



Social Security

EXPENDITURES OF THE AGED CHARTBOOK, 2020

Social Security Administration
Office of Retirement and Disability Policy
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Expenditures of the Aged Chartbook, 2020 examines the spending patterns of the population aged 55 or older, focusing mainly on the expenditures of those aged 65 or older. Policymakers and researchers are concerned about the adequacy of economic resources of the elderly. Income tells part of the story with regard to adequacy, but it is also useful to seek out other measures of standards of living, such as expenditures. The goal of this chartbook is to improve the availability of statistics on expenditures.

This chartbook is based on data from the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey Public-Use File, sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It contains many comparisons of the expenditures of the aged population (65 or older) with those of the near aged (55–64). Many charts include additional detail for those aged 65–74 and those aged 75 or older.

Some charts in this book use box plots to show distributions of expenditures by presenting the 25th, 50th, and 75th percentile values for expenditure amounts or the percentages of total expenditures allocated to various components. The box plots are described on page 4.

Patrick Purcell of the Social Security Administration's Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics prepared this chartbook. Staff of the Office of Information Resources edited the book and prepared it for publication.

Questions about the charts should be directed to Patrick Purcell at patrick.purcell@ssa.gov. This chartbook and other statistical publications are available on our website at <https://www.ssa.gov/policy>.

Natalie T. Lu
Acting Associate Commissioner
for Research, Evaluation, and Statistics
January 2022

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Errata Policy

If there are any additions or corrections to the data published herein, they will be posted as errata on the web at https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/expenditures_aged/2020/index.html.

Source of the Data

The *Expenditures of the Aged Chartbook* is based on data from the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey Public-Use File. The survey provides continuous comprehensive data on the buying habits of US consumers. The survey is representative of the total civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States, as well as that portion of the institutionalized population living in group quarters (excluding military personnel living on military bases and residents of nursing homes).

The Consumer Expenditure Survey program consists of two separate components, each with its own questionnaire and independent sample:

- An **interview survey**, which collects data on monthly expenditures such as housing.
- A **diary survey**, which collects weekly expenditures of frequently purchased items such as food and beverages.

The Census Bureau collects the data under contract with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Further details on the Consumer Expenditure Survey program are available at <https://www.bls.gov/cex/home.htm>. Documentation on the two survey components and their integration, as well as limitations of the data, are found on the Frequently Asked Questions page at <https://www.bls.gov/cex/csxfaqs.htm>. In this chartbook, medians and distributions are calculated using only the interview survey. Means are calculated using data from both the interview and diary surveys. The mean household expenditure for each expenditure category is the sum of spending for that category by all households divided by the sum of total expenditures for all households.

Surveys are subject to sampling error because observations are not taken for the entire population. Information on the sampling error in the 2020 Survey of Consumer Expenditures can be found in the survey documentation available at <https://www.bls.gov/cex/pumd-getting-started-guide.htm>.

Definition and Explanation of Key Terms

The definitions of key terms are abbreviated versions of those used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which presents detailed definitions in its glossary at <https://www.bls.gov/cex/csxgloss.htm>.

Unit of Analysis

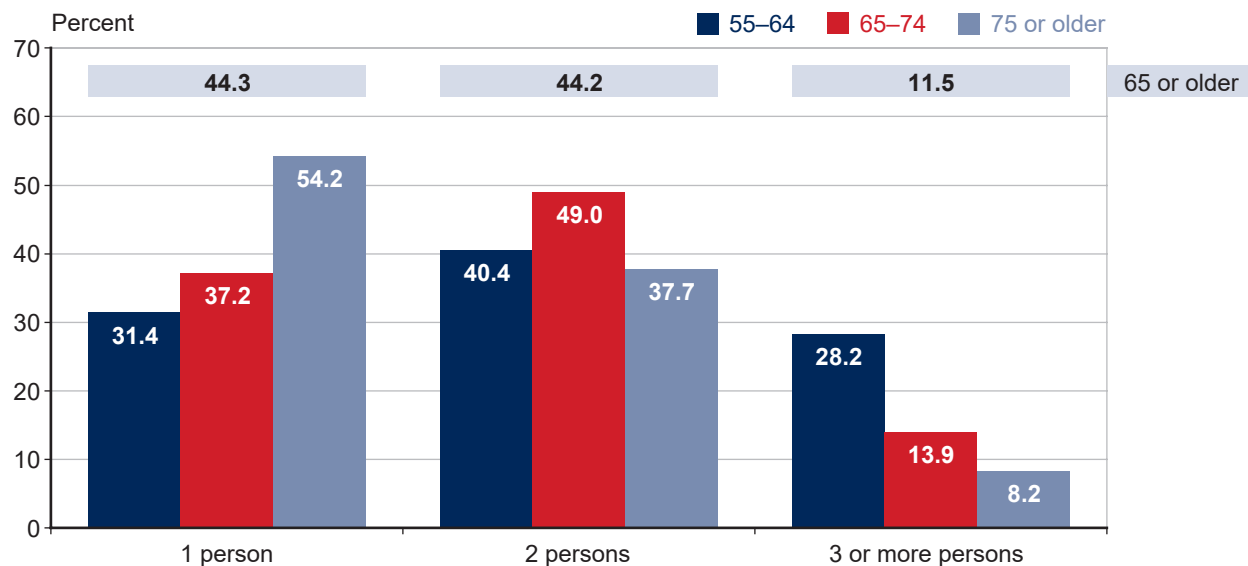
Consumer unit (CU). Expenditures in the Consumer Expenditure Survey are measured for the CU, defined as the members of a household related by blood, marriage, adoption, or other legal arrangement; a single person living alone or sharing a household with others but who is financially independent; or two or more persons living together who share responsibility for at least two of the following three major expense categories: food, housing, and other (comprising various items, listed below under “Components of expenditures”). Students living in university-sponsored housing also are included in the sample as separate CUs. The Consumer Expenditure Survey is a survey of the noninstitutionalized population and therefore does not include nursing home residents and their expenditures.

Reference person. The first CU member mentioned by the respondent when asked to “Start with the name of the person or one of the persons who owns or rents the home.” The relationship of the other members of the CU is determined with respect to this person.

Age of the CU. The age of the reference person.

Size of the CU. The number of persons whose usual place of residence at the time of the interview is in the sample unit. In the interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey, the size of the CU decreased as the age of the CU increased, as shown in the chart below. The average number of persons in a CU, by age of the unit, was 2.1 for CUs aged 55–64, 1.8 for those aged 65–74, and 1.6 for those 75 or older.

Percentage distribution of CUs, by size and age



Expenditures and Income

Total expenditures. The sum of all expenditures in 2020.

Per capita expenditures. Expenditures of the CU divided by the size of the CU.

Total income. The sum of all income sources before taxes in 2020, including the value of food stamps.

Earned income. Income from wages and salaries or self-employment in 2020, including income from businesses and farms.

Components of Expenditures

Housing. The sum of all housing expenditures in 2020, including the expenses associated with renting or owning a home such as rent, mortgage interest, property taxes, maintenance, utilities, furnishings, renters' or homeowners' insurance, home appliances, cleaning supplies, textiles, and luggage. It does not include payments toward mortgage principal, which are considered to be part of household savings rather than expenditures. **Housing tenure** refers to the CU's principal place of residence during the survey. "Owners" include CUs living in their own homes, cooperatives or condominium apartments, or townhouses. "Renters" include CUs paying rent or living rent-free in lieu of wages.

Food. The sum of all food expenditures in 2020, including expenditures made at grocery stores and restaurants.

Health care. The sum of all out-of-pocket health care expenditures in 2020, including public and private health insurance premiums and payments for doctor visits, eye and dental care and aids, hospital services, lab tests, and prescription drugs.

Transportation. The sum of all transportation expenditures in 2020, including the purchase of new and used cars and trucks; insurance; gas and motor oil; finance charges; maintenance and repairs; licenses; rentals; other charges; and fares for travel by airplane, bus, train, and taxi.

Apparel. The sum of all apparel expenditures in 2020, including clothing, footwear, laundry, sewing, watches, jewelry, and storage.

Entertainment. The sum of all entertainment expenditures in 2020, including club fees, sport fees, theater tickets, televisions, stereos, pet expenses, toys, hobbies, campers, boats, and sporting equipment.

Other. The sum of all other expenditures in 2020, including those for alcohol, tobacco, personal care products and services, reading materials, education, miscellaneous items, cash contributions to persons or organizations outside the CU, personal insurance, pension contributions, and Social Security payroll taxes.

Travel. Travel is a combination of components of the above categories. It is the sum of all expenditures on out-of-town trips in 2020, including food; alcohol; lodging; gas; rental of autos, trucks, motorcycles, boats, campers, and other vehicles; parking; tolls; fares for travel by airplane, bus, train, and taxi; and recreation and entertainment.

Notes About the Data

Data in this report reflect expenditures during calendar year 2020. The Trends section also includes comparative data on expenditures in 2010 and 2015.

Data are from the interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey, unless otherwise noted.

Some charts contain data from an integration of the diary and the interview portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Some expenditure items are measured in either the interview survey or the diary survey; others are measured in both the interview survey and the diary survey. In the latter cases, the data source used for a given item is the survey that yields the smallest standard error for that item. Items are aggregated into summary categories that may include data from both the interview and diary portions.

Charts variously show mean, median, and percentile values. Because means can be influenced by high-spending outliers, mean expenditure data can be highly skewed. In those cases, median and percentile figures provide a clearer picture of the distribution of expenditures. However, the interview and diary portions cannot be combined to calculate medians and percentiles because the two surveys have different questionnaires and samples.

Expenditure data are collected at the CU level.

Estimates are based on weighted responses from a sample of the population, as follows:

Age group	Unweighted	Weighted (thousands)
55–64	1,292	25,106
65–74	1,072	20,404
75 or older	802	14,743
65 or older	1,874	35,147

The estimates in this chartbook, which are based on the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey Public-Use File, may vary from those published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics because some public-use data are adjusted to prevent the disclosure of respondents' personal information. For a summary comparison of estimates from the two sources, see the appendix.

Income figures refer to income before taxes. Those figures include some noncash benefits, such as the value of food stamps.

Expenditures include Social Security payroll taxes and property taxes on owned dwellings and vacation homes.

Income quartiles for CUs aged 65 or older are four groups of roughly equal size as determined by their income level, as follows:

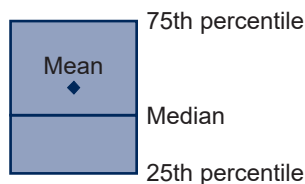
Quartile	Income
Lowest	\$19,871 or less
Low-middle	More than \$19,871 and less than or equal to \$35,794
High-middle	More than \$35,794 and less than or equal to \$65,000
Highest	More than \$65,000

The 2004 Consumer Expenditure Survey was the first in which the Bureau of Labor Statistics imputed income for units that did not report their amounts and sources of income. In the first edition of this chartbook, which was based on the 2002 Consumer Expenditure Survey, CUs that did not have complete income information were excluded from the analysis. All subsequent editions have included CUs that reported their income as well as those for which the Bureau of Labor Statistics imputed income.

Charts that show data by age group also show aggregate data for CUs aged 65 or older in a shaded bar in (or adjacent to) the chart.

In charts showing percentage distributions, totals do not necessarily equal the sum of rounded components.

