



*Empowering People Through
Information and Technology*

Public Attitudes Toward Social Security and Private Accounts

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Summary of Findings

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Public Attitudes Toward Social Security and Private Accounts

Summary of Findings

Social Security is an important domestic policy issue before the American public. While many public surveys contain questions about Social Security, there are few current, comprehensive assessments of how the public views the Social Security program, including assessments of public attitudes toward private accounts carved from Social Security funds.

This summary contains data from the second AARP survey on public attitudes toward Social Security and private accounts. This survey was conducted among 1,000 persons ages 18 and over, with oversamples of 410 African-Americans and 411 Hispanic-Americans. The survey was conducted January 15th through January 23rd of 2005 by AARP and Roper Public Affairs.

Public Attitudes Toward Social Security

A majority of Americans have a favorable view of Social Security (62%), and two-thirds (66%) support keeping the program as close to the current system as possible.

The favorable opinion of Social Security extends across all age groups, with majorities expressing a very or somewhat favorable view of the program. In addition, over 6 in 10 women, African-Americans, and Hispanic-Americans favor the program.

Similarly, majorities of individuals in all age groups support keeping the Social Security program as close to the present system, as possible. Individuals age 60+ (83%), Hispanics (74%), African-Americans (75%), and women (67%) are the most likely to feel this way, but a majority of younger persons ages 18 to 39 (55%) also want to keep the Social program close to it's present form.

Confidence in the status of future Social Security benefits is a real issue for the American public.

Only 43% of survey respondents are at least somewhat confident that Social Security will be there for them when they retire. While almost half (48%) of those ages 40 to 59, and 82% of people 60 or older are confident about Social Security, only about one-third (31%) of Americans 18 to 39 are confident. AARP's focus group

research indicates that the viability of the Social Security program is not well understood, and public pessimism exists about the program. However, even younger people who are less confident about Social Security being there for them still hope it will be and have generally positive attitudes about the Social Security system, as revealed in our survey.

The public recognizes the need for Social Security reform. However, they do not believe that private accounts will resolve the shortfalls Social Security might have in the future. People tend to see Social Security solvency and private accounts as separate and distinct issues.

When asked about their perceptions of the current Social Security system, 8 in 10 agreed that: Social Security should be strengthened not replaced (80%). This strong preference extends across all age, race/ethnicity, and gender groups.

Similarly 9 in 10 Americans of every age, race/ethnicity and gender group agree that Social Security's problems can be fixed and should be fixed sooner rather than later.

Clear majorities (5 to 6 in 10) of persons in every age, race/ethnicity and gender group agree that private accounts created from Social Security funds will harm Social Security, not help it.

Large majorities of persons (7 to 8 in 10) in every age, race/ethnicity and gender group agree that Social Security should be protected as a guaranteed benefit, and not privatized.

Public Attitudes Toward Private Accounts

Most public opinion polls on private accounts pose the issue in a simplistic manner. These polls ask respondents if they favor allowing individuals to invest a portion of their Social Security taxes in the stock market. In most of these surveys, about half the adult population favors this option. But this question appears to be essentially asking about people's preference for handling their own money. It seems reasonable that many people would favor this approach to investing.

In fact, this survey contained questions with three of the most common messages proponents of private accounts employ – control, legacy, and wealth. As our survey indicates, many Americans favor personal control in their lives; like the idea of leaving a legacy; and desire wealth. However, the fact that many people exhibit these typical American preferences does not mean the public is willing to damage what they value about Social Security in order to get them.

This survey suggests that once people of all ages, race/ethnicities, and genders hear some of the consequences associated with private accounts support for them decreases considerably.

As many national surveys found, about half of the American public support private accounts when the survey question simply asks about the option to invest some of their Social Security contributions, and does not specify consequences

In this survey, 53% of the adult public initially favors allowing workers to invest up to \$1,300 of their Social Security contributions in individual retirement accounts. As might be expected, this support for private accounts is stronger among younger populations and much weaker among those ages 60 and over. About half of women, African-Americans, and Hispanic-Americans support private accounts when no consequences are specified.

Regardless of age, race/ethnicity, or gender, when respondents are exposed to the benefit cuts, greater federal debt, or the passing of debt to their children, caused by draining money from Social Security in order to create private accounts, majorities oppose these accounts. In fact, the initial 53% of the adult public who favor private accounts drops to between 20% and 40% depending on the consequence presented.

Table 1 lists all the consequences read to respondents who initially favored allowing workers to invest up to \$1,300 of their Social Security contributions in individual retirement accounts. The table also illustrates responses from the particular age, racial/ethnic, and gender groups highlighted in this survey. These responses are recalculated percentages based on the entire survey sample. That is, the initial group opposed to private accounts as measured by the first private account question, added to those who dropped their support for private accounts in response to each consequence of private accounts.

Figures 1 through 4 illustrate the level of opposition to private accounts among all age, racial/ethnic, and gender groups as measured by the four consequences our respondents consider to be the strongest reasons for not creating private accounts by draining money out of Social Security.

