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Are Jews leaving Europe?

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The **Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR)** is a London-based research organisation, consultancy and think-tank. It aims to advance the prospects of Jewish communities in the United Kingdom and across Europe by conducting research and informing policy development in dialogue with those best placed to positively influence Jewish life.

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Introduction

As these lines are being written, two processes are unfolding on European soil. The first is the demographic transformation of Europe. During the second half of the twentieth century, European countries experienced a significant inflow of migrants from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. On the one hand, Europe remained a sought-after place in the eyes of migrants, with its economic opportunities, personal freedom and safety being especially attractive to those arriving from areas affected by poverty and unrest. On the other hand, a significant proportion of migrants to Europe came from places with very different cultural, political and religious traditions to those found in the West, raising questions about integration and acculturation, both among themselves and their new home societies. A concomitant evaluation of Europe's colonial past and the emergence of Islamic extremism have given rise to the second process: an intellectual attempt to grasp the meaning of the transformation and to assess its significance for existing European cultural and political institutions and traditions. Does mass migration from outside Europe bring greater conflict along ethnic and religious lines? Are the migrants assimilating into European societies? The debates around these questions are not purely intellectual but highly emotional too, insofar as they link to issues such as identity politics and loyalties, safety and security, and the whole notion of the common good.

It is against this background of demographic change and political reckoning that European Jews and Jewish communities try to orientate themselves. Irrespective of the degree of their religiosity and communal involvement, the process is neither easy nor light-hearted for most Jews. It takes place both in the shadow of the Holocaust, an event that showed to Jews and others the scale of possible tragedy when a small and vulnerable minority is drawn into ideologically-inspired military conflict, and in the context of painful and difficult discourse about the State of Israel that affects many Jews at a gut level. So what do the changing demographic and political realities of contemporary Europe have in store for Jews? Is there a safe place for Jews in Europe? Will Europe be safe for Jews in one or two generations from now?

This paper examines Jewish migration to Israel from selected European countries and focuses on the most recent patterns. In particular, it asks whether or not recent developments in migration to Israel are in any way unusual, either in scope, scale or motivation. It considers the determinants of Jewish migration to Israel and explores some of them in depth, correlating them with migration flows. In short, are Jews leaving Europe? And, if so, what prompts them to do so?

A multitude of surveys conducted in the past decade or so have attempted to explore the extent to which Jews feel comfortable and safe in Europe. This paper adopts a different approach. It asks what Jewish people do in response to the developments around them, not what they think, on the assumption that their actual behaviour is a better measure than their opinions and attitudes. Migration is a powerful factor in Jewish demography. Jews tend to move from country to country in response to changing economic conditions and political climate. If Jews feel unwelcome in Europe, their movement out of Europe will serve as the first sure sign of that.

2^{The approach}

This report analyses migration to Israel from six European countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The choice of countries was dictated by a number of factors. First, these countries contain almost 70% of Europe's Jewish population and 7% of the total Jewish population of the world.¹

Second, these countries belong, by and large, to the Western European cultural and political sphere. They share, albeit to varying degrees, the challenges of increasing cultural and religious diversity. In the first decade of the twenty-first century the proportion of the general population with a foreign background (first and second generation migrants) constituted 22–27% of those aged 25–54 years in all selected countries with the exception of Italy, where it was 12%.² The proportion of Muslims in the total populations of all selected countries was in the range of 4–8% in 2010, and it is projected to rise to 10–12% by 2050.³

Third, the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism of Jews in these countries were recently documented in a survey conducted by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research and Ipsos MORI on behalf of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (henceforth abbreviated as FRA) in autumn 2012. The results of that survey made it possible to create a scale of exposure to antisemitism and the intensity of concern that exists about it among Jewish communities of the countries discussed here. The scale was developed on the basis of seven variables relating to different aspects of antisemitic experiences and perceptions of antisemitism. The Jewish respondents in each country were asked questions on the following topics: (1) the extent to which they

- 1 DellaPergola, S. 2013. World Jewish Population, 2013. Current Jewish Population Reports 9. Berman Jewish Databank, in cooperation with the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry.
- 2 Eurostat. 2011. Migrants in Europe: A statistical portrait of the first and second generation. 2011 edition. Eurostat Statistical Books. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 122.
- 3 Pew Research Center, April 2, 2015, "The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010–2050".

saw antisemitism as a problem in their country; (2) whether they believed it to have been on the increase in the five years preceding the survey; (3) whether the respondents had personally experienced antisemitic harassment, physical attack, vandalism or discrimination in the twelve months preceding the survey; and (4) whether the respondents were worried about becoming a victim of antisemitic harassment or physical attack in the next twelve months. Countries were first scored on each of the questions/variables; at the next stage all variable-specific scores were added up for each country and an overall score for each country was derived. Then the countries were ranked on the basis of that overall score: from 1 (the lowest level of exposure to antisemitism and the smallest concern) to 6 (the highest level of exposure to antisemitism and the greatest concern). The ranking (provisionally called here Antisemitism Ranking) is set out below (Figure 1).

The countries with the highest rankings are Belgium and France, while the UK and Sweden possess the lowest ranking. Germany and Italy occupy an intermediate position. It is remarkable that this Antisemitism Ranking, which was developed on the basis of the FRA survey and therefore reflects perceptions and experiences of antisemitism *among Jews*, shows a high correlation with the Antisemitism Index Score, which was developed by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) on the basis of its regular surveys of non-Jewish populations (Figure 2).

The ADL Antisemitism Index Score includes a proportion of non-Jewish individuals in a given country who thought that six out of eleven antisemitic stereotypes listed in the survey were 'probably true'.⁴

It has been pointed out that reconciling findings from different surveys on the topic of antisemitism is an acute methodological and analytical problem. Surveys often tell different, or seemingly different, stories, and cross-survey comparisons of findings, on most occasions, do not allow for

4 Further information on the stereotypes and the way ADL antisemitism index score is calculated can be found on http://global100.adl.org/about.



Figure 1. FRA survey-based Antisemitism Ranking

Source: author's calculations on the basis of the FRA survey dataset.



