

בארץ ישראל קם העם היהודי
הדתית והמדינית, בה חי חיי קוממיות
לאומיים ובכל-אנשיים והוריש לעולם
לאחר שהוגלה העם מארצו בכות הזרוע שמי
פזוריו, ולא חדל מתפלה ומתקוה לשוב לארצו
המדינית.

מתוך קשר היסטורי ומסורתי זה התרו היהודים
במולדתם העתיקה, ובדורות האחרונים שבו
מעפילים ומגינים הפריחו נשמות, החיו שפה
והקימו ישוב גדל והולך השליט על משפחה
ועמם, מבוא ברבת הקדימה לכל העמים
המלכותיים.

70 YEARS OF ISRAEL-DIASPORA RELATIONS: THE NEXT GENERATION

Shmuel Rosner | John Ruskay



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The Jewish People Policy Institute's Annual
Israel-Diaspora Dialogue

70 YEARS OF
ISRAEL-DIASPORA RELATIONS:
THE NEXT GENERATION

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FOREWORD

The Jewish People celebrates, in 2018, 70 years of sovereignty. There are still many challenges confronting the Jewish state today. But at the same time, Israel can note that 70 years of independence had brought her to unfathomable heights of success beyond any dreams held at its founding.

Diaspora Jewry is also highly successful. The disproportionate number of Nobel laureates, its material assets and cultural and political influence have opened doors that were closed for centuries globally. Paradoxically, with all this success has come a new set of challenges for the unity of the Jewish People. Many are attracted to the largesse of the general society, which may erode the circuitry connecting their present reality to their deeper ancestral roots.

The *raison d'être* of JPPI's annual Dialogue, and of the Institute itself, is to bridge differences between Jewish communities wherever they are and enhance the core principle of mutual responsibility and respect. An open and ongoing discourse is essential to the Jewish future and the significance of the Dialogue is to create such a conversation, with all its complexities. For these reasons the decision to dedicate the 2018 Structured Jewish World Dialogue to 70 years of Israel – Diaspora relations.

The threats of the Middle East are not always fully digested in the Diaspora, and Israelis do not always make sufficient effort to grasp Diaspora life and its challenges. This may encourage distancing processes now and in the future. Israelis are perceived as walking a conservative path, while the majority of Western Jewry, especially in North America, are committed to liberalism. Although the strategic and tactical closeness between the governments of Israel and the United States causes discomfort for many, Israel cannot afford to neglect the positive moves that are taking place, such as the new administration's approach to the Iranian threat or moving its country's embassy to Jerusalem.

The Dialogue shows that Jews the world over are not indifferent to Israel's plight and the vast majority remain committed to the Jewish state. Israel and the Jewish Diaspora are indeed strategic assets for one another. That said, Israel and the Jewish world's energies should be directed toward enlarging the tent, and better

engaging in the discourse those perceived to be distancing themselves due to political and social pressures. At the same time, red lines beyond which mutual respect and responsibility come under assault should be honored.

JPPI's fifth Dialogue, as in recent years, was headed by Shmuel Rosner (Jerusalem) and Dr. John Ruskay (New York), both are senior fellows of the Institute. Their work culminated in a new road map for future Israel – Diaspora relations. It recommends that:

Israel **consult with Jewish leaders** “on decisions having to do with **culture or religion**” and take Diaspora Jews into consideration when formulating Israeli policy with ramifications for world Jewry.

Diaspora communities aspire to interact with **all parts of Israeli society**, and exercise “**appropriate caution** with regard to major involvement in **the political plane.**”

Israel **avoid** “political criticism of Diaspora Jewry” and define the activities Israel views as beyond **the red line of Diaspora legitimate criticism.**

The Diaspora take measures to **avoid the distancing discourse.** JPPI warns that “a discourse that concentrates on distancing may itself generate distancing.”

This year we made a special effort to engage the young generation in the Dialogue. It was launched with participants of joint programs of Israeli and Diaspora youth to stimulate a conversation on what may generate distance as a result of ideological and geographic diffusion, and what could contribute to unity. Dozens of discussion seminars then took place all over the Jewish world.

I would like to express my gratitude to the William Davidson Foundation for their support of the Dialogue endeavor which is encouraging a deeper mutual understanding among Jews globally. I especially appreciate the effort made not only by the project heads, Rosner and Ruskay, but also for the significant assistance of JPPI staff members Dan Feferman, Dr. Dov Maimon, Prof. Uzi Rebhun, Adar Schieber, and Noah Slepko.

Next year's Dialogue will be dedicated to a discussion of the growing responsibility of the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox communities for the Jewish future in light of the demographic developments underway.

Avinoam Bar-Yosef

MAIN FINDINGS

The findings reflect what emerged in the course of this year's Dialogue process – a framework in which engaged Jews, often occupying positions of leadership in the Diaspora communities, are predominantly represented.

- Israel is perceived as the **driving force of the Jewish people** and, accordingly, is felt to bear an **outsized share of responsibility for the Jewish people's fate**.
- Diaspora and Israeli Jews agree that all Jews have a “stake” in the State of Israel and, therefore, **the right and duty to help sustain it**.
- Diaspora Jews expect Israel to **provide cultural and ideological inspiration**. Practical assistance in the ongoing management of community life is expected to a much lesser extent.
- Alongside their duty vis-à-vis the State of Israel, Jews expect Israel **to listen to them and show them consideration**. Most expect particular consideration on issues related to the state's “Jewishness.” Regarding policy on other issues, notably security, their expectations of input are lower.
- Israeli Jews are **willing to take Diaspora positions into account** on matters of religion and state, but not on issues of security or foreign policy.
- The “distancing” discourse is gaining currency; today's prevailing opinion, particularly in the Diaspora, is that **Israel and Diaspora Jewry are growing apart**. Surprisingly, this view is more common among older Jews than among younger Jews.
- Diaspora Jews are **disappointed with the level of attentiveness and consideration** they receive from the Israeli government. The disappointment centers around, but is not limited to, the Western Wall crisis (for unaffiliated Jews, Israel's lack of attentiveness increases the degree of alienation).
- Nevertheless, **the relationship with Israel is still a significant and irreplaceable element** for affiliated Diaspora Jews.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Israel-Diaspora relations roadmap, 2018

In all of this year's Dialogue discussions, participants were given a chart to review, with the aim of outlining principles and points of consensus on major issues that stand between Israel and the Diaspora. The discussions related to the chart were preceded by a brief review of the Ben-Gurion-Blaustein Agreement (dating from early 1950, it laid a groundwork for Israel-Diaspora relations), and participants were asked to update various sections of the agreement, in keeping with their understanding of 21st century realities.

For some groups the chart completion process was lengthy and meticulous, for others it was quicker. However, the entire array of conversations, and the insights raised during other portions of the discussion, together with the information obtained via the participant survey were sufficient to allow a basic framework for major principles of Israel-Diaspora relations to emerge, as understood by the Dialogue participants, and as formulated by the Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI). Naturally, such a framework cannot consistently reflect the specific positions of each individual participant or reader; rather, it addresses Israel-Diaspora relations more broadly. In our view, this framework does reflect a reasonable consensus shared by a substantial group of Jews who took part in the Dialogue and devoted thought and effort to the formulation of an appropriate model for relations. We recommend that the Israeli government, Israeli social organizations, and major Diaspora Jewish institutions look upon this framework as a roadmap for managing the relationship. In addition to the framing chart, we have included a short section detailing additional recommendations specifically directed toward Israeli and Diaspora leaders, based on the Dialogue discussions and on JPPI's subsequent analysis.

Section	Recommendations for Israeli Conduct and Objectives	Recommendations for Diaspora Conduct and Objectives
Primary obligation	Maintaining and developing a secure refuge for Jews, in a country that also provides cultural and moral inspiration to the entire Jewish world.	Maintaining a thriving, vibrant Jewry that also plays a meaningful role in the relationship with Israel.
Mutual support	Practical (political and economic) support for communities in distress or crisis; aspiring to participate in joint projects with Diaspora Jewry (including MASA programs).	Support for Israel as a Jewish and democratic state; backing for Israel vis-à-vis de-legitimization movements; economic and cultural investment in Israel's development.
Policymaking involvement	Honoring the decisions of Diaspora Jewish communities; allowing the communities to manage their own lives; taking them into consideration when formulating Israeli policy on issues of culture, religion, education and values; conducting dialogue on other policy issues as well, especially when they impact Diaspora communities.	Helping to outline a policy direction for Israel on issues of culture, religion, education and values; honoring the rules of the democratic game as played in Israel; displaying appropriate caution with regard to major involvement on the political plane.
Dialogue	Consulting with Jewish leaders on decisions having to do with culture or religion; displaying sensitivity to the views of Diaspora Jews when shaping Israeli policy as a whole; striving to influence the Jewish communities' and organizations' policies on Israel; maintaining respectful dialogue in cases of disagreement.	Aspiring to dialogue with all parts of Israeli society; working within Israel to achieve educational and ideological objectives on which a broad consensus exists; holding constructive dialogue on highly controversial intra-Israeli issues; creating an alternative to the distancing discourse.
Political Loyalty	Israel and Diaspora Jewry are in agreement that every Jew owes political allegiance to the country of his/her citizenship. The sense of connection, esteem and mutual responsibility shared by Israel and Diaspora Jewry are expressed on other planes.	
Criticism	Avoiding political criticism of Diaspora Jewry; avoiding and condemning insults directed at Diaspora Jews or expressions of arrogance toward them; defining the type of activity that Israel views as beyond the bounds of legitimate criticism.	Participating in critical Israeli discourse on policy related to religion and state; being aware of, and attentive to, Israeli sensitivities in situations where Israel is subject to international criticism, and behaving accordingly; taking into account that public criticism may cause Israeli alienation from Diaspora Jewry.

Who is a Jew?	Honoring Diaspora decisions about the identity of Diaspora Jewry; acting in Israel in a way that is respectful of the situation in the Diaspora, and striving to avoid rifts within the Jewish people.	Striving, through dialogue and educational means, to ensure understanding of attitudinal gaps and their repercussions; when setting policy in the Diaspora, the potential implications for relations with Israel should be taken into account.
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Jewish Pluralism	Allowing the broadest possible range of Jewish expression and respecting different positions and streams; taking into account that policy pertaining to the various Jewish streams has a direct impact on relations, both among Jews in Israel and with the rest of world Jewry.	Encouraging Jewish pluralism in Israel through social and educational means; fostering awareness of the attitudinal gaps between Israeli and Diaspora Jews, and honoring the composition and character of Israel's Jewish population.
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Aliyah	Encouraging Aliyah, but refraining from delegitimizing Diaspora life.	Agreeing that Aliyah is an important Zionist-Jewish value, even if it is not the sole aspiration.
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Law of Return	Uphold the Law of Return; do not change it without a frank and thoroughgoing process of consultation with Diaspora Jewry.	The Law of Return has significant implications in terms of entry to Israel; accordingly, its provisions are determined by Israel.
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ADDITIONAL MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ISRAEL

Israeli resources allocated to the Diaspora should be channeled toward **helping communities in distress or crisis**. Communities capable of marshaling their own resources should remain responsible for their own affairs.

Diaspora Jewry should be accorded **space for meaningful and diverse cultural expression in the Israeli arena**. It is the Israeli government's duty to remove obstacles to creating such a space (in this regard the government would do well, as a first step toward rebuilding trust, to unfreeze the agreed-upon Kotel arrangement, and implement it).

Resources should be directed to **reinforcing projects that promote Israeli-Jewish culture** – a culture that generates impact, provides inspiration, and fosters Israeli-Diaspora connections. Cultural activity of this kind should be goal-oriented, and its impact should be measured via professional follow-up analysis and assessment instruments.

Israel and its institutions have an obligation to **educate the younger generation of Israelis** to understand their responsibility for the fate of all Jews, whoever and wherever they may be, and the meaning of this responsibility – including the duty to take into consideration the needs of non-Israeli Jews.

Israel should regularly take measures designed to show solidarity with Diaspora Jewry and the recognition of its importance. Such measures might include naming streets for important Diaspora leaders, regular symbolic participation of dignitaries in major Israeli public ceremonies (for example, lighting the Memorial Day torches), and more.

ADDITIONAL MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DIASPORA

Communal Diaspora discourse on Israel should be a productive discourse of partnership, patience and support, and should reflect the recognition that the shaping of Israeli society – and of Israeli-Diaspora relations in the present era – is a process that will take time and be marked by ups and downs.

Publicly goading Israel as a means of organizational, philanthropic or community advancement is damaging to Israel-Diaspora relations and should be avoided.

The Diaspora Jewish communities are faced with **the important task of fostering a sense of connection to Israel among the younger generation**. They must ensure that the next generation includes Jews who are attached to Israel. Israel can and should aid in this effort to the best of its ability, and act with awareness of the consequences that its behavior sometimes has in terms of Diaspora Jewry's sense of connection to Israel.

ADDITIONAL MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ISRAEL AND THE DIASPORA

The **Israel-Diaspora dialogue** should focus on reinforcing shared interests, creating joint projects, and identifying a shared and relevant cultural platform. A discourse that concentrates on distancing will itself produce distancing.

It is incumbent upon Israeli and Diaspora leaders to **manage confrontations between them in a measured manner**, and to refrain from statements that intensify feelings of alienation between the Diaspora and Israel. Well-managed interaction should be the basis for active participation in meaningful Israel-Diaspora dialogue.

Encounters and dialogue should be initiated between groups of Jews from different streams, and between people of differing opinions. “Liberal New York Jews with Rishon Likudniks and Shilo settlers” (as opposed to “liberal New York Jews with Tel Aviv liberals,” or “Borough Park Orthodox with Kiryat Arba settlers”).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION: DIALOGUE 2017

Israel-Diaspora relations are in a state of flux, with the Jewish world's center of gravity shifting toward Israel – and Diaspora Jews, whether quickly or slowly, happily or unhappily, are growing accustomed to this change and acknowledging it. The shift in the center of gravity accounts for much of the difficulty that has plagued the relationship in recent years. On both sides of the equation there are Jews who understand that change has occurred but have not internalized its meaning or the adjustments it entails.

Israeli Jews, especially their official representatives in the political sphere, see this shifting center of gravity as obviating the need for awareness of, or consideration for, Diaspora Jewry's wishes. Moreover, many Israelis view this shift as an indication that the rest of the Jewish world is declining – a trend that is expected to intensify. They conclude that it is pointless to listen to those who persist along a path leading to the extinction of the Jewish tribe. As far as Israeli governmental policy is concerned, the last few years have witnessed a process that is eroding global Jewry's ability to exert an influence. As indicated in an earlier JPPI publication that addressed the freezing of the Kotel compromise, this decline in Diaspora Jewry's impact stems from an ongoing erosion of the power of organized Jewry in the Diaspora, and from internal Israeli processes that pose challenges for the institutions that world Jewry has used as vehicles for impact (such as Israel's High Court).¹

Diaspora Jews, especially those of the younger generation, and Americans in particular, may accept this change as fact – as indicated by their near-unanimous consensus that Israel is the “center of the Jewish world” – but they do not translate this fact into a new plan of action. These Jews, who feel that Israel does not listen to them, are usually gratified by the Jewish state's success, but have trouble accepting that a strong Israel has less need (or at least feels that it has less

¹ 2017 annual assesment, JPPI. <http://jppi.org.il/new/en/article/aa2017/part-2-dimensions-of-jewish-well-being/bonds/english-putting-the-kotel-decision-in-context-implications-and-steps-forward/>

need) of them and their counsel and will naturally be less inclined to take their opinions into consideration. The fact that they are growing weaker as a group (as they themselves acknowledge), compared with an Israel that is growing stronger, does not lead them to the conclusion drawn by Israelis, namely, that Israel knows what it is doing and where it is going, and has no need of direction or demands from those who have not kept their own community afloat.

These divergent sentiments often give rise to a tug-of-war atmosphere that does nothing constructive for the Jewish people as a whole; they are leading both groups ineluctably along a path of conflict and mutual disappointment (mutually disappointed expectations). World Jewry is unable to influence Israeli policy in a substantive way, while Israeli Jews lack the patience to listen to those who are unwilling to accept Israel's decisions – decisions arrived at through an orderly democratic process according to well-known rules. This conflict intensifies when the parties are drawn into confrontation on the Israeli political plane, where the balance of power is least equitable and where the game is often zero-sum. Thus, while communal/cultural activity and interpersonal/organizational relations proceed as usual, creating a sense of positive reciprocity among their participants, the political arena produces constant friction and rising anger, which frequently overshadow the constructive relations maintained in other spheres. This is why one of this paper's main recommendations is to move the center of gravity of Jewish relations, to the extent possible, outside the political arena.

* * *

As Israel approaches its 70th year of independence, its relationship with Diaspora Jews – nearly all of whom, by now, have decided not to become Israeli – is undergoing a rapid process of change and adjustment to new circumstances. These adjustments are necessitated by changes in Israel's situation, the situation of Diaspora Jewry, the state of the global arena, and the relationship dynamic itself. As in any process of change and adjustment, the Israel-Diaspora change dynamic is engendering tension, fear, opposition and a sense of uncertainty about the future. Some hope to profit from the change, while others fear that it will result in loss. Some view it as fate, others believe that it is the result of human action. Some think they know where the change is leading, while others see a range of possibilities, requiring choosing the best option and the appropriate policy adjustments.

JPPI's 2018 Dialogue, with 70 Years of Israeli Independence as its theme, focused more on the views and sentiments of young Jews from across the globe (without neglecting the positions of older Jews) than did earlier Dialogues. The 2018 Dialogue reflects all of these processes, hopes and concerns. On the one hand, it gives expression to the basic desire for a continued close and special relationship between all Jews, all over the world. On the other hand, it calls attention to a broad array of challenges that are complicating and overshadowing that relationship.

As noted, both the challenges and the opportunities derive from changes that have already occurred or are now taking place – in Israel, in Diaspora Jewry, and in the relationship dynamic. Nearly a decade ago, a JPPI study on a “new paradigm” In all Diaspora communities, their great variations notwithstanding, two key phenomena are deeply affecting Jewish life; one is qualitative and the other quantitative. The qualitative phenomenon is the danger of erosion in meaning and intensity in the experience of Jewish identity. Most researchers agree that in the absence of concerted action this trend is expected to continue, despite the vast scope and range of current efforts throughout the Jewish world to preserve – and make meaningful – Jewish identity. The quantitative phenomenon is the demographic decline that characterizes Jewish communities everywhere, except for a few rare cases. Demographers are divided regarding the rates of decline, and some forecasts are bleaker than others, but the basic trends are glaringly and painfully clear.”²

The study noted, correctly, the emergence of “concerns about a growing discernible fear of an ever-widening gap between Israel and the Diaspora and concern over the diminishing sense of mutual connectivity between Israel and Jews around the world. This gap especially manifests itself in the distancing of Diaspora youngsters from Israel, decreasing identification with Israel, steadily declining interest in its affairs and less concern for its future.” It is worth mentioning at this early point in the present report that, over the decade since the aforementioned concerns were noted, there has been no real difference in the phenomena discussed: the danger of eroded meaning still exists; the demographic downturn, or stagnation, continues. And the implications for the complex relationship between Israel and Diaspora Jewry remain unchanged.

2 Arevut, Responsibility and Partnership, JPPI, 2009
<http://jppi.org.il/new/en/article/english-arevut-responsibility-and-partnership/>

However, the quality and quantity of the Diaspora Jewish communities are not the only factors affecting the relationship. As noted, Israel-Diaspora relations are influenced by a variety of trends and changes taking place in Israel, in the Diaspora, on the global plane, and in the relationship dynamic itself. A few trends exerting a major impact on the relationship are noted below:

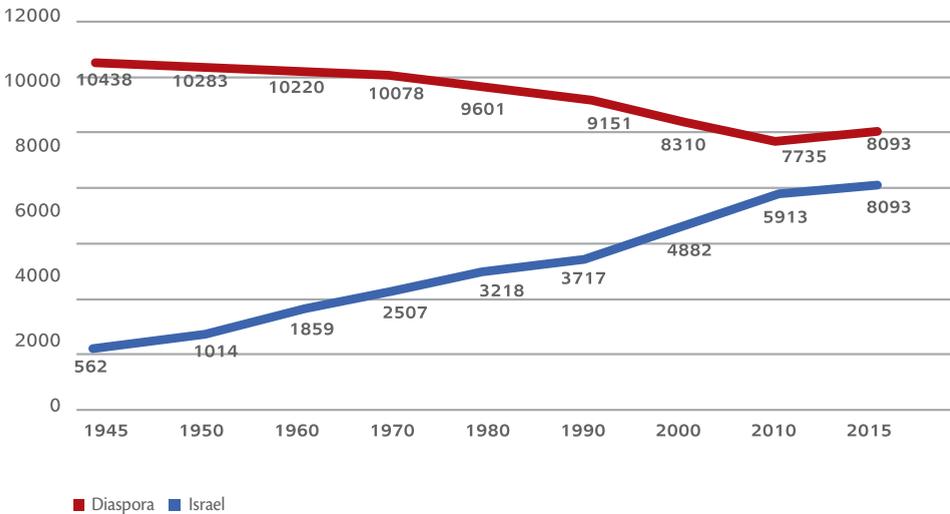
Changes taking place in **Israel**: the transition from a small and intimate society to a large population encompassing subgroups that all have their own social and ideological agendas; high birthrates and rapid demographic change; military might and political power; economic growth and the development of a Western-style society of abundance; the dominance of a political right based on religious and traditional voters, many of them Mizrachim.

Changes underway within **Diaspora Jewry**: growing assimilation within Western society as a whole; diminished group cohesion due to the waning of outside threats; the dwindling influence of the organized community; changing patterns of philanthropy; skyrocketing rates of mixed marriage, with attendant changes in Jewish consciousness; a growing demand for change in the relationship with today's stronger Israel; opposition among some groups within the Jewish community to Israeli foreign policy (especially vis-a-vis the peace process), and to Israeli policy with respect to religion and state.

Changes on the **global plane**: an overall decline in anti-Semitism (despite recent worrying indications of a resurgence); geostrategic changes (the end of the Cold War, American dominance, developments in the Middle East, and more); the ascendancy of nations with no history of problematic relations with the Jews (China, India); technological developments that make the world smaller; the growing ease of travel to faraway destinations.

Changes in the **relationship dynamic**: Israel's numerical ascendancy compared with world Jewry as a whole; less need for economic or political assistance from the Diaspora in order to ensure Israel's survival; a rift in historical memory as the younger generation drifts away from shared (mainly) European roots; intensified political and cultural differences due to a variety of circumstances.

World Jewish Population, 1945-2015 (In Thousands)



These developments and many more, both together and separately, are producing multidimensional change in the Israel-Diaspora relationship. This has positive aspects (more reciprocal visiting than before; relative ease of monitoring developments in other Jewish communities), and negative aspects (widened [greater emphasis on] political and cultural gaps, difficulty in pooling resources for collective goals). The change poses a new challenge for the Jewish people: the relationship needs to be managed so as to preserve the sense of Jewish solidarity and mutual responsibility, despite an accelerating process of necessary mutual adjustment.

JPPI's 2018 Dialogue, whose findings are presented in this paper, does not cover all of the topics on the relationship-management agenda. It does not, for instance, address the economic aspects of the relationship, beyond a brief sketch for background when discussing other matters. Nor is it concerned with geostrategic issues over which the Jewish people have little influence (the Jews neither started nor ended the Cold War, though its course and outcomes definitely affected them). It does not prominently or directly address the potential impact of changing religious/theological approaches on the future of the Jewish people or on relations between Jews, though these may well be significantly affected by theological undercurrents.

In other words, a substantial number of the variables determining the quality and future of Israel-Diaspora relations are treated as givens in this report, not as topics for discussion and development. For example, the continued growth of Israel's Jewish population compared with Diaspora Jewry's numerical decline or stagnation, is an issue that the Dialogue framework does not specifically address, out of an understanding that such demographic trends require separate, in-depth and focused discussion (which may not, after all, produce practical results: Jews have the number of children they want to have as individuals, not the number "desired" by scholars of Jewish peoplehood).

With what issues *are* the Dialogue concerned? Focus groups held throughout the Jewish world (see the Appendix for a list of countries, communities, and participants) and the accompanying survey both concentrated on various aspects of mutual commitment or lack of commitment between Jews. The commitment discussion emphasized the commitment of Israel, as the Jewish nation state, to Jews who are not its residents or citizens – and the commitment of Jews who are not residents or citizens of Israel to the Jewish people's nation state. With the help of the Dialogue's hundreds of participants, we tried to pinpoint the exact practical meaning of commitment; to understand Israel's expectations of Diaspora Jewry and Diaspora Jewry's expectations of Israel (and of Israeli Jewry); to identify the difficulties that hinder or may undermine relations; and to propose ways of improving dialogue, understanding, and cooperation between Israel and the Diaspora.

It should be stated unequivocally, here in the Introduction, that the working assumption behind this paper is that a healthy, strong, and reciprocal relationship between Israel and Diaspora Jewry is a worthwhile and invaluable enterprise. And it bears noting that, among the Jews who took part in the Dialogue, there were occasionally those who cast doubt on this working assumption. Their voices also need to be heard, and their views understood; it should be determined whether and to what degree their opinions are prevalent in the Jewish discursive space. "As far as I'm concerned, Judaism is a religion. I'm not aware that Catholics in Argentina feel a need for relations with Catholics in France," an Israeli participant said at one of the meetings.³ This woman's opinion was unusual compared to most other participants, but she was not alone in expressing it.

3 Quotes taken from Dialogue participants were summarized by moderators. Dialogues and moderators are listed in the Appendix.

And on the other hand, as shown by the survey administered to all Dialogue participants, a very substantial majority of the Israeli participants (90%) felt that “concern for world Jewry is a very important part of my Jewishness.” A very strong majority of the non-Israeli participants (88%), for their part, felt that “concern for Israel is a very important part of my Jewishness.” That is, an adherence to the idea of mutual Jewish responsibility, with its tacit assumption that Jews do not merely share a religious faith but also belong to the same people, also exists among young Jews. Accordingly, only a handful of Israeli and non-Israeli Dialogue participants agreed with the statement: “There is no need for a special relationship between Israel and the Diaspora.” Of the Israelis, only 2% “somewhat” agreed with this statement, versus 97% who disagreed (34% “somewhat” and 63% “strongly [completely]”). The data for the non-Israelis were very similar: 4% agreed (strongly or somewhat), while 96% disagreed (21% somewhat, 75% strongly). “The relationship with Israel is one of the basic elements of American Jewish identity,” said a young participant from Northeastern University in Boston. 91% of the American Dialogue participants said that “concern for Israel is a very important part of my Jewishness” (for the younger American participants, those under age 30, the figure was 82%).

This data are not a one-off phenomenon rooted in the specific character of the Dialogue participants – which does not represent the entire Jewish world but tends, rather, to focus on Jews who hold leadership positions or are more engaged than others in organized community life (see the Appendix for information on the participant profile, participant opinions, and the difference between the participant population and the general Jewish population). The Dialogue findings, at least in this regard, accord with earlier, similar findings produced by a wide variety of studies in Israel and the broader Jewish world – outcomes that we will be discussing in the coming chapters. That is, even in a situation where the relationship is changing, and to some degree deteriorating, a mutual desire to maintain close relations within the Jewish world is still in evidence. “The question of whether there is a need for a good relationship between Israel and the Diaspora is a strange one in my view,” said a Dialogue participant in Wilmington, Delaware. In his view, the need for such relations is clear – the only question is how to achieve or maintain them, and what exactly would constitute, for both communities, a “good” relationship.

This, then, was the primary goal of the 2018 Dialogue: to find out what those who will be shaping Israel-Diaspora relations for the next generation, young Jews now in their twenties and early thirties, perceive as the desired model for Israel-Diaspora relations. This year's Dialogue intentionally focused on groups of young people in this age group, for whom the relationship as it stands today is a given that has to be dealt with as is. Young Jews form their expectations in accordance with this state of affairs, unable to compare it first-hand with "what came before" (though "what came before" is also subject to debate, with no unequivocal conclusion).

JPPI's 2018 Dialogue was held under the wider umbrella of its Pluralism and Democracy project, which is supported by the William Davidson Foundation. The Dialogue process included unmediated study of relevant Jewish opinion via 33 discussion groups in Jewish communities around the world and featured a meeting with a Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations delegation. Within this framework, surveys were also administered to the participants, and other studies of Jewish public opinion were analyzed, including research on Jewish populations whose connection with organized Jewish life is tenuous. Discussions in the communities were conducted in accordance with the Chatham House Rules: participants agreed to be quoted, but without any particular statement being attributed to a specific person. This arrangement was meant to ensure open and free discussion. Accordingly, the present report quotes extensively from the discussions held by JPPI, without mentioning the speakers' names. The names of some of the participants are provided in the Appendix. As in previous years, we obtained additional information via the JPPI surveys conducted in Israel.

The Dialogue was held from November 2017 to March 2018, at dozens of gatherings around the world. Participants received a short background document for review and took part in seminars lasting from 90 to 120 minutes. The events were organized as follows:

- Brief presentation on the history of Israel-Diaspora relations;
- Survey administered to participants, from which the JPPI obtained data on participant opinions;

- Structured and moderated discussion of the state of Israel-Diaspora relations. Participants were presented with several test case scenarios and asked to comment on them and to clarify the various nuances of their positions regarding the desired and current status of these relations.

