



MAURICE AND MARILYN COHEN CENTER FOR MODERN JEWISH STUDIES

The Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University is a multi-disciplinary research center dedicated to bringing the concepts, theories, and techniques of social science to bear on the study of contemporary Jewish life.

<https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/>

Implications of Pew 2020 for the Jewish future

Friday, May 14, 2021

12 PM – 1:15 PM

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Introduction | <i>Matthew Boxer</i> |
| Presentation | <i>Leonard Saxe and Janet Aronson</i> |
| Response | <i>Alan Cooperman</i> |
| Q&A and discussion | <i>Facilitated by Matthew Boxer</i> |
| Closing | <i>Leonard Saxe</i> |

Pew Research Center 

FOR RELEASE MAY 11, 2021

Jewish Americans in 2020

U.S. Jews are culturally engaged, increasingly diverse, politically polarized and worried about anti-Semitism

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

Pew Research Center, May 11, 2021, "Jewish Americans in 2020"

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From Research to Action

Pew has done a great service for the Jewish community

- Methodologically sophisticated survey-based portrait of US Jewry
- Pew 2020 is an extension of their 2013 study
- Includes new questions about identity, engagement with culture, Israel, and Jewish life

Goal is to make the data useful for the philanthropic community

- Selected findings that support or challenge “common wisdom”
- Put the findings in context with other knowledge
- Share lessons we take from the study

