

WORLD JEWISH POPULATION, 2024

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On January 1, 2024, we estimated the world's Jewish population at 15,736,800—an actual increase of 78,800 (0.50%) above the revised 2023 estimate of 15,658,000 (DellaPergola 2024a). This estimate reflects a review of Jewish populations in 104 countries and territories with at least 100 Jews.

The world's total population increased by 0.90% in 2023. Thus, the rate of increase of world Jewry was about 56% of that of the world's total population. Nearly all world Jewish population increase derived from growth in the State of Israel, while in most other countries the number of Jews remained stable or slightly declined. The largest *core* Jewish population (see definitions below) was in Israel with 7,153,000, followed by the US with 6,300,000. Other countries with *core* Jewish populations above 100,000 included France (438,500), Canada (400,000), the UK (313,000), Argentina (170,000), Germany (125,000), the Russian Federation (123,000), and Australia (117,000). These estimates reflect updates of the data we published in the 2023 American Jewish Year Book (AJYB) (DellaPergola 2024a) in accordance with ongoing demographic trends.

A major downward adjustment of -40,500 was applied to the 2023 Jewish population estimate for Israel following the results of the 2022 Israel population census (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2024a). The main determinant of this revision was the adoption by the CBS of new criteria to define the population present in the country or absent due to permanent emigration or other prolonged stays abroad. On balance, more Israeli Jews were estimated to reside abroad than previously assumed (see below for more details).

The Israeli revision did not necessarily affect the estimates for other countries, since the respective estimates were independently obtained and supposedly already incorporated the Israeli Jews residing there. However, corrections were also introduced in previous 2023 estimates for other countries, for a total revision of +7,300 Jews, reflecting new national population censuses undertaken in 2020-2022 as well as new analyses of data available for several local Jewish communities. Consequently, retroactive corrections for the US and world Jewry were introduced going back several years. This demonstrated once more the paradox of the *permanently provisional* nature of Jewish population estimates.

This chapter, as in previous years, examines the world Jewish population's size, geographical distribution, alternative definitions, changes over time, and selected determinants of such changes. Section 8.1 examines the main methodological issues in the study of Jewish populations globally, such as definitions and data sources. Section 8.2 presents a picture of Jewish population size and distribution by major areas of the world. Section 8.3 analyzes major patterns and trends in Jewish population distribution. Section 8.4 focuses on the largest Jewish populations—the State of Israel, the United States, and several others. Section 8.5 deals with major cities and metropolitan areas. Section 8.6 reviews some major determinants of demographic change like Jewish identity boundaries, international migration and the

COVID-19 epidemic. An **Appendix** details the criteria and technical issues involved in estimating Jewish populations globally and in each country, stressing the need for comparable data based on a consistent worldwide methodology. Jewish population estimates are provided for each country as of January 1, 2024, according to four different definitions of the target constituency.

8.1 Assessing Jewish Population

8.1.1 Main trends

The study of Jewish demography is part of a growing interest among scholars and practitioners concerning the interplay of qualitative characteristics, such as religious or ethnic identities, with the known determinants of population change (De Gasquet 2021). **Table 8.1** details the originally published and the revised estimates of the world Jewish population—as well as changes in the world's total population between 1945 and 2024. The world's *core* Jewish population was estimated at 11.0M in 1945 and 15.7M in 2024, an overall increase of 4.7M, or 43%. The world's total population was 2.3B in 1945 and surpassed 8B by mid-2023, an increase of 5.7B, or 246%.

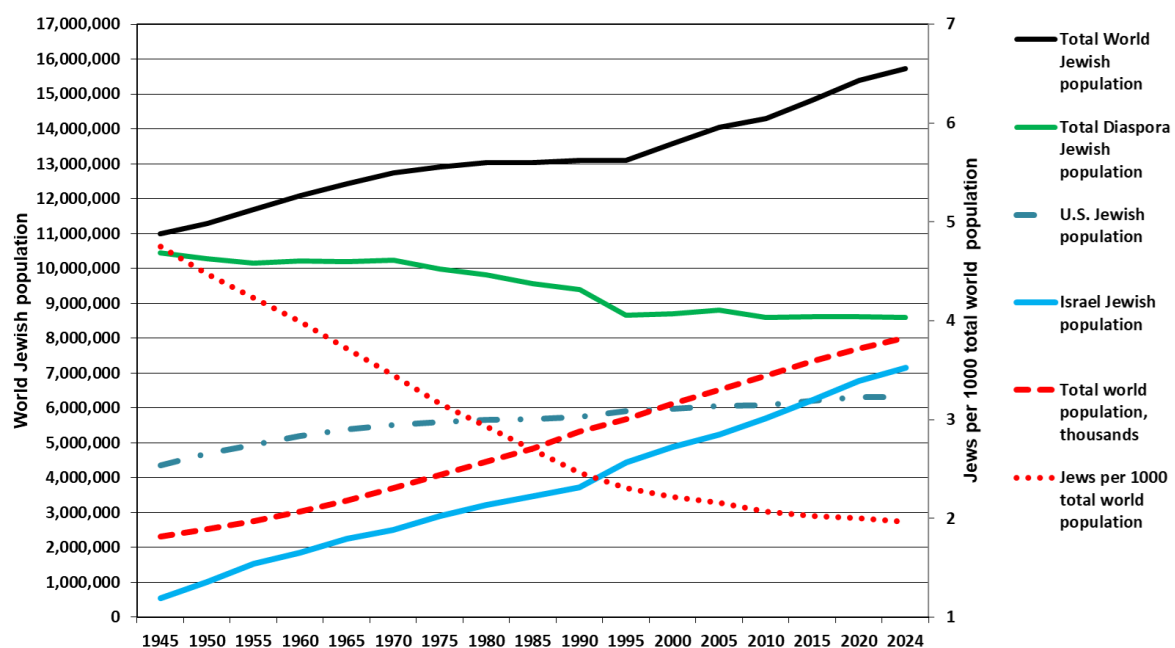


Fig. 8.1 World total population and core Jewish population, 1945-2024

The *core Jewish population* concept addresses a human collective whose identification is mutually exclusive with respect to other subpopulations. This is the main criterion employed in this chapter to define Jewish populations, but the number of people who carry multiple cultural and religious identities is increasing in contemporary societies (Josselson and Harway 2012). The adjudication of group identities (without double counting) becomes increasingly difficult as recent Jewish population studies in the US and elsewhere clearly demonstrated. One important issue in the current predicament is whether (Jewish) corporate identities can only be

acquired or whether they can also be lost. From a socio-demographic perspective, unlike the situation in the past, a clear-cut binary division of the world population between Jews and non-Jews is no longer possible. Operational decisions must be made to consistently estimate current Jewish population size for all countries in the world (DellaPergola 2014b, 2015b).

For the same period (1945-2024), **Fig. 8.1** shows the *core Jewish population* estimates for the world, for Israel, for the rest of world Jewry (the *Diaspora*), and for the US.

Table 8.1 World core Jewish population estimates: original and revised 1880-2024

Year	World Jewish Population			World Population		Jews per 1000 total world population	% in Israel of world Jewish population
	Original estimate ^a	Revised estimate ^b	Annual % change ^c	Total (millions) ^d	Annual % change		
1880		7,800,000		1,400		5.57	0.31
1900, Jan. 1	10,728,500	10,600,000	1.55	1,625	0.75	6.52	0.47
1922, Jan. 1	15,393,800	14,400,000	1.40	1,900	0.71	7.58	0.58
1939, Jan. 1	16,181,300	16,500,000	0.80	2,300	1.13	7.17	2.72
1945, May 1	11,000,000	11,000,000	-6.53	2,315	0.11	4.75	4.95
1950, Jan. 1	11,303,400	11,297,000	0.57	2,526	1.76	4.47	8.97
1960, Jan. 1	12,792,800	12,079,000	0.67	3,026	1.82	3.99	15.39
1970, Jan. 1	13,950,900	12,735,000	0.53	3,691	2.01	3.45	19.68
1980, Jan. 1	14,527,100	13,034,000	0.26	4,449	1.81	2.93	24.69
1990, Jan. 1	12,810,300	13,103,000	0.05	5,321	1.74	2.46	28.37
2000, Jan. 1	13,191,500	13,575,000	0.35	6,127	1.42	2.22	35.90
2005, Jan. 1	13,034,100	14,035,000	0.67	6,514	1.23	2.15	37.32
2010, Jan. 1	13,428,300	14,299,000	0.37	6,916	1.20	2.07	39.88
2015, Jan. 1	14,310,500	14,830,800	0.73	7,336	1.19	2.02	41.92
2020, Jan. 1	14,787,200	15,380,600	0.73	7,689	0.94	2.00	44.04
2023, Jan. 1	15,691,200	15,658,000	0.65	7,937	1.06	1.97	45.26
2024, Jan. 1	15,736,800		0.50	8,008	0.90	1.97	45.45

^a As published in *American Jewish Year Book*, various years. Some estimates reported here as of Jan. 1 were originally published as of Dec. 31 of previous year

^b Based on updated or corrected information. Original estimates for 1990 and after, and all revised estimates: The A. Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

^c Based on revised estimates, except latest year. Mid-year estimates.

Source: Population Reference Bureau (2024), United Nations Population Division (2024)

After the tragic human losses of World War II and the *Shoah* (Holocaust), 15 years passed before the Jewish population increased by one million, from 11M to 12M (DellaPergola et al. 2000). Another 30 years were needed for an increase of another million from 12M to 13M. From the 1970s and for the next nearly 20 years, world Jewry stagnated with approximately *zero population growth*. Some demographic recovery occurred since the 1990s, mostly reflecting accelerating population growth in Israel. It took about 17 years to add another million from 13M to 14M, and about ten more years to add the next million, reaching 15M around 2017. From a historical perspective and based on comparable definitions, world Jewish population has not yet recovered its estimated size of 16.5M on the eve of World War II (1939), and it may still take a few more decades before that milestone is attained.

World Jewish population size reflects a combination of two very different demographic trends in Israel and in the rest of the world—the Jewish Diaspora. Israel's Jewish population increased linearly over fourteen-fold, from an initial half million in

1945, and 630,000 in 1948, to 7.2M in 2024. The Jewish population of the Diaspora, from an initial 10.5M in 1945, was quite stable until the early 1970s, when it started decreasing. It reached about 8.7M around 2000 and subsequently remained relatively stable. Given the faster pace of growth of the world's total population, the share of Jews relative to the world's total steadily diminished from 4.75 per 1000 in 1945 to 1.97 per 1000 currently—or one per every 509 inhabitants in the world.

In 2024, two countries, Israel and the US, accounted for over 85% of the total Jewish population; 23 countries, each with 10,000 Jews or more, accounted for another 14%, and another 79 countries, each with Jewish populations below 10,000, accounted for the less than 1% remaining. **Fig. 8.2** shows the size of the 20 largest core Jewish populations in 2024.

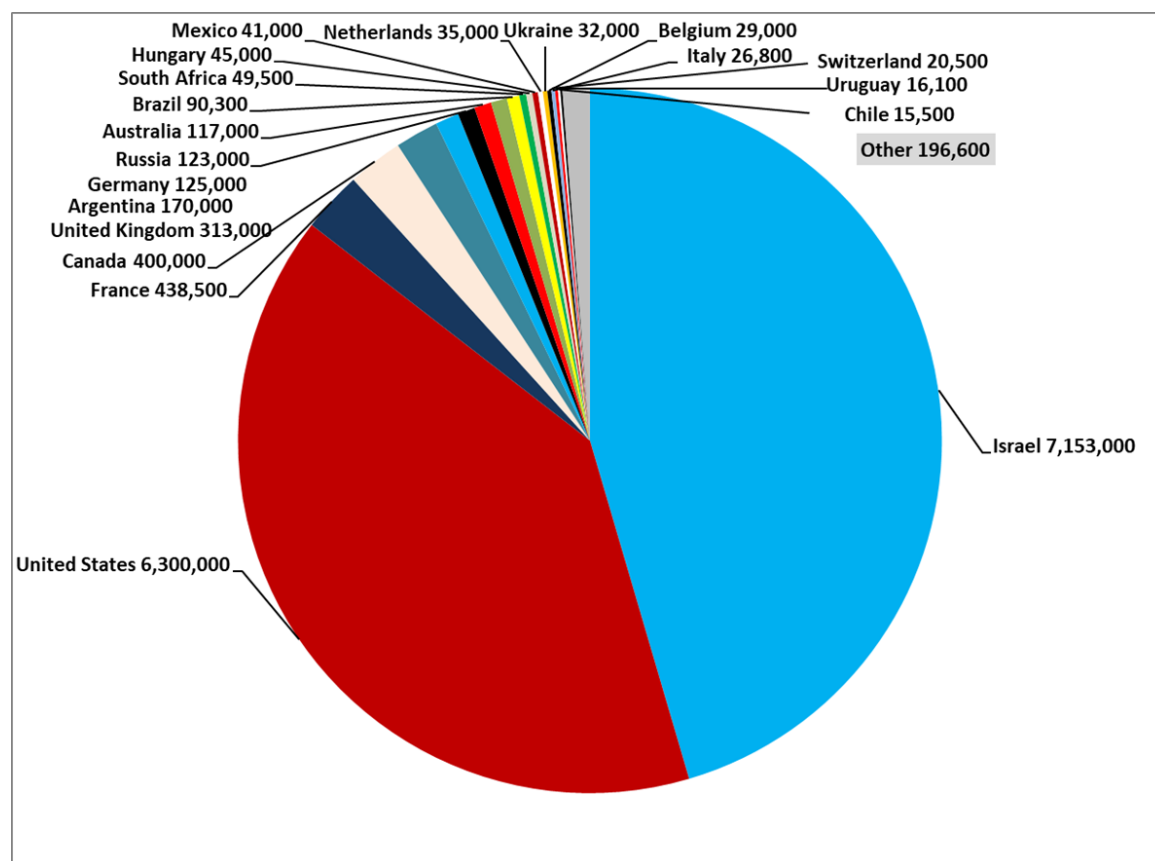
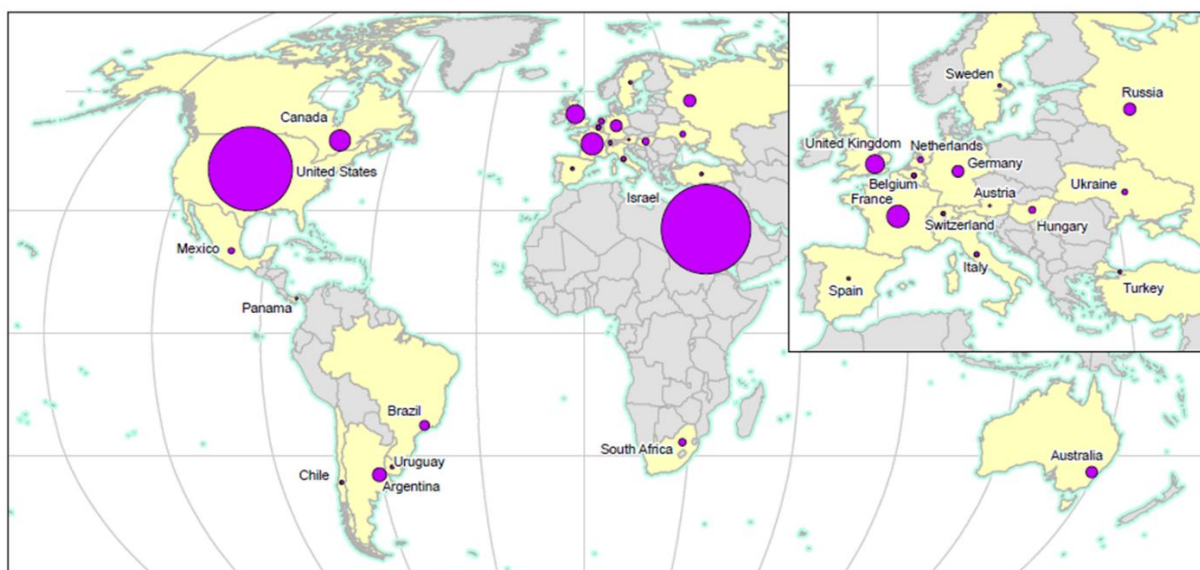


Fig. 8.2 Twenty largest core Jewish populations, 2024

Map 8.1 shows the geographical distribution of the 20 largest Jewish communities worldwide.



Map 8.1 Countries where 99% of world core Jewish population live, 2024

Israel's *core Jewish population* reached 7,153,000 on 1/1/2024, out of Israel's total legal population of 9,914,700 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Monthly). This *core* Jewish population figure does *not* include 478,900 members of families admitted in Israel under the *Law of Return* who were not recorded as Jews in the Ministry of Interior's Population Register. The 7,153,000 corresponded to 45.45% of the revised world's *core* Jewish population and represented an increase of 92,100 (1.30%) over the revised figure of 7,060,900 on 1/1/2023. Israel's rate of population increase in 2023 was slower than on the previous year, after a slow-down in 2020-2021 due to the direct and indirect consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and significant recovery in 2023 (see below). In 2023, the total Jewish population of the Diaspora decreased by 13,300, from a revised estimate of 8,597,100 in 2023 to 8,583,000 in 2024 (-0.15%).

Based on our interpretation of the 2020 Pew study (Pew Research Center 2021, DellaPergola 2022, 2023a, 2023b, 2024a and 2024b), we assessed the US *core* Jewish population at 6.3M (as against a *net* Jewish population estimate of 7.5M by Pew) constituting 40.0% of world Jewry in 2024. An explanation of the rationale for US estimates is discussed below.

The Jewish population in the rest of the world—outside Israel and the US—was assessed at 2,283,800 in 2024 (14.5% of world Jewry), versus a revised estimate of 2,297,100 in 2023. The decline of 13,300 among Diaspora Jews outside the US amounted to an annual loss of -0.58% in the aggregate for those countries. With respect to the total world population, growth in 2023 was 1.1% in less developed countries, versus a decline of -0.2% in the more developed countries where most Jews live (Population Reference Bureau 2024).

After critically reviewing all available evidence on Jewish demographic trends, it is plausible to claim that Israel hosts the largest *core* Jewish community worldwide. Other population estimates pointing to a larger Jewish population in the US (Saxe and Tighe 2013; Saxe et al. 2021; Pew Research Center 2021; Tighe et al. 2023; Sheskin, Dashefsky, and Comenetz in this volume) are based on different definitions of the target population, addressed in detail below. Since Israel's independence in 1948, demography has produced a transition of singular importance to the Jewish historical experience—the return of the Jews to a geographical distribution significantly rooted

in Israel, their ancestral homeland. This has occurred through daily, slow, and diverse changes reflecting births and deaths, geographical mobility, and the choices of millions of people to express or to deny a Jewish collective identification not subordinated to—or shared/split with—other explicit religious or ethnic identifications. Concomitantly, Jewish majority status in Israel meets a significant demographic challenge facing a growing Palestinian Arab population within the officially recognized boundaries of the state as well as in the West Bank and Gaza.

Jewish (like any other) population estimates are subject to the fundamental demographic equation which holds that population size at a given time reflects an uninterrupted chain of events that may change the size of that population from an earlier to a later date. Of the possible determinants of population increase or decrease, two are relevant to all populations:

1. The balance of vital events (births and deaths). In many countries low Jewish birth rates combine with an increasingly elderly population, which generates higher death rates, yielding a declining population.
2. The balance of international migration (immigration and emigration). Such mobility can be highly variable over time and can differ significantly by country.
3. A third determinant consists of group identification changes (accessions and secessions)—in this case *passages* to and from a Jewish identity. This applies to all subpopulations defined by some cultural, symbolic, or other specific characteristic, as is the case for Jews. Identification changes do not affect people's physical presence but rather their willingness or ability to identify with a particular religious, ethnic, or otherwise culturally-defined group.

Israel's current Jewish population growth—although slower than during the 1990s—reflects a substantial natural increase generated by a combination of relatively high fertility and a relatively young age distribution. Young age composition in turn boosts the birth rate and keeps the death rate low. These two drivers of demographic growth do not simultaneously exist in any other Jewish population worldwide, notably not in the US. Other than a few cases of growth due to international migration (for example Canada, Australia, the US, and Germany), and possibly some local natural increase (plausibly in the UK and Mexico, and minimally in Austria and Belgium), the total number of Jews in Diaspora countries tends to diminish at varying rates.

All this holds true regarding the *core Jewish population*, which does *not* include non-Jewish members of Jewish households, Jews who also maintain another religious identification, people of Jewish ancestry who profess identification with another monotheistic religion, other non-Jews of Jewish ancestry, other non-Jews with family connections to Jews, and other non-Jews who may be interested in Jewish matters (see more details below). The detailed mechanisms and supporting evidence of Jewish population change were discussed extensively in previous issues of the *American Jewish Year Book (AJYB)* to which interested readers are referred (see DellaPergola 2015a through 2024a; for a detailed report on Jews in Europe, see DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020).

Jewish population size and composition reflect the day-to-day interplay of various factors that operate from within and beyond the Jewish community. The continuing realignment of world Jewish geography toward the major centers of economic

development and political power provides a robust yardstick for further explanation and prediction of Jewish demography (DellaPergola et al. 2005; DellaPergola and Sheskin 2015; DellaPergola 2017a; DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020).

The 2024 Jewish population data reported here were updated from 2023 and previous years in accordance with known or estimated vital events, migrations, and Jewish identification shifts. The world and regional Jewish population estimates result from the sum of national estimates. While individual country estimates can be obtained from nationwide sources and sometimes also from the sum of local sources, in the case of the world's total, no alternative exists to the summation of individual country figures, given the lack of a global population census. In updating the country estimates, procedures were applied consistently, based on known changes in vital events and migration, where available. In some less documented instances, the new numbers resulted from reasonable assumptions. If the evidence suggested that intervening changes balanced one another in a particular country, Jewish population size was not modified. This procedure has proven to be highly effective over the years of our monitoring the world Jewish population. Most often, when improved Jewish population estimates reflecting a new census or socio-demographic survey became available, our annually updated estimates have been quite on target. Where needed, previous estimates were adjusted retrospectively based upon newer, more rigorous evidence.

Perhaps more importantly, the research findings reported here tend to confirm a coherent and conceptually robust interpretation of the trends prevailing in world Jewish demography (Bachi 1976; Schmelz 1981, 1984; DellaPergola 1995, 1999, 2001, 2011a). While allowing for improvements and corrections, the 2024 population estimates highlight the increasing complexity of socio-demographic and identification factors underlying Jewish population patterns. This complexity is magnified at a time of extensive internal and international migration as well as increasing transnationalism, sometimes involving bi-local residency and leading to double counting of people on the move or who permanently share their time between different cities, states, and countries. The rather unsettled situation following the start of the Russia-Ukraine war and the October 7, 2023 massacre and ensuing war in Israel, as well as pressures felt by Jews worldwide due to rising antisemitism, make the current moment one in which temporary and permanent population movements are more difficult to assess.

In this study, special attention was paid to avoiding double counts of nationally and internationally mobile bi-local persons. Estimates become even more complex when considering those who may hold more than one religious, ethnic, or cultural identity and may periodically shift from one to the other. Available data sources only imperfectly allow for the documentation of these complexities; hence, Jewish population estimates are far from perfect. Thankfully, the quality of the estimates can always be corrected retrospectively, as demonstrated in this chapter.

8.1.2 Definitions

It is obvious that Jewish population definitions critically impact population estimates. A major problem with estimates produced by several individual scholars or Jewish organizations is a lack of uniformity in Jewish population definition criteria and data quality. This problem is magnified when attempts are made to estimate the Jewish population globally, providing a coherent and uniform definitional framework for Jews who live in very different institutional, cultural, and socioeconomic environments. For

analytical purposes, it would *not* be acceptable to employ a different definitional standard for each country, although in the daily conduct of Jewish communal affairs such differences across countries may be the reality.

In such an open, fluid, and somewhat blurred environment, the very feasibility of undertaking a valid and meaningful study of the Jewish collective generates debates between different intellectual standpoints facing Jewish population studies—let alone the use of particular quantitative tools (DellaPergola 2014d). In particular, the study of a Jewish population (or of any other subpopulation) requires addressing three main problems:

1. *Defining* the target group on the basis of conceptual or normative criteria aimed at providing the best possible ideal description of that group—which in the case of Jewry is no minor task in itself.
2. *Identifying* the target group thus defined based on tools that operationally allow for those who belong to it to be distinguished from all others. This is primarily achieved by the systematic canvassing of populations and directly ascertaining personal identifications—typically through national censuses or representative sample surveys. Identification is also often performed by means of membership lists, consumer directories, distinctive Jewish names, areas of residence, or other random or non-random procedures.
3. *Covering* the target group through appropriate field work—through face-to-face interviews, by telephone, mail, internet, or other means. In the actual experience of social research, most often and contrary to ideal procedures, the task of defining is performed at the stage of identifying, and the task of identifying is performed at the stage of actual fieldwork.

It should be emphasized that the quantitative study of Jewish populations, as reflected in this chapter, relies predominantly on *operational* social scientific, not *prescriptive* rabbinical or legal, definitional criteria. The main conceptual aspects, besides being rooted in social theory, heavily depend on practical and logistical feasibility—not the least, available research budgets. The ultimate empirical step—obtaining relevant data from relevant people—crucially relies on the readiness of people to cooperate in the data collection effort. In recent years, response rates and cooperation rates have significantly decreased in social surveys—in particular, those undertaken through telephone interviews (Keeter et al. 2017). Consequently, the amount, content, and validity of information gathered have been affected detrimentally. New field work strategies must be continuously devised to avoid deterioration in the number and quality of responses. Response rates for Jewish surveys tend to compare fairly with those of general surveys, as Jews are possibly readier than others to respond to surveys, generally because of their higher socioeconomic status. Nevertheless, data quality constitutes a topic of growing concern in contemporary social research.

No perfect method exists to counter decreases in response and cooperation rates, or self-selection biases in participation readiness. Research findings therefore reflect with varying degrees of sophistication only that which is possible to uncover—namely, respondents' degree of involvement with or indifference to feeling Jewish. Sometimes, things which cannot be uncovered directly can be indirectly estimated through various

research techniques. However, there exist insurmountable limits to what research methodologies can deliver. Research methods should be finely tuned to research goals. Large representative samples and small qualitative studies are not interchangeable—rather they are complementary—regarding the answers they may provide to specific research questions. Beyond that, we enter the realm of narratives, beliefs, hopes and fears, myths, and corporate interests. No perfect methodology exists to demonstrate the actual nature of some of these biases—at least not within the limits of non-fiction and non-advocacy studies such as the present one. Keeping these limits in mind, four major definitional concepts are presented here to provide rigorous comparative foundations to the study of Jewish demography worldwide (**Fig. 8.3**):

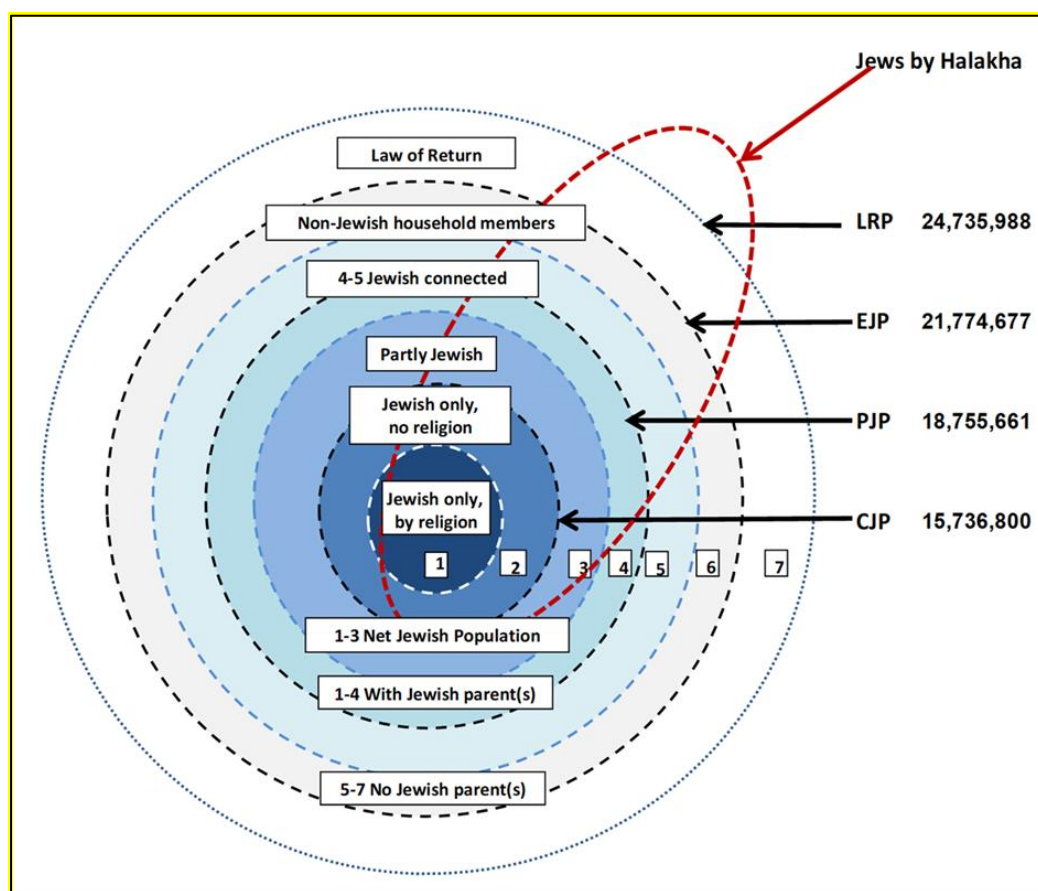


Fig. 8.3 Configuring and defining contemporary Jewish populations, 2024

1-2 = Core Jewish population (CJP)

1 to 4 = Population with Jewish parent(s) (PJP)

1 to 6 = Enlarged Jewish population (EJP)

1 to 7 = Law of Return population (LRP)

Note: Areas inside each concentric circle are not proportional to actual population sizes

1. the **Core Jewish population (CJP)**: the group that considers Judaism their mutually exclusive identification framework, includes both those who do and do not see religion as a relevant avenue for identification (in **Fig. 8.3**: *Circle 1*: Jewish only, by religion; and *Circle 2*: Jewish only, no religion).

