

# Accessible tourism for people with psychosocial disabilities in-country and abroad

## ISRAEL/ENOSH – NOFESH PROGRAMME

Nofesh is an accessible travel programme developed in 2015 by Enosh, an Israeli NGO that works with individuals with psychosocial disabilities. Nofesh-facilitated travel tour groups can range from a one-day tour to a five-day vacation that includes visits to museums and cultural events nationwide and abroad. Participants are part of the entire planning process, and each trip starts with an individual consultation. Mental health professionals and peers travel together to provide mutual support.

### Problem targeted

Important components to mental health, such as recreation and leisure time, are often overlooked regarding people with disabilities

### Solution, innovation, and impact

Nofesh provides tailor-made leisure experiences to people with psychosocial disabilities in Israel. Examples include one day tours, three-to-five-day vacations, cruises, museum trips, recreation activities, and cultural events. The preparation phase usually covers discussions on emotional, financial, physical, and technical aspects of the trip.

“Being far away from the usual routine and coping with new challenges opens up new opportunities to build new skills.”

Shirit Perl-Levy, Director of Community Outreach & Nofesh, Enosh

Participants experience the vacation in a group setting with peers and professionals who provide accommodations for physical and psychosocial needs. Each trip includes a social guide for every six participants, a coordinator, and a nurse. Managing the vacation budget is also an inseparable part of participants' recovery process. Enosh works with travel agencies that specialize in the planning of vacations, and it considers any special needs that may require adequate responses while also enjoying group benefits and accessible prices in Israel and abroad. Since its launch in 2015, Nofesh has seen an average of 500 participants each year. During the pandemic,



Hanging in there – supported by qualified peers and guides.

the organization switched to virtual daily tours and lectures in various locations worldwide in which 200 participants were involved.

### Outlook, transferability, and funding

The annual cost of the accessible tourism project is \$100,000–120,000. Participants pay for the cost of their own vacations, which includes the fees for the supportive mental health professionals. Over the next three to five years Enosh aims to expand its designed vacations to other groups, such as young adults, religious communities, women tours, and people with multiple disabilities. To do so, it hopes to secure funding from the Israeli Government and private donors.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2015

- Some 4,000 participants join in a one-day tour, organized twice a year.
- An average of 500 participants per year take vacations using Nofesh.
- 200 participants took part in virtual tours.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*



Ms. Liron David

[liron.david@enosh.org.il](mailto:liron.david@enosh.org.il) – [www.enosh.org.il/en/english](http://www.enosh.org.il/en/english)