# Values and Religious Identification among Affiliated Jews in Eastern Europe

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**Abstract**

This article analyzes data on the values of adults affiliated with the Jewish community in Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Romania. There was wide agreement among the populations' value prioritization, but they are not monolithic. Overall, family-related values were more important than materialistic values. Those in Romania were the most religious, those in Hungary the least so.

A graphic portrayal of the data is presented and interpreted, guided by the Schwartz axiological typology. Sub-populations by home country and age group are compared in the context of this model. The older cohort tends towards Family-related values, while the younger cohort tends towards values of Hedonism and Stimulation. The placement of the national sub-groups illustrates their relative emphasis on materialist values versus post-materialist values of self-enhancement, which reflects the degree of democratization of the countries and the socio-economic level of the Jewish communities.

**Key words:** Jewish identity, Eastern Europe, values, post-materialism, age cohort

## Introduction

Since the fall of the Communist regimes in the 1990s, Eastern European culture and community life have been in a state of rapid flux and transition. After decades of virtual isolation, Eastern Europe is re-integrating into the international political, economic and cultural scene. Civic and community life are similarly being reformulated. The directions and trajectories of these changes are influenced by many factors. Within each country, the legacies of their pre-Communist history and culture as well as the socialization and education received under the Communist regimes impact how citizens of the various countries envision their future (Appel, 2004; Nagel & Mahr, 1999; Tismaneanu, 2009; Tomka, 2011, among many others).

In addition to political and economic considerations, knowledge of the values held by the citizens of these countries is vital in order to understand the current and evolving situation in Eastern Europe. For example, to what extent do they hold collective or individualistic values? Do they want a return to religious life or prefer the secular culture which was mandatory for decades? The rights and role of minority groups in post-Communist Eastern Europe is an issue of particular importance. Alongside the opinions of the majority population and the governments, there is the complex question of how the minority groups view themselves within the national culture.

Numerous researchers have found that looking at the Jewish community enables profound insights into the larger society in which they live (Cohen & Horenczyk, 1999; Gitelman, Kosmin & Kovács, 2003; Glazer, 1957; Greilsammer, 1978; Lipset, 1963, 1988; Park, 1950). The radically fluctuating role of the Jews throughout Europe's long and tumultuous history can be read as a sort of cultural barometer. Buffeted by countless impacts--internal and external, voluntary and enforced-- the Jews navigated a balance between acculturating into the societies in which they lived and maintaining a distinct Jewish identity based on culture, religion and a sense of Peoplehood. Thus, Jewish identity is always a constructed hybrid identity, Jewish-something else (Askénazi, 1984; Cohen, 2010). Fundamental values of the surrounding society impact how Jewishness is constructed and expressed and may even be internalized to the point that they are perceived as "Jewish" values.

This article looks at the value structure of Jews in contemporary Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Romania, with a structural comparison of the five countries and two different age cohorts in each country.

*Value structures in sociology*

Sociologically, a value is a belief that one type of conduct or state of existence is preferable to others (Fichter, 1971; Rokeach, 1976). Values held by individuals reflect those of the group in which they live. They are transmitted by family, community and educational settings and are essential to societal cohesion (Durkheim, 1953).

Guttman and Levy (1976) developed an axiological typology portraying a double polarity in which values related to authority were placed opposite values related to autonomy, and values related to altruism were placed opposite values related to egoism. Subsequently, Schwartz and his colleagues developed a structure of ten value-types graphically represented as a two-dimensional model showing two sets of general moral positions: Self-transcendence versus Self-enhancement and Conservation versus Openness to change, as shown in Figure 1 (Schwartz, et al., 2001).

**Figure 1: Schwartz typology of universal values (Schwartz, et al., 2001)**
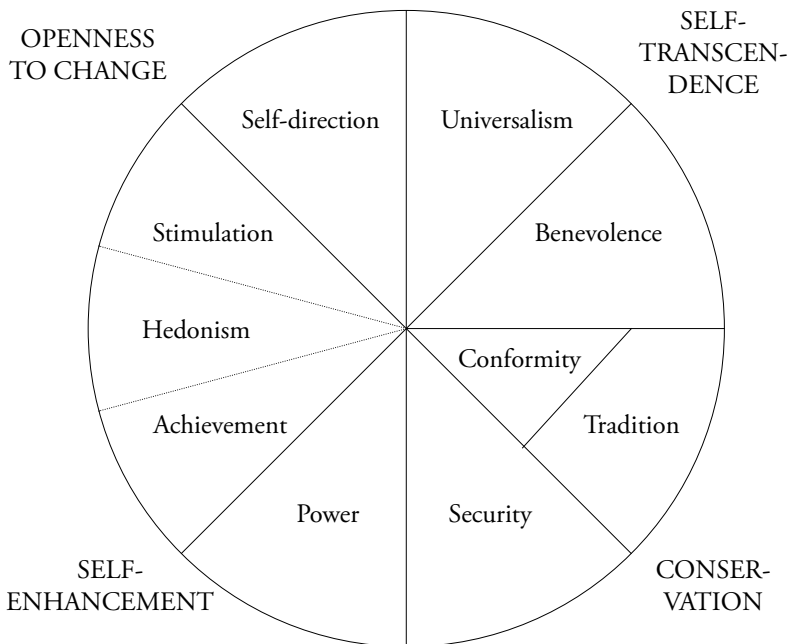
The Guttman/Levy and Schwartz models have both been used and verified many times in numerous international forums, indicating that the cognitive structure of values is similar in many societies (Cohen, 2011; Elizur & Sagie, 1996; Knafo & Schwartz, 2001; Moore, 1999; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995; Saroglou, Delpierre & Dernelle, 2004; Saroglou & Muñoz-García, 2008). This does not mean, of course, that values are emphasized to the same extent in all societies and cultures, but rather that the understanding of values is organized in a similar way, allowing for comparison between populations.

*Values and the "generation gap"*

Values, at least core values, have been found to be relatively consistent over the course of an individual's lifetime, forming a stable 'nucleus' of social identity (Abric, 2001). On the other hand, significant differences between age cohorts are seen, reflecting changes between different social contexts (Alwin & Krosnick, 1991; Brooks & Bozendahl, 2004; Danigelis, Hardy & Cutler, 2007; Johnson, 2001). Throughout the Western world, it has been found that 'post-materialistic' values related to self-expression and belonging are beginning to replace 'materialistic' values of economic security and survival, at least in countries where economic conditions enable such a shift (Inglehart, 2000, 2008). Further, the WVS documented "… a shift from institutionally fixed forms of dogmatic religion to individually flexible forms of spiritual religion" in post-materialist cultures (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005, p. 31). At the same time, a recent international poll found that around the world there has been a decline in the percentage of people who say they are religious and an increase in the percentage who are atheists (Win-Gallup, 2012).

*Socio-political and historical background*

To understand the values of the Jews in Eastern Europe today, it is necessary to look at their recent historical experiences and current socio-political context. Prior to WWII, Eastern Europe was home to over 60% of the world's Jewish population. As is all too well known, the entire region was nearly emptied of Jews during the Shoah. The shattered, remnant communities were unable to rebuild their populations, their religious and cultural life or their institutions during the subsequent years of Communist rule. The Jews strove, with varying degrees of success, to adapt to the new political-cultural environment. This environment,

inevitably, still contained anti-Semitism. The mass murder of the Jewish population was a taboo subject, making it difficult for survivors to come to terms with what had happened. Many Jews left, mainly for Western Europe, North America and Israel. Those who stayed were largely cut off from post-war Jewish life in other parts of the world. It was not uncommon for Jewish children to grow up completely unaware of their heritage. What had been for centuries a vibrant and diverse center of Jewish life came to be seen, in a matter of a few decades, as the furthest periphery of the Diaspora (Kovács, 2003).

