

The Kaplan Leadership Initiative Evaluation Report First Cohort 2018–2019

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The study was commissioned by the JDC and funded with its assistance

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Abstract

Background

The Kaplan Leadership Initiative (KLI) is the first international JDC program that has set itself the goal of developing young leadership in Jewish communities in Europe, the former Soviet Union (FSU) and Latin America. The program is designed for young professionals at mid-level positions in Jewish communities, aspiring to strengthen their influence and leadership, particularly in their organizations and communities. It focuses on providing tools and knowledge in four areas: leadership, management, community development, and Jewish content. The plan is for 3 program cohorts, each built on 3 regional seminars, and 1 global seminar hosted in Chicago by the Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership, as well as activities and tasks in between the seminars. This report presents the main findings on the first cohort of the program (2017-2018), which numbered 32 fellows from two regions – Europe and the FSU.

Evaluation goals

The evaluation aims to examine the implementation and organization of the program, and the extent to which it achieves its main objectives. At this stage, the evaluation examines the achievement of the program's intermediate goals, such as the acquisition of new knowledge and tools for management and leadership, the development of connections and networking, and preliminary evidence that the program has attained its ultimate goals in the fellows' communities: their own changing roles in the organization, their adoption of tools in their professional activities, and contact and networking with program fellows.

This is a formative evaluation that seeks to improve the various program components while evaluating it through close teamwork with the staff. The purpose of the report is to summarize the findings on the first cohort in order to improve the program for the coming ones.

Methods

The evaluation is based on an examination of the program as a whole. To this end, the research tools are nearly identical for all of the regions yet sensitive to the distinctive characteristics of each. Each evaluation cycle covers 3 main stages (before, during and after the program). It combines quantitative

tools (self-administered questionnaires), semi-structured interviews with fellows and program staff, as well as observations at regional seminars and the global seminar. A special effort was made to maintain sensitivity to unique cultural and linguistic aspects in the development of the tools while collecting the data.

Key findings

All the fellows expressed great satisfaction with the program's implementation and organization for the regional seminars and especially for the global seminar; 91% of the FSU participants and 81% of the European fellows reported that the program had met all or most of their expectations in a number of key areas: communication and networking, the acquisition of new knowledge and tools, and professional and personal development. Regarding the program's contribution, FSU fellows cited leadership and management skills, while the European fellows cited stronger motivation and the development of their professional identity as community workers.

The establishment of new connections and / or strengthening of ties with colleagues in the region were cited by 75% of the European fellows and 46% of the FSU fellows. All of the fellows reported that they had begun to apply the knowledge and tools learned in the program. European fellows credited the mentoring work for their ability to apply the new knowledge and tools in the work.

Issues to consider regarding future implementation

Several recommendations emanated from the report: To adhere to the program's admission criteria; insist on English proficiency or its acquisition during the program; place greater emphasis on fundraising, teambuilding, integrated Jewish learning, and community development; invest more in creating a global network; enable more peer learning; connect organizational managers and mentors to the program; invest greater efforts in cultural adaptation; make mentoring mandatory while creating a culturally comfortable climate for FSU fellows; upgrade the work in between seminars; and introduce structural improvements in the program's organization.

Executive Summary

Background

The Kaplan Leadership Initiative (KLI) is the first JDC global program to provide the necessary tools and support to develop young leaders from Jewish communities in Europe, the former Soviet Union (FSU) and Latin America. It is funded by Ed and Carol Kaplan, USA.

KLI Fellows are mid-level, Jewish professionals aspiring to increase their impact on their organizations and communities through better management and leadership skills in the context of Jewish life. The program focuses on four areas: community development, leadership, Jewish content and context, and management. These are adapted to local characteristics, needs and culture.

The program plan is for 3 cohorts: 2017-19, 2019-2020, and 2021-22. Each cohort has regional programs, including 3 regional seminars and 1 global seminar at the Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership in Chicago, USA. In between the seminars, learning activities are offered.

This report elaborates the findings on the first cohort, i.e., 2017-2019, numbering 32 fellows from two regions: Europe and the FSU.

Evaluation framework

Evaluation goals

The evaluation focuses on examining KLI's program implementation and contribution, as well as the more direct, intermediate outcomes at the end of the first cohort:

- Examine the implementation of the program
- Examine the degree to which the program is achieving its outcomes as outlined in its theory of change
- Contribute to ongoing improvement as the program develops

At all stages of the program, the evaluation aims to examine its contribution based on the list of intermediate and final outcomes defined in the logic model.

Research methodology

A mixed methods approach was used to obtain both quantitative and qualitative input in depth. Quantitative analysis provides comparative and crosscutting information. Qualitative analysis enables better interpretation of the findings, based on a greater understanding of the context and concrete, in-depth examples. Careful attention was and is given to cultural and linguistic factors in the development of research instruments and the interpretation of the findings.

Our data collection for the first cohort of European and FSU fellows (16 participants per region) used a number of instruments: online self-report surveys (in two languages) before the program started and at the end; in-depth, qualitative interviews midway through the program and at the end; interviews with participants at the global seminar; on-site observations (at regional and global activities); and the analysis of documents produced by the program.

Table ES1 presents the summary of the tools, sources of information and number of respondents per method.

Table ES1: Study design summary – Data collection methods and sources of information

Data Collection Method	Source of Information	No. of Respondents
Pre-program online self-administered questionnaire (before the first seminar)	Program participants	32
Mid-program semi-structured telephone interviews (FSU only)	Program participants	5
Observation at the regional seminar in Israel	One day for each region	
Observation at the global seminar	4 days	
Informal interviews at the global seminar	Program participants	14
Post-program online self-administered questionnaire (a week after the final regional seminar)	Program participants	29
End-of-program semi-structured telephone interviews	Program participants	9

Study findings

Background characteristics of program fellows

Both groups met the criteria for age and occupation. The European group lacked the required professional seniority, the FSU group had a low level of English. Europeans tend to have a richer background in Judaism from childhood although the fellows' participation in Jewish-related activities and Israeli-connected programs in the two years preceding the program was similar for both regions. The fellows hailed from communities of very different sizes, with a wider range in Europe than the FSU.

Attendance and satisfaction with the program: seminars and in-between activities (absolute numbers are given next to the percentages, in brackets)

Most of the fellows attended the regional seminars and 69% (22) attended the global seminar. There were 6 dropouts from the program, 3 from each region. All the European fellows participated in mentoring and havruta (paired) learning in between the seminars; 38% (5) of the FSU fellows chose to work with a mentor; there was no 'havruta' learning in the region. FSU fellows completed home assignments to practice the tools learned in the seminars, but European fellows were not given assignments. Both groups attended some of the webinars, but the use of webinars fell short of their potential benefits.

Program contribution

We examined several aspects of the program's contribution: the acquisition of knowledge and tools; the participants' perceptions and motivation to pursue a career in the Jewish community; networking, and the application of the new knowledge and tools. European fellows emphasized the program's contribution to the integration of Jewish content in their daily work (81%, 13), and felt that their needs in the area of management had not been met; only 37% (6) felt that they had broadened their knowledge of management. FSU fellows emphasized the program's impact on their leadership and management, knowledge and skills (77%, 10). Approximately two thirds of the fellows felt that the program had contributed to their knowledge on leadership; 62% (10) of the European and 46% (6) of the FSU fellows reported broadened knowledge of community development.

The program's greatest contribution was in helping the fellows to understand their strengths and challenges as Jewish professionals, and to think about the next steps on their professional path. There was an increase of about 20 percentage points in their self-perceptions as Jewish professionals compared

with the start of the program: 81% (13) of the European and 100% (13) of the FSU fellows now saw themselves as Jewish professionals; 94% (15) of the European and 92% (11) of the FSU fellows now felt a sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals.

The regional networks were well formed, but the global network did not develop according to expectations. This was due to cultural and language communication gaps, as well as a lack of opportunity at the global seminar and in between seminars.

While it is too early to examine the program's impact on their work in the field, the fellows attest to changes in their self-perception and work methods following their program participation; e.g., developing new programs, incorporating measurement and evaluation, and conducting fundraising.

Program organization

The European fellows were mostly satisfied with the time allocated to the four content areas, FSU fellows felt that more time had been needed. Both groups were quite satisfied with the amount of Jewish learning provided, and dissatisfied with the amount of time dedicated to the development of professional management skills. The groups varied in their satisfaction with the amount of time dedicated to different learning methods. Fellows from both regions approved of the amount of time devoted to study tours and excursions, and would have liked more workshops.

Regarding satisfaction with the intervals between seminars: 44% (7) of the European and 23% (3) of the FSU fellows felt that there had not been enough activities in between the seminars, and 25% (4) of the European and 15% (2) of the FSU fellows noted that the seminar days had been too long.

Both groups reported high satisfaction with various program aspects, including its organization, guidance, lecturers, program materials, responsiveness and flexibility. Slightly lower levels of satisfaction were reported for group facilitation and the management of facilitation between the seminars.

Expectations from the program

Nearly all of the fellows felt that the program had met all or many of their expectations: 81% (13) of the European and 92% (15) of the FSU fellows. The main expectations realized were the acquisition of tools, skills and knowledge, as well as networking. The Europeans also cited personal and professional growth, and increased Jewish knowledge. The expectations that were not realized were few and scattered over various topics.

Overall program evaluation

Most of the fellows felt that the program included new themes and relevant topics, and reflected their current professional issues, the FSU fellows significantly more so than their European peers. All the fellows said that they would recommend the program to others, and some already have. All the fellows described the program as a very meaningful experience; indeed, some pronounced it life-changing.

The fellows' recommendations

The fellows recommended several changes to improve the program:

- The structure should be modified, adding more workshops and teambuilding.
- The content should be improved by adding more academic classes followed by workshops, as well as practical tools using relevant, regional examples.
- The formation of contacts and networking should be enhanced, investing greater effort in creating a global network through joint learning and assignments in between the regional seminars and at the global seminar.
- Some needs relate to the end of the program and afterwards: the fellows need to learn how to introduce new ideas to managers and colleagues, they should have the benefit of ongoing support and the resources to maintain networking.

