

The Finances of Orthodox Jewish Life: A Nishma Research Study

December 21, 2021



Table of Contents

Topics	Contents	Page(s)
Introduction & Methodology		3-4
Summary of Key Findings	A brief summary of the study’s findings, in Q&A format	5-7
Orthodox Jewish Households Income, Savings & Investments	Annual Household Income; Non-Retirement Savings; Retirement Savings; Home Equity; Income & Assets Summary; Asset/Investment Allocation	8-14
Household Financial Health, Comfort Levels & Outlook for the Future	Overall Assessment of Household Financial Health; Views on Various Aspects of Financial Health; Comfort With Savings and Retirement Savings Levels; Views Relating to Luxuries; Expectations for Change Over Next 5-10 Years	15-20
Educational Expenses and Attitudes	Number of Children; Number Attending Grades K-12, Gap Year or College; Types of Schools Attended; Educational Expenses; Future School Intentions	21-26
The Broad Array of Other Orthodox Expenses	Jewish Organizations, Donations, Camps, Trips, Religious Items; Celebratory Events / Simchas; Impacts of Kosher Food and Where People Live; Potential Savings Due to Not Being Non-Orthodox	27-31
The Cost of Orthodoxy & How the Costs are Perceived	Better Understanding the Cost of Orthodoxy; Are the Additional Costs Worth It?; Impact of Costs on Religious Feelings; Advice to Struggling Families	32-38
Impact of Costs on Various Groups Across Orthodoxy	Variations Within Haredi: Hasidic vs. Yeshivish; Modern Orthodox by Age, Gender, Household Income, Number of Children, Couples vs. Singles, and More vs. Less Expensive Areas of Residence	39-47
Appendix I	Respondent Demographics	48-50
Appendix II	Survey Questionnaires: Primary Survey and Follow-Up Survey	51-57
About Nishma Research		58

Introduction and Methodology *(Page 1 of 2)*

Introduction

The issue of the cost involved in living an Orthodox life has come up in several of our past studies. The purpose of this study was to more deeply explore this issue, the realities and perceptions, and potential impacts.

Sponsorship

The following research, analysis, findings and conclusions were developed by Nishma Research, an independent firm, as a service to the community. Nishma Research is responsible for the contents.

Methodology

We conducted two surveys: a primary survey that broadly explored the cost of Orthodoxy and a follow-up that gathered additional household financial data.

Reaching the Orthodox community is challenging given its small size and the lack of centralized, accessible email or phone lists. We informed the public of our primary survey mainly through: (1) Rabbinical Council of America (RCA) and National Council of Young Israel rabbis, who informed their synagogue members of the survey; (2) emails to approximately 3,000 Orthodox individuals who have opted in to participate in a Nishma Research respondent panel; and (3) a bit of social media messaging.

The primary survey was conducted November 1-17, 2021, with 2,387 respondents qualifying to take the survey (based on being Orthodox, residing in the U.S., age 22 and older, and head or co-head of household) and completing the survey online sufficiently to be included in the data analysis.

We divide responses into two main groups:

- **Modern Orthodox** – Defined in the questionnaire as “Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox (including liberal Modern Orthodox as well as right-leaning Centrist Orthodox” ... we sometimes abbreviate this as M.O. – 1,334 respondents.

- **Haredi** – 972 respondents, including 589 Yeshivish / Agudah / Litvisch, 304 Hasidic, and 79 who identified as other Haredi or “heimish.” The Haredi community is comprised of two segments – Yeshivish and Hasidic – and these differ in many ways. For example, the Yeshivish are more secularly educated, while the Hasidic are more insular and its members have lower incomes and larger families. Some key differences between the Yeshivish and Hasidic are detailed on page 40.

A follow-up survey that requested additional household financial information was sent to 953 primary survey respondents and was conducted November 17-21, 2021. The survey received 475 responses (of which 293 identified as Modern Orthodox and 167 as Haredi). This was an email invitation, opt-in, on-line survey.

The Focus of this Report

As has been seen in numerous past studies, the two large segments of Orthodoxy – Modern Orthodox and Haredi – vary significantly in many ways. We therefore do not present findings for the consolidated Orthodox Jewish community, but rather focus separately on the two large segments. Also offering comparisons between them.

This report presents data for all Modern Orthodox households and for all Haredi households. We show ranges of values and also medians (mid-points), as representative of “typical households.” Clearly, household finances vary substantially based on many characteristics, including not only the segment within Orthodoxy, but also age, whether they have school-age or college-age children, where they live, etc. Differences within the Modern Orthodox community based on such factors as age, gender, income, etc. are explored in the section “Impact of Costs on Various Groups Across Orthodoxy” (pages 39-47).

Introduction and Methodology (Page 2 of 2)

As an opt-in survey, samples are not purported to be representative of the populations from which they derive, the characteristics of which are to a substantial extent unknown. Our respondents were, on average, a few years younger than their communities as a whole, suggesting that younger, working people with children at home responded more than older individuals. This may be because the challenges of cost are felt more by the younger people. Additionally, we stipulate that this survey did not well reach the most insulated Hasidim, non-English speakers with no online access at all, whom we believe to be a minority albeit a not insignificant one.

Despite the challenges in reaching a small community, the study uncovers intriguing findings distinctive to Orthodoxy. We hope these findings will help the community deal with the uncovered issues. As is true for all surveys, responses should be viewed with appropriate understanding and caution, and through the lens of what is already known.

Verbatim Responses

We believe that open-ended survey questions are important to “give a voice” to respondents. This report includes samples of verbatim responses, presented virtually unedited. Responses on pages 19 and 35-37 were randomly selected; responses were sorted using a randomization algorithm and then every n^{th} comment is shown. This process was adopted in order to provide a relatively brief but representative set of responses. We see the verbatim responses as providing a valuable “qualitative addition” to the quantitative data.

Additional verbatim responses may be available upon request; go to <http://nishmaresearch.com/contact.html> to contact us.

Thank You

Nishma Research wishes to thank the following individuals for input on the survey topics and questions:

- Rabbi Dovid Bashevkin – Director of Education of NCSY; author, professor of public policy, host of the 18Forty podcast that explores key issues in the Orthodox community; and honored as one of the Jewish Week’s “36 Under 36” in 2021. His enthusiasm (and a late evening phone call) spurred this survey, so a special thanks!
- Prof. Sylvia Barack Fishman – Renowned expert on Modern Orthodoxy; Joseph and Esther Foster Professor of Contemporary Jewish Life, Brandeis; co-director of Hadassah-Brandeis Institute; author of eight books and many articles on Jewish social issues; and an always willing and thoughtful source of valuable advice on Jewish community research.
- Michael Karlin – Actuary, statistician, pension consultant, who has conducted research in the Jewish community, including surveys for the Orthodox Union and Yeshiva University. We started to plan a survey on Orthodox finances in late 2019 ... but the pandemic delayed this research.
- Rabbi Dr. Dov Zakheim – Rabbi, professor, writer, entrepreneur, former US government official (Undersecretary of Defense), active in the national Jewish community; and always willing to share his insights into our community. (Disclosure: Dov and I grew up together in the very first hasidic shtiebel in Flatbush.)

Contact

Nishma Research continues to conduct research on issues that are important to the Jewish and Orthodox community. We welcome feedback, questions, and suggestions.

Mark L. Trencher – Email: mark@nishmaresearch.com
West Hartford, Connecticut – December 21, 2021

Summary of Key Findings *(Page 1 of 3)*

Introduction

This has been an emotionally difficult topic – but one long overdue. The community is economically fragmented and, while many are doing fine, many others are struggling mightily. One goal of this study was to give the latter a voice, with the hope that this can spur communal consideration of the issues.

It appears that the “threat” to people’s religious lives and observance is not very large, as people are coping and drawing strength from their beliefs, practices, families and communities. Still, reading through the survey results and especially the verbatim responses makes the struggles of many real and daunting! We all need to be sensitive to the challenges many of our coreligionists are facing on a day-to-day basis.

There is important “bad news” here but also important “good news.” We don’t believe in minimizing or hiding problems and we respect our thoughtful community’s ability to consider and discuss the issues raised.

Q. There are a lot of issues confronting Orthodoxy. Why was the finances of Orthodox Jewish life selected as the focus of this study?

In Orthodox community research, the issue of cost has often surfaced as a problem. For example, a broad 2017 Nishma Research survey of the Modern Orthodox community had the cost of Jewish schooling rated as a serious problem by 89% of respondents, ranking it the

#1 problem among 27 issues listed; 56% rated the cost of maintaining an Orthodox home as a serious problem, placing it #4 on the list.

Q. Before we get into the results, what do we need to know about the survey?

This was an online survey and we reached the community through shuls. Our 2,306 respondents (1,334 Modern Orthodox and 972 Haredi) were generally a few years younger on average than other demographic studies have shown for the broad community, and the reason is that we heard back from fewer retirees. The topic of finances resonated more with younger, working members of the community, those with children at home, and the survey results mostly represent that group. (See pages 3-4 and 49-50)

Q. This survey gathered interesting metrics for Orthodoxy, such as the median (mid-point) levels of household earnings, savings, retirement savings, home equity, and even how Orthodox Jews invest their money. Could this be of value to those who want to see where they stand relative to the community?

While the median figures provide a profile of the community (for example, median annual total household incomes of \$188K for Modern Orthodox and \$136K for Haredi; and we also have medians for general savings, retirement savings and home equity), we caution against comparing one’s personal household finances against the communal data. Every family is different, and significant

Summary of Key Findings *(Page 2 of 3)*

factors such as age, the geographic areas where people live, how many school-age children they have, etc., would need to be taken into account before someone can even start to assess where they stand relative to the overall Orthodox community. (See pages 9-14 and 40-46)

Q. What are people paying for their children's education, and are they able to get support through scholarships and other sources?

Jewish education is a significant expense, and the report breaks out the educational cost findings for the U.S. Modern Orthodox and Haredi communities (all survey questions are broken out for these two main sub-groups of Orthodoxy).

Among families with children in grades K-12, the median amount they pay is: Modern Orthodox \$31K a year (41% get tuition assistance, median of \$7K per child;) and Haredi \$20K a year (52% get tuition assistance, median of \$3K per child). Additionally, a significant number (although fewer than the K-12 families) have children in college or gap year studies.

Does this affect the perceived importance of Jewish education? In response to the question "Might you in the next five years consider taking a child out of their current Jewish day school, with finances being a significant factor in such a decision?," we see a strong continuing commitment: 7% of Modern Orthodox and 1% of Haredi respond that there is a "good chance they would consider this." (See pages 22-26)

Q. How should we define "cost of Orthodoxy" and what are those costs?

In addition to Jewish schooling, we asked how much households spend on shul expenses, donations, religious articles, food, simchas, and many other areas, including the perceived additional cost due to kosher food and the neighborhoods where people live. How much of these should be viewed as a "cost of Orthodoxy"? Our subjective base for comparison is the incremental costs, compared to U.S. non-Orthodox families.

We view these incremental costs as having three broad components. First, there are assorted expenses in the range of \$4,200 for Modern Orthodox and \$6,000 for Haredi. (See pages 28 and 33)

Second, the cost of kosher food. This study did not seek to quantify households' incremental spending for kosher food, but we offer some observations. U.S. Department of Agriculture data suggest median annual household food expenditures of \$8,000. Anecdotal data and conversations suggest that Orthodox families may spend \$1,000 to \$1,300 monthly, or \$12,000 to \$15,600 annually (and we invite readers to provide data on this, especially if you maintain a spending diary). Some of this is due to the higher cost of kosher food, while some is due to larger family size and Shabbat meals.

One in six families, both Modern Orthodox and Haredi, said that the higher cost of some kosher food has a

Summary of Key Findings *(Page 3 of 3)*

significant negative impact on their household budget. Also, one in six said that Shabbat and Chagim (Yom Tov) have a significant negative impact on their household budget. (See pages 29 and 33)

A third, very significant factor is where people live. A connection to shul is near universal among Orthodox, and halachah prohibits driving on Shabbat and therefore requires people to be within walking distance of shul. The laws of supply and demand take effect in housing markets, and many Orthodox neighborhoods are quite expensive. One-third of Modern Orthodox and Haredi said that where they live has a significant negative impact on their household budget, and another one-third said it has a somewhat negative impact. (See page 30)

Q. What are the biggest financial worries?

There is a large spectrum across all responses; there are struggling and then there are those that are not. While relatively few (12% of Modern Orthodox and 17% of Haredi) have concerns about their income covering expenses, many more are concerned about their ability to save money, especially retirement savings. Fewer than half (48%) of the Modern Orthodox, and fewer than one-third (29%) of the Haredi, are comfortable that they will have enough retirement savings when they retire. (See pages 16-18)

Q. How do Orthodox Jews feel about all this? Happy? Sad? Angry? Anxious? Accepting?

The survey asked two questions that try to get at this. First: “Do you agree with the statement: Orthodoxy has costs, but the additional costs are worth it.” We see disagreement with the statement as representing the view that costs are burdensome enough that they detract from one’s religious life. Those feeling this way ranged from lows of 2% (Yeshivish) and 3% (those ages 55+), to highs of 15% (those with incomes under \$50K and those who live in more expensive neighborhoods). Overall, though, a small minority feels this way ... the vast majority say the cost is worth it, given all they get from their Orthodox life and community. (See pages 34 and 47)

The survey also asked a somewhat more direct open-ended question: “Are the financial costs of Orthodoxy affecting your religious feelings, either in a positive way or in a negative way?” A majority state that it has no effect on them religiously, but a notable minority explain how cost does affect them negatively, at least to some respect. (See page 37)

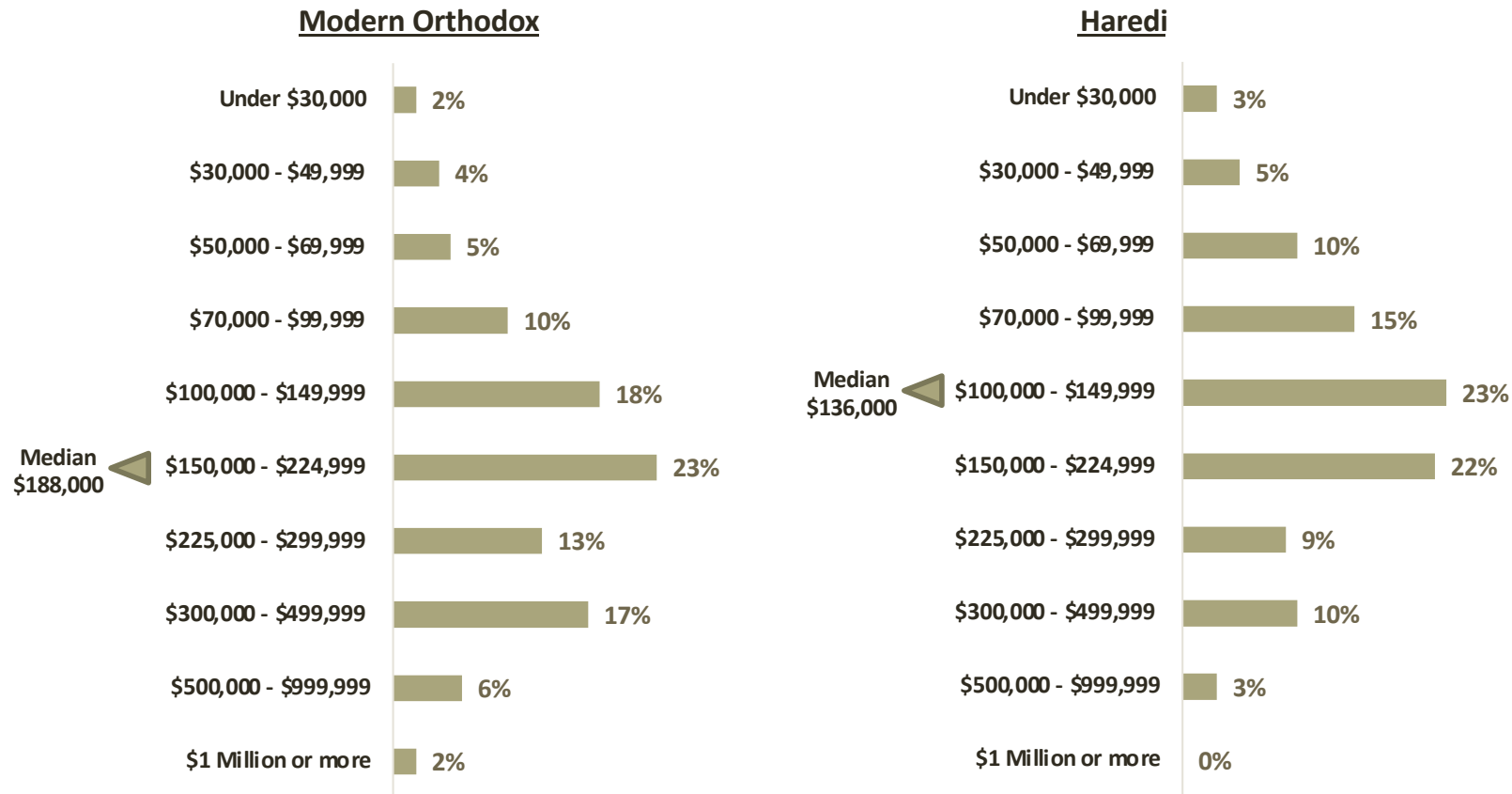
Q. The survey asked people if they had any advice on handling the cost of Orthodoxy. Were there common responses?

The advice most often given is to live within one’s means, resist the perceived need to “keep up with the Joneses,” move to a less expensive community, if possible, don’t be shy about asking for help, and pray, give charity and otherwise draw sustenance from Judaism and its beliefs and practices. (See page 38)

Orthodox Jewish Household Income, Savings & Investments

Annual Household Incomes of Orthodox Jewish Families – Incomes are nearly 40% higher among Modern Orthodox (median income \$188K, with 21% under \$100K and 25% at \$300K or more) than among the Haredi (median income \$136K, with 33% under \$100K and 14% at \$300K or more).