All five of the countries included in this study share some basic historic features: occupation by the Nazis during WWII, followed by several decades of Communist regimes, during which virtually all Jewish religious, cultural and political organizations were banned. The Communist governments were replaced by democratic governments in the 1990s. All five countries were accepted as members of the European Union in the first decade of the 21st century. As the EU requires member countries to meet certain economic and political requirements, this indicates that the former Communist countries have developed democratic political institutions and market-oriented economies. All five are now rated as having high or very high levels of development according to the United Nations Human Development Index.[1]

At the same time, there are historical and cultural differences between the countries which impact their Jewish communities. The brief summaries presented here provide context for the analysis of the results of this survey.

*Bulgaria*. This is the smallest of the surveyed populations, with only some 2000 Jews (DellaPergola, 2010a).[2] Nearly all live in the capital city of Sophia. Unlike the other countries, most are of Sephardi-Mizrahi descent. Due to emigration among the younger generation, senior citizens make up a large percentage of this population.

At the beginning of WWII about 50,000 Jews lived in Bulgaria. During the Shoah, 18% of Bulgaria's Jews were killed, a significantly

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[1] The HDI takes into account indicators related to economics, health and education. http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Tables.pdf

[2] Due to difficulties in definition and census-taking, estimates of Jewish populations vary widely. Sources considered the most reliable are cited. DellaPergola considers the 'core' Jewish population, which excludes non-Jewish family members, people of Jewish ancestry who profess another religion, and non-Jews with some Jewish ancestry (DellaPergola, 2010a, p. 5).

lower proportion than in other Eastern European countries (Hollander, 2008). In Bulgaria, more than in other Nazi-occupied countries, the local population and the national Church tried to prevent the deportation of their Jewish neighbors to the death camps (Ben-Yakov, 1990; Cohen & Assa, 1977; Genov & Baeva, 2003). After the establishment of a Communist regime, tens of thousands of Bulgarian Jews—about four-fifths of the remaining population—moved *en masse* to Israel (Merdjanova, 2007). After the fall of the Communist government, another 3500 Jews moved to Israel from Bulgaria.

The officially imposed atheism of the Communist era was not internalized in this population, and the majority of Bulgarians affiliate with some religious faith (mainly Christian) (Genov & Kalkandjieva, 2007).

*Hungary*. The Hungarian Jewish population is the largest in East-Central Europe. On the basis of the calculation method applied by DellaPergola it numbers almost 50,000 (DellaPergola, 2010a). According to another demographic calculation, there are an estimated 80,000 to 150,000 people in Hungary with at least one parent of Jewish origin (Kovács, 2004).

In 1944, over three quarters of a million Jews lived in Hungary. They were largely acculturated. Within two months of the German occupation, almost half a million Hungarian Jews were deported to work and death camps. Only a quarter of a million Hungarian Jews (mainly the inhabitants of the capital city, Budapest) survived the war. Initially the Soviets were viewed by the Jews as saviors from the fascists and many Hungarian Jews embraced Communist ideology, but the reality quickly became a disappointment. About a tenth of the Jewish population moved to Israel over the next several decades. Those who stayed maintained their guiding principle of integration. By the 1980s Hungarian Jews were well-educated and economically successful.

Since the end of Communist rule there has been a renewed interest in Jewish culture, evidenced by a proliferation of university courses, books, and conferences on the subject. A Jewish institutional and educational system has been re-established, partly with help from abroad. Recent surveys of Hungarian Jews after the collapse of the Communist system indicate that while many Jews, especially from the younger generation, wish to revive Jewish tradition, religious-cultural traditions seem to serve mainly as tools for constructing group identity (Kovács, 2003, 2011).

*Latvia*. In Latvia, during the Shoah entrenched anti-Semitism was given free reign. The Jews of Latvia were not deported, but rather shot down in the forests by the *Einsatzgruppen* and local supporters. Virtually all of the 70,000 - 80,000 Jews who lived in Latvia at the beginning of the war were killed. In addition, some 100,000 Jews were brought from other countries (Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia) to be killed on Latvian soil (Press, 2000; Zisere, 2005). During the Soviet era Jews moved from other parts of the USSR to Latvia, so that by 1970 there were some 35,000 Jews in the region. For the Jews of Latvia, the desire to commemorate the Shoah is mixed with fear of re-accentuating their difference as a minority. Since the fall of the communist regime, thousands have left for Israel, the US or other Western European countries, leaving a population of less than 10,000. The aging population and high rate of intermarriage cast doubts on the stability of the community, although in recent years there have been efforts to organize and connect with the larger Jewish world.

*Poland*. The Polish ethnic-national identity that emerged in the 1880s was closely linked to the Catholic Church. There was a strong strain of anti-Semitism in certain Polish political and religious movements (Hagen, 1996; Weeks, 2006). As a result, despite their opposition to the Nazi invasion in 1939, the systematic persecution of Poland's Jews was ignored or accepted by the majority of Poles, though a minority aided or hid Jews. The major labor and death camps were established on Polish territory. By the end of the war 3 million Polish Jews had been killed, which constituted 90% of the pre-war population. In the first years after the war almost 200,000 survivors and returned refugees left Poland—about half went to Israel, and the remainder to the US, Western Europe and other destinations. The negative image of the Jew as a threat to the Polish nation persisted during the Communist era. Immediately after the war, periodic outbreaks of violence against the now-tiny Jewish minority occurred. The anti-Zionist backlash following Israel's Six Day War lead to the forced emigration of thousands of Poland's remaining Jews. During the years of resistance against the Communist regime, assimilated Polish Jews began exploring their history and culture, subjects which had been repressed. After Poland became the first Eastern European country to dismantle the Communist power structure in 1989, interest in Jewish culture increased among non-Jewish Poles as well, with the establishment of university courses and tourism to Jewish sites, both pre-war and Shoah-related. Nevertheless,

anti-Jewish sentiment continued. Particularly in the years since Poland's entry into the EU in 2004, there have been efforts to reconstruct a Polish identity which is not rooted in anti-Semitism. There has been a parallel process of reconstructing Polish-Jewish identity among those for whom their Jewish ancestry and tradition had been almost unknown. Jewish schools, summer camps, youth groups and synagogues are being established in the main cities (Cherry & Orla-Bukowska, 2007; Engel, 2005; Gebert, 1991; Michlic, 2007). The contemporary Jewish-Polish population is estimated at about 3,200--a mere 0.1% of its size before the war (DellaPergola, 2010a).

*Romania*. Romania was an ally of the Axis powers and in the early years of the war the military dictator Ion Antonescu ordered the deportation and murder of Jews in areas under his control. As in Latvia, the local population—soldiers, policemen and civilians—actively aided the *Einsatzgruppen* in the slaughter of Jews. However, as the war drew to a close, rather than intensify efforts to kill Jews as happened in other areas, Antonescu took a practical approach and in a pragmatic attempt to appease the Allied forces whose victory was apparently imminent Antonescu did not send the remaining Jews to the death camps, but repatriated some of those who survived the brutal deportation and made efforts (largely unsuccessful) to allow emigration to British Palestine. In 1944 after a coup toppled Antonescu, the new government under the restored King Michael signed a ceasefire with the Soviet Union and joined the Allies. Of the approximately three quarters of a million Jews who had been living in Romania in 1939, only about half survived the war (Deletant, 2006, Friedman, 2011). Many of these survivors left in the next decade for Israel and other destinations. While the Romanian government's policy regarding Jewish emigration to Israel underwent radical shifts, by 1970 almost a quarter of a million of Romania's surviving Jews had moved to Israel (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011; Levy, 1998). Romania was the only Soviet bloc country not to sever diplomatic ties with Israel following the Six Day War. There are fewer than 10,000 Jews in Romania today. Most are senior citizens, with a median age of close to 60 and a small percentage of youth; DellaPergola (2010a) classifies this population as 'terminal' in that deaths far outnumber births.

