



China fact sheet

The Future of Retirement in a World of Rising Life Expectancies

China research summary

- The global study commissioned by HSBC has revealed that in a rapidly modernizing and fast-paced urban China, views of old age diverge sharply across generations. Old age starts early - at 50 according to most respondents, and the Chinese tend to want to mingle with people who are not in their own age bracket.
- Younger Chinese think their elders have too much time on their hands and spend too much time living in the past. They also have very different views on what old age and retirement are all about. While older Chinese think the later years are a time for rest, relaxation, and no work, younger Chinese are more likely to view it as an opportunity for a new chapter in life and a chance for new career challenges.
- However, all generations agree that family is central, and that staying young at heart and having loving family and friends are the keys to a happy old age. Virtually all Chinese - regardless of age - expect to rely on their children for care and support in later life. And, though they are avid readers about retirement planning, few consult professional advisors.

Key findings from China

Attitude to ageing and elders

- The Chinese have a moderately positive view of their elders

Retirement planning

- Eight in 10 (80%) of pre-retirees have taken steps to prepare for retirement in the last 12 months
- Over a third (39%) think they will bear most of their own retirement costs
- Four in 10 (43%) think not having to worry about money is extremely important for a happy old age

Attitude to retirement and old age

- Only 13% think age 50 plus years will be the best years in their lifetime
- A third (37%) see retirement as an opportunity for a whole new chapter in life
- Over half (52%) believe retirement is the time for personal challenges and taking risks
- One in six (15%) believe having dreams and ambitions is extremely important for a happy old age

Attitude to work in later years

- Two thirds (68%) of the Chinese are likely to want to work in retirement
- Only two in 10 (22%) feel having work you enjoy is extremely important for a happy old age
- Two thirds (63%) are against mandatory retirement
- Two thirds (66%) think those over 65 should have the freedom to work for as long as they want

Care and support in retirement

- Over nine in 10 (96%) are likely to expect to rely on their children for care in old age
- Four in 10 (40%) are seriously concerned about being a burden to their families in old age

Supporting data

- Recent UN global population research (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 8 December 2004) highlights the extent of the ageing population:
- The proportion of older persons was 8 per cent in 1950, 10 per cent in 2005 and is projected to reach 21 per cent by mid-century
 - In 2000, the global population included 600 million older persons, triple the number in 1950
 - The global population of older persons is growing by 1.9 per cent annually, considerably faster than the population as a whole
 - By 2050, the world is expected to have 2 billion older persons