

Australian Jews in the Shadow of War: Main Survey Findings

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We extend our sincere appreciation to all those who contributed, directly or indirectly, to this research. We hope you find yourselves in the diversity of views presented here. May this report serve as a catalyst for dialogue, inspire further inquiry, and contribute meaningfully to our shared pursuit of knowledge.

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Executive Summary

The impact of the Israel-Hamas war on Jewish people in Australia

The aim of this survey was to carry out an empirical assessment of the initial impact the Israel-Hamas war on Australia's Jewish community. The attack on Israel by Hamas on 7 October 2023 was the start of an extremely traumatic period and while anecdote has its place in the record, it is evidence-based, systematic data-gathering that we rely on to fully understand what Jewish people were experiencing and how they reacted.

The findings of this survey, conducted during the fifth week of the war between Israel and Hamas (10-17 November 2023), are based on responses from 7,611 Australian Jewish adults from diverse backgrounds. As we show here, at this point in time, the impact of these events was profound.

News consumption

There was an extremely high level of engagement in news related to the Israel-Hamas war among Jewish people with news being consumed from local and international sources as well as Israeli sources. Jewish people were also obtaining information from personal contacts living in Israel.

High level of interest in the war among Australian Jews

- Eight out of ten Australian Jewish adults (79%) were following news about the Israel-Hamas war 'very' closely, a further 19% were following it 'fairly' closely. Therefore 98% are following the news closely.
- In addition to Australian news sources, 63% of Australian Jews were consuming Israeli news sources, and 60% were getting news from personal conversations.
- Eight out of ten (81%) Australian Jews were talking about the war on a daily basis with their friends and family in Australia, highlighting how the war in Israel is nevertheless a very personal experience for many Australian Jews living as far away as Australia.
- Almost one in three (64%) Australian Jews with close family and friends living in Israel were in personal contact with them every few days of more often since 7 October.

Distress and concern about the war

The data reveal an extraordinarily high level of distress experienced by people in the Jewish community, whether from being upset, offended or frightened by content they had seen on social media or the news; whether by being concerned or upset at the reactions of some of their own non-Jewish friends or colleagues. All of this was reflected in widespread feelings of anxiety and worry.

The emotional toll of social media

- Three quarters (74%) of Australian Jews felt upset, more than half (54%) felt offended and more than a third (38%) felt frightened by social media content about the war on a 'daily basis'.

Reactions of non-Jewish friends and colleagues

- Six out of ten Jewish people (60%) were concerned or upset by the reactions of their non-Jewish friends since 7 October.

- And almost half (48%) were concerned or upset by the reactions of their non-Jewish colleagues.
- On the other hand, a large majority (83%) of Australian Jews said that non-Jewish friends and acquaintances had reached out to them with messages of sympathy.

Mental health strain

- 44% of Jewish people felt nervous, anxious or on edge on a 'daily basis' since the war had begun, and a further 38% felt this way frequently.
- 31% said they had not been able to stop or control worrying on a 'daily basis' and a further 36% felt this way frequently.

Concern for the lives of Israelis and Palestinians

Australian Jews in Australia expressed concern for the lives of Israelis as well as the lives of Palestinians living in Gaza.

- A large majority (91%) of Australian Jews felt 'very much' concerned for the lives of the Israelis.
- Eight out of ten Australian Jews (79%) felt 'somewhat' or 'very much' concerned about the lives of Palestinians in Gaza.

Antisemitism

The high level of concern that Australian Jews expressed about antisemitism in Australia during this period was almost certainly unprecedented. The data show that the experience of antisemitism in the five-week period following 7 October was broad, whether or not these incidents ended up being recorded in official statistics. Many Australian Jews felt the need to hide their Jewish identity in public.

- 64% of Australian Jews felt that antisemitism was 'very much' a big problem in Australia. This was ten times higher than in 2017 when a similar question was asked of Australian Jews in more peaceful times.
- Since the beginning of the war, i.e., over a period of about 40 days, one in five (20%) Jewish adults in Australia said they had personally experienced an insult or harassment because they are Jewish, rising to 43% among those aged 18 to 29 years.
- 71% of these victims said they had *not* reported the antisemitic incident to any authority.
- Since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, one in five (22%) Jewish people in Australia had been less open about their Jewish identity in public.

Hostility towards Israel at universities

Jewish students were asked about their experiences on Australian campuses during this five-week period.

- More than two-thirds (68%) of Jewish students studying at Australian universities had personally encountered hostility towards Israel from other students at their university by this point.
- Half of all students (51%) had encountered hostility towards Israel from their own close friends at university.
- 46% had experienced hostility towards Israel from university lecturers and staff.

Attachment to Israel

The data highlight that most Jewish people in Australia feel a very strong emotional attachment to Israel and most have multiple personal connections through their family members and friends who live and work there. Almost all Jewish people in Australia have visited Israel and many have lived there themselves. Five weeks after 7 October, Australian Jews reported widespread charitable support directed towards Israel.

Close attachment to Israel

- Three quarters (75%) of Jewish people said they were 'very' emotionally attached to Israel and a further 16% said they were 'somewhat' attached. Therefore 91% of Australian Jews felt at least somewhat emotionally attached to Israel.
- 87% said they felt 'a special alarm' given that Israel had been put in danger. 37% said they were so alarmed 'it is almost as if my own life was in danger.' In 2017, in more peaceful times, the equivalent proportion was 16%, meaning it was almost 2.5 times higher at this point.
- A very large proportion (82%) of Jewish people in Australia have personal social connections to Israel through close family members and friends who live there.
- The vast majority (93%) of Jewish people in Australia have visited Israel. Indeed, most have visited more than once and one in five (20%) has either lived there or was born there.

Charitable support

- In the 40-day period since the start of the war, almost three quarters (73%) of Australian Jewish people had made charitable contributions because of the conflict.
- Over half (52%) had contributed to an Israel-based charity.
- Almost half (46%) had contributed to an Australian-based charity focused on Israel.
- By contrast, 11% had donated to Australian-based Jewish charities.

Introduction

Australian Jews in the shadow of war (AJSW) is a survey that was conducted by the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation (ACJC) at Monash University, Melbourne in conjunction with the charity JCA in Sydney, Australia. This study was funded by JCA and the Loti and Victor Smorgon Family Foundation, in partnership with Australian Jewish Funders. The study employed post-hoc population weights developed out of an analysis of the 2021 Australian Census and a separate Jewish congregational census, to make the data more representative of Australia's Jewish population.

The tumultuous events which occurred in Israel on the 7th of October 2023 and the subsequent war between Israel and Hamas—which was still in its early stages as the survey was being conducted—had ramifications not only for the warring parties but also for Australian Jews around the world. We were primarily motivated to provide an empirical basis of understanding about the emotional impact of these events on Australian Jews in Australia and their personal experiences. The main areas of interest were the views of Australian Jews about the Israel-Hamas war itself, their attitudes towards Israel and their personal connections to the Jewish State, and their perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in the wake of this war.

In doing so, we sought to take a balanced and scientifically rigorous approach to this work whilst acknowledging first, that this was a survey of Jewish people and not of others who may have been affected by the war, and second, that there are a multitude of perspectives on the Middle East conflict within the Jewish community and there is always a risk that bias may be perceived, regardless of these efforts.

Specifically, the study sought to:

- Understand the attitudes of Australian Jewish people towards—and experience of living during—the Israel-Hamas war, including opinions about the actions of Israel and Hamas; media and social media access; confidence in their familiarity with the situation in Israel; feelings and actions in response to the war; philanthropic activity; reactions to responses by non-Australian Jews in their lives.
- Examine the nature of Australian Jews' Israel attachment, including their familial and social connections in Israel, and their visits to Israel.
- Capture perceptions of and experiences with antisemitism.
- Detail Australian Jews' views about how Australian political leadership has performed in response to the events in Israel and Australia.
- Explore effects on Australian Jews' mental health.
- Contextualise current attitudes by comparing responses at this moment, with responses gathered in 2017 during a 'normal' period.

The survey was conducted in the early days of the war between the 10th and 17th of November 2023, closing on the 41st day of the conflict. The final dataset contained complete responses from 7,611 self-identifying Australian Jews aged 18 and above from across Australia.

Australian Jewry: demographic context

There has been a Jewish community continually present in Australia since the landing of the First Fleet in 1788. In 2021, the size of the Jewish population was estimated to be 116,967,¹ which is just under 0.5% of total

¹ This estimate is larger than the enumerated 2021 Australian Census figure of 99,956 as it takes into account estimated Jewish non-response to the census's voluntary religion question and those who identified as Jewish in the

Australian population. The estimated size of the Jewish population aged 18 and above is 92,300. The Jewish population is highly concentrated in a very small number of urban areas: 83% of all Australian Jews live in either Greater Melbourne or Greater Sydney, and a further 8% live in either Greater Perth or Greater Brisbane. While 57% of Australian Jews are Australian born, this is a smaller proportion than for the general population at 71%. Just over an estimated 8,000 Australian Jews living in Australia were born in Israel.²

ancestry question but not in the religion question. See further Graham, D. 2024. (forthcoming). The Jewish population of Australia: Key findings from the 2021 Census, JCA Sydney.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021. 2021 Australian population census.
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/population-census/2021>

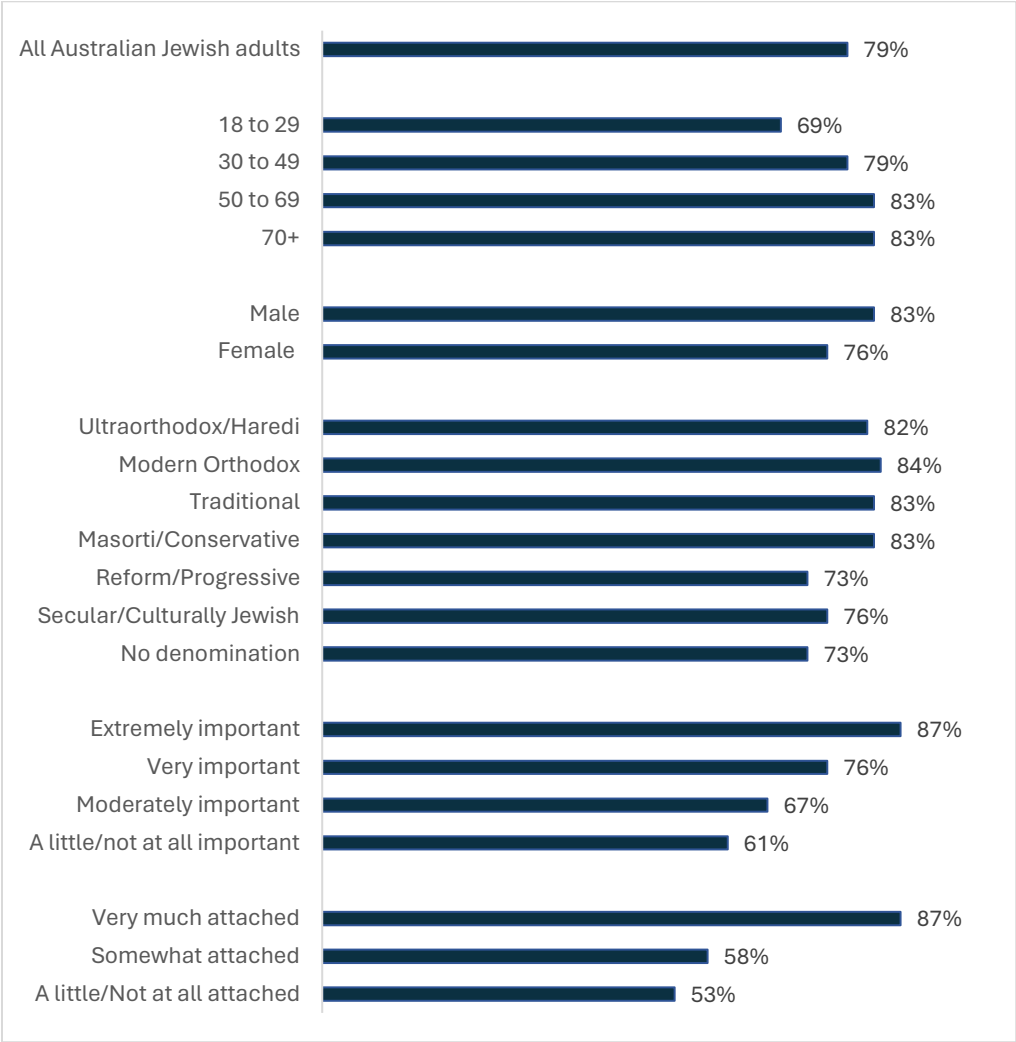
Survey Results

News consumption

Following news about the war

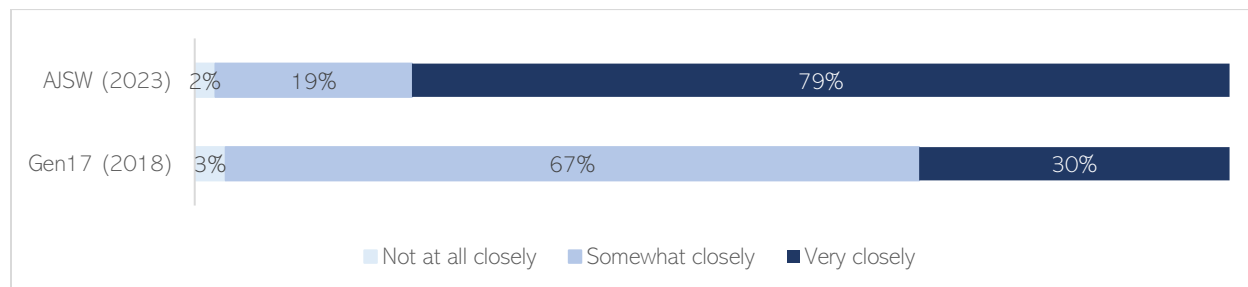
Almost 8 out of 10 Australian Jewish adults (79%) were following news about the Israel-Hamas war very closely (Figure 1). A further 19% were following it fairly closely. In other words, almost all (98%) Jewish adults in Australia were highly motivated in gathering information about this conflict. Indeed, even among those who are not at all attached to Israel, 62% are following the news at least fairly closely.

Figure 1. How closely have you been following the news about the Israel-Hamas war? – Very closely



In 2017, the last time a survey of Australian Jews in Australia was conducted,³ 30% said they followed news on Israel 'a lot'. In the present survey a similar, but not identical, question was asked which we believe is sufficiently comparable provide reliable contextualisation. This showed that 79% of Jewish adults had been following the news about the Israel-Hamas war 'very closely' (Figure 2). The substantial rise in consumption of news about Israel by Australian Jews is striking.

