

How Do Older Americans Spend Their Time?

by

Barbara Butrica

The Urban Institute

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What people say and what they do sometimes differs.

- Life changing events such as a job loss, the onset of health problems, and a death of a spouse can force people to change their plans.
- Even under the best of circumstances, reality may fall short of expectations.

Key Questions

- How many older Americans are engaged in productive activities?
- What activities do older adults engage in?
- How does engagement vary by age and other personal characteristics?

Data: Health and Retirement Study

- Nationally representative survey of older Americans.
- Began in 1992 with a sample of adults born between 1931 and 1941 (ages 51 to 61) and their spouses, who were re-interviewed every two years.
- Other cohorts were added to the survey design after 1992.

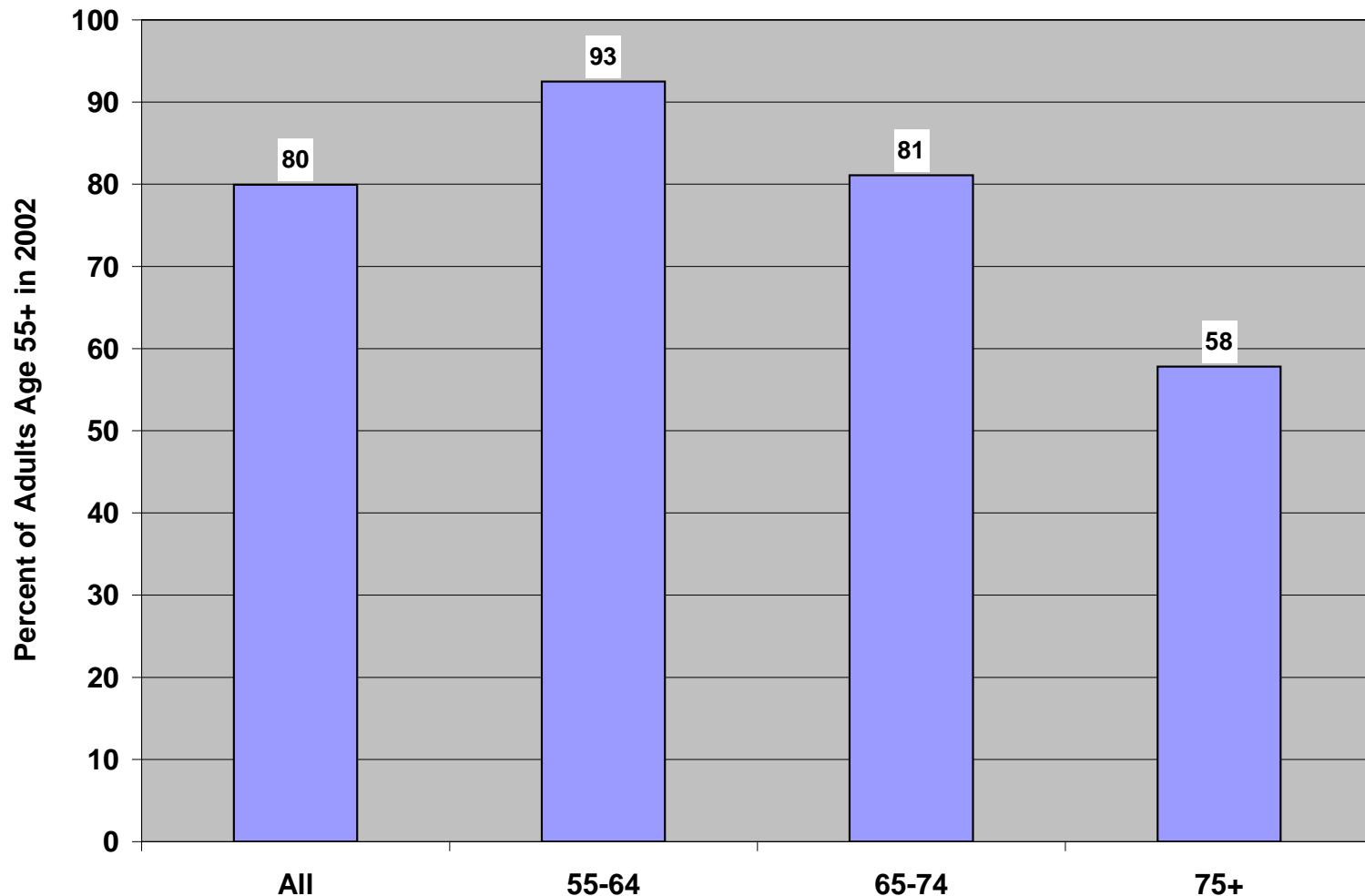
Data: Health and Retirement Study

- The 2004 HRS includes 20,129 respondents ages 51 and older.
- The HRS asks respondents about volunteering, parent care, child care, spouse care, work, time spent helping others, as well as their financial resources, religiosity, health status, and basic demographics.

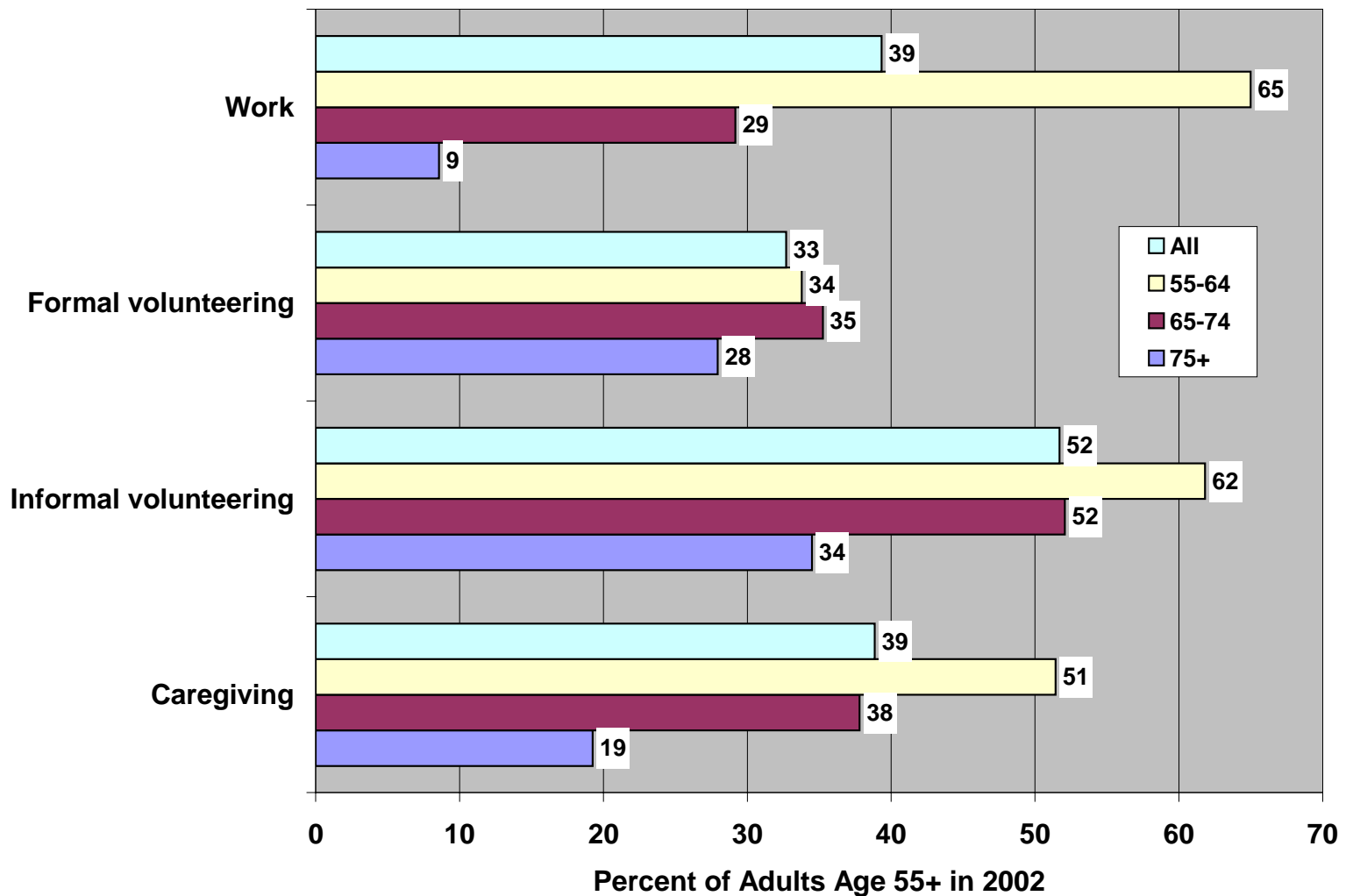
What does productive aging include?

