

The coronavirus papers 1.0

Methodology: COVID-19 online panel survey, July 2020

August 2021

The coronavirus papers comprise a series of reports based on a national survey of Jews across the UK conducted by JPR in July 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The studies look at the effects of the pandemic on Jewish people's health, jobs, finances, relationships, and Jewish lives, and aim to provide Jewish organisations with the data they need to navigate their way through the pandemic and its aftermath.

1 / Introduction

This paper accompanies the series of JPR reports investigating how the coronavirus pandemic affected Jews across the UK, from its outbreak in February 2020 until mid- to late July 2020, when JPR conducted an online survey of Jewish people aged 16 and over.

Each of the coronavirus papers explores a different aspect of the pandemic from the perspective of the Jewish community, including mental health and Long COVID, socioeconomic impacts and disadvantage, Jewish community income and Jewish life. This paper provides details about how the survey was designed and conducted. All the papers in this series are available on the [JPR website](#).

It is important to note that the survey conducted in July 2020 is intended to be the first in a sequence of surveys using a new research mechanism and infrastructure: the JPR research panel. The objectives of the research panel are described briefly below. For any specific methodological queries about the survey or the panel which are not answered here, please email jpr@jpr.org.uk.

2 / An online approach with telephone support

The results reported in the JPR coronavirus papers are based on an online survey of Jewish people aged 16 and over living in the UK. While online surveys can be used in tandem with random probability sampling methods, for example using postal contact to request an online survey response, they are often based on volunteer samples and that is the approach we took here. In this context, online surveys provide a relatively low-cost method for reaching large numbers of individuals in a short time period. Because the Jewish population is small and there is no single list from which a sample can be drawn, JPR has been using this approach, and pioneering appropriate methodologies to ensure population representativity, for over ten years.

Nevertheless, there are some disadvantages to using online surveys. They tend to achieve lower response rates than modes where an interviewer can personally encourage participation. Not all sections of the population have internet access, or have a suitable device, or feel confident answering a survey online. While overall, the Jewish population is more likely to be online than most other groups, this is less common among strictly Orthodox Jews and the oldest age groups, so there is a potential risk of underrepresenting these groups. In practice, the vast majority of respondents completed the survey online, while a small number who contacted JPR to request assistance were interviewed by telephone. Based on the sample of individuals who form the basis of JPR's coronavirus papers, 58% completed the survey using a desktop or laptop and 42% completed it using a smartphone or tablet. A very small proportion (<1%) completed using another device.

Early concerns about the quality of online survey responses have been largely assuaged in recent years with the adaptation of surveys for completion on smartphones, though research in this area continues. JPR's survey was programmed using Conconfirm, an industry standard platform that can be adapted for multiple device types. Care was taken to ensure that questions worked across different devices, for example traditional grid formats that render poorly on small screens were avoided.

3 / Questionnaire development and content

At the time the survey questionnaire was being developed (May to June 2020), Britain had been experiencing the first national lockdown of the pandemic and restrictions were beginning to ease. There was an urgent need for data, albeit without unduly compromising quality. To this end, it was not realistic for JPR to consult with a broad spectrum of community organisations, so a limited number of community professionals were consulted, and we drew heavily on existing survey instruments relating to the pandemic which were being developed by other research organisations.

The questionnaire was initially developed by considering past JPR surveys, particularly the [National Jewish Community Survey 2013](#) (NJCS) and the [Jewish Community Survey of South Africa](#) in 2019. In order to include content about the coronavirus pandemic, JPR drew on questions developed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) which were being used in its national surveys such as the [Annual Population Survey](#) (APS) and [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey](#) (OPN). We also drew on questionnaires focused on COVID-19 developed by major UK social surveys and research agencies (for example, [Understanding Society](#), the [English Longitudinal Study for Ageing](#) (ELSA), the British birth cohort studies at the [Centre for Longitudinal Studies](#) at UCL, [The Policy Institute](#) at Kings College London, [YouGov](#) and [Wellcome](#)) and by some international studies ([Pew Research](#)). At the time the project team was only aware of one COVID-19 survey focused on a Jewish population and this was carried out by [Nishma](#), although we later became aware of another US study carried out by [Brandeis University](#). In addition to this content, we developed a number of experimental questions, although there was limited time and resource to test these because of the urgency and restrictions during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The questionnaire covered six broad themes: COVID-19 infection, general and mental health, social relations and living arrangements, financial and economic circumstances, Jewish community life and Jewish identity.