Figure 2. Following news about Israel Gen17 (2017) and AJSW (2023) compared



Question asked in AJSW 2023: How closely have you been following the news about the Israel-Hamas war? Very closely, Fairly closely, Not very closely, Not at all

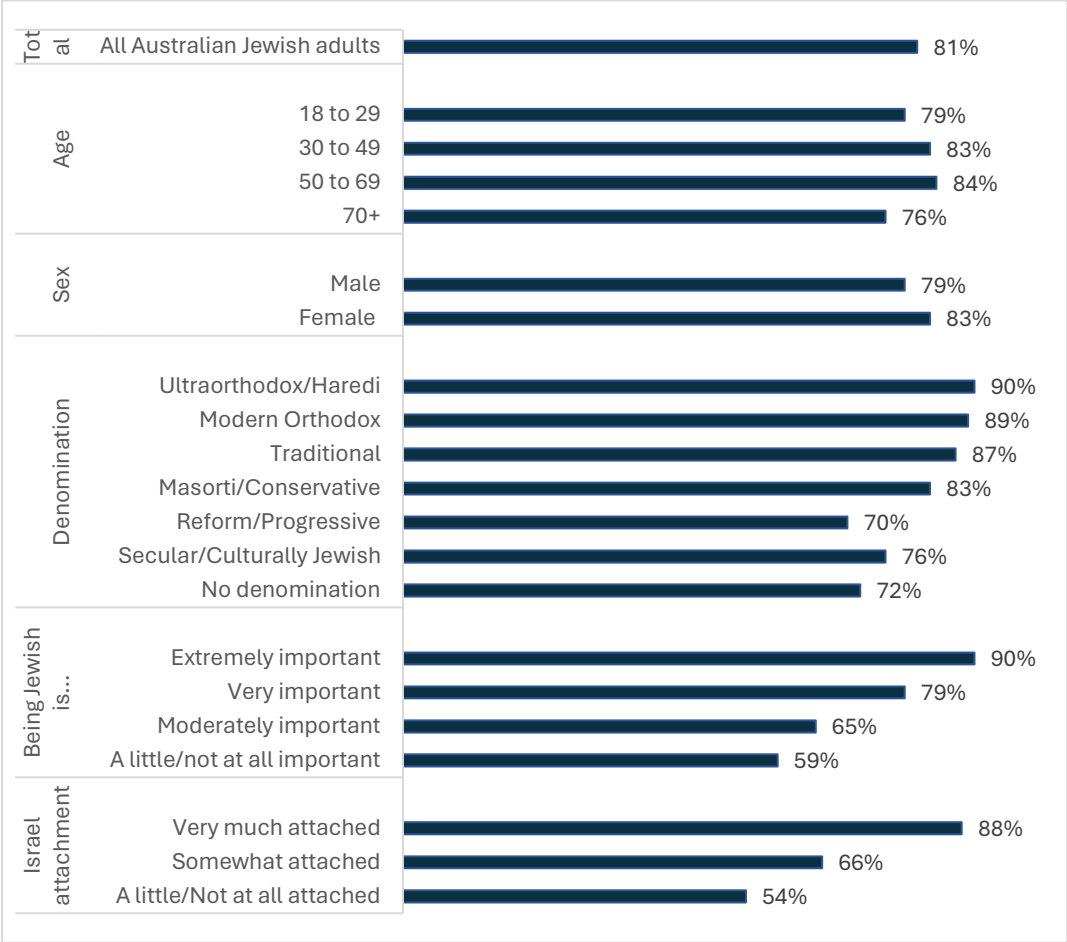
Question asked in Gen17 2017: To what extent do you keep up with current events which involve Israel? Would you say... A lot, Quite a lot, A little, Not at all

Discussing the war with friends and family in Australia

More than eight out of ten (81%) Australian Jews were talking about the war with friends and family in Australia on a daily basis (Figure 3), which accords with the above finding about engagement with news about the war. A further 15% were having such conversations every few days. Therefore, the vast majority of Australian Jewish adults (96%) were talking almost daily with family and friends in Australia about the war.

³ See Graham, D. and Markus, A. 2018. *Gen17 Australian Jewish Community Survey*. Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation and JCA. https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1531791/gen17-initial-findings-report-online-version-final-22_3.pdf

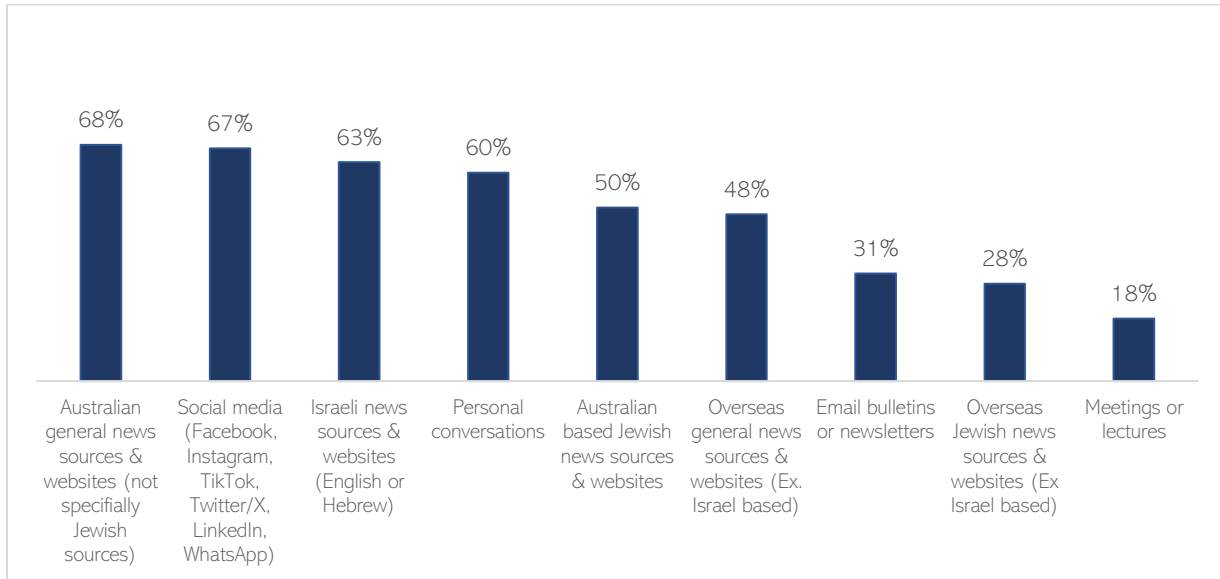
Figure 3. How often have you had conversations with your friends and family in Australia about the Israel-Hamas war?



Main sources of information about the war

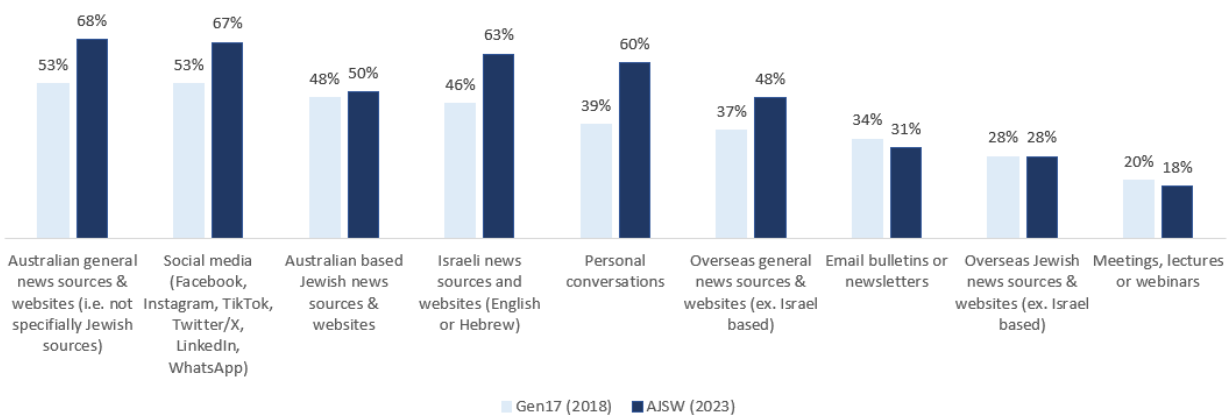
Jews in Australia were obtaining information about the war from a very wide variety of sources. Figure 4 shows the news sources which were read, watched or engaged with by Australian Jews most frequently. About two-thirds of Australian Jewish adults most frequently consumed Australian general news sources (i.e., that were not specifically Jewish) (68%), social media (67%), Israeli news sources (63%) and through personal conversations (60%). And half consumed Australian-based Jewish news sources (50%) and overseas general (i.e. not specifically Jewish) news sources (48%).

Figure 4. Since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, which news sources have you read or watched or engaged in most frequently? (Check all that apply) – Frequently



In 2017, Jewish people in Australia were asked what their main sources of information were about the Jewish world and Israel.⁴ Comparing those 2017 responses with those during the Israel-Hamas war allows us to gain some understanding about how this particular moment had impacted Jewish peoples' behaviour when it comes to news consumption (Figure 5). In proportionate terms, the largest changes were increases in personal conversations, the consumption of Israeli news sources and the consumption of overseas general (i.e., not specifically Jewish) news sources.

Figure 5. News sources accessed for following news about Israel, Gen17 (2018) and AJSW (2023) compared*



⁴ Graham, D. and Markus, A. 2018. *Op. cit.*

* Question in Gen17: What are your main sources of information about the Jewish world and Israel?;
 Question in AJSW 2023: Since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, which news sources have you read or watched or engaged in most frequently?

About two-thirds of Australian Jews said that the news sources which they read, watched or engaged in most frequently were Australian general news sources and websites (68%), social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter/X, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, 67%), Israeli news sources and websites (in English or Hebrew, 63%) or personal conversations (60%). Half of Australian Jews also said that they read, watched or engaged in Australian-based Jewish news sources and websites (50%). The types of news sources that Jewish people were accessing are closely related to demographic and identity profiles. For example, news source consumption significantly differs by age group, especially in terms of social media which was consumed far more by younger people (84% of those aged 18 to 29) than older people (42% of those age 70 and older). In contrast, Australian general news sources were consumed more by older people (75% of those aged 70 and above) than younger people (65% of those aged 18 to 29). Compared with Jewish men, Jewish women were more likely to use social media (72% vs 61%) and have personal conversations about the war (65% women vs 54% men). Israeli news sources were far more likely to be read by those who feel very much attached to Israel (71%) compared to those who felt a little or not at all attached (33%) to Israel. Israeli news sources were also far more likely to be read by those who were Haredi and Modern Orthodox (70% and 71%), compared with those who had no denomination (53%).

Use of social media during the war

The vast majority of Jewish people in Australia (89%) had used social media during the war and 65% of these people had changed their viewing habits in the five weeks since the start of the war (Table 1). More than half of Australian Jewish adults had increased their use of social media (57%), and a small minority had decreased their use (8%). Younger people were more likely to change their habits than older people and Jewish women were more likely to have done so than Jewish men. Those who are more Orthodox, more emotionally attached to Israel and for whom being Jewish is important were all more likely to have increased their social media use.

Table 1. Since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, has your use of social media....?

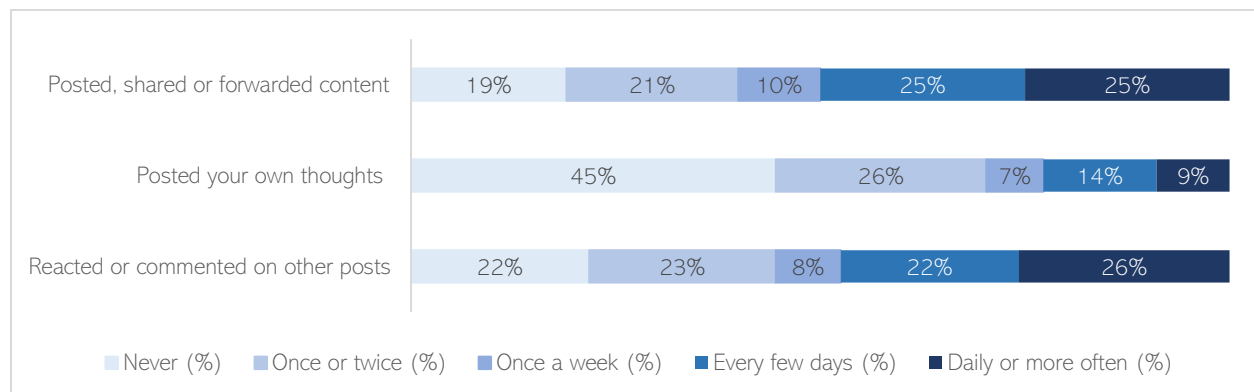
	I haven't used social media at all (n=879) (%)	Decreased (n=581) (%)	Stayed the same (n=1,771) (%)	Increased (n=4,303) (%)	Total (n=7,534) (%)
<u>Australian Jewish adult total</u>	11	8	24	57	100
<u>Age</u>					
18 to 29	2	14	24	60	100
30 to 49	5	10	20	64	100
50 to 69	9	6	26	59	100
70+	29	2	28	40	100
<u>Sex</u>					
Male	14	6	29	51	100
Female	8	10	21	62	100
<u>State</u>					

New South Wales	12	7	25	56	100
Victoria	9	9	23	59	100
Rest of Australia	9	8	26	56	100
<u>Denomination</u>					
Ultraorthodox/Haredi	8	13	17	62	100
Modern Orthodox	9	8	19	64	100
Traditional	9	6	20	65	100
Masorti/Conservative	10	9	31	50	100
Reform/Progressive	16	12	30	43	100
Secular/Culturally Jewish	10	8	27	54	100
No denomination	16	7	31	46	100
<u>Being Jewish is...</u>					
Extremely important	9	8	18	65	100
Very important	13	9	26	53	100
Moderately important	11	7	33	48	100
A little/not at all important	14	5	43	38	100
<u>Israel attachment</u>					
Very much attached	10	7	20	63	100
Somewhat attached	13	11	34	42	100
A little/Not at all attached	11	10	45	34	100

How social media was being used by Australian Jews in Australia

Among the 89% of Jewish people who had been using social media since the start of the war, they were far more likely to share content or react to other people's content than post their own thoughts about the situation (Figure 6). Half (50%) had posted, shared or forwarded content about the situation on social media at least every few days and almost half had reacted or commented on other people's posts by this stage.