Note: ADL Antisemitism Index Score is a proportion of non-Jews believing that 6 out of 11 antisemitic stereotypes are 'probably true'. The dotted line captures the linear association between the two types of scores.

ADL Antisemitism Index Score, %

Source: for the FRA survey based Antisemitism Ranking-author's calculations on the basis of the FRA survey dataset; for the ADL Antisemitism Index Score, see http://global100.adl.org/about.

coherent and unambiguous interpretations to arise.⁵ However, this is a rare occasion where two

5 Boyd, J. and L. Daniel Staetsky (2015). Could it happen here? What existing data tell us about contemporary antisemitism in the UK. JPR Policy Debate. Institute for Jewish Policy Research: London.

sets of findings are well aligned. Two poles are identifiable: Belgium and France, with high levels of antisemitism correlating with high levels of perceived antisemitism, and the UK and Sweden with low levels. Italy and Germany are situated in the middle.

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The remainder of this report is organised in three substantive sections as follows. The first section contains an overview of long-term trends in migration to Israel from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The focus of this section is on identifying the patterns of migration to Israel, generating hypotheses about what might explain these patterns and asking whether or not antisemitism in the source countries can qualify as a reasonable explanation for some of the observed developments in Jewish migration towards Israel. The second section concentrates on the most recent trends in Jewish migration and compares them to the cases of mass migration of Jews as a response to persecution or major political upheavals in the past. This is done in an attempt to benchmark the recent migration to Israel and answer the question of whether what is happening at present constitutes what some have argued is an 'exodus' of Jews from Europe. The last section presents the push

and pull framework of migration processes and empirically tests the impact of selected determinants (such as the economic situations and political conditions in Israel and in the source countries) on the intensity of Jewish migration to Israel. That too is done in order to uncover the role of antisemitism behind the recent migration to Israel.

A particular strength of this work is its reliance on multiple sources of data and advanced statistical methods. The chief sources of data are the statistical offices of Israel and the selected source countries of Jewish migration. However, in addition, data from the international databases of statistical indicators of political stability, conflict-related mortality and terrorism have been used, as well as data on antisemitic incidents collated by Jewish communal organisations. To ensure the complete transparency of the sources and their uses, a detailed methodological section has been included in the Appendix to the report.

3 The patterns: long-term trends in migration to Israel

Many journalists and politicians have asserted that migration of European Jews to Israel is on the rise. This is a useful starting point for this paper. Is this assertion true? The first step towards making an assessment is a careful comparison of recent levels of migration with levels observed since such records began. Fortunately, migration to Israel is a welldocumented phenomenon. The establishment of the State of Israel and the demographic transformation of the territory formerly under the British mandate unfolded in the full light of history. The first migrants into the newly established Jewish state arrived in a country well equipped administratively and statistically. Thus, migration records go back as far as 1948.

Let us look in detail at the trajectories and levels of migration to Israel from the selected countries. The goal here is to provide a thorough description of the empirical data, keeping the interpretative component to the minimum for the time being. Four questions guide the discussion:

- 1 Are recent levels of migration unprecedented in the history of a given source country?
- 2 If not, are the recent levels in any way remarkable; for example, are they only rarely observed?
- 3 Are there identifiable patterns in the trajectories of migration from different countries?
- 4 If so, are the recent developments in trajectories suggestive of new forces behind migration?

A convenient starting point is to compare the UK and France, countries that represent two poles in terms of their levels of antisemitism but also contain the two largest Jewish populations in Europe. The immediate impression from such a comparison is a significant resemblance of the trajectories in migration from the two countries for most years since 1948 (Figure 3). The difference in the scale of migration is preserved in most years: the rate of Jewish migration from France (and the absolute number of Jewish migrants from there) is generally higher than the rate of migration from the UK (although the difference in the absolute number might be expected because the French Jewish population has been larger than the UK Jewish population for most of that period). However, the pictures of fluctuations in migration from the UK and France are very similar. It is noteworthy, and critical for the identification of the patterns in migration in this report, that there is a strong resemblance in the trajectories between 1948 and the end of the 1990s. However, from year 2000 onwards the situation changes.

The year following the establishment of the State of Israel and the late 1960s are two easily identifiable peaks in migration from both countries. The first followed the removal of all restrictions on the migration of Jews by the newly independent State of Israel. The second peak equally or even more numerically significant - developed in the aftermath of the Six Day War (1967). The conventional view of this development attributes the increase in migration to the special meaning attached to Israel's victory in that war by Jews in Western countries. The importance and viability of Israel increased, thereby motivating Jews with some "latent migration propensity" to migrate there.⁶ Whether or not this view is correct can only be established once one has controlled for other drivers of migration, such as socioeconomic and political conditions in the countries of origin and in Israel. In the meantime, it must remain a strong hypothesis. However, one thing is unambiguous: in relation to many Western countries, the levels of Jewish migration to Israel observed directly after 1967 were among the highest recorded, competing closely with the levels observed after the establishment of Israel, or even surpassing these.

It is not clear when the post-Six Day War wave of migration came to a 'formal' end. The levels of migration observed in the 1970s and 1980s were never as low as those observed during the 1950s

6 DellaPergola, S. 1984. On the differential frequency of Western migration to Israel. In *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, Volume 1. (Ed. J. Frankel). Jerusalem: Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, pp. 295–296.



Figure 3. Migration to Israel from the UK and France, 1948-2015

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; American Jewish Year Book, Graham (2011). See Appendix for details.

and the early 1960s. However, the mid-1970s can be treated here as a convenient cut-off point when the major wave of migration had clearly passed. Yet, after the mid-1970s, British and French migration trajectories still showed significant synchronicity. This ended in the early 2000s. Since then, and up until the end of the follow-up period (2015), British and French migration trends diverged sharply. Migration from France rose to unprecedented levels surpassing all levels observed in the past, including the record levels of 1948 and the late 1960s. There has been no development of this kind in migration from the UK. Although levels from the UK have increased since the early 2000s, they generally remained unremarkable given the levels observed in the 1980s and the 1990s.

