



Survey of Jewish Life since October 7

Findings from a poll of Jewish Americans

June 2026



About This Survey

Objective: Provide **local Federations, national and local Jewish partner organizations, and philanthropists** with **actionable insights** to effectively respond to **evolving needs** and trends in Jewish communities. Compare to findings from similar study conducted in [March 2024](#) and [March 2025](#).



May-June 2026



Text message recruitment



2836 Jewish respondents



Weighted to be
representative of the
Jewish community

For questions about the data or methods, contact Research@JewishFederations.org.

This presentation and all future releases will be posted on the Berman Jewish Databank (www.jewishdatabank.org)

We are grateful for the support for this survey from:

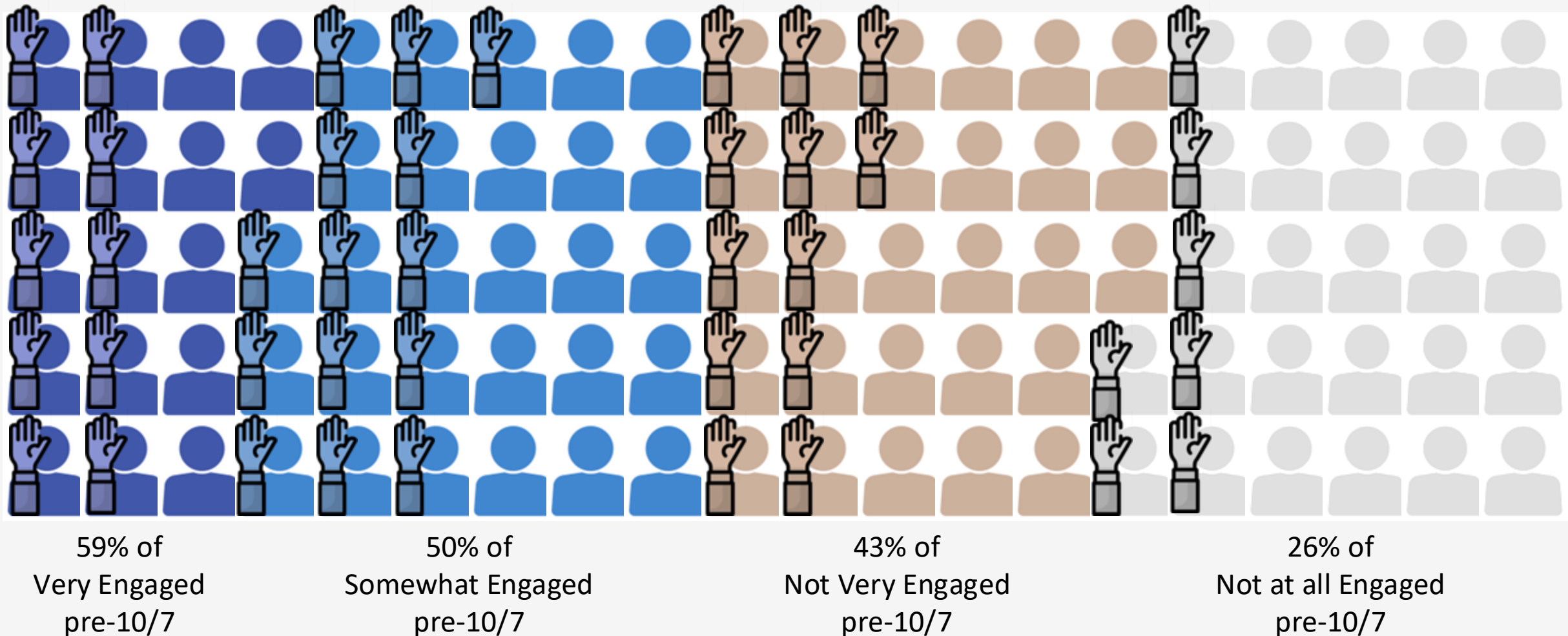




The Surge, 3 years in

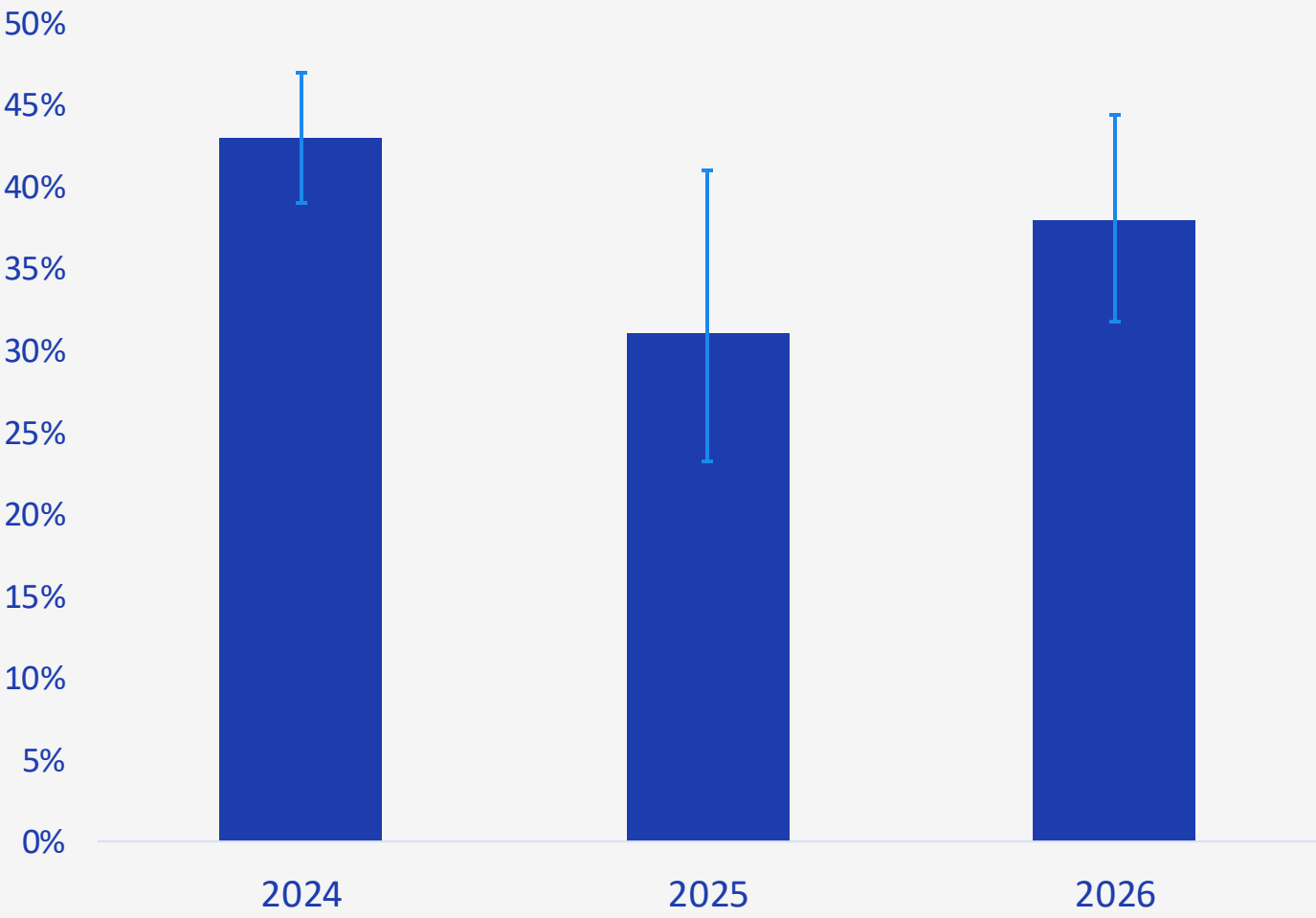


In 2024, we saw that 43% of the Jewish community was seeking to or engaging more across all engagement levels. We named this *the Surge*.





