

# European Jewry in 2030

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The October 2010 brainstorming seminar is the first gathering in a JPPI's multi-year project that aims at recommending a structure for European Jewry in their efforts to optimize analysis, action-oriented strategic planning and decision making capabilities. It brings together academics, public intellectuals and strategy experts from diverse perspectives with institutional leaders from different countries to identify priorities, imagine scenarios, define further required research and suggest policies.

This background paper is based on the methodology and categories described extensively in JPPI's recent report *2030: Alternative Futures for the Jewish People*. Beyond the external and internal drivers identified as critical for the Jewish people at the global level, the future thriving or decline of European Jewries will depend upon some specific drivers linked to the geopolitical, economic and cultural environment of the region.

This preliminary report does not profess to be exclusive and definitive. The goal of this working paper is to identify some of the critical variables, "drivers" in JPPI's terminology, which need to be taken into account when discussing the future of European Jewries. While external drivers are beyond the direct influence of the Jewish people, internal drivers depend more directly on the intervention of Jewish decision-makers.

# Contents

Introduction: A common people separated by several languages

1. Is a thriving future for Jews in Europe possible?
2. Morphological analysis – Global, European and Jewish perspectives
3. Trends shaping the Europe of 2030
4. Major European developments and their potential implications for Jewish communities
5. Major internal challenges faced by Jewish communities
6. Variables of interventions and the means to promote vibrant communities
7. Strategies to ensure the thriving of European Jewish communities in 2030
8. Optimistic and negative scenarios: choosing between “hedging” and “shaping” strategies

## Introduction: A common people separated by several languages

In the coming years, the French Jewish community will have to contend with preserving its past achievements while expanding its appeal and consolidating internal unity. Internally, several challenges are urgent: French Jewish institutions are weak and inadequately funded, women and young adults are underrepresented in communal institutions, pluralistic Jewish schools of the highest caliber are painfully missing, and barriers to conversion are higher than ever. The French Rabbinical Seminar needs to be rebuilt from scratch, and Jewish educational structures for the children of out-marriages should be built. To confront these heavy challenges, the world's third largest Jewish community might need to consider new and innovative policies while expanding its depleted financial base. THINKpiece, An occasional letter from the JPPI, October 2008.

The British Jewish community numbered 450,000 at the end of the Second World War, but its population has declined to fewer than 300,000 today, the loss being variously attributed to assimilation, emigration (in part to Israel), and a low birth rate. Arguably, no other comparable community has suffered such numerical decline in the same period. And the numbers only tell part of the story; in his 1985 book *Diaspora*, the scholar Howard Sachar variously described British Jewish organizational life as "pedestrian," its cultural life as "somnolent," its religious-educational life as "exceptionally shallow," and its religious establishment as "a bore."

I don't know if Sachar has visited the UK since that time, but if he were to drop in on us today, I am not convinced he would issue quite the same report. Visit the leafy north London suburbs of Golders Green and Hendon and you will encounter a growing range of kosher restaurants, creative educational initiatives and innovative organizations that are breathing new life into the community. Come on Shabbat, and you will find a mounting array of interesting spiritual possibilities, ranging from the inspirational Orthodox community of Ner Yisroel, the melodic traditional egalitarian community of Assif and the funky band playing at Finchley Progressive Synagogue's monthly 'Shabbat Resouled.' Come at the right times of year, and you will have opportunities to attend Jewish Book Week – an impressive literary festival by anyone's standards – the Jewish Film Festival, and the real jewel in the community's crown, Limmud.

Jonathan Boyd, JPR Executive Director, Open Forum Blogs, July 2009.<sup>1</sup>

Should we speak of one European Jewry or of several European Jewries? The situation of European Jewries is complex. Coming from different historical and sociological backgrounds, European Jewish communities are highly diversified and their communal leaders do not share a common language. While there is no doubt that they face similar challenges and will benefit from more intensive dialogue and collaboration, they must cope with distinct local challenges because they differ in size, socio-economical environment, history, acceptance in the general society, leadership, creativity, communal resources and capabilities as well as in the intensity of their Jewish life.

Of the communities that have deeply suffered from the Shoah, the French Jewish community is the only one that has succeeded to set up an extensive network of Jewish day schools, to provide effective social services and to have its voice clearly heard in the national political arena.<sup>2</sup> Gourmet cuisine is a central part of the French Jewish life and every weekday there are more Jews eating in two-hundred Paris kosher restaurants than Jews participating in all other cultural, religious and Jewish institutional activities combined. French Jews share with the majority of French citizens concerns about the future of their country. A significant minority of French Jews is pessimistic about the future of Jewish communities in France and experiences a feeling of uncertainty. Some major past achievements are challenged by recent developments and, as mentioned in the above excerpt, the communal mechanisms that have been effective during the last sixty years may need to be rethought.

As illustrated in the second excerpt, British Jews, like the majority of the British citizens, have a highly positive perception of their communal achievements and are reasonably confident in the future thriving of their community. Notwithstanding the importance of the other communities, this preliminary paper focuses on the two largest communities that together account for some sixty percent of the 1.3 million European Jews.

## 1. Is a thriving future for Jews in Europe possible?

Many Jewish leaders in Israel and in North America are not optimistic about future thriving of Jews in Europe. Because the U.S. and Israel comprise eighty percent of world Jewry – most Jewish soft and hard power – and are thus perceived as the two key poles of the Jewish future, European Jewries routinely escape the attention of institutional Jewish policy planners and researchers. Another reflection of this is the fact that European Jewries do not play any significant role in Israel's relationship with the European Union. At the opposite, as an institutional structure that fits the geographical region of the EU is cruelly missing, Israeli and American organizations are the ones that set the agenda for EU Jewry.<sup>3</sup> Instinctively, many expect that in the end the most vital of the 1.3 million European Jews (which accounts for as much as ten percent of world Jewry) will resettle in Israel or in North America, while the remaining others will assimilate. A concrete consequence of this U.S.-Israel bias is that in Israel-Diaspora debates, the specific interests of European communities are ignored and resources are largely invested according to an exclusively U.S.-Israel perspective.

Thus, for instance, out of the 80 million dollars that the Government of Israel invests yearly in Diaspora communities, only a small part is invested in Western Europe Jewish communities. Israeli support allocated to the Taglit-Birthright program illustrates this bias: while Israeli support was 17 million dollars in 2010 and will be increased to upwards of 39 million in 2013, the program does not operate in France and disaffected local young Jews are currently unable to benefit from this outstanding opportunity to re-connect to their Jewishness in an Israeli environment. Being unable to cope with the fund-matching constraints of the program, some of the communities that are the most in need cannot benefit from this Israeli funding. Similarly, at the political level, despite the fact that Israel's foreign policy actions greatly affect European Jews' status and security, there is no mechanism to make their voices heard by their Israeli counterparts. The relationship between European Jews and American Jewry is asymmetric in a similar way. Thus, for instance, while American Jewish organizations have recently established offices in Brussels and other European capitals, they have done so more to advance their own interests than to advance cooperation with European Jewry.

If many analysts expect that the small communities, lacking critical mass as they do, will disappear, the largest French, British and German communities are here to stay. Democracy as the overarching principle of the modern European idea renders large-scale

inhospitable conditions, anti-Jewish discrimination, physical violence against Jews and state sponsored anti-Semitism, inconceivable in Western Europe unless a surprise, wild card macro-catastrophic event occurs. **Benefiting from relatively high social, professional and economic individual status, most European Jews will in all likelihood remain in Europe.** However, this alone does not guarantee vibrant and thriving communities. Should they be held by non-Jewish people, as they sometimes are, responsible and accountable for controversial Israeli actions<sup>4</sup>, many Jews will prefer to avoid the issue of Israel in public debates, hold neutral or critical stands toward Israel and eventually decrease their Jewish profile in general. If being identified as Jews becomes a hindrance to their social achievement, if interactions with fellow Jews in communal settings are dull and boring, and if “official Jewish representatives” who are supposed to speak in their names support controversial positions, young Jews will probably run away from Jewish institutions. Almost everywhere in Europe, with some prominent exceptions, we observe a massive disaffection of young Jews from the institutions of Jewish life, and this trend is accelerating.

