

# JEWISH DEMOGRAPHIC POLICIES

## Population Trends and Options in Israel and in the Diaspora

**Sergio DellaPergola**

The Shlomo Argov Professor Emeritus  
of Israel-Diaspora Relations

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

With a Foreword by Stuart E. Eizenstat



**המכון למדיניות העם היהודי** (מיסודה של הסוכנות היהודית לא"י) **בע"מ**

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JPPI, Givat Ram Campus, P.O.B 39156, Jerusalem 91391, Israel

Telephone: 972-2-5633356 | Fax: 972-2-5635040 | [www.jppei.org.il](http://www.jppei.org.il)

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# Foreword

by Stuart E. Eizenstat

Sergio DellaPergola has been for decades a most prominent, prescient, and respected demographer of the Jewish people. He has never seen demographic data as dry statistics, but rather as a platform to focus our attention on the implications of population trends for the future strength and security of the Jewish people. But in this new book for The Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI), “Jewish Population Policies: Demographic Trends and Options in Israel and in the Diaspora” he has written a defining work for his career, which combines key demographic trends in Israel and the Diaspora, with penetrating policy options that Jewish leaders must consider to meet the profound challenges they pose.

Even more so, he forces us to consider demography and population trends not as ancillary factors, but as central to the future of the Jewish people, shaping the historic transformations of our time. With a great sense of urgency he notes that, “A responsible Jewish leadership cannot avoid coming to terms with the reality that serving the Jewish People, among other things, involves fully understanding and addressing its demographic trends.”

The demographic figures Professor DellaPergola presents are sobering. While other demographers take different approaches, despite discrepancies of counting between them, both the underlying trends and the policy recommendations to cope with them are the same. There are only 13.5 million Jews in a world of over 6 billion people—5.7 million in Israel and 7.7 million in the Diaspora. In 1945, even after the Holocaust, there were 5 Jews per 1000 people in the world; in 2010 there were less than 2 per 1000, and inexorably declining every year.

The demographic challenges are distinctly different for Israel and the Diaspora. Most Jews in the Diaspora may be unaware that Israel has now overtaken the United States, as the country with the largest Jewish population. In 1970, Israel had a smaller Jewish population than the U.S. or the rest of the Diaspora outside the U.S. By 2005, it had the largest population among the three. And by the year 2030, Israel will have a majority of the world’s Jewish population.

As DellaPergola indicates, the main demographic challenge for Israel is to “preserve a clear and undisputed majority among the State’s total population”, as a “critical prerequisite to Israel’s future existence as a Jewish and democratic state”. I agree. Although the birth rates for Israeli’s Jewish population are far higher than for Diaspora Jews, at 2.9 children per family, on average, the growth of the Muslim population, both within Israel and in the territories is considerably higher. DellaPergola notes that the growth rates of Palestinian Arabs within Israel and in the West Bank at 3.7 children per couple and Gaza (even higher) are nearly double those of the Israeli Jewish population. This means that by 2020, the population of Jews out of the total population of Israel plus the West Bank, without counting Gaza, would decline to 56%.

Israel cannot make peace with the Palestinians, without a willing Palestinian partner, and the current refusal of the leadership of the Palestinian Authority to enter into negotiations until there is a total settlement freeze, including Jerusalem, is unrealistic. But the Israeli government needs to prepare their public for the fact that Israel cannot remain a majority Jewish, democratic state, by indefinitely controlling the Palestinian territories.

For the Jewish Diaspora, in the United States, Europe, and around the world, the demographic realities are even more foreboding. The combination of out-marriage without conversions, now over 40% in Western Europe, above 50% in the U.S., and higher than 75% in the Former Soviet Union, together with fertility rates below the average number of children (2.1) necessary to simply stay even in populations, produces an unhealthy result. If current trends continue to 2020, there would be a decrease of 600,000 Jews from the current Diaspora population of 7.7 million. The core Jewish population in the U.S. according to DellaPergola, is 5.2 to 5.3 million, but even this overstates the reality, since only about 4.3 to 4.4 million are prepared to define themselves as Jews by religion.

I believe that rabbis and secular Jewish leaders are aware of these population trends, but have not developed, as DellaPergola and JPPI recommend, a comprehensive approach to both assess the impact of these demographic realities, and to try to change their course. For example, taking an expansive definition, some 8.3 million Americans have some significant connection to Judaism, living in mixed Jewish households or of Jewish heritage, even if they do not define themselves now as Jewish, and more than 10 million people would be eligible as Jews under Israel’s Law of Return. In addition to strengthening the “core” Jewish population of 5.2 to 5.3 million (of which 3 million



belong to some Jewish organization), outreach programs to bring those outside the core into the Jewish community is an imperative. Moreover, there is an urgent need to try to encourage the non-Jewish spouses in a mixed marriage to either convert or at least to raise their children as Jewish. Over 95% of the children born to all Jewish couples in the U.S. are identified by their parents as Jewish, but only 33% of the children of intermarriage; other nations have similar identification figures.

Prof. DellaPergola makes twelve recommendations to meet these demographic challenges. All are worthy of serious debate. In his important book, Sergio DellaPergola presents the Jewish world with the imperative of putting demographic and population data at the forefront of our consideration. For this, and for his serious proposals, all of us should be deeply grateful. The Jewish People Policy Institute is prepared to grasp the challenge DellaPergola has presented us.



# ABSTRACT

Currently ongoing demographic processes carry highly problematic implications for the Jewish future. The Jewish population in countries out of Israel is diminishing and becoming older. The Jewish population in Israel is growing and is younger, but its share of the total population in the country is diminishing.

The Jewish People Policy Institute recommends a **comprehensive approach** to assess and influence the whole complex of demographic processes and to sustain Jewish population in Israel and throughout the Jewish world.

The main demographic challenge of the State of Israel as the *core state of the Jewish People* is **to preserve a clear and undisputed Jewish majority among Israel's total population**. This is a critical prerequisite to Israel's future existence as a Jewish and democratic state.

The main challenge for Jews who live out of Israel – Diaspora Jewry – is to preserve and strengthen Jewish communities able **to maintain high social cohesion and unique spiritual significance and cultural creativity** while Jewish minorities enjoy all the manifold opportunities of an open and receptive majority environment.

The overall challenge for World Jewry is **how to generate a better and more meaningful interaction between its constituent parts, Israel and the Diaspora**, where the *core state* constitutes a source of meaning, pride and strength for the Jewish communities outside of it, and Jewish communities worldwide are a source of support, wisdom and strength for the Jewish state.

**Depending on what happens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, demography is going to be one of the crucial factors determining the future of the Jews.** A responsible Jewish leadership cannot avoid coming to terms with the reality that serving the Jewish People involves, among other things, fully understanding, monitoring, and steering its demographic trends.

No serious policy program can avoid coming to terms with the following twelve main goals:

1. Along with continuing emphasis on the importance of Jewish immigration to Israel (aliyah) in the framework of the Law of Return, encourage new patterns of Jewish migration and absorption into the country through innovative concepts and tools.

2. Reduce and clearly regulate immigration outside the frame of the Law of Return and the number of undocumented non-Jewish residents in Israel.
3. Reduce emigration from Israel (yeridah), facilitate return of Israelis abroad, strengthen relations between Israelis abroad and their home country, and facilitate stronger participation of Israelis abroad in the life of local Jewish communities.
4. Reduce obstacles that interfere with Jewish marriage and family formation.
5. Reduce obstacles that interfere with the birth of the 3rd and 4th child in Israel, and develop conditions that may facilitate Jewish family growth in Israel and in the Diaspora.
6. Strengthen the positive components of Jewish identification in Israel and in the Diaspora and the interaction between the two parties.
7. Develop new approaches to limit the erosive effects of assimilation and intermarriage.
8. Facilitate cultural absorption of non-Jewish members of Jewish households into a Jewish context and promote a friendlier approach to conversion to Judaism (giyur).
9. Continue to improve health standards, life duration and life quality, with special attention to health conditions that are peculiar to Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora.
10. Establish final borders of the State of Israel that reflect a maximum effort to secure a large and long-term Jewish majority within the State's territory, with due consideration of Jewish historical values and Israel's security needs.
11. Raise public awareness in Israel and in the Diaspora about the relevance, importance and feasibility of Jewish population policies.
12. Create a central focal point for demographic policy research, discussion, planning and implementation for Israel and for world Jewry.

# PREFACE

Unlike its occasional mentions in the media and public discourse, demography is not a problem, a demon, a ghost, or voodoo. Demography is a fundamental existential process present in the daily experience of every society at both the individual and collective levels. Demography is also a discipline in the realm of the social sciences and the humanities. And as with any discipline, it constitutes an ever-expanding body of accumulated knowledge, theories and hypotheses, analytic tools and techniques, empirical observations usually synthesized in the form of quantitative data, and emerging policy options and directions. This report aims at developing a broad policy framework covering the manifold demographic issues now facing the Jewish People in Israel and across the world. The report reflects my seven years between 2002 and 2009 as Head of the Jewish Demography Project at the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute. I hope it will constitute a landmark and baseline, or at least a useful reference for future discourse about Jewish population policies.

More than once throughout history, existence of the Jews was radically modified by events that embedded elements of demographic change. This was the case with the repeated instances of massive coerced and voluntary migrations and relocation of Jews across seas and continents; the major increase in Jewish population size – mostly in Eastern Europe – from the late middle ages to the early decades of the 20th century; the massive destruction of Jewish communities in the Shoah; and the emergence of contemporary Israel as a major Jewish population center, and eventually the largest Jewish community on Earth. In each instance, sweeping social, cultural and political determinants shaped radical changes in Jewish population size, composition and environment. But demographic change itself was not only a dependent variable; it also played an important independent role in those historic transformations, shaping them in part.

The current Jewish demographic scene is perhaps changing less dramatically than in those past occurrences, but the imperceptible daily impact of demographic change has nonetheless deep consequences for Jewish corporate and individual existence. Jews constitute the majority of the total population in the State of Israel, but this majority is being challenged by the more rapid growth of the non-Jewish population within the state and in its proximate regional environment – the Palestinian territories and

the neighboring Arab countries. Jewish populations in the Diaspora are diminishing numerically, becoming older, and constituting a decreasing share of the total society of the respective countries. Population projections to the year 2020 and beyond provide a disquieting outlook of the deterioration in the Jewish demographic balance that is expected if the current trends continue unabated and unmatched.

In the light of these current and expected population developments in Israel and the Diaspora, policy analyses and operational suggestions are needed to provide insights to decision-makers concerned with the current facts, the expected futures, and the emerging challenges for Jewish peoplehood. Four crucial aspects are: (1) the size of Jewish populations in Israel and in the Diaspora; (2) their composition by major characteristics, namely age; (3) the share of Jews out of total population; and (4) the intensity and quality of Jewish identification. While this latter dimension deserves a separate full-scale study – planned within the scope of activities of the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute – identity patterns constitute a crucial factor for the overall evaluation of Jewish population trends. As such, and with no greater pretension, some of the pertinent issues will be treated in this report.

In this publication we review some of the main trends and patterns of Jewish population change in the recent past, present and foreseeable future. We examine relationships between the several major determinants and consequences of demographic processes that affect contemporary Jewry. We especially focus on the intervening mechanisms that shape each of the relevant processes in Jewish population growth or decline. We also outline some possible goals for Jewish population policies, trying to designate mechanisms of action that might be able to strengthen the overall balance of available Jewish human resources, and their relationship to Jewish identification – in Israel and in Diaspora communities.

Three prominent features need to be considered as a general background. One is the growing influence of globalization on Jewish life. Its manifold effects lie well beyond the reach of Jewish corporate interventions but nonetheless need to be considered as part of the package of determinants and consequences of relevant social and demographic processes in Jewish life. A second central aspect is that the human capital that is captured by the broad concept of population needs to be nurtured through adequate education, advanced training and adequate placement in the labor market. These issues are prominently related to demography but they by themselves constitute main policy targets and therefore should be the subjects

of separate specialized consideration. The third aspect is the need to realize that internal processes of socialization and intergenerational transmission of Jewish values and identity form a crucially important background to demographic trends among world Jewry. These issues are relevant to our report but they also lend themselves to interventions by the Jewish community system and, as noted, should be dealt in greater depth elsewhere.

Main issues for policy elaboration and evaluation, regarding both patterns from the past, consequences for the present, and possible future interventions, touch upon the Jewish family and reproduction, socioeconomic change, international and internal migration, health and survivorship, and the boundaries and contents of Jewish corporate identification. The implications of demography for the State of Israel's cultural identification, civil society, territorial definition and frontiers in a prolonged situation of conflict also call for careful consideration.

Demographic change within the particular configuration of the Israel-Jewish Diaspora dyad raises policy challenges that exemplify and anticipate broader concerns and prospects of State-Diaspora interactions for Middle Eastern, European and other Western societies. This report examines each of the factors involved in the global future of Jewish population and suggests ways and means to deal with demographic structural and dynamic processes that constitute a strategic dimension of the contemporary and future Jewish existence.

Under the current circumstances, not to do anything facing ongoing Jewish population trends would be to acquiesce with a future that in many respects will feature a far less favorable equation between Jewish and other populations globally and within each of the major regions of contemporary Jewish residence. The available margins for policy interventions will most likely be narrower in the future than they appear to be nowadays. The present report thus aims to generate a constructive and informed dialogue about the future of the Jews, as seen from the peculiar yet pervasive perspective of demography. Our report deals with a whole array of relevant factors and therefore tends to be quite synthetic on each of them, aiming to create a necessary general framework for more detailed analyses of specific topics that will hopefully follow. It should be explicitly mentioned that any notion of the costs and financing of the policy options and directions discussed below is outside the scope of the present report. In-depth analyses of the costs and benefits of each policy option and direction need to be carried out separately.

I hope that the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, or other public bodies, will be able to follow this report with further more detailed policy analyses. Each of these will separately focus on one or more of the major relevant processes and will hopefully be able to provide more detailed, concrete, and feasible policy options and directions.

Finally, I wish to thank those at JPPI who helped and supported this project: Yehezkel Dror and Avinoam Bar Yosef, the Founding President and Director; Barry Geltman, who very professionally edited the manuscript; Rami Tal, who skillfully oversaw the editorial process; and all the other colleagues who followed my work at JPPI and offered their suggestions. The author is solely responsible for the contents of this report.

**Sergio DellaPergola**

The Shlomo Argov Professor Emeritus of Israel-Diaspora Relations

The Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Formerly Senior Fellow

The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: MAIN JEWISH POPULATION TRENDS AND POLICY OPTIONS

## A. PRIMARY AGENDA

The Jewish People comprises today just less than 13 and a half million individuals – 5.7 million in Israel and 7.7 million in the Diaspora (DellaPergola, 2010). World Jewry needs to tackle unprecedented existential challenges reflecting sweeping changes at the global, regional and local levels. While the changing environment of world Jewry and its internal configuration encompass a whole gamut of political, socioeconomic and cultural factors, current Jewish population trends and prospects need to be considered as a separate factor of strategic importance in any assessment of the possible future (or futures) of Jewish affairs. Policy planning in Israel and across Diaspora communities needs to evaluate how current and expected population trends will affect the future of the Jews both individually and as a collective, wherever they are.

Three quite different sets of issues stand at the center of an agenda aimed at monitoring and, where possible, strengthening the global Jewish population balance sheet:

- The main demographic challenge of the State of Israel as the core state of the Jewish People is to **preserve a clear and undisputed majority among the State's total population. This is a critical prerequisite to Israel's future existence as a Jewish and democratic state.** Today the growth rates of Palestinian Arabs in the State of Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza are nearly double those of the Jewish population. Were the same demographic trends to continue, by 2020 the percent of Jews (including all the non-Jewish members of their nuclear families) in Israel's total population would decline to 77%, that of Jews out of the total population of Israel plus the West Bank (without Gaza) would decline to 56%, and that of Jews out of the total population between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River would approach 47%. Minor variations in these percentages may be suggested in the light of alternative assumptions about the size and dynamic

of the Jewish and Palestinian population, but they do not in any way alter the basic substance of the question at stake: a constant diminution in the share of Jews in the historical area of Eretz Israel. The consequent question is: how shall the State of Israel preserve its Jewish character through democratic means and through the respect of equal civil rights for all of its citizens?

- The main challenge for Diaspora Jewry consists of **preserving and strengthening Jewish communities able to maintain high social coherence and unique cultural and spiritual significance, while Jewish minorities enjoy all the manifold opportunities of an open and receptive majority environment.** Such a target is not ensured today while the rate of out-marriage is above 75% in the Former Soviet Union (FSU), above 50% in the United States, and above 40% in the main Western European countries, and Jewish fertility is much below the level of 2.1 necessary for generational replacement. Were these trends to continue, the current Jewish Diaspora of 7.7 million would decrease by 600,000 by 2020, not including the possible effects of international migration. One emerging question is: how shall world Jewry take care of its interests in a competitive world where it is losing in both absolute and relative size compared to other religious and ethnic groups?
- The overall challenge for World Jewry seen as the integrated complex of the Jews in Israel and throughout the Diaspora is how to generate a stronger and more meaningful interaction between the different parts, where **the core state constitutes a source of meaning, pride and strength for the Jewish communities outside of it, and Jewish communities worldwide constitute a source of support, wisdom and strength for the core state.** This requires not only finding adequate answers to the abovementioned challenges, but also the development of shared and functioning mechanisms of evaluation of existing trends and of policy decision making.

As of now – as it will be argued in the following – none of these three major challenges seems to be adequately met, either by the nature and principal direction of the underlying processes, or by the configuration and activity of the institutions – namely Israel’s Government and the principal Jewish organizations worldwide – that are supposed to take care of Jewish interests and the Jewish future.

Facing these challenges, the Jewish People Policy Institute recommends that **a comprehensive approach be developed to assess and influence the whole complex of factors affecting demographic processes and to sustain Jewish**

**population in Israel and in the Diaspora.** The word “demography” is intended here for the whole range of quantitative and qualitative issues related to Jewish population dynamics. Such an approach calls for considered and shared elaboration of planning goals and coordination between the main actors on the Jewish institutional scene.

The Government of Israel and the major Jewish organizations global, national and local, separately and together, should deepen their awareness that **current demographic processes carry fundamentally negative implications for the Jewish future.** Wherever Jews are and wherever feasible, Jewish population policy programs and initiatives should be encouraged, not only within the existing respective mandates of the various bodies involved, but also through new initiatives that may be developed in collaboration among them. Joint initiatives of Israel’s government and the representatives of world Jewry would be particularly welcomed.

Such Jewish population policies should aim at improving collective life regarding both the quantitative aspects of Jewish population size and critical mass and the qualitative aspects of Jewish cultural identity and meaningful inter-personal interaction, while preserving full civil rights and freedom of choice of the individual actors. Emphasis should be placed on the retrieving, development and competitiveness of Jewish human resources. Demographic policies able to coordinate and integrate across different topical areas should be carefully thought out as a tool to preserve the fundamental interests of Israeli society and of World Jewry in the short and in the longer term. **A responsible Jewish leadership cannot avoid coming to terms with the reality that serving the Jewish People, among other things, involves fully understanding and addressing its demographic trends.**

It is important and urgent that the complex of factors affecting Jewish demography and population finds a higher place in national strategic planning. The primary need is to have available good and systematic research, to be able to develop a strategic perspective, to realize that some margin of uncertainty always characterizes human behaviors and even more so the human reactions to any policy implementation. Grounded on adequate insights of the multiple forces shaping Jewish population change, appropriate tools should be developed by experts and policy planners for implementation in each of the several relevant areas of interest. Such policy interventions would involve a system of incentives and constraints aimed at promoting trends considered beneficial, and at hindering trends considered to be negative.

Openness of views and the ability to formulate innovative and inspiring goals are required, but they need to be framed within a reasonable and critical evaluation of the global and regional situation and of the determinants and expected consequences of population trends.

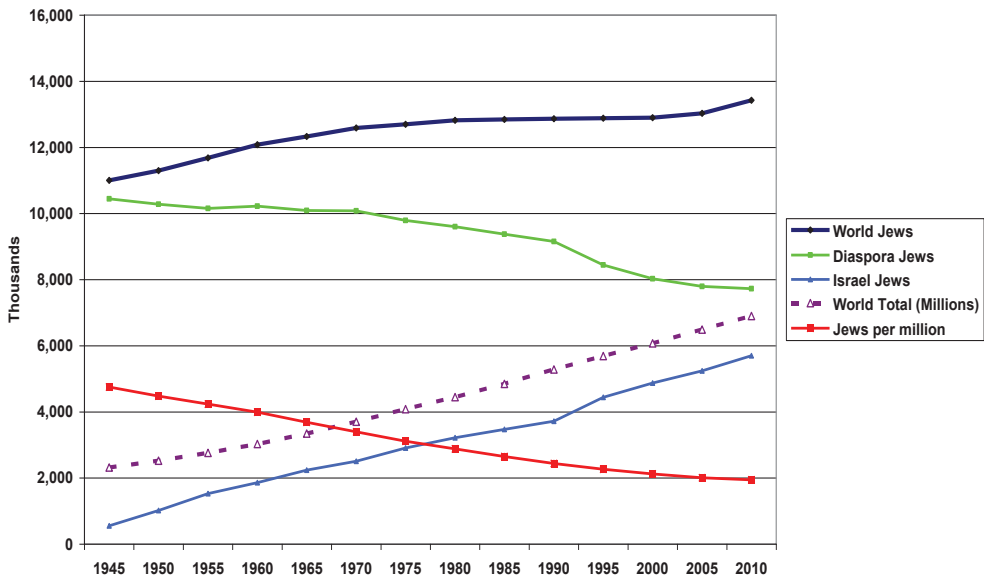
There is no single magic panacea that can solve the manifold issues in the emerging demographic scene of world Jewry. The identification of policy goals and the implementation of adequate policy initiatives must address a large spectrum of various issues, each of which is supposed to partly contribute to the overall picture. Since the present report is being issued in Jerusalem, it reflects the perspective that as an essential platform for specific policy interventions in the realm of demography, efforts should be intensified to develop the State of Israel to the highest possible levels of quality of life, international competitiveness and personal reward for those who live in it. This is an important prerequisite for increasing immigration (aliyah), for increasing the willingness of its inhabitants to live in the country, for enhancing the ability to develop attractive patterns of Jewish culture and creativity, and for strengthening the mutual relations between Jews in Israel and those across the world. But this report does not in any sense reflect an Israelo-centric perspective. Equal efforts should be employed to support the viability of permanent Jewish communities in the Diaspora and to ensure them the highest standards of Jewish identification, knowledge and pride.

Quantitative and qualitative aspects of demography play a central role in determining the likelihood of thriving or the dangers of decline among World and Israeli Jewry and call for urgent and determined assessment and intervention. **Demography will be one of the crucial factors that will determine the future of the Jews.**

## B. MAIN JEWISH POPULATION PATTERNS AND IMPLICATIONS

After the ravages of the Shoah, in 1945 about 11 million Jews were left in the world versus 16.5 million in 1939. During the early post-war period some recovery occurred in global Jewish population size, followed by a prolonged period of nearly zero population growth, and a modest revival in more recent years. Jewish population in Palestine and since 1948 in Israel grew by nearly ten times under the impact of immigration and a substantial natural increase. The pace of Jewish population increase in Israel was similar to the world's total population increase.

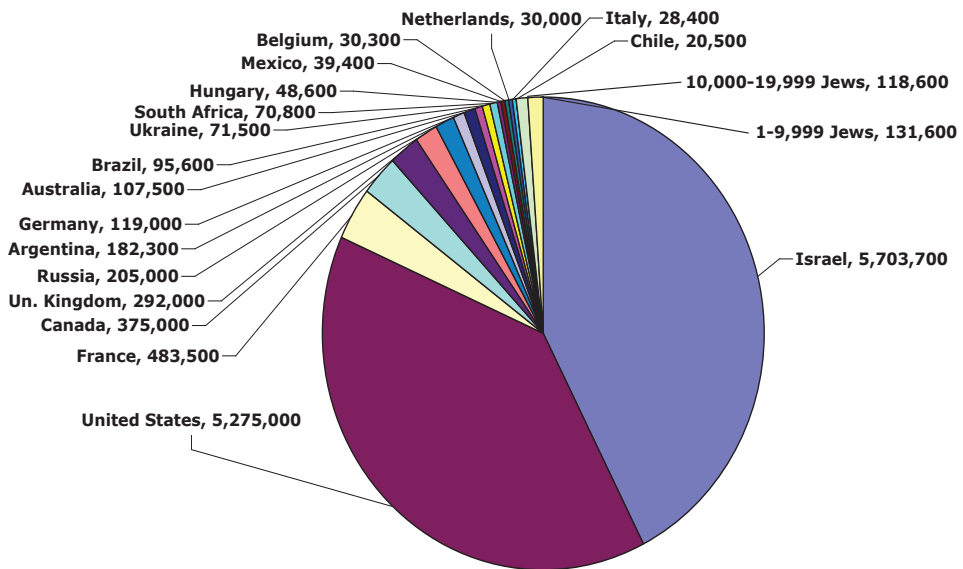
**FIGURE 1. WORLD TOTAL POPULATION AND JEWISH POPULATION (CORE DEFINITION), 1945-2010**



The total of Jews in the Diaspora incurred significant decline especially after the 1970s. This reflected migration to Israel and – increasing over time – the effects of low birth rates, high percentages of mixed marriage and population ageing. Israel's share of the total of world Jewry increased to 42.5% in 2010. The tiny share of Jews out of the world's total population steadily diminished over time, from nearly 5 per 1,000 in 1945 to less than 2 per 1,000 in 2010 (DellaPergola, 2010).

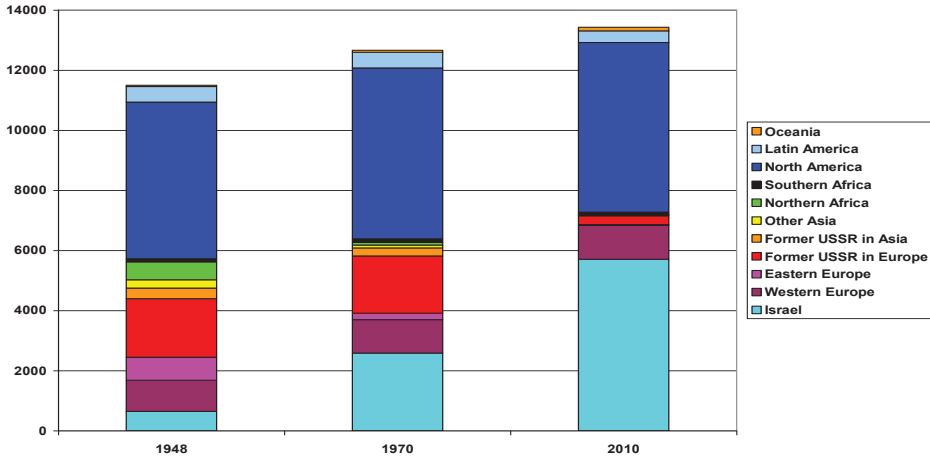
Figure 2 shows Jewish population distribution among the major Jewish communities. Israel became the largest during the early 2000s overcoming the United States, which had been quite static or in the beginning of decline. More than 80% of the Jews live in these two main countries. Other major communities are found in affluent and stable western democracies, such as France, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and Germany. The latter absorbed significant numbers of immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU). In other areas, Jewish communities diminished mainly through emigration, these include the main FSU republics, countries in Europe, Latin America, and South Africa. While Jews live in about 100 countries, over 95% are concentrated in the 15 largest communities.

**FIGURE 2. LARGEST CORE JEWISH POPULATIONS, 2010**



These Jewish population distributions have changed significantly over the last sixty years, primarily under the impact of international migration (Figure 3). Between 1948 and 2010, Israel's share grew steadily, while the share of countries in Eastern Europe and Islamic countries in Asia and Africa diminished significantly. North America and Western Europe maintained, overall, quite stable Jewish populations.

**FIGURE 3. JEWISH POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY MAIN AREAS  
1948-2010 (THOUSANDS)**



These data need to be evaluated in the light of the paradigmatic question: “Who is a Jew?” Among the various approaches in this respect, we single out three very different ones. The first is the definition of a Jew in the Israeli Law of Return. Here, following a normative path very close to that of Rabbinical Law, a Jew is a person:

- Born to a Jewish mother, OR
- Who has converted to Judaism
- And does not have another religion

It should be noted that the incompatibility of a Jewish identity with holding another religion reflects a decision by Israel’s Supreme Court – a civil legal body – and is not one of the postulates of the Jewish religion.

The U.S. National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) sponsored by the United Jewish Communities in 2001 adopted a more complex and extensive definition by which a Jew is one:

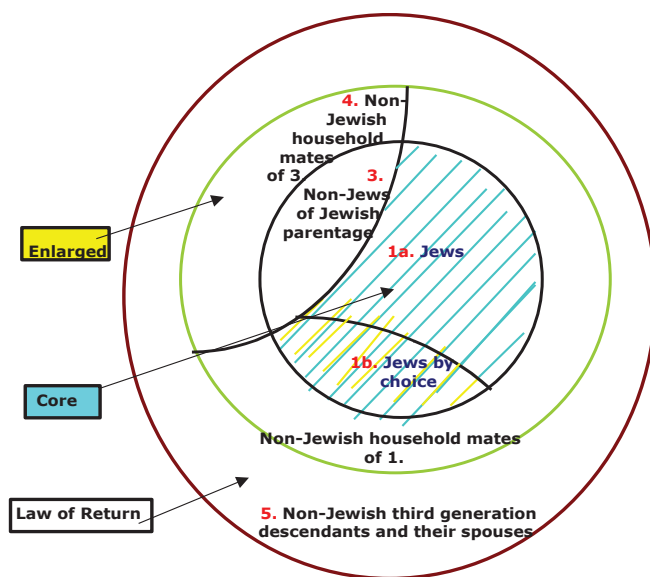
- Whose religion is Jewish, OR
- Whose religion is Jewish and something else, OR
- Who has no religion AND has at least one Jewish parent or a Jewish upbringing, OR
- Who has a non-monotheistic religion AND has at least one Jewish parent or a Jewish upbringing.

An even more comprehensive approach was suggested by Y. Satanowsky, a lay leader of the Jewish community of the Russian Republic, who in 2008 published the following statement:

The author is inclined to agree with the deceased Lubavitcher rebbe, Rabbi Menachem-Mendel Schneerson who believed that non-Jews according to the Galakha (sic) will inevitably mingle with Jewish people, and therefore to separate them from those whose destiny they share is inadmissible.

In the light of these quite different approaches, it is clear that Jewish population can only be defined by operational criteria and not by normative criteria. Figure 4 provides a unified framework of the main definitional criteria.

**FIGURE 4. JEWISH POPULATION DEFINITIONS:  
CORE, ENLARGED, LAW OF RETURN**



Persons who declare that they were born Jewish, or declare to be of no religion but have some Jewish ancestry, or who have converted to Judaism, and do not hold another monotheistic religion constitute what we define as the core Jewish population. Together with these, an enlarged Jewish population can be defined also including all persons of Jewish ancestry who now hold another monotheistic religion, and all non-Jews who belong with the nuclear families of Jews.

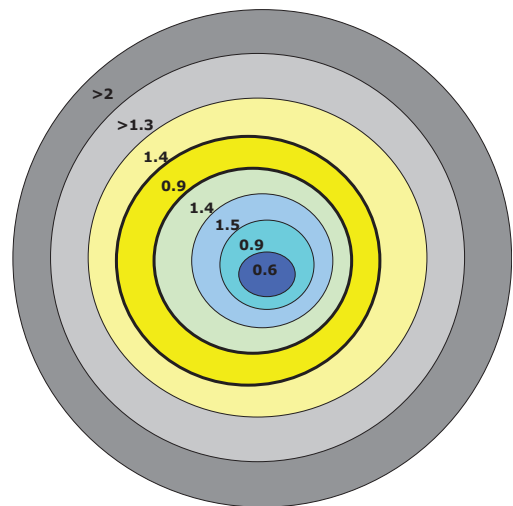


A third and broader definition stems from the Israeli Law of Return, which grants eligibility for immigration and citizenship in Israel to all Jews, children and grandchildren of Jews, and the respective spouses, whether or not Jewish, provided they do not have another monotheistic religion. The numeric implications of these different definitions can be exemplified with the help of U.S. data and estimates (Figure 5).

The U.S. core Jewish population is estimated at 5.2-5.3 millions. Of these, about 4.3-4.4 millions were ready to define themselves as Jews by religion in 2001, nearly one million defined themselves otherwise but were eventually recognized as persons of Jewish background. About 3 million Jews were members of a Jewish organization, about half of them actually volunteering their time there. A deficit of Jewishly identified births versus Jewish deaths – inherent in an aging Jewish age composition – suggests that the core Jewish population is past its peak, but there exist at least another 1.5 million people who do not define themselves as Jews but are of Jewish parentage. Close to another million and a half of persons of non-Jewish origin live in mixed Jewish households, thus creating an enlarged Jewish population of about 8.3 million. The population theoretically eligible for Israel’s Law of Return would be considerably more than 10 million, probably as many as 12 million, also including non-Jewish grandchildren and non-Jewish spouses of Jews, children of Jews, and grandchildren of Jews. All in all, one detects a shrinking core and an expanding periphery, in the U.S. as well as in other countries.

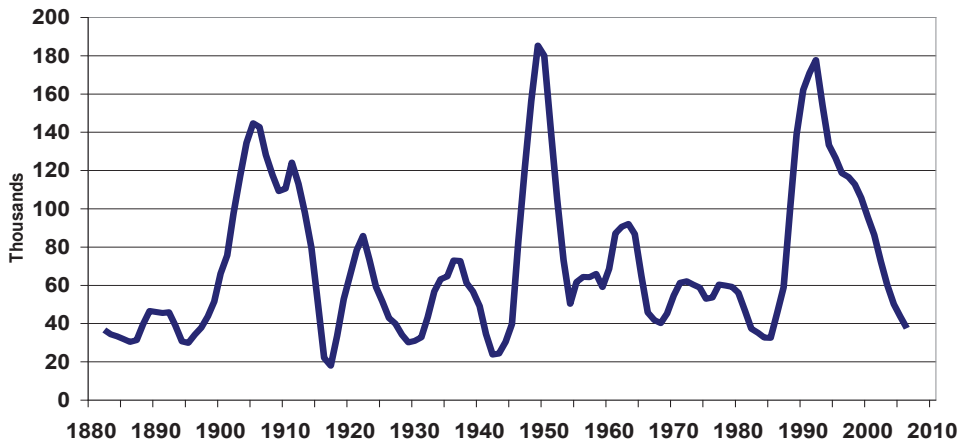
**FIGURE 5. U.S. JEWISH POPULATION:  
ALTERNATIVE DEFINITIONAL CRITERIA, 2001**

Jewish Identification	Millions
Law of Return eligibles	> 10.0
Total in Jewish households	> 8.0
Have Jewish parent/s	6.7
<b>Core Jewish population</b>	<b>5.2-5.3</b>
Declare to be Jewish	4.3-4.4
Jewish organization affiliated	3.0
Devote time to community	1.5
Denomination Orthodox	0.5-0.6



Shifts in Jewish population size in the main regions were primarily determined by large-scale international migration. Figure 6 shows a synthesis of the estimated total number of Jewish international migrants between 1880 and 2008. The dramatic ups and downs reflect the changing incidence of push forces in the different main regions of emigration, often under conditions of rapid geo-political change and real or expected disruption of the environment of Jewish life, namely the relationship between the larger society and Jews. Highly influential Changing opportunities in the availability of countries of immigration were highly influential.

**FIGURE 6. WORLD JEWISH MIGRATION, 1880-2008<sup>a</sup>**

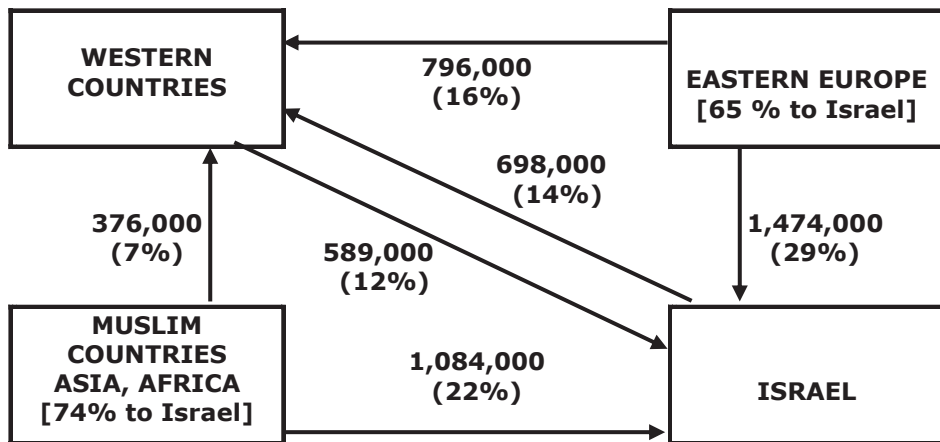


<sup>a</sup> Five-year averages | Source: adjusted and updated from DellaPergola (2009a).

Three moments of peak migration intensity correspond with (a) the large-scale transfer from Eastern Europe to North America before World War I, interrupted by restrictive migration quotas in the early 1920s; (b) the end of World War II and the Shoah, the end of the British Empire, and the independence of Israel in 1948; and (c) the dissolution of the Soviet Union virtually beginning with the fall of the Berlin Wall at the end of 1989. All of these circumstances along with others like the end of French colonization in North Africa point to a relation of dependency of major developments in Jewish society – and large-scale migration in particular – on major transformations of the global geo-political system.

Figure 7 provides a synthesis of the main Jewish migration flows over the 60 years between 1948 and 2008. Israel was the main recipient of Jewish migrations, absorbing 63% of the total, while the Western countries absorbed 37%, including 14% generated by Israel. Israel received 65% of the total migration from Eastern Europe and 74% of the total from Asian and African countries.

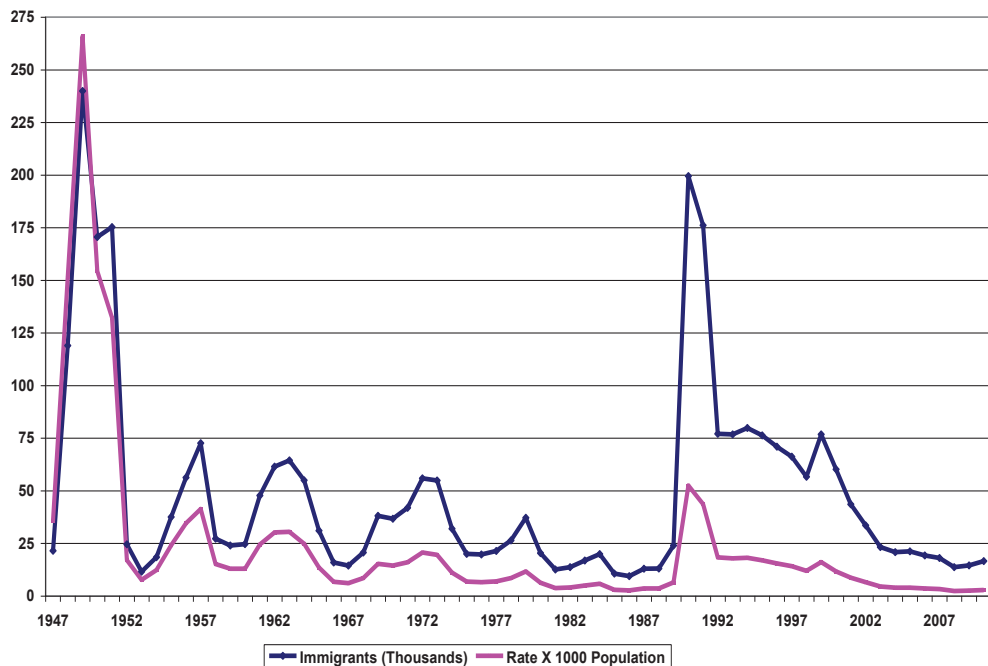
**FIGURE 7. WORLD JEWISH MIGRATION SYSTEM: DISTRIBUTION OF MAIN FLOWS BY AREAS OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION, 1948-2008**



a Including immigrant citizens to Israel | Source: adjusted and updated from DellaPergola (2009a).

Immigration had a crucial impact on the growth and socio-demographic structure of Israel's population. Figure 8 portrays the typical profile of major immigrations waves that occurred over time.

**FIGURE 8. NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS AND IMMIGRATION RATES PER 1000 POPULATION, ISRAEL, 1947-2010<sup>a</sup>**

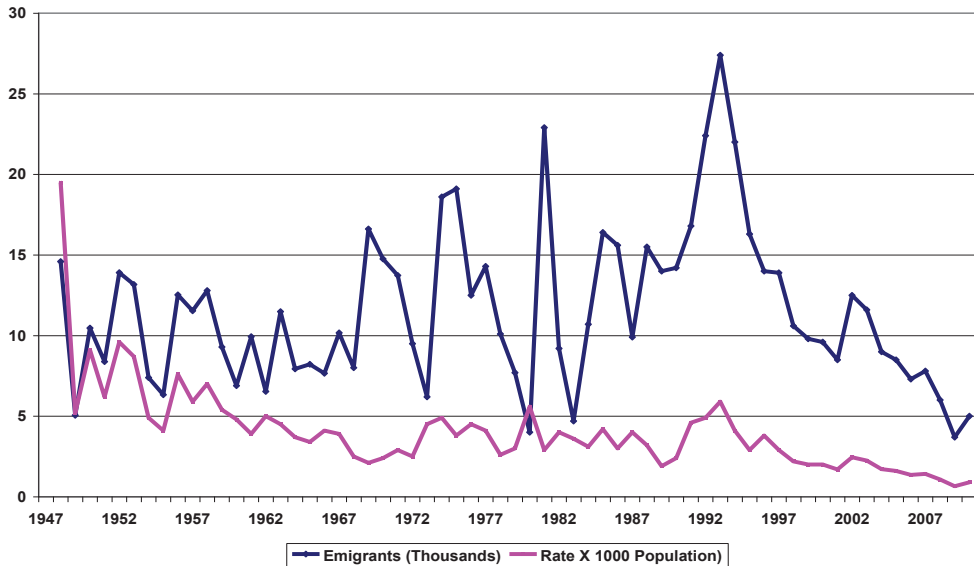


<sup>a</sup> Not including immigrant citizens | Source: Central Bureau of Statistics.

Each wave had a different composition by countries of origin. As noted, the two major waves occurred immediately after the independence of the state and included survivors from the Shoah and massive transfers of Jews from Islamic countries. The later wave was dominated by Jewish emigrants from the FSU, together with the nearly complete transfer of Ethiopian Jews to Israel. Most of the intermediate immigration waves were directly or indirectly related to major political or economic crises or perceived risks in the countries of origin. Rates of immigration tended to diminish reflecting the constant growth of the absorbing population.

Unlike the major periodical immigration waves, emigration from Israel (also known as *yeridah*) primarily reflected short-term variations mostly related to the business cycle and status of the Israeli economy (Figure 9).

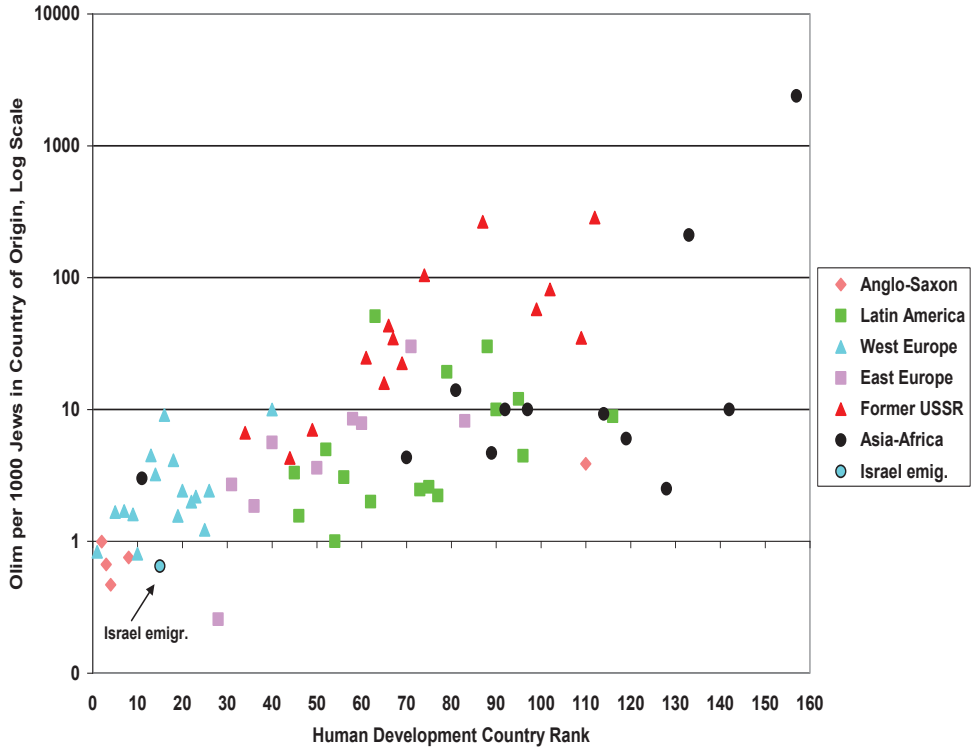
**FIGURE 9. NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS AND EMIGRATION RATES PER 1000 POPULATION, ISRAEL, 1947-2010<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Computed as the difference between total migration balance and total immigrants.  
Source: Central Bureau of Statistics.

Emigration from Israel also responded as a counter-flow to major immigration waves as normally found in large-scale migrations. The high-low range of emigration from Israel was significantly smaller than the similar range in the volume of immigration. Rates of emigration, too, gradually diminished over time. During the more recent period, in light of the concentration of Jews in the more developed countries, the frequency of Jewish international migration tended to decrease. Figure 10 illustrates the strong negative relationship that exists between the propensity of Jews from a given country to migrate, and the level of development in that same country. The ranking of countries by the Index of Human Development (based on an assessment of national income, health and education) stands in a significant relationship with the frequency of aliyah per 1,000 Jews from 73 countries. A clearly negative relationship emerges between quality of life in a country and the propensity to leave. This predicts rather low future migration intensities, provided the current conditions continue to prevail in the foreseeable future. From this perspective, the frequency of emigration from Israel is highly consistent with the level of development of the country. These findings evidently contrast with the possible expectation that the volume and timing of immigration to and emigration from Israel would be primarily motivated by ideational and not by socioeconomic determinants.

**FIGURE 10. IMMIGRANTS TO ISRAEL PER 1000 JEWS  
IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN, 2009**



Jewish populations, like any other population, also change under the effect of natural increase, i.e. the difference between the birth and death rates. Table 1 documents recent numbers of Jewish births and Jewish deaths in selected countries. Highly negative balances emerge in the Russian Republic and the same is documented for other FSU republics. Similar negative balances are recorded in many other countries, including Germany following significant immigration from the FSU, and the United Kingdom. The apparent reduction in the number of Jewish deaths in the UK clearly is an artifact of underreporting or a diminished demand for traditional Jewish burial ceremonies. Under these circumstances, Jewish populations tend to shrink. A totally different pattern emerges in Israel where fertility was stable and relatively high for a developed a country, and a natural increase of growing magnitude was recorded. In 2010, nearly 87,000 Jews were thus added to Israel's population.

**TABLE 1. JEWISH VITAL STATISTICS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1988-2010**

Country and Year	Births	Deaths	Difference
Russian Republic			
1988	3,710 <sup>a</sup>	13,826	-10,116
2000	613 <sup>b</sup>	8,218	-7,605
United Kingdom			
1991	3,200	4,500	-1,300
2000	2,786	3,791	-1,005
2006	3,314	3,107	+207
Germany			
1990	109	431	-322
2002	151	1,000	-849
2010	168	1,081	-913
Israel			
1990	73,851	25,759	+48,092
2000	91,936	33,421	+58,515
2010	120,763	33,948	+86,815

<sup>a</sup> Births to Jewish mothers, of which 2,148 to non-Jewish fathers. Assuming as many births to Jewish fathers and non-Jewish mothers, the total births would be 5,858. | <sup>b</sup> Births to Jewish mothers, of which 444 to non-Jewish fathers. Assuming as many births to Jewish fathers and non-Jewish mothers, the total births would be 1,057. | Source: Tolts (2002), Schmool (2005), Graham, Vulkan (2008), Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle (2010), Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2010).

One of the explanatory factors for the low Jewish birth rate in the Diaspora is the high incidence of intermarriage and the loss to the Jewish side of many children of Jewish ancestry who are raised in accordance with the identity of the non-Jewish parent. The evolution of the intensity of intermarriage in the U.S. is illustrated in Figure 11, which shows very low levels in the 1950s and 1960s and steadily grows in the following decades, surpassing the 50% threshold toward 1990. It may be interesting to compare these trends with the parallel trend of marriage convergence within Israeli society between Jewish persons of Asian-African and European-American origin. The consequences of these two types of intermarriages are obviously quite different: in Israel, the identity of the offspring is in any case Israeli and Jewish; in the U.S. it is American, but Jewishness depends on decisions the parents make, or fail to make. In 2001, 96% of the children born to Jewish couples were identified as Jewish by their parents, versus only 33% of the children of intermarriage. Results similarly erosive of Jewish identification of recently born cohorts appear for other countries in the West, including Australia, and Eastern Europe.

**FIGURE 11. INDICES OF MARRIAGE DIVERSITY:  
UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL – 1940s-2000s**

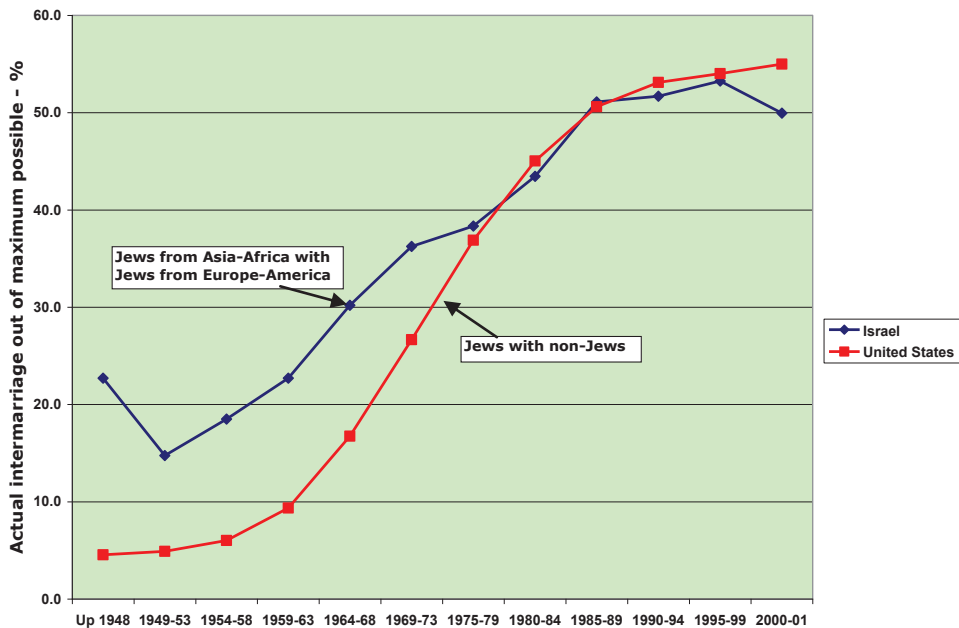
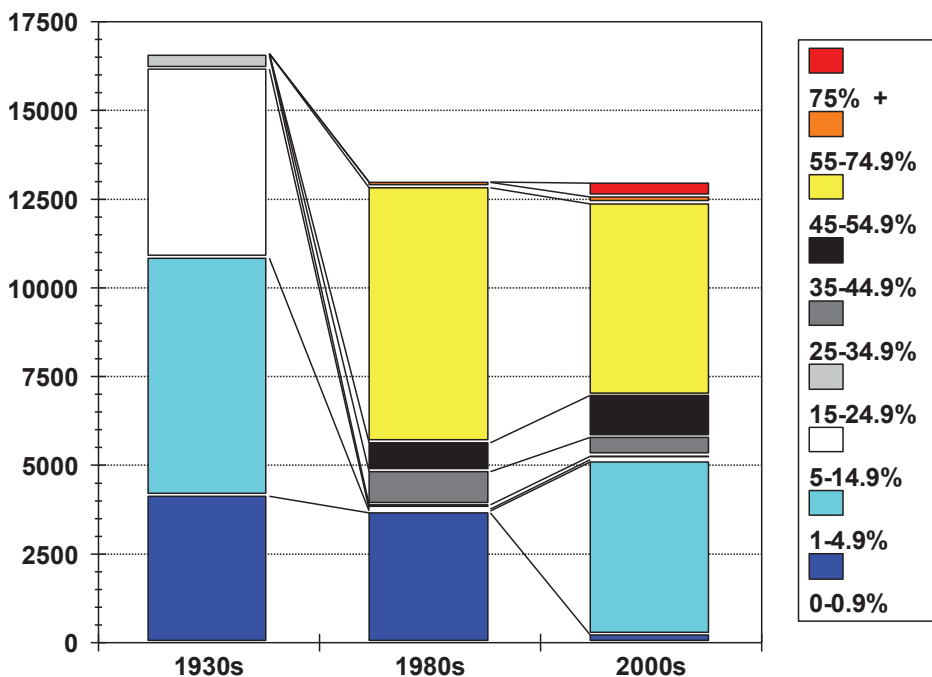




Figure 12 depicts the spread over time of intermarriage by showing a synthesis of world Jewish population distribution by frequency of intermarriage in the various countries. While back in the 1930s the largest section of world Jewry lived in countries with less than a 5% intermarriage rate (measured for individuals, not couples), in the 1980s the largest Jewish population groups were found in countries with over a 45% intermarriage rate. By 2001, again the largest contingent lived in countries with rates of intermarriage between 45% and 55%. Levels in the FSU and Eastern Europe could be as high as 75% and above. Israel too experienced measurable intermarriage levels of about 5%. This new development followed the immigration of about 300,000 non-Jewish members of Jewish households in the framework of the Law of Return, mostly from the FSU. In the absence of civil marriage, and in the absence of large-scale conversion to Judaism, many of these new immigrants marry in Cyprus with Israeli Jews – some of them also new immigrants from the FSU – and promptly return to Israel where their marriages are legally recognized.

**FIGURE 12. WORLD JEWISH POPULATION DISTRIBUTION (Thousands), BY OUT-MARRIAGE FREQUENCIES IN EACH COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE – 1930s, 1980s, 2000s**



Under these circumstances, the numbers of those who apply for conversion and actually complete the entire procedure are of high relevance. Table 2 provides data on converts through the Israeli Conversion Courts system between 1999 and 2008, covering conversions both in the civilian population and in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

**TABLE 2. CONVERSIONS TO JUDAISM IN ISRAEL, 1999-2009<sup>a</sup>**

Year	Civilian	IDF	Total	"Others" <sup>b</sup> in Israel	
				Total	Of which: New cases
1999	3,648		3,648	171,600	
2000	2,570		2,570	208,800	37,200
2001	3,816		3,816	240,800	32,000
2002	4,031		4,031	264,600	23,800
2003	4,550		4,550	277,200	12,600
2004	3,599		3,599	286,500	9,300
2005	5,279	789	6,068	295,800	9,300
2006	3,811	480	4,291	304,900	9,100
2007	7,280	601	7,881	312,700	7,800
2008	5,321	823	6,144	317,100	4,400
2009			1,500 <sup>c</sup>	312,800 <sup>d</sup>	-4,300 <sup>d</sup>
Total	43,905	2,693	48,098		

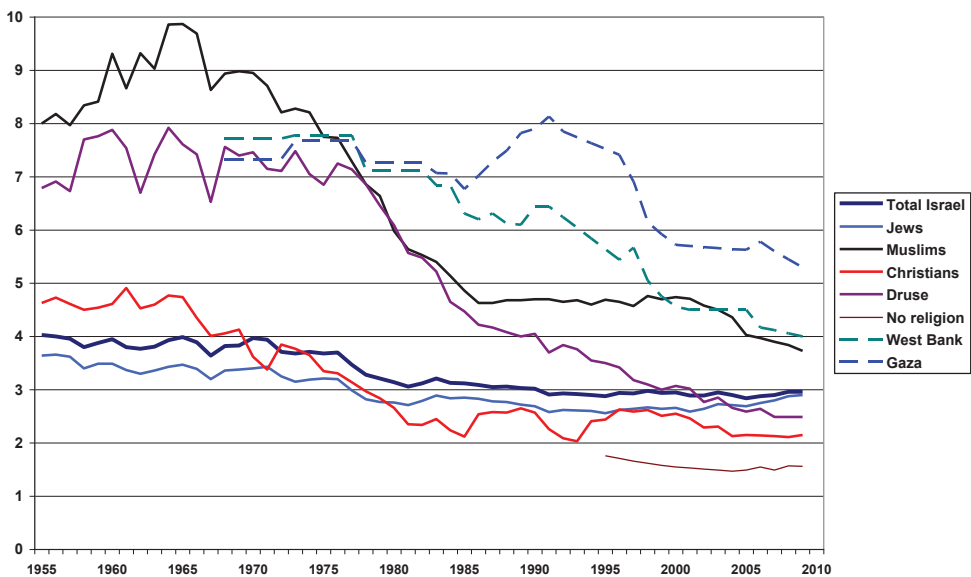
<sup>a</sup> Conversion certificates | <sup>b</sup> Immigrants under the Law of Return who were not recorded as Jewish in the Population Register | <sup>c</sup> Provisional | <sup>d</sup> Revised following 2008 population census

Source: Israel Conversions Court system and Central Bureau of Statistics.

Most civilian conversions – over 3,000 annually – have been of new immigrants from Ethiopia and in recent years pertained nearly exclusively to the Falashmora group. The total number of “others,” i.e. Law of Return immigrants and their children not registered as Jews in Israel's Population Register, grew from 171,600 in 1999 to 312,800 in 2009. Only in 2007, for the first time, was the number of conversions greater than the annual increment in the “others” population.

As already noted, Jewish fertility in Israel was quite stable and high for a developed country. Figure 13 shows the development of Total Fertility Rates (TFR) – an estimate of the number of children on average expected to be born to women if the fertility patterns observed in a given year will continue unchanged over time.

**FIGURE 13. TOTAL FERTILITY RATES, ISRAEL, WEST BANK AND GAZA 1955-2009**

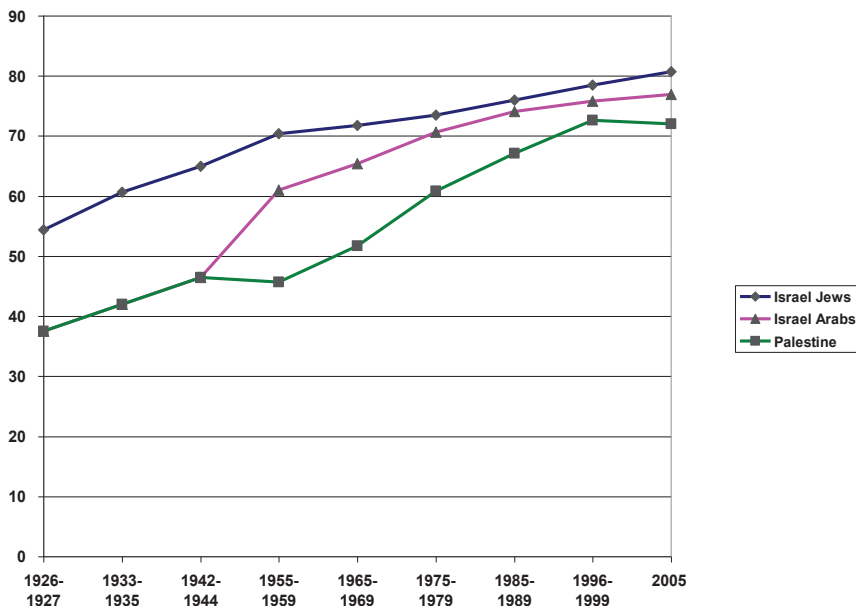


Among Israel's Jewish population since the 1970s, the TFR was steadily slightly below 3 children on average (2.9 in 2009). Among the non-Jewish immigrants from the FSU, the TFR was at about half the level of the Jews. Among Israel's Christian Arabs, it became somewhat lower than among Jews, and it converged from higher levels to the Jewish mainstream among the Druze. The Moslems' TFR was much higher during the 1960s, diminished to about 4.5 by the mid 1980s, stalled there for twenty years,

descended for the first time below 4 in 2005, and was 3.7 in 2009. In the West Bank, after many years of higher fertility, the TFR eventually became quite similar to that of the Moslems in Israel, while in Gaza it remained significantly higher. While the fertility gap between Jews and Arabs has diminished, the gaps in the birth rates remain considerable because of the much younger age composition of the Arab population.

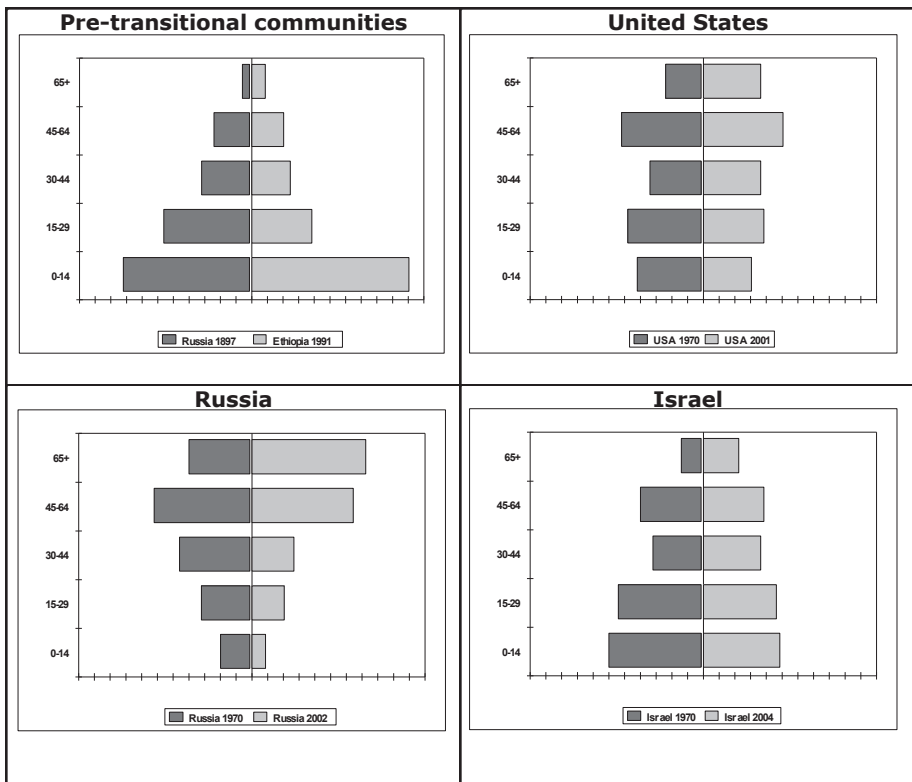
Turning to mortality, life expectancies steadily improved with the onset of a substantial Jewish presence in Palestine. Since 1948 – with the division of the Palestinian Arab population between the State of Israel and the West Bank and Gaza – mortality rapidly diminished among those in the Israeli circumscription and remained much higher in the other territories (Figure 14). After the 1967 war and enhanced contact with the Israeli health system, life expectancy converged to higher levels in the Palestinian territories. Survivorship continues to be higher among the Jewish population, but because of their much younger age composition, Arab populations in Israel and in the Palestinian territories display much lower death rates. Consequently, rates of natural increase (births minus deaths) remain higher among Arabs than among Jews. In 2009 the respective figures were 25.3 per 1,000 population (2.53%) among Moslems, 17.4 per 1,000 among Druzes, 11.9 per 1,000 among Christians, and 14.7 per 1,000 among Jews.

**FIGURE 14. LIFE EXPECTANCY IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE, 1926-2005**



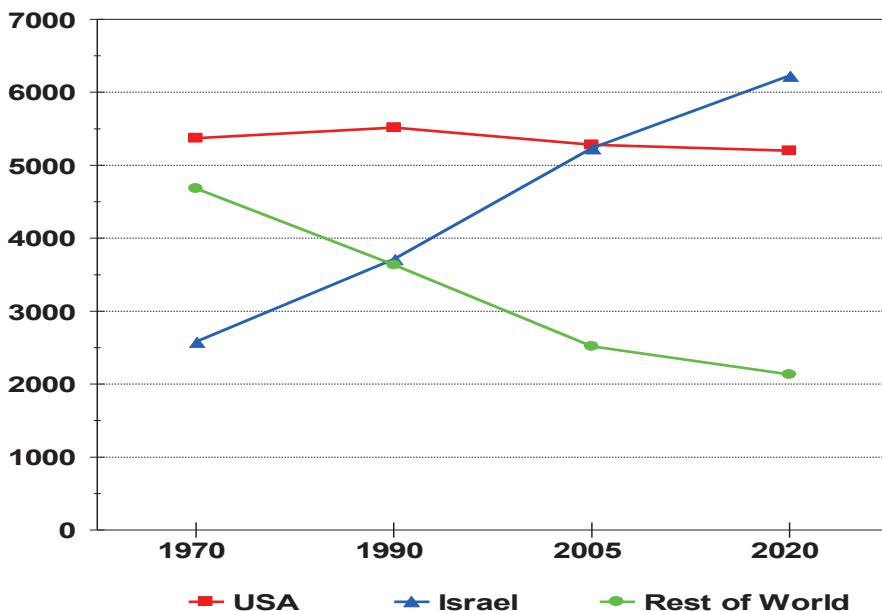
Age composition plays a crucial role as a mediating factor in population processes. Figure 15 exemplifies the extreme variations that can emerge in age composition following the transition from higher to lower birth rates and death rates. Data for Jews in the Russian Empire in 1897 as for the Jews in Ethiopia in 1991 represent the typical structure of a population that has yet to undergo the main modernization processes. Jews in the U.S. in 1970 and in 2001 point to the significant population ageing that follows relatively low birth rates in combination with losses due to assimilation. Jews in the Russian Republic in 1970 and in 2002 exemplify the terminal stages of a population affected by extremely low birth rates, high assimilation and the emigration of young couples with children. It can be estimated that in the FSU for every child recorded as Jewish, at least four children of Jewish parentage in intermarriages were recorded under another nationality. Only in Israel did Jewish age composition remain quite balanced, thanks to the higher TFR, although in Israel too, the signs of ageing appear when comparing 1970 and 2004.

**FIGURE 15. JEWISH POPULATIONS BY AGE, 1897-2004 – PERCENT**



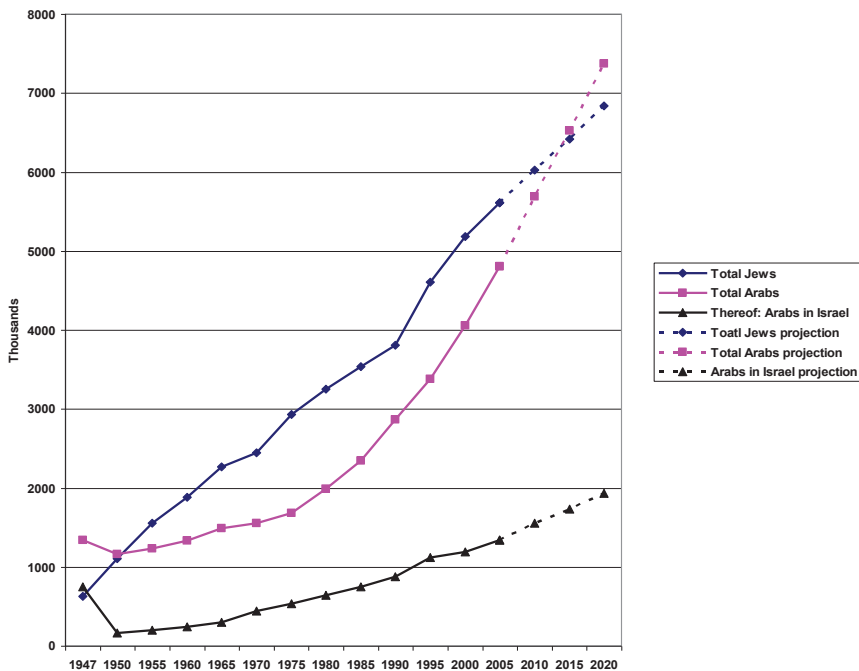
Taking into account the cumulative evidence presented so far, it is possible to elaborate population projections in the short, middle and longer term. Such projections usually rely on the assumption that no extreme changes will occur either in the global or regional geo-strategic context or in the dynamics of the several factors of relevance to demography. However, expected changes in the levels of health and longevity, fertility, and international migration are considered. Several alternative hypotheses have been elaborated. Focusing on an intermediate path between the possible extremes, Figure 16 shows the retrospective changes that occurred between 1970 and 2005, and the changes expected between 2005 and 2020 in the size of world Jewish population according to a partition into three segments: the U.S., the rest of the Diaspora, and Israel. In 1970 Israel had the smallest population among the three, but in 1990 it had raised to second, and by around 2005 it had become first. Looking forward, Israel's Jewish population is expected to continue growing, especially because of its relatively younger age composition and stable fertility levels. U.S. Jewry is expected to incur moderate decline, and more visible declines are expected in the aggregate of other Jewish communities worldwide. If the assumptions of the projection were to hold true, in a longer term projection extended to the year 2030 or 2035 Israel might hold the majority of the world's total Jewish population.

