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The 2010 Survey of New Jewish Initiatives in Europe: Key Findings

In this report

By Shawn Landres with Joshua Avedon

Introduction

Over the past fifteen years, a revival of Jewish life has spread across Europe, one that is rooted in its 2,000-year heritage, reflects the diversity of contemporary Jewish thought and experience, and reflects the hope for a promising future. Quietly, and in small pockets across the continent, Jewish social entrepreneurs have been experimenting with new forms of communities and organizations designed to engage a new generation of Jews, their partners and friends in meaningful Jewish experiences.

Conventional discussions of Europe often emphasise antisemitism, Jewish continuity, and anti-Israel activism. While we do not dismiss or diminish those concerns, we know that these are only part of the story. The European Jewry we know is confident, vibrant, and *growing.*

pears foundation

קהילת ליזמים צעירים יהודים
Community of Young Jewish Innovators

Background

Pears Foundation, a British family foundation based in London and focusing on positive identity and citizenship, has established JHub: a centre of social action and innovation, to build capacity for the sector. It has funded startups and innovative programmes across the Jewish community from human rights campaigns to volunteering placements to a new Jewish food festival. The ROI Community of Young Jewish Innovators and its founder, Lynn Schusterman, have spent the past six years building a global network of creative young Jewish leaders who are collectively dedicated to building a global Jewish community that is exciting, interconnected and widely accessible. Jumpstart, an incubator, catalyst and think tank for sustainable Jewish innovation based in Los Angeles, California, provides capacity-building support to new projects around the world and conducts field-building research on Jewish innovation. In recent years our three organisations have begun to collaborate to provide funding, networking, and training to emerging European projects and their leaders, especially through the ROI Global Summit and the Paideia Project-Incubator.

Although much research has focused on a similar trend in North America, few studies have addressed Europe. A pioneer in the conversation is *Compass: Directions in European Jewish Life* (2009), a compendium published by The Westbury Group listing 36 of the most innovative initiatives in Europe. However, without systematic study and sharing of information, until now, it has been difficult to assess just how widespread, significant and impactful even the best of these new initiatives may be—and even more difficult to target resources where they could make the most difference. Moreover, we have to contend with scepticism about whether the European Jewish "innovation sector," to the extent that one even existed, was merely an ephemeral fringe phenomenon or the leading edge of 21st-century European Jewish life.

To that end, inspired by the collaborative research and policy development model established by Jumpstart, The Natan Fund and The Samuel Bronfman Foundation, which produced *The Innovation Ecosystem: Emergence of a New Jewish Landscape* (2009), we created our own transatlantic partnership with Jumpstart to bring the 2010 Survey of New Jewish Initiatives to Europe. As in North America, the survey results are a snapshot census of the sector's size and reach, and the organizations' funding sources, expenses, structure and governance.

The survey's results show that as much as, if not more so, than in North America, there is a European Jewish innovation ecosystem, an interconnected web of leaders and projects taking control of and responsibility for their own Jewish destinies. More than 200 organizations have been founded in the past decade alone, and they represent a €21 million annual economy engaging around 250,000 people. Although this is the first study of its kind to focus on the European Jewish innovation ecosystem and its leaders, there is little doubt that they are the vanguard of Jewish life in Europe, and will be contributing to the global revitalization of Jewish culture that the 21st century promises, both in Europe and around the world.

Echoing the process that led to *The Innovation Ecosystem* in North America, we are releasing this first iteration of the survey's findings without policy recommendations. This is by design. We intend to engage key stakeholders in a communal conversation about the survey's findings and implications. In due course, informed and inspired by our colleagues' wisdom and experience, we plan to release more precise recommendations.

Lastly, a word about our partnership, unusual perhaps not only for its geographical diversity (Israel, the UK, and the U.S.) but also for its collaborative approach. All three of our organisations are committed to nurturing the building blocks of our common Jewish future: new ideas, creative projects, emerging leaders. Doing so requires cross-sector partnerships—in this case that of a grantmaking foundation, an operating foundation, and a nonprofit—that unite vision, capacity, and expertise in service of a broad vision. We hope that our work together might reflect the spirit of the innovation ecosystem and indeed encourage others to join us in building the European Jewish future.

Amy Philip and Lisa Capelouto
Pears Foundation

Shawn Landres and Joshua Avedon
Jumpstart

Justin Korda
ROI Community of Young Jewish Innovators

October 2010
London, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem

About the survey

The 2010 Survey of New Jewish Initiatives was designed to take a comprehensive snapshot of Jewish startups—defined as autonomous or independent non-commercial European initiatives founded 10 years ago or more recently (2000-2010). The aim was to help nonprofit leaders, funders, and community supporters understand the current landscape of the Jewish startup sector, enabling them not only to learn from one another, but also to discover common threads from which to build collaborations.

The survey collected data about organisational age, location, constituents and participants, structure and governance, income and expenditures, staffing, volunteer leadership, and self-assessment of their organisational strengths and weaknesses. Recognising that the grassroots energy of 'do-it-yourself Judaism' comes at the same time that broad and deep philanthropic investment has sparked the creation and growth of intensive Jewish learning schemes, service and travel experiences, and other leadership development fellowships, we also sought information about the background and practices of the initiatives' founders and leaders. The rapid global growth of the Jewish innovation sector only magnifies the importance of this data, which we hope will help nonprofit leaders and funders craft strategies to enable these new initiatives grow to scale and sustainability.

The 2010 Survey of New Jewish Initiatives was conducted in both Europe and North America simultaneously—the first-ever transatlantic census of innovative and entrepreneurial Jewish ventures. Approximately 1,200 invitations to complete the survey were emailed in March and April 2010 to initiatives believed to be in North America or Europe. 192 responses were received from among the 396-412 European initiatives believed to be in the sample. Of those, 136 qualified to be included in the final sample: that is, they were autonomous or independent non-commercial European initiatives founded 10 years ago or more recently (2000-2010). The response rate to the survey among European initiatives was 46-48%; a more precise calculation is impossible due to the possibility of duplicate invitations sent to the same organisation, as well as the possibility of invitations sent to initiatives that had ceased to exist; furthermore, it likely was depressed by the fact that the survey could be taken only in English. Because the 2010 Survey of New Jewish Initiatives sought responses from currently operating initiatives, we do not have a way to estimate the number of initiatives founded in 2000 or later that have since closed.

Based on our experience with non-responding startup initiatives in other surveys, we believe that the 204-220 non-respondents would have qualified to be included at about ¾ the rate of the responders, leaving about 108-116 non-responding initiatives that would have qualified to be included in the sample. Assuming that a total of 246-254 is the upper middle range and allowing for under- and over-counts, we estimate that there are 220-260 European Jewish startups currently in operation.

Additional details on the survey methodology are available online at http://jewishjecosystem.org/euro2010/.

Key findings

Key Finding 1 Europe is witnessing a revival of contemporary Jewish life through the emergence of hundreds of new initiatives reaching hundreds of thousands of people.

Key Finding 2 The vast majority of new Jewish initiatives describe their primary areas of focus as Jewish education, arts and culture, or community building. Inter-group and interreligious relations are a higher priority than diversity issues within the Jewish community.

Key Finding 3 New European Jewish initiatives connect people across broad differences in age and affiliation.

Key Finding 4 European Jewish startups are dependent primarily on foundation largesse and grassroots labour to sustain themselves. Although they operate independently of communal structures, they do not have a broad base of individual supporters.

Key Finding 5 European Jewish startup leaders bring strong educational backgrounds and professional expertise to their ventures.

Key Finding 6 European Jewish startup leaders are the beneficiaries of significant investments in their educational and professional development, especially Jewish learning and leadership.

Key Finding 7 European Jewish startup founders and leaders are actively engaged in Jewish life and practice; they tend to affiliate with progressive and secular/cultural forms of Judaism.

