

# PRESS RELEASE

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Jerusalem  
July 31, 2011  
182/2011

## Foreign Workers in Israel

### At the End of 2010: 116,000 Foreign Workers Entered on a Work Permit, and 95,000 Entered as Tourists

#### Foreign Workers Who Entered Israel on a Work Permit in 2010

In 2010, approximately 32,000 foreign workers (foreign nationals) entered Israel with work permits<sup>1</sup>, 5,000 more than in 2009.

In the same year, approximately 30,000 foreign workers who entered Israel on a work permit left the country. This is according to data of the Border Control Authority. Work permit holders who entered Israel in 2010 (of which 52% were women) arrived from some 100 countries. In 2010, there was a change in the distribution of the main countries of origin in comparison with 2009 (see Table A).

**Thailand, the Philippines and the former Soviet Union (FSU)** topped the list in 2010, with approximately 7,600 entrants from Thailand (24% of total entrants) and approximately 5,800 entrants from the Philippines (about 18% of total entrants) and approximately 5,700 entrants from the FSU (18% of total entrants).

Approximately 3,000 entrants with work permits arrived from **India** (about 10% of total entrants), compared with approximately 2,000 in 2009. Thus, India took fourth place in the number of entrants in 2010.

In 2010, 1,600 work permit holders entered Israel from **China** (5% of total entrants), and similarly, 1,500 entrants from **Nepal** were recorded (5% of total entries) – their relative share among the entrants dropped by half in comparison to 2009.

In 2010, only about 500 entries from developed countries were recorded (**USA, Germany and the United Kingdom**), the same as in 2008; this was approximately 2% of total entrants. **Romania's** share (200 entrants) continues to fall as a continuation of the downward trend recorded since 2002.

Seventy-four percent of those entering hailed from Asia (72% in 2009) and 24% from Europe (26% in 2009).

<sup>1</sup> Including foreign workers registered as holding work permits at the border and foreigners who received a work permit shortly after entering Israel at the Ministry of the Interior's district offices.

**Table A: Work Permit Holders Entering from Countries with the Highest Number of Entries, by Year of Entry and Nationality, 2005-2010 (in thousands)**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
						Thousands	% Men
<b>Total</b>	29.4	32.7	36.5	30.3	<b>26.6</b>	<b>32.3</b>	48
<i>Asia – total *</i>	21.0	24.4	27.6	21.4	<b>19.1</b>	<b>24.0</b>	57
Thailand	8.4	9.0	10.6	5.8	<b>5.6</b>	<b>7.6</b>	94
Philippines	6.8	6.4	6.6	5.5	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.8</b>	13
India	0.9	1.1	2.1	2.7	<b>2.1</b>	<b>3.1</b>	40
China	1.9	3.3	3.8	2.3	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.6</b>	96
Nepal	1.3	2.8	2.2	2.3	<b>2.7</b>	<b>1.5</b>	19
Turkey	1.0	1.1	0.8	0.9	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.8</b>	99
Other	0.7	0.7	1.5	2.0	<b>1.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	48
<i>Africa – total</i>	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	92
<i>Europe – total</i>	8.0	8.0	8.3	8.1	<b>6.8</b>	<b>7.7</b>	18
FSU **	3.5	4.3	5.4	5.8	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.7</b>	7
Romania	3.4	2.6	1.9	1.4	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.9</b>	21
Germany	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>	93
Bulgaria	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.1</b>	14
UK	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	89
Other	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.5	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.6</b>	78
<i>America – Oceania – total</i>	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.6	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	70
USA	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>	85
Other	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.2</b>	50

\* Including Asiatic republics of the FSU

\*\* Only European republics

The **average age** of work permit holders entering Israel in 2010 was 36.3.

## Foreign Workers Who Entered Israel on a Work Permit<sup>2</sup> (at the end of 2010)

At the end of 2010, the number of foreign workers who entered Israel on a work permit and were not registered as having left the country stood at 116,500.

The principal countries of origin of foreign workers with a work permit who resided in Israel at the end of 2010 are the **Philippines** (25%), **Thailand** (24%), **Romania** (9%) and **China** (9%).

