Jewish Federations of North America

Small Communities – From Survey of Jewish Life post 10/7

Findings from a poll of Americans – General Public and Jewish Americans

June 29, 2026

Background

- In March 2025, Jewish Federations of North American conducted a national study of Jewish Life in North America
- We were able to use this data to analyze important subpopulations including those living in small Jewish communities
- Data were weighted to ensure both the general population and the Jewish sample were representative
- The current data reflects Jews living in small communities (n = 455), and comparisons are offered with the overall Jewish community (n = 1877).
- Small communities are considered those with fewer than 5,000 Jews.

About This Survey

Objective: Provide **local Federations, national and local Jewish partner organizations, and philanthropists** with **actionable insights** to effectively respond to **evolving needs** and trends in Jewish communities.



March 5 -March 25, 2025



Text message recruitment



1877 Jewish 3921 Non-Jewish

5798 Total Respondents



Weighted to be representative of the US population and Jewish community

For questions about the data or methods, contact Research@JewishFederations.org.
This presentation and all future releases will be posted on the Berman Jewish Databank (www.jewishdatabank.org)
We are grateful for the support for this survey from:

THE DIANE & GUILFORD GLAZER FOUNDATION

CROWN FAMILY PHILANTHROPIES

one8 FOUNDATION

WILLIAM DAVIDSON FOUNDATION

Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation

UJA Federation NEW YORK

~22% of Jews in the United States live in small Jewish communities*

Small Jewish communities are most likely to be in the South, and in rural or suburban areas.

JFNA National Survey, March 2025. *Small Jewish Communities were defined as those with fewer than 5,000 Jews living within 5 miles of their zip code.

Small Jewish communities are not simply smaller versions of large communities. They face three interconnected challenges.

A smaller engagement ecosystem

People seek Jewish connection but face greater geographic and structural barriers.

A greater security burden

Jews in small communities experience similar levels of antisemitism but feel less supported by their non-Jewish community peers, leadership, and infrastructure.

A smaller leadership bench

Fewer people identify as community leaders, and those leaders carry extraordinary strain and responsibility.

Small Jewish communities begin with a less engaged population.

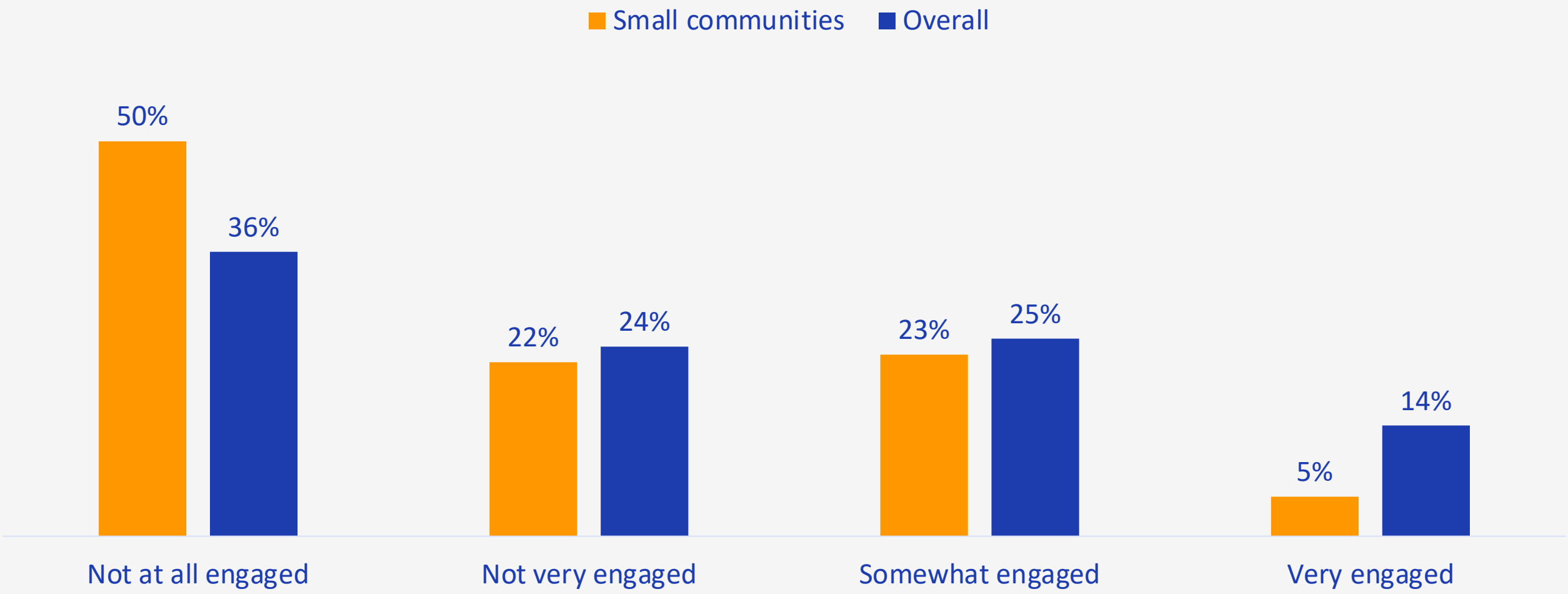
Half of Jews in small communities report being not at all engaged, compared with 36% nationally.

