



# Sixth Survey of European Jewish Community Leaders and Professionals, 2024

July 2024



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## FOREWORD

The International Centre for Community Development, the European research division of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC-ICCD) is proud to present this sixth Survey of European Jewish Leaders and Professionals. This survey, which is conducted approximately every three years, is intended to spotlight trends of interest and concern among European Jewish leadership.

The 2024 survey comes during a historically fraught moment for the Jewish people globally. The impact of the horrific October 7<sup>th</sup> attacks and the subsequent war in Israel cannot be understated. This year's survey includes additional questions regarding the impact of October 7<sup>th</sup> on various aspects of community life, perceptions, and behaviour.

The simultaneous global upswing in antisemitic incidents and anti-Israel protests throughout Europe have been at the forefront of the minds of Jewish leaders across the continent, and beyond. This survey provides valuable data regarding increased levels of isolation, insecurity, and fear among European Jews, who at the same time are reporting an increased desire to gather with other Jews.

As with each survey released since 2008, this survey also provides an opportunity to analyse changes in affiliation, engagement, and priorities across the region. It is of particular interest to note the differences between Eastern and Western Europe within a range of issues and the trends therein.

Following the pandemic, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and October 7<sup>th</sup>,

the Jewish people are faced with new realities. It is JDC-ICCD's hope that the information contained within this survey will serve as a guide for Jewish community leadership throughout Europe to help plan and innovate, to strengthen Jewish life for generations to come, transforming challenge into opportunity.

I would like to thank all our partners who took the time to complete this survey. These leaders have had to contend with extraordinary challenges over the last number of years and their commitment has not faltered. It is our privilege to partner with you moving forward to carry out our collective mission to foster strong and celebratory Jewish life.

Stefan Oscar  
Regional Director, JDC Europe

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

October 7<sup>th</sup> and its aftermath have shaken Jews throughout Europe and particularly those in the West. They are threatened by antisemitism and are concerned for their safety. They are more isolated socially and pessimistic about the future.

However, Jewish communities remain resilient, coming together in the face of intensified threats. Their connections are deeper, and strengthened, their support for Israel nuanced but robust, and responding well to emerging needs.

Europe's Jews are also staying put. Despite the serious challenges in the post-October 7<sup>th</sup> reality, they are no more likely to emigrate today than they were three years ago.

These are the key findings from the *Sixth Survey of European Jewish Community Leaders and Professionals*, conducted in March and April 2024 by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee's International Centre for Community Development (JDC-ICCD). The survey was conducted online in 10 languages

and administered to 879 respondents in 32 countries.

JDC-ICCD conducts the *Survey of European Jewish Community Leaders and Professionals* every three or four years, using the same format to identify important topics and trends and glean insights into how attitudes differ by region, age, gender and community role. Thus, analysis of the 2024 findings has been enriched by the comparative data available from previous surveys conducted in 2008, 2011, 2015, 2018 and 2021.

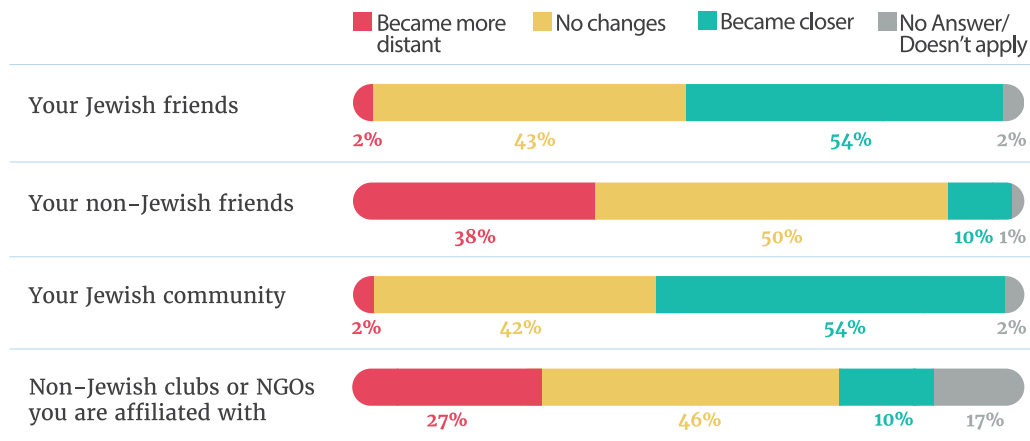
This year's survey asked Jewish community leaders and professionals a range of questions, seeking their views on the major challenges and issues affecting European Jewish communities in 2024 and their expectations for how the situation in their communities will evolve over the next five to ten years. In addition, this year's survey includes a special section designed to understand the impact of October 7<sup>th</sup> on Jewish life in Europe.

### Europe's Jews in the Post-October 7<sup>th</sup> Reality

That October 7<sup>th</sup> has profoundly affected Jewish Europe is evident across multiple sections throughout the survey. Concern about antisemitism and the threat of physical attack has intensified. A large majority of 78% feel less safe living as Jews in their cities than they did before the Hamas attack, and respondents are more cautious about how they identify themselves as Jews. They are also more distant from their wider environments, with 38% reporting they have become more distant from non-Jewish friends.

At the same time, they have sought and found strength in one another. They have become closer with their families and Jewish friends, and a net 11% say attendance in community activities has increased. Almost half, 48%, are more likely to participate in pro-Israel demonstrations. They further display a heightened sense of connection to Jews outside their communities – whether elsewhere in Europe, in Israel, or around the world – while internal community tensions have moderated.

**Figure 1.** “Thinking about your personal situation, to what extent do you consider that the war in Israel and its consequences in Europe have affected your relationship with...



They are also in broad agreement about the difficulties they face. More emphatically than ever, antisemitism is now cited as the leading threat to

the future of Jewish life in Europe. Combatting these risks are the community leaders' unchallenged top priority.

## Community Priorities

The 2024 respondents reconfirmed *combatting antisemitism* as their top priority after it had risen to first place in 2021 from seventh in 2011. The next-ranking priorities this year were *supporting Jews in need in the community*, *strengthening Jewish education and including young leadership in decision making*. While their order has changed, these priorities have comprised the four top priorities since 2018.

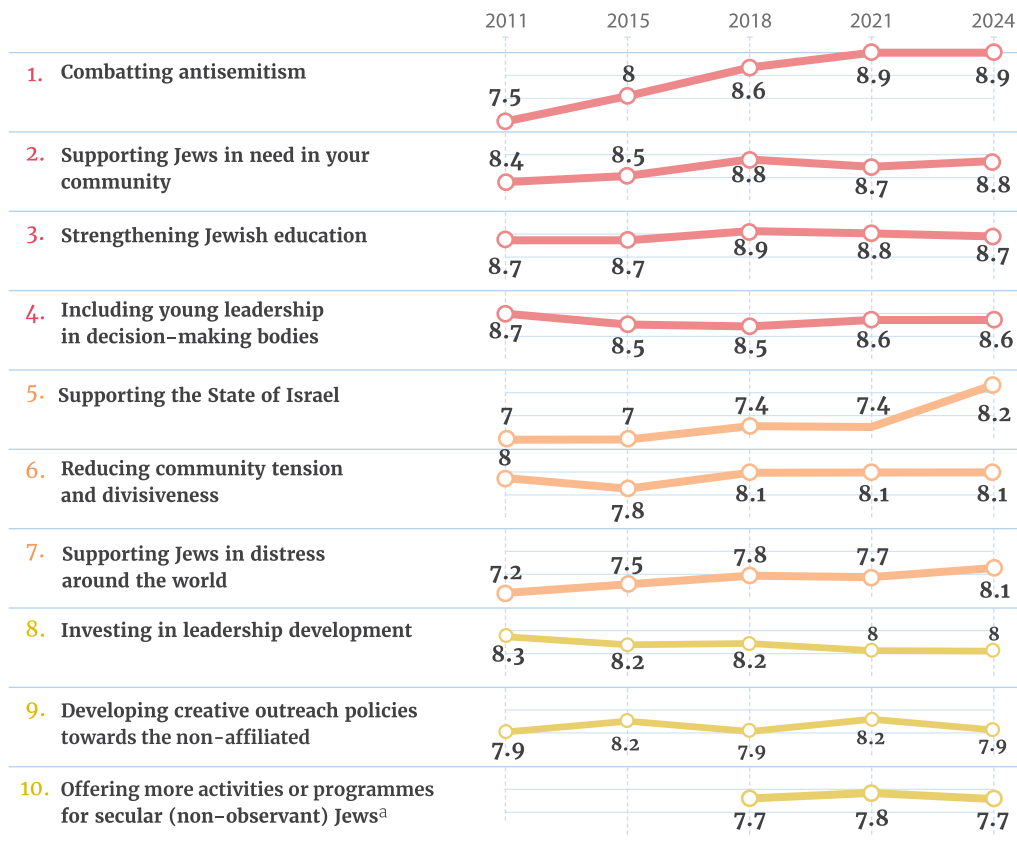
lowest ranked of the 16 priorities tested, with their prioritisation scores holding steady or falling.

Two October 7<sup>th</sup>-related issues saw their prioritisation climb since 2021. *Supporting Israel* surged from 14<sup>th</sup> place to 5<sup>th</sup>, while *supporting Jews in distress around the world* rose from 10<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. *Reducing community tensions* maintained its high 2021 prioritisation.

*Strengthening interfaith relations, functioning as a pressure group in national politics, strengthening Jewish religious life and developing an effective policy on intermarriage* remained the



**Figure 2.** Top 10 community priorities. (On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means “not a priority at all” and 10 means “a top priority”.) Comparison 2011–2024.



a. Item introduced in the 2018 survey

## Threats to the Future of Jewish Life

This year’s threat ratings show an intensification of the respondents’ concerns, with a growing number of threats scored as more serious than in the past. While this continues a long-term trend, the impact of October 7<sup>th</sup> is apparent.

As in 2021, *antisemitism* was ranked the greatest threat but with an even higher 79% (vs. 71%). This was followed by an up-ticking in *alienation of Jews from Jewish life*, a stable *lack of renewal in Jewish leadership and ignorance about Judaism*, which also scored slightly higher. Concern about *terrorism and violence against Jews* rose sharply to 64% from 53% in 2021 and now ranks the joint-5<sup>th</sup> most serious threat.

With communities drawing together, *lack of engagement in community life* was among a handful of threats viewed as less serious by this year’s respondents (64% vs. 68%). They were also less concerned about *efforts to ban certain religious practices* (e.g., *brit milah*, *ritual slaughter*).

*Poverty in the community*, long the lowest-ranked threat, continued to decline as a concern (down 32% from 35%), although *economic hardship among members/rising cost of living* increased from 37% to 41%.

**Figure 3.** “Which of the following are the most serious threats to the future of Jewish life in your country?” 2024. (Percentage of respondents giving a score of 4 or 5 on a 1 to 5 scale).

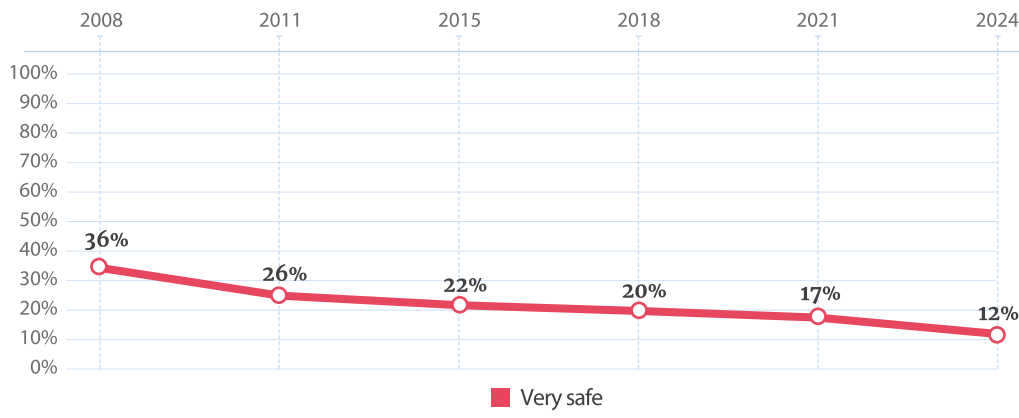


### Security and Safety in the Post-October 7<sup>th</sup> Context

The 2024 survey reflected a worsening of the security situation. A significant 38% of respondents reported that their institutions had suffered antisemitic incidents since October 7<sup>th</sup>, and a large majority (78%) say it has become less safe to live and practise as a Jew in their home city. While 73% still consider it safe, the number among them who feel *very safe* continued a long-term decline with a new low of 12%, while more than a quarter now say it is unsafe.

The leaders are, moreover, much more pessimistic about antisemitism than in the past, with 83% expecting the problem to worsen in the coming years compared to 70% in 2021.

**Figure 4.** “To what extent do you feel today it is safe to live and practise as a Jew in the city where you reside? Evolution of “very safe” responses, 2008-2024.



The respondents reported greater caution in how they display their Jewish identities. A quarter say they are less likely to wear a kippa, while 32% avoid other outward signs (T-shirts, necklaces) that could make them a physical target. They are less nervous about displays of identity that are more muted (having a mezuzah on their front door) or mediated (identifying as a Jew on social media), with 75% and 53%

respectively reporting no change. They are also much more willing (48%) to join pro-Israel demonstrations, where their identity display is anonymous. This likely also reflects the prevailing view (78%) that their governments have responded adequately to their communities' security needs, and the assessment that their communities were either very (41%) or somewhat prepared (41%) to deal with an emergency.

## Emigration

The Jewish leaders surveyed in 2024 are no more likely to emigrate than those in 2021, and their assessment of the mood about emigration in their communities is virtually unchanged: Almost half

expect a limited increase (39%) or none at all (8%). Antisemitism is now the top reason cited for emigration, with Israel remaining the preferred destination by far.

