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Debt Trends Vary Among Older Households

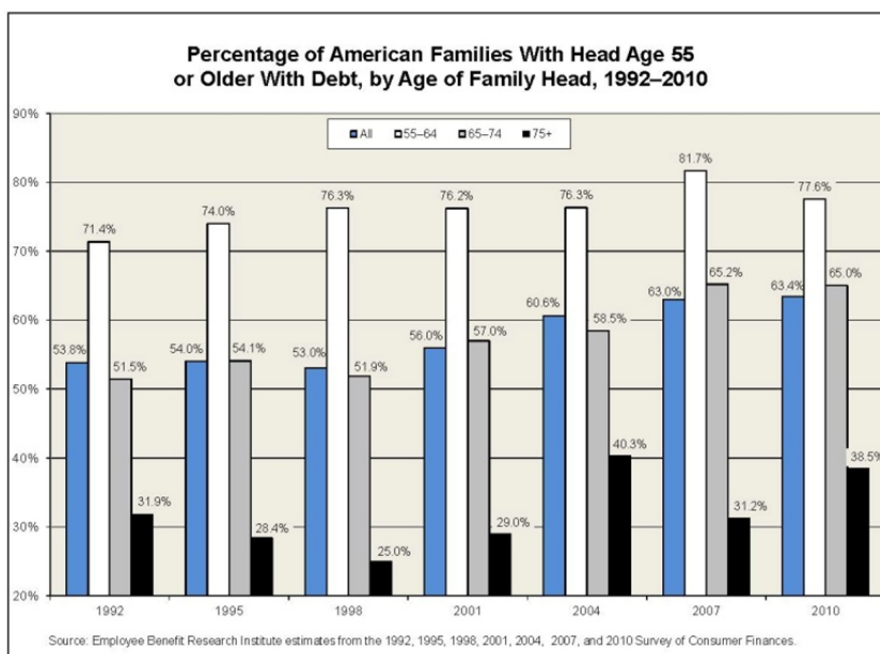
The share of older American families with debt in 2010 was virtually unchanged from 2007, although there was a significant increase in the share of those families with the oldest heads (ages 75 or older).

The percentage of American families headed by individuals age 55 or older with some level of debt was 63.4 percent in 2010, almost unchanged from the 2007 level of 63.0 percent. However, the 2010 level was up nearly 10 percentage points from the 1992 level of 53.8 percent.

While the percentages with debt decreased for families headed by individuals ages 55–64 and stayed the same for families headed by individuals ages 65–74, the percentage with debt among those with heads age 75 or older increased to 38.5 percent in 2010 from 31.2 percent in 2001.

Moreover, each age group in 2010 has a significantly higher percentage with debt than it had at the low point for each age during 1992–2010 study period.

EBRI's analysis is published in the February *EBRI Notes*, "Debt of the Elderly and Near Elderly, 1992–2010," using the Federal Reserve Board's Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF). This study also analyzes debt payments relative to income and debt relative to assets. The report is available online at www.ebri.org



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