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The American Jewish Year Book 2015
The Annual Record of the North American Jewish Communities

This Report derives from Chapter 7 of the *American Jewish Year Book, 2015*.

The *American Jewish Year Book* is "The Annual Record of the North American Jewish Communities." This volume is a very important and prestigious annual publication because it has acted as a major resource for academic researchers, researchers at Jewish institutions and organizations, practitioners at Jewish institutions and organizations, the media, both Jewish and secular, educated leaders and lay persons, and libraries, particularly University and Jewish libraries, for up-to-date information about the American and Canadian Jewish communities. For decades, the *American Jewish Year Book* has been the premiere place for leading academics to publish long review chapters on topics of interest to the American Jewish community.

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World Jewish Population, 2015

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World Jewish Population, 2015

At the beginning of 2015, the world's Jewish population was estimated at 14,310,500—an increase of 95,100 (0.67%) over the 2014 revised estimate of 14,215,400 which was slightly higher than the 14,212,800 original estimate (DellaPergola 2014). The world's total population increased by 1.13% in 2014 (Population Research Bureau 2014). World Jewry hence increased at about half the general population growth rate.

Figure 1 illustrates changes in the number of Jews worldwide, in Israel, and in the aggregate in the rest of the world—commonly referred to as the Diaspora—as well as changes in the world's total population between 1945 and 2015. The world's *core* Jewish population was estimated at 11 million in 1945. The *core* Jewish population concept addresses a human collective that is mutually exclusive with respect to other subpopulations, while acknowledging that the number of persons who carry multiple cultural and religious identities are increasing in contemporary societies (Josselson and Harway 2012) (see more under definitions below). While 13 years were needed to add one million Jews from 11 million to 12 million after the tragic human losses of World War II and the Shoah (Holocaust) (DellaPergola, Rebhun, and Tolts 2000), 40 more years were needed to add another million from 12 million to 13 million. While since the 1970s world Jewry stagnated at *zero population growth* for nearly 20 years, some demographic recovery has been recorded during the first fifteen years of the 21st century. World Jewish population has increased, mostly reflecting enhanced demographic increase in Israel. It took about 14 years to add another million from 13 million to 14 million. In historical perspective, world Jewish population has not recovered its size on the eve of World War II—16.5 million—and it will take decades more to do so, if ever.

World Jewish population size reflects a combination of two very different demographic trends in Israel and in the Diaspora. Israel's Jewish population increased linearly from an initial one-half million in 1945 to over 6.2 million in 2015. The Diaspora, from an initial 10.5 million in 1945, was quite stable until the early 1970s, when it started decreasing to the current 8.1 million. The world's total population increased more than threefold from 2.315 billion in 1945 to 7.236 billion in 2015. Thus, the relative share of Jews among the world's total population steadily diminished from 4.75 per 1,000 in 1945 to 1.98 per 1,000 currently.

Two countries, Israel and the US, account for over 83% of the 2015 total, another 17 countries, each with 18,000 Jews or more, account for another 15%, and another 76 countries, each with Jewish populations below 18,000, account for the remaining 2%. **Figure 2** shows the largest *core* Jewish populations in 2015.

Israel's Jewish population (*not* including over 359,000 persons not recorded as Jews in the Population Register and belonging to families initially admitted within the framework of the *Law of Return*) reached 6,217,400 in 2015 (43.4% of world Jewry). This represented a population increase of 112,900 (1.85%) in 2014 when the total Jewish population of the Diaspora decreased by 7,800 (-0.22%). Following the 2013 Pew Research Center study of Jewish Americans (Pew Research Center 2013), the US *core* Jewish population was upwardly re-assessed at 5,700,000 and was estimated not to

have changed, constituting 39.8% of world Jewry in 2015. Jews in the US were estimated to have slightly increased over the past 15 years, after probably reaching a peak after 1980, followed by several subsequent years of moderate decline (DellaPergola 2013a). Jews in the rest of the world were assessed at 2,393,100 in 2015 (16.7% of world Jewry).

After critically reviewing all available evidence on Jewish demographic trends, it is plausible to claim that Israel now hosts the largest Jewish community worldwide, although there are some dissenting opinions (Saxe and Tighe 2013; Sheskin and Dashefsky 2015). Demography has produced a transition of singular importance for Jewish history and experience—the return of the Jews to a geographical distribution significantly rooted in their ancestral homeland. This has occurred through daily, minor, slow, and diverse changes affecting human births and deaths, geographical mobility, and the willingness of millions of persons to identify with a Jewish collective concept—no matter how specified in its details, but not confounded with explicit alternative religious or ethnic identifications. At the same time, Israel's Jewish population faces a significant demographic challenge with its gradually diminishing majority status vis-á-vis the Palestinian Arab population who live within the boundaries of the State of Israel as well as on the whole territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River.

Israel's current Jewish population growth—although slower than during the 1990s—reflects a continuing substantial natural increase generated by a combination of relatively high fertility (currently an average of 3.05 children per Jewish woman as of 2013) and a relatively young age composition (27% under age 15 and only 12% age 65 and over as of 2013). These two drivers of demographic growth—above-replacement fertility and a balanced age composition—do not simultaneously exist among any other Jewish population worldwide, including the US. Other than a few cases of growth due to international migration (for example, Canada, the US in the recent past, Australia, and until recently, Germany), the number of Jews in Diaspora countries tends to diminish at varying rates. The causes for these decreases are low Jewish birth rates, an elderly population (which increases the death rate), and a dubious balance between persons who join Judaism (*accessions*) and those who partly or completely drop their Jewish identity (*secessions*).

All this holds true regarding the *core* Jewish population, which does *not* include non-Jewish members of Jewish households, Jews who also hold another religious identification, persons of Jewish ancestry who profess 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. Starting from the core Jewish population estimate of 14,310,500 in 2015, if we add persons who state they are partly Jewish and non-Jews who have Jewish parents, an *extended* global aggregate population estimate of 17,411,450 is obtained. By adding non-Jewish members of Jewish households, the *enlarged* estimate increases to 20,235,700. Finally, under the comprehensive three-generation and lateral provisions of Israel's *Law of Return*, the total Jewish and non-Jewish eligible population can be roughly estimated at 23,047,900. The US holds a significantly larger *enlarged* population living in households with Jewish background than Israel—roughly 10 million compared to 6,576,700, respectively. (See further discussion of definitions below.)

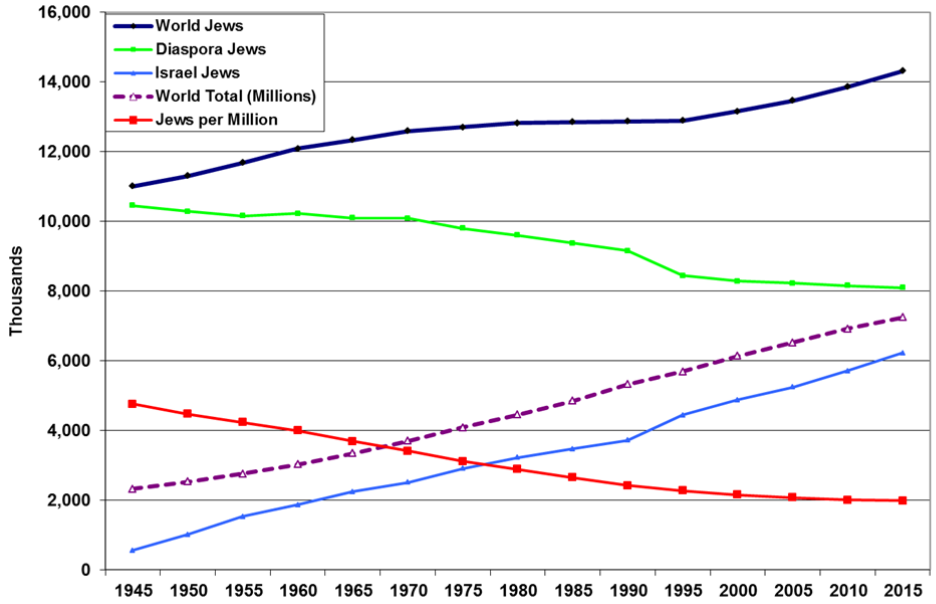

Figure 1 World total population and core Jewish population, 1945-2015

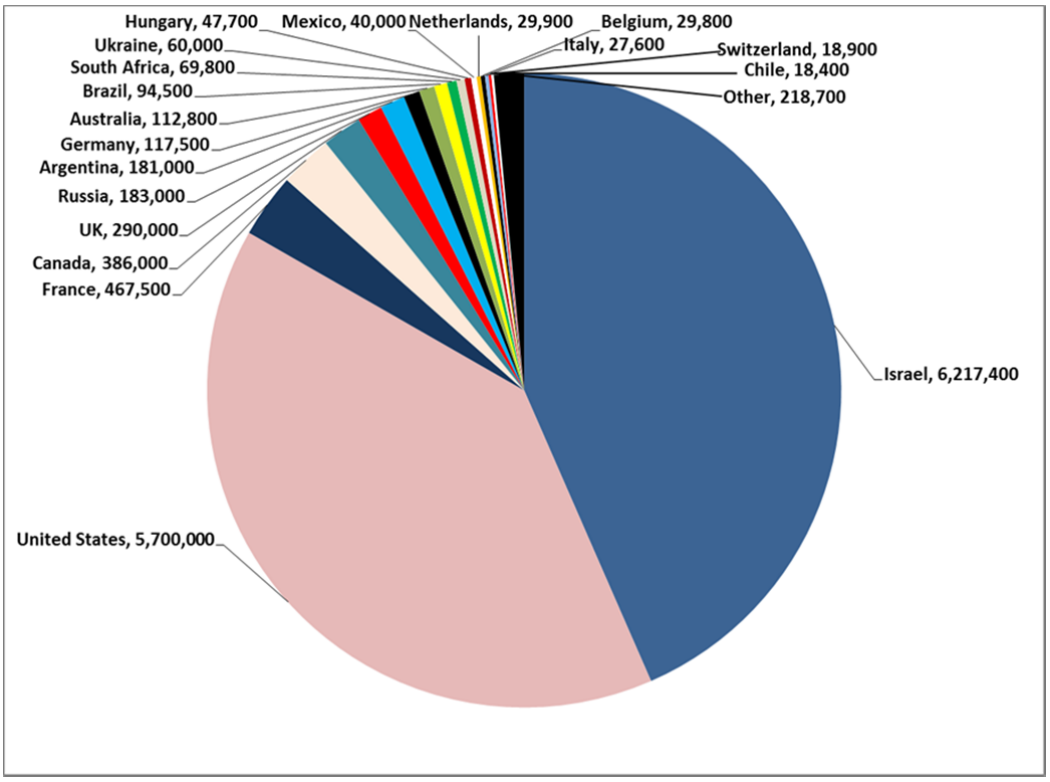

Figure 2 Largest core Jewish populations, 2015

Fundamentals of Jewish Population Change

Jewish population size and composition reflect the continuous interplay of various factors that operate from both outside and inside the Jewish community.

Regarding **external factors**, since the end of the 1980s, major geopolitical and socioeconomic changes in the world significantly affected Jewish population trends. Leading factors included: 1) the disintegration of the Soviet Union; 2) Germany's reunification; 3) the EU's gradual expansion to 28 states, but also its more recent economic stagnation and rising xenophobia and anti-Semitism (European Union Fundamental Rights Agency-FRA 2013); 4) South Africa's transition away from the apartheid regime; 5) political and economic instability but also democratization and growth in several Central and South American countries; and 6) steady economic growth in Israel in conjunction with a highly tense and volatile situation in the Middle East. Large-scale emigration from the former Soviet Union (FSU) and also from Ethiopia, and rapid population growth in Israel were the most visible effects, accompanied by other significant Jewish population transfers, such as the movement of Jews from Central and South America to the US, particularly South Florida (Sheskin 2015b) and Southern California (Gold 2015). Shifts in group allegiances, reflecting broader trends in religious and national identities, as well as intermarriage patterns also played a role in shaping Jewish population size and composition. A major development was the rapid growth of the external—partly, weakly or not at all connected—belts of the Jewish identification configuration (**Figure 3**).

Reflecting these global trends, over 83% of world Jews currently live in two countries, Israel and the US, and over 96% are concentrated in the ten countries with the most Jews. In 2015, the G8 countries—the world's eight leading economies (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russian Federation, UK, and US)—constituted about 89% of the total Diaspora Jewish population. Thus, the aggregate of just a few major Jewish population centers virtually determines the assessment of world Jewry's total size and trends. 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, Rebhun, and Tolts 2005; DellaPergola 2014a).

Regarding **internal factors**, the defining principle of demography is that populations do not result from a vacuum, but rather reflect an uninterrupted chain of events that change the size of a population from an earlier to a later date. Of the three possible determinants of population change, two are shared by all populations: (a) the balance of vital events (births and deaths); and (b) the balance of international migration (immigration and emigration). The third determinant consists of identification changes or *passages* (accessions and secessions), and applies only to 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. One cannot undervalue the quantitative impact of passages that occur in either direction regarding individual perceptions and emotional attachments to group identities. Some of these passages are sanctioned

through a normative ceremony under a given religious denomination, and some are not. Some involve severing ties with a previously held identity, some do not and involve a growing pool of carriers of multiple identities no matter how contradictory those nominal identities can be to each other.

The 2015 Jewish population data were updated from 2014 and previous years in accordance with known or estimated vital events, migrations, and Jewish identification shifts. In the updating procedure, when data on intervening changes were available, empirically ascertained or reasonably assumed, effects of change were applied accordingly and consistently added to or subtracted from previous estimates. If the evidence was that intervening changes balanced one another, Jewish population size was not changed. This procedure has proven highly effective over the years of our monitoring of world Jewish population. Most often, when improved Jewish population estimates reflecting a new census or socio-demographic survey became available, our annually updated estimates proved to be on target. Otherwise, previous estimates were adjusted to newer better evidence.

The research findings reported here tend to confirm the estimates reported in previous years and, perhaps more importantly, a coherent interpretation of the trends prevailing in world Jewish demography (Bachi 1976; Schmelz 1981, 1984; DellaPergola 1995, 1999, 2001, 2011a). Concisely stated, a strongly positive balance of Jewish vital events (births and deaths) exists in Israel versus a negative balance in nearly all other countries. A positive migration balance prevails in Israel, the US, Canada, Australia, and in a few other Western countries, while a negative migration balance prevails in Central and South America, South Africa, Eastern Europe, Muslim countries, and several countries in Western Europe. Israel features a positive balance of accessions to Judaism over secessions, while an often negative, or, in any case, rather uncertain, balance of formal and especially informal passages prevails elsewhere.

While allowing for improvements and corrections, the 2015 population estimates highlight the increasing complexity of socio-demographic and identification factors underlying Jewish population patterns. This complexity is magnified at a time of pervasive internal and international migration and increasing transnationalism, sometimes implying bi-local residences and, thus, double counting of people on the move or who permanently share their time between different places. In this study, special attention is paid to avoiding double counts of internationally mobile and bi-local persons. Even more intriguing can be the position of persons who hold more than one cultural identity and may periodically shift from one to the other. Available data sources only imperfectly allow documenting these complexities; hence Jewish population estimates are far from perfect. Some errors can be corrected at a later stage. Consequently, analysts should resign themselves to the paradox of the *permanently provisional* nature of Jewish population estimates.

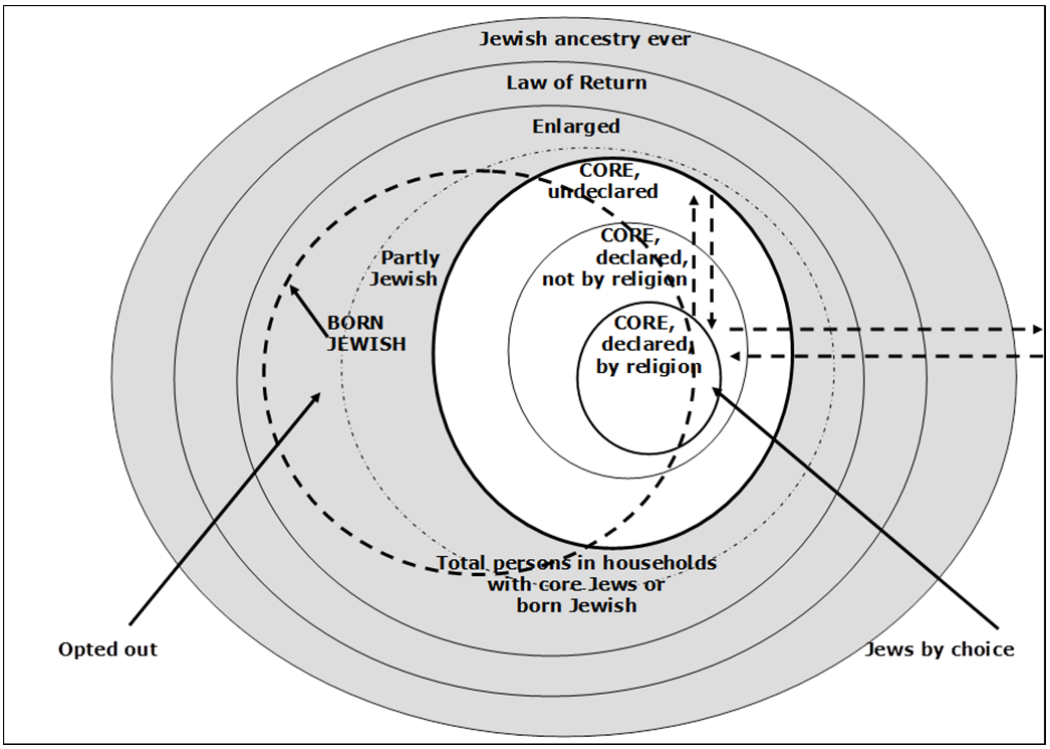

Figure 3 Configuring and defining contemporary Jewish populations (Areas represented are not proportional to actual populations)

Definitions

Jewish population definitions obviously critically impact the numbers. A major problem with Jewish population estimates produced by individual scholars or Jewish organizations is the lack of uniformity in definitional criteria—when the issue of defining the Jewish population is addressed at all. This problem is magnified when one tries to address the Jewish population globally, trying to provide 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 use one definitional standard for one country, and another for another country, although in the daily conduct of Jewish community affairs such differences do exist among countries.

In such an open, fluid, and somewhat undetermined environment, the very feasibility of undertaking a valid and meaningful study of the Jewish collective—let alone by the use of quantitative tools—generates debate. Four competing **intellectual stances** prevail on the contemporary scene of Jewish population studies (DellaPergola 2014d):

1) *Maximizing*: Jewish populations are the largest possible conglomerate of all persons who can be defined as Jewish via one or more criteria with any relevance or affinity to a Jewish category of any sort (Moles 1965);

2) *Consolidationist*: Jewish populations are a collection of persons defined by a given concept of what it means to be Jewish and can be empirically measured according to some standardized criteria (DellaPergola 2002);
3) *Situational*: Jewish populations can be recognized and studied but not really quantified, being the elusive product of ever-changing exogenous and endogenous circumstances (Schnapper 1994);
4) *Manipulative*: Jewish populations lack historical continuity and are generated by the interventions of elites or special interest groups, hence lacking serious claim to empirical validity or even legitimacy (Kimmerling 1999; Sand 2009).

The need for international consistency guides this report following a general *consolidationist* approach while being aware of the existing alternatives. High stakes emerge in actual implementation. Difficulties involve the sources of data available, the possible alternative definitions of the Jewish collective, and the techniques implemented in its surveying. In particular, the study of a Jewish population (or of any other subpopulation) requires solving **three main problems**:

1) *Defining* the target group on the basis of conceptual or normative criteria aimed at providing the best possible description of that group—which in the case of Jewry is no minor task in itself;
2) *Identifying* the group thus defined based on tools that operationally allow for distinguishing and selecting the target group from the rest of the population—primarily by systematic canvassing of populations and personally ascertaining personal identifications. Identification is also often performed through membership lists, distinctive Jewish names, areas of residence, or other random or non-random procedures; and
3) *Covering* the target group through appropriate field work—through face-to-face interviews, by telephone, by Internet, or otherwise. Most often in the actual experience of social research, and contrary to ideal procedures, the definitional task is performed at the stage of identification, and the identification task is performed at the stage of actual fieldwork.

It thus clearly appears that the quantitative study of Jewish populations relies mostly on *operational*, not *normative*, definitional criteria. Its conceptual aspects, far from pure theory, heavily depend on practical and logistical feasibility. The ultimate empirical step—obtaining relevant data from relevant persons—crucially reflects the readiness of people to cooperate in the data collection effort. In recent years, as cooperation rates have significantly decreased in social surveys, the amount, content, and validity of information gathered have been affected detrimentally. These declining cooperation rates reflect, among other things, the identification outlook of the persons who are part of the target population—that outlook which is itself an integral part of the investigation. No method exists to break this vicious cycle. Therefore, research findings reflect, with varying degrees of sophistication, only that which is possible to uncover. Anything that cannot be uncovered directly can sometimes be estimated through various imperfect techniques. Beyond that,

we enter the virtual world of beliefs, hopes and fears, myths, and corporate interests. No methodology exists to demonstrate the actual nature of some of these claims—at least not within the limits of a non-fiction work such as this.

Keeping this in mind, five major definitional concepts (core Jewish population, total population with Jewish parents, enlarged Jewish population, Law of Return population, and ancestors-were-ever-Jewish population) should be considered to provide serious comparative foundations to the study of Jewish demography (**Figure 3**). It should be noted that the graph has purely illustrative purposes and does not pretend to portray accurately the actual quantitative extent of each of the several areas portrayed there.

In most Diaspora countries, the ***core Jewish population*** (a concept initially suggested by Kosmin et al. 1991) includes all persons 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 have 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, beliefs, knowledge, communal affiliation, or otherwise. The *core* Jewish population includes people who identify as Jews by religion (JBRs), as well as others who do not identify by religion but see themselves as Jews by ethnicity or other cultural criteria. Some do not even identify themselves as Jews when first asked, but if they descend from Jewish parents and do not hold another religious identity they should be included. All these people are considered to be part of the *core* Jewish population which 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 identity. Persons of Jewish parentage who adopted another monotheistic religion are excluded, as are persons 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 is subject to Ministry of the Interior rulings, which rely on criteria established by rabbinic authorities and by the Israeli Supreme Court (Corinaldi 2001). In Israel, therefore, the *core* Jewish population does not simply express subjective identification but reflects definite legal rules. 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 was to allow for Jews with multiple religious identities to be included in

the *core* Jewish population definition under 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 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, 2013).

The 2013 Pew Research Center survey of Jewish Americans (Pew Research Center 2013), by introducing the so far not empirically tested concept of *partly Jewish,* helped clarify the demographic picture, but also made the debate about definitions more complicated and ambivalent. One intriguing issue concerns the status of the *partly Jewish* as a standard component of the Jewish collective, as some analysts would have it. Following a similar logic, persons with multiple ethnic identities, including a Jewish one, have been included in the total Jewish population counts for Canada. As against this, other researchers would suggest 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*. Recent research experiences, at any rate, indicate that people may shift their identities over time across the different layers of the *core* Jewish definition, and between different *core* and *non-core* statuses. It is not uncommon to see those shifts across the boundary between being Jewish and being something else and vice versa, as graphically illustrated in **Figure 3**.

Emerging from these more recent research developments, a second concept, the ***total population with Jewish parents***, includes the core Jewish population plus anyone currently not Jewish, but with one or two Jewish parents. In the Pew 2013 survey, the total population with Jewish parents comprised two sub-groups: 1) persons who report no religion, but are partly Jewish, and 2) persons who report being not Jewish, but with a Jewish background because they had a Jewish parent.

The ***enlarged Jewish population*** (concept initially suggested by DellaPergola 1975) includes the sum of: (a) the *core* Jewish population; (b) persons reporting they are *partly Jewish*; (c) all others of Jewish parentage who—by *core* Jewish population criteria—are *not* currently Jewish (non-Jews with Jewish background); and (d) all respective non-Jewish household members (spouses, children, etc.). Non-Jews with Jewish background, as far as they can be ascertained, include: (a) persons 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 just mentioned for recent US and Canadian data; and (b) other persons with Jewish parentage who disclaim being Jewish. It logically follows that most Jews who are identified in the Pew survey as *partly Jewish* or as *PJBs* who are not part of the US *core* Jewish population, as well as many Canadians declaring Jewish as one of *multiple ethnicities,* naturally should be included under the *enlarged* definition.