Overview

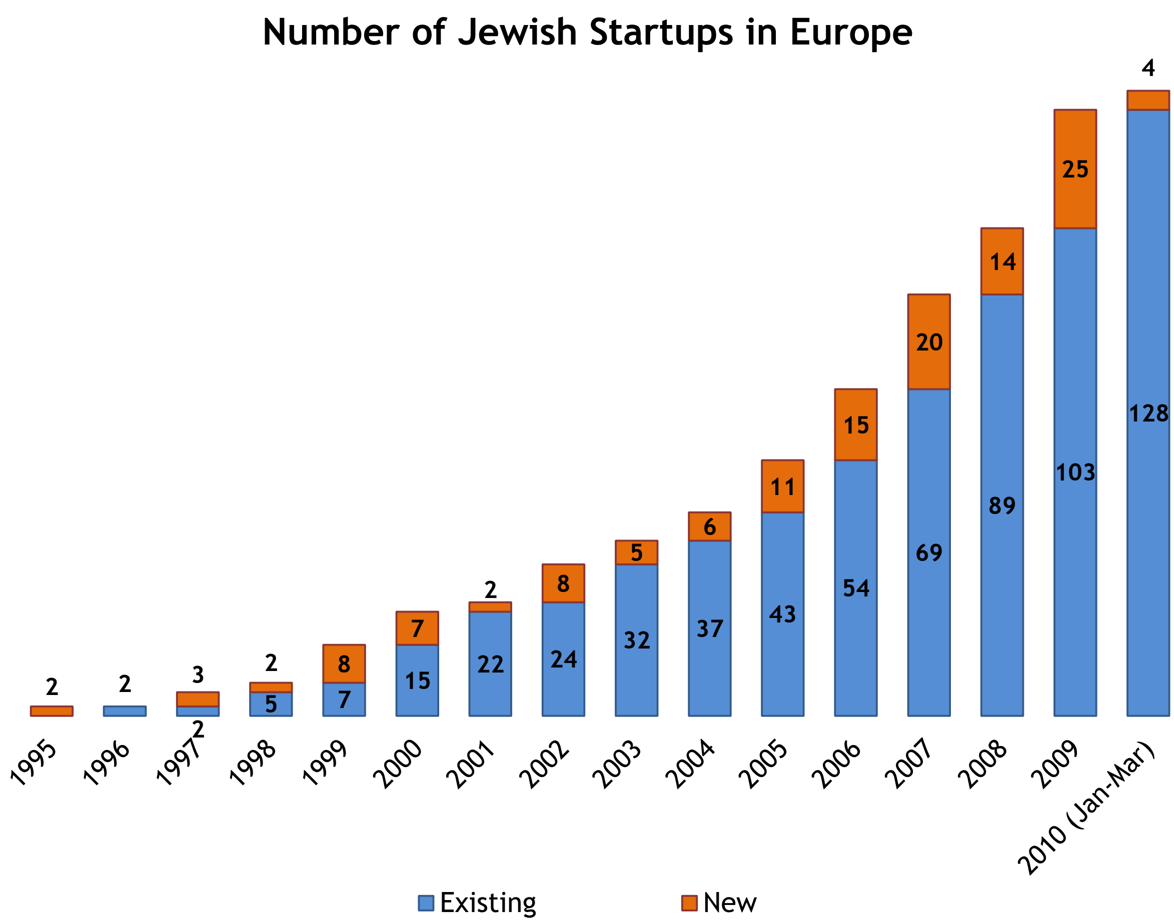
As the 21st century unfolds, European Judaism and Jewish life are reclaiming what was so violently stolen over the course of the previous hundred years: a wellspring of cultural inspiration and spiritual creativity. On the continent, from the ashes of war and reconstruction, of the Shoah and state socialism, of antisemitism and social exclusion, new generations of Jewish leaders are taking their future into their own hands and building the communities they want for themselves and their children. In the UK, as institutions of 19th and 20th century Judaism grapple with shifts in Jewish demography, identity and community, an entire landscape of new Jewish initiatives has emerged. Like their counterparts across the Atlantic and in growing numbers around the globe, these bootstrap efforts not only address programming and service gaps in existing institutions, but also make new claims about what Judaism and Jewish life should mean in contemporary Europe. The political and economic integration of Europe, alongside ever-adapting new technologies, provides the platform for individuals and groups to express their needs and values beyond and in spite of traditional boundaries.

Hundreds of independent Jewish initiatives have been launched, many dedicated to specific niches and interests within the broader architecture of Jewish life. They vary in size, from large-scale organisations reaching thousands to people to intimate gatherings in private homes. However, their impact does not depend on their size, but rather on their quality and adaptability, and their capacity to embody the values and worldviews of their founders and participants. Together with their funders, supporters, participants and beneficiaries they form a European Jewish innovation ecosystem, a vital network that develops, promotes and diffuses new ideas, technologies, products and services.

Findings

Key Finding 1 Europe is witnessing an unprecedented revival of contemporary Jewish life. There are more Jewish startups *per capita* in Europe than in North America.

As of Spring 2010, we estimate that there are 220-260 European Jewish startups—that is, new Jewishly identified initiatives founded in 2000 or later—currently in operation. Relative to their respective Jewish populations, there are nearly twice as many Jewish startups in Europe (1 project: 6400 people) as in North America (1 project: 11,000 people).

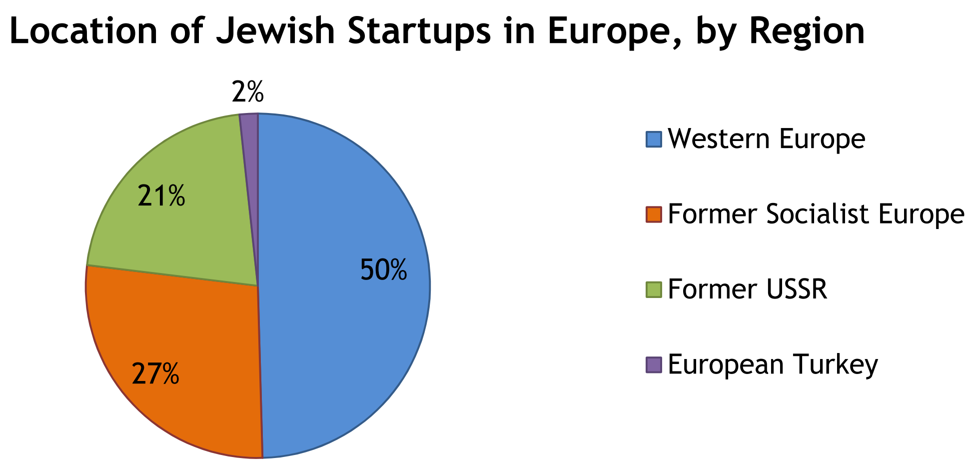


European Jewish startups are in contact with around 250,000 people,[1] of whom about 41,000 are regular participants and core members. There are a small number of initiatives with very

[1] This estimate is based on survey's data regarding participants' level of involvement in the organised Jewish community, a predictor of the number of organisational commitments. The population estimate assumes that the 33% of participants 'deeply involved' in the organised Jewish community are, on average, connected to as many as

high attendance and participation levels and a much larger number of groups with lower levels. Although regular participants generally make up about one fifth of the total annual attendee population, the proportion is higher in smaller initiatives. Those reporting web traffic claim an average of about 6,900 website visitors per month (though half receive 500 or fewer) and nearly 1,500 people per mailing list (half have 300 or fewer). Two thirds of the population engaged by Jewish startups are under 45; one third is over 45.

About 75% are independent entities and slightly fewer than 25% are autonomous subsidiary projects of larger organisations; overall, prayer groups make up around 7% of the total and other religious groups another 4%. 53% are in five countries—the United Kingdom (18%), Germany (10%), Poland (10%), Russia (9%), and Hungary (6%)—and the remainder are in at least 22 other countries.



Key Finding 2 The vast majority of new Jewish initiatives describe their primary areas of focus as Jewish education, arts and culture, or community building. Inter-group and interreligious relations are a higher priority than diversity issues within the Jewish community.