*A survey of Eastern European Jews in the post-Communist era*

Since the fall of the Communist regimes, Jewish community life has begun to experience a revival in Eastern Europe, made possible by the eased restrictions on religious activity in these countries, and catalyzed through reconnection with the rest of the Jewish world. Numerous programs have been initiated by international institutes such as the American Joint Distribution Committee, the American Jewish Committee, and the Jewish Agency, to assist in the rebuilding of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. Yet little was known about the values, the religious beliefs and practices and the Jewish identity of the past few generations of Jews who grew up there, the populations among whom they intended to work. Even more, there was a tendency to generalize, and to view the Jews of contemporary Eastern Europe as somehow monolithic. This was perhaps unavoidable given the logistical and bureaucratic impossibility of conducting sociological research among these populations during their years behind the Iron Curtain.

Now the situation has changed, and as the recent research undertaken by András Kovács and Ildiko Barna (2010) revealed, the Jews in the different Eastern European countries are far from homogenous. Furthermore, changes in the economic, political and cultural context may impact values across age cohorts, as will be explored below.

## Methods

*The survey*

This article presents an analysis of values among Jews in five Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Romania (Kovács & Barna, 2010). In 2008-2009, 1280 face to face interviews were conducted with Jewish adults in Bulgaria (200), Hungary (405), Latvia (276), Poland (200) and Romania (199).[3] The sample was built using a snowball method. As a result of this, the interviewees tended to be those with at least some connection with Jewish community life, from those most actively involved at the core of the community through those further towards the periphery. Based on general knowledge of Eastern European Jewry, it was anticipated that a third of the interviewees would be affiliated with organized Jewish community life. However, due to the sampling method the proportion of affiliated Jews was

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[3] The surveys were conducted by the IPSOS Social Research Institute (Hungary) and its partners on behalf of the JDC International Centre for Community Development.

significantly higher, particularly in certain countries. In Hungary, just over half (54%) of the respondents indicated they were affiliated with a Jewish organization. In Romania 84% were affiliated with the Jewish community. The samples in the other countries were between these two extremes. Therefore, these samples are not representative of the whole Jewish population of the countries. Rather, the survey covered a certain segment of the population, namely those Jews who have at least some connection to the Jewish community and its institutions.

The Jewish identity of the interviewees and their family members (spouse, parents, and grandparents) was defined by the interviewees, not by standards of traditional Jewish law. That is, the only criterion was the interviewees' identification of themselves and their family members as beings Jewish, whether by birth or conversion. Relevant questions asked of the interviewees are given in the Appendix.

The current paper analyzes interviewees' responses to a question asking them to rate the importance of each of a set of 22 values. Values were rated on a five point scale, 5 indicating 'very important' and 1 'not important at all'. Using standard distribution tables and sophisticated multi-dimensional data analysis techniques, these values as ascribed to by these populations are compared to each other and to the dominant societies in which they live.

The full questionnaire was quite lengthy, consisting of 147 questions. Surveys were conducted in face-to-face interviews lasting approximately an hour. Interviews were conducted in the local language.

*Method of data analysis*

This analysis uses a Facet Theory approach to data analysis. Facet Theory is a meta-theoretical framework and systematic approach to theory construction, research design, and data analysis. It enables a structural approach to a data set that covers numerous variables for a large survey population. The definitional framework of the study is articulated in a 'mapping sentence' which delineates facets (sets of conceptually related variables) of the subject under study and the relations between them (Levy, 1985, 2005; Levy & Guttman, 1985).

Facet Theory includes several multi-dimensional data analysis techniques. The technique used in this study is Smallest Space Analysis (SSA). The SSA procedure graphically portrays the correlations between a set of selected variables, thus uncovering the structural relationships between them (Guttman, 1968). This procedure is particularly useful in

analyzing data from surveys such as the European Values Survey, which include many variables and multiple, large populations.

An SSA begins with the construction of a correlation matrix for the selected variables. A computer program (HUDAP, Amar, 2005) plots the variables according to their correlations following the principle that closely correlated items are close together and weakly or negatively correlated items are far apart. The program takes into account the entire correlation matrix simultaneously. The researcher then looks for a coherent overall structure in the map consisting of contiguous regions of semantically related variables. By definition, for n variables a structure may be found in n-1 dimensions, but structures in maps of high dimensionality are not easily understandable or useful. It is preferable to find a structure in two or three dimensions. Structures may consist of, for example, series of sequential slices (such as a 'most' to 'least' progression), a center-periphery structure of concentric circles, or a polar structure of pie-shaped wedges arranged in sets of oppositions and emanating from a common center. While the placement of the variables is objective, based on the correlation matrix, the designation of the regions and interpretation of the structure is subjective. The mapping sentence provides a theoretical guide for determining the regions and structure of the map (Levy, 1985, 1994).

The regionalization of SSA maps is analogous to that of geographic maps, whose fixed features may be divided into regions according to political boundaries, natural features, population density, etc. For example, two towns along the shore of the Black Sea may be in the same area of a map divided according to natural habitat, while in a map divided according to political boundaries one may be in Bulgaria and the second in Romania. In the same manner, the same SSA map may be read in various ways according to the theoretical basis of the analysis.

Sub-groups of the surveyed population may be introduced into the map as 'external variables', a feature which distinguishes SSA from other similar multi-dimensional data analysis techniques. The map of primary variables is 'fixed', so its structure is not affected by the introduction of external variables. A correlation array between the external variables and the set of primary variables is calculated. Each external variable is placed in the map according to its correlations with the primary variables. This allows for the comparison of sub-groups within the structural representation uncovered in the interpretation of the primary data set (Cohen & Amar, 2002).

## Results

*Demographic profile of interviewees*

The population covered a wide age spectrum, ranging from 18 to 60 years old. Males and females were approximately equally represented although the gender distribution varied slightly in the different countries (males were slightly over-represented in Latvia and under-represented in Romania). Education level of interviewees was high, as was the education of their parents. A large percentage worked in high-status professions, though this was somewhat smaller in Bulgaria and Latvia. Interviewees came from middle or upper-middle socio-economic strata, with a high level of access to modern communication technologies and other consumer goods. In each country, over half the respondents said they use the internet regularly. The lowest rate of internet usage was in Bulgaria, where 57% said they go online 'a lot' or 'quite a lot'; in Poland this figure exceeded three quarters (76%). A large majority (80% or more in each country) visit websites with Jewish content. It is likely that internet use in general and visiting Jewish sites are more common among youth and young adults.

Between 30% and 47% of interviewees were married. The average number of children was low, well below replacement level; among respondents aged 25 and older it ranged between 0.7 in Romania and 1.22 in Latvia. Exogamy rates were quite high among respondents, ranging from 46% in Hungary to 72% in Bulgaria and Romania. Intermarriage was also prevalent in previous generations: a large percentage in every country had at least one non-Jewish grandparent, from 48% in Latvia to 84% in Poland. A fifth of the respondents said their Jewish identity was concealed from them during childhood; this was more common in Poland and Hungary.