The purely visual characterisation of the post-2000 divergence between the UK and France can also be expressed with the help of statistical tools. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient is an indicator of the existence of a linear relationship between two variables. It can take values between -1 and +1, with the sign being indicative of the direction of the relationship, positive or negative, and the absolute value being indicative of its strength. Overall, for the years 1948–2015, the value of the correlation coefficient for the British and French migration trajectories is 0.51, signalling a positive linear relationship of medium strength: the data series 'co-move' in the same direction. Yet, splitting the whole period into two fragments produces a more revealing picture: for the years 1948–1999, the correlation coefficient is 0.79 (a very strong linear relationship), whereas for the years 2000–2015, it is as weak as 0.26.

With the divergence of the migration trajectories between the UK and France established, it is helpful to compare these trajectories to the levels and trends in other countries selected for analysis here. In Figure 4 migration trends from Belgium and Italy are plotted, with the British and French levels set in the background.

The overall trajectories of migration from Belgium and Italy strongly resemble those from the UK and France, with the same peaks around the times of the establishment of Israel and in the aftermath of the Six Day War. However, the latest level of migration from Italy (year 2015) is above the levels seen around the establishment of the State of Israel and in the aftermath of the Six Day War. In Belgium the most recent number is the second largest in the history of migration to Israel from that country: it is higher than the levels reached in the late 1960s and only slightly lower than the



Figure 4. Migration to Israel from Belgium and Italy, 1948-2015

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; American Jewish Year Book; Graham (2011). See Appendix for details.

highest levels registered around the establishment of Israel.

Looking at the most recent developments, both Belgium and Italy follow the French pattern of migration and diverge from the British pattern. The beginning of the divergence from the British pattern is situated somewhere around 2009, i.e. later than in France by almost a decade, but the divergence is decisive nevertheless.

Migration to Israel from Germany/Austria and the Scandinavian countries is shown in Figure 5. Again, the UK and France constitute the background, while Belgium and Italy are removed to avoid cluttering the diagram.

The presentation of Germany in combination with Austria, and of all the Scandinavian countries together (Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland) instead of just Sweden alone, had to do with the availability of data. Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics reported migration from Germany and Austria combined for many (though not all) years. Migrants from Germany constituted about 75% of all migrants from Germany and Austria combined in those years that the data were available for the two countries separately. The same reporting technique was used with the Scandinavian countries. Migrants from Sweden constitute at least 50% of migrants from all Scandinavian countries combined.⁷

Data for Germany/Austria and the Scandinavian countries are not available as far back as for the other countries. Nevertheless, for periods with available data (1972–2015 in the case of Germany/ Austria, and 1992–2015 in the case of the Scandinavian countries), one can easily discern the synchronicity of the trajectories in these two countries with the UK. Germany/Austria and the Scandinavian countries follow the British post-2000 trajectory.

A slightly different re-cast of the same data is offered in Figure 6. Here the level of migration to Israel from each country per annum is calculated relative to the average level of migration to Israel from that country over the years 1976–2015. The average level is effectively held at 1, and each year's rate presented in relation to that value. Again, there is a conspicuous similarity in the behaviour of all selected countries up to the 2000s. The levels

7 Personal communication with Ms Marina Sheps, Director of Migration Division, Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel.



Figure 5. Migration to Israel from Germany/Austria and Scandinavian countries, 1948-2015

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; American Jewish Year Book; Graham (2011). See Appendix for details.



Figure 6. Migration to Israel from six selected countries relative to the 1976-2015 average level

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; American Jewish Year Book, Graham (2011). See Appendix for details.

of migration for most countries at most times remain locked within a relatively narrow range of values: between half to twice that of the average rate over the years 1976–2015. Yet in the 2000s, France, Italy and Belgium unambiguously diverge from other countries, with the new levels of migration establishing themselves at between 2.5 and 6.5 times the average level of years 1976–2015.

In sum, resorting to various methods – some visual, and others statistical – the existence of two distinct post-2000s trajectories of migration to Israel can be seen. On the one hand, there is the British pattern, constituted by the UK, Germany and Sweden, where 'business as usual' seemingly prevails, and on the other, there is the French pattern, constituted by France, Belgium and Italy, where new winds seem to be blowing.

4 The benchmarks: recent migration to Israel in a comparative perspective

The chief obstacle in the area of the empirical study of antisemitism is the absence of a benchmarking capacity. This has been described in some detail in a previous report by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, but the essentials of this diagnosis are worth reiterating here. Benchmarking is the method of comparing any given situation with situations unambiguously considered to be normal, better/desirable, or worse/undesirable, using established measurement tools and scales. An example that is often used to illustrate the process of benchmarking is the measurement of certain physical characteristics, such as body temperature or blood pressure. In relation to both characteristics there are established measurement tools and an established understanding of normal and abnormal levels, and, importantly, of dangerous levels requiring urgent medical attention. In relation to most social phenomena, benchmarking cannot be carried out in the straightforward manner described above. Hence, the seemingly endless stream of surveys of antisemitic attitudes in Europe and debate about the meaning of their findings.

Yet, useful policy advice rests on researchers' understanding of what constitutes high, low or standard levels of a particular phenomenon. In the popular press, the recent levels of Jewish migration from Europe are at times characterised as an 'exodus' of Jews from Europe. It is further suggested that the exodus is a Jewish reaction to heightened levels of antisemitism.⁸ How does a researcher address a claim of this kind? What levels of migration constitute an 'exodus' of Jews? Aside from the obvious biblical connotations, an exodus is a mass departure of people from their usual places of residence towards new destinations, but an established, widely-shared, quantitative meaning of the word 'exodus' does not exist. It tends rather to be a more emotive term, employed to elicit a political or social reaction.

