

Media Release

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The Ethiopian Population in Israel

- At the end of 2015, the **Ethiopian population in Israel numbered 141,200 residents**.¹ Approximately 85,700 were born in Ethiopia, and 55,500 were Israeli-born with fathers born in Ethiopia.
- In 2015, 91 Ethiopian immigrants arrived in Israel. This was the smallest number of immigrants from Ethiopia since 2000, and less than half the number of immigrants who arrived in the previous year (213 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 2015, the urban locality with the largest Ethiopian population was Netanya (approximately 11,400 persons). However, the highest percentage of Ethiopians out of the total population in a locality was found in Qiryat Mal'akhi (16.8%).
- The Ethiopian population **marries at a later age** than the overall Jewish population.
- 90% of the Ethiopians marry another Ethiopian: more men than women marry other Ethiopians (95% and 87%, respectively).
- The **divorce rate** among the Ethiopian population was higher than the rate among the overall Jewish population (16 out of every 1,000 marriages, compared with 9 per 1,000 marriages among the overall Jewish population).
- **The percentage of single-parent families** in the Ethiopian population was very high – approximately 29%. This was more than twice the percentage of single-parent families among the overall population of Jews and Others in Israel.
- **Live births** – In 2015, 3,348 babies were born to Ethiopian women in Israel. That year, the average number of children that an Ethiopian woman was expected to bear during her lifetime was 2.8.

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

- During the academic year 2014/15, 48.4% of the Ethiopian students were enrolled in schools under **state-religious** supervision (in primary and secondary education). This reflects a downward trend over the past decade (in 2004/05, the rate was 58.4%).
- The **rate of Ethiopian students in 12th grade** who took matriculation examinations was 89% in 2015, compared with 94% in the overall Hebrew education system.
- In 2014/15 and during the transition to 2015/16, the **drop-out rate** among Ethiopian students was somewhat lower than among students in the overall Hebrew education system: 1.21%, compared with 1.40%, respectively.
- The **average monthly consumption expenditure** in Ethiopian households headed by a person born in Ethiopia or a person with one Ethiopian-born parent was NIS 10,238, compared to NIS 15,407 in all households (34% less than the average in the overall population).

Population

At the end of 2015, the **Ethiopian population in Israel numbered 141,200 residents**. Approximately 85,700 were born in Ethiopia, and 55,500 were born in Israel with fathers were born in Ethiopia.

Immigration to Israel

In 2015, 91 Ethiopian immigrants arrived in Israel. This was the smallest number of immigrants from Ethiopia since 2000, and less than half the number of immigrants who arrived during the previous year (213 immigrants). Half of the immigrants were female, and half were male. The median age of the immigrants in 2015 was 23.5, compared with 21.2 in 2014.

Age Composition

The age composition of the Ethiopian population in Israel has been influenced by the composition of the population (approximately 61% are immigrants, and 39% are Israeli-born with fathers born in Ethiopia), as well as by the timing of immigration and the number of immigrants. Most of the immigrants arrived in two major waves: the first wave was in the 1980s ("Operation Moses"), and the second was in the 1990s ("Operation Solomon"). In recent years, immigration from Ethiopia has declined. At the end of 2015, the share of children aged 0-14 amounted to approximately 28% of that population (approximately 84% were Israeli-born). The percentage of persons aged 65+ among the Ethiopian population reached approximately 6% (approximately 100% of them were 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 2015, Netanya was the urban locality with the most members of the Ethiopian community (approximately 11,400 persons).

The locality with the largest percentage of Ethiopians out of the total population was Qiryat Mal'akhi (about 17%).

Table A – The Ethiopian Population at the End of 2015, in Main Localities (1)

Name of locality	Total population in locality (thousands)	Total Ethiopian population in locality (thousands)	% Ethiopian population out of total population in locality
Netanya	207.9	11.4	5.5
Rishon LeZiyyon	244.0	8.0	3.3
Be'er Sheva	203.6	7.3	3.6
Ashdod	220.2	7.1	3.2
Rehovot	132.7	7.1	5.3
Petah Tiqwa	231.0	6.8	3.0
Ashqelon	130.7	6.4	4.9
Jerusalem	865.7	5.9	0.7
Hadera	88.8	5.5	6.2
Haifa	278.9	5.3	1.9
Qiryat Gat	51.5	4.5	8.7
Ramle	73.7	4.0	5.5
Bet Shemesh	103.9	3.8	3.6
Lod	72.8	3.7	5.1

Name of locality	Total population in locality (thousands)	Total Ethiopian population in locality (thousands)	% Ethiopian population out of total population in locality
Qiryat Mal'akhi	21.6	3.6	16.8
Afula	44.9	3.5	7.7
Yavne	42.3	3.1	7.3
Tel Aviv-Yafo	432.9	2.6	0.6
Bat Yam	128.9	2.4	1.9

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

Marriages and Divorces, 2014

During 2014, 819 grooms and 896 brides of Ethiopian origin were married in Israel, 94% for the first time.