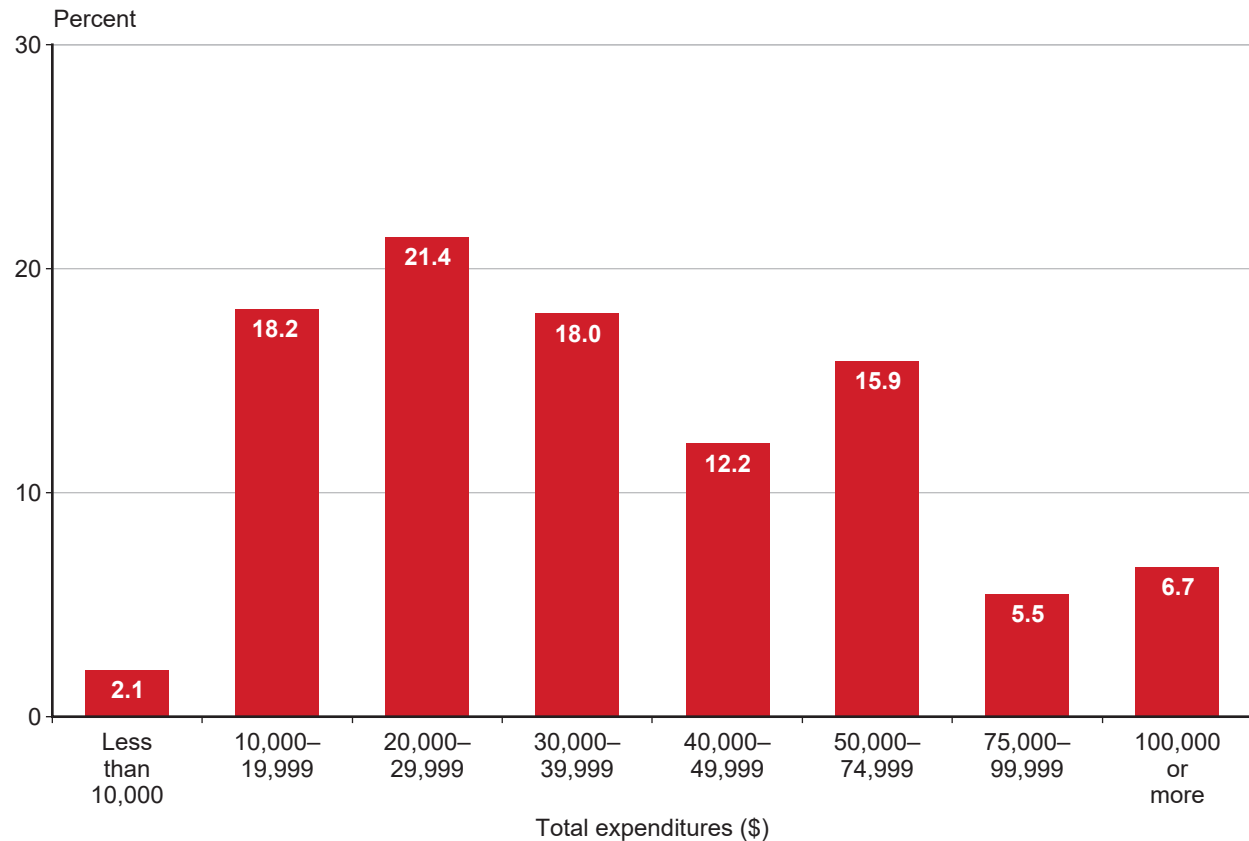
Some charts present data as box plots. The upper and lower edges of the box plots represent the values at the 75th and 25th percentiles. The box therefore presents the interquartile range, or the middle 50 percent of the data, to indicate the variability of the values. Within the box, a third horizontal line indicates the median (50th percentile) value. A diamond symbol (◆) indicates the mean. A sample box plot appears below.



Total Expenditures

Annual expenditure amounts for all CUs aged 65 or older ranged widely. In 2020, 20 percent spent less than \$20,000, and 12 percent spent \$75,000 or more. Two-thirds of CUs aged 65 or older had total expenditures between \$20,000 and \$75,000. Median expenditures were \$34,088. A relatively small proportion of CUs with very high expenditures strongly influenced the overall mean, which was \$45,270. (Median and mean values are not shown.)

Distribution of CUs, by total expenditures

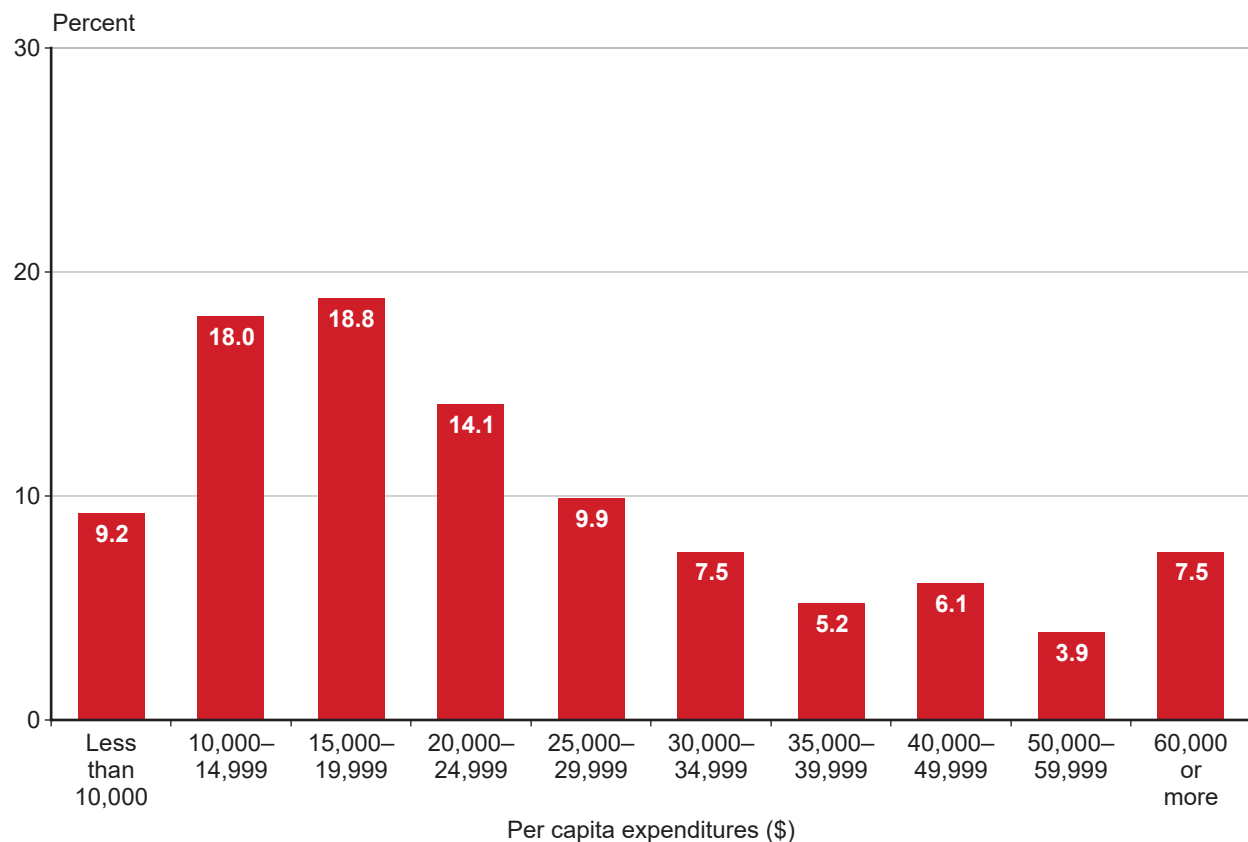


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Per Capita Expenditures

Per capita expenditures account for differences in the number of persons in a CU. Twenty-seven percent of CUs aged 65 or older had per capita expenditures of less than \$15,000 in 2020, and 11 percent had per capita expenditures of \$50,000 or more. Sixty-two percent of CUs aged 65 or older had per capita expenditures between \$15,000 and \$50,000. Median and mean per capita expenditures of CUs aged 65 or older were \$21,270 and \$28,472, respectively (not shown).

Distribution of CUs, by per capita expenditures

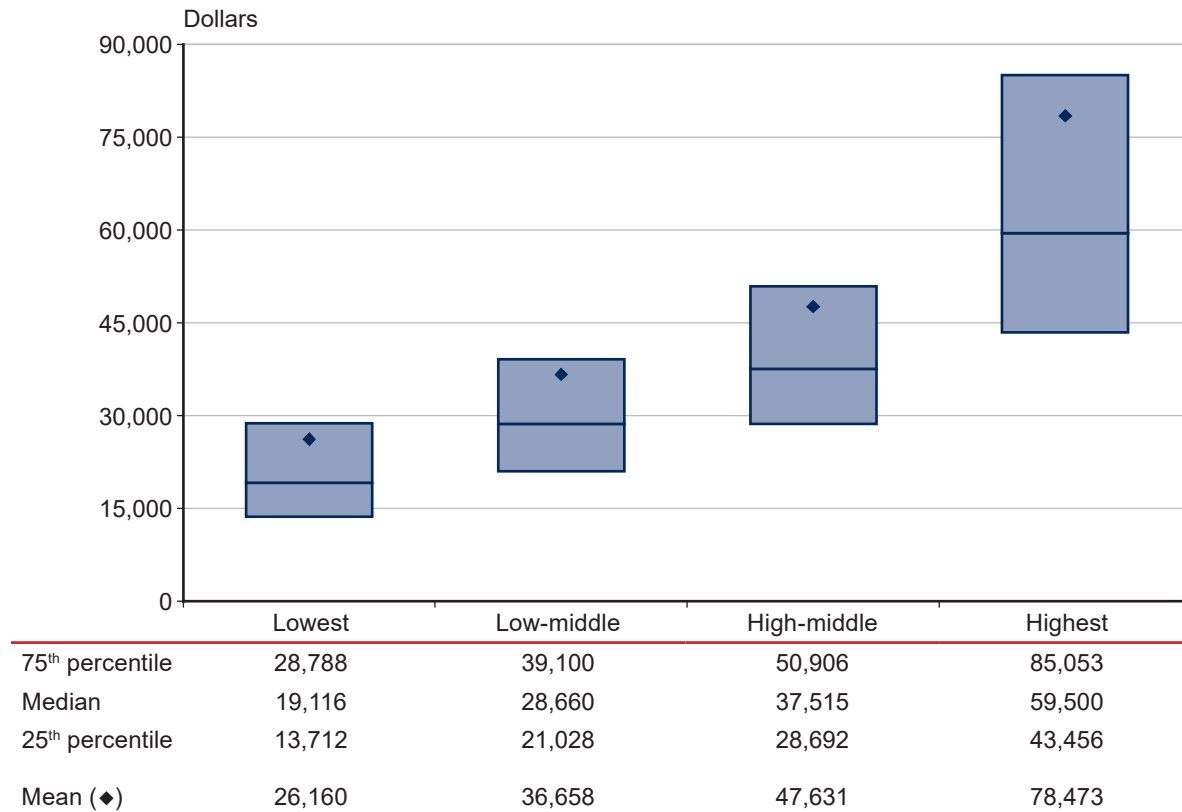


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Expenditures, by Income Quartile

For CUs aged 65 or older, median expenditures in the highest income quartile (\$59,500) were more than triple the median in the lowest income quartile (\$19,116). In the lowest income quartile, expenditures at the 25th and 75th percentiles were \$13,712 and \$28,788, respectively; the corresponding values in the highest income quartile were \$43,456 and \$85,053. Although the difference in spending between the 25th and 75th expenditure percentiles was greater in absolute terms in the highest income quartile than in the lowest income quartile, in relative terms the patterns were quite similar. In both the highest and lowest income quartiles, expenditures at the 75th percentile were approximately twice as large as expenditures at the 25th percentile.

