

# MAP OF JEWISH POPULATIONS: SUGGESTED ACTIVITY FOR CLASSROOM USE



ECHOES & REFLECTIONS

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The following activity is to inform educators on how to utilize the interactive map with added context to the specific Jewish populations that exist and/or have existed in most of the countries of the world in the past 125+ years. For more information on how to teach about Jewish life, culture, and contemporary antisemitism as well as a complete lesson plan, see [Unit 11: Gringlas Unit on Antisemitism after the Holocaust](#).

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## The Perseverance of Jewish Life amid Antisemitism

**Summary:** Students will investigate a specific geographic area and/or country that is of particular importance to Jewish populations over the last 125+ years. By exploring context and data from the map, students will better understand the changing demographics of where Jews have lived and the effects that antisemitism has had on them, regardless of where Jews have resided.

**Grade Level:** Middle and High School

**Estimated Time:** 30 – 45 minutes

**Directions:**

1. In pairs or small groups, students choose a geographic area or specific country to research, utilizing the map, context within the map if available, and the [Virtual Jewish History Tours](#) provided by the Jewish Virtual Library.
2. Students create a visual presentation that answers the following questions about their geographic area or specific country:
  - When did Jews first arrive in the area?
  - What was the Jewish population in 1899? 1931? 1948? 1992? 2023? What percentage of the total population was Jewish in each of those years?
  - How did the Holocaust affect the Jewish population in that area? How did the population change and how dramatic was the change?
  - How did the Jewish population change after 1948? What were the reasons for this?
  - How has antisemitism affected the Jewish population in that area for the past 125+ years?
3. When students have completed the task, they share their visual presentation with the class. Then, they discuss the following questions:
  - How did this exercise help build on your knowledge of what it means to be Jewish?
  - Wherever Jews have lived, except for Israel after 1948, they have been a small percentage of the population. How did this exercise help you understand the effects of antisemitism?
  - What can you infer by exploring the change of Jewish populations throughout the world over time?
  - What is one question you still have about the Jewish experience that you wish to explore further?