Here an attempt is made at benchmarking recent levels of Jewish migration to Israel. In Figure 7 the levels of migration from selected countries are set against historically observed cases where particularly high levels of Jewish migration indeed took place in response to economic crises, increasing ethnic and religious tensions and/or general social instability in the country of origin. The comparator cases chosen for presentation are cases to which the term 'exodus' was attached with historical hindsight, after the full scope of the mass departure of Jews and the nature of its political and social-economic drivers became known to the general public. The comparator cases are (a) the mass migration of Jews from the Soviet Union in the early 1990s following the collapse of the communist regime there; (b) the mass migration of Jews from the countries of North Africa in the 1950s and 1960s following the political and civil unrest in these countries, coupled with the exacerbation of anti-Jewish sentiment and (c) the mass migration of Jews from Germany during the 1930s following Hitler's rise to power. The exact nature of migration drivers is not identical in the three cases presented here. In all cases, however, the increase in hostility of non-Jews towards Jews and the economic and political instability of the source countries played an important, and at times decisive, role.

It is easy to see that in all comparator cases a very significant proportion of Jews migrated out of a given country. A period of six years is universally adopted here on the grounds of comparability. Between 1933 and 1938, about one third of all German Jews left Germany. Incidentally, only a minority of them went to Palestine, due to the migration restrictions imposed by Britain under

⁸ For one such example see a feature by Leo Cendrowicz in *The Independent:* http://www.independent.co.uk/ news/world/europe/jews-no-longer-feel-safe-ineurope-and-mass-exodus-increasing-as-a-result-ofsurge-in-anti-semitic-a6676021.html. See also features by Hillel Fendel on Arutz Sheva (*Israel National News*): http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/ News.aspx/202780, by Rabbi Menahem Margolin in *Newsweek*: http://europe.newsweek.com/how-stopeuropes-jewish-exodus-israel-408822, and by Kalhan Rosenblatt in the *Daily Mail*: http://www.dailymail. co.uk/news/article-3399791/Immigration-Israelwestern-European-Jews-hits-time-high-followingrise-anti-Semitic-attacks.html.



Figure 7. Jewish migrants within a time span of six years, as a proportion of the total Jewish population in each country

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; Rosenthal (1944); The YIVO Encyclopaedia of Jews in Eastern Europe; American Jewish Year Book (1948-1949, 1961); Strauss (1980). See Appendix for detailed explanation of the sources.

the Mandate.⁹ About half of the Jews of the Soviet Union left between 1989–1994, most (one third of the total Jewish population) for Israel. These two cases provide a clear quantitative idea of an 'exodus' with historical hindsight.

In relation to the two North African countries chosen for presentation here, we do not possess the same amount of detail on the scope of migration. The proportions presented (54% for Morocco and 26% for Tunisia) are indicative of the migration from these countries to Israel, but a significant proportion of Jews also chose to settle in Europe, mainly in France. Therefore, the true scope of the exodus from these countries is greater than the scope suggested by the exhibit.

If we use these data to define an exodus as, say, 30% of the Jewish population emigrating, at first glance, the scope of the recent migration to Israel is not suggestive of an exodus occurring now. In Belgium, France and Italy, 4% of Jews left in 2010–2015, while in Germany, the UK and Sweden, 0.6–1.7% left. These figures are quite far from the range of one quarter to one half suggested by the comparator cases. The point of weakness of this analysis is the absence of information on the scope of migration to places other than Israel. For example, the number of Jews leaving France for the USA, Canada or other destinations, apart from Israel, is unknown. Thus, the figures presented here are necessarily conservative estimates.

The assessment of the true scope of migration in the absence of hard data is no more than an imaginative game. If one is that way inclined and willing to allow migration flows to all countries other than Israel, in combination, to be similar in volume to the flow directed towards Israel, that would amount to 8% of Jews leaving Belgium, France and Italy and 1-4% of Jews leaving Germany, the UK and Sweden. What would happen if migration to Israel in 2016-2021 remained at the levels reached in 2014–2015? Figure 8 shows the 'what if' scenario: if the relatively high levels of migration persist, France and Italy would lose 7-8% of their Jewish populations; Belgium: 5%; Sweden: about 2%; and Germany and the UK: around 1%.

⁹ Wischnitzer, M. 1940. Jewish emigration from Germany 1933–1938. Jewish Social Studies, V. 2(1), pp. 23–44.



Figure 8. The 'what if' scenario: projected Jewish migrants to Israel in 2016-2021, as a proportion of the total Jewish population in a given country, if the levels of migration are those seen in 2014-2015

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel.

Finally, Figure 9 presents the comparison of the average number of Jewish migrants in 2014– 2015 from the selected countries to the number that would be necessary in order to reduce the Jewish populations of these countries by one third – a level characteristic of Jewish migration from Nazi Germany. The actual average number is indicated by the red line, while the 'would be necessary' number by the blue bars.

Figure 9. Average annual number of Jewish migrants in 2016-2021 that would result in a reduction of the Jewish populations of the respective countries by one third, compared to the average annual number observed in 2014-2015



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel.

In all cases, without a single exception, the number one would expect to see if the population were to decline to levels approaching the kind of exodus seen in the 1930s is much higher than the actual average number of the years 2014–2015. In relative terms, France, Italy and Belgium show the smallest gap: the actual number is 4–7 times lower than the exodus benchmark number. In Germany, the UK and Sweden, the actual number is 20–50 times lower than the exodus benchmark number.

5 The determinants: what drives migration to Israel?

Migration is a net outcome of various push and pull factors. Countries 'compete' for people, metaphorically speaking, by presenting to them various advantages and disadvantages. Most people feel a positive connection with their country of origin. The sheer familiarity of life and the comfort that comes from this familiarity are important pull factors in relation to people's country of origin. Some countries, Western countries in particular, have strong economies and provide good economic opportunities, and these constitute additional pull factors. The most obvious push factors operating in countries of origin are safety issues, including antisemitism, and economic downturns, should and when these occur. Israel can present a number of pull factors. It is considered a 'safe haven' for Jews coming from precarious situations; it is economically developed relative to many countries, and it provides opportunities for a meaningful and accessible Jewish religious and national life. Pre-existing social connections in Israel (family and friends) constitute an additional pull factor. On the other hand, Israel's challenging security situation would be considered as a push factor by many, as well as its level of economic development, which is inferior to certain Western European countries.