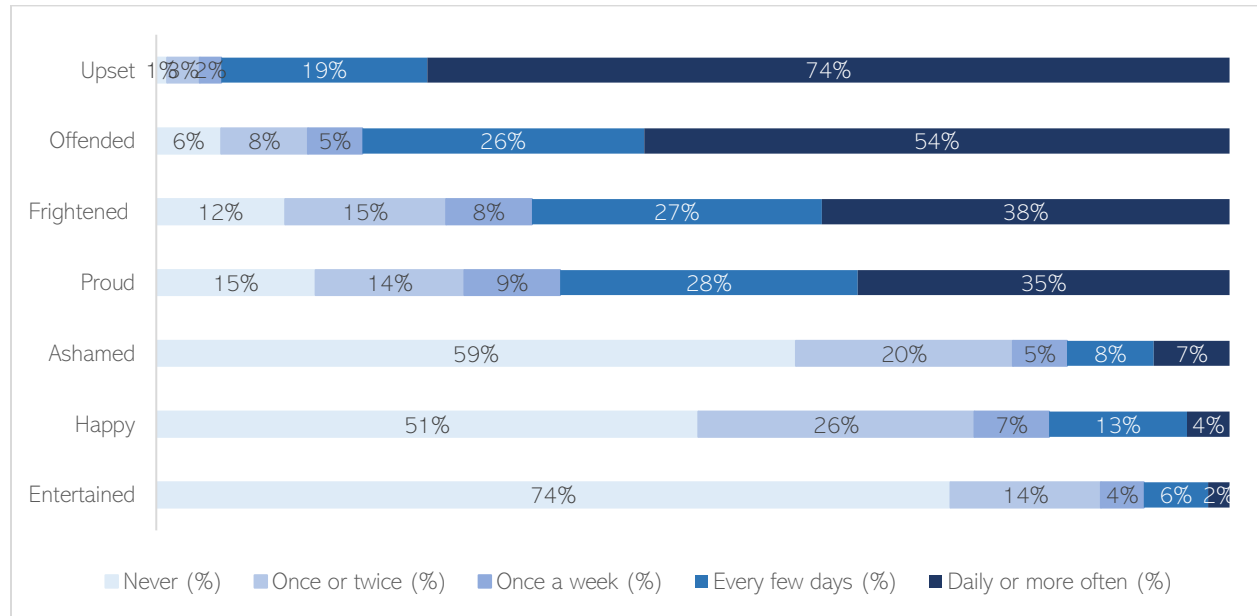
Figure 6. Since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, how often have you...?



Emotional impact of social media content about the war on Jewish people in Australia

It is evident that the emotional impact of social media content about the war had been very substantial on Jewish people living in Australia (Figure 7). Three quarters (74%) of Australian Jews had felt upset on a daily basis. More than half (54%) said they had felt offended by social media content on a daily basis. 38% said they had felt frightened daily or more often when viewing social media and a further 27% had felt this way every few days. But a similar proportion found themselves frequently feeling proud on viewing social media, daily or more often (35%).

Figure 7. Since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, when viewing content on social media, how often have you found yourself feeling...

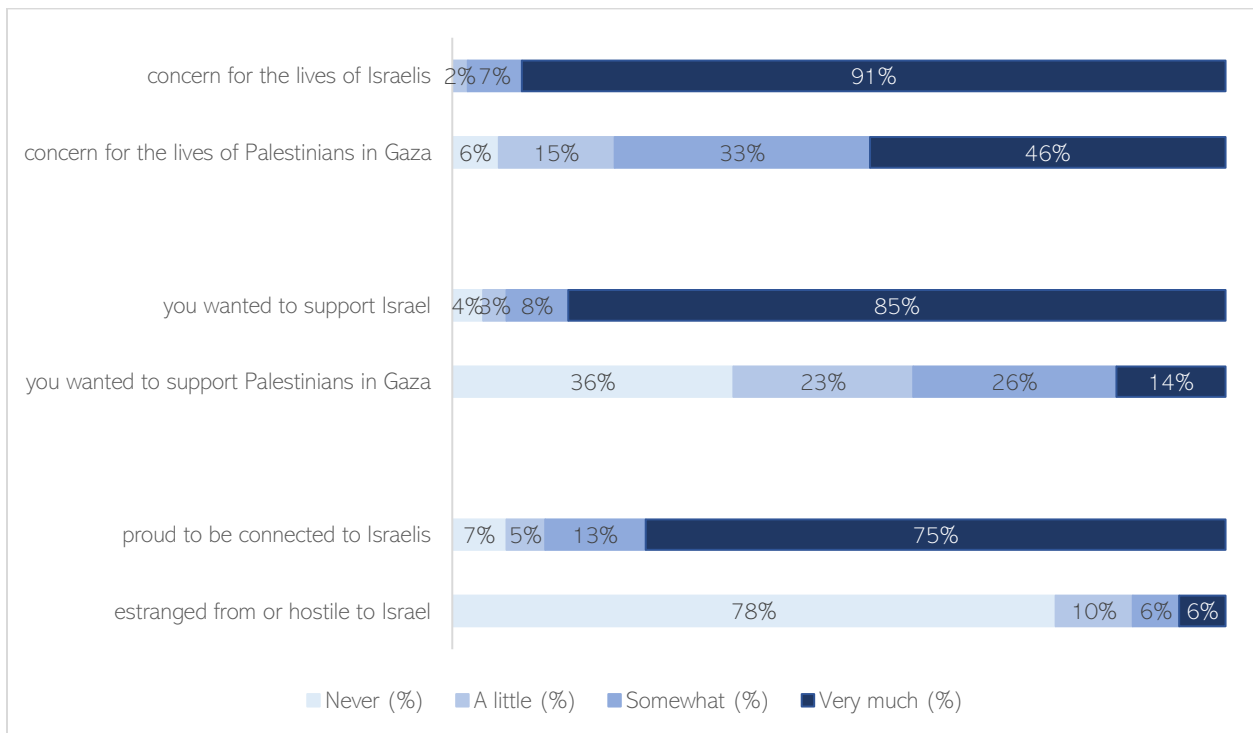


The effect of the war on Jewish people in Australia

Jewish peoples' feelings about the war

Five weeks into the war, a large majority (91%) of Australian Jews said they felt very much concerned for the lives of Israelis (Figure 8), and almost as many felt they wanted to support Israel (85%) and felt proud to be connected to Israelis (75%). But it is also noteworthy that despite the deep concern that they felt for Israel and Israelis, almost eight out of ten of Australian Jews in Australia (79%) were somewhat or very concerned about the lives of Palestinians in Gaza at this stage.

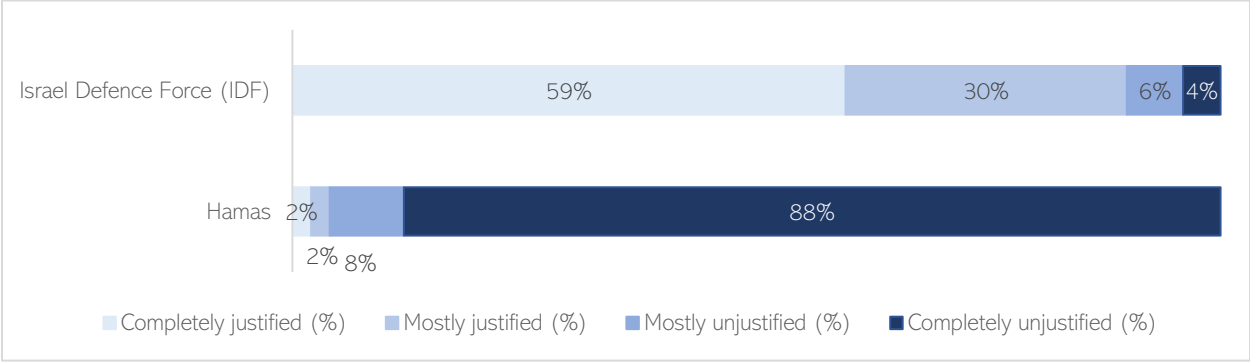
Figure 8. Thinking about the Israel-Hamas war, to what extent have you felt...?



Jewish people's attitudes towards the actions of the IDF and Hamas

Five weeks into the war, the vast majority (90%) of Jewish people in Australia felt the actions of the Israel Defence Force (IDF) had been justified (Figure 9). Indeed, a majority (59%) said that the actions of the IDF were completely justified. By contrast, hardly any Jewish people (4%) felt the actions of Hamas had been justified.

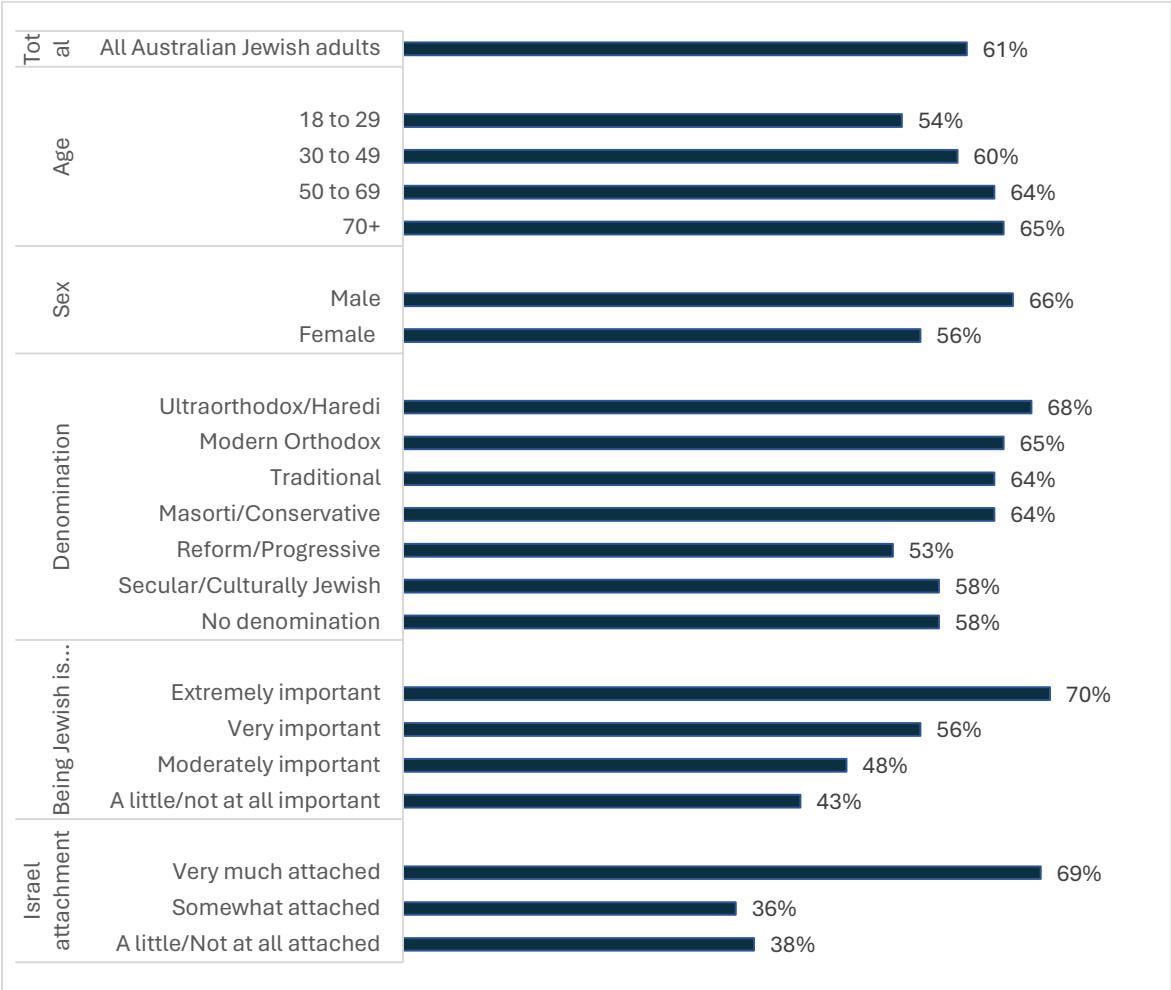
Figure 9. In the current war between Israel and Hamas, how justified or unjustified, do you think each side's actions have been?



How well do Jewish people feel they understand the current situation in Israel?

Considering the complexity of the situation it is striking that 93% of Jewish people in Australia agreed that they felt confident in their understanding of the current situation in Israel (Figure 10).

Figure 10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I feel confident that I understand the current situation in Israel – strongly agree



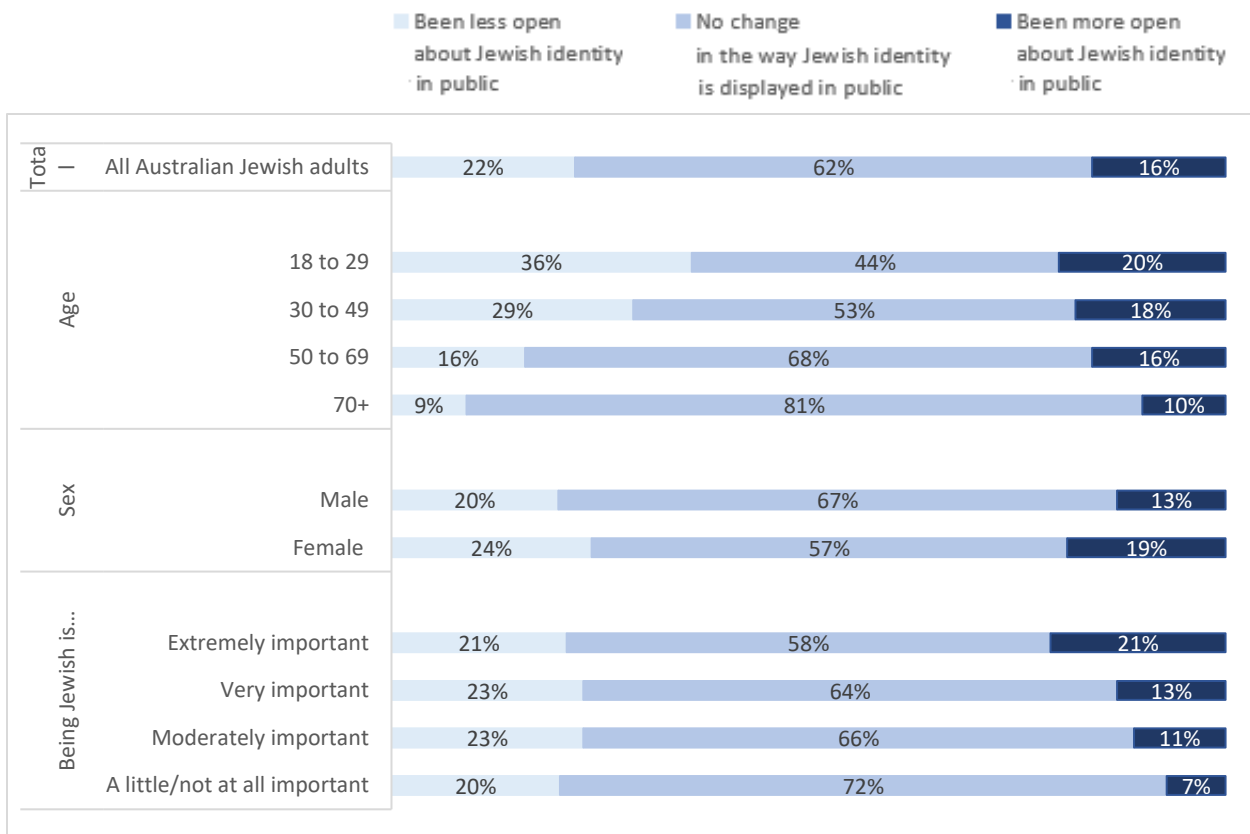
Showing support for Israel

In the five-week period since the start of the war, more than half (57%) of Australian Jews had demonstrated support or solidarity with Israel by attending a rally or event, putting up a sign, flag, poster or ribbon. Support was more likely to be expressed in this way by Australian Jews who are more Orthodox, feel more attached to Israel and who are more likely to say that being Jewish is important to them.

