



**AARP Bulletin
Poll on Workers 50+:
Executive Summary**

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Data collected by International Communications Research

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What do older workers think about age-based discrimination in the workplace? How satisfied are they with their current job? Do their past expectations match today's reality? At what ages do they think they will stop working completely and not work for pay at all? What types of work arrangements are prevalent among older workers? As the nation celebrates Labor Day 2007, the AARP Bulletin recently commissioned a nationwide poll of workers 50 years of age and older to explore these questions.

Poll respondents reported. . .

- **Retirees returning to the workforce.** Nearly 40% (38%) of workers aged 60+ reported having retired from a previous career. This number dips significantly when we look at the 50-54 year old workers, where only 11% reported having retired from a previous career.
- **Self-employment increases with age.** Fourteen percent of the 50-54 year old workers stated they were self-employed, but that number doubles to 30% for the 60+ workers.
- **Part-time work schedules differ by age and gender.** 35% of workers 60 years of age or older reported working part-time, while significantly fewer younger workers reported similar arrangements (18% of 55-59 year olds and 11% of 50-54 year olds reported part-time). Significantly more females (26%) reported a part-time work schedule than their male counterparts (8%).
- **Past expectations match today's reality.** Nine out of ten 50-54 year old workers expected they would be working at their current age; however, significantly fewer (66%) workers age 60 years or older expected to be working at this age.
- **Full retirement age projected to be 65 or 70.** When asked at what age they think they will stop working completely and not work for pay at all, frequent responses were age 65 and age 70 (23% and 16%, respectively), although some respondents (7%) reported they never plan to stop working.
- **Few experience age-based discrimination in the workplace.** When asked about different types of discrimination, very few workers (approximately 10%) reported having experienced any one of these actions in the workplace. Percentages do slightly increase with age - - workers 60 years and older were more likely to report having been exposed to unwelcome comments about their age than the 55-59 year old cohort (15% compared to 3%, respectively).
- **Similar opinions expressed concerning age-discrimination in workplace.** 80% of workers agreed that "nobody should be forced to retire because of age if they want to continue to work" and 82% of workers agreed that "most older

workers can perform as well on the job as most younger workers.” More than half (62%) of workers agreed with the statement “most employers discriminate against older workers.” No differences of opinion were found when looking across three different age cohorts (50-54 year olds, 55-59 year olds, and 60 years and older).

- **Older workers are satisfied with their overall job, but not so much with certain elements of their job.** Ninety percent of poll respondents reported satisfaction with their overall job; however, when asked about their benefits package, current pay, and current manager, fewer respondents reported being satisfied (67%, 72% and 75%, respectively). Further, a slight gender difference appeared in strength of satisfaction reported with current work hours (74% of female respondents were “very satisfied” compared to 55% of males).

Poll methodology

A nationally representative sample of 510 age 50+ “workers” (defined as employed full-time, part-time or temporarily unemployed) were polled by telephone between August 1st and 8th, 2007 by International Communications Research using its national omnibus survey.

Workers 50+ Omni Survey: Annotated Questionnaire

Numbers shown below are percentages.

The base for each percentage is 510 unless otherwise noted.

Z-7. What is your age?

50-54	55-64	65+
62%	31%	7%

Z-4. Currently, are you yourself employed full-time, part-time, or not at all?

EMPLOYED			Temp. Unem- ployed	Don't know	Refused
NET	Full- time	Part- time			
93%	76%	17%	5%	--	2%

WO-1 Are you self-employed or do you work for someone other than yourself?

Self-employed	Employed by someone else	Don't know	Refused
19%	76%	3%	2%

WO-2 Have you retired from a previous career?

Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
19%	79%	*	1%

WO-3 At what age do you think you will stop working completely and not work for pay at all?

50-64	65-72	73+	Will work forever/ will never retire	Don't Know	Refused
21	48	10	8	8	5

WO-4 Thinking back ten years, did you expect to be working or did you expect to be fully retired when you reached your current age?

Expected to be working	Expected to be fully retired	Don't know	Refused
85	13	1	1

WO-5 Now, I am going to read you some statements people have made about work and retirement. How strongly do you agree or disagree that (INSERT STATEMENT)? Would that be strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?

a. Nobody should be forced to retire because of age if they want to continue to work

AGREE			Neither agree nor disagree	DISAGREE			Don't know	Refused
NET	Strongly	Somewhat		NET	Somewhat	Strongly		
80	60	20	4	13	9	4	1	1

b. Most employers discriminate against older workers

AGREE			Neither agree nor disagree	DISAGREE			Don't know	Refused
NET	Strongly	Somewhat		NET	Somewhat	Strongly		
62	27	35	11	23	15	8	2	2

c. Most older workers can perform as well on the job as most younger workers

AGREE			Neither agree nor disagree	DISAGREE			Don't know	Refused
NET	Strongly	Somewhat		NET	Somewhat	Strongly		
82	56	26	4	11	6	5	2	1

WO-6 Next, I'm going to ask you some questions about work related discrimination due to age and I want to know if you believe you have experienced any of these situations because of age since turning 50 years old. Have you (INSERT STATEMENT).

a. Not been hired for a job because of your age

Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
8	88	2	2

b. Been passed over for a raise, promotion or chance to get ahead because of your age

Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
6	92	1	2

c. Been denied access to training or the opportunity to acquire new skills because of your age

Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
5	93	*	2

d. Been laid off, fired or forced to retire because of your age

Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
5	93	*	2

e. Received or been exposed to unwelcome comments about your age in the workplace

Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
8	90	*	2

WO-7 Next, I am going to ask about your satisfaction level with each of the following job-related items. How satisfied are you with your (INSERT)? Would that be very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

a. Current work hours

SATISFIED			Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	DISSATISFIED			N/A	Don't know	Refused
NET	Very	Some-what		NET	Some-what	Very			
86	64	22	4	7	4	3	--	1	3

b. Current pay or salary

SATISFIED			Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	DISSATISFIED			N/A	Don't know	Refused
NET	Very	Some-what		NET	Some-what	Very			
72	38	35	6	17	11	6	--	2	3

c. Current benefits package

SATISFIED			Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	DISSATISFIED			N/A	Don't know	Refused
NET	Very	Some-what		NET	Some-what	Very			
67	42	25	5	16	8	7	7	2	3

d. Current supervisor or manager

SATISFIED			Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	DISSATISFIED			N/A	Don't know	Refused
NET	Very	Some-what		NET	Some-what	Very			
75	58	17	3	10	6	4	8	3	2

e. Job, on an overall basis

SATISFIED			Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	DISSATISFIED			N/A	Don't know	Refused
NET	Very	Some-what		NET	Some-what	Very			
90	61	28	3	4	2	2	--	1	2

AM-1 Are you (or your spouse/partner) a member of AARP?

Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
38	60	1	1