> *'I want to create beautiful positive and interesting Jewish experiences for people, and be part of creating a dynamic community of people who want to make the world/our community a better one,' wrote one respondent. 'I know that there are people who want something more interesting, dynamic, creative and alternative than established ...Jewish institutions. I want to be part of building a community which I would like to be part of - open minded, eclectic, interested in the world, intelligent, kind, warm and welcoming.'*

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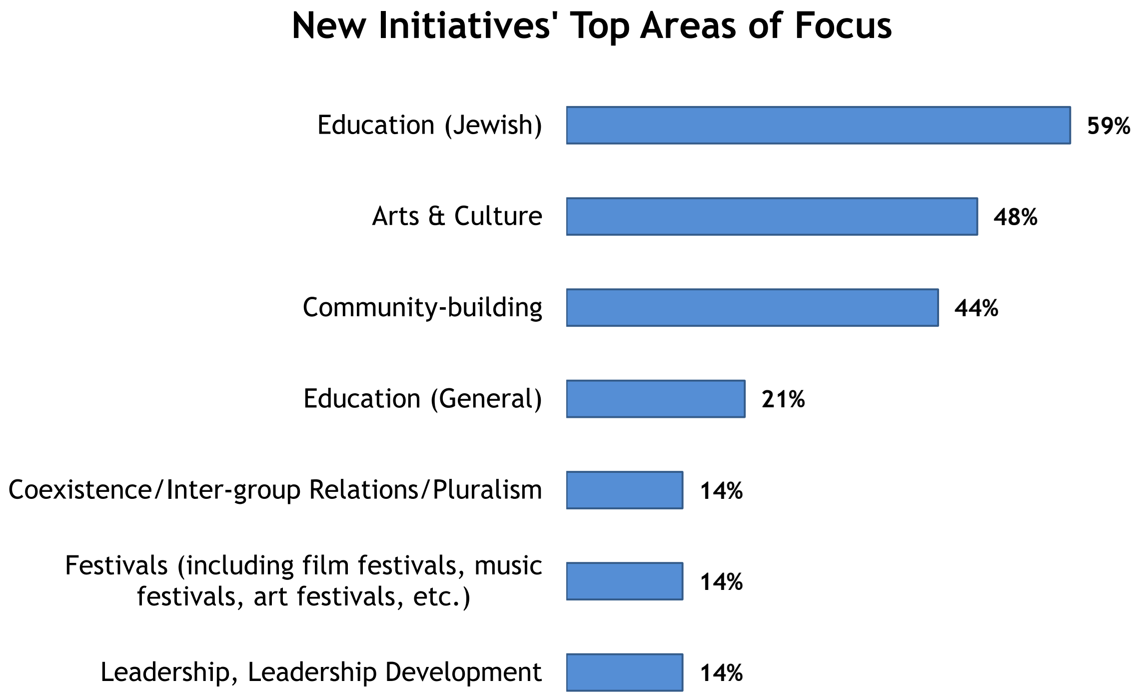
three Jewish startups; the 32% 'moderately involved' are connected to up to two startups; and the 35% with no other meaningful connection are involved with one startup. As such, we estimate that unique individuals account for 62%-70% of the aggregate reported participant figures.



Given the mission of building such a community, it may come as little surprise that when asked to categorise their initiatives' top five areas of work, 87% of respondents placed Jewish education, arts and culture, or community building among their top priorities. Each of these three categories was selected more than twice as often as any other category.

Moreover, for some respondents, the categories complement each other:

> *'I think in [the] 21st century [it] is very important to bring the Jewish people who [live] in the Diaspora ...together. Art is a good tool for it. [Our initiative] succeeded to gather ...Jews who are part of the Jewish community and ...Jews who are not, on the basic of cultural event[s]. [Our initiative]'s event[s] succeeded to deliver the information about Jewish tradition.....'*

There appears to be a stronger and more consistent emphasis on an accessible approach to European Jewish life—through arts, culture, general education, pluralism and festivals—than in North America, where the top five areas of focus are more inner-directed toward the Jewish community. Jewish education leads, as among European startups, but although community building comes second, it was selected by fewer than a third of North American respondents; the remainder are spirituality, ritual, and 20s/30s engagement/development.

Contemporary Jewish life in multicultural Europe is of greater interest than memory or social services. Few—11%—opted for areas of work used by most Jewish community support agencies.[2] Inter-group and interreligious concerns[3] were the focus for 29% of initiatives. Slightly more selected festivals (14%) as did Holocaust (13%); 5% of respondents wrote in a variant of 'heritage'. For many, the work is about establishing Judaism and Jewishness as core to Europe. One respondent described the sense of accomplishment 'when we turn the lights on for students in small towns in Romania, Hungary, Germany and elsewhere—kids who have never even seen a Jew, but thanks to [our initiative], they feel that they now own a piece of their country's Jewish heritage.'

Only 6% of initiatives have a primary focus on Israel advocacy or Israel education and engagement, and another 2% address Israeli-Palestinian issues. Although all respondents but one who selected 'Israel advocacy' also selected 'Israel education and engagement,' the reverse is not the case: overall, 'Israel education and engagement' was selected slightly more than twice as often as 'Israel advocacy' (6% vs. 3%). Even so, Israel as a motivation for action appeared most frequently in service of European Jewish life. As one respondent noted, there is 'a desire to get a deeper feeling for, and understanding of the Jewish tradition. And a strong need to promote this tradition in the overly Israel-critical Europe of today.'

Key Finding 3 New European Jewish initiatives connect people across broad differences in age and affiliation.

Most European Jewish startups interact with their participants and beneficiaries across boundaries of geography, level of affiliation, age and life-stage. They attract those who are deeply involved as well as those who are moderately involved and the otherwise unaffiliated. They engage a wide range of participants and beneficiaries in all age categories and at all stages of life.

Although 77% of startups have local programming on their campus, or in their city or local community, only 17% do so exclusively. 57% operate internationally. 42% report interacting with their constituents online in some form, and 17% are exclusively or almost exclusively web-based, although none operate entirely online.