Rather than continue to decline, in 2026 the surge rebounded slightly or held flat since last year.



Light blue bars show the margin of error. When bars don't overlap, the difference between results is statistically significant.



Individuals identified whether and in what ways they changed since 10/7. We defined *the Surge* as those who changed *behavior*.

Included in the Surge:

Social - Connected more with other Jews

Educational – Learned more about Israel and/or Jewish life

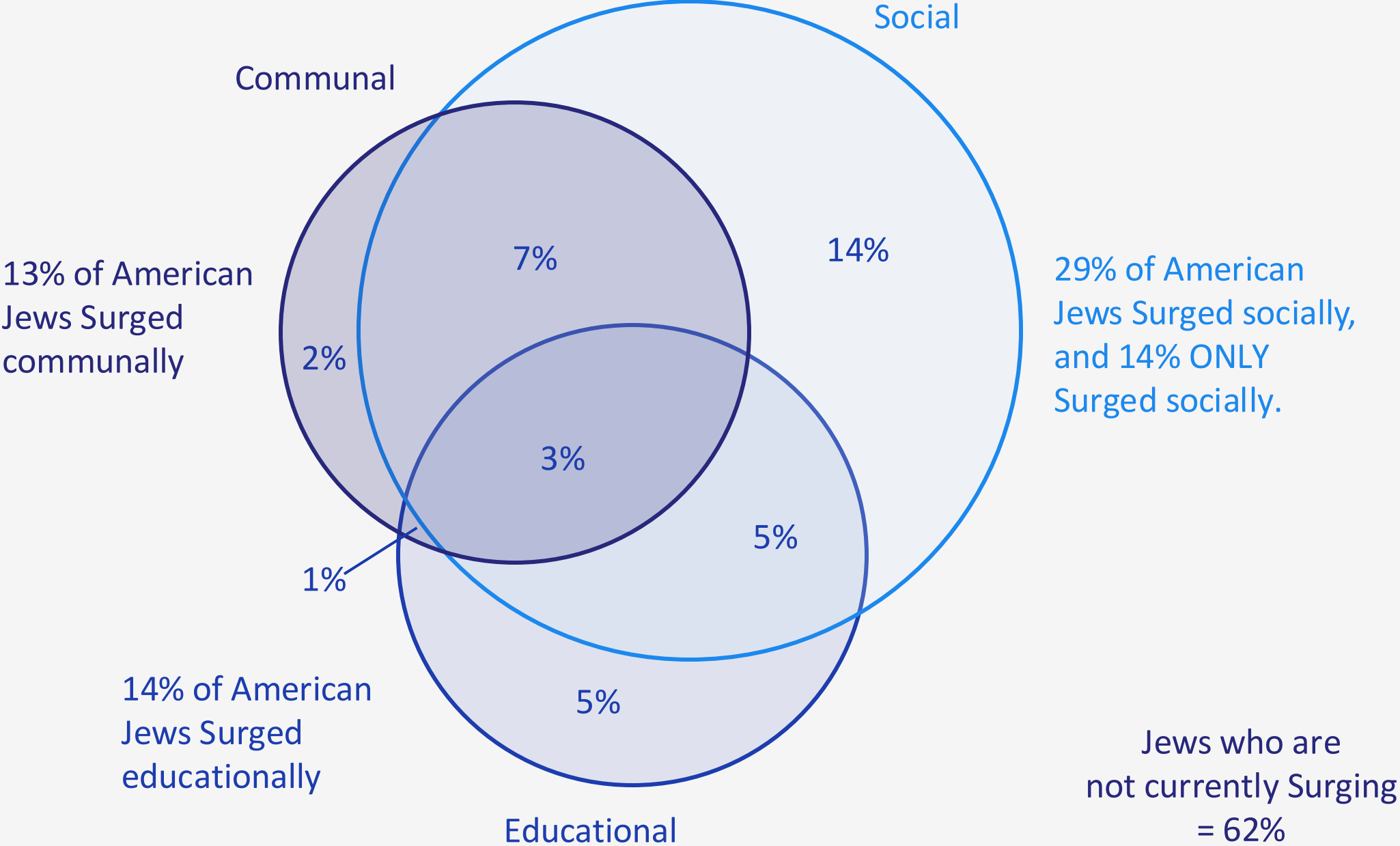
Communal – Engaged more with a Jewish community and/or participated more at services, events, programs, or activities offered by a synagogue or other Jewish organization

NOT Included in the Surge:

Desire – Wanted to connect with a Jewish community more

Pride- Were prouder to be Jewish

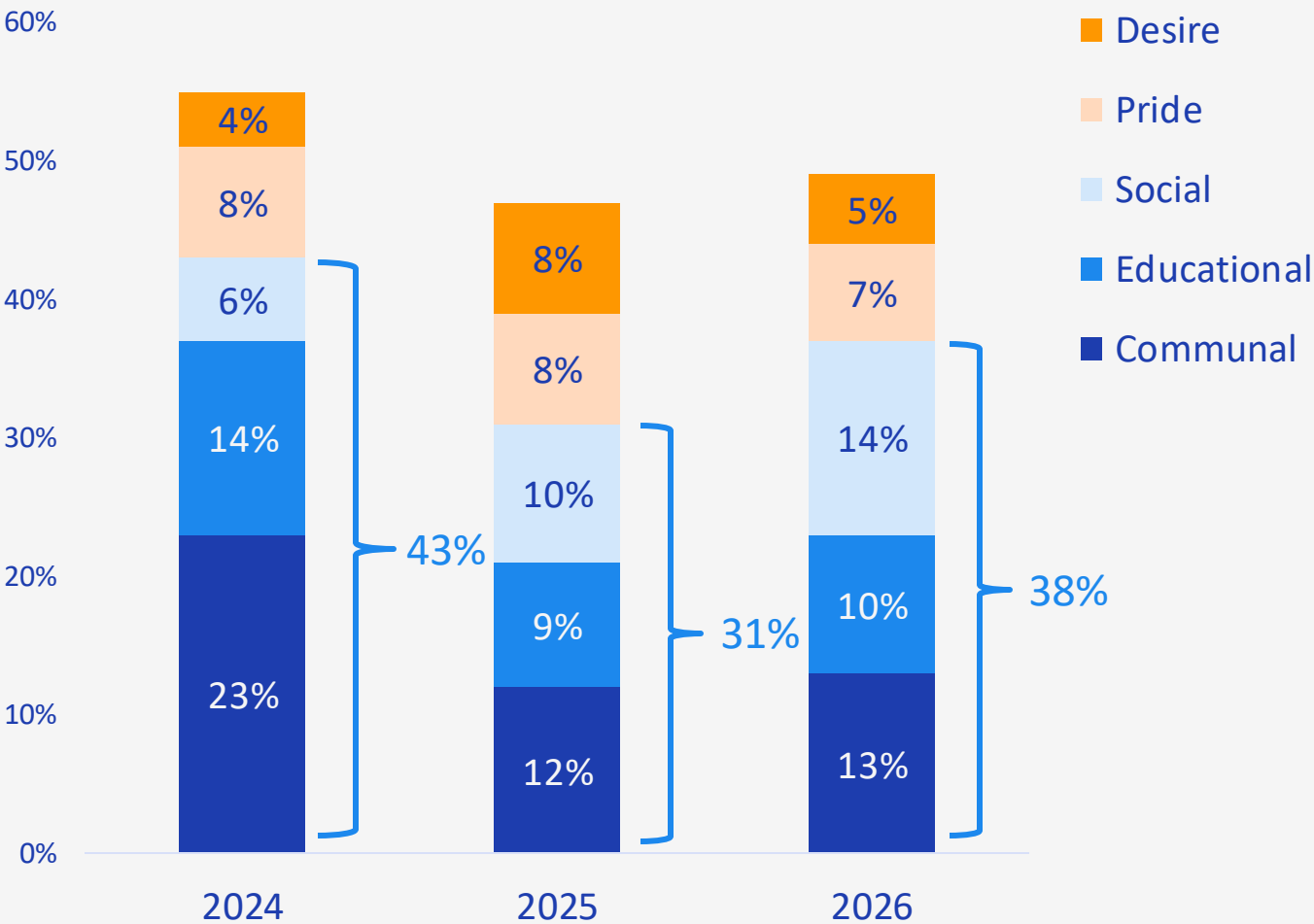
There was overlap in the way people surged, with most engaging socially.