This was the fifth consecutive year in which a JPPI-initiated worldwide Dialogue was held. Last year (2017) the Dialogue investigated the Jewish people's relationship with Jerusalem; the results were presented to Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat on the eve of the 50th Jerusalem Day. The year before that, the Dialogue considered "Exploring the Jewish Spectrum in a Time of Fluid Identity" – in essence an investigation of the communal meaning of "Jewishness" in our time (2016). The 2015 Dialogue looked at "Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict," and the inaugural Dialogue in 2014 was part of a broader effort to formulate recommendations for a possible "constitutional arrangement dealing with Israel's identity as a Jewish and democratic state."

All the Dialogue final reports have garnered media attention and were recognized as major contributions in promoting discourse between Israel and the Diaspora. This year, the report is being presented for the first time to Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein, who has given the Dialogue his endorsement in advance of Israel's 70th Independence Day. The main points will be presented afterward, as they are each year, to the Government of Israel and to decision-makers in Israel and throughout Jewish world.

JPPI is grateful to the dozens of organizations and hundreds of Dialogue participants. The names of the individual participants and communities that took part in the effort appear in the appendix.

BACKGROUND: 70 YEARS OF RELATIONS

This document is not meant to be a comprehensive history of Israel's relations with Diaspora Jewry, but some background must be provided. In the coming paragraphs we will try to focus on a few of the issues that come up in the report and how they have changed over the years, if they have had or are likely to have an impact on the relationship.

From the dawn of the Zionist movement and the renewal of Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel, Diaspora Jewry was the primary source of economic support for the growing Yishuv. A small number of well-known philanthropists founded and provided backing for localities, neighborhoods, and settlement groups. A much larger number of Jews from all walks of life sent donations, large or small, in the framework of communal or national fundraising campaigns, without which life in Palestine-Eretz Israel would have been impossible. "For many years Israel-Diaspora relations were institutionally founded on a system of donations to the State of Israel. The needs were legitimate, and the young Israeli state, which struggled with existential and infrastructural difficulties, needed the assistance – which also gave Diaspora Jewry a means of identifying with, and taking part in, the struggle for their dream state's establishment."⁴

The scholar Alon Gal has written that Israel was founded "thanks largely to Diaspora Jewry and the support of the democratic Western powers, foremost among them the United States."⁵ However, due to the ideology that guided it and, perhaps, to prevailing circumstances, an attitude of negating the Golah, or "exile," emerged within the Zionist tradition at the same time the Diaspora's crucial assistance was being gratefully accepted. According to this approach, a substantive and purposeful Jewish continuity could exist only within the framework of Jewish national life in Eretz Israel and, later, the State of Israel.

4 Jewry and the Diaspora at a Crossroads, Avi Beker, 1998. <http://lib.cet.ac.il/pages/item.asp?item=450> [Hebrew]

5 "The Relations Between Israel and American Jewry: the Israeli Perspective," *Iyunim biTkumat Yisrael*, Vol. 8, pp. 8-32, Alon Gal.

Israeli Zionism tended to assume that only life in Israel gives full expression to Jewishness.⁶ David Ben-Gurion embraced the position that only Israel gives meaning to Jewish life. He wrote: “There is no Jew in the Golah [...] who can be a complete Jew, and no Jewish community in the Golah can live a full Jewish life. Only in Israel can Jewish life be lived fully.”⁷ The Israeli leadership assumed that Israel was the place where the fate of the Jewish people would be decided, and that “the people living in Zion” would therefore come to embody or represent the Jewish people as a whole. According to this view, the Israeli community is “essential,” while the Diaspora community is “incidental.” And even if this assumption is not explicit in Israeli public life, it is ingrained in Israeli culture. Sociologist Shlomo Fischer, a JPPI Senior Fellow, posits that this is one of the underlying reasons why Israeli government decisions tend to ignore the Diaspora and its needs.

This approach to Zionism was not, of course, consistent with the positions of many Diaspora leaders – not in the early days of Zionism, and certainly not later on, after the State of Israel was founded. The early Zionist period was marked by disputes within Jewish circles regarding the movement’s role. Some groups favored the idea of a sovereign Israel as a refuge from Jew hatred (Theodor Herzl). Others saw Eretz Israel primarily as a refuge from spiritual assimilation (Ahad Ha’am).⁸ Many saw no use for Zionism, preferring to strengthen the Diaspora Jewish communities (Simon Dubnow⁹). There were those who vehemently opposed Zionism (Herman Cohen¹⁰), some for existential reasons (dispersion is preferable to concentration in one place –

6 This section is borrowed from: *The Jews: 7 Common Questions*, Shmuel Rosner (Dvir and Beit Hatfutsot, 2016) [Hebrew]. Space is too short to discuss this issue in depth, but it is worth noting that Zionism essentially abandoned, in practice if not in theory, the definition of Judaism as a religion, and embraced the idea that it is primarily a national identity. See Taub, p. 35: “The state created by Zionism is based, in its constitutional structure, on a secular ideal of identity, and is by definition not the state of the Jewish religion. It is the Jewish nation state.”

7 The quote appears in an article by A. B. Yehoshua: “Defining Who Is an Israeli,” *Haaretz*, September 2013.

8 The following paragraph is taken from *The Jews: 7 Common Questions*, Shmuel Rosner (Dvir and Beit Hatfutsot, 2016) [Hebrew].

9 On Dubnow’s approach, see: Simon Dubnow’s “New Judaism: Diaspora Nationalism and the World History of the Jews, Robert Seltzer, 2014., and *Relation to Zion and the Diaspora in 20th Century Jewish Thought* [Hebrew], Turner, p. 91.

10 On Cohen (1842-1918), see: *A History of Modern Jewish Religious Philosophy*, Eliezer Schweid, III, 1, p. 115. For Cohen’s views as conveyed in his writings, see: *The Religion of Reason in Jewish Sources*, Hermann Cohen. Trans. Zvi Voyeslavsky, edited with comments by Samuel Hugo Bergman and Nathan Rotenstreich, Bialik Institute and Leo Baeck Institute, 1971. [Hebrew from German]

a rationale that is being voiced with growing frequency today, when nuclear arms pose a threat to Israel's security¹¹), others for reasons of national culture (the Jewish people has a mission that it can fulfill only when it is dispersed among the other peoples of the world).¹² Thus, seeds of mutual disappointment were embedded in the relationship from the outset – alongside a shared desire to cooperate and strive for the success of a momentous national endeavor. Diaspora Jewry's disappointment in an Israel that sees itself as superior and refuses to repay the Diaspora's generous support with respect is mirrored by Israel's disappointment when it finds that the broader Jewish public does not share its positions, and that most Jews, though they have chosen to support Zionism, still choose to live outside of Israel.

The growth and strengthening of the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine-Eretz Israel and, later, the official establishment of the State of Israel, gave rise to another change in the relationship between the Yishuv and Diaspora Jewry. In its early years, the Yishuv was managed by the national institutions that emerged subsequent to the Zionist awakening; in this way, Diaspora Jewry had official representation that, in practice, was part of the Zionist movement's leadership. But in a process that began during the early years of Mandatory Palestine and gained momentum as Israeli statehood approached, the Diaspora Jewish leadership was pushed out of most positions of influence in the Zionist movement, and the center of gravity shifted to the heads of the Yishuv. "This process reached its peak when the state was founded," wrote the scholar Assaf Yedidya. Diaspora Jewry effectively lost its representation and its ability to exert an influence on the State of Israel. "The Zionist movement saw itself as representing world Jewry in its entirety, but the Jewish state, once founded, did not act to represent world Jewry within the state institutions; its representatives remained only those who lived in Israel itself."

In any case, this process, which continued and intensified as Israel gained economic and political strength and had less need of major assistance from the Diaspora, bore the seeds of mutual frustration. Diaspora Jews sometimes felt that they were being excluded from decisions on issues of cardinal

11 See *Flexigidity: The Secret of Jewish Adaptability*, Gidi Grinstein, Dvir 2013, p. 216. [Hebrew]

12 A lengthy and detailed discussion of this topic can be found in *Relation to Zion and the Diaspora in 20th Century Jewish Thought*, Joseph Turner, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2014. [Hebrew]

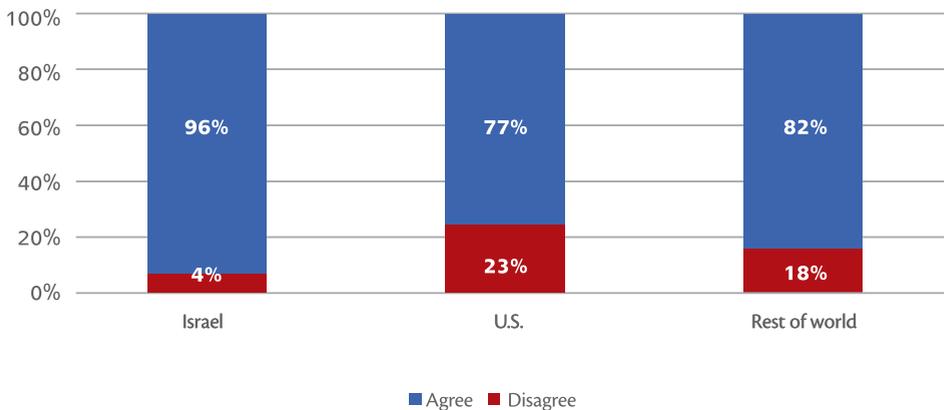
importance to the future of the Jewish people as a whole. Israeli Jews, for their part, came to lose their sense of direct and unmediated connection with the heads of Diaspora Jewry. Accordingly, they felt disappointed by events and processes affecting Diaspora communities they were unable to decode.

These slow, ongoing processes were periodically interrupted by dramatic events that muted them. The urgent and immediate need to care for the survivors of the Holocaust pushed aside nearly all disputes. An instinctive desire to see the State of Israel established and able to overcome the annihilation attempts that immediately followed, left no time for secondary coordination of expectations issues. Israel's founding filled Diaspora Jews with pride, which was redoubled when the fledgling state proved capable of overpowering its enemies and surviving in its hostile surroundings. They regarded it as a source of solidarity and a target of vigorous activity, which also aided in consolidating Diaspora Jewry around a shared goal. They helped Israel absorb those Jewish communities not fortunate enough to be situated in hospitable Western countries – Jews of Arab and Middle Eastern lands and, later, those emigrating from the Soviet bloc.

At the same time, processes of demographic, military, and economic reinforcement, along with cultural developments, made Israel the strongest community in the Jewish world. This is supported by much empirical data and was also the view of the Dialogue participants, a large majority of whom (81%), both Israelis and non-Israelis, agreed with the statement: "Israel is the center of the Jewish people." "Israel influences everything that happens to us as Jews," as one Australian participant put it. "Whether they like it or not, Jews are affected by Israel's behavior. Israel doesn't understand that what happens in Jerusalem has repercussions here as well, and not always positive ones, to which we are exposed," noted a Delaware participant. "Israel was also founded for me, so it's also doing things in my name," asserted a Brown University student. Of course, not everyone agreed with these statements. An Australian participant said that she has "no emotional connection to the concept of a center for the Jewish people. Maybe if I were from someplace where it's hard to be a Jew I'd need Israel." One Brown participant said: "Being Jewish is very important to me, but Israel isn't a meaningful part of that."

But even those for whom ties to Israel do not constitute a major element of identity know that Israel, as a successful political entity, has more organizational might than any other community. Alongside the problems intrinsic to managing, maintaining, and protecting a state, especially in a hostile environment, Israel enjoys a cultural coherence that spares it many of the challenges faced by Diaspora Jewry – the difficulty of maintaining a communal identity in a universal world, the loosening of ties to religious communities in a secularizing world, the change in consciousness arising from accelerated integration in general society, at both the social-economic level and at the more intimate familial-communal level.¹³

Israel Is the Center of the Jewish People¹⁴



13 On this issue, see the 2015 Dialogue, which dealt with world Jewry’s perspectives on Jewish values and Israel’s use of force in armed conflict.
<http://jppi.org.il/new/en/article/english-exploring-the-jewish-spectrum-in-a-time-of-fluid-identity/#.Ww0Hpe7RAdu>

14 Many of the graphs appearing in this paper distinguish between three main communities: Israel, the United States, and the rest of the world. This breakdown reflects current demographics – Israel and the U.S. are the two major Jewish population centers. To some degree it also reflects the character of the communities: there are differences between Israel, the U.S. as a large Diaspora community, and the other Jewish communities. However, great differences clearly exist between subpopulations within the communities (e.g., urban secular Israelis versus Orthodox Israelis from Judea and Samaria), and between communities in different places (e.g., Jews in Germany versus Jews in Australia – both fall into our “Rest of the world” category). The division is also a matter of convenience, to ensure three groups with enough participants for the findings to have meaningful value. A separate exploration of a community such as France, where only one Dialogue was held, would be insufficient given the circumstances and nature of the Dialogue.

Seventy years is a long time, and many different events have garnered attention, but in contrast to what is commonly thought (and written), a few of the main trends that have characterized Israel-Diaspora relations have not changed substantially over the past seven decades. In the early 1950s, in the set of understandings known as the Ben-Gurion-Blaustein Agreement, one could already discern several points that would eventually become stumbling blocks in the relationship's management. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion was asked to affirm, and did affirm, that Israel would not demand political loyalty from Jewish citizens of other countries. He agreed to declare that Aliyah be based on the choice of individual Jews, not an obligation for all Jews. The then-president of the American Jewish Committee, Jacob Blaustein, communicated the desire of Jews to see a thriving Jewish state, but also conveyed their discomfort with the idea of Israel assuming a role of leadership and overall responsibility for the Jewish people writ large. In reality, Israel constantly interfered in Diaspora political affairs, and expected Diaspora Jews to work on its behalf on a variety of levels. At the same time, Diaspora Jews found themselves identified with a state that was not their own, and with policies they did not always support, and that sometimes put them in conflict with their own governments or environs. "We, the Jews of Europe, are hostage to Israeli foreign policy," said a young German participant. "When Israel changes its policy and escalates the situation, I feel less secure in America," noted a Brown student. Participants in Dialogue seminars were asked to jointly reformulate several of the main Ben-Gurion-Blaustein understandings, and it was interesting to see that on many of the issues presented to them (political loyalty, Aliyah, mutual commitment and the like) they tended to reiterate the agreements reached almost 70 years ago.

Non-Israeli participants in particular produced statements similar to the original understandings. "Ultimately it's not a bad place to start from," summed up the view of one participant in the Washington discussion and those of her interlocutors. Ben-Gurion said that "the State of Israel represents and speaks only on behalf of its own citizens and in no way presumes to represent or speak in the name of the Jews who are citizens of any other country." Similarly, one U.S. participant said, "I don't want Israel to speak for me," while another maintained that "Israel has no right to represent me politically." A third participant noted: "Sometimes it's annoying when the Israeli prime minister presumes to represent all Jews – he doesn't represent me, and he has no right

to say he does.” The question about Israel’s leadership role vis-a-vis the Jewish people will be discussed at length below, but it is worth mentioning here that it is one of the questions that has plagued the Israeli [national] project from its beginnings. The tension between two poles is nothing new: the desire of some Jews to see Israel in a leadership role, and Israel’s pretension to lead – versus the desire of other Jews to shake off Israel’s leadership pretensions, and Israel’s tendency to shirk leadership when inconvenient. It takes different forms according to particular political and social events (French anti-Semitism, the Kotel crisis), but it is fundamentally the same tension.

Over the past few decades, a number of processes emerging in tandem have underscored practical differences and gaps of consciousness between Israel and a substantial part of Diaspora Jewry, beyond such trivial facts as geographic distance or the lack of a common speaking, reading, and writing language. Israel has become more conservative politically, at a time when many Jews around the world self-identify as liberal. Israel has become stronger and, accordingly, there have been calls for it to address what many Diaspora Jews see as a flawed approach to the dynamics between religion and state. Israel has responded with opposition, due to political power struggles and its own domestic priorities. At the same time, major political differences have erupted between Israeli Jews, most of whom have lost faith in the peace process with the Arab world (especially the Palestinians), and many Diaspora Jews who still support and believe in the peace process. Many feel that the current lack of progress on the peacemaking front is due largely to Israeli policy, and they see this as a major blow to the state’s Jewish identity and to its ability to represent a Jewish culture with which they want to identify. At times these views manifest in resounding interrogation of Zionism’s legitimacy by Jewish opinion-makers in the Diaspora.¹⁵

These developments have engendered successive crises between Israel and Diaspora Jewry – as well as interminable discussion of the supposed “distancing” of Jews from Israel. Crises surrounding legislation on the “Who is a Jew” and conversion issues. Crises relating to Israeli policy on peace and war. Crises touching on the status of non-Orthodox Judaism in Israel. Crises over

15 For for example: Is Liberal Zionism Dead?, Michelle Goldberg, The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/08/opinion/liberal-zionism-jerusalem.html>

the way in which Israel regards Diaspora communities and the probability of their survival. Largely, these crises reflect the divergent agendas of Jews living under different circumstances and the development of Jewish identities whose components, accordingly, differ. A Judaism oriented toward universalism and liberalism in the Diaspora; a Judaism with national and tribal characteristics in Israel. In the Diaspora – a Judaism that is in frequent and substantive contact with a non-Jewish environment. In Israel – a Judaism that lives in relative cultural isolation from the non-Jewish world. The Israeli national identity is mediated by religion/tradition, while the Jewish communities in the Diaspora, especially the primary U.S. community, are elitist-cosmopolitan with a secular orientation. This situation constitutes a change vis-à-vis the early decades of Israeli statehood, when both Diaspora and Israeli Jews tended to hold liberal-socialist views.

To all of the above may be added the structural gaps between Israel and the Diaspora Jewish communities, gaps whose results have become evident as the years have passed. “How can you compare a country, whatever its problems, with a collection of communities between and within which disagreements abound, and that are, ultimately, very weak entities to which most Jews have little or no commitment?,” was the provocative question posed by one Minnesota participant. Israel creates, for its Jews, a Jewish environment that relies on political power, feeds it and is fed by it. A Jewish environment that has the power to impose itself, that has a need for legal definitions on certain issues, that has control over the population’s composition, and that has orderly processes for resolving and deciding on controversial matters. In the Diaspora, by contrast, there is a voluntary Jewish community that can exist in a state of conceptual/organizational ambiguity and vagueness with regard to identity – a community that is strongly influenced by social trends within the non-Jewish majority. These gaps hinder productive dialogue between Israel and the Diaspora, both at the conceptual level (how a state speaks to communities) and at the practical level (who speaks with whom, on what issues, and for what purposes).

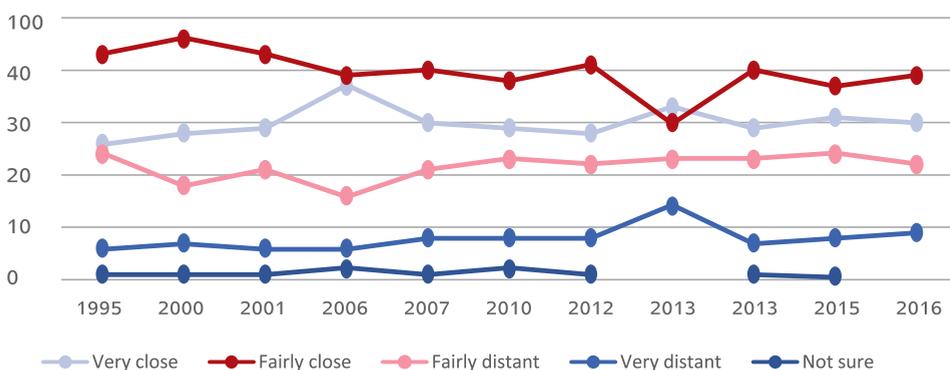
THE STATE OF RELATIONS TODAY

It is a complicated task to define the state of relations between communities as different from each other as Israel and the Diaspora. There are emotional elements that have to be taken into account – how the communities or, more precisely, how the members of the communities, feel about each other. There are elements of consciousness that have to be taken into account – what the members of the communities think about each other, as individuals and as groups. And there are behavioral elements that merit consideration as well – how Jews behave, what they do with regard to the relationship.¹⁶

The general picture, as we noted at the beginning of this study, includes both meaningful ties and concern over the relationship's changing character – and the implications of this change for future relations. Today's Israel is not a weak fledgling state requiring constant assistance to survive. Accordingly, it needs to define and decipher its relationship with a large group of human beings whose support, though still significant, is of less practical necessity than in the past, and who have different expectations of it, which do not always line up with its own citizenry's expectations. Diaspora Jews are no longer under the harsh and powerful spell of the dramatic events that preceded Israel's establishment 70 years ago, and which marked the early decades of the state's existence (the Holocaust, War of Independence, Six-Day War, Yom Kippur War). "The problem is that the next generation understands nothing of what we understand here," said a Chicago participant. "What's happening on the campuses is unlike what's going on in the Federations," observed another participant in the same discussion. "Most Jewish students don't come to these kinds of discussions at all, or to other Hillel activities," noted an Austin participant during a discussion held at the University of Texas Hillel chapter. These Jews need a new definition for the relationship with a country whose policies and actions are not always to their liking. These changes have given rise to new ideas and, more importantly, to new priorities for the relationship itself.

16 This formulation is consistent with the one made in: *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, JPPI 2014.

How close do you feel to Israel? U.S. Jewry (%)¹⁷



By many empirical measures, the relationship is as strong as it was in the past, or stronger. Seven out of ten U.S. Jews say they feel “very close” (30%) or “fairly [somewhat] close” to Israel (39%), per Pew Research Center findings.¹⁸ In the UK, Jews are “strongly connected to Israel.”¹⁹ On the other hand, nearly seven out of ten Jewish Israelis say that “a thriving Diaspora is necessary for the Jewish people’s long-term survival.”²⁰ These Jews feel (79%) that Israel bears responsibility for their security. Half of them (50%) believe that Israel is also obligated to contribute to the continued flourishing of Jewish communities outside Israel. The Dialogue findings also suggest a relatively strong mutual desire for bonds and affirm the existence of a strongly shared sense of mutual responsibility, in nearly all of the communities.

Based on an array of surveys employing different kinds of questions, Jews around the world still appear to see themselves as members of a single group, among whom a relationship of mutual responsibility should prevail. This year’s JPPI survey of Israeli Jews’ practices and beliefs found that a large majority (76%) feel that “being Jewish means being concerned for other Jews wherever

17 The graph is based on data from the American Jewish Committee, the Pew Research Center, [and the] Cohen Center. It should be noted that the survey questionnaires used slightly different terminology. Pew asked about “emotional connection,” the Cohen Center about the “sense of connection.”

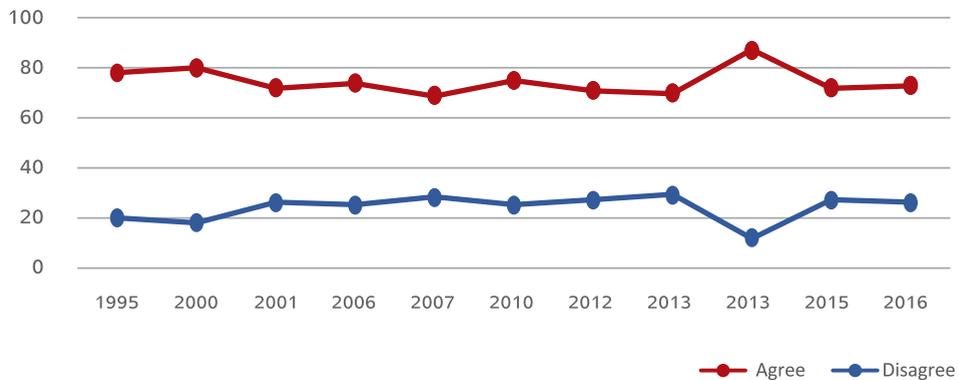
18 A Portrait of Jewish Americans, Pew Research Center, 2013.

19 *The Attitudes of British Jews Towards Israel*, Department of Sociology, School of Arts and Social Sciences, City University of London, 2015.

20 Israel’s Religiously Divided Society, Pew Research Center, 2016. <http://www.pewforum.org/2016/03/08/comparisons-between-jews-in-israel-and-the-u-s/>

they may be” – a very high percentage relative to other options offered [noted] in the study. Based on a Pew Research Center comparison of U.S. and Israeli Jewish attitudes, it appears that Jews on both sides of the Atlantic feel the necessity of mutual responsibility. 88% of Israeli Jews reported a strong sense of connection to the Jewish people, a sentiment shared by 75% of U.S. Jews. 5% of Israeli Jews and 63% of U.S. Jews agreed that they have a duty to care for Jews in need of assistance.²¹ A Ministry of Diaspora Affairs survey found that half of Israeli Jews regard Israel as responsible for “continued Jewish existence [survival] in the Diaspora, not just in Israel.”

Do you agree: Concern for Israel is a very important part of being a Jew (U.S.)? (%)²²



An ongoing Cohen Center study indicates that 43% of young Jews who have participated in Taglit-Birthright Israel and have two Jewish parents report, even years after their trip to Israel, feeling “very” connected to Israel.²³ Of those with one Jewish parent, 29% report feeling very close to Israel, while another 34% report feeling “somewhat” close to Israel. Both the Israeli and the Diaspora-based studies suggest that levels of attachment to Israel are strongly affected by opportunities for encounters and acquaintance between Israeli and Diaspora Jews.

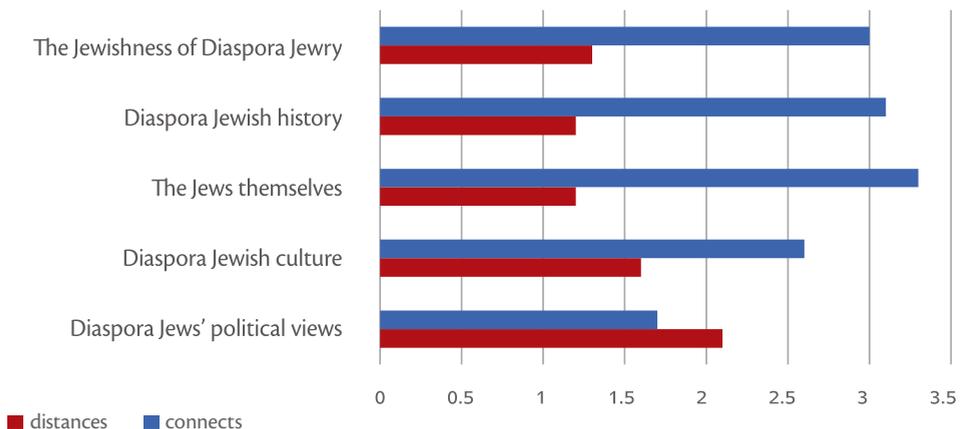
21 Israel’s Religiously Divided Society, Pew Research Center, 2016.

22 The data in this graph are from the Pew Research Center, the American Jewish Committee, (and the Cohen Center.

23 Beyond 10 Days, Brandeis University, 2017
<https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/pdfs/jewish%20futures/Beyond10Days.pdf>

One of the survey questions posed to the Dialogue participants asked them to state the degree to which several specific factors cause them to feel distant or close to other Jews (Israel versus the Diaspora). The factor that connects Jews to the most significant degree, per their definition, is “the Jews themselves.” Even those who feel that “Diaspora Jewish politics” or “Diaspora culture” alienates them to some degree do not feel alienated from the Jews themselves. Among the Israeli respondents, a large majority ranked “the Jews themselves” as a “connecting” or “strongly connecting” factor. A substantial, though not wide, majority of Diaspora Jews identify “Israelis” as a “connecting” or “strongly connecting” factor. “I have many acquaintances in Israel whom I like a lot,” said a Minnesota Dialogue participant. A few New York participants mentioned the professional relationships they have with Israelis, and the pleasant relations that have developed between them, “as long as we don’t start talking politics.” As the graph below shows, politics is unquestionably the subject that most strongly hampers connection on both sides. The Israelis rate Diaspora Jewish politics as the sole issue that repels them (distances more than connects), while Diaspora Jews are also dissatisfied with Israeli political views. “I don’t quite understand what they think about politics, but one thing is for sure – they don’t think like us,” said a young Israeli at one of the Dialogue seminars. “The Israeli political sphere is complicated and I’m not comfortable with it, or with its outcomes.” said a young American woman.

