



JDC Impact Report, Former Soviet Union // 2018



11 countries
11 time zones
Over **100,000** Jews impacted

Feeding the body, feeding the soul



The Hebrew word

“Hesed” means loving kindness. It’s a fitting name for the Hesed social welfare centers that serve as the hub for JDC’s efforts in the former Soviet Union: All of our work in the region stems from that central Jewish value, whether it’s care for the impoverished, inspiring new generations of leaders, or reintroducing Jews to their lost traditions. We’ve put down strong roots in the communities we serve, fostering a spirit of volunteerism and collective responsibility with an eye toward sustainability. Each branch of our work connects to and nourishes the others; our broad array of programs ensures that Jews of all ages have everything they need to survive, as well as form rich, rewarding bonds to their Jewish heritage and each other.

JDC FSU by the numbers



5,300

volunteers

44

communities

3,200

teens actively involved
in Jewish life through
Active Jewish Teens



60

AJT clubs

4,700

Jews of all ages
in family shabbat
retreats



13,123

elderly, children, and
families helped in
emergency situations



87,842

elderly Jews receive
critical assistance



82,225

elderly received
food assistance
including holiday
food



18,139,038

hours of homecare
provided to elderly Jews



63,469

food and bank cards
provided to needy elderly



29,258

elderly received
medicine/medical
services



6,661

elderly attended
day centers



10,061

elderly kept warm
thanks to essential
winter relief



Aiding vulnerable Jews



JDC provides vital aid to nearly 90,000 elderly Jewish people

in the former Soviet Union. Though many had long careers as doctors, teachers, or engineers, today they struggle to survive on pensions as low as \$2 per day. They are the poorest Jews in the world, with no family to turn to and no government support, but thanks to JDC and our partners, they have food, medicine, winter relief to stave off the harsh cold, and compassionate homecare. Our approach ensures they also have the priceless things — community, tradition, and companionship — that allow them to do more than just survive, and live with dignity and hope.

Care for elderly Jews: A personal touch on a massive scale



HESED LOCATIONS: FORMER SOVIET UNION



**JDC works
through
69 Hesed social
welfare centers**

across the former Soviet Union.
Each one is a hub for care and
community, reaching **87,842**
elderly Jews in some **2,200**



Care for elderly Jews: **A wide array of services**



JDC services across the former Soviet Union:



29,258
elderly recieved
medicine/medical
services



12,078
SoS emergency relief



3,949
food packages/
food sets



18,139,038
homecare hours for



31,301
recipients



63,469
food and bank
cards



10,061
people with
winter relief



8,409
medical
equipment
loans



**Meet
Mikhail, 76,
of Kharkov,
Ukraine**

As a child, **Mikhail** remembers observing Jewish traditions, lighting candles, and eating kosher food. But for most of his life, these things were forbidden. When the Soviet Union collapsed, Mikhail reconnected to his Jewish heritage and joined the JDC relief effort. A driver by trade, Mikhail spent years volunteering for his local Hesed, transporting food packages to homebound members of his Jewish community.

Today, Mikhail is the one who relies on JDC to survive. He receives 16 hours of homecare every week, as well as medical supplies and financial support for food. **"I could not do anything without JDC,"** Mikhail says. **"I cannot go out on the street, get food, clean the apartment. For me, it is an inestimable help."**

Care for elderly Jews: Efficient service models with a far reach



A Hesed is more than just a physical space where people receive aid; it's a center for renewed Jewish community, a lifeline for those in need, and a bulwark against loneliness. Elderly clients, as well as Jewish children and families, visit the Hesed regularly, participating in Jewish activities, celebrating holidays, attending physical fitness classes, or sharing meals with other Jewish people.

