

American Jewish Population Project



Summary & Highlights
2019

Brandeis

STEINHARDT SOCIAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Elizabeth Tighe
Raquel Magidin de Kramer
Daniel Parmer
Daniel Nussbaum
Daniel Kallista
Xajavion Seabrum
Leonard Saxe

© 2019 Brandeis University
Steinhardt Social Research Institute
www.brandeis.edu/ssri

Established in 2005 and housed at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, the Steinhardt Social Research Institute (SSRI) uses innovative research methods to collect and analyze sociodemographic data on the Jewish community.

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

Introduction

This report presents the current population estimates for the US Jewish Population released by the American Jewish Population Project (AJPP) at the Steinhardt Social Research Institute in July 2019. AJPP synthesizes data from nationally representative surveys of the US population to produce estimates of the Jewish population in the contiguous US. Estimates are based on the proportion of US adults who identify their religion as Jewish. Supplemental sources of data are used to estimate the number of children and the portion of Jewish adults who do not identify as Jewish by religion.¹

AJPP is the only independent source of data to provide sociodemographic characteristics of the population (age, educational attainment, and race/ethnicity) for the entire contiguous US, its states, metropolitan areas, and counties (or groups of counties) in an ongoing program of research. As new data are incorporated, estimates are updated, as are analysis models, and methods to improve the estimation process.

Highlights

Overall, the data synthesis yields an estimate of **4.4 million adults, or 1.8% of the total US population, who identify as Jewish when asked about their religion.** Adjustments based on supplemental sources of data to account for Jewish adults who do not identify as Jewish when asked about religion and for children results in an **overall population estimate of 7.5 million.** See Table 1 for a breakdown of the total Jewish population.

AJPP is the only independent source of data to provide sociodemographic characteristics of the population for the entire contiguous US, its states, metropolitan areas, and counties in an ongoing program of research.

- A total of 7.5 million people in the US are Jewish.² This includes:
 - 4.4 million US adults (1.8%) identify their religion as Jewish
 - An additional 1.5 million Jewish adults identify with no religion³
 - 1.6 million children under the age of 18 are being raised Jewish
- More than 1 in 10 US adult Jews self-identifies as non-white.
- 63% of Jewish adults ages 25 and older are college graduates
- 91% of Jewish adults live within the top 40 metropolitan areas in the US
- Nearly half of Jewish adults live in just three states: New York (21%), California (14%), and Florida (12%)

Table 1: National Population Estimates, 2019

Adults	
Jewish by religion	4,433,000
Jewish not by religion	1,467,000
Total Jewish Adults	5,899,000
Children	
Total Jewish Children	1,579,000
Total Jewish Population	7,479,000

*Total Jewish population in households, does not include group quarters (e.g., college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities, and workers' dormitories).

¹ This includes the Pew Research Center (2013) A Portrait of Jewish Americans, along with local Jewish community studies.

² All data presented in this report are estimates and contain uncertainty. The total population could be as low as 7.1 million or as high as 7.8 million. Source: Steinhardt Social Research Institute, 2019 Jewish Population Estimates (Release Date: July 25, 2019).

³ This is a conservative estimate based on county level estimates of adults with no religion who consider themselves Jewish and had a Jewish parent or were raised Jewish. Source: "JNR and Kid Sources, 2019" accessed from <http://ajpp.brandeis.edu/documents/2019/JNR_Kids_Sources.pdf>



Characteristics of JEWISH ADULTS

Jewish adults are older, with 26% aged 65 years or older compared to 21% of US adults overall in this age group (See Table 1). Jewish adults also are more likely to be college graduates (59%) compared to US adults overall (29%). Among those 25 years or older, Jewish adults are also more likely to be college graduates (63%) compared to US adults overall (31%).

They are also disproportionately White non-Hispanic (89% vs 66% of all adults).

Table 2: Population Estimates for Jewish Adults by Age, Education, and Race/Ethnicity, 2019

