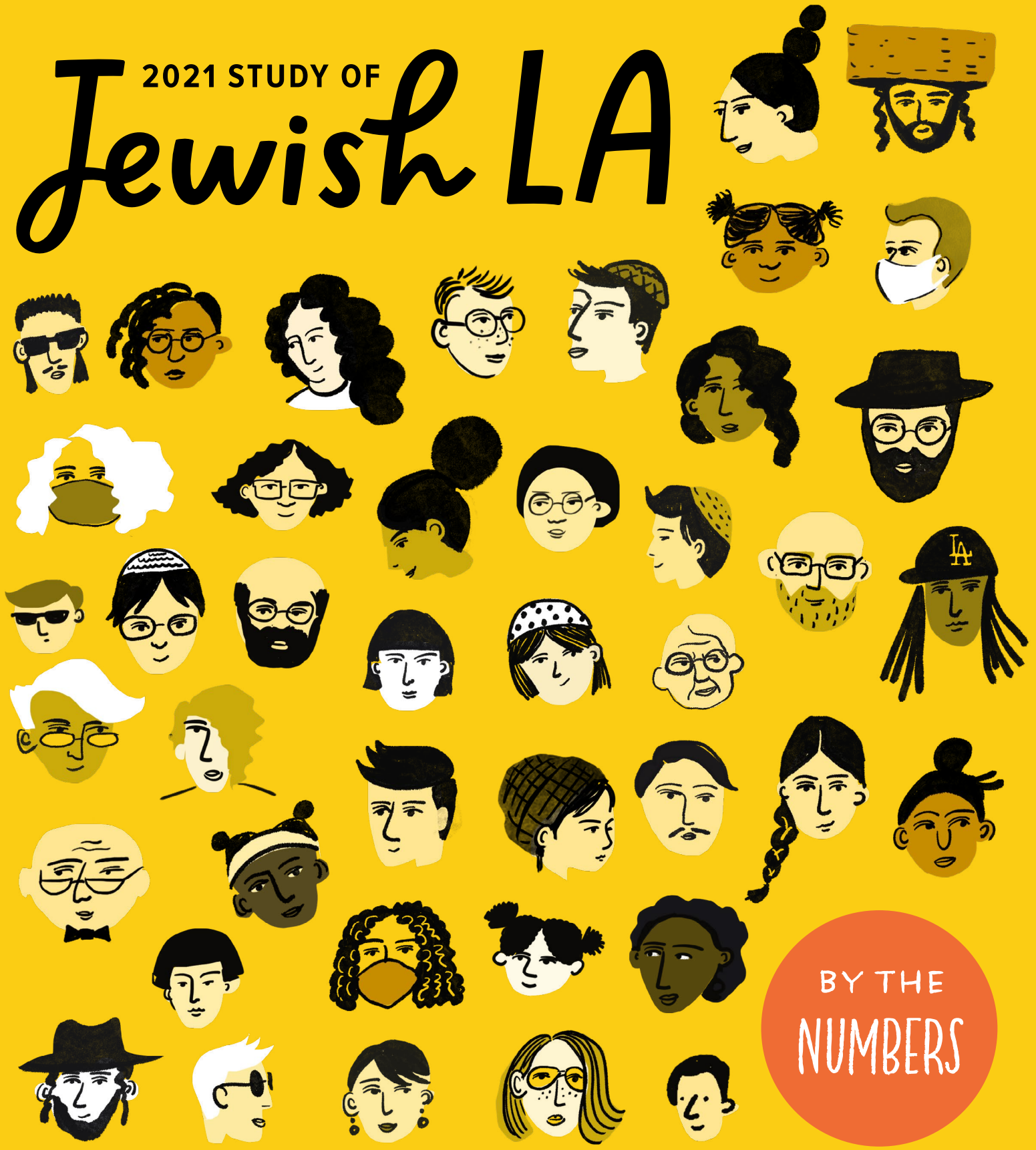


2021 STUDY OF *Jewish* LA



BY THE
NUMBERS

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



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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

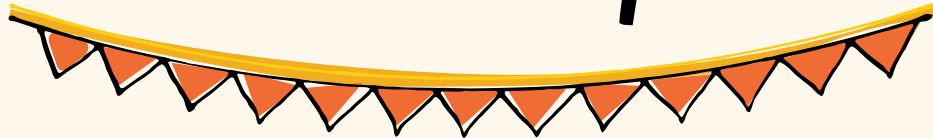


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The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS), founded in 1980, is dedicated to providing independent, high-quality research on issues related to contemporary Jewish life.