**FIGURE 16. CORE JEWISH POPULATIONS IN ISRAEL, THE U.S. AND THE REST OF THE WORLD, 1970-2005, AND PROJECTIONS, 2005-2020 (THOUSANDS)**



The possibility that a majority of world Jewry might one day live in Israel renders the following question evermore acute: Will Israel Jews constitute the majority of population in the country in which they live? Figure 17 provides a reconstruction of the respective population sizes of Jews and Arabs over the whole territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River between 1947 and 2005, and projections between 2005 and 2020. Data and estimates are also provided for that part of the total Arab population residing within the State of Israel in its pre-1967 boundaries, but also include East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. While in 1947 Jews comprised about one third of the total population of the whole territory considered here, a Jewish majority emerged shortly after Israel's independence. While initially the Jewish population grew faster than the Arab population because of the high impact of immigration, in later years the number of Arabs grew faster than that of Jews because of the dominant impact of their natural increase.

**FIGURE 17. JEWISH AND ARAB POPULATIONS IN ISRAEL, WEST BANK AND GAZA, 1947-2005, AND PROJECTIONS, 2005-2020 (THOUSANDS)**



Under the present circumstances, the quantitative edge of the Jewish side is progressively reduced. In 2000 such an enlarged Jewish population majority was estimated at 55% of the total Israeli population between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River (including

the more than 300,000 non-Jewish immigrants under the Law of Return, but not including foreign workers). By 2010 this enlarged Jewish was reduced to 52%, and at around 2015 the Jewish majority would be lost. Within the territory of the State of Israel plus the West Bank, the enlarged Jewish population (i.e. Jews and their non-Jewish household members) constituted about 62% of the total in 2010. Within the territory delimited by the 1967 borders plus Jerusalem and the Golan, the enlarged Jewish population held a majority of 79% in 2010. If the Jewish population is considered in its core definition, without the over 300,000 non-Jewish members of households, and the over 222,000 foreign workers are added to the total population of Israel, the West Bank and Gaza – i.e. all individuals who currently live between the Mediterranean and the Jordan river regardless of citizenship status – the Jewish percentage becomes 49.8%. In other words, in 2010 there is no majority of Jews, by the core definition, over the whole territory of the former British Mandate plus the Golan Heights. All of these percentages of Jews out of the total population, within the respective territorial boundaries, will gradually diminish in subsequent years and the percentages of Arabs will increase.

As a further consistency check of these projections we throw a look at the present and expected age composition of the Jewish and Arab populations in Israel and the Territories. As already noted, age composition is a crucially important mediating factor of demographic processes, as it conveys a synthesis of the human context in which vital events are more or less likely to occur. Figure 18 compares age compositions of Jews and Arabs in Israel as actually observed in 2005 and as projected in 2030 according to a medium hypothesis of generally stable fertility levels, but with Israeli Arabs converging to the fertility levels of Jews.

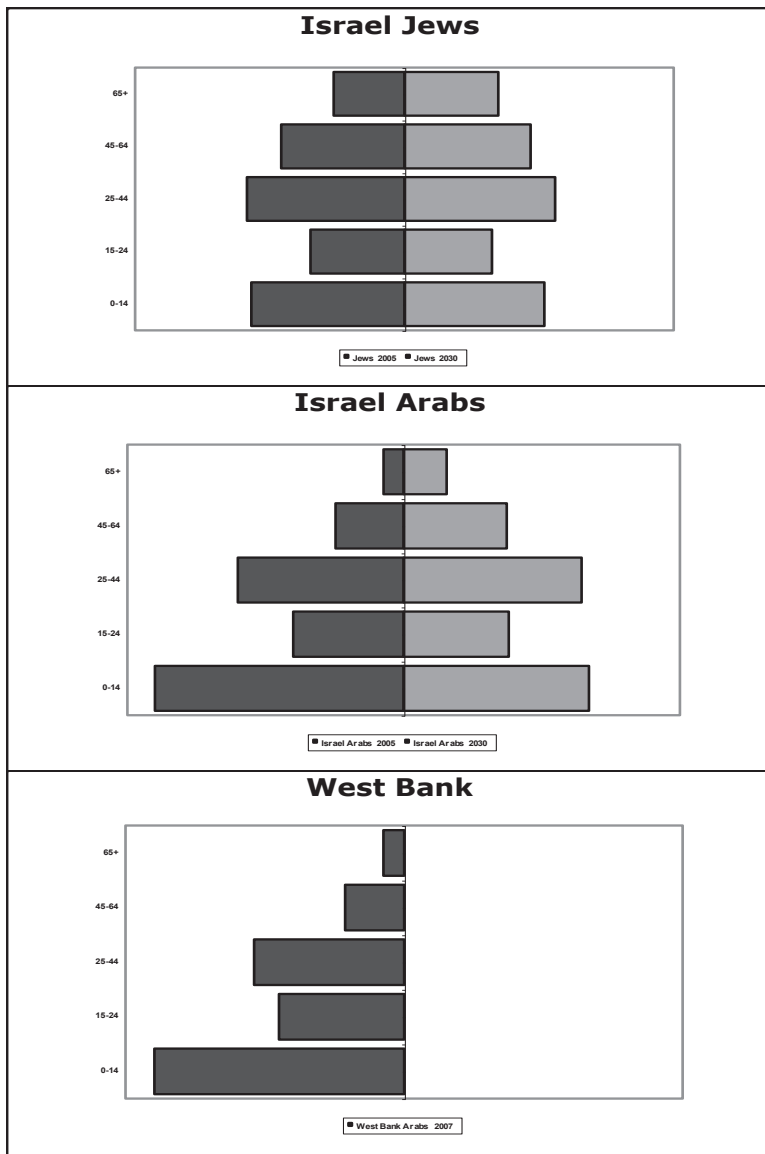
Israel's Arabs have a clearly much younger age composition conducive to more births and fewer deaths, even at equal fertility and survivorship rates. While a general effect of ageing is expected among both populations, structural differences will persist in 2030 providing constant support to higher natural increase and higher population growth among Israeli Arabs. Regarding the Palestinian Territories, Figure 18 limits the observation to the West Bank where recent fertility rates were similar to those of Israel's Moslems. In fact West Bank Palestinians and Israeli Arabs display exceedingly similar population structures.

Even short of a new reliable projection of expected population growth, it is plausible to expect the future course in the West Bank to be similar to that of Israel's Arabs – namely growth rates significantly higher than among the Jewish population. Factoring in the population of Gaza would add to the Palestinians growth rate given the higher fertility rate and higher proportion of young adults in Gaza.



Our preceding overview of the main demographic trends affecting Israel and world Jewry – namely the implications of current trends in the demography of Jews and Palestinians in both Israel and the Territories – constitutes the background for the main policy options and directions that will be introduced in the next section of this Executive Summary.

**FIGURE 18. JEWS AND ARABS IN ISRAEL, 2005-2030, AND WEST BANK ARABS, 2007, BY AGE – PERCENT**



## C. MAIN POLICY OPTIONS AND DIRECTIONS

Three fundamental variables stand at the center of a serious and comprehensive demographic policy perspective: (a) the size of the Jewish population in Israel and in the Diaspora; (b) the demographic, socioeconomic, and identificational characteristics of the Jewish population; and (c) the weight of the Jewish population vis-à-vis the total population in Israel and other countries. A fourth variable, strictly related to the three preceding ones, is the quality and intensity of Jewish identification and community life.

In the following we suggest twelve top priority demographic policy options and directions, with special attention to the social and cultural aspects of Jewish human capital. We briefly delineate the main rationale and direction of each main recommendation. The full report that follows provides a more detailed discussion of the determinants and consequences of Jewish population trends, and develops much more detailed policy options and directions concerning each of the several factors of Jewish population change. In the full report separate recommendations are provided for implementation in Israel and in Diaspora communities.

It should be stressed that some of the following policy options and directions stem from in-depth analysis and evaluation, while some do not constitute more than initial suggestions in the light of a broad assessment of the subject matter. The common ground of all the suggestions that follow – here in short synthesis, in greater detail later in the full report – is that all are worthy of systematic research, discussion, evaluation, and testing. In any case, clearly, **no serious policy program can avoid coming to terms with the multiple and diverse issues suggested here**, because they all address the core of the demographic processes that are shaping the destiny of the Jewish People in Israel and in the Diaspora. Ideally, each policy option should be the object of its own, separate feasibility study that would consider the details of viable implementation, direct and indirect budgeting, and other planning implications.

**Recommendation 1 - Along with continuing emphasis on the importance of Jewish immigration to Israel (aliyah) in the framework of the Law of Return, encourage new patterns of Jewish migration and absorption in Israel through innovative concepts and tools.**

**Rationale:** Many words have been devoted to the importance of aliyah for Israel and the Jewish People as a whole. But it should be realized that given the current Jewish population distribution worldwide – mostly in developed and stable countries with the old reservoirs of immigration extremely reduced – there is no chance for significant migration to Israel without a radical change in the modes of migration encouragement and absorption. Moreover, continuing improvement in the social and economic standing of Israel relative to Western countries, and progress toward regional peace and normalization are significant prerequisites for larger aliyah. Aliyah policies should continue to reflect traditional rescue and idealistic goals. But, based on a keen assessment of the linkages between developments in the global system and international migration, these policies should adjust to the socioeconomic characteristics and needs of the majority of Jews worldwide who continue to hold powerful links with their countries of residence.

**Recommendation 2 - Reduce and clearly regulate immigration not within the frame of the Law of Return and the number of undocumented residents in Israel of non-Jews.**

**Rationale:** It looks like Israel has at least partly lost control over people who enter as temporary workers or refugees, stay undocumented or become permanent residents. Israel's relatively good economic situation attracts immigrants from less developed countries who make every effort to stay – a condition well known in other developed societies. This feature and the additional quest for family reunion of Palestinians is bound to grow. Definition and implementation of clear policy and legal norms is essential.

**Recommendation 3 - Reduce emigration from Israel (yeridah), facilitate return of Israelis abroad, strengthen relations of Israelis abroad with their home country, and facilitate increased participation of Israelis abroad in the life of local Jewish communities.**

**Rationale:** The number of Israelis who have emigrated and permanently live abroad is estimated at over half a million, plus their foreign-born children. Many of these Israelis abroad are successful academics, professionals and entrepreneurs. The growing impact of a “brain drain” seriously and negatively impacts Israeli society. Their rapprochement with Israel is important, whether as potential returnees or as Jews who continue to be involved, albeit from a distance, with their homeland. Prolonged residence abroad can cause a loss of Jewish and Israeli identity, and therefore, a stronger link with local Jewish communities may offer an opportunity for more meaningful and efficacious identity maintenance.

In recent years many countries have moved toward strengthening their links with the respective diasporas. Several countries allow the respective communities abroad the right to vote in national elections, or allow them to express their voice in specially designed public agencies. The same should be explored as a possibility for Israelis abroad.

**Recommendation 4 – Reduce obstacles that interfere with Jewish marriage and family formation.**

**Rationale:** A contradiction exists between the widespread adherence of the Jewish collective in Israel and in the Diaspora to high marriage propensities, including adolescents and young adults, and a diminishing frequency of actual marriages. Part of this is explained by postponement of and higher ages at marriage, part by the growing diffusion of adult cohabitation – most of which in the Diaspora is between Jews and non-Jewish partners. These in turn reflect the economic costs of family formation and more individualistic norms and behaviors. Marriage nonetheless remains the normative framework for procreation among most Jews – unlike many other contemporary populations. Lesser family formation has a definite reducing impact on Jewish fertility.

**Recommendation 5 – Reduce obstacles that interfere with the birth of a third and fourth child in Israeli families and develop conditions that may facilitate Jewish family growth in both Israel and the Diaspora.**

**Rationale:** Recent research shows that many Jewish households in Israel with one or two children would like to have three or four children if the appropriate socioeconomic and logistical conditions were available. The State of Israel should enhance the roles of social services and financial and value-oriented incentives aimed at facilitating family, marriage and childbearing of wanted children, particularly at medium parities such as the 3rd or 4th child, on a non-discriminatory basis for all its citizens. In other countries too, the evidence is that the actual number of Jewish children is lower than the ideal number. The main policy goal should be to lower or eliminate obstacles that prevent Jews from achieving their preferred family sizes.

**Recommendation 6 – Strengthen the positive components of Jewish identification in Israel and in the Diaspora and interaction between the two parties.**

**Rationale:** In contemporary societies, personal identities are not monolithic but reflect the interplay and competition of several possible spheres of influence. Jewish identity is the complex product of many factors such as the general status of religion in society, the amount of multiculturalism allowed, historical events, exposure to socialization frameworks, and individual characteristics. The overall Jewish identity reflects the cumulative effects of different exposures to Judaism over the course of the lifecycle. The State of Israel should recognize the maintenance and thriving of Diaspora Jewry in its various forms, including the Israeli Diaspora, as a strategic imperative. Massive investment should be undertaken to improve knowledge and transmission of Jewish identity through expanding existing and new networks of Jewish schooling, including the best forms of informal education such as Birthright, summer camps, youth movements, adolescent education and adult education and other programs.

**Recommendation 7 – Develop new approaches to limit the erosive effects of assimilation and intermarriage.**

**Rationale:** The high frequency of out-marriage in the Diaspora and the beginning of its visibility in Israel constitute one of the most significant factors correlated with low Jewish community participation and a low transmission of Jewish identification to the offspring of Jews. This calls for expanded actions and frameworks aimed at reaching the non-Jewish spouses and the children of out-marriages and involve them in Jewish culture and community life.

**Recommendation 8 – Facilitate cultural absorption of non-Jewish members of Jewish households into a Jewish context and promote a friendlier approach to conversion to Judaism (giyur).**

**Rationale:** The question of giyur should be carefully considered in the light of the different challenges and issues that emerge when – as in Israel – Jews are the majority as against – as in the Diaspora – they are a relatively small minority of total population. Over 312,000 recent immigrants to Israel – mostly from the FSU – are not recorded as Jewish in Israel's population register, including a growing number of Israeli-born children of immigrants. Their integration within Jewish peoplehood is feasible and steps have been taken in this direction, though far from approaching the necessary scale. The issue of the status of these Israelis facing the Israeli legal system and Jewish peoplehood

cannot be postponed any longer. Most of them view themselves as an integral part of Israel's Jewish population and hold Jewish identities not distinguishable from those of other immigrants from the same countries who are Jewish by Halakha. Notwithstanding their being Israeli citizens, they cannot marry in Israel given the exclusive prerogative of religious authorities over personal status matters. The current situation creates tension, frustration and disenchantment. A discriminatory policy supports full-scale conversion for non-Jews who arrive from Ethiopia, as opposed to the high obstacles facing non-Jewish immigrants from the FSU and Western countries who arrive in Israel under the Law of Return. Rabbinic authorities and the governmental and other administrative institutions with whom they interact should strengthen and make more accessible the giyur system and its procedures. Means of conversion should be developed that will facilitate inclusion within the Jewish fold of as many members of Jewish families who wish to do so, provided they wish to respect the tenets of Judaism.

**Recommendation 9 – Continue to improve health standards, life duration and life quality with special attention to health conditions that are peculiar to Jews in Israel and the Diaspora.**

**Rationale:** Contemporary improvements in life expectancy play a lesser role than in the past in affecting the overall demographic equation, but they are more evident among the elderly. The State of Israel and Diaspora Jewish communities should continue all efforts to improve public health, render medical and pharmaceutical services more accessible and affordable to a larger public, and promote sensitive care for people with particular life histories such as Shoah survivors or those carrying Jewish ancestry-related genetic risk markers.

**Recommendation 10 – Establish final borders of the State of Israel that reflect a maximum effort to secure a large and long-term Jewish majority within the State's territory, with due consideration of Jewish historical values and to Israel's security needs.**

**Rationale:** This is an essential premise to the enterprise of future development of the State of Israel, together with an evaluation of security needs and other values-oriented considerations. This assumes a division of historic Eretz Israel between separate political bodies, with special attention to the territory where a stable Jewish majority can be ensured in the long-term. Failure to secure a clear Jewish majority

would jeopardize the State's long-term ability to exist as the core state of the Jewish People and a central, relevant referent to world Jewry.

**Recommendation 11 – Raise public awareness in Israel and in the Diaspora about the relevance, importance and feasibility of Jewish population policies.**

**Rationale:** Public awareness is important for the success of population policies. Without the wide support of leaders and agencies who command public influence, and without adequate information to the population at large, it will be difficult to implement programs that will allow the achievement of planned policy goals.

**Recommendation 12 – Create a central focal point for demographic policy research, planning and implementation for Israel and for world Jewry.**

**Rationale:** In the absence of a central focal point empowered with both strategic thinking and operative strength, there is no chance for comprehensive, integrated demographic policies to produce effective results, even if they were formally endorsed. Nor is it realistic to wait for a transition to a presidential regime in Israel before a plan of demographic policy reform is submitted and implemented. The topic is today largely neglected, and if any attention is paid to it at all, it is highly dispersed across many different government ministries and other agencies. We stress the need to create a central focal point at the Prime Minister's Office or in one of the adjacent agencies, and an inter-ministerial committee within Israel's government, charged with establishing and coordinating Jewish demographic policy planning and implementation. A coordinating body should be formally charged with overseeing demographic policy planning for Israel and world Jewry.

## D. ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report aims at developing a broad policy framework covering the manifold demographic issues now facing the Jewish people in Israel and across the world. In the next chapters of this report we will review in greater detail the demographic trends and policy options shortly outlined so far.

The report is organized in three main parts. Part One outlines the main conceptual aspects of demography in general, and of Jewish population trends in particular. It also provides a general policy framework to the challenges that currently face Jewish peoplehood in a broader sense than mere demography. The general limits and incidence of population policies are reviewed in international perspective, and the specifics of policies aimed at a specific social and cultural group like the Jews are discussed. In this context, Jewish population trends are assessed, not ignoring certain disagreements that exist about the main thrust and significance of the major changes in Israel and in the United States. The demographic and non-demographic implications of current trends across the Jewish Diaspora and in the state of Israel are extensively discussed, paying attention to some lessons that can be drawn from history.

Part Two offers a systematic discussion of relevant demographic processes and policy options, each of eight chapters being devoted to one particular driver of population change. These include immigration and absorption of immigrants in Israel; emigration from Israel; marriage, family and fertility; Jewish identity; assimilation and secession from Judaism; accession to Judaism; health, mortality and survivorship; and territory and boundaries. Reflecting the particular approach to empirical research and policy planning of this report, each chapter is articulated in four sections: one section reviews the main processes that currently affect the given driver, a second section unveils the driver-specific intervening mechanisms that help explaining and predicting the observed trends, and two sections suggest a variety of policy options and directions – one for Israel and one for Diaspora Jewry. We stress in each case the causal chain that links rather broad and sometimes global social determinants to individual behaviors and patterns, through the intervention of community-related variables. We believe that one of the prerequisites to any serious policy recommendation – rather than broad declarative scenarios – is paying attention to the particular shape of each process and to the role that intermediate stages and steps play in generating the final



result. Clearly, at all levels of process evaluation and assessing the main intervening mechanisms, the situations in Israel – where Jews are the majority of total population – and the Diaspora communities – where Jews are small minorities – are significantly different, which calls for separate policy options and recommendations.

Part Three is devoted to an effort to formulate an integrated Jewish population policy framework for the future. This involves reviewing past efforts in the field, evaluating the desirability and feasibility of different policy alternatives, and seeking for institutional frameworks that would be capable and willing to carry the burden. While some of the emerging trends affecting Jewish demography are quite disparaging, the view of this document is not pessimist. It calls for serious evaluation of the odds, development of adequate tools, and action to promote goals that may reflect widely shared interests across Jewish peoplehood.

The Appendixes report several documents that outline how issues of interest were understood and handled in the past by Israel's governments and by Jewish organizations worldwide.



# PART ONE: GENERAL AND CONCEPTUAL ASPECTS

## 1. DEMOGRAPHY AND POLICY PLANNING

### A. Overview

This report is about the demography of the Jews, the description and assessment of the changes they are undergoing in the contemporary period, the implications of such changes, and the prospects for policy options that might alter for the better the current course of affairs in the demographic sphere. Demography is about the private life of individuals. Life events such as marriages, births, changes of residence within and across countries reflect decisions that are taken annually by hundreds of millions of individuals across the globe, or occurrences, such as deaths, that are mostly not matters of choice. Transformations of the global political, economic, cognitive and normative environment continuously, deeply and rapidly affect the daily life, opportunities and risks, identity and boundary definitions of civilizations, nations, countries, communities, and individuals worldwide. Through a chain of direct and indirect influences over the continuous flow of lifecycle events, the same and additional factors deeply transform the established patterns of existence of people globally and locally. At the same time, the hundreds of millions of little, anonymous life events powerfully cumulate to produce collective effects in the form of changing population size and composition. Slowly but unavoidably, demography and population turns into one of the most powerful strategic forces in the world, regional, national and local contexts.

It would be a serious mistake, of course, to believe that demography operates in a vacuum and itself alone generates its own consequences. Population dynamics cannot be understood in disjunction from a much broader array of global, national and local factors that need to be at least summarily mentioned. In each of these instances, one or a few major centers of influence often guide, sometimes impose, and frequently cause the main patterns of transformation, innovation, and possibly hierarchy of peoples and societies within the global system (Wallerstein, 1991). This is true in the diverse spheres of military power,

politics, and economy, even if the dispersed nature of markets may often result in variable incidences of the same processes in different locations. Certain areas in the world system, empowered with a more abundant amount of originality, competitiveness and specialization may enjoy greater amounts of autonomy and self-direction than others in facing these trends. This is probably also true of cultural patterns that draw from a larger array of sources globally, although culture too, is often conveyed through channels and means of communication whose ownership is quite concentrated. In different modes, many areas of the contemporary human experience stand in a position of significant dependency on decisions, trends, ideas, resources and processes generated elsewhere in the global system (Bauman, 1998).

While these general trends require a much deeper geo-strategic discussion that cannot be carried out here, one important implication is that three interrelated types of process operating at different levels affect the human experience in general – therefore also the Jewish experience – globally and in specific locales making it dependent on (if not prisoner of) powerful external forces. These processes include:

- at the global level, the changing mutual position of regional societies in the worldwide context (Eizenstat, 2008);
- at the continental, regional and national level, the changing mutual position of organized socioeconomic and cultural groups, and within these societal frameworks, the different mobility profiles of communities and individuals (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005);
- at the Jewish collective level, sometimes described as a self-organizing system (Dror, 2005), the relevance, the mode of interaction and the nature of discourse between Jews and the surrounding environment, and among individuals and institutions within the Jewish collective.

Of primary importance is the intensified web of political, military, industrial, trade, communication interconnections, and a concomitant growing competitiveness between the major powers for global control and dominance. What is true of the material world of the economy has been posited by some to be true also of the symbolic world of civilizations (Huntington, 1996). In terms of both boundary maintenance and trans-national influence, religious ideas and hierarchies compete for the identificational space of large masses of people in search of meaning.

Three directions of change are worth noticing in particular:

- At the geo-political strategic level, one assumption not borne out by observation of the evolving contemporary scene is that after the disappearance of the Soviet Union the world would be dominated by one superpower – the United States – surrounded by a constellation of minor powers. In reality, the continuation of old and new high-profile international conflicts, and the emergence of new coalitions of secondary actors have effectively prevented the U.S. from unilaterally achieving some of its most coveted strategic goals while not awarding a clear leadership position over world affairs to any other actor.
- In the socioeconomic dimension, a general improvement in average standards of living is accompanied by growing gaps at the global, national and local levels. Development unfolds at highly differentiated paces at the aggregate level of national societies as well as reflected in individual access to employment, wealth, housing, services, environmental quality, and civil rights. Growing gaps are generated both in objectively measurable terms, and in terms of diffused feelings of relative deprivation.
- On the cultural scene, enhanced by intensified international migration, societies, and Western societies in particular, tend to become more ethnically and religiously diverse. The increasing diffusion of and access to networks and channels of mass communication exposes growing sections of humankind to a similar blend of diverse cultural stimuli and ideological messages. Contrary to the assumption of a world headed toward more neutral and softened ideologies, the center of which would be represented by the Western democratic paradigm, a growing quest for meaning and an increasing role for religious and ethnic identities can be observed. Broad popular movements are sometimes led by radical or fanatic leaders with momentous consequences for peace and stability within and between societies. These global changes generate, at one and the same time, two opposite effects: more broadly standardized and shared perceptions and folkways, on the one hand, as well as intra- and inter-group tensions at the local, regional and global level, on the other.

These transformations also increase the exposure of local societies to events of political significance, economic influences, and ideas that are being generated in distant parts of the world. Growing fluidity, lessening predictability, and augmented

ethnic cleavages characterize the contemporary world scene as compared to situations that may have prevailed for several decades following World War II, namely during the years of the Cold War when the bipolar structure of U.S.-Soviet dominance, fraught with tensions though it was, assured a high degree of global stability. World Jewry has been and is highly sensitive to these geo-strategic trends (Weinfeld, 2005; DellaPergola, 2008).

Due to the special relationship that exists between the Jewish People and the State of Israel, many of Israel's demographic, socioeconomic and cultural trends draw from processes unfolding in the Diaspora. However, the Jewish Diaspora closely reflects patterns and trends that operate in the surrounding host societies. Israel, in turn, is affected by circumstances and events that characterize the geo-political region of which it is part. Thus the whole of world Jewry, and in particular Israel-Diaspora relations are highly influenced by these externalities, along with the unique values and contents that operate within the global Jewish collective. One most outstanding example of the nature of this relationship is provided by the powerful immigration waves from which contemporary Israeli society was formed, grew, and still draws, to some extent, currently. These large-scale human flows were determined by geo-political circumstances well beyond the control or even the expectation of the Jewish collective, but they were channeled and eventually produced consequences in ways that were unique to the Jewish collective.

The interdependence that exists between Israel and the Diaspora is expressed in many other areas as well. Historically, in the present and presumably in the future the development of the Israeli population and society cannot be only seen as an independent entity within the framework of changing demographic processes. Israel – at least its Jewish sector – is to the same extent also part of a larger and more complex Jewish peoplehood entity, of which we assume here it constitutes the *core* state. Indeed, in contemporary perceptions both within the Jewish polity and outside of it, Israel constitutes a focal point that cannot be neglected even if such perceptions sometimes tend to lean towards the critical or even negative side.

Clearly, based on these lessons from the past, individuals and institutions in Israel should be particularly interested in following events and occurrences in the Diaspora, and concurrently, individuals and institutions in the Diaspora cannot

ignore events and occurrences in Israel. A reliable, continuous monitoring of changes affecting the Diaspora should be an integral part of Israel policy thinking and decision-making, and reference to Israel should be part of daily Jewish community planning elsewhere. Jewish leadership in Israel and elsewhere should be accustomed to appreciate the interactive, dynamic nature of the Israel-Diaspora relationship. When it comes to policy evaluations and to choosing between the different available policy options, an integrated analytic approach to different processes that affect either or both components of the Israel-Diaspora dyad, in the light of broader developments in world society, is required. The case for such an approach in the domain of Jewish population and demography is argued and possibly demonstrated later in this report.

## **B. Fundamentals of Jewish demography**

The population size, image of, and in fact, the very existence of the Jewish People in its present form depend among other factors upon the equilibrium between socio-demographic processes that determine the propensity of Jews to marry, their fertility and mortality levels, their migration movements, and assimilation rates. All these factors may determine if and to what extent Jewish populations will grow or diminish, will concentrate in certain regions and metropolitan areas, their sizes and characteristics, and the extent and quality of their interrelations with the larger society. Normally, these demographic trends are much less present in public awareness than military, political or economic developments. It is common sentiment that demographic patterns found in any society may be considered “inherent properties” of that society – something that exists but there is little that can be done to modify. This, however, is not true. Under consideration here are complex and sensitive variables that should be taken into account in any attempt to figure out Jewish policy planning while looking realistically at questions such as the nature of Jewish society in the foreseeable future, what challenges it may be called to tackle, what are its major sources of strength and weakness, and what improvements might affect the latter balance over time.

The existing statistical information on the demography of Diaspora Jewry, especially after the Shoah, has been extremely partial and fragmentary. However, since the 1960s and with greater intensity since the 1990s, there has been an increasing effort to collect data. Official sources like numerous national censuses

and specially sponsored investigations – such as the National Jewish Population Surveys of 1970, 1990, and 2001 in the U.S. – along with the detailed database supplied for Israel by the Central Bureau of Statistics allow today for an overall reasonable assessment of the current situation and trends of the world Jewish population.

Much of the stimulus for this activity has come from the Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics of the Institute of Contemporary Jewry at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem founded by Roberto Bachi and U.O. Schmelz in 1959 (Bachi, 1976; Schmelz, 1981), and until 2010 directed by this author (DellaPergola, 2007). Among current examples of research activities on Jewish population in other countries, a specialized research center mostly focusing on American Jewry is the Steinhardt Social Research Institute at Brandeis University. In the United Kingdom, the Board of Deputies of British Jews has a Community Research Unit that regularly monitors the collection of Jewish vital statistics. The same service is performed by the Zentralwohlfahrtstelle, the central social work unit of German Jewry in Frankfurt.

At the beginning of 2010 the world Jewish population was estimated at 13,428,000 – 80,000 more than the previous year – reflecting a growth of 95,000 in Israel and a decline of 15,000 elsewhere (DellaPergola, 2010). An overall growth rate of 0.6% resulted from a 1.7% increase in Israel and a -0.2% decrease in the Diaspora. These trends continued the well-established patterns of past years of minimal growth in world Jewry mostly resting on Israel's natural increase. The estimated total grew from 11 million in 1945 to 13.4 million in 2010, a total increase of 22%, compared to a global population growth of 194% (nearly triple the size in 1945). Since 1970, Jewish population growth was 6%, versus 90% among the world's total population. Because of the Jews' slow demographic patterns in a context of rapid global population growth, Jews represent a continuously diminishing share of the world's total population, about 2 per 1000 in 2010, as against 3.5 per 1000 in 1970, 4.7 per 1000 in 1945, and 7.5 per 1000 in 1938 (Figure 1 above and Table 3). This constant shrinkage of the Jewish presence facing the steady growth of the host populations around them is a fact of overwhelming significance for all Jewish thinking, not only as regards demography as such.



**TABLE 3. WORLD JEWISH AND TOTAL POPULATION, 1945-2010**

Year	Jewish population		World population		Jews per 1000
	Thousands	% change	Millions	% change	
1945	11,000	-	2,350	-	4.7
1970	12,645	+15	3,637	+55	3.5
2010	13,428	+6	6,900	+90	2.0
Increase:					
1945-2010	+2,428	+22	+4,550	+194	0.5
1970-2010	+783	+6	+3,263	+90	0.2

Source: DellaPergola (2010); United Nations (2004); Population Reference Bureau (2010).

The significant changes that occurred in world Jewish population distribution since the 1970s are outlined in Figures 2 and 3 above and Table 4. Israel's Jewish population of 5,704,000 constituted 42.5% of World Jewry in 2010, as against 20% in 1970 and 5% in 1948. In Israel a comparatively young age composition and a persisting preference for nuclear families with 3-4 children explain a yearly natural increase of over 83,000 in 2009. The nearly 117,000 Jewish births recorded in 2009 were the highest number ever.

Along with the significant surge of Israel's population, which more than doubled, only Oceania (Australia and New Zealand) had a visible increase. Two more countries significantly increased their Jewish populations: Canada, whose growth was offset by a decrease in the United States, and Germany, whose growth (by a factor of four) was in fact the highest of any country in the world but was offset by an overall

decrease in other countries in Western Europe. In other areas such as North Africa or the Asian portions of the FSU, the Jews have nearly completely left, while in the European parts of the FSU the current figure is less than 20% of what it was in 1970. The total number of Diaspora Jews diminished by 23% – from 10,080,000 in 1970 to 7,724,000 in 2010.

Besides continuing Jewish population growth in Israel, minor increases in Canada and Australia were offset by more significant losses in the FSU; Eastern Europe; Western Europe as a whole; Latin America and Africa. In Western Europe, after several years of rapid increase, the number of Jews in Germany stabilized, but France and the United Kingdom are recording declines. The 2010 data incorporate the effect of the transfer to the European Union (Western Europe) of several countries in Eastern Europe plus the former Soviet Baltic republics that joined the European Union.

These estimates refer to the concept of core Jewish population (see Figure 4 above and Chapter 2 below), mostly inclusive of self-reported Jews and people without religion with Jewish parents who do not hold another monotheistic religion. In countries such as those of the FSU, Jewish population estimates reflect declared ethnic affiliations.

In the United States, a recent high-profile debate on the size of the Jewish community benefited from some new sources of data but relied mostly on secondary analyses of previous studies (Sheskin and Dashefsky, 2006; Saxe et al., 2007; DellaPergola, 2008a). Our estimate of 5,275,000 core Jews represents the middle range between two large national surveys conducted in the U.S. in 2001. The National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) and the American Jewish Identity Survey (AJIS) provided national estimates of 5,200,000 and 5,350,000 Jews respectively (Figure 5 above). These surveys (to be interpreted with margins of error of plus/minus 200,000 individuals) pointed to Jewish population reduction since the early 1990s and coherently indicated the causes for so negative a trend: later and less frequency of marriage, low fertility, a continuing increase of out-marriage rates, population ageing, and declining numbers of immigrants from other countries (DellaPergola, 2005). A new national survey, the American Religious Identity Survey conducted in 2008 (Kosmin and Keysar, 2009), confirms the ongoing trend of a slowly shrinking and ageing Jewish population in the U.S.

The role of changing Jewish identification is of course very important in determining not only population estimates but also the whole thrust of Jewish life. In the U.S., a

**TABLE 4. WORLD JEWISH POPULATION, BY MAJOR AREAS, 1970-2010**

Area	Core Jewish Population (Thousands) <sup>a</sup>			2010 as % of 1970	2010 as % of 1990
	1970	1990	2010		
World total	12,662	12,806	13,428	106	105
Israel	2,582	3,947	5,704	221	145
Total Diaspora	10,080	8,859	7,724	77	87
West Europe	1,119	1,044	1,137 <sup>b</sup>	102	109
East Europe and Balkans	216	114	21 <sup>c</sup>	10	18
FSU, Europe	1,906	1,000	297 <sup>c</sup>	16	30
FSU, Asia	262	150	19	7	13
Rest of Asia	100	33	19	19	58
North Africa <sup>d</sup>	83	35	4	5	11
South Africa	124	115	72	58	63
North America <sup>e</sup>	5,686	5,845	5,650	99	97
Latin America	514	433	390	76	90
Oceania	70	90	115	164	128

<sup>a</sup> Not including non-Jews eligible for the Law of Return | <sup>b</sup> Including East European and former Soviet new members of the European Union | <sup>c</sup> Excluding East European and Former Soviet new members of the European Union | <sup>d</sup> Including Ethiopia | <sup>e</sup> United States and Canada.

weakening of ethnic, community, and Israel-oriented expressions of Jewish identification can be noted over time among younger adult generations, along with greater resilience of the religious-oriented components of Jewish identification (Waxman, 2008). On the other hand, the Jewish school-age population segment includes a growing share of the Orthodox and of children who are receiving full-time Jewish education; Jewish studies courses and programs on college and university campuses continue to grow; as does the publication of Jewish books by both Jewish and general publishers; and levels of Jewish ritual observance among the more traditional segments of the American Jewish population have risen.

Simplistic inference of trends from one population to another is quite common in population research and public discourse about demography. Yet, knowing the mere direction of change in one population is clearly not enough to let us arrive at conclusions about another population. Such a simplistic approach of inferring the trends of one population from another was quite common in the past. Over the years percentages of change found in general populations were often applied to the Jewish inhabitants of the same country, thus creating a mistaken impression that national Jewish populations and the world total were steadily increasing like other populations. Demographic studies of the last tens of years have suggested new evaluations pointing to downward estimates of Diaspora Jewry.

Jewish demographic changes depend not only on the varying internal balances of Jewish communities in individual countries, but also on the exposure of individual Jews to the political and socioeconomic constraints and opportunities within national societies. One central feature of contemporary world Jewry is the substantial similarity in the direction of the major socio-demographic processes in different countries. These megatrends are pervasive and fundamental to any attempt to put into motion a decision-making evaluation aimed at demographic patterns and trends.

Differences in the life quality of different countries, hence the respective attractiveness of societies, tend to importantly affect the volume and direction of international migration. Since World War II and the Shoah, the Jews have tended to concentrate in the core of the world-system of nations (DellaPergola, Rebhun, Tolts, 2005). In 1988, 55% of the world Jewish population lived in the upper fifth of the world's countries, i.e. those with the highest standards of living, levels of industrialization and modernization, health standards, degrees of education and culture, and political emancipation. The same share of world Jewry had dramatically risen to 92% in 2001.

By comparison, the same countries hosted only 16% of the world total population in 2001, thus making the Jews relatively more represented among the most developed and influential segment, or core, of world society inclusive of North America, Western Europe and a few other more developed countries.

Based on the latest available data (2006), Israel was steadily ranked 23rd out of 177 world countries according to the Human Development Index (HDI) which can be viewed as an operational measure of standard of living in each country (UNDP, 2008). Regarding the separate components of HDI, Israel was 9th best worldwide in terms of health standards, 26th in income per capita as measured by purchase power parity (but only 62nd in income distribution equality), and 34th in educational enrollment (but only 39th in the PISA test – a measure of high school pupils' abilities in reading, mathematics, and science (Kashti and Aderet, 2007)). Israel also was 34th in public administration honesty (a worsening of 6 places versus a previous ranking (Infoplease, 2007)). At the same time, some 85% of Diaspora Jewry lives in countries with an HDI higher than Israel's, and only 15% in countries with a lower HDI. The high standards of living attained by most Jews across the world do not generate impetus for emigration to Israel (aliyah) or to other countries.

Another 7% of the world Jewish population in 2001 lived in the second best fifth of countries, a more semi-peripheral type within the World-system's, as against 13% of the total world population. These countries are characterized by a comparatively weaker degree of overall development or by clear unbalances in the internal availability of major resources. The second tier of countries included most of Eastern Europe where before World War II the largest share of world Jewry had been concentrated.

Jews have nearly disappeared from countries at the world system periphery where they were well visible in the past. The less developed three-fifths of world countries now host less than 2% of the global Jewish population, as against 71% of the total world population.

From a global perspective, an absolute majority of world Jewry appears to have gained access to economically affluent, politically stable, and socially attractive environments. Central to our understanding of contemporary world Jewry should be the unprecedented favorable opportunity framework now available to most Jews in their countries of residence. This includes comparatively strengthened chances for better health, higher income, quality educational opportunities, and rapid

socioeconomic mobility in a general environment of political freedom, technological innovation, sophisticated research facilities, high industrial productivity, modernity, and cultural pluralism. Unavoidably, one of the paramount aspects of the major exodus from the FSU to Israel, and also to the U.S., Germany and other Western countries is that it consisted of a large Jewish population transfer from economically less to more developed countries, and from authoritarian to democratic societies within the world system.

Concurrently, internal transformations of unprecedented scope developed with regard to the perceptions, practices, contents, and identifications of Jewish peoplehood. With regard to Diaspora Jewry, these changes can be concisely described as a major trade-off between a very impressive strengthening of material conditions and opportunities, and an equally significant dilution of ethnic identity and continuity. Integration of the Jews in the general society of the more developed countries exposes most of them to pervasive and sophisticated networks of cultural and social interactions. This enhances reception of a great volume of diverse cultural messages, and participation in many social spheres, some of which may support the continuity of the cultural patterns of the Jewish group itself, but most of which propose challenges and alternatives to it.

In historical perspective, it may be maintained that the Shoah tragically accelerated what might have been the normally expected course of affairs, namely the gradual, shifting concentration of the Jews toward the more developed countries. On the other hand, in many respects the State of Israel succeeded pre-World-War-II East European Jewry in the role of the core of Jewish ethno-religious identity within the Jewish People. But Israel, as noted, has not yet reached a stable position among the leading nations in terms of material development.

These trends underscore a conflict of interests and strategies between the efforts aimed at developing a viable Jewish life within the world's most competitive societies, and the efforts to strengthen the ethno-religious core of Jewish peoplehood in Israel, where average material conditions still lag behind those of the leading nations.

The apparent contradiction between Israel's potential cultural and socioeconomic roles has enhanced relevance in the context of the extraordinary transformations of world Jewry throughout the last decades. Since the end of the 1980s traumatic political changes have occurred, pointing in fact to an ongoing process of

transformation and re-alignment within the world system which is still unfinished and is characterized by much fluidity, if not dangerous instability. In terms of the internal structural characteristics of the Jewish population, the already noted globally favorable position is matched by equally unprecedented levels of socioeconomic achievement at the individual level. However, other crucial factors of socio-demographic change have recently operated in ways that are more problematic. Jewish international migration again reached levels closely matching the historical maximum peaks, followed by a slow-down matching historical minimum levels. Migration movements affected Jews in the FSU and Ethiopia, but also South Africa, Iran, some Latin American countries and even France. Enormous opportunities but also heavy human costs are involved in these movements, both at the individual and community level. Great personal stresses may attend the process of uprooting and re-adapting from one society to another. Enormous material resources continue to be necessary to the successful absorption of Jewish immigrants in Israel and in other main countries of destination.

Most importantly, Jewish identificational erosion among Jews in the Diaspora is intertwined with the growing incidence of mixed marriage, which evinces declines in Jewish religious practices, knowledge of Jewish culture, Jewish community activism, Jewish social networks, and commitment to Israel. Beyond the narrower debate on the actual percentages expressed in one or another statistical indicator, the major thrust of the broad social trend characterizing Jewish identification points to recent erosion and to further potential decline.

The chain of demographic and identificational trends now involves fewer, later, and less stable marriages; low fertility levels; increasing out-marriage; reduced rates of Jewish up-bringing among the children of mixed couples; population aging; and a negative balance of Jewish births and Jewish death. Jewish population decline is the end product of this chain of factors now operating in virtually every Jewish community outside Israel. The same process, though, operates with different shades of intensity.

Figure 15 above demonstrates the consequences of these various transformations through a display of the age compositions of different Jewish populations. The initial chart shows the typical population structure of communities at the early stages or before the beginning of modernization, in the Russian empire in 1897 and in Ethiopia in 1991. The large shares of children below 15 reflect persistently high

birth rates. As a consequence, the percentage of mature adults and especially of the elderly were relatively low.

The three other cases show Jewish age compositions in the U.S., the Russian Republic, and Israel compared between 1970 and the early 2000s (DellaPergola, 2005; Tolts, 2007; Israel Central Bureau of Statistics). Overall decreases in Jewish birth rates determined gradual changes in age configurations with shrinkages in younger age groups and increases in older ones. However the differences between the three Jewish populations remained striking. Jews in Israel maintained a fairly balanced age shape, supporting some further demographic growth in the next few years. Jews in the Russian Republic exemplifies the terminal stage of demographic transition, with the elderly, aged 65 and over, becoming the predominant group and Jewish children virtually disappearing, foreshadowing further demographic decline. Jews in the U.S. move in the same direction, although moderated and delayed by several tens of years thanks to the large cohorts born during the post-World War II “baby boom.”

The whole approach to Jewish demographic and identificational trends – as shown in this report – obviously reflects the empirical evidence and the theories and models presently available. These in turn can rely on quite a large number of different sources. However, final judgment about the size and composition of a Jewish population often rests on decisions made about population definitions by researchers and institutional data users (see Chapter 2). One should be advised that relying on the core, enlarged, or Law of Return concepts, results not only in different numbers but, sometimes, also in diametrically opposed diagnoses about the main thrust of population change. Policy implications may evidently be affected by different definitions of the target population and by new emerging evidence on its total entity and different components.

Table 5 provides a synthesis of the main Jewish population and identificational indicators for 2010 or the most recent year available on record. The connection between demographic and cultural trends clearly emerges from the reverse relation that exists between the extent of Jewish education outreach and the rate of Jewish out-marriage. In the final analysis Jewish population numbers are largely determined by the willingness to belong to a shared notion of Jewish peoplehood.

Table 5 also shows a projection of world Jewish population to the year 2020, by major regional divisions. Population projections are not reliable prophecies, but



they may help to grasp better the longer-term implications of a continuation of current trends. Obviously, projections several tens of years (as provocatively exemplified up to 2080 in DellaPergola, Rebhun and Tolts, 2000) ahead cannot be considered more than speculative. However, the past record of models extending over a 10 or 20 years span indicates that population projections are likely to portray actual trends with reasonable accuracy. Between 2010 and 2020, World Jewish population size is expected to remain relatively stable, with a moderate increase of about 400,000 from 13.4 to 13.8 million, assuming the main current features of international migration, family formation and childbearing, and cultural assimilation versus its opposite of return to more intense Jewish identity will continue unchanged.

All of such Jewish population increase is expected to come from Israel whose Jewish population might approach 6.5 million in 2020, up from 5.7 million in 2010, as against an expected decline to 7.5 million in the total of Diaspora Jewish communities, down from 7.7 million in 2010. Israel would then hold over 46 percent of total world Jewry, and the proportion would continue to increase in subsequent years – namely because of the sharp difference between a younger Jewish age composition in Israel vis-à-vis greatly aging Jewish communities in the Diapsora.

The projections in Table 5 represent an intermediate assumption among other more daring models which especially consider possible future changes in Jewish family size. The number of Jewish children may grow or shrink either because of changes in fertility levels, or because of a higher or lower retention within the Jewish fold of the children of intermarriages. Under the higher assumption of quite a minor increase in Jewish fertility (assumed here to be +0.4, or less than half a child more on average), world Jewish population in 2020 might be 850,000 larger versus the default assumption in Table 5, and by 2050 might even recover its size of 16-17 million on the eve of World War II. On the other hand, under the lower assumption of a similarly minor Jewish fertility decrease (-0.4 of a child), Jewish population would be 850,000 smaller than normally expected by 2020, and would regress to its level of about 12 million in the 1950s by 2050. In other words, moderately different levels of fertility and assimilation can make *a difference of nearly 1 million more or 1 million less* Jews globally by 2020, and in longer-term prospective, *over 2.5 million more or 2.5 million less* by 2050 (DellaPergola, 2003<sup>d</sup>).

**TABLE 5. SELECTED INDICATORS OF WORLD JEWRY – 2010**

Country	Jewish Population Core Definition			GDP per capita, PPP US \$	Jewish Day-school Attendance Rate (%)	Recent Out-marriage Rate (%)	Ever Visited Israel, % of Jew. Pop.	Aliyah
	1970 <sup>a</sup>	2010 <sup>b</sup>	Projected 2020 <sup>c</sup>					
World	12,633,000	13,428,000	13,827,000 <sup>i</sup>	2006 <sup>d</sup>	Most recent <sup>a</sup>	Most recent <sup>a</sup>	Most recent <sup>a</sup>	2010 <sup>e</sup>
Israel	2,582,000	5,704,000	6,453,000 <sup>i</sup>	25,864	97	5	100	-
North America	5,686,000	5,650,000	5,581,000	41,890-33,375				2,801
United States	5,400,000	5,275,000	5,200,000 <sup>g</sup>	41,890	25 <sup>h</sup>	54	>35	2,530
Canada	286,000	375,000	381,000	33,375	55	35	>65	271
Latin America	514,000	390,000	364,000	17,297-1,663				1,206
Argentina	282,000	182,000	162,000 <sup>i</sup>	14,280	50-55	45	>50	337
Brazil	90,000	96,000	90,000 <sup>i</sup>	8,402	71	45	>50	244
Mexico	35,000	40,000	42,000	10,751	85	10	>70	137
Other countries	107,000	72,000	70,000 <sup>i</sup>	17,297-1,663	75	15-95	>50	488
Europe non-FSU	1,331,000	1,144,000	1,070,000	60,228-5,316				3,406
France	530,000	484,000	482,000	30,386	40	40-45	>70	1,775
United Kingdom	390,000	292,000	278,000 <sup>i</sup>	33,238	60	40-45	>75	632

Germany	30,000	119,000	108,000	29,481	<20	>60	>50	119
Hungary	70,000	49,000	34,000	17,887	<15	60	..	87
Other EU <sup>j</sup>	171,000	148,000	134,000	60,228-15,871	10-25	33-75	>50	535
Other non-EU <sup>k</sup>	140,000	52,000	34,000	41,420-5,316	5-20	50-80	..	258
FSU <sup>l</sup>	2,151,000	330,000	173,000	15,478-1,356				6,999
Russia	808,000	205,000	130,000 <sup>i</sup>	10,845	<15	80	..	3,404
Ukraine	777,000	72,000	25,000 <sup>i</sup>	6,848	<15	80	..	1,752
Rest FSU Europe <sup>l</sup>	312,000	34,000	15,000 <sup>i</sup>	15,478-2,100	<15	65-75	..	695
FSU Asia	254,000	19,000	3,000	7,857-1,356	<15	50-75	..	1,148
Asia (rest) <sup>m</sup>	104,000	19,000	21,000	31,267-930				136
Africa	195,000	76,000	60,000	16,106-667				1,937
South Africa	118,000	71,000	57,000	11,110	85	20	>75	212
Oceania	70,000	115,000	105,000 <sup>i</sup>	31,794-2,563				147
Australia	65,000	107,000	97,000 <sup>i</sup>	31,794	65	22	>65	133

<sup>a</sup> Source: Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics, The A. Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem | <sup>b</sup> Source: DellaPergola, (2010) | <sup>c</sup> Source: adapted from DellaPergola, Rebhun, Tolts (2000), medium variant | <sup>d</sup> A measure of a country's development based on health, educational attainment, and real income. Source: United Nations Development Programme (2007) | <sup>e</sup> Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2008) | <sup>f</sup> Including country not specified | <sup>g</sup> After downward reduction following NJPS 2001 | <sup>h</sup> Based on adjusted response from NJPS 2001 | <sup>i</sup> Revised population projections for 2020 | <sup>j</sup> Without Baltic states, Romania, Bulgaria | <sup>k</sup> Including Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria | <sup>l</sup> With Baltic states | <sup>m</sup> Without Israel, FSU and Turkey.

## C. Main processes affecting population size and composition

Demography deals with several fundamental aspects of human behavior, some quantifiable, others better appreciated in qualitative terms. At the center of demography stand the simple and basic facts of life: birth, death, living in a certain place at a certain time and moving from place to place, sharing a group identification with others or shifting from one identification to another. Demographic trends thus concern human development along the basic processes of the lifecycle and a significant quantity of social interactions. As such, demography powerfully reflects and affects the internal fabric of relations within a given society as well as mutual relations between societies. This is as true of societal relations that involve Jews as those of any others.

Any serious discussion of Jewish demographic trends must proceed from an understanding of the broader processes that generally determine the development of any population. It is important to realize that population is a collective, macro-social concept, but its changes reflect events that occur at the individual, micro-social level. All changes in world population size result from the simple balance between birth rates (reflecting fertility levels and a population's age composition) and death rates (reflecting life expectancy and age composition). In the case of a population existing in a defined geographical area where both in and out migrations are possible, and also defined by culturally determined characteristics (such as religion, ethnicity, language or other divisions), the following balancing equation can be used to express changes in population size over time:

$$P^t = P^o + (B-D) + (I-E) + (A-S)$$

- where  $P^t$  is the size of the population at a given point in time;
- $P^o$  is the size of the same population at an earlier point in time;
- $B$  and  $D$ , respectively, are the numbers of births and deaths during the intervening period of time;
- $I$  and  $E$ , respectively, are the numbers of immigrants and emigrants with respect to the defined area over the same period of time;
- $A$  is the number of accessions, or those who joined the given group from a previously different group identification;
- and  $S$  is the number of secessions, or those who during the same period of time left the given group choosing a different group identification.

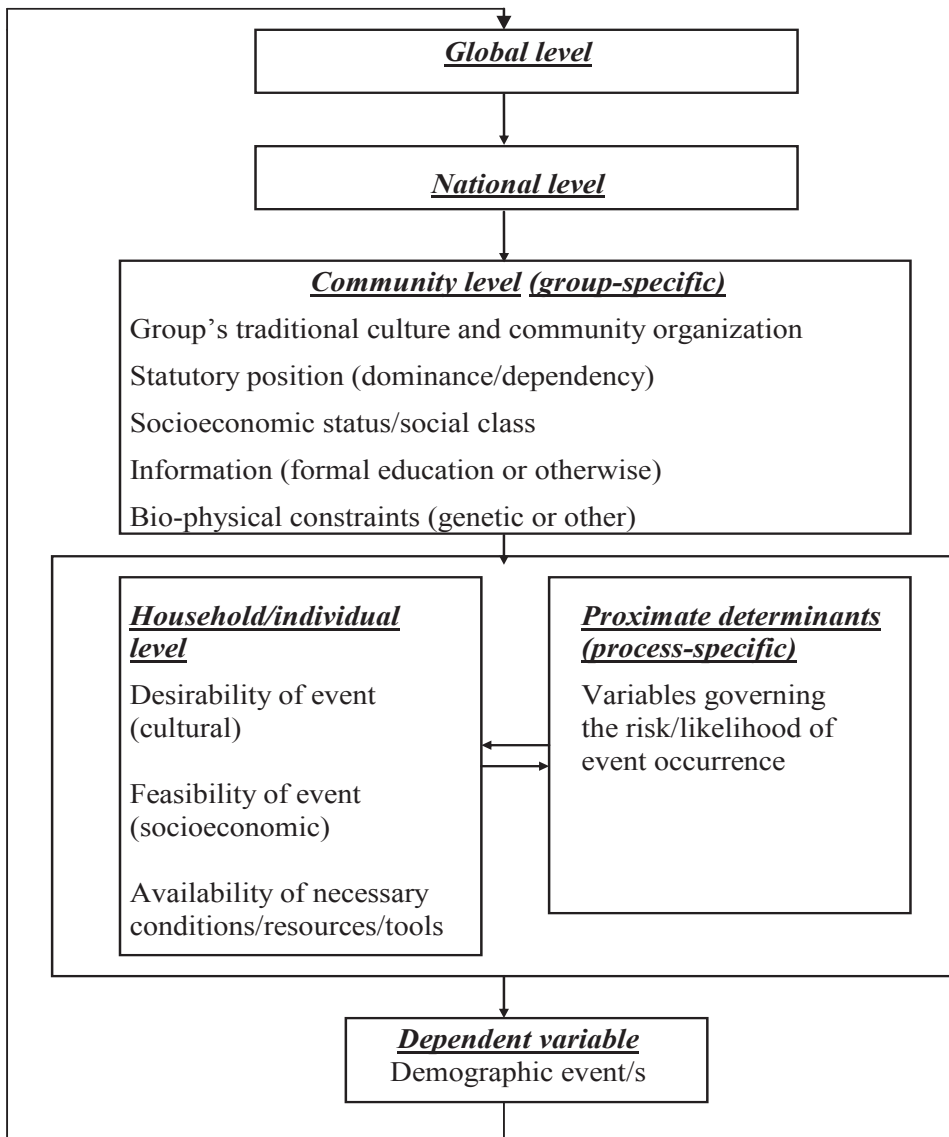
Each of these factors can be of varying magnitude at different stages of the historical evolution of any population. In the case of world Jewry, the frequencies of birth rates, death rates, migrations between countries, and conversions to and out of Judaism, have undergone drastic variations in the course of history. As will be specified below, these changes reflected the scope and balance of external factors that were sometimes forced upon Jews, and internal factors that operated from within the Jewish community itself. Demographic events occurred at times because of circumstances beyond the free will of Jews, and sometimes because of their own determined decisions.

Each component of change in a population may influence the various age cohorts in different and specific ways. Age, in other words, functions as a powerful intermediary referent, synthesizing past demographic change and significantly affecting the likelihood of future change. It is therefore necessary to disaggregate as much as possible the whole demographic process into its various component parts – vital events, geographical mobility, identity shifts – in order to reach a deeper understanding of each component separately, and also to obtain information on population trends and composition according to sex, age and other relevant characteristics. At the same time, important mechanisms of transformation within a given population, such as educational attainment, social stratification and mobility, welfare, politics, and cultural change, generate further significant changes in the socio-demographic profile of a population. Population characteristics and the components of population change stand in a tight mutual relationship.

To give a few examples, international migration may bring into a country a large number of new individuals whose previous educational attainment may have ranged between very high and very low. The educational characteristics of the pre-existing veteran population, plus the initial characteristics of the new immigrants, plus the new immigrants' achievements within the educational system of the new country will determine the final educational profile of the population in the given country. In turn, people with varying educational achievements may tend to have different numbers of children. The educational level that will emerge in the given country following immigration will affect the size of new birth cohorts and the allocation of their social characteristics. Many other examples can be provided of the possible connections between different population processes, namely in conjunction with mortality or religious conversion or other intervening changes in the realm of a group's corporate identity. Population size and composition are thus permanently modified by the direct and indirect influence of each of the different factors outlined above.

Keeping in mind the peculiar subject of Jewish demography, Figure 19 schematically outlines the expected causality chain for socio-demographic events among a minority or sub-population – from the most general, diffuse and global, to the most particular and individual. As noted the ultimate dependent variable is the occurrence or non-occurrence of a given single event of demographic relevance.

**FIGURE 19. CAUSALITY CHAIN FOR SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC EVENTS AMONG A MINORITY/SUB-POPULATION**



Most socio-demographic processes can be statistically explained by an appropriate set of proximate determinants (or intermediate variables). One typical example is viewing birth rates as the joint product of couple formation frequencies, natural fertility levels, and fertility control. However, each of these proximate determinants is itself the dependent variable of a more complex explanatory chain. First and foremost is the community of orientation through or by which individual strategies and behaviors are often learned, mediated or influenced. The role of community constraints may have major effects on individual behaviors.

In this respect, population composition by a variety of personal characteristics is a crucial factor in the chain of demographic events. Individual characteristics also, directly or indirectly, reflect the influence of broader determinants, such as religious and social norms and institutions; legal frameworks; economic development; levels of modernization; political regimes; available technologies; environmental constraints and other variables that simultaneously shape the lives of many contemporaries.

Any given event reflects the integrated strength of three main aspects:

- the cultural desirability of the event, i.e. its compatibility with the prevailing social norms within a given population;
- its economic feasibility, i.e. the presence of the material resources needed for the event to happen; and
- the availability of instrumental tools and conditions that are necessary for the event to occur.

With regard to the different desirability, feasibility, and availability of socio-demographic events in a given community, and more particularly among Jews versus others and regarding patterns of variation within the Jewish community itself, the following variables are especially important:

- the group's unique traditional culture and organization with special reference to religious and social norms relevant to the given demographic event, as well as community frameworks and institutions established to implement those norms;
- the group's legal status or – more relevant to the contemporary situation – subjective perceptions of its own dominance/dependence versus the majority of society or other minorities within it, and consequently preferred strategies toward the given demographic event;

- the group's social class stratification, implying significant inter- and intra-group differences in perceived interests and access to resources relevant to the demographic event;
- the group's available knowledge with respect to the given socio-demographic process, whether acquired through formal education or other channels, and its consequent behavior relative to the given demographic event;
- group-specific biological constraints of genetic or other nature, namely in relation to inherited properties that may enhance or hinder exposure to various types of demographic events.

Religio-ethnic communities are in turn affected by the overall context of the national societies of which they are part and parcel. To some extent, and according to the variable circumstances in each country, such communities may operate to influence national policies in order to advance particularistic corporate interests. Global influences may result in powerful influences on demographic processes, but they mostly escape influences by specific individuals, community groups, or even countries with the possible exception of a few superpowers during very limited periods of time.

Summing up and keeping in mind the whole relational chain linking the individual to the global system, three major types of explanatory factors need to be considered in interpreting social and demographic trends affecting any sub-population:

- the complex of distinctive religious imperatives, ethic values, social norms, ancestral traditions, popular beliefs, local customs and community institutions particular to a given group;
- the modes of legal and other interaction between that group and the rest (the majority) of society; and
- the circumstances shared by the specific group and the majority concerning the general character of society, its patterns of modernization, economic resources, modes of production, social structures and stratification, political institutions, level of technology, and climatic conditions.

These general analytic considerations need to be kept in mind when we turn to examine the more specific paths of causation in Jewish demographic processes.



## D. General population policy challenges

Issues of population policy have been debated since the inception of the discipline. Political Arithmetics was the original name of this empirically grounded branch of the social sciences that only in the 19th century was to receive its current name of demography. The need to collect data for the purpose of national planning and administration indeed emerged with the consolidation of national states in Europe. In most general terms, national governments who hold the major burden for policy planning hold two basic responsibilities (van de Kaa, 2006):

- To maintain the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the state; and
- To improve the quality of life and well-being of the population they represent.

A third basic goal, present in numerous instances although often not explicitly declared, tends to reflect the aspiration:

- To preserve and develop a particular brand of culture, or mission, or other kind of unique national legacy facing the world.

Looking at the general population debate of the last years, it is appropriate to state that demography is at a crossroads. As it will be noted below, some of the major assumptions and goals of population policy may well have reversed in the course of time, as a consequence of the observation of actual demographic trends and their social implications. Thanks to research advances we may now have an improved understanding of the mechanisms of population change and of their determinants and consequences. But, we still need to improve our ability to identify where and how population policies can be developed, or where they already exist, tailored to be made more effective, strengthened or modified to fit future needs. One major difficulty derives from the existence of significantly different attitudes regarding preferred population trends in different countries and within individual countries. In any event, public awareness of population issues has never been so high (Sadik, 1991; Macura, MacDonald, Haug, 2005).

Concisely stated, policies aimed at affecting population processes usually emerge from assessments of goals perceived as both ideal and attainable at the urban/metropolitan, national, regional, or global level, and include a comparison between those assessments and observed realities. The greater the gap between realities and goals, the higher the stimulus for interventions aimed at correcting the current

situation – if feasible. But also in the absence of gaps between the ideal and the observed, policies may aim at keeping the current equilibrium of different factors that operate in opposing directions. A relative stable demographic outcome may often be the product of active interventions.

To refer to a classic if somewhat dated definition, three groups of measures may jointly constitute the population policy of a country, if any (Berelson, 1971):

- Measures aimed at exerting a direct influence on demographic events such as fertility, mortality or migration, or that have a direct bearing on the size, composition, or distribution of the population;
- Measures not formulated with demographic intent but with an initial awareness of their likely demographic effects; and
- Measures not taken with demographic intent or awareness that nonetheless produce non-negligible demographic effects.

In a certain very limited sense, demographic policies operate not unlike economic policies. The latter deal with the attempt to optimize the utility of total production and distribution. The attempt to manipulate these variables for the collective benefit sometimes involves some costs for the individuals concerned. Demographic policies, in much less explicit terms, also find their justification in trying to pursue a perceived advantage for the collective through facilitating or inhibiting relevant individual behaviors.

However, a significant difference between economic and demographic policies – often raised in public discourse – is that the former deal with the accumulation and redistribution of goods and services, while the latter operate in strict proximity with human life. The right of privacy and the right of choice are claimed sometimes as fundamental limits to the feasibility or even bare legitimacy of population policies. The answer – and the underlying value assumption of this report – is that population policies should not operate through imposition and they can only be developed from a standpoint that respects the fundamental liberty of individuals and families to make their own decisions and judgments within a given set of constraints and incentives.

More specifically, demographic policies address existing population size and patterns of change, most often at the national level, sometimes at the higher resolution of local/metropolitan processes, and inasmuch as international agencies are concerned,

also sometimes at the regional or global level. If a population is deemed too small or too slow growing – in absolute terms or relative to the available territory and resources – policies may aim at increasing its size and/or at raising its rate of growth. The contrary will happen if a population is deemed too large or growing too rapidly. Policies may also address in similar terms each of the main components of population change such as incoming or outgoing international migration, fertility and mortality – each having been judged too high, or too low, or satisfactory.

In the recent past, many international discussions on means of affecting demographic processes have taken place in the shadow of apocalyptic projections such as those of the "Club of Rome" report on *The Limits of Growth*, which predicted disaster for human kind if the rate of population growth was not slowed, and this owing to a projected collapse of equilibrium between world population, the economic system and the ecological system (Meadows et al., 1972). This and similar opinions provided momentum to campaigns that set zero population growth as the objective to be attained as soon as possible.

There has been, however, no agreement on the matter among different governments. Already at the 1974 World Population Conference in Bucharest (United Nations, 1975) it became clear that the United States and other industrial countries were leading the way on population control, namely slowing down the rate of population growth through aggressive programs of family planning. However several other developing countries claimed that economic development and social justice were of greater importance than the effort to decrease population size. Around this approach, a heterogeneous group of countries convened, diverse in overall levels of development and forms of government, including the People's Republic of China, the Vatican, Argentina, Brazil, and various African countries. The State of Israel, at least at the official declarative level, supported this critical approach to drastic reductions in population growth (Friedlander, 1974).

Over time, reflecting the unfolding of demographic trends in more developed societies and more recently in some less developed societies as well, both factually technical and moral explanations were provided to support different opinions regarding population policies. Periodical surveys by the United Nations about national ideal targets in fertility and international migration (United Nations, 2009) levels unveil widely different perceptions and action across nations. The emerging national orientations reflected, primarily, national political, social and economic interests,

as well as the cultural-religious orientation of the different countries. One theme increasingly raised was the need to allow more autonomy of decision-making and much better care to women at all stages of the processes related to family planning and reproductive health. Migration policies, too, became the object of much greater attention and regulation in concomitance with the expansion of international migration since the last decades of the 20th century.

Three main dimensions of population policy in general – power, age composition, and ethnic migrations – are of special relevance in the framework of the present discussion:

- General reasons for paying attention to population size include political, including military, strategic evaluations related to national power resources, and the balance of power with respect to potential enemies or competitors. The same may be articulated in terms of economic evaluations related to the production system, consumption and employment. National defense and social security provide the essential background to the expanding appraisal of the feasibility of political demography and demographic engineering (Weiner and Teitelbaum, 2001).
- Another important element – often neglected in the past, but now more clearly perceived – concerns the age distribution of a population and the changing balance between different age groups. Each age group, indeed, implies a different set of investments and returns. Populations with different age compositions, besides possessing inherently different potentials for future growth or decline, face very different prospects in relation to economic productivity and different burdens in relation to income distribution. Most of the productive capacity is concentrated among a given central range of younger or older adult ages, while children and the elderly constitute, for the most part, an economically dependent population. Populations with a very large share of children or the elderly face much higher social costs than populations with a more balanced age composition. The mechanisms of transformation in age composition tend to be similar to those of population growth or decline, but they have received far less attention in the past. The effort to reach or maintain an optimal age composition is becoming, and will increasingly become in the future, a central element of concern in rationally planned societies. Important reasons for monitoring age composition include financing retirement for working generations, which must rely on an adequate supply of labor, or smooth evolution of school attendance, which has far-reaching implications for the whole

organization of the national educational system. Age composition crucially reflects the level of birth rates in preceding years, which creates a powerful mutual linkage – conceptually and practically – between policies aimed at the family and fertility levels, and socioeconomic policies (Demeny, 2005). Clearly the birth rate affects in the longer term the availability of manpower and the economy; in turn, the status of the economy affects the birth rate.

- A further element of growing concern is the ethnic mix within populations and societies that receive significant amounts of international migration. Population heterogeneity generates interest in the respective shares of different groups out of the total population, which is significantly related to the cardinal concepts of citizenship, democracy and equality especially in countries that absorb substantial international migration. The respective experiences can be quite different regarding the legal and socioeconomic aspects of dominance vs. dependency, in the allocation of societal power, and in the availability of resources as a whole. The latter features, in turn, may evolve in diametrically opposed directions according to the prevailing rules for power allocation that reflect different basic tenets of political philosophy and the availability of civil rights. The challenges of local absorption in an ethnically mixed environment include sharpened effects of economic inequality and potential religious and racial unrest. In more developed societies, this has turned into a main issue on the social agenda, linking immigration policies to policies attuned to civil rights and law and order (Coleman, 2005).

It can be fairly stated that – at least from the perspective of the more developed societies – over time the leading concern has turned from the fear of excessively rapid population growth – hence an emphasis on fertility control – to a wider range of issues related to societal equilibrium – such as ageing, lowering of ethnic tensions, and an adequate supply of manpower for the labor market. As a consequence, greater attention is now being paid to migration policies and to encouraging higher birth rates among host populations. It is true that the concern with deterioration of the Earth’s physical environment and excessive population densities has not receded, and has in fact become more pressing in the light of a better documented and more sophisticated appreciation of dangers such as climatic change and environmental damage tied to the ozone hole, the greenhouse effect, or nuclear pollution. But these concerns now form a package together with fears about a future shortage of human capital and fears of societal disequilibria.