Table B – Marriages of Ethiopians in 2014

Absolute numbers

	Grooms	Brides
Total number of Ethiopians marrying	819	896
Born in Ethiopia – total	735	735
Of these: Immigrated through 1990	105	75
Immigrated after 1990	630	660
Born in Israel, father born in Ethiopia	84	161

Of Ethiopians who married, 90% married a spouse of the same origin. The percentage of men who married a spouse of the same origin was greater than that of women (95% versus 87%, respectively).

Members of the Ethiopian community tend to marry at a later age than the general Jewish population. Among Ethiopian men, the median age² at first marriage was 28.8 in 2014 (1.1 years older than Jewish grooms). Among Ethiopian women, the median age at first marriage was 25.9 (0.2 years older than Jewish brides).

In first marriages, the age gap between men and women among Ethiopians marrying (about 2.9 years) was similar to the age gap among the overall Jewish population (about two years).

In 2014, 298 men and 314 women of Ethiopian origin divorced.

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

Live Births

In 2015, 3,348 infants were born to Ethiopian women. That year, the average number of children an Ethiopian woman was expected to bear during her lifetime was 2.8. This was lower than the average number of children among the population of Jews and Others (3.0).

Ethiopian Households³

Households⁴

The average number of Ethiopian households in Israel in 2013-2015 was 35,400, approximately 1.5% of all Israeli households and approximately 1.7% of the households of Jews and Others.

Like the overall Jewish population, approximately 83% of the Ethiopian households were family households⁵. Of those, approximately 77% consisted of only one family.

The average size of Ethiopian households was 4.0 persons – larger than the size of households in the overall population (3.3), as well as households of Jews and Others (3.1).

² Median age: The age at which half the persons marrying are younger and half are older.

³ The source of data is the Labour Force Survey. The data for the overall population and the population of Jews and Others are for 2015. The data for the Ethiopian population are the average for 2013-2015. The population does not include institutions, kibbutzim, student dormitories, and those living outside of localities (Bedouins in the South).

⁴ 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. A household can include persons who are not related to each other.

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).

⁵ A family household is a household that contains at least one family. A family household can include: one family, one family with other persons, or two families or more.

Families⁶

In Israel, approximately 30,000 Ethiopian families (over 50%) have a traditional structure, consisting of a couple with children (approximately 60%).

The percentage of couples without children among Ethiopian families (approximately 9%) was lower than the percentage of couples without children in the country as a whole (approximately 24%) and lower than the percentage among families of Jews and Others (approximately 27%).

The percentage of single-parent families in the Ethiopian population was especially high (approximately 29%) – over twice as high as the percentage of single-parent families in the country as a whole and among families of Jews and Others.

Students in the Educational System

- In the 2014/15 school year, 33,923 Ethiopian students were enrolled in primary and secondary education; they constituted 2.8% of all students in the Hebrew education sector.
- In the 2014/15 school year, 35.3% of the Ethiopian pupils were born in Ethiopia, compared to 48.8% in the 2004/05 school year.
- In the 2014/15 school year, 48.4% of the Ethiopian pupils were enrolled in schools under State-Religious supervision (primary and secondary education). This percentage has been declining over the past decade (58.4% in the 2004/05 school year). Concomitantly, there has been an increase in the percentage of students enrolled in schools under State supervision (47.8% compared to 39.9% in the 2004/05 school year). In ultra-Orthodox supervision, there was a decrease from 3.8% in the 2004/05 school year to 1.7% in the 2014/15 school year.
- Of children born in Ethiopia, 65.9% were enrolled in schools under State-Religious supervision, compared to 43.1% of the Israeli-born students whose fathers were born in Ethiopia (primary school).
- Among Ethiopian students in upper secondary education, 51.7% (58.2% of the boys and 45.4% of the girls) were enrolled in the technological track (including agriculture), whereas 35.1% of their non-Ethiopian counterparts in Hebrew education were enrolled in the technological track (33.4% of the boys and 37% of the girls).

