



National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01

Jews in Small Communities

A United Jewish Communities
Presentation of Findings to the
Federation Small Cities Institute

March 2, 2004



NJPS Respondents

- The NJPS 2000-01 questionnaire was administered to 4,523 Jews in the U.S.
- This presentation compares 361 respondents who live in small communities with 4,162 other respondents.



Defining Small Communities

- “Small communities” are defined as all geographic areas outside the forty largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in the United States.
- Federations and other Jewish institutions exist in some small communities, but not in all.
- Therefore, many Jews who live in small communities may be unknown to communal organizations.



Methodological Note

- ❑ The NJPS questionnaire was divided into long-form and short-form versions. The long-form version was administered to respondents who are more Jewishly-connected (representing 4.3 million Jews, or over 80% of all U.S. Jews). The short-form version, which omitted many questions on Jewish topics, was given to respondents who are less Jewishly-connected (representing in total 800,000 Jews).
- ❑ Asterisks (*) in the presentation refer to questions that appeared on the long-form questionnaire and were asked of respondents who are more Jewishly connected (i.e., have stronger Jewish connections).



Demographic topics

- Population size and households
- Household composition: Jews and non-Jews
- Age structure
- Socio-economic status



Estimates of Jewish population and households in small communities

Total Jewish population	802,000
Adults	665,000
Children	137,000
Total Jewish households¹	535,000
Total people, Jewish and non-Jewish, in Jewish households	1,296,000

¹ Defined as households with at least one Jewish adult.



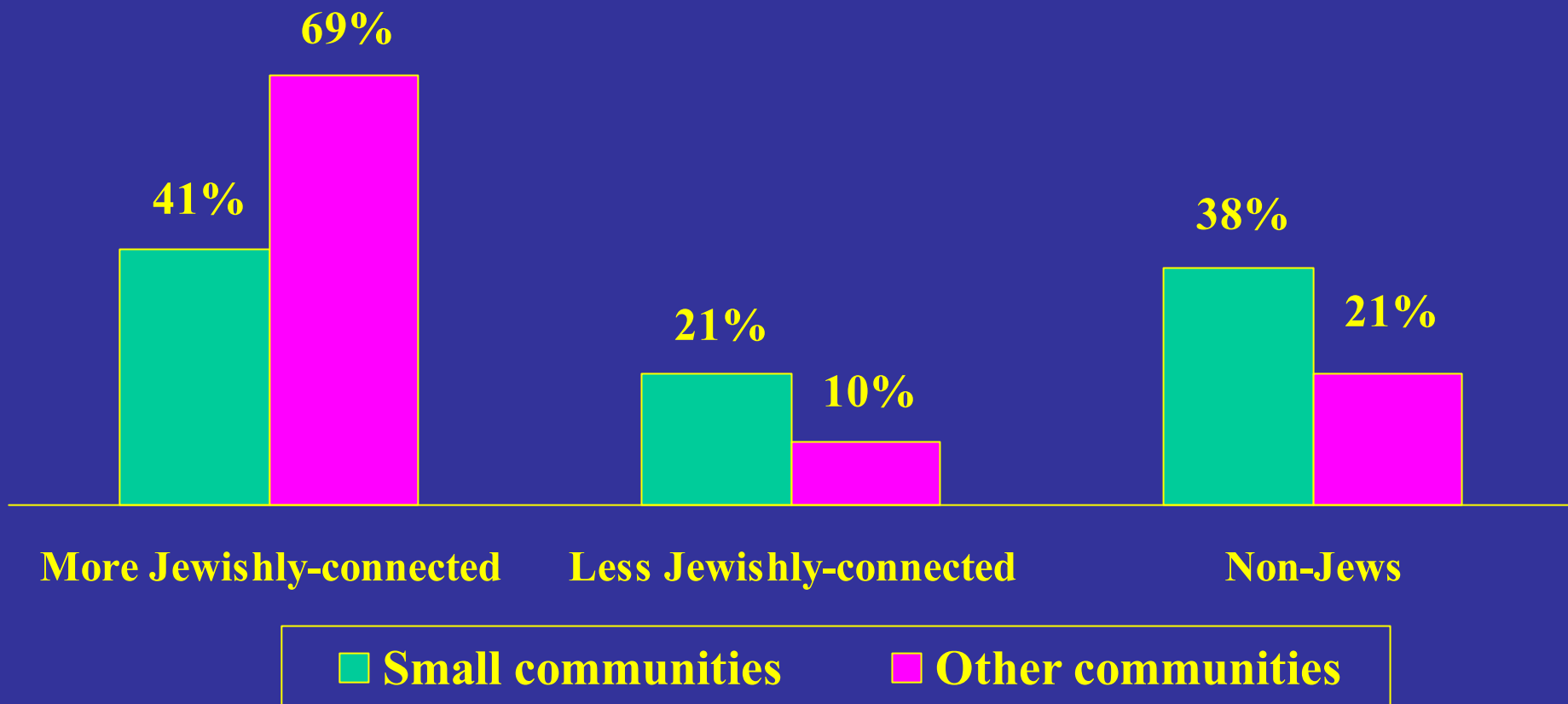
Jews in small communities as part of the total U.S. Jewish population

- The 802,000 Jews living in small communities represent 15% of the total U.S. Jewish population of 5.2 million people.
- The 535,000 Jewish households in small communities are 18% of the 2.9 million Jewish households in the U.S.¹

¹ Jewish households defined as households with at least one Jewish adult.

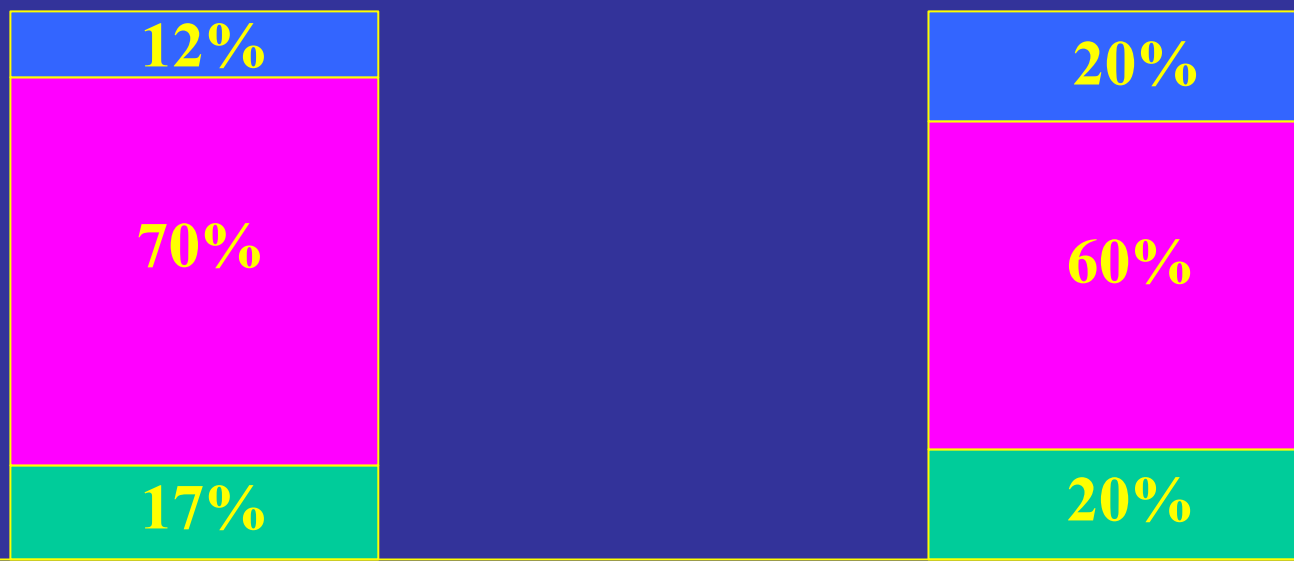


Jewish households in small communities have fewer “more Jewishly-connected” Jews and more non-Jews than households in larger communities.





Small communities have proportionally fewer Jewish children and Jewish elderly than other communities.