On a scale of 1 to 4: **What Connects Diaspora Jews to/Distances them from Israelis**



The intensiveness of communication and contact between Jewish communities around the world and Israel is another issue to be considered when assessing the state of Israel-Diaspora relations. The Jewish people's organizational ability to transport and bring many thousands of young Jews from all over the world into contact with each other every year has a positive effect in terms of the level of connection that may be expected of the next generation. The number of Jews visiting Israel has risen over the last few decades (due, among other things, to large-scale programs such as Taglit-Birthright (see graph). The Internet, social media, and other virtual/technological frameworks have enabled Jews to communicate with each other more easily than in the past, and to share a cultural space (limited, however, by language – Hebrew for Israeli Jews, other languages for other Jews). Nor is there any lack of opportunity at the leadership level for encounters, dialogue, interaction – even if the outcomes are not always those hoped for by either side (the Israeli government's decision to renege on the Kotel compromise framework is a notable example, one that will be discussed later in this work²⁴). A very large majority of the Dialogue participants had visited Israel, which naturally affected their perspective on Israel-Diaspora relations. But these visits themselves reflect a desirable situation: Diaspora Jews with even a minimal desire for connection to the Jewish community will make it to Israel at some point. And as many studies from both the distant and the recent past have shown, trips to Israel both reflect a desire for connection, and themselves deepen Diaspora Jews' connection with Israel and with the Jewish community.²⁵

Of course, reciprocal visits and Jewish leadership encounters do not tell the whole story. According to Professor Ted Sasson's calculations, donations to Israel by (U.S.) Jews are trending upward, though donation patterns are changing. Based on some assessments, even the 2017 crisis in relations between the Israeli government and the Diaspora Jewish leadership has not led to a major decline in Jewish donations to Israel.²⁶ Involvement in Israeli economic activity on the part of Jews around the world, as well as involvement

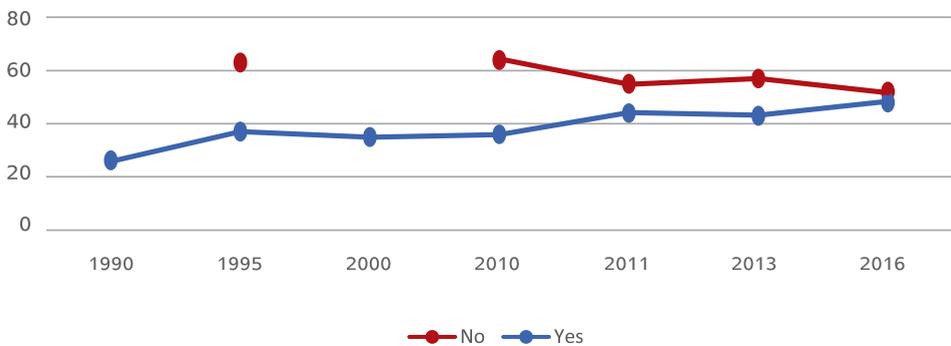
24 See: Putting the Kotel Decision in Context – Implications and Steps Forward, Maj. (Res) Dan Feferman, Shmuel Rosner, JPPI, 2016.

25 See: Jewish Continuity and Israel Visits, David Mittelberg, 1999.

26 See: Survey: No Change in Donations to Israeli Charities From American Jews, Gil Hoffman, *Jerusalem Post*, Aug. 2017.

and investment in the Israeli NGO [nonprofit] world continues, and in some places is growing stronger. “I won’t stop investing in Israel even if I’m angry with it,” said a New York participant, “I’ll just try to invest in things that accord with my outlook.” A Delaware participant chose another option: “If there’s a disagreement, I’ll donate to a hospital [in Israel], which is something that isn’t subject to disagreement.” The Israeli expatriate presence in various countries has undergone a change in character in recent years; there have been attempts, some of them successful, to connect expat Israelis with the local Jewish communities.²⁷ Thus, it would not be at all incorrect to argue that, in current practical terms, the past few decades have witnessed a strengthening of the Israel-Diaspora relationship on several planes.

Have you visited Israel? (U.S. Jews) (%)²⁸



Still, a number of worrisome signs and developments were discussed over the course of the Dialogue process. In light of these developments, it is hard to argue that the relationship is running smoothly or that no reassessment of the state of the relations is in order. The Diaspora’s younger generation seems less committed to relations with Israel than its predecessors. This trend is the result of changes both in the Diaspora Jewish communities and in Israel’s

27 This possibility is realistic mainly in the U.S. Current research attests to a disconnect between Israelis living in Europe and the Jewish communities. See: *The Israeli-European Diaspora: Survey About Israelis Living in Europe*, Machon Kehilot, Dec. 2017.

28 The data in this graph are based on data from the Pew Research Center, the American Jewish Committee, the Cohen Center, and the *National Jewish Population Survey*, 1990, 2000.

character.²⁹ A recent study of Jews in the San Francisco area found that “an identical number of Jews are strongly connected to Israel and not connected to it at all.”³⁰ The Jews less connected to Israel in this community are similar to those less connected to Israel in other communities: “Young Jews are less likely to be connected to Israel. This is also true of liberals, people in mixed marriages, and the unaffiliated,” wrote researchers Steven Cohen and Jacob Ukeles.

Many factors can be credited with driving the internal changes in the communities. Lawrence Hoffman, a Reform rabbi on the faculty of Hebrew Union College, explained the change this way: “The disappearance of the sort of ethnic solidarity that prior generations enjoyed as a matter of course... [and] our high intermarriage rate... means that Jews of the next generation will increasingly be people with no childhood Jewish memories and no obvious reason to maintain Jewish friends, associations, and causes at the expense of non-Jewish ones.”³¹

There can be no doubt that changes in the structure of the Jewish community, especially in the United States but to a lesser degree in other communities as well, provide at least a partial explanation for the changing relationship with Israel. Research findings suggest, for example, that “the connection to Israel is much stronger among Jews by religion (and older Jews in general) than among religiously unaffiliated Jews (and younger Jews in general).”³² The number of “religiously unaffiliated” Jews was found to be rising; the sense of connection to Israel is, accordingly, liable to deteriorate. The fact that the children of mixed marriages, a group whose numbers are increasing in the various Jewish communities, are less connected to Israel than are the children born of Jewish couples, is also well known and has been elucidated in numerous studies. Jack Wertheimer wrote in 2009 that “the most important trend shaping the connection of American Jews to Israel, the one that outweighs all other factors,

29 See: *Agreeing to Disagree: Jewish Peoplehood – Between Attachment and Criticism*, Shmuel Rosner, JPPI, 2012.

30 A Portrait of Bay Area Jewish Life and Communities, 2018

31 This quote and the one that follows are from: “If American Jews and Israel Are Drifting Apart, What’s the Reason?”, Elliott Abrams,” *Mosaic Magazine*, April 2016

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

is intermarriage.”³³ Elliott Abrams, writing about the weakened relationship between U.S. Jewry and Israel, summed it up this way: “The beginning of wisdom is surely to understand that the problem is *here*, in the United States. The American Jewish community is more distant from Israel than in past generations because it is changing, is in significant ways growing weaker, and is less inclined and indeed less able to feel and express solidarity with other Jews here and abroad.”

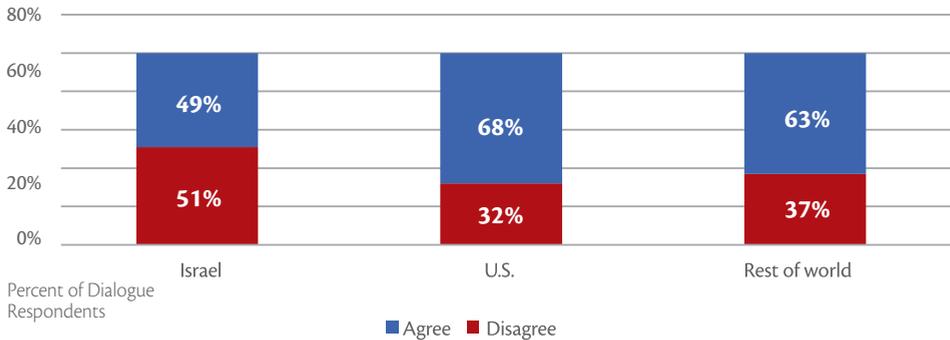
But there are also those who attribute changing attitudes toward Israel mainly to Israel’s behavior. “There is now much more ambivalence toward Israel and much less agreement about its policies,” wrote Dov Waxman in his book *Trouble in the Tribe*.³⁴ Young Jews, he maintained, “are becoming increasingly uncomfortable with Israel’s policies in its conflict with the Palestinians and skeptical of its government’s proclaimed desire for peace.” The Dialogue survey indicates that for several years now Jews have indeed had little faith in the seriousness with which the Israeli government is pursuing peace (see Appendix). “I’m very close to deciding that I’m finished with Israel,” said a young Oregon participant.

A substantial share of the Dialogue survey respondents disagreed with the statement “Young Jews don’t care about Israel” (38% of non-Israelis agreed with the statement, 62% disagreed – while only 28% of Israelis agreed). But a much higher level of agreement was elicited by the commonly-heard claim that Israeli and Diaspora Jews are “drifting apart.” 57% of the entire participant pool said that they discern distancing; among them, Israelis were relatively optimistic, with 48% stating that there is distancing. By contrast, Diaspora Jews were less optimistic, with two-thirds of them (60%) saying that Israel and the Diaspora are drifting apart. It should be noted that participants belonging to the U.S. Jewish community were slightly more likely (68%) to say that Israeli and Diaspora Jews are drifting apart, compared with Jews in other countries.

33 *The Truth About American Jews and Israel*, Jack Wertheimer, Commentary
<https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-truth-about-american-jews-and-israel/>

34 *Trouble in the Tribe: the American Jewish Conflict over Israel*, Dov Waxman, 2016, p. 4.

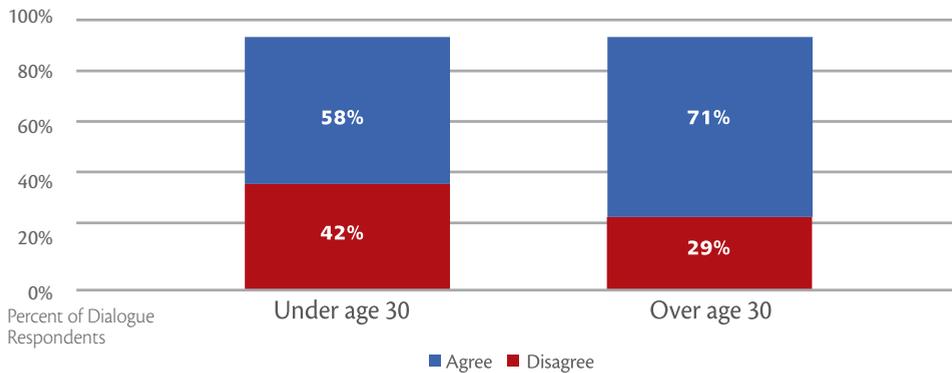
Israel and Diaspora Jewry are Drifting Apart



It was interesting to note that, in terms of age cohorts, the older participants actually tended to feel more acutely that Israel and the Diaspora are drifting apart than their younger counterparts. This, of course, may be due to a number of different reasons: their expectations of closeness may be higher, meaning that the present situation strikes them as one of distancing, compared with younger people for whom the current situation seems adequate and who therefore discern no distancing. It may be that age simply has its advantages – a longer memory of how things once were relative to today, and thus a better ability to assess the state of relations vis-à-vis the past. It may also be that the distancing discourse is actually affecting older Jews, who have less understanding of the modes of expression of younger Jews and see distancing in it while the younger people themselves are aware that their discourse reflects changing attitudes toward Israel but not necessarily distancing. (There is a fourth possibility: that the Dialogue reflects the views of a random reference group, and that a statistically valid assessment of the entire Jewish population would produce different findings.)

There was a similar notable finding with regard to the question of whether young Diaspora Jews “don’t care about Israel.” While nearly half of the older Diaspora (over 30 years) participants agreed with this statement, a substantially lower percentage of young people – just 20 percent – agreed. That is: the older participants’ general assessment of the state of Israel-Diaspora relations, and of younger Jews’ attitudes toward Israel in particular, is much more pessimistic than that of the younger participants themselves.

Israel and world Jewry are drifting apart: U.S. Jewry's response



In the book mentioned earlier, Waxman joins a long list of authors who hold that most of the responsibility for the eroding Israel-Diaspora relationship belongs to Israel, which does not meet the (in their view reasonable) expectations that these Jews have of a country that aspires to be the state of the Jewish people. In Israel, the situation is often the reverse: Israeli policy may be at issue – but it is the other side, inclined to act against Israel rather than stand by it, that is choosing to distance itself. “Unfortunately, I see how time after time they link up with the wrong parties, the radical and strident left that represents almost nothing of Israeli public life. They speak perfect English, they’re nice (truly), they understand the American mentality, often you have the same outlooks and they meet you where you live. But it’s a ruse [...],” wrote Sara Haetzni-Cohen in the newspaper *Makor Rishon*. At some of the meetings with young Israelis similar thoughts were expressed: “As I see it, a Jew who goes against Israel and supports a deal with Iran that could lead to Israel’s annihilation is [himself] the problem,” one of them said. The data indicated that, at least in the United States, most Jews did in fact support the nuclear agreement with Iran, in contrast to most Israeli Jews who viewed it as a bad deal. Furthermore, the surveys showed that American Jews support the deal despite agreeing with the Israeli Jews’ assessment that it endangers Israel.³⁵

JPPI, in one of its earlier studies, established that when evaluating Jews’ connection to Israel, and the degree to which the connection is affected by

35 Jew vs. Jew (vs. Jew) on the Iran deal, Shmuel Rosner, 2015
http://jewishjournal.com/current_edition/176122/jew-vs-jew-vs-jew-on-the-iran-deal/

Israel's behavior rather than internal trends of the Jewish communities, one should focus on four main spheres where opinion and ideology gaps are known to affect the relationship's quality:

- Israeli foreign and security policy;
- Israel's attitude toward the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria (and, to a lesser degree, in Gaza), and toward Arab Israelis;
- Relations between state institutions and the religious establishment – especially with regard to the Orthodox religious establishment's dominance in Israel;
- And finally, a general discomfort with Israeli culture and discourse.³⁶

Opinion gaps are evident in these spheres, which lead to confrontations that often manifest in a sense of powerlessness. “As far as I'm concerned, if Israel is in the wrong [in its foreign policy], there's no point in going easy on it,” said a young Boston participant. With regard to Diaspora Jewry, such feelings may lead to the stance that relations with Israel are pointless, and that Jewish communities should be concerned solely with themselves.³⁷

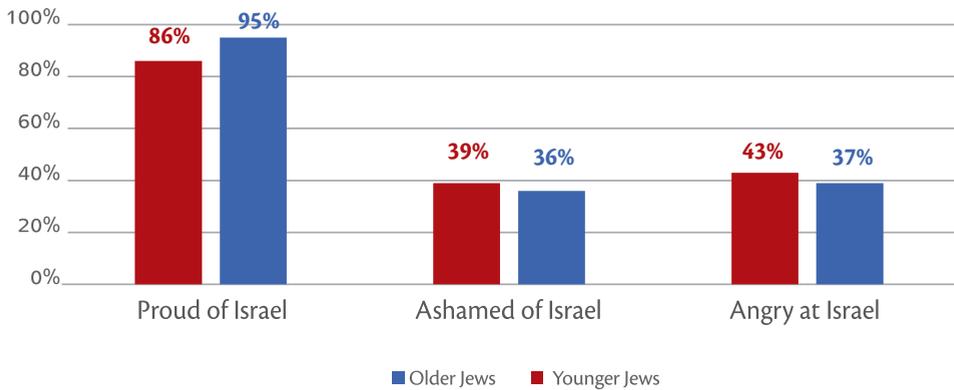
Anger and taking offense surfaced at many of the Dialogue sessions, in the wake of what Diaspora Jews perceived as the Israeli government's disregard of them and their sentiments. Essentially, feelings of pride in Israel – Diaspora Jewish awareness of Israel's achievements – mingle with feelings of shame (for those who think that Israel is behaving improperly in various areas), and with feelings of anger (for those who hold that Israel is not treating them or their communities with due respect) “Of course I'm angry,” said an Australian participant, “Isn't that natural?” A Washington participant said: “Young people's anger worries me, since it can lead to outcomes that aren't good even if it's currently under control.” Participants in a number of communities made frequent use of phraseology such as: “lack of consideration”; “powerlessness”;

36 See: American Jewish Support for Israel Is Eroding, and It's Got Nothing to Do With the Palestinians, Eric Yoffie, *Haaretz*, Dec. 2016, and: Shmuel Rosner, “Agreeing to Disagree: Jewish Peoplehood: between Attachment and Criticism,” JPPI, 2012, and: Political Views and the Strength of the Israel-Diaspora Relationship, in: *Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict: Perspectives from World Jewry*, Shmuel Rosner, Michael Herzog, 2015.

37 See, for example: Sharansky warns some Diaspora Jews are rethinking Israel ties over Western Wall crisis, *Times of Israel*, June 2017.

“great disappointment”; “I’m sick of hearing excuses”; “I’ve lost confidence [faith]” and the like. As the participant survey data also show, a very high percentage of Diaspora Jews are often angry at Israel (and a very high percentage are frequently proud of Israel).

What Diaspora Jews “frequently” feel



Israeli Jews sometimes argue that world Jewry is dying out and therefore merits no regard or consideration by Israel. Israeli Dialogue participants did not often express anger at Diaspora Jewry, but they did tend to voice disappointment or derision. Such sentiments were also discernible in various sectors of Israeli-Jewish society during the Kotel crisis, especially in the right-wing religious sector, as noted by Sara Haetzni-Cohen:³⁸ “The Reform movement [...] is a movement that we simply gave up on in advance. We, and this applies not only to the religious public, are revolted by the sight of a woman in a kippah and immediately turn our heads away. That is a mistake for which we will end up being very sorry. We don’t have to agree in order to engage in dialogue, and we don’t give up on the great Jewish Diaspora just because it doesn’t suit us politically or look good to us.” The Dialogue survey shows that many Jews agree that “Israeli politics” and “Diaspora Jewish politics” are indeed factors that do little to foster connection between Jews. As we saw earlier, only a small number of the Diaspora Jewish participants referred to Israeli politics as a “connecting” (8%) or “strongly connecting” (13%) factor. In contrast, a considerable number stated that Israeli politics instills a sense of “distancing” (16%) or “substantial distancing” (28%) from Israel.

38 “Why the Jewish Right Has Given Up on U.S. Jewry,” Sara Haetzni-Cohen, *Makor Rishon*, December 2017.

And the same picture emerges with regard to the other side of Israel-Diaspora relations. The Israelis, most of them young adults, who participated in the Dialogue, are not encouraged by Diaspora Jewish political views. A very large proportion of them chose the “does not connect” option with respect to “Diaspora Jewish politics” (51%). A substantial number said that Diaspora politics are a distancing (25%) or even a very distancing (5%) factor. They reject all attempts by Diaspora Jews to influence Israeli policy on issues of state security. “The bottom line is that they aren’t [Israeli] citizens, they don’t know what’s going on here,” said a student at a Conservative-affiliated pre-army *mechina* at Kibbutz Hanaton. Some of his peers were even more blunt. Here are a few selected quotes: “You can’t let them decide what will happen here;” “Anyone who wants to have a say, should come here;” “They don’t send kids to the army;” “I don’t care what they think about the Territories, it’s none of their business;” “Those who fight are the ones who deserve to have an influence. Despite all the money and the long-distance support, you’re less important;” “I care about them, but they aren’t going to decide on policy for me, they choose not to live here;” “People who don’t live in Israel have no real right to interfere, they don’t know how it feels. They aren’t really involved [one of us].”

Similar sentiments can also be found in certain statements by Israeli public figures. In recent years Israeli government ministers have often condemned progressive Judaism (especially the Reform). Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotoveli triggered an uproar when she said that American Jews have trouble understanding Israeli positions because “they never send their children to fight for their country, most of the Jews don’t have children serving as soldiers, going to the marines, going to Afghanistan, or to Iraq.” Dr. Gabriella Berzin wrote in *Israel Hayom* about “sentiments, which are blossoming among U.S. Jews and to a lesser degree in the Canadian, Australian and British Jewish communities, [that] are welcomed by the extreme left in Israel, which enlists any claim, even the most ridiculous, against the state, for categorical rhetoric against the liberal values of Israeli society and its government.”³⁹

Chemi Shalev, addressing in *Haaretz* what he views as the Israeli right wing’s disregard for Diaspora Jews whose opinions differ from theirs, wrote that right-wing leaders “adhere to Ben-Gurion’s Zionist credo that the only Jewish life worth

39 “U.S. Jewry Distances Itself from Israel,” Dr. Gabriella Berzin, 2016.

<http://www.israelhayom.co.il/opinion/381471>

[English version -- <http://www.israelhayom.com/opinions/us-jewry-distances-itself-from-israel/>]

living is in Israel [...] but they have added numerous other prisms [...] through which to look down on the bulk of American Jews. Hotovely and her kind are ultra-nationalist conservatives who scoff at liberal, pluralist and cosmopolitan American Jews and their values; they are mostly Orthodox, who thus mock the modernized Reform and Conservative movements and sympathize with the Haredi claim that they're not really Jewish. In many ways, they represent the antithesis of the most widely held American-Jewish position[s] and beliefs [...] They [...] couldn't care less about the personal freedoms and democratic safeguards that are cherished by American Jews. In this regard, Hotovely was simply representing the true attitude of many right-wing Israelis, including a majority of Netanyahu's governing coalition."⁴⁰

It is, however, worth noting that for several decades now the Israeli leadership has seen itself as less politically dependent on Diaspora Jewry's influence – and thus less in need of a close relationship with Diaspora Jewry at the institutional level. As Gabi Sheffer and Hadas Roth-Toledano noted in their study, Israeli leaders from different political parties shared “the assessment that Israel would be able to advance its interests without mediation and largely without multidimensional or large-scale assistance from professional Diaspora leaders. As noted, prime ministers [...] Yitzhak Rabin, Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir – as well as [...] Benjamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon – were all deeply persuaded that they had direct access to the American government and to other governments, and that they did not need Jewish mediators from the Diaspora.”⁴¹ Incidentally, a small majority of the Israelis who completed the Dialogue survey rejected the argument that “Israel will not survive without Diaspora Jewry.” Nevertheless, a very high percentage of them agreed with it (see graph below). Similar findings were obtained in a 2017 UJA-Federation of New York survey: over 80% of Israeli Jews feel that American Jewish support is “vital to Israeli security.”⁴²

A larger majority of Israeli Jews assume, at the same time, that Diaspora Jews “will also survive without Israel.” That is: mutual dependence for existential

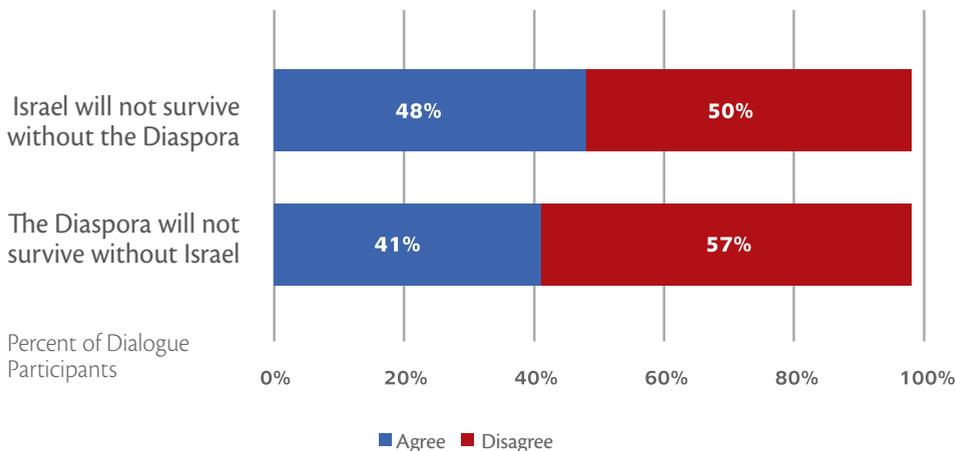
40 “Netanyahu Owns Hotovely's Arrogant, Hypocritical Anti-Semitic Attack on U.S. Jews,” Chemi Shalev, 2017 <https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/world/america/.premium-1.4625846>
[English version of the article: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-netanyahu-owns-hotovelys-hypocritical-anti-semitic-attack-on-u-s-jews-1.5626735>]

41 Professor Gabriel Sheffer, Hadas Roth-Toledano, 2006. Who Leads? Israel-Diaspora Relations. <http://lib.cet.ac.il/pages/item.asp?item=19526>

42 The UJA-Federation Study of Jewish Connectivity in Israel

purposes is not obligatory. Each of the communities can survive even without its counterpart.

Young Israelis disagree on the ability of Israel and the Diaspora to survive alone



Diaspora Jews as a group do not share this view. Whether due to outdated notions about the Israel-Diaspora relationship, its history, and the Jewish communities' major role in the founding and strengthening of the state, or because of a more sophisticated assessment of the current power balance ("We also have considerable political power, [because we live in a country] which also happens to be in Israel's most important ally," said a New York participant), Diaspora Jews disagree with their Israeli counterparts. A large majority of them are convinced that without their support, Israel would not survive. As the Dialogue survey shows, 45% of Diaspora Jews believe that Diaspora Jewry would not survive without Israel, but a much higher percentage, 71%, feel that Israel would not survive without Diaspora Jewry. The answer to the question of whether their assessment is correct – and one must hope that it will never be put to the test – is less important than the fact that this is how they see things, and then the way in which the assessment affects their connection to Israel. As long as Diaspora Jews believe that their contribution to Israel's survival is critical, they will be more strongly motivated to maintain the relationship despite its pitfalls (out of a sense of weighty responsibility for the Jewish state's destiny). If, however, they accept the view shared by half of Jewish Israelis, namely that Israel can manage without them, they may find it easier to disconnect.

This question also reflects an opinion gap between older Diaspora Jews and the younger Dialogue participants. Of the older group, 51% think that the Diaspora would not manage without Israel, versus 35% of younger participants with that view. The question of course remains: Does the younger Diaspora population's more confident assessment stem from inexperience or lack of familiarity with the situation as it is, making it an *overconfident* assessment, or are the younger people, via this position, expressing a partial withdrawal from national-cultural dependence on Israel, and setting out on a path that allows Diaspora Jews greater autonomy alongside Israel (even if they agree about Israel's dominance)?

All of the facts presented here point to a strange situation, at least to the degree that the relationship is also regarded as one of [at least in terms of a perceived] unavoidable power struggle over who will be plotting a future course for the Jewish people: On one hand, Israel needs to be strong enough to manage on its own; on the other hand, it would do well to keep persuading Diaspora Jewry that its support is important (since if the Diaspora comes to believe otherwise, it might distance itself from Israel even further). Of course, such a policy comes at a price: the more successful Israel is in convincing Diaspora Jewry that it cannot survive without Diaspora support, the greater the chance that Diaspora Jews will make demands on Israel, on the assumption that such decisive power justifies and facilitates intervention in Israeli affairs. Should Israel not accede to these demands (at least in part), it puts the first goal at risk (that of persuading Diaspora Jewry of the importance of its support). Should Israel accede to the demands (if only in part), it may offend a large proportion of Israelis (who do not view Israel's need of the Diaspora as self-evident).

To sum up: many indicators point to stability or even improvement in the state of Israel-Diaspora relations. Other measures, including ones anchored in a multi-layered political discourse, suggest that the relationship is eroding or changing in character. Erosion of a cultural-political nature is more strongly in evidence among young liberal Diaspora Jews, while this type of erosion is more readily discerned among Jewish Israelis aligned with the political and religious right.

THE ISRAEL-DIASPORA DIALOGUE

The dialogue between Israel and Diaspora Jewry takes place on at least three different levels: constant and ongoing dialogue ever since the early days of Zionism between the leadership in Eretz Israel – later the Government of Israel – and major organizations of Diaspora Jewry; unofficial dialogue at the organizational and institutional level, between various bodies of Diaspora Jewry and organizations in Israel; and also interpersonal dialogue among Jews – Jews from the Diaspora visiting Israel, Israelis living in the Diaspora, family relations, friendships, professional contacts, and so on.

THREE TIERS OF DISCOURSE

Different tiers naturally produce different expectations, and different rules of engagement.

Relations between the Government of Israel and Diaspora Jewry's organizational leadership are mainly political; the unofficial organizational relationship is mainly ideological and philanthropic; non-organizational relations are cultural and personal, more or less close, more or less open, sometimes subject to environmental influences, but not necessarily dictated by events in the political and social arena.

Greater public attention is given to organized Jewish discourse, rather than to the cultural and personal discourse, although it is possible to argue that such relations between Jews are no less important, and sometimes even more important, than organizational ones, and that such discussions contribute to the strength of the long-term relationship between different Jewish communities no less, and perhaps even more, than organizational relations. At some of the Dialogue meetings it was argued that “it is not certain that relationships should take place by means of the government,” and that it makes sense to divert relations toward entities that are “unofficial, such as organizations and communities, and then there are no clashes that are due to politics,” as proposed by a young Israeli from the Kol Ami Leadership Academy in Gush Etzion. At this stage, we

will not deal at length with personal relationships between Jews in Israel and the Diaspora, but we do note that strengthening and expanding the channels enabling such relationships could also contribute a great deal to strengthening the other tiers. The next chapter relates to this point in greater depth.

The organizational discourse between Israel and the Diaspora is divided, as noted, into two main levels: between official Israel and the organized leadership of Diaspora Jewry, and between various kinds of Israeli organizations and various kinds of Jewish organizations in the Diaspora.

It is not necessary to carry out an in-depth study to characterize Israel-Diaspora discourse as not a discussion between two entities of similar nature.

