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Time to leave the UK?

Patterns of Jewish migration to Israel post-October 7

Dr Jonathan Boyd

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/ Are Jews leaving the UK?

742 people emigrated to Israel ('made *aliyah*') from the UK in 2025 – the highest annual count for over forty years. But what does that number – and the longer-term migratory trend – really tell us?

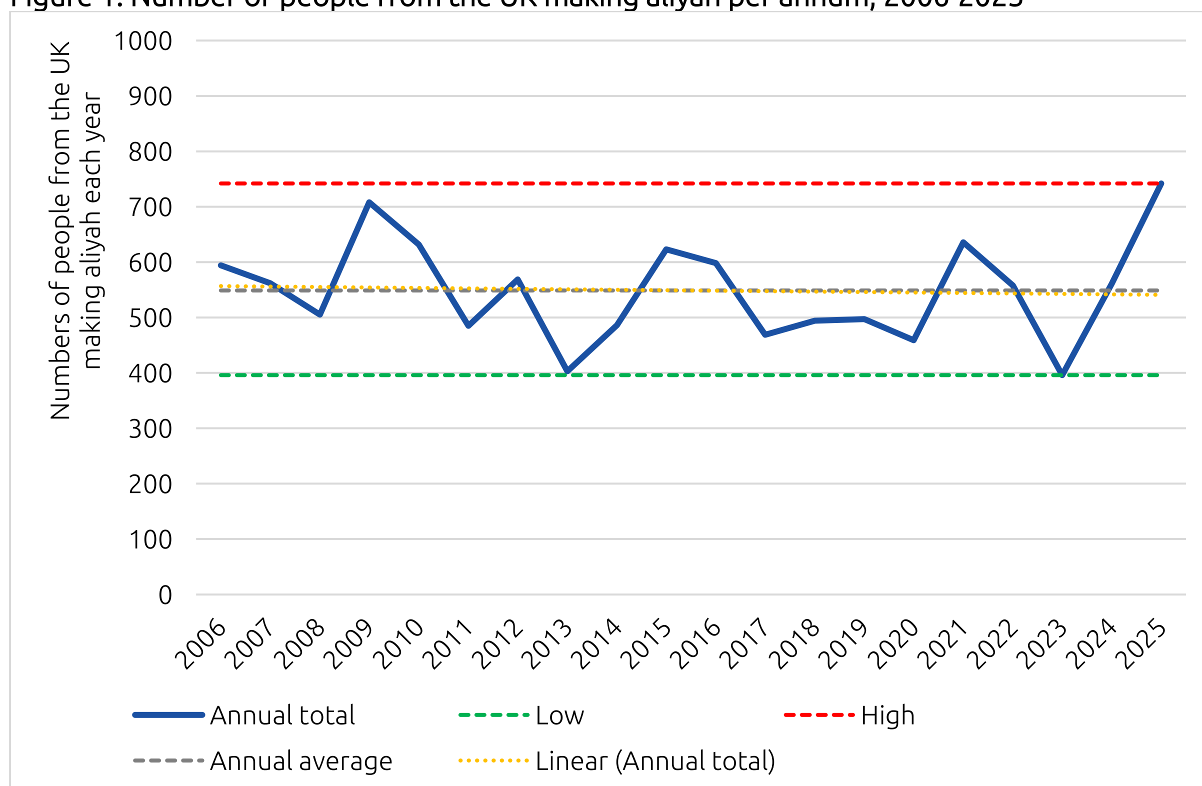
In a world marked by social media, 24/7 news and a constant stream of startling news headlines, it's tempting for many to explain this by reaching for the most sensationalist interpretations. Indeed, the simplest, and most immediate explanation for the high 2025 count is a dramatic one: Jews are starting to leave the UK in elevated numbers because antisemitism is at its highest levels for decades and the country is becoming increasingly unsafe for Jews. And the evidence for that claim is starting to mount: the UK experienced its first deadly Islamist terrorist attack against a specifically British Jewish target in October 2025 – at Heaton Park Synagogue in Manchester on the festival of Yom Kippur – an assault that left two Jewish worshippers dead. Jewish community members commonly expressed shock but not surprise about the attack[1] – Islamists have been targeting Jews in Europe for the past two decades, with Jews also being murdered in France, Belgium, Denmark. For at least a decade, many British Jews have wondered when, rather than whether, such an attack may reach the British Isles.

Moreover, anxieties have risen since the 7 October 2023 atrocities in southern Israel – attacks that initially generated a degree of sympathy for Israel, but quickly morphed into the most intensive criticism the country has ever experienced in light of its ruthless assault on Hamas in Gaza. Many Jews around the world have been, or certainly have felt, targeted in response – as has long been the case when conflict erupts between Israel and Palestinians in Gaza – but the post-October 7 realities have been particularly acute, with deadly attacks on Jews in Sydney, Washington DC and Boulder CO, and countless other traumatic assaults on Jewish targets worldwide. In the UK, the Community Security Trust registered the three highest annual totals of recorded antisemitic incidents in 2023, 2024, and 2025 since records began in the 1980s, and JPR figures consistently demonstrate CST numbers constitute a significant undercount; survey data suggest that approaching a third of all British Jewish adults personally experienced some kind of antisemitic incident in 2025. Recent JPR data additionally show that 31% of British Jewish adults report experiencing someone blaming them for the policies of the State of Israel at least occasionally over the previous twelve months, and 47% report someone making them feel as if they have to justify Israel's actions, also at least on occasion. Quite clearly, many Jews worldwide are feeling under suspicion and attack simply by virtue of being Jewish, leading to a sense of insecurity that is simultaneously strange yet familiar due to historical resonances of anti-Jewish persecution. The dominant narrative across large parts of the organised UK Jewish community is that antisemitism has reached levels not seen in decades, within a wider context of concern that the country is becoming increasingly unsettled, shaped by a confluence of left-wing populism, Islamist extremism and perceived political ineffectiveness.

[1] See: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdr64nnjlv1o.