*Jewish identity*

While, as stated, the majority of respondents had some connection to the Jewish community, in many cases this connection was informal. Only in Poland and Romania were more than half of those interviewed members of a Jewish religious organization (63% and 69% respectively). In the other three countries, less than a third were (30% in Hungary, 26% in Latvia and 23% in Bulgaria). This may reflect a lack of attractive organizations, reluctance to publicly identify as Jewish, or a distrust of official organizations stemming from experiences under the Communist

regime—a social phenomenon noted among non-Jewish populations in the post-Communist world (Howard, 2003).

Participation in the Jewish community did not necessarily indicate religious belief or observance of Jewish tradition. When asked if they would be more likely to take part in community life if it were more religiously oriented, the vast majority answered in the negative. The Romanian respondents were an exception; 42% said they would be more likely to be involved in a more strongly religious Jewish community, and 18% said they 'certainly' would. In Bulgaria, Latvia and Poland just under a fifth said they would be drawn to a more religious Jewish community life, and in Hungary fewer than 10% did.

In each country, the perception of the importance of participation in Jewish religious activities was stronger than the low level of membership in religious organizations would indicate. Again, the degree of importance attached to participation in religious activities was highest in Romania (57% said they are important or very important) and Poland (46%). Interestingly, though the Bulgarian respondents had the lowest level of membership in a Jewish organization, they attributed a higher level of importance to participation in Jewish religious activities: a third said this was important to them, compared to a quarter in Latvia and 15% in Hungary.

The level of interest in Jewish religion and tradition was even stronger, and more consistent among all the countries, ranging from 62% in Latvia to just over three quarters of respondents in Romania (77%).

At the same time, there was dramatic variation in the extent to which the sub-populations considered themselves "Jewish by religion" (as opposed to by birth, culture, reaction to anti-Semitism, or other possible ways of perceiving Jewish identity). In Romania, 73% said they think of themselves as Jewish by religion. In Latvia, only 20% said so. In Latvia and Poland about half identified this way (51% and 47% respectively) and in Bulgaria 62% indicated religion as a primary component of their Jewish identity.

*Values of the Jews of Eastern Europe*

These values associated with Jewish identity are part of a larger value system comprising universal and particular values. It is this cumulative value system which is the main focus of the current analysis.

**Table 1: Importance of values, percentage of interviewees by country answering 'important' or 'very important' combined; ('very important' in brackets)[4]**

| | Bulgaria | Hungary | Latvia | Poland | Romania | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family and children | 98% (92%) | 97% (87%) | 96% (88%) | 91% (69%) | 98% (90%) | 96% (86%) |
| Honoring parents | 99% (92%) | 95% (73%) | 99% (88%) | 93% (65%) | 97% (87%) | 96% (80%) |
| Educational attainment | 92% (59%) | 89% (59%) | 96% (72%) | 93% (75%) | 97% (91%) | 93% (70%) |
| Helping others | 95% (62%) | 92% (56%) | 86% (36%) | 89% (55%) | 92% (63%) | 91% (54%) |
| Responsibility | 96% (78%) | 93% (65%) | 78% (42%) | 85% (54%) | 91% (64%) | 89% (60%) |
| Friends and acquaintances | 94% (58%) | 92% (57%) | 82% (38%) | 88% (51%) | 85% (52%) | 88% (51%) |
| Doing what you like | 80% (68%) | 85% (57%) | 82% (49%) | 89% (59%) | 85% (59%) | 85% (57%) |
| Enjoying life | 89% (64%) | 88% (62%) | 75% (41%) | 76% (40%) | 94% (77%) | 85% (57%) |
| Having a good time with friends | 82% (52%) | 92% (57%) | 73% (36%) | 80% (38%) | 84% (56%) | 83% (48%) |
| Being useful to society | 91% (57%) | 77% (35%) | 70% (28%) | 82% (39%) | 81% (50%) | 79% (40%) |
| Feeling part of the Jewish People | 80% (48%) | 60% (36%) | 76% (38%) | 70% (36%) | 88% (60%) | 72% (42%) |
| Excellence at work | 80% (40%) | 56% (20%) | 81% (40%) | 62% (17%) | 90% (58%) | 71% (33%) |
| Going on holiday | 77% (47%) | 70% (43%) | 46% (18%) | 47% (22%) | 76% (36%) | 63% (34%) |
| A nice appearance | 62% (37%) | 55% (18%) | 77% (33%) | 61% (20%) | 63% (31%) | 62% (26%) |
| Responsibility towards fellow Jews | 82% (52%) | 56% (23%) | 49% (17%) | 50% (20%) | 72% (37%) | 60% (28%) |
| Earning a lot of money | 75% (32%) | 44% (13%) | 76% (33%) | 43% (9%) | 57% (25%) | 58% (22%) |
| Engaging in sport | 46% (21%) | 54% (22%) | 62% (29%) | 52% (18%) | 52% (23%) | 54% (23%) |
| Believing in God | 40% (25%) | 32% (20%) | 55% (32%) | 39% (23%) | 78% (56%) | 47% (30%) |
| Observing Jewish law | 39% (18%) | 18% (8%) | 35% (10%) | 33% (15%) | 59% (33%) | 34% (15%) |
| Marrying only a Jew | 25% (13%) | 15% (13%) | 28% (14%) | 26% (13%) | 35% (17%) | 28% (14%) |
| Politics and public life | 24% (6%) | 28% (8%) | 23% (5%) | 31% (6%) | 20% (9%) | 25% (7%) |
| Buying a good car | 16% (7%) | 12% (4%) | 24% (9%) | 11% (4%) | 28% (12%) | 18% (7%) |

[4] Significance tests were conducted for the data. Chi square and adjusted residual indicators were calculated. We found p < .01 for all variables except for 'marrying only a Jew' for which p = .069.

Table 1 shows quite clearly that there was wide agreement among the countries for the general prioritization of the values. That is, in comparing the combined positive answers (important and very important) versus the combined negative answers (not important and not important at all) there were very few differences between the countries. The difference can be seen mainly in a comparison between those who answered each was 'very important'. Family-related values were important to virtually all respondents in all countries, though those in Poland were distinctly less likely to say family and parents are 'very important'. Educational attainment was also of great importance for most; the Romanian Jews were particularly emphatic about this. At the bottom of the list were involvement in politics and buying a car. Overall, materialistic values and specifically Jewish values were attributed relatively little importance.

Some interesting differences can be seen between the countries that highlights the cultural variance among them. For example, values of social responsibility (helping others, responsibility, friends, being useful to society) were consistently lower in Latvia than the other countries, while the Latvian respondents gave relatively strong emphasis to materialistic values. The Romanian Jews were the most likely to say that enjoying life was important to them, particularly in comparison to those in Latvia and Poland. The Jews in Bulgaria scored highest on a wide range of values. Compared to those in the other countries, they attributed more importance to being useful to society, doing what one likes, and earning a lot of money, three very divergent values. Those in Hungary were more likely to say having a good time with friends was important, and the least likely to say excellence at work is important.

Responses to the particularly Jewish values differed dramatically between national sub-populations. Across the board values related to group belonging (feeling part of the Jewish People, responsibility towards fellow Jews) were considered more important than keeping religious tradition or belief in God. This is an indicator of the secular character of the surveyed population, and the presence of a relatively strong ethnic identity. However, despite the concern expressed for group belonging, endogamy was among the lowest-ranked values, reflecting the persistently high rate of intermarriage in these communities.