- Paid work
- Caregiving
- Formal volunteering
- Informal volunteering

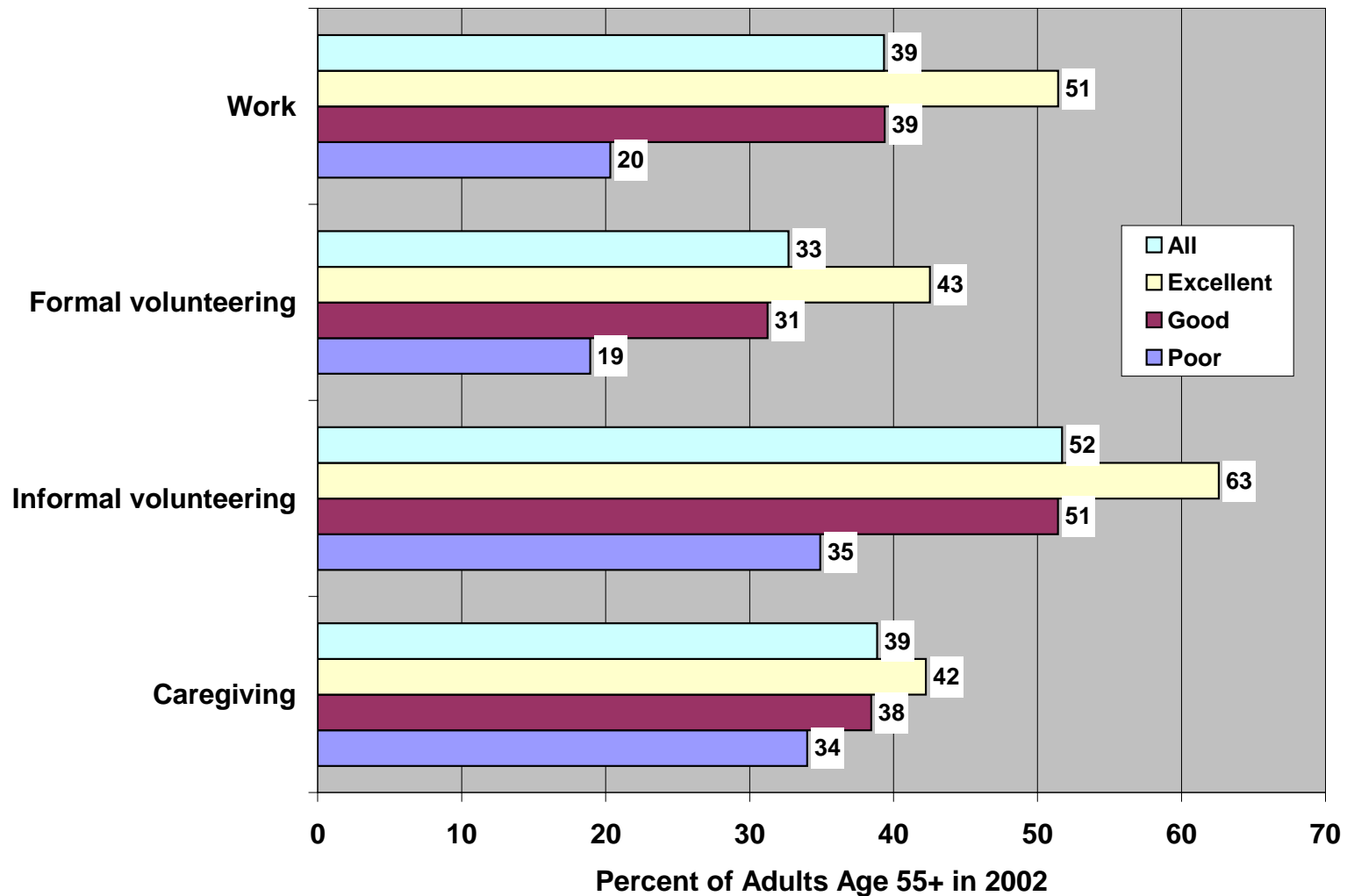
Eight out of ten adults age 55+ engage in productive activities.



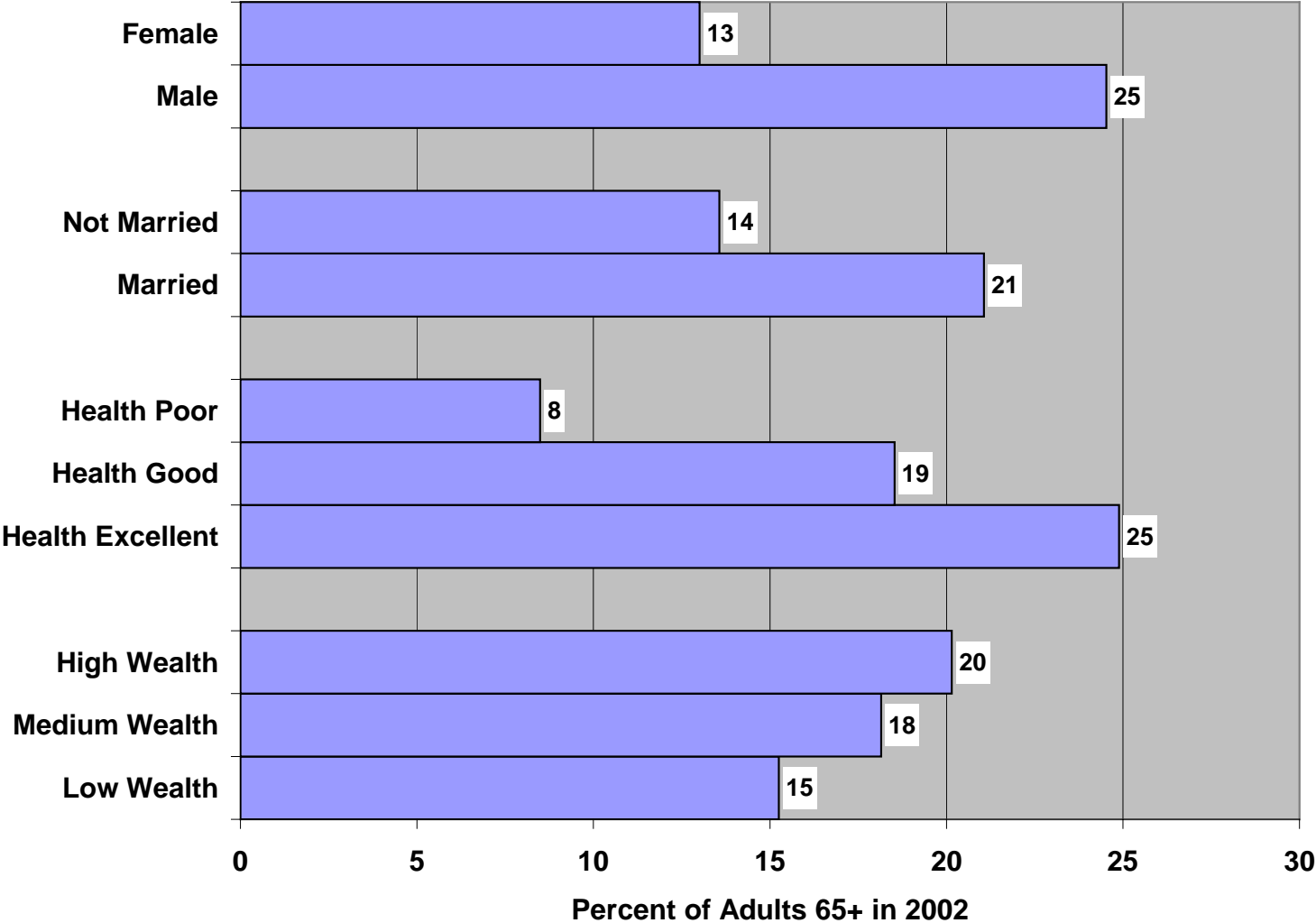
What older Americans do with their time varies by age...



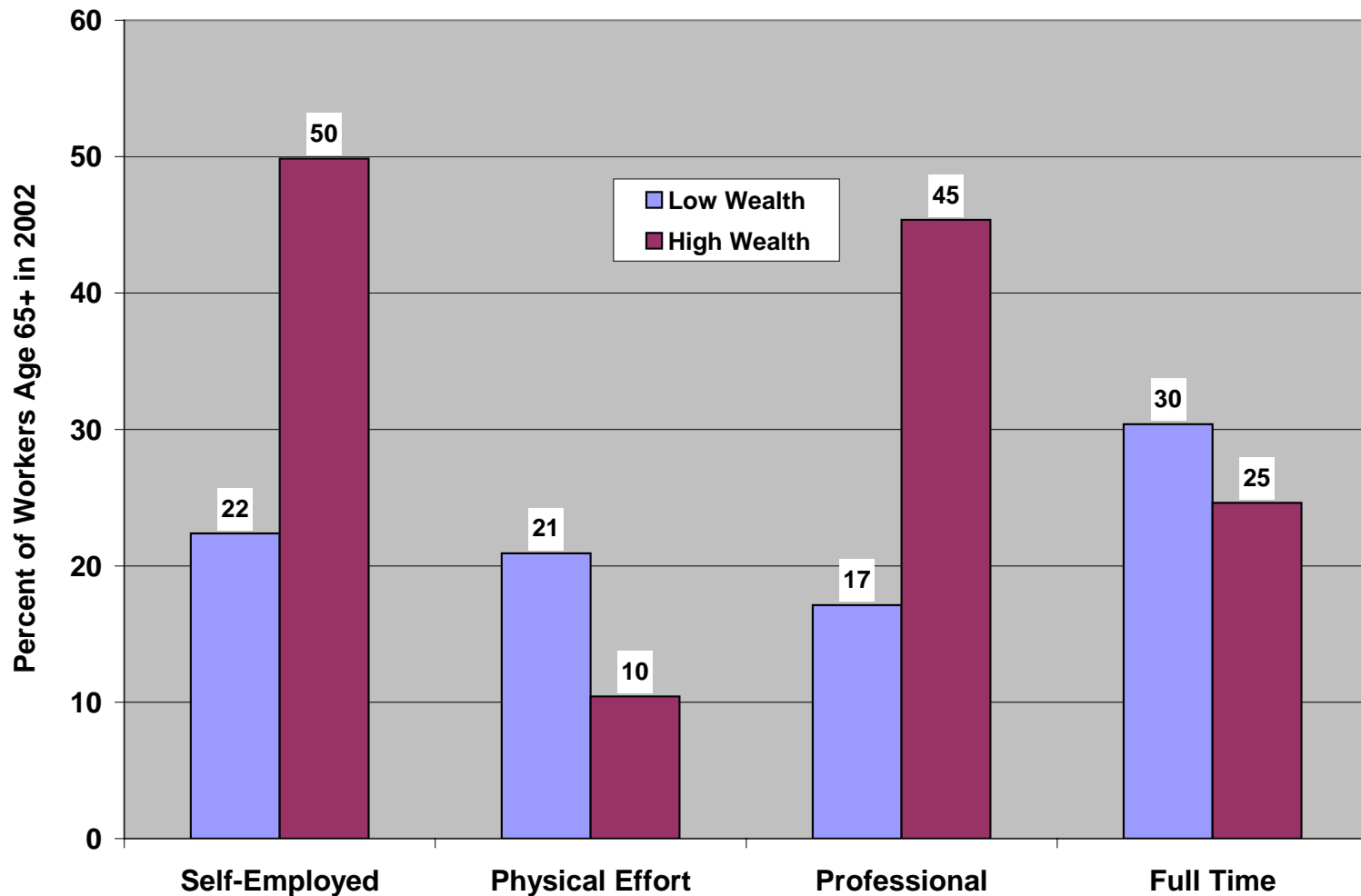
...and health status.



