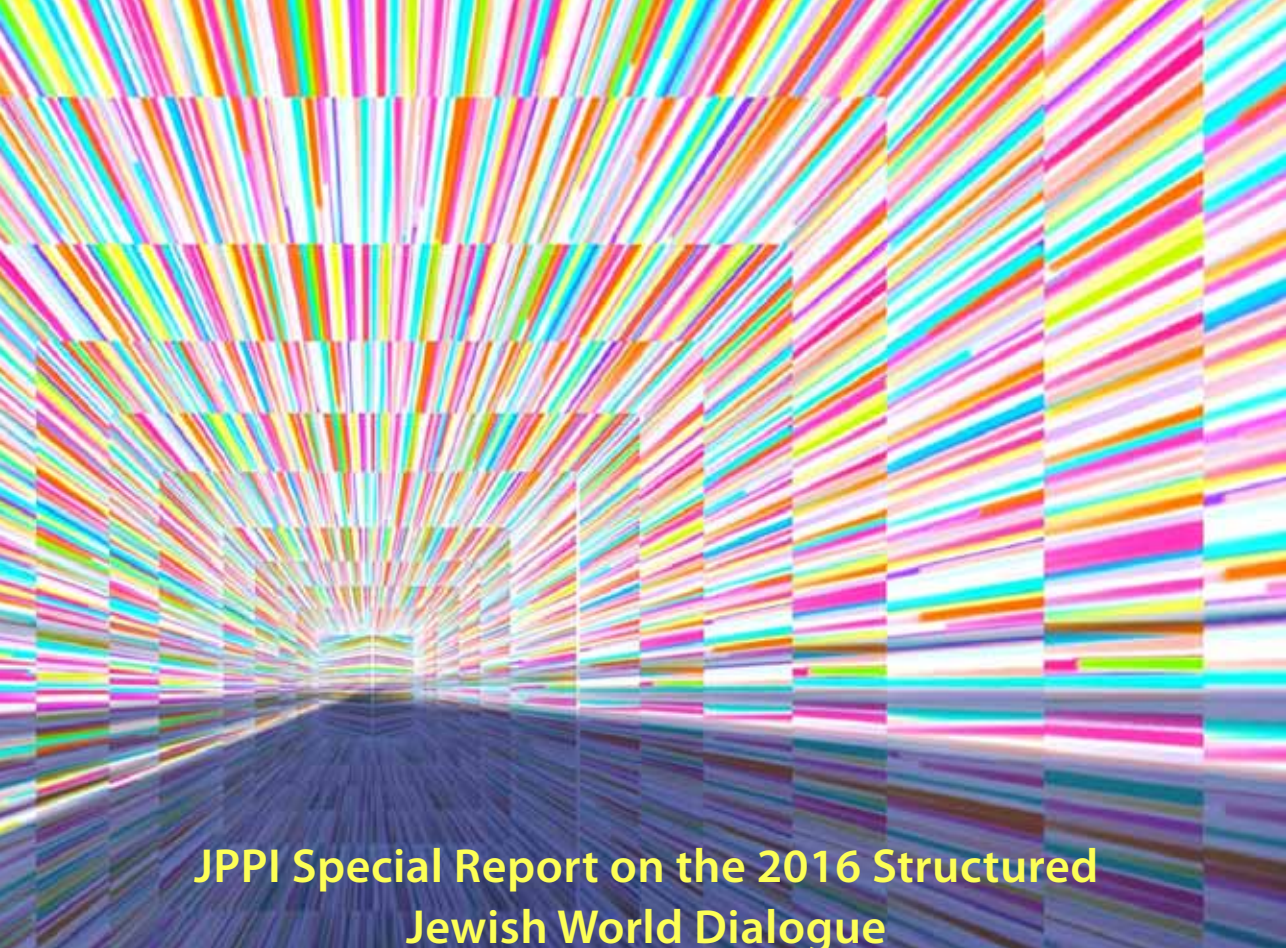

JPPI Special Report on the 2016 Structured Jewish World Dialogue

EXPLORING THE JEWISH SPECTRUM IN A TIME OF FLUID IDENTITY

Project Heads:
Shmuel Rosner | John Ruskay

המכון למדיניות העם היהודי (מיסודה של הסוכנות היהודית לא"י) בע"מ (חל"צ)
The Jewish People Policy Institute (Established by the Jewish Agency for Israel) Ltd. (CC)

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Foreword

This year's Dialogue Process marks the third year that JPPI has been building a structure for a systematic discourse on issues that are at the core of the collective interests of the Jewish people globally. Exploring the Jewish Spectrum in a Time of Fluid Identity, discussing together how the different streams approach Judaism, is a main component of our project on Pluralism and Democracy in Israel and the Diaspora. We are grateful to the William Davidson Foundation for supporting this endeavor and encouraging a deeper understanding among Jews globally.

The 2016 Jewish World Dialogue was co-headed for the first time by an Israeli JPPI Senior Fellow in tandem with an American one. Shmuel Rosner and John Ruskay, representing the two largest Jewish communities in the world, started a personal conversation before widening it to 49 different seminars worldwide. They didn't neglect the smaller communities, which many times present the most difficult challenges.

JPPI's effort to enhance pluralism in the Jewish world has, from its inception, enjoyed the encouragement of Israel's leaders, such as former President Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and JAFI's Chairman Natan Sharansky as well as the participating communities and Jewish organizations abroad. President Reuven Rivlin, who is dedicated to bridging gaps in Israel and world Jewry, launched a tradition with JPPI to bring together representatives of all the streams to study together Jewish texts. The Dialogue is approaching the point when it should culminate in a deeper results-oriented conversation at the highest echelons of leadership on how we should fulfill our common destiny.

The Jewish people is undergoing a period of radical change in its internal dynamics: generational transitions; the promise of some normalization of Israel's situation in the Middle East; a shift in Jewish Identification and sense of community. The external environment of the Jewish people is changing radically as well: globalization; geostrategic shifts; value transformations; scientific and technological innovations; new manifestations of anti-Semitism. All these create new realities and challenges that provide the Jewish people unprecedented opportunities for thriving but also pose serious risks of decline.

Enriching the dialogue in the Jewish world between different communities, streams, and political orientations may help us take advantage of opportunities and avert dangers and threats.

We are continuing in making an effort to internalize and implement the lessons learned from each year of JPPI's Structured Dialogue Process.

I want to thank the Institute's leadership, and especially Stuart Eizenstat, Dennis Ross, and Leonid Nevzlin, who head our Professional Guiding Council, for their continuing commitment to, and support of, our work. Special thanks, once again, to the William Davidson Foundation for its confidence and trust.

Avinoam Bar-Yosef

Main Findings

JPPI's 2016 Structured Jewish World Dialogue reveals a remarkable consensus among engaged Jews regarding the need for the Jewish world to:

Be **inclusive and welcoming** toward all those who seek to participate in Jewish life.

Maintain selective **communal norms** when necessary for practical or symbolic reasons.

Be Inclusive

In virtually every community, participants in JPPI's 2016 Dialogue, many of whom serve in positions of Jewish communal leadership, believe that welcoming all who seek to learn and participate in Jewish structures will strengthen Jewish life. There were scant voices advocating limiting access to Jewish programs. Twenty-five years after the American National Jewish Population Study[1] revealed the substantial increase of intermarriage in an open society, most Jewish leadership groups strive to seed, nurture, and strengthen a broad range of quality Jewish cultural and educational programs and a communal environment that welcomes **all who seek to participate**. Jews around the world also **expect Israel to offer a welcoming environment** to all those wishing to participate in Jewish life and identify with the Jewish people.

Maintain Communal Norms

Along with the consensus on welcoming that emerged in the discussions, there was also a near consensus assertion of the value of **maintaining communal norms in certain areas**; most notably, criteria for senior communal leadership and for the Law of Return.

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1 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. "The fluid character of the American Jewish community is at the heart of the findings." Profile of American Jewry: Insights from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, Sidney Goldstein, American Jewish Year Book, 1992.

Dialogue participants recognize that denominational perspectives and local community criteria will prevail at every level in matters pertaining to membership and participation. Still, it was agreed by most participants that select senior leadership positions, particularly those with symbolic significance, demand a higher level of accepted "Jewishness" norms than does simple participation in activities.

Despite an overwhelming cultural consensus of welcoming inclusiveness, there was a parallel consensus in favor of maintaining certain standards. Said differently, it was acknowledged that individuals are living in an open, fluid context in which their search for identity and meaning is personal, idiosyncratic, and unique; still, the value of sustaining particular collective norms was recognized.

The acceptance is needed both to accommodate current realities, and is also believed by many Jews to be of value in and of itself. The norms are needed to maintain the Jewish people as a collective, and prevent it from disintegrating into a fragmented and diffuse collection of groups and individuals.

Main Recommendations

The following list of recommendations was compiled based on: **A.** Recommendations and suggestions specifically made during JPPI discussions in the communities; **B.** Sentiments expressed in the dialogue, and the recommendations emanating from these sentiments, as JPPI fellows understand them. In other words: The recommendations below do not always reflect the consensus of the community dialogues. But these are recommended steps that many engaged Jews – many among them leaders in their communities – advocate for the Jewish world as it strives to strike the delicate balance needed, as stated above, to accommodate current realities, and keep the Jews as a true collective.

The professional policy directions listed below are those JPPI recommends volunteer and professional policy makers consider (more recommendations can be found in the last chapters of the report itself):

Seed and support programs that reach out to Jews with weak Jewish identities and/or those whose Jewish status may be uncertain but still seek to learn and engage in Jewish life. In this regard, the Government of Israel, Jewish federations,

and philanthropies should continue to invest, both to encourage as many Jews as possible to intensify their engagement with Judaism, and also to create a welcoming environment. Support should be directed to the **broadest range** of Jewish organizations that have record of providing **quality Jewish education**.

- If inclusivity is to be the communal ethos, then **communal leaders** – rabbis, philanthropists, volunteers and professionals – **must become ambassadors** and greeters **for a welcoming community**. The Jewish community will be strengthened and well served with leaders who offer a welcoming hand and recognize the value of providing support to the broadest range of organizations that nurture Jewish identity at each stage of the lifecycle.

Forge a language of best professional practices. Jewish organizations should encourage and support convening volunteer and professional leaders, formal and informal Jewish educators, and Jewish communal professionals to create **communities of practice**, networks for those on the front lines of program development with the goal of developing a common language of best practices in dealing with the broad range of contemporary Jews and Jewish groups.

- Communities would be well served to develop **leadership training** programs so leaders can deepen their understanding of the new milieu and think strategically about how their organizations can most effectively respond to the new challenges and opportunities at hand.
- Encourage the inclusion of **welcoming language and messaging** in organizational marketing materials and websites.

Convene inter-denominational dialogues. Efforts should be undertaken by Jewish organizations around the world and by the government of Israel to convene ongoing inter-denominational interchanges. As late as the 1970s, there were structures that brought together leaders of the major religious streams in North America. Whatever its achievements, having a body that convened religious denominational leaders had symbolic value and vividly communicated that although there are profound differences in how Jews of various stripes understand God, Torah, obligations and far more, we share a common history and destiny. Diaspora communities spend tens of millions of dollars annually on Christian-Jewish dialogue, but little is devoted to intra-Jewish dialogue. Local communities should convene such discussions among senior volunteer and professional leaders, as well as mid-level leaders. The value, in terms of relationship building and learning, can only strengthen Jewish life

during this period of evolving fluid identity.

Inter-denominational dialogue is **especially needed in Israel**, where tolerance toward, and familiarity with, a broad range of Jewish ways of thinking is lacking. Surely, not all Israeli groups will agree to participate in this kind of dialogue, but it is **the duty of official Israel to encourage and facilitate** such interactions for the benefit of the majority of the Jewish people.[2]

Considering the criteria for the Law of Return. Considering cultural and demographic developments in the Jewish world, Israel might consider whether changes in the criteria governing the Law of Return are advisable.

Strengthen the sense of Jewish peoplehood among all members of the community. Jewish institutions, with the possible help of Israel, should look for new ways – in addition to Birthright – to strengthen the sense of what was traditionally known as "nationality" but is more commonly referred to as "peoplehood" today. This is especially important for Jews who do not instinctively feel that kind of connection, including some "Jews by choice," distant Jews, mixed families, partial Jews, and non-Jews who affiliate with Judaism. As our study shows, while connected Jews tend to view **"nationality/peoplehood"** as the main components of Jewishness, there is a growing number of people affiliated with the Jewish world (whether it is "Jews by choice" or non-Jewish members of the Jewish community) who do not instinctively feel a connection to Judaism as a nationality, and see it mostly as a religion. This development makes it necessary to create initiatives that consciously seek to enhance the understanding of the Jewish peoplehood component among all who participate in Jewish life (Jews and non-Jews who affiliate with the community).

Acknowledge those who have cast their lot with the Jewish people. Both Israel and Jewish communities around the world ought to recognize that current demographic realities are changing the internal fabric and structure of the Jewish world and its relations with the non-Jewish world. Thus, Jewish leaders are strongly encouraged to examine ways of acknowledging those who have cast their lot with the Jewish people, in terms of behavior and self-identity, but have not yet undergone conversion and become fully fledged members of the Jewish people.

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2 A promising step in this direction was taken in 2015 and 2016 when President Rivlin in cooperation with JPPI held a Tisha b'Av communal study event at the President's Residence with the participation of representatives from the various Jewish streams in Israel. Energy and vision should be invested in similar efforts.

Introduction

We live in a remarkable period of Jewish history. Decades after the devastation of the Holocaust, the Jewish people has created a remarkable sovereign democratic state in its historic homeland. Outside of Israel, particularly in North America, Diaspora Jews enjoy unprecedented affluence, influence, and acceptance.

A century ago, defining who was a member of the Jewish people was relatively clear. Biology was decisive. Jews were either the children of a Jewish mother or those who converted to Judaism through broadly accepted procedures under Jewish law. Today, while biology remains a significant determinant, it has been gradually eroded as more and more Jews have a non-Jewish parent, family members of Jews see no need to convert, and self-identification is perceived to be the critical component of Jewish connection.

These changes in the larger Jewish tent have policy implications in many areas, among them: how and for whom Jewish resources – Jewish philanthropic resources and those of the Government of Israel – should be used; how best to define membership and the criteria for leadership of Jewish communal organizations; Israel's Law of Return; and far more.

JTS Professor Jack Wertheimer observed that when it comes to the US Jewish community, "questions of personal status have become irrelevant… and the community has no interest in enforcing its boundaries."[3] He continues: "The watchwords today are inclusiveness, pluralism, trans denominationalism, and 'journeys' leading to a 'self-constructed' Judaism tailored to the needs of each Jew." If this accurately describes much of the North American Jewish community, and in somewhat different ways large segments of other communities, Israeli Jews included, then the sovereign individual pursuit of Jewish grounding at times trumps the advantages of having a uniform communal criteria for entry and "membership" in the Jewish people.

This special JPPI report on the 2016 Structured Jewish World Dialogue aims to

3 "All Quiet on the Religious Front?, Jewish Unity, Denominationalism, and Post-denominationalism in the United States", Jack Wertheimer, American Jewish Committee, 2005. Pages 20, 25.

describe the viewpoints of Jews on the contemporary meaning(s) of Jewish belonging.[4] It also aims to outline some of the possible implications of these perceptions for policy making in Israel and in Jewish communities around the world. JPPI recognizes and respects the fact that there are multiple viewpoints and opinions concerning the questions we raised with participants. We also acknowledge the fact that the Dialogue did not, nor could, cover all of these viewpoints.

JPPI's 2016 Dialogue was conducted under the wider umbrella of its Pluralism and Democracy project, which is supported by the William Davidson Foundation. The Dialogue process, an unmediated study of Jewish public positions highly relevant to the Jewish world, comprised 49 discussion groups in Jewish communities around the world. Questionnaires were administered in this framework, and research on the Jewish public as a whole was analyzed – including studies on Jewish populations with thin attachments to Israel, and organized Diaspora Jewish life. Discussions were held, and this report was prepared, in accordance with Chatham House Rules, i.e., participants may be quoted, but without specific attribution. This was meant to ensure open and frank exchanges. Participant names are listed in the appendix. This year we also rely on a wide JPPI survey of Jewish public opinion in Israel conducted in March 2016.[5]

The 2016 Dialogue is the third in an ongoing series. Last year (2015), the topic was "Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict."[6] In 2014, at the request of Israel's Justice Ministry, the Dialogue was a part of an effort to formulate recommendations regarding a possible "constitutional arrangement dealing with

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4 JPPI Senior Fellows Shmuel Rosner and John Ruskay lead the 2016 Dialogue on "Exploring the Jewish Spectrum in a time of Fluid Identity" and are the authors of this report. Important contributions to this paper were made by JPPI's Prof. Uzi Rebhun, Dr. Shlomo Fischer, Dr. Einat Wilf and Noah Slepkov. Chaya Ekstein assisted with valuable research and was in charge of coordinating the seminar process, assembling the data and producing the final report. The report was edited by Barry Geltman and Rami Tal.

5 The survey, conducted by Panels Politics, sampled 1031 individuals. The breakdown of those respondents who self-identified by religious affiliation is as follows: 30.4% secular; 20.8% secular traditional; 22.5% traditional; 4% as liberal religious; 10.3% as religious; and 10.1% as ultra-Orthodox (Haredi). Statistical analysis for the Pluralism Index and the methodological development was led by Professor Steven Popper, a Senior Fellow of the Institute, together with JPPI Senior Fellows: Professor Uzi Rebhun, a demographer; Dr. Shlomo Fischer, a sociologist; Shmuel Rosner; and Noah Slepkov, a Fellow of the Institute. See: http://jppi.org.il/uploads/JPPI%20Pluralism%20Index%20Presentation%20May%208-2016.pdf

6 The report "Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict- Perspectives from World Jewry" can be found here: http://jppi.org.il/news/175/58/Jewish-Values-and-Israel-s-Use-of-Force-in-Armed-Conflict--Perspectives-from-World-Jewry/.

Israel's identity as a Jewish and democratic state."[7] In both cases, JPPI's concluding reports were recognized as significant achievements in advancing the Israel-Diaspora discourse.[8] Prime Minister Netanyahu, in a June 2014 Cabinet meeting, encouraged the Institute to continue with this important and timely endeavor.

Six basic underpinning assumptions served as a launch pad for the dozens of discussions held in March and April of 2016 on *The Jewish Spectrum in a Time of Fluid Identity*:

1. Being Jewish means having a connection to a broadly defined group with certain characteristics or definitions (if there are no definitions, there is no group; if there is no group, there is nothing to connect to).
2. The once-clearer understandings of the contours of the Jewish collective were based on a set of definitions, many of which no longer apply today.
3. This era of "fluid identity" makes the notion of defining (or worse, setting absolute boundaries) who is "in" and who is "out" of the group both unappealing and impractical.
4. Different communities of Jews have varying, at times contradictory definitions of "Jewishness" – this is markedly true in the case of Israel and Jewish Diaspora communities.
5. The erosion of the Jewish world's ability to subscribe to a broadly accepted understanding (if not exact agreement) of the nature of the group has ramifications on cooperation between Jews.
6. It also affects the policies of Israeli governmental bodies and Jewish institutions of many types.

We also note that these assumptions have underlying implications. JPPI has identified four areas likely to be affected; questions pertaining to them were central in community discussions:

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7 The report "Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry" is here: http://jppi.org.il/uploads/jewish_and_democratic-eng.pdf.

8 Media reports about the 2014 Dialogue can be seen here: http://jppi.org.il/uploads/09-07-14%20Selected%20Press%20Clippings.pdf. Reports about the 2015 Dialogue, here: http://www.timesofisrael.com/a-wartorn-israel-directly-affects-diaspora-jewry-so-wheres-its-voice/?fb_comment_id=915104805226877_915535288517162, here: http://forward.com/opinion/317923/israeli-study-finds-jews-fretful-as-israeli-actions-stir-bias/, and here: http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/jewish-world-news/1.667542.

- **Allocation of resources**: The impact of Jewish identity definitions on the ways communities, foundations, and the Government of Israel allocate limited resources for broad programmatic purposes.
- **Legal and procedural issues**: The effects definitions of Jewishness have on Israeli law and institutions (Law of Return, marriage, military service), and to a lesser extent on Jewish communities worldwide (membership in organizations, eligibility to serve in certain roles).
- **Psychological state of the Jews**: Decades after the Holocaust, population figures with respect to the Jewish people certainly matter. How we define inclusion affects the numbers.
- **Sense of Peoplehood**: The group with whom one identifies, and the sense of responsibility felt as a result, is framed by who is (or is not) considered to be part of the Jewish people.[9]

This report describes the context in which our discussions took place, lays out the reasons this topic requires discussion at this time, provides several short reference points, and frames the main questions the Dialogue considered. It deals with questions on which volumes of books and articles have been written, but strives to be relatively short and concise. Our focus is twofold: to give a sense of what Jews think about this issue when presented with certain simple questions, and to present possible practical and conceptual implications that the current state of Jewish zeitgeist might entail. Generally speaking, the report steers away from an elaborate discussion of Jewish history and philosophy.

JPPI would like to thank the hundreds of Dialogue participants, and the many dozens of organizers, moderators, and note takers in the many communities that took part in this process. We hope that this Dialogue, much like the two preceding it, produced an interesting, thought provoking, and useful report. But we also believe that, reports aside, having a Jewish Dialogue on a global scale is a worthy process in and of itself.

9 The establishment of the State Israel and the fight to free Soviet Jewry are two notable examples of recent great group efforts on the part of the "Jewish people."

The Fluidity of Jewishness

Jews of all groups understand that there is growing complexity in defining Jewishness, as a result of fragmentation and secularization, integration, and the establishment of Israel

In JPPI's 2014-2015 Annual Assessment, it was reported that "at the end of World War II, the global Jewish population was estimated at 11 million, since then, through the beginning of 2015, the Jewish people has grown gradually to 14.3 million."[10] It was also noted that these numbers are based on estimates that "combine objective and subjective definitions of group belonging." For Israel, "they are based on Halachic criteria." For Jews elsewhere, they are based on "self-definition." When it comes to Israel, the numbers are totally reliable – the state keeps a record of the number of Jews. When it comes to other communities, the numbers spring from surveys and studies, estimations that rely on the assumption that people accurately acknowledge their affiliations – these are all voluntary numbers, imprecise by definition. It is not possible to strip them of their inherent subjectivity.

Everything in this enterprise of counting Jews is subject to profound questions of identity and meaning. Even the mere decision to use a term such as "belonging" rather than "connection" (as in "connected to Judaism"), "link" (as in "linked to the Jewish people"), "membership" (as in "member of the tribe"), or "attachment" (as in, "attached to Jews elsewhere") comes with a particular significance. Some people might not want to "belong" to the Jewish people but are willing to be linked to Judaism. Others might feel that "belonging" could mean that something has been forced upon them and would prefer the more voluntary sounding "attachment." In the JPPI Dialogue we utilized all these terms interchangeably.

10 JPPI's Jewish People Demography, 2015, see: http://jppi.org.il/uploads/JPPI_2014-2015_Annual_Assessment_English-Jewish_People_Demography.pdf

We did not assign strict ideological meanings to any of them in an effort not to impose any single interpretation on discussants.[11]

Just as JPPI employed specific criteria in determining its own Jewish population estimates, any attempt to count Jews has to grapple with definitional questions and dilemmas. This is because unlike formal and well-defined group signifiers, such as "citizen" or "dues-paying member of a synagogue," there is no unanimously agreed upon definition of Jewishness and what being a Jew necessarily entails. In the Jewish world today "some see 'Jewishness' as voluntary, subject to the decisions and choices of individuals,"[12] while others believe that only "those born to a Jewish mother or those, who after declaring the desire to belong to the Jewish people, undergo a lengthy [Orthodox] conversion process" should be considered Jewish. Of course, the conversion process itself is the subject of much debate. No single conversion procedure is accepted by all Jews as the "gold standard" of measurement or authenticity.

Dialogue participants, across the board, concurred that defining Jewishness has become increasingly complex and problematic. "There are many different definitions of what being a Jew means, and who gets to define it," a discussant in Atlanta said.[13] "Being Jewish today is a choice," a participant in Portland, Oregon, asserted.[14]

Some participants want clearer definitions, to better know what Jewish means, and are frustrated by their inability to find such definition. "Who is Jewish and who is not almost seems arbitrary...," said one Atlanta participant.[15] "Judaism isn't like a fad you just pick up," according to a Leeds seminar participant.[16]

Jews see complexity of definitions all around them. When the Israeli government

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11 There is a difference we could explore between definitions of belonging to a Jewish group and one's understanding of the definition of Judaism itself. This paper and the Dialogue focus on the aspect of belonging, and have less emphasis on the way people interpret Judaism - but such interpretation must be in the background for any discussion of belonging.

12 See: Shmuel Rosner, "Background: Conversion, Between Crisis and Dialogue," JPPI, 2010, http://jppi.org.il/uploads/rosner_Giyur.pdf, and "Working Group: Conversion, between Crisis and Dialogue," JPPI, 2011, Moderador: Prof. Suzanne Last Stone, JPPI Facilitator: Shmuel Rosner, http://jppi.org.il/uploads/Conversion%20After%20the%20Dialogue%20and%20the%20Crisis.pdf.

13 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi

14 Portland seminar, April 18-19, 2016. Notes by Laura Renner Satushek and Caron Rothstein.

15 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi

16 Leeds seminar, March 9, 2016.

counts Jews in Israel it uses a certain definition;[17] the Israeli Rabbinate uses another definition.[18] In fact, "there is no uniform answer to the question 'Who is a Jew?' under Israeli law. Often times, the context determines both the answer as well as the identity of the person providing it," Prof. Ruth Gavison explains.[19] When the Pew Research Center studies American Jews it uses one set of criteria[20] (and another when studying Israel and its Jewish community[21]); other scholars studying the same communities prefer different criteria.[22] In some synagogues, participation in certain ceremonial practices is reserved for people who are, by certain criteria, "Jewish"; in other synagogues, this participation is extended to members of Jewish families.[23] In a 2011 study of Australian Jews, the designation "Jewish household" was limited to those in which both parents were Jewish;[24] in the 2013 Pew study of American Jews, "Jewish households" included those with one Jewish parent.[25] In JPR's 2013 study of British Jews, the survey sample was self-selected and biased toward membership in the established institutions of the community;[26] the 2011 study of Jews in New York was based on "randomly

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17 A Jew is anyone who was born to a Jewish mother or who converted to Judaism, and does not have another religion. See the law for registering citizens, clause 3: http://www.nevo.co.il/law_html/Law01/289_001.htm.

18 The Israeli Rabbinate accepts a person as Jewish if their mother is proven Jewish or if they underwent orthodox conversion that was approved by the Israeli Rabbinate (regardless of whether a person is considered Jewish by the State of Israel). For more details see: http://www.rabanut.gov.il/vf/ib_items/523/נהלי%20רישום%20לנישואין.pdf

19 In a report she submitted to the Minister of Justice, entitled "Constitutional Anchoring of Israel's Vision", Prof. Ruth Gavison wrote: "The contexts of registration, the Law of Return, personal status and other matters are all mixed into the issue of 'Who is a Jew.'" For an English translation of Gavison's report: http://media.wix.com/ugd/ebbe78_0ec5bffcec764721bd2aa1b3e5df8715.pdf.

20 Pew chose to include a wide range of definitions, enabling different readers to include those they see as Jewish. The "net Jewish population" includes those who identify as Jewish on the basis of religion as well as those who say they have no religion but have a Jewish parent or were raised as Jewish and still consider themselves Jewish in some way. See: Portrait of American Jewry, Pew, 2013: http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/sidebar-who-is-a-jew/.

21 "Israel's Religiously Divided Society", PEW, March 2016..

22 Elizabeth Tighe Raquel Kramer Leonard Saxe Daniel Parmer Ryan Victor, "Recoding of Jews in the Pew Portrait of Jewish Americans," Brandeis University, July 9, 2014.

23 See, for example: "What is Your Synagogue's Policy on Opening the Ark?," InterfaithFamily, 2014, http://www.interfaithfamily.com/spirituality/synagogue/What_is_Your_Synagogues_Policy_on_Opening_the_Ark.shtml.

24 See: Dr David Graham, "The Jewish Population of Australia, Key Findings from the 2011 Census," JCA, page 17. It should be noted that the study also counts households of intermarried couples in another section of the study.

25 Pew's 2013 survey of U.S. Jews, page 25.

26 See: "Jews in the United Kingdom in 2013," JPR, page 41.

selected Jewish households."[27]

At times, definitions reflect a professional understanding of the ways Jews conceptualize their identity (**who we are**). An Israeli participant complained that "Judaism is not like fans of a basketball team, and anyone who wants to be a fan can join. It is a group with clear categories and rules, for someone to be part of the group it needs to be in accordance with these rules."[28]

At other times they reflect ideological criteria for how Jews should conceptualize their identity (**who we ought to be**). "Boundaries help to provide definition, but even boundaries need a level of permeability for survival. Think about human skin as a metaphor," a participant in a Portland seminar said.[29]

At other times still, they are a reflection of pragmatic considerations (what definition is **good for the Jews**). In a Boston discussion group there was a debate: "Several participants felt strongly that self-identifying as Jewish shouldn't turn you into a Jew and doesn't qualify that person for certain leadership positions. However, some disagreed strongly with this and noted that some self-identifying Jews who are welcomed do indeed convert."[30]

Identity definitions often derive from compromise and a long process of fine-tuning – such is the case with Israel's current understanding of who is a Jew.[31] In other cases, definitions are based on unambiguous decisions made at a particular point in time – for example, Reform Judaism's 1983 "patrilineal descent" ruling ("The Central Conference of American Rabbis declares that the child of one Jewish parent is under the presumption of Jewish descent. This presumption of the Jewish status of the offspring of any mixed marriage is to be established through appropriate and timely public and formal acts of identification with the Jewish faith and people").[32]

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27 See: "Jewish Community Study of New York: 2011," UJA-Federation of New York, page 253.

28 Ein Prat, Israel seminar, December 31, 2015. Notes by Inbal Hakman

29 Portland seminar, April 18-19, 2016. Notes by Laura Renner Satushek and Caron Rothstein.

30 Boston seminar, April 19, 2016. Notes by Alex Thompson.

31 Prof. Ruth Gavison offers a detailed description of the process in her paper: "60 Years to the Law of Return: History, Ideology, Justification," Metzila Center, 2009 [Hebrew].

