

Media Release

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Jerusalem
November 9, 2015
302/2015

The Ethiopian Population in Israel

- At the end of 2014, the **Ethiopian population in Israel numbered 138,200 residents**.¹ Approximately 85,600 were born in Ethiopia and 52,600 were Israeli-born whose fathers were born in Ethiopia.
- In 2014, 211 Ethiopian immigrants arrived in Israel. This was the smallest number of immigrants from Ethiopia since 2000, and 85% lower than the number of immigrants in the previous year (1,355 immigrants).
- Most of the Ethiopian population lives in two main **districts**: The Central District (approximately 38%) and the Southern District (approximately 24%). At the end of 2014, of the urban localities, the locality with the largest Ethiopian population was Netanya (approximately 11,200 persons).
- The Ethiopian population **marries at a later age** compared to the general Jewish population.
- A large majority of Ethiopians (89%) marry another Ethiopian. This was more true of men (93%) than of women (86%).
- **Live births** – In 2014, Ethiopian women gave birth to 3,433 babies. In this year, an Ethiopian woman was expected to have 2.9 children during her lifetime, on average.
- During the academic year 2014/15, in all of the institutions of higher education in Israel,² there were 2,946 Ethiopian **students**. Of these students, 88.5% were studying toward a first degree, 10.7% toward a second degree, 0.5% toward a third degree, and 0.3% toward an academic certificate.
- The most popular field studied by Ethiopians for a second degree was **business and administration sciences** – more than a third of them studied in this field (34.3%), compared to 22.4% in the general student population studying toward a second degree.
- The average expenditure on consumption in Ethiopian households was NIS 10,075 per month,

¹ The Ethiopian population of Israel also includes Israeli-born persons whose fathers were born in Ethiopia.

² Including the Open University. In this release, the student population includes that of the Open University, unless otherwise specified.

compared to NIS 15,053 in households overall, which constituted 33% less than the average in the overall population. The average gross income per household in the Ethiopian population was NIS 11,496 per month, compared to NIS 18,329 in the general population, which was 37% less than the average in the overall population.

Population

At the end of 2014, the **Ethiopian population in Israel numbered 138,200 residents**. Approximately 85,600 were born in Ethiopia and 52,600 were Israeli-born whose fathers were born in Ethiopia.

Immigration to Israel

In 2014, 211 Ethiopian immigrants arrived in Israel. This was the smallest number of immigrants from Ethiopia since 2000, and 85% lower than the number of immigrants in the previous year (1,355 immigrants). The notable decline in the number of immigrants from Ethiopia, which began in September 2013, resulted from the government's decision to end the process of bringing Ethiopians to Israel in organized groups.

Age Composition

The age composition of the Ethiopian population in Israel has been influenced by the population composition: Approximately 60% are immigrants and 40% are native-born Israelis (whose fathers were born in Ethiopia), as well as from the timing of immigration and the number of immigrants. Most of the immigrants arrived in two major waves: the first in the 1980s ("Operation Moses") and the second in the 1990s ("Operation Solomon"). In recent years, immigration from Ethiopia has declined (in 2014, there were only 211 immigrants).

At the end of 2014, 29% of the Ethiopian population consisted of children aged 0–14 (of these, 80% were Israeli-born). The percentage of the Ethiopian population aged 65 and over was 6% (approximately 100% born abroad).

Geographic Distribution

Most of the Ethiopian population lives in two main districts: the Central District (approximately 38%) and the Southern District (approximately 24%).

At the end of 2014, Netanya was the urban locality with the most members of the Ethiopian community (approximately 11,200 persons).

The locality with the largest percentage of Ethiopians out of the total population was Qiryat Mal'akhi (about 16%).

Table A – The Ethiopian Population at the End of 2014, in Main Localities (1)

Locality name	Total population in locality (thousands)	Total Ethiopian population in locality (thousands)	Population of Ethiopians as a percentage of the total population in locality
Netanya	202.4	11.2	5.5
Rishon LeZiyyon	240.7	7.7	3.2
Be'er Sheva	201.1	7.1	3.5
Ashdod	218.0	7.0	3.2
Rehovot	128.9	6.9	5.4
Petah Tiqwa	225.4	6.7	3.0
Ashqelon	126.8	6.1	4.8
Jerusalem	849.8	5.6	0.7
Hadera	86.8	5.4	6.2
Haifa	277.1	5.2	1.9
Qiryat Gat	50.6	4.2	8.3
Ramla	72.3	4.0	5.6
Bet Shemesh	98.1	3.7	3.7
Lod	72.2	3.6	5.0
Qiryat Mal'akhi	21.3	3.5	16.4
Afula	43.8	3.4	7.8
Yavne	39.7	3.0	7.5
Tel Aviv-Yafo	426.1	2.6	0.6
Bat Yam	128.5	2.4	1.9

(1) Localities with 2,000 or more Ethiopians.