## Israel

European Jews have rallied in support of Israel, even as they have become more sensitive to the impact that the events have had on their lives. The vast majority of respondents, 82%, reported that their commitment to Israel was stronger post-October 7<sup>th</sup>, and increased majorities said that all Jews have a responsibility to support Israel and do so unconditionally. Its

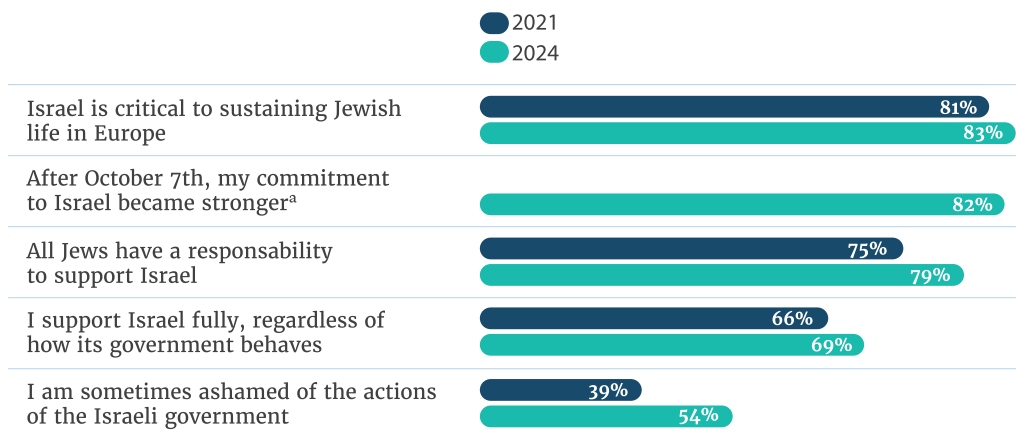
divisiveness as an issue within the community has correspondingly decreased, with the vast majority saying it is either *minor* (36%), *manageable* (32%) or *non-existent* (19%).

At the same time, 93% now agree that events in Israel can lead to antisemitism in their countries, up sharply from 81% three years ago, while an increased

majority agree that the media in their countries regularly portrays Israel in a bad light. This is reflected in a spike in those – now a majority of 53% – who

said they are *sometimes ashamed of the actions of the Israeli government*, and, perhaps, in the widely held view that Israel is critical to Jewish life in Europe.

**Figure 5.** Selected statements about Israel. Strongly and Rather Agree. Comparison 2021 and 2024.



a. Item introduced in the 2024 survey

## Europe and Its Jews: A Continental Perspective

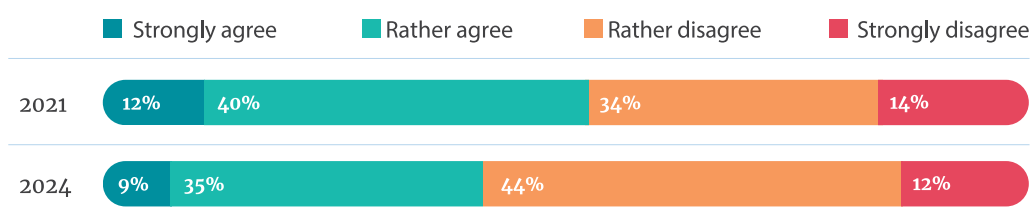
Evident in this year's result, is the increased importance leaders place on strong ties and mutual responsibility among European Jews. A near-unanimous 97% ascribed importance to boosting ties with other Jews in Europe and the view that European Jews have a special responsibility to each other resonates strongly, with 85% agreeing. In both cases, support increased for the first time since 2015.

In practice, however, the leaders' familiarity with Jews elsewhere in Europe is more limited. Fewer than two thirds (60%) say they have direct knowledge of the situation in other Jewish communities in Europe and

fewer than half (46%) are familiar with European Jewish organisations. This year's data did, though, show signs of halting or reversing the steady slide in the leaders' involvement with their continental neighbours.

Most of the European Jewish leaders surveyed are pessimistic about the future, though slightly less so about European Jewry's outlook than about Europe as a whole. At 54%, pessimism about their communities held steady, recent events notwithstanding, though their assessment of Europe's future saw an 8-point swing from a marginally optimistic 52% to a somewhat pessimistic 56%.

**Figure 6.** "I am optimistic about the future of Europe. Comparison 2021 and 2024.

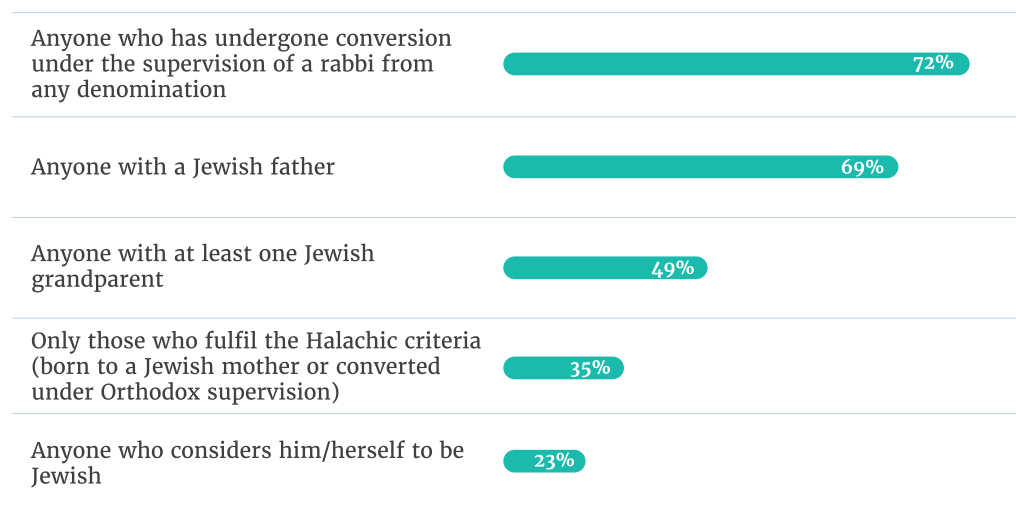


## Internal Community Issues

Interdenominational tensions eased again this year, continuing a long-term trend, with 80% calling them at least manageable. On the key wedge issue of “Who is a Jew?”, the 2024 respondents reaffirmed their repeated preference

for a more accommodating criteria for community membership, with 72% in favour of accepting anyone converted by a rabbi of any denomination. Support for applying Halachic criteria continued to hold constant at about a third.

**Figure 7.** “Who should be accepted as a Jewish community member?” Strongly and Rather Agree. 2024



Although a small majority of 53% predict a worsening of community tensions, the 2024 respondents were no more pessimistic about the prospects for these issues than three years ago.

Regarding the financial situation in their communities, strong majorities said it is manageable or better, with the assessment slightly better for their own organisations (77% agree) than for the wider community (73%). These majorities have narrowed since the 2021 survey was conducted at the peak of the economic uncertainty of the Covid pandemic, while the number saying their organisations’ finances were unmanageable or critical has spiked. This year’s leaders were also more pessimistic about the financial outlook, though again somewhat less

about their organisations than their communities.

The 2024 cadre reported that their organisations are engaged slightly less in strategic planning today than three years ago, but slightly more in succession planning. Some improvement is evident in the representation of women on organisational boards, with 33% of respondents saying that at least half of all board members are female, up from 27% in 2021.

## Regional Differences

Segmentation of the response data yielded significant insights into differences in attitudes between age groups, religious streams, community roles, and geographic regions. The regional differences were especially striking this year, with the fallout from October 7<sup>th</sup> weighing much more heavily on Western respondents than their colleagues in the East.

Concern about antisemitism increased in both regions, with leaders across the continent now regarding *combating antisemitism* as their top priority. The rise in concern, though, was much greater in the West (from 77% to 86% vs. 50% to 55%), and while Westerners ranked it the most serious threat, Easterners ranked it only 7<sup>th</sup>.

Westerners were also more than twice as concerned as Easterners about *terrorism and violence against Jews* as a serious threat (72% vs. 34%). Correspondingly, Easterners overwhelmingly reported (95%) that their cities remain safe for Jews, in contrast to a marked deterioration in the West, which saw the

number saying they feel unsafe jump from 27% to 33%.

This differential impact was reflected in the intensity of the changes in their respective opinions. While both boosted their prioritisation of *supporting Israel*, it remains a mid-level 8<sup>th</sup> priority in the East, while climbing to a high 5<sup>th</sup> priority in the West. Easterners were also less likely to *strongly agree* (44% vs. 56%) that their support for Israel had grown stronger post-October 7<sup>th</sup>. The East's increased prioritisation of *supporting Jews in distress around the world* was similarly more muted.

Leaders in the East are more uniformly accommodating in their approach to Jewish status issues and prioritise *offering more activities for non-observant Jews* more highly than those in the West. Eastern Europeans are also much more optimistic about the future of European Jewry, with 66% predicting it will be vibrant, compared to 57% in 2021, while Western Europeans are increasingly pessimistic (59% vs. 56%).

## About the Sample of Respondents

The size of the 2024 survey sample (879) was slightly smaller than in 2021 (1,054), returning to the pre-Covid 2018 levels (891). Over three-quarters of respondents reside in Western Europe, home to the continent's largest Jewish centres. Germany, France, and Italy have particularly large samples. The explanation for this is that the national community organisation/federations of France, Germany, and Italy – the *Fonds Social Juif Unifié*, the *Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland* and the *Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane (UCEI)*

– have partnered with JDC-ICCD to reach a more significant number of respondents. These robust national samples provide the partners with reliable and up-to-date information for their planning and policymaking.

The gender ratio in 2024 is similar to 2021, though slightly more male. This year's sample was also slightly older, with fewer younger leaders and more in the 41-54 cohort.

Respondents who self-identified according to their religion or outlook did

so in rough proportion to the streams' representation in 2021. Just over a third of the latest sample identified as Orthodox, a quarter as Masorti/Liberal/Reform, and the remainder as Cultural/Secular. As for their religious outlook, those defining themselves as "religious" or "somewhat religious" were a slight majority over the 46% who defined themselves as "secular" or "somewhat secular."

More than half of the respondents (55%) were lay leaders, and more than a quarter (28%) were community professionals, with a smaller number of rabbis (9%) and activists (8%).

For the purposes of this survey, the following roles were included under the definitions of "leaders" and "community professionals": presidents and chairs of nationwide umbrella organisations or federations; presidents and executive directors of private Jewish foundations, charities and other privately funded

initiatives; presidents and main representatives of Jewish communities organised at a city level; executive directors and programme coordinators, as well as current and former board members of Jewish organisations; directors and executive directors of Jewish agencies or departments dealing with Jewish social welfare; directors and programme coordinators of Jewish educational bodies and departments at Jewish federations or communities; principals of Jewish schools; prominent Jewish informal educators, including rabbis; directors and programme coordinators of youth departments at Jewish federations or communities; directors and executive directors of Jewish Community Centres (JCC's); staff responsible for programming at non-institutionalised Jewish initiatives; prominent young activists; influential Jewish media entrepreneurs; and significant donors to the communities.

## I. Introduction

One of the primary goals of the *Survey of European Jewish Community Leaders and Professionals* is to identify the major priorities and challenges facing European Jewish communities today. The survey also examines other topics such as safety and security, emigration and attitudes towards Israel and Europe, and internal community issues, including interdenominational tensions, community and organisational finances, planning, and governance. All these, it also tracks over time. Each new triennial survey adds insights into the evolution of European Jewry's thinking on the issues affecting its communities' health and well-being.

This year's survey was conducted amid the enduring trauma of October 7<sup>th</sup> and of the war that has engulfed Israel in the months since. The results reflect this, bringing definition to the massive impact these events have had on European Jews, along with others in Israel and around the world. This was reinforced by data from a special set of questions that focused on the changes the leaders experienced during this time of political and social upheaval.

The report's primary focus is on the priorities and pressing issues that dominate the operational agenda of European Jewish leaders today. These priorities form the crux of this report, as they are the issues currently demanding the most attention, resources, and action from the leaders, their organisations, and their communities. The report's other sections explore the context in which today's operational agenda has been set. With comparative data indicating changes and trends, the survey results offer an overview of the leaders' assessment of the main

challenges they and their communities are facing, and this year very much reflects the changed reality post-October 7<sup>th</sup>. Analysed in the section on *Threats to the Future of Jewish Life* and expanded upon in the focus sections that follow, these are the challenges that have shaped the agenda items the leaders have prioritised.

With the insights it offers on the state of European Jewry in the spring of 2024, the European provides a basis for comparison with surveys on related issues taken in recent months in the United States and elsewhere<sup>1</sup>. It thus makes a key contribution to our collective understanding of the impact October 7<sup>th</sup> on the Jewish world at large.

1. For example, the American Jewish Committee's 2024 Survey of American Jewish Opinion, was conducted at the same time as the European Leaders' survey and asked a similar array of questions.



## II. Community Priorities

As in past surveys, respondents were asked to rate 18 community issues in terms of their priority, ranging from 1 (not a priority at all) to 10 (top priority) (Figure 8). The highest priorities in 2024 (scoring 8 or more) were: *combatting antisemitism* (8.9), *supporting Jews in need in your community* (8.8), *strengthening Jewish education* (8.7), *including young leadership in decision-making bodies* (8.6), *supporting the State of Israel* (8.2), *reducing community tension and divisiveness* (8.1), *supporting Jews in distress around the world* (8.1), *developing creative outreach policies towards the non-affiliated* (8.2), and *investing in leadership development* (8).

Notwithstanding notable differences in the 2024 survey that reflect the changed post-October 7<sup>th</sup> reality, the ranking of the priorities has remained largely constant over time. Though their order has sometimes varied, the same four priorities – *combatting antisemitism*, *strengthening Jewish education*, *supporting Jews in need in your community*, and *including young leadership in decision-making bodies* – have topped each survey since 2018, while four others – *strengthening interfaith relations*, *functioning as a pressure group in national politics*, *strengthening Jewish religious life* and *developing an effective policy on intermarriage* – have likewise ranked the lowest.