Who works past age 65?



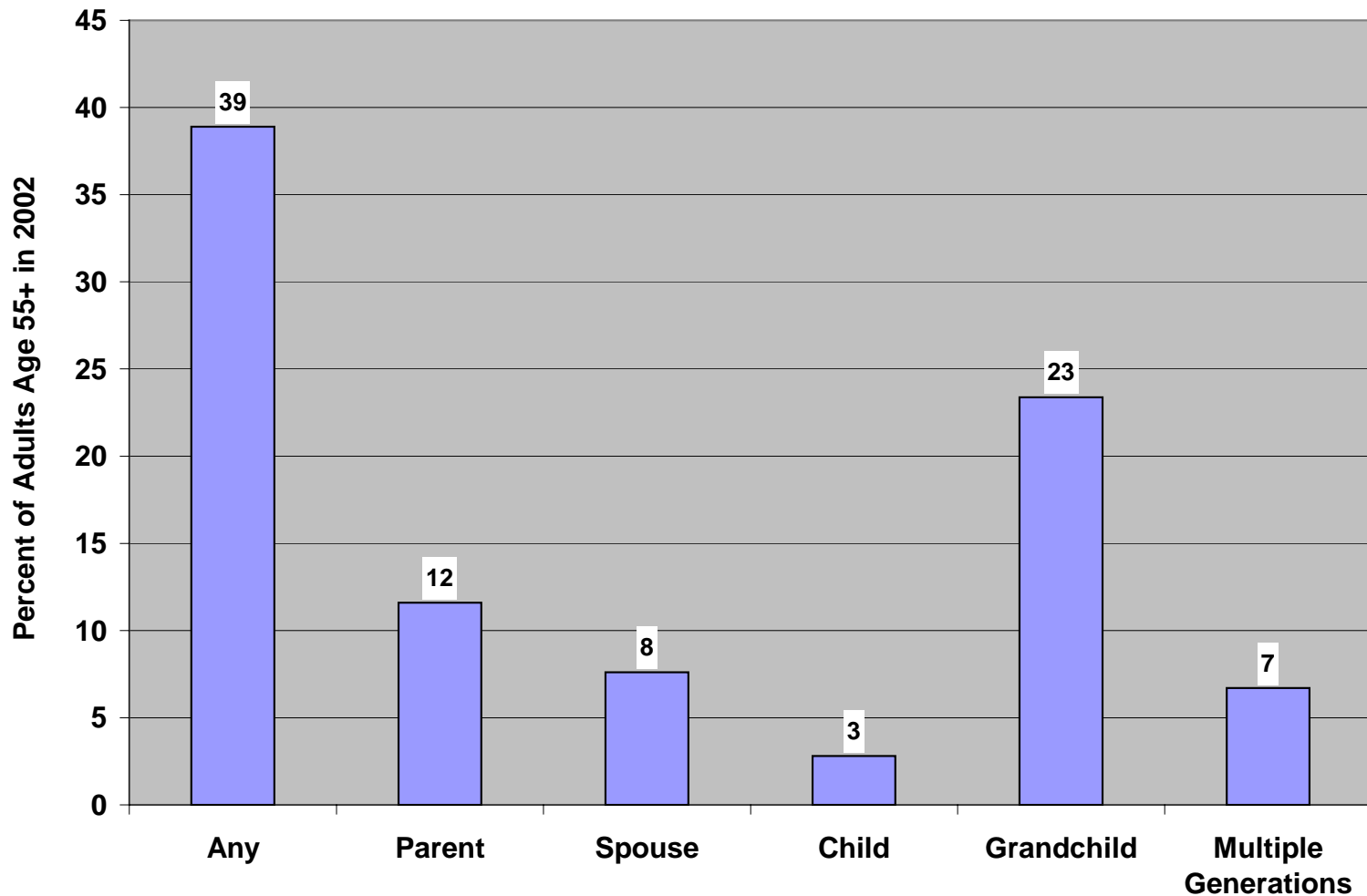
Although the nature of work varies significantly by wealth...



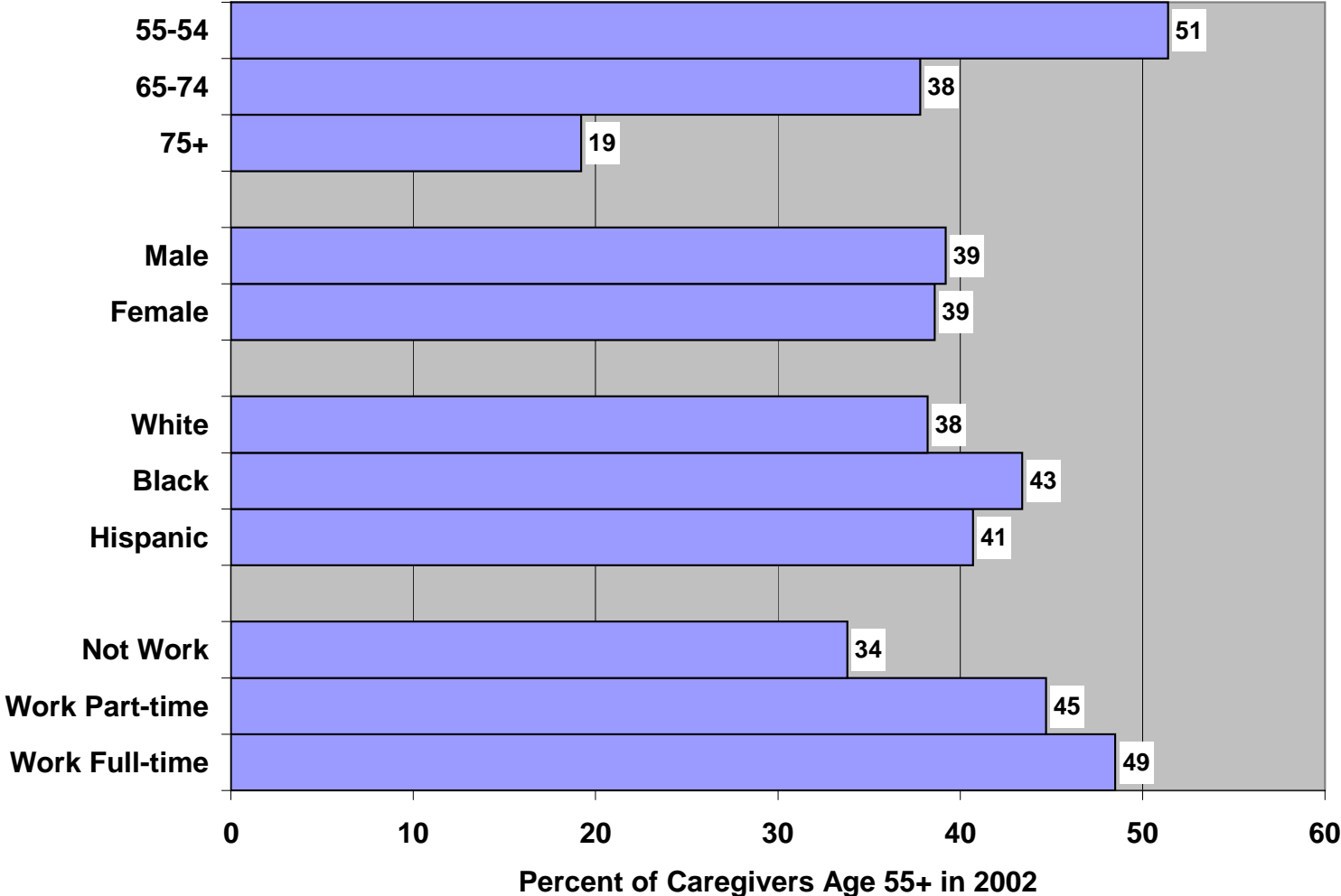
...satisfaction with work does not.



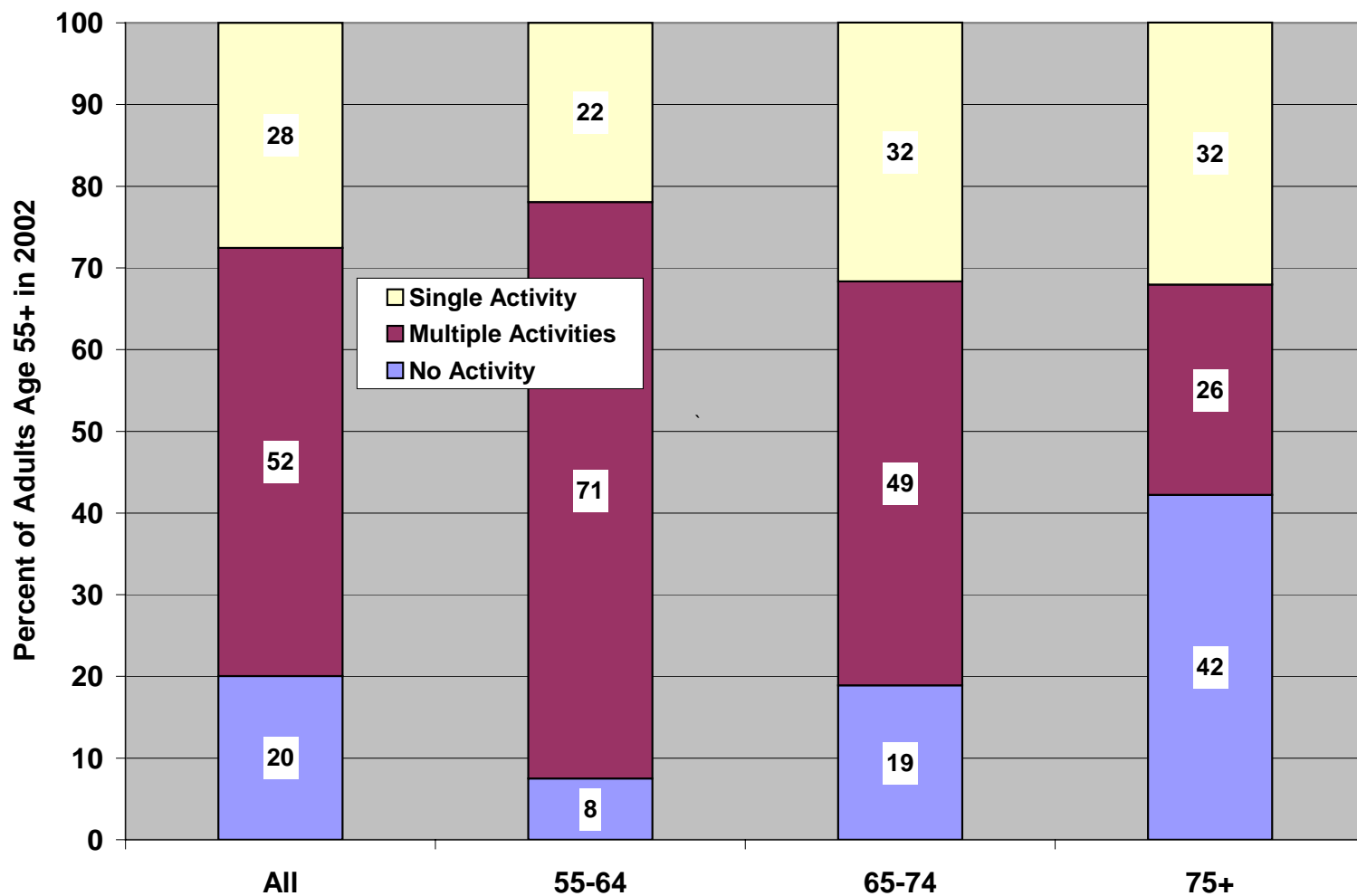
Nearly four out of ten adults age 55+ provide care for family members.