2. the **Population with Jewish parent(s) (PJP)**: includes those who say they are *partly Jewish* because their identity is split between two or more different identification frameworks (*Circle 3*), and those who say they are not Jewish but have at least one Jewish parent (*Circle 4*). Taken together Circles 3 and 4 may also be referred to as the *Jewish-connected* population.
3. the **Enlarged Jewish population (EJP)**: includes those who say they have Jewish background but not a Jewish parent (*Circle 5*), as well as all non-Jewish household members who live in households with Jews (*Circle 6*).
4. the **Law of Return population (LRP)**: the State of Israel's legal instrument for determining eligibility for immigration, citizenship, and all related prerogatives includes Jews, their children, grandchildren and the respective spouses (*Circle 7*).

A further important conceptual term is the **Net Jewish population (NJP)** introduced by the Pew Research Center to define their main target population in their 2013 and 2020 surveys of US Jews (Pew Research Center 2013, 2021). The **NJP** includes the core Jewish population as defined above plus those who defined themselves—or operationally were defined—as *partly Jewish* (circles 1, 2, and 3 in **Fig 8.3**). In 2020, the definition was extended to include persons with no religion identifying in some way with Judaism as culture, ethnicity or family origin, and could also identify with another religion. In other words, the **NJP** defined a group which is conceptually and numerically intermediate between the **CJP** and the **PJP**. Further discussion about these definitions may be found in the **Appendix**.

Our four-fold typology is independent from other existing population definition approaches, and delineates different analytic paths grounded in alternative social theories. It also provides backing to different possible Jewish institutional strategies aiming at variable catchment constituencies. The categories in **Fig. 8.3** are not static but in fact assume continuous passages across the different circles, from center to periphery and vice versa, and from the most external circle outwards and into it. Further definitional extensions (not shown in **Fig. 8.3**) may address those additional people who are not currently Jewish and feel some degree of **affinity with Judaism**, sometimes because their more distant ancestors were Jewish or because of other personal, cultural or social connections with Jews. These forms of affinity have aroused growing interest in recent years in different regional contexts like Latin America (Torres 2017), Africa (Miles 2019), and Europe (Vincze 2020). This is the background to recent attempts made to establish organized communities in various parts of the world, who claim belonging to Judaism and ask to be recognized as such by various state, rabbinical, or other institutional authorities in Israel or elsewhere.

Relatedly, some studies—possibly including the recent Pew surveys—may have reached people whose **ancestors were ever Jewish**, regardless of the respondents' present identification. Socio-demographic surveys sometimes ask about the religious-ethnic identification of parents. Some population surveys even ask about more distant ancestry. Historians may wish to engage in the study of the number of Jews who ever lived (DellaPergola 2024c) or of how many people today are descendants of those Jews—for example, *Conversos* who lived in the Iberian Peninsula during the Middle Ages, or the descendants of Jews who lived during the Roman Empire, or the Lost Tribes (Parfitt 2002; Parfitt and Fisher 2016; Israel Ministry of Diaspora Affairs 2018; Gross et al. 2019). The early Jewish backgrounds of some population groups have

been uncovered in recent studies of population genetics (Hammer et al. 2000; Behar et al. 2004; Behar et al. 2010; Carmi et al. 2014; Tian et al. 2015). These long-term issues and analyses are beyond the scope of the present study.

The adoption of increasingly extended definitional criteria by individual researchers and by Jewish organizations tends to stretch Jewish population definitions with an expansive effect on population estimates beyond usual practices in the past as well as beyond the limits of the *core Jewish population* definition. These decisions may reflect local needs and sensitivities but tend to limit the comparability and efficacy of Jewish population research over time and in different locales at one given time. As noted, a more coherent comparative approach is followed here, historically and geographically. The estimates presented below of Jewish population distribution worldwide and in each continent and country—unless differently specified—are consistently anchored to the concept of *core Jewish population*. The *core* definition is indeed the necessary starting point for any broader definition such as the population *with Jewish parents*, the *enlarged* definition, or the *Law of Return* definition (see detail in the **Appendix**). All Jewish population estimates presented here refer to the total number of persons in a given geographical unit, *not* only the affiliated or those who are religiously observant.

What is clear from this discussion, and is portrayed in **Fig. 8.3** by a red oval dotted line, is that these operational estimates cannot and have no pretention to represent a Jewish population defined according to Rabbinic law (*Halakha*). The determination of Jewish belonging according to Halakha is based on Jewish legal principles—sometimes requiring lengthy and detailed verification—which cannot be implemented in empirical social research. **Fig. 8.3** exemplifies graphically the possible overlap or lack of overlap between a Jewish population according to Halakha and according to the principles explained above. Clearly, there are persons that *bona fide* include themselves by one criterion but might be excluded according to another criterion, and vice versa. The respective numbers are unknown.

8.1.3 Data sources

The Jewish population estimates for major regions and individual countries reported below reflect a continuing effort—since the early 1980s—to scientifically study the demography of contemporary world Jewry. Data collection and comparative research on current population estimates have benefited from the collaboration of scholars and institutions in many countries, including access to unpublished databases. It should be emphasized, however, that the development of worldwide estimates of the number of Jews in various countries is beset with difficulties and uncertainties (Schmelz 1981; Ritterband et al. 1988; DellaPergola 2014c and 2014d). The problem of data consistency is particularly acute, given the very different legal systems and organizational provisions under which Jewish communities operate in different countries. In spite of our keen efforts to create a unified analytic framework for Jewish population studies, data users should be aware of these difficulties and of the inherent limitations of Jewish population estimates.

Over the past decades, the data available for a critical assessment of the worldwide Jewish population have expanded significantly. This new evidence generally confirmed our previous estimates, but sometimes suggested revisions. These data consist of national population censuses, national population registers, national and international public and privately sponsored surveys, and national or Jewish

community records of vital statistics, migrations, and conversions. Our approach is empirical, stressing that data, if they exist, should be intensively exploited. Every possible source of data deserves to be considered seriously. However, data must be critically read, evaluated and where needed, adjusted and corrected. It is not sufficient to simply report a number because it appeared somewhere. Before it can be accepted, each piece of information must be weighed in the light of accepted technical specifications and must be contextualized in a broader time and space framework. Most of this ongoing data compilation has been part of coordinated efforts aimed at strengthening Jewish population research by the Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics at the Avraham Harman Research Institute of Contemporary Jewry of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Since 2022, Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) has been associated with the scientific study of Jewish populations worldwide.

Jewish population projections undertaken by the author and others in light of available data, also helped in the current assessment. It is quite evident that the cross-matching of more than one type of source about the same Jewish population, although not frequently feasible, can provide either mutual reinforcement of, or important critical insights into, the ongoing trends. Other existing estimates of total world Jewish population and of its geographical distribution (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life 2012; Johnson and Zurlo 2014; Pew Research Center 2015a) provide findings quite consistent with ours. Unlike our review of hundreds of local and international sources, some of these global comparisons often rely on percentages of Jews from general national studies. In the latter case, as Jews are usually an extremely small fraction of the total population, the resulting Jewish estimates may be affected by large sampling errors. Full detail about the types and quality of documentation upon which our Jewish population estimates are based appears in **Table 8.17** below.

8.2 World Jewish Population Size and Distribution by Major Areas

8.2.1 Global trends

Between 2020 and 2022, several countries conducted national censuses, among them major Jewish population centers such as Israel, Canada, the United Kingdom, Russia, Australia, Brazil, Hungary and Mexico. While not all definitive information from these new sources was yet available at the time of this writing, our estimates for those countries drew important information from those sources. Further corrections will be introduced if needed, as more detailed census data become available. As noted, in our current estimates, we corrected some previously published Jewish population data given new information. In the US, following the 2020 Pew Research Center's survey of Jewish Americans, a most significant correction was an addition of about 300,000 Jews to our previous estimate (Pew Research Center 2021). Further corrections were introduced in this chapter for Israel and several other countries. These improvements generated retrospective revisions of the whole annual series of data for the US, the total Diaspora, and World Jewry since 1965.

Table 8.1 provides a synopsis of world Jewish population estimates for 1880 to 2024, as first published annually in the *AJYB*, and as now retroactively corrected in the light of augmented information. These revised estimates reflect an improved database and depart, sometimes significantly, from the estimates published by other authors until 1980 and in this chapter since 1981, also adjusting and superseding all

revisions that already had been introduced in previous years. Indeed, these new revisions are not necessarily the same revised estimates that appeared annually in past *AJYB* volumes, based on the information that was available on each date. It is likely that further retroactive revisions may become necessary reflecting ongoing and future research.

The earlier part of **Table 8.1** illustrates the last stages of the significant Jewish population growth that occurred during the 19th century, and more particularly between the 1880s and the eve of World War II. World Jewish population doubled during the half-century between the 1880s and the 1930s, and its growth was most marked in Eastern Europe, but also in the US as a consequence of large-scale intercontinental migration. As a consequence of higher than average natural increase, the share of Jews out of the world's total population increased from 5.57 per 1000 in 1880 to 7.17 per 1000 in 1939. On the eve of the war, the world total was estimated at 16.5M. The *Shoah* caused an estimated loss of 6M Jews (Lestschinsky 1948; Fein 1979; DellaPergola 1996; Benz 2001), but this was partially compensated by the increase in areas that were not under Nazi occupation.

The time series for the more recent decades in **Table 8.1** incorporates the newly revised estimates. It portrays the decreasing rate of Jewish population growth globally since the 1960s and through contemporary days. Based on a post-*Shoah* world Jewish population estimate of 11,000,000, an increase of 1,079,000 occurred between 1945 and 1960, followed by increases of 556,000 in the 1960s, 284,000 in the 1970s, 99,000 in the 1980s, and 482,000 in the 1990s. Since 2000, the trend of Jewish population growth somewhat recovered, with an increase of 799,000 up to 2010, reflecting the robust demographic trends in Israel and Israel's increasing share of the world total. Between 2010 and 2020, world Jewry increased by 1,078,000. Between 2020 and 2024 the Jewish population further increased by 356,000, all of this more recent growth due to Jews in Israel. **Table 8.1** also demonstrates the slower world Jewish population growth rate compared to global population growth since World War II, the declining share of Jews among the world's total population, and the rising share of Israel's (and formerly Palestine's) Jewish population out of total world Jewry, from less than half of one percent at the beginning of the 20th century, to over 45% in 2024.

Table 8.2 offers an overall picture of the Jewish population by major geographical regions at the beginning of 2024, compared with 2023. Estimates from the 2023 *American Jewish Year Book* (DellaPergola 2024a) were revised reflecting retroactive corrections due to improved data. These corrections resulted in a net reduction of -33,200 as against the 2023 world Jewry estimate. This reflected net increases of 5,300 for the Netherlands, 1,200 for Mexico, 1,000 for Turkey, 900 for Slovakia, and 100 for Serbia, and net decreases of -200 for Croatia, -500 for Czechia, -500 for Hungary, and -40,500 for Israel.

Looking first at global trends, the revised number of Jews in Israel increased from 7,060,900 at the beginning of 2023 to 7,153,000 at the beginning of 2024, an increase of 92,100, or 1.30%. Of this increase, 89,800 derived from the balance of births in 2023 (131,400, about 1400 less than in 2022) and deaths (41,300, about 2000 less than in 2022) (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Monthly). The decline of births came after a marked recovery following a reduction during the COVID-19 pandemic in Israel. The number of deaths diminished somewhat following the decline of the COVID-19 epidemic. The total net Jewish population increase of 92,100 also comprised a tiny net international migration balance of 2500, and a net loss of 200 in the balance of passages to and from Judaism (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual). In 2023 as

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in previous years, therefore, internal demographic change produced most (97.5%) of total Jewish population growth in Israel.

Table 8.2 Estimated core Jewish population, by continents and major geographical regions, 2023 and 2024^a

Region	Revisions vs. 2023 estimate	2023 Revised ^b		2024		Difference 2023-2024		Jews per 1000 total population in 2024
		Estimate	Percent ^c	Estimate	Percent ^c	Number	Percent	
World total	-33,200	15,658,000	100.0	15,736,800	100.0	78,800	0.50	1.97
Jewish Diaspora	7,300	8,597,100	54.9	8,583,800	54.5	-13,300	-0.15	1.07
US	0	6,300,000	40.2	6,300,000	40.0	0	0.00	18.81
Other	7,300	2,297,100	14.7	2,283,800	14.5	-13,300	-0.58	0.30
Israel ^d	-40,500	7,060,900	45.1	7,153,000	45.5	92,100	1.30	721.45
America, total	1,200	7,061,200	45.1	7,060,800	44.9	-400	-0.01	6.87
North ^e	0	6,698,200	42.8	6,700,200	42.6	2,000	0.03	17.86
Central, Caribbean	1,200	58,700	0.4	58,500	0.4	-200	-0.34	0.26
South	0	304,300	1.9	302,100	1.9	-2,200	-0.72	0.71
Europe, total	6,100	1,321,700	8.4	1,309,800	8.3	-11,900	-0.90	1.58
European Union ^f	5,000	796,200	5.1	794,100	5.0	-2,100	-0.26	1.77
FSU ^g	0	172,500	1.1	161,900	1.0	-10,600	-6.14	0.83
Other West, Balkans ^h	1,100	353,000	2.3	353,800	2.2	800	0.23	1.91
Asia, total	-40,500	7,095,800	45.3	7,187,400	45.7	91,600	1.29	1.54
Israel	-40,500	7,060,900	45.1	7,153,000	45.5	92,100	1.30	721.45
FSU	0	13,500	0.1	13,100	0.1	-400	-2.96	0.13
Other	0	21,400	0.1	21,300	0.1	-100	-0.47	0.00
Africa, total	0	54,600	0.3	54,100	0.3	-500	-0.92	0.04
Northern ⁱ	0	3,400	0.0	3,400	0.0	0	0.00	0.01
Sub-Saharan ^j	0	51,200	0.3	50,700	0.3	-500	-0.98	0.05
Oceania^k	0	124,700	0.8	124,700	0.8	0	0.00	2.77

^a Jewish population: January 1. Total population: mid-year estimates, 2023. Source: Population Reference Bureau (2024), United Nations Population Division (2024)

^b Compare with the original in DellaPergola (2024). The corrections reflect newly available data and concern: Netherlands (+5,300), Mexico (+1,200), Turkey (+1000), Slovakia (+900), Serbia (+100), Croatia (-200), Czechia (-500), Hungary (-500), Israel (-40,500).

^c Minor discrepancies due to rounding

^d Includes the Jewish residents in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights

^e US and Canada

^f EU including the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania). Not including the UK

^g FSU excluding the Baltic countries. Asian parts of Russia included in Europe

^h Including the UK. Asian parts of Turkey included in Europe

ⁱ Including Ethiopia and Eritrea

^j Including South Africa and Zimbabwe

^k Including Australia and New Zealand

In contrast, the estimated Jewish population in the Diaspora *decreased* from the revised estimate of 8,597,100 in 2023 to 8,583,800 in 2024—a decrease of 13,300, or -0.15%. These changes reflect continuing Jewish emigration from the former Soviet Union (FSU), and, to a lesser extent, from France, South Africa, the small remnants of Jewish communities in Muslim countries, and other countries, and internal decrease due to an excess of deaths over births, as is typical of the majority of Diaspora Jewry. These data predominantly reflect temporary or permanent exits from Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus as a result of the war in Ukraine. They also reflect the increased number of Israeli residents migrating, at least temporarily, to other countries in the world.

Following these estimates, the Jewish Diaspora's estimated total decrease of 13,300 in 2023 versus a negative migration balance of 2500 vis-à-vis Israel would imply a natural decrease of 10,800. The total Diaspora population decrease in 2023 did not occur in the US, whose Jewish population was assumed to be stable, nor a few countries like Canada, Germany and Poland which could have absorbed some migration stemming from the Russia-Ukraine war.

In recent years, an increase was noted in the quest for conversion, accession, or "return" to Judaism among immigrants to Israel and other people from Ethiopia, from the FSU, from Latin American countries like Brazil, Colombia and Peru, from India, and to a minor extent from Sub-Saharan Africa. To some extent, this same phenomenon of returns or first-time accessions to Judaism appears throughout Diaspora communities, sometimes without a formal conversionary *rite of passage*. To the extent that such previously non-belonging or unidentified people are actually incorporated within the recognized Jewish population, they contribute both to the slowing of population decrease in some Diaspora Jewish communities, and to a minimal increase in Israel's Jewish population (Fisher 2015, 2019; DellaPergola 2017c; Nissim 2018; Torres 2017).

8.2.2 Continental distribution

Looking at population distribution by continents, in descending order, 45.7% of world Jewry in 2024 lived in **Asia**, the overwhelming majority of which (45.5%) in Israel (**Table 8.2** and **Table 8.17**). Asia is defined herein to include the Asian republics of the FSU, but not the Asiatic areas of the Russian Federation nor Turkey. The Jewish presence in Asia (Kovner 2021) is mostly affected by trends in Israel which accounts for more than 99% of the continental total. The former republics of the FSU in Asia and the aggregate of other countries in Asia accounted together for 0.1% of the world total. Rapid economic development in Asian countries like Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and especially China (namely in Hong Kong), is attracting Jewish professionals, businesspeople, and skilled technical workers. The numbers are still small, but they are increasing. As for Muslim countries, Turkey (followed by Iran and Azerbaijan) had the largest remaining Jewish community but is included in Europe since most Jews live on the European side of the Turkish Straits (Tuval 2004; Filiba 2023).

The Americas were home to 44.9% of the world's Jews, of whom 42.6% lived in North America. The Jewish population in the Americas, estimated at 7,060,800 in 2024, was predominantly concentrated in the US (6,300,000, or 89% of the total Americas), followed by Canada (400,000, 6%), South America (302,100, 4%), and Central America and the Caribbean (58,500, less than 1%) (DellaPergola 2021c). Since the 1960s, the Jewish population generally decreased in South America, reflecting emigration motivated by recurring economic and security concerns (Schmelz and DellaPergola 1985; DellaPergola 1987, 2008a, 2011b). Central American countries such as Mexico and Panama were the exceptions, absorbing Jewish migrants from other countries in Latin America. In the Miami Jewish community alone, the number of members of households containing a Jewish adult from Latin American countries increased from roughly 18,000 households in 2004 to 24,500 households in 2014 (Sheskin 2015b). In neighboring Broward County, the same pattern was evident, with an increase from 5300 in 1997 to 26,500 in 2016 (Sheskin 2017). Between 2001 and 2023, over 36,000 immigrants from Latin America arrived in Israel (Israel Central

Bureau of Statistics Annual). This included many people highly educated and highly involved in Jewish life, as well as recently converted people (Bokser-Liwerant et al. 2015; Torres 2017). Outside the mainstream of established Jewish communities, stronger interest in Judaism appeared among real or alleged descendants of *Conversos*, whose ancestors left Judaism and converted to Christianity under pressure of the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal in the 15th and 16th centuries. Some of these *Converso* communities strove to create permanent frameworks to express their Jewish identity, in part locally, and in part through formal conversion to Judaism and migration to Israel. This phenomenon may lead to some expansion of the Jewish population, especially in smaller communities in the peripheral areas of Mexico, Brazil, Peru, and Colombia, as well as other countries (Israel Ministry of Diaspora Affairs 2018; Torres 2017).

Europe, including the Asian territories of the Russian Federation and Turkey, accounted for 8.3% of world Jewry (see also DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020 and 2021). The Jewish population in Europe, estimated at 1,309,800 in 2024, was increasingly concentrated in the western part of the continent, within the European Union (EU) and the UK. The EU, comprising 27 countries after the secession of the UK, had an estimated 794,100 Jews in 2024 (61% of the continent's total). Other non-EU and non-FSU European countries, including the UK (from 2020) and Turkey, had an estimated total of 353,800 core Jews (27% of the European total, of which 24% in the UK and 3% elsewhere). The combined Jewish population of the four former Soviet republics in Europe (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova, but excluding the Baltics) was reduced to 161,900 (about 12% of the continental total). Our 2024 assessment of the total *core Jewish population* for the 15 FSU republics in Europe and Asia was 183,100, of whom 170,000 were in Europe (including 8,100 in the three Baltic republics already accounted for in the EU) and 13,100 were in Asia. The FSU is the area where Jewish population diminished the most in absolute numbers since 1991 (Tolts 2008, 2014, 2015, 2018 and 2023; Konstantinov 2007).

The momentous political transformations since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 brought about a huge emigration wave out of the USSR and significant changes in the geographical distribution of Jewish communities in Europe. In spite of the unifying effect of the EU, Europe continues to be politically fragmented, making it more difficult to create a homogeneous Jewish population database. Nevertheless, several studies attempted to create such analytic frames of reference (Graham 2004; Kovacs and Barna 2010; DellaPergola 1993, 2010b; Staetsky et al. 2013; Staetsky and DellaPergola 2019; DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020 and 2021). The EU's initially expanding format symbolized an important historical landmark and a promising framework for the development of Jewish population. However, in recent years, the EU concept and ideal found itself under major stress, demonstrated by the 2020 secession of the UK (Brexit). Large Muslim population increases, following legal and unauthorized immigration in different European locales, generated disagreements about migration policies, and highlighted the long-standing dilemma of defining Europe's own cultural identity and geopolitical boundaries.

Revitalization of Jewish community life in Western European countries occurred over the prior decades through immigration mainly from North Africa and the Middle East, as well as the FSU. More recently, however, economic recession and rising perceptions of antisemitism across the continent brought about growing Jewish dissatisfaction and emigration (DellaPergola 2017b; Staetsky 2017; Staetsky et al.

2013; European Union Fundamental Rights Agency-FRA 2013, 2018, 2024; DellaPergola 2020b). The conflict between Russia and Ukraine since February 2022 significantly influenced the respective Jewish populations by generating large scale emigration (both permanent and temporary) and internal displacement. Some of these population movements affected the size of neighboring Jewish communities, such as Germany and Poland. Between 2018 and 2024 (January to September), total emigration of Jews and their family members from Europe to Israel, including the FSU, surpassed 205,000. Of these, more than 180,000 came from the FSU, of which over 134,000 came from Russia; more than 20,000 came from the EU, of which over 15,000 came from France; and more than 5000 originated from other countries, of which over 3,000 from the UK. Emigration clearly was a sustained factor of Jewish population decrease all across Europe.

In Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Jewish population decrease continued, reflecting enhanced emigration, a continuing excess of Jewish deaths over Jewish births, high intermarriage rates, and low rates of Jewish identification among the offspring of the intermarried. The ongoing process of demographic decrease was alleviated to some extent by the revival of Jewish educational, cultural, and religious activities supported by American and Israeli Jewish organizations (Gitelman 2003; Remennick 2007).

Slightly more than 1% of the world's Jews lived in Africa and Oceania combined. The Jewish population in **Africa** was mostly concentrated in South Africa whose declining Jewish population constituted about 91% of the continental total, after a significant downward reassessment based upon a 2019 survey (Graham 2020). Some immigration continued to keep a stable Jewish population in **Oceania**, where Australia accounted for 94% of the total (Graham 2021).

Overall in the course of 2023, the Jewish population size increased primarily in Israel, and to a minimal extent in North America (thanks to Canada), and the UK (affecting the total of other European countries including the Balkans). The Jewish population decreased to varying degrees in Central and South America, the EU, the FSU (both in Europe and Asia), and Africa. It was stable in the US, North Africa, and Oceania.

8.2.3 Alternative Jewish population definitions

In **Table 8.3**, we evaluate the Jewish population's world and regional distribution according to several alternative definitions, as outlined in **Fig. 8.3**. Updated and revised *core Jewish population* estimates (CJP in **Table 8.3**) are presented, along with the total of those who *have Jewish parents* regardless of their current identity (PJP); the *enlarged Jewish population* including non-Jewish household members (EJP); and the population as defined by the *Law of Return* (LRP). Detailed country estimates are reported in **Table 8.17**. The main purpose of these alternative population boundary definitions is to promote and facilitate comparisons across countries. In light of the preceding discussion of definitions, it is clear that investigators and/or community leaders in one country sometimes follow local definitional criteria that may be different from, or even not meaningful or acceptable in, another country. This explains why Jewish population size in the US or Canada is evaluated quite differently in this versus other chapters of the present volume (see Sheskin, Dashefsky, and Comenetz; Brym). But in a global study such as this, maximum comparability can be ensured only if the same criteria are applied consistently for all countries. The prime choice should fall on

a minimum common denominator. By showing the implications of different definitions for Jewish population estimates we offer readers additional tools to understand ongoing population trends in their countries.

Starting from the *core Jewish population* estimate of 15,736,800 (CJP) worldwide in 2024, by adding people who state they are partly Jewish and people who are currently not Jewish with one or two *Jewish parents*, we obtain a broader global population estimate of 18,755,661 (PJP). By further adding non-Jewish members of Jewish households, we reach an *enlarged* estimate of 21,774,677 (EJP). Finally, under the comprehensive three-generation and spouse rules of Israel's *Law of Return*, we roughly estimate at 24,735,988 the total Jewish and non-Jewish population eligible for *aliyah* (immigration to Israel) (LRP). All these estimates include those who already live in Israel. In 2024, the US had a significantly larger *Jewish parents population* (PJP) than Israel—8,662,500 compared with Israel's 7,331,825.

Table 8.3 Jewish population by major regions, core definition and expanded definitions, 1/1/2024

Region	Core Jewish population ^a CJP	Population with Jewish parents ^b PJP	Enlarged Jewish population ^c EJP	Law of Return population ^d LRP	Difference LRP - CJP		Percent expansion LRP over CJP
					Number	Percent distribution ^e	
World total	15,736,800	18,755,611	21,774,677	24,735,988	8,999,188	100.0	57
Israel ^f	7,153,000	7,331,825	7,510,650	7,631,900	478,900	5.3	7
Diaspora, total	8,583,800	11,423,826	14,264,027	17,104,088	8,520,288	94.7	117
North America	6,700,200	9,132,765	11,565,330	13,997,895	7,297,695	81.1	109
Latin America	360,600	442,904	525,208	607,512	246,912	2.7	68
European Union ^g	794,100	950,214	1,106,327	1,262,441	468,341	5.2	59
FSU in Europe ^g	161,900	249,336	336,752	424,178	262,278	2.9	162
Rest of Europe ^g	353,800	404,704	455,607	506,511	152,711	1.7	43
FSU in Asia	13,100	18,679	24,258	29,837	16,737	0.2	128
Rest of Asia	21,300	25,599	30,063	34,167	12,867	0.1	60
Africa	54,100	60,464	66,837	73,431	19,331	0.2	36
Oceania	124,700	139,173	153,645	168,118	43,418	0.5	35

^a Includes all persons who, when asked, identify themselves as Jews; or, if the respondent is a different person in the same household, are identified by him/her as Jews; and do not have another religion. Also includes persons with a Jewish parent who claim no current religious or ethnic identity

^b Sum of (a) core Jewish population; (b) persons reported as partly Jewish; and (c) all others not currently Jewish with a Jewish parent

^c Sum of (a) core Jewish population; (b) persons reported as partly Jewish; (c) all others not currently Jewish with a Jewish parent; and (d) all other non-Jewish household members (spouses, children, etc.).

^d Sum of Jews, children of Jews, and grandchildren of Jews, and their respective spouses, regardless of Jewish identity

^e Minor discrepancies due to rounding

^f Includes the Jewish residents of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights

^g The UK is included in the Rest of Europe. The Former Soviet Union Baltic republics are included in the European Union

These results were estimated through a new, more accurate algorithm than in previous years. This algorithm determines the gradual expansion of the *Core Jewish population* figures into the *Jewish parents*, *Enlarged*, and *Law of Return* estimates reflecting the different frequencies of intermarriage in each country. Expanded Jewish population figures published in previous years based on a rougher estimation technique appeared to be somewhat overestimated—up to some 800,000 out of over 25M in the case of the *Law of Return* population. The technical details are illustrated in detail in the **Appendix** of this chapter.

Although tentative, the new estimates provide relevant indications about the total size and geographical distribution of populations that are more or less closely attached to the *core Jewish population*. The global total of those with a *Jewish parent* (PJP),

regardless of their own identification, is 3,018,861 higher than the *core Jewish population*. The *total number of household members* who have at least one core Jew in the household (EJP) is larger by an additional 3,019,016 people. Finally, the total number eligible for *the Law of Return* (LRP) comprises an additional 2,961,311 people. The difference between the global Law of Return population (LRP) and core Jewish population (CJP) is estimated at 8,999,188. Of these nearly 9M partly Jewish, somewhat Jewish-connected, or otherwise non-Jewish members of Jewish households, 81% live in North America, 5% in Israel, 5% in the EU, 3% in the FSU Republics in Europe and Asia, 3% in Latin America, 2% in other European countries, and 1% in the Rest of Asia, Africa and Oceania.

The relative impact of these population definitions is quite different in the three main geographical divisions considered in the upper part of **Fig. 8.4**—Israel, the US, and the rest of Diaspora Jewry (Other).