US Jewish population is expanding

Pew 2020 Estimate

7.5M Jews in the United States

5.8M Jewish Adults

1.8M Jewish Children

AJPP 2020 Estimate

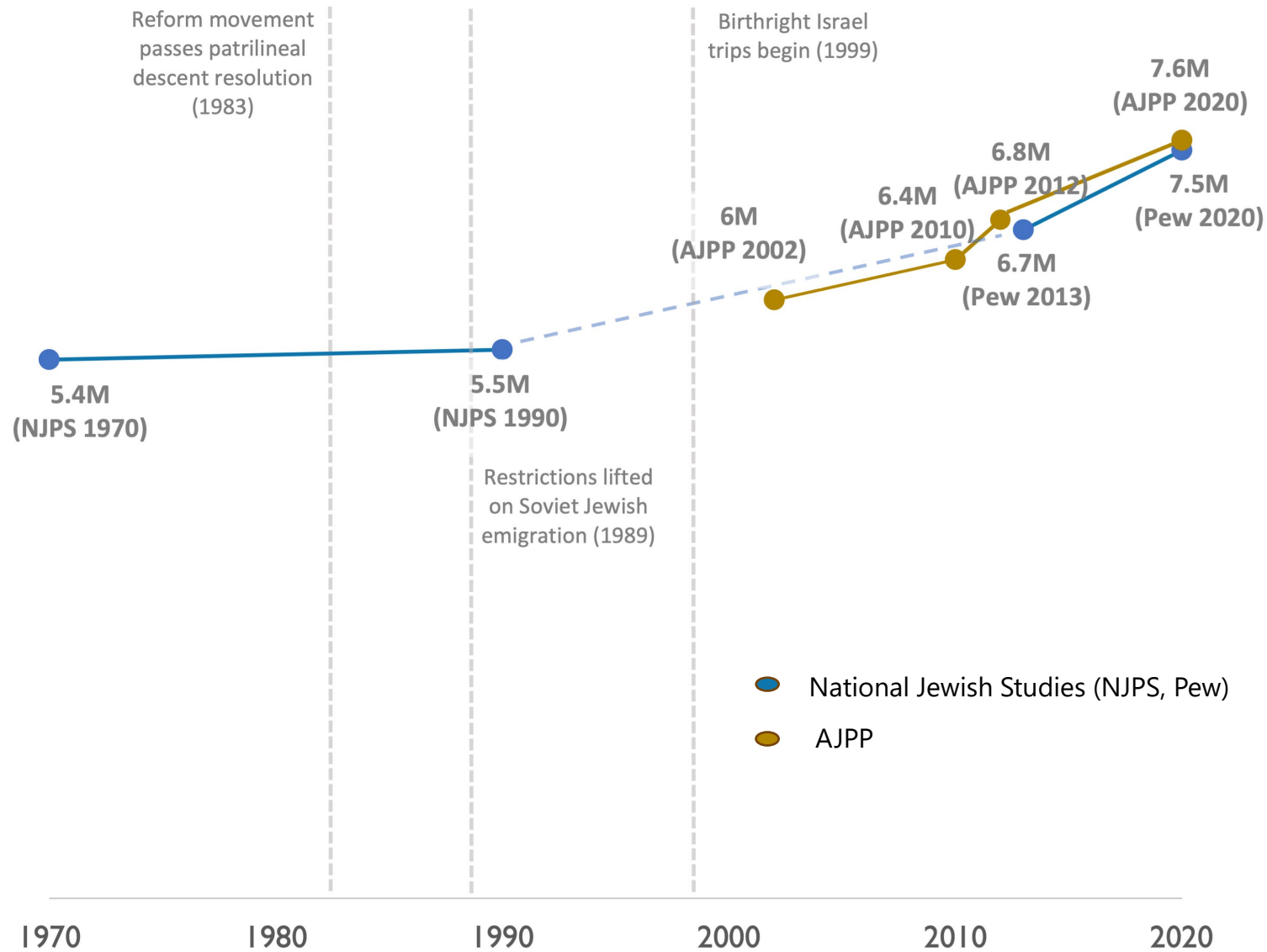
7.6M Jews in the United States

6.0M Jewish Adults