The Jews in Romania placed more importance on each of the Jewish values than did other nationalities, with the exception of 'responsibility towards other Jews', which was highly important to the Bulgarian Jews. The Hungarians attached the least importance to this set of values, likewise except for 'responsibility towards other Jews', which was lower

in Latvia and Poland. It seems that this concept of group loyalty follows a different logic than that of religious values.

*Impact of age cohort/generation*

Differences in values between various age cohorts may reflect changes due to individuals' life stage or to changes in the larger social environment or both. The current analysis compares two age cohorts in order to identify similarities and differences between generations that grew up in different social, political and cultural contexts. Since the Communist governments in each of these countries fell over 20 years ago, a new generation has grown to young adulthood in the post-Communist era. Responses to the set of values were compared between two age cohorts: respondents between the ages 18 and 35 and those between 36 and 60. Respondents in the former cohort are likely to be in the early stages of beginning a career and family. They have come of age since the transition from the Communist regimes and the fall of the Soviet Union. Members of the older cohort are likely to be more established in their careers and family lives. Further, they lived more years [of their lives] during the Communist era.

Despite the dramatic changes in the social context, the variance between the values of the two age cohorts was not large—in most cases less than 10%. This finding illustrates the basic consistency of the value structure within the cultures despite the great social, political and economic changes they have undergone.

At the same time, some consistent patterns of variance between the two age cohorts can be seen. The older respondents were more likely to attribute great importance to general values of family, education, altruism, and responsibility as well as to specifically Jewish values. In contrast, the younger respondents were more likely to say that values related to personal enjoyment were very important to them.

In each individual country the same pattern was observed. In some countries, however, the differences between the age cohorts regarding certain values were larger. For example, the younger Polish Jews were significantly less likely to say that family was very important to them (61% compared to 80% of the older cohort in that country). In the Bulgarian sample, the younger cohort gave much less importance to educational attainment (48% compared to 75%). In Romania, the most religious of the populations, observance of Jewish law dropped significantly among the younger generations. In Latvia, the younger respondents attributed much less importance to helping others and responsibility than did the older ones.

**Table 2: Values by age cohort. Percentage answering 'very important'**

|  | Total survey population | |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 18-35 years | 36-60 years |
| Family and children * | 82% | 90% |
| Honoring parents | 78% | 83% |
| Educational attainment * | 66% | 74% |
| Helping others ** | 49% | 60% |
| Responsibility * | 55% | 67% |
| Friends and acquaintances | 54% | 48% |
| Doing what you like * | 60% | 54% |
| Enjoying life * | 60% | 52% |
| Having a good time with friends * | 51% | 45% |
| Being useful to society | 37% | 43% |
| Feeling part of the Jewish People ** | 39% | 47% |
| Excellence at work | 35% | 30% |
| Going on holiday | 33% | 34% |
| A nice appearance ** | 23% | 30% |
| Responsibility towards fellow Jews * | 24% | 33% |
| Earning a lot of money ** | 21% | 23% |
| Engaging in sport | 22% | 24% |
| Believing in God ** | 28% | 32% |
| Observing Jewish law * | 12% | 19% |
| Marrying only a Jew * | 14% | 13% |
| Politics and public life * | 6% | 8% |
| Buying a good car | 7% | 6% |

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

*Holistic structure of values*

While much can be learned from the distribution tables, they do not show the inter-relationships between the variables. For this, the SSA technique is valuable. The correlation matrix, which serves as the data input for the SSA, is given in Table 3. The correlation between each pair of values indicates the likelihood that a respondent who indicated one value was important also indicated the importance of the second. Correlations range from very strong, as between 'honoring parents' and 'family / children' or between 'responsibility' and 'helping others' to neutral or slightly negative, with such values as 'doing what you like' and 'marrying only a Jew'.

The resultant SSA is shown in Figure 2. The regionalization was guided by the  Schwartz model. The map is divided into six basic regions, arranged in a polar structure. At the top of the map is a region containing three values, 'responsibility', 'helping others' and 'being useful to society', values of benevolence which correspond to the dimension of Self-transcendence in the Schwartz model. Moving clockwise is a region

entitled Hedonism and Stimulation. Using the structure of the Schwartz typology as a guide, values related to stimulation are part of a larger dimension he refers to as Openness to Change, which lies contra-laterally to the Conservation dimension. Values related to hedonism are related to both the dimensions of Openness to Change and Self-enhancement (Schwartz, et al., 2001).

**Table 3: Correlation matrix among 22 values, total population[5]**

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Honoring parents | 1 | 100 | 84 | 52 | 53 | 43 | 38 | 55 | 34 | 20 | 37 | 18 | 46 | 18 | 45 | 29 | 14 | 31 | 26 | 8 | -3 | 41 | 20 |
| Family children | 2 | 84 | 100 | 73 | 55 | 56 | 35 | 56 | 16 | 3 | 41 | 20 | 44 | 22 | 37 | 20 | 9 | 16 | 4 | 12 | -13 | 34 | 23 |
| Responsibility | 3 | 52 | 73 | 100 | 36 | 81 | 31 | 23 | -12 | 13 | 50 | 37 | 18 | 26 | 18 | 12 | 5 | -9 | 8 | 37 | 12 | 47 | 7 |
| Educational attainment | 4 | 53 | 55 | 36 | 100 | 48 | 40 | 48 | 29 | 24 | 34 | 21 | 31 | 19 | 36 | 36 | 24 | 32 | 36 | 18 | 22 | 28 | 19 |
| Helping others | 5 | 43 | 56 | 81 | 48 | 100 | 52 | 36 | -10 | 21 | 58 | 45 | 28 | 27 | 28 | 22 | 8 | -9 | 16 | 47 | 9 | 48 | 14 |
| Enjoying life | 6 | 38 | 35 | 31 | 40 | 52 | 100 | 33 | 27 | 65 | 36 | 69 | 5 | 53 | 5 | 36 | 40 | 33 | 31 | 47 | 15 | 26 | -4 |
| Jewish people | 7 | 55 | 56 | 23 | 48 | 36 | 33 | 100 | 39 | 14 | 38 | 16 | 63 | 24 | 78 | 40 | 3 | 30 | 28 | 12 | 6 | 74 | 68 |
| Buying a good car | 8 | 34 | 16 | -12 | 29 | -10 | 27 | 39 | 100 | 26 | 17 | 17 | 34 | 35 | 33 | 56 | 35 | 68 | 51 | 4 | 23 | 21 | 24 |
| Doing what you like | 9 | 20 | 3 | 13 | 24 | 21 | 65 | 14 | 26 | 100 | 38 | 58 | -13 | 50 | -10 | 32 | 31 | 35 | 31 | 39 | 20 | 4 | -15 |
| Being useful to society | 10 | 37 | 41 | 50 | 34 | 58 | 36 | 38 | 17 | 38 | 100 | 52 | 26 | 38 | 38 | 36 | 20 | 12 | 34 | 44 | 36 | 56 | 13 |
| Good time with friends | 11 | 18 | 20 | 37 | 21 | 45 | 69 | 16 | 17 | 58 | 52 | 100 | -5 | 64 | 1 | 38 | 35 | 26 | 25 | 85 | 24 | 31 | -3 |
| Believing in God | 12 | 46 | 44 | 18 | 31 | 28 | 5 | 63 | 34 | -13 | 26 | -5 | 100 | 9 | 82 | 32 | 8 | 14 | 23 | -10 | 0 | 49 | 54 |
| Going away on holiday | 13 | 18 | 22 | 26 | 19 | 27 | 53 | 24 | 35 | 50 | 38 | 64 | 9 | 100 | 23 | 37 | 34 | 39 | 21 | 54 | 22 | 35 | 8 |
| Observing Jewish law | 14 | 45 | 37 | 18 | 36 | 28 | 5 | 78 | 33 | -10 | 38 | 1 | 82 | 23 | 100 | 39 | 3 | 16 | 26 | 4 | 3 | 65 | 69 |
| Caring for appearance | 15 | 29 | 20 | 12 | 36 | 22 | 36 | 40 | 56 | 32 | 36 | 38 | 32 | 37 | 39 | 100 | 55 | 59 | 45 | 30 | 23 | 31 | 24 |
| Engaging in sport | 16 | 14 | 9 | 5 | 24 | 8 | 40 | 3 | 35 | 31 | 20 | 35 | 8 | 34 | 3 | 55 | 100 | 46 | 26 | 22 | 24 | 9 | -3 |
| Earning a lot of money | 17 | 31 | 16 | -9 | 32 | -9 | 33 | 30 | 68 | 35 | 12 | 26 | 14 | 39 | 16 | 59 | 46 | 100 | 70 | 29 | 23 | 24 | 9 |
| Excellence in work | 18 | 26 | 4 | 8 | 36 | 16 | 31 | 28 | 51 | 31 | 34 | 25 | 23 | 21 | 26 | 45 | 26 | 70 | 100 | 36 | 28 | 32 | 10 |
| Friends acquaintances | 19 | 8 | 12 | 37 | 18 | 47 | 47 | 12 | 4 | 39 | 44 | 85 | -10 | 54 | 4 | 30 | 22 | 29 | 36 | 100 | 31 | 41 | -2 |
| Politics public life | 20 | -3 | -3 | 12 | 22 | 9 | 15 | 6 | 23 | 20 | 36 | 24 | 0 | 22 | 3 | 23 | 24 | 23 | 28 | 31 | 100 | 26 | 5 |
| Resp. fellow Jews | 21 | 41 | 34 | 47 | 28 | 48 | 26 | 74 | 21 | 4 | 56 | 31 | 49 | 35 | 65 | 31 | 9 | 24 | 32 | 41 | 26 | 100 | 54 |
| Marrying only a Jew | 22 | 20 | 23 | 7 | 19 | 14 | -4 | 68 | 24 | -15 | 13 | -3 | 54 | 8 | 69 | 24 | -3 | 9 | 10 | -2 | 5 | 54 | 100 |