⁶ A family (nuclear family) is defined as two persons or more who share the same household and are related to one another as husband and wife, as parent and child, as an unmarried couple, as grandparents with grandchildren (without the child's parents), or siblings who live together (without their own spouses or children). An Ethiopian family was defined as a family in which at least one of the persons aged 15 is Ethiopian born or their father was born in Ethiopia.

Matriculation Examinees⁷

- In the 2014/15 school year, approximately 2,600 Ethiopian twelfth-grade students (Ethiopian-born or Israeli-born with father born in Ethiopia) took matriculation exams.
- The percentage of Ethiopian twelfth-grade pupils taking matriculation exams was 89% in 2015, compared with 94% of the examinees in the entire Hebrew education system. However, the percentage of those entitled to a matriculation certificate was lower – 54% versus 76%, respectively. The share of Ethiopian students with a matriculation certificate who met university entrance requirements was about one-third of all Ethiopian students (30%), compared with 65% of all students in Hebrew education.
- In 2015, the share of the second-generation Ethiopian students (those born in Israel whose father was born in Ethiopia) was 54% of all Ethiopian 12th-grade students. The percentages of those Ethiopian 12th-grade students entitled to a matriculation certificate were 56% among those born in Ethiopia and 52% among second-generation Ethiopian students. However, the percentage of those who met university entrance requirements, i.e., the percentage of potential candidates for continuing studies at institutions of higher education, was higher among the second generation – 33%, compared with 26% among those born in Ethiopia.

Dropouts⁸

- In 2014/15 and in the transition to 2015/16, the percentage of Ethiopian dropouts was slightly lower than that of all students in Hebrew education: 1.21% out of approximately 34,000 Ethiopian students who began studying in Grades 1-12 during the 2014/15 school year in schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education dropped out during that year or in the transition to 2015/16, compared to 1.40% of all students in Hebrew education.
- The percentage of dropouts from primary school was lower among Ethiopians; only 0.20% of them dropped out, compared to 0.67% of pupils in Hebrew education overall in these grades.
- Of 380 Ethiopian pupils who dropped out of Grades 7–12 in schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, 34.21% continued to study in other formal education settings (schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy or "higher" yeshivas).

⁷ In order to allow for a valid comparison between Ethiopian students and all students in Hebrew education, the population of students examined in this section excludes those enrolled in schools under ultra-Orthodox supervision (Ethiopians as well those enrolled in Hebrew education in general).

⁸ 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. Dropouts from Hebrew Education during 2014/15
and in the Transition to 2015/16: Ethiopian Students versus all Students in Hebrew Education**

Grade and sex	Students in Hebrew education			Ethiopian students		
	Total students who began schools supervised by the Ministry of Education at the beginning of 2014/15	Dropout rate		Total students who began schools supervised by the Ministry of Education at the beginning of 2014/15	Dropout rate	
		Percentage of students who dropped out of Ministry of Education schools (gross dropout rate)	Percentage of students who dropped out of Ministry of Education schools and are not enrolled in another formal education setting (net dropout rate)		Percentage of pupils who dropped out of Ministry of Education schools (gross dropout rate)	Percentage of pupils who dropped out of Ministry of Education schools and are not enrolled in another formal education setting (net dropout rate)
Total	1,231,362	1.40	1.06	34,087	1.21	0.82
Boys	628,599	1.92	1.34	16,966	1.82	1.18
Girls	602,763	0.82	0.76	17,121	0.60	0.47
Grades 1-6	658,869	0.67	0.67	15,450	0.20	0.20
Grades 7-12	572,493	2.24	1.50	18,637	2.04	1.34

Athletes⁹ Active in 2014/15

- In 2014/15, there were 1,492 active¹⁰ Ethiopian athletes, about 1.5% of total active Ethiopian in the overall population. This is similar to the percentage of active Ethiopian athletes in the previous year (1.6%).
- Women comprised only 7.6% of active Ethiopian athletes, whereas they comprised 19.2% of the active athletes in the total population.
- 87.1% of all Ethiopian athletes were active in team sports, and the rest (12.9%) were active in individual sports.

⁹ The numbers include athletes in individual sports and in team sports.

¹⁰ 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 soccer (1,154 athletes, who constituted 3.7% of all athletes in this sport), athletics (121 athletes, who constituted 10.4% of all athletes in this sport), and basketball (80 athletes, who constitute 0.4% of all athletes in this sport).
- The vast majority (77.3%) of the Ethiopian athletes played soccer, compared with 31.9% of their counterparts in the total population of active athletes.
- The largest age group of Ethiopian athletes was 12-17 years.

