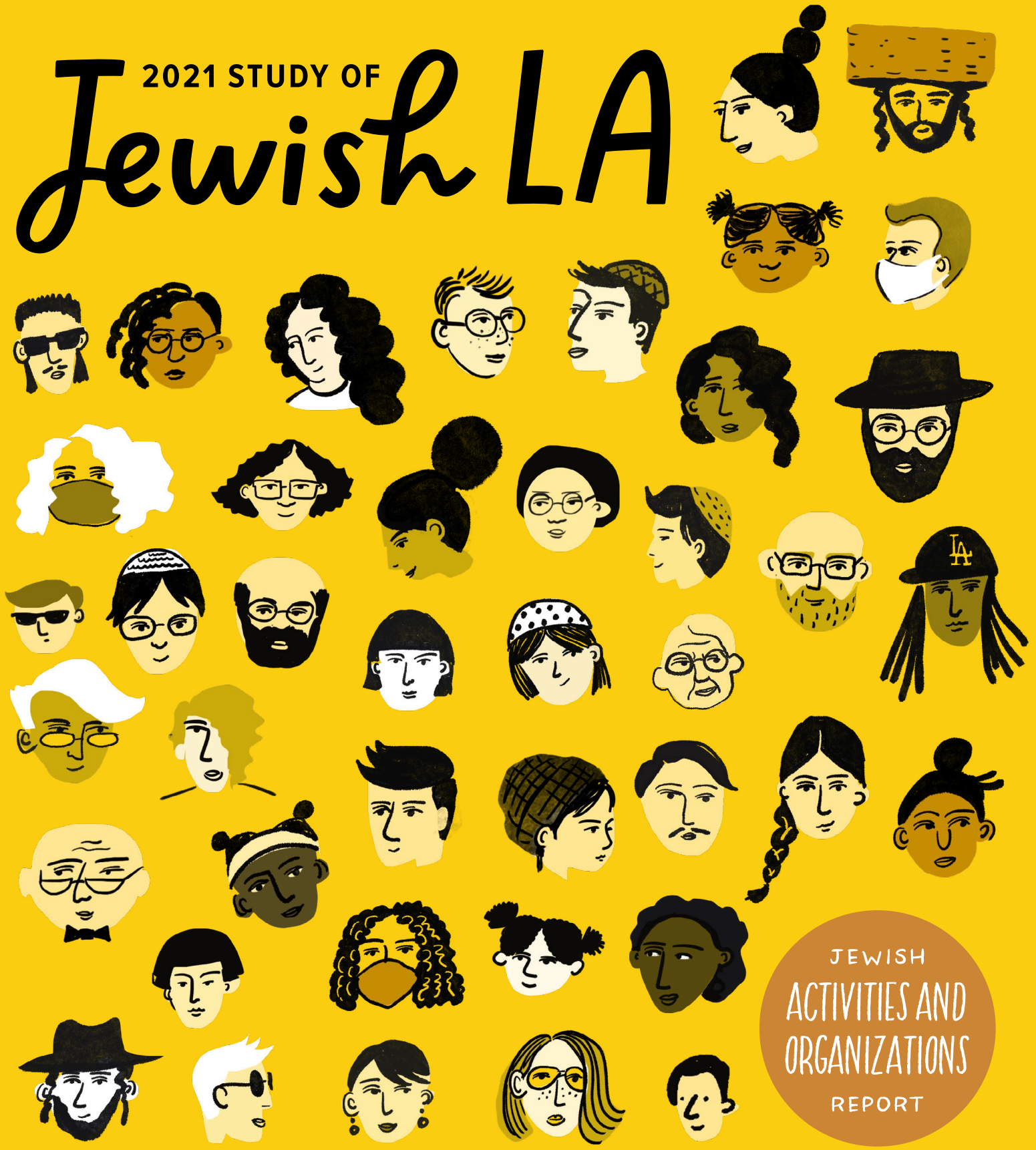


2021 STUDY OF *Jewish* LA



JEWISH
ACTIVITIES AND
ORGANIZATIONS
REPORT

Brandeis

MAURICE AND MARILYN
COHEN CENTER FOR
MODERN JEWISH STUDIES

NORC at the
University of
Chicago

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS)
at Brandeis University and NORC at the University of Chicago



THE ROSALINDE AND ARTHUR
GILBERT FOUNDATION

THE FOUNDATION
JEWISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
LOS ANGELES

THE DIANE & GUILFORD
GLAZER
FOUNDATION FUND
At the Jewish Community Foundation

2021 STUDY OF *Jewish* LA

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) at Brandeis University and NORC at the University of Chicago

Janet Krasner Aronson, Matthew A. Brookner,

Leonard Saxe, Adina Bankier-Karp, Matthew Boxer,

Zachary H. Seeskin, David Dutwin

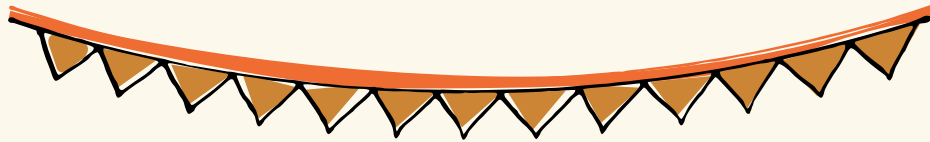


© 2022 Brandeis University
Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies
www.brandeis.edu/cmjs

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

Recommended citation: Aronson, J.K., Brookner, M.A., Saxe, L., Bankier-Karp, A., Boxer, M., Seeskin, Z.H., & Dutwin, D. (2022). 2021 Study of Jewish LA: Jewish Activities and Organizations Report. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.
www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/community-studies/los-angeles-report.html

In This Report



PREFACE	1
JEWISH ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS	4
GENERAL AND JEWISH ACTIVITIES	5
JEWISH-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES	7
MEMBERSHIP IN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS	9
PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS SPONSORED BY JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS	11
PHILANTHROPY AND VOLUNTEERING	16
CAUSES OF INTEREST	22
CONCLUSION	25



PREFACE

This is one of a series of reports describing findings from the 2021 Study of Jewish LA. The study was conducted by the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and NORC at the University of Chicago. For an introduction to the study, along with additional reports and material, visit www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/community-studies/los-angeles-report.html or studyofjewishla.org

JEWISH POPULATION ESTIMATES OF LA, 2021

JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	294,200
PEOPLE IN JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	737,900
NON-JEWISH INDIVIDUALS	173,800
JEWISH INDIVIDUALS	564,700
ADULTS	
JEWISH	462,900
NON-JEWISH OR UNKNOWN	143,900
CHILDREN	
JEWISH	101,800
NON-JEWISH OR UNKNOWN	29,900

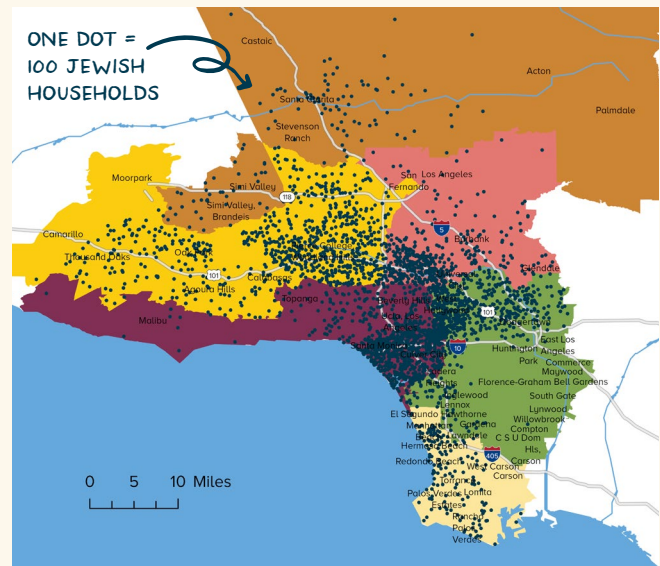
Note: Numbers do not add up to total due to rounding.