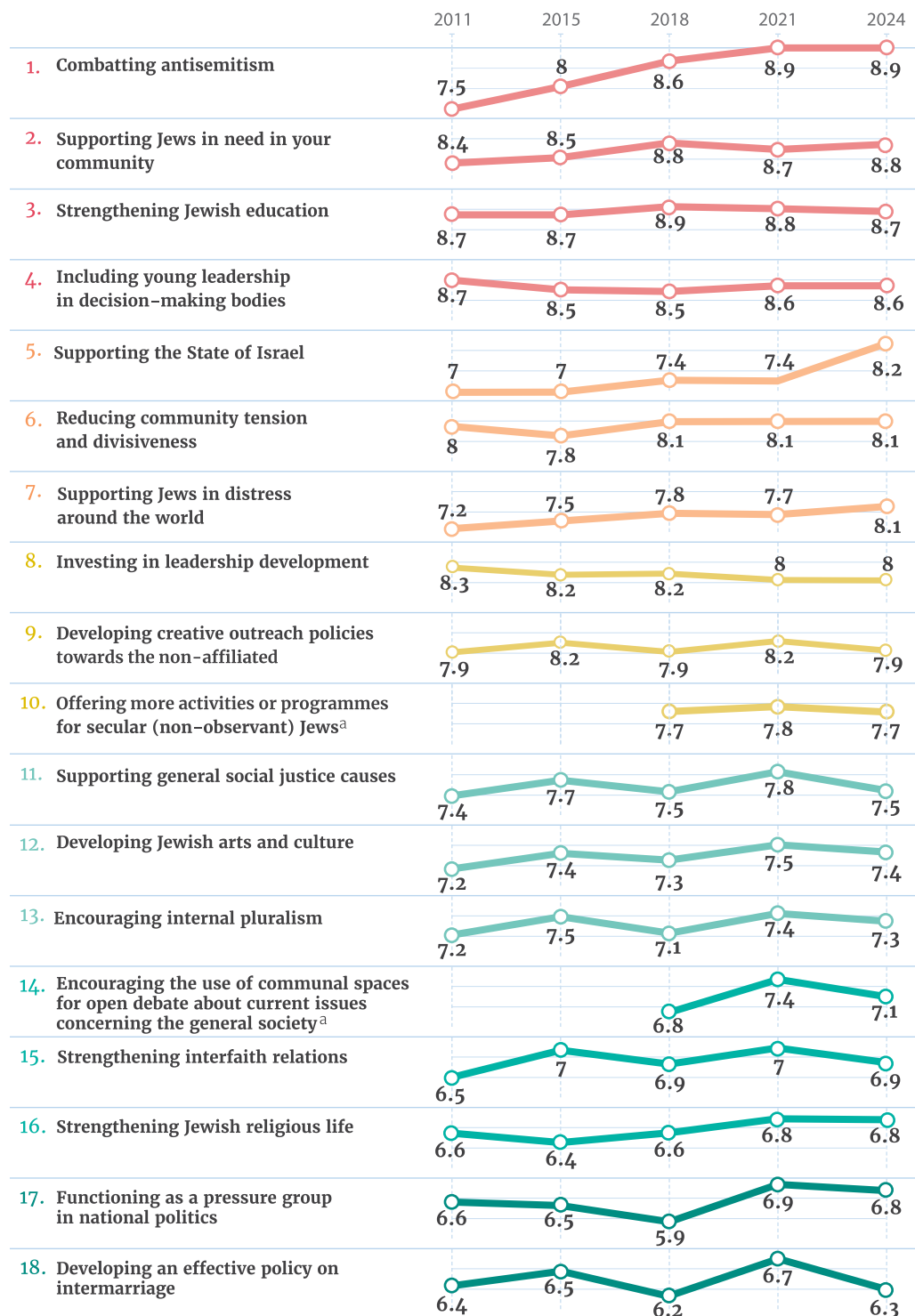
The most striking break with the overall picture of stability is the steady rise in importance the leaders attach to *combatting antisemitism*, which ranked first this year with a score of 8.9. While this lead status might have been expected in 2024, the multi-year data indicate that the leaders regarded this

priority with growing urgency long before antisemitism erupted globally after October 7<sup>th</sup>. Ranked only 7<sup>th</sup> in 2011 with a score of 7.5, it rose to 6<sup>th</sup> place in 2015 (8.0), and 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2018 (8.6), before topping the list in 2021 (8.9) and reaffirming that status in 2024 with an unchanged score.

At the same time, October 7<sup>th</sup> and its impact were reflected in a spike in the priority given to two other issues, and particularly to *supporting the State of Israel*. This issue had not, historically, even been among the top 10 priorities, with its 2021 score of 7.4 earning it only 14<sup>th</sup> place. In 2024, however, its score jumped by almost a full point (0.8) to 8.2, boosting its ranking to 5<sup>th</sup>.

A similar, if less marked, effect was also found with *supporting Jews in distress around the world*. This issue increased its score by almost a half-point (0.4) from 7.7 in 2021 to 8.1 in 2024, with its ranking rising from 10<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Figure 8.** Community causes. “Please indicate the extent to which you think it should be prioritised in the next 5 to 10 years.” Responses on a scale of 1 to 10 for 2011–2024.



a. Item introduced in the 2018 survey

As in the past, the general picture emerging is one of consensus among leaders from different sub-groups, though with some outliers of note.

Leaders aged 55+, for example, prioritise *combatting antisemitism* more highly than any other sub-group, giving it a score of 9.2 (vs. 8.4 for those under

40). This compares to the next-highest score of 9.1 that the Cultural/Secular and female leaders gave to this issue, and 8.9 for the sample overall.

Older respondents and Orthodox leaders gave *supporting Israel* the highest scores, 8.6. This contrasts sharply with those aged up to 40. While the younger respondents increased their score on this issue dramatically from 6.0 in 2021, their 7.1 in 2024 was the lowest of any subgroup. It was half a point (0.5) lower than the next lowest scorer (Jewish professionals, 7.6) and more than a full point (1.1) lower than the overall sample score of 8.2. We also see a disparity between the Orthodox leaders' 8.6 rating and the 8.0 given by the Masorti-Liberal-Reform (MLR) and Cultural/Secular leaders.

The data also reveal significant regional differences. Eastern European respondents were more likely to prioritise *offering more activities for non-observant Jews*, giving it a score of 8.3 vs. 7.5 for Western Europeans and 7.7 overall and *developing Jewish arts and culture* (7.8 vs. 7.3 in the West and 7.4 overall). This likely reflects the more secular and cultural approach to Jewish identity prevalent in the formerly Communist East. On the other hand, leaders in the West give higher priority to *functioning as a pressure group in national politics*, scoring it a 7.1 (vs. 6.8 overall), substantially higher than their Eastern counterparts' 5.7.

The comparison of how leaders in the two regions changed their rankings of issues related to October 7<sup>th</sup> is of further interest. *Supporting the State of Israel* rose six places in the rankings in both regions between 2021 and 2024, but the increase was much more notable in the West. There, leaders boosted it from a low 11<sup>th</sup> place in 2021 to 5<sup>th</sup> in 2024,

while in the East, the increase was from a low 14<sup>th</sup> place to a still-middling 8<sup>th</sup>. Likewise, while leaders in both regions boosted their ranking of *supporting Jews in distress around the world* by two places between 2021 and 2024, the increase in the West was from 7<sup>th</sup> place to 9<sup>th</sup>, while in the East, it was from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>.

The exception to this East/West "intensity differential" can be found in *combatting antisemitism*. With leaders in the East raising this issue's priority from fourth position in 2021 to first in 2024, they aligned with their counterparts in the West, who had ranked it first in the prior survey and reiterated that placement this year.

This year's survey also brought to light some intriguing gender differences. Female respondents generally showed a slight tendency to rate priorities more highly than their male counterparts. This was evident in their higher scores for *combatting antisemitism*, in which female respondents scored 9.1 vs. 8.8 for males, *supporting Jews in your community* (8.9 vs. 8.6), and *including young people in decision-making* (8.7 vs. 8.5). The difference was particularly pronounced with *supporting general social justice causes* (7.7 vs. 7.3), *developing Jewish arts and culture* (7.7 vs. 7.3) and *strengthening interfaith relations* (7.3 vs. 6.6).

This tendency, however, did not hold across the board. Males scored *strengthening Jewish religious life* significantly higher than females (7.0 vs. 6.4), as well as *developing an effective policy on intermarriage* (6.6 vs. 6.1). Less pronounced but notable, nevertheless, male respondents scored *supporting Israel* higher (8.3) than their female colleagues (8.1).

### III. Threats to the Future of Jewish Life

As in other sections of the survey, the responses on threats provide both a snapshot of what the Jewish leaders see as the greatest dangers and challenges today and updated data for long-term comparison. This year, respondents were again asked to rate 17 issues – some internal to the community, others external – that could be viewed as serious threats to the future of Jewish life in their countries.

The responses are on a 5-point scale, where 1 indicated *not a threat at all* and 5 *a very serious threat*. The main metric used by the survey is the percentage of respondents who rate a given threat seriously by scoring it either 4 (*serious*) or 5 (*very serious*).

As Figure 9 reflects, this year's responses continue a long-term trend in which respondents perceive a growing number of threats as being increasingly serious. At the same time, there was remarkable consistency between the 2024 results and those in 2021, which were gleaned during the Covid crisis and showed a jump in the number of threats seen as serious over 2018.

*“Antisemitism is a threat we didn't expect at this level of violence and its massive nature. It shuts Jews in and closes the door on certain aspects of the surrounding society.”*

*(Community professional, France)*

However, there was a dramatic uptick in the percentage who see a serious threat (rating of 4 and 5) from directions related to October 7<sup>th</sup> and its aftermath. Same as in 2021, *antisemitism* is regarded as the greatest threat, identified as serious by 79% of respondents. It was followed by *alienation of Jews from community life*

(74%). The high ranking for *alienation* may reflect concern that some Jews are responding to growing antisemitism by distancing themselves from Jewish life.

While their placement remains unchanged, concern over these threats has increased sharply since the last survey, with 8% more respondents calling *antisemitism* serious than in 2021 (71%) and 4% more doing so for *alienation of Jews* (70% in 2021). *Terrorism and violence against Jews* continue to emerge as a growing concern and now ranks joint 5<sup>th</sup> (with *lack of engagement in Jewish community life* and *demographic decline*), up from 11<sup>th</sup> three years ago. When this issue was first included in the survey in 2018, 40% of leaders rated it as *serious* or *very serious*. By 2021, this jumped to 53%, and in 2024 it spiked a further 11%, with 64% now regarding *terrorism and violence against Jews* as a serious threat.

*“I believe that we cannot continue doing the same things and expect different results as far as Jewish education is concerned.”*

*(Jewish professional, Spain)*

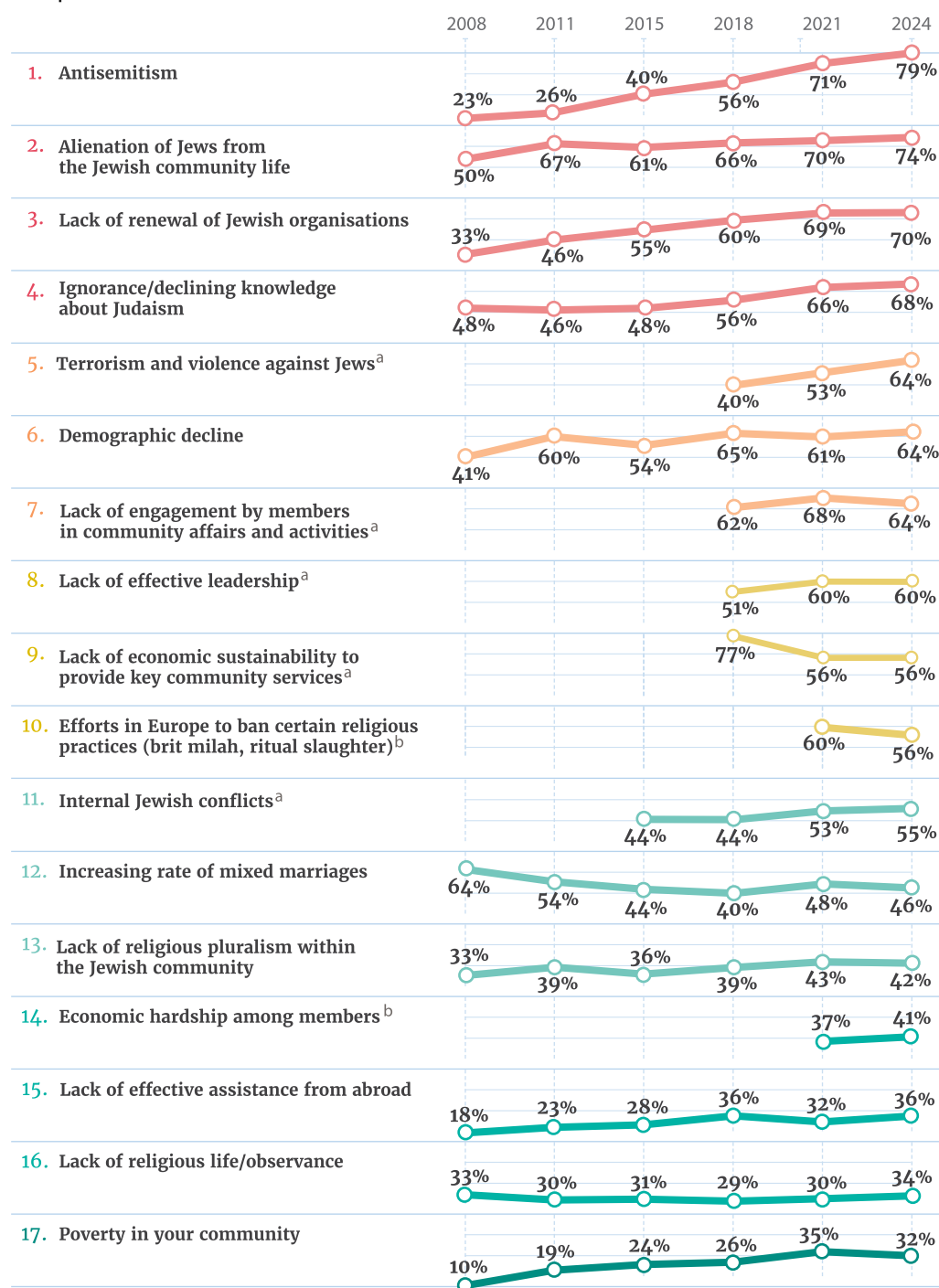
At the same time, concern over *lack of engagement by members in community affairs or activities* fell 4% to 64% in 2024, down from 68% in 2021. This may reflect the effect recent events have had in bringing Jewish communities together. Also seeing a 4% drop in concern was *efforts in Europe to ban certain religious practices* (e.g., *brit milah*, *ritual slaughter*), which 56% of leaders considered *serious* this year, compared to 60% three years ago.

Another change of interest concerns *economic hardship among members/*

rising cost of living. While not among the top threats, the number of leaders citing it as a *serious* or *very serious* threat rose to 41%, up from 37% three years ago. Interestingly, though, *poverty in your*

*community* – long the lowest-ranking threat – appeared to fade further as a danger, with 32% considering it *serious* this year, down from 35% in 2021.

**Figure 9.** Which of the following are the most serious threats to the future of Jewish life in your country? (Percentage of respondents giving a score of 4 or 5 on a 1 to 5 scale). Comparison 2008-2024.



a. Item introduced in the 2018 survey    b. Item introduced in the 2021 survey

*“The cost of living is getting more and more expensive, and the prices of food, gas and electricity are rising. For the average people in the community affording summer camp or the Jewish school might become a serious challenge.”*

*(Community professional, Bulgaria)*

Significant regional differences can be seen in issues related to safety and security, which concern leaders in the West much more than those in the East. *Antisemitism* is seen as the top-rated threat by Western respondents, 86% of whom rated it as *serious*, an increase of 9% over 2021 (77%). By contrast, not only did fewer of their Eastern counterparts rank it similarly (55%), the 5-point increase over the 50% who did so in the previous survey was much smaller than in the West. This issue ranked 7<sup>th</sup> among respondents in the East, behind *alienation from Jewish community life* (75%), *lack of renewal in Jewish organisations* (66%), and *ignorance about Judaism* (66%). Similarly, *terrorism and violence against Jews*, the 3<sup>rd</sup>-ranking threat in the West with 72%, ranked the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in the East, where only 34% considered it *serious*. Eastern respondents were also significantly less concerned about *efforts to ban certain religious practices*, with 29% regarding it as *serious* vs. 63% in the West.