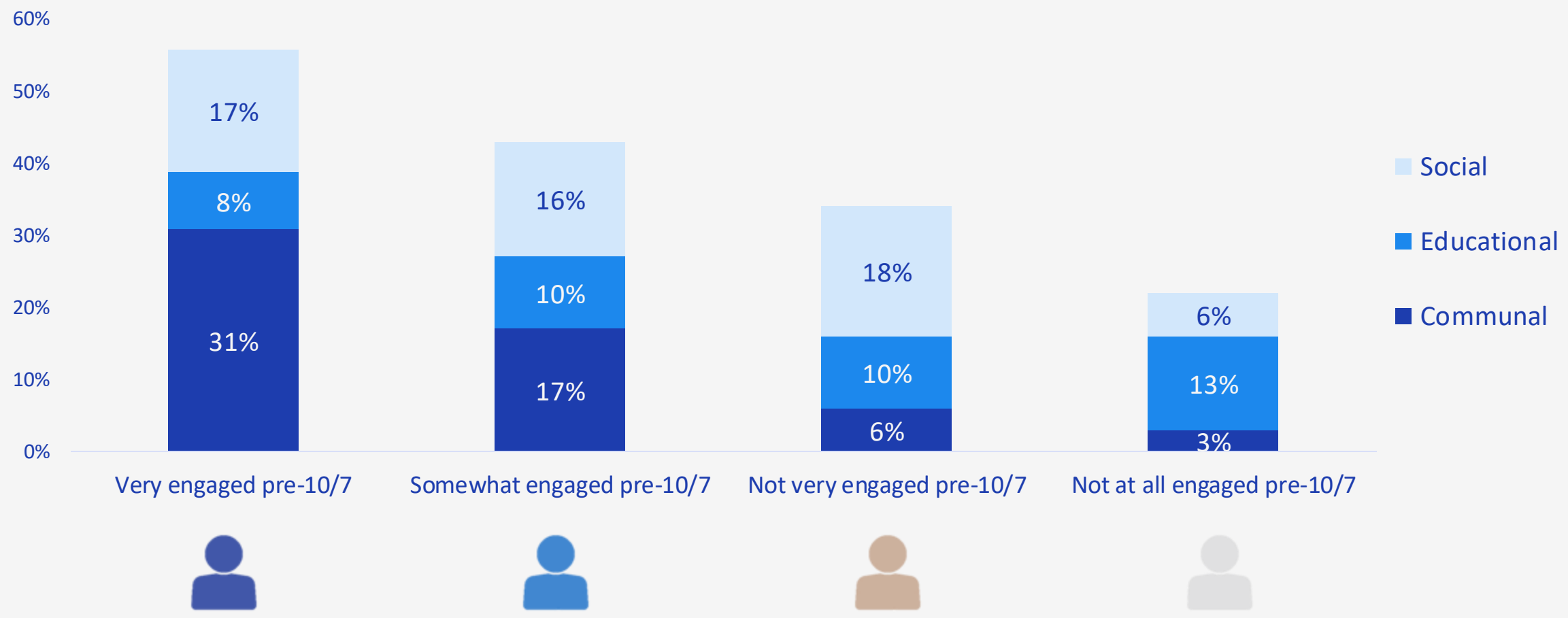
Over time, social engagement has increasingly become the preferred avenue of Surge engagement.

The Surge Types





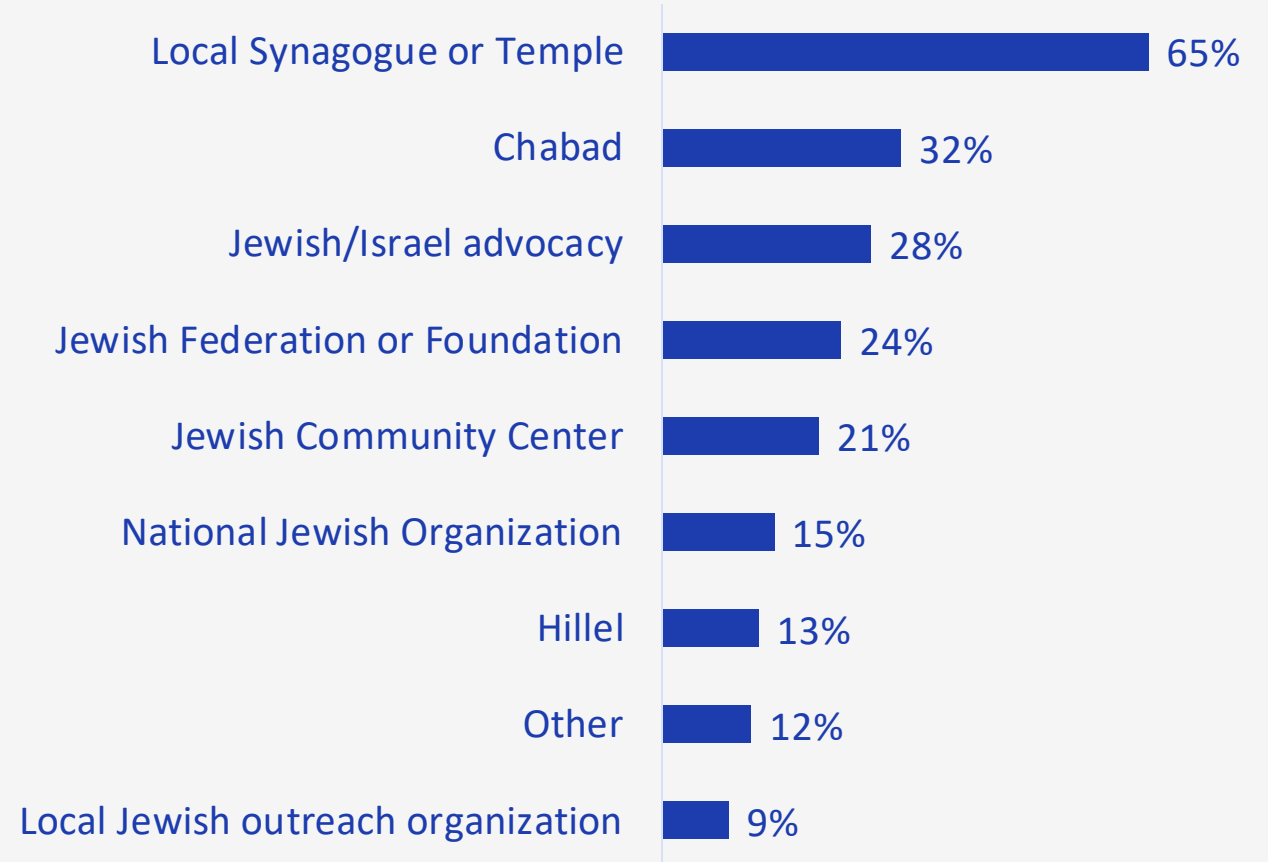
The Surge most inspired **increased community participation** from those who were **already engaged**, and **increased learning** from those who were previously **less engaged** in Jewish Life.



