



International Forum of Jewish Scouts
(IFJS)

2017 – 2020/21 Triennium

Report

March 2022

International Forum of Jewish Scouts
President – Alain Silberstein
General Secretary – Michael Marks

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1 IFJS Statutes

To further the development of the IFJS, the **Forum international des scouts juifs (IFJS)** was registered in France on 20 July 2020. Its purpose is to bring together Jewish Scout bodies across the world and represent Judaism in the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM).

Headquarters: 27, Avenue de Segur, 75007 Paris, France

In a letter dated 23rd May 2019, the World Scout Committee confirmed that IFJS Statutes are in compliance with WOSM's Constitution, as well as WOSM's Criteria for Consultative Status with the World Scout Committee. Hence, the Consultative Status of IFJS has been renewed for the remainder of the 2017-20 Triennium.

The mission statement is as follows:

The IFJS is to be the 'Jewish voice' within the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and is to participate within the Interreligious Forum of World Scouting (IFoWS).

The IFJS goals are the following:

1. To establish ties between all the existing associations, committees, branches and groups of Jewish scouts in order to:

- Engage in dialogue among participants and exchange ideas regarding the main concerns of the Jewish people of today
- Strengthen and improve Jewish Scouting around the world
- Initiate joint activities, such as a Jamboree of Jewish Scouts
- Exchange and edition of educational and training material
- Publicize Jewish Scout activities within the Jewish world
- Seek funding for the development and strengthening of Jewish Scouts groups

2. To establish new local groups of Jewish Scouts in Jewish communities around the world:

- To establish a non-formal Jewish educational structure in communities in which there is presently no youth movement
- To develop local community leadership via leadership in the Scout movement

3. To represent Jewish scouts within the Scout movement and to be the Jewish voice in interfaith activities:

- To participate in international activities by representing the Jewish voice
- To strengthen the Jewish identity of Jewish Scouts attending international gatherings and meetings
- To establish and/or participate in various interfaith encounters initiated by the World Organization of the Scout Movement.

2 IFJS General Assembly – February 27th, 2022

It was intended to hold the first General Assembly of the IFJS during the 6th World Scout Interreligious Symposium (WSIS) that was scheduled to take place in March 2020 in France. The General Assembly was postponed due to the cancellation of the Symposium because of the pandemic.

Since it was impossible to meet face-to-face, all discussion about how to develop the IFJS and the strategic choices required took place via numerous online meetings between 2020 and 2021. It was decided to hold an online IFJS General Assembly on Sunday 27 February 2022.

Present:

- **Australia:** Rabbi Peter Moore
- **Brazil:** David Britva Beraha, Rav Nathan Freller
- **Greece:** Alexandros Modiano
- **France:** Ruth Ouazana Barer, Alain Silberstein,
- **Israel:** Cali Cohen, Anat Friedman, Eran Glazer, Raz Pearl, Dor Posner, Elad Sanderowich, Amos Simon,
- **United Kingdom:** David Marks, Michael Marks
- **United States of America:** Bruce Chudacoff, Frank Youdelman

IFJS MEMBERS 2022 – 2024

The full membership list of the IFJS was as follows:

- Tsofim halvrim – Hebrew Scouts Movement (Israel)
- Éclaireuses Éclaireurs Israélites de France EEIF (France)
- National Jewish Committee on Scouting NJCoS (USA)
- National Jewish Scout Active Support Unit, NJSASU (UK)
- Uniao dos Escoteiros do Brasil UEB (Brazil)

New members are also actively sought from Scouts of Mexico and Scouts of Argentina.