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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

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
Seder, Hanukkah, Shabbat occasionally



16%

COMMUNAL
Seder, Hanukkah, High Holiday services, attend Jewish programs, donate to Jewish causes, Jewish books/TV/music



16%

RITUAL
Seder, Hanukkah, High Holiday services, Shabbat, half are synagogue members



17%

IMMERSED
All holidays, most are synagogue members, attend Jewish programs, donate to Jewish causes, Jewish books/TV/music

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 “—”.

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.

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.



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

LA by the Numbers

This report discusses the size and demographic characteristic of the Los Angeles Jewish community. The ways in which members of the LA Jewish community participate in Jewish life—whether at home with family celebrations and personal activities or in programs sponsored by Jewish organizations—are closely related to their ages, household composition, denomination, marital status, and other demographic factors.

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. Approximately 8% of all residents¹ of the catchment area are Jewish, and 11.3% of all households include at least one Jewish adult. The geographic boundaries of the catchment area are described on the next page.

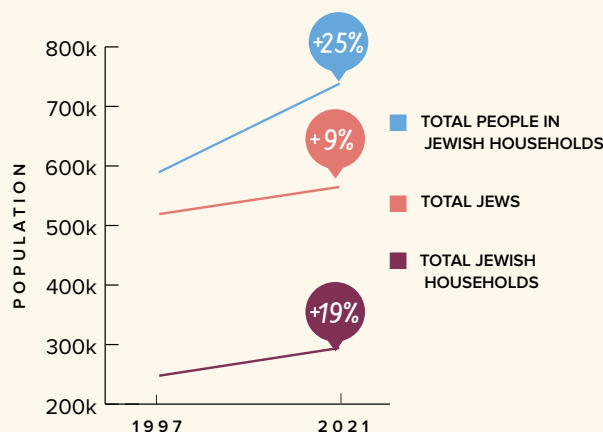
The most recent scientific study of the LA Jewish community prior to this one was conducted in 1997.² Over the last quarter century, the number of Jews increased by about 9%³ Concurrently, the total number of people in Jewish households grew by 25%. By comparison, the overall LA County population increased by 5% between 2000 and 2020.⁴ The dramatic increase in the total number of people in Jewish households is related to rising rates of intermarriage and the growing number of non-Jewish individuals in these households.

JEWISH POPULATION ESTIMATES OF LA, 2021

JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	294,200
PEOPLE IN JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	737,900
NON-JEWISH INDIVIDUALS	173,800
TOTAL 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.

CHANGE IN LA JEWISH POPULATION, 1997-2021



TERMS

JEWISH ADULTS: Identify as Jewish (by religion, ethnically, or culturally) and have a Jewish background: at least one Jewish parent, raised Jewish, or converted to Judaism

