

Individual Retirement Account Balances, Contributions, and Rollovers, 2011: The EBRI IRA Database

By Craig Copeland, Ph.D., Employee Benefit Research Institute

AT A GLANCE

Individual retirement accounts (IRAs) are a vital component of U.S. retirement savings, holding more than 25 percent of all retirement assets in the nation. A substantial and growing portion of these IRA assets originated in other tax-qualified retirement plans, such as defined benefit (pension) and 401(k) plans. The EBRI IRA Database contains data collected from various IRA plan administrators on 20.5 million accounts owned by 16.6 million unique individuals with total assets of \$1.456 trillion to study this ever-growing important source of retirement assets.

- The average IRA account balance in 2011 was \$70,915, while the average IRA individual balance (all accounts from the same person combined) was \$87,668. The median (mid-point) account balance was \$19,619, and the median individual balance was \$23,785.
- Individuals with a traditional IRA originating from rollovers had the highest average and median balance of \$110,918 and \$31,944, respectively. Roth owners had the lowest average and median balance at \$25,228 and \$11,344.
- Males had higher individual average and median balances than females: \$114,745 and \$30,704 for males, respectively, vs., \$66,529 and \$21,642 for females. The median balance for males reached \$72,971 for those ages 70 or older, compared with \$42,926 for females of that age.
- The average individual IRA balance for individuals in the EBRI IRA Database in both 2010 and 2011 declined by 2.0 percent from 2010 to 2011. However, the average individual Roth IRA balance increased by 2.2 percent in 2011.
- Among traditional IRA owners, 6.1 percent contributed, while 26.0 percent of those owning a Roth IRA contributed to it (13.2 percent overall). Of those individuals contributing, 47.2 percent contributed the maximum amount. Just over one-half (50.7 percent) of those contributing to a traditional IRA contributed the maximum, while 43.6 percent did so with a Roth IRA.
- More contributions were made to Roth accounts than to traditional IRAs in the database. However, at \$3,879, the average contribution to a traditional account was higher than the \$3,633 average contribution to a Roth account. Yet, a higher overall aggregate amount was contributed to Roth IRAs (\$3.7 billion for Roths compared with \$2.3 billion for traditional accounts).
- Roth IRAs had a higher percentage of younger individuals contribute to them than did traditional IRAs, as 23.8 percent of the Roth accounts receiving contributions were owned by individuals ages 25–34.
- While more than 1.6 million accounts received contributions and approximately 1.1 million accounts received rollovers in 2011 in the database, almost 13 times the amount of dollars were added to IRAs through rollovers than from contributions.

Craig Copeland is senior research associate at the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI). This *Issue Brief* was written with assistance from the Institute's research and editorial staffs. Any views expressed in this report are those of the author and should not be ascribed to the officers, trustees, or other sponsors of EBRI, EBRI-ERF, or their staffs. Neither EBRI nor EBRI-ERF lobbies or takes positions on specific policy proposals. EBRI invites comment on this research.

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Introduction

Individual retirement accounts (IRAs) are a vital component of U.S. retirement savings, holding more than 25 percent of all retirement assets in the nation.¹ A substantial and growing portion of these IRA assets originated in other tax-qualified retirement plans, such as defined benefit (pension) and 401(k) plans, and was moved to IRAs through rollovers from those plans.

The Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) has focused on retirement savings since its inception in 1978 and has been particularly informative on the behavior of participants in 401(k) plans. As noted above, a sizable percentage of IRA accounts have become repositories for assets built up in the employment-based retirement system. However, the connection between 401(k) plan participants and IRA owners has not been as well developed.² Consequently, EBRI has initiated a set of in-depth studies of this potential tie between defined contribution (DC) plans and IRAs. To do this, EBRI has created the EBRI IRA Database, which is able to link the account(s) of individuals within and across participating data providers in the EBRI IRA database with the account(s) of DC participants. This is done both within a calendar year and longitudinally; permitting the examination of retirement-asset holdings both at a point in time and over time as the individual ages and either changes jobs or retires.

This *Issue Brief*, the annual, cross-sectional analysis of the EBRI IRA Database, examines the distribution of IRA owners by IRA type, average and median account balances, and contributions and rollovers to IRAs. One unique aspect of the EBRI IRA Database is that it can link the accounts of individuals with more than one account in the database, thus aggregating the IRA assets of individuals and giving a more complete picture of their IRA-based retirement savings.

Data

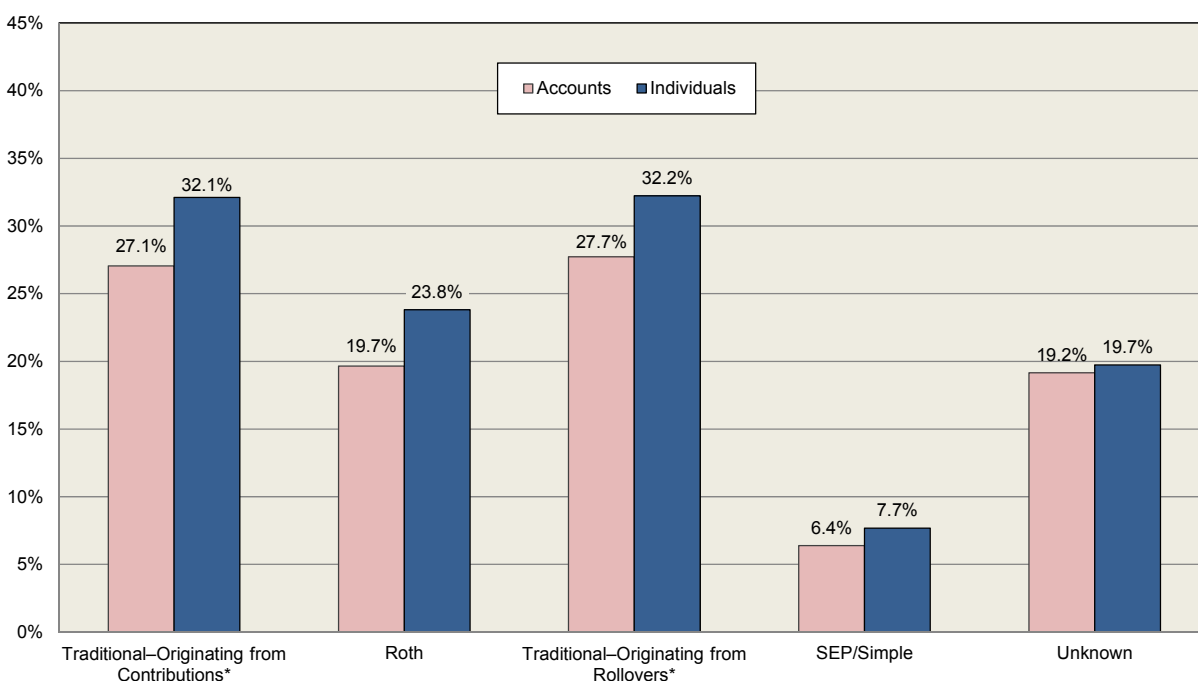
The EBRI IRA Database is an ongoing project that collects data from various IRA plan administrators. For year-end 2011, it contains information on 20.5 million accounts owned by 16.6 million unique individuals with total assets of \$1.456 trillion.³ For each account within the database, the IRA type, the account balance, any contributions made and rollovers transferred during the year, as well as the asset allocation, and certain demographic characteristics of the account owner are included (among other items). Based on the richness of the data, the study presents account-level and individual-level results.

IRA Types

In the EBRI IRA Database, IRAs are classified into five types: (1) traditional—originating from contributions (TOFC), (2) Roth, (3) Simplified Employee Pension (SEP)/Savings Incentive Match Plan for Employees (SIMPLE), (4) traditional—originating from assets rolled over from other tax-qualified plans (TOFR), such as an employment-based pension or 401(k) plan, and (5) other/unknown.^{4, 5} The distribution of the IRA accounts in this database is:

- 27.1 percent TOFC IRAs.
- 27.7 percent TOFR IRAs (combined traditional IRAs, 54.8 percent).
- 19.7 percent Roth IRAs.
- 6.4 percent SEPs and SIMPLEs
- 19.2 percent unknown (Figure 1).⁶

Figure 1
Distribution of IRA Types by Accounts and Individuals, 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* Both of these accounts could have received contributions or rollovers after their origination, so these are NOT proxies for employment-based dollars versus IRA-only dollars. The traditional-originating from rollovers do provide an estimate of the dollars that have been moved into a new IRA.

Note: The percentages for individuals add up to more than 100 percent, as an individual may own more than one type of IRA.

IRA Owner Distribution

On a *unique individual basis* (combining the accounts owned by the same person into one observation), 32.1 percent of those owning an IRA in the database had a TOFC IRA, 32.2 percent had a TOFR IRA (combined total of 64.3 percent), 23.8 percent had a Roth, 7.7 percent had a SEP or SIMPLE, and 19.7 percent were unknown.

Among all IRA owners in the database, including those with unknown ages, nearly one-half (46.6 percent) were ages 45–64 (Figure 2). However, age distribution was very different for those owning a TOFC IRA relative to other IRA types. Only 17.5 percent of those owning a TOFC IRA were under age 45, compared with 39.3 percent for those with a Roth, 27.4 percent for those with a TOFR IRA, and 28.6 percent for those with a SEP or SIMPLE.

IRA owners were more likely to be male. In particular, those having a TOFR IRA or a SEP/SIMPLE IRA were much more likely to be male (58 percent were male for TOFR IRAs and for SEP/SIMPLEs, recalculated from Figure 2 for those in the database with a known gender).