But what might recent *aliyah* (migration to Israel) data actually tell us about the current British Jewish response to all of this? Migration to Israel can occur for multiple reasons – pull factors towards Israel as well as push factors away from the UK, and often simple pragmatism: to take up a professional opportunity, or to live in close proximity to a partner or close family. Thus, the meaning behind the numbers should be considered carefully – the most simple interpretations may not be the correct ones. Figure 1 shows recent figures based on official Israeli government data. As can be seen, annual counts have remained within a fairly narrow range over the past twenty years, settling at between a low of about 400 (dotted green line) and a high of about 740 (dotted red line) annually, with an average across the period (dotted grey line) of about 550. Given the fundamental Jewish connection with Israel and that the size of the UK Jewish population has been fairly steady over this period, this is about as low and stable a picture as one can reasonably imagine, ranging from an estimated 1.27 Jews per 1,000 in the UK Jewish population as a whole (in 2023), to 2.36 per 1,000 (in 2025).

Figure 1. Number of people from the UK making aliyah per annum, 2006-2025



Data: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel, based on numbers of immigrants from the UK as last country of residence.

/ Interpreting the data

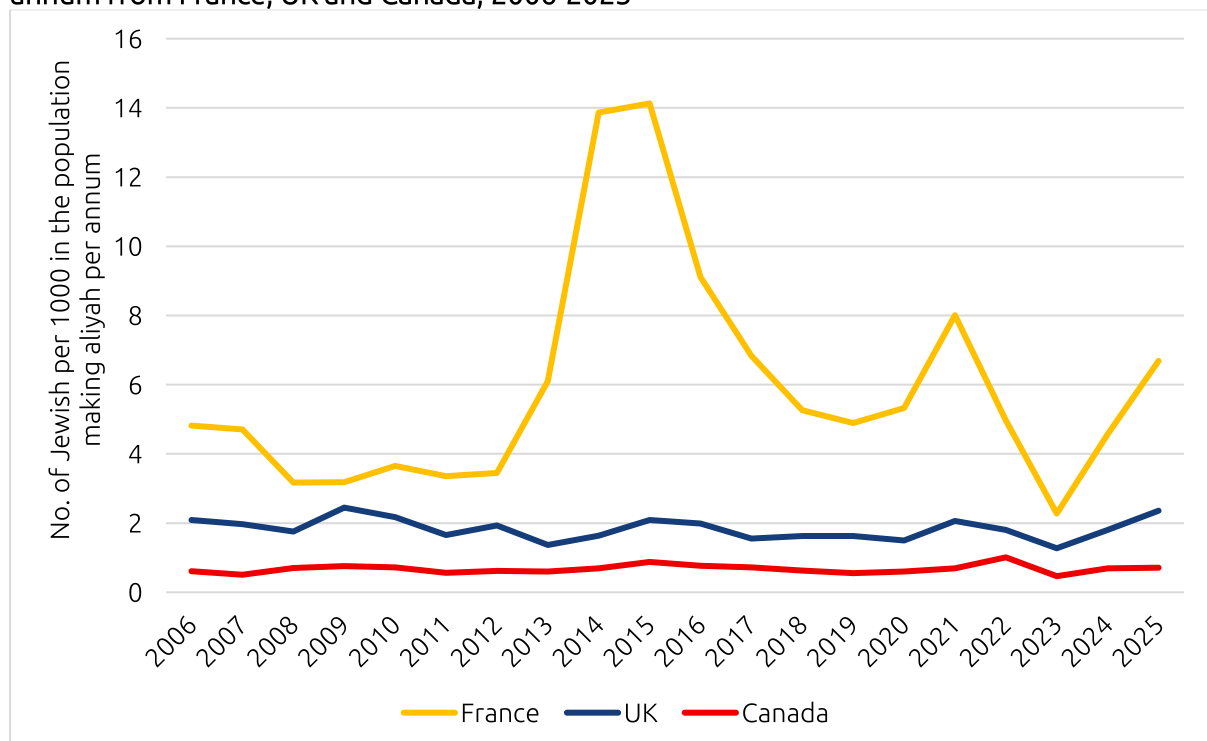
The high count in 2025 can currently be interpreted in at least two distinct ways. The first is to focus exclusively on it, and draw the dramatic and sensationalist conclusion noted above: the highest annual count since the mid-1980s – a direct response to rising antisemitism and disillusionment or fear among British Jews about the future of Jewish life in the country. Indeed, the fact that this peak has occurred in the same year as major wars involving Israel – not only in Gaza, but perhaps even more notably with Iran – make it all the more striking.

Yet one should be cautious about this view. Annual counts alone can be deceptive – the trend over time also matters. An alternative, second, interpretation is to note that 2023 saw the *lowest* number of British migrants to Israel in two decades (396), followed by 561 in 2024 which was approximately the average annual figure over the same twenty-year period. Thus,

taking the past three years together, we can see that 1,699 people migrated in total, at an average of 566 per annum – again, strikingly close to the annual average over the past two decades. When the figures are smoothed out between 2023 and 2025, it is distinctly possible that the high count in 2025 is simply a 'catch up' due to the particularly low count in 2023, which was likely a result of individuals delaying their aliyah plans due to the political turmoil in Israel in 2023 prior to October 7 and/or the October 7 attacks and subsequent war. Indeed, even accounting for the somewhat high count in 2025, the trendline (dotted orange line in Figure 1) over the entire period is extraordinarily flat, and runs more or less exactly along the average line. In brief, a contextual assessment of 2025 data at this point in time suggests that it may be a reflection of business as usual.

Nevertheless, in many respects, it is still too early to accurately read what is – or what may be – going on in the post-October 7 context. It is rare to see year-on-year increases in two consecutive years – typically the trend is more jagged than that (as can be seen in Figure 1) – so a third annual increase in 2026 would be unusual and would lend credence to the notion that some kind of wave is occurring. Yet the actual numbers remain small relative to the Jewish population as a whole – the overwhelming majority of British Jews are not leaving. As Figure 2 shows, on average, about 2 Jews per 1,000 in the Jewish population of the UK make aliyah each year, somewhat higher than the equivalent figure for Canada (0.7) (where antisemitism is at least as pervasive today), but considerably lower than in France (6.4).

Figure 2. Proportions of Jews per 1,000 in the Jewish population migrating to Israel per annum from France, UK and Canada, 2006-2025



Data: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel, and DellaPergola (core Jewish population data as reported in *American Jewish Year Books* over the period shown). The comparison here is between the three largest Jewish populations in the world, after Israel and the US.

