

National Survey Results

(Direct all inquiries about this survey to AARP Media Relations at 202-434-2560)

This national survey of adults at least 18 years old finds that when it comes to Medicare and Social Security, the public believes Washington is trying to make too many decisions behind closed doors and Washington needs to spend more time listening to ordinary citizens like them. The public feels that both Medicare and Social Security are important to people's health and financial security in retirement, however confidence in the programs being there throughout retirement is not very strong. The survey was conducted by Woelfel Research, Inc., an independent research firm, among 1,207 adults age 18+ from February 13-28, 2012. The survey has a margin of sampling error of +/- 2.8%.

Medicare

- **Over nine in ten adults (98%) believe Medicare is *important* to people's health in retirement, including over eight in ten who believe it is *very important* (88%).** This sentiment holds true across political parties (100% of Democrats, 96% of Republicans, and 97% of Independents) and age groups (97% of adults under age 50, 98% of 50-64 year-olds, and 99% of adults age 65+) with nearly all believing the program is *important* to people's health in retirement.
- **Roughly half (54%) of adults are *confident* that Medicare will be there for them throughout their retirement. However, less than a fifth (18%) are *very confident* about this.** Younger adults are less confident: 45% of adults age 18-49, 59% of 50-64 year-olds, and 73% adults age 65+ express confidence that Medicare will be there for them.

Social Security

- **Over nine in ten adults (96%) believe Social Security is *important* to people's financial security in retirement, including over eight in ten who believe it is *very important* (84%).** This sentiment holds true across political parties (98% of Democrats, 95% of Republicans, and 95% of Independents) and age groups (94% of adults under age 50, 98% of 50-64 year-olds, and 98% of adults age 65+) with nearly all believing the program is *important* to people's financial security in retirement.
- **About half (49%) of adults are *confident* that Social Security will be there for them throughout their retirement. However, less than a fifth (19%) are *very confident* about this.** Younger adults are less confident: 34% of adults age 18-49, 61% of 50-64 year-olds, and 75% adults age 65+ express confidence that Social Security will be there for them.

Views about Washington

- **Over three quarters of adults (78%) agree Washington is trying to make too many decisions behind closed doors when it comes to Medicare and Social Security.** Agreement is seen across political parties (72% of Democrats, 89% of Republicans, 79% of Independents) and age groups (80% of adults under age 50, 80% of adults age 50-64, and 70% of adults age 65+).
- **Over nine in ten adults (95%) agree Washington needs to spend more time listening to ordinary citizens like them when it comes to decisions about Social Security and Medicare, including over three quarters (79%) who *strongly agree*.** Agreement is seen across political parties (92% of Democrats, 97% of Republicans, 97% of Independents) and age groups (95% of adults under age 50, 95% of adults age 50-64, and 93% of adults age 65+).

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted by Woelfel Research, Inc., an independent research firm, among 1,207 adults age 18+ from February 13-28, 2012. A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples were used to represent all adults nationwide who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone (approximately 98%). A three-stage weighting procedure was used to weight this dual-frame sample. The first stage weight adjusts for the probability of selection within a household and for phone use (overlapping landline and cellular sample frames). The second stage weight combines the cell phone and landline usage to be consistent with national statistics. The third stage weight adjusts age, gender, and race to be consistent with the distribution nationwide. The survey has a margin of sampling error of +/- 2.8%.

DATA TABLES

Notes:

Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

Less than 0.5% shown as “-“

N's shown are unweighted

1. How important would you say Social Security is to people's financial security in retirement? Would you say it is [READ LIST]

	ALL	AGE			PARTY AFFILIATION		
	Total N=1207	18-49 N=467	50-64 N=354	65+ N=383	Dem N=415	Rep N=282	Ind N=358
Very important	84%	78%	89%	93%	91%	80%	80%
Somewhat important	12	16	9	5	7	15	15
Not too important	1	2	-	1	1	3	1
Not at all important	1	2	1	-	-	2	2
Don't know [DON'T READ]	2	2	-	2	1	-	2
Refused [DON'T READ]	-	1	-	-	-	-	-

2. How confident are you that Social Security will be there for you throughout your retirement? Would you say you are [READ LIST]

	ALL	AGE			PARTY AFFILIATION		
	Total N=1207	18-49 N=467	50-64 N=354	65+ N=383	Dem N=415	Rep N=282	Ind N=358
Very confident	19%	9%	23%	43%	25%	16%	15%
Somewhat confident	30	25	38	32	31	30	31
Not too confident	24	29	24	11	24	26	24
Not at all confident	24	34	14	5	17	25	28
Don't know [DON'T READ]	3	3	1	8	3	4	2
Refused [DON'T READ]	1	1	-	1	1	-	-

3. How important would you say Medicare is to people's health in retirement? Would you say it is [READ LIST]

	ALL	AGE			PARTY AFFILIATION		
	Total N=1207	18-49 N=467	50-64 N=354	65+ N=383	Dem N=415	Rep N=282	Ind N=358
Very important	88%	85%	89%	94%	93%	86%	86%
Somewhat important	10	12	9	5	7	10	11
Not too important	1	1	1	1	-	1	1
Not at all important	1	1	1	1	-	2	1
Don't know [DON'T READ]	1	1	-	1	-	1	1
Refused [DON'T READ]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

4. How confident are you that Medicare will be there for you throughout your retirement? Would you say you are [READ LIST]

	ALL	AGE			PARTY AFFILIATION		
	Total N=1207	18-49 N=467	50-64 N=354	65+ N=383	Dem N=415	Rep N=282	Ind N=358
Very confident	18%	13%	16%	37%	24%	16%	14%
Somewhat confident	36	32	43	36	35	35	38
Not too confident	26	29	27	15	25	30	23
Not at all confident	17	23	12	5	13	17	21
Don't know [DON'T READ]	3	3	2	5	2	2	3
Refused [DON'T READ]	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

5. Please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: When it comes to Medicare and Social Security, Washington is trying to make too many decisions behind closed doors.

	ALL	AGE			PARTY AFFILIATION		
	Total N=1207	18-49 N=467	50-64 N=354	65+ N=383	Dem N=415	Rep N=282	Ind N=358
Strongly agree	52%	52%	54%	51%	45%	63%	56%
Somewhat agree	26	28	26	19	27	26	23
Somewhat disagree	8	8	8	7	11	6	7
Strongly disagree	7	6	7	9	11	2	7
Don't know [DON'T READ]	7	6	5	11	5	3	7
Refused [DON'T READ]	1	1	-	2	1	-	1

6. Please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: When it comes to decisions about Social Security and Medicare, Washington needs to spend more time listening to ordinary citizens like me.

	ALL	AGE			PARTY AFFILIATION		
	Total N=1207	18-49 N=467	50-64 N=354	65+ N=383	Dem N=415	Rep N=282	Ind N=358
Strongly agree	79%	76%	83%	82%	77%	80%	82%
Somewhat agree	16	19	12	11	15	17	15
Somewhat disagree	2	2	2	2	4	1	1
Strongly disagree	2	2	2	2	3	1	1
Don't know [DON'T READ]	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Refused [DON'T READ]	1	1	-	-	-	-	-