THE WIDEST REACHING HESED

**St. Petersburg
to Zapolyarny**
(919 mi.)

DRIVE: 18 hrs, 35 min.
FLY: 8 hrs (multi stops)
(= driving from NY to Nashville)



**St. Petersburg
to Vorkuta**
(1,559.4 mi.)

DRIVE: 41 hrs, 54 min.
FLY: 23 hrs (multi stops)
(= driving from NY to Dallas, TX)

Vorkuta

Ukhta

**St. Petersburg
to Ukhta**
(1,072 mi.)

DRIVE: 26 hrs, 43 min.
FLY: 7 hrs, 42 min.
(multi stops)
(= driving from NY to Orlando)

THE FARTHEST REACHING HESED

**Hesed with the
farthest reach**
(2,608 mi.)

DRIVE: 2 days, 7 hrs, 15 min.
FLY: 3 hrs, 10 min. (direct)
(almost = driving from NY to LA)

RUSSIA

Palatka



UKRAINE

RUSSIA



Care for elderly Jews: From the city to the farthest village



Lyudmila, St. Petersburg, Russia

Lyudmila used to work as a tour guide in St. Petersburg. She loved meeting people from all over the world and showing them the city's historic sites. But that life ended when she became ill with Diabetes and Parkinson's disease. Lyudmila could no longer lead tours; she couldn't even walk

the streets of the city she loved. Her illnesses left her confined to her two-room flat, unable to clean the apartment or cook for herself.

Lyudmila's only sister and the rest of her family more or less abandoned her. For an outgoing person like Lyudmila, this was unbearable. The longer she was trapped in her apartment, the lonelier and more depressed she grew.

In Lyudmila's time of need, JDC stepped in to provide homecare. Thanks to JDC, she now has critical support for her household tasks, as well as a weekly source of companionship. For the gregarious former tour guide, this human interaction is life-saving.

With a pension of only \$116 USD monthly, Lyudmila relies on JDC to subsidize the cost of her many essential medicines, as well as help her pay for food, utilities, and rent.

"My life is totally dependent on JDC," Lyudmila said.



Yuliy, Apatity, Russia

The drive from St. Petersburg to the town of Apatity (population 55,000) takes over 15 hours, but that doesn't prevent the St. Petersburg Hesed from providing 86-year-old **Yuliy** with the same quality of care that Lyudmila receives.

Yuliy spent 60 years of his life devoted to the study of geology, engaged in both scientific research and teaching students. In 2018, he finally retired at the age of 85.

For almost a decade, including while he continued to work, Yuliy has struggled with Parkinson's disease. His debilitating illness has made it nearly impossible to handle basic household tasks and requires costly medical care. Yuliy lives alone — his wife and son passed away, and his remaining daughter moved abroad; without JDC and Claims Conference support, he would have to deal with these challenges on his own.

Every week, a homecare worker provides 25 hours of compassionate care to Yuliy, helping him with cleaning, cooking, shopping, and accompanying him on trips to doctors whose office are nearly 125 miles away.

Yuliy also receives funds for food and medicine, as well as SOS funds for larger necessities, like a new washing machine.

Addressing family needs



Countries in the former Soviet Union struggle to provide a social safety net for children as well as the elderly.

Children from poor families are growing up without enough food, heat, or healthcare. Children with disabilities stay home, cared for by a parent, making it nearly impossible for both parents to work. For single-parent families, this means no income beyond small government benefits.

JDC takes a holistic approach in our support for children and families, addressing these material and social needs while providing opportunities to forge relationships and strengthen their ties to Jewish life.



Meet Aleksey

Fourteen-year-old **Aleksey** and his family live in Belarus, where they receive aid from JDC because of his autism; unlike in the US, there are few resources for families with children who are autistic. Aleksey and his family regularly attend JDC-supported Family Shabbat Retreats — these events are some of the only times Aleksey is

able to be a part of an inclusive community. “It was amazing,” he said after a recent Retreat. “I had a great time there and made new friends.”

His mother echoed his sentiment. **“These events are very important for my son, because they help him communicate with other children and adapt to social situations. Aleksey keeps in touch with his new friends, they talk on the phone and sometimes we go to community events together.”**

Building family connections



The support of family and neighbors can make a real difference in a family's emotional and financial health. One of the ways JDC fosters this community spirit is Family Shabbat Retreats. These retreats are pluralistic and inclusive; they offer an organic way for families to get involved in Jewish community life. Most families are able — and happy — to pay to participate in such rewarding events, but those who cannot afford it receive partial or full discounts.

Once families arrive at the Retreat, socioeconomic differences are left at the door. Families enjoy a transformative experience of informal and formal Jewish educational activities — singing, challah baking, dancing, craft projects and parenting workshops — all designed and led by local staff and volunteers. The results are consistent — participants make new friends and leave excited to participate in future community events.