Marriages and Divorces, 2013

During 2013, 842 grooms and 907 brides of Ethiopian origin were married in Israel, 92% for the first time.

Table B – Marriages of Ethiopians in 2013

	Grooms	Brides
Total number of Ethiopians marrying	842	907
Born in Ethiopia – total	765	759
Of these: Immigrated through 1990	123	86
Immigrated after 1990	642	673
Born in Israel, father born in Ethiopia	77	148

Of Ethiopians marrying, 89% married a spouse of the same origin, men more than women (93% versus 86%, respectively).

Members of the Ethiopian community tend to marry at a later age than the general Jewish population. The median age³ at first marriage of Ethiopian men was 29.0 in 2013 (1.2 years older than Jewish grooms).

Among Ethiopian women, the median age at first marriage was 26.7 (1.9 years older than Jewish brides).

In first marriages, the age gap between men and women among Ethiopians marrying (about 2.3 years) was similar to the age gap among the general Jewish population (about two years).

During 2013, 266 men and 280 women of Ethiopian origin were divorced.

The rate of divorce among the Ethiopian population was higher than the rate among the general Jewish population. Approximately 15 of every 1,000 married couples divorced, compared with about 10 of every 1,000 married couple among the general Jewish population.

Live Births

In 2013, 3,433 infants were born to Ethiopian women. In that year, on average, an Ethiopian woman was expected to have 2.9 children during her lifetime.

³ Median age: The age at which half the persons marrying are younger and half are older.

Ethiopian Households⁴

Households⁵

In 2014, there were 27,300 Ethiopian households, approximately 1.2% of all Israeli households and approximately 1.4% of Jewish and Other households.

The average Ethiopian household size, 4.1 persons, was larger than in the general population (3.3 persons) as well as in comparison to the Jewish and Other households (3.1 persons).

Pupils in the Educational System

- In the school year 2013/14, there were 34,422 Ethiopian pupils in primary and secondary education; they constituted 2.9% of the total pupils in the Hebrew education sector.
- In the school year 2013/14, 37.3% of the Ethiopian pupils were born in Ethiopia, compared to 49.9% in the school year 2003/04.
- In the school year 2013/14, 49.9% of the Ethiopian pupils studied in the State-Religious system (primary and secondary school). There has been a declining trend in this percentage during the past decade (59.3% in the school year 2003/04), along with an increase in the percentage of pupils studying in the State system (46.4% compared to 39.2% in the school year 2003/04). In ultra-Orthodox supervision, there was a decrease from 3.6% in the school year 2003/04 to 1.5% in the school year 2013/14.
- Of children born in Ethiopia, 69.9% studied in the State-Religious system, compared to 43.1% of pupils born in Israel whose fathers were born in Ethiopia (primary school).
- Among Ethiopian upper secondary education pupils, 51.1% (57.4% of the boys and 45.1% of the girls) studied in the technological track (including agriculture), compared to upper secondary education pupils who were not Ethiopian, of whom 34.6% studied in the technological track (33.4% of the boys and 35.8% of the girls).

⁴ The source of data is the Labour Force Survey 2014. The population does not include institutions, kibbutzim, student dormitories and those living outside communities (Bedouin in the South).

⁵ A household is defined as one person or a group of persons living together in one dwelling on a permanent basis most of the week, who have a joint expense budget for food. They may be related or unrelated persons. An Ethiopian household was defined as a household in which at least one person aged 15 or over is Ethiopian (i.e., Ethiopian-born or whose father was born in Ethiopia).

Matriculation Examinees⁶

- In the 2013/14 school year, approximately 2,500 Ethiopian twelfth-grade pupils took matriculation exams.
- The percentage of Ethiopian twelfth-grade pupils taking matriculation exams was 91% in 2014, compared with 93% in Hebrew education overall, but the percentage of those entitled to a matriculation certificate was lower – 56% versus 75%, respectively. The share of holders of a matriculation certificate that met university entrance requirements was about one-third of those entitled who were Ethiopian (31%), compared with 63% of Hebrew education pupils overall).
- In 2014, the share of the second generation (those born in Israel whose father was born in Ethiopia) was 56% of total Ethiopian 12th grade pupils. The percentages of those entitled to a matriculation certificate among Ethiopian 12th grade pupils were similar among those born in Ethiopia and the second generation of Ethiopian origin – 55% and 57%, respectively. However, the percentage of those meeting university entrance requirements, who are potential candidates for continuing studies at institutions of higher learning, was higher among the second generation – 36%, compared with 26% among those born in Ethiopia.