Issues for consideration regarding future implementation

Based on the evaluation findings we recommend action in the following areas:

1. **Admission criteria** should be adhered to, to derive the maximum benefit of the program.
2. **English proficiency** is a key factor of networking and learning at Spertus. If fellows are not proficient in English, the program should provide an opportunity to improve their command of the language from the very start.
3. **Content:** More emphasis should be placed on integrated Jewish learning, community development, fundraising and teambuilding.
4. **Networking** would benefit from introducing fellows from different regions earlier in the program, and adding international joint learning or tasks, as well as international webinars.
5. **Peer learning:** There should be more contact, more mutual learning in regional and global groups.

6. **Passing on the learning:** Efforts should be made to connect mentors and managers to the program, and to teach the fellows how to share their experiences and knowledge with colleagues and managers.
7. **Cultural adaptation:** All program staff should familiarize themselves with the characteristics of the different communities and the challenges faced by fellows, especially the speakers at the global seminar.
8. **Mentoring:**
 - Mentoring is the program's game-changing component and should be obligatory.
 - FSU fellows are not familiar with the mentoring method and its presentation must be culturally sensitive.
 - The mentoring process requires greater structure. Mentors need to know more about the program and their mentees, and both mentors and mentees should familiarize themselves with the framework and expectations of the mentoring process.
9. **Work in between seminars** should include the dispatch of pre-seminar reading material, home assignments, and international webinars.
10. **Structural improvement:** There should be more workshops to drill the theoretical material, fewer group discussions, and more time for reflection and closure.

Acknowledgments

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1. Introduction

The Kaplan Leadership Initiative (KLI) is an American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) global program that provides the necessary tools and support to develop young leaders from Jewish communities in Europe, the former Soviet Union (FSU) and Latin America. It is funded by Ed and Carol Kaplan.

In Europe, KLI is part of Yesod, a partnership of the JDC, the Rothschild Foundation (Yad Hanadiv) Europe and the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation. In the FSU, the program is led jointly by JDC-FSU and the JDC Israel Institute for Leadership and Governance. In Latin America, it is part of LEATID, the training and development arm of JDC-Latin America and the University of San Andrés. The global seminar is hosted and led by the Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership in Chicago, USA.

KLI Fellows are mid-level Jewish professional leaders aspiring to increase their impact on their organizations and communities through better management and leadership skills in the context of Jewish life. The program focuses on four areas: community development, leadership, Jewish content and context, and management. Based on these four, the content and activities are adapted to local characteristics, needs and culture.

The program plan is for 3 cohorts: 2017-19, 2019-2020, and 2021-22. Each KLI cohort has regional programs, including 3 seminars focusing on a major leadership theme that integrates Jewish content and explores Jewish life of the region. In between the seminars, fellows continue to develop through mentoring, webinars and supplementary learning. In addition, all regional groups gather for a week-long seminar at the Spertus, where fellows network, share experiences and strengthen their global Jewish leadership identity. This report details the findings on the first cohort, which took place in 2017-19 and numbered 32 fellows from two regions: Europe and FSU.

The report summarizes the findings of the evaluation study accompanying the program from its inception. The next section presents the research design: the goals, evaluation strategy, sources of information, tools, and methods analyzing the findings. The third section presents the findings on the fellows' characteristics, participation and satisfaction with the program, the program contributions, satisfaction with how it was organized, the expectations from the program, an overall assessment of the program, and the fellows' recommendations. The fourth section summarizes the insights and recommendations emanating from the study, and the fifth section presents the research limitations and concludes this report.

2. Research design

The evaluation focuses on examining KLI's program implementation and contributions, as well as the more direct, intermediate outcomes at the end of the first cohort.

The evaluation strategy was developed together with the KLI planning team in light of relevant literature on evaluation, and our own experience with evaluating leadership and community programs.

2.1 Evaluation goals

- Examine the implementation of the program.
- Examine the extent to which the program achieves its desired outcomes.
- Contribute to the program's ongoing improvement as it develops.

At all stages, the evaluation aims to examine the program's contribution based on the list of intermediate and final outcomes defined in the logic model.

Intermediate outcomes relate to gaining new knowledge (e.g., innovative approaches to Jewish community life and best practices), acquiring new skills and tools (e.g., management skills and collaborative tools to promote cooperation), reinforcing certain perceptions (e.g., value-based diversity, pluralism and inclusiveness), strengthening motivation to build professional careers in the Jewish community, and consolidating relations and engagement with peers from diverse backgrounds.

Final outcomes are defined here in terms of the action taken by alumni in their communities (e.g., adopting and adapting successful models of community development from other communities and regions, pluralistic and inclusive handling of community diversity, and active engagement with other alumni as part of one's professional network).

2.2 Evaluation strategy

The evaluation strategy focuses on examining the program as a whole. To this end, a unified set of instruments was developed and significant efforts were invested to understand the diverse regional contexts and factors affecting the program's implementation. At all stages, the evaluation team maintained close contact with program stakeholders and staff to maximize the contribution of the evaluation.

The evaluation of each cohort consists of three major stages: (1) before the start of the program, to collect data on the participants' background and obtain a baseline for the relevant outcomes; (2) throughout the program, to examine the implementation and contribution of different components; and (3) after the program, to examine the final outcomes.

This report is based on the first and second stages of the evaluation of cohort 1.

A mixed methods approach was used to obtain both quantitative and qualitative in-depth input. While the quantitative analysis provides comparative and crosscutting information, the qualitative analysis enables better interpretation of the findings, based on greater understanding of the context and concrete in-depth examples. Careful attention was and is given to cultural and linguistic factors in the development of the research instruments and interpretation of the findings.

We collected data from the European and FSU groups in the first cohort (16 participants per region), using a number of instruments: online self-report surveys (in two languages) before the program started and at its end; in-depth qualitative interviews midway through the program and at its end; interviews with program participants during the global seminar; on-site observations (at the regional and global activities); and analysis of documents produced by the program.

2.3 Tools and method

The evaluation is based on data collected from the European and FSU groups in the first cohort, using a number of instruments:

- An online self-administered questionnaire (in two languages) before the program started. The questionnaire consisted of 110 questions that examined the participants' expectations of the program, their professional needs, their identity as Jewish professionals, and their background characteristics.
- In-depth qualitative semi-structured interviews midway in the program and at the end. The interviews took 45 to 60 minutes and were conducted in English or Russian. They were recorded, partially transcribed during the interview and summarized.
- Interviews with program fellows at the global seminar informally inquired into their experience of the program and the implementation of learning.
- On-site observations (at regional and global activities)

- An online self-administered questionnaire (in two languages) at the end of the program. This questionnaire consisted of 90 questions that examined the fellows' perceptions of the program contribution and the quality of implementation, as well as their intention to apply the knowledge and tools they had learned.
- Meetings with program staff.
- An analysis of documents produced by the program, provided by the staff.

Due to program constraints, the evaluation of the European group was different from the FSU group. They started the program earlier, and attended the global seminar a few months after the third regional seminar. They were not interviewed in the middle of the program, and their end of program interviews took place before the global seminar.

Table 1 presents the summary of the tools, sources of information and number of respondents for each method.

Table 1: Study design summary – data collection method and sources of information

Data Collection Method	Source of Information	No. of Respondents
Pre-program online self-administered questionnaire (before the first seminar)	Program participants	32
Mid-program Semi-structured telephone interviews (FSU only)	Program participants	5
Observation at the regional seminar in Israel	1 day for each region	-
Observation at the global seminar	4 days	-
Informal interviews at the global seminar	Program participants	14
Post-program online self-administered questionnaire (a week after the final regional seminar)	Program participants	29
Post-program semi-structured telephone interviews	Program participants	9
Ongoing meetings and updates	Program staff	30 meetings
Analysis of documentation	25 documents	-

2.4 Data analysis

While acknowledging the programmatic and cultural differences between the regions, the main findings are presented in comparative form rather than as a single dataset.

Unless otherwise noted, most of the closed questions in both self-administered questionnaires used a Likert scale of 5 scores ("Not at all," "To a small extent," "To a moderate extent," "To a great extent," and "To a very great extent"). For the questions examined with this scale, we give the percentage of respondents answering either "To a great extent" or "To a very great extent." For instance, if we note that 50% of the participants acquired new knowledge, it means that 50% of the participants reported that they had acquired new knowledge "To a great extent" or "To a very great extent."

The statistical significance of the differences between the regions was tested by Cohen's d test, which measures the size of the effect. Cohen's d values around 0.2 are considered a weak effect, values around 0.5 are considered a moderate effect, and values of 0.8 or higher are considered a strong effect. Only the strong effects are cited in this report.

3. Evaluation findings

The evaluation findings are presented in the following seven sections:

- 3.1 Fellows' background characteristics
- 3.2 Attendance and satisfaction with the program: seminars and in-between activities
- 3.3 Program contribution
- 3.4 Program organization
- 3.5 Expectations from the program
- 3.6 Overall evaluation of the program
- 3.7 Fellows' recommendations

3.1 Fellows' background characteristics before the program

3.1.1. Participant characteristics in relation to the admission criteria

The program's target population:

1. Aged 25 to 40
2. Speak and understand English at a sufficient level
3. Are currently employed in a full-time, professional position in the Jewish community in the FSU, Europe (or Latin America)
4. Have at least 5 years of professional experience in Jewish communal/educational frameworks

The fellows' background characteristics varied between regions and did not fully conform to the program criteria, as follows (for complete details of participant characteristics, see Appendix I).

