



## SYNAGOGUES REPORT

### DEMOGRAPHICS OF SYNAGOGUE MEMBERS

Synagogue members are generally older, with unaffiliated respondents more likely to be under age 45.

Synagogue members' spouses more often consider him/herself Jewish (91%) compared with unaffiliated respondents (63%).

A smaller proportion of synagogue members are single (14%) compared to unaffiliated respondents (36%).

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSIENCE AND SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION

Those who live longer at their address are more often affiliated with a synagogue. Fewer affiliated respondents (5%) have lived in their current household for less than 1 year compared to 21% of unaffiliated respondents. Meanwhile 67% of affiliated respondents have lived at their current address for at least ten years, vs only 43% of unaffiliated respondents.

Unaffiliated respondents more often expect to move within 3-5 years (63% compared to 28% of synagogue members).

**Of people planning to move to another location in Greater Hartford, 53% of affiliated want to move to West Hartford versus 29% of unaffiliated.** Furthermore, 52% of synagogue members strongly agree that "It is important to live in an area where Jewish programs/services are conveniently located," compared to 18% of unaffiliated respondents.

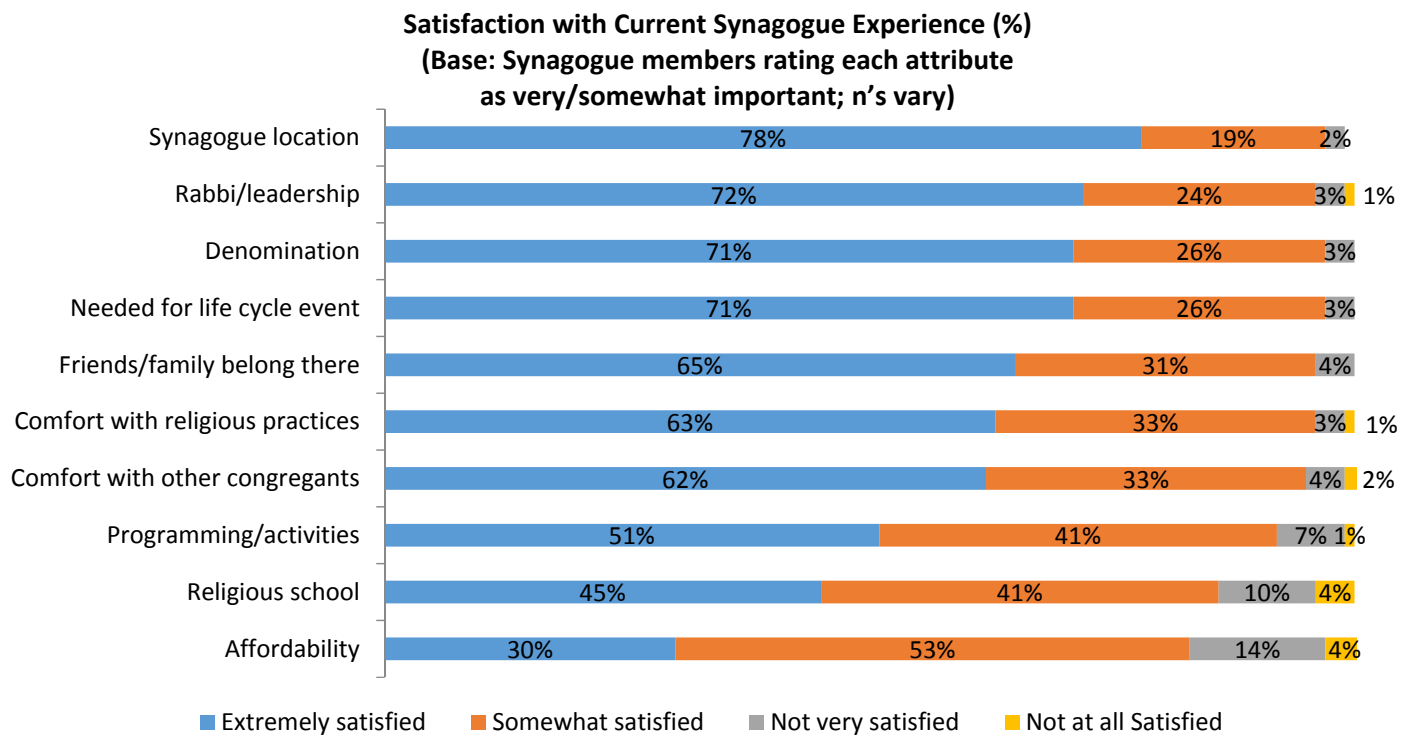
## SATISFACTION OF CURRENT MEMBERS

For the most part, people are pleased with their synagogues - over 80% say that they are satisfied with each aspect of membership.