87% of family retreat participants plan to increase their involvement in Jewish community activities.

78% of new participants plan to join in their local JCC activities following the retreat.

45% of new participants plan to volunteer or initiate projects in their community following the retreat.

Data from post-retreat surveys.

In 2018, **4,700 participants** took part in Shabbat retreats.

AJT, JFS, JCC, Volunteer Centers

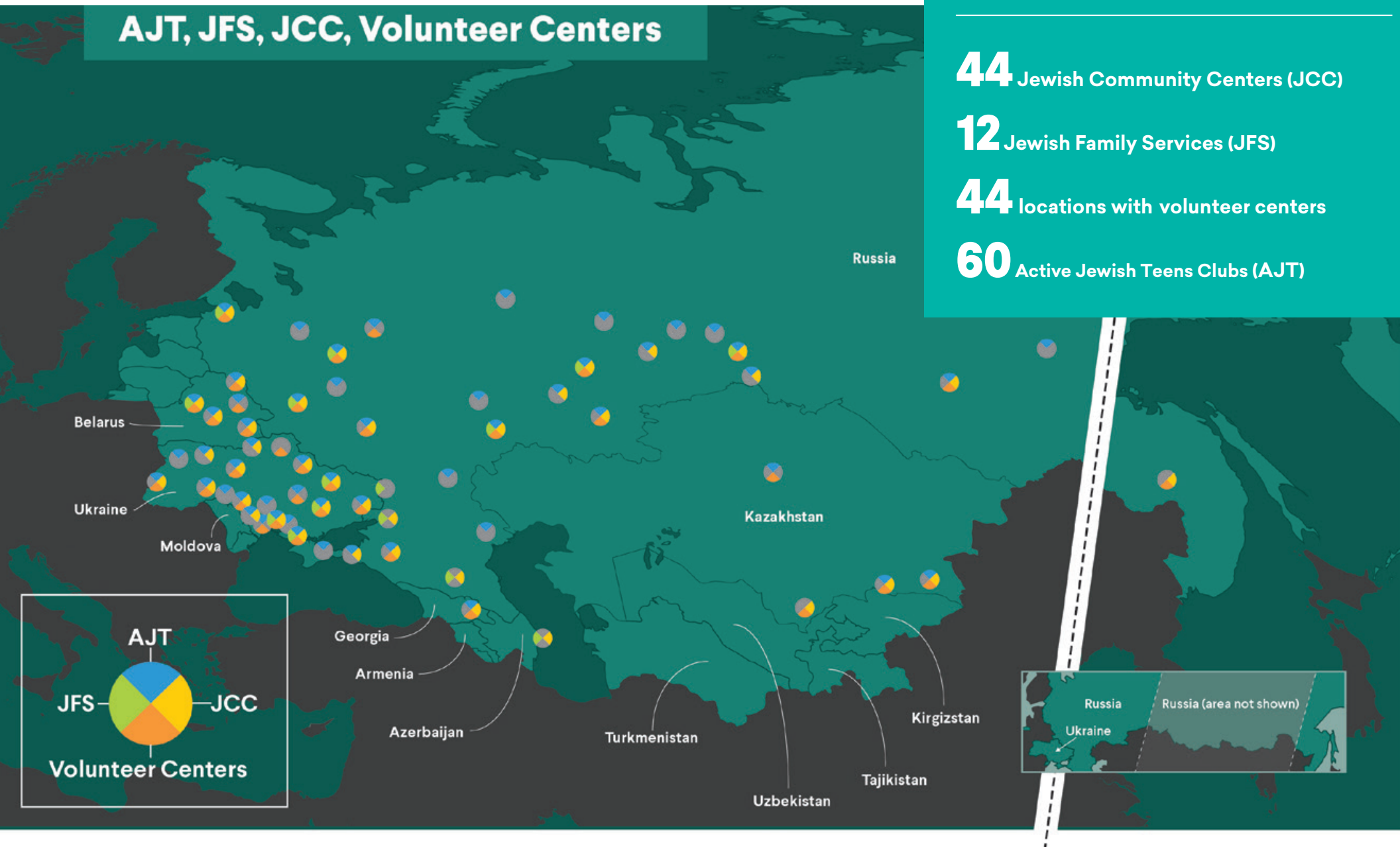
Total # of locations

44 Jewish Community Centers (JCC)

12 Jewish Family Services (JFS)

44 locations with volunteer centers

60 Active Jewish Teens Clubs (AJT)



Cultivating a Jewish future: Nurturing caring communities



Once, the Jewish communities of the former Soviet Union were some of the largest and most vibrant in the world. After WWII, and then under Soviet rule, everything changed; a devastating combination of government policies and persecution of Jews drove flourishing communities to near-extinction.