Yet even the elevated counts in France remain fairly low overall – just 6 to 7 per 1,000 per annum over the period shown, albeit rising to a high of around 14 per 1,000 in the peak years of 2014 and 2015. It is tempting to reach for the antisemitism explanation in that period there too – the timing aligns with the murderous Islamist attack on a kosher supermarket in Paris in

January 2015 that saw four French Jews killed, alongside several other violent assaults on Jews in the country at a similar time. Yet a socioeconomic argument can also be made. In general, decisions to migrate are most commonly prompted by socioeconomic factors – for example, when unemployment levels are high, people are more likely to move. And 2013, 2014 and 2015 saw unusually high unemployment rates in France, approaching 10.5%. It seems highly probable that the spike at that time wasn't prompted exclusively by antisemitism, and that socioeconomic factors played a significant role too. We return to this issue a little later.

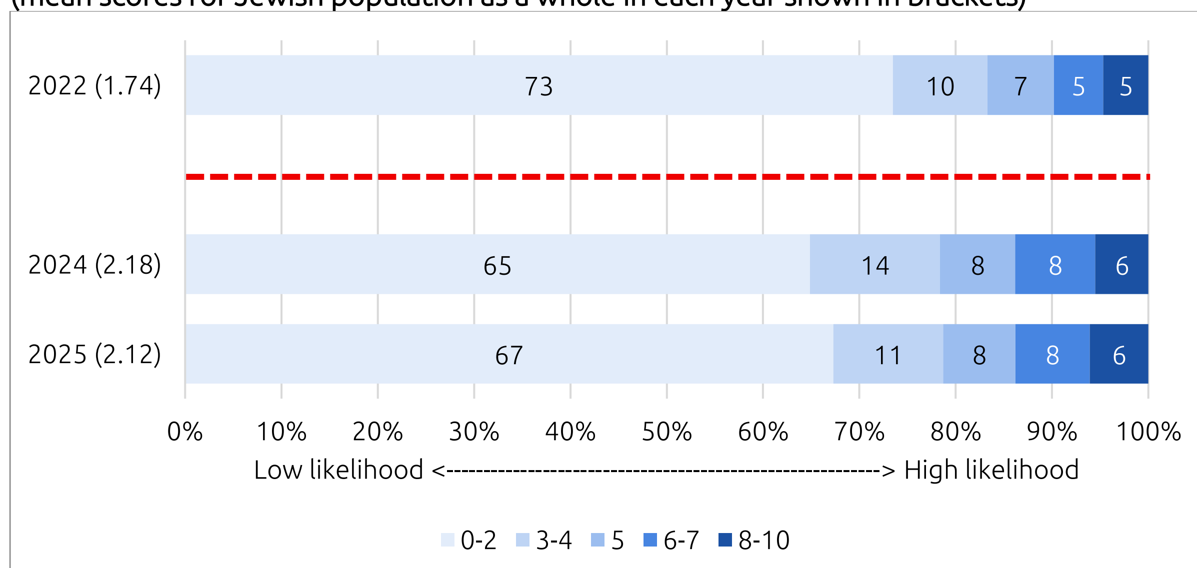
Moreover, previous work conducted by JPR demonstrates that none of these recent rates – in the UK, France or Canada – even at their heights, can be compared to previous examples of mass migration of Jews.[2] Three examples from notable periods – from Germany in the 1930s, from Morocco and Tunisia in the 1960s, and from the Former Soviet Union in the early 1990s – all demonstrate that one should expect to see figures of around 70-75 per 1,000 per annum during periods of crisis or major transitions – vastly higher than the levels shown above in Figure 2. So in a historical and international context, there is nothing close to what one might describe as a Jewish 'exodus' from the UK, or more or less any other country, at present. The only possible exceptions in the current period are Jews from Russia and Ukraine, although even there, the dramatic levels of *aliyah* from both countries seen in 2022 and 2023 in response to the war there have now settled back down to pre-war levels, indicating that while emigration remains considerably higher there than from the West, it is not at crisis point at te moment.[3]

/ Thinking about migrating

Yet with that stated, JPR survey evidence suggests that even if the numbers choosing to leave the UK for Israel remain fairly low and stable, the internal conversation among British Jews about leaving has changed somewhat since the October 7 attacks and the subsequent wave of antisemitism. Invited in three separate surveys in 2022, 2024 and 2025 to indicate how likely they are to make aliyah over the coming five years, British Jews show a small but nevertheless marked increase in the possibility over the past two years. The survey question, which asks respondents to mark themselves on a scale running from 0 (extremely unlikely) to 10 (extremely likely), shows that the proportion scoring at the higher end (6-10) rose from a pre-October 7 proportion of 10% to a post-October 7 of 14%. Equally importantly, those at the unlikely end of the scale (0-2) fell from 73% to 67%. Examined through the lens of mean scores on the 0-10 scale, the Jewish population as a whole shifted from a mean of 1.74 in late 2022, to 2.18 in mid-2024 and similarly 2.12 in mid-2025. These may not feel like major shifts, but closer analysis indicates that many individuals have moved up a notch or two on the scale over the period shown – mild shifts that do not point to their imminent migration, but suggest that the possibility has become a little more likely from wherever it was previously.

[2] See: Staetsky, D. (2023). *Jewish migration today: What it may mean for Europe*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research. The average number of Jews from the European (as opoosed to Asian) parts of the Former Soviet Union who emigrated ot Israel per annum in the twenty-year period from 2002-21 was just over 10,000. It jumped dramatically in 2022 to almost 63,000 as the Russia-Ukraine war began, and continued at lower, but nonetheless elevated levels in the following two years (39,500 in 2023; 21,000 in 2024), before falling back to just under 10,000 in 2025.
[3] Ibid.

Figure 3. Self-assessed likelihood of British Jews migrating to Israel, 2022, 2024 and 2025 (mean scores for Jewish population as a whole in each year shown in brackets)



Question: *How likely, if at all, is it that you will live permanently in Israel ('make aliyah' or return there) in the next five years, where 0 is 'Extremely unlikely' and 10 is 'Extremely likely'?* Note. Proportions may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Ns=4,891 (2022); 4,641 (2024); 4,822 (2025). Data for 2023 are not available. Data above the dotted red line pre-date the October 7 attacks, data below the line are from after them.

