

Tiptoeing on Minefields, by Joelle Fiss
Where the European and Jewish worlds collide in unison

How to invent a system where Israelis and Jews around the world can simultaneously discuss critical questions, such as the peace process or the role between church and state in Israel? In her book *Tiptoeing on Minefields*, Joelle Fiss makes some startling new policy proposals, encouraging individuals to unite more fluidly across borders. She proposes notably the creation of a “Jewish people’s initiative”, whereby if 0.2% of the world Jewish population (26,856 Jews out of 13 428,000 Jews worldwide) united around a new idea, it could be added on the agenda of major Jewish organisations or proposed to the Israeli government.

Fiss uses the model of European Union structures to show how transnational democracy in the Jewish world can be reshaped. According to the European Citizen’s Initiative (a provision in the EU Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on the 1 April 2012), if one million EU citizens from at least 7 EU countries submit a proposal, then the European Commission (EU executive) must react upon it. “It is fascinating to transpose this into to a Jewish context,” Fiss says. “Imagine a declaration of Jews from around the world who would petition the Israeli government to consider a proposal. Proportionally to the EU system, this would amount to around 15,400 Jews- which is about half the size of the Jewish population in Belgium”, she explains. Proposals emerging from such a system would not be binding. But they would change the scope of a discussion, rendering it global and relevant to the Israeli government, major Jewish leaders- as well as the wider Jewish population as a whole.

In *Tiptoeing on Minefields*, Fiss calls for a “new, sustainable infrastructure” that can strengthen social connections and free untapped creativity in the Jewish world. “In this day and age, new technologies are required for the Jewish people to think, discuss and act collectively. Rusty organizations are disconnected from the vast majority. It is time to create a structure which capitalizes on the global talent of the Jewish people. Let’s adapt Zionism to globalisation”, she said.