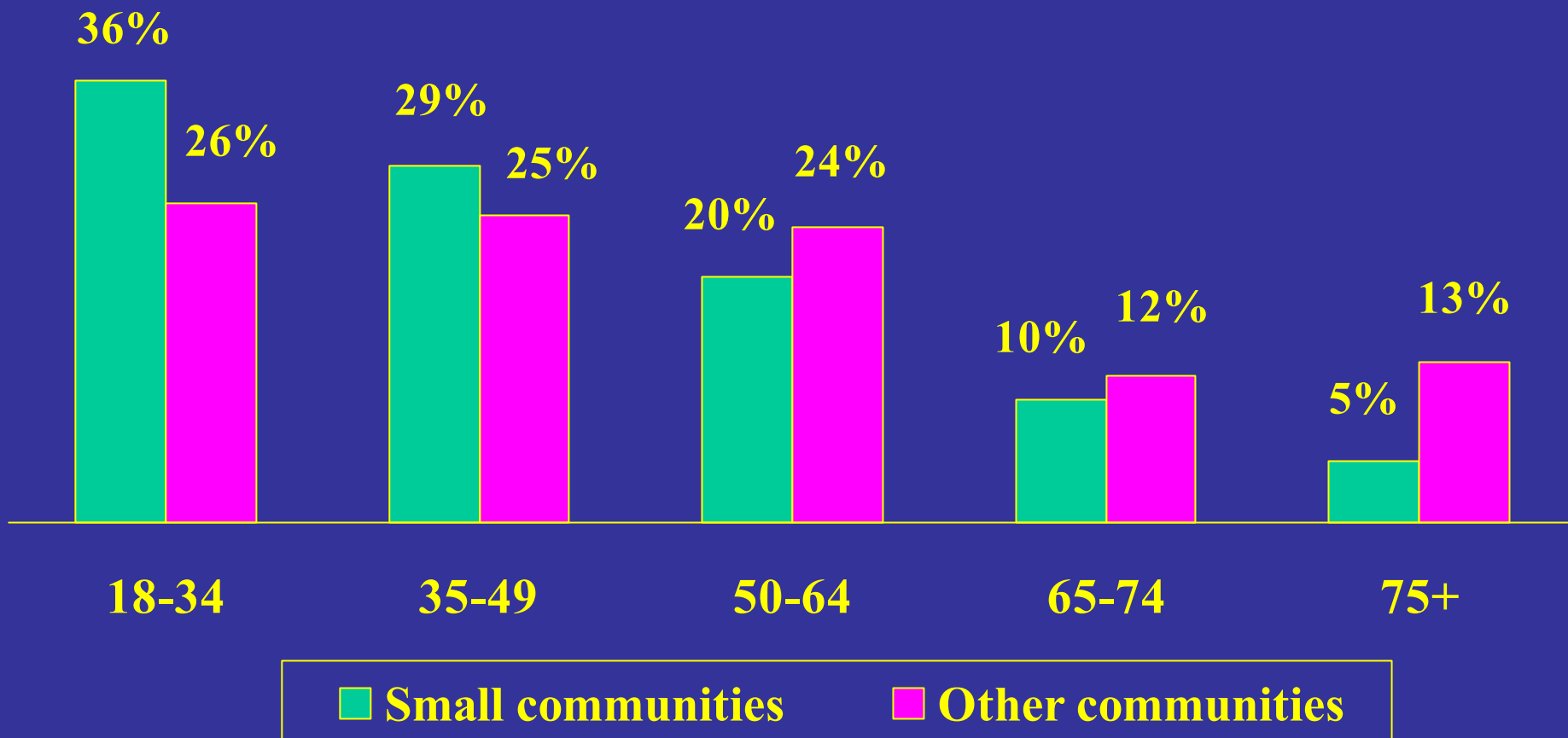
Small communities

Other communities



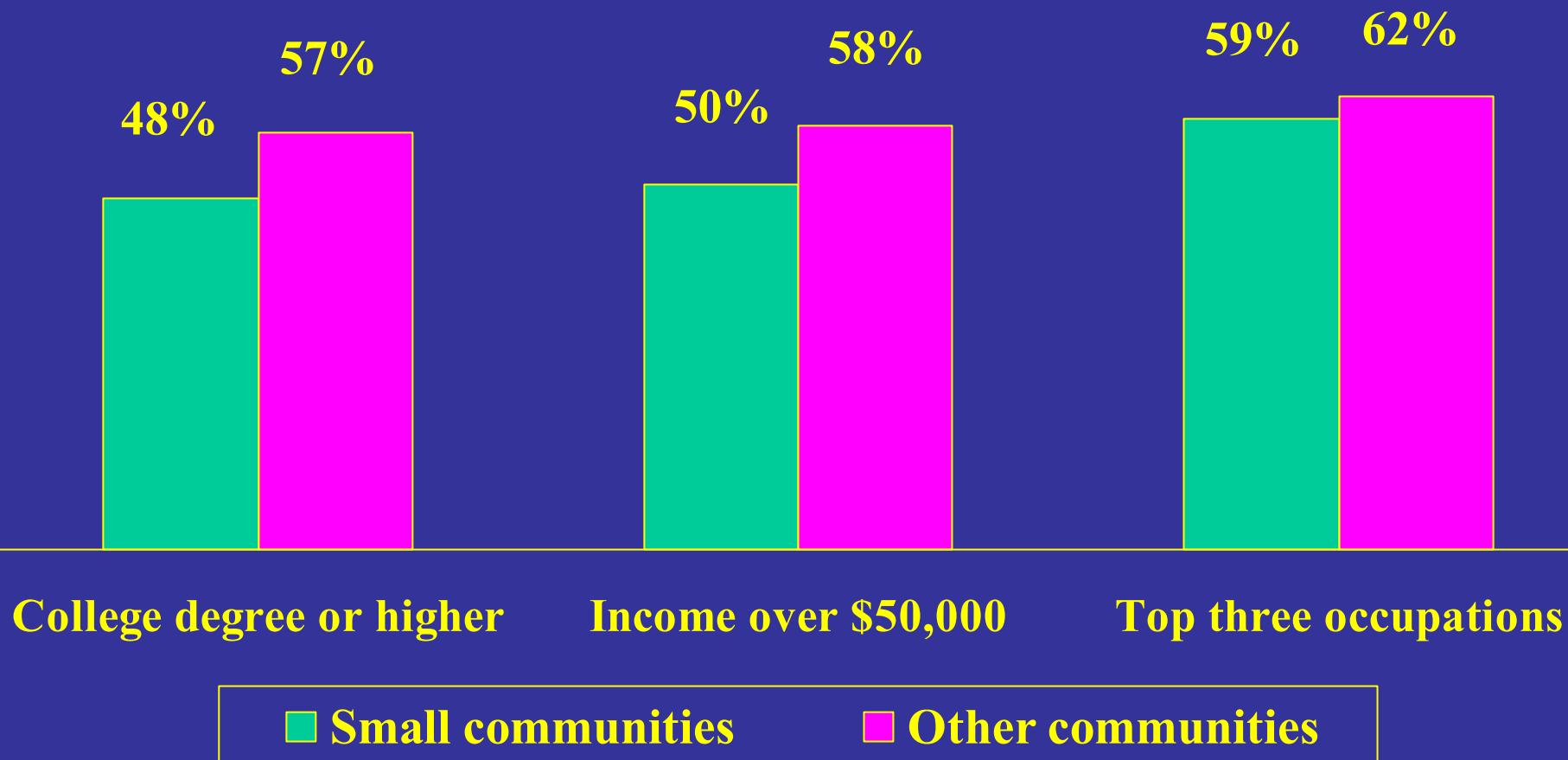


Jewish adults in small communities tend to be younger than Jewish adults elsewhere.





Measures of socio-economic status are somewhat lower among Jews in small communities.



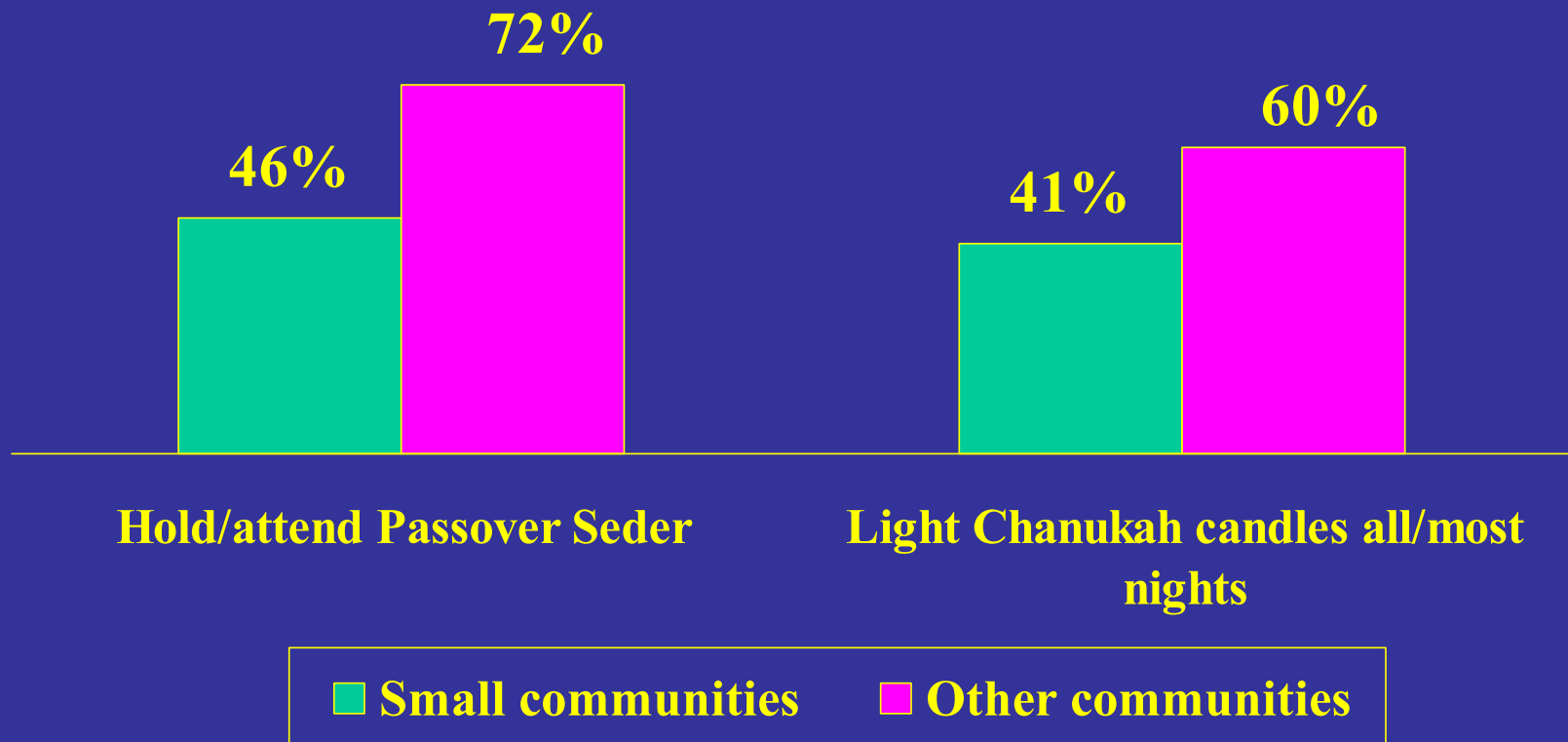


Jewish connections

- Religious behavior and identification
- Organizational affiliations
- Philanthropy
- Volunteerism
- Travel to Israel
- Use of Jewish information sources
- Attitudes about Jewish peoplehood, being Jewish and Israel
- Families and friends
- Jewish education of adults and children

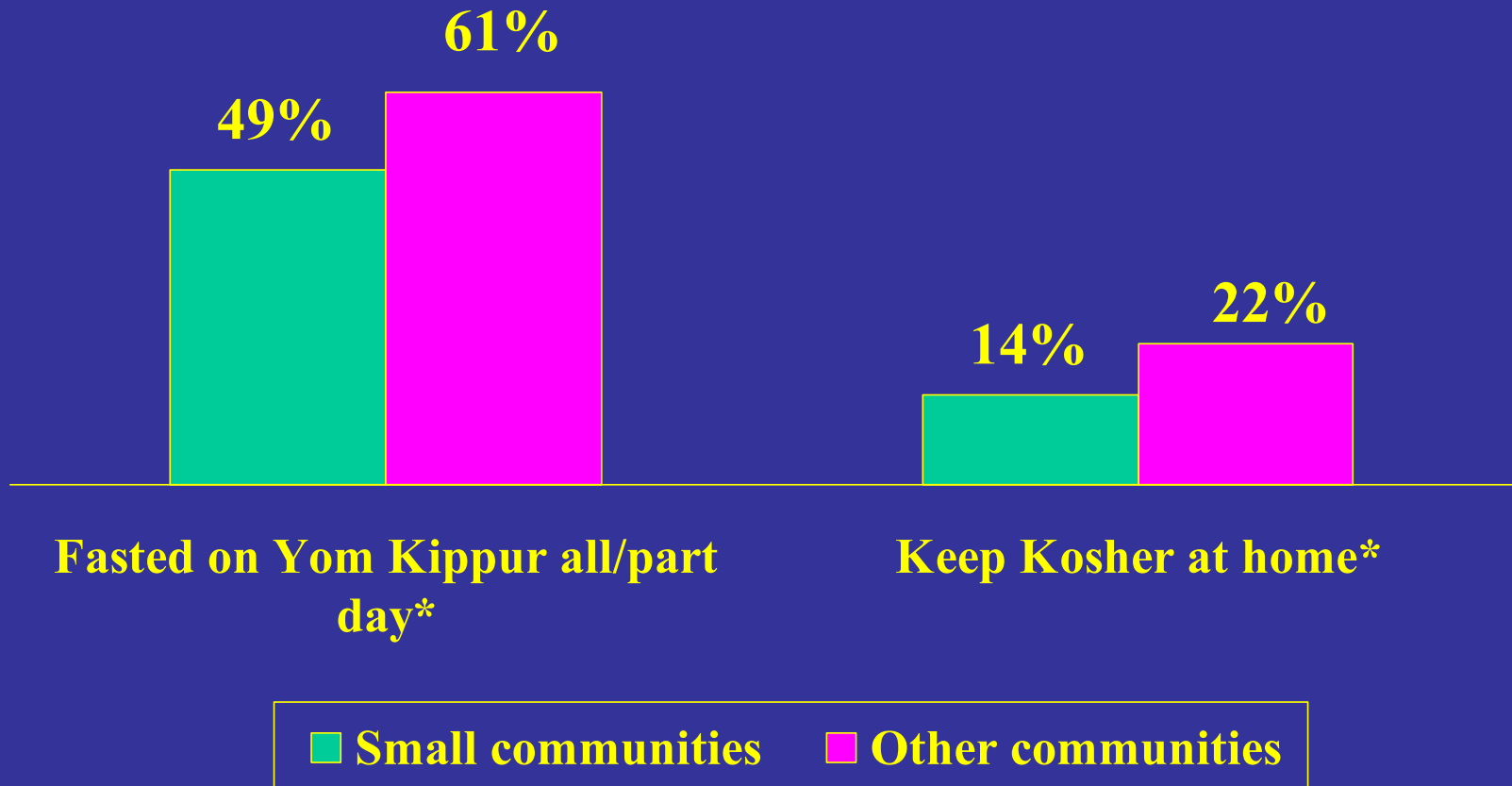


Jews in small communities are less likely than other Jews to hold or attend a Passover Seder and to light Chanukah candles all or most nights.



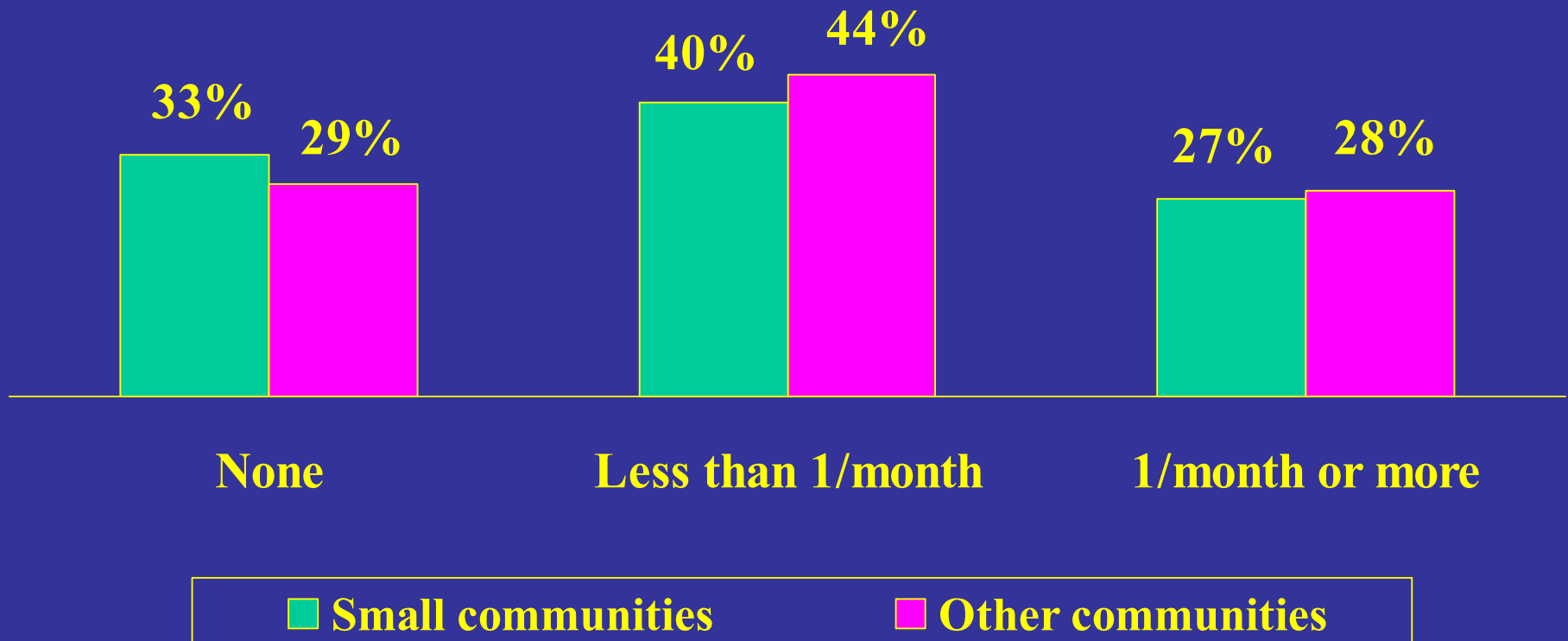


Jews in small communities are also less likely to fast on Yom Kippur* and to keep kosher at home.*