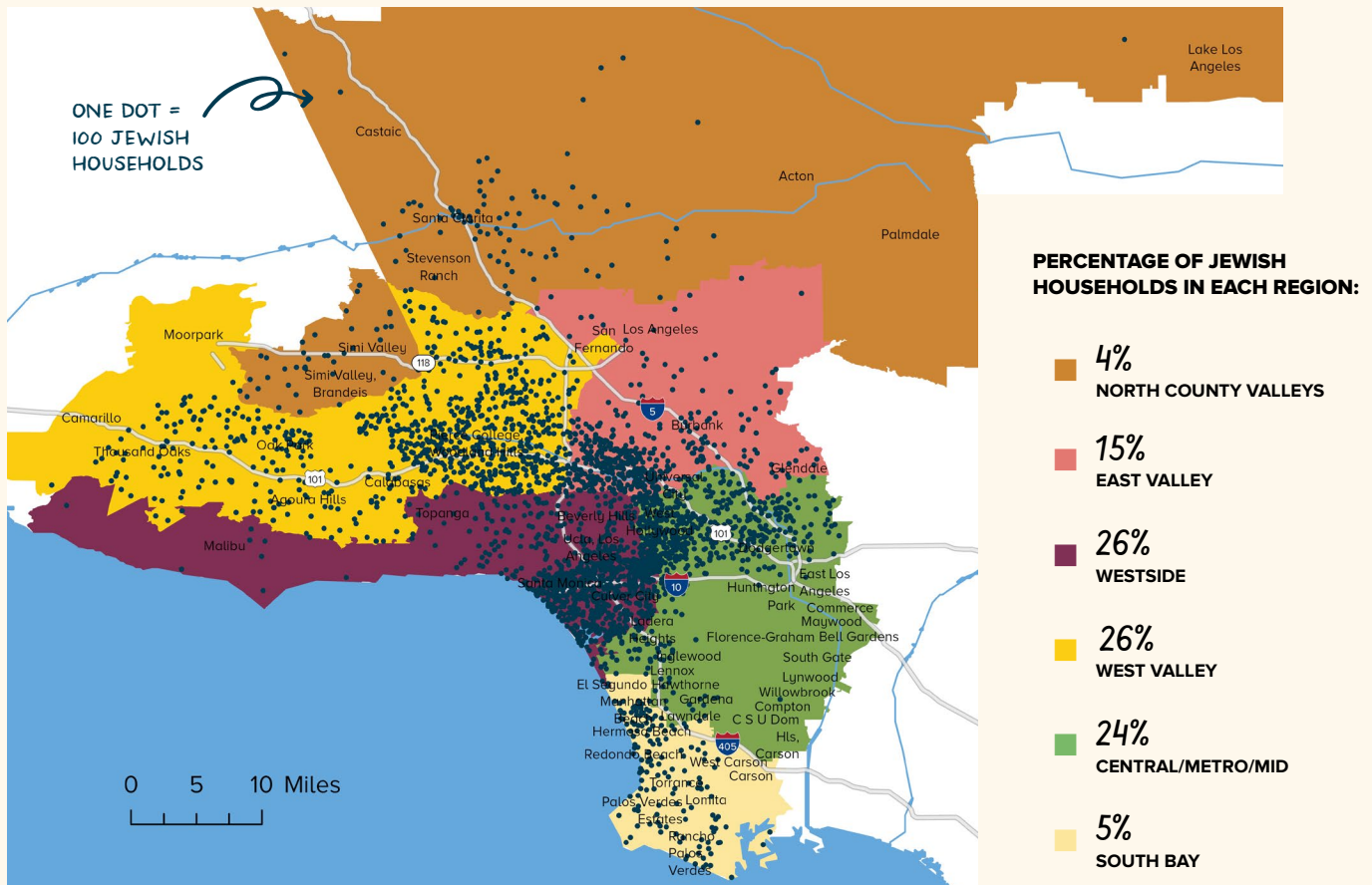
JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS: Households that include at least one Jewish adult

JEWISH CHILDREN: Children in Jewish households whose parents consider them to be Jewish

Geography

The Jewish community is located throughout the cities and neighborhoods of Los Angeles: 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 the six regions described below.

MAP OF JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS IN LA



■ **NORTH COUNTY VALLEYS:** Canyon Country, Castaic, Newhall, Palmdale, Santa Clarita, Simi Valley, Stevenson Ranch

■ **EAST VALLEY:** Arleta, Burbank, Glendale, La Crescenta, North Hills, North Hollywood, Panorama City, Sherman Oaks, Studio City, Sunland, Sylmar, Toluca Lake, Tujunga, Tuna Canyon, Valley Village, Van Nuys

■ **WESTSIDE:** Bel Air, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Century City, Culver City, Fox Hills, Malibu, Mar Vista, Marina del Rey, North Beverly Hills, Pacific Palisades, Palms/La Cienega Heights, Playa del Rey, Rancho Park, Santa Monica, Sawtelle, Topanga, UCLA, Venice, Westwood

■ **WEST VALLEY:** Agoura, Bell Canyon, Calabasas, Canoga Park, Chatsworth, Encino, Granada Hills, Lake Balboa, Lynn Ranch, Mission Hills, Moorpark, Newbury Park, North Hills, Northridge, Oak Park, Porter Ranch, Reseda, San Fernando, Tarzana, Thousand Oaks, Warner Center, West Hills, Westlake Village, Winnetka, Woodland Hills