CU expenditures, by income quartile

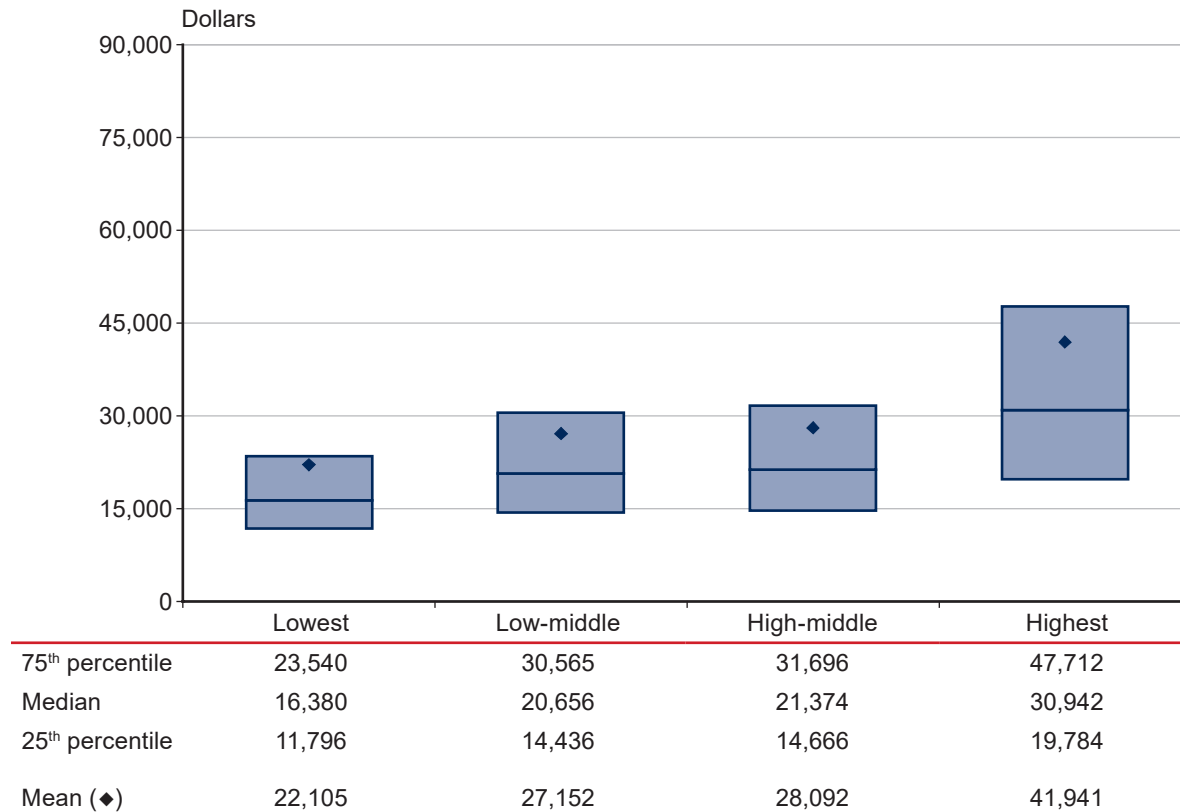


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Per Capita Expenditures, by Income Quartile

Median per capita expenditures for CUs aged 65 or older in the highest income quartile (\$30,942) were nearly double those in the lowest income quartile (\$16,380). Per capita expenditures at the 25th and 75th percentiles of the lowest income quartile were \$11,796 and \$23,540, respectively. In the highest income quartile, 25th and 75th percentile per capita expenditures were \$19,784 and \$47,712, respectively.

Per capita CU expenditures, by income quartile

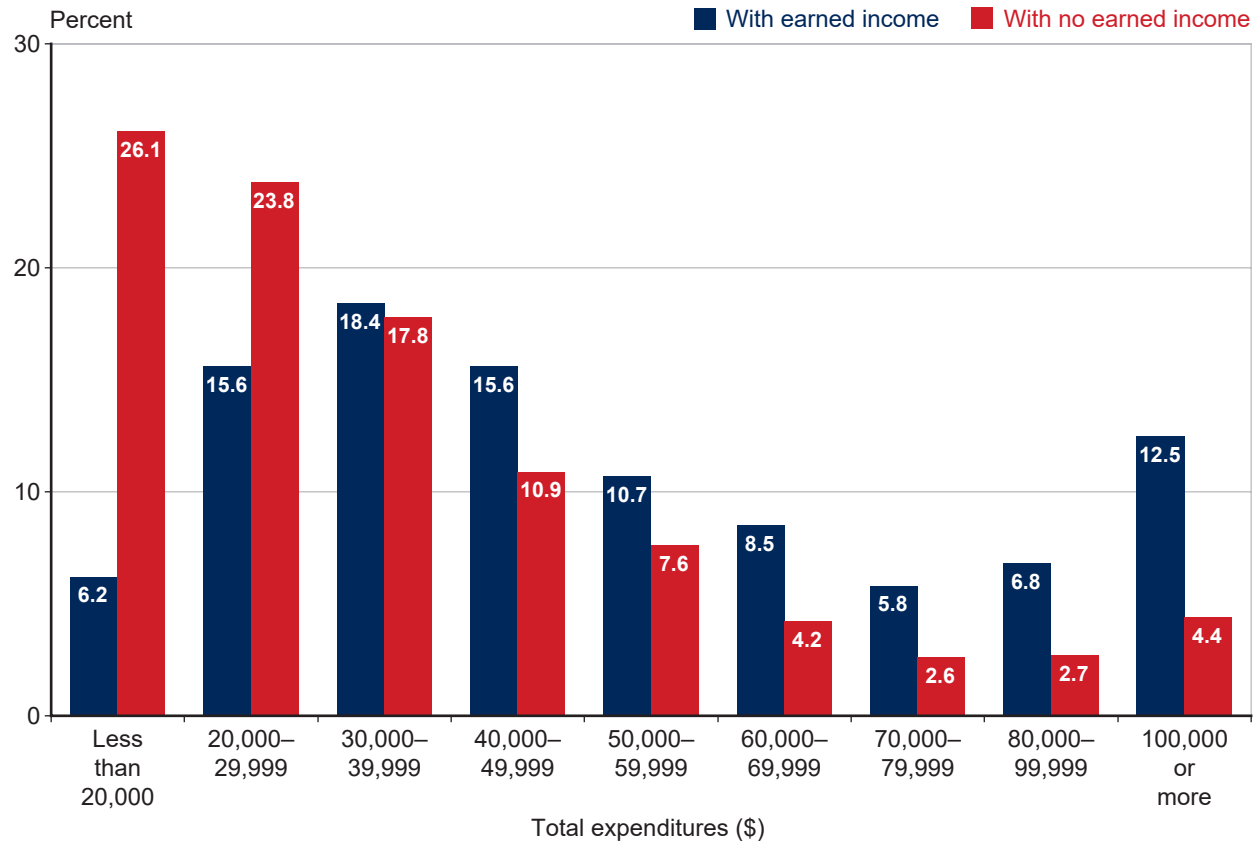


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Expenditures, by Earned Income Status

Almost three-quarters (71 percent) of CUs aged 65 or older had no earned income in 2020. The chart shows that more than a quarter (26.1 percent) of CUs with no earned income spent less than \$20,000 annually, compared with 6 percent of those with earned income. Conversely, 44 percent of CUs with earned income spent \$50,000 or more, compared with only 22 percent of CUs with no earned income. Median expenditures for CUs aged 65 or older with no earned income (\$30,016) equaled 65 percent of median expenditures for those with earned income (\$46,162) (not shown).

Distribution of expenditures, by earned income status

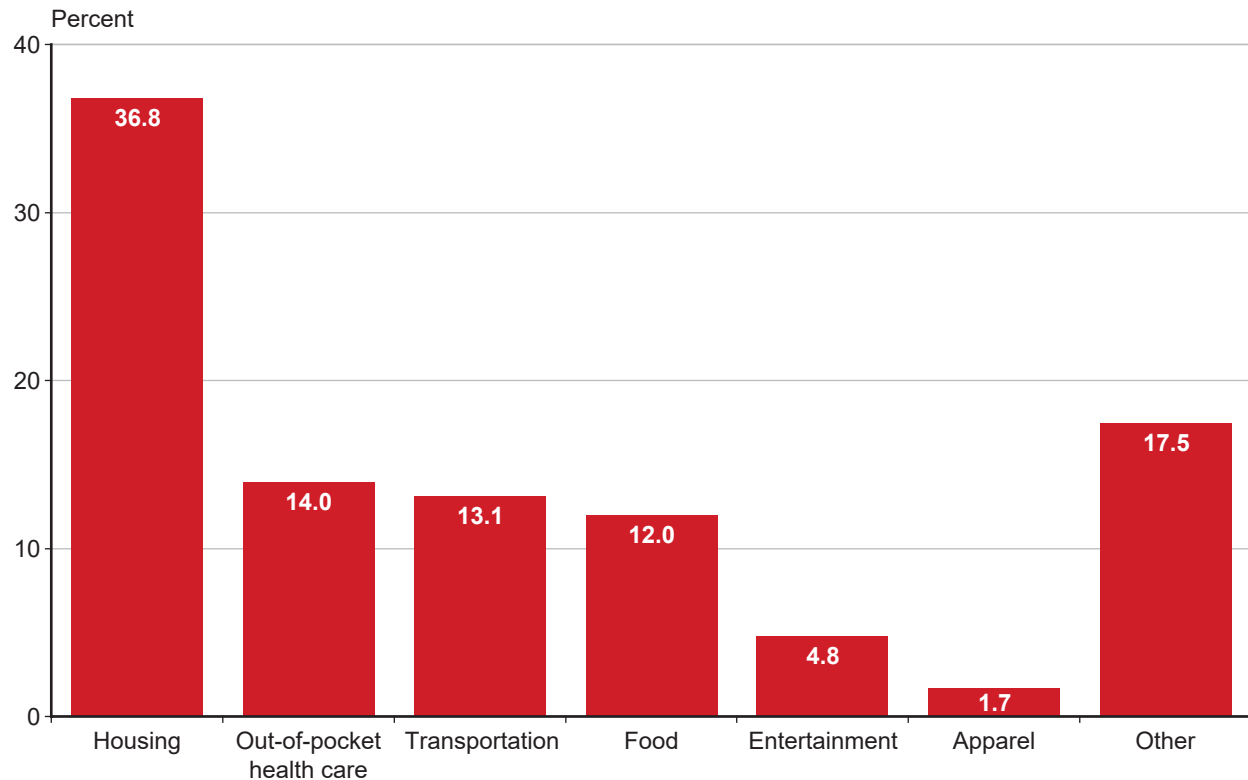


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Components of Expenditures

Housing was the largest component of expenditures (37 percent) for CUs aged 65 or older. Out-of-pocket health care (14 percent), transportation (13 percent), and food (12 percent) also composed substantial shares of expenditures. Smaller components included entertainment (5 percent) and apparel (2 percent). Other types of expenditures, including those for alcohol, personal care, reading materials, education, tobacco, miscellaneous items, cash contributions to persons or organizations outside the CU, personal insurance, pension contributions, and Social Security payroll taxes, accounted for 18 percent. Social Security payroll taxes and pension contributions together composed 5 percent of total expenditures. Per capita expenditures were similarly distributed.

Mean percentage allocated to components of total expenditures

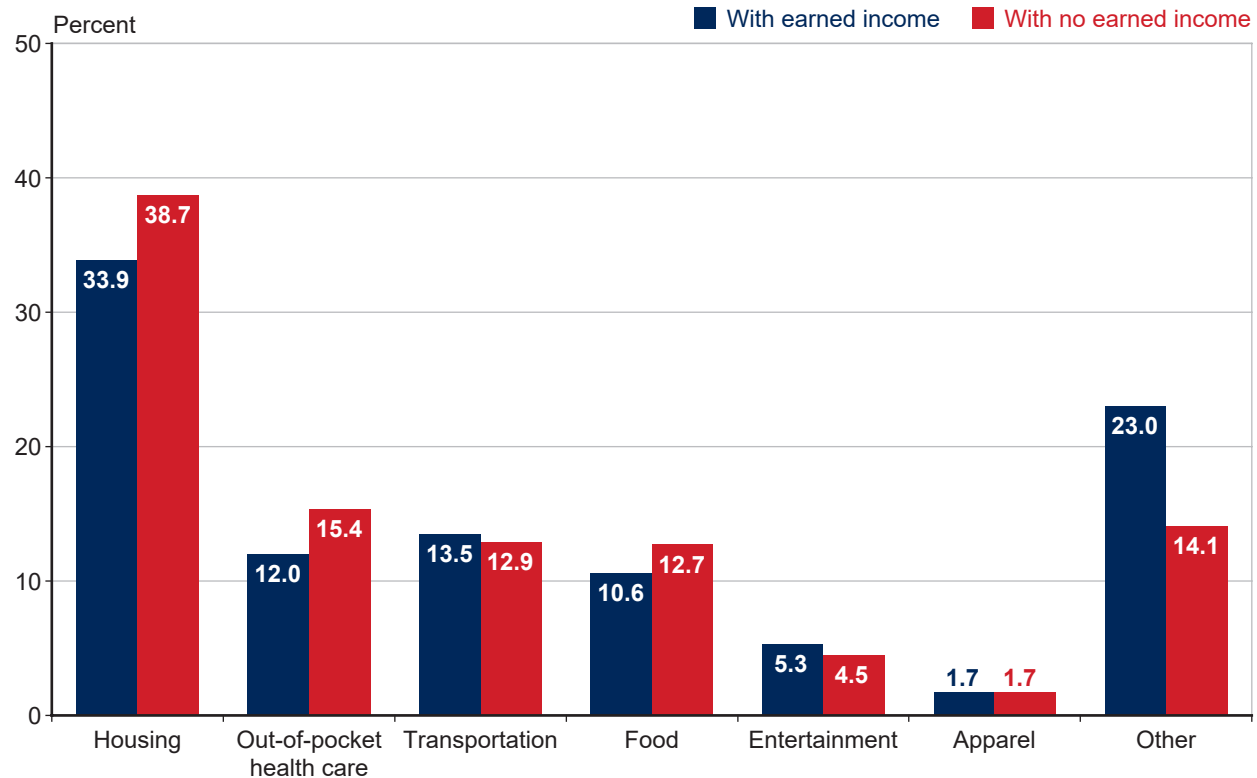


SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Components of Expenditures, by Earned Income Status

CUs aged 65 or older spent similar shares on most expenditure components regardless of whether they had earned income. For CUs with and without earned income, the respective shares of total expenditures were 34 percent and 39 percent for housing, 12 percent and 15 percent for out-of-pocket health care, 14 percent and 13 percent for transportation, and 11 percent and 13 percent for food. Entertainment and apparel respectively accounted for 5 percent and 2 percent of expenditures for CUs regardless of earned income status. Other expenditures differed significantly between the two groups, accounting for 23 percent of spending in CUs with earned income (which would incur Social Security payroll taxes or pension contributions) and 14 percent of spending in CUs with no earned income (which would not).