Importantly, the data from 2025 *pre-date* the Heaton Park Synagogue attack in Manchester in October of that year,[4] not to mention the attack on the Hatzola ambulances in March 2026 in the north-west London suburb of Golders Green[5] – the neighbourhood with the largest Jewish population in the country. It is possible that attitudes may have shifted somewhat since those major incidents, although it seems unlikely that they will have changed dramatically – as a general rule, this type of measure does not undergo major shifts except in particularly extreme circumstances, as discussed previously. Yet, the cumulative effect of multiple troubling if not deadly antisemitic attacks can certainly take a toll over time, and these are occurring far more regularly at present than prior to the October 7 attacks.[6] Monitoring attitudes towards migration, as well as migration data itself, are important components both in assessing how Jews are responding to the realities they sense around them, and determining whether changes seen are simply short-term responses to specific acts, or signals of more fundamental long-term change.

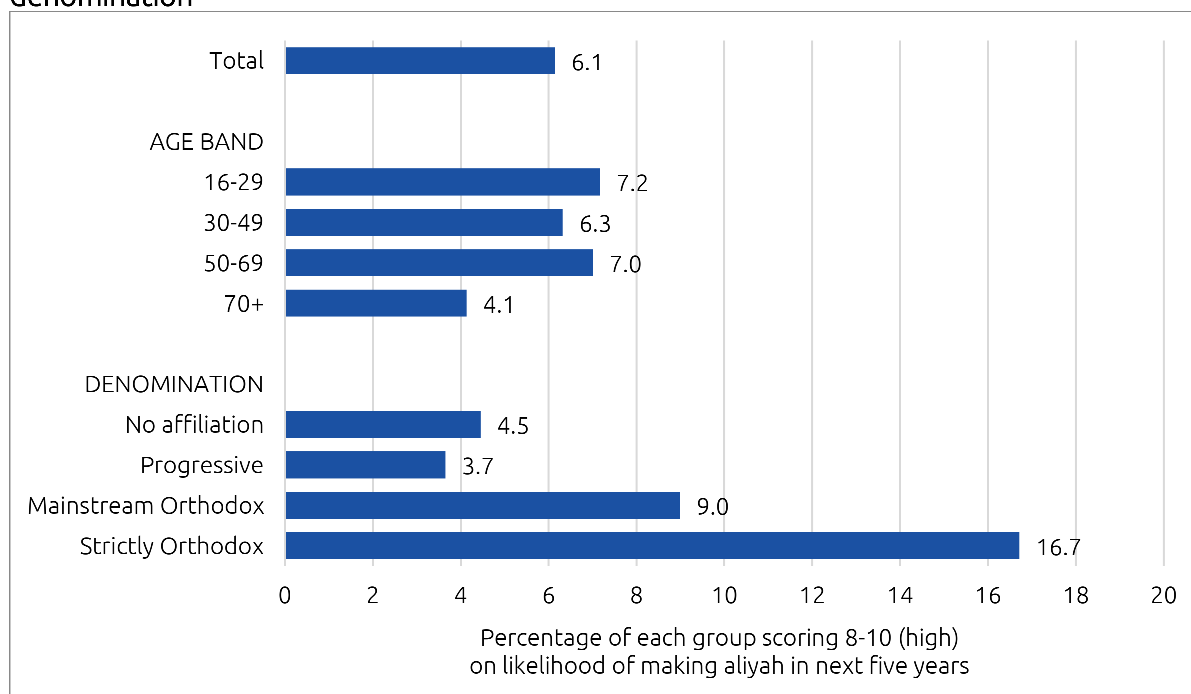
However, more importantly, by analysing the existing survey data in more detail, we can start to see which Jewish sub-groups are most likely to be considering aliyah, and indeed what factors may be driving that consideration, thereby allowing us to predict how the extant British Jewish community may be affected by any increase in aliyah in the coming years.

In the figures below, we examine those who scored 8-10 on the aliyah scale – i.e. those who said they were most likely to make aliyah in the coming five years. 6.1% of all British Jewish adults scored themselves within this range, a proportion with equates to about 19,200 UK-based Jews in total, including children, over that five year, 2026-2030, period. At this stage, we would not expect this type of number to migrate to Israel over that period – existing evidence would suggest the figure will rather be in the range of about 2,700 to 3,700.

[4] See: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5yvzp070vgo.
[5] See: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwyj1p49gdpo.
[6] Indeed, at the time of writing, Harakat Ashab al Yasmin al-Islamia (HAYI), suspected by the police of being linked to Iran's intelligence services and identified as the group that took responsibility for the Hatzola ambulances attack, has purportedly been involved in four incidents alone in the past week.

Figure 4 shows what we would expect to see in terms of age bands and Jewish denominational alignment. As a general rule, younger people are more likely to want to emigrate than older people, and we essentially see this gradient with 16-29-year-olds scoring the highest (7.2% of them scored 8-10) and 70+ year-olds the lowest (4.1%). Yet 50-69-year-olds appear to represent something of an anomaly in the pattern, scoring almost as highly as the youngest band, a finding that requires further investigation to understand its implications.

Figure 4. Proportions of British Jews scoring 8-10 on the aliyah scale, by age and denomination



2025 data. N=4,822. Questions: *Are you currently a member of a synagogue?* [Response options: Yes, I am a synagogue member; Although I am not a synagogue member I do belong to/attend a synagogue; No, I am not a synagogue member; Don't know]; If yes: *Which of the following types of synagogue/s are you currently a member of?* [Response options: None – I do not align with any synagogue movement; Strictly Orthodox (e.g. Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations); United Synagogue; Federation of Synagogues; Other Independent Orthodox; S&P Sephardi Community; Masorti Judaism; Reform Judaism; Liberal Judaism; Independent shtiebel; Office of the Chief Rabbi – Independent; Other synagogue (write in)].