The questionnaire was structured with two linked sections. One of these was a set of questions capturing details about the respondents' background, their eligibility to take part and consent to be recontacted in the future (further details are provided in Section 5). The other included a set of substantive modules capturing experiences, behaviours and attitudes. The survey also included two methodological experiments, described in Section 6.

4 / Who JPR surveyed

In an ideal world, a Jewish sample would be drawn by randomly selecting names from a comprehensive and up-to-date list of all Jewish adults in the UK. However, no such list exists, and alternatives must necessarily be sought to remove the need for a complete Jewish 'sampling frame'. This was achieved, as on previous occasions, by indirectly accessing lists held by Jewish institutions. To protect the privacy of list members, Jewish organisations from across the Jewish community were recruited by JPR to send out emails with a weblink to the survey or to advertise the survey in their electronic newsletters.¹ In addition, the survey was advertised using traditional and social media outlets, and a process to encourage respondent referrals (snowballing) was built into the survey instrument (see Section 7). This type of approach is known as convenience sampling and offers a pragmatic solution to sampling Jewish populations.

The survey included some initial screening questions to establish if the person considered themselves to be Jewish in any way at all, was aged 16 and over and was currently living in the UK.

5 / The JPR panel

Surveys of the Jewish population are time consuming, costly and challenging to administer. Even so, JPR has successfully carried out a significant number of large-scale social surveys over the past decade, both in Britain and internationally, generating data to support policy development in the Jewish community on a range of topics. However, each time a new survey takes place, the task of drawing a sample has started afresh, in practice, reinventing the wheel. To avoid this and to operate in a faster and more responsive way, many research organisations and polling companies use panels – large groups of respondents that they return to repeatedly over time.

There are many advantages for JPR in trialling this approach. Panels reduce the reliance on other organisations' generosity with their contact lists and allow the focus to shift to building up the sample of hard-to-reach population groups; they also allow for greater control of the sample makeup as targeting of underrepresented groups can be planned prior to fieldwork. A panel approach should support more consistent weighting and therefore increase confidence in the representativeness of the survey results. Analytically, a panel should also improve the ability to track change over time by returning repeatedly to the same individuals in subsequent surveys. Panels also provide a number of operational benefits: they provide greater control over the survey process and procedures, such as sending out multiple reminders to those who did not respond in the first instance; survey turn-around times should be quicker since the sample already exists; in time, response rates at each wave should rise as the people on the panel have already committed to taking part, at least in principle, although panel attrition is a known and significant issue. In the long run, panels should reduce the cost of running surveys, although it is important to acknowledge that maintaining a panel sample introduces its own costs.

All things considered, the decision to develop and trial a JPR research panel had already been taken prior to the onset of the pandemic but the unique circumstances and pressures that were becoming apparent in March 2020 accelerated this plan. Therefore, on this occasion, JPR was not only concerned with running a survey on COVID-19 but also with building a research panel. As such, JPR's COVID-19 survey also included a short section inviting respondents to join its panel. The rapid rollout meant an

¹ This included: 30 synagogues, three schools, three youth movements, the Union of Jewish Students, five Jewish Representative Councils and the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, the Jewish Small Community network, JLGB, Maccabi GB, JW3, the Office of the Chief Rabbi, the Jewish Chronicle, Jewish News and Hamodia, Wessex Jewish News, and Everywhere K.

expedited approach was needed and a simpler design was implemented, for example, only inviting individuals to volunteer, rather than incorporating a random probability element, as had originally been anticipated.

In Section 7 below we discuss the number of individuals who responded to the survey and/or agreed to being recontacted for our next survey. In summary, 6,997 people completed the survey of whom 6,984 were included in the final analysis. This achieved sample was very large compared with previous national surveys such as [NJCS \(2013\)](#) and [FRA \(2018\)](#), which obtained samples of 3,736 and 4,731 respectively. This may well reflect the extraordinary circumstances at the time – the pandemic was clearly salient and impacted on both general and Jewish life – and the Jewish community experienced a disproportionate number of deaths in the first wave.² If, over time, following up the panel with additional surveys proves to be successful, this development will have represented an important milestone for research into Britain’s Jewish population.