Approximately half (51.0 percent) of those owning IRAs had less than \$25,000 in those accounts at year-end 2011 (Figure 2), while nearly three-quarters (71.9 percent) of Roth IRA owners fell in that category (Figure 2).⁷ TOFR IRA owners had the largest percentage of account balances of \$100,000 or more at 27.4 percent, while TOFC IRA owners had the next-highest percentage (18.9 percent) among those with a known IRA type. For all IRAs combined, 21.0 percent of individual owners had balances of \$100,000 or more.⁸

Average IRA Balances

The average IRA *account balance* in 2011 was \$70,915, while the average IRA *individual balance* (all accounts from the same person combined) was \$87,668 (Figure 3). TOFR IRAs had the highest average individual balance at \$110,918,

<p style="text-align: center;">Figure 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Distribution of IRA Ownership, by Various Demographic Characteristics and IRA Type, 2011</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(All accounts versus individuals)</i></p>												
Age	All		Traditional-Conts.*		Roth		Traditional-Rolvr*		SEP/SIMPLE		Unknown	
	Accounts	Individuals	Accounts	Individuals	Accounts	Individuals	Accounts	Individuals	Accounts	Individuals	Accounts	Individuals
Under 25	1.3%	1.5%	0.5%	0.5%	2.8%	2.8%	0.4%	0.4%	1.2%	0.9%	2.6%	2.7%
25-29	2.9	3.4	1.7	1.8	6.2	6.3	2.6	2.7	3.4	3.4	1.8	2.0
30-34	5.1	5.6	3.3	3.4	9.0	9.1	5.5	5.7	5.8	5.9	3.1	3.3
35-39	6.6	6.9	4.6	4.8	9.9	9.9	7.6	8.0	7.6	7.7	4.2	4.4
40-44	8.7	9.0	6.9	7.1	11.1	11.1	10.2	10.6	10.5	10.7	6.1	6.3
45-49	10.2	10.4	9.2	9.4	11.0	11.0	11.8	12.1	12.8	12.9	7.9	8.1
50-54	12.0	12.1	12.2	12.4	11.0	11.0	12.7	12.9	14.4	14.5	10.8	10.8
55-59	12.5	12.4	13.8	13.9	10.6	10.6	11.9	12.0	13.6	13.7	13.1	12.8
60-64	12.0	11.7	13.3	13.3	9.4	9.4	11.6	11.6	10.8	10.9	13.8	13.2
65-69	9.8	9.6	11.0	11.1	6.8	6.7	9.4	9.4	7.0	7.1	12.4	11.8
70 or older	13.8	14.5	17.4	17.6	6.4	6.3	10.7	10.9	5.9	6.0	23.4	24.0
Unknown	5.0	2.9	6.2	4.9	5.9	5.8	5.7	3.9	7.1	6.3	0.8	0.6
Gender												
Female	30.3	30.7	38.9	39.1	38.1	38.3	35.6	36.2	37.3	37.4	0.0	0.8
Male	37.8	37.1	43.3	43.1	45.2	45.3	50.0	49.7	52.2	51.9	0.0	0.8
Unknown	31.9	32.2	17.7	17.7	16.7	16.4	14.4	14.1	10.5	10.7	100.0	98.4
Account Balance												
Less than \$5,000	24.9	23.4	20.1	19.9	28.6	28.3	25.7	24.9	29.7	29.6	24.9	23.7
\$5,000-\$9,999	11.6	10.3	11.1	11.0	18.0	17.9	7.2	7.3	11.6	11.6	12.3	11.2
\$10,000-\$24,999	18.7	17.4	19.4	19.3	25.7	25.7	13.5	13.6	18.3	18.2	18.3	17.7
\$25,000-\$49,999	14.9	14.7	16.4	16.4	16.7	16.8	12.9	12.9	13.7	13.6	14.5	14.7
\$50,000-\$99,999	12.5	13.3	14.5	14.5	7.7	7.9	14.0	14.0	11.9	11.9	12.6	13.0
\$100,000-\$149,999	5.7	6.4	6.5	6.4	1.6	1.6	7.8	7.8	5.7	5.6	6.0	6.2
\$150,000-\$249,999	5.3	6.2	5.6	5.6	1.0	1.0	8.0	8.1	4.9	5.0	5.4	5.9
\$250,000 or more	6.4	8.4	6.5	6.9	0.8	0.8	10.9	11.6	4.4	4.6	6.0	7.6

Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* Traditional-Conts.=Traditional-Originating from Contributions and Traditional-Rolvr.=Traditional-Originating from Rollovers.

Both of these accounts could have received contributions or rollovers after their origination, so these are NOT proxies for employment-based dollars versus IRA-only dollars.

The Traditional-Originating from Rollovers do provide an estimate of the dollars that have been moved into a new IRA.

while Roth IRAs had the lowest at \$25,741.⁹ The median account IRA balance was \$19,619, while the median individual IRA balance was \$23,785 (Figure 4). The median TOFR IRA balance was significantly higher than the balances of the other plan types.

The overall average and median individual balances were 24 percent and 21 percent, respectively, higher than the overall average and median account balances. The individual balances exceeded the account balances by smaller percentages for each of the plan types, ranging from 3 percent for the SEP/SIMPLE average balances to 20 percent for the average unknown balances. This suggests that individuals with more than one IRA typically had more than one *type* of IRA—and that not taking into account all IRA holdings will miss at least 24 percent of the average individual's cumulative IRA assets.

The average individual IRA balance increased with age before leveling off for those age 70 or older (Figure 5).¹⁰ This balance ranged from \$11,434 for those under age 25 to \$145,575 for those ages 65–69. The median individual balance across age followed a similar pattern, with the median individual balance increasing from \$3,238 for those under age 25 to \$50,122 for those ages 65–69 (Figure 6).

Across each plan type, above age 25 the average and median individual IRA balances increased with age (Figure 7). However, for the unknown category IRAs, the average balance declined for those age 70 or older. For individuals age 35 or older, the average and median balances for TOFR IRAs were higher than for each of the other plan types, particularly once the account owners reached age 40 or older.¹¹

Males had higher individual average and median balances than females: \$114,745 and \$30,704 for males, respectively, vs., \$66,529 and \$21,642 for females (Figure 8). Across all ages, males had both higher individual average and median balances than females (Figure 9). The median balance for males reached \$72,971 for those ages 70 or older, compared with \$42,926 for females of that age.

Males had larger average and median balances across each of the IRA types as well, with the largest differences being among those with a TOFR IRA, at \$141,770 average and \$44,791 median for males vs. \$75,771 average and \$23,860 median for females (Figure 10). For Roth IRAs, average and median individual balances were much closer: \$30,543 and \$12,486, respectively, for males vs. \$23,068 and \$11,584 for females.

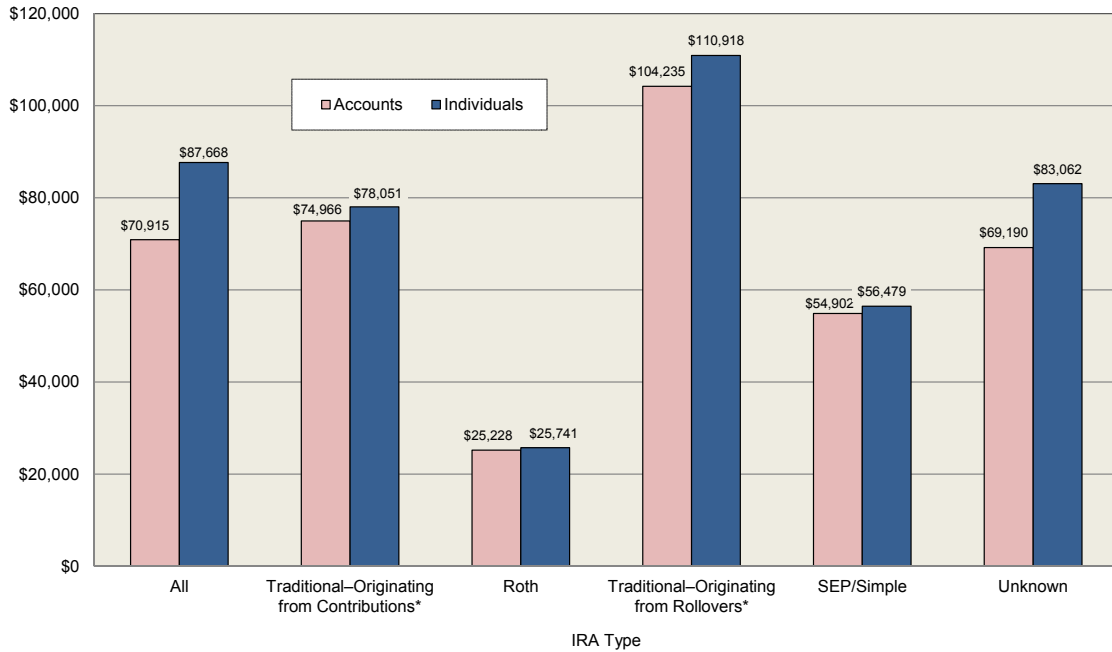
Comparison of Account Balances With 2010

While each year's database is a unique snapshot, it is informative to compare the results between years. In order to compare the same individuals over time, a consistent sample of individuals with a positive account balance in each year of the database was constructed.¹² The average and median individual balances of these individuals were higher in 2010 at \$92,579 and \$25,795, respectively, compared with \$90,683 and \$25,312 in 2011 (Figure 11). This is 2.0 percent lower for the average account balance and 1.9 percent for the median balance.

Despite lower overall average and median individual balances of these individuals in 2011 relative to 2010, the average and median account balances were higher in 2011 for the Roth and SEP/SIMPLE IRAs, as well as the unknown category IRAs of these individuals. Although the balances were lower in 2011 for both types of traditional accounts. Furthermore, the average and median balances of those under age 60 were lower in 2011, while these balances were higher for the owners age 60 or older. The female owners had slightly larger average and median balances in 2011, while males and those of unknown gender had lower average and median balances in 2011 than in 2010.

The comparison of the averages and medians, while instructive, does not show the distribution of the changes in the individuals' IRA balances, an important consideration as individuals could experience significantly different changes between years. In order to examine this, the percentage change in each individual's balances was calculated from 2010 to 2011, and the results for the changes in account balances at the 25th percentile, median, and 75th percentile are

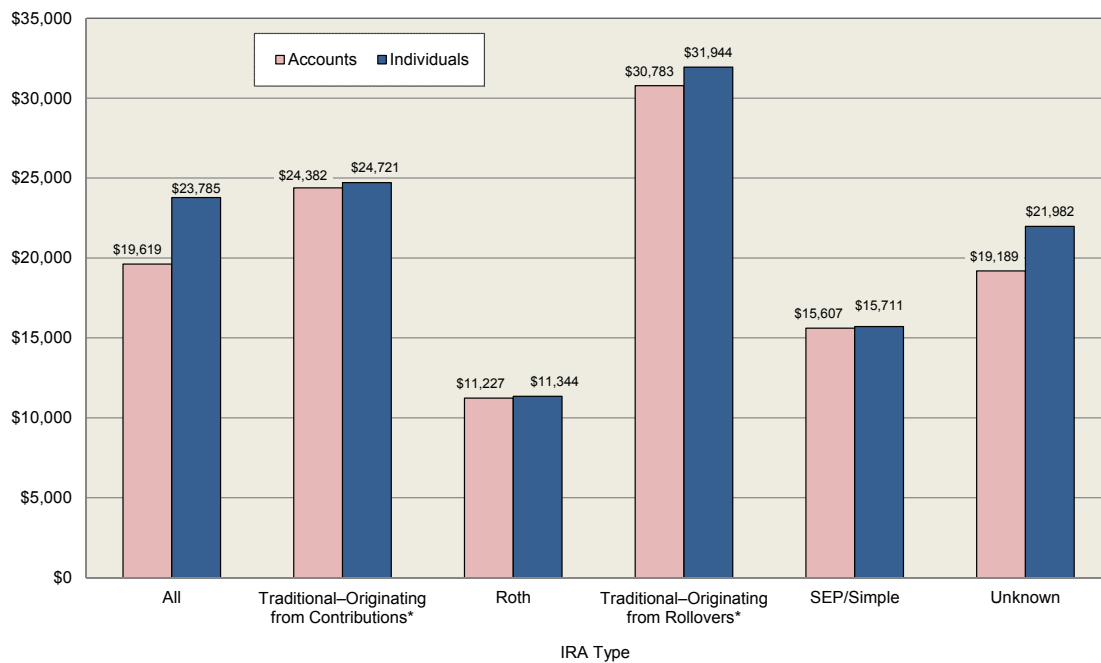
Figure 3
Average IRA Balance for All Accounts and Individuals, by IRA Type, 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* Both of these accounts could have received contributions or rollovers after their origination, so these are NOT proxies for employment-based dollars versus IRA-only dollars. The Traditional-Originating from Rollovers do provide an estimate of the dollars that have been moved into a new IRA.