1.6M Jewish Children

Not included in estimate
Jewish Background individuals: 2.8M adults and 800k children

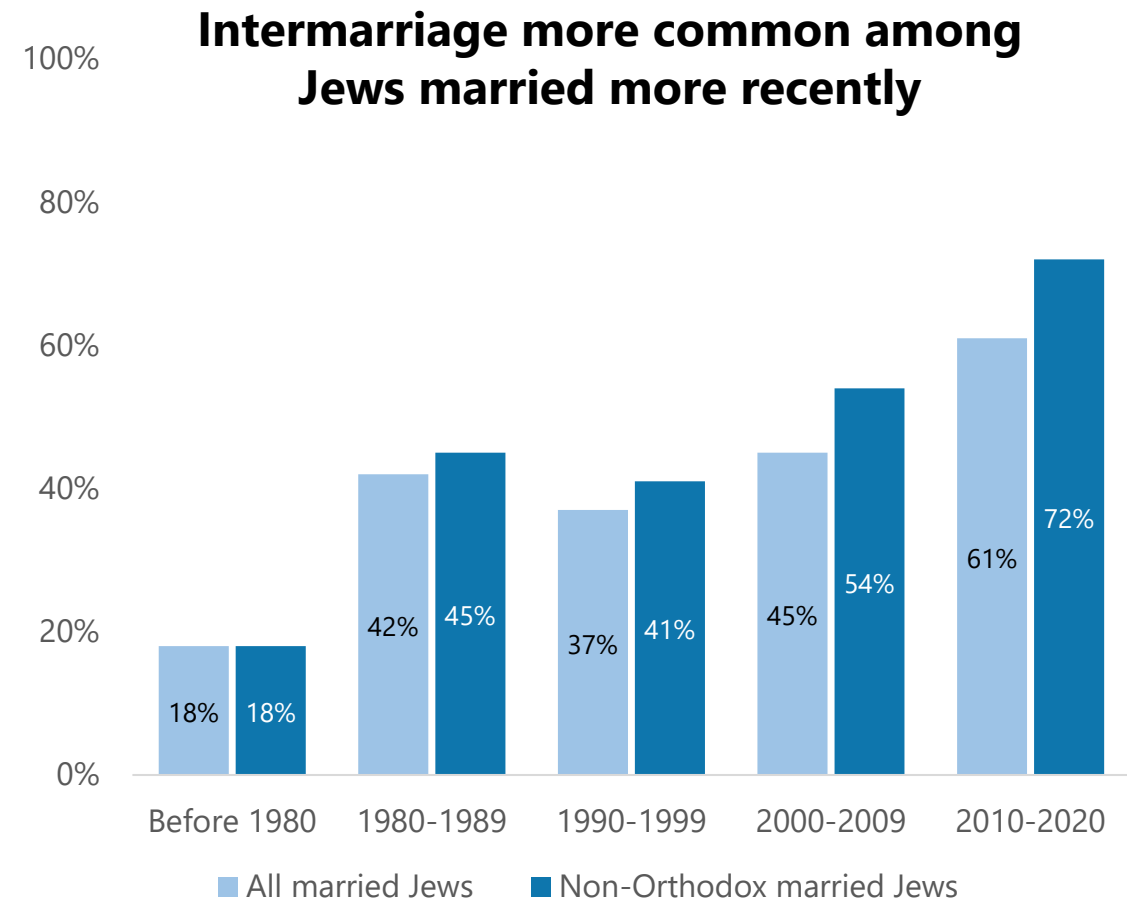
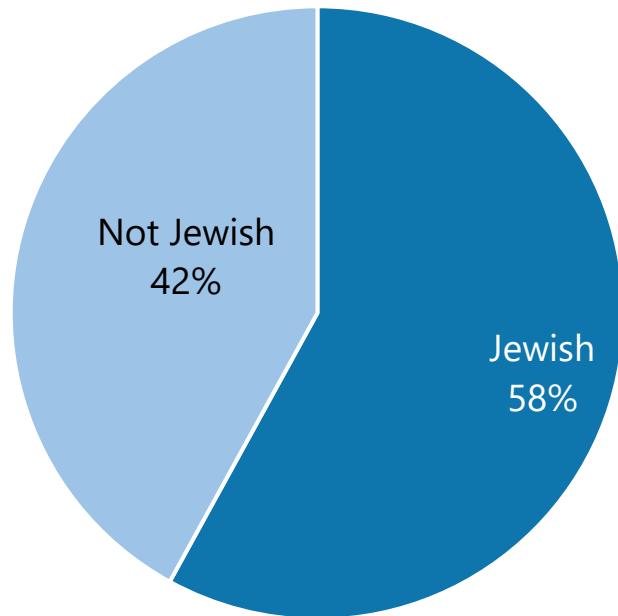
Growth and stability since 1970