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5 The original coefficients were multiplied by 100 and rounded into integer numbers in Tables 3 and 4.

The next region contains values of Achievement and Power, corresponding to the dimension of Self-enhancement. The value 'caring for appearance' may be expected to be related to Hedonism, but in this case it was more closely correlated with earning money and excellence in work. The following region contains all of the Jewish-oriented values. This corresponds to Schwartz's universal value type Tradition. The final region contains two values pertaining to family. These reflect Schwartz's categories of conformity and security and correspond to the Conservation dimension. This shows the distinction between 'traditional' values which are specifically Jewish (observing Jewish law, marrying only a Jew) and those which are universal (family and children, helping others).

As noted in the methods section, SSA maps may be interpreted in various ways based on the theoretical basis. In this case, the well-known typology of Schwartz served as the theoretical guideline. Nevertheless, we could easily read the data according to the equally renowned Guttman/Levy model with two polarities: authority (i.e., observing Jewish law) vs. autonomy (i.e., doing what you like) and altruism (i.e., helping others) vs. egoism (i.e., earning money). Other readings are possible but beyond the scope of this article.

**Figure 2: SSA of values of Jews of Eastern Europe**
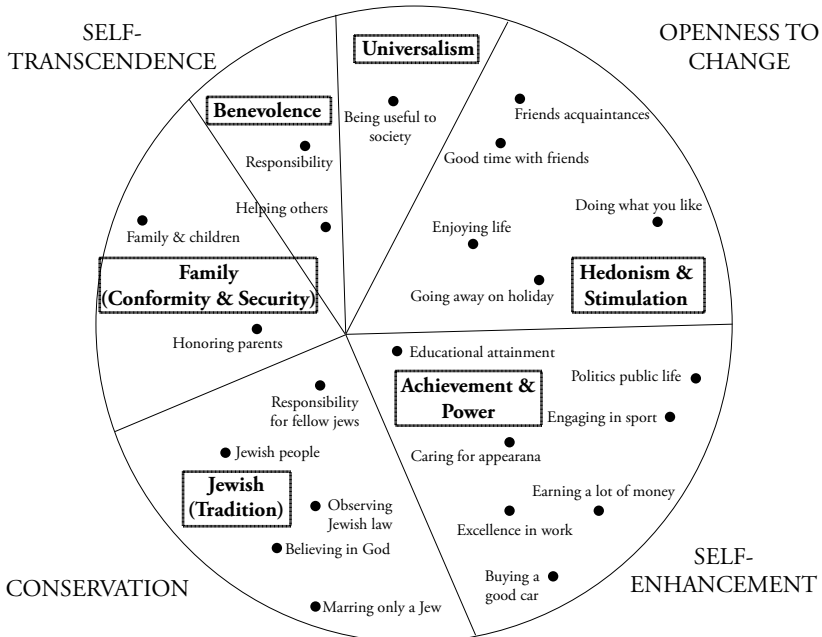
*Sub-populations by nationality and age cohort in the structure of values*

In this map external variables for the five national sub-populations and for the two age cohorts (all five countries conjoined) were inserted. The correlation array for these seven sub-populations and the set of primary variables is given in Table 4. Each population is placed in the map based on simultaneous consideration of its correlations with all the primary variables.

**Table 4: Correlation array for sub-populations by nationality and age cohort**

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bulgaria | 53 | 42 | 47 | -21 | 24 | 20 | 23 | -6 | 22 | 42 | 4 | -11 | 39 | 19 | 10 | -17 | 39 | 28 | 22 | -12 | 54 | -6 |
| Hungary | -29 | 6 | 24 | -33 | 11 | 20 | -34 | -30 | -4 | -11 | 35 | -42 | 28 | -53 | -29 | 5 | -34 | -48 | 20 | 18 | -12 | -14 |
| Latvia | 42 | 11 | -46 | 12 | -39 | -40 | 6 | 38 | -18 | -30 | -35 | 27 | -47 | 10 | 34 | 19 | 45 | 30 | -33 | -3 | -29 | 6 |
| Poland | -43 | -55 | -18 | 11 | 0 | -34 | -12 | -27 | 13 | -2 | -21 | -15 | -35 | -7 | -8 | -12 | -40 | -36 | -1 | 7 | -28 | -1 |
| Romania | 17 | 25 | 9 | 63 | 13 | 48 | 44 | 30 | -3 | 20 | 11 | 61 | 23 | 60 | 3 | -3 | 1 | 62 | -5 | -20 | 31 | 22 |
| 18-35 population | -19 | -36 | -20 | -9 | -16 | 21 | -9 | 0 | 21 | -7 | 21 | 1 | 1 | -5 | -6 | 6 | -1 | 16 | 20 | 6 | -5 | 17 |
| 36-60 population | 18 | 36 | 20 | 9 | 16 | -21 | 9 | 0 | -21 | 7 | -22 | -1 | -1 | 5 | 6 | -6 | 1 | -16 | -20 | -7 | 6 | -17 |

The resultant placement in the map is shown in Figure 3.