Dropouts⁷

- In 2013/14 and the transition to 2014/15, the percentage of Ethiopian dropouts was slightly lower than that of pupils in Hebrew education overall. Of the approximately 35,000 Ethiopian students who began studying in Grades 1–12 during the 2013/14 school year, 1.18% dropped out during that year or in the transition to 2014/15, compared to 1.25% in Hebrew education overall.
- The percentage of dropouts from primary school was lower among Ethiopians; only 0.13% of them dropped out, compared to 0.47% of pupils in Hebrew education overall in these grades.
- Of 388 Ethiopian pupils who dropped out of Grades 7–12 in schools under Ministry of Education supervision, 38.14% continued to study in other formal education settings (schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy or religious seminaries)

⁶ The population of pupils in this section excludes those studying under ultra-Orthodox supervision (both Ethiopians and pupils in Hebrew education in general), who do not tend to take the matriculation examinations, in order to allow a valid comparison between Ethiopian pupils and pupils in Hebrew education in general.

⁷ A pupil was considered a dropout if he or she left school during the 2013/14 school year, or in the transition to the 2014/15 school year. Not considered dropouts were those who left school and stayed abroad for at least 100 consecutive days, those who left school during the 2013/14 school year and returned in 2014/15, and those who moved from one school to another.

Table C. Ethiopian Dropouts and Dropouts Overall From Hebrew Education During 2013/14 and the Transition to 2014/15 in Schools Under Ministry of Education Supervision

	Pupils in Hebrew Education			Ethiopian pupils		
	Total pupils who began school in 2013/14	Percentage of pupils who dropped out		Total pupils who began school in 2013/14	Percentage of pupils who dropped out	
		Percentage of pupils who dropped out of Ministry of Education schools (gross dropouts)	Percentage of pupils who dropped out of Ministry of Education schools and are not studying in another formal education setting (net dropouts)		Percentage of pupils who dropped out of Ministry of Education schools (gross dropouts)	Percentage of pupils who dropped out of Ministry of Education schools and are not studying in another formal education setting (net dropouts)
Total	1,195,946	1.25	0.92	34,515	1.18	0.76
Sex						
Boys	610,728	1.73	1.15	17,152	1.64	1.00
Girls	585,218	0.74	0.69	17,363	0.74	0.51
Grade						
1–6	635,656	0.47	0.47	15,975	0.13	0.13
7–12	560,290	2.13	1.43	18,540	2.09	1.29

Athletes⁸ Active in 2013/14

- In 2013/14, there were 1,444 active⁹ Ethiopian athletes, about 1.6% of total active athletes, similar to the Ethiopian representation in the population overall. This percentage was identical to the previous year.
- Women comprise only 7.0% of active Ethiopian athletes. In contrast, women comprise 19.2% of active athletes in the general population.

⁸ The numbers include athletes in both individual sports and team sports.

⁹ Two criteria determine whether an athlete is active: Participating in a minimum number of competitions and an upper threshold of birth year (these are both determined for each sport).

- The most prevalent sports in which Ethiopian athletes participated were football (soccer) (1,139 athletes, who constituted 3.8% of all athletes in this sport) and athletics (107 athletes, who constituted 10.2% of all athletes in this sport).
- The vast majority (78.9%) of Ethiopian athletes played football compared with 32.6% of athletes in the general population.
- Compared with 1.1% of the athletes in the general population. 7.4% of Ethiopian athletes were engaged in athletics,

Higher Education

During the academic year 2014/15, in all of the institutions of higher education in Israel,¹⁰ there were 2,946 Ethiopian **students**.

Of the Ethiopian students, 88.5% were studying toward a first degree, 10.7% toward a second degree, 0.5% toward a third degree, and 0.3% toward an academic certificate.

Among all students in Israel, the percentage of Ethiopian students was 1.0%, lower than their 1.7% representation in Israel's general population.

The percentage of Ethiopians studying for advanced degrees¹¹ has increased substantially: In 1999/00 they constituted 6.7% of Ethiopian students, compared to 11.2% in 2014/15. During this period, this percentage also increased substantially in the general population of students (from 18.7% to 22.5%, respectively). Thus, while study toward advanced degrees is more prevalent in the general student population than among Ethiopians, the gaps are narrowing moderately.

First Degree Studies

In 2014/15, 2,608 Ethiopians studied toward a first degree. Approximately one-third of them studied at universities (32.1%), and almost half studied at the academic colleges (46.7%). The academic colleges of education accounted for 11.2% of the students, and 9.9% studied at the Open University.