European Jewry is today at a crossroads, between renaissance and decline. There is no certainty that answers and institutions that have been effective in the past will adequately fit tomorrow’s challenges. There may be a need to assess without self-complaisance the existing communal successes and failures and to launch an “out-of-the-box” process to develop a bold vision able to meet the emerging future.

Sustainable Jewish community life will ultimately depend on the ability of communal leaders to effectively confront the serious external and internal challenges their communities face. In fact, several major European challenges (integration crisis, endemic non-acceptance of Jewish and Israeli exceptionalism, economic turmoil, Muslim demographic increase and the reemergence of anti-Semitism, in both familiar and new forms and expressions) have implications for the future of European Jewries.

At the internal level, the challenges are no less serious. In a world where identity is not only a matter of birth, but also – and perhaps even more so – a matter of choice, Jewishness will appeal to the young generation only if it is perceived to be relevant to their existential and social needs. We can already observe in several European countries a polarization between a growing ultra-orthodox minority, with a self-segregationist stance that prioritizes religious observance over other forms of Jewish identity and seeks to impose its exclusive perspective on Jewish religious institutions while downplaying other forms of Jewish engagement, and a secular Jewish majority that feels excluded from existing Jewish institutions but is unable to create its own viable alternatives.

## 2. Morphological Analysis – Global, European and Jewish perspectives

Morphological analysis provides a relatively simple tool to review thousands of possible alternative futures in compact form. It operates with the help of a matrix in which the rows reflect the dimensions and the columns reflect a range of possible states in each dimension. The columns for each dimension include a neutral possibility (typically, same as now), a negative one, a positive one, and two “wild card” possibilities of highly negative or highly positive potential states, included mostly to provoke thinking and push the envelope so as to minimize the possibility of “failures of imagination.”

The selected dimensions for analysis include both internal and external aspects. In this work about the future of the European Jewry, we are relating to three levels of observation. The “global level” has been analysed extensively in JPPI’s *2030: Alternative Futures for the Jewish People* and we invite the reader to refer to it. The following sections of this paper will address successively the European and the Jewish dimensions.

**External dimension: the global level.** This aspect includes developments expected to have the greatest impact on the trajectory of the Jewish people, as a whole, living either in Israel or in the Diaspora. This dimension includes geopolitics and especially the main global actors and their distribution of power, proliferation of weapons of mass killing, terrorism, energy, and the Palestinians and the Middle East. They also include global societal factors such as globalization, demography, economics, culture, religion, governance and anti-Semitism, as well as science, technology, cyberspace and environmental and public health issues.

**External dimension: the European level.** If the Jewish people as a whole will be affected by global trends, the vibrancy of the European Jewish communities will be impacted by the future of Europe and its attitude toward Jews, Israel and Judaism. In a case of unfavorable conditions for Jewish thriving, the most committed Jews may relocate to more hospitable environs.

**Internal dimension: the Jewish level.** Finally, the future vibrancy of the European communities will depend greatly on internal dimensions. The internal dimensions are related to demography, identity, Israel-Diaspora relations, economics and leadership. Together they form a composite image of the Jewish people designated “Jewish Momentum.” In Europe, some communal challenges are national and other relate to a pan-European cooperation and coordination.

Table 1: Morphological Analysis (Jews of Europe in 2030)<sup>5</sup>

Dimension	Neutral	Negative	Positive	Wild (+)	Wild (-)
<b>Global actors</b>					
Global main actors	Rising Asia, no instability	Rising radical Islam	Strong America	Sustained world peace	Global security breakdown
Proliferation of WMD		To terrorist groups	Under control	Roll back of proliferation	Global nuclear war
Terrorism	Occasional, not transforming	Increasing impact	Minor nuisance	Eliminated	Global disruption
Energy	Oil a factor, not overwhelming	Oil supports terrorism	Oil less portant	Oil out of equation	Petro-power
Palestinians and the ME	Manageable conflict	Escalating conflict	Peaceful relations	Israel/Pal towards EU	Mutual destruction
Global cultures	Western-Asian confluence	Cultural tensions	Cultural exchange	New radical sect New sect of peace	Global cultural clashes
Religion	Mixed trends	Deepens conflicts	Personal, not geopolitical	Source of peace	Global clash of religions
Global governance	Strong states; global networks	Unstable, majoritarian	Stable; protects minorities	Peaceful world order	Breakdown of world order
Anti-Semitism	Mixed trends	Hostility to Jews and Israel	Fringe phenomena	Philo-Semitism	Jews and Israel pariahs
Cyberspace		Instrument of hate and terrorism	Instrument of cultural exchange	Major tool for Jewish networks	
Natural/ health disasters	Manageable	Disrupt Jewish centers	Minor, under control		
<b>Europe</b>					
European demography	Ethnic enclaves	Islam changes Europe	Immigrant integration	Demographic reversal	Global ethnic conflagration
European economy	Mixed trends	Volatility and inequality	Rising wealth; equality	Eradication of poverty	Global economic breakdown
Governance of European union	Consensus management. Slow political integration	Exit of some countries. Heavy decision making process	Political integration. Effective and fast decision making process	A charismatic leader, sharing a democratic Judeo-Christian ideal, leads Europe to an economical and cultural apex	Euro currency trust crisis and EU dismantling
Islam in Europe	Heterogeneous component of the European culture	Islamophobia Increased immigration	Massive social integration. Muslim leaders adopt a tolerant and democratic stand	Emergent European democratic Islam. No resentment against Jews and European culture	Clash of civilization. Either Eurabia or Reconquista



Dimension	Neutral	Negative	Positive	Wild (+)	Wild (-)
<b>European Jews</b>					
Demography: (numbers without FSU)	1,070,000	700,000	1,120,000	1,820,000	500,000
Identity	Mixed	Weak	Strong	New attractive idea	Massive rejection
Hard and Soft Power	Same as now	Decline in power	Increase in power	A new Jewish century	Nuclear war
Israel – Diaspora	Same as now	Drifting apart	Strong, deep, equal	New governing idea	Hostility and rejection
Jewish economics & philanthropy	Slight improvement	Economic stagnation	Rise of micro-philanthropy	A common vision boosts the Jewish philanthropy	Economic crisis
Leadership	Some good leaders but not all	Mediocre leadership	Innovative leadership	Charismatic figures combining political ability with strong Jewish spiritual basis	No common vision, poor democracy and transparency
Youth and education	Some good Jewish day schools but not all	Massive isaffection	Young adults are set as the top financial priority	Outstanding Jewish day schools and highly diversified and attractive youth programs	Ethnic ties perceived as 'politically incorrect'
Jewish pluralism	Emerging pluralism	Mutual exclusion	Positive competition	Inter-stream coordination and common actions	Mutual destruction
Connection to Israel	Committed Jews connected, others are distancing	Committed Jews only support and visit Israel	Israel is a central component of Jewish identity	High profile – all young Jews spend one year study or volunteering in Israel	"Not in my name"
Social justice, volunteerism and Tikkun Olam (general society)	No systematic efforts to build alliances and coalitions	Jews take care only of Jews	Alliances and coalitions with popular forces to advance social justice	Leading role in local concerns (local hunger, illiteracy, migrants integration) and global concerns	Only Jews support Jewish causes and combat anti-Semitism
Grassroots initiatives and new communities	Proactive outreach efforts in few countries	Obsolete answers to new challenges	Significant budgets are allocated to innovation	Jewish initiatives venture capital foundation established with systematic outreach and support to local initiatives	Leaders are unaware of the field needs
Cultural creativity	High literary and philosophical creativity but not Jewishly inspired	Jewish creators deny their Jewish origin	Leading authors claim their Jewish heritage. Judaism as an ethical compass	The Jewish tradition is globally perceived as one of the leading sources of inspiration to human creativity	Jews and Judaism rejected as outdated, anti-humanist and negative

