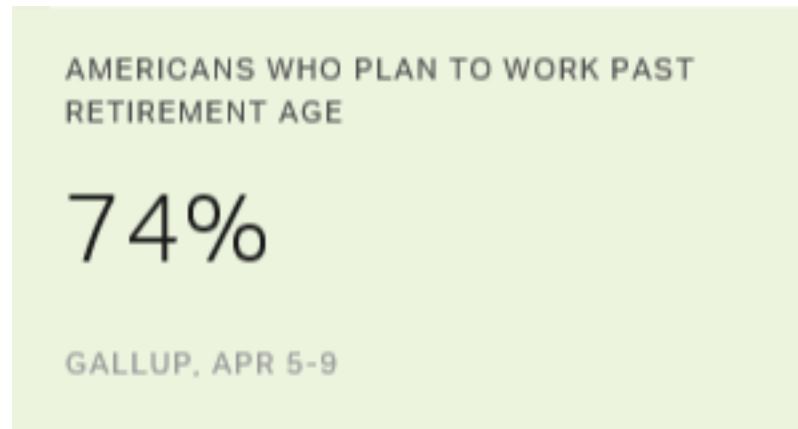


# Most U.S. Employed Adults Plan to Work Past Retirement Age

May 8, 2017

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/210044/employed-adults-plan-work-past-retirement-age.aspx>



by Art Swift

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Nearly two in three employed U.S. adults, 63%, say they plan to work past retirement age, but on a part-time basis. An additional 11% say they will work full time once they hit retirement age. A quarter of employed Americans say they will stop working altogether.

Most Employed U.S. Adults Say They Will Continue Working Past Retirement Age

Asked of employed adults

	2011	2013	2017
	%	%	%
<b>Continue working, and work full time</b>	18	15	11
<b>Continue working, and work part time</b>	63	61	63
<b>Stop working altogether</b>	18	22	25
Gallup			

These results come from Gallup's Economy and Personal Finance survey, conducted April 5-9. As in 2011 and 2013, the two previous times Gallup asked this question, working adults are most likely to say they intend to "continue working, and work part time." Over the same time period, the percentage who say they plan to "stop working altogether" has ticked up.

Of those who say they will continue working, but only full time, the majority plan to do so because they want to, not because they have to. The proportion of "want to" versus "will have to" explanations has edged up slightly since 2013. The percentage who say they "want to" keep working *part time* has also risen, from 34% to 44%.

There has been a decline in nonretirees' intentions to continue working full time, from 9% "will have to" in 2013 to 5% today, while the percentage who "will have to" work part time has dropped from 26% to 18%.

Regardless of their retirement-age plans -- whether they work full time, work part time or stop working -- employed adults mostly say their choice is out of preference rather than necessity. The vast majority of those who plan to stop working say it is because they want to rather than will need to. Also, by a better-than 2-to-1 ratio, those who plan to continue working part time say it is something they want to do, rather than will have to do.