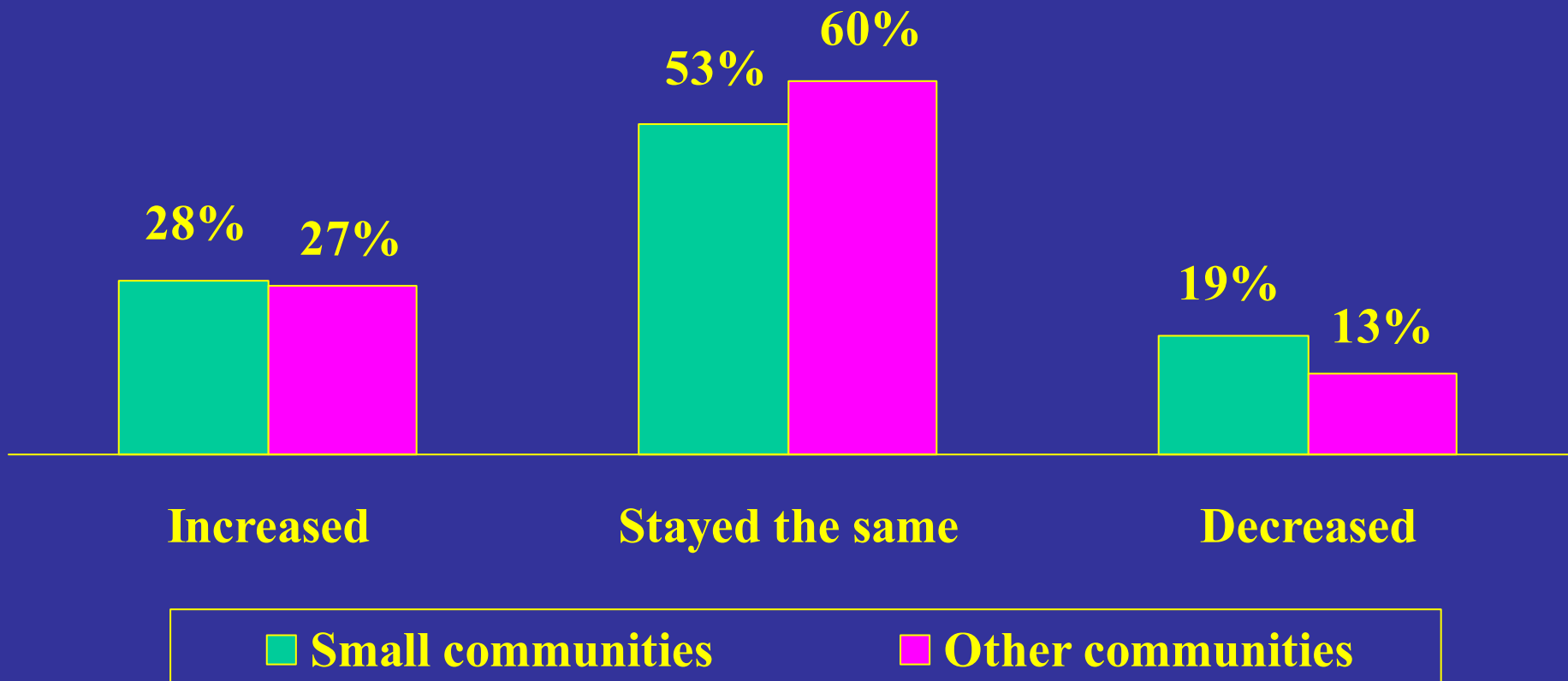


Frequency of attendance at religious services is similar across communities among the more Jewishly-connected segment of the population.*



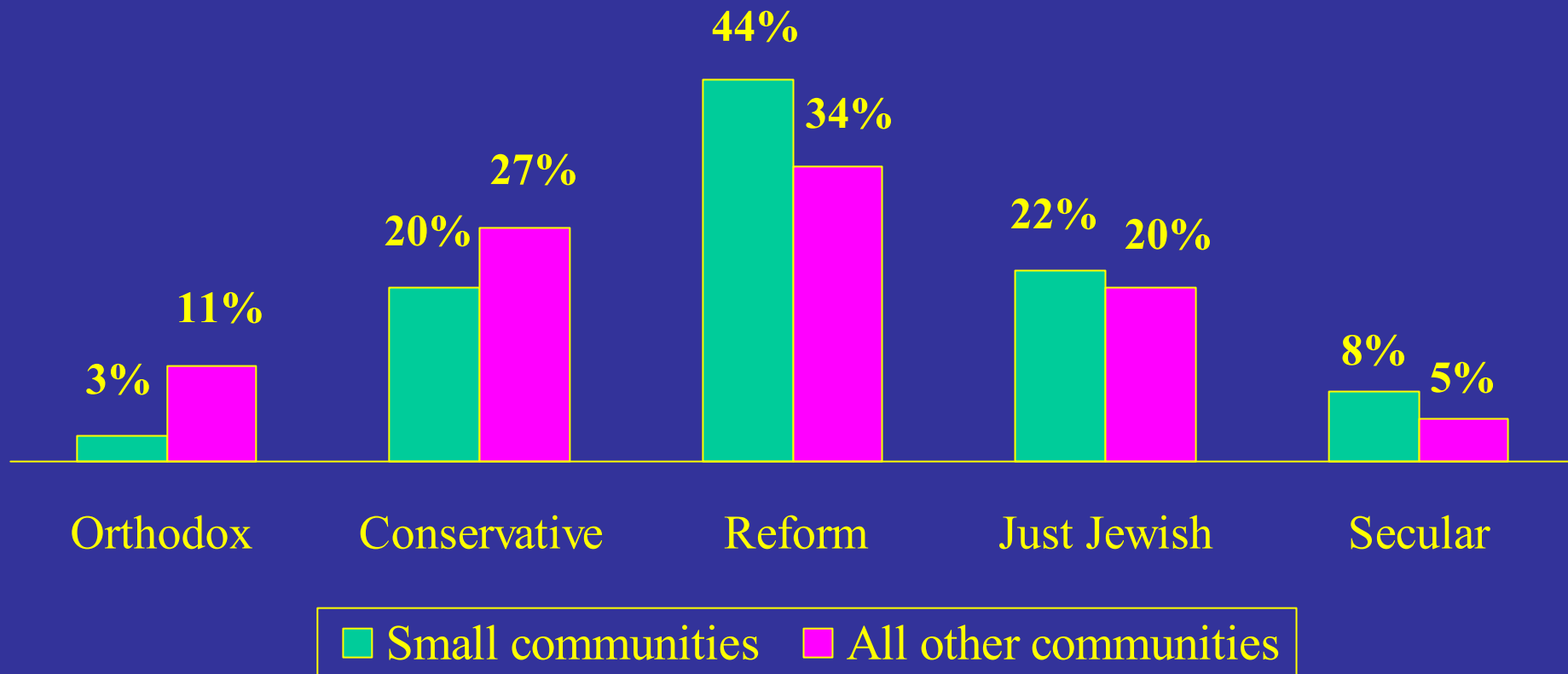


Proportionally as many Jews in small and other communities report increased Jewish activity in the past five years, but small community Jews are also more likely to say their activity level has decreased.*



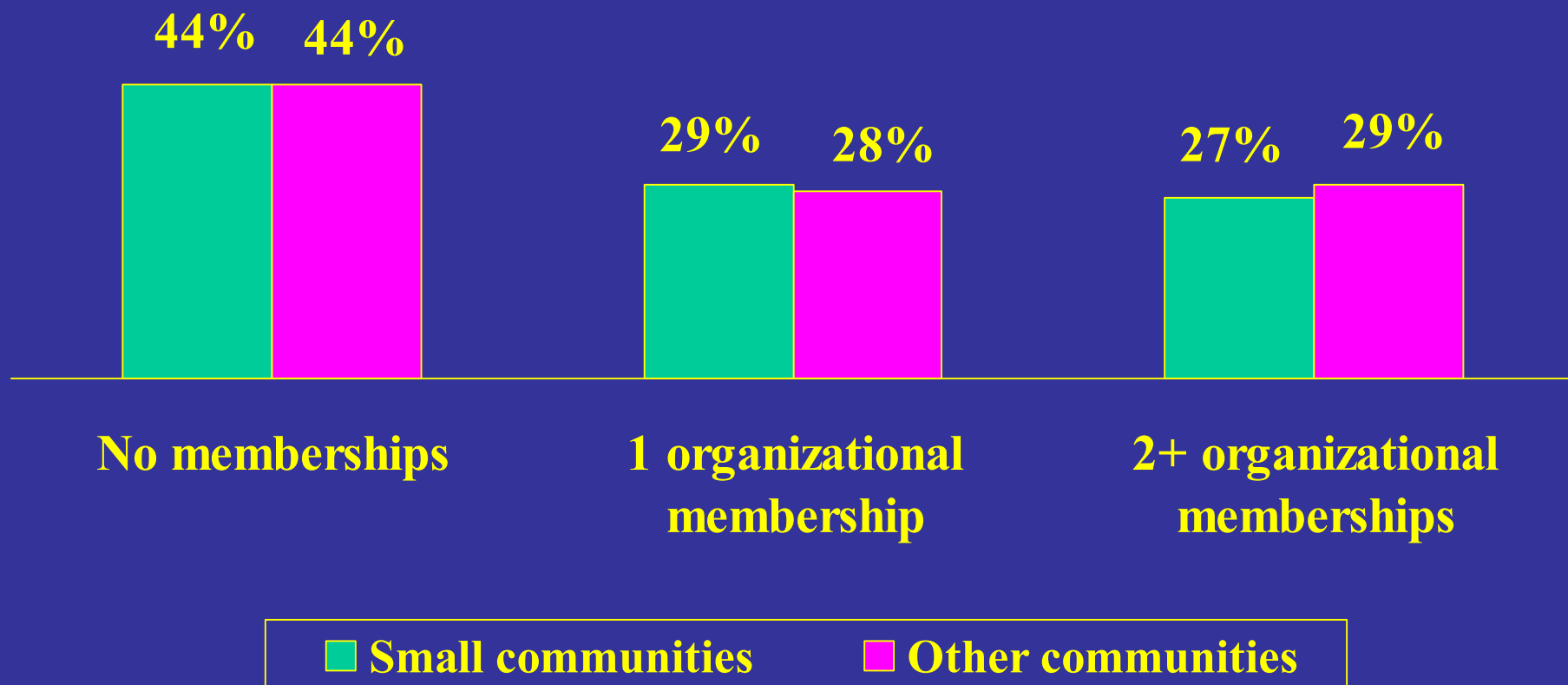


Jews in small communities are more likely to consider themselves Reform, just Jewish or secular, and less likely to consider themselves Orthodox or Conservative.*