### 3. Trends Shaping the Europe of 2030: Major European developments and their potential implications for Jewish communities

In analyzing the European external environment, the emphasis is placed on drivers and trends most likely to have a direct impact on the future of Jewish community life. We have focused our perspective on four fields of uncertainty. Namely, demography and migrant integration (how will integration of large Muslim migrant populations impact Europe?), European Union governance (will the Europeans be able to review and revise their “management by consensus” governance model?), the status of Europe among global actors (the position of Europe in the future balance of power, decline of Europe’s global status, Euro currency crisis, political integration downturn) and cultural developments (Europe identity search, emergent new identities and Israel de-legitimization, anti-Semitism, nationalistic pro-Christian political resurgence versus renewal of post-nationalist trends).

#### a. Demography and migrant integration

Islam becomes a major component of the European cultural landscape. Following massive immigration from Muslim countries of young populations with relatively high birthrates, Islam is now omnipresent in Western Europe. Despite the economic integration of a large minority of the Muslim migrants, many second-generation Muslim migrants suffer from social exclusion. Loosely integrated newcomers who do not share the traditional European ethos are significant actors in delinquency and uncivil behaviors that are perceived as major nuisances to daily life in large European cities. On the social fringes, some Islamic radicals refuse the local culture and advocate the Islamization of Europe.

In a context of growing economic instability and social uncertainty, rapid globalization and technological shifts, welfare state erosion and increased social gaps, the presence of massive exogenous populations nurtures a growing popular resentment. Islam is perceived as a heterogeneous component of the traditional European culture. Many Europeans perceive a threat to their core belief system and are hesitant to accept Islamic practices in the public sphere, such as mosque building, total or partial veil wearing, and polygamy. New dilemmas appear on a daily basis around issues such as women rights, mixed athletic accommodations, critical thinking education, personal freedom, and the supremacy of civil law over religious legal authority. In 2010, votes

for extreme right parties reached 28 percent in Holland. Ultimately, nationalistic and xenophobic trends may challenge the EU integration process.

#### Implications for Jewish communities:

The presence of the ten-times more numerous Muslim populations affects the political, electoral, economic and even symbolic status of European Jewish communities. In the context of the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of Muslim resentment against Israel, some local political parties play the community game and adopt an anti-Israeli stance for electoral effect. If the seriousness of the electoral impact of the demographic shift is self-evident, its economic implications are no less critical. In the United Kingdom, France and Germany, where public money is the principal source of funding (often above 80 percent) of Jewish school systems as well as of cultural and social communal services, the economic impact of this demographic change is a matter of concern. Special benefits, unique privileges and public funds traditionally granted to Jewish communal services are now expected, as a matter of fairness, to be extended to the ten-times more numerous Muslim populations. In some cases, fund transfers have been prohibitively high and therefore cancelled.

Nurtured by solidarity with the Palestinians and jealousy toward integrated Jews, resentment of Jews by socially-excluded Muslims places the safety of easily recognizable Jews in jeopardy. In some underprivileged neighborhoods, where the security of Jewish children cannot be guaranteed in public schools, synagogues have closed, and Jews have fled. In certain universities, being identified as Jew is socially detrimental. We may expect that following future anti-Hamas, anti-Hezbollah or anti-Iran military operations, large scale consumer product boycott and other BDS actions will be launched against Israeli and Jewish interests.

#### b. European Union governance

The “management by consensus” governance model was appropriately applied in the initial stages of the European Union. The laborious, lengthy and costly handling of the recent Greek economic crisis has shown that the multi-level decision-making process has some critical disadvantages when urgent, radical and unpopular decisions have to be made. Should the actual governance model not be adapted to new global challenges, the future of the Union may be imperiled. The emergence of global NGO’s and international supreme courts that can condemn “non-democratic and unethical” national or European legislation may further limit the future governability of the E.U.

### c. The status of Europe among other global actors

While the increased status of emergent Asian superpowers may benefit the Jewish people as a whole, the decline of Europe, (global power and influence, devaluation of the euro, decreased political integration) may harm local Jewish communities. In Diaspora communities, the economic situation of Jews is closely correlated with that of the countries in which they live. A Euro currency crisis, a global economic crisis or economic decline of Europe will directly result in the economic decline of Jews and Jewish communities. Economic failure and the attendant domestic unrest will hit Jewish communities and could foment greater anti-Semitism. Across history, political and economic instability have generally had negative impacts on existing Jewish community structures. Studying European history, Fernand Braudel found that as a general rule every major anti-Jewish persecution in Europe was preceded, accompanied or followed by a grave economic crisis.<sup>6</sup>

### d. Cultural trends: Europe's emergent new identities and Israel de-legitimization

Encountering political and economic difficulties in its on-going integration process, the emergent European political entity is in the middle of an identity search. What does it mean to be European? Are there common core values that make us unique and what are the values we definitively reject? Built after centuries of bloody ethno-religious and nationalist conflicts, the basic ethos of the European Union is that strong ethno-religious and national identities are better avoided. In this context, Jewish and Israeli exceptionalism are perceived with considerable skepticism. Moreover, across history, Jews have been the ultimate "other" in Europe and they fulfill a symbolic reference baseline to all new "others". Therefore, sixty-five years after the Shoah, attitudes toward Jewish issues and to the Jewish sovereign state are rarely neutral; most often, they are charged with highly emotional content. Despite a largely shared fundamental sympathy to Judaism, two opposed radical voices are unsympathetic to Jews:

- on one side, the extreme-leftist forces (a nebulous group of activists who support anti-globalization, human rights ideology, cultural relativism, anti-Western rhetoric, anti-Americanism, anti-colonialism and have pacifist aspirations). They hold negative attitudes toward religion and ethno-religious identity, advocate post-nationalism and therefore question the legitimacy of the Jewish nation-state. Other leftist forces, such as some of the communist parties, make an intensive use of Soviet-style anti-Zionist rhetoric for either ideological or populist motives.

- and on the other side, the reactionary extreme-right forces that advocate anti-Muslim xenophobia and sometimes espouse anti-Semitic opinions.

Beyond the media's largely negative reporting on Israel there is also a more positive focus on Jewish culture. Apparently, Jews continue to fascinate. But sometimes it seems that the European media and reading public are more comfortable with the threatened or vanished culture of long-dead Jews than with thriving, living Jewish communities. Over the past twenty years the European media and public have been especially ambivalent about the Israeli Jewish reality, and a discourse of de-legitimization has taken hold. Radical criticism of Israel and anti-Semitic discourse are not anymore taboo, Jewish and Israeli exceptionalism is questioned and Israel is often presented as "the" obstacle to the peace process. Sometimes even as "the" obstacle to Euro-Mediterranean peaceful economic prosperity.

