

Survey of Canadian Jews 2017

Project Prospectus

Background. Canada's Jewish population has historic roots stretching back to the times of earliest European settlement of this continent. Most of Canada's urban centres have well-established Jewish communities, and Jews are well represented in the country's professions, business community, government and cultural circles. Today, Canada's Jewish population is diverse and consists of numerous distinct religious and cultural communities, and is evolving along with the rest of society. Within the next few years, Canada's Jewish population is expected to exceed 400,000, which would make it the largest Jewish community outside of Israel and the United States.

The basic demographics of the Jewish population are captured every ten years through national surveys conducted by Statistics Canada, which documents the number who identify as Jewish religiously and/or ethnically, where they live, and their basic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, education). What it does not provide is a substantive understanding about Jewish identity priorities, attitudes and values, especially among those who do not identify religiously. This type of information has never been collected among Canadian Jews on a national scale and is becoming increasingly important given the dynamic changes taking place in society generally, and in the Jewish world in particular. It is remarkable that the Canadian Jewish community is one of the least studied in the world, in sharp contrast to that of the USA and the UK.

In 2013, the respected Pew Research Center published the results of a comprehensive survey of American Jews that addressed many of these questions for the American community. This research provides a valuable portrait of the Jewish population in the USA, and raises important questions about the extent to which it may or may not characterize the Canadian Jewish community.

Survey of Canadian Jews. The Environics Institute for Survey Research, in partnership with Dr. Robert Brym (SD Clark Chair of Sociology at the University of Toronto) will conduct a landmark national survey of Jews in Canada in 2017. Consistent with the Pew American survey, the Canadian survey will be conducted as live telephone interviews (landline and mobile) with a representative sample of individuals 18 years and older who self-identify as Jewish (by religion, ethnicity or parents' background). This is the only feasible survey method for effectively sampling a representative sample of the Jewish population within the broader Canadian population-at-large.

The sample will be national, and stratified by region and major cities, as well as by demographics (e.g., age and gender) and religious affiliation. The base survey sample size will be 1,200, which may be adjusted once the requisite funding is secured. In addition to the base sample, there will be opportunities to provide a deeper focus on the Jewish population in specific cities through additional interviews where there is local interest and support from local funders.

The survey questionnaire will be developed by the project partners with the assistance of a small group of experts who will be convened by the partners to advise on the project. This group will include academic experts and individuals knowledgeable about the Canadian Jewish community. The questionnaire will incorporate relevant portions of the Pew American survey as well as questions relevant to the local and national Jewish community.

Timetable. The project schedule is as follows (subject to revision):

- Planning: design/questionnaire and sample development February – May 2017
- Implementation: Survey fieldwork/data tabulation June – November 2017
- Analysis/report preparation January – March 2018
- Public release April 2018

The completed research will be publicly released in partnership with one or more media organizations (e.g., CBC, *The Globe and Mail*, *Canadian Jewish News*), and the partners will be available for presentations and briefings to community organizations, governments and other interested groups. The research will also serve as the basis for a book by Dr. Brym.

Project Budget. The full budget for this project is \$475,000, two-thirds of which will be contributed by the project partners.

Sponsorship. The partners are looking for sponsor support to cover the remaining portion of the research costs (\$155,000). Sponsors will be publicly recognized for their contribution and receive an advance briefing of the research findings prior to public release.

Sponsor contributions will be considered tax-deductible charitable donations if made as designated gifts through the University of Toronto Advancement Office. For details, please contact Dawn Marie Schlegel, Director of Development, University of Toronto at 416-946-5192 or dawnmarie.schlegel@utoronto.ca.

For more information:

Keith Neumann, Ph.D., (Environics Institute) at 416-969-2457 or keith.neuman@environics.ca

Robert Brym, Ph.D. (University of Toronto) at 416-508-6117 or rbrym@chass.utoronto.ca

The Environics Institute for Survey Research conducts original public opinion and social research related to issues of public policy and social change. The Institute's primary mission is to survey those not usually heard from, using questions not usually asked. Survey research - properly conducted and published - helps all of us better understand our world as it is today, how it's changing, and where it may be heading. For more information, see www.environicsinstitute.org.

Dr. Robert Brym holds the SD Clark Chair of Sociology at the University of Toronto and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He specializes in political sociology and race and ethnic relations, and is the author/co-author or editor/co-editor of more than 125 books, peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. Among these are the definitive sociological collection on Canada's Jews and works on Canadian-Jewish demography and intermarriage. Dr. Brym has received numerous awards for his scholarly work and teaching. His work has been translated into nine languages. For more information, see www.utoronto.academia.edu/RobertBrym.
