

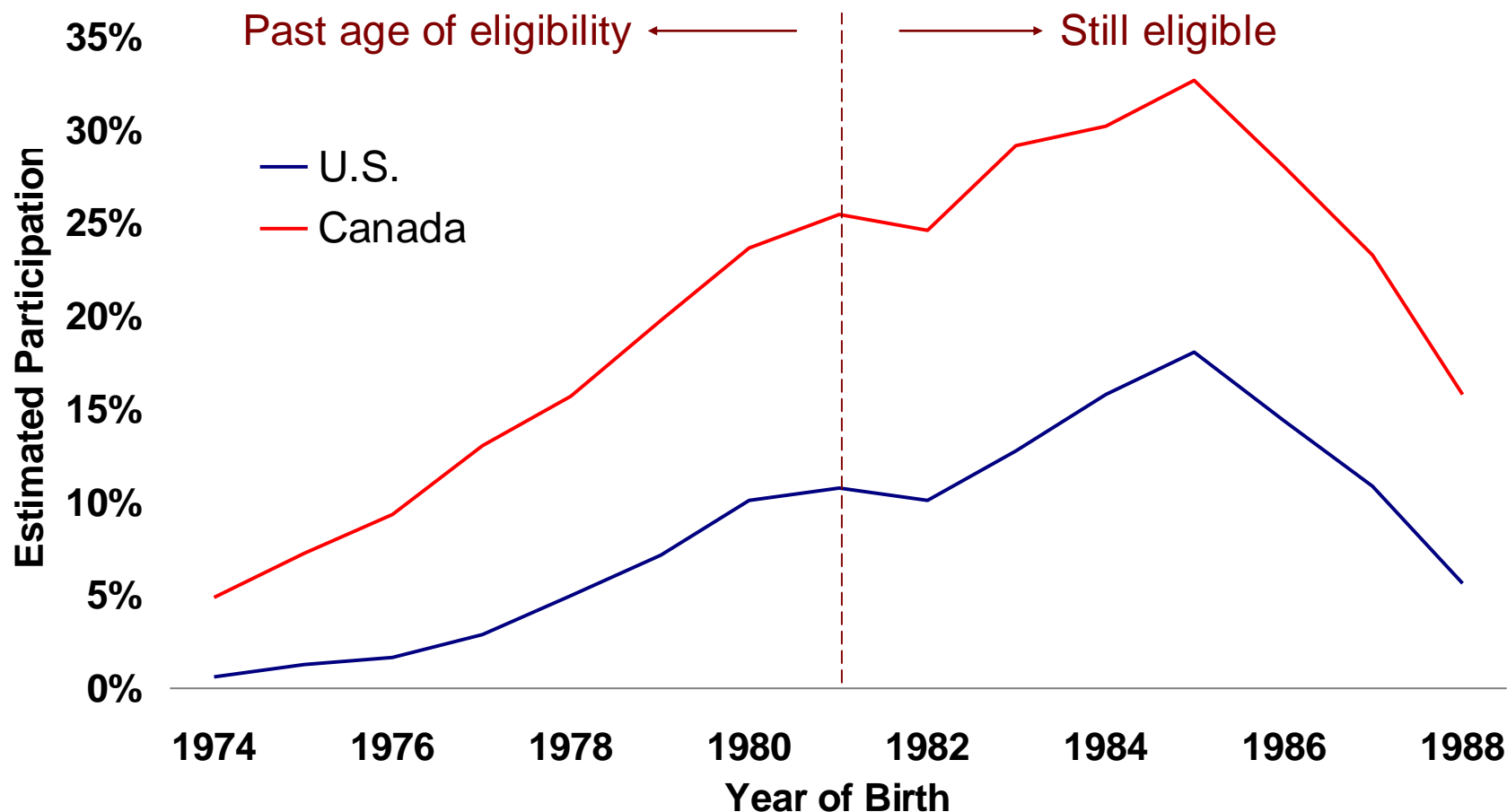
Connecting Diaspora Young Adults to Israel: *Lessons from Taglit- Birthright Israel*