The ***Law of Return****,* Israel's distinctive legal framework for the acceptance and absorption of new immigrants, awards Jewish new immigrants immediate citizenship and other civil rights. The Law of Entrance and Law of Citizenship apply to all other foreign arrivals, some of whom may ask 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, Reconstructionist, or Reform) who does not have another religious identity. By 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 for *Law of Return* purposes. Thus, the Falash Mura—a group of Ethiopian non-Jews of Jewish ancestry—must undergo conversion to be eligible for the *Law of Return*. The law as such does not affect a person's Jewish status—which, as noted, is adjudicated by Israel's Ministry of Interior relying on Israel's rabbinic authorities—but only for the specific immigration and citizenship benefits granted under the *Law of Return*. Articles 1 and 4A(a) of this law 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). 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 influence research targets, rendering them increasingly complex and flexible. 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 to Jewish populations increasingly closer to the *enlarged* and *Law of Return* definitions than to the *core* definition.

Finally, some socio-demographic surveys, by investigating people who were born or were raised or are currently Jewish, may have reached people whose **ancestors *ever* were Jewish** regardless of the respondents' present identification. Several socio-demographic surveys indeed ask about the religio-ethnic identification of parents. Some population surveys, however, *do* ask about more distant ancestry. 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. Historians may wish to engage in the study of the number of Jews who ever lived or of how many persons 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. 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; Tian et al. 2015). These long-term issues and analyses are beyond the purpose 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 and beyond the limits of the typical *core* definition. These decisions may reflect local needs and sensitivities, but tend to limit the actual

comparability of the same Jewish population over time and of different Jewish populations at one given time. As noted, a more coherently comparative approach is followed here. The estimates presented below of Jewish population distribution worldwide and in each continent, country, and major metropolitan area consistently aim at the concept of *core* Jewish population. The *core* definition is indeed the necessary starting point for any admittedly relevant elaboration about the *enlarged* definition, or even broader definitions such as the *Law of Return* definition, which will be presented in the **Appendix**.

Data Sources

Data on population size, characteristics, and trends are a primary tool in the evaluation of Jewish community needs and prospects at the local level, nationally, and internationally. The estimates for major regions and individual countries reported below reflect a prolonged and continuing effort to study scientifically the demography of contemporary world Jewry. Data collection and comparative research have benefited from the collaboration of scholars and institutions in many countries, including access to otherwise unpublished databases regarding current estimates. It should be emphasized, however, that the elaboration of worldwide estimates for the Jewish populations of the various countries is beset with difficulties and uncertainties (Ritterband, Kosmin, and Scheckner 1988; DellaPergola 2002; DellaPergola 2014c). 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 demographic picture have expanded significantly. These data consist of national population censuses, public and private sponsored surveys, population registers, and records of vital statistics, migration, and conversions. Some of this ongoing data compilation is part of coordinated efforts aimed at strengthening Jewish population research by the Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics at the Institute of Contemporary Jewry of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. This new evidence generally confirmed our previous estimates, but sometimes suggested upward or downward revisions.

Jewish population projections undertaken by the author, in light of the latest 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 available data. For a full list of recent sources of data on Jewish population, see the previous version of the present report (DellaPergola 2014).

World Jewish Population Size and Distribution

The size of world Jewry at the beginning of 2015 was assessed at 14,310,500. World Jewry constituted 1.98 per 1,000 of the world's total population of 7.236 billion by mid-year 2014 (Population Reference Bureau 2014). One in about 505 people in the world is a Jew (**Table 1**).

According to the revised estimates, between January 1, 2014 and January 1, 2015, the Jewish population increased by an estimated 95,100 persons, or about 0.67%. This compares with a total world population growth rate of 1.13% (basically nil in more developed countries, 1.5-2.0% in less developed countries). World Jewry continued to increase slowly exclusively due to the population increase in Israel (1.85%) overcoming the decrease in the Diaspora (-0.22%).

Table 1 offers an overall picture of the Jewish population at the beginning of 2015 as compared to 2014. For 2014, the originally published estimates from the 2014 *American Jewish Year* Book are presented followed by the revised estimates that reflect retroactive corrections made in certain country estimates given improved information. These corrections resulted in a net increase of 2,600 persons in the 2014 world Jewry estimate, comprising an increase of 1,300 in the previous estimate for Israel, and an increase of 1,300 in the Jewish Diaspora total. The corrections, reflecting newly available data, are for the Russian Federation (+500), Estonia (+200), Latvia (-200), Singapore (+600), and Tunisia (+200). Further explanations are provided below.

The number of Jews in Israel increased from the revised 6,104,500 in 2014 to 6,217,400 at the beginning of 2015, an annual increase of 112,900, or 1.85%. In contrast, the estimated Jewish population in the Diaspora *decreased* from the revised 8,110,900 to 8,093,100—an annual decrease of 17,800, or -0.22%. These changes reflect continuing Jewish emigration from the former Soviet Union (FSU), France, and other countries to Israel, and the internal decrease typical of the aggregate of Diaspora Jewry. In 2014, of a total growth of 112,900 core Jews in Israel, 94,900 reflected the balance of births and deaths, and 18,000 derived from the estimated Israel-Diaspora net migration balance (immigration minus emigration) and from net conversions to Judaism (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2015; Fisher 2015). Israel's net migration balance includes tourists who changed their status to immigrants, returning Israelis, and Israeli citizens born abroad who entered Israel for the first time. Therefore, internal demographic change produced 84% of the recorded Jewish population growth in Israel, while according to our estimates, most of the Diaspora's estimated decrease reflected emigration. This quite certainly means underestimating the actually negative vital balance in most countries, resulting in higher than real population estimates for the aggregate of Diaspora Jewry. Adjustments could be needed in the future.

Recently, however, more frequent instances of conversion, accession, or "return" to Judaism can be observed in connection with the absorption in Israel of immigrants from the FSU, Ethiopia, some Latin American countries like Peru, and India. To some extent this phenomenon occurs in the Diaspora as well. The return or first-time accession to Judaism of such previously non-belonging or unidentified persons tends to contribute both to slowing the

decrease in the relevant Diaspora Jewish populations and to some of the increase in the Jewish population in Israel.

Over 45% of the world's Jews reside in the Americas, with about 43% in North America (**Table 1**). About 44% live in Asia, mostly in Israel. Asia is defined as including the Asian republics of the FSU, but not the Asian parts of the Russian Federation and Turkey. Europe, including the Asian territories of the Russian Federation and Turkey, accounts for about 10% of the total. Fewer than 2% of the world's Jews live in Africa and Oceania.

In addition to the estimates of the world Jewish population and its geographical distribution presented in this report, there are other such evaluations. One worth mentioning is the 2010 estimate by the Pew Research Center (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life 2012). Unlike our review of hundreds of local and international sources, the Pew study often relies on percentages of Jews from larger general studies. As those fractions are usually extremely small, the resulting Jewish population estimates may be affected by large sampling errors. However, the overall picture is worth comparing as part of Pew's broader assessment of world religions. Pew's estimates are remarkably compatible with ours, especially when estimates refer to the same year: 2010. The main change to 2015 relates to Israel, whose Jewish population increased by over one-half million:

Estimate (thousands)	North America	Latin America, Carib-bean	Europe	Israel	Other Middle East, N. Africa	Asia, Pacific	Sub-Saharan Africa	Total
AJYB 2015	6,086	382	1,391	6,217	14	149	71	14,310
AJYB 2010[a]	6,074	390	1,456	5,704	15	143	72	13,854
Pew 2010	6,040	470	1,410	5,610	20	200	100	13,850

a Revised as of 2015

Among the major geographical regions shown in **Table 7.1**, the number of Jews increased between 2014 and 2015 in Israel (and, consequently, in Asia as a whole), and minimally in Oceania and in North America given continuing immigration to Canada. Jewish population size decreased to varying degrees in South America, Western Europe, the Balkans, the FSU (both in Europe and Asia), the rest of Asia, and in Africa. These regional changes reflect the trends apparent in the Jewish population in the major countries in each region.

As noted, in our present study we corrected previously published Jewish population estimates in light of new information. The last upward correction in the US following the 2013 Pew study generated retrospective revisions of the whole annual series of data since 2000. **Table 7.2** provides a synopsis of world Jewish population estimates for 1945–2015, as first published each year in the *American Jewish Year Book (AJYB)* and as now corrected retroactively, also adjusting all revisions that had been suggested in previous years.

Table 1 Estimated core Jewish population, by continents and major geographic regions, 2014 and 2015[a]

Region	2014 Original[b] Estimate	2014 Revised[c] Estimate	2014 Revised[c] Percent[d]	2015 Estimate	2015 Percent[d]	Percentage change 2014-2015	Jews per 1,000 total population in 2015
World total	**14,212,800**	**14,215,400**	**100.0**	**14,310,500**	**100.0**	**0.67**	**1.98**
Diaspora	8,109,600	8,110,900	57.1	8,093,100	56.6	-0.22	1.14
Israel[e]	6,103,200	6,104,500	42.9	6,217,400	43.4	1.85	749.36
America, total	**6,468,800**	**6,468,800**	**45.5**	**6,468,200**	**45.2**	**-0.01**	**6.66**
North[f]	6,085,300	6,085,300	42.8	6,086,000	42.5	0.01	17.22
Central, Caribbean	56,900	56,900	0.4	56,900	0.4	0.00	0.27
South	326,600	326,600	2.3	325,300	2.3	-0.40	0.79
Europe, total	**1,407,200**	**1,407,700**	**9.9**	**1,391,100**	**9.7**	**-1.18**	**1.70**
European Union[g]	1,103,300	1,103,300	7.8	1,093,900	7.6	-0.85	2.16
FSU[h]	263,700	264,200	1.9	257,200	1.8	-2.65	1.28
Other West	20,900	20,900	0.1	20,800	0.1	-0.48	1.50
Balkans[h]	19,300	19,300	0.1	19,200	0.1	-0.52	0.20
Asia, total	**6,142,000**	**6,143,900**	**43.2**	**6,256,100**	**43.7**	**1.83**	**1.46**
Israel[e]	6,103,200	6,104,500	42.9	6,217,400	43.4	1.85	749.36
FSU	19,100	19,100	0.1	18,600	0.1	-2.62	0.22
Other	19,700	20,300	0.1	20,100	0.1	-0.99	0.00
Africa, total	**74,700**	**74,900**	**0.5**	**74,700**	**0.5**	**-0.27**	**0.07**
Northern[i]	3,500	3,700	0.0	3,700	0.0	0.00	0.01
Sub-Saharan[j]	71,200	71,200	0.5	71,000	0.5	-0.28	0.09
Oceania[k]	**120,100**	**120,100**	**0.8**	**120,400**	**0.8**	**0.25**	**3.09**

a Jewish population: January 1. Total population: mid-year estimates, 2014. Source: Population Reference Bureau (2014)
b See DellaPergola (2014)
c Based on updated or corrected information
d Minor discrepancies due to rounding
e Includes Jewish residents in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights
f US and Canada
g Including the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania)
h Asian regions of Russian Federation and Turkey included in Europe. Excluding the Baltic countries
i Including Ethiopia
j Including South Africa and Zimbabwe
k Including Australia and New Zealand

These revised estimates depart, sometimes significantly, from the estimates published by other authors until 1980 and since 1981, by ourselves. Thanks to the development over the years of an improved database, these new revisions are not necessarily the same revised estimates that appeared annually in the *AJYB* in the past 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 time series in **Table 7.2** clearly portrays the decreasing rate of Jewish population growth globally from World War II until 2000. Based on a post-Shoah world Jewish population estimate of 11,000,000, a growth of 1,079,000 occurred between 1945 and 1960, followed by increases of 506,000 in the 1960s, 234,000 in the 1970s, 49,000 in the 1980s, and 282,000 in the 1990s. Since 2000, the slow rhythm of Jewish population growth has somewhat recovered, with an increase of 704,000 through 2010, reflecting the robust demographic trends in Israel and Israel's increasing share of the world total. Between 2010 and 2015, world Jewry increased by 456,500, but Israel's Jewish population increased by 513,000 while the total Diaspora Jewish

population decreased by 57,000. **Table 2** also catches the slower Jewish population growth rate compared to global population growth, and the declining Jewish share of world population. In 2015, the share of Jews among world population (1.98 per 1,000) was 41.7% of the 1945 estimate (4.75 per 1,000).

Table 2 World core Jewish population estimates: original and revised, 1945-2015

	World Jewish Population			World Population		Jews per
Year	Original estimate[a]	Revised estimate[b]	Annual% change[c]	Total (millions)[d]	Annual % change	1,000 total population
1945, May 1	11,000,000	11,000,000		2,315		4.75
1950, Jan. 1	11,303,400	11,2 97,000	0.57	2,526	1.76	4.47
1960, Jan. 1	12,792,800	12,079,000	0.67	3,026	1.82	3.99
1970, Jan. 1	13,950,900	12,585,000	0.41	3,691	2.01	3.41
1980, Jan. 1	14,527,100	12,819,000	0.18	4,449	1.81	2.88
1990, Jan. 1	12,810,300	12,868,000	0.04	5,321	1.74	2.42
2000, Jan. 1	13,191,500	13,150,000	0.22	6,127	1.42	2.15
2005, Jan. 1	13,034,100	13,460,000	0.47	6,514	1.23	2.07
2010, Jan. 1	13,428,300	13,854,000	0.58	6,916	1.20	2.00
2015, Jan. 1	14,310,500		0.65	7,236	0.91	1.98

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, besides latest year
d Mid-year estimates. Source: United Nations (2013) and Population Reference Bureau (2014)

Besides updating and revising *core* Jewish population estimates (*a* in **Table 3,** we present evaluations of the possible extent of various expanded Jewish population definitions in each country: (1) the total of those who *have Jewish parents* regardless of their current identity (*b*); (2) the *enlarged Jewish population* inclusive of non-Jewish household members (*c*); and (3) the population eligible for the *Law of Return* (*d*) (**Table 3,** and the **Appendix**). The main purpose of these alternative population boundary definitions is to promote and facilitate comparability among the countries. In light of the preceding discussion of definitions, it is clear that Jewish investigators and/or community leaders in different countries sometimes follow local definitional criteria that may differ from the criteria acceptable and used in other countries. This may help explain why Jewish population size in the US is evaluated quite differently in the present study and in the United States population report for 2015. In other words, criteria that may be understood or even preferred in one country may not be meaningful or acceptable in another country. But in a global study like ours, maximum comparability can be ensured only if the same criteria are followed consistently across the board, and the choice unavoidably must fall on a minimum common denominator. By showing the consequences different definitions may have for Jewish population evaluation, we offer readers an additional tool to better appreciate the ongoing population trends in their countries.

The results are quite tentative but provide interesting indications about the total size and geographical distribution of the populations more or less closely attached to the core Jewish population. The global total of persons who have a Jewish parent, regardless of their own identification, stands at 17,411,450,

or 3,100,950 more than the 14,310,500 core Jews. The total number of household members with at least one core Jew in the household is estimated at 20,235,700, an additional increment of 2,824,250. Finally, the total eligible for the Law of Return is roughly estimated at 23,047,900, an additional increment of 2,812,200. All in all, the difference between the Law of Return potential aggregate and the core Jewish population can be evaluated at 8,737,400 partly Jewish or non-Jewish holders of a non-Jewish religion and/or a non-Jewish ethnicity. Of these roughly estimated 8.7 million somewhat Jewish-connected non-Jews, 75.7% live in North America, 8.8% in the EU, 6.4% in the FSU Republics in Europe, 4.1% in Israel, 3.6% in Latin America, and 1.4% in other countries.

The relative impact of the various population definitions linking the Core Jewish population and the Law of Return population is quite different in the main geographical divisions considered (**Figure 4**). Since the impact of intermarriage is much lower in Israel than in other countries, the extensions beyond the core in Israel are quite limited and primarily reflect immigration of intermarried households and, more recently, births in Israel from these households. Outside the US and Israel, the graphic portrays the significant expansion of population aggregates around the Jewish core.

Table 3 Jewish population by major regions, core definition and expanded definitions (rough estimates), 1/1/2015

Region	Core Jewish population[a]	Population with Jewish parents[b]	Enlarged Jewish population[c]	Law of Return population[d]	Difference Law of Return-Core Jewish population	
					Number	Percent
World total	**14,310,500**	**17,411,450**	**20,235,700**	**23,047,900**	**8,737,400**	**100.0**
North America	6,086,000	8,450,000	10,550,000	12,700,000	6,614,000	75.7
Latin America	382,200	513,600	625,100	698,600	316,400	3.6
European Union[e]	1,093,900	1,312,300	1,592,600	1,862,300	768,400	8.8
FSU Republics in Europe[e]	257,200	410,700	542,500	814,000	556,800	6.4
Rest of Europe	40,000	46,700	53,000	59,600	19,600	0.2
Israel[f]	6,217,400	6,419,000	6,576,700	6,576,700	359,300	4.1
FSU Republics in Asia	18,600	26,850	37,900	52,300	33,700	0.4
Rest of Asia	20,100	23,200	26,300	29,400	9,300	0.1
Africa	74,700	80,950	87,400	94,750	20,050	0.2
Oceania	120,400	128,150	144,200	160,250	39,850	0.5

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 The Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) are included in the European Union, not in the FSU
f Includes Jewish residents of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights

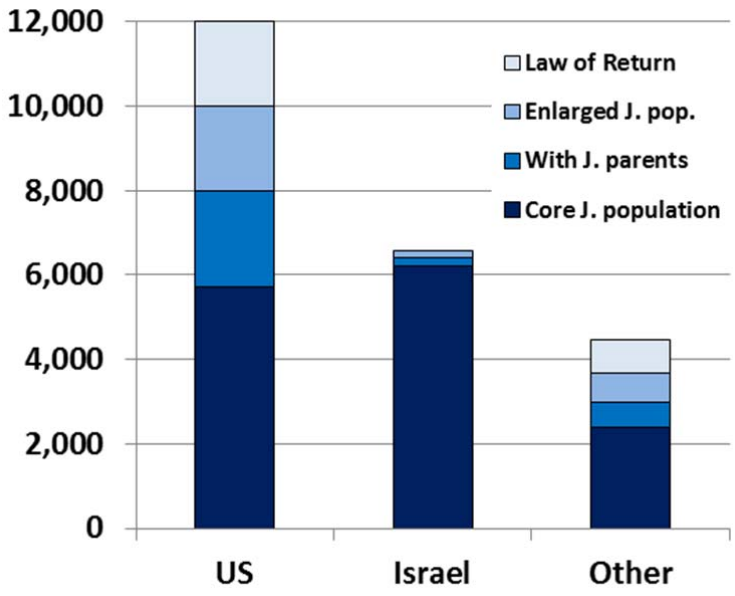

Figure 4 Core and extended Jewish populations in the United States, Israel, and other countries, thousands, 2015

Retrospect and Prospect

Very significant changes occurred in world Jewish population distribution by major regions between 1948 and 2015. **Figure 5** illustrates these changes by focusing on a threefold division between the US, Israel, and the rest of the world ("other"). The rapid growth of Israel's Jewish population is evident, from 650,000 and 5.7% of the world total in 1948, to over 6.2 million and 43.4% in 2015. In contrast, the US changed from over 4.5 million and 39.5% of the total in 1948, to 5.7 million and 39.8% in 2015, while the total Jewish population in other countries decreased from over 6.3 million and 54.9% of the total in 1948, to 2.4 million and 16.7% in 2015. The most significant decreases occurred in the FSU, in other Eastern European countries, in Muslim countries in North Africa and the Middle East, in Africa south of the Sahara, and in Latin America. Substantial stability prevailed in North America and in Western Europe as a whole. Significant increases occurred in Oceania where the Jewish population represents less than 1% of world Jewry. All in all, comparing 2015 with 2000, 1985, 1970, and 1948, the ranking of the three major geographical divisions has reversed. The world Jewish population has become much more geographically concentrated over time.

Table 4 presents world Jewish population changes between 1948 and 2014, reflecting the effects of international migration and of the vital balance of births and deaths and the balance of conversions to and from Judaism. The net balance of migration between Israel and the Diaspora was the main driver of change at the global level between 1948 and 1970 (when significant numbers migrated to Israel from Shoah-impacted European communities and from the Middle East and North Africa) and between 1986 and 2000 (when significant numbers migrated to Israel from the FSU). Israel's vital balance

(significant excess of births over deaths and of conversions to Judaism over conversions out of Judaism) was the main driver at work between 1971 and 1985, and between 2001 and 2014.

Over the whole period 1948-2014, Israel attracted a net migration balance of 2,307,000 Jews (by the core definition) and added 3,260,000 Jews through the excess of births over deaths and the excess of conversions to Judaism over conversions from Judaism. The total vital balance of Diaspora Jewish communities over the whole period 1948-2014 resulted in a net loss of 450,000 persons, but since between 1948 and 1970 there had been a positive balance of 368,000, the negative balance since 1971 resulted in a loss of 818,000 Jews.

These trends are expected to continue and to affect the geographic distribution of the world Jewish population over the next several decades. **Table 5** compares new projections of the number of adherents of the major world religions (including Jews) by the Pew Research Center (2015) for 2010 through 2050 with older long-term Jewish population projections published in the centennial issue of the *American Jewish Year Book (AJYB)* (DellaPergola, Rebhun, and Tolts 2000).

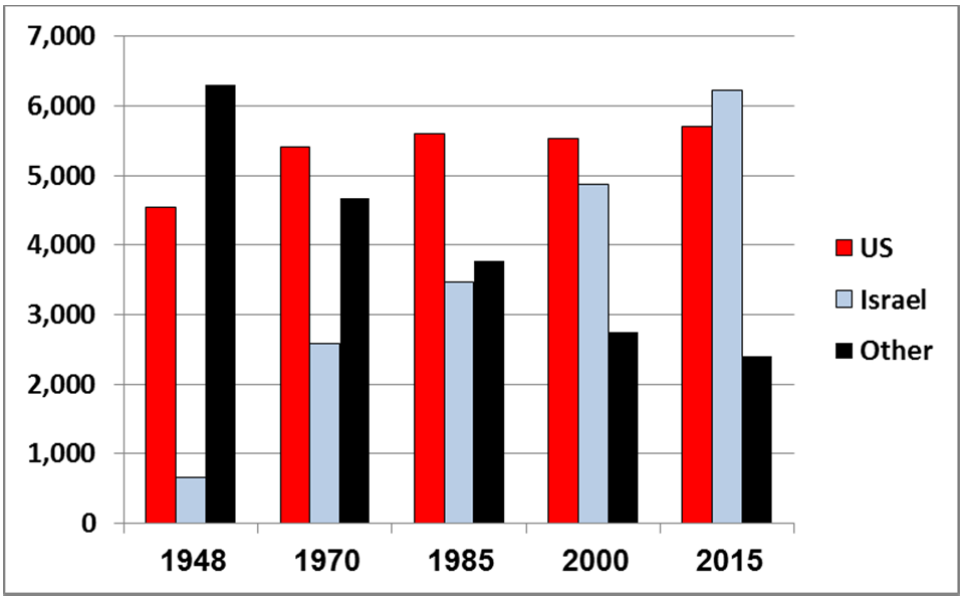

Figure 5 Core Jewish population in the United States, Israel, and other countries, thousands, 1948-2015

Table 4 World Jewish population change by main demographic components, 1948-2014

Components of change (in thousands[a])	1948-1970	1971-1985	1986-2000	2001-2014	Total
World Jewish population change	1,145	200	305	1,161	2,811
Israel Jewish population change	1,932	890	1,400	1,345	5,567
Diaspora Jewish population change	-787	-690	-1,095	-185	-2,757
Israel-diaspora migration balance	1,155	255	765	132	2,307
Israel vital balance[b]	777	635	635	1,213	3,260
Diaspora vital balance[b]	368	-435	-330	-53	-450

a Minor discrepancies due to rounding
b Balance of Jewish births and deaths. Conversions to and from Judaism are included here

Table 5 Jewish population estimates and projections, 2010-2050 – alternative scenarios

	Jewish population, thousands			As percent of world Jewry		
	AJYB 2000[a]		Pew	AJYB 2000[a]		Pew
Year and place	Medium	High	2015[b]	Medium	High	2015[b]
Total						
2010	13,428	13,916	13,860	100.0	100.0	100.0
2050	14,480	17,286	16,090	100.0	100.0	100.0
% difference	+7.8	+24.2	+16.1			
United States						
2010	5,650	5,839	5,690	42.1	42.0	41.1
2050	4,688	5,600	5,360	32.4	32.4	33.3
% difference	-17.0	-4.1	-5.8			
Israel						
2010	5,565	5,777	5,610	41.4	41.5	40.5
2050	8,230	9,741	8,180	56.8	56.4	50.8
% difference	+47.9	+68.6	+45.8			
Other						
2010	2,213	2,300	2,560	16.5	16.5	18.5
2050	1,562	1,945	2,550	10.8	11.3	15.8
% difference	-29.4	-15.4	-0.4			

a DellaPergola, Rebhun, and Tolts (2000)
b Pew Research Center (2015)

Based on data and estimates made in the late 1990s, *AJYB* 2000 presented three sets of projections (low, medium and high) based on alternative assumptions about the levels of Jewish fertility and international migration. The data in **Table 5** for 2010 are projections made in the late 1990s. Regarding the world total, the 2010 Pew estimate of 13.9 million Jews coincides with our higher assumption for the same year. For 2050, Pew projects 16.1 million Jews globally, fully within the range of our medium (14.5 million) to high (17.3 million) projections. The similarity between the Pew and our older projections for the three major geographical components, the US, Israel and the rest of the world ("Other"), is quite extraordinary. In fact, the Pew projections are between our medium and higher scenarios for the world total and the US, between our medium and lower scenarios for Israel, and higher than our higher scenario for the rest of the world.