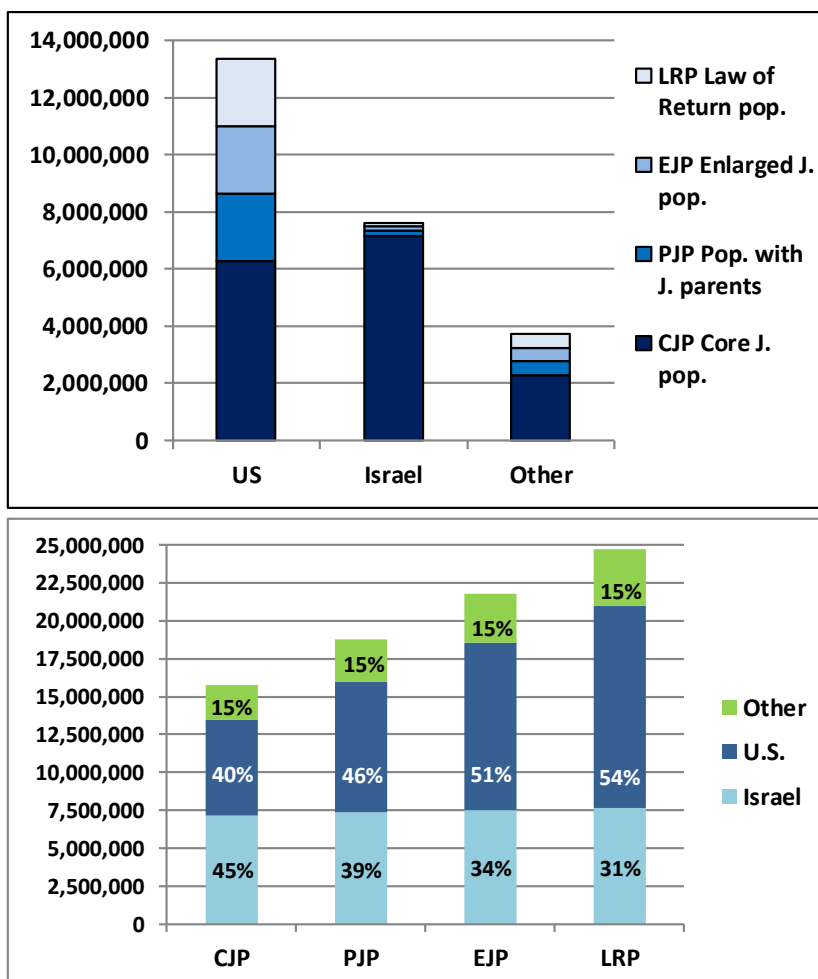


Fig. 8.4 Core and extended Jewish populations in the US, Israel, and other countries, number and percent, 2024

Since the frequency of intermarriage is much lower in Israel than elsewhere, the extensions beyond the *core Jewish population* in Israel are quite limited and primarily reflect immigration of intermarried households and, more recently, births in Israel from these households. With respect to Diaspora populations outside the US, the graphic

portrays the significant population expansion beyond the CJP. Note that with the emigration of core Jews—mainly to Israel—the number of other people connected in some way to Judaism does not necessarily diminish across these other Diaspora Jewish communities. The propensity of non-core Jews to change their country of residence may be actually lower than among core Jews, but they often remain nonetheless as a submerged part of the global Jewish population. On the other hand, with the passing of time, as more Jews across all definitional categories die, the more distant circles may eventually lose awareness of their connection to the core, or their eligibility for Israel's Law of Return. The lower part of **Fig. 8.4** confirms the growing dominance of the US in the definitional extensions beyond the *core* Jewish population. The US comprises 40% of the *core*, versus 54% of the *Law of Return* population. In turn, Israel comprises 45% of the *core* versus 31% of the *Law of Return* population. The rest of the world comprises an invariant 15% across different population definitions.

Recent research experience indicates that people may change their identities over time across the different circles of the *core* Jewish definition, and between different *core* and *non-core* Jewish identification statuses. It is not uncommon to see shifts across the virtual boundary between Jewish and 'something else' and vice versa in response to the particular context or moment when the question about identity is investigated. At any particular moment, then, there will be a countable Jewish population, which does not necessarily comprise the same individuals at any prior or future point in time.

8.3 Major Patterns and Trends in Jewish Population Distribution

In this section, we discuss the Jewish presence in relation to socioeconomic developments, time comparisons, and main patterns of dispersion and concentration.

8.3.1 Socioeconomic development and the Jewish presence

Reflecting moderate growth in the global Jewish population in 2023, accompanied by increasing concentration in a few countries, 85.4% of world Jewry in 2024 lived in Israel and the US, with 96.8% concentrated in the ten countries with the largest Jewish populations. Thus, the aggregate of just a few major Jewish population centers virtually determined the assessment of world Jewry's total size and trends. In 2024, 99.2% of world Jewry lived in the largest 25 communities, each with an estimated Jewish population of 10,000 or more. Excluding Israel, 98.4% of Diaspora Jewry lived in the 24 largest Diaspora communities, of which 73.4% lived in the US (**Table 8.4**). Besides the two major Jewish populations (Israel and the US), each comprising at least 6M, another seven countries each had more than 100,000 Jews but less than 500,000. Of these, three were in Western Europe (France, the UK, and Germany); one in Eastern Europe (Russia); one in North America (Canada); one in South America (Argentina); and one in Oceania (Australia). The dominance of Western countries in the global Jewish population distribution is a relatively recent phenomenon and reflects relatively more hospitable socioeconomic and political circumstances toward their respective Jewish communities.

Table 8.4 25 countries with core Jewish population of 10,000 or more, 1/1/2024

Rank	Country	Core Jewish population	% of total Jewish Population			
			In the world		In the diaspora	
			%	Cumulative %	%	Cumulative %
1	Israel ^a	7,153,000	45.5	45.5	b	b
2	United States	6,300,000	40.0	85.5	73.4	73.4
3	France	438,500	2.8	88.3	5.1	78.5
4	Canada	400,000	2.5	90.8	4.7	83.2
5	United Kingdom	313,000	2.0	92.8	3.6	86.8
6	Argentina	170,000	1.1	93.9	2.0	88.8
7	Germany	125,000	0.8	94.7	1.5	90.2
8	Russia	123,000	0.8	95.5	1.4	91.7
9	Australia	117,000	0.7	96.2	1.4	93.0
10	Brazil	90,300	0.6	96.8	1.1	94.1
11	South Africa	49,500	0.3	97.1	0.6	94.7
12	Hungary	45,000	0.3	97.4	0.5	95.2
13	Mexico	41,000	0.3	97.6	0.5	95.7
14	Netherlands	35,000	0.2	97.9	0.4	96.1
15	Ukraine	32,000	0.2	98.1	0.4	96.5
16	Belgium	29,000	0.2	98.2	0.3	96.8
17	Italy	26,800	0.2	98.4	0.3	97.1
18	Switzerland	20,500	0.1	98.5	0.2	97.3
19	Uruguay	16,100	0.1	98.7	0.2	97.5
20	Chile	15,500	0.1	98.8	0.2	97.7
21	Turkey	15,000	0.1	98.8	0.2	97.9
22	Sweden	14,900	0.1	98.9	0.2	98.1
23	Spain	13,000	0.1	99.0	0.2	98.2
24	Austria	10,300	0.1	99.1	0.1	98.3
25	Panama	10,000	0.1	99.2	0.1	98.4

^a Includes Jewish residents of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights

^b Not applicable

The growth, or at least the slower decrease, of Jewish population in the more developed Western countries goes together with a persistently higher share of Jews among the total population. The share of Jews in a country's total population, albeit small, tends to be directly related to the country's level of socioeconomic development (**Table 8.5**). Regarding *core* Jewish populations in 2024, the share of Jews out of Israel's total population was 721.5 per 1000, including Jews in East Jerusalem, in the West Bank, and on the Golan Heights, and also including foreign *de facto* residents, but excluding Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. The new inclusion of foreigners, and the renewed method of accountancy of Israelis abroad adopted by Israel Central Bureau of Statistics determined a reduction in the share of Jews among Israel's total population (721.5), down from 735.0 per 1000 in 2023. Israel's high rate of Jewishness obviously reflects its special position in Jewish history, migrations and identity perceptions. However, Israel also belongs to the group of more developed countries, and as such, may be attractive to prospective migrants. In the US, the *core* Jewish population represented 18.8 per 1000 of the total population. Jews comprised on average 4.7 per 1000 total population in the other seven countries with over 100,000 Jews; 0.6 per 1000 on average in the next 16 countries with 10,000 or more

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Jews; and less than 0.1 per 1000 in the remaining countries which comprise the overwhelming majority of the world total population (82.9%).

Table 8.5 25 largest core Jewish populations per 1,000 country's total population and Human Development Indices, 1/1/2024

Rank	Country	Core Jewish population	Total population	Jews per 1,000 total population	HDI Rank ^a 2023-24
1	Israel ^b	7,153,000	9,914,700	721.5	25
2	United States	6,300,000	335,000,000	18.8	20
3	France	438,500	65,900,000	6.7	28
4	Canada	400,000	40,100,000	10.0	18
5	United Kingdom	313,000	68,100,000	4.6	15
6	Argentina	170,000	46,300,000	3.7	48
7	Germany	125,000	84,900,000	1.5	7
8	Russia	123,000	146,900,000	0.8	56
9	Australia	117,000	26,600,000	4.4	10
	Total countries 3-9 ^c	1,446,500	305,300,000	4.7	26
10	Brazil	90,300	204,000,000	0.4	89
11	South Africa	49,500	60,700,000	0.8	110
12	Hungary	45,000	9,600,000	4.7	47
13	Mexico	41,000	131,100,000	0.3	77
14	Netherlands	35,000	17,900,000	2.0	10
15	Ukraine	32,000	36,700,000	0.9	100
16	Belgium	29,000	11,800,000	2.5	12
17	Italy	26,800	58,800,000	0.5	30
18	Switzerland	20,500	8,800,000	2.3	1
19	Uruguay	16,100	3,600,000	4.5	52
20	Chile	15,500	20,000,000	0.8	44
21	Turkey	15,000	85,600,000	0.2	45
22	Sweden	14,900	10,500,000	1.4	8
23	Spain	13,000	48,300,000	0.3	27
24	Austria	10,300	9,200,000	1.1	22
25	Panama	10,000	4,500,000	2.2	57
	Total countries 10-25 ^c	463,900	721,100,000	0.6	46
	Rest of the world ^c	373,400	6,636,641,000	0.1	>100

^a HDI, The Human Development Index, is a synthetic measure of health, education and income (in terms of US dollar purchase power parity) for the country's total population. See: United Nations Development Programme (2024)

^b Total Jewish population of Israel includes Jewish residents of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. Total population includes all residents of Israel, including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, but only the Jewish residents and the non-Jewish members of Jewish households in the West Bank

^c Average HDI rank for group of countries

To further illustrate the increasing convergence between the Jewish presence and a country's high level of socioeconomic development, **Table 8.5** reports the latest available Human Development Index (HDI) for the 25 countries with the largest Jewish populations in 2024 (United Nations Development Programme 2024). The HDI—a composite measure of a society's level of education, health, and income—provides a general sense of the context in which Jewish communities function, although it does not necessarily reflect the actual characteristics and proximate environments of the members of those Jewish communities. Of the 25 countries listed, five were included

among the top ten among 193 countries ranked by HDI (Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Australia, and the Netherlands). Another six countries were ranked 11 to 25 (Belgium, the UK, Canada, the US, Austria, and Israel), seven more were between 26 and 50 (Spain, France, Italy, Chile, Turkey, Hungary, and Argentina), six were between 51 and 100 (Uruguay, Russia, Panama, Mexico, Brazil, and Ukraine), and one (South Africa) was ranked 110, pointing to lesser development in the host society. All of the nine largest Jewish populations, comprising 96% of world Jewry, lived in countries with HDIs among the top 56. The average ranking of the seven countries with 100,000 to 500,000 Jews was 26, and the average of countries with 10,000 to 100,000 Jews was 46. Among countries with the largest Jewish populations, during the past year, the HDI rank somewhat improved for nine countries, it deteriorated for 11 (among them Israel from 22 to 25, and Ukraine from 77 to 100), and remained the same for another five.

Fig. 8.5 demonstrates the relationship between Jewish population size and the human development index (HDI). The horizontal axis shows the HDI value (ranging between 0 and 1) for the 95 countries with at least 100 Jews. The vertical axis indicates the Jewish share of each country's total population on a logarithmic scale to allow for better readability. The graph shows a strong positive relationship ($R^2 = 44.5\%$) between the HDI and the proportion of Jews in the total population. The relationship also indicates that the strong Jewish presence in Israel, besides obviously drawing on deeper Jewish historical, cultural, and religious roots, and on Israel's active immigration policies, can also be significantly explained by the environmental circumstances of high socioeconomic and human development. If we omit Israel from the equation, the explanatory power of HDI for the Jewish Diaspora slightly increases to $R^2 = 46.0\%$.

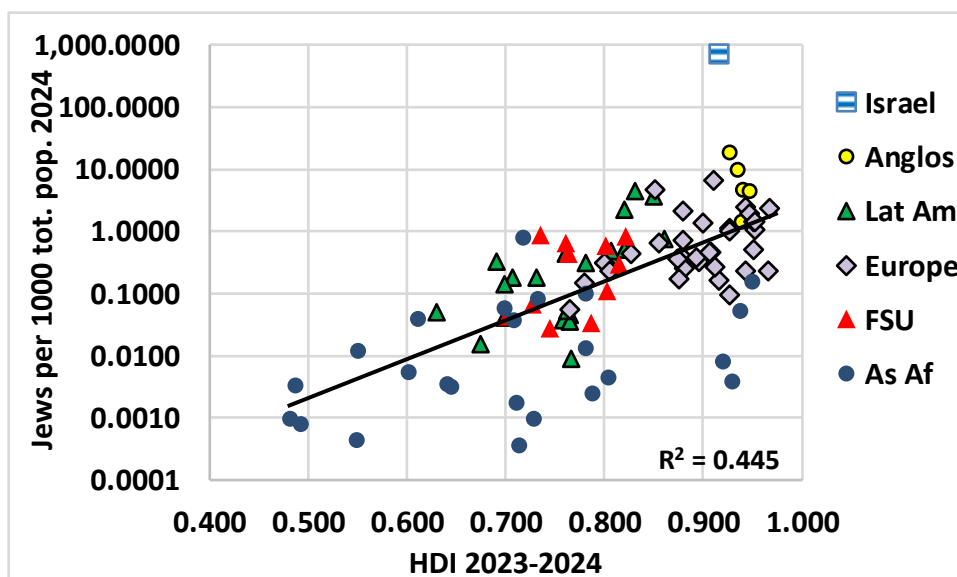


Fig. 8.5 Major groups of countries by Human Development Index (HDI) and Jews per 1000 total core Jewish population, 2024

* Logarithmic scale

Note: As Af is Asia and Africa

As a caveat, it is worth noting that Jewish communities may display social and economic profiles significantly better than the average population of their respective

countries. Nevertheless, the general societal context does powerfully affect the individual's quality of life, Jews included. Changes in countries' quality of life foreshadow changes in Jewish population distribution worldwide, mostly through international migration. Changes in HDI, namely the significant HDI rank decline among some of the major countries, should be monitored carefully as they may critically affect future changes in world Jewish population distribution.

8.3.2 Time comparisons

The current Jewish population distribution worldwide has been shaped by dramatic changes in the geographic, socioeconomic, and cultural profile of world Jewry—particularly since the independence of Israel, but also since the 1967 War and the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. As an illustration of the accumulated changes, we report the world distribution of core Jewish population by major geographical regions at four points in time over 75 years: 1948, 1970, 2000, and 2024 (**Fig. 8.6**).

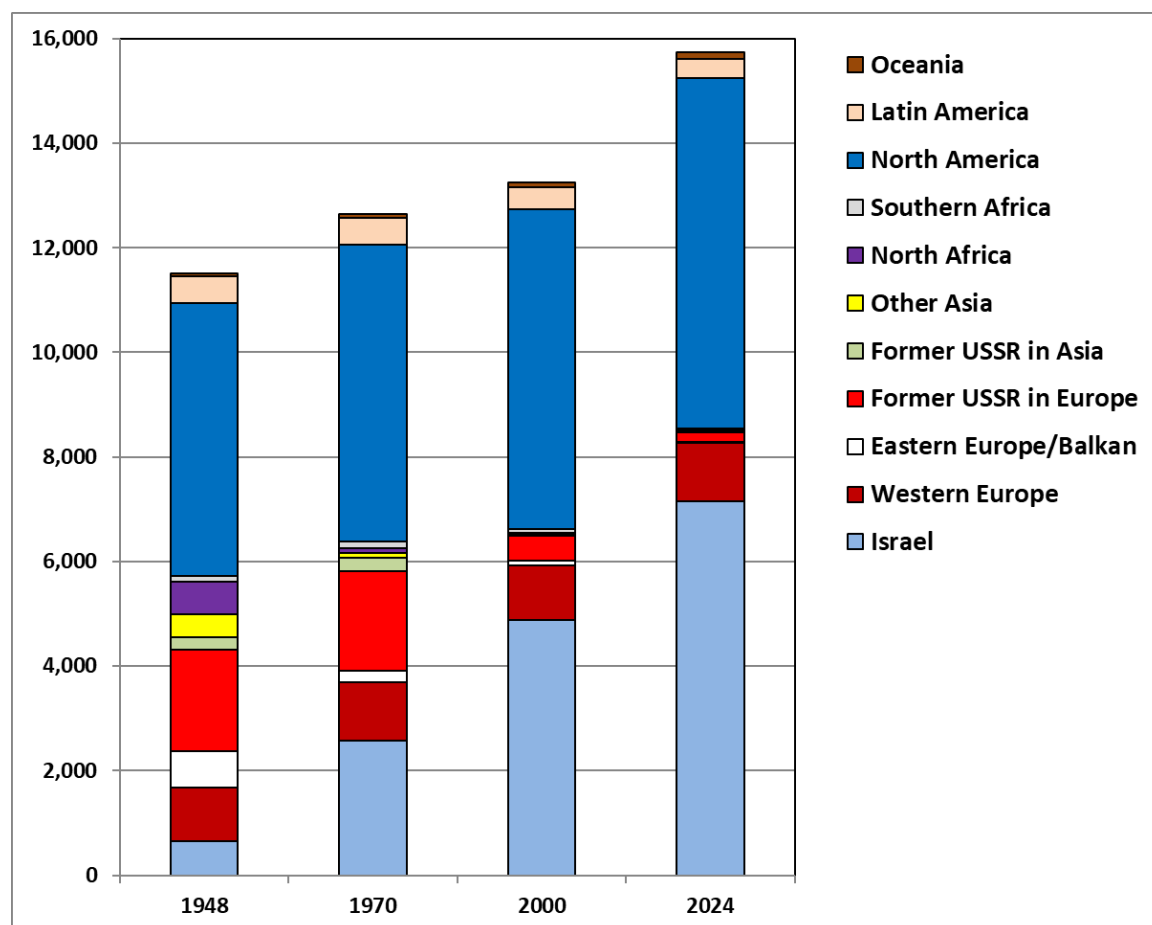


Fig. 8.6 Core Jewish populations by major regions, 1948, 1970, 2000, 2024, in thousands

Two opposing trends emerge from this comparison: On the one hand, Israel's Jewish population increased from being a small community in 1948 to being the main home of the world's Jewish population in 2024; on the other hand, the major Jewish population centers in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, the FSU in Europe and in Asia, and the Islamic countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) declined, and

in some cases disappeared. Declines on a lesser scale occurred in Latin America and Southern Africa, and to a lesser extent in Western Europe, in the latter case through a significant turnaround of immigration and emigration streams. North America grew, with a pace of increase higher in Canada than in the US. The tendency over time was a much greater consolidation of world Jewry in the two major centers, North America (US and Canada in **Fig. 8.6**) and Israel, compared with a more dispersed Jewish population worldwide shortly after World War II.

A more detailed picture of the changes between 1970 and 2024 is reported in **Table 8.6**. Here we compare the population size and ranks for the 33 countries which had a Jewish population of at least 20,000 in 1970—based on revised estimates and using the detailed country list following the dissolution of the Former Soviet Union (FSU), Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia.

Table 8.6 Countries with at least 20,000 Jews in 1970, and core Jewish population in 2024

Country	Core 1970	Rank	Core 2024	Rank	Difference 1970-2024		
					Absolute	Percent	Rank diff.
United States	5,520,000	1	6,300,000	2	780,000	14.1%	-1
Israel	2,581,000	2	7,153,000	1	4,572,000	177.1%	1
Russia	807,900	3	123,000	8	-684,900	-84.8%	-5
Ukraine	777,100	4	32,000	15	-745,100	-95.9%	-11
France	530,000	5	438,500	3	-91,500	-17.3%	2
United Kingdom	390,000	6	313,000	5	-77,000	-19.7%	1
Canada	286,000	7	400,000	4	114,000	39.9%	3
Argentina	282,000	8	170,000	6	-112,000	-39.7%	2
Belarus	148,000	9	5,400	32	-142,600	-96.4%	-23
South Africa	118,000	10	49,500	11	-68,500	-58.1%	-1
Uzbekistan	102,900	11	2,500	41	-100,400	-97.6%	-30
Moldova	98,100	12	1,500	52	-96,600	-98.5%	-40
Brazil	90,000	13	90,300	10	300	0.3%	3
Iran	72,000	14	9,000	27	-63,000	-87.5%	-13
Hungary	70,000	15	45,000	12	-25,000	-35.7%	3
Romania	70,000	16	8,600	28	-61,400	-87.7%	-12
Australia	65,000	17	117,000	9	52,000	80.0%	8
Georgia	55,400	18	1,100	57	-54,300	-98.0%	-39
Morocco	45,000	19	2,100	46	-42,900	-95.3%	-27
Azerbaijan	41,300	20	6,700	30	-34,600	-83.8%	-10
Turkey	39,000	21	15,000	21	-24,000	-61.5%	0
Latvia	36,700	22	4,100	35	-32,600	-88.8%	-13
Mexico	35,000	23	41,000	13	6,000	17.1%	10
Belgium	32,500	24	29,000	15	-3,500	-10.8%	9
Uruguay	32,000	25	16,100	19	-15,900	-49.7%	6
Italy	32,000	26	26,800	16	-5,200	-16.3%	10
Germany	30,000	27	125,000	7	95,000	316.7%	20
Netherlands	30,000	28	35,000	14	5,000	16.7%	14
Chile	30,000	29	15,500	20	-14,500	-48.3%	9
Kazakhstan	27,700	30	2,200	44	-25,500	-92.1%	-14
Ethiopia	25,000	31	100	87	-24,900	-99.6%	-56
Lithuania	23,600	32	2,100	45	-21,500	-91.1%	-13
Switzerland	20,000	33	20,500	18	500	2.5%	15

^a Ranked as of 1970. Jewish population in bold increased in absolute size. Countries that had Jewish populations among the 33 largest in 2024, but not in 1970: Sweden, Spain, Austria, Panama, Poland, New Zealand, Denmark, and India

Striking changes occurred in the size and global ranking of Jewish populations during the 54 years between 1970 and 2024. Nine countries had a larger Jewish population in 2024 than in 1970. Quantitatively, the most remarkable finding is that Israel's Jewish population more than doubled from 2,581,000 in 1970 to 7,153,000 in 2024 (+177.1%). The highest percentage growth occurred in Germany (+316.7%). Absolute population increases were also recorded in Australia (+80.0%), Canada (+39.9%), Mexico (+17.1%), the Netherlands (+16.7%), the US (+14.1%), Switzerland (+2.5%) and Brazil (+0.3%). The next 25 countries witnessed Jewish population decreases, with nine countries losing more than 90% of their 1970 population (Ethiopia, Morocco, and the seven former Soviet republics of Moldova, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Lithuania). Five more countries lost 80% to 90% of their 1970 Jewish populations: Iran, Romania, and the FSU republics of Latvia, Azerbaijan, and Russia. Two countries lost more than 50% of their 1970 Jewish population: Turkey and South Africa. And eight countries lost between 1% and 49%: Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, Hungary, the UK, France, Italy, and Belgium. An entirely different ranking of the major communities consequently emerged. The top five in 1970 were the US, Israel, Russia, Ukraine, and France; in 2024 they had become Israel, US, France, Canada, and the UK. Ethiopia lost 56 positions in the global ranking of Jewish populations, Moldova lost 40, and Georgia lost 39. Germany gained 20 rank positions, Switzerland 15, and the Netherlands 14. Yet while the country ranked 33rd in 1970 (Switzerland) had 20,000 Jews, in 2024 the country with the same rank (India) had 4,500 Jews.

The geographical realignment of world Jewry reflects emigration from countries which feature political discrimination and persecution, lack of democracy, as well as inferior socioeconomic development and economic opportunities. The consequent mass migration from those countries generated large Jewish population declines, mostly in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. On the other hand, countries that offered greater freedom and a wider range of socioeconomic opportunities witnessed steady Jewish population growth or at least stability (DellaPergola 2020b).

8.3.3 Dispersion and concentration

In 2024, 104 countries had at least 100 Jews (**Table 8.7**). As already noted, two countries had Jewish populations of 6 million or more each (Israel and the US), another seven countries had more than 100,000 Jews (but less than 500,000), two had 50,000 to 99,999, six had 25,000 to 49,999, eight had 10,000 to 24,999, seven had 5000 to 9999, 28 had 1000 to 4999, and 44 had 100 to 999. The 79 countries each with less than 10,000 Jews together accounted for less than 1% of world Jewry.

In only five Diaspora countries and territories did Jews constitute at least 5 per 1000 (or 0.5%) of the total population. In descending order by the relative share (not size) of their Jewish population, they were Gibraltar (24.2 Jews per 1000 inhabitants), the US (18.8), Monaco (17.5), Canada (10.0), and France (6.7). The case of Israel is very different, with a *core* Jewish population representing 72.1% of the total legal population, and a *Law of Return* Jewish population representing 77.0% of the total. In both Israel and the Diaspora, the percentage of Jews among the total population has been generally decreasing.

By combining the two criteria of Jewish population size and percentage of Jews out of the total population, we obtain the following taxonomy for the 24 countries with Jewish populations over 10,000 (not including Israel). Three countries had over

100,000 Jews and at least 5 Jews per 1000 total population: the US, Canada, and France. Four countries had over 100,000 Jews and at least 1 Jew per 1000 of the total population: Australia, the UK, Argentina, and Germany. One country, the Russian Federation had more than 100,000 Jews who constitute less than 1 per 1000 of the total population. Eight more countries had 10,000 to 99,999 Jews and at least 1 Jew per 1000 of the total population: Hungary, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Uruguay, Sweden, Austria, and Panama. Eight countries had 10,000 to 99,999 Jews and less than 1 Jew per 1000 total population: South Africa, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Italy, Spain, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Table 8.7 World core Jewish population distribution, by number and proportion per 1000 total population, 1/1/2024

Number of Jews in Country	Jews per 1,000 Population					
	Total	0.0-0.9	1.0-4.9	5.0-9.9	10.0-19.9	20.0+
Number of countries						
Total ^a	104	77	21	1	4	1
100-999	44	37	5	-	2	-
1,000-4,999	28	26	2	-	-	-
5,000-9,999	7	5	2	-	-	-
10,000-24,999	8	3	5	-	-	-
25,000-49,999	6	3	3	-	-	-
50,000-99,999	2	2	-	-	-	-
100,000-999,999	7	1	4	1	1	-
1,000,000 or more	2	-	-	-	1	1
Jewish population distribution (number of core Jews)						
Total ^b	15,736,800	515,100	927,500	438,500	6,701,500	7,153,000
100-999	13,100	10,200	1,400	-	1,500	-
1,000-4,999	65,900	59,500	6,400	-	-	-
5,000-9,999	53,200	39,300	13,900	-	-	-
10,000-24,999	115,300	43,500	71,800	-	-	-
25,000-49,999	208,800	99,800	109,000	-	-	-
50,000-99,999	139,800	139,800	-	-	-	-
100,000-999,999	1,686,500	123,000	725,000	438,500	400,000	-
1,000,000 or more	13,453,000	-	-	-	6,300,000	7,153,000
Jewish population distribution (percent of world core Jewish population)						
Total ^b	100.0	3.3	5.9	2.8	42.6	45.5
100-999	0.1	0.1	0.0	-	0.0	-
1,000-4,999	0.4	0.4	0.0	-	-	-
5,000-9,999	0.3	0.2	0.1	-	-	-
10,000-24,999	0.7	0.3	0.5	-	-	-
25,000-49,999	1.3	0.6	0.7	-	-	-
50,000-99,999	0.9	0.9	-	-	-	-
100,000-999,999	10.7	0.8	4.6	2.8	2.5	-
1,000,000 or more	85.5	-	-	-	40.0	45.5

^a Not including countries with fewer than 100 core Jews

^b Grand total includes countries with fewer than 100 Jews, for a total of 1200 Jews. Minor discrepancies due to rounding
Israel includes Jewish residents of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights.

Over the past decades, the basic size-and-density typology of Jewish communities throughout the world did not change as much as the underlying changes witnessed by

individual countries. **Table 8.8** shows the configuration of Jewish populations in 2024 as compared to 1984, the first year for which such tabulation is available (Schmelz and DellaPergola 1986). The 1984 data are reported here unrevised in the original format of the countries and territories that existed then.