At the level of official discourse: on the Israeli side there is a representative body that is authorized to decide on binding policy for all Israelis – the Government of Israel. This is a strong, authoritative body whose legitimacy is granted by all the Jews subject to its rule. On the part of Diaspora Jewry, there is no single body, but rather a collection of voluntary organizations of different kinds, representing different interest groups and populations, and communities in different countries. These organizations do not always enjoy a high degree of legitimacy (and according to various yardsticks, their legitimacy is in the process of being eroded), nor do they have the authority to present, and certainly not to enforce, a uniform policy on Diaspora Jewry. “Jewish organizations suffer from a much bigger problem than leadership legacy,” writes Yehuda Kurtzer. “After serving the Jewish people nobly during the 20th century, they are coming under pressure from the general Jewish public’s skepticism with regard to their relevance, mainly in the face of a flourishing, creative sector that is more important in light of the changing trends of Jewish affiliation, which place Jewish identity outside the normative frameworks [of the organizations].”⁴³ In JPPI’s policy paper on Jewish leadership in North America, it states that “there is broad and ongoing concern with regard to the leadership of North American Jewry.”⁴⁴

This concern is also expressed in some of the Dialogue meetings. “Who is the Israeli government supposed to consult with?,” asked a participant in New York. “It is not certain that we have institutions that represent us,” said another.

43 Leadership and Change in the Land of the Lost, June 13, 2013, by Yehuda Kurtzer

44 Jewish Leadership in North America – Changes in Personnel and Structure, JPPI

“I don’t believe that it is possible to find someone who represents all the Jews in America, nor is it realistic to invent such a body,” said a participant in Minnesota. “Jewish organizations are something that most of my friends shy away from – so do they represent us,?” asked a young participant in Boston. “Jews in the Diaspora don’t have to listen to anyone other than their government, and certainly won’t listen to the Jewish organizations if they tell them what to think about Israel,” remarked a young Canadian.

The question of Jewish leadership in the Diaspora is not the only question being raised. The Government of Israel, too, does not necessarily enjoy trust – even at the structural level – as a body that can represent the Jews of Israel in dialogue with world Jewry. The government represents a civil state, in which there are also non-Jews. This is what prompted a young Australian to say that “Judaism and Israel are two separate things. Israel is Israel. A large Jewish organization should not talk with the political representatives of Israel.” This is what caused a young Israeli to say: “the Israeli government is responsible for Israel. Period. Jews have only one way to get support from the Government of Israel – and that is to immigrate to Israel, as the law allows them to do.” Another young Israeli said: “I don’t understand what my government is looking for among world Jewry, other than support. Its only authority, and only obligation, is to look out for us [Israeli citizens].”

At the level of unofficial organizational discourse: on the part of Israel, there is a constant appeal to Diaspora organizations for economic, political, and sometimes also moral support for its actions (usually in Israel). This is an appeal of need, depending on the goodwill of Jews in the Diaspora, and requiring the Israeli organizations to take into account, and sometimes also to subordinate their agenda to the priorities of those Diaspora Jews with whom they are in contact.

On the part of Diaspora Jewry, there is an appeal to organizations in Israel to express support, find a channel for capitalizing influence, and maintain a space for direct conversation with Israeli society. This is both an appeal of desire and need for contact, but alongside it, also an expectation of influence, and sometimes a sense of ownership with regard to the organizations and the objectives Diaspora Jewry is prepared to support. As expressed by an American participant: “If we send money, it is logical that we should also

have influence. We invest in Israel, and we want to see a return on our investment.”

In both cases, this is a dialogue that aspires to clear and immediate benefits, and therefore mainly brings together Jews who have few disagreements between them. Organizations of Liberal Jewry, such as the New Israel Fund, find Israeli interlocutors with whom to collaborate. But this act on their part, which certainly brings together donors and recipients, also leads to tension between Diaspora Jewry and those Israelis who do not agree with the ideological objectives of the fund. Certainly, a similar situation also exists with regard to conservative organizations or philanthropists, such as Sheldon Adelson, and the recipients of their support in Israel. “The New Israel Fund drives the Jews of the United States away from Israel,” charges Evelyn Gordon.⁴⁵ “In the previous generation, an organization in which the managers and donation recipients expressed anti-Israeli sentiments or supported a boycott against Israel was as toxic among American Jews as it was among Israelis. The fact that the New Israel Fund today enjoys a hearing and broad support among American Jewry tells Israelis everything they need to know in order to understand just how far many American Jews have turned against Israel.”

Meretz MK Tamar Zandberg presented a different, opposing perspective in her speech at the 2017 AIPAC Policy Conference. She, of course, is interested in increasing educated involvement by Diaspora Jewry organizations in what is taking place in Israeli society. “Pro-Israel is not pro-occupation. Pro-Israel is supporting a secure future, a future of prosperity and peace. This is also the position of the majority of Jews in the United States, who are not prepared to leave their liberal, democratic values out of the discussion on Israel, but on the contrary – understand that implementing these values is the key to a sustainable future for Israel. It is therefore an illusion to think that ‘non-interference’ is an option. Non-interference is interference in favor of continuation of the occupation. Moreover, here in the U.S. there is massive intervention in favor of the occupation and the settlers. This week a U.S. ambassador to Israel was confirmed [referring to David Friedman] who headed a fundraising campaign for settlement in the West Bank. You should know

⁴⁵ This is how the New Israel Fund drives the Jews of the United States away from Israel, Evelyn Gordon, 2017 <https://goo.gl/2zPWcV>

that this is a narrow political interest that does not represent the majority of Israelis. It is damaging to the majority of Israelis.”⁴⁶

These two examples show how a meeting at the organization level creates closeness (among those who are in agreement), alongside conflict (with those who do not agree). Israelis like Zandberg may perhaps feel closer to liberal Diaspora Jews but will push away conservative Diaspora Jews. Conservative Israelis (see, for example, the article by Galit Distel Etebaryan: “U.S. Jewry in the guise of the underdog”⁴⁷) will have the opposite feeling: they will keep away from Diaspora Jews aspiring to influence Israelis to follow the path they believe is to be correct. Among other things, this is the reason why the JPPI’s recommendations this year include the particular need to hold meetings between a group of the Israeli majority – conservative Jews – and a group of the Diaspora majority – liberal Jews. In current conditions, at least with regard to the organizational discourse, most of the exchanges are unbalanced meetings between a majority and a minority – liberals in the Diaspora (majority) with liberals in Israel (minority), conservatives in the Diaspora (minority) with conservatives in Israel (majority).

THE RULES OF DISCOURSE

What should and what should not be discussed between Israel and the Diaspora? This question, too, should be asked in a number of ways.

What is the significance of the discourse: is it intended to exchange information or to exercise reciprocal influence? And, of course, in any situation of reciprocal input of information there is the potential to change attitudes and exert a reciprocal influence – but nonetheless there is a difference between discourse intended from the outset to influence, on the assumption of a right or obligation to influence, and discourse intended to inform, in the knowledge that informing can sometimes lead to influence. And it should be noted: at many Dialogue

46 Speech by Tamar Zandberg at the 2017 AIPAC Policy Conference <https://tamarzandberg.co.il/archives/4307>

47 The Israeli Jew does not exclude the American Jew – neither from the Kotel, nor from his heart. He just wants the conditions of the place to be respected, and not to be forced to accept rules that clash head-on with his religious belief. Perhaps this is a conservative belief, but hey, thanks to this crazy conservatism we still exist as a people. <http://www.israelhayom.co.il/opinion/517919>

sessions in the Diaspora a note of skepticism was found with regard to the ability to influence Israel – and therefore also the question of whether, and to what degree, there is any point in holding a dialogue. “So we talked, what came of it?” asked a participant in Minnesota. “We see a lot of talking, and nothing good comes out of it,” said another in New York. A participant in Israel said that there is a fundamental difficulty in holding a fruitful dialogue because “let’s admit the truth, they don’t really know what is happening over here, and we don’t really know what is happening over there.”

What are the topics of the discourse: there are many and varied topics of conversation occurring between Israel and Diaspora Jewry. There is a conversation relating to clearly political matters – Israel’s wish for political support, or the desire of a Diaspora community for political support. There is a conversation with regard to practical, urgent questions – dealing with a community in distress, – or less urgent, such as developing programs that serve the broader Jewish people. There are conversations with regard to Jewish content and culture in Israel and in the Diaspora, both in the context of identity and in the context of policy. Issues of religion and state, Jewishness and Jewish nationhood, and all their policy implications, and the nature of Israel-Diaspora relations (such as: Who is a Jew?; What is conversion? Who has the right to pray according to which custom at the Western Wall?; Israel’s attitude toward Progressive Judaism; mixed marriages in the Diaspora and so forth). In some Dialogue meetings, the argument was raised that the discourse between Israel and the Diaspora too often focuses on divisive issues, and not on what could be unifying. “If we talk all the time about the Western Wall and the settlements, this obviously leads mainly to anger,” said a participant in Minnesota. And on the other hand, in the same conversation and also in others, it was argued that these are precisely the issues that need to be discussed. “I don’t see the point in talking about shared culture while Israel is expanding the settlements.”

Parties of the discourse: obviously there is one set of rules for interpersonal discourse between friends from Israel and the Diaspora, who can talk to whomever they choose, and another set for inter-organizational discourse where the main interest is to reach understandings and agreements on actions in support of a joint objective (for example, strengthening the Yeshiva world, or supporting education in the periphery, or helping Bedouins in the south); and another for discourse between the Government of Israel – the official ship of state – and heads of Diaspora organizations.

IS THERE ENOUGH DIALOGUE?

The question of whether current dialogue between Israel and Diaspora Jewry is sufficient has follow-on questions: Sufficient for whom? Sufficient in whose view? Sufficient in what respect?

Dialogue participants did not feel there is a shortage of communication channels between the Israeli government and Diaspora organizations. At the same time, some felt that organizations are the wrong conduit for communication – because the number of Jews who belong to them, or feel represented by them, is small. Some felt that the organizations included in the Dialogue process did not constitute a broad enough umbrella of representation – this claim was raised mainly with regard to the exclusion of left-wing Jewish organizations, such as J-Street and Jewish Voice for Peace, from the conversation with Israel (and as expected, there was an argument over this, with different groups of participants choosing to define the arena of legitimate discourse in their own way). Very many of them felt that the ongoing interactive discourse did not provide the desired results – in other words, in most cases it did not motivate the Israeli government to change its policy in matters in which Diaspora Jewry has an interest (from policy in the West Bank, through the expulsion of illegal foreign workers, to issues of marriage and divorce).

Some of the discussions included arguments over the question of whether there was any point to formalizing Israel-Diaspora communication channels, for example the proposal of space in the Knesset for representatives of Diaspora Jewry or creating other official mechanisms of representation. However, at most of the meetings it quickly emerged that the Jews, in Israel and in the Diaspora, cannot see any reasonable practical way for creating such a channel. “How many representatives will they have in the Knesset – two, three? And what would happen when Israel embarks on an operation in Gaza, will they also vote in favor or against? Can you imagine a situation in which the Diaspora Jews, with their two votes, bring down the government?,” asked an Israeli participant. An American participant said: “It raises again the question of how representatives are chosen, who chooses them, to what extent they represent all of us – it won’t work.” Another said: “I am not at all sure that, as an American citizen, I want a representative in

the parliament of a foreign country. American Jews have always taken care over this separation, and we have to continue to take care over it, even if it means that we have less influence in Israel.”

RECIPROCAL ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND THE DIASPORA

Israeli Dialogue participants saw “assimilation” as the main reason for a negative assessment of trends and developments of Jewish communities in the Diaspora (“anti-Semitism” was next in line). At the same time, most Israeli participants gave the development of communities in the Diaspora a generally positive assessment. Similarly, a significant majority among Dialogue participants outside Israel also assessed the trend of Israel’s development as being positive. Among the reasons given for a possible negative assessment, the first two, by a wide margin, were “relations between Israel and the Arabs,” and “the religious space in Israel” (Israelis marked “Israel’s political culture” as the most problematic factor, with 37%; a similar number (about one fifth of them) marked “relations with the Palestinians,” and “relations between religion and state in Israel”).

It must be taken into account that the reciprocal assessment of the state of the Jewish communities is not always knowledge-based. This year’s survey included a brief test of participant knowledge, in order to check how familiar they were with what is taking place on the other side of the Israel-Diaspora equation. Diaspora Jews were asked, among other things: Who is Shlomo Artzi? (60% of them were able to answer correctly); and What is the distance between the Green Line and the seashore at Israel’s narrow waist? (66% knew the answer). Jews in Israel were asked, among other things: What is the traditional dish eaten by American Jews on Christmas Eve? (38% knew the answer); and Who was Abraham Joshua Heschel? (38% answered correctly).

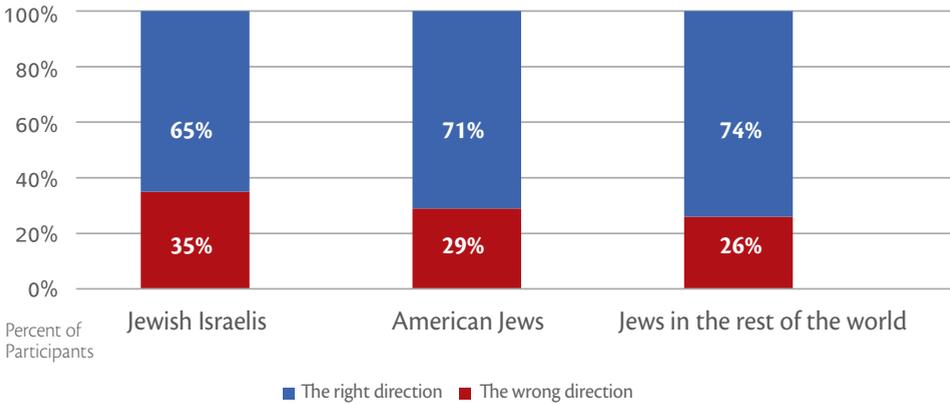
In all the communities, there were some not very interested in learning about the other community. “I admit that it is not at the top of my priorities,” said a student participant from Austin, Texas, some of whose fellow Dialogue participants did in fact display great familiarity with various matters relating to Israel. At meetings in Israel, it was rarer to find such familiarity. “I never

felt the need to learn about communities abroad, I don't know what I need to know about them other than the fact that they exist. I don't know what I will gain from it," said an Israeli participant. Naturally enough, the opinion of those who do not know a great deal carries less weight when talking about a realistic assessment of the state of the Jews. At the same time, the working assumptions and perceptions of Jews with regard to their approach to one another certainly has an impact on the degree of their willingness to learn more, to invest, and to cultivate relations.

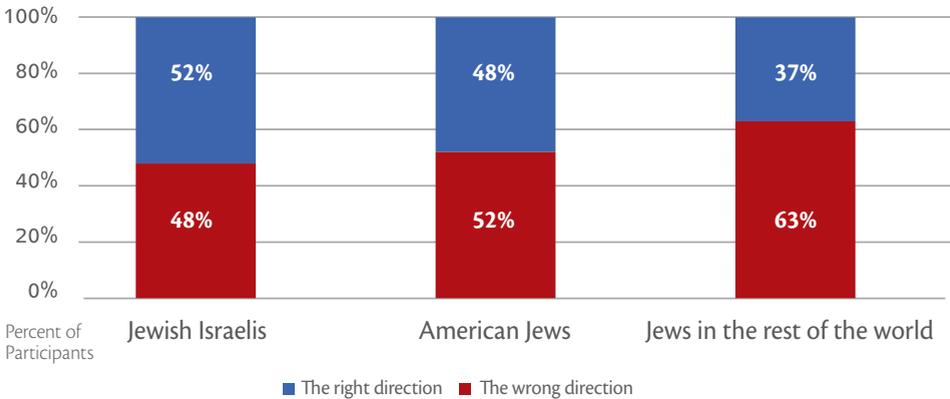
Already last year, in the Dialogue on Jewish People and Jerusalem, we added a standard question to the participant survey that teaches us something about the way in which Jews – at least those represented in the Dialogue – see the situation of Israel and of world Jewry generally. The answers we obtained, both last year and this year, clearly show that despite all the criticism directed at Israel and its policy (as we will see later in the report), Jews see Israel as being in a better state than the rest of world Jewry. Last year, more than 80% of Dialogue participants noted that Israel seems to them “strong and flourishing,” by comparison with just over a half who said the same thing about “the Jewish world outside Israel.” At the same time, only a small group of Dialogue participants saw Israel as “declining and weakening,” while a much more significant group saw the Jewish world “outside Israel” as “declining and weakening.”

This year there were notable differences in the assessment of the state of the Diaspora according to geographic location. Surprisingly, it was the Israelis who had a more positive assessment of the Diaspora than the others. Jews living in what we have called “the rest of the world” – that is, not in one of the two main groups living in Israel or the United States – had the most negative assessment of the direction in which the Diaspora is developing (about a third named anti-Semitism as the main reason for their negative attitude – 31%).

Is Israel developing in the right direction?



Is Diaspora Jewry developing in the right direction?



Already last year we noticed significant gaps in this question according to participant age. Last year, the Dialogue’s youngest age cohort had the darkest view of Israel’s situation. They were the most likely (31% last year) to say that Israel is “declining and weakening,” and the least likely (69% last year) to say that Israel is “strong and flourishing.” No parallel gap in terms of age was found in the assessment of the state of Diaspora Jewry.

This year’s Dialogue focused on groups of young people, and it was therefore possible to examine questions of Israel-Diaspora relations and mutual perceptions by age in a more systematic way. And the gaps were clear. The assessment of Israel’s direction of development was similar among young and old in this year’s Dialogue, and it was mainly positive. At the same time,

there were gaps in the assessment of the main challenges facing Israel. While relations between Israel and the Arabs was the main challenge mentioned by young people (over 50% of young people aged under 30), among the older participants there was a stronger tendency to mention “Israel’s political culture” (21%), and the religious arena (33%) as problematic.

The gap between older participants and their younger counterparts (under 30) was much more significant in their assessment of the state of the Diaspora. While fewer than half of the older participants felt that the Jewish communities in the Diaspora were developing in the right direction (45%), a relative optimism could be detected among the young, and 62% felt that the Diaspora is developing in the right direction. Furthermore, older and younger participants were also divided with regard to the challenges facing Diaspora Jewry. The older age cohort placed “assimilation” as the number one factor (42%). This, together with “little commitment to Judaism” (another 29%) overshadowed all other possible factors. But this is not what the younger age cohort thought. Among them, only around a fifth cited assimilation as the main reason for a negative assessment of the state of the Diaspora (22%). The factor of greatest concern to the largest group of the younger age cohort (29%) was “anti-Semitism” – mentioned by a much smaller percentage of the older participant (14%) as the main cause of concern with regard to the future of the Diaspora.

When analyzing survey answers according to whether respondents were Israeli or Diaspora Jews (in contradistinction to age cohort), a somewhat different picture is obtained, and all in all, a realistic understanding of the main challenges facing the Jewish people in practice. Despite the context of discussions on Israel and the Diaspora, which often focus on issues of religion and state or society and morality, participants did not lose sight of the other weighty challenges of contemporary reality. Among Diaspora participants, a significant majority identified the issue of Jewish-Arab relations as the main challenge on Israel’s agenda. With regard to Diaspora Jewry, there is a clear gap between Israeli participants and those from other countries. Although the two groups tended to state that “assimilation” is the Diaspora’s main challenge, the numbers were strikingly different. In the Diaspora, 35% of respondents answered that assimilation most challenged the Diaspora, while in Israel, 45% so answered – by a large margin relative to the other possible choices.

In the Dialogue meetings themselves, broader expression was given to the subject of religion and state. “As long as Israel doesn’t regulate the matter of state and religion, it will not be a well-administered country,” said a young participant from Boston. “Israel has a long way to go before it is a really good place, first of all the conflict with the Palestinians, but also questions of religious pluralism. I am impressed by Israel’s achievements, but I don’t forget that it has a lot of problems,” said a British participant. “It is hard to decide which direction Israel is going. In economic and technological terms, it is making good progress, but in other respects it is going in a bad direction,” said an Australian participant. “Improving the situation with regard to religion and state is a major obligation of Israel to the Jewish people,” said a participant in Washington. Israeli participants sometimes expressed their sense that Diaspora Jewry is fading. “I don’t know how much I need to take them into account, because it is not certain that they will still be around for long,” one of them said. “The truth needs to be said,” contended another, “soon there will be no Jews there, at least not Jews in the way we understand what a Jew is.” Historical analogies were also repeated among young participants: “There have been Jewish communities in many places, and we know how that ended,” said one participant. “I hear talk of the future of the Jews in the Diaspora, and I don’t believe it. That’s exactly how they talked in the 19th century, until the Holocaust came along,” said another.

ISRAEL’S RESPONSIBILITIES WITH REGARD TO THE DIASPORA

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CONSIDERATION

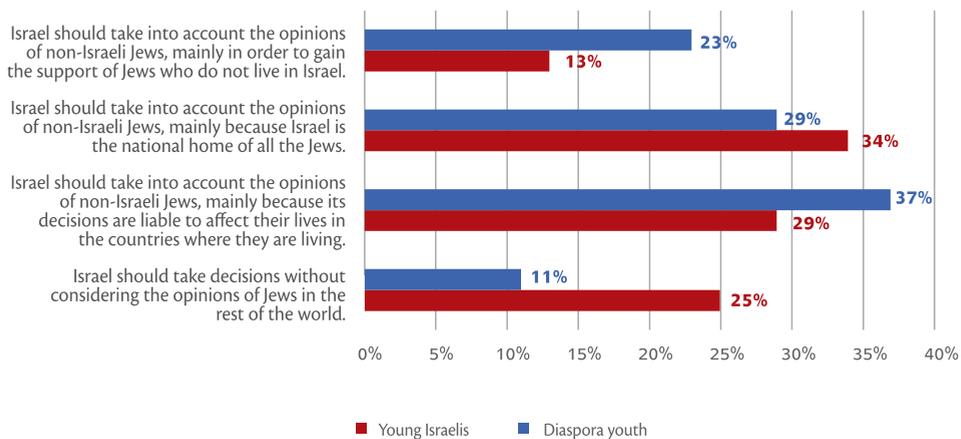
This is already the fifth Dialogue in which participants have been asked about their attitude about considering the position of Diaspora Jewry when taking decisions in Israel, and in all the previous rounds it has been apparent that Diaspora Jews are of the unambiguous opinion that they have the right to such consideration. In previous years the question has always pertained to a particular matter (who is considered a Jew in Israel; when Israel goes to war; how the future of Jerusalem is being shaped), and as shown in the table below, the more participants associated the question with “Jewish” matter (like who is a Jew, or the cultural future of Jerusalem), the more they tended to demand participation in the decisions – and the more they associated the question “political” or “security” matters (going to war, the political future of Jerusalem), the weaker their demand to be considered in decision making. This year, when the Dialogue dealt with the entirety of the Israel-Diaspora relationship, we asked the same question but at a very general level. The question related to “consideration of the opinions” of Diaspora Jews in “taking decisions” by Israel.

	During armed struggle	When deciding who is a Jew in Israel	When deciding on the political future of Jerusalem	When deciding on the cultural future of Jerusalem	When taking decisions in Israel
Israel should take decisions without considering the opinions of Jews in the rest of the world.	31%	6%	18%	14%	9%

Israel should take into account the opinions of non-Israeli Jews, mainly because its decisions are liable to affect their lives in the countries where they are living.	38%	18%	21%	19%	35%
Israel should take into account the opinions of non-Israeli Jews, mainly because Israel is the national home of all the Jews.	11%	54%	44%	51%	34%
Israel should take into account the opinions of non-Israeli Jews, mainly in order to gain the support of Jews who do not live in Israel.	21%	22%	17%	17%	22%

In addition, many more Israelis took part in the Dialogue this year than in the past, and their answers to the question of the right of Diaspora Jews to consideration by Israel did not always line up with the answers tendered by Diaspora Jews. As might have been expected – when the answers of Diaspora Jews conflict with those of Israeli Jews, a somewhat less harmonious picture emerges. However, even with these differences it appears that most Israeli Dialogue participants (young Israelis with some awareness of Israel-Diaspora relations, see Appendix for details) are prepared to take Diaspora Jewry into consideration in Israeli decision making. Still, the rate of Israelis supporting such consideration is lower (while the rate of Israelis who feel that the position of Diaspora Jewry should not be taken into account is very high – 25%), and also the explanations they offered for their answers were very different. In fact, the Israelis did not tend to give purely reasons rooted in a strategy of strengthening support for Israel among Diaspora Jewry and appeared to prefer the argument based on principle – Israel is the national home of the Jewish people.

The perspective of young Diaspora Jews on how Israel considers the Diaspora⁴⁸



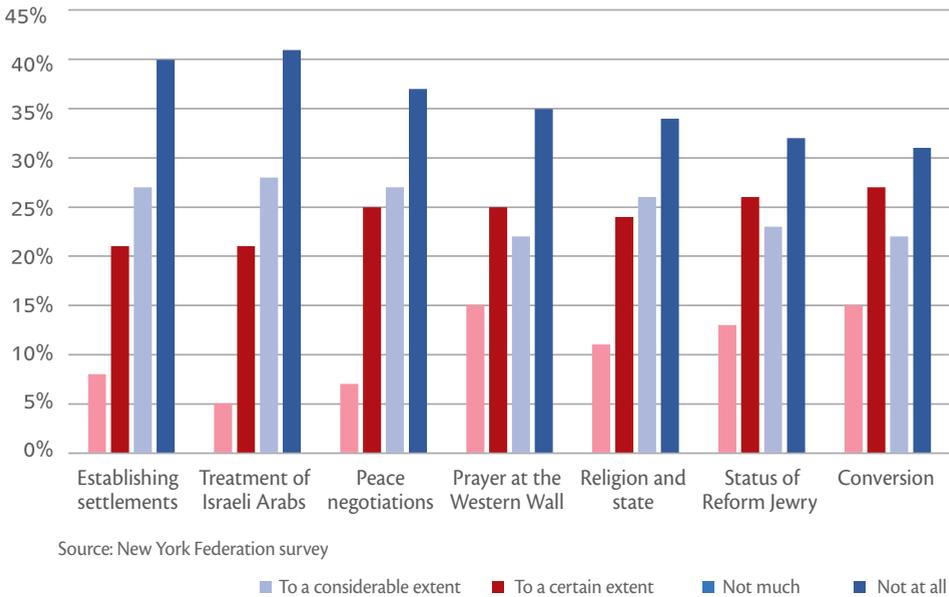
In a UJA- Federation of New York survey of Israelis from last year, the picture was even less inviting of Diaspora intervention. Unlike the Dialogue participants, a distinct group of Jews who have an interest in Israel-Diaspora relations, and therefore tended to express greater acceptance of Israeli consideration of Diaspora positions, this survey examined the degree to which Israelis agreed with such consideration among a representative sample of the Jewish population in Israel. Not surprisingly, the average Israeli, according to the UJA-Federation of New York study, is less interested in taking Diaspora Jews into account than were the Israeli Dialogue participants.

But even in the representative sample it can be seen that the resistance of Israelis to diaspora involvement is much stronger when political issues are at stake (settlements, the peace process) whereas when it comes to issues from the the “Jewish” arena - such as conversion, the status of the different streams, and so forth – Israelis are weaker in their objection to diaspora involvement. Still, in general, Israeli Jews do not feel that the Israeli government should take the position of American Jews into account on almost any subject. Even subjects on which the Israeli Dialogue participants were slightly more prepared to accept the involvement of “American Jewish leaders” – conversion is the most notable example of these – ,a majority of Israelis still object to the Government of Israel taking these Jews into account (53%).

48 The graph above shows the breakdown of young people in Israel versus young people in the Diaspora – but it is worth noting that in the Diaspora there is no real difference between older Jews and younger Jews on this question

These figures show, among other things, that even before Diaspora leaders are able to persuade Israelis to consider their positions on particular subjects, they have to persuade them of the very legitimacy of their claim to consideration. They also show that the argument for consideration will meet a lower persuasive threshold on Jewish issues than on what Israelis interpret as relating to security matters.

To what extent should Israel take into account the positions of American Jewish leaders?



The discussions clarified that alongside the Israelis’ objection to the Diaspora’s demand for consideration, Diaspora Jews do not feel they receive sufficient consideration from Israel – not even among those who advocate minimal consideration on limited matters. “There is no point in beginning to talk about dialogue on weighty matters, when even on relatively simple matters the Government of Israel does not show goodwill,” claimed a Chicago participant. “Israel and Diaspora Jews share a common responsibility. One side cannot do something that harms the other side. Unfortunately, Israeli politicians do not always act this way,” said a European participant. Shalom Lipner, who worked for many years in the very heart of the Israeli establishment, put it this way: “Israel’s approach to the Jews of the world is an instrumental one: it is

not attentive to their desires, and mainly seeks the benefit in the relationship. The message put across by the state is that it has no great interest in Jews who do not adopt its ideological doctrine, and this is true across the entire political spectrum. Its official representatives flaunt the title of 'leaders of the Jewish people,' but do not relate appropriately to the responsibility that comes with the job. The expectation is that the Jewish communities will subordinate their priorities to those of the State of Israel."⁴⁹

The feeling that this is Israel's policy *modus operandi* and leads to a not inconsiderable sense of anger among Diaspora Jews. Almost 40% of the Dialogue participants – Jews who have a considerable interest in having a relationship with Israel – said that "they often feel anger toward Israel." Just under a third of them also agreed with the statement: "Israel does not particularly care about the Jews of the Diaspora" (only 17% of Israeli Dialogue participants agreed with the statement). "I hope that you will pass on the feeling of rage among Jews to the important entities in Israel," said one participant in a meeting with the the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations in America. "I am not certain that they understand in Israel how difficult it is to deal with a community that is so angry about Israel," said an American rabbi. "Obviously it is sometimes exaggerated, but in recent years there is a great deal of disappointment, and a great deal of frustration with Israel," said a participant in New York. "Israel can't assume that it will do what it wants, and this will not provoke negative feelings on our part," said a participant who wanted to emphasize that she was a Conservative Jew.