- 5.4M in 1970, 7.5M today
- 2.1 to 2.4% of total US population

Intermarriage

Of married (59% of adults),
religion of spouse



Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

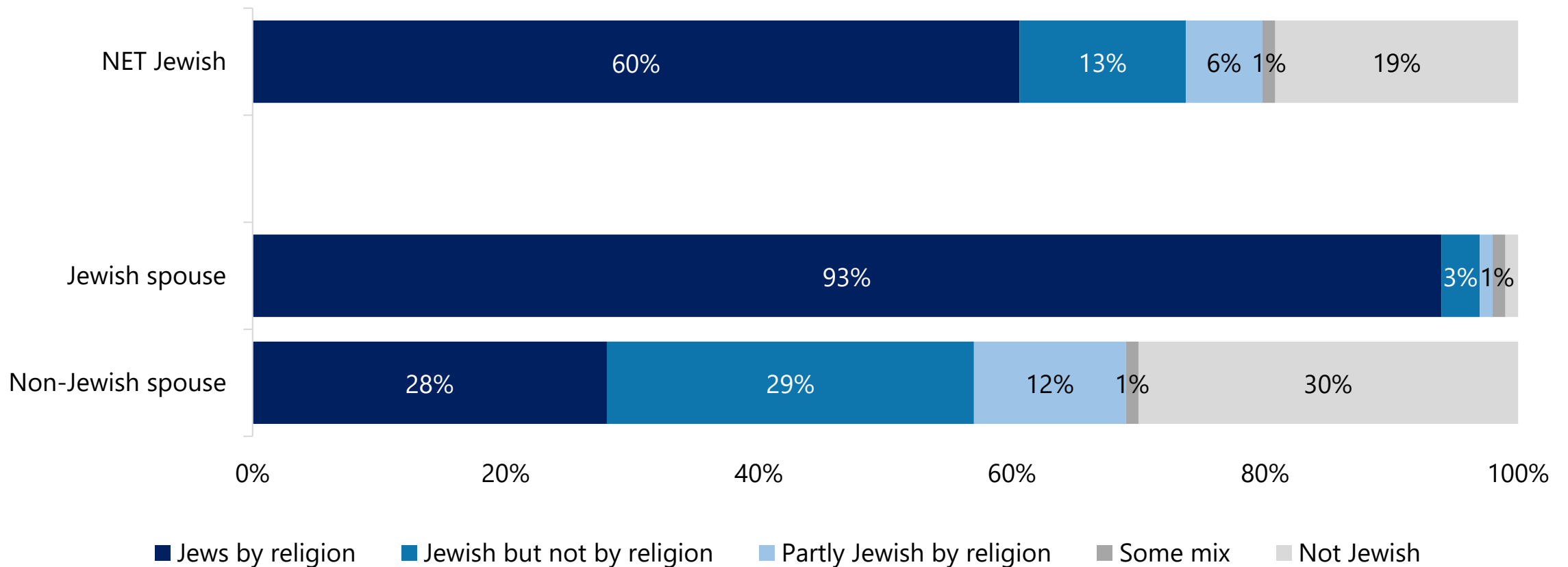
Jewish parents of Jewish adults

| | Mother | Father | Both | Neither | Other |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| NET Jewish | 13% | 11% | 69% | 5% | 2% |
| 18-29 | 22% | 23% | 49% | 3% | 3% |
| 30-49 | 21% | 16% | 55% | 5% | 3% |
| 50-64 | 8% | 6% | 80% | 6% | 0% |
| 65+ | 2% | 2% | 89% | 4% | 3% |

Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Intermarriage and raising Jewish children