Following the reasoning in the previous section of this chapter, policy interventions can aim at each of the different stages in the causal chain leading to the occurrence of demographic events. Interventions aimed at inducing demographic effects may be directly oriented toward the individual and household levels within the relevant population, by reducing the cost of a given event thus increasing its perceived feasibility; or by enhancing its perceived desirability thereby supporting the values orientation most conducive to such an event; or by increasing the supply and availability of the intermediate tools necessary for such an event to happen. Interventions aimed at causing demographic change may also act indirectly upon entire and specific communities or sub-populations, by affecting their particular corporate value system, or their legal status relative to other population groups, or their socioeconomic stratification and the information capital available to them about relevant processes. Clearly, policy interventions at the individual level may be expected to be more immediate and effective, though subject to high individual variability. Interventions at the community level can be expected to generate quite slower effects, but if successful they may generate more substantial effects. Policy interventions that determine sweeping changes in the legal, economic or cultural patterns at the national level may generate the more comprehensive effects, but given the large and heterogeneous nature of the target population, they may be the most difficult to implement and monitor.

A short review of past policy efforts in different selected domains of population policy may be helpful in sharpening the understanding of the outlined chances and imponderables of demographic policies. Two major areas are particularly worth mentioning:

- (a) efforts to regulate international migration; and
- (b) efforts to regulate fertility levels.

In both cases, the success of efforts aimed at increasing or reducing the level of the relevant feature can be analyzed. In each case examples can be presented pointing to a complex of success and failure facing the expected impact of policy interventions, and regarding the anticipated and unanticipated consequences of such interventions.

The case of policies aimed at regulating international migration policies is better illustrated with two American examples – one restrictive and one expansive. Both types of policy significantly affected the levels and composition of immigration.

The previously almost unfettered influx of overseas migrants in the U.S. was curbed by two laws enacted in 1921 and 1924. The main rationale was to preserve the American ethno-cultural fabric that according to the prevailing opinion was endangered by the massive influx of immigrants at the turn of the century and during the first two decades of the 20th century. A second rationale was the concern with preserving the employment of the veteran population, which was perceived to be threatened by the continuing influx of newcomers. The National Origins Quota System, an Act to limit immigration into the United States, was first implemented in 1921:

Chap. 8, Sec. 2.(a) The number of aliens of any nationality who may be admitted under the immigration laws to the United States in any fiscal year shall be limited to 3 percentum of the number of foreign-born persons of such nationality resident in the United States as determined by the United States census of 1910 (United States Congress, 1921).

The second Act in 1924 was even more restrictive and set annual quotas for each country of origin amounting to no more than 2% of the respective immigrant population already in the country at the comparatively early date of 1890. As a result the net migration balance passed from 6.3 millions in 1900-1910 to a net decrease of 85,000 in 1930-1940 (Easterlin, 1982). The annual average for Northern and Western Europe passed from 177,000 in 1907-1914 to 141,000 under the 1924 act, but the figures for Southern and Eastern Europe were 686,000 and 21,000, respectively (Bernard, 1982). These changes affected with particular intensity prospective migrants from Eastern Europe – the main area of Jewish emigration – as well as from Southern Europe, in particular Italy. The number of Jewish immigrants to the U.S. was forced down drastically: it declined from nearly 150,000 in 1905/1906 to slightly more than 10,000 annually between 1925 and 1930. It is not surprising that limitations in the number of new immigrants could be efficiently enforced, although it is less clear what the socioeconomic impacts of restrictive immigration policies were. Some have attributed the powerful economic depression of the late 1920s and 1930s, among other causes, to the diminished economic stimulus inherent in the absorption of large-scale international migration.

During the early 1960s the preoccupation of the American administration, especially under President Johnson, with a possible demographic, socioeconomic and cultural crisis brought about a significant revision in the U.S. immigration law (Miron, 2009).

The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act established significantly higher total targets for yearly immigration, established more generous quotas for people with skills and for relatives of previous immigrants, and significantly modified the geographical allocation for legal immigration by substantially expanding the eligibility of immigrants from Latin American and Asian countries. Figure 20 shows the impact of the earlier quotas in reducing the number and percent of foreign-born in the U.S., and the dramatic impact of the 1965 act on allowing increases in the respective numbers and percents.

**FIGURE 20. FOREIGN BORN POPULATION IN THE U.S., 1850-2005**

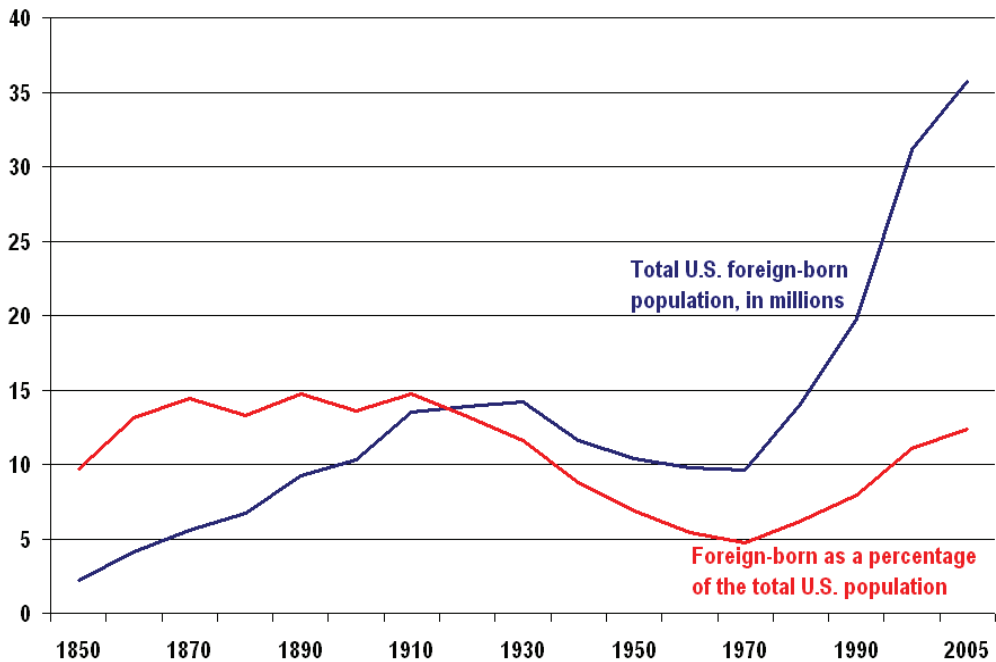
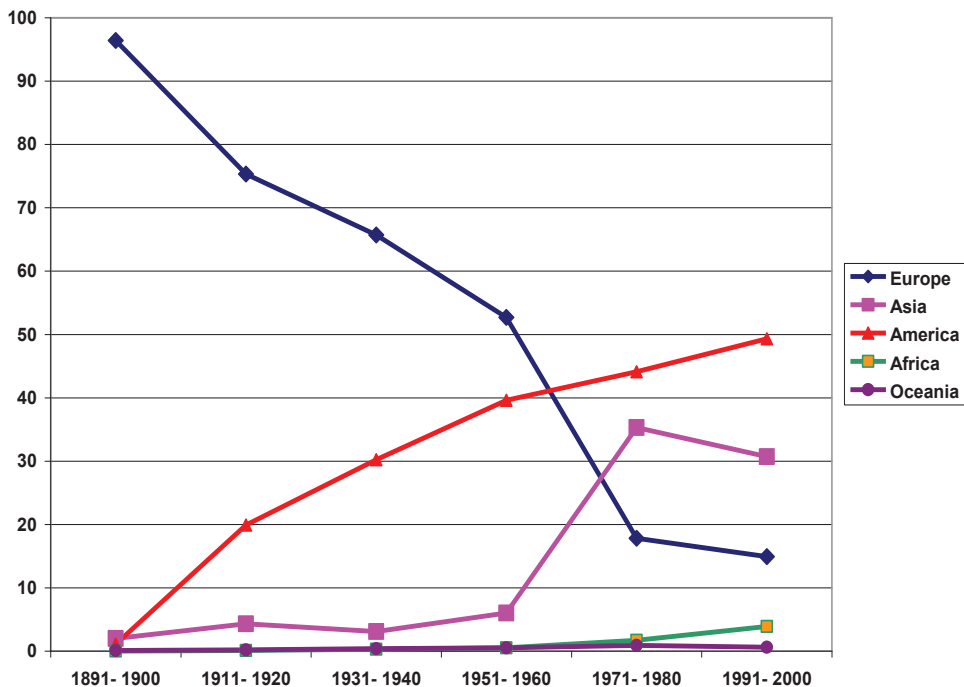


Figure 21 demonstrates the radical changes that occurred over time in the composition of immigrants to the U.S. by continent of origin. The significant economic growth in the U.S., also related to high rates of population growth – much higher than in most other developed countries – drew significantly on the migration policies of the 1960s allowing the arrival of larger and more heterogeneous inflows of new immigrants. Many of these, with Asians perhaps more visible than others, rapidly moved up the socioeconomic ladder providing numerous new entries, fresh replacements, and high quality manpower to the better educated segment of the American labor force – thus enhancing American productivity and international competitiveness.



In both these cases, new migration policies produced radical changes in the size and composition of immigrants. It is important to realize that in both cases a full appreciation of the impact of these migration policies must incorporate an assessment of their determinants and consequences from both the socioeconomic and cultural angles.

**FIGURE 21. IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES, BY CONTINENT OF ORIGIN, 1891-2000 (PERCENT)**

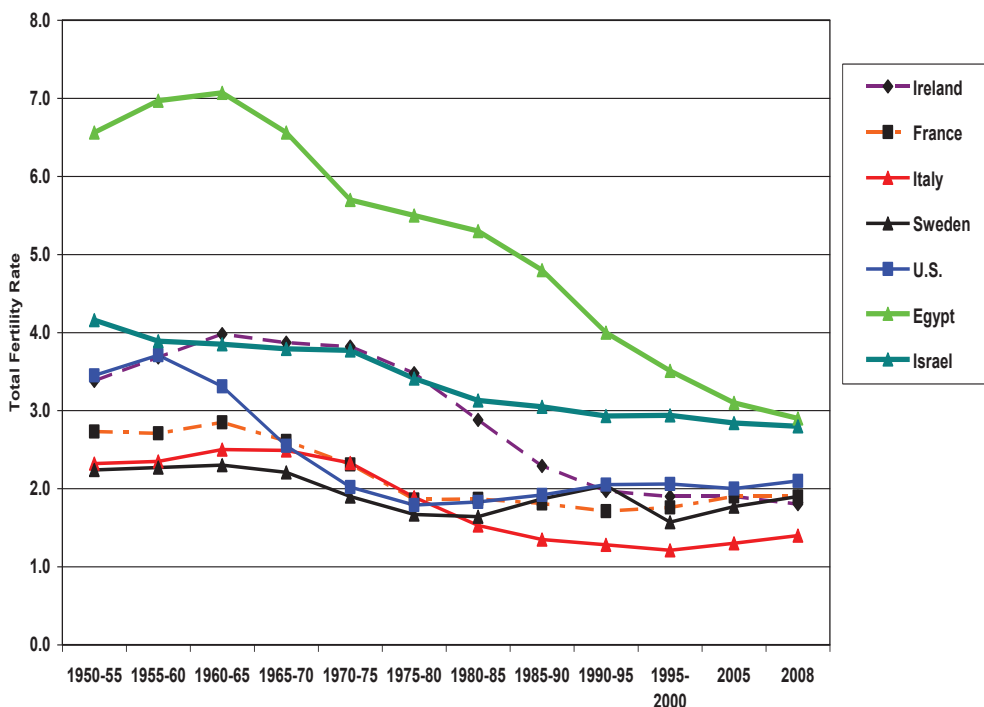


A second major topic for evaluation concerns family and fertility policies. The more conventional aspect here relates to the effort to develop efficient family planning methods and to have them diffused and steadily used all over the world through international and national programs. It can be noted that, though at widely variable paces, fertility control eventually penetrated virtually all societies and fertility levels actually diminished. Among the more surprising were the fertility declines in societies previously known for their very high fertility such as Middle Eastern countries. Thus in 2008 the total fertility rate was 3.3 in Syria, 3.1 in Jordan, 3.2 in Saudi Arabia, 2.9 in Egypt, 2.4 in Morocco, and 1.9 in both Tunisia and Lebanon. Most revealing of the

fertility patterns unfolding in the Middle East and Muslim world was the low TFR of 1.8 in Iran in 2008, as compared to 2.8 in Israel, and 5.1 in the Palestinian Territory (West Bank and Gaza).

But the more intriguing policy issue was related to the more recent emergence of the issue of excessively low fertility in the more developed countries. From the past concern with overpopulation and exaggerated rates of population growth, the emphasis has turned in many Western countries to the determinants of low fertility and the ways to sustain it. Figure 22 demonstrates the range of total fertility variation in five western societies during the second half of the 20th century. Embedded within the data are both a diversity of patterns related to local cultural and socioeconomic determinants, and the variable impact of family policies enacted, or not enacted, by the various countries.

**FIGURE 22. TOTAL FERTILITY RATES IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1950-2008**



The profiles of two Catholic countries, Ireland and Italy, demonstrate – with Italy at the lowest fertility levels – the powerful consequences of secularization for family norms and behaviors. The U.S. had a post-war baby boom that reached a higher peak than similar fertility increases in most European societies, but lasted a shorter span of years. Italy had fertility levels initially higher than Sweden, but over the course of time Sweden, after initial declines, recovered higher fertility levels. France started higher than Sweden, but eventually Sweden closed the gap and slightly surpassed Ireland. The U.S. eventually was the only country keeping fertility at the level slightly above the TFR of 2 needed for intergenerational replacement.

Comparisons across European countries clearly demonstrate the prevalence of very different levels of involvement in family support policies by the respective governments. Figure 23 shows the relationship between the expenditure for families and children as a percent of total social expenditure and Total Fertility for 18 European countries. The relationship is clearly positive, with Scandinavian countries and France at the higher level of spending with moderately higher TFRs, and Italy and Spain at the lowest level of family investment with the lowest TFRs (Hoem, 2005; Olàh and Bernhardt, 2008).

**FIGURE 23. TFR AND SOCIAL EXPENDITURE FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN, EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, 2000**



Source: Livi Bacci (2004a).

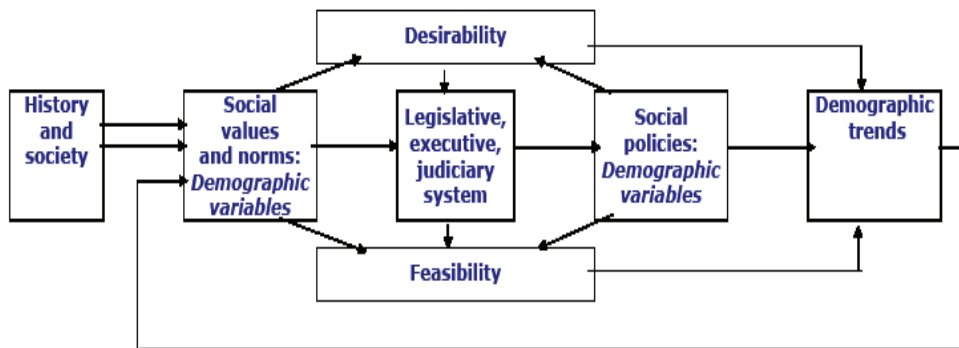
The case can therefore be made quite persuasively for the effectiveness of public investments on raising the levels of fertility, or at least reducing fertility decline – provided there is a continuing desire (or in the economists' terms, demand) for children among the public. Such investments need to be aimed primarily at services such as facilities and subsidies for early childhood care, but also toward optimized social benefits for working mothers such as longer paid leaves of absence, or the right to swap such benefits between parents of either sex. The case for the relevance of population policies is supported, within the limits of generally moderate family sizes that reflect the predominant value systems of secular Western societies.

Important issues for consideration in this respect concern the translation of fertility norms and ideals into practice, the predictive value of declared fertility intentions, and matching up feasibility with desirability. Two leading questions should be considered here:

1. Can the actual number of children be brought up to match the number of intended children, in the event the latter is higher?
2. Can the number of intended children be brought up to match the number of appropriate children, in the families' own terms of reference, considering the actual family resources, and again assuming the latter is higher?

These questions should be asked keeping in mind the whole array of factors, not only the socioeconomic and logistic conditions that lead to the feasibility of family-oriented policies, but also the societal identities and projects that may lead to its desirability. Family planning is a compendium of both. Here the different branches and stages of the whole institutional system in advanced societies may play important roles (Figure 24).

**FIGURE 24. DIRECT AND INDIRECT SOCIETAL EFFECTS OF VALUES AND NORMS AFFECTING FAMILY AND REPRODUCTION**



The final outcome of reproduction reflects among other things policies enacted by national legislative, executive and judiciary systems that may enhance child feasibility. It also reflects norms and values prevailing in society about child desirability. The catch is that decisions and processes of public institutions unavoidably reflect prevailing social norms – in turn the product of longer-term history and society – that also affect the personal lives and outlooks of those who are charged with those institutional decisions. To enact any policy, the representatives of the public should, in the first place, believe in its plausibility. If they do not, for any personal reasons, no public action is likely to follow.

One radical idea in this respect was advanced by Massimo Livi Bacci (2004a; 2004b) who suggested that a fund for newborn children be created, similar conceptually to a pension fund. The fund would be alimented through yearly payments, partly by the state, partly by the concerned families. The fund would become available to the child upon reaching adulthood and it would provide an initial economic foundation to his or her further growth, human development, and entry into economic life and family formation. The fund would thus help in allaying the widespread sense of insecurity about the future that operates in many Western societies and is an obstacle to higher fertility.

The road to population policies passes through effective provisions relevant to each step of the issue under consideration but also through deeper and more diffuse cultural processes that affect the whole environment within which those policies should be conceived and in which they are expected to operate.

## E. Jewish population policy challenges

The State of Israel, according to its Declaration of Independence, shares the fundamental policy premises and predicaments outlined in the previous section, but in addition and more than other countries, explicitly stresses that the state is part of a national, social and cultural entity that transcends national boundaries: the Jewish People. It is through this defining framework that Israel becomes one of the constituent components of the Israel-Jewish-Diaspora dyad. The concern with Jewish population is indeed an integral and overlapping part of the overarching concept of Jewish peoplehood that has constituted a central driver in Israel's existence. Population policies are part of a broader complex of major policy issues that together form the complex goal of Jewish People policy planning (JPPPI, 2005). These overarching concerns, worthy of short mention, include:

- **Jewish rescue** – acting to defend and save communities in danger;
- **Jewish unity** – developing internal communication, solidarity, mutual respect and tolerance, common interests and denominators, and coordinated action within local Jewish communities and in the framework of Israel-Diaspora relations;
- **Jewish sovereignty** – striving to manage the Jewish State, preserving its security and aiming to achieve peace through an appropriate balance of realpolitik and adherence to Jewish ethical values;
- **Jewish engagement** – improving the image of Israel and the Jews in the non-Jewish world, fighting old and new forms of antisemitism, using force where necessary to defend legitimate Jewish and Israeli interests, and enhancing the positive elements of the Jewish/non-Jewish interface;
- **Jewish continuity** – creating and supporting mechanisms able to enhance demographic and cultural reproduction, the replacement of generations in the long run and a thriving cultural life; and
- **Jewish human capital** – nurturing and training human resources and manpower that will be able to manage and lead the Jewish People, to preserve its share of influence, and to expand its role as an enlightened component of world society.

This last aspect stands as one of the main rationales and central concerns of the demographic policies discussed in this report. But it should be noted that each of the preceding items is also related, in some direct or indirect ways, to major demographic

concerns. Two interrelated issues to be stressed from the outset are that, on the one hand, the approach to demography and population cannot be confined to numbers of people, but must be meaningfully related to their cultural orientation and identities. On the other hand, the minimal and necessary condition for Jewish cultural continuity to exist is the presence of a sufficient number of carriers, i.e. a Jewish population of sufficient scale.

A major constant throughout history was the Jews' exposure to contextual circumstances perceived at the level of different national-territorial divisions. With increasing incidence over the course of time, the latter were affected by sweeping trends of a broad international and sometimes global nature. Wide geographical dispersion and the progressive deepening of globalization and transnationalism across Jewish communities make it essential to address the world-system structure and change as a necessary background for understanding the position of Jews internationally and locally. Demographic trends draw on non-demographic processes such as the general state of world and regional economies, global cultural change, and political and military affairs. The combination of these factors and their mutual interactions with demography may determine the future size and characteristics of any population – in particular the Jewish population in Israel and elsewhere, hence the nature of the broader Jewish experience worldwide.

In the light of the previous discussion and drawing on the experience of recent decades, the fundamental forces that currently influence Jewish demographic change and population characteristics must be outlined considering a more general perspective. Which is the more fruitful and relevant interpretative approach to Jewish demographic processes: a general, *outer-oriented*, or a more specific, *inner-oriented*, one? Two extreme versions maintain, respectively, an absolutely *self-directed* course in Jewish history and society (such as in Jewish mystic interpretations), or their total *dependency* on external circumstances (as in the case of materialist explanations). Conceptual and substantive reasoning shows that the two approaches should be incorporated as complementary rather than rival elements in the combination of *macro-social* and *micro-social* determinants intervening in the path of demographic causation. Indeed, as noted, all socio-demographic events occur at the individual or at the household level, but the causation chain leading to their occurrence relates individuals and households to collective frames of reference of a higher-rank hierarchic order in a global perspective.

The principal factors at work are illustrated in Figure 25, which specifies the main drivers of change, the intervening operational variables of population change, and the final product in terms of Jewish population size and composition. It should be noted that Jews may serve as a paradigm for the more general case of the demography of subpopulations whose existence and development over time is always determined not only by demographic-biological factors, but also significantly by cultural-ideational factors.

Four topics of demographic interest apply to evaluation and possible policy interventions:

- Jewish population size;
- Jewish population composition;
- The share of Jews out of total population; and
- The intensity and quality of Jewish identification.

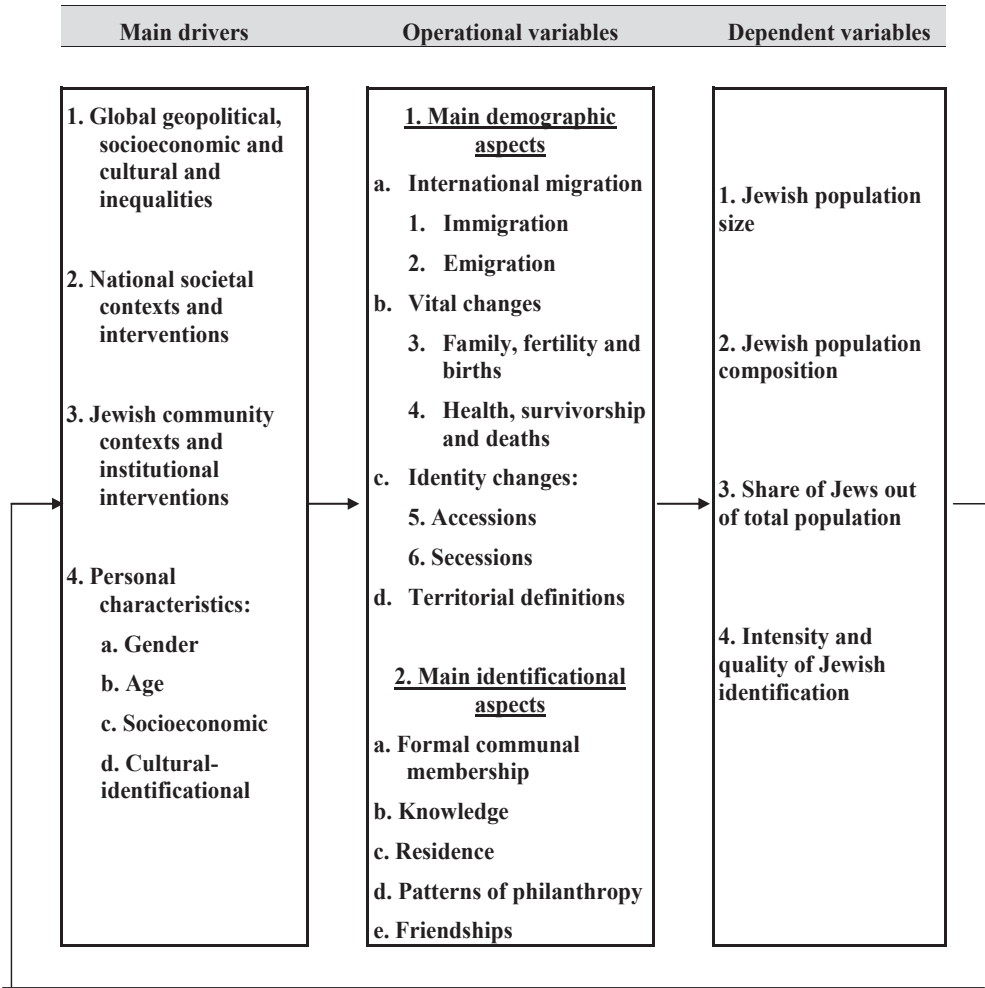
Six main operational variables intervene and interact to affect future population size and composition:

- International migration, i.e. the balance of immigration (1), and emigration (2);
- Vital changes which comprise marriage and fertility levels, affecting the birth rate (3), and health and survivorship, affecting the death rate (4);
- Identificational changes which comprise the balance of accessions to Judaism (5), and secessions from Judaism (6) – often, but not exclusively, dealt with under the heading of “conversions.”

To these six, a seventh factor should be added, which is not related to personal transformation but rather to the corporate environment. Defining the territorial boundaries within which any given Jewish population lives may play a role in determining its characteristics and relative weight versus the surrounding population. Besides several examples in history concerning boundary changes and the passage of territories inhabited by Jews from one power to another (such as the partition of Poland or the creation of the Pale of Settlement in the late 18th century), the most pertinent is the definition of the boundaries of the State of Israel relative to the total territory of historical Eretz Israel or the British Mandate over Palestine. This is an issue of special relevance in the context of the conflict-ridden situation in the Middle East.



**FIGURE 25. MAIN DETERMINANTS OF JEWISH DEMOGRAPHIC AND IDENTIFICATIONAL CHANGE**



As the main drivers of each of these components of demographic change operates both at the broad aggregate (or macro-social) level, and at the individual (or micro-social) level, the ensuing changes prominently reflect:

- Transformations in the world societal system, namely geopolitical, socioeconomic and cultural changes across the world’s different regions and inequalities between countries;
- The respective contexts of the national societies in which Jewish communities are located, including the nature of the relationships between the majority

of society and the Jewish minority, and policy interventions by the national powers;

- The specific internal context of each Jewish community, including the various types of interventions enacted by the Jewish institutional system internationally and locally; and
- The personal characteristics of individual Jews, and in particular their gender, age, socioeconomic status, and cultural and identificational patterns.

The relationship between these various factors and processes usually runs from the main drivers through the operational variables, to determine the nature of the dependent variables. However, to some extent, the final product becomes in turn a determinant of further change. Jewish – and any other – population trends are therefore embedded in an eminently dynamic, interactive, and in fact iterative process.

In spite of the uniqueness of some of the issues mentioned above, the emerging concern with population continuity – reflected by scale, composition and dynamics – with respect to the Jewish collective is in no way unique. At the same time, attention to and legitimacy of population policies has significantly expanded and transformed over the last decades in many countries and at the international institutional level. Concern with demographic trends and their implications is increasingly becoming a central focus for policy discourse in both more and less developed societies.

Jewish population policy-making is an ever more complicated craft. It compounds the acknowledged complexities of the general predicament regarding demographic policies, with the extreme volatility of the complex identificational factors that underlie the demography of minority groups. The latter include some general features shared by all minority populations and diasporas facing the respective core country (Sheffer, 2003), but also unique features of the Jewish collective (Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, 2005).

Most importantly, while population policies in general can be framed within fixed geographical boundaries, Jewish population policies address a group essentially defined by a set of cultural, ideological, religious, and symbolic properties with no necessarily or uniformly fixed territorial boundaries, a group whose membership is, in many of its largest and most significant concentrations, entirely voluntary. These

properties can be attained, modified, or lost much more frequently and easily than in any case pertaining to a definite territory. This also obviously orients in quite different ways the population policy options that may be available for Jews in Israel and for Jews in the Diaspora, as it will be argued later in this report.

In this respect, one main area of policy interest emerges in addition to the three leading targets of population policy outlined in the previous section:

- The intensity and quality of group identification – in this case, Jewish identification – is not only a matter of interest concerning the cultural style and tastes of a society, but also a fundamental mechanism of population growth or decline. Indeed, family formation and the respective incidence of endogamy vs. heterogamy, and through the subsequent choice of group affiliation for children of out-marriages, adds an important effect to the general process of intergenerational replacement. While this has no effect on the overall population numbers of a larger host territory, it can be substantial from the perspectives of each of the specific groups involved.

To underline the paradoxical diversity of the population debate in a Jewish vs. a general context, suffice it to say that India's contemporary annual population growth is significantly higher than that of the entire world Jewish population. While the Indian population increases by a measure equivalent to one Jewish People every year, the latter itself is quite close to zero population growth. **In most of the less developed countries zero population growth would be attained through a significant decrease of the birth rate. For Diaspora Jewry, the same zero population growth would be attained only with a substantial increase of the present fertility levels.**

In historical perspective, Jews have often preceded other peoples in the process of demographic stabilization and later, erosion (DellaPergola, 1999). Various countries are beginning to show similar symptoms of demographic erosion through a deficit in the vital balance of births and deaths. Such a phenomenon caused concerned reactions in academic circles which viewed this process a danger to the existence of their own countries or even of the entire Western civilization (Chaunu, 1975; Wattenberg, 1987).

The assumption is that world competition for economic and ecological resources and for political power will become increasingly more acute in the foreseeable future, and that mankind will be faced with various shortages that will make conflicts more acute and dangerous. This leads to the overarching conclusion

that the search for a golden path between competing interests is not easy. The national Jewish interest can be defined as the need **to preserve the best possible equilibrium between Jewish particular interests and more general interests of the Jews**. In relation to demographic factors, in particular, it indicates the necessity **to preserve the present equilibrium between Jews and Arabs within the State of Israel and its surroundings, and to preserve the standing of Diaspora Jewries facing their diverse surroundings**. Even when simply framed, these minimal goals demand great investments of resources and efforts.

Any attempt to formulate a set of Jewish population policies in each of the areas of demographic interest outlined above requires undertaking an honest and thorough review of the major analytical issues, determining and ranking priorities, locating and defining instruments for possible action, and evaluating their applicability and efficacy. In this respect it is worth recalling that the most systematic and in a certain sense the only effort in this direction, involving Israel's government and the major Jewish organizations worldwide, dates back to the late 1980s (DellaPergola and Cohen, 1992).

In the following chapters we briefly review each of the main components of population change outlined above, stressing the main changes that have emerged in recent times and the main options for change to be expected in the foreseeable future (Table 6). Each of the different main drivers interacts, to a greater or lesser extent, with each of the operational variables of population change. The respective degrees of influence can be at least hypothesized in the light of the experience of recent years – in particular since the end of the Cold War at the beginning of the 1990s and the trends that followed, and can provide some guidelines concerning reasonable expectations for the future and the formulation of relevant policy interventions. In Table 6 we hypothesize the strength of some of these bi-variate relations on a rough, three-point scale: Most significant, Significant, and Secondary. This scaling reflects the observation of recent patterns and plausible changes in the foreseeable future. It also aims to convey a first, rough sense of where the likelihood of policy interventions, and where the chances of impacting current realities appear strongest – pending further analysis.

Among the strongest connections hypothesized, those reflecting global forces are clearly out of the reach of the Jewish institutional system. Factors that operate at the national level, too, can be only marginal influenced by the Jewish institutional

system – within the range of difference determined by the situation of each country separately. Other powerful connections, reflecting forces within Jewish society, appear to be within the reach of community interventions. The main interactions include:

- Global geopolitical, socioeconomic and cultural changes and inequalities, and the different national contexts (including their policy dimensions) may generate highly stimulating or deterrent effects on the pace and direction of international migration. Globalization means that huge amounts of people, ideas, goods, services, and resources flow across a space that has become increasingly open. These large scale population transfers have been at the origin of most striking variations in the configuration of world Jewry historically and in particular during the second half of the 20th century.
- Different national contexts have striking effects on health patterns, chances for survivorship, and mortality. It should be mentioned, however, that nearly all Jews today live out of the reach of crisis-stricken areas, though this may change, for instance as a result of raising sea levels due to global warming, nuclear war, or major terror events. The national societal – namely political – context in Israel is going to have an important effect on any possible future territorial exchange related to a solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- The different Jewish community contexts and institutional interventions play a crucial role on the pace of accessions to Judaism, and on the ability of communities to retain its Jewish population and prevent assimilation and secessions. The Jewish status of entire communities has been decided by the variable modes of operating of religious authorities in Israel and in other countries.
- Regarding individual characteristics, personal Jewish identity appears to be by far the best predictor of Jewish fertility variation, also through the effects of gains and losses due to out-marriage and the general impact of identity on the quality of Jewish life. It should be noted, however, that ideational factors often appear to become subordinate to socioeconomic factors when confronting the basic necessities of life. The exception is represented by the more religiously segregated communities which, however, must too accommodate between maintaining ideal life models and gaining them economical support.

**TABLE 6. MAIN DRIVERS AND PROCESSES AFFECTING CONTEMPORARY JEWISH POPULATION SIZE AND COMPOSITION**

Main drivers	Individual effects			
	Migration balance		Vital balance	
	Immigration and absorption	Emigration	Marriage, fertility, births	Health, survivorship deaths
Global geopolitical, socioeconomic and cultural changes and inequalities	Most significant	Most significant	Secondary	Significant
National society contexts and interventions	Most significant	Most significant	Significant	Most significant
Jewish community contexts and institutional interventions	Most significant	Secondary	Significant	Secondary
Personal characteristics:				
Gender	Significant	Significant	Most significant	Significant
Age	Most significant	Most significant	Most significant	Most significant
Socio-economic	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Cultural-identificational	Significant	Significant	Most significant	Significant

Individual effects		Aggregate effects
Identificational balance		Territorial balance
Identity maintenance accessions	Assimilation, secessions	Boundary changes
Secondary	Secondary	Significant
Significant	Significant	Most significant
Most significant	Most significant	Significant
Significant	Significant	Secondary
Significant	Significant	Secondary
Significant	Significant	Secondary
Most significant	Most significant	Significant

- Several other significant effects causally relate main drivers to population variables. In particular one should note the following important effects:
- World-system inequalities affect health and survivorship chances in different parts of the world. Global and even more so regional geopolitical circumstances may plausibly affect Israel's final territorial shape and frontiers.
- National contexts may significantly intervene in fertility constraints and incentives, and may exert significant influences on the nature of identities including the character of Jewish identity retention or loss.
- Jewish international and national institutional interventions are highly visible in the assistance provided to Jewish international migrants and may significantly affect the cost of child rearing and fertility levels. They can also play some role in territorial questions concerning Israel through negotiations with the Israeli political party and governmental system.
- Personal characteristics tend to significantly affect – through gender, age, the socioeconomic and the identificational side – the propensities to international migration, and – through gender and socioeconomic opportunities – Jewish identity and the propensities for accession to and secession from Judaism.
- The development and transmission of Jewish identification and of each of its several components – mainly community membership, knowledge, residence, philanthropy and social network and friendship patterns – operate as significant factors in Jewish population trends, and need in turn to be considered as the dependent variables of a long chain of intervening influences. Some of the relevant relationships will be reviewed in later sections of this report.

## F. For what purposes and clients

In the present report we attempt to deal with these challenges, and to draw some directives of thought for action. Toward this aim, it is essential to be in command of the major demographic trends now characterizing World Jewry, and of their implications. It is also important to clearly establish to whom such policies should be directed, regarding the definition of the relevant collective, of the subject matter, and of the primary users of policy suggestions. The assumption here is that the latter presumably belong to a small group of state and community leaders whose general sense of the importance of demographic issues for Jewish society needs to be reinforced by systematic evidence and counseling.



Jewish population trends, rather than unfolding in a vacuum, are powerfully influenced by the environment in which they occur. The three contexts of Jewish demographic trends and policies include:

- World Jewry in the framework of the global human, socioeconomic and political system;
- Diaspora Jewish communities in the framework of non-Jewish majority populations; and
- Israel's Jewish population in the framework of the total population of Israel and Palestine.

In most Diaspora communities, wherever Jews confront minority status, their changing socioeconomic, political and cultural circumstances largely depend on trends and interests of the majority. The challenge is how to preserve the sense of a cohesive and meaningful Jewish community while enjoying the gamut of creative opportunities offered by open and non-hostile societies such as those in major Western countries in which Jews mostly live. From a demographic point of view, this implies that those who wish to be part of the Jewish way of life have to be persuaded that the cultural collective to which they want to belong cannot survive in the long term without the primary biological foundations of family and children. A related challenge is how to pierce the surface and reach those who do not bother or do not want to belong in order to revive in them a spark of historical memory and mutual responsibility, if not a sense of pride and mission.

By contrast, the main challenge in Israel is how a clearly defined Jewish majority can be preserved among the total population so that the character of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state can be maintained and transmitted. Differential growth rates, population composition and territorial configurations need to be taken into account when envisaging possible solutions to the conflict. Israel's vested interest from a demographic point of view is to encourage possible, legitimate social processes that might be conducive to reducing existing gaps in the pace of growth and the emerging quantitative imbalances between rival ethno-religious groups. Existing interconnections between the security situation, the economy, international migration, family patterns and the Jewish and Israeli identity of Israelis should be thoroughly examined. Likewise, the costs inherent in achieving these goals must be fully appreciated in order to develop effective long-term policy strategies.

Jewish population policies are meant to help and provide answers to these diverse issues by influencing all possible aspects of population change. Such policy suggestions are supposed to be made available to Jewish institutional decision makers and the broader strata of policy-influentials, such as elected politicians, appointed government and other public agency officials, spiritual and cultural authorities, mass media commentators and academics. These also include, in many respects primarily, Israel government officials, Jewish community leaders and professionals, philanthropists, and the responsible leaders of Jewish international organizations.

The huge diversity of Jewish interests and the consequent fragmentation of the Jewish institutional system globally, nationally and locally, imply the near impossibility of satisfying all these groups with a single program. Policy analyses should be undertaken with the broadest spectrum of interests in mind. The results may include elements of interests that will not necessarily coincide for different constituencies. Preferred solutions are supposed to reflect the disparity of assumptions and goals of different organizations and therefore need to include enough flexibility in the practical phases of implementation.

The following parts of this report attempt to portray a broad spectrum of issues and recommended policy directions to be subjected to professional scrutiny, policy analysis and planning in cooperation with major decision makers. It is not expected that each recommendation or even its premises will, or should, command complete consensus. An attempt is made, however, to analyze underlying trends and to select the main areas of policy concern, bearing in mind as broad and widely shared conception as possible of the common denominators of general Jewish People interests.

Demography is bound to be one of the crucial determinants of the future of the Jews. A responsible Jewish leadership cannot avoid coming to terms with the fact that serving the Jewish People involves full understanding of and the ability to cope with its demographic trends. No serious policy program can avoid coming to terms with the issues that will be discussed in the following chapters.

## 2. DRIVERS AND CONSEQUENCES OF JEWISH POPULATION DYNAMICS

### A. Who are the Jews?: definitional predicaments

While population policies in general predominantly aim at the national society of a given country, the Jewish global collective comprises two separate situations, each of which requires separate analytic tools and different channels for possible policy intervention. Contemporary world Jewry is indeed split between two quite different and contrasting, if not conflicting, sets of demographic determinants and consequences. Jews in the State of Israel and Jews in the rest of the world – the Diaspora, if that term can be agreed upon – are the two typological components of Jewish population worldwide. One component, currently including over 40% of the world total, operates in the context of the Jewish majority within its own sovereign state. The other component, about 60% of the world total, operates as a plurality of minorities of different absolute sizes, which also constitute very small to minuscule shares of the total populations of their respective countries.

Unavoidably, the specific policy targets for the two typological components of world Jewry cannot be the same. However, it is important to locate and specify commonalities of destiny and shared interests of the Jewish global collective as a whole so that policy elaboration and interventions, if any, are coherent as much as feasible. Before we can do that, however, we should briefly deal with the question of whether the collective at stake actually exists and how it can be defined.

Studying Jewish socio-demographic characteristics and trends requires in the first place some conceptual grounding concerning the nature of the main variable of reference. Therefore, before addressing the more famous "Who is a Jew?" issue, we need to briefly address the question "What are the Jews?" Jews are posited here as one modality within the broader class of groups defined by religio-ethnic identities, often abridged in the research literature under the rubric of ethnicity. Recent debates suggest three main approaches regarding ethnicity's basic nature and societal role. In the particular case of the Jewish group, these may be defined as:

- **Consolidationist:** views Jewish populations as discrete objects for conceptual definition and empirical measurement (DellaPergola, 2002);

- **Situational:** views Jewish populations as groups that can be recognized and studied but not really quantified – the elusive product of ever-changing exogenous circumstances and endogenous attitudes (Schnapper, 1994);
- **Manipulative:** views Jewish collectives as lacking historical continuity and essentially generated by the calculated interventions of elites or special interest groups, hence lacking serious claim to empirical reality or even legitimacy (Kimmerling, 1999).

The opinion followed here is that Jewish communities in the Diaspora and in Israel in the past or present do constitute a target for empirical investigation. Jewish populations are composed of people, accordingly, who are identifiable to specified, though multiple, criteria for inclusion and exclusion, featuring definite individual perceptions of group boundaries and collective identities, and unique and recognizable patterns of social and demographic composition and mobility. This paradigm suggests a powerful, relevant and necessary approach to establishing the theoretical and empirical foundations to scientific investigation and public discourse on Jewish population.

A major challenge that unavoidably ensues when considering Jewish population studies and policy options is the definition of the boundaries of the collective. While this is per se one of the topics for policy planning, it also functions as a factor of friction and internal conflict in defining policy perspectives and goals. The paradigmatic “Who is a Jew?” question constitutes an ever-elusive issue in the study of Jewish population. A major problem bedeviling Jewish population estimates available in the literature, whether by individual scholars or by Jewish organizations, is a lack of coherence and uniformity in the definitional criteria they follow (DellaPergola, 1992).

Jewish populations estimates may rely on *normative* or on *operational* definitions. Traditional *Halakha* (Jewish rabbinical law) provides a clear and authoritative normative definition of who is a Jew. Even alternatives stemming from the adoption of a patrilineal definition in the attribution of a Jewish identity, while admittedly inconsistent with traditional Halakha, remain essentially normative in that, even as they part with traditional formulations they still offer positive and determinate criteria for determining one's Jewishness. However, in empirical research it is not possible to undertake the stringent controls involved in ascertaining each individual's Jewish identity according to such criteria because they would be overwhelmingly costly and

time consuming. Therefore, Jewish populations are usually identified in censuses or surveys through operational criteria, such as the more or less accurate proxies offered by generally elective individual responses to simply pre-coded variables like *religion* or *ethnic origin*, or based on indirect and rougher information such as countries of origin, languages and the like (DellaPergola, 2008; Rosenthal, 1975).

One important complicating factor in contemporary definitions is the increasing frequency of out-marriage. Inter-marriage generates a growing number of individuals whose Jewish identification is one among their several possible or shared ancestries. Moreover, such personal Jewish identities may become the object of controversy between different religious or legal authorities. Consequently, many eligible individuals may not know whether, when or how to identify as Jewish, and may prefer not to. Others do not deem their Jewishness mutually exclusive with other religious or ethnic identities, in contrast with the normative assumption that Jewish identity is incompatible with other religious identities.

An appropriate appraisal of Jewish population trends thus requires one to address the broadest possible definition of the collective so as to capture the full dynamics of ongoing change. Yet, to meaningfully address a population we need working definitions. Definitions imply certain standards, the alternative being an amorphous approach unable to generate analytic conclusions of any sort. Data collectors should therefore allow for wide and flexible analytic opportunities for data users who within the broadest possible initial definition may later decide on specific definitional typologies according to their own assumptions and research or policy goals.

Jewish population definitions have long followed operational rather than normative paths. The concepts of *core* and *enlarged* Jewish population have been developed in order to disentangle the cluster of Jews and others who share their daily lives in the same households, and to trace virtual boundaries where in reality such distinctions have become increasingly flexible, porous and interchangeable (DellaPergola, 2007). *The core Jewish population* concept includes all those who, when asked, identify themselves as Jews or, if the respondent is a different person in the same household, are identified by him/her as Jews, and those of Jewish parentage who are identificationally indifferent or agnostic but do not formally identify with another religious group.

The *enlarged* Jewish population concept also includes all other persons of Jewish parentage who are not Jews currently (or at the time of investigation) and all the additional non-Jewish members (spouses, children, etc.) in mixed religious households.

In turn, the Law of Return, Israel's distinctive legal framework for the acceptance and absorption of new immigrants, awards immediate citizenship and other civil rights to all current new immigrants who are Jews and to their Jewish or non-Jewish spouses, children, and grandchildren, as well as to the spouses of such children and grandchildren. Unfortunately, these various definitional concepts are often confused. It should be noted that an *enlarged* Jewish population may be growing while the respective *core* Jewish population is declining.

A great amount of latitude hence characterizes the definitional solutions adopted in socio-demographic research, with obvious consequences for the ensuing population counts and their policy implications. Today, normative formulations persist at one extreme of the Jewish definitional continuum, such as in Israel's Law of Return, which says that "a Jew is who was born of a Jewish mother or was converted (in Hebrew: *nitgaiyer*) and does not belong to another religion" (Corinaldi, 2001). Such a definition carries important practical implications in the daily life of Israeli society and its relationship to world Jewry. It does not only follow normative guidelines but also assumes Jewish identity to be mutually exclusive of other identities and foregrounds religious identity as the exclusive marker of Jewish identity.

Within the operational limits of social scientific research in the United States, definitions have tended to evolve from the straightforward question "What is his religion?" and its *Jewish* modality (U.S. Census Bureau, 1958, on the only occasion in which religion was investigated as part of an American official population survey), through the several ideal constructs devised for the 1990 NJPS (Kosmin *et al.*, 1991), reaching increasingly more nuanced solutions. In the NJPS 2001, at least in the version initially processed and circulated by UJC, a Jew is defined as:

a person whose religion is Judaism, OR whose religion is Jewish and something else, OR who has no religion and has at least one Jewish parent or a Jewish upbringing, OR who has a non monotheistic religion and has at least one Jewish parent or a Jewish upbringing (Kotler-Berkowitz *et al.*, 2003).

It is important to note that such a definition is neither normative nor mutually exclusive of other group identifications.

These criteria were supported by the sponsoring institution of the NJPS (UJC) as better responding to cognitive and policy planning needs facing their perceived constituency. NJPS 2001 therefore based itself on a broadly conceived Jewish population definition, relying on non-dichotomous classification criteria and

allowing for a large number of intermediate categories of uncertain resolution. Such a definition not only was operational in nature but also was meant to reflect the working definitions guiding the provision of services by UJC. At the extreme end of this ongoing definitional transformation, no consistent criterion may be left besides the purely subjective willingness of people to identify themselves with the given group at a given point in time.

The significant involvement of major Jewish organizations in Israel and in the U.S. – such as the quasi-governmental Jewish Agency for Israel, the global social service oriented American Joint Distribution Committee, or the UJC (which changed its name in 2009 to The Jewish Federations of North America), the umbrella body of mainstream organized and institutional American Jewish life – in sponsoring data collection tends to make research issues more sensitive. Organizations are motivated by their mission toward their constituencies rather than by unequivocally pure analytic criteria. In turn, the understandable interest of organizations to continue functioning and securing budgetary resources tends to bring them to regard Jewish populations increasingly more similarly to the *enlarged* and *Law of Return* definitions than to the *core*.

International experience shows that research commissioned by organizations with clear interests in arriving at certain results cannot help but bias the study, even if this was unintended. Therefore, crucial Jewish demographic issues should be researched by independent high-quality professional bodies isolated from organizational and, as far as possible, financial pressures.

In the light of these considerations, there clearly is a significant amount of ambivalence in the definition of the collective about which policies are supposed to care. In this report we shall assume that – these difficulties notwithstanding – it is eminently possible to undertake a supreme effort of conceptual synthesis in defining an ideal *Klal Israel* as a subject for observation and policy interventions. **Klal Israel – the normative Jewish collective – implies not only a given aggregate of people, no matter how well technically defined, but also the bonds of mutual responsibility that are meant to give it meaning and resilience.**

## B. Demographic trends of Diaspora Jewry

One of the major conclusions of the comparative study of Jewish demographic trends is that many of the differences that in the past characterized various Diaspora communities are steadily disappearing. There is a distinct tendency towards a demographic convergence and growing similarity among the processes occurring among Jews in the different countries. To some extent, this is a result of changes that have occurred in the last generations in the geographical dispersion of world Jewry. The destruction of Eastern, Central, and in part Western European Jewry, and the subsequent mass emigration of millions from North Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe to the United States and Western Europe (besides Israel) resulted after World War II in most of the Diaspora Jewish population becoming concentrated in the Western countries. In most if not all of these countries the Jewish minorities attained relatively similar socio-political and economic structures and roles, and stand in similar relationships to the structures and roles of the host cultures.

Those Jewish communities that remained in Eastern Europe and the Islamic countries – the former major centers of Jewish population – over the years underwent demographic and socioeconomic changes that operated to a lesser degree but in the same direction as communities in the West. But as noted, more significantly, those communities ended by massively emigrating to Israel and to some major Western countries where they became rapidly absorbed into the new society, at least from the point of view of their social, economic and demographic characteristics.

The demographic convergence of Diaspora Jewry may be seen as the combined expression of seven main factors:

- **Delayed demographic effects of the Shoah.** Those who underwent and survived the period of Nazi and fascist persecution experienced a breakdown in both personal and communal Jewish life that, in turn, resulted in unusual demographic changes. Such were particularly evident in the drastic reduction in the number of marriages and births and in the increase of deaths from "natural" causes during World War II, all in addition to the consequences of the process of organized extermination itself. The results were serious distortions in Jewish population structure by sex, age and marital status, with a large decrease in the 1935-45 birth-cohorts. The first years following World War II saw a temporary increase in the number of births against which the hollow years of the Shoah period stand



out even more clearly. During the 1970s and 1980s these structural irregularities strongly affected the size of age cohorts and the ability of those 20 to 35 years-old to find matches, establish new families and have children. The same effects may continue to be felt, albeit to a diminishing extent, in future generations.

- **Minority status.** Jews in the Diaspora constitute only a small minority of the larger society of their respective countries of residence – at most, as in the United States, below 2% of the entire population, but more often around 5 per 1000 or even much less. This tiny share represents a basic structural constraint of enormous importance. Minority status presents members of the given minority with special challenges and deeply affects their range of available options. Sociologists and economists (Goldscheider, 1971; Kuznets, 1973) have pointed out that historical-political factors working from the outside of a community, as well as the psycho-social aspects related to reactions from within the group can explain the characteristics of a minority's particular occupational and demographic structure. These general theories not only particularly fit the Jewish experience but sometimes have been shaped by carefully looking at the longer term experiences throughout Jewish history and society. Some of these traits are, to some extent, common to all minorities (Sheffer, 2003); at the same time, cultural and normative traditions peculiar to each minority play an important role in affecting the overall social experience and options of each of them separately and differently.
- **Urbanization.** The Jewish tendency to concentrate in major metropolitan centers is not a new phenomenon and certainly a continuation of the trends found in previous generations. The process, however, is more evident today given the disappearance of the little Jewish town, let alone village. Until World War II in those countries where the number of Jews was falling off (e.g. in Eastern Europe and Muslim countries), their relative standing (in percentage) in the general population of capital and other major cities tended to remain stable or to increase. It also often occurred that Jews from relatively small towns in their countries of origin migrated to larger cities in their countries of destination. Nowadays, one often observes the tendency for many people – particularly the more veteran residents and younger people seeking to start a career – to move away from the larger central cities to less crowded suburban residential areas or to smaller cities. This phenomenon is, however, of only secondary significance when compared to the basic trend of urban concentration evidenced by the Jews. In 2010, 52% of World Jewry resided in only 5 major metropolitan areas (Tel Aviv, New York, Jerusalem, Haifa, and Los Angeles);

another 18% lived in the next 8 major areas (Southeast Florida, Beer Sheva, San Francisco, Paris, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, and Washington); and another 10%, lived in the next 11 metropolitan areas (London, Toronto, Buenos Aires, Atlanta, Moscow, Baltimore, San Diego, Denver, Phoenix, Cleveland, and Monreal), for a grand total of 80% across 24 major urban areas.

- **Residential proximity.** Significant differences continue to exist between the pattern of territorial concentration and dispersion of Jewish and non-Jewish populations in major cities and metropolitan areas. Residential density can be considered an important resource supporting Jewish corporate life. Yet the increasing dispersion of the Jewish population in urban areas carries important implications for the quality of their community life. In particular the efficiency of mutual interaction may increase or diminish as a function of the existence and proximity – as against distance if not lack – of organized Jewish services to areas of Jewish residence.
- **Widespread academization of the younger generation.** Very high proportions, and in some countries the near totality of the younger cohorts pursue post-secondary studies. Moreover, the trend toward post-graduate university specialization today encompasses very substantial proportions of young Jewish adults. In spite of the general improvement of educational standards in Western societies, the traditional gap between Jews and non-Jews in educational attainment has not diminished or disappeared. Colleges and universities, of course, serve two different socialization functions. One is the statutory provision of professional training; the other relates to various forms of social interaction and extra-curricular activity that can be developed on campus. Such large-scale exposure to cultural and community alternatives appears to be one of the common traits of greatest significance in the overall experience of younger Jewish contemporaries.
- **Changes in the occupational structure of Diaspora Jewry.** Occupational trends, too, display many similarities across the different communities, despite the differences existing between the levels of development and modernization in different countries. In almost all countries a decreasing and in fact very tiny proportion of the younger Jewish generation is employed as laborers in factories, industry and services. The number of industrial entrepreneurs has been declining too over time. Employment in the field of commerce and business remains stable or tends to decrease, while the percentage of those employed in professional, technical, managerial and clerical occupations is increasing. The high level of education attained is consistent with these changes,

which also drive from the past predominant status of self-employed to more frequent jobs as employees. Women have been prominent in these trends, and along with an educational attainment today higher on average than that of men, their entrance into professional and managerial positions is increasingly visible (DellaPergola, 2000).

- **Evolving social norms.** Following the trends mentioned, in most countries the majority of young Jewish adults is of middle to upper-middle class social status and orientation. It is reasonable to assume that cultural standards, moral codes, political allegiances, attitudes towards religion and secularization, and other tastes and behaviors tend to become relatively homogeneous among the majority of Jewish students and young wage-earners – surely to a greater extent than among their non-Jewish peers in the surrounding society. It may be hypothesized that several geographically separated communities of young Jewish adults, albeit influenced by local conditions, tend to relate to Jewish religious, ethnic, national, and perhaps also social status identity more similarly than was the case in the past. While it would be inappropriate to expect homogeneity and conformism of perceptions, this younger Jewish generation may display rather similar reactions at times of crisis, when the deeper layers of Jewish identity are called into question. The crucial question, however, concerns the character of the new Jewish identity that is emerging among this younger generation during times of routine, in the context of a high level of integration and acceptance within the majority of society. The finding that to many younger Jews in the U.S. “American and Jewish values are indistinguishable” cannot cause great surprise, although it may cause concern to some observers (Reboot, 2006).

The noted parallelism in the demographic characteristics of different Jewish Diaspora communities should not surprise. Nevertheless, the speed and extent to which recent Jewish immigrants coming from more traditional environments and backgrounds adopted the demographic patterns of the more veteran Jewish populations in countries such as the U.S. or France is remarkable.

Two critical traits consistently emerging throughout the Diaspora are aging and assimilation. A third factor is the complex interrelation between social mobility – involving changes pertaining to an individual's relation to the material environment and the collective socioeconomic structure – and cultural identity – involving feeling and attitudes in the ideological and symbolic sphere.

- **Demographic aging.** A continuing prevalence of low birth rates is followed by a growing percentage of the elderly in the population. The effect of diminishing mortality levels is not negligible but of only secondary importance in this respect. While Jews preceded other societies and populations in the world in lowering their death rate and in achieving higher life expectancies, it is the level of the birth rate that mostly determines the age structure of a population. If the number of yearly births is not large enough to offset the number of people who grow up and pass into an older age group, then the weight of the latter increases. Even under optimal socio-medical conditions the number of deaths eventually tends to exceed the number of births and the population size diminishes. Stemming from the low birth rate found among Western Jews, it took only a few years for the high fertility levels once characteristic of those Jews who emigrated from the southern shores of the Mediterranean (most of them to France) to disappear. In the U.S., too, Jewish fertility has reproduced – if at a lower level – the changes of the general white population, passing from the postwar baby boom to levels insufficient for sustaining the Jewish population at its present size. Low fertility in the range of 1-2 children per woman – including a high share who are not married and do not have children – is only one of the changes currently observable in the traditional Jewish family. The tendency to put off marriage until a later age or not to marry at all is widespread. Divorce rates are rapidly increasing. These factors further contribute to diminishing fertility levels. Other influences are likely to result from changes in the time intervals between births. Regarding these trends there are basic similarities between Jews and the majority of society in which they live, although there is some evidence that these processes began earlier and were more pervasive among Jews.
- **Assimilation.** An extremely important factor, though not the only one, in the complex and continuing demo-cultural erosion of Diaspora Jewry is out-marriage. Regarding the effects on the uniqueness of Jewish society, no less important are the different stages of cultural assimilation (acculturation) and the Jews' access and incorporation in the social, economic and organizational structure of the majority. However, it is the great diffusion of out-marriage that is likely to determine the initial identification with Judaism for large numbers of children, and perhaps more importantly, their group identity in the long-run (Reinharz and DellaPergola, 2009). In almost every country in the world the percentage of mixed marriages grew significantly between the 1960s and the 1980s, remaining thereafter at a high plateau. Today, probably close to one half of all Jews in the Diaspora marry a non-

Jew who does not convert to Judaism: over 75% in the FSU, over 50% in the U.S., over 40% in France and the U.K., over 30% in Canada, over 20% in Australia. A minority of the children of out-marriage is affiliated by their parents with Judaism (37% in Australia in 2001, 33% in the U.S. in the same year, less than 20% in Russia in 1994) (Eckstein, 2009; Kotler-Berkowitz et al., 2003; Russian Republic Goskomstat, 1994). This leads to a further decrease in *effective Jewish fertility* – the number of children born and raised as Jews – hence, as already mentioned, a strengthening of the aging trends. In addition, when in a population the low birth rates of previous years have determined a shortage of young people reaching marriage ages, it becomes increasingly difficult to find a Jewish spouse.

- **Mobility and the meaning of identity.** Improved socioeconomic opportunities largely stemming from the high educational profile of most young Jewish adults entail peak levels in the recent frequencies of internal migration, geographical redistribution and commuting of Jews within countries – or even across countries – especially in the U.S. but also elsewhere. Patterns of relocation tend to strengthen the regrouping of most Jews in large communities, but they also often bring mobile Jews from places with a stronger to places with a weaker Jewish community infrastructure. At least in the shorter term, personal rootlessness negatively affects the quality of life of large sections of the Jewish population (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1996; Rebhun and Goldstein, 2009). The very meaning and relative position of Jewish identity vis-à-vis other personal identities is affected. One overlapping and sometimes competing identity is social class which has increasingly become a predictor of the willingness and ability of Jews to affiliate communally and devote part of their energies and means to nurturing Jewish identity. A second competing identity is national political allegiance. In the U.S., in particular, it has been maintained that taking into account American exceptionalism, *Jewishness* has become for a growing number of people a subsidiary attribute of *Americanness*. It becomes, therefore, hardly comparable with the gamut of other Jewish communities worldwide where *Jewishness* remains for many the primary identificational criterion, along with local, national and other identities. The overall declining amount of voluntarism in Jewish community activities, a negative balance of accessions and secessions, and though marginally, a negative balance of migrations with Israel, all add erosive traits to the demographic paradigm of Diaspora Jewry.

Reflecting these trends, population projections based on different assumptions indicate a likely further reduction of the whole of Diaspora Jewry to 7,330,000 in 2020 –

5% less than in 2010 – assuming a minimum role for international migration and *aliyah* (DellaPergola, Rebhun, Tolts, 2000). The prospects for U.S. Jewry are comparatively more stable than those for the aggregate of the other smaller communities (Figure 16 above).

The evaluations presented here have not gone unmatched. Some sociologists have suggested that the quantitative aspect is not very significant and the vitality of Jewish life should rather be the main object of observation (Goldscheider, 2004). Others have suggested different population estimates generating a debate about Jewish population size in the U.S. that unfortunately has focused more on the quality of sources of data – none of which can be conclusively rated better than others – than on tackling the substantive realities portrayed by those data in the perspective of the last decades (see more below).

The more problematic issue is that the evident erosion in the main quantitative aspects of Jewish population, such as the birth rate, Jewish marriage, and age composition are clearly related to the quality of Jewish life. It is not possible to disentangle the qualitative from the quantitative aspect, in that both stem one from the other in circular relation. It is to a large extent the patterns of Jewish identification that determine Jewish family and other demographic patterns, and in turn the emerging demography with its effects on critical mass, population distribution and networking opportunities powerfully affects the quality of Jewish community life. If this is true in the U.S., it is even truer in the much smaller Jewish communities that exist elsewhere in the world.

### C. Demographic trends of Jews in Israel

The Jewish population in the State of Israel grew from 630,000 in 1948 to 5.7 million at the beginning of 2010. The number of Arabs in Israel grew from 156,000 in 1948 to 1,536,000 in 2010 – mostly Muslims. In addition, 313,000 non-Jewish immigrants in the framework of the Law of Return brought the total enlarged Jewish population to over 6.0 million. With the inclusion of over 200,000 foreign workers, Israel's total resident population was estimated at 7.8 million. Jews – including residents of the West Bank – represented 73% of this total according to the core definition, and 77% by the *enlarged* definition.

A very concise outline of the main patterns of development of the Jewish population in Israel should consider the following key aspects:

- **Absorption of immigrants.** The foundations of a rapidly growing population in Israel based on a Jewish majority were constituted by large-scale immigration which entered continuously but was characterized by powerful wavelike patterns. Immigration came from all countries in the world and reflected the extremely different socio-demographic conditions of Jewish communities that had been exposed, to very different extents, to common processes of modernization and had lived under different economic, cultural, political contexts. If, from the point of view of Israel, international migration of Jews brought about a significant population surplus and created the backbone of society, it may be also noted that such migration was a factor in quantitative and qualitative weakening of some Jewish communities in the Diaspora.
- **Fusion of diasporas.** The substantial social gaps that existed since the onset of the State and were periodically enhanced through large-scale immigration facilitated a permanent preoccupation with the stability and coherence of Israeli society. One of the essential goals of governmental and other agencies was to promote equalization of different origin groups. Although at quite different paces for the different communities involved, and with unequal achievements, significant steps were accomplished in this direction. Demographic differences between groups virtually disappeared, residential integration rapidly increased, educational and occupational gaps were narrowed though they are still visible in the social structure and in the patterns of elite recruitment of Jews originating from Europe and America vs. those from Asian and African origins.
- **Population growth and economic development.** Rapid population increase did not impair economic growth. On the contrary, economic development was substantially stimulated by immigration waves and an ensuing relatively high natural increase. Growth generated necessary patterns of production namely in the areas of housing and infrastructure, and stimulated consumption thus feeding back into further production. A radical transformation occurred in the basket of products exported by Israel from the oranges, grapefruits and polished diamonds of the past, to a wide array of exhibits in the most advanced fields of industrial technology and services. In the process, the whole international economic standing of Israeli society was significantly upgraded bringing Israel into the second tier of the world's more developed societies. An emblematic achievement was the invitation by OECD – the group of more developed countries – to the State of Israel to join the organization in May 2010.

- **Role of religion.** Unlike many other developed countries, Israel has not undergone a steady and uniform process of secularization. The role of religion has remained institutionally visible, and religious values persist as a diffused pattern across the population. Among large sections of Israel's population tastes and life choices – namely in areas crucially related to demography such as fertility and mortality – have been directly or indirectly influenced by the persisting and voluntary effect of religious attitudes.
- **Role of the Arab-Israel conflict.** The gist of the conflict since its inception has been the de-legitimization of Israel as a Jewish state. Long fought on the battlefield, disclosing the critical role of hard power, the campaign gradually took up increasingly more complex political shades touching upon Israel's cultural and political character and stressing the crucial role of soft power. Demographic variables, and in particular fertility levels related to differential growth, continue to play a crucial role in defining Israel's profile and viability in the present and future.

Among the possible explanations for Israel's patterns of resilient natural increase and a comparatively young age composition the following may be mentioned:

- Self-selection of people more imbued with Jewish cultural values among those who made the choice to migrate to Israel versus their peers who did not;
- Consolidation of a common Jewish-Israeli national identity among immigrants coming from different backgrounds abroad, boosted to some extent by the exacting circumstances created by the ongoing conflict;
- Under conditions where Jews form the majority of society in the country and enjoy a growing critical mass, the factors of cultural and physical erosion typical of Diaspora communities do not operate or operate only marginally – namely minority status and frequent out-marriage; and
- Government branches (executive, legislative, judiciary) over decades successfully displayed planning and executive capacities in taking care of the existential interests of the Jewish sector, as part of the overall concern with conducting state affairs.

Israel's Jewish population is expected to reach 6,453,000 in 2020 – an increase of 16% over 2009, plus an additional 386,000 non-Jews in Jewish households. But at the same time, the aggregate of Arab residents in the State of Israel and in



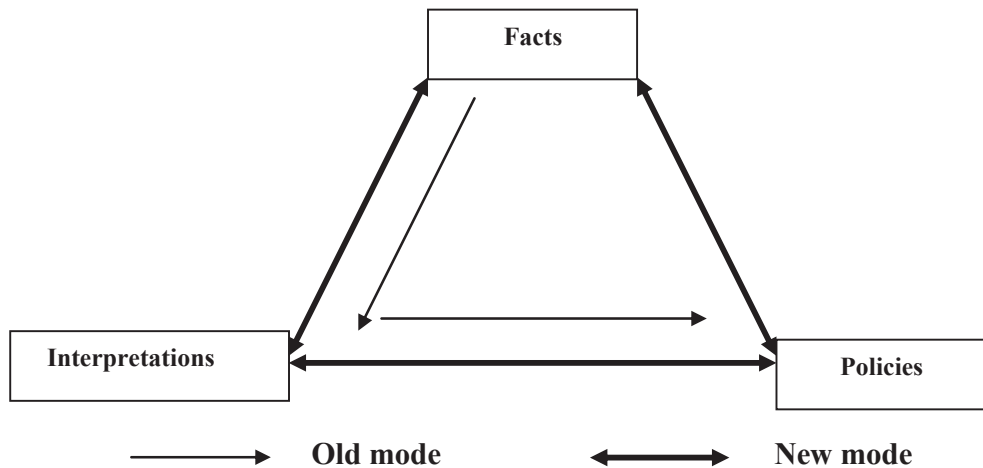
the Palestinian Territories might grow as high as 7,611,000 – with 1,931,000 in Israel, 3,338,000 in the West Bank, and 2,342,000 in the Gaza strip – or as low as 6,916,000 – with 1,916,000 in Israel, 3 million in the West Bank and 2 million in Gaza. By 2020 Arabs are bound to outnumber Jews – even if including their non-Jewish household members – over the whole territory of historical Eretz Israel (DellaPergola, 2003).

Summing up the evidence of Jewish population trends at the end of the 20th century and observations and projections for the first two decades of the 21st century, the formidable paradox emerges of a Jewish population increasingly concentrated in Israel, with a substantial and persisting second pole in North America, but gradually losing its predominance and headed to losing majority status among the total population of Israel and Palestine (Figures 15 and 17).

#### **D. Current debates: agreements and disagreements**

One central controversy in the evaluation of Jewish population trends often concerns the size of Jewish communities. This report has already clearly specified the limits inherent in this effort and the need to clearly specify the definitions adopted as terms of reference. Such differences about the data are not always adjudicated on the basis of pure research but often become a bone of contention of much broader significance for Jewish communal discourse. In the past, the conventional wisdom was that ascertained facts affected interpretations, which in turn affected the processes of policy decision-making and implementation. More recently, a rather more complex and reciprocal interplay of facts, interpretations and policies has emerged. The result is that the reading of basic findings about Jewish populations is increasingly influenced by pre-existing interpretative assumptions. A positive or negative interpretation of the trends often precedes in-depth analyses. In fact, if one sweeping critique can be put forward of the more recent research efforts, it is not that the data are sometimes far from reaching ideal quality, but that the available data are underutilized, thus lending a very shallow factual basis to most of the debates around the findings. In turn, policies tend to directly affect both the interpretations and the very results – in particular the different choices made by various large Jewish organizations in determining their target constituencies (see Figure 26).

**FIGURE 26. CONTEMPORARY JEWISH POPULATION DEBATES:  
FACTS, INTERPRETATIONS AND POLICIES**



The logic and mandate of Jewish organizations is very much oriented by the pressing requests of the *here and now*, whereas good research requires historical perspective and geographical comparisons. The latter should be based on stable definitions and research questions along with constant innovation. But organizational policies sometimes require a re-invention of the subject matter as a function of changing contingencies. The consequences for the seriousness of the debate about trends, their causes and consequences are detrimental. Today, pre-established policies often determine the interpretations of facts and even the reading of the facts themselves, reversing the past conventional relation between facts, interpretations and policies.