- **Age:** The average age of the European fellows was 29; the FSU fellows were slightly older, averaging 31.
- **Gender:** Male-female representation was uneven: there were only 5 males among the FSU fellows, and 3 among the Europeans.
- **Education:** The FSU group seemed to be slightly more educated: Most FSU fellows (75%, 12) and half of the European fellows (50%, 8) held a masters level graduate degree. Three European fellows were still enrolled in a degree or postgraduate course during the program.

- **Additional academic courses and relevant training:** More than half of the FSU fellows (63%, 10) and over a third of the European fellows (38%, 6) reported that they had taken relevant academic courses such as management and leadership. Most of the fellows had had training in specific areas relevant to the program such as Jewish leadership programs – 88% (14) of FSU fellows and 69% (10) of European fellows. Of the latter, 3 (19%) had not participated in any professional training.
- **Jewish community employment:** All the fellows worked in Jewish communities as their primary job. The FSU fellows had significantly greater seniority in community employment, in their organizations and current jobs: approximately 2.5 times that of the European fellows (Cohen's $d=1.09$). Some European fellows had less seniority than required; their average seniority in the community was 3.8 years compared with 8.6 years for FSU fellows (Cohen's $d=1.38$).
- **Job responsibility:** Most FSU fellows were responsible for budgets and staff.
- **English proficiency:** Knowledge of English is very important in order to fully participate in, and benefit from, the program and, as noted, constitutes a prerequisite for admission. Most of the material at the regional seminars and the global seminar in Chicago is taught in English. Moreover, English is essential for the communication between fellows from different regions. Some FSU fellows received English lessons as part of the program.

Self-reported levels of English proficiency among FSU fellows were low: 44% (7) reported moderate or low competence in all categories. All European fellows reported moderate to high proficiency in all four categories. At the regional seminar in Israel and the global seminar, the fellows from the FSU evidently had a difficult time understanding and expressing themselves in English. A few fellows required simultaneous translation throughout the seminars, and hardly spoke at formal sessions. During the breaks, meals and tours, all FSU fellows spoke Russian among themselves, interacting little with their European peers.

In summary, with respect to the fellows' characteristics, both groups met the age and occupation criteria. Both fell short of other criteria: the European group lacked professional seniority; the FSU group lacked English proficiency.

Additional background characteristics that affect integration and suitability to a program developing Jewish professionals, are elaborated below.

3.1.2 Leadership and commitment to the community

Considering their higher positions in their communities and organizations, and their greater responsibilities, it is not surprising that FSU fellows regard themselves as Jewish professionals (77%, 10) and community leaders (85%, 11) to a greater extent than do the European fellows. Of the latter, 63% (10) regard themselves as Jewish professionals, and only 25% (4) – as leaders (Cohens' $d=0.99$).

Table 2: Self-perceptions of program fellows as Jewish professionals and leaders[^]

	Europe N=16	FSU N=13
You see yourself as a Jewish professional	63% (10)	77% (10)
You see yourself as a Jewish community leader	25% (4)	85% (10)

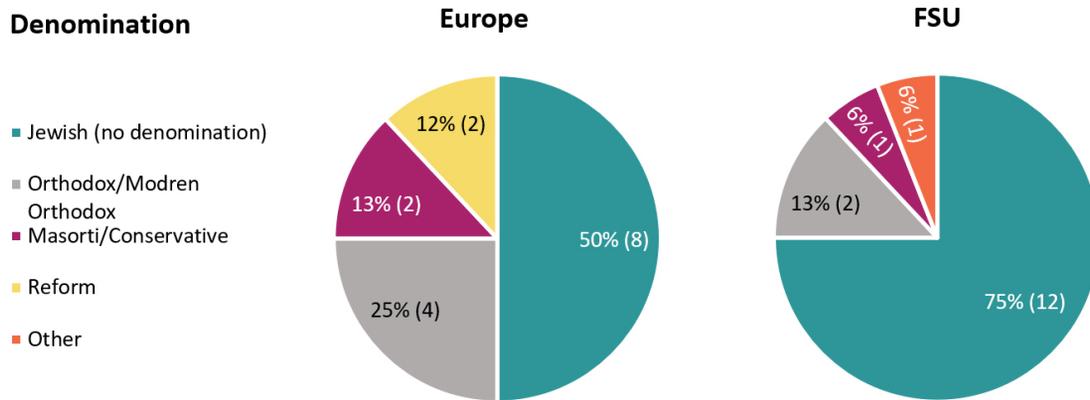
[^]to a great or very great extent

Most of the FSU fellows plan to continue working in their communities (94%, 15), in the same organizations (75%, 12). Of the Europeans, 75% (12) plan to work in the community (Cohens' $d=1.00$), 44% (7) in the same organizations (Cohens' $d=1.02$). Of the former, 75% (12) plan to stay in the same cities and countries. Of the Europeans, who are younger and less senior, 56% (9) plan to stay in the same cities, 62% (10) in the same countries.

3.1.3 Jewish denomination

Figure 1 presents the fellows' Jewish denomination. Interestingly, most of the FSU fellows (75%, 12) and half of the European fellows chose not to define their Jewish denomination, even though the fact that the program is Jewish, is central and clear. Perhaps this is a result of options in the questionnaire that did not include "secular".

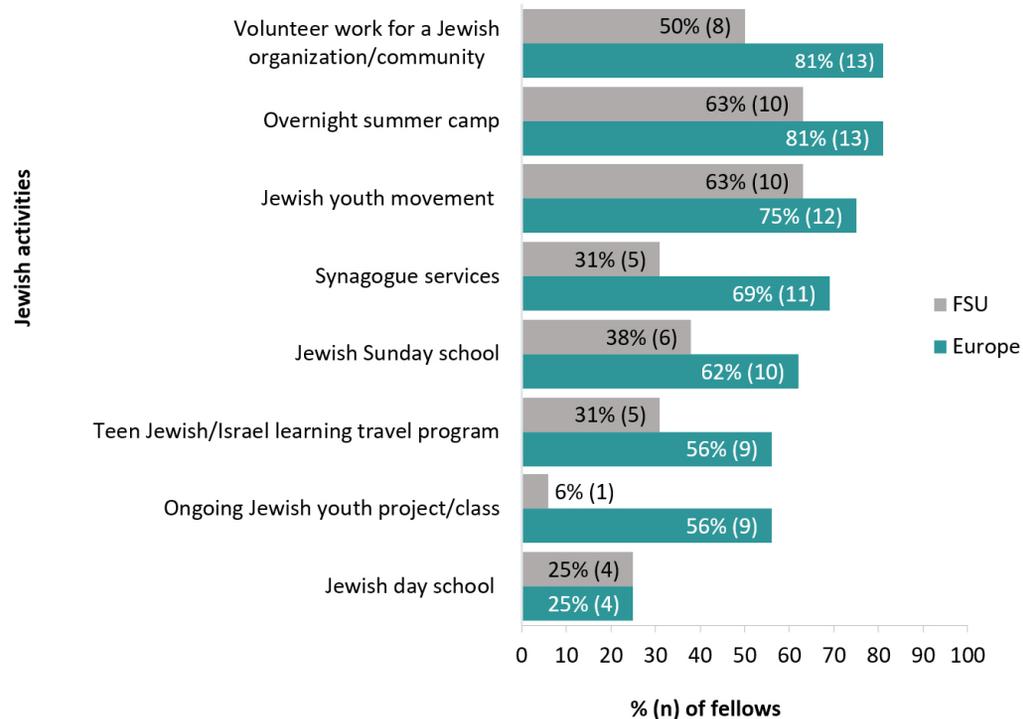
Figure 1: Jewish denomination



3.1.4 Jewish experience

In background, the groups differ in their experiences of Judaism in childhood. The Europeans reported participation in 6 types of activities, on average, as opposed to 3.5 for FSU fellows (Cohens' $d=0.83$) (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Experience of Judaism in childhood

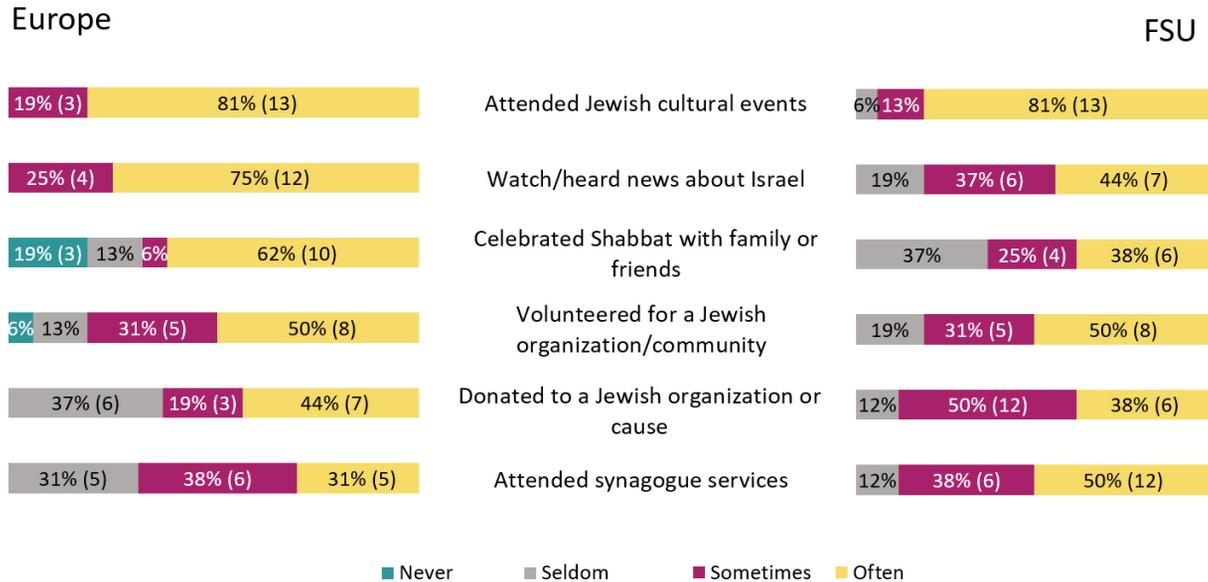


Fellows who did not participate in Jewish activities in childhood amounted to 6% (1) of the Europeans and 31% (5) of the FSU group. For some fellows from the FSU and Eastern Europe, no such activities were available: 25% (4) fellows from small Eastern European communities and 19% (3) from the FSU reported that 3-7 activities on the list had not been available in their communities.