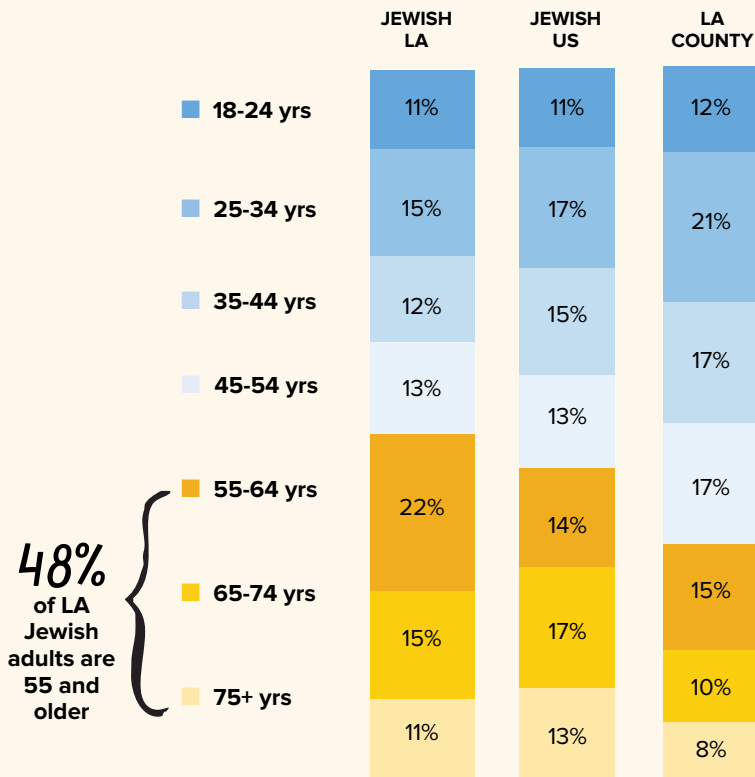
■ **CENTRAL/METRO/MID:** Alondra Park, Athens, Atwater Village, Avalon Gardens, Baldwin Hills, Bell Gardens, Boyle Heights, Central Alameda, Central LA, Chinatown, Cienega, City Terrace, Commerce, Compton, Downtown, Eagle Rock, East Hollywood, Echo Park, El Sereno/Cal State LA, Fairfax, Gardena, Glassell Park, Gramercy, Hawthorne, Highland Park, Hollywood, Hollywood Hills, Huntington Park, Inglewood, Koreatown, Ladera Heights, Lafayette Square, Larchmont Village, Lawndale, Lincoln Heights, Little Armenia, Los Feliz, Lynwood, Mar Vista, Maywood, Pico Union, Pico-Robertson, Rancho Dominguez, South Gate, St James Park, Strawberry Park, USC/University Park, Vermont Square, Vernon, W Rancho Dominguez, Watts, West Adams, West Hollywood, Westlake, Willow Brook, Windsor Hills

■ **SOUTH BAY:** Carson, Carver City, El Segundo, Hermosa Beach, Lomita, Manhattan Beach, Redondo, Redondo Beach, Rolling Hills, San Pedro, Torrance, Wilmington

Age and Gender

Los Angeles Jewish adults skew older than the LA County population as a whole and are similar in age to all US Jewish adults.

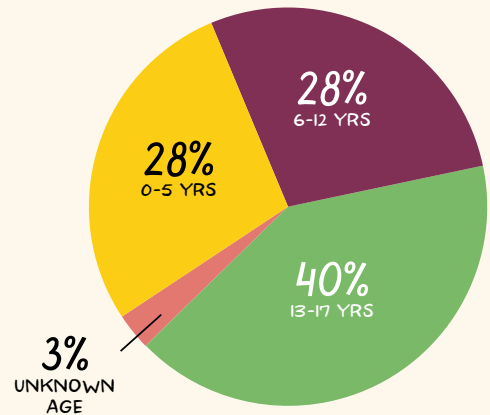
AGES OF JEWISH ADULTS⁵



Median/Mean Ages

The mean age of local Jewish adults is 51, and the median age is 53; nationally, the median age of Jewish adults is 49.⁶ Including children in the analysis lowers the mean age. The mean age of all Jewish Angelenos is 43, and the median is 45.