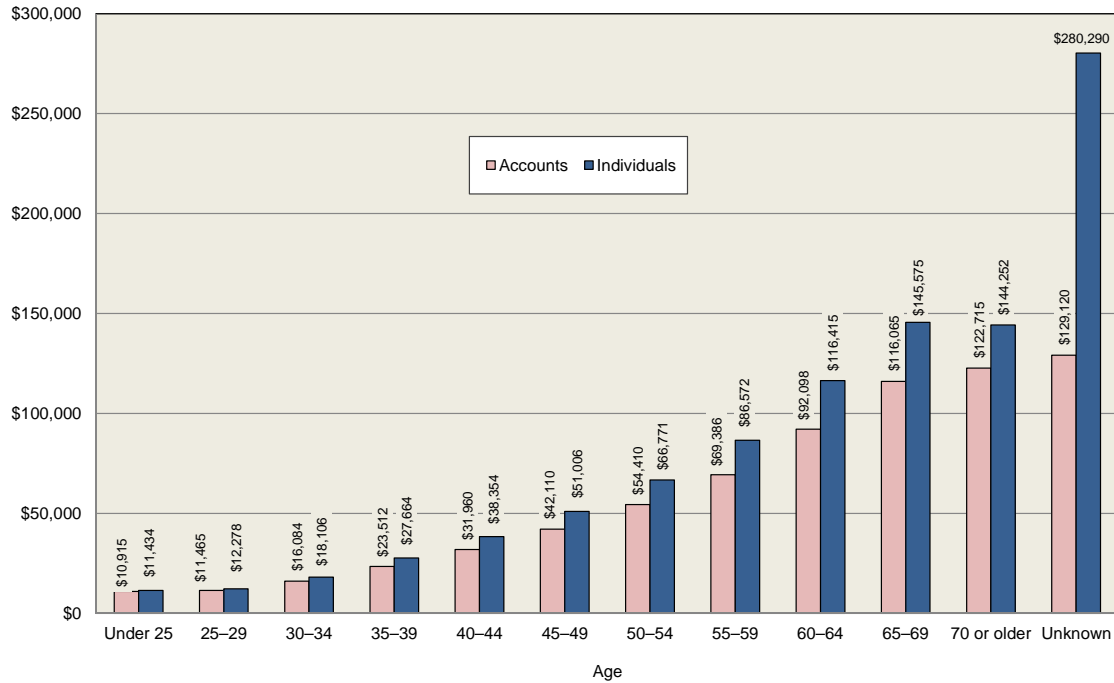
Figure 4
Median IRA Balance for All Accounts and Individuals, by IRA Type, 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.

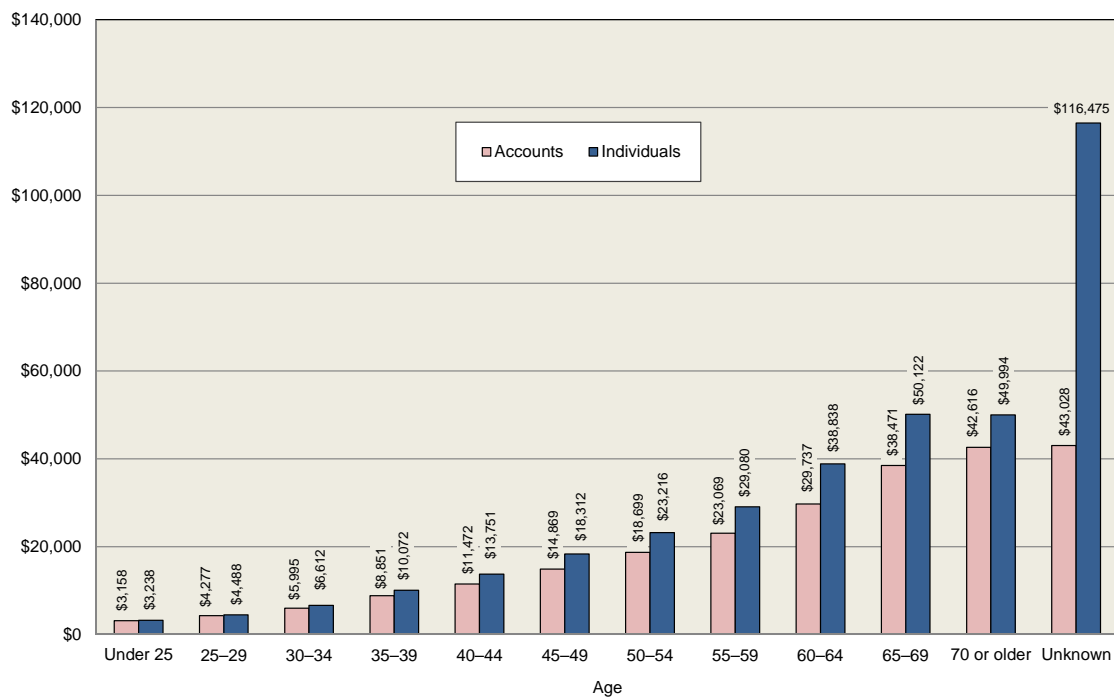
* Both of these accounts could have received contributions or rollovers after their origination, so these are NOT proxies for employment-based dollars versus IRA-only dollars. The Traditional-Originating from Rollovers do provide an estimate of the dollars that have been moved into a new IRA.

Figure 5
Average IRA Balance for All Accounts and Individuals, by Age, 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.

Figure 6
Median IRA Balance for All Accounts and Individuals, by Age, 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.

presented in Figure 12. The median percentage change for all individuals was a decline of 0.2 percent from 2010 to 2011. This means that half of the individuals had a decline greater than that amount and the other half either had a decline smaller than that amount, no change, or an increase. At the 75th percentile (the minimum threshold that the highest 25 percent of increases lies above), the percentage increase in balances was 5.1 percent. The lowest 25 percent had decreases of 6.3 percent or more.

TOFC IRAs of these individuals had the largest declines at the 25th percentile and the median, while the Roth IRAs of these individuals had the largest increase at the 75th percentile. These results were consistent across all ages. However, younger IRA owners' much larger increases were concentrated in Roth IRA increases.

Contributions¹³

Focusing only on those owning Roth or either type of traditional IRAs, contributions were made to 10.9 percent of the accounts, and 13.2 percent of the individuals owning these IRA types contributed to them in 2011 (Figure 13). Among traditional IRA owners, 6.1 percent contributed, while 26.0 percent of those owning a Roth IRA contributed to it. Of those individuals contributing, 47.2 percent contributed the maximum amount. Just over one-half (50.7 percent) of those contributing to a traditional IRA contributed the maximum, while 43.6 percent did so with a Roth IRA.^{14, 15, 16}

When looking at the age of the IRA owners, those who are younger and own a Roth IRA were more likely to contribute to the Roth IRA than older Roth IRA owners (Figure 14). Forty-four percent of Roth owners ages 25–29 contributed to their Roth in 2011, compared with 21 percent of Roth owners ages 60–64. However, the percentage of traditional IRA accounts being contributed to did *not* significantly vary by age, as the percentage ranged from 9 percent to 6 percent for account owners up through age 64. Furthermore, the likelihood of contributing to an IRA did not significantly differ by gender, as both Roth and traditional IRAs owned by either males or females in the data base had similar probabilities of receiving contributions. For example, 10.6 percent of IRAs owned by females were contributed to in 2011, compared with 10.4 percent of accounts owned by males (Figure 15).¹⁷

Just over 1.6 million IRA accounts in the database were contributed to in 2011 (Figure 16). The average amount contributed was \$3,723. Almost one quarter (24.2 percent) of the accounts receiving contributions were owned by individuals in their 50s. More accounts owned by males were contributed to than those owned by females, since there are more male account owners (this is a different measure than the likelihood of contributing described above). The average contribution was highest for accounts owned by those ages 60–64. There was a steady increase in the average contribution up to that age, with a jump when the owners reached age 50, likely a result of the increased allowable contribution under the catch-up contribution rules.¹⁸ Accounts owned by males received higher average contributions (\$3,831) than those owned by females (\$3,755).

More contributions were made to Roth accounts than to traditional accounts (both types of traditional accounts combined into one category) (Figure 16). However, at \$3,879, the average contribution to a traditional account was higher than the \$3,633 to a Roth account. Yet, a higher overall aggregate amount was contributed to Roth IRAs (\$3.7 billion for Roths compared with \$2.3 billion for traditional accounts).

Roth IRAs had a higher percentage of younger individuals contribute to them, as 23.8 percent of the Roth accounts receiving contributions were owned by individuals ages 25–34. In contrast, only 8.9 percent of the traditional accounts that received contributions were owned by those in that age group. Both Roth and traditional accounts receiving contributions were more frequently owned by males, and the average contribution was higher for male account owners to both of the IRA types.

Even when accounting for age, the average contribution to accounts owned by males was larger than that owned by females (Figure 17), although the age distributions for the male and female accounts that received contributions were nearly identical.

Figure 7
Average and Median Individual IRA Balance, by IRA Type and Age, 2011

	Traditional—Conts.*		Roth		Traditional—Rlvr*		SEP/SIMPLE		Unknown	
	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median
All	\$78,051	\$24,721	\$25,741	\$11,344	\$110,918	\$31,944	\$56,479	\$15,711	\$83,062	\$21,982
Age										
Under 25	24,722	3,972	8,246	4,765	20,242	1,717	7,681	1,622	9,284	1,922
25–29	15,065	3,455	11,426	7,133	12,047	2,788	8,817	2,835	8,066	2,791
30–34	18,265	4,836	14,684	9,201	19,045	4,865	14,731	4,968	12,677	4,917
35–39	25,356	7,507	16,945	9,893	31,675	10,366	23,688	7,570	20,196	7,901
40–44	33,161	10,889	19,204	10,490	45,271	16,142	34,034	11,143	29,150	10,348
45–49	41,385	14,957	21,863	11,178	62,482	24,262	44,226	14,647	40,240	13,995
50–54	53,102	20,550	24,851	12,014	84,619	32,648	56,029	18,673	53,922	17,398
55–59	67,652	26,544	28,341	13,514	114,288	42,109	68,739	22,814	72,786	22,926
60–64	89,243	33,402	33,127	15,509	154,780	61,072	78,250	25,227	102,752	31,828
65–69	112,893	42,605	41,272	16,721	190,093	77,049	85,334	26,955	131,827	44,718
70 or older	115,378	44,261	57,701	19,071	209,641	86,328	88,688	28,368	121,199	41,446
Unknown	182,202	64,352	34,334	12,273	293,701	125,135	105,342	45,025	453,403	36,689

Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* Traditional—Conts.=Traditional—Originating from Contributions and Traditional—Rlvr.=Traditional—Originating from Rollovers.

Both of these accounts could have received contributions or rollovers after their origination, so these are NOT proxies for employment-based dollars vs. IRA-only dollars. The Traditional—Originating from Rollovers do provide an estimate of the dollars that have been moved into a new IRA.

