



State of Israel  
Central Bureau  
of Statistics

STATISTILITE 15

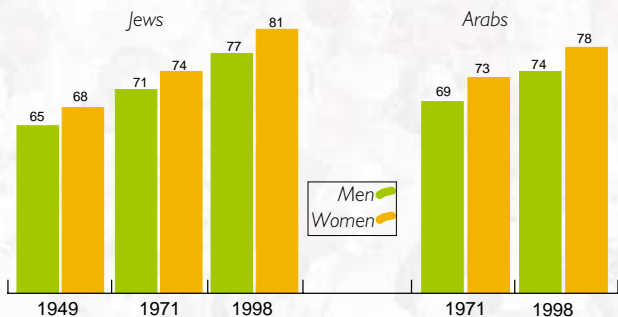
# POPULATION

Nurit Yaffe

# Mortality

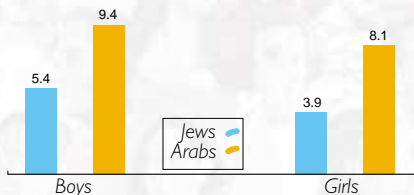
- ◆ The life expectancy of Israeli men is among the world's longest. In contrast, women's life expectancy is lower in Israel than in many Western countries.
- ◆ Since the state was founded, the life expectancy of the Jewish population has risen by about 12 years. An especially strong increase (more than five years) occurred in the first decade, even though more than half a million immigrants arrived that decade; they came from countries where life expectancy was very low. The life expectancy of the Arab population has not caught up with that of the Jewish population, mainly due to higher infant mortality among Arabs than among Jews.

## 7: Life Expectancy, 1949–1998



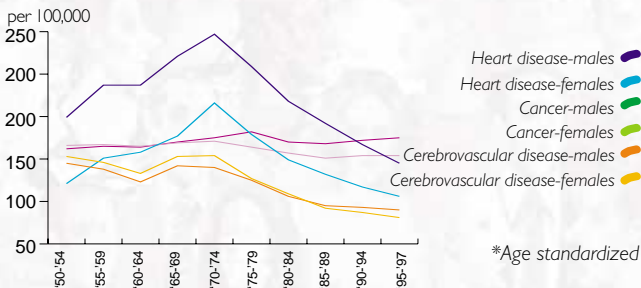
- ◆ Israel's infant mortality rate has declined from more than 40 deaths per thousand births in the early 1950s to 5.4 in 2000. Today, as in the past, infant mortality is twice as prevalent among Arabs as among Jews (8.3 and 4.0, respectively). The two main causes of infant mortality today are congenital defects and premature delivery, even though mortality for the latter reason declined steeply in the 1980s (due to the development of medication to treat these infants' premature lungs).

## 8: Infant Mortality Rate (Deaths per Thousand Births), 1998



- ◆ Cardiovascular diseases cause one-third of the deaths in Israel (even though mortality from heart disease has been declining), and cancer cause another one-fourth.

## 9: Mortality Rate,\* Selected Causes of Death, Jewish Population, 1950–1997

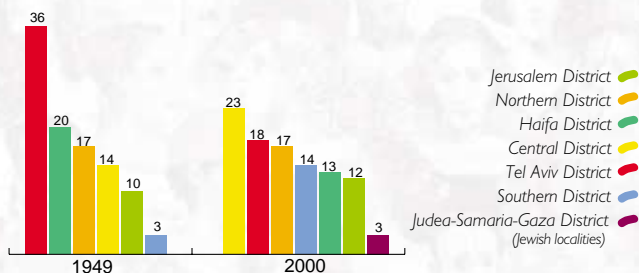


# Geographical Distribution

◆ Israel has a very high population density - nearly 300 persons per sq. km. The most congested part of the country, the Tel Aviv District, has a population density of 6,750 persons per sq. km. The most sparsely populated area, the Southern District, has 63.

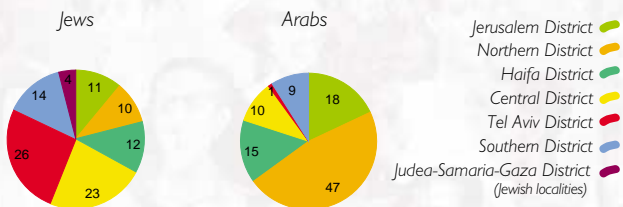
◆ The population is distributed very differently today than when the state was established. The Central District became the most populous area (in the early 1990s), replacing the Tel Aviv District, and the population distribution between center and periphery has become more balanced. In 1948, 70% of the population lived in the central districts (Tel Aviv, Central, and Haifa); today, only 54% do so.