#### Alternative scenarios:

The growing Muslim demographic presence in Europe is a key factor of concern regarding the future prospects of European Jews. Even if today a large number of Muslims do not befriend Jews, the degree of opposition to Jews is not disconnected from a sociological and political context.<sup>7</sup> The resentment level will depend on the following geopolitical global shifts: Israeli-Palestinian conflict developments, balance of power in the Middle East region, reinforcement or dismantling of radical Islamic actors, global status of Muslims and oil producing countries. The resentment will also depend on the following European factors: migrant social integration policies, European attitudes toward cultural relativism and the attitudes of Muslim migrants toward European Enlightenment values. All these factors, with the exception of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, are beyond the direct action of Jewish people institutional actors. At the local level, some Jewish-Muslim dialogue and cooperation projects may marginally impact the Muslim general resentment level.

At this moment, we do not know whether the integration efforts will succeed. This will depend, on the one hand, on European integration and immigration policies, and, on the other hand, on whether global geopolitical factors will encourage among children of Muslim immigrants the willingness to integrate into the general society. Even if the majority of Muslim immigrants' children are still socially excluded today, we may expect that in the coming twenty years, they will occupy public, business and media positions of leadership all over Europe. What are the future implications of the social integration of Muslims immigrants' children for Jewish communities? Studies

have shown that professionally integrated migrants experience less social jealousy toward Jews, but in the scenario of an unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict, their resentment against Jews may persist and damage the status of European Jews.

The radically opposed scenario will be one of a nationalistic reaction that will target Muslims and will seek to exclude them from leading positions. The Christian and nationalist movements, that want to defend the Judeo-Christian and democratic heritage, are gaining audience and political support. A large contingent of this movement's activists opposes cultural relativism, associates past European supremacy with Enlightenment values and wishes to preserve Europe's historical and particular cultural character. Many among them are aware of the Jewish sources of Christianity and are sympathetic to Jews and Israel. In a twenty-year timeframe, many scenarios are possible. In any radical scenario (either "Eurabia" or "Reconquista"), Jews will have to take a stand and will suffer from anti-Semitic violence. Should the situation become extreme, we may expect a large-scale migration of affluent Jews and Jewish professionals to North America, Australia, Asia and Israel.

Table 2:  
Trends Shaping Europe and their possible implications for Jewish communities

Trends shaping the Europe of 2030	Possible implications for Jewish communities
<p>Islam becomes a major component of the European cultural landscape. An increased number of Muslim descent hold public and private leading positions.</p>	<p>Decrease of the political status of Jews. Decrease in public funds transfer to communal services.</p>
<p>Popular voices advocate a return to Judeo-Christian European core values. Nationalist and Christian parties gain substantial political influence.</p>	<p>Playing the community games, political parties hold anti-Israel positions. Muslim resentment of Jews makes the experience of easily recognizable Jews increasingly anxious.</p>
<p>Negative view of religion. Poor public support of faith-based initiatives. Lack of pro-philanthropic policy and poor philanthropic culture. Rise of post-national cultural trends.</p>	<p>Diminished influence of Europe harms European Jewish communities. Talented Jews relocate to the United States, Israel and elsewhere.</p>
<p>Decreased global standing of Europe. Increased fragility of the Euro zone. Endemic bad governance (no common vision, lack of capacity to make sound decisions, democracy and transparency).</p>	<p>De-legitimization of the nation-state concept decreases the legitimacy of Israel as a Jewish state.</p>
<p>Radical criticism of Israel and anti-Semitic discourse are no longer taboo. The post-Shoah period characterized by European guilt and special treatment of Jews is over.</p>	<p>Israel and Judaism positioned as controversial issues, many young Jews avoid identifying as Jews and appearing sympathetic toward Israel.</p>
<p>Jews fulfill a symbolic function. Beyond the largely negative reporting on Israel there is also a more positive focus on Jewish culture.</p>	<p>Should Israel be branded a pariah state, many Jews will decrease their Jewish profile (“not in my name”) while a minority will feel more committed. Animal rights and human rights activists lobby to outlaw Jewish ritual slaughter and circumcision practices.</p>
<p>All around Europe, Jewish intellectuals hold a position of ethical reference.</p>	<p>Positive perceptions of Judaism allow imagining a renaissance of a philo-Semitic era.</p>

## 4. Major internal challenges faced by Jewish communities

In the previous section, we described the European external environment drivers and trends that are most likely to have a direct impact on the future of European Jewish communities. The future vibrancy of the European communities will depend greatly on internal factors. The main internal dimensions are related to demography, identity, Israel-Diaspora relations, economics and leadership. Leadership, communal professionalism, and the ability to build coalitions and alliances at the national and pan-European levels are of great concern to achieve vibrant communities in Europe.

Following is a brief description of the observed trends in each dimension:

### a) Demography

A negative balance of Jewish births and deaths now prevails in most Jewish communities worldwide with the prominent exception of Israel. Across the Jewish Diaspora, more frequent choosing of marriage partners from outside the Jewish community is associated with growing percentages of children not raised Jewishly. The consequent erosion of the younger generation has produced a steady process of Jewish population aging, leading in turn to higher death rates and population decrease. Further major consequences of ongoing familial and cultural changes include the blurring of Jewish identification boundaries and the growing complexities in defining the Jewish collective. The location of Jews on the world map largely reflects the ranking of countries by the U.N. Index of Human Development. Over 90 percent of world Jewry now lives in the top 20 percent of more developed countries – that is in North America, Western Europe and Israel. Unless unexpected major geopolitical changes occur, no large immigration wave is expected to reinvigorate the European communities in the next twenty years. Everywhere in Europe, the most committed Jews move to vibrant Jewish neighborhoods, and small communities, lacking critical mass, disappear. The open issues regarding this dimension are linked to immigration to Israel (does immigration to Israel of the most committed young Jews harm the future thriving of European communities?) and relocation (should we encourage young committed Jews from small communities to relocate?), fusion of declining communities, conversion policy (how would easier conversion impact our communities?), Jewish pluralism (is the quasi-monopoly of the Orthodox French Jewish Religious life a desirable situation?), outreach to non-Jewish spouses and day schools for children of intermarried couples.



## b) Identity

The overall trend in Jewish identification is towards more diverse and pluralistic forms of Jewish identification less focused on a common set of basic values. There is a shift in identification from religious to secular, from ethnic to cultural, from community-oriented to individualistic and universal. Global norms about identity, individual choice, communal expression and religious freedom are making it more acceptable to choose one's religious or non-religious and community identity. Jewish identity is increasingly about choice and the personal quest for meaning, especially among the younger generation. Outside Israel, within the overall growing diversity and plurality, the course of Jewish identification seems to be towards increased polarity between those clearly identified and those totally unidentified as Jews, with a large segment falling in between.

In Europe, there is a deep tradition of secularism. Religion is perceived as outdated and therefore, there is poor public support for faith-based social and educational initiatives, and the will to pursue religious and ethnic ties is perceived as politically "incorrect". With the exception of some urban areas, we observe a distancing of a majority of Jews from Jewish organizational life.

The open issues regard the communal priorities: if our main communal objective is that "young Jews remain Jews," a more substantial share of communal resources have to be invested in supporting grassroots initiatives, leadership programs, youth cultural empowerment programs, outreach on campuses and the establishment of diverse and attractive activities for young adults. This identity disinvestment is linked to broader social and global trends that reach far beyond the Jewish world as such, as shown in the following table.<sup>8</sup>

Table 3: Broader social and global trends that set the terms of Jewish engagement and institutional life<sup>7</sup> :

Secularization, the advent of the “open society” and globalization.
The emergence of instantaneous global communication through telecommunication technologies and the Internet.
The perception of religion as a positive or negative, meaningful or meaningless social value.
The willingness of a society to fund faith-based social and educational frameworks.
Traditional forms of anti-Semitism, intolerance and xenophobia.
Perceptions of the State of Israel, its society and policies.
Political amity between Israel and local political entities.
Accord between Jewish values and general values.
Attitudes toward inherited ties of belonging and toward socio-communal groups.
Shifts in family patterns.
There are also several major developments touching on more personal, affective dimensions of human life:
Search for meaning, consciously chosen belonging and the celebration of personal experience over collective forms of belonging.
The primacy of autonomy and individualism over communal loyalties and authorities.
Perception of ethnic in-group ties as “politically incorrect.”
Decline of emotional attachment to fellow Jews and Israel.