However, a certain degree of anger, although less intense, can also be found on the Israeli side. About a third of Israeli Dialogue participants (32%) – almost all of them young (around conscription age) – agreed with the statement that "I am often angry with Diaspora Jewry." More than a quarter of them (27%) felt that young Jews around the world "don't really care about Israel." Many participants in the Israeli discussion groups expressed a lack of interest, and even anger, when the possibility of Israeli consideration of Diaspora positions was raised – mainly, but not exclusively, when in connection to security issues.

49 They don't work for us, Shalom Lifner, Haartz, 2017
<https://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/.premium-1.4632607>

“A person living in Metulla and paying taxes is more important [than a Jew in the Diaspora] in taking decisions with regard to prayer arrangements at the Western Wall], even if he never goes to the Western Wall,” said an Israeli participant. “There is a line between consideration and changing the norms of life,” said another in the same discussion. In a different discussion, also in connection with the argument over the Western Wall, a participant said, “there are not enough Conservatives in Israel, if they want to have an influence – let them make Aliyah. If you are not from here – don’t interfere.” Another participant said: “I don’t see that they give us so much support in the matters that are most important to us, for some reason there are more demonstrations against us than in support of us, so don’t let them come to us with demands.” A participant in Tiberias commented: “Many Jews know nothing about Israel. How can we tell the difference between those who know and contribute, and those who are just Jews? Jews who demonstrate against us are crossing a line.”

As mentioned, in many Diaspora discussion groups as well, calls were heard against the involvement of Diaspora Jews in certain types of Israeli policy, mainly when the discussion overflowed to issues of security and foreign policy. “I see no reason for Israel to manage its policy issues while taking into account what students in Texas say,” said a participant in Austin. “Even if I have a position, I don’t always feel comfortable saying what Israel should do in situations of coping with military issues,” said a participant at Brown University.

This is a distinction we also found in JPPI’s previous Dialogues, and which was discussed in the final report of the first of them, on Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. “The issues where various Jews in various communities around the world expect to have an influence on Israel, and the level of influence that they hope to have, differ from case to case – from those who believe that they have an obligation to raise their voice on every subject, including those clearly related to Israel’s security, to those who prefer to focus on questions relating to Jewish life in Israel alone. Attempts to outline a clear boundary for the legitimacy of intervention by world Jewry in Israeli affairs have turned out to be very complicated.”⁵⁰

50 Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State, Shmuel Rosner, JPPI, 2014
http://jppi.org.il/new/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/jewish_and_Democratic-Hebrew.pdf

In the second Dialogue, which focused on security questions, it emerged that “not a few Jews around the world feel that they are entitled to a voice, and to consideration of their positions on the part of the State of Israel, even on matters clearly dealing with security. Their reasons are varied – their support for Israel, the fact that it is a Jewish state, the impact of events on their lives... and more. Participants from Columbia focused on impact on their lives as a reason for consideration on the part of Israel. A participant at a seminar in Chicago said: “Israel should consider Diaspora Jewry, and the reverse, in order to benefit world Jewry in general. To see things as a nation. The fact that you don’t vote doesn’t mean you don’t have a voice.” In Brazil, the argument was made that Israel, as a Jewish state, represents all the Jews, and therefore should consult with world Jewry and see it as a source of support. In South Africa it was said that ‘Israel should be open to hearing the voice of Diaspora Jewry, not only because of the negative impact on their lives, but because they too want the good of Israel, and also because their fate is related to the State of Israel’. Participants at a seminar in St Louis said that ‘Israel should take into account the effect on Diaspora Jewry and on their attitudes. However, world Jewry can’t try to tie [Israel’s] hands.’”

In this year’s Dialogue, dozens of Israelis of around conscription age participated. It was possible to gauge their degree of resistance to the suggestion that Diaspora Jews be involved in security issues. “This is a red line,” said one Israeli. “When someone starts to make comments to me about things about which they have no concept, I stop listening.” And in another conversation, a young Israeli woman said: “The fact that we are all Jews is good when we’re talking about matters of Judaism, the Western Wall, women in synagogue, things like that. But that’s it.”

In some of the discussions, participants were asked to try more precisely delineate the border between issues on which it is more appropriate or less appropriate to voice an opinion. For example, they were asked to decide whether the question of the settlements in Judea and Samaria is “security-related,” “political,” “ethical,” or “Jewish”? In most cases the tendency was conservative – that is, minimal involvement of Diaspora Jewry in Israeli issues that are not clearly “Jewish” (like the question of the Western Wall, or the status of the rabbinate, marriage, conversion, and so on). At the same time, in a number of the discussions there were participants who argued

that the issue of control over the territories relates to the “survivability of the State of Israel as a Jewish state, and this is something in which I have a clear interest, and therefore I should make my voice heard,” as a participant in Minneapolis put it. A participant at Brown explained that “everything that relates to Jewish morality, like conquering another nation, also reflects on me as a Jew for whom Israel is part of my identity, and therefore I am not only permitted but I am obligated to express my position on it.”

A participant in Washington said that “the matter of the territories is a clear matter of survival of the Jewish state, and therefore obviously I have an interest in expressing my position. On the other hand, I understand that it will be harder for me to persuade Israelis that they need to listen to me on such an issue, and so my tendency is to be cautious, and not to try in places where it will produce strong resistance.”

In a large number of discussions, the argument was heard that Israel should make greater use “of what we have to offer it. It should take our Diasporaness seriously,” as one participant said. Another participant, in Chicago, said something similar: “There are things that we know how to do. We have acquired experience in them, in working with minorities, in creating a pluralist atmosphere, in human rights – Israel should learn these things from us and not invent everything itself.” As mentioned, only a minority of the participants had a very broad view of the right of Diaspora intervention, and this minority was even smaller among the Israeli participants.

LEADERSHIP AND INSPIRATION

Recognition of the increasing predominance of Israel in the Jewish world was accepted by many of the Dialogue participants, certainly in Israel, but also in the Diaspora. “Israel has a great impact on what happens to Jews throughout the world,” said a participant in New York. “How Israel is perceived also affects me, how Israel acts also affects me,” said another. “Whether I want it or not, when Israel does something people look at me,” said a participant in Boston. “Jews are identified with Israel in a way that cannot be denied even if you want to,” said a participant in St Louis.

Israel's impact on the consciousness of Diaspora Jews, and on their status in their communities, is sometimes desirable and sometimes not, but only rarely denied. It was also observed in the Institute's previous Dialogues, whether in the context of Israeli military action, where "in discussions... reasons were brought up for the need for Israel to consider the position of world Jewry, mainly because of the effect Israel's actions have on Diaspora Jewry,"⁵¹ or in the context of Jewish identity, where we found that "there is recognition of Israel's tangible impact on the way in which Jewishness is perceived and applied around the world."⁵² This year, when we asked Dialogue participants whether Israel "should stop claiming that it is the leader of the Jewish people," a majority of participants answered in the negative – with an absolute majority among the Israelis (over 80%), and a small negative response among Diaspora Jews (59%). In other words: Israelis have no doubt that Israel has the right to claim the status of leadership of the Jewish people, while for the Jews of the Diaspora it is hard to argue with a situation in which Israel is perceived as the leader of the Jewish people, although more than 40% of them would like Israel to stop presenting itself as its leader (10% "completely agree" that it should stop doing so).

The result of this recognition – sometimes willing and sometimes through necessity – is a longing for an Israeli leadership "that will give inspiration" to the rest of the Jewish world, a participant who is Jewish educator asserted. "It should set an example, it should be focused on pride and identification." Something similar was heard in Chicago: "We don't need anything material from Israel, just that it should give us reasons for pride, and be a force of attraction for young Jews." This type of general statement, without specific detail on what exactly is expected of Israel, was prevalent in some discussions. "Israel should be a role model and an example of what a Jewish

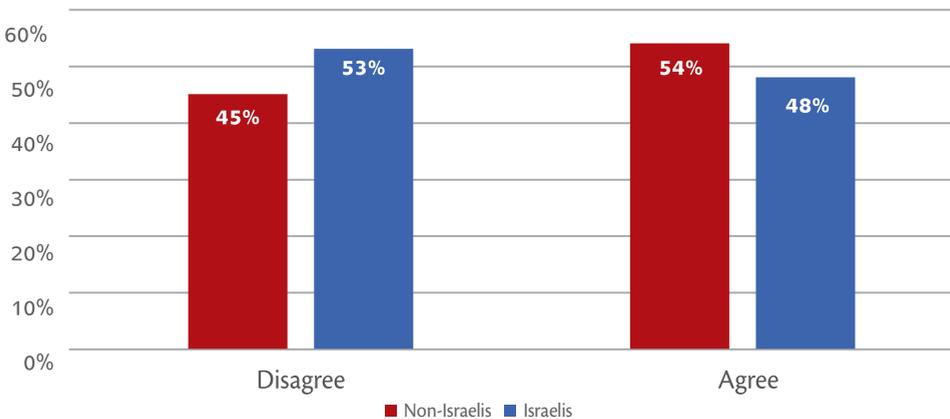
51 JPPI Dialogue, 2014, Shmuel Rosner and John Ruskay, On this subject, see also the 2015 Dialogue, which dealt with the position of Jews around the world on Jewish values and Israel's use of force in armed conflict -http://jppi.org.il/new/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Jewish_Values_and_Israels_Use_of_Force_in_Armed_Conflict-JPPI-Hebrew.pdf

52 Jewish People Policy Institute Dialogue, Shmuel Rosner and John Ruskay, 2016. http://jppi.org.il/new/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Exploring_the_Jewish_Spectrum_in_a_Time_of_Fluid_Identity-Heb.pdf

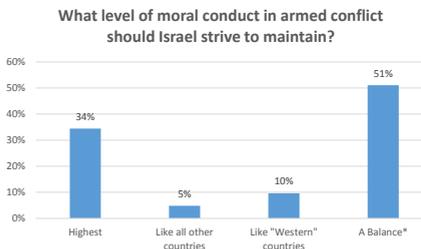
state should look like”⁵³; “I would like Israel to be a beacon of Jewish values”; “Israel represents all of us, and if it looks good, we looked good too”; “I know that it is an irrational demand, but I want Israel to be a special country, not like all the others.”

The expectation that Israel be a special country came up repeatedly in the Diaspora, but sometimes received an irritable response in Israel: “Let them worry about their countries, and not come to us with demands that their countries do not fulfill,” said one participant. Most of the Israelis did not agree with the participant survey statement: “World Jewry should require Israel to meet higher standards than other countries.” A very small percentage (8%) completely agreed with it, while a small majority (52%) responded “quite disagree” or “completely disagree.” However, 22% of Diaspora participants completely agreed with this position. (Incidentally, there was no significant difference between younger and older U.S. participants on this matter, but in other countries, younger participants tended to demand a higher standard while their older counterparts had reservations about this demand – 70% of them did not agree with it).

Jews should demand that Israel meet a high standard



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The survey also included the statement: “Diaspora Jews demand too much of Israel.” A clear majority of discussion participants did not accept this statement. In other words, most of them did not feel that the standards that they demand of Israel are too high. Among Diaspora participants, only 11% completely agreed that there this demand was excessive, another 25% somewhat agreed, 47% somewhat disagreed, and 20% completely disagreed (thus, a 67% majority did not agree that Diaspora Jewry demands too much of Israel).

The question of what is demanded of Israel also came up in previous JPPI Dialogues. It was presented in a focused manner with regard to Israel’s actions in times of armed conflict; a survey of the Dialogue participants showed that, at least on this matter, Diaspora Jewry did expect a more demanding code of behavior from Israel than other countries. As we reported in 2015: “In the survey of participants, respondents were given four possibilities to choose from for Israel: that it should be ‘like everyone’, ‘like Western countries’, that it should set the bar ‘as high as possible’, or that it should ‘balance between morals and the fact that it is facing cruel enemies that want to destroy it’... The participants expressed a desire to set a unique bar for Israel, unlike that set for the rest of the world – ‘any country’ or ‘Western countries.’ About half of the respondents said that Israel should make its own accounting, balancing between its aspiration to be moral and the security challenge that it faces, and another one third felt that Israel should set a bar high above all the others. All in all, only a little more than one-tenth of the participants chose one of the two options setting a standard bar for Israel that is similar to that of other countries.”⁵⁴

In other words, Diaspora Jewry’s expectation that Israel behave according to a higher standard than the political behavior of other countries emerged as a motif in Dialogue discussions. This expectation manifests not only during JPPI Dialogue discussions, but also in the everyday discourse between the Diaspora and Israel. Frequently, it is the cause of tension and insufficient understanding. That is what happened this year, for example, when Israel decided to deport illegal migrants from its territory, which was met with considerable critical

54 Jewish values and the use of force, the Jewish People Policy Institute, p. 35-36. This is a graph showing the breakdown of answers presented at the 2015 dialogue:

reaction in the Diaspora. Their objection was often explained by the fact that expulsion conflicts with “Jewish values,” as understood by Diaspora Jews, or against the behavior expected of the Jewish state, as Diaspora Jews understand it.⁵⁵

Daphne Mirkin expressed the inherent difficulty in such a position, when she wrote that “I agree... that the expulsion of Eritrean and Sudanese asylum seekers contradicts basic Jewish values, and I also wonder, as I do frequently, why Israel is held to higher standards of equality and purity of intention, that are not required, for example, of Belgium. It is as if deep in our hearts, we have never given up the idea of Israel as unique – a light unto the nations – and at the same time we aspire to normality, to Israel being considered as just another imperfect nation among all the other nations.”⁵⁶

In Israeli society itself there is a fierce debate between those in favor and those against the deportation, but while it was clear in Israel that at least in numeric terms, those in favor of the government’s policy had the upper hand (69% among the Jewish public, according to the Peace Index⁵⁷), in the Diaspora the main voices heard were of those objecting to the deportation plan. When Israeli Jews were asked explicitly: “What is your opinion of the claim that Israel, as the country of the Jewish people who suffered throughout history from violence and persecution and sought refuge in different countries, should show greater generosity than other countries, and allow the asylum seekers to remain in Israel?,” a clear majority – almost 60% of them – did not agree with this claim.

Hence, we see a fundamental and recurrent problem in regulating the reciprocal expectations of Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora. In Israel, the

55 In this matter, see JPPI’s policy paper on the refugee crisis in Israel, by Dan Feferman and Dov Maimon, 2018

56 Defending Israel From Afar: The Problem of Being a Light Unto the Nations, Daphne Merkin, haaretz, 2018 <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-defending-israel-from-afar-1.5836627>

57 Data from the Israel Democracy Institute’s Peace Index:

% Jews	
11.0	Very much agree
22.5	Somewhat agree
28.6	Don’t really agree
31.3	Don’t agree at all
6.6	Don’t know / refuse

aspiration is toward interest-driven policy, and resistance to external demands for a higher bar of “morality” or “ethical behavior,” generally seen as being a tool for reproaching Israel, or merely an attempt to manipulate its policy by rhetorical means. In the Diaspora, the aspiration, sometimes overt and sometimes covert, is to see Israel as a moral beacon that is more powerful than other countries. “The State of Israel is a historic opportunity to fulfill Jewish values of mutual respect, tolerance, human dignity, and well-being for all of society,” wrote Rabbi Tully Harcsztark, a Dialogue participant, in an essay on “Israel, Diaspora, and Religious Zionist Education in America.”⁵⁸

The roots of this gap in perception are deep and appear in various studies. For example, parallel Pew Research Center studies carried out in Israel and in the United States reveal the gap in identifying core values of Jewishness. “Upholding ethics and a moral life” was defined by 69% of American Jews as being fundamental to Jewishness, but only by 47% of Israeli Jews. “Working for justice and equality” was defined as a core value by 56% of American Jews, but only 27% of Israeli Jews. Naturally, when Israel is seen as not working for “justice” – for example in the case of the illegal migrants, many Diaspora Jews see the situation as Israel failing in its role as a Jewish state. By contrast, from the outset the Israelis have not seen the aspiration to justice a central component of their Judaism, and therefore many of them shy away from the argument that a breach of justice (and to preclude doubt: this document does not claim that Israel’s policy on the question of the illegal migrants is unjust) is a failure in Israel’s mission as a Jewish state.

Given these gaps, it is clear that there is a need for an appropriate interpretation of the demand by many Dialogue participants that Israel export a Jewish culture that will also be relevant to the rest of the Jewish world. The television series *Fauda* was mentioned by some participants. The actress Gal Gadot came up a few times. A large majority of the participants agreed that Israel should be “a center of Jewish learning and ideas” (77% of Israeli participants, and, similarly, 71%, of non-Israeli participants).

The participant survey shows that a large majority of Diaspora Dialogue participants felt that “Israeli culture” enables them to feel connected (39%)

58 Israel, Diaspora and Religious Zionist Education in America, Rabbi Tully Harcsztark, In: Conversations on Jewish Education, Machon Shiach at SAR High School, 2017.

or very connected (41%) to Israel. On the other hand, the culture of Diaspora Jews appears a great deal less attractive to the Israeli participants in the Dialogue (perhaps because they are not aware that a considerable part of what they consume as Western culture is, in fact, the cultural production of Diaspora Jews). When a significant number of all Jews agree that Israel should serve as a center of “Jewish learning and ideas,” this is recognition of the centrality conferred on a country that claims leadership of the Jewish people. However, further clarifying research is required to understand the meanings of “learning” and “ideas” in this context – since it has already become clear that in the context of “values,” for example, there is an embedded gap in perception even when Israeli and Diaspora Jews employ similar language.

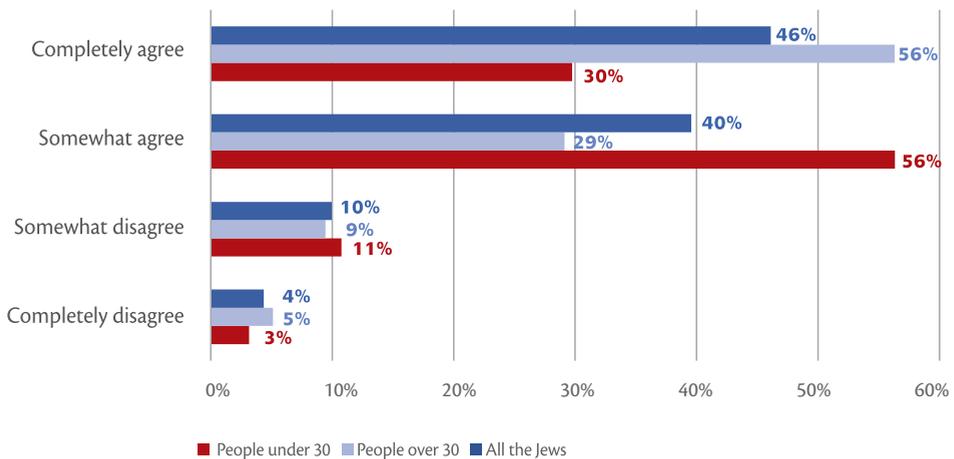
Either way, some Dialogue participants were of the opinion that Israel already has a certain Jewish cultural dominance in the Jewish world. This position was more prevalent among Orthodox participants. “The most exciting things in Torah study come from Israel,” said an Orthodox American participant. Among other participants there were those who disagreed with him. “Where are the great ideas that Israel is supposed to generate, why does it not serve as a significant force of Jewish renewal?,” asked one of them.

DUTY OF ACTION: A SAFE REFUGE

Israel was and still is a “safe refuge” for all the Jews of the world, at least in the view of the Dialogue participants, many of whom also said that this is its main role and obligation toward the rest of the Jewish world. “Israel should be loyal to Diaspora Jewry. Israel protects the Jews after the Holocaust. Israel is there for the Jews. Israel is the contingency plan for Jews in the Diaspora.” “We live in the knowledge that at some point we will get to Israel,” said a participant from Europe. “Israel is plan B for Jews around the world. In my opinion they should pay the Army so that this plan B will be secure,” said a young Israeli woman. “It’s not that everyone will be coming tomorrow, but it is certainly good for us to know that the possibility exists,” said a participant in St Louis. “It is important to me to have the ability to make Aliyah,” said a participant from Latin America. “[Israel should] safeguard itself for itself and safeguard itself to be a safe refuge for us,” wrote one of the participants at a Conference of Presidents event. Naturally, concerns over the personal safety of Jews were

sharper with regard to Europe, and less so in the United States. But all in all, agreement over Israel’s purpose, and its obligation to serve as a refuge, is shared by a large majority of Jews in all countries. Israelis have internalized this obligation and do not repudiate it. Not even one Israeli Dialogue participant chose the option “completely disagree” with the survey statement: “Israel is a safe refuge for all Jews” (only 7% answered “don’t really agree”). And Jews around the world still rely upon it – at least those of them who took part in the Dialogue discussions. Fewer than one fifth of them rejected the claim that Israel is a safe refuge for all the Jews (among the young people, there was a certain hesitation with regard to this statement, more than among the older people, but they, too, decided in favor of the safe refuge, as can be seen in the graph below).

Participants in the Diaspora: Israel is a safe refuge for all the Jews



One interesting finding obtained with regard to the question of refuge: when we asked Diaspora participants whether they would consider living in Israel, around two-thirds (63%) responded affirmatively, even if it was clear that most of them would, in the end, remain in their Diaspora communities. This finding, naturally, reflects the composition and nature of the participants – Jews who, for the most part, are committed both to their Judaism and to the relationship with Israel. The majority of them visit Israel often (see appendix) – and the finding also reflects Israel’s power of attraction. These Jews also see

no particular reason for Israel to stop calling for the immigration (Aliyah) of the rest of the world's Jews. It may be assumed that the form of the appeal and the degree of aggressiveness could certainly change their opinion, but to the simple question of whether Israel "should stop calling on Jews to immigrate to Israel," a decisive majority (85%) answered: no, it should not. Unsurprisingly, the Israeli participants, too, saw no reason to stop calling for immigration to Israel. Only 2% of them completely agreed with the notion that Israel "should stop." A further 12% "somewhat agreed," and the rest, 86%, did not agree. They didn't express the belief or expectation that the rest of world Jewry was on the way to making Aliyah (from the discussions it was clear that they understand that this is the situation at present). But the Israeli call for immigration still seemed to them legitimate and necessary.

The safe haven is an obligation in itself. That is, Israel must organize itself so that it continues to be able to be a safe haven. But this is an obligation that, in the opinion of most Diaspora participants, also contains additional obligations within it. In order to be a safe haven Israel must, for example, keep the Law of Return in its broad form, as proposed in the Dialogue in New York. The idea that "my grandchildren may not be able to enjoy the same rights is very troubling to me" was raised in the Dialogue when participants were asked what would happen if the criteria of the Law of Return were restricted. It was also argued that in order to serve as a safe haven, Israel should "allow a range of religious expression," otherwise it would only be a suitable refuge for Jews of a particular type, and not for Jews of other kinds. However, Jews throughout the world understand that Israel "has the right to determine who will enter the country," as a Hungarian participant said. And yet, as his friend said, "it can't simply cancel the Law of Return, because that would have an impact on the Jews of the Diaspora."

The Law of Return figured prominently in the framework of the discussions because it is the sole concrete legal expression of the connection between Israel and the Diaspora, and because of its symbolism. It also held a place of importance because the criteria determining its application embody significant gaps between Israel and the Diaspora regarding the question of who is a Jew.

We had already dealt with a number of aspects of the Law of Return in previous Dialogues. The Dialogue on Israel as Jewish and democratic brought up the fact that a considerable majority of Diaspora Jews feel that the law should remain as is, even though some participants were not completely comfortable with it (because it sets out an ethno-religious test for immigration to Israel). In the Dialogue report on the on the Jewish spectrum in an age of fluid identity (2016) an entire chapter was devoted to the Law of Return.⁵⁹ “The fact that identity is becoming more flexible in Jewish communities around the world,” we reported, “does not cause all Jews to expect Israel to ease the Law of Return’s criteria. In practice, it is possible that the opposite is true. Participants in that Dialogue tended to argue that the Law of Return can remain quite inflexible in setting a threshold for Jewishness.” We also reported that “because the significance of Jewishness varies, and the boundaries of the Jewish people are being redrawn through the actions of Jews and non-Jews around the world, it may be necessary to consider making adjustments to the law in the future. If such a need arises (as a result of increasing demand for Aliyah to Israel or because of increasing pressure within Israel against the existing criteria), it is important to understand that Jews around the world will not necessarily resist any attempt to narrow the definition automatically, and as a result, the scope of entitlement under the Law of Return.”

This statement still holds true, but in view of this year’s Dialogue discussions it is worth adding a cautionary note: when a possible scenario of restricting the application criteria for the Law of Return was presented to Dialogue participants this year, putting forward an imaginary decision by Israel to narrow the degree of eligibility from grandchild of a Jew to child of a Jew – the reactions were generally negative. And in any event, the demand is that such a step should not be taken without Israel’s wide-scale consultation with the entire Jewish people, and some even felt that such a change could only be made with their consent (in other words, that Israel should give Diaspora Jews the right of veto with regard to changing the law). “It is obvious that in practical terms, Israel can do it. But this is a very dramatic step, from which there may perhaps be no turning back,” said a participant in one New York discussion. In another group in the same city, it was said that “restricting the

59 Jewish People Policy Institute Dialogue, Shmuel Rosner and John Ruskay, 2016 http://jppi.org.il/new/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Exploring_the_Jewish_Spectrum_in_a_Time_of_Fluid_Identity-Heb.pdf

Law of Return relates to the very basis of what Israel means for me – Israel must exist as a safe haven for the Jewish people, and when you compromise on the Law of Return, it has a direct impact on this position.”

The question of the obligation of consultation between Israel and the Diaspora came up at length in the discussion framework, and an attempt was made to understand in which cases it applies, and when it does not apply. The case of a change in the Law of Return and its derivatives – that is, changes on Israel’s part that are liable to affect the definition of “who is a Jew” in its broad sense – was at the top of the list of cases requiring consultation by Israel, and consideration of the position of Diaspora Jewry. This is an understandable expectation, but it is clear that as the years pass, and as the gap increases between the way Israeli and Diaspora Jews understand the meaning of Jewishness and the manner of affiliation with it, Israel is likely to have difficulty with it.

As a possible example of disagreement, we can put forward a few of the recent studies of the Jewish communities in the Diaspora that have included a group of Jews called “Jews with multiple religions” (JMR). These Jews maintain a religion other than Judaism, but for various reasons see themselves as belonging to the Jewish people. As mentioned, a number of communities (as happened this year in San Francisco and Washington) count this group in the framework of the general Jewish community – in Washington this group represents 9% of the total community. But it is clear that, according to the rules in force in Israel, it will be difficult to accept the immigration eligibility of these Jews under the Law of Return (which does not recognize those holding another religion as Jews). In the discussions with Israeli participants, there was seen to be a degree of hesitation regarding the inclusion of Jews who do not even meet the broad criteria of the Law of Return – “non-Jewish Jews,” as one participant called them – in the Jewish tribe. This was in spite of the fact that the approach of many Jews in Israel with regard to marriage with non-Jews is not particularly rigid, as emerged in the JPPI’s pluralism survey carried out earlier this year.⁶⁰

60 According to JPPI’s 2018 survey, some 32% of Israeli Jews say that “it doesn’t matter to them” if a close family member marries a non-Jew (who is not an Arab – in a separate question with regard to Arab spouses, the result was different). A further 4% say that they would be happy about such a marriage.

At this stage, there is no direct conflict with regard to such a group of Jews. However, it is clear that the potential for disagreement exists if Diaspora communities see this group as an organizational part of the community, and at the same time the State of Israel refuses to confer immigration eligibility to members of the group under the Law of Return. This potential for conflict is what reinforces the need for broad consultation on significant issues relating to the essential nature of the definition of Jewish membership, and it is clear that such consultation is only feasible if both sides understand that each of them has the right to take whatever measures it wishes, but that some actions may affect the unity of the Jewish people and its ability to continue functioning as a defined and cohesive unit.

DUTY OF ACTION: MATERIAL INVESTMENT

Another issue with regard to the application of Israel's duty of action relates to the financial support that Israel should/should not give to Diaspora communities. It is clear that the financially sound Israel of today can allocate resources it did not have in the past to support Jewish communities in the Diaspora. At the same time, both in public and in the Dialogue discussions, a disagreement can be seen with regard to application of this obligation. The habit that was formed in the first decades of the state's existence was one of financial donation to Israel by Diaspora Jews, and quite a number of the participants in the Dialogue discussions have felt that this is the right direction for the flow of donations. At the same time, about half of the Diaspora participants agreed with the statement that Israel should "give material support" to communities in the Diaspora (57%). Among Israelis, there was a majority of almost 60% who did not agree that Israel should provide financial support to Jewish communities in the Diaspora. Only 2% "very much agree[d]" that Israel should provide financial support to the Diaspora.