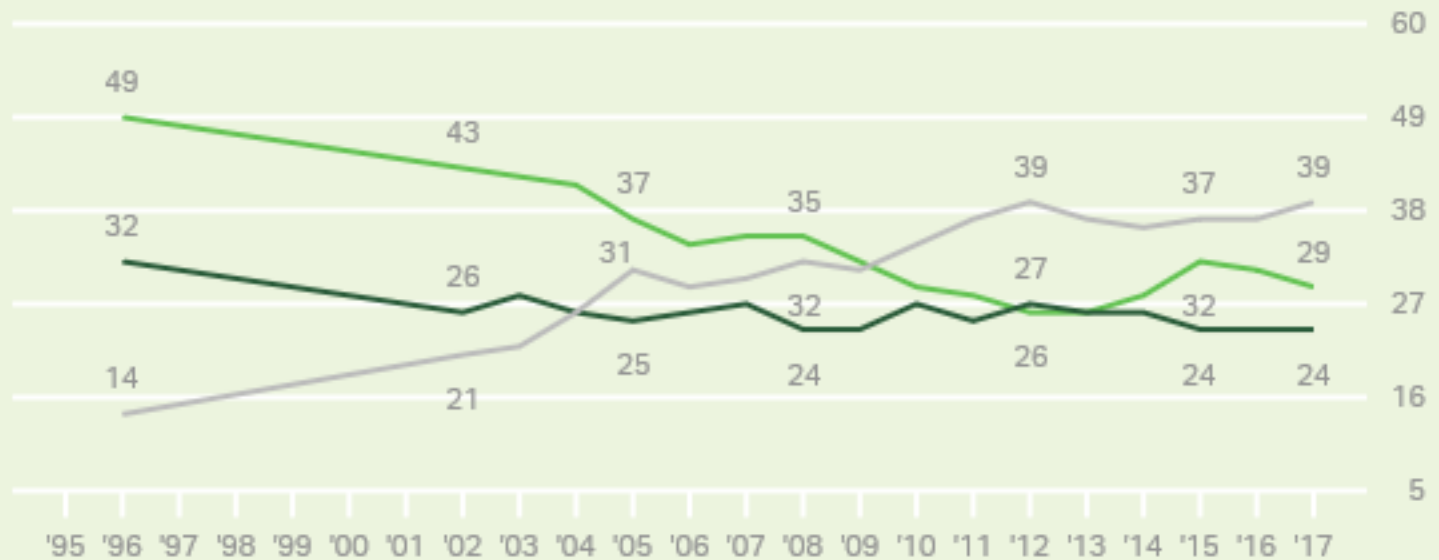
### **More Americans Expect to Retire After Age 65**

Nonretired U.S. adults are split on when their "retirement age" actually will be, but the greatest percentage (39%) say they expect to retire after age 65, about the same as last year. Roughly one in four expect to retire at exactly age 65, while 29% believe they will retire before then.

## At what age do you expect to retire?

Asked of nonretirees

■ % Under 65 ■ % 65 ■ % Over 65



Note: 1995 result reflects an average of two polls, from November and December

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These trends have remained relatively consistent this decade, yet there has been a seismic shift since 1995 in the age at which nonretirees believe they will retire. In two polls conducted that year, an average of 14% said they expected to retire after 65 and 49% before 65. These percentages have flipped in the last two decades, as the age to start collecting Social Security has risen to 67 and more Americans feel a financial need to stay in the workforce.

For current retirees, the picture is quite different. Sixty-eight percent say they retired before age 65, while 30% left the workforce when they were 65 or older. The difference in the retirement age of current retirees and the plans of those still working may be related to the changes in Social Security and movement away from guaranteed benefit plans, such as pensions.

### Bottom Line

More Americans say they want to continue working when they reach retirement age rather than retire altogether, with part-time work being the most popular option. However, the shift since 2013 by nonretirees who say they "want to" -- rather than "will have to" -- work part time suggests the

need to work isn't as dire in today's post-Great Recession economy. Another possibility is that some employed Americans may be overly optimistic about their retirement finances, perhaps thinking they have enough money for retirement when in actuality they might not.

At the same time, nearly 40% of Americans now believe they will retire after 65 -- a stark departure from their beliefs in the 1990s. Whether it is working to make ends meet or for pleasure/life enhancement, more Americans plan to stay in the workforce longer.

*Historical data are available in [Gallup Analytics](#).*

## **Survey Methods**

Results for this Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted April 5-9, 2017, with a random sample of 718 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia who are not retired. For results based on the total sample of nonretired adults, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 5$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on the sample of 547 nonretired adults who are currently employed, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 5$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting.

Each sample of national adults includes a minimum quota of 70% cellphone respondents and 30% landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas by time zone within region. Landline and cellular telephone numbers are selected using random-digit-dial methods.

[View survey methodology, complete question responses and trends.](#)

Learn more about how the [Gallup Poll Social Series](#) works.