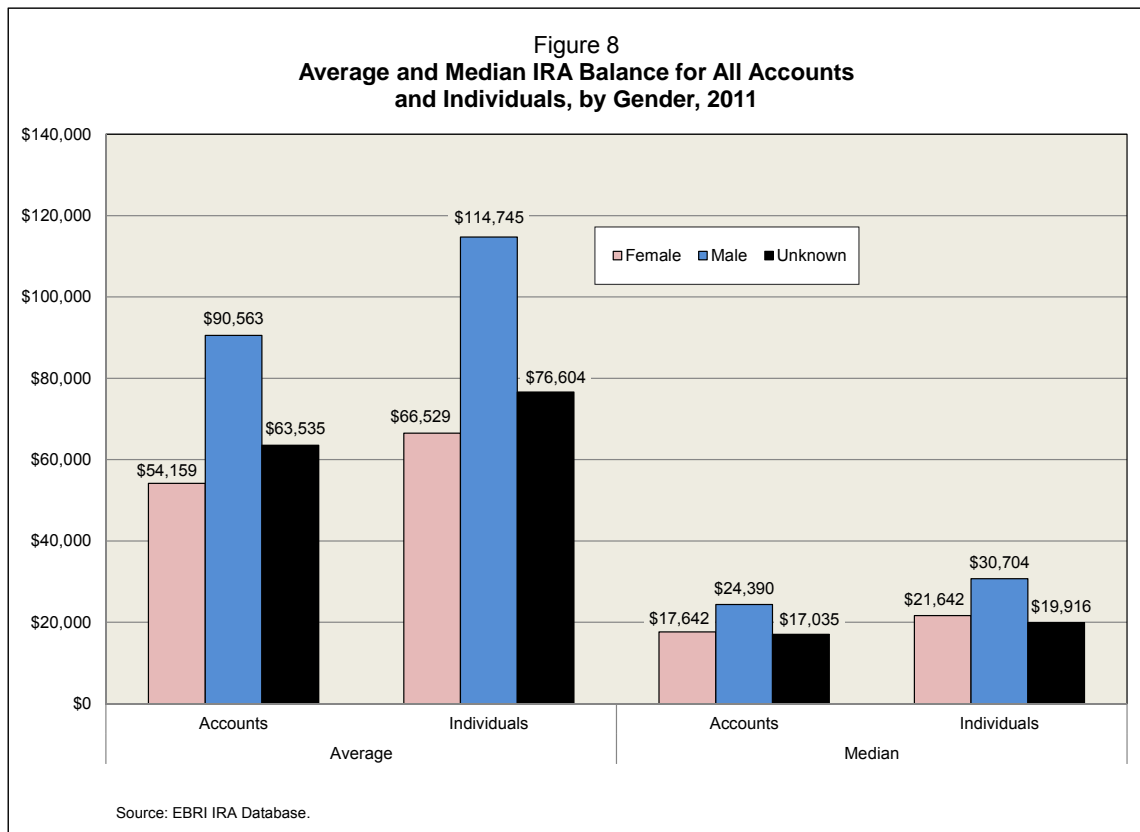
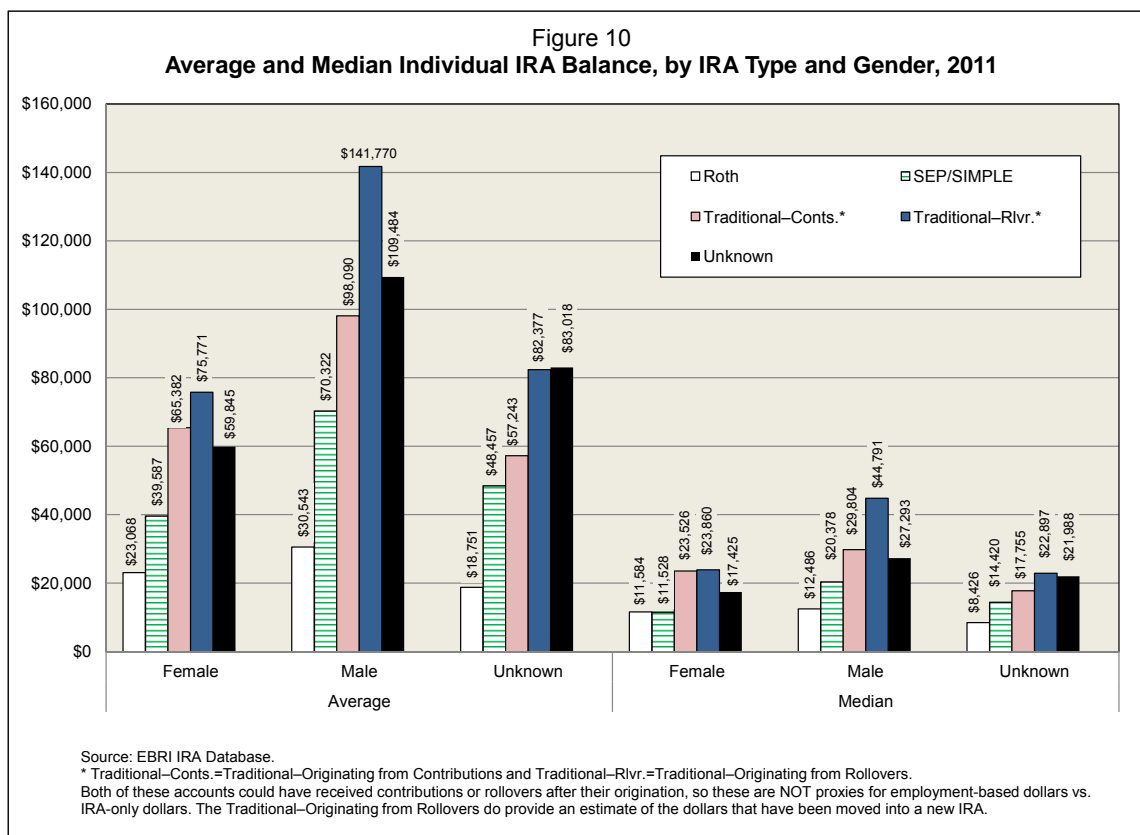


Figure 9
Average and Median Individual IRA Balance, by Gender and Age, 2011

	Female		Male		Unknown	
	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median
All	\$66,529	\$21,642	\$114,745	\$30,704	\$76,604	\$19,916
Age						
Under 25	12,813	4,156	14,014	4,494	9,252	2,207
25–29	11,715	4,595	14,591	5,005	9,901	3,592
30–34	16,944	6,785	21,504	7,758	15,080	5,328
35–39	25,321	10,055	33,098	11,461	23,479	8,789
40–44	33,828	13,505	46,896	16,184	32,316	11,517
45–49	44,213	17,411	63,296	22,608	42,561	14,868
50–54	56,537	21,740	84,935	29,966	54,767	18,145
55–59	70,176	26,552	112,673	38,688	72,212	23,317
60–64	87,597	34,031	153,887	52,506	101,008	31,842
65–69	102,853	42,169	195,680	68,781	128,220	42,586
70 or older	103,224	42,926	203,066	72,971	121,758	41,466
Unknown	244,380	120,416	313,867	152,958	252,969	52,664

Source: EBRI IRA Database.



Rollovers vs. Contributions

When comparing the incidence and dollars going into IRAs by the two primary funding sources of IRAs, contributions and rollovers (aside from capital gains and interest earnings), rollovers overwhelmingly outweighed new contributions in dollar terms. While more than 1.6 million accounts received contributions and approximately 1.1 million accounts received rollovers in 2011, almost 13 times the amount of dollars were added through rollovers compared with contributions (Figure 18). This is not surprising, given the annual contribution limit of \$5,000 (\$6,000 for those age 50 or older) to IRAs in 2011, relative to the theoretically unlimited amount that could be added through a rollover. The average and median rollover amounts were \$72,398 and \$19,632, respectively, compared with the average contribution of \$3,723.

Average and median rollover amounts increased with age through age 64, at which point the median rollover amount decreased while the average began decreasing once the owners reached age 70. Furthermore, the average and median rollover amounts from male-owned accounts were higher than those from female-owned accounts, \$88,973 and \$24,348, respectively, compared with \$56,671 and \$15,291. Controlling for age, the average and median rollover amounts were still higher among male account owners than among female account owners (Figure 19). The age distribution of those making a rollover was very similar between males and females.

Figure 11
Distribution and Average and Median Individual IRA Balances of a Consistent Sample* of Individuals, by IRA Type, Age, and Gender, 2010 and 2011

	Distribution	Average		Median	
	2010 Status	2010	2011	2010	2011
All	100.0%	\$92,579	\$90,683	\$25,795	\$25,312
Type					
Traditional-Conts.^	41.0	84,879	79,269	28,770	25,603
Roth	27.4	26,021	26,602	11,605	12,148
Traditional-Rlvr.^	33.1	118,037	115,699	35,711	33,888
SEP/SIMPLE	8.3	57,525	59,220	16,821	17,530
Other/Unknown	7.8	87,085	87,781	13,395	23,748
Age					
Under 25	1.1	27,291	11,351	5,009	4,107
25-29	3.0	17,219	10,464	5,004	4,845
30-34	5.5	22,868	15,782	7,487	7,073
35-39	7.0	31,437	25,418	11,118	10,302
40-44	9.3	42,679	36,667	15,490	14,310
45-49	10.9	56,712	50,899	20,581	19,120
50-54	12.5	73,735	68,860	26,243	24,913
55-59	12.8	93,815	91,793	32,107	31,646
60-64	12.1	124,683	127,247	41,943	42,947
65-69	10.1	159,893	167,207	54,568	59,260
70 or older	15.4	160,895	162,740	54,563	56,978
Unknown	0.3	290,068	293,819	53,256	54,763
Gender					
Female	32.3	67,162	67,467	22,359	22,474
Male	39.4	118,705	117,790	32,778	32,404
Unknown	28.3	85,297	79,523	22,236	20,989

Source: EBRI IRA Database.
 * The consistent sample has only the individuals with at least one account in each year (2010 and 2011) of the database.
 ^ Traditional-Conts.=Traditional-Originating from Contributions, Traditional-Rlvr.=Traditional-Originating from Rollovers. Both of these accounts could have received contributions or rollovers after their origination, so these are NOT proxies for employment-based dollars vs. IRA-only dollars. The Traditional-Originating from Rollovers do provide an estimate of the dollars that have been moved into a new IRA.