Openness about Jewish identity in public

Almost two out of five Australian Jews (38%) had chosen to change the way they displayed their Jewish identity in public as a result of the war (Figure 11). Overall, more Jewish people had chosen to be less open than more open about their Jewish identity in public in Australia. Change of any kind was more likely among younger Jewish people, Jewish women, those who are more closely attached to Israel, those who are more Orthodox and those for whom being Jewish is more important.

Figure 11: As a Jewish person living in Australia, since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, would you say you have...



Charitable donations made since the start of the war

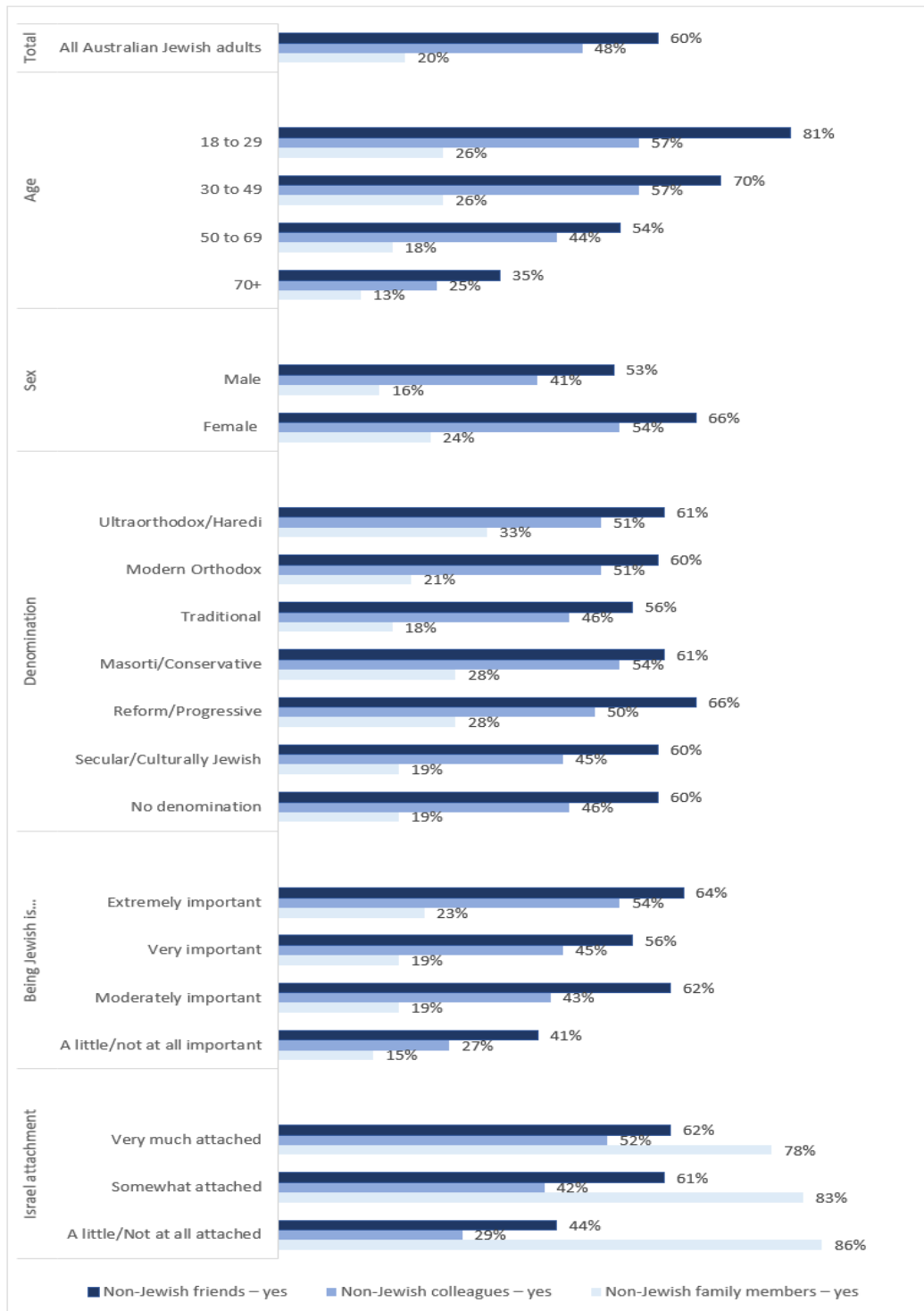
During the five-week period since the start of the war, almost three quarters (73%) of Australian Jews said they had made charitable contributions. Over half (52%) had contributed to an Israel-based charity and almost half (46%) had contributed to an Australia-based charity focused on Israel. Relatively few Jewish people (11%) had contributed to Australian-based Jewish charities (despite the role these play in combatting antisemitism in Australia). Older Jewish people were less likely to have made a charitable contribution than younger Jewish people. Similarly, those who are more Orthodox, who feel greater attachment to Israel, and those for whom being Jewish is more important to their identity were more likely to have made charitable donations than those who are more secular, who have a weaker attachment to Israel and for whom being Jewish is less important. Separately, 4% of Jewish people had contributed to a charity focused on helping Palestinians in Gaza.

Jewish people's feelings about the reaction of non-Jewish friends and colleagues to the war

While Australian Jews are highly integrated into Australian society, 60% had been concerned or upset by the reactions of their non-Jewish friends to the war, 48% had been concerned or upset by non-Jewish colleagues and 20% had been concerned or upset by non-Jewish family members (Figure 12).

The younger people are, the more likely they were to say that they felt concerned or upset by the reactions of their non-Jewish friends and colleagues. The younger Jewish people are, the more likely they were to have close non-Jewish friends (not shown in Figure 12) and it is conceivable they were, therefore, at greater risk of experiencing adverse reactions. Indeed, 81% of people aged 18-29 had been concerned or upset by the reactions of non-Jewish friends, and 70% of those aged 30-49 had been similarly concerned. More than half (57%) of those under the age of 50 had been concerned or upset by the reactions of non-Jewish colleagues, and about a quarter of people (26%) the same age had been concerned or upset by the reactions of non-Jewish family members.

Figure 12: Since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, have you been concerned or upset by the reactions of any of your...



On the other hand, in the first five weeks of the war, 83% of Australian Jews said that non-Jewish friends and acquaintances had reached out to them with messages of sympathy, either frequently (14%) or sometimes (68%). The younger Jewish people are, the more likely they were to say that their non-Jewish friends and

acquaintances had *not* reached out to them since the start of the war. This was the case for one-quarter (24%) of Australian Jews aged under 30 which is also the group with the largest proportion of non-Jewish friends. Australian Jews with the weakest levels of attachment to Israel and for whom being Jewish is less important to them—also subgroups with the largest proportions of close non-Jewish friends—were the most likely to say that their non-Jewish friends had not reached out to them. This reflects how even the most peripherally attached Australian Jews had been adversely impacted by the war.

Connections to Israel

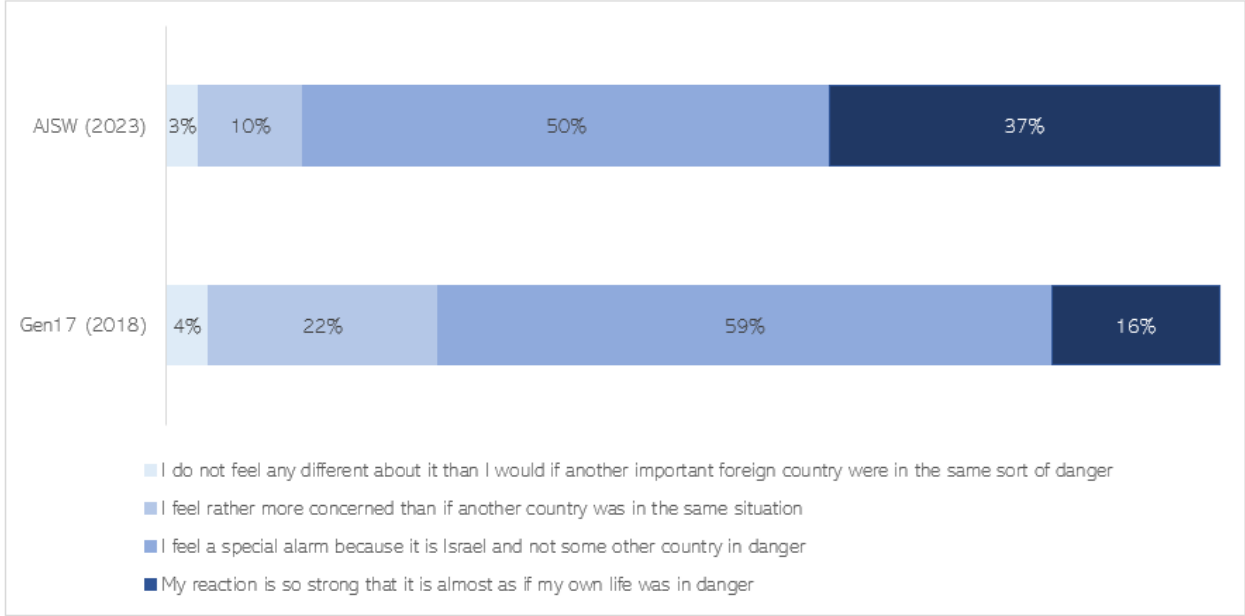
Jewish peoples' emotional attachment to Israel

Levels of emotional attachment to Israel were extremely high at the time of the survey, almost certainly far higher than they would have been prior to the conflict. Three quarters (75%) of Australian Jews said they were very much attached to Israel and a further 22% said they were either somewhat (16%) or a little (6%) attached to Israel. Therefore 91% of Australian Jews felt at least somewhat emotionally attached to Israel at this time.

Jewish people's attitudes about Israel when it is put in danger

To obtain a clearer understanding of how the war had affected Jewish people's attitudes towards Israel at this stage, Australian Jews were asked how they feel when Israel is in danger, a question that had been posed in several earlier Australian Jewish community studies (Figure 13). Nearly two out of five (37%) people said when Israel is in danger 'my reaction is so strong that it is almost as if my own life was in danger.' A further 50% said 'I feel a special alarm because it is Israel and not some other country in danger.' These results are directly comparable with data obtained prior to the war in 2017 during a relatively peaceful period for Israel. At that earlier point, 16% said it was 'almost as if my own life was in danger,' meaning that the proportion reporting the highest level of concern about Israel being in danger was almost 2.5 times higher in the immediate⁷ October aftermath, compared with 2017.

Figure 13. As the current war has put Israel in danger, which one of the following best describes how you feel? Gen17 (2017) and AJSW (2023) compared*

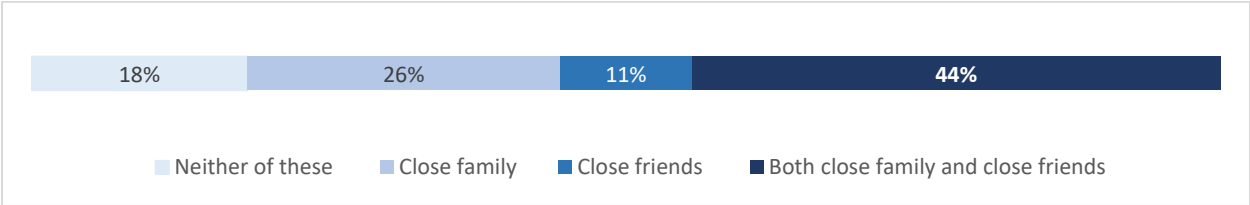


*Note: In Gen17, this question was posed hypothetically: “When international events put Israel in danger, which one of the following best describes how you feel?” Response options as per chart.

Personal connections to Israel among Australian Jews

A very large proportion (82%) of Jewish people in Australia have personal, social connections with people living in Israel who are either close family members, close friends or both of these (Figure 14). The younger people are, the more likely it is that they have such personal connections. Having such personal connections with Israel was less likely among those who are less emotionally attached to Jewish, less Orthodox and those who say that Jewish is less important.

Figure 14. Do you have any close family or close friends living in Israel?



Discussing the war with friends and family in Israel

As noted above, 82% of Australian Jews have close family and friends living in Israel. Of these people, about two-thirds (64%) had been in contact with them every few days (42%) or daily (22%) since the war had begun. An additional 32% said they had been in touch with family and friends in Israel occasionally. In other words, Jewish people in Australia were likely to be getting information about the war directly from their personal contacts in Israel. In addition, this again highlights how war in Israel is a very personal experience for Australian Jews living as far away as Australia.

