



Antisemitism Amplified

Eshel reports on antisemitism and LGBTQ+ Jews between Oct 7, 2023 and Nov 1, 2024, in partnership with A Wider Bridge.

Since October 7, 2023, LGBTQ+ Jews have experienced antisemitism in the United States at rates that are likely higher than the Jewish community overall.

Eshel led a survey in partnership with A Wider Bridge (AWB) to measure the experiences of LGBTQ+ Jews in their communities and social spaces since Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, 2023. **Eshel** is a nonprofit whose mission is to build LGBTQ+ inclusive Orthodox Jewish communities. **A Wider Bridge** is a nonprofit with a goal to build a strong relationship between the LGBTQ+ communities in North America and Israel, advance LGBTQ+ inclusion in Israel, advocate for justice, and counter LGBTQ+phobia.

On the one-year anniversary of October 7, Eshel launched a survey to Eshel and AWB's combined audience of 13,000 individuals who are Jewish and LGBTQ+. Of this group, 328 responded over a period of 30 days, representing 2.5% of the total population surveyed.

Key Findings

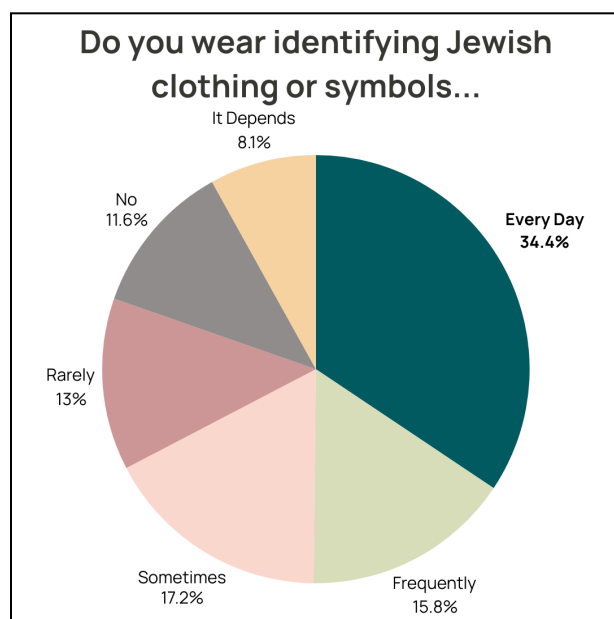
1. LGBTQ+ Jews who outwardly identify as Jewish...

The surveyed group strongly presents as Jewish, with most wearing Jewish clothing or symbols. Over one-third (35%) wear these items every day.

...feel more unsafe than the general Jewish population.

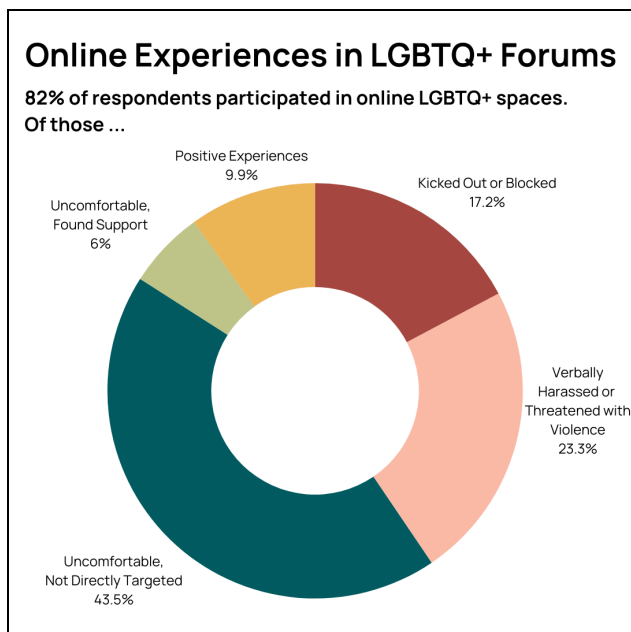
Those LGBTQ+ Jews who wear identifiable Jewish clothing are more likely to experience antisemitism than those who do not.

67% of respondents who wear recognizable Jewish symbols, daily or frequently, reported experiencing antisemitism. They are significantly more likely to experience verbal harassment and be excluded from social communities. This is in sharp contrast with the feeling of the general Jewish population. According to the American Jewish Committee's (AJC) 2024 Survey of American Jewish Opinion, just 42% either felt somewhat or very unsafe wearing Jewish symbols out in public.¹



"I was physically chased out of a memorial by someone yelling 'F Israel' because I wore a Kippah that day."

¹ American Jewish Committee (AJC), 2024 Survey of American Jewish Opinion. Survey conducted between March 12-April 6, 2024.