But significantly, according to all scenarios, the Jewish population is expected to diminish somewhat in the US, to increase substantially in Israel, and to diminish at variable rates in the countries in the rest of the world. From

initial near equality between Jewish populations in the US and in Israel, each assessed at 5.6-5.8 million or 41-42% of world Jewry in 2010, in 2050 Israel is projected to become the absolute majority (56-57% in our scenarios, 51% according to Pew), while, by all scenarios, the US is expected to comprise one-third of the world total. The rest of world Jewry will be between 1.5 and 2.5 million in 2050, or 11-16% of the total.

It is true that Pew defines its target population only in terms of religion, and a certain share of the Jewish population identifies as "Jewish, with no religion." The new Pew projections indeed point to an increase in the religiously unaffiliated worldwide. But it is also true that the nuanced position of being Jewish with no religion is more difficult to maintain and transmit over several generations, as will be argued again below. The new Pew projections, by confirming what was projected by the *AJYB* 2000 study, depicts how the currently observed patterns and trends of Jewish demography will reshape world Jewish population if no major changes intervene.

Major Regions and Countries

We now turn to a review of the largest Jewish populations in individual countries. Reflecting global Jewish population stagnation accompanied by an increasing concentration in a few countries, 98.5% of world Jewry in 2015 lived in the largest 19 Jewish communities. Excluding Israel, 97.3% of Diaspora Jewry lived in the 18 largest communities of the Diaspora, including 70.4% in the US (**Table 6**). Besides the two major Jewish populations (Israel and the US), each comprising over five million persons, another seven countries each had more than 100,000 Jews. Of these, three were in Western Europe (France, the UK, and Germany); one in Eastern Europe (the Russian Federation); one in North America (Canada); one in South America (Argentina); and one in Oceania (Australia). The dominance of Western countries in global Jewish population distribution is a relatively recent phenomenon and reflects the West's relatively more hospitable socioeconomic and political circumstances *vis-á-vis* the Jewish presence.

The growth, or at least the slower decrease, of Jewish population in the more developed Western countries is accompanied by a higher share of Jews in a country's total population. Indeed, the share of Jews in a country's total population tends to be related to the country's level of development (**Table 7**). Regarding *core* Jewish populations in 2015, the share of Jews out of the total population was 749.4 per 1,000 in Israel (including Jews in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights, but excluding Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza). Israel's Jewish population obviously reflects its special positioning in Jewish identity perceptions, but Israel also has become a developed country, and, as such, attractive to prospective migrants. Jews represented about 18 per 1,000 of total population in the US; 3.8 per 1,000 on average in the other seven countries with over 100,000 Jews; 0.8 per 1,000 on average in the other ten countries with 18,000 or more Jews; and virtually nil in the remaining countries which comprise the overwhelming majority of world population.

Table 6 Countries with largest core Jewish populations, 1/1/2015

Rank	Country	Jewish population	% of total Jewish Population			
			In the world		In the diaspora	
			%	Cumulative%	%	Cumulative%
1	Israel[a]	6,217,400	43.4	43.4	[b]	[b]
2	United States	5,700,000	39.8	83.3	70.4	70.4
3	France	467,500	3.3	86.5	5.8	76.2
4	Canada	386,000	2.7	89.2	4.8	81.0
5	United Kingdom	290,000	2.0	91.3	3.6	84.6
6	Russian Federation	183,000	1.3	92.6	2.3	86.8
7	Argentina	181,000	1.3	93.8	2.2	89.1
8	Germany	117,500	0.8	94.6	1.5	90.5
9	Australia	112,800	0.8	95.4	1.4	91.9
10	Brazil	94,500	0.7	96.1	1.2	93.1
11	South Africa	69,800	0.5	96.6	0.9	93.9
12	Ukraine	60,000	0.4	97.0	0.7	94.7
13	Hungary	47,700	0.3	97.3	0.6	95.3
14	Mexico	40,000	0.3	97.6	0.5	95.8
15	Netherlands	29,900	0.2	97.8	0.4	96.1
16	Belgium	29,800	0.2	98.0	0.4	96.5
17	Italy	27,600	0.2	98.2	0.3	96.8
18	Switzerland	18,900	0.1	98.3	0.2	97.1
19	Chile	18,400	0.1	98.5	0.2	97.3

a Includes Jewish residents in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights
b Not applicable

To better illustrate the increasing convergence between the Jewish presence and the level of socioeconomic development of a country, **Table 7** reports the Human Development Index (HDI) for each country (United Nations Development Programme 2014). The HDI—a composite measure of a society's education, health, and income—provides a general sense of the context in which Jewish communities operate, although it does not necessarily reflect the actual characteristics of the members of those Jewish communities. The latest available HDI country ranks reported in the table are for 2014. Of the 19 countries listed, six are included among the top ten HDIs among 187 countries ranked (Australia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the US, Germany, and Canada). Another four countries are ranked 11th to 25th (the UK, Israel, France, and Belgium), four more are between 26th and 50th (Italy, Chile, Hungary, and Argentina), four are between 51st and 100th (Russian Federation, Mexico, Brazil, and Ukraine), and one (South Africa) occupies a lower rank (118th), pointing to lesser development in the host society. One should be aware that Jewish communities may display social and economic data significantly better than the average population of their respective countries, but nonetheless the general societal context does affect the quality of life of each individual, Jews included.

Table 7 Largest core Jewish populations per 1,000 total population and Human Development Indices, 1/1/2015

Rank	Country	Jewish population	Total population	Jews per 1,000 total population	HDI Rank[a] 2014
1	Israel[b]	6,217,400	8,297,000	749.4	19[c]
2	United States	5,700,000	317,700,000	17.9	5
3	France	467,500	64,140,000	7.3	20
4	Canada	386,000	35,500,000	10.9	8
5	United Kingdom	290,000	64,700,000	4.5	14
6	Russian Federation	183,000	143,700,000	1.3	57
7	Argentina	181,000	42,700,000	4.2	49
8	Germany	117,500	80,900,000	1.5	6
9	Australia	112,800	23,500,000	4.8	2
	Total Ranks 3-9	1,737,800	455,140,000	3.8	22.3[d]
10	Brazil	94,500	202,800,000	0.5	79
11	South Africa	69,800	53,700,000	1.3	118
12	Ukraine	60,000	42,900,000	1.4	83
13	Hungary	47,700	9,900,000	4.8	43
14	Mexico	40,000	119,700,000	0.3	71
15	Netherlands	29,900	16,900,000	1.8	4
16	Belgium	29,800	11,200,000	2.7	21
17	Italy	27,600	61,300,000	0.5	26
18	Switzerland	18,900	8,200,000	2.3	3
19	Chile	18,400	17,700,000	1.0	41
	Total Ranks 10-19	436,600	526,600,000	0.8	48.9[d]
	Rest of world	218,100	5,928,083,000	0.0	ca. 100[d]

a *HDI* The Human Development Index, a synthetic measure of health, education and income (in terms of US dollar purchase power parity) among the country's total population. See: United Nations Development Programme (2014)
b Total Jewish population of Israel includes the 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 non-Jewish members of Jewish households) of the West Bank
c In the previous year Israel was ranked 16th. The difference does not indicate a change in Israel's actual HDI ranking but is due to the inclusion of several new countries, mostly very small, in the list of ranked countries
d Average HDI rank for group of countries

The increasing overlap of a Jewish presence with higher levels of socioeconomic development in a country, and at the same time the diminution or gradual disappearance of a Jewish presence in less developed areas is a conspicuous feature of the 20th and early 21st centuries. The emerging geographical configuration carries advantages concerning the material and legal conditions of Jewish life, but it also may generate a lack of recognition of, or estrangement toward, Jews on the part of societies in less developed countries that constitute the overwhelming majority of the world's total population and the overwhelming majority of voting countries in international bodies like the United Nations.

Major Cities

Changes in the geographic distribution of Jews have affected their distribution not only among countries, but also significantly within countries, and have resulted in a preference for Jews to live in major metropolitan areas. Within metropolitan areas, too, Jews have manifested unique propensities to settle or

resettle in specific neighborhoods that were more compatible with their socioeconomic status, and/or more attractive to them because of the vicinity of employment or Jewish community facilities (DellaPergola and Sheskin 2015). Most metropolitan areas include extended inhabited territory and several municipal authorities around the central city, definitions varying by country. (For definitions of Combined Statistical Areas (CSAs) in the US see: United States Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget 2013). It is not easy to create a truly standardized picture of Jews in major cities, as some of the available figures refer to different years and only roughly compare with each other regarding Jewish population definitions and evaluation methods. For example, in the case of a recent Jewish population study of the service area of UJA/Federation of New York (Cohen, Ukeles, and Miller 2012), we subtracted about 100,000 individuals of the 1,538,000 that had been included in the Jewish population count because they were neither born Jewish nor had converted to Judaism and therefore could not be considered part of the core Jewish population. This correction affected our estimate for the New York CSA. On similar grounds, we introduced a correction in the Jewish population estimate for the San Francisco Bay CSA (Phillips 2005).

The unequivocal fact of an overwhelmingly urban concentration of Jewish populations globally is shown by the fact that in 2015 more than half (53.4%) of world Jewry lived in only five metropolitan areas (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2014; see Sheskin and Dashefsky 2015). These five areas—including the main cities and vast urbanized territories around them—were Tel Aviv, New York, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and Haifa (**Table 8**). In 2015, significant changes were introduced to the boundaries of Israel's major metropolitan areas (Jerusalem, Haifa, and Beersheba) and to Boston, resulting in lower population estimates in 2015 versus 2014. Tel Aviv, New York, and Philadelphia were expanded, thus adding further to their populations. Los Angeles became the fourth largest surpassing Haifa. Over two-thirds (67.8%) of world Jewry lived in the five previously mentioned largest areas plus the South Florida, San Francisco, Washington/Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Paris areas, which lost one position, reflecting Jewish emigration from France. The 17 largest metropolitan concentrations of Jewish population, each with 100,000 Jews or more, encompassed 75.9% of all Jews worldwide.

The Jewish population in the Tel Aviv urban conurbation, extending from Netanya to Ashdod and approaching 3.35 million Jews by the *core* definition, now exceeds by far that in the New York CSA, extending from southern New York State to parts of Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, with 2.1 million Jews. Of the 17 largest metropolitan areas of Jewish residence, nine 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 widespread transnational connections.

Unlike our estimates of Jewish populations in individual countries, the data reported here on urban Jewish populations do not fully adjust for possible double counting due to multiple residences. The differences in the US may be

quite significant, in the range of tens of thousands, involving both major and minor metropolitan areas. The respective estimates of part-year residents were excluded from the estimates in **Table 8**. Part-year residency is related to both climate differences and economic and employment 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, or vice versa, and some may even commute weekly (Pupko 2013).

Table 8 Seventeen metropolitan areas (CSAs) with largest core Jewish populations, 1/1/2015

Rank	Metropolitan Area[a]	Country	Jewish Population	Share of World's Jews	
				%	Cumulative%
1	Tel Aviv[b]	Israel	3,350,000	23.4	23.4
2	New York[c]	U.S.	2,136,000	14.9	38.3
3	Jerusalem[d]	Israel	840,000	5.9	44.2
4	Los Angeles[e]	U.S.	688,000	4.8	49.0
5	Haifa[f]	Israel	625,000	4.4	53.4
6	South Florida[g]	U.S.	506,000	3.5	56.9
7	San Francisco[h]	U.S.	336,000	2.3	59.3
8	Washington/Baltimore[i]	U.S.	334,000	2.3	61.6
9	Philadelphia[j]	U.S.	309,000	2.2	63.8
10	Chicago[k]	U.S.	295,000	2.1	65.8
11	Paris[l]	U.S.	280,000	2.0	67.8
12	Boston[m]	France	279,000	1.9	69.7
13	Beersheba[n]	Israel	220,000	1.5	71.3
14	London[o]	United Kingdom	195,000	1.4	72.6
15	Toronto[p]	Canada	186,000	1.3	73.9
16	Buenos Aires[q]	Argentina	160,000	1.1	75.0
17	Atlanta	U.S.	121,000	0.8	75.9

a Most metropolitan areas include extended inhabited territory and several municipal authorities around the central city. Definitions vary by country. The US metropolitan areas are the Combined Statistical Areas (CSAs) as defined by the US Office of Management and Budget. A table of the population of the top 20 CSAs can be found in the US population report by Sheskin and Dashefsky. Some of the US estimates may include non-core Jews

b Includes Tel Aviv District, Central District, and Ashdod Subdistrict. Principal cities: Tel Aviv, Ramat Gan, Bene Beraq, Petach Tikwa, Bat Yam, Holon, Rishon LeZiyon, Rehovot, Netanya, and Ashdod, all with Jewish populations over 100,000

c Our adjustment of original data based on core Jewish population definition. About 100,000 individuals pertaining to the enlarged Jewish population were subtracted from the original population estimates by Cohen et al. (2012). This is the New York-Newark, NY-NJ-CT-PA Combined Statistical Area, including much of southeastern NY, western CT, and northern NJ. Principal cities: New York, NY; White Plains, NY; Newark, NJ; Edison, NJ; Union, NJ; Wayne, NJ; and New Brunswick, NJ

d Includes Jerusalem District and parts of Judea and Samaria District. The Jerusalem metropolitan area was redefined in 2014, bringing to a diminished population estimate.

e Includes Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana area, Riverside-San Bernardino and Ventura County areas

f Includes Haifa District and parts of Northern District. The Haifa metropolitan area was considerably reduced in 2014, bringing to a diminished population estimate

g Includes Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties. Not including 67,375 part-year residents

h Our adjustment of original data based on core Jewish population definition. About 40,000 individuals pertaining to the enlarged Jewish population were subtracted from the original population estimates by Phillips (2005). Includes the San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward area, Napa, San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma

i Includes the District of Columbia, northern Virginia, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and the Baltimore-Towson area

j Includes Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington area (PA-NJ-DE-MD) and much of southern NJ,

k Includes Chicago-Joliet-Naperville area (IL-IN-WI)

l Departments 75, 77, 78, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95

m Includes Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Bristol, southern New Hampshire, and Rhode Island

n Includes Beersheba Subdistrict and other parts of Southern District. The Beersheba metropolitan area was considerably reduced in 2014, bringing to a diminished population estimate

o Greater London and contiguous postcode areas

p Census Metropolitan Area

q Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area A.M.B.A.

Determinants and Consequences of Jewish Population Change

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 only imperfectly documented. Currently, only Israel annually records Jewish immigrants as such by country of origin (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics). Israeli data, compared over several successive years, may provide, under certain conditions, a sense of the intensity of parallel migration movements of Jews to other countries, although there also are differences in the timing, volume, direction, and characteristics of migrants (DellaPergola 2009a; Amit, Borowski, and DellaPergola 2010). Some countries do have records of annual numbers of migrants from Israel, though not distinguishing between Jews and non-Jews (US Department of Homeland Security 2013). Jewish organizations, like HIAS (which used to stand for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) (2013) in the US or Zentralwohlfhartsstelle in Germany, record Jewish immigrants on an annual basis, but the global picture of Jewish migration remains incomplete.

Jewish international migration reached one of its highest peaks ever when the former Soviet Union (FSU) opened its doors to emigration at the end of 1989. Of the estimated total 1.7 million FSU migrants between 1989 and 2014 including non-Jewish household members, over one million migrated to Israel, over 300,000 to the US, and over 225,000 to Germany. Israel's share of the total increased from 18% in 1989 to 83% in the peak years 1990-1991. It then decreased to 41% in 2002-2004 and increased again to 71% in 2010-2012. The decrease for the US as a destination for FSU migrants in the first decade of the 21st century is noticeable, as is the parallel decrease in the attractiveness of Germany since the second half of the same decade. These significant increases and decreases reflect the changing incidence of push factors in the FSU during times of rapid geopolitical change and shifts in economic opportunities, and real or expected disruptions in the environment affecting Jewish life, namely the relationship between society at large and the Jews. They also reflect the different and significantly variable legal provisions related to migration and socioeconomic options in the main countries of destination.

Beginning with 1948, Israel was the main recipient of Jewish international migration. It gathered 69% of all Jewish migration between 1948 and 1968, and about 60% between 1969 and 2014 (DellaPergola 2014b). Clearly migration, or rather a net migration balance to Israel, decreases the Diaspora Jewish population and increases Israel's Jewish population. **Table 9** shows the number of immigrants to Israel by country of origin in 2013 and 2014 (Amit and DellaPergola 2015). The data reflect the *Law of Return*, not the *core* Jewish population, definition.

Table 9 New immigrants to Israel[a], by last country of residence, 2013-2014

Country	2013	2014	Country	2013	2014	Country	2013	2014
GRAND TOTAL[b]	**16,882**	**24,066**	Greece	7	15	Kazakhstan	146	146
			Hungary	148	122	Kyrgyzstan	28	24
America - Total[b]	**3,334**	**3,668**	Ireland	2	6	Tadjikistan	2	0
North America	**2,413**	**2,704**	Italy	133	323	Turkmenistan	24	4
Canada	228	265	Luxembourg	0	4	Uzbekistan	266	208
US	2,185	2,439	Netherlands	55	49	**Other Asia**	**202**	**96**
Central America	**161**	**199**	Poland	25	29	Afghanistan	1	0
Costa Rica	7	11	Portugal	5	6	Bahrein	1	0
Cuba	72	104	Romania	41	22	Bhutan	0	1
El Salvador	2	1	Slovakia	1	0	Brunei-Daressal.	0	1
Guadalupe	0	1	Slovenia	0	0	China	10	6
Guatemala	2	6	Spain	70	77	Hong Kong	4	0
Honduras	0	9	Sweden	29	13	India	44	32
Martinique	0	1	United Kingdom	403	486	Iran	82	27
Mexico	77	60	**FSU in Europe**	**6,529**	**10,870**	Japan	0	7
Panama	1	5	Belarus	323	312	Pakistan	1	0
Trinidad Tobago	0	1	Estonia	3	6	Philippines	0	1
South America	**760**	**765**	Latvia	36	28	Singapore	4	0
Argentina	255	271	Lithuania	32	10	Syria	0	11
Bolivia	11	1	Moldova	178	211	Thailand	4	2
Brazil	169	251	Russian Fed.	4,028	4,553	Vietnam	0	1
Chile	52	43	Ukraine	1,917	5,737	Yemen	52	7
Colombia	62	55	FSU unspecified	12	13	**Africa - Total[b]**	**1,562**	**392**
Ecuador	0	1	**Other West Europe**	**81**	**80**	**Northern Africa**	**1,400**	**271**
Paraguay	1	1	Andorra	5	0	Algeria	1	0
Peru	101	31	Gibraltar	0	1	Eritrea	1	0
Uruguay	62	52	Norway	1	1	Ethiopia	1,355	211
Venezuela	47	59	Switzerland	75	78	Morocco	37	48
			Balkans	**82**	**63**	Tunisia	6	12
Europe - Total[b]	**10,881**	**19,105**	Albania	1	1	**Sub Saharan Afr.**	**162**	**121**
European Union[c]	**4,189**	**8,092**	Bosnia-Herzegov.	0	1	Central Africa	1	0
Austria	25	17	Macedonia	4	0	Ghana	0	1
Belgium	222	224	Serbia	13	4	Namibia	0	2
Bulgaria	15	24	Turkey	64	57	Senegal	0	1
Croatia	4	8				South Africa	161	117
Czech Republic	4	11	**Asia - Total[b]**	**955**	**759**	**Oceania – Total**	**149**	**138**
Denmark	13	10	**FSU in Asia**	**753**	**663**	Australia	145	124
Finland	5	10	Armenia	22	12	Marshall Islds.	0	1
France	2,903	6,545	Azerbaijan	124	94	New Caledonia	0	1
Germany	79	91	Georgia	141	175	New Zealand	4	12

a New immigrants and tourists changing their status to immigrant, not including immigrant citizens
b Including country unknown
c Not including the Baltic countries
Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

In 2014, a significant increase in Jewish international migration occurred. In recent years, such migration had decreased due to the increasing concentration of Jews in more developed countries and the decreasing Jewish population in areas from which Jews had been migrating. The reason for this increase in migration is twofold. First, some Jewish communities have experienced economic problems. Overall, a clearly negative relationship prevailed between the quality of life in a country and the propensity of Jews to emigrate Second, fears of mounting anti-Semitism in some countries, particularly France, have caused Jewish emigration. This suggests that a continuation of moderate levels of migration can be expected for the foreseeable future, provided that current geopolitical and socioeconomic conditions are not seriously disrupted across the global system, especially in Europe.

In 2014, 24,066 new immigrants arrived in Israel, compared to 16,882 in 2013 (a 43% increase), 16,557 in 2012, 16,892 in 2011, 16,633 in 2010, 14,567 in 2009, and 13,699 in 2008. Plausibly, similar migration increases occurred to some other countries as well, although Israeli immigration law (the Law of Return) allows for much easier migration. France, for the first time in history, was the main country of origin (6,545 immigrants in 2014 versus 2,903 in 2013), followed by Ukraine (5,737 versus 1,917) the Russian Federation (4,553 versus 4,028), and the US (2,439 versus 2,185). The fifth highest number of immigrants came from Italy (323 versus 133) testifying to the malaise that prevails across several EU countries. In 2014, immigrants to Israel increased from the Americas, the EU, and the FSU European republics, and slightly diminished from Europe other than the EU, Asia, Africa, namely from Ethiopia (211 versus 1,355 in 2013), and Oceania. To these figures, one should add several thousand immigrant citizens (Israeli citizens born abroad and entering the country for the first time) and of returning Israelis, at a time when the Israeli economy was performing relatively better than many Western countries. This made Israel a reasonably attractive option for international migration.

On the other hand, Israel—in part because of its small market and the limits this imposes upon some employment opportunities—is today probably the main single source of Jewish emigration, mostly to the US and other Western countries (Rebhun and Lev Ari 2010). The level of emigration from Israel is consistent with expectations for a country at Israel's level of human development (DellaPergola 2011c). These findings clearly point to the primacy of socioeconomic determinants related to both the basic level of development of a country and its current economic situation, along with variations in the stringency of regulations about immigrant admissions. This contradicts the widespread assumption that the volume and timing of Israeli immigration and emigration are primarily motivated by ideological and security factors.

Marriages, Births, and Deaths

Another major determinant of demographic change at the global level is family formation and childbearing. When international migration is at moderate levels, as in recent years, the birth rate is the most important determinant of long-term population change, which reflects both the average number of

children currently born per woman age 15-49 (the *fertility rate*) and the changing number of potential parents. In contemporary societies the latter is in turn affected by the number of births in previous years, by international migration, and to a lesser extent by the mortality level. The mutual influence of childbearing, survivorship and age composition is often ignored or misunderstood and indeed plays an important role in the case of world Jewry. In addition, the question of the Jewish identity of the children of intermarriage plays a significant role in the overall pattern of Jewish demographic change (Reinharz and DellaPergola 2009).