Table 8.8 World core Jewish population distribution, by number and proportion per 1000 total population, 1984 and 2024

Number of Jews in country	Number of countries		Jewish population		Percent of world's Jews	
	1984	2024	1984	2024	1984	2024
Total	74	104	12,963,300	15,736,800	100.0	100.0
100-999	23	44	11,000	13,100	0.1	0.1
1,000-4,999	17	28	41,900	65,900	0.3	0.4
5,000-9,999	7	7	43,800	53,200	0.3	0.3
10,000-49,999	16	14	362,400	324,100	2.8	2.1
50,000-99,999	2	2	136,500	140,500	1.1	0.9
100,000-999,999	6	7	1,616,000	1,686,500	12.4	10.7
1,000,000-4,999,999	2	0	5,046,700	0	38.8	0.0
5,000,000 or more	1	2	5,705,000	13,453,000	43.9	85.5

^a Number of countries not including countries with fewer than 100 core Jews. Population and percent figures including countries with fewer than 100 core Jews, for a total of 1200 Jews

Sources: Schmelz and DellaPergola (1986); Table 8.7 above

The number of countries and territories with at least 100 Jews increased from 74 to 104, following the dissolution of the USSR, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, while several more countries with very small Jewish communities reached the 100-person threshold. The greatest increase was in the number of countries with less than 1000 Jews, from 23 in 1984 to 44 in 2024. At the top of the distribution, two countries in 2024 had 6M Jews or more, while in 1984 one country, the US, had more than 5M, and two, Israel and the USSR, had between one and five million. In the meantime, Israel increased and the USSR split into 15 states and lost most of its Jews through emigration.

Countries with between 100,000 and one million Jews comprised 12.4% of the total Jewish population in 1984 compared with 10.7% in 2024. Of the 15 FSU republics, only Russia had more than 100,000 Jews in 2024. Brazil and South Africa had more than 100,000 Jews in 1984, and fewer in 2024. Germany and Australia had less than 100,000 Jews in 1984 and more in 2024. France, Canada, the UK, and Argentina were included in the countries with more than 100,000 Jews at both dates, but the gap between Canada and Argentina more than trebled, from 65,000 in 1984 to 230,000 in 2024.

Communities with populations of between 10,000 and 100,000 Jews comprised 3.9% of the world Jewish population across 18 countries in 1984, compared with 3.0% across 16 countries in 2024. Among the smaller Jewish communities, those with less than 10,000 Jews comprised—both in 1984 and 2024—less than 1% of world Jewry. In 1984, however, they were distributed across 47 countries; and in 2024, they were distributed across 79 countries. The apparent stability of the structure of world Jewish population distribution reflected a strong concentration of Jews in a few countries at the top and a wide dispersion throughout many countries with very small numbers at the bottom. The transition of concentration of Jews from one dominant and two secondary centers to a configuration featuring two main centers reflected the

revolutionary changes experienced by world Jewry moving from the 20th to the 21st century.

8.4 Jewish Population in Major Individual Countries

In this section, we provide short profiles of the demographic trends for some of the largest Jewish populations in individual countries or regional areas. In 2020, 2021, and 2022 several countries undertook a national census. In some cases, the census had to be postponed by one or two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Detailed results from some of these censuses were available at the time of this writing. Pending possible updates, reasoned estimates will be reported here only for selected countries, without repeating the detailed descriptions of sources and patterns that appeared in previous volumes of the *AJYB*, especially since 2012 through 2023 (DellaPergola 2024a).

8.4.1 Israel

8.4.1.1 General

Israel became the country with the largest core Jewish population worldwide during the second decade of the 21st century. In 2022, Israel undertook a national population census. The new data along with some revisions in the definitions of permanent population generated some corrections to the previous estimates. In particular, permanently resident foreign citizens were now included in Israel's total population, which was not the case previously. Moreover, Israelis were considered as absentees after a staying abroad for a period of 275 days, and not 365 days, as per previous practice. Keeping in mind these changes, on January 1, 2024, Israel's total *resident* population was 9,914,700, including 7,153,000 core Jews (72.1%), 478,800 other members of Jewish households, 2,067,300 Arabs and others, and 215,600 foreigners (**Table 8.9**) (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Monthly). On 1/1/2024, these 215,600 foreigners comprised 30,500 asylum seekers, 108,000 legal foreign workers, 23,800 tourists whose visas had expired, and 52,900 religious students (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2024b). It is likely that most of these 52,900 students, and possibly some others among the foreigners, were Jewish, although the information was not officially released by Israel's CBS. If so, Israel's total core Jewish population would be slightly above 7.2 million.

Israel's *Law of Return* Jewish population of 7,631,800 (**Table 8.9, Column 3**) in 2024 represented 77.0% of the state's total legal population of 9,914,700. Israel's Arab population, including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, comprised 20.9% of the total population. Foreigners comprised 2.1% of the total.

Israel's Jewish population growth rate of 1.30% in 2023, while high in international comparison, was about half the average growth rate since independence in 1948. With a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 3.0 children currently born per Jewish woman in 2023, and a relatively young age composition (27.5% under age 15 vs. 14.4% age 65 and over), Jews in Israel displayed the highest fertility among Jewish populations worldwide (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual). Jewish fertility stood well above generational replacement (theoretically expected at 2.1 children per woman). This explained why the percentage of children among Israel's total Jewish population was

about twice higher than that of the elderly. The 2023 fertility rate among Israel's Jews (and non-Jews as well) was significantly higher than among the total population of any other developed country (Population Reference Bureau 2024). It was also twice or more the current average of *Jewish* children born to women in most Diaspora Jewish communities (also called the *effective Jewish fertility rate*). Explanations include not only the large family size of the more religious Jewish population sectors, but also a persistent and widespread desire for children among the moderately traditional and secular, especially among the upwardly mobile (DellaPergola 2009c, 2009d, 2015b). A moderately positive international migration balance also contributed to Israel's Jewish population increase. Israel's population census in 2022 did not include a question on religion, but religion was part of the official data regularly collected through the permanent Population Register kept by the Ministry of Internal Affairs' Population and Migration Authority. The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics performed a linkage between the records collected through the Census and the records available at the Population Register (2024b).

Table 8.9 Core and enlarged Jewish population, Arab population, and foreigners in Israel, West Bank and Gaza, by territorial divisions, 1/1/2024^a

Area	Core Jewish Population CJP	Others	Law of Return population ^b LRP	Arab population and others	Foreign workers and refugees ^c	Total	Percent of Law of Return population ^d
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Grand Total	7,153,000	478,800	7,631,800	6,995,400	215,600	14,842,800	51.4
<i>State of Israel, total^e</i>	<i>7,153,000</i>	<i>478,800</i>	<i>7,631,800</i>	<i>2,067,300</i>	<i>215,600</i>	<i>9,914,700</i>	<i>77.0</i>
<i>Thereof:</i>							
Pre-1967 borders	6,395,800	458,700	6,856,700	1,658,800	215,600	8,731,100	78.5
East Jerusalem ^f	239,100	8,000	244,900	381,400	-	626,300	39.1
Golan Heights	27,000	2,100	29,100	27,100	-	56,200	51.8
West Bank	491,100	10,000	501,100	^g	-	501,100	15.1
West Bank and Gaza (WBG)				4,928,100		4,928,100	-
West Bank	ⁱ	ⁱ	ⁱ	2,818,100	-	2,818,100	-
Gaza	0	0	0	2,110,000	-	2,110,000	-

^a Revised and rounded figures

^b Enlarged Jewish population

^c All foreigners were allocated to Israel within pre-1967 borders

^d Column 3 divided by column 6

^e As defined by Israel's legal system

^f Estimated from Jerusalem Institute of Israel Studies (2024)

^g Included under Palestinian Territory

^h Percent of Jews and others out of total population in the West Bank under Israeli or Palestinian Authority jurisdiction

ⁱ Included under State of Israel

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics; Israel Population and Migration Authority; PCBS Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics; and author's estimates

Annual data derive from constant updating of periodic censuses through detailed accounting of intervening events (births, deaths, arrivals to the country including new immigrants, departures from the country including emigrants, and changes of religion). In the case of Jews and Judaism, the defining concept is a combination of religion and ethnicity (in Hebrew: *le'om*) according to rabbinic law (*Halakhah*). At the beginning of 2024, Israel's *core* Jewish population reached 7,153,000, compared with the revised figure of 7,060,900 in 2023, excluding Israeli residents who had been absent from the

country for 275 days or more. These figures refer to all Jews living within Israel's internationally recognized boundaries, plus those in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. The core population combined with 478,800 *Others*—non-Jewish members of households who immigrated under the Law of Return and their Israel-born children—formed a *Law of Return* Jewish population of 7,631,800 in 2024, of which these *Others* constituted 6.3% (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual). Israel's *population with Jewish parents* was newly estimated at 7,331,800 for 2024.

Since the early 1990s, the main component of Jewish population growth in Israel was the natural increase resulting from the surplus of births over deaths, which largely exceeded the surplus of immigrants over emigrants. In 2023, 131,143 Jewish births and 41,344 Jewish deaths produced a net natural increase of 89,799 Jews. This represented 97.5% of Israel's total Jewish population growth in 2023. **Fig. 8.7** demonstrates the changes between 1955 and 2023-2024 but in birth rates and death rates for Jews and Muslims—the largest non-Jewish population group. The two birth rate lines displayed quite spectacular increases and periodic decreases. The Jewish birth rate was unusually stable by international standards. A major adjustment toward a lower birth rate occurred among Israel's Muslims since the end of the 1990s, with a concomitant increase among Jews. Aside from different fertility levels, this largely reflected differences and changes in age compositions and age at first marriage in the respective populations (Staetsky 2019a). Death rates tended to be low and decreasing among both populations; but since the second half of the 20th century, they were lower among Muslims due to their younger age composition. For example, in 2023-2024, the overall birth rate of Jews and others was 17.6 per 1000 population (18.4 for Jews only), versus 20.6 per 1000 for all Arab and others, including Muslims, Christians, and Druze (22.0 for Muslims only). The death rate was 5.7 per 1000 Jews and others (5.8 for Jews only), compared with 3.0 per 1000 for Arabs and others (2.8 for Muslims only). Such differences significantly affected the respective rates of natural increase: 11.9 per 1000 Jews and others (12.6 for Jews only) compared with 17.6 per 1000 Arabs and others (19.2 for Muslims only). The consequence was that in 2023-2024, Israel's Arabs continued to grow at a rate of 5.7 per 1000 higher than Jews and others—meaning more than one-half percent higher; and Muslims increased at a rate 6.6 per 1000 faster than Jews—as demonstrated in **Fig. 8.7**.

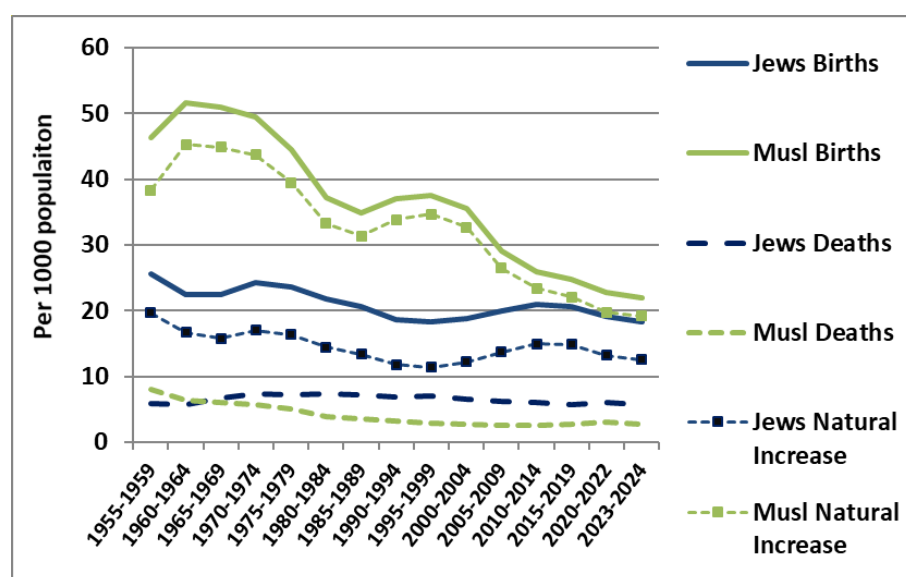


Fig. 8.7 Births and deaths per 1,000 population among Jews and Muslims in Israel, 1955-2024

Regarding the detail of components of population change, of the total 84,320 immigrants to Israel in 2023, including new immigrants, Israelis returning after a prolonged stay abroad, and immigrant citizens—Israeli citizens born abroad who entered the country for the first time—39,831 (47.2%) were Jewish. Most non-Jewish immigrants were from Russia and Ukraine. Factoring in emigration, the net balance of Jewish migrants was only 2536. Therefore, an estimated 37,935 Jews (39,831 - 2536) joined the pool of Israelis who resided abroad for one year or more, including those who will never return to Israel. This figure was a significant jump as against previous years, which featured some of the lowest levels of emigration in Israeli history.

This increase in Israeli emigration is clearly related to the October 7, 2023 events, as shown by a singularly high and nearly unprecedented negative migration balance of 12,700 among those who left in October 2023 and had not returned one year later, by the end of October 2024. Nevertheless, the rising trend had already started in previous months, perhaps in relation to the widespread social unrest that prevailed in Israel after the November 2022 elections. Beginning with November 2022, the negative balance between those who left each month and had not returned twelve months later was higher than 3000—a negative balance of 7300 among those who had left in September 2023 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Monthly).

The recent revision of emigration computation methodology implemented by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics generated an increase in the estimated number of Israeli residents abroad but also in the number of foreign residents in Israel who previously had not been included in Israel population counts (Cohen-Kastro 2023). The total number of Israelis—Jews and non-Jews—permanently residing abroad was estimated at 572,000 to 612,000 at the end of 2018 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2020; Rebhun 2023), and had evidently increased by the end of 2023.

The number of converts to Judaism as recognized by Israeli law remained low and comprised only a tiny percentage of the non-Jewish members of Jewish households in Israel, especially among recent immigrants (Fisher 2013, 2015, 2019; Waxman 2013). The number of *Others*—including a majority not classified by religion and a minority of persons with a non-Jewish religion eligible according to the Law of Return—was re-evaluated at 478,812 in 2024. Israel's Central Rabbinate pursued a rather rigid conversion policy and rejected several proposals and programs aimed at developing a unified conversion procedure that would satisfy all denominations (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1998-99; Nissim 2018). In 2023, the net balance of changes of registration of religion in the population register was minimally negative for Judaism, -190 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual). Muslims in Israel had a net shift balance of +177, Christian denominations gained 332, and the group with no religious definition lost 315 (minor discrepancies due to rounding). Some religious intermarriages probably underpinned these figures, although in Israel the levels of ethnoreligious marriage were overall quite low (DellaPergola 2017b). These data also comprise a trickle of people who choose to delete their Jewish identification.

8.4.1.2 Israel, West Bank, and Gaza

Turning now to the territorial aggregate of Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza (WBG—the Palestinian Territories), **Table 8.9** reports the numbers of Jews, Others (as noted, non-Jewish members of Jewish households *and* Israeli citizens by the provisions of the Law of Return), Arabs, as well as foreigners. Each group's total is reported for different territorial divisions: the State of Israel within the pre-1967 borders, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and Gaza. The

percentage of Jews (by the *Law of Return* definition) in each division is also shown.

At the beginning of 2023 (**Table 8.9, Column 1**), of a total 7,153,000 *core* Jews, 6,395,800 lived within Israel's pre-1967 borders; 239,100 lived in East Jerusalem neighborhoods that were incorporated into Israel after 1967 (Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research 2023); 27,000 on the Golan Heights; and 491,100 in the West Bank. Over the years, the pace of Jewish internal migration from Israel's pre-1967 area, including East Jerusalem, to the West Bank was significantly correlated with levels of unemployment and emigration from Israel (DellaPergola 2021b). In 2020, for the first time, and again in subsequent years the Jewish internal migration balance between the West Bank and the main area of Israel was negative, i.e., more Jews left WB for Israel than went to WB from Israel. There are today more Jews in the West Bank than in France.

As shown in **Table 8.9 (Column 7)**, the *Law of Return* Jewish population represented 78.5% (**Column 3** divided by **Column 6**) of total residents within the pre-1967 borders, including foreign workers and refugees; 39.1% in East Jerusalem; 51.8% in the Golan Heights; and 15.1% of the West Bank's total population. Since the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in August 2005, there is no permanent Jewish population in Gaza.

Regarding the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza (WBG), in November 2017, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) undertook a new census which enumerated 4,705,600 people, of whom 1,875,300 lived in Gaza and 2,830,300 in the West Bank—including 281,200 in East Jerusalem. The census results were about 250,000 lower than the population projection of 4,952,168 then reported by the PCBS' website (PCBS 2018). The PCBS Jerusalem's population estimate was a clear undercount because of the Palestinian census takers limited access to the city (PCBS 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2018). This would imply an annual growth rate of 1.84% since 2007 in the West Bank, not including East Jerusalem, and 2.84% in Gaza—as opposed to 2.40% for Muslims in Israel, including East Jerusalem, during the same period (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual). These growth rates were much lower than in the past and pointed to significant differentiation within the Arab/Palestinian population.

The Palestinian population's growth rate in WBG was decreasing also due to net emigration. According to Israel's IDF Civilian Administration in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank), the total of Palestinians recorded in the West Bank population register surpassed 3 million already in 2018, but this figure did not sufficiently discount Palestinian residents permanently living abroad. Keeping in mind **Fig. 8.7** above, among the WBG Arab population, both birth rates and death rates probably continued to be somewhat higher than among their Arab peers in Israel. A minor internal migration flow prevailed from Gaza to the West Bank, estimated at 2671 people as of mid-2019 (Hass 2019), as long as border closures allowed for it. In the process, most Christian Palestinians had left Gaza, and many had left the West Bank, because they felt persecuted (Casper 2020).

Our adjusted population estimates for the WBG at the beginning of 2024 was 4,928,100, of whom 2,818,100 are in the West Bank and 2,110,000 are in Gaza. These figures, always excluding East Jerusalem, were lower than the Palestinian census and subsequent updates because they excluded students and others who actually resided abroad for one year or more. The Palestinian CBS displayed further contradictory figures. As of 2024, a population projection suggested 5,483,450 persons living within the PCBS's definition of the Palestinian Territory, of which 3,256,906 in the West Bank

including East Jerusalem, and 2,226,544 in Gaza. On the other hand, by combining the PCBS reported numbers of births and deaths with the reported birth and death rates per 1000 population, one would obtain a total of 4,331,500, of which 2,851,200 are in the West Bank and 1,480,300 are in Gaza, for a total of 4,331,500. Some of the 1.2M gap could be due to under- or late reporting of vital events; but unquestionably, some doubt remains about who is counted: the legal resident population (*de jure*) or those actually present (*de facto*). Our estimate (4,928,100) falls quite inside this range. Other much lower estimates of the WBG population (e.g., Zimmerman et al. 2005a, 2005b; Feitelson 2013) reflected political narratives rather than ascertained demographic criteria (Miller 2015).

By summing Israel's 2,067,300 Arab population, including East Jerusalem, and the 4,928,100 estimated Palestinians in WBG, excluding East Jerusalem, a total of 6,995,400 Arabs/Palestinians obtained for the whole territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, compared with the total enlarged Jewish population of 7,631,800.

Table 8.10 reports the percentage of Jews according to the *core* and *Law of Return* definitions, out of the total population of the combined territory of Israel and WBG. Such percentages are conditional upon two factors: which criteria are applied in defining who is a Jew, and which territorial boundaries are chosen for assessment. Relative to this grand total, the table demonstrates the potential effect on the existence and size of a Jewish population majority when gradually and cumulatively subtracting from the total the Arab/Palestinian population of designated areas as well as the residing foreigners. The result of this exercise is a gradually growing percent of Jews among the total resident population of a hypothetically diminishing grand total.

Table 8.10 Percent of Core and Law of Return Jewish Population in Israel, West Bank and Gaza, According to Different Territorial Definitions, 1/1/2024

Area	Percentage of Jews ^a by definition	
	Core	Law of Return
Grand Total of Israel, West Bank and Gaza	48.2	51.4
Minus foreign workers and refugees	48.9	52.2
Minus Gaza	57.1	61.0
Minus Golan Heights	57.3	61.1
Minus West Bank	74.0	78.9
Minus East Jerusalem	77.0	82.1

Source: Table 8.9

^aTotal Jewish population of Israel including East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. In each row Arabs and others of mentioned area are deducted, and the percentages are recalculated accordingly.

A grand total combined Jewish, Arab, and Other population of 14,842,800 lived in Israel and the WBG at the beginning of 2024, including foreigners, namely workers, long-term tourists, and refugees. The *core* Jewish population of 7,153,000 represented 48.2% of this total between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, of which the State of Israel is part and parcel. Thus, by the Orthodox rabbinic definition of who is a Jew, there was not a Jewish majority among the broader aggregate of people over the whole territory between the River and the Sea (DellaPergola 2003a, 2003b, 2007a, 2011a; Soffer and Bistrow 2004; Soffer 2015). If the 478,800 *Others* (non-Jewish members of Jewish households) were added to the *core* Jewish

population, the *Law of Return* Jewish population of 7,631,800 represented 51.4% of the total population in Israel and the WBG—a narrow majority. If subtracting from the grand total the 215,600 foreigners, the *core* and *enlarged* Jewish populations would rise to 48.9% and 52.2% of the total population respectively—including residents in Israel plus WBG. If further subtracting the population of Gaza, the percentages of Jews out of the total would rise to 57.1% (core) and 61.0% (Law of Return). If subtracting the Druze population of the Golan Heights, the Jewish percentages would rise to 57.3% and 61.1%, respectively. If further subtracting the Palestinian population of the West Bank, the Jewish percentages would rise to 74.0% and 78.9%, respectively; and if the Arab population of East Jerusalem were also subtracted, the percentages Jewish would rise to 77.0% and 82.1%.

Given a claim advanced about much lower Palestinian population estimates, one may note that the alleged percentage of Jews (by the Law of Return) out of the total population of Israel and West Bank combined would be 65% (Ettinger 2019), as against our estimated 61% (including the Golan Heights). A spirited debate occurred about a modest 4% difference. Under current demographic trends, the Jewish majority is annually eroded by about 0.1%. The same data are graphically presented in **Fig. 8.8**.

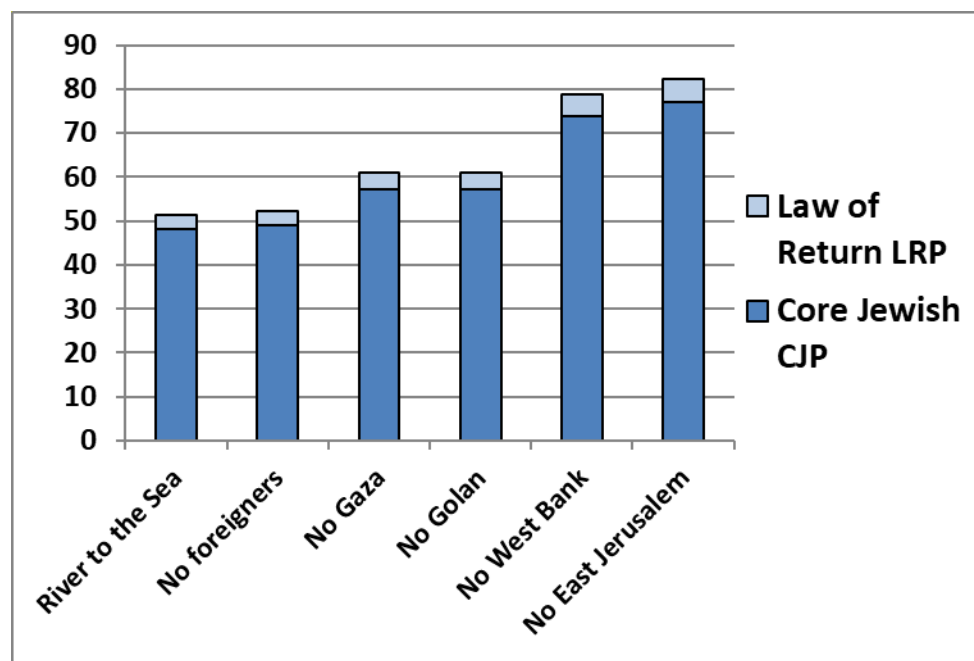


Fig 8.8 Percent Jewish out of total population of Israel, West Bank and Gaza, by different territorial and Jewish population definitions, 2024

8.4.2 The United States

8.4.2.1 Methodological issues

In the **US**, in the absence of official census documentation, Jewish population estimates must rely on alternative sources. These are quite abundant, though of very uneven quality (Goldstein 1981, 1989, 1992; Perlmann 2007; DellaPergola 2005, 2013b and 2024b; Sheskin and Dashefsky 2022; Rebhun 2023a). In 2013 and in 2020, the Pew Research Center undertook two studies of Jewish Americans (Pew Research

Center 2013 and 2021). The former suggested a *net Jewish population* estimate of 6.7M, and the latter suggested 7.5M. In previous volumes of the *American Jewish Year Book*, I reviewed in detail the methodology and findings of the Pew studies and suggested ways to estimate a *core Jewish population* compatible with estimates for other countries (DellaPergola 2022, 2023, 2023a, 2024a, and 2024b). The reader is referred to those previous analyses for an in-depth appraisal of the Pew surveys, which represent a great contribution to Jewish demographic research in the US. In the following, I will only summarily report about in-depth secondary analyses of the Pew survey database, leading to US estimates coherent with those for other countries.

The quest for US national Jewish population estimates has relied on three major strategies:

1. *National sample surveys* sponsored by:
 - a. the US Census Bureau [the 1957 Current Population Survey (US Census Bureau 1958 and 1968; Glick 1960; Goldstein 1969)];
 - b. the organized Jewish Federations of North America [National Jewish Population Studies of 1970 (Massarik 1974; Lazerwitz 1978), 1990 (Kosmin et al. 1991), and 2000-01 (Kotler-Berkowitz et al. 2003)];
 - c. other organizations [the 1991 and 2008 American Religious Identity Surveys (ARIS) (Kosmin and Lachman 1993; Kosmin and Keysar 2009) and the 2001 American Jewish Identity Survey (AJIS) (Mayer et al. 2001), the Public Religion Research Institute's census of American religion (PRRI 2021), and the Pew 2013 and 2020 surveys of Jewish Americans (Pew Research Center 2013 and 2021; Hartman and Bankier-Karp 2023)];
2. *Compilations and summations of local estimates* obtained through a variety of sources, from representative Jewish population surveys to hearsay (*American Jewish Year Book* 1899; Linfield 1942; Robison 1943; Sheskin 2008; Sheskin and Dashefsky 2007, 2010, 2017, 2022 and Sheskin, Dashefsky, and Comenetz in this volume; Hartman and Sheskin 2012 and 2017; Hartman et al. 2017), as well as from the US Censuses of Religious Bodies (Schwartz et al. 2002);
3. *Syntheses of many general social surveys* which comprise small subsamples of persons self-reporting as Jews, almost always in response to a question on religion. The leading project using this methodology is the American Jewish Population Project (AJPP) at Brandeis' Cohen Research Center (Saxe et al. 2006, 2006b, and 2021; Tighe et al. 2005, 2009a, 2009b, 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023). The AJPP uses data on religion to estimate a broader Jewish population which also includes those without religion (Magidin de Kramer et al. 2018; Hackett 2014). To do so, it uses estimates of the proportion of people with no religion taken from the Pew survey. As such, the AJPP is significantly dependent on the Pew survey.

Each of these three approaches has advantages and disadvantages. They can all serve as the basis for studying the interrelations between different sociodemographic and attitudinal variables, but only the first approach allows for proper inference of Jewish population size at the national level. The first method also has the advantage of internal consistency, although any methodological shortcoming or technical mistake may have far reaching consequences for the overall results. The second method combines the advantage of local insight with the disadvantages of extremely

heterogeneous data due to different definitions of the target population, different data reliability, different instruments, different timing and different pollsters. When it comes to summing up several local surveys to get a national total, double counts are likely because of intervening internal migration. The third method has the advantage of a large database and the disadvantage that it usually covers only religion, potentially omitting Jews who do not declare a religion (about 27% of American Jews according to Pew 2020). Along with inconsistency of data quality, the coverage of topics related to Jewish identity is usually very limited, if existent at all. Whereas the first two approaches usually provide a full profile of the characteristics of all members of a household, the third mostly relies on answers by adult respondents with little or no information on other household members, namely the identity of children.

8.4.2.2 US Jewish population estimates for 2020

The 2020 Pew survey of Jewish Americans provided an estimated Net Jewish Population (NJP) of 7.5M Jews, inclusive of adults and children. Of these, 5.3M were Jews by religion (JBR) (4.2M adults and 1.1M children); and 2.2M were Jews with no religion (JNR) (1.6M adults and 0.6M children). These Jewish population estimates implied a Jewish population increase of about 2M versus the early 1990s. Such increase could be explained either by the known factors of population change, namely birth rates and international migration, or by the adoption of a new set of Jewish population definitions, different from those adopted in previous Jewish population research. Indeed, the 2013 Pew survey assessed a Net Jewish Population of 6.7M, including 5.1M Jews by religion and 1.6M Jews with no religion—among the latter, 1M *partly Jewish* at the screening stage of the survey. At any rate, Jewish population change cannot be placed out of the context of the US total population which has recently featured historically minimal internal growth along with substantial legal and unauthorized immigration (Cohen and Chamie 2021; Chamie 2022)

In the US there is overall agreement among analysts and across different sources about the number of Jews by religion, along with disagreement about the number of Jews with no religion. The sum of these two components forms the Pew *Net Jewish Population* estimate. The challenge is how to combine these two components so as to reach a comprehensive common definition. Different definitions of the boundaries of the Jewish population aggregate are conducive to different numbers. The *core* Jewish population definition does not allow for multiple religious identities, in line with a Jewish population definition comparable with the criteria adopted for other Jewish populations worldwide, including Israel. Following release of the public use file of the Pew 2020 survey, we¹ performed an intensive in-depth secondary data processing, aiming at a firmer resolution of the definitional issue. Our analysis led to the following conclusions.

Jews by religion

All respondents who in 2020 answered *Jewish* to the question: “What is your present religion, if any?”) were included by Pew in the Jewish by religion category (JBR). The weighted total, as noted, was 5.3M, of which 4.2M adults and 1.1M children.

