

Yishuv

The **Yishuv** ([Hebrew](#): [בּוֹשֵׁי](#), [lit.](#) 'settlement'), **HaYishuv Ha'ivri** ([Hebrew](#): [יִרְבֵּעָה בּוֹשִׁיָּה](#), [lit.](#) 'the [Hebrew](#) settlement'), or **HaYishuv HaYehudi Be'Eretz Yisra'el** ([lit.](#) 'the Jewish Settlement in the Land of Israel') was the community of [Jews](#) residing in [Palestine](#) prior to the establishment of the [State of Israel](#) in 1948. The Yishuv was also referred to as the [Palestinian Jewish](#) community.^[1] The term Yishuv came into use in the 1880s, when there were about 25,000 Jews living in that region, and continued to be used until 1948, by which time there were some 630,000 Jews there.^[2] The term is still in use to denote the pre-1948 Jewish residents in Palestine, corresponding to the southern part of [Ottoman Syria](#) until 1918, [OETA South](#) in 1917–1920, and [Mandatory Palestine](#) in 1920–1948.^[3]

A distinction is sometimes drawn between the [Old Yishuv](#) and the [New Yishuv](#). 'Old Yishuv' refers to all the Jews living in Palestine before the first [Zionist](#) immigration wave ([aliyah](#)) of 1882, and to their descendants until 1948. The Old Yishuv residents were religious Jews, living mainly in [Jerusalem](#), [Safed](#), [Tiberias](#), and [Hebron](#). There were smaller communities in [Jaffa](#), [Haifa](#), [Peki'in](#), [Acre](#), [Nablus](#), [Shfaram](#), and until 1799^[4] in [Gaza](#). In the final centuries before modern Zionism,^[clarification needed] a large part of the Old Yishuv spent their time studying the [Torah](#) and lived off charity ([halukka](#)), donated by Jews in the [diaspora](#).^[5]^[clarification needed]

The term 'New Yishuv' refers to those who adopted a new approach, based on economic independence and various national ideologies, rather than strictly religious reasons for settling in the "Holy Land".^[citation needed] The precursors began building homes outside the [Old City](#) walls of Jerusalem in the 1860s, followed soon after by the founders of the [moshava](#) of [Petah Tikva](#), with growth in full swing during the [First Aliyah](#) of 1882, followed by the founding of neighbourhoods and villages until the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

Ottoman rule

The Old Yishuv were the Jewish communities of southern [Ottoman Syria](#) in the [Ottoman Empire](#),^[6] up to the onset of Zionist [aliyah](#) and the consolidation of the New Yishuv by the end of World War I in 1918 and the establishment of the British [Mandate for Palestine](#). The Old Yishuv had continuously resided in Palestine and was largely made up of [ultra-Orthodox Jews](#) dependent on external donations ([Halukka](#)) for living, as opposed to the later Zionist aliyah and the New Yishuv, who were more socialist-leaning and secular, emphasizing labor and self-sufficiency.^[citation needed]

The Old Yishuv developed after a period of severe decline in Jewish communities of the Southern [Levant](#) during the [early Middle Ages](#), and was composed of three clusters. The oldest group consisted of the [Ladino](#)-speaking [Sephardic Jewish](#) communities in [Galilee](#) and the [Judeo-Arabic](#) speaking [Musta'arabi Jews](#) who settled in Eretz Yisrael in the Ottoman and late [Mamluk period](#). A second group was composed of [Ashkenazi](#) and [Hasidic](#) Jews who had emigrated from Europe in the 18th and early 19th centuries. A third wave was constituted by Yishuv members who arrived in the late 19th century.^[7] The Old Yishuv was thus generally divided into two independent communities – the [Sephardi Jews](#) (including Musta'arabim), mainly constituting the remains of Jewish communities of [Galilee](#) and the [Four Holy Cities](#) of Judaism, which had flourished in the 16th and 17th centuries; and the [Ashkenazi Jews](#), whose immigration from Europe was primarily since the 18th century.^[8]

