

Study reveals demographic trend of the Jewish population in Broward County

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South Florida has the second most populous Jewish community in America, after New York. Jewish people traditionally settled in South Florida for economic opportunities, for the climate, to join friends and family and to retire. Nonetheless, the once growing Jewish population of Broward County is now declining in numbers, according to a recent study conducted by University of Miami professor Dr. Ira M. Sheskin, from the department of Geography and Regional Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences and director of the Jewish Demography Project of the Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies.

The study funded by Temple Beth Emet of Cooper City is a description of the size, decrease and geographic distribution of the Jewish community of Broward and concludes that much of the drop in [population](#) is in the 65 and over age cohort.

"In Broward the elderly are not being replaced," Sheskin said "What may act to slow this trend is that in the next five years or so, the [baby boomers](#) will begin to retire in large numbers."

In 1997, 46% of Jews in Broward were 65 years of age and over. Much of this population has now died, explained Sheskin. Other important findings included in the study are:

- The number of Jews in Broward has decreased from 240,000 in 1997 to about 185,000 today.
- Broward County still has the largest number of Jewish people in

Florida, followed by South [Palm Beach](#), West Palm Beach and Miami.

- Broward County is fourth in the country for Jewish persons age 75 and over, after South Palm Beach, West Palm Beach and Sarasota.
- The median age of a Jewish person living in Broward is 59.
- The percentage of persons in Broward who live in Jewish households decreased from 18% in 1997 to 12% in 2008.
- Broward is the eighth largest Jewish community in the United States and the largest Jewish community in Florida.
- Only Northwest Broward (6%) shows an increase in the number of persons in Jewish households from 1997-2008. Decreases are seen in North Central Broward (35%), West Central Broward (33%), Southeast Broward (21%), East Broward (17%), and Southwest Broward (16%).

Most of the Jews population decline in Broward was the elderly. Their absence will be felt in the neighborhoods, synagogues, and businesses that cater to the [Jewish population](#), explained Sheskin.

More information: The full report can be found at www.jewishdatabank.org under "What's New."

Source: University of Miami

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