*“My community is officially recognized as Orthodox. However, non-Orthodox Jewish organisations are not involved in the internal life of our communities and organisations. This separation is absurd.”*

*(Lay leader, Italy)*

*“Today, there is no debate within the communities, dissidence with respect to the ‘official line’ is not welcomed. Religious and, above all, political plurality is seen as a threat.”*

*(Jewish activist, Spain)*

Western European leaders appear to be focusing even more closely on *antisemitism* than in the past. In 2021, when they ranked this threat highest, it was seen as *serious* by only 6% more than the second-ranking issue, *alienation from Jewish life* (77% vs. 71%). In 2024, the difference in the number citing these two threats, still ranked 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, doubled to 12% (86% vs. 74%).

Western leaders were more likely to view lack of *religious pluralism* as a serious threat than those in the East (43% vs. 35%), even though, as we have seen, they were less likely to prioritise *offering more activities for non-observant Jews*, which Westerners scored 7.5 vs. 8.3 for Easterners. This apparent discrepancy may simply underscore the Westerners’ more intense prioritisation of responding to external threats.

*“When are we going to tackle the question of the responsibility that the leadership of the various denominations within Judaism holds for the influence it exerts on its members, which results in an increasingly assertive refusal to accept a different way of practising Judaism?”*

*(Community professional, France)*

Westerners similarly scored *lack of effective leadership* (62% vs. 56%). On the other hand, those in the East were more concerned about *economic hardship among members* (44% vs. 40% in the West) and especially by *lack of effective assistance from Jewish organisations abroad* (42% vs. 34%).

The differences between leaders of the various religious streams were more predictable. MLR leaders were particularly concerned by *internal Jewish conflicts* (62% vs. 52% of Cultural/Secular and 49% of Orthodox) and *lack of religious pluralism in the Jewish*



community (51% vs. 44% Cultural/Secular vs. 29% Orthodox). The Orthodox were much more likely to see threats from *efforts to ban religious practices* (71% vs. 50% of MLR and 46% of Cultural/Secular), *increasing rates of intermarriage* (62% vs. 34% vs. 36%) and *lack of religious observance* (49% vs. 32% vs. 19%).

“It is important to understand that the Jewish community has never been unified. Pluralism is not a modern curse, but a characteristic of a living that we should deal with and not discourage.”

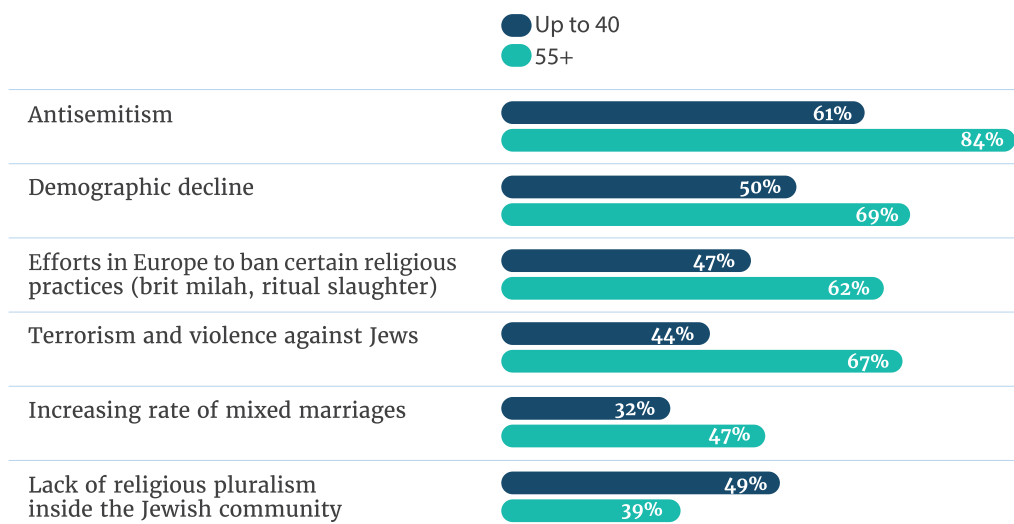
(Lay leader, Hungary)

There are significant differences between age groups (figure 10). Younger respondents are much less concerned than their older counterparts about both the more tangible threat from *antisemitism* (61% of under 40's vs. 77% of those aged 41-54 and 84% of 55+) and *terrorism and violence against Jews* (44% vs. 65% vs. 67%), as well as about the less immediate threats of *demographic decline* (50% vs. 63% vs. 69%) and *increasing rates of intermarriage* (32% vs. 47% vs. 47%). They are much more concerned about *lack of religious pluralism* (49% vs. 40% vs. 39%). By contrast, respondents over 55+ are the most likely to cite *antisemitism* (84%), *demographic decline* (69%), and *efforts to ban certain religious practices* (62%) as serious threats.

“The massive number of UK Jews are not going to be here, most likely, for another 40 or 50 years, and our community, which is very top-heavy in age, will shrink quite a bit. There is some complacency about this in my view. The illusion of permanence – of wealth, culture and Jewish numbers – is commonly believed in.”

(Volunteer, UK)

**Figure 10.** “Which of the following are the most serious threats to the future of Jewish life in your country?” (Percentage of respondents giving a score of 4 or 5 on a 1 to 5 scale). Comparison between age groups on selected items.



## IV. The Impact of October 7<sup>th</sup>

A key goal of this year's survey was to bring an empirical definition to the anecdotal evidence of the changes and challenges that have faced European Jewry since October 7<sup>th</sup>. To augment the insights yielded by its multi-year questions, the 2024 survey asked a series of specific questions about the impact of October 7<sup>th</sup>, much as the 2021 survey did with Covid.

*“We increased our work in organising security for the community and Jewish places. Increased work in assisting local Israelis. Increased contact with state and security institutions. Increased focus on cultural activities that explain Israeli reality and culture.”*

*(Lay leader, Italy)*

West, 76% of respondents reported new needs, vs. only 52% in the East. Despite this weaker assessment of new needs among Eastern respondents, they were much more likely than their Western colleagues (91% vs. 83% vs. 84% overall) to report that their organisation had undertaken activities or programmes to address the needs.

*“We have organised support sessions for the local community members trying to come to terms with the situation, including sessions with a child psychologist preparing parents to talk to children.”*

*(Lay leader, Poland)*

This special section probed the consequences of October 7<sup>th</sup> on the ground in the day-to-day lives of the leaders and their communities. It inquired whether specific, new needs or priorities had emerged post-October 7<sup>th</sup>, whether and how their communities had responded, and the nature of the programmes put in place. The leaders were also asked about changes they had observed in participation in community events, including whether they had been approached by Israelis living in their cities.

*“We started collecting all the antisemitic threats and hatred we receive through social media, so that we can show it to the local authorities.”*

*(Community professional, Sweden)*

*“Israeli children were able to study in our school, we created a programme to help Israelis find a place to stay as well as a hotline for Israelis, and other events.”*

*(Lay leader, Greece)*

Similarly, 30% percent of the total sample said they had experienced an increase in attendance at community events since October 7<sup>th</sup>. This “participation dividend”, however, appears to have been much stronger in the West. 13% more respondents reported an increase in attendance (33%) than reported a decrease (20%), while in the East, the net gain was a modest 3% (20% more attendance, 17% less). Contributing to this reported uptick, a substantial 45% of leaders said that Israelis living in their cities had reached out to their organisations for help. There was little variation between East (42%) and West (45%) on this question.

More than 7 in 10 (71%) said that October 7<sup>th</sup> had generated new needs in their communities, though, the regional differences are striking. In the



“It feels as if a new pioneering spirit is present and the need to gather at various events is visible and is strengthening our community.”

(Lay leader, Netherlands)

“In the beginning it was a radical decrease, people didn't dare come. But in the weeks following we had an enormous increase in member applications.”

(Community professional, Sweden)

“As a consequence of October 7th, there is an increased sense of togetherness. Many Jews who previously were detached from the community are now seeking contact.”

(Lay leader, Germany)

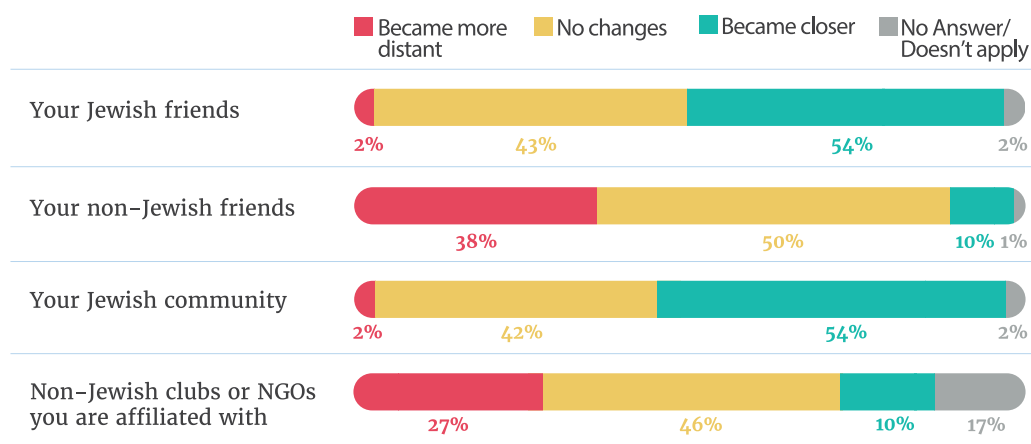
Respondents were also asked whether and how October 7<sup>th</sup> and the ensuing war had affected their relationships with different groups. This question provided statistical confirmation of the social and psychological impact of the war, offering insight into the more subtle but nonetheless profound effect of antisemitism on the respondents' daily lives as Jewish citizens of their countries.

Overall, the responses – presented in Figure 11 – indicate that respondents have become *more distant* or *much more distant from their non-Jewish*

*friends* (38%) and from *non-Jewish organisations* they are affiliated with (27%). At the same time, they have become *closer with their Jewish friends* (54%), *Jewish communities* (54%) and *families* (36%).

These effects are most evident in the West, where 41% have become *more distant from their non-Jewish friends* (vs. 24% in the East) and 30% *from non-Jewish organisations* (vs. 17%). Westerners were also more likely to report *closer ties with their Jewish friends* (55% vs. 46%), *Jewish communities* (57% vs. 46%) and *families* (39% vs. 29%).

**Figure 11.** Thinking about your personal situation, to what extent do you consider the war in Israel and its consequences in Europe have affected your relationship with...



This alienation is felt most acutely among younger respondents, of whom 47% report distancing from non-Jewish friends and 38% from non-Jewish organisations. However, the effect appears to moderate with age. Older cohorts report less alienation from non-Jewish friends (aged 41-54=40%, 55+=35%), as well as from non-Jewish organisations (26% and 25%). This may well reflect the exposure to antisemitic hostility that many younger respondents encounter on campuses, or more generally, in a single lifestyle. Women are also much more likely than men to report distancing from non-Jewish friends (46% vs. 32%) and from non-Jewish organisations (32% vs. 23%).

Leaders from other subgroups gave remarkably similar responses to these questions. This underscores the overriding impression that, as Jews, the respondents feel more isolated from their non-Jewish environment and are drawing support from each other.

To ensure the human dimension of this fallout reflected amid the data, the survey invited respondents to describe in their own words the effect their changed environment has had on their lives. The statements below are chilling testimonies to how deeply Europe's Jews feel their alienation from their wider environments.

*"I feel like a stranger in a strange land. I don't feel that this is my country, nor my city."*

*(Rabbi, Spain)*

*"I now live more in the Jewish bubble than ever before. I am very reluctant to show my Jewish identity in public, where possible, I conceal my role/identity to avoid direct antisemitism."*

*(Lay leader, Germany)*

*"I guess the trauma is still ongoing. It feels like it is October 7 over and over again, every day. My life and the life of every Jew I know, has changed since then. I feel less safe, I feel less accepted, I feel less integrated in a society where I thought I belonged."*

*(Community professional, Italy)*

*"I am much more wary of speaking about Israel or my being Jewish with strangers. My close non-Jewish friends really rallied around- I will always remember those who checked in to see how I was and those who remained silent."*

*(Lay leader, UK)*

*"I have Jewish friends and family to talk about it but with my non-Jewish friends we simply avoid the topic. With other non-Jewish friends, I even stopped communication. Being connected and discussing the topic with various Jewish groups helps a lot, while following the social media of my non-Jewish friends often make me extremely sad and frustrated for days."*

*(Lay leader, Croatia)*

*"The most difficult situation for me is the feeling of loneliness and abandonment, which may not be intentional on the part of the non-Jewish circles of which I was previously a part but has nevertheless become a reality. I feel uprooted from the reality in which I have functioned until now, having been rooted both in Jewish and progressive (open to minorities, multi-ethnic, tolerant and supportive) environments. I no longer feel at home in the latter, and it is monstrously painful."*

*(Community professional, Poland)*

*"After what I have seen and heard in recent months, both in person and through other Jews, I am finding it increasingly difficult not to think in terms of us Jews and them non-Jews relative to Italian society."*

*(Lay leader, Italy)*

## V. Security and Safety in the Post-October 7<sup>th</sup> Context

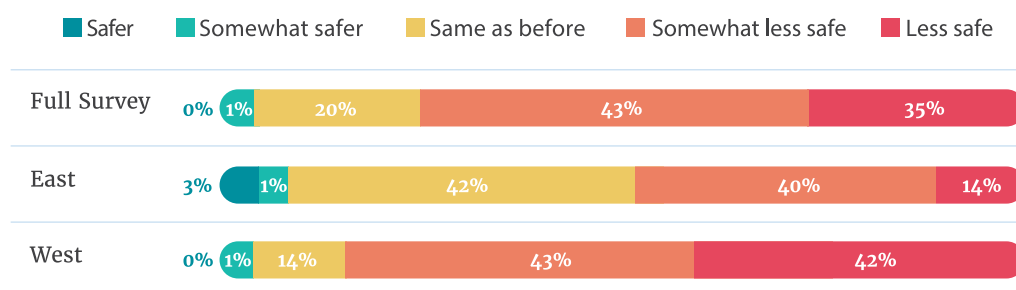
At first glance, the leaders' perceptions of safety appear to have changed little since the last survey. In 2024, 73% of respondents reported that it is *rather safe* or *very safe* to live and practise as a Jew in their cities, only 5% less than in 2021 (78%). On closer examination, however, the data indicate that Europe's Jewish leaders – those in the West in particular – feel *less safe* than they did three years ago.