ELECTED BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022 – 2024

- Jacques Behar (USA)
- David Britva Beraha (Brazil)
- Eran Glazer (Israel)
- Michael Marks (UK)
- Alain Silberstein (France)

ELECTED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2022 – 2024

- President: Alain Silberstein (France) 2022-2023 | Eran Glazer (Israel) 2024
- Vice President: Eran Glazer (Israel) 2022-2023 | Alain Silberstein (France) 2024
- Vice President: David Britva Beraha (Brazil)
- Treasurer: Jacques Behar (USA)
- General Secretary: Michael Marks (UK)

• IFJS Secretary:

In charge of Israeli programme

Dor Posner (Israel)**• Asia-Pacific Region Observer**

Appointed by the Board of Directors

Rabbi Peter Moore (Australia)

3 IFJS – Strategic Memo 2022 – 2024

In the General Assembly, members of the IFJS worked on and produced a document for the 2022-2024 triennium that will form the basis of a strategic plan that takes account of the widely differing situations that young Jews experience in Scouting. Programmes, exchanges and training will be prioritised to develop strong sustainable links between Scouts across the world. This will apply to young people and leaders whether in open units or members of Jewish Scout groups.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Before the Second World War and the tragedy of the Shoah, there were Scout groups in almost all Jewish communities in Europe, from Moscow to Manchester. 77 years on from the Shoah and 33 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain, not a single group of Jewish Scouts in the world has been created by National Scout Organizations (except one in Czech Republic)!

Only offering young Jews Scouting in units open to all prevents them discovering and living Judaism in all its dimensions, thus deepening and fostering their identity. **First and foremost this is what families and communities are asking us to do.**

We have to recognise that the attraction of Zionist youth groups is that they offer a programme and training based on the same format across the world. This greatly facilitates international exchange. The pre-war international aspect of Scouting has given way now to national Scout practices that tend to hinder international exchange – a real Babel!

We are trying out a world programme in Europe and Eurasia – a bit like those offered by Zionist youth groups – to encourage exchange between Jewish and non-Jewish Scouts and which includes discovering and learning about Israel with the Hebrew Scouts Movement in Israel. This is open to Jewish Scouts whether they are members of open groups or Jewish Scout groups.

Since its inception, Scouting has been the ideal educational tool for the discovering Judaism, with its connection to nature and openness to others, hence its success throughout Jewish communities yesterday and today.

Jewish life in Scouting is an intense and joyful **immersive experience** that can only be experienced in tribes of Jewish Scouts. Celebrating Shabbat 'in the wood' (with its preparation and programme full of joy, song and dance) is a central element of the Jewish Scout programme.

The IFJS can assist National Scout Organizations to look at the benefits of incorporating Jewish scout groups.

In Europe and Eurasia regions, National Scout Organizations prove unable to create Jewish Scout groups that take into account the expectations of families and communities. That is why IFJS is now offering an international Scout programme for Jewish youth. **This programme is in line with the WOSM constitution.**

The 'Tsofim Yehudim (Jewish Scouts in Hebrew)' programme being put forward is aimed at the European and Eurasian regions. When we presented this programme at Pan-European Conferences of the European Association of Jewish Community Centres (EAJCC), it was warmly welcomed by community leaders in those countries. A pilot programme is underway in Lithuania.

Diversity and Inclusion are now top priorities of the World Scout Movement. Let's put them into practice for young Jews!

3.2 TSOFIM YEHUDIM' PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Practicing Jewish life in a Scouting environment is based on the century-old experience of the EEIF (Jewish Scouts of France). It profoundly transformed Jewish life in France. Many French community leaders were Scouts and in their adult commitments have never forgotten the diversity of Judaism they discovered and experienced as Scouts, in addition to the importance of listening to others, whatever form of Jewish life have chosen.

– Building a Strong Scout Table

The 5 Legged Table of Jewish Scouts – Avraham Infeld's teaching: <https://5leggedtable.com>:

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| • Zachor | – Memory |
| • Mishpara | – Family |
| • Har Sinai | – Covenant - Mount Sinai |
| • Ivrit | – Hebrew |
| • Israel | – the Land, the State |

– A Jewish Scout camp is a time of Shabbat.