There is room for improvement, however, specifically around affordability, religious school, and programming/activities.

People without children under 18 are more often satisfied with their synagogue programming than those with children.

People who feel more connected to the Jewish community are more satisfied overall than those who do not.



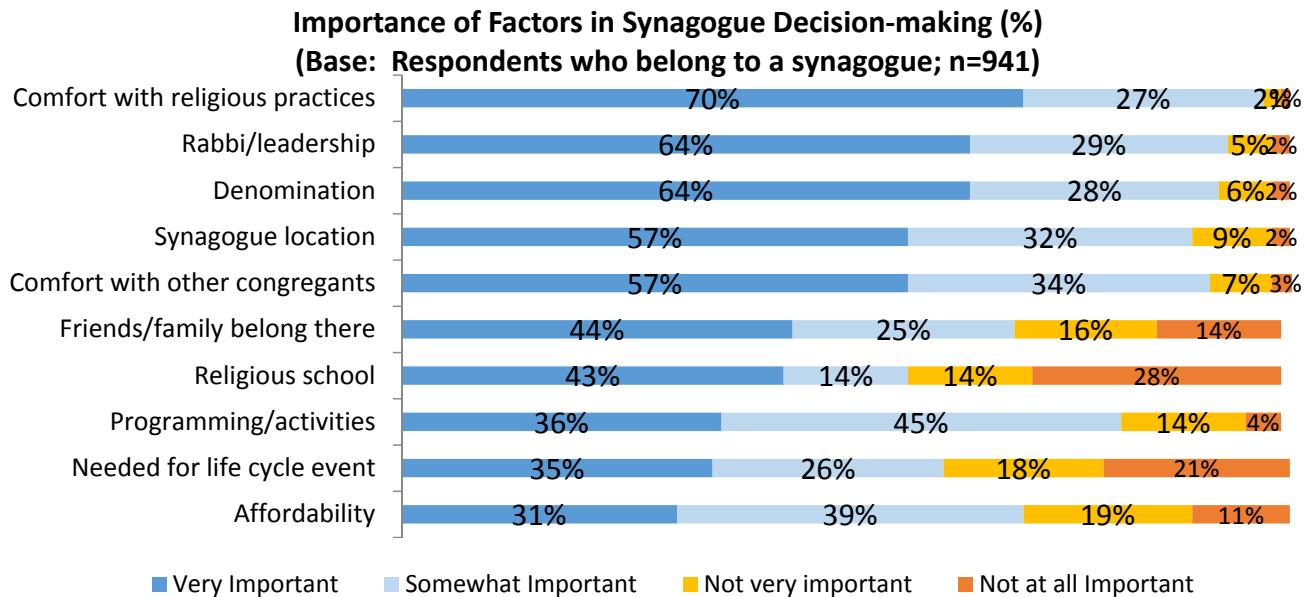
## FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR CURRENT SHUL

The three most important factors respondents considered when joining their current shul were: 1) comfort with religious practices, 2) the rabbi, and 3) synagogue denomination. Location and having friends/family belong were also very important to more than half of the respondents.