**Those who Surged
communally
engaged most
often with their
local synagogue.**



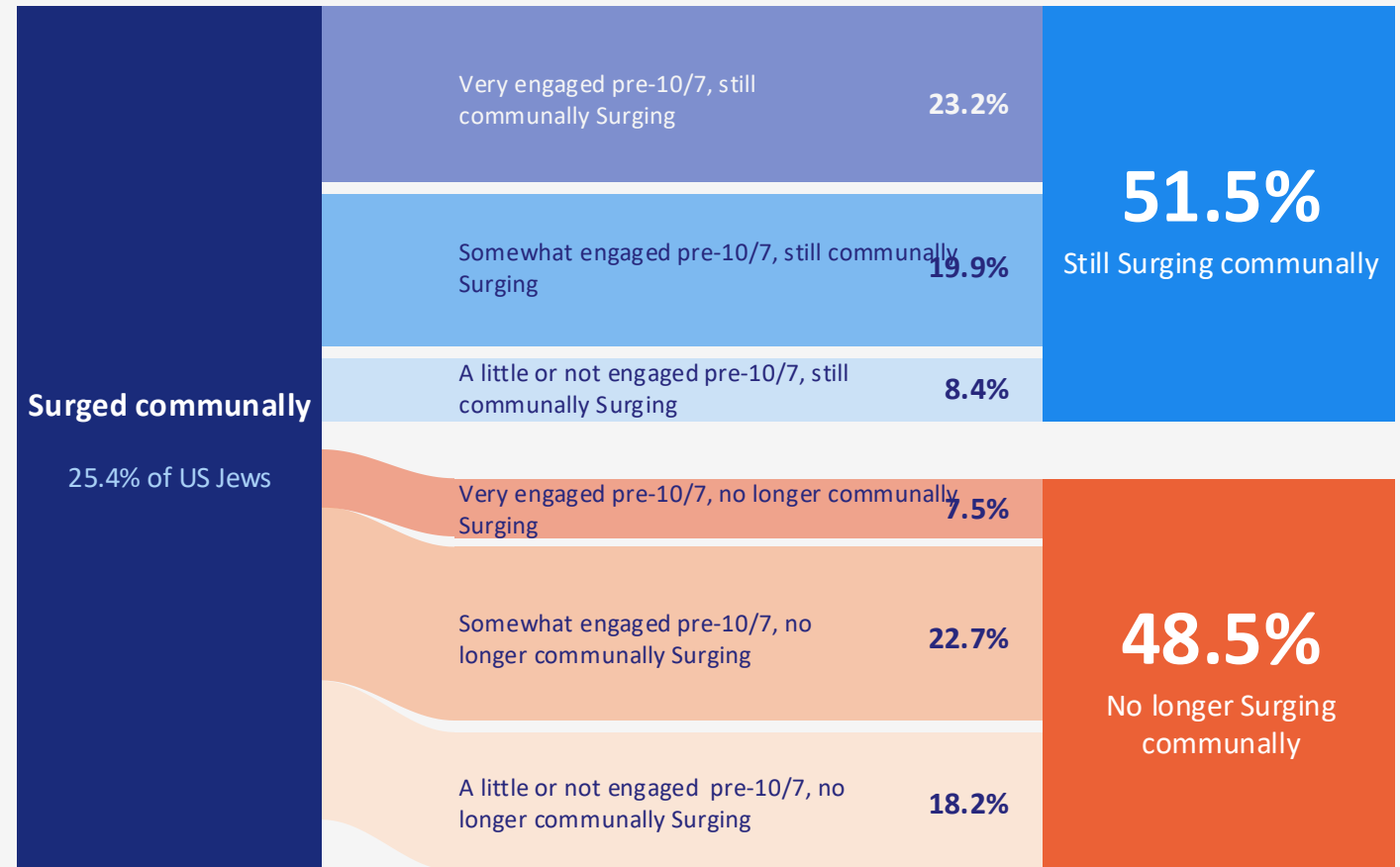
Which best describes the organization(s) or group(s) you engaged with? Select all that apply:





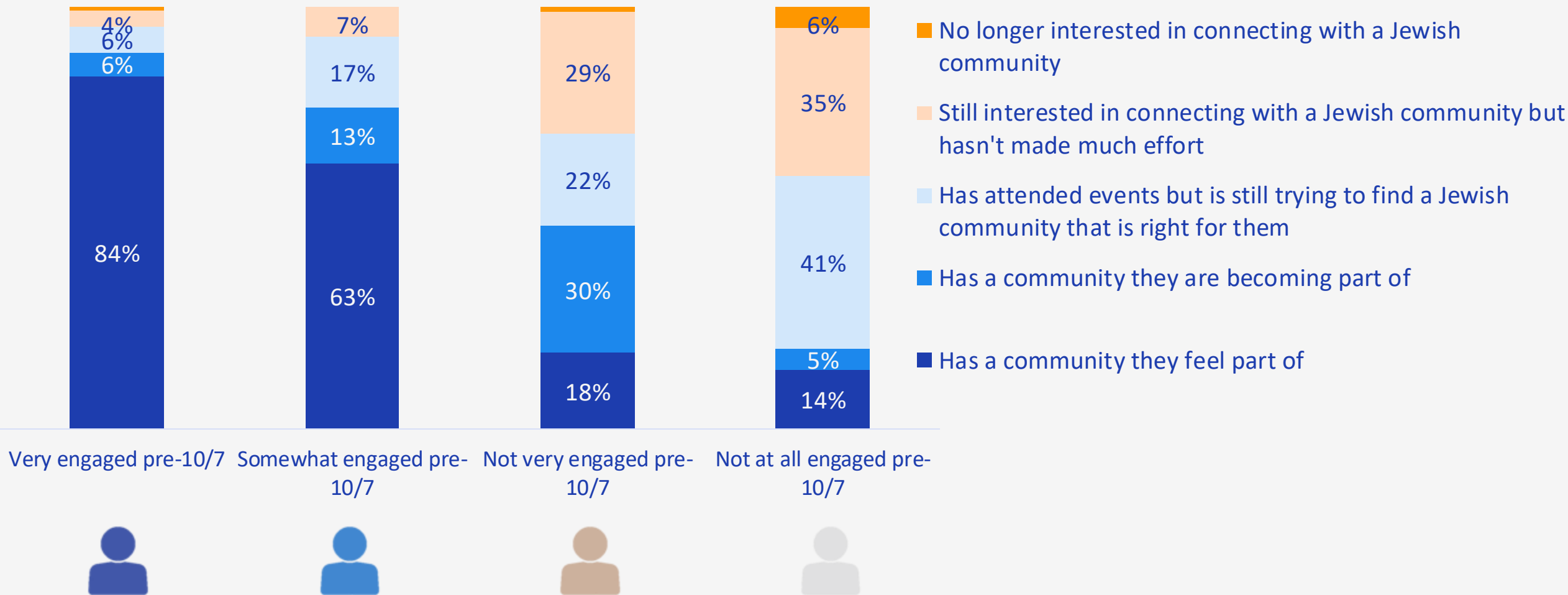
EVERYONE WHO SURGED COMMUNALLY

WHERE THEY ARE NOW



Of those who Surged communally, half are still participating more. Others changed the way they are engaging or reverted to their prior way of engaging.