Connected, they see:

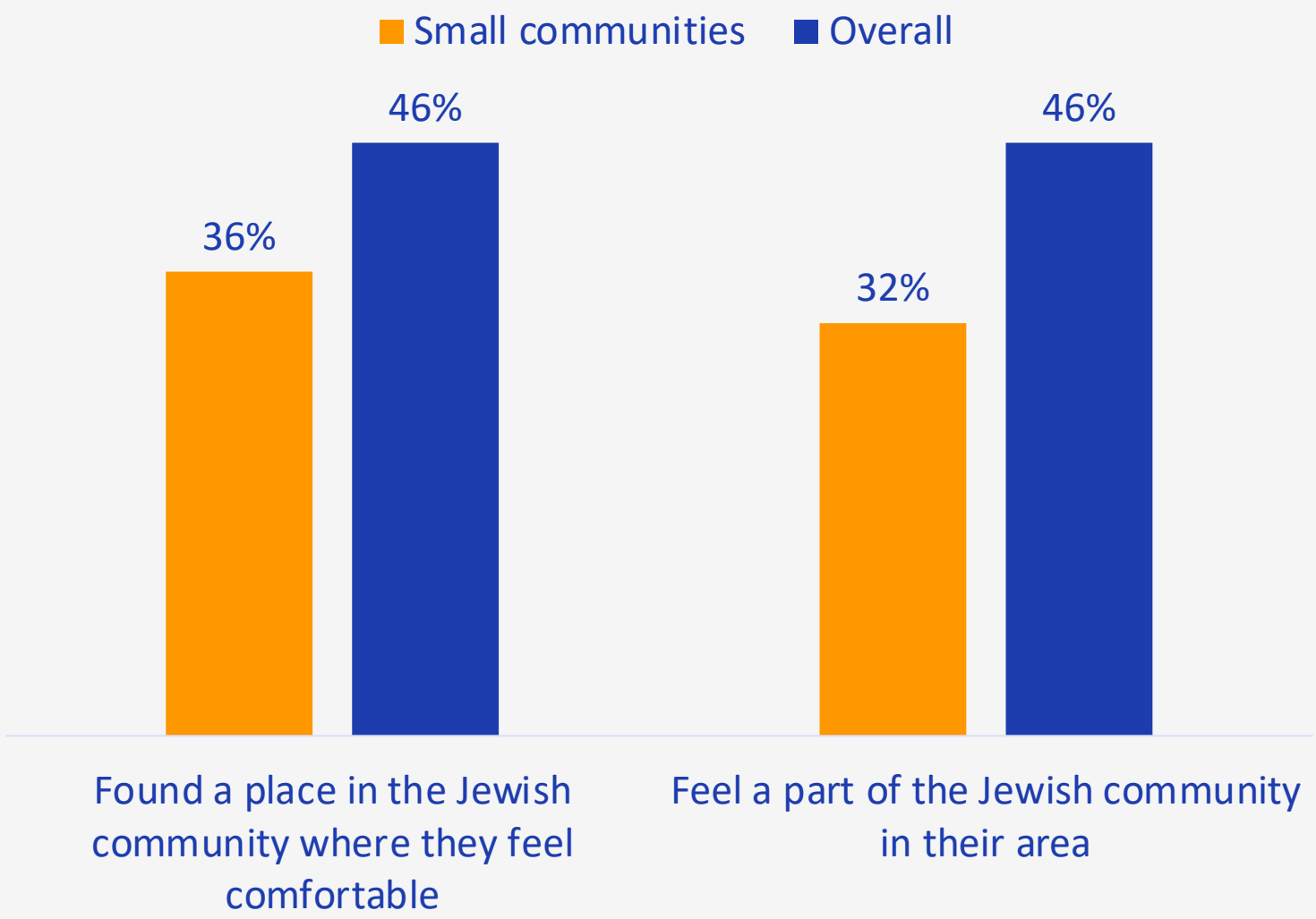
- Weaker feelings of community belonging
- Fewer people surging post 10/7