Mean percentage allocated to components of total expenditures, by earned income status

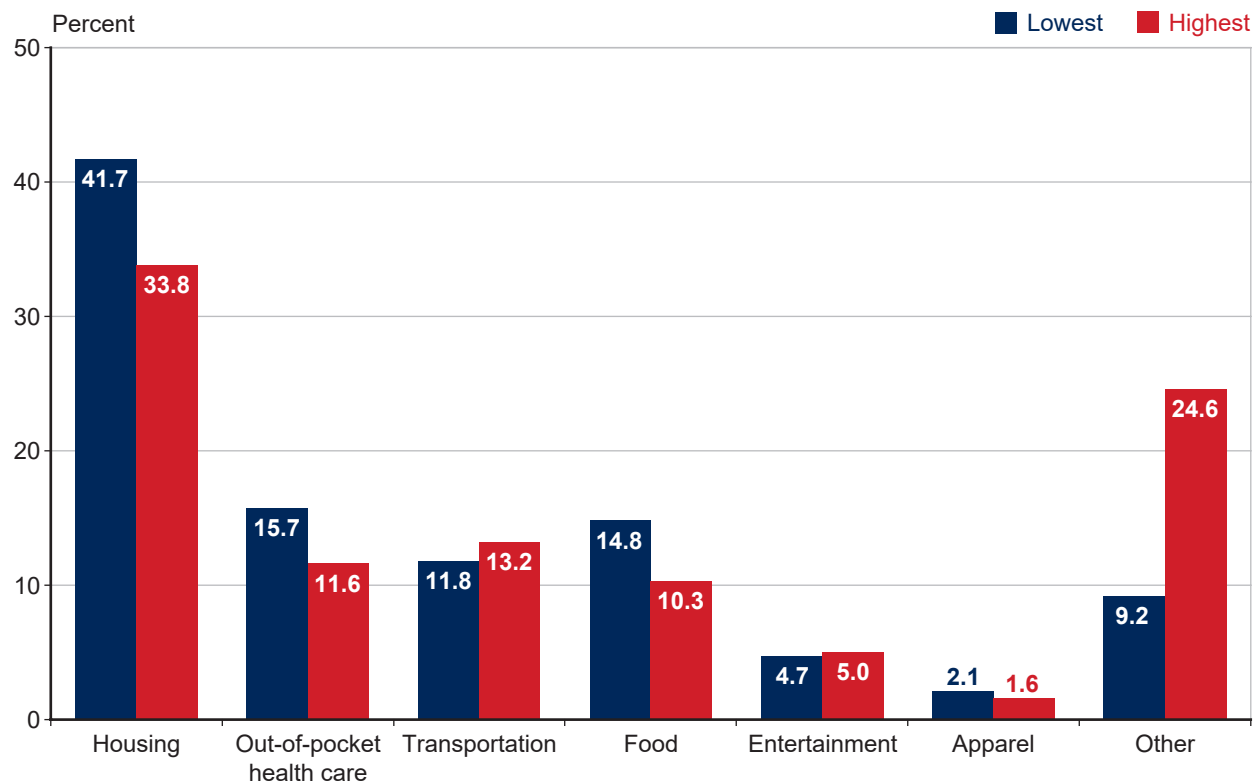


SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Components of Expenditures, by Selected Income Quartile

The proportion of expenditures allocated for housing, food, and out-of-pocket health care was 30 percent higher for CUs in the lowest income quartile than for those in the highest income quartile. CUs aged 65 or older in the lowest income quartile spent 42 percent of their total expenditures on housing, compared with 34 percent for those in the highest income quartile. Out-of-pocket spending for health care accounted for 16 percent of expenditures in the lowest income quartile and for 12 percent in the highest quartile. Transportation accounted for 13 percent of expenditures for CUs in the highest income quartile and for 12 percent among CUs in the lowest quartile. Food made up 15 percent of expenditures for CUs in the lowest income quartile and 10 percent for those in the highest income quartile. Both income groups allocated similar percentages to entertainment and apparel. Other expenditures accounted for 25 percent of the total among CUs in the highest income quartile, but only 9 percent among CUs in the lowest income quartile.

Percentage of expenditures allocated to each category, by selected income quartile

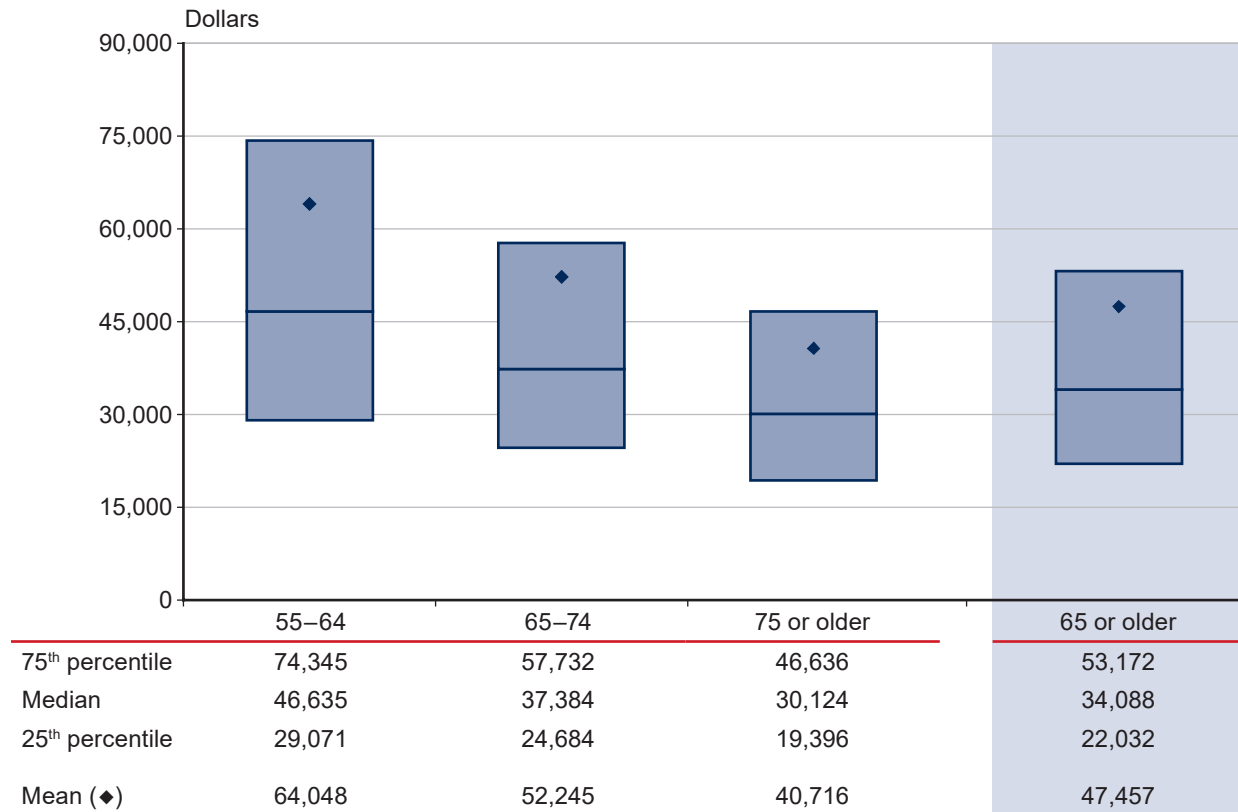


SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Total Expenditures

Expenditure amounts varied by age. This section of the chartbook examines three age groups: 55–64, 65–74, and 75 or older. Median expenditures for CUs aged 55–64 (\$46,635) were 55 percent higher than those of CUs aged 75 or older (\$30,124). For CUs aged 55–64, 25th and 75th percentile expenditures were \$29,071 and \$74,345, respectively; the corresponding values for CUs aged 75 or older were \$19,396 and \$46,636. Per capita expenditures followed the same pattern.

Total expenditures, by age of reference person

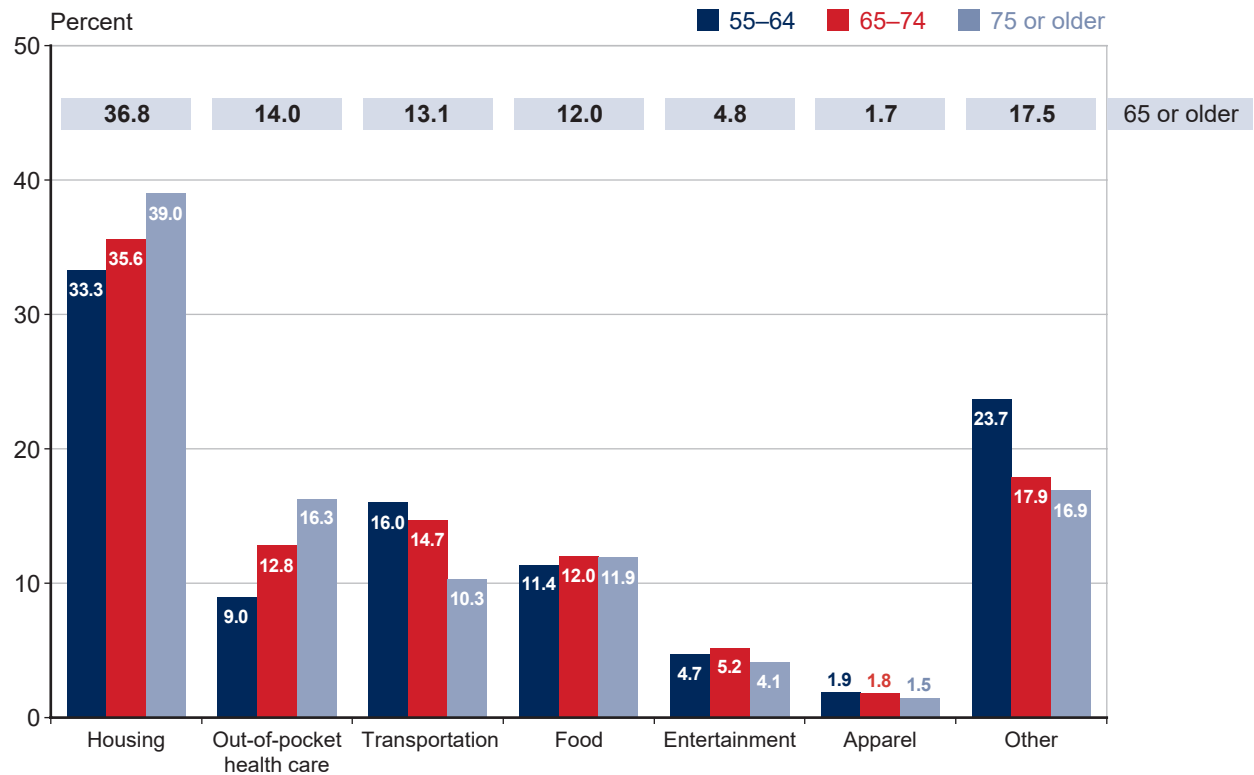


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Components of Expenditures

The distribution of spending among expenditure components varied by age, with the largest share going to housing for all age groups. Housing accounted for 33 percent of expenditures among CUs aged 55 to 64, 36 percent among CUs aged 65 to 74, and 39 percent among CUs aged 75 or older. CUs aged 75 or older allocated 16 percent of expenditures to out-of-pocket health care, while among CUs aged 55–64 out-of-pocket health care costs accounted for 9 percent of expenditures. Compared with CUs aged 55–64, those aged 75 or older allocated less of their expenditures to transportation (10 percent versus 16 percent) and to other expenditures (17 percent versus 24 percent). The share of expenditures allocated to food was similar for all three age groups, ranging from 11 percent to 12 percent. CUs in all age groups allocated relatively small proportions of expenditures to entertainment (from 4 percent to 5 percent) and apparel (about 2 percent for each age group).