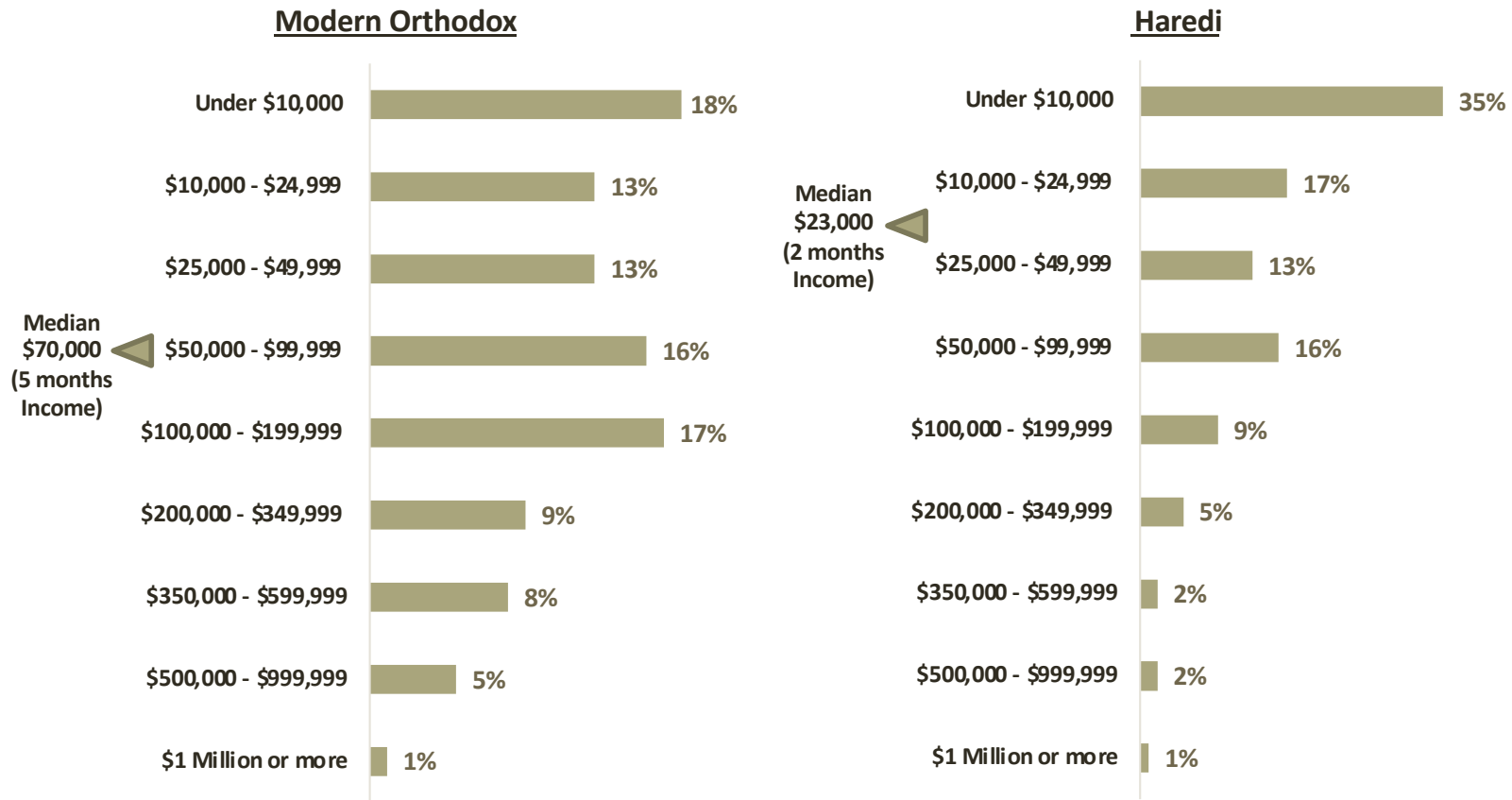
(The median is a midpoint; half of the respondents are above this figure and half are below.)



See Q12 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. The distribution of incomes of \$500,000 or more was derived via Q4a in Appendix II – Follow-Up Survey Questionnaire. n (number of responses to the survey question) = 1,163 Modern Orthodox and 786 Haredi.

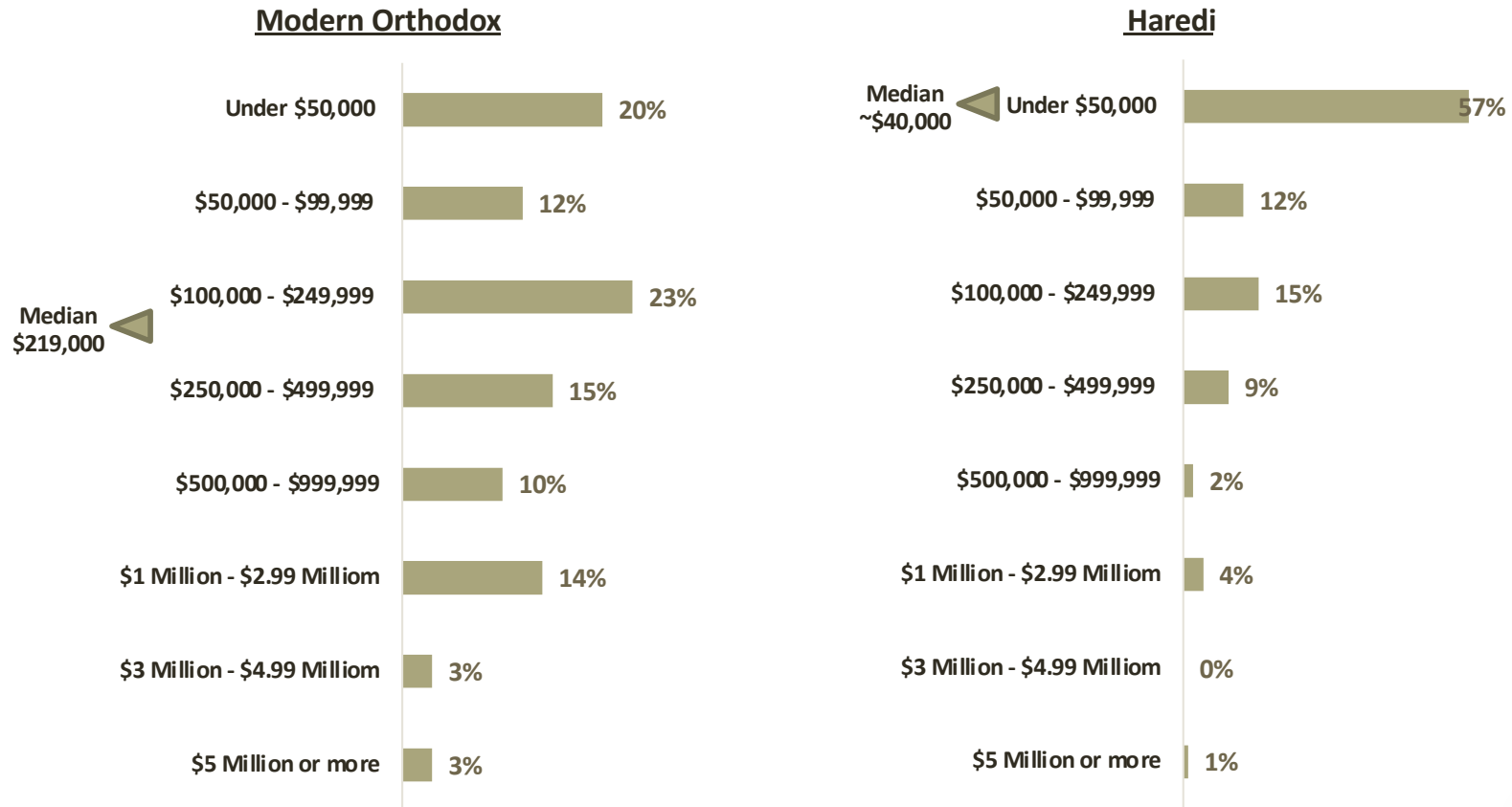
This report presents medians for dollar responses that were obtained categorically (alternatively, we believe respondents' willingness to provide exact data would have been notably reduced). These medians are obtained using the generally accepted practice of identifying the median category (the one in which the mid-point of respondents lies) and then interpolation within that category, generally assuming a uniform distribution of responses within the median category. So all medians are estimates. We believe the estimates to be reasonable. In a few instances where we believe medians may be less reliable, we preface the dollar figure with the tilde (~) symbol. approximations.

Household Savings (Excluding Retirement Plans) – Modern Orthodox families have a median of \$81K in non-retirement savings (equivalent to 5 months of income); Haredi families have a median of \$24.5K in non-retirement savings (equivalent to 2 months of income). Haredi families have significantly less of a “savings cushion.”



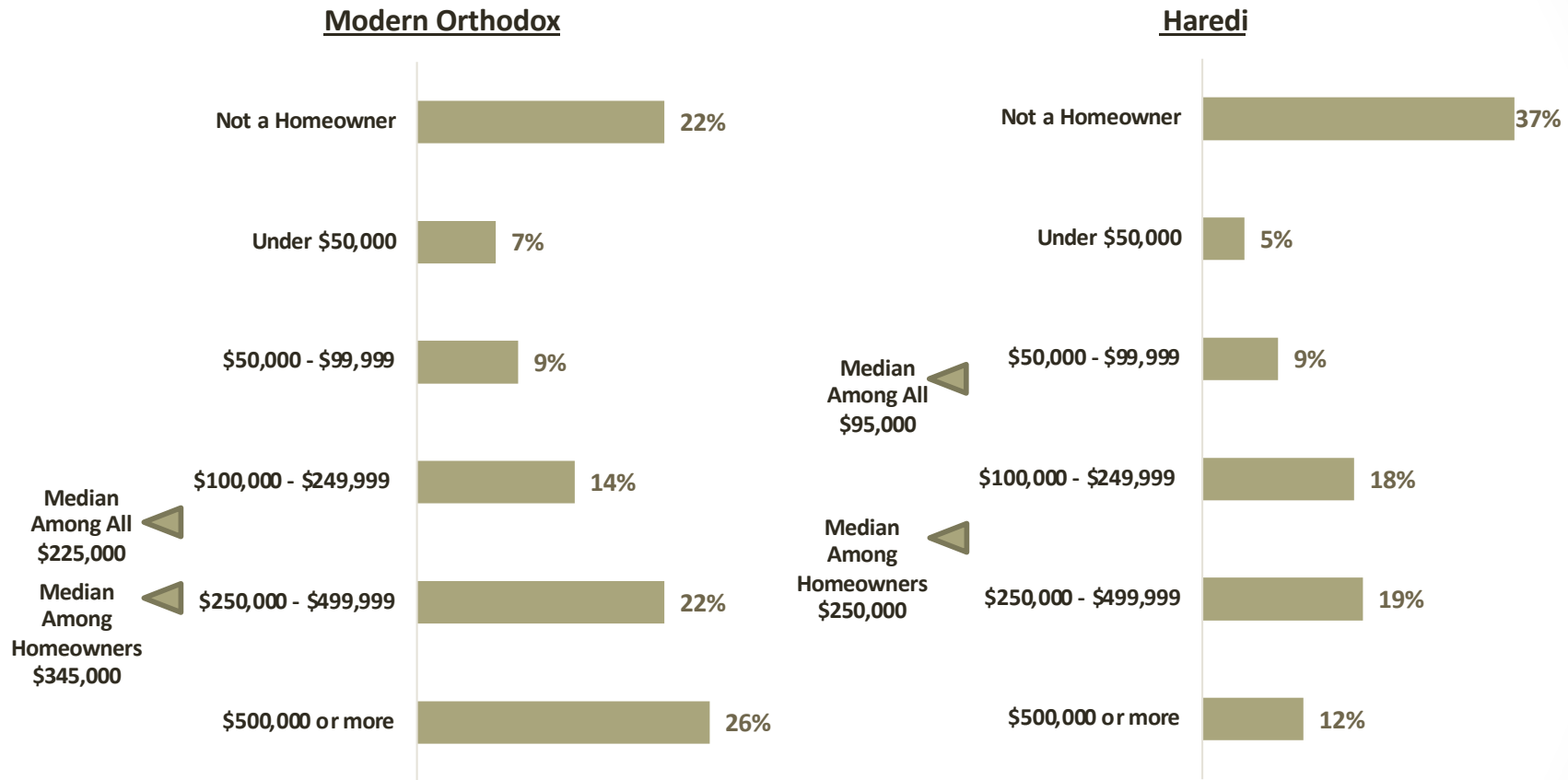
See Q5-5a in Appendix II – Follow-Up Survey Questionnaire. n = 277 Modern Orthodox and 153 Haredi.

Household Retirement Savings – Modern Orthodox families have a median of \$220K in retirement savings; Haredi families have a much lower median of \$40K in retirement savings. However, the Haredi community is younger, on average, than the Modern Orthodox community – a difference that is reflected in this survey’s respondents (see Demographics in Appendix I) – and so they have had less time to save for retirement.



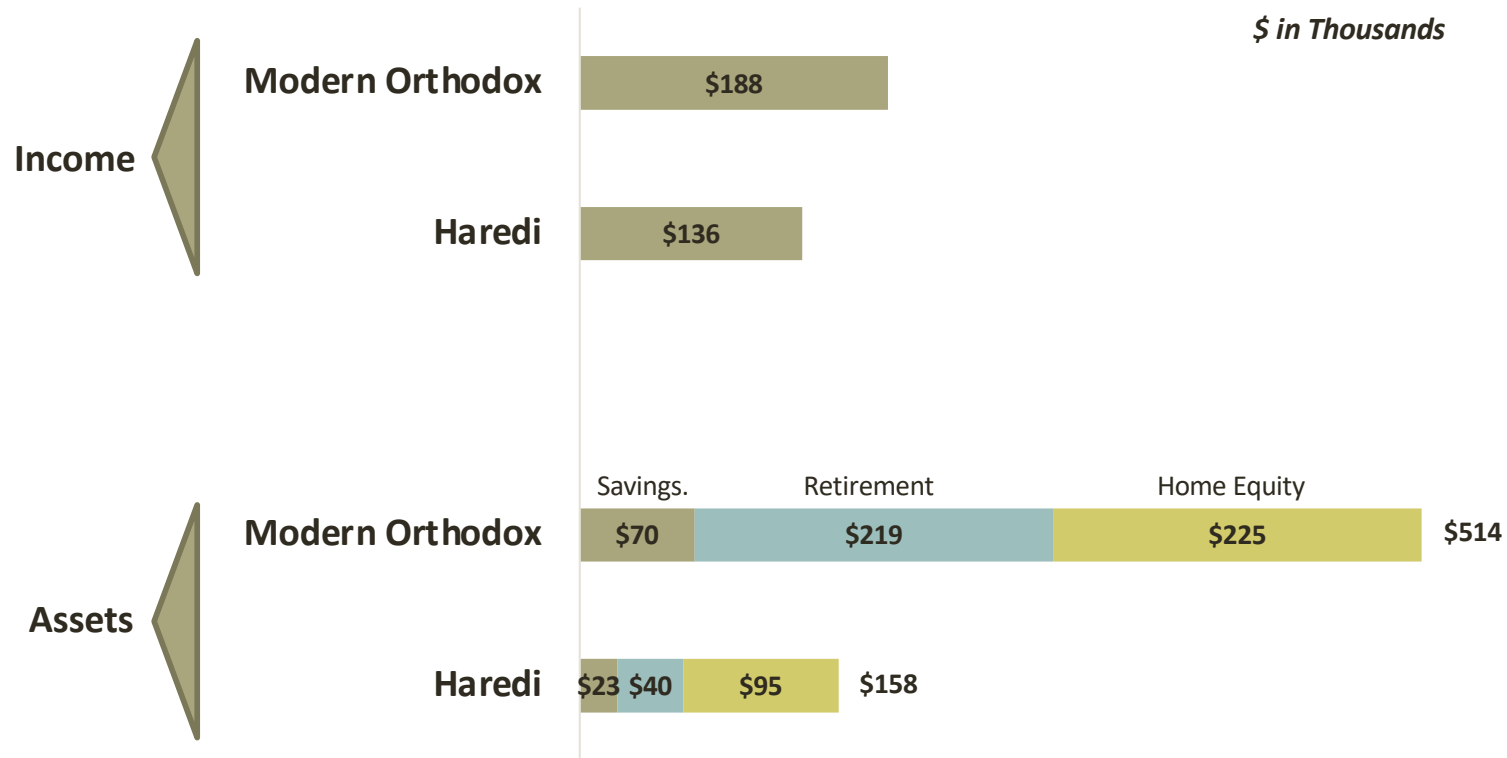
See Q6-6a in Appendix II – Follow-Up Survey Questionnaire. n = 272 Modern Orthodox and 151 Haredi.

Home Equity – 78% of Modern Orthodox families own their homes, compared to 63% of Haredi families. Among all families (homeowners as well as renters), Modern Orthodox have a median home equity of \$225K, compared to \$95K among Haredi families.



See Q7 in Appendix II – Follow-Up Survey Questionnaire. n = 272 Modern Orthodox and 151 Haredi.

Income and Assets Summary – While Modern Orthodox families have median annual incomes about 40% higher than those of Haredi families (\$188K vs. \$136K), the Modern Orthodox have median total assets (defined as the sum of savings, retirement savings and home equity) more than triple that of Haredi families (\$514K vs. \$158K).



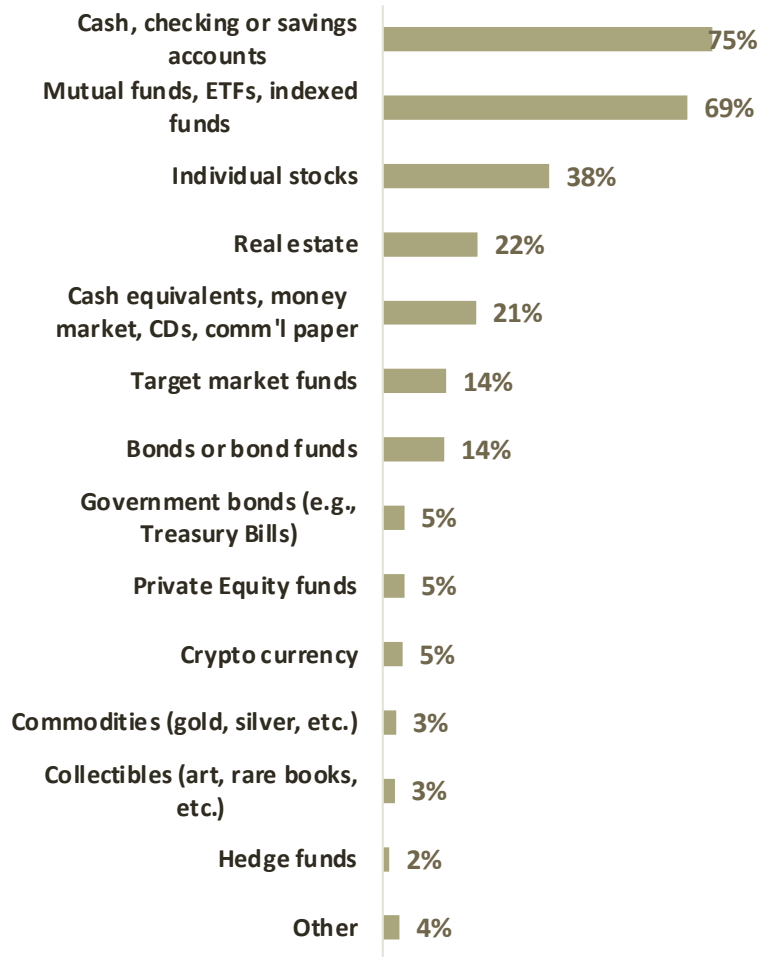
This above summarizes the data presented in this section. The total assets figures should be viewed with some caution, as we are adding median values across variables that may or may not be correlated. As just one example, it may be that household savings are lower for some respondents because they prioritize retirement savings

The survey asked about credit card debt and about two-thirds of respondents report that they do not carry any interest-accruing credit card debt, with a median debt of \$8,000 among the remainder. In retrospect, the question wording may have created a perception that we wanted to exclude debt with a 0% interest rate, and it should have been more clearly phrased. Thus, credit card debt has been excluded from our overall analysis, although it does reduce household assets. Note that the average American credit card debt per household is about \$6,000.