Whether Australian Jews have visited Israel

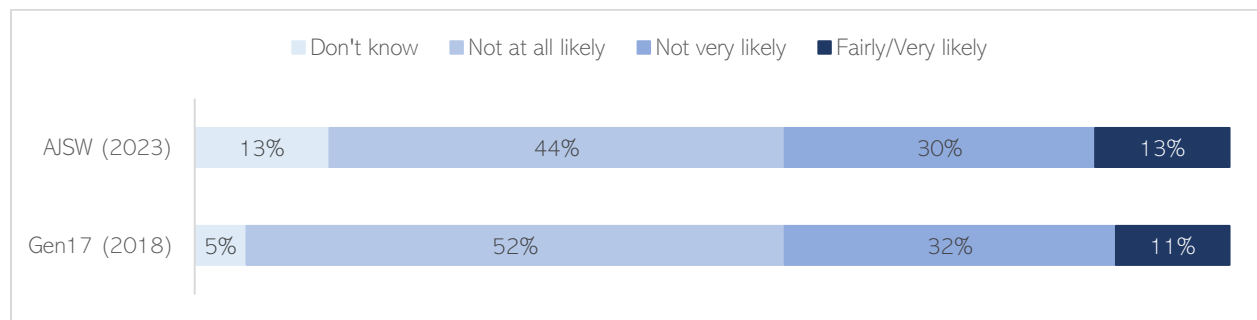
The vast majority (93%) of Jewish people in Australia have visited Israel. Indeed, the vast majority of Australian Jewish adults have visited the Jewish State more than once (60%) and one in five (20%) have either lived in the country or were born there. An additional 13% have visited once, and 7% have not visited Israel.

Likelihood that Jewish people in Australia would choose to live in Israel

Despite the overwhelming evidence shown here of a very close relationship between Australian Jews in Australia with Israel, it is nevertheless the case that, five weeks into the war, relatively few (13%) Jewish people said that it would even be fairly likely that they would choose to live permanently in Israel in the future (8% fairly likely, 5% very likely).

Australian Jews were also asked this question in 2017, in more peaceful times for Israel, and we see that the proportion of Jewish people saying they may live in Israel in the future was rather similar (11% were fairly or very likely to live permanently in Israel in the future compared with 13% in the current survey) (Figure 15). This suggests that the war has not changed people's attitudes about 'aliya', immigrating to live in Israel. However, it is also the case that the proportion who said they 'don't know' almost tripled from 5% to 13%, so perhaps the feelings of vulnerability and insecurity were having an impact on how Australian Jews view aliya.

Figure 15. How likely is it that you will choose to live permanently in Israel in the future? Gen17 (2017) and AJSW (2023) compared



Antisemitism and perceptions of personal safety

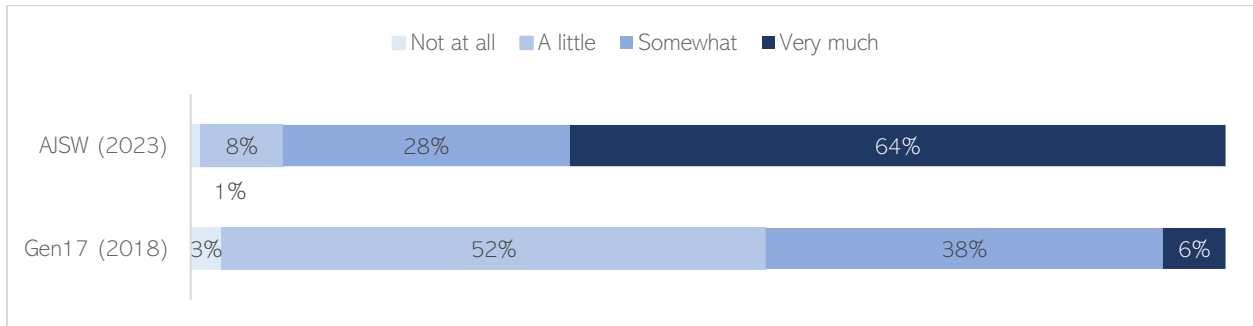
Jewish people's perceptions of the prevalence of antisemitism

There is a strong historical link between conflicts in Israel and waves of antisemitism in countries around the world.⁵ In 2017, a relatively peaceful period for Israel, a very small minority (6%) of Jewish people in Australia said that they felt antisemitism was a very big problem in Australia. In the present survey, a similar question asked 'how big a problem, if at all, is antisemitism in Australia today' finding that, five weeks into

⁵ Eilam, S. and Enshed, T. 2021. Increased Antisemitism in the United States Following Operation Guardian of the Walls: Permanent or Short-Lived? *The Institute for National Security Studies*. Tel-Aviv University. <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/antisemitism-and-guardian-of-the-walls/>

the war, 64% of Australian Jews felt that antisemitism was very much a big problem (Figure 16). These results are directly comparable and show that Jewish people's concern that antisemitism was a problem in Australia at that point was about 10 times higher than in 2017.

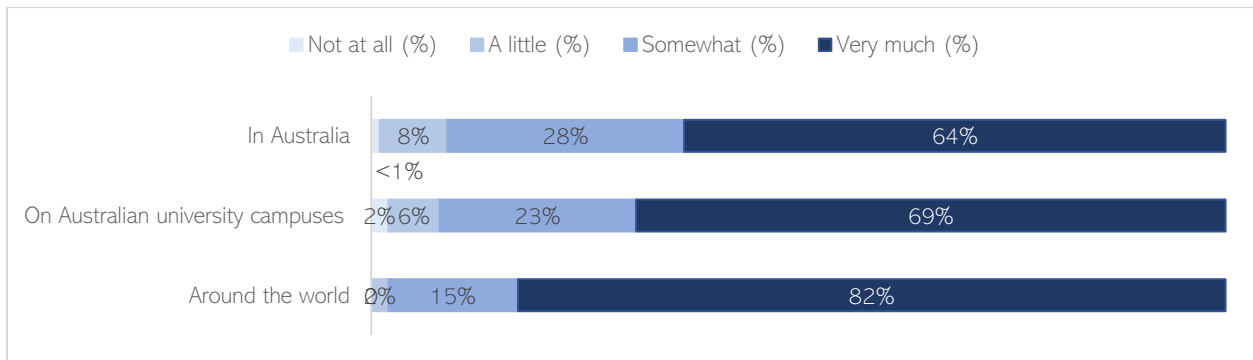
Figure 16. How big a problem, if at all, is antisemitism in Australia today, Gen17 (2017)* and AISW (2023) compared



* Question asked in Gen17: In your opinion, how big a problem, if at all, is antisemitism in Australia today? A very big problem, A fairly big problem, Not a very big problem, Not a problem at all.

We also asked respondents about their perception of antisemitism in other places and contexts (Figure 17). It is apparent that they felt antisemitism was worse on Australian university campuses than in Australia generally. And notably, 82% said antisemitism was very much a big problem around the world compared with 64% saying this was the case in Australia.

Figure 17. How big a problem, if at all, is antisemitism today...



Jewish peoples' experience of antisemitism since the beginning of the war

Since the beginning of the war, a period of about five weeks, one in five (20%) Jewish adults in Australia said they had personally experienced an insult or harassment *because they are Jewish* (Table 2). This rises to 43% for Jewish people aged 18 to 29. A majority of these incidents were experienced via social media although 11% more experienced such incidents in person. Among Jewish people aged 18 to 29, 22% had experienced an insult or harassment *in person* since the beginning of the war because they are Jewish. Fifteen percent of Australian Jews living in states and territories outside of Victoria and New South Wales had also experienced an insult or harassment in person since the beginning of the war because they are Jewish.

Less than 1% of people (n=34) said that they had experienced a physical attack, in that five-week period, because they are Jewish. (Not shown in Table 2 for reasons of confidentiality).

Table 2. Since the Israel-Hamas war began, have you personally experienced any of the following because you are Jewish? (Choose all that apply)

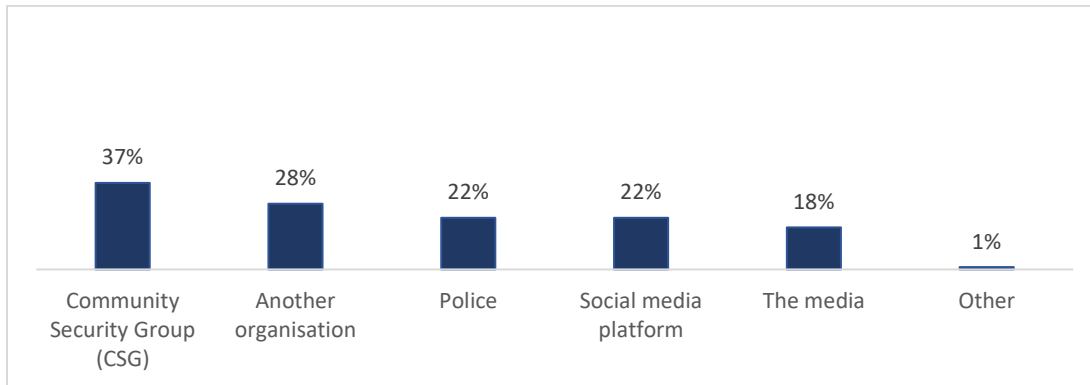
	Insult or harassment on social media (n=1,365) (%)	Insult or harassment in person (n=711) (%)	None of these (n=5,783) (%)
<u>Australian Jewish adult total</u>	20	11	75
<u>Age</u>			
18 to 29	35	22	57
30 to 49	25	13	68
50 to 69	15	7	80
70+	5	3	93
<u>Sex</u>			
Male	18	12	76
Female	22	9	74
<u>State</u>			
New South Wales	17	8	79
Victoria	22	11	72
Rest of Australia	22	15	70
<u>Denomination</u>			
Ultraorthodox/Haredi	24	31	55
Modern Orthodox	22	15	71
Traditional	20	8	76
Masorti/Conservative	19	10	76
Reform/Progressive	20	9	76
Secular/Culturally Jewish	19	8	77
No denomination	14	9	80
<u>Being Jewish is...</u>			
Extremely important	24	13	70
Very important	17	8	79
Moderately important	16	9	79
A little/not at all important	10	6	84
<u>Israel attachment</u>			
Very much attached	22	12	72
Somewhat attached	15	7	81
A little/Not at all attached	9	5	89

Reporting antisemitic incidents

Of those who mentioned having at least one of the three aforementioned forms of antisemitic experiences—verbal, physical and social media—71% did not report their experience(s) to any authority (Figure 18).

Most of those who did do so, told the Community Security Group (CSG) (37%), a Jewish non-profit organisation that works with the authorities to ensure the safety of Jewish people at public gatherings. There were no significant differences across age, sex, state, denomination, Israel attachment, or Jewish identity traits in those who did not report antisemitic experiences.

Figure 18. To whom did you report this [antisemitic incident]?



Australian Jewish university students

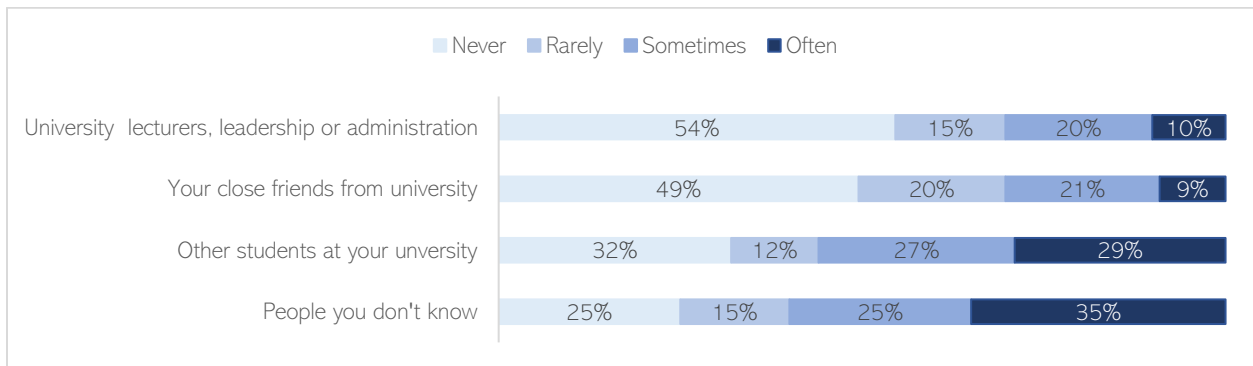
Experiences of Australian Jewish university students

The following two figures focus on the experiences of the 562 respondents who were university students during the 2023 academic year.

It is notable that at this stage, university students regarded antisemitism as being slightly *less* of a problem on campus than other Australian Jews. 60% of university students said antisemitism was very much a problem on university campuses, compared with 70% of other Australian Jews.

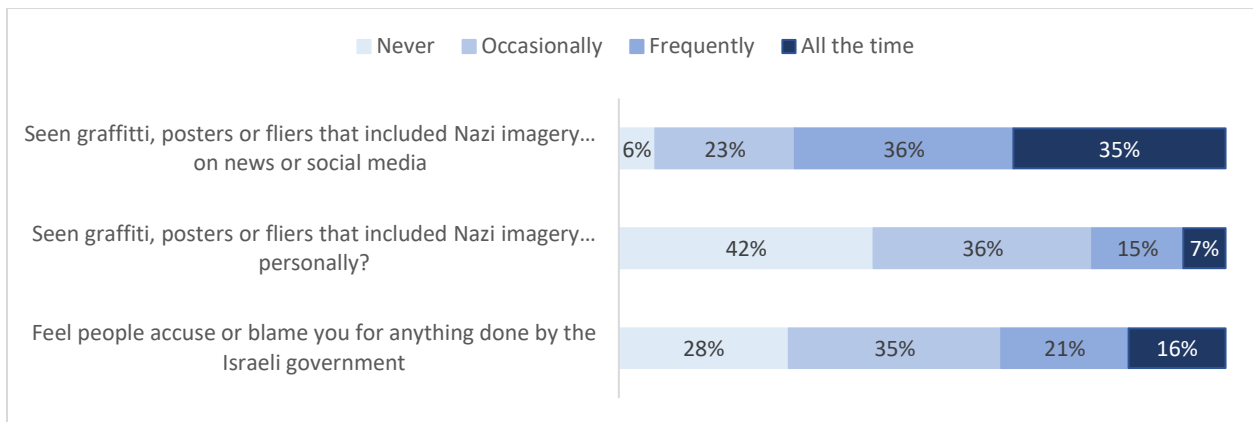
In the five weeks since the war started, more than two-thirds (68%) of Jewish students studying at Australian universities said they had personally encountered hostility towards Israel from other students at their university (Figure 19). Half of all students (51%) had experienced hostility from their own close friends at university. And 46% had experienced hostility towards Israel from university lecturers, leadership or administration.