Mean percentage allocated to components of total expenditures, by age of reference person

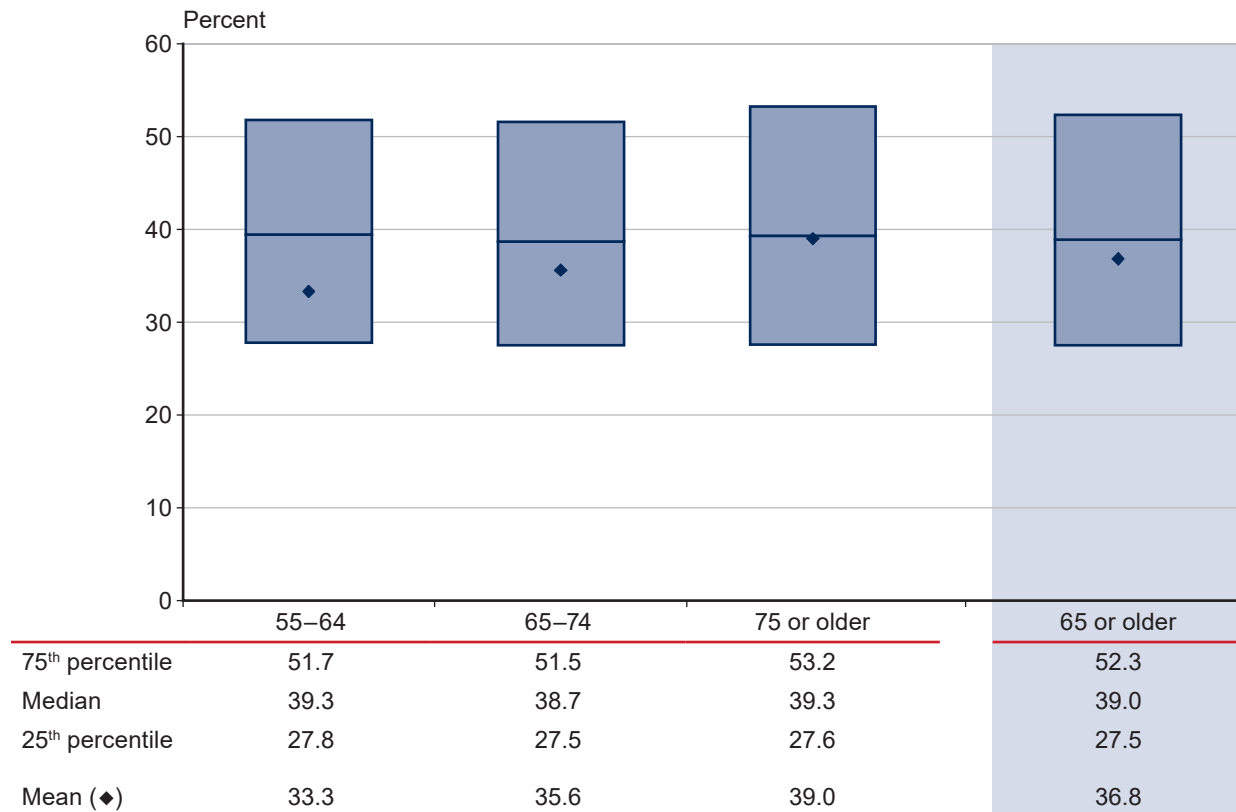


SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Housing Expenditures

Housing was the largest component of expenditures for all three age groups. The median share of expenditures allocated to housing was about 39 percent for all three age groups. The median amount spent on housing declined for successively older groups, from \$17,024 for CUs aged 55–64 to \$13,888 for CUs aged 65–74 and \$10,952 for CUs aged 75 or older. At the 25th and 75th percentiles, respective housing expenditures were \$10,176 and \$27,944 for CUs aged 55–64 and \$6,800 and \$19,628 for CUs aged 75 or older. Per capita median housing expenditures were \$8,881 for the 55–64 age group and \$7,744 for those aged 75 or older.

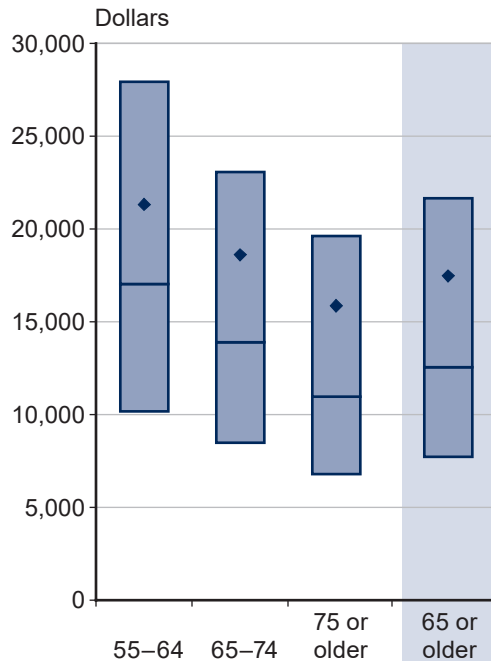
Housing expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Housing Expenditures (cont.)

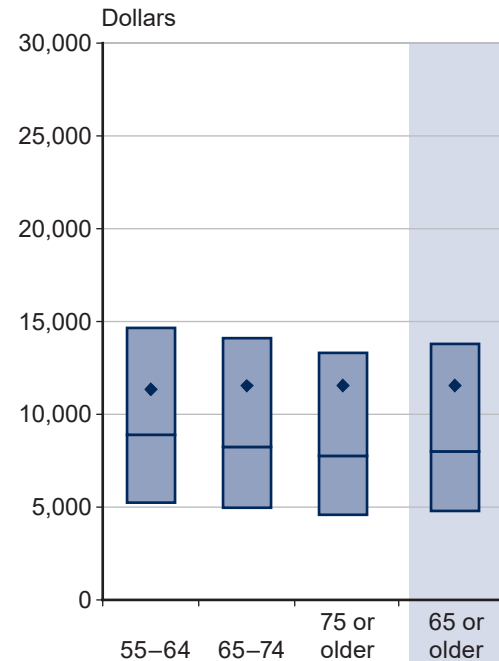
Housing expenditures, by age of reference person



	55-64	65-74	75 or older	65 or older
75 th percentile	27,944	23,068	19,628	21,644
Median	17,024	13,888	10,952	12,556
25 th percentile	10,176	8,500	6,800	7,716
Mean (◆)	21,321	18,605	15,865	17,469

SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Per capita housing expenditures, by age of reference person



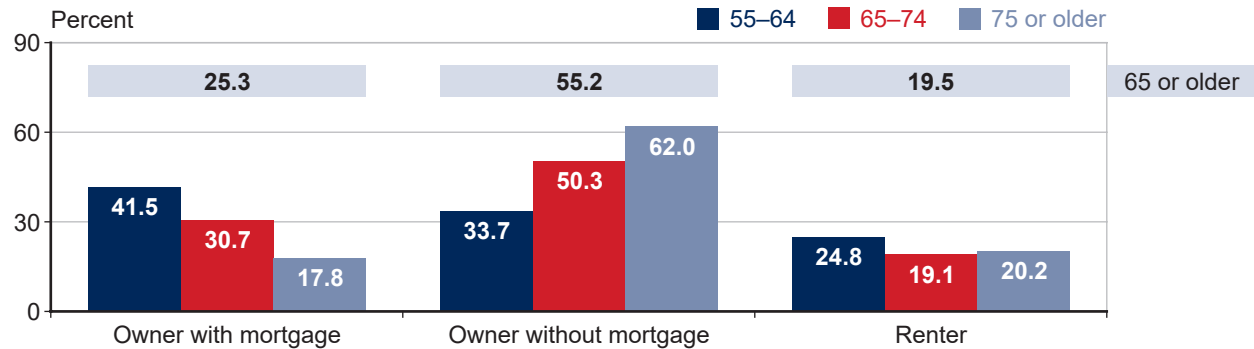
	55-64	65-74	75 or older	65 or older
75 th percentile	14,652	14,108	13,326	13,808
Median	8,881	8,232	7,744	7,998
25 th percentile	5,258	4,960	4,578	4,792
Mean (◆)	11,343	11,541	11,550	11,550

SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Housing Tenure

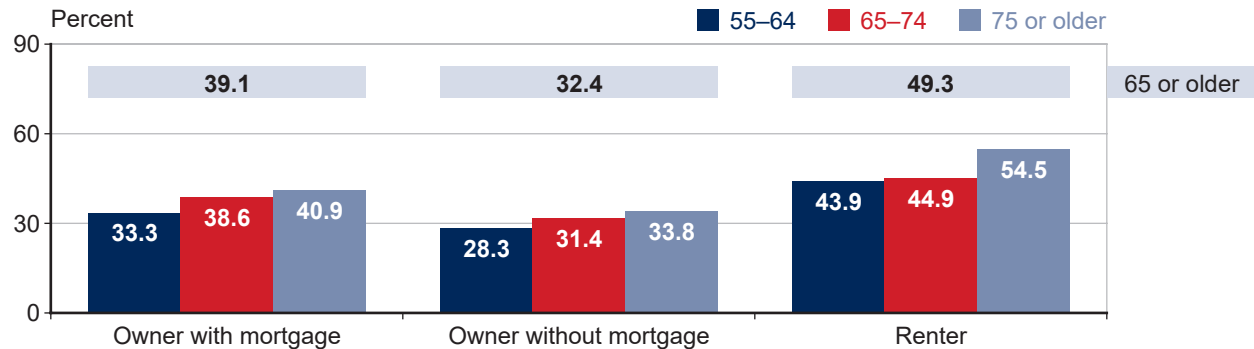
Most CUs in all three age groups were homeowners, and the proportion of CUs that owned a home without a mortgage increased with age. CUs aged 55–64 were the least likely to own a home without a mortgage (34 percent). CUs aged 65–74 were the least likely to own a home without a mortgage (34 percent). Among CUs aged 65–74, 50 percent owned their homes with no mortgage. Among CUs aged 75 or older, 62 percent owned their homes with no mortgage. Among CUs aged 75 or older, the proportion that owned a home with no mortgage was more than three times the proportion that owned with a mortgage (62 percent compared with 18 percent). The mean percentage of total expenditures allocated to housing was lowest for homeowners without a mortgage (between 28 percent and 34 percent) and highest for CUs that rented a house or apartment (44 percent to 55 percent).