3.1.5 Participation in Jewish and Israel-related activities

The fellows' participation in Jewish and Israel-related activities in the previous two years was similar for both regions and is shown in Figure 3; 69% (11) of FSU and 62% (10) of European fellows practiced at least 5 out of 6 activities sometimes or often.

Figure 3: Participation in Jewish and Israel-related activities in the previous two years



3.1.6 Fellows' communities and geographical distribution

The fellows represented different Jewish communities, varying greatly in size and characteristics and, therefore, also in needs (see Appendix 2). The European communities ranged from 200 Jews in Lodz to around 350,000 in Paris; the FSU range was smaller, from 2,500 (in Poltava) to 100,000 (in St. Petersburg and Moscow).

3.2 Attendance and satisfaction with program: Seminars and in between activities

The program comprised 4 seminars and various opportunities to learn and develop in between them: webinars, mentoring, joint learning and home assignments.

3.2.1 Program seminars

There are 4 seminars, 3 regional ones and 1 global one at the Spertus. The program format (with the exception of the first European cohort), calls for 2 regional seminars, the global seminar, and a final regional seminar. Seminar attendance is elaborated in Table 3.

Table 3: Attendance at seminars

	Europe N=16	FSU N=16
First regional seminar	16 (Jerusalem, Israel)	16 (Tbilisi, Georgia)
Second regional seminar	16 (Prague, Czech Republic)	14 (Jerusalem, Israel)
Global seminar	11 (Chicago, USA)	11 (Chicago, USA)
Third regional seminar	16 (Rome, Italy)	14 (Tel Aviv, Israel)

Program dropouts numbered 6: 3 Europeans, because they had stopped working in the Jewish community following the previous regional seminar (before the global seminar); One FSU fellow stopped working in the Jewish community and two dropped out due to family issues.

Each regional seminar was followed by internal feedback. As for the global seminar, the Spertus Institute distributed questionnaires at its conclusion and presented their comprehensive findings to the program staff. The fellows' satisfaction and input regarding the seminars are elaborated in Sections 3.3 to 3.7.

3.2.2 Activities in between seminars

Most of the in-between activities helped to maintain and enhance networking and relationships with program staff, filling the inter-seminar gaps which could last some four months. In addition, the activities were important for learning and practicing the program tools, for instance, strategic planning and fundraising.

Webinars

The program included global seminars presented by program staff and Spertus, and regional seminars presented by program staff and Yesod.¹ Webinars were conducted on such topics as digital program-management tools, Jewish-community pluralism and diversity, and Jewish learning.

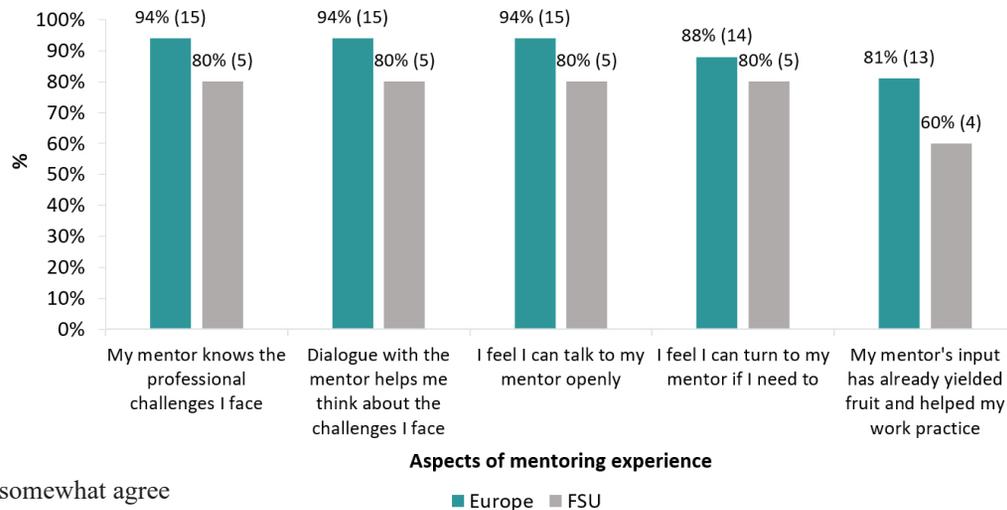
Most of the European (85%, 11) and more than half of the FSU (62%, 8) fellows participated in at least one webinar during the program. In interviews, the fellows noted their satisfaction with the webinars despite their workload that made it difficult to find time to participate in webinars and technical difficulties during the broadcasts.

Mentoring

Mentoring was offered to both regions; for European fellows, it was obligatory, for FSU fellows it was strongly recommended but optional. In addition, the European fellows were familiar and comfortable with this process, but the FSU fellows were not. Thus, all the European fellows had a mentor versus 38% (5) of the FSU fellows.

Virtually all the fellows that had a mentor cited it as a very positive experience and a significant contribution to their work and practical application of the knowledge acquired at the seminar (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Mentoring experience[^]



¹ The exact topics, dates and number of participants were not available from program staff and were not included in this report.

One of the fellows wrote in the end of program questionnaire:

"Mentoring helps to improve the work, organize priorities, tasks. The three seminars gave abstract, less practical knowledge. The mentor helps me in a useful way, with the mentor I talk about problems at work, difficulties on the job, the mentor shares his experience with me and advises [me] on how to cope with the difficulties. It is very useful." (Europe)

The work with mentors helped the fellows feel confident to voice their opinions on the job, devise strategic plans, improve their fundraising skills, venture to develop programs, and formulate their self-perceptions as Jewish professionals.

Many European fellows commended the mentoring at the informal interviews in Chicago. One fellow reported that her mentor had directed and understood her, helped her understand what it meant to work at her workplace, how the challenges were reflected in her work. She found these discussions very helpful. Other fellows said:

"My mentor changed my life."

"Mentoring is the most important part of the program."

"Mentoring was really significant for me, it was very cool."

The few FSU fellows that did opt for a mentor reported that they had only just begun and looked forward to the process.

Paired learning

All the European fellows (100%, 16) learned in pairs (havrutas) – using Project Zug, an online learning platform provided by the Hadar Institute.

The fellows reported that they enjoyed learning in a havruta. Some intended to apply this tool to their Jewish communities:

"I did not know about Project Zug before and now that I have experienced it, I would like to bring something similar to my Jewish community."

This activity helped to create and strengthen interpersonal relationships, and contributed to learning and familiarity with a variety of concepts and trends in Judaism.

"It was a very interesting havruta because there were different levels of Jewish learning, different backgrounds and points of view... It was a pluralistic *havruta*."

The FSU staff reported that the fellows were going to improve their English through paired learning of leadership content. This plan, however, was not carried out.

Home assignments

FSU fellows received "homework" in between the seminars, for instance, to complete a draft of an annual work plan. They considered the number of tasks reasonable, with several benefits: The assignments helped to maintain contact and connection with the program; prepare them for the upcoming seminars; review material taught in previous seminars, and practice the newly-learned tools.

In summary, all these activities complement the seminars and are vital to the program's impact. However, while the European fellows highly benefitted from mentoring and Project Zug learning activities, and FSU fellows enhanced their learning in seminars with home assignments, neither groups took full advantage of the activities offered by the program. Mentoring in particular seems to be essential to convey the knowledge for day-to-day practice. But webinars, too, can be maximized, not only as a vehicle of knowledge but as a platform to strengthen networking.

3.3 Program contribution

This chapter describes the program's contribution regarding several aspects: knowledge and tools, perceptions and motivation for a career in the Jewish community, networking, and implementation of the new knowledge and tools acquired.

3.3.1 Four content areas

As noted, KLI strives to enhance the influence of Jewish professionals in middle-management positions by providing management tools and leadership skills, focusing on four areas: Jewish content, community development, management and leadership. Table 4 presents the fellows' responses regarding the extent of the program's impact on these areas.

Table 4: Program contribution to expanded knowledge in various content areas[^]

	Europe N=16	FSU N=13
Integration of Jewish content in everyday work (Jewish learning, Jewish texts relevant to your work as a Jewish professional etc.)	81% (13)	54% (7)
Community development (models, methodologies, best practices)	62% (10)	46% (6)
Management skills (team management, annual planning, solving managerial dilemmas, marketing, fundraising, social media, M&E etc.)	37% (6)	77% (10)
Leadership (visionary thinking, strategic planning, leadership models and adaptive leadership, followership, power and power sharing, models of leadership)	62% (10)	69% (9)
Presentation of yourself and your organization	75% (12)	54% (7)

[^]To a great or very great extent

The findings indicate a varying contribution of the different content areas, consistent with the different emphases of the regional seminars.

