

## **PREFACE**

The immigration of Ethiopian Jews to Israel, which began with “Operation Moses” in the mid-1980s, brought tens of thousands of immigrants who make up a community of more than 90,000 people today.

This new population group, like all groups of immigrants who have reached Israel since and even before the country was established, has unique characteristics that are reflected, among other respects, in its demographic traits.

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the Ethiopian population has attracted much interest. Researchers, planners of immigrant-absorption policies and immigrant services, and, to a large extent, the public at large, are interested in both the attributes of these immigrants and the process of their integration in Israeli society.

This publication profiles the demographic characteristics of the Ethiopian community in Israel as reflected in the data that have accumulated thus far, with the focus on the 1996-1999 period. The purpose of this publication is to illuminate main demographic aspects of the Ethiopian community, with reference to the size of the population, its structure by sex and age, its fertility and marriage patterns, its geographical distribution, and its migration patterns between Israeli localities.

The Central Bureau of Statistics took the initiative to monitor the demography of this population group, and is pleased to present the data to all interested parties by means of this publication and in many other ways.

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Jerusalem, 2003

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