Asset/Investment Vehicles Utilized – While comparable vast majorities of both Modern Orthodox and Haredi have assets in cash, checking or savings accounts, beyond that the Modern Orthodox have more diversification and breadth of investment vehicles, notable in equities (individual stocks as well as stock funds).

(Multiple Responses add to more than 100%) *

Modern Orthodox



Haredi

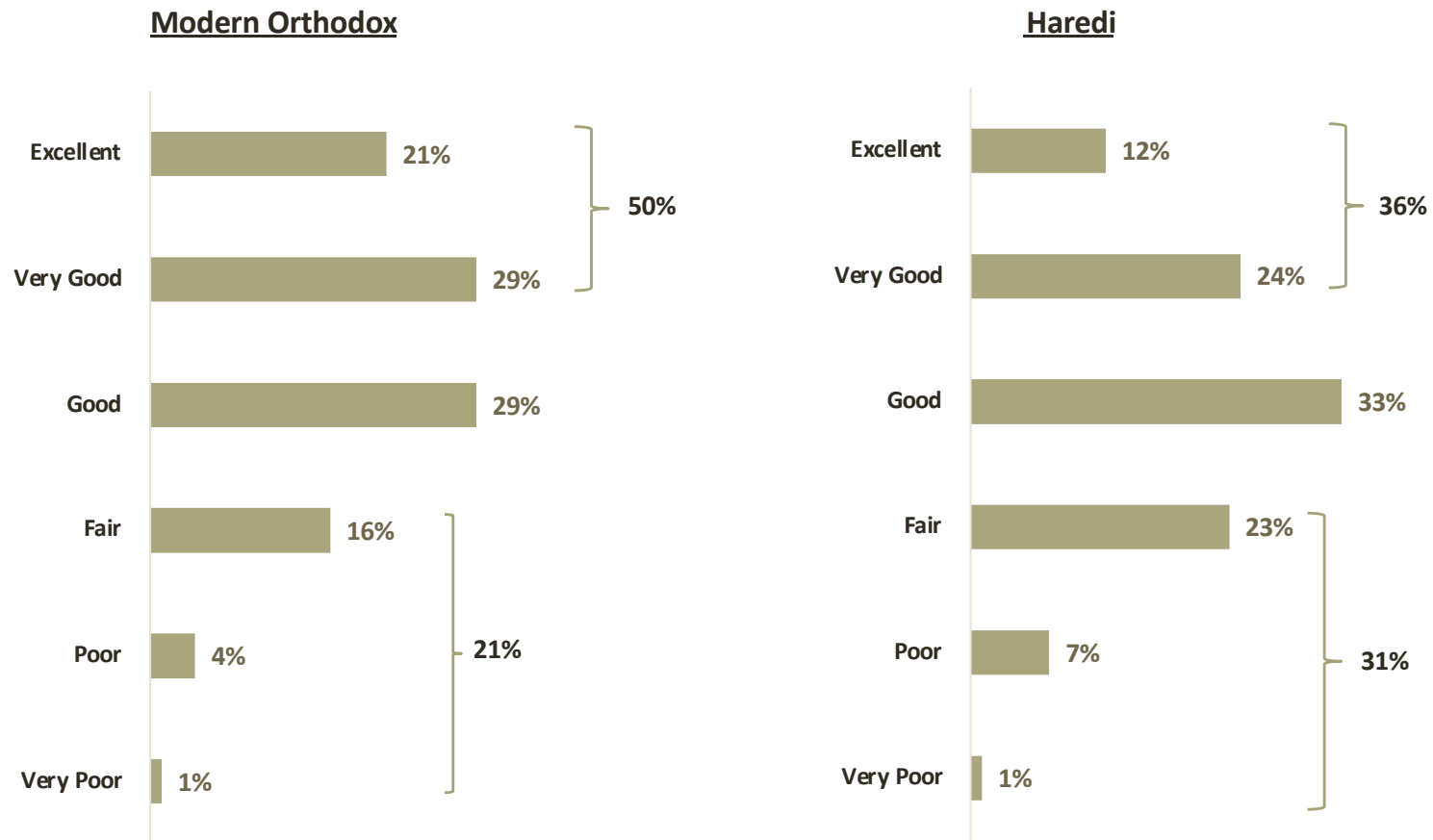


See Q8 in Appendix II – Follow-Up Survey Questionnaire. n = 264 Modern Orthodox and 146 Haredi.

* Multiple Responses add to more than 100%, as these are all the investment vehicles used. The average number of household investment vehicles was 2.8 for Modern Orthodox and 2.1 for Haredi.

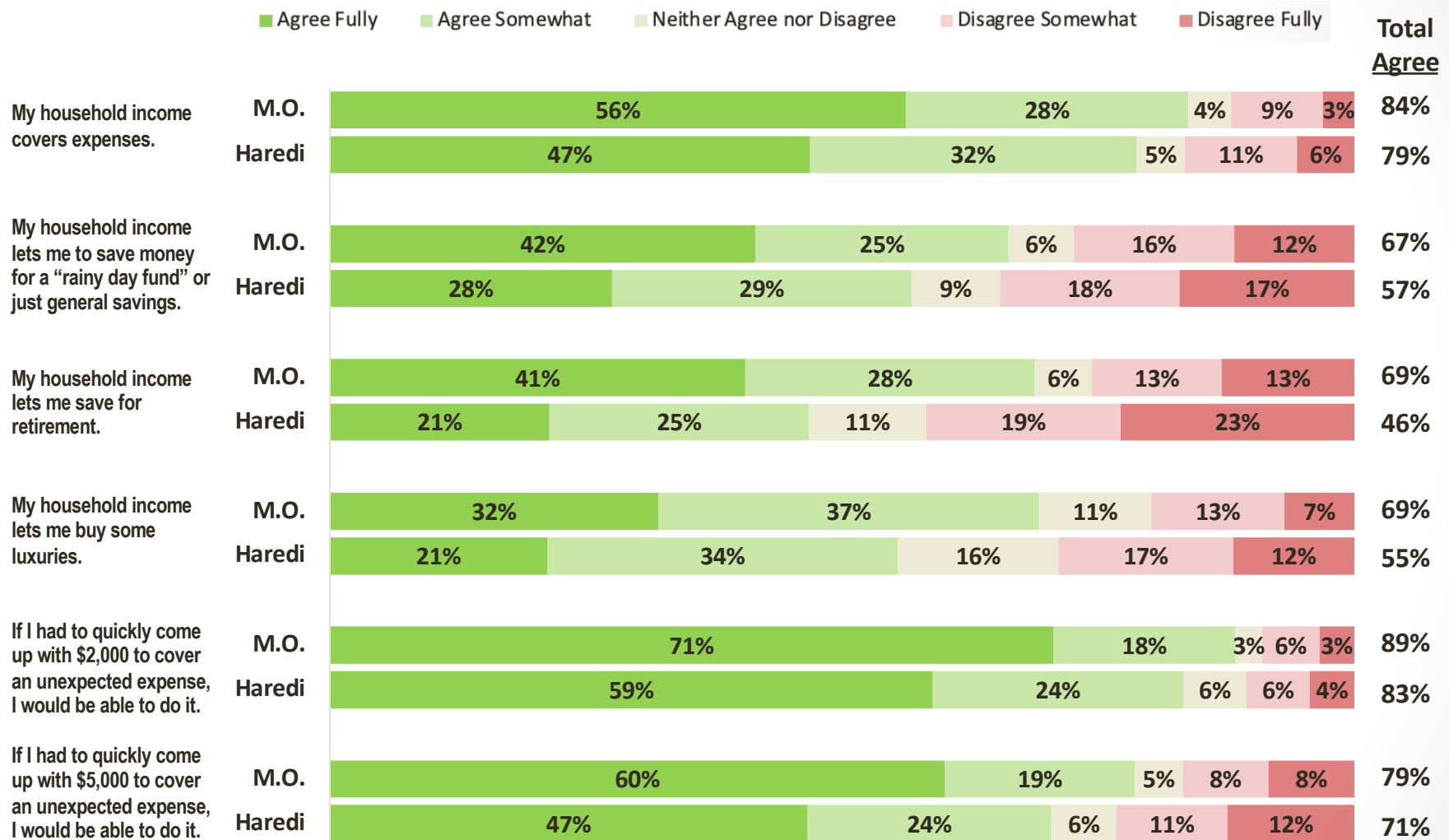
Household Financial Health, Comfort Levels & Outlook for the Future

Overall Assessment of Household Financial Health – Household financial health is seen as stronger by Modern Orthodox than by Haredi. Half (50%) of Modern Orthodox rate their financial health as Excellent or Very Good, compared to slightly more than one-third (36%) of Haredi. At the other end of the scale, more Haredi rate their financial health as Fair, Poor or Very Poor (31% of Haredi vs. 21% of Modern Orthodox).



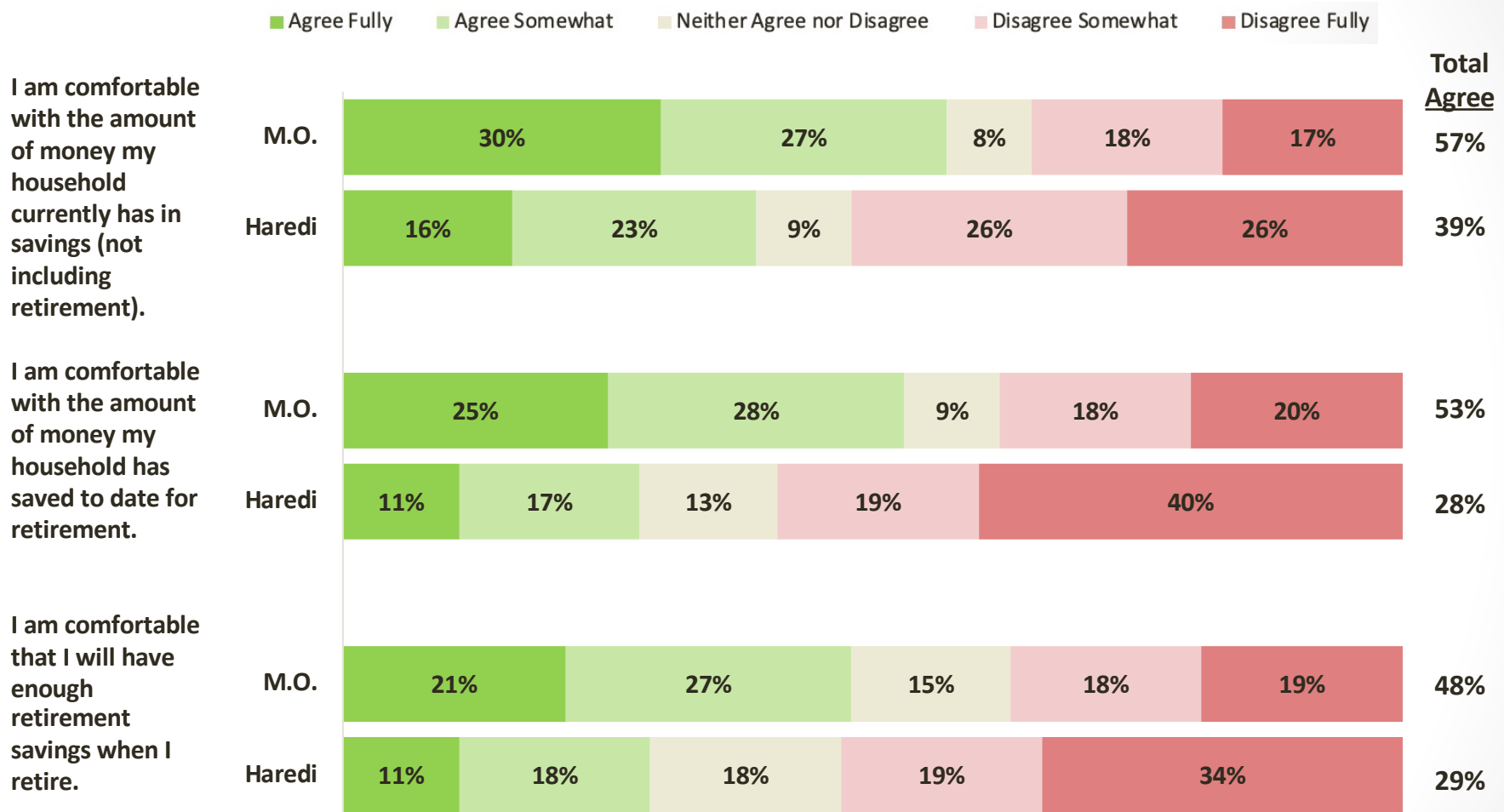
See Q6 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 1,318 Modern Orthodox and 950 Haredi.

Views on Various Aspects of Household Financial Health – Modern Orthodox have significantly more positive views on their financial health than do Haredi. The biggest difference is in ability to save for retirement, but there are also large differences in the ability to save money and the ability to afford luxuries.



See Q7 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. Average n = 1,200 Modern Orthodox and 786 Haredi..

Comfort With Savings and Retirement Savings Levels – Haredi are not comfortable with their saving levels – general savings as well as retirement. Modern Orthodox are somewhat more comfortable but nearly 40% are not comfortable with their retirement saving levels.



See Q9 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. Average n = 1,195 Modern Orthodox and 910 Haredi for the first two questions; 1,058 Modern Orthodox, and 776 Haredi for the third question (asked of those under age 65).

Views Relating to Household Luxuries – Sample Verbatim Responses

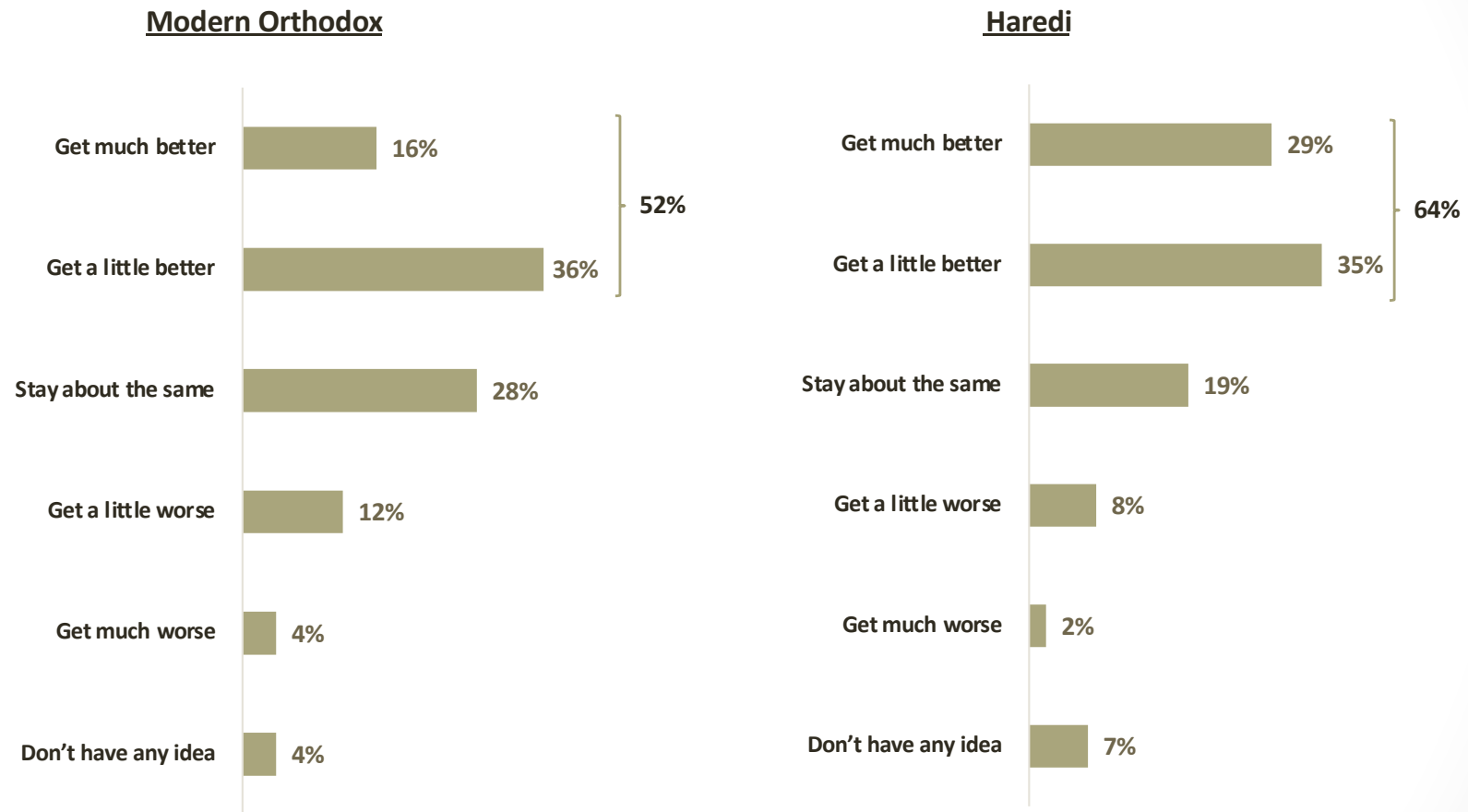
What luxuries do you allow yourself? (Asked if agreed that “My household income lets me buy some luxuries”):

- Among a long and varied list, most often mentioned were vacations/trips, eating out/food; house purchase/renovation/cleaning.
- Vacations, second home
- Clothing for work and holidays/Shabbat Dates at bakeries/coffee shops
- Cleaning help, occasional trips with the kids to Florida, great wolf lodge ect (no where fancy)
- Occasionally eating out Yearly small getaway
- Clothes vacation
- Recently upgraded bathroom for ADA use and beautification, added large patio area.
- Hobbies
- summer vacation, home renovations, self-care.
- We have never taken a family vacation that wasn't paid for by grandparents. This year, we are hopefully flying to Israel. That being said, we rarely allow ourselves any luxuries like eating in restaurants. We have yearly family fun days only on chol hamoed.
- Grow and behold meat Living in an expensive neighborhood Sustainable fish (\$20/#)
- Expensive clothes/wine/watches
- travel, pay down mortgage
- Eating at restaurants, unexpected gifts for spouse, brief vacations
- Large house, Luxury Cars, grand vacations
- Kosher meat, new clothes, housing within eruv
- Takeout, additional groceries, new clothes for seasons, books, toys for kids
- Not having to check prices or worry about spending on basically any basic or near-basic goods (including domestic travel). Paying full tuition. Owning a home.
- Florida home, trips to E.Y., taking extended family away about once every other year
- Vacation abroad once a year. New phone every couple of years. Going to concerts
- Eating out car leases traveling
- Eating out, annual vacation for my husband and me alone, ready made food weekly, small family vacations throughout the year.