Low birth rates and relatively high intermarriage rates have prevailed in some European Jewish communities since the late nineteenth century. After World War II, the US and several Western European countries experienced a prolonged rise in fertility, the so called "baby boom," which did not occur in Eastern Europe. These trends were followed by the Jewish communities in each country, though at lower levels. Where larger age cohorts were born between 1945 and 1965, who in turn reached the age of procreation between the 1970s and the 1990s, and an “echo effect” of more births was to be expected. But fertility rates, general and Jewish, decreased sharply since the 1970s and the “echo effect” was weaker than expected. Jews usually anticipated these developments by several years, resulting in lower birth rates, with Orthodox Jews generally maintaining higher fertility rates than other Jewish groups.

Data on the balance between Jewish births and deaths over the past two decades exist for Jews in different countries, either from governmental or Jewish community sources. The number of Jewish births was usually exceeded by the number of Jewish deaths according to direct vital registrations in the Russian Federation, the UK, Germany, and according to indirect estimates, in the US. For example, in the Russian Federation in 2000, there were only 600 recorded Jewish births compared to over 8,200 recorded Jewish deaths—a net loss of 7,600 (Tolts 2004). Such a striking deficit reflects extreme population aging, in part the consequence of intensive emigration of younger Jewish adults and families so that overwhelmingly only the elderly remained in the FSU. In Western Europe, the negative gap was somewhat smaller, yet consistent. In the UK in 1991, 3,200 Jewish births were exceeded by 4,500 Jewish deaths—a net loss of 1,300. The most recent UK data available from Jewish community sources indicate a reversal of this trend in 2005, showing an increase in the number of births and a decrease in the number of deaths (Graham and Vulkan 2008). In Germany, the Jewish community experienced a threefold population increase due to a significant inflow of FSU immigrants since 1989. However, while in 1990 there were 100 Jewish births and 400 Jewish deaths—a net loss of 300, in 2014, 241 Jewish births were recorded compared to 1,330 Jewish deaths—a net loss of over 1,000 (Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle).

Jewish vital statistics are not directly available in the US, a country where the birth rate has been declining in recent years (US Census Bureau 2014). Jewish population projections based on the available age composition (Pew Research Center 2013) and cautious assumptions about the age-specific frequency of motherhood and deaths suggest that the core Jewish population generates about 55-57,000 births and 60-62,000 deaths annually. The likely deficit of about 5,000 is being compensated for by a positive Jewish

immigration balance.

Israel is the only exception to these recessive demographic trends. Steady immigration produced a doubling of Israel's Jewish population between 1970 and 2004, which was reinforced by a significant Jewish natural increase. In 1990, 73,900 Jewish births and 25,800 Jewish deaths produced a natural increase of 48,100. In 2004, for the first time, more than 100,000 Jewish babies were born in Israel. In 2014, 130,800 Jewish births and 35,900 Jewish deaths produced a net increase of 94,900. Demand for children continues to be strong among both the religious and secular populations, rooted partly in Jewish communal identity and partly in a widespread sense of economic optimism and life satisfaction (documented in Israel's national Social Survey, Central Bureau of Statistics 2014)—resulting in significantly larger families in Israel than among Jews in other countries (DellaPergola 2009c).

Low Jewish birth rates and population aging among Diaspora Jews are further impacted by diminishing propensities to marry and by high and continually increasing intermarriage rates (DellaPergola 2009b). Postponement of marriage and non-marriage have been growingly visible all across world Jewish communities since the 1970s (DellaPergola 1992). Current data show percentages of never married Jews of over 50% for males and nearly 40% for females under age 35, and over 25% for males and close to 20% for females at age 35-44 (DellaPergola 2011a). In Israel, the trend follows similar lines but at much higher and younger frequencies of marriage (DellaPergola 2015). In 2014, the proportions ever-married at age 45-49 were 89% for males and 91% for females (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics).

Overall, the rate of intermarriage has been increasing among Jews, but significant differences persist by country. Intermarriage can be measured with reference either to the number of individuals or to the number of couples involved. Intermarriage percentages for couples are higher because an in-marriage involves *two* Jewish individuals and therefore the total number of couples is smaller than the total number of Jewish individuals involved. The same number of Jewish individuals marrying is obviously involved with both methods of measurement. The underlying trend is also exactly the same (DellaPergola 2009b). In recent years, in the Russian Federation, about 70% of recently married Jewish female individuals and 80% of recently married Jewish male individuals chose non-Jewish spouses. In the US, the 2013 Pew survey found an individual out-marriage rate of 58% among the most recent marriage cohorts, but this figure is likely an overestimate because of the broad population definition adopted, actually closer to an *enlarged* than to a *core* Jewish population. In any case, the actual individual intermarriage rate in the US has been about or above 50% for the past 20 years. In several medium-size European Jewish communities, too, the recent individual intermarriage rate is over 50%; in France and the UK, it is over 40%; in Canada and Australia, over 30%[1]; and in South Africa and Venezuela, over 15%. Of the major Jewish communities, probably only Mexico had an individual intermarriage rate lower than 15%. The incidence of intermarriage is

[1] The 30% for Canada is different from the percentage provided in the report on Canada because the percentage in that report is for all existing married couples, whereas the 30% is for only those marriages in about the past five years.

significantly dependent on the ethno-religious composition of parents: most of the total increase in intermarriage occurs among Jewish adults who are themselves the children of intermarried parents (Phillips 2013; DellaPergola 2014e).

In Israel, the individual rate of intermarriage is assessed at less than 5%, low but not negligible, reflecting the growing size of the non-Jewish population who immigrated under the *Law of Return*, particularly from the FSU. Many of these intermarriages are performed in Cyprus (Dvorin 2006). The absence of civil marriage in Israel raises the intriguing question of the inability of the Israeli legal system to face the family formation needs of an increasing number of citizens whose religion is not Jewish. On average, based on the 2010 Jewish population distribution and recent intermarriage rates in different countries, about 29% of all recently married Jews worldwide, and 48% of all recently married Jews in the Diaspora, started a new family with a non-Jewish partner. Scattered data on cohabitation among young Jewish adults suggest much higher rates of couples in which one partner is not Jewish (Pew Research Center 2013; Cohen and Ifergan 2003).

A further factor in Jewish population change is the Jewish identity of the children of intermarriages. The percentage of the children of intermarriage being raised as Jews during the early 1990s was about 20% in both the US (Phillips 1997) and the Russian Federation (Goskomstat 1994). In 2001, this percentage had increased in the US to more than one-third (Kotler-Berkowitz et al. 2003), and was estimated at 36% (20% Jewish by religion and 16% Jewish not by religion) by the 2013 Pew study, still far from the 50% that would be required so as not to erode the younger Jewish population cohorts, and, hence, the total number of Jews. The non-identification with Judaism of many children of intermarriages combined with low Jewish fertility levels is producing an even lower *effective Jewish birth rate*.

In addition, affiliation of intermarried Jewish adults with the Jewish community or exposure to any Jewish services including children's education is much lower than among the in-married. This often compounds with a propensity to have fewer children, hence low overall Jewish intergenerational reproduction. Compared to other countries, Israel only marginally features this whole chain of lifecycle factors related to marriage, childbearing, and childrearing that potentially weaken Jewish identification and demography (Fishman 2015).

Age Composition

Age composition plays a crucial role in population change (Schmelz 1984; DellaPergola and Schmelz 1989). The whole gamut of Jewish community resources and needs is being significantly reshaped by the demographic changes that portray Jewish population aging. **Figure 6**, covering selected populations between 1975 and 2014, exemplifies the extreme variations that can emerge in age composition following the demographic transition from higher to lower birth rates and death rates. Jewish populations can be classified into five demographic types, gradually moving from traditional, to transitional, moderately aging, advanced aging, and terminal.

Traditional Jewish populations characterized by very high percentages of children and frequent in the past, have disappeared. Jews in Ethiopia, here

portrayed at the time of their mass immigration to Israel in 1991, were the last surviving example with over one half of all Jews under age 15. In **transitiona**l communities, fertility is controlled and mortality decreases following economic development and health improvement. Such populations feature relatively high percentages of children, increasing shares of adults, and median ages about age 30 or under. Israel in 2013 provided the only persisting example of a Jewish population where cohort size regularly decreases when moving from younger to older ages. In **moderately aging** communities, the center of gravity moves to age 45-64, but children under age 15 are still more numerous than adults age 65 and over. This type, whose median age is about age 35 and less than age 40, was still evident during the 1970s and through the 1990s in the US, and still later in some communities in Central and South America like Mexico, or even France which in 2002 still was in the moderately aging type with 19% age 65 and over, and possibly a similar percentage of children under age 15 (Cohen and Ifergan 2003).

More recently, Jewish communities in the US (Pew Research Center 2013)–namely in New York (Cohen, Ukeles, and Miller 2012) and Canada, major Jewish communities in Western and Central European countries, Central and South American communities like Argentina and Brazil, as well as Australia and Turkey, joined the **advanced aging** type. In these populations, persons age 65 and over outnumber children under age 15, and median ages mostly range between age 40 and 45, but also tend to approach age 50. **Terminally aging** Jewish populations are typical of the Russian Federation, the other FSU republics, Germany, and several other Eastern European countries. In these communities, the percentage elderly may be double or more the percentage of children, with median ages of 50 or higher, eventually tending toward age 60 and over.

In the US, the ongoing aging process was confirmed by the results of the 2013 Pew survey (Pew Research Center 2013) when compared with NJPS 1990 and with NJPS 2000-01 (when corrected for under-reporting of young and middle-age adults) and with projections to 2011 and later years of the corrected NJPS 2000-01 figures (DellaPergola 2013a). In these projections, death rates were based on Israeli Jews' detailed schedules—Israel having life expectancies of more than 84 years for females and more than 80 years for males in 2013, significantly higher than among the total US population (81 and 76 years, respectively) (Population Reference Bureau 2014). Birth rates were calculated according to varying assumptions about the effective Jewish fertility rate—i.e., estimated average children born, discounted for the non-Jewish children of intermarriages. The decline from 1990 through 2001 to 2013 in the US Jewish cohorts under age 15 is evident (from 19% in 1990 to 16% in 2013), as against an increase from 1990 to 2001 followed by a temporary decline from 2001 to 2013 in the population age 65 and over (17% in both years 1990 and 2013). A sharp increase in the percentage of the elderly is expected in future years with the bulge of the "baby-boomers" passing age 65 in 2020.

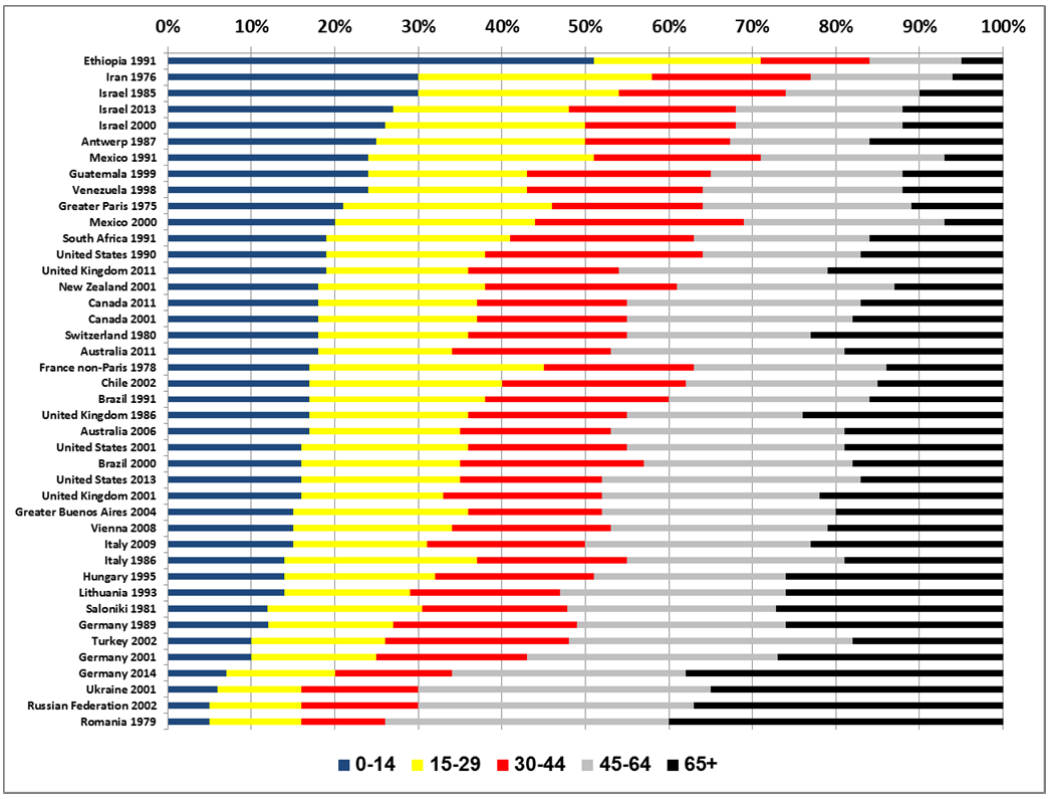

Figure 6 Jewish populations in selected countries, by main age groups, 1975-2014, arranged by descending percentage at age 0-14, followed by descending percentage at age 15-29

In some other countries, like in the UK, better census coverage of the religiously more strongly identified Jewish population and possibly also their increased weight among the total Jewish population produced some rejuvenation in Jewish population composition. In the UK, the percentage below age 15 increased from 16% in 2001 to 19% in 2011, and the percentage age 65 and over decreased from 22% to 21%—still within the paradigm of an aging Jewish population. The trend in Australia was similar.

Conversions

Given the increasing number of Jewish households containing one or more identified Jews living with non-Jews, the number of persons converting to or from Judaism is highly relevant to Jewish population change.

In Israel, data on converts through the Israel Conversion (*Giyur*) Courts from 1999 to 2014 cover passages to Judaism certified through both the civilian and military-Israel Defense Forces (IDF) conversion systems (Bass 2011; Fisher 2015). Overall, from 1999 to 2014, 83,200 persons converted to Judaism through Israeli rabbinical channels.

Data on conversions to and from Judaism in Diaspora countries exist, but have not been compiled systematically. The consistent evidence from socio-demographic surveys, reflecting the net effect of accessions and secessions,

is that many more people were born Jewish than the number of people who consider themselves currently Jewish. The main evidence for this loss derives from US Jewish population surveys. One recent source, the 2007 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey (Pew 2008), compared the percentages of those raised Jewish with those currently Jewish in the total US population. At least in terms of Jews by religion, the lifetime balance was unequivocally negative—about 0.2% of the US total population. Assuming the same effects among children as among adults, this would amount to a net lifetime loss of about 600,000 individuals, or approximately 10% of a total Jewish population estimated by different authors at between 5.7 and just over 7 million (see below). It is true that some of these passages occur to/from/ the unknown/unreported/ agnostic/atheist group, rather than to/from another specific religious group. But such data disprove the assumption of a significant ongoing transfer allegedly fueling an increase in the US Jewish population from the outside and partly identified toward the inside and more strongly identified areas of the Jewish identification typology outlined in **Figure 3**.

Demographic Implications

The corollary of the older age composition among Jews in many countries is that the annual number of deaths must outnumber the annual number of births. Such a skewed age composition also reflects the past non-incorporation within the Jewish collective of many children of intermarriages, which is bound to lead to continuing decrease in Jewish population in future years, as in fact has been the case in the overall Diaspora over the past decades.

Jews in Israel are the notable exception. Their vital (birth and death) rates not only *do* generate Jewish population growth, but the rate of natural increase is high in comparison with other developed societies, and, in fact, very similar to that of the world's total population (Population Reference Bureau 2014). Contemporary Jewish demography is polarized between an Israeli component that features consistent increase and a Diaspora component which is bound to decrease—though internal variation exists as shown in the following.

Jewish Population by Country

The Americas

The Jewish population in the Americas is predominantly concentrated in the US (5,700,000, or 88% of the total Americas), followed by Canada (386,000, 6%), South America (325,300, 5%), and Central America and the Caribbean (56,900, 1%) (see **Appendix**).

The United States

Jewish population size in the **United States** constitutes a very important component of any global Jewish population estimate and calls for careful assessment. In the absence of official census documentation, one has to rely on alternative sources which, while scarce in the past, are now more abundant, though of very diverse quality (Goldstein 1981, 1989, 1992; Sheskin 2015a). An assessment of the current number of Jews in the US should rely on reasoning and empirical evidence grounded in socio-demographic research (discussed elsewhere in greater detail, see DellaPergola 2005, 2010a, 2012, 2014). In recent years, before and after the 2013 Pew Jewish population survey, the topic stands at the center of intense debate in the social scientific community, paralleled by a lively discussion in the media (Pew Research Center 2013; *The Jewish Daily Forward* 2014). Two volumes comprising the gamut of methodological and analytical positions have appeared on the matter (Heilman 2005, 2013), preceded and followed by numerous national and local studies.

Three major strategies have emerged in the quest for US Jewish population estimates (DellaPergola 2013a). **First**, and conceptually the best strategy, where feasible, is to relate different Jewish population estimates available over time via an assessment of intervening changes: births and deaths, international migration, and identificational changes (accessions to and secessions from identifying as Jewish). In the US, several major sources of data allow for a detailed reconstruction of Jewish population trends since the end of World War II to date. **Second,** a strategy pursued since the beginnings of Jewish population studies in the US is to estimate the national total from a compilation of existing local Jewish population estimates (Sheskin and Dashefsky 2015). **Third**, a more recent strategy relies on a meta-analysis of the available pool of national surveys periodically undertaken by a variety of public and private bodies each of which include a small subsample of Jews (Saxe and Tighe 2013). Neither of the latter two alternatives was designed to determine nationwide Jewish population estimates, but both methods provide valuable grounds for serious comparative analytic work and in-depth multivariate analysis (Hartman and Sheskin 2012).

As a general rule, with regard to each of these strategies, Jewish population estimates should be consistent with similar estimates from earlier dates, reflecting intervening changes over the period of time considered and using consistent and comparable population definitions over time. Unfortunately, this was not the case during the past decades and this inconsistency, as we shall argue, explains much of the gap between different

population estimates. Indeed, competing narratives (Kaufman 2014) and non-comparable empirical approaches have generated diverging Jewish population estimates with an intriguing high-low gap of nearly two million individuals and opposite interpretations of current and expected trends. These vary between rapid growth, stability, and slow decline, entailing very different implications at the cognitive level as well as for Jewish community service planning and the broader policy effort to defend and promote Jewish corporate interests (DellaPergola and Cohen 1992; DellaPergola 2011a).

The initial requirement of the just mentioned first research strategy is a reliable baseline figure. The total US Jewish population was realistically assessed at 4.4 million in 1945 (Rosenwaike 1980), quite an improvement over pre-existing estimates that had relied on the US Census of Religious Bodies (Schwartz, Scheckner, and Kotler-Berkowitz 2002). Between then and 1990, when the estimate was set around 5.5 million, all available evidence indicated relatively rapid growth until the late 1970s, followed by stagnation or incipient decline during the subsequent 20 years. Several national Jewish population surveys (NJPSs) were undertaken between 1957 and 2001, and the question was whether these various data sets could be logically related to one another through the same or other sources about international migration, age composition, marriage, fertility, survivorship at different ages, and conversions. A series of forward-backward Jewish population projections indeed provided highly consistent results (DellaPergola 2005). In light of the then ongoing and expected demographic trends, the finding of over 5 million Jews in the 1957 Current Population Survey (CPS) (US Census Bureau 1958, 1968; Glick 1960; Goldstein 1969) did quite accurately predict the 5,420,000 Jews found by NJPS 1971 (Massarik 1974; for a somewhat higher estimate see Lazerwitz 1978), which, in turn, did predict the 5,515,000 found by NJPS 1990 (Kosmin et al. 1991). If there had been an NJPS 1980, it would probably have shown a peak of around 5.6-5.7 million, reflecting continuing Jewish population growth due to the first echo effect of the relatively large baby-boom cohorts. Yet, the Jewish population was aging through the combined effect of postponed marriage, low fertility, more frequent intermarriage, and the non-attribution of Jewish identification to a large percentage of the children of intermarriages. The unavoidable consequence was the stoppage of growth and incipient decline in Jewish population. The retrospective and current findings of both NJPS 1971 and NJPS 1990 (Schmelz and DellaPergola 1983, 1988) predicted some Jewish population reduction after 1990, which was actually found by two nearly simultaneous and competing studies in 2001. Both NJPS 2000-01 (Kotler-Berkowitz et al. 2003) and the American Jewish Identity Survey (AJIS) (Mayer et al. 2001) assessed American Jewry at 5.2-5.3 million and produced fundamentally similar Jewish population profiles (Perlmann 2007). Other Jewish population projections suggested somewhat higher scenarios, but likewise produced an expectation of eventual decline after temporary growth (DellaPergola, Rebhun, and Tolts 1999, 2000).

In some popular perceptions, NJPS 2000-01 was flawed because of a variety of inappropriate procedures. However, when NJPS 2000-01 was submitted to independent professional scrutiny, the conclusion was that the study—while handicapped by methodological shortcomings such as low response rates, inconsistent survey coverage of relevant population subgroups, and loss of documentation—stood within the range of

professionally acceptable standards and biases and was therefore usable (Schulman 2003). Indeed, leaving aside for a moment the question of population size, some of the critics did use NJPS 2000-01 (Kadushin, Phillips, and Saxe 2005). When the Jewish Federations of North America [JFNA, formerly the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF) and United Jewish Communities (UJC)]—the main sponsor of the 1971, 1990, and 2000-01 National Jewish Population Surveys—decided not to undertake a national survey in 2010, the opportunity was lost to further compare developments based on substantially similar Jewish databases. Fortunately, the Pew Research Center undertook a new major national study in 2013, thus providing renewed empirical evidence and new bases for the ongoing debate about US Jewish population trends.

The above mentioned survey-to-survey projections aimed at determining consistency between different Jewish databases over more than forty years were significantly on target within reasonable margins of error, not only for the total Jewish population, but also for each birth cohort. This meant that the Jewish population surveyed at two or three different points in time consistently kept their characteristics—allowing for margins of statistical error and for the changes intervening within each sex and five-year age group such as: becoming older, incoming and outgoing international migration, births to women of relevant ages, deaths, and accessions to and secessions from Jewish identity. When stable characteristics of a given cohort, such as the number of children born to older women, could be compared at two or even three points in time such as NJPS 1971, NJPS 1990, and NJPS 2000-01, they appeared to be the same, confirming the good comparability across successive surveys (DellaPergola 2013a). Moreover, on most accounts when an NJPS-based estimate could be checked against a similar estimate from another source, the comparison usually held—with the possible exception of Jewish Community Center (JCC) membership. Examples of such good matches included the estimated numbers of children enrolled in Jewish day school compared with actual school enrollment (Schick 2005) and the estimated number of documented immigrants compared with institutional data (HIAS) or other sources (Gold 2015).

The NJPS 1990 finally adjusted core Jewish population was 5,515,000. NJPS 2000-01 yielded an initial estimate of 5,035,000. After imputation of people not actually covered in the survey, such as persons in homes for the elderly or in prisons, a final estimate of 5,200,000 was suggested (Kotler-Berkowitz et al. 2003). There was, however, an important point of contention regarding a supposed undercount in NJPS 2000-01 of many Jewish adults age 35-44 and age 45-54 (Saxe et al. 2006a, 2007; Tighe et al. 2009a, 2011). A careful cohort analysis and projection indeed unveiled under-coverage of over 250,000 individuals born between 1950 and 1970. Evaluation of current migration, fertility, mortality, accessions, and secessions provided a higher estimate of 5,367,000 for 2000-01 and 5,425,000 for 2013—not including the institutionalized (DellaPergola 2013a). A rounded core Jewish population estimate could thus be placed at 5.6-5.7 million in 2013, very close to the estimate suggested by a previous Pew survey completed in 2007 (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life 2008). Whether such significant under-coverage of the Jewish adult generation born during the baby boom years was due to insufficient efforts or skills during the NJPS fieldwork or on the elusive nature

of those adults' own Jewish identification cannot be easily determined. Either explanation is reasonable.