Two different ongoing debates are worth mentioning in this respect. The first goes back to the basic numerical estimate of Jews out of Israel.

In the U.S., as already noted, against the estimated 5.2-5.3 million *core* Jews found by the National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) in 2001 (Kotler-Berkowitz et al., 2003), highly similar results were found in the same year by the rival American Jewish Identity Survey (AJIS) (Mayer et al., 2002). Still another national study, the Heritage and Religious Identification Survey (HARI) yielded an estimate of 6 million Jews (Tobin and Groenman, 2003). An independent estimate of 6.5 million Jews has been suggested based on a compilation of Jewish population surveys and other sources obtained in local Jewish communities (Sheskin and Dashefsky, 2010). An even higher estimate,

reaching up to 7.5 million Jews, was suggested based on a meta-analysis of general national social surveys, each of which included small samples of Jews identified by religion (Saxe et al., 2007). This was complemented by assumptions about the share of Jews who did not declare a religion. In 2008, the American Religious Identity Survey (ARIS) found evidence of Jewish population stagnation or decline in the U.S. – highly compatible with NJPS and AJIS.

Compilations of disparate surveys – local or national – do rely on better response rates than large national Jewish population surveys. However, they are spread over many years, are collected with different and not always random methods by different investigators, rely on different definitions of who is a Jew, are not comparable in their topical contents – sometimes not even with respect to the same variable – and any one source is inadequate to portray the whole of American Jewry in isolation from other cognate sources. Jewish population estimates suggested by these research efforts are higher by one or even two million as opposed to the *core Jewish population* used in the estimates presented above. They share the critical weakness of not being based on a simultaneous effort of data collection as customarily practiced in national censuses; of not relying on consistent and identical population definitions; and of not covering representative samples of the whole national territory or of the whole gamut of age groups. In fact most surveys included in the meta-analysis rely only on adult respondents and therefore cannot provide estimates of the child population and a full age composition. But the higher estimates produced by some of these research efforts are not implausible provided we take the precaution of mentioning that they, evidently, reflect broader definitions of the Jewish collective.

The identificational stratification of American Jewry is reported in Table 7. While the evidence of a deficit of Jewishly identified births versus Jewish deaths suggests that in the U.S. the *core Jewish population* is past its peak, it is agreed that at least another 1.5 million people of Jewish parentage live in the U.S., bringing the expanded total of those currently Jewish or of Jewish ancestry to 6.7 million. In addition, about the same number of persons of non-Jewish origin live in mixed Jewish households, thus creating an *enlarged* population of about 8.3 million in households with Jews or persons of Jewish ancestry. The population theoretically eligible for Israel's Law of Return would be considerably above 10 million, perhaps closer to 12 million, also including non-Jewish children and grandchildren, and their spouses. All in all, one detects a shrinking Jewish identificational core and expanding peripheral identificational belts.

Similar debates and controversies exist in other countries as shown in Figure 27.

**TABLE 7. U.S. JEWISH POPULATION,  
BY DIFFERENT IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA, 2001**

Jewish Identification	Millions
Law of Return eligibles	> 10.0
Total in households with Jews or persons of Jewish ancestry	> 8.0
Have Jewish parent/s	6.7
Core Jewish population	5.2-5.3
Declare to be Jewish	4.3-4.4
Jewish organization affiliated	3.0
Devote time to Jewish community	1.5
Denomination Orthodox	0.5-0.6

In the FSU a core Jewish population estimate of 357,000 in 2007 based on census data, is not incompatible with an estimate of at least one million eligibles according to the criteria of the Law of Return, which would also include 323,000 non-Jewish members of Jewish households, and another 320,000 more distantly related persons.

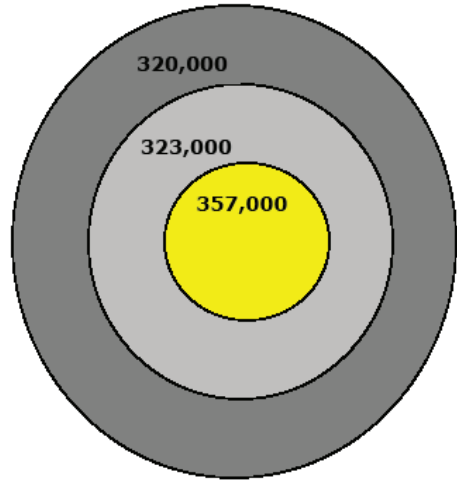
In the Greater Buenos Aires metropolitan area based on a survey undertaken by the Joint (JDC), an estimate of 163,000 people who declared to be Jewish, plus another 17,600 with a Jewish mother but defining themselves as Christians, another 63,400 with other (paternal) Jewish ancestry, and 68,000 further non-Jewish household members may be the equivalent of 312,000 individuals in households with at least one person of Jewish ancestry.

Clearly, policies aimed either at the more strongly identified Jewish core or at the broader virtual collective of Jews and their non-Jewish extended families cannot be the same. In the name of integrity and efficiency, separate policy objectives and appropriate tools and strategies need to be declared and developed for these different and relevant constituencies.

**FIGURE 27. JEWISH POPULATION ESTIMATES IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION AND IN THE BUENOS AIRES METROPOLITAN AREA – VARIOUS DEFINITIONS**

**Former Soviet Union, 2007**

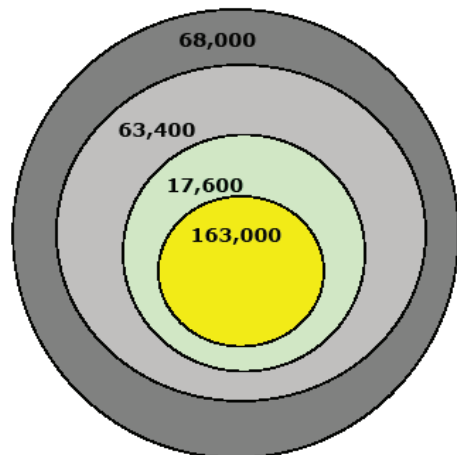
Jewish identification	N.
Law of Return population	1,000,000
Enlarged Jewish population	680,000
<b>Core Jewish population</b>	<b>357,000</b>



Source: adapted from: Tolts (2008)

**Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area, 2005**

Jewish identification	N.
Enlarged Jewish population	312,000
Jewish ancestry	244,000
Maternal Jewish ascendant	180,600
<b>Declare to be Jewish</b>	<b>163,000</b>



Source: adapted from: Jmelnitzky, Erdei (2005)

The demographic balance between Israel and the Palestinians has been the object of another lively debate. Not unlike the case with the U.S. Jewish population, the available Palestinian database is far from perfect and must be regarded with a critical eye. The 2007 Palestinian census indicated a total population of 3.5 million, without East Jerusalem which was already included in the Israeli data. In our view, the figures were somewhat overstated through the inclusion of students who had been residing abroad more than one year, and about 40,000 double counts between East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

In 2010, when we add the 2,200,000 Palestinians of the West Bank (but not Gaza) to Israel's population of 7,552,000, the 6,017,000 Jews – including their over 312,000 non-Jewish household members – represent 61.7% of a total of 9,752,000 inhabitants, and 60.3% if 222,000 foreign workers are also included.

Some observers have suggested that Palestinian population estimates in the West Bank and Gaza were overestimated by one million. If this were true, as suggested by Zimmerman, Seid, White, and Ettinger (2005), Jews (enlarged) would represent 67% of a total population of 8.8 million in Israel plus the West Bank. The critical argument has been put forward with highly spirited tones. However, it should be stressed that the alleged impact of significant variations (actually, reductions) in Palestinian population estimates on the share of Jews out of total population is much less than might be expected and revolves around a mere 6% (60-62% in our view, vs. 67% according to Zimmerman *et al.*).

The main rationale for the critique of the higher Palestinian population estimates is that the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) has been involved in systematic misreporting and manipulation of data. One of the arguments is that PCBS population projections had assumed a positive migration balance following the experience of the years subsequent to the 1990s Oslo agreements while the actual migration balance was probably negative. This is a factually impeccable correction, and in fact the PCBS in their 2007 population census found a population 300-400,000 *smaller* than they had anticipated in their own projections. What the PCBS actually found was very close to what independent Israeli demographers had anticipated (e.g., DellaPergola, 2003). The PCBS subsequently downwardly corrected their population estimates.

A further argument of the critics goes against the reported or calculated Palestinian Total Fertility Rates. To support their thesis they maintain that the number of pupils in elementary schools is smaller than the number of births reported in preceding

years. While this may be true, the missing link may be some dropout from schooling, not unheard of in the Middle East, rather than data manipulation. The critics have focused on an expected reduction in fertility levels in the Palestinian territories and they have gone as far as equating the situation in the Palestinian Territories to that of Sweden (Zimmerman *et al.*, 2005). However, they have completely ignored the critical argument that a young age composition – as documented in the West Bank and Gaza – leads to high birth rates even under conditions of diminishing family size, as well as to very low death rates. Consequently, high rates of population increase continue to prevail among the Palestinian population – nearly double the levels found among the Jewish population.

What has perhaps been missed in this debate is that the fundamental issue is not the specific percentage point of the extant Jewish majority, or the specific date when Jews will or will not lose their current majority over the entire territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, or even within the Green Line (which in any case is not expected to happen). Neither a difference of one or five percent, nor advancing or deferring the date of the demographic *tie* by one or by five years, is the main issue at stake. The main issue is not even the implications of this seemingly approaching majority-minority shift, as well as its geo-strategic and international implications.

The real question concerns the nature of Israel's civil society, its constituting the foundation of a national or a bi-national state, the amount of corporate autonomy that a majority in a democratic state is supposed to allow or rather allocate to a minority of 10% or 20% or 30% or 40% of its population. The whole issue of the political, historical, sociological, cultural, symbolic nature of the State of Israel is at stake here. And for sure, demography stands at the heart of these unresolved questions (see Chap. 10).

## **E. Demographic implications of Jewish demographic trends**

A complex relationship exists between demographic, economic, social and cultural phenomena. In the United States, for example, it was suggested that many of the changes during the past several decades in the birth rate, employment, wage-earning, and social stability could be explained by examining parallel changes in the ratio of young adults to other age groups and the related ratio between the economic satisfaction of a particular generation and that of their parents (Easterlin, 1978). At the same time, unexpected exogenous factors – such as a deficiency in the supply

of fuel and its rising costs – ostensibly affected the economic situation in developed countries, depressing the sense of individual material satisfaction and security about the future and, consequently, the birth rate.

One generation later it became clear how strong the consequences of those pressures and perceptions actually were throughout the 1970s and later for the demographic patterns of Western countries. Following the same reasoning, it was expected that a reversal in the relationship between the size of young age cohorts and labor market opportunities would automatically lead to a rise in the U.S. birth rate. But changes in the cultural, normative and psycho-social determinants of family patterns intervened – including new perceptions of ideal and achievable economic rewards – and were quite resilient. The new pattern of low fertility in the West was termed the *second demographic transition* – a reference to the first, major demographic transition that resulted in the lowering of mortality and fertility throughout modernization (van de Kaa, 1987). In turn, low fertility brought about far reaching changes in the social and economic structure of these countries by determining shortages of young manpower and introducing the need to massively import foreign labor through international migration.

Although the typical nature of demographic processes is step-by-step through elementary individual events each of which is imperceptible at the societal level, the cumulative effect of the build-up of such events may portend dramatic societal change. The two major paradigms affected by current Jewish population trends globally and regionally, concern respectively:

1. The future global distribution of Jews between the State of Israel and the Diaspora; and
2. the future demographic equilibrium between Jews and Arabs in Israeli society.

To these two, perhaps, a third issue can be added, based on the observation of internal differences in the fertility rates – hence the growth rates – of different sections within the total Jewish population. High growth rates of the more religious segments of Jewish society leads some observers to question the future demographic equilibrium between Haredi and other Jews in the State of Israel.

Declining sizes of most Diaspora Jewish communities and structural changes in world Jewry emerging from the higher pace of growth in Israel, partly already documented and partly expected in a longer-term perspective, generate several key implications for world Jewry.



- **Changing Israel-Diaspora balance.** The level of natural increase of Israeli Jews – although roughly half that of Israeli Arabs – is the highest of all developed countries while Diaspora Jewish communities display, nearly without exception, a deficit between Jewish births and deaths. This evinces continuous changes in the relative weights of the two components of World Jewry. About 58% of all Jewish babies born in the world today are born in Israel. In just one generation or a few more years this may pass the 65% mark. Therefore, assuming a continuation of current trends – which of course cannot be taken with absolute certainty – one scenario increasingly advanced is that the majority of world Jewry might plausibly be located in Israel. Such a development might constitute a landmark point in the Jewish long-term experience, whose manifold educational, historical and philosophical implications obviously transcend the scope of this report.
- **Jewish cultural reproduction.** Based on recent trends, around 2005 a majority of all Jewish children under age 15 lived in Israel, even though Israeli Jews still constitute 42% – hence a minority – of world Jewry. Today already, over two thirds of all pupils receiving any sort of Jewish education (all-day or supplementary) live in Israel. Jewish cultural reproduction tends to become more definitely identified with Israeliness.
- **Concentration of World Jewry.** While the concept of *diaspora* refers to dispersion and while this is still the common perception of world Jewry, in reality nearly 82% of the total Jewish population is concentrated in the two major centers in Israel and the U.S.. The major wave of Jewish migration from the FSU since 1989 was a main factor in reducing the numerical size and visibility of Jews out of the two major centers. This process is being substantially accelerated by the differential impact of natural increase and international migration in the different locales. The implications for the preservation of a variety of Jewish experiences and of different local brands of Jewish culture in the global context are worth considering.
- **Changing Jewish-Palestinian balance.** The parallel demographic equation concerning the equilibrium of Jews and non-Jews in Israel evolves in a different direction. The much higher rate of natural increase among Arabs, both in Israel and in the Territories, than among Jews determines a progressive decline in the extent of the current Jewish majority among the total population. This is true of the territory corresponding to Israel's boundaries before the 1967 Six Day War, where the (enlarged) Jewish majority is currently close to 80%, and will continue to be significant in the foreseeable future. If the population of the West Bank and Gaza, of Israel's concern since 1967 is added,

the Jewish majority in 1989 was slightly over 60%, and in 2010 was barely 52-53%, notwithstanding the conspicuous immigration from the FSU. Under the lack of a significant migration at the end of the first decade of the 21st century, and the high growth rates of the Arab population in the territories, demographic parity between Jews and non-Jews can be expected around the year 2015 over the whole territory between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River – followed in short order by an Arab majority. At younger age groups, the respective percentages are significantly more skewed toward the Arab sector. The Israeli educational system becomes increasingly a provider of Arab education – which incidentally is what an educational system animated by equity and pluralist representation is supposed to do. A net annual immigration of over 80,000 Jews would be needed to keep the balance of Jews and Arabs in the State of Israel as of at present. Considering the demographic characteristics of current and prospective Jewish immigration, this does not appear likely, at least in the short run.

Population projections customarily consider a basic continuation, or moderate changes, in current demographic trends among Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora, and among Arabs in Israel and in the Territories. Overarching above these trends is the shared notion that the Jewish population is now, and will be in the future, a shrinking share of total population – both in Israel and worldwide. Today the natural increase in Israel barely compensates for the decline of Jews in the Diaspora. In Israel, the majority of such demographically stagnant Jewish people might become the minority of the total population in the Land – assuming it is still undivided and a continuation of present demographic behaviors sometimes during the second decade of the 21st century. The further question is whether this Jewish population will constitute the majority in its own country.

## F. Non-demographic implications of Jewish demographic trends

The combined demographic trends of Diaspora and Israel Jewish populations bear significant, though in part uncertain, implications that extend beyond the boundaries of demography. Such effects are evident at the local level of every Jewish community and of Israel, and impact the relationship between the Diaspora and the State of Israel.

- **Loss of political influence.** In comparison with other growing population groups, the status of a numerically stable or diminishing group is likely to be negatively affected by a diminishing electoral power and representation in institutions and in government. In the U.S., the lack of growth and widening geographical dispersion of the Jewish population is likely to diminish the impact of the Jewish vote, whose

weight, due to the American electoral system, may be under certain conditions much greater than would be expected of a population of its size. But compensatory factors, such as better organization and mobilization for political action, can compensate for declining influence caused by demographic contraction and dispersal. In the former USSR, where there was no really relevant Jewish parliamentary representation, already before the mass out-migration of the 1990s and obviously after, the loss of Jewish positions of influence found expression in other areas of society, such as among students and researchers in institutions of higher education (Konstantinov, 2005) and among the professional elites (Tolts, 2010).

- **Weakening economic influence.** Even without going into a detailed discussion of the present economic status of Diaspora Jewry, three processes are worth mentioning:

(1.) **Jewish wealth retention:** Low birth rates and small family sizes may cause large sums of money to be bequeathed to and divided among a relatively small number of inheritors. Often Jews of means leave no descendents and much of their wealth is transferred to institutions outside the Jewish community. Since the social and economic status of Jews is higher than that of the general average it may be assumed that the increase in mixed marriages results in more "Jewish wealth" passing into non-Jewish hands rather the opposite. The process of assimilation has important implications for the maintenance or transfer of the "national wealth" of Diaspora Jewry. It is also true that in the light of economic crises such as in 2008-2009, developments may become less predictable.

(2.) **Changes in the structure of economic activity in the West,** where former family businesses often evolved into shareholder corporations, have diminished the degree of direct control of the founding families whose percentages out of total entrepreneurs tend to be lower than in a previous generation. This does not automatically mean a reduction in the economic power of the Jewish minority, but surely the figure of the traditional Jewish entrepreneur is somewhat less visible from the financial scene and is being replaced by new figures of Jewish executives and middlemen. For several decades a growing number of young Jews have entered academic and liberal professions, although the share of Jews in these professional areas has diminished because of shrinking of Jewish young adult cohorts. In more recent years, probably fewer young Jewish adults have entered the science and technology fields and

more have opted for careers in business and law, which at least temporarily increased their income (Chiswick, 2008). It is not clear what the effect could be in terms of cultural influence. The result of these processes was a general move toward achieving positions of higher social prestige, not necessarily those with the highest income. Major trends in demographic dynamics, social mobility and cultural identification of Diaspora Jewry do not go hand in hand with the preservation of their corporate economic status, in contradiction to what prevailed in previous generations.

- **Growth of Jewish community social costs.** Observations over the last several years as well as projections for the near future strikingly underscore changes in the age composition of the Jewish population. This has important implications regarding the organization of Jewish community services, particularly schools, homes for the elderly, welfare agencies, youth and cultural institutions, all of which focus on different age groups. Special attention should be given to services which, in the coming years, will have to be provided to the more fragile age-groups – the older elderly.
  - (1.) **Jewish elderly:** A significant increase is expected in the number of Jewish elderly; many of those in need will be dependent upon fewer wage earners and it will be necessary to expand the existing community frameworks of care services. On the other hand, the absolute number of the elderly is likely to diminish later on in the course of the 21st century when the reduced generations born after the 1970s reach old age.
  - (2.) **Jewish education:** Periodic changes in the potential number of consumers of Jewish education may be expected. Here, the situation is complex and paradoxical. On the one hand, the expected future reduction in the number of young Jews does not justify increased investments for new buildings. On the other hand, we are already witnessing the phenomenon in small communities where, due to the decreasing number of Jewish children, Jewish schools are accepting non-Jewish students in order to remain open. At the same time, a substantial percentage (about 30% in the U.S., higher percentages in other Western countries) of Jewish youths does not study in any Jewish educational framework. Attitudinal surveys indicate that some parents would opt in, if appropriate educational facilities were available in proximity to their place of residence, but also significantly if a broader ideological range of Jewish schools were available (Cohen, 1991).

3. **Resource allocation:** These changes indicate the difficulties to be expected regarding the distribution of available financial resources to Jewish communities in the coming years. Growing communal needs, for example a rapidly growing percentage of elderly people in need of assistance, may be accompanied by diminishing communal economic resources. This may be particularly true if the adult children of the elderly are less connected than their parents were to a Jewish community.
- **Decreasing support for Israel.** In the future, all those areas from which Israel draws strength from the Diaspora will be affected by the expected demographic changes, unless compensated by more intense commitment, which at present looks unlikely pending the formulation of new, innovative Israel-Diaspora policies (see the debate about the so called *distancing hypothesis* in Sassoon *et al.*, 2010; Cohen and Kelman, 2010).
  - (1.) **Aliyah:** Aside from the relatively and consistently weak Western aliyah propensities, young adults used to make up a large percentage of those new immigrants. A decrease in the number of young Jews in the Diaspora, then, means less immigration or a higher and growing share of the elderly among new immigrants. This implies heavier social investments on the part of the Israeli socio-economic system. Even if the young may be more willing to adopt novel forms of multi-local living, the overall impact on *aliyah* prospects is negative.
  - (2.) **Philanthropy and financial support:** While the relative portion contributed by the United Jewish Appeal-Jewish National Fund to Israel's entire national budget is very small, nonetheless many Israeli institutions receive additional and important financial support which is transferred to them directly. Cases in point are the Israeli institutions of higher education which collect funds abroad through their "friends" associations. There is a risk that these forms of support will diminish in the future. Of course, changes in currency rates and the overall stability of economic investments do make their own contributions to the total financial picture, but these are out of the scope of the present review.
  - (3.) **Lobby group effectiveness:** In certain countries, the relationship between the local and the Israeli government also reflects the activities of lobbying groups whose attainments are also indicative of the size

of the public they serve. Particularly important are the effects for the American government's support of Israel's security budget. A decrease in the numerical leverage of American Jewry may eventually find some expression in American strategic support of Israel. All of this without going too much in the direction of demographic determinism and remembering well that the U.S. security support for Israel depends on many factors, of which demography is only one, and certainly not the most important one.

- **Increasing burdens for Israel.** Conversely, there emerges a growing need for Israeli investments in the Diaspora. If Israel sees the Diaspora as the "capital" and Diaspora-Israel support as the "dividend", the capital must be carefully nurtured.

(1.) **Draining of manpower:** Diaspora Jewry's inability to keep pace demographically, as along with the awareness that its organizational and spiritual forces must be strengthened, leads to the demand for more substantial input by teachers, youth movement coordinators and cultural operators, which Jewish communities in the Diaspora cannot supply for themselves in sufficient number. Prominent and vital functions in the Jewish institutional network in the Diaspora are today dependent upon Israelis or former Israelis. Israelis increasingly participate and contribute in the area of Jewish education and culture as there has been a rapid and expansive increase in the number of academic courses in Jewish and Israeli studies offered in the U.S. and other countries. Besides the teaching profession, Israelis are most visible in Jewish communities globally in certain other specialized fields, such as security, communication technologies, biomedical research and other sciences, and their maintenance. This is obviously not only the product of demography, but the truth is that the critically important young adult cohorts are scarce in Diaspora communities, leading to a scarcity of local talent in crucially important fields, such as doctors and engineers in the general realm, and social and community workers in the internal realm. In theory some of these needs might be fulfilled through compensatory measures, such as increased reliance on internet use or learning at distance, but there is often a wide gap between the

availability of a tool and its predominant implementation. And the importance of physical proximity cannot be dismissed, yet, in the functioning of human society and community. Demographically, in the U.S. it is mainly the arrival of Jewish emigrants from Israel and the FSU (who opted not to go to Israel) that has offset the demographic decrease of the Jewish population and has allowed it, so far, to remain fairly stable in size.

- (2.) **Implications for Israel's centrality:** In a sense, this situation underscores a conflict of interest. On the one hand, stands the goal of strengthening the Diaspora, which is in need of efficient and representative institutions, as well as professional, organizational and spiritual leadership it cannot always provide itself. On the other, stands Israel's loss – *brain-drain* – of capable human capital which might have usefully contributed to Israeli society instead of taking their talents elsewhere. The significance of these contradictions may be expressed not just quantitatively but also qualitatively: it is possible to somehow legitimize emigration from Israel (*yeridah*), because it sanctions the fact that Israel increasingly is if not the spiritual, at least the functional center of world Jewry. But, if the aim is to preserve a viable Diaspora, can Israel really aspire to be the spiritual center of the Jewish people? These questions, of course, go beyond demography but to a certain extent they are the result of it and in particular of the enhanced role of and diminished hostility to the Israeli presence abroad.

We selectively listed here the most likely range of implications of several demographic trends currently visible and whose effects will continue unless effectively matched by appropriate provisions. If no substantial change intervenes, the dynamic interplay of known factors will continue to affect Jewish demography locally and globally. The obvious implication is that interventions are necessary if the anticipated outcomes are regarded as undesirable. The broad contours of such interventions can be easily imagined but they need to be fleshed out in greater detail and translated into actual planned policy interventions able to affect one or more of the elements in the whole demographic equation. The subsequent parts of this Report are devoted to a review of some of the aspects of these possible interventions.

## G. Some lessons from history

Demographic variables are only one particular segment of a much wider array of social trends and interactions. One may study demographic processes per se, but in the context of the present report it is more meaningful, in fact imperative, to perceive demographic variables as both the ending and the founding element in a wider complex of cultural, socioeconomic and political trends. This is also one of the reasons why it seems useful not only to learn from the demographic policies of others, but also to look back at the past of Jewish population, in order to draw some lessons that can be useful in thinking about the future.

The central question we ask is how Jewish society ensured a substantial degree of demographic continuity over the centuries, in spite of the odds of unfavorable conditions to which it was often exposed in the context of non-Jewish majority societies. Looking at the analyses and conclusions of several leading social scientists who have worked on Jewish populations and societies in the past (Katz, 1961; Bachi, 1976; Eisenstadt, 1985), we draw the following inspiring message:

**Jewish traditional society was stable and continuous as long as it was able to effectively reproduce itself both demographically and culturally.**

But Jewish society did not invest a particular effort to be “traditional”; rather, it was operating following what was perceived by most as the “natural” course of things. The most natural of things was the lifecycle, meaning that Jewishness was inherent in the individual from birth to death, all along the course of life. Distinctive Jewish cultural values and behavioral norms predominated in Jewish society and met the needs of each different stage in life, alongside mechanisms, internal and external, meant to enforce partial or complete separateness between Jews and the rest of society. These values and norms were reinforced through the operation of distinctive Jewish community institutions and by both clearly visible and invisible boundaries. Institutions that were functional to particular values and norms actually contributed to the viability and continuity of Jewish population and society by providing their particular and diverse needs not only before the Emancipation, but long after it. Individuals, their culture and their institutions constituted a highly integrated complex that was able to deliver Jewish survival and continuity across time and space.



The contemporary situation – in a context which is completely different because of the openness and permeability of general society on the one hand and the existence of a Jewish state on the other – may be perceived as one of growing split and inconsistency between the Jews' peculiar norms and behaviors, general life options and constraints, and community institutions. This basic review generates several simple but fundamental lessons that may serve as a starting point for the elaboration of possible Jewish population policies for the future. In the current and future debate about Jewish population, a number of major strategies naturally stem. We can outline them as follow:

- act along **the typical processes of the lifecycle, inclusive of all of its stages;**
- act considering the **different needs of different target constituencies;**
- act through appropriate institutional channels and facilitate appropriate **interactions between individual Jews and their collective institutions.**

Each of these three strategies operates in its own orbit, but they are clearly meant to overlap and complement one another in the overall policy design.



# PART TWO:

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROCESSES AND POLICY OPTIONS

### 3. MIGRATION (ALIJAH) AND ABSORPTION IN ISRAEL

#### A. Main processes

Since inception, immigration of Jews to Israel (*aliyah*) has constituted one of the central objectives of the Zionist doctrine and of the Israeli ethos in the context of large-scale world Jewish migration (Figure 6 above). The importance of *aliyah* can be assessed primarily as a major contributor to Jewish population growth in Israel: over three million new immigrants who arrived between 1948 and 2009, in addition to the approximately half million who arrived between 1918 and 1948, provided a decisive contribution to the foundation, consolidation and progress of a viable Israeli society. But immigration also functioned indirectly as a booster of Jewish population growth owing to the significant fact that Jewish immigrants adopted demographic patterns different from those prevalent abroad: higher fertility, infrequent out-marriages, most often better health standards and lower mortality, and overall a far higher natural increase. During most of the 20th century international migration between the rest of world Jewry and Israel (*aliyah*) was one of the most powerful transforming forces within the complex of world Jewish society. Between 1948 and 2009, 3,126,400 people immigrated to Israel, including immigrant citizens, mostly in major periodic waves (see Figures 7 and 8 above).

High levels of migration made Israel one of the world's principal countries of immigration. In 2005 it was ranked 15th in the world for its number of foreign-born (United Nations, 2009). It also had one of the highest percentages of foreign-born among its total population – only surpassed by several of the Gulf Emirates – although this was gradually diminishing. Nearly two thirds of the Jewish population was Israel-born.

At the end of the first decade of the 21st century, aliyah is playing a diminishing role in global Jewish population redistribution. Most Jews have already left the countries where their economic and political conditions and potentials were less attractive, and the vast majority today reside in fairly developed and democratic societies where the pressures to leave (push factors) are not overwhelming. In 2006, a total of 19,000 new immigrants came to Israel – a decrease of 9% from 2005. In 2008 the total was barely above 13,000 – a decrease of over 30% compared to 2006, and in 2009 it moderately increased to 14,500. Migration to Israel under the Law of Return has included a growing share of non-Jews. Most of these immigrants come from the FSU, but the whole Falashmura immigration from Ethiopia consists of people who come to Israel under the Law of Entrance and undergo conversion to Judaism in the process of immigration and absorption.

Emigration from Israel (*yeridah*) has been quite stable, around 10-15,000 a year. Over the years the composition of emigrants shifted from a prevalence of former immigrants who did not settle permanently in Israel, to a growing share of Israel-born and Israel-educated young adults who respond to the opportunities of an increasingly global labor market. From an outflow of unsatisfied former immigrants – typical of all major immigration waves – emigration from Israel has tended to become more of a brain-drain of high quality manpower.

Because of the lessening of immigration, in recent years Israel's net international migration balance has diminished to just a few thousand a year. Yet in 2009, Israel still featured a net migration balance of 13,400 people, thereof 11,700 Jews (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, annual). Jewish migration from the FSU to Germany and to the U.S. have also steadily declined, while interest in possible future moves has been growing among Jews in France, the UK, and Latin American countries like Venezuela. Today, international migration includes a growing share of people who maintain family and economic links with their countries of origin and whose lives effectively function in a bi-local or multi-local context. This recent feature affects Jewish migrations and needs specialized attention (Pupko, 2009).

**(1.) Aliyah.** To what extent are Jewish migration trends, particularly aliyah to Israel, predictable? To answer this question, one needs to assess the different factors that operate in such circumstances, the possible independent impact of each factor, and the final outcome due to the interplay of all factors. In historical perspective, six main factors have been at work:

- **The intensity of pro-migration forces in response to the socioeconomic and political situation within the country of origin.** Periodic crises have disrupted

the extant equilibrium between Jewish communities and the social environment in different countries at various times. This created the typical wavelike profile of Jewish international migration over the last century. In the FSU these forces gained momentum after the Six Day War of 1967 and again since the end of the 1980s but eventually dissipated over time. Given the current Jewish population distribution globally, and its heavy concentration in affluent Western democracies, the effect of these push factors is significantly less notable than in the past.

- **The actual possibility to leave the country of origin.** Shifting policies in different countries, ranging from the FSU to Morocco, from Romania to Ethiopia, powerfully impacted on the ability of Jews to leave.
- **The availability of alternative destinations for Jewish migration.** Since 1948, Israel has stood out with its open-door immigration policy, as opposed to other countries that have been much more selective if not reluctant to receive large numbers of immigrants, including Jews. The U.S. policy of immigration quotas was especially significant in this regard beginning in the early 1920s, during the immediate pre- and post-World War II period, and until the more recent changes in immigration regulations. Many other countries followed the U.S. example and strongly regulated immigration with powerfully limiting effects on Jewish migration. After several years of sustained “drop-out” of Jewish migrants who supposedly had left the Soviet Union directed to Israel, in 1989 the U.S. stopped granting automatic refugee status to Soviet nationals and a yearly quota of 40-50,000 was established for Jewish immigrants; in 1996 that quota was reduced to 20,000, reflecting a general reduction in the refugee quota. In recent years, Germany and to some extent Canada have maintained comparatively more encouraging immigration policies. In the 1990s the economic incentives offered by Germany were particularly significant, but in 2005 German migration policies became more restrictive and migration has diminished drastically.
- **The extent of involvement and the nature of the assistance provided by Israeli, Jewish and international agencies.** Various bodies have promoted, directed and supported Jewish migration, such as the Jewish Agency for Israel, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), and *Nativ* – Israel’s government agency in the former Soviet Union also known as *Lishkat Keshet* (Liaison Bureau). Migration opportunities have been comparatively more accessible to Jews in some countries than in others.

- **The demographic, socioeconomic and socio-cultural characteristics of the Jewish population.** These have had differently effects on migration propensities and the choice of countries of destination. More frequent migration has usually involved both ends of the social ladder, including highly educated professionals and low status labor. The middle classes engaged in trade and tied to local capital investments have been less mobile when the opportunity has existed, and the most exposed to irreversible losses of economic property when emigration became anyhow imperative. Israel has historically absorbed a disproportionate share of the needy and has consequently carried a heavier burden in immigrant absorption.
- **The quality of absorption and feedback by recent migrants.** Information about the success of their efforts to integrate and start a new life sent back by immigrants to Israel, the U.S. and other main receiving countries to families and other social networks in their countries of origin significantly affected the latter's decision-making about possible future migration. Successful absorption in Israel played an important role in stimulating further *aliyah* from the same countries.
- Finally, from the point of view of the receiving country, *what counts* is the **number of immigrants who stay for good.** Net immigration is the total number of immigrants minus re-emigrants or returning migrants. Net migration has tended to encompass quite a high share of total Jewish migration in historical experience. In the case of the FSU, the latter constitute a comparatively small share of total migrants. Those who return, or re-emigrate to a third country tend to display different socio-demographic characteristics from those who settle permanently.

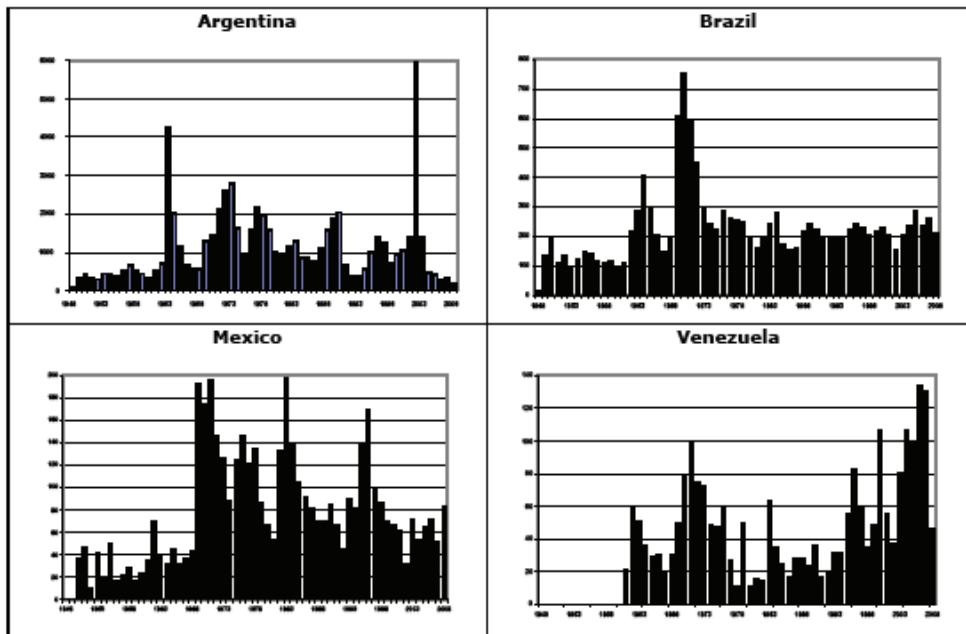
Recent research has demonstrated that the main predictor of aliyah timing and volume is negative circumstances that generate a condition of push in the countries of origin (DellaPergola, 2009a). This is true both of fluctuations over time in the number of immigrants from a given country, and in inter-country variation in the relative frequency of immigrants. Between 1980 and 2000 there was a correlation of 0.69 between the initial Human Development Index (HDI) and the percent of change of Jewish population in the 24 major Jewish populations worldwide. This is an indication of the clear effects of the environment upon the resilience of Jewish populations in a given locale. There also was a negative correlation of -0.66 between the HDI level in 75 countries and the rate of aliyah per 1000 Jews in those countries (see Figure 10 above). Significantly, today over 87% of all Jews in the Diaspora live in countries with an HDI higher than Israel, and only 13% live in

countries with lower HDIs. Under the present conditions, the levels of *aliyah* are expected to remain low.

Regarding yearly variation, suffice it to look at a few examples to understand how powerful local factors can be in the determination of *aliyah*. Since the 1970s the major contribution to immigration came for the FSU and its impact reflects in the total profile of *aliyah* (Figure 8 above). In recent years immigration has been steadily diminishing reflecting the declining Jewish population pool in the republics of origin.

Figure 28 compares the yearly variation in immigration from four countries in Latin America (each on a different scale). Immigration from each country was clearly affected by local political and economic events. Argentina was affected in particular by the political turmoil of the early 1960s, again by instability in the 1970s and 1980s, and by the economic crisis of 2002; Brazil mainly displays the political crisis of 1970; Mexico, the financial crises of the mid-1980s and mid-1990s; Venezuela the rise to power of Hugo Chavez. Such evidence does not imply that Israel's power of attraction (pull factor) is not important in generating *aliyah*, but demonstrates how it is subordinate to other factors.

**FIGURE 28. IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL FROM COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA, YEARLY PROFILES – 1948-2008**

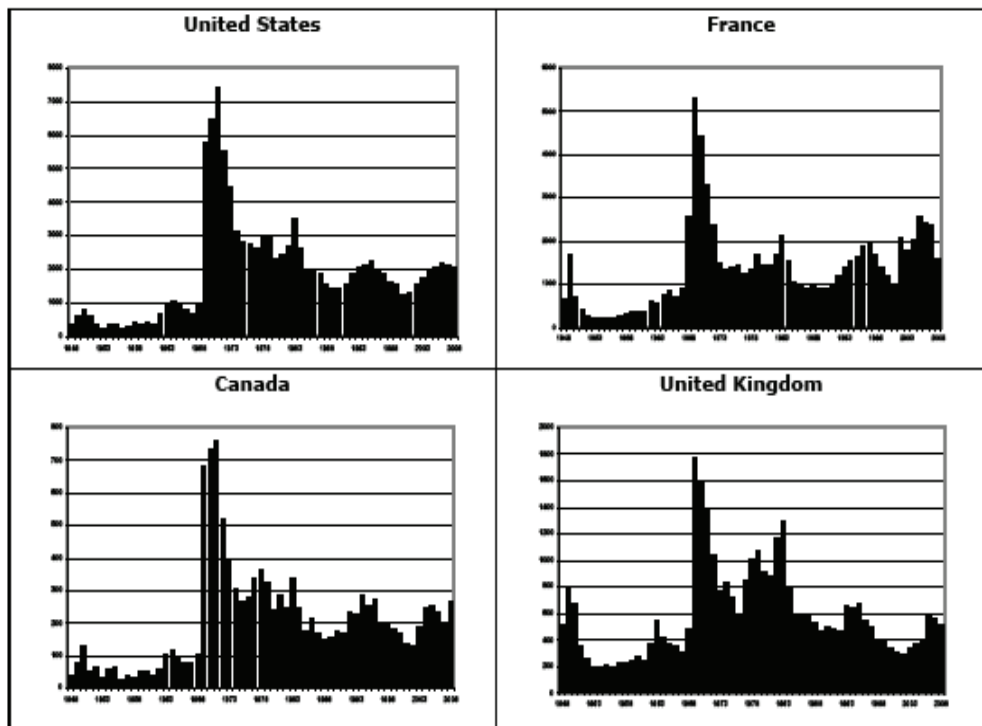


In comparison, aliyah from the major Western countries has followed a time pattern that appears more internally consistent (Figure 29).

The major increase after the 1967 Six Day War apparently reflects Israel's enhanced pull, emerging from the war as a more relevant and stronger focal point for Jewish identification. However, here too, negative factors that operated in the different countries help to partly explain the *aliyah* surge and also its lack of synchrony once one more carefully looks at the details.

For example, the peak from France and the U.K. was in 1969, and in 1971 for the U.S. and Canada. All four countries featured a revival in 1983 – the year of the first Lebanon war – and experienced overall modest fluctuations of various magnitude and timing during the 1990s and 2000s. The recent concerns of French Jewry with growing anti-Semitism are clearly reflected in the volume of *aliyah*, though with overall minor consequences.

**FIGURE 29. IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL FROM LARGEST WESTERN COMMUNITIES, YEARLY PROFILES – 1948-2008**





A contributing factor to Israel's international migration balance is provided by returning Israelis and immigrant citizens, i.e. children of Israelis who were born abroad, already hold Israeli citizenship and who actually immigrate since they enter Israel for the first time in their lives. They too are sensitive to developments in their current countries of residence, but they usually have stronger family and social ties in Israel than many new immigrants who lack an Israeli background. Hence in their migration decisions, returning and immigrant citizens may be more sensitive to ongoing changes in Israeli society than other new immigrants.

**(2.) Most Jewish immigrants enter Israel under the Law of Return.** The Law of Return at its inception in 1950 intended to offer the opportunity of free migration to Jews, which had been sadly missing at crucial junctures of history such as during World War II. The Law acted on a principle of affirmative action on the grounds that Jews had been discriminated against, granting Israeli civil rights down to the third generation of descendants of Jews regardless of their personal identities. Today, while the basic principles still hold, the sociological and demographic situation of world Jewry is entirely different. There is no clear separation between Jews and non-Jews in communities around the world – as demonstrated by high out-marriage rates – and therefore it is not surprising to find that growing proportions or even a majority of immigrants in the framework of the Law of Return are non-Jewish household members or descendants of Jews. The difference is rapidly diminishing between this pool of immigrants and immigrants who first enter Israel via the Law of Entrance, i.e. the standard legal instrument that exists in any country for granting visas and immigrant status to foreign applicants.

Revisions of the principles of the Law of Return have been advocated (Gavison, 2009), namely transferring the main definitional focus of who is a Jew from religious to ethnic criteria. Some would aim at reducing its coverage of non-Jewish descendants of Jews. Others would like to liberalize the definition of who is a Jew, which currently largely – though not exactly – follows the principles of traditional Jewish *Halakha*. Today the children of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother (which the Reform Movement considers Jews to any effect) can be granted Israeli citizenship because they are the children of Jews, but not because they are considered themselves Jewish. But opening some parts of the Law would surely generate a wide debate on other parts. It might become impossible to gather a parliamentarian majority on any revised version of the law, or the revised law might become so restrictive or so extensive that it would empty it of any meaning. Attempts to create subjective – as opposed to objective – criteria

for Jewish ascription would meet endless challenges in court. The pros and cons of the eventuality of modifying the Law of return should be considered carefully.

Today more Jews choose more than one place as their place of residence, spending part of the year in either, or commuting between places – living and working in different places. The numbers may not be very high in the context of the generally moderate level of mobility of the recent period, but nonetheless the trend is worth systematic analysis (Pupko, 2009). This new trend is becoming more common in Israel and among Jews in the Diaspora in the framework of globalization processes. Improvements in transportation and communication technologies and the diffusion of multicultural absorption policies have contributed to more immigrants living in or maintaining links to more than one country. These migrants – often defined in the literature as transnational migrants – are, for our purposes, multi-local migrants who often hold multiple economic and identificational attachments (Ben Refael, Sternberg, Liwerant and Gorni, 2009).

Globalization has expanded the means by which these migrants remain economically, socially and politically involved with their countries and Jewish communities of origin. Rather than a permanent move *from* one place to another, migration today is characterized by a move *between* places. Israel is being significantly affected by these new trends. Growing proportions of immigrants arriving in Israel continue to maintain multi-local links between their countries and communities of origin and Israel. It can be argued that at least one fifth of North American and nearly half of French immigrants arriving in Israel over the last few years are multi-local. Multi-localism is also emerging among Russian immigrants to Israel and to other countries such as Canada, the U.S., and Germany. Although there are no clear-cut numbers, it is clear that the number of Russian immigrants spending some time in Israel and in Russia is on the rise.

Multi-local immigrants in Israel engage in various practices. These immigrants often are highly skilled individuals engaging in liberal professions, high-tech, academics, Jewish community professionals, or retirees whose families reside in Israel. The most frequent travelers do so on a weekly basis in order to work in their country of origin and return to spend the weekend in Israel. Some engage in less frequent travel and spend only one week a month in their country of origin. Some migrants completely refrain from traveling but do manage entire transnational enterprises electronically.

The implications of these new trends must be well understood in order to develop new approaches for handling multi-local *aliyah* and its effects on Jewish families, communities abroad, and Israeli society.

**(3.) Other types of immigration to Israel.** Along with its main mandate and *raison d'être* as a cultural and political center for the Jewish People – hence mostly directed toward receiving Jewish immigrants and their families – Israel is a sufficiently developed country to attract an unlimited number of potential immigrants and refugees from poorer countries, especially from neighboring Asia and Africa. While such migration has come to fulfill a significant role in the economy, it raises – as in many other Western societies – complex issues related to multiculturalism (Rubinstein, 2006). In Israel, it adds an additional measure of complexity to a society already much segmented by the main Jewish-Arab cleavage, and by cleavages within each of these two main sectors.

Since the 1990s, Israel has been the recipient of a growing number of immigrants who stand outside the main normative concept of Jewish immigration, such as foreign workers, people asking to be reunited with their non-Jewish families in Israel, and refugees. The growing number of foreign workers in Israel, estimated at 222,000 in 2010, generates a significant social and demographic issue. Foreign workers influence the employment level and the quality of manpower in Israel. Foreign workers and their children present some serious welfare problems. The main problem consists of illegal or undocumented sojourners remaining in Israel beyond the terms of validity of entry permits. Shorter stays and better enforcement of laws may be a way to reduce illegal and non-documented entries.

A related issue concerns family formation and childbearing of foreign workers, and the acquisition of permanent status in the country by their Israel-born children. The proposed expulsion of a number of such locally-raised children caused some emotion in 2010 and unveiled the need for Israel's Government to make clear choices about the possible incorporation of these children in Israel's cultural mainstream.

Another issue is family reunion requests of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who wish to rejoin relatives within the territory of the State of Israel. According to the Population Register with Israel's Ministry of Interior, 130,000 requests were authorized, but according to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, the actual figure of Arab immigrants since the 1990s was around 20,000. In this respect, a conflict of interests has clearly

emerged between general humanitarian principles – which would support the right of families to stay united – and the state's interest in preserving its security, which would support restrictions on people coming from areas that stand in military conflict with Israel. Requests for family reunification nearly always involve a request by a Palestinian to settle in Israeli territory and nearly never a request by an Israeli to resettle in Palestinian territory. In light of the outstanding conflict over the question of the Right of Return of the Palestinian refugees of 1948, this can be construed as an indirect attempt to enhance a politically charged immigration. Consequently the Israeli Administration has handled these cases one by one and has been reluctant to allow large scale recognition to an inherent right of family reunion on the Israeli side of what once was the Green Line.

The further problem of refugees entering Israeli territory has emerged in recent years following conflicts and persecutions of particular population groups. One case in point is the problem of refugees from Darfur in Western Sudan. Numerous refugees reach Israel's frontier (estimated at 16,000 in 2010) after crossing the whole territory of Egypt where they are actively chased by the local security forces. Israel has made attempts to accommodate these displaced persons by providing basic shelter and allowing economic self-support. Solutions have been provided on a case-by case ground.

All in all, no matter how strange the notion may seem, the State of Israel does not yet have a comprehensive approach to international migration. The implementation of such a strategy is now a recognized and high priority goal for policy making (Avineri, Orgad, Rubinstein, 2009).

**(4.) Jewish migration to other countries.** Since 1948, Israel has been by far the main recipient of international migration of Jews. Between 1948 and 2008 Israel absorbed 63% of a total of 5,017,000 Jewish international migrants. The remaining 37% went to Western countries – of which 16% were from Eastern Europe, 7% from Asia and Africa, and 14% from Israel itself. Migration policies in the receiving countries played an important role in encouraging or deterring Jewish immigrants. Thus, the U.S. was, until the late 1990s, Israel's main competitor in attracting Jewish immigration from the FSU. With the reduction of admission quotas in the U.S. and the nearly simultaneous adoption by Germany of a generous absorption package, the latter became, for about a decade, Israel's main competitor. In 2005 Germany too diminished its embrace of Jewish immigration, hence migration drastically diminished. In general terms, the U.S. remains the main alternative to Israel, followed by Canada.

The main emerging problem is probably the limited connection new Israeli arrivals feel with the extant Jewish community; instead they often gravitate into ethnic enclaves with the broader non-Jewish immigrant community from the same countries of origin (Lev Ari, 2008). These Jewish emigrants often display highly skilled socioeconomic characteristics – sometimes better than those of Jewish immigrants to Israel (DellaPergola, 1996; Cohen, 2009; Rebhun and Lev Ari, 2010). They also include a far higher proportion of non-Jewish household members and, at least during the initial stages of decision-making related to migration, demonstrate scarce interest in the Jewish side of their cultural identity.

**(5.) Main consequences of Jewish migration.** The following sequence illustrates the permanent interaction that operates between international migration of Jews and the status of Jewish population distribution worldwide:

- **Changes in population size in receiving and sending countries.** The effects are important not only regarding the aggregate totals in the sending and receiving countries, but also regarding the communal environments perceived by the migrants themselves in the different locations.
- **Changes in the characteristics of the migrants.** These may occur in the course of the migration process itself, or before – if a certain predisposition mechanism is already at work, or soon after, mostly as a consequence of the market constraints of the receiving country.
- **Competition between new immigrants and veterans in the countries of destination.** Israel is an important case – among others – of large scale Jewish migrations that have brought together communities originating from countries with highly different profiles with respect to occupational and cultural modernization. The nature of the different models of societal convergence or divergence between different groups of immigrants may have crucial consequences for their material and cultural integration in the longer term.
- **Changes in the global configuration of the population considered.** Attention should be paid in particular to the respective weight and mutual relations between the core country of a given national or ethnic group and its Diaspora. This phenomenon is of growing diffusion and relevance (Sheffer, 2003), and of course is significant centrality in the case of world Jewry.
- **Changes in the global and local institutional systems of the population considered.** These may be affected by the relative size of the different communities

involved globally, by the respective cultural and political contexts, by their respective leaderships, and by their ability to position the different organizations and lobbying bodies which constitute the global institutional fabric of the collective being examined.

- **Changes in the positioning of countries in the framework of the global system.** Changing population size and characteristics, stimulated by international migration can eventually significantly affect the pool of available human resources. One remarkable example is the substantial qualitative jump of Israel's economy following mass immigration of academically trained people from the FSU in the 1990s.
- **Changes in the mutual relationships between the population considered and other populations.** Referring to the combined configuration or core state-diaspora – for example in the case of world Jewry – the modified structure that may emerge as a consequence of large scale international migration may affect the mutual relation of the given global national collective – for example a world Jewry with a comparatively heavier Israeli component – with other national collectives.
- **Establishment of a new basic configuration out of which new migrations will likely emerge.** A migration system in fact operates as a series of successive iterations between an initial configuration and the opportunities of change that are inherent in it – through further international migration.

## B. Intervening mechanisms

Having already noted the main explanatory factors of the timing and volume of Jewish migration – particularly to Israel – interventions aimed at influencing the outcome must come to terms with the interplay of macro-social determinants that are quite hard to manipulate, and micro-social factors that can be selectively sensitive to policies. One general observation – quite obvious, yet needing mention – is that all migrations respond to the overall balance between *push* and *hold* factors in the countries of origin, and between *pull* and *repel* factors in the countries of destination. In this respect, raising the quality of life in Israel in all respects is imperative in order to improve its relative attractiveness as a receiving country, and in order to reduce the chances that it consolidates its status as a sending country. Moreover, significant impact on the outcome may derive from the amount of public visibility allocated to immigration and absorption and from the amount of empathy it is granted as part of a high priority national project, rather than being portrayed as some marginal, odd or even tolerated feature.

Inasmuch as the determinants of international migration mostly operate in the countries of origin, options aimed at enhancing Jewish migration have included supporting high profile international coalitions to promote changes to existing adverse migration policies – as was very successfully the case in the campaign in favor of the emigration of Soviet Jewry since the late 1960s – and low-profile interventions to modify the situation from the inside of the relevant countries. In fact, Israeli policies in the past operated both to allow exit of Jews from countries of origin and to discourage entrance of Jews into alternative countries of destination. In this respect, the role of the Jewish institutional system internationally was not negligible and was sometimes of determinative influence, such as with respect to Jews originating in the FSU in the 1960s, the 1970s, and the 1980s. It was characterized by more or less open conflict of values and interests between Israel's government (especially during parts of the tenure of Itzhak Shamir) and the leadership of major Jewish organizations in the U.S.

In the realm of Jewish organizations, the recent trend has been to strive for privatization of aliyah operations, at least in some Western countries. Private organizations like *Nefesh B'Nefesh* are taking over for the institutional professional branches of the Jewish Agency and of Israel's Government. The claim that such a substitution has generated significantly higher numbers of new immigrants from the U.S. is not substantiated by the yearly *aliyah* data reported above. However, it may be – and this is a worthy subject for research – that the more intensive and better personal care offered to immigrants by a private organization versus a public one may result in higher levels of satisfaction, hence a better retention rate among the new immigrants.

Regarding the individual characteristics of migrants, Israeli policies have generally enacted non-discriminatory rules – even at times, as in the early 1950s, when officially declared policies explicitly preferred specific types of immigrants over others (such as young adults, economically independent households, or workers in agriculture) (Friedlander and Goldscheider, 1979). In reality, Israel's concern and responsibility regarding the life and security of Jews abroad and ideological factors tied to the quantitative growth of Israel's population systematically prevailed upon considerations about the costs and returns of investments in bringing new immigrants. This was evidently conducive to attributing especially high priority to immigration of Jews in less secure countries which also tended to be less economically developed. While this basic ethos is not subject to change, we have already stressed that the current potential

reservoir for immigration is located in more developed countries. Here the likelihood is that the lower socioeconomic strata of a generally well-off Jewish population would be more prone to emigrate. Appropriate incentives may significantly affect the final outcome. The surge of *aliyah* from Argentina in 2002 during the collapse of the economy there, and its rapid decline quite mechanically reflected the initial concession and subsequent withdrawal in Israel's incentives to new immigrants.

This is true also of Jewish migration to other countries. The German government extended a special quota immigration law (*Kontingentsflüchtlingengesetz*) to Jewish immigrants from the FSU and their families leading to the immigration from the FSU of over 200,000 persons, about half of them Jewish. On January 1, 2005, this law was replaced by a new, more restrictive law (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*). Jews were included in the new provisions and lost their privileged quota status. The new law placed integration into German society and good economic prospects before other considerations, and required Jews aspiring to immigrate to Germany to first prove that a community would accept them as members. Prior knowledge of the German language was required, and potential Jewish immigrants now also had to prove that they would not be dependent on welfare and that they were willing to integrate into the German labor market (JPPPI, 2006). Following these rules, in 2009 only 704 Jews immigrated from the FSU to join the organized Jewish communities in Germany, as against more than 19,000 in each of the peak years 1997 and 2002 (von Bassewitz, 2010).

In turn, the quality of immigrant absorption (*klitah*) contributes its share to the promotion or deterrence of further immigration. Absorption pertains nearly in its totality to the domain of responsibility of the receiving country including both its government and civil society actors, in part financed from abroad, and is very sensitive to both the general conditions of Israeli society and to the treatment offered to specific newcomers. Future newcomers, if any, are likely to come from countries more developed than Israel. More specific policy directions should be articulated around this basic fundamental.



## C. Main policy options and directions: Israel

Following these analyses about Jewish migration trends in the past and present, several policy options and directions, as well as creative ideas are worthy of further study and elaboration.

1. At the declarative level the ethos of *aliyah* should continue to be nurtured and the public image of *aliyah* desirability should remain prominent. Jewish migration should be highlighted within the framework of a broad concept of the unique cultural-social character of the State of Israel and its multiple links with world Jewry and other countries in the region and in the global system. The centrality of Israel as a country of immigration should be underscored as part of a mutual relationship with the Jewish Diaspora through educational activities and visits to Israel.
2. If Israel is to continue to represent a central target for Jewish immigration, it is fundamentally important that it becomes a society that can offer its residents a sense of physical safety and freedom from security concerns. Were it not for other reasons of heavier strategic import, here is one worth considering.
3. New modes of thought should be developed to encourage *aliyah*. Given that it primarily derives from Jewish communities in more developed countries, it is fundamentally important that Israel strives to be more competitive and more attractive from both the social and occupational points of view. Especially important is the expansion of facilities for research and development, teaching, industrial production and services especially attuned to the manpower capabilities of well educated Jews who live in the more developed parts of the world. This implies high investment in areas that need manpower equipped with academic training as typical of most Jews in the Diaspora.
4. Special provisions should be developed for new immigrants who keep a permanent link with their country of origin and are involved in a situation of *part-time* and *multi-local aliyah*. These provisions should address the needs of such type of immigrants in the areas of citizenship rights, housing, degrees and titles recognition, employment, childcare and education, taxation, and military service.
5. Regarding the structure of institutions involved with migration to Israel, a distinction must be made between those who enter under the Law of Return and other migrations. Concerning Jews and their families, it would be a serious mistake

to discontinue the very existence of branches – such as the Jewish Agency's Aliyah Department – that have the declared purpose of encouraging and implementing migration to Israel. Privatization and other schemes of reorganizing public services should not come at the price of destroying public capabilities and facilities that were developed over long years of practice.

6. Concerning other types of migration, it is essential that a Central Authority for Migration be created with adequate law enforcement powers.
7. Israeli initiatives to encourage aliyah should be grounded in new concepts and tools to identify candidates for migration and to help with their absorption in Israeli society. Traditional *shlichut* (emissaries) methods that may have worked in the past will not be sufficient to attract significant numbers of new immigrants from countries whose level of development is higher than in Israel. Especially encouraged should be the arrival and absorption of Jews creatively active in scientific, technological, business and cultural endeavors. Priority should be given to the mainstream of world Jewry over fascination with the exotic but quite marginal "lost tribes".
8. Friendly and efficient immigrant absorption is of primary importance, and new efforts should be invested to improve it. A customized approach should be created and applied to immigrants from Western countries. A network of partly competitive initiatives might be allowed offering differentiated services to various kinds of immigrants. When bringing a new immigrant, it should be clear that the responsibility does not end with his or her landing in Israel. This involves taking better care of the economic and legal aspects of absorption, and the removal of legal obstacles such as the impossibility to marry in Israel for immigrants under the Law of Return who are not Jewish.
9. It is important to understand, cope with, and where needed, facilitate the newly emerging mode of part-time/part-place *aliyah*. Partial *aliyah* may allow more people to live part of their life in Israel and part elsewhere. It responds to the needs of a growing public that cannot sever economic or other links with locations abroad while sincerely wishing to enjoy the advantages and opportunities of life in Israel. In this context, it is imperative to develop new approaches to multi-local immigrants in absorption procedures, citizenship, civil rights allocation, consideration of taxation needs, adaptations in educational and military service rules, and more. There is an urgency to improve the policy frameworks for the legal, professional, economic and civic absorption and status of such new immigrants in their respective situations.

10. Efforts should be made to increase the involvement of new immigrant organizations in the process of immigration and absorption, and to allow more primary leadership roles to representatives of immigrant groups. Quick transfer of Israeli leadership roles to representatives of the immigrants themselves should be encouraged, and in the lack of a readily available leadership, efforts should be made to develop it instead of keeping the new immigrants under the tutorship of veteran local leaders and administrators.
11. One should consider the possibility of developing for the absorption and residence of new immigrants urban locations in parts of Israel now not intensely settled – for example, areas in Israel's regions with climatic conditions similar to retirement areas of the elderly in the United States. The possibility should be considered that new urban localities be created based on significant concentrations of new immigrants with similar language backgrounds – such as English, French, Spanish.
12. One should avoid haste in changing the Law of Return while carefully developing and analysing alternative possible changes and their implications. The Law of Return should continue to represent the basic tool for expressing a preferred opportunity for Jews to migrate to the State of Israel, receive its citizenship and related civil rights. In this respect several points deserve attention:
  - The Law of Return, as it is currently conceptualized, should be implemented in relation to nuclear families;
  - Non-Jewish grandchildren of Jews should benefit from the Law of Return only if they come together with their Jewish grandparents;
  - Non-Jewish grandchildren who immigrate alone should receive resident status. If they apply for citizenship, their request should be given priority;
  - The same should apply to non-Jewish grand-grandchildren of Jews, whether they come alone or with their family members;
  - A person converted to Judaism (see below) should be eligible for the Law of Return but should not be entitled to include other non-Jewish family members in his or her eligibility. Those relatives should separately apply for residence.
13. Regarding other types of migration to Israel, new rules should be established concerning entrance of immigrants such as foreign workers, their family members, and refugees, based on clearly defined and enforced criteria. The right

of entrance to Israel should be granted selectively according to the characteristics of the countries of origin, and according to the personal characteristics of the applicant.

- Countries of origin should be classified according to the status of mutual relations with Israel: (1) priority if there exists regular diplomatic relations, on conditions of reciprocity regarding the treatment of Israeli citizens in that country; (2) low priority if there are no diplomatic relations, on a strictly humanitarian basis; (3) no admission at all if the country stands in a situation of conflict with Israel.
  - Besides family relations, personal, and primarily occupational skills of the applicants should be considered, giving priority to those who can make a positive contribution to the Israeli economy, society, and culture.
  - The residence status and civil rights of foreign workers should be defined and protected by transferring them directly under the auspices of state authorities, or under international agencies such as the U.N. authorities on migration and refugees, away from exclusive dependency on their employers. Employers of foreign workers should be subject to strict controls by state authorities.
  - Israel should make all possible efforts to reduce its dependency on foreign labor, by developing an adequate supply of local manpower – at least in those occupations and economic activities where the paucity of Israeli labor is not justifiable.
  - Studies should be undertaken to evaluate the relationship between the length of stay of foreign workers and patterns of integration in Israel.
  - Programs should be evaluated to absorb the Israel-born children of foreign workers in the Israeli society.
  - Awarding of Israeli citizenship outside the Law of Return should be subject to one or more pre-conditions, as customary in other countries, for example: (1) a minimum knowledge of the Hebrew language; (2) a minimum knowledge of Jewish and Israeli history; (3) a declaration of loyalty to the State of Israel; (4) participation in national service; (5) with the exception of refugees, a viable means of support, so as not to be a burden on the public welfare system.
14. All entries of Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank into Israeli territory should be recorded as passages to and from a foreign country. The issue of family reunion of Palestinians should be linked to progress in achieving a permanent settlement of the

conflict with Israel, and with the proviso that, on balance, a similar number of families are reunited on each side of the border. Demographic, humanitarian, political, and image implications should be carefully considered. Family reunions of Palestinians who ask to live within the territory of the State of Israel should not be allowed as long as the conflict has not been peacefully concluded. Exceptions may be allowed:

- If the applicants meet the criteria to be awarded citizenship;
  - Based on humanitarian criteria and on reciprocal small quotas for family reunification within the Palestinian Authority or State.
15. A status of permanent resident separate from that of immigrant or temporary resident should be envisaged, including partial civil rights, such as the right to vote in municipal elections.
- A permanent resident could be anyone who lives in Israel for a prolonged and continuous period of time and meets criteria to be specified;
  - Permanent residency could be granted in cases that stand outside the margins of the law of Return, such as a non-Jewish grandchild of a Jew coming to Israel unaccompanied, or a non-Jewish great-grandchild of a Jew, or a non-Jewish parent, or a widow of a Jew;
  - It could be granted to Jewish tourists who spend prolonged time in Israel and do not wish to receive Israeli citizenship;
  - To Jewish tourists who regularly spend part of the year in Israel; and
  - To others with particular skills, including non-Jews, who are not citizens and regularly stay in Israel for prolonged periods of time.

#### **D. Main policy options and directions: Diaspora**

1. In agreement and in coordination between Israeli and Diaspora Jewish institutions, the concept should be clearly articulated that migration to Israel is a legitimate personal goal of Jewish interest, and responsible Jewish organizations should facilitate it – if this is what people request.
2. Israel should develop a position toward Jewish communities in countries that compete with Israel as immigrant receiving societies, avoiding open conflict and seeking collaboration on compatible goals.

3. Jewish migrants to countries other than Israel should be encouraged to settle in places already hosting Jewish populations of sufficient size to support the viability of and participation in Jewish community life – even if this is not the declared immigrants settlement policy of the governments in the respective countries.
4. Systematic efforts should be developed to encourage Jewish migrants who have chosen another country over Israel to incorporate within the existing local communities.
5. Special educational programs should be developed for these Jewish migrants and their families, incorporating local language acquisition and knowledge of the local civic system as well as acclimation assistance with respect to Jewish culture and community activities.

## 4. MIGRATION FROM ISRAEL

### A. Main processes

As in any country, emigration is a process symmetrical in some respects to immigration, but in Israel *yeridah* has been usually discussed from an ideologically charged perspective rather than a more matter-of-fact one. According to the United Nations world review of national population policies, Israel's government has consistently perceived immigration levels as too low, and emigration levels as too high (United Nations, 2009). The growing number of Israelis who live abroad for shorter or longer periods plays more than a negligible role in the overall demographic balance and illustrates important junctures of the Israeli social system and its interactions with world Jewry (Gold, 2002).

It is very hard to provide exact estimates of the yearly number of emigrants from Israel and of the total number of Israelis abroad because emigration is not recorded as such at Israel border stations. The emigration estimates in Figure 9 above are mostly based on comparing the numbers of permanent residents entering and leaving Israel. Indirect data exist based on people who left the country and did not return after prolonged periods of stay abroad, but some of these may have died abroad. Some emigrants may re-enter Israel after a change of citizenship. The monitoring of their movements is thus interrupted. On the other hand, some Israelis who reside abroad and frequently travel to Israel may be regarded as living in Israel according to border police data while in reality they spend most of their lives abroad.

Even more complex is the question: Who is an Israeli abroad, since the whole pool is composed of four different groups:

- Persons born in another country who after a stay in Israel returned to that same country;
- Persons born in another country who after a stay in Israel moved to a third country;
- Persons born in Israel; and
- Foreign-born children of Israelis of all the categories above.

Clearly, the designation of Israeli emigrant applies in increasing order to the first three types, the first one being typically an immigrant who did not integrate. But, to be sure,

the emphasis has been gradually shifting from the first and second to the third (and fourth) type, which represents the more significant and pressing subject of discourse about emigration.

Over time the number of Israelis leaving the country has fluctuated constantly but within a much narrower range than the massive changes in the volume of immigration (see Figure 9 above). While population size steadily increased, the average number of emigrants remained remarkably stable, thus implying a decreasing rate of emigrants per 1000 inhabitants. The latter has been estimated in recent years at 3-4 per 1000, which is considered by many as too high. It is important to note, however, that very similar levels of mobility characterizes the frequency of migration from a country like Switzerland to Israel, which is generally deemed to be quite low. Therefore the definition and perception of *high* and *low* is clearly more related to normative perceptions than to objective criteria.

The total pool of former Israeli residents abroad – referring to the three first types already mentioned – can be estimated at some 5-600,000, while every year a continuous flow adds new people, and several thousands return to Israel. These estimates are far lower than numbers often heard in public discourse. Taking into account children born abroad, a total estimate of Israelis abroad can tentatively be put at up to 15% of the total Jewish population living in Israel. In addition, significant numbers may be drifting abroad for shorter or longer periods that may include temporary or even permanent work activities.

The largest group of expats is in the United States where studies have estimated the number of Israelis at over 200,000 (Cohen and Haberfeld, 1997; Rebhun and Lev Ari, 2010). Other attractive countries for Israelis include Canada, Australia and to a lesser extent those of Western Europe. The development of globalization and the creation of new markets for the Israeli economy generate new work opportunities for Israelis in these places. Several African countries used to have small and stable communities of Israelis. It can be expected that if the current trends continue, the number of Israelis temporarily or permanently living in countries like China, Korea and Japan will increase. In the hypothetical and for now remote scenario of normalization between Israel and the Arab countries, the number of Israelis residing in those countries would be bound to increase significantly.



Emigration from Israel mainly responds to five determinants:

- Response to periodical changes in the main economic indicators such as employment levels, price stability and foreign investment – as in any other developed society;
- Response to the closeness of correspondence between the immigrants' characteristics and the available pool of opportunities mainly in the socioeconomic and employment sphere;
- Return or circular migration of former immigrants who did not sufficiently integrate in the country or had, beforehand, decided to move to Israel for a short stay – as in any other society affected by large-scale immigration;
- Availability of employment opportunities abroad as against occupational bottlenecks in Israel;
- Response to events affecting security in the country; and
- Expression of the level of cultural and/or emotional identification with the State of Israel and its society.