Ultimately, the question of what exactly drives a particular migration wave to Israel is only answerable satisfactorily if all potential migration drivers are taken into account, i.e. all drivers are measured, and their relationship with a given migration wave is appropriately quantified. Only after the influences of all drivers are accounted for, can one confidently state that antisemitism (or any other single factor) is in fact responsible, or not, for a particular migration wave. In this section, an attempt is made to account for the chief drivers of migration to Israel, and to test whether or not antisemitism is the main factor behind the recent increases. To do so, we have utilised a type of analysis known as 'multiple linear regression.' In this analysis, we attempt to test the size, direction and significance of correlations between the migration of Jews to Israel and the main push and pull factors. The particular strength of this technique is in its ability to control for a number of factors

simultaneously. In contrast to the previous sections, the analysis here is limited to the UK and France, two master examples of low and high levels of antisemitism in Europe.

Based on the considerations pertaining to the role of the push and pull factors, as above, and previous research in this area, we implemented a regression model predicting the annual rate of migration to Israel from a given country. The annual rate of migration, a dependent variable, is defined as the number of Jews migrating to Israel in a given year per 1,000 Jews in the population of a given country. The predictors are variables capturing the state of the economy and security situations, both at source and at destination, i.e. in the countries of origin of migrating Jews (the UK and France) and in Israel. It is conventional to describe the state of the economy and its trends using the level of unemployment, and we follow this tradition here by using the levels of unemployment in the UK, France and Israel for our predictions. The level of unemployment in a given country provides a good reflection of the attractiveness of that country as a place to live, as it signals both the health of the economy and the level of societal welfare in a broader sense.

Figure 10 shows the relationship between levels of unemployment in the UK and migration from the UK to Israel. One immediately observes that times of high unemployment in the UK correspond to times of high migration of British Jews to Israel (in Panel A of Figure 10, peaks in migration and in unemployment correspond well visually), i.e. the deterioration of the job market appears to push people towards migration elsewhere. The relationship between the migration of British Jews to Israel and the level of unemployment in the UK is also recast as a scatterplot (Panel B of Figure 10). A scatterplot captures the relationship between two variables without presenting their values explicitly, focusing only on a correlation between the variables. When high values in one variable (e.g. the rate on unemployment) occur together with high values in another variable (e.g. the rate of migration), the dots on the scatterplot arrange themselves in a typical diagonal pattern around an imaginary line. In Figure 10, Panel B, a positive linear relationship of medium strength is

Figure 10. Migration of British Jews to Israel vs unemployment in the UK

Panel A. Trends



Panel B. Correlation



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; Graham (2011); Office for National Statistics. See Appendix for details. Note: years 1969-1971 appeared as strong outliers and were removed from the graph and the calculation of correlation coefficients.

clearly seen.¹⁰ About 30% of variation in the rate of migration of British Jews to Israel is explained by the levels of unemployment in the UK.

10 Pearson correlation coefficient of correlation between two series is 0.54.

Further, times of high unemployment in Israel correspond to times of low migration of British Jews there: troughs in migration are well aligned with peaks in unemployment in Israel (Figure 11,

Figure 11. Migration of British Jews to Israel vs unemployment in Israel

Panel A. Trends



Panel B. Correlation



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; Graham (2011); Office for National Statistics. See Appendix for details. Note: years 1969-1971 appeared as strong outliers and were removed from the graph and the calculation of correlation coefficients.

Panel A). The correlation is negative linear, and it is weaker than the correlation between migration to Israel and the level of unemployment in the UK: just 6.7% of variation in the rate of migration of British Jews to Israel is explained by the levels of unemployment in Israel.¹¹

11 Pearson correlation coefficient is -0.25.

The data for France reveal the same correlation of peaks in the series of French Jewish migration and the levels of unemployment in France. The correlation of peaks in migration with troughs in Israeli unemployment exists but it is weaker than in the British case: levels of unemployment in Israel have a very small impact on the migration of French Jews. Due to the similarities of the British and French cases, the French correlations are not presented here graphically in order to save space.¹²

Although previous research by Sergio DellaPergola has indicated a correlation between 'economic stress' in source countries and the strength of Jewish migration from these countries to Israel at a point in time,¹³ this correlation has never been shown to apply longitudinally. Here, for the first time, a significant correlation across time has been demonstrated. Further, previous research has not tested the correlation between the economic situation in Israel and the intensity of migration. This research shows the presence of a negative correlation: high unemployment in Israel seems to deter migration from Western countries. Finally, our analysis shows that the relationship between migration to Israel and unemployment levels in both settings (Israel and the source countries) holds, when tested simultaneously. About 45% of the variance in migration rates of Jews from the UK and France is explained by levels of unemployment in the UK/France and Israel, combined. This finding, being of a substantive value in the context of research on the determinants of Jewish migration, also constitutes a powerful illustration of the operation of push and pull factors and, as such, is a valuable contribution to the broader agenda of migration research.

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, this research did not reveal any meaningful correlations between levels of migration to Israel and the security situation in Israel. Our initial hypothesis was that any deterioration of the security situation in Israel would deter potential migrants, whilst an improvement in the situation would make Israel more attractive. The state of security in Israel was measured experimentally using the numbers of fatalities from terrorism and the overall number of battle deaths in all military conflicts in which

- 12 They are available from the author upon request.
- 13 See footnote 6 for the full reference.

Israel was involved since its establishment. None of these measures was associated with the scope of migration after controlling for the economic correlates of migration (levels of unemployment). The state of security in the UK and France was also measured in a number of ways. The most important measures were: (1) the number of victims of terror in the UK and France per 100,000 people in their respective populations, and (2) the number of terror events in the UK and France per 100,000 people in their respective populations. These measures have been available since the early 1970s, and neither showed any correlation with the rate of Jewish migration from these countries to Israel.