After initial supporters of private accounts had been exposed to each of the consequences of diverting payroll taxes to fund private accounts, only 7% never changed their mind, and still favored them. This means, in the context of the entire survey sample, that only 4% favored this approach regardless of the consequences.

Table 1

Percent Opposing Private Accounts if it Meant...

	Total Pop.	18-39	40-59	60+	Women	Hispanic	African American
No withdrawals prior to retirement	53%	42%	54%	64%	56%	51%	62%
Lower guaranteed Social Security benefit in retirement	63%	57%	66%	68%	68%	64%	70%
Stock market fluctuations could result in decreased money in retirement	61%	53%	63%	68%	65%	64%	71%
Workers pay management fees associated with private accounts	63%	57%	65%	69%	68%	66%	72%
New government agency created to administer program	65%	54%	68%	77%	64%	57%	63%
Diverting some of Social Security payroll taxes means massive new federal debt in order to pay current benefits	68%	63%	70%	74%	71%	64%	68%
Market losers will need additional help from government	62%	50%	64%	75%	63%	58%	63%
Cuts to your guaranteed SS benefits would be so severe that you could not make up the difference with money from your private account	71%	70%	71%	76%	77%	72%	75%
Changes to the way SS benefits are calculated would result in cuts in guaranteed benefits for everyone not just people who choose to participate in private the accounts program	69%	65%	71%	76%	73%	66%	70%
Our children could be confronted with two bills: one for the current shortfall and another to meet additional shortfall due to private accounts	68%	66%	68%	73%	72%	69%	69%

Sample Sizes:

Total Pop. n=1000

Women n=578

Ages 18-39 n=291
40-59 n=388
60+ n=289

Ethnicity Hispanic n=411
African American n=410

Figure 1
Opposition to private accounts if it meant that cuts to guaranteed Social Security benefits would be so severe that individuals could not make up the difference with money from their private account

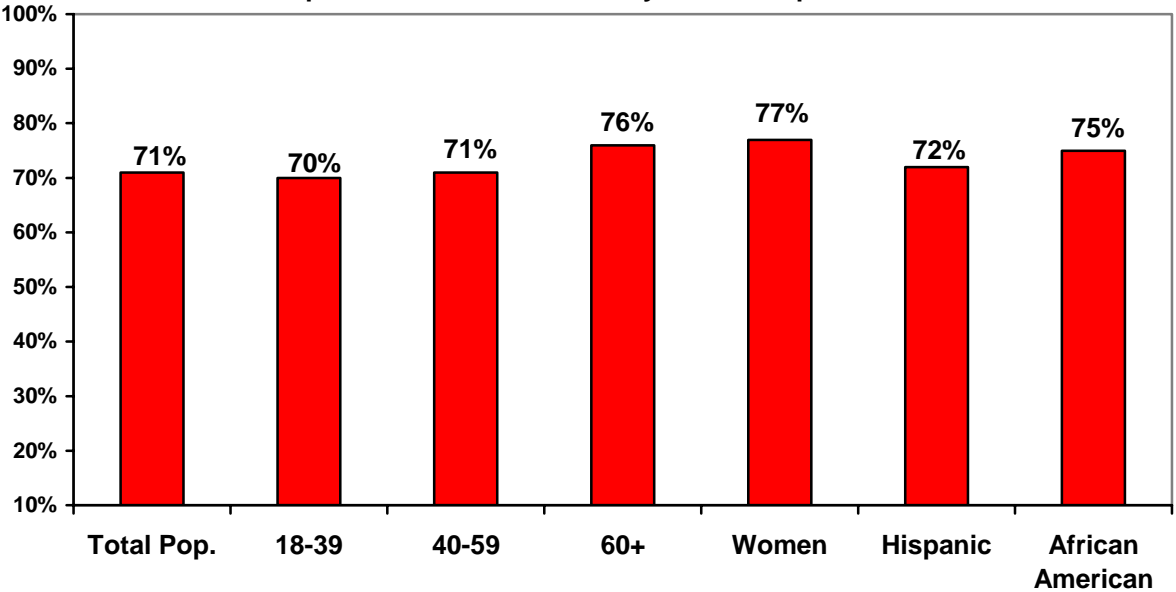


Figure 2
Opposition to private accounts if it meant that changes to the way Social Security is calculated would result in cuts in guaranteed benefits for everyone not just people who choose to participate in the private accounts program

