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Getting to retirement age doesn't mean you can afford it.

A growing number of older workers are laboring past the traditional time of retirement, often long past, and more workers say they don't see themselves stopping work until their late 60s or beyond.

"I don't think I ever will," said Francine Smith of Lindenhurst, who at 64 is driving a school bus, with a small 401(k) account and no plan to stop work anytime soon. "Oh jeez, I have nothing: no savings, no retirement, no nothing, I live day to day."

The trends spell trouble for many Americans:

- Workers are not saving enough to retire comfortably. A survey this month by the Employee Benefit Research Institute, a think tank, found that 57 percent of workers reported less than \$25,000 in total savings other than the value of a home or a defined-benefit pension. That included 28 percent with less than \$1,000, up from 20 percent in 2009.

- Savings as a percentage of disposable personal income fell from more than 10 percent in the mid-1980s to 2.4 percent in January.

- Fewer private-sector workers can expect a traditional defined-benefit pension. About 15 percent are in a plan now, versus 30 percent three decades ago. About 85 percent of public-sector workers have one. A survey by the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College in 2010 said 55 percent of workers have neither a pension plan nor a defined-contribution plan such as a 401(k).

- Compared with a decade ago, significantly more workers in all age groups except the youngest now anticipate working to 65 or older, and the percentage of workers expecting to retire before age 65 is now half what it was two decades ago: down from 50 percent in 1991 to 23 percent in 2013, according to the latest EBRI Retirement Confidence Survey.

Financial need was among the most-cited reasons, but intangible benefits such as keeping active, maintaining connections to others, and a sense of self-worth and identity were also important.

- Delaying Social Security substantially increases monthly benefit levels. A worker entitled to \$1,000 a month at 66, currently the full retirement age, would get \$1,320 if benefits aren't

Why they CAN'T afford to retire



PAUL FRANCEUS,
HUNTINGTON

Franceus, 81, says he must work because he was "foolish with money" in the past.



FRANCINE SMITH,
LINDENHURST

Smith, 64, drives a school bus and has no plans to stop working: "I have nothing."

claimed until age 70.

About one-third of retirees 65 and older live exclusively on Social Security, according to surveys. (The average monthly benefit for workers who retired in December 2012 was \$1,262.) For many others, Social Security provides 80 percent or more of income.

Still struggling with losses

The recovering economy has restored much of the real estate and stock market losses from the recession, but many households are still struggling to recoup individual reverses.

The stock market gains tend to benefit higher-income households, and those who lost jobs may still be making up for lost income. At the same time, yields on interest-bearing investments such as bonds and bank savings are at historically low levels.

"People are anxious about retirement and they have good reason to be anxious," said Steven Sass, of the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. Working longer "is the No. 1 thing you can do to improve your retirement prospects."

For those without adequate investment income, retiring is

harder, financial planners say.

"Over the last decade, I'm seeing a growing percentage of people having difficulty making it work," said Lanny Weisman, principal of Weisman and Co. CPAs of Port Jefferson. "I think the recession has impacted a lot of people: they lost their jobs, their asset base. Their children are having financial problems, which become their financial problems when they help them out."

And Social Security benefits don't go very far, where local taxes and costs are high, said financial planner Craig Ferrantino

of the firm Craig James in Melville. "People need to work longer if you are going to live on Long Island," he said. "They need to have another source of income somewhere."

Full-time work in his 80s

Paul Franceus, 81, of Huntington, said he must work because he was "foolish with money" as a younger man and made some bad investments.

Now, the former Wall Street accounts clerk drives 40 minutes each way to a full-time job in the mailroom of the IRS office in Holtsville. He puts 15 percent



JOHN AND MARY COLE, BOHEMIA

John Cole, 78, works from home, while his wife, Mary, 72, has an apart-time job. He said he lost most of his money in an investment plan. What's left is "not enough to live on."

of his wages into a savings plan so he can retire next year.

