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SUMMARY OF ATTITUDES RELATED TO ISRAEL IN CMJS COMBINED DATASET

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The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS), founded in 1980, is dedicated to providing independent, high-quality research on issues related to contemporary Jewish life.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 18 years, CMJS has conducted 35 socio-demographic studies of US federated Jewish communities. The Combined Dataset pools data from 29 of these communities into a single dataset. The CDS allows for the analysis of patterns across multiple communities as well as analysis of small groups that, due to sample size limitations, cannot be conducted in any individual study. The CDS includes more than 60,000 respondents, representing 2,215,000 Jewish adults and almost 1,450,000 Jewish households. Methodological details about the construction of the dataset can be found on the CMJS website, <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/community-studies/combined-dataset.html>.

This document summarizes a set of questions that were asked in recent studies about Israel. The results should be interpreted as representing the combined responses in those studies, and not necessarily of all US Jews.

CMJS sociodemographic studies include a diverse battery of questions about attitudes associated with Israel. Each community chooses which items to include based on their priorities and interest. The analysis presented here explores three attitudes toward Israel:

1. How emotionally attached are you to Israel?
2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel
3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government

The focus of this analysis is on how responses to these questions differ based on demographics including political views.

Subsample description

The subsample of the CDS that is used in this analysis includes data from 10 studies conducted on the last six years that include the attachment to Israel question along with at least one of the other two questions of interest in this analysis. The subsample includes nearly 20,000 respondents representing over 960,000 Jewish adults.

Table 1. Number of Jewish adults represented in the subsample, by community

Community	Unweighted n	Jewish adults
Chicago	5,481	246,000
Los Angeles	3,671	465,000
Ann Arbor	930	15,000
Portland	2,446	45,000
Lane County	248	4,000
Willamette Valley	132	3,000
St. Louis	1,737	36,000
Miami	2,642	101,000
Northeast Florida	824	31,000
Maine	1,326	15,000
Total	19,437	961,000

Table 2. Number of Jewish adults represented in the subsample, by study year

Study year	Unweighted n	Jewish adults
2020	5,481	246,000
2021	3,671	465,000
2022	3,756	67,000
2023	1,737	36,000
2024	4,792	145,000
Total	19,437	961,000

Subsample description: Demographics

The following table represents an Index of Jewish Engagement for the Combined Dataset¹, similar to that produced in most of our individual studies. Although each community has its own model, reflecting its own local patterns of Jewish behavior, this model represents every study in the Combined Dataset, without regard to local differences.

For the remaining demographics, we provide comparisons to the full CDS and to Pew 2020 to illustrate demographic differences between the subsample and the US Jewish community. Demographics of the CDS subsample and the full CDS database are similar.

Table 3. Jewish engagement of Jewish adults

Engagement group	CDS subsample	CDS full
1. Unengaged	21	19
2. Detached	27	25
3. Holiday	12	18
4. Personal	12	11
5. Connected	15	16
6. Immersed	13	12
Total	100	100

Compared to Pew 2020's national estimates, the CDS subsample includes a smaller proportion of Reform respondents and a larger proportion of respondents who do not identify with a particular denomination.

Table 4. Denomination of respondent

	CDS subsample	CDS full	Pew 2020
1. Orthodox	7	6	9
2. Conservative	17	19	17
3. Reform	27	29	37
4. Other	4	5	4
5. None	44	41	32
Total	100	100	100

The CDS subsample includes a larger proportion of Jewish adults ages 50-64 and a smaller proportion of Jewish adults ages 18-34 than Pew 2020.