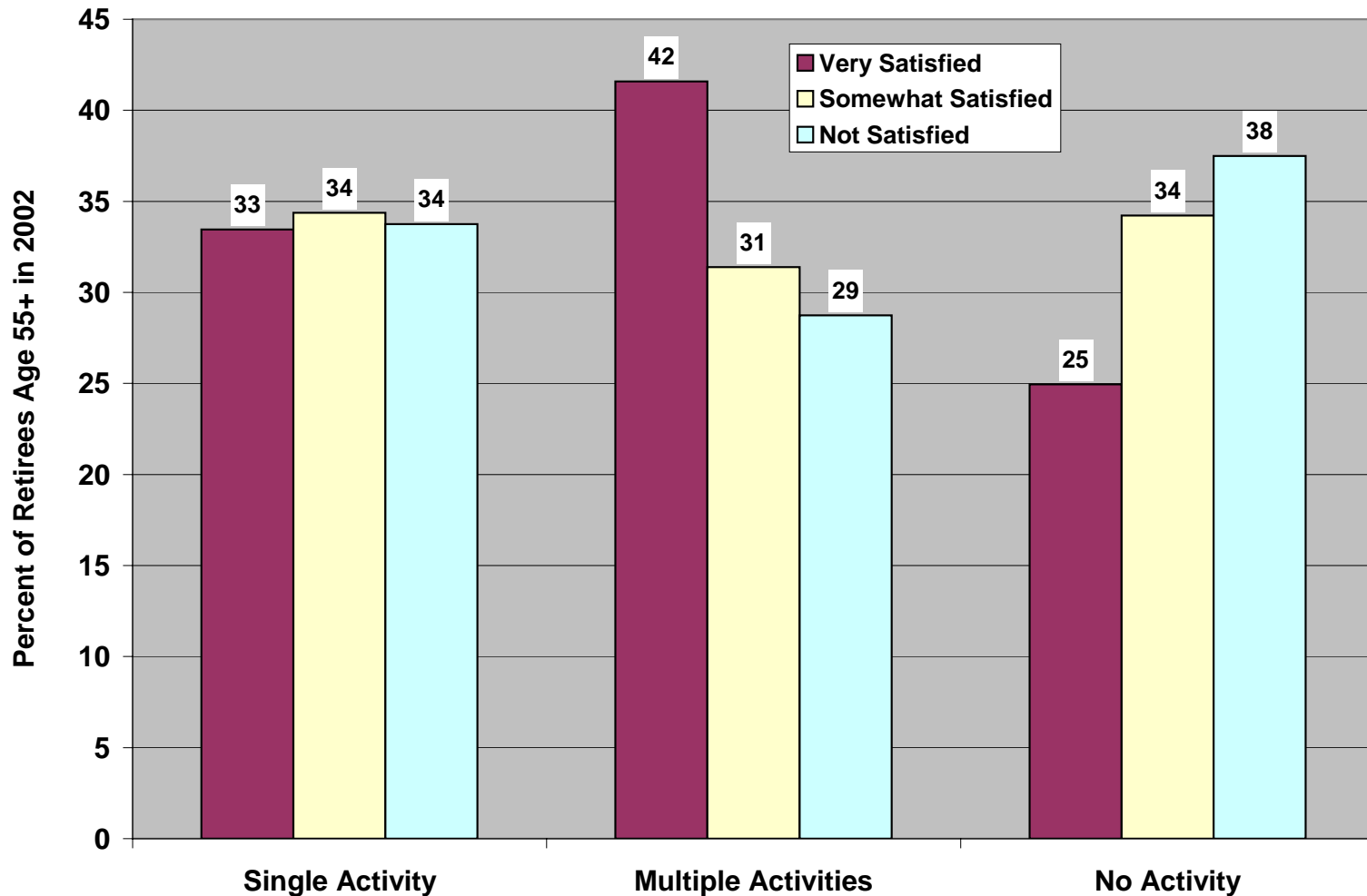
Who provides caregiving?



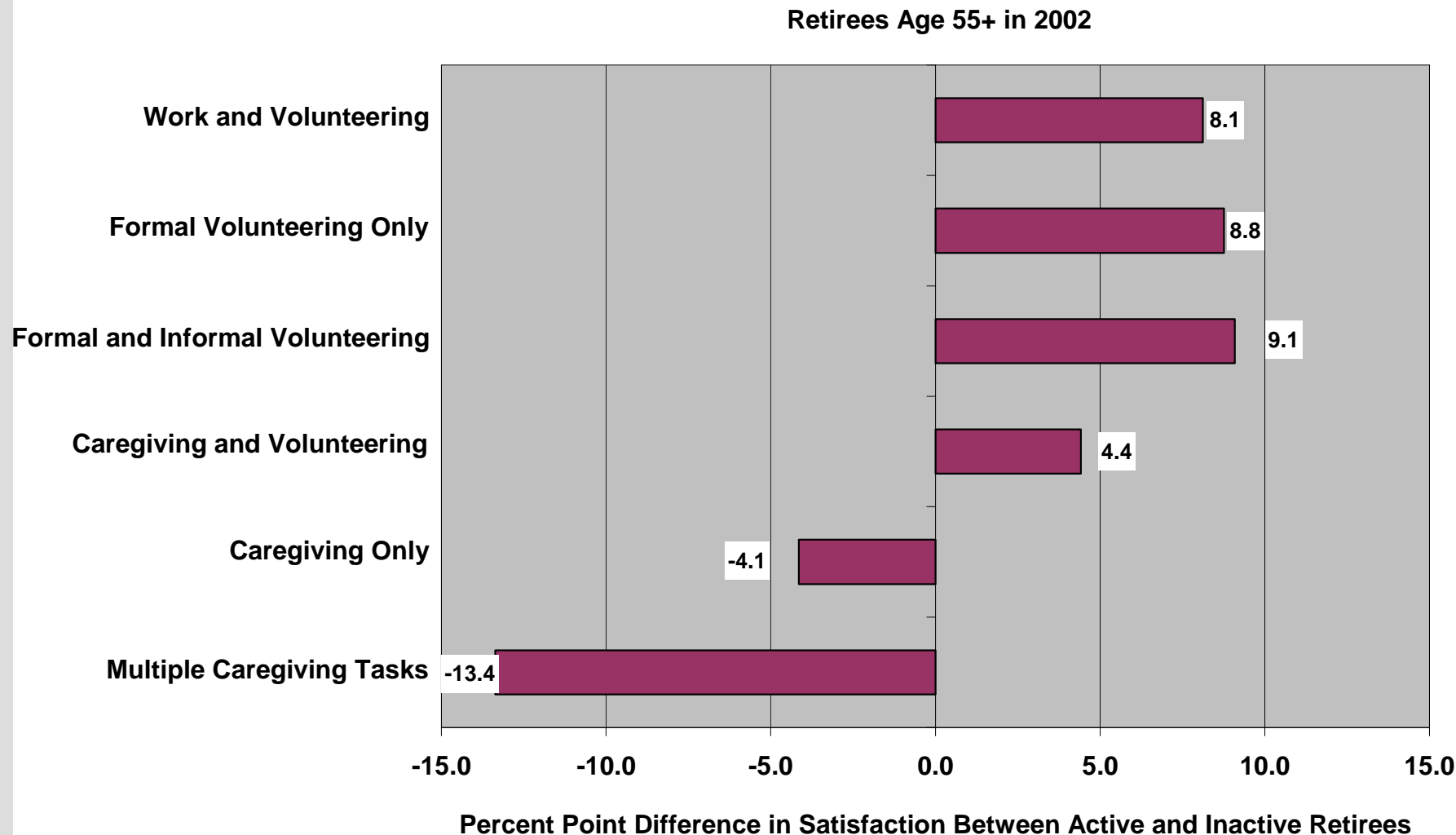
The majority of all older Americans engage in multiple productive activities.



Seniors who are more active say they are more satisfied with retirement.



However, retirement satisfaction varies by the type of engagement.



