



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
 McCourt School of Public Policy  
 Center for Retirement Initiatives

## FAST FACT SHEET # 13

### *What are Current and Projected Demographic Trends for the Older Population?*

- ✓ U.S. residents ages 65 and over grew from 35 million in 2000 to 49.2 million in 2016, accounting for 12.4 percent and 15.2 percent of the total population, respectively. By 2029, when all baby boomers will be 65 years and over, more than 20 percent of the U.S. population will be over the age of 65.  
 U.S. Census, [The Nation's Older Population Is Still Growing](#), Census Bureau Reports, June 2017; U.S. Census, [The Baby Boom Cohort in the United States: 2012 to 2060](#), May 2014, p. 1.
- ✓ Globally, the population age 60 and over is growing faster than all younger age groups. People 60 and over are projected to number 1.4 billion in 2030, 2.1 billion in 2050, and 3.1 billion in 2100.  
 United Nations, [Global Issues: Ageing & World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision](#), p. 11.
- ✓ In the U.S., a man turning 65 can expect to live until 84.3 on average. A woman turning 65 can expect to live, on average, until 86.6. About one in four 65-year-olds today will live past 90, and one in 10 will live past 95.  
 Social Security Administration, [Calculators: Life Expectancy](#)
- ✓ In the U.S., today's 20-year-olds are expected to live to 100, and today's 10-year-olds are expected to live to 103. The oldest age at which 50 percent of babies born in 2007 are predicted to still be alive is 104.  
 World Economic Forum, [We'll Live to 100 – How Can We Afford It?](#), May 2017, p. 4.
- ✓ The proportion of Americans 65 and over was 12 per 100 working-age adults in 1945 and 21 per 100 working-age adults in 2010. This old-age dependency ratio is projected to reach to 35 per 100 working adults in 2030.  
 U.S. Census, [The Baby Boom Cohort in the United States: 2012 to 2060](#), May 2014, p. 9.
- ✓ The median income of households with a member age 65 or older was \$38,515 in 2015.  
 U.S. Census, [Older Americans Month: May 2017](#), March 2017, p. 1.
- ✓ The supplemental poverty rate (which takes government assistance programs into account) is 13.7 percent for those age 65 or older, equal to 6.5 million people in 2015. Without Social Security benefits, the poverty rate for this group would more than triple. Social Security income is the most important source of income for those age 65 and older — 82 percent of those age 65 or older receive Social Security benefits.  
 U.S. Census, [The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2015](#), September 2016, p. 12-13; Economic Policy Institute, [The State of American Retirement](#), March 2016, p. 32.
- ✓ While the share of older adults in poor health fell between 1998 and 2012, health declines among middle-aged adults may halt or reverse this trend. For example, between 1992 and 2010, the share of people ages 51 to 54 reporting fair or poor health increased from 17 to 22 percent, as diabetes has become more widespread.  
 Urban Institute, [How Retirement Is Changing in America](#), original analysis of Health and Retirement Study data
- ✓ Unmarried women age 65 and over are the most likely to be below the poverty line at 18 percent, compared to married women at 5 percent and unmarried men at 12.7 percent.  
 Social Security Administration, [Income of the Population 55 or Older, 2014](#), April 2016, p. 311-312.
- ✓ Between 1998 and 2012, the share of adults age 65 and older with household debt increased from 30 to 44 percent. In 2012, 24 percent of older households had an outstanding mortgage, compared with 16 percent in 1998. The prevalence of other types of debt, including credit card debt, has also grown over time.  
 Urban Institute, [How Retirement Is Changing in America](#), original analysis of Health and Retirement Study data