## 10: Population, by District (%), 1949–2000



◆ Only 25% of Jews live in the Northern and Southern districts, as against 56% of Arabs.

## 11: Population by District and Population Group (%), 1999



◆ Israel has 12 cities with populations larger than 100,000. 4 of them have more than 200,000 inhabitants: Jerusalem (658,000), Tel Aviv-Yafo (353,000), Haifa (271,000) and Rishon LeZiyon (203,000).

◆ The largest Arab city in Israel is Nazareth (58,000).

Oct. 2001

Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

Internet: [www.cbs.gov.il](http://www.cbs.gov.il)

E-mail: [info@cbs.gov.il](mailto:info@cbs.gov.il)

Tel: 02-6592666

Fax: 02-6521340

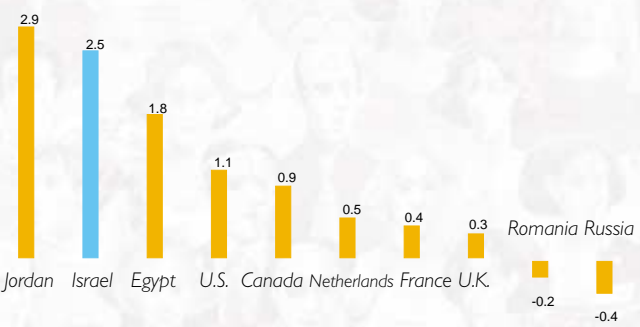
◆ Cover illustration: Audience, David Gerstein, 2000. Photo: Eliezer Klagsbrunn



# Population Growth

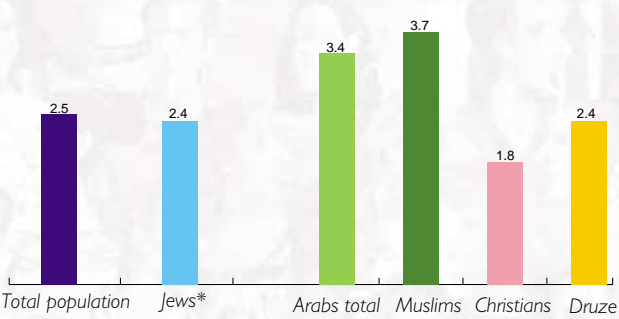
- ◆ At the end of 1948, Israel had a population of nearly 900,000. By the end of 2000, its population had grown to 6,400,000 (about 1/1000 of the world's population), and is projected at 8,700,000 in 2020.
- ◆ Israel's rate of population increase (2.5 per year in recent years) is the highest among Western countries, due to high levels of both fertility and immigration. In many Western European countries, such as Germany and Sweden, the annual increase is zero, and in Eastern Europe it is actually negative.

## 1: Annual Average Percent Increase, Selected Countries, 1995–2000



- ◆ The 5,200,000 Jews in Israel\* account for 81% of the country's population, similar to their share when the state was founded. The proportion of Jews verged on 90% after mass immigration, and declined from the 1960s on.
- ◆ Due to immigration, the proportion of Jews worldwide who live in Israel has increased from 6% when the state was established to 37% today.
- ◆ Some 82% of Arabs in Israel are Muslim (70% in 1948), 10% are Christian (21% in 1948), and 8% are Druze (9% in 1948). The changes in composition of the population by religion over the years stem from differences in the various groups' rates of increase.

## 2: Annual Average Percent Increase, 1995–2000



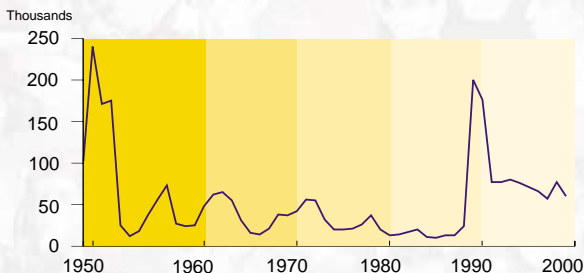
- ◆ Among the Jews,\* half of the population growth since the state was founded originates in natural increase and half in the migration balance. Almost all growth of the Arab population originates in natural increase.

