



Boomers Expect Less Comfortable Retirement

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

For Immediate Release: Thursday, January 20, 2011

Contact: Lee M. Miringoff
Barbara L. Carvalho
Mary E. Azzoli
Marist College
845.575.5050

This Marist Poll Reports:

2011 marks a milestone for one of the most discussed generations -- the Baby Boomers. This year, the Boomers began turning 65 years old. As they enter this golden stage of life, how optimistic are they about their future?

When it comes to their retirement years, a majority of Baby Boomers -- 54% -- believe they will be less comfortable than other generations before them. In fact, Boomers are the generation who is least optimistic about post retirement life. Nearly half -- 48% -- of Millennials and a plurality -- 44% -- of Gen Xers believe retirement will be more difficult compared with previous generations. Only the Silent-Greatest generation has a more positive outlook. Nearly four in ten in this group -- 39% -- say they are more comfortable than generations who preceded them. 37% say they are about as comfortable.

Among Americans overall -- 44% -- report their retirement years will be more trying compared with about one-third -- 33% -- who say they anticipate those years will be about as comfortable as those who retired before them. 22% believe they will have it easier than their predecessors.

Looking Back to the Future: Hope for a Cure

When they were teenagers, four in ten Baby Boomers -- 40% -- thought a cure for cancer would be discovered by the time they were 65. 21% thought poverty or hunger would be ended, 18% believed there would be an end to war, and an additional 12% predicted a clean environment around the globe. 10% were unsure.

Hope for a cure for cancer spans the generations. 52% of Gen Xers, 51% of Millennials, and 31% of those in the Silent-Greatest generation report they, as teens, thought a cure for the disease would be found by the time they turned 65.

Among adults as a whole, 43% of Americans believed, as teens, a cure for cancer would be discovered by the time they reached retirement age.

Visions of Innovations: Driving Sky-High

As for the innovation that Boomers thought would most likely be invented by the time they reached 65, three in ten -- 30% -- believed, as teenagers, there would be flying cars. 35% of Gen Xers agree. Millennials divide with 28% predicting, as teenagers, that flying cars would enter the transportation landscape by the time they reach retirement age and 25% anticipating human robots. There is little consensus among those in the Silent-Greatest generation. Among this group, 17% envisioned flying cars, 16% thought people from earth would be living on other planets, and 14% believed there would be a technological way to make us smarter. 12% thought human robots would be commonplace. Four percent believed there would be no need for sleep, and nearly four in ten -- 38% -- were unsure.

Among adults nationally, as teens, 28% reported flying cars and 21% believed human robots would be invented by the time they reach 65.

Boomers: Burden or Benefit?

Most Americans -- 80% -- acknowledge the contributions Baby Boomers, as a generation, have made to society. This includes 87% of Boomers, 79% of those in Gen X, 77% of Millennials, and 75% of those in the Silent-Greatest generation who believe Boomers have been more of a benefit than a burden to American life. However, a greater proportion of Millennials -than any other generation -- 19% -- consider Boomers to be more of a burden than a benefit.

How the Survey was Conducted

Nature of the Sample: National Poll of 1,029 Adults

This survey of 1,029 adults was conducted on December 2nd through December 8th, 2010. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the continental United States were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. To increase coverage, this land-line sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined. Results are statistically significant within ± 3.0 percentage points. There are 873 registered voters. The results for this subset are statistically significant within ± 3.5 percentage points. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

Nature of the Sample: Adults

Nature of the Sample - National Adults		
		National Adults
		Col %
National Adults		100%
Registered Voters		85%
Region	Northeast	19%
	Midwest	22%
	South	37%
	West	22%
Income	Less \$50,000	51%
	\$50,000-\$99,999	31%
	\$100,000 or more	18%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	51%
	\$50,000 or more	49%
Race	White	67%
	African American	10%
	Latino	11%
	Other	11%
Race	White	67%
	Non-white	33%
Age	Under 45	40%
	45 or older	60%
Gender	Men	49%
	Women	51%
Households with children under 18	Household with children	37%
	No children in household	63%
Interview Type	Landline	73%
	Cell Phone	27%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted December 2nd through 8th, 2010, N=1029 MOE +/- 3%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

		National Adults		
		Thinking about your own retirement, do you think you will be or are more comfortable, less comfortable, or about as comfortable as previous generations were in their retirement?		
		More comfortable	Less comfortable	About as comfortable
		Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		22%	44%	33%
Generation	Millennials	20%	48%	32%
	Gen X	23%	44%	32%
	Baby Boomers	14%	54%	32%
	Silent-Greatest	39%	23%	37%
Age	Under 45	22%	46%	32%
	45 or older	23%	43%	34%
Region	Northeast	22%	51%	27%
	Midwest	22%	51%	27%
	South	24%	38%	38%
	West	21%	42%	37%
Gender	Men	23%	45%	32%
	Women	22%	44%	34%
Race	White	23%	46%	31%
	Non-white	23%	40%	36%
Education	Not college graduate	18%	49%	33%
	College graduate	29%	36%	35%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	21%	48%	31%
	\$50,000 or more	26%	40%	34%
Households with children under 18	Household with children	23%	48%	29%
	No children in household	22%	42%	36%
Interview Type	Landline	22%	45%	33%
	Cell Phone	24%	43%	32%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted December 2nd through 8th, 2010, N=1029 MOE +/- 3%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