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union came the opportunity for reemergence and regrowth. Since 1989, JDC has been at the forefront of reviving these irreplaceable Jewish communities, partnering with local communities to foster a sense community spirit and global Jewish responsibility. We reconnect Jews with their lost heritage and forge a new generation of leaders. The reason is simple: We believe all Jews are responsible for each other.

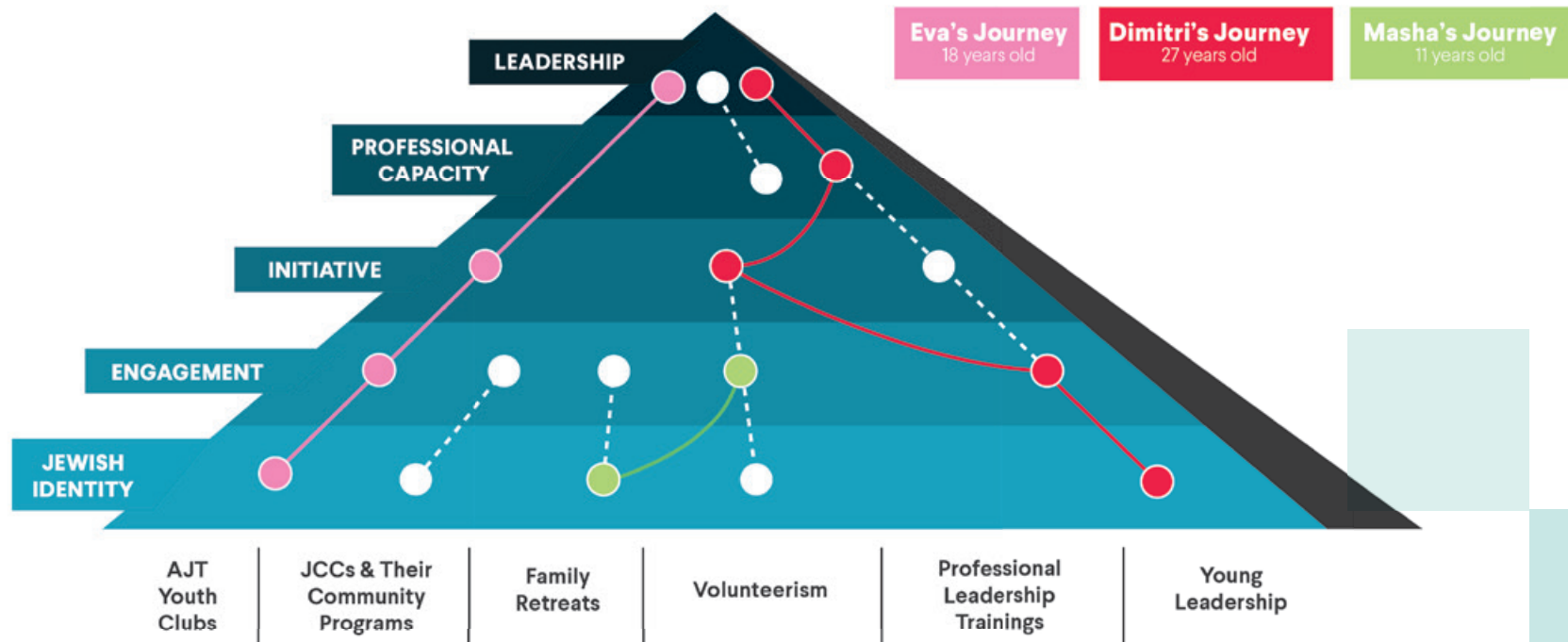
Our community-building efforts serve another purpose, as well. A tight-knit community can ensure its most vulnerable members have the helping hand they need to face — and overcome — hardship. Our work inspires Jews of all ages to give back to their local communities. Under Soviet rule, the word “volunteer” was not part of the language or culture, but today, in the FSU’s Jewish communities, it is worn like a badge of honor. This mission is unique to JDC, distinguishing us from other organizations that work in the FSU.