We see the continuation of a long-term decline in those stating that “it is **very safe** to live and practise as a Jew in your city”. Since 2008, when 30% of respondents reported that their city was *very safe*, the number doing so has decreased in each successive survey, reaching 17% in 2021 and only 12% in 2024.

Most importantly, and as Figure 12 illustrates, respondents reported that their sense of safety has been significantly and negatively impacted since October 7<sup>th</sup>. Overall, 78% said it is now *somewhat or much less safe to live as a Jew in their city*.

This is particularly true in Western Europe, where 85% of leaders reported feeling *less safe* than before October 7<sup>th</sup>, compared to a significantly lower, though still substantial, 54% in the East. Indeed, the regional distinctions on this issue are striking, with data revealing a sharp contrast between how the preceding months impacted communities in the East compared to the West.

**Figure 12.** “Do you consider that after the events of October 7th to live and practise as a Jew in the city where you reside became...”



Differences already apparent in 2021 – when 27% of respondents in the West reported that their cities were unsafe compared to only 5% of those in the East – became more so in 2024. The number of Western European respondents who reported feeling unsafe jumped by 6% over 2021 to 33%, while in the East, the number remained unchanged at 5%.

Furthermore, while 38% of all respondents stated that *their institutions had experienced antisemitic incidents* since October 7<sup>th</sup>, the figure was 40% among leaders in the West and only 30% of those in the East.

The practical effect of the heightened concern over safety and security can be seen in changes in the respondents' public identification as Jews. A third (32%) said they are *less likely to wear a necklace or T-shirt with Jewish markers*, while a quarter (25%) stated they are *less likely to wear a kippa*, and 18% said they *identify themselves less as a Jew on social media*.

The picture, however, is mixed. Respondents' most common reaction has been to continue displaying their Jewishness as before. Thus, 43% said they wear Jewish necklaces, etc., to the same degree as previously, as do 39% of kippa wearers, while 56% reported no change in their identification as Jews on social media. Regarding having a mezuzah on their front doorposts, 75% report no change, while only 14% say they are less likely to display their identity in this way.

*“Physically, I feel we are safe in my country, but I do not feel we are 'safe' on many other levels, which I believe we should address, and address strategically.”*

*(Community professional, Netherlands)*

This greater tendency towards caution was offset to varying degrees by a modest counter-effect, which saw some leaders declare themselves more likely to display such signs. 4% said they are more likely to wear a kippa, 10% to wear necklaces/T-shirts, and 5% to have a mezuzah. Among social media users, the number reporting increased public identification as a Jew was a substantial 18%, the same proportion as reported a decrease.

This counter-effect is dramatic in terms of participation in demonstrations in support of Israel or against antisemitism. Almost half – 48% – say they have

been more likely to join such rallies since October 7<sup>th</sup>, while only 9% said they were less likely to do so, and 36% reported no change.

The leaders' reported changes in these different public displays add resolution to the diminished sense of safety. Respondents are more likely to avoid behaviour that exposes them physically and individually (kippa, necklace/T-shirt), but less so when the exposure is muted or filtered (mezuzah, social media), and not likely at all when the exposure is collective (demonstrations). Leaders appear to be fearful of being a target personally. Still, they are embracing the anonymity, safety and mutual support of numbers.

The marked regional differences seen above are reflected in the leaders' different approaches to identifying publicly as Jews. Western respondents were twice or even three times as likely to avoid public displays than their counterparts in the East. When it comes to wearing a kippa, 30% of Westerners were less likely to do so compared to 10% in the East; to wearing a necklace/T-shirt, 36% in the West reported a decline vs. 15% in the East; to displaying a mezuzah, 16% vs. 7%; and to identifying as a Jew on social media, 21% vs. 8%. Only regarding participation in demonstrations is the picture more balanced, with 84% of Western and 81% of Eastern respondents saying they are either continuing as before or participating more and only small proportions (10% in the West vs. 7% in the East) reporting that they participate less.

Women are more likely than men to reduce their visibility as Jews: 36% of female respondents vs. 28% of males avoid wearing Jewish necklaces or T-shirts more since October 7<sup>th</sup>, 16% vs.

12% avoid having a mezuzah and 22% vs. 15% say they are less likely to identify as Jews on social media.

By contrast, women are more likely than men to increase their participation in demonstrations (51% vs. 45%), though less likely to say that their degree of participation is unchanged (31% vs. 40%).

Interestingly, no statistically relevant differences exist between age groups or community roles. Rabbis are the exception. They are more likely than those in other community positions to maintain previous behaviour, with a majority reporting no change in their likelihood to wear a kippa (52%) or necklace/T-shirt (54%), to have a mezuzah (87%) and to identify as a Jew on social media (58%).

Again, the situation with demonstrations is different, with rough parity across community roles. Among rabbis, 81% are as more likely to participate in demonstrations vs. 86% of lay leaders, and 82% of professionals, and a slightly lower 76% of activists.

Respondents were pessimistic about antisemitism in the future. Asked whether they expect antisemitism to increase or decrease over the next 5-10 years, 80% predicted it will increase, up sharply from 68% in 2021. Their pessimism has also intensified. Where 28% of 2021 respondents anticipated a *significant* increase in antisemitism, 45% did so in 2024. Furthermore, expectations of a *moderate* increase have declined, such that a majority of those predicting an increase in antisemitism now believe it will be significant (45% significant vs. 35% moderate). This is the reverse of 2021 when a plurality expected a moderate increase (40% moderate vs. 28% significant).

The data on this question provide further evidence of the gap in perceptions of safety and security between East and West. While pessimism on this issue has increased substantially in both regions since 2021, Westerners are more than twice as likely as Easterners to predict that the increase will be significant (51% vs. 25%).

There were no differences of note on this question among the other subgroups.

## Government Response

Respondents in both regions believe their governments have responded adequately to the Jewish community's security needs. 78% of the overall sample who answered affirmatively when asked, *'do you think the government of your country responds adequately to the security needs of Jewish communities?'* was an increase of 8 points over 2021 (70%). This increase corresponds with the high number of respondents, 79%, who reported that *security provision by government agencies had been somewhat or definitely reinforced* since October 7<sup>th</sup>.

*"We need a clear understanding of the problem on the part of government agencies and more coordinated cooperation with government agencies."*

*(Community professional, Estonia)*

## Emergency Preparedness

In light of their bleak assessment of the security situation today and in the future, respondents were asked to rate how well their communities are prepared to deal with an emergency situation. Interestingly, the responses suggested a slightly less upbeat emergency preparedness assessment than in 2021. Overall, 41% of the 2024 sample said their communities were prepared to a *large* or *very large* degree – a small decline from 43% who answered similarly three years earlier – while slightly more (19% in 2024 vs. 17% in 2021) said their communities were prepared a little or not at all. Though not significant statistically, these changes may reflect a recognition of the communities' limitations in dealing with the current emergency.

*“We need to foresee emergency scenarios (physical/verbal attacks on the community and/or its members, hateful or biased speeches or statements that are clearly anti-Jewish, institutional discrimination, discrimination in the workplace, etc.)”*

*(Lay leader, Spain)*

*“Perhaps it would be necessary to teach the wider community members how to deal with emergency situations without being overwhelmed by fear.”*

*(Rabbi, Italy)*

## VI. Emigration

This year's survey again asked two questions about emigration, one concerning the respondents' personal plans and the other about their assessment of the sentiment on emigration in their communities. Despite the heightened concern over safety and growing antisemitism, along with the heightened levels of pessimism the leaders expressed, the responses on emigration are virtually identical to 2021.

An unchanged 24% said they themselves have considered emigrating because they do not feel safe living in their country as a Jew. In comparison 47% of 2024 respondents expect increased Jewish emigration from their country, vs. 48% in 2021. There was, however, a shift in the leaders' assessment of their fellow Jews' motivations for emigrating, with antisemitism now cited as the main reason by 43% compared to 36% in 2021.

Although Israel remains the destination of choice for leaders who are themselves considering emigration (59%), it declined slightly compared to 2021 (62%), with the EU the apparent beneficiary (11% in 2024 vs. 7% in 2021). When asked about emigration from the community at large, the proportion citing Israel was virtually unchanged at 50%, compared to 49% in 2021.



## VII. Israel and European Jewry

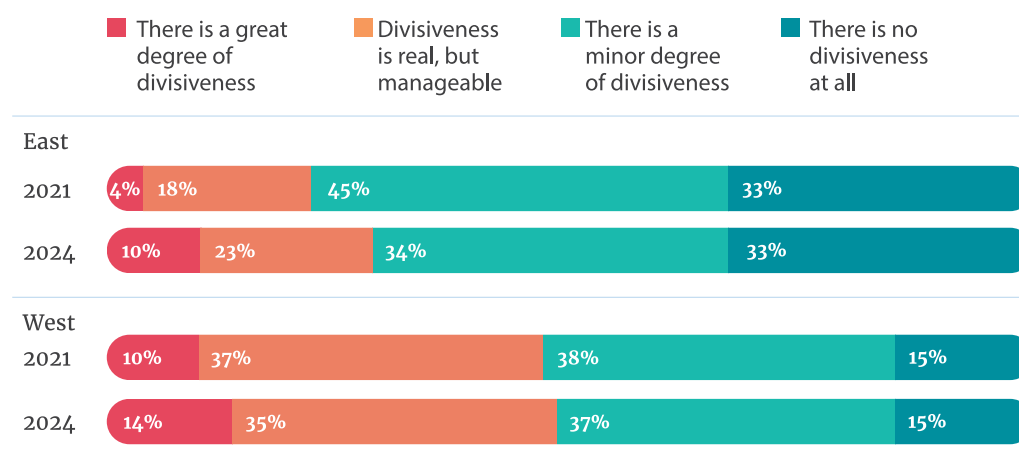
While Israel has always been a seminal issue for European Jews, October 7<sup>th</sup> and its aftermath have thrust it to the forefront of their consciousness and their lives as Jews. More than ever before the leaders' attitudes towards Israel are key to understanding the dynamics at play in this year's results and the nuanced story they tell about the relationship between Europe's Jews and the Jewish state at this time of common crisis.

Recognising that this relationship is increasingly complex and emotional, respondents were asked, *to what extent do you feel there is divisiveness over Israel within your community today?* Overall, 13% reported a *great degree of divisiveness*, while 19% reported *no divisiveness at all*. A majority of responses were concentrated on a *minor degree of divisiveness over Israel* (36%), and *divisiveness is real but manageable* (32%).

The only significant differences among the various subgroups were regional and denominational. As in previous surveys, Western Europeans reported that community divisiveness was much more of a problem than Eastern leaders did, with 14% of Westerners stating that there was *a great degree of divisiveness over Israel* compared to 10% in the East. Conversely, 67% of respondents in Eastern Europe reported *minor or no divisiveness at all* compared to 52% of those in the West.

It is interesting to note that, while divisiveness in the West remained stable when compared to 2021 (49% vs. 48% described great or manageable divisiveness), in the East, it seems to have increased sharply. In 2021 only 22% reported the existence of great or manageable divisiveness, whereas in 2024 this jumped by half to 33% (Figure 13).

**Figure 13.** "To what extent do you feel there is divisiveness over Israel within your community today?" East vs. West, 2021 vs. 2024.



The gap between denominations also seems to have widened this year. The MLR report the highest levels of divisiveness over Israel, with 55% calling it great or manageable vs. 40% among Orthodox leaders and 43% among Cultural/Secular. It is not clear, though, whether the divisiveness reported exists within the respondents' own denominational streams, whether they are attesting to a widening rift between denominations, or a combination of both.

Despite the clear complexity of Israel's presence in their lives, the leaders' connection with Israel – already strong in 2021 – became stronger in 2024. The Jewish leaders reported greater levels of agreement with almost all statements about the Jewish state with which they were presented.

As Figure 14 shows, 83% of this year's sample agreed (*strongly agree or rather agree*) that *Israel is critical to Jewish life in Europe*, compared to 81% in the previous survey. Similarly, 79% agreed that *all Jews have a responsibility to support Israel*, which was up 4 points from 75% in 2021, while 70% said they *support Israel regardless of how its government behaves*, also 4% higher than in 2021 (66%). A sturdy 82% further agreed that their commitment to Israel had become stronger after October 7<sup>th</sup>, with only 13% disagreeing.

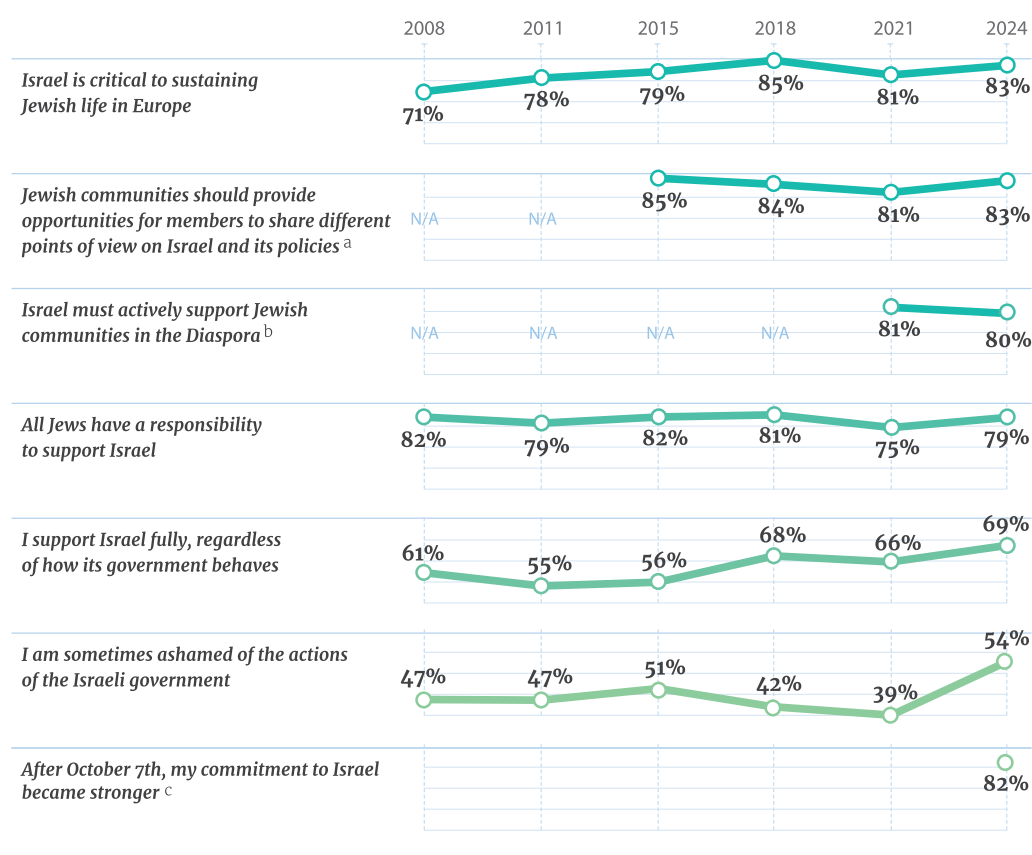
At the same time, the leaders exhibit a much greater sensitivity to events in Israel than in the past. More than 9 in 10 – 93% – now say that events in *Israel sometimes lead to antisemitism in my country*, a marked 12% jump from 81% three years ago, while 75% agree that *the media in my country regularly portrays Israel in a bad light*, up from 70% in 2021. However, the number agreeing that *Israel must actively support Jewish*

*communities in the Diaspora*, remained stable, even ticking down a point to 80% in 2024 from 81%.

