

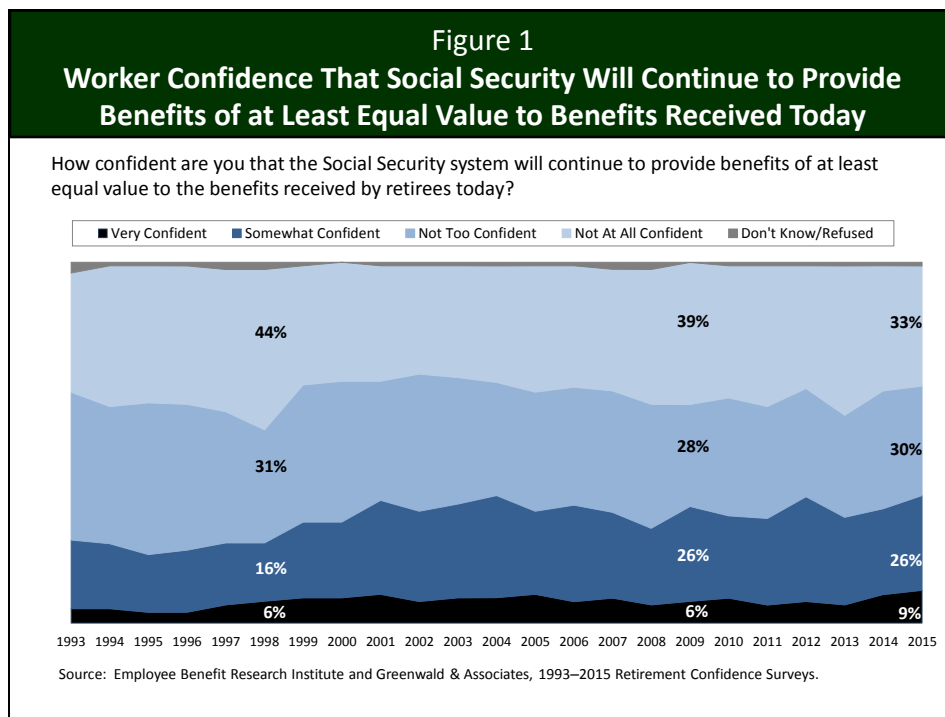
2015 RCS FACT SHEET #6

ATTITUDES ABOUT CURRENT SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE BENEFIT LEVELS

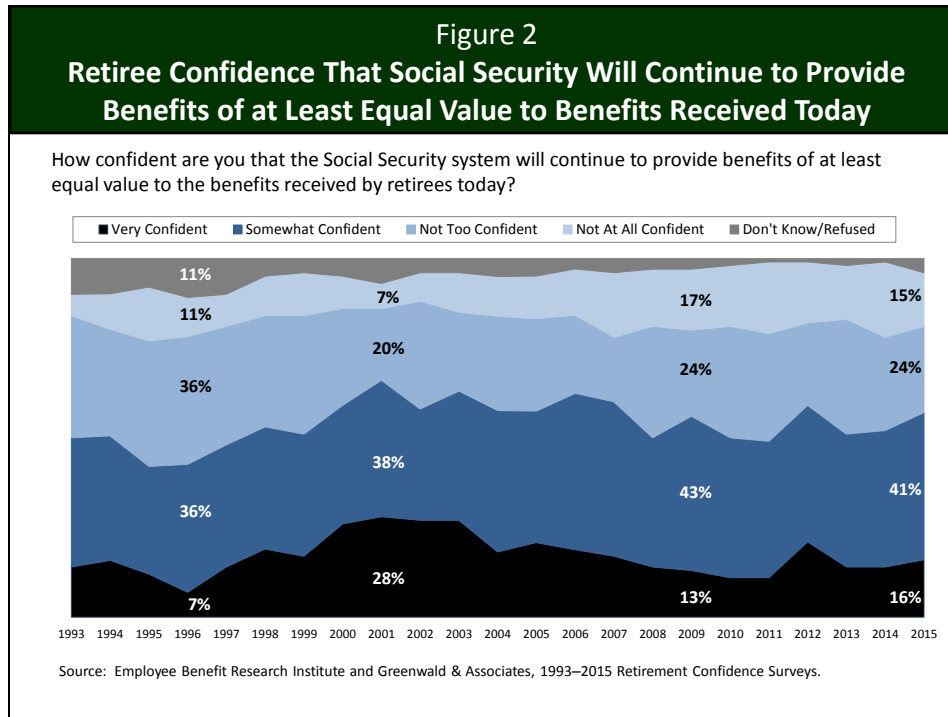
Confidence about having enough money to live comfortably in retirement continued to increase for both workers and retirees. Has there been a corresponding increase in confidence about the sustainability of the benefit levels of social insurance programs like Social Security and Medicare? To what extent are workers planning to rely on Social Security in retirement, and how does that compare with the experience of current retirees?

