

The Kaplan Leadership Initiative Evaluation Report

Findings from the Second Cohort 2019–2020
and Follow-up of the First Cohort 2018–2019

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Abstract

Background

The Kaplan Leadership Initiative (Kaplan program) is the first international JDC program that has set itself the goal of developing leadership in Jewish communities in Europe, the former Soviet Union (FSU) and Latin America (LATAM). The program is designed for professionals at mid-level positions in Jewish communities who are aspiring to strengthen their influence and leadership, particularly in their own organizations and communities. It focuses on providing tools and knowledge in four areas: community development, leadership, Jewish content and context, and management. The program plan comprises three program cohorts, each built on three regional seminars and one global seminar hosted by an academic institution in the USA, as well as activities and tasks in between the seminars. This report presents the main findings on the second cohort of the program (2019-2020), which numbered a total of 45 fellows from all three regions, and a follow-up of the first cohort (2018-2019), 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 the establishment of contact and networking with program fellows. These ultimate goals are examined among the graduates of the first cohort.

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

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 the regions, yet sensitive to the distinctive characteristics of each. Each evaluation cycle covers three main stages (before, during and after the program). The evaluation includes quantitative tools (self-administered questionnaires) and semi-structured interviews with fellows and program staff, as well as observations at regional seminars and the global seminar. A special effort is made to maintain sensitivity to unique cultural and linguistic aspects in the development of the tools while collecting the data.

Key Findings

The fellows expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the program and the organization of the regional seminars. Ninety-two percent (12) of the European fellows, 85% (11) of the LATAM fellows and 72% (10) of the FSU fellows reported that the program had met all or most of their expectations in a number of key areas: networking; the acquisition of tools, skills, and knowledge; and personal and professional development. The European fellows cited Jewish knowledge as well.

All the European fellows (13), 93% (13) of FSU fellows and 92% (12) of the LATAM fellows had changed or were planning to change the content or practices of their work as a result of their participation in the program. The areas targeted for change were presentation techniques and emotional intelligence in Europe; team management, leadership and fundraising in the FSU; and leadership, management, strategic planning and teamwork in LATAM.

Comparison of the findings for Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 showed that overall, the program has managed to maintain the relatively high levels of satisfaction in both regions that took part in the first cohort (Europe and FSU).

The follow-up of Cohort 1 revealed that most of the program graduates work in the Jewish community (69%, 20): 52% (15) fill the same organizational position they held at their entry into the Kaplan program, and 17% (5) have been promoted; 31% (9) no longer work in the Jewish community; 67% (16), make use of the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the areas of management and leadership to a great or a very great extent; 54% (13) use the knowledge and tools in the field of community and 42% (10) use the Jewish learning and texts they have acquired in their everyday work. Most of the graduates

(83%, 20) are part of their regional network, which is a platform mostly for personal communication and friendships.

Issues to Consider for Future Implementation

Several recommendations emerged from the study:

- To adhere to the four program contents – community development, leadership, Jewish content and context, and management – in all regions, and to coordinate the work to achieve more alignment between groups
- To set a program outline, to communicate it to the participants and connect the activities to the outline during reflection and summary sessions
- To place greater emphasis on community development, integrated Jewish learning, fundraising and teambuilding;
- To invest more in creating a global network and an active alumni network
- To enable more peer learning; and to upgrade the quality and volume of activities in between seminars.

Executive Summary

Background

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

Kaplan program 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 designed for three cohorts: 2018-19, 2019-2020, and 2021-22. Each cohort has regional programs, including three regional seminars and one global seminar in the USA in cooperation with an academic institution. In between the seminars, learning activities are conducted.

This report presents the findings on the second cohort, i.e., 2019-2020, numbering 45 fellows from three regions: Europe, FSU and LATAM, and the findings of a follow-up study of the first cohort – 29 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 the establishment of contact and networking with program fellows. These ultimate goals are examined among the graduates of the first cohort.

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

Study Methodology

A mixed methods approach was used to obtain in-depth quantitative and qualitative input. 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 the study tools and the interpretation of the findings.

Our data collection for the second cohort (45 fellows) used a number of tools: online self-report surveys (in three languages) before the program started and at the end; in-depth, qualitative interviews midway through the program and at the end; interviews with fellows at the global seminar; observations (at the regional and global seminars); analysis of documents produced by the program and meetings with program staff.

Data collection for the first cohort of European and FSU fellows (29 fellows) used online self-report surveys (in two languages).

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
Second cohort:		
Pre-program online self-administered questionnaire (before the first seminar)	Program fellows	45
Mid-program semi-structured telephone interviews	Program fellows	15
Observation at the regional seminars in Israel	1 day for each region	
Observation at the global seminar	9 days	
Informal interviews at the global seminar	Program fellows	20
End-program online self-administered questionnaire (a week after the final regional seminar)	Program fellows	40
End-program semi-structured telephone interviews	Program fellows	16
Ongoing meetings and updates	Program staff	35 meetings
Analysis of documentation	30 documents	-
First cohort:		
Post-program online self-administered questionnaire	Program fellows	24

Study Findings

Background Characteristics of Program Fellows

Nearly all the fellows met the admission criteria regarding employment and professional experience. The LATAM group was older than required and lacked the necessary command of English. LATAM fellows 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 all regions. The fellows hailed from communities of very different sizes, with a wider range in Europe than in the FSU and LATAM.

Attendance and Satisfaction with the Program: Seminars and in-between Activities

(absolute numbers are given next to the percentages, in parentheses)

Most of the fellows attended the regional seminars and 89% (40) attended the global seminar. There were four dropouts from the program, two from Europe, one from the FSU and one from LATAM.

The LATAM group was satisfied with the global seminar, and less satisfied with their regional seminars. In the other two regions, the fellows were much more satisfied with their regional seminars than the global seminar.

Several global and regional webinars were offered, and most of the fellows from all the regions (92%, 41) attended at least two during the program, although all of the webinars fell short of their potential benefits in terms of interaction and networking; the European and LATAM fellow worked with mentors (85%, 11 and 100%, 13, respectively), 100% (14) fellows from the FSU worked with coaches and were much more satisfied than their peers; all of the fellows completed homework assignments; many FSU fellows (71%, 10) and a few LATAM fellows (23%, 3) took English lessons; European and LATAM fellows also participated in activities tailored to their region: 77% (10) of the European fellows participated in *havruta* (paired) learning in between the seminars; all the LATAM fellows worked in groups on a final project. In all of the regions, the fellows expressed disappointment with the small amount of activities between the seminars.

Program Contribution

We examined several aspects of the program's contribution: the acquisition of knowledge and tools; the fellows' perceptions and motivation to pursue a career in the Jewish community; networking; and the application of the new knowledge and tools.

The program’s contribution to the development of the fellows as Jewish professionals was different in each region. **In Europe**, the main influences were on “understanding your strengths and challenges as a Jewish professional” (85%, 11), “strengthening your wish to build a professional career in the Jewish community” (85%, 11) and “helping you recognize new opportunities in your role or in your organization” (85%, 11). **In the FSU**, the program had a strong impact on the fellows in regard to “understanding your strengths and challenges as a Jewish professional” (92%, 13), and at lower rates, to “helping you think about the next steps in your professional journey” (79%, 11). **In LATAM**, the program highly contributed to “helping you think about the next steps in your professional journey” (92%, 12), and also to “strengthening your wish to build a professional career in the Jewish community” (84%, 11), “helping you formulate a leadership approach that suits you personally” (84%, 11), and “helping you better understand what issues you want to promote in your community” (84%, 11).

The pre-program rates of self-perceptions as Jewish professionals were higher in the FSU and LATAM than in Europe. In all regions, there was an increase in the fellows' self-perceptions as Jewish community leaders. There was a notable increase among the fellows from Europe in their self-perception as Jewish professionals, from 77% (10) before the program to 100% (13) at the end.

The regional networks were well formed, but the global network did not yet develop. This was due to mainly to lack of time and opportunities during the global seminar and in between seminars, as well as language and communication gaps.

While it is too early to examine the program’s impact on their work in the field, all the European and most of the FSU (93%, 13%) and LATAM fellows (92%, 12) 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 presentation techniques and emotional intelligence; for FSU fellows – team management leadership and fundraising; for LATAM fellows – leadership and management, including strategic planning and teamwork.

Program Organization

Most fellows from all three regions expressed satisfaction with the amount of time devoted to community development: 39% (5) of European, 30% (4) of LATAM and 29% (4) of FSU fellows thought that more time could have been devoted to this area of knowledge. Nearly all the LATAM group

(92%, 12) and most of the FSU group (79%, 11) were satisfied with the time allotted to developing management skills. Among the European group, only 46% (6) were satisfied with the time allotted and most of the group wanted more.

All the groups were mostly satisfied with the amount of time allocated to leadership; many of the European fellows (84%, 11) and two-thirds of the FSU fellows (64%, 9) were satisfied with the amount of Jewish learning offered, while most of LATAM fellows (62%, 8) thought that not enough time was allocated this topic.

The program consists of different types of learning methods, including discussions, lectures and presentations, *beit midrash* learning of Jewish texts, workshops, site visits etc. The European fellows were pleased with the amount of time dedicated to text learning (85%, 11). The FSU fellows were pleased with the amount of time dedicated to lectures and presentations (93%, 13), study tours (86%, 12) and text learning (79%, 11). The LATAM fellows were pleased with the amount of time dedicated to lectures and presentations (92%, 12), study tours (84%, 11) and informal interaction at breaks and free time (92%, 12). Fellows of all three regions thought that not enough time was dedicated to workshops, peer learning, and networking, throughout the program.

All the groups agreed that the intervals between the seminars and duration of each seminar day were appropriate, although they felt that more breaks were needed in between the activities. The groups differed in their satisfaction with the amount of program activity between the seminars. Most of the Europeans felt that the amount of program activity between the seminars was appropriate (84%, 11), almost half of the LATAM (46%, 6) and only a third of the FSU (29%, 4) fellows reported that there were enough activities between the seminars.

All groups reported high levels of satisfaction with the organization of the program and the guest lecturers. The European and FSU groups were highly satisfied with the responsiveness to fellows' requests (100%, 13 and 93%,13, respectively); the LATAM group was less satisfied with the program's responsiveness (77%, 10). The European and FSU groups were highly satisfied with the flexibility in the structure and agenda of the program (93%, 12 and 86%,12, respectively) compared to 46% (6) in LATAM. Lower rates of satisfaction were found in the European group regarding program materials (54%, 7), and in LATAM regarding facilitation and connection in activities between seminars (54%, 7). Overall, the LATAM group expressed less satisfaction with the program organization than the groups in the other regions.

Expectations from the Program

Most of the fellows in all three regions felt that the program met all or many of their expectations, although, 28% (4) of the FSU and 15% (2) of the LATAM fellows noted that the program met only some of their expectations. All groups said that the main expectations realized were networking and the acquisition of tools and skills. The European and FSU fellows also noted personal and professional growth. The European fellows mentioned Jewish knowledge.

Overall Program Evaluation

Most of the fellows from all the regions felt that the program included contents that were relevant to their work, and that the program reflected the professional issues they were dealing with. Yet, while 85% (11) of the European fellows said that the program included themes that were new to them, only 62% (10) of LATAM fellows and 43% (6) of FSU fellows reported the same.

All the fellows noted that they would somewhat or highly recommend the program to others, although almost all the Europeans (92%, 12) would highly recommend the program, compared to 79% (11) of the FSU and 69% (9) of the LATAM fellows.

The Fellows' Recommendations

The fellows' recommendations focus on the introduction to the program, the regional and global seminars, activities in between seminars, contacts and networking, and the conclusion of the program and its aftermath. According to the fellows, the regional groups should be more homogeneous in terms of education, training and experience of the fellows (FSU) and in terms of their position within the Jewish community (Europe), and more diverse in terms of country of origin and gender (LATAM); the program outline should be clarified before and during the program; the seminars should include more peer learning, site visits, case studies, workshops, and work in small groups, and address more topics such as management, team development and community development. The fellows want more activities in between the seminars, with more follow-up by program staff and more interaction with their peers from other regions.

Comparison between Cohort 1 and Cohort 2

Changes Made to the Program after Cohort 1

The program underwent significant programmatic changes following the experience gained from the first cohort and the evaluation findings, as well as personnel changes. Most of the contents of the regional seminars were new and there were changes in the global seminar. The second cohort also included a third region, LATAM.

Comparison between the Cohorts

We examined the difference between cohorts according to the two regions in Cohort 1 – Europe and FSU – since the considerable differences between the implementation of the program in each region limited our ability to compare one region to another. The differences in the satisfaction and contribution of the program were examined through six indexes: Development as a Jewish professional; self-perception as a Jewish professional; expansion of knowledge in the program's four content areas; overall assessment of the program; program organization; and program methods. Overall, it is apparent that the program maintained the relatively high levels of satisfaction in both regions.

In Europe, there was improvement in four indexes: Self-perception as a Jewish professional, development as a Jewish professional, expansion of knowledge in the program's four content areas, and overall assessment of the program. Two indexes were rated lower in the second cohort than in the first cohort: program organization and program methods. In the FSU, there was improvement in the fellows' rating of development as a Jewish professional, and a slight increase in their self-perception as a Jewish professional. Expanding knowledge in the program's four content areas was rated lower in the second cohort than in the first cohort.

Cohort 1: Post Program Findings

Evaluation Goals and Methodology

The survey conducted among the graduates aimed to examine whether they were still working in the Jewish community and if so, in which positions; whether they were making use of the knowledge and tools they had acquired in the program and were actively engaging with one another. Data collection was challenging, but eventually we obtained a response rate of 83%. Basic information about the current employment of the non-responders was obtained by program staff.

Current Employment

Most of the program graduates work in the Jewish community: 52% (15) are in the same position, 17% (5) have been promoted. Around one third, 31% (9) no longer work in the Jewish community. Five of them are involved in the community in a committed, voluntary position.

Program Impact

The various aspects of the program – specific learning content and methods, learning about different communities, feeling part of a peer group of Jewish professionals with similar challenges and needs, mentoring and personal and professional development – affected the graduates in different ways. Over two-thirds of the graduates (67%, 16) implement the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the areas of management and leadership to a great or a very great extent; about half (54%, 13) use the knowledge and tools in the field of community, and 42% (10) use the Jewish learning and texts they have acquired in their everyday work.

The graduates reported little application of their knowledge and skills in the areas of community development and integration of Jewish content. This is consistent with their feedback at the end of the program, that not enough time was devoted to these areas.

The main changes in their work as Jewish professionals following the program were: Changes in strategic vision and perception, increased self-confidence, developing a network, concrete skills and tools, focusing on the community, and developing self-perception as a Jewish professional.

Network

According to the findings, regional networks have evolved, but no global network has developed. The graduates offered various suggestions to enhance the network, including activities that should take place during the program and the establishment of a formal and active alumni network after the program.

Issues for Consideration Regarding Future Implementation of the Program

Based on all the study findings, we recommend action in the following areas:

Implementation of Cohort 2

- **Program management and coordination.** It is important to focus on all four content areas – community development, leadership, Jewish content and context, and management – in all the

regions and to coordinate the work to achieve more alignment between groups. Regional staff could benefit from mutual learning, sharing experiences and replicating successful activities.

- **Setting a program outline and communicating it:** It is advisable to draw up an outline, to communicate it to the participants, and to connect the activities to the outline during reflection and summary sessions. Organizing the knowledge and learning may facilitate the use of information in the future and deepen the impact of the program over time.
- **Program contents and methods:** Changes need to be made in the integration of Jewish contents, additional time should be dedicated to community development and fundraising methods by means of workshops, case studies and peer learning.
- **The global seminar:** The global seminar requires a very large investment of resources. In view of the fellows' feedback, it is advisable to rethink how to conduct the seminar, ahead of the next cycle.
- **Activities between the seminars:** Fellows requested an increase in the volume of activities and clarification of the framework of the activities. It is important to follow up on the implementation of the activities and make adjustments when necessary. Also, coaching should be considered instead of mentoring in all regions.
- **Developing the network:** In addition to the resources invested in the program, we suggest devoting resources to the construction of a global peer network that will operate continuously and frequently for an extended period. Belonging to an active network may also influence the fellows' decision to continue in their career as Jewish professionals.

Cohort 1

- **Reconsider the programs' expectations regarding the fellows' long-term employment in the Jewish community** considering the realities of their communities, the program limitations and their needs for support that are not met.
- **Maintaining an active network** can help the graduates handle their challenges and increase their sense of belonging to their peer group of Jewish professionals, and perhaps prolong their commitment to their career in the Jewish community.

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1. Introduction

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

In Europe, the Kaplan program 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 by JDC-FSU. 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 an academic institution in the USA. In the first two cohorts, the seminar was hosted by the Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership in Chicago, USA.

Kaplan program 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: 2018-19, 2019-2020, and 2021-22. Each Kaplan program cohort has regional programs, including 3 seminars in Europe and the FSU and 4 seminars in LATAM, 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 of the regional groups gather for a week-long seminar at an academic institution in the USA, where fellows network, share experiences and strengthen their global Jewish leadership identity. This report includes two parts: the first details the findings on the second cohort, which took place in 2019-20 and numbered 45 fellows from three regions – Europe, the FSU and LATAM – and compares Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 (sections 3 and 4). The second part (Section 5) describes the findings from a follow-up survey conducted among 29 graduates of the first cohort.

The following section presents the study design: the goals, evaluation strategy and sources of information, tools and methods, analysis of the findings, and ethics. The third section presents the findings on the fellows' characteristics, participation and satisfaction with the program, the program contributions, satisfaction with the way it was organized, the expectations from the program, an overall assessment of the program, and the fellows' recommendations. The fourth section presents the main findings from the comparison between Cohort 1 and Cohort 2. The fifth section presents the findings from a follow-up survey we conducted among the fellows of Cohort 1. The sixth section summarizes the insights and recommendations emerging from the study. The seventh section presents the research limitations and concludes this report.

2. Study Design

The evaluation focuses on the implementation of the Kaplan program and its contributions, as well as the more direct, intermediate outcomes at the end of the first cohort.

The evaluation strategy was developed together with the Kaplan program planning team, taking account of relevant literature on evaluation and our own experience of evaluating leadership and community programs.

2.1 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** among the second cohort: 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.

In addition, the evaluation began the examination of the achievement of the program's final outcomes among the first cohort. **The 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 their professional network).