### c) Israel-Diaspora relations

The overall trend in relations between Jews in Israel and the Diaspora is for the younger generation, both in Israel and the Diaspora, to be less and less interested in the fate of their fellow Jews overseas. Relations between Israel and the Jews of the Diaspora are strong at present, but are likely to face decline. The younger generation in the Diaspora is distanced from the dramatic historical events that accompanied the establishment of the State of Israel. The younger generation is more likely to be exposed to negative views of Israel and its policies and has almost no experience of identification with Israel as a source of pride. It is less concerned about Israel and its future and has less of an emotional attachment to the country. Compared to their American counterparts, European Jews have strong connections to Israel. According to the 2010 JPR Israel survey<sup>9</sup>, a huge majority of British Jews (95%) have visited Israel, 20% have even lived there, 70% have first degree family there, 76% claim that Israel is relevant to their lives in Britain and 82% claim that Israel plays a “central” or “important” role in their Jewish identities. Israel is also the major component of French Jewish identity: 70% of French Jews have first degree relatives in Israel, visit Israel frequently, and indeed – in a context of general anti-Jewish sentiment – the French Aliyah rate is the highest among developed countries. 40,000 French Jews – out of a total 500,000 – immigrated to Israel since 1988<sup>9</sup>. Very few figures exist regarding other European communities, but the fact that a significant number of German Jews also visit Israel frequently is worth mentioning.

If the commitment of European Jews to Israel is exceptionally strong, the relationship between Israel and European Jews is asymmetric. Israel's actions affect Jews wherever they live. European Jews, feeling uncomfortable with this asymmetric dynamic, want their voices to be heard about the consequences they face as a result of the interdependent relations they have with Israel. The recent Jcall petition and the “Call for Reason” counter-petition, that have been both launched by non-institutional actors, illustrate the urgent need of European Jews to have their voices heard by the Israeli government. On the public level, Israel has seemed to address European Jewry mainly and almost exclusively over questions relating to anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activity. Because of perceptions about the level of anti-Semitism in Europe, Israeli leaders have seen fit to call for mass Aliyah, especially from France, without first consulting the communities or considering how these pronouncements may tangibly affect them.

#### d) Economics

The Jewish people today are at a historical zenith of absolute wealth creation. With the vast majority of Jews living in countries that are among the world's wealthiest, and with the majority of those Jews belonging to middle and upper socio-economic strata in those countries (excluding Israel) the Jewish people as a whole enjoys access to wealth as never before. There is more money per capita in Jewish hands, absolutely and perhaps even relatively, than at any time in history. With respect to the distribution of wealth and its allocation to Jewish causes, there is insufficient data and the evidence is mostly anecdotal. It appears that outside Israel, philanthropic giving directed to Jewish causes is only a very small share of overall Jewish philanthropic giving. Compared to their American counterparts, European communities have scarcer resources and this is a key limit to their communal performance. The aging of the population will require additional funding for communal services. The European demographic trends described above should impact further this resource scarcity and we may expect that public funding to Jewish day schools and communal services will decrease in the coming years.

#### e) Leadership

The Jewish People is facing a serious paucity of high quality leadership - spiritual, political and organizational — with no clear trend of improvement. Current leadership, both in Israel and in Jewish institutions, with few individual exceptions, appears to lack capacity to meet the challenges facing the Jewish people and a deep understanding of changing realities and new ideas for coping with them that are able to assure, as much as possible, the long-term sustainable thriving of Jewish communities around the world and the thriving of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, which add up synergistically to the thriving of the Jewish people as a whole. Jewish leadership positions in Israel and in other Jewish communities do not attract the best and brightest — with some notable exceptions. Efforts to attract and prepare the best and the brightest for leadership are inadequate, and despite some beginnings, including on the Jewish civil society level, the entry of younger persons into leadership positions is very slow. There is also a very pronounced paucity of spiritual leaders acceptable as such by major parts of the Jewish people.

#### f) Communal challenges

When asked about what is most required to achieve a thriving Europe, many experts mention the need for an outstanding leadership that will be able to develop a common vision, develop capacities to make sound decisions and develop an environment of

democracy and transparency. It seems that one of the key challenges of the Jewish institutions in Europe is of a similar nature. Among the challenges linked to communal professionalism and management, the most often mentioned in the focus groups are:

- Poor representativeness of representative bodies;
- Poor coordination and bad communication between communal organizations;
- Attempts to silence outside opinion;
- Poor human resources management and lack of career plan for professionals;
- Poor integration of new generation activists into communal mechanisms;
- Poor awareness of the grassroots needs;
- Internal divides, power struggles and ego-driven agendas;
- Poor professionalism of Jewish studies educators and religious leaders;
- Poor Jewish literacy of day school graduates;
- Lack of pan-European coordination (no say in the global Jewish arena, no say in the Israel-Diaspora dialogue, no say in EU institutions, no authorized single voice);<sup>3</sup>
- Need to create a culture of philanthropy,
- Need to develop a vision, a common agenda and a strategic plan.

Last but not least, in most European countries, there is not yet any systematic collection of basic data regarding the level of Jewish knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. Essential information is missing regarding demography, kosher food consumption, attendance in synagogues and at community events and the number of intermarriages. The absence of a policy planning research center is specifically critical with respect to compiling accurate statistics to assess trends and to measure developments. Communal leaders are presently unable to accurately appraise the impact of past policies and are inadequately equipped to define priorities and design the most fitting strategies.

## 5. Variables of interventions and the means to promote vibrant communities

If many factors that will affect the Jewish future in Europe are beyond Jewish communities' influence, community leaders still have the ability to intervene in certain variables and design strategies for weaving the future of their communities. Beyond the limited influence of Jewish institutions, intellectuals in Europe have had a great influence in the last centuries. Two thinkers of Jewish descent, Baruch Spinoza and Karl Marx, have deeply influenced the intellectual history of Europe and this could certainly happen again.

### Effective management is a critical issue

The primary challenge of the communal leader is to improve the level of professionalism of community workers. This difficult yet critical endeavor may in itself make all the difference between two communities of similar size and situation. Effective management is critical for European Jewish communities. Even the best strategies might fail unless they are in the most capable professional hands. In continental Europe, communities were reconstructed after the Shoah under traumatic conditions and had to integrate large numbers of new comers (300,000 in France in the 1960s; 200,000 in Germany in the 1990s). They haven't yet reached the professional level of their American counterparts. The levels of professionalism of the communities vary and many communities do not make systematic use of tools such as vision development, strategic planning, human resource management, career planning for professionals, pre-training and ongoing training of religious and lay leaders, development of school curricula, fund raising development, etc.