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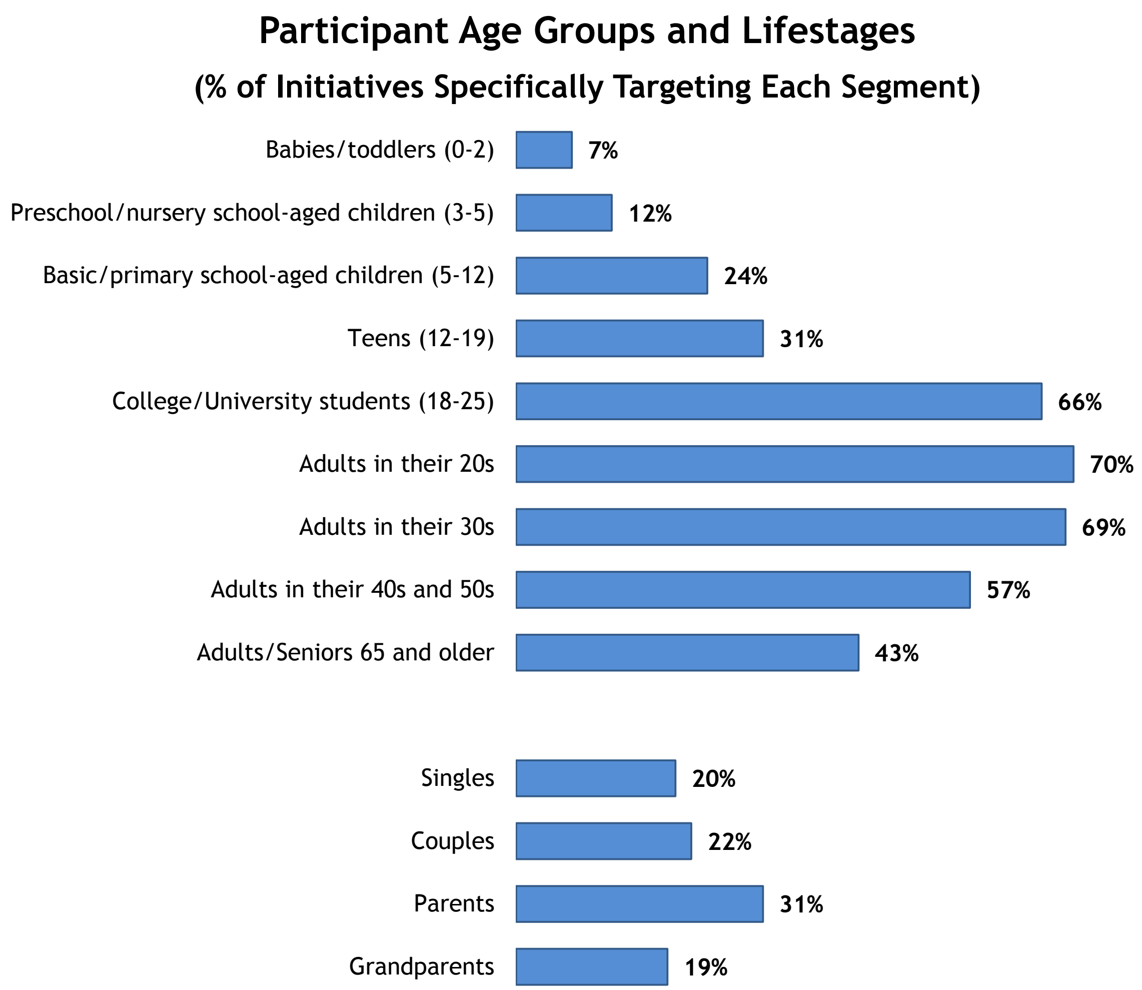
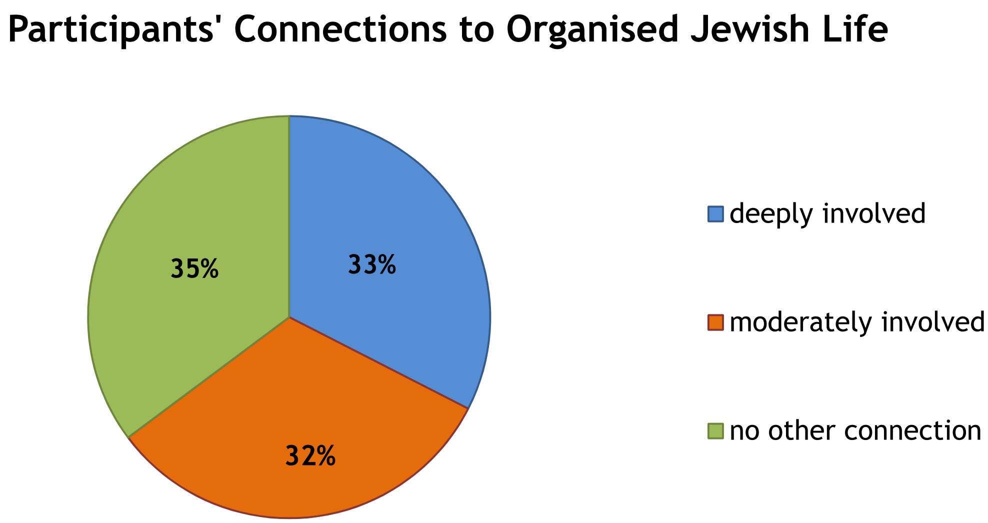
[2] Employment/vocational services, family services, finance/loans, food/nutrition/agriculture, health/medicine, housing/shelter, poverty, disaster/catastrophe relief & recovery, or social services. Of these, only family services, social services, disaster/catastrophe relief & recovery, or employment/vocational services, were not selected by any respondents at all.

[3] Christian-Jewish relations, coexistence/inter-group relations/pluralism, cross-border collaboration/exchange, interfaith/interreligious, Israeli-Palestinian issues, Muslim-Jewish relations, and/or peacemaking. Issues of Jewish pluralism—feminism/women's issues, gay/lesbian/LGBT issues, intermarriage, and/or Jews of color—were the focus of fewer than 4% of Jewish startups. The categories of gender, men's issues, and special needs were not selected by any respondents.

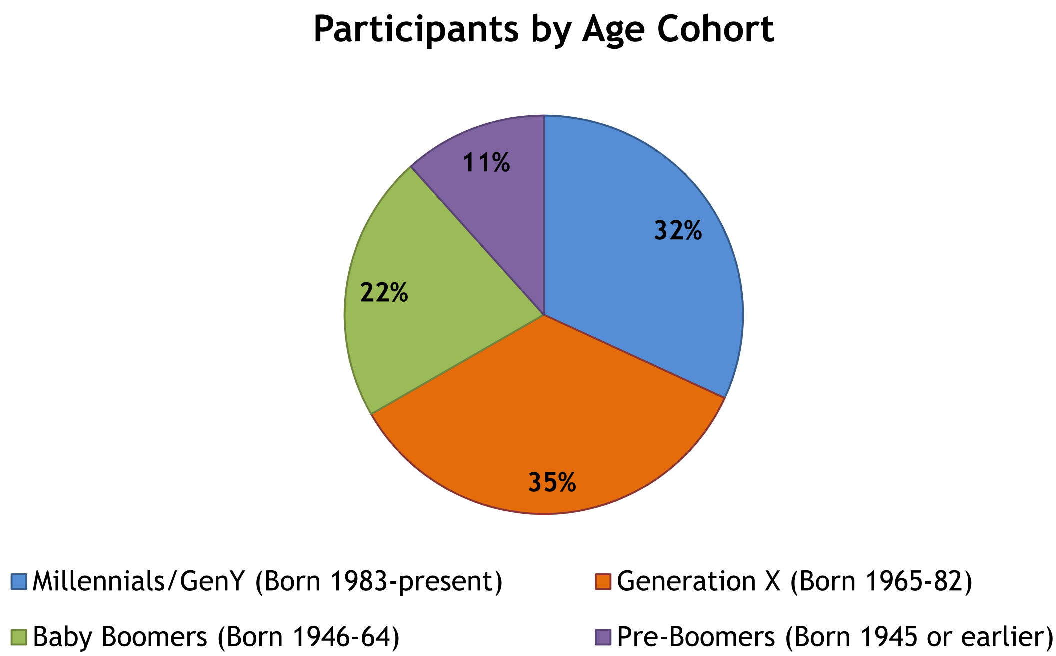


The desire to create 'a place to meet Jewish people informally, without having to be in the context of an established Jewish community' and the 'chance to realise our ideas without depending on the community' were motivations shared by a number respondents. As a result, when it comes to involvement in the organised Jewish community, the constituents and participants in European startups are a roughly even mix of the deeply involved, moderately affiliated, and the otherwise disconnected. Survey respondents estimated that 33% of their constituents and participants already are deeply involved in the Jewish community; 32% are moderately involved; and just over 35% have no other meaningful connection with the organised Jewish community (irrespective of their Jewish background, which the survey did not address). New European Jewish initiatives appear to reach a rather higher proportion of the so-called 'unaffiliated' than their counterparts in North America, nearly half of whose constituents and participants are deeply involved in organised Jewish life.



Few organisations are exclusively for 'insiders': only about one in ten reported having only deeply and moderately involved constituents (overall, about one quarter have at least 85% deeply and moderately involved constituents). Similarly few are for 'outsiders': 17% reported that two thirds or more of their constituents had no other meaningful connection to the organised Jewish community and only 4% report a population that is 90% or more otherwise unaffiliated. Rather, most initiatives welcome a mix of deeply involved, moderately involved, and otherwise unaffiliated participants.