The distribution of contributions was concentrated near the maximum amount, with 50.4 percent of those contributing \$5,000—\$6,000 (Figure 20).¹⁹ In contrast, 30.4 percent of the rollovers were less than \$5,000, and more than half (54.4 percent) were less than \$25,000, such that the majority of rollovers were on the lower side of the rollover-distribution amounts, although 19.5 percent of the rollovers were \$100,000 or more. Consequently, while a large

number of rollovers were relatively small, almost one-fifth of those rolling over qualified plan distributions to an IRA in 2011 did so with a six-figure balance.²⁰

Persistence of Contributions

Using the longitudinal consistent sample from above for balances, but limiting the analysis to only those individuals owning either type of a traditional and/or a Roth IRA, the persistence of contributing to IRAs was investigated. First, the percentage of these consistent contributing individuals who contributed to their IRA in 2010 was 10.8 percent, and in 2011 it was 9.7 percent (Figure 21). The percentage of those owning a traditional IRA remained unchanged between the 2 years, at 5.7 percent. However, a lower percentage of the Roth owners contributed in 2011 (24.0 percent), compared with 25.2 percent in 2010. While the percentage contributing declined, the percentage of those who contributed the maximum increased. For all traditional and Roth IRAs, 46.4 percent of those contributing did so at the maximum level in 2010, compared with 49.6 percent in 2011. The percentage contributing the maximum for Roths experienced a similar increase. Despite the unchanged percentage contributing the maximum to traditional IRAs, an increased percentage of those who contributed did so at the maximum level in 2011.

The overall percentages of those contributing to their traditional or Roth IRAs were similar for this group between the two years, but is it the same individuals? Among these IRA owners, 7.1 percent made contributions in both years (Figure 22). Of those who contributed in 2010, 65.4 percent contributed again in 2011.²¹ Of those who did not contribute in 2010, 3.0 percent contributed in 2011. Consequently, those who contributed one year were far more likely to contribute the next year. However, nearly 35 percent of those who did contribute in the prior year did NOT contribute in the next year.

Not only were Roth IRA owners much more likely to contribute to their IRA, they were also more likely to contribute to the IRA in subsequent years. Seventeen percent of Roth IRA owners contributed to their IRA in both years, compared with 3.2 percent of traditional IRA owners. Furthermore, 67.4 percent of the Roth owners who contributed in 2010 also contributed in 2011. For traditional IRA owners, 56.5 percent of 2010 contributors contributed in 2011. A similar pattern occurred across all age groups.

Younger Roth owners (above age 25 up to age 50) had higher persistence rates (if contributing in 2010 also contributing in 2011) than those 50 or older. For traditional IRA owners, the persistence rates increased with age through age 49, then started to decline through age 70 or older. There were virtually no differences in the percentages of those contributing both years or in the persistence rates between genders (when known).

As described above, those contributing in 2011 were more likely to contribute the maximum than those contributing in 2010. However, there was also a difference in the likelihood of contributing the maximum between those contributing to traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs between the years. For traditional owners who contributed in both years, the probability of contributing the maximum was higher than for those who contributed in only one of the years (Figure 23). However, for those contributing to Roth IRAs, those contributing in only one of the years were more likely to contribute the maximum than those who contributed both years.

This same result is borne out in the average dollar amount contributed, as the average contribution for all individuals in 2010 and 2011 was smaller than for those who contributed in both years (Figure 24). However, by IRA type, Roth owners overall had a higher average contribution amount than those who contributed both years, while for traditional IRAs it was just the opposite—those contributing both years had a higher average contribution.

Generally speaking, both-year contributors to traditional IRAs had higher average contribution amounts than the overall average contribution across ages. In contrast, for Roth IRAs in 2011, those who contributed in both years who are either younger (under age 40) or older (age 65 or older) had higher average contributions than contributors overall. Those between ages 40–64 who contributed to a Roth IRA in both years had lower average contributions.

Both-year contributors' average contributions were generally higher for individuals when the gender was known. For those whose gender was unknown, both-year contributors to a traditional IRA had a higher average contribution than the overall average contribution. However, both-year Roth IRA contributors had a lower average contribution for those whose gender was unknown.

Conclusion

Individual retirement accounts (IRAs) are a vital component of U.S. retirement savings, holding more than 25 percent of all retirement assets in the nation. A substantial and growing portion of these IRA assets originated in other tax-qualified retirement plans, such as defined benefit (pension) and 401(k) plans. The EBRI IRA Database contains data collected from various IRA plan administrators on 20.5 million accounts owned by 16.6 million unique individuals with total assets of \$1.456 trillion to study this ever-growing important source of retirement assets.

This study provides results for the third year (2011) of data available from the EBRI IRA Database. The results show the importance of being able to measure an individual's combined account balances to determine the potential total retirement savings he or she has by the aggregation of multiple accounts. Indeed, the overall cumulative IRA average balance was 24 percent larger than the unique account balance. Therefore, databases that are not able to link multiple accounts owned by the same individual within and across data providers will likely understate the total IRA assets held by individuals.

As the EBRI IRA Database expands and matures, more elaborate studies will be conducted, in particular an examination of the longitudinal changes by individuals in the database. The first such examination occurred in this year's study with the inclusion of a consistent sample to investigate the changes in IRA balances for the same set of individuals as well as the persistence of contributions among these same individuals. Furthermore, when linked with DC account data, the tracking of movements of dollars between the primary holders of retirement savings (DC plans and IRAs) can be studied with far greater accuracy along with the pace and amount of withdrawal or "spend-down" of assets over time.

About IRAs

Individual retirement accounts (IRAs) were created by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) as a way to provide workers who did not have employment-based pensions an opportunity to save for retirement on a tax-deferred basis. The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 (ERTA) extended the availability of IRAs to all workers with earned income, including those with pension coverage. The Tax Reform Act of 1986 (TRA '86) restricted the tax deductibility of IRA contributions to those with incomes below certain levels and created *nondeductible* IRAs (where contributions are not tax-deductible but earnings still accrue tax-deferred), and *partially* (or *wholly*) deductible IRAs, depending on income. The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 (TRA '97) created a new type of nondeductible IRA—the Roth IRA—and allowed nonworking spouses to contribute to an IRA, subject to certain income restrictions. As an account type, IRAs currently hold the largest single share of U.S. retirement plan assets, largely from rollovers from other types of plans (see Box Figure A).

Nonemployment-based IRAs. There are two basic types:

- *Traditional IRAs:* Anyone with earned income can contribute, as well as a nonearning spouse of an earner under certain conditions. Contributions are tax deductible (or not) depending upon the contributor's income and participation in an employment-based retirement plan. Earnings in these IRAs accrue tax-deferred, and withdrawals after age 59½ are taxed as ordinary income. Minimum withdrawals from a traditional IRA must commence during the year that the individual turns age 70½.
- *Roth IRAs:* This type of IRA offers tax-free investing for retirement: No taxes are paid on investment returns or on withdrawals made after age 59½, as long as the Roth IRA has been held for at least five years. Contributions to Roth IRAs are not tax-deductible, but there are no mandatory withdrawals after age 70½ (as there are with traditional IRAs). Certain income limits restrict eligibility for contributing to a Roth IRA.

The current, maximum, annual contribution to a traditional or Roth IRA is \$5,500 for those under age 50 at the end of 2013. This limit can be split between a traditional and a Roth IRA, but the combined limit is \$5,500. Those age 50 or older before 2013 can make an additional \$1,000 "catch-up" contribution, for a combined annual limit of \$6,500. The maximum contribution to a Roth IRA and the maximum deductible contribution to a traditional IRA may be reduced depending upon an individual's modified, adjusted gross income.

Employment-based IRAs

- *Simplified Employee Pension (SEP) plans* allow employers to make contributions on a tax-deferred basis for their employees and allow self-employed individuals to make contributions for their own retirement.
- *Savings Incentive Match Plans for Employees (SIMPLE) plans* also allow for tax-deferred, employer contributions plus allow salary-reduction contributions by the employees. The employers must make matching contributions or nonelective contributions to the plans.

Traditional—Originating from Rollovers (TOFR) IRAs or Traditional—Originating from Contributions

(TOFC) IRAs: In the EBRI IRA Database, traditional IRAs are separated into two categories to highlight the amount of IRA assets that have moved from other tax-qualified plans (including defined benefit, DC, and a prior IRA) and were subsequently rolled over to new IRAs—those originating from rollovers and those originating from contributions. However, this in *no instance* should be construed as an estimate of the dollars originating in the employment-based system and transferred to the IRA system, as both types of accounts could have received rollovers or contributions subsequent to their establishment. Additionally, a rollover could have been an IRA-to-IRA rollover without any money originating in the employment-based system. This distinction is important for those interested in seeing the relative contribution of the employment-based retirement system vs. that funded solely by IRA contributions. As the longitudinal aspect of this database is developed, a more refined measure of these dollars will be established. The Internal Revenue Service reports these accounts as a single category called traditional IRAs. The tax treatment is the same for these IRAs once the dollars are in the IRA.

Figure 12
Distribution of Individual IRA Balance Changes for a Consistent Sample*
of Individuals from 2010 to 2011, by IRA Type, Age, and Gender

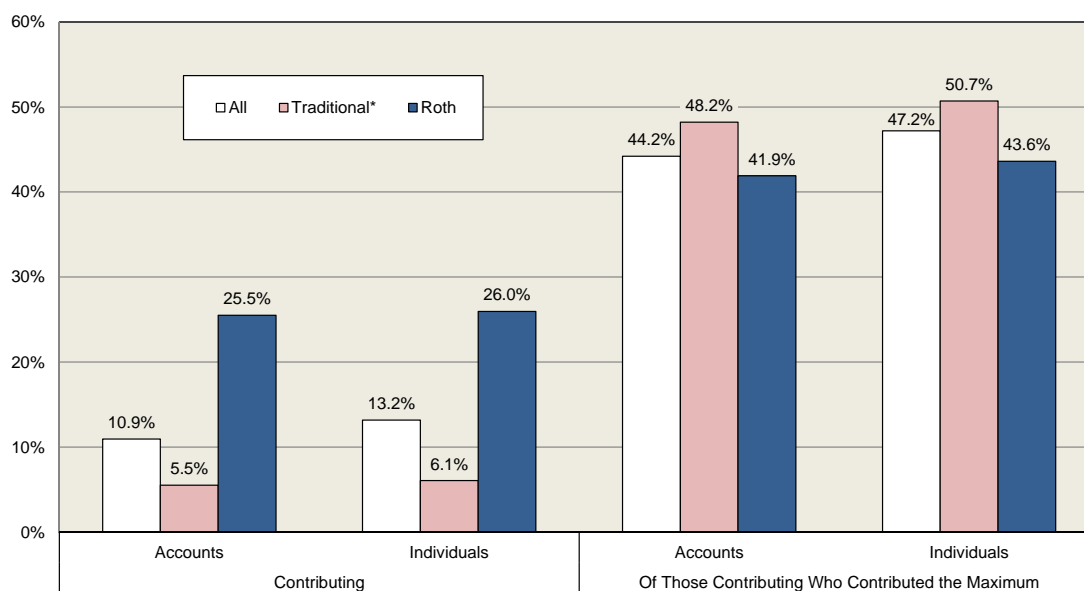
	Total			Traditional-Conts.^			Traditional-Rlvs.^			Roth		
	Percentile			Percentile			Percentile			Percentile		
	25th	Median	75th	25th	Median	75th	25th	Median	75th	25th	Median	75th
All	-6.3%	-0.2%	5.1%	-13.7%	-2.3%	1.4%	-6.2%	-1.2%	0.5%	-4.9%	0.0%	7.7%
Age												
Under 25	-6.6	0.0	19.8	-100.0	-11.6	-0.2	-3.3	0.0	0.0	-2.5	1.7	25.8
25-29	-3.4	0.0	15.0	-14.4	-0.9	0.0	-3.4	0.0	0.0	-2.5	2.0	21.7
30-34	-4.2	0.0	7.9	-11.0	-0.9	0.5	-4.5	-0.2	0.0	-3.5	0.9	13.2
35-39	-4.6	0.0	4.9	-10.0	-1.1	1.4	-4.6	-0.7	0.0	-4.3	0.0	8.2
40-44	-4.9	-0.1	4.1	-9.9	-1.2	1.7	-4.7	-0.9	0.2	-4.5	0.0	6.6
45-49	-5.0	-0.1	4.2	-9.5	-1.1	1.9	-4.9	-0.8	0.5	-4.5	0.0	6.6
50-54	-5.1	0.0	4.8	-9.9	-1.1	2.0	-4.9	-0.7	0.8	-4.8	0.0	7.4
55-59	-5.0	0.0	5.8	-10.3	-1.0	2.1	-4.8	-0.4	1.2	-4.9	0.1	7.7
60-64	-6.5	0.0	5.9	-11.9	-1.2	2.1	-7.5	-0.8	1.3	-6.5	0.0	7.1
65-69	-7.0	0.0	5.2	-14.0	-1.6	2.0	-8.5	-1.2	1.3	-8.5	0.0	4.4
70 or older	-11.3	-3.9	2.7	-30.5	-6.5	-1.3	-10.7	-4.9	-0.6	-84.1	-1.8	2.4
Unknown	-5.2	0.0	8.2	-11.5	-1.2	1.6	-3.7	0.0	9.8	-2.5	2.1	11.0
Gender												
Female	-4.1	0.0	3.8	-4.9	-0.3	2.6	-2.5	1.0	9.1	-4.9	-0.6	0.8
Male	-5.3	-0.4	3.1	-6.1	-0.8	2.1	-3.6	0.7	8.8	-6.7	-1.5	0.5
Unknown	-45.4	-1.0	50.4	-100.0	-100.0	-1.6	-100.0	-4.1	2.0	-8.6	-1.8	0.0

Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* The consistent sample has only the individuals with at least one account in each year (2010 and 2011) of the database.

^ Traditional-Conts.=Traditional-Originating from Contributions, Traditional-Rlvs.=Traditional-Originating from Rollovers. Both of these accounts could have received contributions or rollovers after their origination, so these are NOT proxies for employment-based dollars versus IRA only dollars. The Traditional-Originating from Rollovers do provide an estimate of the dollars that have been moved into a new IRA.

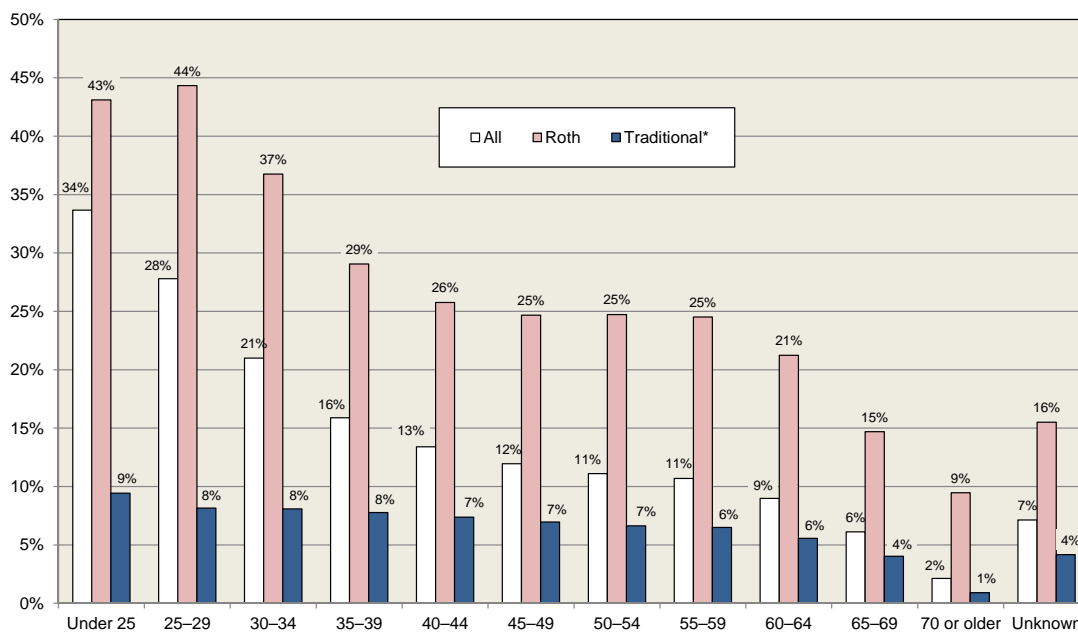
Figure 13
Percentage of Those Owning a Traditional* or Roth IRA Contributing to Them,
and of Those Contributing, the Percentage Contributing the Maximum Allowable
Amount, by All Accounts and Individuals, 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.

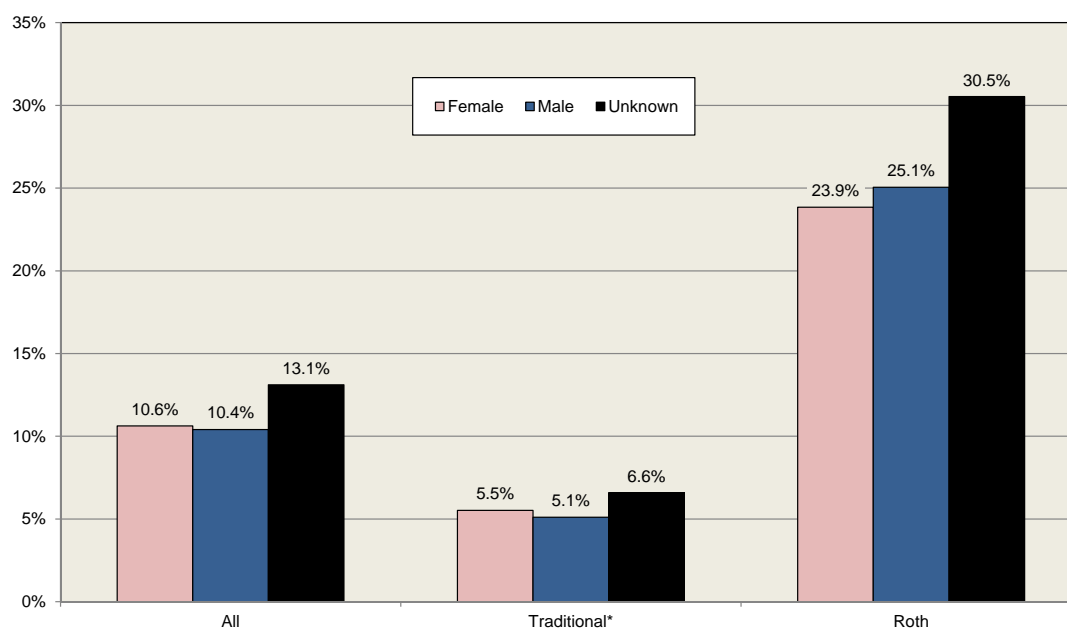
*Traditional IRAs in this figure include all Traditional IRAs.

Figure 14
Percentage of Traditional* or Roth IRA Accounts That Received a Contribution, by Age of Account Owner, 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.
 * Traditional IRAs in this figure include all Traditional IRAs.

Figure 15
Percentage of Traditional* or Roth IRA Accounts That Received a Contribution, by Gender of Account Owner, 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.
 * Traditional IRAs in this figure include all Traditional IRAs.

Figure 16
Distribution of Those Contributing to an IRA, by IRA Type and Age and Gender, 2011

All Contributions				Traditional Contributions*				Roth Contributions			
Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average	Total (in millions)	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average	Total (in millions)	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average	Total (in millions)
All 1,601	100%	\$3,723	\$5,962	587	100%	\$3,879	\$2,279	1,014	100%	\$3,633	\$3,683
Age											
Under 25	3.2	2,814	145	4	0.7	2,503	10	47	4.7	2,841	135
25-29	7.9	3,095	392	17	2.9	2,595	44	110	10.8	3,173	347
30-34	10.4	3,135	524	35	6.0	2,992	106	132	13.0	3,173	418
35-39	10.2	3,209	524	49	8.4	3,340	165	114	11.2	3,153	359
40-44	11.2	3,315	597	67	11.3	3,480	232	114	11.2	3,219	365
45-49	11.5	3,466	640	77	13.2	3,570	276	107	10.6	3,390	364
50-54	12.0	4,122	808	88	15.0	4,166	367	108	10.7	4,087	441
55-59	12.0	4,347	834	89	15.2	4,290	383	103	10.1	4,396	451
60-64	9.6	4,500	693	75	12.7	4,368	326	79	7.8	4,624	367
65-69	5.2	4,471	376	45	7.6	4,348	194	39	3.9	4,610	182
70 or older	2.4	4,360	165	14	2.3	4,309	59	24	2.4	4,389	106
Unknown	4.0	4,110	265	28	4.7	4,273	118	37	3.6	3,988	147
Gender											
Female	36.0	3,755	2,164	216	36.8	3,893	842	360	35.5	3,672	1,322
Male	43.9	3,831	2,695	254	43.2	3,989	1,012	450	44.4	3,741	1,683
Unknown	20.1	3,431	1,104	118	20.0	3,617	426	204	20.1	3,323	678

Source: EBRI IRA Database.
* Traditional IRAs in this figure include all Traditional IRAs.

Figure 17
Distribution of Those Contributing to a Traditional* or Roth IRA, by Age and Gender, 2011

Female				Male				Unknown			
Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average	Total (in millions)	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average	Total (in millions)	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average	Total (in millions)
All 576	100%	\$3,753	\$2,164	703	100%	\$3,828	\$2,695	322	100%	\$3,429	\$1,104
Age											
Under 25	1	2,859	42	22	4	3,010	67	14	1	2,466	36
25-29	2	3,098	122	56	9	3,279	183	31	3	2,766	87
30-34	3	3,116	173	71	12	3,256	231	41	4	2,950	121
35-39	3	3,189	178	67	11	3,256	219	40	4	3,159	126
40-44	4	3,309	213	76	13	3,351	255	40	4	3,258	129
45-49	4	3,449	240	79	13	3,517	277	36	4	3,386	123
50-54	5	4,131	316	85	14	4,191	357	34	3	3,931	135
55-59	5	4,368	331	85	14	4,424	374	31	3	4,088	129
60-64	4	4,509	270	70	12	4,582	322	24	2	4,237	102
65-69	2	4,450	138	40	7	4,579	183	13	1	4,194	55
70 or older	1	4,291	55	19	3	4,501	88	6	1	4,029	23
Unknown	1	4,103	87	33	6	4,229	140	10	1	3,735	38

Source: EBRI IRA Database.
* Traditional IRAs in this figure include all Traditional IRAs.