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

2.2 Evaluation Strategy

The evaluation strategy focuses on examining the program as a whole. To this end, the same set of tools was developed for all regions, 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 was conducted in three major stages: (1) before the start of the program, to collect data on the fellows' 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 2, and the third stage of the evaluation of Cohort 1.

A mixed methods approach was used to obtain in-depth quantitative and qualitative 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 study tools and interpretation of the findings.

The evaluation of Cohort 2 included collecting data from the European, FSU and LATAM groups (45 fellows), using a number of tools: online self-report surveys (in three languages) before the program started and at its end; in-depth qualitative interviews midway through the program and at its end; interviews with program fellows during the global seminar; on-site observations (at the regional and global activities); and analysis of documents produced by the program.

The follow-up evaluation of Cohort 1 included an online self-report survey of the graduates of Cohort 1, and information obtained from the program staff.

2.3 Tools and Method

The evaluation is based on data collected from the fellows, using several tools:

Cohort 2

- An online self-administered questionnaire (in three languages) before the program started. The questionnaire consisted of 110 questions that examined the fellows' expectations of the program, their professional needs, their identity as Jewish professionals, and their background characteristics.
- In-depth qualitative semi-structured interviews midway through the program and at the end: The interviews took 45 to 60 minutes and were conducted in English, Spanish 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 way the learning was conducted.

- On-site observations (at regional and global activities)
- An online self-administered questionnaire (in three languages) at the end of the program. This questionnaire consisted of 90 questions that examined the fellows’ perceptions of the program's 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.

Cohort 1

- An online self-administered questionnaire (in two languages). The questionnaire consisted of 37 questions that examined the fellows’ current employment locality and status, implementation of knowledge and tools acquired in the program, and networking.

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

Table 1: Study Design Summary – Data Collection Methods and Sources of Information

Data Collection Method	Source of Information	No. of Respondents
Second cohort:		
Pre-program online self-administered questionnaire (before the first seminar)	Program fellows	45
Mid-program semi-structured telephone interviews	Program fellows	15
Observation at the regional seminar in Israel	1 day for each region	
Observation at the global seminar	9 days	
Informal interviews at the global seminar	Program fellows	20
End-of-program online self-administered questionnaire (a week after the final regional seminar)	Program fellows	40
End-of-program semi-structured telephone interviews	Program fellows	16
Ongoing meetings and updates	Program staff	35 meetings
Analysis of documentation	30 documents	-
First cohort:		
Post-program online self-administered questionnaire	Program fellows	24

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 5-point Likert scale (“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 fellows acquired new knowledge, it means that 50% of the fellows reported that they had acquired new knowledge “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent.”

The small number of participants, the large differences in the implementation of the program between the regions in terms of the content and activities, and the many changes made from cohort to cohort in the staff, selection of fellows, content and activities do not allow for a statistical comparison between the groups.

We tested the statistical significance of the differences between the cohorts in several measures in each region (FSU and Europe) by performing an independent-sample t-test, using the IBM-SPSS Statistics version 24 software. Only the significant differences are cited in this report.

The qualitative information – from data collected in the in-depth interviews and the open-ended questions in the questionnaires – was analyzed through analysis of the content of the text. The purpose of content analysis is to find recurring topics common to all interviews/questions. The recurring topics arose from the text spontaneously without pre-defined categories of analysis.

2.5 Ethics

When the fellows joined the program, they were told that an evaluation of the program was being conducted and they would be asked to complete questionnaires before and at the end of the program, as well as to be interviewed. The interviews were pre-arranged, and fellows were given the option not to be interviewed if they were not interested. The interview was conducted after obtaining their written consent (by email). In addition, as promised to the fellows, the interview findings were presented after analysis and summation, with no personally identifiable details.

3. Evaluation Findings: Cohort 2, End-of-Program 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 General evaluation of the program

3.7 Fellows' recommendations

3.1 Fellows' Background Characteristics before the Program

3.1.1. Characteristics vis-à-vis the admission criteria

The program's target population:

- Aged 25 to 40
- Speak and understand English at a sufficient level
- Are currently employed in a full-time, professional position in the Jewish community in the FSU, Europe and LATAM
- 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 the fellow characteristics, see **Table I-1** in Appendix I).

Age: The average age of the European fellows was 31, and of the FSU fellows, 32. The LATAM group was older, with an average age of 38.

Gender: The European group was characterized by full gender equality (50%, 8 of each). In the FSU there were more women than men (69%, 11 women), while in the LATAM group, there was an overwhelming majority of men (85%, 11). According to program staff, the low representation of women

in the group reflects the reality throughout the region, where there is a considerable minority of women in senior positions in Jewish organizations.

English proficiency: Fellows from Europe reported high levels of English proficiency, and fellows in the FSU reported slightly lower but still very good levels of language proficiency. Fellows in the LATAM group reported moderate levels of language proficiency. In practice, the ability to follow lectures and discussions and converse in English was compromised (see English lessons on page 24).

Jewish community employment: All the fellows worked in Jewish communities as their primary job. The LATAM fellows had significantly greater seniority in community employment, in their organizations and current jobs. Their average time of employment as Jewish professionals was more than twice that of the other regions, 19 years, compared to an average of 8.8 years among the European fellows and 8.5 years among the FSU fellows. Several fellows had less seniority than required by the program: 12% (3) in Europe and 18% (3) in the FSU.

In summary, with respect to the admission criteria, all groups met the employment and professional experience criteria. According to participants' self-reports, the LATAM group was older than required and did not have the required command of English.

3.1.2 Additional background characteristics

- **Education:** The FSU group had the highest levels of education: 12% of fellows held PhDs (2) and most of the group held a master's degree (57%, 9). Half of the European fellows (50%, 8) held a master's degree. In the LATAM group, 23% (3) held a master's degree, and 31% (4) held a post-secondary certificate.
- **Additional academic courses and relevant training:** The FSU group was characterized by high rates of leadership and management academic studies and education and pedagogy (88%, 16 and 75%, 12, respectively), as well as professional training in Jewish leadership and communal work (75%, 12). In LATAM, around half of the fellows reported academic studies in the field of Jewish studies (54%, 7), leadership and management (46%, 6) and NGO management (46%, 6). Many fellows had also taken professional courses in leadership and management (77%, 10). European fellows reported lower levels of academic studies: about a third of them reported studies in education and pedagogy (38%, 6), leadership and management and Jewish studies (31%, 5), but many of them had taken professional courses on leadership and training (69%, 11). It should be noted that only a small percentage of fellows from all regions reported studies in community development (13%, 6).

- **Job responsibility:** The scope of responsibility in the position is an indicator of the fellows’ place in the organizational hierarchy. Program fellows were supposed to be in the middle tier of their organization. The LATAM fellows reported the highest rates of responsibility: 100% (13) of the group are in charge of employees, 85% (11) are in charge of a budget and 77% (10) are in charge of volunteers, altogether 62% (8) were responsible for all three. Lowest levels of responsibility were reported by the European group – 31% (5) were responsible for all three.
- **Country of origin and country of residence:** The fellows from the FSU did not express an opinion on the diversity of nationalities among the fellows in their group. In Europe, some mentioned that there was over-representation of England with 3 participants from this country. The LATAM fellows remarked that most of the fellows were Argentines working in Buenos Aires or Argentines working in other countries; only one fellow did not originate from Argentina. They suggested including fellows from countries such as Panama and Mexico.

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

3.1.3 Leadership and commitment to the community

All the fellows from LATAM, 93% (14) fellows from the FSU and 77% (10) fellows from Europe perceived themselves as Jewish professionals. Most of the fellows also felt a sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals, while a lower percentage saw themselves as Jewish community leaders (Table 2).

Table 2: Pre-program Self-Perceptions of Program Fellows as Jewish Professionals and Leaders[^]

	Europe N=16	FSU N=16	LATAM N=13
You see yourself as a Jewish professional	77% (10)	93% (14)	100% (13)
You see yourself as a Jewish community leader	54% (7)	64% (9)	77% (10)
You feel a sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals	77% (10)	86% (12)	85% (11)

[^]To a great or very great extent

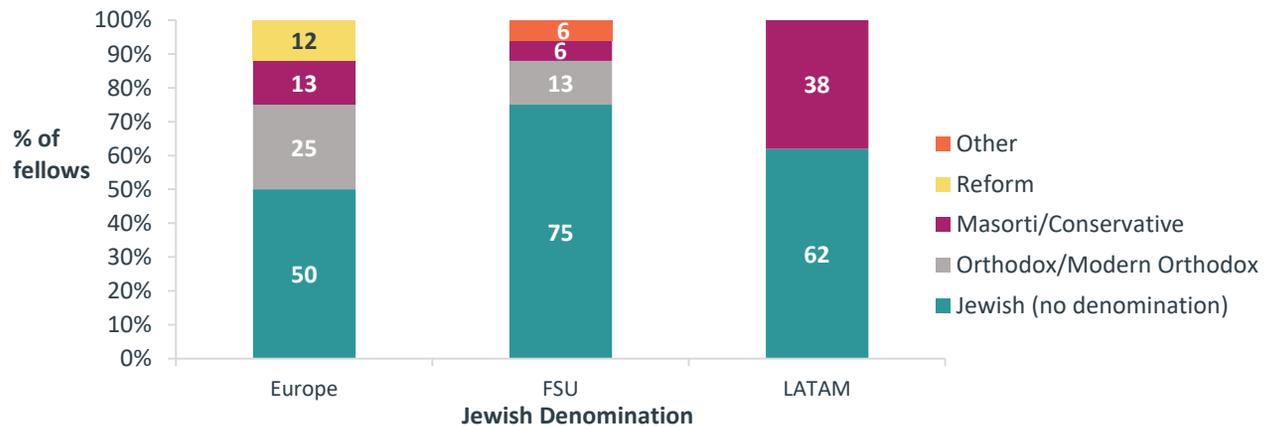
Almost all fellows see themselves continuing to work as Jewish professionals for the next three years (92%, 12, in Europe and LATAM, 93%, 13 in the FSU). A high percentage of fellows from Europe estimate that they will remain in the same organization in the near future (85%, 11), compared with about two-thirds of their colleagues in the FSU (72%, 10) and LATAM (69%, 9).

3.1.4 Jewish denomination

Figure 1 presents the fellows’ Jewish denomination. Most fellows in all the groups 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 the option “secular.”

The composition of the European group is the most diverse of the three.

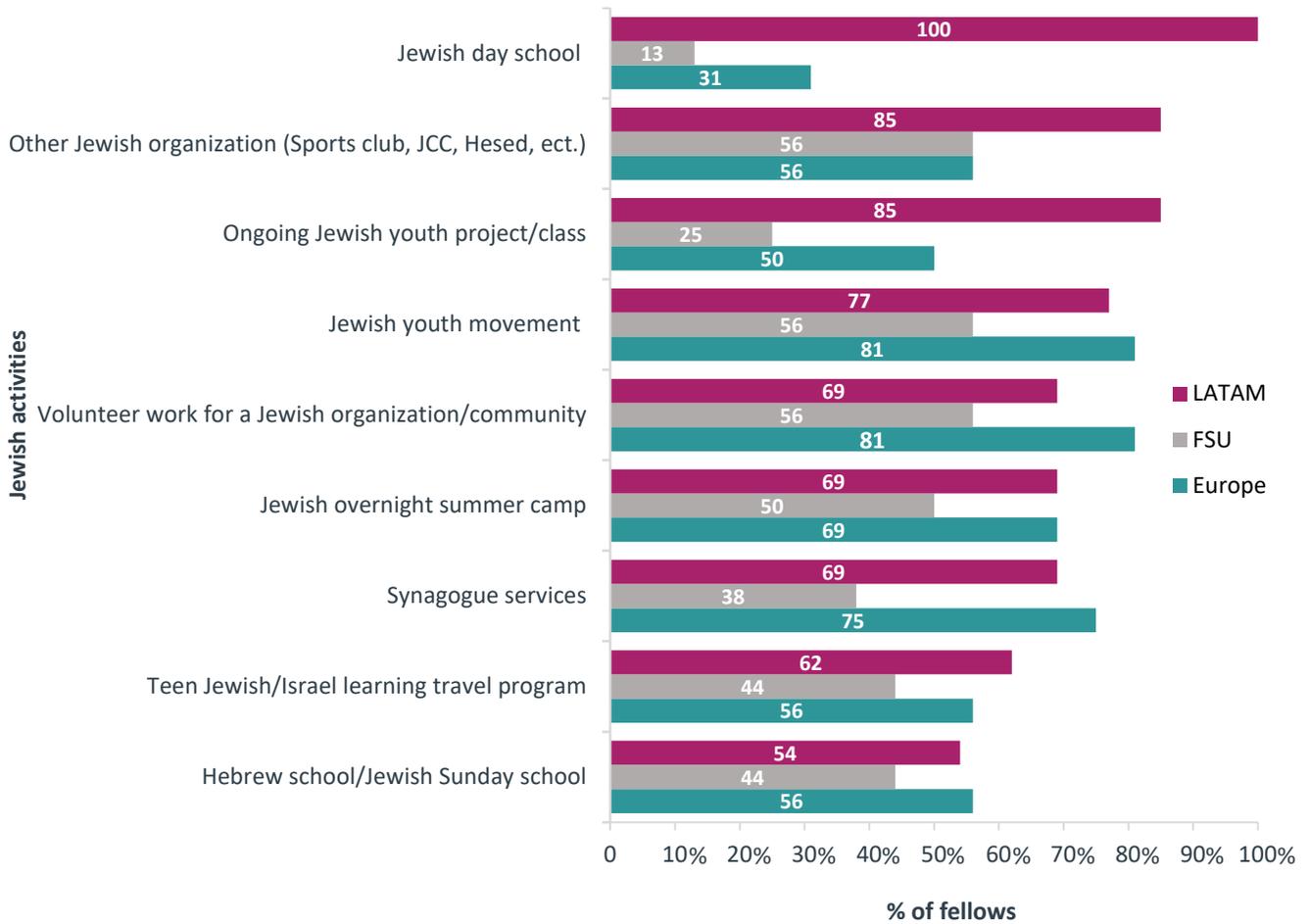
Figure 1: Jewish Denomination (percentages)



3.1.5 Jewish experience

The groups differ in their childhood experiences of Judaism. The LATAM group had been the most active, followed by the Europeans. The FSU group had participated in the fewest number of activities, in some cases because there were not many activities in their communities.

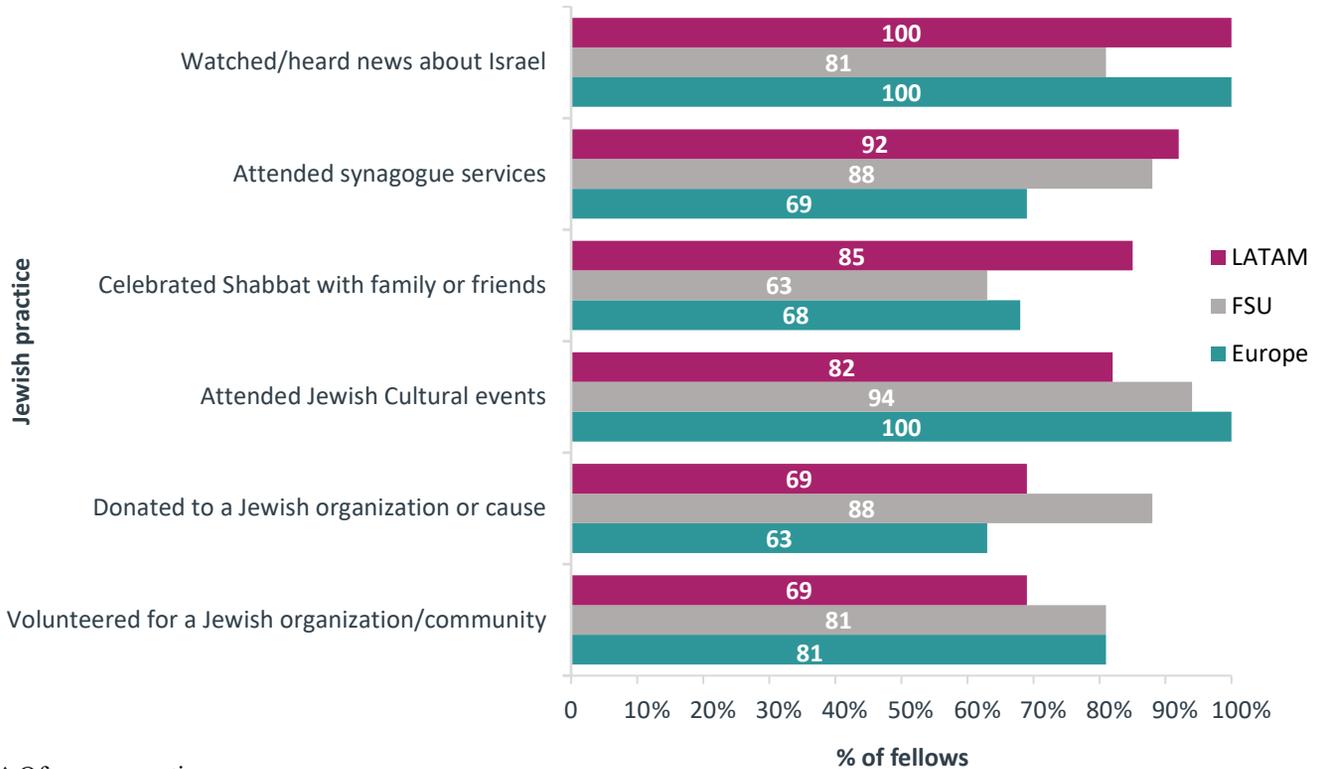
Figure 2: Experience of Judaism in Childhood (percentages)



3.1.6 Participation in Jewish and Israel-related activities

All fellows are currently very involved in a variety of Jewish and Israel-related activities (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Jewish Practices in the Previous Two Years (percentages)^



^ Often or sometimes

3.1.7 Fellows' communities and geographical distribution

The fellows represented different Jewish communities, varying greatly in size and characteristics and, therefore, also in needs. The European communities ranged from 400 Jews in Wroclaw to around 350,000 in Paris; The LATAM communities ranged from 2,500 in Lima to 250,000 in Buenos Aires; the FSU range was smaller, from several thousand in the small communities to 100,000 in St. Petersburg.

3.1.8 Programmatic differences

The manner of joining the program, the participation fee and the cost of the program varied in different areas. In Europe, most fellows came following Yesod advertisements and on the recommendation of first cohort graduates. Many of the FSU fellows work for the JDC or related organizations, many came following first-cohort recommendations and some even tried to get accepted to the previous cohort. A nominal participation fee was collected from the fellows in Europe, and no payment was collected from the FSU fellows.