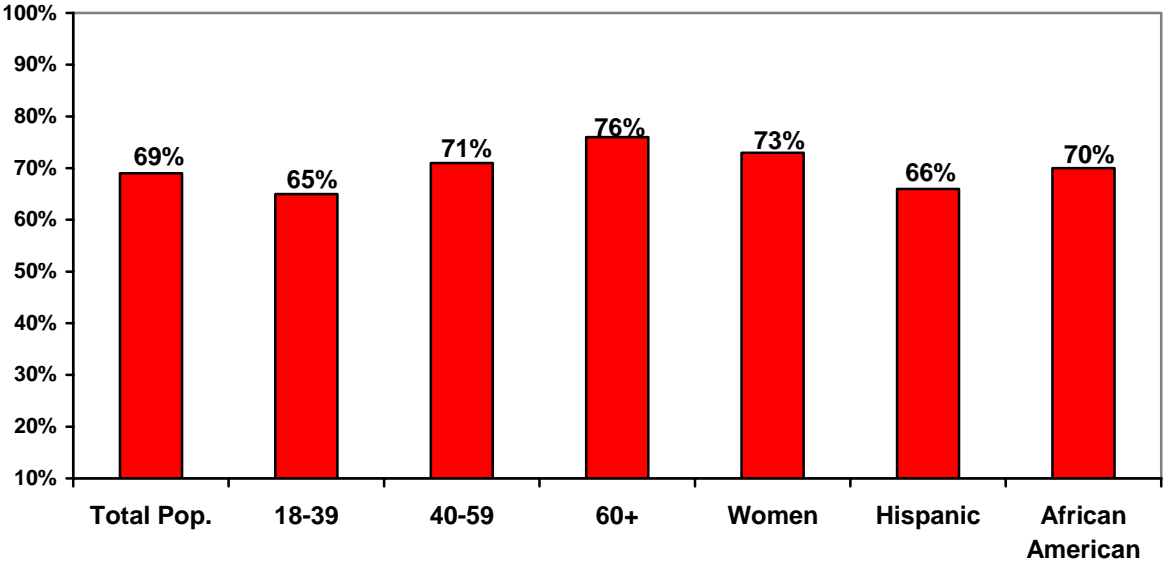


Figure 3
Opposition to private accounts if it meant that our children could be confronted with two bills: one for the current shortfall and another to meet additional shortfall due to private accounts

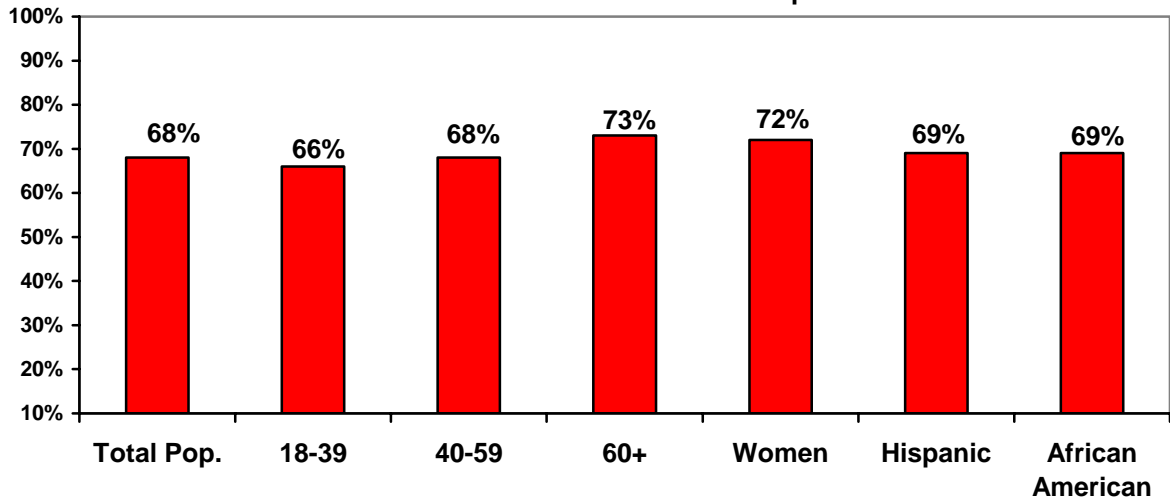
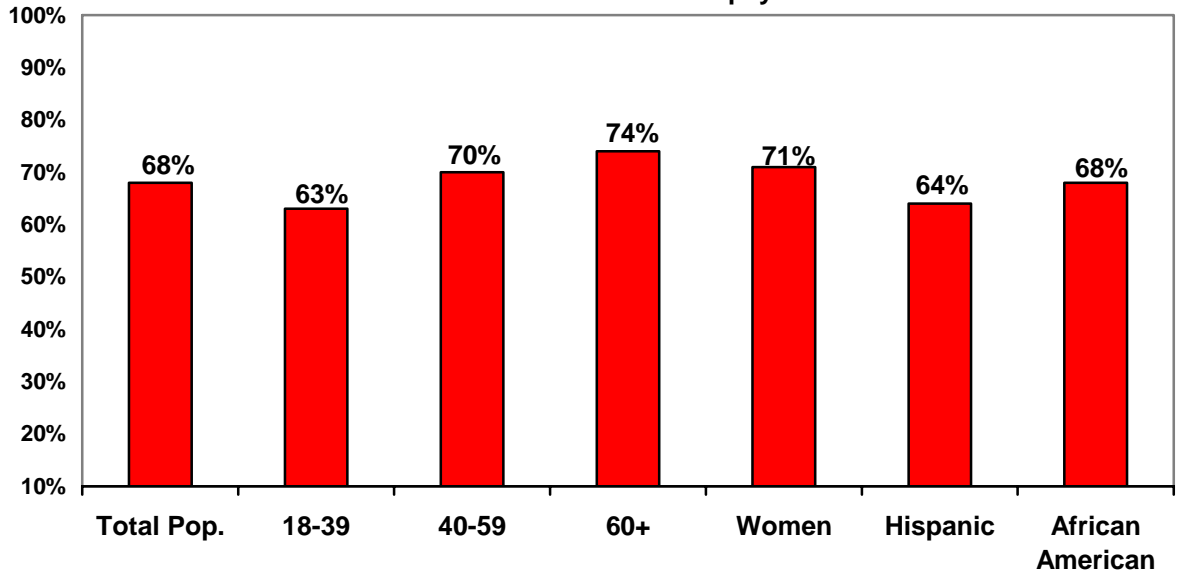