Living Jewish values: **Many paths for growth**

JDC's wide array of programs offer a variety of pathways to embody the ethic of global Jewish responsibility by becoming more involved in Jewish life, enriching one's own identity, developing valuable skills and engaging in community service. No matter a person's age or Jewish education, there is a program for them, and each leads naturally to the next set of opportunities for growth.

Follow some of our clients' journeys along their paths, then read more about them in the pages to come.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT JOURNEYS IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION



Eva's Journey
18 years old



Dimitri's Journey
27 years old



Masha's Journey
11 years old

Priority program — Volunteerism: Jewish responsibility in action



Volunteering starts at a young age: Meet Masha

When she's not at school or at JCC classes, you can find 11-year-old **Masha** preparing a craft activity for the elderly at Hesed or staffing a station at a community charity event. Her smile and energy make it clear she loves to help people.

Masha volunteers because she remembers how it felt to receive help when it really mattered. She was seven years old when her family fled Eastern Ukraine to escape the bombs falling on her hometown. Arriving in Odessa bewildered and scared, Masha and her family received food, clothing, and other necessities from a woman with a warm smile, a woman who worked for JDC. Now, Masha is the one sharing a warm smile with the elders of her community. Masha's mother says, "**When Masha goes to Hesed, I don't worry about her. I know she will only learn good things there, first and foremost — how to be a good person, a human being who cares.**"

2018 VOLUNTEER GRAPH

5,300 volunteers

6 Countries



44 Cities



41,000
Beneficiaries



In Moldova, the Day of Good Deeds event has gone from a small group of excited volunteers to a movement 6 times as large!



Priority program — Active Jewish Teens: The next generation of engaged Jews



In a recent survey of Active Jewish Teens participants:

65% said being in the club greatly affected their levels of connectedness.

88% said participating in the club affected their volunteering in the community.

93% said their motivation to contribute to their Jewish Community was derived from participating in the club!

Meet Eva Stupka

When **Eva** was seven years old, her mother asked her if she wanted to learn Hebrew — and her life changed forever.

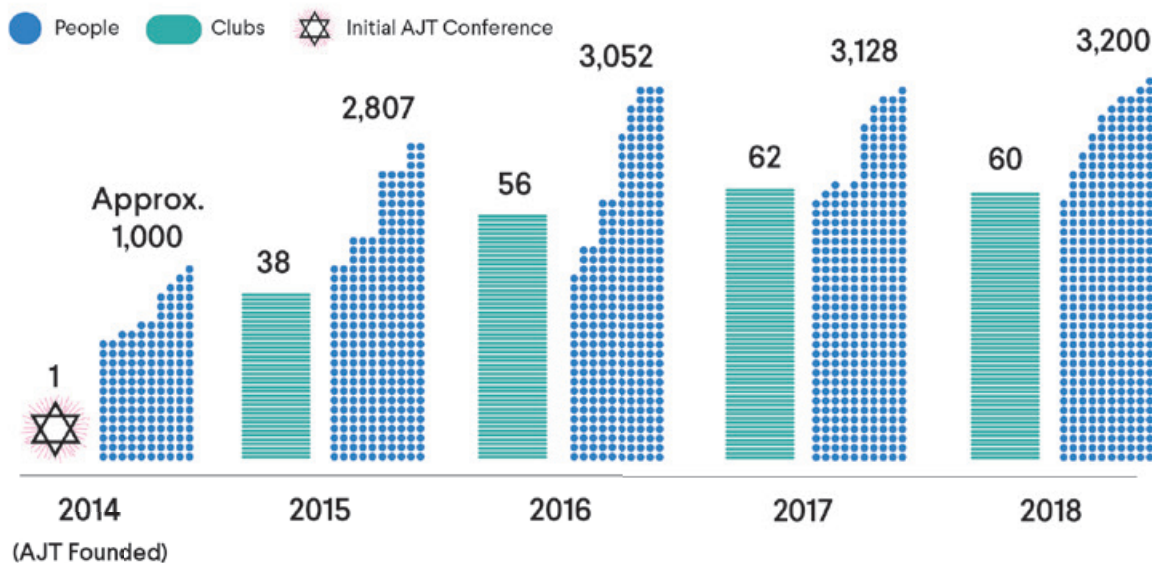
Like so many Jews born under Soviet rule, Eva had never known she was Jewish. Her family had hidden their heritage to escape persecution, but the collapse of the Soviet Union had changed things in Moldova; it was finally safe for Eva to explore her Judaism.