32 See resolution adopted by the CCAR: "The Status of Children of Mixed Marriages," 1983. http://ccarnet.org/rabbis-speak/resolutions/1983/status-of-children-of-mixed-marriages-1983/.

Why is the definition of Jewishness more complicated today than in the past?[33]

For many generations, only two paths were open for a person to be considered Jewish: Jewish decent (matrilineal)[34] or conversion that included a standardized set of procedures (circumcision, ritual bath, approval by a Beit Din (a Jewish court)).[35] Some internal developments disrupted those ancient conditions and made the current understanding of Jewishness much more fluid – but before we specify them it is essential to understand that these developments are first and foremost a result of the **Jewish response to developments in the non-Jewish world**. As a discussant in Leeds acknowledged: "The outside world plays a large part in how we ourselves regulate our own Judaism"[36].

For many generations the only way for a Jew to belong to the general society was through conversion to another religion. This changed with the era of emancipation, nationalism, and secularity – and opened new venues of belonging (or not belonging) for Jews unavailable in the past. So much so, that a participant in a Portland seminar remarked: "What a privilege to be this free, in this era, to ask this question!"[37] But this is not just about the freedom to choose, it is also because the daily lives of Jews today are much more integrated into the larger societies in which they live (and into the global non-Jewish society). Hence, they are much affected by the main trend in the general Western society, many of which weaken religious and other group affinities, such as the growing aversion

33 Definitions were complicated in the past too – but mostly in the distant past. Fluidity of Jewishness and complexity of definition, the characteristics of the Jewish condition today, characterized the Jewish condition in the days from the Maccabees and the Mishnah, as Shaye J. D. Cohen shows (From the Maccabees to the Mishnah, Westminster John Knox Press).

34 Arthur J. Wolak, "Ezra's Radical Solution to Judean Assimilation," Jewish Bible Quarterly, 40: 2, April 2012, pp 93-105.

35 See for example Shaye J. D. Cohen, The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties, (California: University of California Press, 1999), Chapter 7: The Rabbinic Conversion Ceremony, pp 198 – 238.

36 Leeds seminar, March 9, 2016.

37 Portland seminar, April 18-19, 2016. Notes by Laura Renner Satushek and Caron Rothstein.

to being categorized in ways formerly acceptable and commonplace.[38]

"Traditional denominationalism is on the decline and there is a concurrent rise in the number of people unwilling to align with a denomination," concluded a 2005 survey of young Americans.[39] A similar trend exists in all of the Jewish world: Young Jews increasingly reject what they perceive as attempts to "label" them, or box them into discrete categories of identity. "We can do without the labels," a relatively young participant told his seminar colleagues in Dallas.[40] One participant went even further: "Labels are an insult. It is a way to tell people that they are not as good [Jews] as other people."

"The task of coming up with a definition [of Jewishness] is more complicated today because many folks have 'plural identities'; they identify as both Jewish and someone else," a Boston participant said.[41] "Everything today is shaky, you can be a non-believing Jew, a Jew who keeps tradition differently," one young Israeli said.[42]

It is possible to bundle the main developments of change into three main groups:

Processes of **fragmentation** and **secularization** have weakened the identification of many Jews with specific religious components of Judaism, and consequently weakened all specific religious definitions traditionally associated with Judaism.

The **integration** of Jews into larger Western societies (especially in the United

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38 In many Western countries, the percentage of those who affiliate themselves with any particular religion is dropping: in the U.S., a Pew report from 2012 shows that the "religious nones" are on the rise – 20% of all U.S. adults are religiously unaffiliated, a rise of 15% from 2007. There is also a noticeable generation gap: 32% of millennials are unaffiliated as opposed to 15% of people aged 50-64. http://www.pewforum.org/2012/10/09/nones-on-the-rise/#growth. Similar trends are apparent in other Western countries: In the 2011 UK census, nearly 25% responded that they have no religion, an increase of 74% from the 2001 census. See http://www.jpr.org.uk/documents/JPR_Jews_in_the_UK_in_2013_NJCS_preliminary_findings.Feb.%202014.pdf. This does not necessarily reflect a drop in religion; a vast majority of respondents still said that they 'believe in god'- it could reflect a change in approach: religion has become more fluid than in the past – as each person can choose which, if any, religion to be affiliated with. See for example Steven M. Cohen, Jacob B. Ukeles, and Ron Miller, "A Special Case of America's Fluid Boundaries at Work," Jewish Data Bank, November 2013, and Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell, American Grace: How religion Divides and Unites Us, (New York: Simon and Schuster paperbacks, 2012).

39 See: Roger Bennett, Erin Potts, Rachel Levin, "OMG! How Generation Y is Redefining Faith in the iPod Era," Reboot, 2005 http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=331.

40 Dallas March 8, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

41 Boston seminar, April 19, 2016. Notes by Alex Thompson.

42 Ein Prat, Israel seminar, December 31, 2015. Notes by Inbal Hakman.

States) has resulted in a sharp rise in the number of mixed (Jews and non-Jews) families.

The **establishment of Israel** as a Jewish state, in which Jewishness has legal and practical implications beyond religious beliefs and communal belonging.

Let us specify:

The integration of Jews into Western societies has had a practical consequence that cannot be ignored. Since the Haskala, the borders and boundaries between Jews and the broader society have increasingly diminished.[43] These boundaries, which had previously been set and enforced by strong social norms (both within Jewish communities themselves and the surrounding societies) and maintained Jewish cohesiveness, "came tumbling down."[44] As a result, young Jews have increasingly married non-Jews, and the number of families in which one parent is Jewish and the other is not has grown dramatically. So much so, that in the United States this year it is estimated that about a half of the new generation of young adult Jews comes from mixed families.[45] By Orthodox Halachic criteria, many of these young people are not, in fact, Jewish. However, as we will show in more detail, only about a quarter of this year's Dialogue participants accept this strictly matrilineal criteria demanded by Halachic orthodoxy. That is to say, it seems that most Jews, for obvious reasons, wish to include those who self-identity as Jews and/or participate in Jewish life. (At the other end of the spectrum, there are many non-Jews born to Jewish parents the community has no intention or ability to coerce into membership unless they express interest in opting back in).[46] To do so necessitates a rewriting of the rules of community membership, which, in fact, is taking place. Otherwise, the community of Jews will shrink rapidly – a result very few would find desirable.

A weakening of the religious content of Judaism is reflected in many public

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43 Obviously, this process did not take place in all countries at the same time, and the 20th century was one in which these boundaries, in certain areas, were dressed in a new, chilling, meaning.

44 This is markedly true in the U.S. but also, to an extent that depends on time and place, in many other western countries.

45 The 2013 Pew report shows that 48% of millennial Jews come from intermarried families. http://www.pewforum.org/2013/12/03/infographic-survey-of-jewish-americans/ See also Professor Leonard Saxe's interpretation "The Sky is Falling! The Sky is Falling!," Tablet, December 3, 2014, http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/187165/pew-american-jewry.

46 According to the 2013 Pew study there are 2.4 million non-Jews of Jewish background in the U.S.. http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/chapter-1-population-estimates/.

opinion polls of Jews.[47] Most Jews today do not fully adhere to a set of practices and laws that define them as a coherent group with similar day-to-day behaviors. They do not observe Shabbat in a certain way, they do not observe Jewish dietary laws (two-thirds of Israeli Jews say they keep kosher at home, compared to about a quarter of Jewish Americans[48]), and, perhaps more importantly, they do not accept rabbinical authority or Halachic texts as the ultimate arbiters of proper conduct. As an institution of rabbinical authority, the Israeli rabbinate has a meager approval rating – less than 30 percent of Israeli Jews say they trust the rabbinate "much" or "quite a lot."[49] As a component of Judaism, just 19 percent of American Jewish adults say that observing Halacha is "essential to what being Jewish means to them."[50] They do not automatically accept all traditional Halachic definitions of Jewishness (more about this later). And their reasons are emphatically held. A participant in Baltimore argued, "There needs to be a normative definition of being Jewish that will stand the test of time. The Halachic definition is 1800 years old."[51] An example of this departure from previously established criteria is Reform Judaism's acceptance of patrilineal descent – a decision taken more than 30 years ago.[52] Another departure from orthodoxy can also be seen among many Israeli Jews, who believe that an Israeli soldier fighting for his people is fully Jewish, even if, according to Halacha, his father or mother is not.[53] That is why a participant in a seminar in Israel asserted, "Sociological conversion should be accepted as a type of conversion."[54]

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47 Pew 2013: Only 15% of respondents from the net Jewish population said that Judaism is mainly a religion, and an additional 23% said it is both a religion and ancestry/culture. See: http://www.pewforum.org/files/2013/10/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey-overview.pdf.

48 Pew 2016, page 47.

49 See: The Israeli Democracy Index, 2014, Tamar Herman et al, The Israel Democracy Institute, page 38.

50 Pew 2013, page 14.

51 The quote is from a letter sent to JPPI's Shmuel Rosner, following the seminar in Baltimore. We quote in this report some letters of this sort that were sent by participants who wanted to add more thoughts that they did not have to express during the discussion.

52 Dr. Sylvia Barak-Fishman, "Patrilineal Descent in American Reform Judaism," JPPI, March 2013. See: http://jppi.org.il/uploads/Fathers%20of%20the%20Faith-%20Three%20Decades%20of%20Patrilineal%20Descent%20in%20American%20Reform%20Judaism.pdf.

53 Shmuel Rosner, "The Ultimate Conversion," NYT, July 9, 2013. See: http://mobile.nytimes.com/blogs/latitude/2013/07/09/the-ultimate-conversion/?referer=.

54 Hashlama, Israel seminar, February 24, 2016. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

The establishment of the State of Israel introduced further complications to an already complex modern picture of Jewishness. Israel, as a sovereign body, has to have certain well-defined criteria for belonging to the Jewish people (this criteria has the capacity to change over time). This is because Jewishness has legal and practical implications for Israel. It has implications for Israelis themselves – what school they go to, are they under clear obligation to serve in the military, who marries them, etc. It also has implications for Diaspora Jews: Are they eligible to make Aliyah according to the Law of Return? It has implications for the future of the state – keeping Israel a Jewish state is contingent on keeping it a Jewish-majority state. So Israel must have definitions, and these definitions are not (and some would argue, could not be) acceptable to all Jews.

The result of all of these processes is that Jews are found in different shapes and forms, some of which are new, some of which challenge the understanding of other Jews, and some of which break traditions that have existed for many hundreds of years. Obviously, there are still many Jews who conform to at least somewhat traditional definitions: born to a Jewish couple (or mother), raised as Jews, see the value in being Jewish, intending to pass along their "Jewishness" to the next generation, etc. These are the Jews who do not seriously challenge the system. But alongside them, many new types of Jews thrive and enrich the Jewish world.

Jews of no religion: The term "Jews of no religion" originates from the world of sociology. It describes a growing group of Jews – about a quarter of all Jews in the United States – about a third of young Jews – who do not answer affirmatively "Jewish" when asked their religion.[55] Although they profess no religion, they still identify as Jewish in some ways. They present unique challenges to the Jewish world, both pragmatic (how does one make a Jew of no religion a more active member of the Jewish community) and conceptual (because these Jews seem to be beyond a certain consciousness pale of belonging). JPPI's Dr. Shlomo Fischer summarized this challenge succinctly: "This group, Jews of no religion, accepts their Jewishness as a matter of fact, like having blue eyes. It does not enjoin much of a sense of solidarity or any

55 Jews of no religion (JNR) – are "those who say they have no religion but who were raised Jewish or have a Jewish parent and who still consider themselves Jewish aside from religion" including 1.2 million Jews - 22% of the net Jewish population, 32% of millennial Jews. See Pew, 2013 chapter 1: http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/chapter-1-population-estimates/

normative commitment to the welfare or continuity of the Jewish people or to Jewish culture."[56]

Self-declared Jews: In a 2011 study of the Jews of New York, a very small group of Jews made itself more conspicuous: self-identifying Jews whose parents are not Jewish and who have not undergone any form of official conversion.[57] These people usually have a Jewish family member – a spouse or a grandparent – but the path leading them to Judaism is not one the Jewish people has traditionally recognized. These individuals clearly exemplify the belief – very much in line with core liberal values – that the individual should be the one deciding what he or she wants to be. If they say they are Jewish, can the community say otherwise?

Partial Jews: As more and more Jews around the world (Israel is an exception) establish families with non-Jewish spouses, there is a concomitant increase in the number of people declaring themselves to be "partially" Jewish – again, a formulation almost unknown to previous generations of Jews.[58] Partial Jews can be Jews brought up with more than one religion (Jewish and something else), they can be Jews with non-Jewish spouses, deciding to exercise two religious affiliations,[59] or they can be Jews who identify solely with Judaism, but do not see themselves as "fully" Jewish (generally because they have a non-Jewish parent). For some of these Jews the "partial" is a fact of life; for others, it is an ideology.[60] While, generally speaking, Jewish streams and organizations do not encourage partial Jewishness, and in some cases even encourage their

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56 Shlomo Fischer, "Who are the "Jews by Religion" in the Pew Report?," The Times of Israel, November 2013. "If we are to adopt interventions regarding Jews not by religion, we must realize that moving from a matter of fact, descriptive ethnicity to sacred, normative ethnicity would seem to involve some kind of conversion experience. It is a change in the very essence of one's Jewishness." For the full article see: http://jppi.org.il/news/146/58/Who-are-the-%EF%BF%BDJews-by-Religion-%EF%BF%BD-in-the-Pew-Report/.

57 See: "Jewish Community Study of New York: 2011," page 37. http://d4ovttrzyow8g.cloudfront.net/196904.pdf.

58 Pew 2013, chapter 1: 600,000, or roughly half of the Jews of no religion self-identified as "partly Jewish" http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/chapter-1-population-estimates/. Although there is less concrete data from other countries, there are many people self-identifying as Jewish to some degree, such as the former-Soviet Jews in Germany. See: http://www.rothschildfoundation.eu/downloads/jpr_germany_english_language.pdf page 9.

59 At least in the U.S., most partial Jews do not have dual religious identity; they have no religion at all, but consider themselves "partially" Jewish.

60 Susan Katz-Miller, Being Both: Embracing Two Religions in One Interfaith Family (Boston: Beacon Press, 2013).

members to make a more coherent choice (of one religion), the reality is that there is a growing sector of partial Jews. In fact, most intermarried parents do not tell their children that they are "Jewish."[61] This could definitely motivate Jewish communities to have welcoming policies toward partial Jews and include them as part of the larger Jewish world.

Behavioral Jews: These are individuals who do not necessarily declare themselves to be Jewish, but who live their lives as Jews, among Jews. In many cases they provide their children with Jewish education, and are well integrated into a Jewish community. The phenomenon is most conspicuous in Israel,[62] where hundreds of thousands of immigrants, eligible for Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return, are not Halachically Jewish, but live their lives alongside all the other Jews of Israel.[63] Many, but not all, Jewish Israelis would not rule them out as prospective spouses,[64] and the limitations they encounter in their daily lives are few, and in the eyes of many too insignificant to justify the long process of rabbinate-authorized conversion.

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61 See: Shmuel Rosner, "Most children of intermarriage aren't told they are exclusively Jewish," Jewish Journal, October 2015. And also: "Millennial Children of Intermarriage: Touch points and Trajectories of Jewish Engagement," Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, 2015.

62 Some instances of sociological Jewishness can be found in other communities as well. See a series of articles by David Landau, "Special report: Judaism and the Jews," The Economist, 2012.

63 As of 2014, there are 346,000 Israeli citizens registered as "others" – who are either non-Arab Christians, other religions or do not have a religion in the Israeli Ministry of Interior. See Netanel Fisher, The Challenge of Conversion to Judaism in Israel: Policy Analysis and Recommendations, (Jerusalem: The Israel Democracy Institute, 2015), p. 42. [Hebrew] http://www.idi.org.il/media/4150085/The_Challenge_of_Conversion_to_Judaism.pdf.

64 Menachem Lazar of Panels Politics ask Jewish Israelis how would they react had their offspring decided to intermarry. 20% told him that they would "gladly" accept it, 24% would simply "accept". A small majority of 52% would object or strongly object to such marriage, but the majority of opponents is more religious and older than the significant minority (44%) of accepting Israelis. See: Shmuel Rosner, "How Many Israelis Would Gladly Intermarry? Quite a Few…," The Jewish Journal, June 2014.

Possible Impact on Policies

The meaning of Jewishness today is, of course, a subject of great intellectual interest and cultural curiosity. But its implications for the practical world of Jewish communities, organizations, philanthropists, and the State of Israel could be significant. These implications could arise in four possible forms:

Implications for the allocation of resources by communities and philanthropists. The Jewish world today is invested in a great variety of programs aimed at strengthening the Jewish identity of young and old alike. Some of these programs are large and highly ambitious, others are more modest. Some of these programs have a clear ideological bent and, hence, a specific constituency. Others are more pluralistic in nature. But almost all of them are aimed at Jews, or at people close enough to Jewishness to be considered appropriate for Jewish identity building. In whom should Jewish communities (or Israel) invest?

Of course, there are many different answers to this question. They depend on how Jewish leaders and professionals understand the current situation as well as on their beliefs and ideologies. For example, the initiators of a program aimed at Jews of no religion might ask if there is a viable path for strengthening their Jewish identity? And they might also ask if they wish to strengthen a stream of no religion within the Jewish tent? Whatever the answers to these questions, they have to take into account the meaning of Jewishness as a starting point for the process of determining where resources are best directed, and for whom funded programs should be designed. It could be argued, that a clearer definition that is acceptable to most institutions could improve the way the Jewish world invests in its future – because it would make investments and goals more coherent. But one could also make a counter argument: A broadly accepted definition could inhibit the ability and inclination of Jewish institutions to invest in a variety of programs aimed at a variety of people.

Legal consequences for Israel and voluntary Jewish organizations. In Israel, Jewishness has practical meaning – for example, the state-sanctioned religious

authority under which couples can marry (there is no civil marriage in Israel).[65] As mentioned above, a (different, non-halachic) definition of Jewishness has practical meaning not just to Jewish Israelis but also to non-Israeli Jews – as in the definition at the heart of the Law of Return.[66]

Legal definitions are not usually associated with Jewish institutions outside Israel. However, in the case of determining Jewishness they could be considered, in a broader sense, to also have consequences. For example, there are Jewish institutions in which certain roles (for example, members of certain synagogue committees) are reserved for Jews. Or the fact that only Jews by a certain definition are eligible to become rabbis in all institutions currently conferring ordination. And again, these institutions are making their own determinations about whom they consider "Jewish," and these determinations vary greatly from one institution to the other. Still, the starting point for all of these institutions is similar to the one underlining JPPI's study: They need to decide what they consider to be "Jewish" in this time of fluid identity.

Psychological consequences: Jews count. And we do so continually. To be sure, this is understandable for a people that lost a third of its members just 70 years ago, and a people that constitutes a tiny minority in all places except Israel. In addition, demographers agree that the arithmetic is clear: as a percentage of world population the Jewish people is in numerical decline, which is likely to continue.

These facts impact the Jewish state of mind. In Diaspora communities Jews worry about maintaining their status as a valued and significant minority, and in Israel Jews want their state to remain Jewish, not in name only but also as a numerical majority. There are Jews for whom a definitional loosening would have disheartening consequences, and, conversely, there are those for whom stricter definitions might have dire consequences. Obviously, if the number of

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65 Many Israelis who are secular or traditional and not orthodox do not want to change the legal situation, and would leave matters such as marriage in the hands of the Orthodox Rabbinical establishment. Generally speaking, in Israel there is a well-known phenomenon of the "Secularist Orthodox" – namely people for whom the proper synagogue (to which they rarely go) is an Orthodox one.

66 The Law of Return does not apply to Jews only, but also to certain relatives of Jews. But there has to be a Jewish connection along the way for a person to be eligible to immigrate to Israel according to the Law of Return - and hence, the argument that the definition of Jewishness has practical meaning for this purpose stands.

Jews is important, the definitions under which these numbers are determined are also important. Hence we count. But after we count, there are often fierce debates among policy makers and demographers over the efficacy of the various demographic studies. And more often than not, these debates are about the criteria for determining who is eligible to be counted as a Jew.

Implications for "peoplehood." The group with whom one identifies, and the sense of responsibility felt as a result, is framed by who is (or is not) considered to be part of the Jewish people. Most Jews understand that finding a single, strict, and binding definition of Jewishness in today's world may be impossible. Then again, many still hope that a certain level of understanding and agreement is within reach. One possible motivation for reaching a consensus understanding is the realization that if the Jewish world becomes so fragmented that one Jewish group can no longer recognize another Jewish group as "Jewish," the result will be an irreparable schism of the Jewish people (they are those who would argue that this already happened to some degree).

Such splits have occurred in Jewish history, and could occur again. They could be of even greater consequence if the definition acceptable to the Jewish state becomes too remote from what is acceptable to non-Israeli Jews. This could amount to an unbridgeable conceptual gap between the Jewish state and half of the Jewish people (that is, of course, unless most Diaspora Jews become Israelis – and then again, even in this unlikely scenario it would be asked: Which "Jews"?).

Our aim for the 2016 Dialogue was to try and clarify some of the implications on policy that current trends have, and to generate recommendations based on the exploration of this topic with groups of engaged Jews all over the world. Specific chapters dedicated to the implications on each of the above mentioned fields appear later in this report.

What are the Main Components of Jewishness?

Dialogue participants consider Peoplehood and Culture as the main components of Judaism – more than Religion and Ancestry. Accordingly, they value caring for other Jews more than keeping the laws of the Torah.

"What is Judaism?" is the underlying question for those seeking to explain what "Jewishness" means to a variety of Jews from different backgrounds and armed with different beliefs. In this study it is not our ambition to definitively answer such a complex and loaded question. Rather, our goal is to shed some light on what some Jews say about the meaning of Judaism and their definition of it.[67]

In both the Dialogue survey and JPPI's Pluralism in Israel survey we asked respondents to rank the importance of four definitions that could explain what Judaism means to them. The exact question in the Dialogue survey was: "To what extent is each of the following aspects of Judaism a primary component of Jewishness: Religion; Culture; Genealogy; and Nationality\Peoplehood? (1 means that the category is "not at all" a primary component of Jewishness, and 5 means the category is "very much so" a primary component of Jewishness.)[68]

A word of caution: Because when we asked about "religion" or "culture", we did not define the terms but rather relied on the personal meaning each participant attaches to these terms, we must take into account the subjectivity involved in understanding terms such as "nationality," "religion" and "culture."

That said, we still believe that how Dialogue participants ranked these four terms is telling: "culture" and "nationality\peoplehood" ranked highest. The

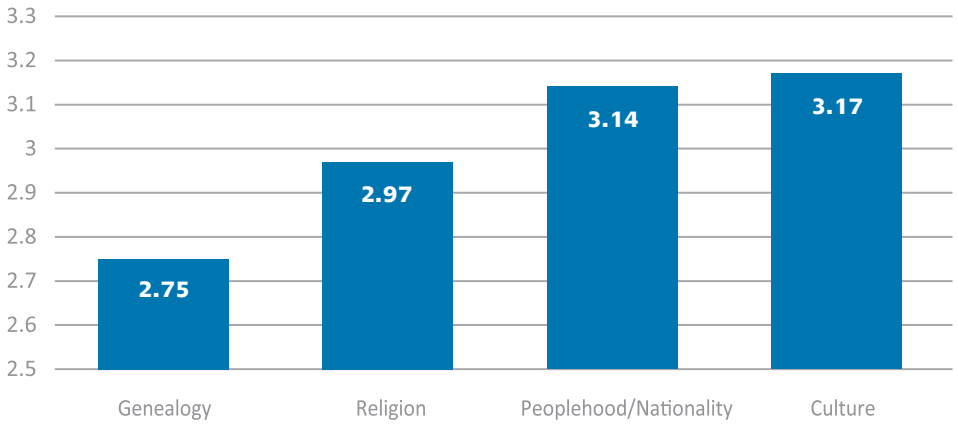
67 For a short discussion of the question "what is Judaism" and the ways to approach it, see: The Jews: Frequently Asked Questions, Shmuel Rosner, from page 13 (Dvir and Beit Hatfutzot, 2016, Hebrew).

68 The survey asked respondents to rank the categories on a scale of 1-5, and all graphs showing the responses of participants are on a scale of 1-5. However, in order to compare to other surveys, all graphs showing the mean of the responses have been adapted to show the division of responses on a scale of 1-4.

more traditional definitions – religion and genealogy – lagged behind. So a first impression clearly points to the possibility that Jews today feel more comfortable with definitions of their Jewishness that are compatible with non-religious, non-traditional lives.[69] And this is the case, as a Dialogue participant in Philadelphia noted, even when the criteria of belonging to Judaism they follow is religious in nature: "We are using religious definitions to be a part of a nation of a people. Yet many are part of this people, who have no feeling of religion."[70]

Means for the question: To what extent is each of the following aspects of Judaism a primary component of Jewishness?

On a scale of 1-4, 1 = "not at all" and 4 = "very much so"[68]

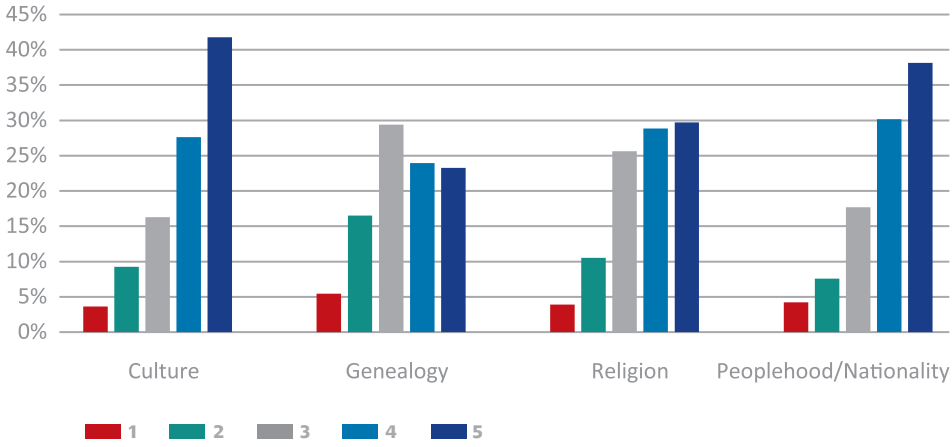


69 Jews in America (and half of Israel's Jews) tend to be more secular than members of other religions. "They are secular, in terms of their beliefs & religious participation. About as religious as non-churched Christians" (See: "Does Political Liberalism Undermine Jewish engagement? Implications for Research, Education and American Jews", Steven Cohen, presentations to Network for Research in Jewish Education).

70 Philadelphia seminar, April 18, 2016. Notes by LaJonel Brown.

How participants ranked the categories: To what extent is each of the following aspects of Judaism a primary component of Jewishness?

On a scale of 1-5, 1 = "not at all" and 5 = "very much so"



Similar examinations of Jewish ranking of these categories is available to us in studies of Israeli and North American Jews, the two communities that together constitute the vast majority of Jews.[71] JPPI's Pluralism in Israel survey of early 2016 included a question very similar to one of the Dialogue survey questions.[72] The two Pew Research Center studies of Israel (2016) and of US Jews (2013) included a different question on the same topic.[73]

What we clearly see in all these reports is that:

1. **Nationality is by far the most important identity component to Jewish Israelis.** Eighty-one percent ranked Le'om (nationality) as being either "highly significant" or "somewhat significant" (56 and 25 percent respectively);

71 See: JPPI, annual assessment 2015: http://jppi.org.il/uploads/JPPI_2014-2015_Annual_Assessment_English-Jewish_People_Demography.pdf

72 The pluralism survey asked about religion, ancestry, nationality (but did not had peoplehood attached to it) and culture. It used a 1-4 scale rather than a 1-5 scale.

73 While the JPPI survey asked participants to rank four options, the Pew report on Israel included three options from which to choose: religion, nationality and culture. The report in English was erroneous in translating the Hebrew word that means "nationality" (in the original question in Hebrew: עניין לאומי) to "ancestry". In this report we refer to the question as it was asked in Hebrew. The Pew survey of Jewish Americans had religion, culture and ancestry. Thus, exact comparisons between the U.S. and Israel based on the Pew questions is impossible, even though Pew did include such comparison in the report on Israel.

Culture ranked second (76 percent, 42 and 34 percent respectively); Religion was ranked third (68 percent, 45 and 23 respectively); and Motza (ancestry\ genealogy) was ranked last (42 percent, 19 and 23 percent respectively).

2. **Religion is not the main component of Judaism:** A minority of both Jewish Americans and Israelis consider Religion to be the main component of Jewishness. The two Pew studies showed that only 22 percent of Israeli Jews regard Judaism mainly as a religion; the number drops to 15 percent for Jewish Americans. An attempt to interpret Judaism solely as religion (to make it compatible with modern realities in which Diaspora Jews live) would not resonate with the current generation of Jews.

3. **Orthodox put more emphasis on religion:** Orthodox respondents thought **religion** to be the main feature of Jewishness, ranking it higher than the other identity components.[74] This is seen in the Pew studies, and also in JPPI's Pluralism in Israel survey in which "totally secular" Israeli Jews rated Religion 2.15 (on a 1-4 scale of importance); 3.05 for "secular somewhat traditional." For religious Israeli Jews Religion rated a 3.75 by National Religious (Dati-Leumi) respondents, and 3.88 by Haredi respondents).

It is important to mention that "totally secular" Israeli Jews tended to rank all options lower than other Jews overall, both in Israel and elsewhere. "Totally secular" Israeli Jews constitute approximately a third of Israel's total Jewish population – 32 percent according to JPPI's Pluralism in Israel survey.

74 Interestingly, the Dialogue survey shows that "non-denominational" participants ranked "religion" quite high (3.02) in comparison to the Orthodox participants (3.23). Seculars ranked religion as low as Israel's secular from the Pluralism in Israel survey (2.49, 2.51).

Pew Surveys: Percent of Jews in U.S. and in Israel who say being Jewish, to them personally, is mainly a matter of...