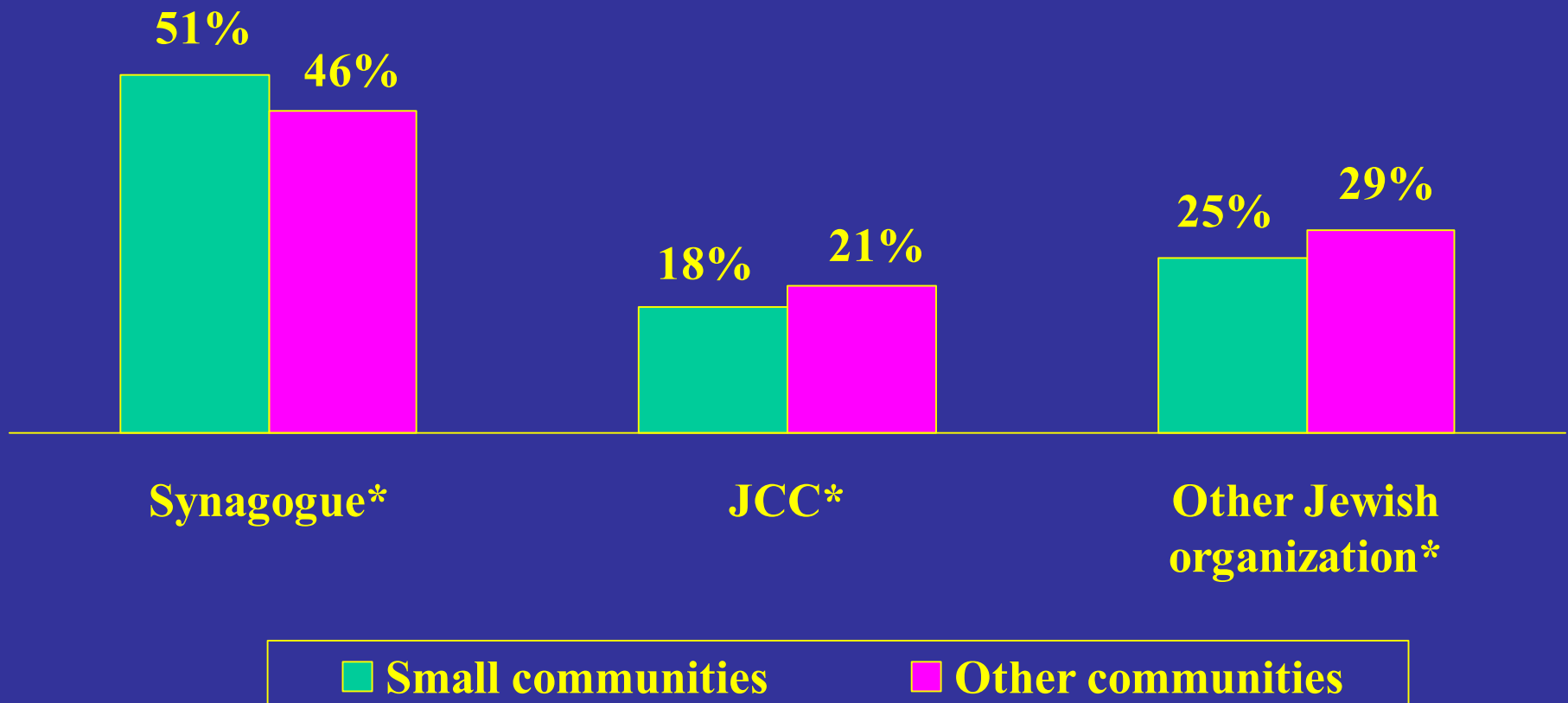


Levels of Jewish organizational affiliation are very similar in small and other communities among the more Jewishly-connected population.*



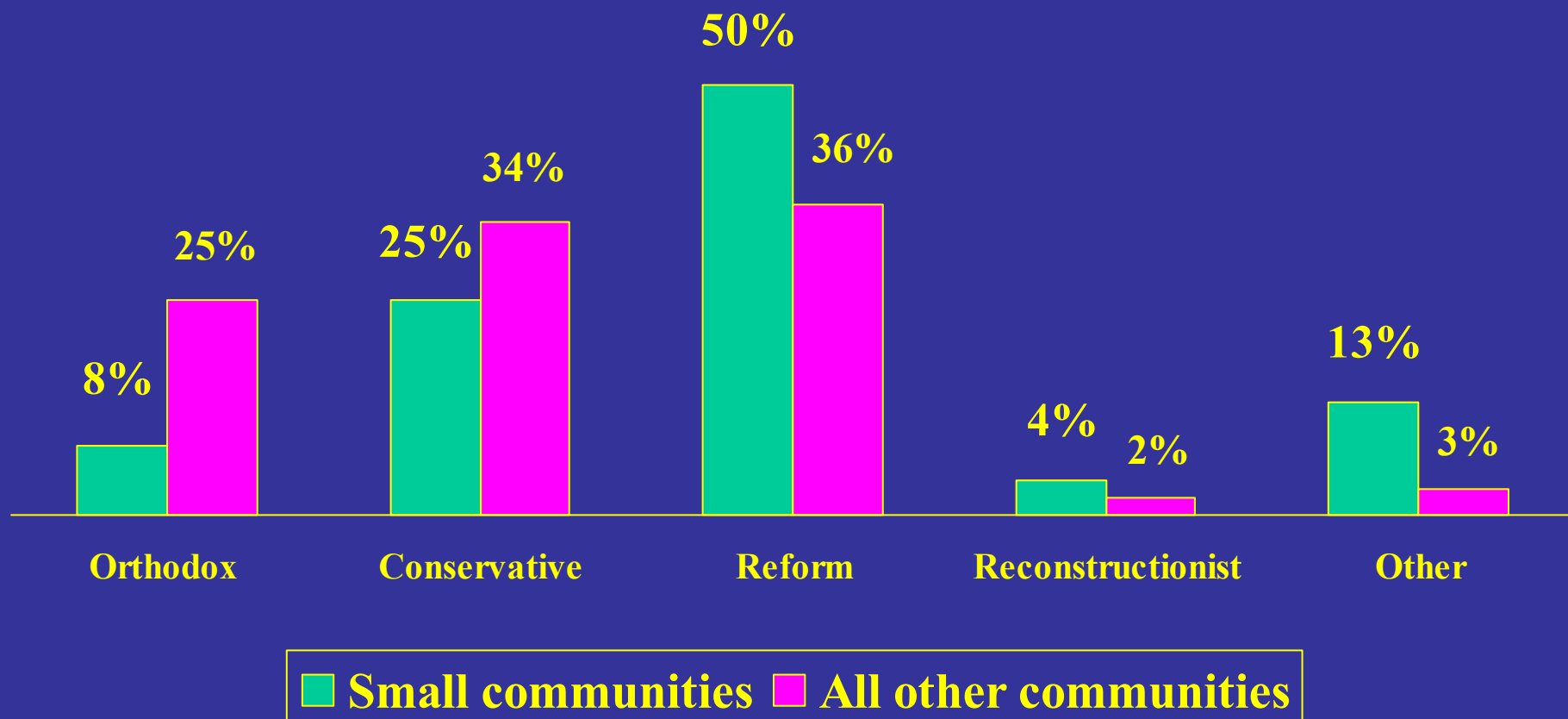


About half of Jews in small and other communities belong to synagogues and a fifth to JCCs.*



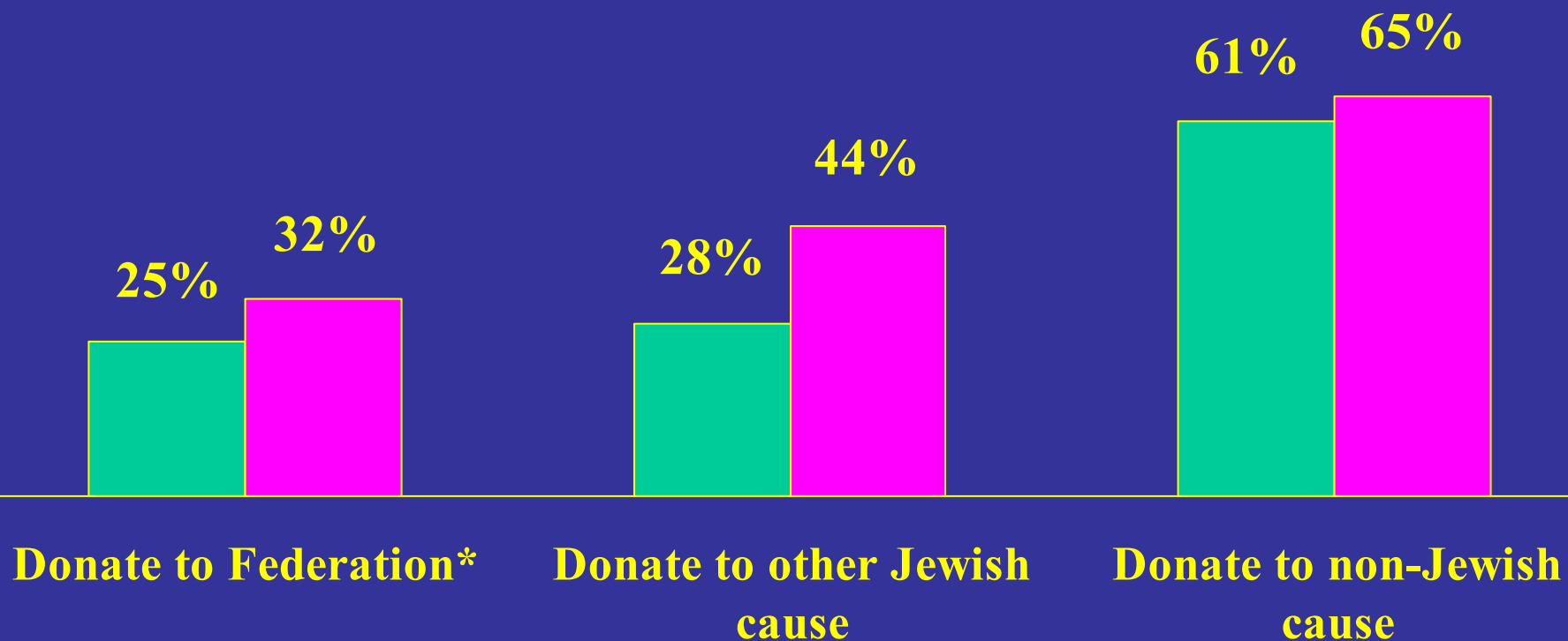


Among synagogue members* in small communities, half belong to Reform synagogues and a quarter to Conservative synagogues.





Jews in small communities appear less likely to donate to philanthropic causes than Jews in other communities.