The 2013 Pew survey, *A Portrait of Jewish Americans* (Pew Research Center 2013), provided new population estimates accompanied by a rich array of other demographic, social, and identificational data. Pew found that *Jewish religion* (JBRs) without other religious identities applied to 4.2 million adults and 900,000 children, for a total of 5.1 million Americans. Another 600,000 persons—500,000 adults and 100,000 children—reported *no religion and Jewish* (JNRs) without another identity, raising the total to a 5.7 million mutually exclusive Jewish population. This 5.7 million corresponded with the old *core* Jewish population concept which relied on self-assessment (enhanced by some outside decisions by analysts) and mutual exclusiveness between religious or ethno-religious populations. Another million—600,000 adults and 400,000 children—reported *no religion and partly Jewish*, thus reaching a total of 6.7 million which the Pew report designated as *the net Jewish population* estimate. Moreover, another 2.4 million non-Jewish adults with 1.5 million children, for a total of 3.9 million, reported a *Jewish background*, further expanding the total to 10.6 million. An additional 1.2 million non-Jewish adults reported some *Jewish affinity*, raising the total to 11.8 million, not including the children of the latter group. In tabular format, the same data show as follows:

Population (millions)	Jews by religion (JBR)	Jews of no-religion (JNR)[a]	No-religion, partly Jewish[a]	Jewish back-ground (Non-Jews)	Jewish affinity (Non-Jews)	Total
Total	**5.1**	**0.6**	**1.0**	**3.9**	**1.2**	**11.8**
Adults	4.2	0.5	0.6	2.4	1.2	8.9
Children	0.9	0.1	0.4	1.5	NA.	2.9

Source: Pew Research Center 2013

As against this quite solid body of evidence stemming from the first research strategy outlined above, are the alternative results emerging from the other two strategies. Based on their compilation of local estimates, Sheskin and Dashefsky (2015) estimate the US Jewish population at 6,830,000 (see Sheskin and Dashefsky 2015). Without detracting from the importance of local Jewish community studies—still the most important tool for local Jewish community planning—the methodology of summing local studies to obtain a national estimate is quite problematic, as the authors themselves recognize (Sheskin and Dashefsky 2007, 2010; Sheskin 2008, 2009). One should acknowledge the many and diverse databases, the lack of synchronization in time, and the very uneven quality of the various sources, including sometimes embarrassing disparities across different survey firms. When it comes to national Jewish population estimates, which local studies were not designed to supply in the first place, local Jewish community summations risk to cumulate significant errors and biases, including double counts of geographically mobile individuals (Rebhun and Goldstein 2006; Groeneman and Smith 2009). Local studies, on the other hand, provide the richest and largest database for inter-community comparisons, inasmuch as the respective data can be made compatible.

The Brandeis Steinhardt Social Research Institute (SSRI) meta-analysis of a large set of general social surveys is one of the more innovative and ambitious projects ever undertaken in the social scientific study of American Jews (Saxe et al. 2006b; Tighe et al. 2005; Tighe et al. 2009a, 2009b). The latest Jewish population estimate suggested by SSRI (2015) is 7,089,000. This figure implies that American Jewry increased by about 30% since 1990, as against 12% for the US total white, non-Hispanic population (US Census Bureau 2014). Further findings from the same project are that at least 70,000 Jewish babies are born annually, or that the vast majority of US Jews do not adhere to any of the known Jewish religious denominations (Tighe et al. 2009a, 2011). All these facts can be plausible only if, in the midst of the time-related analysis, one shifts from a *core* concept of individually-identified Jews to an *enlarged* concept of the total population with Jewish background. This looks like moving from a neutral to a maximizing analytic approach, as defined above. When using general surveys inclusive of a Jewish subsample, many crucial Jewish/non-Jewish demographic differentials risk being ignored leading to inflated projections of the number of Jews. Important caveats include: (a) neglecting the fact that Jews are over-represented in general sample surveys because of their higher socioeconomic status and their scarce presence among subpopulations that are difficult to cover like the homeless or those without a functioning telephone; (b) using data for a sample of US adults to represent estimates for total Jews and disregarding the lower percentage of children among Jews; (c) projecting from the number of households to population size, ignoring multi-religious household composition and thus factoring non-Jews into Jewish population estimates; or (d) using data on Jews by religion to estimate the non-religiously declared segment of Jewish population.

One interesting finding is that a higher percentage of Jews may declare themselves Jewish if the sponsoring agency of a study is *not* identified as Jewish (Saxe and Tighe 2013). On the other hand, national Jewish surveys with their detailed information on individual identification characteristics offer better opportunities to assess the grey zones around the more clearly defined Jewish population. Quite a few respondents, who at first may not seem to belong to the core Jewish population, can be retrieved and incorporated through detailed questions about their parents' and grandparents' religion, Jewish educational training in childhood, etc. General social surveys that classify population by religion may reach a larger share of the total Jewish public, but do not offer the same opportunities to explore Jewish identity. Hence, estimating the undeclared parts of the Jewish population becomes largely conjectural and it would be a certain mistake to assume the known rate of non-response/agnostic in Jewish surveys as a proxy for the unknown one in general surveys.

Regarding some leading demographic patterns among US Jews, during the 1990s the influx of at least 200,000 new Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union (FSU), Israel, Central and South America, South Africa, Iran, and Western Europe, might have boosted the total US Jewish population. But, since the late 1960s, marriage has occurred less often and later in the Jewish community. In one perhaps somewhat extreme case study (Miami), the proportion of currently married Jews under age 35 decreased from 47% in 1994 to 27% in 2014, while the percentage married at age 35-49

rose somewhat from 74% to 83% (Sheskin 2015b). Since births out of marriage are still infrequent in the Jewish community, such postponement of marriage implies small completed families years later. Jewish fertility consistently stood well below a replacement level of 2.1 children per woman, hence the Jewish population tended to become older, generating increasing death rates. The 2013 Pew study confirmed rising frequencies of intermarriage, assessed at 58% of the latest marriage cohorts on the basis of an extended Jewish population definition, and in any case above the 50% threshold. Identification with Judaism among children of intermarriages, though probably on the increase, continued to be low and far below that 50% of all such children and younger adults which would help to maintain demographic stability (Rebhun 1999; Barack Fishman 2004; Dashefsky with Heller 2008; Phillips 2013). In 2013, the percentage of non-Jewish children raised by Jewish couples was 7% (probably from previous marriages), but the percentage among intermarried couples was 67%.

As noted above, the current age composition of US Jewry and other evidence about age-specific birth and death rates probably generates about 5,000 fewer Jewish births (by the *core* definition) annually than the estimated number of Jewish deaths. After Jewish immigration to the US diminished from the FSU, Jewish immigration continued from other countries in Western Europe, Latin America, Israel, and, to some extent, other countries in the Middle East and South Africa. In 2012, 4,640 Israelis, including non-Jewish Israelis, obtained US legal permanent resident status, versus 4,389 in 2011, 5,172 in 2010, and an annual average of 5,408 for 2000-2009, pointing to a stable or decreasing trend. Probably as a subset of these admissions, there were 3,466 US naturalizations of Israelis in 2013 as against a decennial average of 2,910 (US Department of Homeland Security 2013). At the same time, increasing numbers of Israelis and immigrant citizens from the US returned to Israel, reflecting the 2008-2009 economic recession and the slow subsequent US recovery at a time when Israel's economy was comparatively stable and actually growing. Accounting for unrecorded migration to the US, an annual net migration into the US of 5,000 Jews (or slightly more) can be estimated. In other words, net immigration basically balanced the losses due to the higher number of Jewish deaths than Jewish births (stressing the *core* definition).

Looking at the balance of accessions to and secessions from identifying as Jewish, the notion forwarded by some that "counting the Jews has improved" because "more Jews are now coming out of the closet" is disproven by empirical evidence (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life 2008). Examining shifts in lifetime religious preference in American society—comparatively more frequent than in other countries—different surveys found that Jews, Catholics, and older established Protestant denominations tended to lose ground, while Evangelical denominations, Eastern cults, and especially the “religiously undefined” tended to gain (Smith 2009; Pew Research Center 2015). All in all, American Jewry neither was gaining nor losing large numbers due to conversions from and to other religions. However, the total secessions from Judaism were double the number of accessions. Several other independent sources like the three American Religious Identification Surveys (ARIS) (Kosmin and Lachman 1993; Kosmin, Mayer, and Keysar 2001; Kosmin and Keysar 2009) confirmed the same trends.

Hence, the true predicament of American Jewish demography concerns population definitions. In 2001-02, the Survey of Heritage and Religious Identification (HARI) (Tobin and Groeneman 2003) estimated a Jewish population larger by about one million compared to both NJPS and AJIS because it used a broader definition of Jewish identity which included persons of Jewish ancestry who did not profess another western religion. The significantly higher *core* Jewish population estimates by the second decade of the 21st century do not look tenable unless one assumes that: (a) there were one million more Jews in the US in the 1960s and 1970s than is commonly accepted and thereafter the number of Jews has been relatively stable; and/or (b) the initial number was not higher than commonly thought, but the US Jewish population increased during the past decade at a pace much higher than that of the US total non-Hispanic whites, and similar or higher than the unusually high rate of increase of Israel's Jewish population; and/or (c) Jewish population definitions can be freely updated and reshaped following patterns prevailing in American society, but not consistent with a common standard for the US and other countries. The similar estimates reached using very different methods by Sheskin and Dashefsky, by Saxe and his SSRI associates, and by a reading of the 2013 Pew survey that ignores the difference between *Jewish* and *partly Jewish* (as do many Jewish federations in the US), are quite coincidental and in no way reflect a shared research logic or mutual agreement between the respective research teams.

The singular new Partly Jewish, *no-religion* category introduced by Pew 2013, in addition to persons who define themselves as *Jews of no religion* calls for special attention, whereas in the recent past the broad label of *just Jewish* might have accommodated both. The new label may indicate a stronger relevance of the non-Jewish identificational component along with the Jewish one and calls for empirical validation. Thus, **Table 10** compares the partly Jewish with two other groups of non-Jews: those with *Jewish background* and those feeling *Jewish affinity*, along with the more conventional Jewish types (JBRs and JNRs) on selected Jewish identity measures (DellaPergola 2014e).

Table 10 Frequency of selected Jewish identity measures among different subpopulations, United States 2013

Jewish identity measures[a] (percentages)	**Jews by religion (JBR)**	**Jews of no religion (JNR)**	**Partly Jewish (no religion)**	**Jewish background (Non-Jews)**	**Jewish affinity (Non-Jews)**
Raised Jewish only	87	53	**34**	20	0
Parents both Jewish	80	55	**26**	19	0
Held/attended Seder	78	47	**37**	26	23
Donated to Jewish cause	67	25	**15**	28	25
Fast Yom Kippur all/part	62	27	**16**	31	26
Ever been to Israel	49	32	**15**	13	9
Member of a synagogue	39	5	**3**	5	2
Friends are all/mostly Jewish	38	16	**11**	11	9
Very attached to Israel	36	21	**3**	21	26
Synagogue 1 or 2 times per month	29	6	**2**	8	3
Christmas tree at home	27	41	**60**	61	60
Member of other Jewish organization	22	4	**3**	4	4

a Ranked by decreasing frequency among Jews by religion
Source: Pew Research Center (2013); DellaPergola (2014e)

Judging from the twelve selected measures that allow for comparison, the *partly Jewish no-religion* look more similar to *non-Jews with Jewish background* than to the JNRs, not to mention the JBRs. The partly Jewish, no religion are predominantly the children of intermarriages and do maintain some attachment to Judaism and other Jews, though often less than others who—while formally declaring not to be Jewish, may have maintained significant links with their families of origin. They stand quite completely outside the organized Jewish community and otherwise seem to have adopted the normative patterns of mainstream non-Jewish America.

Following these observations and assumptions, and relying on a reading of the 2013 Pew that views Jewish identity as mutually exclusive versus other competing identities, our core Jewish population estimate was set at 5,700,000 for 2015, the same as in 2014. If, however, different criteria are followed for defining Jewish population, the picture is quite different. As noted above, it is beyond dispute that the US has a far larger *enlarged* and *Law of Return* population than by the *core* definition. We do not count the *partly Jewish* in the US *core* to keep comparability with other countries where they are not included either. However, we should recognize that different American Jewish organizations do include this group within their population totals and service constituencies.

Canada

Canada is significantly different from the US concerning both the available databases and our ability to produce estimates of population trends. The 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) (previously known as a population census) allows for comparisons with numerous previous Censuses (Statistics Canada 2003a, 2003b; Weinfeld and Schnoor 2014; Shahar 2015). Data on Jewish ethnicity, released every five years (in years ending with the digit 6), can be compared with data on religion, released every ten years (in years ending with the digit 1). Data on religion and ancestry are collected through open-ended questions (although “Jewish” is one of the examples given as a possible response to the ethnicity question), with examples and instructions provided, and both types of information help to estimate Canada’s *core* Jewish population. Since 1981, Canadians can declare either a single or a multiple ethnic ancestry (up to four categories, one for each grandparent). Consequently, people can be ethnically Jewish only, or Jewish and something else, being the descendants of intermarriages, or express multiple ethnic identities. Ethnic Jews, as defined by the Canadian Census, can include persons who hold a non-Jewish religion, but these persons are *not* included in the *core* concept used herein. On the other hand, persons without religion may declare a Jewish ethnicity (single or part of a multiple declaration) in the Canadian Census and are included in the *core*. The Jewish Federations of Canada-UIA defines this as the *Jewish Standard Definition* (Shahar 2004).

In 2011, 329,500 Canadians declared they were Jewish by religion. The Jewish population was greatly concentrated in the major urban areas: about half lived in Toronto, another fourth lived in Montreal, and the total of the five main urban areas (Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Ottawa) accounted for 87% (Weinfeld, Schnoor, and Koffman 2012). The national total

by religion remained nearly unchanged compared to 2001, when it reached 329,995. Previously there had been a significant increase from 296,425 in 1981 and 318,070 in 1991. Following Jewish ethnicity throughout the past decades provides further clues on Jewish population and identification in Canada. An initial estimate of 293,175 ethnic Jews in 1981 increased to a peak of nearly 370,000 in 1991, and has since decreased to 349,000 in 2001, 315,000 in 2006, and 309,650 in 2011—a decrease of 1.7% in five years and 16.3% in twenty years. In other words, the ethnic mode of Jewish identification was stronger than the religious mode until 2001, but now seems to be losing traction among Canadian Jewry. By combining religion and ethnicity, the core Jewish population was evaluated at 312,060 in 1981, 356,315 in 1991, 370,520 in 2001, and 380,000 in 2011. Compared to the core figure, religion tended to lose some ground, constituting 95% of the broader concept in 1981 and 86% in 2011. The main Jewish population growth therefore involved the total of persons with a Jewish religion, but another ethnicity, and persons with a Jewish ethnicity, but no religion.

More striking changes affected the distribution of Canadians and of the Jews among them between single and multiple ethnicities. Among Canada's total population in 2011, 58% of the total population provided a single ethnicity answer and 42% reported multiple ethnicities. Of the 19 million who provided a single ethnicity, 5.8 million (31%) declared themselves Canadian, and 4.7 million (34%) of the 13.8 million who provided a multiple response did so. All in all, 10.6 million of a total population of 32.9 million reported a Canadian ethnicity—which in other epochs was thought to be a nonexistent construct. The growth of a new Canadian ethnic identity from the merger of pre-existing ethnicities is parallel to the development of a new American ethnic identity in the US (Lieberson and Waters 1988). Most likely, the rapid growth of *Canadian* as a primary or additional ethnic category affects identification perceptions among Jews. In 1981, 90% of total ethnic Jews declared a single ethnicity, but this share decreased to 66% in 1991, 53% in 2001, 43% in 2006, and 37% in 2011. The proportion of Jews (63%) with a multiple ethnicity is today much higher than among the total population (42%). Some minor inconsistencies in the ratio between the number of Jews by religion and by ethnicity depend on changes in definitions and modes of data processing at Statistics Canada. The sharp decrease from 1991 to 2011 in Jewish ethnic identification clearly points to a powerful process of acculturation that operates at two levels. One is an increase in intermarriage, which generates growing multiple ancestries among descendants of Jews. The share of children of intermarriage reported to be Jewish is also increasing, with significant gender differences in this respect: the likelihood of a child of intermarriage being raised Jewish is four times higher if the mother is Jewish than if the father is (Goldman 2009).

As noted, the number of Canada's Jews according to religion remained stable at about 330,000 between 2001 and 2011. It should be stressed, though, that, between 2001 and 2011, 21,445 Jews by religion immigrated into Canada, mostly from the FSU, and were reported in Canada in the 2011 NHS. Consequently, the Jewish population by religion would have decreased by a similar amount (a potential decrease of 6.5%) were it not for immigration. This essentially points to some emigration, to a negative balance between Jewish births and Jewish deaths, and to passages of Jews from self-definition

by religion to self-definition with no religion. Emigration from Canada is moderate, with 493 persons migrating to Israel in 2013 and 2014, and an unknown number moving to the US and other countries.

Assuming continuing immigration to Canada, but also some internal attrition, we estimate the Jewish population at 386,000 in 2015, the world's fourth largest Jewish community. This figure is slightly lower than the newly suggested *Revised Jewish Standard Definition* of 391,665 which also accounts for: a) persons with no religious affiliation, but who are Israeli by ethnicity; b) persons with no religious affiliation, but with knowledge of Hebrew or Yiddish as a "non-official" language; c) persons with no religious affiliation but who were born in Israel; and d) persons with no religious affiliation who lived in Israel in 2006 (Weinfeld and Schnoor 2014; Shahar 2014). The reason for our more conservative estimate is that the latter estimate is not strictly comparable with the concept of *core* Jewish population as it includes the fast increasing number of persons for whom Jewish is only one among multiple ethnic identities, some of whom may not readily identify as Jewish if asked, possibly preferring *partly Jewish*, and some of whom would not be included in the *core* Jewish population in Israel (see below). As argued above, some of these would better be included among the *enlarged* Jewish population. Taking into account all ethnic Jews who profess a non-Jewish religion, and/or multiple ethnicities, and all other non-Jewish household members, an *enlarged* Jewish population of 550,000 would probably obtain, along with a *Law of Return* population of possibly 700,000.

Central America and the Caribbean and South America

Since the 1960s, the Jewish population has been generally decreasing in Central and South America, reflecting emigration motivated by recurring economic and security concerns (Schmelz and DellaPergola 1985; DellaPergola 1987, 2008a, 2011b). In the community of Miami alone, the number of members of households containing a Jewish adult from Latin American countries increased from roughly 18,000 in 2004 to 24,500 in 2014 (Sheskin 2015b). During the same period, the total number of immigrants from Latin America to Israel approached 10,000 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics). However, outside the mainstream of the established Jewish community, increased interest in Judaism appeared among real or putative descendants of *Conversos* whose ancestors left Judaism and converted to Christianity under the pressure of the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal. Some of these *Converso* communities have been trying to create permanent frameworks to express their Jewish identity, in part locally, in part through formal conversion to Judaism and migration to Israel. In the long run, such a phenomenon might lead to some expansion of the Jewish population, especially in smaller communities in the peripheral areas of Brazil, Peru, Colombia, and other countries.

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—due to dire economic conditions in Argentina and to special incentives offered by Israel. In 2003, the Argentinean economic situation eased somewhat and Israel restricted its incentives for immigrants, resulting in much lower levels of migration. About 1,500 persons left Argentina for Israel in 2003, decreasing steadily to 337 in 2010, 220 in 2011, 222 in 2012, 255 in 2013, and 271 in 2014 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics). Based on the experience of previous years, approximately 20% of these migrants were non-Jewish household members. Partial evidence from different sources indicated that less than half of total Jewish emigration from Argentina migrated to Israel, with most others going to South Florida where the Greater Miami Jewish Federation ran a program to assist Argentinian Jews. By 2014, 4,400 persons lived in Jewish households in Miami in which at least one adult was Argentinian (Sheskin 2015b). Permanence in Israel of the new immigrants was high, at least during the first three years after immigration, with only about 10% emigrating (Adler 2004).

A 2004 Jewish population survey in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area (AMBA) (Jmelnizky and Erdei 2005) found an enlarged Jewish population of 244,000. Of these, 64,000 were Christians and about another 20,000 reported some Jewish ancestry, but did not consider themselves Jewish. Overall, 161,000 people in the AMBA considered themselves as totally or partly Jewish—consistent with our own previous estimate of 165,000. This estimate for the major urban concentration provided support to our national *core* estimates also inclusive of provincial communities. The 244,000 figure is a good estimate of the AMBA *enlarged* Jewish population (including non-Jewish members of Jewish households) as part of the over 300,000 who were identified as in some way of Jewish origin or attached to a person of Jewish origin. Another survey, limited to the City of Buenos Aires, suggested significant aging of the *core* Jewish population, reflecting the emigration of younger households in recent years (Rubel 2005). The current situation implies an annual loss of about 300-500 persons through a negative balance of Jewish births and deaths and emigration. Argentina's Jewish population was assessed at 181,000 in 2015, the world's seventh largest Jewish community.

Brazil

In **Brazil**, the second largest Central and South American Jewish community, the 2010 Census provided new data on Jews (Instituto Brasilero de Geografia e Estadistica IBGE 2010). The reported national total was 107,329, of whom 105,432 lived in urban localities and 1,987 in rural localities. The census classified Brazil's population by color, and among Jews, 94,575 were white, 10,429 brown, 1,690 black, 492 yellow, and 143 indigenous. By region, 79,910 lived in the Southeast, 12,963 in the South, 4,266 in the Northeast, 2,367 in the North, and 1,394 in the Central West. These data need to be critically evaluated against the evidence of previous censuses that supplied

somewhat contradictory evidence. The historical series was: 55,563 in 1940, 69,955 in 1950, 96,199 in 1960, 91,795 in 1980, 86,416 in 1991, and 86,828 in 2000 (Instituto Brasilero de Geografia e Estadistica 1991, 2000; Decol 2009). The 1960 figure included about 10,000 "rurals," which was not plausible, while the 1991 and 2000 results returned to a lower and more urban, if somewhat underestimated, Jewish population.

According to the 2010 Census, the Jewish population in São Paolo decreased from 41,308 in 1980 to 37,500 in 2000 (Instituto Brasilero de Geografia e Estatistica IBGE 2000; Decol 1999, 2009), which certainly was an undercount. The new census found 51,050 Jews in São Paulo state—36% more than in 2000. While an upward adjustment is reasonable, a 36% increase is not. There also was a 2.5% increase in Rio de Janeiro (24,451 in 2010) and a decrease of -8.7% in the rest of the Southeastern and Southern states (overall 17,372 in 2010). What cannot be attributed to demography and likely reflects new emerging identifications is a decennial increase of over 8,000 people (+125%) in the Northeastern, Northern, and Central-Western states. These growing numbers in the least developed and more peripheral regions of Brazil, but to some extent also in São Paulo, point to inclusion as Jews in the Census population of many thousands of persons who in all probability belong to Evangelical sects and Jehovah Witnesses, besides possible cases of *Converso* Jewish ancestry. The same applies when evaluating the background of the about 13,000 non-whites recorded in the census, besides the recognized existence of some well-established small communities of descendants of Jewish immigrants who have long integrated within the local non-Jewish population.

Previous Census data were consistent with systematic documentation efforts undertaken by the Jewish Federation of São Paulo that showed 47,286 Jews (Federação Israelita do Estado de São Paulo FISESP 2002) and an assumption that about one-half of Brazil's Jews live in that city. A new survey of the community of São Paulo (Milkewitz, Milevski, and Erdei 2014) unveils a Jewish population tendentially aging, with 53% concentrated in five main neighborhoods, with a high rate of attendance (96% ever and 63% currently) in Jewish community centers, with a 17% intermarriage rate (20% among persons age 30 to 39), and a high level of support (70%) for the concept that intermarriage prevents the development of a Jewish home.

Considering the possible omission of persons who did not answer the 2000 Census question on religion, we had assessed Brazil's core Jewish population at 97,000 in 2003 and at 95,200 in 2013, allowing for moderate emigration (3,001 migrated to Israel between 2001-2014, including 420 in 2013-2014). Our assessment of Brazil's core Jewish population stands at 94,500 in 2015—the world's tenth largest Jewish community. Brazil's *enlarged* Jewish population (including non-Jewish members of Jewish households), assessed at 132,191 in 1980 and 117,296 in 1991, reached 119,430 in the 2000 census (Decol 2009) and was reassessed at 150,000 in 2015.