How many Jewish people in Los Angeles?

As of 2021, it is estimated that the Los Angeles catchment area is the home to nearly 300,000 Jewish households. These households include almost 740,000 individuals, of whom 564,700 are Jewish.

For this study, Jewish individuals are those who identify as Jewish, whether by religion or ethnicity, and who either have a Jewish parent or converted to Judaism. Jewish households are any households that include at least one Jewish adult.

MAP OF JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS IN LA



PERCENTAGE OF JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH REGION:

4% NORTH COUNTY VALLEYS	26% WEST VALLEY
15% EAST VALLEY	24% CENTRAL/METRO/MID
26% WESTSIDE	5% SOUTH BAY

What are the boundaries of Jewish LA?

The Los Angeles Jewish community encompasses all cities and neighborhoods

- East from the coastline
- West from Silver Lake/Downtown/the 710 freeway
- North from San Pedro, including the San Fernando, Conejo, Simi, Santa Clarita, and Antelope Valleys.

For analysis purposes, this report divides the community into six regions: West Valley, East Valley, Westside, Central/Metro/Mid, South Bay, and the North County Valleys.

Index of Jewish Engagement

Jewish life is complex and multidimensional and includes cultural and religious behaviors that are practiced at home, with friends and family, as well as with formal and informal organizations and institutions. Jewish engagement is associated with attitudes, such as feelings of attachment to the Jewish people, and with beliefs, such as valuing social justice.

The 2021 Study of Jewish LA uses a typology of patterns of Jewish engagement as one of its primary analytic tools for understanding Jewish life in LA. LA Jews were categorized into five groups using a statistical analysis (latent class analysis) of levels of participation across 20 different Jewish behaviors, including ritual and cultural behaviors. The names of the five groups reflect the primary ways in which each group engages in Jewish life. This typology is unique to the LA Jewish community and is used throughout this report to highlight the diversity of expressions of Jewish life.

Overview of Methodology

This study is based on analysis of a rich set of data collected from 3,767 eligible households between June and September 2021. Survey respondents were randomly selected from all households in the Los Angeles catchment area (see map). The study design integrated an Address Based Sample (ABS) with known households on Jewish organizational lists. Households were contacted by mail, email, and telephone and invited to complete the survey online or by telephone. Responses were statistically weighted to represent all LA Jewish households. The response rates for the main sample were 11.2% unweighted and 10.2% weighted (see Technical Appendix for details).

Although some survey responses were likely influenced by the special circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in March 2020, the questions were designed to provide a demographic and attitudinal portrait of the stable characteristics of the community. As necessary, questions were modified to account for changes in usual patterns of behavior during the pandemic.

INDEX OF JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

Jewish engagement groups and primary activities of each group



23%

MINIMALLY INVOLVED

Few Jewish activities



27%

HOLIDAY

Passover seder, Hanukkah candles, occasionally mark Shabbat



16%

COMMUNAL

Passover seder, Hanukkah candles, High Holiday services, attend Jewish programs, donate to Jewish causes, partake in Jewish books/TV/music



16%

RITUAL

Passover seder, Hanukkah candles, High Holiday services, mark Shabbat regularly, follow some Kosher rules, donate to Jewish causes, half are congregation members



17%

IMMERSED

All holidays, mark Shabbat weekly, attend Jewish programs, donate to Jewish causes, read Jewish publications, most are congregation members

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

AS YOU READ THIS REPORT, KEEP IN MIND THE FOLLOWING:

TERMS: Unless otherwise specified, references to “all Jewish adults” or “all Jewish households” refer to Jewish adults and Jewish households in Los Angeles.

Throughout this report, the term “couples” includes those who are legally married and those who are partnered and living together. Unless otherwise specified, “children” refers to minor children under age 18.

RESPONSES: Information in this report is based on over 3,700 survey responses. Responses to survey questions are often subjective and reflect respondents’ interpretation of survey questions. Data presented in this report reflect an estimate of the distribution of responses to a particular question if every member of the community had been interviewed.

ESTIMATES: Because estimates are based on a probability survey, no one estimate should be considered an exact measurement. As a guideline, the reader should assume that all estimates have a range of plus or minus five points; therefore, reported differences between any two numbers of less than 10 percentage points may not necessarily reflect true differences in the population.

When a percentage is between 0% and 0.5% and would otherwise round down to 0%, the number is denoted as < 1%. When there are insufficient respondents in a particular subgroup for reporting reliable information, the estimate is shown as “—”.

QUOTES in this report may have been edited for clarity and to protect privacy. While representing an individual experience, the quotes illustrate the themes identified in the numeric data.

COMPARISONS ACROSS SUBGROUPS: When there is a statistically significant difference among subgroups, we are 95% confident that at least some of the differences in estimates reflect actual differences and are not just the result of random chance. Unless otherwise specified, all tables in this report that compare subgroups reflect some significant difference. However, even in cases where there are statistically significant differences in a full set of responses, it is unlikely that there are statistically significant differences between every pair of numbers. As noted above, as a rule of thumb, differences between any two numbers of less than 10 percentage points may not reflect true differences in the population.

DIFFERENCES THAT ARE NOT STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT are indicated in this report by gray text in tables. This means that even though the numbers are different, these differences are the result of random chance and are not meaningful.



Each report brings a fresh analysis of the data in the hope of stimulating community members to ask new questions, engage in strategy conversations, and consider the implications for our community. These thematic reports are intended to act as a starting point and designed to spark curiosity.”

RABBI NOAH FARKAS, PRESIDENT AND CEO
JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER LOS ANGELES

Jewish Activities and Organizations

Jewish Angelenos participate in a wide range of Jewish activities and programs—often in communal settings, but also with friends and family, online, or alone. This report explores the variety of ways in which Jews engage in Jewish life aside from holidays, religious activities, and rituals.¹

Because many activities take place under the auspices of Jewish organizations, this report also explores connections to formal and informal Jewish organizations. To reflect the changing nature of affiliation with traditional and emerging Jewish organizations, this report documents the ways that Jewish households connect to Jewish organizations through membership, participation, and/or financial support.

TERMS

For this report, we define **activities** as actions and pursuits that individuals engage in; these activities might take place within the context of a program or might occur independent of organization involvement. This report covers secular activities, such as those related to culture and recreation, as well as specifically Jewish-content activities, such as discussions of Jewish topics.

We define **programs** as events and initiatives that are sponsored or organized by a Jewish organization—whether they take place at an organization’s location, in a public space, at home, or online.



¹Participation in Jewish holidays, rituals, and congregational memberships are explored in the Congregations and Ritual report.

General and Jewish Activities

Jewish Angelenos engage in a broad array of activities, including those that are distinctly Jewish and those that are not Jewish-focused. Along with exploring the range of interests expressed by LA Jews, this section looks at the activities in which Jewish adults have participated in specifically Jewish settings. Although the COVID-19 pandemic likely reduced participation in communal activities, in the two years prior to the study, about half of Jewish adults participated in at least some activities sponsored by a Jewish organization.