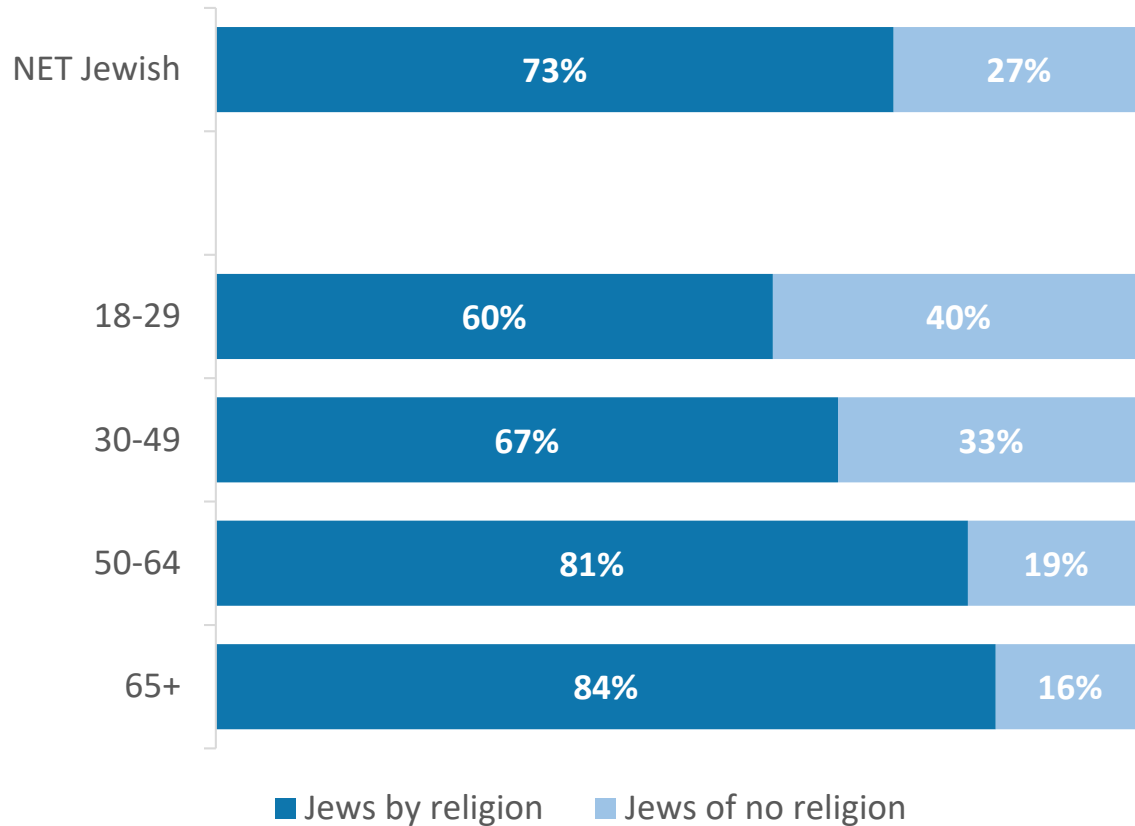
More than half of intermarried parents raising children Jewish in some way



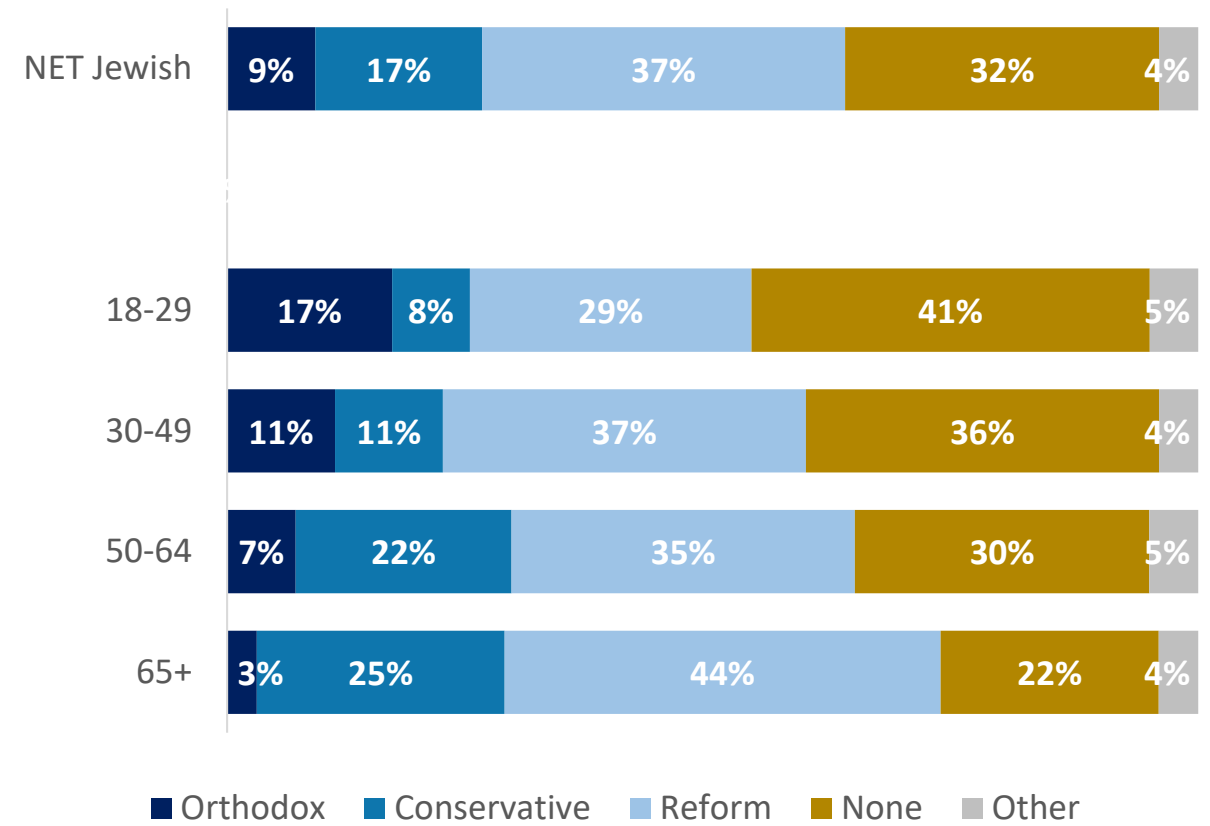
Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Jewish identification (JBR/JNR) and denomination