**Geography.** 70% of respondents East of the River said that location was very important (versus 57% overall).

**Age.** The youngest respondents (18-24) less frequently name denomination as an important factor.

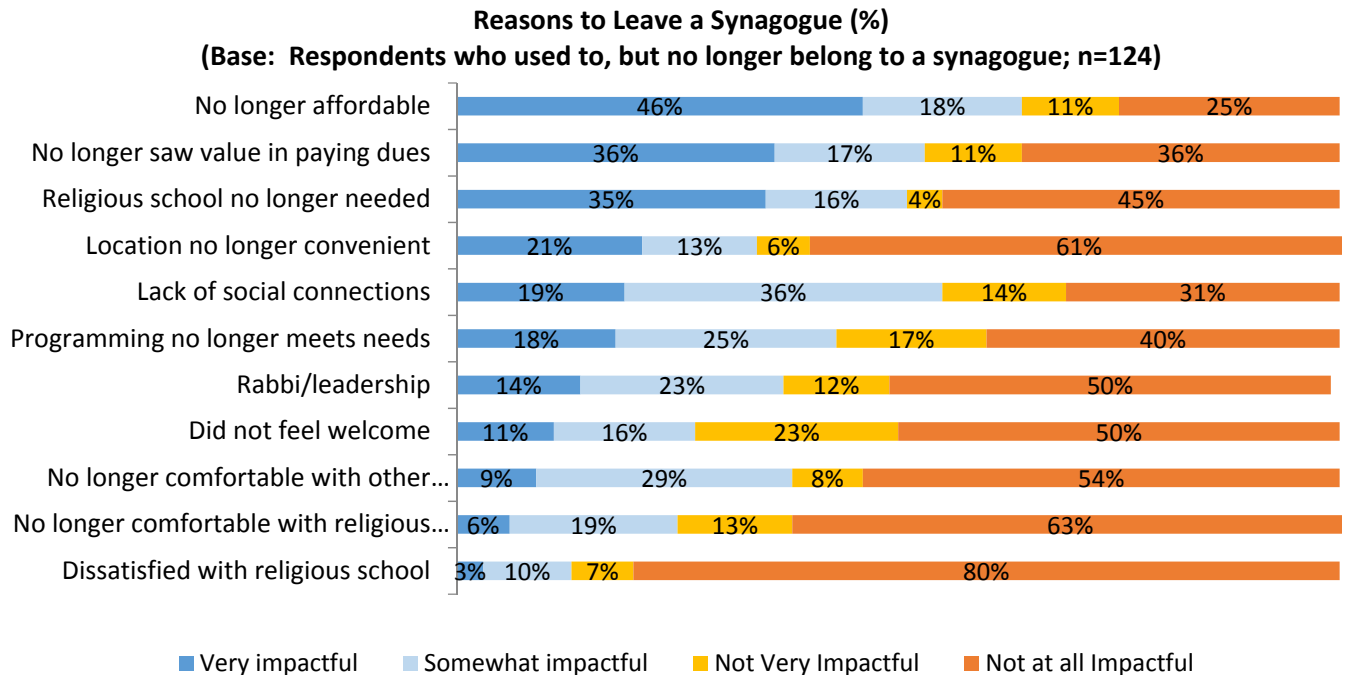
**Denomination.** Comfort with religious practices was very important to 81% of Orthodox respondents.



## REASONS TO LEAVE A SYNAGOGUE

Financial concerns have the most impact on the decision to leave a synagogue. Nearly half (46%) of those who left say that (lack of) affordability was very impactful, and 36% say that lack of value was very impactful.

Interest in sending a child to religious school was very important to 43% of respondents when they decided to join a synagogue. Children “aging out” of religious school is another leading reason to leave a synagogue.



## DECISION-MAKING CRITERIA FOR JOINING A SYNAGOGUE IN THE FUTURE

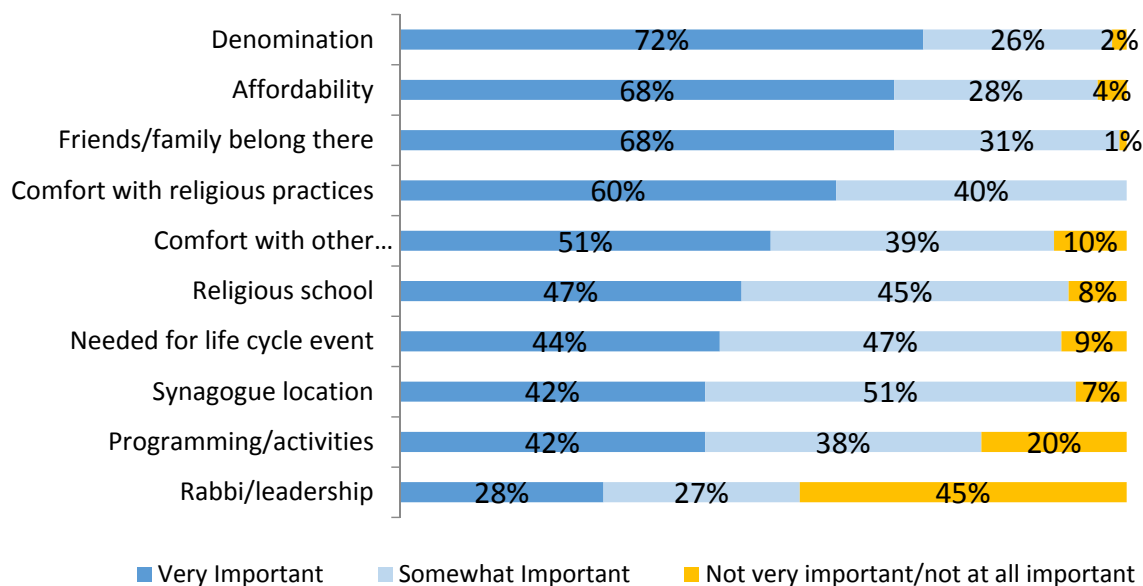
Among people who say they will join a synagogue in the future, the greatest percentage say that very important to their selection will be denomination, cost, and having friends/family who belong at the synagogue. It is important to note that cost and friends/family are much less important to people who already belong to a synagogue (31% and 46% of current members, respectively, rated these attributes as important to their decision, versus 68% of those who do not currently belong and rate these attributes as very important to their future decision-making).