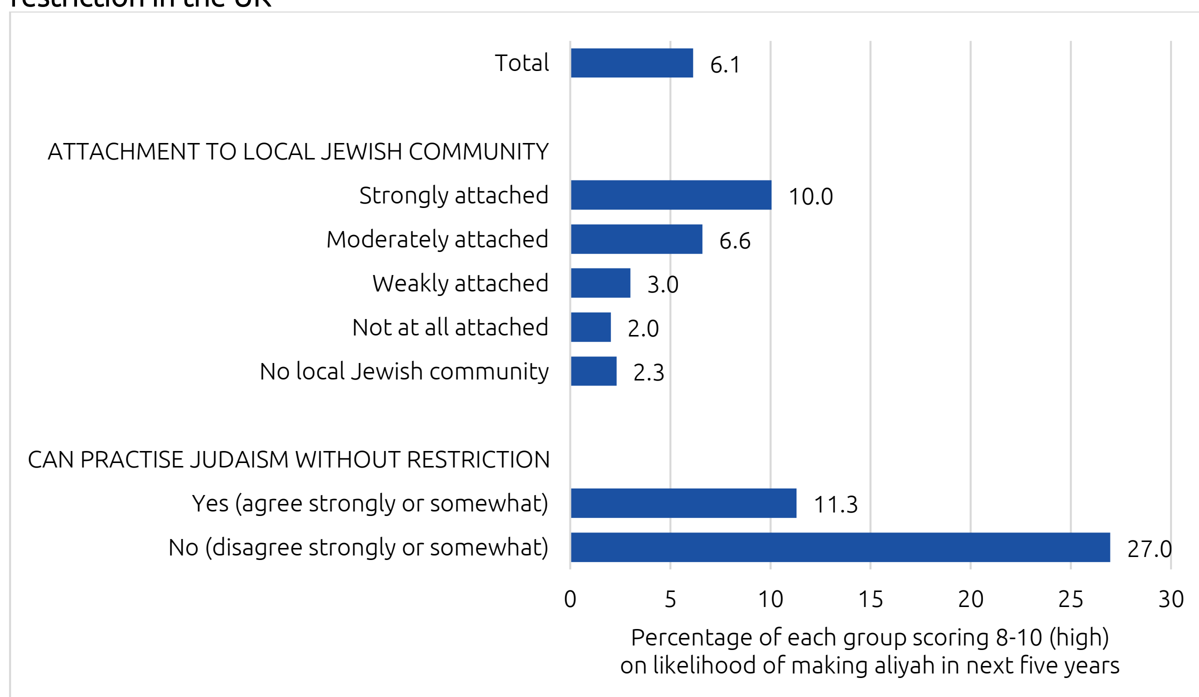
We also see a clear distinction denominationally in terms of synagogue membership, with one in six strictly Orthodox Jews scoring themselves in the 8-10 range – a significantly higher proportion than mainstream (modern) Orthodox (although they score considerably above the population average of 6.1%). This, in turn, is significantly higher than among Progressive or unaffiliated Jews. Given the rapid demographic growth of the strictly Orthodox (haredi) Jewish population driven by high fertility and normal mortality, it is unlikely that this will do a great deal to affect the continued growth of this sector in the UK, but we would expect the mainstream Orthodox sector to be impacted to some degree as (a) it has a considerably older age profile so is far less able than the strictly Orthodox to reconstitute itself through natural processes; and (b) it has shown signs of numerical decline since at least the 1990s.[7]

Further similar evidence can be found in Figure 5. Those who feel most attached to their local Jewish community – who may align themselves with any denomination, but are most likely to

[7] See: Casale Mashiah, D. and Boyd, J. (2017). *Synagogue membership in the United Kingdom in 2016*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research. More recent survey data suggest that the long-term trends indicated in that study have continued along similar lines.

be mainstream or strictly Orthodox – are found to be notably more likely to be thinking about making aliyah than those who feel weakly or not at all attached. This is not surprising – those most connected to Jewish life are almost inevitably those who are most likely to be thinking about moving to Israel and drawn to it – yet this is important to consider from a community leadership and governance perspective. The most communally-attached or engaged in Jewish life are also those who are most likely to step up to lead the community; higher than average rates of emigration among them will, in all probability, have at least some bearing on community leadership flows.

Figure 5. Proportions of British Jews scoring 8-10 on the aliyah scale, by attachment to their local Jewish community and feelings about their ability to practise Judaism without restriction in the UK



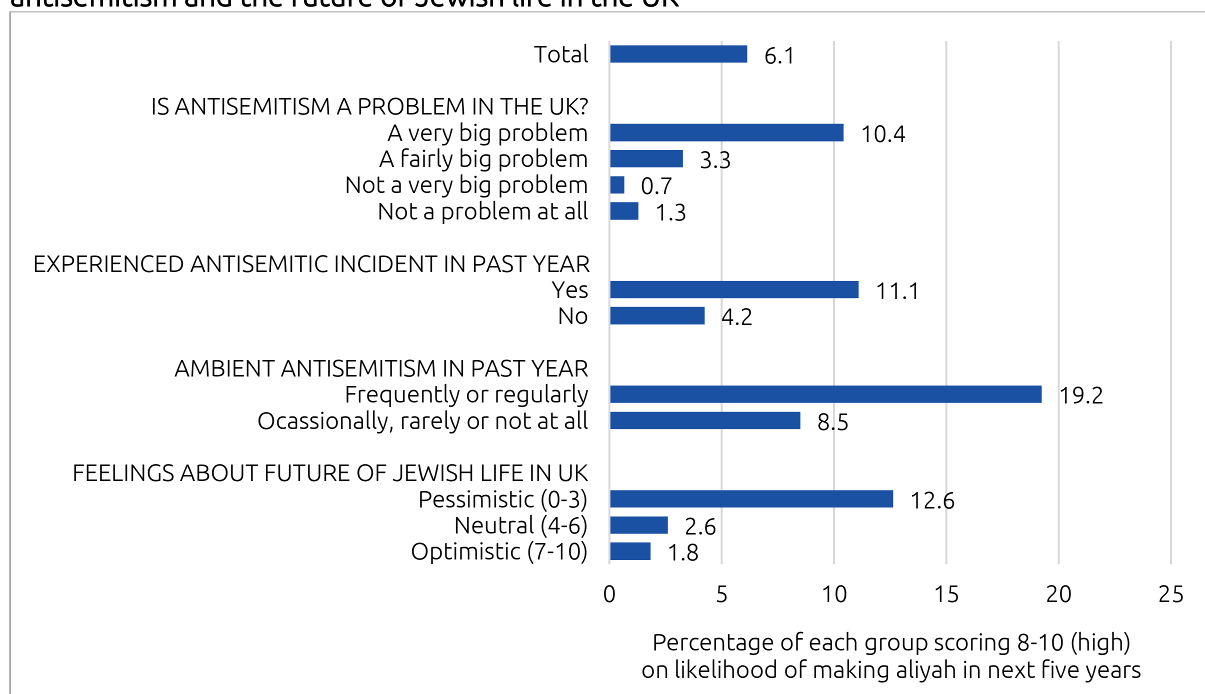
2025 data. N=4,822. Questions: *How attached do you currently feel to your local Jewish community?* [Response options (select one): Strongly attached; Moderately attached; Weakly attached; Not at all attached; There is no local Jewish community where I live]; *If I choose to, I can practise Judaism without restriction where I live* [Response options (select one): Strongly agree; Somewhat agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat disagree; Strongly disagree; Does not apply to me].