Distribution of CUs, by housing tenure and age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Mean percentage allocated to housing expenditures, by housing tenure and age of reference person

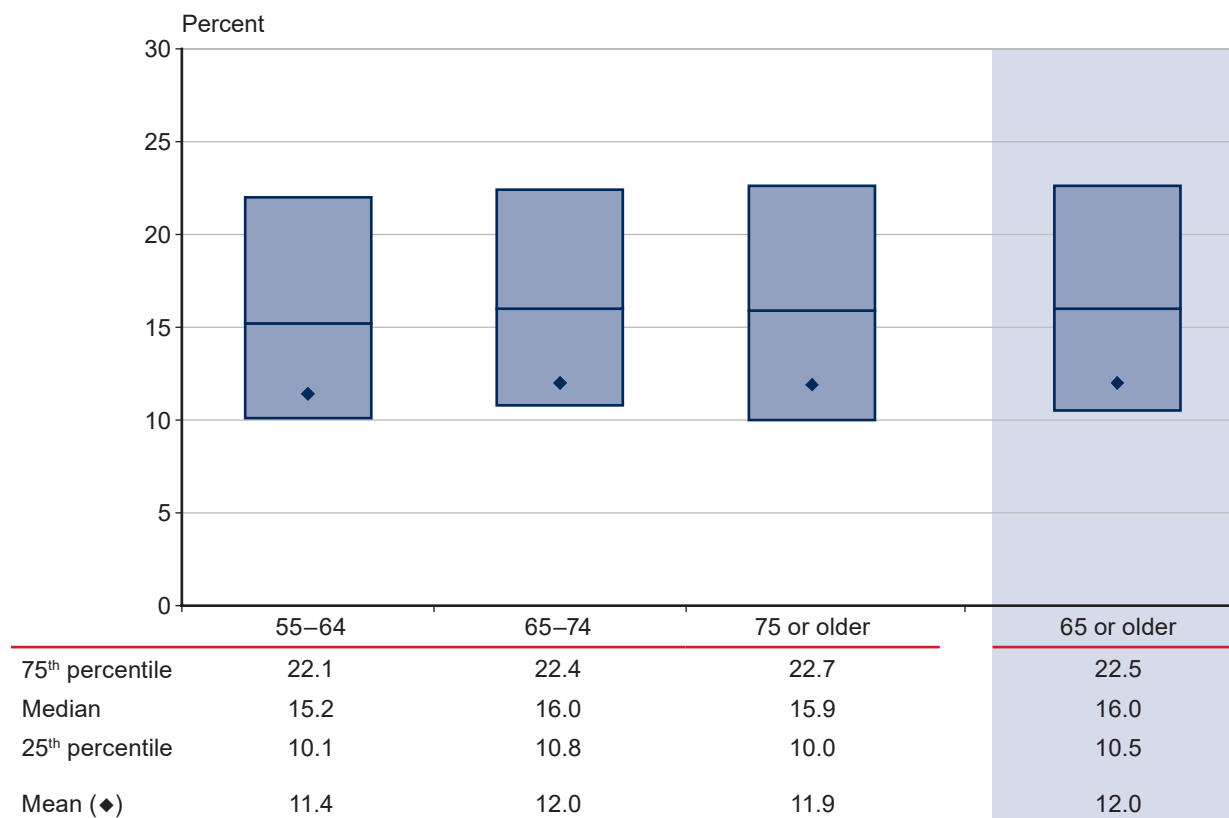


SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Food Expenditures

The median percentage of total expenditures spent on food was 15 percent for CUs aged 55–64 and 16 percent for those in the two older age groups. Including all age groups, the 25th and 75th percentile values ranged from 10 percent to 23 percent, respectively. The median amount spent on food was 57 percent higher for CUs aged 55–64 (\$7,020) than for CUs aged 75 or older (\$4,460). Median per capita food expenditures were 17 percent higher for CUs aged 55–64 (\$3,640) than for CUs aged 75 or older (\$3,120).

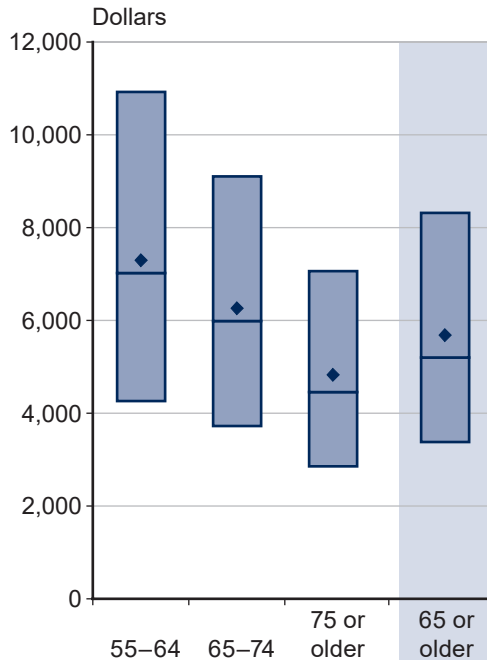
Food expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Food Expenditures (cont.)

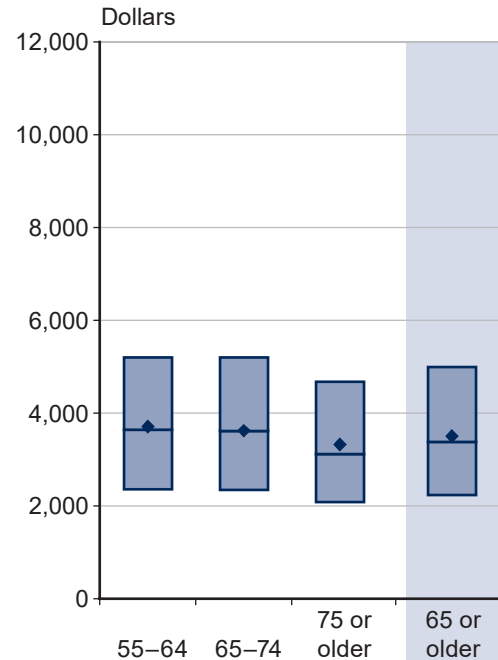
Food expenditures, by age of reference person



	55-64	65-74	75 or older	65 or older
75 th percentile	10,920	9,100	7,068	8,320
Median	7,020	5,980	4,460	5,200
25 th percentile	4,264	3,728	2,860	3,380
Mean (◆)	7,299	6,260	4,829	5,681

SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Per capita food expenditures, by age of reference person



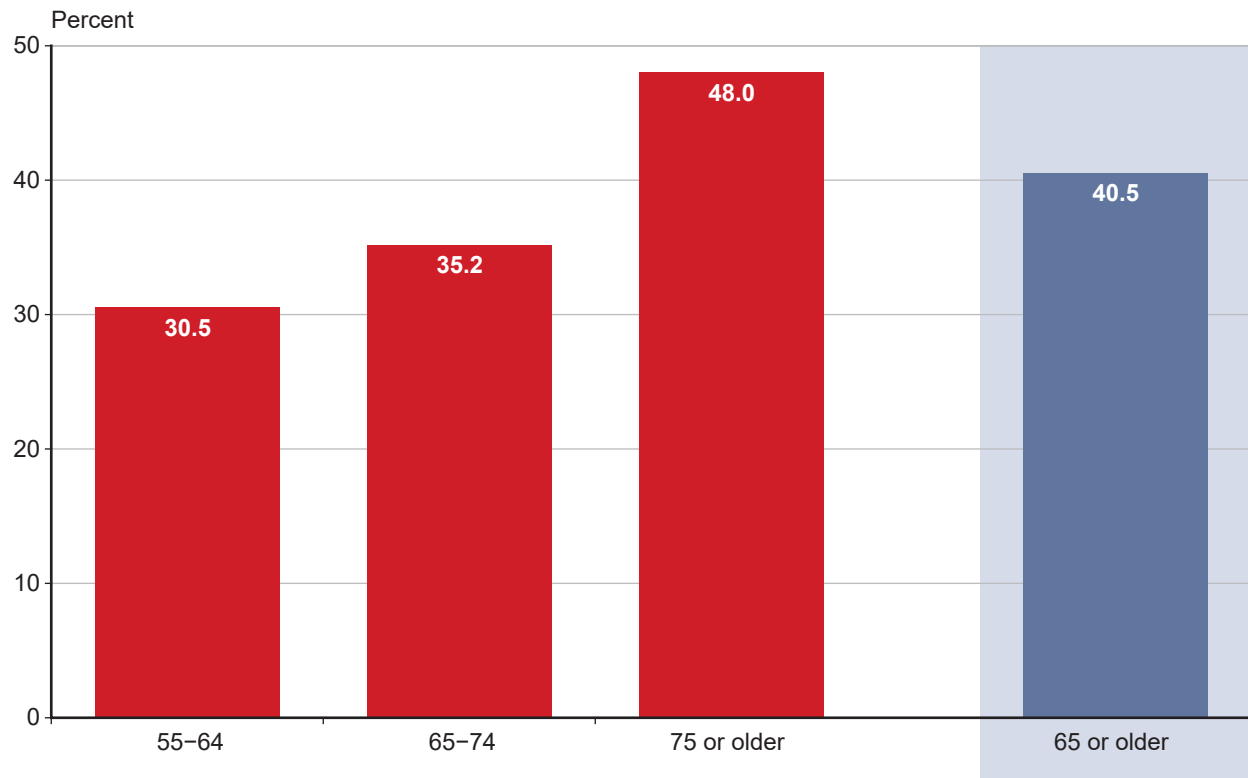
	55-64	65-74	75 or older	65 or older
75 th percentile	5,200	5,200	4,680	4,993
Median	3,640	3,620	3,120	3,380
25 th percentile	2,360	2,340	2,080	2,240
Mean (◆)	3,712	3,624	3,326	3,503

SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Food Prepared and Eaten at Home

Older age groups allocated a larger share of food expenditures to food prepared and eaten at home than did younger age groups. CUs aged 75 or older were more likely to allocate 95 percent or more of their food expenditures to food prepared and eaten at home than were CUs aged 55–64 (48 percent compared with 31 percent). The average percentage of food expenditures allocated to food prepared and eaten at home was 70 percent for CUs aged 55–64, 73 percent for CUs aged 65–74, and 75 percent for CUs aged 75 or older (not shown).

Percentage of CUs spending 95 percent or more of food expenditures on food prepared at home, by age of reference person

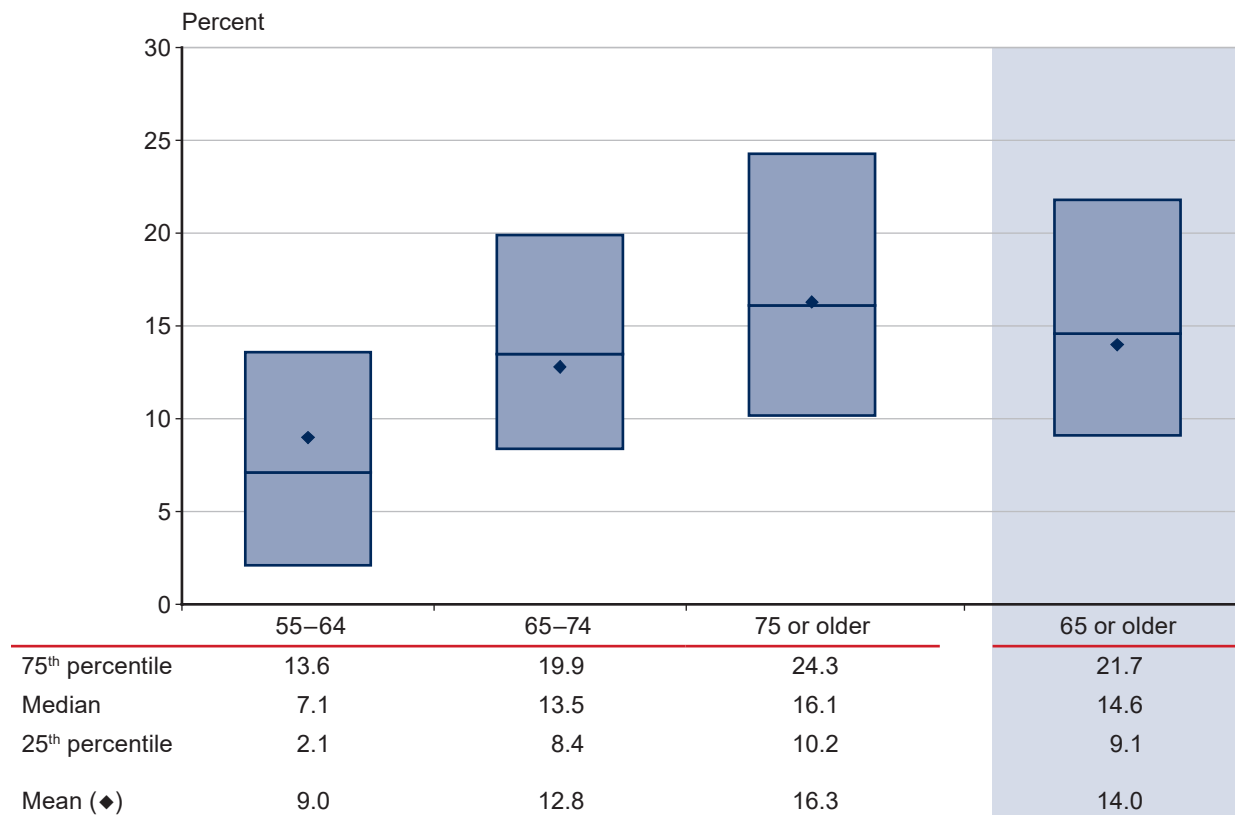


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Out-of-Pocket Health Care Expenditures

Median out-of-pocket health care expenditures ranged from 7 percent of total expenditures for CUs aged 55–64 to 16 percent for those aged 75 or older. From the 25th to the 75th percentiles, the share of total expenditures allocated to health care ranged from 2 percent to 14 percent for CUs aged 55–64 and from 10 percent to 24 percent for CUs aged 75 or older. Median out-of-pocket health care expenditures for CUs aged 75 or older (\$4,680) were 38 percent higher than those of CUs aged 55–64 (\$3,380) but were almost double on a per capita basis (\$3,342 compared with \$1,774). The Consumer Expenditure Survey covers the noninstitutionalized population and therefore omits nursing home residents and their expenditures.

