

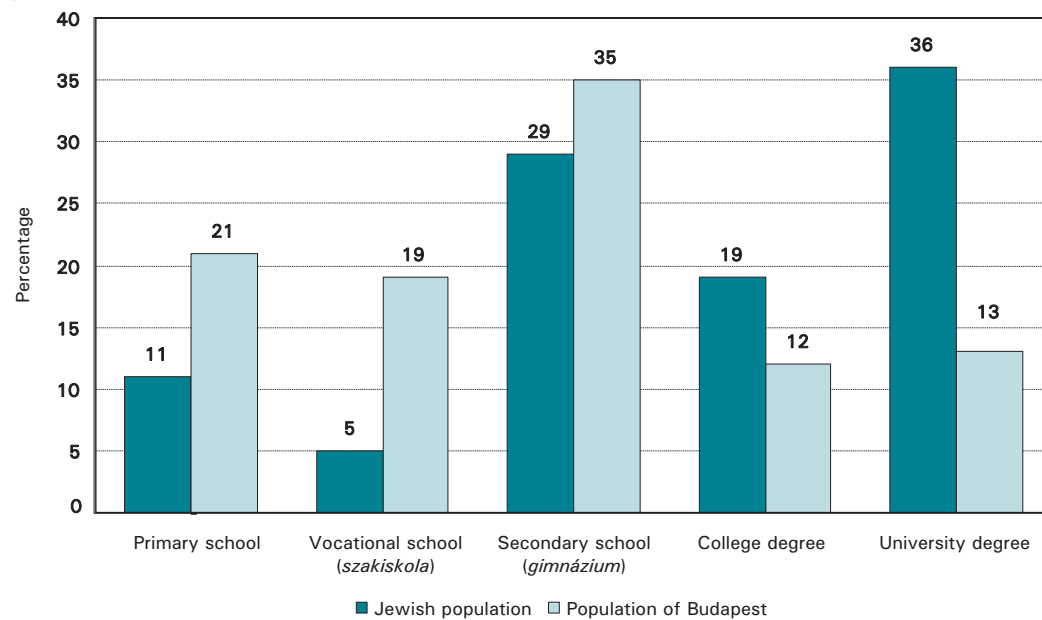
### 3 Socio-economic indicators

#### Education

In terms of educational achievements and professional choices,<sup>5</sup> the survey data show that the profile of Hungarian Jewry differs distinctly from that of the Hungarian population as a whole. Since almost 90 per cent of Hungary's Jews live in Budapest, the city's Jewish population was compared with the population of Budapest as a whole.

Figure 4 shows that Hungarian Jews had a much higher level of educational attainment than the ambient population. The percentage of those with academic (college and university) degrees, especially university diplomas, was much higher than that of the population of the capital in general. Table 5 shows that, in general terms, the younger the age cohort, the higher the level of educational

Figure 4: Highest educational level attained by the Jewish population (N=1,826) and the population of Budapest (N=520)



Source for the Budapest data: National surveys of MTA-ELTE Kommunikacioelmeleti Kutatocsoport (Research Group for Communication Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Loránd Eötvös University) in October 1998 and in February 2000

5 In Hungary, primary education lasts for eight years and is divided into two stages of four years each. Secondary education is provided in either academic (*gimnázium*) or vocational secondary schools (*szakközépiskola*). Secondary schools often offer more than one programme (e.g. academic and vocational courses or academic four- or six-year courses). The typical institution offering general education and a Secondary School Leaving Certificate is the *gimnázium*, which may be attended for four, five (in the case of bilingual secondary schools), six or eight years. The *szakközépiskola* and vocational schools (*szakiskola*) train students in the fields of humanities, technical and agricultural sciences and services. The *szakközépiskola* provide a general education during the first four years and award the Secondary School Leaving Certificate; the vocational education generally begins after the fourth year, although some introductory vocational subjects may be taught earlier. The length of vocational courses may vary from one to three years or more. The vocational schools

(*szakiskola*) do not award the Secondary School Leaving Certificate and the level of the vocational qualification is lower than that in the *szakközépiskola*. As for higher education, Hungary has a dual system of colleges and universities. Some colleges are associated with universities and operate as faculties of the universities. A university can also offer college-level courses. The duration of training at college level is a minimum of three years and a maximum of four years; at university level it is a minimum of four years and a maximum of five years (with the exception of medical universities where it is six years). Both colleges and universities grant the *Főiskolai Oklevél* (college-level degree) and universities grant the *Egyetemi Oklevél* (university-level degree). Universities organize three-year doctoral programmes, specialized further education courses (with a normal duration of one to three years) and various continuing education courses. See [www.unesco.org/iau/cd-data/hu.rtf](http://www.unesco.org/iau/cd-data/hu.rtf) (viewed 28 January 2004).