Overall, Israel's retention rate of new immigrants has been high. At the end of 2009 there lived in Israel 1,141,290 residents who had immigrated since 1989, as against a total number of 1,248,712 new immigrants during the same period (Israel CBS, 2009). This means that the total of those who re-migrated or died was 107,422, or 8.6% of total immigrants. This is a remarkably low rate of attrition considering that the percentages of ethnic Germans who immigrated to Germany between 1954 and 1999 and left was above 60% (Münz, 2002).

Over time, the focus of the debate about Israeli emigration has shifted from the mere quantitative dimension to a more attentive consideration of the qualitative implications of the loss of human capital inherent in emigration. While perhaps in the past consideration of mere numbers mainly reflected the concern with the size of labor pool in a relatively simpler economy burdened with security problems, today in a much more sophisticated socioeconomic context the concern turns to the economic costs of highly skilled human resources leaving Israel.

One of the most significant aspects is the educational composition of the emigrants, with a growing emphasis on well-trained people. In the U.S., compared with immigrants from other countries, Israelis hold the highest ratio of college and university teachers

per 1000 population in the country of origin. Thus, emigration from Israel is more significant for its brain-drain character than for its absolute quantitative size. Partly mitigating this problematic finding is that it has also been found that many of the more gifted tend to return to Israel after a period of stay abroad (Cohen, 2009).

When one considers the high level of immigration to Israel, the growing integration of Israeli society in a global migration system, the smallness of the Israeli market and its inability to provide jobs to all the highly skilled manpower trained in the country or imported through immigration, emigration from Israel does not reach the level of social pathology but it looks quite normally commensurate with its environment. Nonetheless it is the value-oriented aspects of emigration from a country whose founding ethos was immigration and the absorption of immigrants that primarily raise the relevance of the issue in public and policy discourse.

One further aspect quite peculiar to Israel related to temporary mobility more than to emigration proper is the widespread tendency among Israeli youth – especially before or after military service – to travel abroad, sometimes for extended periods. Considering that these are mostly Israel-born, and allowing for a total percent of Israelis born abroad still close to 40% of the total Jewish population, Israel has one of the highest proportions in the world of people who have ever been abroad. The feature of frequent traveling abroad may be a very functional psychological mechanism to compensate for stress, among other things related to prolonged military service. It also may serve to broaden perspectives, which is important in a country tending towards localism and provincialism. What calls for attention, however, is the relatively frequent number of troubling incidents involving young Israelis abroad, often marked by unreasonable risk-taking or inadequate appreciation of the odds of negative outcomes in various situations. Even though the vast majority of these travelers safely return, this phenomenon points to some evident or latent measure of crisis, or lack of satisfaction – or even responsibility– that calls for thought.

In the past, the public attitude in Israel toward Israelis abroad was one of impatience and condemnation, while epithets such as *yored* (descending) or *nemusha* (weakling) were commonly used. Today, the socioeconomic and ideological-cultural situation has drastically changed and the growing globalization of the economy imposes more frequent interactions between Israel and abroad. Contrary to many perceptions, research data on Israelis in the U.S. show a high level of attachment to Israel, continuing involvement with Israeli politics, a high level of attachment to the Jewish People,

robustly unique residential patterns, a fairly high level of integration within the local Jewish community system, even if from the point of view of religious expression quite a high proportion do not identify with any of the major American Jewish religious denominations (NJPS, 2001; Kim and White, 2005; Lev Ari, 2008; Rebhun and Lev Ari, 2010).

## **B. Intervening mechanisms**

As already noted with immigration, processes shaping emigration operate both at the macro- and the micro-social levels. The latter are easier to envisage and more likely to produce immediate returns, but the effects of the former tend to be more massive and long-lasting. The more obvious mechanisms that may reduce emigration from Israel operate through the general level of economic development, job opportunities, stability, security and satisfaction with Israeli society.

However, more specific mechanisms relate to the peculiar circumstances of emigration and characteristics of Israelis abroad, namely:

- comparatively high levels of education;
- widespread immigration background, i.e. being foreign-born or a child of immigrants;
- persistence of family links and continuing emotional attachment to Israel; and
- significant social networks linking Israelis abroad among themselves.

Higher education and family networks abroad are an incentive for more frequent emigration from Israel. Family and social networks in Israel may provide incentives to return. The further aspect to be considered is the dynamics of acculturation and absorption of Israeli emigrants in the new countries of residence, both in the general societal framework and within the Jewish community framework. These features provide clues for possible policies aimed at emigrants from Israel.

## **C. Main policy options and directions: Israel**

1. In light of the powerful correlation that exists between emigration from Israel and the economic – especially employment – situation, in addition to factors influencing satisfaction of living in Israel, a most obvious but crucial general goal for thought is that stable and attractive conditions should be created in Israeli society for full employment and fruition of the potentialities of professional training and skills.

2. In particular, higher priority should be given to special investments in Israel in areas of the economy, research and development capable of absorbing the supply of well-educated and sophisticated manpower being created through the Israeli higher education system and through immigration.
3. Acknowledging that a growing proportion of Israeli emigrants are individuals born and socialized in the country, efforts should be invested in improving the sense of cultural and national belonging of the younger generation to their home country. Special educational initiatives should be developed to strengthen among Israel's younger generation the search for meaning in the local context.
4. Efforts should be invested in reducing the re-migration of new immigrants by better understanding and facilitating their process of adaptation in Israel.
5. Tools should be developed and budgets allocated that may encourage Israelis abroad holding cutting edge occupational skills to return to Israel.
6. An entirely new strategy is needed to face the growing pool of Israeli citizens who live abroad. Such programs need to be coordinated between appropriate agencies in Israel and Jewish community organizations worldwide.
  - The cultural and economic links of Israelis abroad with Israel should be enhanced by establishing more points of encounter and appropriate activities there. This may help Israelis to maintain stronger contacts with other Israelis and with the local Jewish community.
  - Relations of children of Israelis with the home country and with Jewish culture should be strengthened.
  - Ways and means should be developed to help Israelis wishing to return to Israel permanently to do so. At least part time residence in Israel should be encouraged.
  - Links with Israel among Israelis who live abroad should be facilitated through appropriate incentives in income taxation and similar areas, and by providing appropriate educational and military training frameworks.
  - The resources available to Israeli representative agencies to keep in touch with Israelis abroad should be increased.
7. Following the example of other countries, the relationship of the home country and its Diaspora should be reexamined and given an appropriate institutional

framework.

- Following the example of tens of other countries, including most of the major Western democracies, it is worth examining the desirability of granting voting rights to Israelis abroad, provided they have maintained their Israeli citizenship.
- Among methods adopted by other countries where citizens resident abroad have suffrage rights: (1) such voters may be counted in the total of votes to the national parliament, countrywide and in each voting circumscription in the home country, as in the U.S. and France; (2) such voters may elect in the national parliament a number of representatives of the Diaspora, proportionally smaller than their actual numerical weight, as in Italy; (3) such voters may elect a special consultative body of all national citizens who are residing abroad, as in France, Italy, and Hungary.

#### **D. Main policy options and directions: Diaspora**

1. Support incorporation into, rather than the alienation of Israelis from Jewish communities abroad. Encourage Israelis to be in contact with both their local Jewish communities and with Israel.
2. Provide help in the establishment of Jewish educational facilities for Israelis and in the admission of Israeli students within the fabric of local Jewish schools.
3. Facilitate the organization of events and frameworks where local Jews and Israelis can interact.



## 5. MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND FERTILITY

### A. Main processes

The world Jewish collective has long displayed two extremely different models of family formation and growth, one in Israel and the other throughout the Jewish Diaspora. Fertility constitutes one of the principal factors in the overall array of demographic change. In the Jewish context, births out of marriage are very infrequent among Jews in Israel and elsewhere. This calls for special attention to the processes leading to choosing a spouse and getting married. Fertility can be measured in terms of current output in a given period of time, or as the cumulative outcome at the end of reproduction. In view of demographic trends across the Jewish Diaspora, fertility of Jewish families in Israel is the fundamental engine of contemporary world Jewish population change. Unequivocally, the majority of new infants globally who are Jewishly identified now are born in Israel.

The main difference in family formation between Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora concerns the pool of available mates. There is a huge contrast between the majority situation of Jews in Israel and the position of Jews as tiny minorities in other countries. As demonstrated in Figures 11 and 12 above, high and growing proportions of young Jewish adults who marry non-Jews do not adhere to Judaism in any form. The main consequence is the non-incorporation in the Jewish collective of high shares of the potential younger generation of descendants of Jewish parents. But marriage per se is perceived as less of an imperative milestone in life in Western societies than in the still relatively traditional Israeli context. The direct result is younger ages at marriage and lower percentages of unmarried adults in Israel. The indirect consequence is more years available for reproduction.

Table 8 compares Jewish marriage propensities in the U.S. and in Israel. Still in 1970 there were nearly no differences, as in both countries well over 90% had already married by age 30-34. In 1990 however, significant differences appeared, with the proportion of never married growing and becoming nearly twice as high in the U.S. as in Israel. Gaps continued to appear in the early 2000s, when the proportion of never married Jews in the U.S. at age 35-44 equaled the proportion in Israel at age 30-34. At the same time, the increasing incidence of divorce generated a constant increase in the pool of persons who were currently non-married. In the U.S. in 2001, 10% of the pool of Jewish adults was currently divorced, the proportion being evidently higher at middle adulthood ages such as 35-55 (Kotler Berkowitz et al., 2003). In Israel the increase in singles who were never married is shown in Table 8 (Israel, CBS).

**TABLE 8. PERCENT NON-MARRIED JEWS  
IN THE U.S. AND IN ISRAEL, 1970-2006**

Country and year	Age and status	Men	Women
United States			
1970	30-34, never married	7	5
1990	30-34, never married	34	24
2001	25-34, never married	52	36
	35-44, never married	26	15
Israel			
1970	30-34, never married	7	4
1993	30-34, never married	19	10
1998	30-34, single	25	21
	thereof: never married	21	13
2006	30-34, single	33	25
	thereof: never married	28	17

Fertility levels are governed by a combination of economic and cultural factors, mediated by several demographic-biological factors. Explanations of fertility levels can be organized in a four-tier sequence (DellaPergola, 2009a).

Toward the end of the causal chain, a first explanatory tier is provided by *proximate determinants* – the immediately preceding bio-demographic causal factors of fertility. Several variables instrumentally affect the actual ultimate chance of initiating a new pregnancy and of completing one with a live birth:



- The frequency and timing of *couple formation*, mostly through marriage but increasingly also through other informal arrangements;
- The level of *natural fertility*, expressing the biological capacity to procreate and mostly tied to health conditions and bio-physical factors; and
- The frequency and success of *fertility control*, before a pregnancy initiates or before it is carried to term.

Interventions drawn from the several contexts translate into household-level or individual strategies of family formation and growth. This second explanatory tier determines the likelihood of a future birth as a result of a synthesis between the respective strength of three variables:

- The value-oriented *desirability* of children in general and of a child of a specific parity in particular, generated through the reception of historical Jewish cultural values and certainly also through imitation of the behaviors of those perceived as a relevant reference group;
- The cost-related *feasibility* of childbearing and child rearing, inclusive of actual costs and of missed benefits, for example from work by the mother, and access to relevant means, resources and tools, whether from family-generated or other sources; and
- The *availability* of conditions necessary to procreation such as a sufficient supply of partners with adequate personal characteristics.

The dilemmas and negotiations of individual households inherent in the potential conflicts between identity and sentiment on the one hand, and economic rationality on the other hand, are better evaluated in their *community context* – a third explanatory tier. Perceptions broadly shared with one's close environment tend to influence individual family growth behaviors. The role of community influences is especially important in a diverse socio-cultural environment such as typically observed across Jewish communities. In this respect five groups of factors call for special attention:

- **Traditional culture and organization.** A group's religious and social norms concerning fertility as well as community frameworks and institutions established for implementing those norms, is a natural source of inter-group differences. Traditional Judaism, Islam and Christianity, each in their own distinctive ways, carry explicit pro-natal stances. In traditional Judaism, more explicitly than in other religious frameworks, the principle goes together with definite prescriptions

affecting each of fertility's proximate variables. Traditional Judaism also gives high priority to children's prolonged religious education, but community investments to the same effect may reduce its cost to individual families. Community and extended family mechanisms of communication, social control and sanction explain why the more religious individuals generally conform more strictly to each religious group's declared fertility precepts.

- **Minority/majority status.** This reflects past situations of actual legal discrimination or, more relevant to the contemporary experience, community-based subjective perceptions of dependence/dominance relative to the majority of society or other minorities within it. Such perceptions may psychologically affect group propensities to expand or restrain. Minorities may feel pressured to concentrate on the higher quality of fewer children to overcome the odds of possible discrimination. Minorities may also consciously try to maximize their natural increase as a mechanism to expand their share of the total population. In Israel, the latter may be the case for communities that feel their lifestyle endangered, such as the Haredim, or whose advocacy for political goals requires the support of numbers, such as the Palestinians.
- **Social class stratification.** Occupational status and specialization imply significant differences in perceived interests and access to resources. Shared perceptions of the role of children as potential providers or dependents tend to generate widely different strategies of family growth. Other things being equal, social mobility of individuals within a subpopulation or of a whole subpopulation relative to the rest of society may translate into significant fertility change.
- **Knowledge.** Formal education or to a large extent other channels may affect fertility especially via community level awareness of fertility control opportunities – limiting or enhancing – and the understanding of their mode of operation. In this respect, it would be mistaken to equate religious traditionalism with lack of information. Traditionalism in contemporary societies tends to shift from repudiation of modernity to selectively choosing from modernity those elements compatible with or even supportive of traditional goals – including ways and means to increase fertility.
- **Biological constraints.** Inherited diseases and other health-related factors, often tied to strict community homogeneity, have affected fertility differentials in the past and may still exert minor effects in contemporary societies more open to intermarriage.

A fourth and broader explanatory level reflects the continual flow of civilization, namely political, socioeconomic, cultural and technological change subsumed under the general definition of *modernization*. Modernization's enhanced global effects on local populations operate through diffused media and communication networks. Broad transformations of macro-economic patterns, standards of living, contents and boundaries of community identities, contextual *mentalités* and personal tastes may significantly affect demographic patterns. Comparative evidence points to the predominantly lowering effects of modernization on fertility levels. However, technological advances are of special interest inasmuch while previous generations of scientific research greatly enhanced fertility control, more recent advances have focused on overcoming fecundity impairments.

In Israel, fertility levels have been uniquely stable (Figure 13 above). Among the Jewish population the level in 2008 stood at 2.90 children, as against 3.73 among Muslims. In the Diaspora the corresponding measure was closer to 1.5 *Jewish* children on average, also reflecting the low fertility that has prevailed since the late 1970s in most developed societies. These measures incorporate married and unmarried women.

In Israel, well-established patterns of family formation created the premises for a current Total Fertility Rate of 2.6-2.9 children per woman (regardless of marital status) and an ideal family size approaching 4 among married Jewish couples at reproduction ages (DellaPergola, 2009b). These values are uniquely high for a developed society, although they are markedly lower than among Israel's Arab citizens and the West Bank and Gaza Palestinians. One note of caution to these robust family patterns comes from the emerging trend to later, somewhat less frequent, and somewhat less stable marriages – in partial imitation of the prevailing trends in the West. Fertility rates in Israel between 1955 and 2006 are outlined in Figure 13 above.

In 2009, there were 161,042 births in Israel, the highest number ever. Of these infants, 116,599 (72.4%) were Jewish, 35,253 (21.9%) Muslims, 2,517 Druze (1.6%), 2,514 Arab Christians (1.6%), and 4,159 (2.5%) of no religion. In other words, while the *enlarged* Jewish population constituted 79.7% of Israel's total population, it garnered 120,758 births (75% of total), versus 40,284 births in the Arab sector (25%). In theory, to represent 80% of total births without modifying the actual number of births to other religions, the enlarged Jewish sector should have produced over 40,000 more births, or an increase of 33%. However, if 8,174 births among Arabs in East Jerusalem are not counted, to keep a share of 80% of all births in Israel (without East Jerusalem)

the Jewish sector should have produced 7,700 more babies, or an increase of just 6%. This simple calculation hints at the implications of different possible geographical boundaries for determining the demographic balance in the state of Israel. These issues are covered in greater detail in Chapter 10.

Two surveys of married adults were undertaken in Israel to better understand family patterns and to create a basis for family policies – the first in 1988 with the support of the *United Nations Fund for Population Activities*, and the second in 2005 in the framework of the *Jewish Agency’s Initiative on Jewish Demography*. A comparison between these two surveys unveils remarkably similar results among the Jewish public (Kupinsky, 1992; DellaPergola, Wiesel, Tzemach, Neuman, 2005). Israeli Jewish preferences of family size did not change in spite of large-scale immigration from the FSU where fertility patterns were very low, nor were they affected by the significant improvement in living standards experienced during the 1990s. If anything, the average preference for children slightly increased (see Table 9).

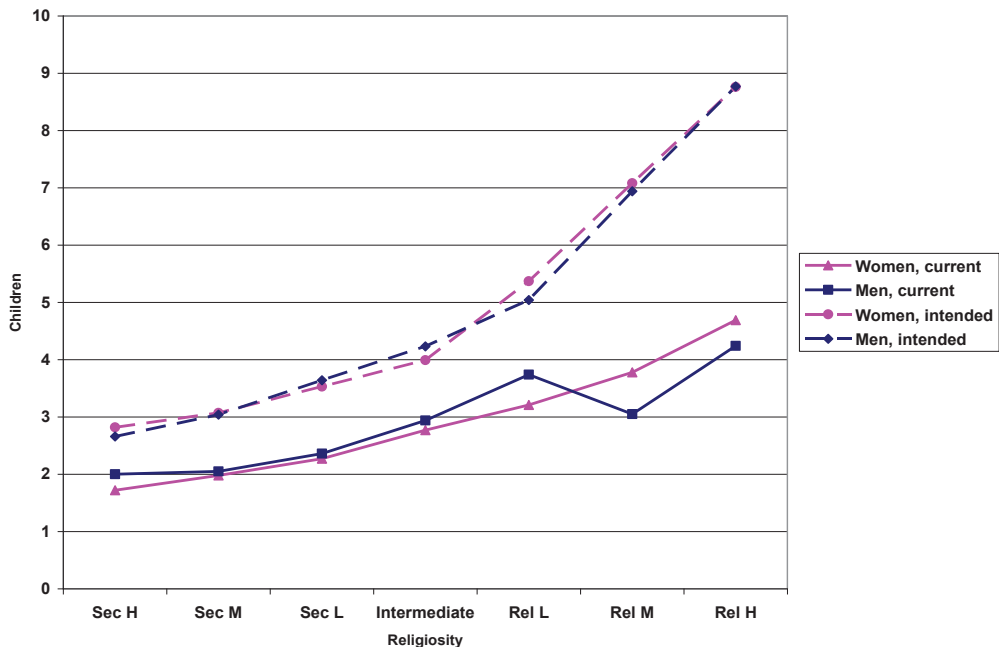
**TABLE 9. AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE PREFERENCES OF MARRIED JEWISH WOMEN – ISRAEL, 1988-2005**

Number of children	1988	2005	
	Total	Total	Without Haredim
Currently already born	2.5	2.5	2.3
Personally intended	3.5	4.1	3.5
Most appropriate for an Israeli family of social status same as respondent’s	3.4	4.0	3.8
Ideal for an Israeli family	3.7	4.1	3.6

Source: Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel’s Jewish Population, 2005. 1988 data are based on 1500 married women aged 20-39. 2005 data are based on 1004 Jewish women, 25-40, and 494 Jewish men, 25-50, currently married or in stable relations.

Among the salient findings of the 2005 survey, Israel fertility levels were comparatively higher and more stable than in other developed countries (DellaPergola, 2009b). A positive orientation of Jewish couples toward children continues to prevail, also demonstrated by a gap of nearly one child between already attained and preferred family size. Significant gaps exist in family size attitudes and plans across different strata of the Jewish population. Significant differences also persist between a generic ideal number of children, the most appropriate number of children for a family of the same socioeconomic status as the respondents, and the number finally intended. Among the veteran population the number of children planned is lower than among their parents' generation, but among new immigrants from the FSU it is higher. This confirms the already manifest tendency of a general convergence of fertility norms and expectations within the Jewish public, regardless of continents of origin. In general, fertility differences related to geographic origins nearly disappeared from the Israeli scene, nor were fertility levels any more significantly related to educational levels or women's employment. One innovative and important finding is that over the more recent years larger families tended to emerge among the better educated and the wealthier.

**FIGURE 30. ALREADY BORN AND INTENDED CHILDREN BY SELF-ASSESSED RELIGIOSITY – CURRENTLY MARRIED JEWS AGED 25-45– ISRAEL 2005**



Observation of gender differences indicates that women prefer a slightly higher number of children than men. Probably, the most salient differences relate to the relationship between religious orientation and fertility norms. Figure 30 shows the number of children already born and intended among Israeli Jewish couples, by levels of self-assessed religiosity. Notably among couples in the middle of their reproductive course, those at the most secular end of the distribution already have 2 children, while those at the most religious end already have 4. These numbers are bound to grow. The intended number of children varied even more intensely and ranged between about 9 at the most religious end (Rel H in Figure 30), 5.4-5.6 among the national religious (Rel L), 3.5-3.7 among the traditional (Sec L), and 2.9-3 among the most secular (Sec H in Figure 30).

The single most popular number of children is 3. However, quite considerable gaps appear between appropriate and intended children outlined in Table 10.

**TABLE 10. NUMBER OF INTENDED<sup>a</sup> VS. APPROPRIATE<sup>b</sup> CHILDREN AMONG CURRENTLY MARRIED<sup>c</sup> JEWS - ISRAEL, 2005**

Gender and age	Number of Intended vs. Appropriate Children							Total	N
	Same				Different				
	0-2 <sup>d</sup>	3 <sup>d</sup>	4 <sup>d</sup>	5+ <sup>d</sup>	I<A <sup>e</sup>	I>A <sup>f</sup>			
Women, 25-45	12	25	11	16	8	28	100	975	
Men, 25-50	14	26	11	11	15	22	100	481	
Women % difference	-14	-4	=	+45	-47	+27	=		

<sup>a</sup> Sum of total number of children born so far plus total additional children expected | <sup>b</sup> Number of children most appropriate for family with standard of living same as respondent's | <sup>c</sup> Including non-married persons in stable couple relations. <sup>d</sup> Same number of children Intended and Appropriate | <sup>e</sup> Number of children Appropriate 3, 4, or 5, and fewer children Intended | <sup>f</sup> Number of children Appropriate 2, 3, or 4, and more children Intended | Source: Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel's Jewish Population, 2005.

These apparent inconsistencies involve 36% of women – of which 22% intend to have more children than they deem *appropriate for a family of their standards* and 8% intend to have fewer - and 37% of men – of which 22% intend to have more and 15% intend to have fewer. While the negative gaps between intended and appropriate children are mostly explained by late age at marriage, older current age, and health problems, the reverse gap is more intriguing.

Two competing explanations may be suggested in this respect:

- Families wish to out-perform the appropriate social norm, investing more of their own resources in a higher number of children. This explanation would be compatible with a measure of ideological activism, and indeed this is the explanation for the more religious part of the population.
- Families fear to out-perform the appropriate social norm, lacking the necessary resources. This explanation unveils a lack of economic security, and detailed analyses not reported here show it to be predominant across the public.

Optimism about the future of the economy in general and particularly regarding one's own family indeed plays an important role in family planning targets. The main reasons for having further children predominantly reflect personal and household motives, such as continuity of the family, and the beliefs that children should have brothers and sisters (mentioned mostly by women), the house should not be empty, and children bring joy. Much less emphasis is attributed to collective reasons such as the continuity of the Jewish People (mentioned mostly by men) or the strengthening of the state. At the top of causes for not having or postponing further children stand economic reasons. Further motives are the quest for independence (mainly by women), and health and age (mostly by men).

Clearly, the higher the desired parity or the greater the feeling of economic inadequacy, the more widespread the effects of preferred policy options. Taking together these various elements, our study unveils a significant potential for stable or somewhat higher fertility levels in Israel. There also is a paramount dilemma in public policy, namely the conflict of interests between universal and selective provisions. Indeed, those more likely to respond to policy incentives and support are identifiable with lower socioeconomic strata – as shown through their

inconsistent stance on intended and appropriate family size. Additional births that might result from policy interventions would primarily reinforce population groups which already are in quest for economic support. On the other hand, trying to selectively enhance the unexploited potentials of wanted fertility among the socio-economically stronger risks to infringe upon basic rules of equal opportunity and social justice.

These findings all relate to attitudes and performances concerning children among married Jews in Israel. It should be noted however, that over the last years a noticeable erosion has been occurring in the near universality of marriage among Jews (and among Muslims) in Israel. The new trend of less frequent marriages and more widespread cohabitation of young adults resemble, at considerable distance, patterns visible in the more developed countries. Changes in family formation exert significant influence on fertility since in Israel the frequency of births out of marriage is very low in Israel unlike its growing predominance in some European societies, up to the majority of first births in some Scandinavian countries.

Outside Israel, Jewish communities in most countries are affected by a continuing distancing from conventional family patterns expressed by far lower frequencies of marriage than in Israel, higher rates of divorce, lower marital fertility, and on top of these trends, an ever expanding rate of out-marriage. Average numbers of children born reported in Table 11 refer to the total women's cohorts regardless of marital status and not only to the fertility of married women. Only a scant share of total fertility comes from unmarried Jewish women, although it can be presumed – based on the Israeli experience – that it is slowly becoming more frequent especially among unmarried women approaching the end of their reproductive years. In Israel these births constitute about 3% of the total Jewish birthrate. Clearly births to single mothers are still far away from the mainstream of Jewish consensus, contrary to what can be observed in most Western societies.



**TABLE 11. CHILDREN BORN BY AGE OF JEWISH WOMEN –  
U.S., FRANCE AND ISRAEL, 2000S**

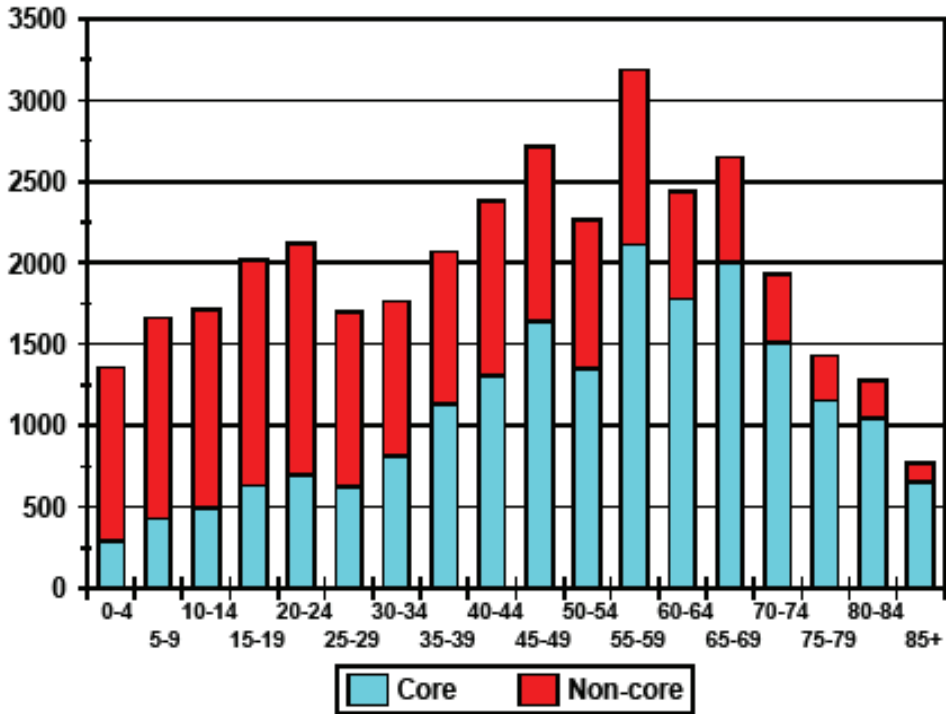
Age	U.S. 2001	France 2002	Israel 2005
18-24	0.13	0.35	..
25-29	0.59		1.07
30-34	1.04	1.65	2.05
35-39	1.38		2.69
40-49	1.86	2.17	3.43

Sources: Kotler-Berkowitz et al. (2003); Cohen (2007); DellaPergola (2009b).

There is clear differential between fertility levels in the U.S. and France versus Israel. Up to the age of 30, Jewish women in Israel already have one child on the average – roughly double the performance of their peers in the major Western communities. At the end of reproduction, the last measurable generation of Israeli women had 3.4 children, versus 2.2 in France and 1.9 in the U.S.. The somewhat higher fertility of French as opposed to American Jews possibly reflects the fact that today 60% of French Jews are of North African origin, actually French born but still influenced by the memories of more traditional family norms from the past. One should also consider the fact that France has enacted more pro-natal policies than many other Western countries. Israel, though, is still the only place in the Jewish world – and in fact the only place in the more developed world – where the prevailing level of fertility stands significantly above generational replacement (2.1 children).

Out-marriages might, in theory, create an opportunity for increasing the Jewish population pool, but in reality they constitute a primary factor of reduction in the younger segment of the Jewish age composition, and a likely chain of transmission toward further assimilation of future generations. Data from the Russian Republic in 1994 (Russian Republic Goskomstat, 1994) demonstrate the powerful erosive identificational effect on Jewish reproduction. Among children below age 5 in families with at least one declared Jewish person, for every child recorded as (core) Jewish there were at least four other recorded as non-Jewish.

**FIGURE 31. ENLARGED JEWISH POPULATION  
BY NATIONAL IDENTITY AND AGE, RUSSIAN REPUBLIC, 1994**



Source: Russian Republic Goskomstat, 1994 (5% sample).

Contrary to the situation in Israel, Jewish generations in the Diaspora not only do not replace themselves, but are constantly shrinking.

### B. Intervening mechanisms

Each of the factors affecting fertility enumerated above, and operating at the collective, the community, or the household level, is liable to be affected by policy interventions. *National policy interventions* can provide incentives and constraints that effectively alter the outcome of family processes. Israel's social policies do reflect some general concern with family formation and growth (regardless of citizens' religion or ethnicity). Means for birth control, while not encouraged are easily available. Abortion is strictly regulated but feasible through public health facilities. The actual impact of Israel's pro-birth stance tends to be moderate and mostly felt by specific subpopulations. Among these public interventions:

- **Direct government provisions.** Transfer payments (allowances to children below age 18) pertain to all relevant households. The Israeli Social Security system offers moderately benign provisions to working women in the case of maternity. Comparatively easy availability of child-care and educational facilities is a facilitating – or rather not a preventing – factor in family growth in Israel. The high cost of housing is a main constraint perceived by families wishing to increase the number of their children.
- **Indirect government provisions.** Especially significant at the community level are collective exemptions from otherwise universal, three-year compulsory military service applied toward Muslim and Christian Arabs in Israel (though not toward the Druze and in part the Bedouin community), as well as to the majority of the *Haredi* Jewish population. Military exemption allows for lower ages at marriage and a longer exposure to the opportunity for childbearing. Moreover, transfer payments at the community level, in particular public financing of community-specific educational networks or housing projects, may significantly reduce the given community's cost of children.
- **Non-government provisions.** Of a similar nature can be the interventions of agencies, NGOs and private donors from the Diaspora, or from other private sources of economic, social and political support locally. The main effect on fertility of relevant services and subsidies provided operates, again, through reducing the cost of having and raising children.

The public in Israel is very attentive to these opportunities, and in fact it seems to be eager for policy incentives. Perceived incentives and constraints to, and negotiations with family size provide the cognitive background to public attitudes toward different policy options that might become available. About 60% of couples do support public interventions that might encourage larger families, with another 27% in favor of letting families to do what they wish, and only 4% in favor of smaller families (DellaPergola *et al.*, 2005).

As noted, lack of socioeconomic security – real or perceived – may generate some indetermination regarding intended and appropriate family size, while a clearly specified parity is a symptom of self-confidence. On top of this, 78% of women and 67% of men acknowledge readiness to reconsider their final fertility targets by adding one child – were the appropriate circumstances to emerge (Table 12). The realization of such widespread openness to larger families involves a quest for an improved infrastructure of services and facilities. Israel's prevailing policy has emphasized transfer payments (Schelekens and

Ophir, 2007). The primary need expressed by both women and men is support for early childhood care. Concern follows for women’s working conditions (among women) and child education costs (among men). Housing is the next concern for both genders. Men are more sensitive than women to transfer payments or tax exemptions. But such limited approach does not match a widespread demand for children grounded on enhanced quality and subsidy for childrearing, early childhood care, equitable conditions for working women, and access to more suitable housing, rather than money transfers or tax benefits.

**TABLE 12. MAIN FACTORS AFFECTING HAVING ONE ADDITIONAL CHILD ABOVE NUMBER INTENDED – CURRENTLY MARRIED JEWS – ISRAEL, 2005**

Reason	Women	Men	Women % difference
N	975	481	
Response %	78	67	+16
Total responded	100	100	=
Early childhood care	28	19	+47
Child education cost	10	16	-38
Woman employment	18	10	+80
Housing	14	14	=
Money transfers	5	9	-44
Tax exemptions	5	9	-44
Fertility treatment	3	4	-25
Good to children	17	19	-11

Source: Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Family Size among Israel’s Jewish Population, 2005.

The findings in Table 12 are of extraordinary interest in view of the debate about the Israeli state budget of 2009. The Israeli Supreme Court had ruled that working women would be entitled to deduct the expenses of early child maintenance from their income declarations. This would carry significant tax reductions. Immediately after Israel's Treasury withdrew the ruling and decided instead that – starting from 2012 – working women would receive a bonus. The actual amount of such bonuses was vastly inferior to what would have been the results of the Court's ruling, and in any case were postponed. The case indicated a worrying gap between government perceptions of the needs of young families and perceptions of the public, which the Court had correctly perceived.

The noted persistence of pro-family values in Israeli society – namely among the Jewish population – is clearly expressed through the quest for medically assisted fertility intervention/enhancement which is high in international comparison. One interesting indicator is the unusually high frequency of twin-births in Israel. Because of the cost of these procedures, they naturally become part of a relevant debate about family policy priorities. A different part of the same debate concerns reproduction by proxy or adoption. These alternative family growth options and practices have been on the increase over time and have been periodically at the centre of requests for stronger regulation.

### C. Main policy options and directions: Israel

1. First and foremost, the central focus of policies involving the family and childhood should be the child and not the money, the human capital and not the budget. The 2009 budgetary deliberations and final rejection of the Child Caretakers Law exposed a serious misunderstanding of strategic priorities in Israel. Policies relevant to fertility and children should start from realizing the importance of the family as the main engine of population growth and stability and of the continuing normative dependence of fertility on marriage in Israeli society. The essential principle of family policies should be the empowerment of the child as a fundamental enrichment and not as a burden.
2. Facilitation mechanisms should be developed to help the initial stages of marriage and family life.
  - Attention should be paid to the needs of a growing pool of singles. Professional care should be devoted to how marriage can be facilitated for those interested.

- Initiatives should be allowed to facilitate encounters, also through cyberspace, of young adults seeking marriage to facilitate the chances of mutual acquaintance and marriage.
3. A clearer and more explicit distinction should be made between marriage and childhood policies aimed at general societal demographic goals, and policies focused on welfare and the reduction of poverty among selected strata of the population.
  4. Family policies should be grounded on the widespread and persistent public quest for support of family and children, on facilitating the achievement of average wanted fertility thresholds, and on the premise of equal treatment for all citizens of the State. Population policies should be decided upon and implemented knowing that a large majority of Israeli households do not feel any contradiction between family policy interventions and the protection of their privacy.
  5. Family policies should aim at maintaining the current moderate population growth while preserving a balanced age mix of youth and elderly. Policies should facilitate convergence of fertility rates toward an average, rather than helping to reproduce and encourage the wide gaps in family size now existing between different population strata who also have very different economic resources available for childrearing.
  6. Family policies should reduce the obstacles that presently prevent couples from having the number of children they want through the help of additional services and facilities.
    - Provisions should focus on the preference of the majority of the public – many of whom now have 2-3 children – for a 3rd and 4th child, and the public support for such a goal. This should be the main aim of public policy in the realm of fertility facilitation and support.
    - The socioeconomic aspect of family growth and personal development should receive more systematic attention. The more radical provision would be the creation of a personal fund for each newborn that would be regularly alimented with mechanisms similar to those of pension funds, and would become available to the child at age 18 – the age of voting rights and army enrollment.
    - Significant expansion and subsidy should be aimed at structures for early childhood care.

- Parenthood should be allowed to young adults during the period of their military service along with encouraging them to sign with the army for a designed period of years and the creation appropriate child-care facilities in military locations.
  - Housing loans and other incentives should be made available to families that decide to add one child to their existing parity.
  - The economic independence of women should be encouraged. Work conditions of women should be made more compatible with raising a family without penalizing the women's working status, career advancement, and salaries. Accordingly, legal solutions should be allowed for working women encouraging higher labor force participation. This should include flexibility regarding leaves of absence, defense of worker's rights, recognition of expenses connected with childrearing as part of the investment needed to productive work, and promoting the use of tools – such as electronic networks – that can allow the simultaneous participation of women in family and economic life.
  - The costs of elementary, secondary and higher education should also be reduced as a factor intimately connected with the evaluation of future children's cost.
  - The income tax system should take into account family size – following a model already implemented in France.
  - Transfer payments such as family allowances in their present form should no longer constitute a main tool in the public discussion about family needs. A systematic re-evaluation of the role of family allowances as a policy tool should be undertaken by an independent professional body.
  - It should be realized that family allowances to larger families may have a role in reducing poverty among specific sub-populations, but cannot serve as a general instrument of social and family policy.
7. The gender related aspects of family growth should receive more careful attention:
- Men's role in family growth and childrearing should be increased and greater genders equality should be encouraged.

- Greater attention should be paid to the growing number of single-parent-families mainly reflecting immigrant households but also a moderate growth in births outside of marriage.
  - A more severe policy should be enacted to protect women's rights and prerogatives against the persisting practice of polygamy and casual divorce among certain sectors of the population. The practice of polygamy cannot be defended in an advanced contemporary society and should be discontinued following the European practice.
  - Genetic counseling and testing services should be offered to population groups among which frequent inbreeding has caused high rates of birth defects and other hereditary anomalies.
8. The cultural and public relation related aspects of family growth should receive more systematic attention:
- The nature of the public debate on family and fertility should radically change in light of new findings on policy preferences. The conceptual frame and slogan of *encouraging fertility* should be abandoned in favor of an approach favorable to *removing obstacles and facilitating* the family size that adults wish to achieve.
  - An atmosphere friendly to objective information and tuned to the natural propensities of the vast majority of the Israeli public toward the family and children should be promoted in the media and public discourse.
  - Attention should be paid to developments in the areas of ethics and medical technology.
  - Greater access to family counseling and education should be encouraged.
  - Parents should be allowed and encouraged to acquire ideas, tools and methods toward developing responsible parenthood.
9. Regarding the recently emerging feature of out-marriage in Israel, it is strictly related to issues of conversion and giyur, and as such it will be treated in Chapter 8 below.
10. Policy interventions concerning the family in Israel should be undertaken through the creation of an inter-ministerial coordination sub-committee. Topics connected with family formation and fertility regulation and levels cover different areas such as health, education, housing, employment and welfare.



## D. Main policy options and directions: Diaspora

With regard to possible family policies, conditions of Jewish communities in the Diaspora are radically different from those in Israel because of the lack of a central policy making authority and the voluntary character of Jewish communities. A number of steps and directions can nevertheless be suggested:

1. Encourage frameworks for actual and virtual encounters among young Jewish adults to facilitate the chances of mutual acquaintance and marriage.
  - Attention should be paid to the needs of a growing pool of singles. Professional attention should be devoted to how marriage can be facilitated for those interested.
  - Initiatives should be strengthened to facilitate encounters – also through virtual tools – between young adults seeking marriage to facilitate the chances of mutual acquaintance and marriage.
  - Subsidy systems should be developed for those in need to allow for the initial stages of marriage and family life.
2. Efforts should be multiplied to try to reduce the negative impacts of intermarriage. But since intermarriage is a widespread experience in today's open societies, initiatives should be developed to encourage non-Jewish spouses and the children of such marriages to enter and pertain into the Jewish fold.
3. This requires the development of appropriate Jewish educational programs and facilities for adults and children alike.
4. Regarding Jewish births, child care services should be established that would be available to new parents early in the parenting process, offering them a basket of services, including early child care, family membership in Jewish community bodies and other points of access into Jewish life.



## 6. JEWISH IDENTITY

### A. Main processes

Judaism is a multi-faceted complex of normative, cognitive, behavioral, affective, relational and other expressions and experiences. It can be at the same time a religion, an ethnicity, a culture, an organized community, a social group, a complex of collective and personal historical memory, folklore, and more. Therefore, no single indicator or measure can adequately express the intensity, contents and complexity of Jewish identification. On the cognitive, analytic and intellectual side, Jewish identification can and should be expressed through a variety of different indicators (Phillips, 1991). The same should apply to judgment of the affective, experiential and emotional side of Jewish identification.

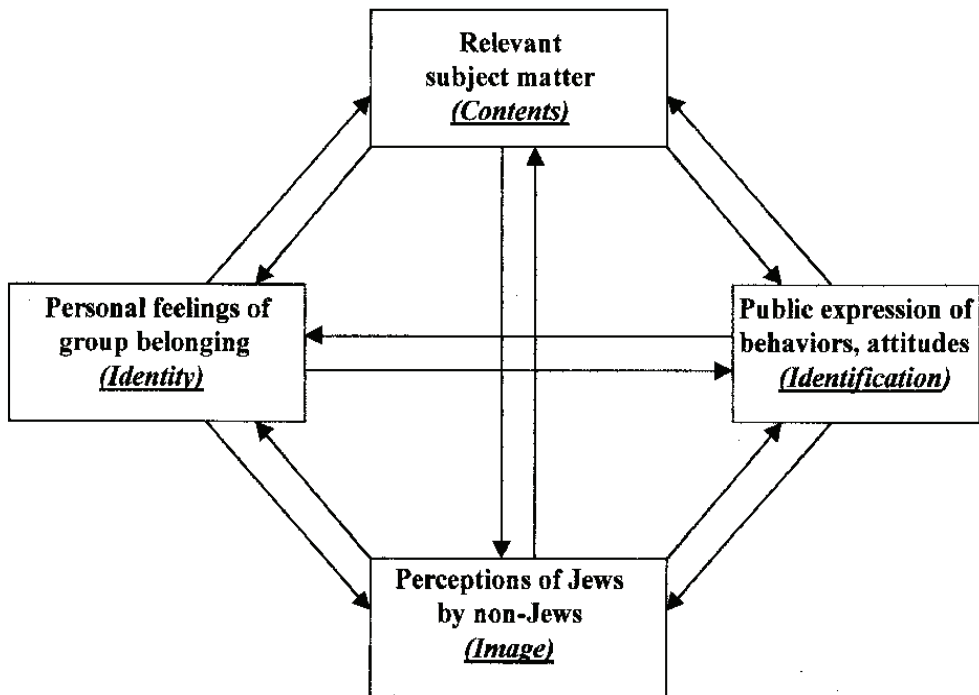
It is important to note at the outset that consensus about trends in Jewish identification and their implications is not easily attained because Jews can be observed and classified both as individuals and as part of a coherent collective – with possibly contradictory findings. In turn, judgment of ongoing trends can stem from the interpretative discourse of intellectual elites – religious or lay – or through comprehensive and as neutral and objective as possible observation of the complex of actors.

Following and elaborating upon a well-established social scientific perspective (Herman, 1977) the cultural and ideological distinctiveness of any group and of the Jewish group in particular can be assessed with reference to four main criteria:

- The nature of group identity, or the deeper inner-felt sense of belonging of an individual to a given reference group. Group identity, no matter how powerful and relevant, is difficult to measure since it may be privately concealed, or deliberately unexpressed.
- The nature of group identification, or the ways and means by which individuals actually externalize their sense of identity through clearly defined and measurable attitudes and behaviors.
- The distinctive contents of a given group's culture, or the specific complex of ideas, values, symbols, and community institutions with which individuals identify and in relation to which they externalize their identification.
- The image of the given group held by people who are not part of it, based both on bona-fide understanding of the same criteria, or on bias and prejudice.

Complex interactions and mutual influences constantly operate between these various fundamental dimensions of the relationship between individual and collective frames of reference (see Figure 32). The inner dimension of identity is expectedly reflected in outer manifestations of identification, but a symmetric influence can also occur to some extent when inner beliefs, emotions or feelings (identity) are the consequence rather than the cause of expressed opinions or manifest action (identification). In turn, both identity and identification bear a significant relationship to the core of values and norms that uniquely define a given group and its culture. Such contents can stand anywhere along the continuum between what is rather fixed over time, and that which is constantly changing, reflecting variable historical and societal contexts. Specific contents tend to motivate individual identities and identifications, but the latter in the longer run may determine which contents continue to be relevant and which have become obsolete and irrelevant. Furthermore, beliefs and behaviors of members of a given group tend to affect outsiders' perceptions and images about the same group. But concurrently, the same beliefs and behaviors are not indifferent to those stereotyped perceptions from the outside, whether or not correct.

**FIGURE 32. DEFINITIONS OF JEWISH IDENTITY/IDENTIFICATION**

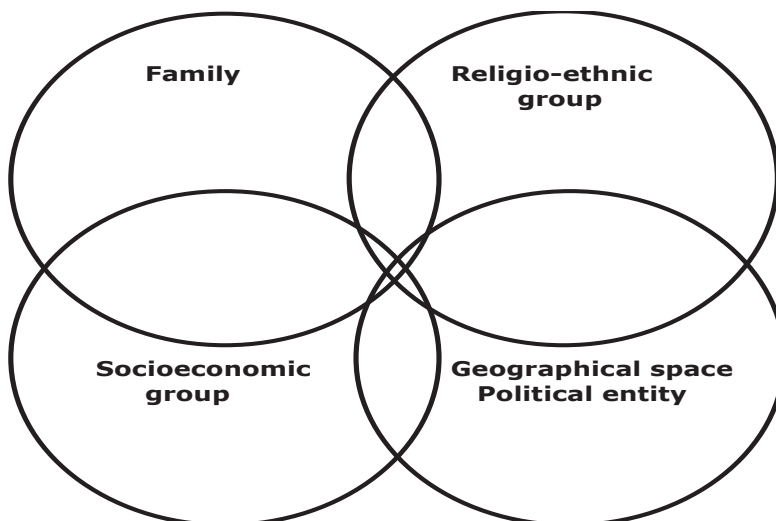


In the following we deal with some aspects of the first three concepts outlined here. The fourth aspect – the outside imaginary – has attracted a large amount of scholarly and public attention (Adorno et al., 1969; Glock and Stark, 1966; Lewis, 1986) and will not be treated here.

Following the obvious assumption that any individual deserves, first of all, to be respected as such, a fundamental element of such is recognizing the right of each individual to an identity of his/her own. Identity encompasses both free acceptance by an individual of a body of notions, ideas and values generally defined here as culture, and a sense of proximity and solidarity with others that identify with that same culture, generally defined here as group identity. Clearly, as each individual has more than one identificational option, multiple group identities can be cultivated simultaneously. It is from the process of integration of all of such possible and overlapping identities that the unique identity patterns of each individual emerge along with a set of priorities when sorting out one or more among the relevant options.

Identities play a significant role in society in relation to groups within which there exists a recognizable social interaction and group dynamics, or at least an awareness of group belonging, and whose defining characteristics can be transmitted from one generation to the next. These prominently include national allegiance, religious tradition, ethnic identity, mother tongue. Four spheres of identificational reference, among many more possible, occupy a prominent place in the personal identities of the overwhelming majority of individuals (Figure 33).

**FIGURE 33. EXAMPLES OF OVERLAP BETWEEN MAJOR IDENTIFICATIONAL OPTIONS**



- **Family bonds and roles** which usually determine a person's earliest and primary set of interactions and allegiance in life and can be considered virtually universal;
- **Ethnic or religious group**, also often clustered residentially and class-wise, primarily evokes unique cultural and normative commonalities, ideational boundaries, superior aspirations, attitudinal and behavioral patterns, and collective memory;
- **Geographical space**, such as a *country* or other territorially defined political-administrative entity, primarily evokes residential proximity but also common socio-historical experiences, languages, cultures, allegiances and bonds of solidarity, civil rights and legal duties;
- **Socioeconomic status**, expressed by *social class* or *occupational category*, often though not necessarily clustered residentially, concurs with material interests associated with instrumental choices in a broad range of personal and collective circumstances in life – reflecting the particular options and constraints of each stratum.

Simplifying what would better look like a three-dimensional representation, Figure 32 provides a description of the possible relations of a typical individual to these various, not mutually exclusive identificational frames of reference. Overlap between identifying with one's own nuclear or extended family, a particular religio-ethnic group (e.g. Jewish), a given geographical location (e.g. Brazil), and a particular socioeconomic status (e.g. middle class) may be total, partial, or non-existent. A person may identify as a member in a given family, Jewish, Brazilian, and middle-class, at the same time, or with only two, one, or none of these four options. Assuming a person feels meaningfully related to more than one identificational area, it may not be always possible to disentangle the boundaries and effects of each type of identification from another. Feelings toward these various identities may be hierarchically ordered, or may stand on equal footing. The same relations may be rather fixed over time, or change their intensity and mutual influences and order over time.

Widespread historical processes such as secularization, individuation, or socioeconomic mobility are interesting in this context viewed not so much in terms of their consequences for the single individual, but rather for the implications for collectives with shared cultural identities (whatever their specific contents), and recognizable group boundaries (whether freely determined or legally sanctioned). The continuous rise, fall and transformation of group identities indeed constitute a fundamental aspect of societal dynamics at the intersection of demographic flows, socioeconomic stratification and cultural change.

In the study of Jewish identity, it becomes growingly important to assess compatibility, consonance and overlap with other identities (Herman, 1977). Generally a competing, if not negative, relationship tends to emerge between identifying as Jewish and having another national identity, but a positive relationship prevails between a Jewish and an Israeli identity. Particularly interesting is the verification of ranking of identities, namely whether Jewishness represents the primary, most salient and valued layer of identity, and a determinant of other layers, or only as a subordinate element in an identity complex determined and dominated by other parameters and allegiances. In other words, (Jewish) ethno-religious identity may include geographical-regional identities as subordinate sub-identities, or it may itself become a subordinate sub-identity within a given national-geographical identity. By the same token, (Jewish) ethno-religious identity may be the primary determinant of one's position on the socioeconomic ladder, or may be reduced to a secondary attribute compatible with that particular social stratum which turns to be the fundamental pole of reference in one's overall identity (Waters, 1990; Bozorghmehr, 1992; DellaPergola et al., 1996). Developments in cyberspace and transnationalism may significantly alter these well-established relations.

Turning to the substantive modes of expression of contemporary Jewish identification, these can be expressed through *individual* beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, as well as through being part of a collective or community. We need to define and briefly describe the major alternatives to religion that have emerged for a positive and meaningful Jewish identification, and address further marginal situations now emerging at the periphery of group identification:

- **Normative-traditional.** A first typical pattern of attachment to Judaism can be defined as *normative-traditional*, mainly expressed by holding a complex of particular beliefs, norms and values as well as consistently performing religious ritual practices. The latter are in a sense unnatural – a duty one takes upon oneself, not immediately and functionally related to some materially defined (or economic) benefit. Judaism involves complying with relatively rigorous behavioral rules coupled with submitting to possible sanction by a recognized authority or by the whole community. Numerous Jewish ritual acts require the presence of a quorum of other Jews. Hence, active Jewish identification through religion necessarily involves simultaneously adhering to a unique complex of

values, norms and behaviors, and belonging to an exclusive community of reference.

- **Ethno-communal.** A second major mode of attachment to Judaism, defined through a sense of shared *ethnicity* or *community*, typically consists of maintaining strictly or predominantly Jewish association networks, where in-group communication includes a far greater amount of spontaneous and non-specific cultural contents besides religion. Such involvement within a Jewish collective, while calling for at least some empathy for traditional Judaism, does not need systematic adherence to Jewish particular beliefs and behaviors nor clearly defined community sanctions in cases where there is a lack of compliance with such normative standards. A case in point is affiliation with a given Jewish *Landsmanshaftn*, or more recently, a Jewish Community Center. While participants tend to be exclusively or mostly Jewish, the contents of their interaction often incorporate a vast amount, if not an overwhelming majority, of non-uniquely Jewish symbols and information. Jewish ethnic/communal identification may often involve the persistence of some element of religiosity, as shown by the diffuse though inconsistent presence of traditional observances among Jewish populations which in many instances one could define or would define themselves as secular. This is why it seems justifiable to include in the *ethnicity/community* type of identification many Jews outside of Israel whose main attachment to Judaism is through a religious congregation. Where, as in the case of some contemporary non-Orthodox congregations in the United States, the contents of the collective tends to incorporate large amounts of symbols and concepts taken from the outside, non-distinctively Jewish world, the sense of community is indeed preserved, but the element of religious or in broader terms cultural *exclusiveness* is lost.
- **Cultural residue.** Identification with Judaism may still persist independently of a clearly recognizable pattern of personal behavior or associational involvement in collective Jewish life. A person may display interest, curiosity and some knowledge in one's own Jewish historical past, tradition and culture. Familiarity with a Jewish language, interest in Jewish scholarship, or even a sense of "home nostalgia" which once acquired may be indelible, may be cases in point. This third main mode of Jewish identification can be defined



as a *cultural residue*. Viewed in this context, culture is a looser and subaltern concept, especially when considering that most of those who display this mode of Jewish identification actually are illiterate in Jewish philosophy, Jewish literature, and out of Israel, the Hebrew language. A cultural residue, therefore, provides a more ambiguous and less binding parameter for defining Jewish identification, as typical of the individual who lacks affiliation with any Jewish community organization. It does not provide a mutually exclusive bond with regard to outsiders as may be the case with the normative-traditional and ethno-communal types, and can be more easily acquired, shared, or lost. Sporadic elements of religion and of ethnicity/community involvement may accompany the cultural residue mode of Jewish identification which, however, is mostly expressed through individual intellectual or emotional attachment of variable and often quite low intensity.

- **Dual or none.** To these three major positive categories of Jewish identification, a fourth and weakest one should be added to take account of those Jews for whom none of the preceding modes and patterns of Jewish identification consistently apply. Some remnants of the three major modes may be present among Jews who belong to this fourth group. In practice, declining intensities of Jewish identification often tend to be compensated for by increasing identifications with alternative religious, ethnic, communal, or cultural frames of reference. Otherwise, a weakened Jewish identification may simply be an indicator of a weaker overall sense of group identification and a greater stress on individualism among such persons. Many, indeed, while still formally belonging to a Jewish population, display weak or no attachment to Judaism coupled with a substantial presence of distinctively non-Jewish ritual behaviors and/or attitudes. The latter may reflect a person's increasingly non-Jewish proximate relational networks, or the active attempt to create a synthetic identificational solution – whether or not defined as religious syncretism. The existence of such dual *Jewish/non-Jewish* identities has been clearly documented in America (DellaPergola, 1991). It has its counterpart among non-Jewish members of society who because of a previous Jewish background or current family attachment display some familiarity or interest toward Judaism.

Table 13 exemplifies how this rough typology of Jewish identification can be applied to the realities of contemporary Jewish society in Israel and in the Diaspora around the year 2000. All the types exist either in Israel or in the Diaspora, but the respective proportions are quite different. The majority of all those identifiable as Normative/Traditional live in Israel. Israel also hosts about one half of the Ethnicity/Community type. The absolute majority of the two weaker identificational types live in communities of the Diaspora.

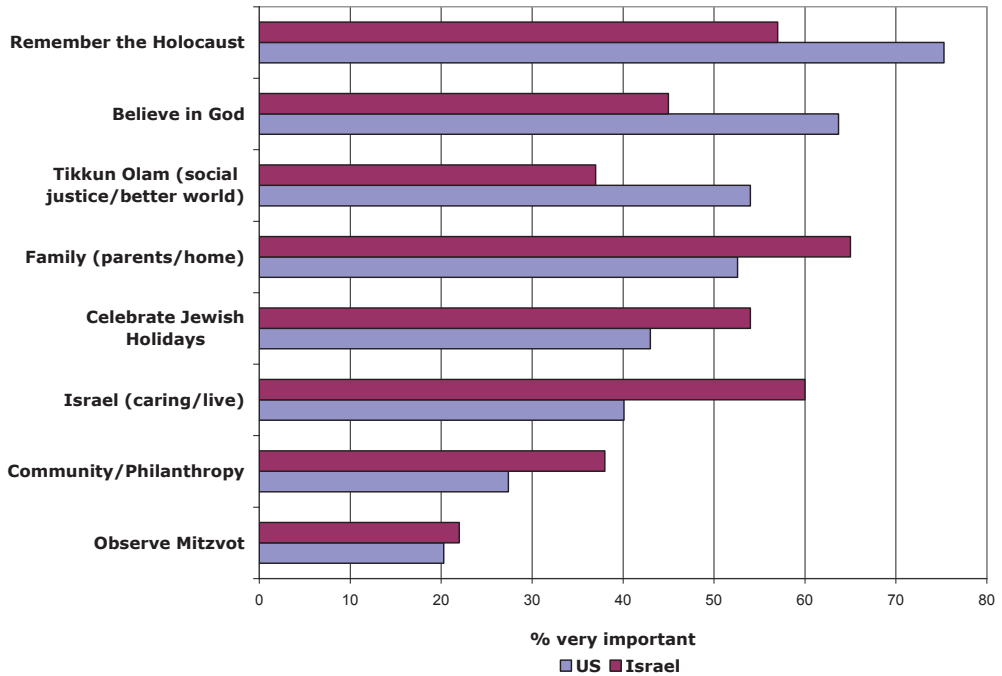
**TABLE 13. MAIN MODES OF JEWISH IDENTIFICATION AMONG ISRAEL AND DIASPORA JEWRY – AROUND 2000 (THOUSANDS)**

Type	World Total	Israel	Diaspora	% in Israel
Total	13,000	5,250	7,750	40
Normative/Traditional	2,050	1,150	900	56
Ethnicity/Community	6,500	3,250	3,250	50
Cultural residue	3,450	650	2,800	19
None or Dual <sup>a</sup>	1,000	200	800	20

<sup>a</sup> Jewish/Non-Jewish | Source: computed and adjusted from: Levy, Levinsohn, Katz (2002); DellaPergola (1999).

The aspect of Jewish identity content is important in many respects but perhaps most so is the consonance of cognitive perceptions across the Jewish global collective. Do Jews living under different circumstances feel and believe in the same things or not? Figure 34 exemplifies the simpler answer, i.e. the juxtaposition of the two largest Jewish communities in the world, Israel and the U.S. with respect to the ranking of the main indicators of Jewish identification. The data were collected nearly simultaneously in 2000-2001 and refer to the percentages reporting that a given indicator is very important in determining the Jewish identification of the respondents.

**FIGURE 34. JEWISH IDENTIFICATION IN THE U.S. AND IN ISRAEL, 2000-2001 – PERCENT VERY IMPORTANT**



Sources: adjusted from Levy, Levinsohn, Katz (2003); NJPS (2000-2001)

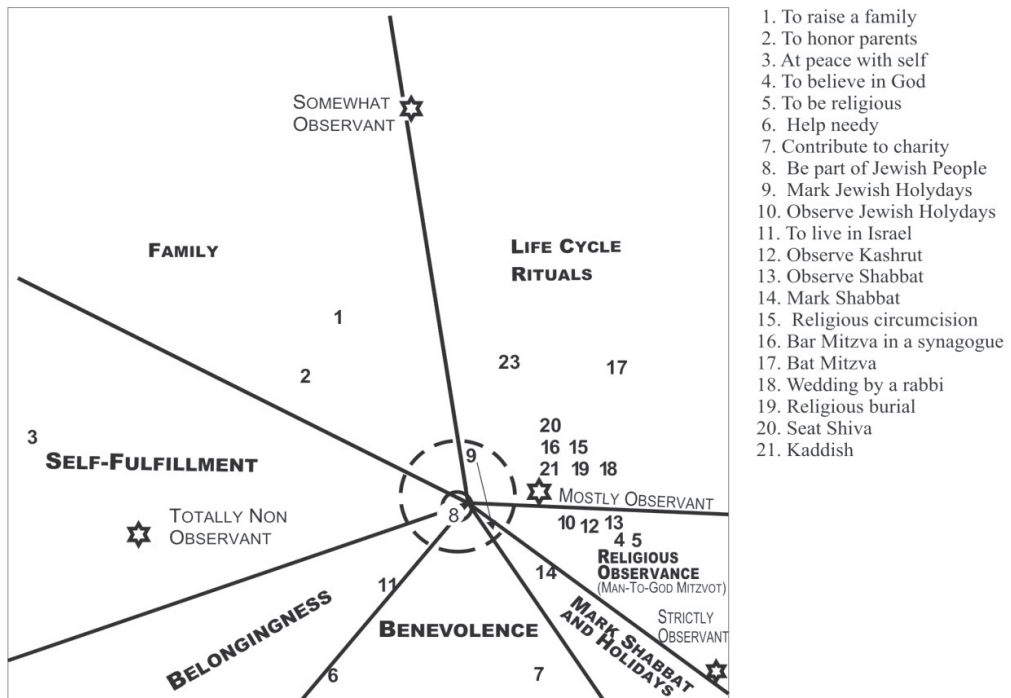
Comparing the ranking of the various options reveals differences that can be explained by the various environments and population compositions. Examples include the high relevance of *Believe in God* in the U.S., and *Live in Israel* in Israel. *Memory of the Holocaust* is ranked as the most powerful factor in the U.S.; *To have a Jewish family* is the highest in Israel. But there are also important similarities in the overall ranking of the various Jewish identificational options in the two countries: see for example the similarly declining sequence of *Remember the Holocaust*, *Believe in God*, and *Tikun 'Olam* in the upper part of Figure 34, and of *Caring for/Living in Israel*, *Community/Philanthropy* (a measure of voluntarism), and *Observe Mitzvot* in the bottom part. The two cognate communities can certainly be seen still as part of the same global collective, although the future coherence of the Jewish collectivity is by no means guaranteed.

A more in-depth test of the proximity and divergence of Jewish identificational patterns comes from comparing the perceptions of Jews in the U.S. and in Israel of the overall identificational space. The relationships that exist between several

identificational variables can be mapped out with the help of multivariate data processing based on the Facet Theory's Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) (Figure 35). The map graphically expresses a wide matrix of statistical correlations between each of the indicators. Proximity and distance between points on the map express the similarity or dissonance between different existing options to express one's own identification, as well as their centrality or peripherality in collective perceptions. The map also shows the division of the whole identificational space into main regions each of which relates to a particular form of content.

In Israel, based on a national survey conducted around the year 2000, the main relevant components of Jewish identification included religious observance and practices, lifecycle rituals, the family, benevolence and philanthropy, belongingness with Israel, and self-fulfillment. Importantly, the central and more consensual indicator was *Be part of the Jewish People*, which could be construed as the bridging element between the more secular and individualistic, and the more community oriented and traditional options for expressing Jewishness (Levy, 2001).

**FIGURE 35. STRUCTURE OF JEWISH IDENTITY VALUES, ISRAEL, 2000**

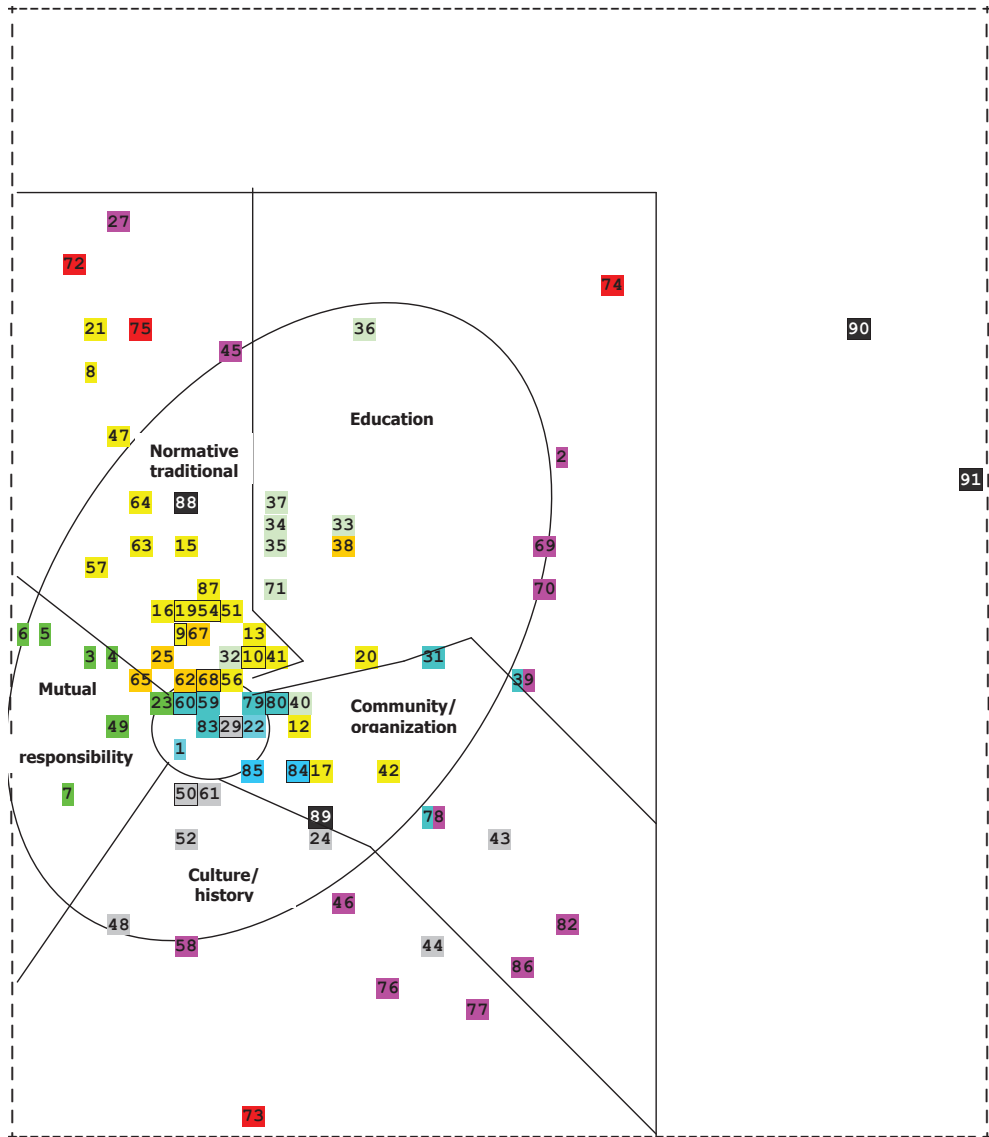


1. To raise a family
2. To honor parents
3. At peace with self
4. To believe in God
5. To be religious
6. Help needy
7. Contribute to charity
8. Be part of Jewish People
9. Mark Jewish Holydays
10. Observe Jewish Holydays
11. To live in Israel
12. Observe Kashrut
13. Observe Shabbat
14. Mark Shabbat
15. Religious circumcision
16. Bar Mitzva in a synagogue
17. Bat Mitzva
18. Wedding by a rabbi
19. Religious burial
20. Seat Shiva
21. Kaddish

Source: Levy (2001).

Parallel research in the U.S. provides the map displayed in Figure 36. Here a larger set of indicators is displayed based on a new processing of the 2001 NJPS data (DellaPergola, Levy, Rebhun, Sagi, 2009). Besides the various options available within the Jewish community context, also included were attitudes towards options operating in the general American societal context such as political parties and non-Jewish organizations.

**FIGURE 36. STRUCTURE OF JEWISH IDENTITY VALUES, U.S. 2001**



Source: DellaPergola, Levy, Rebhun, Sagi (2009).

All in all, the results are very similar. Jewish identity options are partitioned in the same circular-sectorial way as in the U.S., the distinction emerging between the main identificational areas of Jewish normative/traditional, Jewish education, Jewish community/organization, Jewish culture/history, Jewish mutual responsibility – including a commitment to the needs of Israel. At the center of the configuration we find *Importance of Being Jewish* (1) and *Being part of the Jewish People* (22). The relationship of each of the four major types within the Jewish population outlined in Table 13 to Jewish identification indicators is expressed by the four markers in Figure 36: (89) represents the Orthodox, appropriately closer to traditional Jewish religious norms and behaviors; (90) represents other affiliated Jews, again appropriately situated across the Jewish community/organization and culture/history domains; (91) represents other non-affiliated Jews; and (92) represents other Jewish-connected persons who in the first stages of fieldwork did not even report as being Jewish. It is evident how far removed from the mainstream of Jewish life these two latter groups are, which together include about 50% of the total Jewish population in the U.S..

Realization of the persistent and shared centrality of a common sense of belonging to the Jewish People is a fundamentally important finding for the study of contemporary Jewish identity and for the implementation of any future policies in this area of concern. These findings at the individual level confirm observations at the aggregative perceptual level, as expressed in a study of experts asked to evaluate the major challenges facing the Jewish People (DellaPergola and Levy, 2009). Jews' identification with the Jewish People, together with reckoning the role of Jerusalem as the spiritual capital of the Jewish People appears again the principal factor of agreement among many other challenges that generate hopes and fears about the future.