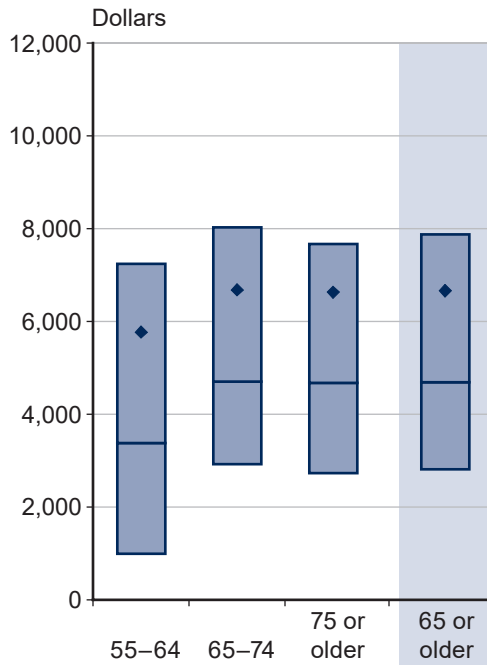
Out-of-pocket health care expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Out-of-Pocket Health Care Expenditures (cont.)

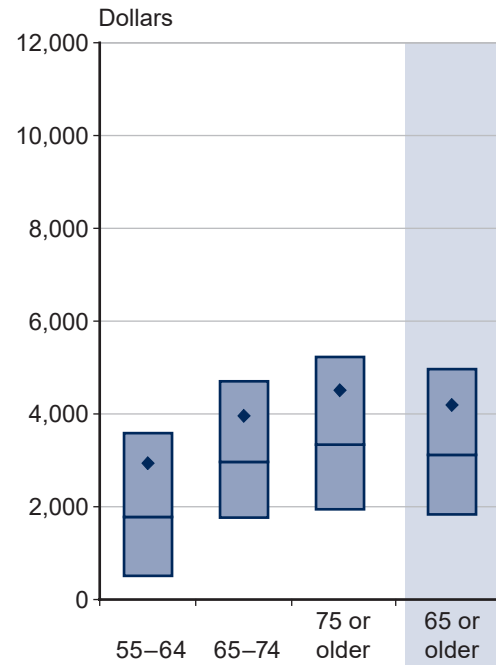
Out-of-pocket health care expenditures, by age of reference person



	55-64	65-74	75 or older	65 or older
75 th percentile	7,240	8,024	7,664	7,880
Median	3,380	4,704	4,680	4,688
25 th percentile	988	2,928	2,736	2,820
Mean (◆)	5,770	6,682	6,629	6,661

SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Per capita out-of-pocket health care expenditures, by age of reference person



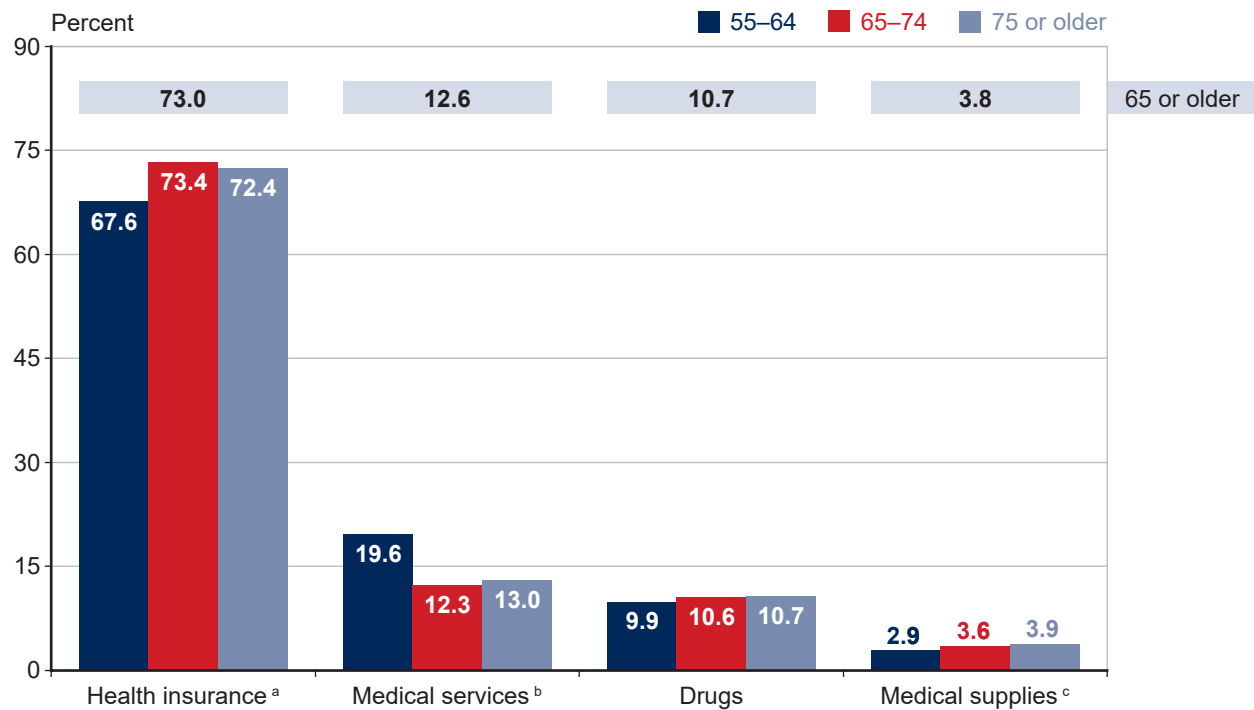
	55-64	65-74	75 or older	65 or older
75 th percentile	3,580	4,698	5,224	4,968
Median	1,774	2,968	3,342	3,112
25 th percentile	516	1,772	1,940	1,832
Mean (◆)	2,935	3,959	4,511	4,191

SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Components of Out-of-Pocket Health Care Expenditures

Health insurance premiums accounted for the largest share of out-of-pocket health care expenditures, comprising more than two-thirds of the total for all three age groups. Medical services were the second largest component of health care expenditures for CUs, accounting for 12 percent to 20 percent of the total. Drugs were the third largest component, comprising 10 percent to 11 percent of out-of-pocket health care expenditures. Medical supplies accounted for only about 3 percent to 4 percent of out-of-pocket health care expenditures for all age groups.

Mean percentage allocated to components of out-of-pocket health care expenditures, by age of reference person



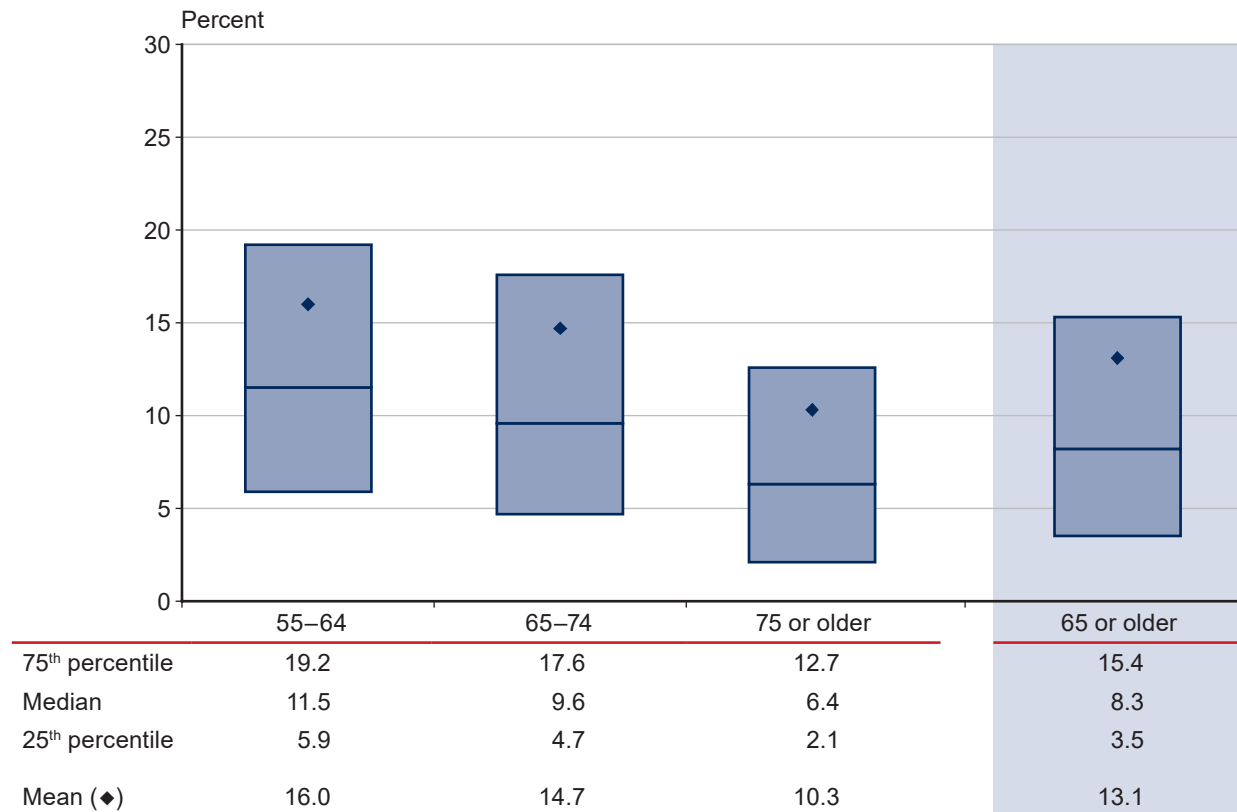
SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

- a. Includes fee-for-service health plans, preferred-provider health plans, health maintenance organizations, commercial Medicare supplements, Medicare payments, and other health insurance.
- b. Includes hospital room and services, professional and physicians' services, eye and dental care, lab tests and X-rays, medical care in a retirement community and convalescent or nursing home, and other medical care service.
- c. Includes antiseptics, dressings and bandages, first aid kits, contraceptives, syringes, ice bags, thermometers, vaporizers, heating pads, medical appliances (such as braces, canes, crutches, walkers, eyeglasses, and hearing aids), and rental and repair of medical equipment.

Transportation Expenditures

Transportation expenditures were lower for CUs aged 75 or older than for those aged 55–64, whether expressed as the median percentage of total expenditures allocated to transportation (6 percent compared with 12 percent), median total transportation expenditures (\$1,960 compared with \$5,424), or median per capita transportation expenditures (\$1,302 compared with \$2,680).

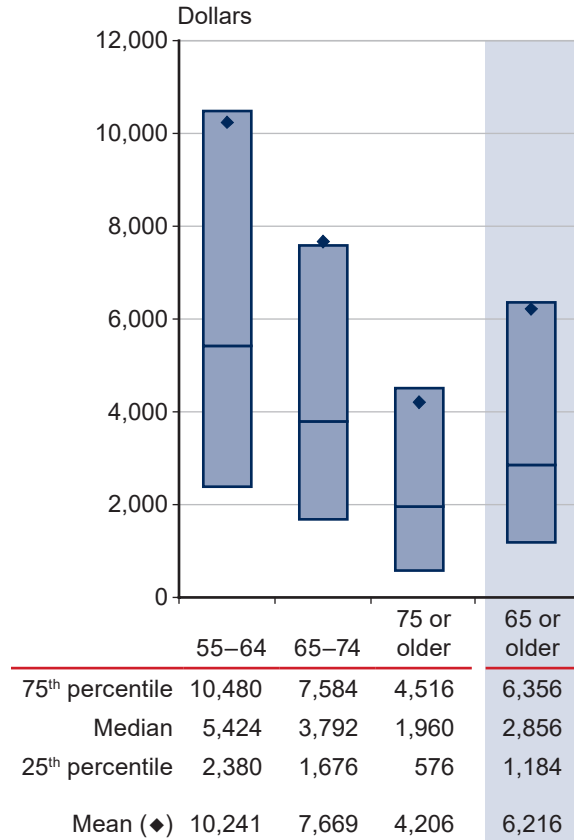
Transportation expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

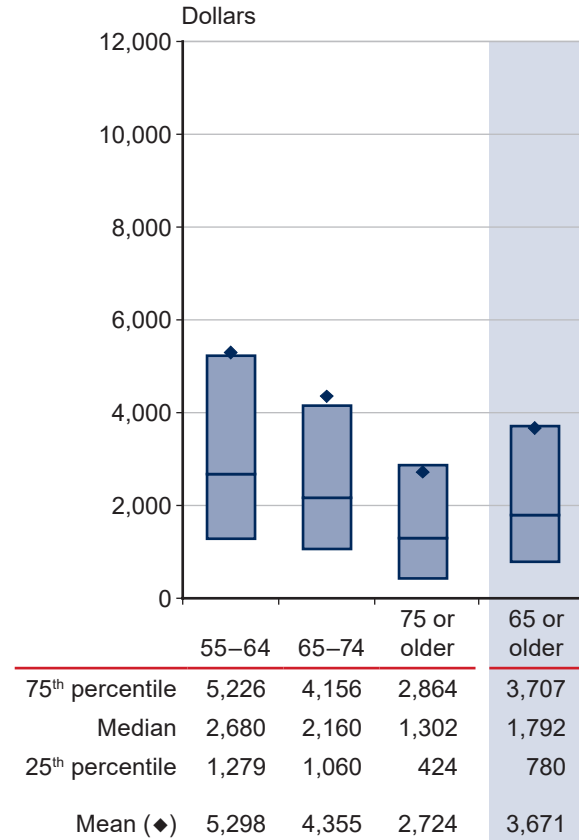
Transportation Expenditures (cont.)