### Strategic choices regarding the type of programs to promote

In an environment of scarce and limited resources, communal leaders have to define priorities regarding the type of activities they want to promote and the population they want to address. Notwithstanding the importance of supporting elderly populations, the future of the communities will depend on our ability to engage the new generation in communal life, enhance its Jewish identity and promote its resolve to belong to the Jewish people. Concretely, Jewish communities can and do engage in numerous activities to further Jewish identity, along the following three axes:

1. Jewish identity programs;
2. Israel programs; and
3. Social justice and non-specifically Jewish targeted programs.

Each of the three categories has pros and cons. Regarding the financial aspects, let's mention that programs of the second category may find some funding in Israeli matching programs and third category programs may leverage large public funding.

According to the relative part of the community resources that will be invested in each of these three programmatic categories, each community will position itself differently on the strategic map shown in figure 1.

Tables 4 and 5 describe the means, available to Jewish community leaders, to promote Jewish identity and connection to Israel.

TABLE 4:  
MEANS OF PROMOTING BELONGING<sup>10</sup>

1. Formal Education	Day schools, Judaic Studies in universities, rabbinical schools, after-school programs.
2. Informal Education	Summer camps, youth movements, continuing adult education, museums, study circles, institutional community education, retreats and seminars.
3. Communal Infrastructure	Formal communal structures such as community institutions, different Jewish organizations, organizations for Israel, federations, foundations, etc., are not only the infrastructures of action, but themselves constitute a connecting and strengthening factor as well, creating a feeling of belonging and commitment among those involved in their activities.
4. Religious Institutions and Experience	Synagogues, individual religious practice, Torah study, prayer and meditation, life cycle events and rites of passage.
5. Cultural and Intellectual Activity	Arts, especially literature, are a vital and exceptionally creative form of Jewish life and regularly offer the most probing analyses and critiques of Jewish life. Jewish scholarship is another dynamic arena of exploration and discovery.
6. Exposure to Israel	This means both visits to Israel, for pleasure, and more significantly, for study and life experience, as well as engagement with Israeli creativity and culture in literature, film, music, dance, fine arts, etc.



7. Networking and Virtual Communities	The Internet offers extraordinary opportunities for communal networking as well as interaction beyond the normal confines of the community as such as well as a plethora of educational resources and methods.
8. New Communities	We are witnessing the flourishing of creative initiatives of young communities around a shared Jewish spiritual experience: an experiences of learning, religious rituals and social action. These spiritual communities provide their members with a sense of belonging and special meaning.
9. Tikkun Olam & Social Ethics	Leading social values, ideas for meaningful action which merge with the ethical narrative of the Jewish people constitute an anchor for belonging and meaning, in conversation with widely-shared ethical sensibilities. Developing programs and ideas of this kind can strengthen the experience of identity and consciousness of Jewish belonging, as do ethical sensitivity in Israeli policy-making.
10. Jewish Media	The importance of the existence and further development of Jewish media – print and electronic – aimed at creating vibrant, diverse and well-informed internal Jewish discourse cannot be overestimated.
9. Leadership	The strength/weakness of community leadership in a given community and its directedness towards continuity can have tremendous influence over the degree of the sense of belonging and the identity consciousness of its members.

<p>10. Culture and language</p>	<p>Throughout Jewish history, Hebrew, though not a spoken language, was a written <i>lingua franca</i> through which Jews were able to gulf great distances of geography and time. Jews communicated in other vernaculars, such as Aramaic, Judeo-Arabic, Yiddish and Ladino, but Hebrew is unique for its historic and geographic sweep and literary and sacred power. A common language constitutes an opening for cultural partnership and deeper familiarization with Jewish cultural strata, the necessary familiarization for the purpose of creating a sense of meaning. In strictly linguistic terms, among Jewish languages Hebrew's place is unequalled, for the immediate access it gives not only to the classic sources but to the great enterprise of collective creativity across all the periods of Jewish history down to the present.</p>
<p>11. Connections Among Communities</p>	<p>Joint tasks for young people from different communities, adoption of a community in need of support by a substantially established community by means of volunteer work of the young people from one community in another, exchanges among the young people in the communities on the basis of fields of interest, etc., have the potential for contributing to the development of solidarity among the communities. The development of additional ideas in this field should be considered.</p>

## MAPPING JEWISH INTERVENTIONS AND THE LIFE CYCLE

How can we make sense of this list of activities and use it in long-range planning?

One particularly fruitful way is to map these various activities in terms of their points of contact with people at the critical, formative and decision-making junctures of their lives.

At different points over the course of a life cycle people make crucial decisions which shape the next stages of their lives. At each such turning point in life, one's previous, cumulative exposure to Jewishness and Israel will have an impact on an individual's decision. Frameworks of socialization, such as family, school, neighborhood and so on are critical to the framing of identity and self-perception. They provide the required knowledge to make Jewishness meaningful to young people, and nurture specific attitudes, social networks and individual behaviors, commitments and values. While there is widespread consensus among Jewish educators and communal leaders and professionals that cumulative exposure to Jewishness is critical to fostering future behaviors and decisions, there is genuine disagreement regarding the best ways to invest limited and regularly scarce Jewish resources. Some urge an emphasis on early Jewish socialization and education in childhood, while others maintain that intense socio-cultural experiences can result in choices for greater commitment and identification in the teen years and young adulthood. The chart on the following page outlines the various sorts of interventions available at different stages of the life cycle.

TABLE 5:  
Points of intervention throughout the life cycle<sup>11</sup>

Life cycle	Intervention mechanisms	Individual impact	Communal goals
Parents home identification	Adult and family education, school-parent relationship programs, outreach programs.	Knowledge Jewish heritage Israeli culture	Jewish identification
Kindergarten and school	Jewish kindergarten, day and quality supplementary schools, Bar/Bat mitzvah education and group programs, seasonal rituals celebration, summer camps and informal education.	Hebrew literacy	Vibrant communities
		Attitudes Group Self-Esteem	
Higher education	Judaism, Shoah and Israel electives, Hebrew learning, universities with vibrant Jewish life, One-year program in Israel, English-teaching Israeli universities, leadership programs.	Jewish concerns Israel concerns Private identity Public identity	Communal affiliation
		Practices	
Young adult	Social networks, Birthright Israel, Friendship circle, study groups, group visit to Israel, students networks, JCC, cultural habits (music, books, movies, museums, etc.), Israel advocacy, virtual communities, Israeli and Jewish websites, new communities, innovative initiatives.	Communal membership Cultural involvement Philanthropy Jewish causes Tikkun Olam projects	Ethics
Professional life	Federation and synagogue membership, philanthropy, professional links with Israelis and Jews, Israel advocacy, Jewish/Tikkun Olam causes engagement.	Israel Advocacy Study groups Visits to Israel Rituals	Age-to-age relationships
Family life	Choice of spouse, raising children as Jews, residence, community membership, Jewish education, frequent Jewish rituals, Shabbat dinners, Jewish friendship, Israeli and Jewish culture consumption, visits to Israel, old age, mortality.	Spiritual life	Ties to Israel
		Social Networks Friendship circle Professional links Virtual communities	

## 6. Strategies to ensure the thriving of European Jewish communities in 2030

Community leaders can invest their scarce resources in two types of projects:

1. Projects nurturing Jewish identity, connection to local Jewish community, connection to the trans-national Jewish community and connection to Israel.
2. Projects nurturing connection to the general society, taking into account the general concerns of local Jews and non-Jewish residents.

Following is a presentation of four possible alternative prototypes of “pure” strategies. The strategies were created based on the intersection of two axes: the first (vertical) includes Jewish concerns, and the second (horizontal) includes general concerns. The alternative strategies are described later in greater detail.