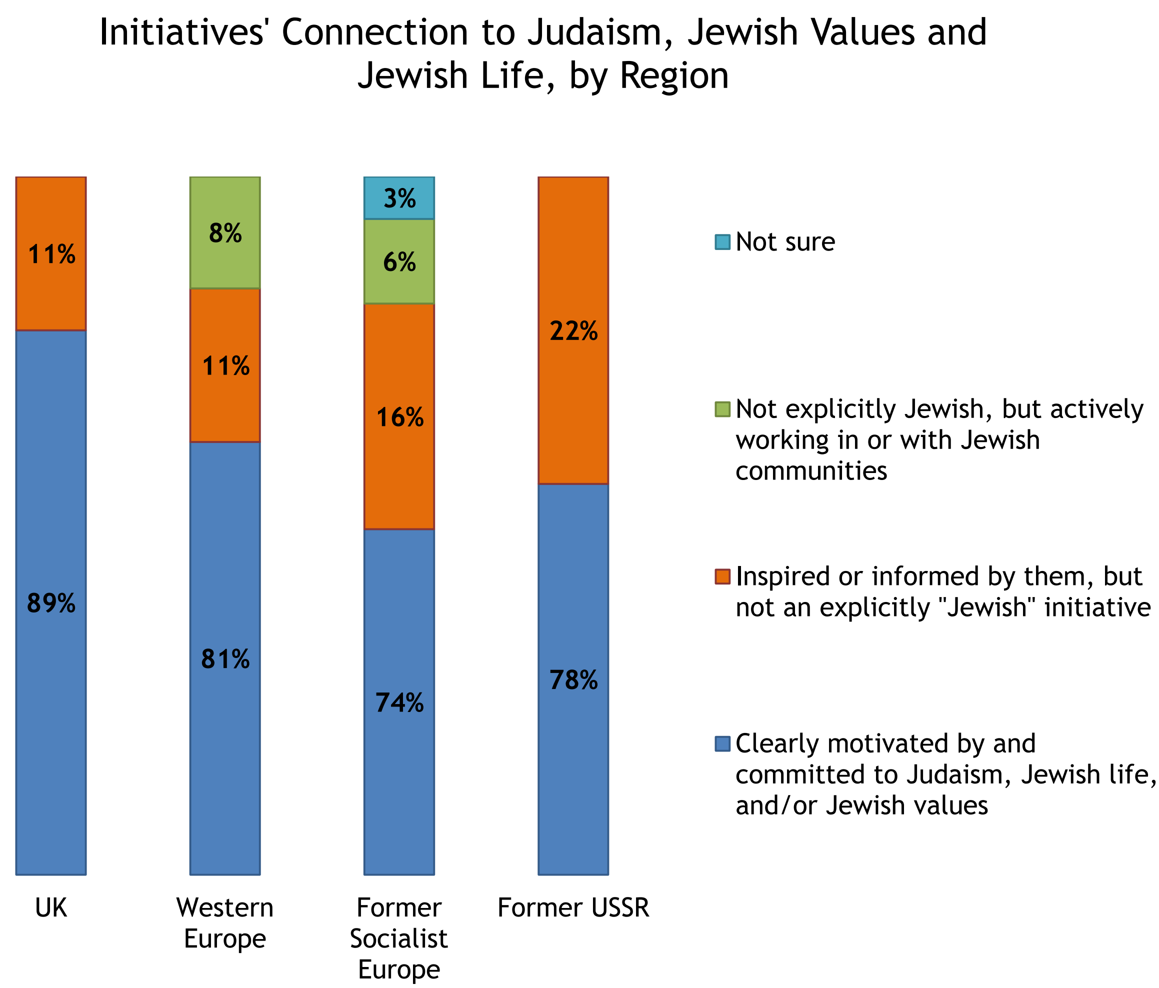
Individual Jewish startups generally are integrated not only by participants' level of organised Jewish involvement but also by age. 16% said all of their constituents were under 45, and 12% reported that individuals over 45 years old accounted for two thirds of their participants. While 75% of European Jewish startups do focus on adults in their 20s or 30s, only 5% do so exclusively, and more than half (55%) reported that people over 45 years old make up at least 25% of their constituents and participants.



Many startups seek to enable a wide range of people, Jews and non-Jews alike, to access Jewish life and civilisation in ways that not only work for them, but also indeed are explicitly open to and inclusive of difference.

> *'I had been a member of other congregations, both orthodox and [R]eform', wrote one respondent, '...and I was appalled by the closed character of all of them. Non-Jews are not welcome, people with only a Jewish father are shunned, Jews with a non-Jewish spouse are shunned, gays are shunned. And so I decided to found a congregation in which all of the above are welcome.'*

'[Our initiative] does, I believe, meet a need,' wrote another respondent: 'for informal interaction with other Jewish people, without any strings attached, and without having to meet any requirements.' The vast majority of both European and North American respondents and their key constituencies do see their organisations as clearly motivated by and committed to Judaism, Jewish life and Jewish values. However, about 16% of European respondents (compared with 10% of North American ones) said they find it more accurate to describe themselves as inspired or informed by Judaism, Jewish life, and Jewish values, but not explicitly 'Jewish' organisations; a higher proportion of these are to be found in formerly socialist Europe and the former Soviet Union, where charitable initiatives frequently are legally required to be open to all. Another 4% describe themselves as not explicitly Jewish but actively working in or with Jewish communities.



With nearly a third of startups working on inter-group and interreligious issues, it seems clear that in Europe, 'doing Jewish' need not happen in Jewish places nor only with other Jews. Indeed, for many leaders, 'joining my Jewish identity and education to my European identity and education,' as one respondent wrote, is a powerful motivator. This goes beyond bridge-building to 'provid[ing] Jewish education and culture to both the Jewish and non-Jewish community' and, ultimately, 'the contribution of a Jewish dimension to the reading of history and the interpretation of legacy.' Concerns about antisemitism play a role in this, as one respondent wrote: 'I am very upset about how the criticism against Israeli politics brims over into antisemitic statements. I am worried also for Europe's own sake - the Jewish people being part of European culture. Maybe I am naïve ...but I and my Israeli friend started our project as a joint venture, in the hope that it's possible to build bridges via culture.' This latter purpose echoes another respondent, who aimed 'to involve young Jewish people in community issues and to inform Jewish and non-Jewish youth about Jewish culture and values'.

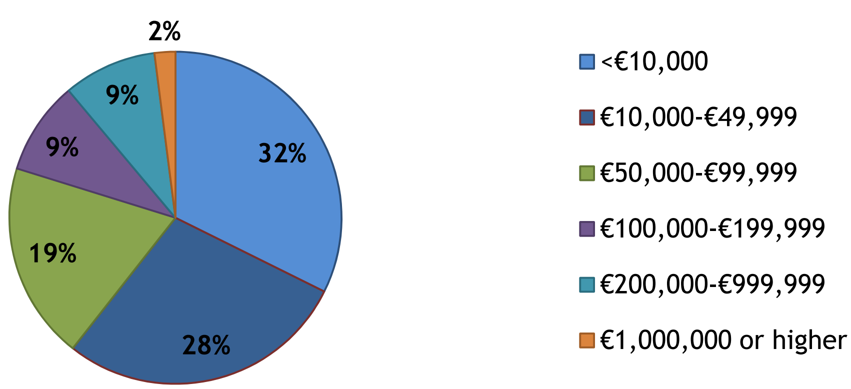
Key Finding 4 European Jewish startups are dependent primarily on foundation largesse and grassroots labour to sustain themselves. Although they operate independently of communal structures, they do not have a broad base of individual supporters.

As of Spring 2010, the European Jewish startup sector represented approximately a €21 million annual economy, supported through a little more than 10,000 individual charitable donations in addition to service fees, foundation support, and other revenue.

They tend to be either bottom-up (grassroots) or top-down (institutionally based) efforts, rather than professional entrepreneurial ventures: 50% were founded entirely by volunteers, and 26% were launched at institutions or by independent foundations and funders. 15% of European Jewish startup initiatives were founded entirely by professional staff leaders (i.e. individuals who generally expect to be paid a salary through the initiative), and 10% by a volunteer/professional collaboration. Only 16% of responding initiatives had founders who intended to earn a salary through it. That said, the sector currently occupies about 400 full-time employees, about 600 part-time employees, and around 2,300 non-administrative independent contractors. About 25% of Jewish startups are entirely volunteer-run, and together they engage about 2,300 core volunteers.

European Jewish startups are dependent on grants, volunteer labour and in-kind support for most of their income. The three most frequently cited primary sources of support were individual donations (not including bequests), independent foundation programme grants, and volunteer labour (non-board, but include administration/office, fundraising, and programme volunteers). However, when respondents were asked to rank these primary sources of support in order of importance, independent foundation programme grants far outranked volunteer labour, which itself considerably outranked individual donations. Indeed, 27% of European Jewish startups report having no individual donors at all; of the remainder, half have 10 or fewer donors. Only 11% have 100 or more donors.

Annual Budgets of New European Jewish Initiatives



Overall, using spring 2010 exchange rates[4], the average budget is approximately €90,000, but at least half of all initiatives have budgets below €30,000; moreover, not all initiatives have budgets, or chose to report them.[5] There are a very small number of large organisations (2% have budgets exceeding €1 million) and a much larger number of small ones (60% have a budget of less than €50,000).