Mexico

In **Mexico**, the third largest Jewish community in Central and South America, the 2010 Census reported a Jewish population of 59,161, plus another new category of 8,315 *Neo Israelitas* (New Jews), for a grand total of 67,476 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía 2012). Of these, 62,913—55,138 Jews and 7,775 New Jews, respectively, were age 5 and over. The 2000 Census reported 45,260 Jews age 5 and over (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informatica 2002). Projecting the number of Jews age 5 and over to an estimate inclusive of children age 0-4, the total Jewish population in 2000 would be about 49,000. At face value, this would indicate an increase of over 10,000 (+21%) if only counting Jews, and nearly 18,500 (+38%) if also including New Jews. The increase would be only 485 (+2.6%) in the Federal District, 5,728 (+40.7%) in the State of Mexico, and 10,518 (+82.2%) in Mexico's other states. Such findings are most intriguing and demonstrate the changing identifications among individuals and groups that previously would not have been identified with Judaism. A 2000 Jewish population survey provided a national estimate of 39,870 Jews, of whom 37,350 lived in Mexico City (Comité Central Israelita de México 2000), confirming the results of a previous 1991 survey (DellaPergola and Lerner 1995). Another survey in 2006 confirmed the previous results (Comité Central Israelita de México 2006).

The 2010 Census findings, at a time when migration, if anything, is slightly reducing Mexican Jewish population size, remind us of erratic estimates in past Censuses which reported 17,574 Jews in 1950, 100,750 in 1960, 49,181 in 1970, 61,790 in 1980, and 57,918 (age 5 and over) in 1990. In other words, these figures cannot be accepted at face value, but should be critically evaluated. An in-depth analysis of the 1970 Census (DellaPergola and Schmelz 1978) indeed unveiled a significant presence, among those defined as Jews, of persons adherent to other religious denominations, mostly located in distant rural states or peripheral urban areas, with very low levels of educational attainment, exclusive knowledge of local indigenous idioms, and reportedly *descalzos* (shoeless). The further inclusion of a category of *Neo Israelitas* in 2010 leaves open the question of the attribution to Judaism of a population most likely composed of followers of Evangelical sects or Jehovah's Witnesses.

Mexican Jewry still displays relatively high birth rates and a relatively young age profile compared to other Jewish populations in Central and South America, but some aging occurred during the past decade and emigration intermittently affected the community. In 2015, allowing for some emigration to the US and Israel (1,032 persons moved to Israel between 2001 and 2014, of whom 137 did so during the past two years) and some new arrivals, we maintained our previous Jewish population estimate at 40,000, the world's fourteenth largest Jewish community.

Other Central and South American Countries

Chile has the fourth largest Jewish community in Central and South America. This relatively stable core Jewish population was assessed at 18,400 in 2015 on the basis of the 2002 Census (Instituto Nacional de Estadistica 2003) and an earlier Jewish population survey (Berger et al. 1995); 95 people moved to Israel in 2013-2014. **Uruguay** has experienced continuing emigration (Berenstein and Porzecanski 2001; Porzecanski 2006), including 114 migrants to Israel in 2013-2014. The Jewish population estimate for Uruguay was assessed at 17,100 in 2015. **Venezuela** experienced significant Jewish emigration in recent years (DellaPergola, Benzaquen, and Beker de Weinraub 2000). In 2000, about 20% of the former students of Jewish schools in Uruguay, and over one-third of the adult children of Caracas Jews, lived in a different country. In Venezuela, where the Jewish community has been under pressure due to disruptive security and political and economic circumstances, the estimate was reduced to 7,800 Jews, reflecting 106 migrants to Israel in 2013-2014, and significantly higher numbers to other destinations, particularly South Florida. **Colombia** and **Peru**, with respectively 117 and 132 migrants to Israel in 2013-2014, several of whom recently converted to Judaism, had diminishing Jewish populations below 2,500.

In Central America**, Panama** with an estimated Jewish population of 10,000 continued to constitute an attractive location for Jewish migration from other Central and South American countries. It is symptomatic of the country's stability that in 2013-2014 only 6 migrants from Panama migrated to Israel. **Costa Rica** was stable with 2,500 Jews, and 18 migrants to Israel in 2013-2014.

Europe

The Jewish population in Europe, estimated at 1,391,100 in 2015, is increasingly concentrated in the western part of the continent and within the European Union (EU) (see **Appendix**). The EU, comprising 28 countries, had an estimated total of 1,093,900 Jews in 2015 (79% of the continent's total). The former Soviet republics in Europe outside the EU comprised 257,200 Jews (18%). All other European countries combined comprised 40,000 Jews (3%).

The momentous European political transformations since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Soviet Union brought about significant changes in the structure of Jewish community organizations, with an expanded presence of Israeli and American bodies in Eastern European countries. The latter have played an important role in strengthening or even creating anew the opportunities of Eastern European Jewish life in the fields of religion, education, culture, social service, and support to the needy—in the context of very large scale emigration to Israel and to Western countries. The revitalization of Jewish community life may have some impact on demographic trends, primarily through the revival of submerged Jewish identities and the opportunity of greater social interaction with other Jews, possibly leading to more Jewish marriages and children. But economic recession and rising perceptions of anti-Semitism across the continent have

brought about growing Jewish dissatisfaction and emigration (Staetsky et al. 2013; European Union FRA 2013). In spite of the ongoing unifying project and process, Europe is much more politically fragmented than the US, making it more difficult to create a homogeneous database. Nevertheless, several studies have attempted to create and expand such analytic frames of reference (Graham 2004; Kovacs and Barna 2010; DellaPergola 1993, 2010b; Staetsky et al. 2013).

The European Union (EU)

The EU's growing format symbolizes an important historical landmark: the virtual boundary between Western and Eastern Europe was erased. Iceland, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Turkey are the next candidates for EU membership. Disagreements about the possible inclusion of Turkey, with its large Muslim population and its mostly Middle Eastern location, reflect the persisting dilemma in the definition of Europe's own cultural and geopolitical boundaries.

France

France is the largest Jewish community in Europe, where a 2002 national survey suggested 500,000 core Jews, plus an additional 75,000 non-Jewish members of Jewish households (Cohen with Ifergan 2003). Jewish population is decreasing, primarily due to emigration, mainly to Israel, but also to Canada, the US, and other countries. Migration to Israel, after surpassing 2,000 annually for several years, increased to 2,903 in 2013 and 6,545 in 2014. The total for 2001-2014 was 31,730. Jewish emigration was directed as well toward other western countries and reflected the continuing sense of uneasiness in the face of anti-Semitism, in part stemming from Islamic fundamentalism. The murder of four Jewish children and a rabbi at a Toulouse Jewish day school in 2012, and the dramatic events in Paris in January 2015 with the massacre at the *Charlie Hebdo* magazine, and the murder of several police officers and of Jewish customers at a kosher supermarket in Paris enhanced a widespread feeling of destabilization. However, early data for 2015 did not indicate further emigration increase.

A survey of Jewish tourists to Israel from France in 2004 unveiled a remarkable estimate of 125,000 French visitors in that year, or more than 30% of all French Jews age 15 and over (Cohen 2005). Much higher percentages of French Jews have visited Israel at some point in their life. Of the 125,000, 23% (about 29,000) affirmed their intention to move to Israel in the near future. The US was a distant second candidate for possible emigration. Migration intentions are not a proxy for actual migration decisions, but in the past such intentions proved quite reliable in the case of French Jews (Cohen 2007). The diminishing feeling of security among French Jewry and the actual movement of thousands of persons is undisputable. A more recent 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%; uncertain (Cohen 2013). Our 2015

estimate for French Jewry, the third largest in the world, was, therefore, decreased to 467,500.

United Kingdom

In the **United Kingdom**, the 2011 Census, including regional totals for Scotland and Northern Ireland, suggested a slight Jewish population increase, from 266,740 in 2001 to 269,282 in 2011 (+1%) (United Kingdom Office for National Statistics 2002 and 2012; United Kingdom National Records of Scotland NRS 2011; Graham, 2013a; Graham and Caputo 2015). The 2001 national population Census included a voluntary question on religion for the first time since the nineteenth century (Kosmin and Waterman 2002) and was generally believed to have somewhat underestimated the Jewish population, especially in areas inhabited by the more religious sectors of UK Jewry. In 2011, the response rate significantly increased in those areas, especially when it was realized that government investment tends to be based on reported population figures (Graham and Vulkan 2012). In 2001, about 15% of the UK total population reported no religion and another 8% did not answer the question, for a total of 23%. In 2011, the total rose from 15% to 32% (25% and 7% respectively). In view of the organized Jewish community's efforts to encourage participation in the Census, Jewish population estimates should not be expanded to account for the increase in *no religion* to the same extent as for the total population. There is strong evidence that persons not reporting a religious affiliation, as well as many others reporting weird labels like "Jedi Knight," "Wicca," or "Heavy metal" did not live in residential areas associated with a strong Jewish presence. Nevertheless, a consensus exists for an increased estimate of the Jewish population (Graham, Schmool, and Waterman 2007; Graham and Waterman 2005; Voas 2007; Graham and Waterman 2007).

Another, admittedly small, example illustrative of the more general trend derives from the 2001 Census of Scotland (United Kingdom, Scotland General Register Office 2002), the data from which are available separately and in greater detail than the data from other parts of the UK. In 2001, 8,233 persons in Scotland declared that either they were raised Jewish or their current religion was Jewish. Of these, 5,661 (69%) were both raised Jewish and Judaism was their current religion; 1,785 (22%) were raised Jewish but were not currently Jewish; and 787 (9%) were not raised Jewish but were currently Jewish. Thus, the total number with Jewish upbringing was 7,446, and the number currently Jewish was 6,448, a difference of 998—a net loss of 13% (Graham 2008). In 2011, the number of Jews in Scotland had further diminished to 6,262 (Graham 2013a).

Detailed tabulations obtained by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (IJPR) and the Board of Deputies of British Jews from the Office for National Statistics from the 2001 Census allowed for an in-depth profile of the socio-demographics of British Jewry, along with better evaluation of the quality of Jewish population estimates. The Jewish population was dispersed over the whole national territory, including all counties but one—the Isles of Scilly. The presence of Jews in areas lacking Jewish infrastructure suggested a lower degree of affiliation with the organized community than previously assumed.

Analyses for detailed geographical precincts allowed for estimates of non-response in areas with higher and lower Jewish shares of the total population. A significant correlation was found between the known Jewish religiosity, in terms of the local presence of very Orthodox Jews in a ward, and non-response to the religion question. On the other hand, post-Census surveys of Jews in London and Leeds did not reveal high percentages declaring they had not answered "Jewish" to the question on religion (Miller, Schmool, and Lerman 1996; Graham and Vulkan 2007).

There were significant geographical shifts among UK Jews between 2001 and 2011. The most significant relative increase occurred in the North East, including the Gateshead Yeshiva. Increases also occurred in the North West (Manchester) and East Midlands (Nottingham) areas. On the other hand, significant losses occurred in the Yorkshire and Humber (Leeds) and West Midlands (Birmingham) areas, as well as throughout the South East (Surrey), the South West (Bournemouth), Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland. Regarding London, the main portion of the metropolitan area was quite stable (148,602 in 2011 versus 149,789 in 2001) with an increase of over 3,000 in Inner London, partly compensating for a decrease of 5,000 in Outer London, while the areas just beyond London's northwestern suburbs (Hertfordshire) continued to expand steadily. As noted, some of these changes may reflect the higher propensity of Haredi Jews to participate in the 2011 Census than in the 2001 Census.

British Jewry is aging, but as noted above, the higher participation of Haredi Jews in the Census is reflected in a somewhat younger 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 were quite consistent with the Census returns (The Board of Deputies of British Jews, Community Research Unit 2005). Comparing the uncorrected Census returns for the 0-9 age group and the recorded number of Jewish births over the past ten years preceding the Census, the discrepancy was only 2.5%. This confirms some undercount, but not on a scale that would significantly impact Jewish population Census estimates. The same vital statistics indicated a continuing excess of Jewish burials over Jewish births until 2004, but since 2005 the trends apparently reversed. However, the decrease to fewer than 3,000 Jewish deaths in recent years seems to indicate a significantly reduced Jewish community, or a significant under-reporting of Jewish burials, or both.

Another indicator of the same trend was decreasing synagogue membership in the UK (Hart and Kafka 2006; Graham and Vulkan 2010; Vulkan and Graham 2008), by 17.8% between 1990 and 2000, and by 4.5% (about 1% annually) between 2001 and 2005. This trend, however, seems to have abated, as in 2010 synagogue membership was 82,963 households, compared to 83,567 households in 2005. At the same time, the denominational balance has shifted toward the strictly, often locally called right-wing, Orthodox (whose membership doubled between 1990 and 2010) and Masorti (tending to American Conservative, with an 85% membership increase), as against a reduction in the Central (mainstream) Orthodox (a 30% membership decrease). This may plausibly explain the apparent increase in the birth rate.

Updating UK Jewish population estimates must account for the negative balance of births and deaths during most of the intercensal period after correcting for under-reporting, as well as some continuing emigration (403 persons immigrated to Israel in 2013 and 486 in 2014, for a total of 6,604 between 2001 and 2014). Allowing also for some immigration, we estimated the UK's total Jewish population at 290,000 in 2014, the fifth largest Jewish community in the world.

Germany

In **Germany**, Jewish immigration mainly from the FSU, brought to the country over 200,000 Jewish and non-Jewish household members between 1989 and 2005. This caused a significant boost in the Jewish population that had previously relied on a few Shoah survivors and several thousand immigrants mostly from Eastern Europe and Israel. This major immigration stream subsequently diminished to a few hundred annually. The German government, under pressure because of growing unemployment and a struggling welfare system, limited Jewish immigration from the FSU in 2005. On January 1, 2005, the previous special quota immigration law (*Kontingentsflüchtlingsgesetz*) was replaced by new, more restrictive, rules (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*), and Jews lost their privileged quota status. The new law elevated integration into German society and good economic prospects above other considerations and required Jews (and others) aspiring to immigrate to Germany to first prove that a community would accept them as members. Prior knowledge of the German language was required. Potential Jewish immigrants now also had to prove that they would not be dependent on welfare and were willing to enter the German labor market (Cohen and Kogan 2005; Dietz, Lebok, and Polian 2002; Erlanger 2006).

In 2014, no more than 651 new immigrants were added to Jewish community membership, of whom 365 were from the FSU (Zentralwohlfhartsstelle der Juden in Deutschland 2014). This compared to 467 in 2013, 481 in 2012, 636 in 2011, 667 in 2010, 704 in 2009, 862 in 2008, 1,296 in 2007, 1,971 in 2006, 3,124 in 2005, 4,757 in 2004, 6,224 in 2003, and 6,597 in 2002 (Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Juden in Deutschland). Between 2002 and 2004, the *enlarged* total of Jewish and non-Jewish household members who migrated to Germany from the FSU was larger than the number of FSU migrants to Israel, but Israel regained primacy as of 2005. Admission criteria to the central Jewish community follow Jewish rabbinical rules. The total number of *core* Jews registered with the central Jewish community, after increasing consistently since 1989 to a peak of 107,794 at the end of 2006, diminished to 107,330 in 2007, 106,435 in 2008, 104,241 in 2009, 104,024 in 2010, 102,797 in 2011, 102,135 in 2012, 101,338 in 2013, and 100,437 in 2014. Of the current total, only 5,000-6,000 were part of the original community of 28,081 members in 1990. The remainder was mostly recent immigrants and their children.

Total growth between 1989 and 2007 was more than three and one-half times. However, since 2007, the Jewish population has been decreasing. Most of the past growth was in the Länders (states) of the former Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) (West Germany) which increased from 29,957 in

1989 to 99,558 in 2007, but decreased by 7% to 92,737 in 2015. In the Länders of the former German Democratic Republic (DDR) (East Germany), the number of Jews was assessed at only 1,100 in 1989, increased to 8,236 in 2007, and also decreased by 7% to 7,700 in 2015. Because of the German national policy to decentralize the geographical absorption of immigrants, no specific area became very dominant in Jewish population. The main regional concentrations were in the industrial area of Northern Rein-Westphalia (Düsseldorf, Dortmund, Cologne), Bavaria (Munich), Hesse (Frankfurt), and Berlin. But, during the past seven years, regional trends of growth and decline were widely different. Five Länders lost more than 10%: Lower Saxony, Saar, Bremen, Hamburg, and Saxony-Anhalt. Modest increases occurred in Brandenburg, Thuringia, Saxony, and Rhineland-Palatinate. The registered Jewish population of Berlin, despite wide reports of a huge increase, diminished from 10,157 in 2013 to 10,009 in 2013. At the end of 2013, the number of officially recorded Israelis in Berlin was 3,578 versus 3,065 in 2011, clearly on the increase but very far from the high figures often mentioned in popular discourse (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2012 and 2014). No more than a few hundred more could be located in the surrounding Brandenburg State. This, of course, does not account for Israelis and others who have acquired German citizenship. Between 2000 and 2010, 25,012 applications for German citizenship were submitted to the German consular offices in Israel (Harpaz 2013).

The age composition not only of the 5,000-6,000 long-time Jewish residents of Germany, but also of the many more newcomers, is very skewed and very aged. To characterize the prevailing demographic trend, in 2014, 241 Jewish births and 1,330 Jewish deaths were recorded by the German Jewish community, a loss of over 1,000 Jews. While 515 Jews joined a German Jewish community in 2014, 521 Jews withdrew membership. Another 286 immigrated from countries other than the FSU republics, versus 169 who emigrated out of Germany (Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Juden in Deutschland). According to Israeli sources, 79 persons arrived from Germany in 2013 and 91 in 2014. All in all, because of these and other population movements, the total Jewish community inclusive of orthodox and liberal congregations diminished by 901 persons in 2014. Allowing for delays in joining the organized community on the part of new immigrants and a preference on the part of some Jews, including temporary migrants, not to affiliate with its official institutions, we assessed Germany's *core* Jewish population at 117,500 in 2014, the world's eighth largest Jewish community. The *enlarged* Jewish population, inclusive of the non-Jewish relatives of immigrants, is closer to 250,000. German Jewry surely enjoys new opportunities for religious, social, and cultural life, but also significantly depends on welfare and elderly services (Schoeps, Jasper, and Vogt 1999).

Hungary

In **Hungary**, Jewish population trends reflect the unavoidably negative balance of Jewish births and deaths in a country whose total population's vital balance has been negative for several years. A Jewish survey in 1999 reported a conspicuously larger *enlarged* Jewish population than usually

assessed (Kovács 2004). The report reconstructed Jewish population changes between the end of World War II and 1995 (based on Stark 1995), but the latter study significantly underestimated emigration from Hungary to countries other than Israel, as well as to Israel outside the major migration periods. A demographic extrapolation based on the usually accepted number of post-Holocaust *core* Jewish survivors (Swiss Fund for Needy Victims of the Holocaust/Shoa 2002) and accounting for the known or estimated numbers of births, deaths, and emigrants to Israel and other countries since 1945, closely matches our assessment. In the 2001 Hungarian Census, only 13,000 reported themselves as Jewish by religion. In 2013-2014, 270 persons migrated to Israel. Our *core* estimate was 47,700 Jews, the world's thirteenth largest Jewish community. The *enlarged* Jewish population in Hungary is assessed at about 95,000 in 2015.

Other European Union Countries

The next three largest Jewish communities in the EU, and globally, are in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy. In the **Netherlands**, a 1999 survey estimated a Halakhic Jewish population of 30,072, of whom perhaps as many as one-third were immigrants from Israel, and an *enlarged* Jewish population of 43,305 (van Solinge and de Vries 2001; Kooyman and Almagor 1996). In 2013-2014, 104 people migrated to Israel, a number somewhat lower than from other European countries. Assuming other intervening migrations tended to balance, our Jewish population estimate is 29,900 for 2015, the fifteenth largest Jewish community in the world. In **Belgium**, quite stable numbers long reflected the presence of a traditional Orthodox community in Antwerp and the growth of a large European administrative center in Brussels that has attracted Jews from other countries. However, 222 Jews migrated to Israel in 2013 and 224 in 2014, reflecting growing concerns about Islamization and anti-Semitism. The murders at the Jewish Museum of Brussels in 2014 were a worrying symptom. Local Jewish population estimates are quite obsolete and unsubstantiated in comparison with most other EU countries, but the order of magnitude reported here is supported by indirect evidence such as the number of votes collected by Jewish candidates in the 2003 legislative elections (Cohn 2003). The Jewish population was estimated at 29,800 in 2014, the world's sixteenth largest Jewish community. In **Italy**, total Jewish community membership—which historically comprised the overwhelming majority of the country's Jewish population—decreased from 26,706 in 1995 to 25,143 in 2001 and 24,462 at the end of 2009 (Unione delle Comunitá Ebraiche Italiane 2002, 2010; Lattes 2005). A new study unveiled the evolving patterns of Jewish identification and community participation (Campelli 2013). Our estimate of 27,800 allocates for non-members and considers enhanced migration to Israel of 113 in 2013 and 323 in 2014.

Next in Jewish population size among EU countries are **Sweden**, estimated at 15,000 (Dencik 2003) and **Spain**, estimated at just less than 12,000 (Cytto 2007). Much higher figures occasionally mentioned for Spain lack documentary basis, unless one wishes to venture into speculations about the number of descendants from Jews at the time of the Inquisition (Adams et al. 2008).

No other Jewish community in the EU reaches 10,000 by the *core* definition. In some EU countries, national censuses offered a rough baseline for Jewish population estimates. In **Austria**, the 2001 Census reported 8,140 Jews, of whom 6,988 lived in Vienna (Statistik Austria 2003). The Jewish community of Vienna had a membership of 7,097 in 2010 (Cohen-Weisz 2010). Austria's age composition is old, but not as extremely old as Germany. In 2013-2014, 42 migrated to Israel. We estimated the *core* community at 9,000. In **Romania**, the 2002 Census reported a Jewish population of 6,179, but we assessed the community at 9,300, after accounting for 63 migrants to Israel in 2013-2014. In **Bulgaria** the 2011 census estimated 706 Jews and our assessment was 2,000. In **Poland**, where the 2002 Census reported a Jewish population of 1,100, we estimated the core at 3,200 in 2015 and the enlarged at 7,500. For the **Czech Republic**, we assessed 3,900 Jews following a 2011 census. In **Slovakia,** 631 Jews were reported in the 2011 census, with our assessment at 2,600 in 2015. In **Croatia, compared to the** 495 Jews in the 2002 census, we assessed 1,700 in 2015; and in **Slovenia, compared to** 28 Jews in 2002, we assessed at 100 in 2015. *Enlarged* Jewish populations are proportionally higher in Eastern Europe, reflecting the high intermarriage rates among these dramatically reduced communities following the Shoah and massive emigration. In **Ireland,** following the 2011 census results (Ireland Census Statistical Office 2011), our estimate is 1,600.

The Former Soviet Union

The FSU is the area where in absolute numbers Jewish population has diminished the most during the past 25 years (Tolts 2008, 2014; Konstantinov 2007). Jewish population decrease continued, reflecting continuing emigration, an overwhelming excess of Jewish deaths over Jewish births, high intermarriage rates, and low rates of Jewish identification among the children of intermarriages. 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). Nevertheless, total migration to Israel from the FSU steadily continued with 7,282 in 2013 and 11,533 in 2014. Our 2015 assessment of the total *core* Jewish population for the 15 FSU republics was 285,900, of whom 267,300 lived in Europe (including the three Baltic republics already accounted for in the EU) and 18,600 in Asia. Almost as many non-Jewish household members created an *enlarged* Jewish population nearly twice as large as the *core* (Tolts 2006, 2007, 2011). A similar number of further eligible persons would probably lead to a *Law of Return* population approaching 900,000.

Russian Federation

In the **Russian Federation,** Jewish population continued its downward course in the context of a country whose general population had been diminishing for years and only recently has started to slowly recover (Tolts 2008, 2014). The 2002 Census reported 233,600 Jews, compared to our *core* Jewish

population estimate of 252,000 for the beginning of 2003, extrapolated from a February 1994 Russian Federation Microcensus estimate of 409,000 Jews (Goskomstat 1994; Tolts 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007). After the compulsory item on ethnicity *(natsyonalnost)* on identification documents was canceled, and the Census ethnicity question became optional, the 2010 Russia Federation Census provided a core Jewish population estimated at 157,763, plus another 41,000 undeclared people who most likely belonged to the core Jewish population, for a total of 200,600 in 2010 (Tolts 2011). Comparing the totals and main geographical distributions of Jews in the Russian Federation in 2002 and 2010 (adjusted data for under enumeration), the Jewish population diminished by 54,500 (21.4%) reflecting emigration, aging and a negative balance of births and deaths. About half of Russian Jewry was concentrated in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and the basic configuration was not much altered through migration or vital events during the intercensal period.