In Figure 12, the following measures are shown. First, the actual levels of migration to Israel are presented. Alongside them are the predicted levels of migration based on unemployment levels in the UK and Israel (Panel A) and in France and Israel (Panel B). The predicted migration rate has been derived using regression analysis and is effectively a 'would be' rate of British and French Jews to Israel in a situation where migration to Israel depended solely on the state of the economy (i.e. measured here in terms of unemployment) in the source and destination countries. Any differences between the predicted and the actual migration rates, otherwise known as a residual, indicate that factors other than the state of economy must be at play in driving migration.

Looking at the UK migration first (Figure 12, panel A), one notices the especially wide gaps between the actual and predicted rates in the aftermath of the Six Day War, the late 1970s/ early 1980s and since approximately 2005. The post Six Day War spike in migration has been commented on before. It has been attributed to a significant change in the perception of Israel among Diaspora Jews at that time. The predicted rate around that time - shaped by economic factors – also increased, but the scope of the increase was nowhere near what happened in reality. The actual levels were much higher than those predicted. Something else happened, and the post-war euphoria among British Jews is a good candidate explanation for that 'something else.' In the same way, the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, with the subsequent withdrawal of Israel from the Sinai peninsula, is a good candidate explanation for the gap between the actual and



Figure 12. Actual versus predicted level of migration to Israel: results of the regression analysis

Panel A. UK





Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; Graham (2011), American Jewish Year Book; INSEE. See Appendix for details.

the predicted rate in the late 1970s and the early 1980s. That peace deal was treated as a watershed event by many Jews and non-Jews in the Diaspora and it is conceivable that it could have encouraged some movement of Jews towards Israel. However, for the period starting around 2005 there is no such ready explanation of this kind. No political or military watershed event in Israel took place at that time. The beginning of the twenty-first century in Arab-Israeli relations was marked by the second Intifada, the second Lebanon war, the withdrawal of Israel from the Gaza Strip and the subsequent activation of the Gaza front with three military campaigns there in quick succession.

Looking at the French migration (Figure 12, panel B), these impressions are reinforced. French migration trends show two very prominent periods when a very large gap between the actual and predicted rates of migration to Israel occurred: (i) in the aftermath of the Six Day War; and (ii) at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The gap is especially large most recently, in 2014 and 2015. Otherwise, the actual and the predicted trends are remarkably similar.

If no obvious candidate explanation for the gap in the 2000s presents itself in the same manner as the Six Day War does for the gap in the late 1960s, what conclusion can be derived from that? That missing explanation needs to be found, and one might reasonably assume that antisemitism is the cause. However, this idea needs to be tested and fortunately, we have sufficient data in order to do so.

There were two additional measures under the umbrella of 'the state of security' indicators in the UK and France that could not be tested formally in the regression model simply because the data for these measures are only available since the late 1990s and not beforehand. The measures are: (1) the number of antisemitic incidents in the UK and France per 1,000 Jews living there; and (2) an indicator of political stability and the absence of violence for the UK and France, calculated by the World Bank Group. This second indicator is a percentile rank of the UK and France showing the percentage of countries across the world that rank lower than each of them on political stability.¹⁴

In Figure 13 these indicators are set against each other and against the migration series. It is clear that, since the mid-1990s, relative to other countries in the world, political stability declined in both countries: in 1996, 70-80% of countries worldwide scored lower than the UK and France on political stability, while 60% did so in 2014. Interestingly, the rate of antisemitic incidents grew concomitantly. So the increase in the rate of migration of Jews to Israel happened alongside the increase in the rate of antisemitic incidents and the decrease in the level of political stability. Pearson correlation coefficients for the correlation between the migration rate and the rate of antisemitic incidents are in the range of 0.5–0.7. These values signal a positive correlation of medium strength: the migration rate of Jews increases with an increase in the rate of antisemitic incidents. The coefficients for the correlation between migration to Israel and political stability are -0.3 (UK) and -0.4 (France): i.e. the migration rate of Jews increases as political stability decreases.

The introduction of the level of political stability and the rate of antisemitic incidents into the regression model would have reduced the number of observation to below 20 - an insufficient number for multivariate analysis of this kind. The bivariate correlations reported here, however, lend further support to the hypothesis that the increases in the intensity of migration from the UK and France alike may be related to the increase in the incidence of antisemitism.

¹⁴ This is one of the worldwide governance indicators produced by the World Bank Group. Further details can be found in the Appendix.



Figure 13. Political stability, antisemitism incidents and Jewish migration from the United Kingdom to Israel since the late 1990s

Panel A. Political stability in the UK vs Jewish migration to Israel

Panel B. Antisemitic incidents in the UK vs Jewish migration to Israel

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; Graham (2011), American Jewish Year Book; Community Security Trust; Jewish Community Security Service; World Bank Group.

Figure 14. Political stability, antisemitism incidents and Jewish migration from France to Israel since the late 1990s



Panel A. Political stability in France vs Jewish migration to Israel

Panel B. Antisemitic incidents in France vs Jewish migration to Israel



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; Graham (2011), American Jewish Year Book; Community Security Trust; Jewish Community Security Service: World Bank Group. Note: the dotted line marks the smoothed trend in the rate of antisemitic incidents.

6 Conclusion: putting it all together

In the social sciences, research questions are often informed by the political context. The research project summarised in this paper is no exception. It came into being as a consequence of growing disquiet in European Jewish communities about antisemitism and Islamic extremism. European Jews are uncertain, perhaps even fearful, of what the future holds for them and their children's generation. This study was designed to explore the extent to which they are acting on the basis of this uncertainty and anxiety. In short, is there an exodus of Jews from Europe? And if so, is this because of an increase in European antisemitism?

This project examined trends and levels of emigration to Israel from selected European countries. Whilst data on all potential destinations for European Jews (e.g. North America) are not available, migration to Israel can be seen as a useful proxy for Jews' desire to leave their home countries. Our examination revealed that there has been an increase in the propensity to migrate to Israel among Jews in certain European countries, and that in some countries (France, Belgium and Italy), the most recent levels of migration to Israel are historically unprecedented, or come very close to being so. We refer to this empirical pattern as the 'French pattern.' In other places (the UK, Germany and Sweden) the current levels of migration do not appear unusual. We have called this the 'British pattern.' When compared with historical examples of mass out-migration of Jews in welldocumented settings with established causality either due to persecution or rapid and menacing political developments – the scale of the current Jewish migration from France, Belgium and Italy (the countries with the highest desertion levels) to Israel is far smaller and cannot meaningfully be termed an 'exodus.'