AGES OF JEWISH CHILDREN



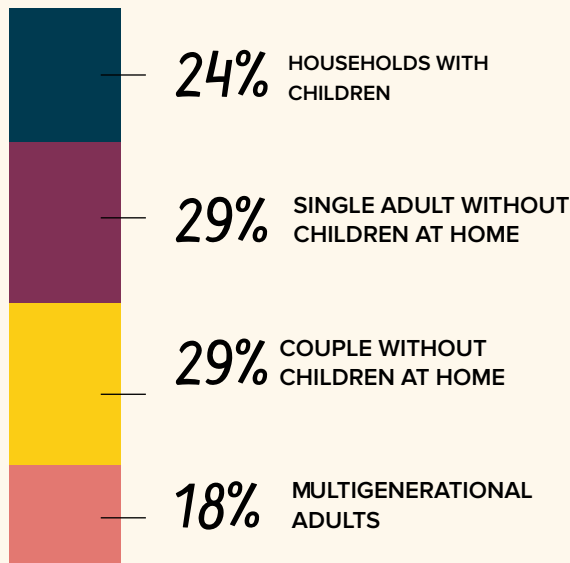
GENDER

Overall, the Los Angeles Jewish community is 49% female, 49% male, and 1% non-binary or another gender identity.

Household Composition

The nearly 300,000 Los Angeles Jewish households include families with children under age 18 (24%) and married or cohabiting couples without children at home (29%). Another 29% of Jewish households include an adult living alone or with unrelated roommates.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION



TERMS



COUPLES include both those who are legally married and those who are partnered and living together.



MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS are defined as parents and adult children of any age living together. These households are nearly all adults in their 20s or 30s living with parents or grandparents in their 50s and older, but also include middle-aged adults living with a parent in their 70s or older. These households do not include children.



CHILDREN are minors under age 18.

MEAN JEWISH HOUSEHOLD SIZE

2.5
INDIVIDUALS

1.9
JEWISH
INDIVIDUALS

1.8
CHILDREN
(among households
with children)

Education and Employment

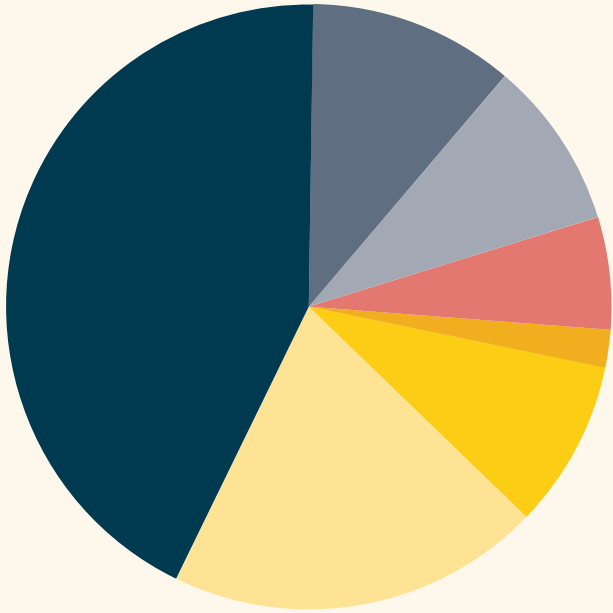
The Los Angeles Jewish population is highly educated. Thirty-six percent of Jewish adults hold a graduate degree of some kind, and about two thirds (68%) have at least a bachelor's degree. Nationally, 58% of Jewish adults have a college degree.⁷

Nearly two thirds of Jewish adults not enrolled in high school are working, and another 6% are unemployed and looking for work. One-in-five Jewish adults are retired.



EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF JEWISH ADULTS

(Of Jewish adults not enrolled in high school)



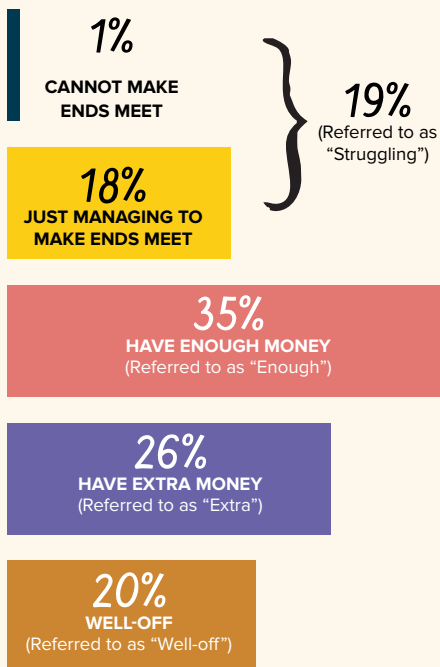
- 63% EMPLOYED
 - 43% ONE FULL-TIME JOB
 - 11% ONE PART-TIME JOB
 - 9% MULTIPLE POSITIONS
- 6% UNEMPLOYED
- 32% NOT WORKING
 - 2% ON MEDICAL LEAVE OR DISABILITY
 - 9% NOT WORKING BY CHOICE
- 21% RETIRED