Most significantly, those agreeing that they are *sometimes ashamed of the actions of the Israeli government* spiked 14 points from 39% in 2021 to 53% in 2024. This is only the second time since the surveys began in 2008 -- the other in 2015 (51%) -- that a majority of respondents have agreed with this statement. This is accompanied by an uptick (to 70% from 66%) in those who say they *support Israel regardless of how its government behaves* may suggest a growing recognition that Israel's actions are often misrepresented in the media and are not cause for the leaders to withdraw support.



**Figure 14.** Responses to selected items related to Israel: “To what extent do you personally agree or disagree with the following statements about Israel?” Strongly agree and rather agree. Comparison 2008-2024.



a. Item introduced in the 2015 survey b. Item introduced in the 2021 survey c. Item introduced in the 2024 survey

The marked regional differences on this issue are most pronounced in three statements. Two relate to the leaders' respective sensitivity to events in Israel. A minority of those in the East, 43%, *strongly agree* that *events in Israel sometimes lead to antisemitism in their countries*, compared to 71% of Westerners. In comparison, only 12% of Easterners, vs. 53% in the West, *strongly agree* that *the media in their country portrays Israel in a bad light*. The third statement with strongly disparate regional responses was *someone can just as easily be a good Jew in Europe as in Israel*. Almost twice as many Western Europeans as Easterners strongly agreed with this statement (52% vs. 27%).

Eastern respondents are also much more likely than Westerners (54% vs. 42%) to *agree strongly* that *Israel should actively support Diaspora Jewish communities*. However, they are also less likely to *agree strongly* that *Israel is critical to Jewish life in Europe* (47% vs 56% in the West), that they *support Israel, no matter how its government behaves* (32% vs. 43%), or that their *commitment to Israel became stronger after October 7<sup>th</sup>* (44% vs. 56%).

Younger respondents, historically among the demographics that are less supportive of Israel, continue to demonstrate greater willingness to criticise Israel than older age groups. The number of under 40's who *strongly agree* that they *support Israel regardless*

of how its government behaves declined 5% over 2021, from 28% to 23%.

This cohort exhibits the weakest level of unconditional support and is the only age group whose strong agreement with this statement has fallen since the previous survey. Among leaders aged 41-54, strong support increased from 31% in 2021 to 38% in 2024, and among those aged 55+, from 43% to 47%. Furthermore, while all age groups showed similar percentage increases in those *agreeing strongly* that they are *sometimes ashamed by the Israeli government's actions*, the increase among the under-40's was significantly higher, 34% in 2021 vs. 20% in 2021. The older cohorts, by comparison, also increased their *strong agreement* considerably, but remain closely aligned with each other still-moderate levels. Thus, while the number *agreeing strongly* with this statement doubled from 12% that the 41-54's and over-55's reported in 2021, the 25% and 24% of these cohorts respectively who now report doing so, remain a small minority.

At the same time, the younger age group is reaffirming its connection to Israel. The number *strongly agreeing* that *Israel is critical to Jewish life in the Diaspora* leaped from 25% in 2021 to 44%. Though still the lowest-ranking age group in strongly agreeing with this statement (ages 41-54=47%; 55+=60%), the 19-point increase it posted far outstrips the 5% and 7% upticks reported by leaders aged 41-54 and those aged 55+, respectively.

A majority of the under-40's – 53% – now *strongly agree* that *Israel must actively support Diaspora Jews*, up from only 39% in the previous survey. This 14-point increase took this age group from parity with the older cohorts in strongly agreeing with this statement in

2021 (<40=39%; 41-54=39%; 55+=38%) to leading them by 10 points (53% vs. 44% vs. 43%).

Although still, the least likely to *agree strongly* that *all Jews have a responsibility to support Israel* (28% vs. 33% vs. 48%), support for this statement among younger leaders ticked up 4% from 2021 (24%), matching the increase recorded by the over-55's, while the 41-54's held steady. Moreover, while the under-40's were also the least-likely group to *agree strongly* that *my commitment to Israel became stronger after October 7<sup>th</sup>*, a not-insubstantial 37% nevertheless felt their commitment had certainly increased (vs. 48% vs. 63%).

In attempting to reconcile the apparent contradictions between greater criticism on the one hand and deepening connection on the other, it is instructive to consider the younger leaders' responses in the context of the relationship changes they reported post-October 7<sup>th</sup>. They are the most likely cohort to report distancing from non-Jewish friends (47% vs. 40% vs. 35%) and from non-Jewish organisations (38% vs. 26% vs. 25%) and have therefore paid the highest social price for their identification with Israel.

With their responses of *feeling ashamed* and *unconditional support*, the young leaders seem to be telling us that supporting Israel has become much harder. If so, the jump in *Israel is critical to Jewish life* could reflect a new, acute awareness of the degree to which Diaspora life is intertwined with events in Israel, and the spike in *Israel must support the Diaspora*, an expectation of help from Israel in managing the impact in their communities.

The data offer insights into trends among other subgroups, too. Orthodox

respondents were the most supportive of Israel, with 65% *strongly agreeing* that *Israel is critical to Diaspora Jewish life* (vs. 55% of MLR and 46% of Cultural/Secular), 51% that *I support Israel regardless of how its government behaves* (vs. 42% and 46%) and 51% that *all Jews have a responsibility to support Israel* (vs. 38% and 35%). Conversely, the Orthodox were also the least likely to *agree strongly* that *I am sometimes ashamed by the actions of the Israeli government* (16% vs. 32% among the MLR and 31% among the Cultural/Secular).

At first, female leaders appear to be somewhat less supportive of Israel than males. Consistently fewer *agree strongly* that *Israel is critical to Jewish life* (51% female vs. 56% male), *I support Israel regardless of how its government behaves* (39% vs. 42%), *all Jews have a responsibility to support Israel* (37% vs. 42%) and particularly that *Israel must actively support Diaspora Jews*, 37% vs. 51%.

On the other hand, women seem to be more alert to the impact Israel has on their lives. They are more likely to *agree strongly* that *the media in my country regularly portrays Israel in a negative light* (45% vs. 40%) and that *events in Israel sometimes lead to a rise in antisemitism in my country* (67% vs. 62%). This may correlate with their stronger agreement that they are *sometimes ashamed of the actions of the Israeli government* (30% vs. 22%). However, women were also more likely than men to say *their commitment to Israel became stronger post-October 7<sup>th</sup>* (55% vs. 52%).

## VIII. Europe and Its Jews: A Continental Perspective

This year's survey again asked respondents their opinions about Europe as a continent and their Jewish communities' part in it. This section offers insight into the extent to which Jewish leaders look beyond their communities to others in Europe at a time when EU expansion to the East and, more recently, the war in Ukraine have deepened a secular sense of shared purpose across the continent. This year's survey, of course, also reflects

the antisemitic fallout from October 7<sup>th</sup>, which has been felt by Jews throughout Europe, although, as we have seen, much more so by those in the West than in the East.

The leaders were asked to state their level of agreement with seven statements about relationships among Jews throughout Europe. They were also asked to assess the future situation of Europe and its Jewish communities.

### Ties Among Europe's Jewish communities

The leaders were in strong agreement with statements about the value of strong ties and mutual responsibility among European Jews. Respondents were almost unanimous (97%) in agreeing that *it is very important to strengthen relationships between Jews living in different parts of Europe*, with large majorities also agreeing that *I believe it is important that my community belong to European Jewish organisations* (89%) and *European Jews have a special responsibility to each other* (84%).

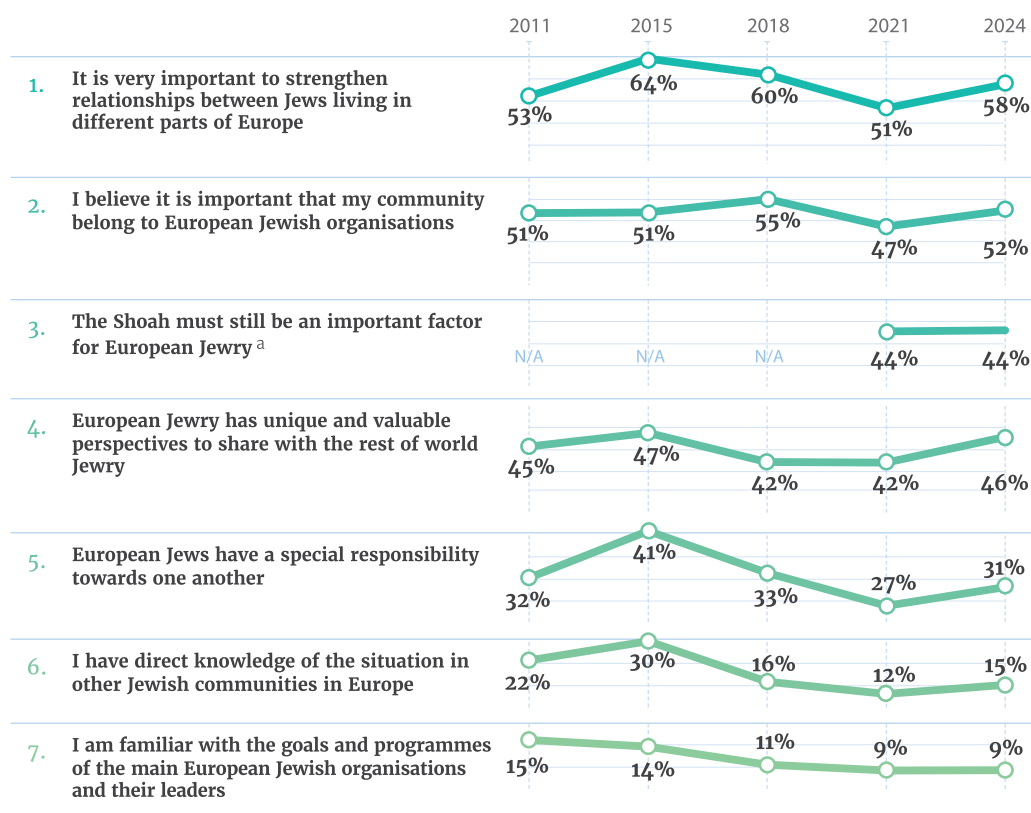
The situation the leaders describe in practice, however, is less robust. Only 60% agree strongly that *they have direct knowledge of the situation in other Jewish communities in Europe* and fewer than half – 46% – say *they are familiar with the goals of the main European Jewish organisations*.

Since a majority of respondents agreed with most statements, with a tendency to concentrate their answers in the *rather agree* category, focusing on those who said they *strongly agree* offers a more differentiated analysis. Seen from this perspective, the 2024 results

indicate a striking reversal of the decline in agreement with these statements seen in previous surveys (Figure 15). This year, 58% *strongly agreed* that *it is very important to strengthen ties with Jews elsewhere in Europe*, after strong support for this statement had declined from 64% in 2015 to 60% in 2018, and 51% in 2021. Also rebounding, 31% *strongly agreed* that *European Jews have a special responsibility to each other*, which was up for the first time since 2015 (41% vs. 33% in 2018 and 27% in 2021).

After years of decline, there was also an uptick, to 15%, in those who *agree strongly* that *they have direct knowledge of the situation in other European Jewish communities*. Nevertheless, this is still substantially lower than the 30% who *strongly agreed* in 2015 (16% in 2018 and 12% in 2021). The percentage *strongly agreeing* that *they are familiar with the main European Jewish organisations* remained unchanged from 2021 at 9%, halting a long-term slide.

**Figure 15.** Responses on statements about European Jewry are expressed in the strongly agree response category (%). Comparison 2011–2024.



a. Item introduced in the 2021 survey

As in other areas, there are notable regional differences. Eastern respondents placed much more importance on belonging to European Jewish organisations, with more than two-thirds (69%) agreeing strongly that their community should belong to such organisations, compared to less than half (47%) in the West. The Easterners were also more likely (55% vs. 44%) to agree strongly that *European Jewry has unique perspectives to share with the rest of world Jewry*.

There were relatively few differences among the various demographic subgroups on most questions in this section. On whether they have direct knowledge of the situation in other communities, Cultural/Secular Jews are the least likely of the streams to agree strongly that they have such direct knowledge (10% vs. 20% for MLR and 18% for Orthodox). Women are more likely than men to agree strongly with this statement (17% vs. 13%) and rabbis more than other community roles (27% vs. 13% of lay leaders, 17% of professionals and 15% of activists).

## The Importance of the Shoah

The survey yielded interesting insights into attitudes about the importance of the Shoah. While the overall number strongly agreeing that the *Shoah must remain an important factor for European Jewry* has held steady at 44% since 2021, younger respondents show less support for this statement than older ones, with 37% of the under-40's agreeing strongly compared to 40% of the 41-54's and 47% of the over-55's.

Cultural/Secular Jews are also more likely to agree strongly with this statement than leaders from other streams (47% vs. 42% of MLR and 41% of Orthodox). Interestingly, among leaders holding various roles, unpaid leaders (49% of lay leaders and 46% of volunteer/activists) are more likely to agree strongly that the Shoah must remain a key factor than those who are paid (34% of professionals and 30% of rabbis).

## The Future of Europe and its Jews: Optimism and Pessimism

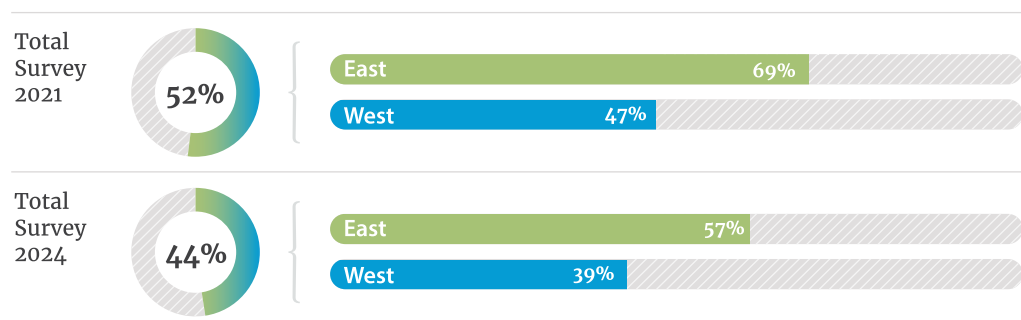
Most of the European Jewish leaders surveyed are pessimistic about the future, though slightly less so about the future of European Jewry (54% pessimists vs. 46% optimists) than about Europe as a whole (56% vs. 44%).

