

The First Women's Mission



PHOTO: ARCHIVE

from the Czech Republic to Israel, October 2018

The first women's entrepreneurial mission to Israel took place from the 12th to 20th of October 2018. The mission's goal was to learn about the start-up ecosystem in the "Start-Up Nation," to gain inspiration from relevant examples, and to establish personal contacts for future collaboration. Twenty-two women participated in the mission, including CEOs, investors, and top managers from corporations, NGOs, and academia. Gender diversity of the mission was also ensured by the participation of a male student from a private graphic arts high school. Linda Štucbartová organized and led the mission in collaboration with Igor Neumann from CK Kareta Tour, both as members of the Czech-Israeli Chamber of Commerce.

The mission visited ten different companies and institutions: Herzliya Accelerator, Pico Investments, Maskit, Red Hat, IDC Beyond, Pearl Cohen Advisory, Amazon, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel, OurCrowd, and Mobileye. In the space of only five days, the mission participated in eighteen presentations and meetings with more than forty Israeli contributors from select start-up incubators, accelerators, investment funds, large corporations, as well as academia and the non-for-profit sector. The Israeli participants always greeted the mission with enthusiasm and appreciated the mission

members' proactive approach to learning and their desire to discuss potential mutual support and collaboration in the future. The mission got attention from media and was mentioned by the Israeli ynetnews.com portal.

The mission also visited the Czech Embassy in Tel Aviv and met with the Charge d'Affaires, Kateřina Moravcová, and the diplomat in charge of science and technology relations, Delana Mikolašová. The Israeli-Czech Chamber of Commerce organized an informal evening networking session that introduced the Chamber's activities and women members, as well as the new concept of Pepper banking. The representatives of the Israeli-Czech Chamber of Commerce promised to reciprocate and visit the Czech Republic in 2019.

The cultural program consisted of excursions in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Massada, and a one-day trip to the Dead Sea. Most of the participants were visiting Israel for the first time and appreciated the opportunity not only to learn about the Israeli start-up ecosystem, but to also experience on their own a country whose image is often distorted by the media.

It is impossible to summarize all the insights and presentations that we had in this short briefing, and that is why I have extracted ten inspirational insights that were most often cited to explain

how Israel, which began by exporting oranges, became a nation of start-ups and innovative new technologies:

1. "Tachles" or "let's do it" approach is fundamental for fast and effective connection with Israeli partners.
2. The Israeli market is limited. All products and services are therefore conceived with the global market in mind.
3. Failure and lack of success is not a stigma, it is only a step towards improvement and success.
4. Status quo is not good enough. Even top-level services and products must be constantly improved upon.
5. Every book has many pages. Do not be afraid to write your own story.
6. Diversity is not only a slogan. Israel's success is the result of more than 70 different nationalities and they like to emphasize this fact.
7. Solidarity with others and the need to give back to society are very important in Israel. Large corporations allow their employees to spend up to 20% of their working capacity on practical projects with social impact.



8. The recipe for success according to one of the most successful investment companies: $V+M+C+A = S^2$ Values + Mission + Creativity + Action = Success Squared.
9. The role of the government and state institutions is not to regulate. Rather, their role is to provide optimal conditions so that businesses and other entities can fulfill their role to their best ability.
10. The friendship between the Czech Republic and Israel is longstanding and built on common traditions and firm foundations. However, in the dynamic conditions of the 21st century, these are not sufficient for growth. Let us therefore build on this extraordinary friendship and continue to develop and nurture it.

The success of a mission is often measured only by the satisfaction of its individual participants. In this case, the mission was successful because it led to both high satisfaction as well as specific follow-up programs that will be launched thanks to our Israeli inspiration. The participants were very impressed by, for example, the concept of the Herzliya Accelerator

and OurCrowd and their implementation in the regions, the automotive security system of MobilEye and the company's efforts to promote safety in public transport, and the increased support given to projects focused on combining technology with health prevention.

Linda Štucbartová and Diversio will continue to actively promote Czech-Israeli relations, make connections, and support individual projects. Future projects include a high-school initiative to develop students' entrepreneurial skills in combination with robotics, a second mission to Israel in 2019, and the founding of the first Israeli-Czech accelerator focused on technology and supporting women.

This mission would not be possible without the support of His Excellency, the Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Daniel Meron, and his deputy Irit Amitai from the Israeli Embassy in Prague; the Charge d'Affaires, Kateřina Moravcová, and the diplomat responsible for science and technology relations, Delana Mikolašová, from the Czech Embassy in Tel Aviv; Dr. Raviy Zadok and Dr. Andy David from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel; Karel Kortánek and Tomáš Pojar from the Czech-Israeli Chamber of Commerce, and David Hercky and Assaf Dovrat from the Israeli-Czech Chamber of Commerce.

On behalf of all the participants I would like to cite feedback from Jana Hrstková, Operating Principal of Keller Williams, Member of the Board of the Jan and Meda Mladek Foundation, and President of the Harvard Alumni Club in Prague:

"Missions are generally the modern way to support new projects and represent an effective tool for making personal connections with foreign partners. Another goal is to create synergies and a program that will satisfy the maximum number possible of the delegation participants. I think that this first women entrepreneurial mission to Israel fulfilled the vision very well. We had the opportunity to meet with partners from the Herzliya Accelerator Center, PICO Investment Fund, RedHat, IDC Beyond, OurCrowd, and MobilEye, among others. Personally, I was most taken by the example of the most successful Israeli start-up MobilEye, which offers a very sophisticated technology that assists drivers, and which can serve as inspiration for the Czech Republic. The program was very professional and thorough. A huge thank you to Linda Štucbartová from Diversio who prepared the program and supported it professionally, as well as to the Czech Embassy in Tel Aviv, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel, and the Israeli-Czech Chamber of Commerce. I would recommend the mission to all those who are interested in new trends in technology, investment opportunities, start-ups, and education. I'm already looking forward to the next mission which Diversio plans for Fall 2019."

By Linda Štucbartová

České znění naleznete v elektronické verzi magazínu na www.czechleaders.com

Finally, a poem written by Lenka Čábelová, Communication and Storytelling Expert:

Welcome home

Welcome to the city
Whose backbone is a bike path
Where balconies breathe
And town squares smile

Welcome to the city of white round corners
A garden in the desert
Despite the fragility of being
Again and again
It opens its whole heart to you

Abstract beauty composed in concrete
Modestly covered by a green veil
Like a pearl diver I float through the streets
And one by one string them on a thread of wonder

I am here for just one day
And I am not a stranger
Even I have the right to return
Welcome home, it whispers...



Credit to Mrs. Marcela Janíčková, founder of Visual Coach, who, as one of the participants, kindly provided active life sketch noting of all presentations