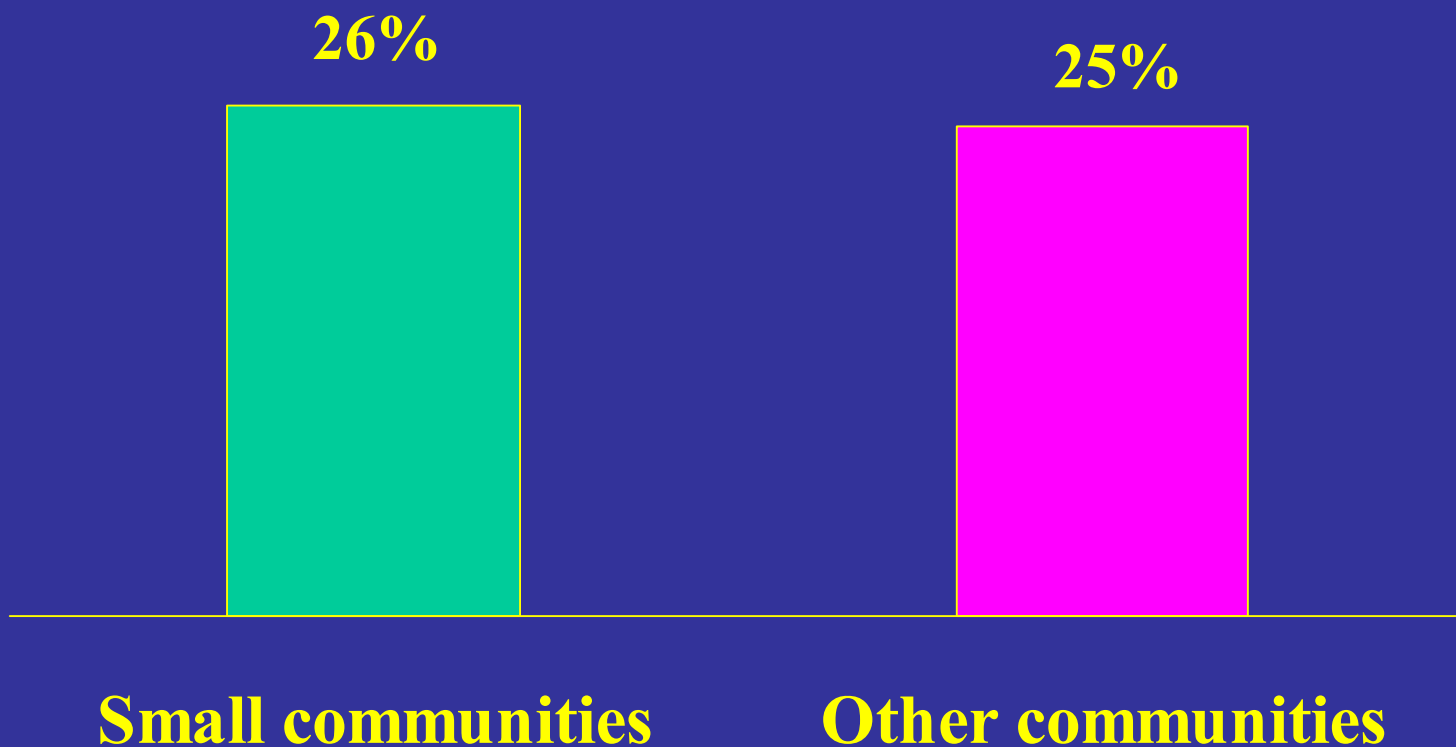


■ Small communities

■ Other communities

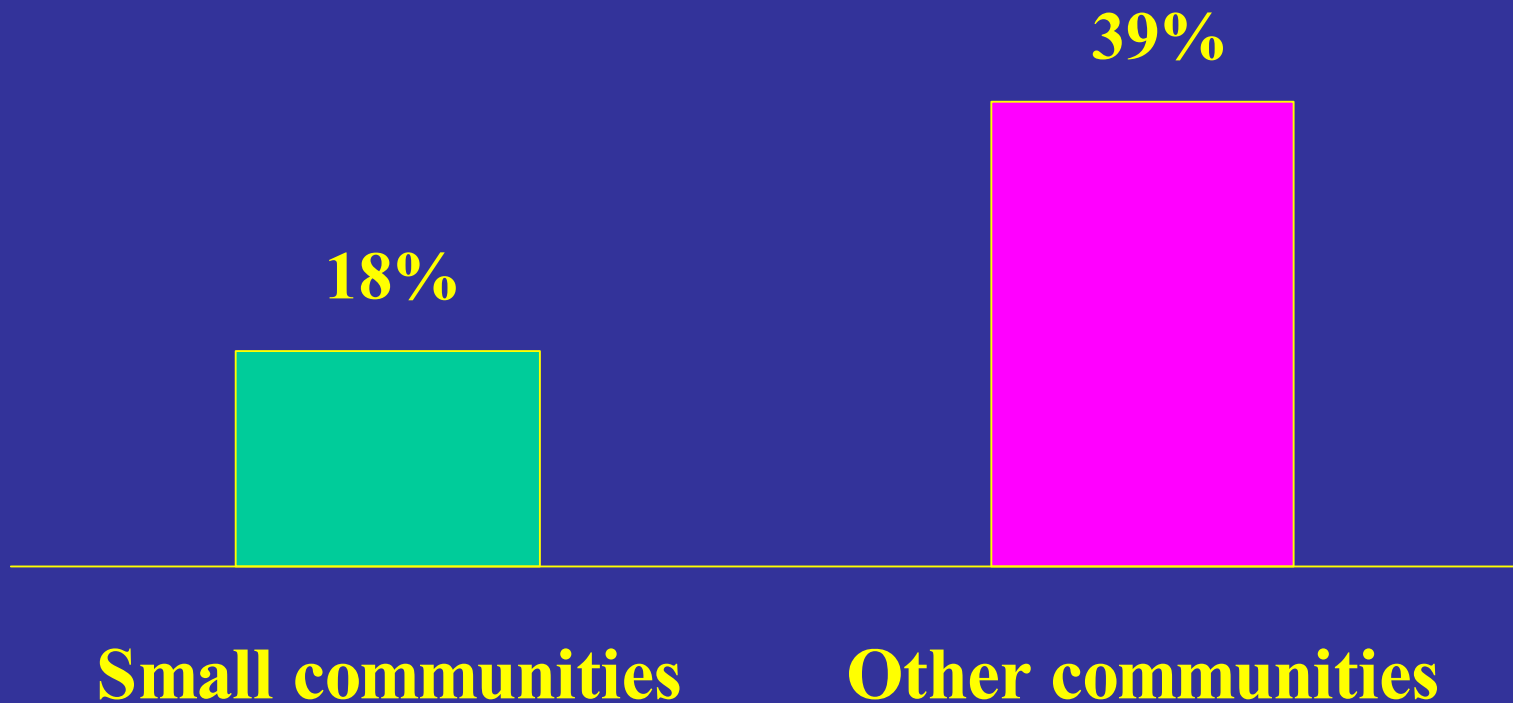


Rates of volunteering for Jewish organizations are the same across community size.*



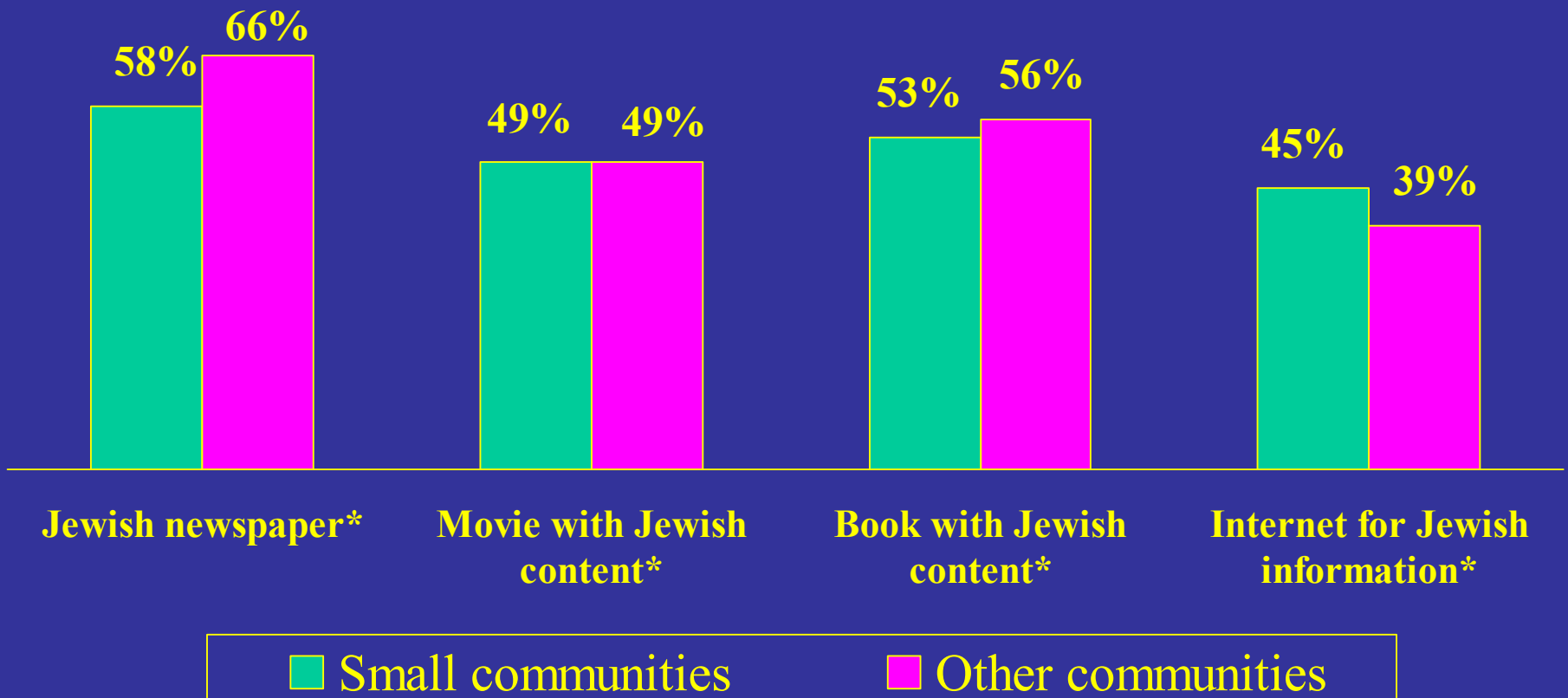


Jews in small communities are about half as likely to have been to Israel as Jews living elsewhere.



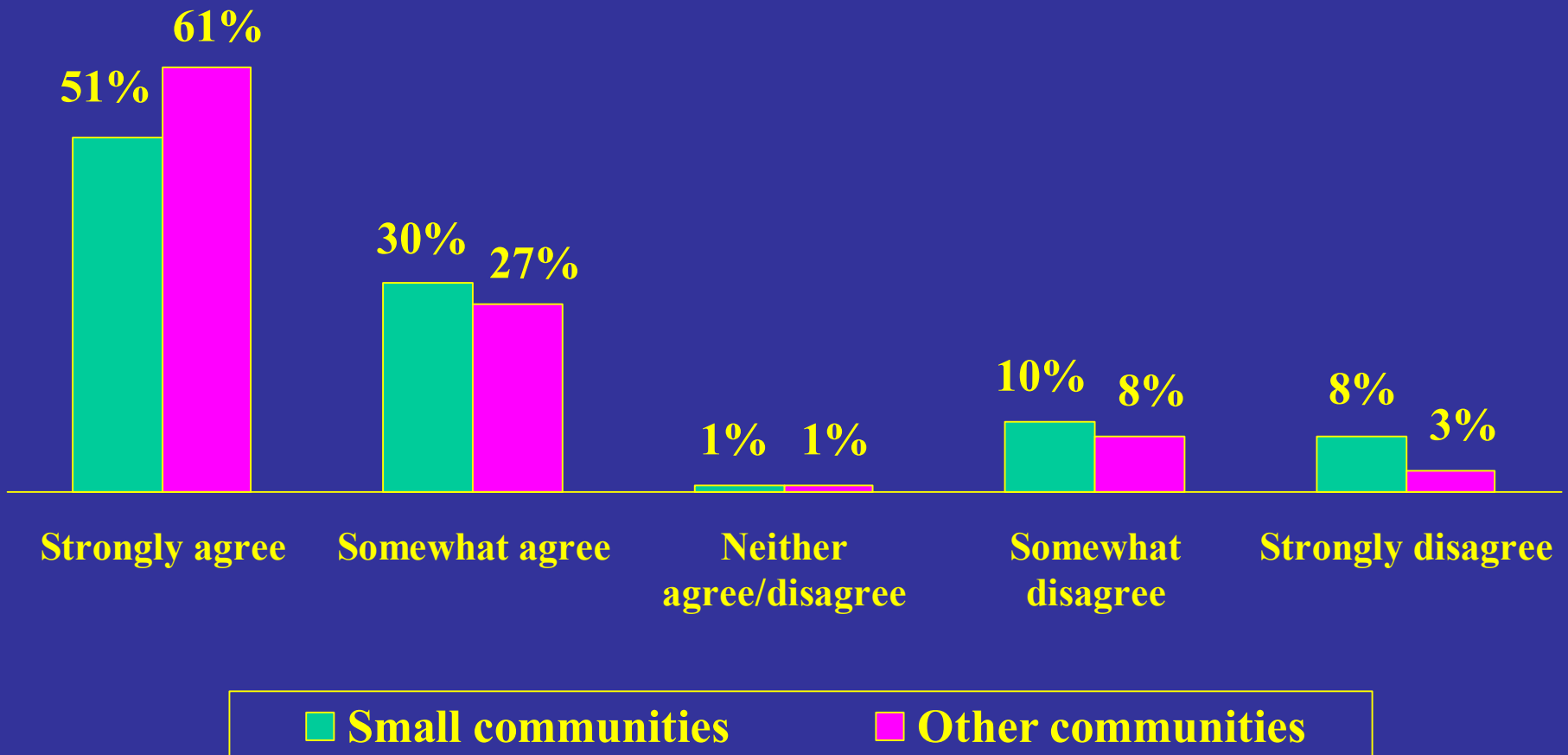


In both small and other communities, reading Jewish newspapers is most common and using the Internet for Jewish purposes least common among these types of Jewish media.*



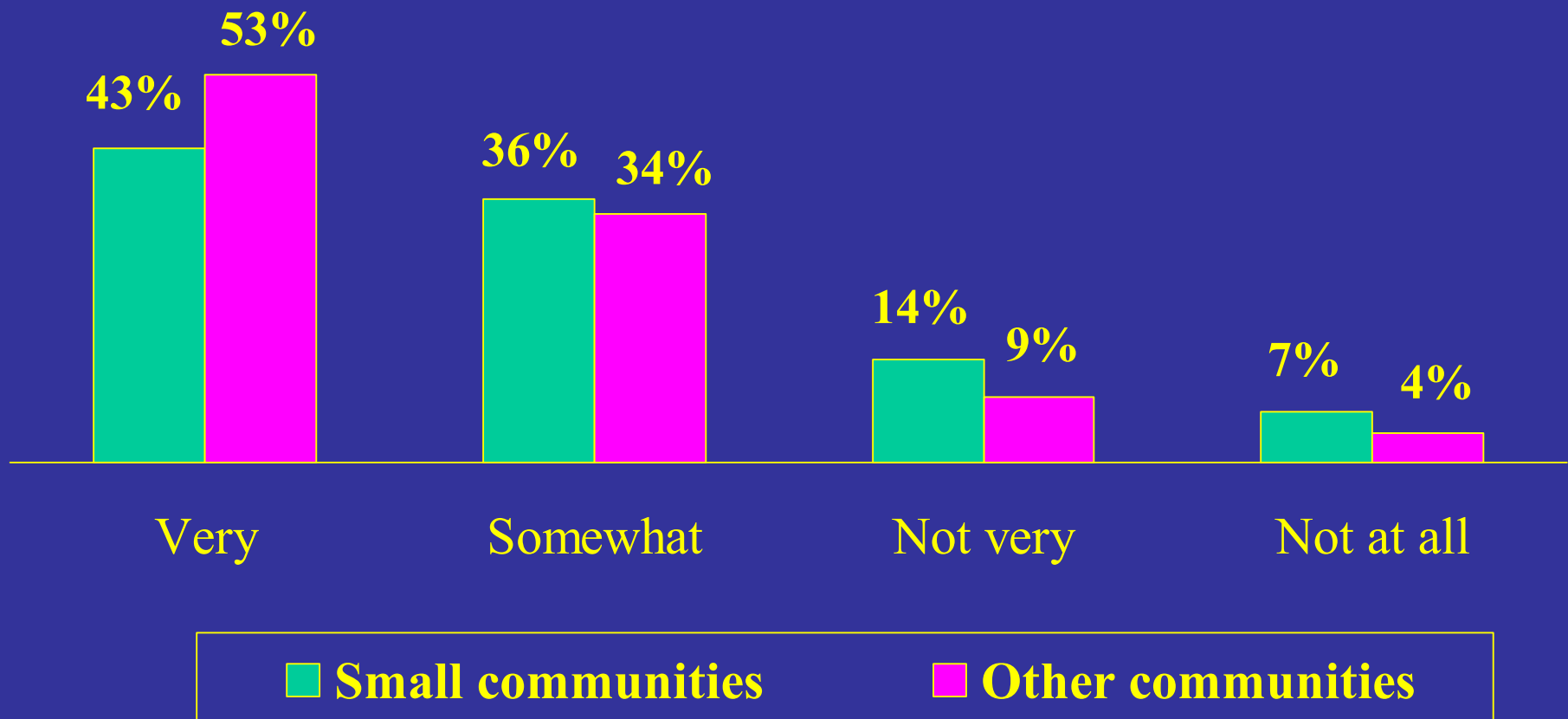


Fewer Jews in small communities report they “strongly agree” that they have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people.*