In LATAM, the Kaplan program was presented as an up-to-date version of a prestigious leadership program in the region, the Directores [sic] Program. The Directores Program had not been running for a decade, and once word of the program renewal became widespread, Leatid sent out emails to Jewish organizations in the region, and at the same time, fellows approached Leatid asking to join as the word spread. The cost of the program, which was payable over two years, was significantly higher than in the other regions, and was shared among the participants, their organizations, and the program itself, during a period of great economic instability and high inflation in the region. The fellows' expectations from the program were especially high, because of the image of the program, the experiences they heard from the Directores graduates and because of the large financial investment to which they had committed.

3.2 Attendance and Satisfaction with the Program: Seminars and In-Between Activities

The program comprised regional seminars, a global seminar, and various opportunities to learn and develop in between them: webinars, mentoring, coaching, group projects, English lessons, and home assignments.

3.2.1 Program seminars

The program format calls for two regional seminars, the global seminar, and a final regional seminar. The LATAM program, which spanned almost two years, from April 2018 to December 2019, included three regional seminars, the global seminar, and a final regional seminar. Seminar attendance is elaborated in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Attendance at Seminars

	Europe	FSU	LATAM
First regional seminar	100% (16) Jerusalem, Israel	100% (16) Jerusalem, Israel	100% (14) Buenos Aries, Argentina
Second regional seminar	88% (14) Prague, Czech Republic	94% (15) Kishinev, Moldova	100% (14) Santiago, Chile
Third regional seminar (LATAM)	-	-	86% (12) São Paulo, Brazil
Global seminar	88% (14) Chicago, USA	81% (13) Chicago, USA	93% (13) Chicago, USA
Third (fourth) regional seminar	81% (13) Barcelona, Spain	88% (14) Tbilisi, Georgia	93% (13) Buenos Aries, Argentina

All the fellows attended the first regional seminar. Situations such as instability in the country, visa non-compliance, pregnancy and childbirth prevented fellows from attending some of the following seminars. Four participants dropped out in the course of the program. Two fellows dropped out from Europe, one because of leaving the workplace and one because of admission to a doctoral program in another field; In FSU, one fellow who could not attend two seminars due to family issues dropped out, and in LATAM, a fellow had to leave the program due to changes in his organization.

Each regional seminar was followed by internal feedback. As for the global seminar, the Spertus Institute distributed questionnaires that were analyzed by the Kaplan program staff. In this cohort, the study team was asked to summarize its impressions regarding the global seminar based on the observations and interviews conducted during it, as detailed below.

The regional seminars

The regional seminars included a combination of theoretical lectures, workshops and site visits based on the four program core areas: leadership, management, integrating Jewish content, and community development. A unique program was built in each region for each seminar. There were no overlapping activities between the regions in the seminars, except for one workshop during the seminar in Israel (in the European and FSU seminars).

During the interviews with the fellows in the middle and at the end of the program, as well as in the end of program questionnaires, the fellows noted several activities that made a particular impression on them.

The European fellows mentioned: the emotional intelligence lecture and workshop, structured activities based on peer learning, a public-speaking workshop with Lior Shoham, and an inspiring talk by Abraham Infeld.

The FSU fellows noted: fundraising, negotiation management, case studies led by fellows and the public-speaking workshop with Lior Shoham.

The LATAM fellows were extremely pleased with the connection to the local community where each regional seminar was held, site visits and conversations with local professionals, as well as the development of the peer network during the seminars.

In addition, without being asked about it, the fellows in Europe and FSU noted favorably the response of the staff to the feedback they gave, and the changes made following their feedback. For example, the European team added sessions based on case studies provided by the fellows, and in the FSU, the teaching method of Jewish content was changed, and a workshop on fundraising was added.

The global seminar

The global seminar was very successful in terms of the atmosphere, the chemistry between fellows from different regions, and the “spirit” of the seminar. The exposure to Jewish professionals from various communities around the world was very significant, and it seemed as if promising initial relationships were established between fellows from different regions. In terms of theoretical contents, Dr. Hal Lewis’s lectures made an impact on the fellows and many of the ideas that they internalized were from his lectures (leadership as a relationship, followership, sharing power, and the imperfect leader). The active learning components, the communication workshop given by the Second City, and the Fox in a Box escape room were both enjoyable and served as learning resources. The exposure to the Chicago Jewish community and their diverse programs and services was enriching and though provoking, particularly the talk given by Mr. Lonnie Nasatir, the president of the Federation. The program’s logistical aspects, Spertus’s facilities, the meals, and the leisure activities were also highly appreciated.

The global seminar was planned by mainly by Spertus. Throughout the process, members of the JDC team found it difficult to influence the design of the seminar according to their expertise and experience from the previous cycle, and they also encountered resistance to making changes in real time, due to the limited cooperation on the part of the Spertus team.

The fellows expressed disappointment with many aspects of the global seminar, as follows.

Seminar contents: The contents of the global seminar overlapped the regional ones; the time-consuming pre-seminar tasks were not addressed during the seminar; the pre-assigned reading materials did not form the basis for the beginning of the discussion, but rather the lecturers repeated the content in full during the lectures; very little time was spent on integrating Jewish contents and community development – most of the lecturers did not incorporate any Jewish aspects in their lectures, and only one session at the end of the seminar was dedicated directly to community development; very little time was allocated to peer learning and case studies; and there were very few formal sessions in which fellows from different regions shared their experiences and challenges.

Learning methods: There was an imbalance between theoretical learning and practical workshops. While the few workshops that were conducted were highly successful, the large number of theoretical sessions did not include enough new knowledge. Most of the instruction was frontal without the use of technological means, and many of the sessions were held in the presence of all the fellows, so that many of them found it difficult to express themselves in this forum. In addition, the simultaneous translation into two languages made it difficult for many of the fellows to concentrate.

Time allocation: The learning days were very intense, with limited time to relax in between sessions, and not enough off-time to unwind and process at the end of the day; not enough time was devoted to the framing of the activities within the wider perspective of the program or to manage expectations before and during the program.

Networking: The spirit that the fellows from LATAM brought with them contributed greatly to breaking the ice and creating a good atmosphere full of positive energy. However, there was not enough time to make meaningful connections. During the classes there were almost no peer-to-peer meetings in small, global groups, and there were not enough opportunities for discourse during the few breaks. The limited language abilities of the LATAM fellows and the reluctance to speak English among the FSU fellows during the formal sessions also limited the creation of deep ties. The impact of the few opportunities for building a significant global peer network is evident in the findings on the development of this network (see Section 3.3.3). It is important to note that JDC team tried to find creative solutions for the lack of time to interact and exchange ideas. They came up with the idea that fellows meet for “breakfast brain dates,” an idea that was adopted by many fellows.

Overall, the European and FSU fellows were more positive about their regional seminars and expressed

relatively low satisfaction with the global seminar. In contrast, the fellows from LATAM, were more satisfied with the global seminar than with their regional seminars.

3.2.2 Activities in between seminars

The activities in between the seminars varied somewhat among the regions. Webinars and home assignments (reading materials, videos, etc.) were given in all regions. In Europe and LATAM, the fellows worked with mentors. In the FSU, the fellows took coaching sessions. In Europe, the fellows studied in *havruta* pairs, and in LATAM, the fellows worked on a project in pairs or in small groups.

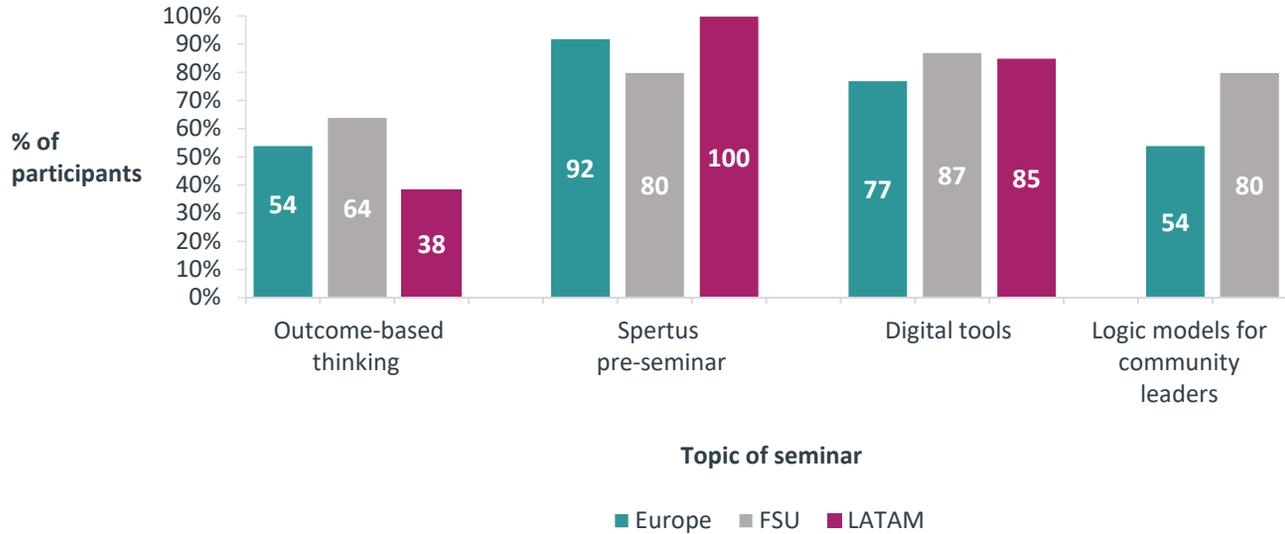
Webinars

The program included global webinars presented by program staff, Spertus, JDC staff and additional guest speakers. Europe provided one regional webinar presented by program staff and LATAM provided several regional webinars hosted by program staff and professional lecturers. The benefits of the digital platform were hardly reflected in the sessions. Most of the webinars were conducted in a basic format of frontal lectures, with very little possibility of talking in small groups or opportunities for conversations and discussions among the participants.

Most of the fellows, 92% from all the regions, attended at least 2 webinars during the program. The percentage of participants and topics of the global webinars is presented in **Figure 4**. Interviews with fellows revealed that the practical webinar in digital tools was the most successful of all, and many reported that they had begun using the tools they had acquired.

The percentage of participants and topics of the regional webinars is presented in **Figure 5**. In most cases, about half of the fellows reported that the content of the webinar was relevant to their work. In LATAM, there was high satisfaction from the team management webinar.

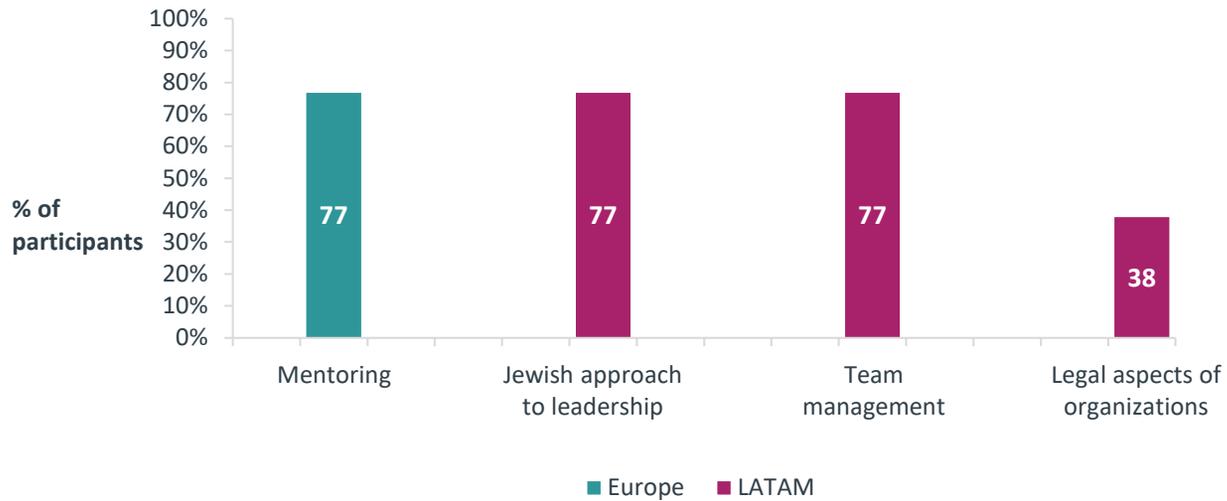
Figure 4: Attendance at the Global Webinars (percentages)*



* Fellows from the LATAM group attended all of the global webinars but data about their attendance were collected for only three of them.

The regional webinar in LATAM regarding team management was relevant to the fellows, the rest of the webinars were reported to be less relevant than the global ones (**Figure 5**). It should be noted that no regional webinars were held in the FSU.

Figure 5: Attendance at the Regional Webinars (percentages)



Many fellows liked the webinar platform but said it should be used for additional goals besides lectures: they would appreciate social gatherings, a forum for discussions, learning and sharing among colleagues, even on a monthly basis. Another suggestion was to hold a webinar after each seminar to formulate, process and practice the newly acquired knowledge. There is no doubt that the dramatic increase in the use of online meeting platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic period has accustomed the fellows to using these tools, and possibly upgraded their skills.

Mentoring and Coaching

As part of the lessons learned from the first cohort, it was decided to continue providing mentoring to the fellows in Europe and provide mentoring in LATAM, whereas the FSU program offered fellows a limited number of hours of work with coaches, tailored to the specific needs of each fellow, instead of mentoring, which was found to be less culturally suitable. The mentors in both regions were volunteers, while the coaches were hired and funded by the program. All the regions held a meeting at which they presented the goals and the work process with the mentor/coach. In LATAM and the FSU, there were

follow-up activities during the year, in Europe, the follow-up was not intensive. In the FSU, the usage of the budgeted hours for each participant was monitored and they were encouraged to utilize them all; the unused hours were transferred to other fellows. In LATAM, there were update meetings on the subject in the middle of the year and at the end. In Europe, two participants were unable to initiate the process with their assigned mentors and no action was taken by program staff to restart the process. However, several fellows from all three regions said at the end of the program that the framework of the mentoring/coaching was not clear enough with regard to its purpose, way of working, expectations, scope of activity, and how much could be asked of the mentors, knowing that they were volunteers.

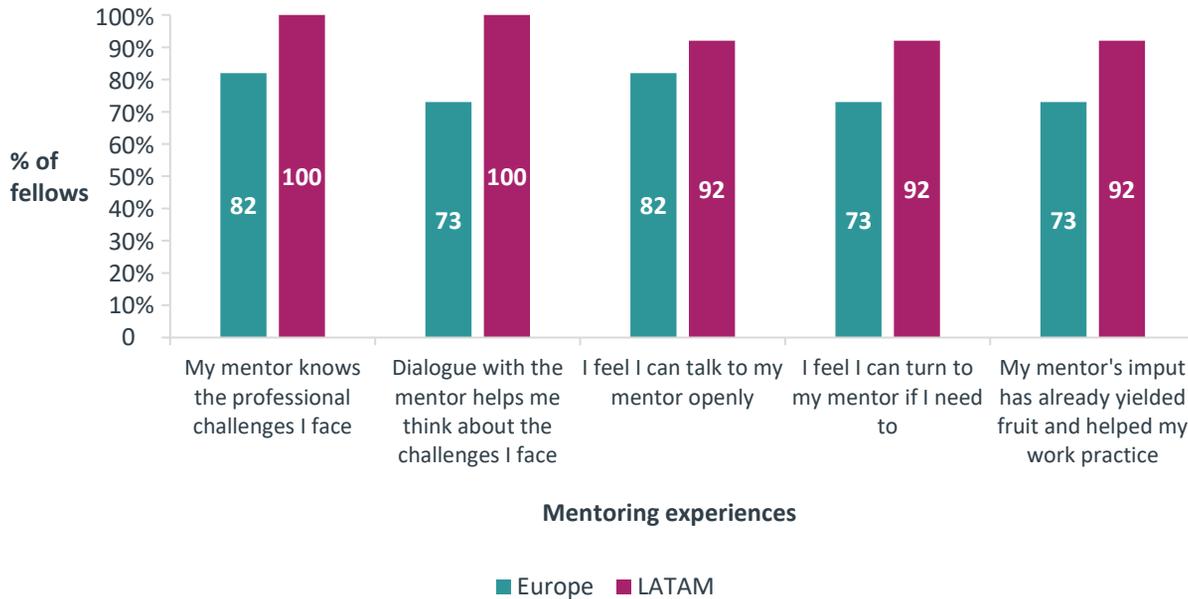
All the fellows from the FSU and LATAM participated in the mentoring/coaching process, as did 85% (11) of the European group. The highest use of the process took place in the FSU, an average of 7.9 sessions, in Europe the average number of sessions was 6.9, while in LATAM the average number was 5.7 (Table 4).

Table 4: Participation in Mentoring and Coaching

	Europe	FSU	LATAM
	N=13	N=14	N=13
Proportion of fellows who participated	85%	100%	100%
Range number of sessions	4-10	3-10	4-8
Average number of sessions	6.9	7.9	5.7

The fellows reported high levels of connection and trust in their mentor, particularly in LATAM (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Mentoring Experience (percentages)^



^ Strongly or somewhat agree

In the open-ended questions and in the interviews, the fellows from Europe and LATAM expressed mixed feelings about the mentoring process. Some had a good experience, others felt that it did not contribute much to their progress.

"It (mentoring) was one of the best things that happened to me in the program, we had a very good relationship. He helped me see a few points in my conduct, helped with working on some concrete situations, he gave me tools and material for thought. It was very professional; it was a pleasant and very welcoming place." (LATAM)¹

¹ All the quotations from the participants are presented in this document as reported by the participants themselves in the questionnaires and interviews and have not been edited.

Other fellows reported:

"Mentoring didn't work for me the way it seems to have worked for some others. It was like some kind of therapy with a distant friend." (LATAM)

Fellows made several suggestions for improving the mentoring process. They suggested ensuring a match in terms of gender and culture; timing – the mentoring should start a bit later in order for the fellows to reflect, and continue after the program ends; the selection of the mentors – the fellows suggested more professional mentors, like the coaches who were brought in for their workshops.

"The volunteer mentors have great knowledge, but the professional coaches are on a different level very often." (Europe)

The coaching sessions in the FSU focused on several areas: fundraising (64%, 9), team management (50%, 7), marketing (36%, 5), public speaking (14%, 2), and other areas, such as crisis management and creativity (14%, 2). The fellows were highly satisfied with their coaching sessions: 93% (13) said that the dialogue with their coach had helped them think about the challenges they faced and that the coach's input had already yielded fruit.

