

SAGA/POPULUS PANEL RESULTS

Populus received 9053 responses from adults aged 50 and over to its online poll for SAGA between 9th and 16th May 2008. Populus is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. For more details go to www.populus.co.uk

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender	Male	5472	60%
	Female	3581	40%
Age	50 - 54	1453	16%
	55 - 59	2432	27%
	60 - 64	2418	27%
	65 and over	2756	30%
Grandchildren or children?	Children but no grandchildren	3076	52%
	Grandchildren	4725	34%
	Neither	1259	14%
Socio-Economic Group	AB	5365	59%
	C1	2434	27%
	C2	808	9%
	DE	412	5%
Region	LWT/Carlton (London)	1586	18%
	Meridian (South)	1239	14%
	Anglia (Eastern)	759	8%
	Yorkshire	874	10%
	HTV West / West Country (South West)	731	8%
	Tyne Tees (North East)	350	4%
	Central East (East Midlands)	478	5%
	HTV Wales (Wales)	358	4%
	Central / Central West (West Midlands)	901	10%
	Border Scotland / Scottish / Grampian (Scotland)	713	8%
	UTV (Northern Ireland)	965	11%
	Granada / Border (North West)	77	1%
	Caring responsibility?	Yes	1401
No		7671	85%
	Total	9053	100%

THE ECONOMY AND HEATING THE HOME

- Well over half (59%) say they are feeling financially worse off compared to a year ago. Only 1 in 10 say they feel better off. Those in lower social groups are more likely to say they are feeling worse off than those in higher social groups (68% of DE's compared to 56% of ABs.)
- Over 90% say they have noticed their heating bills rising, and over half (55%) are worried about how much their next heating bill will be for. Worryingly, just under a third (32%) say they can't afford to heat their homes as much as they would like – with the oldest slightly more likely to say this (35%).

CARERS

- 15% of respondents have caring responsibilities for an adult. [N.B. All following figures in this section refer to percentages within this group of carers, not to the panel overall.] The majority of these carers provide care to a single person (84%), with 14% providing care to two adults. The average age of the person cared for is 75. 57% of carers provide care for an older relative (like a parent) while 30% provide care to their partner.
- Two thirds of carers receive no benefits or financial support for providing care. Only 12% claim carer's allowance. The most popular 'other' write-ins were Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance.
- Nearly a third (31%) say that providing care costs them under £50 a month, and 36% say they spend over £50 a month on providing care (18% say £51 to £100 and 18% say over £100.) In all, even taking account of the benefits they receive, two thirds of carers are left out of pocket.
- Most carers (54%) have taken a holiday away from their caring responsibilities and not with the person they look after in the last year, but nearly 1 in 4 (24%) have "never" taken a holiday away from their caring responsibilities. For those who have been carers for longer than 10 years, this figure rises to 31% – so nearly a third of all long term carers have never taken a holiday away from their care duties. These long term carers are also much less likely to have taken a holiday in the last year – only 42% of these carers have, compared to 54% among all carers.

- The reasons for not taking a holiday are mixed; with worrying too much while they were away chosen by 30% (of those who have caring responsibilities and who haven't been on holiday in the last year) and not being able to afford to chosen by a quarter. For those who have been on holiday, in most cases (53%) care was provided by another family member while the main carer was away.
- Carers faced a range health issues as a result of being carers; over a quarter (27%) said they neglected their own health concerns, over a third (35%) said they suffered from anxiety and 3 in 5 (61%) feel stressed or suffer from tension.
- When asked about the biggest impacts of having caring responsibilities, the most common 'biggest impact' was having less time and space for myself, chosen by 37% of carers as the biggest impact they faced. By a different measure, taking all the chosen impacts together (whether placed first, second or third), less personal time and space was the most popular (with 76% ranking it as one of the three biggest impacts.) Other popular options were having less time to meet friends / pursue leisure interests and a reduction in the amount of time that can be spent with other family members.
- When asked what would have the greatest impact on making life as a carer easier, the most popular first choice (chosen by 32%) was additional income (perhaps echoing the fact that two thirds receive no financial support). Taking all preferences together, greater income and more day care support were each chosen by 54% of respondents.

COMPARING CARERS AND NON-CARERS

- Carers and non-carers hold broadly similar views on which reforms the government should introduce. On both measures – by number of mentions as first choice, and total mentions – free personal care even at the cost of increased taxation is the most popular option among both carers and non-carers. While higher benefits for carers is the 2nd most popular first choice among carers, for non-carers the second place goes to a statutory right to respite care. One notable area of difference is over better access to information; while 38% of carers rank this in their top three, only 18% of non-carers do.
- The survey suggests that both carers and non-carers believe that full-time carers should be treated as full time employees in terms of pay and respite. 65% of carers, and 71% of non-carers, believe that full-

time carers should be paid £5.52 (the minimum wage) or higher. Fewer than 1% felt that the current carer's allowance – which implies a wage of £1.44 an hour – was appropriate. In terms of respite, 3 in 5 – 61% of carers, rising to 65% of non-carers – believe that full-time carers should receive 21 days or more holiday a year (the statutory entitlement for full-time workers.)

- There was a more noticeable difference between carers and non-carers in their attitudes to whether social services should provide cash or vouchers for care. Those with caring responsibilities for an adult split roughly evenly on the issue – 52% in favour of vouchers, 48% in favour of cash – while those who do not provide care were much more strongly in favour of vouchers – 74% favoured vouchers, with only 26% saying cash.