For context, these data from mid-2025 show that 85% of British Jews either 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' that they "can practise Judaism without restriction" where they live, a sign that despite very similar levels of concern about antisemitism (82% consider it to be a 'very' or 'fairly' big problem), most Jews feel that they are able to function freely as Jews in Britain. Yet it is striking to see that those who are most likely to feel they *cannot* practise Judaism freely are notably more likely to be considering aliyah than those who agree with it. In quantitative terms, over a quarter (27%) of Jews who feel that their capacity to practise Judaism is being curbed in some way in Britain are highly likely to be thinking about aliyah. Again, this is an important point for policymakers both within and beyond the community to note: freedom of religious practice and the quality of Jewish life in the UK have a statistical bearing on Jewish people's views about their future in the country.

It is clear too that people's perceptions and experiences of antisemitism correlate with their likelihood of making aliyah in the next five years (Figure 6). Those who consider antisemitism to be a 'very big problem' in the UK are much more likely to score 8-10 on the aliyah scale than those who consider it less of a problem, and those who personally experienced an antisemitic

incident in 2024 are much more likely to situate themselves in the 8-10 zone than those who did not. The same pattern can be seen with regard to 'ambient antisemitism' – experiences that, whilst not directed at an individual directly or personally, nonetheless create the impression of an antisemitic environment around them.[8] One in five of those who have had such experiences 'frequently' or 'regularly' are at the high end of the likelihood to make aliyah scale, compared to fewer than one in ten who have had them 'occasionally,' 'rarely' or not at all. A further indication that a preference for aliyah is driven by push factors away from the UK can be seen in the data on how optimistic or pessimistic British Jews feel about the future of Jewish life in the UK: those who are pessimistic about it are much more likely to score highly on the aliyah scale than those who feel optimistic or neutral. Thus overall, while the actual numbers of people moving to Israel remain low and fairly stable, the antisemitism British Jews have seen and experienced around them is having a bearing on how they think about their future in the UK, and appears to be pushing more to at least contemplate the possibility of moving to Israel in the coming years.

Figure 6. Proportions of British Jews scoring 8-10 on the aliyah scale, by various measures of antisemitism and the future of Jewish life in the UK



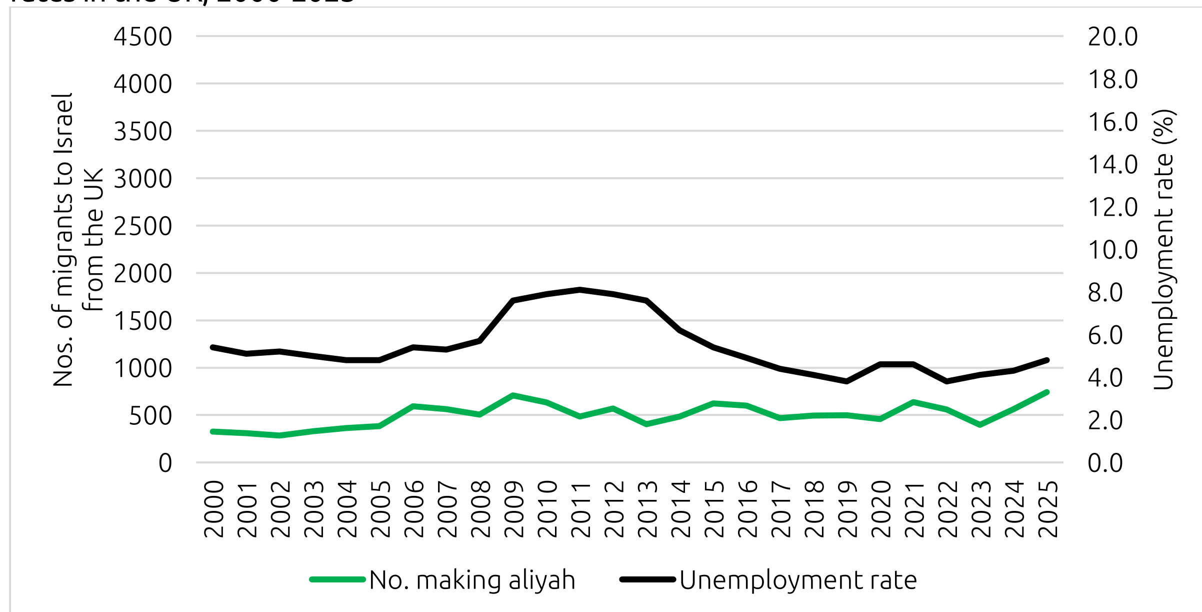
2025 data. N=4,822. Questions: *To what extent do you think antisemitism is a problem in the UK?* [Response options as shown in chart, plus 'Don't know']; *Thinking specifically about the period from 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024, did you experience any of the following? Please answer only for calendar year 2024 – this is important to estavlish an incident rate for that year – and only about incident that were directed at you personally.* [Response options (select all that apply): A physical antisemitic attack; A verbal antisemitic attack; Antisemitic discrimination at work or other venue or institution; Antisemitic damage to your property; Online antisemitic abuse or harassment directed at you personally; Other type of antisemitic incident(s) directed at you personally; None of these; I am unsure if an incident I experienced was antisemitic]; *Thinking more generally, have you had any experiences in the past 12 months that you considered to be antisemitic that were not directed at you personally (for example, seeing antisemitic graffiti, posters, online comments or images, media reports, etc.)?* [Response options (select one): No; Yes, rarely; Yes, occasionally; Yes, regularly; Yes, frequently]; *Thinking about the next 10 years, how optimistic or pessimistic do you feel about the prospects of the future of Jewish life in the UK? Use the 0 to 10 scale to answer, where 0 means very pessimistic and 10 means very optimistic.*

That stated, it is worth noting that migration to Israel, and indeed in general, is commonly driven significantly by socioeconomic factors. Figure 7 shows how aliyah levels among British

[8] See: Boyd, J. 'The pernicious effects of ambient antisemitism', *Jewish News*, 18 February 2025

Jews since the turn of the century have quite often tracked the unemployment rate in the UK, certainly more so than antisemitic incidents which incident suggest have risen significantly, particularly since the early 2010s.[9] Volatility and uncertainty driven by increased chances of joblessness create conditions in which people are more likely to consider their options, resulting in some pursuing change or opportunities abroad.