	Religion	Ancestry/Culture	Both
U.S. Jews	15%	62%	23%
Orthodox	46%	15%	38%
Non-Orthodox	11%	68%	21%

	Religion	Nationality/Culture	Both
Israeli Jews	22%	55%	23%
Orthodox	60%	10%	30%
Non-Orthodox	11%	68%	20%

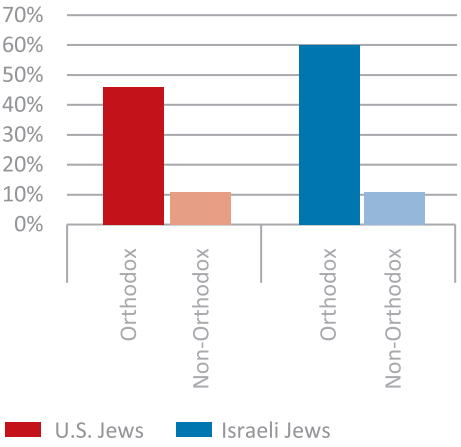
JPPI's 2016 Dialogue Survey (U.S. participants): To what extent is each of the following aspects of Judaism a primary component of Jewishness, mean response on a scale of 1-4, 1 being not at all important, 4 being very important:

	Religion	Nationality/ Peoplehood	Culture	Genealogy
U.S. Jews	3.07	3.2	3.06	2.8
Orthodox	3.32	2.9	2.51	3.32
Non-Orthodox	3.02	3.26	3.13	2.71

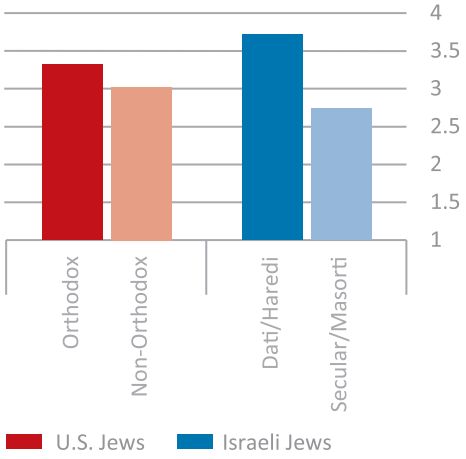
JPPI's 2016 Pluralism in Israel survey: To what extent is each of the following aspects of Judaism a primary component of Jewishness, mean response on a scale of 1-4:

	Religion	Nationality	Culture	Ethnicity
Israeli Jews	2.99	3.32	3.12	2.99
Dati/Haredi	3.72	3.56	2.95	2.27
Secular/Masorti	2.74	3.24	3.18	2.30

Pew surveys: percent of Jews in U.S. and in Israel who say being Jewish, to them personally, is mainly a matter of religion:

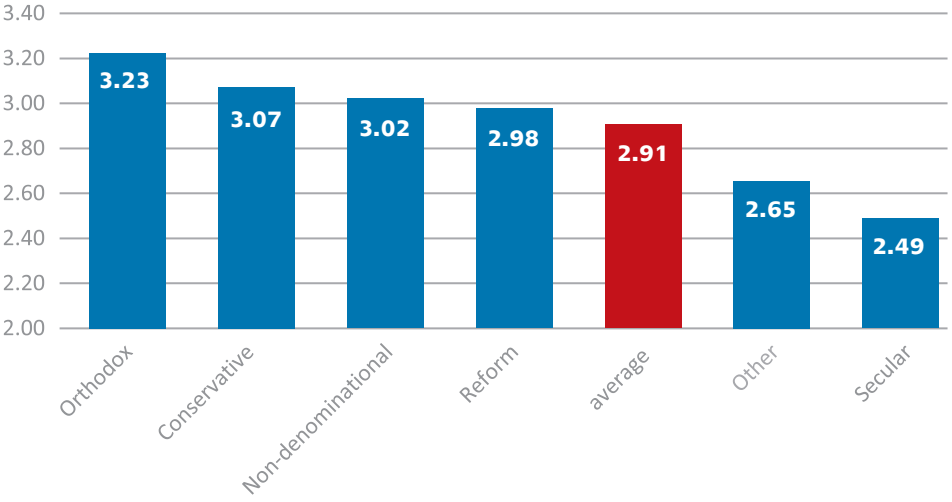


JPPI surveys: To what extent is religion a primary component of Jewishness? Mean response on a scale of 1-4:



To what extent is religion a primary aspect of Jewishness?

Mean response on a scale of 1-4, 1 = "not at all" and 4 = "very much so"



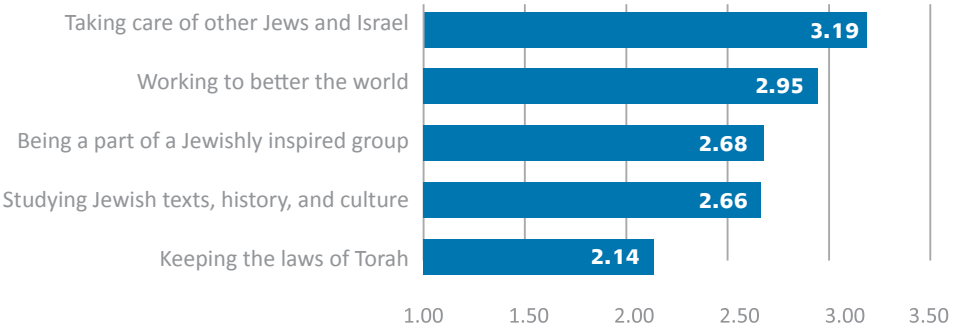
In addition to the relative value of four main components of Judaism, JPPI asked all Dialogue participants to identify the actions they consider "essential for being Jewish." Five actions were offered in broad terms without elaboration. That is to say, participants were not asked about particular deeds that often appear in surveys, such as "lighting Shabbat candles" or "attending services" or "going to a Jewish day school." They were, instead, asked to rank five broad fields of Jewish expression:

1. Keeping the laws of the Torah
2. Working to better the world
3. Studying Jewish texts, history, and culture
4. Taking care of other Jews and Israel
5. Being a part of a Jewishly inspired group

In ranking these five fields of activity, Dialogue participants gave us another layer with which to understand what Jewishness means to them. Here is how they ranked these fields and how their ranking of the five fields in this question corresponds with their ranking of the four components of Judaism in the earlier question:

To what extent are the following components essential to being Jewish?

On a scale of 1-4, 1 = "not at all" and 4 = "very much so"



The comparatively low ranking of "keeping the laws of the Torah" [75] (except for the Orthodox) clearly corresponds with the tendency of Jews to consider the "religious" component of Judaism as less important than other components. Interestingly, not even among the Orthodox was "keeping the laws of the Torah" overwhelmingly predominant as an essential to being Jewish.[76] In fact, Orthodox respondents more highly rated "studying Jewish texts." And their ranking of "taking care of other Jews" was even higher; more than 40 percent of them gave it the highest possible ranking.

The relatively high ranking of "taking care of other Jews and Israel" should not come as a surprise: if Jews, as we have seen, value "nationality\peoplehood" more than "religion" (and Israeli Jews value it more than any other component of Judaism), then it follows that they would rank "taking care of Jews" above "keeping the laws of the Torah." A Dialogue participant in Pittsburgh put it this way: "The Jews are first and foremost a people and they need to take care of whom they consider other members of the people, and this does not mean that their worry for the rest of the world is less valued. You can be a caring person, a loving person, and still care for your family more than you care for other people."[77]

Caring for other people – other than Jews – is indeed important for many Jews. "Working to better the world" was the second most important Jewish activity for Dialogue participants. It was somewhat more important for Diaspora Jews than to Israelis (for Brazilians it was the most important[78]), as other surveys, including Pew's two surveys of Jews in the United States and Israel, have arguably shown.

According to Pew: "U.S. Jews are more likely than Israeli Jews to say leading an ethical and moral life is essential to their Jewish identity (69 vs. 47 percent); the same is true of working for justice and equality (56 vs. 27 percent)."[79] Although

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75 The gaps between the categories are not always very wide, but this is partially a result of the way the question was framed. Each participant ranked each category on the scale, and since few participants would rank any of the components as a 0 or a 1 the result is a scale in which all categories amount to something. The above Pew graph is an example of what happens when Jews are asked to choose between categories, rather than rank all categories. In such case, the gaps are much more pronounced.

76 Only about half the Orthodox ranked it a 4 or a 5 (out of 5).

77 Pittsburgh seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

78 When comparing the percentage of participants that ranked each of the activities at 4 or 5 (on a 1-5 scale).

79 "Israel's Religiously Divided Society", Pew 2016, page 62.

not an exact match to JPPI's phraseology "working to better the world," all three correspond with the notion of Tikkun Olam familiar to most Jews. That in JPPI's Dialogue survey "caring for other Jews and Israel" tops Tikkun Olam, even among most non-Israeli Jews, while the Pew survey shows that North-American Jews prioritize "leading a moral life" and "working for justice" over "caring about Israel" is due to both survey language differences (caring for Jews vs. specific focus on Israel) and the differences in sample composition. Dialogue participants are much more likely to high priority to Israel than the "average" Jew polled by Pew.[80]

At least for some of the Dialogue participants there was hardly any tension between the tribal notion of caring-for-Jews and the more universal caring-for-the-world notions. Participants in several Dialogue sessions explicitly expressed a desire for partnership between all Jews to "better the world" – as a participant in Washington put it: "What if instead of looking for artificial ways for connection we connect by doing Tikkun Olam together as a group?"[81] So for these participants what might be seen as a challenge becomes, in fact, an opportunity.

80 The number of times non-Israeli Dialogue participants traveled to Israel compared to average Jews is telling. For the numbers, see the appendix.

81 Washington JPPI seminar, April 11, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

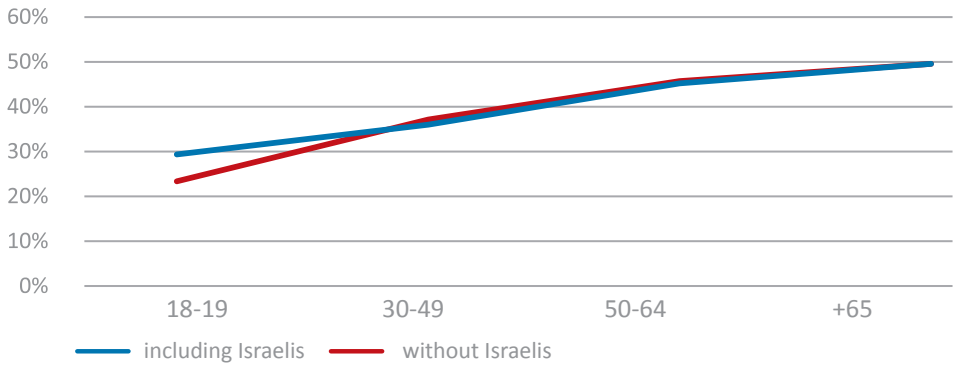
What are the Main Components of Jewishness? (younger vs. older)

A lot of discussion in recent years has been dedicated to the differences between older and younger Jews on various matters, including – especially in the case of Diaspora Jewry – generational differences in reading identity issues and approaches to Israel. We also know that the composition of age groups is becoming increasingly disparate, as a result of late marriage, low birth rates, and high rates of intermarriage.

The Dialogue survey captures some of the generational differences, and, in some of the discussions we saw these differences come to life. Young participants expressed views somewhat more radical than those of their elders, and young participants answered some of JPPI's questions markedly differently than older cohorts.

For example, as we look at the ranking of the four components of Judaism, it is clear that younger Jews – even though Dialogue participants tend to be relatively committed Jews – put slightly less emphasis on the national component of Judaism than their older colleagues. Overall, they still consider nationality and peoplehood important components of Judaism, but the younger they are, the less they consider it worthy of the highest ranking (5 on a 1-5 scale). This becomes especially pronounced when we exclude the Israeli respondents from the survey sample, and examine the views of Diaspora Jews by age cohort:

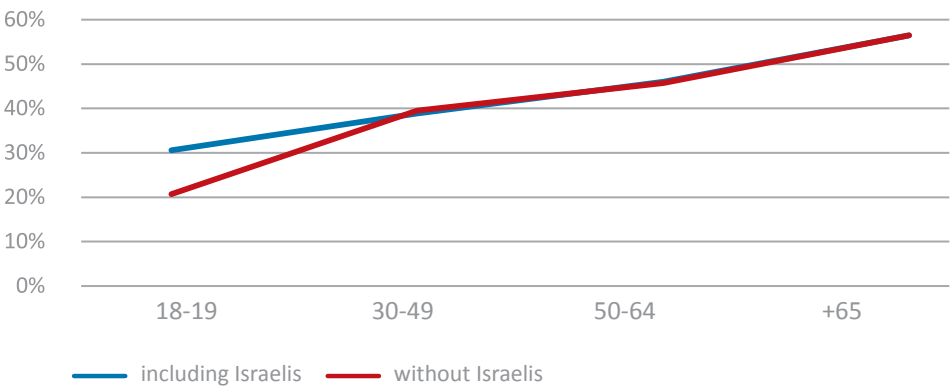
Peoplehood/Nationality as a primary component of Jewishness:
percent of respondents within each age group who chose "5"



A similar result is evident in the relative ranking of "taking care of other Jews and Israel." As mentioned earlier, this is the Jewish activity most valued by Dialogue survey respondents. However, when examined by age cohort it is yet again clear that the younger the participant, the less his or her tendency to rank this activity highest (again, 5 on a 1-5 scale). While more than half of JPPI participants 65 years old or more ranked "taking care" as 5 – the highest possible – less than a third of the youth cohort (18-29 years old) found "taking care" worthy of a 5.

Of course, one ought to consider the possibility that the difference in ranking is due to inherent "life-cycle" differences – that is, younger Jews may develop a deeper sense of peoplehood as they age – rather than a generational shift – that is, younger Jews will remain less attached to peoplehood throughout their lives. Some past studies have shown that life-cycle changes occurred in previous generations.[82] But this is not proof that the same dynamics will occur for the current generation of young Jews as a higher percentage of them come from mixed families which corresponds to weaker connection to the peoplehood-nationality component of Judaism.

Taking care of other Jews and of Israel is essential to being Jewish:
percent of respondents within each age group who chose "5"



82 See: Sasson, Theodore, Charles Kadushin, and Leonard Saxe, "Trends in American Jewish Attachment to Israel: An Assessment of the ''Distancing'' Hypothesis", Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, 2010. Also see: "The Challenge of Peoplehood: Strengthening the Attachment of Young American Jews to Israel in the Time of the Distancing Discourse", Shmuel Rosner and Inbal Hackman, JPPI, 2011.

What is the Main Channel for Belonging?

Jews value Peoplehood and Culture more than Religion and Ancestry – and yet, when asked to consider who is a Jew, most of them turn to definitions based on religion and ancestry

There are at least four prisms through which one can understand the meaning of Jewish belonging: **ancestry, sentiment, behavior, and belief**. Each of these prisms corresponds to more than one of the four components of Judaism we identified earlier: religion, genealogy, culture, and nationality. For example, religion combines sentiment, behavior, and belief (but not necessarily ancestry), nationality might include ancestry, sentiment, and behavior (but not belief).

Each of these prisms also interacts with many other sub-categories and provides more parsing ground. Here are some examples:

If a connection to Judaism is an expression of a **biological fact** (or having undergone a conversion), then a person does not have to act in any particular way to be Jewish. He or she just is. Many Jews have ancestry in mind when they think about connection to Judaism, as a participant in Brazil said: "To be a Jew there are, and there must be, only two ways, through the womb or through conversion done by the different denominations."[83] But to say this does not mean they view connection to Judaism as based solely on the ancestral criteria – many still think that additional criteria apply to make this connection vital or meaningful. "As a Jewish community, we are too hung up on someone's parents rather than the individual's behaviors regarding and commitment to the Jewish community," an Atlanta participant said. And he did not necessarily intend to suggest that the "parental" criteria be eliminated, but rather that focusing on the ancestral factor alone does not guarantee active membership in the Jewish community at large.[84]

If belonging to Judaism rests on **self-identification**, an ancestral link might not

83 Salvador seminar, March 29, 2016. Notes by Dr. Alberto Milkewitz.

84 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi.

be necessary, nor other manifestations of Judaism. "You can't deny someone his belief. If they feel connected that is enough, their feeling of self-identity is the most important factor," a young Dialogue participant contended.[85] Another participant was in basic agreement, with reservations. "When talking to people, I go by self-definition, but that is not a practical way to work as a system."[86] The feeling of connection to the Jewish civilization, or one of its elements can vary – it can be a national sense of connection to a people, or a spiritual sense of connection to the Jewish religion, or a personal sense of connection to a Jewish family member that translates into a sentiment of belonging to Judaism or the Jewish people (and it can also be all of the above, and then some).

If belonging to the Jewish people is **dependent on particular behaviors** – observing rituals, attending a Passover Seder, or supporting Israel – then this is an entirely different matter. And, of course, in the case of behavior, many sub-categories exist. The behavior can be related not only to *Mitzvot* and support for the Jewish collective, but also to cultural behaviors – studying certain texts, or Israeli folk dancing, or watching a Woody Allen film etc. We also ought to consider if and how a certain action (being actively anti-Israel?; printing anti-Semitic propaganda?) could result in banishment. "Without demonstrating commitment to Judaism, you can feel Jewish in one minute and non-Jewish in another minute," said a Boston participant, highlighting the importance of behavior.[87] But what is the exact nature of "Jewish behavior"? Today, this is not easy to define, as various studies of Jewish behavior have shown. There are Jews who light Shabbat candles, and those who do not. There are Jews who keep Kosher and those who do not. There are Jews who are members of a Jewish community and those who are not. Et cetera. There is no codified list of behavior that makes a person Jewish.

If membership in the "Jewish tribe" requires a person to **believe in certain things**, for instance, a certain God or the Torah from Sinai, this will raise many questions regarding Jews who do not believe these things. Naturally, the area of belief can be positively framed – Jews believe that Israel is a Holy Land, or "believe in Jewish values and philosophy."[88] It can also be negatively framed – Jews cannot

85 Shnat Netzer seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Inbal Hakman.

86 Bina seminar, December 16, 2015. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

87 Boston seminar, April 19, 2016. Notes by Alex Thompson.

88 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi.

believe that there is no God (rarely argued), or believe that Jesus is the messiah. The Jesus factor was brought up in many community conversations: "Many groups mentioned Jews for Jesus as the limit of who they want to include – they are already clearly out."[89] Whatever it is, if "being Jewish is your belief – it is very personal" – and in that case it cannot be determined by an "objective" definition, as a member of a discussion group of young adults said.[90]

Of course, these categories are not mutually exclusive. Many Jews believe a person must embody both ancestry and particular behaviors to belong, or behaviors and beliefs, or sentiment and ancestry and behavior – or all other conceivable combinations of these four prisms. It is also well established that, much like the case with questions about the essence of Judaism (culture, religion etc.), Jews also do not always agree on questions regarding belonging criteria. On one hand you have Jews who believe, "The Orthodox Halacha gives strict and clear parameters about who is a Jew, and that is what kept us as a people all this time. Deciding to give up the rules is dangerous," as one young Israeli Dialogue participant claimed.[91] On the other hand you have Jews who believe, "The traditional ways of gauging Jewishness like adherence to Halacha or dues-paying members of synagogue and other organizations is an antiquated idea," said an Atlanta participant.[92]

In JPPI's Dialogue survey, about 15 percent of respondents insisted on a "combination" of answers to the question "whom do you consider to be a Jew?" – even though the instructions were to pick a single criterion. Tellingly, most of these participants chose the category "lives an active Jewish life" as one of the two criteria they chose. That is to say: even if their criteria for Jewishness relies on one of the other options, they still want the Jew to do something with his or her Jewishness – not to be a Jew in name only, or as a fact only. "What is a Jew? is more important than who is a Jew?" a Portland Dialogue participant asserted.[93] This means that a portion of the Jewish world (as seen through the lens of the Dialogue[94]) might be reluctant to value the inactive Jewishness of the

89 The quote from a summary by JPPI's Chaya Ekstein based on report from Cleveland, Miami, Detroit, Portland, St. Louis.

90 Masa seminar, February 2, 2016. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

91 Ein Prat, Israel seminar, December 31, 2015. Notes by Inbal Hakman.

92 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi.

93 Portland seminar, April 18-19, 2016. Notes by Laura Renner Satushek and Caron Rothstein.

94 Counting both 13.91% for "active" and 14.63% for "combination".

growing share of people that the research calls "Jews of no religion" – who show little inclination to demonstrate any active connection to Jewishness other than a general declaration that they are somehow Jewish.[95] Those Jews who have "a sense of 'ordinary' or 'descriptive' ethnicity..." but do very little or even nothing that is "Jewish" in their lives.[96] Jews not by religion "express relatively little interest in any aspect of Jewish life – not in religious ritual, not in national identification, and not in communal engagement."[97]

To clarify (this topic will reemerge in a later chapter on "levels of Jewishness" Jews apply to different situations): Jews do not wish to exclude inactive Jews from the Jewish world. In fact, the opposite is true. In almost every community JPPI surveyed, a clear call for inclusion and diversity was heard. "Inclusion is our reality today," a St. Louis seminar participant said.[98] In Australia, a participant argued: "At the entry level of engagement it is important to remain open and inclusive so as not to scare potential members of the community."[99] Another Australian said: "We strengthen the community by being inclusive, not restrictive."[100]

The four options JPPI offered Dialogue participants when we asked them determine the criteria the connection of individuals to the Jewish world, correspond with four possible modalities of connection to Judaism:

1. A person who decides s/he is Jewish ("sentiment");
2. A person born to a Jewish mother ("belief" –see the footnote for clarification[101]);
3. A person born to a Jewish parent ("ancestry");
4. A person who lives an active Jewish life ("behavior").

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95 PEW 2013 found that "90% of Jews by religion who are currently raising minor children in their home say they are raising those children Jewish or partially Jewish. In stark contrast, the survey finds that two-thirds of Jews of no religion say they are not raising their children Jewish or partially Jewish – either by religion or aside from religion". It also found that "Jews of no religion have grown as a share of the Jewish population and the overall U.S. public".

96 See: Who are the "Jews by Religion" in the Pew Report?, Shlomo Fischer, JPPI, 2013.

97 See: 'Jews Not by Religion': How to Respond to American Jewry's New Challenge Shmuel Rosner, JPPI, 2013.

98 St. Louis seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Cyndee Levy.

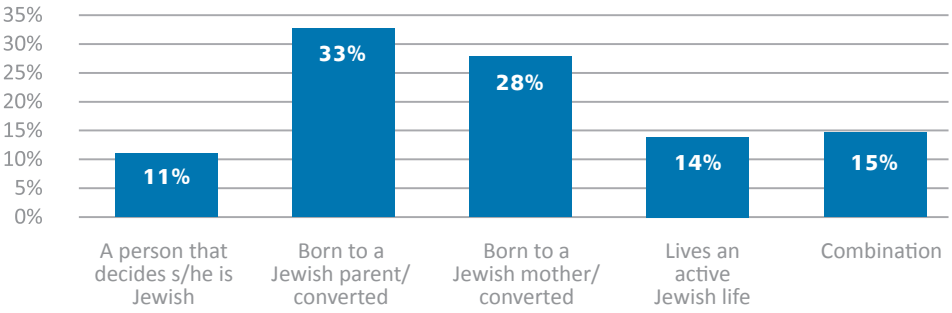
99 NSW Australia Seminar, March 31, 2016. Notes by Teneille Murray.

100 Melbourne seminar, March 21, 2016. Notes by Eileen Freed.

101 Born to a Jewish mother can reflect both "belief" and "ancestry" – as in the case of Orthodox Jewish halacha the two go hand in hand. The same is true for those who chose "Jewish parent" who might mean both "ancestry" and "belief". But in these cases case we assume that "Jewish mother" reflects a tendency to consider Orthodox halacha as a main arbiter of Jewishness, while "Jewish parent" reflects an instinctive sense of tribal belonging by family connection and not consciences reliance on "halacha" (but this can be a matter of debate).

Interestingly, the largest portion of JPPI participants believed non-Halachic religious criteria (Jewish parent) to be the definitive determinant of Jewishness, with the second largest group making the Halachic religious criteria (Jewish mother) the key determinant of Jewishness.[102] That is to say, there is something of a disconnect between how these Jews rank the most important components of Judaism ("religion" and "genealogy\ancestry" as the least valued), and the way they define criteria for belonging to the group of Jews (Jewish mother or parent, which is religious\ancestral criteria).

Whom do you consider to be a Jew?



This becomes even more confused when we examine what many JPPI Dialogue participants stated emphatically when asked about these issues. There was a clear discomfort with the notion of describing Jews as a group that is defined by blood (ancestry) or religion, and it was clear throughout the discussions that many Jews much prefer to view the Jewish collective as united by values or culture. Many place enormous value in self-definition and are reluctant to accept any dictated "rules" or "criteria" for belonging. And yet, in the survey these tendencies are downplayed, and allow space for a communally-agreed-upon criteria, whether ancestral (born to a Jewish parent or mother) or behavioral (Jewish engagement).

Here is what Jews said in various discussions:

"How does a ceremony change what you believe?", asked one Detroit participant, professing a preference for personal choice over religious conversion.[103] "A feeling

102 Only Reform Judaism refers to a Jewish parent rather than to the mother. Here we make Orthodoxy and Conservative Judaism – the two halachic "streams" – into one group.

103 Detroit seminar, March 9, 2016. Notes by Gail Greenberg.

of Jewish is essential to being Jewish," a participant in Zurich argued.[104] "We strengthen the community by being inclusive, not restrictive," a Melbourne participant said, echoing the sentiment of many.[105] "We want to grow the community so we should welcome those who self-identify," a Cleveland seminar discussant said, and in the same seminar another said, "It doesn't feel like a Jewish value to exclude people."[106] In Australia a participant said: "A Jew is not defined only according to strict a Halachic definition, we should recognize patrilineal descent, and being part of an active Jewish family, and community engagement as critical to the definition of who is a Jew."[107] In Brazil: "If we only accept the genetic heritage, most of the members of the Jewish People wouldn't prove to be Jews."[108]

Yet looking at the survey data, we can see that these statements did not reflect a common understanding by a majority of participants. When choosing the criteria of belonging in our survey, the instinctive tendency of many participants was to revert to the traditional denotations of connection. The answers were more reflective of statements such as, "You can't self-define as a Jew if the community doesn't accept you," heard in Leeds.[109] That is to say, the survey answers clearly ranked the "restrictive" options – born to a Jewish parent – above the "inclusive" options – self-definition or being Jewishly active. A participant in Cleveland defined his dilemma with succinctly: "Culture says 'come join us'; religion says 'not so fast,' how do we reconcile the two?"[110]

Denominations and beliefs matter: secular Jews, more than other Jews, view self-definition as the proper determinant of Jewishness (17 percent, compared to the average of 11 percent among all Jews). A survey of Israeli Jews from a few years ago had shown that secular Jews (at least when it comes to Israeli secular Jews) are less interested in the question "Who is a Jew?" to begin with: "Orthodox respondents expressed the greatest interest, followed by Haredi respondents and Traditional respondents (86, 79, and 72 percent, respectively). Secular and anti-religious respondents were much less concerned by it (47 and 20 percent,

104 Zurich seminar, May 4, 2016. Notes by Guy Spier.

105 Melbourne seminar, March 21, 2016. Notes by Eileen Freed.

106 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

107 South Australia Seminar. Notes by Merrilyn Ades

108 Brazil seminar. Notes by Dr. Alberto Milkewitz.

109 Leeds seminar, March 9, 2016.

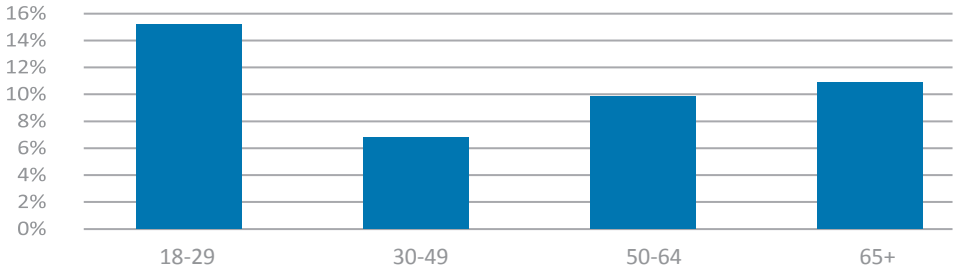
110 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

respectively)."[111] Thus, their preference for "self-definition" can be seen as springing from a general belief in personal choice, rather than a nuanced understanding of the complications of Jewishness.

Geography matters: In Israel, more respondents chose "Jewish mother" (the familiar normative reality), while in America, Australia, and Brazil more chose the non-gender- specific "Jewish parent." It is interesting to compare the Israeli data from JPPI's Dialogue to the Guttman-Avichai survey in which 40 percent of Israeli Jews accept as Jewish "the child of a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother," and 33 percent accept a person who "feels Jewish but his/her parents are not."[112] Brazil was the country with the highest emphasis on active engagement, with 27 percent considering this the deciding factor of Jewishness.

Age matters: The youngest age cohort is most ready to accept self-definition as the deciding factor of Jewishness. "You can't deny someone his belief. If they feel connected that is enough, their feeling of self-identity is the most important factor," a young non-Israeli participant said at one of JPPI's discussions in Israel.[113] Still, the percentage of young participants choosing that definition was low (15 percent), compared to 29 percent for a Jewish parent, and 27 percent for a Jewish mother. Also, the trend line is not steady – the frequency of the self-definition answer is not strictly inversely proportionate to age.

Percent of participants who responded that they would consider as Jewish any person who decides that s/he is Jewish (by age)



111 "A Portrait of Israeli Jews Beliefs, Observance, and Values of Israeli Jews", the Guttman Center for Surveys of the Israel Democracy Institute for The AVI CHAI–Israel Foundation, 2009, page 17.

112 What explains most of the difference is the nature of the question: in the JPPI Dialogue the participants were asked to make a choice between options, while Guttman-Avichai asked them separately about each choice. Still, the number of Israelis accepting self-definition according to Guttman-Avichai is quite striking compared to the percentage of JPPI participants accepting such norm (4.92% among Israelis).