The findings from all the sources of information (seminar observations, interviews and questionnaires) point to a greater emphasis on **Jewish content** in Europe than in the FSU. The majority of fellows from Europe (81%, 13) and close to half of the FSU fellows (51%, 7) noted the substantial contribution of the program to the integration of Jewish content in their daily work. For the Europeans, Jewish content was an integral and significant part of the program, successfully integrated by the program facilitators. In the FSU program, distinct sections were devoted to Jewish content, presented by a lecturer formerly from the FSU. Some fellows felt that these parts of the seminars had contributed to their learning while others did not understand how they were connected or relevant to the rest of the program components:

"I did not quite understand what the purpose [of the Jewish content] was... it has a life of its own... I did not understand the connection between the Jewish part and the rest of the seminar." (FSU)

Community development was rated relatively lower than other content areas. Fellows from both regions said that they would like to learn more about community development:

"The topics of community development and the understanding that we work for people and not for ourselves should be given more time." (FSU)

Most of the FSU fellows (77%, 10) noted the great contribution of the program to the provision of management tools, compared with a significantly lower percentage among the European fellows (37%, 6) (Cohen's $d=1.37$). Nearly half of the European fellows (44%, 7) said that the program had contributed little or nothing to their knowledge or skills of management. One fellow noted at the end of program questionnaire:

"The program lacked practical training of professional skills: project management, budget management, people management etc."

Approximately two-thirds of the fellows from both regions felt that the program had contributed to their knowledge of **leadership**. Some European fellows, however, noted that the program had not contributed at all in this area. They may have had previous knowledge or, perhaps, the regional program had not focused enough on leadership. According to the regional seminar schedules, this group discussed leadership only at the third seminar (and as said above, the Europeans had completed the end-of-program questionnaires before the Spertus seminar).

3.3.2 Perceptions and motivation for a career in the Jewish community

KLI strives to develop the professional identity of young, middle-level professionals in Jewish communities, to direct them towards leadership roles, and thereby to increase their influence on their communities. To this end, the program contribution to shaping the professional identity of Jewish community professionals is therefore critical. This effect was examined both in semi-structured interviews with the fellows and in pre-program and end-of-program questionnaires.

The European fellows emphasized the program impact on their reflections regarding their professional work:

"I feel re-motivated by the program. It gave me the opportunity to step back and rethink my work, what I do and what I want to do, to see again that it is very important and that this is what I really want to do in my life."

"It's not a job but a mission, it's my life, my community, wherever I am, I can do it!"

Table 5 presents the fellows' perceptions of the program contribution to their development as Jewish professionals.

Table 5: Program contribution to the fellows' development as Jewish professionals[^]

To what extent did the program...	Europe N=16	FSU N=13
Help you understand your strengths and challenges as a Jewish professional?	94% (15)	77% (10)
Help you think about the next steps in your professional journey?	81% (13)	77% (10)
Strengthen your wish to build a professional career in the Jewish community?	75% (12)	46% (6)
Help you recognize new opportunities in your role or in your organization?	75% (12)	69% (9)
Help you better understand what issues you want to promote in your community?	75% (12)	61% (8)
Change your perception of your place in the community?	69% (11)	23% (3)
Strengthen your interest in Jewish learning?	62% (10)	31% (4)
Help you formulate a leadership approach that suits you personally?	56% (9)	38% (5)

[^]To a great or very great extent

The program's greatest contribution was in helping the fellows understand their strengths and challenges as Jewish professionals, and helping them think about the next steps in their professional path. In all areas, European fellows attested to greater program contributions than their FSU counterparts, with significantly large differences in the perception of their place in the community (Cohen's $d=0.89$). These differences might be explained by the differences between the fellows in their employment record, particularly in their seniority in the Jewish community.

In addition, we asked the fellows about their self-perceptions as Jewish professionals and leaders at the beginning and at the end of the program: To what extent did they see themselves as Jewish professionals, Jewish community leaders, and what was their sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals? Table 6 presents the fellows' perceptions before and after the program.

Table 6: Fellows' self-perceptions as Jewish professionals[^]

	Europe (N=16)		FSU (N=13)	
	Pre- program	Post- program	Pre- program	Post- program
You see yourself as a Jewish professional	62% (10)	81% (13)	77% (10)	100% (13)
You see yourself as a Jewish community leader	25% (4)	50% (8)	85% (11)	77% (10)
You feel a sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals	62% (10)	94% (15)	69% (9)	92% (12)

[^] To a great extent or very great extent

The initial levels of identification with the self-perceptions were higher among FSU fellows compared to the European, particularly seeing themselves as Jewish community leaders, which was significantly higher (85% [11] compared to 25% [4], Cohen's $d=0.99$).

To begin with, the Europeans' perceptions were much weaker. These low levels are compatible with their lower levels of experience and seniority.

At the end of the program, FSU fellows identified more strongly with two of the three aspects, and the Europeans identified more strongly with all three aspects.

Interestingly, the two groups scored similarly for sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals, before and after the program, although the difference between the pre and post levels is significant only for the FSU fellows (Cohen's $d=1.30$).

One of the European fellows stated:

"... [I'm taking from the program] new aspects and ways of thinking about my work, thinking about being a community professional. A sense of community with other fellows and a strengthened idea of European Jewish identity." (Europe)

3.3.3. Professional network, professional connections

The regional networks appear to be well formed: 75% (12) of the European and 46% (6) of the FSU fellows reported that they had established new professional ties with their peers or strengthened existing ones. Note that some of the FSU fellows knew each other or had worked together beforehand, 4 fellows

from the Ukraine and 2 from St. Petersburg. All the fellows kept in touch in between the seminars, mostly on a personal basis, and to share information and consult; 88% (14) of the European and 85% (11) of the FSU fellows agreed that beyond these individual relationships, they had formed a regional peer network.

One fellow from Europe reported:

"The network is a huge thing; I am in touch with the entire group and I feel that I have whom to turn to in each country."

In addition, The FSU fellows initiated group Zoom meetings:

"Our group speaks on Zoom - talking about professional issues... Everyone is at their home but feels [that we are] together. Sometimes we just want to share"; "We correspond and consult. It moves you forward, striving for progress. When you are among successful people, it motivates you to be successful too. Everyone advises and offers their solutions - it's interesting and helpful."

The global network did not take shape as the fellows' had expected. They had not met (online) or even read about each other before the global seminar nor were there enough opportunities to create meaningful connections during the seminar.

"One seminar does not have enough time to really get to know [one another]... Everyone stays in their [own] group. There was no real contact." (FSU)

"We should have met before [the global seminar]. Our groups were in a different place. They [the Europeans] were already finished and we were still in process. It was possible to bring us together in Israel beforehand, to hold a joint mission ... Even if speaking during a Webinar... we sat together yet separately in Chicago, and we didn't really [make] contact ... The real connection in Chicago was created only on the fifth day ... It was a shame that time was wasted." (FSU)

We arrived at a similar conclusion in our observations. There were very few sessions structured to mix small groups of fellows from both regions at the global seminar during free time and non-frontal activities. The fellows, particularly those from FSU, tended to cling to their own peers and language.

3.3.4 Application of knowledge and skills

Since this report is based on measurements conducted during and immediately after the program, it is premature to expect to see significant behavioral changes. Nevertheless, indications of the program

impact are evident in the extent to which fellows share their new knowledge with colleagues and managers, and in their initial application of the knowledge and tools acquired.

Sharing knowledge with managers and colleagues

It is important for the fellows to share their experience with their direct managers if the new tools and knowledge are to receive legitimacy and support at the workplace, and if the new work processes are to be assimilated in the organizational culture and ongoing organizational work. Note that the various organizations did not refer the fellows to the program nor pay for their participation; they merely enabled them to participate with some of the fellows counting their participation as workdays. Consequently, not all the managers were involved or interested in hearing about the program. About half of the fellows reported that they had shared knowledge with their direct managers: 44% (7) from Europe and 54% (7) from the FSU.

We asked the fellows if their managers expected them to apply the knowledge they had acquired in the program and supported their attempts to introduce changes in the work following their participation.

Only 56% (9) of the European and 38% (5) of the FSU fellows reported that their supervisors did expect them to apply the knowledge they had learned in the program; 63% (10) of the European fellows and 77% (10) of the FSU fellows noted that their supervisor supported their attempts to introduce changes in their work.

Most of the fellows from the FSU (85%, 11) versus less than half of the European fellows (44%, 7) shared their insights from the program with their colleagues (Cohen's $d=0.84$).

One of the fellows said that she had tried to arrange an appointment with her manager to share what she had learned in the program but he could not find the time for a meeting, and her colleagues were reluctant to make changes in their work without his approval and instructions.

A few fellows from both regions mentioned that it was difficult for them – nor did they know how – to share what they learned in the program with management:

"If the Kaplan program would have such a course for our managers, it would be good... when possible, I share with my colleagues. But it's really hard! I'm not [as good as] Dr. Hal Lewis..." (FSU)

Subsequently, this same fellow suggested that the program add the topic of specific guidance on how to share the new knowledge with management and workplace colleagues.

Implementing the new knowledge and tools

KLI is a practical training program designed to provide knowledge and practical tools rather than academic, theoretical learning. The fellows are expected to implement the learning outcomes in their daily work. Therefore, in evaluating the program, we questioned the fellows closely about their use of the various program materials and the practical applications in their work.

All the FSU and most European fellows (88%, 14) said that they had changed or were planning to change their work content or practices as a result of their program participation. The areas targeted for change were consistent with the different emphases of the regional seminars. For the European fellows, it revolved around Jewish content and the formulation of a value-based organizational-professional vision; for FSU fellows – it was measurement and evaluation, as well as budgeting. None of the fellows mentioned community development.