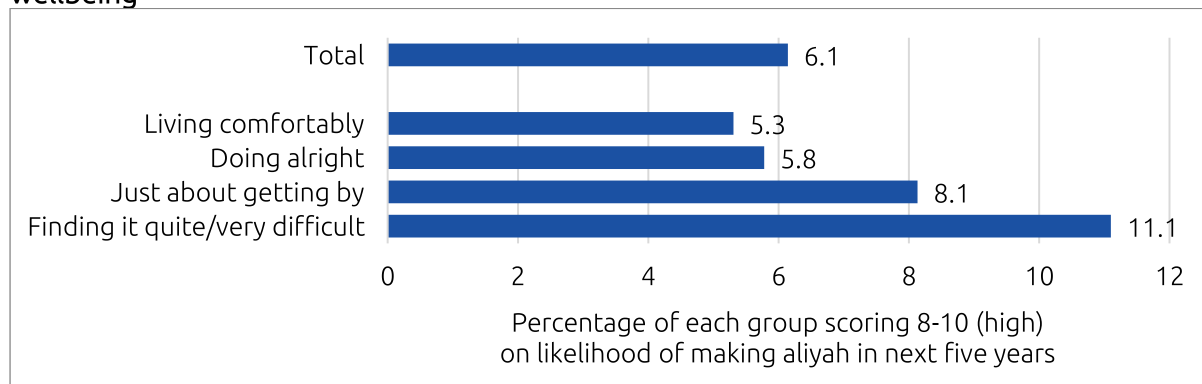
Figure 7. Comparison between number of migrants to Israel from the UK and unemployment rates in the UK, 2000-2025



Sources: Central Bureau of Statistics Israel; Office for National Statistics, UK – unemployment rate (aged 16 and over), seasonally adjusted (%)

We see possible evidence of this socioeconomic factor in the survey data too. A pattern can be discerned whereby British Jews experiencing higher degrees of economic hardship are more likely to be seriously contemplating aliyah than those in stronger positions. That said, there is some overlap between this finding and those shown earlier relating to age and denomination – younger people and the strictly orthodox tend to be in a weaker economic situation than others.

Figure 8. Proportions of British Jews scoring 8-10 on the aliyah scale, by self-assessed financial wellbeing



Question: *Thinking about your economic wellbeing, how well would you say you are managing financially these days?* [Response options (select one): Living comfortably; Doing alright; Just about getting by; Finding it quite difficult; Finding it very difficult.] 2025 data. N=4,822.

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[9] See: Community Security Trust, 'Antisemitic Incidents 2025'.

More detailed multivariate analysis would help to determine how each of these factors interact (work that will be undertaken in due course), but these basic findings suggest that those most likely to migrate to Israel from the UK in the coming years are expected to be among the more communally-attached and Orthodox parts of the Jewish population, and particularly those who are most concerned about, and affected by antisemitism.

/ Wider context

In considering all of this, it is important to bear in mind that migration is not a one-way street. Jews are immigrating into the UK, as well emigrating from it. Indeed, the number of people living in the UK who were born in Israel rose from 12,229 in 2001 to 23,152 in 2021, a net increase of 10,923 over that twenty-year period.[10] These figures are population 'stocks' at two given points in time so they don't reveal the details of the population 'flows' that took place during the twenty-year period (Israel-born Jews will have moved in and out of Britain throughout that time); they rather demonstrate that, overall, there was net growth of the Israel-born Jewish population at this scale. An equivalent recent stock of UK-born Jews living in Israel indicates that there were about 25,800 in mid-2024,[11] a figure that can be reasonably compared to the 23,152 for Israel-born people in the UK in 2021. Whilst more detailed data would be required to fully understand migratory dynamics in both directions, the similarity of these two figures suggests that migration levels in the two directions have been broadly balanced thus far in the 21st Century – overall, for every one Jew leaving the UK, there has been one Israeli moving to the UK. This is critical to bear in mind, and should serve as a reminder that aliyah data, however dramatic, need to be examined in this context too.

Ideally, in seeking to develop the picture further, one would also consider Jewish migration patterns to and from countries other than Israel. Whilst existing data indicate that the most popular migratory destination for British Jews is Israel and demonstrate that the largest foreign-born Jewish population living in the UK was born in Israel, other countries obviously feature. However, such data are difficult to come by. Most countries do not record or publish the religion or ethnicity of immigrants, so it is challenging to enumerate how many British Jews have emigrated to countries other than Israel or how many non-British Jews have migrated to the UK. Nonetheless, European Union survey data from 2018, collected and analysed by a joint JPR/Ipsos team, indicate that of those British Jews thinking seriously about emigration from the UK at the time, about 7 in 10 expected to move to Israel, whilst 3 in 10 saw their likely destination as somewhere else.[12] If we assume this remains the case, the number of Jews who emigrated from the UK in 2025 to Israel or any other country can be loosely estimated at a little over 1,000. Using the same formula, we can estimate that about 16,600 Jews emigrated from the UK between 2001 and 2021 (about 11,600 are known to have emigrated to Israel over this period[13]). Future work needs to assess the extent to which this 7:3 ratio is stable over time, and explore in more detail the motivations behind Jewish people's decisions to migrate.

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[10] UK Census data, as analysed in: Staetsky, D. (2025). *Israelis abroad: The transformation of the Jewish Diaspora?* London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research. An estimated 80%-95% of these people are Jewish.
[11] Data from: Central Bureau of Statistics Israel, Population Census, Population and Immigration Autjority, Population Register, published 31-12-2025.
[12] See: DellaPergola, S. and Staetsky, L. D. (2020). *Jews in Europe at the turn of the Millennium. Population trends and estimates*. London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research. Data are from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU, 2018.
[13] Central Bureau of Statistics Israel data: immigrants, last country of residence.

Regarding Jews moving *into* the UK from countries other than Israel, one can make an assessment drawing on national census country of birth data, as done with the Israel-born population above. This reveals that the largest single foreign-born Jewish group in Britain is Israeli, accounting for about a quarter (26%) of all foreign-born Jews in the country in 2021. Looking at the figures over the 2001-2021 period, the number of Jews (by religion) who are foreign-born rose by a total of about 8,800. While in most cases the counts are very small, other foreign-born Jews whose numbers increased over that time came notably from the United States, France and Belgium, and, to a less extent, Switzerland, Australia, Russia, Brazil and Spain.

