



USA fact sheet

The Future of Retirement in a World of Rising Life Expectancies

USA research summary

- The global study commissioned by HSBC has revealed that, in the USA, the later years are viewed as a time of opportunity, new careers, and religion. Americans have a very positive image of both their later years and their elders, who they think are interesting, full of wisdom, and highly deserving of respect.
- Compared to other countries, Americans think spiritual faith is more important to a happy old age and are also less likely to feel they can depend on their children for support in later life.
- However, financial preparation is top of mind for most, and Americans actively contribute to pension plans and seek out a variety of advice from professional advisors, the internet, newspapers, magazines, and friends. Work is considered an important part of retirement, and Americans are the most opposed to any legal restrictions that would limit their freedom to work for as long as they want.

Key findings from the USA

Attitude to ageing and elders

- Residents of the USA have a generally positive view of their elders

Retirement planning

- Eight in 10 (83%) of pre-retirees have taken steps to prepare for retirement in the last 12 months
- Two thirds (67%) think they will bear most of their own retirement costs
- Over a third (39%) think not having to worry about money is extremely important for a happy old age
- Four in 10 (40%) are seriously concerned about outliving their money

Attitude to retirement and old age

- Only a quarter (27%) feel age 50 plus years will be the best years in their lifetime
- Two thirds (64%) think retirement is a whole new chapter
- Half (52%) believe retirement is the time for personal challenges and taking risks

Attitude to work in later years

- Over nine in 10 (93%) are likely to be against mandatory retirement
- Just over three quarters (78%) are likely to want to work in retirement
- Just under a quarter (23%) are likely to think having work you enjoy is extremely important for a happy old age
- Nearly nine in 10 (88%) think those over 65 should have the freedom to work for as long as they want

Care and support in retirement

- Half (52%) are likely to be seriously concerned about being a burden to their families in old age
- One in 10 (12%) think their children and other family members will bear most of their retirement costs
- Four in 10 (41%) expect to rely on their children for care 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