Figure 4
Opposition to private accounts if it meant that diverting some of Social Security payroll taxes means massive new federal debt in order to pay current benefits



Methods

On behalf of AARP, Roper Public Affairs, a part of NOP World, conducted a nationally representative survey of 1,000 adults, aged 18 and older, to measure overall support for or opposition to a proposal that would allow workers to invest some or all of their Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market through individual retirement accounts. Interviews were conducted from January 15 through January 23, 2005.

The survey used a random-digit dialing (RDD) methodology to select a national sample of telephone numbers. This RDD method is widely accepted as the best way of drawing a truly random, representative sample of Americans, ensuring the inclusion of both listed and unlisted telephone numbers. Households were screened to identify adults 18 years of age or older. The most recent-birthday method was used to randomly select respondents among the adults within each household. Weighting was used, in analysis of the data, to ensure that the sample was representative of the adult U.S. population on age within gender, level of education, and region of the country.

The survey did not impose quotas for political party identification and did not weight the data by it. The party identification findings from the survey are not inconsistent with what Roper and others have found in other recent surveys of American adults.

The sampling error, at the 95% confidence level, for the survey is +/- three percentage points.

Oversamples of African American and Hispanic Adults:

The survey was also conducted among oversamples of African Americans and Hispanics to yield total samples of 411 Hispanics and 410 African Americans to be used in analyses of these two subgroups. Interviews were conducted from January 15 through January 25, 2005. Interviews among the Hispanic sample were conducted in English.

The samples included respondents from the general public sample and oversamples of Hispanic and African American adults. For each of these two oversamples, a targeted sampling strategy was used to randomly select households (using the RDD strategy described for the general public sample) from each of five different strata of telephone numbers, based on the density of the racial/ethnic group in the areas where those phone numbers are located. A greater proportion of phone numbers were drawn from the strata with higher densities of the racial/ethnic group than would occur naturally, and smaller numbers were selected from the lower density areas.

Weighting was used to correct for this disproportional sampling so that the weighted samples were representative of the Hispanic and African American adult population on this characteristic. The samples were also weighted to match the national population of Hispanic adults and African American Adults on age within gender, level of education, and region of the country.

The sampling error for the Hispanic sample (n=411) and the African American sample (n=410) is plus or minus five percentages at the 95% confidence level.

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Do you feel things in this country are generally going in the right direction today, or do you feel that things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Right direction	40	41	41	36	37	41	19
Wrong track	53	53	53	55	57	52	75
Don't know	6	5	5	8	6	7	6
Refused	1	--	1	1	*	--	--

2. Just to get an idea, when discussions come up about issues involving Social Security, how knowledgeable do you feel you are about how the system works: Would you say you are: (READ LIST)

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very knowledgeable	18	11	16	29	15	16	18
Somewhat knowledgeable	46	39	50	49	46	35	40
A little knowledgeable	26	34	27	17	29	31	28
Not at all knowledgeable	9	15	8	4	8	17	13
Don't know	1	*	--	2	1	1	*

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES

3. Are you, or anyone in your family, currently receiving benefits from Social Security? [IF JUST SAY “YES” PROBE:] Do you mean you, your spouse or somebody else in your family, or both?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, I am	18	3	10	51	20	9	16
Yes, my spouse/other family member is	17	19	19	12	16	23	26
Yes, we both are	6	1	*	22	6	2	4
No, neither	59	76	70	14	57	66	52
Don't know	*	1	--	--	*	*	2
Refused	*	--	--	*	*	--	--

4a. Are you retired?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	24	1	8	84	25	12	21
No	76	99	92	16	75	88	79
Refused	*	--	--	--	--	--	--

4b. How confident are you that Social Security will be there for you when you retire?
Are you ... (READ LIST)

<i>Among those not retired</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=710)	(n=289)	(n=354)	(n=47 ^β)	(n=392)	(n=363)	(n=324)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very confident	13	8	12	53	13	14	10
Somewhat confident	30	23	36	29	28	24	24
Not too confident	28	33	26	12	30	30	28
Not at all confident	28	35	24	7	28	29	36
Don't know	1	1	2	--	1	3	*
Refused	*	--	*	--	--	--	--

^β Small base, use data with caution.