6 / Fieldwork

Following initial in-house checking of the questionnaire, the instrument was tested with a small sample of volunteers known to the research team. This was followed by a ‘soft launch’ on 9th July 2020 in which the members of a single synagogue were invited to participate four days ahead of the main survey launch. This allowed the survey team to test the procedures and survey infrastructure and to make minor adjustments where necessary.

The ‘main launch’ or mainstage fieldwork period began on 13th July 2020. All supporting community organisations sent out information about the survey from that date and throughout the following week. These organisations were then asked to send out a reminder approximately one week after the initial invitation or as soon as possible thereafter. Shortly before the end of the fieldwork period, JPR sent a single reminder to 1,288 individuals who had started the survey and provided contact information, but who had not fully completed it. The survey was closed to new entrants on 31st July 2020, i.e. 22 days after the soft launch. After this date, 14 individuals who had already started the survey completed it by 2nd August and were subsequently included in the analysis. Anyone wishing to participate in the survey after July 31st was informed that it was closed but they were still able to join JPR’s panel and would be invited to take part in future surveys — i.e. panel recruitment continued.

Fieldwork and panel survey management was carried out in-house by the JPR research team. A log of all contacts with the survey team was kept and all feedback was recorded. Those needing assistance with the questionnaire could contact the research team by email or a freephone number and, as noted, a small number of individuals were interviewed by telephone, or received online support to complete the questionnaire.³

A prize draw for five £100 shopping vouchers was offered as an incentive to anyone who completed the survey and agreed to be included in the prize draw.⁴ Following the closure of fieldwork, participants’ serial numbers were randomly sampled. This included all individuals who took part in the survey, regardless of whether they joined the panel or agreed to participate in future surveys.

² See: Staetsky, D. and Paltiel, A. (2020). *COVID-19 mortality and Jews: A global overview of the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic, March to May 2020*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research.

³ Everyone who requested a telephone interview was offered this facility, but the number was limited (less than 10). Another group of people were given telephone support to complete the survey online (less than 20).

⁴ A small number of individuals who did not reach the very end of the questionnaire, and so had not been asked this question, were also included in the draw.

During the first few days of the fieldwork JPR carried out two experiments. The first was designed to determine whether it was more effective to invite people to join the JPR research panel before they began to answer the substantive modules, or to invite them at the end of the survey. The second experiment was set up to determine whether it was better to ask the majority of questions about respondents' background (demographics etc.) at the start of the survey or at the end. The soft launch, coupled with the first few hours of mainstage fieldwork, provided sufficient evidence to close both experiments. We established that it was better to ask panel recruitment questions at the start of the questionnaire, and to delay some of the demographic data collection until the end of the questionnaire. We will be able to extend this analysis to establish whether there is an effect at future waves.

7 / Response and data quality

One of the disadvantages of non-probability sampling methods is that we cannot calculate a response rate, because we do not know how many people received an invitation. For example, some people may have received more than one invitation if they appeared on more than one list. Further, while 19,862 hits were registered on the opening screen of the questionnaire, this number cannot be treated as a 'base' for multiple reasons. In particular, it is not possible to tell how many of these are unique hits,⁵ how many subsequently responded, nor how many people received an invitation but did not take any further action.

Of those who progressed to a point where they did provide an email address, 155 were screened out for not meeting the participation criteria based on Jewish identity, age and UK residency. In the final assessment, 8,412 people completed the survey and/or joined JPR's panel, as summarised in **Error! Reference source not found.** Of these, 83% (6,997) were included in the final subset for data cleaning and weighting and 73% (6,118) joined JPR's panel. It is important to note that these groups overlap but are not nested within each other – as Table 1 shows, 1,415 people appeared to sign up for the panel but did not complete the COVID-19 survey, 1,008 people completed the survey but chose not to join the panel (although they did permit JPR to return to them with one further survey in the future) and 1,286 completed the survey but did not agree to any further follow up. Following the data cleaning process (discussed below), a further 13 cases were dropped so **the final sample size was 6,984** individuals of whom 67% also joined JPR's panel.