What luxuries do you wish you could afford, but cannot? (Asked if disagreed that “My household income lets me buy some luxuries”):

- Among a long and varied list, most often mentioned were vacations/trips, cars and dwelling improvement.
- Vacation/trip
- Living without roommates
- A vacation or trip to Israel
- I haven't vacationed anywhere in fourteen years. I'd like to fix the rattling noise under my car, and maybe get a nice desk to work at. Nothing extravagant, just IKEA or similar.
- To go on a vacation
- School for kids
- Vacations
- My own home. A vacation here and there. Being able to help my grown children with their needs.
- I wish I could pay my rent without relying on subsidiaries.
- Cleaning help, eating out, furniture, house renovation,
- Physical therapy for an old injury, clothes that fit better, new desk chair.
- Travel, house cleaning help, home improvements, sleep away camp
- Three meals a day, living in a safe apartment, clothes and shoes without holes, prescription drugs.
- I wish I could expand our home/buy a larger home because our house feels too small for our family
- Larger home, travel, new wig
- Vacation. New kitchen.
- Travel, nicer clothing, sleep away camp
- A yearly vacation, to go away for Passover, a family trip to Israel, sleep away camp for the kids
- A new car, ours is a 2005. New furniture. Our furniture is 30 years old. An occasional vacation.
- Vacation, jewelry, finer clothes and shoes for all household members
- Regular vacation on an airplane and in a hotel (not camping or staying w family and friends). Not being on financial aid. A new car (not used).
- Going away to a hotel for Pesach! Our couch is coming apart at the same time that other home repairs are needed, so even a new couch is feeling like a luxury.

Expectations for Overall Household Financial Change Over Next 5-10 Years – While the Haredi perceive their financial situation as currently poorer than do the Modern Orthodox, the Haredi are more optimistic that their financial situations will improve in the years ahead.



See Q11 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 1,179 Modern Orthodox and 801 Haredi.

Educational Expenses and Attitudes

Education: Total Children and Number in School – The average number of children of all ages for households with children is 3 for Modern Orthodox. (of which 1.8 are currently in school: 1.5 in grades K-12 and 0.3 in college or a gap year); and about 4 for Haredi respondents (of which 2.7 are currently in school: 2.4 in grades K-12 and 0.3 in college or a gap year).

	Modern Orthodox	Haredi
% with one or more children	86%	92%
Average number of children:		
– All respondents	2.6	3.6
– Among those with one or more children	3.0	3.9*
Among those with one or more children:		
– % with children in grades K-12	63%	79%
– Average number of children in grades K-12	1.5	2.4
Among those with one or more children:		
– % with children in gap year or college	20%	16%
– Average number of children in gap year or college	0.3	0.3
Average total number of children currently in school	1.8	2.7

See Q14-16 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 1,170 Modern Orthodox and 796 Haredi.

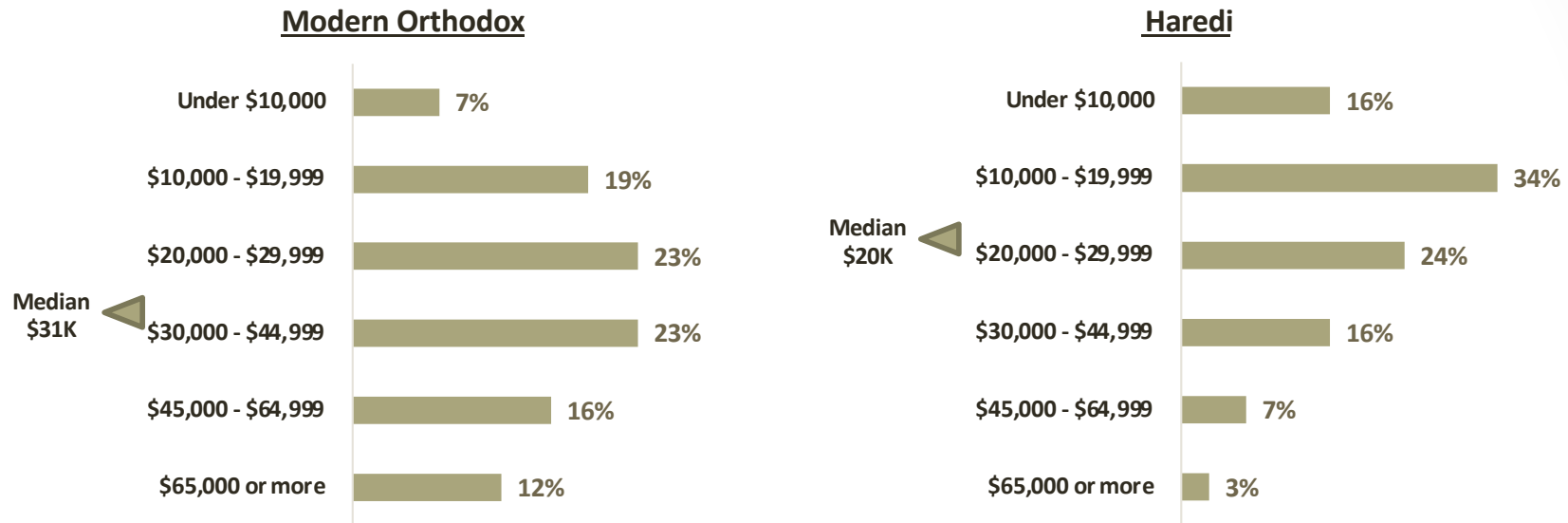
* The figure of about 4 children per Haredi household seems low. There are several driving factors. First, as was noted (page 4), this survey did not well reach the most insulated Hasidim, non-English speakers with no online access at all, whom we believe to be a minority albeit a not insignificant one. Studies of the Hasidic community have shown a median of about 6 children. Also, because our sample skewed to the younger side, many of these respondents are still growing their families.

Types of K-12 Schools Attended – Orthodox Jewish day schools / yeshivas are the nearly universal standard, with 97% of Haredi and 87% of Modern Orthodox families with children in Grades K-12 attending these institutions. Among Modern Orthodox, 9% have children attending some other type of Jewish day school (non-Orthodox, community, pluralistic, etc.), a rarity among the Haredi.

% of households with children in Grades K-12 attending:	Modern Orthodox	Haredi
Jewish Schools:		
– Orthodox day school / yeshiva	87%	97%
– Other Jewish schools (non-Orthodox, community schools)	9%	<0.5%
– Total Jewish schools	96%	97%
Other:		
– Public school	9%	1%
– Private school (non-Jewish)	2%	1%
– Home schooling, other	3%	4%

See Q17 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 672 Modern Orthodox and 592 Haredi. Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple responses (i.e., families with children attending two or more of the types of schools listed).

Educational Expenses, K-12 – Among households with one or more children attending an Orthodox Jewish day school or yeshiva, or other type of Jewish day school, the median total annual tuition and fees (net of scholarships) is \$31K for Modern Orthodox and \$20K for Haredi. 41% of M.O. households and 52% of Haredi, respectively, get some form of tuition assistance.

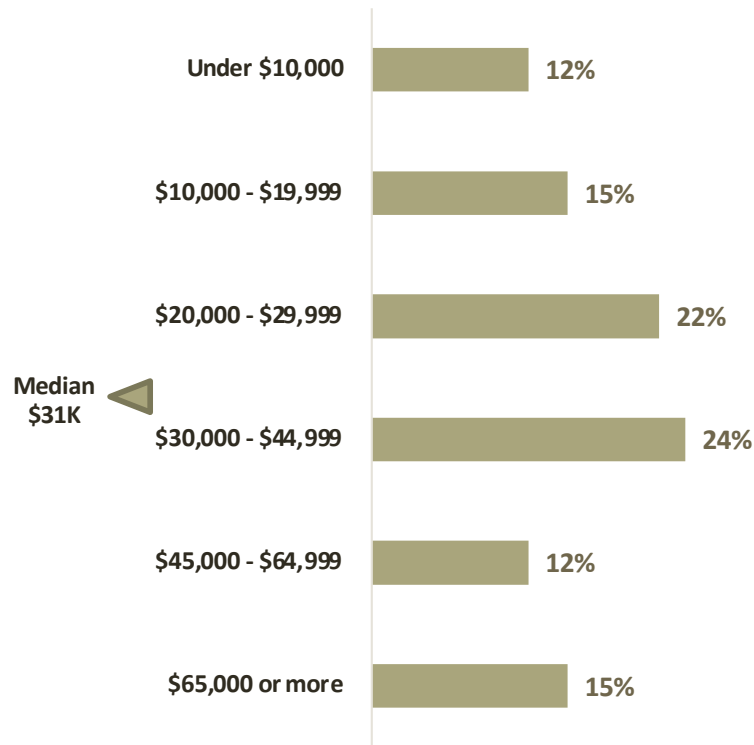


Tuition assistance from school(s) or other communal scholarship sources	Modern Orthodox	Haredi
Do not get any assistance	59%	48%
Get tuition assistance	41%	52%
A little assistance (\$2,500 or less per child)	10%	24%
Moderate assistance (\$2,500 to \$9,999 per child)	17%	25%
A lot of assistance (\$10,000+ per child)	14%	3%

See Q18-19 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n for Q18 = 570 Modern Orthodox and 552 Haredi; n for Q19 = 567 Modern Orthodox and 547 Haredi

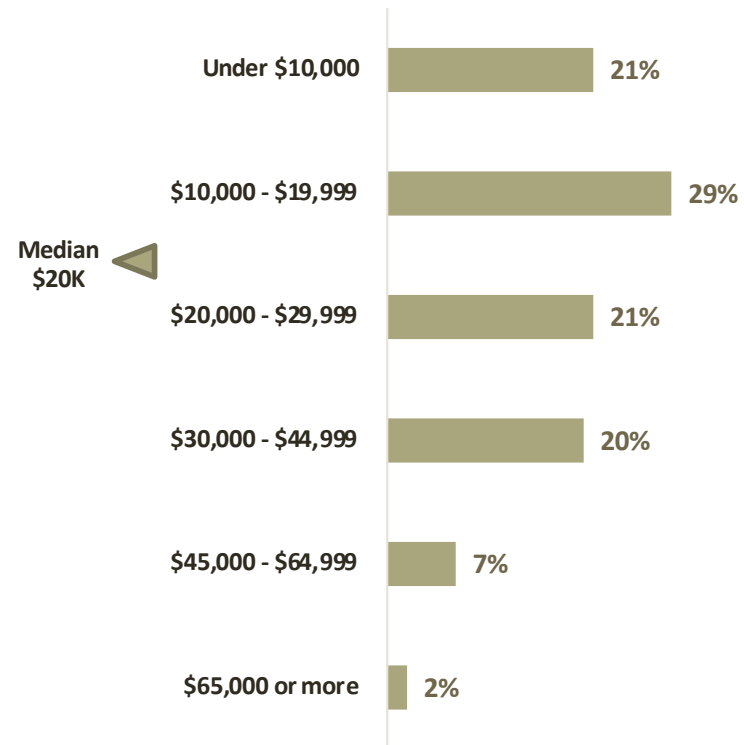
Educational Expenses, College & Gap Year – The median college and gap year expenses– for households that have these expenses – are virtually identical to the median K-12 expenses. Of course, far fewer households have children in college than in K-12.

Modern Orthodox



For every 100 households paying K-12 tuitions there are 32 paying college / gap year tuitions.

Haredi

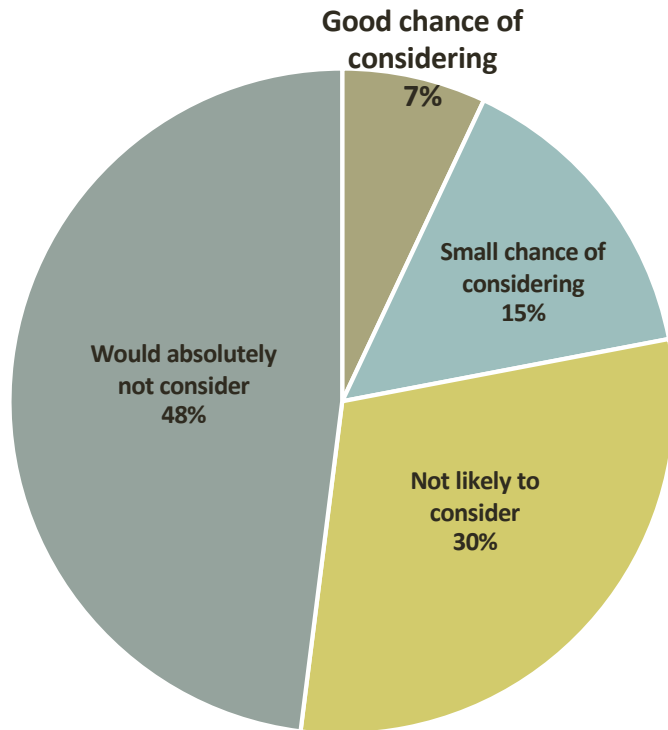


For every 100 households paying K-12 tuitions there are 18 paying college / gap year tuitions.

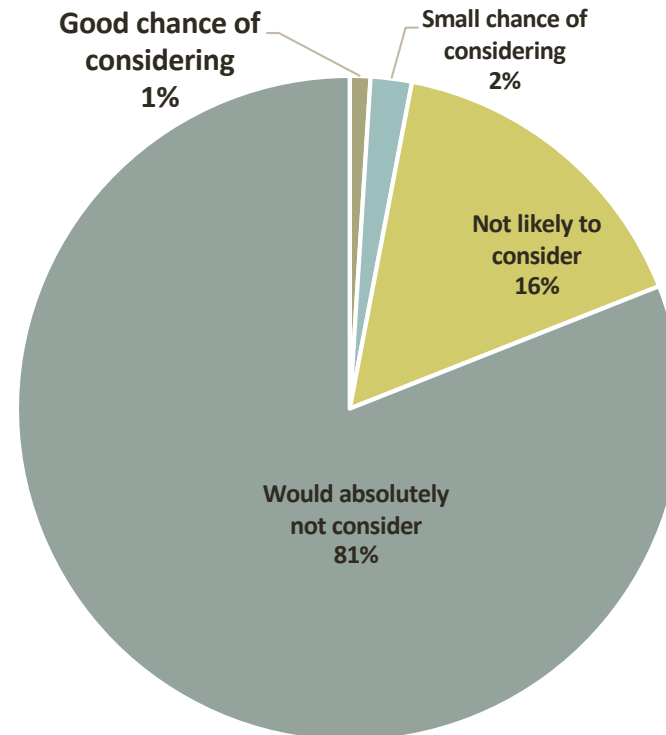
See Q21 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 184 Modern Orthodox and 97 Haredi.

Future K-12 Orthodox School Intentions, as Affected by Cost – Among households with one or more children attending an Orthodox Jewish day school or yeshiva, or other type of Jewish day school, 7% of Modern Orthodox say there is a good chance that they would consider in the next five years taking a child out of their current Jewish day school, with finances being a significant factor in such a decision; compared to 1% of Haredi households.