Higher Education

In the academic year 2015/16, there were 2,966 Ethiopian students in all of the institutions of higher education in Israel.¹¹

Of the Ethiopian students, 87.1% were studying toward a first degree, 12.0% toward a second degree, 0.6% toward a third degree, and 0.3% toward an academic certificate.

First Degree Studies

In 2015/16, 2,583 Ethiopians studied toward a first degree. Most of them were enrolled in academic colleges (55%), approximately one-third of them were enrolled in universities (32.1%), and 13% were enrolled at academic colleges of education.

More than two-thirds of Ethiopians studying toward a first degree were women (72.4%). By comparison, the share of women studying toward a first degree in the overall student population was 57.9%.

The Ethiopian students tended to study the following fields: social sciences (26.1%); business and management science (19.3%); and education and teacher training (18.2%). The social sciences were more popular among Ethiopian students than among all students studying toward a first degree (26.1% compared to 18.4%, respectively). This was the case regarding business and management science (19.3% compared to 10.6%, respectively) and paramedical studies (8.8% compared to 6.3%, respectively). In contrast, engineering and architecture were less popular among Ethiopian students than among all students studying toward a first degree (10.4% compared to 17.6%, respectively). These differences were also found in other fields, such as medicine (0.3% compared to 1.1%, respectively), as well as natural sciences and mathematics (4.2% compared to 10.8%, respectively).

¹¹ Excluding the Open University.

Second and Third Degree Studies

In 2015/16, 357 Ethiopian students studied toward a second degree, and 19 studied toward a third degree. Of those studying toward a second degree, 52% were enrolled in universities, 39% were enrolled in academic colleges, and 9% were enrolled at the academic colleges of education.

Women accounted for 62.8% of Ethiopians studying toward a second degree (compared to 60.4% among the overall student population).

Data from the 2015 Household Expenditure Survey

The **average consumption expenditure** of a household from the Ethiopian population was NIS 10,238 per month, compared to NIS 15,407 in households in the overall population, which amounts to 34% less than the average for the overall population.

The average gross monthly money income per household among the Ethiopian population was NIS 12,568, compared to NIS 18,671 in households in the overall population, whereas the **money expenditure** per household was NIS 8,522, compared to NIS 12,323 in the overall population.

The average number of persons in Ethiopian households was 4.0, and the average number of earners per household was 2.0,¹² compared to 3.3 persons per household and 1.5 earners per household in the overall population.

¹² As of 2012, the number of earners also includes soldiers in compulsory service.

Table D. Monthly Consumption Expenditures in Ethiopian Households, by Main Groups, 2015

	Households in overall population		Households in Ethiopian population	
Number of persons	3.3		4.0	
Number of earners	1.5		2.0	
Gross money income per household	NIS			
Net money income per household	18,671		12,568	
Money expenditures per household	15,427		11,534	
	12,323		8,522	
	Consumption expenditures, in NIS	Composition of consumption, in %	Consumption expenditures, in NIS	Composition of consumption, in %
Consumption expenditures – total	15,407	100.0	10,238	100.0
Food (excl. vegetables and fruit)	2,032	13.2	1,616	15.8
Vegetables and fruit	485	3.1	270	2.6
Housing	3,812	24.7	2,978	29.1
Dwelling and household maintenance	1,463	9.5	844	8.2
Furniture and household equipment	564	3.7	580	5.7
Clothing and footwear	490	3.2	452	4.4
Health	873	5.7	277	2.7
Education, culture, and entertainment	1,818	11.8	1,064	10.4
Transport and communications	3,094	20.1	1,764	17.2
Miscellaneous goods and services	776	5.0	393	3.9

The percentage of expenditure on food (including fruit and vegetables) and housing was higher among the Ethiopian population than among the overall population – 47.5% compared with 41%, respectively. However, the percentage of expenditure on health was lower among the Ethiopian population than among the overall population (2.7% compared with 5.7%, respectively).

With regard to ownership of communications products, there were differences between Ethiopian households and households in the overall population. The percentage of ownership of most of these products was lower among the Ethiopian population than among the overall population. The exceptions were ownership of televisions and ownership of mobile phones, which were higher among the Ethiopian population than among the overall population (90.9% compared with 87.5%; and 100% compared with 96.9%, respectively).

The percentage of ownership of kitchen and household products was lower among Ethiopian households than among the overall population, except for ownership of a combined oven and stovetop.