Table 1. Total responses to invitations to complete the survey and/or join JPR's panel

Row	Status	Count	% (n=8412)
1	Joined panel, survey complete*	4,703	55%
2	Refused panel but allowed one follow-up, survey complete	1,008	12%
3	Refused further follow-up, survey complete^	1,286	15%
4	Joined panel, survey incomplete	1,415	17%
Sample size for analysis (1+2+3)		6,997	83%
Agreed to be recontacted (1+2+4)		7,126	84%
Joined JPR panel (1+4)		6,118	73%
Total engaged (completed survey and/or joined panel) (1+2+3+4)		8,412	100%

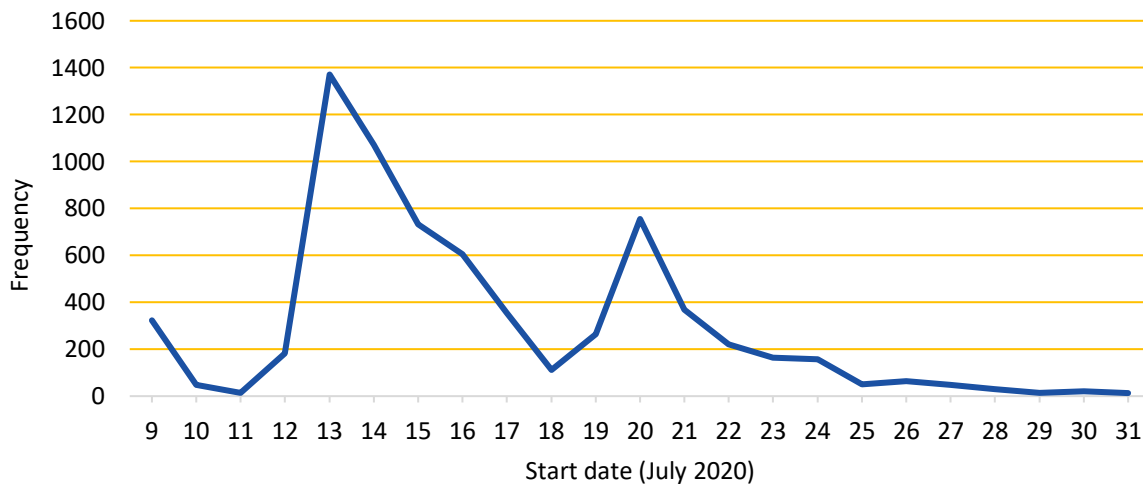
* Includes 282 respondents who completed all questions from the mainstage but did not complete the final optional non-data questions about the prize draw and referrals.

^ includes 111 respondents whose panel status was not recorded due to a system error

⁵ A hit was registered each time an invitation link was clicked. The session only became unique once an email address was supplied so it was possible to register multiple hits, albeit without progressing through the survey.

As noted, fieldwork was carried out between the 9th July and 2nd August 2020. Responses were obtained throughout this period in three main periods, as shown in Figure 1. The first period was the ‘soft launch’ to a single synagogue list (discussed above). Then the mainstage invitations were issued in two waves peaking on 13th July 2020, with the ‘main launch’ when the majority of email invitations were sent out, and then again around 20th July in response to a reminder email sent out by several organisations. The long declining tail in the graph suggests it is likely that a second coordinated reminder may well have boosted the final sample further still.

Figure 1. Dates when those included in the final dataset started completing the questionnaire (N=6,984)



7.1 / Referrals (snowballing)

In order to broaden the sample, a referral mechanism was built into the survey whereby respondents were requested to send a link to their contacts. 86% of completing respondents⁶ were presented with this option, which is a standard technique used in convenience surveys known as snowballing. JPR was particularly keen to use this approach as it provided a potential opportunity not only to increase the size of the sample but also to broaden its representativeness by reaching sections of the Jewish population that were less likely to have been on the email lists used to build the original sample and are typically harder to engage – namely young adults, the strictly Orthodox and the unaffiliated.

Among respondents who were asked, 1,105 people (18% of 5,994) offered to invite their contacts to take part in the study via email or social media. To do so, they were asked to click a link which automatically opened an email containing invitation text. Alternatively, they were encouraged to copy and paste the invitation text into an email manually or share a link (www.jprpanel.org.uk) via messaging services, social media and word of mouth. It is not possible to know how many people each respondent chose to invite but we can assume that many will have invited more than one person. Part of the instructions they were given prompted them to try and contact groups the survey team expected to be underrepresented: “We are particularly keen to reach young Jewish people, people from the strictly Orthodox community and Jewish people who may see themselves as less engaged or on the periphery of the community.”