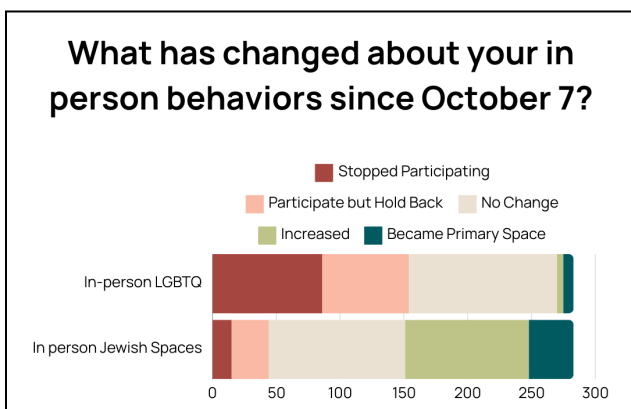
2. Toxic online world

Once again, those surveyed report far higher rejection and assault when participating in general and Queer online communities compared to social media experiences by the general Jewish community. According to the AJC 2024 survey, forty-four percent (44%) of Jews feel somewhat to very unsafe sharing their views on social media.

"I've pretty much left all of the queer/trans pages I was previously on, and either replaced them with local pages that are well moderated, or Jewish themed instead."

In contrast, eighty-two percent (82%) of LGBTQ+ Jews in this survey who utilized LGBTQ+ online spaces have either been "kicked out", blocked, experienced verbal

harassment, or made to feel uncomfortable². Forty-three percent (43%) reported completely disengaging from LGBTQ+ online spaces as a result.



3. Migrating from LGBTQ+ Spaces to Jewish spaces

Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents reported no longer engaging in exclusively LGBTQ+ spaces, such as bars, clubs, and gatherings.

"I was both kicked out and threatened with violence in LGBTQ spaces... I received death threats and threats of violence, and had to file a police report."

Respondents reported the highest rates of discrimination in social friendships, with thirty percent (30%) of participants reporting harassment, threatened with violence, or kicked out/uninvited.

Both online and in-person, a large number of respondents increased their participation in Jewish spaces or made them their primary gathering places. For in-person, over forty-three percent (43%) moved towards Jewish spaces and within the online or social media world, thirty-eight percent (38%) increasingly gravitated to Jewish platforms and chat groups.

² When asked "What has your primary online experience been since October 7th in LGBTQ+ forums?" respondents chose among "I have been kicked out or blocked;" "I have been verbally harassed or threatened with violence;" "I have been uncomfortable, but not directly targeted;" "I have been uncomfortable, but found support;" or "I've had positive experiences."

Background on respondents

Age and location: Respondents range in age from 18 through age 70-plus. More than half are from either the Northeast or the West Coast.

Affiliation: Twenty-six percent (26%) of participants identify as “Just Jewish”³. Approximately thirteen percent (13%) affiliated with each of the major branches of Judaism, Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative Judaism. Those who identify as “Halachically observant” or “don’t participate” each represent eight-percent (8%) of respondents.

The big question for Orthodox LGBTQ+ Jews: Is there a place to migrate?

Despite drawing closer to Jewish spaces, Orthodox respondents will likely encounter a number of obstacles. Eshel’s Welcoming Shuls Project (WSP) has surveyed Orthodox synagogues over the past decade.

While WSP has seen improvement and acceptance, a report on these synagogues reveals that: thirty-five percent (35%) say that LGBTQ+ families should celebrate family milestone events outside of shul, fifty percent (50%) are unsure how to characterize gay families, and forty-five percent (45%) have not begun to think about transgender halakhic (Jewish legal) questions.⁴

“[The past year] made me realize that I’d rather be uncomfortable in Jewish spaces as a Queer Jew than uncomfortable in a Queer space as a Jewish person.”

For more information on this report or Eshel, please contact Ely Winkler at ely@eshelonline.org. With special thanks to Toby Klein, PhD, and Laura Vladimirova, LCSW.



Eshel’s mission is to build LGBTQ+ inclusive Orthodox Jewish communities.

Eshel envisions a world where LGBTQ+ people and their families are full participants in the Orthodox community of their choice.



Builds a strong relationship between the LGBTQ communities in North America and Israel.

Advances LGBTQ Inclusion in Israel through Impact Grants to LGBTQ-focused Israeli organizations.

Advocates for justice, counters LGBTQphobia, and fights antisemitism and other forms of hatred.

³ Religious affiliation: Respondents who self-identified as “Just Jewish” agreed with this statement: “I attend Jewish programming/events/services but I don’t affiliate with a particular movement.”

⁴ Welcoming Shuls Project 2019