One of the fellows praised the process:

"I am grateful for this experience, also the fact that I could choose what to work on. I chose to work on fundraising and public speaking. I started using the skills I received from the coach on budgeting, within two weeks. I am really pleased - no wasted time, and very effective! I received concrete tools for setting up fundraising actions for projects. Something really practical." (FSU)

The decision to provide coaching proved successful. The coaching seemed to serve as an essential and practical tool that mediated between the knowledge and tools acquired in the program and their application in practice in the day-to-day work. Among other things, the coaches helped the fellows prepare grants, plan team meetings, organize and carefully draw up work plans, and encouraged them to use the digital tools.

Paired learning (Havruta)

Seventy-seven percent (10) of the European fellows learned in pairs (havrutas) – using Project Zug, an online learning platform provided by the Hadar Institute. Several fellows did not participate in the learning activity because they could not find the necessary time for it. Four fellows reported that they enjoyed the learning:

"It is a very good platform that enables those who want to learn from our Jewish sources and delve into the method of havruta learning."

Two fellows mentioned that the learning was an opportunity to develop a deeper relationship with their partner as well. However, several of the fellows did not find the learning beneficial. Some felt the timing, during the summer, was stressful and wrong, several felt that they were mis-matched with their partners, and one fellow felt that platform did not bring him any new knowledge.

The fellows' feedback suggests that the pair matching was not optimal; many of them did not understand the benefits of the platform and its innovative features, which are of interest also to those with extensive traditional havruta learning experience; There was no follow-up on the implementation of the activity, no efforts were made to re-assign partners for fellows for whom the initial pairing was unsuccessful.

Homework assignments

The European group was given a variety of assignments: TED talks, emotional intelligence questionnaires and case studies, and three presentations during the last seminar in Barcelona: a personal statement on "What I Now Know About Being a Jewish Community Professional," a summary of the program and a personal declaration of what each fellow is committed to in his or her work in the future, and sharing their "desert island text" – a Jewish text (in the broadest sense) that has made a significant impact on who they have become as a Jewish community professional and leader.

The fellows appreciated these assignments and felt that they enhanced their learning and development:

"The learning between seminars was generally very helpful and considered and complimented the seminar we had just attended and the next seminar well."

"Most of the assignments that were focused on my professional development and to be able to understand myself better and getting to know myself better were the prime step in order to know which are my differences and how to address them. As for the pre-reading it really expanded my understanding of what means to be a leader, how to become a leader, what types of leaders are and which type of leadership can get the more results in a specific community or situation, and more important everyone can become a leader - it can be taught."

"It's precisely these 'out of the box' tools such as being made to watch Simon Sinek again(!) that I feel directly refine my work. Absolutely essential and precisely what I wanted from the program."

The LATAM group were given various assignments in between seminars: viewing TED talks and videos on leadership, writing about the possibility of applying strategic planning in their organization, designing a fundraising questionnaire, preparing a video clip, and answering questions about reading materials they had been given. The fellows said that these assignments were somewhat helpful. The homework helped them understand content and theories at some level. However, there was a sense that the homework was not sufficiently related to the content of the seminars. Some fellows felt that they were “assignments to be done,” which did not contribute to their development and did not form a basis for discussion between fellows and program staff or as a basis for discussion and thinking with other fellows later on in the program.

The FSU group was given one homework assignment, which related to Jewish identity. Understandably, the fellows did not refer to this one task as significant.

All regions were given assignments ahead of the global seminar: reading materials and various questions to answer. The fellows reported that it was an effort to accomplish these tasks. The way in which assignments were treated during the seminar was problematic. Regarding the reading materials, the lecturers did not use the materials as a starting point for the lectures; rather, they repeated all the information in the lecture. One very small reference was made to the fellows’ responses to the questions. Fellows expressed much disappointment in feedback after the global seminar as well as in the end of program questionnaire, such as:

“However, the pre-work for the Chicago international session felt entirely pointless and not only that, but after the session it felt like I had wasted a lot of time. The pre-work was very stressful and then not fully utilized when we were there.” (Europe)

English lessons

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 (Europe and FSU) and the global seminar in Chicago is taught in English. Moreover, English is essential for communication between fellows from different regions. Most of the FSU fellows received English lessons as provided by the program (71%, 10), as did a small group of the LATAM fellows (23%, 3).

FSU fellows whose English level was insufficient were offered English lessons, which were usually taught in pairs. The lessons started a little late, after the first seminar, but most of those who took them expressed great satisfaction with their contribution. Seven fellows (70%) reported that the English

lessons improved their English to great or very great extent. In fact, several fellows noted that their considerable progress in English during the program was one of the significant contributions of the program as a whole:

"The English teacher [on behalf of the program] taught intentionally according to the topics of the program, as opposed to the more general online learning. From the first seminar I tried not to listen to the translation. So, in Chicago I understood everything, although talking was harder. I felt very comfortable."

The LATAM staff expressed concerns about members of the group's command of English. An attempt was made to incorporate a lecture in English at one of the regional seminars and failed. In the mid-program interviews the fellows reported that they underwent a screening test to determine who was eligible to receive English classes, and only a few were approved. In practice very few of the group participants received English lessons.

During the global seminar, we observed significant language gaps. Many fellows from LATAM needed the interpreters' services and had difficulty conducting a fluent conversation in English. A small part of the FSU group also used the services of an interpreter, and many of them, even those who did not need the interpreter, spoke little English during the formal activities at the seminar. It seemed to be less a matter of command of the language and more a matter of their self-confidence.

Joint project

The fellows in LATAM were instructed to work with a colleague from the program and develop a project of their choice. The division into pairs was carried out by the program team, which was perceived by some of the fellows to limit the diversity and creativity of thought. Their work was accompanied by an instructor who has a background in Jewish organizations. The fellows appreciated her skills but found her knowledge wanting:

"Carla's assistance was excellent at the technical level. At the level of Jewish and communal knowledge it was null. The realities of Jewish institutions have a certain identity that must be taken in consideration."

It was not clear to the fellows whether the project was an exercise in collaborative work and networking or whether the expectation was for them to create a real, usable product:

"The project was not clear - whether the goal is to do the project or just to practice. I took it as an opportunity to practice. The goals are not clear enough. If the goal was actually to get it done, I would choose something else... We sat and thought together but it wasn't real."

Some of the pairs spent a lot of time working, while others spent little time doing so. The topics covered by the projects included specific local needs such as increasing school enrolment, improving the emotional-person centered institutional climate, and universal topics such as a mutual responsibility campaign for assisting Jewish communities in times of financial or political crisis, improving the teaching of Hebrew in the Diaspora, and increasing the involvement of volunteers in the community.

Although the fellows' progress was tracked by program staff, when they were told, just days before the last seminar, that they would be presenting their projects to the audience during the seminar, many of them felt distressed and unprepared, and rushed to prepare accordingly. They were further disappointed when they realized that the audience included their fellows and only a limited number of mentors. Only a few of the fellows plan to continue working on the project to bring it to fruition.

The fellows disagree on whether and how such a project should be included in subsequent cycles of the program. Some felt that the project was a good method to implement the newly acquired knowledge and skills:

"It is a very good idea to carry out a project to leverage knowledge acquired in the program, however it would [be better to] leave open the possibility that the participants can choose their teammates or that they can decide if they prefer to carry out projects on their own, without imposing on a partner that maybe does not work as expected. I recommend the participation of Leatid professionals to help resolve conflicts during the development of projects or by giving effective advice when requested by program members becomes a little more evident. I think it is necessary to follow up to accompany the participants a little more."

Other fellows were not sure how much the project contributed to the program:

"I didn't feel that the final project was important. It looked like a vague exercise all the time, disconnected of the rest of the program. At the end it is confirmed, with a simple presentation for basically ourselves".

Overall, most participants think it is worthwhile to include the project in the future as well, while implementing some suggestions for improving the work:

- Working in groups rather than in pairs
- Having a more structured process of selecting the project
- Receiving feedback from colleagues about ideas that were formed in real time, during the seminars, and not at the end of the program
- Allowing opportunities for face-to-face work on the joint projects during the seminars

- Providing assistance for personal needs, such as motivation, the dynamics between partners, and driving the process forward
- Making implementation of the project and the provision of feedback to Leatid program requirements
- Announcing that the projects will be publicized among professionals in the area, thereby encouraging the fellows to aspire to excellence.

In conclusion, in all the regions, fellows said that they joined the program on the understanding that there would be activities and assignments from the program between the seminars. No complaints were made about workload. On the contrary, fellows from all the regions indicated that they had expected to be much more active than they were. The fellows from LATAM were particularly disappointed, considering the long breaks between the seminars. A diagrammatic summary of the participants' satisfaction is presented in **Table 5**. The FSU group were the most satisfied, although they were offered fewer activities, but those offered were very successful.

Table 5: Summary of Activities and Satisfaction

	Europe	FSU	LATAM
Webinars	😊	😊	😊
Mentoring/coaching	😞	😊	😞
Paired learning	😞	-	-
Home assignments	😊	-	😞
English lessons	-	😊	*
Joint project		-	😞

*No information was collected about English lessons in LATAM

Legend: 😊 Very satisfied 😊 Satisfied 😞 Disappointed

3.3 The Program's 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, the Kaplan program 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 6** presents the fellows' responses regarding the extent of the program's impact on these areas.

Table 6: Program Contribution to Expanded Knowledge in Various Content Areas[^]

	Europe	FSU	LATAM
	N=13	N=14	N=13
Integration of Jewish content in everyday work (Jewish learning, Jewish texts relevant to your work as a Jewish professional etc.)	85% (11)	43% (6)	23% (3)
Community development (models, methodologies, best practices)	46% (6)	50% (7)	92% (12)
Management skills (team management, annual planning, solving managerial dilemmas, marketing, fundraising, social media, M&E etc.)	31% (4)	50% (7)	39% (5)
Leadership (visionary thinking, strategic planning, leadership models and adaptive leadership, followership, power and power sharing, models of leadership)	92% (12)	36% (5)	92% (12)

[^]To a great or very great extent

The findings indicate variance in the reported contribution of the different content areas, consistent with the different emphases of the regional seminars. The findings from all sources of information (observations, interviews, and questionnaires) point to a greater emphasis on **Jewish content** in Europe than in the FSU and LATAM. The majority of fellows from Europe (85%, 11) compared to less than half of the FSU fellows (43%, 6) and only 23% (3) of the LATAM fellows, 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 provided by the program facilitators. In the FSU program, the format of a beit midrash delivered by an external lecturer was changed after the first seminar, and after the second seminar the topic was integrated as an integral part of the program content. For example, the second seminar included a lecture on the various streams of Judaism in the FSU, and the development of Jewish identity. This topic was very relevant for the fellows, as they attested in the mid-program interviews.

Several LATAM fellows mentioned the program's lack of "Jewishness" in the interviews:

"The program was really secular... if we don't connect to our sources, there is no difference between this program and Netflix training, for example."

According to the program team, they decided to minimize their work on Jewish contents at the regional seminars, counting on the global seminar to fill this content area. However, in hindsight they understood that their expectations that the integration of Jewish content in the global seminar would be enough, were unfounded.

Community development received a very positive rating from the LATAM fellows (92%, 12), but a low rating from the FSU (50%, 7) and European fellows (46%, 6). The great satisfaction in LATAM probably stems from the site visits conducted at the regional seminars in Chile and Brazil, in which the fellows met with many and varied professionals who represented diverse Jewish communities and organizations. Fellows from Europe and the FSU said that they would like to learn more about community development:

"More interaction with different top community models (even as just a case study) and their way of dealing with community problems and struggles, and more case studies." (Europe)

"What community development is and how to do it was unclear. More tools should be given to how community development is implemented." (FSU)

"There was a conversation in Prague with the head of the community association. It was nice but as one who works in the community it was more interesting to see the community model (not how many Jews there are and how many cemeteries). I am interested in how they work, what services they offer, there are other people working in communities like me. What content, what business model do they have in terms of strategy and customer acquisition, it was much more interesting, especially since the community there is similar to my community." (Europe)

About a half of the FSU fellows (50%, 7) and around a third of the LATAM (39%, 5) and European fellows (31%, 4) noted that the program had made a great contribution in the provision of **management** tools. However, nearly half of the European fellows (47%, 6) said that the program contributed little or nothing to their management skills or knowledge.

Almost all the fellows from Europe and LATAM (92%, 12) felt that the program contributed to their knowledge of **leadership**. However, only around a third of the FSU fellows (36%, 5) noted that the program had contributed greatly to their knowledge of leadership. This low ranking could be a result of the fellows' extensive education and training, or because they were referring mainly to the lectures on leadership at the global seminar, which they perceived to be superficial and to present a narrow American view of the subject. At the same time, during the interviews at the end of the program, many FSU fellows emphasized that their personal and professional confidence greatly increased following the program, and they are now taking on leadership roles, leading processes of change in their organizations and initiating new projects:

"The program allowed me to feel my strength! I work with managers of various organizations. In the past I had a hard time expressing my opinion ... Already after the first seminar, my feelings that the others were smarter than me were melting. I started talking! And I liked that ..." (FSU)

"The program gave me a professional urge, a kind of self-confidence, made me get out of my comfort zone ... No more fear ... Belief in myself that can do a lot, belief in my personal abilities" (FSU)

3.3.2 Perceptions and motivation for a career in the Jewish community

The Kaplan program strives to develop the professional identity of middle-level professionals in Jewish communities, and direct them towards leadership roles, thereby increasing their influence on their communities. The program's 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 the pre-program and end-of-program questionnaires.

Fellows from all regions emphasized the programs' impact on their reflections regarding their professional work:

"After you work for a few years in Jewish community especially in a middle to small one - you start to have second thoughts, start to lose your excitement and for sure, you start lose 'the' vision: Why I'm doing it? Who we are? In which direction should our organizations go? How do I address the continuing need for improvement?... In my view here is where KAPLAN FELLOWS @ YESOD program started to address to this pressing need. The program put an effort in addressing to all these fundamental questions..." (Europe)

"Years ago, I asked [the direct manager] if I had a horizon for professional advancement ... I understood that not a lot... Now I realize that I can create myself without waiting for them to be created for me. A negative answer is not the limit. I see myself on a global level. This vision came to me during the program." (FSU)

"I have questions about my place in the organization, me and my supervisor have different worldviews, a different form of speech. If I had not done the program I would now be under pressure, I would think I have no options. Now that I see that in my city and in the world, I have something to contribute and to do both outside my organization and my regular role, I can move on." (LATAM)

Table 7 presents the fellows’ perceptions of the program’s contribution to their development as Jewish professionals.

Table 7: Program’s Contribution to the Fellows’ Development as Jewish Professionals[^]

To what extent did the program...	Europe	FSU	LATAM
	N=13	N=14	N=13
Help you understand your strengths and challenges as a Jewish professional	85% (11)	92% (13)	77% (10)
Strengthen your wish to build a professional career in the Jewish community	85% (11)	72% (10)	84% (11)
Help you recognize new opportunities in your role or in your organization	85% (11)	65% (9)	77% (10)
Help you think about the next steps in your professional journey	77% (10)	79% (11)	92% (12)
Help you formulate a leadership approach that suits you personally	69% (9)	58% (8)	84% (11)
Help you better understand what issues you want to promote in your community	62% (8)	43% (6)	84% (11)
Strengthen your interest in Jewish learning	54% (7)	43% (6)	38% (5)
Change your perception of your place in the community	46% (6)	57% (8)	69% (9)

[^]To a great or very great extent

The program’s contribution to the development of the fellows as Jewish professionals was different in each region. In Europe, the main influences were on “understanding your strengths and challenges as a Jewish professional” (85%, 11), “strengthening your wish to build a professional career in the

Jewish community” (85%, 11) and “helping you recognize new opportunities in your role or in your organization” (85%, 11). In the FSU, the program had a strong impact on the fellows “understanding your strengths and challenges as a Jewish professional” (92%, 13), and at lower rates, “helping you think about the next steps in your professional journey” (79%, 11) and “helping you recognize new opportunities in your role or in your organization” (72%, 10%). In LATAM the program highly contributed to “helping you think about the next steps in your professional journey” (92%, 12), “strengthening your wish to build a professional career in the Jewish community” (84%, 11), “helping you formulate a leadership approach that suits you personally” (84%, 11), and “helping you better understand what issues you want to promote in your community” (84%, 11).

The European group gave low scores for the contribution to “changing your perception of your place in the Jewish community” (46%, 6). The FSU group gave lower scores to the program’s contribution to “helping you better understand what issues you want to promote in your community” (43%, 6) and “strengthening your interest in Jewish learning” (43%, 6). The LATAM group felt that the program contributed less to “strengthening your interest in Jewish learning” (38%, 5).

The differences between the groups can be explained by the differences in the fellows’ positions, seniority, and age (the latter between LATAM and the other two regions) and by the emphasis given by each regional team.

In addition, we asked the fellows about their self-perception 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 and Jewish community leaders, and what was their sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals. **Table 8** presents the fellows’ perceptions before and after the program.

Table 8: Fellows’ Self-Perceptions as Jewish Professionals[^]

	Europe (N=13)		FSU (N=14)		LATAM (N=13)	
	pre	post	pre	post	pre	post
See yourself as a Jewish professional	77% (10)	100% (13)	93% (13)	100% (14)	100% (13)	92% (12)
See yourself as a Jewish community leader	54% (7)	77% (10)	64% (9)	79% (11)	77% (10)	85% (11)
Feel a sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals	77% (10)	85% (11)	93% (13)	86% (12)	85% (11)	92% (12)

[^] To a great extent or very great extent

The initial levels of self-perceptions as Jewish professionals were higher among the FSU and LATAM fellows than among the European fellows, particularly in “seeing yourself as a Jewish community leader.” In all regions there was an increase in the self-perception of the fellows in seeing themselves as Jewish community leaders. There was a noticeable increase among the fellows from Europe in their self-perception as Jewish professionals – from 77% (10) before the program to 100% (13) at the end.

3.3.3. Professional network, professional connections

The regional networks appear to be well formed: 92% (12) of the European and LATAM fellows and 79% (11) of the FSU fellows reported that they had established new professional ties with their peers or strengthened existing ones. Note that in all regions, some of the fellows knew each other or had worked together before the program and some of them worked in the same organization or in the same community. All the fellows kept in touch in between the seminars, mostly on a personal basis, and in order to share information and consult; all of the European and LATAM fellows (100%, 13) and 69% (9) of the FSU fellows agreed that beyond these individual relationships, they had formed a regional peer network.