Modern Orthodox



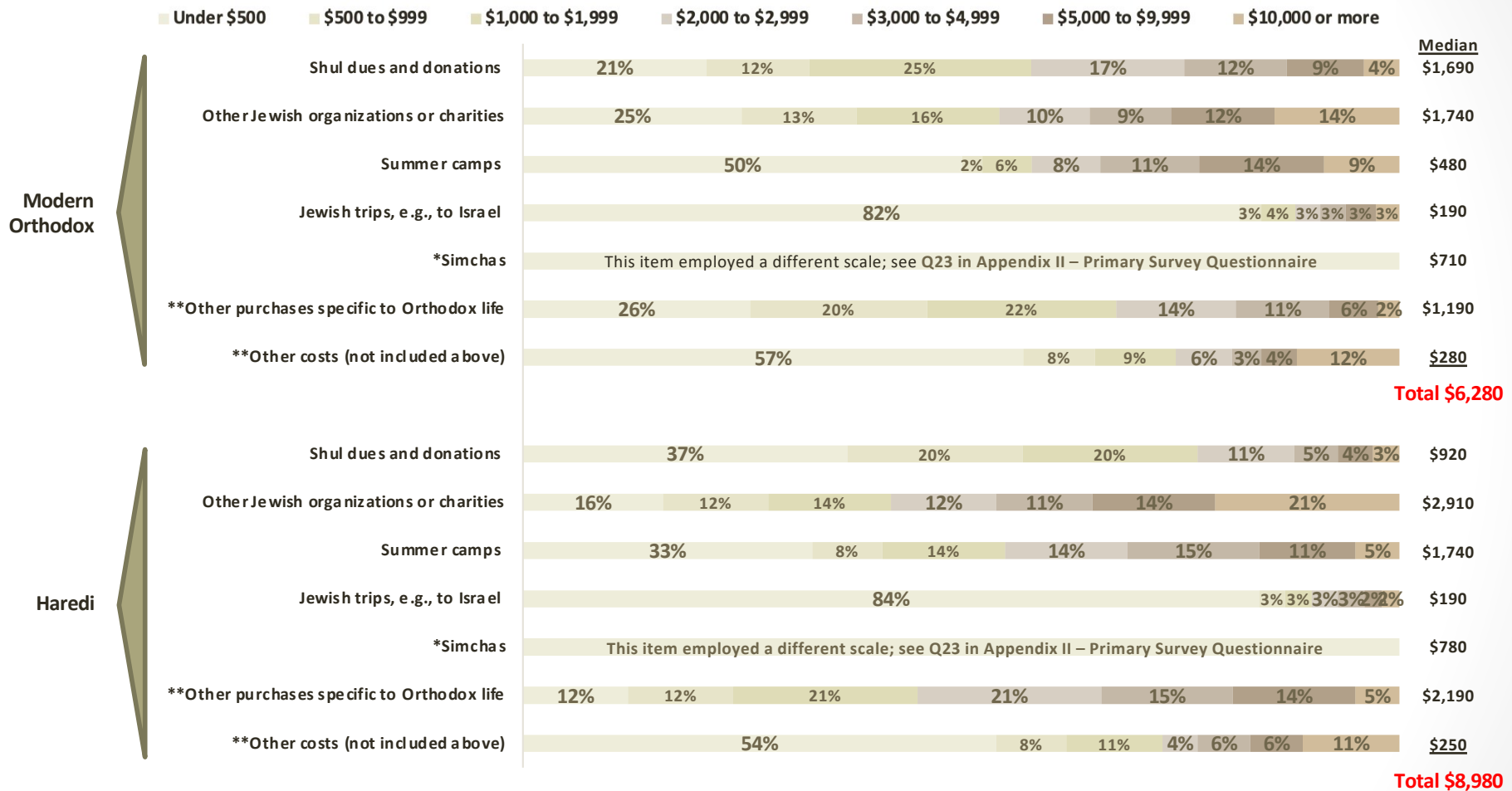
Haredi



See Q20 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 568 Modern Orthodox and 552 Haredi.

The Broad Array of Other Orthodox Expenses

Orthodox Expenses Beyond Educational – while Modern Orthodox have higher shul expenses, the Haredi have higher expenses in donations to organizations other than their shul, and to an array of purchases specific to Orthodox life (for example, Pesach matzahs, esrog, religious articles – tallis, tefillin – seforim/religious books, sheitel, etc.). Little was spent on Jewish trips and less than usual was spent making simchas, given the pandemic.

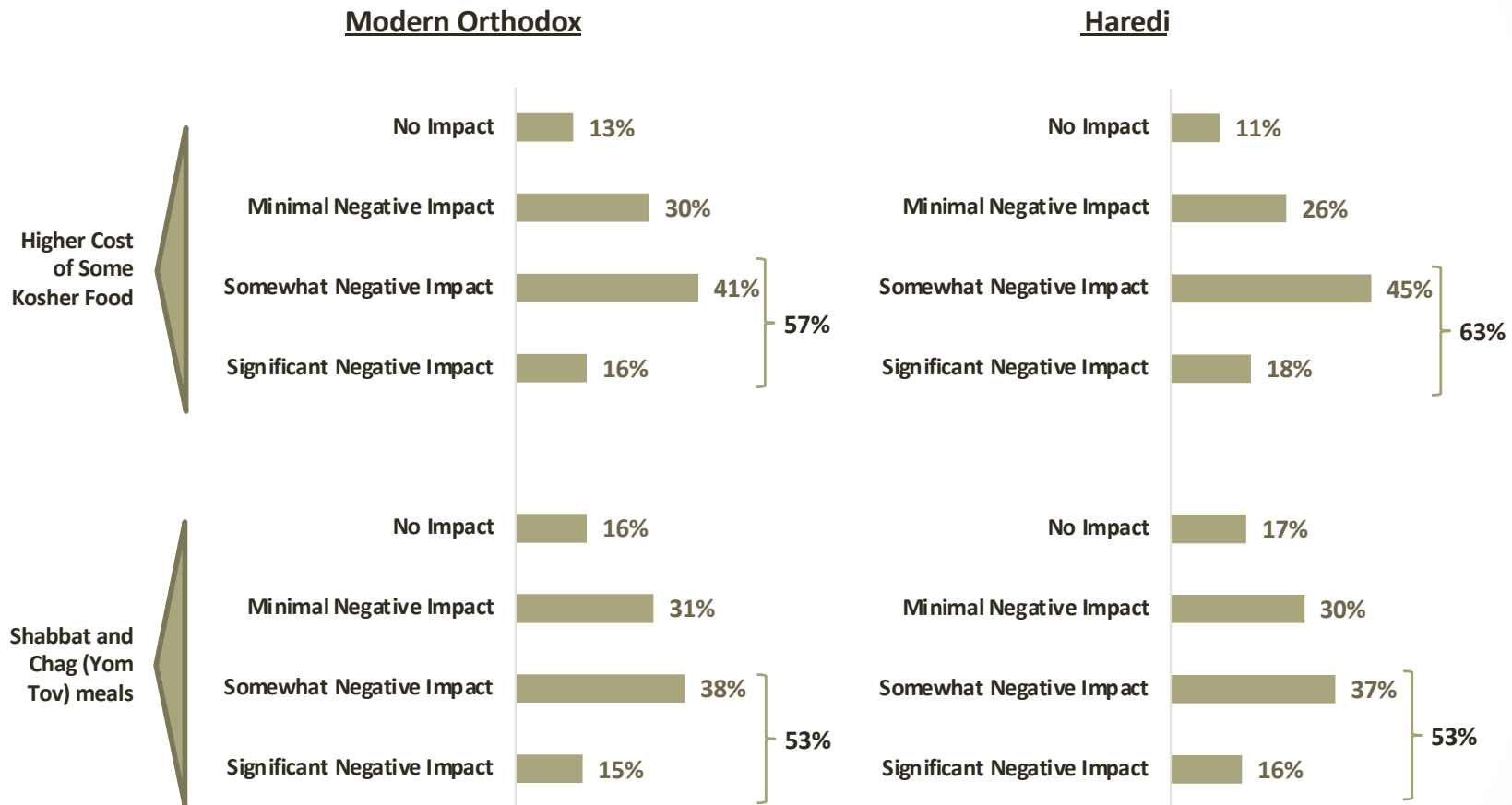


See Q22-23 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. Average n = 1,126 Modern Orthodox and 735 Haredi.

* Q23 asked about total five-year spending on simchas (weddings, bar/bat mitzvahs, sheva brachos, bris, shul kiddush, etc.); median shown is a per-year figure. We chose to use the term “simchas” in lieu of the more Hebraically correct but less common term “s’machot.”

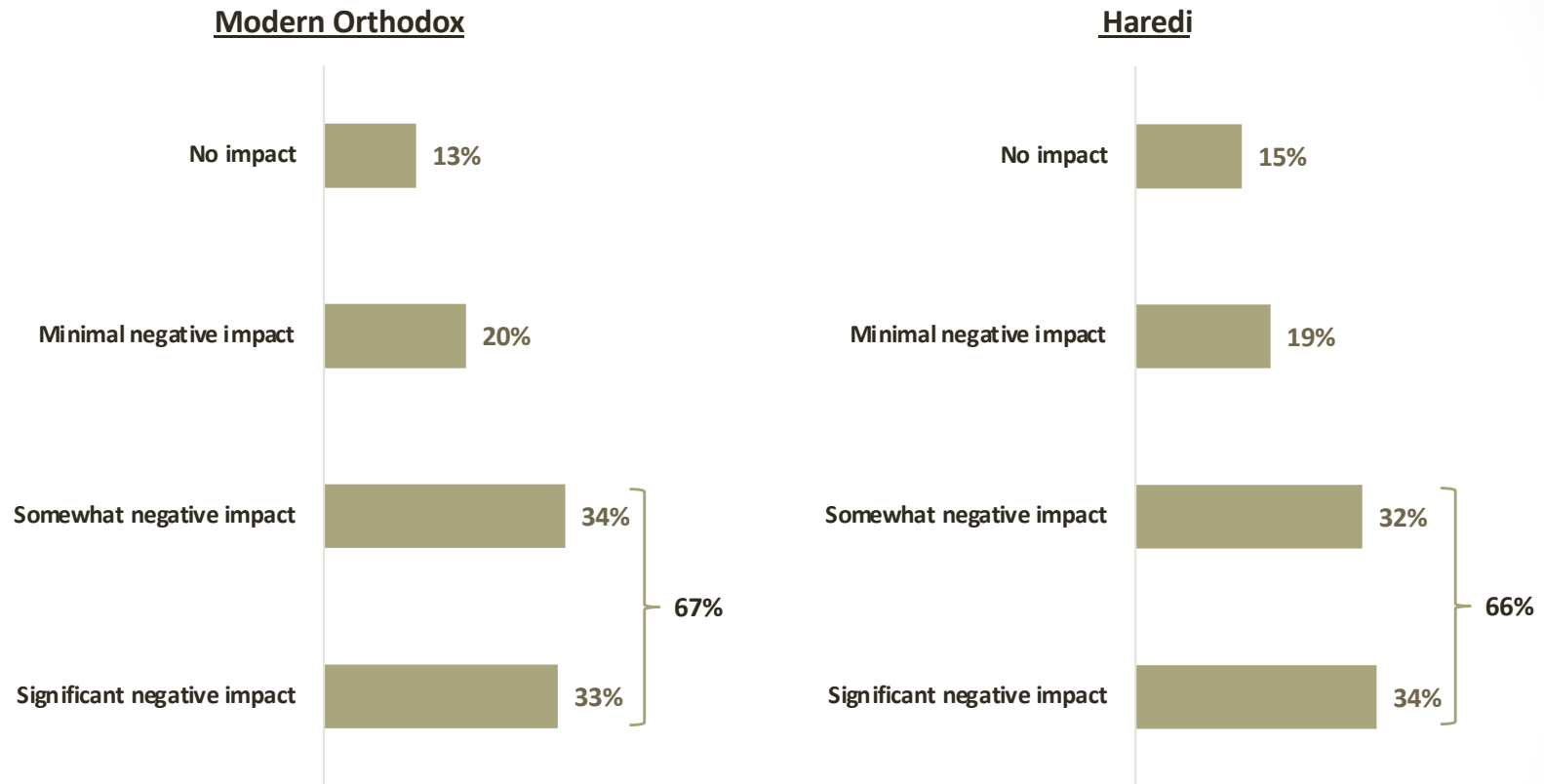
** Q22 full text of the final two response options is as follows: Other purchases specific to Orthodox life (for example, Pesach matzahs, esrog, religious articles – tallis, tefillin – seforim/religious books, sheitel, etc.); Other costs (not previously mentioned) related to Orthodox life, such as adult Jewish education, helping with kids’ living expenses or home purchases in Orthodox communities, helping with grandchildren’s tuition, etc.

Cost Impact of Kosher Food – A majority of respondents (average of 56%) say that the higher cost of some kosher food and their Shabbat and chag (yom tov) meals have a significant negative impact (average 16%) or a somewhat negative impact (average of 40%) on their household budget.



See Q24 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 1,110 Modern Orthodox and 730 Haredi.

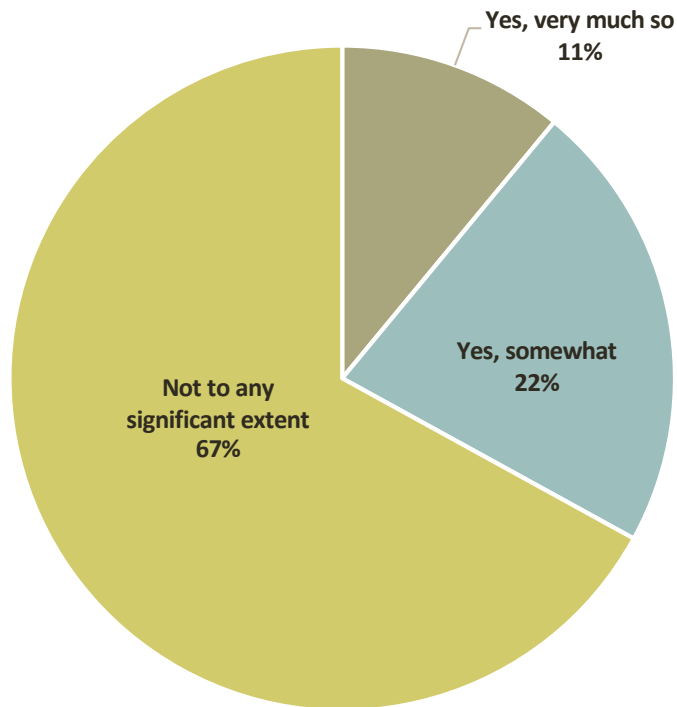
Cost Impact of Where People Live – Two-thirds of respondents say that where they live has a negative impact on their household budget: split evenly between those who say it has a somewhat negative impact (one-third) and those who say it has a significant negative impact (one-third).



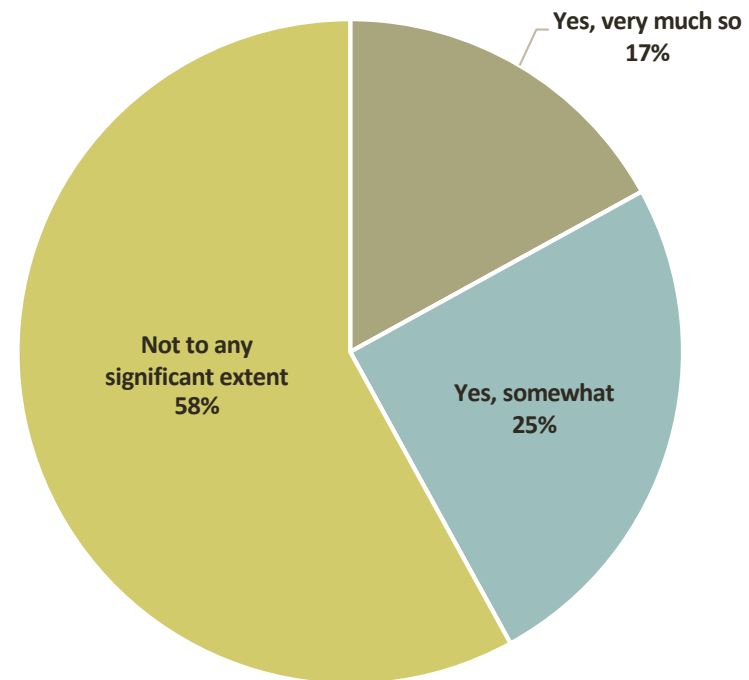
See Q25 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 1,115 Modern Orthodox and 734 Haredi.

Potential Savings Due to Not Being Non-Orthodox – One-third of Modern Orthodox (33%) and a bit more of the Haredi (42%) say there are areas where they spend less, compared to non-Orthodox households. The survey did not probe what these savings might be.

Modern Orthodox



Haredi



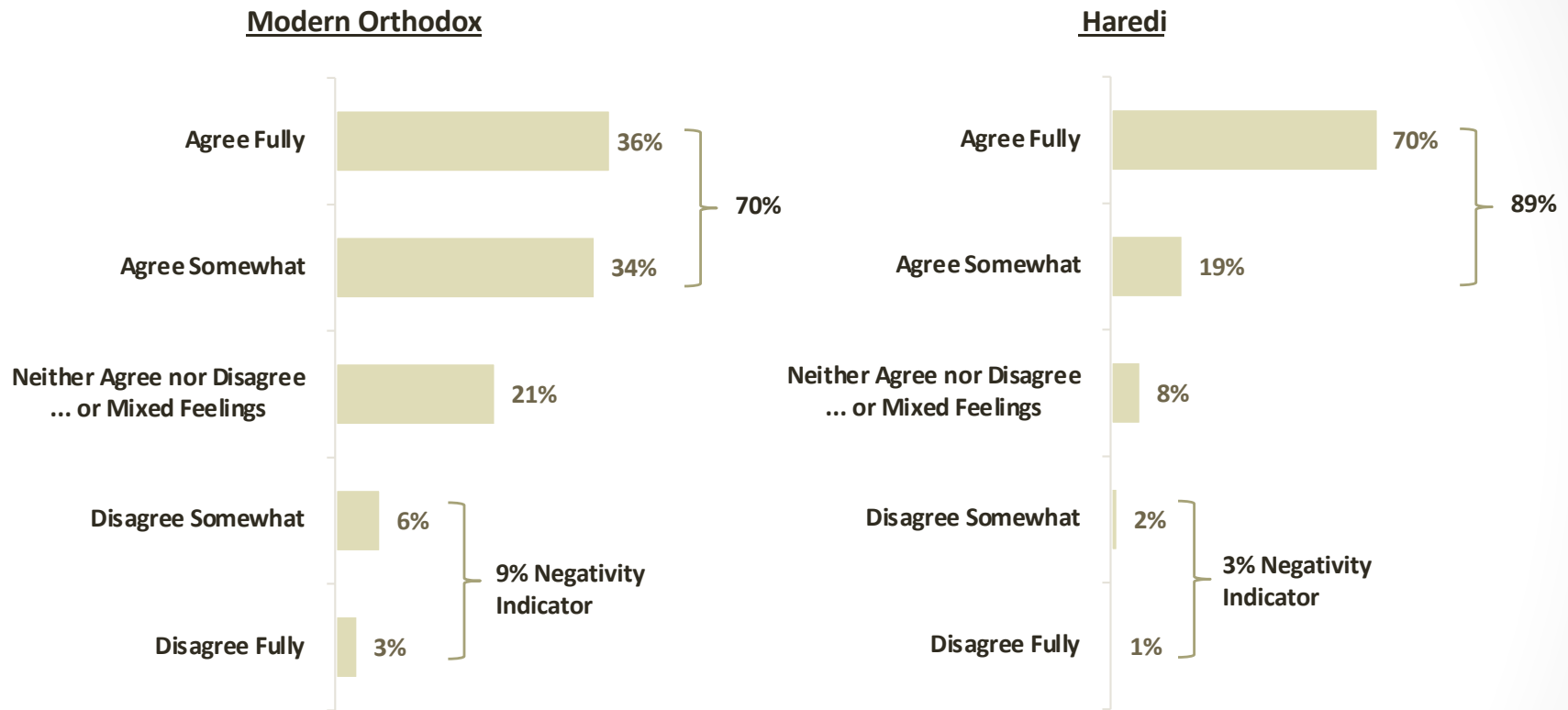
See Q26 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 1,114 Modern Orthodox and 730 Haredi.