⁶ The facility was not made available at the start of the survey because it would have damaged the experiment (see Section 6). Some others were not asked to refer to friends or family because they did not reach the very end of the questionnaire.

In the final analysis, 240 respondents successfully referred others. By ‘success’ we mean the invitations these people sent out led to others engaging with the survey and/or signing up to the JPR panel. In effect, they became ‘seeders’ for the survey and panel sign-up. In Table 2 we show that most of these (79%) led to completed surveys, and a further 17% produced new panellists but not complete surveys.

Table 2. Total number of successful referees (‘seeders’) by the status of those they referred (N=19,862)

Status	N	%
Refused follow-up	5	2%
Joined panel but partially completed survey	40	17%
Joined panel and completed survey	177	74%
Follow-up once but partially completed survey	6	3%
Follow-up once and completed survey	12	5%
Total	240	100%

Taking the analysis a step further, we can focus on the 178 successful seeders, i.e. those that produced referrals that went on to complete the survey. This is 16% of all those who offered to refer others (178⁷ out of 1,105). Three-quarters (75%) recruited more than one person and four recruited 50 people between them (we might call these super-seeders). In total, these 178 seeders recruited 399 people who subsequently completed the survey. 13% of these were fellow family members but most, 77%, were not in the seeder’s household. These 399 referrals constitute 5.7% of the final sample (N=6,984). It is also the case that 20 referrals subsequently became seeders themselves.

Table 3 illustrates the extent to which the referral process achieved the aims of the survey terms by broadening the scope and representativeness of the sample. First, we find that referrals were no younger than the sample average. 11% of referrals were aged under 40 compared with 13% of non-referrals (i.e. all others), although it is clear seeders recruited people who were younger than themselves since just 3% of seeders were under 40 years old. The process was more successful in redressing the gender imbalance, with 45% of referrals being male compared with 41% of non-referrals, and in this respect, seeders, who were predominantly female, were successful. There was even greater success in terms of recruiting non-synagogue members (2% non-referrals v 8% referrals) and this pattern was matched in terms of recruiting those with ‘Secular’ outlooks. Further, while no seeders were strictly Orthodox,⁸ seeders did recruit a disproportionate number of strictly Orthodox referrals (4%), but this was not to the level at which the strictly Orthodox were already represented among non-referrals (6%). Finally, the process was also unsuccessful at broadening the geographical scope of the sample although, again, referees did recruit more people outside London relative to themselves (40% v 44%).

In summary, we can say that the referral process was successful in redressing three of the six areas of concern to the survey team. Compared with non-referrals (n=6,585), referrals (n=379) were more likely to be secular and unaffiliated and more likely to be male, but they were less likely to be young or strictly Orthodox or to live outside London. However, it is apparent that as a group, seeders (n=178) were actually very successful in most target areas when compared with themselves since they

⁷ Further analysis is required to clarify why the figure of 178 from the final cleaned dataset is not exactly the same as the equivalent figure (177) in Table 2 based on the pre-cleaned dataset. However, given the difference is only 1 we believe the percentages are still worth reporting.

⁸ To clarify, this does not necessarily mean that no strictly Orthodox respondents invited others to participate, but rather, if they did, they were unsuccessful at getting their invitees (strictly Orthodox or otherwise) to complete the survey.

managed to recruit disproportionate numbers of people in each target population. The reason the referral process struggled overall was because the number of seeders was small relative to the sample size. In future, the aim will be to broaden the size of the seeder group, perhaps by simplifying the referral process and encouraging greater use of social media.

Table 3. Characteristics of seeders, referrals and others in the final dataset

	All seeders	Seeder only	Referral only	Referral and Seeder	Non-referrals	Total sample
N	178	158	379	20	6,585	6,984
Age under 40	2%	3%	11%	-	13%	12%
Male	35%	35%	45%	35%	41%	42%
Not a synagogue member	3%	2%	8%	10%	2%	2%
Strictly Orthodox synagogue member	0%	-	4%	-	6%	6%
Secular outlook	16%	15%	31%	30%	18%	19%
Outside London	38%	40%	44%	25%	47%	47%

7.2 / Identifying households

Beyond the individual, a key unit of analysis in survey data is the household. However, because the sample was not built using a list containing full postal address data, it is not possible to identify if respondents live in the same households. This is a problem for certain types of household-based analyses, for example, the number of children in a household who attend Jewish schools: if both parents have responded independently and both responses are used, then the output data will be double counted.⁹ In the absence of full postal address data, the approach taken by the survey team, as in previous surveys, was to ask individuals who reported living in households with more than one Jewish adult whether their birthday was the first one in the calendar year out of all other adult Jewish household members. This procedure identified 2,758 unique, multi-person households in addition to 1,129 lone person households in the survey.