¹ Aronson, J.K., Brookner, M.A., Boxer, M., Nussbaum, D., de Kramer, R.M., Saxe, L. (2024). Using Denominational Identity to Understand Jewish Engagement. In: Dashefsky, A., Sheskin, I.M. (eds) *American Jewish Year Book 2023*. American Jewish Year Book, vol 123. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-67478-5_2

Table 5. Age distribution

	CDS subsample	CDS full	Pew 2020
18-34	20	22	28
35-44	12	12	18
45-54	15	15	11
55-64	23	20	14
65-74	19	18	17
75+	12	13	13
Total	100	100	100

Table 6. Political views

	CDS subsample	CDS full	Pew 2020
1. Extremely/very liberal	19	19	18
2. Liberal/slightly liberal	39	40	32
3. Moderate	23	23	32
4. Conservative/slightly conservative	16	16	12
5. Extremely/very conservative	3	3	3
Total	100	100	

ANALYSIS

Israel attitudes

Question text for the three questions below:

1. How emotionally attached are you to Israel?
2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel
3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government

Table 7. Emotional attachment to Israel

0. Not at all attached	14
1. Not too attached	20
2. Somewhat attached	35
3. Very attached	31
Total	100

Table 8. I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel

1. Strongly disagree	31
2. Somewhat disagree	28
3. Somewhat agree	26
4. Strongly agree	11
5. No opinion or not sure	4
Total	100

Table 9. American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government

1. Strongly disagree	18
2. Somewhat disagree	15
3. Somewhat agree	19
4. Strongly agree	41
5. No opinion or not sure	8
Total	100

Differences in responses by key subgroups

The tables included in this section present the weighted distribution of the attitude questions by demographic variables. The tables present the point estimates along with 95% confidence intervals (CI). Note that, because of the large sample size, most differences are reported as statistically

significant. We review the CIs to look at which specific numbers in the table differ from others statistically. Because the actual number can fall anywhere within the range specified by the CI, we say that there is no significant difference between the numbers when the CIs overlap.

Table 10. How emotionally attached are you to Israel (by Jewish engagement)

	Not at all attached	Not too attached	Somewhat attached	Very attached	Total
1. Unengaged	36	29	28	8	100
	[31,41]	[24,35]	[23,33]	[5,11]	
2. Detached	16	25	41	18	100
	[13,20]	[21,29]	[36,46]	[15,22]	
3. Holiday	12	27	41	20	100
	[8,18]	[22,32]	[36,47]	[16,24]	
4. Personal	2	10	35	53	100
	[1,3]	[7,15]	[29,41]	[48,59]	
5. Connected	5	14	42	40	100
	[3,7]	[10,18]	[37,47]	[35,45]	
6. Immersed	1	4	17	77	100
	[1,3]	[3,6]	[14,21]	[74,81]	

P < 0.000

Table II. How emotionally attached are you to Israel (by denomination)

	Not at all attached	Not too attached	Somewhat attached	Very attached	Total
1. Orthodox	0	7	15	78	100
	[0,1]	[3,16]	[11,20]	[71,84]	
2. Conservative	6	10	31	53	100
	[3,9]	[8,13]	[27,36]	[48,58]	
3. Reform	10	22	43	25	100
	[8,13]	[19,25]	[39,46]	[23,29]	
4. Other	16	22	37	25	100
	[8,29]	[14,34]	[27,48]	[17,34]	
5. None	22	24	34	21	100
	[19,25]	[21,28]	[30,37]	[18,24]	
Total	14	20	35	32	100
	[12,16]	[18,22]	[32,37]	[30,34]	

P < 0.000

Table 12. How emotionally attached are you to Israel (by age)

	Not at all attached	Not too attached	Somewhat attached	Very attached	Total
1. 18-34	14	19	31	36	100
	[10,19]	[15,24]	[26,37]	[30,42]	
2. 35-44	17	24	31	28	100
	[13,23]	[20,29]	[26,37]	[23,32]	
3. 45-54	19	18	32	32	100
	[14,24]	[13,23]	[27,38]	[27,36]	
4. 55-64	14	23	34	30	100
	[10,18]	[18,27]	[29,39]	[26,34]	
5. 65-74	10	20	38	32	100
	[8,13]	[16,24]	[33,42]	[28,36]	
6. 75+	12	15	42	31	100
	[9,17]	[10,21]	[36,47]	[26,37]	
Total	14	20	34	32	100
	[12,16]	[18,22]	[32,37]	[30,34]	