One fellow from LATAM noted:

“The most important thing is the social network we have created and share experiences between us, we have a very great motivation to continue to be in contact and exchange information, consultations, deliberations, that was the most important thing.”

The global network did not take shape as the fellows had expected. While they saw each other during one of the webinars and worked together in small multiregional groups before the global seminar to prepare a joint assignment, no real connections were made before the seminar. During the global seminar there were very few opportunities to create meaningful connections. The seminar schedule did not include enough time for peer learning and formal and informal communication between the fellows. The “projects fair,” in which the fellows were supposed to present themselves as well as hear from others about their organizations and professional activities, was held at the end of a long and tedious day, was not well planned, and caused hard feelings of missing out and frustration among the fellows.

“I am maddened by the loss of opportunity; I will never again share a physical space with that many people from LATAM who have a completely different way of running their Jewish community. I think that the way they do things there is not applicable to my country, I don't really know because I didn't have a chance to hear how they do things, if we had one or two case studies, here is a community problem/issue, how do you deal with it in Brazil/Argentina etc..? I have no idea! I wanted to hear how my colleagues do things around the world and we missed that opportunity. When we did the little case study in the fair, oh my god that was so painful, the amount of work everyone put in and it was so irrelevant to them.” (Europe)

The fellows expressed their disappointment at the lack of time for peer learning and interpersonal communication during the global seminar. As mentioned above, the program staff tried to carve time for meetings and suggested breakfast meetings in mixed couples for personal and professional acquaintance and networking.

In addition, the language level of some of the FSU and most of the LATAM fellows was insufficient for creating a more profound professional networking. Even when some of the language barriers were removed with the help of non-verbal communication and assistance from the interpreters, the quality of the communication was very limited.

In practice, so far, the activity of the global network has been very limited. 46% (6) fellows from Europe, 28% (4) from the FSU, and 30% (4) from LATAM reported that they were in touch with colleagues from other regions, mainly for personal or friendship reasons, and for exchanging information and best practices.²

² After the end of the program of the second cohort, the Kaplan team began building a peer-to-peer network, and as a result, an increase in communication within the global network may be expected.

3.3.4 Application of knowledge and skills

Since this report is based on measurements conducted during and immediately after the program, it is too early 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

Sharing the experience with direct managers is important, in order to get support and permission to implement new ideas at the workplace. In this context it is important to note that the European and FSU fellows participated in the program at their own initiative while their LATAM peers were partially sponsored by their employers. Consequently, there are differences in the degree to which fellows' direct supervisors support them in promoting changes in their organizations and work (Table 9).

Table 9: Expectations and Support of Supervisors to Introduce Changes following the Program[^]

"My supervisor (or board) in my organization ..."	Europe	FSU	LATAM
	N=13	N=14	N=13
Expects me to apply the things I learned in the program	38% (5)	72% (10)	77% (10)
Supports my attempts to introduce changes in my work following what I learned in the program	54% (7)	64% (9)	100% (13)

[^] Somewhat or strongly agree

All of the LATAM fellows (100%, 13) reported that their supervisors supported their attempts to introduce changes in their work, compared to over half of the of the European group (54%, 7) and almost two-thirds of the FSU group (64%, 9).

Most of the FSU (72%, 10) and LATAM (77%, 10) fellows reported that their supervisors expected them to apply the knowledge they had learned in the program, compared to only 38% (5) of European fellows.

Fewer differences were reported about the degree of sharing their experiences and knowledge with colleagues and direct supervisors in the workplaces. Over half of the fellows shared their insights from the program with their colleagues; 62% (8) of European, 54% (7) of LATAM and 50% (7) of FSU fellows shared the program and their learning with their direct supervisors at their workplace:

"I talk about the program all the time. It's really a program that affects you ... even in Torah lessons ...I incorporate the ideas I learned during the program. My clients are very satisfied. I talked to the management of the community, to my supervisor, to my colleagues ..." (LATAM).

Applying the new knowledge and tools

The Kaplan program 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, we asked the fellows about their use of the various program materials and their practical application in their work.

All the European and most of the FSU (93%, 13) and LATAM fellows (92%, 12) said that they had changed or were planning to change their work content or practices as a result of their participation in the program. The areas targeted for change were consistent with the different emphases of the regional seminars. For the European fellows, it revolved around presentation techniques and emotional intelligence; for the FSU fellows – it was team management and fundraising; for LATAM fellows – leadership and management, including strategic development. Only a few fellows, all of them from Europe, noted a change in the use of the Jewish texts.

"Some of the concepts and dynamics given in the seminars I immediately applied in my work groups, some as an experiment and some on a regular basis ... Now I start working on the plans for 2020 and some of the tools I learned I adopt when building new programs or presenting existing ones. All the tools they have given us in working on the projects I have been using in practice. Also, when it comes to planning work plans, I use what I have learned." (LATAM)

Fellows from all three regions noted that the program changed their professional conduct and self-perception, contributed to their self-confidence, and increased their confidence to do more: initiate activities, such as presenting lectures and workshops, submit grant proposals, start new projects, pursue fundraising, to realize their professional ideas, and look for further personal and professional development:

"For some time now, I have felt 'stuck' in the same place. I wanted to get out, move on and I realized that there is not much to grow in the community. Now came the opportunity to try myself as a manager. I really see the connection between this change and the seminars and mentoring." (Europe)

"After 10 years in the community, I took a big project. I am more confident. It's a general feeling about self-esteem." (Europe)

"In general, my way of working has changed. It's easier for me to work, because of my inner feeling and also the knowledge I gained. For example, the polls. Everything worked out in my head, like a puzzle. Now I use questionnaires - send a questionnaire [to the community] and that's ingenious!" (FSU)

"I no longer feel fear. I can see myself from the side. I have belief in myself that I can do a lot, belief in my personal abilities. The ambitions to move forward to more continents [for a global project] - ambition!" (FSU)

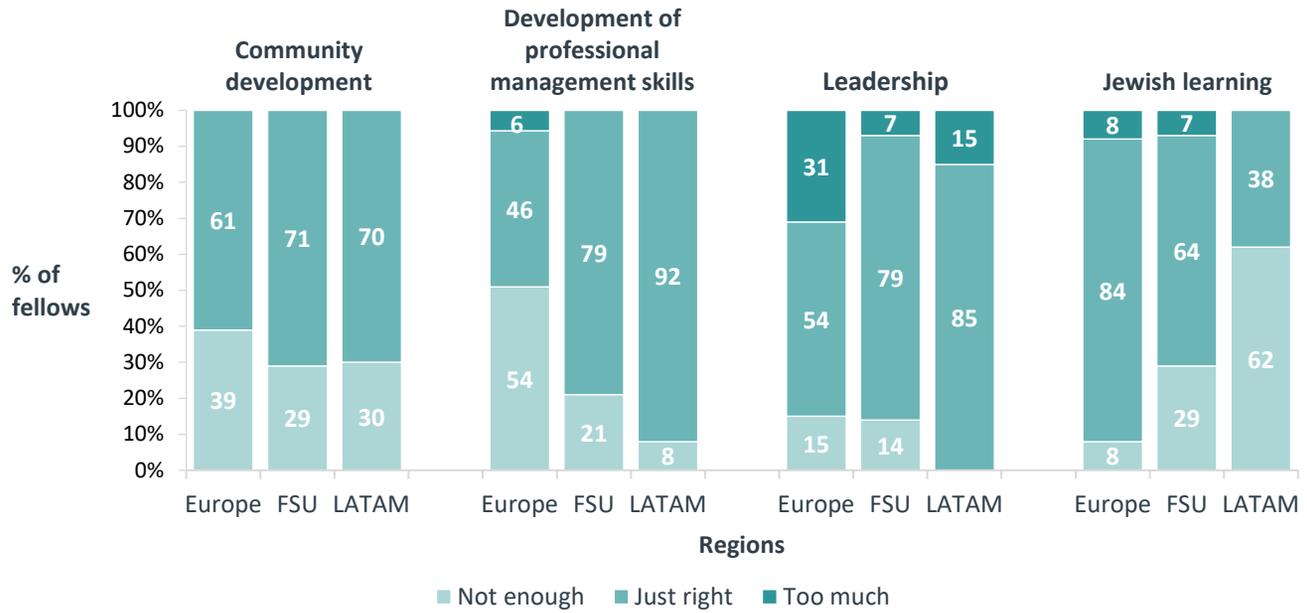
3.4 Program Organization

Various aspects of the program's organization are important as they could help 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 considered 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 7 presents the fellows' satisfaction with the time allotted to the program's four areas of content.

Figure 7: Time Allotted to the Program’s Four Areas of Content (percentages)



Most fellows from all three regions expressed satisfaction with the amount of time devoted to community development. However, 39% (5) of European, 30% (4) of LATAM and 29% (4) of FSU fellows thought that more time could have been devoted to this area.

Nearly all of the LATAM group (92%, 12) and most of the FSU group (79%, 11) were satisfied with the time allotted to developing management skills. Among the European group, only 46% (6) were satisfied with the allotted time and most of the group wanted more.

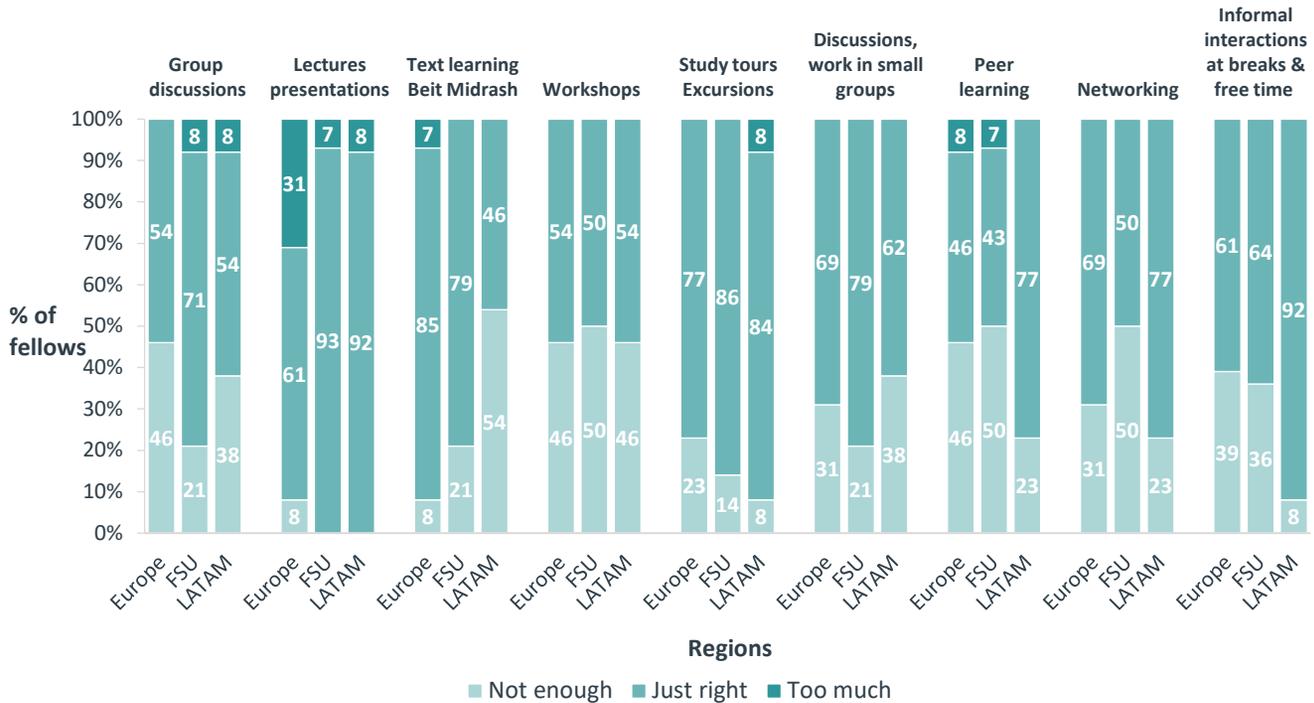
All the groups were mostly satisfied with the amount of time allocated to leadership; 31% (4) of Europeans thought it was too much:

"Leadership was too great a focus... I felt at the time [in Chicago] that the sort of semi-emotive inspirational 'you can do it' stuff was not relevant to people who are no longer junior."

Many of the European fellows (84%, 11) and two-thirds of the FSU fellows (64%, 9) were satisfied with the amount of Jewish learning offered, while most of LATAM fellows (62%, 8) thought that not enough time was allocated to Jewish learning during the program.

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 8** presents the fellows' perceptions of the balance between the different methods.

Figure 8: Time Allocated to Various Learning Methods (percentages)



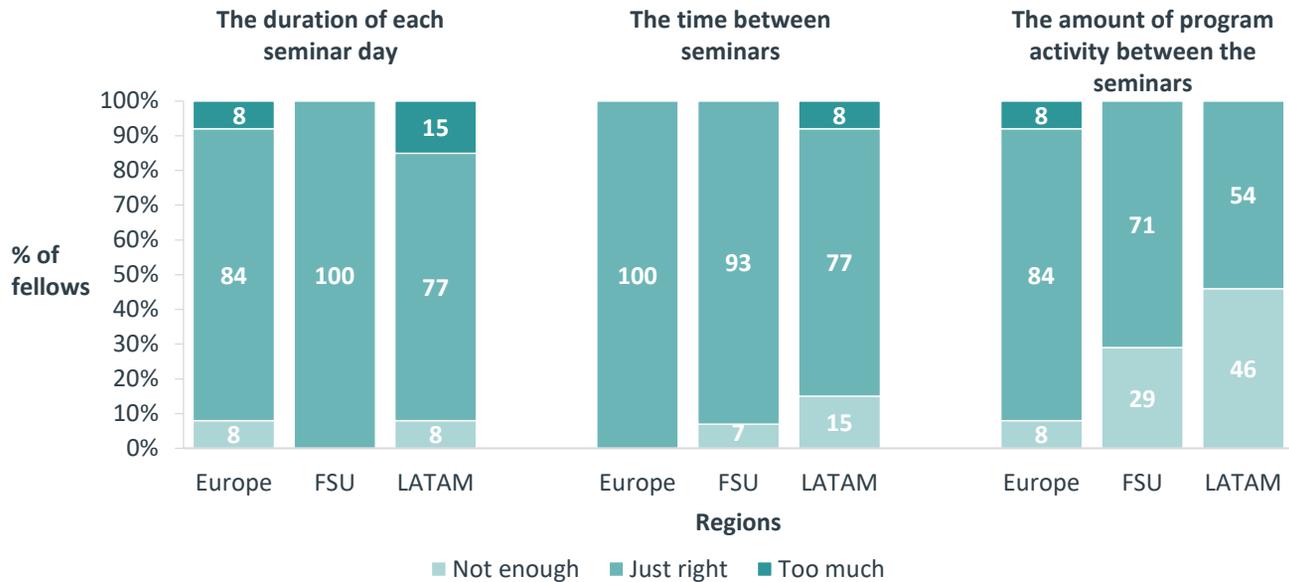
The European fellows were pleased with the amount of time dedicated to text learning (85%, 11). The FSU fellows were pleased with the amount of time dedicated to lectures and presentations (93%, 13), study tours (86%, 12) and text learning (79%, 11). The LATAM fellows were pleased with the amount of time dedicated to lectures and presentations (92%, 12), study tours (84%, 11) and informal interaction at breaks and free time (92%, 12).

Fellows of all three regions noted that not enough time was dedicated to workshops, peer learning, and networking. The European and FSU fellows felt that not enough time was set aside for informal

interactions. The European group felt that too much time was dedicated to lectures and presentations (31%, 4), and not enough time was dedicated to group discussions (46%, 6). The LATAM group felt that not enough time was dedicated to text learning (54%, 7).

Program intensity was examined with reference to the duration of seminar days, the intervals between seminars, and the number of activities between them (**Figure 9**). All groups agreed that the intervals between the seminars and duration of each seminar day were appropriate. The groups differed in their satisfaction with the amount of program activity between the seminars. While most of the Europeans felt it was appropriate (84%, 11), almost half of the LATAM (46%, 6) and only a one-third of the FSU (29%, 4) fellows reported that there were enough activities between the seminars.

Figure 9: Program Intensity (percentages)



All the groups reported high levels of satisfaction with the organization of the program and the guest lecturers. The European and FSU groups were highly satisfied with the responsiveness to fellows' requests (100%, 13 and 93%, 13, respectively), while the LATAM group was less satisfied with the program's responsiveness (77%, 10). The European and FSU groups were also highly satisfied with the

flexibility in the structure and agenda of the program (93%, 12 and 86%, 12, respectively), while less than half of the LATAM group was satisfied with this aspect (46%, 6). Lower rates of satisfaction were found in the European group regarding program materials (54%), and in LATAM regarding facilitation and connection in activities between seminars (54%). Overall, the LATAM group expressed less satisfaction with the program organization than the groups in the other regions.