These findings are somewhat in line with the findings of other surveys looking at the willingness of Israelis to invest resources in Diaspora Jewry. A broad survey by the Ministry of the Diaspora Affairs found that when Israelis are presented with the statement "the State of Israel should invest resources in supporting the Jewish identity of Diaspora communities just as it invests in Jewish culture and identity in Israel," there was a high degree of objection (42%) and a low

level of support (27%). At the same time, when the Israelis consider this support through the prism of security benefits – “investing in strengthening Jewish identity in the Diaspora is an investment in the robustness and security of the State of Israel” – the rate of agreement increases considerably (44%) and the rate of objection falls (27%). There are quite a few in Israel who do not feel that the country should invest in Jews who have sufficient resources of their own. “To put it simply, as an Israeli citizen I am not interested in a single shekel of my tax money going to Diaspora Jewry,” wrote Uri Misgav in *Haaretz*. “Not in the Diaspora in general, and certainly not to wealthy America. It is not because I am angry with American Jews. On the contrary, I have no complaint against them. I respect their decision to live in America... with some of them, I feel closeness and empathy. Some of them are members of my family. It is their private business.”⁶¹ Similar positions were heard in Dialogue meetings, even if not with the same acerbity. “It seems to me that they have enough, and the question is not if we should, but if we want to invest. If they don’t want to, why should I?” asked an Israeli participant. Another participant said: “my preference is for investment in development towns, not in Jews living abroad.”

It is worth noting that in the Dialogue meetings in the Diaspora there were also quite a number of reservations expressed regarding Israel’s activities to strengthen Jewish identity in the Diaspora, in the form of investment of resources. These reservations arose for two main, non-overlapping reasons:

- a. Fear of clumsy involvement by a government that is not sufficiently aware of the sensitivities of Diaspora Jewry, and acts in a manner that causes more harm than benefit (as expected, apprehension about the currently-serving government also hangs on political and ideological gaps – and the fear that an Israeli government would try to impose its positions on Diaspora communities).
- b. The assumption that communities in the Diaspora, indeed, have sufficient resources of their own, and that concern for the Jewish identity of Jews in these communities is the responsibility of the communities and should not be delegated, wholly or in part, to the Government of Israel.

⁶¹ I have no money for Diaspora Jewry, Uri Misgav, 2016 <https://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/premium-1.3042681>

In research carried out by the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, and in other research as well, it was found that the rate of Israeli agreement that Israel should provide support for strengthening Jewish identity in the Diaspora is higher among religious Israelis and lower among younger Israelis. In the nature of things, in a Dialogue session focusing on the positions of young Israelis we did not find particularly high support for allocating Israeli resources for strengthening Jewish identity in the Diaspora – with one clear exception: even the younger people agreed that the State of Israel should invest resources in Jewish communities in distress with meager resources of their own. “If it is necessary to invest in order to help Jews in Ethiopia, I am in favor of that, but it seems to me that Jews in wealthy places can manage for themselves,” said one of the participants. It should be mentioned that these positions are to some degree in contradiction with decisions by the Government of Israel, which has increased its activities to support Jewish identity in the Diaspora over the past decade, and with previous JPPI policy recommendations, mainly in the framework of the paper *Arevut, Responsibility, and Partnership*,⁶² in which it was recommended, among other things, that “the Government of Israel should act to disseminate the knowledge and spiritual treasures of Jewish culture through the generations, including contemporary Israeli culture, teaching the Hebrew language, and assimilating the culture of learning as a Jewish value among Jews around the world, through a range of activities and partnerships.”⁶²

DUTY OF ACTION: ANTI-SEMITISM

The area in which there was the greatest degree of agreement over Israel’s duty to act on behalf of the Diaspora, and its responsibility to participate in shaping the future of Diaspora communities, was anti-Semitism. “A Jewish state should, first of all, fight anti-Semitism,” said a participant in St Louis. “With regard to anti-Semitism, we all suffer, and obviously it is a shared battle,” said an Israeli participant. At some of the meetings the claim was made that Israel had responsibility for the fight against anti-Semitism because it has increased, among other things, as a result of actions that Israel has taken. “We are all captives of Israeli foreign policy,” said a young person in Germany. Previous JPPI Dialogues have dealt at length with this not uncommon perception.

62 *Arevut, Responsibility and Partnership*, 2009 http://jppi.org.il/new/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/New_Paradigm_Heb.pdf

In the 2015 Dialogue report, which was published not long after the murderous attacks against Jews in France, we wrote: “If the use of force by Israel is the given rationale behind attacks against Jews throughout the world, it is completely natural for Jews around the world to be concerned over Israel’s policy toward its neighbors, and Israel’s image abroad. Jews around the world, whether or not they want a connection with Israel, are forced to bear part of the consequences of the way in which Israel is perceived in the world.” “European Jewry experiences the impact of Israel’s actions after every war,” we were told then by a young Dialogue participant. “Jewish institutions are forced to increase their security guards in the wake of a war,” it was said at a seminar in London. “Israel’s wars have an immediate, and usually negative, effect on Jews in the Diaspora in the media and at the universities,” it was agreed at a Dialogue in Brazil. “We are all held responsible for Israel’s actions,” said a Pittsburgh participant.⁶³

In any event, some of this year’s participants also claimed that one of the reasons for the demand for Israeli involvement in the fight against anti-Semitism is its responsibility for the phenomenon. But this is not the main reason for such a demand – the main argument is that as the state of the Jewish people, established for the purpose, among other things, of doing away with anti-Semitism, Israel has a basic and fundamental duty to resist every appearance of anti-Semitism. Added to this argument is the practical determination that Israel is the strongest Jewish force in the world, and therefore it has a greater ability to act against anti-Semitism than most of the other communities, whether by the allocation of resources, expertise, exertion of political pressure, and so on.

At the same time, it should be noted that in certain communities, especially in America, reservations were heard against Israeli action on the grounds that “with regard to anti-Semitism in America, we don’t need Israel to intervene – we know how to handle it better.” In some discussions, the fear was even expressed that Israeli intervention “could only hamper and complicate matters.” In any event, in most of the communities it was claimed that Israel should intervene while respecting the position of the local Jewish community, and only in consultation with it. “I prefer them to do nothing rather than

63 Jewish People Policy Institute Dialogue on the use of force in armed conflict, p. 75

coming and talking nonsense,” said one of the participants in Minnesota. In some of the discussions, Prime Minister Netanyahu’s call for the Jews of France to emigrate to Israel was mentioned in a negative light. Opposition leader Yitzhak Herzog’s statement from a year ago that Israel should prepare “for a massive wave of immigration from the U.S.” as a result of increasing anti-Semitism was also roundly criticized.⁶⁴

Opinions were not quite fully formed as to the exact nature of Israel’s obligation to act against anti-Semitism. However, it was generally agreed that it should involve a combination of state and political pressure, and, as necessary, also assistance to communities with advice and preparation of a defense (JPPI’s recommendations on this subject can be found in a 2004 report by Prof. Yehezkel Dror).⁶⁵ The opinion that the only thing that Israel had to offer against anti-Semitism was the option to immigrate to Israel was sometimes expressed by Israeli participants. In other words, in their view Israel as a safe haven is its most important response to anti-Semitism. “If they decide to stay there despite the fact that there is anti-Semitism, it is no longer our problem,” said one participant. “Israel invests a great deal in the world, and that is its contribution to battling anti-Semitism. Obviously if we are in favor of Aliyah, we have nothing to look for in communities where the Jews don’t want to make Aliyah, even if there are attacks against them,” said another.

DUTY OF CONSULTATION, DUTY OF ACTION

The table below provides a brief summary of the fields examined for consultation and action, it includes the main subjects where there was significant agreement on Israel’s obligation to consult with the Diaspora communities, and the subjects where there was significant agreement on Israel’s obligation to act arising from its commitment to the Jews of the rest of the world:

64 Herzog: Get Ready For Mass Aliya From U.S. Due To Anti-Semitism, Gil Hoffman And Tamara Zieve, 2017 <http://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Herzog-Get-ready-for-mass-aliya-from-U.S.-due-to-anti-Semitism-482747>

65 Strategy against anti-Semitism, Prof. Yehezkel Dror, 2004 http://jppi.org.il/new/wp-content/uploads/2004/11/Confronting_Antisemitism-A_strategic_Perspective-Heb.pdf

Subject	Duty of consultation	Duty of action
<i>Anti-Semitism</i>	With the local community	Declarative, state-political consultation and advice regarding practical defense, readiness for absorption if necessary
<i>Safe haven</i>		Reinforcement of Israel's readiness to absorb Jews who are interested, or in need of rescue
<i>Law of Return</i>	With world Jewry, on any desired move to make a change	Leaving the law as is, readiness to absorb Jews
<i>Jewish pluralism in Israel</i>	With world Jewry, in order to create conditions that will enable all Jews to feel at home in Israel	Overcoming political and technical obstacles in order to enable an inviting Jewish space for Jews with different approaches
<i>Dialogue</i>	Regularly communicate with world Jewry in order to understand the mood and neutralize confrontations at an early stage	Implementing lessons from the Dialogue so that Diaspora Jews can feel that it is of tangible benefit, and not just listening for the sake of fulfilling an obligation
<i>Investment of resources</i>	With local communities	Preference for investing resources for actions in Israel (such as travel programs), divided over action in the Diaspora

THE DIASPORA'S OBLIGATIONS TOWARD ISRAEL

From the outset it should be said that in this year's Dialogue, it was much easier to obtain clear statements from the participants with regard to Israel's obligations toward Diaspora Jewry, and harder to understand what they feel the obligations of Diaspora Jewry toward Israel to be. This asymmetry is based on three primary factors (also expressed in statements made by Dialogue participants):

1. The increasing dominance of Israel in the Jewish world, carrying with it an expectation of its increased responsibility, as against the decreasing responsibility of other communities (whose dominance, according to this view, is becoming weaker). This subject did not engender full agreement, in Israel nor, even more so, in the Diaspora. And yet, it can be said that in a significant part of the conversations the final conclusion was that Israel

did indeed have greater obligations than Diaspora Jewry – regarding both consultation and action (on behalf of all the Jews of the world).

2. Israel's organizational advantage, enabling it to act with well established mechanisms, based on decisions of the general public. In a considerable number of the discussions in the Diaspora, participants had difficulty defining the duty of "Diaspora Jewry" because of the difficulty in determining who represents the Jews of the Diaspora, and therefore the obligations of this representative(s). In many of discussions it was determined that because there is no representative, there is no general obligation on "Diaspora Jewry," but rather, each community defines its obligations for itself. The expectation of participants was that even if there were to be broad consensus among the Jewish people on a list of subjects that were the obligation of Diaspora Jewry, there would be many communities that would choose to deviate from it, both for practical reasons and on principle. On the other hand, the participants assumed that it was possible to demand from the Government of Israel – a single body that represents the citizens of Israel – to bring its policy in line with such an agreed list.
3. The ideological and geographic split of Diaspora Jewry. Unlike Israelis who, even if they do not agree on the interests of their country, can at least agree that the country has certain interests relating to all its citizens – in the case of Diaspora Jews, the interests of the French Jews are not the same as the interests of the British, Australian, or Argentinian Jews. In addition, Jewish communities in the Diaspora are split not only geographically, but also ideologically, in the absence of an umbrella organization bringing together Haredi Jews with Reform Jews, and atheist Jews. A large number of Dialogue participants had no interest in creating such a body, because they saw significant benefit in the split of the Diaspora, and therefore did not aspire in any way to achieve a unitary representation from which it would be possible to derive general obligations shared by all Diaspora Jews.

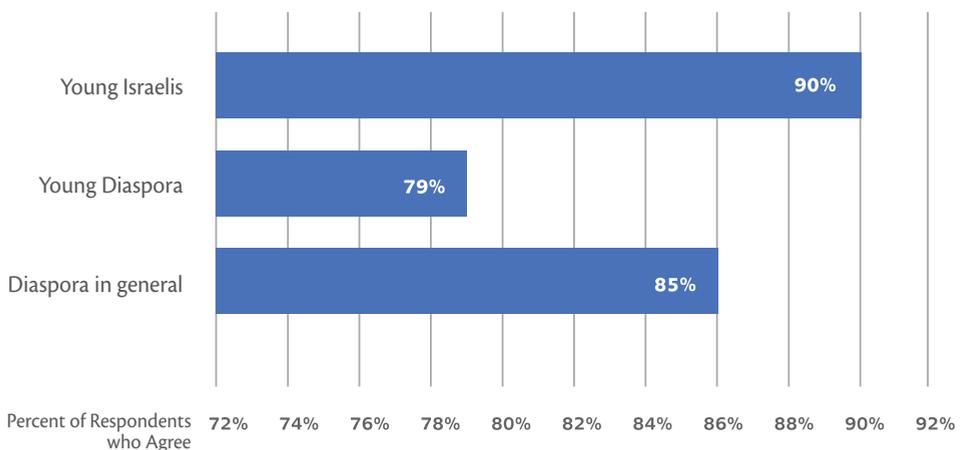
Given these reservations, the Dialogue discussions nonetheless brought up a series of issues on which there was consensus or near consensus with regard to certain obligations of Diaspora Jewry toward Israel, and the way in which these obligations should be met. In the following sections we attempt to describe these along general lines.

THE DUTY OF SUPPORT

Nine out of ten Diaspora Dialogue participants agreed that “concern for Israel is a substantive part of my being Jewish.” A great many of them – over two-thirds (71%) felt that Israel “will not survive without the Jews of the Diaspora.” In these circumstances, it must be assumed that Diaspora Jews must support Israel. And indeed, when Dialogue participants were asked to say whether Jews should “generally support Israel,” a large majority replied in the affirmative, whether in full agreement or with reservations. Only a negligible percentage (6%) “certainly did not agree” – in other words, did not think that Diaspora Jews should generally support Israel.

Age gaps with regard to the strength of the obligation to support Israel “generally” can be seen in the results. Fewer young Jews were of the opinion that such support is required, and when the breakdown is examined in detail, it emerges that among young people only 37% “strongly agree” with the obligation of general support, while a larger group of 42% “somewhat agree” with it. On the other hand, among the older participants a decisive majority – 66% – “strongly agree” with the obligation (among older non-American Jews the percentage is even higher, around 70%). Only 4% of the older Jews “strongly disagree” with it, as against twice as many (8%) among the younger people.

“Jews should generally support Israel”



The expectation of Israeli Jews is clear: they expect that Diaspora Jewry will give its uncategorical support. 44% of Israeli Dialogue participants in the “very much agreed” with the statement regarding the need for such support, and a further 46% of them “somewhat agreed.” Only 2% of the Israelis “strongly disagreed” with the statement that Jews in the Diaspora should generally support Israel. And, of course, this expectation as expressed in the discussions is not necessarily in line with the Diaspora agreement over support. In other words, it is not certain that when Israelis talk about “support” and when non-Israelis talk about “support” they are talking about exactly the same thing. But at least in principle, there is not much disagreement on the question of support. If there is disagreement, it is to be found in the details.

With regard to details, a distinction can be made between the weighty and the trivial. The weighty being situations in which Israel finds itself at war, or under attack by one of its enemies. In such a situation, a considerable majority of the Dialogue participants felt that Diaspora Jewry is obligated to provide support. In many discussion groups it was made clear that even if there are reservations about Israel’s policy, “when there is blood in the streets we automatically identify with Israel,” as a participant in New York emphasized. “If Israel is attacked, most of us do not stop to ask why, but first of all feel that we have to support it,” said a participant in Minneapolis. These participants continued to insist on their position even when asked what would happen if it turned out that Israel had no small degree of responsibility for the flare-up, and perhaps even bore part of the blame for the outbreak of violence. “I know that it is not completely just, but there are things I don’t want to know, I do what I have to do,” said a participant in Texas.

Nonetheless, here and there the opposite was also heard, such as: “If Hezbollah attacks Israel, I want to know the reason before I can give my full support,” a participant in the young people’s group in Oregon said. Or put slightly differently: “I think that among the young people, there will be quite a few who demand to know what exactly happened before they decide to give Israel their support,” as stated in Minneapolis. In some of the groups, there were young people who drew a distinction between violence that breaks out “against Hezbollah, which is clearly a dangerous terrorist group that has no justification for its actions,” and “the case of the Palestinians, which is harder

for me because I think that Israel is acting very irresponsibly with regard to them.” And even in the case of violence in the Palestinian arena, there were those who made a distinction between Hamas in Gaza, and the outbreak of violence in Judea and Samaria. “Generally speaking, I always want to support Israel, but there are cases where I am not sure that I can,” said one participant. His position reflected that of other, mainly young, participants – but certainly not the majority of Dialogue participants, even among young people.

Even more complex questions regarding the duty of support are those relating to the political sphere, and the political behavior of Israel in the Middle East arena. For example, the question of assistance to Israel in the fight against BDS, in which most Jews participate, but where many more participant voices were heard who are not convinced that it is their obligation to support anti-BDS efforts. “You have to understand that a large number of our young people are in support – even if not wholly, at least partially – of punishing Israel for the occupation,” said one participant. “You cannot oblige these young people to enlist on behalf of something that they are not certain they believe in.” But there were discussions in which there was broad consensus on the matter: “Anyone who is not able to fight against BDS, for my part is crossing a very significant line, and perhaps is no longer part of my community,” noted an Australian participant. Others said similar things: “The boycott is an expression of anti-Semitism, anyone who agrees with it – either doesn’t understand what he is doing, or has already really decided to go over to the other side”; “Jews who do not agree with Israel can criticize it sharply, and I have no problem with that, but when they join the elements that are the most hostile to Israel, that is already a problem”; “I know that there are Jews in favor of the boycott, and I don’t know how to stop it – but it is clear that these are Jews who care less about Israel”; “What does it mean that Jews ‘must’ support Israel? First of all, it means not supporting Israel’s enemies, and the boycott people are enemies of Israel, and certainly not its friends.” An Australian participant staying in Israel (Tiberias Dialogue) said: “We are fighting against Israel’s bad reputation in the world. In my opinion, this is the duty of all the Jews in the world.”

It was clear from the discussions that the question of “support” in principle – is support necessary? – has one answer, which is affirmative in almost all the communities. On the other hand, the individual question – what does

support mean? – has more than one answer, and there is no consensus about it. For the most part, there are reservations when it seemed to participants that “support” meant completely refraining from criticism. At one of the discussions, an Israeli participant suggested that “Jews in the Diaspora should support what the Israeli government does, because that is who represents us.” There were those, even in the Diaspora, who agreed with him, but there were more who disagreed. “As long as I support a position that Israelis also support, it is a legitimate position. I don’t have to agree with the government in order to support Israel, I can also support the opposition.” At one of the discussions a barbed dialogue developed between two participants. One of them said that support of “any position where there are Israelis who also believe in it is a pro-Israeli position.” The other one asked “does that mean that even if you support the position of the Arab parties (in the original) it is a pro-Israeli position?” The first replied: “Obviously, if there are Israelis that think that way, that means that there are Israelis who think it is the right thing for Israel.” The second one insisted: “But there are legislators who are against the State of Israel as a Jewish state, and this means that in your view, support for Israel is also support for Israel as a non-Jewish country.”

The participants did not reach an unequivocal stance in this specific argument, nor was there sweeping agreement over other issues. But in general, it can be said that most of them thought that criticism of Israel is a legitimate act that does not deviate from support for Israel, while, on the other hand, joining up with those taking steps to constrain and impose measures the country does not want through punitive measures is liable to appear as an act that is not “support for Israel.” Among the Israelis, there was far less disagreement on these questions. In almost all matters relating to security issues, in the broadest sense, they expressed their expectation of unconditional support. With regard to the political argument over the future of the territories, some of them said that criticism from the Diaspora was desirable – but even among them, there was a tendency to prefer criticism through discreet channels. “I admit that even things that I agree with sound different when someone in Canada or America says them. There are things that are legitimate to say here, when tomorrow you are going into the army, that it is not legitimate to say from your comfortable villa outside Israel,” said one of the Israeli discussants.

DUTY OF CONSULTATION AND CONSIDERATION

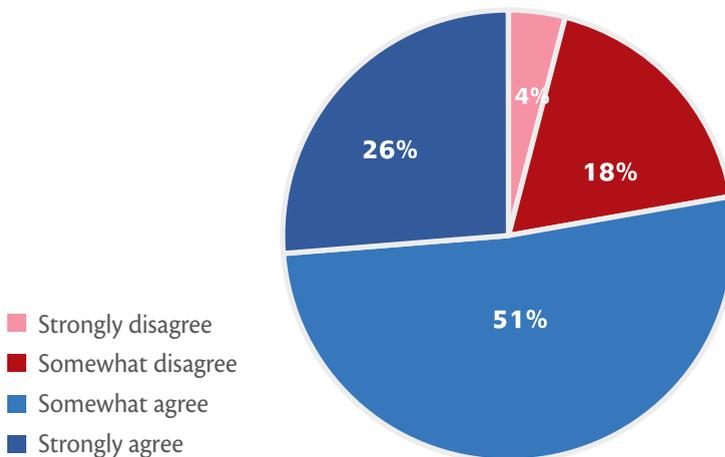
Dialogue participants frequently had difficulty formulating when, in their opinion, Jewish communities in the Diaspora had a duty to consider and consult with Israel. They usually agreed that with regard to an action on behalf of Israel in their country – a political lobby, or action against the boycott – there was some point to a certain degree of coordination with Israel. Although even here there were differences of opinion as to whether it was necessary to coordinate with “Israel,” (the Government of Israel), or whether it was necessary to coordinate with someone “in Israel,” that is, some other Israeli entity. In the discussions, there was resistance to Israel’s attempts to dictate or even influence the way Jewish communities in the Diaspora act. And basically speaking, there was a prevailing opinion that Diaspora Jews can act as they see fit with regard to their communities, without needing to check how Israel would respond, or what its position would be with regard to their actions. At the same time, when we asked in the participant survey about the need to take Israel’s position into account when formulating a policy of Diaspora Jewry, there was broad agreement (approximately 3 out of every 4 Diaspora participants) that such consideration was desirable. In other words, there was a general wish to see a degree of reciprocal consideration, even coordination, but the precise cases to which this coordination would apply, and how it would be implemented, were not always clear.

Doubts with regard to deep coordination with Israel on Diaspora policy (the question being, of course, whether Israel is the “Government of Israel” or a “parallel Israeli organization,” as proposed by a participant in Washington) were expressed with regard to Diaspora actions – for example, whether Diaspora Jews are obliged to consult with Israel in determining local criteria on the question of who is a Jew. It was also expressed with regard to actions by Diaspora Jews in Israel – for example, do Diaspora Jews have a duty to consult and coordinate with Israel when they try to influence Israeli policy, mainly with respect to religion and state issues. In practice, it emerged that with regard to quite a few matters Diaspora Jews are not interested in taking Israel’s position into consideration, as expressed in government policy, and show active resistance to these positions. This refers mainly to subjects relating to the relationship between religion and state in Israel – marriage and

divorce, attitudes toward progressive streams, Western Wall policy, kashrut, conversion, and so on. “What is the point in consulting with Israel on a subject where the purpose is to change Israel?” asked a participant in Chicago. A New York participant felt that “in many cases, our aim is to oppose Israel, even to annoy it, in order to challenge the status quo. Obviously, in these cases we will not coordinate or consult, or the result will be that we do nothing.”

At some discussions, the question came up as to whether there is an asymmetry in the demand that Israel check the position of Diaspora Jews on various matters, while Diaspora Jews are under no obligation to check their positions on these same matters with Israel. For example, a question was raised on the 1983 decision by the Reform Movement to recognize patrilineal descent (according to certain criteria) taken without consultation with Israel.⁶⁶ It was interesting to see that at discussions in the Diaspora, but also at a considerable number of discussions in Israel, participants saw no need for required symmetry. Most of them related to decisions by Diaspora Jews as local decisions relating to the community or stream, and not to the entire Jewish people. This was not the case with regard to Israel’s decisions, interpreted as decisions of a higher order, therefore requiring a broader process of clarification.

Diaspora respondents: Israel’s position should be taken into account when forming policy in Jewish communities



66 With regard to this decision, among other things also regarding Israel-Diaspora relations, see *Fathers of the Faith? Three Decades of Patrilineal Descent in American Reform Judaism*, Sylvia Barack Fishman, JPPI, 2013.

In the view of Israeli participants too, demanding that Diaspora Jews consult with the government on matters of religion and state would miss the point of their activity, since it is indeed in line with the positions of many Israelis. “Taking Israel into consideration is not taking the government into consideration,” said one of them. “Let them consider me and help me to organize less religious coercion here [in Israel], and that will only be a good thing.” Another one said: “If there would be civil marriage here thanks to them, I would not complain.” But there were meetings at which a more cautious position was expressed even with regard to those matters. “I understand that there are Israelis who want civil marriage here. That is what the Knesset is for. It is not a matter for Diaspora Jewry, and if they intervene in it, then at least for me, it will lead to the conclusion that it is better to keep them a little further away,” said a participant in Migdal Oz. Another participant remarked: “This is a matter of principle, those who are here decide what happens here, even when I don’t like it. I don’t want some Jew coming from abroad and telling us what to do, even if by chance it is similar to my own position.”

In general, it was clear among Israeli participants that what tipped the balance for most of them was not the question of government policy – that is, whether Diaspora Jews take into consideration a specific position of a specific government – but the question of consent among the majority in Israel. The more scenarios were presented of actions by Diaspora Jews on subjects that involve deeper disagreement in Israel, the less the Israeli participants were willing to accept such involvement. In practice, consideration as seen by the Israeli Dialogue participants was not consideration of policy, but consideration of social tensions in Israel, and a preference not to see Diaspora Jews acting to exacerbate them. “I am in favor of them coming as much as possible, and taking them into consideration as much as possible, but don’t let them come and create chaos here,” as one Israeli participant put it. “We have enough quarrels of our own, and I am not sure that more quarrels are what Diaspora Jewry should be bringing here,” said another.

DUTY OF ACTION

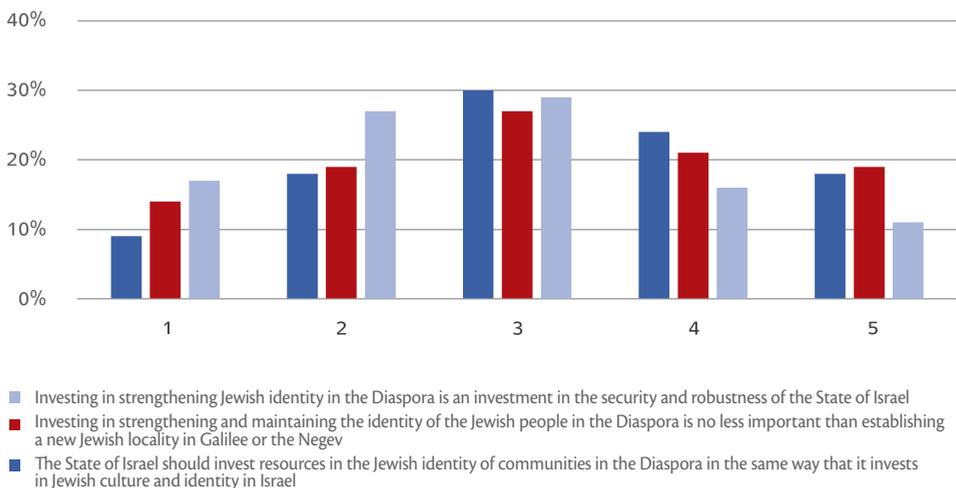
Over many years of Israel-Diaspora relations, the strength of the relationship was measured in terms of the Diaspora's financial support of the State of Israel. The impoverished Israel of the early days was in urgent need of assistance, and Jews around the world who wanted to support the Zionist project without making Aliyah used their purse to demonstrate their commitment to Israel.

The pattern of donations to Israel by Diaspora Jews changed over the years, especially in recent decades, as documented by a number of studies. At the same time, the fact of financial giving to Israel was, and still is, a central channel for expressing Diaspora Jewry's support for Israel – whether for Israel as a state, by donating to state projects, or by donations intended to promote specific issues in Israel, some the subject of general agreement (hospitals, sports institutions), and others a matter of social and political contention (the Progressive movements, associations for refugees, associations in favor and against the settlements, and so forth). Financial support for Israel serves not only as a channel for expressing solidarity, but also as a certain measure of the state of relations between the communities. In times of emergency, concern increases and with it the amount of money donated; in times of controversy, voices are increasingly heard calling for a reduction or even cancelation of economic contributions (as seen recently during the Western Wall crisis).

In the past decade there has also been a significant change in the extent of Israel's contribution to Jewish communities around the world, and to projects intended to strengthen them. The Government of Israel has allocated increasingly large budgets to finance initiatives like Taglit-Birthright, and recently also to fund activities to strengthen Jewish identity in the Diaspora (mainly through the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs). According to various indices, although the willingness of Israelis to support this kind of funding is not very high, it does exist. In the New York Federation survey, a significant majority of Israeli Jews expressed clear support for mutual responsibility among Jews (93%). Israeli participation in funding the Birthright program enjoyed 90% support among the Jewish Israeli public. 53% agreed that Israel should fund sending young Israelis to Diaspora communities, and 56% supported Israeli funding for Jewish education in the Diaspora.

Other surveys, expressing the questions in different formulations, found less support. A survey by the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs itself found: “The majority of the Jewish public does not enthusiastically support investing in Diaspora Jewry; most support for this investment comes when the political and state benefit of the existence of strong Jewish communities in the Diaspora is presented.” As can be seen in the graph below, when investment in the Diaspora is mentioned in comparison to parallel investment in Israel (a locality in the Galilee), or when it is argued that it is of equal importance to investment in Israel, support for it declined significantly. In other words: Israeli Jews are prepared to invest in the Diaspora when it is shown to them as directly and clearly supporting the interests of the State of Israel – and less so when it is shown in the broader context of the Jewish people.