The activities that Jewish Angelenos most commonly engage in are primarily cultural (72%), outdoors or active (58%), and educational (46%). Over the two years prior to the time of the survey, about half of Jewish adults participated in at least one of these activities through a program sponsored by a Jewish organization. The most common Jewish-sponsored activities include those that are spiritual or religious (27%), educational (23%), and cultural (19%).

GENERAL AND JEWISH ACTIVITIES






Percent of Jewish adults

	ANY SETTING (TYPICAL YEAR)	JEWISH-SPONSORED (PAST 2 YEARS)
Any activity	94%	54%
Primarily cultural (concert, theater, film, museum)	72%	19%
Primarily outdoors or active (sports league, hiking, surfing)	58%	8%
Primarily educational (class, lecture)	46%	23%
Primarily social (bar night, party, dance)	41%	12%
Primarily spiritual or religious, aside from services (meditation, prayer, holiday celebration)	40%	27%
Primarily social action (volunteering, fundraising)	36%	15%
Primarily political (rally, protest)	20%	9%
Other	7%	2%

To illustrate the similarities and differences in interests across engagement and demographic groups, the tables on this page list the top three types of activities that each group participates in. We compare preferences for activities in any setting and in Jewish settings.

Cultural activities are among the top interests in both Jewish and general settings for almost all Jewish engagement groups. In Jewish settings, spiritual and religious activities, as well as educational activities, are most popular among all engagement groups other than the Minimally Involved.

TOP THREE TYPES OF ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL AND JEWISH SETTINGS BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	ANY SETTING (TYPICAL YEAR)	JEWISH-SPONSORED (PAST 2 YEARS)
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	Cultural (70%) Outdoors or active (57%) Educational (40%)	Spiritual or religious (27%) Educational (23%) Cultural (19%)
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	Cultural (59%) Outdoors or active (52%) Social (32%)	Primarily political (3%) Educational (3%) Social action (2%)
 HOLIDAY	Cultural (80%) Outdoors or active (63%) Social (40%)	Cultural (12%) Educational (9%) Spiritual or religious (8%)
 COMMUNAL	Cultural (86%) Outdoors or active (56%) Social action (56%)	Educational (44%) Spiritual or religious (44%) Cultural (42%)
 RITUAL	Outdoors or active (64%) Educational (61%) Cultural (40%)	Spiritual or religious (33%) Educational (19%) Cultural (16%)
 IMMERSED	Cultural (70%) Spiritual or religious (64%) Educational (60%)	Spiritual or religious (75%) Educational (60%) Social action (41%)

Although social activities are popular for Jewish adults under age 55, only the youngest age group, ages 22-30, listed social activities in a Jewish setting as a top interest. For all age groups, outdoor and active activities are among the top three interests, but none of these groups participated regularly in these activities in a Jewish setting.

TOP THREE TYPES OF ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL AND JEWISH SETTINGS BY AGE

	ANY SETTING (TYPICAL YEAR)	JEWISH-SPONSORED (PAST 2 YEARS)
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	Cultural (70%) Outdoors or active (57%) Educational (40%)	Spiritual or religious (27%) Educational (23%) Cultural (19%)
22-30	Social (67%) Cultural (63%) Outdoors or active (55%)	Spiritual or religious (38%) Cultural (25%) Social (24%)
31-40	Cultural (80%) Outdoors or active (65%) Social (58%)	Spiritual or religious (35%) Educational (33%) Social action (25%)
41-54	Cultural (72%) Outdoors or active (61%) Educational and social (each 41%)	Spiritual or religious (32%) Educational (22%) Cultural (19%)
55-64	Cultural (77%) Outdoors or active (70%) Educational (46%)	Spiritual or religious (29%) Educational (27%) Cultural (20%)
65-74	Cultural (63%) Outdoors or active (44%) Educational (36%)	Educational (22%) Spiritual or religious (20%) Cultural (19%)
75+	Cultural (73%) Educational (33%) Outdoors or active (32%)	Cultural (20%) Educational (19%) Spiritual or religious (15%)

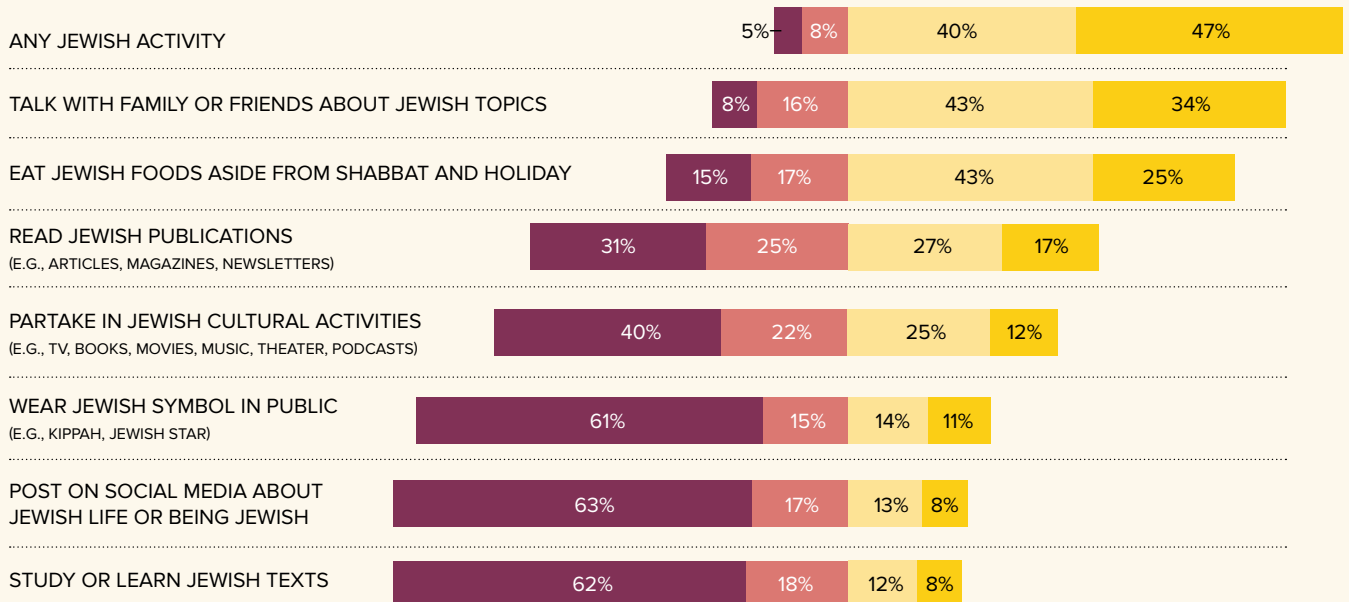
Jewish-Focused Activities

Jewish adults in LA were also asked about the frequency of their participation in a number of Jewish-focused activities in the past year. These Jewish activities include those that take place under the auspices of a Jewish organization, as well as those that are conducted independently. Activities might take place in a communal setting, with friends or family, or alone.

Nearly all Jewish adults participated in at least one of the listed Jewish activities in the past year, including 47% who did so often. Across all Jewish adults, the most common Jewish activities were talking with family or friends about Jewish topics and eating Jewish foods.