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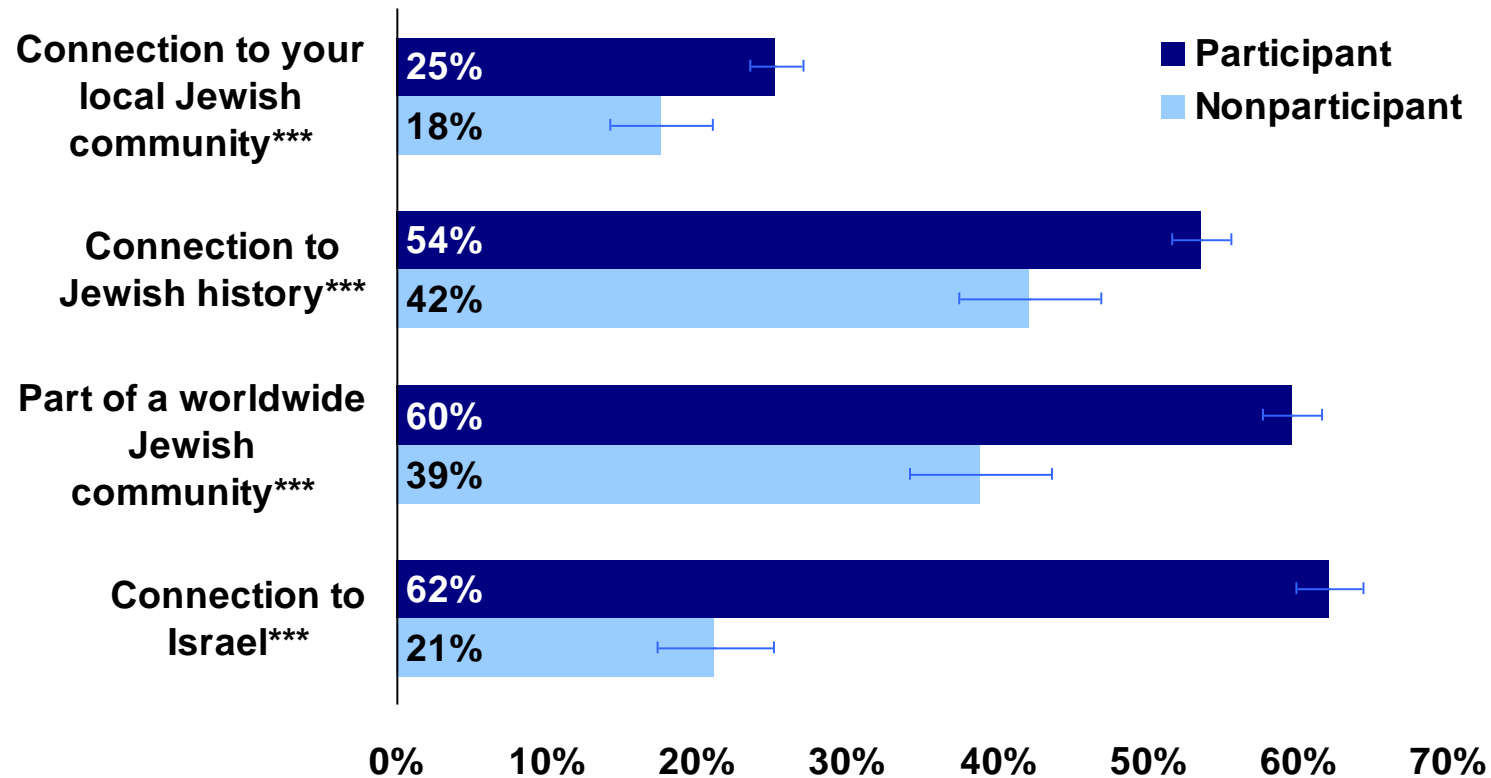
**23 January, 2008
8th Annual Herzliya Conference
Herzliya, Israel**

Estimated Participation in *Taglit*: Eligible Population by Year of Birth



Jewish Connections by Participation

Estimated Percentage "Very Much" (Winter 2006-07)



*** $p < .001$

Controls: Pre-trip attitude, gender, age, denomination, Jewish education, summer camp, childhood religious observance, parental intermarriage, and student status.

I. Young Adults Jews Want a Connection to Israel

- **Contemporary young Jews more connected than previous generations**
 - Confirmed by survey data and behavior
- **Young adults seek meaningful connections**
 - Interest in *Taglit* consistently exceeded availability
 - Social networks foster interest/engagement

II. Person-to-Person Encounters Heart of Diaspora-Israel Connections

- Connection to Israel through physical presence was never central for North American Jews
 - Connections through philanthropy, advocacy, religion
- *Taglit* made the “experience” of a visit central on a large scale
 - Framed by interaction with Israeli educator and peers
- *Mifgash* with Israeli peers “active ingredient”
 - Impact on Diaspora participants *and* Israelis profound

III. Education Must Engage Heart, Mind, and Body

- *Taglit's* success depends on its ability to create education that simultaneously:
 - Emotionally stimulating
 - Intellectually rich
 - Behaviorally engaging
- Educational strategy must be adapted to the target population
 - For *Taglit*, to the needs, interests, skills of young adults
 - Young adults live in a multi-windowed, virtual world
 - Engaged in a search for meaning and connection

IV. Institutions Must Adapt or be Replaced

- *Taglit* reconfigured traditional approaches to Israel experience and Jewish education
 - Successful, in part, because it created a new organization
- Are Jewish institutions ready to engage *Taglit* participants on the 11th day?
 - *Taglit* alumni more “connected” than their non-participant peers, but a wide gap exists between attitudes and behavior.
 - Institutions that failed to engage participants before trips remain unable to connect them when they return