Although how people spend their time may differ from their original plans,

- Older adults' engagement has many benefits.
 - Economic value
 - Reduction in societal costs
 - Enhanced well being
- Engagement should be encouraged.
 - Changes in work (flexible hours, employee benefits)
 - Senior workforce development
 - Supporting volunteer opportunities
 - Increasing awareness

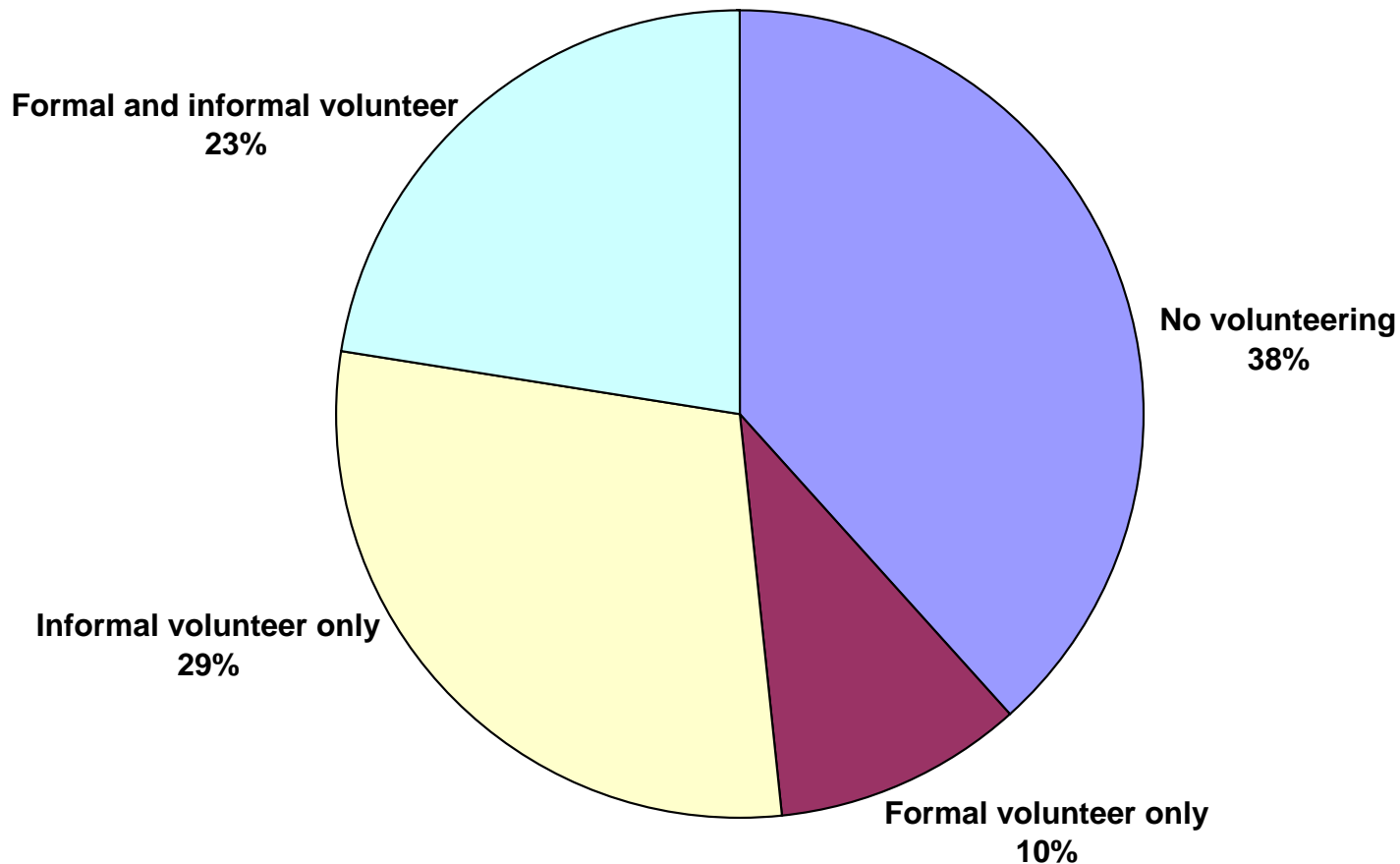
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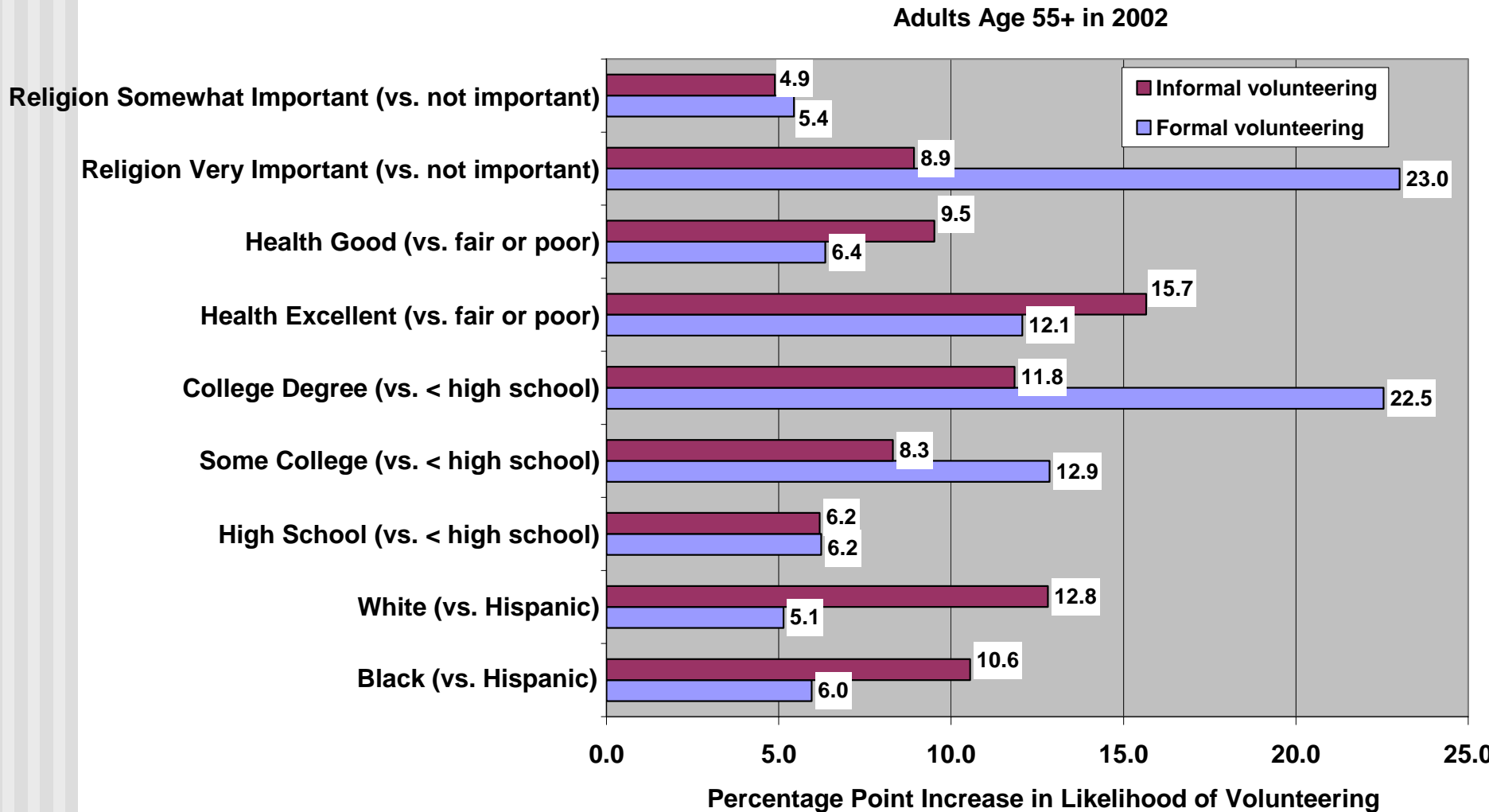
Appendix

Six out of ten adults age 55+ engage in volunteer activities.