Adults. We found that the equivalent of 12,000 persons also defined themselves of various Christian denominations. These 12,000 were excluded from the core Jewish

¹ Sergio DellaPergola together with Maya Shorer Kaplan of the Institute of Contemporary Jewry at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem..

population but were included in a more extended definition. The total of core Jewish adults by religion was therefore, 4,188,000 rather than 4.2M.

Children. The children of Jews by religion were mostly raised in households where all children were Jewish by religion or Jews of no religion. However, 73,000 children were raised in households where all children were non-Jews. These 73,000 were excluded from the core Jewish population, bringing the total of Jewish children by religion to 1,027,000 rather than 1.1M.

Total. In total, therefore, core Jews comprised 5,215,000 persons, of which 4,188,000 were adults and 1,027,000 were children. In sum, we removed 85,000 persons from the Jews by religion category that Pew had included.

Jews of no religion

The Jews of no religion (JNR) category as defined by Pew 2020 is a conglomerate of different subpopulations, all of whom had one characteristic in common: None answered *Jewish* to the question, “What is your religion?”. They all affirmatively answered a further question about other possible modes of attachment to Judaism: “ASIDE from religion, do you consider yourself to be Jewish in any way (for example ethnically, culturally or because of your family’s background)?”. Such *family background* could be anything from having two Jewish parents to being the distant descendant of a Jew who was forcefully baptized during the Inquisition, before or after 1492.

Adults. Jews of no religion had four possibilities about their current religious identification: 1. Atheist, 2. Agnostic, 3. Nothing in particular, or 4. Jewish *and* one of the previous three. Data about the religion in which respondents with *no religion* were raised when children, unveiled three possibilities: 1. Jewish, 2. Atheist, agnostic, or none, or 3. Another religion.

All Jews with no religion who reported being raised Jewish were included in the core Jewish population. All who reported having been raised in another religion were excluded from the core Jewish population. Those who reported having been raised atheist/agnostic/none, were further checked to ascertain the religion of their parents. Those with two Jewish parents were included in the core Jewish population. Those with one or no Jewish parents were excluded from the core and included in an extended definition. These atheists or nones with one Jewish parent can be considered with equal degree of likelihood as Jewish or as non-Jewish, hence conceptually similar to the *partly Jewish* of the 2013 Pew survey. This explains their non-inclusion in the core.

A further set of questions concerned whether respondents (in addition to considering themselves *Jews of no religion*) considered themselves of *another religious group* ethnically, culturally or because of their family’s background. Those who answered affirmatively were excluded from the core. Here, it is important to note that the other religions suggested in the questionnaire included: Catholic, Mormon and Muslim, but not the most frequent religious group in the US—Protestant. This omission is hardly explainable or justifiable on analytic grounds. This obviously resulted in some overestimate of the number of Jews with no religion pertaining to the Core Jewish population, since it included an unknown number of Jewish *and* Protestant.

In sum, 800,000 adults were excluded from the Core Jewish population:

- 370,000 considered themselves as holders of another religion;

- 87,000 were raised in another religion, and considered themselves now atheist/agnostic/none; and,
- 343,000 with one Jewish parent only were raised atheist/agnostic/none and considered themselves now atheist/agnostic/none.

Overall, of the original (weighted) 1.6M adults who were placed by the Pew survey report in the Jews of no religion (JNR) category, 800,000 qualified for the Core Jewish population and 800,000 qualified for an extended definition.

Children. No immediate data exist in the 2020 Pew file for each child and their respective religious identity. The estimates for children were obtained by a cross-classification of the total number of children present in the household, and the mode of attribution of Jewish or other identity by the respective parents. All children in households where *all* children were raised Jewish (by religion or of no religion) were included in the core Jewish population. All children in households where children were raised as *partly Jewish* or not at all Jewish were excluded from the core. Of the original (weighted) 600,000 children who were placed by Pew in the Jews of no religion category, 262,000 qualified for the Core Jewish population, and 338,000 qualified for an extended definition. Of the latter 338,000, 9% (30,000) were in households where children were raised *partly Jewish*, and 91% (308,000) were in households *none* of whose children were raised Jewish.

Total. Our revised total estimate of the *core* Jews of no religion was 1,062,000, of which 800,000 are adults and 262,000 are children. The sum of the 1,062,000 Jews of no religion included in the Core Jewish population and the 1,138,000 included in an extended definition provided the 2.2M originally counted by the Pew in the Jewish population with no religion.

Total estimate

Summing the results of our secondary analysis, we estimated at 5,215,000 the total of Jews by religion included in the Core Jewish population, of which 4,188,000 are adults and 1,027,000 are children. The new estimate of core Jews with no religion was 1,062,000, of which 800,000 are adults and 262,000 are children. The total core Jews included, therefore, 5,215,000 by religion and 1,062,000 with no religion, for a total core Jewish population of 6,277,000, of which 4,988,000 adults and 1,289,000 children. Excluded from the Core Jewish population were 812,000 adults and 411,000 children, for a total of 1,233,000 with or without Jewish religion. Summing the two figures—6,277,000 and 1,233,000—we obtain the 7.5M Pew Net Jewish Population (NJP). **Table 8.11** summarizes the various estimates and adjustments just described. Keep in mind that the discussion here only concerns Jewish population *definitions* and not *beliefs or behaviors*. Some people not included in our Core Jewish population may actually be occasionally involved in religious or ethnic Jewish behaviors and some may be halachically Jewish. By the same token, similar or higher numbers of Core Jews may never be involved in anything Jewish (DellaPergola 2015b and 2024b).

No population estimate may claim to be perfect. Estimates can be better understood if they can be explained, as we attempted to do here. Besides the imperative to use coherent definitions of relevant subpopulations over time and across space, the Pew 2020 survey of Jewish Americans featured several other steps probably leading to inflated Jewish population estimates, namely reliance on the internet and on residential address lists (Link et al. 2008; de Leeuw and Hox 2010;

Appeared in *American Jewish Year Book 2024*, ed. A. Dashefsky and I. Sheskin. Cham: Springer, 2025

Statista 2021). These problems are discussed in detail elsewhere (DellaPergola 2022, 2023, 2023a, 2024b).

Table 8.11 US Jewish population estimates, adults and children, by various definitional criteria, 2020 Pew survey, and author's estimates

	Category	Adults	Children	Total
Pew 2020 survey report				
(1)	Jews by religion	4,200,000	1,100,000	5,300,000
(2)	Jews of no religion	1,600,000	600,000	2,200,000
(3) = (1) + (2)	Pew Total Net Jewish population	5,800,000	1,700,000	7,500,000
Our revised estimates				
(8)	Jews by religion - Core	4,188,000	1,027,000	5,215,000
(9)	Jews of no religion - Core	800,000	262,000	1,062,000
(10) = (8) + (9)	Total Core Jewish population	4,988,000	1,289,000	6,277,000
(11)	Jews by religion - Non-core	12,000	73,000	85,000
(12)	Jews of no religion - Non-core	800,000	338,000	1,138,000
(13) = (11) + (12)	Total Non-core Jewish population	812,000	411,000	1,223,000
Comparison of core and net Jewish population estimates				
(14)	Our Total Core Jewish population	4,988,000	1,289,000	6,277,000
(15)	Our Total Non-core Jewish population	812,000	411,000	1,223,000
(16) = (14) + (15)	Pew Total Net Jewish population	5,800,000	1,700,000	7,500,000

Sources: Pew Research Center (2021). Author's revised processing, by courtesy of Pew Research Center.

Two notable factors of undercount in the 2020 Pew survey probably affected the Orthodox denominations, and those born abroad, namely in Israel and in the Former Soviet Union. Our effort to adjust the data did not consider these factors. On the other hand, the unexplained and unjustifiable omission of the Protestant denominations in a questionnaire where Jews were invited to indicate their other religious orientations in addition to their Jewish one generated a significant overcount. We may at least hypothesize that the amount of overestimation was somewhat balanced by the amount of underestimation.

8.4.2.3 Backward adjustment and estimate for 2024

Population change is usually smooth and not subject to sudden sharp increases or decreases (except, perhaps in times of war or plague). The revised total Core Jewish population estimate must be adjusted accordingly, not only for 2020 and after, but also gradually for previous years whose Jewish population estimates generally required upward corrections. The starting point for such retrospective revisions was set in 1945. Such corrections were gradually allocated all along the time axis, entailing revisions in several previously widely held and quoted estimates based on major demographic research on US Jewry (for a different attempt, see Rebhun 2023a).

In a seminal reconstruction of Jewish population size and trends in the US since World War II, Ira Rosenwaike (1980) reviewed all the then existing evidence and suggested the definitive path of growth between 1945 and until NJPS 1970. The revised estimates presented here for the years since 1970 fully reconsider objections and suggestions that had been raised about each major documentation source on the US Jewish population. **Table 8.12** presents the suggested adjustments to the previous set of estimates between 1945 and 2020, some of which already were the product of

previous adjustments. The present adjustment consistently incorporates known or reasonably assessed balances between Jewish births and deaths, and between immigration and emigration. The variable pace of Jewish immigration to the US was carefully scrutinized in the light of previous studies (NJPS 1970, 1990 and 2000-01; Diamond 1977; DellaPergola 2005, 2013; Pew Research Center 2021).

Following Rosenwaike (1980), a revised estimate of 5,520,000 was preferred to the originally published 1970 NJPS lower 5,370,000 and higher 5,420,000 estimates (Massarik 1973 and 1974; Massarik and Chenkin 1973; Lazerwitz 1978—the latter’s 5.6M estimate evidently also inclusive of non-Jewish household members). As to 1990, the original and generally accepted NJPS figure of 5,515,000 was raised by 235,000 to 5,750,000, thus incorporating the suggestion of some undercounting among the elderly and other institutionalized Jewish population (Kosmin et al. 1991). Around 2000-01, as against the original NJPS estimate of 5,200,000 (Kotler Berkowitz et al. 2003), after a previous significant upward correction to 5,700,000 (DellaPergola 2023), we raised it by another 275,000, to 5,975,000. Regarding 2013, the year of the first Pew survey (Pew Research Center 2013), taking a mid-point between 2010 and 2015, our own previous estimate of 5,777,500 was raised to 6,145,000, as against the original Pew Net Jewish Population of 6.7M. And finally, as noted above, our previous provisional assessment of a Core Jewish Population of 6.0M in 2020 (DellaPergola 2022 and 2023) was raised to 6.3M, as against the original Pew Net Jewish Population of 7.5M. The original and revised US Jewish population estimates, and the correction factors introduced between 1945 and 2020 are summarized in **Table 8.12**. This revised data series is suggested to the reader for future reference.

Table 8.12 Older and revised estimates of core US Jewish population, 1945-2024

Year	Older	Revised	Difference
1945	4,360,000	4,360,000	-
1950	4,680,000	4,680,000	-
1955	4,950,000	4,950,000	-
1960	5,200,000	5,200,000	-
1965	5,280,000	5,380,000	100,000
1970	5,370,000	5,520,000	150,000
1975	5,385,000	5,585,000	200,000
1980	5,435,000	5,650,000	215,000
1985	5,485,000	5,675,000	190,000
1990	5,515,000	5,750,000	235,000
1995	5,675,000	5,900,000	225,000
2000	5,700,000	5,975,000	275,000
2005	5,730,000	6,050,000	320,000
2010	5,825,000	6,075,000	250,000
2015	5,940,000	6,215,000	275,000
2020	6,000,000	6,277,000	277,000
2024	-	6,300,000	-

Source: author’s estimates. Until 1975 based on Rosenwaike (1980)

Fig. 8.9 reproduces the same set of corrected Jewish population estimates along with the data also published by the *American Jewish Year Book* in its own independent annual assessment of US Jewish population based on the sum of local Jewish community estimates. The figure also reports the annual data for the US total

population (on a scale 50 times larger). The US total rhythm of growth was consistently higher, with the possible exception of a few years after World War II. This reflected the much lower Jewish fertility and the relatively lower incidence of Jewish immigration from abroad. After the retrospective revisions discussed above, the picture drawn from different Jewish population estimates is overall quite consistent. What stands out dramatically is the assumed Jewish population increase in the US after 2000 according to the sum of local community sources but also according to the American Jewish Population Project at Brandeis. By those sources, over the past 10-15 years Jews would be growing much faster than the total US population, in spite of the much lower Jewish marriage and fertility and of the millions of legal and unauthorized immigrants, and on the face of clearly declining rates of total population growth.

The frequently mentioned argument of rapid Jewish population growth since 2000 thanks to immigration from the FSU, was largely disproven by our secondary analysis of the Pew data. Out of the 750,000 Jews born abroad found by Pew 2020, about one half of them from the FSU, half had immigrated to the US before 1990. A simple crosstabulation of birthplace by year of arrival helped to better frame the current debates on Jewish population size and growth. The Pew database also allowed us to document unprecedentedly low Jewish birth rates in the US, in consonance with general US population trends (Cohen and Chamie 2021). A completed family of two children on average among Jewish women currently below 30 appeared a very remote possibility. Added to the elderly age composition of US Jews, this is a sure recipe for future population decline. Our new adjustment also allowed for some softening of Jewish population definitional criteria, in consonance with the expansion of intermarriage to over 60% of most recent marriages (Pew Reserch Center 2021) and the consequent growth of the group of Jews of no religion (see DellaPergola 2024a and b). Jewish immigration to the US continued (see below), partly compensated by some emigration (over 52,500 American Jews moved to Israel between 2001 and 2023)

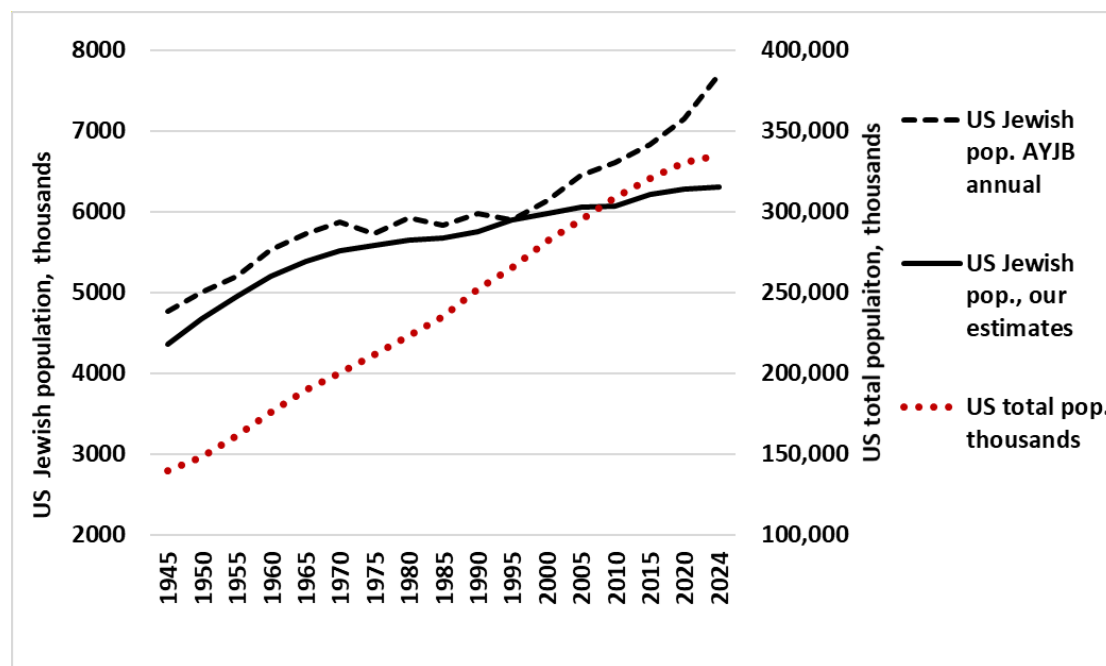


Fig 8.9 US total and Jewish population, according to alternative estimates, 1945-2024
Source: AJYB, various years

In sum, US Jewry appeared to have exhausted its demographic growth momentum, with the exception of the unpredictable effects of future immigration. We calculated a marginal increase from the 6,277,000 in 2020 to 6.3M in 2023 (DellaPergola 2024a). Our stable 6.3M core estimate for 2024 implies current zero population growth. This view coincides with a projection of the current stock of American Jewry into the next decades based on the 2013 Pew survey (Pinker 2021).

8.4.2.4 Extended Jewish population definitions

Beyond the core Jewish population, the more extended definitional circles significantly expand the catchment area of US Jewry. The Core Jewish population (CJP), the Population of Jewish Background (PJB), and the Law of Return Population (LRP), evolved at very different paces according to our revised NJPS data for 1970 and 1990, followed by our revised Pew estimates for 2013 and 2020 (DellaPergola 2024b). The evolutionary process involved a CJP increasing from 5.5M in 1970 to 6.3M in 2020, along with much more substantial increases of the PJB and the LRP. Non-Jewish children and spouses of Jews involved an addition of 435,000 people in 1970, 2,686,000 in 1990, 4,455,000 in 2013, and 5,400,000 in 2020. Further accounting for other Law of Return eligibles would add some 1.7M more in 2024. Once more, one should recall that the Pew's *Net Jewish* population concept (Pew Research Center 2021) is intermediate between the *Core Jewish* and the *Jewish Background* definitions (**Fig. 8.3**).

8.4.3 France

France has the largest Jewish community in Europe and the third largest in the world. France absorbed large numbers of Jewish immigrants especially during the 1950's and 1960's following decolonization in North Africa. In the absence of official data, subsequent surveys found 530,000 Jews in the 1970s (Bensimon and DellaPergola 1984), and 500,000 core Jews in 2002, plus an additional 75,000 non-Jewish members of Jewish households (Cohen with Ifergan 2003). Several follow-ups (Cohen 2005, 2007, 2013b; Ifop 2015) indicated a decreasing Jewish population, primarily due to emigration, mainly to Israel, but also to Canada, the US, and other countries. In retrospect, 39% reported relatives living in Israel compared to 31% who had relatives in another country. This would correspond to a migrant ratio of 56% to Israel versus 44% to other countries. A survey of French Jewish adults age 18 to 40 about their expected country of residence in five years found that 33% expected to be living in France, 26% in Israel, 14% in another country, and 27% were not sure (Cohen 2013a). In 2018, the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) survey on perceptions of antisemitism in EU countries found that 44% of French Jews had considered emigrating, versus 46% in 2012 (European Union Fundamental Rights Agency-FRA 2013 and 2018). Migration to Israel, after surpassing 2,000 annually for several years, increased to a highest-ever peak of 6,627 in 2015, and subsequently returned to previous levels with a marked decline in 2023. Nearly 60,000 new immigrants arrived from France to Israel between 2001 and 2023. Jews also emigrated to other western countries reflecting growing uneasiness facing antisemitism, Islamic fundamentalism, and terrorism against Jewish and other targets, but even more strongly in response to periodic recessions in the French economy (DellaPergola 2020b). Assuming Israel attracted half to two-thirds of the total who left France,

between 90,000 and 120,000 Jews and family members should have emigrated from France since 2000, although some of these returned to France in the meantime, thus reducing the impact of net migration. Our 2024 core estimate for French Jewry decreased to 438,500, the world's third largest Jewish community.

8.4.4 Canada

Jewish population in **Canada** is reviewed by Brym (in this volume). A large representative survey of Canadian Jews undertaken in 2018 (Brym, Neuman and Lenton 2019) revealed stronger resilience for indicators of Jewish religious identification than for indicators of Jewish ethnicity and community participation (Goldman 2009; Brym, Slavina, and Lenton 2019; Smith and McLeish 2019). Compared to the US, Jews in Canada featured significantly lower rates of intermarriage along with higher rates of Jewish school enrollment, Jewish community participation, and interest in Israel.

The 2021 census separately reported 335,295 Jews by religion, up from 329,000 in 2011, and 282,000 Jews by ancestry/ethnicity, down from 309,650 in 2011 (Statistics Canada 2022).² Canada releases decennial data on Jewish religion every year ending with digit 1, and quinquennial data on Jewish ethnicity in years ending with digit 1 or 6 (Yam 1974; Torczyner et al. 1993; Statistics Canada 2003a, 2003b, 2019; Weinfeld and Schnoor 2014; Shahar 2015, 2016, 2017; Brym in this volume). The 2021 census indicated a continuing increase in the Canadian Jewish population, though this increase was less than expected accounting for continuing immigration to the country. Between 2011 and 2021, 16,685 Jews by religion immigrated to Canada (as against 21,445 in 2001-2011), mostly from the FSU, Israel, and the US (Brym 2023). The Jewish population by religion increased by 5795 over that decade, but it would have decreased by 3.3% were it not for immigration. Besides emigration of nearly 5600 between 2001 and 2023, a negative balance evidently prevailed between Jewish births and Jewish deaths; between mentioning or not Jewish religion; and between listing or dropping a Jewish ancestry/ethnicity.

Since 1981, Canadians can declare either one single or multiple ethnic ancestries (Torczyner et al. 1993; Shahar 2004). Over the past tens of years, Jewish ethnicity clearly underwent continuous erosion, in part substituted by an emerging *Canadian* ethnicity. The *Revised Jewish Standard Definition* frequently used in Canada includes, besides Jews by religion: a) persons without religion who declare a Jewish ethnicity (single or part of a multiple choice); b) those with no religious affiliation who are Israeli by ethnicity; c) those with no religious affiliation with knowledge of Hebrew or Yiddish as a "non-official" language; and d) those with no religious affiliation who were born in Israel (Weinfeld et al. 2012; Weinfeld and Schnoor 2014; Shahar 2014, 2015 and 2016). Ethnic Jews who hold a non-Jewish religion are not included. This definition provided an estimate of 391,665 in 2011. In 2021, adding the 335,295 Jews by religion with another 68,270 with no religion who mentioned a Jewish ethnicity, a total would obtain of 404,015 (Brym in this volume).

In 2021, the census instructions read: "Specify as many ethnic or cultural origins as applicable." Among the 80,240 who defined themselves without religion and reported a Jewish ethnicity or culture (a 43.7% increase over 2011), 11,515 stated

² Note that many respondents identified as both Jews by religion and Jews by ancestry/ethnicity. See the chapter on Canadian Jewish population in this volume.

Jewish as their single ethnicity, 26,940 ranked Jewish as first of their multiple ethnicities, 20,265 ranked Jewish second, 13,055 ranked Jewish third, and 8,465 ranked Jewish as fourth to sixth (Brym and Hou 2023; Brym 2024). Summing those with no religion who declared a Jewish ethnicity or culture alone or as one of the first *two* options, 58,720 persons would be included in the *core* Jewish population. Adding these to the 335,295 Jews by religion would provide a 394,015 estimate for 2021. The mentioning of *Jewish* as the third, fourth, fifth or sixth option looks rather similar to the *partly Jewish* discussed above regarding US Jewry, therefore not part of the *core* definition, and better included among the *Jewish parents* or *Jewish background* population. Three years after the 2021 census, compounding the effects of continuing net immigration to Canada, in particular from Ukraine and Russia in the wake of the war, we estimated the core Jewish population to have increased to 400,000 in 2024—the world’s fourth largest Jewish community.

8.4.5 United Kingdom

In the **United Kingdom**, the 2021 national Census estimated Jews by religion in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland at 277,600 (United Kingdom Office for National Statistics 2023; United Kingdom, National Records of Scotland 2024; NISRA Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2023; Graham and Boyd 2022). Previous censuses suggested some Jewish population increase, from 266,740 in 2001 to 271,259 in 2011 (+1.69%) (United Kingdom Office for National Statistics 2002 and 2012; United Kingdom National Records of Scotland 2011; Miller et al. 1996; Kosmin and Waterman 2002; Graham et al. 2007; Graham and Waterman 2005 and 2007; Voas 2007; Graham and Vulkan 2007; Graham 2013a and 2013b; Boyd and Staetsky 2013; Graham and Caputo 2015; Staetsky and Boyd 2015). Those who did not report a religion nationally rose from 23% in 2001, to 32% in 2011, and 43% in 2021 (6% religion not stated, and 37% no religion). One important issue concerned the ascertained or inferred under-coverage of the fast-growing Haredim (Staetsky 2023a and 2023b), who initially were reluctant to participate in the census. The high birth rate and younger age composition of the Haredi communities, but also rising Haredi participation in successive censuses, generated Jewish population increase (Graham 2011, Graham et al. 2012, Graham and Boyd 2022, Staetsky 2022). The 2021 census also asked a question about ethnic group, and 68,198 people in England and Wales reported their ethnic group as *Jewish* (United Kingdom Office for National Statistics 2023a). Of these, 52,167 were also Jewish by religion, therefore already accounted for; 10,791 had no religion; 3068 did not report a religion; and 2172 had a non-Jewish religion. The 2021 figure was double the number (33,770) who wrote-in Jewish ethnicity in 2011, and over five times as many (12,235) as in 2001. In addition, 4517 reported an Israeli ethnicity in 2021, of whom 3047 were Jewish by religion, 840 had no religion, 390 did not state a religion, and 250 had another religion. Adding Jews by religion and ethnic Jews without religions, allocation of non-respondents to the census religion question, and further investigation of the underreporting of Haredim suggested a 310,000 Jewish population estimate for 2021.

Mainstream British Jewry is aging, but the growing share of Haredim caused a rejuvenated age composition, with an absolute increase of 3% in the percentage under age 15 and a 1% decrease in the percentage age 65 and over. Vital statistics routinely collected by the Board of Deputies of British Jews Community Research Unit on the annual number of Jewish births revealed a reversal around 2004-2005 from a

prolonged negative balance to a positive balance of Jewish births and deaths (The Board of Deputies of British Jews, Community Research Unit 2005; Vulkan 2012; Casale Mashiah 2018). Inter-marriage was at moderate levels compared with most other European and Western countries, from 11% of couples in 1965-69 to 26% in 2010-13 (Graham 2016 and 2018; DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020). Between 2001 and 2023, 11,300 emigrated to Israel. Jewish education was growing, confirming the increasing impact of the Haredi sector on the Jewish birth rate (Graham, Staetsky and Boyd 2014; Staetsky and Boyd 2016). Greater London remained the dominant concentration but declined from 58.1% of the total in 2001 to 52.5% in 2021. The northwestern suburban areas of Hertfordshire were the main recipients of London's population dispersal. The Greater Manchester area increased from 10.5% to 12.0%. A majority of other areas with smaller Jewish populations witnessed some decrease over time (Shapiro 2023). We assessed the UK's core Jewish population increasing to 313,000 in 2024—the world's fifth largest Jewish community.

8.4.6 Argentina

Argentina has the largest Jewish community in Central and South America. Nearly 6,000 Jews emigrated from Argentina to Israel in 2002—the highest number ever in a single year from that country—following the bankruptcy of the country's Central Bank, dire economic conditions, and special incentives offered by Israel. Subsequently, the Argentinean economic situation underwent periodic fluctuations, and Jewish emigration varied accordingly, surpassing 17,200 between 2001 and 2023 to Israel only (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual; Krupnik 2023). A 2004 Jewish population survey in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area (AMBA) (Jmelnizky and Erdei 2005) found 161,000 people in the AMBA who considered themselves as totally or partly Jewish. They were part of an *enlarged* Jewish population of 244,000. Over 300,000 identified in some way as of Jewish origin or living with a person of Jewish origin. Of these, 64,000 were Christians and another 20,000 reported some Jewish ancestry but did not consider themselves Jewish. Significant aging of the *core* Jewish population reflected the emigration of younger households in recent years (Rubel 2005) and the growing incidence of inter-marriage (Erdei 2014). A significant downward correction was introduced in 2021 for Argentina (-4,000) in light of a new evaluation of Jewish burials for the past several years based on the records of AMIA, the main Jewish community organization, of several minor ones in Buenos Aires, of communities in provincial cities, and also allowing for burials in non-Jewish cemeteries. Argentina's Jewish population was assessed at 170,000 in 2024—the world's sixth largest Jewish community.

8.4.7 Germany

In **Germany**, the Jewish population registered with officially recognized Jewish communities, after increasing consistently from 29,089 in 1990 to a peak of 107,794 at the beginning of 2007, diminished gradually to 102,797 in 2013, and 90,478 in 2024 (ZWST 2024). These figures only include core Jews and exclude the high share of non-Jewish members of Jewish households. The main reason for membership decline was extreme aging and a continuing negative balance of vital events (births and deaths). Between 2000 and 2023, there were a total of 4655 recorded Jewish births and 31,100 Jewish deaths, with a net natural deficit of -26,445. Births may be

underreported because of non-membership, but family size is actually very small, and intermarriage frequent (DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020). During the same period, 53,900 immigrants (of which 1314 in 2023), mostly from the FSU, registered with a Jewish community, versus 4660 emigrants, with a surplus of 49,240. The Jewish population that had previously relied on scant numbers of *Shoah* survivors and several thousand immigrants mostly from Eastern Europe and Israel, received a powerful boost from the FSU between 1990 and 2005. After 2005, immigration from the FSU diminished to a few hundred annually after the German government reduced benefits to Jewish immigrants (Cohen and Kogan 2005; Dietz et al. 2002; Erlanger 2006). Further numerical changes reflected joining and leaving the organized communities. Opportunities for religious, social, and cultural life, as well as welfare and services for the elderly encouraged joining (Schoeps et al. 1999; Ben Rafael et al. 2011; Glöckner and Fireberg 2015). However, between 2000 and 2023 there were 10,511 membership withdrawals versus 1657 new joiners, with a negative balance of -8854. Following the Russia-Ukraine war, about 6500 people were supported by the central Jewish organization ZWST, of which about 2,550 people were in longer-term case management (Bundesministerium des Innern und für Heimat 2023). About 3300 people from Ukraine sought for ZWST assistance in 2022. Between 2001 and 2023, 2500 emigrated from Germany to Israel.