Financial Status

The majority of Jewish households are financially comfortable, but 19% report either being unable to make ends meet or just managing to make ends meet. Throughout this report, we refer to these two categories as “struggling.”

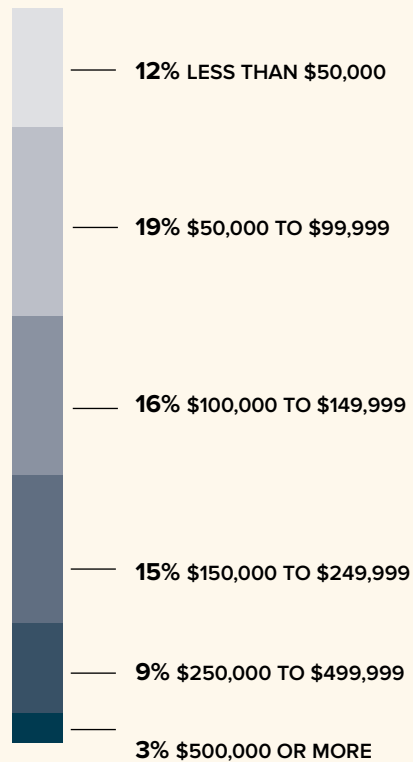
HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL SITUATION

Percent of Jewish households that describe themselves as...
(Text in parentheses is the category name used within this report)



HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2020

Not shown: 26% who do not know or prefer not to answer.