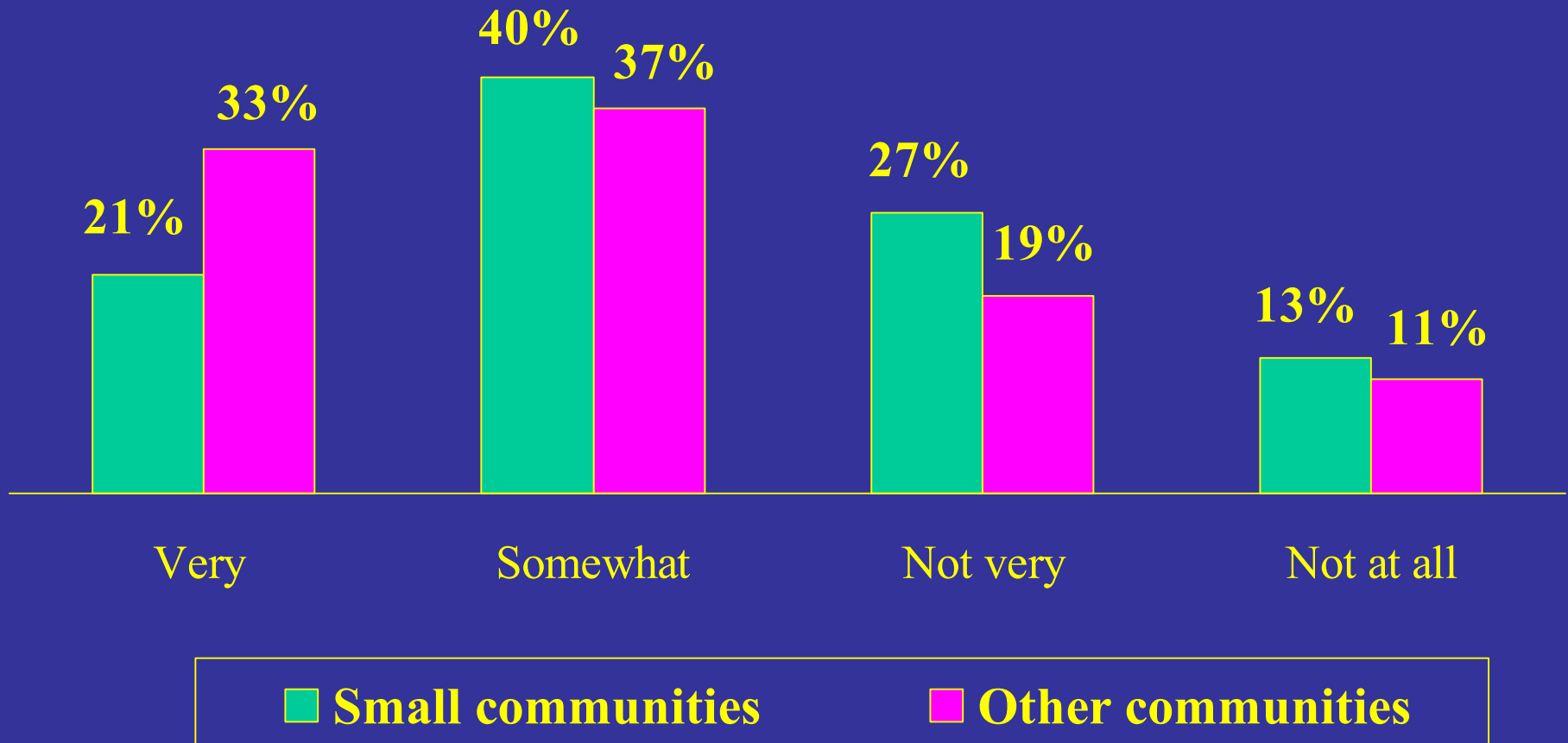


Similarly, fewer Jews in small communities say that being Jewish is “very” important in their lives.*



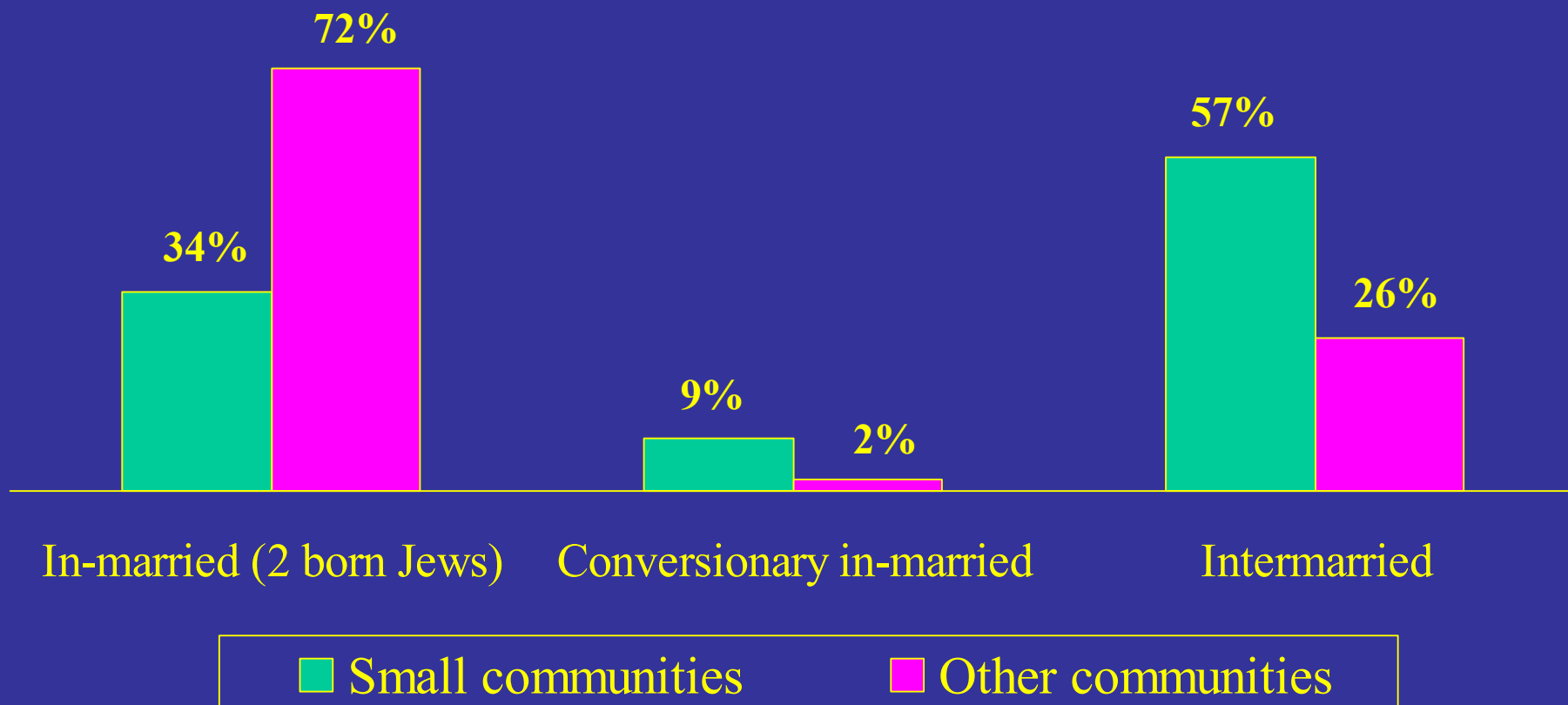


Jews in small communities are also less likely to say they are “very” emotionally attached to Israel.*





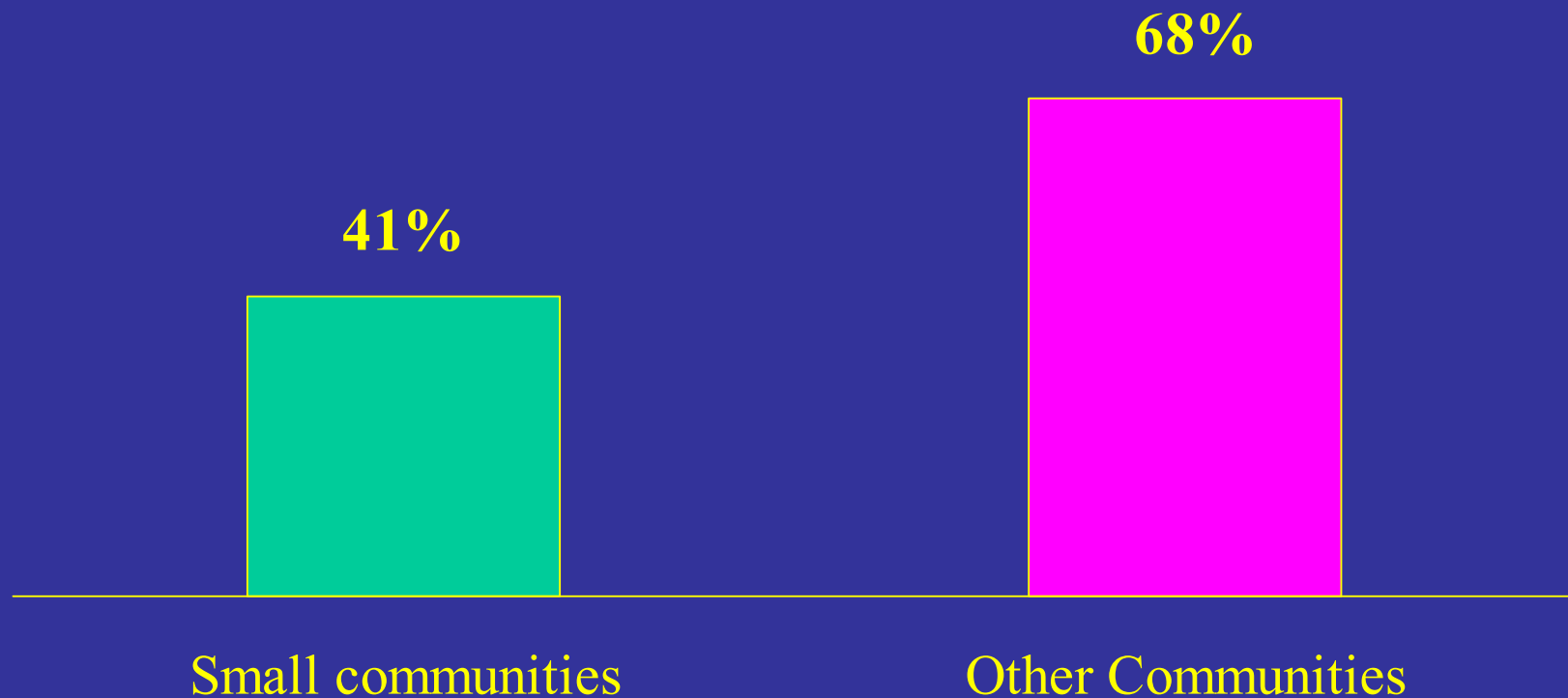
Intermarriage rates are higher among Jews in small communities than among Jews elsewhere.¹



¹ Individual intermarriage rates, based on current marriages.