P = 0.042

Table 13. How emotionally attached are you to Israel (by political views)

	Not at all attached	Not too attached	Somewhat attached	Very attached	Total
1. Extremely/very liberal	28	25	28	20	100
	[23,32]	[21,29]	[23,33]	[15,25]	
2. Liberal/slightly liberal	14	25	40	21	100
	[12,17]	[22,28]	[36,43]	[19,24]	
3. Moderate	10	15	36	39	100
	[8,14]	[12,20]	[32,40]	[34,43]	
4. Conservative/slightly conservative	5	11	34	51	100
	[3,8]	[7,16]	[27,41]	[44,57]	
5. Extremely/very conservative	7	5	21	67	100
	[2,23]	[2,12]	[13,34]	[54,78]	
Total	14	20	35	31	100
	[13,16]	[18,22]	[33,37]	[29,33]	

P < 0.000

Table 14. How emotionally attached are you to Israel (by visits to Israel)

	Not at all attached	Not too attached	Somewhat attached	Very attached	Total
0. Never	27	30	33	11	100
	[24,30]	[27,34]	[29,37]	[9,13]	
1. One	9	21	43	27	100
	[7,13]	[18,26]	[38,47]	[23,31]	
2. Multiple	3	8	36	53	100
	[2,5]	[6,11]	[32,39]	[49,57]	
3. Lived in Israel/is Israeli	5	2	19	74	100
	[2,11]	[1,4]	[14,26]	[67,80]	
Total	14	20	35	31	100
	[13,16]	[18,22]	[33,37]	[29,33]	

P < 0.000

Table 15. To what extent do you agree or disagree...I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel (by Jewish engagement)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
1. Unengaged	29	18	30	15	8	100
	[19,41]	[11,28]	[20,42]	[9,23]	[4,16]	
2. Detached	24	32	27	11	6	100
	[17,33]	[24,42]	[21,35]	[7,16]	[3,9]	
3. Holiday	20	17	49	12	3	100
	[13,30]	[11,25]	[38,60]	[8,19]	[1,5]	
4. Personal	36	33	17	12	2	100
	[27,45]	[24,44]	[12,23]	[7,20]	[1,4]	
5. Connected	32	28	28	9	2	100
	[26,40]	[20,37]	[22,36]	[6,14]	[1,4]	
6. Immersed	41	28	16	11	4	100
	[32,51]	[18,41]	[11,21]	[6,19]	[1,11]	
Total	31	28	26	11	4	100
	[28,35]	[24,32]	[23,29]	[9,14]	[3,6]	

P = 0.001

Table 16. To what extent do you agree or disagree... I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel (by denomination)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
1. Orthodox	29	41	11	16	4	100
	[18,43]	[23,61]	[6,20]	[7,32]	[1,8]	
2. Conservative	41	19	27	10	2	100
	[34,49]	[15,25]	[22,33]	[6,16]	[1,5]	
3. Reform	32	25	31	10	3	100
	[25,39]	[19,31]	[25,38]	[7,13]	[2,5]	
4. Other	13	61	13	10	3	100
	[5,28]	[33,83]	[5,31]	[4,24]	[1,10]	
5. None	26	28	25	13	8	100
	[21,32]	[22,35]	[21,31]	[9,17]	[5,12]	
Total	31	28	26	11	4	100
	[27,35]	[24,32]	[23,29]	[9,14]	[3,6]	

P < 0.000

Table 17. To what extent do you agree or disagree... I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel (by age)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
1. 18-34	31	37	20	11	1	100
	[23,42]	[26,49]	[13,30]	[6,18]	[0,2]	
2. 35-44	32	24	28	13	3	100
	[23,43]	[17,34]	[19,39]	[7,22]	[1,6]	
3. 45-54	31	32	25	8	4	100
	[23,41]	[21,46]	[18,34]	[5,12]	[2,11]	
4. 55-64	31	23	26	11	9	100
	[22,40]	[17,31]	[19,33]	[7,18]	[5,16]	
5. 65-74	29	25	30	12	3	100
	[23,36]	[19,33]	[24,37]	[8,17]	[2,6]	
6. 75+	31	19	27	15	7	100
	[24,39]	[15,25]	[21,34]	[10,22]	[4,13]	
Total	31	28	26	11	4	100
	[27,35]	[24,32]	[22,29]	[9,14]	[3,6]	