JEWISH ACTIVITIES, PAST YEAR

Percent of Jewish adults ■ NEVER ■ RARELY ■ SOMETIMES ■ OFTEN



For Jewish adults in the Minimally Involved group, more than half (61%) engage in some Jewish activities sometimes or often; the most common include talking about Jewish topics with friends and family and eating traditional Jewish foods. In the Communal and the Immersed groups, a large majority read Jewish publications regularly and partake in Jewish books, TV, music, and films.

JEWISH ACTIVITIES BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT, SOMETIMES OR OFTEN, PAST YEAR

	ANY INFORMAL ACTIVITY	TALK ABOUT JEWISH TOPICS	EAT JEWISH FOODS	READ JEWISH PUBLICATIONS	PARTAKE IN JEWISH CULTURE	WEAR JEWISH SYMBOL IN PUBLIC	POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA	STUDY JEWISH TEXT
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	87%	76%	68%	44%	38%	24%	21%	20%
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	61%	45%	39%	8%	7%	6%	3%	2%
 HOLIDAY	88%	76%	63%	30%	25%	14%	13%	2%
 COMMUNAL	100%	95%	91%	79%	77%	31%	38%	29%
 RITUAL	93%	82%	69%	36%	22%	23%	17%	9%
 IMMERSED	100%	99%	93%	88%	73%	57%	46%	75%

The majority of Jewish adults of all ages participate in at least some Jewish activities sometimes or often, however, the types of activities differ by age group. About 85% of Jewish adults ages 40 and younger talk about Jewish topics sometimes or often, compared to about 70% of those ages 65 and older. Not surprisingly, younger Jewish adults are more likely to post on social media about Jewish topics compared to older adults.

JEWISH ACTIVITIES BY AGE, SOMETIMES OR OFTEN, PAST YEAR

	ANY INFORMAL ACTIVITY	TALK ABOUT JEWISH TOPICS	EAT JEWISH FOODS	READ JEWISH PUBLICATIONS	PARTAKE IN JEWISH CULTURE	WEAR JEWISH SYMBOL IN PUBLIC	POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA	STUDY JEWISH TEXT
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	87%	76%	68%	44%	38%	24%	21%	20%
22-30	89%	85%	69%	55%	48%	39%	36%	20%
31-40	93%	86%	76%	54%	44%	29%	35%	25%
41-54	89%	79%	68%	41%	35%	25%	24%	24%
55-64	85%	75%	68%	34%	36%	19%	15%	20%
65-74	84%	70%	66%	48%	34%	19%	11%	20%
75+	83%	69%	66%	48%	36%	15%	10%	10%

Membership in Jewish Organizations

LA is home to a wide variety of Jewish organizations, ranging from membership organizations, such as JCCs or Hadassah, to more informal and “grassroots” groups, such as a Jewish book club or social group. Individuals can connect to these organizations through membership as well as regular participation.






Nineteen percent of LA Jewish households are members or regular participants in LA-based Jewish organizations and groups. Fourteen percent of LA’s Jewish households are members of Jewish organizations aside from congregations based in LA, such as Hadassah or a JCC. Ten percent belong to or regularly participate in local informal or grassroots groups, such as a social *havurah* or a Jewish book club.

About one third each of the Communal and Immersed engagement groups belong to a Jewish organization in LA. Very few members of the Minimally Involved, Holiday, and Ritual engagement groups belong either to traditional membership organizations or to informal Jewish groups.

TERMS

For this section, we define **organizations** as Jewish organizations in which someone might be a member, such as Hadassah or a JCC. We define **groups** as informal or grassroots Jewish groups which may or may not include formal membership, such as a social *havurah* or a Jewish book club.

ORGANIZATION AND GROUP MEMBERSHIP BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	ORGANIZATION AND/OR GROUP	ORGANIZATION MEMBER	GROUP MEMBER OR PARTICIPANT
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	19%	14%	10%
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	3%	3%	<1%
 HOLIDAY	8%	6%	3%
 COMMUNAL	45%	36%	23%
 RITUAL	12%	9%	3%
 IMMERSED	55%	35%	37%

Membership in organizations is higher in the West Valley, East Valley, Westside, and in Central/Metro/Mid, compared to the South Bay and North County Valleys. There is no significant regional difference, however, in membership in informal or grassroots groups.

Smaller shares of financially struggling households have memberships in organizations compared to well-off households, but similar proportions belong to informal or grassroots groups.

ORGANIZATION AND GROUP MEMBERSHIP BY FINANCIAL SITUATION

	ORGANIZATION AND/OR GROUP	ORGANIZATION MEMBER	GROUP MEMBER OR PARTICIPANT
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	19%	14%	10%
STRUGGLING	15%	10%	8%
ENOUGH	22%	15%	12%
EXTRA	20%	14%	10%
WELL-OFF	25%	21%	11%



[LA] lacks a Jewish place to attend for the mainstream Jewish secular person, a place that has cultural events, sports, Israel activities, etc. ... If I want to watch movies with other Jews and have a discussion, there's nowhere to go ... It's a shame!"

Participation in Programs

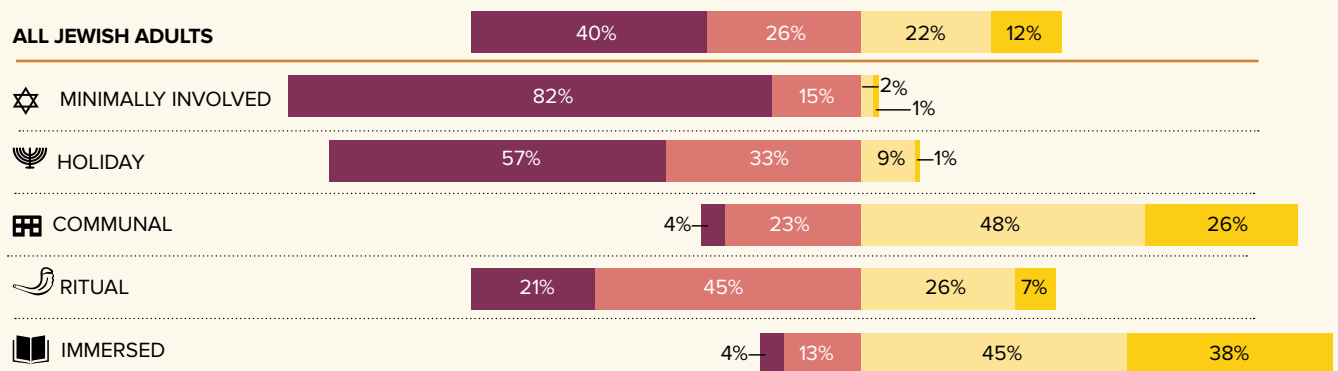
SPONSORED BY JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

Jewish organizational involvement is not limited to membership. Participation in Jewish programs can frequently be a better indicator of the level of interest in particular Jewish topics and activities. In the LA Jewish community, the level of participation in Jewish programs far exceeds membership in Jewish organizations.