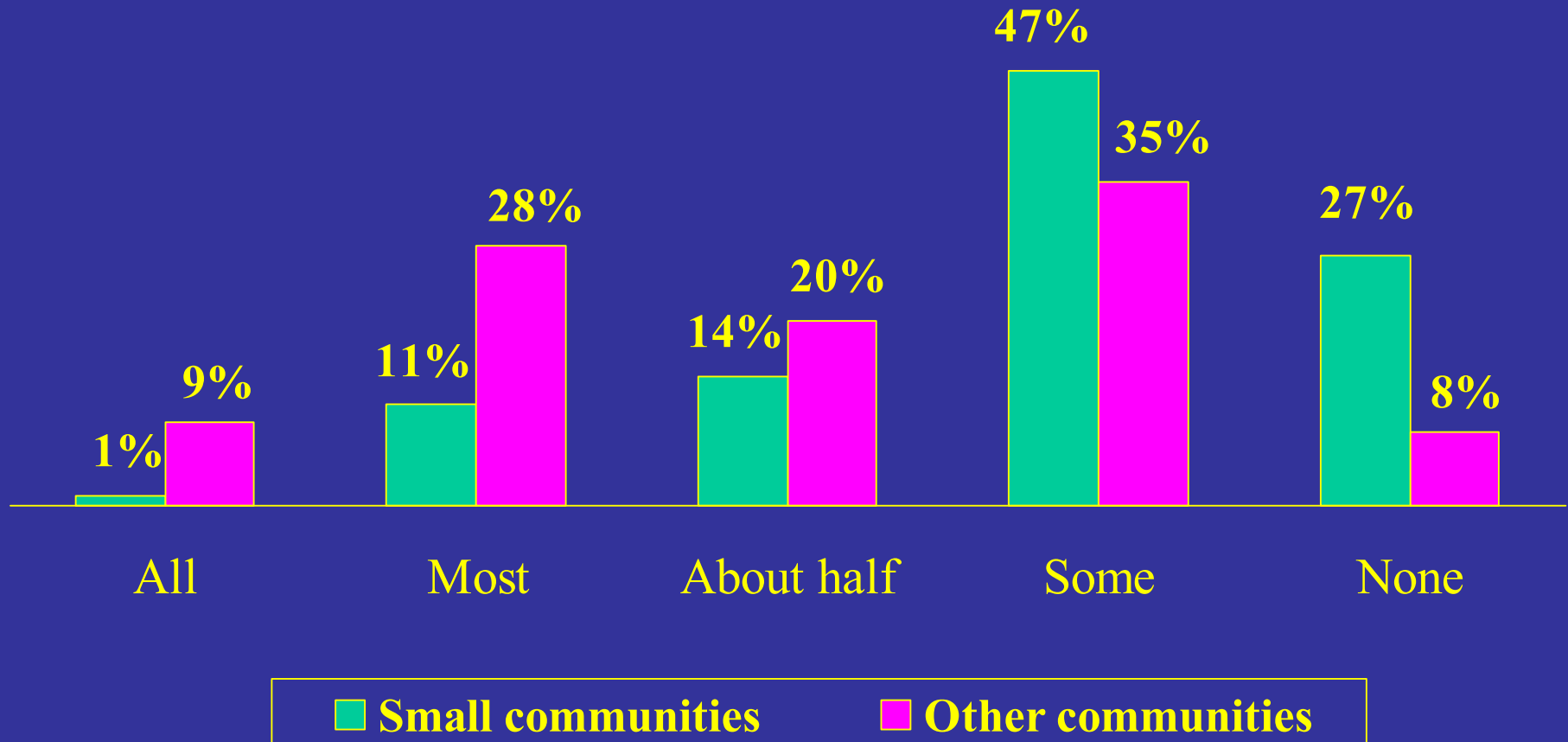
In small communities, less than one-half of all children in Jewish households¹ are being raised Jewish.



¹ Reminder: Jewish households defined as households with at least one Jewish adult.

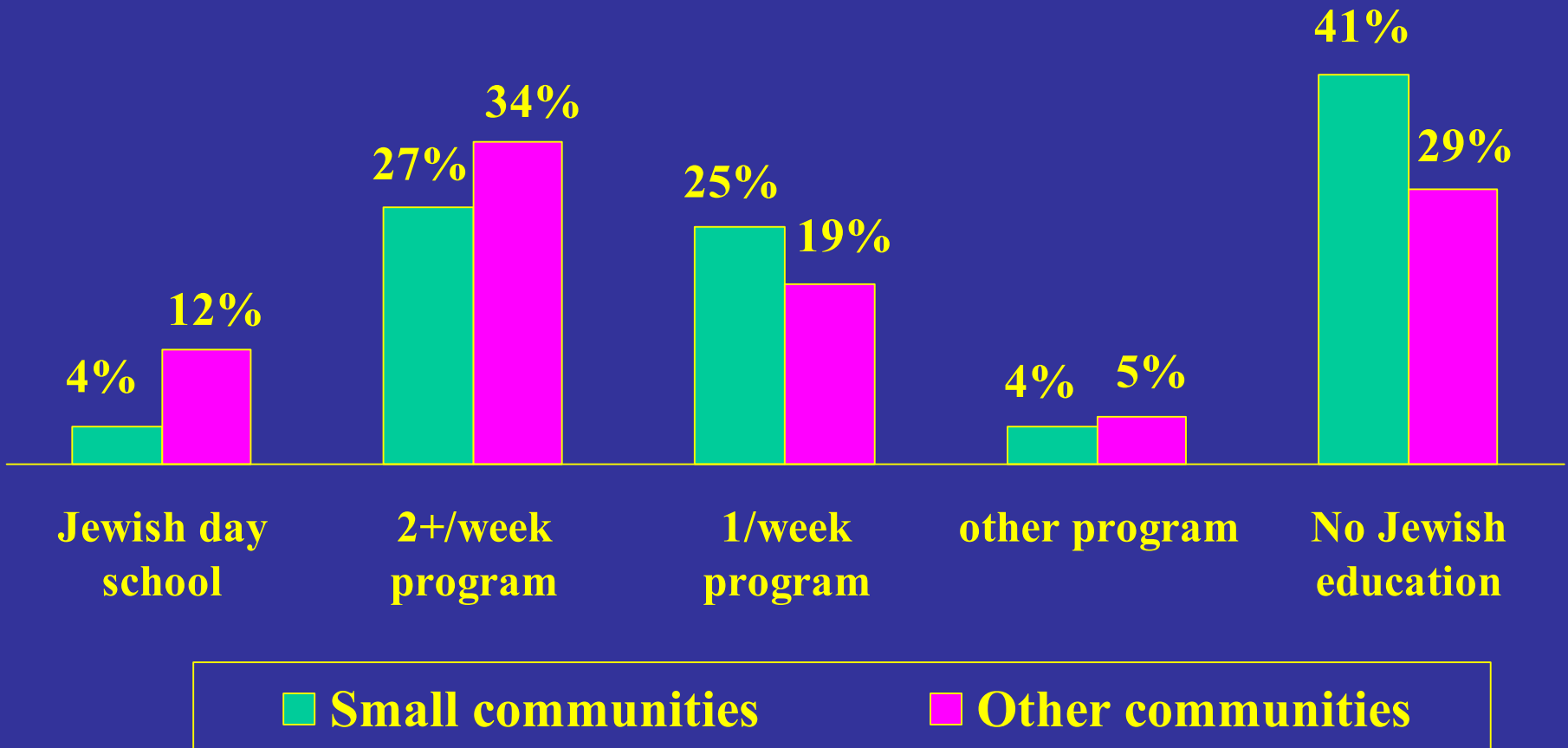


Only one-quarter of Jews in small Jewish communities report that half or more of their close friends are Jewish.



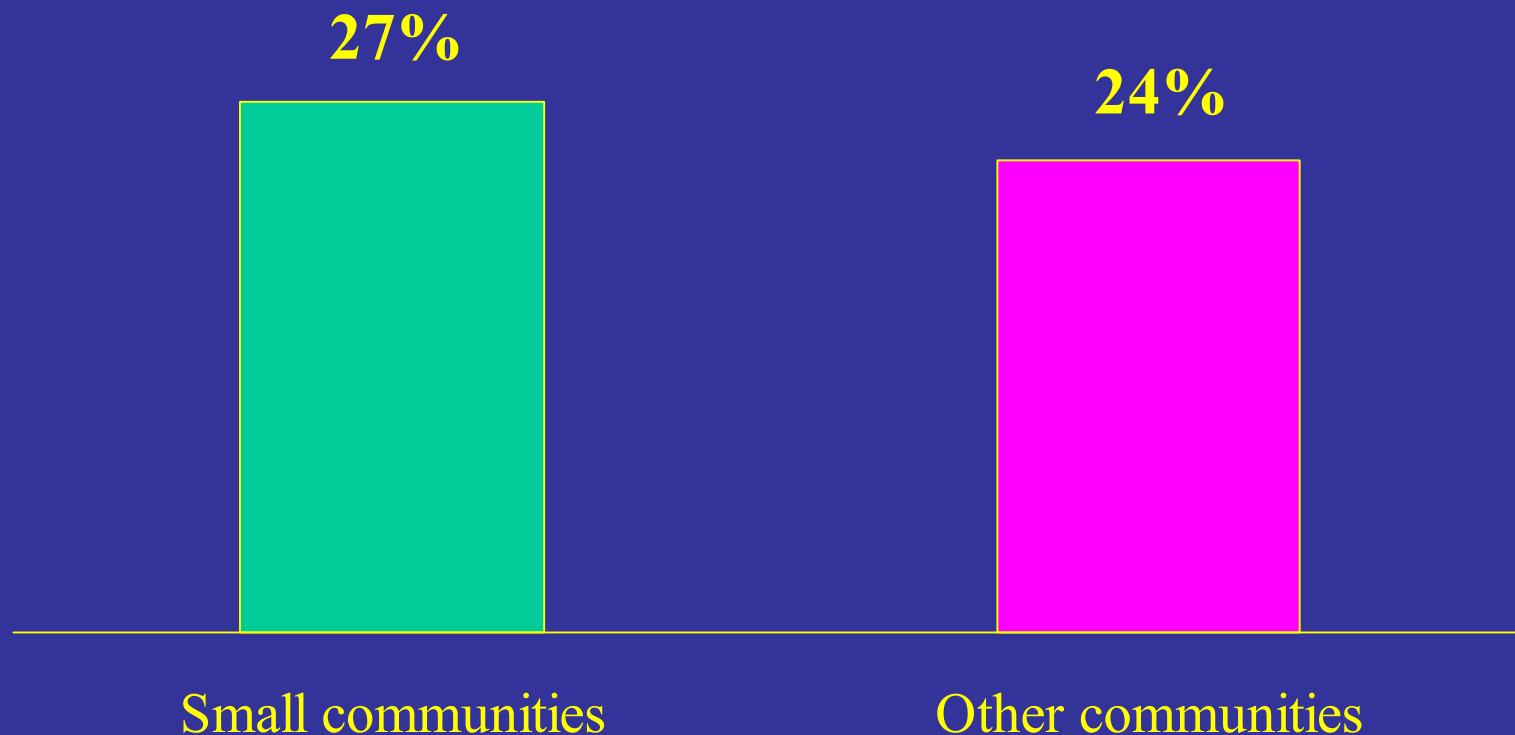


Jews in small communities had less intensive Jewish education when they were growing up than Jews in other communities.



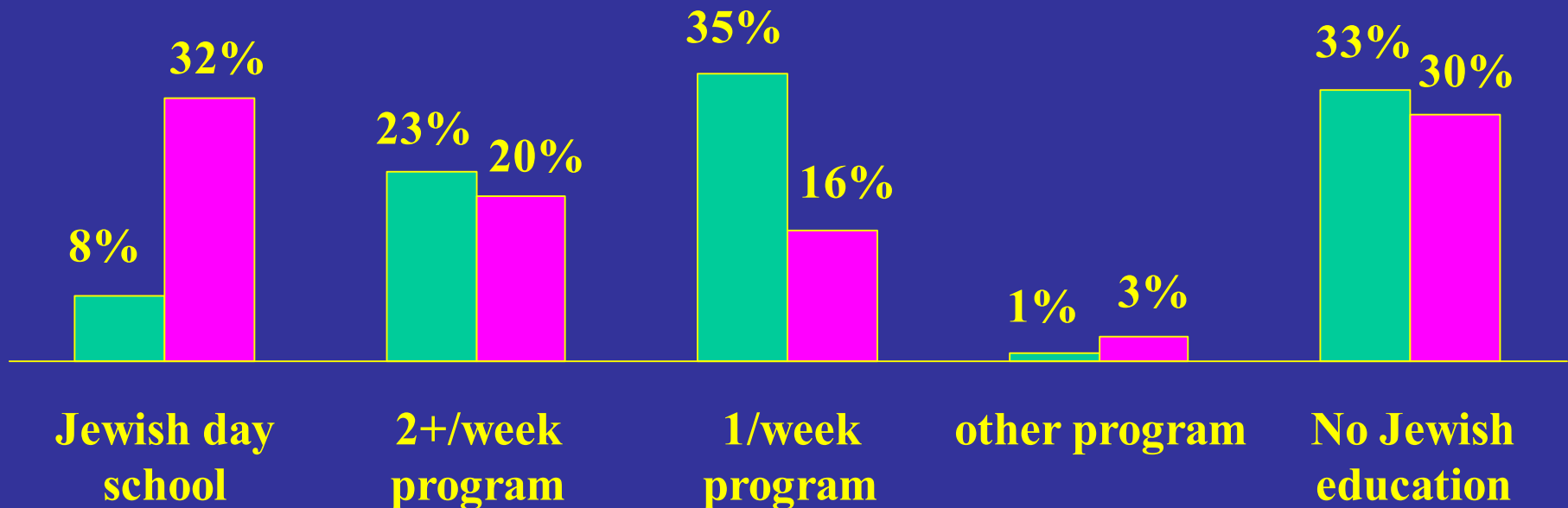


Jews in small and other communities report equal levels of participation in adult Jewish education programs.*