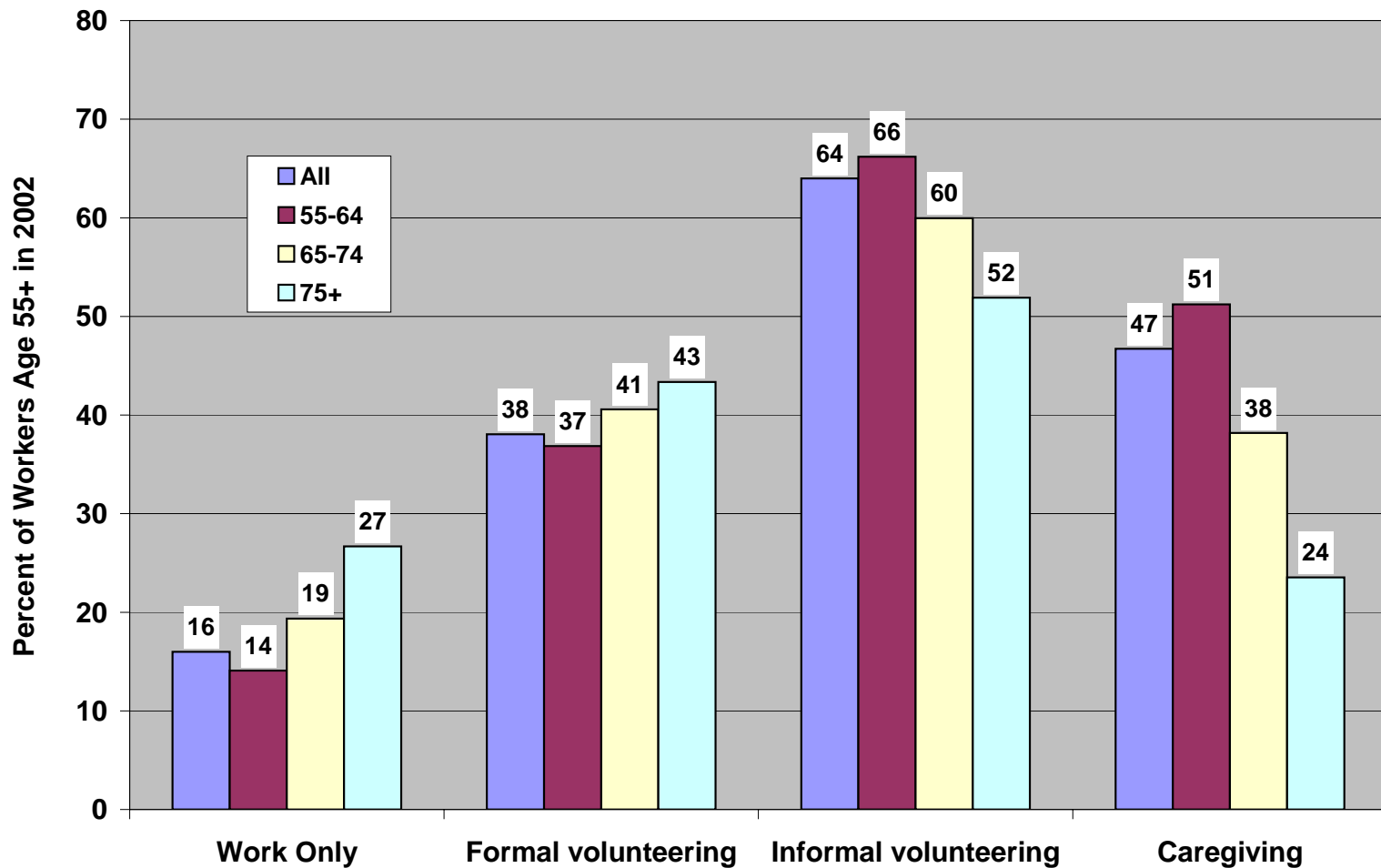
Percent of Adults Age 55+ in 2002



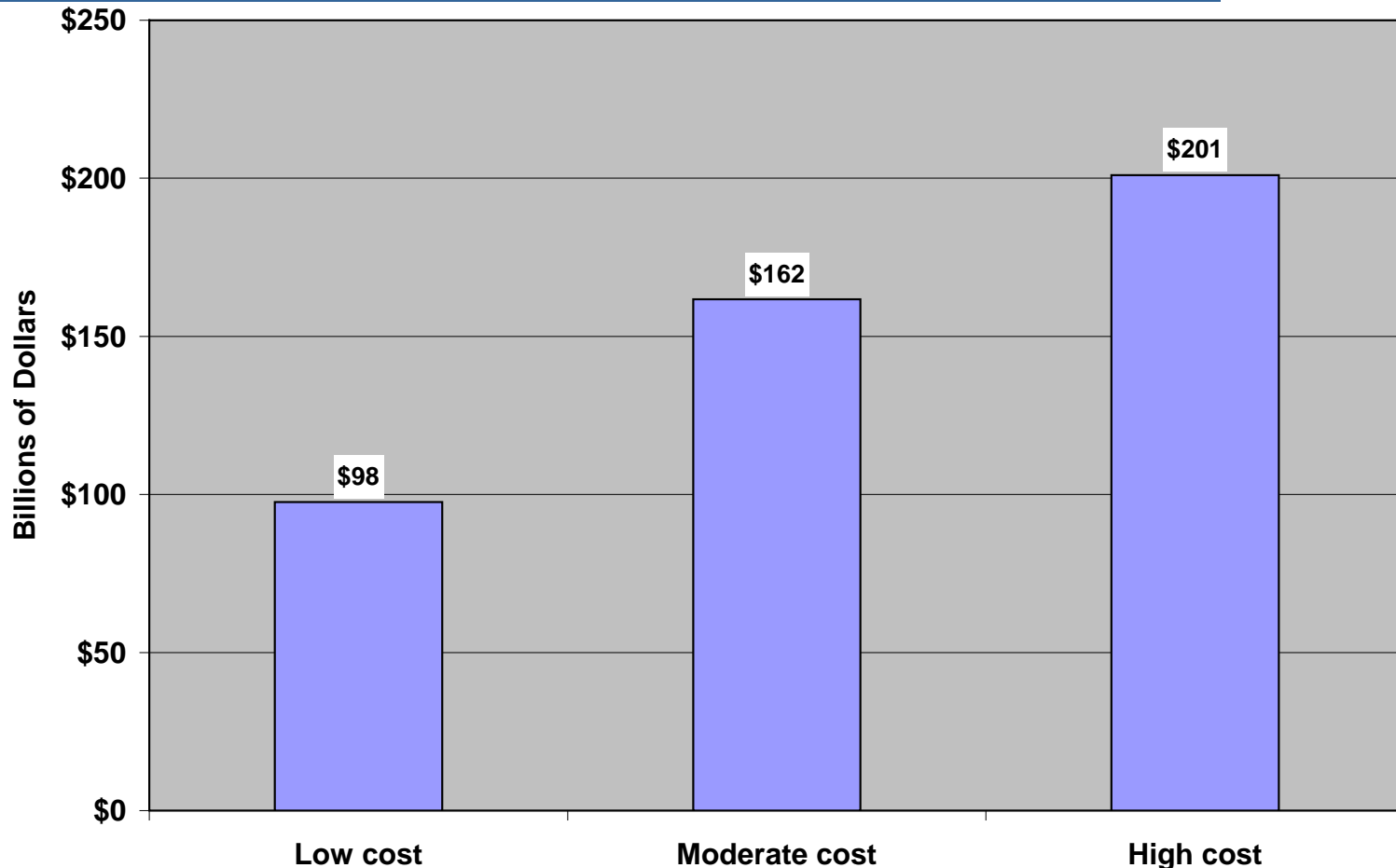
The likelihood of volunteering varies by personal characteristics.



As an example, most workers also volunteer or provide care.

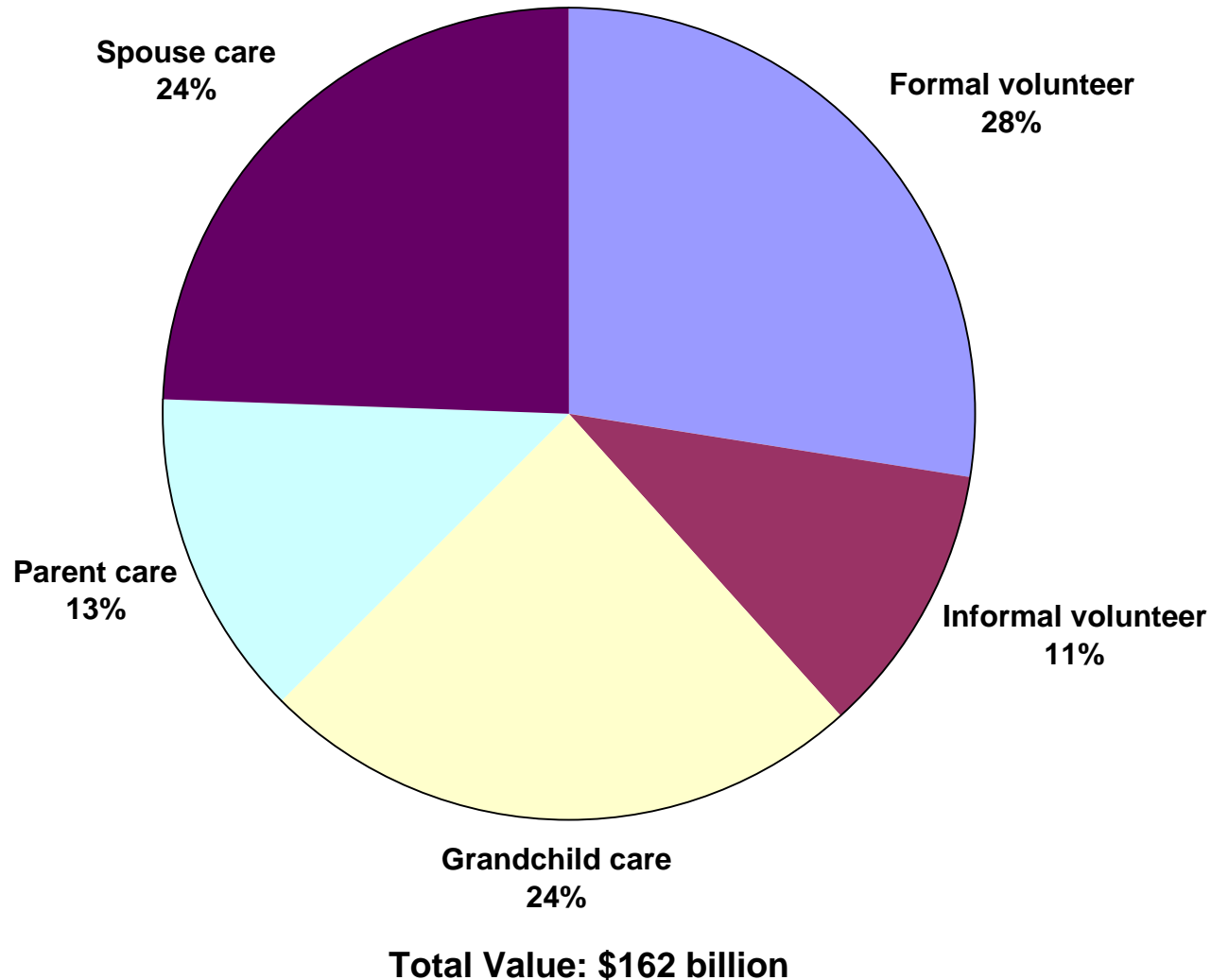


Older Americans contributed between \$98 billion and \$201 billion to society in 2002 in unpaid activities.