The Cost of Orthodoxy & How the Costs are Perceived

Better Understanding the Cost of Orthodoxy – While we lack household financial diary data (which was not in the scope of this study), some rough estimates are possible. However, we should view the cost of Orthodoxy as an incremental cost, above what one might pay as a non-Orthodox Jew. Our very rough and arguable “guesstimate” is that the median “cost of Orthodoxy” is \$4,200 among Modern Orthodox and \$6,000 among Haredi ... plus the additional costs of kosher food, the effect of living in an Orthodox neighborhood, and the impact of having larger families (to the extent this is attributable to halachah).

	M.O.	Haredi	Is This a Cost of Orthodoxy?
Schools K-12	\$31K* \$17K**	\$20K* \$15K**	* = Median among respondents with one or more children in those grades. ** = Median among all respondents. To the extent that Orthodox are religiously obligated to send K-12 children to Jewish schools and non-Orthodox send children to public schools, this would be a cost of Orthodoxy. Of course, non-Orthodox may send children to private schools, so it's not as clear. We do know that Orthodox families, especially Haredi, are larger, and this therefore increases this cost. While college attendance and costs are a societal norm, those with a religious program (e.g., Y.U., Israeli yeshiva, seminary, etc.) might be viewed as a cost of Orthodoxy. On the other hand, segments like the Haredi are likely incurring lower college costs (for those attending a college) than non-Orthodox Jews.
College, Gap Year	\$31K* <u>\$5**</u>	\$20K* <u>\$3K**</u>	
Total Schooling	\$22K**	\$18K**	
Shul	\$1,690	\$920	About 25% of non-Orthodox are synagogue members (per Pew Research). Membership is much higher among Orthodox (close to universal), so most of this may be viewed as a cost of Orthodoxy.
Other org., donations	\$1,740	\$2,910	About 44% of non-Orthodox donate to Jewish organizations (per Pew Research, although amounts are unknown), and the Gates Foundation reported average donations by U.S. households of \$1,280 in 2018. With these data as a baseline, it appears that some MO donations and most of the Haredi donations may be seen as a cost of Orthodoxy.
Other purchases	\$1,190	\$2,190	Given how this was defined (see footnote** on page 28), these amounts are clearly costs of Orthodoxy.
Oher	<u>\$1,660</u>	<u>\$2,960</u>	Given how this was defined (see footnote** on page 28), some of this is a cost of Orthodoxy, while others (summer camp, simchas / celebratory events) are also incurred by non-Orthodox, possibly at lesser amounts.
Subtotal	\$6,280	\$8,980	Our very rough and arguable “guesstimate” is that perhaps two-thirds of this amount is a cost of Orthodoxy, i.e., \$4,200 among Modern Orthodox and \$6,000 among Haredi.
Kosher Food	About 60% negatively affected by higher costs		The research firm Statista reports U.S. average annual household food expenditure of about \$8,000. No comparable data exist for Orthodox, but informal discussions suggest it is notably higher, with monthly figures of \$1,000 to \$1,300 monthly (\$12,000 to \$15,600 annually) not uncommon. Some of this is due to higher costs of kosher food but much also is due to family size and Shabbat meals.
Location	About two-thirds negatively affected by higher costs		Orthodox live in walking proximity to shul and are geographically much more tightly clustered than non-Orthodox, with a resulting supply and demand dynamic that drives up housing costs. Additionally, a high percentage live in the more expensive NY tri-state area. Further, family size requires larger dwellings. All of this affects the cost of Orthodoxy.
Family Size, average number of children	2.6	3.6	Pew Research notes that “fertility among Orthodox Jews is at least twice as high as among non-Orthodox Jews.” It is hard to understate the impact of family size, especially among Haredi, as a driver of the “cost of Orthodoxy” in such areas as education, food, housing requirements, and other general expenses (clothing, medical, etc.)
Net savings vs. non-Orthodox	33% of MO and 42% of Haredi spend less		The Haredi response may be due to lower expenses in such areas as education (college), entertainment, etc.)

Are the Additional Costs of Orthodoxy Worth It? – More than two-thirds (70%) of Modern Orthodox respondents feel the additional costs of Orthodoxy are “worth it” and even more of the Haredi (89%) feel this way. At the other end of the spectrum, 9% of Modern Orthodox and 3% of Haredi disagree that the costs are worth it.



*Can you please explain why you responded that way?
See sample verbatim responses* →

See also breakdowns by segment, page 47 →

Are the Additional Costs of Orthodoxy Worth It? Sample Verbatim Responses (Page 1 of 2)

Sample Responses by Those Who “Agree Fully”:

- I would NEVER change away
- The rewards outweigh the financials.
- Everything in life is a priority. People who are not Orthodox, or not Jewish, have their priorities. Being Orthodox comes with priorities and costs. It's all about choices.
- I want to raise my children up loving orthodox life and although I am sometimes anxious about higher costs (even if it doesn't impact my budget) I don't waNT to relay that stress to my kids
- HaShem is priceless
- It's not a question of whether I will spend a lot to prepare amazing shabbat food for the family - it's a necessity; same with other necessities for living an orthodox life
- Our life gives us connection to hashem. It is the ultimate. The best things in life have a cost. And they're always worth it
- There's a lot of frivolous spending on entertainment in the secular world that we don't involve ourselves in. The issues are primarily if you are worried about keeping up with the Jones's in our circles.
- The best way for our people to remain strong and vibrant is to live in a Jewish community and educate our children and grandchildren in Jewish schools. It is also important to maintain a strong connection to Israel.
- 1.Continuity of the Jewish religion 2.Continuity of the Jewish people 3.Continuity of the Jewish state. 4. Olam Haba(kidding!)
- My religious observance is a central part of my life, it costs what it costs
- The lifestyle is so rich and creates a better life
- Orthodoxy has costs like esrog, tefillin, and sheitels, but being frum is the only way I want to live so it's not even part of any financial cost-benefit analysis: it's a necessity.
- My children are able to lead a Jewish life and identify being Jewish in a positive way.
- Because torah is truth. This is what HaShem wants
- Wouldn't want to be any other brand of Judaism,
- BH we can afford it and love our lifestyle and proud to spend the money we have on tzedaka etc
- Olam hazeh vs. Olam haba
- The sense of camaraderie and community can't be replicated in anyway other than being in an orthodox community. If gd forbid something terrible happens to me or my family, I know I won't feel alone at all
- I am extremely proud to be a Jew and am more than willing to accept the sacrifices required to maintain that. The Jewish people survived so long because of sacrifices, Baruch Hashem the sacrifices we need to make are so minimal compared to our ancestors
- Fulfilling lifEstyle, even with its costs I don't regret any of our Jewish investments
- How can one say the expenses of fulfilling lifes purpose are not worth it?.
- The quality of Jewish life is more than the cost of participating in the Orthodox Jewish institutions: it's mostly about gaining access to a quality Jewish education and other support and the relationships that are built over time.
- For us, the costs are worth it because we believe it's emes. Also, looking around at the people we grew up with who didn't become religious like we did, I think we're very fortunate to be a part of this community, even if it comes with downsides. I would like to know that ideally people who couldn't afford these extras would be able to live a full Jewish life that's integrated with the rest of the community, and I realize that that isn't necessarily the case right now.
- Community means a great deal to me. And, to live within one means to incur an additional cost factor for numerous necessities such as kosher food, close proximity to shuls and friends.
- I love being Orthodox and am willing to make sacrifices to be a part of the community. I also am a Jewish professional and understand that things cost money. If I want to be paid then people need to be prepared to pay for the services that pay my salary. So I need to be prepared to pay for the things I want as well.
- The blessings of living a Frume lifestyle is not measurable in money. Nothing can replace it.
- Because keeping kosher, sending to private school and shabbos/Yom tov costs are all things that non Jewish (or frum) people don't have to pay for.

See Q28 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. n = 828 Modern Orthodox and 492 Haredi verbatim responses. Within each response category (agree fully, agree somewhat, etc.) the sentiment of the responses did not vary much between Modern Orthodox and Haredi, and so we have not split them out that way. The number of responses shown for each response category is roughly proportionate to the number received, although we do include a few more from the “disagree” respondents than would be statistically warranted, since there would otherwise be very few of those responses included.

Are the Additional Costs of Orthodoxy Worth It? Sample Verbatim Responses (Page 2 of 2)

Sample Responses by Those Who “Agree Somewhat”:

- *The only reason I didn't put fully agree is because there are ways the community can encourage less expensive behavior (simchah takanos).*
- *We pay minimal expenses to be in the community. Our house is pricier because it's in the eruv, but that's worth it to me. Groceries are pricier, takeout is pricier, but these are manageable for our family. For others making less, it may be less worth it.*
- *we can streamline so many costs regarding education*
- *the schools particularly at the high school level are "top-heavy" with administrators And individuals who do not deliver education directly or indirectly. In addition, we pay very high property taxes and yet Jewish day schools are totally unwilling to find creative solutions to take it vantage of secular studies which are provided at a very high level in our town. The schools are afraid of having our children interact with anyone but other orthodox children. THIS APPEARS TO BE A GRAVE MISTAKE. Additionally, the Yeshivot Are not Preparing their graduates to deal with critical issues such as Jewish identity, and with anti-Semitism that they are encountering on campus... it's not clear if we are truly getting the most important long-term benefits although we pay quite a price. I would be happier to believe I was making a large investment rather than another monthly payment.*
- *Much of my religious practice could be accomplished without the cost being this high*
- *Because we don't have to spend all of this. We could create communities in more affordable areas but choose not to...creating a cycle that leaves future generations in debt*
- *The cost of orthodoxy in major metropolitan areas is over inflated because there are too many wealthy families that can afford the higher prices so competition does not keep costs down as much as it should. Schools, restaurants, and food could much cheaper. But it is worth the general increased costs (over what non-religious and non-jewish people) pay to raise a religious family.*
- *We opt for public school and supplementary education (both from us, our synagogue and an online school); as I cannot justify the expense of day school.*
- *I am happy to be Orthodox, but many of the aspects of an Orthodox lifestyle that incur additional costs are unnecessary and frivolous. We try our best to avoid these pitfalls, but some (such as housing costs) are unavoidable to a large degree.*

Sample Responses by Those Who “Neither Agree Nor Disagree, or Have Mixed Feelings”:

- *Orthodoxy definitely costs more is it always worth it ? I'm not so sure. I am retired, and look back on how what used to be optional is now considered run of the mill, ie- summer camps/ teen programs in israel/ gap year in israel/ March of the living etc. While these are all wonderful experiences and may enhance Jewish knowledge and life, I'm not sure that they ar really necessary. I fell badly for those families that don't have the resources for all of these supplemental programs. Parents are likely under a lot of pressure to provide for their kids .*
- *Most of our income woes are due to social standards, not Judaism. Our communities are structured around values, as opposed to socioeconomic class (like in the secular world). So the haves and the have-nots have to live side by side, and then everyone wants to fit it so the community standards are raised. But it has nothing to do with Judaism per se, it's sociological*
- *I love being orthodox and raising orthodox Jewish children, but it's extremely stressful thinking of the future in terms of costs for bar/bat mitzvahs, tuition, Jewish summer camps, weddings, etc. I wonder if we will ever have enough to truly feel comfortable and settled.*

Sample Responses by Those Who “Disagree Fully or Somewhat”:

- *I don't see kids coming out of Yeshiva day Schools better prepared for real life. I don't think Kosher food has to be this expensive. I can't afford shul membership fees so I am not considered to be part of my community.*
- *The cost of living an Orthodox lifestyle can be crippling. Food is far more expensive, particularly around holidays. Pesach costs thousands of dollars even if you stay home. Sukkot is expensive including the cost of a sukkah. Chanukah is expensive. Finally, school tuition is out of control and completely unaffordable.*
- *A lot of the costs are not really even religous, but rather social in nature. Dress a certain way, host certain events, go to certain trips, vacations...etc, live a certain lifestyle.*
- *The cost of living an Orthodox life has been totally ruinous to our household finances and our future. When the stress of not being able to make ends meet makes you feel so totally helpless that your best hope is to get hit by a car so at least your family can get the life insurance, it's probably not worth it.*

Do financial costs Orthodoxy affect religious feelings? Sample Verbatim Responses – About two-thirds of respondents responded that the cost of Orthodoxy has no effect on their religious feelings, with most of the remainder citing various negative feelings.

The cost of Orthodoxy has no effect on religious feelings:

- *Neither. The challenges and income have covering the budget are universal struggles. Balancing our budget is an effort we are obligated to make but the results are clearly G-d determined. (I can bring data to support my claim if asked.)*
- *Neither. The communal issues are not necessarily reflective of the religion. I think it's more the fault of being in America (both costs and being surrounded by far wealthier clueless people). I can see why people make aliyah. I sometimes wish we had done it when our kids were small.*
- *No impact. However, we have 2 children, which is fewer children than most. We chose to have 2 children for reasons of mental and physical health, unrelated to finances. However, I have observed that a lot of the cost and financial burden of being orthodox is a direct result of people having more children than they can really afford. Much of the financial, mental, and emotional burden would be significantly alleviated if people had fewer children.*
- *Not really. (A) I feel privileged to be able to say that. (B) I belong to a community in which it is considered honorable to live within your means, with all that that implies for people's school decisions, camp decisions, simcha \$\$\$ decisions. It's not enough -- institutions also have to do better -- but it's a start.*
- *Not really. B"H He has provided me a comfortable living. Things were not so easy back when the kids were all in day school and/or college. I guess the tough times reinforced my commitment to carry me through.*
- *Not my religious feelings but the feelings of feeling trapped in living a certain lifestyle in order to live in the community. Expectations in the name of Judaism have gotten out of hand. So it may frustrate me, for example, that Yom Tov is approaching, not because I'd have to spend on Yom Tov expenses, but because I'd have to spend the way it's "meant to be spent" (and this is already with us living very simply, without care as to what others do. But there's a limit to how much of a say we have over things.)*
- *Not really. Being Jewish comes with costs in every possible way. They are costs to my career, there are cost to our whole life: socially, emotionally, and societally. Financial costs are just another cost associated With the privilege and choice of being a frum Jew.*

Those indicating they are affected negatively:

- *Not about being Jewish just about orthodoxy. My folks lost their money but wanted to live near a shul. They live in a walk up apartment and sometimes my dad can't get out all week. I live in a working class neighborhood because we wanted to save for a house so we can foster kids, there is NO WAY to afford an orthodox neighborhood. Instead we just didn't go to shul much until I missed it too much and found a conservative traditional one that I can drive to because I missed Torah readings and communal prayer on shabbat and now that shul is closed because there aren't enough Jews here to support it. I think that there need to some leniency about a lot like if it was considered kosher in the times of the writing of the gamara, it's kosher and driving short distance on shabbat to do a mitzva like see family or attend shul would be great. It's not like it's long travel or makes a horse work.*
- *The stress of providing takes away from davening and learning and makes it difficult to serve Hashem with joy.*
- *While I usually feel the money spent on Jewish education was worth it, it did greatly impact our finances and I feel public or private schools offers more from wider range of classes (eg architecture class) to wider range of extra-curricular. We chose our neighborhood based on proximity to shul but the taxes in my town are through the roof and the homes in general are not as nice as other neighborhoods.*
- *Negatively because kosher companies take advantage and charge so much. Schools sadly are not run well and so expensive. There needs to be a push to get more local government funding like vouchers for school.*
- *Kosher certification is a protection racket and mafia utterly divorced from actual textual requirements.*
- *My children constantly feel like that other kids in shul have it better than we do.*
- *Negatively. Particularly as they relate to large Orthodox or rabbinical institutions that funnel a lot of communal money through their institution and make decisions that go against my religious or moral beliefs.*

About 1% said that cost affected them positively:

- *I am proud to spend money to support my way of life.*
- *Giving tzedaka makes my work more meaningful.*

Advice for Orthodox families struggling with the added costs. Sample Verbatim Responses – The most frequently given advice relates to living within one’s means and resisting communal pressure to “keep up with the Joneses”; not to be embarrassed to seek support; and make hard decisions as to what one really needs.

- 1. Live within your means, and don't stress about those around you. 2. We are part of a community that requires immense wealth, but there are places in the US (and certainly Israel) where you can have a great life without incredible wealth.
- Get out, if at all possible, from high COL Jewish communities. Forget about the "need" to keep up with the Joneses. Vacations and Pesach programs aren't a required element of being Jewish or observant. It's not easy to do it, but it's possible. And living outside of NY/NJ/Miami/LA/etc helps A LOT. Not just strictly financially but the pressures to "keep up" are a lot less.
- Pray. And if that does not bring sustenance, it may bring a bit of serenity. Accept that you may always struggle financially. Then, let go and move on. Be frugal. Be happy with small pleasures. Try to get your kids ice cream on Sunday, small luxuries. Splurge on your wife here and there. Pray. Learn about how great your soul can be - that IS in your control. And do NOT waste money on extravagant Simchos. Eat well, stay healthy - it's cheaper.
- Make a conscious decision to keep income below the poverty line to qualify for government assistance or aim for a decent six-figure salary. Anything in the middle is impossible.
- Pray to Hashem and give charity. Or move to Israel where it is cheaper to be orthodox and have a large family.
- This may sound weird and a bit "frummy", but I truly believe it... Give tzedakah, and give of yourself to the community. HaShem often responds kindly to those that help others. Also, do your "histadlus" in figuring out what you want to do, what you're good at, and how you can merge those two things to make your parnasa. Don't try to keep up with anyone else's perceived wealth! It is absolutely not necessary to spend money on fancy things. If you can afford it, be modest and generous. If you can't afford it, be honest, and don't be embarrassed.
- Move out of town. Live within your means especially wrt simchas, vacation, clothing/fashion. Eat out less or not at all. Talk to a Rav before giving tzedakah/maaser.
- Start planning for the future when you're single, newly married, or when you only have a couple of young kids. Put away a bit from each paycheck and speak to someone knowledgeable and trustworthy regarding where and how to keep / invest your 'put away' money to maximize it as much as possible.
- It's really really hard and that should be acknowledged and recognized by the community. I'd say don't be afraid to reach out for help or support - through community programs (Tomchei Shabbat, Federation, Jewish Family Services, Jewish free loan society, social welfare programs etc) local rabbis who often have some funds for different causes. I'd also say that it often requires sacrifice to maintain a frum lifestyle -so not going on vacation, cancelling cable, having only 1 car, not eating meat during the week, not going out much etc (all things my family did) may be necessary in the short term. The struggle is real.
- Establish realistic expectations. Much more difficult to live at the standard of living as our parents. Disposable income has shrunk and continues to shrink. Seriously consider moving to low tax states.
- Try to cut down on things in your control: food, clothing, etc. If you usually have meat for shabbat, have chicken. If you get a new suit/dress for every simcha, maybe reuse one you already have in your closet for the next one. These are small things, but they add up, and everything helps.
- Use Quicken to keep track of your finances. Buy things second hand rather than new. Make coffee at home instead of getting it on the go. Choose a career that doesn't require you to go into debt.
- Don't follow the masses. We had all our daughters skip seminar and go straight to college (which we paid for). We did not listen to any shidduch match for our kids where there was a price tag.
- Write down what you believe you spend every month, then track it and see how close you are to correct over a 6-12 month period. The first and biggest impactful step will be awareness.
- Move to Israel. If that's not in the cards, move away from expensive cities like NYC, Miami, LA.
- My wife and I never had more kids than we could afford financially, and as our income and net worth increased, so too did the size of our family. I understand that is not the case for everyone and some people are either uncomfortable or not in the position to include family planning as part of their lifetime financial planning. That being said, if this advice was being sought by someone in a financial and familial situation significantly similar to mine, I would tell them that the money they're spending on being Orthodox is providing them with a direct benefit of a more fulfilled and meaningful life.