Still, they have similar desire to connect as those in larger communities.

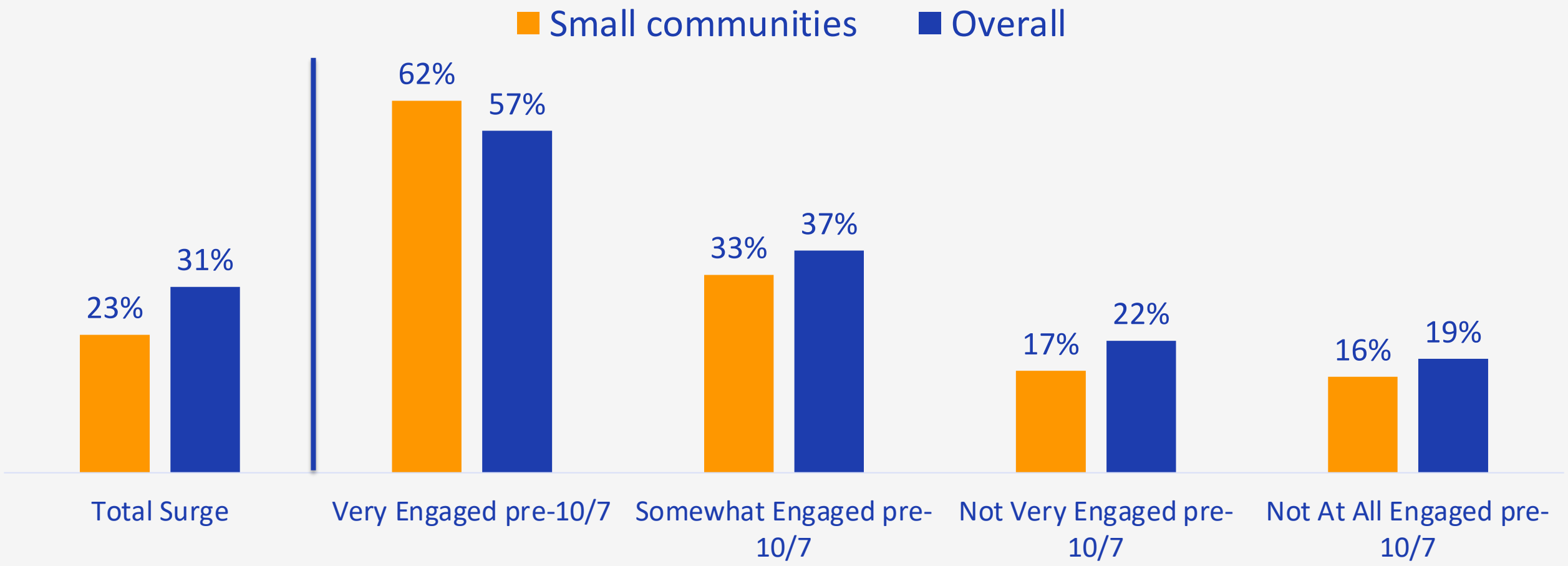
Jews in small communities are less engaged compared to Jews overall, with 50% reporting as not at all engaged.



Lower engagement is reflected in lower feelings of belonging.