5. How confident are you that your savings and/or investments will provide you with enough money for your retirement?

<i>Among those not retired</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=710)	(n=289)	(n=354)	(n=47 ^β)	(n=392)	(n=363)	(n=324)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very confident	23	24	21	22	20	19	22
Somewhat confident	39	43	36	33	38	34	30
Not too confident	17	14	18	30	19	20	19
Not at all confident	20	17	23	14	22	24	28
Don't know	2	1	2	2	2	3	2
Refused	*	--	*	--	--	--	--

SOCIAL SECURITY ATTITUDES

6. Based on what you have heard, read, or experienced with Social Security, what is your overall view of the program? Is it... (READ LIST)

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very favorable	18	10	14	36	20	21	20
Somewhat favorable	44	41	49	42	43	43	41
Not too favorable	23	34	21	13	25	23	20
Not at all favorable	12	13	13	6	9	10	18
Don't know	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Refused	*	--	--	--	--	*	--

^β Small base, use data with caution.

7. Do you generally support or oppose keeping the Social Security program as close to the present system as possible? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly support	37	23	37	56	39	38	46
Somewhat support	29	32	28	27	28	36	29
Somewhat oppose	18	24	18	10	16	12	13
Strongly oppose	11	15	13	4	9	8	10
Don't know	5	6	4	3	7	5	2
Refused	*	*	--	*	*	*	*

PRIVATE ACCOUNTS

8a. Some people propose allowing workers to invest some of their Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market through individual retirement accounts. For the average worker, this portion could be up to \$1,300 per year that they could invest. In general, do you favor or oppose this approach? Is that strongly or somewhat?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly favor	29	36	33	15	25	30	25
Somewhat favor	24	32	21	19	26	28	23
Somewhat oppose	14	12	14	19	17	13	16
Strongly oppose	28	16	29	41	27	22	28
Don't know	5	4	4	6	5	7	7
Refused	*	--	--	1	*	*	*

8b. If you would not be permitted to withdraw any of the money you invested until you retire, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market?

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	76	77	75	76	71	64	60
Oppose	21	21	22	15	24	28	36
Don't Know	3	2	2	8	4	8	3
No Answer/Refused	*	--	*	--	--	*	--

8c. If it meant you would receive a lower guaranteed Social Security benefit when you retire, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market?

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	55	54	52	60	46	44	41
Oppose	40	43	44	25	47	49	53
Don't Know	5	2	3	13	7	6	6
No Answer/Refused	1	*	1	2	1	1	*

8d. If the ups and downs of the stock market meant you might receive less money throughout your retirement than if you had kept all your money in Social Security, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market?

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	57	58	55	62	50	41	38
Oppose	36	37	39	25	42	51	54
Don't Know	6	4	5	10	7	7	7
No Answer/Refused	1	*	1	3	1	*	*

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

8e. If it meant each worker would have to pay the management fees associated with these accounts, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market?

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	51	51	48	58	42	39	36
Oppose	40	43	42	29	46	53	57
Don't Know	8	5	8	14	11	7	6
No Answer/Refused	1	*	1	--	*	*	1

8f. If it meant creating a new government agency to administer the program would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market?

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	50	57	45	37	52	55	56
Oppose	44	38	48	52	40	38	37
Don't Know	6	4	6	11	7	6	7
No Answer/Refused	*	*	1	*	1	1	1

8g. If diversion of some Social Security payroll taxes into private accounts mean massive new federal debt in order to pay the Social Security benefits of current retirees, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market through private accounts?

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	42	44	39	46	37	39	44
Oppose	50	51	53	44	53	50	49
Don't Know	6	4	7	5	9	10	6
No Answer/Refused	2	1	2	5	2	1	1

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

8h. Since private accounts will create losers as well as winners and the losers may need additional help from the government, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market through private accounts?

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	55	63	52	42	53	52	58
Oppose	37	33	41	46	38	40	39
Don't Know	7	4	7	9	8	8	3
No Answer/Refused	1	*	*	2	1	*	--

8i. "If it meant that cuts to your guaranteed Social Security benefits would be so severe that you could not make up the difference with money earned from your private account, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market?"

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	37	35	39	38	27	32	32
Oppose	56	61	54	49	66	64	64
Don't Know	5	2	5	9	6	4	4
No Answer/Refused	2	1	2	4	1	--	*

8ii "If it meant that changes to the way Social Security benefits are calculated would result in cuts in guaranteed Social Security benefits for everyone not just for people who chose to participate in the private account program, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market?"

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	42	42	44	37	36	42	42
Oppose	52	55	54	50	58	55	53
Don't Know	5	3	2	9	6	4	4
No Answer/Refused	1	*	*	3	*	--	*

^β Small base, use data with caution.

8j. If private accounts were created, our children, or other young people, could be confronted with two bills: one for the current shortfall in Social Security and another to meet the additional shortfall which would be created by private accounts. Knowing this, would you still favor or would you oppose allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market through private accounts?