P = 0.053

Table 18. To what extent do you agree or disagree... I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel (by political views)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
1. Extremely/very liberal	35	27	29	6	3	100
	[27,44]	[21,35]	[22,37]	[4,10]	[2,5]	
2. Liberal/slightly liberal	23	25	33	15	5	100
	[17,30]	[20,31]	[27,40]	[10,20]	[3,8]	
3. Moderate	32	30	22	11	5	100
	[26,39]	[22,39]	[17,29]	[7,16]	[3,9]	
4. Conservative/slightly conservative	33	33	20	10	3	100
	[25,43]	[22,46]	[14,28]	[6,17]	[1,8]	
5. Extremely/very conservative	56	13	10	16	6	100
	[39,73]	[5,28]	[4,23]	[6,33]	[2,15]	
Total	31	28	25	11	4	100
	[28,35]	[24,32]	[22,29]	[9,14]	[3,6]	

P = 0.009

Table 19. To what extent do you agree or disagree... I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel (by attachment to Israel)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	
0. Not at all attached	34	21	21	17	7	100
	[21,49]	[9,40]	[13,31]	[10,28]	[4,14]	
1. Not too attached	16	28	40	11	4	100
	[10,26]	[20,38]	[31,50]	[7,16]	[3,7]	
2. Somewhat attached	21	29	33	11	5	100
	[16,28]	[23,36]	[27,40]	[8,15]	[3,8]	
3. Very attached	42	28	18	9	3	100
	[36,47]	[22,36]	[14,22]	[6,13]	[2,6]	
Total	31	28	26	11	4	100
	[28,35]	[24,32]	[23,29]	[9,13]	[3,6]	

P < 0.000

Table 20. To what extent do you agree or disagree... I often feel that I don't know enough about the current situation to participate in conversations about Israel (by visits to Israel)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
0. Never	26	23	31	14	6	100
	[21,33]	[17,30]	[25,37]	[10,18]	[4,10]	
1. One	26	26	33	12	4	100
	[19,35]	[20,33]	[25,42]	[8,17]	[2,6]	
2. Multiple	36	32	20	9	3	100
	[30,42]	[25,39]	[16,25]	[6,14]	[1,7]	
3. Lived/Israeli	42	38	9	10	1	100
	[28,58]	[21,59]	[5,15]	[5,21]	[0,1]	
Total	31	28	26	11	4	100
	[27,35]	[24,32]	[23,29]	[9,14]	[3,6]	

P = 0.002

Table 21. To what extent do you agree or disagree...American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government (by Jewish engagement)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
1. Unengaged	18	12	15	42	13	100
	[14,22]	[9,17]	[10,20]	[37,48]	[9,18]	
2. Detached	18	12	18	47	6	100
	[15,21]	[10,15]	[14,22]	[42,51]	[4,9]	
3. Holiday	21	16	21	32	10	100
	[17,27]	[13,20]	[17,26]	[27,37]	[7,15]	
4. Personal	20	18	21	34	7	100
	[17,24]	[15,22]	[17,26]	[29,40]	[3,14]	
5. Connected	14	14	20	48	5	100
	[11,16]	[10,19]	[16,24]	[43,53]	[3,7]	
6. Immersed	19	23	23	31	5	100
	[16,23]	[18,27]	[18,27]	[26,36]	[3,7]	
Total	18	15	19	41	8	100
	[17,19]	[14,17]	[17,21]	[38,43]	[6,9]	