Finally, two prominent factors need to be considered in the evaluation of Jewish identity. On the one hand, the growing influence of globalization on Jewish life mostly lays beyond the reach of Jewish corporate interventions. On the other hand, internal processes of socialization and intergenerational transmission of Jewish values and identity lend themselves to resolute interventions by the Jewish community. A major challenge relates to the question of the ability to preserve not merely a *community of presence* driven by and dependent on favorable, though possibly transient, market forces, but a *community of creativity* able to nurture and transmit its own cultural identity and demographic momentum. Contemporary Jewish communities can be shown to respond in very different ways to this challenge. The absolute majority of the two weaker identificational types live in communities of the Diaspora.

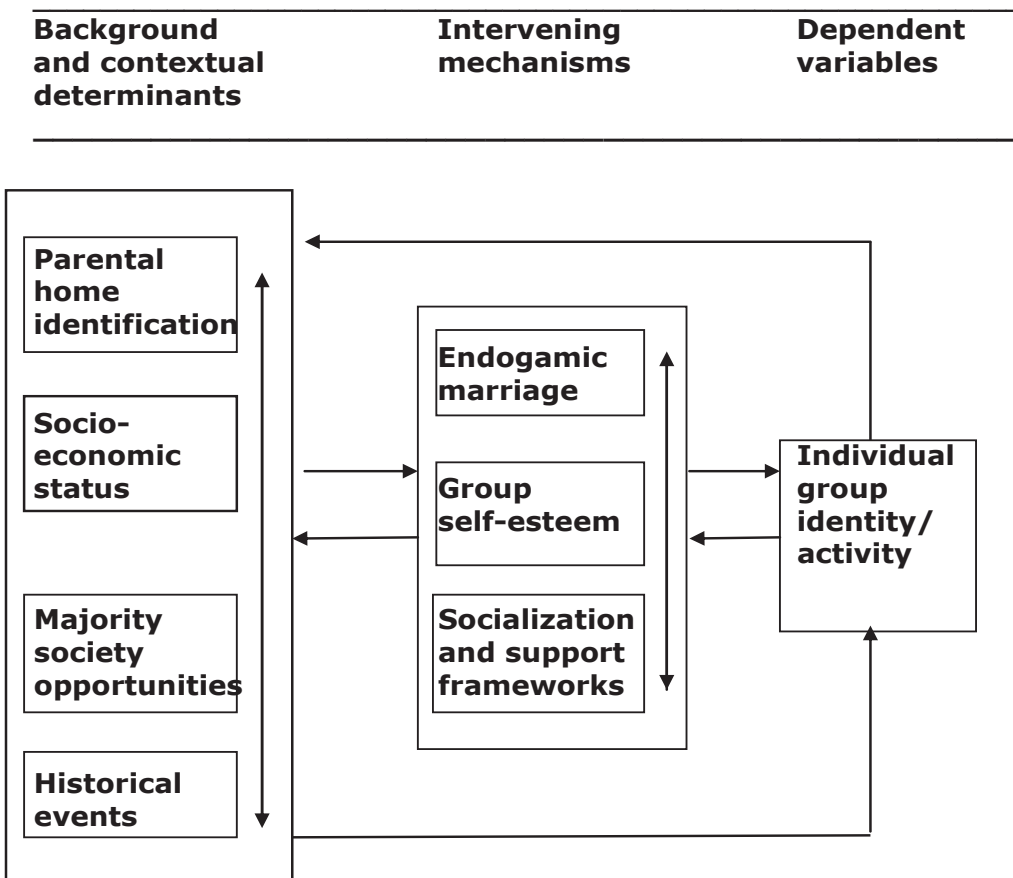
## B. Intervening mechanisms

Two overarching policy issues emerge from these trends:

- Perceptions of and responses to ongoing trends by concerned individuals and institutions; and
- The impact of group identification on Jewish population size and characteristics.

Ongoing research – especially on American Jews – provides some indications that help clarifying more general mechanisms of group identity formation and transmission, hence the avenues through which future policy interventions might be channeled. Some of these mechanisms are outlined in Figure 37.

**FIGURE 37. THE CONTEXT AND BASIC PROCESS OF JEWISH GROUP IDENTIFICATION**



Source: DellaPergola (2005b).

First as already noted, Jewish group identification can be expressed by a great variety of individual identity and/or activity measures, variously stressing Jewish religion, Jewish ethnicity or Jewish culture. Each of these various measures of Jewish identification stands at the end of a causal chain where the immediately preceding stages have been demonstrated to involve three main factors of critical importance:

- The amount of self-esteem and pride related to Jewish group identification;
- Being part of a Jewish in-marriage or an out-marriage; and
- The amount of exposure (in terms of both time and quality of time) to Jewish socialization and support frameworks, such as Jewish schools or community centers.

These intervening identity variables can obviously strengthen Jewish identification if they are present, while their absence quite certainly is related to weaker manifestations of personal Jewishness. Each of the three intervening variables represents indeed a major goal of Jewish policy planning, but they also in turn reflect the impact of four main determinants:

- The quality and intensity of Jewish identification in the parental home;
- The family of origin's socioeconomic status;
- The prevailing model of interaction – more centralistic or more pluralistic – of general society with the Jewish group in any given country, and the emerging constraints and opportunities; and
- Relevant historical events, of which the fall of the Berlin Wall, September 11, or for that matter the Holocaust or Israel's Six Day War provide vivid illustrations.

The process of Jewish identification construction, maintenance and transmission is further understood when seen as a complex unfolding over the lifecycle. This is schematically illustrated in see Figure 38.

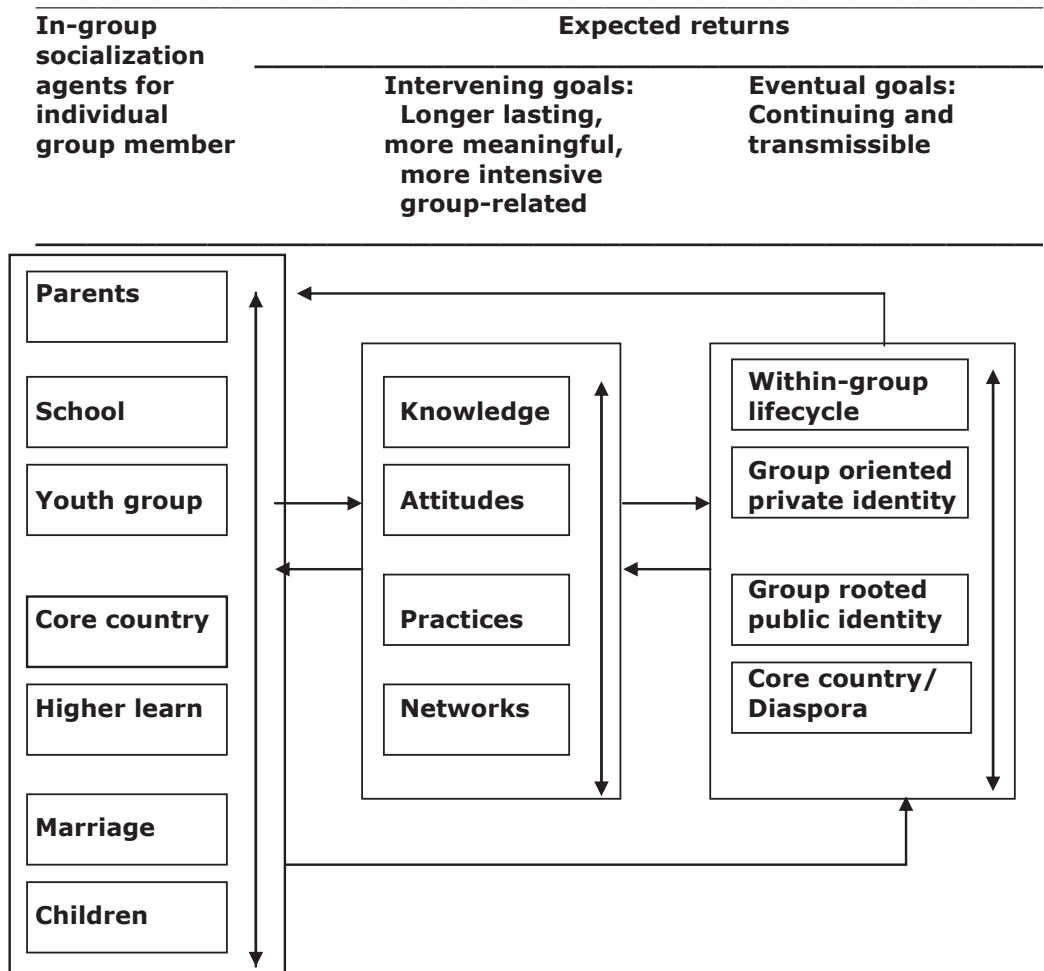
From the inner perspective of the group, the main defining pillars of identification and community goals comprise:

- A continuing group inward-directed lifecycle, i.e. personal choices and relations operating within the boundaries of the Jewish collective;
- A group-oriented personal identity, i.e. an inner feeling of belonging mostly oriented toward peers who belong to the same Jewish collective;



- A publicly manifested group identity, i.e. the willingness and urge to express toward the outside feeling, attitudes and behaviors positively related to the Jewish collective, its values and concerns; and
- Support for the ethnic “core state” (in this case Israel) and for its homologue “Diaspora” (in this case Jewish) as seen from the respective countries of residence; i.e. seeing self as part of a global identificational space that includes both formats of a core state and a transnational set of relevant communities.

**FIGURE 38. POLICIES AND RETURNS: CUMULATIVE OPPORTUNITIES AND GROUP IDENTIFICATION**



Source: DellaPergola (2005b).

Achievement of these normative targets is not or is less likely to occur without the prior attainment of four instrumental goals:

- Adequate knowledge of the group's cultural legacy, attained either through formal studies or through other channels and sources of learning;
- The promotion of positive group-oriented attitudes, i.e. empathy toward others of the same collective, and awareness of and support for goals, actions, symbols that are central to the collective and are also manifested by others within it;
- Frequent practice of uniquely Jewish normative behaviors, not necessarily strictly marked in a religious sense but otherwise recognizable as particular to the collective of orientation;
- The development of predominantly within-group social networks, both informal such as friends and neighbors, and formal such as membership in specific organizations.

In turn, these four intervening goals tend to reflect the amount and overlap of exposure to various possible socialization frameworks which run without interruption over all the possible stages of one's lifecycle. These include primarily a person's Jewish parents, formal education via the Jewish schooling system, Jewish informal educational activities such as youth groups and summer camps, experiences and contacts with the Jewish group's "core country" (Israel), participation to Jewish programs in the course of one's curriculum of higher education, in-marriage, and Jewish child rearing. At each lifecycle stage, exposure to in-group experiences expectedly will raise the chances of occurrence of the next stage. The overall effect on Jewish identity tends to reflect the cumulated opportunities made available over the lifecycle. Exposure to each type of opportunity increases the chances for exposure to other opportunities.

### **C. Main policy options and directions: Israel**

In the areas relevant to Jewish identity it is difficult or actually inappropriate to assume a clear-cut division between Israeli and Diaspora policy options. Rather, the unity and coherence of Jewish peoplehood and the importance of the individual's identity with it constitutes the central analytic concept and the turning point of any intervention aimed at Jewish identification strengthening and support. Therefore the distinctions between the present and subsequent sections must be taken with great flexibility, assuming an overall framework of mutual intent and collaboration.

1. The effort to strengthen the quality of Jewish identity is a worthy endeavor as such, but it should also be recognized as the essential prerequisite to the strengthening of the quantitative bases of Jewish population.
  - Initiatives and activities should be encouraged that can help strengthen the influence of Jewish identification upon Jewish population trends.
  - Efforts should be made to encourage the search for meaning, immediacy and spirituality that powerfully move Jews, and especially young people, in Israel and throughout the world. This requires openness to innovative approaches to forms and expressions of Jewish community life.
2. The development should be encouraged of one or more core curricular modules for Jewish education in Israel and in the Diaspora stressing basic commonalities and shared notions and the common aspiration to Jewish solidarity and peoplehood.
  - Initiatives and activities helpful in promoting Jewish identity throughout the individual lifecycle should be encouraged, building on the notion that total identity reflects the accumulation of successive exposures to Judaism over one's lifetime.
  - It is therefore important that each individual has access to the highest possible number of different such exposures, in all possible forms.
  - Programs should be developed to make these exposures more meaningful and durable, including as far as possible all stages of a person's lifecycle: (a) Jewish consciousness in the parental home; (b) formal education through full-time Jewish school systems; (c) informal Jewish educational activities such as youth movements and summer camps; (d) participation in Jewish tracks within higher education systems; (e) experiences and contacts with Israeli society as the core of Jewish ethnic identification; (f) marriages within a Jewish framework, or at least encouragement of the non-Jewish partner to belong within a Jewish community framework; (g) birth of Jewish children and encouragement of out-married families to raise their children in a Jewish framework.
3. A supreme effort should be undertaken to encourage awareness and exchange of different views stemming from a Jewish framework, through mutual respect, so that each Jew can feel at home in Israel, and that he or she finds a place within the existing Jewish community system.

4. Intensify the involvement of Israel's public and private institutions in the effort to strengthen Jewish identity in the Diaspora and Israel-Diaspora mutual relations, including, where needed, investments in Jewish education systems.
5. Strengthen the role of Jerusalem as the spiritual, normative and cultural capital of the Jewish people.
6. Develop the concept and role of forums and spaces of encounter for representatives of all existing Jewish cultural and institutional orientations that will allow for free debating and consultation, and for developing shared visions toward future decision-making.
7. Allow a variety of Jewish ideological and spiritual movements that have deep roots in the Diaspora to develop and grow in Israel, according to their own capability to attract interested constituencies.
8. Encourage the senior Israeli leadership to play a more visible role as all-Jewish leadership, and conversely raise the familiarity with and visibility of Diaspora Jewish leaders in the Israeli context.
9. Create and encourage frameworks to foster young Jewish peoplehood leadership.

#### **D. Main policy options and directions: Diaspora**

1. Develop core curricular programs for Jewish learning and a better knowledge of the Jewish People, past and present, to be shared by schools in Israel and in Diaspora communities in a variety of forms adjusted to different schools of thought within the Jewish collective.
2. Efforts are needed to strengthen and deepen the diffusion and reception of Jewish culture through a broader, more inclusive young and adult Jewish constituency in Israel and in the Diaspora.
3. Jewish education systems should be strengthened while seriously considering the reforms of content that might bring them closer to wider strata of the Jewish public that so far have abstained from making Jewish education available to their children because they disagreed with the ideological orientation of the teaching provided.
4. Efforts should be intensified to improve curricular programs and teacher training in Jewish schools.

5. The effort should be expanded to bring Jewish youth visits, contacts and experiences in Israel through programs like Birthright, Masa', and the various existing high school programs that are especially efficacious in building and strengthening ties between Diaspora Jews and Israel.
6. Efforts should be made to promote Hebrew language literacy and the use of Hebrew as a growing and more relevant vector of communication across the Jewish world. Hebrew should be strengthened and expanded as a language of communication and learning capable of unifying the Jewish people. Special emphasis should be placed on Hebrew in early childhood and an international network of ulpanim should be established.
7. Efforts should be made to convince the younger adult generation that a community of culture and faith cannot last unless it develops its own continuity through marriage and children.
8. Invest a large corporate effort to significantly reduce the often prohibitive cost of Jewish education and participation in Jewish community life. The State of Israel and Jewish donors worldwide should consider the provision of a guaranteed loan program for Jewish education as well as an expanded pool of scholarship grant resources.
9. The possibility should be considered of accepting help from governmental authorities in the different countries outside of Israel, as part of their multicultural policies, to promote or maintain the current Jewish educational systems.
10. Encourage and support all forms of informal Jewish education and socialization, namely youth movements and periodical or seasonal camps and retreats.
11. Encourage initiatives abroad that can support the maintenance of the adequate critical mass needed to develop a Jewish community of higher quality. The costs and benefits should be evaluated of efforts by Jewish communities to organize their collective life and activities separately from the non-Jewish surrounding in order to better defend and nurture Jewish cultural traditions and Jewish interests.



## 7. ASSIMILATION AND SECESSION FROM JUDAISM

### A. Main processes

The phenomenon of assimilation is not new in Jewish life. Assimilation here refers to the weakening or loss of contents, notions, and symbolic references related to a previous world of identification. Over the generations Jews – usually as individuals but sometimes also as whole communities – periodically have left the mainstream of their community and culture. This was the case during the hundreds of years that followed the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem; during the years that preceded and followed the expulsion from Spain and Portugal; in communities in Ethiopia and in other places that experienced long periods of isolation from other Jewish communities. The circumstances that in the past generated collective abandonment of Judaism were often the result of the pressure of hostile external forces against single Jewish individuals or the whole Jewish collective. But these circumstances virtually do not operate any more. During the last generations the process of assimilation appears less often as deliberate choice to truncate any links with Judaism and the Jewish collective and more often as individual drift that naturally follows a weakening of personal links with Jewish identification, lack of sources of knowledge about Judaism, lack of sufficient community relational networks, and perhaps more than anything else personal circumstances. Frequent non-conflictual interactions (a term developed by Goldscheider and Zuckerman, 1984) between Jews and others in the learning and working environment, normally lead to proximity, friendship, experience sharing and, growingly, family formation.

One should not neglect to notice that contemporary assimilation reflects the nearly unlimited openness of a society that offers cultural alternatives apparently more attractive and relevant to the needs and propensities of the moment. In this sense at least, there is little difference between Jews in the Diaspora and large sections of Israeli society, the fundamental distinction is that a Jew that “assimilates” in Israel does so in an environment dominated by a powerful Jewish frame of reference and surrounded by other individuals who are themselves Jewish. The same process in other places happens among non-Jews and in a cultural context that is often imbued with the religious or national values and symbols of another culture.

It is also true that under variable historical circumstances the trend of assimilation diminished. In no way should assimilation be construed as a deterministic one-way process, as it draws from complex causes that can operate in changing directions,

most significantly, as a consequence of appropriate Jewish community policies.

Indeed, it is true that the critical mass of a sufficiently large presence of Jews in a given locale may be crucial for the creation of an attractive and competitive supply of Jewish community action, institutions, and informal social networks. An answer to the challenge of distinct identity maintenance may be found in an approach better articulated and adapted to each individual according to his/her needs, and that draws from the cultural abundance that characterizes the Jewish civilization.

Especially in the U.S. a lively debate has unfolded within the community about the best ways to challenge the weakening of identity at the periphery and among parts of the younger sectors of the community. In recent years initiatives of out-reach to out-married couples and their children have become more widespread. Assuming the Jewish community becomes smaller, even if it succeeds in preserving its own high human capital quality, it will face greater challenges because it is in competition within an expanding, diverse, and assertive total population. In communities lacking the critical mass of U.S. Jewry, the same struggle is already and will continue to be much more problematic.

One of the primary characteristics of “post-modernity” is the overall decline in traditional and mutually exclusive group affiliations such as community, ethnicity, or even place of residence. This pattern of drift develops in an unintentional manner as the result of cultural change, and it determines a major challenge to maintaining the communal and ethnic affiliation of young, fairly affluent, highly educated individuals including, of course, many Jews in Western societies. In the United States, the challenge is compounded by the very success of American culture and values, which have enabled Jews to be equals and more politically, economically, and socially involved and influential. Among the many examples that one may give, perhaps the more revealing is the appointment of Justice Elena Kagan to the U.S. Supreme Court, bringing with Justices Bader Ginsberg and Breyer the total of Jewish judges to three – one third of the supreme court. There is an inverse relationship between primary-group and secondary-group bonds, and the more one identifies with the larger and more heterogeneous secondary-group, the less one identifies with the smaller and more homogeneous primary-group (Waxman, 2008).

American Jews are no different and, having achieved success in the larger society, their primary-group bonds are weakening. The situation is exacerbated by their low levels of primary Jewish socialization, namely intensive schooling within the fold of their group of origin. These patterns are not characteristic of all segments of the population and, indeed, some segments – especially the more intensively orthodox parts of the



Jewish community – ostensibly do develop intensified group and communal ties, but they are the minority. The dominant trend is in the weakening direction. Moreover, those who seek to retain strong and sometimes exclusive in-group ties are at times derided by others for whom ethnic and communal ties are perceived as primordial, primitive, obsolete and therefore inappropriate or even counter-productive for modern, enlightened human beings, hence “politically incorrect” (Waxman, 2008).

A transition in perceptions of Judaism from one’s own religion, to secular, cultural, or undetermined and multiple modes of identification primarily emerges among people in their 20s through their 50s. This manifests itself in:

- Declining rates of ethno-religious homogamy, namely rapidly increasing Jewish out-group marriages;
- Declining rates of communal affiliation, affecting membership in secular as well as religious Jewish organizations;
- Declining rates of Jewish neighborhood concentration density – increasingly Jews reside in ethnically and religiously heterogeneous neighborhoods and find lesser value in living among Jews;
- Declining significance of Jewish friendships – increasing numbers of Jews stating that their best friends are not Jewish, although unquestionably Jewish friendship networks still represent a prominent and influential feature among the Jewish collective;
- Declining rates of philanthropic giving to Jewish causes. For example, in 1985, the Jewish Federations raised \$656 million. While in 2005, the amount raised grew to \$860 million, factoring in the rate of inflation and the increased socio-economic status of America’s Jews, that figure should have been almost 20% higher just to keep pace. In other words, measured in constant dollars Jewish giving is in serious decline;
- Younger Jews in particular increasingly contribute to non-Jewish philanthropies and appear to be decreasingly committed to Jewish causes and to contributing to Jewish philanthropies;
- Declining degrees of emotional attachment to Israel, increasingly substituted by apathy and embarrassment;
- Declining emotional connection to the memory of the Shoah and a transition from an emotional to a more rational and didactic notion of the need to remember.

Recent data on American Jewish attitudes toward Israel indicate that 82% of the respondents identify as “pro-Israel” but only 28% identify as “Zionists,” and the figures are even lower among younger Jews. That 82% identify as “pro-Israel” needs to be viewed within the context that most Americans are pro-Israel. For example, as a recent Gallup poll reported, 63% of Americans favor Israel and 55% consider it a “vital friend.” In fact, the poll reported that Israel “is the one country ... that a majority of Americans feel favorably toward and say that what happens there is vitally important to the United States.” Within that context, the fact that only 28% identified as Zionists, may be more revealing, particularly within the American context where Zionism has never entailed a commitment to one’s own *Aliyah*, nor has it been widely perceived as clashing with being a “good American.” The unwillingness to identify as a Zionist is, apparently, an indicator of the level of emotional attachment to the Israeli counterpart of American Jewry (Waxman, 2008).

Out-marriage is a main instrumental mechanism of the assimilation drift. Figures 11 and 12 above show the changes that have occurred in the incidence of out-marriage from the 1930s into the 2000s, in the U.S. and throughout the world (DellaPergola, 2003b). Jewish populations in the different countries were classified according to the levels of out-marriage in each place and their respective shares of the total world Jewish population were summed up. As it can be seen, in the 1930s the vast majority of Jews lived in countries where out-marriage rates were below 15%. During the 1980s these rates, including that of the U.S., had typically increased to 45-55%, and have remained there during the 2000s. In a global perspective, the low out-marriage environment of Jews in Israel constitutes a growing part of the overall scene, although the impact of cases of out-marriage is gradually increasing in Israel too.

The crucially dominant role of out-marriage in determining the subsequent Jewish identification patterns of Jewish adults is demonstrated in Table 14. Several multivariate analyses were carried out on the findings of the 1990 NJPS in the U.S., trying to figure out the depth of the relationship between the different types of marriage (in-marriage vs. out-marriage) and several other socio-demographic determinants vis-à-vis the outcome of ten different measures of Jewish identification. The overall statistical variation of these Jewishness indicators that was explained by the several determinants examined appears in the first left column. Such coefficients of determinations may not look very impressive and surely leave ample spaces for other causal explanations

**TABLE 14. EFFECTS OF OUT-MARRIAGE AND OTHER EXPLANATORY VARIABLES ON MEASURES OF JEWISH IDENTIFICATION, U.S., 1990**

Dependent variable	Overall variance explained	Spouse type as % of explained variance	Other significant explanatory effects						
			Young	Female	Geog. mobile	High SES	NY region	Jewish parents	J. education
Jewish friends	<b>29%</b>	<b>76</b>	(-)	(+)	(-)	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)
Jewish philanthropy	25%	<b>73</b>	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
Synagogue attendance	20%	<b>68</b>	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
Importance to be Jewish	<b>31%</b>	<b>63</b>	v					v	
Jewish organizations	13%	<b>59</b>	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
Kippur fast	23%	<b>55</b>		v	v	v	v	v	v
Jewish neighborhood	20%	54			v	v	v	v	v
Israel visit	14%	48	v	v		v			v
Israel attachment	26%	24				v	v	v	v
Jewish denomination	<b>37%</b>	13	v			v	v	v	v

Source: NJPS 1990, adapted from Rebhun and DellaPergola (1998).

not analyzed here, but they are considered significant in comparative social scientific research.

Among the causal determinant of the variable patterns of Jewish identification, the only one that significantly contributed to explain variation in each of the ten indicators was type of spouse (Jewish/non-Jewish). The ten variables are ranked according to the relative contribution of spouse type. The strongest, in fact absolutely predominant effects – negative in the case of out-marriage – appear on relational variables such as Jewish friends, Jewish philanthropy, Synagogue attendance, followed by Importance to be Jewish. The weakest effects are on Israel attachment and Jewish denomination.

Interesting though much weaker effects on Jewish identification/assimilation appear on the side of Jewish education (reinforcing 9 out of 10 variables, but not Importance to be Jewish), Higher socio-economic status (reinforcing 8 of 10, but not Importance to be Jewish and Fasting Yom Kippur), having two Jewish parents (reinforcing 7 out of 10, but not Jewish friends, Jewish neighborhoods, Visits to Israel), being young (weakening 6 out of 10), being geographically mobile (weakening 5 out of 10), being female (reinforcing 5 out of 10), and living the New York Area (reinforcing 4 out of 10: friends, neighborhoods, organizations and Kippur). In other words, marriage partner, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, is the stronger predictor of the intensity of adult attitudes and participation vis-à-vis the whole possible range of Jewish identificational options (Rebhun and DellaPergola, 1998).

In most countries, with the possible exception of Latin America, children of out-marriages tend to be predominantly affiliated with their non-Jewish parental side, so that significant demographic losses are constantly incurred by the Jewish side. Significant differences exist in the predominance of genders in the attribution of children's identities in different regions of the world. Usually in English speaking countries the dominant parent in identity attribution is the mother, which is also consonant with the Jewish tradition. In Latin and Eastern European countries children of intermarriages more often follow their father's identity, which for the Jews creates a contrast with the traditional Halacha. What, on the other hand, constantly grows as a consequence of these trends is the extension of the *enlarged* Jewish population and of the number of non-Jews eligible for immigration to Israel under the Law of Return.

## B. Intervening mechanisms

Assimilation and secession of individuals out of any form of Jewish identification is in a sense the negative symmetric of the several processes of identification consolidation reviewed in the previous chapter. It manifests itself through disengagement from any relation with other Jews, usually scarce or no foundation of Jewish knowledge, scarce or no Jewish experiences, few or no tools of Jewish educational and cultural training, and limited or non-existent involvement with the rest of the Jewish collective. It is partly through the same intervening mechanisms that have been shown to be efficacious in strengthening Jewish identification that weakening Jewish identification should be countered.

The main challenge is how to find a strategy and methods to engage those at the margins of the Jewish collective, totally unconnected or partially connected but not viewing the connection as essential in their life. A related puzzle is how to pierce the outer shield and touch the hearts of those who do not care or do not wish to belong to a Jewish community in order to revive in them a spark of historical memory and mutual responsibility, if not a sense of pride and mission.

An additional fundamental concern relates to the mutual relations with the non-Jewish component of the marriage dyad and the growingly complex and multi-cultural Jewish social network. Some people in such emerging non-Jewish relational networks may be trying to develop a syncretistic approach incorporating various elements taken from the original cultural-religious frameworks. Some may feel indifference to the particularistic identity of the Jewish side – and often also by indifference to their own non-Jewish identification. Some may be significantly involved in their own alternative identificational frames of reference, thereby actively drawing the relevant Jewish adults and their children away from their original Jewish cultural and social referents.

## C. Main policy options and directions: Israel

1. The processes of assimilation are typical of the Jewish communities of the Diaspora. However, it is important that greater understanding is developed in Israeli society about its own growing openness to the outer world, frequent travel abroad by Israelis, frequent visits by non-Jewish tourists to Israel, and especially

the impact of recent non-Jewish immigrants under the Law of Return, have caused conditions in Israel to become less extremely different from those of Diaspora Jewish communities.

2. This requires the development of adequate approaches to assimilation in Israel not unlike those needed in the rest of the world.

#### **D. Main policy options and directions: Diaspora**

1. Growing attention should be paid to the spiritual development and identification needs of the younger generation in the Diaspora and in Israel.
2. It is important to develop an approach that understands the aim of constructing bridges toward Jews standing at the periphery of the organized Jewish community.
3. Such an approach should operate out of a wide array of different religious and cultural aspirations and experiences, all embedded within the basic complex of Judaism and Jewishness.
4. Support should be given to grassroots initiatives aimed at providing answers to the cultural needs and predicaments of young Jewish adults.
5. There is a need for a systematic and sincere evaluation of the methods and results of the out-reach efforts accomplished thus far, and for finding new tools to utilize in further or future outreach efforts.

## 8. ACCESSION TO JUDAISM (GIYUR)

### A. Main processes

Over the last decades, the steady increase in the frequency of out-marriage is associated with an increase in the number of Jews who share their lives with non-Jewish partners as well as in the number of non-Jews who become involved in extended Jewish families and social networks. In many countries with large Jewish communities the number of non-Jews connected to Jews through primary family relations is today similar to or greater than the number of Jews. The virtual number of potential candidates for the Law of Return is substantially larger than the core Jewish population.

Issues of defining the Jewish group's boundaries and the balance of accessions to and secessions from the group are often, but not exclusively, dealt with under the heading of "conversion". A growing gap is emerging between the large number of non-Jewish individuals falling under the definition of the *enlarged* Jewish population, and who therefore participate – albeit very marginally – in the cultural and associational life of Jews, and the actual numbers of people being considered for conversion to Judaism by acknowledged authorities. The number being formally admitted to the fold of the Jewish group is even smaller. A growing gap is also emerging between subjective feelings of belonging to a Jewish identification (no matter how specified), and formal Jewish identification categories established within a given population by religious authorities, researchers in demography or sociology, or other observers. Moreover, the many different organizations operating within the broadly defined Jewish community often adopt different criteria to delineate their own target constituencies.

At first glance, the pace of accessions to Judaism is governed by the rabbinical authorities who are directly involved in decision-making about the acceptability of candidates for conversion. Conversion itself can normatively occur only after a certain formal *rite de passage* has occurred. However, it should be noted that in today's Jewish world, especially in the U.S., joining a Jewish community is often the result of a free act of choice that doesn't include any formal ceremony. Such cases cannot be recognized by the Orthodox rabbinical authorities as legal members of a Jewish community, although some of the liberal streams in the U.S. may look upon them as integral members of a congregation. In any event, these cases today comprise a large share of total joiners. Many more are joining Judaism under the auspices of Conservative and Reform Rabbis.

In the United States, the 2001 AJIS estimated the total number of Jews who had been converted to Judaism at 170,000 (Mayer, Kosmin, Keysar, 2003). We have already noted that the number of non-Jews in the U.S. who have Jewish ancestors approaches 1,500,000, mostly the children of intermarriages.

Conversion in Israel is handled by the Chief Rabbinate and by the Rabbinical Courts for Conversion established to facilitate the process following the recommendations submitted by the Ne'eman Committee in 1998 (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998). Since the beginning of the 1990s, with the surge of mass immigration to Israel from the FSU and from Ethiopia, large sectors of a public that had been marginally connected to Judaism or totally out of the range of any Jewish identificational perspective have asked to return or have otherwise been returned to the mainstream of Jewish life. The Law of Return has played a facilitating role for recovery not only of the opportunity to live in Israel, but also of the opportunities to participate in Jewish culture and community. This often involved persons in countries where Jews had long suffered discrimination. In Israel, the total number of immigrants who were not registered as Jewish was estimated at 312,800 at the beginning of 2010, of which 283,000 were without religious determination, and about 30,000 were Christian. Many in the former, larger group would like to integrally belong to the Jewish mainstream of Israeli society, and in fact they do belong for most purposes, with the critical exception of personal status matters that include the handling of birth, marriage and death records.

The annual number of conversions approved in Israel (see Table 2 above) never reached 4,000 until 2001, exceeded 6,000 in 2005, and reached an all-time high of 7,881 in 2007. In 2009, according to provisional data, the total number of converts in Israel fell to 1,500. This reflected the steady decrease in the number of immigrants from Ethiopia, and high profile disagreement within Israel's Rabbinate about conversion policies in general, and even about the validity of conversions already certified by Rabbinical Courts.

Of the 22,700 converts between 2000 and 2004, 60% were from Ethiopia, 24% from the FSU, and 16% from other countries, including relatively large contingents from India and Peru. All in all, between 1999 and 2008, 48,098 persons were converted to Judaism in Israel. Most of them were new immigrants from Ethiopia who, as noted, undergo conversion in near totality (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2007).

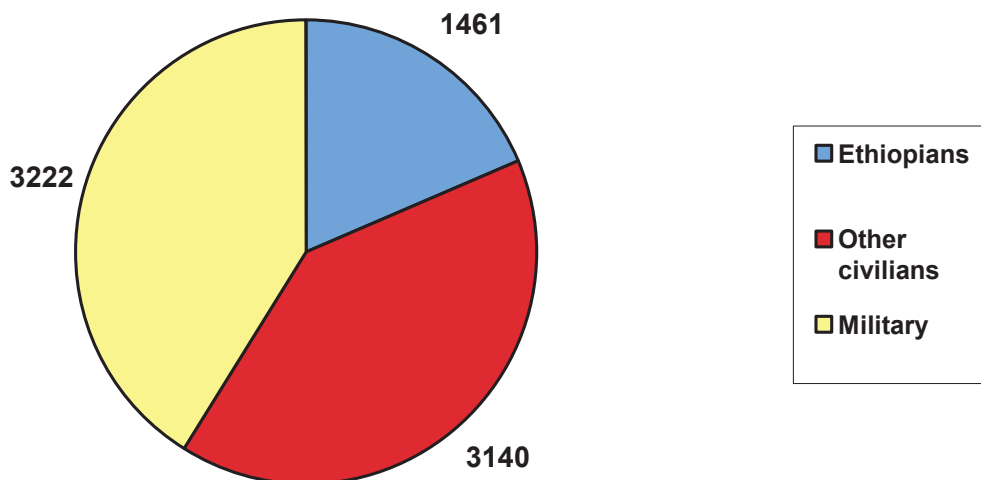
Conversion to Judaism is the most visible component of a more complex system of population exchanges between the various religions in Israel. According to data of the Israeli Ministry of Justice, in the years 2005-2007 249 Jews converted to Islam and 48



converted to Christianity. In 2008 the respective figures were 112 and 30. These cases are often connected to out-marriage in Israel, most predominantly of Jewish women to non-Jewish men.

In 2008, the number of students in giyur preparatory courses was 7,823, of which 1,461 were Ethiopians, 3,222 were IDF soldiers, and 3,140 civilians from other countries (Figure 39). This clearly indicates that the students do not adequately represent the profile of the whole pool of potential converts who, according to their proportion in Israel's Jewish population, would include a far higher share of candidates from countries other than Ethiopia – namely from the FSU.

**FIGURE 39. STUDENTS IN CONVERSION CLASSES IN ISRAEL, 2008**



One important aspect of religious conversion is the composition by age and sex of the potential converts. Table 15 provides a detailed breakdown of the so-called “others” who are included in the category “Jews and others,” i.e. the components of the Law of Return population who are not recorded as Jews.

The matrilineal transmission of Jewish identity according to traditional Halacha continues to play a central definitional role, even if the alternative of patrilineal transmission is equally followed by other denominations – especially the Reform congregations in the U.S.. There is, therefore, a lack of symmetry in the consequences for the future generations of male and female conversions. From the angle of possible reproduction and future identity transmission, the more crucial age-group is women

aged 15-45. According to a recent projection (Israel CBS), by the year 2010 there were in Israel about 86,000 “other” (i.e. non-Jewish but Jewish-related) women aged 15-44. In addition, there were 33,900 girls and 35,600 boys under 15 years of age. By focusing on these numbers rather than the somewhat bombastic total figure of over 300,000, it may be that the target will not appear out reach, and a more pragmatic approach can be agreed upon among the different bodies involved in the matter.

**TABLE 15. ESTIMATES OF THE “OTHERS”<sup>a</sup> POPULATION IN ISRAEL, BY SEX AND AGE GROUPS, 2010 (THOUSANDS)**

Age	Total	M	F
Total	338.5	159.5	179.0
0-4	24.0	12.3	11.6
5-14	45.6	23.3	22.3
Total 0-14	69.6	35.6	33.9
15-24	49.8	25.5	24.3
25-34	57.9	28.2	29.7
35-44	59.6	27.7	31.9
Total 15-44	167.3	81.4	85.9
45-54	44.4	19.6	24.8
55-64	32.5	13.5	19.0
65+	24.8	9.4	15.4

<sup>a</sup> Non-Jews, lacking another religious denomination, related to Jewish households | Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (2009).

Conversion is of course a delicate matter of conscience. It is a personal *rite de passage* but also the result of a sort of cooptation into the Jewish collective. Clearly, the admission of new members affects the composition and nature of the whole collective. The very

act of joining and admitting is sanctioned by the collective through its competent representatives – in this case the Rabbinical authorities.

The quest for conversion reflects different and complex motives among potential candidates. Some of the main paths toward conversion to Judaism include:

- Intellectual curiosity and spiritual needs in a general context of the search for meaning;
- Sometimes even an insistent, deep and endogenous affinity to Judaism – perhaps a mystical calling;
- Interpersonal relations and the willingness to unify the cultural-religious composition and style of the household following or in the prospect of a marriage among two people born into different religions; and
- Socioeconomic needs and a perception that conversion is likely to induce possible advantages.

In turn, these motivations are in all likelihood related to the candidates' personal characteristics, including their demographic profile, psychological makeup, family history, socioeconomic status, and cultural background. But what above all is important and has not enjoyed sufficient attention in public debates and in legal decisions is the fundamental distinction between the status of Jews as a majority in the State of Israel or as a minority in other countries. Minority status – as discussed in the previous chapter – is tightly related to assimilation, secessions and accessions. Normally, members of the minority tend to be attracted into the fold of the majority – usually one or another form of Christian belief in the U.S., more often some form of secular agnosticism in Europe and Latin America – although these passages do not necessarily imply the acceptance of the new faith's dogma or intensive activism in the respective organizational network. Consequently, the identificational balance tends to be negative for members of the minority. Yet, the sense of real community in some Jewish congregations is a kind of existential balm for some, and one should not underestimate the drawing power (not necessarily charismatic) of particular communities and rabbis. Hence, the conversions balance – to and from Judaism – is in a sense an unfinished game, whose final result is open to several alternative scenarios.

The traditional attitude of Diaspora Judaism under those circumstances has been restrictive toward new admissions, with little or no support for proselytism. One factor

worth of consideration is that post-modern individualism – described as freedom with attendant episodic alienation and isolation – sometimes seems to manifest in an obsessive preoccupation and paradoxical identification with the "other". Moreover, in some cases, the need and willingness to embrace a downward mobility in status – i.e. leaving the majority – is a strategy for shaking off the anesthesia of affluence and modern isolation. Another factor that has probably been greatly undervalued and misunderstood is that under the new conditions of a Jewish majority in the State of Israel, the same logic tends to attract the non-Jewish minority toward assimilating into the Jewish majority.

In Israel, under the current arrangements and provisions:

- People who are recorded in the Population Register as lacking a national or religious status – mostly members of immigrant families from the FSU – cannot marry in Israel where marriages are handled by religious authorities.
- Only a small fraction of non-Jewish immigrants actually begin a conversion procedure, and among those who do so only a fraction complete it successfully. There have also been a number of high-profile decisions by Rabbinical courts in Israel which have annulled previous conversion decisions on the ground that the behavior of the converts after conversion did not meet the standards and norms of Jewish traditional behavior. It is worth noting that neither did the earlier Jewish traditional sources link conversion to post-conversion behavior, nor was the withdrawal of conversion nearly ever heard of in the long history of Jewish civilization.
- At the current pace, the gap between the number of actual joiners and the pool of over 300,000 potential joiners cannot be bridged in any foreseeable future.
- Conversion policies in Israel are not uniform and tend to discriminate between immigrants from different countries. Virtually all immigrants from Ethiopia, namely those who belong to the Falashmura community whose alleged Jewish origins were hidden for many generations beneath a Christian identity, undergo a conversion procedure simultaneous with their immigration to Israel. The decisional approach is collective, even if the conversion procedure is carried out individually. Regarding non-Jewish immigrants from other countries – namely the large pool from the FSU – the conversion procedure is individual and primarily reflects the immigrant's will to undergo such a procedure. The Israel Defense Forces have implemented their own programs to facilitate conversion of young adults who wish to join Judaism.

- Among Jewish communities outside of Israel, where no central rabbinical and Jewish court authority exists, conversions are handled separately by the different Jewish communities and by the different Jewish denominations. There is no mutual recognition of such conversions – at least Conservative and Reform/Liberal conversions are not recognized by Orthodox congregations. The State of Israel is supposed to recognize all conversions performed abroad. However, in recent years the matter of conversions performed in Israel by entities other than the Chief Rabbinate and/or by denominations whose conversions abroad were usually recognized by the state, was brought before the Israeli Supreme Court. The Court initially handed down a judgment accepting some cases conversions ruled in Israel by non-Orthodox rabbis, but a final ruling is still pending with respect to their general acceptability.
- The Supreme Court appropriately noted that the matter should be solved through the political negotiation that is appropriate to the Parliament, not to Court. Indeed, after long delays, at the time of this writing a new conversion law stood before the Knesset.

## **B. Intervening mechanisms**

In the more distant past, the traditional attitude of Eretz Israel Judaism toward giyur was inclusive. Conversely, contemporary rabbinic rulers in Israel, where they constitute an influential part of the executive branch, and in the Diaspora hold a variety of different attitudes toward conversion. Nonetheless, the predominant pattern follows the restrictive assumptions of historical Jewish life in the Diaspora ignoring the new realities of the State of Israel, where Jews constitute the majority of the population.

Formal conversion procedures in Israel and in the Diaspora are conditional upon a period of formal instruction, which necessarily must follow the desire and intention to join. Such decisions reflect evaluations by potential candidates of various factors including:

- The social acceptability of the contemplated change;
- The availability of conversion frameworks;
- The expected degree of difficulties to be overcome;
- The economic, psychological and social cost of the whole procedure, including missed benefits during the period of transition.

In turn, the religious authority's decisions may reflect a number of main factors:

- The conceptual (Halachic) framework out of which the specific authority operates;
- The variable leniency of standards for admission – within the same Halachic framework – by different authorities;
- The rabbinical authorities' stereotypes and prejudices regarding the candidates – resulting in, for example, applying different standards for Ethiopian vs. Russian candidates;
- The candidates' learning achievements during their instruction period – which in turn reflect the candidates' characteristics and their motives.

One interesting and evolving question concerns the extent to which Jewish religious authorities are directly or indirectly influenced by the policy assumptions and decisions of lay Jewish institutions. In the case of Israel, legislative, executive, and judiciary agencies (namely the Supreme Court) have periodically intervened in controversial issues relating to the Law of Return and the Law of Conversion. For sure, the nature of such decisions has reflected the variable political equilibriums that periodically emerged in the Israeli polity. In the case of Jews in the Diaspora, there is no central Jewish lay authority, and widely different decisions regarding the status of conversion and the converted can be taken by voluntary organizations. As noted, decisions and procedures initiated in the Diaspora may or may not gain legal validity in the Israeli system.

### **C. Main policy options and directions: Israel**

1. In Israel, the approach that attributes personal matters to the governance of the representative judiciary bodies of the respective communities should be continued. In other words, radical changes are not assumed here regarding the current regime of devolution from the state to religious authorities concerning the pertinent matters. Admission into a religious community should continue to be decided by the respective judiciary body of that religious group.
2. Regarding the Jewish community in Israel, it is suggested that admissions (giyur) should be subject to the following rules:
  - One Special Rabbinical Court for Conversions in the spirit of the Ne'eman Committee will operate through local city or regional branches and will verify and, if appropriate, ratify all conversion documents originating from abroad or from Israel;

- Rabbinical Courts for Conversion should consider all applicants following the same accepted, clear, uniform and transparent principles and procedures;
  - It is recommended that conversion procedures be handled by local city and regional rabbinates rather than by a central national authority;
  - As an integral part of the package of immigrant absorption, each non-Jewish immigrant admitted under the Law of Return should be automatically and friendly directed to the local city or regional branches of the Rabbinical Court for Conversions and informed of the possibility of initiating a conversion procedure. If the immigrant is interested, the procedure will be initiated without further delays. If the new immigrant is not interested, no such procedure will start without personal prejudice.
  - Israel Defense Forces giyur activities should be further strengthened, and following final ruling on the Jewishness of these converts, objections to their legitimacy should stop.
3. In addressing the potential constituency of converts, special attention should be paid to two population groups: minors below the age of 13 for boys and 12 for girls, and women of childbearing age (18-45). By giving first priority attention to these groups, the likelihood of the creation of a second and third generation of Israeli-born descendants of immigrants who are not recognized as Jewish for the purpose of registration in Israel's Population Register will be significantly reduced.
  4. It is urgently recommended that Israeli law should supply solutions to personal status matters such as births, marriages, divorces, and burials for all citizens who lack religious status – a situation that, as noted above, typically applies to immigrant members of Jewish households who are not themselves Jewish. The current legal lacuna is not acceptable in a democratic state.
    - To take care of cases of people lacking personal status with any of the existing religious groups, a state recognized framework should be created with prerogatives similar to those of those existing for religious groups.
    - Promote activities by the Israeli educational system aimed at better social integration of children of non-Jewish immigrants.
  5. Intensify the cooperation and coordination between Israeli rabbinic authorities and Jewish communities who perform conversions abroad. Recognition of

conversions performed out of Israel should be set on a broader basis than at present, based on mutual interaction between the respective rabbinates.

6. Conversion of non-Jewish and non-Islamic or Christian foreign permanent residents, accepted refugees, etc., should be allowed under the appropriate procedures.

#### **D. Main policy options and directions: Diaspora**

1. Regarding Jewish communities outside of Israel, it is recommended that voluntary arrangements be established aimed at facilitating the participation of all congregations and denominations in one unified and agreed framework for conversion procedures.
2. As already noted, mutual interaction between the rabbinates of the different Diaspora communities and the Israeli rabbinate – based on a shared platform of criteria – would greatly enhance the spirit of Clal Israel.



## 9. HEALTH, MORTALITY AND SURVIVORSHIP

### A. Main processes

Health policy is a matter that requires its own comprehensive survey and policy planning well beyond the scope of this report. However, a few selected points of interest in the discussion of Jewish population policy issues are singled out here for reference.

In developed societies where most contemporary Jews live, health patterns generally follow a course of slow and gradual improvement resulting in longer average life expectancies. In Israel in 2009, life expectancy was over 84 years for Jewish women, and over 80 for men (see Figure 14 above). Improvements in standards of living and advancements in medicine and its related fields have greatly reduced the negative impact of epidemiological and human developmental causes of death. Such general trend toward lower mortality and longer life expectancies constitutes one – today secondary – determinant of higher population growth and resilience. It can be roughly assessed that since World War II Jewish life expectancy has improved by one full year of life every five calendar years

Survivorship and its obverse mortality reflect the variable incidence of and the ability to counteract several main types of negative agents whose main nature is:

- Physical and chemical;
- Bacteriological and epidemiological;
- Genetic;
- Psycho-social;
- General degenerative processes related to human ageing.

The absolute and relative incidence of each of these factors has greatly changed over the course of time. In particular – thanks to better environmental circumstances and earlier, more efficient, more diffused treatment – the past dominance of bacteriological and epidemiological factors has been superseded by the growing relative incidence of conditions typical of more advanced stages in the lifecycle, such as cardiovascular and neoplastic disease. All in all, longevity significantly increased. It can be expected that further preventative and therapeutic advances will help reducing mortality levels in those areas. In this context, aspects of survivorship

and mortality that need to be carefully monitored tend to become increasingly related to behavioral and life-style patterns as well as to large-scale disruptions following nature-related causes, environmental pollutants, mishandling or collapse of technological devices, or human-created violence, including acts of terrorism. Of growing general interest – and of interest for specific Jewish communities – is the emerging body of research relating health patterns to specific characteristics of the human genome. In the longer term, advances in genetic research may produce beneficial effects on populations – like the Jews – among whom the incidence of hereditary disease is comparatively high.

While in the past improvements to survivorship mostly affected childhood and young adulthood, and thus significantly impacted the total of years of life experienced by the whole population, in recent years additions to length of life more often benefit the elderly. The ensuing effects are felt more in the age composition of the older population than in terms of total population size and age structure. Unlike in a more remote past when reduced mortality generated a younger population, under current conditions lesser mortality contributes to producing population ageing. The consequences may be significant regarding the nature and extent of investments needed in the relevant health care and social services.

Throughout modern history Jews have noticeably participated in and often anticipated improvements in health standards and reductions in the death rate. Particularly significant was the different incidence of diseases among Jews and others in the same locales, which could be explained primarily through cultural and social differences (Schmelz, 1971). As a consequence, infant mortality and life expectancy rates of Jews were usually more benign than in proximate non-Jewish environments. With the diffusion of better healthcare and socioeconomic standards across society, the significance of such peculiarities diminished but did not disappear altogether. One persistent feature was a smaller gap between the longevity of men and women among Jews – and among Arabs – as compared to Western societies. The explanation was probably due to a more benign ecology of morbidity causes – including a comparatively lesser exposure to excessive alcohol consumption – among Semite males. But the significant endogamy and isolation of Jewish communities in the past, and their fast growth out of a small pool of founders in the respective locales of the Jewish Diaspora, also allowed significant incidences of various hereditary diseases at the community level, especially among Eastern European Jews.

From an international perspective, Israel's health standards enjoy a fairly high position, being ranked 9th out of 177 countries in terms of life expectancy and infant mortality (UNDP, 2006). In 2002, however, Israel was 5th in the world, which points to a worryingly slower pace of improvement relative to other more developed countries. It should be noted that these changes in ranking are not the direct consequence of disruptions related to political violence or military events, but rather reflect longer-term trends deeply rooted in the cultural and socioeconomic fabric of nations.

Persisting survivorship differentials between different sub-groups within Israel's Jewish population mostly reflect the past experiences of more recent immigrants as well as differences in personal lifestyles (Israel CBS, 2007; Eisenbach et al., 1997). With regard to Diaspora Jews, most live in countries with good health standards and good health facilities. A dramatic improvement in Jewish survivorship chances recently occurred when large-scale migration brought Jews from the FSU whose life expectancy was relatively low and where the health system was literally collapsing, to Israel and some other more developed Western countries. But it is also true that Jewish émigrés from the FSU brought their accumulated handicaps into their new communities, generating the need for greater investment in healthcare.

One factor of major significance in modern Jewish history was the persecution and destruction of Jews by the German National Socialist regime and its allies – the Shoah. Of especially significant impact for contemporary Jewish communities are the postponed consequences of Shoah. These consequences are visible in several realms, such as demographic composition of the population, social psychology, economic structure, and collective and individual forms of Jewish identification. But the primary current impact of the Shoah concerns the survivors and their physical and contextual conditions. The pool of survivors is estimated at about one million and is an ageing group being born by definition up to 1945 (DellaPergola, 2003c). Survivors disproportionately carry negative physical, mental and socioeconomic consequences from the traumatic period, although it can also be inferred that those who survived included many who were especially resilient individuals (Brotsky and DellaPergola, 2005).

While survivorship per se can be construed as an indication of uniquely high personal resilience, the conditions of Jewish survivors, primarily because of their ageing, are a major concern for care and policies. Such policies – namely regarding the representation of Jewish interests in front of indemnification opportunities that have become available in recent years (Eizenstat, 2003) – have been remarkably weak in strategy, planning and coordination,

and have often resulted in open confrontation between Jewish institutions. Opposing interests were occasionally advocated by the Israeli government as a representative of survivors in Israel, and other large Jewish organizations representing survivors in various other countries. The ensuing conflicts were unpleasant as a basic matter of public image, but were also damaging to the survivors themselves who often had to wait long years before agreements could be reached about the recognition of their rights. In the meantime, the number of survivors constantly diminishes and their health conditions deteriorate.

The total number of Shoah survivors can be determined based on a thorough examination of institutional sources, namely lists of people declared eligible based on certain legal criteria, lists of applicants to relevant funds and welfare organizations, and relevant aggregate populations included in socio-demographic population studies. These different sources provide the following picture of three major groups of Shoah survivors:

- A. Those who were in concentration camps, in ghettos, or were otherwise forced into slave labor. Included here are people eligible under the *Claims Article 2*, including pending cases, but excluding rejected cases; people – all of them in the FSU and other Eastern European countries – eligible under the *Central and Eastern European Fund* (CEEF) agreement, including pending but excluding rejected cases; people eligible under the German *Bundes Entschädigung Gesetze* (BEG); people directly taken care under parallel *agreements with national governments*, primarily in Israel but also in countries such as France, the Netherlands, Greece, and Poland.
- B. Those who were involved in flight and illegality or whose life was disrupted in similar ways. Included here are people eligible under the *Claims Hardship Fund*, including pending cases, but excluding rejected cases. Also accounted for is an estimate of the people that *would be eligible in the FSU and Eastern Europe* under similar assumptions (a situation similar to the CEE Fund vis-à-vis the Article 2 Fund). It was estimated, on the basis of existing evidence, that such people in the FSU and Eastern Europe would constitute about 15% of the total in Other Countries.
- C. All other survivors included in the very extensive concept adopted in a previous report, namely *all those Jewish persons who are alive today and who at least for a brief period of time were submitted in their locations to a regime of duress and/or limitation of their full civil rights in relation to their Jewish background – whether by a Nazi foreign occupying power or by a local authority associated with the Nazis' endeavor – or had to flee elsewhere in order to avoid falling under the aforementioned situations*. This definition incorporates all Jews who actually suffered physical or

other kinds of persecution, those who escaped from areas in which they were the designated target for persecution, and those who suffered any kind of other – even temporary or potential – limitation of personal freedom. Obviously included here are Jews who lived at the time in countries subjected to colonial or mandatory rule of hostile powers such as France and Italy.

The numbers in Table 16, based on population estimates for 2001, represent the results of our analysis of the various types of persons eligible as Shoah survivors. We estimated the total under the more extensive definition of Shoah survivors at 1,092,000 persons, of these: about 213,000 comprise the group that experienced concentration camps, ghettos, slave labor; 327,000 comprise the group that experienced flight and illegality; and 552,000 comprise the group of those who were otherwise at risk. In accordance with the definitional criteria adopted, our estimates are generally higher than those suggested by previous reports (Spanic, Factor, Strovinski, 1997).

**TABLE 16. JEWISH SHOAH SURVIVORS, BY TYPE OF EXPERIENCE, AND REGION OF RESIDENCE - 2001 – PERCENTAGES**

Region	Type of Experience			
	Concentration camp, ghetto, slave labor	Flight, illegality	Other	Total <sup>a</sup>
Total number	213,200	326,800	552,000	1,092,000
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Israel	49.4	50.2	43.2	46.5
FSU and East Europe	12.9	12.1	21.1	16.8
North America	27.8	29.3	5.3	16.9
Other countries	9.9	8.4	30.4	19.8

<sup>a</sup> Due to improved documentation available in the present report, there are minor discrepancies between these percentages and those reported in DellaPergola, (2003).

In the context of the recent legal and public discourse on post-Shoah indemnification, special emphasis was placed on the dimension of neediness among survivors. We may plausibly assume that neediness among survivors tends to be proportionally more frequent among those who suffered the heaviest hardship. Indeed, both the survivors' health status, in turn related to mental health, and other personal characteristics and experiences, including lost opportunities, can be at least assumed to bear a relationship to personal experiences during the Shoah period. In this respect, Shoah survivors are sometimes considered as one whole group ignoring possible experiential differences, and on other occasions are considered as different sub-groups, depending on different attitudes existing in the Jewish institutional context.

The share of survivors who live in Israel is higher in our estimates than in previous assessments, mainly because of two factors:

1. The recent continuing inflow of immigrants, particularly from the FSU, caused an increase in Israel's Jewish population and reduced the number of Jews in the relevant countries of origin.
2. We incorporated in our estimates North African and Middle Eastern communities that were under German or allied occupation that were mistakenly omitted in previous assessments. This tends to expand Israel's share more than that of other parts of the world but also increases the share of Western Europe, because most of the migrants from relevant former European colonies in Muslim countries settled in Israel and in France.

Reliable data on neediness among Shoah survivors exist for Israel (Brodski and DellaPergola, 2005). Based on estimates drawn from the *Israeli Elderly Survey*, in 2003 out of the total Shoah survivors in Israel the estimated number of those living under the poverty line was 75,200 excluding those from Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries, or 98,000 including them (Table 17). Of these, 50,000 immigrated from the FSU since 1990. The combined number of indigent Shoah survivors living below or near the threshold of poverty (income 25% above poverty line) was 137,300 excluding SEM countries, or 176,100 including them. Of these, 89,000 immigrated from the FSU since 1990. The number of survivors who were below or near the threshold of poverty and also had problems with physical/mental health and/or housing was 94,800 excluding SEM countries, and 124,600 including SEM countries, of whom 57,000 were recent immigrants from the FSU.

**TABLE 17. JEWISH SHOAH SURVIVORS  
BY NEEDINESS LEVELS, ISRAEL, 2003**

Type of Problem	Estimated Total Shoah Survivors in Israel		Thereof: Immigrated from the FSU 1990+
	With SEM <sup>a</sup>	Without SEM <sup>a</sup>	
Total Number in 1997/98	362,900	283,000	92,800
Adjusted Number in 2003 <sup>b</sup>	429,600	326,900	118,000
Poor	98,800	75,200	50,000
Poor/near-poor	176,100	137,300	89,000
Thereof: Poor/near-poor <b>who also have</b> problems of physical/mental health <b>and/or have</b> housing problems	124,600	94,800	57,000

<sup>a</sup> SEM = Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries | <sup>b</sup> Source: Israeli Elderly Survey. Not including up to 14,600 survivors born in 1945 | Source: Brodski and DellaPergola (2005).

Due to the very aged composition of the pool of Shoah survivors, their numbers tend to decrease rapidly year by year. A yearly attrition rate of about 5% can be estimated based on current Israeli age-specific death rates. This implies that if an estimate of 1,092,000 was suggested for 2001, the extant figure in 2010 would range between 700,000 and 750,000.

One further peculiar aspect of Jewish health and survivorship patterns is the high incidence of disease related to genetic factors. This is one of the consequences of the relatively more homogeneous genetic pool of Jews in general, and of specific local communities in particular (Hammer et al., 2000; Behar et al., 2006). Diseases such as Tay-Sachs, cystic-fibrosis, Gaucher disease, pemphigus, Mediterranean anemia, and more, are more common among Jews than among other population groups. This requires enhanced attention at the diagnostic and treatment levels in communities where genetic risks are high.

## B. Intervening mechanisms

At a very general level of reference, health and mortality levels can be analyzed as dependent on three main intervening mechanisms (Ruzicka, 1983): (a) disease mechanisms; (b) preventive medicine and health measures; (c) medical treatment and health measures.

These factors noticeably reflect the overall level of development of the health system in a society. In the first place, these intervening mechanisms reflect several macro-social explanatory variables, such as: (a) physical environment; (b) socioeconomic and socio-cultural organization and change; (c) healthcare infrastructure; (d) public health administration and health regulations.

These, also through the additional influence of levels and patterns of sanitation, influence micro-social variables of major interest for our purposes such as: (a) personal lifestyle, individual socioeconomic status, socio-cultural and bio-social characteristics; (b) medical practice; and (c) hygiene.

While the quality of medical practice, hygiene, and welfare support patterns mostly reflect interventions related to human training, technological environment and physical plant capabilities, it is in particular the aspects of personal lifestyle, highly related to cultural patterns and socioeconomic characteristics that call for attention in a demographic policy perspective. Here, the impact can be highly differentiated of personal life-experiences and of personal characteristics related to the family of origin, training and human development, and community and institutional networks. Each of these can be the subject for significant interventions likely to affect the health status and survivorship chances of the designated people. It clearly emerges therefore, that medical and other health related procedures must follow but cannot be confined to general and universal standards. The additional dimension of cultural specificity and its relation to health must be present when dealing with both analytic and policy oriented issues. Around this central tenet we articulate the following propositions.

## C. Main policy options and directions: Israel

1. Israel should continue to pursue policies that keep it among the leading countries in the world vis-à-vis all relevant aspects of public health, mortality reduction, and improvement in the life quality of the living. Policies should continue to enhance the preventive and treatment procedures that have allowed for impressive



increases in life expectancy all across Israel's population. The main achievements in these domains may have largely exhausted themselves, but continuing scientific and technological innovation makes it imperative that the level of investment in research and training facilities remains high. Campaigns aimed at facilitating healthy life styles should also be publicly visible. Procedures and controls should continue to improve in the effort to reduce if not entirely avoid treatment errors.

2. Pay attention to the needs of different population constituencies, such as:
  - Younger age groups should be encouraged to pursue healthy lifestyles, especially concerning dietary habits, movement and hygiene of the environment, also by stressing appropriate role models.
  - Mid-lifecycle families at the peak of their competitive needs and tensions of work and, childrearing.
  - The growing pool of the elderly, and especially of the frail elderly.
3. The large if shrinking lot of Shoah survivors, with their unique package of physical, mental and socioeconomic impairments, needs special attention and sensitive initiatives.
  - Regarding the newly available resources for compensation of Shoah survivors, coordinated institutional efforts are imperative instead of the continuing differences about resource allocation between major Jewish organizations in Israel and worldwide.
4. In Israel the quantitative weight is especially high, and consequently more than proportional attention and investment should be devoted to special constituencies such as:
  - Carriers – manifest and latent – of inherited diseases that tend to be especially frequent among the Jewish public, and quite more frequent among members of specific Jewish communities.
  - Other impaired persons, such as victims of terrorism, military events, or work-related accidents.
5. The unreasonably high incidence of road accidents in Israel calls for massive coordinated efforts in the fields of education, training, infrastructure, and above all, law enforcement.

## D. Main policy options and directions: Diaspora

1. The needs of special populations within the larger Jewish community should attract special attention, training efforts and investment of resources. The growing needs of Shoah survivors urgently require continuing efficient and equitable action by the major relevant agencies.

## 10. TERRITORY AND BOUNDARIES

### A. Main processes

The State of Israel was founded to provide a definitive answer to the bimillennarian problem of the Jewish People's lack of sovereignty. Israel's territory significantly though not completely overlaps with the ancestral land. Israel is the only country in the world where Jews constitute a majority; in most countries of the world, Jews constitute small minorities among the total population. Demographic trends may quite crucially affect the persistence and shares of such majorities and minorities. In the experience of many nations the actual entity of the majority/minority ratio plays a critical role in determining the essence of society, its adherence to rules of democracy and the allocation of rights and decisional power to those who belong to different segments of society.

Within the state of Israel, Jewish and Arab (Palestinian) populations grow at quite different rates, and the Jewish majority edge is being daily eroded by these differential trends. In addition, since 1967 Israel has been in control of the West Bank and (until August 2005) of the Gaza strip. In this respect, alternative definitions of the boundaries of the State of Israel, with the eventual inclusion or exclusion of significant numbers of Palestinians may result in radically different population structures. Alternative population estimates and projections, reflecting different analytic assumptions, can affect the urgency of the perceived implications of population trends.

Israel's population is composed of a number of sub-populations possessing separate national and religious identities. Each of the two main sub-populations – the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs – displays a different demographic profile in turn related to different age compositions and different rhythms of growth. Neither the Jewish nor the Palestinian sub-population is a monolith socially or demographically. Each includes several sub-groups characterized by allegiance to different religious creeds, denominations and sects; different levels of religiosity; different socioeconomic stratifications; and different territorial concentrations. This heterogeneity entails a significant amount of inter-group tensions and conflicts – within the two main sub-populations even before what happens between the two sub-populations.

A common characteristic of both main groups – Jews and Arabs – has long been a pace of growth faster than in countries and societies with a socioeconomic development status similar to Israel's. Relatively high population growth is expected to continue in the foreseeable future even while differences persist in the respective growth rates of

the various sub-populations. This would have little more than documentary interest – besides the concern for population density and the availability and distribution of essential resources – were it not for the conflict that has characterized the Israeli-Palestinian scene since 1947 and earlier, and remains unresolved as of this writing.

Historical discussions about the carrying capacity or economic capability of Palestine between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River appear today oddly obsolete in the light of the demographic developments of the last decades (Troen, 1988). An area that during the 1920s and 1930s was deemed capable of sustaining a maximum of 2 to 3 million individuals now holds well above 11 million. The question of what the maximum population limit might be is still being asked today. Radical changes in the technological environment have transformed the relationship between local resources and population, hence allowing the land and its limited resources to host a much larger population that had been deemed possible. It is clear, however, that demographic increase cannot be indefinite. Beyond a certain point, continuation of current or even somewhat lower population growth rates would lead to a serious environmental crisis, particularly the unavoidable disruption of the balance of the water supply, pollution beyond tolerance, chaos in transportation and logistical systems.

But the main challenge is tied to the politically charged consequences of the ethno-religious demographic balance. Only matching population growth rates of ethno-religious components could prevent a break-up of the existing balance and a dramatic change in the social structure of the whole region. Tied to this is the need for regional development and for a more consistent and widespread population dispersal over the national territory – namely in the Negev and other southern regions.

A further basic question touches upon the balance of population composition according to the main Jewish and Arab ethnic and religious groups. One clear assumption in the present discussion is that all citizens should enjoy equal civil rights. At the outset, it should be recalled that a large number – perhaps the majority – of contemporary societies are constitutionally defined as one nation's countries. The world's geographical map is in most cases the geography of national identities, and, in spite of the emerging critique of the national state as an obsolete concept, it is in such a clearly predominant framework that the discussion of Israel and Palestine should be placed.

It is true that in several democratic societies that display heterogeneous population composition by religion, ethnicity or other cultural traits, the assumption of equal rights is usually enforced at the individual level, regardless of possible group allegiances of the

concerned citizens. Many democratic constitutions and legal systems tend to ignore such sub-identities. It would be poor judgment, however, to submit that ethnic identities are irrelevant in contemporary societies or should be ignored. Numerous contemporary examples from Ireland to Spain, from Cyprus to Belgium, from Serbia to Macedonia, from the Czech Republic to Slovakia, from Guyana to Jamaica to Quebec – not to mention areas of the world in Asia and Africa where ethnic violence is much higher – clearly demonstrate how ethnic identities continue to represent a powerful focus for social affiliation and for public action. Even in a country like the U.S. after a long story of racial discrimination and immigration quotas, the concept of affirmative action on ethnic ground is undeniably part of what many perceive as an enlightened vision of a democratic and egalitarian society.

A query lacking a clear answer is whether there exists a quantitative threshold, or a tipping point, beyond which the nature of Israel a Jewish state transforms from having a particular and unitary national character to being a bi-national or multi-national society. While it may be impossible to determine whether there is a meaningful difference between a minority of 10% or 20%, or between one of 30% and one of 40% of a total population, clearly above a given threshold the situation may change irreversibly.

At a time when Jewish international migration is at one of its lowest levels since 1948, the main factor of differential population growth in Israel and the Palestinian territories reflects total fertility rates that in 2009 stood at 2.9 for Jews and 3.7 for Muslims in Israel, about 4 in the West Bank, and above 5 in the Gaza strip. Two factors must be considered in this respect:

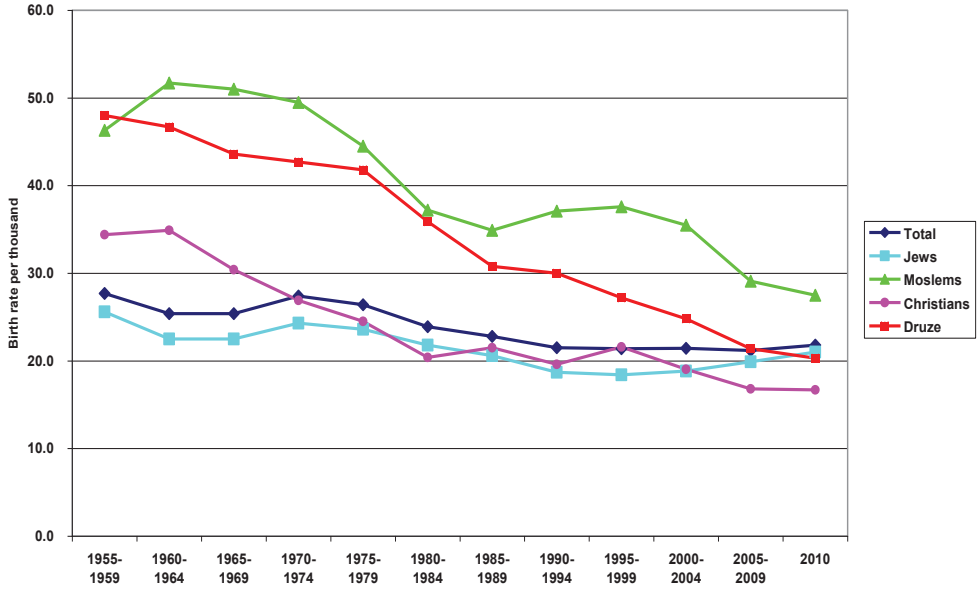
- Fertility levels have converged from much greater gaps prevailing in past years that determined significant differences in the age compositions of the respective populations.
- Palestinian Arabs in Israel and in the territories over the years have achieved levels of mortality and life expectancy much closer to though still lower than those of Jews.