Unlike countries like France and the UK, Jews in Germany were not concentrated in the capital city, reflecting the Federal policies of immigrants' dispersal throughout the Republic. The largest number of Jews was in the industrial Nordrhein-Westfalen region (primarily Dusseldorf) followed by Bavaria (Munich). In Berlin, the community-registered Jewish population diminished from 11,278 in 2003 to 8258 in 2024 (ZWST 2024). In 2018, 52% of the total Jewish adult population of Germany were foreign-born (DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020). Among these, the Israeli-born constituted about 9% of Germany's total Jewish population (see also Rebhun et al. 2022). Despite widespread reports of large increases, at the beginning of 2023, the number of officially recorded Israeli citizens in Berlin was 4894 as against 5472 in 2021, and 3065 in 2012 (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2012, 2015, 2019, 2020, 2022; Harpaz 2013; *Times of Israel* 2017). In 2023, 177 Israelis obtained German citizenship in Berlin (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2023). Considering new immigrants, declining affiliation rates, and population aging, we kept Germany's *core* Jewish population estimate stable at 125,000 in 2024—the world's seventh largest Jewish community.

8.4.8 Russia

In the **Russian Federation**, the 2021 census (Rosstat 2022) provided an unexpectedly low estimate of 83,896 Jews (including Mountain Jews, Georgian Jews and other small groups), as against 161,300 in 2010, and 238,900 in 2002. The new census figure appeared manifestly below target, due among other things to considerable non-reporting to the question on ethnicity (11.3% nationally). While the new Census results were not plausible, the Jewish population is continuing a downward course reflecting a decline in the country's total population since 1990 because of emigration, aging, and a negative balance of births and deaths (DellaPergola, Tolts and Rebhun 1996; Tolts 2008, 2014, 2015, 2018, and 2023). After the compulsory item of ethnicity (*natsyonalnost*) on identification documents was canceled, the ethnicity question became optional in the 2010 Census, thus leading to

shakier population estimates. In 2010, the core Jewish population was evaluated at 157,763, plus another about 43,000 people with undeclared ethnicity who likely belonged to the core Jewish population, for a total of 200,600 (Tolts 2011). Nearly 202,000 Jews and family members emigrated to Israel between 2001 and 2023—a majority of them non-Jewish family members (DellaPergola 2024f). Based on official vital statistics, the negative balance of Jewish births and deaths was evaluated at an annual deficit of about 2%. The selective effects of Jewish emigration generated an extremely elderly age composition and continuing population decrease, only partially compensated by migration from other FSU republics and returns of previous migrants to Israel (Tolts 2003, 2009, 2015, 2018 and 2023; Cohen 2009; Khanin 2023). In 2022, we estimated Russia's Jewish population at 145,000, based on a systematic assessment of known or projected birth rates and death rates, as well as international migration. In 2022, the war in Ukraine caused a sharp revival of Jewish emigration from Russia, much more so than from Ukraine, but a significant share of new immigrants of the past years from Russia, appeared to have left Israel within a year after arrival (Israel Population and Migration Authority 2022). In 2024, following various corrections and updates, we estimated the *core* Jewish population of the Russian Federation at 123,000—the world's eighth largest Jewish community.

In spite of the serious shortcomings of the 2021 census, the data threw some light on the changing internal Jewish geography in the Russian Federation. Decline—true or exaggerated—appeared all across the country. The two major metropolitan areas of Moscow and St. Petersburg/Leningrad (central city plus suburban district) comprised 51.5% of the total in 2021 versus 54.6% in 2002. The largest provincial Jewish communities were in the districts of Sverdlovsk (Yekaterinburg) and Samara (Kuybyshev).

8.4.9 Australia

In **Australia**, 99,956 persons identified as Jewish by religion in the 2021 Census, or about 0.4% of the total population (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2022). This was a 9.8% increase over the 2016 Census which had estimated 91,022 Jews—a surprising decline of 6.5% compared to 2011. The 2011 Census reported a Jewish population of 97,336, compared to 88,831 in 2006 and 83,993 in 2001 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017; Eckstein 2003; Graham 2012, 2014a, 2014b; Graham and Narunski 2019). The 2021 census indicated a 2.7% increase in Jews by religion compared to the more reliable 2011 figure. Changes in the Census form explained these fluctuations. In 2016, *No religion* was moved from the bottom to the top of the list of printed options, and Judaism did not appear as a printed option in the questionnaire but only as a write-in option. The result was a dramatic increase by 45.5% in the number of all Australians reporting no religion between 2011 and 2016. The percentage not reporting a religion further increased from 30% in 2016 to 39% in 2021. The 2021 census also asked about ancestry, referring to the ethnic or cultural origins of parents/grandparents. Of the 29,112 who wrote-in a Jewish ancestry, 16,718 did so for the first of two options, and 12,394 did so for the second. Of the total, 12,789 people did not also identify as Jewish by religion (8715 were of no religion or not stated, and 4074 stated another religion). Adding the 8715 with Jewish ancestry and no religion to the 99,956 of Jewish religion, provides a total of 108,671. Allocating for non-response, the revised census estimate for 2021 was 117,000 Jews in 2021 (Graham 2023).

The community's aging composition generated a fairly high death rate (Eckstein 2009; Markus et al. 2009; Markus et al. 2011; Forrest and Sheskin 2014, Graham 2018), but the *GEN17 Australian Jewish Community Survey* (Graham and Markus 2018; Porat 2020) still allowed for some minimal growth. Around 2016 there was a small positive difference between an estimated 1200 Jewish births and about 900 Jewish funerals, with continuing immigration from South Africa, the FSU, and Israel, and moderate although rising intermarriage rates (Graham 2018; Graham and Narunski 2019). Jewish population reached zero growth around 2021 (Graham 2023). Thus, we kept Australia's Jewish population stable at 117,000 in 2024—the world's ninth largest Jewish community.

8.4.10 Brazil

In **Brazil**, the 2020 census was postponed to 2022, and the results on religion were not yet available at the time of this writing. The 2010 Census reported a national total of 107,329 Jews, of whom 105,432 lived in urban localities and 1,987 in rural localities (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística IBGE 2010). A decennial increase of over 8000 compared to the 2000 census (+125%) in the Northeastern, Northern, and Central-Western states, cannot be attributed to demography. These growing numbers in the least developed and more peripheral regions of Brazil, as well as in São Paulo, pointed to inclusion as Jews in the Census population of many thousands of persons who in all probability belonged to Evangelical sects and Jehovah's Witnesses, besides possible cases of *Converso* Jewish ancestry. The surge of interest in Judaism among local populations notably included Brazil and several other countries in Latin America (Torres 2017). At the same time, Jewish emigration to Israel increased significantly to over 7400 in 2001-2023. Allowing for emigration, still not including potential emerging communities, and waiting for the final census counts, our assessment of Brazil's core Jewish population was 90,300 in 2024—the world's tenth largest Jewish community.

8.4.11 South Africa

In **South Africa**, the full counts from the 2022 Census were not yet available at the time of this writing. A 10% sample (Statistics South Africa 2023) provided a figure of 17,980 Jews which was evidently off mark, reflecting serious shortcomings with the census in general (Moultrie and Dorrington 2024). The 2016 Census indicated 49,450 Jews (Statistics South Africa 2017). According to the 2001 Census, the white Jewish population of South Africa was 61,675, out of a reported total of 75,555 including nonwhites. Some of these nonwhites identified with Jewish ancestry, but more likely were members of Christian messianic denominations. Factoring in the national white non-response rate (14%) led then to a revised estimate of 72,000 (Saks 2003). The Jewish population in South Africa experienced a major emigration wave just before the 1994 transfer of power from the apartheid regime to a democratic government (Dubb 1994; Kosmin et al. 1999; Bruk 2006; Raijman 2016). Subsequently, continuing emigration to Australia, Israel, and other countries, and a negative balance of births and deaths, led to steady Jewish population decline. Between 2001 and 2023, 4825 Jews emigrated to Israel. A Jewish national survey undertaken in 2019 confirmed a significant downward reduction in local Jewish population estimates suggesting an estimate of 53,200 for that year (Graham 2020). Among the Jewish population surveyed in 2019, 15% said they would leave South Africa, of whom 51% would go to

Israel (Graham 2020). But, regarding the actual distribution of immediate family members who had left South Africa, 26% lived in Israel, 21% in the US, 20% in Australia, 20% in the UK, 6% in Canada, and 7% in another country. Our estimate for 2024 was 49,500—the world's eleventh largest Jewish community.

8.4.12 Hungary

In **Hungary**, the third largest Jewish population in the European Union, there were 7635 Jews according to the 2022 Census, as against 10,965 in 2011 and 12,781 in 2001. The declining Jewish population (-40% over 21 years according to these data) plausibly portrayed the negative balance of Jewish births and deaths in a country whose total population has been diminishing for several years (Stark 1995 and 1997; Swiss Fund for Needy Victims of the Holocaust/Shoa 2002; Kovács 2013a; Population Reference Bureau 2019; and Hungarian Central Statistical Office 2003, 2013, 2023). A Jewish population estimate not far from the census report could be derived by looking at the percentage of Jews out of the total in the Hungarian sample of the European Social Survey (European Social Survey annual). These numbers should be interpreted cautiously since a majority of Hungarians reported no religion.

In 2023, 12,612 persons payed a 1% tax offering to the Association of Hungarian Jewish Religious Communities, which can be taken as an indication of the affiliated Jewish population (Hungary National Tax and Customs Administration 2023). At the same date, 3500 Shoah survivors were still living in Hungary, age 77 and over (Claims Conference 2024) Based on the age composition of Jews as reported in the 2022 census these elders comprised 15% of the total Jewish population. Assuming each was a Shoah survivor, this would correspond to a total Jewish population of 23,000. A demographic projection of an estimated 67,800 Jews in Hungary in 1995 (in turn a projection from the 1948 Census results, Stark 1997) generated an estimate of 36,550 in 2020 (-46% in 25 years).

A 2017 Jewish survey suggested a minimum-maximum range of 58,936-110,679 Jews, portraying substantial discrepancies about Jewish population size according to different sources and, especially, definitions (Kovács and Barna 2018). About 1600 new immigrants moved to Israel between 2000 and 2023 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual). During the same period, over 5500 Israelis immigrated to Hungary, most of them probably Jews, many of them temporarily for study or other purposes; about 1500 Israelis emigrated from Hungary—thus creating a net balance of 4000 (Hungary Central Statistical Office 2022). The number of Israelis receiving Hungarian citizenship was very small, but migration apparently mitigated the inherent decline of Hungary's Jewish population. Our core population estimate for 2024, pending further revisions, was downwardly revised to 45,000—the world's twelfth largest Jewish community.

8.4.13 Mexico

In **Mexico**, the third largest Jewish community in Latin America, the 2020 Census reported 58,876 Jews, as against 59,161 in the 2010 Census which also reported another 8,315 *Neo Israelitas* (New Jews), for a total of 67,476 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía e Informática 2012, 2022). Earlier Mexican censuses provided highly erratic figures and hinted at problematic and unstable interpretations of Jewish

population definitions (DellaPergola and Schmelz 1978). The inclusion of a category of *Neo Israelitas* in 2010 left open the question of the Jewish identity of a population possibly comprising followers of Evangelical sects or Jehovah's Witnesses, as well as descendants of *Conversos*. For the Federal Capital's metropolitan area, the Census Jewish population produced rather stable estimates similar to Jewish surveys of the same area (DellaPergola and Lerner 1995; Comité Central Israelita de México 2000, 2006, 2015, 2023; Bokser Liwerant 2013). Some international migration operated both ways. The total of immigrants to Israel between 2000 and 2023 surpassed 2000. More Jewish migrants relocated to the US. The most recent assessment of memberships lists of all Jewish community organizations in Mexico (CAE 2024) provided a total of 44,133 in 2022, 400 less than in 2015. However, 1050 people who left Mexico did not withdraw their membership in the community of origin, and an estimated 2500 for provincial cities and for the unaffiliated looked somewhat inflated. After revising upwardly our previous estimate by 1200, our 2024 Jewish population estimate, assuming minimal decline due to emigration, was 41,000—the world's thirteenth largest Jewish community.

8.4.14 Netherlands

A thorough overview and revision of the demographic development of Jews in the **Netherlands** was undertaken in the light of all evidence accumulated between 1945 and 2023 (Staetsky 2024). Jews in the Netherlands were investigated in two demographic surveys in 1954 and in 1966 (Committee for the Demography of the Jews in the Netherlands 1961-1962; van Praag 1976). Two more recent Jewish surveys in 1999 and in 2009 found high levels of intermarriage and a growing percentage of elderly (van Solinge and de Vries 2001; van Solinge and van Praag 2010; Tanenbaum and Kooyman 2014). An increase in the number of Israelis largely compensated for the inherent losses of the veteran population (Kooyman and Almagor 1996). Recent research concluded that beginning with the post-World War II/post-Shoah estimates, the numbers had been under-evaluated (Van Imhoff, van Solinge and Flim 2001). Considering the latest critical evaluation, our core Jewish population estimate for 2024 was upwardly revised by 5000 to 35,000, thus placing the Netherlands as the world's fourteenth largest Jewish community.

8.4.15 Ukraine

In **Ukraine**, the last Census held in December 2001 yielded an estimate of 104,300 Jews (Ukrainian Ministry of Statistics 2002; Tolts 2002, 2018, 2023). Subsequently, censuses could not be implemented. Instability, internal cleavage, and war in Ukraine resulted in continuing Jewish emigration and population decline. About 124,000 total immigrants, of which 47,500 were Jews arrived in Israel between 2000 and 2023. Continuing emigration to other countries, namely to the Russian Federation, low fertility, intermarriage, aging, and the consequent low birth rates and high death rates, caused great population declines. Since 2022, the war in Ukraine caused serious dislocations and massive emigration. In 2022, Israel received 14,656 new immigrants, of which 5,813 were Jews, but the number dwindled to 2080 in 2023. Many families supposedly relocated at least temporarily in Poland, Germany, and other European countries, as well as in North America (Amit et al. 2024). Some of these also tried to return to Ukraine. Lacking better data, we cautiously estimated the core Jewish

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population in Ukraine in 2024 at 32,000—the world's fifteenth largest Jewish community.

8.4.16 Other countries

Only a few countries for whom meaningful information was recently obtained will be discussed here. Updates for all other countries relied upon the previous years' estimates to which the reader is referred (DellaPergola 2024a), plus minor changes reflecting the balance of births and deaths and international migration.

In **Belgium**, a thorough review of all available Jewish community and public sources (Staetsky and DellaPergola 2022) confirmed quite stable numbers generated by growth among the highly traditional Orthodox community in Antwerp, versus demographic stagnation in Brussels (Cohn 2003; Ben Rafael 2013). Emigration to Israel of 2,900 between 2001 and 2023 reflected growing concerns about Islamization, terrorism, and antisemitism. The Jewish population was stable at 29,000 in 2024.

In **Italy**, total Jewish community membership—comprising the overwhelming majority of the country's Jewish population—decreased from 26,706 in 1995 to 21,982 in 2022 (Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane 2002, 2010, 2018, 2022; Lattes 2005; Campelli 2013 and 2016). Considering increasing non-membership, more conversions to Judaism, and emigration of 2,300 to Israel between 2001 and 2023, our estimate was 26,800 for 2024.

In **Switzerland**, according to census data and current updates, there were 17,478 Jews age 15 and over at the end of 2021, roughly corresponding to a total of 20,500 (Statistik Schweiz 2005, 2012, 2019, 2022). In light of the census and emigration of 1800 to Israel between 2001 and 2023, but also arrivals of new foreigners—the estimate was stable at 20,500 in 2024.

In **Uruguay**, the Jewish population was slowly declining due to emigration (Shorer Kaplan 2016). Between 2001 and 2023, 2470 emigrated to Israel. The estimate for 2024 was set at 16,100.

In **Chile**, the 2013 census caused some controversy (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas 2013). The rise to power in 2022 of a new radically anti-Israeli President raised some concern and increasing interest in emigration. Between 2001 and 2023, 1363 emigrated to Israel. The 2024 estimate was downwardly revised to 15,500.

In **Turkey**, new Jewish community data indicated very low birth rates, emigration from the country by a large share of Jewish youth seeking higher education abroad and marked aging. Between 2001 and 2023, 2600 emigrated to Israel. In the light of new Jewish community information (Filiba 2023), the previous estimate was revised upwardly by 1000 to 15,200 for 2023 but reduced to 15,000 for 2024.

In **Sweden**, figures from the Official Council of Jewish communities indicated a decline in Jewish community affiliation from 9368 in 2007, to 8462 in 2011, 8316 in 2016, and 8153 in 2021 (a decline of 13% over 14 years) (Willander 2019, Official Council of Jewish communities 2021). Some 500 emigrated to Israel between 2001 and 2023. Our estimate, including non-affiliated persons stood at 14,900 in 2024.

In **Spain**, according to Comunidad Judía de Madrid-CJM and the Bet El membership records, there were about 1200 affiliated families in Madrid in 2019. Keeping with the estimated average household size of 3 (European Union Fundamental Rights Agency-FRA 2018), 3600 Jews in affiliated households at an affiliation rate of 60% would correspond to a total Jewish population of around 6000. In Barcelona, the approximately 2,700 Jews in 800-900 households affiliated with Comunidad Israelita

de Barcelona-CIP and other communities would roughly correspond to about 5000, assuming a slightly lower affiliation rate. By the FRA survey, 85% of respondents lived in the two major cities, leading to a national estimate of 13,000 in 2024. The government dispositions favorable to acquisition of Spanish citizenship by persons who could demonstrate Spanish family origins were practically discontinued. Some 1200 emigrated to Israel between 2001 and 2023.

In **Austria**, a thorough analysis of updated Jewish community records and state vital statistics (Statistik Austria 2019; Staetsky and DellaPergola 2020) suggested some upward revision in 2022. Between 2001 and 2023, 450 emigrated to Israel. In 2024, the estimate was kept stable at 10,300.

In **Panama**, the Jewish population increased as a consequence of continuing immigration especially from other Latin American countries and from Israel. Although higher figures were reported locally, with the lack of a firm source, we kept our 2024 estimate stable at 10,000.

In **Poland**, the Jewish population reported by censuses and surveys consistently increased due to recovery of lost Jewish identity memories and some immigration (DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020). Jewish community membership was 1,860 in 2018. In the 2021 Census, 17,156 respondents mentioned a Jewish ethnicity (GUS 2022), versus 1055 in 2002, and 7353 in 2011 (GUS 2012). Of the latter, 1636 mentioned Jewish only, and 851 mentioned Jewish as the first of two ethnicities, for a total of 2488. The others declared Jewish as a second ethnicity, mostly after Polish. Another 7811 non-Jewish persons lived in households with at least one Jewish person. Pending further analysis of the 2021 census, we assumed that roughly half of all ethnic Jews would fall under the *core* Jewish population definition, the rest pertaining to persons of Jewish background. The 400 ascertained Shoah survivors (aged 77 and over) implied a total veteran Jewish population of 1700-2700 (Claims Conference 2024). Allowing for more recent Jewish immigration and some permanent resettlement from Ukraine since 2022, our core Jewish population estimate for 2024 was 9,600.

In the former Czechoslovakia, the 2021 censuses for **Czechia** and for **Slovakia** (Czech Statistical Office 2021, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2021) reported similar numbers by religion, around 2000, somewhat higher than in previous censuses through immigration, but probably under-estimated. We revised the previous estimates to 3500 in each country in 2024.

In the former Yugoslavia, the 2021/2022 censuses for **Croatia** and for **Serbia** gave similar figures, around 600 Jews in each country, by religion (Croatian Bureau of Statistics 2021, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia 2022). Croatia also reported 410 Jews by ethnicity (Vlada Republike Hrvatske 2021). These evidently were underestimated. Pending better data, we corrected the estimates for both countries to 1500 in 2024.

8.5 Major Cities and Metropolitan Areas

Changes in the geographic distribution of Jews affected their distribution not only among countries, but also significantly within countries. Jews showed a clear preference to live in major metropolitan areas. Within metropolitan areas, too, Jews often manifested unique propensities to settle or resettle in specific neighborhoods that were more compatible with their socioeconomic status, and/or more attractive because of their propinquity to employment or Jewish community facilities

(DellaPergola and Sheskin 2015). Definitions of urban areas vary by country. The US urban areas reported on **Table 8.13** are Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). Changes in the definition of Metropolitan areas periodically affected some of the data for Israel.

Table 8.13 Metropolitan areas with Core Jewish populations (CJP) above 100,000, 1/1/2024^a

Rank	Metropolitan Area	Country	Jewish population (CJP) ^b	% Jews out of total population	% of world Jewish population (CJP) ^b	
					%	Cumulative %
1	Tel Aviv ^c	Israel	3,720,500	88.9	23.6	23.6
2	New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ	U.S.	1,980,200	10.2	12.6	36.2
3	Jerusalem ^d	Israel	1,029,100	70.8	6.5	42.8
4	Haifa ^e	Israel	651,200	64.0	4.1	46.9
5	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	U.S.	647,500	5.1	4.1	51.0
6	Miami-Ft. Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	U.S.	481,000	7.8	3.1	54.1
7	Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN	U.S.	325,250	3.5	2.1	56.1
8	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	U.S.	311,400	5.0	2.0	58.1
9	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	U.S.	303,500	4.7	1.9	60.0
10	Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	U.S.	265,200	5.4	1.7	61.7
11	Paris ^f	France	265,000	2.3	1.7	63.4
12	San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	U.S.	247,500	5.4	1.6	65.0
13	Be'er Sheva ^g	Israel	227,938	53.1	1.4	66.4
14	London ^h	U.K.	200,000	2.1	1.3	67.7
15	Toronto ^j	Canada	198,000	3.2	1.3	69.0
16	Buenos Aires ⁱ	Argentina	150,000	1.2	1.0	69.9
17	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	U.S.	135,670	2.1	0.9	70.8
18	Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD	U.S.	122,950	4.3	0.8	71.6
19	San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad, CA	U.S.	100,700	3.1	0.6	72.2

^a Most metropolitan areas include extended inhabited territory and several municipal authorities around the central city. Definitions vary by country. Israel metropolitan areas are defined by the Central Bureau of Statistics. The US metropolitan areas are Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) as defined by the US Office of Management and Budget. See <https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-files/time-series/demo/metro-micro/delineation-files.html> The data for metropolitan areas in the US are taken from the chapter by Sheskin, Dashefsky, and Comenetz on United States Jewish Population in this volume

^b Several of the US estimates refer to Population with Jewish Parents (PJP). All Israel Jewish Populations are Enlarged Jewish Populations (EJP). Data for other countries refer to Population with Jewish Parents (PJP)

^c Includes Tel Aviv District, Central District, Ashdod Subdistrict in the Southern District, and sections of Judea and Samaria District. Principal cities: Tel Aviv, Ramat Gan, Bene Beraq, Petach Tikva, Bat Yam, Holon, Rishon LeZiyon, Rehovot, Netanya, and Ashdod, all with Jewish populations 100,000 and over

^d Includes Jerusalem District and parts of the Judea and Samaria District. Includes Bet Shemesh with over 100,000 Jews

^e Includes Haifa District and parts of Northern District

^f Departments 75, 77, 78, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95

^g Includes Beersheba Subdistrict and other parts of Southern District

^h Greater London and Hertfordshire areas

ⁱ Census Metropolitan Area

^j Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area AMBA

It is not easy to create a truly standardized picture of Jewish populations in major cities, as some available figures refer to different years and are only roughly comparable regarding Jewish population definitions and data collection methods. Examining the US Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), we use here the data reported in the US Jewish Population chapter in this volume which rely mostly on estimates resulting from definitions used by local Jewish federations. This often results in extended aggregates of people currently Jewish or who are born or raised Jewish but really should be counted as part of the population with Jewish parents (PJP) or

part of the Net Jewish Populations (NJP, as defined by Pew).

Sheskin, Dashefsky, and Comenetz's estimates, along with those for other locales not reported here, suggested a total US Jewish population of 7.7M in 2024, as against a *net Jewish population* of 7.5M according to the Pew 2020 definition, and our *core Jewish population* estimate of 6.3M. Keeping in mind these discrepancies, the data reported here aim nevertheless at portraying the *core Jewish population* in major metropolitan areas. Broader Jewish population definitions increase the number and percent of Jews out of the total local population, but at the same time lower the proportion in the selected metropolitan areas out of the total world enlarged Jewish population. This has to be kept in mind when comparing the 2024 estimates with those for earlier years.

Unlike our estimates of Jewish populations in individual countries, the data reported here on major urban Jewish populations did not fully adjust for possible double counting due to multiple residences (with the exception of Florida where the estimates were adjusted, see Sheskin, Dashefsky, and Comenetz in this volume). In the US, the differences may be quite significant, in the range of several tens, if not hundreds of thousands, involving both major and minor metropolitan areas. The respective estimates of part-year residents were accounted for only in part in the estimates in **Table 8.13**. Part-year residency may be related to climate differences, the economy and employment, and other factors. Such multiple residences now also increasingly occur internationally. A person from New York or Paris may also own or rent an apartment in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv, and some may even commute monthly or weekly (Pupko 2013). The case of Israelis regularly commuting abroad for work has also become more frequent.

Jewish populations globally are overwhelmingly concentrated in large urban areas. In 2024, more than half (51.0%) of world Jewry (as defined above) lived in only five metropolitan areas (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual; Sheskin, Dashefsky, and Comenetz in this volume). These five areas—including the main cities and vast urbanized territories around them—were Tel Aviv, New York-Newark-Jersey City, Jerusalem, Haifa, and Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim. Another 21% of world Jewry lived in the five mentioned largest areas plus another 14 with at least 100,000 Jews (keeping in mind possible definition discrepancies): Miami-Ft. Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, Paris, San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Be'er Sheva, London, Toronto, Buenos Aires, Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, and San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad.

The Jewish population in the Tel Aviv conurbation, extending from Netanya to Ashdod and surpassing 3.7M Jews by the *core* definition, largely exceeded that in the New York MSA, extending from southern New York State to parts of Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, with nearly 2M Jews. Greater Jerusalem was the third metro area with over 1M Jews. Of the 19 largest metropolitan areas of Jewish residence, eleven were located in the US, four in Israel, and one each in France, the UK, Canada, and Argentina. Nearly all the major areas of settlement of contemporary Jewish populations share distinct features, such as being national or regional capitals, enjoying higher standards of living, with highly developed infrastructures for higher education and hi-tech, and widespread transnational connections. The Tel Aviv metropolitan area also featured the highest percent of Jews (by the *core* definition) among the total population (88.9%), followed at a distance by Jerusalem (70.8%), Haifa (64.0%), and Beersheba (53.1%), the balance mostly being Israeli Arabs. In the

rest of the world, the highest percentage of Jews in a metropolitan area was in New York (10.2%), followed by Miami-Fort Lauderdale (7.8%), San Francisco and Boston (5.4%), Los Angeles (5.1%), Philadelphia (5.0%), Washington (4.8%), Baltimore (4.3%), and Chicago (3.5%).

8.6 Major Determinants of Demographic Change

The changes in the size and composition of Jewish populations outlined above reflect a chain of interrelated factors, each of which in turn depends on a complex array of explanatory determinants. We briefly review here only three of these factors—changes in personal Jewish identification, Jewish international migration, and some possible effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Jewish deaths and births. These factors operated differently in each country.

8.6.1 International migration

Over the past decades, shifts in Jewish population size in the major regions of the world were primarily determined by large-scale international migration. Unfortunately, international migration of Jews is imperfectly documented. Currently, only Israel records Jewish immigrants by their detailed countries of origin (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual, and unpublished data). Israeli data, compared over several successive years, may provide a sense of the intensity of concomitant migration movements of Jews to other countries, although there are also differences in the timing, volume, direction, and characteristics of the respective migrants (DellaPergola 2009a; Amit et al. 2010; DellaPergola 2020b; Kramer and Tong 2024). Some countries do keep records of the annual numbers of migrants from and sometimes also to Israel, although they usually do not distinguish between Jews and non-Jews (US Department of Homeland Security 2017; Eurostat 2015; DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020). Jewish organizations, like HIAS—formerly the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS 2013) in the US or the ZWST-Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle (annual) in Germany, record Jewish immigrants on a yearly basis. The Canadian census records Jewish immigrants by country of birth (Brym 2023). However, the global picture of Jewish migration remains far from complete. A strong negative relationship exists between the level of human development of a country, as measured by the HDI, and the propensity of Jews to emigrate from that country, namely to Israel (DellaPergola 2020b).

Since 1948, Israel was the main recipient of Jewish international migration. It was the country of destination of 69% of all Jewish migrants between 1948 and 1968, and about 60% between 1969 and 2015 (Amit and DellaPergola 2016). The international migration balance quite consistently produced a net surplus for Israel, reduced the Jewish population of the Diaspora and increased the Jewish population of Israel. Of the estimated 2M FSU migrants between 1989 and 2023 including non-Jewish household members, about 1.3M migrated to Israel, over 350,000 to the US, and over 250,000 to Germany. Over time, the proportion of Jews within this aggregate of migrants diminished and the presence of non-Jewish relatives became more dominant (DellaPergola 2024f). Following a worsening of legal provisions for the admission of new immigrants, and the active involvement of Israel's government to that effect, the US lost the primacy as a destination for FSU migrants it had gained during the 1980s.

A cut in the benefits offered by Germany to FSU Jewish migrants occurred since 2005 (Dominitz 1997; Lazin 2005; Erlanger 2006; Gur-Gurevich 2014; Muallem 2016).

Migration levels strongly reflected the differential and varying constraints and benefits related to the migrants' legal status and employment options in the main countries of origin and of destination (DellaPergola 2020b). Israeli immigration law (the Law of Return) allows for comparatively easier access and immediate citizenship to Jewish migrants and their families, especially after a new citizenship law in 2017, but the integration difficulties experienced in Israel by some immigrants created deterrents to successful absorption of further migrants from the same countries of origin. On the other hand, until October 7, 2023, the Israeli economy had been one of the more stable in the developed world.

