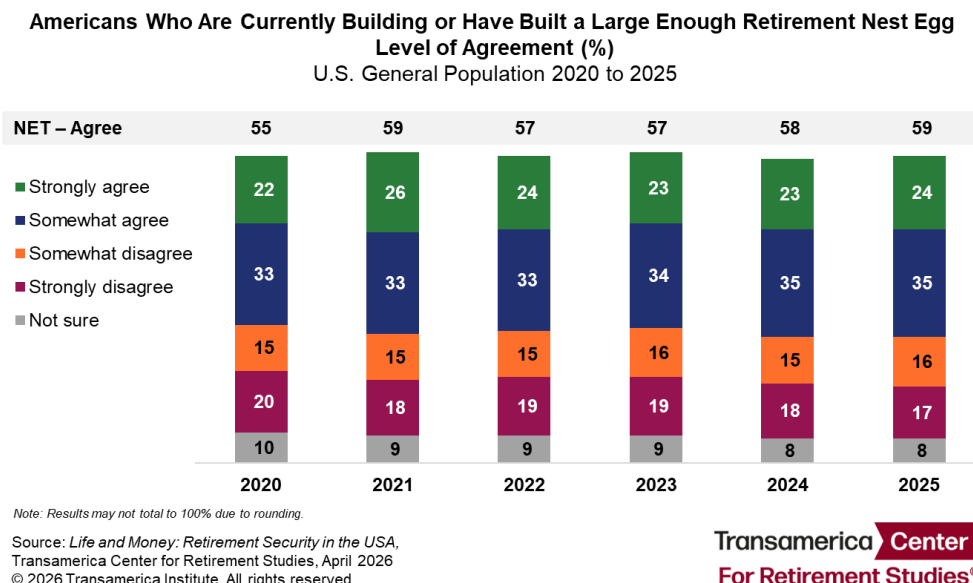


**Retirement Security in the United States Is Stuck in the Doldrums**

*New research finds lackluster improvements in Americans’ outlook amid economic uncertainty*

**LOS ANGELES – April 16, 2026 –** Fewer than six in 10 U.S. residents (59%) agree they are currently building or have built a large enough retirement nest egg, according to [Life and Money: Retirement Security in the USA](#), a report released today by nonprofit [Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies®](#) (TCRS) in collaboration with Transamerica Institute®. This 2025 survey finding has increased slightly from 55% in 2020 when large swaths of the economy were shuttered due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



The research found lackluster performance in other key measures between 2020 and 2025. The percentage of Americans who are confident in their ability to have a comfortable retirement was unchanged at 66%, including 22% who are very confident and 44% who are somewhat confident. Among those who are not retired, the percentage saving for retirement increased from 65% to 69%, and household savings in retirement accounts increased from \$44,000 to \$56,000 (estimated medians).

“Retirement is a core tenet of the American dream. It is a chapter in life that brings time and freedom for travel, family and friends, hobbies, and giving back to our communities,” said [Catherine Collinson](#), CEO and president of Transamerica Institute and TCRS. “Today, a secure retirement may be out of reach for many Americans.”

**Impediments to retirement security**

“Americans are navigating a turbulent economy, the high cost of living, the impacts of AI and robotics on the future of work, and the nerve-wracking countdown to the depletion of the Social Security trust funds,” said Collinson. “These megatrends are driving the doldrums in Americans’ retirement outlook.”

In 2025, the survey identified these impediments to retirement security:

- **The economy, an uncertain future, and fatigue.** Only 15% of Americans say they are very optimistic about their future amid today’s rapid pace of change. Many indicate their day-to-day life has been negatively impacted by the economy (56%), health care costs (44%), housing prices (43%), and extreme weather and natural disasters (28%). Almost half of Americans (46%) say they often feel exhausted and burnt out.