7.3 / Device type

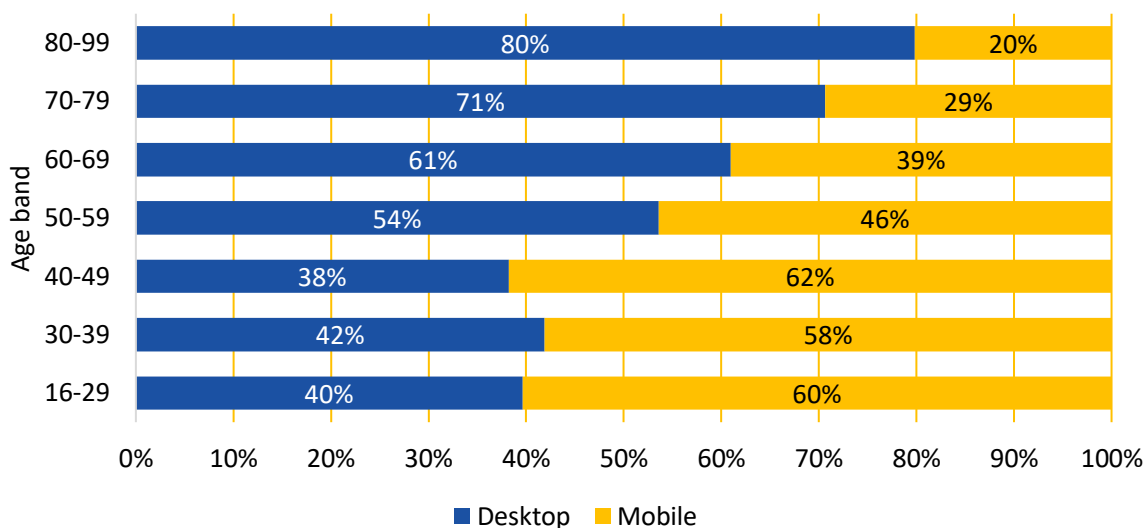
As noted above, the survey was designed to be answered on multiple devices. Survey-process data were captured on whether respondents had answered the survey on a personal computer (desktop or laptop) or using a mobile device with a touchscreen (i.e. a smartphone or tablet) or using a basic mobile phone¹⁰ (such as a Nokia). Overall, 58% completed the survey on a PC or laptop and 42% completed it on a mobile device (smartphone or tablet). Analysis shows there was a notable difference by age. For those aged under 50 years old, around 60% answered on a mobile device rather than a laptop or PC, with the likelihood of doing so steadily decreasing with age. Among those aged 80 and above, just 20% completed the survey on a mobile device (Figure 2).

⁹ While respondents were asked to provide a full postcode, they were not asked to also provide full house address data including a house number. In addition, not all respondents provided full or any postcode data.

¹⁰ Data indicate that there were 1,290 attempts to start the survey using a 'generic' device, although because it is possible that some of these were repeat attempts, we cannot be sure that these are all unique. Because these people did not complete the survey, there is no data available to assess whether they had any particular traits in common. In the end, just 34 respondents completed it on such a device (for which the survey was not designed). Most (76%) of this small group were aged 60 years and over.

There was also a notable difference in terms of gender, with women being far more likely to use mobile devices to complete the survey than men: 49% of women responded by mobile phone compared with 33% of men. In terms of Jewish identity, strictly Orthodox respondents were most likely to complete it by mobile phone (49% of strictly Orthodox ‘synagogue members’ and those ‘closely aligned’ did so) compared with all other denominational groups, although no other pattern is observed in terms of Jewish religiosity.

