



Ethiopian Israeli Community

In 2012, 2,432 immigrants came to Israel from Ethiopia. This was slightly less than the number of immigrants who arrived in 2011 (2,666 immigrants). The declining trend in the number of immigrants from Ethiopia continued in 2013 as well: Approximately 1,315 immigrants (a preliminary figure) have arrived from Ethiopia during the first nine months of 2013 (January-September). This is in comparison with the same period in the previous year in which 1,558 immigrants arrived.

Operation Moses began on November 18, 1984, and ended six weeks later on January 5, 1985. In that time, just over 7,000 [Jews](#) were rescued and brought to Israel.

In 1985, then Vice President George Bush arranged a CIA-sponsored follow-up mission to Operation Moses. Operation Joshua brought an additional 500 Beta Israel from Sudan to Israel. But in the following five years, a virtual stalemate occurred in the rescue of Ethiopian Jewry. All efforts on behalf of the Beta Israel fell on the closed ears of the Mariam dictatorship.

Operation Solomon, named for the king from whom one of the theories suggest that the Beta Israel draw their lineage, ended almost as quickly as it began. Timing was crucial, since any delay by Israel could have allowed the rebels to hold the [Jews](#) as bargaining chips with Israel or the United States. A total of 14,324 Ethiopian [Jews](#) were rescued and resettled in Israel, a modern exodus of the grandest design. Operation Solomon rescued nearly double the number of [Jews](#) as were saved during Operation Moses and Joshua, and it did so in a mere fraction of the time.

The population of Ethiopian immigrants is characterized by a relatively young age composition: In 2012, the median age of the immigrants from Ethiopia was 17.9, compared with 29.2 among the total immigrants during this year. Most of the immigrants from Ethiopia in 2012 were married: 59.8% of the men and 60.5% of the women, aged 15 and over.

When they arrived in Israel, most Ethiopian immigrants had no formal education and could not even read or write their native language, Amharic. The severity of this transnational culture shock cannot be underestimated. In many instances, Ethiopian immigrants have been forced to acclimate to technological and informational differences that have separated them from the rest of the Israeli community for hundreds of years. In addition to adjusting to life in a developed and technologically advanced society, Ethiopian immigrants must acculturate to an unfamiliar climate, a new language, and foreign religious rituals and social customs. This influx of Ethiopian Jews to Israel has given way to major issues. One of the greatest challenges has been determining how this group can integrate itself into Israeli society, and correspondingly, determining how this community of Jews can adapt to major cultural and social differences that accompany their relocation.

According to the 2014 Central Bureau of Statistics report:

- Approximately 135,500 Ethiopian immigrants are living in Israel today. Of these, 49,600 were born in Israel.
- The average household size in the Ethiopian community was 4.4 persons, higher than the average for the general population (3.3).
- In 2009, children aged 0-14 comprised 29% of the Ethiopian population, compared to 26% in the population of Jews and others.
- The majority of the Ethiopian population lives in two districts: the Central District (38%) and the Southern District (24%). At the end of 2013, Netanya had the largest number of Ethiopian residents (10,900 persons).
- 88% of married Ethiopians are married to Ethiopians
- In 2009, Ethiopian households expended a monthly average of NIS 9,385 compared to NIS 14,501 for all households. The monthly expenditure on education, culture and entertainment among Ethiopian households was NIS 1,172, compared to the NIS 1,762 national average.

Facts and Figures on University Students (From the CBS 2014)

- About 2,785 Ethiopian-Israelis comprise the *student population*, ages 20-30, and are enrolled in institutions of higher learning – 0.9% of the total student population in Israel
- Number of students in Masters programs - 312

Facts and Figures on IDF Preparation (From the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 2007)

- About 3,500 Ethiopian-Israeli soldiers are serving in the IDF
 - The enlistment rate to the IDF is:
 - 90% for boys (72% native Israelis)
 - 69% for girls (58% native Israelis)
 - The percentage of soldiers who enlist in elite combat units - 40% (at the beginning of their service)
- In 2011/12 and in the transition to 2012/13, the percentage of pupils of Ethiopian origin who dropped out was slightly lower than that of the general population of pupils in Hebrew education: Approximately 1.6% of approximately 35,000 pupils of Ethiopian origin who began to study in grades 1-12 in schools under Ministry of Education supervision in the school year of 2011/12 dropped out during that year or in transition to 2012/13, compared with 1.88% among the general Hebrew education.
 - The most prevalent sports in which athletes of Ethiopian origin participated in were football (soccer) and athletics; the percentage of their participation in these sports was especially high when compared to the share of these sports in the general population. The vast majority (about 85%) of athletes of Ethiopian origin played football compared with 36% in the general population; 6.4% of athletes of Ethiopian origin are engaged in athletics, compared with 1% of the athletes in the general population.

http://www.enp.org.il/pics/database/more_data/5_file.pdf

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel_Central_Bureau_of_Statistics

This information is current as of 2015.