*Age cohorts in the structure of values.* The cumulative shift in values from conservative and traditional towards personal achievement can be seen between the older and younger cohorts within the whole survey population. As discussed earlier, the differences between the age cohorts were not dramatic, but consistent. The arrows indicate the direction of the shift. The younger cohort's placement shows the movement towards the values in the Hedonism and Stimulation region. The placement of the older cohort shows the shift towards the values in the Family region.

*National sub-populations in the structure of values.* The respective placement of the national sub-populations is mainly along the vertical axis. The Jews of Hungary are closest to the top of the map. They are in the Hedonism and Stimulation region and near the border with the universalist values. All four of the other populations are in the Achievement and Power region. The Jews of Bulgaria and Poland are near the center of the map, with Bulgaria slightly further 'north'. The Romanian population is a bit further towards the south and the Jews of Latvia are at the bottom of the map.

**Figure 3: SSA of values of Jews of Eastern Europe with sub-populations by nation and age cohort as external variables**
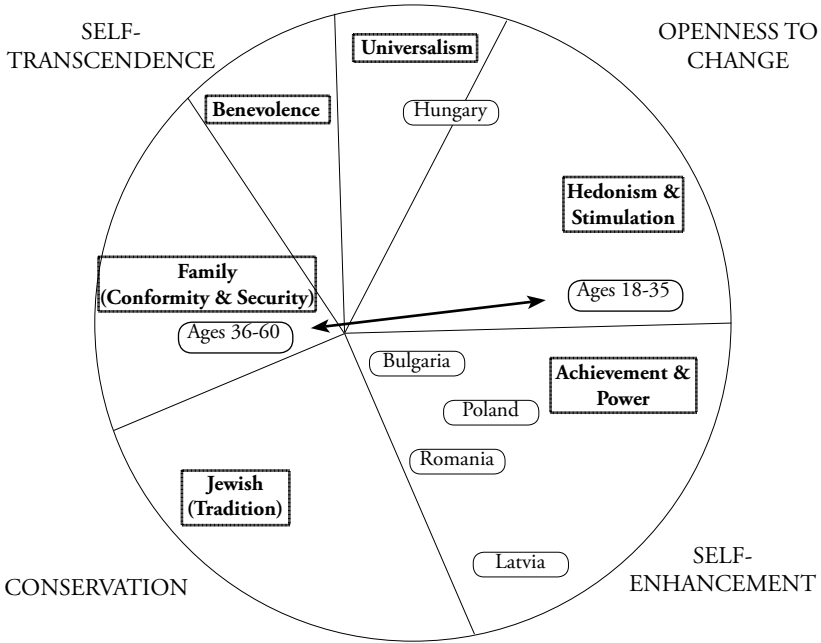


## Discussion

*Values in the five Eastern European countries*

The placement of the five national sub-populations along the vertical axis of the map can be seen as indicating their relative emphasis on materialist values at the bottom of the map and post-materialist values at the top. The emergence of post-materialist values related to self-expression and wellbeing in countries and communities where people are more or less assured of the basic material necessities of life is a consistent finding of the World Values Survey (Inglehart, 2004, 2008). The values of the surveyed Jews of Eastern Europe reflect the extent to which the countries in which they are living have been Westernized as well as the economic and cultural position of the Jewish minority vis-à-vis the general society.

A comparative survey of political transformation in Eastern Europe rated all five of these countries as having well developed democratic institutions; among them, Hungary received the most positive ranking, followed by Bulgaria and Poland, and then Latvia and Romania (Merkel, 2011). This order closely mirrors that of the top-to-bottom arrangement of the Jewish populations surveyed. Since the Jewish populations of some of the countries (notably Bulgaria and Romania) are more urbanized and better educated than the populations of each country as a whole, this hypothesis of the link between Westernization of each country and the values of its Jewish population needs further verification and research. As a preliminary explanation, it seems that the tendency of the Jewish populations to strongly espouse post-materialist values over values of materialism is related to the Westernization of the country. Among populations which enjoy relative economic security and the benefits of technological development, where the basic necessities of daily survival are more or less assured, there is increasing freedom to emphasize personal development (Inglehart, 2008). This seems to be the case among the Jews in Eastern Europe as well.

*Generational value shift and continuity*

The placement of the older sub-population towards the traditional values region of the map and the younger group towards the region of values related to self-enhancement reflects the trend from traditionalism to personal fulfillment found in the World Values Survey (Inglehart, 2008; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

*Comparison with non-Jewish society*

The implications of this analysis are not limited to the case of Jews in Eastern Europe. Jewish communities in other countries are also grappling with issues of assimilation and are struggling to find ways to make Jewish community life attractive and relevant to members of various age brackets. For example, in France it was found that among the older generation there was a division between traditionalists (emphasizing family and religion) and individualists (emphasizing personal benefits), whereas the younger generation were more likely to either hold universalist values or to combine Jewish traditional values with self-actualization (Cohen, 2011).

According to data collected in the 2000 World Values Survey (Inglehart, 2004) there are differences between the values among the general populations, which help put the results of the survey of the Jews of these countries into context. As seen in Table 5, the greatest difference is in the realm of religion, which is far more important to Poles and even more so to Romanians than to the other national groups. Work is relatively important to these Eastern European groups, particularly in Poland. Friends, on the other hand, are less emphasized, compared to the global average.

**Table 5: World Values Survey, 2000: "How important in your life is…"**
**Percentage answering 'very important'[6]**

|  | Bulgaria | Hungary | Latvia | Poland | Romania |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family | 83% | 89% | 72% | 92% | 85% |
| Friends | 37% | 34% | 25% | 27% | 26% |
| Leisure time | 23% | 31% | 17% | 25% | 24% |
| Politics | 31% | 18% | 24% | 30% | 25% |
| Religion | 17% | 20% | 11% | 45% | 51% |
| Work | 62% | 57% | 70% | 78% | 71% |

Comparing these figures with those from Table 1, it can be seen that the surveyed Jewish community members from Bulgaria, Romania and particularly Latvia were more likely to say that family was very important to them when compared with the national populations at large. The Polish Jewish community members, interestingly, were significantly less likely than their non-Jewish compatriots to say that family is very important. In all five cases, the Jewish community members put more emphasis on the importance of friends. In contrast, the Jewish respondents in all five countries were much less likely to say that politics were very important to them, when compared to the WVS respondents.

The Jewish samples and those of the WVS and EVS are not strictly comparable The Jewish sample spanned a narrower age range (excluding those over 60). Given that those in the younger generation of post-materialist societies tend to be less religious, this may skew the results of the Jewish sample towards a lower level of religiosity. At the same time,

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[6] The value 'service to others' was apparently not included in the surveys of some countries, including the Eastern European countries (Inglehart, 2004, table A007).

this sample included mainly those affiliated with the Jewish community. Nevertheless, there are interesting parallels between values of the Jewish communities and the dominant society in which they live. Most notably, of these five countries the WVS respondents from Romania were most likely to say religion was very important to them. Similarly, in the current survey of Jewish communities, those in Romania were the most likely to say that belief in God and observing Jewish law were important to them.

