

## **Jewish Community Institutions and Education in Interfaith Efforts**

**Anat Barber**, Graduate Research Assistant, Center for Online Judaic Studies

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This study sought to assess a diverse cross-section of Jewish institutions in the United States, Israel, Australia, England, Canada, the Council of Latin American Organizations, South Africa, and France. In most countries with significant Jewish populations four different kinds of organizations were contacted: schools, religious organizations such as synagogues or rabbinical schools, community welfare and fundraising organizations, and defense organizations.

The result of my research with the myriad of worldwide Jewish organizations was alarmingly small. In most organizations the individuals I spoke with reported that almost nothing is being done to educate Jews of any age as to Catholic attitudes toward Jews and Judaism. In day school, Yeshiva and supplementary education, there is a noticeable lacuna in the curriculum relating to contemporary changes in Catholic attitudes as reflected in *Nostra Aetate*.

On the community level, the leaders of many communities have mostly perfunctory meetings with leaders of other religious or ethnic communities to discuss shared values and exchange holiday greetings. These meetings are seldom focused exclusively on the Catholic community and rarely discuss substantive issues of antisemitism and the articulation of new Church teachings outlined at the Second Vatican Council. Out of all of the respondent organizations only 6.5% of them are engaging in a program to educate their communities as to the vastly changed attitudes of the Catholic Church. **74% of organizations are doing no intergroup work at all.**

This means that most of the contemporary Jewish population, save for Jewish leaders, has no formal education or up-to-date information regarding the Catholic Church or any other religious group. The remaining 18.5% of organizations and schools engage community leaders in intergroup relations, which may or may not include Catholic groups, but are certainly not exclusively devoted to the dissemination of the



activities do go on, but they are not standardized as part of the educational curriculum from the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

3. The Reform's community approach within education focuses more on common values regarding social justice issues and is closely tied with programs stemming out of their Religious Action Center. There is one program being in formulation for college campuses which is a joint venture of their Keshet College Programming office and the RAC. This program will aim to bring Jewish student leaders together with student leaders of other denominations.

### **III. Geographical Findings**

1. **United States:** In the United States there are a few organizations engaging in full-fledged