The program promoted the fellows' confidence about initiating activities, such as presenting lectures and workshops, adding measurement and evaluation components to their activities, submitting grant proposals, and pursuing fundraising to realize their professional ideas:

"I started looking for more budgeting and grants. After each seminar, I felt a push to do things I had not done before. This is my first grant proposal, it was approved and I did it all by myself - this is the result of the first two seminars. It motivates you, [it is] even a bit irritating but [it] pushes [you] to do things." (FSU)

"I have more self-confidence; I am more independent and I have taken more chances to facilitate workshops and lectures." (Europe)

"The program changed my life. It strengthened my confidence and empowered me to broaden my activities. I started writing in the Jewish newspaper, I organized the first ever Limmud conference in my community and initiated a strategic planning process in my organization." (Europe)

"The part about management and metrics was an important part for me because I have no background in these subjects; as well as in team management and leadership work; I already use [the] planning methods, setting goals." (FSU)

"Listening to our stakeholders and making changes based on their input. This was planned to take place anyway as we're going through change, but the seminars helped prepare me even more." (Europe)

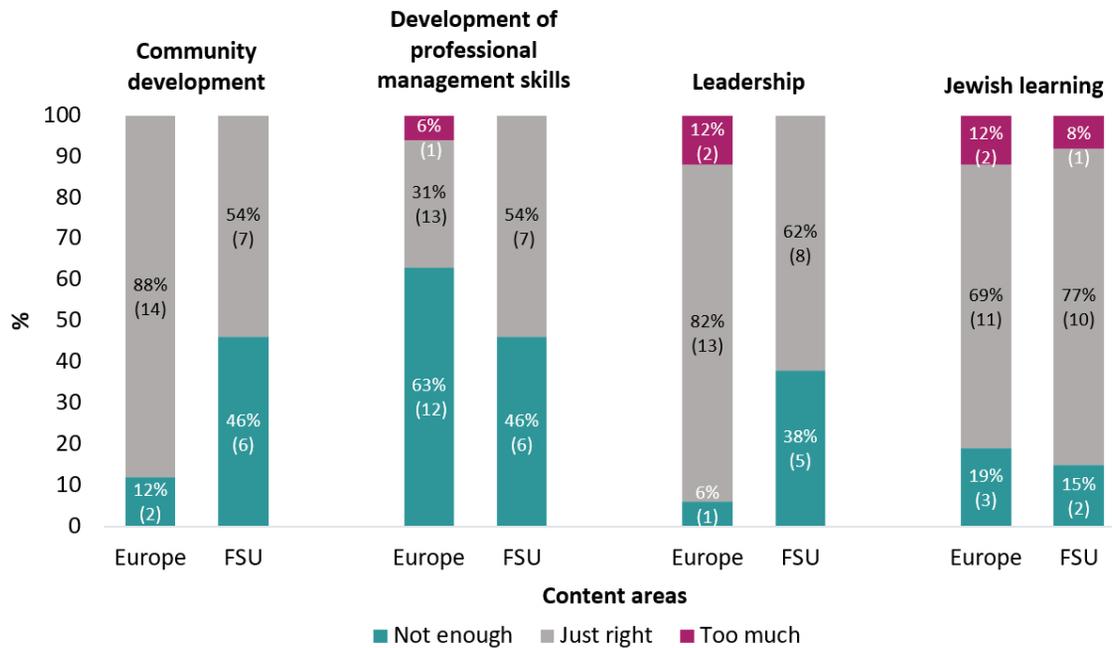
3.4 Program organization

Various aspects of the program's organization are important to shape the fellows' experience and contribute (or otherwise, be detrimental) to the transmission of study materials and the program's effectiveness in general. These aspects should be taken into account in designing subsequent cohorts.

We asked the fellows if enough time had been devoted to the various topics, types, and intensity of the program activities, and examined their satisfaction with various organizational aspects.

Figure 5 presents the fellows' satisfaction with the time allotted to the program's four areas of content.

Figure 5: Time allotted to the program's four areas of content

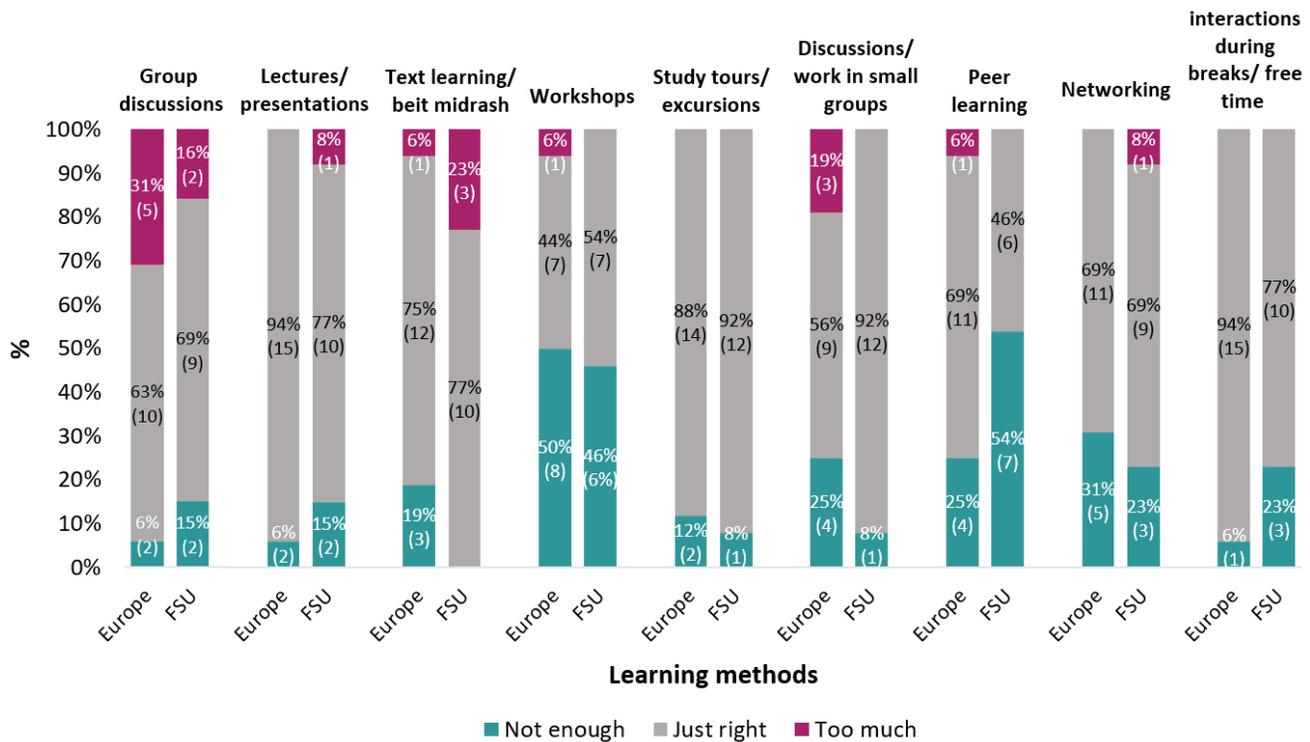


Most of the fellows (69% [10] of the Europeans, and 77% [11] of the FSU fellows) were satisfied with the amount of Jewish learning offered, and lower percentages of fellows felt that insufficient time had been allotted to developing management skills: (63% [10] of the Europeans, and 46% [6] of the FSU fellows). The European fellows were satisfied with the amount of time dedicated to community development (88% [14]) and leadership (81% [13]), but showed relatively low satisfaction with the time

allotted to the development of professional management skills (31% [5]). The FSU fellows reported lower levels of satisfaction with the time allotted to most areas; 46% (6) noted that insufficient time had been devoted to community development and management skills, 38% (5) felt that not enough time had been devoted to leadership.

The program consists of different types of learning methods, including discussions, lectures and presentations, beit midrash learning of Jewish texts, workshops, site visits etc. Figure 6 presents the fellows' perceptions of the balance between the different methods.

Figure 6: Time allotted to various learning methods

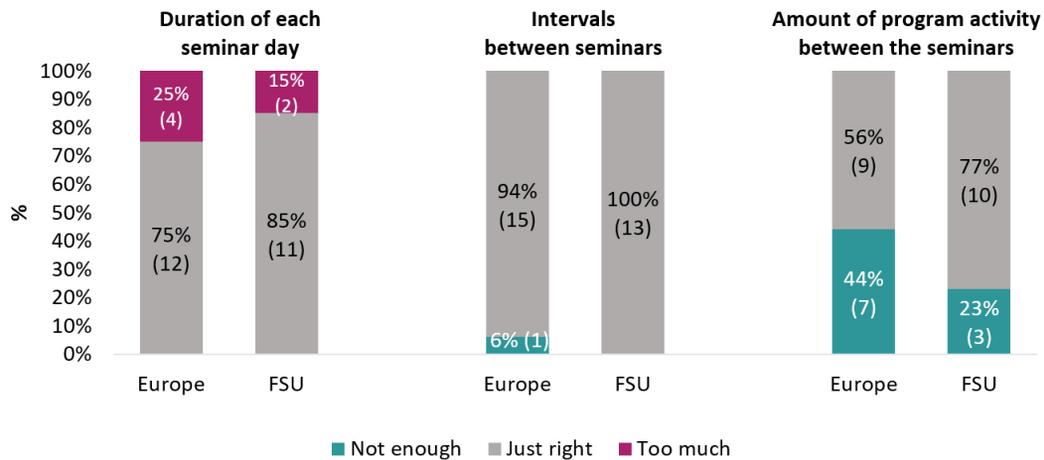


The European fellows were pleased with the proportion of lectures, presentations, and informal interaction between fellows during breaks/free time (94%,15), as well as the study tours/ excursions (88%, 14). FSU fellows were pleased with the discussion and work in small groups (92%, 12), and the

study tours (92%, 12), but felt that not enough time had been allotted for peer learning (54%, 7). 31% (5) of the European fellows reported that they did not create enough networking. Both groups felt that insufficient time had been devoted to workshops (50% [8], of the Europeans and 46% [6] of the FSU fellows). There is a significant difference between the groups regarding discussions and work in small groups; FSU fellows were much more satisfied compared to the European fellows (92% [12] compared to 56% [9]) (Cohen's $d=0.84$).

Program intensity was examined with reference to the duration of seminar days, the intervals between seminars, and the number of activities between them (Figure 7). Both groups agreed that the intervals between the seminars had been appropriate. 44% (7) of the European and 23% (3) of the FSU fellows noted that there had been insufficient activities between the seminars; 25% (4) of the European and 15% (2) of the FSU fellows noted that the seminar days had been too long.