The combination of these two factors with a much younger Arab age composition, produces a much higher birth rate and a much lower death rate, and consequently much higher rates of growth among Arabs in Israel and in the territories (above 2.5% annually) than among Jews (1.4-1.5%). The relative weight of Jewish and Arab populations therefore changes year by year.

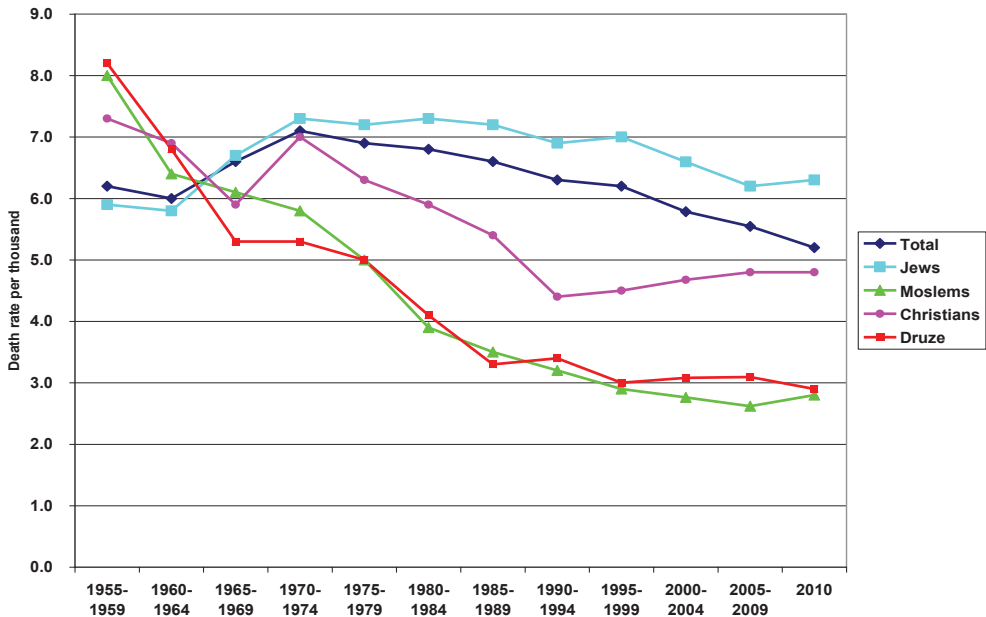
Figure 40 shows the evolution of birth, death and natural increase rates per 1000 population among the major religious groups in Israel between 1955 and 2010.

**FIGURE 40. BIRTH, DEATH AND NATURAL INCREASE RATES PER 1000 POPULATION BY MAJOR RELIGION GROUPS – ISRAEL, 1955-2010**

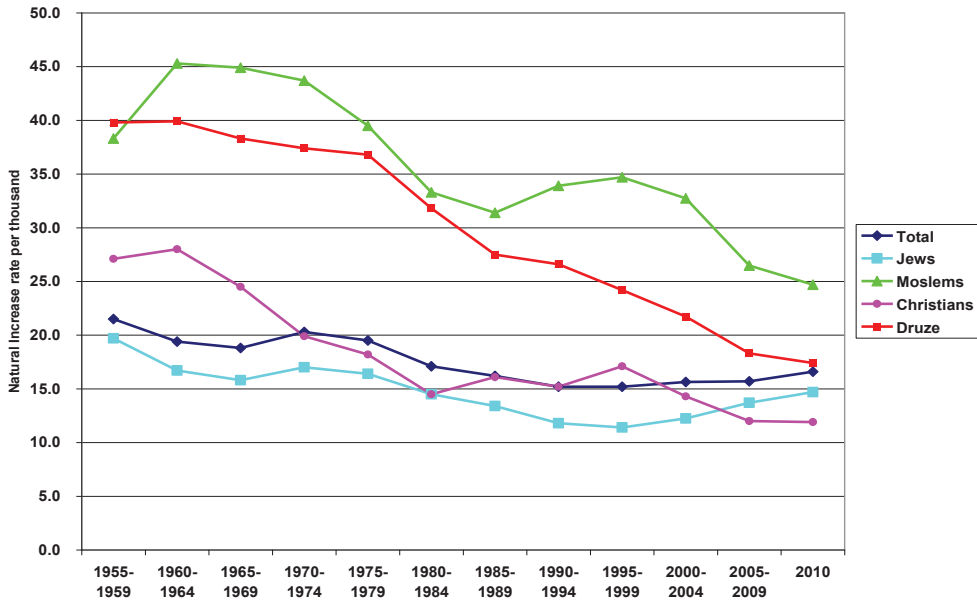
**BIRTH RATES**



**DEATH RATES**



## NATURAL INCREASE



Birthrates among Jews were relatively stable through slow and moderate decline. More visible birthrate declines among Christian Arabs and the Druze led them eventually to full convergence of fertility patterns with those of the Jews. Among Israel's Muslims, the birthrate had a characteristic fluctuating pattern. During the 1960s the improved health and socioeconomic environment led to actual fertility increases that powerfully affected age composition. This was followed by years of decline in both fertility and birth rates but during the 1980s fertility decline halted and birthrates rose due among other things to a structural echo effect. Only during the first decade of the 2000s did the fertility rate again start to decline followed by lower birthrates. However it seems not unlikely that a further echo effect might intervene in the near future providing renewed support to the birthrate albeit in a context of continuing fertility decline.

Developments regarding death rates manifestly reflect the effects of different age compositions. The Jews, with the highest life expectancy, consistently displayed the highest death rates, being the older group. Muslims and Druze, with the lower life expectancies; also had lower death rates.

The composite effects on the rate of natural increase generate a marked convergence between Jews, Christians and Druze in diminishing population growth rates. Israeli

Muslims displayed their characteristic fluctuating pattern, and, in any case, maintained distinctly higher rates of natural increase.

In the West Bank and Gaza, higher fertility generated birth rates higher than among Israel's Arabs, but death rates were higher too, producing rates of natural increase quite similar to those recorded in Israel. The periodical appearance of bulges in age composition, especially at reproductive ages, is an important factor to be considered here.

At the beginning of 2010, the demographic composition of the population looked as in Table 18. In Israel 5,704,000 Jews, 313,000 other members of Jewish households; 1,536,000 Arabs, including Muslims, Christians, Druze and other very tiny minorities, inclusive of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights; for a total in Israel of 7,552,000. These figures comprise 290,000 Jews and 6,000 non-Jewish family members in the West Bank, 189,000 and 6,000, respectively, in East Jerusalem, and 18,000 and 1,000, respectively, in the Golan Heights. In the West Bank, 2,200,000 Palestinians, and in Gaza, 1,470,000 form a total in the Palestinian territories of 3,670,000. These last estimates are based on our critical reading of the census undertaken by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) in November 2007, which found a population of 3,760,000, including East Jerusalem – higher by 870,000 than in the previous census of 1997 when the population had been assessed at 2,890,000, but lower by at least 350,000 than had been anticipated according to population projections by the PCBS. The annual population growth in the intercensal period, excluding East Jerusalem, was close to 2.9% – the same as among Israel's Muslims – and not 3.3% as had been expected in the same PCBS population projections.

In 2010, the estimated grand total in Israel and the Palestinian territories was thus 11,223,000, of which the core Jewish population represented 50.8% and the enlarged Jewish population 53.6%. When adding in the about 222,000 foreign workers in Israel, the grand total rises to 11,445,000, the core Jewish population falls to 49.8% and the enlarged Jewish population to 52.6%. Excluding the Palestinian population of Gaza, the core Jewish populations constitutes 58.5% of the total, and the enlarged Jewish population 61.7%. Excluding also the West Bank from the calculations, but including East Jerusalem, the core Jewish population constitutes 75.5% and the enlarged Jewish population 79.7%. When adding the 222,000 foreign workers the Jewish percentages became 73.4% and 77.7%, respectively.



**TABLE 18. CORE AND ENLARGED JEWISH POPULATION, ARAB POPULATION, AND FOREIGN WORKERS – ISRAEL AND PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, BY TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS, 1/1/2010<sup>a</sup>**

Area	Core Jews	Others <sup>b</sup>	Jews and Others <sup>c</sup>	Arabs	Foreign workers <sup>d</sup>	Total	% Jews and Others <sup>c</sup>
Total	5,704,000	313,000	6,017,000	5,206,000	222,000	11,445,000	52.6
State of Israel <sup>d</sup>	5,414,000	307,000	5,721,000	1,536,000	222,000	7,479,000	76.5
<b>Thereof:</b>							
Pre-1967 borders	5,207,000	300,000	5,507,000	1,238,000	222,000	6,967,000	79.0
East Jerusalem	189,000	6,000	195,000	276,000	..	471,000	41.4
Golan Heights	18,000	1,000	19,000	22,000	..	41,000	46.3
West Bank	290,000	6,000	296,000	2,200,000	..	2,496,000	11.9
Gaza	-	-	-	1,470,000	..	1,470,000	0.0

<sup>a</sup> Rounded figures | <sup>b</sup> Members of Jewish families not recorded as Jews | <sup>c</sup> Enlarged Jewish population | <sup>d</sup> All Foreign workers were allocated to Israel within pre-1967 borders | <sup>e</sup> As defined by Israel's legal system.

It should be noted again that in 2010 about 300,000 Jews lived in the West Bank, and nearly 200,000 lived in the neighborhoods of Jerusalem built beyond the 1967 Green Line. If these are subtracted from the population that actually lives within the Green Line, the proportions of the core and enlarged Jewish populations become 74.5% and 79.0%, respectively (without foreign labor). Jewish population increase in the West Bank continued to be quite stable. In 2009, a total growth of 14,900 represented a natural increase of 10,600, a net internal migration balance of 3,800, and absorption of 900 new immigrants (including immigrant citizens). Table 19 reports the percentage of Jews according to the core and enlarged definitions out of the total population of an area from which we gradually and cumulatively deduct from the initial maximum possible extent the Arab population of designated areas, while keeping constant the Jewish population. The result of this exercise is a gradually growing Jewish share of the total population according to the different territorial configurations considered. This allows a better evaluation of the current share of Jewish population out of the total population under alternative assumptions (DellaPergola, 2003; DellaPergola, 2007c; DellaPergola, 2010; Sofer and Bistrow, 2004).

**TABLE 19. PERCENT OF CORE AND ENLARGED JEWISH POPULATION – ISRAEL AND PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, BY DIFFERENT TERRITORIAL DEFINITIONS, 1/1/2010**

Area and population	Percent of Jews <sup>a</sup> , by definition	
	Core	Enlarged
Grand Total of Israel and Palestinian Territory	49.8	52.6
After deducting foreign workers	50.8	53.6
After deducting Gaza	58.5	61.7
After deducting West Bank	75.5	79.7
After deducting Golan Heights	75.7	79.9
After deducting East Jerusalem	78.6	82.9

<sup>a</sup> Total Jewish population of Israel, constantly including East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights.

The consequences of these trends on population distribution of major ethnic and religious groups in Israel and Palestinian territory appear in Table 20 below, which demonstrates the expected percent of Jews – including non-Jewish members of households – out of the total population according to various possible territorial scenarios up to 2020. It may be recalled that population projections based on the separate assessment of each component of population change over each five-year age cohort over successive periods of five calendar years have reached good reliability levels (United Nations, 2006). This is especially true of relatively short spans of time such as 10 or even 20 years, and relatively conservative paces of change as recently experienced in Israel and in Palestinian territory.

The following population projections reflect the medium (and more likely) projection out of a broader set of available projections (DellaPergola, 2003). The data rely on the assumption that the net balance of international migrations in future years will continue to be quite negligible as recorded in the more recent past. Another assumption is the stability of Jewish fertility levels together with a gradual reduction of Jewish-Arab fertility gaps, leading to a complete convergence by 2050. A third assumption concerns continuing mortality declines among all population groups.

In the year 2000, the baseline for this projection, the enlarged Jewish population represented 55% of the total population of the territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River (Table 20). The enlarged Jewish majority was reduced to less than 53% in 2010, was expected to shrink to 49% by 2020, and to 44% by 2030. Following the disengagement from Gaza, the portion of Jews in Israel plus the West Bank rose to 63%, had declined to less than 62% in 2010, and was expected to diminish to 58% in 2020, and 54% by 2030. The total percent of Jews in 2030 without the territory of Gaza and its Arab population would be similar to the percent in 2000 with Gaza. In other words, the demographic dividend of the 2005 disengagement from Gaza (without addressing here the parallel disengagement from North Samaria) would be completely consumed after about 30 years of continuing demographic processes.

**TABLE 20. PERCENT OF JEWS (ENLARGED) AMONG TOTAL POPULATION IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINIAN TERRITORY – VARIOUS SCENARIOS, MEDIUM PROJECTIONS, 2000-2030**

Year	Israel with West Bank and Gaza	Israel with West Bank, no Gaza	Israel, without West Bank and Gaza	Territorial swap		Israel plus 100,000 refugees
				Israel without East Jerusalem	Israel without East Jerusalem and Triangle	
2000	55	63	81	84	87	80
2010	53	62	80	83	86	79
2020	49	58	78	82	85	77
2030	44	54	76	80	83	75

Source: adapted from DellaPergola (2003) | Includes non-Jewish members of Jewish households. Does not include foreign workers. If the latter were added, the percent of Jews out of the total would diminish by 2-3%. Assumes stable Jewish fertility, declining Arab fertility, scarce impact of international migrations.

In comparison, within the territory of Israel as of June 1967 plus East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, Jews comprised 81% of the total population in 2000, was slightly below 80% in 2010, and according to the same medium projection was expected to decline to 78% in 2020 and 76% in 2030. In such a scenario the Jewish majority would remain significant, but a serious issue is whether this would be a sufficient majority ratio to ensure the Jewish and democratic character of the country in the longer run. The answer is probably negative at least judging at face value the aforementioned differences in age composition. The younger the age, the lower the proportion of Jews out of the total (see Table 21). This would significantly affect the allocation of resources in a society committed not to discriminate between different sectors of its population.

Of course the outlook of Israeli society would not only depend on numbers but also significantly on the mutual attitudes of the majority and the minority. Under conditions of mutual acceptance and willingness to peacefully interact, cultural differences inherent in demography might play a lesser role than under more tentional conditions. The nature of socialization among the younger generation of Israeli Arabs remains quite problematic because a group that constitutes about one third of the child population would probably not plainly accept the culture of the majority but would rather tend to advocate separate educational networks and pathways. In turn, this would render even more difficult than at present the integration of the alumni of such separate education within the mainstream of the Israeli society, economy and culture. The consequence would be a continuous growth in the social structural and mobility gaps already prominent when comparing Jews and Arabs in Israel.

A direct implication of the different age compositions of Jews and Palestinians is the social investments that should be allocated to each age group within each population. Different age groups functionally determine the types of activities and infrastructures to be considered in policy and economic planning.

Figure 41 shows the changes in the size of various major age groups during the decade 2000-2010 – at least as they were projected from the 2000 baseline – subdivided between Jews, Israeli Arabs, and Palestinians in the territories. Among children of school age below 15, most of the increase occurs among Palestinians. Within Israel's population, about half of the number of children added in the ten year period were in the Arab sector. The same trends of differential growth are even more visible in the 15-24 age group. Among the 25-44 age group, which constitutes the younger segment of the labor force, similar numbers of employment seekers have been added to both the Jewish sector and that of

**TABLE 21. PERCENT OF JEWS AMONG TOTAL POPULATION IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE,  
BY AGE GROUPS – MEDIUM PROJECTIONS, 2000-2020**

Year and age	Israel		Israel and Territories	
	% Jewish	% enlarged Jewish <sup>a</sup>	% Jewish	% enlarged Jewish <sup>a</sup>
2000				
0-14	71	74	41	42
15-24	76	79	49	51
25-44	78	82	56	59
45-64	86	89	70	73
65+	92	94	79	81

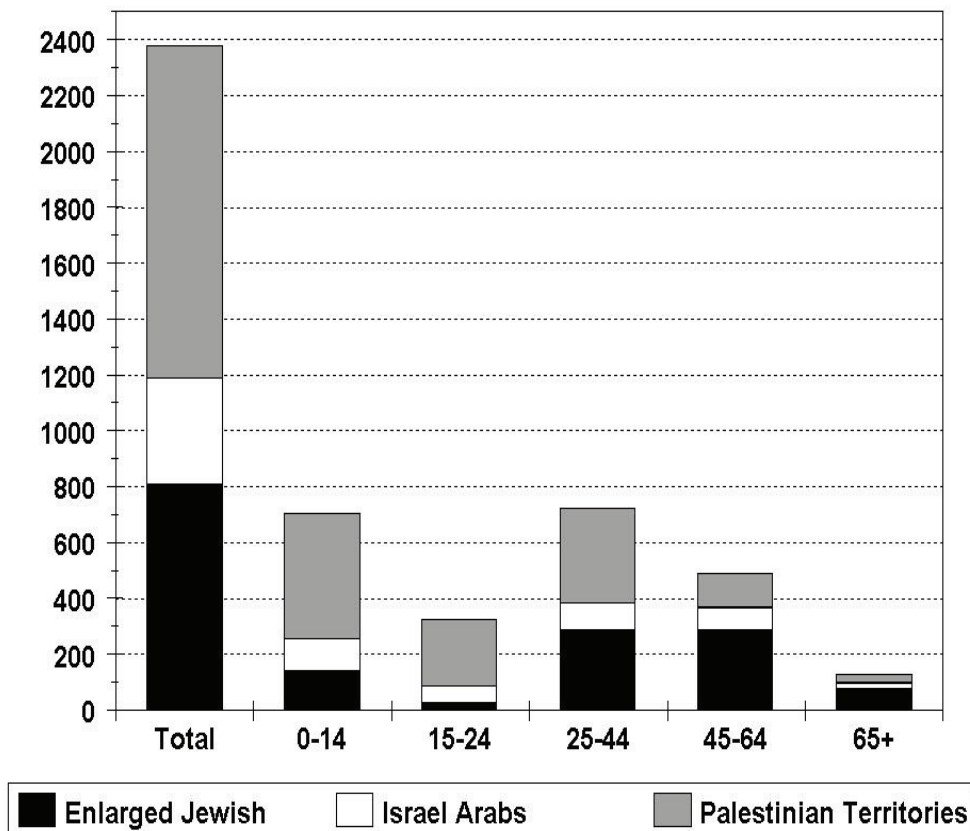
2010					
0-14	68	71	36	38	
15-24	72	75	42	44	
25-44	76	80	51	54	
45-64	83	87	66	69	
65+	89	92	75	78	
2020					
0-14	67	70	33	35	
15-24	69	72	38	40	
25-44	74	78	46	48	
45-64	77	82	57	60	
65+	88	91	74	77	

<sup>a</sup> Including non-Jewish members of Jewish households.

the Palestinian territories, with smaller numbers among Israeli Arabs. It is only above age 45 that most of the additional population belongs to the Jewish sector. In theory, social investments oriented to each of these functional age groups should be apportioned between Jews, Israeli Arabs, and Palestinians in the territories according to the division between major groups, but this is clearly not the case. It is in the nature of the present political situation that – whatever the causes, which in any case are not to be discussed here – the Jewish sector receives a higher share of the total allocation, while resources actually allocated to the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza is far less.

This may turn into a powerful driver of discontent among those whose emerging needs are under-budgeted.

**FIGURE 41. EXPECTED POPULATION INCREASE IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, BY MAJOR AGE DIVISIONS AND POPULATION GROUPS, THOUSANDS, 2000-2010**





These scenarios have been the subject of critique on the ground that the figures of the Palestinians were inflated, and therefore the actual percentages of Jews in each scenario is probably higher than those reported here (Zimmerman et al., 2005). The critics maintain that:

1. The Israeli “demographic establishment” uncritically accepted the data put forward by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in Ramallah;
2. The Arab population in East Jerusalem was double counted, both in the Israeli and Palestinian data;
3. The 1997 census baseline of the Palestinian population data was inflated because of the inclusion of several hundred thousands people who lived permanently abroad;
4. The number of children enrolled in the Palestinian educational system was lower than the alleged number according to the population census, hinting at a lower birth rate in previous years;
5. Fertility rates of the Palestinians were rapidly dropping – to “the Swedish model” in the critics’ words – and had been overestimated;
6. A significant amount of emigration of Palestinians was taking place;
7. Large amounts of Jewish immigration to Israel, as experienced in the past, might redress the Jewish-Palestinian demographic balance;
8. All in all, the estimated Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza should be reduced by one to one and a half million;
9. The policy implication would be that there is no urgency for Israel to address the consequences of demographic trends in Israel and the Territories.

These contentions are easily rejected (DellaPergola, 2007c):

1. The fact is that there is no Israeli “demographic establishment”. Rather, Israel fortunately allows full academic freedom, within which each author should be judged on the basis of professional standards and on the merits of his or her works. In our own work, independent population estimates were elaborated based on a critical review of all available evidence from Israeli, Palestinian and other sources;
2. No careful researcher ever double counted in East Jerusalem. Even the United Nations, which does not recognize Israel’s sovereignty over East Jerusalem, in its

own population projections takes care to subtract East Jerusalem from Israel's results and to add them to the Palestinian territories;

3. A possible double count, not mentioned by the critics, involves Arabs in East Jerusalem who also have residences in the West Bank. We have taken into account and corrected for this possible source of bias in our estimates.
4. The Palestinian population abroad on census day in 1997 was counted but not included in the subsequent tabulations, besides small numbers of students;
5. The notion cannot be ignored that dropping out from education is not infrequent in the Palestinian context;
6. Fertility of the Palestinians has indeed declined but still remains significantly higher than among Jews in Israel, and remains at a considerable sociological distance from the "Swedish model" referred to by the critics;
7. A negative migration balance of Palestinians has indeed occurred but not to the extent of significantly reducing their rate of growth;
8. No large amounts of further Jewish immigration to Israel is in sight;
9. All considered, Palestinian population estimates used in our assessment and projections are lower than those of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in Ramallah, but not to the extent alleged by the critics;
10. The policy implications of the current trends need to be addressed urgently (see below).

In the final analysis, even if the Palestinian population were demonstrated to be significantly lower than in our own independent estimates, the effect on the ratio of Jews to total population would be surprisingly modest. The question is: To what extent would subtracting one million Palestinians from the eleven and a half million inhabitants of the region affect the overall demographic balance? The answer is that reducing the number of Palestinians by one million is tantamount to raising the percentage of Jews by 5-6% of the anticipated total over the whole territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. Moreover, the growth rate of Palestinians will continue to be significantly higher than that of the Jews in the foreseeable future because of their much younger age composition, thus causing a continuing erosion to the extant Jewish

majority. The crucial factor at play here – consistently ignored by the critics – is that the demographic momentum created by the young age composition of Palestinians generates a high number of further births even if the fertility rate is actually declining.

Under these circumstances, the scenario of the Territorial Swap was suggested by members of the Labor party such as Efraim Sneh and Yossi Beilin, and more recently by the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Avigdor Liberman. Such a scenario rests on a number of assumptions that are not necessarily feasible under the present circumstances, and which are largely beyond the scope of this strategy report. It is however an interesting example of thinking that aspires to reduce the amount of friction between the two peoples and – in the framework of a peaceful, agreed and long-term solution to the conflict – to respect the fundamental interests and aspirations of both sides. The swap scenario maintains that the sovereignty over areas within the current territory of the State of Israel with an overwhelming majority of Arabs and contiguous to the 1967 "green line" would be transferred to the Palestinian Authority. All inhabitants and properties would stay where they are, but the international status and responsibility of those areas would shift from Israeli sovereignty to Palestinian. One of the areas in question includes the Arab neighborhoods of the Municipality of Jerusalem in the boundaries that were determined immediately after June 1967, with the incorporation of the Old City and about 50 sq. Km. of territory north, east, and south of the main urban nucleus. The Arab population of those urban areas reached 275,000 in 2010. Another area would be the strip commonly known as "the Triangle" running from Umm al-Fahm north to Kafr Qasem south in the central part of Israel over an extension of about 250 sq. km., with a population of about 300,000 in 2010. In exchange, Israel would receive sovereignty over an identical amount of territory in the West Bank where dense urban localities have been built over the last decades – typified by Ma'aleh Adumim next to Jerusalem. All other Jewish settlements and their inhabitants and property in the West Bank would have to be redeployed inside the 1967 "green line".

Under these hypothetical assumptions, the percent of Jews out of Israel's total population would have been 87% in 2000 and would remain significantly above 80% in subsequent years: 86% in 2010, 85% in 2020, and 83% in 2030 (see Table 20). Even at later dates the proportion of the enlarged Jewish population would not fall below 80%. We would argue that allowing the Palestinian Authority to be sovereign over the areas just mentioned would plainly conform with the aspirations and manifestations of the respective inhabitants as openly expressed in public discourse over the last years: a

Palestinian identity that surmounts an Israeli identity in a context of acknowledged multiple identities. In addition, it might be suggested that the swap might occur while provisions are implemented aimed at preserving the social benefits accumulated by Israeli citizens who would fall under Palestinian sovereignty, as well as full freedom of circulation and reciprocal employment on both sides of the boundary.

It is remarkable, therefore, that in surveys undertaken over the last years, the vast majority of the inhabitants of the Triangle should have declared their opposition to the swap scenario (Arieli and Schwartz, 2006). The most likely reading of this attitude is that the creation of a Palestinian state and becoming part of it is not perceived as a sufficiently attractive alternative to the continuation of the benefits enjoyed as part of the Israeli socioeconomic and health systems, its judiciary, its freedom of information and expression. If anything, opposition prevails against the existence of Israel as a Jewish state rather than against its existence as such (Smootha, 2005). From Israel's perspective, the swap's scope would thus be limited to a very minor proportion of the whole territory, but its consequences are bound to influence significantly Israel's ethno-demographic balance in the long run and to reduce the tensions inherent in a bi-national state.

It might be also hypothesized just for the sake of exercise, that Israel would be willing to admit a contingent of 100,000 Palestinian refugees or descendents of refugees, as part of a peace agreement package. The impact of such a purely speculative decision would be only 1% of the demographic balance between Jews and non-Jews.

A more specific issue of great import concerns the status of Jerusalem. Demographic processes in Jerusalem provide a sharpened version of the same issues and patterns of change seen on the national scale. Jerusalem's population issues are extremely complex and politically sensitive, as the city represents the central symbol of the capital of the State of Israel, the historical capital of the Jewish People, and one of the most significant cities in the world for all monotheistic religions. Jerusalem fulfills a unique role as a point of reference for different proclivities and traditions within the world Jewish collective. Hence, it is important to evaluate the demographic processes that unfold in Jerusalem and their implications for the image and social structure of the city (DellaPergola, 2001; DellaPergola, 2008c; DellaPergola and Levy, 2009).

Within constant municipal boundaries of Jerusalem as they were determined with the incorporation of areas in and around East Jerusalem in 1967 and successive westward extensions, the total population grew from 268,000 at the end of 1967 to 775,000 at the end of 2009. Of this, the Jewish majority, including non-Jewish members of Jewish

households, shrank from 73.5% at the end of 1967 to 63.5% in 2009. Population scenarios for 2020 indicate a likely growth of Jerusalem's population to about 950,000, of which 60% will be Jewish under the same enlarged definition (Municipality of Jerusalem-The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2009). At that same point in time, the junior age groups pertinent to compulsory education would include approximately the same number of Jews and Arabs. Besides a higher fertility rate on the Arab side, one problem on the Jewish side is the continuing negative migration balance to other Israeli localities. Clearly then, a continuation of current demographic trends strengthen a bi-national and divided character for Jerusalem rather than its character as the Jewish capital city.

From a broad outlook of demographic trends in Israel and in the Palestinian territories, it can reasonably be expected that over time the impact of differential demographic patterns will eventually attenuate. The United Nations (United Nations, 2007) forecasts a convergence of all humankind (except Sub-Sahara Africa) at sub-replacement fertility levels within a few decades. We do not follow such sweeping scenarios and believe rather that cultural and socioeconomic differences will continue to prevail across nations although with lesser gaps that currently observed. In Israel and Palestine, too, rates of population growth are bound to converge in the longer term, also in view of the persistent heterogeneity within both the Jewish and the Palestinian sectors. The contemporary presence and impact of different groups characterized by highly traditional, respectively more modern, cultural and social patterns, acts in determining somewhat more conservative balance in the overall demographic trends of the larger sub-population – either Jewish or Palestinian. It is a matter of time before the impact of demography on political processes will diminish, but the length of that time – 20 years or 50 years – is crucially important in terms of accumulated consequences. This is why it is important to monitor and try to influence the processes that will lead to that more distant point of equilibrium and a baseline for more balanced demographic developments further ahead.

## **B. Intervening mechanisms**

Unlike other trends and variables reviewed in this report, which mainly operate at the individual level, processes related to the territorial configuration of Israel and Palestine affect society at the aggregate level. Intervention mechanisms in this respect should not to be understood only in terms of what individual actors do or can be induced to do, thus creating patterns different from those currently observed, but primarily in relation to political processes that follow rules of a different nature. In this case,

as in the case of many other conflicts, the possible mechanisms of change should distinguish between unilateral, bilateral, or imposed scenarios. In each instance, the question arises whether ideas that may be subjects for negotiation should be put forward explicitly or secretly guarded. This is part of the elaboration and implementation of the preferred policies themselves.

As appropriate to political process, mechanisms of intervention should grow gradually through meticulous study, evaluation and simulation of each possible solution and of its foreseeable consequences. The costs and benefits of each possible scenario need especially careful consideration in the case of a process of crucial strategic importance like territorial definition in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its solution. Optimization of the demographic, social and cultural fabric of Israel so that it can maintain its primary character as a Jewish and democratic society is a primary strategic goal, but it should be stressed that other strategic goals particularly those concerning security issues may assert predominance under certain conditions. The final outcome of negotiations for a settlement of the current conflict, if any, will reflect the balance of such diverse interests.

Making an idea acceptable to leaders and decision-makers is a first step that must precede any subsequent implementation. In the present case, the question touches upon the most sensitive core of the Israeli internal and international political debate, and it cannot be adjudicated without substantial participation and even consensus by large sections of the Israeli public opinion. In this respect, it is quite evident that a lot of manipulation of public opinion – i.e. dissemination of factually wrong information, of partial truths, and of truths out of their adequate context – has occurred for tens of years, occurs currently, and will occur in the future. The question of the relationship between the elaboration and implementation of policies, and their marketing aimed at obtaining public support, is particularly acute and sensitive in this case.

### **C. Main policy options and directions: Israel**

1. It should be realized that the shape and boundaries of the sovereign territory of Israel, in light of the demographic patterns among populations that live in that territory, constitute a crucially important factor in determining the country's ethno-religious balance, its cultural and political character, and its status among the Jewish People and among the peoples of the Middle East. Demographic evaluations should constitute a central factor in establishing the final borders

of the State of Israel, whether through a bi-lateral agreement or unilaterally. It is imperative that Israel preserves a clear and durable Jewish majority in the areas that in due course will become integral territory of Israel within its definitive borders.

2. The possibility should be seriously evaluated of undertaking a swap of populated territories between Israel and the Palestinian entity in order to support, as far as feasible, the cultural coherence of the two political entities that will emerge – one Jewish and one Arab. Positive consideration should be given to possible territorial shifts between areas densely populated by Jews and those populated by Palestinians and to the relocation of Jewish settlements as devices apt to separate as much as possible the two populations.
3. Ensure that each population group – Jews and Palestinians – has a clear majority in its own territory, and that, insofar as the State of Israel is concerned, democratic processes positively reflect its Jewish majority.
4. By the same rationale – which does not take into account various value postulates and security considerations, which may be more important and may lead to other conclusions – Israel should reduce or minimize its presence in areas in the West Bank densely populated by Palestinians and not intended to be part of Israel's final boundaries.
5. The possibility might be evaluated to offer Palestinian citizenship, replacing their current Israeli citizenship, to Israeli citizens who are Arabs while granting them continuing residence in their current locations and all socio-economic rights accumulated in Israel. Rights of political suffrage and holding public office would be exerted in the country of citizenship, namely a Palestinian state.
6. In case of the creation of a Palestinian state, the option might be considered for those Jewish residents who might remain there to do so as Palestinian citizens, or in the framework of provisions for Israelis abroad (see chap. 4).
7. The planning of Jerusalem and its character should be directed toward being the capital of the State of Israel, the civilizational capital of the Jewish People, and the symbolic capital of all three major monotheistic religions (Weil and Zarembski, 2007).
8. It is fundamentally important that infrastructures of equal quality are developed all across the national territory in order to put an end to the anachronistic and damaging distinction between “center” and “periphery”. This is essential to help

achieving a more balanced population distribution over Israeli territory, more equally distributed economic and employment opportunities, and to check excessive locality-related internal heterogeneity of social and demographic patterns.

9. For the same reasons, it is suggested that intensive development be continued with the purpose of settling areas currently with low population density especially in the Negev and the southern areas, as well as in the more densely populated northern region of Galilee.
10. Israel's strategic priority should be to balance the effort of settlement and population dispersal with the effort to concentrate the Jewish presence in areas that are bound to have a solid Jewish majority in the long term – in addition to overriding value considerations and security issues, which are outside the scope of this report.
11. It is important that policy decisions be grounded in serious research that will assess the expected impact of trends affecting population size, dynamics and composition in Israel and the Palestinian territories as objectively as possible. Policy decisions should always be based on verified factual evidence; policy preferences should never be the reason for factual evidence.

#### **D. Main policy options and directions: Diaspora**

In a well-established praxis of Israel-Diaspora interaction, the role of decision-making on questions regarding the defense and future of Israel has been reserved for Israel. This does not mean that individual Jews and Jewish organizations in the Diaspora should be prevented from having and expressing their own ideas about the issues. If such judgments are to have any impact at all, it is important that they be reached on the basis of serious information and significant personal interactions between people who fulfill roles of responsibility on both sides, rather than based on purely ideological premises lacking factual or analytic foundation.



# PART THREE: POLICY DIRECTIONS

## 11. SUGGESTED DEMOGRAPHIC POLICY DIRECTIONS

### A. Policy goals and targets

Population constitutes the primary existential base for any society. Information on population trends is an essential prerequisite for evaluation of societal needs and allocation of resources addressing those needs. Relevant questions asked in this respect concern the interactions of the pace of population growth, lifecycle events, age composition, territorial distribution, socioeconomic gaps between different segments within a population, and immigration and emigration, along with other aspects of societal development. In a rapidly changing world, the central target of helping to reach more balanced societal dynamics in demographic terms of reference is the homologue of similar concerns with national security, civil rights and justice, and economic development. In each of these areas, different configurations of societal realities evince different benefits and costs for the collective involved.

From the outset, one needs to fairly acknowledge that in the field of social policy planning there cannot exist absolute and universal solutions, only alternative options. The preference among these reflects, first and foremost, the value orientation of the planners themselves. A review of some of these alternative value frameworks in the context of Jewish policy planning will follow later in this chapter. At this stage, in the view of this writer, the primary agenda must include:

- A thriving Jewish and democratic state of Israel;
- A thriving set of Jewish communities across the world;
- A viable and mutually beneficial relationship and interaction between Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora.

In each case, the ideal goal of promoting the maximum feasible thriving for the collective is reached – at least in theory – by somewhat orienting, and when necessary promoting or limiting, individual liberties through a whole system of incentives and constraints. In some of the areas mentioned, not complying with policy goals may sometimes be accompanied by sanction. This is probably

not the current case with demography in democratic countries, with some exceptions directed at illegal immigrants. Another example may be health-damaging behaviors conducive to early mortality. Non-democratic societies like China have applied sanctions in order to enforce strict reproductive quotas. Being aware that some other aspects of policy interventions never can claim to have achieved fully or even partly their initial target, and keeping in mind that a broad concept of full and equal allocation and defense of civil rights should ideally be superimposed upon more specific and narrowly focused policy targets, the expectations of demographic policies should be kept within reasonable limits.

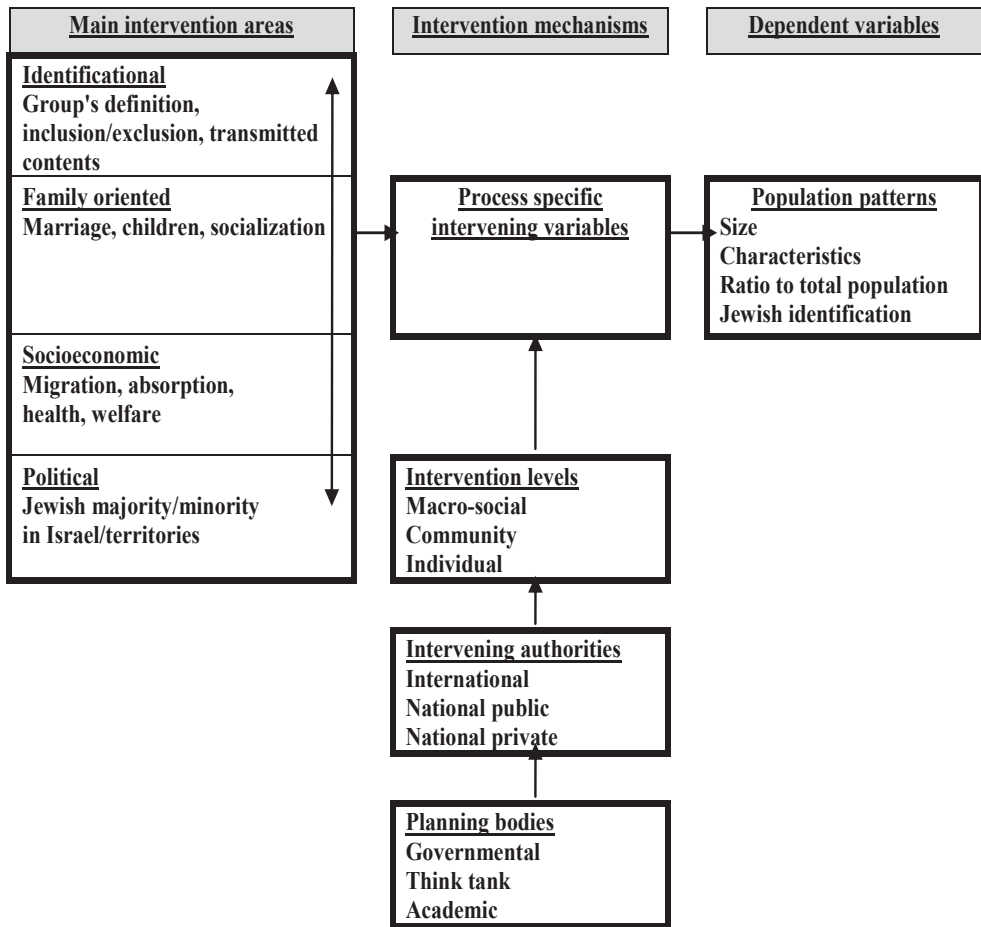
In the case of Israel, the very existence of a sovereign state allows for the development of Jewish policy options while scrupulously guarding the allowance of full and equal civil rights to all citizens. Comprehensive social and demographic policies are feasible and can be enforced with the tools available to central and local government authorities. In Jewish communities outside of Israel, the prevailing voluntary system allows for significantly fewer real policy options.

Policies are usually developed to reverse trends perceived as dangerous and to stimulate counteracting trends, or to utilize new opportunities and realize new values. Policy interventions can directly aim at the several processes outlined in the second part of this report through different intervening mechanisms that causally articulate each main trend. Available data are adequate for identifying some of the needed measures, but in some cases new policy oriented research is needed. It is essential to research and understand the demographic issues truthfully, away from old myths and new superstitions.

Figure 42 summarizes the main current Jewish population policy concerns from a general perspective that encompasses both the state of Israel and Jewish communities in the Diaspora.

Present and future global and local Jewish population patterns – size, characteristics, ratio to total population – depend on a variety of identificational and cultural, family oriented, socioeconomic and political factors, each of which stands in mutual interaction with the others and at the same time directly affects outcome. The importance of these mutual influences cannot be undervalued for both cognitive and policy planning purposes. A few examples can clarify this point:

**FIGURE 42. ILLUSTRATION OF MAIN JEWISH POPULATION PROCESSES AND POLICY CONCERNS**



- Major political developments such as US-USSR relations during the 1970s and 1980s may end in major policy changes at the global level, with huge implications for the Jewish people. The case of mass migration from the FSU, after decades of a locked door is glaring. How Israel positions itself in the international arena may dramatically affect the rate of growth of Jews in Israel, the US, and other countries.
- We know that fertility levels reflect above all cultural and ideational variables, along with socioeconomic opportunities and constraints. Therefore, it is difficult to really understand the birth rate without understanding the processes that shape Jewish identification.

- What Israel does or does not decide with regard to the Palestinian issue has definite consequences for Israel's image abroad and for Jewish identity there, which in turn may affect many young adults' propensity to participate in organized activities, to preserve their Jewish social networks, and to marry within the faith or out, with momentous consequences for demography.
- It is also true that, somewhat symmetrically, Jewish identity attained out of the state of Israel by new immigrants who come perhaps with a romanticized sense of a holy mission, tends to influence the scene in the context of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank, with possible implications for the broader political process involving Israel.
- One further example comes from emigration from Israel, which primarily reflects the operation of economic variables, but also to some extent a sense of estrangement or frustration manifestly tied to identificational processes.

Process-specific intervening variables must be taken into account to understand the character and shape of each specific process affecting Jewish population size, composition and ratio to total population. These process-specific intervening variables are in turn the dependent variables at the end of a chain of policy and other interventions. The levels of articulation of such interventions can be various and multiple, ranging from the individual, the community or the whole macro-societal context. Intervening authorities can range from local non-governmental organizations, through public or governmental institutions, to international agencies that operate on a broad or even global scale. These interventions need to be planned, whereby, ideally, a whole range of research and analysis precedes the implementation stage. Such prior evaluation is generally undertaken – to greater or lesser degree – by the government agencies that are themselves in charge of implementation. To some extent the academy and university system provide the analytic tools and environment where the conceptual antecedent of planning can occur. With the passage of time, independent think-tanks are more visible in the field of policy thought and planning, and sometimes even offer assistance in policy implementation.

When trying to articulate suggested policy directions for Israel and the Jewish Diaspora it should be recognized that Jewish life significantly depends on circumstances beyond Jewish control. The broader global societal framework and within it the main political and macro-economic trends are governed by forces external to the Jewish community

system. Nevertheless, acknowledging the broader situation and focusing on specific ends may, with effort, secure a better outcome for the Jewish collective. A realistic assessment of where and how Jewish individuals and their institutions can best shape their own demographic and identificational future should combine with a willingness to initiate decisions and processes apt to promote these goals. Facing these trends and prospects, two quite different sets of issues should stand at the center of the Jewish agenda.

Challenges in Jewish demography in Israel and in the Diaspora are in part unique and in part similar to concerns in numerous other countries and social groups, mainly in Europe and in America. Jewish society preceded the experiences of other societies on many accounts, such as reaching high population growth, later approaching zero population growth, and being enmeshed in complex conflicts involving ethno-religious identities. While in the past the concerns emerging from Jewish population trends may have looked to some observers parochial and self-concerned, today the same issues are reaching the cutting edge of policy research and planning in a large number of the most developed societies – hence turning into a universal and legitimate field for focused deliberation and action.

There cannot be an “absolute answer” to the problems of Jewish population. However, it is worthwhile to review some of the typical basic assumptions as well as some of the main objectives emerging from on the discourse around possible demographic policies in Israel and the Diaspora. Four main goals, at minimum, stand high on the agenda:

- Sustain Jewish population size;
- Sustain the Jews' share of total population;
- Sustain or increase Israel's share out of world Jewry;
- Sustain the quality of Jewish identification.

In most Diaspora communities, the challenge is how to preserve the sense of a cohesive and meaningful Jewish community while enjoying the full gamut of opportunities offered by open and non-hostile societies. From a demographic point of view, resilience of the Jewish way of life in the long term significantly rests on the primary biological foundations of family and children. A related challenge is how to reach those who do not bother or do not want to belong, in order to revive in them

a spark of historical memory, mutual responsibility and desire to identify Jewishly, if not a sense of pride and mission.

The socio-historical experience of the last decades teaches that in liberal societies it is not reasonable to expect that projects of individual social mobility should be subordinated to community concerns. Since there can be no tight control on the part of the Jewish public over general educational and occupational developments, the main path toward influencing demographic trends in Diaspora Jewish communities passes through the strengthening of culture and identity, and through providing economic supports. These factors, at least partially, do pertain to the influence of the Jewish community system and, for sure, the State of Israel.

In Israel one of the greatest challenges is how to preserve a clear Jewish population majority. Differential growth, the changing population composition of ethno-religious groups – Jews and Palestinians – and territorial configurations need to be considered. Interconnections between security, culture and society, the economy, the demography of international migration and family patterns, emerging identificational patterns, and policy decision-making are bound to determine whether Israel can continue to be a Jewish and democratic state and the overall profile of world Jewry in the future.

The ongoing trends in the size and makeup of the Jewish population in the State of Israel and the Diaspora, together with the trends in other populations which are the natural context of the presence and development of Jewish peoplehood, require examination of the existing situation, the drawing of conclusions concerning implications for the future, and active intervention in order to adjust these existing trends as much as possible. Recognition of existing facts, interpretation of anticipated trends in the foreseeable future, and the implications of all these for the more distant future will necessitate many decisions and the development of a series of constraints and incentives to be utilized by the official responsible authorities in the State of Israel – probably in cooperation with the organizations which advance Jewish interests throughout the world. These interventions are meant to steer the social and demographic reality that exists in Israel and the Diaspora in the direction of desirable and attainable goals.

Of the suggestions in the realm of the demographic policy presented in this document, some have already undergone deliberation and critique, and they should be seen as the recommendations of a mature framework for the planning and implementation of detailed policy. Other suggestions have been presented – some for the first time in this document – as ideas, conjectures or even speculations directed at focusing

necessary policy deliberations and development that will evolve into concrete policy proposals.

Demographic considerations touch upon almost all areas of government action, including education, health, housing, employment and defense and are important in attaining central social goals. In the West, demographic policy has been given a serious and respectable position. In France, Germany, and in Italy, for example, prominent government authorities deal with it, beginning with demography policy institutes and reaching specialized units within government ministries. All this, as already stated, is due to the recognition of the importance of demographic considerations in the execution of overall policy, stemming from a correct viewpoint of goals and anticipated outcomes over the long run.

Specific Jewish population policy considerations and goals should include, among others, the following aspects:

- *The global system* should be monitored to shed more insight into possible future Jewish migrations and the prospective growth or diminution of Jewish populations in individual countries. A better set of indicators with which constant monitoring of the quality of Jewish material and cultural environment in different countries might help to better forecast the future volume and direction of Jewish international migration.
- Rescue, assistance to, and resettling of *Jewish international migrants* remains a central ethical concern at the beginning of the 21st century as it has been over the whole of the 19th and 20th centuries, although in actuality the number of Jewish communities at risk today is very small. Understanding why *aliyah* and other Jewish migrations are more or less frequent than expected in Israel and other countries is an essential basis for policy planning. It is also important to understand the need to incorporate the migrants, including those coming from Israel, into existing Jewish networks of education, culture, and economic assistance.
- Extensive *geographic mobility* between and within major urban areas – a significant factor in Jewish community affiliation – calls for careful evaluation and planning of the territorial location of Jewish community services. Relocation appears mostly in the form of Jews leaving traditionally Jewish urban areas for less traditionally Jewish (and less urban) places – where risks are higher of assimilation and/or alienation. The counter stream also exists of entirely new residential foci being created where Jewish life is intensive and a dense institutional web is emerging, along with some cases of the revitalization of faded Jewish communities.

- Several decades of intensive social mobility have revolutionized the Jews' socioeconomic profile. Trends in Israel's *economy and labor force* and especially employment, social welfare and equal access to resources should be monitored, as a fair distribution of resources – to the extent that this is feasible – and oversight of crucial economic sectors are fundamentally related to national thriving. The latter is both a major and necessary goal if civil unrest and large-scale emigration are to be prevented. This may become particularly true under the impacts of international economic downturns, as was the case in 2008-2009.
- Changes in *Jewish family patterns* are a major topic for assessment and require new policy approaches. With the input of sociologists and social psychologists, a serious survey should be undertaken of marriage and family related attitudes and behaviors among the growing pool of young unmarried Jewish adults in Israel and in the Diaspora. Facing high frequencies of out-marriage in the Diaspora, innovative mechanisms for facilitating the encounter of young Jewish adults should be implemented, supported and evaluated. Moreover, the role of child and young adult formal and informal Jewish education in shaping Jewish identification needs to be carefully analyzed.
- A critical review is needed of the prospects for affecting and sustaining *Jewish birth rates* in Israel and in the Diaspora. Policy instruments can perhaps affect the statistical equivalent of one-half child per family, which multiplied by millions of households over tens of years equals several millions of people. The possible role of social service, financial and value-oriented incentives in affecting fertility – particularly at medium parities such as the 3rd or 4th child – should be better understood and made available to a broad Jewish public whose social norms are still significantly family oriented.
- One important consequence of the recent family patterns is the creation of a growing pool of non-Jewish children, grandchildren and other household mates of Jews. A major policy issue relates to the question of how to bring *out-married couples* and their children into the mainstream of Jewish society, both in the Diaspora and, differently, in Israel.
- In Israel, the issue should also be tackled in terms of the possible role of relevant institutions, such as the Chief Rabbinate, regarding the hundreds of thousands of non-Jewish Israeli immigrants mostly from the FSU but also from Ethiopia and other countries, and the modes of their incorporation within the Jewish sectors of Israeli society. If it is true that the minority tends to conform to the majority



of society, while in the Diaspora it is not easy to stop Jewish identificational losses, in Israel it would probably be possible to perform much larger scale *giyur* (conversion) of those who seriously wish to join Judaism.

- Jewish communities worldwide should continue monitoring the effectiveness of their different *Jewish educational programs*, full time and part time, formal and informal, in shaping and developing an attractive and durable Jewish identity among the younger generation. New solutions should be developed for those sections of the community that would like to give their children a Jewish education but are unable to find in today's system curricular options to their liking or cannot afford the cost.
- The issue of growing *identificational* gaps within the Jewish collective along religious-non religious and Israel-Diaspora directions calls for considerable efforts aimed at creating an enhanced sense of internal cohesion and a dialogue respectful of differences. Lesser demographic gaps between sectors and more homogeneous Jewish population growth might follow lesser estrangement and improved mutual relations among different Jewish population sectors.
- Demography is deeply intertwined with *the Palestinian-Israeli conflict*. Differential Jewish and Arab growth rates and population compositions need to be taken into account when envisaging the conflict's continuing implications and possible political solutions. One of the considerations to be given much weight when determining the permanent or long-term de facto national borders is the requirement to preserve a *viable Jewish majority* in the State of Israel.
- It is imperative that in the evaluation of these problems and in the search for appropriate solutions, the global picture of world Jewry is considered because of the *mutual dependency* and *commonality of interests* that tie together Israel and Diaspora. This is the main reason why Jewish population issues should be constantly kept under observation both on the local and the global scale.

Population policies can operate differently by identifying alternative and complementary points of entry into the socio-demographic processes:

- The individual and household (micro) level;
- The community (meso) level;
- The general societal (macro) level.

It may be easier to operate at the *individual* level, where a certain number of individuals can be stimulated to adjust their behaviors and preferences, rather than at the more aggregate levels.

The main focus for action at the individual level can be conceived following the lifecycle through the continuing and ever-changing interaction of biological and cultural factors. The following list outlines the main stages of the perhaps obvious but often forgotten Jewish lifecycle of physical and cultural reproduction:

- Birth of a child;
- Initial identification of child through formal rituals and ceremonies, such as *brit milah*, naming ceremony, *bar/bat mitzvah*, confirmation;
- Child socialization through several stages of formal schooling and other informal educational activities until transition to adulthood;
- Family formation of adult (if any) negotiated through norms of marriage desirability, the economics of marriage feasibility, and the demography of marriage markets;
- Identification of partner (if any) and identification of self negotiated through norms on endogamy, or outreach and cooptation either way in case of heterogamy;
- Birth of a child (if any) and closure of the generational loop;
- Identification of person through continuing adult socialization and interaction within a Jewish environment;
- Later stages of maturing, pondering, enjoying and still developing the accumulated cultural capital;
- End of lifecycle, and its Jewish ritual procedures.

The gist of this listing is that many repeated interventions, tuned to the different stages and needs of life, rather than one specific type of intervention aimed at one particular stage, may be necessary. An overall “mega-policy” can only emerge from the articulation of many specific “policies” each tuned to an appropriate point of intervention.

In recent years, measures aimed at supporting marriage and births have been questioned on the basis that it is not politically correct to deal publicly with issues that are seen as intrusions into privacy. In actual terms, many of these family-

supporting norms still exist among the Jewish public, but the difficulty arises in their implementation. This generally positive value orientation clashes with constraints generated by the balance of economic resources and costs. In the U.S., for example, declarations about the willingness and propensity to marry are high among Jews as compared to other ethnic and religious groups, but actual rates of Jewish marriage among the lowest (Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1993).

In Israel the number of children wanted is higher than the number of children actually attained (Peritz and Baras, 1992; DellaPergola, 2007). Culture, including religion and other ideational factors, may be the main motivators of ideal levels of a particular phenomenon; but economic factors hold sway in actually establishing its level and fluctuations over time. Policy interventions can be most effective if they operate through appropriate institutions that enhance what most people would like to do anyhow. But once people have not attained what they wanted – in what may be described as a temporary deviation from the main trend – and that deviation has lasted unchecked for too long, the new pattern of behavior may become normative, and in the end, having been generally accepted, it may become culturally institutionalized and sanctioned. One example is the observed transition of (temporary) emigration from Israel – from a phenomenon close to social deviance, to an imperative for social and professional mobility.

A second intermediate level of policy intervention may be the *community* as an aggregate. Since a community as such may appear as a rather amorphous entity, an operationally more effective approach in Jewish population policy planning may consist of focusing on groups that can be generally described as more vulnerable and in need of special treatment and resources. Some of these particular target populations have traditionally been the recipients of special attention in the Jewish community; other types of target populations have emerged more recently as the product of the ongoing transformations of Jewish population and society. Some relevant examples are:

- **Jewish children:** children are primary targets of Jewish educational activities in its various forms.
- **The elderly:** this segment of the Jewish community, and especially its more fragile very elderly (or old-old) component constitutes a growing proportion of the total Jewish population, reflecting diffuse aging trends which primarily reflect a prolonged pattern of low fertility.

- **The poor and the impoverished:** given the prevailing pattern of upward mobility in the Jewish milieu, the economically deprived represent a somewhat neglected and insufficiently assessed segment of the Jewish population. Recent research suggests that rates of assimilation and alienation may be particularly high among those who feel left behind socio-economically by the mainstream community.
- **Recent immigrants:** particularly those from the FSU, Ethiopia, and Israel but also other regions in the world may constitute relatively large and economically lower-status groups who are poorly connected with the majority of the Jewish community.
- **Single parents:** the rapid rise of divorce rates, and to a much smaller extent in the Jewish context the growing incidence of births outside of marriage, generates an increasing number of Jewish single-parent households. These tend to be both struggling with socioeconomic difficulties, and weakly involved with the Jewish community.
- **Mixed households:** the very substantial increase in the frequency of out-marriage – especially couples where the non-Jewish spouse does not undergo conversion to Judaism – implies a growing presence of households whose identification and relational networks tend to be on the borderline between Jewish and non-Jewish, or imbued with both.
- **The unaffiliated and uncommitted:** a growing share of the Jewish population, generally young, well educated, and secular and often not part of Jewish nuclear families, tend to occupy a rather marginal position facing the set of activities and services offered by the Jewish institutional network.
- **The unconventional:** a growth is also observable in the shares of Jewish population adhering to political, cultural, gender or other orientations defined by the majority as unconventional – while receiving growing popular and legal support.

Each of these (and other) special target groups requires increased attention and a serious assessment both of the causes of the underlying cultural and social transformations, and of the ways and means required of the organized community to provide meaningful frameworks of inclusion and prevent complete loss of contact.

A crucial role in this respect is often played by *community leadership*. Often a few outstanding individuals carry disproportionate responsibility for attitudes and decisions that pertain in the individual sphere. Direct involvement of such community

leaders – each in their different capacities according to the specific character of the communities at stake – may play a determinant role in the successful implementation of social and demographic policies.

Even more oblique may be the attempt to influence *the broader societal environment* in order to achieve results that may be seen as beneficial to the collective. In this broader context, the Jewish community does not hold a particular advantage versus others, but it can effectively participate in the more general debate trying to orient population issues. One case in point is the variation of European fertility levels. Already in the 1990s, estimates for France and Sweden indicated that the measured impact of pro-family financial incentives may have contributed an additional 0.5 children over the pre-existing fertility levels (Calot, 1990). Indeed fertility levels in France as well as in some socially interventionist Scandinavian countries have remained or have become higher than among other comparable European societies. Interestingly, Jewish fertility in France ended up being higher than in other Western countries (Cohen, 2007), though significantly lower than in Israel, probably reflecting the general effects of the respective national socio-demographic policies.

In summation, the challenge of trying to influence Jewish population processes and their outcomes needs to be understood in all its complexity. Multiple targets operating at multiple societal levels need to be envisaged with multiple tools. Unlike simplistic and sweeping hypotheses and contentions sometimes put forward, no single policy device can claim exclusivity. It is rather from a multiple facet policy package that significant and persistent results can emerge. This requires opening participation in planning to a broad array of individuals and institutions representing a range of ideational positions and advocating different ways of reaching the same or complementary goals, and striving to coordinate policy execution as much as feasible, as argued in greater detail below.

## **B. Alternative approaches to Jewish population policies**

A major obstacle in articulating a coherent package of policy proposals on population issues is the lack of agreement in the Jewish world concerning the value-based nature of the challenges and the means to deal with them. With regard to demography, at the grassroots level of Israeli society – at least as portrayed through the printed and electronic media – there is probably a greater awareness and interest in the subject than among Jews in the Diaspora. But it is still possible to observe very contradictory attitudes regarding interpretation of the demographic data and the degree of urgency

for sweeping governmental demographic policies. Attitudes, in the past, have ranged from highly committed or supportive (Bachi, 1977; Sicron, 2004) to adversary or skeptical (Friedlander and Goldscheider, 1979; Schelekens and Ophir, 2007).

At least six rival approaches can be mentioned in this respect regarding possible population policy interventions:

- **Fatalistic.** This approach states that Jews in the Middle East comprise a small minority of 5-6 million people facing more than one billion Muslims. Jews in the Diaspora account for 7-8 millions as against a total population of nearly seven billions. This gap can never be bridged. Even relative to the area immediately proximate to Israel, Jews constitute a small minority. No demographic policy, whatever its results might be, can ever alter the basic balance which leaves the Jewish group in a permanent precarious position within the regional broader boundaries, or the globe in its entirety.
- **Messianic eschatological.** This approach emphasizes the continual survival of the Jewish People through the ages thanks to divine providence, forcefully ignoring sociological, economic and psychological determinants. The Jewish nation has lived through other periods of dwindling population in the past during which its absolute numerical size was much smaller than today. This, however, neither prevented the continued existence of the Jewish People, nor peaks in its creativity. The number of Jews, hence, would not be a relevant factor when the emphasis is on the eternal qualitative existential trust of Judaism – as suggested by the caption *Netzach Israel lo Yishaker* (The Eternal Glory of Israel Shall not Fail, I Shmuel, 15:29). To which, however, the further caption should be added: *Hareshut Netunah* (Permission is Given, Pirkey Avot, 3:15).
- **Liberal individualistic.** This approach maintains that the private needs of the individual should not be subordinated to the general interest and control of the collective. Public institutions should not have the right to interfere in those matters relating to the private life of the individual, such as marriage, family planning, and the right to live wherever he or she chooses. To strengthen this argument whose premises are ideological, quite often the further – allegedly empirical – notion is appended that, "anyhow population policies do not work".
- **Reform Judaism.** This approach suggests a renewed reading of Jewish sources in the light of universal principles accepted in modern societies. The Jewish population problem might be solved, at least in part, by redefining the fundamental paradigm of

"Who is a Jew." Easing up definitional rules, particularly in the context of the conversion process, as well as recognition as Jews of children born to a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother as *Halakhic* Jews, would affect the size of the Jewish population.

- **Zionist pragmatic.** This approach maintains that under certain conditions some concessions must be made at the expense of the private interest of individuals to the advantage of the general collective welfare. A quest for solutions to the population problem should be promoted by offering economic incentives with one hand, and "making waves," with the other – proceeding step-by step and stimulating the public imaginary. To the extent that any sort of policy approach was adopted, this has been the prevailing, though not exclusive, approach followed in the past by Israel's Governments and the central Zionist organizations.
- **Post- or anti-Zionist.** This approach is indifferent to or actively denies the basic premise of the Jewish nature of the State of Israel. It leads to denying the legitimacy of initiatives aimed at fostering Israel's Jewish population, or to supporting initiatives aimed at jeopardizing that national identity. Examples would be support for a policy allowing large numbers of descendants of Palestinian refugees to be incorporated into Israeli society, abolishing the Law of Return, and changing the symbolic attributes of the state such as the national anthem and flag. An interesting recent variation operates a feed-back from delegitimizing Israel as a Jewish state to denying the very existence of Judaism and the Jews as such (Sand, 2009).

Paradoxically, the Fatalistic, the Messianic, the Liberal, and the post-Zionist approaches, while based on completely different ideological premises, all lead to similar results of a lack of support for institutional involvement in influencing demographic processes. All four approaches show awareness that individuals, families or other social units are likely to generate far-reaching demographic consequences, with implications that touch both individuals and society at large. But these approaches share the explicit or latent assumption that any possible societal outcome of demographic trends will result from "exemplary individual behavior" – whether generated by man or by a supreme transcendental force. From these ideological angles there is no expectation of or support for any institutional interventions of population policy.

Moreover, on specific points of substance, depending upon their particular ideologies, supporters of different approaches draw conflicting solutions. For example, on the issue of legal abortion, followers of a religious-normative

approach have time and again protested against it, suggesting stronger sanctions particularly when based on socioeconomic motives, while followers of a liberal-individualistic approach would leave the decision up to the concerned woman or couple, giving ample space to personal motives, including socioeconomic ones, and abolishing sanctions.

On the other hand, the Reform Judaism and the Zionist – and to some extent in their own antithetic ways the post and anti-Zionist – approaches advocate public mobilization and concrete action to reach solutions to Jewish population issues. Leaders of Reform Judaism in the U.S. and elsewhere suggest that one solution to the demographic problem may be found by expanding the traditional definition of who is a Jew. Two problems are inherent in such an approach. The first is opposition on the side of other Jewish denominations leading to polarization and strained relations within the Jewish ranks. The second problem is related to the assimilation process. Various studies (Reinharz and DellaPergola, 2009) have shown that the offspring of out-marriages, even when Jewishly defined by their parents, tend to marry non-Jews more frequently than do children of unions of two Jewish spouses. This finding indicates that some of the solutions suggested by Reform Judaism to limit losses due to assimilation may bear some influence in the short run, but that the significance of their returns may diminish with time unless relevant processes change.

These glimpses suggest that policy-making should not be left to the ideological realm, but should be articulated from a broad platform that systematically takes into account a wide array of needs, potential tools, and constituencies. Specific campaigns aimed at affecting certain components of change in the Jewish population or among specific sectors within it – such as age at marriage, family size, internal migration, migration to and from Israel – may have some chance of achieving certain returns even if they do not produce dramatic changes in the existing trends. But in the main, results can only emerge following a broad vision of the complex interplay of relevant socio-demographic factors, and – above all – of collective Jewish interests, beyond particular agendas and factionalism.



## C. Past policy experiences

At first glance, deliberations in the field of demography have been of permanent concern to those governing Israel and have been the subject of diverse policy planning. In the periodical assessment of country population policies issued by the United Nations Division for Economic and Social Affairs, Israel appears to have not only fully articulated policy instruments, and also a critical evaluation of the effectiveness of those policies by those who are in charge for them (see Table 22).

In quick synthesis, the Israeli Government, as of 2009, would like to see a higher population growth, higher fertility, higher immigration, lower emigration, the preservation of current health standards, with a major concern about levels of HIV/AIDS) and the broader issue of size of working-age population and population aging.

Also in the light of these propositions, in the imagination of many there exists the assumption that Israel is a country highly concerned with, and powerfully interventionist in the area of, population policies. In practice, this has not been the case. The Government of Israel indeed at least twice focused on demographic policies: in deliberations that took place in 1967 and again in 1986 (see Appendices a and b), but as a rule these discussions had little consequence.

At the meeting of April 4, 1967 the Government approved proposals regarding demographic policy and established the Center for Demographic Problems in the Office of the Prime Minister, appointed an advisor to the Prime Minister on demographic matters, and founded the Public Council on Demography as an advisory body. The government decided:

- To accompany the legislation and agenda of the government and its ministries in order to suggest proposals aimed at assuring the realization of the demographic policy of the government;
- To initiate research necessary to supply updated data in order to determine the stages of the government's demographic policy;
- To motivate public organizations to act in ways that further the demographic policy;
- To oblige government ministries to follow the advice of the Demographic Center regarding matters and plans of action relevant to demographic policy and dealt with in their respective ministries.

**TABLE 22. ISRAEL'S GOVERNMENT VIEWS AND POLICIES  
CONCERNING POPULATION ISSUES, 1976-2009**

Population policy variable	1976	1986	1996	2009
Population size and growth				
View on growth	Too low	Too low	Too low	Too low
Policy on growth	Raise	Raise	Raise	Raise
Population age structure				
Level of concern about				
Size of the working-age population	..	..	..	Major concern
Ageing of the population	..	..	..	Major concern
Fertility and family planning				
View on fertility level	Too low	Too low	Too low	Too low
Policy	Raise	Raise	Raise	Raise

Population policy variable	1976	1986	1996	2009
Spatial distribution and internal migration				
View on spatial distribution	Minor change desired	Minor change desired	Minor change desired	Minor change desired
Policies on internal migration				
From rural to urban areas	..	..	..	No intervention
From rural to rural areas	..	..	..	No intervention
From urban to rural areas	..	..	..	Lower
From urban to urban areas	..	..	..	No intervention
Into urban agglomerations	..	..	..	No intervention
International migration				
Immigration				

Access to contraceptive methods	Direct support	Direct support	Direct support	Direct support	Indirect support
Adolescent fertility					
Level of concern	..	..	..	..	Not a concern
Policies and programmes	..	..	..	..	Yes
Health and mortality					
View					
Life expectancy at birth	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Under-five mortality	..	..	..	..	Acceptable
Maternal mortality	..	..	..	..	Acceptable
Level of concern about HIV/AIDS	..	..	..	..	Major concern
Measures to respond to HIV/AIDS <sup>a</sup>	..	..	..	..	1,2,3,4,5
Grounds on which abortion is permitted <sup>b</sup>	..	..	..	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,3,4,5

View	Too low	Too low	Too low	Too low	Too low
Policy	Raise	Raise	Raise	Raise	Raise
Permanent settlement	..	..	..	..	Raise
Temporary workers	..	..	..	..	Lower
Highly skilled workers	..	..	..	..	Maintain
Family reunification	..	..	..	..	Maintain
Integration of non-citizens	..	..	..	..	Yes
Emigration					
View	Satisfactory	Too high	Too high	Too high	Too high
Policy	Maintain	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Encouraging the return of citizens	..	..	..	..	Yes

<sup>a</sup> Measures implemented to respond to HIV/AIDS: (1) blood screening; (2) information/education campaigns; (3) antiretroviral treatment; (4) non-discriminatory policies; (5) distribution of condoms | <sup>b</sup> Grounds on which abortion is permitted: (1) to save the woman's life; (2) to preserve physical health; (3) to preserve mental health; (4) rape or incest; (5) fetal impairment; (6) economic or social reasons; (7) on request | Source: United Nations, World Population Policies 2009.

