VITAL VOICES

Issues That Impact Illinois Adults Age 45 and Older, June 2021

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INTRODUCTION

There are currently about 117 million Americans who are 50 and older; this number will grow to 157 million by 2050. The 50 and older population is and will continue to be an essential contributor to American society. Understanding the needs and opinions of older Americans is critical to ensuring they live longer and healthier lives.

Vital Voices is a new and exciting program of research undertaken by AARP. Through this research program, we are launching a new initiative that will deliver critical, current, and state-specific data to 53 states on a rolling three-year schedule between 2019 and 2021. We are making this data available to the public to assist with the development of programs, products, and policies for older adults. This data will allow those in leadership positions to:

• Predict the need for a specific program or interest in a particular issue.
• Enhance program and product innovation and development.
• Track issues and attitudes over time to assess shifts in public opinion.
• Take action on critical advocacy issues.

Never before has AARP launched a research program of this size and with this much promise. We give it to you, hoping that it will significantly impact the work you do.
Survey Results for Illinois-Health Questions

Issues That Impact Illinois Adults Age 45 and Older
Illinois residents age 45+ think many healthcare issues are important, with having adequate health insurance coverage, staying mentally sharp, and staying physically healthy topping the list.

### Important Healthcare Issues

- **Having adequate health insurance coverage**: 93%
- **Staying mentally sharp**: 93%
- **Staying physically healthy**: 93%
- **Having Medicare benefits available to you in the future**: 89%
- **Paying for health care expenses, including premiums and co-pays**: 84%
- **Paying for prescription drugs**: 79%

I1. For the following list of issues, please indicate how important each is to you personally. (Percent ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’) (n=1,006)
CARE1. Are you currently providing unpaid help to a relative or friend 18 years or older to help them take care of themselves? (n=1,006)

More than a quarter (27%) of Illinois residents age 45+ are currently providing unpaid help to an adult relative or friend.
More than one-third (36%) of Illinois residents age 45+ who are not currently caregivers have provided this type of care in the past to a loved one.
Two out of five (40%) Illinois residents age 45+ are very or somewhat likely to face serious financial hardship if unpaid leave from work is needed to care for a loved one.

Likelihood of Facing Financial Hardship If Taking Unpaid Leave

- Extremely likely: 6%
- Very likely: 23%
- Somewhat likely: 17%
- Not likely at all: 21%
- Not very likely: 16%
- Don’t know/ refused: 17%
Illinois residents age 45+ are concerned about a variety of health and long-term care issues, including the quality of care in Illinois nursing homes.

<table>
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<th>Health and Aging Concerns</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>The quality of care in Illinois nursing homes</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having long-term care or home health services available when needed</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staying safe in your own home and community as you get older</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The quality of healthcare services available to you in your community</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paying for long-term care such as nursing home or home health services</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<td>Providing support, help, or caregiving for a loved one</td>
<td>57%</td>
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As of June 2021, nearly three-quarters (74%) of Illinois residents age 45+ have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
COVID-19

Half (51%) of Illinois residents age 45+ who are not getting vaccinated (or are unsure if they will get the COVID-19 vaccine) are worried about side effects of the vaccine and/or don’t think the vaccine has been tested enough.

Reasons for Not Getting the COVID-19 Vaccine

- Worried about side effects: 51%
- Don’t think it has been tested enough: 51%
- Do not trust the government: 45%
- The risks of taking a new vaccine outweigh any benefits: 40%
- Don’t trust the drug companies that make the vaccine: 40%
- Want to wait and see how it goes for other people: 38%
- Healthy and don’t need a COVID-19 vaccine: 29%
- Do not think the vaccination will work to protect from infection: 25%
- Already had COVID-19, so you can’t get it again: 13%
- Do not think you will get that sick if you get COVID-19: 8%
- Keeping away from health care sites to avoid COVID-19: 7%
- Concerned about the cost of the vaccine: 3%
- Other (specify): 3%

CVD-12. What are some reasons why you [do not plan to/are unsure if you will] get the COVID-19 vaccine? (Percent 'yes') (n=185)
Survey Results for Illinois-Wealth Questions

Issues That Impact Illinois Adults Age 45 and Older
Illinois residents age 45+ find many economic issues important, particularly those related to retirement savings and Social Security.