Figure 7: Program intensity



Both groups reported high levels of satisfaction with almost all the various aspects of the program. Both groups reported lower levels of satisfaction with the facilitation and related activities between the seminars especially in the FSU (69%, 9) (Table 7).

Table 7: Program organization[^]

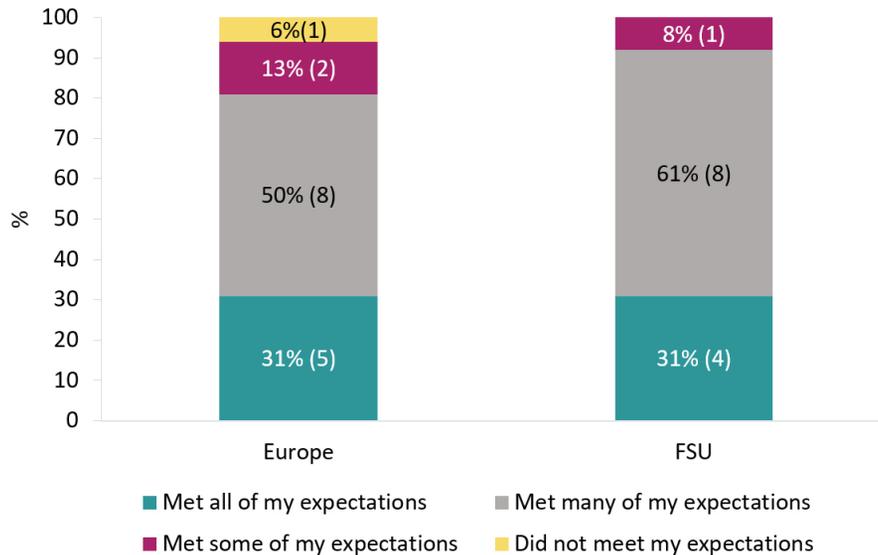
	Europe N=16	FSU N=13
Program organization	94% (15)	100% (13)
Invited lecturers	94% (15)	100% (13)
Responsiveness to fellows' requests	88% (14)	100% (13)
Flexibility of program structure and agenda	88% (14)	100% (13)
Facilitation and related activities between seminars	81% (13)	69% (9)
Group facilitation	94% (15)	85% (11)
Program materials	94% (15)	85% (11)

[^] Very or somewhat satisfied

3.5 Expectations from the program

Considering the program as whole, most of the fellows felt that it had met all or many of their expectations in FSU more than in Europe (92% [12] compared to 81% [13]) (figure 8).

Figure 8: Meeting expectations



The fellows were asked in open-ended questions, which expectations had been met and which had not. The fellows detailed their expectations that had been realized much more so than those that had not, and fellows from Europe detailed more than the fellows from FSU. The analysis of the contents of these questions are presented in tables 8 and 9. Interestingly, some fellows did not answer the second question, and some replied that the program had met their expectations completely.

Both groups mention the acquisition of tools, skills, knowledge as the main expectation realized (56% [9] in Europe, 62% [10] in FSU). Higher percentages of the European fellows also mentioned networking (56%, 9), personal and professional growth, for example, (44%, 7), and Jewish knowledge (31%, 5).

Table 8: Expectations from the program*

	Europe N=16	FSU N=13
Tools, skills and knowledge	56% (9)	62% (10)
Networking	56% (9)	19% (3)
Personal and professional growth	44% (7)	13% (2)
Jewish knowledge	31% (5)	--
Improved knowledge of Jewish communities	19% (3)	--
Presentation skills	--	13% (2)

* The responses do not sum up to 100% because this was an open-ended question

The expectations that were not realized were few, and scattered over various topics.

Table 9: Expectations not realized*

	Europe N=16	FSU N=13
Tools, skills and knowledge	25% (4)	15% (2)
Networking	13% (2)	15% (2)
Jewish learning	6% (1)	8% (1)
Fundraising	13% (2)	15% (2)
Management	13% (2)	-
Peer learning	6% (1)	8% (1)
Community development	6% (1)	8% (1)
Group dynamics	6% (1)	8% (1)
Personal development	-	8% (1)

* The responses do not sum up to 100% because this was an open-ended question

3.6 General assessment of the program

In assessing the program overall, more FSU fellows felt that the program had included new topics (Cohen's $d=1.67$), relevant issues (Cohen's $d=2.41$), and a reflection of their current professional issues (Cohen's $d=2.28$), to a significantly greater extent than did their European peers. Note that around 40% of the fellows from both regions were already familiar with many of the program topics (Table 10).

Table 10: Overall assessment of the program

	Europe N=13	FSU N=16
The program included topics that were new to you	56% (9)	62% (8)
The program included issues that were relevant to the context of your work	75% (12)	85% (11)
The program reflected the professional issues that you are dealing with	68% (11)	85% (11)

^To a great or very great extent

An additional indication of their satisfaction was the fellows' willingness to recommend the program to others. All the fellows reported that they would do so. Some already had, as they stated at the end-of-program interviews.

All the interviewees also graded the program highly in their overall assessments:

"In recent years, this has been the only program that really develops professional Jewish community workers in Russia... It really provides tools and knowledge that will truly help you at work." (FSU)

At the mid-program interviews, the FSU fellows voiced their satisfaction at the program components that had been added following their feedback after the first seminar in Tbilisi. They felt that the second seminar had improved greatly, in line with their suggestions. They were highly appreciative of the program structure and commended the site tours where they met with local professionals:

"The trip to the south touched right at the heart! It was really exciting. The people we met there!... Ofakim is a small town where we met a man who is trying to improve the lives of all the residents; making a community garden and cycling. He took out a really old and torn plan... the program of the garden he constructed himself! The garden plan in Ofakim has stayed in my mind." (FSU)

As noted, fellows from each region were interviewed at different points in time: the European fellows – after the completion of the three regional seminars, but before the global seminar in Chicago; the FSU fellows – after the regional seminars and the global seminar. As a result, their perspectives differed. The FSU fellows reported a sense of progress and continuity between the seminars:

"Georgia - they showed us a community that is already at a stage that Russia has passed ... At the first seminar in Israel - we saw how independent communities meet their needs. Chicago - we were even more surprised there! A very strong community in the United States, very Jewish, like a dream - the Federation! We thought what could be more COOL than that?! Ramle [Israel]-- "It was even more cool!" This is a great initiative, a fresh spirit and a high level - I always came back inspired!"(FSU)

The FSU fellows spoke enthusiastically about the seminar in Chicago. They regarded it as a unique experience, as the climax of all the seminars:

"Chicago was longer; there was an intensive academic program; there was also a lot of homework and was very intense; it dealt with more content, meetings and tasks; this, of course, was very professional ".

Their European peers also attested to a high overall assessment of the program:

I am optimistic and believe that yes, the work is very difficult but I believe that there will be a change. The fellows changed in many respects, they underwent an internal change and this will change the community in the future." (Europe)

Continuing the emphasis on the changes the program encouraged, another fellow said:

"In the past, it was convenient for me to act out of the inertia of the organization, but following the program I realized that this was the only way to make progress, and my manager and colleagues collaborated with me. My mentor is excellent; she helped me implement the strategic planning." (Europe)

Another fellow mentioned a similar progression from a change in self-confidence towards empowerment and changes in her behavior, all this with the assistance of her mentor:

"This seminar [Chicago] adds a different dimension to what I experienced before, and there is a lot of talk about leadership. There is networking with group members. The program gave me self-confidence, changed my self-perception, and gave me the courage to voice my opinions and do things. Working with the mentor was a very empowering experience, thanks to which I embarked on a plan that I had dreamed of for many years." (Europe)

One more fellow described how the program made her rethink her intention to leave her current job, and create a way for herself to advance in the same organization:

"The program encouraged new ideas, how to introduce new ideas and how to implement them, to step forward and dare. Through the program, I came to understand that I don't want to leave my organization, I want to explore possibilities to expand and advance from within, to reshape my role, to bring new ideas. I re-conceptualized the youth section and implemented a training program for experienced instructors." (Europe)

Unlike the FSU group, the Europeans seemed to treat each seminar as a separate unit with its own strengths and weaknesses rather than stages on the same continuum. This may have been due to the different points in time in the program at which the interviews took place or the Europeans may not have felt that the program components were cohesive.

The Europeans expressed strong feelings about specific seminars and some of their activities. The most controversial activity was the leadership workshop at the seminar in Madrid. The topic aroused highly emotional reactions and negatively affected the group dynamics.

Another disputed topic was social resilience:

"It did not work at all ... In Prague half of the seminar passed me by, did not 'get through' to me, I did not understand what was happening ... maybe because of the English, but not only, I understood the words, but it was not clear what it was about." (Europe)

3.7 The fellows' recommendations

The fellows were asked what changes they would recommend in the program to improve it for the next cohorts. Their recommendations addressed structure, content, contacts and networking, and related also to the end of the program and its aftermath. Although many of these recommendations were mentioned above, it is important to consider them as a whole along with the comments that appear here for the first time.

3.7.1 Program organization and structure

- Work more on teambuilding
- Offer more peer learning and workshops, fewer group discussions
- Enable more time for reflection and closure (*specific to Europe*)
- Shorten the schedules at seminars
- Provide clearer schedules for seminars and assignments (*specific to Europe*)

3.7.2 Content

- Offer more academic / theoretical lessons followed by workshops.
- Offer more practical tools and skills (particularly management).
- Offer more learning about community development and fundraising.
- Provide content and examples relevant to the realities of the fellows' lives, particularly in view of the vulnerability of the Jewish communities in Europe and the FSU when compared with the affluent communities in the USA (as demonstrated during the global seminar).
- Introduce the leadership workshop earlier in the program (*specific to Europe*).

Several specific topics evoked ambivalent reactions:

- The session on resilience in Europe: Some fellows considered the presentation unclear and difficult to follow or understand.