Eva began attending Hebrew school. At 13, she joined her local youth club, which was where her Jewish identity took shape. Volunteering, attending events, and celebrating holidays, Eva became a member of — and leader within — a Jewish community.

Yet for Eva, her most life-changing experience has been Active Jewish Teens (AJT). Connecting with Jewish teens from all over the former Soviet Union and beyond, she found her “home” — just as she was a leader in Kishinev, they, too, were leaders in their home communities. They quickly became like family.

Most recently, 18-year-old Eva served as the president of AJT, which now has over 3000 members. **“We are a confident generation that is not afraid of identifying as proud Jews, building bridges with our fellow Jews around the world, and ready to change the world for the better.”**

AJT GROWTH SINCE 2014



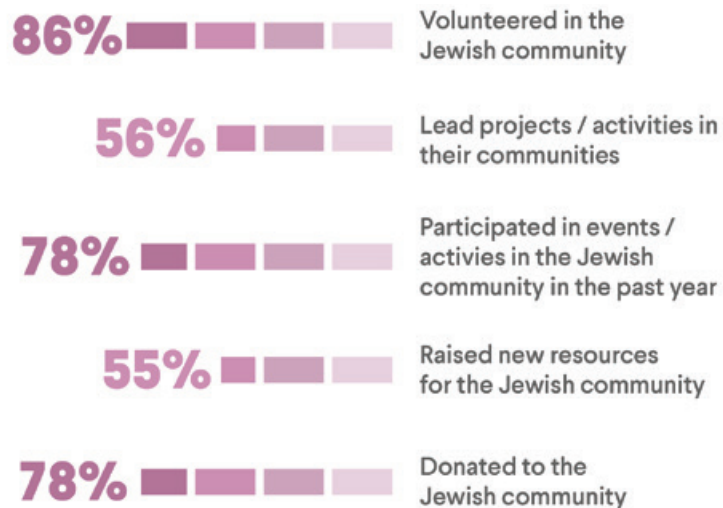
Priority program — Leadership: Cultivating caring individuals who drive change



JDC runs in-depth leadership programs

designed to create a cadre of young active leaders who are committed to contributing to and driving change in their local Jewish communities. Programs focus on developing Jewish identity, community initiative, professional management capacities, and leadership skills. Programs consist of in-depth sessions (3-7 days), local group meetings in between sessions, and ongoing individual mentoring. A special emphasis is placed on combining both theory and practice. In addition to the sessions and meetings, participants engage with local organizations and leaders, and develop a project in their local community.

In a recent survey of graduates...



Dimitri: Making family history accessible

Dimitri grew up knowing he was Jewish, but he didn't know what it meant. "My dad once told me that I should marry a Jewish girl, but I had no idea why, or how to make that happen."

Two years ago, Dimitri, now 27, began researching his family and discovered a connection to "an ancient nation that had managed to keep its authenticity through the centuries." He wanted to share this empowering experience with others, and found the perfect way: **Metsuda**, one of JDC's leadership programs.

The leadership training Dimitri received has given him the skills to form a club that helps Jews like him learn genealogy, so they can trace their own family history. The group is so successful that Dimitri is now training volunteers to facilitate members' research.

"I'm so grateful to Metsuda for teaching me how to turn my idea into reality and helping me realize my dream!" Dimitri says.

Looking ahead: Goals, opportunities, and challenges



Goals for 2019

The care and community support that JDC provides is life-saving and life-changing. As we look toward the future, our primary goal is to maintain our high standards while becoming more efficient — leveraging new approaches and technologies, as well as empowering local communities to take on increased responsibility in a self-sustaining way. In particular, this means:

- Continuing to develop new ways to maximize care with a leaner infrastructure.

Expanding the use of bank cards in providing aid for food and medicine, instead of food cards and food packages. The shift to bank cards is both cost-effective, and allows greater freedom of choice for clients in how to use the aid they receive.