Importantly, there is little that is newsworthy in this contextual information. Net Jewish migration into the UK is positive, but the numbers are small. Jews are not being drawn to the UK in any significant fashion, and those who are attracted to it are largely migrating for personal or professional reasons. However, the reasons why Jews are *leaving* the UK, or contemplating doing so, are likely rather less mundane. The evidence in this paper suggests a shifting conversation about the medium- to long-term position and security of Jews in the UK, and whilst this has had limited bearing on the actual numbers emigrating so far, there are some early warning signs that counts could increase due in no small part to rising concerns about antisemitism.

/ Summary and conclusions

This paper set out to examine a widely circulating claim: that British Jews are leaving the UK in growing numbers because antisemitism has reached intolerable levels and the future of Jewish life in the country is increasingly in doubt. At first glance, the headline figure for 2025 – 742 British Jews making aliyah, the highest annual total for over forty years – appears to lend weight to that narrative. Yet as this analysis has shown, headline numbers alone are an insufficient guide to understand underlying social reality. When examined in historical, comparative and behavioural context, they point to a far more complex and rather less dramatic picture.

Over the past two decades, *aliyah* – migration to Israel – from the UK has remained strikingly stable. Annual totals have fluctuated within a relatively narrow band of around 400–740 people per year, with a long-term average of approximately 550. Whilst the elevated 2025 figure is the highest count recorded over that period, when smoothed across recent years, the meaning behind it becomes more opaque: the unusually low figure recorded in 2023, during a period of political turmoil and acute insecurity in Israel itself, was followed by a return to near-average levels in 2024 and a likely compensatory rise in 2025. Statistically speaking, the long-term trend is flat. There is no clear evidence, at present, of a sustained or accelerating wave of emigration from the UK to Israel.

International comparisons reinforce this conclusion. On a per capita basis, aliyah from the UK remains low by historical and comparative standards: around two per 1,000 Jews per year, higher than Canada but considerably below France, and orders of magnitude lower than the levels associated with genuine Jewish flight in past crises or periods of acute uncertainty. Even in France, where antisemitic violence in the mid-2010s coincided with a pronounced spike in aliyah, peak levels reached only around 14 per 1,000, and fell rapidly thereafter, and arguably were exacerbated by poor economic circumstances in France at the same time. Nothing approaching such levels is observable in the UK today.

Yet to conclude from this that antisemitism is irrelevant to migration decisions would also be a mistake. Survey evidence presented here suggests that the *conversation* about leaving the UK has shifted, even if behaviour has not (yet) followed suit. Since October 7, a modest

but meaningful proportion of British Jews have recalibrated how likely they feel they are to consider aliyah in the coming five years. The share expressing a high likelihood has risen, while the proportion expressing strong resistance has declined. Most of these shifts are incremental rather than transformative; nevertheless, they indicate that the possibility of leaving has moved closer to the centre of the cognitive landscape for some.

Crucially, this change is not evenly distributed across the population. Those most likely to be contemplating aliyah disproportionately include younger adults, 50-60-somethings, strictly and mainstream Orthodox Jews, and individuals who feel strongly attached to Jewish communal life. Based on this profile, many of these are unlikely to be marginal or disengaged figures in the Jewish community, and rather more likely to include individuals who are engaged in the social, religious, voluntary and leadership infrastructure of the community. Similarly, those who report curtailed freedom to practise Judaism, heightened exposure to antisemitism (direct or ambient), or pessimism about the future of Jewish life in the UK are notably more likely than others to be seriously considering migration. While the numbers involved remain small, the potential communal consequences are not trivial.

At the same time, evidence consistently points to socioeconomic factors as important drivers of Jewish migration from the UK, as they are for migration more generally. Over the past quarter-century, aliyah levels have often tracked macroeconomic indicators such as unemployment quite closely, and rather less closely with fluctuations in recorded antisemitic incidents. The current data reflect this pattern as well: Jews experiencing greater financial stress (which overlaps with those who are young and/or strictly Orthodox) are more likely to contemplate leaving. Antisemitism matters, but it rarely operates in isolation; rather, it interacts with economic insecurity, life-stage transitions, and perceptions of opportunity both in Britain and, as noted, in France and elsewhere.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the British Jewish community is not on the brink of an exodus. The overwhelming majority of Jews are staying, and feel able to practise their Judaism in the UK. However, the sense of conditionality surrounding that future has increased. Rising levels of antisemitism are making questions of belonging, security and long-term viability notably more salient than before. Significant proportions of Jews are asking themselves whether Jewish life is safe or sustainable in Britain in the medium- to long-term. For national policymakers and communal leaders alike, the challenge is not to respond to imagined mass flight, but to understand and address the subtler pressures shaping how British Jews think about their future in the country – pressures that may reveal important social and political dynamics within Britain as a whole, and that could gradually reshape the Jewish community over time.

/ Methodological notes

The JPR Jews in Uncertain Times Survey (JUTS) was conducted using the JPR Jewish Population Research Panel, our core research mechanism for exploring the attitudes and experiences of Jews in the UK on a variety of issues. The panel contains over 12,000 individuals who are UK residents aged 16 or above who self-identify as Jewish. The 2025 data presented here are based on 4,822 individuals who participated in JUTS, which was conducted between 8 June and 21 July 2025. Respondents completed the questionnaire online, by computer, smartphone or tablet, or in a handful of cases, by telephone. The questionnaire was developed by JPR, drawing on a range of existing surveys, and were programmed in-house using Forsta software. The survey data were cleaned and weighted to adjust for the age, sex and geographical distribution of the Jewish population based on the 2021 Census, and on information about Jewish denomination based on a combination of administrative and JPR survey data. Statistical analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS.

Data from 2024 and 2022 come respectively from the JPR Jewish Current Affairs Survey (JCAS) and the National Jewish Identity Survey (NJIS), which were also conducted among self-identifying Jews aged 16 or above living in the UK, sampled using the JPR Jewish Population Research Panel using the same methodology as JUTS. JCAS was conducted between 14 June and 14 July 2024; n= 4,641. NJIS was conducted between 16 November and 23 December 2022; n= 4,891 – a more detailed methodological summary can be found at the end of this report.

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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 influence Jewish life positively. Web: www.jpr.org.uk.

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