Key Finding 5 European Jewish startup leaders bring strong educational backgrounds and professional expertise to their ventures.

For many European Jewish startup leaders, the chance to apply and expand their professional skills was both a key motivator for leading a new startup and a major benefit of having done so. As one respondent wrote, '[based on] my experiences as a young Jewish educator, [I knew] this could be done and organised in a better way.' Another respondent noted:

> *'This initiative …absorbed most of my professional skills in the field of project development, outreach and fundraising, so now I can show-case it as an example of my abilities, …'upgraded' me from the level of a professional to a start-up entrepreneur, …allowed [me] to address the issues I care about in Jewish community development in [an] innovative and promising way, [and] let me probe my own capabilities in a totally new field.'*

They bring strong educational backgrounds and professional expertise to their ventures. 73% have master's degrees; another 5% have doctoral degrees. 31% have a formal advanced degree or certificate qualification in a Jewish-related field; however, only two European respondents (3%) reported having rabbinic ordination or *s'michah*; this is a striking contrast to North American startups, where nearly one third of founders and leaders are rabbis.

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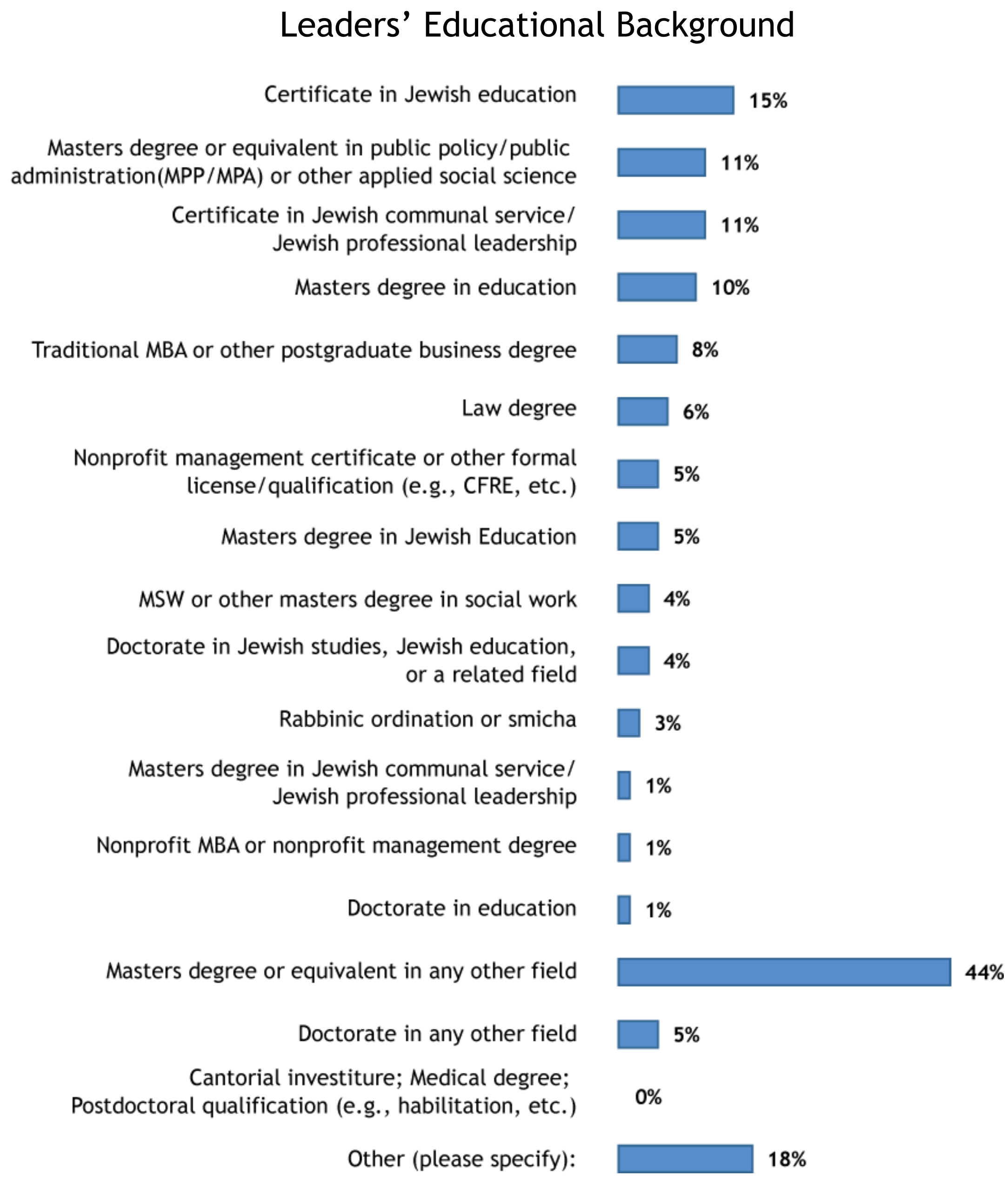
[4] On 15 April 2010, the date the 2010 Survey closed, €1 was equivalent to US$1.35 or £0.875.

[5] Depending on the currency used, average budgets vary widely—and not all initiatives have them, or chose to report them. Among UK initiatives, the average budget is £106,380, and half have annual budgets of £55,551 or less. Among Euro-denominated initiatives, the average budget is €63,576, and half have annual budgets of €26,200 or less. Among U.S. dollar-denominated initiatives, the average budget is $173,125, and half have annual budgets of $47,500 or less).



72% of European startup employees reported that before taking their position at the startup, they were employed or self-employed in nonprofit work, business, government or professional practice. 40% were at an established Jewish nonprofit, 18% were self-employed, 12% were at a private for-profit, 9% were at a non-Jewish nonprofit, and 3% were in government. 15% came directly from full-time study to startup work, and 2% were previously unemployed.

Overall, 80% are involved with other projects, both Jewish and non-Jewish, in significant leadership roles. Moreover, 12% of European leaders completing the survey indicated that they had already completed the survey for another Jewish startup initiative.[6]

European Jewish startup leaders appreciate the opportunity to take on significant leadership responsibility and see the direct impact of their efforts. As one wrote:

> *'I have benefitted enormously from my involvement. My professional development has been vast - I have been given the opportunity to take on far more responsibilities and develop more skills than would be usual for my age and experience. I have also enjoyed seeing an organisation grow and develop and to see the impact of my work on beneficiaries.'*

Key Finding 6 European Jewish startup leaders are the beneficiaries of significant investments in their educational and professional development, especially Jewish learning and leadership.

The leadership of European Jewish startups in large part is the product of a wave of philanthropic investment in Jewish education, leadership development, service and sojourns in Israel. 60% of founders and leaders have participated in at least one of the many schemes aimed at Jewish teens, college students, and recent college graduates focused on service learning, leadership development, short-, medium-, and long-term trips to Israel. 57% of founders and leaders have participated in adult leadership training & development and community service programmes, both those designed primarily to create future Jewish communal leaders (both volunteer and professional) and those designed to network and coach existing professionals.