Some middle-aged and older respondents – many of whom say they are considering joining in the future – might feel uncomfortable joining somewhere where they don’t have established social connections; they might feel that they will have a hard time breaking in socially.

The importance of cost might be related to life stage; perhaps some people are waiting for their children to graduate from college, or for some other event which leaves them with more disposable income.

It is important to note that the rabbi/leadership is not especially important to close to half of those considering synagogue membership in the future.

**Decision-making Criteria for Joining a Synagogue in the Future (%)**  
**(Base: Those who do not belong to a synagogue now, but plan to join; n=143)**

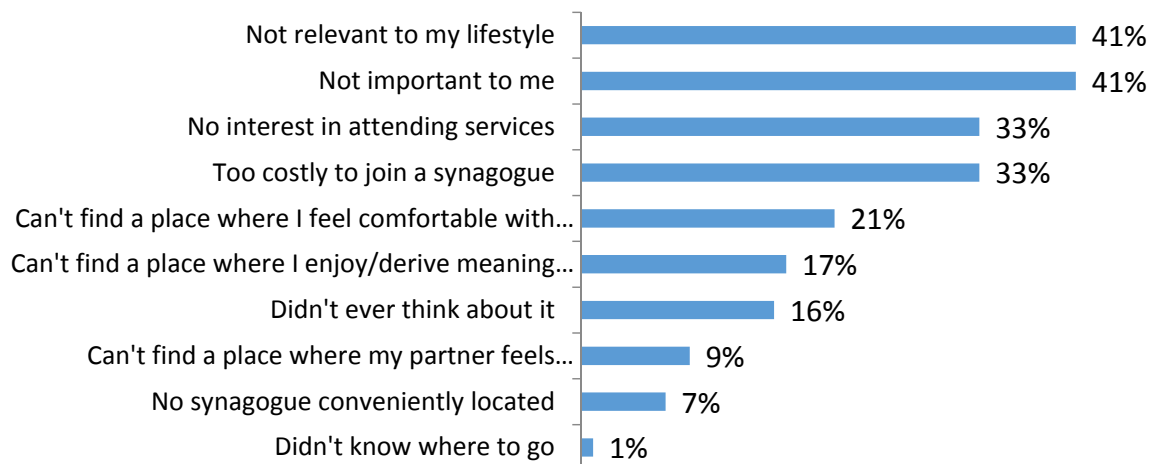


**REASONS NOT TO BELONG TO A SYNAGOGUE NOW OR IN THE FUTURE**

People who do not belong to a synagogue and do not plan to join in the future most often say that synagogue membership is simply not important to them (41%), that it's not relevant to their lives (41%), and/or they have no interest in attending services (33%).

Not feeling comfortable with other members (21%), and/or not finding meaning from services (17%) are less of an issue, though still consequential. Note that similar portions (18%) of non-members who are married to other Jews and those who are intermarried say that their partner not feeling comfortable is a reason they do not belong to a synagogue.

**Reasons Not to Belong to a Synagogue (%)**  
**Up to 5 responses allowed**  
**(Base: Those who do not belong to a synagogue now & don't plan to join; n=77)**



## PARTICIPATION IN JEWISH LIFE

Synagogue-affiliated respondents tend to be more connected and feel more a part of the Jewish community in Greater Hartford.

“I feel part of Jewish life in and around my local community.”

	Synagogue Member	Unaffiliated
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	56%	17%
<b>Agree</b>	35%	37%
<b>Disagree</b>	7%	32%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	2%	14%

“I feel part of a Jewish community in the Greater Hartford area”

	Synagogue Member	Unaffiliated
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	48%	10%
<b>Agree</b>	43%	50%
<b>Disagree/Strongly Disagree</b>	9%	40%

39% of unaffiliated and 25% of affiliated respondents do not participate in Jewish life as much as they would like.

Unaffiliated respondents more frequently give the following reasons for not participating compared to their affiliated counterparts: “I don’t have anyone to go with” (61% vs 36%); “I don’t find out about things until it is too late” (37% vs 21%); “I prefer to spend my resources in other ways” (27% vs 10%).

## PARENTAL ATTITUDES

86% of affiliated respondents with children agree or strongly agree that “it is important to me that my children marry someone who is Jewish,” while 31% of unaffiliated respondents with children agree or strongly agree with that statement.