Confidence in Current Social Security Benefit Levels

Nine percent of workers are very confident and 26 percent are somewhat confident that the Social Security system will continue to provide benefits of at least equal value to the benefits received by retirees today, levels statistically unchanged with those in the 2014 RCS. However, 33 percent of workers are not at all confident that future Social Security benefits will match or exceed the value of today's benefits (Figure 1).

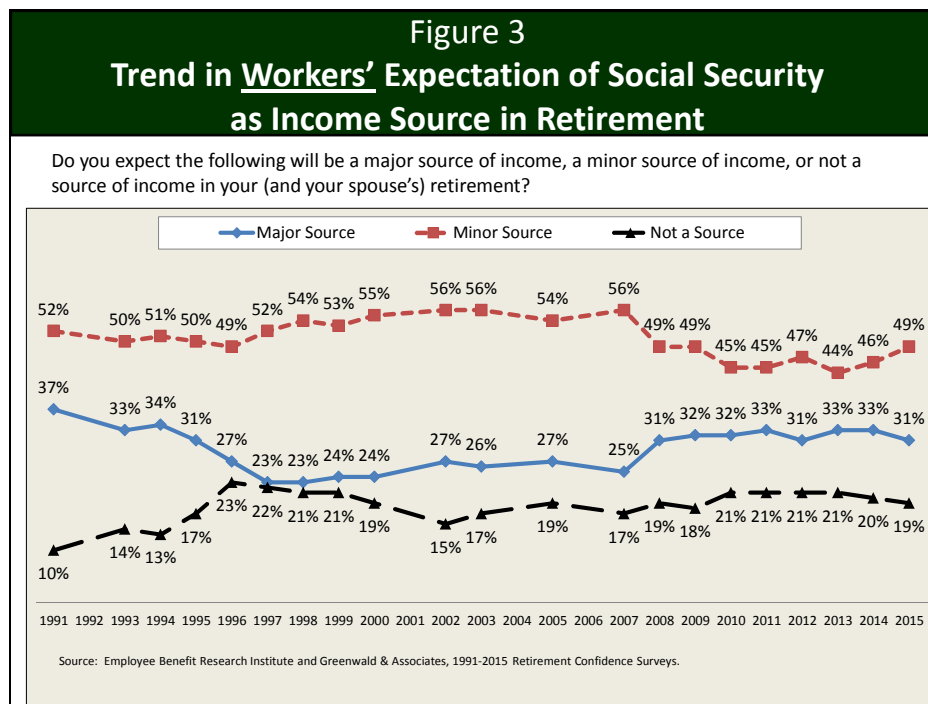


Confidence that Social Security will continue to provide benefits that are at least equal to today's value is higher among workers ages 45 and older than among younger workers, and retirees are more likely than workers overall of any age to be confident about the future value of Social Security benefits. Sixteen percent of retirees say they are very confident about the future value of Social Security benefits (Figure 2).

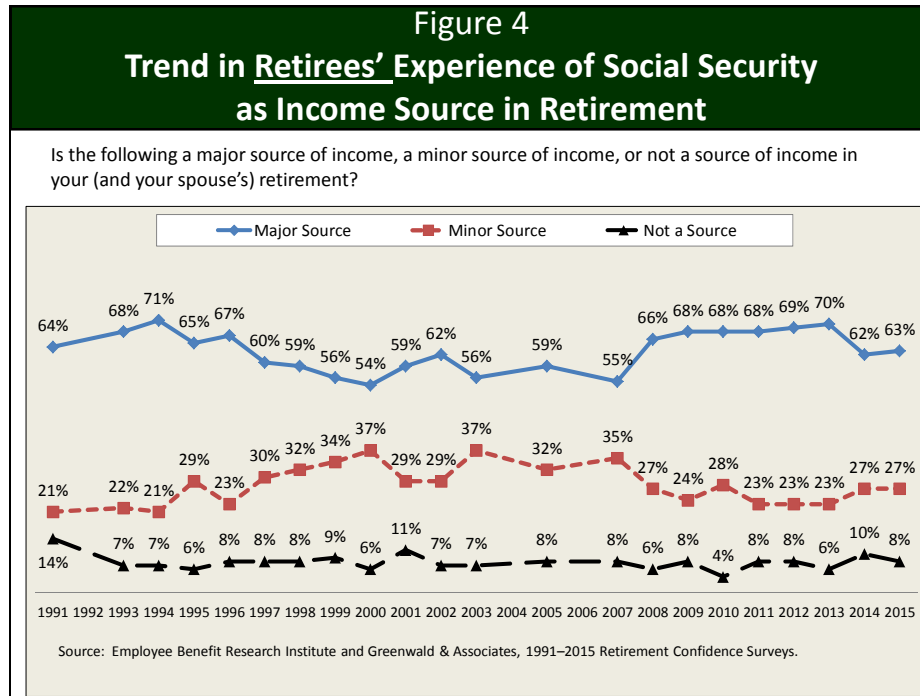


Social Security as a Source of Income in Retirement

Today's workers are half as likely to expect Social Security to be a major source of income in retirement (31 percent) as today's retirees are to report Social Security is a major source of income in their retirement (63 percent) (Figure 3).