- Adaptive leadership in the FSU: The lecture was highly academic, filled with jargon and hard to follow. Also, after being informed that the method was a discipline leading to a degree, some fellows felt that it was pointless to attempt to understand it in less than an hour.
- Jewish learning at FSU seminars: The transmission of Jewish content at the regional seminars in the FSU was not a natural fit with the program, some fellows described the content as irrelevant. During the observations at the seminar, it was evident that the group facilitators, too, did not participate in this activity, sending the fellows a clear message.

3.7.3 Contact and networking

All the fellows would like to improve their networking and stay in touch more with fellows from other regions. To this end, all the fellows should be introduced at the start of the program, their resumes or short clips on them and /or their activities could be passed around, and joint projects could be assigned whether in pairs or small groups before and during the global seminar.

The fellows recommended holding more global webinars and Zug (paired) learning: The Europeans enjoyed *havruta* learning which is universally available online (and also helpful for improving their English), as well as additional practical assignments (particularly in Europe).

3.7.4. Needs at the end of the program and its aftermath

- Implementation: Guidance in their work to apply the knowledge acquired in the program, share it with colleagues and management, and introduce change in their organizations etc.
- Professionalism: Continued consultation, including mentoring
- Networking: Remaining in touch with fellows and facilitators from other groups, exploring the possibility of annual meetings, and opportunities to meet and communicate with upcoming KLI fellows
- Sharing: Ideas for resources and activities (a digital platform other than FB)
- Ongoing learning: Receiving new information and updates (including knowledge, tools, successful projects and events) and following the progress of the other fellows.

4. Issues for consideration regarding future implementation

As elaborated above, the fellows are highly satisfied with the program, they learned a great deal, feel confident, connected to and part of the community of Jewish professionals, and have started to utilize their new knowledge and tools, and take advantage of their connections. Nevertheless, fine-tuning the program could maximize its potential and enhance its impact.

Based on the findings we recommend action in the following areas:

1. **Admission criteria** should be adhered to because the combination of age, language, occupation and seniority is important to enable maximum benefit from what the program has to offer.
2. **English proficiency** is a key factor of global networking and of maximizing the learning at Spertus. If possible, admission to the program should include excellent English. Alternatively, fellows should be willing to improve their English and be provided with the means to do so from the start of the program.
3. **Content:** More emphasis should be placed on knowledge and tools for fundraising, identifying budget opportunities, teambuilding, integrated Jewish learning, and community development.
4. **Networking** would benefit from introducing fellows from different regions earlier in the program, their working together in international Zug or havruta learning, or in assigned group tasks and joint projects. In addition, most of the webinars could be open to fellows from all regions.
5. **Peer learning:** More teambuilding is warranted to create a comfortable atmosphere and contact with peers. There should be more time to hear and learn from each other's experience, in the region and with the global group.
6. **Passing on the learning:** Connecting the fellows' mentors and managers to the program would enable them to be more involved and supportive. Moreover, some of the fellows found it challenging to share their experiences and knowledge with colleagues and managers and are in need of tools for the task.
7. **Cultural Adaptation:** Fellows from both groups felt that many of the non-regional presenters were not familiar with their regional realities. Lecturers, especially at the global seminar, should familiarize themselves with the characteristics of the communities and the challenges of the fellows.

8. **Mentoring:**

- Mentoring is the program's game-changing component and should be obligatory.
- There are evident inter-regional cultural gaps in the fellow's perceptions and how they collaborate in the mentoring process. Mentoring should be introduced to the FSU fellows in a non-intimidating manner.
- The mentoring process requires greater structure. Mentors need to understand the program and receive updates on the mentees' progress. Both mentors and mentees should familiarize themselves with the framework and expectations of the mentoring process.
- The concept of mentoring and the ability to find culturally-matched mentors are crucial to the success of the process. A satisfied fellow from the first cohort could be a strong advocate (perhaps via webinar) for new KLI fellows.

9. **The work in between seminars** should include the dispatch of pre-seminar reading material and home assignments with clear instructions, as well as international webinars (with other regions when possible).

10. **Structural improvement:** There should be more workshops to drill the theoretical material learned, fewer group discussions, and more time for reflection and closure.

5. Research limitations

Two types of research limitations should be taken into account, related to program structure and participant characteristics.

Program structure:

- The program is geared towards a relatively small number of participants, making it difficult to draw conclusive generalizations from the quantitative data. For this reason, the quantitative data on the fellows are given both as a percentage and an absolute number (in brackets) in the report.
- The program is designed for a small number of select participants, a feature that is to remain constant. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data alongside cautious interpretation will continue to be important throughout the evaluation study.
- Due to program constraints, the European fellows completed the questionnaire at the end of their regional seminars and were interviewed before the global seminar. The difference in the timing of the evaluation tools affected the responses given by the fellows. Starting with the second cohort, the seminar structure will be the same for all regions so that all regions will be interviewed at the same stage of the program.

Program participants:

- Inter-cultural characteristics affect the fellows' participation in the program and its impact on them, as well as their patterns of response to interviews and questionnaires.
- Group characteristics differed mainly in employment record and experience, as well as English proficiency. These variances along with the cultural gaps, rather than the program itself, may have been responsible for some of the significant differences between the groups.

The program is intended for Jewish professionals from different regions of the world, another feature that will remain constant. Our multi-lingual team of researchers will continue their efforts while remaining attuned to cultural diversity in the structuring of the tools, the way that they are used, and in the interpretation of the findings.

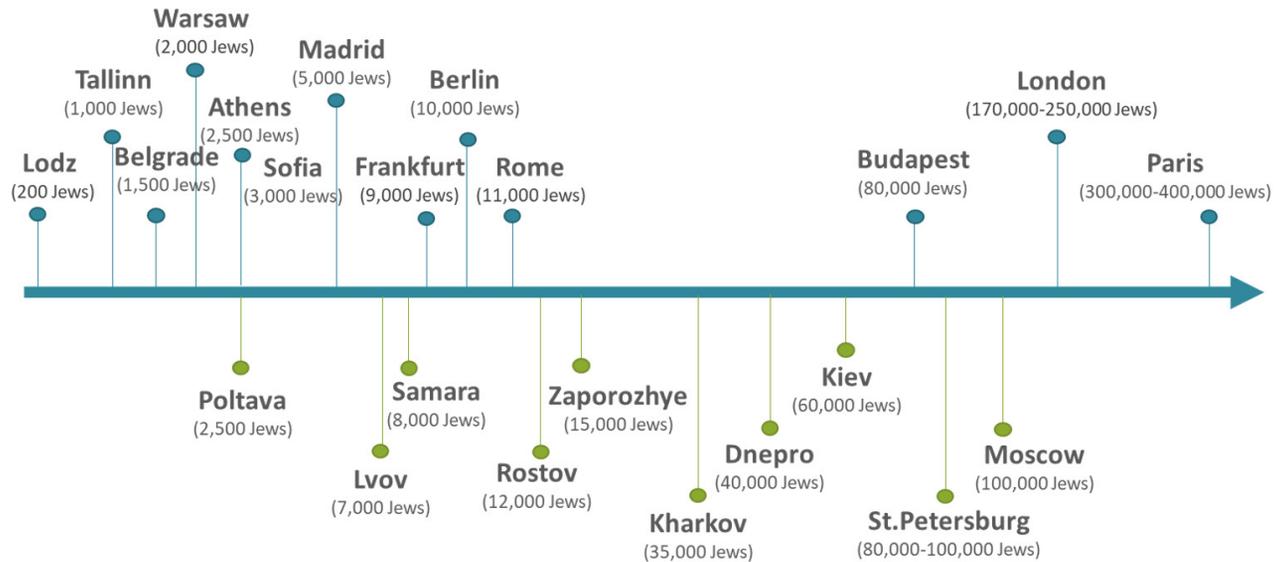
Appendixes

Appendix I: Background characteristics of fellows, by region (%)

Characteristics		Total	Europe N=16	FSU N=16
Gender	Women	75%	81%	69%
	Men	25%	19%	31%
Age (average)	25-29	50%	69%	33%
	30-34	31%	19%	44%
	35-39	16%	12%	19%
	missing	3%	--	6%
Married		41%	13%	69%
Parents		28%	13%	44%
Education	High school	3%	6%	--
	Bachelors-level degree	34%	44%	25%
	Masters-level degree	63%	50%	75%
Academic\college level courses*	Leadership & management	50%	38%	63%
	Education & pedagogy	50%	31%	69%
	Israel and the Middle East	22%	25%	19%
	Jewish studies	38%	19%	56%
	NGO management	9%	13%	25%
Professional courses and training*	Community development	13%	--	25%
	Jewish leadership & Jewish communal work	78%	69%	88%
	Leadership and management	22%	19%	25%
	Other fields	28%	31%	25%

Characteristics		Total	Europe N=16	FSU N=16
English proficiency[^]	Speaking	84%	100%	73%
	Listening	91%	100%	93%
	Writing	78%	100%	64%
	Reading	91%	100%	93%
[^] Middle and high				
Years in organization	Up to 3 years	30%	45%	24%
	3-7 years	36%	38%	35%
	Over 7	34%	17%	42%
	Average (years)	5.8	3.6	6.7
Years in position	Up to 3 years	56%	69%	51%
	3-7 years	27%	26%	27%
	Over 7	17%	5%	22%
	Average (years)	3.6	2.2	4.3
Level of responsibility at work	Responsible for a budget	50%	31%	69%
	Responsible for Employees	63%	38%	88%
	Responsible for Volunteers	72%	62%	81%
	Responsible for budget, employees & volunteers	44%	23%	69%

Appendix II: Jewish communities by size



Europe figures are based on the fellows' estimation, FSU figures based on:

DellaPergola, Sergio. (2017). World Jewish Population, 2016. 10.1007/978-3-319-46122-9_17.