Table 10: Program Organization[^]

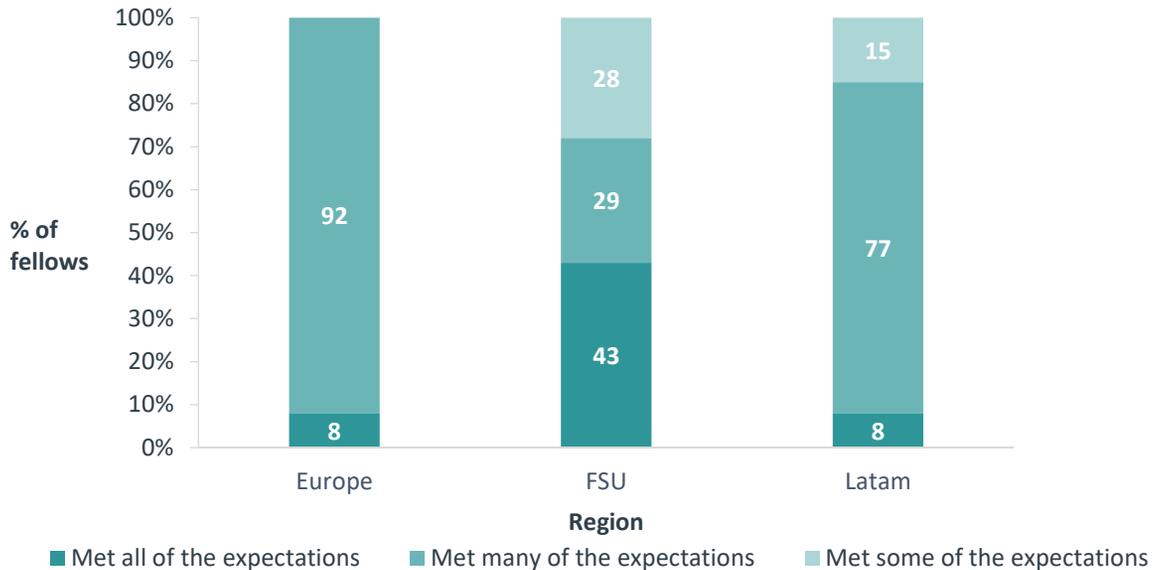
	Europe	FSU	LATAM
	N=13	N=14	N=13
Organization of the program	100% (13)	93% (13)	92% (12)
Guest lecturers	85% (11)	100% (13)	92% (12)
Responsiveness to fellows' requests	100% (13)	93% (13)	77% (10)
Flexibility in the structure and agenda of the program	93% (12)	86% (12)	46% (6)
Group facilitation	92% (12)	86% (12)	77% (10)
Program materials	54% (7)	71% (10)	77% (10)
Facilitation and connection in activities between the seminars	77% (10)	65% (9)	54% (7)

[^] Very or somewhat satisfied

3.5 Expectations from the Program

Considering the program as whole, most of the fellows felt that it met all or many of their expectations in all three regions: 100% (12) in Europe, 72% (10) in the FSU and 85% (11) in LATAM (**Figure 10**). Although 28% (4) of the FSU and 15% (2) of the LATAM fellows noted that the program met only some of their expectations.

Figure 10: Meeting Expectations (percentages)



The fellows were asked, in open-ended questions, which expectations were met, and which were not. The fellows were much more forthcoming in detailing in their expectations that were realized than those that were not, and fellows from Europe detailed more than the fellows from the other regions. The analysis of the contents of these questions are presented in **tables 11** and **12**. Interestingly, some fellows did not answer the second question, and some replied that the program met their expectations completely.

All groups mentioned networking (69% [9] in Europe, 56% [8] in the FSU, 62% [8] in LATAM) and the acquisition of tools, skills, knowledge (69% [9] in Europe, 56% [8] in FSU, 46% [6] in LATAM). The European and FSU fellows also noted personal and professional growth (31% [4] and 35% [5], respectively). In addition, the European fellows mentioned Jewish knowledge (31% [4]).

Table 11: Expectations that were Met by the Program*

	Europe	FSU	LATAM
	N=13	N=14	N=13
Networking	69% (9)	56% (8)	62% (8)
Tools, skills and knowledge	69% (9)	56% (8)	46% (6)
Personal and professional growth	31% (4)	35% (5)	8% (1)
Jewish knowledge	31% (4)	--	8% (1)
Management	23% (3)	21% (3)	15% (2)
Leadership	23% (3)	14% (2)	23% (3)
Improved knowledge of Jewish communities	15% (2)	--	31% (4)
Peer learning	8% (1)	14% (2)	23% (3)

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

The expectations that were not realized are presented in **Table 12**. Apart from some exceptional individual expectations, by and large, the fellows expected more practical knowledge and skills, and in-depth new knowledge.

Table 12: Expectations not Realized*

	Europe	FSU	LATAM
	N=11 [^]	N=10 [^]	N=11 [^]
More practical knowledge and skills	31% (4)	21% (3)	8% (1)
In-depth new knowledge	--	28% (4)	15% (2)
Professional network/post program activities	15% (2)	14% (1)	15% (2)
More case studies	8% (1)	--	23% (3)
Joint project	8% (1)	7% (1)	8% (1)
Fundraising	--	7% (1)	15% (2)

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

[^] Some fellows did not answer the question or replied that the program had met their expectations completely

3.6 General Assessment of the Program

Most of the fellows from all regions felt that the program included issues that were relevant to the context of their work and that the program reflected the professional issues they were dealing with. Note that while 85% (11) of the European fellows said that the program included themes that were new to them, only 62% (10) of the LATAM and 43% (6) of the FSU fellows reported the same (**Table 13**).

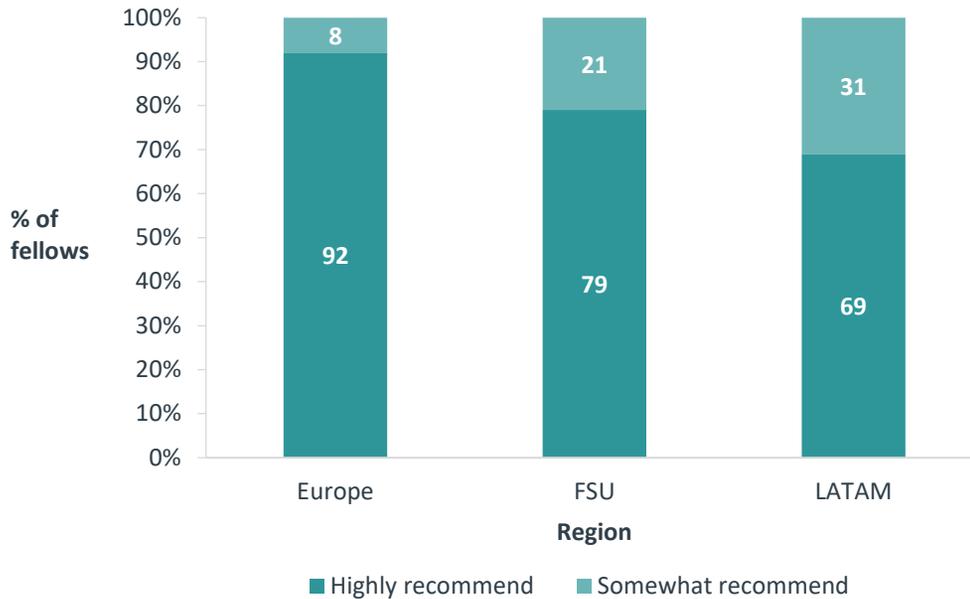
Table 13: Overall Assessment of the Program[^]

	Europe	FSU	LATAM
	N=13	N=16	N=13
The program included issues that were relevant to the context of your work	84% (11)	86% (12)	85% (11)
The program reflected the professional issues you are dealing with	92% (12)	86% (12)	77% (10)
The program included themes that were new to you	85% (11)	43% (6)	62% (13)

[^]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 noted that they would somewhat or highly recommend the program to others (**Figure 11**), although almost all the Europeans (92%, 12) would highly recommend the program, compared to 79% (11) of FSU and 69% (9) of LATAM fellows.

Figure 11: Willingness to Recommend the Program to Others (percentages)



In general, most of the interviewees graded the program highly in their overall assessments and emphasized the overall cumulative impact of the program. Thanks to the program, they could rethink their place in their organization and in the community, see themselves and their community in the global context, and re-envision their professional role in the future:

"I do feel more confident taking a bit of an 'eagle eye' view of the issue and problems that I face at work and the issues facing the Jewish community in my country... I do feel better equipped and it is a sense of confidence that I was aware that I did not have, a toolbox of skills. I know what I need to do." (Europe)

"I learned that we need to see our organization and our role in a different perspective, from above, to see the horizon, to think about the goals of the organization, about our goals In the academia we talk about an ideal, in our reality it is more difficult." (LATAM)

The program imbued the fellows with inspiration, motivation and self-confidence to continue their dedication to their communities:

"The seminars are very important because the work in the same place is exhausting. With the help of a program like Kaplan you refresh, get out of your 'ghetto,' are exposed to a rich and large variety of Jewish world and realize that there is something beyond, and that you are part of it. You can influence and things are up to you too. This feeling has crystallized in me during the last year." (Europe)

In addition, fellows emphasized the importance of the relationships created in the program:

"I have expanded my circle of professional friends and that is the important thing. I have a network for cases where I need help, consult, an attentive ear. For example, when I had a crisis in my role, I feel the comfort of talking to group members about the things I feel. I feel the intimacy of talking to teammates about what I'm going through right now in my role." (LATAM)

3.7 The Fellows' Recommendations

We asked the participants what they would recommend changing in the program in order to improve it in the next cycle and what they felt was missing or unnecessary. Some of the recommendations have been mentioned above, but it is important to see them in the overall context of recommendations for improving the program.

Their recommendations focus on the introduction to the program, the seminars and the in-between activities, contacts and networking, and the conclusion of the program and its aftermath.

3.7.1 Before the start of the program

Constructing the groups

- The groups should be more homogeneous in terms of the fellows' education, training and experience (FSU) and their position within the Jewish community (Europe).
- More diversity in terms of nationality and gender (LATAM)

Program outline

Many fellows felt that they did not know enough about the program, how it would work and what was expected from them.

Fellows from all regions noted that they found it hard to follow the general outline of the program, and how the various activities related to it:

"It is not clear what connects the four seminars, there is no sense of continuity between them, there is no main line that unites the seminars." (FSU)

"The program should make sure that from the beginning to the end of the program there is a 'red line,' it should be one story line. Each time they (program staff) spoke about something else, and they did not connect it to the main line. There should be a clear framework. For example, you start with yourself, emotional intelligence, then leading others, giving feedback, then leading a team and change management. There should be a clear story from the first seminar to the last one, too see the big picture and how things connect. Many people lost track of what they learned. Show how storytelling or emotional intelligence can help you as a leader. Connect the dots." (Europe)

3.7.2 Program seminars

- Use diverse techniques of learning: fewer lectures and more peer learning, site visits, case studies, workshops, and work in small groups based on areas of interest
- Motivation and inspiration, hear more inspiring role models (Like Avraham Infeld and Lonnie Nasatir)
- Topics that need to be addressed (or addressed more):
 - Management: Fundraising and resource development, budget planning, PR
 - Team development: Communication skills and tools, crisis management
 - Community development, volunteering
 - Global view of Jewish world, Israel and various community models
 - Social networks and digital tools
 - The future of the fellows' careers as Jewish professionals
- More Jewish texts, Jewish ethics (specific to LATAM)
- Less leadership (specific to the global seminar)
- Shorten each seminar day, offer more time to internalize learning and informal networking
- Enable more time for reflection, feedback and closure (specific to LATAM)

3.7.3 Activities in between seminars

In general, participants felt it would be worthwhile offering many more activities of all kinds between seminars.

- Coaching and mentoring: Provide clear explanations about the process before it starts, start earlier in the program, allocate more hours. The European fellows suggested coaching instead of mentoring, as the coaches are more professional and better trained than the mentors.
- Webinars: More regional and global webinars focusing on practical learning and enabling interaction and discussions
- More follow-up by program team on all activities
- More global activities, including virtual meetings and joint projects
- Investment in English studies: start English lessons early in the program (FSU) and include all the fellows that need to improve their language skills (LATAM).

3.7.4 Contact and networking

The fellows felt they did not have enough time to get to know their peers and exchange experiences and knowledge in the regional groups, especially during the global seminar. Many fellows would like to improve their networking and stay in touch more with fellows from other regions. There is a need to deepen the familiarity among the different regional groups before the global seminar. Working in small mixed groups before the global seminar was effective but limited.

They recommended organizing more global webinars and facilitating work in small groups based on common topics and interests, and work on joint projects. In addition, for effective communication, a minimum level of English is essential.

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

Fellows asked to continue gaining practical knowledge and skills after the program through post-program activities, including mentoring/coaching, webinars, and support in implementing the projects (LATAM).

4. Comparison between Cohort 1 and Cohort 2

4.1 Changes made to the Program after Cohort 1

The program underwent significant programmatic changes following the experience gained from the first cohort, and the evaluation findings, as well as personnel changes.

- Selection of fellows: In Europe, the program staff ensured that candidates met the program's eligibility conditions.
- Program contents and activities: In both Europe and the FSU, more thought was put into adapting the program to the fellows' needs before and throughout the program. In Europe, emphasis was placed on peer learning and adapting according to the fellows' feedback. In the FSU, the teaching model of Judaism was updated, the mentoring activity was replaced with coaching, and the staff invested efforts in improving the fellows' English. Most of the contents in the regional seminars were new.
- Personnel changes: As the second cohort started, the program appointed a new program director, who also served on the FSU team alongside a new team member, thereby replacing the FSU team. In Europe, one team member was replaced.
- Regionality: The second cohort included a group from LATAM. The structure of the program was slightly different in this region, given their cultural characteristics and needs. The program was spread over nearly two years (April 2018-December 2019), during which four regional seminars were held, in addition to the global seminar, and another component was added to the in-between seminar activities, a pair or group project. Although the program ran for a longer time, the mentoring activity lasted only a year, as compared to an almost complete overlap between the program and mentoring in the rest of the areas.
- The global seminar: Following the feedback from the first cohort, the program team invested efforts in improving the global seminar, in partnership with Spertus, and addressing the special needs that arise from running a joint program for three regions, with some fellows who are not fluent in English. However, these efforts were only partially successful due to lack of cooperation from the Spertus partners.

4.2 Comparison between the Cohorts

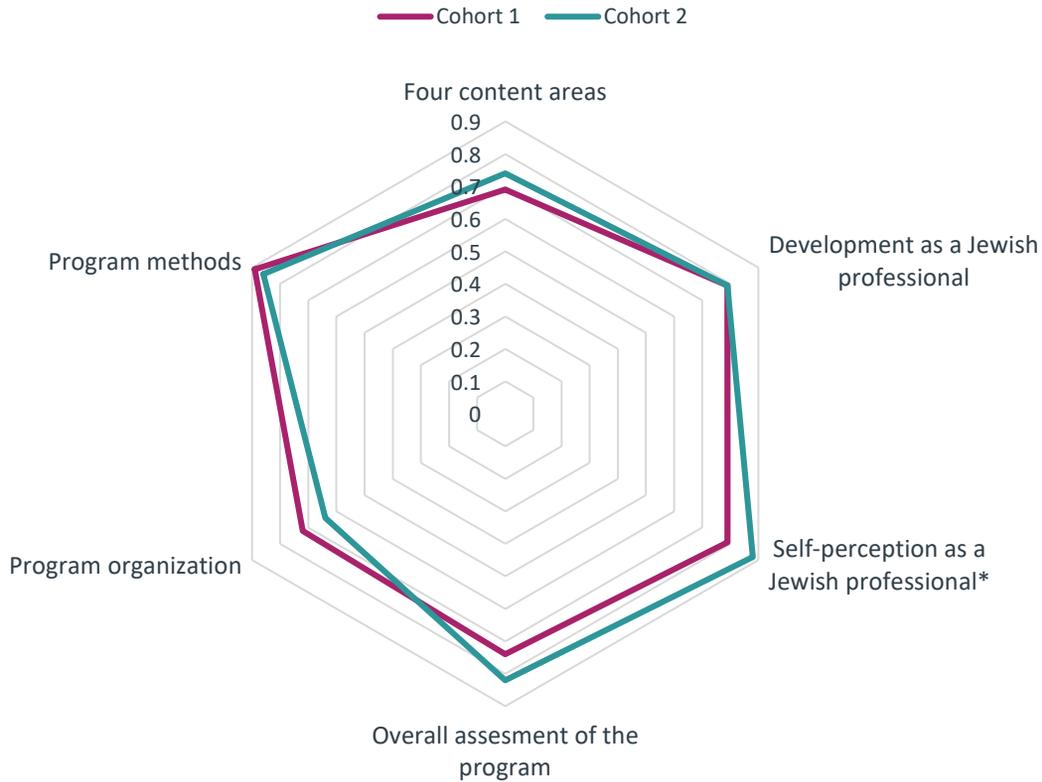
As explained above, the considerable differences in the implementation of the program in the three regions makes it impossible to examine the differences between them with statistical tools. However, the differences between cohorts in each region can be examined by other, non-statistical tools. In the previous cohort, the program included groups from Europe and the FSU, so we examined the differences between the cohorts within each region.

In order to examine whether there were significant differences in the program's contribution and the participants' satisfaction with different aspects of the program, we built six indexes, based on several questions in the questionnaire regarding each topic: Development as a Jewish professional, self-perception as a Jewish professional, expanding knowledge in the program's four content areas, overall assessment of the program, program organization, and program methods. The items included in each index are detailed in Appendix 2. The score in each index ranges from 0, the lowest score, to 1, the highest score.

The data are presented in spiderweb charts, which compare the rate of each index in Cohort 1, to the rate in Cohort 2. The spider chart has six spokes, each representing one of the 6 indexes. Overall, it is apparent that the program managed to maintain the relatively high levels of satisfaction in both regions.

Figure 12 presents the comparison between the European cohorts. There was improvement over the previous cohort in four of the indexes, one of which is significant: Self-perception as a Jewish professional ($t = 2.6321$, $df = 27$, $p < 0.05$), development as a Jewish professional, expanding knowledge in the program's four content areas, and overall assessment of the program. Two indexes were rated lower in the second cohort compared to the first cohort: Program organization and program methods.

Figure 12: Comparison of Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 in Europe



* p<0.05

Table 14 provides a deeper look into the differences between the cycles. The second cohort’s self-perception as community leaders, as professionals who do meaningful work and most importantly, their perception of themselves as Jewish community leaders, was greater than the first cohort. This could be a result of the program impact, as well as the more accurate selection of fellows to the program in the second cohort.

Table 14: European Fellows’ Self-Perceptions as Jewish Professionals by Cohorts[^]

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2
	N=16	N=13
I see myself as a Jewish professional	81% (13)	100% (13)
I see myself as a Jewish community leader	50% (8)	77% (10)
I feel a sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals	94% (15)	85% (11)
I feel that by working in the Jewish community I can fulfill myself professionally	81% (13)	85% (11)
My work has a meaningful impact on my Jewish community	88% (14)	100% (13)

[^] To a great extent or very great extent

Looking into the lower rate of satisfaction from the program’s organization (**Table 15**), two aspects were rated at much lower levels by the second cohort: facilitation and related activities between seminars, and program materials.