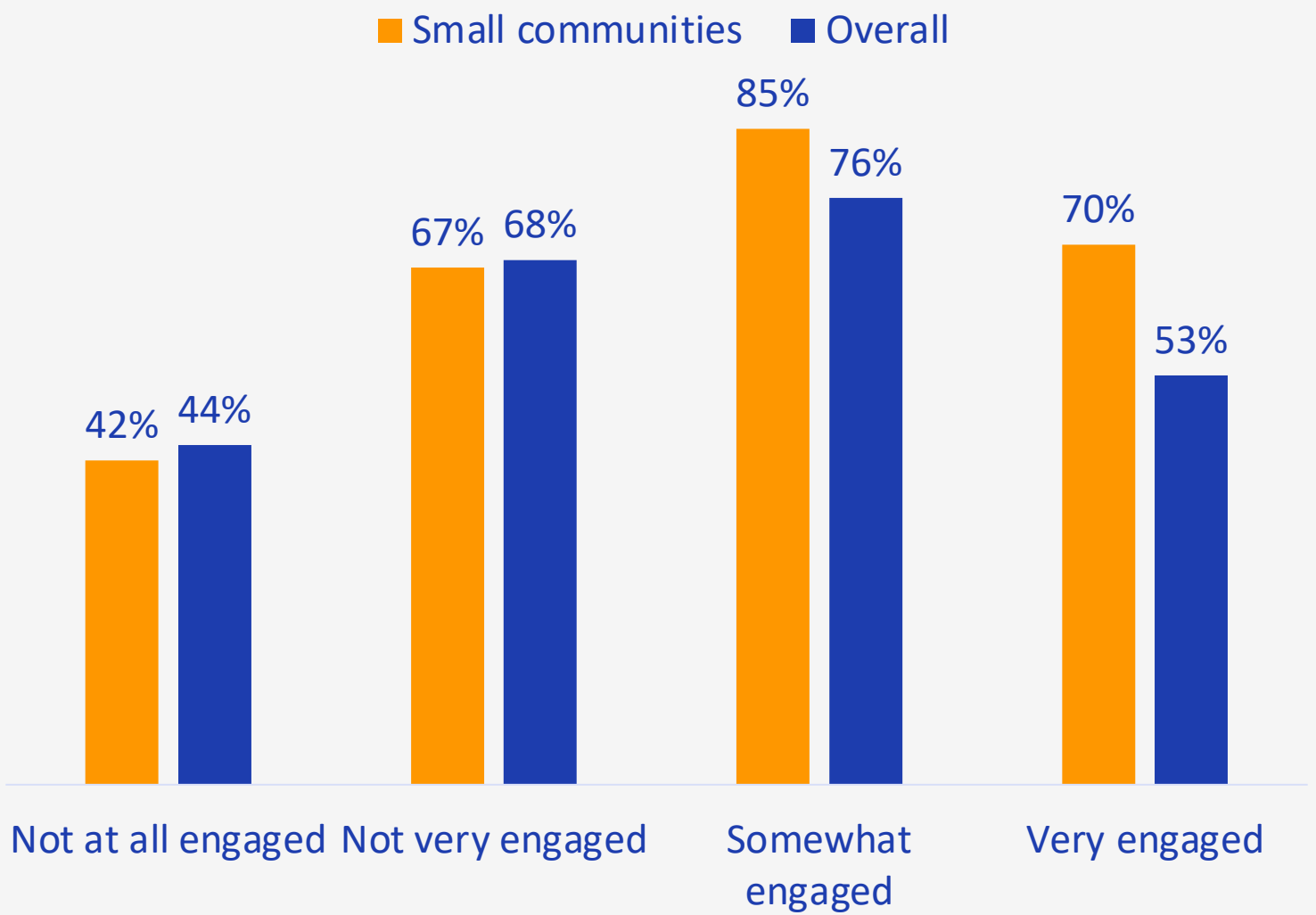


The Surge in small communities mirrors the national Surge when comparing Jews at the same engagement level.



JFNA National Survey, March 2025

At every engagement level, Jews in small communities are just as likely—or more likely—to want to become more connected to Jewish life.



Lower engagement reflects structural barriers—not lower interest.

Jews from small Jewish communities who want to engage more site the following challenges:

- Geographic distance
- Fewer local opportunities
- Lower awareness

Small communities also experience a greater burden from antisemitism.

