

## **Bertelsmann Stiftung: Projects to Foster German-Israeli Relations**

- **Koteret School of Journalism in Tel Aviv**

The Koteret School of Journalism and Communication is the leading journalism training institution in Israel. It enjoys an excellent reputation in the media industry. The practical education received by the young journalists is highly valued – nearly all graduates are hired by Israeli or international print media, radio and TV stations. Approximately 40 students earn their certificate each year after completing a total of three years of training.

The school was founded through a joint initiative of Reinhard Mohn and Dov Yudkovsky, the former editor-in-chief of the highest-circulation Israeli daily newspaper *Yedioth Aharonot* and current Chairman of the Board of Directors in Koteret. Both sought to promote the practically oriented training of journalists in Israel. The Bertelsmann Stiftung has been supporting the school since its founding in 1989, investing a total of approximately EUR 10 million in the initiative by the end of the financial year 2005.

Koteret receives an average of 600 applications each year but can only accept 50 candidates. The school works together closely with the Israeli distance university and the University of Tel Aviv, helping to firmly combine theory and practice. The Bertelsmann Stiftung will continue to support the school of journalism for five more years. The school and its programs are likely to be integrated into the University of Tel Aviv in the future.

The practically oriented education program with modern technical equipment covers radio, TV, print and online media. The students are divided into small working groups taught by well-known journalist and professors. Speakers from neighboring Arab countries come to hold guest lectures. The programs produced in the working groups are broadcast by public radio stations. In addition, the students produce internal daily newspapers, magazines, TV programs and a campus radio station.

The Koteret School, directed by the well-known Israeli journalist and publicist Roman Frister, centers its diverse training program around the social responsibility of the media. It attaches great importance to a deeply ingrained sense of tolerance among the young professionals with their different social and ethnic origins. This orientation is critical for the Israeli media landscape which, with its dynamic structure and widely varying media for the country's different language groups, is dependent on journalists with training in a broad range of areas.

The young future journalists are active beyond Israel's borders as well. There is, for example, a close experience and internship exchange with the Henri Nannen School of Journalism in Hamburg.

<http://www.koteret.co.il/>

- **German-Jewish Dialog**

Together with the London-based publisher Lord Weidenfeld, the Bertelsmann Stiftung frequently invites well-known Jewish personalities from all over the world to engage in discussions with German decision-makers from politics, business, culture and the media. Each of the regular German-Jewish Dialog meetings provides a round table for 40 to 50 participants to engage in open and informal discussion of the topics which shape the multi-faceted relationship between Germans and Jews all over the world.

The selection of topics is based on clear criteria. The focus is on events in Germany and their impact on relations with Jews around the world, the situation in Israel with special emphasis on the conflict in the Near East, and the development of the growing Jewish community in Germany. Approximately 500 participants from 16 countries have taken part in this forum since the dialog was started in 1992.

Over the years, the German-Jewish Dialog has established itself as a tool for facilitation of a trusting exchange of ideas, one in which the critical points in German-Jewish relations can be openly discussed as well. It thus also offers a chance to provide important impulses for the joint shaping of these relations in the future.

- **German-Israeli Young Leaders Exchange**

The German-Israeli Young Leaders Exchange brings together young Germans and Israelis from the worlds of politics, business, culture and media in a dialog on changing key topics and general issues of political and social interest. The first encounter programs, for instance, covered topics such as “Digital Economy,” “Media and Politics,” “Art and Politics” and “Politics and Society.”

The Shoah of the past is present in the background, but the true focus is on the future and the fostering of dialog and cooperation. In addition to providing information, emphasis is also placed on forming a network of younger persons who will continue German-Israeli relations and give shape to them in the future.

More than 150 young people from Germany and Israel have taken part in the encounter program since its founding. The meetings have already led to numerous individual cooperations between the participants. Annual Fellowship Network Meetings serve as the main instrument for creating lasting relationships, ensuring that the participants in the individual key-focus discussions can remain in contact with one another. In addition, all participants are offered an attractive forum where contact with leaders in other areas can be made across the narrower boundaries of the individual subject areas.

<http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/cps/rde/xchg/SID-0A00F0A-E01855CE/bst/hs.xsl/308.htm>