### Important Economic Issues

- **Having enough income or savings to retire**: 93%
- **Having adequate Social Security benefits**: 90%
- **Having affordable utilities**: 85%
- **Protecting yourself against consumer fraud**: 81%
- **Protecting yourself against unfair financial practices**: 80%
- **Being able to stop working for pay at the age you want**: 78%
- **Having online security**: 72%
- **Protection from age discrimination**: 68%
- **Having good employment opportunities in your community**: 61%
- **Having access to affordable high-speed Internet**: 59%
- **Maintaining relevant job skills and experience**: 53%

**N=1,006**

11. For the following list of issues, please indicate how important each is to you personally. (Percent ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’)

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[Note: This data is from a survey conducted for AARP.ORG/RESEARCH | © 2021 AARP ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.]
As you think about your finances in the future, how anxious do you feel about having enough money to live comfortably through your retirement years? (n=1,006)

Seven in ten (71%) Illinois residents age 45+ are very or somewhat anxious about having enough money to live comfortably during retirement.

Anxiety About Having Enough Money During Retirement

- Very anxious: 39%
- Somewhat anxious: 32%
- Not anxious at all: 15%
- Don’t know/refused: 12%
RET10. Does your employer provide a way for you to save for retirement? (n=343)

One in five (19%) Illinois workers age 45+ work for an employer that does not provide a way to save for retirement.
Survey Results for Illinois-Livable Community Questions

Issues That Impact Illinois Adults Age 45 and Older
About two in five (44%) Illinois residents age 45+ describe their residential area as suburban.
Three-quarters (75%) of Illinois residents age 45+ are homeowners.
Independent living is extremely or very important to a most Illinois residents age 45+.

Important Independent Living Issues

- Staying in your own home as you get older: 86%
- Getting to the places you need to go independently: 84%
- Having enough services so people who want to can be cared for in their homes as they age: 81%
- Caring for a loved one: 78%
- Having high quality long-term care in your community: 77%
- Having alternatives to nursing home care: 76%
- Having flexibility in your schedule to care for a loved one: 71%
- Having paid time off to care for yourself or a seriously ill family member: 65%
- Having ways to be connected to your community and socialize as you age, both in-person and online: 59%

11. For the following list of issues, please indicate how important each is to you personally. (Percent 'extremely important' or 'very important') (n=1,006)
Among residents of Chicago City age 45+, two-thirds (67%) are extremely or very concerned about having streets that are safe and easy for all pedestrians to use.

**Livable Community Concerns**

- Having streets that are safe and easy for all pedestrians to use: 67%
- Being able to find affordable housing if you needed to downsize or move to another community: 57%
- Being able to afford to remain in your home as you age: 54%
- Having access to transportation near your home if you are unable or prefer not to drive: 49%
- Being able to afford groceries or household necessities: 48%
- Being able to get around your community: 48%
- Being able to afford modifications to your home so that it is easier to live in as you age: 47%

LIVCOMM1. How concerned are you about the following? (Percent ‘extremely concerned’ or ‘very concerned’) (n=177)
Nearly two-thirds of Illinois residents age 45+ cite increasing rent or property taxes as factors that would impact their ability to remain in their home as they age.

Factors Impacting Ability to Age in Place

- Increasing rent (if renting): 64%
- Increasing property taxes (if own): 62%
- Being able to make the necessary repairs and modifications to your home so you can continue to live there safely: 43%
- Increasing maintenance costs: 43%
- Heating and cooling costs: 42%
- Safety in your neighborhood: 42%
- Safety in your home: 40%
- Being close to goods and services: 38%

HOME-1. How much do you think each of the following would impact your ability to remain in your home as you age? (Percent ‘a lot’) (n=1,006)
MIGRATION

Nearly half (45%) of Illinois residents age 45+ have considered leaving Illinois in the past year.

Considered Leaving Illinois in the Past Year (as of June 2021)

- Yes: 55%
- No: 45%

MIG-1. In the past year, have you personally considered leaving Illinois? (n=1,006)
Illinois residents age 45+ who have considered leaving the state in the past year cite a variety of reasons for doing so, including for lower taxes (91%) and lower overall cost of living (87%).