- **Greatest retirement fears.** Americans' greatest fears about retirement include declining health that requires long-term care (39%), Social Security being reduced or ceasing to exist in the future (38%), outliving their savings and investments (36%), cognitive decline, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease (32%), losing their independence (30%), possible long-term care costs (30%), and not being able to meet the basic financial needs of their family (30%).
- **Inability to adequately save.** Six in 10 Americans (62%) agree that they could work until retirement and still not save enough to meet their needs or, if retired, that they were unable to save enough to meet their retirement needs.
- **Competing financial priorities.** Americans are juggling short- and long-term financial priorities. Top priorities include saving for retirement (44%), building emergency savings (38%), just getting by to cover basic living expenses (34%), and paying off credit card debt (33%).
- **Worries about job obsolescence.** Almost half of Americans who are not retired (46%) are worried that AI and robotics will make their job skills no longer needed.

### **How Americans can take charge of their financial future**

“Although megatrends and economic uncertainty is largely out of their control, Americans have the power to take charge of their finances in ways that could help improve their current situation and long-term prospects,” said Collinson.

In 2025, the survey findings identified these action steps:

- **Gain financial knowledge.** Only one in five Americans (20%) indicate they have “a lot” of working knowledge about personal finance (e.g., managing money, investments, debt, risk, taxes).
- **Focus on finances.** Fewer than half of Americans (49%) are budgeting on a regular basis, and even fewer are managing savings and investments (37%), securing online accounts (33%), financial planning (32%), expanding knowledge of personal finance (30%), and tax planning (22%).
- **Formulate a retirement strategy.** Fewer than one in four Americans (23%) have a financial strategy for retirement in the form of a written plan.
- **Have candid conversations with trusted loved ones.** Only 16% of Americans frequently discuss their retirement savings and investments with family and close friends, and 55% occasionally discuss it.
- **Seek the services of a professional advisor, if needed.** Three in 10 Americans (31%) use a professional financial advisor.

“Strengthening the U.S. retirement system requires addressing the ever-changing realities Americans are facing, so that they can afford everyday life, have income to save and invest, gain continued access to meaningful employment, and build resilience to adapt to change,” said Collinson. “Americans also need policymakers and public-private partnerships to ensure the sustainability of safety nets, such as Social Security and Medicare, and future-proof our retirement system.”

[Life and Money: Retirement Security in the USA](#) is the lead release from the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Retirement Survey, one of the largest and longest-running surveys of its kind. The report provides a 2020 to 2025 trend analysis of 10 indicators of retirement security since the COVID-19 pandemic, and it includes an in-depth examination of the current state of retirement attitudes, beliefs, and preparations. It is based on surveys of U.S. residents age 18 and older conducted between 2020 and 2025. In total, more than 60,000 Americans were surveyed.

Along with other recent reports, [Retirement Realities: The Experience of Retirees](#), [25 Facts About Women's Retirement Outlook](#), [Retirement Throughout the Ages: The American Middle Class](#) and [Social Security: The Cornerstone of Retirement Income](#), the report can be downloaded at [www.transamericainstitute.org](http://www.transamericainstitute.org). Follow on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), and X [@TI\\_insights](#) and [@TCRStudies](#).

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### **About Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies**

Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies® (TCRS) is a division of Transamerica Institute®, a nonprofit, private operating foundation. TCRS conducts one of the largest and longest-running annual retirement surveys of its kind. The information provided here is for educational purposes only and should not be construed as insurance, securities, ERISA, tax, investment, legal, medical, or financial advice or guidance. Please consult independent professionals for answers to your specific questions.

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### **About the 26th Annual Transamerica Retirement Survey**

The analysis contained in [\*Life and Money: Retirement Security in the USA\*](#) was prepared internally by the research team at Transamerica Institute and TCRS. It is based on an online survey conducted within the U.S. by The Harris Poll on behalf of Transamerica Institute and TCRS between September 16 and October 17, 2025, among a nationally representative sample of 10,015. Data is weighted where necessary for age by gender, race and ethnicity, region, education, marital status, household size, household income, and smoking status. Respondents were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval and the worker sample data is accurate to within  $\pm 1.3$  percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent. Note: Methodologies for surveys conducted between 2020 and 2024 are available in the report.

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