JBR/JNR

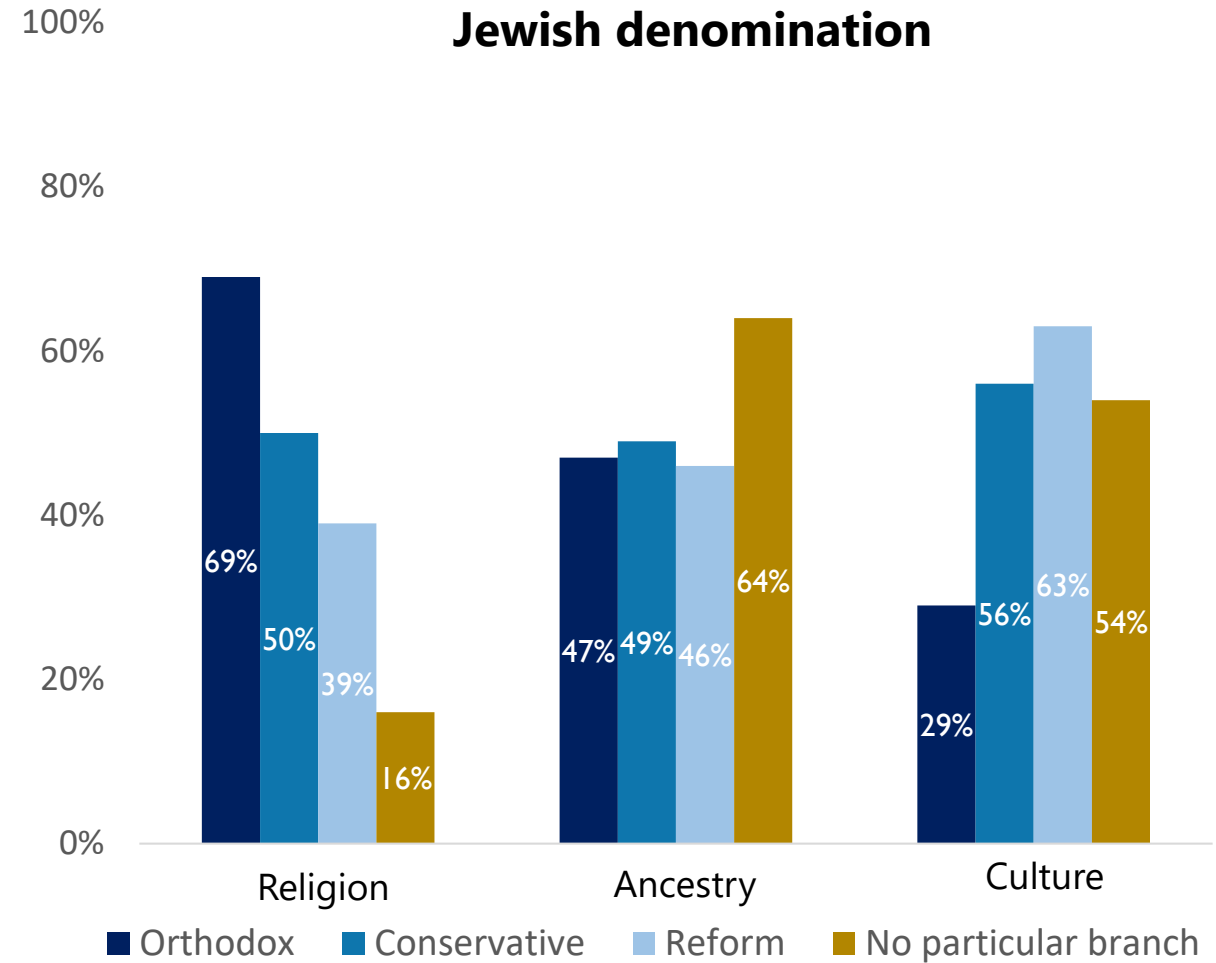
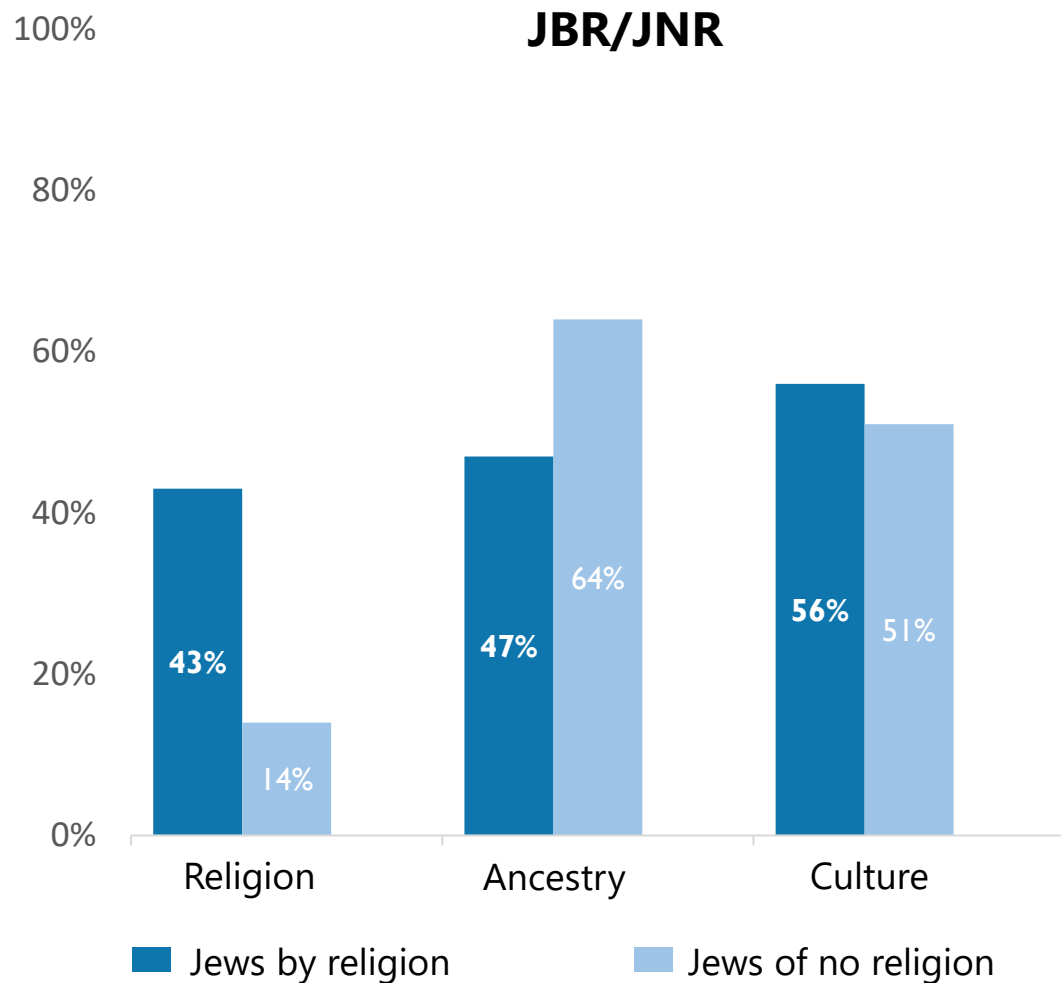


Jewish denomination



Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Varieties of Jewish connection: Religion, ancestry, culture



Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Diversity of Jewish behavior

Jewish practices and activities

| | | NET Jewish | Jews by religion | Jews of no religion |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Ritual behaviors | Passover seder | 62% | 74% | 30% |
| | Yom Kippur fast | 46% | 56% | 20% |
| | Attend synagogue (monthly) | 20% | 27% | <1% |
| | Kosher (at home) | 17% | 22% | 3% |
| | Mark Shabbat in some way | 39% | 48% | 12% |
| Communal | Synagogue membership | 35% | 46% | 5% |
| | Donate to a Jewish charity | 48% | 61% | 11% |
| Cultural behaviors | Cook/eat Jewish food | 72% | 78% | 54% |
| | Read Jewish literature | 44% | 49% | 28% |
| | Watch TV w/ Jewish or Israel themes | 43% | 48% | 27% |
| | Read Jewish news | 42% | 50% | 19% |
| | Listen to Jewish music | 36% | 42% | 22% |
| | Go to Jewish film festivals | 25% | 30% | 13% |

Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Synagogue participation exceeds membership

Non-members find ways to attend services

| | Synagogue member | Attend services | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| | Anyone in household | Monthly + | Few times/yr+ |
| NET Jewish | 35 | 20 | 47 |
| JBR | 46 | 27 | 60 |
| JNR | 5 | <1 | 9 |
| Denomination | | | |
| Orthodox | 93 | 83 | 96 |
| Conservative | 56 | 33 | 75 |
| Reform | 37 | 14 | 52 |
| None | 7 | 2 | 12 |
| Age | | | |
| 18-29 | 37 | 22 | 53 |
| 30-49 | 33 | 19 | 45 |
| 50-64 | 38 | 19 | 48 |
| 65+ | 36 | 22 | 45 |

- In 2013, 31% of households were synagogue members
- Rate is stable, but number of synagogue households has increased
- No age differences in synagogue membership

Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Reasons for attending or avoiding synagogue services

For those who attend at least monthly...

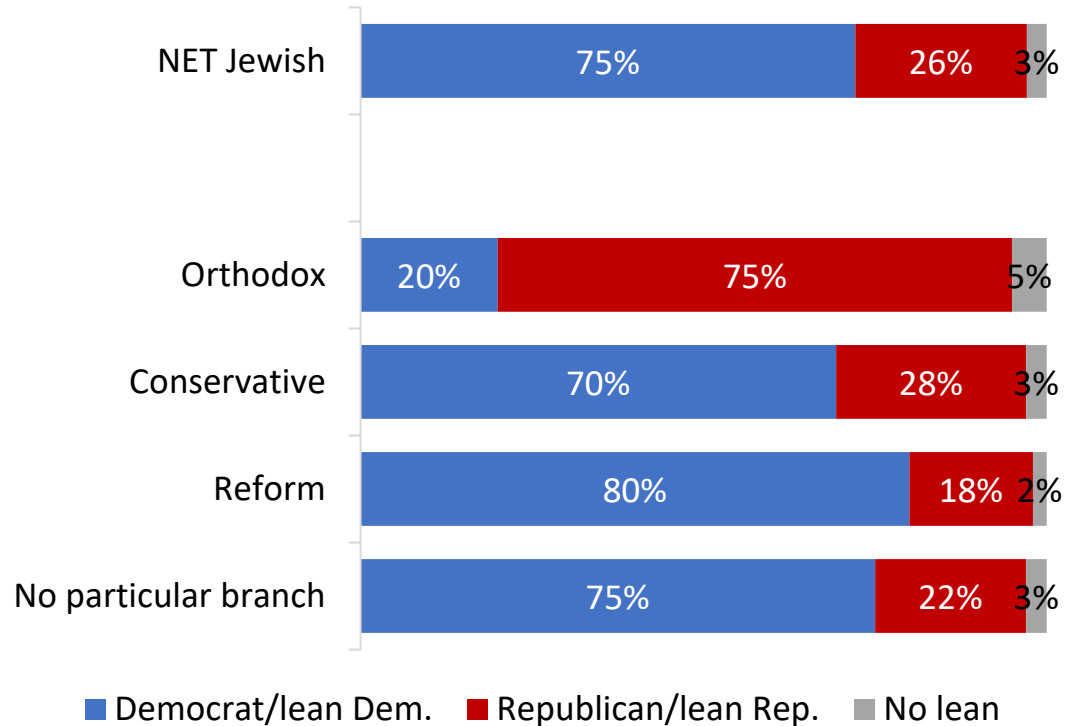
| | Total |
|------------------------|-------|
| Spiritually meaningful | 92 |
| Sense of belonging | 87 |
| Ancestry/history | 83 |
| Family traditions | 74 |
| Learn something new | 69 |
| Religious obligation | 65 |
| See friends | 62 |
| Family/spouse/partner | 42 |
| Guilt | 22 |

For those who never/rarely attend...

| | Total | JBR | JNR |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----|-----|
| Not religious | 67 | 57 | 86 |
| Not interested | 57 | 49 | 74 |
| Express Jewishness in other ways | 55 | 63 | 41 |
| Don't know enough | 23 | 19 | 29 |
| Cost | 17 | 24 | 5 |
| No synagogues nearby | 11 | 12 | 9 |
| Feel pressured | 11 | 12 | 8 |
| Don't feel welcome | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| Security | 6 | 8 | 3 |
| Health | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| People treat me like I don't belong | 4 | 4 | 4 |

Political views

Most US Jews identify as Democrats, but most Orthodox are Republican



Perception of discrimination against Jews and others

| | Jews | Muslim | Blacks |
|-----------------|------|--------|--------|
| NET Jewish | 43% | 62% | 55% |
| Republican | 43% | 30% | 18% |
| Democrat | 45% | 75% | 71% |
| Orthodox | 53% | 18% | 23% |
| Conservative | 55% | 60% | 55% |
| Reform | 45% | 69% | 58% |
| No Denomination | 34% | 67% | 60% |
| All US adults | 18% | 49% | 37% |

Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Most say antisemitism increased, but few stopped participating

Compared to five years ago, is there....