The horizontal axis: High profile versus Low profile in general concern issues

The photograph of Abraham Joshua Heschel walking arm in arm with Martin Luther King, Jr. in the front row of marchers at Selma has become an icon of American Jewish life, and of Black-Jewish relations. This is in some way what the Los Angeles Jewish federation continues today. Using the strength of their community to promote social justice and volunteerism, the Los Angeles Jewish community together with partner organizations work tirelessly to end hunger and illiteracy in the city. On June 13, 2010, hundreds of volunteers of all ages packed groceries, planted community gardens, cooked dinner for the homeless, gleaned produce at area farmers’ markets, participated in a food stamp advocacy project, and painted a mural at a food pantry. Building bridges with nonprofits, interfaith and inter-ethnic organizations, and government allies in a community-wide movement to end local hunger, LA Jews plant gardens, organize food drives and use their collective voice to influence anti-hunger legislation. Regarding literacy, Jewish volunteers have helped over 18,500 children at over 150 schools learn to read. In addition, they have restocked 15 elementary school libraries and trained more than 9,000 Jewish and non-Jewish volunteers to be “reading partners.” The community is also very involved in “Save Darfur” advocacy and other Tikkun Olam programs.

This positioning certainly has a lot of self-evident advantages. Jews can give expression to their particularistic and their universalistic aspirations, and positioning oneself as

Jewish does not conflict with one's other identities. Identifying as Jewish in the city is perceived positively and many Jews loosely interested in "Jewish stuff" per se also increase their links to community life thanks to these activities of general concern. The community increases its soft power, partnerships and influence and is in a better shape when it comes to defending Jewish causes, fighting discrimination and requesting special benefits.

Are such general concern projects reserved to wealthy communities? In the short term, a poor community might better invest its scarce resources in identity projects, emergency programs, sending kids to summer camps and on Birthright educational trips to Israel. These investments may very well be more cost effective regarding identity impact. In the long term, general concern programs may provide exceptional political and economical leverage and substantial indirect benefits. Anyway, there is a tradeoff between short term guaranteed low rates of return, and long-term high-risk high rates of return.

Can such general concern programs work even when the underprivileged populations are resentful of Jews? Launched by the UEJF French Jewish students organization, the Co-exist concept was to send to classrooms one Jewish student and one Muslim student together to help migrant neighborhood pupils with their homework. Throughout the year, personal links are created between the two teachers and between the underprivileged kids and their multi-faith pair of mentors.

Can such general concern programs work even when the underprivileged populations have a bad image in the general public opinion? The Romas' expulsion from France in August 2010 by President Nicolas Sarkozy's conservative government illustrates such a delicate situation. According to moral judgment, Jews should join Pope Benedict XVI, who has spoken out against the move. However, according to real political immediate interests, radical criticism of the Jewish-friendly French government is hazardous.

Is existing public opinion relevant? In cities where Israel and Jews have a negative image in the media and public opinion, these types of projects can improve the public image, can help bridging with partners, can improve self-image and sometimes be an opportunity for reconnection of disaffected Jews. In anti-Israeli contexts without an anti-Jewish dimension, this category of projects can present opportunities to bridge and develop personal connections with anti-Zionist but non anti-Semitic activists. Radical anti-Semitic environments make such projects impracticable.

The vertical axis: High profile versus Low profile in Jewish concerns and Israel advocacy

Jewish concerns (Jewish identity programs and Jewish advocacy) and Israel advocacy are two different modules that can either come together or exist separately. In this configuration, the community invests its resources in Jewish identity programs, in trip to Israel programs, and in Israel advocacy programs. In certain circumstances, the community can avoid a high profile in Israel advocacy while investing heavily in educational trips to Israel and in Jewish belonging programs.

Systematic pursuit of inexact and tendentious information about Jews and Israel in the media, zero tolerance of anti-Semitic insinuation and zero-tolerance of criticism of Israel's right to exist also belong to this category. Such actions position Jews as vindictive and intolerant and may harm the high positioning of general concerns. Activists who are involved in this type of enterprise are often absent from interfaith dialogue, pro-coexistence, pro-peace and other bridging projects. Theoretically, however, deterrence and reconciliation are two sides of the same coin, and as a matter of comprehensive strategy, the two types of projects are complementary and should be encouraged in a delicate balance (80% reconciliation and 20% deterrence).

Figure 1: EUROPEAN JEWRY: FOUR ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

		Jewish Concerns high			
General Concerns low		<p><b>Hedging strategy</b></p> <p><b>High profile</b> in Jewish and Israel advocacy issues.</p> <p><b>Low profile</b> in issues of general concern.</p>	<p><b>Shaping strategy</b></p> <p><b>High profile</b> in Jewish and Israel advocacy issues.</p> <p><b>High profile</b> in general population concerns (local hunger, illiteracy, social integration, the homeless, Tikkun Olam)</p>	General Concerns high	
		<p><b>Low profile strategy</b></p> <p><b>Low profile</b> in issues of Jewish concern.</p> <p><b>Low profile</b> in issues of general concern.</p>	<p><b>Assimilation strategy</b></p> <p><b>Low profile</b> in issues of Jewish concern.</p> <p><b>High profile</b> in general concern issues.</p>		
		Jewish Concerns low			



## General concerns issues

The four alternative strategies that emerge from the intersection of these two axes are:

- **The Shaping Strategy:** high profile in Jewish concerns, and high profile in general concerns.
- **The Hedging Strategy:** high profile in Jewish concerns, and low profile in general concerns.
- **The Low-Low Strategy:** low profile in Jewish concerns, and low profile in general concerns.
- **The Assimilation Strategy:** low profile in Jewish concerns, and high profile in general concerns.

Even if intuitively, most of us prefer the shaping strategy to the other ones, each strategy has advantages and disadvantages and is appropriate in certain circumstances and contexts.

The Shaping Strategy is therefore to keep a high profile in Jewish concerns as well as in general concerns.

“Do you remember Ken Livingstone [Mayor of London], our ‘very special person’? Ken Livingstone, who invited a certain Imam to Britain twice, whom we didn’t think very highly of. If you remember, on the first occasion, the Jewish community protested, with zero impact. He simply ignored the community and went ahead. On the second occasion, who opposed the visit? Not just Jews. It was a combination of Jews, of Hindus, of Sikhs, of moderate Muslims, of gays and of women’s rights activists and the second time Livingstone just backed down without a fight. That is the power of not seeking to be alone.”

Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks JPR Lecture 7 June 2010<sup>12</sup>

**The Hedging Strategy:** also called “they are all against us,” is a self-segregationist classic Jewish stance. If Jews ignore the pain and suffering of others, others will probably not stand with the Jews when they are attacked. In such situations, Jews may find themselves alone at their Israel parades and, worst than that, in their protest demonstrations against anti-Jewish violence. This strategy works sometimes as a self-fulfilling prophecy, and when it is applied non-Jews progressively distance themselves from Jews. Slightly involved Jews may very well distance themselves from this militant

stance, thus leading to an increased polarity between a core of very dedicated Jews and a majority of Jews who feel more and more reluctant to identify. This strategy has been the classic Jewish strategy across history. In the past, it has shown itself as sustainable but has also resulted in a massive loss of slightly affiliated Jews. Such positioning is definitively imposed on Jews in radical anti-Semitic environments and is sometimes freely chosen by Jews for its psychological convenience. While ultra-Orthodox Jews tend to position themselves deliberately in this ghetto scenario, other Jewish streams, in a somehow complementary manner, step toward the shaping strategy along the right side of the horizontal axis.

**The Low-Low Strategy:** when Jews are a tiny and forceless minority, when the public opinion is unsympathetic to them, when they feel unprotected by the law or threatened by possible retaliation; they may choose to take a discreet stand. This has been, during certain periods, the official stand of Swiss Jewry<sup>13</sup>.