		National Adults				
		Thinking back to when you were a teenager, what goal did you think would most likely be accomplished by the time you turned 65:				
		A cure for cancer	An end to war	The end of poverty or hunger	A clean environment around the globe	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		43%	17%	17%	12%	11%
Generation	Millennials	51%	13%	15%	15%	7%
	Gen X	52%	10%	16%	13%	8%
	Baby Boomers	40%	18%	21%	12%	10%
	Silent-Greatest	31%	25%	16%	8%	19%
Age	Under 45	52%	12%	15%	14%	7%
	45 or older	37%	20%	19%	11%	13%
Region	Northeast	39%	16%	19%	15%	10%
	Midwest	45%	16%	18%	8%	13%
	South	44%	19%	17%	11%	10%
	West	42%	16%	17%	14%	11%
Gender	Men	45%	15%	16%	11%	13%
	Women	41%	19%	19%	12%	9%
Race	White	45%	17%	17%	10%	11%
	Non-white	40%	17%	19%	15%	9%
Education	Not college graduate	42%	17%	20%	11%	10%
	College graduate	45%	16%	14%	13%	11%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	38%	19%	21%	11%	11%
	\$50,000 or more	49%	17%	14%	12%	9%
Households with children under 18	Household with children	45%	18%	20%	11%	6%
	No children in household	41%	16%	16%	12%	14%
Interview Type	Landline	41%	18%	18%	11%	12%
	Cell Phone	47%	15%	17%	14%	7%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted December 2nd through 8th, 2010, N=1029 MOE +/- 3%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

		National Adults					
		Thinking back to when you were a teenager, what innovation did you think would most likely happen by the time you turned 65:					
		No need for sleep	Flying cars	People from Earth living on other planets	Microchip implants to make us smarter	Human robots	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		4%	28%	18%	13%	21%	17%
Generation	Millennials	10%	28%	21%	17%	25%	<1%
	Gen X	1%	35%	15%	14%	23%	11%
	Baby Boomers	2%	30%	19%	10%	23%	16%
	Silent-Greatest	4%	17%	16%	14%	12%	38%
Age	Under 45	5%	31%	18%	15%	24%	6%
	45 or older	3%	25%	17%	12%	19%	24%
Region	Northeast	6%	27%	19%	14%	17%	17%
	Midwest	3%	29%	18%	10%	19%	21%
	South	3%	25%	18%	17%	24%	13%
	West	3%	31%	17%	9%	21%	18%
Gender	Men	3%	33%	16%	14%	19%	15%
	Women	5%	22%	19%	12%	23%	19%
Race	White	4%	27%	20%	11%	21%	18%
	Non-white	4%	29%	14%	19%	21%	13%
Education	Not college graduate	5%	26%	18%	14%	19%	19%
	College graduate	2%	31%	17%	12%	26%	13%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	5%	26%	16%	14%	19%	18%
	\$50,000 or more	3%	32%	18%	13%	23%	11%
Households with children under 18	Household with children	4%	32%	16%	13%	22%	12%
	No children in household	3%	25%	19%	13%	20%	19%
Interview Type	Landline	3%	26%	17%	11%	19%	22%
	Cell Phone	5%	31%	19%	17%	25%	2%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted December 2nd through 8th, 2010, N=1029 MOE +/- 3%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

		National Adults		
		Do you think the Baby Boom generation, those between the ages of 46 and 64, have been more of a:		
		Burden to society	Benefit to society	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		12%	80%	8%
Generation	Millennials	19%	77%	4%
	Gen X	12%	79%	9%
	Baby Boomers	8%	87%	5%
	Silent-Greatest	11%	75%	14%
Age	Under 45	16%	78%	7%
	45 or older	9%	83%	8%
Region	Northeast	14%	76%	9%
	Midwest	10%	82%	7%
	South	11%	81%	7%
	West	11%	81%	8%
Gender	Men	13%	80%	7%
	Women	10%	81%	9%
Race	White	10%	82%	8%
	Non-white	14%	78%	8%
Education	Not college graduate	14%	78%	8%
	College graduate	8%	85%	6%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	13%	78%	9%
	\$50,000 or more	10%	85%	5%
Households with children under 18	Household with children	12%	81%	7%
	No children in household	11%	80%	8%
Interview Type	Landline	11%	80%	9%
	Cell Phone	13%	83%	4%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted December 2nd through 8th, 2010, N=1029
MOE +/- 3%. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.