

## *Fast Facts from EBRI*

Contact: John MacDonald, EBRI, (202) 775-6349, [macdonald@ebri.org](mailto:macdonald@ebri.org)

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### **When Do Workers Plan to Retire, vs. Actually Doing So?**

WASHINGTON—At what age do workers say they plan to retire? And when do they *actually* retire? Has that changed over time?

The 17<sup>th</sup> annual Retirement Confidence Survey (RCS) shows that the age at which workers say that they plan to retire has slowly crept up—from a midpoint of age 62 in 1996 to age 65 in 2006 and 2007. The RCS also finds that many retirees left the work force earlier than they expected, for negative reasons.

Among workers, about 4 in 10 plan to retire before reaching age 65; 17 percent say they will retire before age 60; and 21 percent plan to retire between the ages of 60 and 64. More than one-quarter of workers say they will retire at age 65 (27 percent), while another quarter intend to retire at age 66 or even later (24 percent).

But for the average retiree, the actual age of retirement increased from age 60 in 1996 to age 62 in 2006 and 2007—which indicates that current retirees left the work force earlier than current workers expect to. The RCS also finds that many retirees who retired early cite negative reasons for leaving the work force before they expected, including health problems or disability (28 percent), changes at their company, such as downsizing or closure (28 percent), and having to care for a spouse or family member (25 percent).

Comparative data are in the table below:

	Workers (Planned)	Retirees (Actual)
Before 55	7%	14%
55–59	10	21
60–61	10	7
62–64	11	25
65	27	13
66 and older	24	15
Never retire/never worked	6	3
Don't know	5	0

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute and Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc., 2007 Retirement Confidence Survey.

The RCS also finds that workers who are not confident about their financial security in retirement plan to retire later, on average, than those who express confidence. Others planning to retire later include workers in excellent, very good, or good health, those not expecting benefits from a defined benefit plan, private-sector workers, women, and those with less than \$75,000 in household income.

The Retirement Confidence Survey is sponsored by the nonpartisan Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) and Mathew Greenwald & Associates, a survey research firm. Full survey results are available at: <http://www.ebri.org/surveys/rcs/2007/>.

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