**The Assimilation Strategy:** supports a total privatization of the Jewish component of Jews' identity. Jews do not advance their Jewishness as a major component of their humanitarian motivations and do not act under an institutional Jewish banner, even if they don't hide their Jewish origin in the public arena. Some are highly involved in general concern debates and actions. It has been the "Franco-Judaism" stand and allowed individual Jews access to top-level social positions of influence. In countries like France and Britain, Jewish citizens are achieving much more conspicuous status than ever before. Furthermore, we are now witnessing the ascent of fully fledged Jewish politicians whose ability to serve their countries at the highest levels is no longer taboo (e.g.: note the interesting cases of Dominique Strauss-Kahn in France or David Miliband in Britain).

## 7. Optimistic and negative scenarios: choosing between “hedging” and “shaping” strategies

### OPTIMISTIC SCENARIO

**The shaping strategy choice:** According to an optimistic scenario, in another twenty years, the State of Israel will be strong, will enjoy regional peace, and its economy and security will prosper. European Jews may number 1.7 million instead of today’s 1.3 million. We will witness a reduction in the number of marriages outside the Jewish people; Jewish communities will succeed in preserving their strength and influence and will enjoy lives of creativity, culture and flourishing economic conditions; most Jews will be fluent in Hebrew and the Jewish people will have excellent leadership.

**A self-confident Europe:** Jews in Europe will feel safe and secure regarding their future. Following the election of a charismatic leader, inspired by the Judeo-Christian heritage that shaped a new effective governance system, European Union political and economic integration was achieved in 2020 and economic stability was ensured. Adopting a “European style” moderate and tolerant Islam, the large majority of Muslim migrant descendents have been economically integrated and do not have resentment against Jews. This was made possible by the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the membership offer made by the EU to Israel and the newly founded “Palestine” state, the enthusiastic adoption of the new “Core Democratic Values Code” by the International Muslim Council and the dismantling of radical Islamic states that funded the delegitimization campaign against Israel. A new era of philo-Semitism was born perceiving Judaism as an ethical compass for post-modernity and Israel — being a successful value-driven ethno-religious nation-state — as a model of emulation for Europe.

**Effective communal services:** Thanks to an effective best practices sharing mechanism, setting up effective human resource management bodies, career planning programs for promising future leaders, pre and in-training programs for professionals, European Jewish communities have succeeded in professionalizing their communal services and attract and keep the best and brightest. Every year, dozens of innovative grassroots initiatives are funded and supported by the European Jewish Entrepreneurship Foundation. Young adults are given priority in many communal programs around the motto “we want young Jews to remain Jews.”

**Israel-Diaspora connectivity:** The connection between European young Jews and their counterparts from Israel and from North America has skyrocketed since the adoption by European Jewish communities of the Birthright ONE-YEAR PROGRAM. This program, generated by the Jewish people for the young generation, is accepted as an attractive “rite de passage”. Thanks to this program, every young European Jew – as part of a study abroad program – has the opportunity to spend four months in an Israeli university, four months in an European-American Jewish student exchange program and four months volunteering in a Tikkun Olam program. Israel, aware of the strategic value of its partnership with Diaspora Jews, adopted in 2011 an open-sky policy that allows low cost travel to Israel, and extensively financed this endeavor. The Israel-Diaspora Forum, in charge of the direct dialogue mechanism to coordinate and apply global Jewish people policies, piloted this mega-project.

**Involvement in social justice and volunteerism:** These Jewish identity efforts do not prevent European Jewry from being involved with local, general areas of concern in every local community. By now, Jewish institutions have launched and led hundreds of programs to end hunger and illiteracy in the major European cities. This shaping strategy (high profile in general concern issues, high profile in Jewish and Israeli issues) succeeded to position Jewish communities as the champions of civil cooperation.

## THE NEGATIVE SCENARIO AND THE HEDGING STRATEGY CHOICE

According to a negative scenario, in another 20 years there will only be 700,000 Jews in Europe; immigration to Israel will be insignificant and emigration from Israel will increase; the rate of inter-marriage will continue to rise; the Jewish nature of Israel will be compromised; the Jewish state will carry on in a hostile neighborhood and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction will spread; mutual responsibility will decrease, and Jewish People leadership will decline, becoming mediocre and uninspired. The quantitative fact is demographic decline. Arguments among demographers focus on the rates of decline, with some forecasts gloomier than others, but the fundamental trends – at least among core Jewish populations – are depressingly clear. What is unclear is whether certain Jewish communities will be able to maintain a sufficiently critical mass to sustain even their core members in coming years.

## Open issues for discussion:

### Strategy

- Is the future thriving of our communities our priority?
- Between the shaping and the hedging strategy, what is the desirable positioning?
- What could be the implications – if any – of this positioning shift? Regarding priorities, institutional mechanisms and media strategy?

### External factors

- Is there a space in 21st century Europe for vibrant Jewish communities or only for individualistic vibrant Judaism?
- How will the likely decline in global power and influence of Europe affect Jewish communities?
- Regardless of whether the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be resolved, what will be the impact be of Muslim immigrants' social integration on Jewish life?
- Relationship with Israel – Should Jewish communities identify with Israeli politics? Is what is good for Israel, good for the European Jews? Is the State of Israel a resource or a burden on vibrant Jewish communities in Europe?

### Internal factors

- Does immigration to Israel by the most committed young Jews harm the future thriving of European communities?
- Should we encourage young committed Jews from small communities to relocate?
- Should and could we encourage tiny and declining communities to fuse?
- How might easier conversion procedures impact our communities?
- Is the quasi-monopoly of the Orthodox in French Jewish religious life a desirable situation?

## Endnotes:

1. <http://www.jpr.org.uk/discuss/blog.php?id=23>
2. Scenarios about the future of French Jewry could be found in Shmuel Trigano, French Jewry: The End of a Model of Jewish Identity, April 2007, available in <http://covenant.idc.ac.il/en/vol1/issue2/trigano.html>
3. Dr Sharon Pardo, Director of the Centre of the Study of European Politics and Society (CSEPS) at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU), has suggested an interesting model for an effective pan-European coordination in his article “The new political-organizational challenge of the Jews of the enlarged EU”, available on <http://www.jpr.org.uk/discuss/blog.php?id=25>
4. JPR Israel survey, July 2010, p. 33. <http://www.jpr.org.uk/publications/publication.php?id=235>
5. Based on the JPPI’s report 2030: Alternative Futures for the Jewish People, pp.76 and 107-114, 2010.
6. Fernand Bradel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the age of Phillip II*, Vol. II, Trans. Sian Reynolds, Suffolk 1982, p.820 quoted by in Shlom Salomon Wald, *Jewish Civilization at the Crossroads, Lessons from the History of Rise and Decline*, JPPI edition, Publication pending.
7. See the JPPI’s 2010 report: Muslim anti-Semitism by E. Sivan in collaboration with D. Maimon.
8. Excerpt from the JPPI report *Arevut, Responsibility and Partnership*, p. 91, publication pending.
9. 2010 JPR Israel Survey
10. See Erick H. Cohen (2007): *Heureux comme juifs en France?*, Paris-Jerusalem, Akadem-Elkana editions.
11. Excerpt from the JPPI report *Arevut, Responsibility and Partnership*, pp.92-93, publication pending.
12. Excerpt from the JPPI report *Arevut, Responsibility and Partnership*, p. 95, publication pending.
13. <http://www.jpr.org.uk/downloads/Transcript%20of%20lecture%20by%20Rabbi%20Sacks.pdf>
14. See Simon Erlanger, *Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic Roles of Jews in Swiss Society*, *Jewish Political Studies Review* 22:1–2 (Spring 2010)