Notably, despite the intensifying threats since October 7<sup>th</sup>, the leader's assessment of the future of European Jewry is only marginally more pessimistic now (54%) than in 2021 (53%). By contrast, where the 2021 respondents were marginally optimistic about the future of Europe as a whole (52% vs. 48% pessimistic), an 8% swing has turned the tables so that pessimists

now outnumber optimists by 56% to 48% (see Figure 16).

Beneath these overall numbers, a clear divide can be seen between East and West. While Western European respondents are strongly pessimistic about European Jewry (59%), their Eastern counterparts are upbeat, with 61% declaring themselves optimistic. There is a similar difference in the future of Europe more broadly, although, at 57%, the Easterners are slightly less optimistic about the future of Europe than they are about European Jews (61%).

**Figure 16.** Optimism about the future of Europe: Comparison East vs. West, 2021 vs. 2024. Rather and Strongly agree.



With the war in Ukraine now a significant concern, the Easterners' "Eurooptimism" declined by a sharp 12% from 69% in 2021 to 57% in 2024. At the same time, they have become more upbeat about the future of Europe's Jews, with the share of optimists increasing 4% from 57%.

Western leaders, who were already pessimistic in 2021, have become more so. Whereas 56% were pessimistic about the future of European Jewry in the previous survey, this year showed an uptick to 59%. Their pessimism about Europe in general deepened more, reaching 60% in 2024 from 54% in 2021.

There are also significant differences among age groups about the future of Europe and its Jews. Younger respondents (<40) are the only cohort to be optimistic, both about European Jewry (57% vs. 43% for 41-54 vs. 47% for 55+) and about Europe generally (55% vs. 39% vs. 43%). The optimists' majority notwithstanding, their share has declined since 2021, both in European Jewry (from 64% in 2021 to 57% in 2024) and in Europe (from 62% to 55%).



## IX. Internal Community Issues

### 1. Jewish status issues

The survey's question about Jewish membership criteria is designed to gauge the intensity of the debate over "Who is a Jew?"

By and large, the responses to this question reflect the denominational breakdown of the sample. Of the respondents, 36% were Orthodox, 25% MLR, and 39% Cultural/Secular, with a slight majority, 54%, defining themselves as *religious* or *somewhat religious*, compared to 46% who viewed themselves as *secular* or *somewhat secular*.

The 2024 results reconfirm a remarkable consistency of attitudes on this issue. In recent surveys, leaders have repeatedly preferred more accommodating criteria when presented with five options. In deciding who should be allowed to join the Jewish community, large majorities – 72% in 2024, 72% in 2021, 81% in 2018 and 70% in 2015 – have favoured accepting *anyone who has been converted by a rabbi of any denomination*. More than two-thirds (69% in 2024 vs. 69% vs. 73% vs. 67%) would accept *anyone with a Jewish father*, and about half (49% vs. 51% vs. 58% vs. 54%), *anyone with at least one Jewish grandparent*.

Support for applying *Halachic criteria* (born to a Jewish mother or converted under Orthodox auspices) has also held steady in the latest surveys. In 2024,

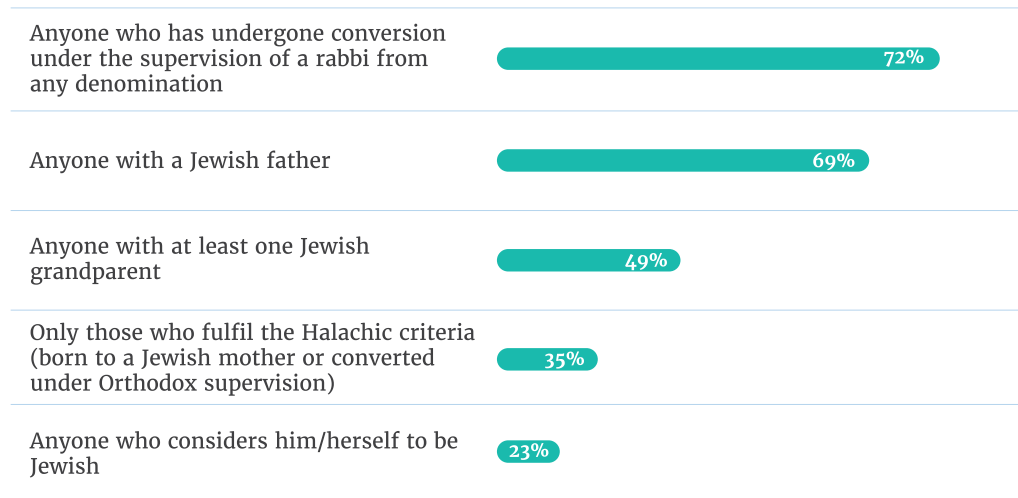
35% favoured limiting membership to those meeting Halachic criteria, versus 38% in 2021 and 35% in 2018.

The one criterion to show significant change is that of self-definition. Despite the tendency towards accommodation, support for accepting *anyone who considers him/herself to be Jewish* has been the least-favoured approach overall for some time. In recent surveys, it has declined further, from almost a third in 2018 (32%) to 27% in 2021 and less than a quarter (23%) in 2024.

There are also important regional differences on this issue, stemming in no small part from their disparate histories. Eastern Europeans are much more likely to consider themselves secular than their colleagues in the West (58% vs. 42%). Leaders from the East also show a clear consensus on three liberal criteria: 89% favour accepting *anyone with a Jewish father*; 87%, *anyone with at least one Jewish grandparent*; and 80%, *anyone converted by a rabbi of any denomination*. While favoured by far fewer, a third of East Europeans (33%) also support *self-definition*, with *Halachic criteria* a distant last at 13%. These levels of support have remained largely constant over time. Attitudes on this issue are much less monolithic in the West, where a hierarchy of preferences is evident.



**Figure 17.** “Who should be accepted as a Jewish community member?” Strongly and Rather Agree. 2024.



Differences can also be seen among the other subgroups. Younger respondents are much more likely than their older colleagues to favour accepting *anyone with a Jewish father* (82% of under-40's vs. 65% of 41-54's vs. 68% of the over-55's) or *at least one Jewish grandfather* (67% vs. 46% vs. 46%). They are also much less likely to support the *Halachic approach* than their elders (16% vs. 38% vs. 38%). Interestingly, the under-40's and over-55's are both more tolerant of self-definition, with 27% and 26% favouring it, respectively, compared to 19% of the 41-54 cohort.

Among community roles, professionals are more likely and rabbis much less likely to favour the more-liberal criteria. Thus, 80% of professionals, but only 46% of rabbis, support accepting *anyone who has converted by a rabbi of any*

*denomination*, compared to 73% of lay leaders and 70% of activists. Male respondents are also more likely than females to favour *Halachic criteria* (38% vs. 30%).

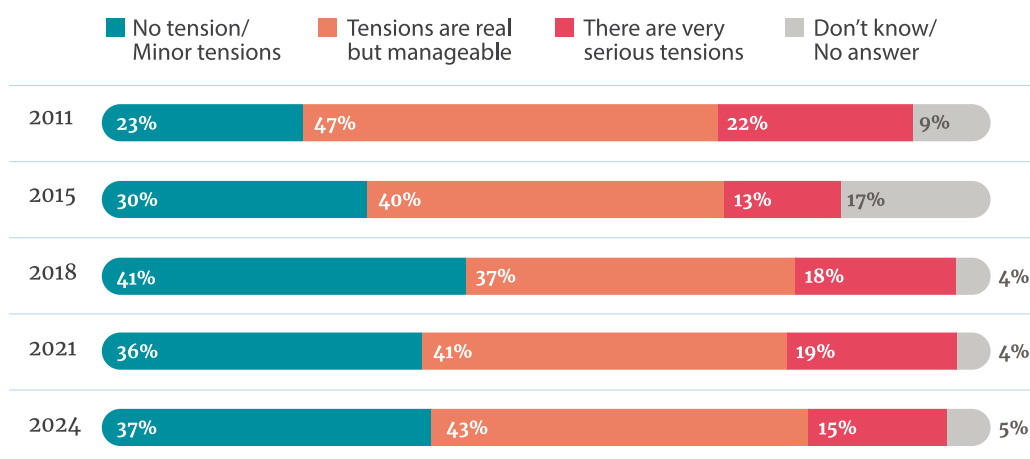
The data also highlight the split in the communities in terms of religious outlook. As expected, Orthodox leaders are much less likely to support liberal criteria, with 54% favouring allowing *anyone who has converted* to join and are much more likely (60%) to favour applying *Halachic criteria*. At the same time, MLR and Cultural/Secular leaders are more aligned with each other in supporting more-liberal criteria (86% and 82% respectively favour accepting *anyone who has converted*), and only 21% and 22% respectively supporting the *Halachic approach*.

## Denominational tensions, present and future

Asked to characterise the level of tensions between the denominations in their community, the 2024 leaders' assessments barely changed from those of 2021, with 80% describing the tensions as either minor or *real but manageable*.

The most significant change is the slight drop – from 19% in 2021 to 15% in 2024 – in the number describing these tensions as *very serious*, which contributed to an uptick in those saying tensions are minor or *real but manageable*. This drop continues a long-term trend, which has seen the proportion who describe tensions as *very serious* decline from 22% in 2011 to 18% in 2018 to 2024's 15%.

**Figure 18.** “To what extent do you feel there are tensions between different denominational streams within your community today?” Comparison 2011-2024.



Among the subgroups, 63% of Western Europeans (vs. 43% of East) reported higher levels of community tensions. Rabbis, who face daily denominational issues in their professional lives, did likewise, with 72% characterising the tensions as more serious.

As to whether the tensions over this issue will diminish or increase in the next 5-10 years, the leaders expressed pessimism. More than half (53%) predicted that tensions over status issues will worsen, with 44% saying *they will become more problematic* and 9% saying *they will pose a danger to the community's*

*future*. Younger leaders are particularly pessimistic, with 63% expecting the situation to deteriorate, (50% *more problematic* and 13% *endanger the community's future*), compared to 54% of the 41-54 age group and 52% of the over-55's.

Leaders in the West were more pessimistic than those in the East (56% vs. 45%). However, the Eastern leaders were almost twice as likely – 13% vs. 8% – to believe that status issues will endanger the future of their Jewish community.

## 2. Financial Situation

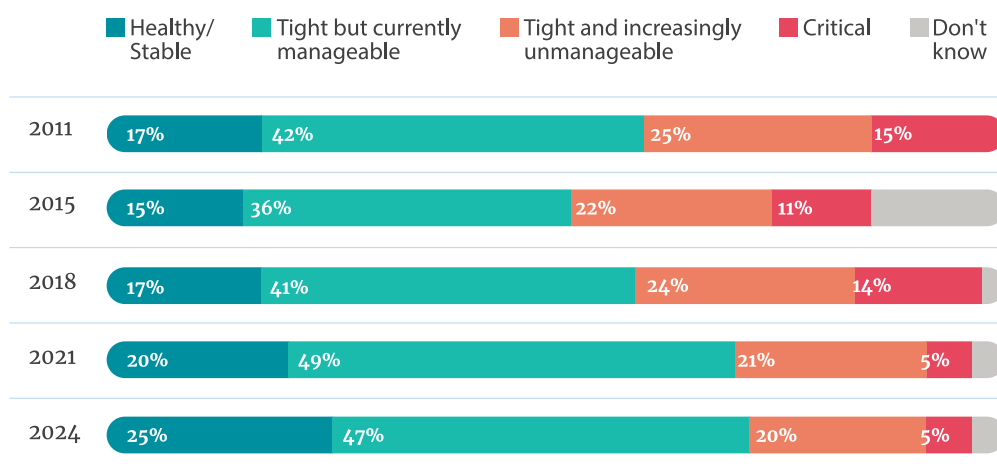
Respondents were asked to evaluate their community's and organisation's financial situation. They were also asked to predict whether the situation would improve or deteriorate over the next 5-10 years.

The leaders' assessment of the current situation was, in general, fairly positive, slightly more so for their own organisations than for their wider communities. A substantial majority believe that the situation is either *healthy* or *tight but manageable* for their communities (72%) and for their organisations (77%). In both cases (47% for communities and 45% for

organisations), *tight but manageable* predominates.

Once more, comparative data allow for deeper analysis and instructive insights. While respondents' assessment of their communities barely changed from 2021, their view of their organisations' finances was less sanguine. Where 81% said their organisations' finances were healthy or manageable in 2021 – this at the height of the Covid pandemic, with all its attendant economic uncertainty – that figure dropped to 77% this year. Over a fifth (21%) now say their situation is unmanageable or critical, up from 16% three years ago.

**Figure 19.** "How would you characterise your community's overall financial situation at present?" Comparison 2011-2024.



This year's leader sample was also more pessimistic about the financial outlook, though somewhat less so for their organisations than for their communities. More than 4 in 10 (43%) now expect their communities' finances to deteriorate in the coming years, compared to 39% in 2021. Regarding their organisations, over a third (36%) anticipate a deterioration, up from 30% in 2021.

*"With the cost of living rising and the global crises, the focus of American Jewish philanthropy is shifting which may prove to be a threat to the financial survival of our community."*

*(Lay leader, Poland)*

While the leaders remain less pessimistic about their organisations than their communities, the gap may be narrowing. Expectations of financial deterioration increased by 4% from 2021 to 2024 when considering their communities' future finances (43% vs. 39%), but by 6% when assessing their organisations' (36% vs. 30%).

In regional terms, leaders in the West describe a somewhat better financial landscape than those in the East. More than three-quarters of the Western respondents (78%) reported that their organisations' financial situation is currently *healthy* or *manageable*, compared to 72% of those in the East.

The difference is slightly larger (8% vs. 6%) when it comes to the leaders' assessment of their communities, with 74% of the Western leaders describing it as *healthy but manageable* versus 66% of their Eastern counterparts.

