

THE 2008 POPULATION CENSUS

The Central Bureau of Statistics will conduct the population census toward the end of 2008.

The Population Census

The Census is a special, broad-based survey conducted throughout the country every decade. Data are collected on the entire population of Israel, in order to obtain a broad and reliable picture of their living conditions and their demographic, social, and economic characteristics. The data include information on: age, sex, country of origin, year of immigration, marital status, housing conditions, marriage statistics, number of children, education, employment, standard of living, and travel patterns.

The Need for the Census

Every country needs basic information on its residents for purposes of planning and development, and to improve the quality of life for its citizens. Effective planning relies on information that is reliable, timely, accurate, and detailed. The Census is the most detailed source information about the Israeli population at the level of small localities, urban neighborhoods, and small population sectors. The data obtained through the Census are used by decision-makers at the national and local levels, and provide an opportunity to improve the quality of life for residents of the country on the general and individual levels.

Use of the Census Data

In the general government sector and local authorities – the data serve as a basis for setting policies and making decisions in various areas such as: education, health, welfare (treating various population sectors), construction, and development; preparation of national and local master plans; planning of social services, schools, kindergartens, and homes for the elderly; planning of road systems and improvement of public transportation; and development of entertainment centers and shopping malls.

Research institutions – The data are an essential resource for research on trends in the composition and distribution of the population. The information serves as a basis for evaluation of changes and projection of trends in the population.

Public and private firms – The data are used for market research, and for evaluating the demand for goods and services as well as for information on the labour force

The media – The data are used as background for news reports and investigative reports.

University students and pupils – The data are a source for academic papers and research projects for advanced degrees.

The general public – The information facilitates personal decision-making, e.g., choosing a locality of residence, locating a venue for self-employed persons to open a business, and choosing fields of study (based on data related to wage and salaries for different occupations).

2008 Population Census Survey

In contrast to previous years, the 2008 Census will employ specific statistical methods developed by the Central Bureau of Statistics in order to economize on resources and ease the response burden for the participants. The Census will combine enumeration of a sample of about 20% of the households in Israel through face-to-face interviews, with administrative data based on the Population Register. (In small localities, complete enumeration will be conducted for all residents.) The field work, referred to as the **population census survey**, will be conducted between October 2008 and February 2009.

Time Schedule and Stages of Implementation for the 2008 Population Census Survey

- a. **Organization:** recruitment and training about 2,500 staff members, including office managers, supervisors, coordinators, and about 2,100 interviewers; establishment of 12 regional offices, and orientation to the area. This stage will be implemented between August and the beginning of December 2008.
- b. **Listing of the buildings in the sample:** Orientation to the field and the enumeration cells selected for the sample, and enumeration of all the

dwellings and buildings – without entering the dwellings. This stage will be implemented from 7-18 December 2008.

- c. **Interviews with the sampled population:** Interviewers will be equipped with an identification tag bearing their photograph. They will arrive at the dwellings registered in the previous stage in order to interview the families selected for the sample. The interview will be documented on a lap-top computer. Interviews will be conducted with one family member aged 18 or over, who is home when the interviewer arrives at the family residence. The interview will relate to the situation of the household on Saturday evening, 27 December 2008 (the determinant date of the Population Census). The duration of the interviews will be 20-30 minutes. Families who are not at home on that date will receive a self-administered questionnaire, which the interviewer will collect at a later date.

This stage of the Population Census survey will be implemented from 28 December 2008 to 19 February 2009.

- d. **Completing Missing Information** – Telephone interviews will be conducted with people who were away when the interviewer visited their home. In so doing, an attempt will be made to verify their correct address. This stage of the survey will be implemented between March and May 2009.

The Role of the Central Bureau of Statistics

The Central Bureau of Statistics is an independent unit affiliated with the Prime Minister's Office. It is the main institution in the country in charge of collecting information and data on issues related to demographic, social, and economic trends in Israel. The data are **processed, edited, and disseminated** to the general public. They are used as a basis for setting policies regarding the issues examined in the surveys. The collected data constitute the official statistics of the State of Israel. This information is considered to be public property, and the general public has a right to obtain it. The Central Bureau of Statistics is headed by the Government Statistician, who is assisted by a staff of professionals in various fields. The CBS adheres to the law and to international standards.

Along with the **Population Census Survey**, the CBS is continuing to conduct its ongoing surveys, including: **the Household Expenditure Survey**, which determines the relative weight of the components of the consumption basket that comprise the Consumer Price Index, and which provides information that is used to characterize the standard of living of households in Israel from various perspectives; **the Labour Force Survey**, which provides information on labour and wages, as well as on employed and unemployed persons in the economy, in addition to other surveys.

The Public is Obligated to Participate

The 2008 Population Census is conducted in accordance with the Statistical Ordinance Law [New Version] 1972. Under that law, every person is obligated to respond to the CBS interviewers. To enable this activity to be carried out, a Census Order is published, with the signature of the Prime Minister.

Obligation to Maintain Confidentiality

The privacy of residents is strictly maintained. The collected data are published only in statistical summaries, and there is no way of identifying the personal details of respondents listed on the questionnaires. The Central Bureau of Statistics is prohibited by law from providing information to any institution – governmental, public, commercial, or private – that will enable individuals to be identified. Under the law, all employees of the Central Bureau of Statistics are required to keep the data confidential.

Publishing and Disseminating the Census Data

In 2010, the findings of the 2008 Population Census survey will be available to the public on the CBS website, as well as on CD ROM disks and in printed publications.

For additional information on the Central Bureau of Statistics:

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