Jewish population size was more stable in Russia than in other FSU republics. This partly reflected Jewish migration among the various republics as well as lower emigration from Moscow and other important urban areas in the Russian Federation (Tolts 2003). In recent years, some Israelis, mostly former immigrants, have also migrated to the FSU (Cohen 2009; Tolts 2009). The number of births to couples with two Jewish parents decreased from 1,562 in 1988 to 169 in 2000. Births to couples with at least one Jewish parent were estimated at 5,858 in 1988 and 1,057 in 2000. Recorded Jewish deaths were 13,826 in 1988 and 8,218 in 2000. The negative balance of vital events was -7,978 in 1988 and -7,161 in 2000 (Tolts 2009). The striking imbalance of Jewish births and deaths, and continuing emigration (4,028 to Israel in 2013 and 4,553 in 2014, including non-Jewish household members) implies continuing population decrease and an extremely elderly age composition. We evaluated the Russian Federation's Jewish population at 183,000 in 2015, the world’s sixth largest Jewish community.

Ukraine

In **Ukraine,** the December 2001 Census yielded an estimate of 104,300 Jews, not significantly different from our 100,000 estimate for January 1, 2002. Reflecting the dramatic pace of emigration since 1989, the Census fully confirmed our previous assessment of ongoing demographic trends. Given that our baseline for the latter estimate was the 487,300 Jews counted in the January 1989 Census, the fit between the expected and actual was remarkable (Ukrainian Ministry of Statistics 2002; Tolts 2002). A new Census was planned in 2010 but was postponed. Adding continuing emigration (1,917 to Israel in 2013 and 5,737 in 2014), we assess the 2015 *core* Jewish population at 60,000, the world’s eleventh largest Jewish community.

The instability and deep internal cleavage and conflict in Ukraine's politics that reached its peak in 2014-2015 call for a more detailed inspection of Jewish geographical distribution and for an assessment of the ethno-political environment in which Ukrainian Jews live. Over 80% of Ukrainian Jews in 2001 were Russian speakers. Looking at changes over the years 1989-2001, the Jewish population diminished more sharply in the Western regions where the share of Russians was relatively lower. Patterns of decline of ethnic

Russians were similar. The northwestern regions where Jewish and total population decline was highest were also those most affected by the 1986 nuclear plant disaster at Chernobyl. Large quantities of radioactivity were released and continued to produce seriously damaging health effects in subsequent years, prompting emigration. The share of Jews in Western (and pro-Western) regions out of Ukraine's total Jewish population diminished from 10.0% in 1989 to 6.6% in 2001. This indicates an overwhelming concentration of Ukraine's Jews in regions with a predominantly Russian (and often pro-Russian) environment where the current war is being fought, with all the obvious consequences for the viability of a Jewish community.

Other Former Soviet Union Countries

Of the other European republics of the FSU, the largest Jewish population is in **Belarus**. The Belarus Census of October 2009 found 12,926 Jews, with 2.4% of the population not reporting an ethnicity/nationality (Belstat 2009). Our estimate, also considering 635 migrants to Israel in 2013-2014, was adjusted to 10,100 in 2015. In the three Baltic republics of **Latvia, Lithuania**, and **Estonia**, following EU membership in 2004, the Jewish population has been fairly stable (Goldstein and Goldstein 1997). After various minor adjustments, reflecting revisions of the respective national population registers, and accounting for overall 115 migrants to Israel in 2013-2014, we assessed a combined revised estimate of 10,400 for the three Baltic countries in 2015.

A survey in **Moldova** found an *enlarged* Jewish population of 9,240 in 2000 (Korazim and Katz 2003). The Moldova Census of October 2004 reported 3,628 Jews, although it did not cover the Russian-Federation controlled Moldovan territory east of the Dniester River. According to unofficial results of a separate Census of November 2004, about 1,200 Jews lived east of the Dniester River. Considering 389 migrants to Israel in 2013-2014, we assess the *core* Jewish population of Moldova at 3,600 in 2015.

Other European Countries

Only 40,000 Jews lived in Europe outside of the EU and the FSU in 2014. Of these, 20,800 lived in Western Europe, primarily in **Switzerland**, where in light of new Census data, our estimate was increased by 1,800 to 18,900 in 2014 (Bundesamt für Statistik 2005, 2012)—the world's eighteenth largest Jewish community. In 2013-2014, 153 migrants migrated to Israel. Another 19,200 Jews lived in the Balkans, primarily in **Turkey** and mostly in Istanbul's European neighborhoods. A 2002 survey in Istanbul suggested widespread aging in a community that has experienced significant emigration (121 to Israel in 2013-2014). In Istanbul, 10% of the Jewish population was under age 15, compared to 18% age 65 and over (Filiba 2003; Tuval 2004). In **Serbia,** the 2011 census indicated 611 Jews and our assessment for 2015 was 1,400.

Asia

The Jewish population in Asia is mostly affected by trends in Israel (see the **Appendix**). Israel accounts for more than 99% of the total Jewish population in Asia. The former republics of the FSU in Asia and the aggregate of the other countries in Asia each account for less than one-half of one percent of the continental total.

Israel

Israeli population data are regularly collected by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). Israel also has a permanent Population Register maintained by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Israel Population and Migration Authority). Annual data derive from CBS periodic censuses and detailed accountancy of intervening events (births, deaths, immigrants, emigrants, and converts). The most recent Census was in December 2008 and resulted in a revised total population estimate of 7,419,100 for the end of 2008, of whom 5,608,900 were Jews, 1,499,000 were Arabs, and 310,300 were others. Two main reasons for periodic population corrections are the normal discrepancy that may occur between repeated population counts, and possible delays in the reclassification of persons following conversion to (or from) Judaism. Israel population data refer to the permanent (*de jure*) population, excluding residents who have been out of the country for one or more consecutive years, and also excluding tourists, other legal temporary residents, foreign workers, undocumented residents, and refugees. These can be included in the permanent population after undergoing appropriate procedures—which does not necessarily involve naturalization and citizenship.

After World War II, **Israel**'s (then still Palestine's) Jewish population was just over one-half million (Bachi 1977). Jews increased more than tenfold over the next 70 years due to mass immigration and a fairly high and uniquely stable natural increase, along with parallel and even higher growth of Israel's Arab population. At the beginning of 2015, Israel's *core* Jewish population reached 6,217,400, as against a revised total of 6,104,500 in 2014. The latter was a revision of the previously released total of 6,103,200. The minor adjustment of 1,300 probably reflects the balance of two-way transfers between the Jewish population and the "other" population which mostly relates to Jewish and non-Jewish members of households who immigrated under the Law of Return. The revised core population combined with the revised figure of 359,300 "others," formed an *enlarged* Jewish population of 6,576,700 in 2015 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics). For the past several years, the main component of Jewish population growth in Israel has been the natural increase resulting from an excess of births over deaths. In 2014, 130,744 Jewish births—the highest ever—and 35,911 Jewish deaths produced a net natural increase of 94,863 Jews—again, the highest ever. Israel's current Jewish fertility rate increased slightly to 3.05 children per woman, higher than in any other developed country and twice or more the effective Jewish fertility rate in most Diaspora Jewish communities. This reflected not only the large family size of the more religious Jewish population component, but more significantly a diffused desire for children among the

moderately traditional and secular, especially remarkable among the upwardly mobile (DellaPergola 2009c, 2009d).

At the time of this writing, the final data on the components of population growth for 2014 were not yet released. In 2013, 16,900 new immigrants arrived in Israel, plus about 6,100 immigrant citizens (Israeli citizens born abroad who entered the country for the first time) and Israelis returning to the country after a prolonged stay abroad, for a total of 23,000 immigrants, of whom 16,000 were Jewish. Permanent emigration (estimated from these data at 2,100) reduced the total net migration balance of 20,900, of whom 11,800 were Jewish. The net emigration of Jews was 4,200, indicating that, among non-Jews, the propensity to emigrate was lower. All in all, these data about Israel's international migration balance point to a relatively low level of immigration in comparison to other historical periods, but also to a relatively low level of emigration. Estimates of total emigration from Israel, including Jews and non-Jews, range from less than 5,000 to 15,000 annually, despite much higher numbers sometimes mentioned in public discourse. These numbers sharply contrast with the highly spirited debate about an alleged increase of emigration from Israel (Lustick 2011; DellaPergola 2011c). In 2014, the total number of new immigrants increased to 24,100 presumably entailing an increase in the net migration balance as well.

The number of converts to Judaism remained only a tiny percentage of the non-Jewish members of Jewish households in Israel, especially among recent immigrants. Evidence from Israel's Rabbinical Conversion Courts indicates some increase in the number of converts. Overall, between 1999 and 2014, nearly 83,200 persons were converted to Judaism by Rabbinical Conversion Courts, some of whom were not permanent Israeli residents. Most converts were new immigrants from the Ethiopian *Falash Mura* community. The highest year was 2007 with 8,608 converts. Since 2010, the annual number of converts was about or slightly above 5,000. Among civilians, conversions mostly were new Ethiopian immigrants who, in recent years, included 2,000-3,000 *Falash Mura* annually. (The *Falash Mura* are the descendants of Jews who were converted to Christianity.) Only a small number of converts were civilians from countries other than Ethiopia who immigrated to Israel under the *Law of Return*. Within the military, the demand for conversion prevailed among young adults mostly born in the FSU or born in Israel to non-Jewish immigrant mothers. About 500-800 young military were converted annually, for a total of 8,006 between 2003 and 2014. In 2014 out of a total of 5,637 converts, 4,839 were civilians and 798 came through the Rabbinate of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) (Fisher 2013 and 2015; Waxman 2013).

Only in 2008, and again barely in 2011, did Conversion Courts convert more persons previously not recognized as Jewish than the number of new non-Jewish persons being added to the country via immigration or birth in Israel. The past few years the numbers were affected by the variable amount of immigration from Ethiopia and by ongoing controversies within the Israeli Rabbinate about the general validity of conversion procedures. Some members of the Israeli Rabbinate have indeed requested that thousands of conversions performed in the IDF conversion system be annulled. The matter was eventually settled, but controversy about conversion in Israel remains high. Were it not for the opposition to conversion within some branches of the Israeli Rabbinate, the actual number of *gerim* (Jewish neophytes) might have

been much higher, but nonetheless the outcome, with over 5,600 converts in 2014, constituted a visible component of Israel's Jewish population growth. However, the total number of “others,” i.e., *Law of Return* immigrants and their children not registered as Jews, increased from 171,600 in 1999 to 359,300 in 2015. The more recent increase reflected, in nearly equal numbers, the arrival of new immigrants and births in Israel to new immigrants. Most of these "others" lack religious status, although less than 10% are Christians and a few are Muslims. It can be estimated that, among the total 359,300 "others," about 202,000 have a Jewish background (most often a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother" and about 158,000 do not.

Turning now to clarify the intricacies of demographic data in the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority territories, **Table 11** reports numbers of Jews, Others (i.e., non-Jewish persons who are members of Jewish households *and* Israeli citizens by the provisions of the Law of Return), Arabs, and foreign workers and refugees. Each group's total is shown 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 *enlarged* definition) in each division is also shown.

Of the 6,217,400 *core* Jews in 2015, 5,622,800 lived within Israel's pre-1967 borders; 210,000 lived in neighborhoods of East Jerusalem incorporated after 1967; 19,900 on the Golan Heights; and 364,700 lived in the West Bank. Of the 359,300 other non-Jewish household members included in the *enlarged* Jewish population, 343,700 lived within the pre-1967 borders, 7,000 in East Jerusalem, 1,000 in the Golan Heights, and 7,600 in the West Bank. *Core* Jews represented 74.9% of Israel’s total *legal* population of 8,297,000 (6,217,400 core Jews, plus 359,300 others, plus 1,720,200 Arabs and others) (see **Appendix**). The Jewish population figure includes East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, *and* the Israeli population in the West Bank, but not the Arab population in the West Bank and Gaza (WBG), nor foreign workers and refugees (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel Statistical Monthly). Israel's *enlarged* Jewish population of 6,576,700 represented 79.1% of the State of Israel's total population of 8,297,000. Israel's Arab population, including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, was 1,720,200, or 20.9% of the total population thus territorially defined. As shown in **Table 9**, the *enlarged* Jewish population represented 78.8% of the total within pre-1967 borders, 41.0% in East Jerusalem, 45.7% in the Golan Heights, and 13.5% in the West Bank. Since 2005, no Jewish population remains in Gaza.

Table 11 Core and enlarged Jewish population, Arab population, foreign workers and refugees in Israel and Palestinian Territory by territorial divisions, 1/1/2015[a]

Area	Core Jewish population	Others	Core Jewish and others[b]	Arab population and others	Foreign workers and refugees	Total	Percent of Jews and others[d]
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Grand total	**6,217,400**	**359,300**	**6,576,700**	**5,825,200**	**226,400**	**12,628,300**	**52.1**
State of Israel[e]	***6,217,400***	***359,300***	***6,576,700***	***1,720,200***	***226,400***	***8,523,300***	***77.2***
Thereof:							
Pre-1967 borders	5,622,800	343,700	5,966,500	1,383,400	226,400	**7,576,300**	**78.8**
East Jerusalem[f]	210,000	7,000	217,000	312,000	-	**529,000**	**41.0**
Golan Heights	19,900	1,000	20,900	24,800	-	**45,700**	**45.7**
West Bank	364,700	7,600	372,300	[g]	-	**372,300**	**13.5**[h]
Palestinian Territory				***4,105,000***		***4,105,000***	-
West Bank	[i]	[i]	[i]	2,393,800	-	**2,393,800**	-
Gaza	0	0	0	1,711,200	-	**1,711,200**	**0.0**

a Rounded figures
b Enlarged Jewish population
c All foreign workers and refugees 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 (2015)
g Included under State of Israel
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

These estimates reflect our own independent assessment of the total Palestinian population in the WBG. To clarify the issues, immediately after the June 1967 war, Israel conducted a population Census in the WBG. The count showed a population of 598,637 in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) and 356,261 in Gaza, for a combined total of 954,898, plus 65,857 in East Jerusalem (Bachi 1977). East Jerusalem's Arab population was incorporated when Israel annexed the city and several surrounding villages in November 1967 into Jerusalem's expanded municipal territory. Until the 1994 Oslo agreements statistical operations in the WBG were the responsibility of Israel's CBS. After 1994, Israel transferred statistical documentation to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). In 1997, the PCBS conducted a Census in the WBG under the guidance of Norwegian experts and reported 1,600,100 persons in the West Bank and 1,001,569 in Gaza, for a combined total of 2,601,669 (not including Israeli settlers). Another 294,014 persons were recorded, but they were not included in data processing because they were abroad at the time of the Census. In addition, the population of East Jerusalem was assessed at 210,000 (PCBS 1998). Thus, the annual rate of population growth over the 30 years (1967-1997) for the WBG combined was 3.4%; it was 3.9% for East Jerusalem. Such high growth rates are fully consonant and, if anything, slightly lower than annual growth rates among Muslim citizens of Israel, assessed at 3.7% during the same years. Palestinian population growth during the 1967-1997 period was therefore very high, but plausible.

The PCBS subsequently released population projections based on fertility and migration assumptions, producing an estimate of 4,081,000 for the end of 2007, inclusive of East Jerusalem. Besides first deducting East Jerusalem because it was already included in the Israeli data, we judged the PCBS projected estimate to be too high since it assumed a continuing immigration of Palestinians to the West Bank that did not materialize and was instead replaced by some out-migration (particularly of Christians). The same estimates were debated by a group of American and Israeli writers who maintained that current population estimates from Palestinian sources were inflated by one and one-half million (Zimmerman et al. 2005a; Zimmerman et al. 2005b; for a rebuttal, see DellaPergola 2007b, 2011a).

In November 2007, the PCBS undertook a new Census which enumerated 3,542,000 persons in the WBG (plus 225,000 in East Jerusalem, clearly an undercount because of the PCBS's limited access to the city). The new Census total, not unexpectedly, was more than 300,000 lower than the PCBS's own projected estimate. Our own independent assessment, after subtracting East Jerusalem (as noted, already included in the Israeli total), accounting for a negative net migration balance of Palestinians, and some further corrections, was about 3,500,000 toward the end of 2007.

By our estimates, the 1997-2007 intercensal yearly average population increase among Palestinians in the West Bank (not including East Jerusalem) and Gaza combined would be 2.91%. This exactly matched the 2.91% yearly growth rate for Arabs in Israel over the same period (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics). In subsequent years, the growth rate of Israel's total Arab population was slowly declining and, in 2013, was 2.11%, rising to 2.19% in 2014 (2.21% and 2.23%, respectively, among Muslims only), as against 1.85% for the Jewish population with immigration and 1.55% without immigration. The Palestinian population's growth rate in the WBG was probably decreasing as well, among other things because of some net emigration which, however, is not well documented. Our assumption here is that the annual rate of growth in the WBG is the same as among Muslims in Israel, whose demographic characteristics are quite similar to those in the Palestinian Territory—though probably both fertility and mortality are slightly higher in the Palestinian Territory than in Israel and significantly higher than among the Jewish population. Our adjusted Palestinian population estimates for the beginning of 2015 are thus 4,105,000, of whom 2,393,800 are in the West Bank and 1,711,200 are in Gaza. These figures are lower than some other independent evaluations (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division 2013) but quite similar to others (Population Reference Bureau 2014). As to the PCBS own estimates, the mid-2014 estimates were 2,790,000 (including 251,000 in Jerusalem) for the West Bank and 1,760,000 for Gaza. Discounting for Jerusalem, a total of 4,299,000 obtains for the WBG (PCBS 2015). Our own estimate, as noted, is 4,105,000. The difference of nearly 200,000 reflects an original PCBS Census overestimate by counting some persons, students, and others, who actually resided abroad for more than one year, and excessively high subsequent rates of growth that ignore the impact of emigration.

The Arab population of East Jerusalem, which we have included in Israel's population count, was assessed at 312,000 at the beginning of 2015, and constituted 37% of Jerusalem's total population of 846,000 (Israel Central

Bureau of Statistics; Choshen et al. 2010, 2012; Jerusalem Institute of Israel Studies 2015; DellaPergola 2008b). By adding the 1,720,200 Arab population of Israel, including East Jerusalem, and the 4,105,000 Palestinian estimate for the WBG, a total of 5,825,200 Arabs obtains for the whole territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. If only adding East Jerusalem's Arabs (312,000) to the 4,105,000 who live in the WBG, a total of 4,417,000 would obtain.

Table 12 reports the percentage of Jews, according to the *core* and *enlarged* definitions, of the total population of the whole territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. The size of the Jewish population majority is conditional upon the definition of who is a Jew, and the territorial boundaries chosen for assessment. Relative to this grand total, we demonstrate the potential effect of gradually and cumulatively subtracting from the initial maximum possible extent the Arab population of designated areas as well as the foreign workers and refugees. The result is a gradually growing Jewish share of a total population which diminishes according to the different territorial and Arab population configurations considered. This allows a better evaluation of the possible Jewish population share of the total population that exists under alternative territorial assumptions.

Table 12 Percent of core and enlarged Jewish population in Israel and Palestinian Territory, according to different territorial definitions, 1/1/2015

	Percentage of Jews[a] by definition	
Area	**Core**	**Enlarged**
Grand total of Israel and Palestinian Territory	**49.2**	**52.1**
Minus foreign workers and refugees	50.1	53.0
Minus Gaza	58.2	61.5
Minus Golan Heights	58.3	61.7
Minus West Bank	75.2	79.5
Minus East Jerusalem	78.1	82.6

a Total Jewish population of Israel, including East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. In each row, the Arab population and others of mentioned area is deducted
Source: Table 11

A total combined Jewish and Arab population of 12,628,300, including foreign workers and refugees, lived in Israel and the Palestinian Territory (WBG) in 2015. The c*ore* Jewish population represented 49.2% of this total between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, of which the State of Israel is part and parcel. Thus, by a rigorous rabbinic definition of who is a Jew, Jewish majority not only is constantly decreasing but possibly does not exist any longer among the broader aggregate of people currently found over the whole territory between the Sea and the River (DellaPergola 2003a, 2003b, 2007a, 2011a; Sofer and Bistrow 2004). If the 359,300 non-Jewish members of Jewish households are added to the *core* Jewish population, the *enlarged* Jewish population of 6,576,700 represented 52.1% of the total population living legally or illegally in Israel and the Palestinian Territory—a small majority.

If we subtract from the grand total, the 226,400 non-Jewish non-permanent residents—74,300 legal foreign workers, 16,400 undocumented, 90,000 tourists whose visas had expired, and 45,700 refuge seekers (Israel Population and Migration Authority 2015)—the *core* and *enlarged* Jewish populations represented, respectively, 50.1% and 53.0% of the total population resident in Israel and the Palestinian Territory, estimated at 12,401,900 in 2015. After subtracting the population of Gaza, the total percent of Jews rises to 58.2% core and 61.5% enlarged; after subtracting the Druze population of the Golan Heights the percentages become, 58.3% and 61.7% respectively; 75.2% and 79.5%, respectively, if subtracting the Palestinian population of the West Bank; and 78.1% and 82.6% if also subtracting the Arab population of East Jerusalem.

Other Asian Countries

In the rest of Asia, the Jewish population consisted mainly of the rapidly decreasing communities in the eight Asian FSU republics in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Continuing emigration was the main factor of change, the total migrating to Israel being 1,416 in 2013-2014. The largest community was **Azerbaijan** (8,600 Jews in 2015), followed by **Uzbekistan** (3,700). In the 2009 **Kazakhstan** Census, 5,281 people appeared with "Judaism" as their religion, most of them Kazakh (1,929) and Russian (1,452) ethnics. The more reliable total number of ethnic Jews was 3,578. Our 2015 estimate was 3,000 for Kazakhstan, and 2,700 for **Georgia** (Tolts 2013).

The largest Jewish population in a single country in Asia besides Israel was Iran. Our estimate of just less than 10,000 Jews in **Iran** in 2015 reflects an effort to monitor intensive emigration to Israel, the US, and Europe since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Large scale emigration, selectively inclusive of younger adults, typically engendered significant aging among the extant remaining communities. The Jewish population in **India** was estimated at 5,000. Another reservoir for possible Jewish population increase is the local tribe known as the *Bnei Menashe* who claim ancient Jewish origins (Parfitt 2002).

Small Jewish populations, partly formed by temporary sojourners, exist in various South Asian and East Asian countries, namely in **China**. Rapid economic development and increasing relations with Israel render these countries receptive to a small, but clearly increasing, Jewish presence. We assess the number in China including Hong Kong and Macao, at 2,500, mostly recent arrivals. **Japan** has a more veteran Jewish presence estimated at 1,000. **Singapore** has a small veteran Jewish community holding national citizenship, but in addition there are several hundred more permanent and temporary residents. We upgraded the total estimate to 900.

Africa

The Jewish population in Africa was mostly concentrated in **South Africa** (94% of the continental total, see **Appendix**). According to the 2001 Census, the white Jewish population was 61,675 (Saks 2003). Factoring in the national white non-response rate of 14% led to a revised estimate of 72,000. Allowing for a certain proportion of actual Jews among the self-reported Jews among South Africa's nonwhites (11,979 blacks, 1,287 coloreds, and 615 Indians, many of whom practice other religions), we assessed the total Jewish population at 75,000 in 2001. After the major wave of departures just before the 1994 internal transferal of power from the apartheid government to a democratic government, South African Jewry has been relatively stable (Kosmin et al. 1999; Bruk 2006). Due to continuing moderate emigration to Israel (278 in 2013-2014) and other countries, we estimated South Africa's Jewish population at 69,800 in 2015, the world's twelfth largest Jewish community.

Our revised estimates for Northern Africa acknowledge the practical end of the Jewish presence in most countries and the ongoing reduction in the small Jewish communities remaining in **Morocco** and **Tunisia**, where the estimate for the Djerba community in Tunisia was upwardly revised (Lagnado 2014). We now assessed the two countries with a combined population of 3,500 (and a combined total of over 1,150 migrants to Israel in 2001-2014).

Virtually the entire Jewish population is estimated to have emigrated from **Ethiopia**. The question that remains open concerns the Falash Mura—a community of Jewish ancestry long ago baptized to Christianity. Upon migration to Israel, all Falash Mura undergo conversion to Judaism. Their quest for family reunification create a never-ending potential extended-family chain of often unskilled non-Jewish immigrants and is the subject of continuing public discussion. The last contingent of the enlarged community eligible for the Law of Return, which we very tentatively assessed at 2,500, was still waiting in Ethiopia hoping to migrate to Israel. The government of Israel decided to stop further migration from Ethiopia but subsequently reopened the doors and it is hard to predict whether this will really be the last word in the saga of Ethiopian Jewry. Since 3,589 Falash Mura migrated to Israel in 2007, the flow decreased to 1,582 in 2008 and only 239 in 2009. It increased again to 1,655 in 2010, 2,666 in 2011, and 2,432 in 2012, declining to 1,355 in 2013 and 211 in 2014. In 2015, we estimated a nominal value of 100 to the remaining core Jewish presence in Ethiopia—as distinguished from Falash Mura.