Many previously less engaged Jews are still seeking a Jewish community that is right for them.





Surgers who engaged through education mostly did so informally, **both through individual and social means.**

96% learned on their own (e.g., through books, podcasts, news stories, or content from Jewish organizations)

86% learned through social access points (e.g., through social media, online discussion groups, or conversations with friends)

54% learned by engaging with Jewish organizations (virtual or in-person events or courses)



Most of those who Surged educationally wanted to know about both Israel and other aspects of Jewish Life.

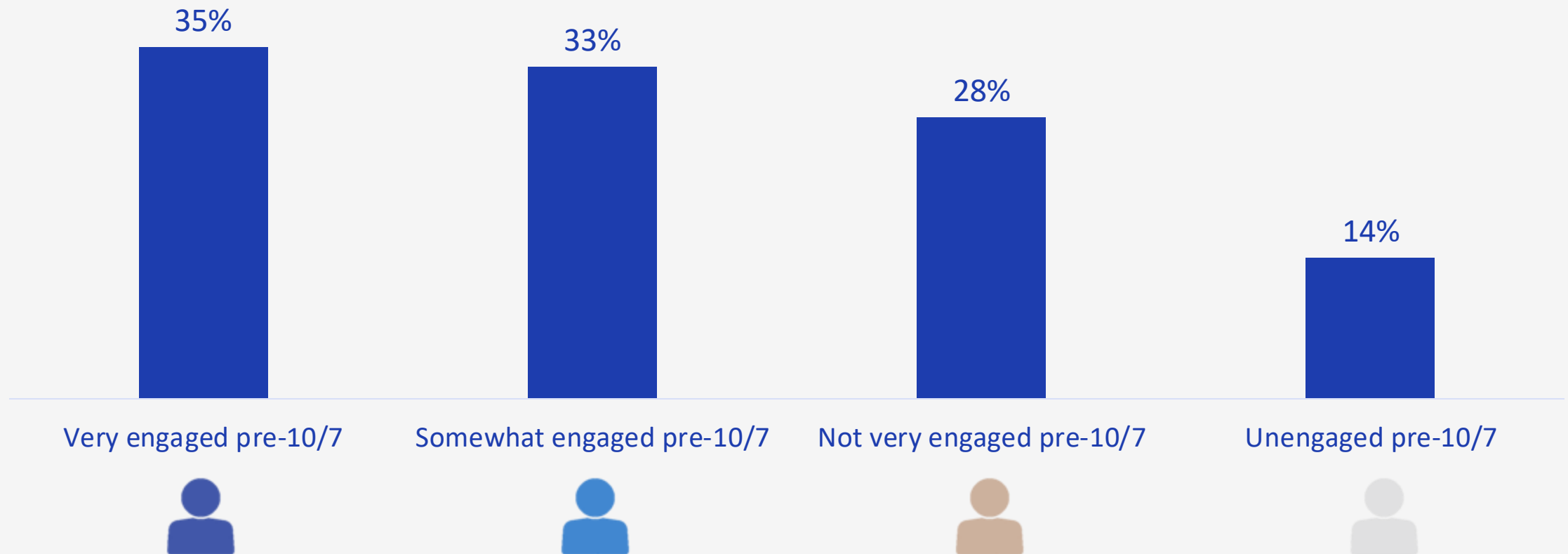
73% sought to learn **both** about Israel & Jewish life

23% sought to learn **only** about Israel

5% sought to learn **only** about Jewish life



Those who were engaged prior to 10/7 are Surging more through advocacy than those who were previously less engaged.





Israel, Antisemitism and the Surge



96% think there is some or a lot of antisemitism in the US, the same as Pew reported in 2020. 65% say there is *a lot* of antisemitism in the US, up from 45% in 2020.

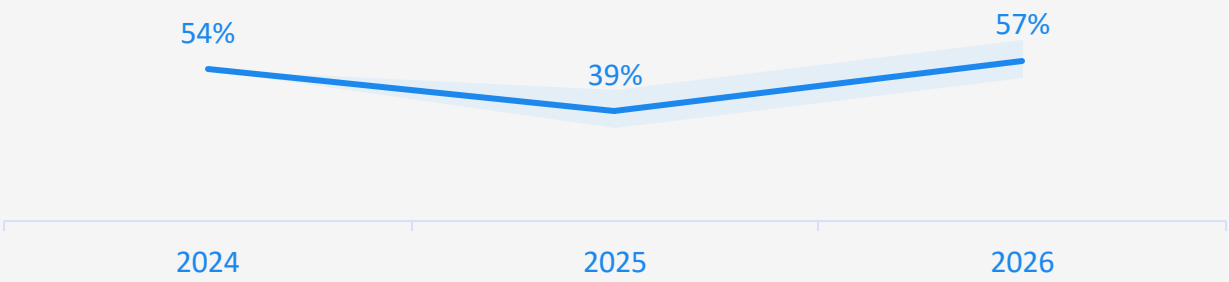
68% feel there is some or a lot of antisemitism in their local community today, the same as just after 10/7.

84% of American Jews are concerned about antisemitism in the broader non-Jewish community, the same as in previous years.

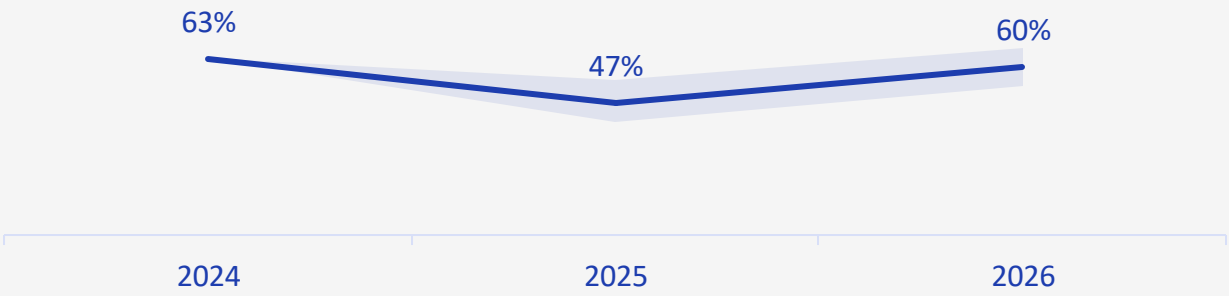


Awareness of community security programs protecting local Jewish spaces has increased since last year.