113 Shnat Netzer seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Inbal Hakman.

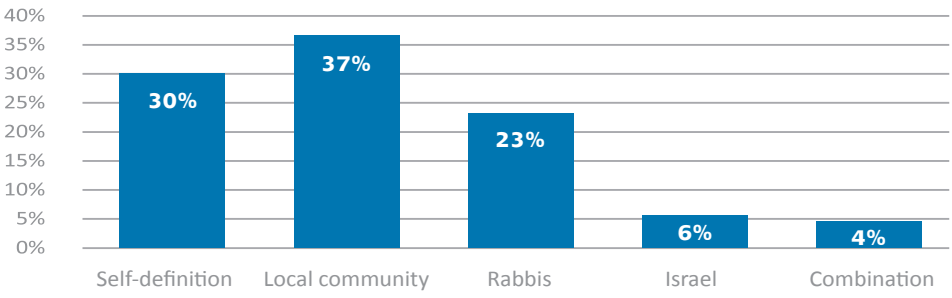
The Question of Authority

Jews tend to prefer personal decisions and local institutions as the arbiters of Jewish belonging. Thus, global Jewish agreement on this subject would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to achieve

One of the main challenges for those examining the contours of any Jewish community, or of the Jewish people writ large, is that of authority. There is no Jewish body that has the authority, the mandate, or the legitimacy to determine for all Jews what a Jewish "people" entails or means. This – as a participant in an Atlanta seminar put it – creates a situation where "who is Jewish and who is not almost seems arbitrary...."[114]

hen JPPI seminar participants were asked: "Who should determine who is Jewish?" more than a third chose the "local community" as the proper arbiter of Jewishness. "Self-definition" – that is, a determination made by the person himself\herself rather than by a larger group – was fairly close behind. Again, this presents a case of confused contradiction: in the previous chapter we saw that fairly few Jews consider "self-definition" a sufficient criterion for Jewishness, but when it comes to authority, the tune changes. Many Jews want that right of self-definition reserved for the individual. They are less inclined to forgo the authority of the autonomous individual to make room, for official authorization by "rabbis" (assuming – probably the wrong assumption – that they could ever agree on a definition) or "Israel."

Who should determine who is Jewish?



114 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi.

The tension between the two definitional possibilities – individual self-determination on one hand and determinations that conform to some collective authority (a local community, Israel, or rules made by rabbis) on the other – was evident throughout the process. "You can't self-define as a Jew if the community doesn't accept you," said a British participant.[115] "In each community the community should decide who to accept – and in Israel, in many ways, the state is the community," an Israeli participant concurred.[116] In contrast, a participant in Cleveland said: "We want to grow the community so we should welcome those who self-identify."[117]

The issue of "self-definition" was debated in many communities, and it was not uncommon for participants to change their attitudes and opinions over the course of a discussion session. The practical and philosophical complications that "self-definition" creates became clearer as different scenarios and dilemmas were presented to participants. In a seminar in Tel Aviv, a participant said: "When talking to people I go by self-definition, but that is not a practical way to work as a system."[118] A participant in a New York seminar initially advocated for self-definition by arguing that "I am Jewish because I belong to the Jewish community – that is the only test" – yet he later acknowledged that to belong to the Jewish community means that the community also must accept him. So it is more a communal decision than self-definition.[119]

As expected, the preference for a rabbis as arbiters of Jewishness was most prevalent among Orthodox participants (more than half), while the preference for self-definition was most prevalent among Reform Jews (41 percent) and secular Jews (37 percent). Obviously, we can assume that many of these Orthodox participants preferred the authority to also be Orthodox. But for Israelis, this preference is wider. Surveys, such as the 2009 Avichai-Guttman survey, asked about Jewishness particularly in the context of conversion. According to what we find in several of them, most Israeli Jews (73 percent) would accept a person that goes through Orthodox conversion, even if he or she does not observe the

115 Leeds seminar, March 9, 2016.

116 Hashlama, Israel seminar, February 24, 2016. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

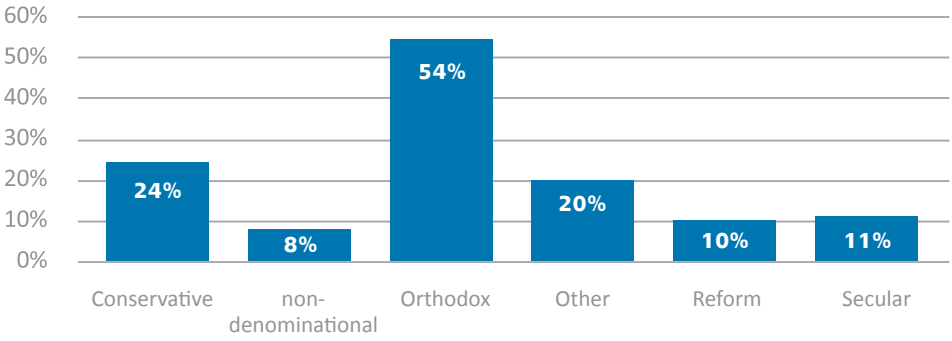
117 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

118 Bina seminar, December 16, 2015. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

119 New York JPPI seminar, April 5, 2016, notes by Shmuel Rosner.

precepts, as Jewish. Fewer (48 percent) would accept him or her as Jewish if they go through a non-Orthodox conversion.[120] According to JPPI's Dialogue survey, Israelis constitute the only group in which a large portion disagree with the statement: "A conversion by a Reform/Conservative rabbi is legitimate." Thirty-three percent of Israeli participants "somewhat disagreed" with the statement, and 11 percent "strongly disagreed" with it.

Determining who is Jewish is a matter for rabbis to decide
(percent of respondents who chose this response by religious affiliation)

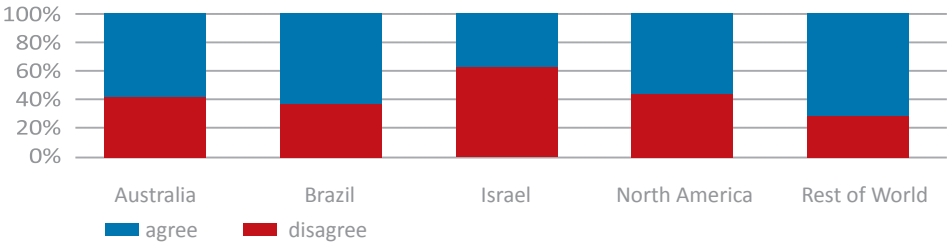


Israelis also differed from their Diaspora counterparts in responding to the statement: "To what degree do you agree/disagree that a state, including Israel, has no place in deciding one's Jewishness?" They were the only participants that tended to disagree more than agree with the statement.[121] That is to say: they think Israel may have a place in deciding one's Jewishness (note that we do not know from the survey if their answer refers to Jewish Israelis or all Jews).

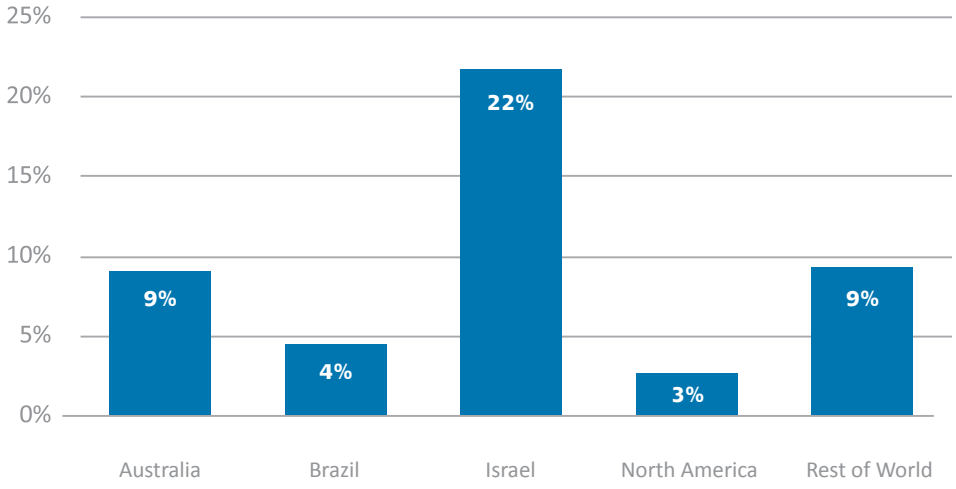
120 A Portrait of Israeli Jews Beliefs, Observance, and Values of Israeli Jews, page 69. In a 2011 Hiddush survey, a different formulation of the question resulted in 39% who said "only Orthodox" and 32% who said "Conservative and Reform too" (29% said, all conversions, including secular conversion).

121 Here is the table, showing the level of agreement to this statement by country of JPPI seminar participants

A State, Including Israel, has no place in deciding one's Jewishness



If there is a need for a body to determine who is Jewish it should be the State of Israel (percent of respondents who chose this response by geographical distribution)



Hence, it is not surprising that Israelis were much more willing than participants from other countries to consider Israel an arbiter of Jewishness. But even among Israelis, more consider rabbis or local communities as the proper authorities in determining Jewishness.[122]

This understanding among Israelis in many ways lines up with Israel's Law of Return, which makes all Jews eligible for immigration to Israel. The law applies to all Jews, including converts by communities abroad – namely, it recognizes the predominance of communities in determining the Jewishness of people in their localities. Israel, though, insists on its right to hold criteria to which communities must adhere for their converts eligible for Aliyah[123] – an insistence that some experts see as an unhealthy imposition "of Israeli will on the Diaspora."[124]

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122 Of course, Israelis have no "local communities" in the same sense that Diaspora Jews have them, and hence it is possible that "Israel" for them has the same meaning of "local community" for other Jews. If that is indeed the case, we ought to consider Israel\local community as the first choice of Israelis – and "rabbis" as the second choice.

123 See: "What happens when two Jews means two different peoplehoods?", Times of Israel, March 14, 2016. This report deals with the civil Israeli Ministry of Interior recently released "list of criteria for acceptable non-halachic conversions". This issue was debated in Israeli courts and among the leadership of Progressive Jewish movements that need to determine whether they want to accept such criteria (both the principle of Israel setting criteria and the detailed criteria).

124 The quote is of Rabbi Seth Farber, of ITIM, from "What happens when two Jews means two different peoplehoods?" (see previous note).

The lack of a clear authority in determining an individual's Jewishness has long characterized Jewish life, because Jews, quite some time ago, ceased living in one monolithic community under a single jurisdiction. However, unlike today, for most of Jewish history of the last millennia the criteria for Jewishness was much clearer, and so were the authorities in charge of preserving each community's criteria.[125] These authorities were rabbis, speaking the language of Halacha. And, of course, they could not always agree on every Halachic detail related to Jewishness (or any other matter), but, for the most part, there was consensus with respect to the grammar of the discussion and its unbreachable boundaries.

The authoritative language lost its power because of Jewish secularization, the fragmentation of Jewish theology, and the genesis of two very different Jewish communal structures in the Diaspora and Israel – both predominantly secular in nature and bound by civil-political processes rather than rabbinical texts and rulings.[126] In this atmosphere it is not just difficult to agree on what authority determines and confers Jewishness, it is impossible. "Being Jewish is your belief, it is very personal," said one young discussant. Being Jewish, he argued, cannot be determined by any "objective definition."[127] "It is quite impossible to have a common definition of Judaism," a participant in Rio de Janeiro argued. "What is possible is to have common projects as a community and as a people."[128]

The lack of clear authority resulted in many forms of hand wringing:

- Less religious and more religious Jews and institutions do not always agree on the type of bodies and activities that offer the most profound manifestation of Jewish belonging (synagogue or AIPAC, Shabbat or *Tikkun Olam*, living in Israel or wrapping *Tefillin* etc).

- Jews who belong or identify with different streams (and theological doctrines) of Judaism (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox etc.) argue about proper power sharing

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125 The question of boundaries and authority tends to appear in times of historical transitions. Some of the debates about the Anusim of Spain (Crypto Jews) and the Sabbateans of the 17th century contain elements from similar questions of authority to define the Jewish boundary.

126 Prof. Steven Cohen argued: Jews in America "are secular, in terms of their beliefs & religious participation. About as religious as non-churched Christians". See: Does Political Liberalism Undermine Jewish engagement? Implications for Research, Education and American Jews, Presented at: Network for Research in Jewish Education, June 2016.

127 Masa seminar, February 2, 2016. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

128 Rio de Janeiro seminar, March 29, 2016. Notes by Dr. Alberto Milkewitz.

among denominations. It was common to hear complaints about this issue in Diaspora communities that do not approve of Israel's share of religious power. "Israel should recognize Reform and Conservative conversions," a non-Israeli said at a JPPI discussion held in Israel.[129]

- Jews within the same stream also argue over the authority of this or that rabbi or body in determining the specific criteria of Jewishness (a chief example of this is the power struggle among Orthodox Jews in Israel over conversion. A recent and well publicized incident concerned the legitimacy of Ivanka Trump's conversion, the daughter of US Presidential candidate Donald Trump).[130]

- The State of Israel has a concentration of power that impacts the rest of the Jewish world, as by far the most potent and well-resourced institution of the Jewish people. But many Jews (in Israel and the rest of the Jewish world) do not believe that a state is the correct body to hold such sway on issues related to identity and community.

Jewish hand wringing over the meaning of Jewish belonging is not necessarily a problem. It is one way for Jews to share a discourse around one of the core questions of their identity. "It's okay to disagree as long as there are shared values and there is a common base for the sense of peoplehood," an Australian participant said.[131] And the fact of the matter is that, in recent decades any attempt to reach consensus on the issue of who is a Jew has ended up unresolved. However, it should be recognized that the inability to reach a modicum of common understanding has led to a situation where different practical actions are taken by different communal organizations and underscores a lack of internal cohesion.

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129 Masa seminar, February 2, 2016. Notes by Cody Levin. We are not elaborating on the issue of Diaspora approach to state-religion affairs in Israel, as this was one of the main components of the 2014 Dialogue. See: Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry, JPPI, 2014.

130 See for example: Yair Ettinger, "Defying Chief Rabbinate, Prominent Rabbis Form Alternative Conversion Court," Haaretz, August, 10, 2015. On the Trump controversy see: Ivanka Trump's rabbi and the state of relations between Israel and American Jews, The Telegraph, July 2016.

131 Queensland Australia seminar, March 30, 2016. Notes by Avi Michaeli.

The Decline of Rabbinical Authority

The impact of Secularism on the one hand, and the strictness of Orthodoxy on the other, make the prospect of rabbis determining the criteria of Jewishness less appealing

The question of authority is broad and complicated, but one aspect stands out and merits special attention. That is, the erosion of rabbinical authority to determine one's Jewishness or lack thereof.

The erosion is two-fold: first, there has been a general erosion of the belief that rabbis should define Jewishness; and second, the more specific reluctance of Jews to accept the authority of rabbis other than their own.

General erosion is to be expected given that for many Jews the religious component of Judaism is currently not the most dominant in the way Jews think about their Judaism (See previous chapter). If rabbis mainly represent the religious component of Judaism (and in many ways they do) and the religious component is not the most dominant in how Jews think about Judaism,[132] then some decline of rabbinical authority in defining Jewishness is to be expected. "The problem is that the definition of Jewishness has moved beyond Halacha," said a participant in Atlanta, "so when using Halacha as a guide, it will inevitably lead to alienating Jews who do not conform."[133] The only country where JPPI participants ranked rabbis as the most authoritative arbiters of Jewishness was Israel (and not a surprise, as the share of Orthodox participants in Israel was much higher than in other countries).[134]

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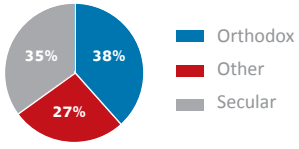
132 One could argue that for many Jews the religious component is also weakening as a practical component of Judaism. Synagogue membership is declining among Jews (except for Orthodox Jews), because of "the effects of growing secularization, declining affection for institutions, a dispersal of Jewish philanthropy and an end to the era in which membership in a congregation was seen as a social obligation" (The 'Pay What You Want' Experiment at Synagogues, Michael Paulson, New York Times, February 2, 2015). According to the Pew Research Center, "roughly one-third of Jews (31%) say they belong to a synagogue" (A Portrait of Jewish Americans, page 60).

133 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi.

134 Israeli participants by affiliation. For full affiliation details in all countries, see appendix B.



A much more common element of the erosion of rabbinical authority is the phenomenon of Jews demanding recognition of the power of "their" rabbis as legitimate arbiters of Jewishness while expressing reservations about the legitimacy of "other" rabbis. The overall effect is that "rabbinical" determination is increasingly irrelevant for those searching for a broadly accepted understanding of Jewishness, and makes the findings of rabbis irrelevant for those who do not identify with the worldview of these specific rabbis.

This is especially pronounced in arguments over the Orthodox establishment's rabbinical authority in Israel, and their exceedingly stringent conversion standards.[135] Again, discussion of the Orthodox worldview is two-fold: first, is how the Orthodox establishment views non-Orthodox definitions of Jewishness; and second, how the non-Orthodox (and also some of the Orthodox) view the Orthodox rabbinical establishment and the impact its definitions have on other Jews.

On one hand, there is the uncompromising demand by Orthodox rabbis (and some JPPI participants) for all Jews to accept the Orthodox interpretation of Jewishness. "At some point, there will be no other option but to declare that Reform Jews are not Jews," said one participant in a Dallas seminar Haredi Jews.[136] Leaders of Israel's Haredi parties have said similar things in the past, fomenting rage among many other Jews, especially in the Diaspora.[137] In JPPI seminars with both Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews participating, the views of Orthodox members were annunciated, albeit less bluntly. "Judaism is defined by Torah," an Orthodox participant in a Baltimore discussion said in response to a suggestion that Jewishness is now a cultural phenomenon rather than a religious one.[138] A participant in Cleveland hinted at a similar understanding of the hierarchy of Jewishness by suggesting that "people who get serious about Judaism will do an

135 It should be noted that the Orthodox criteria is not "stricter" in all ways. An Orthodox acceptance of a person born to a Jewish mother is in some way laxer than other denominations demands for Jewish upbringing or participation.

136 Dallas seminar, March 8, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

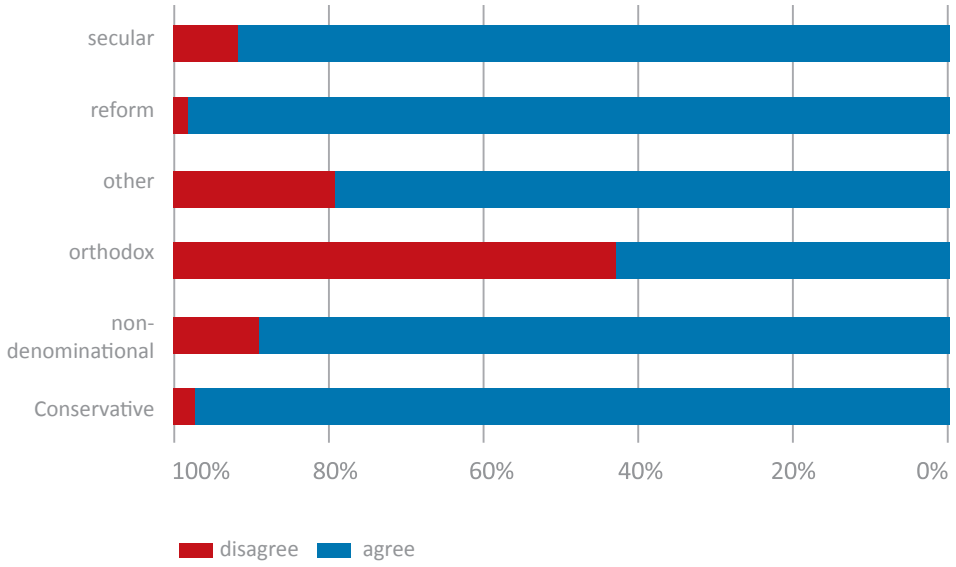
137 See, for example: "Reform Jews Cannot Be Called Jews, Says Israel's Religious Services Minister", Haaretz, July 7, 2015. Minister Azoulai's remarks, and similar remarks by other politicians, were disavowed on more than one occasion by Israel's Prime Minister. See: "Netanyahu: Wholesale attacks on Reform Jews 'unacceptable'", JTA, March 24, 2016.

138 Baltimore JPPI seminar, April 11, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

Orthodox conversion after they've done a non-Orthodox conversion."[139]

JPPI's Dialogue survey of participants clearly shows that Orthodox Jews tend not to accept the legitimacy of non-Orthodox rabbis. When asked to agree\disagree with the statement "A conversion by a Reform/Conservative rabbi is legitimate,"[140] the majority of Orthodox Jews did not agree (a majority of Israeli participants also did not agree).[141]

A conversion by a Reform/Conservative rabbi is legitimate
(percent of respondents who chose this response by religious affiliation)



These outcomes comport with several findings of JPPI's Pluralism survey of Jewish Israelis,[142] in which all Orthodox groups ranked Reform Jews at the bottom

139 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

140 Agree in the graph includes those who responded "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree", and disagree in the graph includes all those who responded "strongly disagree" or "somewhat disagree".

141 See: "A Portrait of Israeli Jews Beliefs, Observance, and Values of Israeli Jews", page 69. As in many of these things, Israeli positions on this matter are somewhat confused. While a small majority of Jewish Israelis do not accept non-Orthodox conversion, a majority of them (61%) "agree" or "totally agree" that "the Conservative and Reform movements should have equal status in Israel with the Orthodox".

142 For details about the Pluralism survey, see comment number 5.

when asked about the level of contribution of various groups to Israel's well-being. This approach of many Orthodox Jews, especially and bluntly so in Israel, has generated anger among non-Orthodox Jews. "Some people view Judaism as Orthodox. It is important to show people that there are many more aspects to Judaism," one young Dialogue participant said.[143] Yet amid this anger, there is a marked difference between the way Orthodox Jews refer to the religious authority of non-Orthodox rabbis and the way non-Orthodox Jews (Reform, Conservative, secular etc.) refer to the religious authority of Orthodox rabbis. While Orthodox Jews often question the legitimacy and authority of non-Orthodox rabbis – non-Orthodox Jews rarely question the legitimacy and authority of Orthodox rabbis, even when complaining about their perceived rigidity, arrogance, and disrespect of other world views.

This difference is significant and points to what some consider inequality of power. The Orthodox see themselves as having the authority to grant or deny legitimacy, the non-Orthodox see themselves as petitioning legitimacy.

Naturally, non-Orthodox leaders and rabbis vehemently reject such a notion. A Conservative rabbi in a Dallas seminar said he "no longer cares" about what the Orthodox think of him and his peers.[144] Similarly, a non-Orthodox rabbi in Chicago said, "It is time for us to stop chasing after legitimacy of Orthodox norms, especially norms of the Israeli Orthodox who have no clue about what is happening here."[145] In various public statements, articles, and interviews, Reform and Conservative leaders and their supporters have made the argument that they have little interest in a seal of approval from the Orthodox.[146]

JPPI seminars showed that the quest for legitimacy – accompanied by frustration with the Orthodox rabbinical establishment over its refusal to grant such legitimacy is still common among non-Orthodox Jews.

"To be a Jew there are, and there must be, only two ways: through the womb or

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143 Shnat Netzer seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Inbal Hakman.

144 Dallas JPPI seminar of non-Orthodox rabbis. March 8, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

145 Chicago JPPI seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

146 To read a blunt example: "Reform Jews should declare themselves a different religion than bigoted forms of Ultra-Orthodoxy", an article by Prof Carlo Strenger, Huffington Post, March 29, 2016. Strenger writes: "I therefore suggest a different strategy for non-orthodox Jews in the United States: simply declare the Orthodox establishment as irrelevant for your religion".

through conversion done by the different denominations," a Salvador, Brazil participant said.[147] In a Melbourne seminar: "There was serious concern about Jews being accepted as Jews in the Diaspora but not in Israel – that is creating a situation in which Israel is separated from the rest of the Jewish world – a homeland for the Orthodox community."[148] The "question of Israeli acknowledgement of the diversity of religious expression is critical, we need to find a road to acknowledge if not honor," a Philadelphia participant said.[149]

As JPPI documented in its 2014 Dialogue report, complaints about the dominance of Orthodox Judaism in Israel are widespread and common in the Jewish world.[150] But displeasure with an Orthodox reluctance to acknowledge the legitimacy of non-Orthodox rabbinical determinations of Jewishness extends beyond the question of Israel.

The impact of all of these sentiments relegate into absurdity the general idea that rabbis could agree unanimously in defining Jewishness (as, some might argue, was the case in the past, at least in setting the criteria for conversion). Rabbis are the arbiters of the religious aspect of Judaism (in many cases, denominational religiosity) – the part most Jews say is the least important to them. Many rabbis currently hold positions that emphasize the differences between Jews rather than their commonalities. Hence, many Dialogue participants seem to prefer that authorities other than rabbis ("self-definition" or the "community") make the rules concerning the contours of Jewishness.

147 Salvador seminar, March 29, 2016. Notes by Dr. Alberto Milkewitz.

148 Melbourne seminar, March 21, 2016. Notes by Eileen Freed.

149 Philadelphia seminar, April 18, 2016. Notes by LaJonel Brown.

150 See: "Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry", a Special Report by JPPI, 2014.

Israel's Role in Defining Judaism

An apprehension concerning the role of Israel in shaping what Jews perceive in terms of culture and peoplehood heightens the demand for Israeli sensitivity as it influences the way Jewishness is defined and practiced around the world

We have dealt briefly with Israel's authority to define Jewishness in a previous chapter, but there were things left to say about how Israel's role is perceived by Israelis and non-Israelis. That is because Israel, as a matter of fact, has at least two important functions in determining the nature of Jewishness for a great number of Jews.

For Israeli Jews – more than 40 percent of world Jewry – Israel makes the rules, some of which have to do with Jewishness. For example, since Israel lacks a mechanism for civil marriage and only allows marriage under the auspices of religious authorities, it effectively gives these religious authorities a mandate to determine a person's Jewishness and hence their marriageability within the system.

For non-Israeli Jews, Israel also determines some matters pertaining to Jewishness. It is the only arbiter with the authority to say who is (or is not) eligible to immigrate to Israel under the Law of Return – the most visible manifestation of Israel's claim to be the state of the Jewish people. Diaspora Jewry, as we reported in 2014, "widely supports the Law of Return as an expression of solidarity between Israel and the Diaspora and believe that it guarantees a safe haven for Jews in distress."[151] This issue came up in this year's discussions as the Law of Return and its definitions of eligibility were presented to participants. "One of the major attributes of Israel is that it's a place for all Jews," one participant reminded his friends[152] (a more elaborate discussion of the Law of Return and its meaning, appears later).

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151 See: "Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry", JPPI, 2014, page 75.

152 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

Moreover, Israel is the most powerful body of the Jewish world, and, hence, can make decisions – for example, encouraging and allocating funds for projects such as Birthright, or prohibited mixed-gender prayer at the Western Wall – that impact Jewishness. Again, this was an issue covered in JPPI's 2014 Dialogue report where we concluded, among other things, that "Israel, as the most visible manifestation of Jewish national expression today, impacts the way Judaism is perceived by Jews and non-Jews alike. Hence, its character... can influence Jewish identity in several ways – from enhancing the role of nationality as the main expression of Judaism, to making Judaism more or less attractive for young people, and intensifying or diminishing their desire to belong to, and take pride in, their Jewishness."[153]

Alas, not all participants in this year's JPPI Dialogue were comfortable with the way Jewishness is interpreted by Jewish Israelis. "There are many people who are not considered Jews by Israel, yet they are much more Jewish than many Jews in Israel," one young participant remarked.[154] In Chicago, a participant said that Diaspora Jews should craft their Jewishness "without always looking to what Israel is doing, and without the need for [Israeli] approval."[155] In Philadelphia it was argued that "it is inappropriate for the Israeli government to take a position on Diaspora Jewry's manner of Jewish practice, definitions, and observance".[156]

Recent studies have shown time and time again that most Israeli Jews and non-Israeli Jews appreciate relations between all Jews, and see value in maintaining them. "Jews in the U.S. and Israel have deep connections," the 2016 Pew report on Israel concluded. Jews in Israel "support the [D]iaspora population's right to move to Israel and receive citizenship"; they believe "a thriving Jewish [D]iaspora is necessary for the long-term survival of the Jewish people."[157] JPPI's 2016 Pluralism in Israel survey showed that Israelis, by and large, agree that Diaspora Jews contribute more to the thriving of Israel than many Israeli groups.[158]

But, as we wrote in last year's Dialogue report: "It is one thing for Israel to

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153 See: "Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry", JPPI, 2014, page 70.

154 Bina seminar, December 16, 2015. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

155 Chicago JPPI seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

156 Philadelphia seminar, April 18, 2016. Notes by LaJonel Brown.

157 " Israel's Religiously Divided Society", PEW 2016.

158 On a 1-4 scale "Jews Living in the Diaspora" were 2.93, more than "north Tel Avivians", "settlers", "Reform Jews", "Yeshiva students" and more.

acknowledge the changing dynamics of its relationship with the Diaspora, its need to work harder at strengthening Jewish communities abroad, and even the desirability of taking Diaspora Jewry's views into consideration... It is another thing to agree to World Jewry's intervention in Israeli affairs."[159] That is to say, Israeli influence on the character of Jewishness around the world, does not necessarily mean that Israel (and Israelis) would be willing to accept explicit Diaspora interference in the affairs of the Jewish state (in an interconnected world a measure of influence through various channels is inevitable). Israelis, as the Guttman-Avichai survey reported, are of the view that "the Jews in Israel are a different nation than the Jews abroad."[160] This surely includes differences in defining and understanding Jewishness.

Like last year, this year's Dialogue survey included several questions concerning Israel's role(s) and how it relates to questions that pertain to Diaspora communities. One question asked participants to agree or disagree with the statement: "Israel's definition of 'Jew' is an insult to Diaspora Jewry." We did not provide specific details about the nature of the insult, assuming that the question left general would give us insight into the negative perceptions of some Diaspora Jews vis-à-vis Israeli definitions of Jewishness.

The findings are inconclusive. We utilized a 1 - 4 scale (1 = "totally disagree"; and 4 = "totally agree," for the question: "Israel's definition of 'Jew' is an insult to Diaspora Jewry." The difference in how Israelis and North Americans (and Australians – but not Brazilians[161]) answered is notable. Only 8 percent of Israelis "totally agree[d]", while more than 20 percent of Americans and Australians "totally agree[d]" with the statement. Younger Dialogue participants agreed with the statement more than older participants. And, obviously, the response to this statement varied according to religious affiliation, with Orthodox Jews least disturbed by Israel's definitions and Reform Jews most disturbed by them.