The integration of these factors in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) was a first step toward consolidating a demographic policy, accompanying legislation and the government agenda, and the initiation of research. Some critics believe that only those who do not understand the realities of Israeli government and politics could have thought this would work because setting up an authority, center or similar entity is a famous way to bury an issue. The PMO, as constituted in fact, is unable to coordinate complex policies dispersed among ministries "owned" by different coalition partners. Others believe that central coordination is the only serious way to promote complex policies that bear on the competencies of more than one ministry.

In 1979 a report dealing with aims and means of demographic policy was prepared by a committee appointed by the Demographic Center of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, under the leadership of Roberto Bachi, long the government statistician and the leading Israeli demographer (The Demographic Center, 1980). The major conclusions of this report, which dealt primarily with fertility, included the following seven major suggestions:

1. **Increasing the awareness** of the underlying dangers inherent in the present demographic trends of the Jewish People as well as of the importance of an adequate level of fertility to the Jewish People's future. This awareness should be increased in Israel, in the Diaspora, and in public, governmental and Jewish organizational circles.
2. **Explanatory measures, guidance, and education on planned reproduction,** responsible parenthood and prevention of abortions.
3. **A coordinated network of means to remove obstacles in the way of those families desiring children.** This concerns, in general, important social problems that call for action due to other reasons as well. For example:
  - In Israel as in other developed countries, there has been a continuous increase in the number of women in the labor force. This development could be thought likely to affect a decrease in the fertility level, therefore generating a need to find suitable ways to reduce role conflicts among workingwomen. These include arranging work hours and conditions in accordance with the demands of child care; finding suitable means for looking after children while their parents work; assurance of a woman's work position while she is busy with the care of her children; etc.;

- Finding solutions to the housing problems of newly married couples and those families wishing to enlarge their family size;
  - Assuring that child allowances, which were developed for the most part for purposes of social equality, also aid demographic aims;
  - Taking serious measures to help women during pregnancy and caring for the children after birth;
  - Enhancing the accessibility of medical fertility intervention when women wish to have children but are unable to conceive, and subsidizing the high costs of such treatments.
4. **Handling of these and similar problems should be left in the hands of governmental and public agencies** that are directly concerned with them. However, decision-making in any area that might affect fertility should take into account, together with other aspects, possible demographic effects. As such, a crucial point is that when public sectors undertake legislative action, financing or decision-making in those areas that may have some possible influence on fertility, they should do so only after prior consultation with the Demographic Center.
  5. **There should be a continuous follow-up of the demographic developments** in Israel and among the Jewish people and yearly reporting on such to the government, governmental and public bodies, and the public at large.
  6. **Research done directly or supported by the Demographic Center should be oriented towards channels relevant to demographic policy.** These are areas of great importance for policies in which insufficient information may lead to mistaken decisions and where there is the need to collect appropriate information as soon as possible.
  7. **The development of proposed demographic policy should be facilitated by the development of suitable tools.** In particular, it is necessary to expand the public base of the Demographic Center, to strengthen it with added personnel and greater financial assistance. In addition action should be taken to improve cooperation between the Center and various public and governmental organizations.

The proposals of the Bachi report, obviously, were only the first steps in a long and complex process that requires much research regarding ensuing policies and their potential implications. They still show a basic path that can be referred to when

thinking about the future of population-oriented policies in Israel. The fact is that in spite of the amazing rhythm of social change in the country, massive injections of new immigrants, recurrent security problems, modernization and a striking improvement in standard of living, periodic upheavals within the party system and frequent changes of political direction, the main demographic trends have remained fundamentally within the same range of continuity and even predictability. This relative indifference to major events can be taken as a sign of societal robustness, but it can be explained primarily through the character of Israeli society as a mosaic of different beliefs and persuasions, each of which continues to reproduce itself and – to a large extent – its value system. Facing the undisputable facts of modernization and social change, these features ensure a sense of continuity and stability across the whole fabric of society.

In the past there was no agreement among those who studied the subject as to which of the two basic demographic components – fertility or immigration – would be the more important for population growth in the long run. At the same time some steps were taken to institutionalize the national approach to demographic issues and to increase national awareness of the importance of population policy as a topic of discussion.

In its deliberations of May 11, 1986 the Israeli government addressed the demographic situation of the Jewish People amid expressions of concern regarding trends persisting in Israel and in the Diaspora, and resolved to "adopt an overall coordinated demographic policy for the long run." Concurrently, the government decision delineated areas of activity such as population growth, including "encouragement of the establishment of families and their desire for children, strengthening of families, and encouragement for remigration of emigrants to the homeland." It must be noted, however, that in spite of these recurrent moments of interest on the part of Israel's government, the topic of Jewish population has been quite neglected as such, and with regard to each of the several components we have reviewed in part two of this report.

In 2002 the Public Council of Demography, whose establishment had been suggested in 1979 and had operated intermittently renewed its activities. During this period of renewed interest, in its plenum as well as at meetings of special committees with outside experts, the Council held deliberations aimed at establishing a set of priorities toward determining a demographic policy for the state of Israel.

Throughout this period, the Israeli government took some important steps aimed at encouraging population growth. These included providing preferential conditions to

new immigrants, grants to returning emigrants, birth grants and child allowances issued by the National Insurance Authority, and incentives for more even population dispersal. These separate policy fields, however, did not provide enough of a unified base from which one could derive an all-encompassing and coherent population policy. Other important matters such as gender, employment, housing, education, health and infrastructure, which are all significantly correlated with possible changes in demographic patterns, were not always understood as integral to the determination of demographic trends.

In addition to the immediate concern regarding population issues of the State of Israel, world Jewry constitutes a central subject in the elaboration of demographic policies in Israel. Notable among past meaningful initiatives was the action of the government of Israel in conjunction with the government of the United States and the leading Jewish organizations which, throughout the 1970s and with renewed emphasis at the end of the 1980s, redirected the flow of emigrants from the Soviet Union toward Israel following years in which the majority had preferred to migrate to other countries of the West. Occasionally, regional Jewish community organizations have attempted to elaborate an agenda including reference to demographic themes (for one rare example developed in Europe, see Appendix d).

Negative natural increase and population decline, typical of developed Western societies where most Jews live, deeply affect Jewish communities there. Furthermore, alongside the common diffusion of late marriages, cohabitation without marriage and population ageing, out-marriages and assimilation cause a decline in Jewish population. In connection to this, in 1987 the government of Israel participated with the Jewish Agency and other Jewish organizations in the first major international conference ever held where the main Jewish demographic trends were analyzed and several policy scenarios and options were discussed (DellaPergola and Cohen, 1992).

*The Association for a Demographic Policy of the Jewish People* – an NGO based in Jerusalem – was soon after established to add a voluntary dimension to activity already undertaken by the Government and by the major Jewish organizations, and to take upon itself tasks that may not be appropriate for the government. The government, indeed, cannot give separate attention to different ethno-religious sectors in society. The Association worked alongside the Public Council on Demography for a number of years. Among activities supported were fertility treatments and summer camps for the children of large families. In subsequent years the Association was not active; it was eventually discontinued after the year 2000. Of critical importance here was the

attitude – for a short span of time interested, and later for long years uninterested – of Israel's Ministry of Treasury (MOT), which, by far, is the main player in Israel's budgetary allocations and government economic positioning. Given the highly concentrated structure of state's budget handling in Israel, lack of attention or collaboration by the MOT can jeopardize any initiative requiring governmental participation.

Under the chairmanship of Sallai Meridor, for several years up to 2005, the Jewish Agency sponsored the *Initiative on Jewish Demography* (IOJD) through which support was provided to research and public discussion of subjects related to the Jewish populations in Israel and the Diaspora. With the foundation of the *Jewish People Policy Planning Institute* (JPPPI), established by the Jewish Agency in 2002, an international conference took place on issues of Jewish demography in Israel and in the world. The IOJD indeed helped to obtain deeper insights on the causes and consequences of Jewish population trends – in particular the predicament of the Jewish community in Buenos Aires and the critically important outlook of Israeli families facing their current and future child planning. The information collected also helped to improve documentation needed to create better bases for policy planning in Israel and in some other countries. But the IOJD was discontinued when several other important targets for investigation and policy planning preoccupied the agenda.

Since 1959, the principal academic research coordination in the field of Jewish demography came from the Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics at the A. Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Unfortunately, following the general budgetary stringencies in Israel's higher education system, academic policies at the Hebrew University have led to a great reduction in the Institute's size, training capability, and ability to function as a central focus for scientific research. In recent years there has been markedly growing interest in this subject at a number of university research centers in the United States, most notably at the Steinhardt Social Research Institute at Brandeis University, and at the North American Jewish Data Bank at the University of Connecticut.

Looking today at past experiences with population policy planning, a main conclusion is that major decisions and non-decisions during the early years of the State of Israel nearly irreversibly shaped the fundamental concepts and institutions that have steered Israeli society until the present day. However, in spite of several subsequent policy initiatives, no significantly coordinated policy has been crafted and implemented. One important case in point concerns child allowances, which



has constituted one of the cornerstones of the demographic debate in Israel. Over the years, repeated raises and decreases in the amount of these money transfers have occurred, along with repeated attempts to selectively define eligibility requirements. Under those conditions, clearly, other motives besides attention to the demographic balance have played a leading role, such as considerations of distributive justice and, usually more important, political lobbying by various interest groups and power centers.

Symptomatically, an increase in such allowances for children of 5th and higher birth order at the beginning of the 2000s, brought about at the initiative of the Jewish Haredi political parties, produced a funding stream of which about 40% flowed to the families of children born in Israel's Arab sector. The government subsequently significantly reduced that allocation. The main rationale for the raise was the attempt to reduce the number of families and children below the poverty line. But clearly, no attempt was made to assess the relationship between transfer payments and their possible demographic consequences. In all of these deliberations – as it became strikingly clear on the occasion of the budget debate in 2009 – the main concern was with national money accountancy; the existence of children and the needs of young families who wanted them played a very marginal role. It actually should have been the reverse: putting the children and their parents' needs at the center of the picture, and finding the budgetary solutions to suit them. Or, plainly worded, put the interest of the whole nation (such as having a 3rd child) ahead of the interest of specific interest groups and special constituencies (such as having the 8th child).

A further central concern in Israel, from the onset, has been the promotion of immigration. After the massively planned campaigns for immigrants' location, transportation and absorption under the conditions of near emergency of the first two and a half decades of Israel's existence, and besides the already noted distinguished and successful struggle to promote the exit of FSU Jews, awareness has grown about the need to attract further immigrants from the Diaspora, on their own terms.

In historical perspective and in international comparison, it cannot be denied that Israel's record in immigration and immigrant absorption was a huge success. The major achievements occurred when the political leadership knew how to exploit narrow windows of opportunity that could radically change the social and the political scene at one and the same time. The most heroic success of

Zionism was its ability to build on negative circumstances such as anti-Semitism, closure of major countries of immigration, and a human capital that had been mentally deprived over long years of persecution and discrimination and had been dispossessed of nearly all of its material belongings, to create a viable, creative, competitive society capable of, among other things, defending itself from military menace. But it cannot be said that, once conditions of normality or near normality were reached, Israel's governments ever developed a coherent policy toward the Jewish world based on a serious assessment of their characteristics and needs. This is said with special reference to occupational training and stratification. Thus, there has usually been a poor understanding of what role Israel might fulfill in encouraging and absorbing larger amounts of immigration than currently available.

A further problematic case of a lack of coherent policy planning can be illustrated with the recent arrival in Israel of hundreds of thousands of new immigrants who are not Jewish. These persons, on the one hand, are granted equal civil rights as Jewish immigrants while, on the other hand, because of the lack of civil marriage in Israel, they are practically denied one of the basic civil prerogatives – the possibility to marry. They are consequently forced to Cyprus and other places to marry, before returning to Israel where their marriage will be recorded by Israel's authorities. The logical consequence is a sense of estrangement of the concerned individuals, a negative projection toward the respective community of reference in Israel and in the countries of origin, and a factor of political tension in Israel. This shows how the lack of coordination between different government agencies and goals may produce unwanted consequences at the individual, the community, and the general societal levels.

#### **D. Evaluation of main demographic policy options and directions: Israel**

Summing up some of the main themes already discussed in this report, the main demographic challenge of Israel as the *core state of the Jewish People* is to preserve a clear and undisputed majority among the country's total population. This is a critical prerequisite to Israel's future existence as a Jewish and democratic state. While making efforts to find a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict one should keep in mind the different rates of natural increase among Jews

and Arabs, the latter's much younger age composition, and the very unequal geographic distributions of the two population sectors. From a demographic point of view, Israel's crucial interest is to encourage any legitimate social process capable of reducing the gaps that now persist in the living conditions and rates of natural growth of different ethnic and religious groups. This would limit the consequences of the visible changes in the current quantitative balance. It is essential to systematically analyze the reciprocal links that exist between security, the economy, international migration, and the trends affecting family and identificational patterns among the Jewish population. One should carefully evaluate the costs involved in developing effective and long-term strategies, and the broader societal costs of not doing so.

The broader strategic scope of demographic processes cannot be escaped. Population changes in Israel do not fall in a vacuum but rather occur in strict interaction with three other central aspects of society:

- Peace and security;
- Economics and standard of living;
- Culture and identity.

This is to say that no demographic policies can be conceived in Israel without at least being aware – if not actually addressing - at the same time of the existence of other areas of concern. Concurrently, within the perimeter of comprehensive understanding, actual policies need to be focused, possibly on the basis of a principle of modularity that can single out the most urgent and feasible priorities out of the larger array of relevant possibilities. Within these premises, the following specific aspects should be addressed, ignoring for the purpose of this writing the important question of prioritization that in any case needs to be separately addressed:

1. **How is an adequate momentum of population growth attained?** How many inhabitants live in the country is strictly related to the ability of the state to develop a range of activities and functions and to defend its own fundamental interests. Israel is a relatively small country although its rate of growth is comparatively high. Unquestionably the fast rate of population growth has been one of the determinants of the rapid development of a more economically developed, complex, and competitive society. Continuing investments in human capital and physical resources contributed to Israel's improved ability to measure itself with an array of

challenges on the local and international scene. Through and thanks to population growth, the standard of living of individuals considerably improved as well. It appears by all means that continuing population growth will be the standard in future years as well. The effects on Israeli society will continue to be positive on condition that control upon demographic processes will be accompanied by apt policies in other relevant social and economic areas. One issue of growing significance for the future is how to achieve an adequate balance between continuing demographic growth and protection of natural resources and of the environment.

2. **How is an adequate population composition balance preserved?** In the particular Israeli context, it would be irresponsible to ignore the extreme cultural diversity that continues to prevail within the population and risks creating social conflicts and imbalances.
  - The different segments of society characterized by ethnic background, religion, mother tongue and other cultural attributes create a mosaic of components, all growing at different rhythms. There cannot exist, neither theoretically nor practically, an “optimal model” for a highly dynamic and quickly developing Israeli society, but as repeatedly noted, the underlying value imperative is that Israel is and should constitute a Jewish and democratic thriving society. Processes should be encouraged that contribute to preserving the balance between a clear Jewish majority and a non-Jewish minority, with all citizens enjoying equal civil rights and freedom.
  - In a similar spirit, efforts should be made to reduce the social distance between different segments of the Jewish population, which tend to maintain significant measures of mutual segregation. The risk exists, and where feasible should be counteracted, that certain demographic patterns contribute to and exacerbate differences and estrangement.
  - Special attention should be devoted to preserving a balanced age composition between children, adults at working ages, and the elderly. Age composition reflects the intensity and pace of change of demographic events such as births, deaths, and migration. Dependency ratios reflecting age composition bear heavy socioeconomic consequences. The situation in Israel is today much better balanced than in most other countries – both more developed and less developed – and this is a resource for the longer-term future that should be nurtured with appropriate policy measures.

**3. How do we cope with and utilize the persisting potential for Jewish international migration?** This in turn calls for:

- Understanding and developing new types of aliyah, including multi-local residences and other Jewish migrations, adjusted to various populations.
- Developing new ideas and procedures with respect to the whole complex of civil, economic, legal and political rights of those who are the more highly mobile and must or wish to keep a permanent and viable link with their countries of origin.
- Creating in Israel professional opportunities reflecting the particular skills available in the Jewish realm and open to servicing a global constituency much broader than the Israeli population – with an eye toward encouraging aliyah of especially skilled persons and discouraging emigration of such people in what might become a growing brain drain.

**4. How do we monitor trends in economy and labor force, promoting employment, welfare and equal access to opportunities, and a fair distribution of resources?**

Over the last years, the Israeli economy has featured two opposing trends along with a general rise in standards of living: relatively high numbers of unemployed or partially employed people, and of people living under the statistical threshold of relative poverty; and at the same time, growing numbers of foreign workers, some of whom are in the country illegally.

- This expanding group of non-citizens is involved in a growing problem of social, cultural and civic integration in Israeli society. At the same time, Palestinian workers, who used to be employed in the same sectors, are prevented from working because of the continuing security concerns.
- Beyond the effects on population composition, it has become an agreed notion that local Israelis *cannot or will not* be employed in certain generally low-status sectors of the economy. No policies aimed at reducing the number foreign workers in the Israeli economy can be effective without seriously dealing with patterns of employment and unemployment of the Israelis.

**5. How do we make more effective the caring for hundreds of thousands of non-Jewish Israeli immigrants in the framework of the Law of Return and the modes of their incorporation within the Jewish sector of Israeli society?** These

Israelis are mostly from the FSU but also from Ethiopia and other countries. Based on the assumption that most are willing to be part of Israel as a Jewish society, it might be possible to perform much larger-scale *giyur* (conversion) of those who seriously wish to join Judaism. In this context:

- The role of institutions such as Israel's Chief Rabbinate regarding procedures for admission and the follow-up of neophytes after conversion should be scrutinized, and the appropriate elements of Halacha for the case where the majority of society is Jewish – unlike the historical situation of most Jews in the past – should be given privileged priority, as against a continuing tendency to address the Israeli reality as if it still were a case of Diaspora or "exile".
  - The growing pool of non-Jewish children, grandchildren and other household mates of Jews: It is necessary to multiply a coordinated effort by all responsible institutions to help their integration into the Israeli Jewish mainstream and prevent them from becoming a disenchanting and marginalized bloc and a source of social tensions and cleavages.
  - A related major policy issue is the question of how to bring children of *out-married couples* into the mainstream of Jewish society, not only in the Diaspora but also in Israel.
  - The effectiveness should be evaluated of different Jewish educational programs, full time and part time, formal and informal, in shaping and developing an attractive and durable Jewish identity among the younger generation.
  - Creating an enhanced sense of internal coherence and a dialogue respectful of differences in the context of growing *identificational gaps* within the Jewish collective along religious-non religious lines and Israel-Diaspora directions.
- 6. How can we develop a more systematic approach to changes in Jewish family patterns?** This involves:
- Understanding marriage and family related attitudes and behaviors among the growing pool of young unmarried adults, and creating the material and psychological conditions that would help them actualize their nuptial aspirations.

- Preserving the current Israeli fertility levels – that remain the highest of any developed society – and acknowledging the existing prospects for facilitating *Jewish birth* rates in Israel – where the demand for children is still high.
- Listening carefully to the public that supports, in large majority, pro-natal policies, and advocates specific measures in the fields of early childhood care, housing, and working conditions for women.
- Acting as much as feasible to reduce the existing fertility gaps between different sub-populations and acknowledging that today a disproportionate percent of the newborn comes from a relatively small pool of often-impooverished families.
- Developing policy instruments and public services that can affect the already existing propensity to have *further* children in addition to those already planned particularly at medium parities such as the 3rd or 4th child. The role of social services and of financial and value-oriented incentives for fertility can be significant.
- Envisage the pertinent policies keeping in mind the newborn at the center of the picture, and empowering him/her with appropriate funding from the cradle to the end of a full educational curriculum.

**7. How do we ensure that the current reasonably good level of personal health enjoyed by the Jewish population in Israel and throughout the world is maintained and improved?**

- Consider the uniquely high incidence of special, genetically transmitted, medical needs related to historical processes that uniquely shaped the Jewish experience, and provide sensitive help to those who have such medical needs, and those who carry their respective genetic markers.

**8. How do we provide policy answers to the questions raised by the fact that Jewish demography is deeply intertwined with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?**

This implies:

From the Israeli perspective, one fundamental principle in the framework of comprehensive policy planning should be the aspiration to conclude the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and advance the whole region toward a stable partition between two countries whose boundaries are definitive and universally recognized.

- Coming to terms with the implications of differential Jewish and Arab growth rates and population composition.

- Taking into account demographic factors in determining the agreed boundaries of the State of Israel, so as to preserve a *viable Jewish majority*.
- Acting to expand the area intensely inhabited toward Israel's southern regions, which offer a potential for a significantly larger population.
- Acting to prevent, reduce, and avoid the existence of quality and opportunity gaps between the different parts of Israel – between center, north and south, as well as between metropolitan and rural areas. This particularly applies to the quality of transportation and infrastructure, communications, and access to institutions of higher education and other similar resources. All of these unequal local opportunities, through the main demographic mechanisms of fertility and geographical mobility, are automatically transferred to the next generation, recreating unequal and polarized human resources possibly *ad infinitum*.

**9. How might some of the already-noted gaps be reduced between different population groups?**

- Adoption of a core curriculum should become mandatory in all Israeli schools as a pre-condition for any kind of recognition of the school and the transfer of state funds to it. Educational institutions would choose non-core aspects of the curriculum from a wide pool of alternatives. The core curriculum should include fundamentals needed to create an aware, productive and functional citizen, such as the following examples: (a) Hebrew; (b) Jewish history and civilization; (c) History of the State of Israel; (d) Mathematics and sciences; (e) Foreign languages.
- Extension to all citizens, regardless of any of their characteristics – besides serious health limitations – of a compulsory period of service to the benefit of the collective: (a) Military service; or (b) civil service; or (c) any other voluntary service adjusted to special individual or community limitations. The recent institution in Israel of a framework for voluntary civil service as an alternative to military service is a promising step in that direction.
- Adoption of the standard by which any person wishing to receive employment, financial help or subsidy by a governmental body, should submit to some common agreed standards, such as the following examples: (a) holding Israeli citizenship or permanent residence; (b) having undergone the core educational curriculum; (c) having completed the period of compulsory service.



## E. Evaluation of main demographic policy options and directions: Diaspora

Again, as a synthesis of the foregoing discussion, the main challenge before Diaspora Jewry consists of preserving and strengthening Jewish communities able to display high social coherence and unique cultural and spiritual significance, while, as minority communities, enjoying all the manifold opportunities and fulfilling all the civil responsibilities of friendly majority environments.

Treatment of demographic variables is much more complicated regarding Diaspora Jewry in the absence of any influential and effective central Jewish authority with the means for implementing appropriate steps (such as in the case of a sovereign government) and in light of the existing structure of only partial affiliation in voluntary Jewish organizational frameworks. In spite of this, is not reasonable to reject at the outset the need for thought and research on the subject of a possible "demographic policy" for the Diaspora as a first step in the process of materializing ideas.

Proposals of demographic policy for the Diaspora can be developed theoretically, although it may be difficult to implement them in practice. Nonetheless, existing population projections based on different assumptions concerning the continuation of, or changes in the existing trends, foreshadow a continuing decline and perhaps more significantly a sharp ageing of Diaspora Jewish communities (DellaPergola, Rebhun, Tolts, 2000). Past attempts to forecast the demography of Diaspora Jewry over the period 1975-2000 (Schmelz, 1981) may have overestimated the amount of ongoing erosion and definitely underestimated the impact of geopolitical change as a determinant of international migration. But the actual situation in 2000 was well within the expected range – if at the higher end – with an overall decrease of the Jewish Diaspora of about 2 million and a similar increase in Israel. A hypothetical continuation of these trends until the year 2050 would result in a further decrease of nearly another 2 million in Diaspora Jewry. More than one third of the Jewish population outside of Israel would then be 65 and over.

It is not certain that this will, in fact, be the future state of affairs since the geopolitical reality of Diaspora Jewry, of Israel, and of the world in general may change. But evidently, a large and complicated problem is in sight that should be dealt without delay. Strategic and tactical choices need to be made.

Interestingly, while various researchers may have sharply different understandings of the ongoing processes, they may agree on the practical conclusions for Jewish community life. Quite different analyses of the dynamics and prospects of American Jewry (such as DellaPergola, 2005; Goldscheider, 2004) may lead to compatible policy suggestions (e.g., compare the present report with Goldscheider, 1986). The latter, at the end of his quite sanguine assessment of present trends and their implications, suggests three major policy objectives:

- Enhance cohesion of the Jewish community;
- Enhance generational continuity as a community;
- Enhance multiple and varied forms of relationships to Israel.

These objectives are fully compatible with what has been stated herein. Our own additional preference would be that handling of the Jewish lifecycle be given even higher priority on the Jewish public agenda.

By the same token, similar assessments of the situation (DellaPergola, 2005; Mayer, 1987) may lead to different assessments of the preferred lines of action. Facing the growing challenge of out-marriage, the former would prefer in-reach – trying to preserve the core of the community, less it become identificationally and demographically eroded; the latter would prefer out-reach – trying to recover the distancing periphery.

Five essential directions may be mentioned in this context:

- 1. Encouragement of Jewish marriages as distinguished from mixed unions.** It is recognized that in addition to trends that generally affect the contemporary family, the fact that Jewish youth are dispersed over a wide geographical area, and that Jewish youth from one community have relatively few opportunities to meet those from other communities, has negative effects on the frequency of Jewish marriages. Facing up to high frequencies of out-marriage in the Diaspora, intervening mechanisms should be developed to facilitate the encounter of young Jewish adults. Moreover, the role of child and young adult formal and informal Jewish education in shaping Jewish identification needs to be carefully analyzed. Some improvement of the existing situation may be made possible if Jewish communities provide some "marriage counseling" for those young people who are approaching the age of marriage and who are interested in receiving

information about, and connecting with, others of their age. Initiatives in this sense come from different avenues, such as cyberspace people connectors (like J-Date and Facebook), and experiential programs (like Birthright and Masa').

2. **Higher birth rates.** In the Diaspora powerful internal and external constraints affect the birth rate through the existence of restrictive norms on family size and comparatively weaker infrastructures and provisions for early childrearing. One auxiliary way to pursue a higher birth rate would be to clarify the present Jewish demographic trends in the framework of cultural activities of youth movements and women's organizations. The social stratification of Diaspora Jewry today is such that it is not only economic factors or material motivations that may discourage family expansion and lower the fertility of Jewish women. Arguments in favor of Jewish identity, the value of children, and community continuity may prove more compelling.
3. **Denser concentration of Jewish populations.** It is important to monitor and evaluate *geographic mobility* between and within major urban areas and changing patterns of affiliation, and planning the territorial location of Jewish community services, together with wider use of networking facilitated by information technologies. Social cohesion may be reinforced by planned concentration of Jewish living quarters, which may ease the provision of Jewish community services and informal personal interaction. In the context of high frequencies of young Jewish adults attending higher education institutions, financial incentives may be thought to enhance attendance of colleges with strong Jewish student populations and support services (such as Hillel). While such enhanced proximity may be of a mechanical nature, it bears the potential for increasing the chance of achieving organic reciprocal solidarity based on common values. In relation to this, it should not be forgotten that proximity of living quarters continues and will continue to be a significant factor in choosing marriage partners.
4. **Increase of resource funds for Jewish youth.** Resources should be directed to strengthen Jewish youth organizations and Jewish schools in order to reinforce these frameworks and the Jewish contents of the activities of these institutions. It may be assumed that benefits will emerge from the integration of the various forms of activity: formal Jewish education, extra-curricular education, such as youth movements and Jewish Community Centers, and enhancing opportunities for contact with the Israeli experience.

**5. Enhancing Jewish identification and belonging.** This may involve, subject to further study and analysis:

- Encouraging a sense of pride in being Jewish (Cohen, 2006);
- Increasing communal support for Jewish education and encouraging Jewish knowledge, including Hebrew language, history, literature, etc. (Wertheimer, 2006);
- Supporting Jewish movements and youth camps in Diaspora communities and in Israel (Sales and Saxe, 2003; Saxe and Chazan, 2008);
- Facilitating conversion in cases of intermarriage (Fishman, 2004);
- Developing visits and short-term stays in Israel, and a one-year, post high school, formal and non-formal educational “year-in-Israel” programs, or “high school semester in Israel” programs (Berger, Jacobson, Waxman, 2007; Rettig Gur, 2010);
- Developing creative use of mass media and the Internet for Jewish socialization, and increasing Jewish social networking through, among others, an enhanced use of cyberspace (Romm, 1997).

Some of these goals might, possibly, seem unrealistic; nevertheless it is important that they be examined together with other ideas in order to build a new conceptual framework for discussion of Jewish population problems. The Jewish experience might, as well, assist other, non-Jewish Diasporas facing some of the same problems in their experiences as minority groups and in their relations with the respective core countries.

We should be aware that the world cannot be turned upside-down. Jews are and will continue to be a minority exposed to an ever-changing, dynamic, attractive majority. But, with appropriate institutional build-up a minority can be stimulated to survive and thrive.

## **F. Institutional frameworks for Jewish population policies**

It is probably correct to state that public awareness of Jewish demographic trends and their implications is higher today than it was in the past. Perhaps the fact that the alarm was sounded at the right moment has already generated a number of responses likely to partially reverse the negative or uncertain thrust of current trends. But besides sporadic initiatives, it is critical that what might otherwise remain rather

abstract perceptions of distant Jewish futures – good or bad – be sharpened and formalized into a concrete plan of action and a formal structure for monitoring and decision-making.

It is also essentially important to stress that the vast majority of the Jewish population in Israel, and with the appropriate distinctions also in the Diaspora, unequivocally supports and in fact demands interventions, by public bodies such as the Government of Israel or the central umbrella organizations of Jews in their respective countries, that would allow them to pursue personal goals that are also conducive to a larger and more coherent collective (DellaPergola, 2007b; Cohen, 1991). The assumption that such public policy interventions raise serious problems with respect to the legitimate scope of activity of liberal-democratic states is not supported by available empirical evidence. Evidently, the issue of the limits of legitimate state activities needs taking up as a major component of any public policy, especially in the field of population and demography.

In the first place, it recommended that periodical consultations between experts, lay leaders and professionals be undertaken about the complex of demographic issues involving Israel and the Diaspora – each separately and in conjunction. These consultations, possibly under the roof of a professional policy planning body, should provide adequate conceptual frameworks for demographic policies; and should lead to investment of more resources in the area. Ultimately, it is up to the government, in the case of Israel, and the major Jewish organizations, in the case of other countries, to approve the priorities set by the experts, ratify the organizational and budgetary aspects and push the legal aspects through adequate legislation.

Clearly, in Israel this presupposes tight consultation with the key political officers, starting with the prime minister. An ad hoc combination is needed of outstanding professionals in the various subject matter gifted with knowledge, originality of thought, international prestige and communication abilities; senior officers within the administration who can lead and execute a project once it has been approved; and political leaders able to develop a broad vision of the interests of the nation in the long-term, above the narrow and particularistic considerations of day-to-day political maneuvering.

Incidentally, bodies like the consultative Public Council on Demography and the more action-oriented Demographic Center, both of which were created as appropriate vehicles for conceptualization and execution, might be revived to fulfill active roles

in Israeli demographic policy planning, on condition that they are radically reshaped and awarded the budgetary resources and the policy formulation authority they were always denied. Some Western European governments have created and support highly prestigious central research facilities that provide the analytic background to policy making, such as the Institut National d'Études Démographiques (INED) in France, the Bundesinstitute für Bevölkerungsforschung (BIB) in Germany, or the Istituto di Ricerche sulla Popolazione (IRP) in Italy.

Taking a similar initiative in Israel would send, in the first place, a high profile signal that the government attributes relevance to the field of demography and its processes. The pervasive and inter-ministerial character of demographic issues requires that the Public Council and the Demographic Center should be placed within the scope of the Prime Minister's Office, as was the case at the time of their initial establishment. Alternatives might include a division of the National Security Council or the Social Planning Unit at the Prime Minister's Office. In principle, these agencies should provide Israel's government with tools for thought, planning and execution of social and demographic policies aimed at sustaining key national interests related to population development. It would be recommendable that a discussion of the various issues raised in this report be undertaken between and within pertinent planning agencies.

In practice, over the last several years this has not happened and these demographic policy bodies are virtually non-existent. Population related issues are discussed occasionally, but no systematic follow-up or integrated policy planning has ensued. The absolute power of decision-making regarding the most sensitive recommendations likely to affect population trends has been sternly in the hands of the Ministry of Treasury. Obviously, this has been the case when Israeli society is concerned, but less obviously, the Ministry of Treasury, in fact, also wields some influence on decisions bearing on Jews in other countries, such as support to Jewish education or other Jewish youth-related programs. Another powerful center of decision-making has been the Ministry of Internal Affairs, especially regarding the Jewish identity status of citizens and residents in Israel and the annotation of such characteristics in Israel's Population Register.

The Jewish Agency and other large world and Diaspora Jewish organizations should be involved in envisaging and implementing demographic policies in their particular areas of competence. It is, indeed, imperative that the effort to collect and analyze data relevant to policy formation is continued in Israel and throughout the Diaspora. But all

in all, these initiatives tend to be sporadic and lack the firm commitment that would make them a permanent backbone of public discourse, research, and policy-making.

Similarly, other major Jewish organizations throughout the world – in particular the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the representative organizations of Jews on the different continents should invest beyond what they already do, and engage more fully and permanently in efforts to evaluate and affect their own trends and futures. This requires a concerted effort of all relevant institutional and educational institutions in Israel and in the Diaspora. Several working teams should be established to deal in-depth with each topic. Knowledge and understanding of the relevant research material available on each subject should be developed as a necessary background for policy planning.

A supportive framework should be created and cultivated to facilitate and expedite better communication between the sources of policy development and decision-making, on the one hand, and the public on the other hand. It is essential that much more attention be paid to public relations, and accordingly, the creation of a friendly atmosphere – essential to demographic policy programs – through communications and public image crafting. One should consider encouraging actors who command religious and ideological influence to be involved and to accompany policy programs in the spirit of *Klal Israel*. Major nonprofit Jewish media networks should be established, including Internet, print, satellite channels and more.

In practical terms, any project decided upon in principle might develop along the following general lines:

- A Steering Committee should be appointed reflecting the different types of sensibilities and expertise relevant to the subject matter;
- Main articulations of each process should be examined at all possible levels: explanatory (involving more theoretical understanding), intermediate (involving the instrumentality of the process under study), and dependent variables (involving the actual measurable manifestation of the trend);
- An executive coordinator should be appointed for each project;
- Where applicable, local and regional committees should function attuned to the different cultural contexts;
- Operational tools should be elaborated including specific incentives/programs;

- Legal implications should be carefully reviewed;
- Budgetary implications should be worked out by teams of experts based on a clear specification of expected costs and benefits;
- One agency should be clearly designated as the address for carrying on each specific project;
- Expected products and outcomes should be clearly explicated;
- Appropriate personnel designated to carry out the project should receive adequate training;
- Procedures for advertising and marketing the project and disclosing its expected benefits for the public at large should be developed.

Along with the organizational, research and implementation efforts, it is imperative that public awareness should be raised regarding demographic trends and their implications for Israeli society and for world Jewry. Thought should be devoted to how the relevance, importance, and feasibility of policies related to the diverse population patterns can be made part of public discourse. The enrollment of influential personalities in the avenues of economics, culture and public life can be determinant in fostering the public image of population policies. The role of Jewish women's movements and organizations may be very decisive, and they should be invited to join forces and take a greater share of leadership than at present in general Jewish affairs. Leaders who command wide respect in the religious and civil spheres should be encouraged to provide public visibility and legitimacy to demographic issues. The same should be achieved through public imaging in the media, through organizational communications, and educational programs.



## 12. WHAT NEXT?

The Jewish People Policy Institute's first annual assessment included the following emblematic statement:

Survival of the Jewish people is not assured, though there are great opportunities for a thriving future. Determined and large-scale efforts are needed to maximize the opportunities and ward off the dangers. Doing so requires significant resources, judicious coping with critical decisions and a careful crafting of long-term strategic policies (JPPI, 2004).

With all the uncertainties and unknowns of the contemporary global scene and their more predictable or less predictable impact for the Jewish collective, world Jewry faces several conspicuous demographic challenges that may significantly affect its viability in the longer term. As demographic policies – if they exist – may show their effects only after a number of years, the momentum of current trends is expected to generate more of the same consequences for several years to come. This is one main reason why population issues should be kept under keen observation, at both the local level and on the global scale, and should be incorporated in any serious effort to sustain the Jewish People as it encounters the challenges of the 21st century. Another reason is that the global picture of world Jewry is largely determined by the *mutual dependency and commonality of interests* that tie together Israel and the Diaspora. Changes in one locale are, sooner or later, bound to affect another locale, which from the angle of policy planning is quite significant.

Demographic policies aim at improving the quality of life in everything that touches upon the availability and quality of human resources, while also guarding the freedom of citizens' rights, and without impairing individual discretion. Demographic policies that coordinate and integrate across diverse areas are meant to assist those who govern and make decisions with the intention of preserving the vital interests of Israeli society and the Jewish People. Demographic policies deal with all the day-to-day subjects whose influences are felt over the long run. The subject of demography has a tendency to take a back seat to other subjects that look more urgent in the short run and capture most of the attention of policy-makers. Nevertheless, demographic processes are cumulative and produce outcomes that are strategically meaningful to the existence and essence of society. Therefore, subjects related to demography and population must be given high priority in national strategic thought.

This report has summarized the main demographic processes that currently affect the Jewish population in Israel and across the world. We specified a number of possible avenues for policy intervention aimed at improving the staying power of Jewish population and society as it faces emerging challenges. The main focus of this report has been on processes that can affect Jewish population size; its composition by ethnic, religious and other characteristics; and its share of larger populations. The central goal of this report and of Jewish demographic thinking in general, is to safeguard and enhance the viability of Jewish community life.

In facing the continuing consequences of current Jewish population changes, in the context of broader pressing issues high on the Jewish public agenda, it is plausible to speak of an emergency. This calls for a prompt beginning of action, which will necessarily evolve in medium and long term stages of thinking and impact, targeted at reversing and taking compensatory measures toward negative trends, and at stimulating or helping to create new positive trends. Policy interventions may directly aim at the specific processes and trends outlined herein, or they may take alternative paths such as upgrading or modifying other processes that may eventually feed back into the main target. Available data are often adequate to identify some of the more urgently needed measures, but in many cases new policy-oriented research is needed.

We need to theorize, research and understand the demographic issues honestly, away from old myths and new superstitions. It should be recognized that Jews often depend on circumstances beyond their control. Nevertheless, acknowledging the broader situation and focusing on specific goals may, with appropriate and adequate effort, secure a better outcome. A realistic assessment of where and how Jewish individuals and their institutions can best shape their own demographic and cultural future should combine with a willingness to make decisions and initiate processes apt to promote these goals.

This report has delineated the place of demographic policy and its importance to the furtherance of Israel as a Jewish-Zionist state central to the Jewish People, and the prosperity of the Jewish People in general as a thriving civilizational society anchored in its cultural roots, concerned with the freedom and equality of its citizens and residents, aspiring to thriving in security and peace, and seeking to minimize – as much as possible – friction with other states and cultures. Together with this, special characteristics of the State of Israel and the Jewish People were mentioned which

emphasize the need for the consolidation of a demographic policy to nurture the size and composition of the population, as well as to create a positive atmosphere for the perpetuation of Jewish Peoplehood in Israel and in the Diaspora.

The selected subjects presented herein emphasize the complexity of the demographic problems in Israel and in the Jewish world that importantly impinge on the determination of policies in the fields of society, defense, the economy, welfare and culture. Within each of these subjects many additional aspects demand research, examination, elucidation, and policy design. This document makes clear that there is no single solution that can alone satisfy all the challenges in the vast subject area of demography. Rather, there are a great many aspects, and the treatment of each can contribute its part to the overall picture. Each of the several fields mentioned demands comprehensive action to be coordinated with all the related factors – with a common understanding that the complex of the demographic issue deserves top strategic priority.

Dedicating a central role to the subject of demographic policy in any national and communal discussion and strategic planning is strongly recommended. The government of Israel, in full partnership with the main organizations of Jewish communities throughout the world, should carefully note that the trends in Jewish demography and identification in the various countries carry seriously negative implications for the Jewish future. Adequate resources must be allocated for documentation and study, especially for practicable research on:

- *aliyah* and other Jewish migrations;
- the efficacy of family-oriented and other population policy initiatives;
- changing patterns of Jewish identification and Israel-Diaspora relations.

It is recommended that much greater attention than presently available be devoted to these matters in the curriculum of Jewish education, and in the general public discourse in Israel and in the Diaspora.

The Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI) was established as a central focal point for developing policies proposals directed at facilitating the pluralistic thriving of the Jewish People. Collaboration with the Israeli government, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and other international and national Jewish organizations should hopefully lead to the formulation of policy suggestions urgently needed by decision-makers. Israel's

central authority might be represented in the policy planning activity either through an ad hoc body, such as a much strengthened Public Council for Demography; or an appropriate division of the National Security Council; or some other governmental entity like the Social Planning Unit at the Prime Minister's Office. It is also imperative that the Israeli government establish an inter-ministerial committee on population issues that will coordinate the decision-making of the several different relevant ministries. Understanding and, within the limits of the possible, steering Jewish demography will play a central role in the definition not only of how many but, more significantly, of *where* and *what the Jews will be* in the future.

The policy options and directions presented in this report require systematic analysis and planning. But from all that has been presented here, it is clear that policy recommendations stem from the basic assumption of **Israel as a Jewish and democratic state across part of its historical land that guarantees equal civil rights to all of its citizens, and of a continuing presence of large number of Jews in the more developed countries worldwide.** The consequent ideological, juridical, social, and economic implications of these assumptions need full evaluation.

With hope, optimism, brains and determined action, the Jews and their institutions should be able to take care of their future with all its imponderables. The future of Israel and World Jewry can be dealt with responsibly and sensibly while contributing to the development of an enlightened civil society and making a supreme effort to preserve within it a genuine spirit of *Klal Israel*.

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# APPENDICES

The following four Appendices are brought together here in order to offer the reader selected relevant illustrations of how policy planning approaches to Jewish population and demography developed in the course of the last forty years. These very disparate materials faithfully represent the limits of "state of the art" before our present effort.

The two resolutions by Israel's Government concerning a comprehensive approach to Jewish demography policies indicate the prevailing mode and level of conceptualization during the 1960s and the 1980s, respectively. The two resolutions also provide a baseline for evaluating what was actually done on the relevant matters by Israel's central authorities.

The document prepared in the early 2000s by Israel's Public Council on Demography – a branch of the government – illustrates the further elaboration reached in the effort to create a platform for governmental action. It again allows to commensurate what was actually done versus the declared intentions.

Finally, the document from the European International Jewish Policy Research in the 1990s is one of the rare efforts ever attempted to conceptualize demographic issues from the standpoint of the Jewish Diaspora and its organizations. Clearly, proposals made with very different amounts of analysis and not always screened for validity may have limited meaning. Nonetheless, results of brainstorming are relevant in that they outline public perceptions of the subject matter, hence the possible boundaries for strategic policy planning.

## A. ISRAEL GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION, APRIL 4, 1967

### 428. Demographic Policy

1. It was decided, subsequent to Decision No. 554 of 12 Elul 5726 (28.8.66):
  - a. To approve the suggestions incorporated therein (pages 15-16) regarding demographic policy.
  - b. The Ministerial Committee which was appointed according to the above Decision No. 554, together with the Minister of Police, will again consider the two proposals suggested by the Minister of Religion, and will present its findings to the Government within two months.
2. The Government has taken note of the findings of the Committee on the Problem of the Birth Rate chaired by Prof. R. Bachi and expresses its gratitude to that Committee for its vital work.
3. The Government recognizes the need for efficient action to realize the demographic policy, whose intention it is to create an environment which will encourage the birth rate, considering its essentiality for the future of the Jewish people.
4. To this end:
  - a. A permanent informative operation shall be established to remove economic and social obstacles, and to ensure various relief measures in the areas of education, housing, insurance, etc. – within the abilities of the State – with the goal of encouraging families to enlarge the numbers of their offspring.
  - b. An effort shall be made to curb the number of induced abortions whose present proportions cause concern from a national-demographic point of view, and also in view of women's health.
  - c. The Ministers and Executive Officers shall see to it that the Government's policy in the matter of encouraging the birth rate will instruct all Government Ministries, and will be realized in the planning and execution of their projects.
5. A "Center for Demographic Problems" (hereafter: the Center) will be established which will consist of a Public Council and an Acting Committee whose members will

- be chosen from the Council members. The Chairman of the Acting Committee, who will be the Chairman of the Council, will be appointed by the Prime Minister, and he will direct the Center.
6. The Prime Minister's Advisor on Demographic Matters will be appointed by the Prime Minister, with the approval of the Government, and he will serve as a member of the Public Council and the Acting Committee.
  7. The Public Council for Demographic Problems will be appointed by the Government according to the advice of the Prime Minister, and will include: the Government's Advisor on Demographic Matters, representatives of the Government Ministries related to the issue, and representatives of the Jewish Agency, development areas, women's organizations and public institutions. Experts in fields such as: demography, medicine, education, economics, sociology and psychology will also take part.
  8. The Center shall be a department of the Prime Minister's Office and its functions shall be:
    - a. To synchronize the legislation and plans of action of the Government and its Ministries so as to advise directives to ensure the actualization of the demographic policy of the Government.
    - b. To encourage the researches necessary to establish the articles of the demographic policy and to impel their actualization.
    - c. To motivate public organizations to act in accordance with the demographic policy.
  9. The Chairman of the Center will be a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Coordination of Social Services.
  10. The Government Ministries will necessarily be subject to the understanding of the Center in matters and plans of action, dealt with in the Ministries, which influence the area of demographic policy. Every office whose activities touch on the demographic issue shall appoint one of its senior workers as a permanent coordinator with the Center for demographic issues.
  11. With the establishment of the Center, a temporary budget will be placed at its disposal for the beginning of its activities. An itemized budget will be proposed by the Center after its organization. The budget will be subject to the approval of the Prime Minister, or whoever will be so authorized by him.

## B. ISRAEL GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION, MAY 11, 1986

### Demographic Trends of the Jewish People

The Government in its session of 2 Iyar 5746 (11.5.86) decided the following:

- A. The Government is concerned regarding the demographic trends which persist in Israel, and regards with special concern the decline in population growth in the State of Israel, the dearth of aliyah, the size of yerida, as well as the growth of assimilation and out-marriage in the Diaspora.
- B. The Government decides to adopt an overall coordinated demographic policy which will, over the long run, endeavor to assure a satisfactory level of growth of the Jewish population, and to this end encourages cooperation with those bodies which represent the entire Jewish People as well as Diaspora Jewry.
- C. This policy will be based on guidance and coordination and the use of measures likely to influence the growth of the population, such as: encouraging the establishment of families and their desire for children, strengthening of families and removal of obstacles in their paths, prevention of unnecessary induced abortions – by means of suitable counseling and information, welfare assistance for those families with difficulties child-raising, fostering aliyah and its absorption, and taking steps to restrain yerida and encouraging the return of yordim to the Homeland.
- D. 1) This policy will ensure that activities run by Ministries and other public bodies in the fields of health, education, labor and welfare, economic development, etc., which influence population growth and other demographic issues, be coordinated by the Demographic Center to conform with the general goals of the demographic policy.  
2) The Government again upholds the principle which was determined by the decision of 9.4.67, that the Government will actively see to it that its policy on the matter of birth incentives will guide all Government ministries and will be expressed in the planning and execution of its projects.
- E. The Government calls on the leaders of the Jewish communities and the heads of the Zionist movement to act in order to increase aliyah to Israel and to make it a primary goal of Jewish education and activism. The Government regards the promotion of aliyah and the improvement of absorption methods as a central goal of its policy.

- F. A team of officials, representatives of the following Ministries, shall advise the Government with detailed proposals on demographic issues: Labor and Welfare – Chairman, Immigrant Absorption, Economic Development, Education and Culture, and the Treasury.

## C. THE ISRAEL PUBLIC COUNCIL ON DEMOGRAPHY DOCUMENT, 2003

### The Government of Israel and Demographic Policy

#### Background

The demographic policy aspires to improve the quality of life in the State in all that touches on population traits and human capital by guarding citizens' rights and without usurping the balanced judgment of the individual.

The demographic policy in general is meant to aid the leaders, policy makers and decision makers in their correct administration of the society, and in the aspiration to maintain a stable and balanced age structure, in the light of lengthening life expectancy in developed societies.

Demographic considerations of the Government's agenda in almost all areas of life including education, health, housing, employment and defense are of great importance to the attainment of societal goals.

Demographic policy has been given an honorable position in the Western world: for example, in France, Germany and Italy there are prominent government authorities which deal with it, beginning with institutes of demography and including government ministries.

All this, as stated earlier, emerges from a recognition of the importance of demographic considerations in the planning and execution of an overall policy, and from suitable demographic examination of the anticipated goals and outcomes in the long range view.

The Israel Public Council on Demography is meant to supply the Government of Israel with the tools for consideration and planning of socio-demographic policy, which should support issues of vital national interest in all that touches upon the development of the population in the State.

## Israel

In the State of Israel, in addition to general demographic considerations, unique aspects exist, such as aliyah and yerida of the Jews, the relationship between the State of Israel and the Jewish nation; and the question of the Jewish nature of the State effects even its future borders.

The Government of Israel dealt with this issue in its deliberations on demographic policy. These were held in 1967 and in 1986.

In the deliberation of 9.4.67 the Government authorized proposals regarding demographic policy, and established the "Center for Demographic Problems" in the Prime Minister's Office, appointed an advisor to the Prime Minister on demographic issues, and also created the "Public Council for Demographic Problems".

The Government's decision determined, among other things:

1. To accompany the legislation and agenda of the Government and its Ministries in order to suggest proposals aimed at assuring the realization of the demographic policy of the Government.
2. To initiate the researches necessary to supply updated data in order to determine the stages of the Government's demographic policy.
3. To motivate public organizations to act in order to further the demographic policy.
4. The Government Ministries will be obliged to be subject to the understanding of the Demographic Center regarding matters and plans of action, dealt with in their Ministries, which influence the area of demographic policy. Every Ministry whose activities touch on the demographic issue shall appoint one of its senior employees as a permanent liaison with the Demographic Center for any issues related to demography.

The integration of these factors in the Prime Minister's Office was a correct first step toward the consolidation of a demographic policy, as it accompanied the legislation and agenda of the Government, and the initiation of research.

In its deliberations of 11.5.86 the Government made decisions regarding the demographic trends of the Jewish People, amid expression of concern regarding the demographic trends persisting in Israel and in the Diaspora, and decided to "adopt an overall coordinated demographic policy for the long run."



Concurrently the Government decision delineates areas of activity such as population growth, including "encouragement of the establishment of families and their desire for children, strengthening of families, and encouragement for remigration of yordim to the Homeland."

In 2002 the Public Council on Demography renewed its activities under the initiative of the then-Minister of Labor and Welfare, Mr. Shlomo Benizri, and continued with the blessing of the Minister of Welfare, Mr. Zevulun Orlev. During this period the Council held, in its plenum as well as in the meetings of special committees with external experts, deliberations on subjects whose priority was determined by the formalization of a current demographic policy which is here briefly outlined.

## **Selected Issues – Demographic Policy in Israel**

### **A. Strengthening the family and encouraging the birth rate**

- This area, so essential to the foundations of the population and its growth, embraces many areas, among which are education, health, housing, employment and welfare. The influence of the empowerment of women and the adjustments of the labor market to working women and their childbearing must be researched, and this in order to enable both spouses to advance personally while bringing up a family – for which there is willingness, according to the findings of fertility research of 1988. In order to assist the parents in bringing up their children, tools and expertise should be provided for them through training in responsible parenting.
- Attention should be given to the special needs of growing population groups (singles): comprehensive and professional attention to this problem can act as an impetus to further marriage and childbearing, as well as for the lessening of the need for fertility treatments, and perhaps even for the need to increase aliyah.
- Plans for action in this area include examination of the effects of credit points for income tax and education, the establishment of childcare facilities, changes in and of housing units, subsidies for household help for the working woman, and information and advice on the subject of the family.
- As opposed to common thought, child allowances in their present format do not serve demographic policy, but rather they serve social welfare goals, especially among delineated sub-populations. From the point of view of an overall

demographic policy, it would seem that the main goal should be to concentrate on the third and fourth child.

- In all which concerns the family and childbearing, close attention must be paid to the fields of ethics and the development of medical technology. The question of the efficacy of child allowances as a policy tool at this level demands basic investigation.

## **B. Aliyah and Absorption**

- Aliyah to Israel is an important reinforcement for the Jewish population in Israel, and also offers a most important answer to the olim in their adoption of Israeli demographic norms such as: high natural increase of population relative to the western world, a decrease of intermarriage as well as lengthened life expectancy.
- The aliyah of Diaspora Jewry has been a major ingredient in Israel's population growth since the founding of the State. We must invest thought and consider new approaches to promote aliyah from the Diaspora, and in this connection it is of great importance that the State of Israel be attractive from a social point of view.
- In this area, the Government was required by its 1986 decision to strengthen aliyah and to establish a "friendly" framework for its absorption in Israel. Also in this connection various proposals were brought forward which emphasized the centrality of Israel in the life of the Jewish People, and the enhancement of that bond by means of educational projects, the proliferation of information and visits to Israel. Aliyah has proved itself in the past as an important demographic factor, and thus it is suggested that funds be made available for its promotion.

## **C. Non-Jewish Olim**

- The number of non-Jewish olim is growing, especially following the large waves of aliyah in the 1990s, and this presents problems and challenges to the demographic policy.
- It seems that ways must be found to include and "embrace" this population within the Jewish community, especially those who have integrated into the country, and whose children are in the school system and are serving in the IDF.
- Various proposals were brought forward regarding the conversion of these olim, the proliferation of information and guidance to this end, and the use of aliyah organizations and non-profit associations to assist in the successful absorption of these olim.

#### **D. Returning Israelis and Yordim**

- The subject of Israelis who leave Israel is an important component in the demographic considerations of the State of Israel. Over the years there have been different attitudes towards these people; however it would be correct and appropriate to adopt a policy which would make it easier for those Israelis living in the Diaspora to return to Israel.
- This field of endeavor must be coordinated with the Jewish Agency for Israel, with the world's organized Jewish communities, and with the international and national Jewish organizations.
- Regarding this issue as well, we must develop a positive and "embracing" attitude toward the Israelis living in the Diaspora, to strengthen their attachment, and especially that of the younger generation, to the State of Israel, and to intensify the projects of the Absorption Ministry and the Jewish Agency. Also in this area it would be worthwhile to examine the suggestion to allow Israelis in certain categories to cast ballots for the Knesset as is allowed in other democratic western countries; this would strengthen their connection to the State and to events here.

#### **E. Foreign workers**

- The large number of foreign workers in Israel is a social and demographic problem of the first order, due to its influence on the labor market, and especially its implications for workers' rights and those of their children in the various areas of welfare. Ways should be considered to promote the integration of citizens into the work which till now has been manned by foreign laborers.
- Regarding this matter, suggestions were made to shorten the length of stay of the workers, and to give work certificates personally to each worker rather than to the employers (a kind of "green card"), and to institute organized supervision over the workers and their employers. It should also be emphasized that the turnover of foreign workers with shorter stays would considerably reduce the extent of family building and mixed marriage with Israelis.

#### **F. The Jewish world**

- As has been stated, World Jewry comprises a central base in the formalization of the demographic policy in Israel. The phenomenon which exists in developed western society – in which most of the world's Jews live – of reduced natural growth and shrinking populations, is not passing over the Jewish communities there. Furthermore,

among the Jews, alongside the accepted phenomena of late marriages, cohabitation without marriage and the aging of the population, there is also the worrying presence of mixed marriages and assimilation which cause a decline in the population. In this connection it would be appropriate for the Government to encourage the work of the "Association for a Demographic Policy of the Jewish People", a non-governmental organization which acted in the past alongside the Public Council on Demography.

## Summary and Conclusions

This document delineates in short the place of demographic policy and its importance in the proper maintenance of a progressive society. Within this framework also included are the special characteristics of the State of Israel which emphasize many times over the need to consolidate a demographic policy to create a positive atmosphere for the perpetuation of the Jewish People.

As stated above, the Government of Israel attended to this matter, but over the years the necessary implementation to consummate its decisions was not forthcoming, and this became clear even in the areas mentioned in these very decisions, which had earmarked an important position for the demographic aspect of legislative, social, defense and economic activities.

The selected subjects mentioned above emphasize the complexity of the demographic problems in Israel which have important implications for the determination of policy in the fields of the society, defense and the economy.

Each of the fields mentioned requires coordinated and basic activity of all the bodies involved. Furthermore, regarding these subjects there are many aspects which require research, investigation and clarification. And there are other subjects which have not been included in this short document.

It would be appropriate for the Government to urgently organize special deliberations regarding Israel's demographic problems, to confirm the organizational aspects and fields of activity, and especially to determine a suitable framework, that is – a Center for Demography and a Public Council for Demography which will deal with the consolidation of a demographic policy, including the aspects of budget and standardization, to allow the decision-makers to establish the demographic policy of Israel.

It is essential that the status of the Council be strengthened and clearly recognized as an advisory body to the Government in all subjects related to all the aspects of demography and population.

## D. INSTITUTE OF JEWISH AFFAIRS; AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE; EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF JEWISH COMMUNITY SERVICES; AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

### Planning for the Future of European Jewry, An International Policy Research Conference, Prague, July 3-5, 1995

The following recommendations and proposals were put forward mainly during workshop discussions. They were not formally approved by conference participants.

#### INFORMATION BASE

If the future of European Jewry is to be planned, the existing information base falls far short of requirements and it is recommended that:

1. an up-to-date database of demographic and socio-economic data is set up for planners, policy-makers and decision-makers;
2. a working paper is produced to start the planning process and discuss the framework and context in which such a database can be created.

In addition there is a need to:

3. set up a common pool of information so that members of small Jewish communities, particularly those in Eastern Europe, have access to information on such areas as developments in education and social welfare; educational resources; and information on leadership training.

#### RESEARCH

The importance of research was emphasized, and general recommendations were made that:

4. planners and decision-makers should use research findings to create policies;
5. information is disseminated among communities on how others are defining the issues and solving them;
6. researchers should be creative in the way they present their research findings, and should work with community leaders to interpret the data and decide on courses of action;

7. socio-demographic process and their implications need to be regularly monitored and relevant research provided to decision makers.

In particular, research should be focused on the following areas:

8. up-to-date demographic data on Jewish births and deaths, Jewish international and internal migrations, and the balance of accessions to and accessions from Judaism;
9. how to define the boundaries of the Jewish population, whether by size of a self-identified Jewish population (the preferred option), an enlarged Jewish population, or by the Israeli law of return;
10. data on the geographical mobility of Jews to enable planners to decide where to locate Jewish schools or community centers;
11. an evaluation of the effectiveness of formal and informal Jewish education including such data as what proportion of the Jewish young attend Jewish schools, for how long, the content of the curriculum, and the different patterns of Jewish behaviour and attitudes among adults who are exposed to different types of Jewish education;
12. the implications of the fact that European society is no longer vaccinated against racism;
13. a re-evaluation of the place and significance of antisemitism in Jewish communities;
14. the needs of young Jewish people and how to respond to these;
15. common areas of interest between Jewish communities and Muslim communities in Europe.

## **INTERFAITH**

It was emphasized that interfaith work should not simply be seen as a response to antisemitism, but as a way of deepening relationships between the different faiths. There is a need to:

16. hold bilateral discussions between Jews and Muslims, and Jews and Christians; or a triologue between Jews, Muslims and Christians;
17. broaden interfaith dialogue to include other faiths, including Muslims, and share common experiences;
18. carry out research on the relationship between Jews and Muslim communities in Europe (see recommendation 15 above).

## EDUCATION, CULTURE AND TRAINING

The important role which education and outreach work must play in attracting Jews, particularly young people, back into the community was underlined. We could:

19. set up a multi-cultural, multi-campus school linked by electronic communications, with one campus in Israel, one campus in the United States and one campus in Europe;
20. establish an Open Jewish University, modelled on the Open University in the UK, which could utilize electronic means of communication;
21. ensure our message to the next generation is delivered in a way and through the medium they understand, in particular electronic communications;
22. devise electronic games and CD-Roms about Jewish subjects in the Hebrew language;
23. develop educational programmes for parents and other adults;
24. organize cultural events and encourage activities such as Jewish publishing and films;
25. devise both formal and informal education programmes which extend beyond teaching about prejudice and its consequences and address the Jewish experience;
26. teach contemporary Jewish history in schools and Jewish civilization in universities;
27. support Jewish studies programmes at state universities in Europe, especially Eastern European countries;
28. mount exhibitions to disseminate information in Jewish experience and Judaism;
29. develop training programmes for rabbis, teachers and community leaders;
30. build up a Jewish spiritual and intellectual leadership in Europe, perhaps through establishing a European Jewish journal;
31. establish museums of tolerance.

## LOBBYING AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The consensus was that, in general political activity and lobbying to represent Jewish interests should take place within each European country. On a European-wide level, the main recommendations were that:

32. European Jewish organizations should co-ordinate their activities when lobbying political leaders on particular issues, and endeavor to present a united front on such issues as the war in Bosnia;
33. a clearing house is set up to share information and co-ordinate activities, political initiatives and meetings with international organizations and between separate Jewish organizations;
34. a series of seminars should be run on the practical steps involved in lobbying governments and politicians;
35. we should meet with, inform and educate newly elected parliaments on Jewish issues, how a Jewish community functions, who are its leaders, and what they do;
36. a list of participants – with addresses, telephone and fax numbers – should be prepared to foster an on-going network of contacts among those who attended the conference.

In addition there is a need to:

37. lobby the European Union both as a source of funds for programmes and activities of interest to the Jewish community, and to influence its role in foreign affairs;
38. share and disseminate information on the timing of requests for funds or support for projects;
39. work to harmonize anti-race hatred legislation in the European Union, and also to ensure that there is no compromise with the political parties of the far right by political leaders;
40. build coalitions;
41. co-ordinate Jewish European initiatives on human rights, racism and anti-discrimination issues, and work with other groups who support these causes;
42. set up a league of tolerance to monitor legislation and become a voice against racism and the violation of human rights;



43. educate and involve non-Jews to support and participate in lobbying on Jewish issues;
44. develop on-going relationships with the media and politicians as a future investment;
45. identify key contacts in different European countries and communities.

## **JEWISH AFFILIATION**

There is an imperative need to find internal consensus on issues of Jewish affiliation between different sectors of the European Jewish community, in particular across the East-West divide. It is necessary to:

46. devise a unified standard for conversion to Judaism;
47. adopt a market approach, whereby the needs of individual Jews are ascertained, and relevant, competitive services are offered by the Jewish community;
48. use the Internet and the information superhighway to build a modern, new European Jewish identity, and attract young people back into the community;
49. ensure that the services of the Jewish community are open to as many Jewish people as possible;
50. look at the role of Jewish women and, in particular, the problem of divorce;
51. encourage the diversity of organizations so that such groups as gays and lesbians can affiliate;
52. attract children from mixed marriages and non-Jewish partners into the community, particularly in Eastern Europe;
53. look at the possibility of redefining Zionism to enable Jews to have an over-arching idea which provides a sense of direction.

## **WELFARE AND SOCIAL NEEDS**

In view of the problems associated with an ageing population, whereby a substantially smaller Jewish adult population will have to provide for a much larger pool of the elderly, the main recommendations were that:

54. a full inventory of Jewish care services now available in Europe is produced and circulated;

55. emphasis should be put on taking care of people and the quality of life, rather than on fixed, real-estate investment;
56. common frameworks for the care of the elderly, and for social work in general, should be established;
57. appropriate forms of links between institutions and resource-sharing are developed between small communities, in particular between Eastern and Western Europe;
58. a common European Jewish pensions scheme or insurance fund should be launched to secure the financial basis of what will become an overwhelming demand on the community.

In general there is a need to:

59. define the role of the state as a provider of services to Jewish communities in relation to the role of the Jewish community;
60. develop and encourage private initiative as a possible provider of certain types of Jewish services;
61. strengthen and analyse our relationship with the European Union in Brussels in the context of the provision of Jewish welfare services.

## **EXCHANGE AND TWINNING ARRANGEMENTS**

Many delegates emphasized the value of developing inter-community networks through exchanges and twinning arrangements. It is recommended that:

62. a network of five or six Jewish communities is set up who could work together strategically for a year, and bring their findings to another conference.
63. In addition, there is a need to:
  64. encourage those American and British Jewish communities who possess one of the Torah scrolls, dispersed when Prague was occupied, to twin with the community in Eastern Europe from where it had originally come;
  65. form links between a municipality in Israel, a federation in the United States and a community in Europe, with relationships focusing on the realm of culture;

66. establish partnerships between Western and Eastern European Jewish communities;
67. encourage visits between different Western and Eastern European Jewish communities;
68. encourage academic exchanges of students, social workers and community leaders between universities in Israel and Europe.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Sergio DellaPergola**, born in Italy in 1942, has lived in Israel since 1966. He holds a Ph.D. from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is former Chairman and Professor Emeritus of Population Studies at The Hebrew University's Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, where he has directed the Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics and has been the incumbent of the Shlomo Argov Chair in Israel-Diaspora Relations. An internationally known specialist on the demography of world Jewry, he has published numerous books and over one hundred papers on historical demography, the family, international migration, Jewish identification, and population projections in the Diaspora and in Israel. He has lectured at over 50 universities and research centers worldwide and served as senior policy consultant to the President of Israel, the Israeli Government, the Jerusalem Municipality, and many major national and international organizations. He served on the National Technical Advisory Committee for the 1990 and 2000-01 National Jewish Population Surveys. In 1999 he won the Marshall Sklare Award for distinguished achievement from the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry (ASSJ). He was Visiting Fellow at the Oxford Centre of Hebrew and Jewish Studies (2002) and at Brandeis University (2006), and Visiting Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in 2009 and at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 2010.

## **JPPI Main Publications**

**The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute – Annual Assessment 2004-2005 The Jewish People Between Thriving And Decline** *JPPPI Staff and Contributors 2005*

To succeed, large resources, judicious coping with critical decisions and careful crafting of long-term grand-policies are needed. The full volume contains analyses of the major communities around the world and in-depth assessments of significant topics.

**Between Thriving and Decline – The Jewish People 2004, Executive Report, Annual Assessment No. 1,** *JPPPI Staff and Contributors 2004*

**Facing a Rapidly Changing World – The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, Executive Report, Annual Assessment No. 2,** *JPPPI Staff and contributors, 2005*

**Major Shifts – Threats and Opportunities – The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, Executive Report, Annual Assessment No. 3,** *JPPPI Staff and contributors, 2006*

**Societal Aspects – The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, Executive Report, Annual Assessment No. 4,** *JPPPI Staff and Contributors, 2007*

**The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, Executive Report No. 5, 2008, with a Special Section on Women in Jewish Society,** *JPPPI Staff and Contributors, 2008*

**The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, Executive Report No. 6, with a Special in-depth chapters: The economic crisis and its impact on the Jewish People, Changes of administration in the U.S. and Israel and Global geo-strategic trends and their possible implications for the Jewish People,** *JPPPI staff and Contributors, 2009*

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

**A Strategic Plan for the Strengthening of Jerusalem,** *JPPPI Staff, 2007*

**Background Policy Documents for the 2007 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People,** *JPPPI Staff, 2007*

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

**The Triangular Relationship of Jerusalem, Washington and North American Jewry, 2009 Glen Cove Conference,** *JPPPI Staff, 2009*

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

**Mega-Trends and their Impact on the Jewish People, Prepared for JPPI'S 2010 Conference, Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat, 2010**

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

**2030: Alternative Futures for the Jewish People, Avi Gil and Einat Wilf, 2010**

**Muslim Anti-Semitism – The Challenge and Possible Responses, Prof. Emmanuel Sivan, 2009**

**Position Paper: Global Jewish People Forum, JPPPI Staff, 2005**

The position paper examines President Moshe Katsav's initiative to establish a "Second House" and makes a number of recommendations.

**Soft Power – A National Asset, Dr. Sharon Pardo**

Today's global changes in the international arena require more consideration of soft assets possessed by the Jewish People. Prepared for the 2005 Herzliya Conference.

**Strategic Paper: Confronting Antisemitism – A Strategic Perspective, Prof. Yehezkel Dror, 2004**

The increasing ability of fewer to easily kill more and more makes new antisemitism into a lethal danger that requires comprehensive, multi-dimensional and long-term counter-strategies.

**Alert Paper No. 2: Jewish Demography – Facts, Outlook, Challenges,**

*Prof. Sergio DellaPergola, 2003*

There may be fewer Jews in the world than commonly thought, and if the current demographic trends continue unchanged, there might be even fewer in the future.

**Alert Paper No. 1: New Anti-Jewishness, Prof. Irwin Cotler, 2003**

The new Anti-Jewishness consists of discrimination against, or denial of, the right of the Jewish people to live, as an equal member of the family of nations.

**A Road Map for the Jewish People for 2025, JPPPI Staff, 2006**

Published in the context of the Alternative Futures for the Jewish People 2025 project. Prepared for the 2006 Herzliya Conference.