Figure 18
Distribution of Those Contributing to a Traditional* or Roth IRA and Those Rolling Over to a Traditional IRA, by Age and Gender, 2011

	Contributions			Rollovers		
	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average (in millions)	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average (in millions)
All	1,601	100%	\$3,723	1,058	100%	\$19,632
Age						
Under 25	51	3.2	2,814	16	1.5	9,079
25–29	126	7.9	3,095	69	6.5	11,122
30–34	167	10.4	3,135	89	8.4	20,810
35–39	163	10.2	3,209	91	8.6	34,157
40–44	180	11.2	3,315	102	9.7	45,998
45–49	185	11.5	3,466	108	10.2	56,284
50–54	196	12.2	4,122	116	11.0	70,596
55–59	192	12.0	4,347	115	10.8	94,194
60–64	154	9.6	4,500	133	12.6	121,106
65–69	84	5.2	4,471	88	8.3	123,265
70 or older	38	2.4	4,360	62	5.9	109,516
Unknown	64	4.0	4,110	68	6.4	104,891
Gender						
Female	576	36.0	3,755	347	32.8	56,671
Male	703	43.9	3,831	476	45.0	88,973
Unknown	322	20.1	3,431	234	22.1	62,005
Total			\$5,962			\$19,632
Total						\$76,566

Source: EBRI IRA Database.
* Traditional IRAs in this figure include all Traditional IRAs.

Figure 19
Distribution of Those Rolling Over to any Traditional* IRA, by Age and Gender, 2011

	Female			Male			Unknown		
	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average (in millions)	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average (in millions)	Number (in thousands)	Percent	Average (in millions)
All	347.4	100%	\$56,671	476.3	100%	\$88,973	233.9	100%	\$62,005
Age									
Under 25	5.3	1.5	8,575	6.5	1.4	10,632	4.4	1.9	7,371
25–29	24.3	7.0	9,606	27.1	5.7	12,979	17.6	7.5	10,361
30–34	30.2	8.7	18,117	35.8	7.5	24,083	22.8	9.7	19,237
35–39	29.1	8.4	29,280	38.1	8.0	39,087	23.7	10.1	32,217
40–44	32.4	9.3	38,614	45.8	9.6	52,841	24.2	10.3	42,933
45–49	35.5	10.2	46,404	48.4	10.2	65,900	24.0	10.3	51,477
50–54	39.5	11.4	56,499	52.4	11.0	83,872	24.6	10.5	64,915
55–59	38.7	11.1	72,467	51.7	10.9	115,408	24.2	10.4	83,631
60–64	42.8	12.3	87,295	62.4	13.1	148,434	27.8	11.9	111,880
65–69	28.0	8.0	90,367	41.2	8.7	149,160	18.7	8.0	115,384
70 or older	18.9	5.4	84,904	29.0	6.1	129,898	14.1	6.0	100,516
Unknown	22.8	6.6	96,959	37.7	7.9	117,839	7.7	3.3	64,867
Total			\$22,638			\$25,846			\$13,572
Total									\$14,503

Source: EBRI IRA Database.
* Traditional IRAs in this figure include all Traditional IRAs.

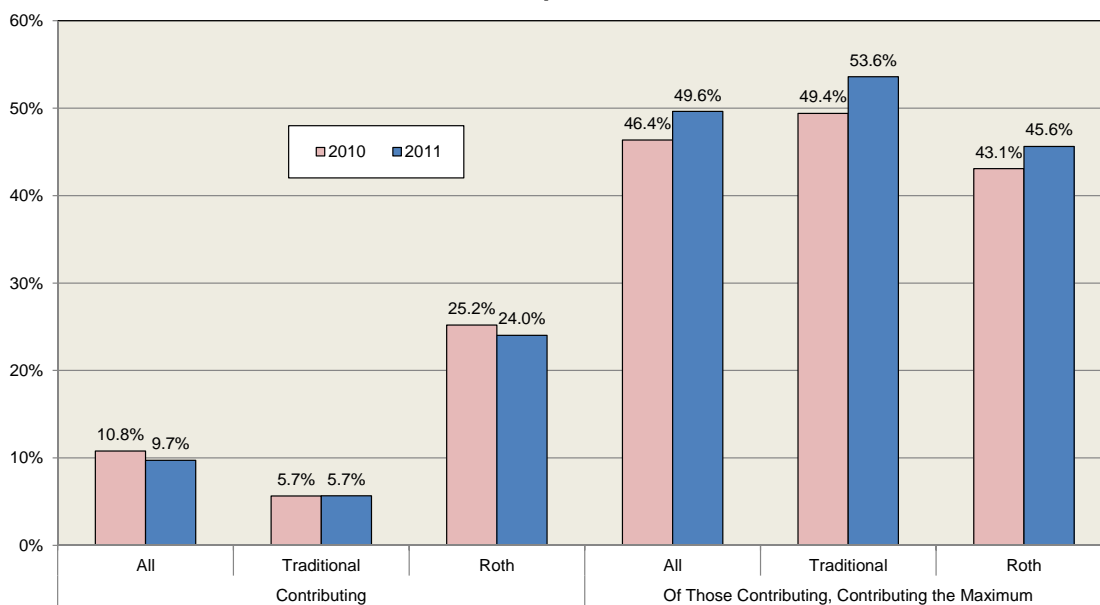
Figure 20
Distribution of Contributions and
Rollovers to Traditional* and Roth IRAs, 2011

	Number (in thousands)	Percent
Contributions		
All	1,601	100.0%
Less than \$1,000	273	17.0
\$1,000–\$1,999	196	12.3
\$2,000–\$3,999	242	15.1
\$4,000–\$4,999	83	5.2
\$5,000–\$6,000	807	50.4
Rollovers		
All	1,058	100.0
Less than \$2,000	171	16.2
\$2,000–\$4,999	151	14.2
\$5,000–\$9,999	93	8.8
\$10,000–\$24,999	160	15.2
\$25,000–\$49,999	141	13.4
\$50,000–\$74,999	82	7.7
\$75,000–\$99,999	53	5.0
\$100,000–\$149,999	69	6.5
\$150,000–\$249,999	65	6.2
\$250,000 or more	72	6.8

Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* Traditional IRAs in this figure include all Traditional IRAs.

Figure 21
Percentage of Individuals Contributing to IRAs,
and of Those Contributing, the Percentage Contributing the
Maximum for a Consistent Sample* of Individuals, from 2010 to 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* The consistent sample has only the individuals with at least one account in each year (2010 and 2011) of the database.

Figure 22
Percentage of IRA-Owning Individuals Contributing Both Years and Percentage Contributing in 2011 Depending on 2010 Contribution Status for a Consistent Sample* of Individuals from 2010 to 2011, by Age and Gender

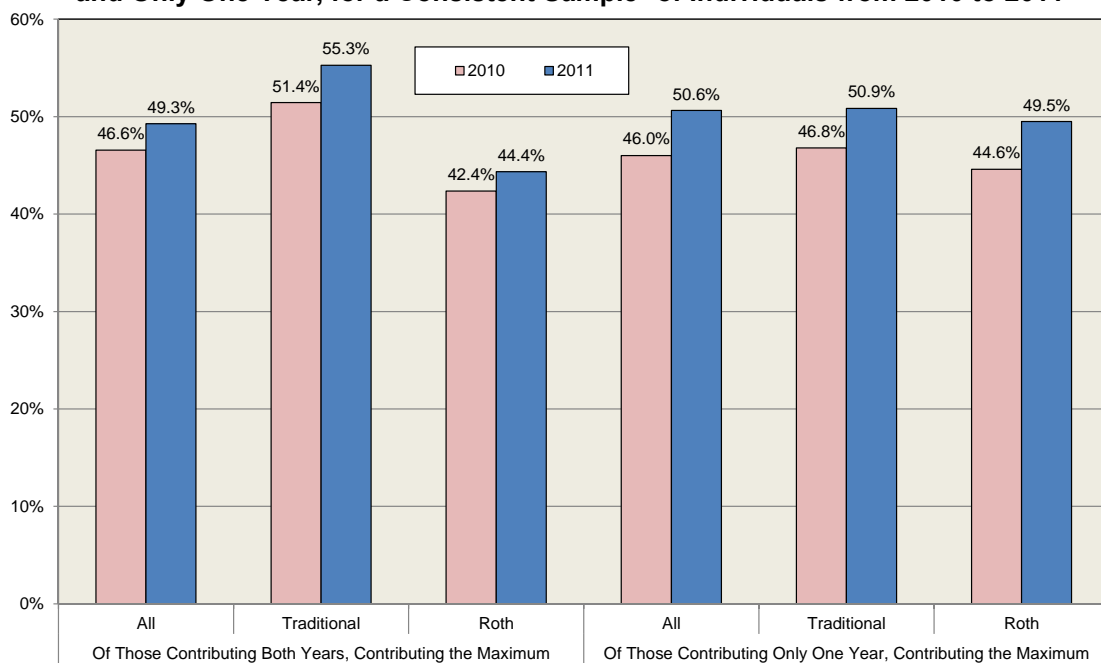
	Total			Traditional [^]			Roth		
	Both Years	Percentage of those contributing in 2010	Percentage of those NOT contributing in 2010	Both Years	Percentage of those contributing in 2010	Percentage of those NOT contributing in 2010	Both Years	Percentage of those contributing in 2010	Percentage of those NOT contributing in 2010
All	7.1%	65.4%	3.0%	3.2%	56.5%	1.4%	17.0%	67.4%	1.7%
Age									
Under 25	15.5	62.7	8.6	2.7	38.3	0.6	23.8	64.0	7.9
25–29	17.4	70.5	7.9	3.5	49.1	1.3	29.9	71.9	6.5
30–34	14.2	70.7	5.7	4.0	54.6	1.7	26.2	72.2	4.1
35–39	11.1	69.8	4.4	4.4	58.1	1.8	20.5	71.6	2.7
40–44	9.4	70.3	3.7	4.6	61.7	1.8	18.0	71.9	2.0
45–49	8.2	69.6	3.3	4.4	62.6	1.8	17.0	71.0	1.7
50–54	7.4	68.0	3.2	4.2	61.9	1.8	16.5	68.9	1.6
55–59	7.1	66.1	3.3	4.1	60.2	1.9	16.0	66.7	1.5
60–64	5.9	60.9	2.9	3.4	55.7	1.8	13.4	61.3	1.3
65–69	3.7	52.3	2.0	2.3	49.0	1.3	8.3	51.7	0.8
70 or older	0.7	26.8	0.3	0.1	10.0	0.1	4.1	36.1	0.3
Unknown	2.7	67.3	1.0	1.0	57.5	0.5	14.3	68.8	0.6
Gender									
Female	8.1	68.9	3.4	3.6	61.0	1.6	17.3	70.2	1.9
Male	8.1	69.2	3.4	3.4	60.6	1.6	18.2	70.7	1.9
Unknown	4.5	52.6	2.0	2.4	42.3	1.0	14.2	56.5	1.1

Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* The consistent sample has only the individuals with at least one account in each year (2010 and 2011) of the database.

[^] Traditional includes both contributory and rollover in this figure.

Figure 23
Percentage of Individuals Contributing Who Contribute the Maximum in Both Years and Only One Year, for a Consistent Sample* of Individuals from 2010 to 2011



Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* The consistent sample has only the individuals with at least one account in each year (2010 and 2011) of the database.