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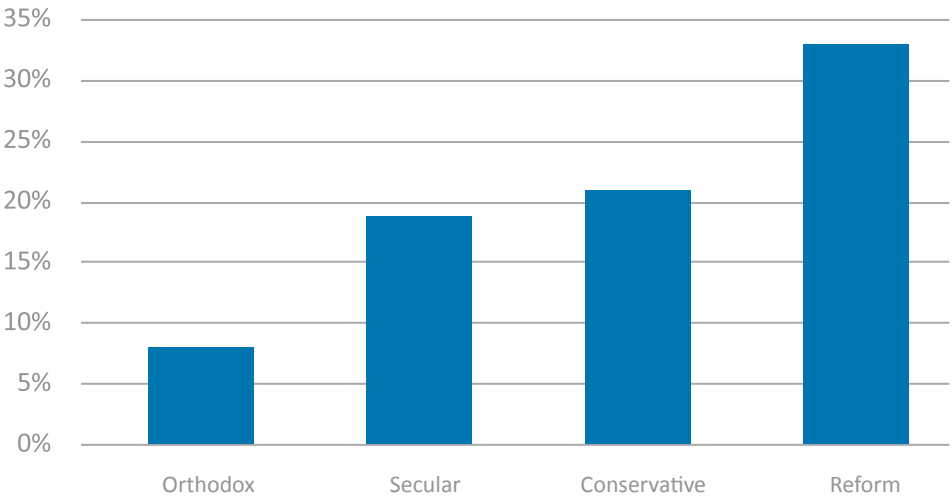
159 See: "Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict: Perspectives from World Jewry", A Special Report by the Jewish People Policy Institute, Shmuel Rosner, Michael Herzog, page 48.

160 See: "A Portrait of Israeli Jews Beliefs, Observance, and Values of Israeli Jews", page 72.

161 Interestingly, Brazilians have a problem with Israel's definitions even less than Israelis themselves. Just 5% of them totally agreed with the statement, and 21% "agreed" (compared to 31% of Americans).

"Strongly agree" that Israel's definition of a "Jew" is an insult to Diaspora Jewry, by religious affiliation



One of the interesting things we tested this year was the difference in opinion among Jews when asked about how Israel-Diaspora relations feed into Israeli decision making on various topics. Last year, when the Dialogue focused on armed conflict, we showed that "a fair number of Diaspora Jews feel they are entitled to express their opinions and that Israel should take them into account, even on major security issues."[162] When we asked Dialogue participants whether they think: **1**. Israel should conduct its armed conflicts without regard to the views of Jews living outside of Israel; **2.** Israel should consider the views of other Jews because its armed conflicts could have impact on their lives; **3.** Israel should consider the views of other Jews, because all Jews define the framework of conducting an armed conflict in accordance with Jewish values; or **4.** Israel should consider the views of other Jews if it wants to keep their support for its armed conflicts. Thirty-eight percent of respondents chose the second statement, that Israel needs to consider their views because "its armed conflicts could have impact on their lives."

162 See: "Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict: Perspectives from World Jewry", page 43.

This year, on a totally different topic, we presented a dilemma with a similar set of four possible choices: Thinking about Israel-Diaspora relations, do you generally believe that: **A.** Israel should decide who is considered Jewish in Israel without regard to the views of Jews living outside of Israel; **B.** Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews mostly because its definition could have an impact on their lives; **C.** Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews, mostly because all Jews define the framework of Jewishness; or **D.** Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews, mostly because it wants to keep other Jews associated with it and supporting it.

Unlike last year, when the issue was security, people's concern for their own safety, and the expectation that Israel would take the possible impact on their lives into account – this year, on the issue of Jewishness, the priority was a sense of partnership. Jewishness is not an Israeli business. It is the business of all Jews. Hence, about half of all participants (including a plurality of Israeli respondents) chose **C.,** that Israel "should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews, mostly because all Jews define the framework of Jewishness." Israeli, Orthodox, and secular Jews had a slightly stronger inclination toward the pragmatic instrumental answer (to keep other Jews associated with Israel and supporting it) than other Jews. But the leading choice emphasized the partnership of Jews in defining Jewishness. Notably, the number of participants believing that Israel has no need to consider the views of Diaspora Jews dropped from about a third of respondents last year, when the issue was armed conflict, to a negligible 5 percent this year, when the issue was Jewish identity. Even among Israelis, who one might expect to be less enthusiastic about Diaspora influence on Israeli determinations, less than 10 percent of respondents thought there was "no need for Israel to consider Diaspora views."[163]

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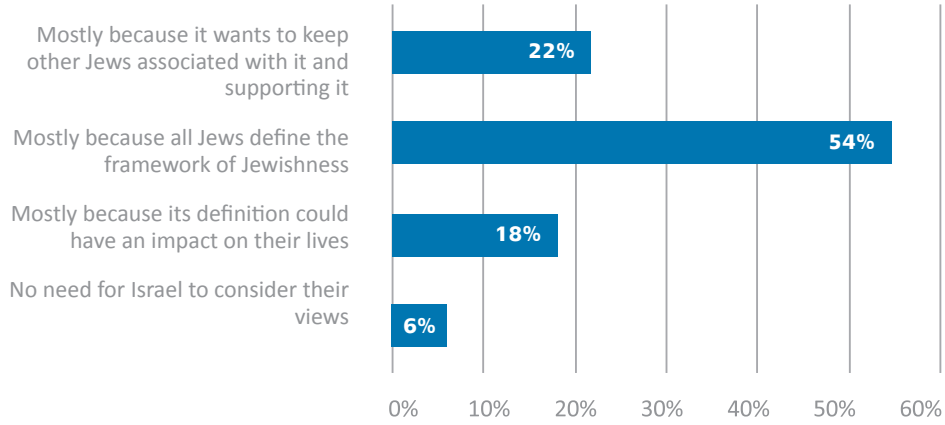
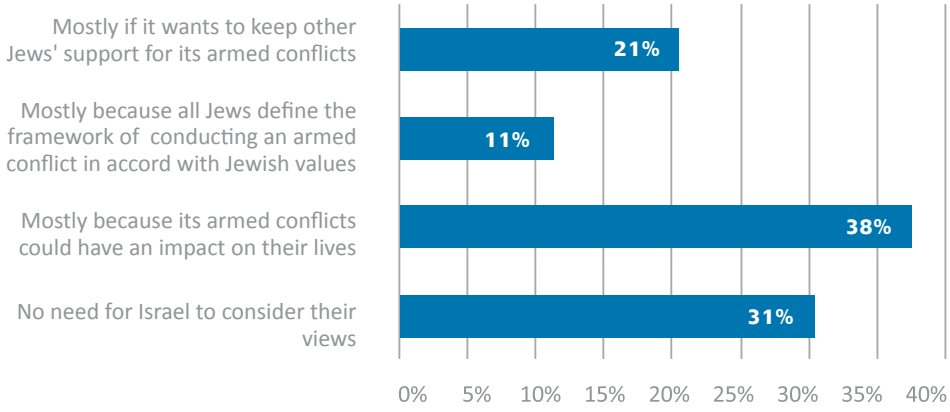
163 For the full question, see the survey in appendix D. The full table of responses by country, Comb. Is the percent of people who chose more than one response, and n/a is those who did not respond to this question.

	A	B	C	D	Comb.	n/a
Australia	2.41%	20.48%	48.19%	15.66%	8.43%	4.82%
Brazil	2.17%	23.91%	41.30%	22.83%	4.35%	5.43%
Israel	9.84%	14.75%	37.70%	26.23%	4.92%	6.56%
U.S.	5.52%	13.56%	48.05%	17.47%	10.11%	5.29%
Rest	6.98%	9.30%	58.14%	16.28%	4.65%	4.65%

JPPI 2016 Dialogue – Israel Diaspora relations about Jewishness:
Thinking about Israel-Diaspora relations, Israel should consider views of non-Israeli Jews when determining who is considered Jewish in Israel:



JPPI 2015 Dialogue - Israel-Diaspora relations about security:
Thinking about Israel-Diaspora relations, Israel should consider views of non-Israeli Jews when conducting armed conflicts...



Israelis are supportive of the idea of Israel taking Diaspora Jewry "into consideration" when major decisions have to be made. An Israel Democracy Institute survey showed that 71 percent of respondents stated that Israel should take Diaspora Jewry into account when making decisions, versus 26 percent who felt that Israel has no need to do so. And yet, as we explained last year: "It is one thing for Israel to acknowledge the changing dynamics of its relationship with the

Diaspora, its need to work harder at strengthening Jewish communities abroad, and even the desirability of taking Diaspora Jewry's views into consideration… it is another thing to agree to World Jewry's intervention in Israeli affairs. Especially in security related matters, on which Israelis have a very different perspective from Diaspora Jews." [164]

The two tables above clearly show that JPPI's previous two Dialogue reports were quite accurate in identifying that it is easier for Israel – as it is for other Jews – to accept and expect Israeli consideration of Diaspora when the discussion pertains to Israel's Jewishness. The reports were also accurate in asserting that it is more complicated for Israelis to agree to, and for Diaspora Jews to demand, such consideration on matters concerning Israel's security and defense policies.

Our integration of the answers to all the questions about Israel's role in defining Judaism finds the following:

1. An acknowledgment of Israel's major influence on how Jewishness is perceived and practiced around the world.
2. An apprehension surrounding the role of a state in shaping what Jews see as a culture and a people.
3. A demand for greater Israeli sensitivity because of this influence (and the displeasure with its current level of sensitivity).
4. A desire for partnership between Israel and Jewish communities around the world in crafting the future of Jewishness.
5. An understanding that on some matters (as we will see in the discussion of the Law of Return) Israel ought to define Jewishness more strictly than other Jewish communities.

164 See: "Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict: Perspectives from World Jewry", page 48. And: "Half of Israelis: Allow Reform Jews to Marry and Convert," Zvika Klein, NRG, June 2014.

Jewishness Meets Intermarriage

Jews accept the reality of intermarriage, and the complications it creates for defining Jewishness. They strive to have a welcoming environment for non-Jews but remain skeptical – that intermarriage is good for the Jewish community and the Jewish people in the long term.

The growing number of intermarried families affects any discussion concerning Jewishness and was an unavoidable topic in this year's Dialogue. It could not be avoided because most Jews understand that the Jewish community, except in Israel, is gradually becoming one for which interfaith marriage is normative and needs to be addressed. "Intermarried families fall within the criteria for Jewishness... they are the Jewish future in an assimilated world," a Boston participant explained.[165]

The number of Jews with non-Jewish spouses is a subject that has been exhaustively discussed in other reports and forums, so we will only address it briefly here. The 2013 Pew report found that the intermarriage rate among Jewish Americans who married after 2005 was 58 percent. Overall, 44 percent of American Jews are married to non-Jews. Twenty-six percent of British Jews are intermarried.[166] Over 50 percent are intermarried "in several medium-size European Jewish communities," according to Sergio DellaPergola. "[167] In "Australia, it is over 30 percent; and in South Africa and Venezuela, over 15%." According to a study of Canadian Jewry, "about a quarter (25.1 percent) of Jewish children under 15 years of age (living in couple families) reside in intermarried arrangements. This represents 15,485 children."[168] When the numbers are such, it makes perfect sense to consider the Jews in mixed families an important component of the Jewish world, assuming that these families so desire. And, as is well known, there are conflicting signs with respect to whether a majority of these families do so desire.

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165 Boston seminar, April 19, 2016. Notes by Alex Thompson.

166 See: "Jews in couples: Marriage, intermarriage, cohabitation and divorce in Britain", David Graham, 2016.

167 "World Jewish Population", 2013 Sergio DellaPergola.

168 2011 National Household Survey Analysis "The Jewish Population of Canada", Charles Shahar, Randal Schnoor.

In America, the numbers tell a story of a growing inclination among interfaith families to raise Jewish children.[169] As a result, according to several analyses, the largest non-Israeli Jewish community grows in numbers: "The overall population increase is driven primarily by higher-than-expected retention of young adult children of intermarriage, most of whom were raised without Jewish religious identity and disproportionately identify as "Jews of no religion."

The numbers also tell a story of intermarried families having a weaker connection than in-married families to the Jewish community and to Judaism.[170] "Intermarried families," Jack Wertheimer and Steven Cohen wrote, "are considerably less likely to join synagogues, contribute to Jewish charities, identify strongly with Israel, observe Jewish religious rituals, or befriend other Jews. Exceptions aside, the large majority of intermarried families are loosely, ambivalently, or not at all connected to Jewish life." They are also less likely to raise Jewish children, even if the level of retention today it higher than it used to be in the past. In Britain, 44 percent of Jewish women who are married to non-Jewish men are raising their children as Jews. For Jewish men who are married to non-Jewish women the number is a significantly lower 10 percent.

Not all Dialogue participants were comfortable with the current state of affairs, but most did seem to accept is as a situation that is not likely to change any time soon, and cannot be easily changed. "Intermarriage may not be ideal, but it is a fact. We should be focusing on how to make these children feel a part of the community,", a young participant advised.[171] Another participant said: "As much as I feel uncomfortable saying this, there is probably a significant chance that one of my children will have a non-Jewish spouse and almost a certainty that one of my grandchildren will have a non-Jewish spouse. They will be my family – and I hope this will still be a Jewish family."[172]

In the Dialogue survey we asked participants if they agree or disagree with the notion that the Jewish community "should encourage Jews to marry other Jews."

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169 See: "What happens when Jews intermarry?", Gregory Smith, Alan Cooperman, Pew, November 2013, and: "Pew's Portrait of American Jewry: A Reassessment of the Assimilation Narrative", Leonard Saxe, Theodore Sasson, Janet Krasner Aronson.

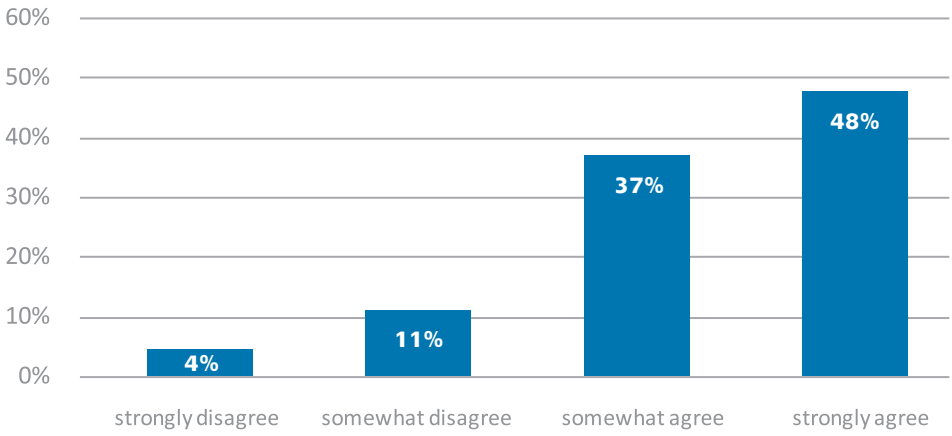
170 See: "The Pew Survey Reanalyzed: More Bad News, but a Glimmer of Hope", Jack Wertheimer and Steven M. Cohen, Mosaic, 2014.

171 Bina seminar, December 16, 2015. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

172 Detroit seminar, March 9, 2016. From notes by Shmuel Rosner.

And, of course, this is a question whose meaning could be interpreted in at least two ways: that the community should do so because it might succeed, at least with some Jews; or that the community should do so as a symbolic declaration that marriage between two Jews, from a communal standpoint, is preferable to marriage between Jews and a non-Jews. And while we cannot be sure which of these two options (or a combination of the both) prompted each participant's answer, we do know that in light of the general assessment of participants – their expectation that intermarriage will continue to be a significant feature of Jewish life (except in Israel) – the number of Jews who believe the community ought to encourage in-marriage is relatively high. More than 80 percent of Dialogue participants agreed or strongly agreed that the community should "encourage" in-marriage. Namely, they want the community to invest in measures that according to their assessment are not going to completely alter the trend of inter-marriage (some might still hope that the trend can be somewhat reversed).

The Jewish community should encourage Jews to marry other Jews



The practical aspects of such encouragement are many and complicated. How does one encourage in-marriage successfully? What would a cost-benefit analysis look like? What if encouraging in-marriage alienates intermarried couples – an alienation that Dialogue participants were acutely worried about. "In my community some of the nicest couples and the most active couples are intermarried couples, and I would not want my community to do anything that

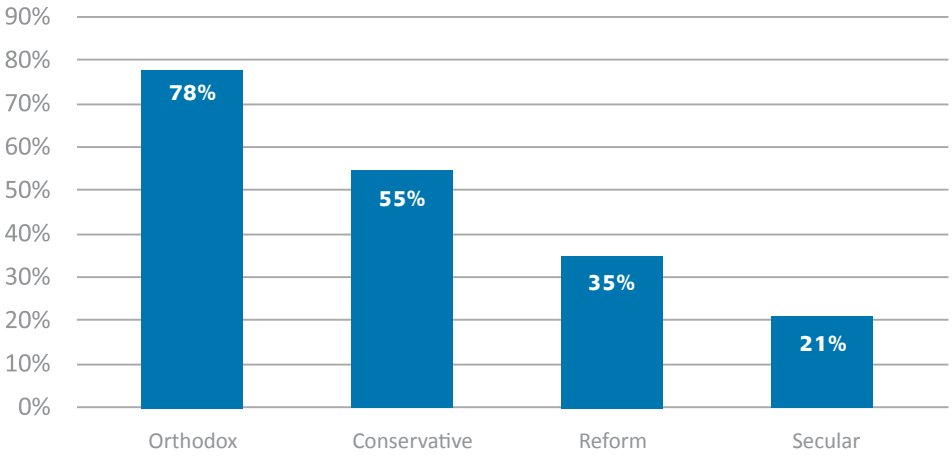
could hurt their feelings," a Pittsburgh discussant said.[173] Obviously, a strong desire to be "welcoming," a word that was repeatedly used in numerous seminars, could be complicated by a campaign to encourage in-marriage. "I cannot imply in my congregation in any way that marriage to a non-Jew is somewhat lesser than marriage to a Jew. In fact, I don't even think that's true. I prefer Jews to be happy in marriage and come to my community as happy couples," a rabbi in Dallas said.[174]

And yet, the encouragement of in-marriage was considered advisable. However, it is not clear that such encouragement has programmatic implications. Yes, Jews want in-marriage to be encouraged, but after trying to promote it for many years no magic bullet has been found for this endeavor – only maintaining a certain communal norm, welcoming all people, and providing opportunities for Jewish learning and living. Essentially, doing everything possible to tencourage distanced Jews to intensify their involvement with Judaism. It is also no wonder that the encouragement of in-marriage is more fervently supported by Jews who belong to communities that are, generally speaking, less beset by the possibility of offending mixed families, because the incidence of intermarriage within these communities is relatively low. Thus, 78 percent of Orthodox Dialogue participants strongly agreed that in-marriage should be encouraged by the community, compared to a much weaker support among Reform participants (of whom 34 percent strongly agreed that encouragement is desirable). And yet, it is interesting to see that even among Reform and secular Jews, there was a significant tendency to agree with the notion that in-marriage ought to be encouraged by the community, as these graphs clearly show.

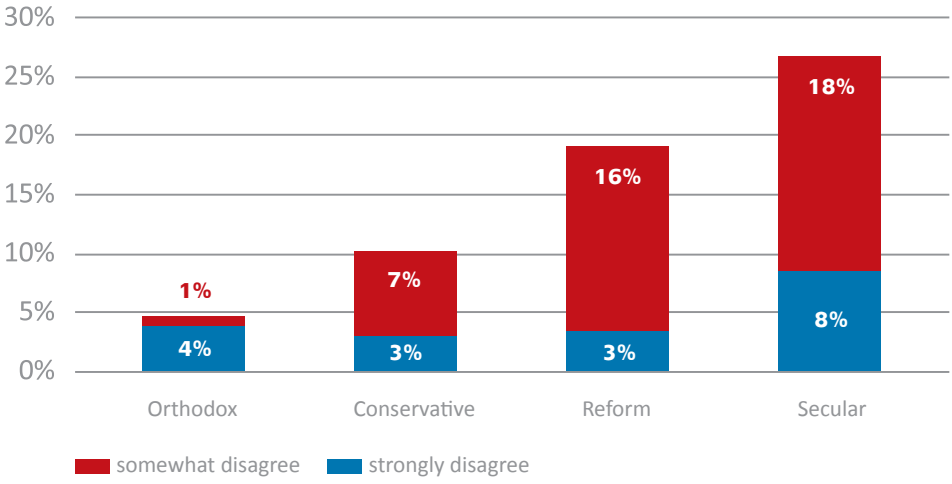
173 JPPI seminar in Pittsburgh, April 4, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner. In Pittsburgh, according to the 2002 community study, about a third of all marriages are intermarriages. See: "The 2002 Pittsburgh Jewish Community Study".

174 Dallas March 8, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

The Jewish community should encourage Jews to marry other Jews:
Strongly agree, by religious affiliation



The Jewish community should encourage Jews to marry other Jews:
Strongly and somewhat disagree, by religious affiliation



It is important to emphasize again that all data that appears here directly result from the particular composition of Dialogue participants, and care should be taken in applying them more broadly. In most cases the Dialogue comprised highly engaged Jews who care deeply about the issues under consideration. It is fair to suspect that had the Dialogue included more Jews of no religion, more

disconnected Jews, and more unaffiliated Jews, the answers to the questions about intermarriage – possibly the most sensitive issue for Diaspora Jews – would have been different.

And yet, connected Jews make the communal rules. It is highly engaged and connected Jews who grasp the challenges, and attempt to tackle them. These Jews, participants in our groups, seemed somewhat readier than we had expected to make definitive assertions concerning the value of in-marriage to the community and its long term interests.

Celebrating intermarriage as an opportunity for growth emanates from some of the studies that present growing community success in keeping interfaith families within the Jewish sphere. The idea that intermarriage could be beneficial for the Jewish community is fairly straight forward. If non-Jews who marry Jews agree in higher numbers – as they do – to raise Jewish children, then the Jewish community no longer "loses" Jews to intermarriage, it "gains" non-Jews and their children who become a part of the community. But do most Jews believe that such a development is likely to occur?

According to our findings they are hesitant to embrace such optimism. They are still skeptical about the ability of the community to sustain itself as strongly "Jewish" (whatever that means to each of them) when so many families within the community are only half Jewish. Even as they see a reality that cannot be reversed, and even as they hear the many success stories of integration of intermarried couples into the community, and even as they hear some of their leaders celebrate intermarriage as an opportunity for growth – they remain doubtful. Many of them cannot overlook the studies that repeatedly show that intermarriage leads to a lesser engagement with Judaism. Many are not certain that it is within the community's capabilities to bring a mixed family (on average) to the level of engagement of an in-married family. As one study conclusively stated: "Children of intermarriage were less likely than children of inmarriage to have attended a Jewish day school or supplementary school, observed Jewish holidays, and participated in informal Jewish social and educational activities during their childhood or teen years."[175]

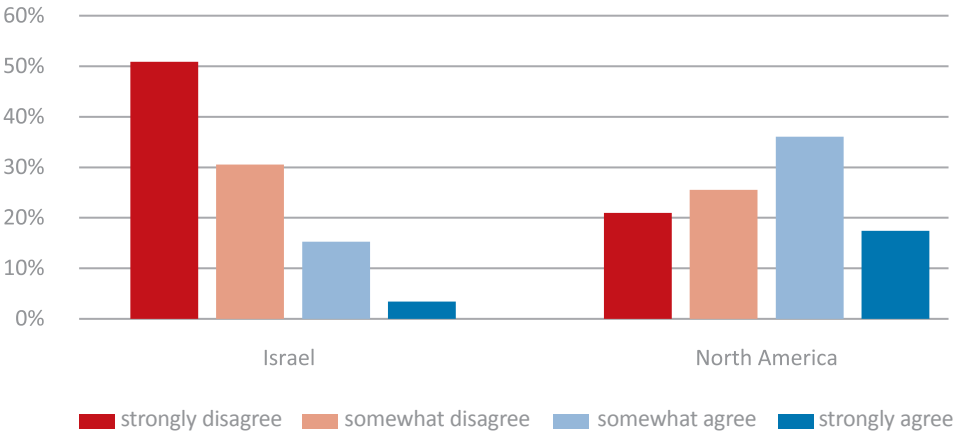
175 "Millennial Children of Intermarriage: Touchpoints and Trajectories of Jewish Engagement", Theodore Sasson, Leonard Saxe, Fern Chertok, Michelle Shain, Shahar Hecht, Graham Wright, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, 2015.

The Dialogue survey asked participants to agree or disagree with the statement: "Intermarriage could be a blessing for the future of Judaism." That is the exact argument proponents of outreach policies tend to make: not that intermarriage is a blessing, but rather that with the right policies (being more welcoming, investing in interfaith families etc.) the potential is there for a beneficial effect on the community.

Dialogue participants were somewhat doubtful, but about half seemed willing to entertain the possibility of benefit. Of course, differences between groups are again notable: the Orthodox vehemently disagreed with the statement – more than 80 percent either strongly disagreed (66 percent) or somewhat disagreed (16 percent). But almost half of our Conservative participants somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement (37 percent somewhat, 11percent strongly), and a majority of both Reform and secular Jews agreed with it. Yet even among the Reform and secular, more participants "somewhat agreed" than "strongly agreed" (44 percent of Reform and 36 percent of secular participants "somewhat" agreed).

On the question of benefitting from intermarriage (unlike the question of encouraging in-marriage) there was also a notable and highly significant difference in answers based on geography. Israeli Jews and American Jews were almost a mirror image of one another in relation to this question. Israelis were highly skeptical that intermarriage presents an opportunity for the community (this is no wonder: they are taught that intermarriage equals "assimilation") – while Americans were cautiously optimistic. Almost half of Israeli participants "strongly disagree(d)" with the statement: intermarriage could be a blessing for the future of Judaism. But in Australia, 46 percent agreed that intermarriage could be a blessing; in Brazil, 67 percent agreed with the statement; and in the U.S., 51 percent agreed. Quite obviously, in this case the cautious optimism of Jews who deal with the issue of intermarriage (Diaspora Jews) is much more important than the bleak view of Israeli Jews who have little familiarity with this issue, and are not on the frontline of having to deal with it.

To what degree do you agree/disagree:
Intermarriage could be a blessing for the future of Judaism



Speculating about the answers Dialogue participants gave with respect to intermarriage, along with the other answers they gave, it is interesting to point out a few things:

As discussed earlier, Jews seem to put less emphasis on the biological component of Jewishness – and this fits nicely with their understanding that intermarriage is currently an irreversible part of Jewish life, and also with the cautious optimism some of them have concerning the community's ability to turn this challenging trend into an opportunity.

As Jews emphasize "nationality\peoplehood" as a major component of Jewishness, and as they also emphasize "taking care of Israel and other Jews" as an "essential" part of being Jewish, their comfort with intermarriage could seem to rest on shaky ground. Almost all studies of intermarried couples and their children clearly show a much lower level of connection to other Jews and to Israel.[176] In this sense, a high percentage of intermarried families within the Jewish community could complicate the desire of many Jews to have "nationality" and "peoplehood" as

176 See, for example: "Millennial Children of Intermarriage", Sasson, Saxe, Chertok, Shain, Hecht, Wright, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, 2015. See also: "Trouble in the Tribe: The American Jewish Conflict over Israe"l, Dov Waxman, page 202.

components more significant than "religion" or even "culture."[177]

We did not ask Dialogue participants a specific question concerning the "exclusivity" of Jewishness – that is, whether being Jewish requires a commitment to Jewishness alone (whether it's religious or peoplehood exclusivity). This is a question in need of exploration as the data show that there is a growing share of Jews who do not see their Jewishness as exclusive.[178] It is worth noting in this context that even though the Israeli definition of who is a Jew is not the Halachic definition, Israeli law states that a Jew cannot have "another religion" and maintain his or her Jewish status in the eyes of the state.[179]

As we will show later, the Dialogue found that many Jews want intermarried families to be full participants in Jewish life, but still have an inclination to preserve some symbolic features that point to the advantage, from a communal viewpoint, of in-marriage over intermarriage (for example: the reluctance of some Jews to have intermarried people occupy certain leadership positions).

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177 An interesting comment concerning this issue was made by Philologos in writing about the term "Jews by choice". "A Judaism without ethnicity can hardly be called Judaism—and yet it is the kind of Judaism that will spread in an America in which being Jewish by choice and Jewish by birth are thought of as two different versions of the same thing. Jewishness can be a deliberate choice for non-Jews only so long as it is as a welcomed chosenness for born Jews". See: The False Ideas in the Phrase "Jew by Choice", Philologos, *Mosaic Magazine*, July 2016.

178 See: "Most children of intermarriage aren't told they are exclusively Jewish", Shmuel Rosner, 2015. According to Pew 2013 "300,000 children who are being raised partly Jewish and partly in another religion" in the U.S..

179 For the legal meaning of "not a member of another religion" see Israel's high court decision Beresford vs. State of Israel.

Jewish Wish for Unity

Jews see the difficulties and acknowledge the complications, and yet wish for a broader "understanding" of what Jewishness means among Jews

Complications are many, and yet, more than a few Jews would deem it desirable to develop as broad as possible an understanding of what Jewishness means. A broad definition, they believe, "strengthens the community, community growth, including as many people as possible."[180] They also believe "it is problematic to have people be accepted as Jewish by some and not by many others."[181] They worry that "it is hard to be united as Jews when we don't have boundaries of what is 'Jewish'."[182]

The Dialogue survey demonstrates this instinctive wish for unity with gusto: 57 percent of participants argued that it is "necessary to have a broadly accepted understanding of who is a Jew" because "otherwise we are not a people" (note that the question did not refer to a broadly agreed-upon and strict "definition" of Jewishness, but rather to a much looser notion of "understanding"). Less than a third (29 percent) argued that a "broadly accepted understanding" is not necessary, while fewer participants argued that such an understanding is necessary "only for Israel" or that one is needed "for Israel" and "another one" for Diaspora communities (less than 5 percent each).[183]

In all countries where seminars were held, except for Brazil, a clear majority opted for an "understanding."[184] In all streams of Judaism, the option of an "understanding" was the most coveted (but for "secular" Jews it was almost on par with the option "no need - it is good to have a variety of options"). As a rule, the more traditional the group, the higher the wish for a single understanding (of

180 From a summary of reports from Cleveland, Miami, Detroit, Portland, St. louis, by Chaya Ekstein.

181 Hashlama, Israel seminar, February 24, 2016. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

182 NSW Australia Seminar, March 31, 2016. Notes by Teneille Murray.

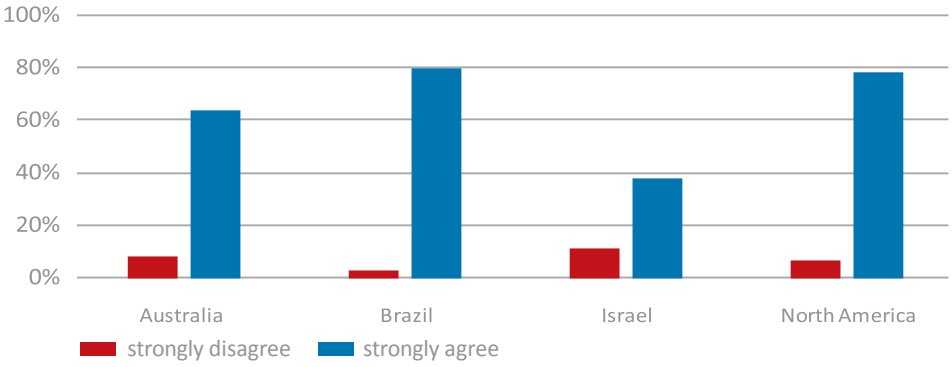
183 The options were: No need - it is good to have a variety of options; Yes - there is such need, because otherwise the Jews would not be "a people"; Only the State of Israel needs a definition; One definition for Israel and another for the Jewish Diaspora.