The *Old Yishuv* term was coined by members of the 'New Yishuv' in the late 19th century to distinguish themselves from the economically dependent and generally earlier Jewish communities, who mainly resided in the four holy cities, and unlike the New Yishuv, had not embraced land ownership and agriculture. Apart from the Old Yishuv centres in the four holy cities of Judaism, namely [Jerusalem](#), [Hebron](#), [Tiberias](#) and [Safed](#), smaller communities also existed in [Jaffa](#), [Haifa](#), [Peki'in](#), [Acre](#), [Nablus](#) and [Shfaram](#). [Petah Tikva](#), although established in 1878 by the Old Yishuv, nevertheless was also supported by the arriving Zionists. [Rishon LeZion](#), the first settlement founded by the [Hovevei Zion](#) in 1882, could be considered the true beginning of the *New Yishuv*.^[9]



[Jewish](#) community in the [Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem](#) under [Ottoman](#) rule, 1895

Beginning of modern Aliyah (New Yishuv)

The Ottoman government was not supportive of the new settlers from the First and Second Aliyah, as the Ottoman government officially restricted Jewish immigration. The Yishuv relied on money from abroad to support their settlements.

In 1908, the Zionist Organization founded the [Palestine Office](#) [[he](#)], under [Arthur Ruppin](#), for land acquisition, agricultural settlement and training,^[10] and later for urban expansion. The first Hebrew high schools were opened in Palestine as well as the [Technion](#), the first institution for higher learning. [Hashomer](#), a Zionist self-defence group, was created to protect the Jewish settlements. Labor organizations were created along with health and cultural services, all later coordinated by the [Jewish National Council](#). By 1914, the old Yishuv was a minority, and the New Yishuv began to express itself and its [Zionist](#) goals.

The [First Aliyah](#) was the very beginning of the creation of the New Yishuv. More than 25,000 Jews immigrated to Palestine. The immigrants were inspired by the notion of creating a national home

for Jews. Most of the Jewish immigrants came from Russia, escaping the [pogroms](#), while some arrived from Yemen. Many of the immigrants were affiliated with [Hovevei Zion](#). Hovevei Zion purchased land from Arabs and other Ottoman subjects and created various settlements such as [Yesud HaMa'ala](#), [Rosh Pinna](#), [Gedera](#), [Rishon LeZion](#), [Nes Tziona](#) and [Rehovot](#). These agricultural settlements were supported by philanthropists from abroad, chiefly [Edmond James de Rothschild](#) and [Alphonse James de Rothschild](#).^[11]

[Eliezer Ben-Yehuda](#) also immigrated during the first Aliyah. Ben-Yehuda took it upon himself to revive the Hebrew language, and along with [Nissim Bechar](#) started a school for teaching Hebrew, later on founding the first Hebrew newspaper.

During the Second Aliyah, between 1903 and 1914, there were 35,000 new immigrants, primarily from the [Russian Empire](#).

During [World War I](#), the conditions for the Jews in the Ottoman Empire worsened. All those Jews who were of an enemy nationality were exiled and others were drafted into the Ottoman army. Many of those exiled fled to [Egypt](#) and the [United States](#). Those who remained in the Ottoman ruled Palestine faced hard economic times. There was disagreement whether to support the British or the Turks. A clandestine group, [Nili](#), was established to pass information to the British in the hope of defeating the Ottomans and ending their rule over Palestine. The purpose and members of the Nili were discovered. All involved were executed by the Ottomans except its founder, [Aaron Aaronsohn](#), who escaped to Egypt. During World War I, the Jewish population in Palestine diminished by a third due to deportations, immigration, economic trouble and disease. In 1915, the [British Army](#) recruited Yishuv Jews who had been exiled to Egypt into the Zion Mule Corps, which provided logistical support during the [Gallipoli campaign](#). Subsequently, the British established the [Jewish Legion](#), which participated in the British conquest of Ottoman Syria (including Palestine), leading to the Turkish surrender. The Jewish Legion's soldiers were predominantly diaspora Jews, but after British forces entered Palestine, a battalion of local Jews was recruited, which carried out support roles and guarded prisoners.