"I have a wish list," said Franceus, a widower. "One is to go on the Seine in Paris on a boat cruise. I take piano lessons. I like jigsaw puzzles . . . when I retire I'll be doing them every day."

John Cole, 78, continues to work from home, in the Town of Islip, as a consultant to the bookkeeping business in which he'd been a partner. His wife, Mary, 72, works part time as a home health aide.

"I put money aside in an investment plan and lost most of

it," he said, noting that a failed investment resulted in a class-action suit. What was left he rolled over into an IRA, but "it's not enough to live on."

If he and his wife couldn't work, he said, they'd probably have to move in with a son. It does get "uncomfortable at times when I think about it but I try not to . . . basically it's not my nature. My wife does all the worrying. We're both in good health and hopefully it continues that way."

Investment advisers at Fidelity, which manages many workplaces' 401(k) investment sav-

ings plans, suggest that those looking to retire at age 67 have assets eight times the value of their last annual salary. Those assets would yield enough, along with Social Security, to replace 85 percent of their pre-retirement income.

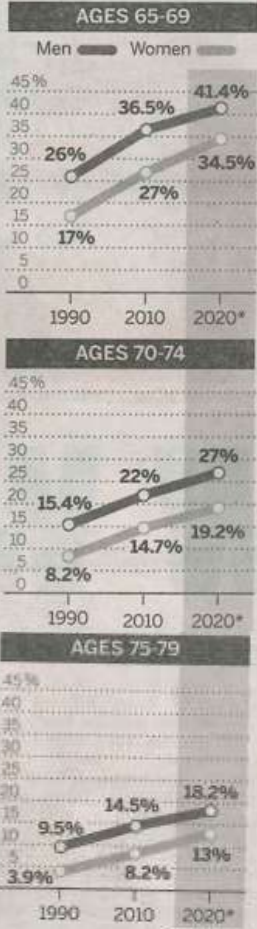
Enjoying medical benefits

Patrina Chiarelli of Ronkonkoma, 65, and her retired husband enjoy good medical benefits under her workplace plan, and she'll keep working rather than pay additional costs under Medicare.

"We're jet, but we live a good

The not retired

Percentage of men and women in the workforce



*Projected SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

divorce on his 401(k).

"It's not a question of if I want to; I have to work," he said, noting the costs of two children, one in college and another in high school. "I will not retire until I'm close to 70 and I may work part time after that."

He said he's unable to save as he struggles to pay his bills each month. "Hell no, absolutely not," he said. "I haven't in a very long time."

More savings possible

Gary Nuccio, an Ameriprise financial planner in Bohemia, said he thinks most families could save more than they think they can. "I find more often than not that there is no real specific savings plan or investment strategy beyond a 401(k)," he said. "Everybody lets money slip through their fingers."

Smith, the bus driver, would find it difficult to believe she could save more. She had five children, is divorced and chose, she said, to stay home with them and then work part time. Now, she said, she accepts the consequences of her decisions.

She took early Social Security at 62 after a brief layoff, which helps pay the bills, but her benefits are lower than if she'd waited until 66. A recent car accident has set her back financially. Her house needs repairs. She is unable, she said, to pay all her bills each month.

She borrowed \$3,500 from her small workplace 401(k) three years ago, so now pays in \$15 a week, up from her usual \$10, to pay it back.

She said she keeps her stress down by simply focusing on living day to day. It's when she thinks about the future, or her bills, that she gets upset.

"Oh my God, what am I going to do? I've taken care of myself all my life, and I don't want to be a burden on my kids," she said. "People laugh at me, but I tell them I live with horse blinders on. Sometimes ignorance is bliss."

A Levittown woman who gave her name as Maureen said her husband wanted to retire at 59 but is still working as an X-ray technician at 69.

He might be able to retire, she said, but works out of uncertainty about the future: "It's not knowing if you will have enough money to last and continue living here. We want to stay here. That's where the grandkids are."

She laughingly recalled taking their retirement dream in their 50s to a financial planner.

"You could retire at 59," she said he told them, "but you'd have to die at 72."