184 In Brazil, 50% said no need for understanding, and 40% said there is such need.

course, we can assume that the more traditional the group, the narrower it would like the understanding to be). Thus, Orthodox Jews want an understanding more than Conservative Jews, who want it more than Reform Jews, who in turn want it more than secular Jews. There is something of an irony here because many Jews would argue that the Orthodox insistence on stringent traditional definitions is what makes an "understanding" impossible to achieve. The result of Orthodox perceptions can be detected by looking how Israelis are much less willing to accept all forms of conversions compared to Jews from other countries (this surely further complicates reaching an "understanding").

To what extent do you agree/disagree: A conversion by a Reform/ Conservative rabbi is legitimate:

Strongly agree vs. Strongly disagree, by country



There was resistance to a singular "understanding" in some quarters. "There is no need for a common understanding," said a participant in Zurich[185]. But more than resistance, there was skepticism about the ability of Jews to reach an understanding with respect to the meaning of Jewishness. "We would be in a much better place had we been able to reach an understanding on these issues," a participant in Pittsburgh said, "but I just don't see it. I don't see the Orthodox accepting a Reform convert, and I don't see the Reform agreeing to strengthen their process of conversion to be more serious. So while I want everybody to agree, I think the divisions will only grow."[186]

185 Zurich seminar, May 4, 2016. Notes by Guy Spier.

186 Pittsburgh seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

Some participants were skeptical about the possibility of Jews ever reaching a common understanding for philosophical reasons: "We will never have a common understanding of what is 'Jewish' as to be Jewish is to spend your life trying to answer this question."[187] Others named specific obstacles to reaching such an understanding: "Israel is behind in understanding what Judaism is, it has a narrow way of thinking."[188] The survey data reveal that the least enthusiasm for reaching a common understanding was among the youngest and the oldest age cohorts – possibly (but this is speculation) because of the younger participants' resistance to definitions generally, and the elders' experience-ignited disbelief. "When Jews try to reach an understanding it often ends up worsening the situation rather than improving it," an older participant it Detroit said.[189]

187 NSW Australia Seminar, March 31, 2016. Notes by Teneille Murray.

188 Bina seminar, December 16, 2015. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

189 Detroit seminar, March 9, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

Compartmentalizing Jewishness

Dialogue participants tended to be pragmatic: rather than look for any unitary "definition" of Jewishness they apply different definitions to different situations

As Jews face the highly complicated world of Jewish connectedness, and as they realize that finding a formula that would be acceptable to all (or at least most) Jews at all times and in all places and situations is unrealistic, they still want some "norms" of Jewishness to be applied. "Without demonstrating commitment to Judaism, you can feel Jewish in one minute and non-Jewish in another minute," a Boston participant explained.[190] "I want to have some sense that a person who claims to belong to the Jewish world is actually Jewish," a discussant in Baltimore said.[191] But cognizant of the impossibility of agreeing on what makes a person "Jewish" for all things, the Dialogue participants tended to be pragmatic: rather than look for any general "definition" of Jewishness they apply different definitions – or different expectations around communal norms – to different situations. Rather than trying to reach agreement on an entry bar for Jewishness, they negotiate the feasibility of diverse entry bars for a multiplicity of Jewish connections.

Broadly speaking, there are four areas to which Jews apply these changing expectations and definitions:

1. Participation in Jewish life;
2. Religious leadership;
3. Communal leadership; and
4. Israel.

Our discussion groups tended to apply certain rules to Israel that do not apply to the Diaspora community. They expect certain things of their communal leaders they do not expect of all participants in Jewish life, and so on and so forth. Of

190 Boston seminar, April 19, 2016. Notes by Alex Thompson.

191 Baltimore JPPI seminar, April 11, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

course, participants did not always agree on which criteria fits which situation. "We all had a lot of difficulty with this question. One thought that only Birthright should be limited to Jews, while synagogue and federation leadership should be open to non-Jews, while another felt just the opposite," a Zurich summary explained.[192] But citing a few examples from JPPI discussions may make these differentiations more tangible, and appropriate examples are plentiful. Dialogue sessions included several scenarios that prompted participant interaction around specific issues: where should the bar of "Jewishness" be for Birthright trip eligibility, or for being a member of a synagogue building committee, or on the ritual committee, or to be a rabbi, or a communal leader, or to get funding for Jewish activities, or to be eligible to immigrate to Israel under the Law or Return. JPPI asked participants to look at different Jewish "types" and tell us how they fit into these slots.

For example: does a person on a synagogue's building committee need to be Jewish – and according to which definition? Most participants answered this question quite simply: when it comes to a synagogue life, the first rule is to adhere to synagogue norms. Dialogue participants did not anticipate, nor expect, that all synagogues have the same rules. "Ritual committee membership would depend on the synagogue," said a participant in Cleveland.[193]

But this does not suggest that Jews see no difference, for example, between a member of a building committee and a member of a ritual committee. They do. Most discussants shrugged off the question of any "Jewish bar" for sitting on building committees: "Why would anyone have a problem with a non-Jew being on a building committee?" asked a UK participant.[194] A participant in Detroit was more blunt: "If someone is dumb enough to want to be on a building committee, Jewish, not Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, by all means, let him be on the building committee."[195] But when considering ritual committees, some more complex debates unfolded. There were those who insisted that even synagogues in which mixed families are normative reserve membership on committees that dictate the rules of ritual for Jews exclusively. Then again, a Dallas rabbi made the exact opposite argument: "I need non-Jews on the ritual committee, and if no one volunteers I will search for such members," he said. "My synagogue has

192 Zurich seminar, May 4, 2016. Notes by Guy Spier.

193 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

194 UK seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by David Walsh.

195 Detroit seminar, March 9, 2016. From notes by Shmuel Rosner.

many families of Jews and non-Jews, and this makes it essential for me to get the non-Jewish outlook on our rituals. I want to know if something is appealing or offensive to non-Jews, I want to make sure they feel comfortable at the Temple."[196]

Looking at the various types and scenarios considered in JPPI Dialogue discussions, it is possible to paint with a broad brush a certain hierarchy of expectations and norms participants would apply to different situations. Clearly, for almost every participant the entry bar for inclusion was low, and the expectation that the Jewish community be welcoming to those seeking to participate in Jewish life or engage in Jewish learning was high. "In general, I lean toward greater inclusivity. Focus on people who actively seek to engage rather than trying to cast a net and draw people in," a Portland participant advised.[197] "Anyone who walks through the door should be eligible for funding, self-identifying, and self-selecting," an Atlanta participant argued.[198] "It doesn't feel like a Jewish value to exclude people," said a Cleveland participant.[199] "'Keiruv' is a Jewish value," asserted a participant in Israel.[200]

If there were any caveats in regard to participation, they were focused on the specific goals of specific activities. "Consider what's best for the Jewish community. The goal is to make the Jewish community better. The 'who' is less important than the 'what' and the 'why,'" according to one Portland participant.[201] "The allocation of funds cannot be centered on the roots of a person but on the goals of the project," offered a Rio participant.[202] One example of an activity where stricter rules might apply: "For a singles event I would be less inclusive."[203] One example of a particular, yet inclusive guideline that could be applied: "We should make funds available for families with one Jewish parent. Cleveland is doing that now, and we've strengthened our community with that outreach."[204]

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196 Dallas March 8, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

197 Portland seminar, April 18-19, 2016. Notes by Laura Renner Satushek and Caron Rothstein.

198 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi.

199 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

200 Hashlama, Israel seminar, February 24, 2016. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

201 Portland seminar, April 18-19, 2016. Notes by Laura Renner Satushek and Caron Rothstein.

202 Rio de Janeiro seminar, March 29, 2016. Notes by Dr. Alberto Milkewitz.

203 Hashlama, Israel seminar, February 24, 2016. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

204 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

The Law of Return

Dialogue participants tended to agree that the Law or Return should be fairly strict in its criteria of Jewishness

So, participation ought to be a low-bar component of Jewish life, but there are instances when a higher bar would be appropriate. The most notable example raised at JPPI's discussions referred to Israel's Law of Return, which guarantees the right of every Jew to a place in Israel.

In JPPI's 2014 Dialogue report,[205] we demonstrated a near consensus among Jews concerning the need for maintaining the Law of Return. "Participants overwhelmingly viewed the relationship between Israel and non-Israeli Jews, as configured in the Law of Return, as not just essential but also as compatible with democratic ideas…discussants were nearly unanimously in agreement that the Law of Return should be maintained as an expression of Jewish solidarity. Many participants thought that it serves a practical need, even today when Jews tend to live in countries hospitable to Judaism." Their argument rested on two main pillars: the Law's possible practical implications (for Jews in need of speedy escape), and its symbolic value to Israel-Diaspora relations.

This year's Dialogue did not deal with the Law's desirability, but rather with the question of who should be included under the Law's umbrella. Participants looked at the current definitions and then discussed their current validity for Jewish world today, which has changed considerably since the law was last updated (in the early 1970s.)[206] Somewhat surprisingly, the fluidity of Jewish identity does not lead all Jews to expect Israel to relax its criteria for Jewish Return – in fact, the opposite may be true: Dialogue participants tended to argue for further eligibility restrictions. These include, a Jewish parent (as opposed to a Jewish grandparent,

205 Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry, JPPI, 2014.

206 For history of the law see Gavison: 60 Years to the Law of Return: History, Ideology, Justification," Metzila Center, 2009.

as under the Law today)[207] or an accepted form of conversion (self-identification, it was felt, should not be an acceptable criterion in this case).

Dialogue participants accept the need for well-defined regulation: "You can't measure how much each person identifies as Jewish, you need concrete criteria," a younger Israeli told us.[208] They also believe a law that enables immigration into a country has consequences more far reaching than those around the allocation of funds for programs for Jews. "Rules are needed. It's not possible or desirable to be as inclusive as allocations";[209] "There is a difference between self-identification as a Jew for local community involvement versus application of the Law of Return."[210] Participants in several locations did not even feel comfortable discussing the rules that govern Israeli immigration policy: "Participants in São Paulo think we don´t have to tell Israel which are the criteria for immigration or in other issues;"[211] "It's more a question for Israel than for us."[212] But most participants did have a view of the Law, and were not shy in expressing it in their survey answers and throughout our discussions.

The Dialogue survey shows that Jews feel more comfortable with the criterion of a Jewish parent than with a Jewish grandparent for Law of Return eligibility, and most (except for the Orthodox)[213] do not see the necessity that the parent be the mother, as Halacha dictates. In Brazil and Australia, a more pronounced emphasis was put on community criteria ("A person that the local community recognizes as Jewish" is the definition that Israel should use for recognizing Jews as eligible

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207 The Israeli Knesset altered the Law of Retun in 1970, as a response to the Shalit court case. For the first time a definition of "Jew" was established in Israeli law: "person who was born of a Jewish mother or has become converted to Judaism and who is not a member of another religion". The amendment also extended eligibility for immigration to Israel to include the child and the grandchild of a Jewish person, the spouse of a Jew, and the spouse of the child or grandchild. As Gavison noted: "The combined result was that the law narrowly defines, in almost halachic terms, 'a Jew,' but grants eligibility to Aliyah to many who are not Jews by this definition and who may not even have any connection to the aspirations of the Jewish people to realize their right to self-determination in Israel" (see: "The Law of Return at Sixty Years: History, Ideology, Justification", Ruth Gavison, page 67).

208 Ein Prat, Israel seminar, December 31, 2015. Notes by Inbal Hakman.

209 Portland seminar, April 18-19, 2016. Notes by Laura Renner Satushek and Caron Rothstein.

210 Miami seminar, March 3, 2016. Notes by Michelle Labgold.

211 São Paulo seminar, March 16, 2016. Notes by Dr. Alberto Milkewitz.

212 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

213 Interestingly, even among the Orthodox there was no majority in support of a "Jewish mother" and halachic conversion as the criteria for the Law of Return. About 44% of the Orthodox participants chose this option, with 23% choosing "Jewish parent" and the rest choosing one of the other options.

for the Law of Return), but in all countries the definition most acceptable was "a person born to a Jewish parent, or one that was converted to Judaism."

Enacting stricter criteria, a Palm Beach participant argued, "is not a judgment on how Jewish you are."[214] As we have already begun to demonstrate, there is no longer a general "scale of judgment" for determining "how Jewish" a person is – we are left only with specific definitions that apply to specific situations. And it is permissible, if not advisable, that the rules pertaining to the Law or Return be more exclusive than other situations as it in involves immigration. "You have to pass tests to become an American citizen and Israel can demand certain tests for a person to become Israeli," a Chicago participant asserted.[215] It is true that many Jews would like Israel to change some aspects of its Jewish character, and many Diaspora Jews (and Israeli Jews) are hardly satisfied with Israel's accepted conversion procedures. However, the overall feeling was that Israel has the right to demand official conversion of a non-Jew if s/he wants to become an Israeli. "It's only reasonable that someone would have to go through a 'proper' conversion to become Israeli via the Law of Return. [However,] Israel should liberalize the definition of and process to become a Jew";[216] "If the person wants to move to Israel he should abide by Israeli rules"; "I don't see how anyone can say 'I want to come to Israel but you can't ask me to go through conversion.' Their country, their rules."[217]

Of course, all this does not mean that Israel needs to rush into debates about possible modification of the Law of Return. History teaches that such attempts at change often result in bitter debate, and with unintended consequences. However, as the meaning of Jewishness changes, and as the boundaries of the Jewish people are being redrawn by Jews and non-Jews all over the world, it may be necessary to modify the Law, and if such need arises (as a result of growing demand for immigration, or growing pressures within Israel against the current criteria), it is worth knowing that world Jewry would not necessarily be against any attempt to narrow the path for Law of Return immigration.

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214 Palm Beach seminar, March 10, 2016. Notes by Patrice Gilbert and Josephine Gon.

215 Chicago JPPI seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

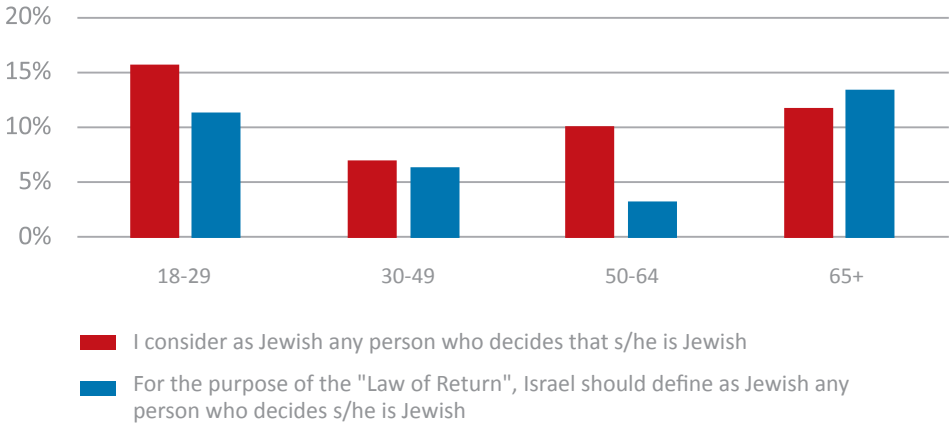
216 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi.

217 Both quotes: Washington JPPI seminar, notes by Shmuel Rosner, April 11, 2016.

Percentage of respondents who answered self-definition as the criteria for being Jewish for each of the following questions:

1) Whom do you consider to be Jewish?

2) How would you propose Israel define a Jew for the purpose of the "Law of Return"?



The Jewishness of Leaders

Jews want their religious leaders to be unquestionably Jewish, and most of them also want their communal leaders to be Jewish. They disagree as to whether a leader must have a Jewish spouse.

Questions about the standard of Jewish leaders' "Jewishness" were more compelling to Diaspora Jews than to Israeli Jews, whose leaders are the democratically elected politicians of Israel. Also, in Israel the issue of Jewish fluidity is much less conspicuous and hardly concerns the Jewish population. In Diaspora communities though, the issue is very much alive with questions about norms, qualifications, local customs, cultural sensitivities and other questions all being part of the larger question: How Jewish should a Jewish leader be, and in what ways?

The leadership under discussion in Dialogue seminars, were of two main types:

Religious leadership – most of all rabbis, but also cantors, and, to a lesser extent, the lay leadership of synagogues, from presidents, to heads of committees (as discussed previously).

Communal leadership – meaning lay and professional leadership of federations and large Jewish organizations.

Separate and distinct criteria apply to each category. In most communities, most participants agreed that both religious and communal leadership ought to be "Jewish" under widely accepted criteria: having been brought up Jewish or having undergone proper conversion. It seems that Jews tend to be more particular and demanding in their belief that religious leadership will adhere to Judaism's more traditional norms. For example: "It is okay to have a top federation executive have a non-Jewish spouse but not the Rabbi of the synagogue since they are the Jewish leader (even if the Rabbi's congregation may have predominantly interfaith couples)," reasoned a participant in Detroit.[218] Other opinions expressed on the subject include:

218 Detroit seminar, March 9, 2016. Notes by Melanie Rivkin.

- "My rabbi has to be Jewish, but I don't see any reason why the head of a Jewish federation has to be Jewish. The federation is a professional organization, and what we need there is the best professionals we can find, Jewish or not Jewish."[219]
- "It is ok to allow all who are interested to come in, but not okay to let them lead."[220]
- "Being Jewish may be a qualification for some positions – rabbi, liturgy, perhaps synagogue leadership – but not for others. For some positions, understanding of the community is important, but this doesn't necessarily require someone to be Jewish."[221]

The differentiation between federation and religious leaders seems to rest upon an assumption that is open to dispute: that the federations are "professional" organizations with little or no symbolic meaning. Such a claim was raised in several discussions, but most Dialogue participants did not accept it. This led some of them to the conclusion that "head of a federation is a symbolic position – and should be held by someone who is clearly Jewish,", a Palm Beach participant said.[222] It led others to attempt to differentiate between different positions within the federations: "The CEO could be non-Jewish, but not the President or Chair";[223] "Professionals do not have to be Jewish, lay leaders should be actively Jewish";[224] Some argued that "a non-Jew cannot lead a federation, for federation are supposed to lead the Jewish community, and federation must lead as part of the community.... Most people would not want a federation CEO who has a non-Jewish spouse because they are supposed to serve as an upstanding example to the community," an Atlanta participant argued.[225]

Family issues of spouse and children – were highly sensitive in all discussions. Clearly, Jews can no longer argue that, as a rule, Jews tend to marry other Jews. The

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219 Dallas seminar, March 8, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

220 NSW Australia Seminar, March 31, 2016. Notes by Teneille Murray.

221 Portland seminar, April 18-19, 2016. Notes by Laura Renner Satushek and Caron Rothstein.

222 Palm Beach seminar, March 10, 2016. Notes by Patrice Gilbert and Josephine Gon.

223 UK seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by David Walsh.

224 Cleveland seminar, March 14, 2016.

225 Atlanta seminar, April 8, 2016. Notes by Aaron Levi.

question concerning people in leadership positions is whether they could or should be expected to adhere to a different standard (some would argue "higher") than other Jews. Put simply: is it acceptable for communal leaders to have non-Jewish spouses, as is the norm for members of many Jewish communities?

Recent events could not be ignored as the discussion about spouses unfolded. Earlier this year, Reconstructionist Judaism was mired in a fierce debate over a new policy that allows the ordination of intermarried rabbis and the graduation of intermarried rabbinical students.[226] That debate, as one rabbi who resigned from the movement in the wake of the new policy put it, "goes to the heart of what it means to be a Jewish leader." If a majority of Dialogue participants argued that communal leaders – as well as religious leaders – must be Jewish, there was no such consensus with respect to their spouses. "There was notable disagreement on whether having a non-Jewish spouse disqualifies an individual from heading a Jewish federation," the Boston summary notes.[227] "The group agreed that a Jew who has a non-Jewish spouse should be able to head a federation," notes the summary of the Miami discussion.[228] "Most (80 percent) agreed that the head of a Jewish Federation (or in the Australian case, the head of a community roof body) could be half Jewish or have a non-Jewish spouse. The important thing is to be passionate about and supportive of the community and organization," reads the summary from the Melbourne.[229] But there were also those who felt differently: "Many of my friends have non-Jewish wives whom I adore, but the leader of the community needs to serve as a beacon of Judaism and having a spouse that is not Jewish does not fit this description," a discussant in Washington said. An Orthodox rabbi in Dallas said: "If the leader of the community has a non-Jewish spouse the Orthodox group will not take him seriously."[230]

In some communities the discussion went even further to the question of children. Some participants argued that they would accept a non-Jewish spouse of a communal leader (and fewer of them, a rabbi) if the offspring of the leader is

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226 See:" 7 Reconstructionist Rabbis Quit as Synagogues Debate Intermarried Rabbis", Nathan Guttman, The Forward, Jan. 2016.

227 Boston seminar, April 19, 2016. Notes by Alex Thompson.

228 Miami seminar, March 3, 2016. Notes by Michelle Labgold.

229 Melbourne seminar, March 21, 2016. Notes by Eileen Freed.

230 Washington JPPI seminar, April 11, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner, Dallas March 8, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

raised exclusively Jewishly. Yet if the leader has not only a non-Jewish spouse but also children who aren't Jewish, the case would be different. "I want my leaders to have a Jewish family," a participant in Chicago said. "If the spouse has reasons not to convert, that I can see, but if the children are not Jewish the leader can't be a real role model."[231]

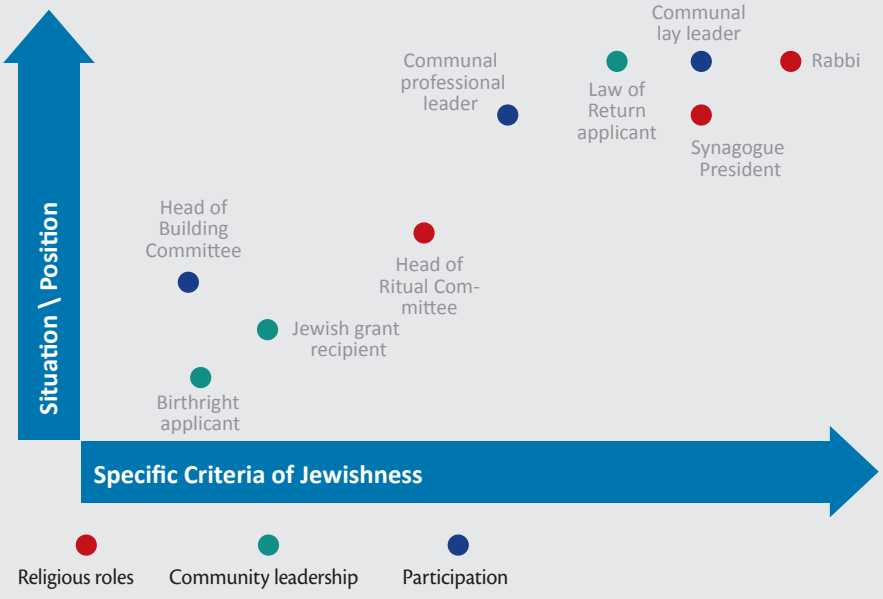
The question of "leader as a role model" becomes significant in this case, only when the encouraged "model" is an in-married Jewish family. Clearly, this is what most of the Dialogue participants believed to be the case. In JPPI's Dialogue survey, as we have shown in previous chapters, more than 80 percent of participants agreed that the community "should encourage Jews to marry Jews." Their arguments in favor of such a model (without it implying the justification of criticism of Jews who made the personal decision to marry non-Jews) were usually straight forward. Such marriages, from a communal viewpoint, are more promising. According to Pew, the only type of families in which a high percentage of children are raised Jewish by religion is in-married families. Among in-married couples, "96 percent say they are raising their children Jewish by religion, and just 1 percent say they are not raising their children Jewish. But among Jews married to non-Jews, just 20 percent say they are raising their children Jewish by religion, and 37 percent say their children are not being raised Jewish." [232]

231 Chicago seminar, April 4, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

232 See: Pew 2013, page 67.

Jewish for What?

Based on our examination of the data, the discussion summaries, and discussions among the JPPI fellows that participated in the Dialogue process, we are able to sketch a diagram of Jews' priorities and standards of "Jewishness" preferred in different circumstances and for different positions. We do not attach numbers to the diagram as this is a non-scientific formulation based on impressions and discussions. Its main purpose and value is in more clearly highlighting how engaged Jews allow for different formulations of Jewishness in different situations, and how these formulations scale on a diagram that includes specific criteria. It shows to what extent Jews in the Dialogue believed various situations\roles justify a narrower and more specific definition of Jewishness. A symbolic hierarchy of the roles and situations discussed emerges. For example, congregational rabbis are considered to be in positions of high symbolic significance in Jewish life, and are expected to adhere to a more rigorous level of Jewishness. On the other end of the scale, Birthright applicants seek to participate in a broadly available Jewish program – hence there is no requirement of adherence to more stringent criteria of Jewishness. And, of course, what we present here is not an agreed upon formulation of either hierarchy or desired criteria. (Is a communal lay leader truly more senior in Jewish life than a synagogue president? Who knows?)



Implications: Material Resources

The main implication of the changing ground of Jewishness is on the allocation of funds for Jewish activities. According to the vast majority of Dialogue participants, investment should be made in all those wanting to participate, without much regard to their brand of Jewishness. "The question must not be who is a Jew, but what a good project is for the Jewish community and how we can achieve the goals," a participant in Brazil asserted.[233] "I think that if anyone declares themselves Jewish we should reach out to them," a participant in Detroit said.[234] "There was an overwhelming desire to reach out to those on the periphery of the community to engage and thus allocate resources to do this," the Boston discussion summary notes.[235]

Reservations were few, and mostly based on pragmatic concerns, such as the reality that resources are not plentiful enough to cover all the bases. "In Salvador, a community with a high percentage of Jews by conversion, it was interesting that most of the participants agreed that allocations must go to 'Jews' as defined by main Jewish denominations."[236] "Minority opinion: too much outreach has the danger of diluting the community."[237]

JPPI Dialogue participants were presented with several options for prioritizing which kind of Jewish programming should receive funding from the organized community (and possibly, for Israel programs as well). We proposed the following allocation options: to 'Jews' as defined by **main Jewish denominations**; to Jews as defined by (Orthodox) **Halacha**; to all **people who say** they are Jewish; and to **all people** who seek to participate. The overall agreement was that the Halachic criteria is much too restrictive for program funding. In several discussions, the example of Chabad outreach was mentioned as proof that not even Orthodoxy – when it reaches out – would limit its outreach to verifiably Halachic Jews.

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233 São Paulo seminar, March 16, 2016. Notes by Dr. Alberto Milkewitz.

234 Detroit seminar, March 9, 2016. Notes by Barrett Harr.

235 Boston seminar, April 19, 2016. Notes by Alex Thompson.

236 Salvador seminar, April 11, 2016. Notes by Dr. Alberto Milkewitz.

237 Masa seminar, February 2, 2016. Notes by Chaya Ekstein.

Viewpoints ranged from those advocating the allocation of most communal resources to Jews as defined by any of the Jewish streams, and those proposing to accept every person who "comes through the door" (a notable exception in all U.S. communities: Messianic Jews are considered beyond the pale of acceptability in community activities – not as individuals, but as representatives of a culture that Jews perceive to be in stark contradiction to their own).

What are the practical implications of these views? Obviously, decision makers do not have the luxury of providing unlimited funding and must, therefore prioritize resource allocation. But, based on Dialogue discussions, it is reasonable to conclude that Jewish institutions and the government of Israel have to take into account the following points:

1. Jews do not condone principled exclusion. If funds have to be distributed based on a set of priorities, these priorities have to be rooted in financial reality rather than ideological preferences.
2. There is a sense among many Jews that the Jewish community is not yet doing a good enough job reaching out to the broader community. This perception may or may not be accurate, but as so many believe this to be the case, it is worth noting.
3. The government of Israel, as a body operating under a more restrictive understanding of Jewishness, has to be aware of the need to tailor certain programs and initiatives so they are compatible with Diaspora realities.
4. There needs to be a better understanding within institutions, including religious ones, of the ultimate goal of funding programs for the broader community. The Dialogue raised the possibility that connected Jews, while understanding the sensitivities and risks involved (being offensive etc.) would like to see a somewhat more daring approach to getting distanced Jews and their families to become, with time, "fully" Jewish.
5. The components of Judaism most Jews consider important may suggest that a larger portion of the Jewish financial pie should be invested in programs that speak to the cultural and national sentiments of Jews – rather than their declining sense of narrowly defined religiosity (for example, framing Shabbat in a cultural context, rather than a Halachic-religious one). This is a challenge for communities whose primary institution of Jewish expression was the synagogue.

Implications: Legal and Procedural Issues

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the meaning of Jewishness as understood by individual Jews, Jewish institutions, and by the State of Israel has far-reaching legal and procedural implications. The already discussed Law of Return, which confers Jews with the right to settle in Israel depends on a particular definition of "Jew." As we have seen, Dialogue participants were by and large in agreement that the Law should not become more vague because of the changing circumstances in Diaspora communities. On the contrary, many argued that there is ample reason to make it somewhat stricter than it is today to counter trends that could lead it to become too loose for Israel to sustain.

