

## E-2 Treaty Investor Visas: Important Immigration News for Israeli Investors and Entrepreneurs

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In much anticipated news for both the United States and Israeli companies and entrepreneurs, Israeli nationals will soon become eligible for the E-2 Treaty Investor visas. The Israeli authorities have announced that the procedures and rules for the B-5 investor visa for U.S. citizens are expected to be released in March 2017. One of the vital effects of the B-5 visa implementation and availability is that it will enable the reciprocal availability of the E-2 visas for Israeli citizens.



The E-2 Treaty Investor visa aims to provide foreign nationals and corporate entities with a path to invest in the U.S. economy through reciprocal treaties of commerce. Where available, this visa option allows investors and employees of the same nationality to live in the United States and work for the U.S. enterprise. In addition to the requirement that the majority ownership of the enterprise must be held by nationals of the treaty country, E-2 visa requirements include a substantial investment into the U.S. enterprise, as well as the entity's growth and expansion.

President Obama first signed the legislation adding Israel to the list of approximately 80 other countries eligible for E-2 treaty investor visas in 2012. However, the implementation of this law was on hold, awaiting Israel to likewise ratify the treaty serving as the basis of E-2 eligibility. The reciprocal terms and conditions included the availability of a reciprocal visa path for U.S. investors to Israel. On Aug. 13, 2014, the Israeli Knesset ratified the necessary legislation to enable E-2 visa availability to Israeli nationals. Subsequent to the ratification, the Israeli authorities took additional time to confirm the details of the legislation and its implementation.

With the recent announcement that the B-5 investor visa procedures and rules are anticipated to be released in March of this year, the much anticipated E-2 Treaty Investor visa availability is expected to be released around the same time.

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