

7 facts about Jewish patterns of charitable giving

1 / British Jews are givers. 93% of all Jews surveyed said that they had made at least one charitable donation in the past year, either to a Jewish or non-Jewish charity. This is significantly higher than the equivalent proportion in wider society, which, according to Charities Aid Foundation research, currently stands at 57%.

2 / Jews are more likely to direct their donations to general charities than they are to Jewish ones. 37% of British Jews give more than half of their charitable donations to Jewish charities, but 45% of them give more than half to general charities.

3 / The style and nature of ‘the ask’ matters. **Younger people are more likely to give if they attend a charity event, or if they are asked to donate by someone they know.** Having personally benefited from a charity’s work, or knowing someone else who has, also has an impact. But younger people are considerably less likely than older people to respond to a synagogue High Holyday appeal, or out of any sense of habit. Whether or not they will become more like their elders over time remains to be seen.



4 / Religiosity and communal engagement matter. Jews who self-identify as ‘religious’ are much more likely than those who self-identify as ‘secular’ to give to charities at all, and particularly to Jewish charities. The religious also give larger amounts in total, and demonstrate higher degrees of generosity (amounts given relative to income earned). But it’s not all about religiosity. Even the predominantly secular who are communally-engaged in some way are bigger and more active givers than those who are unaffiliated.



5 / There are clear signs of parochialism at the fringes of the community. Whilst they are the most likely to be givers at all, the religious are also the most likely *only* to give to Jewish charities. And, not dissimilarly, the self-declared secular are the most likely *only* to give to general charities. Even though most Jews (67% of all those who give at all) give *both* to Jewish and to general charities, the potential for greater parochialism in the future is real. Demographic growth in the most Orthodox sectors, and the ongoing effects of secularisation, indicate that these fringes will become larger parts of the whole over time.

6 / The most wealthy are the biggest givers. This might feel obvious, but it is not necessarily so. Even though the biggest donors are almost inevitably wealthy, that does not mean that all wealthy people are big donors. Yet the evidence is clear. The wealthier people are, the more they give, and the more generous they are with their money. A particularly big jump both in giving and in generosity occurs among the mega-wealthy – whilst giving generally increases with income, a dramatic change occurs once people pass an annual personal income threshold of £250,000.

7 / Retirees (those aged 65+) are more generous than younger cohorts, particularly to Jewish charities. The post-war baby boom created a bulge in the UK Jewish population that is now seen in those aged in their late 60s – there are more British Jews aged 66-70 than in almost any other five-year age band. The sheer size of this group should provide something of a boom for Jewish charities in the coming years, but this will not last indefinitely – the group will contract, as will its ability to give, and the cohorts that follow it are both smaller and more secular.

