

JEWS IN THE SOVIET UNION: A NOTE ON STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

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OUR knowledge of nationality statistics concerning Soviet students has been greatly expanded by the publication in mid-1961 of a new statistical compendium, *Vysshye obrazovanie v S.S.S.R.* ('Higher education in the U.S.S.R.'). It contains figures on a relatively recent year, the academic year 1960-1, and the following data are derived from this source—except that population statistics are derived from the 1959 census returns.

<i>Republic</i>	<i>Total students</i>	<i>Of which, Jews</i>	<i>Percentage of Jews in no. of students</i>	<i>Percentage of Jews in population</i>
Russian Federal Republic	1,496,097	46,555	3.1	0.7
Ukraine	417,748	18,673	4.4	2.0
Belorussia	59,296	3,020	5.1	1.9
Uzbekistan	101,271	2,902	2.9	1.2
Kazakhstan	77,135	837	1.1	n.a.
Georgia	56,322	910	1.6	1.3
Azerbaidzhan	36,017	906	2.5	n.a.
Lithuania	26,713	413	1.6	0.9
Moldavia	19,217	1,225	6.4	3.3
Latvia	21,568	800	3.7	1.7
Kirghizia	17,379	263	1.6	n.a.
Tadzhikistan	19,519	391	2.0	n.a.
Armenia	20,165	52	0.2	n.a.
Turkmenistan	13,151	104	0.8	n.a.
Estonia	13,507	126	0.9	0.5
Total, U.S.S.R.	2,395,545	77,177	3.2	1.1

n.a. = not available

The six republics for which no Jewish population statistics are available contained a total of 95,000 Jews and 2,553 Jewish students, representing respectively 0.4 per cent of the total population and 1.4 per cent of the students.

All these figures include evening and external students. The detailed data show that the Jews tend, in some republics (for instance the Ukraine), to have a below-average share in the number of day (i.e. full-time) students compared

with the share in the less favoured other categories. In the Ukraine, of the 417,748 students, 198,992 were day students, or 47·5 per cent. The others were evening or external students. For the Jews the total was 18,673, of which 7,007 were day students, or 37·5 per cent. In the Russian republic, however, there was no significant difference. About 40 per cent of all Jewish students are women, which is close to the all-U.S.S.R. average among students in general.

It is interesting to note that the absolute number of Jewish students in the Russian republic has fallen since 1956-7, when, as cited in my article in this Journal (Vol. III, No. 1), they amounted to 51,463. As already suggested there, the Russian republic contains a quite disproportionate number of Jewish students (about three-fifths of the total), no doubt because so many of the Jewish population live in Moscow and Leningrad and are on a high cultural level. In the Ukraine, things are much less satisfactory. But even there, and also in other republics where Jews live in large numbers, their share in the student population is well in excess of their share in the total population—though obviously a *numerus clausus* can exist.

The above-cited figures may give an over-favourable impression because the Jews live mostly in the large cities, whence a very large proportion of the total body come; it is quite possible that the Jewish citizens of Kiev or Kharkov find it much harder to get a university place than do other citizens of these towns, even though a larger proportion of Jews than other inhabitants of the Ukraine receive higher education.

Another new table gives the total numbers of 'specialists with higher education engaged in the national economy' on 1 December 1960. The words 'national economy' certainly include medicine, teaching, etc., and the figures can be taken to equal the active population with higher education. The figures are:

	All specialists	Of which, women
Total	3,545,234	1,864,644
Of which: Russians	2,070,333	1,190,250
Ukrainians	517,729	259,146
Jews	290,707	141,847

The Jewish percentage of the total, about 8 per cent, is over seven times their proportion in the total population. It represents nearly 13 per cent of the total Jewish population of all ages. The location of all nationalities by republics is also given, which enables one to observe, *inter alia*, that 4,148 Jewish 'specialists' are in Kazakhstan, 1,800 in Lithuania, and so on.

There is indirect evidence that the percentage of Jews in the total number of specialists has rather substantially fallen. This can be deduced from the omission of Jews from the table in the compendium (p. 69) comparing 1941 with 1960. True, most other smaller nationalities are omitted from this table also; but their share probably rose in these twenty years, yet the nationalities listed in this table accounted for 79·0 per cent of the total in 1941 and 87·2 per cent in 1960. In 1960 the Jews numbered 8 per cent of the total, leaving only 4·8 per cent for all the minor nationalities. Suppose these accounted for

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4 per cent of the 1941 total, which is a reasonably generous assumption. Then the Jews' share fell from 17 per cent to 8 per cent, and the entire object of leaving them out of the table in question was to avoid having to show this fact. If these figures are roughly correct, the absolute number of Jewish 'specialists' nonetheless increased, from 154,000 in 1941 to 290,707 in 1960. This follows from the very large rise (over 3½-fold) in the total number of 'specialists with higher education' of all nationalities.

In the same volume there are tables showing the national composition of teaching and research staffs. These are confined to 'nationalities of the union republics', and no information of relevance for our present purpose can be gleaned from them.*

* Cf. 'Jews in the Soviet Union', Vol. III, No. 1, and 'A Note on the Proportion of Jews in Republican and Local Soviets, U.S.S.R.', Vol. III, No. 2 of this Journal.