A more appropriate description would simply be an increase in the intensity of migration to Israel. Yet what accounts for this increase? Is there empirical evidence to support the claim that the increase in the intensity of migration follows from the increase in antisemitism? The right way to summarise the chief finding in this respect is as follows: the project could not uncover direct and unambiguous evidence in support of this claim; however, it failed to reject the hypothesis either.

Using statistical modelling, we tried to predict the levels of Jewish migration from the UK and France. We found that the state of the economy in the source countries (only France and the UK were included in this exercise) determined a significant proportion of variation in the migration rates. However, when the state of the economy was accounted for, the current levels of migration to Israel from both countries - France and the UK - appeared unusual. If the current levels of migration appear very unusual, and they cannot be attributed to economic factors, then there must be a different factor to explain them. That factor could be antisemitism, since we also saw empirically a positive correlation between migration and latent levels of antisemitism, though the evidence for that is supportive and not confirmatory.

Importantly, the last finding applies both to France, where an unusual pattern of migration was revealed by simple visual and statistical means early in the course of the project, and to the UK, where the 'business as usual' pattern of migration was revealed at an early stage. The presence of unusual features in UK migration was revealed with advanced methods of statistical analysis which allowed, metaphorically speaking, to examine UK migration trends in higher resolution.

The framework of analysis established by this project should be of lasting value, as it allows the continuous and meaningful monitoring of future trends in migration. Effectively, the project has designed a new analytical tool: how to think about the migration of Jews to Israel, to measure its regularities, identify irregularities and attribute them to causes. The questions that motivated this project will continue to be asked, and can and should be resolved using the tools of pattern recognition, benchmarking and multivariate analysis set out in this paper. Political arguments do not need to remain self-sufficient and self-serving. They can and should be trackable statistically for the benefit of decision-making at all levels. The ambition of this paper is to do exactly that.

Appendix: data sources

Sources for Chapter 3

Migration to Israel data

'Immigrant' ('oleh') is an official status under Israeli law. Israel is a country where migration has played a major role in population growth. The registration system for migration is linked to the Population Registry and it produces counts of migrants that are both precise and timely. Historically, two types of statistics on migration are published by the Israeli statistical authority (Central Bureau of Statistics): (1) the number of migrants by last country of residence; and (2) the number of migrants by country of birth. These two series are closely correlated for most countries, and the choice between the two for analytical purposes should be determined by the purpose of investigation. Here we used the number of migrants by last country of residence as a better correlate when it comes to the measurement of the impact of push factors. People who were born in a given country but not resident there at the time of migration would not be exposed to the push factors operating in that country.

Migration to Israel data were obtained from three sources:

- For the years 1948–1972, data were obtained from a special publication of the Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel: *Aliya leIsrael 1948– 1972* (part B), publication 489.
- For the years 1973–2014, data were obtained from the annual publication of the Central Bureau of Statistics: *Israel: Statistical Abstract of Israel*.
- For the year 2015, data were obtained from the monthly publication of the Central Bureau of Statistics: *Israel: Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, January 2016. For Italy, Scandinavian countries, Germany and Austria, the data were received directly from the Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel, on request. Marina Sheps (Director of Migration Division, Central Bureau of Statistics) personally oversaw the production of these figures.

For the UK, France, Belgium and Italy, the number of migrants by country of residence was

known for all years except for 1948 and 1949. For these years the numbers were derived on the basis of the numbers of migrants for whom these countries were countries of birth, on a ratio 'country-born'/'country residents' observed in the three following years. For Germany and Scandinavian countries, only data from the early 1970s or 1990s, respectively, were available for analysis.

Data on migration to Israel used in all subsequent sections originate from the sources described above, unless otherwise stated.

Jewish populations data

The rate of migration to Israel was calculated by dividing the annual number of migrants to Israel from a given country by the number of Jews in that country.

Data on Jewish populations of Belgium, Germany, France, Italy and Sweden came from the demographic section of the 'American Jewish Year Book' for the years 1947–2008: http://www.ajcarchives.org/main.php?GroupingId=40

For later years, these data came from the Current Jewish Population Reports produced by the Berman Jewish DataBank: http://databank.bjpa.org/Studies/results.cfm?Category ID=9

The original data for the UK came from: Graham, D. 2011. 'Enumerating Britain's Jewish Population: Reassessing the 2001 Census in the context of one hundred years of indirect estimates,' *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, LIII.

Historical figures for the UK Jewish populations (up to 2001) were adopted from this publication in their original form. They were derived with the aid of the 'death rates method.' The method relies on the known number of Jewish deaths (furnished by Jewish funeral directors) and the assumption that the Jewish mortality schedule resembles the schedule of the top British socio-economic classes. The figure for 2001, obtained by Graham (2011) from the UK 2001 Census, was somewhat adjusted to ensure definitional compatibility with the earlier estimates: Jews who self-identified in ethnic but not religious terms were removed from the 2001 estimate as they were unlikely to be buried as Jews at earlier times. Between 2001 and 2011 the UK Jewish population was assumed to remain at the same level.

Sources for Chapter 4

The proportion of Jewish migrants out of the total Jewish population of a given country in Figure 7 was calculated on the basis of the census-based population figures (1933 census for Germany, 1989 for the Soviet Union), or best estimates made on the basis of such figures (North African countries in the 1950s and 1960).

Population figures for Jews in Germany (census 1933) come from: Rosenthal, E. (1944). 'Trends of the Jewish population in Germany, 1910–39.' *Jewish Social Studies*, V. 6 (3), pp. 233–274.