Piloting the use of local post services in providing aid for food and medicine to clients in remote locations. Similarly to bank cards, this means of service delivery also enhances cost effectiveness and convenience for clients.

Piloting new call centers, which provide telephone support services to elderly clients. (See next page)

- Further prioritizing our allocation of resources to ensure care for the most vulnerable.
- Nurturing caring communities by prioritizing teen programming, volunteerism, and leadership training, while enhancing the cost-effectiveness of our Jewish community centers.
- Focusing community development efforts in the FSU in major cities, which have the largest Jewish population, including a younger generation of Jews.

Challenges

JDC has an incredible, dedicated team of professionals and volunteers working diligently to maximize our impact. Still, we face challenges as we continue to make our efforts in the FSU a top organizational priority.

In the short-term, economic factors (high inflation and a rising minimum wage) in the region — particularly in Ukraine, where much of our elderly care is focused — have significantly increased our service delivery costs.

In the long-term, we face the decline of Claims Conference funding, which supports much of our infrastructure for elderly care, even for clients who are not Holocaust survivors.

These challenges are not insurmountable, but they demand innovative new approaches, increased self-sufficiency within local communities, and new sources of funding. We will rise to meet them, and secure a bright future for the Jews of the FSU.

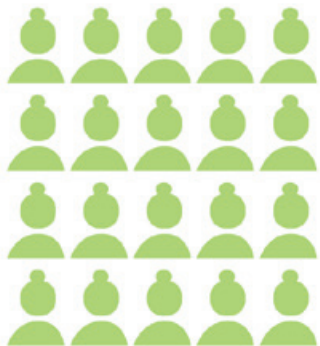


Leaner infrastructure: How call centers make the difference



JDC is piloting and testing a new call center model in the former Soviet Union to provide remote telephone support services to elderly clients. The call centers aim to mitigate social isolation among elderly Jews, and maintain regular contact with high-risk clients to monitor their state. The program currently includes two pilots.

20 Elderly Volunteers



1 Call Center Coordinator
1 Volunteer Coordinator
1 Social Worker
1 JDC Welfare Coordinator

X

8-10 calls
per shift (one shift
per volunteer
per week)

=

**160 to
200**
clients
per week

:

**640 to
800**
calls per
month



2018 Expenditures



JDC receives significant funding support from Jewish Federations across North America through cooperation with JFNA and UIA Canada. Major funding partners also include: the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, the Maurice and Vivienne Wohl Charitable Foundation, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, World Jewish Relief (UK), and tens of thousands of generous individual donors and foundations. The International Fellowship of Christians and Jews is a major operational partner. Donor support brought lifesaving help to Jews in eleven countries, across eleven time zones.

JDC FSU 2018 Expenditures					
Country/Region	Elderly Care			Children & Families	Community Development
	Holocaust Restitution Funds ¹	JDC, IFCJ, Foundations, Federations & Donors	Elderly Total ²	Children's Total	Jewish Renewal Total
Russia	\$44,243,206	\$6,534,489	\$50,777,694	\$542,909	\$3,319,336
Ukraine	\$35,548,281	\$11,840,247	\$47,388,528	\$638,765	\$2,846,351
Belarus	\$5,200,294	\$ 820,131	\$6,020,424	\$79,010	\$423,672
Moldova	\$2,105,901	\$1,537,469	\$3,643,370	\$146,245	\$360,715
Central Asia & Caucasus	\$1,913,636	\$2,776,310	\$4,689,946	\$326,888	\$160,456
Grand Total	\$89,011,318	\$23,508,646	\$112,519,963	\$1,733,817	\$7,110,529

¹ Provided via the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany for people eligible for restitution support (defined as Nazi Victims).

² Totals in these expense reports may be off by \$1 or \$2 dollars due to rounding of decimal points in the millions.

Thank you



It would take 126 hours to drive the 6,500 miles from Kishinev, Moldova to Khabarovsk, Russia. Yet, thanks to the incredible support of partners and donors all over the world, JDC is able to reach them both, and provide Jewish communities with everything they need to not just survive, but thrive.

On behalf of every community we serve in the former Soviet Union, JDC is profoundly grateful to our partners and donors for their strong commitment to care for Jews in this region.

To connect with us, visit www.JDC.org/fsu