See Q9 in Appendix II – Follow-Up Survey Questionnaire. n = 181 Modern Orthodox and 90 Haredi verbatim responses. These are not a fully random selection of the verbatim responses, but were curated to include a variety of the more thoughtful feedback.

Impact of Costs on Various Groups Across Orthodoxy

This report has presented data for Modern Orthodoxy as a whole, and for the Haredi as a whole. In this section, we explore and compare a few selected demographic segments within these communities.

Variations Within Haredi: Hasidic vs. Yeshivish – The chart below compares Hasidic with Yeshivish (with M.O. included for comparison), and finds notable differences: Hasidic have lower income, savings, and overall financial comfort; but also lower educational expenses. In response to whether “the cost of Orthodoxy is worth it” only 2% of the Yeshivish disagreed, the lowest percentage among all groups examined.

	M.O.	Hasidic	Yeshivish
INCOME AND SAVINGS:			
• Median Household Income	\$188K	\$102K	\$164K
• Median Non-Retirement Savings	\$70K	\$12K	\$33K
• Median Retirement Savings	\$219K	~\$35K	\$50K
OVERALL FINANCIAL COMFORT:			
• Household Financial Health (% Rated as Excellent/Very Good)	50%	31%	39%
• Household income cover expenses (% Fully Agree)	56%	43%	49%
• Household income lets me save for retirement (% Fully Agree)	41%	16%	24%
CHILDREN’S SCHOOLING:			
• Have 3 or more children	55%	67%	71%
• Have child(ren) in K-12 / college gap year	53% / 15%	71% / 11%	71% / 16%
• K-12 Median Expenses (those with children in K-12)	\$31K	\$15K	\$24K
• K-12 Receive Assistance (\$2,500 or more per student)	31%	23%	29%
• College/Gap Median Expenses (those with children in college/gap)	\$20K	\$14K	\$23K
OVERALL COST ATTITUDES:			
• Kosher Food (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	16%	20%	17%
• Area Residing (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	33%	38%	32%
• Negativity Indicator (Overall, cost of Orthodoxy is worth it; % that disagree)	9%	6%	2%
<i>Number of respondents</i>	1,334	301	584

Modern Orthodox by Age – Nishma’s 2017 broad study of the M.O. community showed that overall stress was highest in the 35-54 age group and dropped among those older. The chart below seems to support the earlier findings, from the perspective of the cost of Orthodoxy. Income is highest at ages 35-54, but financial health and ability to save for retirement are seen as problems, due to the higher expenses. Interestingly, the percentage that view the geographic area where they reside as negatively impacting their budget drops sharply for ages 55+; perhaps that is when people move to more affordable locales.

	Age 22-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
INCOME AND SAVINGS:			
• Median Household Income	\$155K	\$218K	\$156K
• Median Non-Retirement Savings	\$61K	\$65K	\$145K
• Median Retirement Savings	\$75K	\$250K	\$740K
OVERALL FINANCIAL COMFORT:			
• Household Financial Health (% Rated as Excellent/Very Good)	48%	47%	60%
• Household income cover expenses (% Fully Agree)	59%	50%	66%
• Household income lets me save for retirement (% Fully Agree)	41%	38%	50%
CHILDREN’S SCHOOLING:			
• Have 3 or more children	24%	69%	65%
• Have child(ren) in K-12 / college gap year	43% / 0%	84% / 23%	13% / 21%
• K-12 Median Expenses (those with children in K-12)	\$21K	\$35K	\$25K
• K-12 Receive Assistance (\$2,500 or more per student)	23%	32%	47%
• College/Gap Median Expenses (those with children in college/gap)	\$0K	\$33K	\$26K
OVERALL COST ATTITUDES:			
• Kosher Food (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	19%	16%	13%
• Area Residing (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	38%	37%	21%
• Negativity Indicator (Overall, cost of Orthodoxy is worth it; % that disagree)	11%	11%	3%
<i>Number of respondents</i>	505	638	290

Modern Orthodox by Gender – Income, savings and financial comfort levels are all nominally higher among males than females. Additionally, many more females say that kosher food has a significant negative impact on their household budget (21%, compared to 12% of males). And yet, fewer females think that the cost of Orthodoxy is not worth it (7% of females, vs. 11% males).

	Male	Female
INCOME AND SAVINGS:		
• Median Household Income	\$204K	\$169K
• Median Non-Retirement Savings	\$121K	\$62K
• Median Retirement Savings	\$235K	\$196K
OVERALL FINANCIAL COMFORT:		
• Household Financial Health (% Rated as Excellent/Very Good)	52%	48%
• Household income cover expenses (% Fully Agree)	59%	53%
• Household income lets me save for retirement (% Fully Agree)	44%	37%
CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING:		
• Have 3 or more children	58%	51%
• Have child(ren) in K-12 / college gap year	55% / 17%	51% / 15%
• K-12 Median Expenses (those with children in K-12)	\$30K	\$31K
• K-12 Receive Assistance (\$2,500 or more per student)	27%	36%
• College/Gap Median Expenses (those with children in college/gap)	\$33K	\$29K
OVERALL COST ATTITUDES:		
• Kosher Food (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	12%	21%
• Area Residing (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	30%	38%
• Negativity Indicator (Overall, cost of Orthodoxy is worth it; % that disagree)	11%	7%
<i>Number of respondents</i>	719	608

Modern Orthodox by Household Income – Not surprisingly, lower income households struggle more with the costs of Orthodoxy. About one in four with income under \$100K says their budget is significantly negatively affected by the cost of kosher food. Few rate their household financial health as good, or are able to save, especially for retirement. 15% disagree that the cost of Orthodoxy is worth it, the highest level among all demographic groups examined.

	<\$50K	\$50-99K	\$100-149K	\$150-224K	\$225-299K	\$300K+
SAVINGS:*						
• Median Non-Retirement Savings	\$8K	\$25K	\$36K	\$50K	\$97K	\$225K
• Median Retirement Savings	NA	~\$30K	\$85K	\$157K	\$225K	\$580K
OVERALL FINANCIAL COMFORT:						
• Household Financial Health (% Rated as Excellent/Very Good)	13%	28%	33%	47%	62%	80%
• Household income cover expenses (% Fully Agree)	22%	38%	39%	52%	65%	83%
• Household income lets me save for retirement (% Fully Agree)	4%	21%	25%	35%	45%	58%
CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING:						
• Have 3 or more children	22%	37%	43%	61%	61%	75%
• Have child(ren) in K-12 / college gap year	10% / 10%	34% / 8%	47% / 10%	61% / 16%	60% / 17%	69% / 25%
• K-12 Median Expenses (those with children in K-12)	<\$10K	\$18K	\$23K	\$27K	\$33K	\$44K
• K-12 Receive Assistance (\$2,500 or more per student)	60%	71%	43%	47%	22%	7%
• College/Gap Median Expenses (those with children in college/gap)	<\$10K	\$18K	\$15K	\$28K	\$31K	\$43K
OVERALL COST ATTITUDES:						
• Kosher Food (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	27%	24%	17%	15%	19%	9%
• Area Residing (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	35%	35%	36%	33%	39%	29%
• Negativity Indicator (Overall, cost of Orthodoxy is worth it; % that disagree)	15%	9%	11%	10%	7%	7%
<i>Number of respondents</i>	69	167	211	269	151	296

* As the independent variable (cross-tabulated against the key metrics) for this chart is income, the inclusion of median incomes among the metrics is not meaningful.

Modern Orthodox by Number of Children – Households with more children have higher incomes, although the “cause and effect” relationship, if there is any, is unclear. Despite lower incomes, households with one or fewer children more often say their incomes cover their expenses and let them save for retirement.

	0 to 1	2	3	4+
INCOME:*				
• Median Household Income	\$117K	\$170K	\$220K	\$220K
OVERALL FINANCIAL COMFORT:				
• Household Financial Health (% Rated as Excellent/Very Good)	51%	48%	53%	48%
• Household income cover expenses (% Fully Agree)	65%	54%	54%	52%
• Household income lets me save for retirement (% Fully Agree)	46%	36%	40%	39%
CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING:				
• Have child(ren) in K-12 / college gap year	6% / 2%	52% / 8%	71% / 14%	74% / 38%
• K-12 Median Expenses (those with children in K-12)	\$17K	\$26K	\$29K	\$39K
• K-12 Receive Assistance (\$2,500 or more per student)	36%	27%	28%	37%
• College/Gap Median Expenses (those with children in college/gap)	\$10K	\$27K	\$37K	\$30K
OVERALL COST ATTITUDES:				
• Kosher Food (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	18%	15%	16%	17%
• Area Residing (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	35%	38%	30%	31%
• Negativity Indicator (Overall, cost of Orthodoxy is worth it; % that disagree)	12%	9%	9%	8%
<i>Number of respondents</i>	255	271	357	287

* The savings data were assembled through the follow-up survey, which did not include numbers of children.

Modern Orthodox Couples vs. Singles – Singles’ incomes are much lower than those of couples, as are their perceptions of their household financial health. They have fewer children and educational costs, but kosher food is more financially burdensome than among couples.

	Couples	Singles*
INCOME: **		
• Median Household Income	\$199K	\$78K
OVERALL FINANCIAL COMFORT:		
• Household Financial Health (% Rated as Excellent/Very Good)	52%	38%
• Household income cover expenses (% Fully Agree)	57%	49%
• Household income lets me save for retirement (% Fully Agree)	40%	40%
CHILDREN’S SCHOOLING:		
• Have 3 or more children	59%	22%
• Have child(ren) in K-12 / college gap year	57% / 16%	16% / 14%
• K-12 Median Expenses (those with children in K-12)	\$31K	\$19K
• K-12 Receive Assistance (\$2,500 or more per student)	30%	64%
• College/Gap Median Expenses (those with children in college/gap)	\$33K	\$22K
OVERALL COST ATTITUDES:		
• Kosher Food (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	15%	21%
• Area Residing (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	34%	30%
• Negativity Indicator (Overall, cost of Orthodoxy is worth it; % that disagree)	9%	9%
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>1,048</i>	<i>123</i>

* Includes single, divorced, separated, widowed.

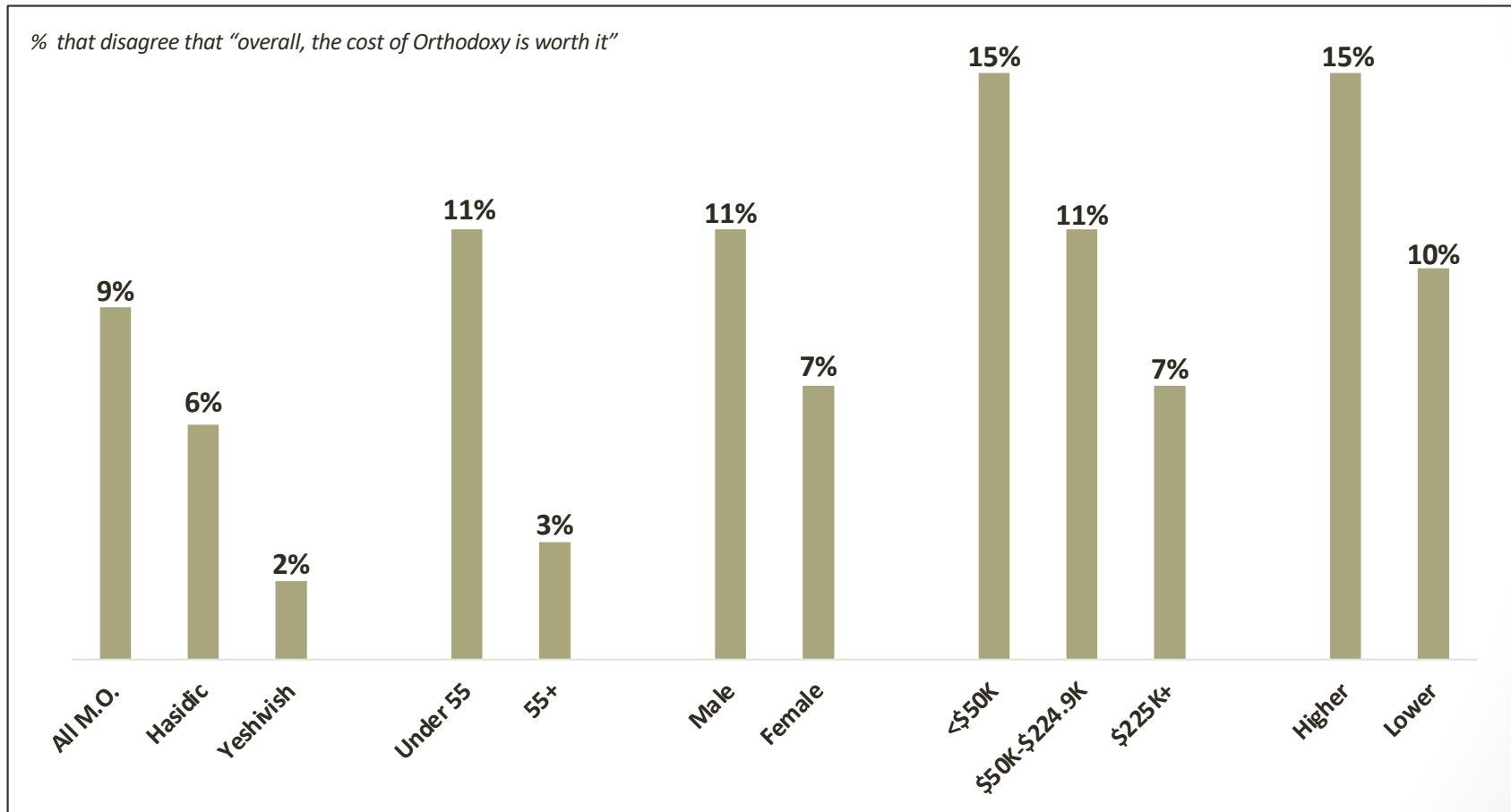
** The savings data were assembled through the follow-up survey, which did not include marital status.

Modern Orthodox by More vs. Less Expensive Areas of Residence – In less costly M.O. neighborhoods, incomes are lower, while retirement savings are higher. Two notable differences are K-12 education, where median spending is about one-third lower in the less expensive communities and more than twice as many respondents get notable tuition assistance and, of course, in the less negative impact of the neighborhood costs on budgets. Add it all up and, interestingly, overall financial comfort levels are pretty much the same. Admittedly, cost is just one factor in the more vs. less expensive community decision.

	More Expensive*	Less Expensive*
INCOME AND SAVINGS:		
• Median Household Income	\$199K	\$133K
• Median Non-Retirement Savings	\$32K	\$30K
• Median Retirement Savings	~\$40K	\$110K
OVERALL FINANCIAL COMFORT:		
• Household Financial Health (% Rated as Excellent/Very Good)	40%	43%
• Household income cover expenses (% Fully Agree)	50%	49%
• Household income lets me save for retirement (% Fully Agree)	33%	36%
CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING:		
• Have 3 or more children	56%	58%
• Have child(ren) in K-12 / college gap year	65% / 18%	57% / 18%
• K-12 Median Expenses (those with children in K-12)	\$27K	\$18K
• K-12 Receive Assistance (\$2,500 or more per student)	25%	54%
• College/Gap Median Expenses (those with children in college/gap)	\$30K	\$32K
OVERALL COST ATTITUDES:		
• Kosher Food (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	21%	18%
• Area Residing (% saying significant negative impact on household budget)	44%	26%
• Negativity Indicator (Overall, cost of Orthodoxy is worth it; % that disagree)	15%	10%
<i>Number of respondents</i>	168	98

* More expensive = zip codes (first 3 digits) 110-119, Brooklyn, Queens and western Nassau County, NY. These are expensive areas, although not as expensive as Manhattan, which might be too different from the less expensive areas. Less expensive areas are zip codes 152-191 and 452-561, which are mostly Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan. These include mid-size to larger cities but are less costly than those in the NYC area.

Summary: Attitude Toward Overall Cost by Segments – As a single indicator of how the costs of Orthodoxy affect people, we look at those who disagreed that “overall, the cost of Orthodoxy is worth it.” Those feeling this way ranged from lows of 2% (Yeshivish) and 3% (those ages 55+), to highs of 15% (those with incomes under \$50K and those who live in more expensive neighborhoods – see page 46). Overall, though, those who feel this way are a relatively small minority, and the vast majority say the cost is worth it, presumably given all they get from their Orthodox life and community.