Paramilitary forces

See [Bar-Giora](#), [Hamagen](#), Hanoter, and [Hashomer](#).

During the British Mandate

[World War I](#) saw the [dissolution of the Ottoman Empire](#) and the division of its territory. The [Sykes-Picot Agreement](#) led to a division of Ottoman territory between British and French rule, and the [McMahon-Hussein correspondence](#) "ambiguously omitted" the region of Palestine from what

was promised to become an Arab state to the Hashemite sharif.^[12] The British then worked to follow through on the [Balfour Declaration](#) of 1917, that announced British support for the [Zionist](#) aspiration to establish "a national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.^{[13][14]} The Jewish population was variously estimated at less than 10% of the [population of Palestine](#) before the beginning of [British Mandatory rule](#) (1920–1948)^[14] to slightly more at the beginning.^[15]

Under British rule Jewish immigration, the majority from Europe, led to the rapid growth of the Yishuv. It referred to this immigration in Hebrew as [aliyah](#), meaning "going up", giving it an ideological and religious connotation unlike immigration to other places.^[16] Additional [Jewish land purchases in Palestine](#) enabled the establishment of more farming communities known as [moshavim](#) and [kibbutzim](#). The [League of Nations](#) codified support for the eventual "establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" into the [foundational document](#) of the British Mandate in Palestine, thereby facilitating what detractors later regarded not as aliyah, or the flight of refugees from Nazi and Fascist atrocities,^[17] but as the Zionist colonization of Palestine.^{[14][18]} ^{[19]: xx} The Yishuv had a level of international recognition that the [Arab Higher Committee](#), the governing body of the Arab majority in Mandatory Palestine did not have. At times the British referred to the Arabs only as "non-Jewish communities".^[19]

Parliamentary representation and self-government

A department of the [World Zionist Organization](#) became the [Jewish Agency for Palestine](#), and later the [Jewish Agency for Israel](#). The agency and representative bodies were set up to enable self government.^[20] The Assembly of Representatives was the elected parliamentary assembly of the Jewish community in [Mandatory Palestine](#). It was established on 19 April 1920,^[21] and functioned until 13 February 1949, the day before the [first Knesset](#), elected on 25 January, was sworn in. The Assembly met once a year to elect the executive body, the Jewish National Council,^[22] which was responsible for education, local government, welfare, security and defense.^[23] It also voted on the budgets proposed by the Jewish National Council and the Rabbinical Council.^[22] The [Jewish National Council](#) (ועד כללי *Va'ad Le'umi*) was also known as the General Council of the Jewish Community of Palestine.^[24]

Yishuv governing institutions were recognized by the British government and created a [quasi state](#) as well as a structure of self-governing institutions that legitimately represented the Jewish population.^{[19][25]} It was "recognized as a public body for the purpose of advising and cooperating with the Administration of Palestine", and it was entitled to diplomatic representation in the League of Nations [Permanent Mandates Commission](#) in Geneva, as well as in London and elsewhere.^[19] These were given quasi-official diplomatic status by Britain and the [League of Nations](#), giving the Yishuv's governing bodies international legitimacy.^{[19]: 45}

Paramilitary forces

Main articles: [Haganah](#), [Irgun](#), and [Lehi \(group\)](#)

See also: [Zionist political violence](#)

The most notable Jewish paramilitaries in the [British Mandate of Palestine](#) were the [Haganah](#), the [Irgun](#) and [Lehi](#). In October 1945, during the [Jewish insurgency in Mandatory Palestine](#), those organizations joined to form the [Jewish Resistance Movement](#). It was established by the [Jewish Agency](#) and activated for some ten months, until August, 1946.^[26] The alliance coordinated acts of sabotage and attacks against British authorities.

[1] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yishuv>

Revision #1

Created 2026-09-10 04:21:56 UTC by Dara

Updated 2026-09-10 04:27:23 UTC by Dara