Figure 19. Since the Israel-Hamas war began, how often have you personally encountered (either in person or on social media) hostility toward Israel from...?



Ninety four percent of university students had seen graffiti, posters or fliers that included Nazi imagery or antisemitic slogans on social media since the war began, 35% of whom had seen this all the time (Figure 20). More than half (58%) had seen these forms of Nazi imagery or antisemitic slogans personally, 7% saying they saw it all the time. Close to three-quarters (72%) said that they felt people accused or blamed them for anything done by the Israeli government because they are Jewish, 16% said this occurred all the time.

Figure 20. Since the Israel-Hamas war began, have you...? (Jewish university students)



Mental Health

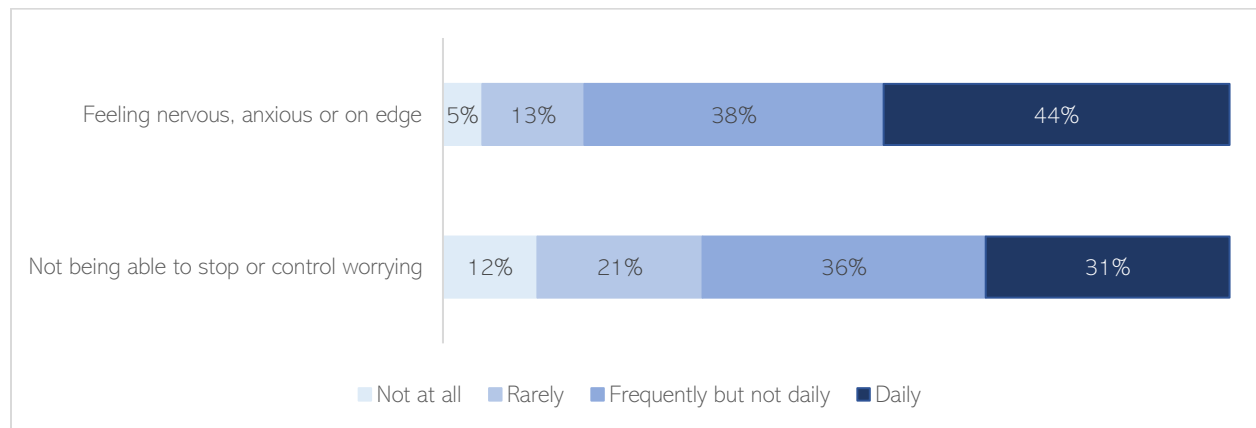
The Generalised Anxiety Disorder 2-item scale (GAD-2) is an established measure used in Australia and internationally for measuring the frequency of symptoms of anxiety.⁶ Five weeks into the war, respondents

⁶ See, for example, Staples, L. et al. 2019. Psychometric properties and clinical utility of brief measures of depression, anxiety, and general distress: The PHQ-2, GAD-2, and K-6. *General Hospital Psychiatry*, 56, 13-18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.genhosppsych.2018.11.003>

were asked to estimate how often they had felt worried or anxious since the war had started, with summed scores of 3 or above (i.e. 'daily' for at least one of the two questions) meeting the threshold for anxiety.⁷

Overall at this point, 44% of Jewish people said they had felt nervous anxious or on edge on a daily basis since the war had begun and 31% said they had not been able to stop or control worrying on a daily basis (Figure 21). When these scores are summed, 47% of Australian Jews can be said to have experienced symptoms of anxiety based on the GAD scale. We do not have any comparable data from earlier Jewish community studies, and while this cannot be considered a clinical diagnosis, when this scale has been used in questionnaires (i.e., self-assessment rather than by a clinician), 10-15% of the general population report that they have experienced symptoms of GAD in the past 7 days.⁸ This suggests that the proportion of Australian Jews who were experiencing anxiety at this time were multiple times higher than would be expected using the general Australian population as a baseline.

Figure 21. Since the Israel-Hamas war began, how often have you been bothered by ...?



Jewish women are far more likely to report having felt nervous, anxious or on edge than Jewish men and they were also far more likely to have been severely worried on a daily basis (Figure 22). The more important being Jewish is to a person's identity, the more likely they were to have experienced anxiety and worry. Similarly, the more emotionally attached Jewish people are to Israel, the more likely they were to have felt anxious and worried.

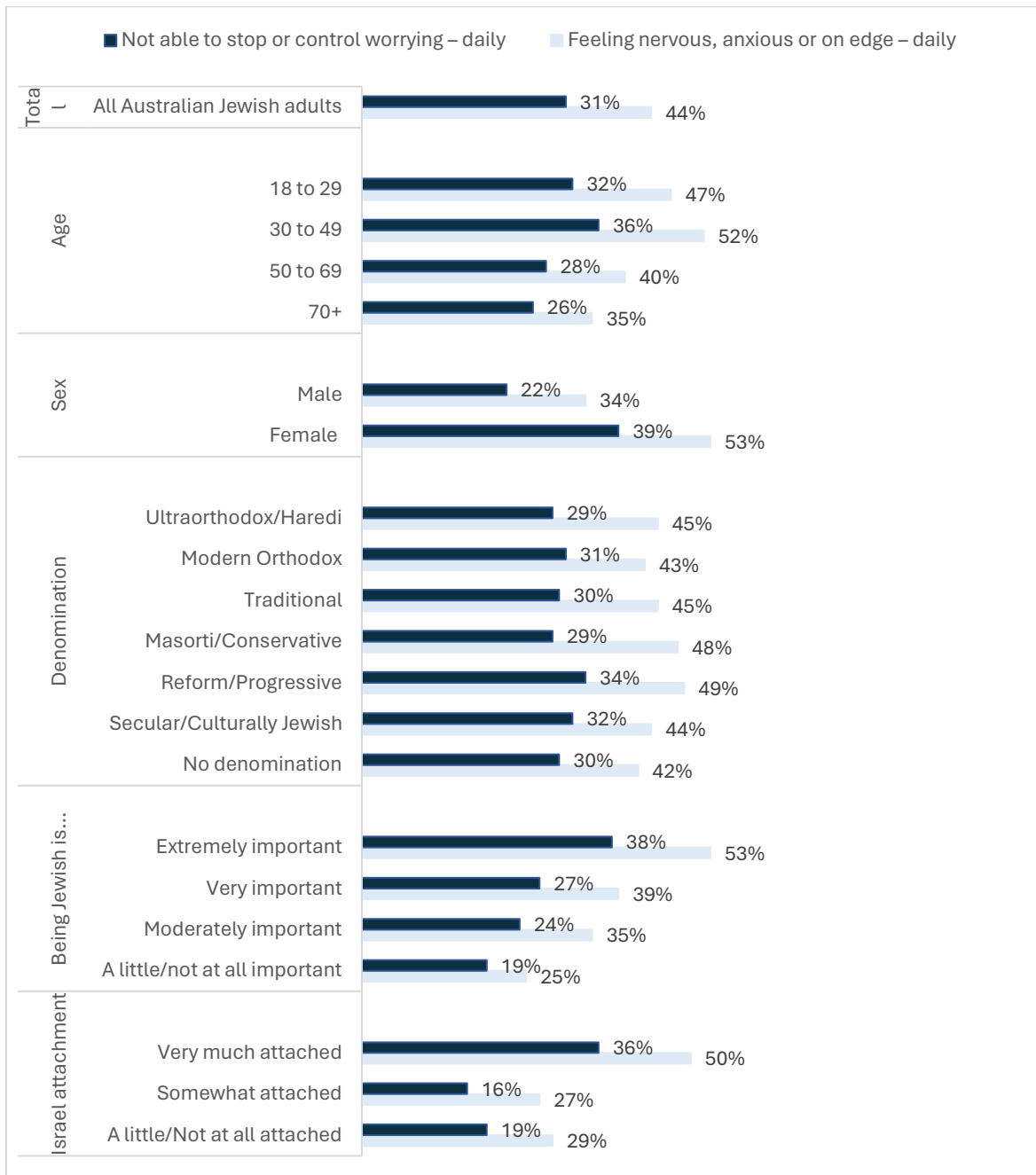
Anxiety and worry were greater among those who had been upset by the reaction of their non-Jewish friends and colleagues and family members.

Interestingly, those who had *changed* their social media usage, either increasing or decreasing it, were more likely to say they were anxious or worried compared with those who had not changed their social media usage. Similarly, those who had *changed* how open they were about their Jewish identity in public (by being either more *or* less open about it) were more likely to say that they were anxious or worried, compared to those who had not changed their Jewish identity in public (not shown in Figure 22). Both findings suggest that *change* in behaviour is associated with heightened anxiety, but further analysis is required to better understand these relationships.

⁷ The GAD-2 original categories are Not at all, Several days, More than half days, Nearly every day. See Kroenke K. et al. 2007. Anxiety disorders in primary care: prevalence, impairment, comorbidity, and detection. *Ann Intern Med.* 2007;146:317-25. <https://doi.org/10.7326/0003-4819-146-5-200703060-00004>

⁸ Personal correspondence with Professor Hans-Ulrich Wittchen. See Wittchen, H. -U., and Jurgen H. 2001. Generalized anxiety disorder: Nature and course. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* 62 (Suppl11): 15-19. <https://www.psychiatrist.com/read-pdf/7719/>

Figure 22. Since the Israel-Hamas war began, how often have you been bothered by ...?



Your experiences as a Jewish Australian: Qualitative reflections

Anticipating that respondents might wish to share their views on topics not fully covered, the survey closed with the following open-ended question: “Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences relating to the Israel-Hamas war as a Jewish person living in Australia?” There were 3,565 respondents (47%) who answered this question (Table 3). Collectively, there were close to 250,000 words in these responses, itself a reflection of the huge emotional impact of the war.

The following table shows a summary of the responses we received by topic (for all items mentioned by at least 50 people). By far the most common item discussed (by 2,599 respondents or 36% of the total) related to antisemitism. Unlike the preceding sections, these responses have not been weighted to be representative of the entire Jewish community.

Table 3: Qualitative reflections by theme

Theme	Explanation	Number of codes	
<u>Antisemitism</u>	Australian experiences of antisemitism; Reflections on the impact of feeling a loss of safety; hiding Jewish identity as a consequence of antisemitism	1614	
	Australian's parents' fears for their children's safety; children's experiences of antisemitism at school	214	
	Antisemitism in Australian workplaces – including the arts, business, law, medicine, sport and academia	207	
	Global Antisemitism in the world/global/other specific places (not including Israel)	564	2,599
<u>Australian leadership and law enforcement</u>	Government: Gratitude/thanks for support	21	
	Government: Criticism for insufficient support	669	
	Police: Gratitude and thanks for protection	23	
	Police: Criticism of police for insufficient protection	314	1027
<u>Thinking about Israel</u>	Israel attachment: Feelings of connection to Israel; support for the Israeli people / IDF; Israel as refuge	519	
	Hostages: Concern for their welfare; prayers/demands for their immediate return	347	866
<u>Media and social media</u>	Media: Praise of specific media outlets and journalists for fair coverage	55	
	Media: Criticism of specific media outlets and general bias in mainstream media	537	
	Social media: Observations of bias; role in fomenting antisemitism	166	758
<u>Mental health</u>	Mental health: Explicit reference to anxiety, nightmares and poor mental health post October 7	252	
	Holocaust connections: Identifies self as a survivor or child/grandchild of a survivor and attributes current feelings to Holocaust trauma; antisemitism stirring fears of another Holocaust	251	503
<u>Australian Jewish community</u>	Comfort and pride in community coming together; pride in feeling more connected to the community	166	
	Pride in and gratitude for organisations & leadership (including some feedback for how leadership could continue to help people at these times)	237	403
<u>Interactions with non-Jewish Australian friends and colleagues</u>	Non-Jewish friends and colleagues who reach out to support and listen	56	
	Silence is deafening' - silence from non-Jewish friends or work colleagues; loss of friendships as a direct result of October 7 and the aftermath	119	
	Betrayal by the left' - social justice activists (LGBT, Indigenous, interfaith, etc.) who have rejected them for being Jewish, despite/after years of shared social activism	114	289

<u>Opportunities for change</u>	Importance of education, for improved understanding of the Israel-Hamas war and experience of Australian Jews	287	287
<u>Other</u>	Observations about the situation not categorised above, but too small in number to appear on their own above. These include, but are not limited to, the importance of Jewish-Muslim dialogue, yearnings for peace, and concerns about social cohesion in Australia.		435
Total			7167

Thinking about Israel

Considering the high proportion of Australian Jews who have family and friends in Israel (noted earlier), it is unsurprising that 866 people mentioned Israel in their responses. Of those, 519 discussed their feelings of connection to Israel and their support of the Israeli people and Israeli Defence Forces. Others elaborated on the idea that, for them, Israel represents a refuge which they feel is critical to their sense of safety in Australia. These responses reflect Jewish people's feelings and opinions five weeks into the war.

My extended family has had two family members murdered and four taken hostage by Hamas. On the other side of the family, another was killed. We are beyond devastated. – Female, 50-69

My eldest brother is living there. Bombs fly over his head every day, with him hiding in the bomb shelters scared for his life. I have been affected greatly. – Male, 18-29

I have a close relative who miraculously escaped the massacre at the music festival on 7 October. I have gratitude and relief but also survival guilt and rage on behalf of those who did not escape. – Female, 70+

I have participated as a reservist in [redacted names of wars in Israel]. I am worried sick for all the reservists in this current war and their families. All news about Israeli soldiers lost are like live bullets in my chest. I hope they all come home safely. – Male, 70+

In my lifetime, the existence of Israel has always sat alongside our identity as this comfort - a place that we can go that we will be safe. That will come rescue us if our country turns against us ... It's impossible to explain but the existence of this tiny piece of land and an army that will come get us if we need is as fundamental to my identity as being female or a [profession redacted] or even now as a mum. For my entire life of studying the atrocities of the Holocaust in every class or discussion where we were taught about what happened and shown images of ghostly emaciated bodies and gas chamber walls covered in scratches, the teacher would always temper our horror with something along the lines of "but don't worry children, this will never happen to us because now we have Israel." It's the Jewish version of "but in the end they all lived happily ever after." – Female, 30-49

I am especially heartened by the increase in unity amongst Australian Jews and Israelis. I believe that Israel needs to do what it needs to do, and we need to support them to do that, despite the increase in risk everywhere. Australian Jews do not need go like sheep to the slaughter no matter how inconvenient that is for anyone else. – Male, 30-49

Among those who mentioned Israel, there were 347 who specifically mentioned the Israelis who were captured and held hostage in Gaza. Some explained that they were personally related to these hostages, others noted that the plight of the hostages was causing them considerable concern, while some observed the lack of outrage regarding the hostages' continued captivity.