In a typical year prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, about 60% of Jewish adults in LA participated in Jewish-sponsored programs at least occasionally. Participation in programs sponsored by Jewish organizations is one of the behaviors that distinguishes the engagement groups from one another. Nearly all members of the Communal and Immersed engagement groups participated in Jewish programs at least occasionally, though a slightly larger share of the Immersed group participated often. In contrast, less than 20% of those in the Minimally Involved group ever participated.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

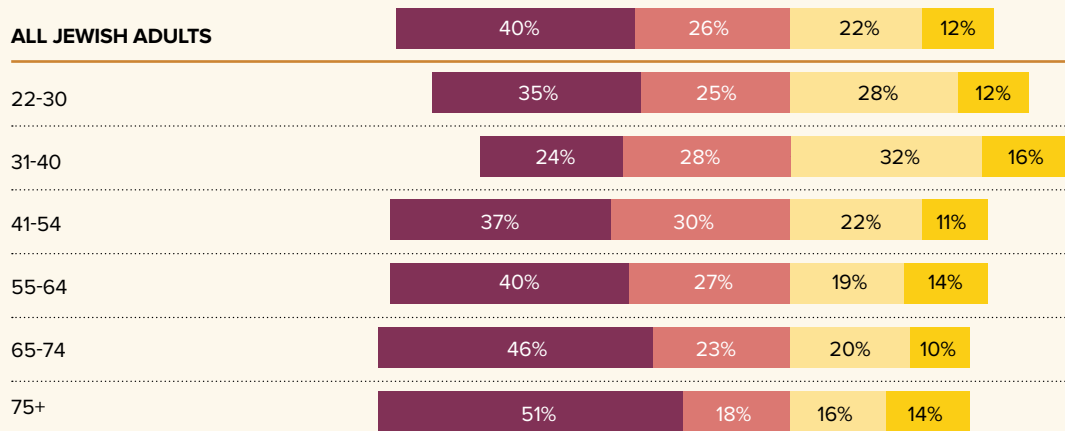
■ NEVER ■ RARELY ■ SOMETIMES ■ OFTEN



While similar shares of each age group participated often in a Jewish-sponsored program, about half of Jewish adults ages 65 and older never participated in a program.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY AGE

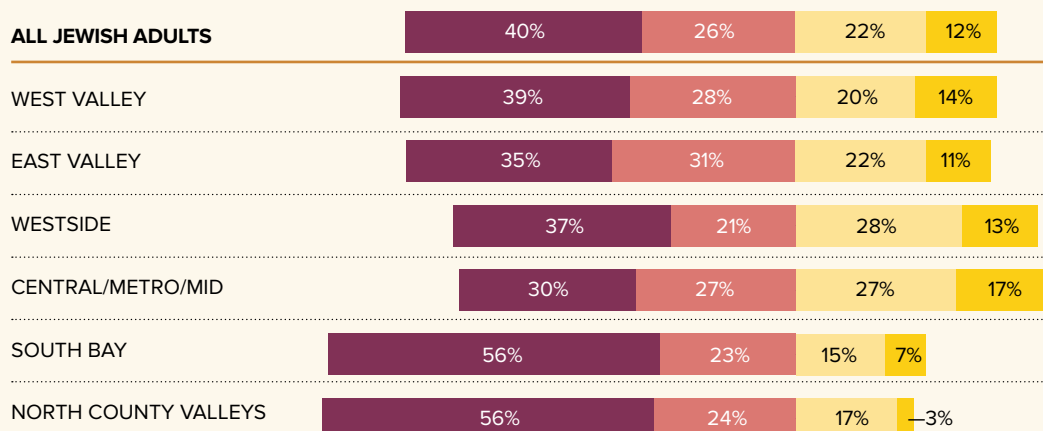
■ NEVER ■ RARELY ■ SOMETIMES ■ OFTEN



There are significant differences in Jewish-sponsored program participation by region. Fewer than half of the adults living in the South Bay and North County Valleys ever participated in a Jewish-sponsored program, compared to 61-70% of adults living in the other regions.

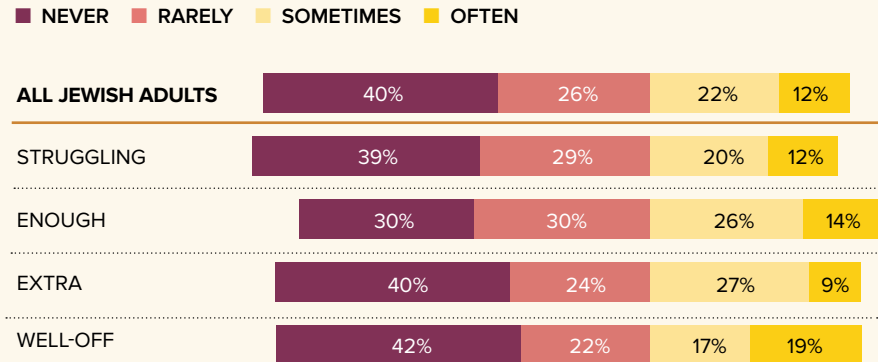
PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY REGION

■ NEVER ■ RARELY ■ SOMETIMES ■ OFTEN



Not surprisingly, an individual's finances affect levels of participation, but the patterns are not straightforward. Jewish adults who are financially well-off include the largest share who participate in Jewish-sponsored programs often (19%) and the largest share of those who never participate (42%).

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY FINANCIAL SITUATION



TYPES OF SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Jewish programs in LA are sponsored by a wide range of organizations, including religious, educational, and cultural institutions. About one quarter of Jewish adults participated in a Jewish program sponsored by a Jewish congregation in LA, and approximately one-in-five Jewish adults participated in activities sponsored by a university, museum, or cultural arts organization ("cultural institution"). Twelve percent each of Jewish adults participated in programs sponsored by a local Chabad or a national Jewish organization (such as ADL, AIPAC, J Street, or Hadassah).

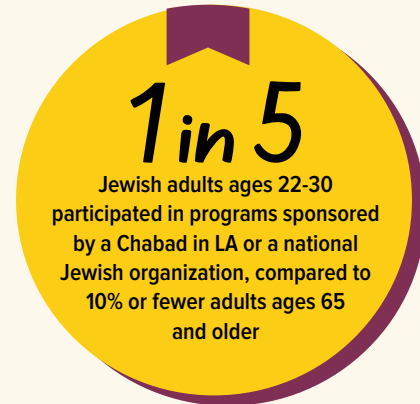
Similar proportions of the Communal and Ritual engagement groups participated in programs sponsored by a synagogue or a Chabad in LA. However, larger shares of the Communal group participated in a program sponsored by a cultural institution or a national Jewish organization.

JEWISH PROGRAM SPONSORS BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT, PAST TWO YEARS

	SYNAGOGUE	CULTURAL INSTITUTION	CHABAD	NATIONAL ORGANIZATION
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	24%	19%	12%	12%
MINIMALLY INVOLVED	<1%	6%	<1%	3%
HOLIDAY	8%	9%	2%	2%
COMMUNAL	37%	43%	15%	29%
RITUAL	30%	13%	17%	9%
IMMERSED	65%	36%	35%	30%

One-in-five Jewish adults ages 22-30 participated in programs sponsored by a Chabad in LA or a national Jewish organization, compared to 10% or fewer adults ages 65 and older.

Compared to other regions, smaller shares of adults in the South Bay and North County Valleys participated in programs sponsored by synagogues and cultural institutions, but similar proportions participated in programs sponsored by a Chabad.