Figure 24
Average IRA Contributions of Those Who Contribute Both Years and in Each Year
for a Consistent Sample* of Individuals from 2010 to 2011, by Age and Gender

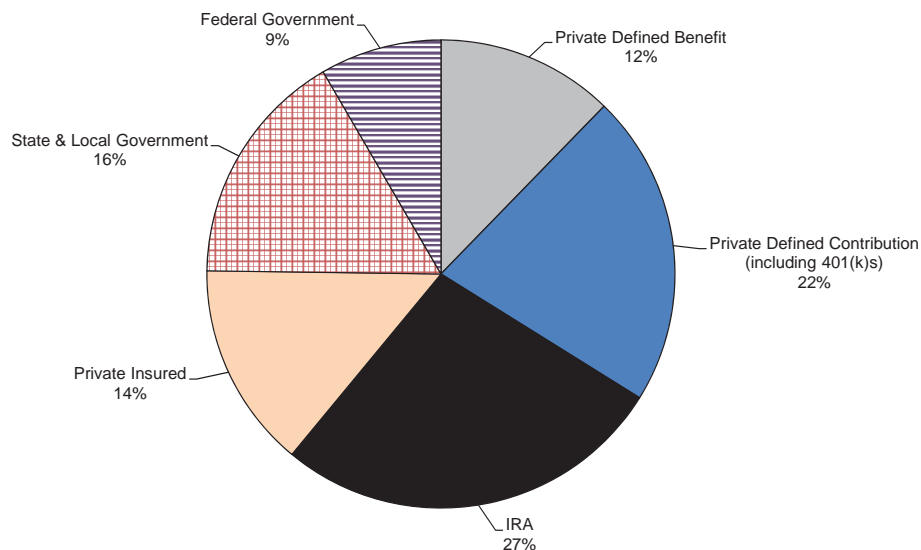
	Total				Traditional [^]				Roth			
	2010		2011		2010		2011		2010		2011	
	All	Both Years	All	Both Years	All	Both Years	All	Both Years	All	Both Years	All	Both Years
All	\$3,808	\$3,841	\$3,859	\$3,890	\$3,937	\$4,059	\$3,993	\$4,114	\$3,665	\$3,659	\$3,705	\$3,696
Age												
Under 25	2,714	2,794	2,885	2,926	2,758	2,550	2,581	2,581	2,704	2,795	2,893	2,928
25–29	3,136	3,201	3,175	3,254	2,679	2,661	2,600	2,687	3,172	3,224	3,216	3,270
30–34	3,194	3,233	3,214	3,265	3,020	3,020	3,028	3,061	3,192	3,221	3,208	3,239
35–39	3,269	3,287	3,291	3,308	3,381	3,434	3,402	3,465	3,166	3,174	3,180	3,181
40–44	3,379	3,405	3,413	3,431	3,525	3,615	3,558	3,645	3,229	3,231	3,251	3,243
45–49	3,532	3,575	3,575	3,607	3,621	3,726	3,659	3,759	3,395	3,402	3,430	3,420
50–54	4,045	4,114	4,263	4,314	4,050	4,187	4,268	4,391	3,947	3,965	4,151	4,144
55–59	4,422	4,528	4,513	4,574	4,341	4,502	4,418	4,544	4,386	4,439	4,490	4,482
60–64	4,620	4,761	4,693	4,767	4,463	4,657	4,531	4,670	4,658	4,742	4,744	4,737
65–69	4,650	4,876	4,713	4,841	4,494	4,759	4,542	4,743	4,723	4,904	4,824	4,851
70 or older	4,375	4,822	4,580	4,717	4,104	4,394	4,057	4,264	4,497	4,869	4,673	4,774
Unknown	4,076	4,086	4,172	4,100	4,290	4,341	4,328	4,332	3,801	3,810	3,902	3,818
Gender												
Female	3,810	3,851	3,853	3,894	3,924	4,028	3,954	4,076	3,675	3,683	3,718	3,713
Male	3,905	3,977	3,955	4,017	4,039	4,189	4,082	4,238	3,764	3,808	3,808	3,833
Unknown	3,619	3,478	3,635	3,565	3,777	3,795	3,861	3,880	3,451	3,242	3,425	3,323

Source: EBRI IRA Database.

* The consistent sample has only the individuals with at least one account in each year (2010 and 2011) of the database.

[^] Traditional includes both contributory and rollover in this figure.

Box Figure A
Sources of Estimated Total U.S. Retirement Plan Assets, 2011
(Total \$18.0 trillion)



Source: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, "Flow of Funds Accounts of the United States: *Flows and Outstandings* Fourth Quarter 2012."

Endnotes

¹ See Box Figure A at the end of this study.

² EBRI has focused on behavior in 401(k) plans, but the databases of EBRI are being expanded to include all forms of DC plans, allowing for the integration of participants in multiple DC plan types and IRAs.

³ Below is a comparison of the EBRI IRA Database™ with numbers from the Internal Revenue Service and the Federal Reserve's Flow of Funds report as referenced in the Box Figure A.

	EBRI Database 2010	EBRI Database 2011	Internal Revenue Service 2004 Data	Flow of Funds 2011 Data
Total Assets	\$1.002 trillion	\$1.456 trillion	\$3.3 trillion	\$4.9 trillion
Percentage Traditional Assets	85.9%	85.3%	89.6%	
Average Rollover Amount	\$69,012	\$72,398	\$59,100	
Average Traditional Contributions	\$3,335	\$3,723	\$3,623	

The above percentage of traditional assets is adjusted for known assets. With the unknown assets included, the traditional IRA asset percentage is 69.4 percent. Based on this asset comparison, the database includes about 30 percent of the assets, and the number of individuals owning IRAs is about 25 percent of the total IRA market, accounting for growth from the 50.9 million individuals the Internal Revenue Service reported owning an IRA in 2004. See Victoria L. Bryant, "Accumulation and Distribution of Individual Account Arrangements, 2004." *Statistics of Income Bulletin*, Spring 2008, pp. 90–101 for complete IRS tabs of IRAs. Also see the discussion about the differences in TOFR and TOFC IRAs on pg. 16.

⁴ Traditional IRAs are broken down into categories based on how the accounts originated with the data providers, either through contributions made by the account owners or through rollovers from other tax-qualified vehicles, such as traditional pension or 401(k) plans. Since both of these account categories could have received contributions or rollovers at some point after their origination, these are **NOT** reliable proxies for employment-based dollars vs. IRA-only dollars. The TOFR IRAs do provide an estimate of the dollars that have been moved into new IRAs.

⁵ Some of the IRAs could not be classified into the four stated categories by the data providers. Consequently, these accounts are classified as "unknown" in this database.

⁶ For those with a known IRA account type, 33.5 percent were TOFC IRAs, 34.3 percent TOFR IRAs (combined 67.8 percent traditional IRAs), 24.4 per-cent Roth, and 7.9 percent SEP/SIMPLE.

⁷ This isn't surprising considering that Roth IRAs didn't exist until 1998. Furthermore, Roth IRAs have a higher percentage of younger contributors who, on average, contribute less annually. Additionally, Roth IRAs have not received large rollovers from other tax-qualified plans, such as 401(k) plans, that traditional rollover IRAs have received. This could change over time with the growing availability of a Roth option in 401(k) plans and changes in tax laws that allow for more ease in converting traditional IRAs into Roth IRAs.

⁸ The individual account-balance distribution could shift toward a larger percentage of individuals having balances greater than \$100,000 as the database grows to include other data providers. However, this will depend on the number of new individuals added relative to the number of new accounts added for individuals already in the database.

⁹ In 2010, the ability of individuals to convert their traditional IRAs to Roth IRAs was significantly eased. Consequently, after 2010, the differences in the average balances between TOFR, TOFC, and Roth IRAs could become smaller, depending on the number of individuals taking advantage of these new Roth conversion rules.

¹⁰ The unknown-age category has significantly higher average and median balances than those of the known-age categories. A segment of the IRA market from some of the data administrators do not collect age data, which seems to be more concentrated among those having higher balances.

¹¹ Again, the traditional IRAs and those of unknown type where owner age was unknown had significantly higher average balances than those of all other ages of these IRA types. This reflects a specific segment of the market that does not have age records. The likelihood of having more than one IRA was also much higher among this group.

¹² This sample includes 14.4 million individuals with \$1.308 trillion in assets out of the total 16.6 million individuals with \$1.456 trillion in assets in the entire 2011 database. Compare Figures 11 and 2 to see the distribution of the individual owners by age and gender. The distributions are very similar, with the exception of those with unknown ages, which is lower in the consistent sample.

¹³ Contributions to SEP and SIMPLE IRAs are not considered in this section due to the differing limits relative to the nonemployment-based IRAs and the potential incentives to contribute to SIMPLEs through matching contributions.

¹⁴ In 2011, the maximum contribution to an IRA was \$5,000 for those younger than age 50 and \$6,000 for those age 50 or older, due to the additional \$1,000 catch-up contribution allowed individuals of that age.

¹⁵ In 2001, 69.9 percent of those making a contribution to a deductible, traditional IRA made the maximum contribution (\$2,000), but in 2005, only 26.8 percent were found to have made the maximum contribution (\$4,000 for those under age 50 and \$4,500 for those ages 50 or older) to this IRA type. See Craig Copeland, "Ownership of Individual Retirement Accounts and 401(k)-Type Plans," *EBRI Notes*, no. 5 (Employee Benefit Research Institute, May 2008): 2–12.

¹⁶ The number of individuals making the maximum contribution could be higher if individuals are contributing to more than one account and the other account(s) is (are) not in the database. However, within the database, of those contributing to a Roth IRA in 2011, only 1.9 percent also contributed to a traditional IRA. Of those contributing to a traditional IRA, only 3.3 percent contributed to a Roth IRA. Furthermore, over 98 percent of those contributing to either a traditional or Roth IRA in 2011 contributed to only that IRA. Thus, virtually all of those contributing to an IRA in the EBRI IRA Database contribute to only one account.

¹⁷ Accounts owned by individuals with an unspecified gender in the database did have a higher likelihood of being contributed to than those with account owners of a known gender, but there is no reason to assume that these "unknown" genders are more likely to be male or female.

¹⁸ The standard IRA contribution limit is currently \$5,000. Taxpayers age 50 or older at the end of the calendar year are allowed to make an extra \$1,000 "catch-up" contribution, for an annual total of \$6,000.

¹⁹ This number is larger than the percentage contributing the maximum due to some individuals age 50 or older contributing more than \$5,000 but less than the maximum of \$6,000 for their age.

²⁰ While only 19.5 percent of the rollovers were valued at \$100,000 or more, the assets associated with these rollovers amounted to 75.7 percent of the assets rolled over in 2011.

²¹ In an earlier EBRI publication, the persistence of contributions was investigated. A different formulation of the persistence statistic based on the current-year contributors to see what percentage of those contributed in both of the prior years was used. It was found that 21.8 percent of those making deductible contributions to an IRA in 1998 also made them in 1996 and 1997. Furthermore, three-fourths of those who contributed all three years made the maximum contribution in 1998. See Craig Copeland, "IRA Assets and Characteristics of IRA Owners," *EBRI Notes*, no. 12 (Employee Benefit Research Institute, December 2002): 1–9.

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