Fear for hostages. Seven [redacted close relatives] feared to be hostages and had 3 murdered, making it very personal. – Male, 70+

How quickly most have forgotten the massacred Israelis and the hostages. Some people's total lack of empathy for these Israelis/Australian Jews (and others) has been palpable and unexpected. – Female, 70+

I weep every night for those poor Israeli girls kidnapped by sadists whose only aim is to rape and maim and the babies and children put in cages and taunted by Hamas... the frightened Israelis still reeling from one of the most egregious in human history and frightened Australian Jews worldwide who feel the collective, falsely legitimised, unleashing of antisemitism here and around the world. – Female, 30-49

Until the hostages are returned, there is an open wound in the soul of all Australian Jews which causes daily anguish and pain. – Male, 70+

I feel I'm living in an alternate universe where the entire world can no longer discern good from pure evil. Where is the outcry over the 240+ hostages of over 30 nations and of several different faiths? – Female, 50-69

Media and social media

There were 758 people who mentioned the media or social media in their responses. Of these, there were 55 people who singled out particular newspapers and news programs, praising them for their coverage and support. Again, these responses reflect Jewish people's feelings and opinions five weeks into the war.

I am shocked by the lack of information and distortion of historical fact in the reporting of this war in Australian media, with notable exception The Australian newspaper. – Female, 50-69

I am very disappointed in the Australian media as their reporting is one sided and promotes antisemitism. There is no fact checking from them, just blind belief in the propaganda Hamas spew. Ray Hadley and Ben Fordham [Radio 2GB] as well as Sky News Australia are the exception. – Female, 50-69

Lots of praise to 3AW Neil Mitchell and Tom Elliot. – Female, 30-49

I am heartened by the news presentation in The Herald Sun. – Male, 70+

The reportage of the media was criticised, however, in many more responses (537). Many shared their despair with bias and lack of fact-checking. Others aired concerns that reportage was contributing to the increase in antisemitism. Some even shared that the coverage by mainstream media had motivated them to seek news elsewhere, including the Israeli media.

Overall, the standard of journalism about the Middle East is biased and poor. Very simplistic and unrealistic. All the expectation is centred on Israel without expecting reciprocal accountability on the Palestinians. – Male, 70+

The bias in the media reporting even for children is revolting (watch episode 30 of BTN from ABC which is shown to school-aged children). They didn't even acknowledge the attack from Hamas. – Female, 30-49

The amount of blatant propaganda being spread online is absurd. Most people take anything they see at face value and don't put in time or research to verify anything. I have spoken with many Pro-Palestine campaigners and from my experience half of them don't know very much about this situation at all. – Male, 18-29

It is the first time in my life I have felt so frightened by the obvious antisemitism so blatantly displayed by our national broadcaster ABC and its attempts to stir up controversy ... Media has a responsibility to not encourage antisemitism within Australia and the daily showing of Palestinians war cry "from the river to the sea" is not being outed as a vile trope. – Female, 50-69

I am furious with the editorial policies of The Age newspaper and have cancelled my subscription. In my view The Age is participating in fomenting hatred of Australian Jews in its misinformation and one-sided reporting, and in allowing the rewriting of history go unchallenged in its letters pages. – Female, 70+

I am deeply offended by the pro-Palestinian slant of most of the Australian news media. We mostly watch/listen to the ABC or SBS, but we believe that they are now actively biased against Israel. As a consequence, we've been tuning into [Israeli news channel] i24 and reading Times of Israel, Jerusalem Post or Haaretz. – Female, 70+

Social media was also raised in the open-ended responses (166). Many shared their concerns about inaccuracy, the ignorance of those reposting information, the emotional toll of social media consumption and concerns for the vulnerability of children. Some shared their frustrations with the lack of social media regulation and the need for legislation to curb hate speech.

It's extremely difficult to navigate. Having many non-Jewish friends, it's an extremely uncomfortable situation given that everyone is picking a side. Mostly with very limited knowledge ... A good friend of mine posted something on Insta last night about a ceasefire ... I couldn't sleep last night. I wasn't sure how to manage it. [Redacted details of resources used to inform friend about her/his perspective] She apologised for the post and admitted she was ill informed and really wasn't coming from a bad place - which I knew, as I know her well. It was just so disheartening... so many 'affluent' and 'ignorant' people are being so vocal without much thought or real knowledge ... I don't know how we fix this ... my heart is so heavy today. – Female, 30-49

Another issue is that Facebook has not removed a single one of my reports against hate speech including one that claimed that Australian Jews had murdered more people than anyone else. Then there's trolls commenting on Jewish sites. It's toxic. I actually removed the Facebook app from my phone last week because of the toxic nature which was significantly impacting on my well-being. – Male, 30-49

I have tried hard to escape my echo chamber and listen to other stories. For me social media is a binary screaming match fuelling hate - no one is listening to each other. Peace is abstract unless we listen and understand the pain of another. – Female, 50-69

Social media has been a big problem . It allows people who are so uneducated and yearn to spread misinformation and don't understand the repercussions by posting. – Male, 18-29

There is so much misinformation circulating on social media and teenagers are particularly vulnerable to it especially as they have no knowledge of history, couldn't find Israel on a map, and don't understand what radical Islamists are and what they are doing or how Iran is involved and determined to destroy the west - which includes them. – Female, 50-69

Social media has exaggerated and prioritised the views of the most ill-informed and fostered hate and misinformation to the extent that it is causing hurt and distress and feelings of danger to Australian citizens - it should, in my view, require closer attention and even control by government and legal and social institutions. – Male, 70+

Mental health

The toll of the Israel-Hamas war on the mental health of Australian Jews five weeks into the war was mentioned by 503 people. Of those, 252 people made explicit reference to anxiety, nightmares and other signs of poor mental health post-7 October. Most mentioned the events of 7 October, lack of support from friends or government, or caustic social media as triggering their poor mental health

The bottom line is I'm absolutely not okay. Nightmares, weight loss, hair loss, and inability to focus at work. Generally, feel dissociated from life - and not truly supported by government - they are weak and haven't visited Israel and are too influenced by votes or anti-Semitic beliefs rather than by what is moral. – Female, 50-69

I am a psychologist [specialisation redacted], in my work having to support more clients who are presenting with symptoms of acute stress disorder. There is an increasing sense of isolation and lack of support from those outside the community. To have people justify the slaughtering of Jewish people or for the head of the UN to use words like "it hasn't occurred in a vacuum" makes the world seem unsafe. – Female, 30-49

The lies and deception are so palpable that my anxiety and stress is at the complete lack of morality in society. – Female, 50-69

I'm much more conscious of people knowing I'm Jewish or my Israeli parents. Especially at work or at non-Jewish friends' gatherings. I feel I need to hide my identity out of fear, and this makes me really sad. – Female, 18-29

I got off social media (Instagram) around 3 weeks into the War and it has made a big positive impact on my mental health. – Female, 18-29

I actually feel like I have a form of PTSD. I am in a constant state of anxiety, and I constantly fear for the safety of my kids at school and us in general from a potential antisemitic attack. It's a horrible time. – Female, 30-49

There were also 251 people who mentioned how their personal connections to the Holocaust made the events of 7 October and the aftermath even more traumatic. Some of the responses were offered by Holocaust survivors themselves; others, the children and grandchildren of survivors explained how they had also felt traumatised by current events, as a consequence of generational Holocaust trauma.

I am a child survivor of the Holocaust. When news of the Hamas attack came through, I felt traumatised to a degree that I have never felt before. – Male, 70+

I never thought that I would have to worry about antisemitism in Australia. It has been a very disappointing experience. Being a holocaust survivor, I know what evil looks like and we have stared it in the face lately. – Male, 70+

I came here as a 2-year-old from a displaced persons camp with my [redacted family members] and my Holocaust survivor parents. This was the lucky country. No antisemitism, just the most beautiful friendly Aussies. Now we are considering leaving. The hate and vile behaviour have made us realise it's not safe for us here... Our grandchildren's schools have to have guards with guns. Our synagogues have guards, Yesterday, there was a huge police presence outside our synagogue. We are peaceful people. – Female, 70+

As a child of Holocaust survivors, I am deeply, deeply triggered by Palestinian rallies in Sydney where they are chanting, 'Gas the Australian Jews,' The police are standing next to the crowd to ensure the rally is "peaceful", and not enforcing any laws on racial vilification. This puts me into a tailspin of anxiety. – Female, 50-69

"I am the grandchild of Holocaust survivors. I think the nature and degree of inter-generational antisemitic trauma plays a significant role in people's response to the current war." – Female, 30-49

Australian Jewish community

The wellbeing of the Australian Jewish community was also foremost in people's minds (403). Within those responses, there were 166 people who reflected upon the support and comfort they have derived from the Jewish community and their sense of pride in feeling more connected to the community and their sense of Jewish identity.

The community has come together in the most amazing way ... The generosity of the community has been overwhelming and what this shows is that we are strong and resilient and will not be beaten. – Female, 50-69

Overwhelmed by the way Jewish people have come together and organised practical things that we can do to help the people of Israel. Pride in the dignified manner in which we carry ourselves. Pride in the emotional, Bring Them Home rallies. Proud that my non-Jewish husband is brimming with anger and emotion. Very aware in the way I am now prouder and louder in being a Jew. – Female, 50-69

Prior to October 7th I did not see myself as particularly Jewish or Israeli. I was an Australian born into a Jewish family. Now I see myself as an Australian-Israeli-Jew and this has honestly been a major shift in my identity which I am still grappling with. – Female, 18-29

I dug out my Magen David [which I received] from my bat-mitzvah and have been wearing it since October 7, having hardly worn it in previous years. My 3-year-old is engaging with it and loves seeing it and commenting on family and friends' Magen-Davids also ... I feel lucky to live in an area with Jewish neighbours. – Female, 30-49

Completely heartbroken... but silver lining in all of this is seeing the "Jewish warrior" coming out of so many friends who were very quietly Jewish. – Female, 50-69

An additional 237 people complimented Jewish communal leaders on the ways in which they have supported Australian Jews, through events, resources and support.

Huge appreciation for the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies for their leadership and the organising of events and webinars and relevant information to help keep us connected. Also great appreciation for UIA, JNF, Zionist Federation of Australia, etcetera, for their support. – Female, 50-69

The response of the Australian Jewish Community has felt unified, supportive and affirming. Our Jewish leadership (Board of Deputies, UIA, etc) have been so active and their work had made me feel safer. A special acknowledgement to ... CSG whose presence at Synagogue and Jewish events has been very reassuring. – Female, 30-49

Excellent Jewish community leadership and unity has been a source of reassurance and hope during a difficult time. – Female, 30-49

The Jewish community and all its representatives and organisations have been supportive and active in every way for Israel and the local Jewish community which gives us the strength and resilience to continue proudly as Australian Jews and in support of Israel. – Female 70+

I am feeling so proud to be a Jewish person in the Sydney Jewish community and getting a lot of comfort attending all the communal events. – Female, 50-69

Interactions with non-Jewish Australian friends and colleagues

Australian Jews are well-integrated into Australian society, most having non-Jewish Australian friends and work colleagues, which were reflected on by 289 people. Of those, 56 noted with gratitude the non-Jewish friends and colleagues who reached out to offer support.

I have also been blown away by a few non-Jewish friends who have been a source of light and security. – Female, 30-49

Many of my non-Jewish friends, colleagues, and relatives have reach out to check how we are, offer support, and learn more. Despite my constant worry about our family in Israel, I have felt comforted knowing that other Australians care and reject antisemitism. – Female, 50-69

I have a number of non-Jewish friends and colleagues. They are most likely left voters. They have known me for a long time and know I am Jewish. I have reached out to them personally and have shared my experiences. They are respectful and supportive. – Female, 30-49

Had the most supportive conversation with my Christian Lebanese neighbour who is anti-Hamas, anti-Hezbollah 100% supports Israel and the Jewish people. Christian Lebanese are an endangered minority there too. – Female, 30-49

There were more people, however, who shared their disappointment in non-Jewish friends and colleagues for not being supportive in the aftermath of 7 October (119). "Silence is deafening" was a refrain in these shared reflections, some hurt by the absence of support, others by hurtful comment, while some shared that they had lost friends over the events of 7 October.

It has made me understand what people mean when they say that silence is deafening. – Female, 18-29

I am particularly worried about the silence in academia where I work as a lecturer. Had close to no support from colleagues and managers, yet it is the silence that is more deafening than any outright form of antisemitism. – Female, 30-49

The reaction of my non-Jewish friends, which is most of them, has been incredibly saddening and disappointing. I feel I cannot rely on them for any support. – Female, 18-29

The majority of our family friend groups are not Jewish and the response to our situation has been underwhelming to say the least. It's often along the lines of 'How awful for you, but Israel shouldn't have...' The feelings of decades-long friends have been distressing in itself. – Female, 50-69

It's awful. I feel like we are calling out and no one is listening. No one cares. We all feel so isolated. I've lost friends over this, they won't speak to me because of who I am. – Female, 18-29

There were 114 people whose reflections details feelings of betrayal by the left, social justice activists with whom they had worked on common causes, but who had rejected them for being for being Jewish, despite years of shared volunteer work in social activist spaces.