JEWISH PROGRAM SPONSORS BY REGION, PAST TWO YEARS

	SYNAGOGUE	CULTURAL INSTITUTION	CHABAD	NATIONAL ORGANIZATION
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	24%	19%	12%	12%
WEST VALLEY	22%	20%	13%	9%
EAST VALLEY	25%	16%	16%	11%
WESTSIDE	24%	25%	10%	17%
CENTRAL/METRO/MID	37%	20%	12%	16%
SOUTH BAY	13%	7%	11%	11%
NORTH COUNTY VALLEYS	8%	7%	12%	5%

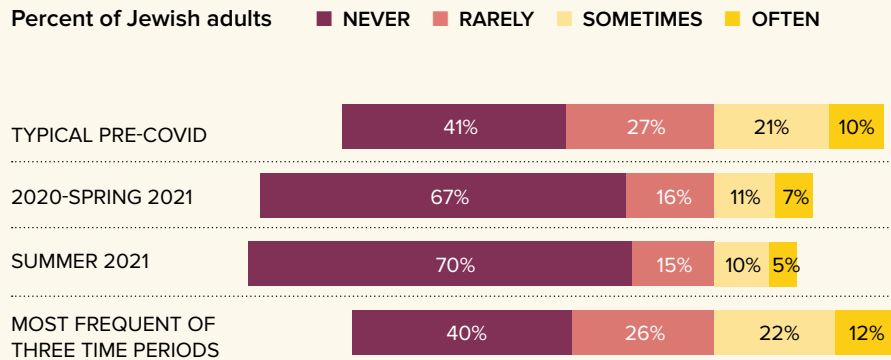
CHANGE IN PROGRAM PARTICIPATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Overall participation in Jewish programs and activities, whether in-person or online, declined with the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, about 60% of Jewish adults participated in Jewish programs at least occasionally, compared to about 30% during the pandemic. At the time of the survey in summer 2021, participation had not begun to recover. For this report, we show participation in Jewish programs during three time periods: typical year pre-COVID, 2020 through spring 2021, and summer 2021.

Overall participation in Jewish programs and activities, whether in-person or online, declined with the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, about 60% of Jewish adults participated in Jewish programs at least occasionally, compared to about 30% during the pandemic

One of the most notable changes that occurred during the initial phase of the pandemic was the rapid shift from in-person to online participation in Jewish programs. Unless otherwise specified, all participation in this report includes both in-person and online activities.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BEFORE AND DURING THE PANDEMIC



“

The online versions of a lot of programs were not very satisfying. In some ways, they made me feel worse because they were a reminder of what we were all missing.”

Forty percent of Jewish adults never participated in any Jewish programs during any of the three time periods. Since the start of the pandemic, 4% of Jewish adults increased their frequency of participation in Jewish programs over a typical previous year, 32% decreased their frequency, and 25% maintained their frequency.

“

I believe online services, classes, and experiences have made it possible for me to reconnect with Judaism starting during the pandemic and continuing after it. I feel more connected to Judaism and being able to participate in classes, services, and programs has enriched my life immensely.”

Philanthropy and Volunteering

Jewish adults also express their Jewish interests and concerns through the organizations and causes that they support, whether by financial contributions, volunteering their time, or both.

.....

VOLUNTEERING

Over the past two years, half of Jewish Angelenos volunteered for at least one organization, whether in person or online. This includes about one quarter of Jewish adults who volunteered for a Jewish cause and almost half who volunteered for a non-Jewish one.

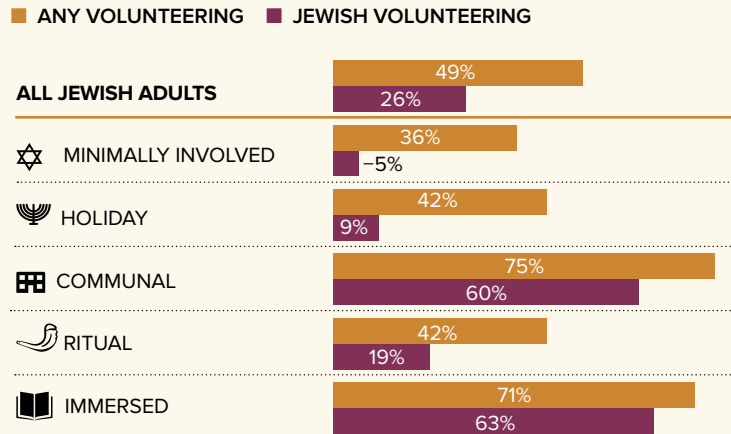
About three quarters of Jewish adults in the Communal and Immersed engagement groups respectively volunteered in the two years prior to the survey, and about 60% of each group volunteered for a Jewish organization. In comparison, 42% each of the Holiday and Ritual groups volunteered overall, as did 36% of the Minimally Involved group. Although the Holiday and Ritual groups had similar shares of Jewish adults who engaged in any volunteering, a larger share of the Ritual group volunteered for a Jewish organization (19%) compared to the Holiday group (9%).

“

The LA Jewish community [lacks] organizations looking for volunteers (to connect people with volunteer work) ... These groups tend to be more about fundraising, which I understand is important, but it shouldn't be the only thing they exist for.”



VOLUNTEERING IN PAST TWO YEARS BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT



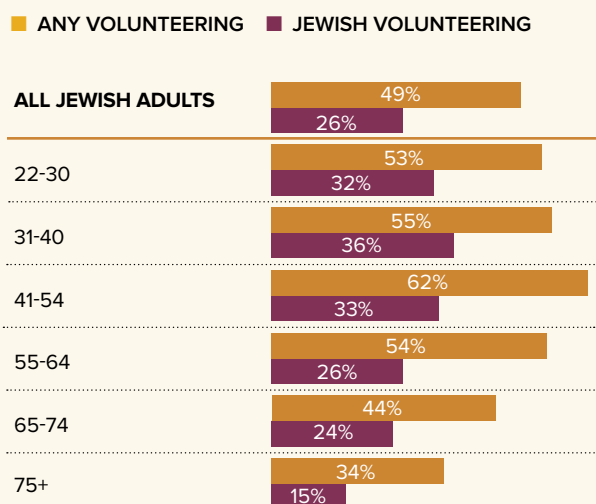
A comparison of Jewish and non-Jewish volunteering illustrates that about 20% of Jewish adults volunteered for both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, and 22% volunteered only for non-Jewish organizations. Seven percent of Jewish adults volunteered only for Jewish organizations. The Immersed group includes the largest share (25%) who volunteered only for Jewish organizations.

VOLUNTEERING FOR JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	BOTH JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH	JEWISH ONLY	NON-JEWISH ONLY	NO VOLUNTEERING
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	20%	7%	22%	51%
MINIMALLY INVOLVED	4%	1%	31%	64%
HOLIDAY	8%	<1%	34%	58%
COMMUNAL	53%	7%	15%	25%
RITUAL	15%	4%	23%	58%
IMMERSED	38%	25%	8%	29%

Half or more of Jewish adults ages 65 and younger engaged in any volunteering during the past two years; fewer adults older than age 65 volunteered. About one third of Jewish adults ages 55 and younger volunteered for a Jewish organization.

VOLUNTEERING IN PAST TWO YEARS BY AGE



Among Jewish adults ages 40 and younger, about one quarter volunteered for both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, and about 20% volunteered for non-Jewish organizations only.

VOLUNTEERING FOR JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS BY AGE

	BOTH JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH	JEWISH ONLY	NON-JEWISH ONLY	NO VOLUNTEERING
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	20%	7%	22%	51%
22-30	24%	8%	21%	47%
31-40	28%	8%	20%	45%
41-54	27%	7%	29%	38%
55-64	19%	7%	27%	46%
65-74	17%	6%	20%	56%
75+	10%	5%	19%	66%

There are no significant differences in volunteering patterns by financial situation. However, as shown below, there are differences in donating patterns.