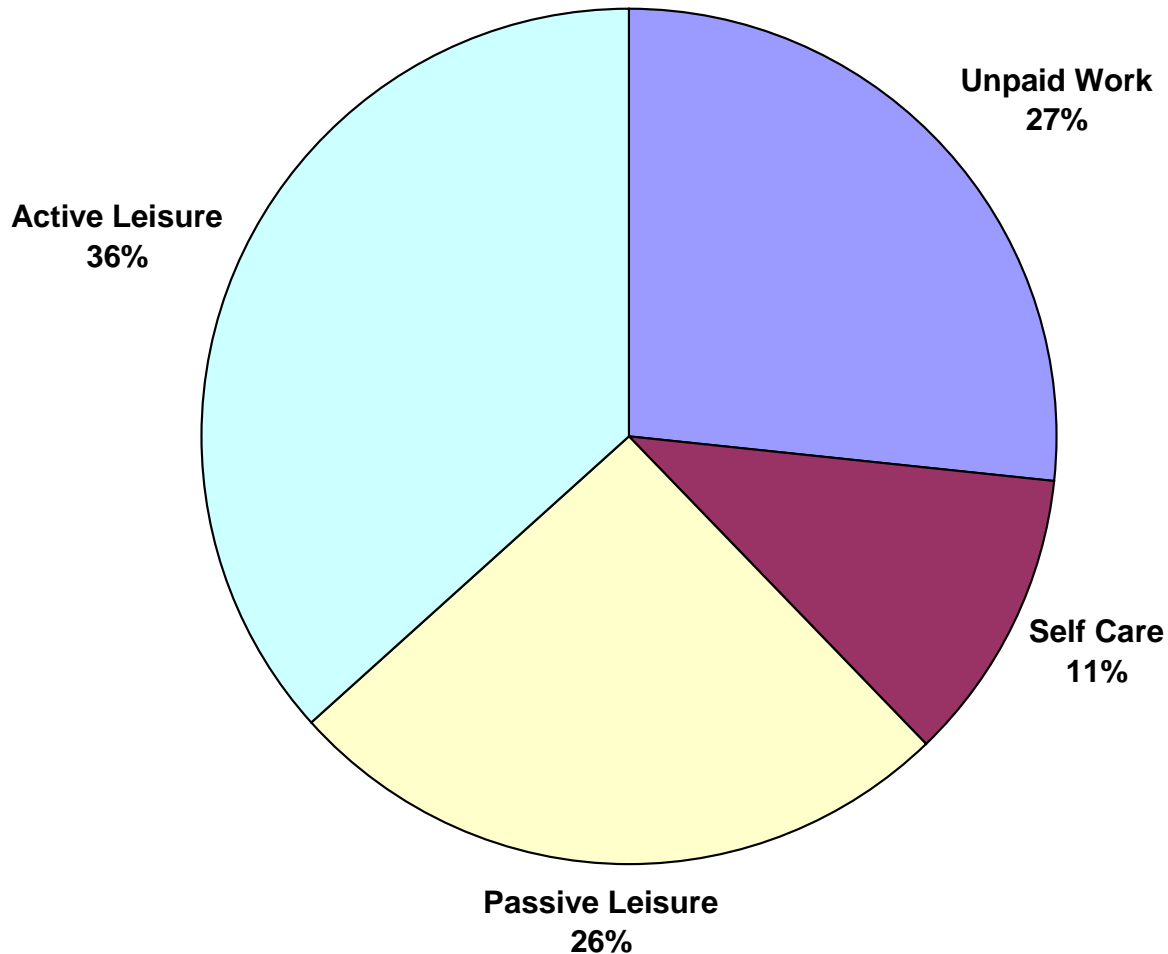
Note: The value of unpaid activities by adults age 55 and older in 2002 is estimated by computing the total number of hours they devote to formal volunteering, informal volunteering, and caregiving and assigning a wage to each hour. See "Value of Unpaid Activities by Older Americans Top \$160 Billion Per Year" by Richard W. Johnson and Simone G. Schaner for details.

Time spent providing care is 61% of the total value of unpaid activities.



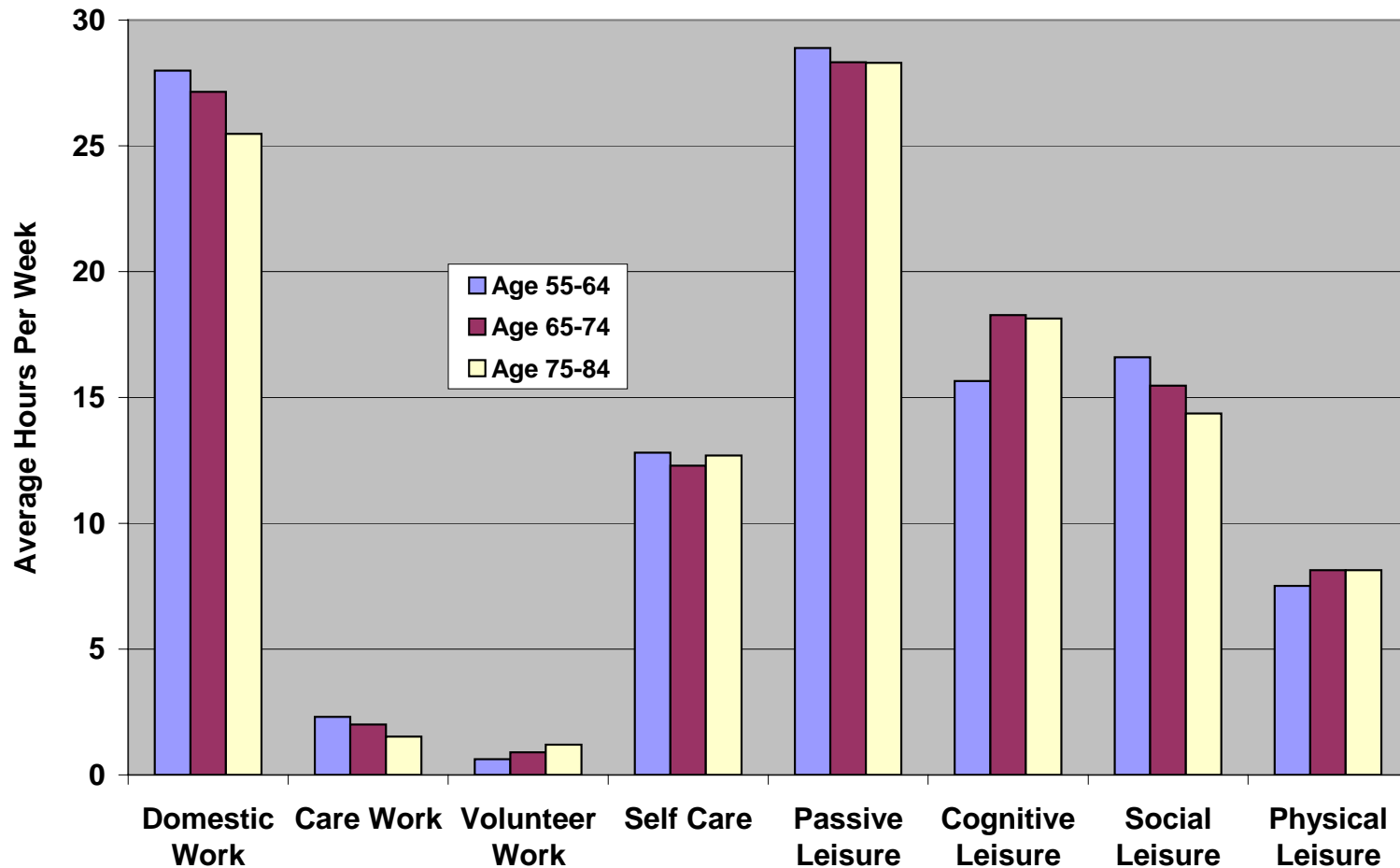
Healthy non-working adults spend 27% of their time doing unpaid work.

Share of Time Spent on Activities by Healthy Non-Working Adults Ages 55-84



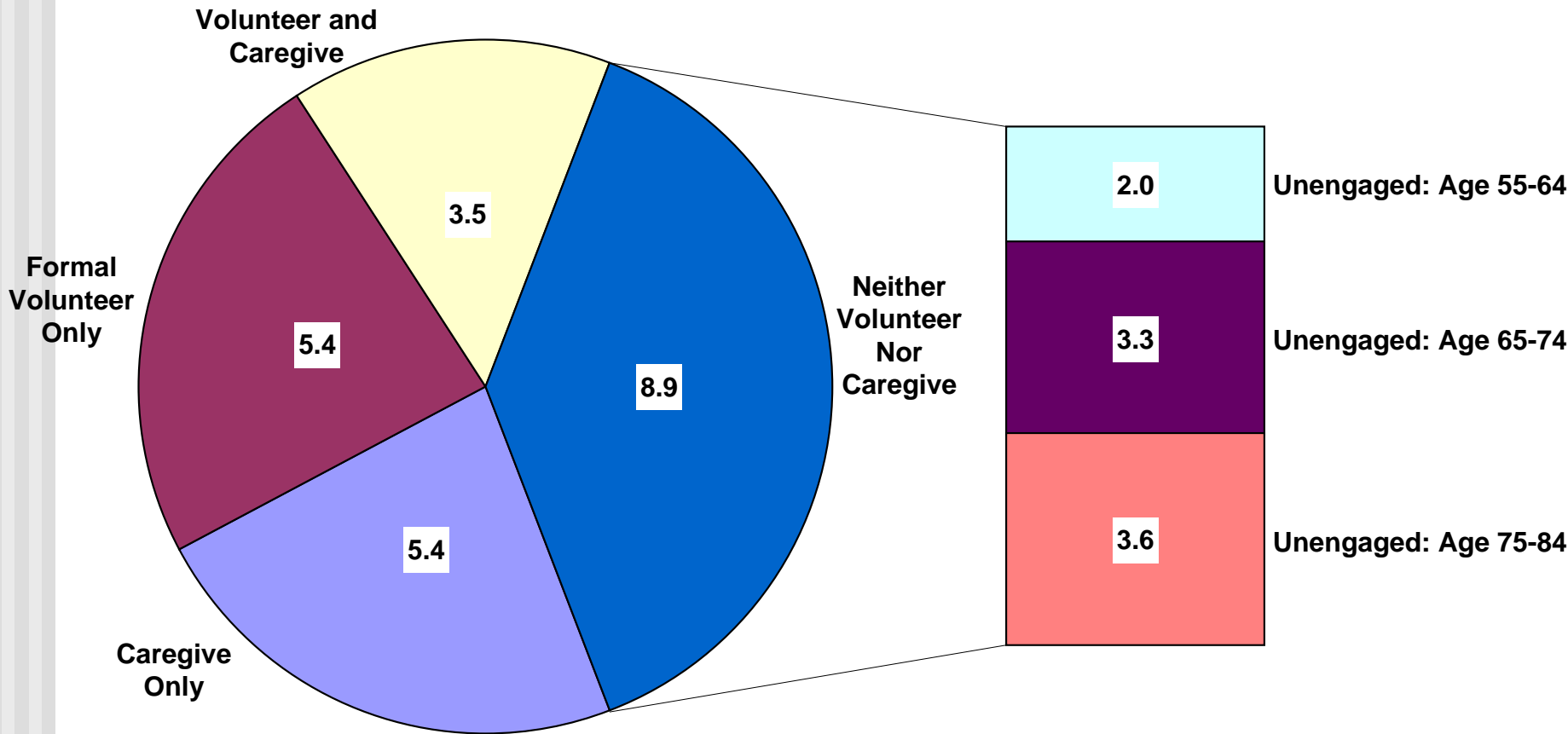
However, most of these hours are devoted to work around the house.

