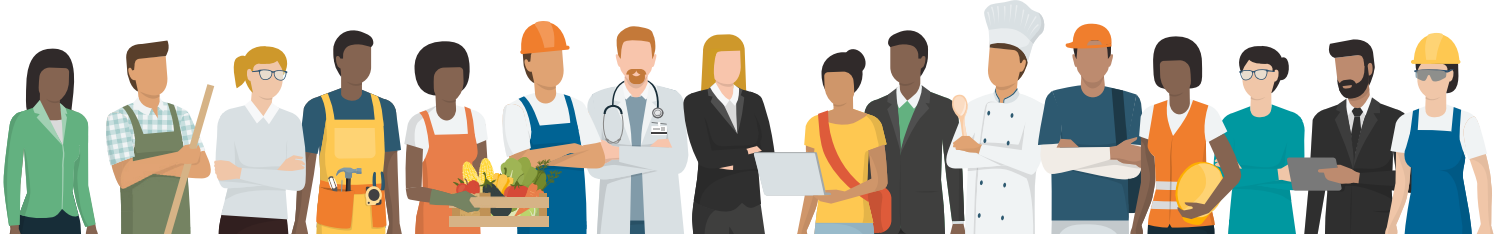




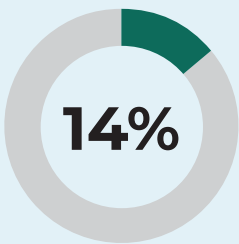
THE MIDDLE CLASS OWNS FEW FINANCIAL ASSETS



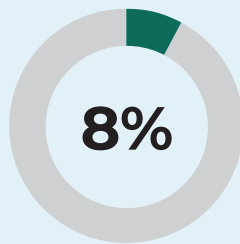
The ownership of financial assets between the top and the bottom is vastly unequal, but middle class households also own relatively few financial assets.

The middle class is defined as those between the 30th and 70th percentiles of net worth, the middle 40 percent. In 2019, **middle class Millennials owned only 14 percent of their generation's financial assets**, Generation X following at 8 percent and Baby Boomers at 6 percent.

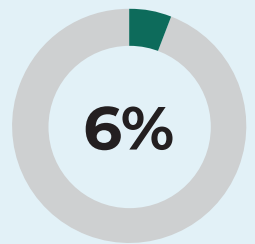
Middle Class Ownership of Financial Assets by Generation



Millennials



Generation X



Baby Boomers

In August 2021, the National Institute on Retirement Security released [new research](#) that examined the ownership of financial assets in the United States according to net worth, generation, and race. **The research found that the ownership of financial assets between the top and bottom by net worth is highly unequal — the bottom 50 percent of Baby Boomers owned just two percent of their generation's financial assets, while the top five percent owned 58 percent.**¹

The data for this analysis comes from the 2019 edition of the Federal Reserve's Survey of Consumer Finances. The generations are defined as follows: Baby Boomers are those born between 1946 and 1964. Generation X are those born between 1965 and 1980. Millennials are those born between 1981 and 1996.

Analysis of the share of financial assets owned is done within each generational cohort. That is, the percentage of financial assets owned by Baby Boomers in the middle 40 percent by net worth is the percentage of Baby Boomer financial assets owned, not all financial assets within the United States. The same is true for the analysis of the other generational cohorts.

Middle Class Financial Assets in 2019

Generation/Race	Mean Financial Assets	Median Financial Assets
Millennials (all)	\$17,802	\$7,800
White	\$19,282	\$9,300
Black	\$20,215	\$7,000
Hispanic	\$11,037	\$4,000
Generation X (all)	\$62,944	\$39,000
White	\$71,283	\$52,000
Black	\$58,150	\$28,200
Hispanic	\$33,990	\$9,000
Baby Boomers (all)	\$93,298	\$51,700
White	\$101,349	\$57,500
Black	\$73,761	\$30,900
Hispanic	\$52,772	\$22,280

Absent any policy changes, middle class families will be left behind in retirement.

Middle class Baby Boomers had median financial assets of \$51,700 in 2019. Assuming all of their financial assets are for retirement, which may not be the case, that would translate to annual income of about \$2,000. In this case, many families would see a reduction in their standard of living.

Policy Solutions to Improve Middle Class Retirement Security



Strengthen and expand Social Security.



Protect defined benefit pension plans.



Increase access to employment-based retirement savings plans for all workers.

¹Tyler Bond, [Stark Inequality](#), National Institute on Retirement Security, August 2021