\*Including some 250,000 immigrants who are not registered as Jews in the Population Registry, and their offspring

# Immigration

◆ Since the state was founded, 2,800,000 immigrants have arrived—1,700,000 from Europe, 500,000 from Africa, 400,000 from Asia, and 200,000 from the Americas.

## 3: Immigrants (Thousands), 1948–2000



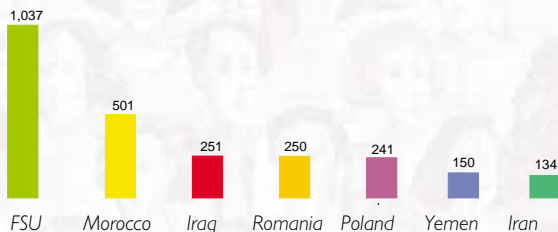
◆ In 1990–2000, about a million immigrants reached the country, including 875,000 born in the Former Soviet Union (thereof 81% from European republics), 42,000 from Ethiopia, 19,000 from the U.S., 16,000 from France, 9,000 from Argentina, and smaller numbers from the U.K., Romania and other countries.

◆ Immigrants who arrived in the 1990s account for about one-third of Israel's total immigration and 14% of the current population. Their population is 7 years older on average than the Jewish population at large and their numerical surplus of women over men is greater than among the Jewish population at large.

Immigration to Israel has been a mass phenomenon relative to the size of the host population.

◆ The proportion of foreign-born in Israel's population (an indicator of the intensity of immigration) is 33 per 100 residents, as against 20 in Australia and Canada (prominent immigration countries); 9 in Austria, Belgium, and Germany; and 4 in Sweden, France, and the Netherlands.

## 4: Jews Born in Main Countries of Origin (Thousands),\* 1999



\*And their Israel-born offspring.

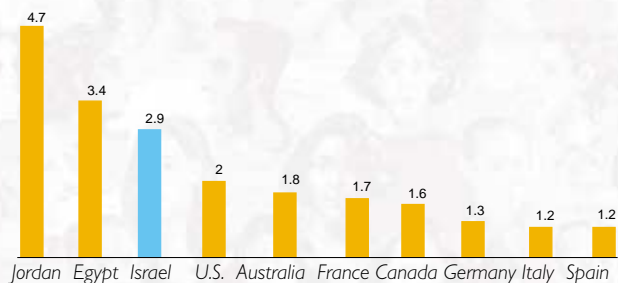
# Marriage and Fertility

◆ In Israel, much as in Western countries, people have been postponing marriage and women have been giving fewer births in recent decades. This stems largely from the increase in the share of persons who acquire post-secondary schooling and a perceptible percent increase in women's participation in the labor force.

◆ Among the Jews, the average age at first marriage has climbed by 2.5 years since the 1970s and now stands at 25 for women and 27 for men (age at marriage is even higher in Europe, e.g., 27–29 among women). The Arab population is also marrying later but the increase in age at marriage is smaller than among the Jewish population.

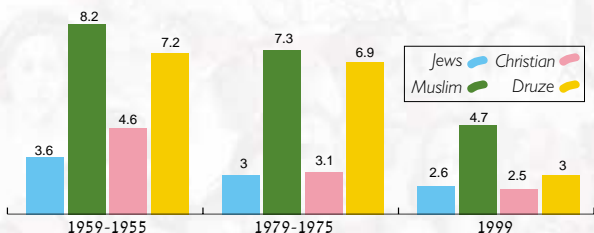
◆ Even though fertility in Israel has declined steeply among women in all religious groups, Israel still has a higher fertility rate than Western countries.

## 5: Births per Woman, 1995–2000



◆ Differences in fertility rates among women in different religious groups have narrowed over the years but have not disappeared. In 1999, Jewish women had 2.6 births on average, Muslim women 4.7, Druze women 3.0, and Christian women 2.5.

## 6: Births per Woman, 1959–1999



◆ Almost all births in Israel are to married women. However, the number of births by never-married women, and the rate of such births relative to the number of never-married women, are on the rise. Thus, among Jewish never-married women aged 35–39, the rate climbed from 9 per thousand women in the late 1970s to 29 in 1997.

◆ Of approximately 19,000 pregnancy terminations in hospitals in 1999, 54% were occasioned by out-of-wedlock pregnancy, 20% by risk to the woman's life, 16% by malformed foetus, and 10% by the woman's age.