We have also demonstrated how definitions of Jewishness can impact how Jewish institutions assign certain roles (for example, rabbis, members of certain committees, and federation executives) based, among other things, on their understanding of the type of Jewishness required for these roles. Some communities emphasize involvement in Jewish life as the basic sign of Jewishness while others opt for the traditional definitions of lineage (born to a Jewish mother\parent) or conversion. In some communities a job candidate's Jewishness plays a minor role among all other considerations (professionalism, personality, etc) while in other communities, at least for certain roles, adherence to a particular definition of Jewishness is a precondition for even being considered for the job.

All in all, Jews tend to want their local communities and institutions to define the type of Jewishness that is desirable in different situations. As an ideal, they may agree that it would be advantageous to have a broader understanding of Jewishness, but when it comes to their synagogue's rabbi, the criteria is more rigorous. "I don't see the congregation taking orders from a distant authority if they find these orders offensive or inappropriate," as one rabbi in Dallas put it.[238] JPPI's Dialogue survey also shows that in all countries except Israel, Jews chose

238 Dallas March 8, 2016. Notes by Shmuel Rosner.

the "Jewish community in which s/he lives" as best situated to "determine who is Jewish."

Based on the research and as a consequence of these sentiments we recommend taking the following points into account:

1. There is not going to be a single agreed upon definition of Jewishness embraced by all institutions, which means that Jewish institutions have to learn to work alongside each other even when their respective understandings of Jewishness differ markedly.

2. Local bodies are, indeed, best situated to determine the type of Jewishness they ought to apply to their institutions. However, it would not be unwise to urge local communities and institutions to make their determinations with an eye on the larger Jewish world and its understanding of Jewishness. If gaps between Jewish bodies become very wide, their ability to work jointly for the Jewish future will be impaired.

3. The same lesson applies to Israel and Diaspora communities. Israel should not further compound the already notable differences between its definition of Jewishness and that of Jews living elsewhere by adopting stricter standards based on Orthodox interpretations of Jewishness. Diaspora communities should also be wary of adopting standards Jewish Israelis would not be able to accept – especially actions that frame assimilationist trends as desirable rather than tolerable.

4. While connected Jews – represented in the Dialogue – understand that current trends require flexibility and the acceptance of a wide variety of tastes and beliefs with respect to the meaning of Jewishness, they also still seem to want certain norms, vague as they might be, to remain in place. As Jewish communities tackle issues and challenges that involve ascribing Jewishness criteria, it is not mandatory to always choose the least demanding, most equivocal, option.

5. It is necessary to further investigate what the future holds for the Law of Return. It must not be canceled, as it remains a cornerstone of Israel's Jewish character. But changing times require fresh thinking about the criteria of Jewishness as defined by Israel today, and their applicability to a Jewish world that evolves over the coming decades.

Implications: Jewish Demography and Psychology

A state of confusion can wear away at the health of a person or a nation, and the Jews are clearly going through a phase of confused identity. "Everything today is shaky," as one young participant put it.[239] A condition of vague definitions also has ramifications for Jewish demographics beginning with the fact that it is not always clear which demographic analysis serves policy makers best. That Jews who participated in JPPI's Dialogue all stressed the need for the community to be welcoming does not mean that they advise a completely loose definition of Jewishness.

Take, for example, one typical expression of this from a seminar in Australia: "A Jew is not defined only according to strict Halachic definitions, we should recognize patrilineal descent, and being part of an active Jewish family and community is critical to the definition of who is a Jew."[240] On one hand, this statement advocates the acceptability of a variety of Jewish types. On the other hand, it lists clear, rather demanding standards: Jewish descent (including patrilineal), and an active Jewish life. Clearly, if only Jews actively engaged in Jewish life were counted as Jews, the demography of the Jewish people would change dramatically.

The most profound change underway, is that world Jewry is shifting from being a "family" in the biological sense, and from being a group who share a faith in the religious sense, to being something else – a "people" with a "culture" (the word "civilization" is often used in such contexts) And the challenge is right here: Biology is easy to define – either people share a lineage or they don't, either they marry within the larger family, or they opt out. Jewish religious practice was, for most of our history, fairly easy to define, at least from a behavioral standpoint. You either kept Kosher or you didn't; you either observed the laws of Shabbat or you didn't; you either fasted on Yom Kippur or you don't.

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239 Ein Prat, Israel seminar, December 31, 2015. Notes by Inbal Hakman.

240 South Australia Seminar, Notes by Merrilyn Ades.

Defining "culture" and "people" is much trickier. Surely, there are starting points: Jewish texts; the Jewish calendar; a shared historical narrative; a land and a capital (Jerusalem); a language. And yet the Jews who participated in JPPI's 2016 Dialogue did not seem to be satisfied with the notion that the Jews are just a group of people who want to share these cultural components. They want to be a people in a deeper sense – that is, even as they say that ancestry and biology matter less to them than before – they seem unwilling to give up on the notion of being a family.

Amid all of these conclusions, and based on the research, we recommend taking the following points into account:

1. The broader Diaspora community should count as "Jews" only those who have a Jewish parent or have undergone proper conversion (that is, conversion by one of the established denominations). Self-defined Jews should be welcomed and respected but not officially counted as Jews.
2. Diaspora communities should be clearer in asserting through programs and actions, especially those aimed at intermarried families, that Judaism is not strictly a religion – but rather a civilization, a culture (in a broad sense that includes religion) of a people.
3. Israel ought to devise more pluralistic policies to encourage the emergence of a non-Orthodox Jewish culture – a culture that has the potential to play a role in the identity of all Jews.
4. Jewish households – in which as many members as possible are Jewishly connected and committed – should remain the ideal to which the community strives (even while the community recognizes and accepts the fact that many Jews who are important to the larger community marry non-Jewish spouses, and will continue to do so). Jewish communities are advised to take this ideal into consideration in choosing their leaders and role models.
5. Israel is obliged to make its contribution to clarifying the criteria for Jewishness by serving as an example and offering a clear and easy path for conversion of Israelis who immigrated under the Law of Return and who are not Jewish.

Appendix A: Background on the Seminars, their Advantages and Limitations

This special JPPI report is based on discussions held all over the Jewish world exploring the Jewish spectrum in our time of fluid identity. It is also based on a vast volume of research and relies on a plethora of previously published studies, papers, books, and articles. References to some of the background materials we utilized appear in the footnotes. The research was used mostly for understanding the background of our topic of discussion, while seminars enabled us to learn firsthand about the opinions of Jewish leaders, professionals, rabbis, philanthropists, activists and other engaged Jews. Most of the discussions were held in March and April 2016.

Alongside the discussion groups, all participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, referred to as the Dialogue survey throughout this report). Beyond the fact that it provided us with additional and focused information about participant attitudes, this questionnaire enabled us to present a more accurate and detailed picture regarding the groups who took part in the process (such as the age of the participants, their religious affiliation, and how many times they have visited Israel). It can also be used as a tool to compare those who participated in JPPI's Dialogue this year to participants from previous years, as well as to the general Jewish population by comparing the data with other studies.[241]

Naturally, the conclusions drawn from the seminars, the survey, and the background materials are subject to reservations and critique, and we cannot present them without raising several "warning flags" to explain the context in which the seminars were held, and to clarify what they can accomplish for certain, and what they cannot.

241 Comparison is possible mainly with regard to American Jewry, since the number of participants from the U.S. is relatively significant and the information for comparison is accessible.

Structure and content of the seminars:

The vast majority of the seminars were between one and a half to two hours long, and in most cases each discussion group had less than 20 participants. In communities where there were a greater number of participants, they were divided into separate discussion groups that were summarized separately.

At the beginning of each seminar and prior to the start of the discussion, participants were asked to complete the survey questionnaires. Afterward, the seminar began with a brief presentation on the reason for having the seminars, laying out the basic underlying assumptions for the discussions, and the main questions that would be raised. Later on, several scenarios were presented for more detailed and practical discussion. The first case had to do with questions concerning the allocation of funds for Jewish outreach purposes. The second dealt with determining criteria for eligibility to immigrate to Israel under the "Law of Return." The third case related to the criteria for holding various positions in the Jewish community or for participating in activities initiated by the Jewish community (or the government of Israel).

Following a detailed exchange on some of the scenarios, the discussion returned to the central questions that had been defined as the main focus of the Dialogue:

1. What makes a person Jewish?
2. Does being Jewish require certain behaviors, beliefs, or ancestry? Is there a belief or a behavior that disqualifies one from being Jewish?
3. Should Jews strive to have a common understanding of what is «Jewish»? Who, if anyone, should be the ultimate authority on this matter?

Specific questions were presented to the discussion groups and they were asked to express their opinions concerning these issues, as well as in connection with the scenarios they had discussed previously that provided them with additional information and examples of specific ramifications of different answers to these questions.

Bias in favor of the Jewish community's core population:

Understanding the process, its advantages and limitations requires that we first note that this process relies heavily upon each local community (and local organizations). The communities were responsible for recruiting the groups for

the seminars. Therefore, there are significant differences in the composition and size of the groups in various communities. But one thing is common to all of them: The established community – usually the Federation but sometimes other organizations as well – was the organizing body that gathered the participants. In many cases, particularly in the seminars held outside the United States, it was also the body that reported on the discussion to JPPI. Since we rely on the seminar reports from all the communities, it is important to recognize the fact that they are reporting on the attitudes of Jews who are connected to the "core" of the organized Jewish community, often the attitudes of Jews who hold various leadership positions in the community, and are less of a reflection of Jews whose connection to established Jewish life is weak, or even non-existent.[242] We know from previous studies that members of the core community attribute greater importance to their Jewish identity, are more actively Jewish both in their personal lives and as members of the community, are more connected to Israel, and in certain cases tend to be less liberal than other Jewish groups.[243] The information we gathered indicates, for example, that the Dialogue participants tend to visit Israel much more frequently than the "average Jew."[244] Naturally, these characteristics could impact the attitudes of participants in the Institute's seminars.

The voice of younger community members:

Since the groups convened for the discussion were, by and large, groups of people with high standing in the community, many of them included fewer young people whose Jewish identity often differs in composition and intensity than the

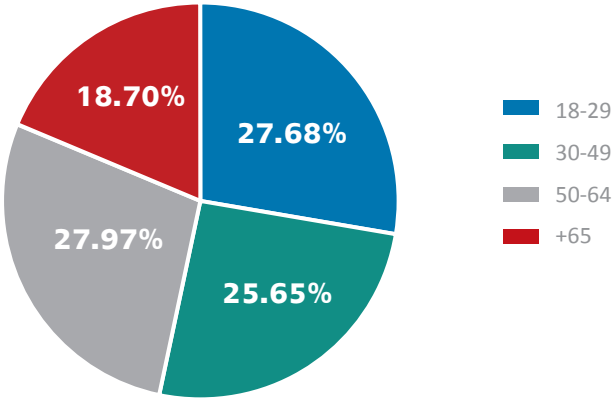
242 Studies of this type are often biased, to a certain extent, towards the core community. For example, we can note the following warning from a study by the JPR conducted among Jews in Great Britain: "It is reasonable, however to suspect that the community involved may be over-represented. Because the survey utilized membership and subscriber lists held by the Jewish community as a first port of call (followed by referrals made by people on these lists), those Jews on the community lists may have had a larger, albeit unknown, probability of inclusion in the sample." (http://www.jpr.org.uk/documents/Perceptions_and_experiences_of_antisemitism_among_Jews_in_UK.pdf)

243 The most prominent example of these characteristics appeared quite clearly in the PEW Report of American Jewry, where an effective distinction was made between Jews by religion, and Jews not by religion. See, "Who are the 'Jews by Religion' in the Pew Report?" Shlomo Fischer, The Times of Israel, December 13, 2013.

244 The average number of visits to Israel by participants in the Jewish People Policy Institute seminars is 5 (this year – in last year's Dialogue it was 3). By way of comparison, the PEW study on Jews in America found that around 43% of respondents had been to Israel, including 23% who visited Israel more than one time (Chapter 5 of the PEW Report).

Jewish identity of older cohorts.[245] Continuing our efforts from the 2015 Dialogue to ensure the representation of younger participants, we held discussion groups especially for young participants – in St. Louis and in Portland, as well as a group of Leeds University students, and several groups of Diaspora participants in Masa and other gap year programs in Israel.[246] In addition, we had a significant group of young Israeli participants this year, adding the voices of young Israelis not include in previous years. As a result, this year we can present a report that includes significant representation of a young age group. Distribution of the age data (see: Appendix B) indicates that this year, the number of young people participating in the Dialogue corresponds, more or less, with the percentage of young people in the Jewish community as a whole.[247] Of course, with the help of these groups we could also compare the perspectives of older and younger Jews participating in the Dialogue process, both from their statements during the discussions and their responses to the Dialogue survey.

Age Group of Survey Respondents



245 "Identificational shifts among the younger generation – from ethnic to cultural, from community-oriented to individualistic and customized – as well as the turning away from mainstream Jewish organizations toward alternatives may be, in part, a manifestation of the transition to a network society". See: "Jewish Identity and Identification: New Patterns, Meanings, and Networks", Shlomo Fischer and Suzanne Last Stone, JPPI, 2012.

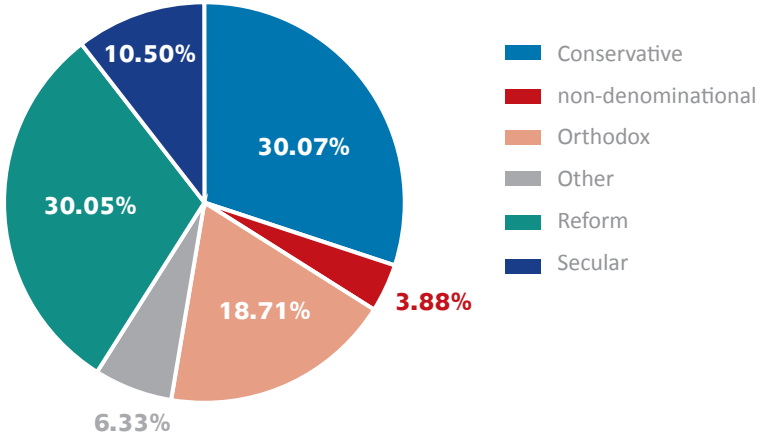
246 Naturally, there is a built-in bias in these groups of participants: These are young people who have chosen to spend time in Israel, and many of them feel very connected to Judaism and to Israel.

247 There is a geographic bias we ought to note: in North America the percentage of young participants in slightly lower than their percentage in the North American Jewish community.

Religious composition:

The Institute's process included very few ultra-Orthodox participants in past years. This year, we managed to include a higher percentage of ultra-Orthodox participants, including an ultra-Orthodox group in Dallas and participants in other groups who identify as ultra-Orthodox. However, in several communities ultra-Orthodox Jews preferred not to take part in the discussion despite an invitation to participate, so in most communities they are underrepresented.[248] Below is a table that clearly presents the specific religious makeup of the groups, in comparison to other studies. Generally speaking, the percentage of Jews who define themselves as "Conservative" is higher in the Dialogue than their actual share of the general Jewish population; in comparison with this, the percentage of Jews who are not "Reform," "Conservative" or "Orthodox" in the Dialogue is lower than their share of the general Jewish population. In other words, those participating in the Dialogue were more "religiously affiliated" (not in terms of observance but in terms of identity and identification) than the average Jew.

Religious Affiliation

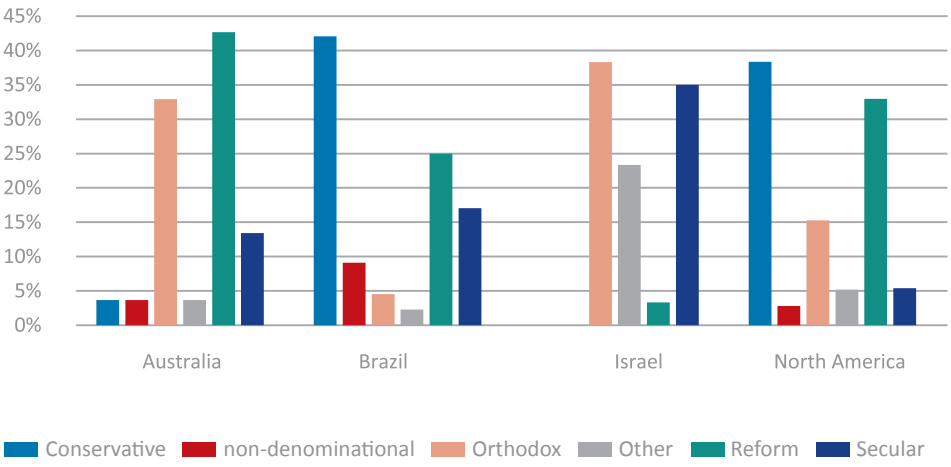


248 However, as we wrote last year "the percentage of ultra-Orthodox Jews in the world is relatively small, so that even if we know that they have very different outlooks from those of most Jews on numerous subjects, the absence of ultra-Orthodox representatives from the discussion, while unfortunate, apparently does not lead to a misunderstanding of the general outlook within the Jewish world."

- Conservative includes: Conservative, Conservadox
- Non-denominational includes: cultural, pluralistic, liberal, humanist, Jewish, post denominational, none
- Orthodox includes: Orthodox, Modern Orthodox, Open Orthodox, Religious Zionist
- Other includes: other, Reconstructionist, Masorti, Traditional, Datlash
- Reform includes: progressive Reform, orthodox + Reform, Conservative + Reform
- Secular includes: Secular, Secular +Orthodox, Secular + Reform, Secular + Conservative, Secular +Masorti

As you can see in the next graph, the composition of Israeli participants is quite different from those of the other main groups of participants (this year, the U.S., Brazil and Australia). Israelis tend to be either Orthodox or secular, while in other countries the dominant groups are religiously affiliated Conservative Jews and Reform Jews (in Australia, Orthodox and Reform). Naturally, such compositional differences in composition translate into other differences of views – as we highlighted in the report.

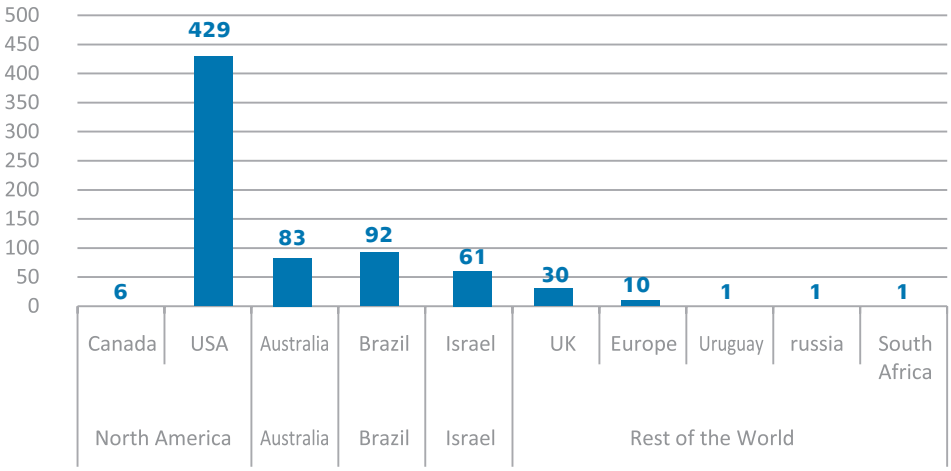
Religious Affiliation by Country



Geographic distribution:

The geographic distribution of the seminars was quite widespread. Communities from several continents took part in the Dialogue process. The impressive representation of the North American Jewish community corresponds to the size of the Jewish population there.[249] This year, as the topic of seminar discussions was about Judaism as a whole, we included several groups of Israeli participants. In addition, quite a few new communities joined the process, mostly in the United States. We also had, as in previous years, significant representation from Australia and Brazil. Representation of European Jewry was lower in this year's process than we would have liked. We hope to expand the number of participating communities next year, and for now we have attempted to overcome the under-representation of these communities by analyzing the relevant background materials. [250]

Participants by Country

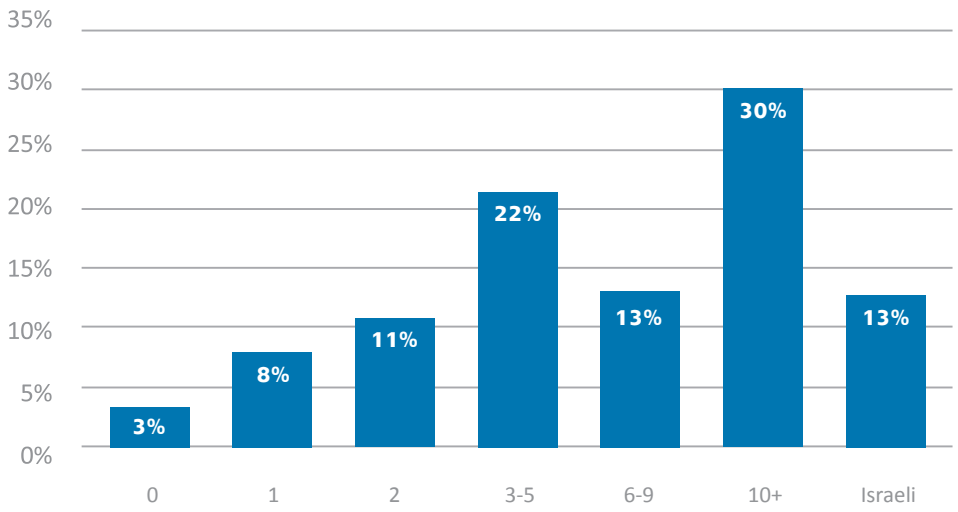


249 See: DellaPergola, Sergio, "Jewish demographic policies, population trends and options in Israel and in the Diaspora," JPPI, 2011.

Interest in Israel:

Unlike the two previous Dialogues – on Israel as a Jewish and Democratic state, and on the use of force in armed conflict – this year our focus was not Israel but rather the larger Jewish world. Still, it is worth noting that groups taking part in the discussions had a self-selection bias as groups who have an interest in Israel. Thus, the general picture we get from the seminars undoubtedly tends toward those members of the worldwide Jewish community for whom Israel is important, and who are interested in conducting a Dialogue that includes a significant Israeli component. We can find clear-cut evidence of this in the fact that the percentage of Israel visits among seminar participants is much higher than the rates for the general Jewish population.

How Many Times Have You Visited Israel?



On the other hand, it is important to note that Israel, and the views of Israelis, are underrepresented in the Dialogue. We included more Israelis in the Dialogue this year, but their number, relative to Israel's dominance as one of the two largest Jewish communities is still proportionally small (there were more Brazilian and Australian Jews in the Dialogue than Israeli Jews – see graph). The Israeli participants were also notably younger than Jews from other countries (this is by design).

Gaps in the process itself:

In certain cases we relied on the communities to record seminar minutes and summarize them for us, and in other cases the Institute's staff was responsible for the summaries. JPPI researchers facilitated the seminars in some communities; other seminars were run by the communities themselves. Additionally, seminars varied in duration, discussion intensity, and level of summation. Full details regarding the nature of the seminars in each community appear below. It should be noted that all of the participating communities demonstrated an impressive level of earnestness and commitment to the process.

Advantages:

After having outlined the composition of the seminars and highlighting some of the limitations, we should also present some of the advantages. A discussion among Jews with a clear and unequivocal interest in the Jewish world and who are involved in their own Jewish communities can be preferable to a discussion that also includes Jews who are weakly connected to the Jewish community with a low level of interest. Since the purpose of the process is to discuss the implications of certain trends on the policies of communities (and the State of Israel) it would be reasonable to argue that such a discussion should take into account primarily (and perhaps only) the outlook of Jews in the world for whom the community is important. Taking into consideration the perspectives of Jews who are not interested in Judaism and in their Jewish community is not reasonable in this context.

In spite of this, in order to give a full and comprehensive picture of the "outlooks of the Jewish world" we supplemented our study by including a considerable amount of data and information that also shed light on the outlooks of groups who are more distant from the organized community, including data from studies and quotes from articles. We have made a considerable effort to present a full and comprehensive picture in this report, to the best of our understanding.

Appendix B: Additional Data from the Participants' Survey

Total number of participants and discussion groups of the Institute:

Groups: 49

Participants: 715

Number of groups holding seminars facilitated by the Institute: 35

Number of groups holding seminars that were locally facilitated: 14

Number of participants in Dialogue, by country:	
Country	**Number of participants**
North America	435
Brazil	92
Australia	83
Israel	65
UK	22

Distribution by gender:

Men: 51%

Women: 49%

(Distribution of men / women in the USA: 52% / 48%)[251]

Religious composition (USA only): Comparison between Dialogue participants and the Jewish population (according to PEW)			
	2016 Dialogue (USA only)	**2015 Dialogue (USA only)**	**PEW (USA only)**
Reform	33%	20%	35%
Conservative	38%	42%	18%
Orthodox	15%	12%	10%
Other	13%	16%	36%

251 Pew, May 2015: http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/gender-composition

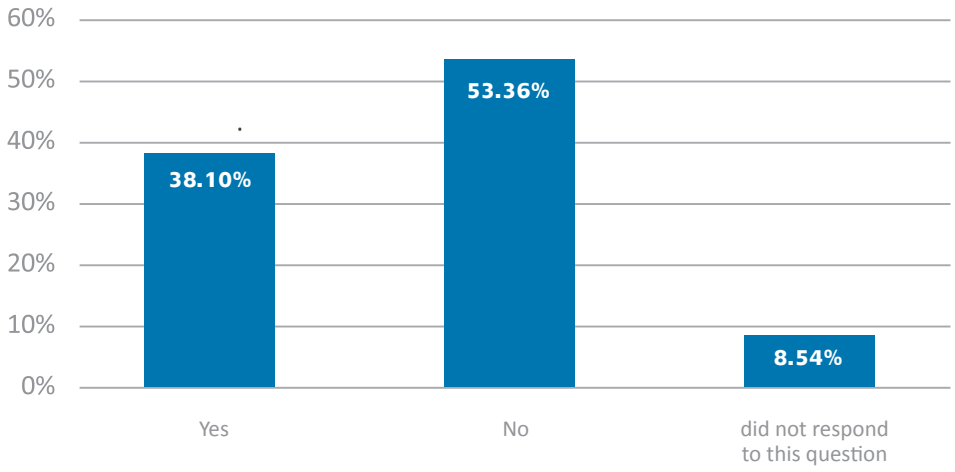
Visits to Israel: Comparison of Dialogue participants with data on all Jews in the USA		
	JPPI 2016 Dialogue	**PEW (USA only)**
Visited Israel	96%	43%
Visited more than once	87%	23%

Age				
	2016 Dialogue (USA)	**PEW (USA)**	**2016 Dialogue (All)**	**2015 Dialogue (All)**
18-29	17%	20%	28%	27%
30-49	29%	28%	25%	21%
50-64	32%	27%	28%	25%
65+	22%	24%	19%	19%

Appendix C: The Peace Question

For the second year in a row we have used the same question on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process in order to give a sense of the political proclivities of JPPI Dialogue participants. The question: "Do you think the current Israeli government is making a sincere effort to bring about a peace settlement with the Palestinians?" is used in several other surveys, and hence it gives us a way of showing how the answers of Dialogue participants change from year to year, but also allows comparison the composition of Dialogue participants to those of other surveys of Jewish groups.

Is the Current Israeli Government Making a Sincere Effort to Bring About a Peace Settlement?



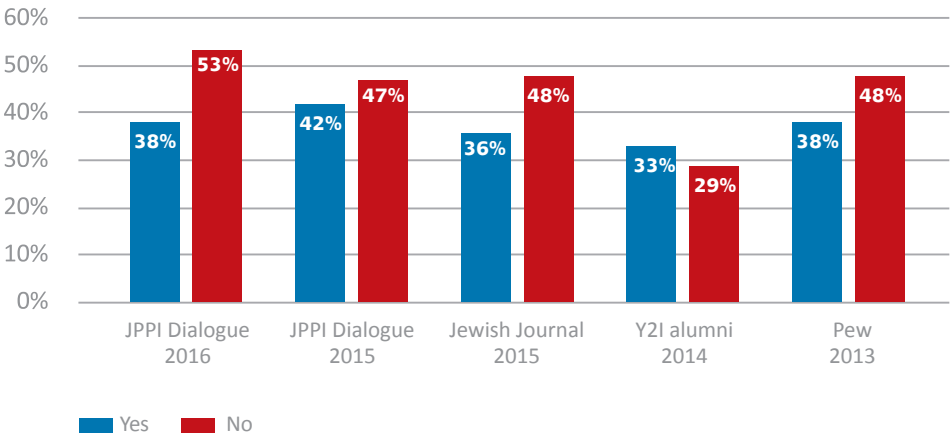
First, take a look at this year's Dialogue response:

The graph below compares the two Dialogue surveys with three other surveys: one of U.S. Jews by Pew (from 2013), one of U.S. Jews by The Jewish Journal[252]

252 See: "When American Jews do not believe that Israel 'sincerely' wants peace," Shmuel Rosner, Jewish Journal, July 2015 (based on the survey by Prof. Steven Cohen).

(from 2015), and one of Youth to Israel Adventure[253] (from 2014). Of course, these are not really comparable in a scientific way. JPPI's survey includes Dialogue participants from all over the world, Pew and JJ surveys are statistically representative of U.S. Jews, and Y2I alumni are a very specific group of people. In addition, the surveys were conducted in different years, and circumstances of the Israeli-Palestinian issue are not uniform from year to year. Then again, it is worth noting that the result (with the exception of Y2I) is not dramatically different in all of these surveys. A plurality of Jews seems to doubt whether Israel's efforts to resolve the conflict are sincere. As you can see, the fact that the JPPI Dialogue comprises people who are highly connected to Israel, have visited the country many times, and also Israeli participants – does not make it question the sincerity of Israel's efforts to achieve peace any less.

Is the Current Israeli Government Making a Sincere Effort to Bring About a Peace Settlement?



253 A survey of 370 Y2I Alumni by Prof. Steven Cohen, See: http://jewishquestions.bjpa.org/Surveys/details.cfm?SurveyID=242

Appendix D: JPPI's 2016 Dialogue Questionnaire

JPPI Dialogue Seminars Questionnaire:

Exploring the Jewish Spectrum in a Time of Fluid Identity

Please take 5-7 minutes to answer the following questions. For each question, please try to circle the **one answer** that is **closest** to your own view.