<i>Among those who favor privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=508)	(n=198)	(n=206)	(n=90 ^β)	(n=273)	(n=232)	(n=200)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still Favor	42	40	44	46	35	33	42
Oppose	49	56	47	42	56	58	50
Don't Know	6	4	6	6	7	8	7
No Answer/Refused	3	*	3	6	1	1	1

IF OPPOSE IN Q8A, ASK:

8J-1. If it meant you would have more control over where your retirement money is invested, would you still oppose or would you now favor allowing workers to invest some social security payroll taxes in the stock market through private accounts?

<i>Among those who oppose privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=441)	(n=83 ^β)	(n=165)	(n=178)	(n=272)	(n=151)	(n=181)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still oppose	74	62	76	80	70	59	59
Favor	21	34	20	13	24	31	32
Don't Know	5	3	3	7	5	10	9
No Answer/Refused	1	1	1	--	*	*	--

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

8J-2 If it meant you have the potential to earn more money for your retirement, would you still oppose or would you now favor allowing workers to invest some social security payroll taxes in the stock market through private accounts?

<i>Among those who oppose privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=441)	(n=83 ^β)	(n=165)	(n=178)	(n=272)	(n=151)	(n=181)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still oppose	65	58	65	71	61	52	49
Favor	29	41	29	21	32	38	44
Don't Know	5	1	4	7	5	10	7
No Answer/Refused	2	--	1	1	2	--	*

8J-3 If it meant you could leave the balance in your private account to your children when you die, would you still oppose or would you now favor allowing workers to invest some social security payroll taxes in the stock market through private accounts

<i>Among those who oppose privatization of Social security</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=441)	(n=83 ^β)	(n=165)	(n=178)	(n=272)	(n=151)	(n=181)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Still oppose	60	52	63	67	55	48	44
Favor	34	48	33	24	38	46	50
Don't Know	5	--	3	7	5	5	4
No Answer/Refused	1	--	1	1	1	*	1

(ASK EVERYONE)

8k. Do you think allowing workers to invest some Social Security payroll taxes in the stock market will strengthen or weaken the Social Security system?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strengthen	36	47	34	23	31	43	34
Weaken	52	44	52	65	52	48	54
Don't Know	12	9	14	12	16	9	12
No Answer/Refused	*	*	*	1	*	*	--

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

81. If you were to invest some of your social security payroll taxes in the stock market through private accounts, how confident are you that your investments would make up for cuts in your social security benefits? Would you feel very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident, or not at all confident?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very confident	15	16	17	13	10	15	12
Somewhat confident	33	44	31	22	35	34	32
Not very confident	25	24	28	25	27	23	25
Not at all confident	23	15	21	35	25	25	27
Don't know	2	1	3	4	3	3	3
Refused	1	--	*	1	1	--	*

9. For each of the following statements, please tell me if you ...

a. Social Security should be strengthened, not replaced with something else.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	61	53	64	67	64	64	73
Somewhat agree	19	29	15	13	19	20	15
Somewhat disagree	9	11	9	8	8	8	4
Strongly disagree	8	5	9	10	7	6	8
Don't know	2	2	3	2	2	2	*
Refused	*	*	--	1	1	--	--

b. There are problems with Social Security, but they can be fixed.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	61	54	63	70	62	50	64
Somewhat agree	29	37	28	18	30	32	23
Somewhat disagree	5	5	5	4	4	8	5
Strongly disagree	5	3	4	6	3	6	5
Don't know	1	1	*	3	2	4	3
Refused	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

- c. Changes in Social Security should be made sooner when they are less severe rather than later when they will have to be more drastic.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	62	64	66	56	62	58	62
Somewhat agree	25	30	24	21	24	27	24
Somewhat disagree	5	2	4	7	4	6	5
Strongly disagree	5	2	4	8	5	7	7
Don't know	4	2	2	7	4	2	2
Refused	*	--	--	1	*	*	--

- d. Private accounts paid for by Social Security money will hurt Social Security, not help it.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	33	24	34	42	32	31	36
Somewhat agree	23	29	19	21	27	31	24
Somewhat disagree	21	27	23	12	23	17	19
Strongly disagree	15	14	15	14	10	16	12
Don't know	7	5	7	9	7	5	8
Refused	1	*	*	1	1	--	*

- e. Social Security should be protected as a guaranteed benefit, and should not be privatized.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	58	52	59	67	60	65	71
Somewhat agree	18	23	15	15	21	20	18
Somewhat disagree	10	13	11	6	8	7	4
Strongly disagree	12	12	13	9	9	6	6
Don't know	2	*	2	2	2	2	2
Refused	*	--	--	*	*	--	--

- f. It is not fair to saddle our children with the additional Social Security debt that would be accumulated by taking money out of Social Security for private accounts.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	49	49	51	49	51	65	71
Somewhat agree	20	26	19	13	22	20	18
Somewhat disagree	11	13	10	11	10	7	4
Strongly disagree	16	9	17	20	13	6	6
Don't know	3	1	3	5	4	2	2
Refused	1	1	--	1	1	--	--