– **Scouting is open to all. So Jewish Scouting should be open to all Jews**, a place to discover the wealth and diversity within Judaism. The special characteristic of Jewish Scouting is that it is **pluralist and inclusive**, meaning addressing all Jewish families, practising or otherwise.

This pluralist basis is one of the strengths of our proposal. It opens the eyes of young people to the unity of the Jewish people through a shared nucleus of Jewish practices (EEIF minhag):

- Kashrut (respect of Jewish Dietary Laws)
- Morning Service – Shacharit (we start our day together, as a community)
- Grace at Meals – Motsi & Birkat Hamazon (we eat together, as a community)
- Shabbat & Yom Tov (Jewish Festivals) – special activities

– Tsofim Yehudim Programme in Europe and Eurasia regions (introduction):

http://jewishscouts.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/0-TY_topo_eurasia1.pdf

4 Programme of Activities 2017-2021 (report)

The pandemic affected everyone's programmes – globally and regionally. Virtual discussions were prioritised but quickly showed their limitations both psychologically and in their effectiveness to discuss and build programmes jointly.

June 2018 – **Lithuania**: meeting with Jewish community leaders in Vilnius and Lithuanian Scout leaders about creating a Jewish Scout group.

June 2018 – **Czech Republic**: meeting with the leader of the Prague Jewish Scout group and one of the national leaders of Czech Scouting.

August 2018 – **Lithuania**: first event – a Shabbat camp – organised by the Lithuanian Jewish Scouts. 50 Scouts and leaders attended, supported by trainers from French Jewish Scouts (EEIF) and the Lithuanian Scouts.

October 2018 – **Tunisia**: attendance at the Interreligious Forum of World Scouting (IFoWS).

IFJS representatives were unable to attend the "Ambassadors of interreligious dialogue" seminar organised by the Scouts Tunisiens that followed this meeting due to a court ruling that forbade inclusion of "Israelis".

Ruth Ouazana and Alain Silberstein, Jewish French citizens, had to leave Tunisia immediately. In solidarity with them Fr Jacques Gagey, World Chaplain of the International Conference of Catholic Scouting (ICCS), left with them and hosted them in Rome.

November 2018 – **Czech Republic**: attendance at the 3rd Summit of European Jewish Leadership in Prague. Presented the pan-European "Tsofim Yehudim" (Jewish Scouts in Hebrew) programme.

July- August 2019 – **USA**: World Scout Jamboree. The IFJS took charge of the Jewish Tent in the Faith and Beliefs zone, Kashrut observance and the organization and celebration of Shabbat (celebratory meal with several guests on Friday evening and Shabbat morning services).

The English edition of the IFJS's "Judaism in a Nutshell" to introduce people to Judaism was available in the Jewish Tent for Scout leaders from the world over.

August 2019 – **Croatia**: attendance at the European Scout Conference in Split.

September 2019 – **Ukraine**: attendance at the Eurasian Scout Conference in Kyiv. The "Tsofim Yehudim" (Jewish Scouts in Hebrew) Pan-European programme was presented to national leaders of the Ukrainian scouts at the request of Jewish families in Dnipro.

November 2021 – **Portugal**: attendance at the World Council of the International Conference of Catholic Scouting (ICCS), in Fatima.

December 2021 – **Lithuania**: meeting in Vilnius with community leaders responsible for developing Jewish Scouts in Lithuania. An evaluation of the situation and requirements as regards training and specific programmes was carried out.

5 Program of Activities 2022 – 2024

5.1 SETTING UP FOUR FOCUS GROUPS

At the IFJS General Assembly on 23 February 2022, it was decided to set up four focus groups to work on development programmes for the coming years. Each focus group is headed by an IFJS administrator leading an international team of expert volunteers.