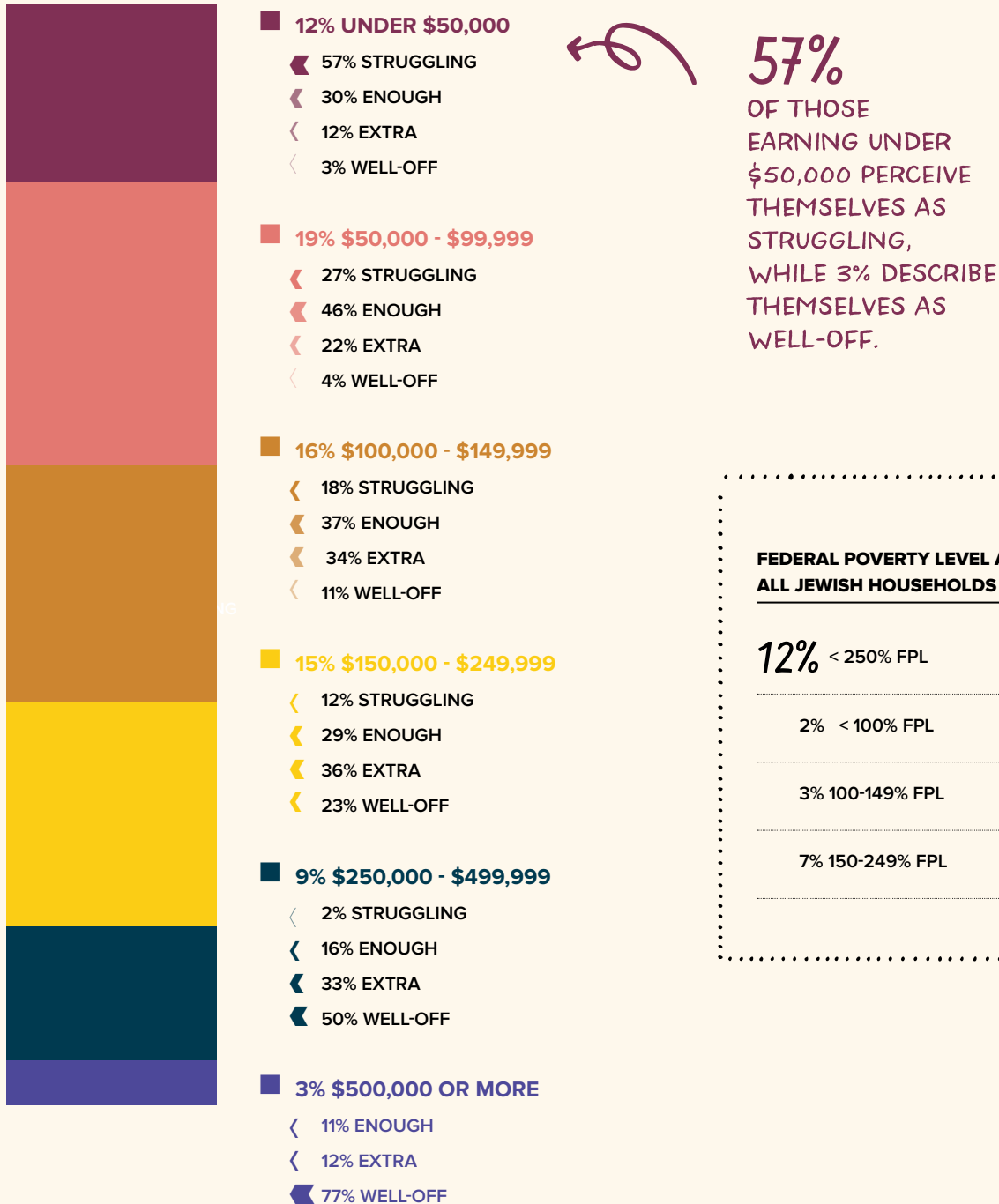


COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT

Sixteen percent of Jewish households report that their financial situation is somewhat or much worse than it was before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

JEWISH HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL SITUATION BY INCOME LEVEL, 2020

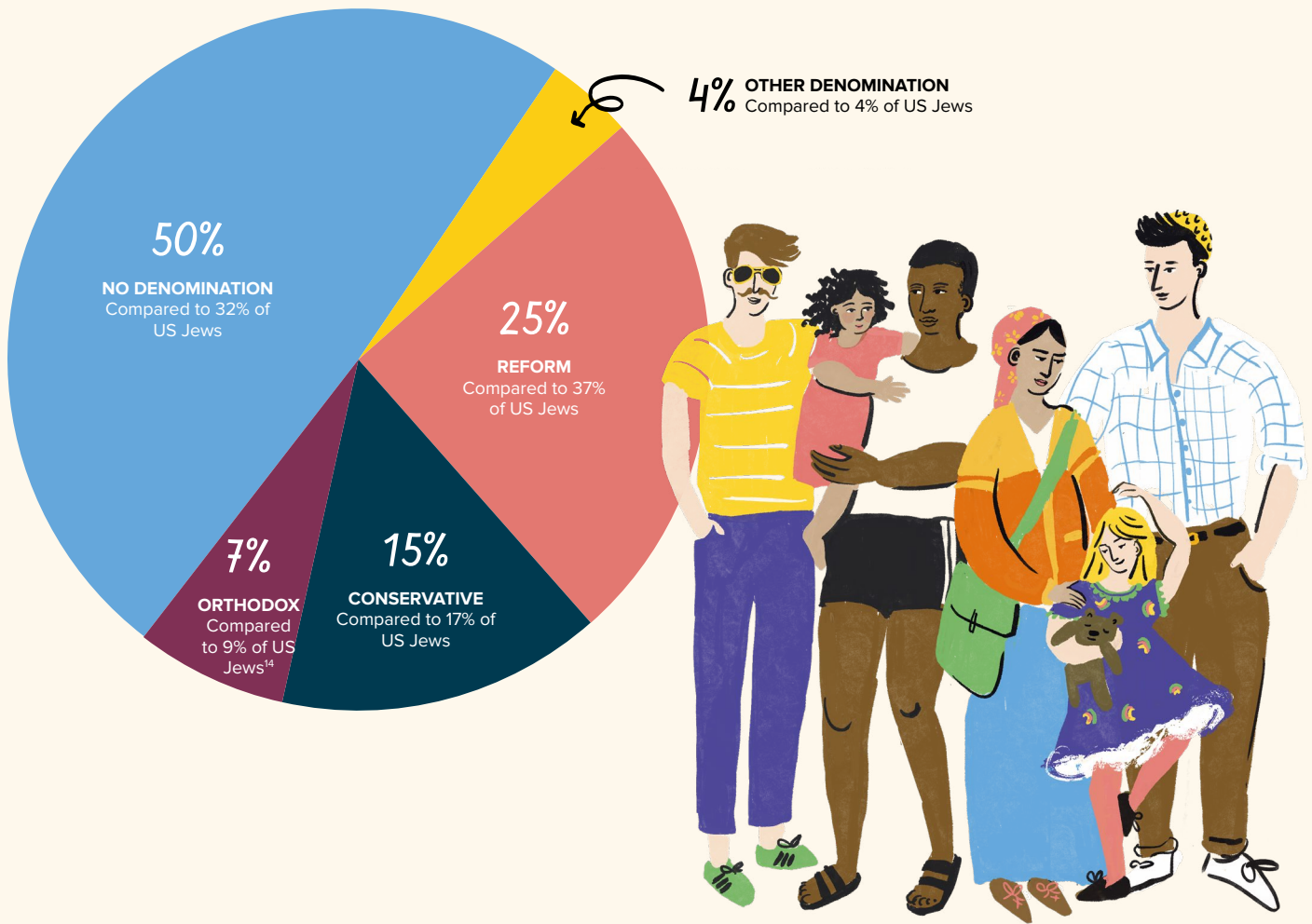
Note: Among the 26% of households that did not report income, 13% are financially struggling, and 28% are well-off.