Table 15: Satisfaction of Program Organization in Europe, by Cohorts [^]

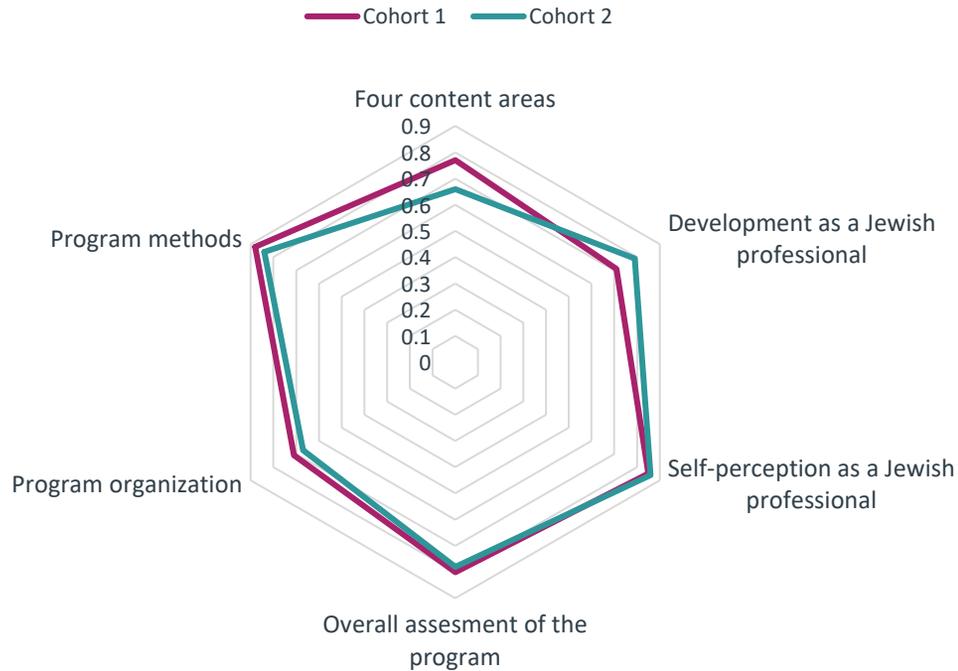
	Cohort 1	Cohort 2
	N=16	N=13
Program organization	94% (15)	100% (13)
Guest lecturers	94% (15)	85% (11)
Responsiveness to fellows’ requests	88% (14)	100% (13)
Flexibility of program structure and agenda	88% (14)	92% (12)
Facilitation and related activities between seminars	81% (13)	77% (10)
Group facilitation	94% (15)	92% (7)
Program materials	94% (15)	54% (10)

[^] Very or somewhat satisfied

Figure 13 presents the comparison between the FSU cohorts. There was an improvement in the participants’ rating of their development as a Jewish professional, and a slight increase in their self-

perception as a Jewish professional. One index was rated lower in the second cohort than in the first cohort: expanding knowledge in the program’s four content areas.

Figure 13: Comparison of Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 in the FSU



The improvement in the program’s contribution to the fellows’ development as Jewish professionals is noticeable in many items. **Table 16** shows that 9 out of 11 items were rated at a higher or much higher level in Cohort 2 than in the previous cohort.

Table 16: Program’s Contribution to the FSU Fellows’ Development as Jewish Professionals, by Cohort ^

To what extent did the program...	Cohort 1 N=13	Cohort 2 N=14
Help you think about the next steps in your professional journey	77% (10)	79% (11)
Help you better understand what issues you want to promote in your community	61% (8)	43% (6)
Help you formulate a leadership approach that suits you personally	38% (5)	58% (8)
Strengthen your wish to build a professional career within the Jewish community	46% (6)	72% (10)
Help you understand your strengths and challenges as a Jewish professional	77% (10)	92% (13)
Help you recognize new opportunities in your role or in your organization	69% (9)	65% (9)
Change your perception of your place in the community	23% (3)	57% (8)
Strengthen your interest in Jewish learning	31% (4)	43% (6)
Strengthen your understanding of diversity, pluralism and inclusiveness as a value	23% (3)	35% (5)
Strengthen your understanding of global Jewish responsibility	46% (6)	71% (10)
Strengthen your understanding of your role as a leader in a Jewish community	46% (6)	71% (10)

^To a great extent or very great extent

The fellows in the second cohort rated the contribution of the program at a lower level in most of the areas, especially leadership. These findings are in keeping with their reports of the small amount of new knowledge that they acquired in the program (only 43% reported that the program contributed to them, see **Table 17**). These findings could be the result of the group members’ previous education and training or due to the changes in the program contents.

Table 17: Program’s Contribution to Expanding Knowledge in Various Content Areas, by FSU Cohort[^]

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2
	N=13	N=14
Community development (models, methodologies, best practices)	46% (6)	50% (7)
Leadership (visionary thinking, strategic planning, leadership models and adaptive leadership, followership, power and power sharing, models of leadership)	69% (9)	36% (5)
Management skills (team management, annual planning, solving managerial dilemmas, marketing, fundraising, social media, M&E, etc.)	77% (10)	50% (7)
Integration of Jewish content in everyday work (Jewish learning, Jewish texts relevant to your work as a Jewish professional, etc.)	54% (7)	43% (6)

[^]To a great extent or very great extent

Overall, the program maintained high levels in the participants’ assessment of its contribution to them and their satisfaction. The changes in the program staff and contents have not led to significant changes in its achievement, at this point. We suggest taking the fellows’ recommendations and the issues for consideration detailed in the concluding chapter of this report seriously, in order to maximize the impact of the program.

5. Cohort 1: Post-Program Findings

5.1 Evaluation Goals and Methodology

As noted, the evaluation of the Kaplan program is continuing to follow up the graduates after the end of the program. As defined in its logic model, program graduates are expected to assume leadership positions in the local or global Jewish communities and lead meaningful processes to strengthen the community/organization; to apply the new knowledge, tools and perceptions they acquired in the program, such as best practices of community development from other communities and regions, including perceptions of community and adaptive and creative responses to community needs; and to engage actively with other graduates as part of their professional network.

The survey conducted among the graduates was designed to examine whether they were still working in the Jewish community and if so, in what positions; and whether they were implementing the knowledge and tools they acquired in the program; and whether they were actively engaging with one another.

Data collection was challenging. Following very low initial responses, many emails, group and personal reminders, and numerous phone calls were made until 24 out of 29 graduates responded to the questionnaire (83% response rate).

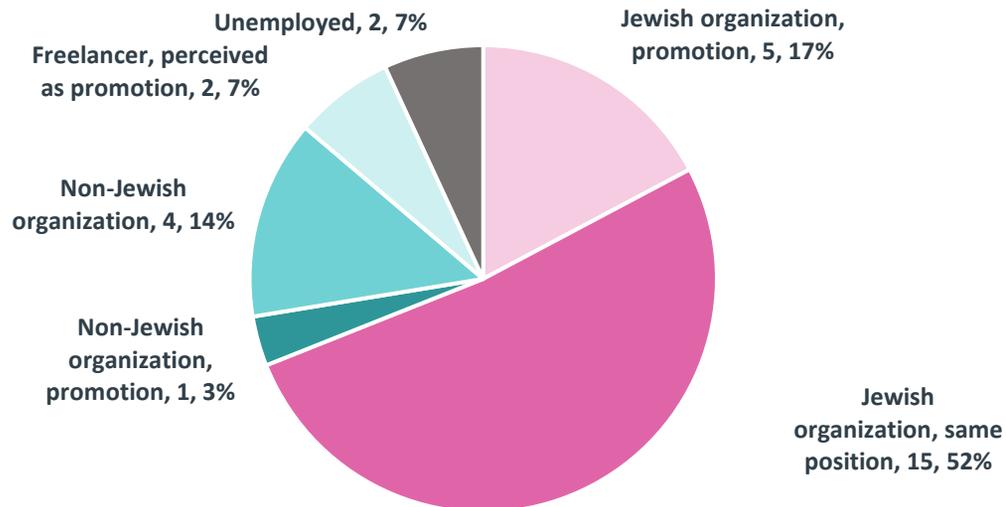
We were also able to obtain information about the workplace and role of the graduates who did not respond to the questionnaire from the regional program teams.

The number of respondents to the open-ended questions varies, because not all questions were relevant to all respondents and not all of the questions were mandatory.

5.2 Current Employment

As shown in **Figure 14**, at the time of the survey, most of the program graduates were working in the Jewish community; 52% (15) were in the same position, 17% (5) had been promoted. Around one third, 31% (9) were no longer working in the Jewish community: 4 (14%) were working outside the community, 2 (7%) graduates were currently unemployed, and 2 (7%) graduates were freelancers. Five graduates who were no longer working in the community were involved in the community in a committed, voluntary position.

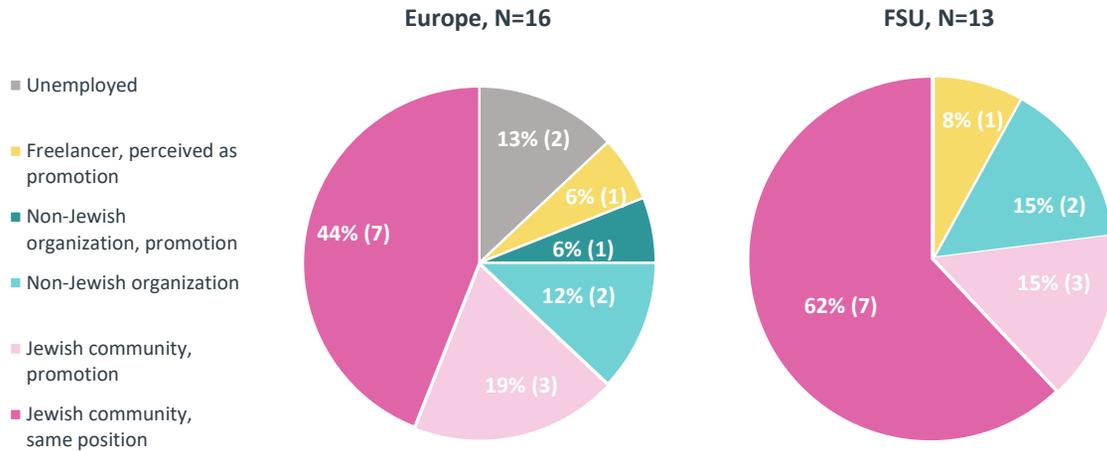
Figure 14: Current Employment (N=29, numbers and percentages)



Among the reasons given for leaving their position in the community, graduates noted the need for change, the search for professional development, reasons related to their organization, and relocation. Most of the graduates who were working outside the community at the time of the survey had remained very involved in the community: five graduates (17%) reported that they are involved in the community in a committed, voluntary position and all those who were no longer working in the community (31%, 9) reported that they planned to stay involved in the community.

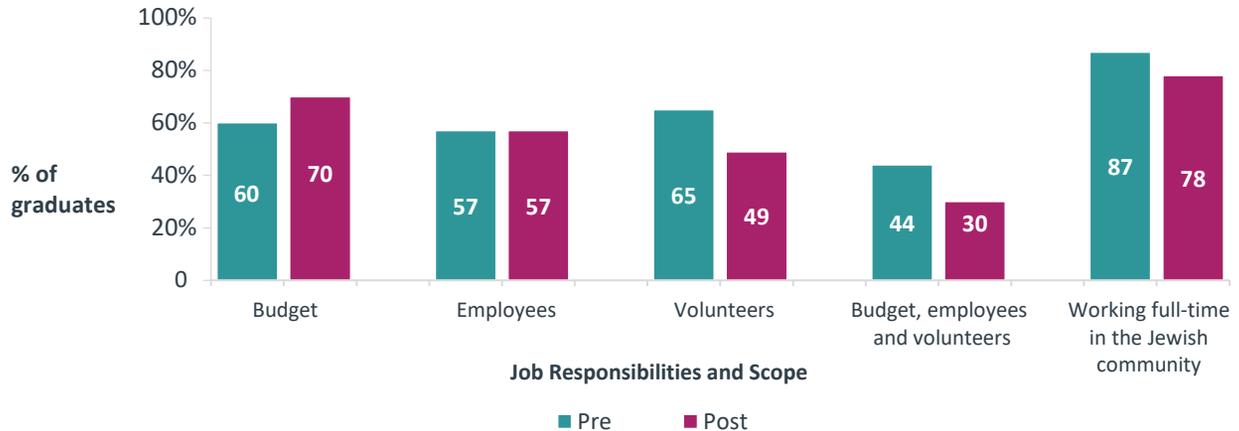
Comparing the two regions, graduates from Europe seemed to be inclined to higher mobility: one year after graduating the program, there are twice as many European graduates not working in the community (37%, 6) than those from the FSU (23%, 3) (**Figure 15**). This finding can be explained by the fact that in the first cohort, the participants from Europe did not meet the admission criteria of the program in terms of their age and professional rank in the organization. In addition, it should be noted that employment opportunities in Europe, outside the community, are many and probably more attractive financially than positions within the community.

Figure 15: Current Employment by Region (percentages and numbers)



Various characteristics of job responsibilities are presented in **Figure 16**, comparing pre-program to one-year post program. With the exception of an increase in responsibility for budget, there were slight decreases in most other areas.

Figure 16: Job Responsibilities and Scope (N=23, percentages)



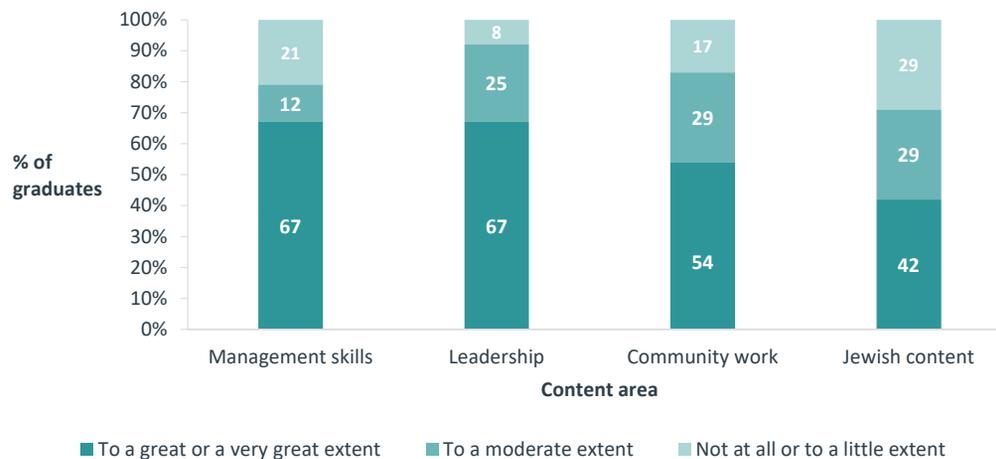
After the program, nearly half of the graduates (42%, 10) continued their professional development in different professional programs, mainly in the fields of Jewish communities, Jewish education and learning and general education. Five graduates (21%) participated in more than one professional program.

5.3 Program Impact

The program influenced the graduates in different ways. We received a variety of answers to the question “What was the most significant learning or professional experience of the program for you?”: specific learning content and methods, learning about different communities, feeling part of a peer group of Jewish professionals with similar challenges and needs, mentoring, and personal and professional development.

Beyond changing perceptions and attitudes, the program aims to motivate the participants to apply their new perceptions, knowledge, tools and skills in their work. **Figure 17** presents the graduates’ reports on the extent to which they have applied the knowledge, tools and skills they acquired in the program in the four core content areas – Jewish learning and texts, community work, management skills and leadership.

Figure 17: Application of Knowledge, Tools and Skills the Graduates Acquired in the Program in their Everyday Work (N=24, percentages)



Over two-thirds of the graduates (67%, 16) apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the areas of management and leadership to a great or a very great extent; about half (54%, 13) use the knowledge and tools in the field of community and 42% (10) use the Jewish learning and texts they have acquired in their everyday work.

We also asked the graduates for examples of the way they are applying what they acquired in these four core areas of the program.

- **Jewish content:** Graduates reported that they are integrating Jewish content in their work, by using texts, values etc.: "Working outside of Jewish context, I seek to educate colleagues about Jewish practices and root my work in Jewish values." (Europe) A few graduates noted that they use *havruta* learning and organize events based on Jewish learning.
- **Community development:** Graduates noted that now they were more aware of community issues and needs: "I have a much clearer understanding of what kind of community I want. And, also, I try always to listen to the needs of people in the community." (FSU) They are engaging more in networking with local and global Jewish communities, and in the organization of community events and learning processes. Some graduates reported that they initiated the creation of new professional and other groups: "I decided to create my own small community of people who want to connect Jewish meditation and yoga. In May 2019 I organized a seminar and now we have a weekly session ..." (Europe)
- **Management:** Graduates noted implementation of specific management tools, the use of strategic vision and planning, communication and negotiation skills: "After completing the training, I began to use the planning process more to work with each individual manager. Thus, they have become more responsible and productive in their work." (FSU) Moreover, they noted that now they are more aware of management issues in general.
- **Leadership:** The graduates reported that they are developing teamwork, including sharing power, delegating responsibility, etc. They also take on more responsibility and leadership roles, and initiate change processes: "I created a work team focused on Jewish leadership and social change and we built an annual leadership program from that work." (Europe)
- In addition, the graduates were asked to state the main change in their work as Jewish professionals, following the program. The responses indicate a variety of changes in their work and personal and professional experience:

- **Change in strategic vision and perception:** 25% (6) of the graduates reported a change in their strategic vision following the program:

"My professional, strategic vision has changed; I understand the direction in which I should go and the gaps in my knowledge that need to be filled." (FSU)

"As a leader, I have a broader vision of the capabilities of our center. The team and I have identified for ourselves an additional vector for building partnerships with other communities in the world. This opens new horizons and opportunities for our organization..." (FSU)
- **Increasing self-confidence:** 25% (6) of the graduates stated that their self-confidence increased significantly as a result of the program, and as a result, their personal and professional endeavors improved. As one of the graduates noted:

"I gained confidence in myself and in the meaning of my vision for the Jewish community. That may have caused difficulties with my boss because I didn't always agree with what was going on... I was thinking more and more of developing my own organization and doing things my way." (Europe)
- **Developing a network:** 25% (6) of the graduates mentioned establishing connections and networking, with their program peers and with other Jewish organizations and communities around the world as a major change in their work since the program ended:

"A sense of connection and inter-connectivity with international peers on the European level. An understanding of common challenges and our responsibility in tackling these." (Europe)
- **Concrete skills and tools:** 21% (5) noted that they were using a concrete skills and tools acquired in the program, especially in the area of management:

"My project became more goal oriented, we started to be better at planning and we started to use better tools." (FSU)
- **Focusing on, and getting to know, the community:** 17% (4) said that following the program they had begun to become aware of the needs and characteristics of a community

"I can organize the events better and also I am more aware of some issues that are happening in small communities." (Europe)

"I received a deep understanding of the processes of the Jewish community, which in many ways helped me to change the approach of my work." (FSU)

- **Developing self-perception as a Jewish professional:** Three European graduates noted that the program assisted them in developing their personal identity as Jewish professionals:

"I see myself as a professional... we tend to think that working within the Jewish community is for losers or something that just happened without [our] asking for it. And now I know that I'm a professional and that I love and want to work with the Jewish community because I'm sure I can add value." (Europe)

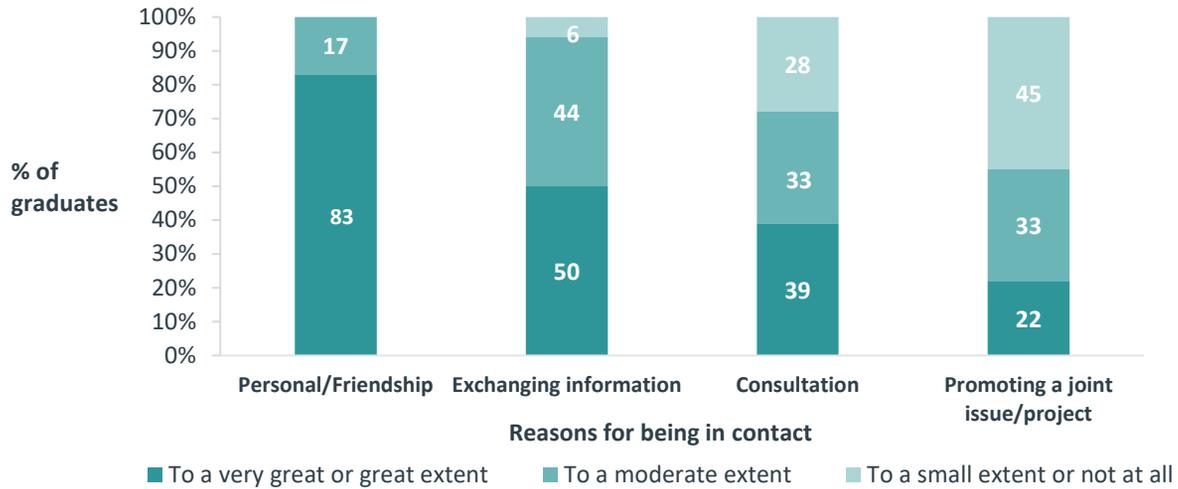
"The consciousness of being a Jewish professional and working professionally. Looking for professional experiences and projects, career growth within the Jewish community and trying to connect with the other organizations and institutions." (Europe)

5.4 Network

The development of an active network of Jewish professionals is another of the program goals. According to the findings, regional networks have evolved, but no global network has developed. Most of the graduates, 83% (20) are in touch with their regional group. Only 2 graduates (8%) reported that they were in touch with graduates from the other region. On average, graduates are in touch with 4.5 peers (range 2-10).