**Table B: Foreign Workers Who Entered on a Work Permit in 1995-2010, and were Not Registered as Having Left the Country, by Nationality**

	2010	
	Thousands	% Men
<b>Total</b>	<b>116.5</b>	<b>52</b>
<i>Asia – total *</i>	<b>90.2</b>	<b>54</b>
Philippines	<b>28.8</b>	<b>14</b>
Thailand	<b>27.8</b>	<b>94</b>
China	<b>10.2</b>	<b>96</b>
Nepal	<b>7.7</b>	<b>18</b>
India	<b>6.3</b>	<b>41</b>
Sri Lanka	<b>4.1</b>	<b>24</b>
Turkey	<b>2.5</b>	<b>99</b>
Other	<b>2.8</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>Africa – total</i>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>60</b>
<i>Europe – total</i>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>42</b>
FSU **	<b>10.7</b>	<b>16</b>
Romania	<b>10.6</b>	<b>67</b>
Bulgaria	<b>1.6</b>	<b>49</b>
Germany	<b>0.2</b>	<b>79</b>
UK	<b>0.1</b>	<b>78</b>
Other	<b>1.0</b>	<b>55</b>
<i>America – Oceania – total</i>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>48</b>
USA	<b>0.4</b>	<b>70</b>
Other	<b>0.7</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>75</b>

\* Including Asiatic republics of the FSU

\*\* Only European republics

The average age of these workers was 38.4.

The proportion of men was 52%. Men make up an especially low proportion of workers from the Philippines (14%), the FSU (16%) and Nepal (18%).

<sup>2</sup> The estimate is based on processing a file on foreign residents with a work permit that entered Israel since 1995 and have not been registered as having left by the end of 2010. These numbers are slanted higher since there may be errors in registering departures from the country.

**Table C: Foreign Workers Who Entered on a Work Permit in 1995-2010, and Remained in Israel at the End of 2010, by Year of Entry**

Year of Entry	Remained at the end of 2010 (thousands)	Percentage of entries in that year
1995	2.6	3.3
1996	3.1	3.4
1997	2.0	3.1
1998	3.3	5.1
1999	3.3	6.2
2000	4.3	8.8
2001	6.4	8.5
2002	3.1	9.6
2003	2.7	10.8
2004	3.9	12.2
2005	4.3	14.6
2006	7.5	22.9
2007	10.9	29.9
2008	12.9	42.6
2009	17.2	64.7
2010	29.3	91.6
Total	116.5	

**Estimate of Foreign Workers Who Entered Israel as Tourists (Without a Work Permit) at the End of 2010**

Since 1995, the Central Bureau of Statistics has prepared an estimate of the number of foreign workers who entered Israel without a work permit. This estimate is based on the assumption that tourists from undeveloped countries who remain in Israel after their visa has expired do so for the purpose of working.

Between 1995 and 2001, the number of foreign workers entering Israel as tourists increased steadily, peaking at the end of 2001 at 139,000. This trend reversed for the first time in 2002, when the number of these workers decreased by 11%, continuing to decline to an estimated 80,000 in 2005. In 2006 their number increased again to an estimated 84,000, continuing to rise to an estimated 107,000 in 2008, before falling once more in 2009 by about 5%. In 2010, the downward trend continued, and their number was estimated at 95,000, a 6% decrease compared with 2009, in which they were estimated at 101,000.

This estimate is based on various models used to estimate the number of foreign workers entering Israel without a work permit. A certain number of tourists, mostly from the FSU, who remained in Israel beyond the expiry of their work permit have submitted a residency application to the Ministry of the Interior.

Approximately 48% of the population of foreign workers who entered Israel as tourists arrived from the FSU, and another 30% from nine other countries.

The ten leading countries of origin, accounting for 78% of all foreign workers who arrived as tourists and resided in Israel at the end of 2010, are listed in Table D.

**Table D: The Ten Leading Countries of Origin of Foreign Workers Who Entered Israel as Tourists in 1995-2010, Who Remained in Israel at the End of 2010**

	<b>Foreign Workers who Entered as Tourists</b>	
	Thousands	Percentage
<b>Ten countries – total</b>	77.7	76.3
<b>FSU *</b>	45.4	44.6
<b>Jordan</b>	8.0	7.9
<b>Mexico</b>	4.8	4.7
<b>Romania</b>	4.1	4.0
<b>Colombia</b>	3.3	3.2
<b>Turkey</b>	3.1	3.0
<b>Nepal</b>	2.4	2.4
<b>India</b>	2.3	2.3
<b>Egypt</b>	2.2	2.2
<b>Czechoslovakia*</b>	2.1	2.1

\* Before the split