Figure 2. Device type used by respondent’s age N=6,984



7.4 / Length of survey

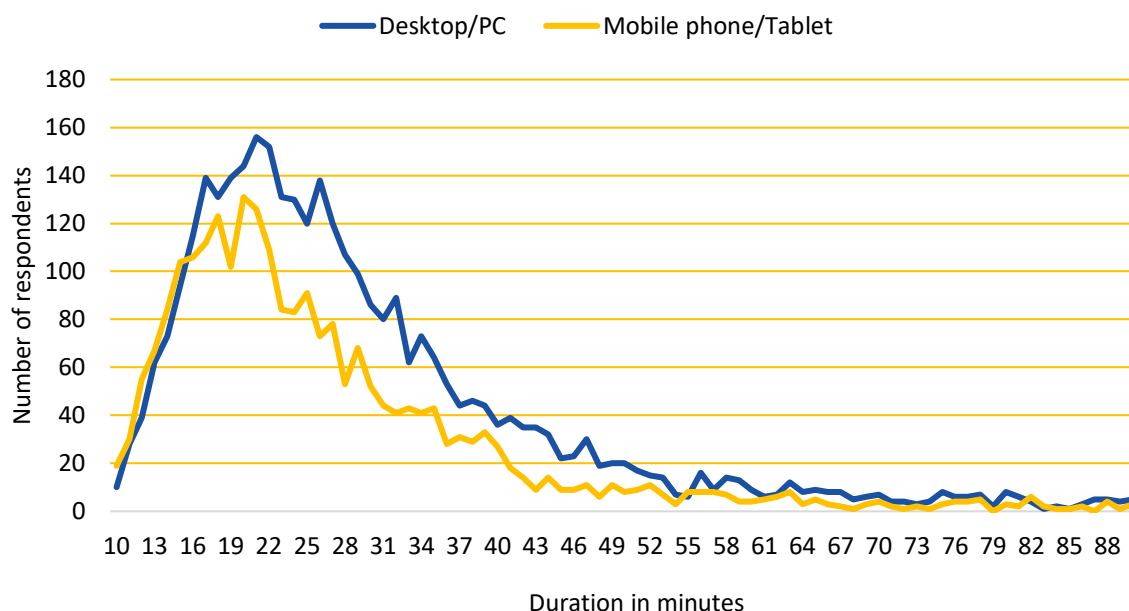
The modal time spent completing the survey at any one sitting was 17-20 minutes.¹¹ However, calculation of the average time taken to complete the survey is complicated by the fact that some people did not complete it in one sitting—a facility that was incorporated into the survey’s design. In these cases, the duration was shown to be many hours or even days, which is obviously not a true reflection of the time actually spent completing the questionnaire. To calculate a meaningful average (mean) time taken, these outliers have been set aside to focus on the 90% of recorded times.¹² This reveals a mean survey completion time of 26 minutes. Overall, the average time taken to complete the survey was in line with what we had anticipated, and some of the outlying durations will have included time taken for breaks. Device type made a slight difference, with a mean of 29 minutes for desktop and PCs compared with 26 minutes for mobile devices, i.e. desktop users spent more than 10% longer completing the survey than mobile users (Figure 3). However, it is apparent that some respondents took much longer than expected to complete the survey, with some providing feedback indicating that they felt the survey was too long.¹³ The difference in time taken may partly reflect differences in ease of completion by device, but it is probably more likely to reflect differences in the demographic composition of mobile-completers and PC/laptop-completers. Further analysis would be needed to separate out these effects.

¹¹ Not including the panel sign-up for those that chose to do so.

¹² 515 cases were missing a completion timestamp presumably because they did not reach the very end of the survey.

¹³ Fewer than thirty people contacted us about this issue, although we assume that more than this felt the survey was too long but did not choose to contact us about it. Survey length and a non-user-friendly postcode capture screen were the two most common criticisms about the survey.

Figure 3. Frequency chart showing time taken to complete the survey in minutes by device type (n=5,861)



* Duration truncated at 90 minutes (see text)

8 / Weighting and analysis

To ensure the survey findings are as representative as possible of the target population (Jews in Britain), it is common practice to weight the data. This involves comparing survey data with reliable baseline statistics obtained from independent sources and adjusting them accordingly. The weighting process adjusts discrepancies in the distribution of the survey data to better match the distributions found in the baseline data. The first three baseline variables used to weight the data are geography, age and sex which are all obtained from the national census. At the time of data cleaning and weighting, the most recently available UK census data were from 2011 (data on religion from the 2021 Census are not expected to become available until 2022). Therefore, a population projection was computed using 2011 Census data to roll Jewish population numbers forward ten years to 2021 which assumed no significant changes had occurred in fertility, mortality and migration over that period.