	US Adults		Jewish Adults ¹						
	Pop.	Pct.	Percentage of US		Pop.	CI: Low	CI: Hi	Percentage within	
Total All Groups	244,087,418		1.8	(1.7, 1.9)	4,432,600	4,252,800	4,618,000		
Gender									
Male	118,746,895	48.6	1.8	(1.7, 1.9)	2,156,300	2,056,600	2,263,600	48.6	(47.4, 50.0)
Female	125,340,523	51.4	1.8	(1.7, 1.9)	2,276,200	2,169,900	2,391,000	51.4	(50.0, 52.6)
Age									
18-24 years	27,041,716	11.1	1.7	(1.6, 1.9)	466,100	422,300	512,600	10.5	(9.7, 11.5)
25-34 years	44,310,019	18.2	1.7	(1.6, 1.8)	757,400	694,600	823,400	17.1	(15.9, 18.2)
35-44 years	40,253,380	16.5	1.5	(1.3, 1.6)	595,100	542,700	652,600	13.4	(12.4, 14.5)
45-54 years	40,714,179	16.7	1.6	(1.4, 1.7)	640,300	592,300	692,300	14.4	(13.5, 15.4)
55-64 years	41,501,171	17.0	2.0	(1.8, 2.1)	817,300	770,700	872,200	18.4	(17.5, 19.4)
65+ years	50,266,953	20.6	2.3	(2.2, 2.4)	1,156,400	1,094,900	1,214,500	26.1	(25.0, 27.2)
Education									
Non-College	173,909,145	71.2	1.0	(1.0, 1.1)	1,821,200	1,717,400	1,925,400	41.3	(39.9, 42.7)
College Grad	70,178,273	28.8	3.7	(3.5, 3.8)	2,611,400	2,495,400	2,724,300	58.7	(57.3, 60.1)
Race/Ethnicity									
White, non-Hisp.	160,737,992	65.9	2.4	(2.3, 2.5)	3,932,400	3,767,400	4,098,300	88.7	(87.6, 89.7)
Black, non-Hisp.	28,262,210	11.6	0.3	(0.2, 0.4)	83,200	65,400	103,500	1.9	(1.5, 2.3)
Hispanic	36,687,487	15.0	0.6	(0.5, 0.7)	227,000	197,800	258,500	5.1	(4.5, 5.8)
Other non-Hisp.	18,399,729	7.5	1.0	(0.9, 1.2)	190,000	159,200	221,500	4.3	(3.6, 5.0)

Sources: American Jewish Population Project, 2019 Jewish Population Estimates (Release Date: August 2019).

U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Estimates 2018, <https://www.census.gov/data/developers/data-sets/popest-popproj/popest.html>. (accessed June 24, 2019). Adjustments to household (within county) are from the 2010 Census. Adjustments for educational attainment are from 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year estimates.

Notes:

1) 'Jewish Adults' includes adults who identify their religion as Jewish.

Estimates:

COUNTY-LEVEL

The county estimates are based to samples that included county-level data. Large counties were analyzed independently; smaller counties were pooled to create estimates for the county group. The five counties with the highest Jewish population are Los Angeles County (CA), Brooklyn (NY), New York County (NY), Palm Beach County (FL), and Broward County (FL). In Los Angeles County, 3.8% of adults identify as Jewish when asked about religion, which corresponds to an adult population of 295,200. The total Jewish population, which includes an adjustment for children and for Jewish adults who do not identify by religion as Jewish, is estimated to be 495,300.

Adjustments for children and Jewish adults who do not identify by religion were based on analyses of data from the Pew survey of Jewish Americans and local Jewish study data where available.

