

## Christmas 2022 - Christians in Israel

- **On the eve of Christmas 2022, approximately 182,000 Christians<sup>1</sup>** live in Israel; they comprise about 1.9% of the State of Israel's population. **The Christian population grew by 2.0% in 2021.**
- 75.8% of the Christians in Israel are Arab Christians. They constitute 6.9% of the total Arab population of Israel.
- **Most of the Arab Christians reside in the Northern District (70.2%) and in the Haifa District (13.6%).**
- 39.0% of the non-Arab Christians reside in the Tel Aviv and Central Districts, as compared to 36.3% in the Northern and Haifa Districts.
- **The localities with the largest Arab Christian populations** are Nazareth (21,100), Haifa (16,700), Jerusalem (12,900), and Shefar'am (10,500).
- 582 Christian couples **married** in Israel in 2020.<sup>2</sup> The average age at the first marriage of Christian grooms was 30.6, and that of Christian brides was 26.8.
- In 2021, 2,434 **infants were born to Christian women**, about 72% of whom (1,749 infants) were born to Arab Christian women.
- In 2021, the **total fertility rate** of a Christian woman was an average of 1.77 children per woman, 1.80 in 2019. The number of children per Arab Christian woman was lower still, at 1.68 children per woman.
- The **average size of a household** headed by a Christian was 3.06 persons – similar to the size of households headed by a Jew (3.05), and lower than the size of households headed by a Moslem (4.46).
- **The average number of children up to age 17** in Christian families with children up to this age is 1.86. Of these Christian families, the average number of children up to age 17 in Arab Christian families is 1.94 – smaller than the numbers in Jewish families (2.42) and in Moslem families (2.62).

<sup>1</sup> This preliminary estimate for December 2021 does not include Christians who do not appear in the Population Register (foreigners).

<sup>2</sup> The figures of people getting married that year were affected by the closures and restrictions imposed in Israel that year due to the Corona crisis.

- In the 2020/21 school year, 26,752 Christian **students** – 1.4% of the total number of students – attended primary and secondary schools.
- 83.8% of Christian 12th-grade students were eligible for a **matriculation certificate**.
- 52.9% of the Arab Christians **continued their studies toward a first degree within eight years of graduating high school**, compared to only 31.2% of the total number of high-school graduates in the Arab school system and 48.2% in the Hebrew education.
- The **proportion of women among the Christian students** was higher than women's proportion among the total number of students in the advanced degrees: 65.2% and 53.1%, respectively, of those studying for a third degree, and 73.8% and 64.2%, respectively, of those studying for a second degree.
- Compared with Moslem students, the percentage of Christian-Arab students studying for a first degree (bachelor's degree) was lower in the following **fields of study**:<sup>3</sup> Education and teacher training, Business and management sciences, as well as Paramedical studies. In contrast, the percentage of those who studied Social sciences (excl. Business and management sciences), Law, as well as Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer sciences was higher.
- **Of all students who were studying for a first degree**, representation among the Christian students was highest in the following **subjects of study**:<sup>4</sup> musicology (15.7%), management information systems (10.5%), and food engineering and technology (9.9%).
- **The percentage of participation in the labour force** in 2021 among **Christians** aged 15 and over was 66.3% (69.2% of men and 64.1% of women). This figure was 56.4% among **Christian Arabs** (63.8% of men and 49.2% of women).
- Approximately 16,300 Christians – a rate of 89.7 per 1,000 persons – were **registered at the Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs** in 2021.
- In 2021, about 4,400 Christians – a rate of about 24.4 per 1,000 persons – were **placed in social service frameworks**.
- In the year of court judgement 2020, the rate of persons **judged in criminal trials** among the Christian population in Israel was about 208 per 100,000 persons, out of those judged,

<sup>3</sup> Fields in which at least 100 students studied for a first degree are discussed.

<sup>4</sup> Subjects studied for a first degree by 100 or more students are discussed. Excluding the academic colleges of education. Students studying two fields were counted in each of their fields of study.

the rate among **non-Arab Christians** was substantially **higher** than the rate among **Arab Christians** (about 289 and 181 per 100,000 persons, respectively).

- The rate of **convicted** Christians was about 185 per 100,000 persons. The rate of **non-Arab Christian** persons convicted was substantially higher than the rate of **Arab Christians** (about 252 and about 164 per 100,000 persons, respectively).
- The **most common offences among persons convicted** from the Christian population in Israel are as follows: offences against public order (22.9%), bodily harm (21.8%), property offences (16.1%), and morality offences (15.0%).