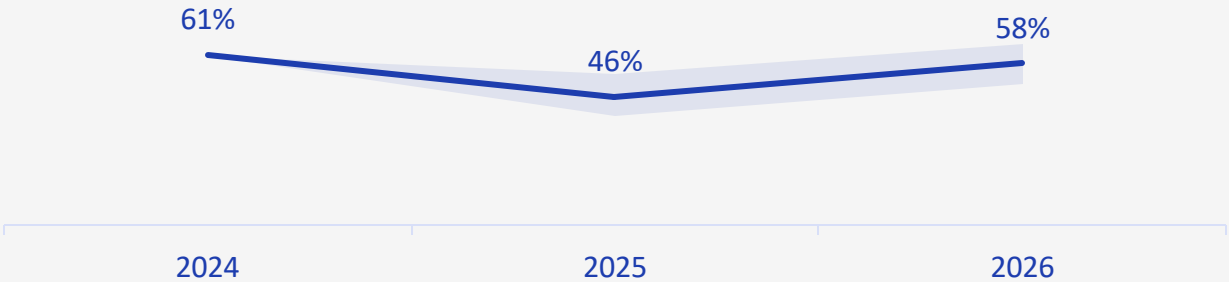
Aware of the specific community security programs and protocols that protect Jewish communal institutions and spaces



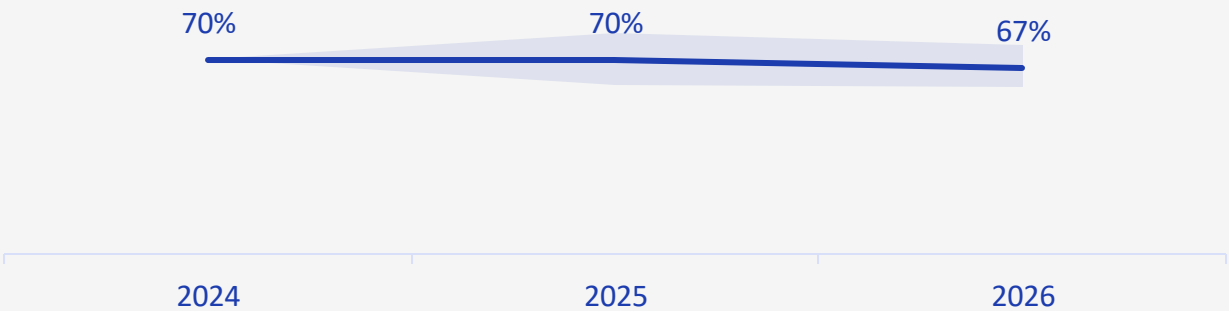
Believe Jewish organizations are effectively providing safety and security for the local Jewish community



Know where to turn in the Jewish community if they are the target of antisemitism



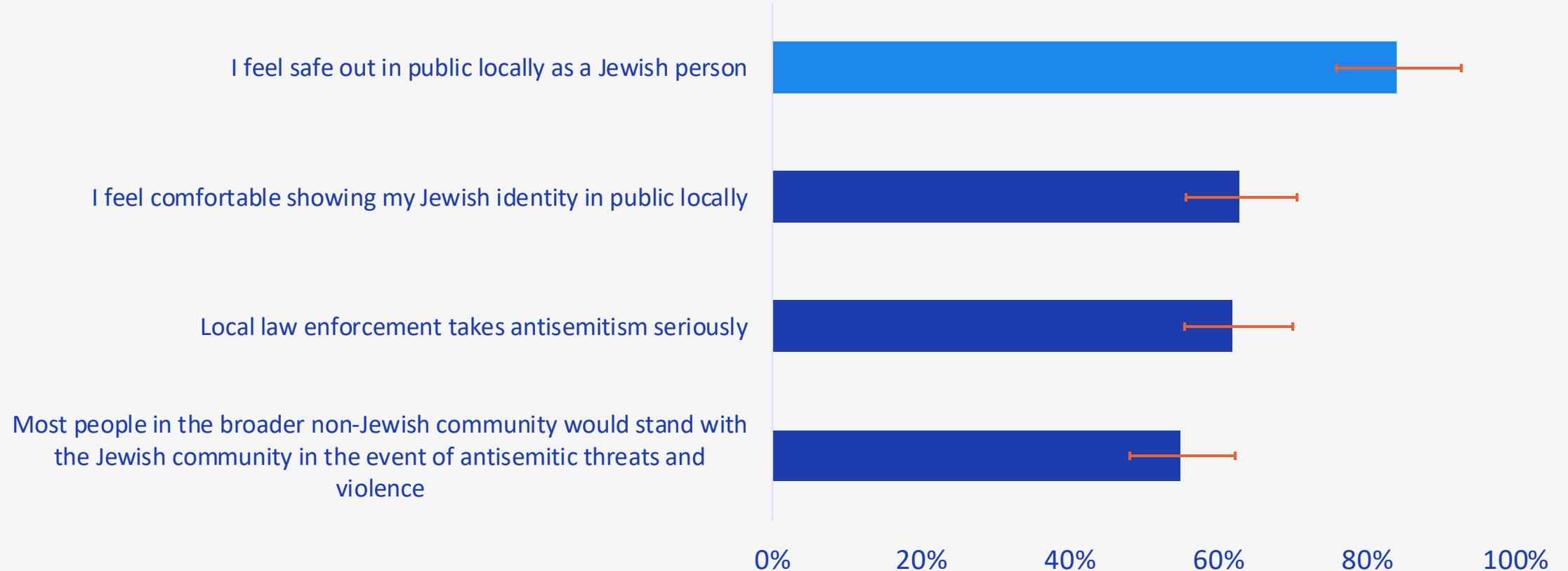
Feel physically safe in local Jewish organizations and spaces



Shaded areas show the margin of error. When bars don't overlap, the difference between results is statistically significant.