Among children in the more engaged Jewish population (4.3 million Jews), proportionally fewer go to Jewish day schools and more attend supplementary Jewish education programs in small communities than larger ones.*



Small communities

Other communities



Special Topics

- Poverty/low income
- Immigrants
- Health

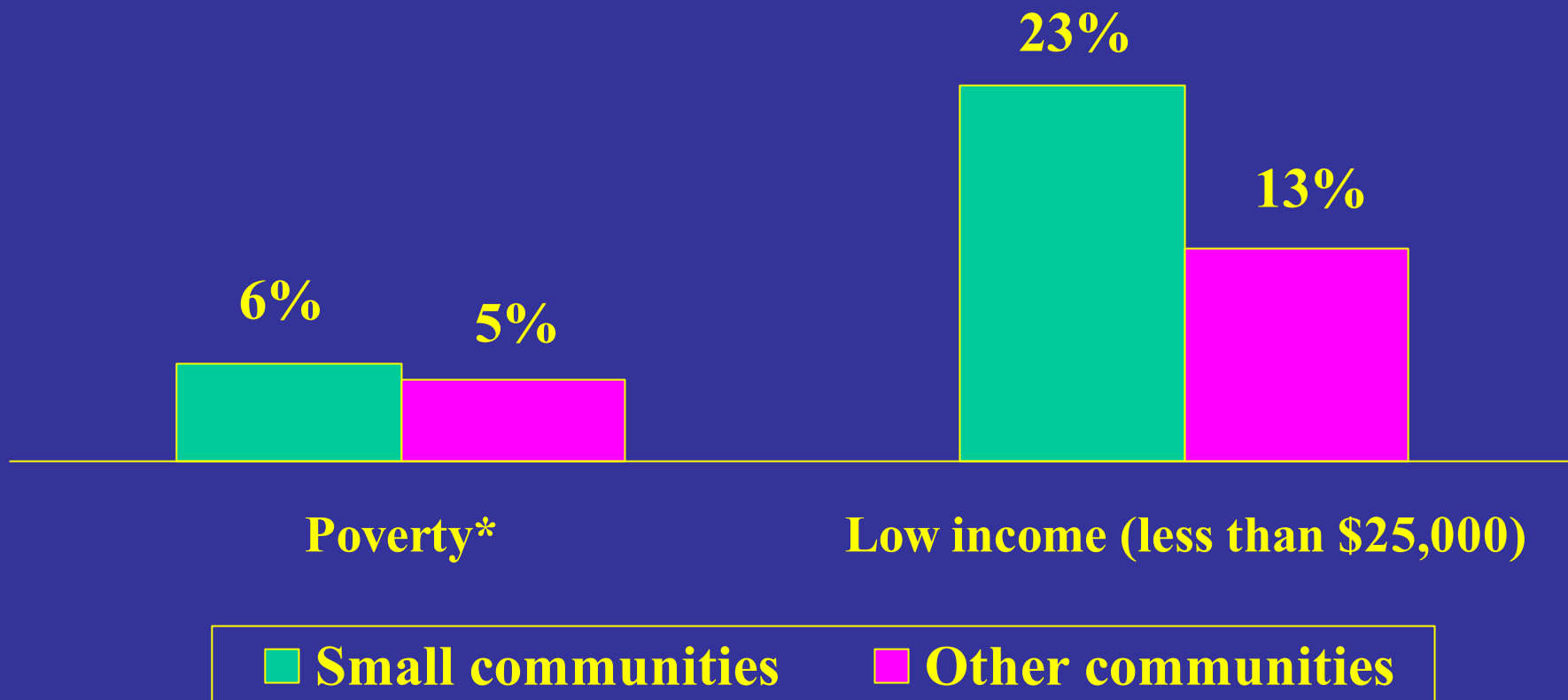


- **Poverty***: US federal government standard; combination of income and household size
- **Low income** = < \$25,000, any household size

Note: the measures of poverty and low income report the percentage of confirmed cases of all households, including those who refused to answer the question on income, thereby producing slightly conservative estimates of the incidence of these two factors.

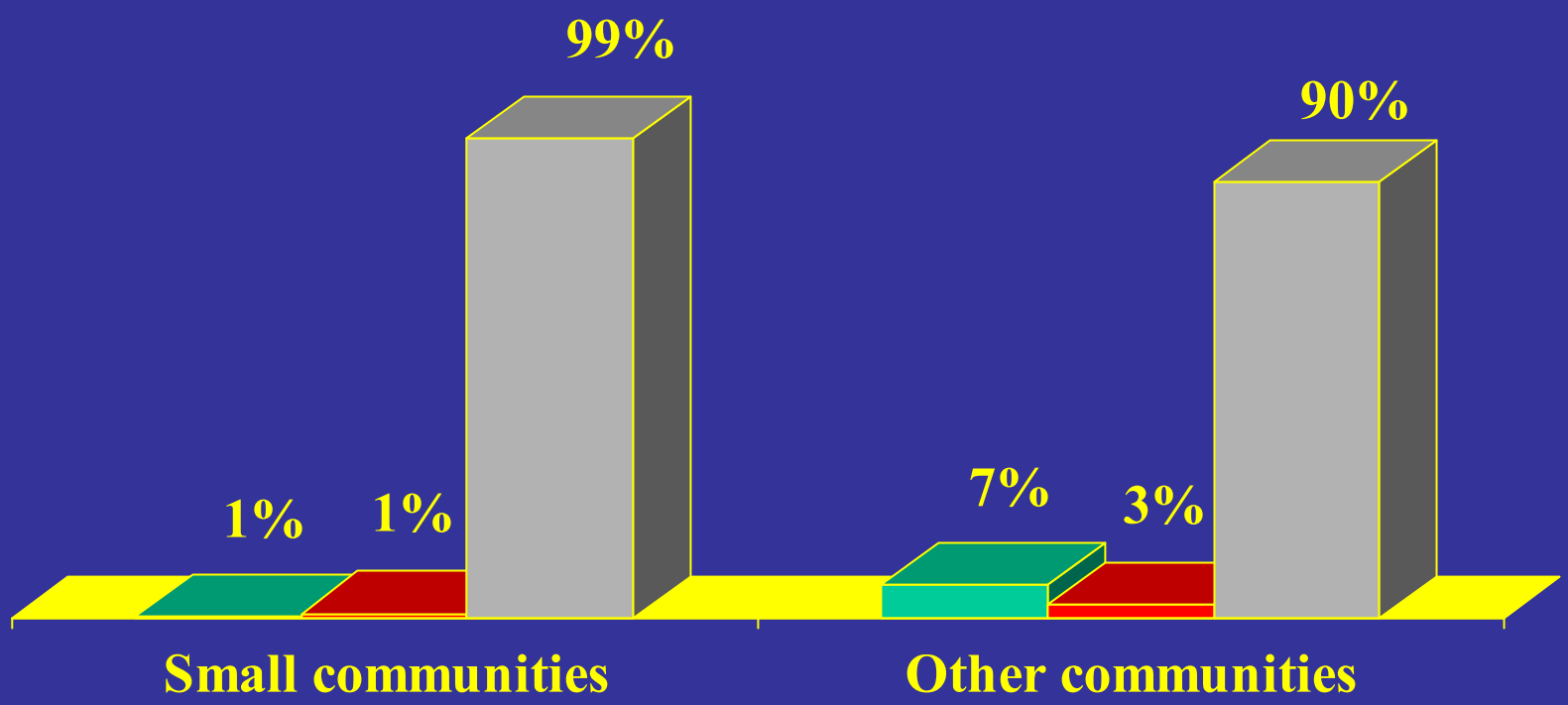


Rates of poverty among Jews are similar in small and other communities, but rates of low income – a broader measure than poverty – are higher in small communities than larger ones.





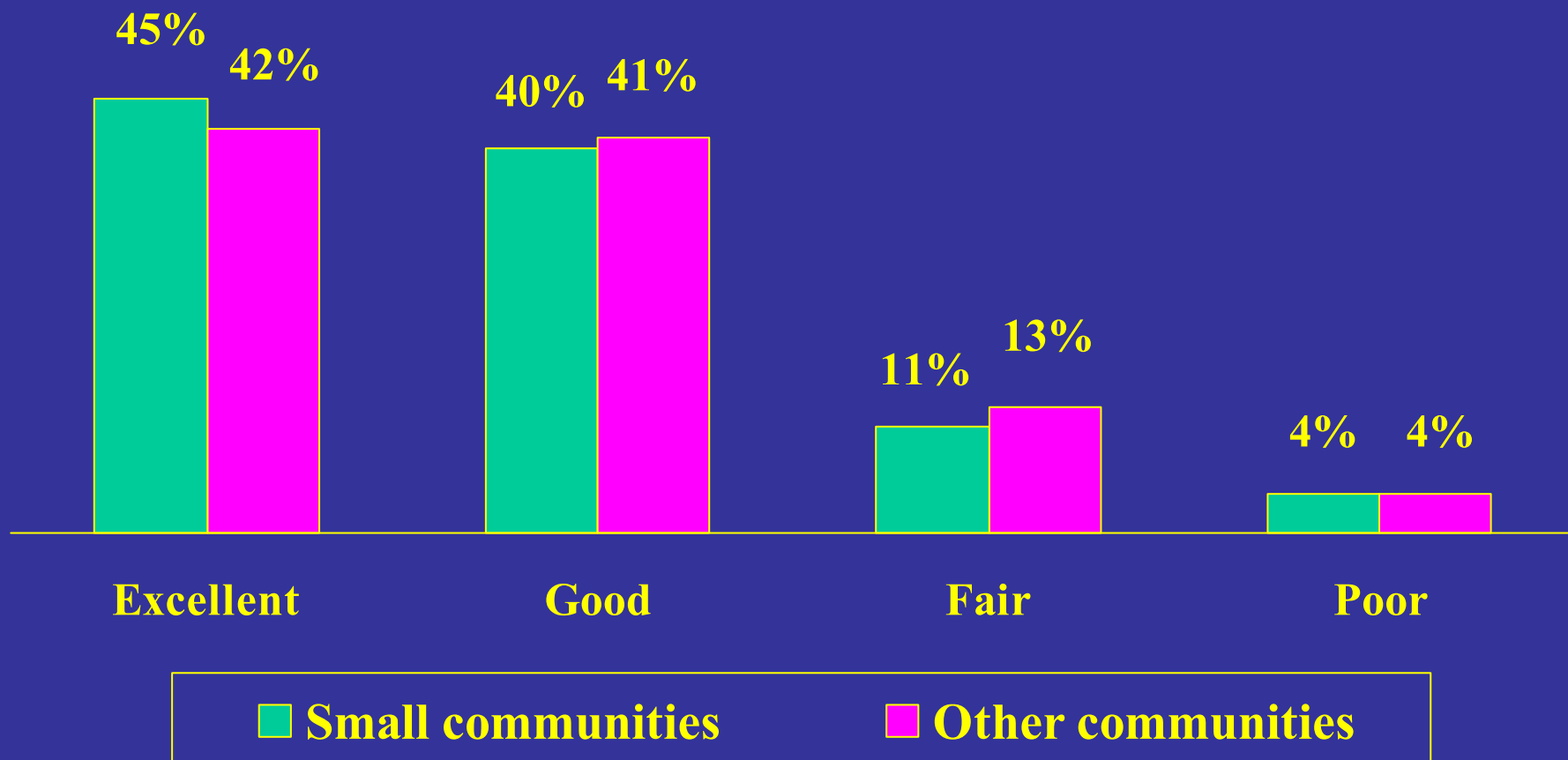
Proportionally fewer Jewish immigrants live in small communities than elsewhere.



■ Immigrants from FSU (1980+) ■ Other immigrants (1980+)
■ US Born and immigrants pre-1980



Health evaluations are similar among Jews in small and other communities.





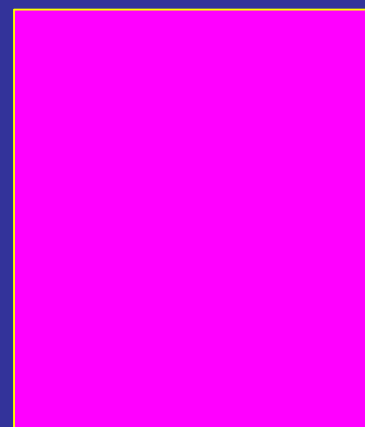
Similar proportions of Jews in small and other communities report that they or another household member have a health condition that limits education, employment or other daily activities.*

17%



Small communities

15%



Other communities

Small communities



Questions?