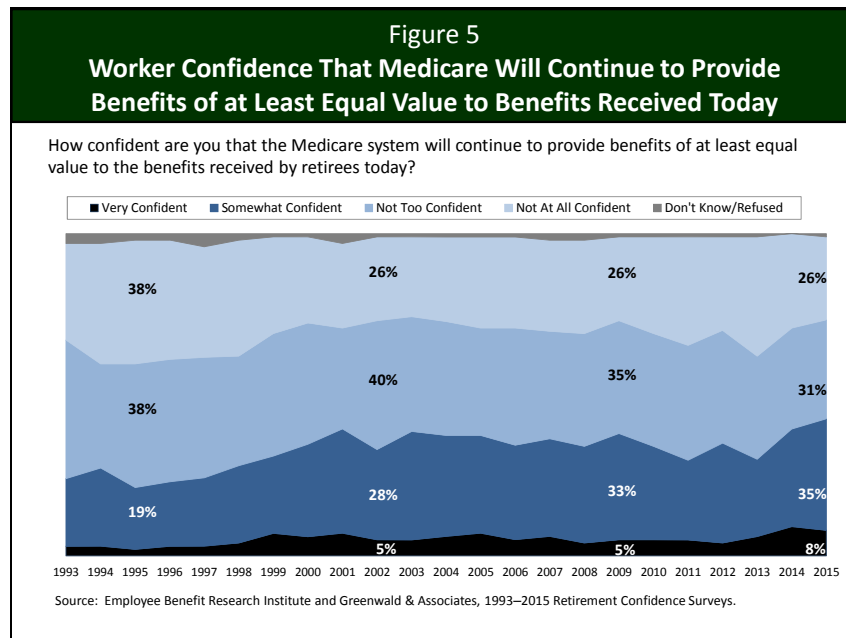


Workers are also less likely to expect Social Security will provide them with a source of income in retirement (80 percent) as retirees are to indicate they have Social Security income (90 percent) (Fig. 4).

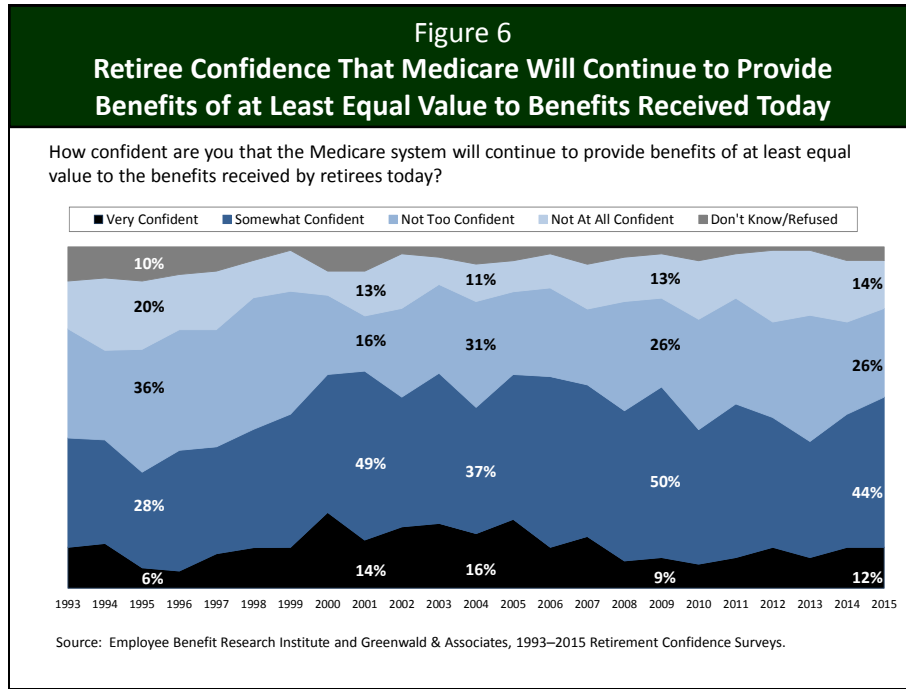


Confidence in Current Medicare Benefit Levels

Workers and retirees also have a low level of confidence in the continuation of current Medicare benefit levels. Eight percent of workers are very confident that the Medicare system will continue to provide benefits of at least equal value to the benefits received by retirees today, while 35 percent are somewhat confident. Most workers are pessimistic, as 57 percent are not confident in the future value of Medicare benefits (Figure 5).



Worker confidence about the future value of Medicare benefits is higher among those age 45 and older, and retirees are more likely than workers of any age group to be confident. Even so, just 12 percent of retirees are very confident in the value of the future benefits paid by Medicare, while 14 report they are not at all confident (Figure 6).



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