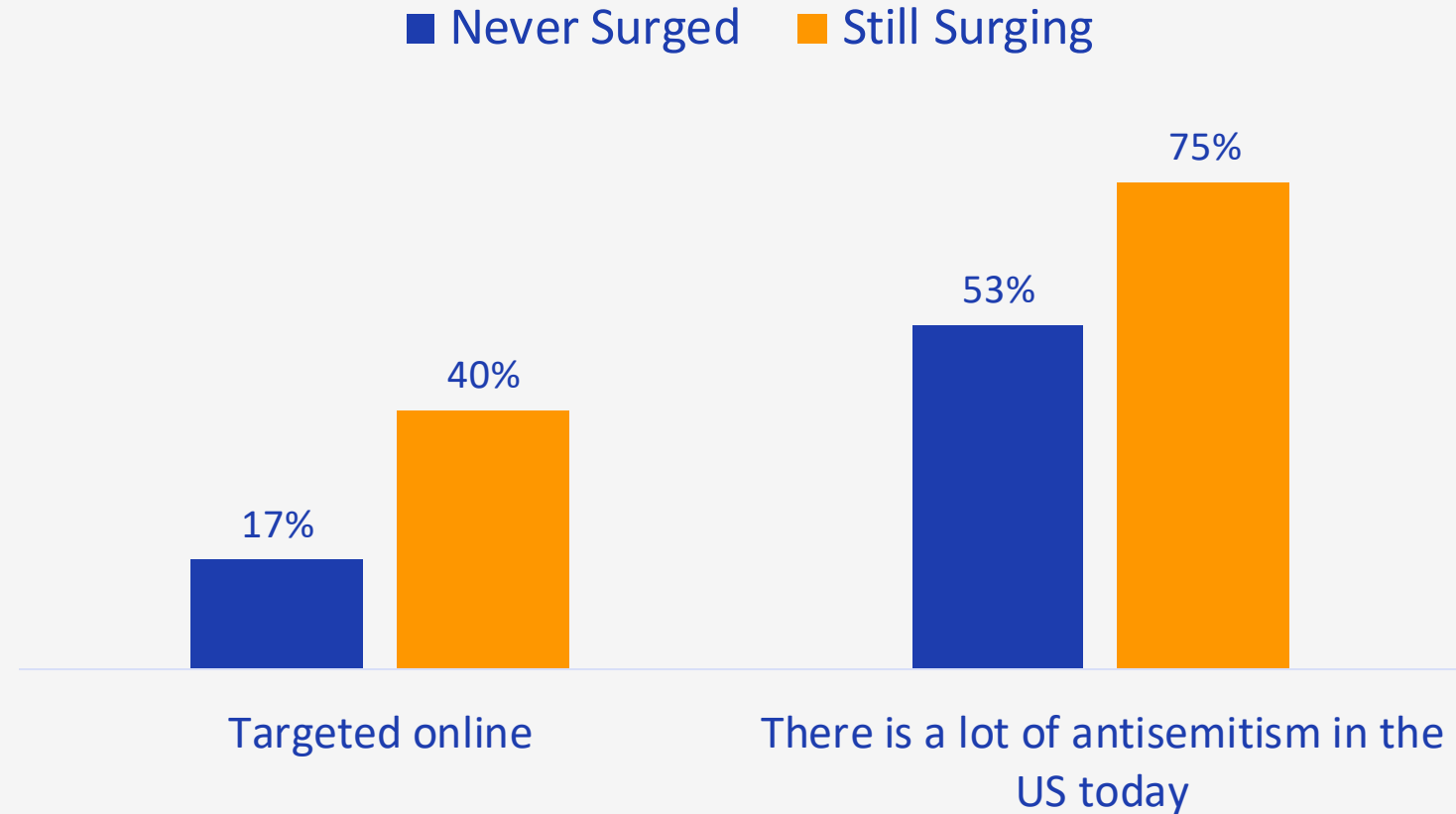


Most Jews feel safe out in public locally, but significantly fewer feel comfortable being outwardly Jewish in non-Jewish spaces and trust that non-Jews would act against antisemitism.



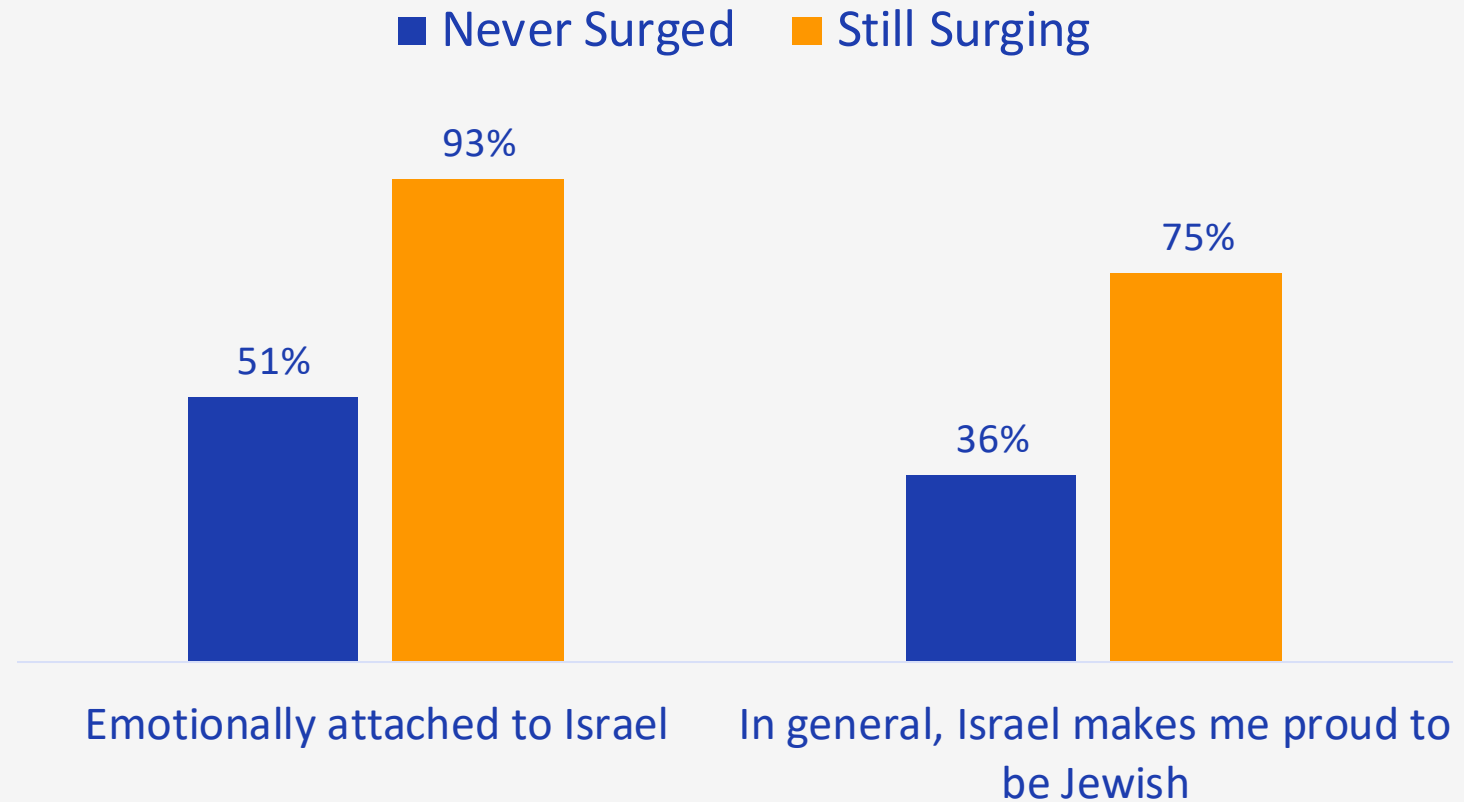


People in the Surge are more likely to report they experience antisemitism online and say there is a lot of antisemitism in the US.





**People in the Surge
are more likely to
be supportive of
and attached to
Israel.**





Engagement Learning for Institutions

Open-ended responses can shed light on the experience of the Surge and illuminate learning.



In addition to quantitative questions, this survey utilized open-ended questions followed by AI probing to gain depth in understanding experiences in more detail. This deck includes some topline insights from responses related to surge experiences from those who surged communally.

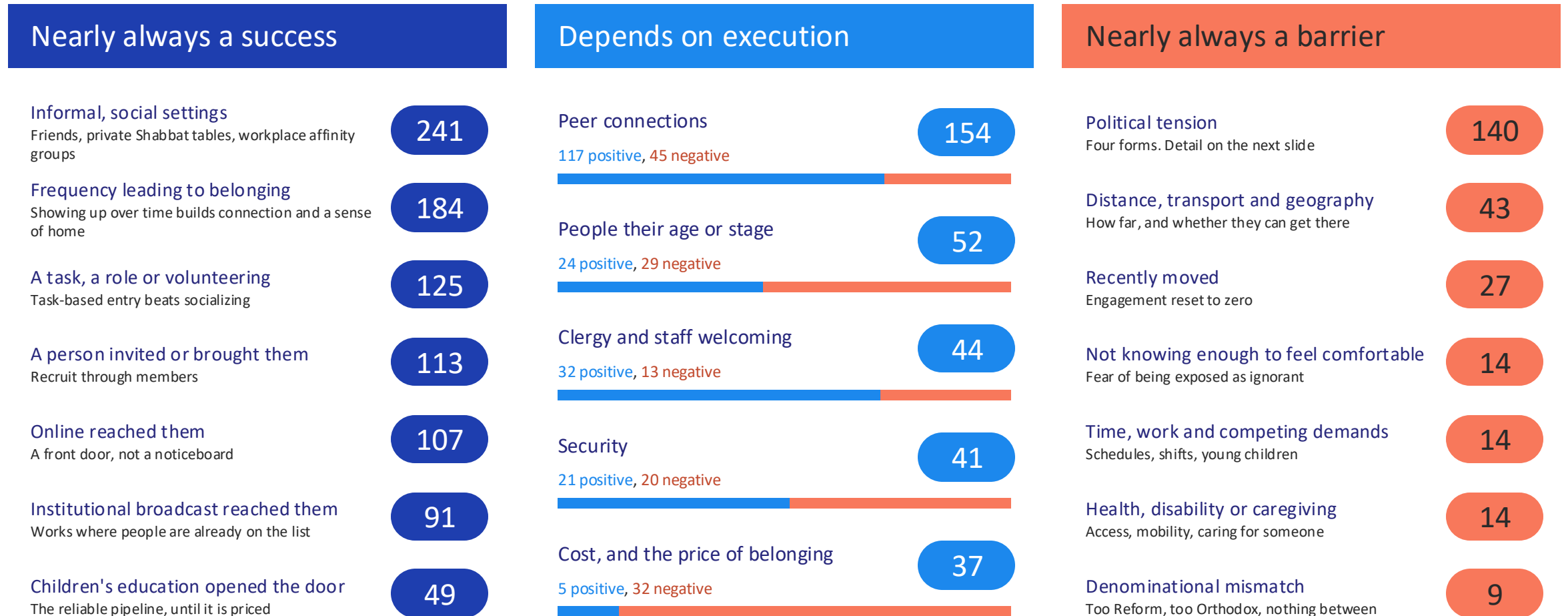
- 709 open-ended responses
- 97 codes tracking different experiences, grouped into 9 themes