Figure 18 shows the reasons for being in touch with their peers from the program. The colleagues contact each other mainly as part of personal friendships they created in the program. In addition, half of them (50%, 9) make contact to exchange information, 39% (7) for consultation and 22% (4) contact each other to promote joint projects on issues such as volunteering, Jewish education, working with elders and children and youth, and inclusion in the community.

Figure 18: Reasons for Being in Contact with Other Program Graduates (N=18, percentages)



In order to improve the networking, the graduates recommend:

- Getting together once a year or less
- Engaging in online activities such as conference calls, virtual classes, Facebook etc.
- Working on a common project or joint assignments
- Sharing information about professional activities
- Providing a common platform for networking.

In addition, they note that meeting and getting to know graduates from other regions earlier in the program could help create a global network.

5.5 Issues for Consideration

5.5.1 Working in the Jewish community:

The graduates' commitment to continue their career as Jewish professionals is not very high – within a year, 31% (9) were working elsewhere. There are several possible explanations for this finding:

- **The realities of the communities:** Many of the communities are small and have very few organizations. When there is a drive to advance and increase income, or simply a need for a change without relocating, there might be no alternative but to leave their position in the community.
- **Program limitations:** The program itself may be unable to create a long-term commitment among the graduates. Assessment studies on training programs indicate that the impact of the programs is reflected mainly in participants' perceptions, and less so in changes in their actual employment.
- **Need for support:** Participating in the program gave graduates support and a sense of belonging to a peer group. Considering that there was no contact on behalf of the program team and no graduate activities, the expectation that a program would lead to a long-term commitment to work as Jewish professionals might be unrealistic.
- **Timing of follow-up:** It is very early to detect dramatic changes in the graduates' careers. Most of them have not even progressed from the positions they held during the program. Further monitoring will yield a better picture of developments.

5.5.2 Implementation of knowledge and skills:

Graduates reported little application of their knowledge and skills in the field of community development or of integration of Jewish content. This finding is consistent with the feedback they gave at the end of the program, that not enough time was devoted to these issues, especially community development. The program needs to develop these areas further.

5.5.3 Network

The graduates expressed a real need to be part of an active peer network. Maintaining an active network could help them handle challenges and strengthen their sense of belonging to a peer group of Jewish professionals, and perhaps prolong their commitment to their career in the Jewish community.

The necessity of a regional network and its contribution to graduates is clear. If it is decided that an active global network is important and worth the investment, resources should be invested during the program in joint activities that allow interaction such as webinars, peer meetings and shared assignments. Efforts should be made to improve the participants' English and their self-confidence to speak in the global seminar as much as possible, to construct the global seminar program with sufficient time allocated, in both formal and informal activities, for global interactions, and to create a platform for maintaining connections among the group members after the program.

Forming a network requires two phases. First, the “joining phase” during the program, and the second, “assimilation and establishment” after the program. These actions require ongoing investment, in order to create substantial and meaningful membership of the network.

6. Issues for Consideration Regarding Future Implementation

As elaborated above, the fellows are satisfied with the program, they learned a great deal, feel connected to and part of a community of Jewish professionals, and have started to use their new knowledge and tools, and take advantage of their connections. Nevertheless, considering the findings of the evaluation study among the second cohort as well as the follow-up of the first cohort graduates, several steps should be considered ahead of the next cohort.

Based on all research findings, we recommend action in the following areas:

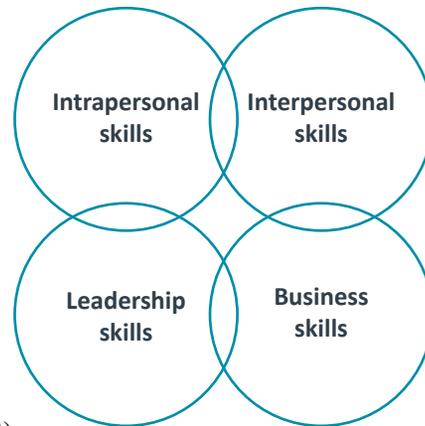
Program management and coordination: The program is operated in three areas, by different teams, coordinated by the JDC team in Israel. Along with the need to show understanding and adapt to local needs and culture, it is also important to adhere to the basic principles of the program. Coordination among the regions will help improve the program in each of them and means that when fellows come to regional seminar, the knowledge and skills that they have already acquired through the program will be better synchronized and aligned.

In addition, program teams can learn a lot from the knowledge accumulated in the various activities in each region and use their expertise in running the program to improve the program in their region. It is especially worthwhile studying and repeating activities that have been found to be particularly successful, in all areas. These include: site visits, connecting to local community in which the seminar takes place and learning about their model, organizations, challenges and solutions (LATAM), emotional intelligence, peer learning and case studies presented by program fellows (Europe), team management and fundraising (FSU). In addition, the public speaking workshop provided by Lior Shoham is one of the most significant workshops in the program and is recommended for application in all areas.

Setting a program outline and communicating it: The fellows found it difficult to understand the overall concept of the program, and how the different activities connect to the main program goal. We suggest that the program outline be constructed in such a way as to indicate where the planned contents, skills, activities and outputs fit into it, and show the participants how to navigate their way through the program and its activities, while bearing in mind the overall program goal and understanding how each of the activities relates to this goal.

A useful model for structuring leadership program such as the Kaplan program could be based on Hogan and Warrenfeltz's (2003) domain model of competencies which outlines four inter-related areas of focus: Intrapersonal skills (such as career ambition and perseverance, self-esteem), interpersonal skills (building and maintaining relationships, self-presentation) leadership skills (team building, vision, motivating) and business (management) skills (planning, budgeting, prioritizing) (**Figure 19**). It is important to incorporate the aspects of community and Judaism into the program outline.

Figure 19: Hogan & Warrenfeltz's Domain Model



Source: Hogan & Warrenfeltz (2003)

It is advisable to introduce the participants to the program outline and to connect the various activities to the outline during the reflection and summary sessions. Organizing the knowledge and learning may facilitate the use of information in the future and deepen the impact of the program over time.

Program contents:

- **Integrating Jewish contents:** The Jewish aspect sets the program apart from other management and leadership programs. Some of the fellows chose the program precisely because of this aspect and were disappointed by the marginal/lack of reference to the subject (especially in LATAM). Many other fellows felt that the connection to Jewish content and the integration of the content in the program, was not natural, some felt that they did not learn enough, some felt that it was too much, and above all, not always relevant for their work (FSU).

- **Missing topics:** Two topics were not given sufficient attention in the program: Community development (despite its being one of the four content areas) and fundraising.

Peer learning: Regardless of the size or region of the community, many of the challenges facing the fellows are nearly identical, as they characterize many Jewish communities around the globe. Issues such as working with a board of directors, working with volunteers, involving youth, engaging young families, and supporting elderly members of the community are relevant to all fellows, and many of them have valuable experience to share. Yet little time was dedicated to peer learning in the regional seminars and particularly in the global seminar. It is worth allocating time for peer learning as part of the seminar schedule (as was done in Europe), and allowing more free time for developing relationships and discourse.

The global seminar: The global seminar involves a very large investment of resources. In view of the participants' disappointment with many substantial parts of it, it is advisable to rethink the global seminar plan, in advance of the next cohort.

Activities in between seminars: The activities between seminars are as important to the fellows as the seminars themselves. This is an opportunity to delve into theoretical reading, expand knowledge, and practice the tools and skills acquired. It is also the time to strengthen ties with colleagues in the regional group and develop the global connection. Many fellows said that they had expected more intense activities during these time periods.

In addition to increasing the volume of activities, it is worth clarifying the framework of the activities, which were not clear enough for the fellows. It is also important to follow up on the implementation, making sure that all the *havruta* pairs are suitable and have indeed found time for shared learning and making sure the mentors and mentees connect. If the connections do not work, an alternative should be found as soon as possible.

Developing the network: The findings from the first cohort show that without any intervention, an alumni network that includes most fellows in each area develops, but that it is mainly a base for personal communication and friendships. The network is very important as a source of consultation, knowledge and support, and can be used by its members to maintain a sense of belonging to the peer group, and to motivate them to continue a career in the Jewish community. It is therefore proposed to

devote resources to the construction of global peer network that is used frequently and continually over time. Belonging to an active network may also influence the fellows' decision to continue in their career as Jewish professionals.

Regional issues:

Europe: Monitoring the Zug project and the mentoring would contribute to increasing the benefit of these activities. In addition, considering the great success of the coaching as opposed to the mediocre success of the mentoring, thought should be given to offering coaching in this region as well.

FSU: The fellows expressed dissatisfaction with the curriculum and reported that the level of in-depth learning was insufficient. We suggest refining and intensifying the contents according to the level of the participants and their previous knowledge. They also expressed the need for more practical knowledge useful tools that could be applied in everyday work.

LATAM: The fellows asked to reduce theoretical lessons in favor of workshops and practical learning, and to greatly increase activities and interaction between seminars. Fellows from all streams (not only the observant ones), requested that aspects of Judaism be included in the regional seminars. In addition, the issue of the high participation fees that the fellows were charged should be examined.

7. Study Limitations

The study had a number of limitations in regard to the program structure and the characteristics of the fellows.

Program structure:

- The program is geared towards a relatively small number of fellows, 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 parentheses) in the report.
- The program is designed for a small number of select fellows and will remain so. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data, which should be interpreted with caution, will continue to be important throughout the evaluation study.
- The program operates under the same general principles in all three regions, but follows a very different outline in each. Furthermore, many aspects of the program were changed between the cohorts. Therefore, it is not possible to make a comparison with statistical analysis tools between the regions and between the cohorts, when by and large, each group followed a different program.

Program fellows:

- 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 levels of education and training, 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 differences between the groups.

Since the program is intended for Jewish professionals from different regions and cultures, these inter-cultural characteristics will remain constant throughout the evaluation. Our multi-lingual team of researchers will continue their efforts to be attuned to cultural diversity in the structuring of the tools, the way that they are used, and in the interpretation of the findings.

Appendices

Appendix I: Background Characteristics of Fellows by Region

Table I-1: Background Characteristics of Fellows, by Region (%)

Characteristics		Total	Europe	FSU	LATAM
		N=45	N=16	N=16	N13=
Gender	Women	47% (21)	50% (8)	69% (11)	15% (2)
	Men	53% (24)	50% (8)	31% (5)	85% (11)
Age	25-29	16% (7)	25% (4)	19% (3)	--
	30-34	53% (24)	63% (10)	62% (10)	30% (4)
	35-39	20% (9)	12% (2)	19% (3)	31% (4)
	40+	11% (5)			39% (5)
Married		69% (31)	62% (10)	62% (10)	85% (11)
Parents		64% (29)	50% (8)	62% (10)	85% (11)
Education	Post-secondary	11% (5)	-	6% (1)	31% (4)
	Bachelor's degree	30% (14)	44% (7)	25% (4)	23% (3)
	Master's degree	44% (20)	50% (8)	57% (9)	23% (3)
	Ph.D.	4% (2)	-	12% (2)	-
	Rabbinical ordination	11% (5)	6% (1)	5% (1)	23% (3)
Academic/college level courses*	Leadership & management	56% (25)	31% (5)	88% (14)	46% (6)
	Education & pedagogy	73% (33)	38% (6)	75% (12)	39% (5)
	Israel and the Middle East	16% (7)	19% (3)	6% (1)	23% (3)
	Jewish studies	40% (18)	31% (5)	38% (6)	54% (7)
	NGO management	31% (14)	19% (3)	31% (5)	46% (6)
	Community development	13% (6)	19% (3)	19% (3)	--

* responses don't add up to 100%

Characteristics		Total	Europe	FSU	LATAM
		N=45	N=16	N=16	N13=
Professional courses and training*	Jewish leadership & Jewish communal work	64% (29)	69% (11)	75% (12)	46% (6)
	Leadership and management	51% (23)	31% (5)	50% (8)	77% (10)
	Other fields	33% (15)	31% (5)	31% (5)	39% (5)
* responses don't add up to 100%					
English proficiency^	Speaking	91% (41)	100% (16)	100% (16)	69% (9)
	Listening	91% (41)	100% (16)	94% (15)	77% (10)
	Writing	84% (38)	94% (15)	88% (14)	69% (9)
^Middle and high	Reading	91% (41)	100% (16)	100% (16)	77% (10)
Years as a Jewish professional	Average	11.7	8.8	8.5	19.0
	Less than 5	11% (5)	12% (2)	18% (3)	--
Years in organization	Up to 3 years	36% (16)	50% (8)	38% (6)	15% (2)
	3-7 years	29% (13)	25% (4)	25% (4)	39% (5)
	Over 7	35% (16)	25% (4)	38% (6)	46% (6)
	Average	6.56	6.0	6.19	8.3
Years in position	Up to 3 years	42% (19)	50% (8)	56% (9)	15% (2)
	3-7 years	36% (16)	25% (4)	31% (5)	54% (7)
	Over 7	22% (10)	25% (4)	12% (2)	31% (4)
	Average	4.77	4.6	3.8	6.6
Level of responsibility in work	Budget	78% (35)	56% (9)	94% (15)	85% (11)
	Employees	73% (33)	50% (8)	75% (12)	100% (13)
	Volunteers	73% (33)	68% (11)	75% (12)	77% (10)
	Responsible for budget, employees & volunteers	51% (23)	31% (5)	62% (10)	62% (8)

Appendix II: Index Items

Table II-1: Items in the Indexes Comparing the Program Cohorts

Index	Items
Self-perception as a Jewish professional To what extent do you ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See yourself as a Jewish professional ▪ See yourself as a Jewish community leader ▪ Feel a sense of belonging to the community of Jewish professionals ▪ Feel that by working in the Jewish community, you can fulfill yourself professionally
Development as a Jewish professional To what extent did the program ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help you understand your strengths and challenges as a Jewish professional ▪ Strengthen your wish to build a professional career within the Jewish community ▪ Change your perception of your place in the community ▪ Strengthen your understanding/perception of diversity, pluralism and inclusiveness as values ▪ Strengthen your understanding/perception of global Jewish responsibility ▪ Strengthen your understanding/perception of your role as a leader in a Jewish community organization ▪ Help you recognize new opportunities in your role or in your organization ▪ Help you better understand what issues you want to promote in your community ▪ Help you formulate a leadership approach that suits you personally ▪ Strengthen your interest in Jewish learning ▪ Help you think about the next steps in your professional journey

<p>Expanding knowledge in the program's four content areas</p> <p>(To what extent did the program expand your <u>knowledge, understanding and skills</u> in the following areas)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership (visionary thinking, strategic planning, leadership models and adaptive leadership, followership, power and power sharing, models of leadership) ▪ Community development (models, methodologies, best practices) ▪ Management and administration (e.g. working with people, budget planning, time management) ▪ Integration of Jewish content in everyday work (Jewish learning, Jewish texts relevant to your work as a Jewish professional, etc.)
<p>Overall assessment of the program</p> <p>To what extent did the program ...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include themes that were new to you or expanded your knowledge of themes you were familiar with ▪ Include issues that were relevant to the context of your work ▪ Reflect the professional issues you are dealing with
<p>Program organization</p> <p>How satisfied are you with the following aspects of program implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organization of the program ▪ Group facilitation ▪ Guest lecturers ▪ Program materials (homework and material given in the seminars) ▪ Responsiveness to participants' requests ▪ Flexibility in the structure and agenda of the program ▪ Facilitation and connection in activities between the seminars
<p>Program methods</p> <p>Overall, how do you feel about the balance in the program schedule <u>allocated to the following types of activities?</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group discussions ▪ Lectures/presentations ▪ Text learning/Beit Midrash ▪ Workshops ▪ Study tours/excursions ▪ Discussions/work in small groups ▪ Peer learning ▪ Networking ▪ Informal interaction between participants during breaks or free time