Israelis on investment in Diaspora Jewry (1 highly disagree - 5 highly agree)



Source: Ministry of the Diaspora survey

One of the interesting findings from this year’s Dialogue participant survey relates to the question of financial contributions from the Diaspora to Israel, and from Israel to the Diaspora. In both cases, it seems that public support for financial donations is declining – in both the responses of the Jewish-Israeli participants and of Diaspora Jews (among young people in the Diaspora, support was even lower than the data shown on the table below). In fact, it turns out that among Israelis committed to a relationship with the

Diaspora, support for Israel's financial contributions to Jewish communities is greater than their support for financial contributions from Diaspora Jewry to Israel. This position apparently expresses the sense of responsibility these young Israelis feel toward Diaspora Jews, as well as the sense of power that accompanies Israel's growing status in the Jewish world. 48% of them agree that the Diaspora should support Israel financially – in comparison to 60% who feel that Israel should provide financial support to Diaspora Jewry.

Among Diaspora Jews, a more “classical” view of the financial dynamics can be seen: support for Diaspora contributions to Israel is higher than support for Israeli contributions to the Diaspora. At the same time, it is interesting to see that among Diaspora Jews too, a majority feels that Israel should provide financial support to Jews in the Diaspora – this is a recognition of Israel's financial capability and its increasing responsibility for the Jewish people writ large. It is particularly worth noting the significant gap between the number of older Diaspora Jews who strongly agreed with the statement that Diaspora Jews should send money to Israel (49%), and the number of young people who felt this way (23%). More than a third of young Diaspora Jews (38%) do not feel that Jews should continue providing financial support to Israel.

Subject	Duty of consultation		Duty of action	
	Israelis	Diaspora	Israelis	Diaspora
Strongly agree	6%	39%	11%	13%
Somewhat agree	42%	37%	49%	44%
Total support	48%	76%	60%	57%
Somewhat disagree	41%	20%	38%	35%
Strongly disagree	10%	4%	3%	9%

When participants were presented with various scenarios and then asked which action Diaspora Jewry should take in response, it was possible to identify three main patterns of desired Diaspora action against or in favor of Israel:

- 1. Supportive action during an Israeli emergency:** in the event of an attack against Israel, military or political (political – not on all matters), it is the duty of Diaspora Jewry to stand by Israel in the accepted ways, and to use the means available to them – political lobbying and pressure on their governments, transferring resources and material aid if needed, expressing a decisive position, among other things in order to demonstrate that Israel is not standing alone in the fight. This duty of action the broadest possible agreement among Diaspora Jewry and was also seen as the Diaspora’s central obligation by Israeli Dialogue participants.
- 2. Action to improve Israel’s situation:** this kind of action is not crisis dependent, and here too there is broad agreement. This action is seen as a way of maintaining partnership in building the national home of the entire Jewish people, and it includes both financial assistance – for the construction of hospitals and schools, as well as support for Project Renewal – and also contributions of knowledge, experience, and additional human resources. Some participants indicated the partnerships between Diaspora communities and local Israeli authorities as a successful model for realizing this duty of action.
- 3. Action to change Israel’s situation:** unlike “improvement” action – which is action intended to support mutually agreeable objectives (no one objects to optimizing hospitals), action to “change” Israel is active intervention to bring Israel closer to the intervener’s desired ideal (whether a private donor, federation, a large organization, or synagogue). With regard to such actions it emerges, as could be expected, that there is disagreement among Jews, both in the Diaspora and in Israel. There are those who regard it as a natural measure of involvement on the part of committed partners (“When I fight for social justice in Israel, I contribute to it no less than when I fight against the boycott,” said a participant in Boston), and on the other hand there are those who see it as heavy-handed interference that could result in distancing between Jews.

THE QUESTION OF RECIPROCAL CRITICISM

Is it “permitted” for Diaspora Jews to criticize Israel? Is it “permitted” for Israel to criticize Diaspora Jews? These questions have been discussed at length in recent years in many forums of the Jewish world, where the context was usually a demand for making the rules of the Israel-Diaspora discourse more flexible, so that Israel would no longer be immune to criticism by Diaspora Jews troubled by its policies, in tandem with the argument that criticism is not a mark of distancing, but in fact one of caring engagement and attachment. As formulated by Alon Friedman, of the Masa program, in a Knesset hearing a few years ago: “Our problem has always been – I say this both as a returned emissary who worked for three years on campuses across the United States, and from experience with the programs in Israel – the biggest problem is apathy, not the enthusiastic supporters, who are also sometimes a problem, and not the enthusiastic objectors, whom in any case we will not be able to convince, but the ones who are apathetic, and indifference is, in fact, the biggest challenge that we can set ourselves in order to strengthen this identity.”⁶⁷

In many JPPI studies it has already been determined that the question of criticism is a regular landmine in Israel-Diaspora relations. For example, in the conclusions of the 2015 Dialogue on Jewish values and the use of force in armed conflict, we wrote: “For young people [Jews in the Diaspora] there is less belief in Israel and its policy, a greater tendency to recoil from its actions, more criticism of its actions and their outcome, more demands for consideration of the positions of Diaspora Jewry.” Statements of this kind have also appeared in other publications. Waxman determines, in his book, that “young American Jews are more critical than their parents and their grandparents.” A document of the Reut Institute states: “Today, it is important to recognize the existence of a third way of relating to Israel, which is prevalent among the younger generation in Jewish communities around the world and tries to influence the character of the State of Israel in different ways, including criticism. For the most part this criticism is due to a sense of personal connection and responsibility for the Jewish state, and

67 Meeting of the subcommittee of the Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora committee, January 2012

therefore Israeli society should learn to accept and work with this criticism, and not reject this third form of relationship as ‘anti-Israeli.’”⁶⁸

The subject of criticism of Israel also came up frequently in this year’s Dialogue discussions. Jews around the world wanted to emphasize their right to express criticism of Israel and sharpened the argument that not every expression of criticism means distancing from Israel or erosion of support for it. At the same time, in many discussions it was also argued that the strength of criticism of Israel has become exaggerated, and that the attempt to allow criticism – which was perhaps justified 20 years ago “when it was really not so usual,” as a participant in Washington said – has become “a flood, where it is not always clear whether it helps or damages relations.” And in fact, in recent years it has not been difficult to detect Jewish criticism of Israel, and impossible to say that Diaspora Jews avoid expressing criticism of it. Both in individual personal expressions by leaders, columnists, prominent Jews and others, and in community frameworks, such as organizations, synagogues, and federations, criticism of Israel is frequently heard.

This is certainly the case when Israel acts in a way that sparks disagreement from Jewish leaders on matters that relate directly to Diaspora Jewry. A notable example is the consternation over the Western Wall plaza, which led to an extensive wave of criticism against Israel, some of it harsh. The same is true when Israel acts on matters with an indirect connection to Diaspora Jewry. One recent example is Israeli policy with regard to illegal migrants, which elicited profound criticism from some Diaspora Jews.⁶⁹ This subject came up at a number of Dialogue seminars, in connection with discussions on criticism and the standards Diaspora Jewry should or may demand of Israel. “I cannot keep silent when Israel expels asylum seekers,” said a participant in Austin. “If you ask me not to speak, you are in fact telling me that I’m not part of the game,” remarked a participant in New York.

As also seen in previous Dialogues and studies, the question of criticism of Israel corresponds to the political identity of the participants, and this was demonstrated again this year – both with regard to Diaspora and Israeli

68 The Future of the Nation-State of the Jewish People, Reut Institute, 2017 <https://reutgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2017/03/Nation-State-Mar14-2017.pdf>

69 See: An Integrated Jewish World Response to Israel’s Migrant Challenge, JPPJ 2018.

participants. The more left leaning participants were, the more they wanted to see Israel exposed to criticism. In other words, it is hard to separate positions relating to the right (or duty) of Diaspora Jews to criticize Israeli policy from political orientation. In this context, Israelis also say that they are willing to hear criticism, as already mentioned in the Institute’s previous studies. According to a number of studies, there is a high level of acceptance and agreement in Israel with world Jewry’s right to level criticism at Israel, and this is a mark of the fact that Israelis are not blind to the expectations of Diaspora Jews. “62% [of Israelis] say that an American Jew has the right to express free and public criticism of Israel and its policy; this rate is double or more the number of Israelis who do not think so.”⁷⁰ But beyond the basic matter – the political context creates difficulty because the Jewish population in the Diaspora tends to lean left far more than Jewish Israelis. This means the Israeli public is often inclined to reject the Diaspora criticism – not in principle but practically. Conversely, non-Israeli Jews public have a greater tendency to demand the right of Jewish criticism, both in principle and practice.

Below is a breakdown by political orientation to level of agreement with the notion that Diaspora Jews should demand a higher standard of Israel than that demanded of other countries. It clearly shows that agreement is higher in Israel among the left. The same is true for the Diaspora.

	Israelis		Diaspora		
	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	
Left	65%	35%	73%	27%	Very liberal
Center-Left	63%	37%	54%	46%	Liberal
Center	49%	51%	45%	55%	Center
Center-Right	50%	50%	47%	53%	Conservative
Right	55%	45%	32%	68%	Very conservative

As noted, inherent in this political breakdown is the potential for disagreement: among Diaspora Jews there will be a majority wishing that Israel adhere to a higher standard, while a majority of Israeli Jews do not. This difficulty requires

70 JPPI’s 2014 Dialogue report, p. 59

a degree of caution: if Israelis do not allow a reasonable space for criticism without responding as if it is illegitimate, it will be very hard for Diaspora Jews to maintain a real dialogue with Israel – and will result in accusations that Israel and its supporters are limiting the freedom of Diaspora to express a dissenting opinion. On the other hand, if the critical dialogue against Israel expands considerably among Diaspora Jewry and takes up a significant part of the discussion on Israel and the arena of relations with it, it will provoke irritation and even anger among many Israelis – Israelis who are not interested in yet more criticism of their country. “There is enough criticism of Israel, so why do the Jews also have to be critical? What, do they feel there is a lack?” asked an Israeli participant, sarcastically.

In parallel to the discussion on criticism of Israel by Diaspora Jews, in some discussions claims were also made with regard to Israeli criticism of Diaspora Jews. This mainly involves sharp or dismissive expressions by state entities, rabbis, or politicians against the non-Orthodox religious streams. These expressions are not seen as constructive criticism, but rather as insults – and it must be said that the style does indeed sometimes tend to be offensive. At the same time, it seems that Diaspora Jews also have difficulty accepting Israeli criticism expressed with relative courtesy, especially when it comes to sweeping statements about their future, their beliefs, or their culture. “I do not want to hear all kinds of Israelis explaining that soon there will be no Jews in the Diaspora, because we are here to stay,” said one American participant. “You have an obsession with assimilation,” said another, referring to the Israelis. “But we will not suddenly start telling our young people who they should marry, and we will not use the criteria of Orthodox rabbis who understand nothing about life in the Diaspora for acceptance into our communities,” said yet another.

An attempt to set clear lines of “permissible” and “prohibited” criticism raises many difficulties – first of all for the fundamental reason that many Jews are not interested in any entity setting such boundaries. At the same time, in the Dialogue discussions there was general agreement that the use of criticism should itself be controlled, and that the results of criticism are not always positive. “The purpose in my view is not to blame Israel, but to be effective in influencing it. If that means criticism – let there be criticism.

But if the criticism doesn't work – it may be worthwhile trying something else," said a participant in St Louis. A young participant from Australia noted (in a discussion in Israel) that she understood "why Israelis sometimes get angry when all kinds of arguments are made. You have to think how to reach their heart, and not how to annoy them."

DUTY OF CONSULTATION, DUTY OF ACTION

The table below summarizes some of the main issues over which there was broad consensus on the Diaspora's duty of consultation with Israel, and the subjects where there was broad consensus over Diaspora Jews' duty of action due to its commitment to Israel.

Subject	Duty of consultation	Duty of action
<i>Safe haven</i>		Assistance to Israel in everything relating to reinforcing it as a safe haven, including political support (relating to its ability to survive) and economic support
<i>Investment of resources</i>		Continuing to invest in Israel, both in strengthening the country, and in well-considered reinforcement of specific entities in accordance with positions and priorities
<i>Who is a Jew and Return</i>	Constant exchange of opinions on the question of the Jewish space and its impact on relations with the communities	Recognition and action taking into account the possibility that a dramatic change in the Jewish space in the Diaspora is liable to cause Israel to change the definitions of Return
<i>Jewish pluralism in Israel</i>	Exchanges of ideas with appropriate entities (including those with opposite positions) in order to correctly identify the possible space for action in Israel	Actions to strengthen Jewish pluralism in Israel, on the basis of alert identification of the social and political reality
<i>Dialogue</i>	With all of Israel, including all its social and political components	Draw guidelines from the Dialogue to change and adapt policy in the Diaspora as well

CULTURAL AND PERSONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN JEWS

The last (and essential) section in this discussion of Israel-Diaspora relations concerns relations that are neither orderly nor institutional: people-to-people relations between Diaspora and Israeli Jews. In recent decades the ability to create such encounters has improved considerably, both physically and in cyberspace. According to many parameters available to researchers, these meetings generate greater attention, reinforce the desire for cooperation, and contribute to a feeling of shared fate.

Relationships between Jews are reinforced through initiated activities, such as various Israel travel programs, sending Israeli emissaries to the Diaspora, domestic and external tourism, and so on. A considerable number of Dialogue participants agreed that such relationships have a greater and more significant influence than institutional activities.

“It is enough to have a few days’ acquaintance with Jews from other places to understand that Israel is not the only option for Judaism,” said a young Israeli at one of the *mechinot* (which brings together Israelis and non-Israelis). “When I am here I understand much better how Israelis think and what they are dealing with. When I was abroad I was living in La-la land,” said a young Diaspora participant. “I have family members in Israel, so with all due respect to ideology, when missiles rain down on them my heart is with them,” said a participant in Minneapolis. “I believe that, in the final analysis, personal relations are the key. The more we bring Israelis and American Jews to meet each other, the fewer problems there will be,” said a leader of one of the large U.S. communities.

Personal encounter initiatives are sometimes made possible through programmatic activities by Israel or by Diaspora communities, but in quite a few cases it is the result of unmediated personal encounters sought and experienced by individual Jews. Diaspora Jews come to Israel and “feel at home,” as an absolute majority of Diaspora participants in the Dialogue agreed (82% of all Diaspora participants, slightly more than 70% of the young Diaspora participants). So much so, that 63% of them “would consider living in Israel.”

Among Israelis, almost all of them young, 69% said that they “feel at home” when visiting a Jewish community in the Diaspora. 86% of them said that if they lived in the Diaspora “I would be a member of the Jewish community.” (The actual figures with regard to the Israelis living in the Diaspora are considerably lower. It is only in recent years that there has been a certain awakening that has led a more significant number of them to consider being involved in a Jewish community).

So mainly, as a mentioned, the impression is that “the Jews themselves” are what brings Israel and the Diaspora closer. When we examine the relative strength of the forces of attraction and distancing, it emerges that the Jews are the least distancing, and also the most attracting. This is true with regard to both bringing Diaspora Jews closer to Israel, and bringing Israeli Jews closer to the Diaspora. The table below shows that “The Jews” got the highest score (on a scale of 1 – 4) as an “attracting” factor, and the lowest score as a “distancing” factor.

Israelis	Politics	Culture	The Jews	History	Jewishness
Brings closer	1.7	2.6	3.3	3.1	3
Distances	2.1	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.3

APPENDIX

BASIC DATA ON THE DIALOGUE

Participants in the Dialogue:

Number of groups: 33

Number of participants: 675

Groups moderated by the Institute: 27

Groups moderated by the communities: 6

This special JPPI report is based on discussions held throughout the Jewish world. It is also based on extensive data collection, and makes use of an abundance of research studies, documents, books, and articles published in the past. Comments on some of the background materials we utilized appear in the references. Additional research was used mainly to strengthen our understanding of the background of the discussion topics, while the seminars enabled us to learn first hand the positions of the Jewish leaders, professionals, philanthropists, activists, and other Jews involved in the community. Discussions were held between November 2017 and March 2018.

Alongside the discussion groups, all Dialogue participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire enables us to obtain additional and focused information on the approach of the participants and allows a more accurate and detailed picture to be presented of the groups participating in the process (such as the participant age, religious affiliation, and the number of times they have visited Israel). These data are also used in comparing the participants in this year's Dialogue and participants in previous JPPI Dialogues, and describing the Jewish population in general, by comparing the data of all the studies. Given the subject of the Dialogue this year – an attempt to outline the way forward in Israel-Diaspora relations – a greater number of Israelis, almost all of them young people, participated in the process than in the past. We also sought out and included more groups of young Diaspora Jews.

Naturally, the conclusions arising from the seminars, the survey, and the background materials are liable to meet reservations and criticisms, and we cannot present them without calling attention to a number of factors, that will explain the context in which the seminars were held, and without clarifying what they can achieve for certain, and what they cannot.

Structure and content of the seminars:

The majority of the seminars lasted between one and a half hours and two hours. All the discussion groups included fewer than 20 participants. In communities where there were more participants, they were divided into separate discussion groups, which were documented separately. Seminars opened with the presentation of background data on Israel-Diaspora relations from before the establishment of the state to the present day, including a brief explanation of some of the subjects that have been in most dispute and have resulted in the greatest strains on the relationship. Participants were also shown a graph depicting the demographic development of Diaspora communities in comparison with Israel.

After a brief presentation of the background material, and before the discussions started, participants were asked to fill out the survey questionnaire. Then the seminars continued to the main subject – a number of test cases were presented for practical and more detailed discussion. Among other things, participants were asked to help us fill out a table of Israeli “duties” with respect to the Diaspora and of the Diaspora duties with respect to Israel. Participants were also challenged with a number of test cases – what Israel should do in the case of rising anti-Semitism in the Diaspora, what Diaspora Jews should do in the case of a Hezbollah attack on Israel, what would the right response be when there is a disagreement such as that over the Western Wall, or when Israel identifies worrying demographic trends in the Diaspora, and so on.

Participants were asked to express their opinions with regard to these subjects in connection with specific tasks, for which they were given information and examples of specific implications of different responses to these questions.

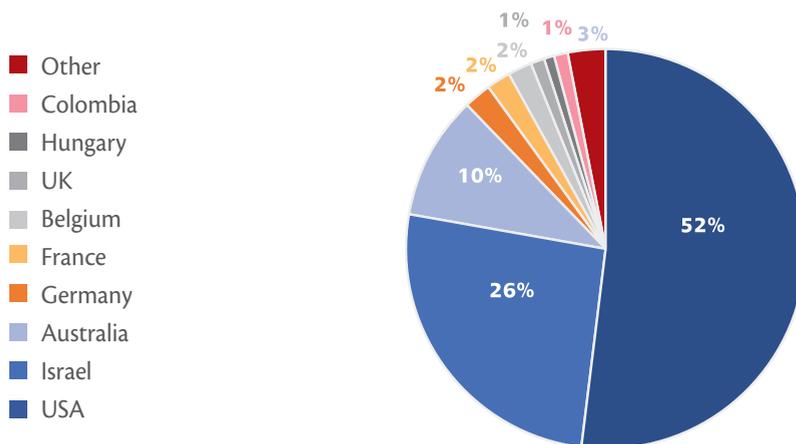
Bias in favor of the core population of the Jewish community:

An understanding of the process, its advantages and its limitations, necessitates first

noting that the process relies on the local communities (and local organizations). Each community was responsible for enlisting the participants the seminar groups. Accordingly, there are significant differences in the composition and size of the groups between the different communities. However, one thing is common to them all: the established community – usually the federation, but sometimes also other organizations, and this year also quite a number of Israeli emissaries – was the organizing body that assembled the participants. In many cases the convening body reported on the discussions and their findings to JPPI. Because we rely on reports from the seminars in all the communities, it is important to recognize that these reports reflect the attitudes of Jews connected to the organized Jewish community, often the attitudes of Jews in different positions of communal leadership. They do not accurately reflect the positions of Jews whose connection to established Jewish life is weak or non-existent. We know from previous studies that affiliated members of a community attribute greater importance to their Jewish identity, are more active both in their personal Jewish life, and as members of the community, are more connected to Israel, and in certain cases also tend to be less liberal than other Jewish groups. The information we have collected indicates, for example, that the Dialogue participants tend to visit Israel much more frequently than “the average Jew” (see data below). Naturally, these characteristics are likely to affect the attitudes of Dialogue participants.

This year, a relatively large number of participants from Israel were included, as well as from the U.S., Australia, and some European countries. Below is the breakdown of participants by geographic region:

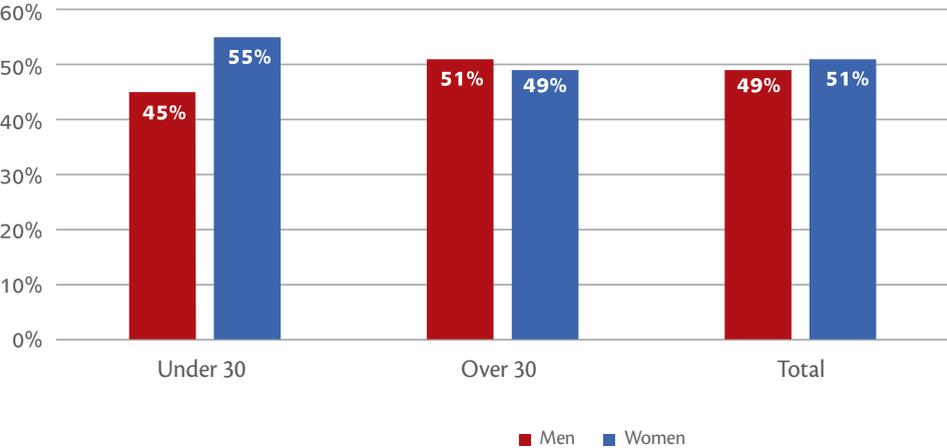
Breakdown of participants by geographic region



DIASPORA PARTICIPANTS

In analyzing the data, we divided the participants from the Diaspora into two main groups: participants over the age of 30, and those who are under the age of 30 – a large number of them took part in the framework of specific groups of young people (in particular in a number of universities). Of all the participants in the Diaspora, % were under 30, and the rest (%) were over 30. The following graphs present a few more characteristics of the participants, divided by age:

Diaspora, age and gender



By political breakdown, Diaspora Jews in the Dialogue clearly tended to the left, as can also be seen in the data of many other surveys. The young participants have a slightly greater tendency to the left than the older participants in the Dialogue.

	Very conservative	Conservative	Center	Liberal	Very liberal
Under 30	1%	13%	33%	40%	13%
Over 30	4%	18%	33%	36%	9%
Total	3%	16%	33%	37%	11%

When examining these data as compared to general surveys on the political position of American Jews – who make up the major Jewish community of the Diaspora – it can be seen that the Dialogue participants, at least in the U.S., are not very different in their political leanings from the overall Jewish population as sampled by the Pew Research Center in 2013.

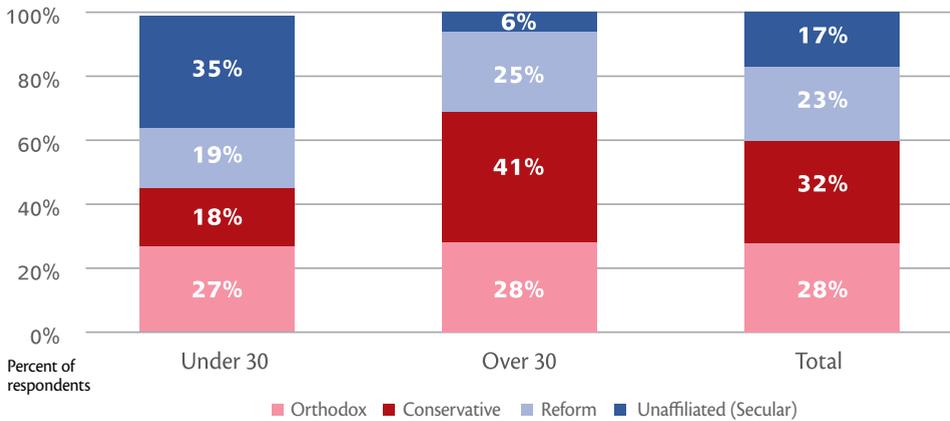
	Conservative	Center	Liberal
Pew 2013	19%	29%	49%
Dialogue (U.S. only)	21%	32%	47%

In a separate examination of the Dialogue participants from the U.S. by age against parallel data on all American Jews, once again it can be seen that there is no significant difference in the political derivation between the Dialogue participants and the general Jewish population.

	Conservative	Center	Liberal
Pew 2013 (18 – 29)	16%	28%	54%
Dialogue (U.S. only, under 30)	13%	28%	59%

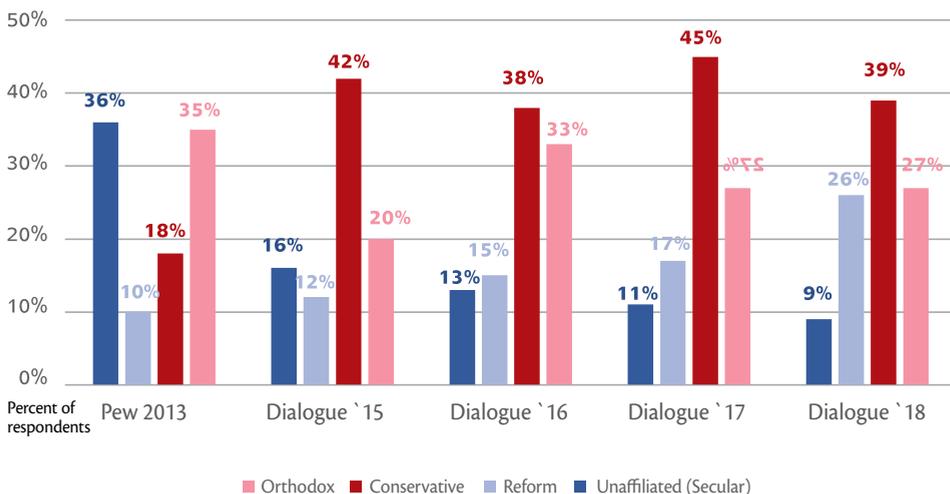
The breakdown of Diaspora Jews participating in the Dialogue by religious stream emphasizes the Conservative stream as against its relative weight in the Jewish population. In addition, significant gaps can be identified between young and older Dialogue participants, with a much stronger tendency among the young people not to be affiliated with any stream – a situation that exists not only among the Dialogue participants but also among the general population of Jews around the world. Around one-third of the participants under the age of 30 do not identify with any stream, and call themselves secular, compared with a much smaller percentage (6%) among the older participants.

Dialogue 2018, Diaspora: affiliation with a religious stream



As can be seen from a comparison of the different Dialogues to date, and the comprehensive Pew survey of American Jews in 2013, this year too, as in previous years, Jews who are not affiliated with any stream are underrepresented in the Dialogue (this is not surprising, since they tend to be less involved in Jewish activity and contacts with the Jewish community, and therefore their tendency to come to Dialogue meetings will be relatively low). On the other hand, representation of Conservative Jews in the Dialogue is very high by comparison with their representation in the overall Jewish-American population. This year a certain increase can also be seen in the representation of the number of Orthodox Jews in the United States relative to Dialogues in previous years.

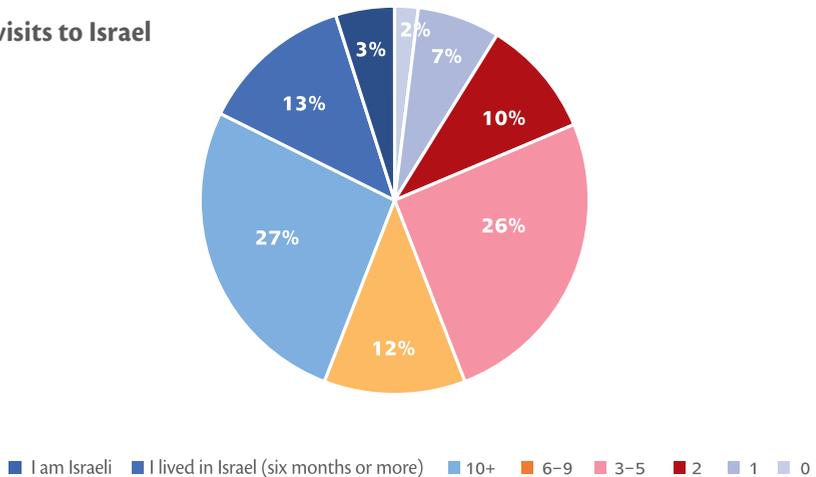
Breakdown by religious stream (U.S.)



VISITS TO ISRAEL

One of the main characteristics differentiating the Diaspora Dialogue participants from Diaspora Jewry in general is the considerably greater number of them who have visited Israel, usually many times, and some have even lived in Israel. Therefore, it may be assumed that the groups taking part in the discussions exhibited a certain bias on the subject of Israel, especially in a Dialogue whose main objective was to discuss relations between Israel and the Diaspora. Around a quarter of all Dialogue participants had visited Israel more than 10 times, only 2% had never visited Israel, and only 10% had only visited once.