These educational and leadership development initiatives have been inspirational to European Jewish startup founders and leaders. Answering a question about motivations behind launching a startup, one respondent wrote:

> *'I want tikkun olam! After Taglit I understand that I want to do something [as] good as I can for Jewish life in the world, in my country, in my city, in my community.'*

Having participated in these leadership development schemes, many startup founders drew upon those experiences as they were founding their initiatives, especially in terms of seeking advice and mentorship (61%) from programme staff. A smaller number turned to their programmes and programme staff for referrals and introductions (50%), actual engagement as

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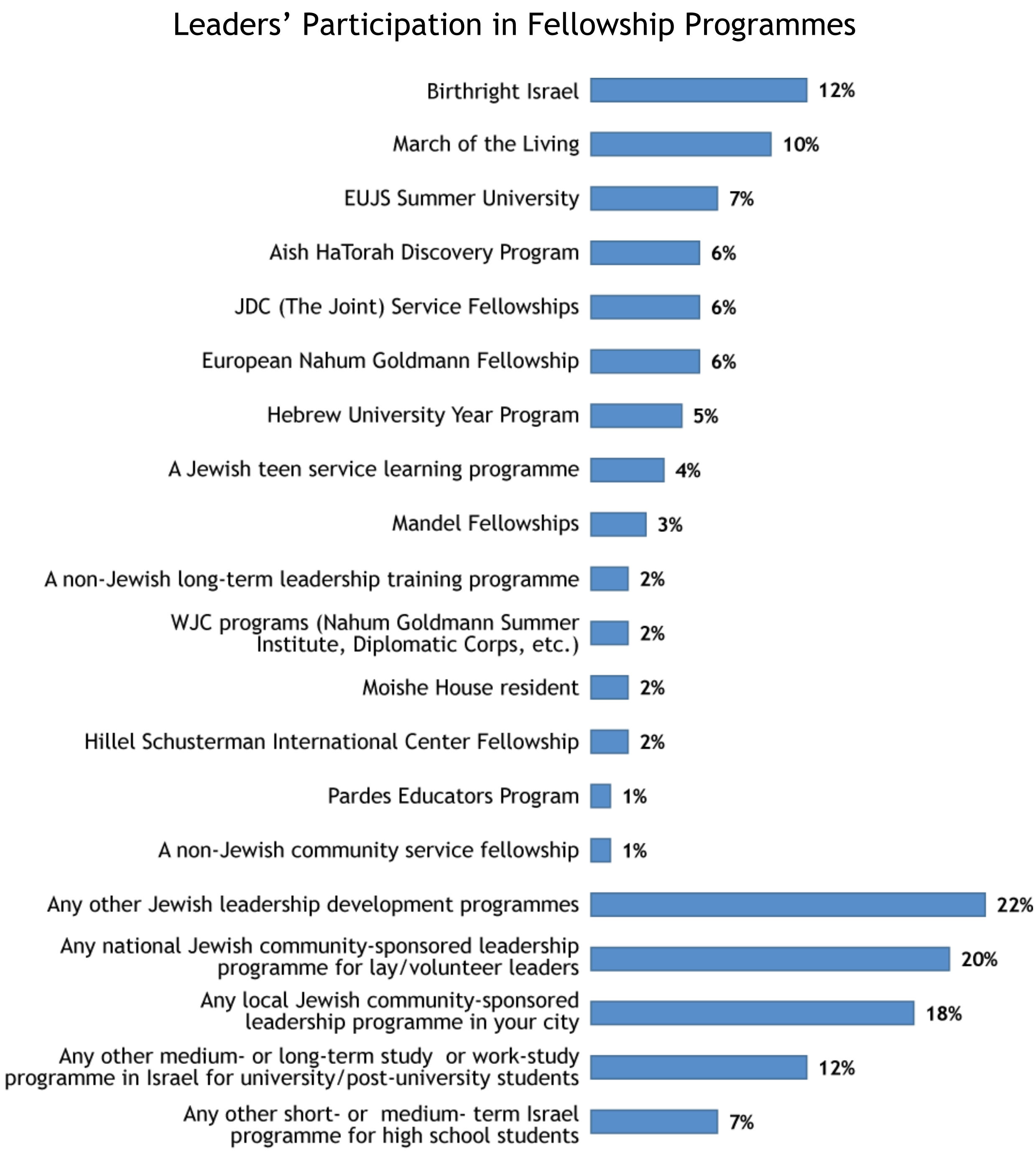
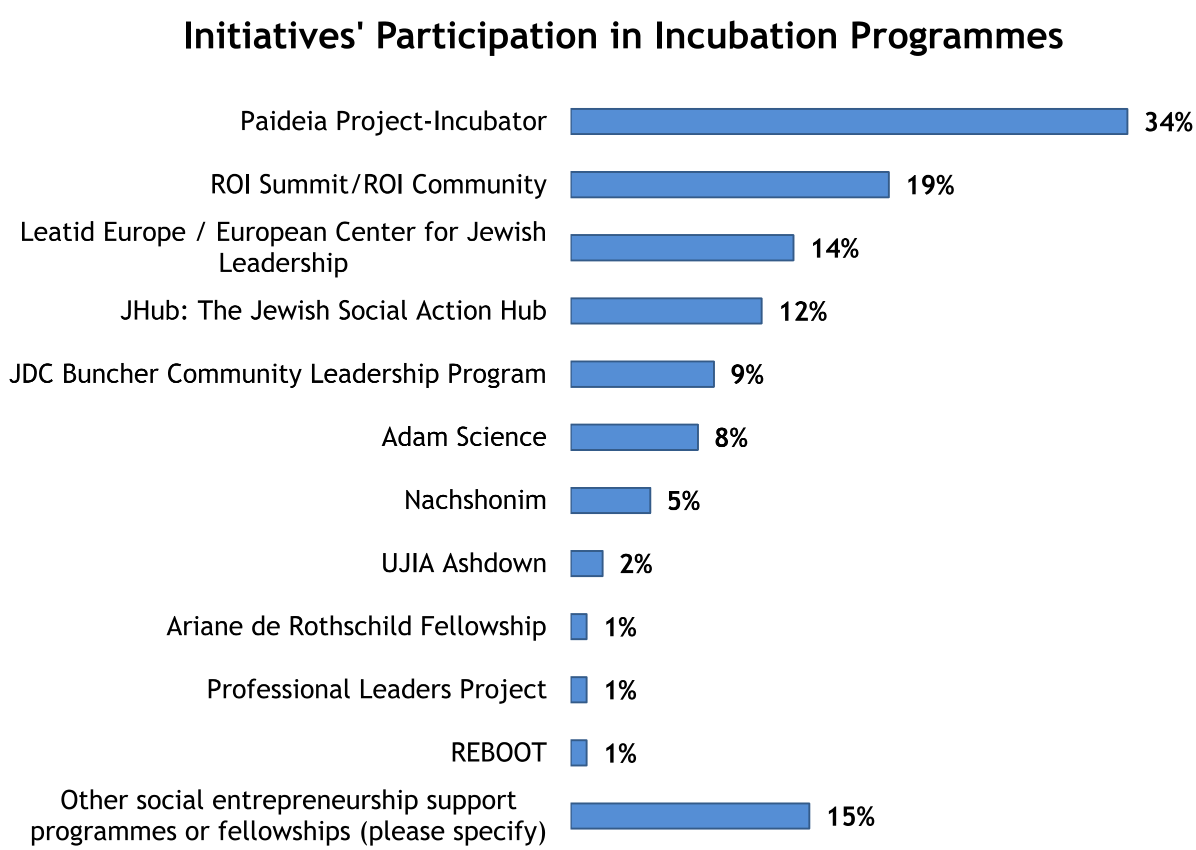
[6] Respondents repeating the survey for additional initiatives did not repeat the portion of the survey inquiring about their personal background.

participants or beneficiaries (48%), volunteer time and expertise, including board membership (45%), and marketing support (40%). About nine out of ten requests were fulfilled. Roughly 34% requested financial support from their programmes, and of these, 72% reported receiving funding.



Beyond programmes and programme staff, startup founders also have turned to their fellow programme alumni, leveraging their multiple networks for resources to support their ventures. They have been especially effective at leveraging their relationships with peer participants in leadership development programmes. 52% successfully recruited their peers as participants and beneficiaries in their initiatives, 50% benefited from advice and mentorship as well as referrals and introductions, 47% gained volunteer time & expertise (including board membership), and 44% received marketing support. Turning to peers has proven very fruitful for startup founders: indeed, of the roughly 32% who requested financial support from their peers, nearly 8 in 10 reported receiving funding from them.