In recent years, total Jewish migration was far from the major peaks of the past (namely the late 1940s and early 1990s), due to the rapidly decreasing Jewish population in the less developed countries from which most Jewish emigration came and the increasing concentration of Jews in more developed countries. The disruptions and dislocations in Ukraine since 2022 due to the Russian invasion brought about a large wave of emigrants and displaced persons, but by far the major migration upsurge came from Russia. This unveils serious economic and political problems in that country and their reverberations in the perceptions of the Jewish population. Perceptions and experiences of mounting antisemitism and a violent and dangerous environment stimulated Jewish emigration particularly from France, Turkey, and Venezuela.

Total immigration to Israel, including new immigrants, returning Israelis, and Israeli citizens born abroad who entered Israel for the first time, amounted to 84,320, of which 39,831 are Jewish. The total net migration balance was 24,800, of which 2500 are Jewish and the majority are non-Jews. **Table 8.14** shows the number of new immigrants to Israel by country of origin in 2022 and 2023. The data reflect the *Law of Return*, not the *core Jewish population*, definition (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Annual, and unpublished data).

Table 8.14 New immigrants to Israel^a, by last country of residence, 2023-2024

Country	2022	2023	% difference	Country	2022	2023	% difference
	74,26						
GRAND TOTAL^b	7	45,985	-38.1	Moldova	147	96	-34.7
America - Total^b	5,283	3,932	-25.6	Russian Federation	45,42	8	-27.1
North America	3,316	2,625	-20.8	Ukraine	14,57	7	-85.7
Bermuda	0	1	-	FSU unspecified	26	12	-53.8
Canada	396	209	-47.2	Other Europe	744	587	-21.1
United States	2,920	2,415	-17.3	Andorra	2	0	-100.0
Central America	282	228	-19.1	Gibraltar	2	2	0.0
Barbados	4	0	-100.0	Montenegro	4	8	100.0
Costa Rica	20	6	-70.0	North Macedonia	0	1	-
Cuba	82	33	-59.8	Norway	7	2	-71.4
Dominican Rep.	1	9	800.0	Serbia	6	21	250.0
El Salvador	6	9	50.0	Switzerland	86	68	-20.9
Guatemala	5	6	20.0	Turkey	79	89	12.7
Honduras	1	3	200.0	United Kingdom	558	396	-29.0
Mexico	136	142	4.4	Asia - Total^b	1,298	1,209	-6.9
Nicaragua	0	1	-	FSU in Asia	1,167	1,090	-6.6
Panama	27	19	-29.6	Armenia	37	129	248.6

South America	1,685	1,079	-36.0	Azerbaijan	164	177	7.9
Argentina	947	532	-43.8	Georgia	381	372	-2.4
Bolivia	5	2	-60.0	Kazakhstan	239	124	-48.1
Brazil	345	254	-26.4	Kyrgyzstan	30	22	-26.7
Chile	100	59	-41.0	Tadjikistan	19	10	-47.4
Colombia	72	83	15.3	Turkmenistan	1	5	400.0
Ecuador	11	19	72.7	Uzbekistan	296	251	-15.2
Paraguay	13	13	0.0	Other Asia	131	114	-13.0
Peru	82	56	-31.7	China	3	8	166.7
Uruguay	55	34	-38.2	Hong Kong	2	2	0.0
Venezuela	55	27	-50.9	India	42	21	-50.0
	66,31						
Europe - Total^b	9	39,662	-40.2	Iraq	1	1	0.0
European Union^c	2,959	1,706	-42.3	Iran	45	31	-31.1
Austria	33	17	-48.5	Japan	5	2	-60.0
Belgium	102	94	-7.8	Nepal	1	0	-100.0
Bulgaria	7	11	57.1	Philippines	1	1	0.0
Croatia	3	9	200.0	Qatar	0	4	-
Cyprus	19	67	252.6	Singapore	7	10	42.9
Czechia	47	41	-12.8	South Korea	0	3	-
Denmark	7	7	0.0	Taiwan	2	0	-100.0
Finland	7	12	71.4	Thailand	10	14	40.0
				United Arab			
France	2,189	1,006	-54.0	Emirates	12	16	33.3
Germany	193	148	-23.3	Vietnam	0	1	-
Greece	8	9	12.5	Africa - Total^b	532	436	-18.0
Hungary	28	39	39.3	Northern Africa	102	179	75.5
Ireland	3	6	100.0	Egypt	0	4	-
Italy	88	68	-22.7	Eritrea	0	1	-
Luxembourg	2	4	100.0	Ethiopia	14	132	842.9
Malta	5	5	0.0	Morocco	43	16	-62.8
Netherlands	37	40	8.1	Sudan	21	1	-95.2
Poland	30	21	-30.0	Tunisia	24	25	4.2
Portugal	5	8	60.0	Sub Saharan Africa	430	247	-42.6
Romania	23	6	-73.9	Cameroun	2	0	-100.0
Slovakia	3	3	0.0	Ghana	3	0	-100.0
Slovenia	15	1	-93.3	Maurutius	0	2	-
Spain	89	60	-32.6	Rwanda	8	3	-62.5
Sweden	16	24	50.0	South Africa	416	242	-41.8
	62,61						
FSU in Europe	6	37,269	-40.5	Togo	1	0	-100.0
Belarus	2,206	1,842	-16.5	Oceania - Total	144	108	-25.0
Estonia	33	36	9.1	Australia	131	105	-19.8
Latvia	146	151	3.4	French Polynesia	2	1	-50.0
Lithuania	53	54	1.9	New Zealand	11	2	-81.8

^a New immigrants and tourists changing their status to immigrant, not including temporary residents, returning Israelis, and immigrant citizens

^b Including country unknown

^c Not including Baltics

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

In 2023, 45,985 new immigrants arrived or changed their status from tourist to permanent resident in Israel, as against 74,267 in 2022—a 38% decline. Among these new immigrants, 16,713 (36%) were Jewish. Russia and Ukraine supplied 76% of all new immigrants in 2023, clearly reflecting the Russia-Ukraine war. These data compared with 24,977 immigrants in 2021, 19,696 in 2020, 33,096 in 2019, 28,118 in 2018, 26,333 in 2017, and 25,010 in 2016.

The Russian Federation was by far the main country of origin for *aliyah* in 2023 with 33,098, a decline of 27% versus 2022. Immigration from Ukraine declined to 2080, down 86% from 14,577 in 2022. The war in Ukraine also generated thousands of refugees who fled to Poland, Germany and several other European countries. But what attracts more attention is the remarkable disproportion in the numbers of new immigrants from Russia and Ukraine. Some doubts were raised about the permanency of stay in Israel of these new *olim*. Several thousand actually left shortly after receiving Israeli citizenship and a passport (Israel Population and Immigration Authority 2022). A high proportion of them were non-Jewish family members eligible for the Law of Return, reflecting an *enlarged* Jewish population in the countries of origin nearly three times as large as the *core* (Tolts 2006, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2018, 2023a and b).

Immigration from the US, handled by Nefesh B'Nefesh (see also Dashefsky and Woodrow-Lafield 2020), diminished from 2920 in 2022 to 2415 in 2023 (-17%). Immigration from France, after an all-time peak in 2015 (6627), diminished from 2189 in 2022 to 1006 in 2023 (-54%). The only other country with more than 1000 migrants to Israel was Belarus with 1842 versus 2206 in 2022 (-17%), and the only other country with more than 500 in 2023 was Argentina with 532 versus 947 in 2022 (-44%).

In sum, in 2023 immigration to Israel decreased from all regions in the world, with the marginal exception of some very tiny numbers from North Africa. The more significant percentage declines were from the EU, the FSU in Europe, and South America (see **Fig. 8.10**).

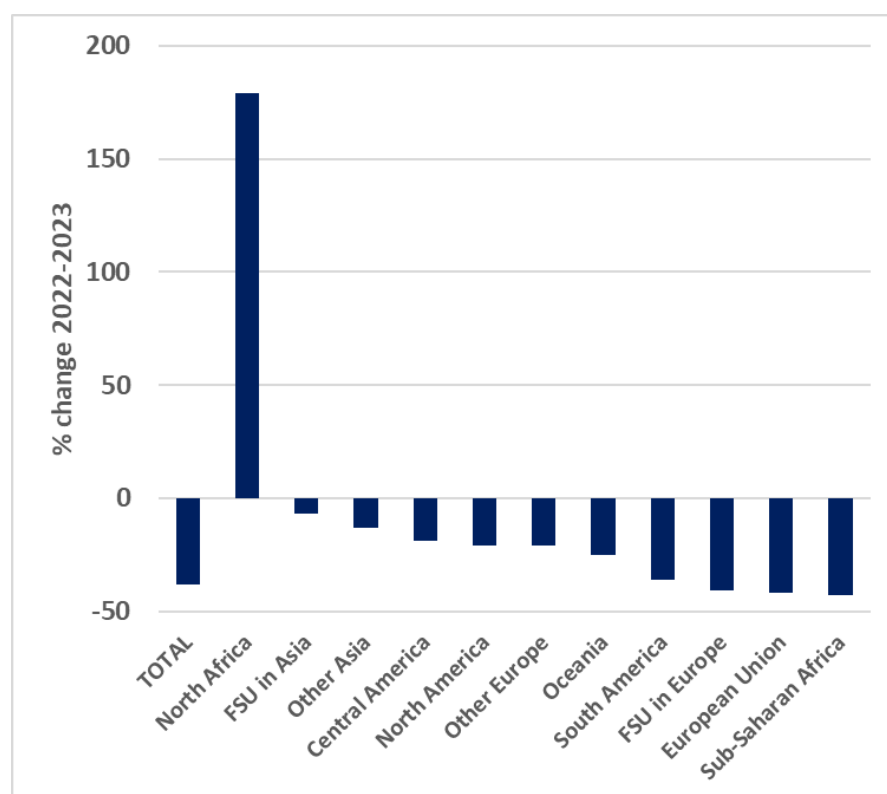


Fig. 8.10 Percent change in number of immigrants to Israel from major areas of origin, 2022-2023
Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, author's processing

Jewish migration to countries other than Israel increased in 2023, especially due to a significant increase in departures from Israel. The criteria by which the Israel

Central Bureau of Statistics computes emigration were modified in 2023. Whereas previously an absence of one entire year was required to classify a person as a long-term absentee, by the new method, a person is accounted for as such if he/she spent at least 275 days abroad since the day of departure, of which the first 90 days were continuous (Cohen-Kastro 2023). Symmetrically, a person is counted as having returned from long-term absence if he/she spent at least 275 days in Israel since the day of return, of which the first 90 days need to be continuous (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2024a). As a consequence of this change, the total number of Israelis counted as long-term residents abroad increased by about 150,000.

Israel—in part because of its small market and the limits this imposes upon employment opportunities—is today probably the main single supplier of Jewish emigration, mostly to the US and to other Western countries (Rebhun and Lev Ari 2010; Rebhun et al. 2022; Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2020 and 2024a).

Evidence for Israelis in the US, based on American sources up to 2023, shows stability or reduction in the influx, in part, balanced by returns to Israel (Gold and Phillips 1996; Gold 2002; Cohen 2009; Rebhun and Lev Ari 2010; Rebhun 2014; Israel Central Bureau of Statistics). The number of Israeli residents who were allowed lawful permanent resident status in the US was fairly stable: 4320 in 2015, 4650 in 2016, 4230 in 2017, 4010 in 2018, 4700 in 2019, 3990 in 2020, 3280 in 2021, 3390 in 2022, and 3970 in 2023 (US Department of Homeland Security 2023). The total number naturalized since 1948 throughout 2023 was about 250,000, some of which evidently have since died or re-migrated, of which 40,790 naturalized between 2014 and 2023. The number of naturalized Israelis by country of birth was 37,610 between 2014 and 2023. Accounting for other Jewish migrants to the US, and discounting for the about 2000-3000 yearly emigrants to Israel, annual net Jewish migration into the US can be estimated at around 5000.

In the European Union, Israelis appeared to constitute a non-negligible share of all resident Jews based on a systematic survey undertaken around 2020 (DellaPergola and Staetsky 2020). Between 2011 and 2021, 4710 individuals born in Israel emigrated to Canada.

In 2021, 17,295 Canadian Jews were born in Israel, making Israeli Jews Canada's largest Jewish immigrant group with 19% of the total (Brym 2023). Israel born persons comprised 1% of all foreign born in OECD countries (OECD 2024).

Overall, during the past ten years, emigration from Israel was quite low, consistent with Israel's high and rising level of human development (DellaPergola 2011c). The primary factors at work were levels of employment and similar indicators of economic development. The effects of ideological, security, and fear-related factors such as antisemitism, terrorism and internal cleavages were weaker determinants of the volume and timing of Jewish immigration to, and emigration from, Israel (DellaPergola 2020b). During 2023, departures from Israel significantly increased, first during the months of social unrest following the legal reforms proposed by the Netanyahu government, and more significantly immediately after the traumatic political and military events of October 7 and the following months. Soon after the war in Gaza and Lebanon started, there also were numerous returns of Israelis abroad. The final balance sheet of migrations in 2023 resulted in 55,300 Israelis leaving the country for a long-term absence, versus 27,800 who returned after a long-term stay abroad, a negative net balance of -27,500 migrants (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2024a). This deficit matched with similar negative peaks of -22,900 in 1981 and -27,400 in 1993, out of what then was a smaller Israeli population. The 45,985 new immigrants

in 2023 are not included in this accountancy.

8.6.2 Intermarriage and identificational variation

Family formation and choice of spouse is one of the fundamental demographic processes in any population. The frequency of intermarriage is historically highly variable across countries, reflecting different local, cultural, and legal circumstances (DellaPergola 2024d). The choice of spouse within or outside the Jewish group strongly determines whether the descendants only have Jewish ancestry or multiple ancestries including at least one Jewish ancestor. The identification of individuals among the several options available is a matter of choice, mediated by personal characteristics and life opportunities to which people are allocated or exposed. Growing rates of intermarriage in nearly every country have contributed to changing the nature of personal Jewish/and/or other identifications, from clearly defined and mutually exclusive, into a weaker, sometimes uncertain, or even forgotten residue (Reinharz and DellaPergola 2009; DellaPergola 2009b; Phillips 2018). Intermarriage is one of the main determinants of a household's religious composition and a prime factor in affecting the identities of the descendants and the overall ethnoreligious composition of the enlarged population of Jews and their family members.

Table 8.15 provides a synopsis of the currently estimated rates of intermarriage, as distributed across Jewish populations worldwide. Reflecting the rather polarized global Jewish physiognomy, two main concentrations appear, one at 0-9% intermarriage comprising 45.5% of world Jewish population—represented by Israel—and one at 50-59% intermarriage comprising 40.3% of world Jewry—mostly represented by the US (whose current rate in 2020 was actually 61%, here considered as the terminal peak of a rising period). Other Jewish communities feature all possible levels of intermarriage. The lower ladder comprises large communities like France, the UK, Australia, and medium-sized ones like Mexico, Belgium, and South Africa. The more extremely high levels are documented for Russia, Ukraine, and several other smaller communities.

Table 8.15 Percent distribution of world core Jewish population, by current frequency of intermarriage in country, 2024

% intermarriage in country	Main examples	Cumulated core Jewish population	% of world core Jewish population
Total		15,736,800	100.0
0-9	Israel	7,153,000	45.5
10-19	Mexico, Belgium	80,800	0.5
20-29	Australia, France, UK, South Africa	964,700	6.1
30-39	Canada, Germany	592,200	3.8
40-49	Argentina, Brazil, Hungary	359,500	2.3
50-59	US, Netherlands	6,347,600	40.3
60-69	Romania	42,300	0.3
70-79	Russia, Ukraine	196,100	1.2
80+	Cuba	600	0.0

Selected sources: Pew Research Center (2021), DellaPergola (2009b and 2017b), DellaPergola and Staetsky (2020), Graham (2020 and 2024), Brym (2024), Jmelnizky and Erdei (2005), Decol (2009), Kolk and Sarela (2024)

Figure 8.11 provides an overview of the respective weights of different Jewish sub-populations defined by gradually more extensive identification criteria, beginning with the *core* Jewish definition and up to the broader limits of the *Law of Return* definition. The data cover each of the 25 largest Jewish populations worldwide, ranked from highest to lowest by the share of *core* compared to *Law of Return* population. The case of Israel stands out as remarkably distinct, with a low rate of intermarriage, either imported from abroad or generated locally, hence the extensions of the *non-core* Jewish populations are relatively small. In the rest of the world, countries where the *core* Jewish population constitutes a larger share relative to the *Law of Return* population include Belgium, Mexico, Panama, Australia, and South Africa. Countries where the *core* Jewish population constitutes a smaller share of the *Law of Return* definition include Ukraine, Russia, Sweden, the US, and the Netherlands.

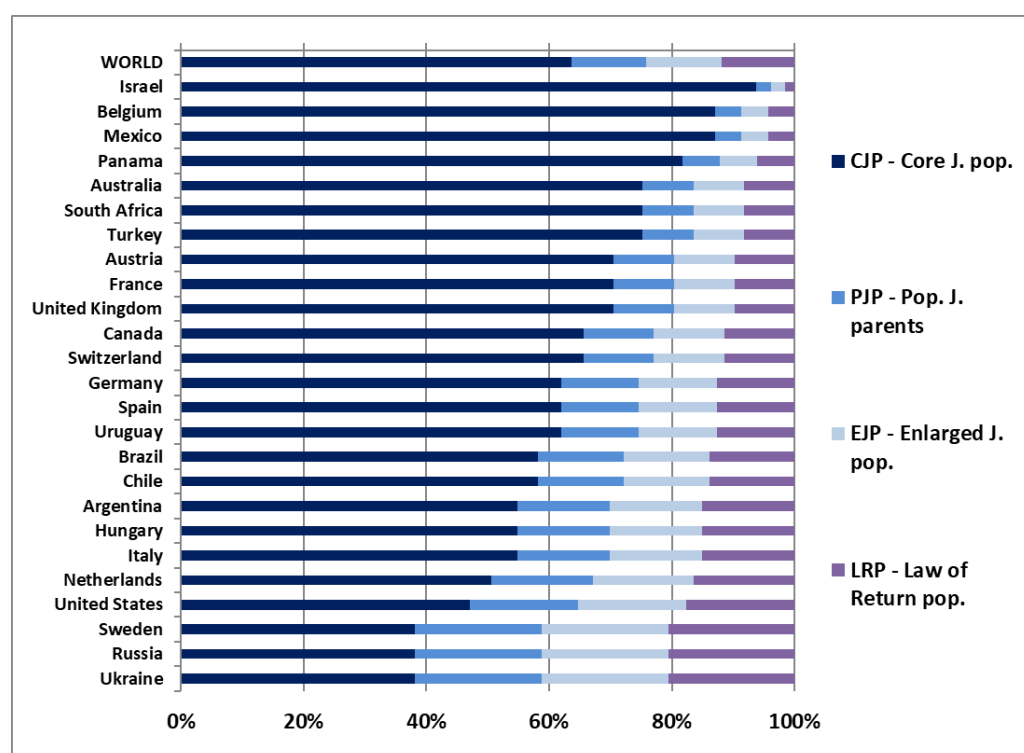


Fig. 8.11 World, Israel, and 25 largest Diaspora Core, Jewish Parentage, Enlarged, and Law of Return Jewish populations, percentage distributions, 2024
Source: Table 8.17

8.6.3 Age composition

The different demographic processes outlined here—international migration, births and deaths, and family formation and identificational choices—affect the distribution of a population by age groups. **Fig. 8.12** illustrates the amazing transformations and differences observable across world Jewry, all based on the most recent data (2019-2023). Israel provides the only example worldwide of a Jewish population where children 0-4 are the largest cohort. This reflects relatively high birth rates, comparatively high fertility rates, and a sufficiently large young adult population that

generates those births.

In all other countries, the modal (relatively largest) age group is older. Mexico demonstrates the incipient transition to lower birth rates, with modal ages at 20-29. Canada demonstrates the alternation of the post World War II baby-boom, the subsequent fertility decline, and the respective echo effects one and two generations later. Modal age in Canada is 70-74. Australia follows a similar pattern, with more marked breaks due to lower Jewish fertility. The US ranks in between Canada and Australia, if sufficiently detailed data on age composition were available (which unfortunately is not the case in the 2020s based on national sources). South Africa demonstrates the visible narrowing caused by emigration among intermediate adult age cohorts. The Netherlands, on the other hand, demonstrates the moderating effects of immigration of Israelis, which provides more adults at intermediate ages and compensates for the eroding effects of low fertility, high intermarriage, and aging. Italy exemplifies the continuing advanced process of aging, due to low fertility and assimilation erosion, once the effects of past Jewish immigration are over. Turkey features the additional effects of continuing sustained emigration, especially of younger adults, over low fertility. Russia demonstrates the more extreme consequences of massive emigration upon long-term low fertility and high assimilation. Germany, although absorbing significant amounts of (rather elderly) Jewish immigrants from Russia, testifies to the extreme consequences of these demographic trends on Jewish population structure. In the last four mentioned Jewish populations, the largest age group is 80 and above.

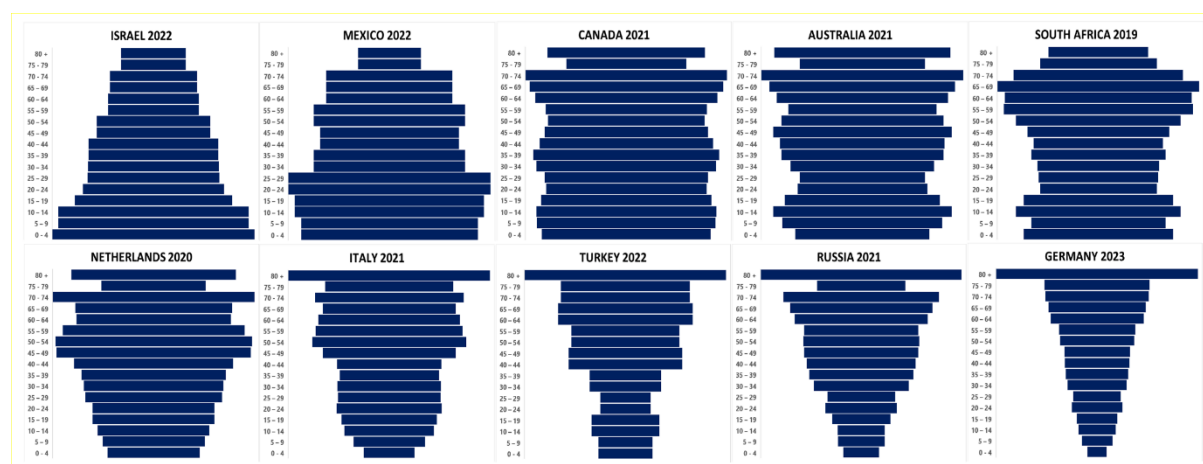


Fig. 8.12 Age compositions of selected Jewish populations, 2019-2023

Sources: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2023); Comité Central de la Comunidad Judía de Mexico (courtesy of Mauricio Lulka); Statistics Canada (courtesy of Robert Brym); JPR (courtesy of David Graham); JCA (courtesy of David Graham); JPR (Courtesy of L.D. Staetsky); Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane (courtesy of Uriel Perugia); Jewish Community of Turkey (courtesy of Lina Filiba); Rosstat (courtesy of Mark Tolts); ZWST - Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Juden in Deutschland (courtesy of Heike Von Bassewitz)

More than anything else, these nearly simultaneous images of Jewish population structure testify to the consequences of long journey across demographic change, and portray each community's resilience capacity, current needs, and future prospects.

Appendix

Mechanisms of population change

Jewish population change is determined by a known set of demographic factors which can increase or decrease the number of Jews in the world or in any given country over time. Formally, the fundamental demographic equation reads:

$$P(t) = P(t-1) + (B-D) + (I-E) + (A-S)$$

where: **P(t)** is the population size at a given point in time, called **t**, and **P(t-1)** is the population size at a preceding point in time; **B** and **D** stand for the number of births and deaths, respectively, between **t** and **t-1**; **I** and **E** stand for immigration into and emigration from a given area by the given population between **t** and **t-1**; **A** and **S** stand for the numbers of accessions and secessions, i.e. conversions or other modes of identificational shift, into and out of the Jewish community, respectively, between **t** and **t-1**.

Unfortunately, the demographic data currently available on Jews in many countries are not sufficient to translate this equation into accurate figures. However, methods exist for indirectly estimating the missing information, thus providing abundant and significant indications about the size and characteristics of the major demographic factors involved, and the respective directions of change.

Definitions

In most Diaspora countries, the **core Jewish population (CJP)**—a concept initially suggested by Kosmin et al. 1991) includes all people who, when asked in a socio-demographic survey, identify themselves as Jews, *or* who are identified as Jews by a respondent in the same household, *and* do not profess another monotheistic religion. Such a definition of a person as a Jew, reflecting *subjective* perceptions, broadly overlaps, but does *not* necessarily coincide, with *Halakhah* (Jewish law) or other normatively binding definitions. Inclusion does *not* depend on any measure of that person's Jewish commitment or behavior in terms of religiosity, observance, beliefs, knowledge, communal affiliation, participation or otherwise. (By the same token, non-Jews who perform Jewishly are not included in the core). The *core* Jewish population includes all people who identify as Jews by religion, as well as others who do not identify by religion but assess themselves as Jews by ethnicity or other cultural criteria (Jewish only, no religion). Some do not identify themselves as Jews when first asked; but if they descend from Jewish parents and do not hold another religious identity, they are included. The *core* Jewish population (CJP) also includes all converts to Judaism by any procedure, as well as other people who declare they are Jewish even without formal conversion and do not hold another religious identity. People of Jewish parentage who adopted another monotheistic religion are excluded, as are people who state being partly Jewish along with another identity, and those of Jewish origin who in censuses or socio-demographic surveys explicitly identify with a non-Jewish religious group without having formally converted. The *core* population concept offers an intentionally comprehensive and pragmatic, mutually exclusive approach compatible with the analytic options offered by many available demographic data sources.

In the Diaspora, such data often derive from population censuses or socio-demographic surveys where interviewees have the option to decide how to answer relevant questions on religious or ethnic identities. In Israel, personal status vis-à-vis religion/national status (in Hebrew: *le'om*) is subject to Ministry of the Interior rulings, which rely on criteria established by rabbinic authorities, and eventually by Israel's Central Rabbinate, as well as by the Israeli Supreme Court (Corinaldi 2001). In Israel, therefore, the *core* Jewish population does not simply express subjective identification but reflects definite normative rules and their legal interpretations. This entails matrilineal Jewish origin, or conversion to Judaism, *and* not holding another religion. Documentation to prove a person's Jewish status may include non-Jewish sources.

A major research issue of growing impact is whether *core* Jewish identification can or should be mutually exclusive with other religious and/or ethnic identities. In a much-debated study, the 2000-01 US National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS 2000-01) (Kotler-Berkowitz et al. 2003), the solution chosen then was to allow for Jews with multiple religious identities to be included in the *core* Jewish population definition under the condition that the other identity was not a monotheistic religion. This resulted in a rather multi-layered and not mutually exclusive definition of the US Jewish population. A further category of *Persons of Jewish Background* (PJBs) was introduced by NJPS 2000-01. Some PJBs were included in the final Jewish population count; and others were not, based on a more thorough evaluation of each individual ancestry and childhood. (See further comprehensive discussions of the demography of US Jews in Heilman 2005 and 2013, Hartman and Bankier-Karp 2023, and DellaPergola 2024b).

The 2013 Pew Research Center's *A Portrait of Jewish Americans* (Pew Research Center 2013), introduced a new concept, the ***net Jewish population (NJP)***. The Pew survey included in the NJP not only those who responded to the ***CJP*** definition, but also the previously not empirically tested category of *partly Jewish*—people who stated they had no religion, and who by their own preference qualified their Jewish identity as part of a broader composite cluster of two or more sub-identities. The new and previously untested concept of the *partly Jewish* helped to clarify the socio-demographic picture; but also made the debate about definitions more complicated, and the comparison of results between different surveys more difficult.

One intriguing issue concerned the status of the *partly Jewish* as a standard component of the Jewish collective, as different analysts would make different choices. The 2013 Pew report included the ***partly Jewish*** in the ***net Jewish population***. *Partly Jewish* children of *Jewish* and of *partly Jewish* parents were also included. Following a similar logic, people with multiple ethnic identities, one of which Jewish, were included by some analysts in the total Jewish population counts for Canada. As against this, in the present report, we did not include them in the ***core Jewish population***. This writer suggested that the *partly Jewish* stand conceptually closer to the other Pew survey categories of *Non-Jews with Jewish background*, or *Non-Jews feeling some Jewish affinity*. This latter assumption was fully supported by detailed analyses of the behaviors and attitudes of the partly Jewish compared with the other categories of the broadly enlarged Jewish population (EJP) (DellaPergola 2015b and 2024b). In the 2020 Pew survey, the category of partly Jewish was abandoned, and instead a broader criterion for inclusion in the ***net Jewish population*** (NJP) was identifying as Jewish because one feels Jewish in any way – for example, ethnically, culturally, or because of *family background*. But such inclusion in the Pew counts did not consider the possible belonging of the same respondents to other

religious groups as well. In our own counts, the latter individuals were not included in the CJP.

Emerging from these more recent research developments, the concept of **total population with at least one Jewish parent (PJP)** includes the core Jewish population plus anyone currently not identifying as exclusively Jewish but with one or two Jewish parents. In the Pew 2013 survey, instead, the total population with Jewish parents besides the core comprised two sub-groups: (a) people who reported no religion, and declared they are *partly Jewish* (defined as *Jewish*) and (b) people who reported not being Jewish and declared a Jewish background because they had a Jewish parent (defined as persons of *Jewish background*) (Pew Research Center 2013). In the Pew 2020 survey (Pew Research Center 2021), no distinction was allowed among people with no religion and reporting themselves *Jewish* or *partly Jewish*. All persons not reporting themselves as in any way currently Jewish and who had at least one Jewish parent or were raised Jewish were included in the category of *Jewish background*.