Oceania

Immigration continued to produce some increase in Jewish population in Oceania. **Australia**'s 2011 Census reported a Jewish population of 97,336, versus 88,831 in 2006 and 83,993 in 2001 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002, 2007, 2012; Eckstein 2003; Graham 2012, 2014a, 2014b). In Australia, the estimated total foreign-born Jews increased by about 5,000 between 2006 and 2011, implying a yearly growth of about 1,000, of whom about 300 were Israel-born (Graham 2014a). In view of general non-response to the question

about religion, but also in view of indications of a lower non-response in more densely Jewish residential areas, adjusted figures suggest totals of 100,800 in 2001 and 112,000 in 2011, a ten year increase of 11.2% (Graham 2014a). The Jewish population is highly concentrated in Melbourne and Sydney, which in 2011 constituted 85% of the total.

Intermarriage in Australia is still less frequent than in most other Western large and medium-size communities, but it is on the rise and affecting the Jewish birth rate. In 2011, 14.4% of all Jews had a non-Jewish partner, which would rise to 23.1% if partners without religion are added. Among Jews in de facto partnerships, only 39.6% had a Jewish partner. Over the period 2001-2001 mixed partnerships increased at a rhythm double that of Jewish partnerships. The percentage Jewish among all youngest children present in households varied as follows by religion of parents: 98% if both were Jewish, and 34% if only one was Jewish. Of the latter: 83% if mother was Jewish and the father had no religion; 48% if the mother was Jewish and the father non-Jewish; 22% if the father was Jewish and the mother had no religion; and 14% if the father Jewish and the mother non-Jewish (Graham 2014a). Accounting for such factors as continuing immigration from South Africa, the FSU, and Israel, moderate but rising intermarriage rates, and the community's rather old age composition (Eckstein 2009; Markus, Jacobs, and Aronov 2009; Markus et al. 2011; Forrest and Sheskin 2014), we adopted a *core* Jewish population estimate of 112,800 in 2015. Australia has the world's ninth largest Jewish population.

The 2006 Census of **New Zealand** suggested a Jewish population increase to 6,858, mostly following immigration from South Africa, the US, and the UK (Statistics New Zealand 2007; Morris 2011). The 2011 population Census was canceled after a severe earthquake damaged the city of Christchurch. We assessed the total at 7,500 in 2015.

Dispersion and Concentration

In 2013, 95 countries had at least 100 Jews (**Table 13**). Two countries had Jewish populations of over 5 million each (Israel and the US), another seven had more than 100,000 Jews, three had 50,000 to 99,999, five had 25,000 to 49,999, eight had 10,000 to 24,999, nine had 5,000 to 9,999, 23 had 1,000 to 4,999, and 38 had less than 1,000. The 70 country communities each with less than 10,000 Jews together accounted for 1% of world Jewry.

Table 13 World core Jewish population distribution, by number and proportion (per 1,000 total population), 1/1/2015

Number of core Jews in country	Jews per 1,000 total population					
	Total	Less than 1.0	1.0-4.9	5.0-9.9	10.0-19.9	20.0+
Number of countries						
Total	95	67	22	2	3	1
100-999	38	35	2	-	1	-
1,000-4,999	23	22	1	-	-	-
5,000-9,999	9	5	4	-	-	-
10,000-24,999	8	2	5	1	-	-
25,000-49,999	5	2	3	-	-	-
50,000-99,999	3	1	2	-	-	-
100,000-999,999	7	-	5	1	1	-
1,000,000 or more	2	-	-	-	1	1
Jewish population distribution (number of core Jews)						
Total[a]	14,310,500	295,700	1,225,700	484,600	6,086,600	6,217,400
100-999	12,300	10,600	1,100	-	600	-
1,000-4,999	55,500	53,400	2,100	-	-	-
5,000-9,999	68,700	40,600	28,100	-	-	-
10,000-24,999	119,000	29,000	72,900	17,100	-	-
25,000-49,999	175,000	67,600	107,400	-	-	-
50,000-99,999	224,300	94,500	129,800	-	-	-
100,000-999,999	1,737,800	-	884,300	467,500	386,000	-
1,000,000 or more	11,917,400	-	-	-	5,700,000	6,217,400
Jewish population distribution (percent of world core Jewish population)						
Total[a]	100.0	2.1	8.6	3.4	42.5	43.4
100-999	0.1	0.1	0.0	-	0.0	-
1,000-4,999	0.4	0.4	0.0	-	-	-
5,000-9,999	0.5	0.3	0.2	-	-	-
10,000-24,999	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.1	-	-
25,000-49,999	1.2	0.5	0.8	-	-	-
50,000-99,999	1.6	0.7	0.9	-	-	-
100,000-999,999	12.1	-	6.2	3.3	2.7	-
1,000,000 or more	83.3	-	-	-	39.8	43.4

a Grand total includes countries with fewer than 100 core Jews, for a total of 500 core Jews. Minor discrepancies due to rounding. Israel includes Jewish residents in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights

In only five Diaspora countries did Jews constitute at least 5 per 1,000 (0.5%) of the total population. In descending order by the relative share (not size) of their Jewish population, they were Gibraltar (20.0 Jews per 1,000 inhabitants), the US (18.0), Canada (10.9), France (7.3), and Uruguay (5.0). The case of Israel is evidently different, with a *core* Jewish population that represents 74.9% of the total population, and an *enlarged* Jewish population that represents 79.1% of the total population. In both Israel and the Diaspora, the percentage of Jews out of the total population is decreasing.

By combining the two criteria of Jewish population size and percentage of Jews, we obtain the following taxonomy of the 25 countries with Jewish populations over 10,000 (excluding Israel). Three countries have over 100,000 Jews and at least 5 Jews per 1,000 total population: the US, Canada, and France. Five more countries have over 100,000 Jews and at least 1 Jew per 1,000 total population: Australia, the UK, the Russian Federation, Argentina, and Germany. One country has 10,000 to 99,999 Jews and at least 5 Jews per 1,000 total population: Uruguay. Ten more countries have 10,000 to 99,999 Jews and at least 1 Jew per 1,000 total population: Ukraine, South Africa, Hungary, Belgium, the Netherlands, Chile, Switzerland, Sweden, Belarus, and Panama. Six countries have 10,000 to 99,999 Jews and less

than 1 Jew per 1,000 total population: Brazil, Mexico, Italy, Turkey, and Spain.

Outlook

Jewish population trends constitute a sensitive indicator of broader political, socioeconomic, and cultural trends globally and within each country. Accurate population data, as far as they can be assessed, also constitute a necessary tool in the planning of Jewish community life.

Beyond the many and arguable problems related to Jewish population definitions, and beyond the imperfect availability and accuracy of data, it is important to recognize that powerful and consistent trends constantly shape and reshape the demographic profile of world Jewry. Current data should be read in historical and comparative context, so as to detect the major underlying drivers of Jewish population change within the broader context of global society. The recent momentum of Jewish population change in the US and in most other countries—at best tending to zero growth if the *core* definition is consistently adopted—contrasts with that of Israel—characterized by the continuation of significant natural increase. While the transition of Israel to the status of largest Jewish population in the world is grounded on solid empirical foundations, the US constitutes a very large and stable Jewish population—culturally and socioeconomically powerful, creative, and an influential center of Jewish life.

The US constitutes a primary source of new modes of Jewish identification attachment—whether exclusive or shared with alternative identifications, whether through direct genealogical linkage or by voluntary association with others who are Jewish, whether shared or rejected by Jews in other countries. These growingly indirect and increasingly individualistic definition and identification patterns operate along, and to some extent compete with, the more conservative and mutually exclusive Jewish family and identification patterns that prevail in Israel. Both modes, however, generate widespread echoes across all other Jewish communities worldwide, including powerful mutual influences among the two major ones. The aggregate demographic weight of other Jewish communities globally—aside from their continuing cultural relevance—is gradually decreasing. The cultural and institutional projection and influence of the two major centers, Israel and the US, has become increasingly significant in other geographical areas of Jewish presence. The Jewish world has become demographically more bi-polar, but also more eclectic and transnational reflecting pervasive trends in contemporary world society.

Acknowledgments

Since inception, the *American Jewish Year Book* has documented the Jewish world and gave significant attention to Jewish population issues. Since 1981, responsibility for preparing annual population estimates for world Jewry was taken by the Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics of the A. Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The Division was founded by Roberto Bachi in 1959, headed by Uziel O. Schmelz until 1986, and by the present author until 2010. Prof. Uzi Rebhun has been Division head since 2010. Jewish population estimates appeared in the AJYB, then under the aegis of the American Jewish Committee, until 2008. Since 2010, our world Jewish population estimates have appeared in the framework of the North American Jewish Data Bank (now the Berman Jewish Data Bank), and since 2012 within the renewed *American Jewish Year Book.* World Jewish population estimates as of January 1, 2009 as well as of January 1, 2011 were prepared for publication but not issued. The interested reader may consult past AJYB volumes or DataBank reports for further details on how the respective annual estimates were obtained.

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Appendix

Presentation and Quality of Data

Jewish population estimates in this report refer to January 1, 2015. Efforts to provide the most recent possible picture entail a short span of time for evaluation of available information, hence a somewhat greater margin of inaccuracy. For example, a wealth of data about Israel's population becomes available annually when the American Jewish Year Book is already in print. Some of Israel's data here are the product of estimates based on the most recent trends, but may need adjustment when the actual data are released. Indeed, where appropriate, we revise our previous estimates in light of newly acquired information. Corrections also were applied retroactively to the 2014 totals for major geographical regions so as to ensure a better base for comparisons with the 2015 estimates. Corrections of the 2015 estimates, if needed, will be presented in the future.

We provide separate estimates for each country with approximately 100 or more resident core Jews. Estimates of Jews in smaller communities have been added to some of the continental totals. For each country, we provide in the Appendix an estimate of 1) mid-year 2014 total (including both Jews and non-Jews) country population (Population Reference Bureau 2014); 2) the estimated January 1, 2015 core Jewish population; 3) the number of Jews per 1,000 total population; and 4) a rating of the accuracy of the Jewish population estimate. The last three columns provide rough estimates of the population with Jewish parentage, the enlarged Jewish population, and the Law of Return Jewish population. These figures were derived from available information and assessments on the generational depth and recent extent 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 better to indicate a range for the number of Jews (minimum, maximum) rather than a definite estimate. 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. 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 persons 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 part-year residents. (This is similar to the part-year resident, or “snowbird” issue in estimating the US Jewish population in Sheskin and Dashefsky 2015.)

The three main elements that affect the accuracy of each estimate are: (a) the nature and quality of the base data, (b) how recent the base data are, and (c) the updating method. A simple code combines these elements to provide a general evaluation of the reliability of data reported in the detailed tables below. The code in the Appendix indicates different quality levels of the reported estimates:

(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 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 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; no reliable updating procedure.

The year in which a country’s base estimate or important partial updates were obtained is also stated. 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 2015 was not only updated but also revised in light of improved information.

As noted, 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, Rebhun and Tolts 2000; and author's updating). 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 decade of the 21st 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 indications from these projections to refine the 2015 estimates against previous years. It should be acknowledged that projections are clearly shaped by a comparatively limited set of assumptions and need to be constantly updated in light of actual demographic developments.

Appendix Table. Jewish population by country, core definition and expanded definitions, 1/1/2015

Country	Total population[a]	Core Jewish population[b]	Jews per total 1,000 population	Accuracy rating[c]		Population with Jewish parents[d]	Enlarged Jewish population[e]	Law of Return population[f]
World	**7,235,820,000**	**14,310,500**	**1.98**			**17,411,450**	**20,235,700**	**23,047,900**
America total	**971,430,000**	**6,468,200**	**6.66**			**8,963,600**	**11,175,100**	**13,398,600**
Canada	35,500,000	386,000	10.87	B 2011		450,000	550,000	700,000
United States	317,700,000	5,700,000	17.94	B 2013		8,000,000	10,000,000	12,000,000
Total North America[g]	**353,330,000**	**6,086,000**	**17.22**			**8,450,000**	**10,550,000**	**12,700,000**
Bahamas	400,000	300	0.75	D 1995		350	400	500
Costa Rica	4,800,000	2,500	0.52	C 1993		2,750	3,000	3,200
Cuba	11,200,000	500	0.04	C 2013		1,000	1,500	2,000
Dominican Republic	10,400,000	100	0.01	D 2000		150	200	300
El Salvador	6,400,000	100	0.02	C 1993		150	200	300
Guatemala	15,900,000	900	0.06	B 1999		1,200	1,500	1,800
Jamaica	2,700,000	200	0.07	C 2010		300	400	500
Mexico	119,700,000	40,000	0.33	B 2010		45,000	50,000	65,000
Netherlands Antilles	310,000	200	0.65	C 2000		300	400	600
Panama	3,900,000	10,000	2.56	C 2012		10,500	11,000	12,000
Puerto Rico	3,600,000	1,500	0.42	C 2000		2,000	2,500	3,000
Virgin Islands	110,000	500	4.55	C 2006		600	700	800
Other	28,580,000	100	0.00	D		200	300	500
Total Central Amer., Caribbean	**208,000,000**	**56,900**	**0.27**			**64,500**	**72,100**	**90,500**
Argentina	42,700,000	181,000	4.24	B 2003		270,000	330,000	350,000
Bolivia	10,300,000	500	0.05	C 1999		700	900	1,000
Brazil	202,800,000	94,500	0.47	B 2010		120,000	150,000	175,000
Chile	17,700,000	18,400	1.04	B 2002		21,000	26,000	30,000
Colombia	47,700,000	2,400	0.05	C 2010		2,800	3,200	3,600
Ecuador	16,000,000	600	0.04	B 2011		800	1,000	1,200
Paraguay	6,900,000	900	0.13	B 1997		1,200	1,500	1,800
Peru	30,800,000	1,900	0.06	C 1993		2,300	3,000	3,500
Suriname	600,000	200	0.33	D 2000		300	400	500
Uruguay	3,400,000	17,100	5.03	B 2013		20,000	25,000	27,500
Venezuela	30,200,000	7,800	0.26	C 2012		10,000	12,000	14,000
Total South America[g]	**410,100,000**	**325,300**	**0.79**			**449,100**	**553,000**	**608,100**
Europe total	**816,790,000**	**1,391,100**	**1.70**			**1,769,700**	**2,188,100**	**2,735,900**
Austria	8,500,000	9,000	1.06	B 2011		14,000	17,000	20,000
Belgium	11,200,000	29,800	2.66	C 2002		35,000	40,000	45,000
Bulgaria	7,200,000	2,000	0.28	C 2011		4,000	6,000	7,500
Croatia	4,200,000	1,700	0.40	C 2001		2,400	3,000	3,500
Cyprus	1,200,000	100	0.08	D 2012		150	200	250
Czech Republic	10,500,000	3,900	0.37	C 2011		5,000	6,500	8,000
Denmark	5,600,000	6,400	1.14	C 2001		7,500	8,500	9,500
Estonia	1,300,000	2,100	1.62	B 2014	X	2,600	3,400	4,500
Finland	5,500,000	1,300	0.24	B 2010		1,500	1,800	2,500
France[h]	64,140,000	467,500	7.29	B 2012		530,000	600,000	700,000
Germany	80,900,000	117,500	1.45	B 2013		150,000	250,000	275,000
Greece	11,000,000	4,400	0.40	B 2000		5,500	6,000	7,000
Hungary	9,900,000	47,700	4.82	C 2001		75,000	95,000	150,000
Ireland	4,600,000	1,600	0.35	B 2011		2,000	2,400	2,800
Italy	61,300,000	27,600	0.45	B 2011		33,000	40,000	45,000
Latvia	2,000,000	5,200	2.60	B 2014	X	8,000	12,000	16,000
Lithuania	2,900,000	2,800	0.97	B 2011		4,700	6,500	10,000
Luxembourg	600,000	600	1.00	B 2000		750	900	1,000
Malta	400,000	100	0.25	D 2012		150	200	250

Country	Total population[a]	Core Jewish population[b]	Jews per total 1,000 popula-tion	Accuracy rating[c]		Population with Jewish parents[d]	Enlarged Jewish population[e]	Law of Return population[f]
Netherlands	16,900,000	29,900	1.77	B 2000		43,000	50,000	57,000
Poland	38,500,000	3,200	0.08	C 2001		5,000	7,500	10,000
Portugal	10,400,000	600	0.06	C 2001		800	1,000	1,200
Romania	20,000,000	9,300	0.47	B 2001		13,500	17,000	20,000
Slovakia	5,400,000	2,600	0.48	C 2001		3,600	4,500	6,000
Slovenia	2,100,000	100	0.05	C 2003		150	200	300
Spain	46,500,000	11,900	0.26	D 2007		15,000	18,000	20,000
Sweden	9,700,000	15,000	1.55	C 2007		20,000	25,000	30,000
United Kingdom[i]	64,700,000	290,000	4.48	B 2011		330,000	370,000	410,000
Total European Union 28	**507,140,000**	**1,093,900**	**2.16**			**1,312,300**	**1,592,600**	**1,862,300**
Belarus	9,500,000	10,600	1.12	B 2009		18,000	25,000	33,000
Moldova	4,100,000	3,600	0.88	B 2004		5,700	7,500	11,000
Russian Federation[j]	143,700,000	183,000	1.27	C 2010	X	290,000	380,000	570,000
Ukraine	42,900,000	60,000	1.40	C 2001		97,000	130,000	200,000
Total FSU Republics	**200,200,000**	**257,200**	**1.28**			**410,700**	**542,500**	**814,000**
[Total FSU in Europe][k]	**206,400,000**	**267,300**	**1.30**			**426,000**	**564,400**	**844,500**
Gibraltar	30,000	600	20.00	B 2001		700	800	900
Norway	5,100,000	1,300	0.25	B 2010		1,500	2,000	2,500
Switzerland	8,200,000	18,900	2.30	B 2012		22,000	25,000	28,000
Total other West Europe[g]	**13,850,000**	**20,800**	**1.50**			**24,200**	**27,800**	**31,400**
Bosnia-Herzegovina	3,800,000	500	0.13	C 2001		800	1,000	1,200
Macedonia	2,100,000	100	0.05	C 1996		150	200	250
Serbia	7,100,000	1,400	0.20	C 2001		2,100	2,800	3,500
Turkey[j]	77,200,000	17,100	0.22	B 2002		19,300	21,000	23,000
Other	5,400,000	100	0.02	D		150	200	250
Total Balkans	**95,600,000**	**19,200**	**0.20**			**22,500**	**25,200**	**28,200**
Asia total	**4,272,600,000**	**6,256,100**	**1.46**			**6,469,050**	**6,640,900**	**6,658,400**
Israel[l]	7,924,700	5,852,700	738.54	A 2015	X	6,050,000	6,204,400	6,204,400
West Bank[m]	2,766,000	364,700	131.85	A 2015	X	369,000	372,300	372,300
Gaza[m]	1,711,200	0	0.00	A 2015		0	0	0
Total Israel and Palestine[n]	**12,401,900**	**6,217,400**	**501.33**			**6,419,000**	**6,576,700**	**6,576,700**
[Total State of Israel][o]	**8,297,000**	**6,217,400**	**749.36**			**6,419,000**	**6,576,700**	**6,576,700**
Azerbaijan	9,500,000	8,600	0.91	B 2009		10,500	16,000	22,000
Georgia	4,800,000	2,700	0.56	C 2002		4,500	6,000	8,700
Kazakhstan	17,300,000	3,000	0.17	B 2009		4,800	6,500	9,600
Kyrgyzstan	5,800,000	400	0.07	B 2009		750	1,000	1,500
Turkmenistan	5,300,000	200	0.04	D 1989		300	400	500
Uzbekistan	30,700,000	3,700	0.12	D 1989		6,000	8,000	10,000
Total former USSR in Asia[g]	**84,700,000**	**18,600**	**0.22**			**26,850**	**37,900**	**52,300**
China[p]	1,371,900,000	2,500	0.00	D 2015		2,700	3,000	3,300
India	1,296,200,000	5,000	0.00	B 1996		6,000	7,000	8,000
Iran	77,400,000	9,900	0.13	D 1986		11,000	12,000	13,000
Japan	127,100,000	1,000	0.01	D 2015		1,200	1,400	1,600
Korea, South	50,400,000	100	0.00	C 2015		150	200	250
Philippines	100,100,000	100	0.00	D 2000		150	200	250
Singapore	5,500,000	900	0.16	C 2015	X	1,000	1,200	1,400
Syria[q]	22,000,000	100	0.00	D 2015		150	200	250
Taiwan	23,400,000	100	0.00	D 2000		150	200	250
Thailand	66,400,000	200	0.00	D 2015		250	300	350
Yemen	26,000,000	100	0.00	D 2015		250	300	350
Other	1,009,098,100	100	0.00	D		200	300	400
Total other Asia	**4,175,498,100**	**20,100**	**0.00**			**23,200**	**26,300**	**29,400**

Country	Total population[a]	Core Jewish population[b]	Jews per total 1,000 popula-tion	Accuracy rating[c]		Population with Jewish parents[d]	Enlarged Jewish population[e]	Law of Return population[f]
Africa total	**1,136,000,000**	**74,700**	**0.07**			**80,950**	**87,400**	**94,750**
Egypt	87,900,000	100	0.00	C 2015		150	200	250
Ethiopia	95,900,000	100	0.00	C 2015		500	1,000	2,500
Morocco	33,300,000	2,400	0.07	C 2015		2,500	2,700	2,900
Tunisia	11,000,000	1,100	0.10	C 2015	X	1,000	1,100	1,200
Total Northern Africa[g]	**312,900,000**	**3,700**	**0.01**			**4,150**	**5,000**	**6,850**
Botswana	2,000,000	100	0.05	C 1993		150	200	250
Congo D.R.	71,200,000	100	0.00	C 1993		150	200	250
Kenya	43,200,000	300	0.01	C 1990		500	700	800
Namibia	2,300,000	100	0.04	C 1993		150	200	250
Nigeria	177,500,000	100	0.00	D 2000		150	200	250
South Africa	53,700,000	69,800	1.30	B 2011		75,000	80,000	85,000
Zimbabwe	14,700,000	400	0.03	B 2001		500	600	700
Other	458,500,000	100	0.00	D		200	300	400
Total Sub-Saharan Africa[r]	**823,100,000**	**71,000**	**0.09**			**76,800**	**82,400**	**87,900**
Oceania total	**39,000,000**	**120,400**	**3.09**			**128,150**	**144,200**	**160,250**
Australia	23,500,000	112,800	4.80	B 2011		120,000	135,000	150,000
New Zealand	4,300,000	7,500	1.74	B 2006		8,000	9,000	10,000
Other	11,200,000	100	0.01	D		150	200	250

a Source, with minor adjustments: Population Reference Bureau (2014). Mid-year 2014 estimates
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 (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. In categories A, B, and C, 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 2013 was not only updated but also revised in light of improved information
d Sum of (a) core Jewish population; (b) persons reported as partly Jewish; and (c) all others not currently Jewish with a Jewish parent
e 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.)
f Sum of Jews, children of Jews, and grandchildren of Jews, and their respective spouses, regardless of Jewish identity
g Including countries and territories not listed because fewer than 100 core Jews live in each of those countries and in all of those countries combined
h Including Monaco
i Including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man
j Including Asian regions
k Including the Baltic countries which are already included above in the EU
l Including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, not including the West Bank
m Author's revised estimates of total Palestinian population on 1/1/2015: West Bank (without East Jerusalem): 2,393,700; Gaza: 1,711,200; Total: 4,105,000. The West Bank also includes 364,700 Jews and 7,600 non-Jewish members of Jewish households, for a total of 372,300 Jews and others. The reported West Bank total of 2,766,000 includes Palestinian, Jewish and other residents
n Not including foreign workers and refugees
o Israel's total permanent (de jure) population of 8,297,000 as defined by Israel's legal system, not including foreign workers and refugees
p Including Hong Kong and Macao
q Jewish population includes Lebanon
r Excluding Sudan and Ethiopia included in Northern Africa

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