- g. We have a responsibility to meet our obligation to people currently on Social Security to protect their benefits.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	78	71	80	87	79	73	76
Somewhat agree	17	23	15	9	16	22	18
Somewhat disagree	2	3	3	1	3	3	3
Strongly disagree	2	2	2	1	1	1	3
Don't know	1	--	*	1	1	1	1
Refused	*	--	--	1	*	*	*

- h. We have a responsibility to meet our obligation to our children to make sure that Social Security is there for them.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	76	77	74	82	78	77	77
Somewhat agree	14	14	16	11	15	18	16
Somewhat disagree	4	4	4	3	4	3	1
Strongly disagree	5	5	6	2	3	1	4
Don't know	1	--	1	1	1	2	1
Refused	*	--	--	*	*	--	*

DEMOGRAPHICS AND LIFESTAGE

D1. GENDER RECORD FROM VOICE

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	48	52	48	45	--	51	44
Female	52	48	52	55	100	49	56

Now I just have some questions for classification purposes.

D2. Please tell me, what year were you born?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
18 – 19	2	5	--	--	2	7	5
20 – 24	6	18	--	--	6	14	6
25 – 29	9	27	--	--	8	13	9
30 – 34	9	26	--	--	9	8	8
35 – 39	8	23	--	--	7	9	12
40 – 44	10	--	26	--	10	12	8
45 – 49	11	--	28	--	12	9	10
50 – 54	11	--	28	--	10	7	10
55 – 59	7	--	18	--	7	5	6
60 – 64	5	--	--	24	5	4	7
65 – 69	5	--	--	21	5	2	4
70 and older	12	--	--	55	14	6	7
Refused	5	--	--	--	5	5	9
Mean (years)	47	29	49	71	48	39	44
Median (years)	46	29	48	70	47	38	43

D3. Are you:

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Married	55	47	67	53	53	44	37
Separated	2	2	3	*	3	4	4
Divorced	10	7	12	10	9	9	10
Widowed	9	--	4	29	14	4	9
Single but living with a partner	6	13	3	*	6	13	11
Or Single (living alone)	17	32	10	7	13	24	26
Don't know	*	--	*	--	*	--	1
Refused	2	--	*	*	2	3	3

D4. What was the last grade of school you completed, not counting specialized schools like secretarial, art, or trade schools?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
8th grade or less (1-8)	2	1	2	4	1	12	3
Some high school (9-11)	9	8	7	13	9	18	12
High school graduate (12)	42	41	43	48	41	40	43
Some college (13-15)	19	24	19	14	22	15	21
College graduate (16)	18	21	19	12	19	8	13
Post-graduate (17+)	7	5	10	9	6	2	3
Don't know	*	--	--	1	--	1	*
Refused	2	--	--	*	2	3	4

D5. Are you currently...(READ LIST)?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employed full-time	43	50	60	10	37	45	41
Employed part-time	10	16	8	6	13	12	11
A homemaker	7	9	9	3	14	8	5
Unemployed	6	10	5	2	7	9	9
A student	3	7	*	--	2	6	6
Retired	19	1	4	71	20	9	16
Self-employed	4	4	4	4	3	3	3
Disabled	6	3	10	4	5	5	7
Refused	1	--	--	--	1	3	3

[IF MARRIED/LIVING WITH A PARTNER IN QD3, ASK:]

D6 Is your spouse currently: (READ LIST)

<i>Among those married/ living with partner</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=617)	(n=183)	(n=270)	(n=155)	(n=343)	(n=223)	(n=191)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employed full-time	58	70	68	15	67	50	49
Employed part-time	6	7	6	7	3	12	5
A homemaker	9	9	10	5	1	16	10
Unemployed	4	5	3	2	3	4	7
A student	1	2	2	--	1	1	1
Retired	17	1	5	69	19	5	12
Self-employed	3	3	3	1	3	4	3
Disabled	2	3	2	*	2	3	3
Don't know	1	1	1	--	*	1	4
Refused	*	--	*	--	*	1	4

IF RESPONDENT IS EMPLOYED FULL-TIME, PART-TIME, SELF-EMPLOYED IN D5, ASK:]
D7. What is your occupation exactly? (RECORD VERBATIM)

<i>Among those currently employed</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=569)	(n=217)	(n=284)	(n=59 ^β)	(n=294)	(n=256)	(n=227)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Executive/professional	29	28	30	43	29	13	19
White collar	29	33	28	22	37	26	32
Blue collar	31	28	35	25	23	48	36
Other	5	5	5	2	4	3	4
Don't know	3	4	2	7	3	5	2
Refused	2	2	*	2	3	5	7

D8. Regardless of how you may have voted in the past, what do you usually consider yourself – a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or what?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Democrat	36	34	38	42	42	36	58
Republican	28	26	32	31	26	20	8
Independent	26	32	23	22	22	24	20
Other named party (Libertarian, Green...)	1	1	1	1	1	1	*
Other responses	3	3	3	1	2	5	3
Don't know	2	3	2	1	3	9	4
Refused	4	1	2	2	4	6	5

^β Small base, use data with caution.