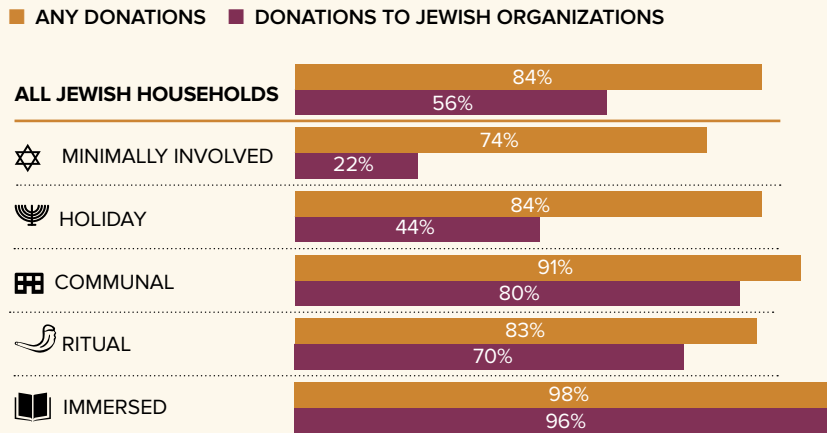
PHILANTHROPY

About nine-in-ten Jewish households in LA made at least one charitable donation in the past year. Half of Jewish households donated to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations. Five percent of Jewish households donated only to Jewish organizations, and 28% donated only to non-Jewish organizations.

Patterns of donations varied significantly across Jewish engagement groups. The share of Jewish households in the Minimally Involved group that made any donations is slightly lower than the other groups, and half of the Minimally Involved households donated only to non-Jewish organizations.

Jewish households in the Communal and Immersed groups had the highest shares of those that made any donations, and in each group, about three quarters donated to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations. Among the Immersed group, 20% of households donated only to Jewish organizations.

DONATIONS IN THE PAST YEAR BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT



DONATIONS TO JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

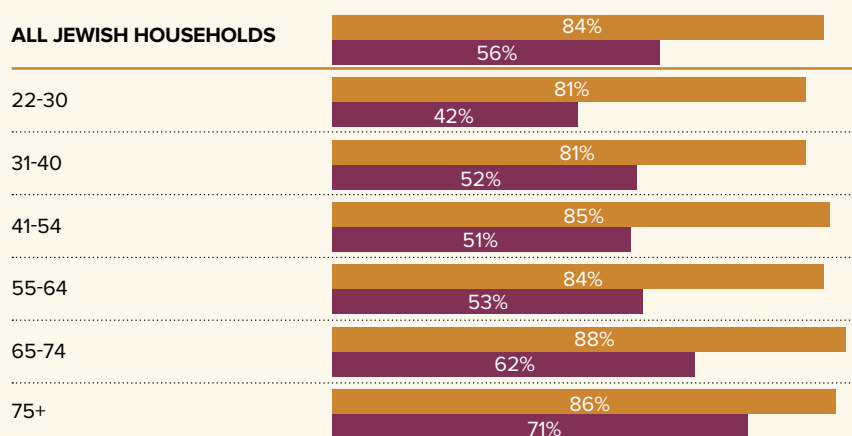
	BOTH JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH	JEWISH ONLY	NON-JEWISH ONLY	NO DONATION
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	51%	5%	28%	11%
MINIMALLY INVOLVED	21%	1%	51%	20%
HOLIDAY	43%	1%	40%	11%
COMMUNAL	77%	4%	11%	7%
RITUAL	62%	8%	13%	12%
IMMERSED	76%	20%	2%	2%

Note: Table excludes the 4% of households that did not know whether they made donations.

Participation in philanthropy also varies by age. Jewish households with older adults are somewhat more likely to make any charitable donations; this might be related to their financial situation (see below). The Jewish households in the youngest age group include the largest share that donated only to non-Jewish organizations (39%) and the smallest share that donated to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations (38%). By contrast, among Jewish households with adults ages 75 and older, two thirds donated to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, and 14% donated only to non-Jewish organizations.

DONATIONS IN THE PAST YEAR BY AGE

■ ANY DONATIONS ■ DONATIONS TO JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS



Nearly 40% of Jewish households ages 22-30 donated only to non-Jewish organizations, and about the same share donated to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations

Note: Differences in "any donation" category are not statistically significant.

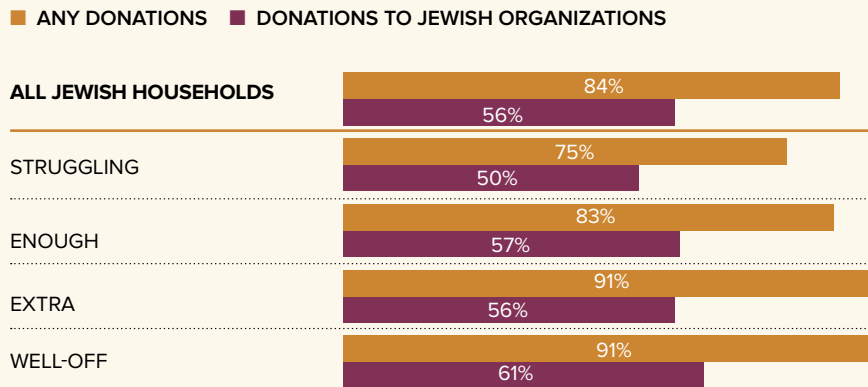
DONATIONS TO JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS BY AGE

	BOTH JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH	JEWISH ONLY	NON-JEWISH ONLY	NO DONATION
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	51%	5%	28%	11%
22-30	38%	4%	39%	16%
31-40	43%	9%	29%	14%
41-54	46%	4%	34%	10%
55-64	50%	4%	31%	12%
65-74	54%	7%	26%	9%
75+	67%	5%	14%	9%

Note: Table excludes the 4% of households that did not know whether they made donations.

Compared to Jewish households that are struggling, households with greater financial means have larger shares that made any donations. Larger shares of well-off Jewish households and households with extra money donated only to non-Jewish organizations.

DONATIONS IN THE PAST YEAR BY FINANCIAL SITUATION



Note: Differences in Jewish donations category are not statistically significant.

DONATIONS TO JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS BY FINANCIAL SITUATION

	BOTH JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH	JEWISH ONLY	NON-JEWISH ONLY	NO DONATION
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	51%	5%	28%	11%
STRUGGLING	42%	8%	25%	19%
ENOUGH	50%	7%	26%	13%
EXTRA	52%	3%	35%	6%
WELL-OFF	59%	2%	30%	6%

Note: Table excludes the 4% of households that did not know whether they made donations.

Slightly larger shares of Jewish households in the West Valley and Westside gave to Jewish organizations, compared to Jewish households elsewhere in Los Angeles. Over half of Jewish households in the North County Valleys donated only to non-Jewish organizations, compared to 25-31% of Jewish households elsewhere.

Few Jewish adults have designated a Jewish organization—or any organization—as a beneficiary in their will or estate planning. Even among those with a will, the vast majority are not planning on making charitable bequests.