Average Hours Per Week Spent on Activities by Healthy Non-Working Adults Ages 55-84



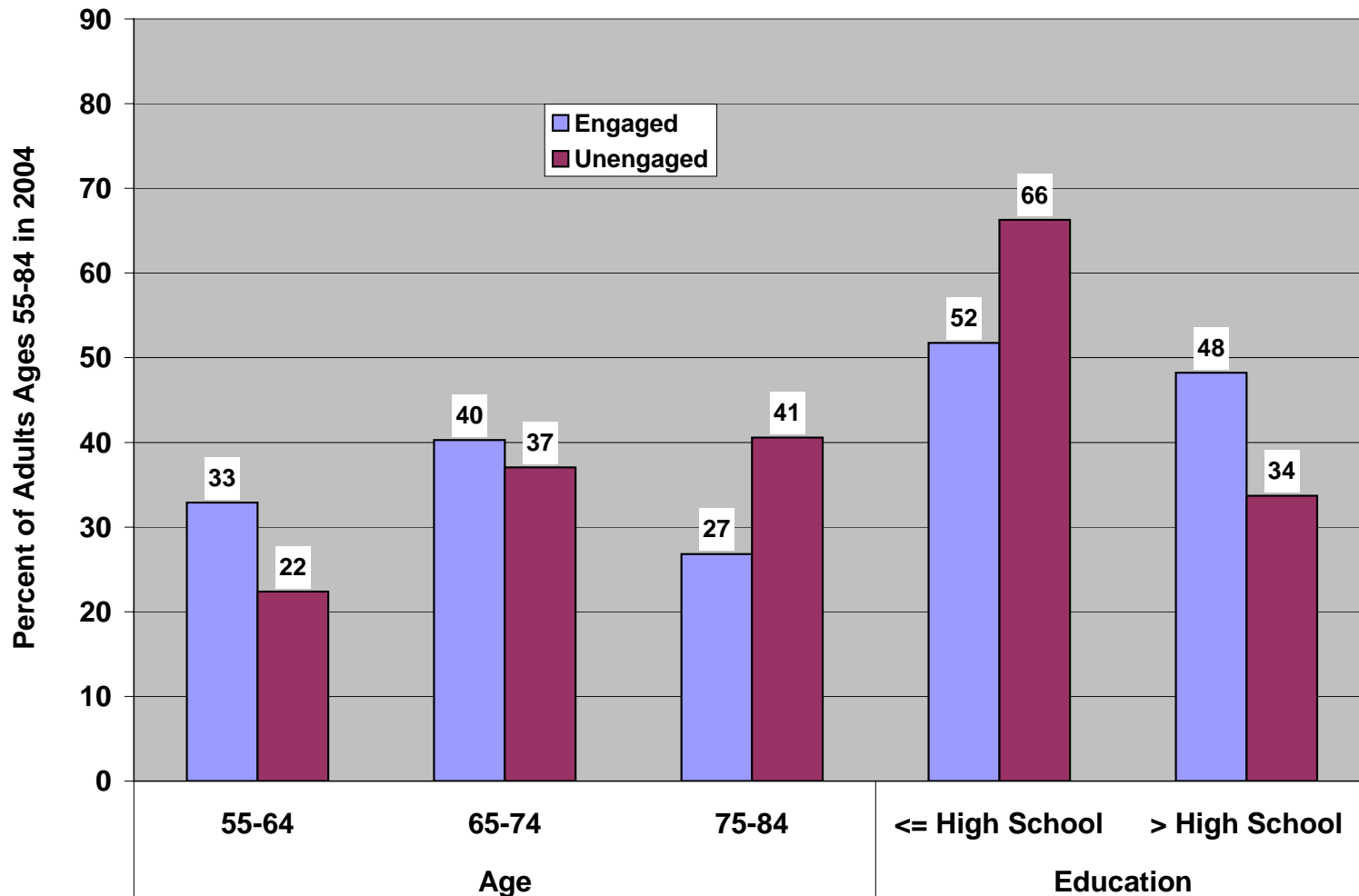
Nearly 9 million healthy non-working adults do not volunteer or caregive.

Number of Healthy Non-Working Adults Ages 55-84 in 2004 (millions)

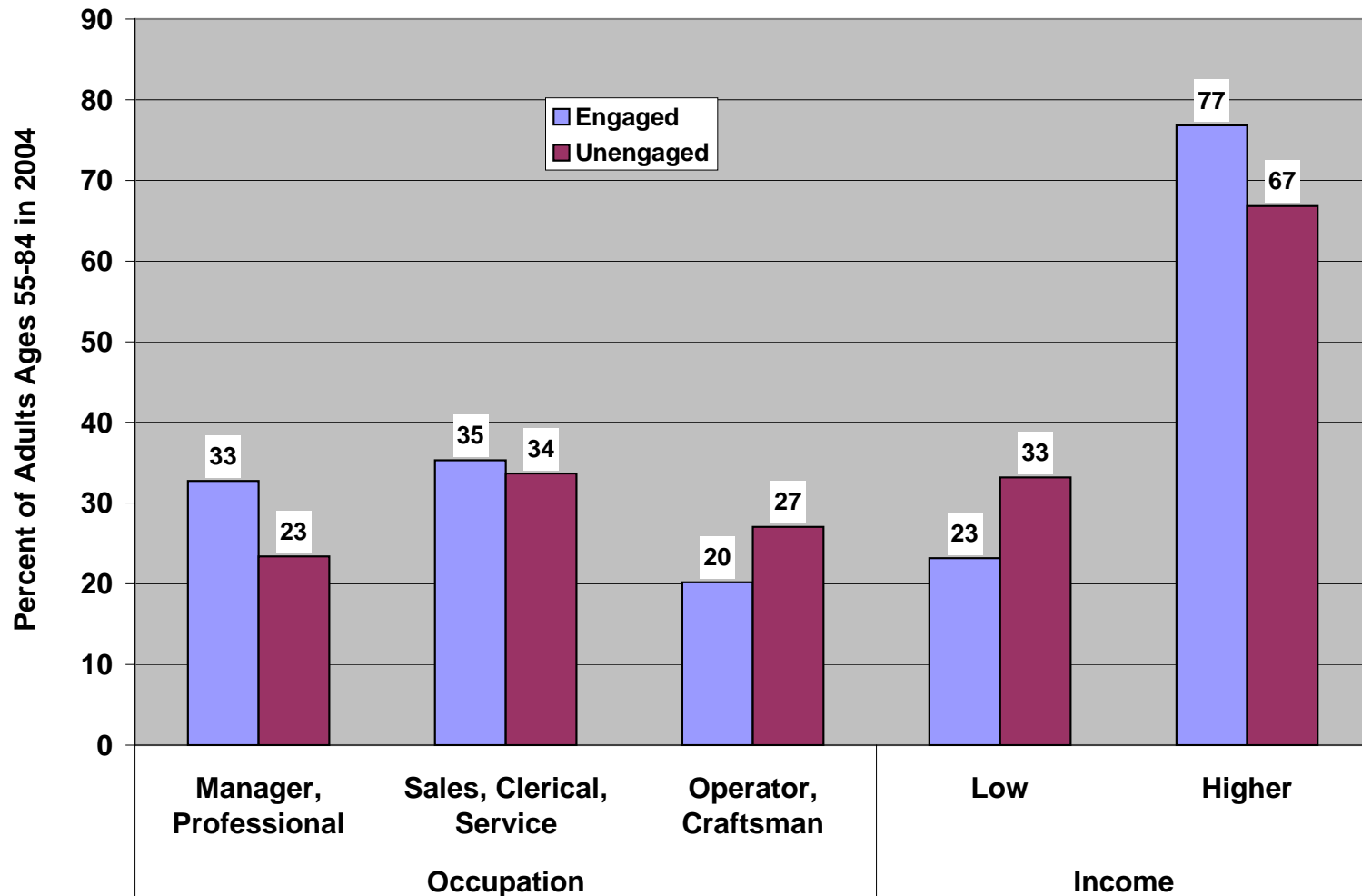


Total Number: 23.2 million

Engaged adults are younger and more educated than unengaged adults...



...they are also more likely to have worked as professionals and to have higher incomes.



Other Data Sources

- American Time-Use Survey (ATUS)
 - Nationally representative of the noninstitutionalized population age 15 and older. Provides age detail for respondents up to age 80.
 - Respondents sequentially report their activities for a 24-hour period.
 - Also includes information about household composition, demographics, and labor force status.
- Consumption and Activities Mail Survey (CAMS)
 - Nationally representative of noninstitutionalized population age 51 and older.
 - Respondents report how much time they spent on 31 activities over the last week or last month.
 - Can be merged with the core HRS to get demographic, economic, and health information.

Other Findings

- Krantz-Kent and Steward, 2007 (ATUS)
 - Most age differences in time use were due to differences in employment status.
 - The average day of non-workers is similar to the average non-work day of employed persons.
 - Hours working declined with age, but most of this decline was due to a shift from full-time to part-time employment.
 - Men take part-time jobs to make a gradual transition into full retirement. Women are more likely to work part-time at all ages.

Other Findings

- Hurd and Rohwedder, 2007 (CAMS)
 - CAMS and the ATUS show similar levels of time-use by category and similar variation by age.
 - Total hours on all activities vary substantially by health status and age.
 - Hours worked are much lower for those in poor health than for those in excellent health.
 - In contrast, time spent on personal care, such as treating a medical condition, are higher for those in poor health than for those in excellent health.