D9. Thinking politically and socially, how would you describe your own general outlook--as being very conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal, or very liberal?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very conservative	14	11	15	18	13	18	15
Somewhat conservative	30	27	33	33	29	25	22
Moderate	29	32	30	26	28	31	32
Somewhat liberal	15	20	14	13	17	12	14
Very liberal	7	9	6	7	8	8	10
Don't know	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
Refused	2	--	*	1	2	3	4

D10. Are you or is anyone else in your household, a member of AARP, formerly known as the American Association of Retired Persons?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	25	7	21	59	29	12	18
No	72	89	78	40	68	86	77
Don't know	1	3	*	*	1	2	*
Refused	2	*	*	1	2	1	5

D10A "Are you aware of an organization called "Rock the Vote"

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	34	56	32	11	34	26	25
No	64	43	68	88	64	73	70
Don't know	*	*	--	*	*	1	2
Refused	2	*	--	*	2	*	3

(If YES)

D10B Please tell me if you strongly trust, somewhat trust, somewhat distrust, or strongly distrust Rock the Vote to provide accurate information about Social Security.

<i>Among those aware of "Rock the Vote"</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=341)	(n=173)	(n=135)	(n=33 ^β)	(n=186)	(n=114)	(n=109)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly trust	13	15	10	13	16	23	26
Somewhat trust	43	50	34	35	45	44	56
Somewhat distrust	18	21	14	11	14	15	6
Strongly distrust	10	5	15	18	8	6	8
Don't know	15	8	24	23	16	11	4
Refused	2	1	3	--	1	*	--

D10C If the nonprofit organization Rock the Vote was advocating to protect Social Security for young people, would that make you more likely to pay attention to the issue, less likely, or would it make no difference?

<i>Among those aware of "Rock the Vote"</i>	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=341)	(n=173)	(n=135)	(n=33 ^β)	(n=186)	(n=114)	(n=109)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
More likely	37	38	36	42	40	45	56
Less likely	3	2	5	4	3	6	1
No difference	58	59	59	42	55	49	42
Don't know	1	*	--	12	1	--	1
Refused	*	1	--	--	--	--	--

S1/D11A. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	8	14	7	3	6	100	5
No	90	85	93	96	93	--	95
Don't know	*	--	--	*	*	--	*
Refused	2	1	*	*	1	--	--

^β Small base, use data with caution.

^β Small base, use data with caution.

S2/D11B. What do you consider to be your race -- are you...

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
White	78	70	82	92	81	29	--
African American or Black	10	14	8	5	11	5	100
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	3	2	1	1	3	--
American Indian or Native American	2	3	3	1	1	4	--
Hispanic	4	7	3	1	3	55	--
Something else	1	2	1	*	1	*	--
Don't know	*	--	1	*	*	3	--
Refused/no answer	2	1	1	*	2	--	--

ASK ALL

D12. For statistical purposes only, we need to know your total household income. I am going to read off some income categories. Would you please stop me when I name the category that best describes the combined annual income of this household, including wages or salary, interest, and all other sources?

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Under \$15,000	12	11	10	16	14	15	15
\$15,000 to \$24,999	12	14	8	16	13	18	15
\$25,000 - \$34,999	12	12	13	14	12	13	13
\$35,000 - \$44,999	10	15	6	10	9	9	9
\$45,000 - \$54,999	7	9	9	3	6	6	7
\$55,000 - \$64,999	7	9	9	3	8	6	7
\$65,000 - \$74,999	4	4	6	2	4	2	4
\$75,000 - \$84,999	4	5	6	1	4	3	3
\$85,000 or more	14	13	20	7	12	8	6
Don't know	4	5	1	7	4	7	6
Refused	14	4	10	21	15	13	15
Mean (\$)	45,600	45,300	51,800	33,900	43,900	38,000	38,300
Median (\$)	40,300	40,900	51,800	27,500	37,700	30,400	31,900

D13. Next, what is the approximate total dollar amount of your household's assets held in retirement plans? Please include any contributions you or members of your household have made, as well as any employer contributions.

	Total pop	18-39	40-59	60+	Females	Total Hispanics	Total African Americans
	(n=1,000)	(n=291)	(n=388)	(n=289)	(n=578)	(n=411)	(n=410)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Under \$10,000	26	30	27	24	26	34	29
\$10,000 to \$24,999	11	18	8	6	12	12	15
\$25,000 - \$34,999	5	7	5	5	5	4	6
\$35,000 - \$44,999	3	4	3	1	2	3	3
\$45,000 - \$54,999	2	2	2	1	1	2	4
\$55,000 - \$64,999	2	2	1	2	1	1	1
\$65,000 - \$74,999	1	1	2	*	1	1	*
\$75,000 - \$84,999	1	1	1	1	1	*	1
\$85,000 or more	15	7	26	14	12	5	6
Don't know	18	24	13	20	21	24	18
Refused	17	5	13	27	17	15	18
Mean (\$)	35,600	25,900	43,700	36,400	32,200	22,100	25,600
Median (\$)	19,300	14,700	30,400	17,200	15,800	9,000	13,500