P < 0.000

Table 21. To what extent do you agree or disagree...American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government (by denomination)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
1. Orthodox	21	22	26	23	8	100
	[16,28]	[17,28]	[18,35]	[17,30]	[5,12]	
2. Conservative	19	21	23	31	7	100
	[16,22]	[17,24]	[19,27]	[27,36]	[5,10]	
3. Reform	20	15	20	41	5	100
	[17,23]	[12,17]	[17,23]	[37,45]	[4,7]	
4. Other	15	23	15	43	5	100
	[10,21]	[13,36]	[10,22]	[32,55]	[1,13]	
5. None	16	12	16	47	9	100
	[14,19]	[9,14]	[13,19]	[43,51]	[7,12]	
Total	18	15	19	41	7	100
	[17,20]	[14,17]	[17,21]	[39,43]	[6,9]	

P < 0.000

Table 22. To what extent do you agree or disagree...American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government (by age)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
1. 18-34	14	11	21	47	8	100
	[11,19]	[8,14]	[16,26]	[41,53]	[5,12]	
2. 35-44	13	15	17	40	15	100
	[11,16]	[12,19]	[14,22]	[34,45]	[10,22]	
3. 45-54	20	20	21	33	6	100
	[16,24]	[15,25]	[16,27]	[28,39]	[4,9]	
4. 55-64	18	16	17	41	8	100
	[15,21]	[13,20]	[14,22]	[36,47]	[5,12]	
5. 65-74	23	16	17	39	6	100
	[20,26]	[13,20]	[14,20]	[35,43]	[4,8]	
6. 75+	21	14	20	38	7	100
	[16,27]	[11,18]	[16,25]	[32,44]	[4,10]	
Total	18	15	19	40	8	100
	[17,20]	[14,17]	[17,21]	[38,42]	[6,9]	

P < 0.000

Table 23. To what extent do you agree or disagree...American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government (by political views)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
1. Extremely/Very liberal	19	6	9	62	4	100
	[16,23]	[4,9]	[6,13]	[57,67]	[2,7]	
2. Liberal/Slightly liberal	21	14	17	43	6	100
	[18,23]	[12,16]	[14,19]	[39,46]	[5,8]	
3. Moderate	13	18	23	35	11	100
	[10,15]	[15,21]	[20,28]	[31,40]	[8,15]	
4. Conservative/Slightly conservative	17	25	28	21	10	100
	[12,22]	[20,31]	[22,34]	[17,26]	[6,15]	
5. Extremely/Very conservative	27	19	29	19	6	100
	[19,38]	[12,27]	[19,42]	[12,29]	[2,20]	
Total	18	15	19	41	7	100
	[17,20]	[14,17]	[17,21]	[38,43]	[6,9]	

P < 0.000

Table 24. To what extent do you agree or disagree...American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government (by attachment to Israel)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
0. Not at all attached	21	5	7	53	14	100
	[16,27]	[3,8]	[4,10]	[46,59]	[10,19]	
1. Not too attached	17	12	17	42	11	100
	[14,22]	[9,16]	[13,22]	[37,48]	[8,16]	
2. Somewhat attached	16	15	19	43	6	100
	[14,18]	[12,18]	[16,23]	[40,47]	[4,9]	
3. Very attached	19	21	24	31	5	100
	[17,22]	[18,24]	[21,28]	[28,34]	[3,6]	
Total	18	15	19	40	8	100
	[17,20]	[14,17]	[17,21]	[38,43]	[7,9]	

P < 0.000

Table 25. To what extent do you agree or disagree...American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government (by visits to Israel)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion or not sure	Total
0. Never	17	12	16	44	11	100
	[14,19]	[10,15]	[13,20]	[40,48]	[8,14]	
1. One	19	14	22	38	7	100
	[16,22]	[11,17]	[18,27]	[33,42]	[5,10]	
2. Multiple	21	19	19	36	5	100
	[18,23]	[16,22]	[17,22]	[33,40]	[4,7]	
3. Lived/Israeli	14	20	19	43	3	100
	[10,20]	[15,26]	[14,27]	[36,51]	[1,8]	
Total	18	15	19	41	8	100
	[17,19]	[14,17]	[17,21]	[38,43]	[6,9]	

P < 0.000