

Opening the File

In 5786, more than 20,000 Jews came home. The bigger story is the 28,000 who started the paperwork.

By Aryeh Leib Thorne Toren · 18 October 2026

The Aliyah and Integration Ministry and the Jewish Agency published their numbers for the Hebrew year 5786, from 23 September 2025 to 3 September 2026. More than 20,000 new immigrants arrived from more than 100 countries. The largest groups came from Russia (5,685), France (4,364) and the United States (3,333), with 975 from Britain.

Arrivals tell you about last year. Files tell you about next year. More than 28,000 Jews opened aliyah files through the Jewish Agency's Global Aliyah Center. Here is the change in files opened, with the arithmetic shown. The formula is: $\text{increase} = (\text{this year} - \text{last year}) \div \text{last year}$.

France: $(7,033 - 5,349) \div 5,349 = 1,684 \div 5,349 = 31.5\%$.

United States: $(6,725 - 5,745) \div 5,745 = 980 \div 5,745 = 17.1\%$.

Britain: $(2,264 - 1,348) \div 1,348 = 916 \div 1,348 = 68.0\%$.

Australia: $(590 - 311) \div 311 = 279 \div 311 = 89.7\%$.

Canada: $(956 - 864) \div 864 = 92 \div 864 = 10.7\%$.

South Africa: $(368 - 322) \div 322 = 46 \div 322 = 14.3\%$.

Every Western country listed went up, and the English-speaking communities outside America rose fastest. A file is not a flight. Some who open one will wait years; some will never come. But a file is a decision to start, and starting is most of the journey.

The Torah's first aliyah began with two words, lech lecha, "go for yourself" (Bereishit 12:1). Avram was told to leave "your land, your birthplace and your father's house," in that order, and Rashi notes that he was not yet told where he was going. Most of the 28,000 know exactly where they are going. What they share with Avram is the moment before the move, when the forms are filled out and the heart is already packed.

To everyone who opened a file this year: the country you are coming to is still at war, and it is waiting for you. Come carefully, come prepared, and come.

May G-d bring His children home from the four corners of the earth, and make the landing soft.

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