Reasons for Considering Leaving Illinois

- Lower taxes: 91%
- Lower overall cost of living: 87%
- To live in someplace with a better managed state government: 82%
- Lower housing costs: 79%
- Better climate: 73%
- A safer community or lower crime rate: 58%
- To be with or live closer to other family members: 43%
- Better job opportunities: 43%
- To be in a home that is safer for older adults: 37%
- Better access to health care: 37%
- More financial assistance: 34%
- Other: 2%

MIG-2. What are your reasons for considering leaving Illinois? Is it for [ITEM]? (Percent ‘yes’) (n=449)
As of June 2021, 5% of Illinois residents age 45+ are in danger of losing their home due to eviction or foreclosure brought about by financial hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Danger of Losing Home Due to Eviction or Foreclosure (as of June 2021)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

HOME-2. Are you in danger of losing your home due to an eviction or foreclosure brought about by financial hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic? (n=1,006)
Over half (64%) of homeowners age 45+ living in Chicago would consider creating an ADU within their home or property if they had the space available to do so.

**Would Consider Creating an ADU Within Home or Property**

- Yes: 64%
- No: 2%
- Don't know: 34%

**ADU-2.** An Accessory Dwelling Unit, or ADU, is a residential unit built on the same lot as an existing single-family home. It is commonly referred to as a "granny flat" or "in-law quarters." ADUs provide complete separate living quarters, including a kitchen and bathroom, that can allow older adults to age in their existing home with live-in care, make it possible for adults to assist their aging parents or other loved ones, or be used for rental income. If you had the space to create an ADU within your home or on your property, would you consider doing that? (n=105)
RACE-1. How big a problem would you say racism is in our society today? (n=1,006)

Over half (54%) of Illinois residents age 45+ agree that racism is a big problem in society today.

Racism as a Problem in Society Today

- A big problem: 54%
- Somewhat of a problem: 24%
- A small problem: 13%
- Not a problem at all: 8%
- Don't know/ refused: 8%
Nearly two in five (38%) Illinois residents age 45+ have often seen or experienced racism personally.

Frequency Seeing or Experiencing Discrimination

- Racism: 38%
- Ageism or age discrimination against someone older: 32%
- Sexism: 30%
In May 2021, AARP engaged ANR Market Research Consultants to conduct a quantitative research study among Illinois residents age 45 and older. Topics included healthcare, the economy, financial issues, independent living, long-term care, caregiving, and retirement issues.

1,006 Interviews
Illinois Adults Age 45+
Fielded in May/June 2021

ANR completed a total of 1,006 interviews (368 via landline telephone, 234 via cell phone, and 404 online). Respondents were screened to meet the following criteria:

- Age 45+
- Resident of Illinois

Survey length averaged 20.1 minutes by telephone and 18.7 minutes online.
METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure

Landline, cell phone, and online sampling were used for this research, with the telephone sample drawn randomly from a list of Illinois residents age 45 and older, purchased from Aristotle, and online sample provided by Fulcrum. A total of 63,344 records were utilized. The list of 5,270,291 Illinois residents age 45 and older was randomly divided into 5,271 replicates of 1,000 records for telephone dialing. Initially, 20 replicates were released for calling, with additional replicates being opened as necessary. In all, 54 replicates representing a total of 53,141 records were dialed to complete the telephone portion of this study.

The sample of 1,006 respondents yields a maximum statistical error of ±3.1% at the 95% level of confidence. (This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would be within ±3.1 percentage points of the results obtained had everyone in the population been interviewed.)

Interview Methodology

The survey was launched on May 17, 2021 and closed on June 7, 2021, offered in both English and Spanish.

Telephone interviewing was active between 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., with some additional calling done between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. If necessary, up to 8 call attempts per telephone number were made to reach an eligible respondent. All numbers were called at multiple times of the day as well as days of the week to maximize each resident’s opportunity for inclusion in the study.

Percentages of some questions may exceed 100% due to rounding or the use of multiple response question formats.

All data have been weighted by age, gender, and race/ethnicity according to 2019 U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) statistics.
AARP is the nation’s largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also works for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen, high-quality products and services to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the nation's largest circulation publications, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.
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This research was designed and executed by AARP Research.