I don't understand what I did wrong. I've stood up for everyone in need. I've donated money I didn't have to try and make the lives better of refugees, the Indigenous community, the LGBTQIA+ community. I have fought for the environment, the homeless and those struggling. I call out racism and bigotry ... The only way that I can get through the day is by blocking it all out and pretending it isn't happening ... but even that is not enough. I live my life with light and kindness, compassion and empathy ... but I don't have much left. – Female 30-49

As a left-wing person I feel dismayed and almost betrayed by the left in Australia and around the world. The lack of empathy shown to Israel, the lack of criticism of Hamas verging on support for its aims, the cynical or ignorant misappropriation and twisting of words like "genocide" and "ethnic cleansing", the blindness to Hamas efforts to kill their own people. It has felt very lonely being Jewish in Australia. – Male, 30-49

The penny has dropped for me, about the relationship between antizionism and antisemitism. Before Oct 7 I would usually be very careful and nuanced on such matters and allow a space for critique of Israeli politics. But what I have seen since I cannot unsee; there is a level of passionate irrationality in those who are hostile to Israel, very severe moral inconsistency, and I see a very clear link to Soviet era antisemitic propaganda, which the modern left has blindly adopted. One of the hardest parts of this for me has been the feeling of being excommunicated from the left, for something I have no real agency over. This is racism, pure and simple, and it is being performed by the high priests of anti-racism. – Male, 30-49

It frustrates me that all diversity and inclusion initiatives and or reporting about minorities don't seem to count Australian Jews. It's a massive blind spot. Australian Jews are seen as too privileged to be a minority. At work we spend so much time doing DEI initiatives but being Jewish doesn't count at all here. – Male, 30-49

I have never, in all my life, been so horrified by the silence of most Australians. I work in the social service sector, and I am consumed with rage by the lack of comment or support from Australians and the not-for-profit community. Australian Jewry has been exceptionally generous to this country and are disproportionately philanthropic. I think that this is a huge wake up call for Australian Jewry, and that there needs to be a serious re-think into the time, money and effort which is given to the non-Jewish charity sector. – Female, 30-49

Opportunities for change

There were 287 people who mentioned ignorance as an obstacle to understanding and dialogue, calling for a greater Jewish communal focus on educational resources – both for community members and for Australians more broadly. Many respondents shared quiet frustrations at their own inability to succinctly advocate for Australian Jews in Australia and Israel; they expressed the desire for the assistance of communal leadership in providing resources to support them when communicating with their non-Jewish friends and work colleagues. Others highlighted the need for greater advocacy within the general Australian community, calling on leaders to fill those roles.

Would be wonderful if there were some key messages/points that could be issued to the community which could be used when discussing the topic with non-Jewish colleagues or friends, especially when chatting with people who might not quite understand what is going on and only rely on what they hear in local media or socials for their information. – Female, 30-49

I graduated in [date redacted] from a private Jewish day school and I feel that the school did not prepare us enough to face these challenges or have difficult conversations about Israeli history OR arm us with enough resources to be confident to debate or inform a neutral party (i.e., prepare us to have the argument with someone say pro-Palestinian). I would like to create an initiative to further educate students and alumni and would love help. – Male, 30-49

keep sharing any information I receive with all my FB friends. The problem is they are mostly Jewish, so I am only preaching to the converted, so to speak. The information, the truth needs to be circulating with the general population of Australia because most of the media as we all know is biased against Israel. In other words, we need a better PR system. The Palestinian/ Muslim population seem to have the upper hand when it comes to PR and press releases, and it has always been this way. Time for this to change somehow. – Female, 70+

My non-Jewish friends are naive at no fault of their own. They don't understand what is happening and I don't blame them. It is too abstract for them to comprehend. They are not stakeholders on the issue. Education on the matter needs to be highly prioritized. We need people to see for themselves the beauty and multi-cultural nature of Israel. We need to send more politicians and students there to see it for themselves. - Male, 18-29

A massive education program is needed regarding antisemitism and Australian values . It has to be routed out of Australian culture at a grass roots level. – Female, 50-69

Appendix A. Methodological Appendix

Methodology overview

This study is based on an analysis of data collected between the 10th and 17th of November 2023. The final sample size was 7,611. The survey was open to anyone who was at that time living in Australia, aged 18 or above, and who considered themselves to be Jewish in any way at all. Fieldwork commenced during the fifth week of the Israel-Hamas war. The survey was carried out online and a link was circulated by Jewish communal organisations across Australia to their membership lists, which was further circulated by participants to other Australian Jews via private messaging. The survey was anonymous and promotion of the survey on public platforms and social media was strongly discouraged to minimise the potential risk of sabotage.

While the size of sample is extremely large by any comparable measure, and to have obtained it in one week is unprecedented,⁹ it is also a convenience sample (that is, non-random). The most important criterion for any sample is for it to accurately represent the total Jewish population in Australia as closely as possible. Fortunately, there are excellent sources of baseline data about Australian Jews that can be utilised in this regard. The national census is carried out every five years by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and contains data on religion¹⁰, age, sex, and geographical location. This provides a highly reliable baseline to weight (that is, to statistically align) the survey data and make it more representative of the Jewish population. However, another biasing factor in any Jewish survey is Jewish identity, since participating in such surveys is more likely to be attractive to more engaged Jewish people than less engaged Jewish people. To address this, a national synagogue membership survey was carried out in November 2023 and these data were used to weight data collected in the survey for this purpose.¹¹ Synagogue membership data are the only whole population baseline source available that provides data on Jewish identity.

There are, however, limits to what can be achieved with survey weighting. Systematic sampling bias can occur when a survey is more likely to be of interest to one group than another. In the present case, a survey about Israel is likely to be of less interest to those who feel *less* strongly about the country than those who feel *more* strongly about it. If the two groups differ systematically then weighting is less likely to overcome this.

Questionnaire design

The survey instrument draws on three main sources. First is the *Gen17 Australian Jewish Community Survey*, a national study conducted of the Jewish community across Australia in 2017.¹² A sample of questions was drawn from that survey to track possible changes in attitudes and behaviours vis-à-vis Jewish identity, Israel, politics and antisemitism. The second source is a series of university student-focused surveys conducted contemporaneously by the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University (<https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/research/antisemitism/hotspots-2023-report1.html>). A sample of questions

⁹ The authors interpret this overwhelming response, obtained without the need for any survey incentive, as an additional expression of the impact of the war; Jewish people wanted to have their voice heard.

¹⁰ The religion question is voluntary and is adjusted by the community using multiple data sources to take account of Jewish non-response.

¹¹ This provides data on those who belong to Orthodox synagogues, those who belong to non-Orthodox synagogues and those who do not belong to any synagogue, the latter calculated by subtracting the affiliated totals from the Jewish population count in the census.

¹² Graham, D. and Markus, A. 2018. Op. cit.

was drawn from that survey to track opinions about and responses to the Israel-Hamas war, Israel attachment and antisemitism. The third source is a series of novel questions developed by the survey team.

The Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee granted approval for this research (Project number 40944). The survey was programmed and administered using the Qualtrics survey platform.

Sampling procedure

There were several limitations in terms of sampling procedure. First, there is no list from which to sample Jewish people. Second, no polling company holds a sufficiently large sample from which a statistically useful Jewish sample could be extracted. Third, there was a time constraint—during the first few weeks post-7 October, the situation was evolving rapidly and the aim of the survey was to capture opinion before a substantive change in the situation had occurred. Fourth, there were security concerns given the sensitive nature of the topics dealt with in the survey. These factors necessitated the building of a convenience sample and as short a field period as possible.

Jewish community organisations received a copy of the invitation to participate, which contained a web-link to the online survey instrument. The survey was launched at 9am on Friday 10th of November 2023, when these organisations emailed this invitation to their respective lists. The instruction was given that the survey link was not to be promoted publicly on social media platforms but could be shared on private networks with friends and family in Australia.

While in theory anyone could have completed the survey if they had chosen to be dishonest about the screening question, comparing key demographic and Jewish identity distributions from the survey with previous surveys carried out on the Jewish community show very close correspondence giving us high confidence that the vast majority of people, if not all, were eligible respondents. Theoretically multiple responses may also have been submitted from the same individual. However, since the survey software, Qualtrics, is designed to prevent multiple responses from the same IP address, this is unlikely to have occurred.

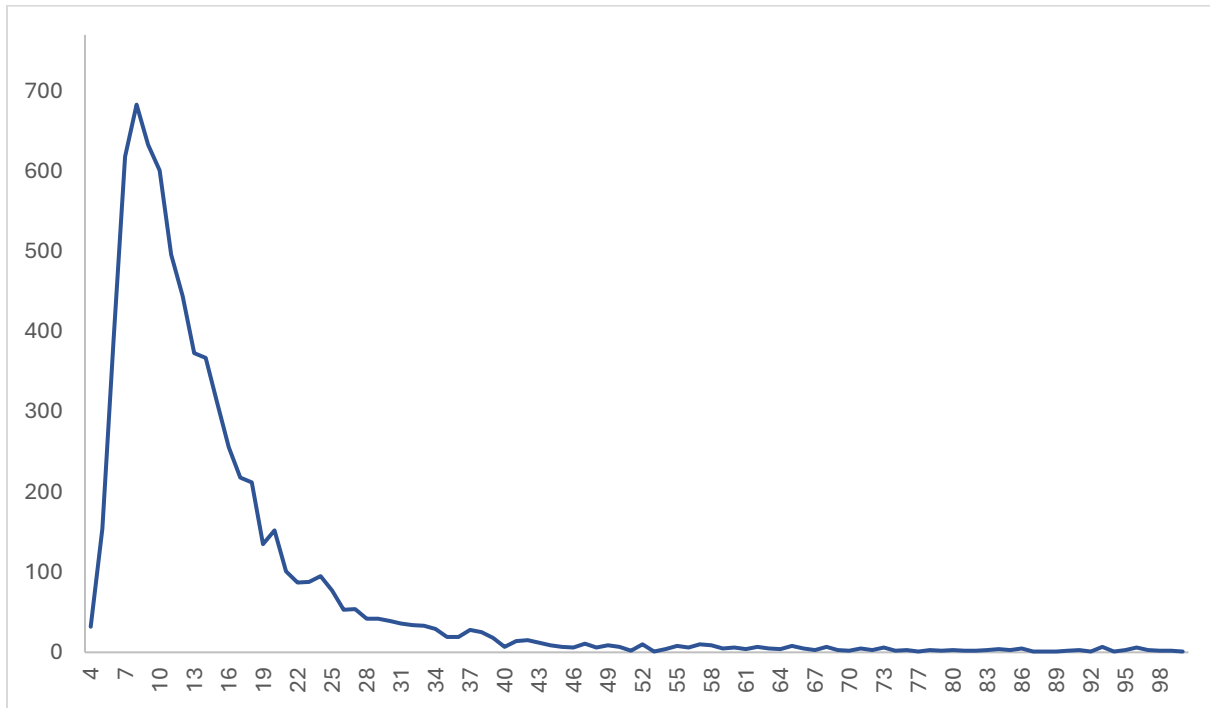
Survey recruitment in NSW and ACT was managed by JCA. In Victoria, which has the largest Jewish population in Australia, there is no comparable centralised body, the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation (ACJC) at Monash University and a range of community organisations promoted the survey to their member lists. The survey was extensively promoted in other states and territories through local Jewish organisations and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ).

The survey was in the field for one week across all states and territories and was closed at 11.59pm on Thursday 16th of November 2023 Australian Eastern Standard time.

Response diagnostics

Figure 23 plots the total time taken to complete the survey by frequency. This shows that most respondents completed it in about 10 minutes; the modal¹³ time taken was 8 minutes. It also shows a long tail (truncated at 100 minutes in the graph) mainly due to people completing the survey in multiple sittings and not necessarily logging out of the system between sessions. It may also be due to people writing lengthy and considered responses to the open-ended question. The median¹⁴ time taken to complete the survey was 12 minutes.

Figure 23. Time taken to complete the questionnaire*



* This chart shows 97% of the data. For reasons of space we have not shown the long tail of data beyond 100 minutes (see text).

¹³ The mode is the point in a distribution where the highest frequency occurs (in other words 'the most').

¹⁴ The median of a distribution is the point where half the population is below the point and half is above.

Sample evaluation

It was the intention of the survey team to achieve a very large sample in order to facilitate more detailed statistical analyses and indeed this was achieved. The final sample size of 7,611 Australian Jewish adults was similar to Gen17's 8,621 respondents and larger than Gen08's 5,840¹⁵ despite the significant constraints on the sampling procedure for the survey. Since there were an estimated 92,300 Jewish people aged 18 and above in Australia in 2021, and assuming minimal demographic change between August the 2021 Census and October 2023, the sample represents over 8% of the entire adult Jewish population of Australia. The sheer size of the sample means that detailed sub-group analyses can be carried out that are simply not feasible using smaller sample sets. By way of contextualisation, the Pew Research Center's *Jewish Americans in 2020* study contains a sample of 5,881 respondents¹⁶ for an estimated population of 6-7.5 million Australian Jews.

Unless otherwise stated, percentage data in this report present weighted survey findings and can be extrapolated to the entire Australian Jewish population. N values are unweighted counts from the survey.

Demographic subpopulation variables and sample size

The following data present demographic, geographic, denominational and identity metrics for the sample comparing unweighted and weighted results. The data are presented to aid the reader when interpreting survey results.

Age

	Unweighted frequencies	Unweighted %	Weighted %
18 to 29	792	11	17
30 to 49	2,302	31	32
50 to 69	2,677	36	30
70+	1,651	22	21
Total	7,422	100	100

Sex

	Unweighted frequencies	Unweighted %	Weighted %
Male	2,953	39	46
Female	4,517	60	54
Other	34	<1	<1
Total	7,504	100	100

¹⁵ Markus, A., Jacobs, N. and Aronov, T. 2009. The Gen08 Survey: Preliminary findings: Melbourne and Sydney (Report 1). Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, Monash University.

https://www.monash.edu/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1676473/gen08-report1-preliminary-findings.pdf

¹⁶ The Pew Research Center's total sample was 5,881. This included respondents who identified themselves as Jewish—either by religion (n=3,836) or of no religion (n=882)—as well as respondents who were categorised as having a Jewish background (n=802) or Jewish affinity (n=361). Only the former 2 self-identifying groups were deemed Jewish for the purpose of that study, thereby yielding a Jewish sample of 3,737. See Pew Research Center. 2021. Jewish Americans in 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020/>

State

	Unweighted frequencies	Unweighted %	Weighted %
Queensland	163	2	3
New South Wales	3,476	46	42
Victoria	3,304	44	44
Western Australia	366	5	7
ACT, NT, TAS & SA comb. *	225	4	4
Total	7,534	100	100

*Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, Tasmania and South Australia were combined to protect anonymity

Denomination

	Unweighted frequencies	Unweighted %	Weighted %
Ultraorthodox/Haredi	249	3	3
Modern Orthodox	1,975	27	23
Traditional	1,707	23	22
Masorti/Conservative	326	4	3
Reform/Progressive	784	11	8
Secular, Culturally Jewish	1,889	25	33
No denomination, just Jewish	510	7	9
Total	7,440	100	100

How important is being Jewish to how you think about yourself?

	Unweighted frequencies	Unweighted %	Weighted %
Extremely important	3,905	51	47
Very important	2,443	32	33
Moderately important	895	12	15
A little important	221	3	4
Not at all important	70	<1	1
Total	7,534	100	100

How emotionally attached are you to Israel?

	Unweighted frequencies	Unweighted %	Weighted %
Very much attached	5,841	78	75
Somewhat attached	1,102	15	16
A little attached	398	5	6
Not at all attached	193	3	3
Total	7,534	100	100