Jewish Denominations

Nationally, a declining share of Jewish adults identify with a specific Jewish denomination, and in Los Angeles this trend is especially prevalent. Half of Jewish adults have no denomination and identify either as secular/cultural Jews or as “just Jewish.” In comparison, 32% of all US Jewish adults have no specific denomination.⁹

DENOMINATION OF JEWISH ADULTS IN LA¹⁰



Inmarriage and Inter-marriage

Among Jewish adults in LA who are married or partnered, 42% are married to a non-Jewish person (intermarriage rate). The national intermarriage rate for married Jews is 42%.¹¹

INDIVIDUAL MARITAL STATUS BY AGE

Includes partners who live together.

	OVERALL	22-30 yrs	31-40 yrs	41-54 yrs	55-64 yrs	65-74 yrs	75+ yrs
MARRIED/ PARTNERED JEWISH ADULTS	70%	29%	77%	89%	79%	73%	64%
INMARRIED (of those married/partnered)	58%	40%	66%	65%	56%	57%	69%
INTERMARRIED (of those married/partnered)	42%	60%	34%	35%	44%	43%	31%

DEFINING TERMS

“**COUPLES**” and “**MARRIAGES**” include married and cohabiting couples. “Spouse” refers to marital spouses and partners.

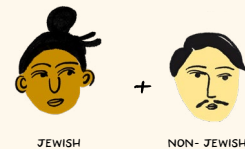
INMARRIED: two partners who are currently Jewish, regardless of whether they were born Jewish or converted

INTERMARRIED: one partner currently Jewish and one partner not Jewish

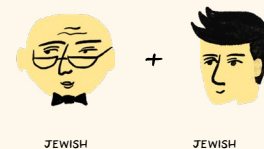
HOUSEHOLD INTERMARRIAGE RATE: percentage of couples that include a Jewish and non-Jewish partner

INDIVIDUAL INTERMARRIAGE RATE: percentage of married/partnered Jewish adults with a partner who is not Jewish

INTERMARRIED



INMARRIED



Notes

- 1 ACS 2019 5-year estimates.
- 2 Pini Herman, "Los Angeles Jewish Population Survey '97" (Los Angeles: The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, 1998). https://www.jewishdatabank.org/content/upload/bjdb/345/C-CA-Los_Angeles-1997-Report.pdf
- 3 For the previous study, those who considered themselves to be Jewish and another religion were not classified as Jewish adults.
- 4 US Decennial Census, data.census.gov
- 5 US Jews from Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020"; LA County from ACS 2019 5-year estimates.
- 6 Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020."
- 7 Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020."
- 8 See <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references/2021-poverty-guidelines#thresholds>
- 9 Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020."
- 10 Ages of US Jewish adults from Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020."
- 11 Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020." Based on marriages only, not partners.