However, in surveys of the Jewish population it is also important, if not more so, to adjust for Jewish identity because such surveys typically oversample Jewish people who are more engaged in Jewish life and undersample those who are less engaged or on the periphery of communal life. The census does not contain baseline data on Jewish identity or levels of engagement. Therefore, synagogue membership data obtained from a census of synagogues carried out by JPR in 2016 were used as a proxy baseline for Jewish identity.¹⁴ The advantage of synagogue membership data is that they are readily available, auditable and collected by synagogues on an annual basis. Moreover, synagogue membership provides a reasonable approximation of Jewish engagement by denomination and area. Of course, this does not include data on those who are not synagogue members, a key undersampled group, but this can be estimated by subtracting the total number of synagogue members recorded in the synagogue membership census from the Jewish population obtained from the national census.

¹⁴ Casale Mashiah, D. and Boyd, J. (2017). *Synagogue membership in the United Kingdom in 2016*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research.

Table 4 summarises the difference between the unweighted and weighted data. Overall, the weights ‘increase’ the presence in the sample of younger Jews, unaffiliated Jews and those living outside London and the South-East.

Table 4. Unweighted versus weighted distribution by key variables

Variable	Categories	Unweighted	Weighted
Age	16-39	12%	42%
	40-59	31%	26%
	60+	56%	32%
Sex	Male	42%	47%
	Female	58%	53%
	Other	<1%	<1%
Synagogue membership	None	9%	42%
	Strictly Orthodox*	6%	15%
	Central Orthodox	47%	28%
	Masorti Judaism	13%	2%
	Reform Judaism	17%	8%
	Liberal Judaism	7%	4%
	Other	1%	1%
Geography	East/West Midlands	2%	3%
	East of England	14%	12%
	London	53%	49%
	North East/West	11%	13%
	Yorkshire & the Humber	6%	6%
	South East/West	7%	7%
	Scotland	2%	4%
	Wales	1%	1%
	Other/Prefer not to say	4%	4%

* The census of synagogue membership does not deal with the strictly Orthodox group as it does with other denominations since the system of association is quite different in this community. Rather, other sources are used such as communal directories published by haredi groups.

Since the data come from a convenience sample and not a random probability sample, it is not appropriate to use inferential statistics to define confidence limits. However, we work on the assumption that many of the inherent biases that convenience sampling is likely to involve can be addressed by weighting. It is important to recognise that this approach is imperfect and that some systematic biases cannot be compensated for by weighting. In this instance, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic may have increased willingness to participate in the survey, and those who were directly impacted by a coronavirus infection may have had a greater interest in the survey topic and therefore been more likely to have responded than those who were not directly impacted. Nevertheless, given our extensive knowledge of Britain’s Jewish community, the very large size of the sample and our ability to weight the data with high quality baseline statistics, the survey team is confident that overall, the data should be considered broadly representative of the experience of most self-identifying Jews in the UK.¹⁵

¹⁵ Our confidence was reinforced by comparing a number of our survey results with nationally available data and finding that the patterns observed were remarkably consistent.

9 / Looking ahead

The process of carrying out social research is one of incremental development and fine-tuning. For more than a decade, JPR has been pioneering online social research of Jewish communities around the world. If successful in the longer term, the development of a JPR panel could be one more step along this process, facilitating the more frequent and cost-effective collection of data to better understand Jewish populations, and enabling Jewish leaders and service providers to be more responsive to the needs of the community. JPR plans to continue the development of the panel by carrying out further surveys and additional methodological analyses, alongside targeting specific sub-groups that have been identified as underrepresented in this survey wave, in particular, younger adults, strictly Orthodox Jews and those who are less engaged with organised Jewish community life.

/ Acknowledgements

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/ About the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR)

The Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) is a London-based research organisation, consultancy and think-tank. It aims to advance the prospects of Jewish communities in the United Kingdom and across Europe by conducting research and informing policy development in dialogue with those best placed to positively influence Jewish life. Web: www.jpr.org.uk.

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