Table 6 gives data on specifically religious questions from the most recent report of the European Values Survey, collected in 2008-2010. Again, the general populations of Poland and especially Romania emerge as far more religiously-oriented than those of the other three countries. Significantly, the importance of religion and faith in God are not manifest through participation in community religious organizations. Even in Romania less than 10% of the respondents said they belong to a religious organization. This may reflect a lack of available organizations, since religious organizations were banned during the Communist era and are still in the early stages of being re-established. Further, many people in these societies developed a mistrust of public institutions during the Communist era and prefer to be involved in informal networks of trusted family and friends (Howard, 2003).

**Table 6: European Values Survey 2008-2010**

|  | Bulgaria | Hungary | Latvia | Poland | Romania |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number | 1500 | 1513 | 1506 | 1501 | 1489 |
| Religion very important | 19% | 14% | 10% | 31% | 57% |
| Faith in God very important | 21% | 21% | 15% | 32% | 76% |
| Belong to religious organization | 2% | 6% | 7% | 5% | 9% |

However, care must be taken not to make over-generalizations in extrapolating from the Jewish example to the larger society. The following table shows the degree of importance attached to religion among the Jewish population surveyed here and among the general populations surveyed in the WVS and EVS. The results of the EVS and WVS are almost the same: Romania is the most religious, followed by Poland. Latvia is the least religious. Only the order of the countries in third and

fourth place (Hungary and Bulgaria) is reversed in the two studies.

The order of the Jewish samples differs in important ways. The Romanian Jews, like their non-Jewish compatriots, are the most religious. The Polish Jews, however, emerge as less religious than non-Jewish Poles. Similarly, the Jews of Hungary place less emphasis on religion than non-Jewish Hungarians. In contrast, the Jewish Latvian sample places relatively more emphasis on religion, compared to the rest of Latvian society. To a lesser degree, Bulgarian Jews also place more emphasis on religion than Bulgarian society at large. Again, although there were differences in the demographic parameters of the survey populations, in this comparison it is not the percentage of those who said they were religious which is important, but rather the order of the countries in terms of religiosity.

**Table 7: Degree of importance attached to religion among Jews and general population**

|  | Jewish sample Kovács & Barna | General population EVS | General population WVS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bulgaria | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Hungary | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Latvia | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| Poland | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Romania | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Thus, even Jewish populations which have largely acculturated into the dominant society may still display differences from them in terms of religiosity. This is not limited to the case of Eastern Europe. For example, while the overall value system of French Jews resembles that of their non-Jewish compatriots, the Jews of France are markedly more religious in comparison with French society at large. A survey of the French-Jewish heads of households found that 36% think it is very important to impart religious faith to their children (Cohen, 2011, pp. 108-9) compared to only 7% of non-Jewish French respondents to the same item in the European Values Survey. American Jews, in contrast, tend to be less religious than the general American population. In comparison to other American religious groups Jews were less likely to describe themselves as 'religious' and there was a relatively high percentage of people identifying as Jews who do not believe in God (Meyer, Kosmin & Keysar, 2003).

## Conclusion

The Jews reached in this survey are fascinating populations to study, as they have voluntarily chosen to be actively Jewish in countries where violent persecution and oppression were so recently prevalent. They have not emigrated to Israel or to other countries, as many others have done. At the same time, they refused to opt for total assimilation into the non-Jewish society and culture. As they already have at least some connection to organized community life, they represent the population most likely to take part in programs and initiatives being launched in an effort to revive and develop Jewish community life in Eastern Europe.

*Diversity between countries*. A basic finding is that these populations are not monolithic. There are important if subtle differences in the values held by the affiliated Jews in the five countries. Within each country, there are differences between age cohorts which parallel a global shift towards post-materialist values in developed countries. Revival of Jewish life in these countries clearly cannot be imagined as a restoration of what existed before the Shoah and the Communist era. The younger generation in particular has internalized many values from the dominant society in which they live as well as from the global youth culture. Family, friends and personal networks are more important to them than belief in God or observance of religious tradition. As in other regions, seniors, parents of school-aged children and unmarried young adults have different needs and motivations for involvement with the Jewish community.

The case of the Jews, as noted, is valuable in trying to understand the non-Jewish society. Throughout the former Communist world, various local and international organizations are launching programs to stimulate civic and community life. Future research may apply the analysis techniques used here to data from studies such as the WVS and EVS in order to holistically assess and compare the value structures of the populations in different countries and to track changes across generational lines. Additionally, it would be interesting to investigate the possibility that differences between the value system of Jews and non-Jews in a given country could contribute to the construction of Jewish identity.

*Directions for future research*. Subsequent studies and analyses may expand upon this cross-cultural comparison and look at similarities and differences between these Eastern European countries and other Jewish populations worldwide. For recent studies which have looked

at values among various Jewish populations (see, for example, Amital, 2005; Cohen, 2008, 2009, 2011; DellaPergola, 2010b, 2011; Knafo & Schwartz, 2001. For studies on social values in post-Communist countries, see Danis, Liu & Vacek, 2011; Kolstø, 2005; Pfau-Effinger, 2005).

Additionally, the impact of demographic features such as ethnicity (Ashkenazi/Sephardi), urbanization, and socio-economic status on values may be further explored. Future research may reach further into the periphery of each community, shedding light on the values of the large population of highly assimilated Jews in each country.

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# Appendix: Relevant questionnaire items

**Respondent**

**Gender of the respondent:**

1 – Male
2 – Female

**Please tell me the year of your birth.**

…………………………………
99 – Refused/DK

**Now I would like to ask you about your forebears. Is your paternal grandmother Jewish? Is your paternal grandfather Jewish? And …**

> *ASK ALL OPTIONS IRRESPECTIVE OF THE ANSWERS!*
> *STOP THE INTERVIEW HERE IF NONE OF THE GRANDPARENTS OF THE RESPONDENT WERE JEWISH AND NEITHER HIS /HER PARENTS NOR HE/SHE HAVE CONVERTED TO JUDAISM.*

**Did she/he/you convert to Christianity or to any other religion?**

**Did she/he/you convert to Judaism?**

| | Jewish | | | Converted to Christianity or to other religion | | | Converted to Judaism | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Yes** | **No** | **Refused/ Don't Know** | **Yes** | **No** | **Refused/ Don't Know** | **Yes** | **No** | **Refused/ Don't Know** |
| 1. Paternal grandmother | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 |
| 2. Paternal grandfather | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 |
| 3. Maternal grandmother | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 |
| 4. Maternal grandfather | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 |
| 5. Mother | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 |
| 6. Father | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 |
| 7. Respondent | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 | 1 | 2 | 99 |

**Are you a member of any non-Jewish political or civil organization?**

1 – Yes
2 – No                → GO TO QUESTION 75
99 – Refused/DK        → GO TO QUESTION 75

**Are you a member of a synagogue?**

1 – Yes
2 – No
99 – Refused/DK

How important is each of the following to you? Use a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 5 means that it is very important and 1 that it is not important at all.

| | Very important 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | Not important at all 1 | Refused/DK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Honoring your parents** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **2. Family and children** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **3. Responsibility for others** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **4. Educational attainment** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **5. Helping others** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **6. Enjoying life** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **7. Feeling part of the Jewish people** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **8. Buying a good car** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **9. Doing what you like** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **10. Being useful to society** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **11. Having a good time with friends** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **12. Believing in God** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **13. Going away on holiday** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **14. Observing Jewish law** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **15. Caring for one's appearance** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **16. Engaging in sport** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **17. Earning a lot of money** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **18. Excellence in career and work** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **19. Friends and acquaintances** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **20. Politics and public life** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **21. Responsibility for fellow Jews** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |
| **22. Marrying only a Jew** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 99 |