The **enlarged Jewish population (EJP)**—a concept initially suggested by DellaPergola 1975) further expands by including the sum of:

- (a) the *core* Jewish population;
- (b) people reporting they are *partly Jewish*;
- (c) all others of Jewish parentage who—by *core* Jewish population criteria—are *not* currently Jewish;
- (d) all other non-Jews with Jewish background more distant than a Jewish parent; and
- (e) all respective non-Jewish household members (spouses, children, etc.).

Non-Jews with Jewish background, as far as they can be ascertained, include: (a) people who have adopted another religion, or otherwise opted out, although they may also claim to be Jewish by ethnicity or in some other way—with the caveat mentioned above for recent US and Canadian data; and (b) other people with Jewish parentage who disclaim being Jewish. It logically follows that the *enlarged* definition should include most Jews who were identified in the 2013 Pew survey as *partly Jewish* or as *PJBs* who are not part of the US *core* Jewish population, as well as many Canadians identifying Jewish as a secondary ethnicity among *multiple ethnicities*. For both conceptual and practical reasons, the *enlarged* definition usually does not include other non-Jewish relatives who lack a Jewish background and live in exclusively non-Jewish households.

The **Law of Return population (LRP)** reflects Israel's distinctive legal framework for the acceptance and absorption of new immigrants. Articles 1 and 4A(a) of this law (amended in 1970) extend its provisions to *all current Jews, their children, and grandchildren*, as well as to *their respective Jewish or non-Jewish spouses*. As a result of its three-generation and lateral extension, the *Law of Return* applies to a large population—the so-called *aliyah* eligible—whose scope is significantly wider than the *core* and *enlarged* Jewish populations defined above (Corinaldi 1998 and 2018; DellaPergola 2024f). The *Law of Return* awards all Jewish new immigrants immediate citizenship and other civil rights. The *Law of Entrance* and the *Law of Citizenship* apply to all other foreign arrivals, some of whom may apply for Israeli citizenship. According to the current, amended version of the *Law of Return* (Gavison 2009), a Jew is any person born to a Jewish mother or converted to Judaism (regardless of

denomination—Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructing, or Reform, provided conversion was performed in a recognized community or congregation) who does not have another religious identity. According to the ruling of Israel's Supreme Court, conversion from Judaism, as in the case of some ethnic Jews who currently identify with another religion, entails loss of eligibility under the *Law of Return* purposes. Thus, all the Falash Mura—a group of Ethiopian non-Jews with Jewish ancestry—must undergo conversion to be eligible for the *Law of Return*. The law itself does not affect a person's Jewish status but only for the specific immigration and citizenship benefits granted under the *Law of Return*. Jewish status for other purposes, as noted, is adjudicated by Israel's Ministry of Interior which relies, in turn, on Israel's rabbinic authorities. It is actually quite difficult to estimate the total size of the *Law of Return* population. Rough estimates of these higher figures are tentatively suggested below.

Some major Jewish organizations in Israel and the US—such as the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and the major Jewish federations in the US—sponsor data collection and tend to adjust population definitions to their institutional strategies which aim at increasingly complex and flexible constituencies. Organizations enact their mission toward their respective constituencies based on perceived interests rather than scientific criteria. The understandable interest of organizations to function and secure budgetary resources may prompt them to expand their reach strategies to Jewish populations increasingly closer to the *enlarged* (EJP) and *Law of Return* (LRP) definitions rather than to the *core* definition.

Quantitative relations between core and other Jewish population definitions

Previous issues of AJYB carried estimates of the CJP, the PJP, and the LRP, based on country-by-country evaluations of the incidence of intermarriage, of the size and structure of intermarried households, and of the number and identification of members of the third generation. In the present update, the rate of expansion of the core Jewish population into its extended derivatives was recalculated for each country on the basis of a more systematic algorithm (**Table 8.16**). The starting point for such algorithm is the current or most recent rate of intermarriage known or estimated for a given country. This, controlling for age composition of that country's *core Jewish population*, entails the additional number of (non-Jewish) individuals immediately incorporated into the *enlarged Jewish population*. In turn the number of children born to intermarried couples in the present and past generations, and the known or estimated share of such children incorporated or not into the core, determine the amounts of growth of both *core* and *enlarged* populations. Finally, the rates of intermarriage of non-Jewish children of intermarried couples determine the rate of expansion into the Law of Return population. We assumed that these rates of expansion tend to be rather low in the beginning when intermarriage is recent and infrequent and grow more rapidly when intermarriages become more frequent and generationally entrenched in the extant population.

For example, in a country where the current intermarriage rate is 25%, the rate of expansion was evaluated at 13.5%. A core (CJP) population of 1000 will generate a PJP of 1135, an EJP of 1270, and an LRP of 1405. In a country with a 65% intermarriage rate, the expansion rate was evaluated at 47.5%, and a core (CJP) of 1000 will generate a PJP of 1475, an EJP of 1950, and an LRP of 2425. Each larger population is inclusive of the former smaller one. These evaluations considered cases

for which actual empirical documentation existed about the rates of expansion of the core population). The different possible levels of intermarriage and the gradually growing rates of expansion of the core are exemplified in **Table 8.16**.

Table 8.16 Synopsis of expansion factors from Core (CJP) to Law of Return (LRP) Jewish populations

% intermarriage	Δx	Core Jewish Population (CJP)	Population Jewish Parents (PJP)	Enlarged Jewish Population (EJP)	Law of Return Population (LRP)
x	a	b	c = b+a	d = c+a	e = d+a
0-4	0.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
5-9	0.025	1.000	1.025	1.050	1.075
10-14	0.050	1.000	1.050	1.100	1.150
15-19	0.075	1.000	1.075	1.150	1.225
20-24	0.105	1.000	1.105	1.210	1.315
25-29	0.135	1.000	1.135	1.270	1.405
30-34	0.165	1.000	1.165	1.330	1.495
35-39	0.200	1.000	1.200	1.400	1.600
40-44	0.235	1.000	1.235	1.470	1.705
45-49	0.275	1.000	1.275	1.550	1.825
50-54	0.320	1.000	1.320	1.640	1.960
55-59	0.370	1.000	1.370	1.740	2.110
60-64	0.420	1.000	1.420	1.840	2.260
65-69	0.475	1.000	1.475	1.950	2.425
70-74	0.535	1.000	1.535	2.070	2.605
75-79	0.595	1.000	1.595	2.190	2.785
80-84	0.660	1.000	1.660	2.320	2.980
85-89	0.725	1.000	1.725	2.450	3.175
90-94	0.800	1.000	1.800	2.600	3.400
95-99	0.875	1.000	1.875	2.750	3.625
100	0.950	1.000	1.950	2.900	3.850

The same levels of intermarriage and estimated levels of expansion of the core are illustrated in **Fig. 8.13**. We acknowledge that the current algorithm is a simplification of more complex, multivariate models that could be suggested. The proposed algorithm, in any case, offers a first systematic and verifiable demonstration of the relationship that exists between different possible concepts of Jewish population definition. The suggested algorithm provides results very close to actual data whenever the model can be compared with actual empirical data.

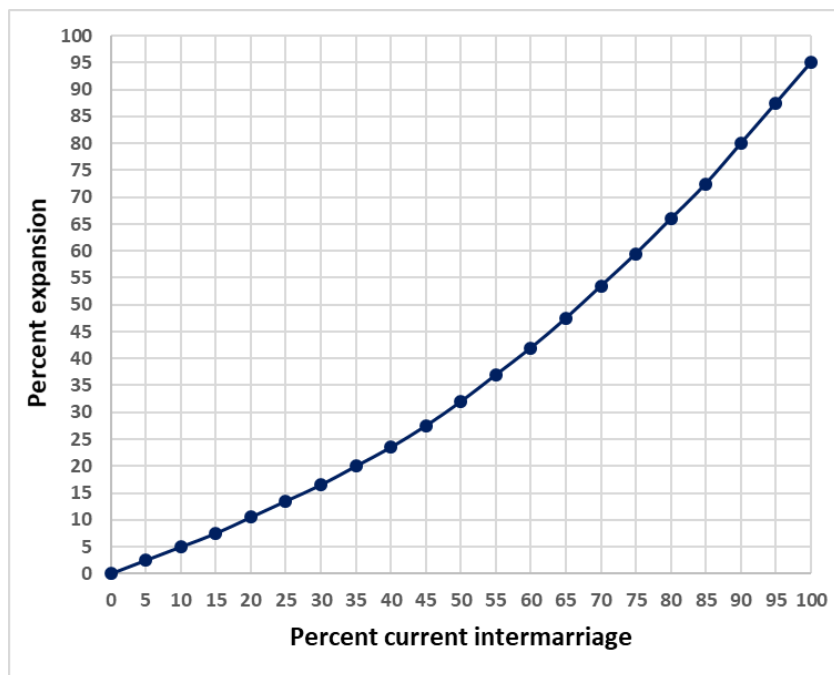


Fig. 8.13 Scheme of expansion percent from Core to Law of Return Jewish populations. See text for explanation

Presentation and quality of data

Jewish population estimates in this chapter refer to January 1, 2024. Efforts to provide the most recent possible picture entail a short span of time for evaluation of available information, hence some margin of inaccuracy. Corrections also were applied retroactively to the 2023 totals for major geographical regions so as to ensure a better base for comparisons with the 2024 estimates. Corrections of the 2024 estimates, if needed, will be presented in the future.

We provide separate estimates for each country with approximately 100 or more permanently resident core Jews. Estimates of Jews in smaller communities have been added to some of the continental totals. For each country, we provide in **Table 8.17** estimates of:

1. mid-year 2023 Total Population (including both Jews and non-Jews) (Population Reference Bureau 2024);
2. the estimated January 1, 2024 core Jewish population (CJP);
3. the number of Jews per 1000 in the total population;
4. an indicator of the type of source used to derive the Jewish population;
5. a rating of the accuracy of the Jewish population estimate;
6. a rough estimate of the population with Jewish parents (PJP);
7. a rough estimate of the enlarged Jewish population inclusive of non-Jewish household members (EJP);
8. a rough estimate of the Law of Return population (LRP); and
9. the Core Jewish Population (CJP) size world rank.

The rough estimates were derived from available information and assessments on the

recent extent and generational depth of cultural assimilation and intermarriage in the different countries. The quality of such broader estimates of the aggregate of Jews and non-Jews who often share daily life is much lower than that of the respective core Jewish populations, and the data should be taken as indicative only.

Wide variation exists in the quality of the Jewish population estimates for different countries. For many Diaspora countries, it might be plausible to indicate a range for the number of Jews (minimum, maximum) rather than a single value. It would be confusing, however, for the reader to be confronted with a long list of ranges; this would also complicate the regional and world totals and would blur the assessment of trends over time. The estimates reported for most of the Diaspora communities should be understood as being the central value of the plausible range for the respective core Jewish populations. The relative magnitude of this range varies inversely with the accuracy of the estimate.

One issue of growing significance is related to people who hold multiple residences in different countries. Based on available evidence, we make efforts to avoid double counting. Wherever possible, we strive to assign people to their country of permanent residence, ignoring the effect of seasonal residents. (This is similar to the seasonal resident, or “snowbird” issue in estimating the US Jewish population in the US Jewish Population chapter in this volume.)

Jewish population data derive from a large array of different sources, each with inherent advantages and disadvantages. We report both the main type, and the evaluated accuracy of the sources used in this study. In **Table 8.17**, the main types of sources are:

- (C) National population censuses: This in theory would be the best source, but undercounts and overcounts do occur in several countries.
- (P) National population registers: Some countries, besides a periodic census, also keep a permanent population register which is constantly updated through detailed accountancy of individual demographic events.
- (S) Surveys of the Jewish population: either nationally or inclusive of the main localities, undertaken most often by a Jewish community organization, and sometimes by a non-governmental organization, such as the Pew Research Center in the US.
- (J) Jewish community registers: maintained by a central Jewish community organization.
- (E) Estimates otherwise obtained by a Jewish organization.

Our estimates reflect these sources, but the figures reported below do not necessarily correspond exactly with the given source. When necessary, additional information is brought to bear on our estimates. The three main elements that affect the accuracy of each country's Jewish population estimate are: (a) the nature and quality of the base data, (b) how recently the base data were gathered, and (c) the updating method. A simple code combines these elements to provide a general evaluation of the reliability of data reported in **Table 8.17**:

- (A) Base estimate derived from a national census or reliable Jewish population survey; updated on the basis of full or partial information on Jewish population change in the respective country during the intervening period.
- (B) Base estimate derived from less accurate but recent national Jewish population

data; updated on the basis of partial information on Jewish population change during the intervening period.

(C) Base estimate derived from less recent sources and/or unsatisfactory or partial coverage of a country's Jewish population; updated on the basis of demographic information illustrative of regional demographic trends.

(D) Base estimate essentially speculative, such as communication from informants, with no reliable updating procedure.

The year in which a country's base estimate or important partial updates were initially obtained is also stated as part of the accuracy rating. This is not the current estimate's date but the initial basis for its attainment. An X is appended to the accuracy rating for several countries whose Jewish population estimate for 2024 was not only updated but also revised in light of improved information.

One additional tool for updating Jewish population estimates is provided by several sets of demographic projections developed by the Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics at the Institute of Contemporary Jewry of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (DellaPergola et al. 2000b; and author's updated estimates). Such projections, based on available data on Jewish population composition by age and sex, extrapolate the most recently observed or expected Jewish population trends over the first two decades of the twenty-first century. Even where reliable information on the dynamics of Jewish population change is not available, the powerful connection that generally exists between age composition, birth rates, death rates, and migration helps provide plausible scenarios for the developments that occur in the short term. Where better data were lacking, we used findings from these projections to refine the 2024 estimates. It should be acknowledged that projections are shaped by a comparatively limited set of assumptions and need to be constantly updated in light of actual demographic data.

Table 8.17 Jewish population by country, core definition and expanded definitions, 1/1/2024

Country	Total population ^a	Core Jewish population ^b CJP	Jews per total 1000 population	Source		Population with Jewish parents ^e PJP	Enlarged Jewish population ^f EJP	Law of Return population ^g LRP	Core Jewish population world rank ^h
				Type ^c	Accuracy rating ^d				
WORLD	8,007,955,700	15,736,800	1.97			18,755,661	21,774,677	24,735,988	
Israel ⁱ	9,914,700	7,153,000	721.45	A	2023 X	7,331,825	7,510,650	7,631,900	
Rest of the world [Rest of the world without United States]	7,998,041,000 7,663,041,000	8,583,800 2,283,800	1.07 0.30			11,423,836 2,761,336	14,264,027 3,239,027	17,104,088 3,716,588	
AMERICA TOTAL	1,027,126,000	7,060,800	6.87			9,575,669	12,090,538	14,605,407	
Bermuda	64,000	100	1.56	C	C 2016	133	165	198	88-104
Canada	40,100,000	400,000	9.98	C	B 2021	470,000	540,000	610,000	4
United States	335,000,000	6,300,000	18.81	S	B 2020	8,662,500	11,025,000	13,387,500	2
Rest of North America ^j	62,000	100	1.61	E	D 2022	133	165	198	
Total North America	375,226,000	6,700,200	17.86			9,132,765	11,565,330	13,997,895	
Bahamas	400,000	200	0.50	C	B 2010	265	330	395	80-87
Barbados	300,000	100	0.33	C	B 2010	133	165	198	88-104
Costa Rica	5,300,000	2,600	0.49	J	C 2020	3,055	3,510	3,965	42
Cuba	11,000,000	500	0.05	S	C 2013	900	1,300	1,700	68-73

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Dominican Republic	11,200,000	100	0.01	E	D 2000		124	148	172	88-104
El Salvador	6,400,000	100	0.02	E	D 2000		173	245	318	88-104
Guatemala	18,100,000	900	0.05	S	B 1999		1,085	1,269	1,454	61-62
Jamaica	2,800,000	500	0.18	C,J	C 2010		663	825	988	68-73
Mexico	131,100,000	41,000	0.31	C,S	B 2023	X	43,050	45,100	47,150	13
Netherlands Antilles [†]	315,000	400	1.27	C	C 2016		496	592	688	74-75
Panama	4,500,000	10,000	2.22	S	C 2012		10,750	11,500	12,250	25
Puerto Rico	3,300,000	1,500	0.45	J	C 2000		1,988	2,475	2,963	51-54
Virgin Islands	135,000	400	2.96	E	D 2016		530	660	790	74-75
Rest of Central America, Caribbean [‡]	31,150,000	200	0.01	E	D 2020		265	330	395	
Total Central America, Caribbean	226,000,000	58,500	0.26				63,475	68,449	73,424	
Argentina	46,300,000	170,000	3.67	S	B 2023		216,750	263,500	310,250	6
Bolivia	12,200,000	500	0.04	J	C 2000		603	705	808	68-73
Brazil	204,000,000	90,300	0.44	C	B 2010		111,972	133,644	155,316	10
Chile	20,000,000	15,500	0.78	C,S	B 2020		19,220	22,940	26,660	20
Colombia	52,200,000	1,900	0.04	S	C 2016		2,290	2,679	3,069	48-49
Ecuador	17,100,000	600	0.04	J	B 2011		723	846	969	66-67
Paraguay	6,200,000	1,100	0.18	C	B 2002		1,326	1,551	1,777	57-58
Peru	33,800,000	1,800	0.05	S	C 2000		2,169	2,538	2,907	50
Suriname	600,000	200	0.33	C	C 2012		285	370	455	80-87
Uruguay	3,600,000	16,100	4.47	S	C 2013		19,401	22,701	26,002	19
Venezuela	28,800,000	4,000	0.14	S	C 2020		4,560	5,120	5,680	35-36
Rest of South America [‡]	1,100,000	100	0.09	E	D 2022		133	165	198	
Total South America	425,900,000	302,100	0.71				379,430	456,759	534,089	
EUROPE TOTAL	830,787,000	1,309,800	1.58				1,604,253	1,898,686	2,193,129	
Austria	9,200,000	10,300	1.12	C,S,J	B 2019		11,742	13,184	14,626	24
Belgium	11,800,000	29,000	2.46	S,J	C 2023		30,450	31,900	33,350	16
Bulgaria	6,400,000	2,000	0.31	C,J	C 2021		2,850	3,700	4,550	47
Croatia	3,800,000	1,500	0.39	C,J	C 2021	X	2,138	2,775	3,413	51-54
Cyprus	1,300,000	600	0.46	C,E	C 2012		705	810	915	66-67
Czechia	10,900,000	3,500	0.32	C,J	C 2021	X	4,988	6,475	7,963	38-40
Denmark	5,900,000	6,400	1.08	S,J	C 2023		9,440	12,480	15,520	31
Estonia	1,400,000	1,900	1.36	C,P	A 2023		2,926	3,952	4,978	48-49
Finland	5,600,000	1,300	0.23	P	B 2023		2,002	2,704	3,406	55-56
France	65,900,000	438,500	6.65	S	B 2018		499,890	561,280	622,670	3
Germany	84,900,000	125,000	1.47	S,J	B 2023		150,625	176,250	201,875	7
Greece	10,600,000	4,000	0.38	J	B 2010		4,960	5,920	6,880	35-36
Hungary	9,600,000	45,000	4.69	C,S	C 2021	X	57,375	69,750	82,125	12
Ireland	5,200,000	2,700	0.52	C	B 2016		3,348	3,996	4,644	41
Italy	58,800,000	26,800	0.46	S,J	B 2023		34,170	41,540	48,910	17
Latvia	1,900,000	4,100	2.16	C,P	A 2023		6,314	8,528	10,742	34
Lithuania	2,900,000	2,100	0.72	C,P	B 2023		3,234	4,368	5,502	45-46
Luxembourg	700,000	700	1.00	J	B 2010		928	1,155	1,383	64-65
Malta	600,000	100	0.17	E	D 2012		121	141	162	88-104
Netherlands	17,900,000	35,000	1.96	S	B 2023	X	46,375	57,750	69,125	14
Poland	37,700,000	9,600	0.25	C,S,J	B 2021		14,784	19,968	25,152	26
Portugal	10,500,000	3,800	0.36	C	B 2011		4,712	5,624	6,536	37
Romania	19,100,000	8,600	0.45	C,J	B 2011		12,255	15,910	19,565	28
Slovakia	5,400,000	3,500	0.65	C	C 2021	X	4,988	6,475	7,963	38-40
Slovenia	2,100,000	200	0.10	C	C 2021		285	370	455	80-87
Spain	48,300,000	13,000	0.27	S,J	C 2020		15,665	18,330	20,995	23
Sweden	10,500,000	14,900	1.42	S	C 2021		22,946	30,992	39,038	22
Total European Union 27	448,900,000	794,100	1.77				950,214	1,106,327	1,262,441	
Bosnia-Herzegovina	3,400,000	500	0.15	C	C 2001		713	925	1,138	68-73

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Channel Islands	200,000	200	1.00	S	C 2015		265	330	395	80-87
Gibraltar	33,000	800	24.24	C	B 2019		860	920	980	63
Monaco	40,000	700	17.50	S	B 2012		868	1,036	1,204	64-65
North Macedonia	1,800,000	100	0.06	C	C 2021		143	185	228	88-104
Norway	5,500,000	1,300	0.24	P	B 2019		1,853	2,405	2,958	55-56
Serbia	6,600,000	1,500	0.23	C	C 2021	X	2,138	2,775	3,413	51-54
Switzerland	8,800,000	20,500	2.33	C	B 2021		24,088	27,675	31,263	18
Turkey ^l	85,600,000	15,000	0.18	S,J	B 2023	X	16,650	18,300	19,950	21
United Kingdom ^m	68,100,000	313,000	4.60	C,S	B 2021		356,820	400,640	444,460	5
Rest of other Europe ^l	5,614,000	200	0.04	E	D 2020		308	416	524	
Total other Europe	185,687,000	353,800	1.91				404,704	455,607	506,511	
Belarus	9,200,000	5,400	0.59	C	B 2019		8,316	11,232	14,148	32
Moldova	3,400,000	1,500	0.44	C	B 2014		2,310	3,120	3,930	51-54
Russia ^l	146,900,000	123,000	0.84	C	C 2021		189,430	255,840	322,260	8
Ukraine	36,700,000	32,000	0.87	C	D 2001		49,280	66,560	83,840	15
Total FSU Republics	196,200,000	161,900	0.83				249,336	336,752	424,178	
[Total FSU in Europe]ⁿ	202,400,000	170,000	0.84				261,810	353,600	445,400	
ASIA TOTAL	4,652,042,700	7,187,400	1.54				7,376,103	7,564,971	7,695,904	
State of Israel ⁱ	9,914,700	7,153,000	721.45		A 2023	X	7,331,825	7,510,650	7,631,900	1
Palestinian Authority ^o	4,928,000	[0]	-		A 2023		0	0	0	
Total Israel and Palestine^p	14,842,700	7,153,000	481.92				7,331,825	7,510,650	7,631,900	
Armenia	3,000,000	100	0.03	C	B 2021		154	208	262	88-104
Azerbaijan	10,200,000	6,700	0.66	C	B 2021		9,548	12,395	15,243	30
Georgia	3,800,000	1,100	0.29	C	B 2021		1,568	2,035	2,503	57-58
Kazakhstan	19,900,000	2,200	0.11	C	B 2021		3,135	4,070	5,005	44
Kyrgyzstan	6,800,000	300	0.04	C	B 2021		428	555	683	76-79
Turkmenistan	7,100,000	200	0.03	C	D 1995		285	370	455	80-87
Uzbekistan	36,400,000	2,500	0.07	C	D 1989		3,563	4,625	5,688	43
Total former USSR in Asia^q	97,400,000	13,100	0.13				18,679	24,258	29,837	
China ^f	1,419,300,000	3,500	0.00	E	D 2021		4,638	5,775	6,913	38-40
India	1,428,600,000	4,500	0.00	C	C 2021		5,130	5,760	6,390	33
Indonesia	278,700,000	100	0.00	E	D 2021		133	165	198	88-104
Iran	89,200,000	9,000	0.10	C	B 2016		10,260	11,520	12,780	27
Japan	124,500,000	1,000	0.01	E	D 2021		1,325	1,650	1,975	59-60
Philippines	117,300,000	200	0.00	E	D 2021		265	330	395	80-87
Singapore	5,800,000	900	0.16	J	C 2021		1,193	1,485	1,778	61-62
South Korea	51,400,000	200	0.00	J	C 2021		265	330	365	81-86
Sri Lanka	22,700,000	300	0.01	E	D 2021		398	495	593	76-79
Syria and Lebanon	28,600,000	100	0.00	E	D 2015		114	128	142	88-104
Taiwan	23,400,000	500	0.02	E	D 2021		663	825	988	68-73
Thailand	66,000,000	300	0.00	E	D 2021		398	495	593	76-79
United Arab Emirates	9,500,000	500	0.05	E	D 2021		555	775	665	68-73
Rest of other Asia ^j	874,800,000	200	0.00	E	D 2021		265	330	395	
Total other Asia	4,539,800,000	21,300	0.00				25,599	30,063	34,167	
AFRICA TOTAL	1,453,000,000	54,100	0.04				60,464	66,837	73,431	
Egypt	105,200,000	100	0.00	J	C 2015		124	148	172	88-104
Ethiopia	126,500,000	100	0.00	S	C 2015		180	260	340	88-104
Morocco	37,000,000	2,100	0.06	J	C 2015		2,394	2,688	2,982	45-46
Tunisia	11,900,000	1,000	0.08	J	C 2015		1,140	1,280	1,420	59-60
Rest of Northern Africa ^k	106,100,000	100	0.00	E	D 2022		133	165	198	
Total Northern Africa	386,700,000	3,400	0.01				3,971	4,541	5,112	
Botswana	2,700,000	100	0.04	E	C 2000		133	165	198	88-104

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Congo D.R.	102,300,000	100	0.00	E	C 2000	133	165	183	88-104
Kenya	55,100,000	300	0.01	J	C 2000	398	495	593	76-79
Madagascar	30,400,000	100	0.00	J	D 2016	128	165	198	88-104
Namibia	2,600,000	100	0.04	C	C 2000	133	165	198	88-104
Nigeria	223,800,000	100	0.00	E	D 2000	133	165	198	88-104
South Africa	60,700,000	49,500	0.82	C,S	B 2019	54,945	60,390	65,835	11
Zimbabwe	16,700,000	200	0.01	C	B 2001	228	256	284	80-87
Rest of Sub-Saharan Africa	572,000,000	200	0.00	E	D 2020	265	330	635	
Total Sub-Saharan Africa^{1s}	1,066,300,000	50,700	0.05			56,493	62,296	68,319	
OCEANIA TOTAL	45,000,000	124,700	2.77			139,173	153,645	168,118	
Australia	26,600,000	117,000	4.40	C	B 2021	129,870	142,740	155,610	9
Guam	200,000	100	0.50	E	D 2022	133	165	198	88-104
New Zealand	5,200,000	7,500	1.44	C	B 2018	9,038	10,575	12,113	29
Rest of Oceania ^l	13,000,000	100	0.01	E	D 2020	133	165	198	

a Source, with minor adjustments: Population Reference Bureau (2024), mid-year 2023 estimates. See also United Nations Population Division (2024).

b Includes all persons who, when asked, identify themselves as Jews, or, if the respondent is a different person in the same household, are identified by him/her as Jews; and do not have another religion.

Also includes persons with a Jewish parent who claim no current religious or ethnic identity

c (C) National population census. (P) National population register. (S) Survey of Jewish population. (J) Jewish community register. (E) Estimate

d (A) Base estimate derived from national census or reliable Jewish population survey; updated on the basis of full or partial information on Jewish population movements in the respective country during the intervening period. (B) Base estimate derived from less accurate but recent national Jewish population data; updated on the basis of partial information on Jewish population movements during the intervening period. (C) Base estimate derived from less recent sources and/or less reliable or partial coverage of country's Jewish population; updated on the basis of demographic information illustrative of regional demographic trends. (D) Base estimate essentially speculative; no reliable updating procedure. The year in which the country's base estimate or important partial updates were obtained is also stated. This is not the current estimate's date but the basis for its attainment. An X is appended to the accuracy rating for several countries, whose Jewish population estimate for 2021 was not only updated but also revised in light of improved information

e Sum of (a) core Jewish population; (b) persons reported as partly Jewish; and (c) all others not currently Jewish with a Jewish parent

f Sum of (a) core Jewish population; (b) persons reported as partly Jewish; (c) all others not currently Jewish with a Jewish parent; and (d) all other non-Jewish household members (spouses, children, etc.)

g Sum of Jews, children of Jews, grandchildren of Jews, and all respective spouses, regardless of Jewish identification

h Ranges indicate more than one country with a core Jewish population of the same size. For example, 17 countries all have estimates of 100 and all are tied for the ranks between 88 and 104

i Israel's total permanent (de jure) population as defined by Israel's legal system, including foreign workers and asylum seekers. Including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, and Jews in the West Bank

j Including countries and territories not listed because fewer than 100 core Jews live in each of those countries

k Including Aruba

l Including regions in Asia

m Including the Isle of Man

n Including the Baltic countries which are already included above in the EU

o Author's independent estimates, after examining materials from Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2024), Population Reference Bureau (2024), and United Nations Population Division (2024). West Bank Israeli residents counted under Israel. See also Table 8.9

p Sum of two preceding lines. Including foreigners in Israel

q Not including Russia's regions in Asia

r Including Hong Kong and Macao

s Excluding Sudan, Eritrea, and Ethiopia which are included in Northern Africa

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