Rates of antisemitism are similar, but Jews in small communities are:

- More likely to feel their experiences are dismissed (58% vs. 48%)
- Less likely to trust local law enforcement (39% vs. 47%)

Small communities have a smaller leadership* bench—and today's challenges weigh even more heavily on those leaders.

12% identify as leaders* (vs. 20% nationally)

Those leaders carry an exceptional burden:

- 95% are concerned about antisemitism (vs. 90% of leaders overall)
- 92% are greatly emotionally affected by the war (vs. 69%)

They also feel less supported:

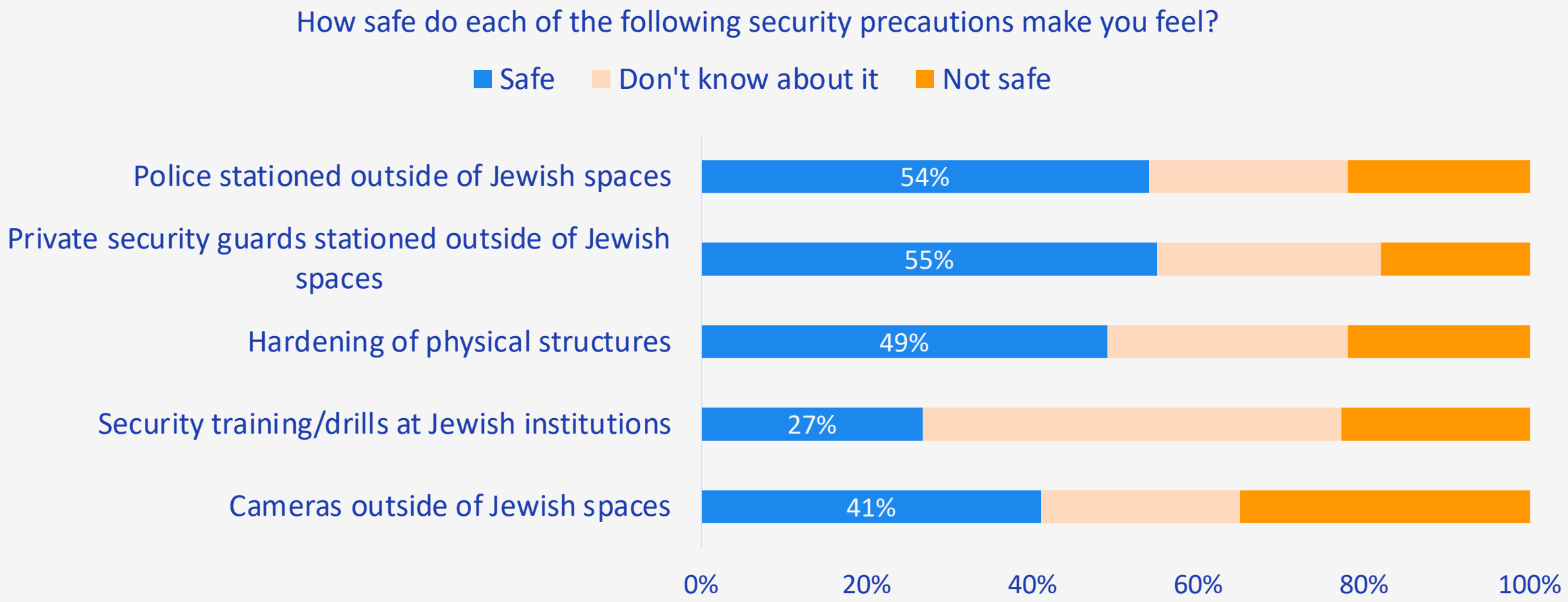
- 60% feel physically safe in Jewish spaces (vs. 86%).
- 36% believe local law enforcement takes antisemitism seriously (vs. 69%).

*Defined based on Latent Class Analysis

JFNA National Survey, March 2025

At the same time, like larger communities, leaders in small communities express strong trust in Jewish institutions to provide security (85%).

What Jews in small communities want to feel safe in Jewish spaces is the same.



The opportunity is ensuring small communities have access to the same professional security infrastructure.