More than two-thirds of Ethiopians studying toward a first degree were women (69.9%). This was much higher than the share of women in the general student population who were studying for a first degree (57.5%). In both sexes, the median age of Ethiopian students was higher compared to students in general studying for first degrees (men – 27.9 compared to 26.4 years old, and women – 25.9 compared to 24.6 years old, respectively).

¹⁰ Including the Open University. In this release, the student population includes that of the Open University, unless otherwise specified.

¹¹ Second and third degrees, excluding studies toward academic certificates.

Students of Ethiopian origin tended to study the following fields:¹² social sciences (27.9%), business and management science (18.4%), and education and teacher training (16.5%). In fact, the social sciences were more popular among Ethiopian students than among students studying for a first degree overall (27.9% compared to 19.2%, respectively). This was also true regarding business and management science (18.4% compared to 10.9%, respectively) and paramedical studies (7.7% compared to 5.9%, respectively). In contrast, engineering and architecture were less popular among Ethiopian students than among students studying for a first degree overall (11.1% compared to 17.4%, respectively). Such differences were also the case in other fields, such as medicine (0.3% compared to 1.0%, respectively), arts, crafts, and applied arts (1.4% compared to 3.9%, respectively), as well as natural sciences and mathematics (4.0% compared to 10.1%, respectively).

Second Degree Studies

In 2014/15, 315 Ethiopian students studied toward a second degree. More than one-half of them studied at universities (54.9%), 35.2% studied at the academic colleges, 7.9% at the colleges of education, and 1.9% at the Open University.

Women accounted for 60.6% of Ethiopians studying toward a second degree (compared to 60.8% among the general student population). The median age of Ethiopian women studying toward a second degree was lower compared to women in general studying toward a second degree (30.7 compared to 31.1 years old, respectively), but the median age of Ethiopian men was two years higher compared to students in general studying toward second degrees (33.8 compared to 31.8 years old, respectively).

The most popular field among Ethiopians studying toward a second degree was business and management science: More than one-third (34.3%) studied this field, compared to 22.4% of second-degree students in the general population in that year. Other popular fields among Ethiopians studying toward a second degree were education and teacher training (18.7%) and social sciences (17.8%). The percentage of Ethiopian students studying law was 8.9%, compared to 4.2% in the general student population studying toward a second degree.

Data From the 2014 Household Expenditures Survey

The **average consumption expenditures** of a household from the Ethiopian population were NIS 10,075 per month, compared to NIS 15,053 in households in the general population, which amounts to 33% less than the average in the general population.

The average gross monthly money income per household among the Ethiopian population was NIS 11,496, compared to NIS 18,329 in households in the general population, which amounts to 37% less than the average in the general population.

¹² Excluding the Open University.

The **money expenditures** per household among the Ethiopian population were NIS 7,953, compared to NIS 12,023 in the general population.

The average number of earners per household among the Ethiopian population was 1.8,¹³ compared to 1.5 in the general population.

¹³ As of 2012, the number of earners also includes soldiers in compulsory service.

Table D. Monthly Consumption Expenditures by Main Groups, 2014

	Households in general population		Households in Ethiopian population	
Number of persons	3.3		4.3	
Number of earners	1.5		1.8	
	NIS			
Gross money income per household	18,329		11,496	
Net money income per household	15,149		10,476	
Money expenditures per household	12,023		7,953	
	Consumption expenditures, in NIS	Composition of consumption, in %	Consumption expenditures, in NIS	Composition of consumption, in %
Consumption expenditures - total	15,053	100.0	10,075	100.0
Food (excl. vegetables and fruit)	1,974	13.1	1,698	16.9
Vegetables and fruit	461	3.1	262	2.6
Housing	3,692	24.5	2,574	25.5
Dwelling and household maintenance	1,450	9.6	854	8.5
Furniture and household equipment	582	3.9	750	7.4
Clothing and footwear	499	3.3	377	3.7
Health	884	5.9	304	3.0
Education, culture, and entertainment	1,820	12.1	1,164	11.6
Transport and communications	2,984	19.8	1,625	16.1
Miscellaneous goods and services	707	4.7	466	4.6

The Ethiopian population had a larger percentage expenditure on food (excluding vegetables and fruit) and housing than the general population, but their percentage expenditure on health was lower than that of the general population.

The percentage of ownership of communications products among the Ethiopian population was lower than that among the general population, except for the percentage of ownership of a mobile phone.

The percentage of ownerships of kitchen and household products was lower among Ethiopian households than among the general population, except for ownership of a combined oven and stovetop, for which the percentage of ownership among Ethiopian households was much higher (66.6% compared to 35.5% in the general population).