Why is there more antisemitism?



As a Jewish person in the United States, do you personally feel ___ than you did five years ago?



Because you felt less safe, have you...



Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

80% of US Jews say caring about Israel is an important or essential part of being Jewish

| | | NET Essential/ Important | Essential | Important | Not important |
|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| NET Jewish | All Jewish Adults | 82% | 45% | 37% | 16% |
| | <i>Jews by Religion</i> | 88% | 52% | 36% | 11% |
| | <i>Jews of no religion</i> | 68% | 27% | 41% | 31% |
| Age | 18-29 | 71% | 35% | 36% | 27% |
| | 30-49 | 79% | 43% | 36% | 20% |
| | 50-64 | 87% | 49% | 38% | 12% |
| | 65+ | 89% | 52% | 37% | 8% |

Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Ties between US Jews and Israel

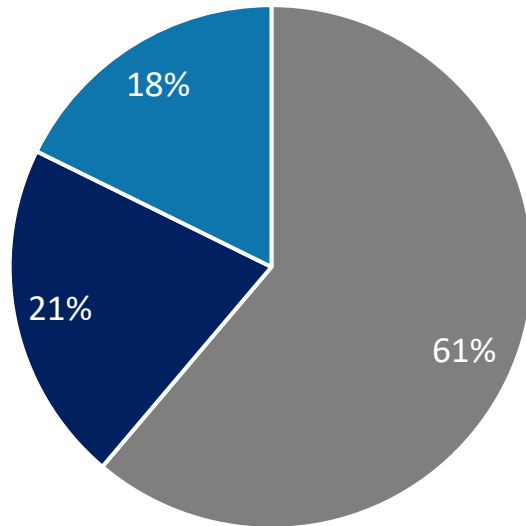
One quarter of US Jews have lived in Israel or been there more than once

| | | Ever gone | More than once |
|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| NET Jewish | All Jewish Adults | 45% | 26% |
| | <i>Jews by Religion</i> | 54% | 33% |
| | <i>Jews of no religion</i> | 22% | 7% |
| Age | 18-29 | 45% | 26% |
| | 30-49 | 45% | 25% |
| | 50-64 | 41% | 24% |
| | 65+ | 50% | 29% |

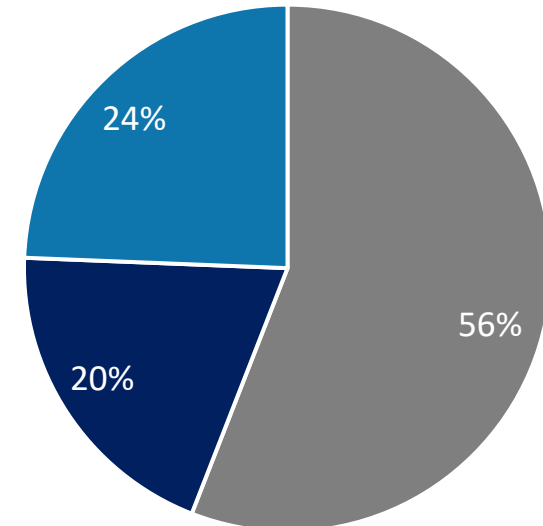
Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.

Birthright participants among Pew respondents ages 18-45

Respondents not raised Orthodox



All respondents



- Never traveled to Israel
- Birthright Participant
- Other Israel Travel

Among Pew respondents ages 25-34, the share of Birthright alumni is over 25%

Source: Pew 2020 Survey of American Jews. Weighted data. Limited to Jews aged 18-45.

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Most US Jews are emotionally attached to Israel

| | | NET Very/ Somewhat | Very | Somewhat | NET Not too / not at all |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|------|----------|-----------------------------|
| NET Jewish | All Jewish Adults | 58% | 25% | 32% | 41% |
| | <i>Jews by Religion</i> | 67% | 32% | 35% | 32% |
| | <i>Jews of no religion</i> | 33% | 6% | 26% | 67% |
| Age | 18-29 | 48% | 24% | 24% | 51% |
| | 30-49 | 52% | 24% | 28% | 47% |
| | 50-64 | 63% | 24% | 39% | 36% |
| | 65+ | 67% | 30% | 38% | 32% |
| Been to Israel | Never | 41% | 10% | 31% | 58% |
| | Once | 64% | 25% | 39% | 36% |
| | More than once | 90% | 58% | 31% | 10% |

Source: "Jewish Americans in 2020," Pew Research Center.