Table 5: Highest educational level attained by the Jewish population, by age cohort (%) (N=2,009)

Educational level	18–34	35–54	55–69	70+
Primary school	4	1	7	28
Vocational school ( <i>szakiskola</i> )	5	3	5	5
Secondary school ( <i>gimnázium</i> )	61	24	27	28
College degree	14	25	18	13
University degree	16	47	43	26
Total	100	100	100	100
N	412	610	409	578

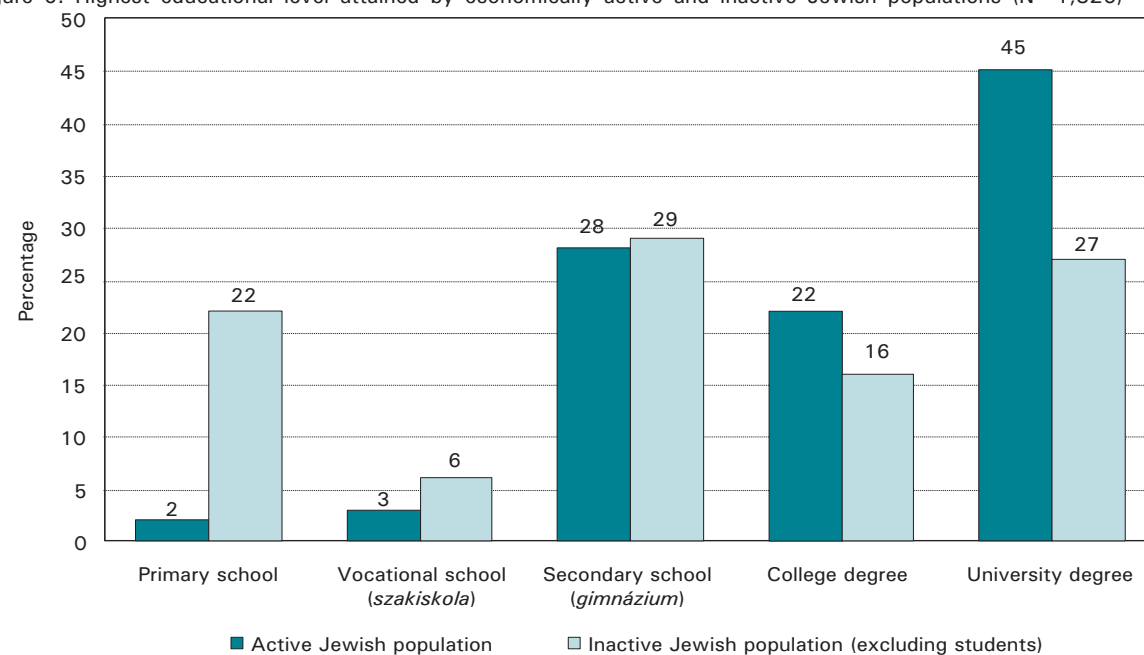
achievement, although there has been a tendency among some young entrepreneurs to forego formal higher education.

The education level was also relatively high among respondents who were economically inactive (over two-fifths had at least higher education degrees). Among the economically active Jewish population, this proportion was even higher, at more than two-thirds. At the same time the percentage of those with fewer educational qualifications was correspondingly smaller.