Human guided AI qualitative coding was utilized in reviewing the 4,000 pages of content. The first 300 responses of each question were coded by a researcher, the next 200 were coded by AI and then reviewed by a researcher. After coding was completed, the AI did a second pass of all the content to ensure consistency. Researchers did spot checks after for accuracy.



What worked, what depends, and what got in the way

Counts of respondents among the 709 who surged communally and wrote something on this topic. Codes are not mutually exclusive.





Nearly always a success in their words: Social and frequency

The two most-named successes among the 709.

Informal, social settings

241

“ We attend more Shabbat dinners with Jewish friends, joined deeper conversations through our network, and **started building toward a Jewish intentional community** in the [community]. The events have felt grounding rather than reactive.”

35-44 · Man · Conservative

“ I started a Jewish Affinity group at a major [company] right after 10/7... When I switched companies, **the first thing I did in my new role was join the Jewish affinity group.**”

35-44 · Man · Conservative

“ I may come to three or four non-religious events at the temple, **just to continue continuity with friends.** Since October 7, I've been more active in the Jewish men's club.”

65-74 · Man · Reform

Frequency leading to belonging

184

“ At first it was intimidating because the synagogue is so big... I felt that many people were suspicious of me, **but over time they became more friendly.**”

35-44 · Woman · Conservative

“ We started going to Chabad about 4 years ago and **have found our home.** We are part of a new Chabad in [community]... we are one of the oldest members and the most active.”

75+ · Woman · Something else

“ When I do go to these events **I feel included,** always happy to see other people from the community who I didn't know were Jewish.”

65-74 · Woman · Something else



Depends on execution in their words: Peer Connection

Peer connections, most frequently named “depends” by 154. Being greeted, approached and included by peers worked for 117 and failed for 45.

When it worked

117

“ People reassuring me that I was welcome, asking about my experience being Jewish. People reaching out to hang out and spend time with me after my first event.”

25-34 · Woman · No denomination

“ I'm connecting with other young Jewish families now that I have a baby... I feel like I'm part of a community... Friendship and a way for my daughter to start creating her own connection to Judaism.”

35-44 · Woman · Reform

When it failed

45

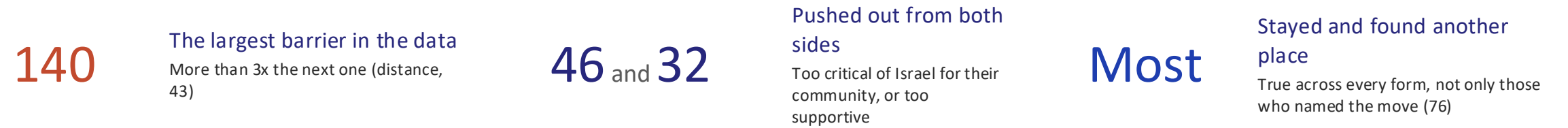
“ Tried making the 45-minute drive to my nearest synagogue on multiple occasions. The rabbi was friendly and welcoming, BUT no congregation members made any effort to include me. I felt alone and ignored, so I stopped making the long drive.”

65-74 · Man · Conservative

The takeaway: clergy and staff can open the door, but it is ordinary individuals – volunteer leaders and peers - who make someone feel a sense of belonging.



Key Barrier: Political Tension – What it means and how it impacts engagement



Form of political tension	What they did	
LEFT OF THEIR COMMUNITY Too critical of Israel for their community 46	Mostly Moved	Some support Israel overall but felt their criticism was silenced. Others were non-Zionist or anti-Zionist. Most found explicitly more progressive congregations.
RIGHT OF THEIR COMMUNITY Too supportive of Israel, or too conservative 32	Mostly Moved	Identify as moderate or conservative. Felt their views were unwelcome, or their communities weren't do enough to support Israel and combat antisemitism. Many found different organizations or congregations.
NO SIDE NAMED Tired of the debate taking up the space 88	Mostly Moved	Feel the community is too focused on Israel & antisemitism and prefer other parts of Jewish Life. Find spaces that focus on Jewish joy, spirituality, or observance. Many identify as "pro-Israel" but prefer "apolitical spaces"
DESCRIBED THE MOVE ITSELF Sorting into a room that's not focused on these topics 76	Mostly Moved	A mix of people who share that they are participating more narrowly, focused on spaces where they feel comfortable.
Any form of political tension	140	75 name more than one form

Counts of respondents. A respondent may name more than one form, so the parts sum to more than the total.



Key Barrier In their words: Political Tension - Everyone experienced tension but most found another place

LEFT OF THEIR COMMUNITY · 46

“ I feel the most myself in Jewish communities or amongst people I know are Jewish friendly and **open to hearing my multifaceted and often painful experiences**. Other spaces make me feel unsafe.

35-44 · Woman · No denomination

RIGHT OF THEIR COMMUNITY · 32

“ Too many Jews in my area are insufficiently engaged in fighting antisemitism and antizionism... I've had to find new settings for involvement.”

75+ · Prefer not to answer · Something else

NO SIDE NAMED · 88

“ I joined groups of people where Israel wasn't the focus of Jewish life... Israel is not the core of my life and it's not the core of this new group either.”

25-34 · Non-binary, gender queer, gender fluid · Conservative

DESCRIBED THE MOVE ITSELF · 76

“ After many years growing increasingly distant from the jewish community I was raised in due to my political differences, I finally decided to attend a small, local, up and coming congregation that shares my values.”

25-34 · Man · Something else

Three years after October 7, here's what the data tells us about *the Surge*.



A new normal: The increase in Jewish engagement remains. ~38% of the Jewish community is part of the Surge three years after October 7.

Two clear correlations: connection to Israel and concern about antisemitism. People in the Surge feel more attached to Israel and more concerned about antisemitism.

What keeps people showing up more: being in community including informal settings, repeat visits, welcoming peers and more. Political tension is the single biggest barrier, but most people encountering this find a different Jewish space that fits rather than leaving Jewish life.

The opportunity: many Jews who were less engaged before October 7 are still looking for a community that fits. This year's data shows what helps them find it.