Population figures for Jews in Soviet Union (census 1989) come from: *The YIVO Encyclopedia* of Jews in Eastern Europe. Population and Migration. Population since World War I, http:// www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/population_and_ migration/population_since_world_war_i

Population figures for Jews in Morocco (circa 1960) and Tunisia (1949) come from, respectively: *American Jewish Year Book*, V. 62 (1961), and *American Jewish Year Book*, V. 50 (1948–1949).

Data on Jewish emigration from Germany (years 1933–1938) come from: Strauss, H.A. (1980). 'Jewish Emigration from Germany-Nazi Policies and Jewish Responses (I),' *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book XXV*, London: Seckler and Warburg.

Data on Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union (years 1989–1994) come from: *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe. Population and Migration. Migration since World War I*, http:// www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Population_and_ Migration/Migration_since_World_War_I

These data were adjusted to take into account the presence of non-Jewish family members in migration flows of Jews from the Soviet Union. This was necessary in order to increase numerator-denominator compatibility, given that the Soviet census figures (1989) relate to Jews only. The number of non-Jews was reduced from the total number of migrants to Israel using the percentages of non-Jews appearing in: Tolts, M. (2014). 'Sources for the demographic study of the Jews in the Former Soviet Union.' *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*. V. 27, pp. 160–177.

Data on Jewish emigration from Tunisia (years 1948–1953) and Morocco (years 1961–1966) come from: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel. (2007). *Immigration to Israel*, 2000–2001. Special publication 1291.

Sources for Chapter 5

UK unemployment data

UK unemployment levels are calculated on the basis of claimant counts. A 'claimant' is an official status relating to an individual claiming unemployment related benefits. Claimant counts constitute a by-product of the administrative system handling unemployment and access to benefits (Job Centres at this point in time). The counts are processed and published by the Office for National Statistics. The unemployment rate is expressed as a percentage, and is calculated with claimant counts in the numerator and a sum of claimant counts and workforce jobs in the denominator.

UK annual unemployment rates were calculated as simple averages on the basis of the monthly rates available in the ONS CLA01 Claimant Counts table:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ 20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/ index.html?nscl=Claimant+Count#tab-data-tables

Israeli unemployment data

Israel's unemployment levels are calculated on the basis of Labour Force surveys. An 'unemployed' person is defined as someone who did not work at all during the determinant week, actively sought work during the four weeks preceding the survey, and would have been available to start work. This definition is closely aligned with the definition developed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The annual unemployment rate is expressed as a percentage and is calculated with the number of unemployed in the numerator and the number of people in the total labour force (including employed and unemployed) in the denominator. It applies to the total population of Israel aged 15 years and over.

For the years 1955–2014, data were obtained from the annual publication of the Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel: Statistical Abstract of Israel 2015 (Table 12.1).

http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/?MIval=%2Fshnaton%2Fsh natone_new.htm&CYear=2015&Vol=66&CSubject=12&s a=Continue

For the year 2015, data were obtained from the section 'Labour Data based on Labour Force Surveys' of the Time-Series Databank: http://www.cbs.gov.il/ts/databank/series_one_e. html?codets=41097

Unemployment rate data were missing for 20 out of 60 points in time (33% missing), predominantly for the early years in the time series. Data for the missing years were obtained by averaging across figures for the preceding and following years with available data. Since 1975, data were unavailable for 8 out of 40 data points (20% missing). Since 1990 there were no missing data.

French unemployment data

The unemployment levels for France are calculated on the basis of Labour Force surveys. The ILO definition of unemployment applies. The annual unemployment rate is expressed as a percentage, and is calculated with the number of unemployed in the numerator and the number of people in the total labour force (including employed and unemployed) in the denominator. It applies to the total population of metropolitan France aged 15 years and over.

For the years 1975–2015, the quarterly unemployment rates, subsequently used for the calculation of the annual rates, were obtained from the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) website: http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/info-rapide.asp?id=14

For the years 1950–1974, the annual unemployment rates were obtained from the historical publication '*Annuaire Rétrospectif de la France 1948–1988*,' made available upon request by Thierry Couderc (Bibliothèque de l'Insee).

Data relating to the state of security

An indicator of political stability and the absence of violence for the UK and France was obtained from the Worldwide Governance Indicators Project, a project carried out by the World Bank Group:

http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index. aspx#home

The indicator is a percentile rank indicating the percentage of countries that rank lower than UK (France) on political stability. High values of the indicators should be interpreted as better governance scores.

The annual rate of antisemitic incidents was obtained by dividing the annual number of antisemitic incidents by the population figure for each country. For the UK, the annual number of antisemitic incidents was obtained from the publications of the Community Security Trust (CST): Community Security Trust. (2016); Antisemitic Incidents report 2015; and Community Security Trust. (2009). Antisemitic Incidents report 2008.

For France, the annual number of antisemitic incidents was obtained from the publications of the Jewish Community Security Service (SPCJ): Jewish Community Security Service. (2016). 2015 Report on antisemitism in France.

British data on antisemitic incidents originate from the reports of such incidents received directly by the CST. French data collated by the French Jewish Community Security Service reflect antisemitic incidents registered by the French Ministry of Interior. They are reported or filed as complaints to the police.

In this project we utilised other types of data pertaining to the state of security in Israel, UK and France. These data are not included in final models and graphical materials in this report but they were used for experimentation, for example, in modelling.

- 1 Annual data on victims of terrorism and terrorist events for the UK and France from the Global Terrorism Dataset: https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/
- 2 Annual data on terror fatalities in Israel provided by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFA-Archive/2000/Pages/ Terrorism%20deaths%20in%20Israel%20-%201920– 1999.aspx http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/ Palestinian/Pages/Victims%20of%20Palestinian%20 Violence%20and%20Terrorism%20sinc.aspx

- 3 Annual data on battle deaths in conflicts involving Israel from the UCDP Battle-Related Deaths Dataset v.5–2015, maintained by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program at Uppsala University http://ucdp.uu.se/?id=1
- 4 Annual data on battle deaths in conflicts involving Israel from the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Battle Deaths Dataset Version 3.0. https://www.prio.org/Data/Armed-Conflict/

Battle-Deaths/

jpr/report

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