Overall, about two thirds of respondents indicated that their initiative, its founder(s), or senior leaders had been a current or former participant in a programme designed to support new initiatives and new leaders, and just under one third benefited from more than one such programme. 48% indicated participation in one of a small number of programmes explicitly focused on incubation, specifically, the Paideia Project-Incubator, the ROI Community, JHub: The Jewish Social Action Hub, and/or Nachshonim.[7]

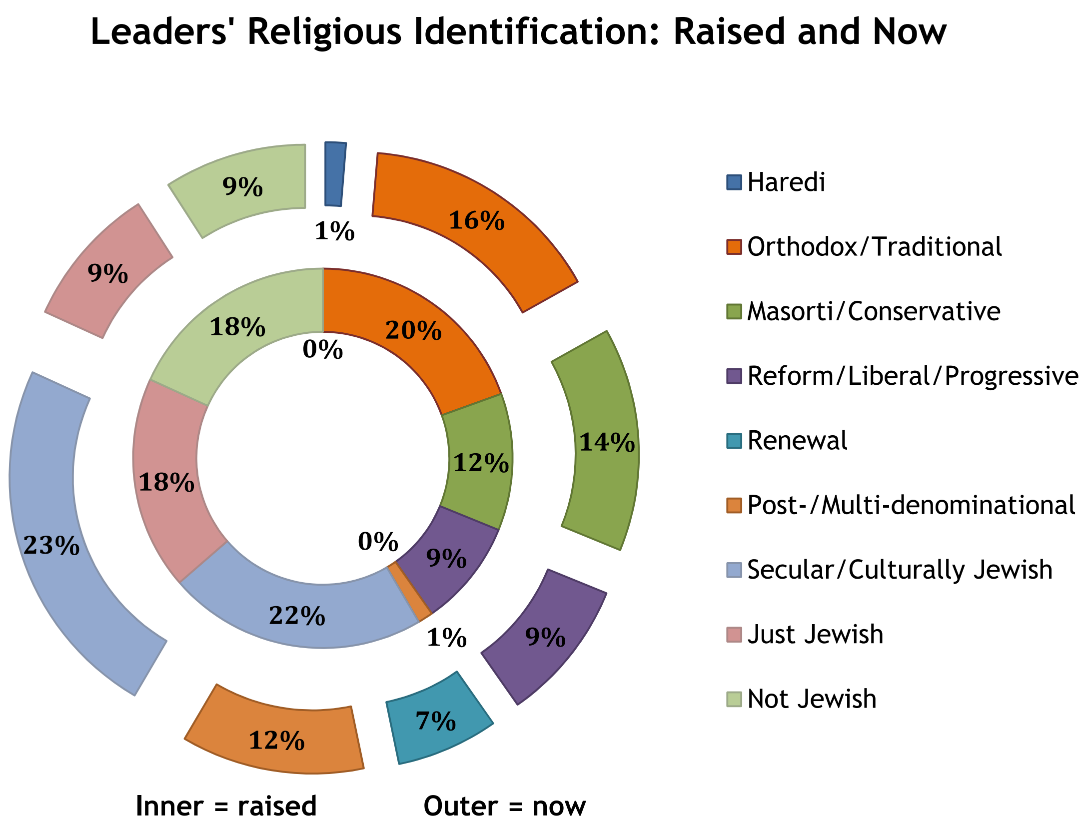


[7] In addition, among non-respondents to the survey are alumni of the Ezra Venture and PresenTense, both of which have supported European Jewish startups and their leaders. Survey invitations were sent to alumni of all of these programmes; however, special encouragement of JHub and ROI Community members to participate may have boosted the response rates for their specific initiatives, whereas a language barrier may have depressed the response rates for Russian-speaking Nachshonim fellows.

In a self-assessment of organisational capacity, respondents rated themselves strongest in programme implementation / execution, programme planning / design / evaluation and mission / vision / strategic planning. They rated themselves weakest in human resources management (professional / paid staff), board recruitment / development and legal / tax / insurance. Perhaps as a result of becoming more aware of the complexities of managing an organisation, respondents from incubated startups self-evaluated their organisational capacity more negatively than those from non-incubated startups in all but one category, legal, tax and insurance.

Key Finding 7 European Jewish startup founders and leaders are actively engaged in Jewish life and practice; they tend to affiliate with progressive and secular/cultural forms of Judaism.

European Jewish startup founders and leaders appear to have a comfort with Jewish involvement well as with Jewish practice. Fully 96% have been to Israel at least once, and 43% have spent at least 4 months studying or working in Israel. Most startup founders & leaders were involved in a Jewish organisation during university (63%) and nearly three fifths (59%) have worked part-time or full-time as a Jewish educator. 73% reported that they currently participate in a Shabbat dinner at least once per month, and 50% reported that they attend services at a congregation, spiritual community, *minyan*, or *chavurah* twice a month or more.



European Jewish startup founders and leaders have moved away from generic Jewish labels toward affiliation with progressive-identified Jewish movements. In general, 21% of respondents indicated having been raised in a progressive movement, and 42% identify as such today. Another 23% identify with secular and cultural Judaism. The shift is primarily in the increase in the number of people identifying as post-/multi-denominational or Renewal. Masorti shows an increase from 12% (raised) to 14% (current identification) and Reform/Liberal/Progressive holds steady at 9%; the move away from Conservative and Reform identification that is apparent in North America does not seem to have a parallel in Europe. Of the 18% who were grew up 'not Jewish', half now identify as Jewish, and half currently are not Jewish.

CONCLUSION

The revitalisation of Jewish life in Europe is part of a larger global phenomenon connecting Jews to their roots while simultaneously embracing the rapidly evolving nature of 21st century life. The implications of these findings for the future in Jewish life in Europe may surprise some readers. The perception that Jewish life in Europe is largely about memorialising the past, or futilely shoring up shrinking population centres of increasingly assimilated and disinterested Jews is not what we found. To be sure, the established Jewish world still uses the lens of post-Holocaust depopulation and cultural preservation as the starting point for their interventions. However, it is clear that a grass-roots communal infrastructure for Jewish life is taking shape for its own sake. Startup leaders are creating Jewish experiences and communities that are grounded in Judaism's past, but also built upon a vibrant appropriation of global Jewish memes using arts, culture, education and even religion to inspire and engage. These leaders are well-educated and well-organised, with networks of peers around the world, and deep connections to Israel. In short, the 2010 Survey of New Jewish Initiatives documents a belief shared by hundreds of thousands of people from London to Lithuania: that there can be a European Jewish future.

References

The 2010 Survey of New Jewish Initiatives was conducted in Europe by Jumpstart, Pears Foundation and the ROI Community and in North America by Jumpstart, The Natan Fund and The Samuel Bronfman Foundation. It is based on the 2008 Survey of New Jewish Organizations, conducted in the United States by Jumpstart, The Natan Fund and The Samuel Bronfman Foundation. In addition, there has been significant research and documentation on contemporary Jewish innovation and emerging leadership in North America and Europe. In Europe, see especially Gallup's European Jewish Leaders and Opinion Formers Survey (American Joint Distribution Committee International Centre for Community Development, 2009) and Compass: Directions in European Jewish Life (Westbury Group, 2009). As of autumn 2010, the JDC-ICCD has at least two closely related research projects currently in the field. For a complete reference list, please see http://europe2010.jewishjecosystem.org

Questions for further inquiry

The purpose of the 2010 Survey of New Jewish Initiative extends beyond pure research to the search for ways to strengthen and extend the investments made by philanthropists, supporting organisations and, of course, the innovators themselves. To that end, we hope these findings and discussion have been useful to you. The overall survey findings are available at http://europe2010.jewishjecosystem.org. Please let us know what questions or further analysis particularly interest you by sending an email to survey@jewishecosystem.org or posting a comment at http://europe2010.jewishjecosystem.org.

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Jumpstart

Jumpstart is working across the globe to empower a new generation of Jewish organizations that are creating unique and compelling gateways into Jewish life. Through providing hands-on help to Jewish innovators and catalyzing new approaches to building Jewish community, Jumpstart is both an entrepreneurial support system and research & development laboratory for the Jewish future.

http://jewishjumpstart.org

Pears Foundation

Pears Foundation is a British-based family foundation rooted in Jewish values. Its work is concerned with positive identity and citizenship. The Foundation supports Jewish organisations and entrepreneurs who place social action and responsibility at the heart of Jewish identity. JHub: The Jewish Social Action Hub is a Pears Foundation operating programme.

http://pearsfoundation.org.uk

ROI Community of Young Jewish Innovators

ROI is a global community of young Jewish innovators that was created by Lynn Schusterman as a partnership between the Centre for Leadership Initiatives and Taglit-Birthright Israel. Since the first ROI Summit in 2006, ROI has grown to become one of the leading vehicles in the world for young Jewish innovators to network with peers, gain skills and get traction toward implementing their visions for the Jewish future.

http://roicommunity.org