Appendix I – Respondent Demographics

Demographics *(Page 1 of 2)*

	Primary Survey		Follow-Up Survey	
	Responses	%	Responses	%
M.O or Centrist Orthodox (including liberal M.O. as well as right-leaning Centrist Orthodox)	1,334	56%	293	62%
Haredi				
– Yeshivish / Litvish / Agudah	589	25%	98	21%
– Hasidic, not including Chabad	184	8%	32	7%
– Chabad	120	5%	26	5%
– Other Haredi, “Heimish”	<u>79</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2%</u>
Subtotal Haredi	972	41%	167	35%
Other	81	3%	15	3%
Total	2,387	100%	475	100%
Orientation Within M.O.				
– “To the left” ... Liberal M.O.	460	35%		
– “In the center” ... Centrist M.O.	477	36%		
– “To the right” ... More stringent (machmir) Centrist Orthodox	394	30%		

- Attitudinal and expense data were derived from the primary survey. The follow-up survey sought to expand upon the non-income financial data, e.g., assets. (See the questionnaires in Appendix II).
- As is the case in most surveys of the Orthodox community, the Modern Orthodox and Haredi are quite different in most respects. Therefore, we do not combine them and thus do not present any of our findings as representative of the Orthodox community as a whole.
- We consolidate the Haredi community (which includes the Yeshivish and Hasidic segments), although we recognize and have found in past studies that there are differences between Haredi segments. Some key differences between the Yeshivish and Hasidic segments are presented (see page 40).

- Gender – Modern Orthodox respondents were split somewhat evenly (male 54%, female 46%), but the Haredi response was skewed quite strongly (male 71%, female 29%). Two reasons for the Haredi skew are the limited Internet/computer access among Hasidic females (men have much more access through workplaces), and the view in this segment that finances are the “male domain,” resulting in less interest among women in participating. Haredi data in this report apply stratified sample weights so that the genders are equally represented. Such weights were not needed in the M.O. community, as the gender split was closer to 50/50.
- Challenges remain in conducting surveys among the Haredi, especially the Hasidic and even more so among women, due to their insularity and lack of on-line access. Nishma Research is exploring methods and funding to facilitate this research, e.g., via live, face-to-face multi-lingual (English and Yiddish) opt-out research. We welcome inquiries.

See Q2-4 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. For Q4 (gender) n=1,352 Modern Orthodox and 963 Haredi.

Demographics (Page 2 of 2)

Age	Modern Orthodox	Haredi
22 to 34	30%	50%
35 to 44	32%	31%
45 to 54	16%	11%
55 to 64	11%	4%
65 or older	11%	4%
Median Age	41	34

The age distributions skew a bit younger than we have seen in other surveys, i.e., more middle-aged and fewer elderly. This study could fairly be described as a financial profile of Orthodoxy during the working years, as the number of retirees who responded is relatively low.

Marital Status	Modern Orthodox	Haredi
Married	89%	93%
Single	6%	3%
Divorced / Separated	4%	3%
Other	2%	1%

Secular Education	Modern Orthodox	Haredi
High school graduate or less	<0.5%	17%
Some college, less than bachelor's	3%	16%
Four-year bachelor's	29%	30%
Postgrad/professional degree	67%	37%

Employment	Modern Orthodox	Haredi
Full-Time	74%	68%
Part-Time	11%	20%
Retired	8%	2%
Homemaker	4%	6%
Student	2%	2%
Other	2%	2%

more tightly clustered in the northeast (74% in NY-NJ, vs. 56% of M.O.), and they reside in different areas within NY-NJ. See page 46 for an analysis of some key differences between households in more expensive areas and those in less expensive areas.

Location	Modern Orthodox	Haredi
New York State	32%	53%
– New York City	27%	41%
– Brooklyn/Queens	15%	39%
– Manhattan	7%	2%
– Bronx/Riverdale	4%	0%
– Rockland County	1%	10%
New Jersey	24%	21%
MD/Silver Spring/DC	7%	1%
MD/Baltimore	4%	5%
Florida	5%	2%
Pennsylvania	5%	3%
Massachusetts	4%	1%
California-Southern	3%	1%

Modern Orthodox respondents hailed from 29 states and Haredi respondents hailed from 23 states. But their geographic distributions are quite different. Haredi are

See Q5,13,30,31,32 in Appendix II – Primary Survey Questionnaire. N for Q5 (age) = 1,352 Modern Orthodox and 961 Haredi. n for Q13 (marital status) =1,171 Modern Orthodox and 796 Hared. n for Q30 (secular education) =1,085 Modern Orthodox and 718 Hared. n for Q31 (employment) =1,084 Modern Orthodox and 721 Hared. n for Q32 (geographic location) = 1,034 Modern Orthodox and 680 Hared.

Appendix II – Survey Questionnaires

Primary Survey Questionnaire (Page 1 of 4)

**NISHMA RESEARCH FINANCIAL SURVEY OF THE U.S. ORTHODOX JEWISH COMMUNITY
November 2021**

INTRODUCTION

What are people's views relating to the cost of living an Orthodox life? This issue has often been discussed, and we believe it warrants deeper exploration through research.

Nishma Research is therefore sponsoring and conducting this survey as part of its continuing efforts to provide meaningful information to the community. As always, we will publicly share all findings. At the end of the survey, you will have the opportunity to get the results sent directly to you.

This survey is for all U.S. Orthodox individuals who are head (or co-head) of household and age 22 and older. Among couples, we encourage spouses to take the survey separately. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. Only some of the questions require a response, but we hope you will respond as fully as possible. This survey is 100% confidential.

If you have any questions about the survey, please email Mark Trencher at Nishma Research: mark@nishmaresearch.com.

(Response required) **Q1. In order to participate in this survey, please check here to confirm that you ...** (check all boxes that apply): Multiple responses

- Are age 22 or older
- Identify as an Orthodox Jew
- Are a head or co-head of your household (i.e., not a dependent in someone else's household)
- Live in the United States
- Would like to take this survey

(Response required) **Q2. Which of these categories best describes how you see yourself within Orthodoxy ?**

- Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox (including liberal Modern Orthodox as well as right-leaning Centrist Orthodox)
- Yeshivish / Litvish / Agudah
- Chasidic, not including Chabad
- Chabad
- Other Charedi, "Heimish"
- Other

Ask if Q2 = Modern or Centrist Orthodox:

Q3. Where do you see yourself within Modern/Centrist Orthodoxy?

- "To the left" ... Liberal Modern Orthodox
- "In the center" ... Centrist Modern Orthodox
- "To the right" ... More stringent (machmir) Centrist Orthodox

Q4. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-Conforming, Other

Q5. What is your age?

- 22 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older

Q6. How do you rate your household's overall financial situation?

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very Poor

Q7. Do you agree with the following statements?

- My household income covers expenses.
- My household income lets me to save money for a "rainy day fund" or just general savings.
- (Ask if Q5 age is 64 or less) My household income lets me save for retirement.
- My household income lets me buy some luxuries.
- If I had to quickly come up with \$2,000 to cover an unexpected expense, I would be able to do it.
- If I had to quickly come up with \$5,000 to cover an unexpected expense, I would be able to do it.

Scale: Agree Fully, Agree Somewhat, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree Somewhat, Disagree Fully

Primary Survey Questionnaire (Page 2 of 4)

Ask if Q7d Buy Luxuries = agree fully or somewhat

Q8a. What luxuries do you allow yourself? Open-Ended

Ask if Q7d Buy Luxuries = disagree fully or somewhat

Q8b. What luxuries do you wish you could afford, but cannot? Open-Ended

Q9. Do you agree with the following statements?

- I am comfortable with the amount of money my household currently has in savings (not including retirement accounts).
- I am comfortable with the amount of money my household has saved to date for retirement.
- (Ask if Q5 age is 64 or less) I am comfortable that I will have enough retirement savings when I retire.

Scale (for each statement): Agree Fully, Agree Somewhat, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree Somewhat, Disagree Fully

Q10. Does your household have any credit card debt (balances that accrue monthly interest charges)?

- None
- Yes, under \$5,000
- \$5,000 to \$9,999
- \$10,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 or more

Q11. Do you expect your overall household financial situation to change over the next 5 to 10 years? Do you expect it to ...

- Get much better
- Get a little better
- Stay about the same
- Get a little worse
- Get much worse
- Don't have any idea

Q12. What is your total annual household income (gross income from all sources)? —

— While your response is not mandatory, we ask that you respond, as this is an important piece of survey information. Remember ... all responses are anonymous.

- Under \$30,000
- \$30,000 to \$49,999

- \$50,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$224,999
- \$225,000 to \$299,999
- \$300,000 or more

Q13. What is your current marital/relationship status?

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widowed
- Living with a partner or in a long-term relationship

Q14. How many children do you have?

- None
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five or More

Ask if Q14 = One or More

Q15. How many of your children are currently in grades K to 12? Open-Ended numeric

Ask if Q14 = One or More

Q16. How many of your children are currently in college or gap year in Israel? Open-Ended numeric

Ask if Q15 Children in Grades K-12 is 1 or more

Q17. What kind(s) of school do your child(ren) in grades K-12 attend?

Please check all that apply. Multiple responses

- Orthodox Jewish day school or yeshiva
- Other type of Jewish day school (non-Orthodox, community, pluralistic, etc.)
- Public school
- Non-Jewish private school
- Home schooling
- Other

Primary Survey Questionnaire (Page 3 of 4)

Ask if Q17 = Orthodox Jewish day school or yeshiva, or Other type of Jewish day school

Q18. Please estimate the total annual tuition and fees (net of scholarships) that you will pay this year (2021-2022) to all Orthodox Jewish day school(s) or yeshiva(s), or other types of Jewish day schools, grades K-12.

- Under \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$44,999
- \$45,000 to \$64,999
- \$65,000 or more

Ask if responded to Q18

Q19. Do you receive any tuition assistance from the school(s) or other communal scholarship sources?

- I do not get any assistance
- I get a little assistance (\$2,500 or less per child)
- I get a moderate amount of assistance (more than \$2,500, up to \$9,999 per child)
- I get a lot of assistance (\$10,000 or more per child)

Ask if Q17 = Orthodox Jewish day school or yeshiva, or Other type of Jewish day school

Q20. Might you in the next five years consider taking a child out of their current Jewish day school, with finances being a significant factor in such a decision?

- There is a good chance that I would consider this
- There is a small chance that I would consider this
- It is not likely that I would consider this
- I would absolutely not consider this

Ask if Q15b Children in college or gap year in Israel is 1 or more

Q21. Turning to your children in college or a gap year institution in Israel, please estimate the total tuition and fees (net of scholarships and loans) that you will pay this year (2021-2022) to all such institutions.

- Under \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$44,999
- \$45,000 to \$64,999
- \$65,000 or more

Q22. Please estimate how much you have paid in the past year for ...

- Shul dues and shul donations
- Other Jewish organizations or charitable donations
- Summer camps
- Jewish trips, e.g., to Israel
- Other purchases specific to Orthodox life (for example, Pesach matzahs, esrog, religious articles – tallis, tefillin – seforim/religious books, sheitel, etc.)
- Other costs (not previously mentioned) related to Orthodox life, such as adult Jewish education, helping with kids' living expenses or home purchases in Orthodox communities, helping with grandchildren's tuition, etc.

Scale (for each option): Nothing, or under \$300, \$300 to \$499, \$500 to \$999, \$1,000 to \$1,999, \$2,000 to \$2,999, \$3,000 to \$4,999, \$5,000 to \$9,999, \$10,000 or more

Q23. Please estimate how much you have spent in total in the past five years in making simchas, such as weddings, bar/bat mitzvahs, sheva brachos, bris, sponsoring a shul kiddush, etc.

- Under \$2,000
- \$3,000 to \$4,999
- \$5,000 to \$9,999
- \$10,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 or more

Q24. Turning to food, to what extent is your household budget affected by:

- The higher cost of some kosher food
- Shabbat and Chag (Yom Tov) meals

Scale (for each item): No impact, Minimal negative impact, Somewhat negative impact, Significant negative impact

Q25. Does the cost of where you live in order to have an Orthodox lifestyle (i.e., possibly in a more expensive city or neighborhood) affect your household budget?

- No impact
- Minimal negative impact
- Somewhat negative impact
- Significant negative impact

Primary Survey Questionnaire (Page 4 of 4)

Q26. On the other hand, would you say there are areas where you are spending less, as compared to non-Orthodox households?

- Yes, very much so
- Yes, somewhat
- Not to any significant extent

Q27. Do you agree with the statement: Orthodoxy has costs, but the additional costs are worth it..

- Agree Fully
- Agree Somewhat
- Neither Agree nor Disagree ... or Mixed Feelings
- Disagree Somewhat
- Disagree Fully

Ask if Q27 answered

Q28. Can you please explain why you responded that way. Open-Ended

Q29. Are the financial costs of Orthodoxy affecting your religious feelings, either in a positive way or in a negative way? Please explain. Open-Ended

Q30. What is the highest level of secular education you have completed?

- High school graduate or less
- Some college, less than four-year bachelor's degree
- Four-year bachelor's degree
- Postgraduate or professional/degree (e.g., master's, doctorate, medical, law, etc.)

Q31. Which of the following best describes your employment status?

- Employed or self-employed full-time
- Employed or self-employed part-time
- Retired
- Homemaker
- Student
- Working or volunteering - non-paid
- Unable to work due to disability
- Other not employed

Q32. What are the first three digits of your zip code? ___ __ _

Concluding Screen

Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts. Your response is very important to us,

- Please check here to get a summary of the survey findings
- Please check here if you are OK with getting occasional (not often) invitations to participate in Jewish community research

If either or both boxes are checked

Please enter your email address. Your email will be totally confidential. It will not be used for any other purposes and will not be attached to your survey responses. Small Text Box, formatted for email address

We encourage you to share this survey with family, friends, colleagues, etc. This survey will close Wednesday evening, November 17, 2021 at 10:00 pm Eastern Time. The Survey Link is:

<http://bit.ly/Ortho-Finance-Survey>

You may now close this browser window or tab to exit the survey. Thank you!

END OF SURVEY

Follow-Up Survey Questionnaire (Page 1 of 2)

NISHMA RESEARCH FINANCIAL FOLLOW-UP SURVEY
November 2021

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking our survey and indicating a willingness to participate in further research.

A few questions came up and we really appreciate about 2 minutes to provide additional information. Only a few questions require a response, but we hope you'll answer fully.

Thanks so much! Again, this survey is 100% confidential.

If you have any questions about the survey, please email Mark Trencher at Nishma Research: mark@nishmaresearch.com

(Response required) **Q1. Which of these categories best describes how you see yourself within Orthodoxy ?**

- Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox (including liberal Modern Orthodox as well as right-leaning Centrist Orthodox)
- Yeshivish / Litvish / Agudah
- Chasidic, not including Chabad
- Chabad
- Other Charedi, "Heimish"
- Other

(Response required) **Q2. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Non-Conforming, Other

Q3. What is your age?

- 22 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older

Q4. What is your total annual household income (gross income from all sources)? Under \$30,000

- \$30,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$224,999
- \$225,000 to \$299,999
- \$300,000 or more

Ask if Q4 = \$300,000 or more

Q4a. You indicate your annual household income is \$300,000 or more. Would you say your income is ...

- \$300,000 to \$499,999
- \$500,000 to \$999,999
- \$1 Million or more

Q5. Please estimate your household's savings, i.e., money readily accessible to you and not including retirement accounts.

- Under \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 or more

Ask if Q5 = \$200,000 or more

Q5a. You indicate savings of \$200,000 or more. Would you say they are ...

- \$200,000 to \$349,999
- \$350,000 to \$499,999
- \$500,000 to \$999,999
- \$1 Million or more

Follow-Up Survey Questionnaire (Page 2 of 2)

Q6. Please estimate your household's total retirement savings (not including the value of your primary residence, if you own it).

- Under \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$249,999
- \$250,000 to \$499,999
- \$500,000 or more

Ask if Q6 = \$500,000 or more

Q6a. You indicate retirement savings of \$500,000 or more. Would you say they are ...

- \$500,000 to \$999,999
- \$1 Million to \$2.99 Million
- \$3 Million to \$4.99 Million
- \$5 Million or more

Q7. Please estimate how much equity you have in your house (the current estimated market value minus how much you might still owe on a mortgage).

- Not a homeowner
- Under \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$249,999
- \$250,000 to \$499,999
- \$500,000 or more

Q8. Please think of all your assets (savings, retirement, etc., not including the value of a primary home residence). Where do you keep significant portions (say, 10% or more) of your assets? Please check all that apply.

- Cash, checking or savings accounts
- Cash equivalents, e.g., money market, CDs, commercial paper
- Individual stocks
- Hedge funds
- Mutual funds, Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs), including indexed funds
- Target market funds
- Government bonds (e.g., Treasury Bills)
- Bonds or bond funds
- Real estate
- Private Equity funds
- Commodities (gold, silver, etc.)
- Crypto currency
- Collectibles (art, rare books, etc.)
- Other [Please describe] _____

Q9. What advice, if any, would you give an Orthodox family struggling with the added costs of being Orthodox? [Open-Ended]

Q10. What are the first three digits of your zip code? _ _ _

Thank You Page

Feel free to share the survey link!

We encourage you to share this survey with family, friends, colleagues, etc. This survey will close Monday evening, November 29, 2021 at 10:00 pm Eastern Time. The Survey Link is:
<http://bit.ly/Ortho-Finance-Survey-2>

You may now close this browser window or tab to exit the survey. Thank you!

END OF SURVEY

About Nishma Research

- Nishma Research was founded in 2015, with the purpose of informing the Jewish community through communal and organizational studies. “Nishma” means “we listen” – and our mission involves conducting research on topics that will promote greater listening among the diverse strands of the Jewish people.
- Nishma is a full-service research firm that supports synagogues, schools, community organizations, and other researchers. We conduct custom research, data collection, analysis, and presentation employing quantitative and qualitative research approaches.
- This is Nishma’s tenth broad Jewish communal studies. Prior studies included: (1) a 2016 survey of people who have left Orthodoxy (“off the *derech*”), across all segments of Modern Orthodox and Haredi Jewry; (2) a 2017 broad demographic and attitudinal profile of American Modern Orthodoxy; (3) a 2019 study of the future of Modern Orthodoxy as it confronts challenges and opportunities emanating from its interaction with secular society; (4) a 2019 study that explored the motivations, challenges and religious journeys of *Baalei Teshuvah*; (5) an early 2020 study of the political views of Orthodox Jews; (6) a mid-2020 study of the health, emotional, financial and religious impacts of the coronavirus pandemic; (7) a 2020 post-election survey that identified the key issues that drove voting decisions across the Orthodox community; (8) an early 2021 study of the broad U.S. Jewish Community’s Views on Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccines; and (9) a mid-2021 study co-sponsored by Chevra Hatzalah, which more deeply explored COVID-related views, particularly vaccine adoption and hesitancy in the Haredi (Hasidic and Yeshivish) communities.
- Nishma Research has funded 80% of its studies to date and makes all reports and findings available free to the public. We appreciate the opportunity to share our findings, which we have presented and discussed at 51 venues (30 shuls and 21 other venues) over the past five years.