*"I think that outside of the elite of the community the financial structures of Jewish community life aren't well understood and there is a presumption that synagogues and other major communal structures will be able to continue to exist without the level of financial support that previous generations have contributed."*

*(Community professional, UK)*

### 3. Planning and leadership

Strategic planning and leadership successions are crucial aspects of organisational development. The leaders have reported that their organisations are slightly less engaged in strategic planning today than they were three years ago. Although 63% say their organisation has developed or is currently developing a strategic plan, this is a decrease from 66% in 2021. There is a corresponding increase, from 24% to 27%, in those saying that their organisation is not developing such a plan. By contrast, the leaders report increased engagement in planning for leadership succession. A majority, 52%, now say their organisation is currently working on succession planning or has already done so, up from 49% in 2021.

By contrast, the leaders report increased engagement in planning for leadership succession. A majority, 52%, now say their organisation is currently working on succession planning or has already done so, up from 49% in 2021. In terms of leadership, the data show some improvement in the representation of women on organisational boards of directors. The number reporting that women make up less than half of all board members dropped from 65% to 59%, while 33% reporting women now have equal or greater than equal representation, up from 27% three years ago.

*"Organisations are struggling to get board members and volunteers and there is a big group of passive members."*

*(Lay leader, Finland)*

## X. Profile of Respondents

**Table 1.** Country of residence 2008-2024.

	2008	2011	2015	2018	2021	2024
<i>Austria</i>	2	5	7	6	18	15
<i>Belgium</i>	17	14	9	30	35	36
<i>Bosnia and Herz.</i>	3	2	3	16	8	9
<i>Bulgaria</i>	6	4	17	21	15	20
<i>Croatia</i>	3	2	7	9	9	5
<i>Czech Republic</i>	10	12	9	34	24	16
<i>Denmark</i>	3	3	2	8	34	12
<i>Estonia</i>	5	4	2	7	9	8
<i>Finland</i>	2	1	3	5	8	3
<i>France</i>	33	48	34	134	295	145
<i>Germany</i>	23	24	27	114	169	151
<i>Greece</i>	3	6	7	24	19	20
<i>Hungary</i>	18	10	19	43	43	41
<i>Ireland</i>	0	0	0	0	4	3
<i>Italy</i>	11	21	13	96	89	120
<i>Latvia</i>	7	7	5	12	10	7
<i>Lithuania</i>	8	9	3	6	8	5
<i>Luxembourg</i>	1	2	2	3	0	0
<i>Macedonia</i>	0	0	0	0	1	3
<i>Montenegro</i>	0	0	0	0	5	2
<i>Netherlands</i>	11	10	11	43	19	24
<i>Norway</i>	1	2	0	5	4	12
<i>Poland</i>	0	0	0	27	24	24
<i>Portugal</i>	1	2	1	3	2	3
<i>Romania</i>	7	12	20	65	40	38
<i>Serbia</i>	3	4	2	19	7	6
<i>Slovakia</i>	4	8	9	21	22	8
<i>Spain</i>	7	12	19	40	36	53
<i>Sweden</i>	11	12	7	10	7	8
<i>Switzerland</i>	7	17	14	17	20	17
<i>Turkey</i>	10	18	7	23	7	11
<i>United Kingdom</i>	25	47	32	52	63	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>1054</b>	<b>879</b>

The 2024 Survey of European Jewish Community Leaders and Professionals is the sixth in a series dating back to 2008<sup>2</sup>. This year's survey was conducted online in 10 languages between March 5<sup>th</sup> and April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, among a sample of 879 Jewish community leaders from 32 countries. This is slightly fewer than the 1,054 sample in 2021. After spiking in the 2021 survey, likely due to the increased screen time respondents were experiencing during the Covid pandemic, the sample size reverted to 2018 levels.

The overall response rate was 50%, with highest rates – over 70% – coming from Bulgaria, Estonia, and Italy. As in

the past, the 2024 survey allows us to analyse the responses to questions with continuous, ordinal categories for different subgroups within the sample. These subgroups are stratified based on their background characteristics (when provided), such as region (Eastern or Western Europe), gender, age group and religious affiliation or outlook. Where relevant, analysis is also segmented by the respondent's role in the community (lay leader or community professional). This process makes it possible to identify, test and report statistically significant differential responses among the subgroups both in the present and over time<sup>3</sup>.

## Country and regional breakdown

Given the different histories of Western and Eastern Europe, analysis by region makes it possible to identify where differences in attitude and approach persist. To allow for this, respondents were divided into an Eastern European group (N=192) and a Western European group (N=687). The Eastern region comprises Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia. The countries in the Western European region are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway,

Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (UK).

Of this year's total, 78% of leaders (N=687) were from the West and 22% from the East (N=192), virtually unchanged from the 2021 breakdown (West=79%, East=21%).

This predominance of Western European leaders in the sample is broadly reflective of the two regions' Jewish populations. Thus, the countries with the largest samples are all from the West – Germany with 151, France with 145, Italy with 120 and the UK with 54 – but are together home to over half of

2. Any assessment of changes in the priorities and opinions of European leaders over the past 16 years must consider the differences in sample size between the six surveys. The 2024 sample, though smaller than in 2021, is in keeping with the larger respondent pools that differentiate the three recent surveys (2018=891, 2021=1,054, 2024=879) from the three earliest (2008=250, 2011=329, 2015=314).

3. For these subgroups, statistical analysis was conducted comparing the current survey to its five previous editions. The analysis included comparison of the average score on different items in the questionnaire between the various subgroups over the years of the survey. The statistical tests used were t-test, one-way ANOVA and chi-square test, depending on the kind of data available. Statistical significance of the results is reported when p-value is below 0.05 (confidence at least 95%).

the continent's total Jewish population. The large samples from the first three of these countries are the result of a partnership between JDC-ICCD and the national community organisation/federations of France, Germany and Italy – the *Fonds Social Juif Unifié*, the *Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland* and the *Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane* (UCEI) – to reach a larger number of respondents. These robust national samples provide the partners with reliable and up-to-date information for use in their planning and policymaking. By comparison, the highest number of Eastern responses came from Hungary with 41, Romania with 38, and Poland with 24.

However, the overall decline in the sample size over 2021, was not evenly distributed. Participation from France declined by half from 295 in 2021, returning approximately to its pre-Covid 2018 level (N=134). German participation, meanwhile, fell only marginally from 169 in 2021 but remains significantly higher than in 2018 (N=114). As a result, Germany is now the largest country sample, dethroning France, which had provided the largest number of responses since the survey began in 2008.

Also of note are two substantial increases in the Western sample. Italian participation increased by a third, from

89 in 2021 to 120 today, while Spain's jumped by almost half, from 36 to 53 (2018 = 40), one fewer than the UK.

Alongside these shifts in the sample sizes of these Western countries, participation from the East has been more stable. The number of Hungarian leaders responding was barely changed from the last two surveys (2024 = 41; 2021 = 43; 2018 = 43), while Romania has remained similarly stable since the last survey (2024 = 38; 2021 = 40), though lower than in 2018 (65). Slovakia's participation declined to 8 from 22 in 2021 and 21 in 2018.

It's worth noting that, despite the stability of the ratio between the regions, the largest country samples in the latest survey have a significant impact. They give a proportionately greater voice to smaller communities in the West, which is a key factor in our decision not to perform sample weighting.

There is a slight difference between the regions in terms of gender, with 41% female respondents in Western Europe vs. 37% in Eastern Europe. However, Eastern European leaders are considerably younger, with 26% aged under 40 compared to 10% of their Western colleagues. Western leaders are correspondingly older, with 61% aged 55 and older compared to 35% among Eastern Europeans.

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4. Despite this overrepresentation, we decided not to perform a weighting of the sample, for the following reasons:

- a. An accurate weighting requires knowing the size of the survey's target population of Jewish community leaders and professionals, by country. Unfortunately, this information was not directly available. Theoretically, this number could be deduced from the size of the Jewish population in each country, under assumption of a uniform ratio between the number of leaders and the size of the community. However, this assumption would contradict the fact that these ratios vary markedly from country to country.
- b. The need to compare the findings of the 2021 survey with those of the previous surveys also made the weighting of the 2021 sample undesirable. All four previous waves of the Survey of European Jewish Community Leaders and Professionals were not weighted. Therefore, in order to maintain consistency, continuity, and comparability, the current 2021 sample was not weighted either.



Religious Judaism is also stronger in the West, with leaders there more Orthodox (41% vs. 17% in the East), slightly less likely to be Masorti, Liberal, or Reform Jews (26% vs. 22%) but much less likely to identify as Cultural/Secular Jews (33% vs. 61%).

## Gender

The responses from self-reporting male participants (N=541) and female participants (N=399) were probed for substantial differences in their approaches to community life and issues.

The survey received more self-reporting male (59.4%) than female (40.4%) responses. This indicates a slight widening of the gender gap from 14% in 2021 (58% male vs. 42% female) to 19% in 2024. These responses were analysed for significant differences in outlook and approach to community issues.

## Age

The participants who self-identified by age were categorised into three age groups: 40 years of age or less (the “under 40’s”, N=108), between 41 and 54 years old (N=245) and 55 years and older (the “over 55’s/55+”, N=438).

This year’s sample was slightly older than in 2021, with leaders under 40 comprising 14% of the total, slightly less than in the previous survey (17%), with those aged 41-54 making up 31%, an increase from 28%. The share of over-55’s remained unchanged at 55%.

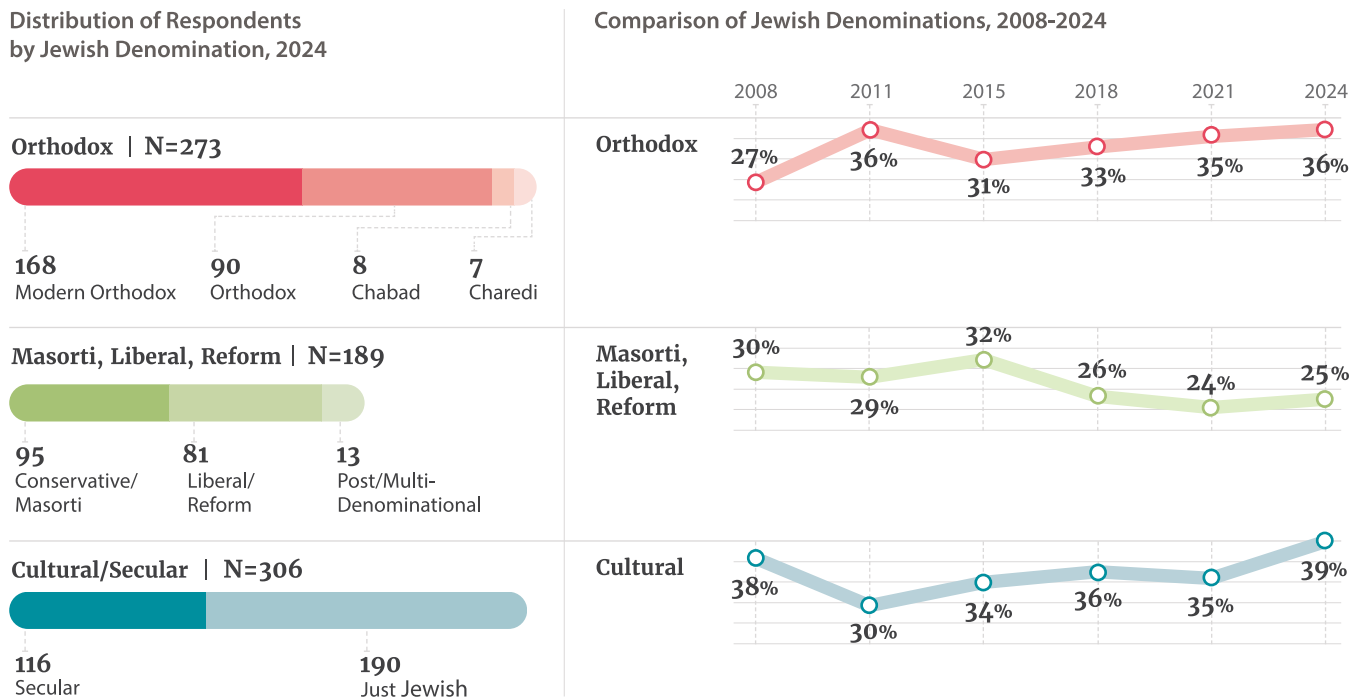
## Denomination

Respondents who self-identified according to their religion or outlook were classified into three groups: Orthodox synagogue members (N=273), Masorti, Liberal, Reform (MLR) synagogue members (N=189) and religiously unaffiliated Cultural/Secular Jews (N=306), to permit investigation of differences between denominations.

Survey respondents were free to choose the questions they answered, and some did not report on their denominational affiliation. The 768 individuals who did report this information in 2024 were in rough proportion to the streams’ representation in 2021. Just over a third, 35%, were Orthodox, 24% were (MLR) and 39% were Cultural/Secular (figure 20, left). As for their religious outlook, those defining themselves as *religious* or *somewhat religious* (54%) were a slight majority over the 46% who defined themselves as *secular* or *somewhat secular*.

Figure 20 shows that the overall religious profile of the survey respondents has varied little over the six surveys conducted to date, despite the changes in country profile and sample size. However, while the percentage of MLR has remained unchanged since 2018, there has been a slight increase in Orthodox respondents (33% in 2018, 35% in 2021, and 36% in 2024) and in the Cultural/Secular (36% in 2018, 35% in 2021, and 39% in 2024).

**Figure 20.** Distribution of respondents by Jewish denomination, 2024 (left) and comparison of Jewish denominations, 2008-2024 (right).



Still, when respondents were asked to define their personal outlook rather than simply their membership or “belonging,” the percentage of respondents identifying as *religious* or *somewhat religious* outnumbered those identifying as *secular* or *somewhat secular*, 55% to 45%. This proportion has remained almost unchanged since 2021 (56% vs 44%). A constant 18% defined themselves as *religious*, and 36% (vs. 38% in 2021), said they were *somewhat religious*. Similarly, an unchanged 25% defined themselves as *somewhat secular* while 21% (vs. 19% in 2021) described themselves as *secular*.

## Community roles

As in 2021, the 2024 respondents were also divided similarly according to their role in their communities. Lay leaders predominated at 55%, followed by community professionals (28%) and more distantly by rabbis (9%) and activists (8%). This last group includes those who described themselves as volunteers or “Jewish entrepreneurs” leading independent grassroots initiatives or programmes. The representation of rabbis increased moderately from five percent in the previous survey, with the other roles seeing corresponding one to two-point declines.

**The JDC-International Centre for Community Development (JDC-ICCD)** is the independent European research and evaluation unit of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). Founded in 2005, JDC-ICCD is devoted to providing an in-depth perspective on the phenomena of the Jewish community, identity, and social welfare. Through applied research, JDC-ICCD analyses ongoing trends and changes in the Jewish world while measuring and evaluating the impact of community initiatives in the field. The Centre generates meaningful and scientifically constructed data that can influence decision-making processes for Jewish communities and other stakeholders, including JDC, across Europe.

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