### Economic activity and employment

There were marked differences between the economically active and inactive members of the sample.<sup>6</sup> The percentage of actively employed people in the sample was 47 per cent (with a further 9 per cent represented by students). This proportion is relatively high with regard to both the age composition of the Jewish population (with a significant proportion of older people) and the general level of employment in Hungary. The Jewish population tended to become inactive later than the general Hungarian population, and the proportion

Figure 5: Highest educational level attained by economically active and inactive Jewish populations (N=1,826)



<sup>6</sup> The active group contained those who were employed. The great majority of the inactive group were retired (77 per cent). Consequently, the mean age of the inactive group was high (71 years).

of those taking early retirement was relatively low. All told, just 2 per cent of the sample were unemployed. This pattern is probably related to the respondents' occupations and employment patterns.<sup>7</sup>

Table 6 shows the prevalence of high-status professional occupations among Jews in the sample as compared with the total population of Budapest. Though not shown in the table, this was particularly marked among the younger economically active population. Those in managerial positions, professionals and the self-employed comprised over 70 per cent of the whole sample and, in the case of the economically active population, this proportion rose to more than 80 per cent. Among the active group, i.e. the younger generations, the proportion of entrepreneurs was much higher than among the older (currently inactive) generations (25 per cent against 6 per cent). One interpretation of this pattern is that Jews have returned to traditional modes of economic activity. Commerce was the most

common form of economic activity among those respondents who were economically inactive, but this was not the case for the younger generations, who tended to choose professions in the service sector or in the cultural sector. Another substantial group among the economically inactive had been employed in traditional production, mainly in industry, but this was no longer the case among the active group.

### Standard of living

The survey data demonstrate a high economic and social status for the Jewish population as compared with the population at large. Rather than illustrate this by income levels, which are often inaccurate, material well-being was measured by determining the proportions of households owning specific consumer durables. Table 7 shows the ownership of such goods among the economically active and inactive sections of the survey sample as well as for the better-educated general population. The table also shows another useful indicator of material status: the frequency of holidays abroad.

Table 6: Occupations of Jews, compared with the general population in Budapest (%)

Occupation	Budapest Jewish population	Budapest general population	Jewish population		General population	
			Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive
Managerial	26	12	25	27	9	13
Professional	29	13	32	25	16	9
Self-employed/-entrepreneur	16	12	25	6	19	2
Clerical	21	24	13	29	24	27
Skilled worker	6	23	4	9	23	24
Other manual worker	2	16	1	4	9	25
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	1,713	520	885	817	-	-

Source for the Budapest data: National surveys of MTA-ELTE Kommunikacioelmeleti Kutatocsoport (Research Group for Communication Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Loránd Eötvös University) in October 1998 and in February 2000

<sup>7</sup> The national unemployment rate in 1999 was 7.1 per cent; see *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 3rd edn (Geneva: International Labor Organization 2003); for a summary, see [www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kilm/indicats.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kilm/indicats.htm) (viewed 10 March 2004).

The high propensity of Jewish households to own consumer durables was especially striking when it came to hi-tech products and services, including personal computers, mobile phones and, in particular, access at home to the Internet. However, examination of the data indicates that, while living standards were generally high, there were considerable differences within the Jewish population, particularly between the younger, economically active group and the older, inactive sector. Detailed analysis shows that just under one-quarter of the older population owned only three or fewer of the eight items listed in the survey; such a low ownership level was very rare among the economically active group. The ownership rates for

the economically inactive group among the non-Jewish population exceeded the parallel age-group in the Jewish sample. The probable explanation for this is that the inactive non-Jewish population was younger than the equivalent Jewish group; as a consequence, the consumer durables present in their households were probably purchased during the household members' economically active period. An alternative reason for the difference could be that older widowed women lived in relatively deprived households due to a single low income; since they constituted a much greater proportion of the Jewish population than the general population, this finding would be not surprising.

Table 7: Socio-economic indicators: Jews compared with the population of Budapest with at least a secondary school education (%)

Indicator	Jewish population			Educated Budapest population		
	Active (N=1,048)	Inactive (N=967)	Total (N=2,015)	Active	Inactive	Total (N=520)
Ownership of a						
Car	72	36	55	67	56	62
Microwave oven	78	56	68	76	56	67
VCR	82	52	68	82	63	71
Mobile phone	59	14	39	42	18	31
Personal computer	67	19	47	55	32	43
Internet access at home	35	6	23	13	10	12
Holiday abroad in previous year	62	28	48	26	19	24
Holiday home	32	23	29	26	23	24

Source for the Budapest data: National surveys of MTA-ELTE Kommunikacioelmeleti Kutatocsoport (Research Group for Communication Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Loránd Eötvös University) in October 1998 and in February 2000