“*There is a huge wealth of human capital in the LA Jewish community, and there is a tremendous number of resources, if you know where to look.*”

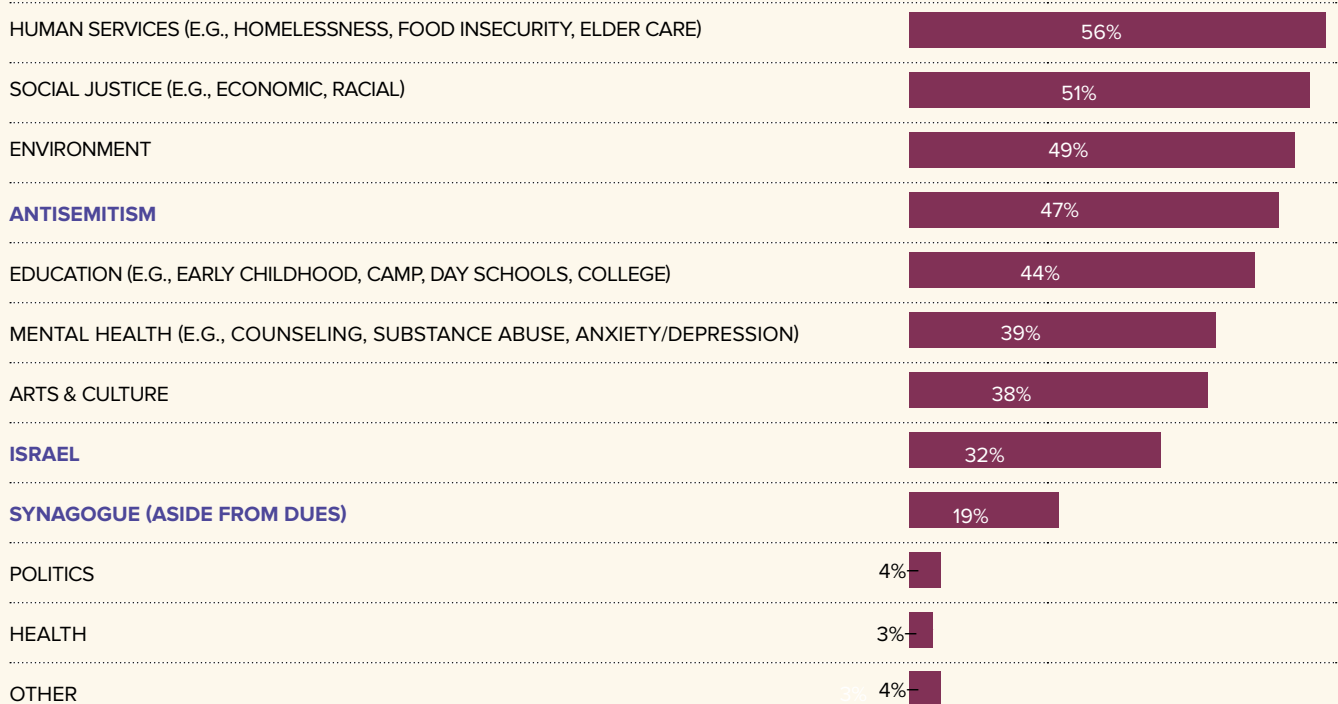
Causes of Interest

Among the causes that Jewish adults in LA indicate an interest in volunteering for or donating to, the most popular is human services (56%), followed by social justice (51%), and the environment (49%). With regard to explicitly Jewish-related issues, 47% of Jewish adults cite antisemitism, 32% cite Israel, and 19% cite synagogues as important causes for volunteering or philanthropy.

IMPORTANT CAUSES FOR VOLUNTEERING OR DONATING

Percent of Jewish adults






Note: Causes that are specifically Jewish are indicated in blue.



Note: Politics and health were not listed on the survey and were provided as write-in responses. It is possible that if they were listed on the survey, more respondents would have selected these options.

Jewish engagement groups differ in the causes they prioritize. For example, human services, social justice, the environment, and mental health are the four most important causes to those in the Minimally Involved group. For Jews in the Immersed group, on the other hand, education, Israel, human services, and synagogues are the four most important causes.

TOP FOUR CAUSES BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

ALL JEWISH ADULTS	Human services (56%) Social justice (51%) Environment (49%) Antisemitism (47%)
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	Human services (56%) Social justice (49%) Environment (49%) Mental health (35%)
 HOLIDAY	Environment (58%) Social justice (53%) Human services (52%) Arts & culture (45%)
 COMMUNAL	Social justice (67%) Human services (65%) Antisemitism (57%) Education (48%)
 RITUAL	Human services (62%) Social justice (53%) Environment (50%) Antisemitism (49%)
 IMMERSED	Education (61%) Israel (60%) Human services (56%) Synagogue (55%)

While similar shares of all age groups believe that human services and social justice are important causes, their relative ranking differs by age. For example, social justice is an important cause to 60% of Jewish adults ages 22-30 and 44% of those ages 65-74.

TOP FOUR CAUSES BY AGE

ALL JEWISH ADULTS	Human services (56%) Social justice (51%) Environment (49%) Antisemitism (47%)
22-30	Social justice (60%) Antisemitism (57%) Education (57%) Environment (54%)
31-40	Human services (63%) Social justice (55%) Education (52%) Environment (45%)
41-54	Human services (61%) Education (50%) Social justice (47%) Environment (44%)
55-64	Human services (56%) Social justice (53%) Environment (52%) Antisemitism (44%)
65-74	Human services (58%) Antisemitism (49%) Environment (44%) Social justice (44%)
75+	Social justice (58%) Human services (56%) Antisemitism (54%) Environment / Arts & culture (47%)

CONCLUSION:

Building Jewish Activities and Organizations

One way in which Jewish organizations attempt to increase Jewish engagement in the community is by designing programs that are meaningful to segments of their population. Understanding the ways in which LA Jews currently participate in programs, as well as their interests and priorities, provides important context for thinking about meeting community members' needs.

This report describes the wide variety of ways that Jewish Angelenos participate in Jewish life outside of specifically religious and ritual frameworks.² These activities occur within Jewish settings, in informal and formal Jewish organizational frameworks, as well as at home, with friends and family, or alone.

Some of the takeaways from this report include:

- ✓ Although LA Jews are involved in a host of secular activities, nearly all Jewish adults participate in some Jewish activities, such as discussing Jewish topics with friends and eating traditional Jewish foods. Jewish organizations should investigate ways to support these Jewish activities that individuals are already engaging in outside of communal spaces.
- ✓ About half of Jewish Angelenos participate in programs that are sponsored by Jewish organizations. There are, however, distinct differences in the types of activities they choose in Jewish and non-Jewish settings. Organizations may wish to consider how they can incorporate the strong interest in cultural, social, and outdoor activities within a Jewish context.
- ✓ Although only 14% of Jewish households belong to a formal Jewish organization, participation in Jewish organizational life—whether by attending programs, volunteering, or donating—is higher. Membership should not be a prerequisite for or sole indicator of community involvement.
- ✓ The top causes for volunteering and philanthropy include human services, social justice, the environment, and antisemitism. Although support for some of these causes occurs in a Jewish framework, in many cases it does not. Jewish organizations may want to consider how to address the interest in these causes in their Jewish communal spaces.

These findings suggest several future directions for LA Jewish organizations. By considering both the content of their work and the structure of their membership, organizations may be able to position themselves to attract new participants and better address community needs.

² See Congregations and Ritual report for information on Jewish ritual and religious life.