1. **To what extent is each of the following aspects of Judaism a primary component of Jewishness? (Please mark each category on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "not at all" and 5 being "very much so" – and try to have a hierarchy between the components that will help us understand which of the four are the more/less important)**

Culture	1	2	3	4	5
Genealogy	1	2	3	4	5
Religion	1	2	3	4	5
Peoplehood/Nationality	1	2	3	4	5

2. **Whom do you consider to be a Jew?**
   - A. A person that decides that s/he is Jewish.
   - B. A person born to a Jewish parent, or one that was converted to Judaism.
   - C. A person born to a Jewish mother, or one that was converted to Judaism.
   - D. A person that lives an active, engaged Jewish life.

3. **If there is a need for a body to determine who is Jewish, should it be…**
   - A. No, only the person himself/herself.
   - B. The Jewish community in which s/he lives.
   - C. It is a matter for rabbis to decide.
   - D. The State of Israel.

4. **To what extent are the following components essential to being Jewish? (Please mark each category on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "not at all" and 5 being "very much so")**

Keeping the laws of the Torah	1	2	3	4	5
Working to better the world	1	2	3	4	5
Studying Jewish texts, history, and culture	1	2	3	4	5
Taking care of other Jews and Israel	1	2	3	4	5
Being a part of a Jewishly inspired group	1	2	3	4	5

5. **Is it necessary to have a broadly accepted understanding of who is a Jew?**

   A. No need - it is good to have a variety of options.

   B. Yes - there is such need, because otherwise the Jews would not be "a people."

   C. Only the State of Israel needs a definition.

   D. One definition for Israel and another for the Jewish Diaspora.

6. **According to Israeli law, every Jew has the right to settle in Israel. How would you propose Israel define a Jew for this purpose?**

   A. A person that decides that s/he is Jewish.

   B. A person that the local community recognizes as Jewish.

   C. A person born to a Jewish parent, or one that was converted to Judaism.

   D. A person with a Jewish family background (grandparent).

   E. Only a person born to a Jewish mother, or one that was converted to Judaism by an Orthodox rabbi.

   F. A person that lives an active Jewish life.

7. To what degree you agree/disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Intermarriage could be a blessing for the future of Judaism				
A conversion by a Reform/ Conservative rabbi is legitimate				
The Jewish community should encourage Jews to marry other Jews				
A state, including Israel, has no place in deciding one's Jewishness				
Israel's definition of "Jew" is an insult to Diaspora Jewry				

8. Thinking about Israel-Diaspora relations, do you generally believe that?

A. Israel should decide who is considered Jewish in Israel without regard to the views of Jews living outside of Israel.
B. Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews mostly because its definition could have an impact on their lives.
C. Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews, mostly because all Jews define the framework of Jewishness.
D. Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews, mostly because it wants to keep other Jews associated with it and supporting it.

9. **Off the top of your head, tell us in no more than a sentence what, in your view, is the most important Jewish value:**

10. **On another topic: Do you think the current Israeli government is making a sincere effort to bring about a peace settlement with the Palestinians?**

A. Yes, Israel is making a sincere effort.
B. No, Israel is not making a sincere effort.

Please answer the following background questions:

Country: _____ **City**: _____

Age: _____ **Male/Female** _____

Religious Affiliation (Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Secular, Other):

_____

Are you a member of a Jewish organization (If yes, please specify the main organization(s))? _____

How many times have you visited Israel?

0	1	2	3-5	6-9	10 +	Israeli

This part is for Israeli participants only (those currently living in Israel, or those residing temporarily abroad):

Have you lived in a country other than Israel for an extended period of time? (Where?) _____

Do you visit Jewish institutions (synagogues, community centers) or events organized by Jewish institutions) when you are away from Israel?

_____

Please mark the answer closest to your view: How would you define the Jewish Diaspora? _____

A. A strong and thriving community.

B. An assimilated and weak community.

Appendix E: Technical data, Including a List of Participating Communities and Participants

The Jewish People Policy Institute's 2016 Dialogue process on "Exploring the Jewish Spectrum in a Time of Fluid Identity" included a number of key research components: a comprehensive survey and in-depth analysis of background literature on definitions and interpretations of Judaism, and on collective identity in our time; several dozen seminars in communities throughout the world, some of which were facilitated by JPPI moderators while others were facilitated locally; distribution of a questionnaire to all discussion group participants; reading and analyzing opinion articles from all over the world on this topic; analysis of the Dialogue survey data and written seminar summaries,; and data from JPPI's 2016 Pluralism in Israel Survey.

Materials produced by the Institute in advance of this year's Dialogue process

- Background report prepared prior to the seminars;
- PowerPoint presentation for showing at the seminars, and detailed instructions to facilitators on how to use the presentation;
- Questionnaire that was distributed to all the discussion group participants (attached above);
- Chapter in the annual evaluation report for 2014-2015 by the Jewish People Policy Institute.

Below is a list of the communities that took part in the Dialogue process:

Communities that held seminars facilitated by JPPI fellows

Country	Organizing body	Seminar dates	Number of participants	Number of groups
	Bina Israel gap year program	16.12.2015	9	
Israel	JPPI December Conference	17.12.2015		
Israel	Ein Prat Mechina program	31.12.2015	45	
	Career Israel – Masa/Israel Experience program	2.2.2016	40	2
Israel	Forum Hashlama – for promoting Haredi-Secular connections	24.2.2106	16	
USA	Federation of Miami	3.3.2016	34	
USA	Federation of Dallas	8.3.2016	36	3
USA	Federation of Detroit	9.3.2016	30	4
USA	Federation of Palm Beach	10.3.2016	22	
USA	Federation of Cleveland	14.3.2016	70	8
	Shnat Netzer – Ma'ayan, WUPJ	4.4.2016	34	
USA	Federation of Pittsburgh	4.4.2016	13	
USA	UJA – Federation of New York	5.4.2016	15	
USA	Federation of Washington DC	6.4.2016	27	
USA	JUF – Federation of Chicago	7.4.2016	38	3
USA	Federation of Atlanta	8.4.2016	15	2
USA	Federation of Baltimore	11.4.2016	22	
USA	Federation of Philadelphia	18.4.2016	10	
USA	CJP – Combined Jewish Philanthropies, Boston	19.4.2016	19	

Communities that held seminars that were facilitated locally

Country	Organizing body	Seminar dates	Number of participants	Number of groups
Australia	Zionist Federation of Australia – the Zionist Council of Victoria	22.2.2016	36	
UK	University Jewish Chaplaincy – Leeds & Yorkshire	16.3.2016	11	
Brazil	Jewish Confederation of Brazil (CONIB) Jewish Federation in São Paolo (FISESP)	16.3.2016	39	
Brazil	Jewish Federation in Rio De Janeiro (FIERJ), CONIB	29.3.2916	60	
Australia	Zionist Federation of Australia – State Zionist Council of Queensland	30.3.2016	22	
Australia	Zionist Federation of Australia – State Zionist Council of NSW	31.3.2016	8	
Australia	Zionist Federation of Australia – State Zionist Council of South Australia		15	
USA	Federation of St. Louis	4.4.2016	11	
UK	Board of Deputies of British Jews	4.4.2016	9	
Brazil	The Jewish Society of Bahia (SIB), CONIB	11.4.2016	26	
USA	Federation of Portland	18.4-21.4.2016	50	3
Switzerland	Zurich	4.5.2016	5	

Partial List of participants

Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta **הפדרציה היהודית באטלנטה**
Seminar coordinator: Cheri Levitan and Aaron Levi
Note taker: Aaron Levi

Janice Blumberg
Shelley Buxbaum
Renee Evans
Amy Glass
Jeremy Katz
Renee Kutner
Lisa Lebovitz
Aaron Levi
Cheri Levitan
Melissa Miller
Blair Rothstein
Kenny Silverboard
Beverly Stahl
Rich Walter
Rachel Wasserman

Bina Gap Year in Tel Aviv **ישיבת בינה**
Seminar Coordinator: Yuval Linden

Shoham Dror
Noa Gordon-Guterman
Kineret Grant-Sasson
Jazlyn Hellman
Yaira Kalender
Sally Klapper
Alexander Leopold
Eva Stein
Ronit Van Der Schaaf

The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore **הפדרציה היהודית בבולטימור**
Seminar coordinator: Mary Haar

Allison Baumwald
Barry Bogage
Reut Friedman
Randy Getz
Mary Haar
Beth Hecht
Liora Hill
Gregory Krupkin
Suzanne Lapides
Dixie Leikach
Amanda Levine
Shelly Malis
Yehuda Neuberger
Mark Neumann
Mimi Rozmaryn
John Shmerler
Chana Siff
Marc Terrill
Harel Turkel
Helene Waranch
Martha Weiman
Larry Ziffer

CJP of Greater Boston **הפדרציה היהודית בבוסטון**

Seminar coordinator and note taker: Alex Thomson

Brad Balter
Arinne Braverman
Rachel Chafetz
Renee Finn
Steven Finn
Paul Gershkowitz
Betsy Hecker
Harold Kotler
Ann Levin
Lawrence Marks
Gil Preuss
Leonard Saxe
Barry Shrage
Adam Smith
Todd Spivak
Alex Thomson
Larry Tobin
Lauri Union

Board of Deputies of British Jews **הועד המנהל של יהדות בריטניה**

Seminar coordinator and note taker: David Walsh
Seminar Moderator: Richard Verber

David Berens
Stephen Curtis
Elliot Jebreel
Colin Lang
Amos Schonfield
Richard Verber
David Walsh
Gabriel Webber

JUF /Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago **הפדרציה היהודית בשיקגו**

Seminar coordinator: Elissa Polan

Jewish Federation of Cleveland **הפדרציה היהודית בקליבלנד**

Seminar coordinator: Erika Rudin-Luria

Seminar facilitators: Dan Zelman, Enid Rosenberg, Bruce Goodman, Dan Polster, Randy Korach, Gary Gross, Keith Libman, Beth Rosenberg, Rick Horvitz

Seminar note takers: Stephanie Kahn, Kari Blumenthal, Varsha Balachandran, Rebecca Stolarsky, Jessica Semel, Jen Schwarz, Jill Pupa, Melanie Halvorson, Elizabeth Klein

Staff: Abbie Levin, Alan Gross, Dayan Gross, Jessica Cohen, Amy Kaplan, Barry Reis, Dahlia Fisher, Shelley Marcus, Tami Caplan, Lakshmi Nebel, Hedy Milgrom

Sheila Allenick
Oren Baratz
Susan Borison
Tami Caplan
Alan Charnas
Reneé Chelm
Jessica Cohen
Barry Feldman
Andrea Kanter Grodin
Gary L. Gross
Stephen H. Hoffman
Richard Horvitz
Suellen Kadis
Elizabeth D. Klein
Jennifer Korach
Hedy Milgrom
Stephen Monto
Robert Nosanchuk, Senior Rabbi
Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple
Dan Polster
Barry Reis
Enid Rosenberg
Barbara S. Rosenthal, Esq.
Erika Rudin-Luria
Kyla Epstein Schneider
Jessica Bell Semel
Jeanne Tobin
Idelle K. Wolf
Dan Zelman

Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas **הפדרציה היהודית בדאלאס**

Seminar coordinators: Anita Zusman Eddy and Talia Kushnick

Rabbi Ariel Boxman
Rabbi Nancy Kasten
Rabbi Michael Kushnick
Rabbi Ariel Rackovsky
Rabbi Debra Robbins
Rabbi Adam Roffman
Rabbi David Stern
Rabbi Benjamin Sternman
Rabbi Shira Wallach
Rabbi Stefan Weinberg
Rabbi Shawn Zell
Rabbi Elana Zelony
Rabbi Brian Zimmerman
Lindsay Feldman
Jay Liberman
Michelle Meiches
Melanie Rubin
Jason Schwartz
Zev Shulkin
Dawn Strauss
Ben Weinstein

Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit **הפדרציה היהודית בדטרויט**

Seminar coordinators: Jeffrey Lasday and Susan Higgins

Note takers and facilitators: Barrett Harr, Harvey Leven, Gail Greenberg, Melanie Rivkin

Kari Alterman
Norm Beitner
Michael Berke
Sue Birnholtz
Rabbi Azaryah Cohen
Rachel Ellis
Rabbi Jeffrey Falick
Suzanne Gildenberg
Jodi Goodman
Rabbi Arianna Gordon
Robert Gordon
Kenneth Goss
Gail Greenberg
Cheryl Guyer
Wren Hack
Barrett Harr
Jessica Katz
Richard Krugel
Jeffrey Lasday
Lori Serbin Lasday
Harvey Leven
Judy Loebl
Debbie Morosohk
Alicia Nelson
Rabbi David Nelson
Melanie Rivkin
Rabbi Steven Rubenstein
Sue Salinger
Susan Salinger
Marilyn Gans Shelberg
Lisa Siegmann
Lisa Soble Siegmann
Rabbi Aaron Starr
Simcha Tolwin
Michael Wolf

Ein Prat Mechina Program **מכינת עין פרת מדרשה למנהיגות חברתית**

Seminar coordinator: Hagai Ivri

Forum Hashlama - for promoting Haredi-Secular connections **פורום השלמה לקידום יחסי חרדים–חילונים**

Seminar coordinator: Ohad Shpak

University Jewish Chaplaincy – Leeds & Yorkshire **הקהילה היהודית באוניברסיטת לידס ויורקשיר**

Seminar coordinator and facilitator: Eli Magzimof

Noam Adler
Spencer Bronson
Sophia Ellis
Alice Engler
Dan Mackenzie
David Maskill
D. Weissmann

Masa-Israel experience Career Israel **מסע–חוויה ישראלית קריירה**

Seminar coordinator: Itzik Tamir Yehezkel

Jewish Federation of Greater Miami **הפדרציה היהודית במיאמי**

Seminar coordinator: Yahaira Taveras
Seminar note taker: Michelle Labgold

Saby Behar
Sara Bejar
Dahlia Bendavid
Robert G. Berrin
John M. Bussel
Mojdeh K. Danial
Amy N. Dean
Isaac K. Fisher
Steven Gretenstein
Jill Hagler
Simon Kaminetsky
Ian Kaplan
Laura P. Koffsky
Steven J. Kravitz
Michelle Labgold
Stave Lande
William Lehman
Jeff Levin
Norman Lipoff
Shelley Niceley Groff
Mark E. Oren
Ofi Osin-Cohen
Sidney M. Pertnoy
Aaron Podhurst
Bonnie Reiter-Lehrer
Sheree Savar
Jeffrey Scheck
Michael Scheck
Maxine E. Schwartz
Lily Serviansky
Mytyl Simancas-Bister
Jacob Solomon
Stanley Weinstein

Shnat Netzer – Ma'ayan **תכנית שנת נצ"ר – קבוצת מעיין**

Seminar coordinators: Adi Blum and Yael Efraim

Samuel Bard
Rosa Cass
Ayanda Dlomo Lawrence
Chloe Glantz
Mia Gottleib
Tommy Grantley
Ella Janner- Klausner
Charlotte Katan
Nancye Kochen
Henry Leonard
Kiara Meltzer
Noa Opat
Daniel Parker
Sophie Peterman
Sophie Phillips
Beth Raphael
Tamara Reichman
Benjamin Reiff
Miranda Robshaw
Sarah Sadique
Ella Sandler
Maxine Silbert
Rachel Stanton
Barney Stubbs
Rebecca Szabo
Mikaela Webb
Jordon Woods
Ben Wyatt

State Zionist Council of New South Wales **הפדרציה הציונית בסידני**

Seminar coordinator, moderator and note taker: Teneille Murray

Sosho Aronjan
Hayley Hadassin
Michael Misrachi
Teneille Murray
Gareth Narunsky
Yigal Nisell
Natalee Pozniak
Ran Wiser

UJA – Federation of New York **הפדרציה היהודית בניו יורק**

Seminar coordinators: Jessica Chait, Rachel Goldrich

Sanford Antignas
Annie Cohen
Zachary Cohen
Melvin Epstein
Harry Frischer
Rachel Goldrich
Harold Obstfeld
Hindy Poupko
Joseph Rafalowitz
Karen Rafalowitz
Rebecca Saidlower
Felicia Sol
Elisheva Urbas
Judith West

Jewish Federation of Palm Beach **הפדרציה היהודית בפאלם ביץ**

Seminar coordinators and note takers: Josephine Gon and Patricia Gilbert

Melissa Arden
Phil Avruch
Sandy Baklor
Debra Berney
Cynthia Brown
Nir Buchler
Charles Cohen
Marjorie Federman
Barry Feinberg
Libby Fishman
Shelly Friedman
Patricia Gilbert
Sandra Goldberg
Josephine Gon
Ilan Hurvitz
Lynne Lieberman
Rabbi David Paskin
Joel Passick
Suzan Sankel
Susan Sher
Marvin Suskin
Stephen Sussman
Gary Walk

Jewish Federation of Philadelphia **הפדרציה היהודית בפילדלפיה**

Seminar Coordinators: Deborah Glanzberg-Krainin and LaJonel Brown
Seminar note taker: LaJonel Brown

Naomi Adler
Arlene Fickler
Joel Freedman
Deborah Glanzberg-Krainin
Ernest Kahn
Adam Kessler
Rena Kopelman
Linda Roth
Rabbi Lynnda Targan
Hillel Zaremba

Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh **הפדרציה היהודית בפיטסבורג**

Seminar coordinators: Deborah Baron and Tracy Grandelis

David Ainsman
Meryl Ainsman
Jim Busis
Jeff Finkelstein
Rabbi James Gibson
E T Kaplan Goldstein
Scott Leib
Jan Levison
Adam Shear
Rabbi Ron Symons
Randy Whitlatch

Jewish Federation of Portland **הפדרציה היהודית בפורטלנד**

Seminar coordinator: Caron Blau Rothstein
Seminar moderators: Joe Hertzberg (primary) Caron Rothstein (secondary)
Seminar note takers: Laura Renner Satushek (primary) Caron Rothstein (secondary)

Marilyn Abend
Steve Albert
Jessica Bettelheim
Marc Blattner
Ben Charlton
Michelle Denov
Julie Diamond
Anna Epstein
Jordan Epstein
Hannah Ferber
Aki Fleshler
Max Forer
Debbie Frank
Sylvia Frankel
Jodi Fried
Bonni Goldberg
Kenneth Gordon
Rhonda Kruschen
Naomi Leavitt
Alex Linsker
Susan Marcus
Judy Margles
Natan Meir
Josh Monifi
Alan Montrose
Sarah Philips
Naomi Price
Brian Rohr
Joshua Rose
Michael Rosenberg
Ilene Safyan
Rochelle Schwartz
Arden Shenker
Steve Sirkin

Eli Gregory
Merrill Hendin
Shari House
Daniel Isaak
Wendy Kahn
Aaron Kaufman
Priscilla Kostiner
Nate Smith
Len Steinberg
Joanne Van Ness Menashe
Julia Weiss
Jordan Winkler
Yehudah Winter

State Zionist Council of Queensland **הפדרציה הציונית בקווינסלנד, אוסטרליה**

Seminar coordinator: Hadas Palevsky
Seminar moderator and note taker: Avi Michaeli

Trevor Brazil
Shakina Burdo
Libby Burke
Jenny Creese
Karen Demartini-Scacheri
Tzuri shaddai Demartini-Scacheri
Noga Erlbaum
Norma Erlbaum
Eve Fraser
Carolyn Goldsmith
David Groen
Rivka Groen
Hila Jacobi
Sheila Levine
Elke Mendels
Jason Steinberg
Olia Zvenyatsky

Jewish Federation in Rio De Janeiro (FIERJ), CONIB **הפדרציה היהודית בריו דה ז'ניירו**

Seminar coordinator and note taker: Dr. Alberto Milkewitz
Seminar moderators: Sergio Napchan and Dr. Alberto Milkewitz

Ana Marlene Starec
Claudio Goldemberg
Cristiane Feldman
Daniel f. Israel
David Albagli Gorodicht
Debora Rosman
Eduardo Cukierkorn
Evelyn Freier Milsztajn
Helio Feldman
Henry Rosenberg
Jeanette Bierg Erlich
Julia Aizenman
Tamar Bakman
Melina Lifschitz Goichman
Michel Ventura
Mourad Belaciano
Nadia Monteiro
Nelly Starel
Patricia Tiomno Tolmasquim
Paula Haas
Paulo Maltz
Regina Lupu
Rubem Ferman
Stella Rosita Goldberg
Vanya Bayon Dodeles

Jewish Federation in São Paolo (FISESP), CONIB **הפדרציה היהודית בסאו פאולו**

Seminar coordinator and note taker: Dr. Alberto Milkewitz
Seminar moderators: Sergio Napchan and Dr. Alberto Milkewitz

Abraham Goldstein
Adrian Gottfried
Alberto Milkewitz
Alon Feuerwerker
Bruno Laskowsky
Celso Zilbovicius
Charles Kirschbaum
Daniel Blatt - Netzach
Daniel Douek
David Diesendruck
Eduardo Wurzrnann
Enrique Mandelbaum
Fabio Topczewski
Felipe Pait
Franklin Kuperman
Gaby Milevsky
Guilherrne Brein
Heloisa Pait
Henry Gherson
lzy Rahmani
Jacques Griffel
Jaques Marcovitch
Joel Rechtrnan
Juliana Portenoy Schlesinger
Karen Didio Sasson
Michel Schlesinger
Mirko Leibl
Rabino Rogerio cukierrnan
Rafael Schur
Raul Meyer
Revital Poleg
Ricardo Berkiensztat
Ruth Goldberg
Sam Osrno
Samuel Feldberg
Sergio Napchan
Sergio Simon
Silvio Brand
Yael Barnea

State Zionist Council of South Ausralia **הפדרציה הציונית בדרום אוסטרליה**

Seminar coordinator and moderator: Alison Marcus
Seminar note taker: Merrilyn Ades

Merrilyn Ades
Bernice Cohen
Matthew Cozens
Ilana Culshaw
Jack Gubbay
Billie Hocking
Alison Marcus
Michelle Morris
Lesley Rosenthal
Sarah Trifoi
Helen Tversky Steiner
Andrew Tversky Steiner
Berry van Vuuren

Jewish Federation of St. Louis **הפדרציה היהודית בסיינט לואיס**

Seminar Coordinator: Maharat Rori Picker Neiss
Seminar moderator: Barry Rosenberg
Seminar note taker: Cyndee Levy

Ariel Axelbaum
Brent Efron
Molly Fink
Ben Fox
Tasha Kaminsky
Jean Morgan
Rebecca Nathanson
Nicky Rainey
Paul Sorenson
Gabriela Szteinberg
Andrew Warshaver

The Jewish Society of Bahia (Salvador), CONIB **הפדרציה היהודית בסלבדור, ברזיל**

Seminar coordinator and note taker: Dr. Alberto Milkewitz
Seminar moderators: Sergio Napchan and Dr. Alberto Milkewitz

Ana Zalcbergas
Antonio Marcos Wanderley dos Santos
Fernando Coifman
Igor Brachmans
Jorge Goldstein
Juceni David
Lea Ester Sandes-Sobral
Liliane Orenstein
Luciano Fingmout
Luciano Gomes
Mauro Zalcbergas
Nilson Goldstein
Perola Pekelhaizen
Raquel Maguilniklen
Reveca Laizen
Ricardo David
Roberto Camoraja
Saul Kaminsky
Sergio Kopinski Ekerman
Sergio Rabinovitz

Jewish Federation of Greater Washington **הפדרציה היהודית בוושינגטון**

Seminar Coordinator: Lynn Jatlow

Mindy Berger
Anne Feinberg
Michael Feinstein
Kevin Fishkind
Michael Flyer
Neil Gurvitch
Karen Herron
Ron Kabran
Sherry Kabran
David Kalender
Leslie Kaplan
Sam Kaplan
Billy Kreisberg
Danny Krifcher
Jocelyn Krifcher
Jennie Litvack
Marcia Nusgart
Albert Perry
Jamie Poslosky
Steve Rakitt
Susan Schor
Jane Shichman
Mindy Strelitz
Stuart Tauber
Stuart Weinblatt
Ed Weiss

State Zionist Council of Victoria **הפדרציה הציונית במלבורן**

Seminar coordinator: Jane Rapke
Seminar moderator: John Searle
Seminar note-taker: Eileen Freed

Jarred Abrahams
Rachel Adams
Michele Bernshaw
George Erlichster
Leonie Fleiszig
Eileen Freed
Emily Gian
Ariel Golvan
Nathan Guttman
Sharene Hambur
Rinat Kedem-Bart
Julian Kowal
Uri Levin
Jodi Liebenberg
SimoneMarkus
Andrew Markus
Leon Orbach
Daniel Rabin
Brandon Raiter
Jane Rapke
Ian Samuel OAM
Ginette Searle
John Searle
Solomon Silverstein
Hadar Slonim
Adam Stein
Simone Szalmuk- Singer
Lauren Winn

Jewish Community in Zurich **קהילה יהודית בציריך**

Seminar coordinators: Guy Spier and Lynda Brandt
Seminar moderator and note taker: Guy Spier

Naama Baram
Elizabeth Kalmin
Guy Spier
Lori Spier
Avital Levi

Main Publications of the Jewish People Policy Institute

A Statecraft-Security Israeli-Jewish View Of The Chief-Of-Staff's Document "Israel Defense Forces Stragegy", Prof. Yehezkle Dror, January 2016

Jewish Solidarity in an Age of Polarization, Background Policy Documents prepared in advance of JPPI's 2015 Brainstorming Conference, May 18-19, 2015, Glen Cove, NY

Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict: Perspectives from World Jewry, Project Heads: Shmuel Rosner and Michael Herzog, 2015

Annual Assessment 2013-2014, Executive Report No. 10, with special in-depth chapters: South African Jewry 20 Years into Democracy; 1989-2014: Russian-Speaking Jews, 25 Years Later; Woman's Leadership in the American Organized Jewish Community; Crowd Sourced Genealogy and Direct-to-Consumer DNA Testing: Implications for the Jewish People; Project Head: Shlomo Fischer; JPPI staff and contributors, 2014.

Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry, Shmuel Rosner and Avi Gil, Project Heads, 2014

Russian-Speaking Jews in North America, Jonathan Sarna; **On Israelis Abroad**, Yogev Karasenty, 2014

The Challenged Triangle: Washington, Jerusalem and the American Jewish Community; Israel: Jewish and Democratic: Background Policy Documents for JPPI's 2014 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, March 11-12, 2014, Glen Cove, NY

Rise and Decline of Civilizations: Lessons for the Jewish People, Shalom Salomon Wald, Foreword by Shimon Peres**,** Academic Studies Press, Boston, 2014; Yediot Books (Hebrew translation), Tel Aviv, 2013.

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The Challenge of Peoplehood: Strengthening the Attachment of Young American Jews to Israel in the Time of the Distancing Discourse, Shmuel Rosner and Inbal Hakman, 2012.

Policy Recommendations for Strengthening Jewish-Israeli Identity among Children of Israelis Abroad and their Attachment to the State of Israel and the Jewish Community, Yogev Karasenty, 2012.

Policy Paper: Absentee Voting Rights for Israelis Abroad, Yogev Karasenty and Inbal Hakman, 2012.

21st Century Global Forces, Their Impacts on the Jewish People, Israel and the United States, Stuart E. Eizenstat, Foreword by Martin Gilbert, 2012.

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Mega-Trends and their Impact on the Jewish People, Prepared for JPPI's 2010 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, JPPI Staff, 2010.

Toward 2030: Strategies for the Jewish Future, Background Documents for the 2010 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, JPPI Staff, 2010.

2030: Alternative Futures for the Jewish People, Project Directors: Avi Gil and Einat Wilf, 2010.

The Triangular Relationship of Jerusalem, Washington and North American Jewry, Background Documents for JPPI's 2009 Glen Cove Conference, JPPPI Staff, 2009.

Muslim Anti-Semitism: The Challenge and Possible Responses, Emmanuel Sivan, 2009.

Background Policy Documents for the Inaugural President's Conference: Facing Tomorrow, JPPPI Staff and Contributors, 2008.

A Strategic Plan for the Strengthening of Jerusalem, JPPI Staff, 2007.

Background Policy Documents for the 2007 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, JPPI Staff, 2007.

Annual Assessments 2004-2014.

Institut de Planification d'une Politique pour le Peuple Juif, Rapport Annuel du JPPPI 2005/2006, Le Peuple Juif en 2005/2006, Entre Renaissance et Declin, Special edition in French, JPPI Staff and Contributors, 2006.

The Jewish People between Thriving and Decline, To succeed, large resources, judicious coping with critical decision and careful crafting of long-term grand-policies are needed. The full volume contains analyses of the major communities around the world and in-depth assessments of significant topics. JPPPI Staff and Contributors, 2005.

China and the Jewish People: Old Civilizations in a New Era, Shalom Salomon Wald, Strategy Paper, 2004. This is the first strategic document in the series: Improving the Standing of the Jewish People in Emerging Superpowers without a Biblical Tradition.

About JPPI

The Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI) is an independent professional policy planning think tank incorporated as a private non-profit company in Israel. The mission of the Institute is to ensure the thriving of the Jewish people and the Jewish civilization by engaging in professional strategic thinking and planning on issues of primary concern to world Jewry. Located in Jerusalem, the concept of JPPI regarding the Jewish people is global, and includes aspects of major Jewish communities with Israel as one of them, at the core.

JPPI's activities are action-oriented, placing special emphasis on identifying critical options and analyzing their potential impact on the future. To this end, the Institute works toward developing professional strategic and long-term policy perspectives exploring key factors that may endanger or enhance the future of the Jewish People. JPPI provides professionals, decision-makers, and global leaders with:

- Surveys and analyses of key situations and dynamics
- "Alerts" to emerging opportunities and threats
- Assessment of important current events and anticipated developments
- Strategic action options and innovative alternatives
- Policy option analysis
- Agenda setting, policy recommendations, and work plan design

JPPI is unique in dealing with the future of the Jewish people as a whole within a methodological framework of study and policy development. Its independence is assured by its company articles, with a board of directors co-chaired by Ambassadors Stuart Eizenstat and Dennis Ross – both have served in the highest echelons of the U.S. government, and Leonid Nevzlin in Israel – and composed of individuals with significant policy experience. The board of directors also serves as the Institute's Professional Guiding Council.