Number of visits to Israel

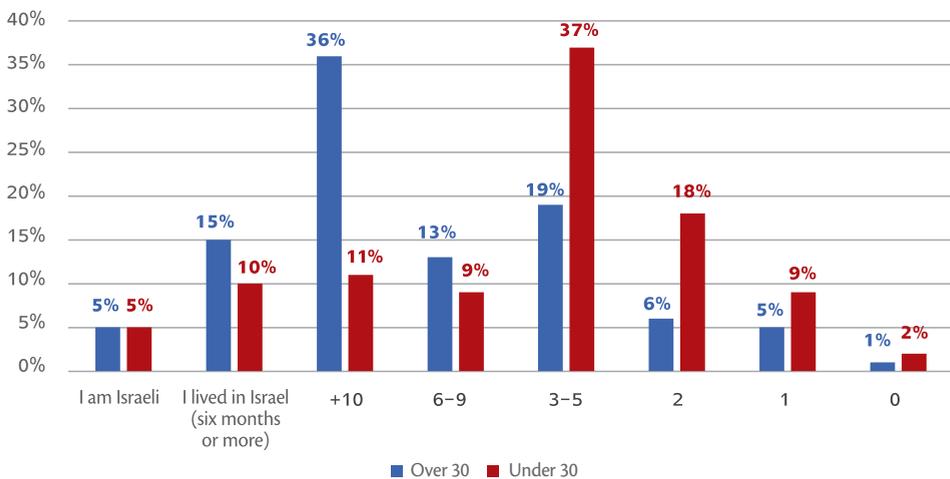


These data on the number of visits to Israel are significantly higher in comparison to the rest of the Jewish population. They are very similar to the data of previous Dialogues, where participants were also mainly Jews who had visited Israel, usually many times – many of them because of the fact that they served in communal leadership roles and were very involved in their communities.

	Dialogue 18	Dialogue 17	Pew (U.S.)
Visited Israel	98%	97.00%	43%
Visited more than once	91%	92.00%	23%

In a comparison of the data on the number of visits to Israel by age, significant gaps can be seen between the group of young people in the Diaspora and the group of older people. This should not come as a great surprise, among other reasons because the young people have had fewer years in which to visit Israel. It, therefore, is to be expected that even if the young people have a basic interest in visiting Israel, the number of trips they have taken to date will almost certainly be fewer than their older counterparts. It is worth mentioning the fact that even among young participants, only 2% have never visited Israel, and almost 90% of them have visited Israel more than once. According to Pew Research Center data on U.S. Jews, more than half (56%) of young people aged 18 to 29 have not visited Israel – so relative to this group, it is clear that the Dialogue participants have a more active and closer familiarity with Israel than many of their generation of Jews. It should be noted that the Pew data relate to the Jews of the United States. There are communities in which the number of visits to Israel is higher. A study of Australian Jews by the University of Monash found that 86% of the respondents had visited Israel, where 50% of the respondents from Melbourne and 45% of the respondents from Sydney had visited three times or more.⁷¹

Visits to Israel (by age)



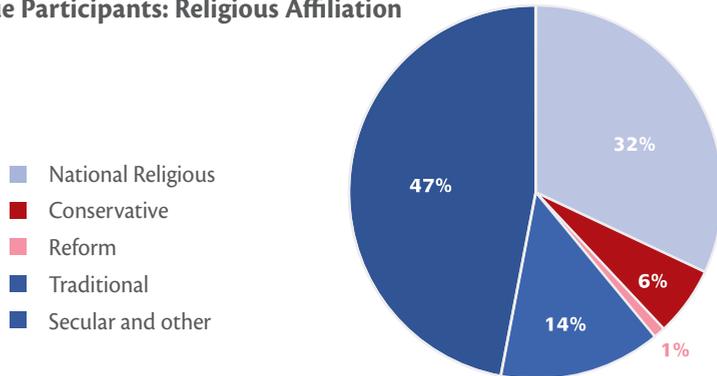
71 Preliminary findings: Melbourne & Sydney, Andrew Markus, Nicky Jacobs, Tanya Aronov, 2009 <http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/gen08/files/2012/12/gen08-report1-preliminary-findings.pdf>

ISRAEL PARTICIPANTS

Among the Israeli participants in this year's Dialogue, some 160 in number, a large majority were under 30 – and, in fact, a considerable number of them were under 20 years old, that is, young people about to be conscripted. These Israelis were mostly in preparatory course frameworks (*mechinot*), some of which emphasize the partnership between Israeli and Diaspora Jews. This means that *a priori* the Israeli participants had a significantly greater interest in Diaspora Jewry than that of young Israelis in general.

A small majority of Israeli participants were female (56%). About half of the Israelis defined themselves as secular (or used another definition that can be included under the umbrella of “secular”). About one-third defined themselves as religious. The lack of young Haredi was conspicuous in the Dialogue – a significant group among all Jews in Israel (Haredi Jews in total constitute 10% of the Israel's Jewish population, but among young people, their number is greater).

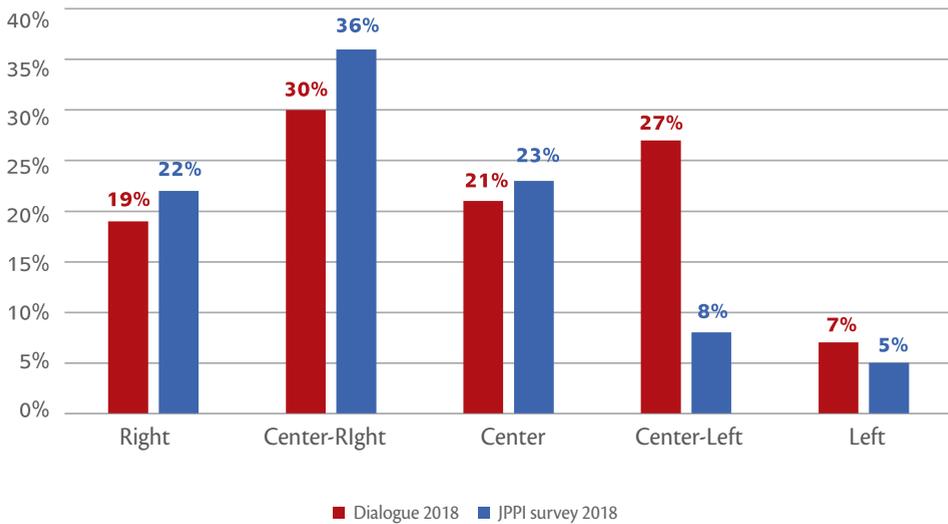
Israeli Dialogue Participants: Religious Affiliation



According to political segmentation, Dialogue participants do not exactly represent Israel's Jewish population and lean somewhat to the left. The gap is notable mainly in the percentage of Israeli participants defining themselves as left-center, which is considerably higher than that of Israeli society in general. The absence of Haredi youth in the Dialogue process surely had a certain effect on this political breakdown, as well as the choice (which was to considerable degree by chance, according to the response of different institutions) of *mechinot* where the political leanings of those who join them do not necessarily reflect those of general Israeli society (it can be assumed

that the population of *mechinot*, other than religious *mechinot*, has more of a left-leaning slant than the overall Israeli society). The graph below shows the data of the Dialogue survey by political orientation, as against JPPI's 2018 Pluralism Survey, which is an opinion poll representing Israeli society carried out by Panels Politics Institute's pollster Menachem Lazar.

Political position: dialogue survey against Institute survey



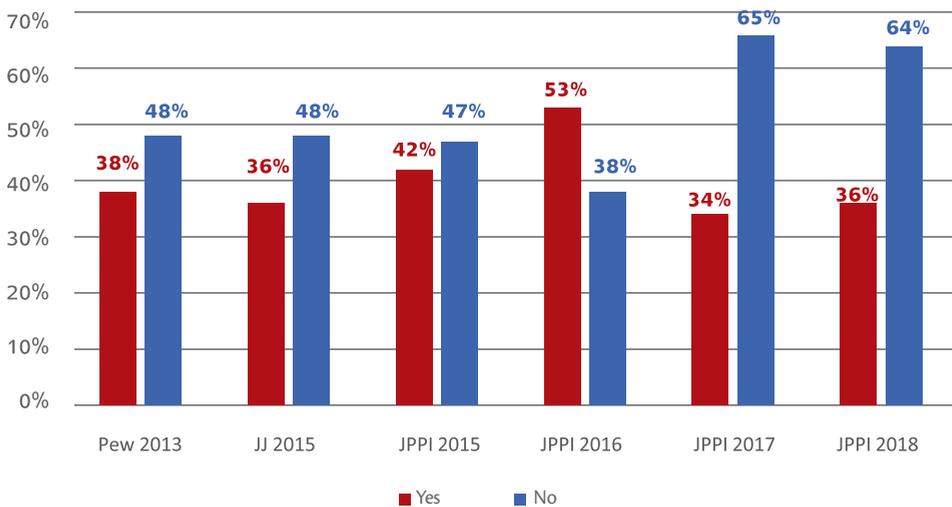
THE QUESTION OF PEACE: COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEARS

This is the fourth consecutive year that we have asked the same question with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, in order to obtain an idea about the political affinities of Dialogue participants. The question – “In your opinion, is the current Israeli government making a sincere effort to bring about a peace settlement with the Palestinians?” – is presented in several other surveys. In this way we can show the way in which the answers of the Dialogue participants change from year to year, and also compare the composition of the Dialogue participants with that of Jewish groups in other surveys.

The following diagram compares the four Dialogue surveys with two other surveys asking the same question: one survey of American Jews by the Pew

Research Center (from 2013), and the second, a survey of American Jews by the *Jewish Journal* (from 2015). Of course, these surveys are not really comparable in scientific terms. JPPI included participants from all around the world, while the Pew Research Center and the *Jewish Journal* surveys are a statistical representation of American Jewry. In addition, the surveys were carried out in different years, and the circumstances relating to the Israeli-Palestinian issue are not the same each year. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that it is possible to see a degree of uniformity in the results obtained. First of all, it is clear that the majority of the Jews have doubts with regard to whether Israel's efforts are sincere. In addition, it seems that the skepticism of the Jews is increasing. As can be seen, the fact that the Jewish People Policy Institute's Dialogue includes people who are very connected to Israel and have visited many times does not make this question about the degree of sincerity of Israel's efforts less interesting.

Diaspora Jews: Is the State of Israel making a sincere effort to achieve peace

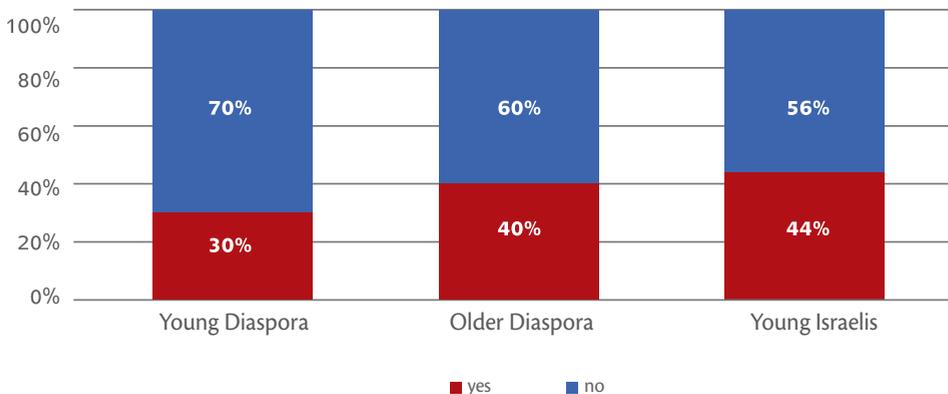


This year's Dialogue included a greater number of Israelis than in previous years, and therefore it is possible to present a more intriguing examination of the disparity between what the Israeli Dialogue participants think about Israel's sincerity in achieving peace with the Palestinians and what the Diaspora participants think. In addition, the relatively large number of young survey respondents enable a comparison to be made between older and younger Jews (in the Diaspora; in Israel almost all the Dialogue participants were

young). As can be seen, there are gaps, where the hierarchy is: older Diaspora Jews have slightly more faith in Israel, younger Israelis slightly less, and young Jews in the Diaspora least of all. It should be said that the data presented here with regard to the Israeli participants are not significantly different from the data from surveys with the statistical validity to represent the entire Jewish population of Israel.⁷²

This document does not deal individually with questions relating to the political process and the way Diaspora Jews understand Israel's position on this issue. At the same time, it should be said that this issue was brought up repeatedly by the participants themselves in many of the discussions, usually in connection with a subject that does not bring Israel and the Diaspora closer together but creates distance between them. The data presented here, which show how Israel appears in the eyes of those who define themselves as friends, and who visit frequently, should be cause for concern. It is possible to argue over the question of whether Israel is indeed sincere in its efforts to achieve peace – but it is hard to argue with clear evidence of the fact that the Jews themselves do not express any great faith in these efforts.

Peace efforts: young people, older people, Israelis



72 See, for example, the Peace Index survey of September 2015. Although the question deals with Prime Minister Netanyahu personally, and therefore should be examined with the necessary caution, the data are not very different: 59% of the Jews do not believe that his position with regard to the two-state solution is sincere, as against 30% who believe it is sincere. https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http://www.peaceindex.org/files/Peace_Index_Data_September_2015-Heb.doc

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take 10 minutes to answer the following questions. For each question, please give the one **answer** that is **closest** to your own view.

1. Please state if you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Agree	Disagree
Israel is the center of the Jewish people		
Caring about Israel is a very important part of my being Jewish		
I often feel proud of Israel		
I often feel ashamed of Israel		
I often feel angry at Israel		
Israeli Jews are from Mars, Diaspora Jews are from Venus		
Israel and world Jewry are drifting apart		
Young Jews don't much care about Israel		
Israel doesn't much care about other Jews		
Diaspora Jewry will not survive without Israel		
Israel will not survive without the support of world Jewry		
When visiting Israel, I feel at home		
I would consider living in Israel		

2. From what you know/have heard/have seen, contemporary Israel is:

- a. Developing in the right direction
- b. Developing in the wrong direction

b. Please circle the one main negative component of your assessment of Israel's situation (even if you chose "right direction"):

Israel-Arab relations	Israel-Diaspora relations	Israel's Economic situation	Israel's political culture	Israel's religious landscape	Other, specify _____ _____
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3. When thinking about Israel's relations with non-Israeli Jews, what is your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Israel is a "safe haven" for all Jews				
Israel should give material support to world Jewish communities				
Israel should stop presenting itself as the leader of all Jews				
Israel should stop calling for Aliyah				
Israel should serve as the center of Jewish ideas and learning				
There should be no special relationship between Israel and non-Israeli Jews				

4. When thinking about Diaspora Jews' relations with Israel, what is your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Jews need to support Israel at most times				
Jews should send money to help Israel				
It's time for Jews to stop looking at Israel as the center of their Jewish universe				
Jews must hold Israel to a standard higher than other countries				
Jewish organizations and communities ought to consider the concerns of Israel when devising their policies				

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
World Jewry demands too much of Israel				
Jewish organizations should call for Aliyah				

5. From what you know/have heard/have seen, the Jewish world outside of Israel is:

- a. Developing in the right direction
- b. Developing in the wrong direction

b. Please circle the one main negative component of your assessment of the Jewish world (even if you chose “right direction”):

Level of commitment to Judaism	Israel – Diaspora relations	State of Jewish organizations	Assimilation	Level of anti-Semitism	Other, specify _____ _____

6. Thinking about Israel-Diaspora relations, do you generally believe that (choose only one answer):

- a. Israel should make policies without regard to the views of Jews living outside Israel.
- b. Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews mostly because its decisions may affect their lives in the Diaspora.
- c. Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews, mostly because Israel is the home of all Jews.
- d. Israel should consider the views of non-Israeli Jews, mostly because it wants to keep the support of other Jews.

7. a. To what extent do the following items make you feel connected to Israel? Please rank the items on the list from 1 to 4 (1 – Not at all Connected, 2 – Somewhat Connected, 3 – Connected, 4 – Strongly Connected):

	Not at all Connected	Somewhat Connected	Connected	Strongly Connected
Israel's politics	1	2	3	4
Israel's culture	1	2	3	4
Israelis	1	2	3	4
Israel's history	1	2	3	4
Israel's Jewishness	1	2	3	4
Israel's security and foreign policy	1	2	3	4

b. To what extent do the following items make you feel distanced from Israel? Please rank the items on the list from 1 to 4 (1 – Not at all Distanced, 2 – Somewhat Distanced, 3 – Distanced, 4 – Strongly Distanced):

	Not at all Distanced	Somewhat Distanced	Distanced	Strongly Distanced
Israel's politics	1	2	3	4
Israel's culture	1	2	3	4
Israelis	1	2	3	4
Israel's history	1	2	3	4
Israel's Jewishness	1	2	3	4
Israel's security and foreign policy	1	2	3	4

8. Please answer this pop-quiz (without consulting your friends):

- a. When was the Yom Kippur War:
 - 1) 1968
 - 2) 1975
 - 3) 1973
 - 4) 1982

- b. Who is Shlomo Artzi:
 - 1) A musician
 - 2) A painter
 - 3) A philosopher
 - 4) A politician

- c. Where is Yerucham:
 - 1) Israel's north
 - 2) Israel's south
 - 3) Lebanon
 - 4) In Jerusalem

- d. What is Le-Hit-Ra-Ot in Hebrew:
 - 1) See you later
 - 2) Welcome
 - 3) Peace
 - 4) A Moroccan candy

- e. What is the percentage of Jewish Israelis who say they are secular (Hiloni):
 - 1) Less than 10%
 - 2) 20-30%
 - 3) About half
 - 4) A clear majority

f. Israel's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in 2016 (in US Dollars) was:

- 1) \$24,000
- 2) \$33,000
- 3) \$11,000
- 4) \$58,000

g. The narrowest path from the Green Line (1967 line) to the Mediterranean is:

- 1) 20 miles
- 2) 55 miles
- 3) 8 miles
- 4) 200 miles

h. Israel's Knesset (parliament) has:

- 1) 70 members
- 2) 50 members
- 3) 120 members
- 4) 100 members

Please answer the following background questions:

Country: _____ **City:** _____

Age: _____ **M/F**

Religious affiliation (Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Secular, Other)

How many times have you visited Israel?

0	1	2	3-5	6-9	10+	Israeli
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Your political tendency is:

Very liberal	liberal	moderate	conservative	Very conservative
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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

Questionnaire for participants in the Diaspora (the questionnaire was given out also in French and German)

PARTIAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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

Allison Levine	Gary gross	Bredley shalng
Kari Blumenthal	Stephanie Hoffman	Eliav shravit
Keith librman	Aviva Roland	Cheryl Davis
Adam Jacobs	Stephanie kahn	Score spiergle
Pinchas Landis	Shelly Gimbel	Greg marcous
David Heller	Abbie Levin	Debbie vien
Ira Kaplan	Jeff wig	Natan malgron
Robert Goldberg	Tom caplan	Matt Newman
Oren baratz	Enid Rosenberg	Ilanit gerblichkazir
Amy Kaplan	Danielle wild	Lynne Cohen
Rob brick	Lisa hacker	Andrew zelman
Tracy Bergman	Heddy Adler	Alan gross
Beth Brandon	Ann garson	Howard wolf
Lisa lebaitz	Hedy milgrom	Melanie Lieberman
Rob Wolff	Jessica Cohen	halvorson
Renny Wolfson	Alan charnas	Orry Jacobs
Shelly marcaus	Carol wolf	

Wilmington, Delaware, USA

קהילה יהודית בדלוור, ווילמינגטון

Coordinator: Russel Silberglied

Moderator & Note-taker: Shmuel Rosner

Brent Saliman	Seth Katzen	Henry Weiner
Joel Friedlander	Jenn Steinberg	Heddy Mintz
Ivy Harlev	Laura Rubin	Robin K. Saran
Mark Wagman	Marty Zukoff	Michelle Silberglied
Regina Alonzo	Ellen Bernhart	
Alan Ebner	Gael Szymanski	
Richard Levine	Lisa Dadone Weiner	
Connie Sugarman		

Jewish community in Minneapolis–Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA

הקהילה היהודית במינסוטה

Coordinator: Tal Dror

Moderator & Note-taker: Shmuel Rosner

Zionist Federation of Australia, NSW, Sydney, Australia

הפדרציה הציונית בסידני, אוסטרליה

Coordinator: Emily Gian

Moderator: Dr. Ron Weiser AM

Note taker: Adam Carpenter

Bloom Kobi	Louria Naama	Samuel Jonathan
Campbell Jake	Meltzer Julia	Siegel Rabbi Daniel
Carpenter Mr Adam	Phillipsohn OAM Peter	Warner Hall Jordan
Cohen Tomer	Royal Nat	Weiser AM Dr Ron
Lewin Ianir	Rutowitz Romi	

UJA – Federation of New York

הפדרציה היהודית בניו יורק

Coordinator: Penina Grossberg

Moderator: John Ruskay

Rena Allen	Joshua fried	Rebecca said lower
Alexander bebeszko	Shaun goldstone	Deb scher
Andrew belinfante	Evan hochberg	Beck skoff
Jenna Citron	Sam koing	Hanna schlager
Erica Cohen	Elisabeth kostin	Franny Silverman
Nina faynberg	Kate lauzar	Jen vegh
Shira felberbaum	Mordechai lightstone	
Erica Frenkel	Adina poupko	

Jewish Federation of St. Louis

הפדרציה היהודית בסיינט לואיס

Coordinator: Cyndee levy

Moderator & Note-taker: Shmuel Rosner

State Zionist Council of Victoria

הפדרציה הציונית במלבורן

Moderator: Jodi Liebenberg

Brussels UEJB

הקהילה היהודית בבריסל

Moderator & Note-taker: DR Dov Maimon

Steve Diamant	Jonathan De Lathouwer	Camelia Ostrowski
Amir Adam	Lucas De Lathouwer	Salama Tslilia
Nathan Behar	Stefan Goltzberg	David Sierzant Acitores
Charles Gleicher	Sacha Langlet	Julia Szerer
Olivier Danenberg	Clémentine Le Roy	Samy Weimberg

Jewish community in Berlin

Moderator & Note-taker: DR Dov Maimon

Rabbiner Shlomo Afanasev

Sandra Anusiewicz-Baer

Hannah Dannel

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Shila Erlbaum

Rabbiner Fabian

Dalia Grinfeld

Sabine Reisin

Rabbiner BorisRonis

הקהילה היהודית בברלין

Renée Röske

Marat Schlafstein

Benjamin Steinitz

Maya Zehden

Jewish community in Vienn

Moderator & Note-taker: DR Dov Maimon

Isaac Besalel Watnik

Moris Lerner Jamri

Elliot Lerner Jamri

David Saban

Tamas Lövei

Lilla Hidasi

Peter Vador

Dmytro Solovei

Benjamin Pretzer

Armin Lonker

Daniel Friedman

Berna Franko

Joel Halstuch

Yevgen Sholudschenko

הקהילה היהודית בווינה

Katerina Mihaylova

Elizaveta shchapova

Sofia Kliuch

Eyal Levy

Sabrina Bonilla

Jewish community in Paris

Moderator & Note-taker: DR Dov Maimon

Lionel Baraban

David Chemla

Gerard Unger

Bernard Abouaf

Jean Francois Strouf

Ryvon Kriger

Laurent Parienti

David Revscolevsci

jean Pierre Allali

Philippe Allouche

Myriam Glikerman

Gad Ibghi

Elie Lobel

Sylvie Bensaid-Maarek

Tsion Grabarz

Gerard Choukroun

Madame Choukroun

Aris Hauptschein

הקהילה היהודית בפריז

Veronique Hauptschein

Alain Keller

Elie Korchia

Charles Sulman

Frederic Nordmann

Noemie Madar

Arie Flaks,

Nicky Covo-Leon

Haim Musicant

SAAR high school, New York

תיכון סער בניו יורק

Coordinator: Rabbi Tully Harcsztark

Moderator & Note-taker: Shmuel Rosner

Rabbi Tully Harcsztark	Ms. Reizi Chechik	Rabbi Eliezer Rubin
Ms. Lisa Schlaff	Ms. Tikvah Wiener	Ms. Tamar Appel
Dr. Rivka Schwartz	Rabbi Harry Pell	Ms. CB Neugroschl neu-groschl
Rabbi Josh Rosenfeld	Rabbi Noam Silverma	Rabbi Daniel Alter
Rabbi Shmuel Hain	Rabbi Dov Emerson	Rabbi Shlomo Stochel
Rabbi Binyamin Krauss	Rabbi David Chamudot	
Ms. Adina Shoulson	Ms. Ariela Dubler	
Ms. Laura Frank	Mr. Benjamin Mann	

Jewish Federation of Portland, Oregon

הפדרציה היהודית בפורטלנד, אורגון

Coordinator: Caron Blau Rothstein

Moderator & Note-taker: Shmuel Rosner

Nadine Astrakhan	Leci Grenet	Sam Perrin
Abbie Barash	Katrina Katzenbach	Sarah Philips
Hannah Ferber	Aaron Kaufman	Melissa Smith
Eli Gregory	Ron Melamed	Len Steinberg

BINA shnat hashlama

שנת השלמה ב"בינה"

Coordinator: Adar Schieber

Moderator & Note-taker: Shmuel Rosner

Adani Lir	Hoffman Samuel	Wise Jonah
Bensky Todd	Hollander Adam	Wolff Cassidy
Bertram Jay	Joffe Jarred	Zalcman Jordan
Blode Jared	Kaye Benjamin	Zilberman Sarah
Blount Hannah	Marcuson Claudia	Gordon Tamar
Bouhadana Ruby	Sandler Jordan	Posner Remi-lee
Byala Megan	Sharp Joshua	Genis Jasmine
Curtis Georgia	Silverstein Gilad	Pearce Bernie Nastasia
Galanti Ilan	Steinberg Gina Allie	Danin Ari
Ginsberg Benjamin	Wasserman Mikayla	Abitbol Lavi
Silverstein Gilad		

"SIACH" group in the Hebrew university, Jerusalem

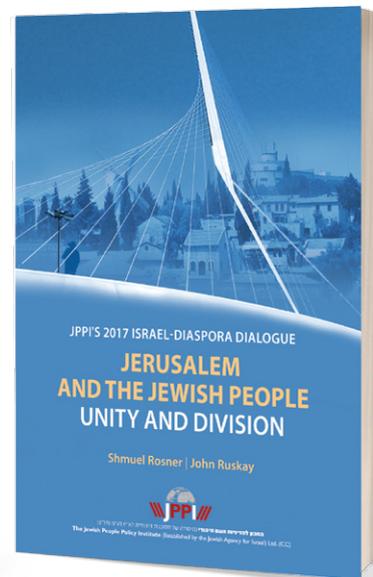
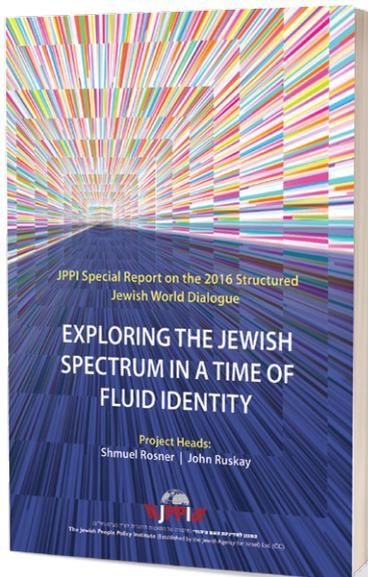
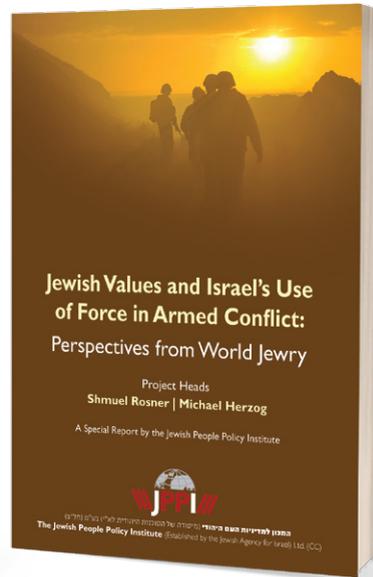
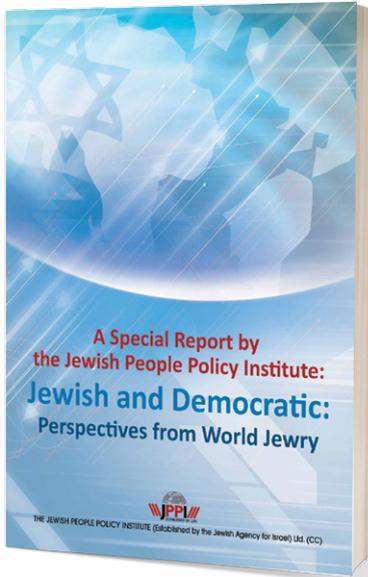
קבוצת "שיח" באוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים

Coordinator: Netta Asner

Moderator & Note-taker: Dan Feferman

אהרון בנדרסקי	אלעד לוי	נעה גולדברג
סער בן ציון	ים ברעם	ליה אבגרוב
		נטע אסנר

PREVIOUS JPPI DIALOGUES



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's publications address six main areas of Jewish People challenges and well-being: Geopolitics Impacting World Jewry; Community Bonds; Identity and Identification; Demography; Material Resources; and, Intellectual and Cultural Achievement. A full set of major publications can be found on our website: www.JPPI.org.il.

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 composed of individuals with significant policy experience. The board of directors also serves as the Institute's Professional Guiding Council.