– **Funding:** Jacques Behar (USA), Raz Pearl (Israel) or someone else from the Board of Directors of the Hebrew Scouts on his behalf

“Man is worthy of being called man only if he is charitable” – Yalkut Reuveni

– **Youth Programme & Adult Training:** Alain Silberstein (France), Eran Glaser (Israel), Ruth Ouazana Barer (France)

Develop and share with Jewish communities an educational curriculum with a view to enhance the spiritual dimension of Jewish youth in accordance with the purpose, principles and methods of Scouting (IFJS By-laws)

– **Reaching Out:** Eran Glaser (Israel), Jeremie Haddad (France), David Britva Beraha (Brazil)

Introduce and promote Scouting among youth in countries or regions where Jewish communities exist (IFJS By-laws)

– **World Events:** Michael Marks (UK), Dr Amos Simon (Israel)

Develop and promote the spirit of brotherhood and understanding among Jewish Scouts and other Scouts worldwide (IFJS By-laws)

5.2 WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE INTERRELIGIOUS FORUM OF WORLD SCOUTING (IFoWS):

– Faith & Beliefs Zone

Partnering the creation and the training of a network of young leaders to run such program at the national, regional and world levels.

– Interreligious Dialogue Badge (IRD Badge)

Introducing the new program (runned by the IFoWS) enhancing the fraternity of religions within Scouting. Partnership with the International Catholic Conference on Scouting (ICCS).

– Interreligious Dialogue Network

Partnering the creation and the training of a network of experienced leaders to deliver the IRD Badge program at the national, regional and world levels.

– Creation of New Interreligious Scout Forums

We have isolated Jewish scouts groups in two regions:

- Latin America (Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Argentina)
- Australia

The creation of regional interreligious scout forums will help us to provide specific exchange program and training within multicultural and multireligious environment.

6 The European Scout Interreligious Forum (ESIF)

Michael Marks (IFJS - United Kingdom) is a member of its Steering Committee.

We look forward to it being able to restart its activities effectively.

7 Funding challenges

A focus group was established to identify the stable funding required for organising exchange and training programmes for Scouts and leaders internationally, especially the Southern hemisphere (Latin America and Australia).

8 IFJS Awards

- The Nachshon Fellowship
- The Shalom Award

8.1 THE NACHSHON FELLOWSHIP

The Nachshon Fellowship recognizes individuals worldwide who provide outstanding service to International Jewish Scouts. The Fellowship consists of dedicated adult Scout volunteers (Scouters) who perform long-standing, exemplary service on a national or international level promoting Jewish Scouts.

No awards were made during the pandemic.

8.2 THE SHALOM AWARD

The Shalom Award of the International Forum of Jewish Scouts encourages Jewish Scouters worldwide to strengthen their unity and develop closer bonds with each other. The IFJS Shalom Award recognizes adult Scout volunteers (Scouters) who provide leadership and assistance to national Jewish Scout groups.

Jewish Scouts from France, United Kingdom, USA, Brazil, attending major international scout events did received the Shalom Award during that triennium.

The Shalom Award is currently being revised so that it can complement religious programmes that exist in certain NSOs like the BSA. The guiding principle behind the Shalom Award is that it must also satisfy national programmes' requirements regarding Jewish identity.

For young Jews without dedicated programmes for them in their NSOs, the new Shalom Award will be a programme to encourage them to discover and deepen their Jewish identity, supported by their parents and community. This programme will also be accessible online via the IFJS site.

9 Communications

To maintain communications and information links between Jewish scouts worldwide, the International Forum of Jewish Scouts developed various toolings:

- An official IFJS website: <http://www.jewishscoutsforum.org>
- A site to support the creation of Jewish Scout groups in the European and Eurasian Scout regions: <http://Jewishscouts.eu>
- An official IFJS Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/jewishscoutsforum>

We would like to recruit a Community Manager to look after these pages.



*By 2023 Scouting will be the world's leading educational youth movement,
enabling 100 million young people to be active citizens creating positive change in their communities
and in the world based on shared values.*