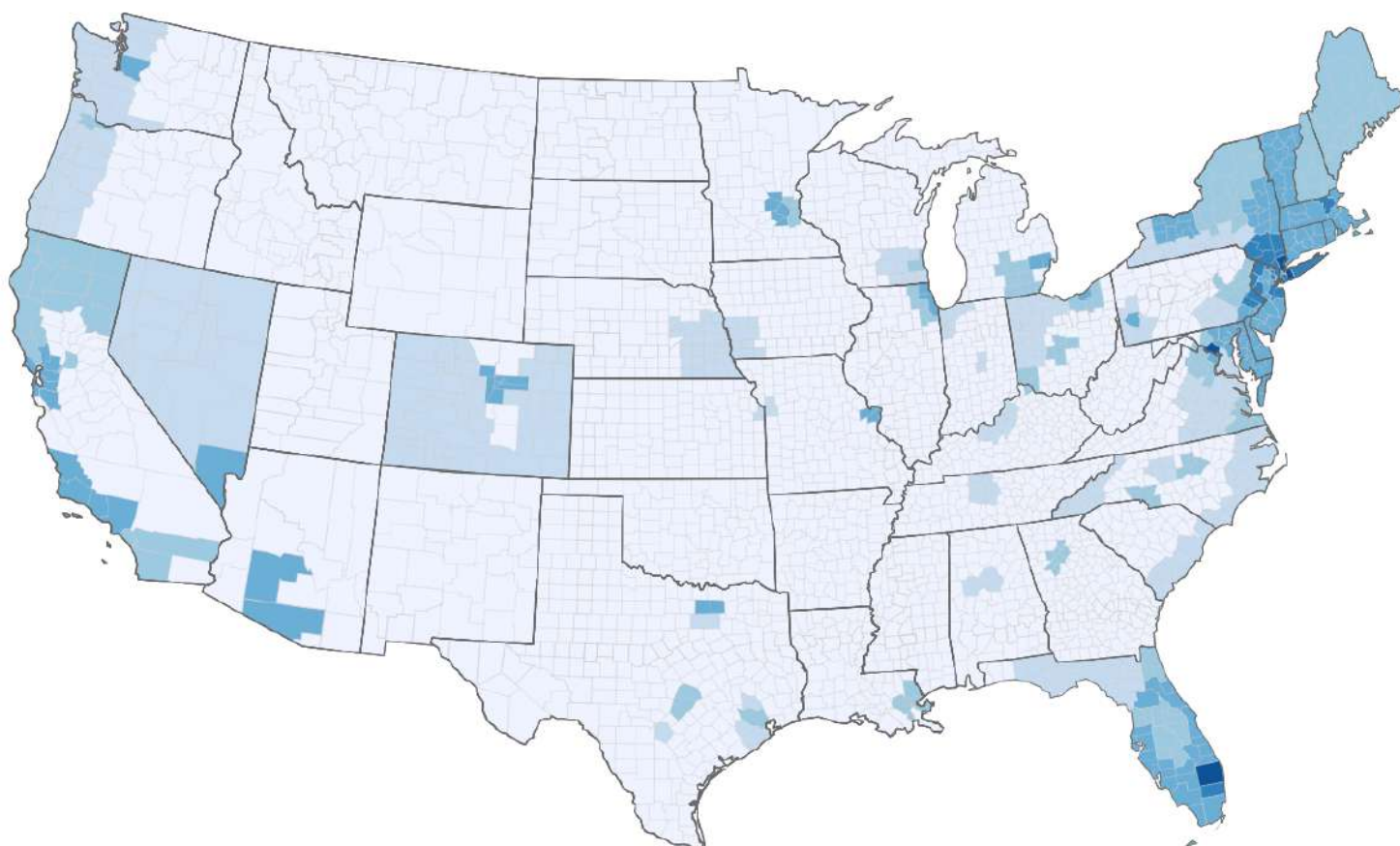
Kings and New York Counties in NY have larger proportions of the adult population who identify as Jewish when asked about religion (11.4% and 12.9%, respectively), compared to 3.8% in LA. This corresponds to nearly 172,300 adults in NY County and 224,200 in Kings County with total Jewish population estimated to be 254,300 and 424,200 respectively.

Table 3: Top 5 Counties by Jewish Population

County	% JBR Adults	# JBR Adults	Total Jewish Pop*
Los Angeles County, CA	3.8	295,200	495,300
Brooklyn, NY	11.4	224,200	424,200
Manhattan, NY	12.9	172,300	254,300
Palm Beach County, FL	13.1	154,200	212,500
Broward County, FL	7.6	115,900	170,900

*Total Jewish population in households, does not include group quarters.

Figure 1: County Map of Proportion Jewish Adults by Religion



Metropolitan Area Estimates

The metropolitan area estimates depend on core-based statistical areas (CBSAs) included in the sample data. CBSAs refer to metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas, as defined by the United States Office of Management and Budget. They represent the largest urban centers and their surrounding areas. Estimates are provided for the top 70 major metropolitan areas.

The five metropolitan areas with the largest Jewish populations are New York-Newark-Jersey City, Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Palm Beach, Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, and Washington-Arlington-Alexandria. In the New York metropolitan area, 7.4% of adults identify as Jewish when asked about religion, which corresponds to an adult population of 1.1 million. The total Jewish population, which includes an adjustment for children and for Jewish adults who do not identify by religion as Jewish, is estimated to be 1.7 million.

Table 4: Top 5 Metro Areas by Jewish Population

Metro Area	% JBR Adults	# JBR Adults	Total Jewish Pop*
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA	7.4	1,094,100	1,742,000
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	3.3	333,000	558,500
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	6.7	327,700	473,100
Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI	2.4	171,400	329,000
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	4.0	188,300	285,300

*Total Jewish population in households, does not include group quarters. Estimates Revised November 2019.

References

Pew Research Center. (2013). *A Portrait of Jewish Americans*. Washington DC: Pew Research Center's Religion and Public Life Project

Saxe, L., Sasson, T., and Krasner Aronson, J. "Pew's Portrait of American Jewry: A Reassessment of the Assimilation Narrative." In *American Jewish Year Book 2014*, edited by Arnold Dashefsky and Ira Sheskin, 71-81. New York: Springer, 2015.

Brandeis

STEINHARDT SOCIAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

ajpp.brandeis.edu