Transportation expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Per capita transportation expenditures, by age of reference person

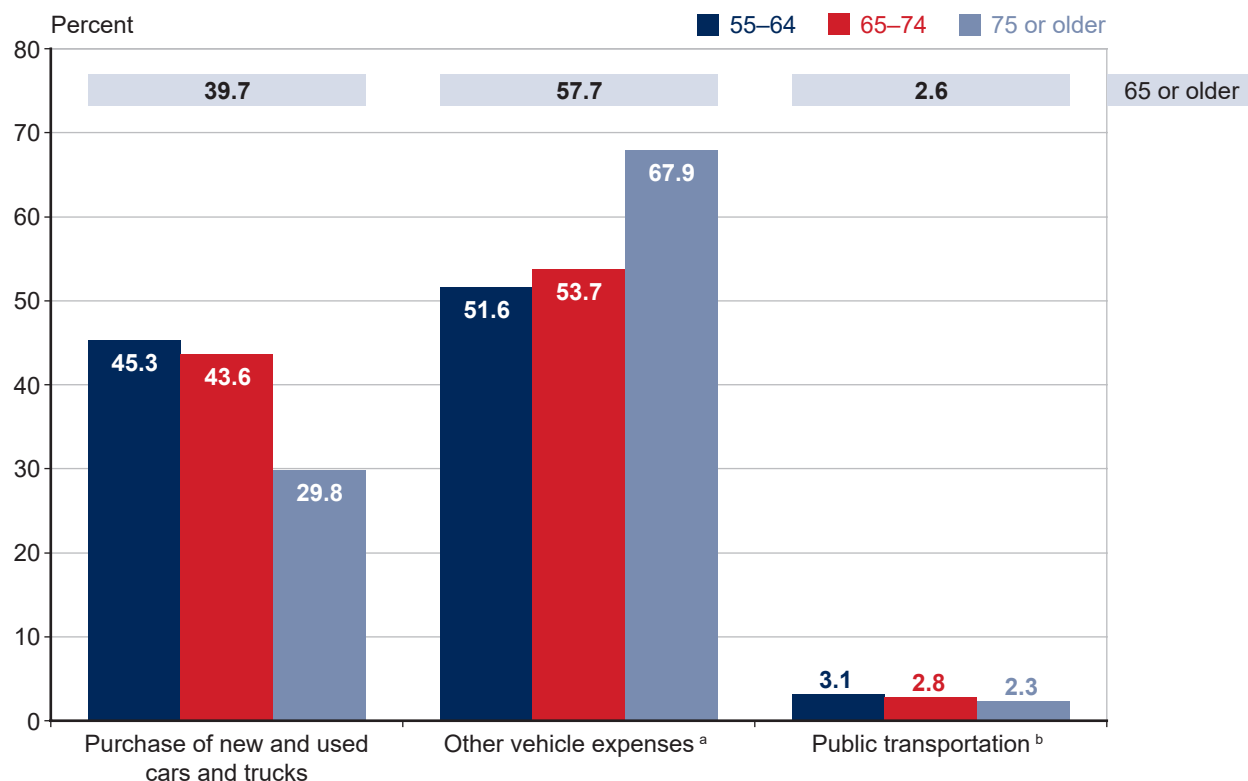


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Components of Transportation Expenditures

Almost all transportation expenditures were for the purchase and maintenance of vehicles. The purchase of new and used cars and trucks accounted for 45 percent of transportation expenditures for CUs aged 55–64, 44 percent for those aged 65–74, and 30 percent for those aged 75 or older. Other vehicle expenditures made up 52 percent of transportation expenditures for CUs aged 55–64, 54 percent for those aged 65–74, and 68 percent for those aged 75 or older. Across all age groups, only 2 percent to 3 percent of transportation expenditures went to public transportation.

Mean percentage allocated to components of transportation expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

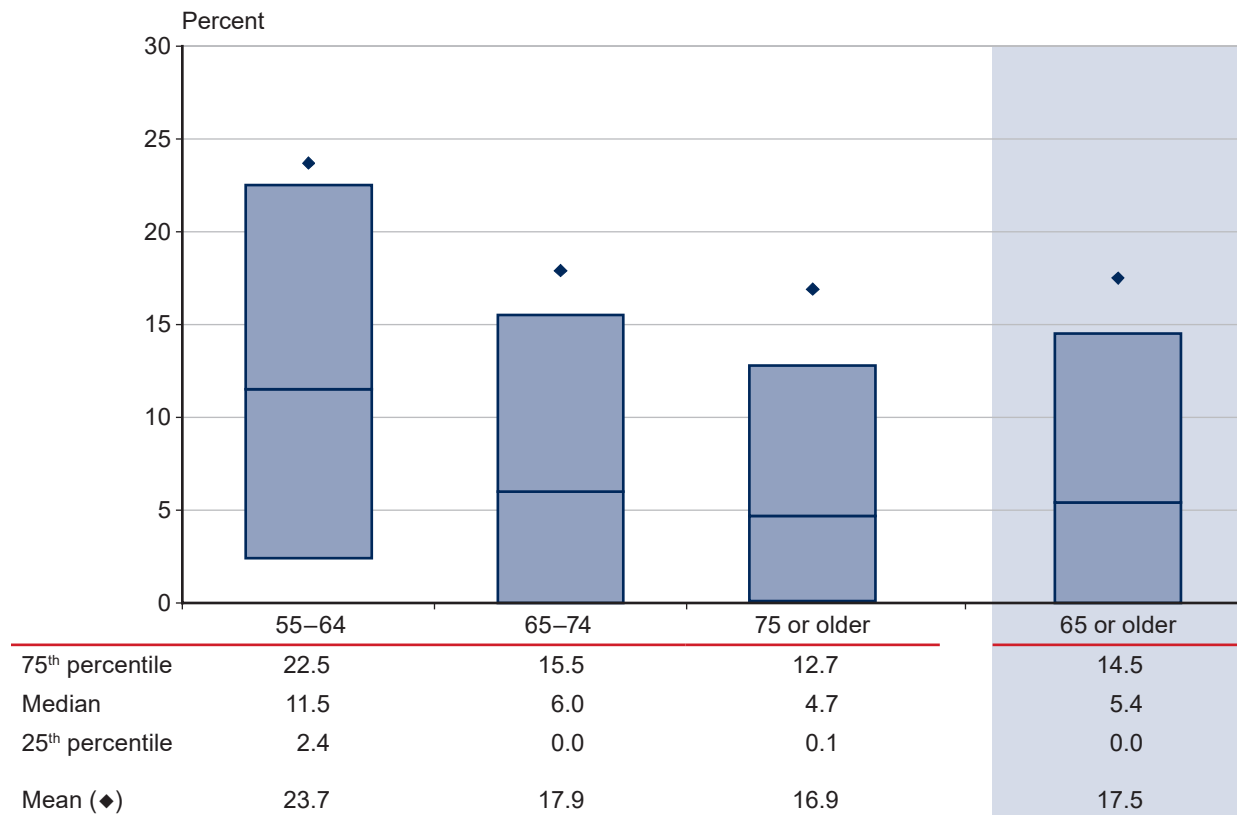
a. Includes expenditures for insurance, gas and motor oil, finance charges, maintenance and repairs, licenses, rentals, and other charges.

b. Includes fares for travel by airplane, bus, train, and taxi.

Other Expenditures

Other expenditures include such items as alcohol, personal care products and services, reading materials, education, tobacco, miscellaneous items, cash contributions to persons or organizations outside the CU, personal insurance, pension contributions, and Social Security payroll taxes. As a percentage of total expenditures, median expenditures in this category were 12 percent among CUs aged 55–64, 6 percent among CUs aged 65–74, and 5 percent among CUs aged 75 or older. Mean expenditures in this category exceeded the median mainly because of very high cash contributions to individuals and organizations made by a relatively small proportion of the population.

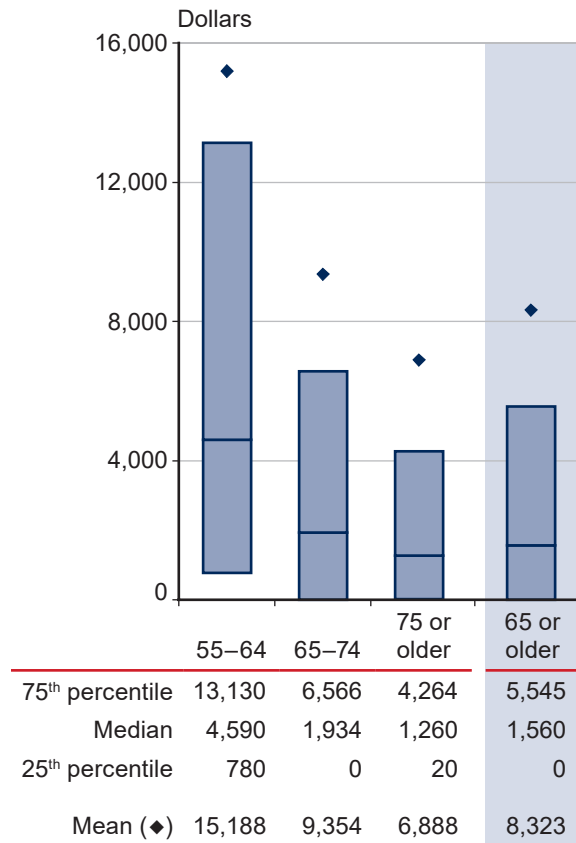
Other expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

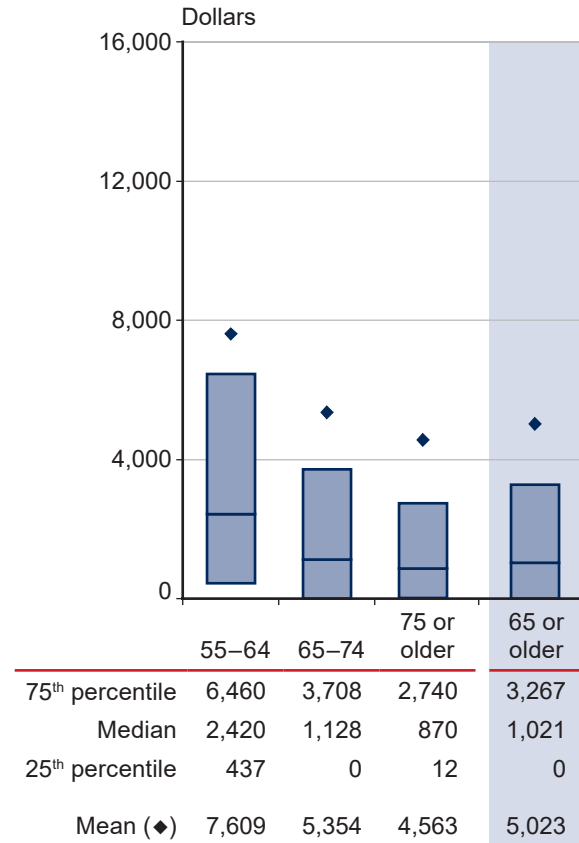
Other Expenditures (cont.)

Other expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Per capita other expenditures, by age of reference person

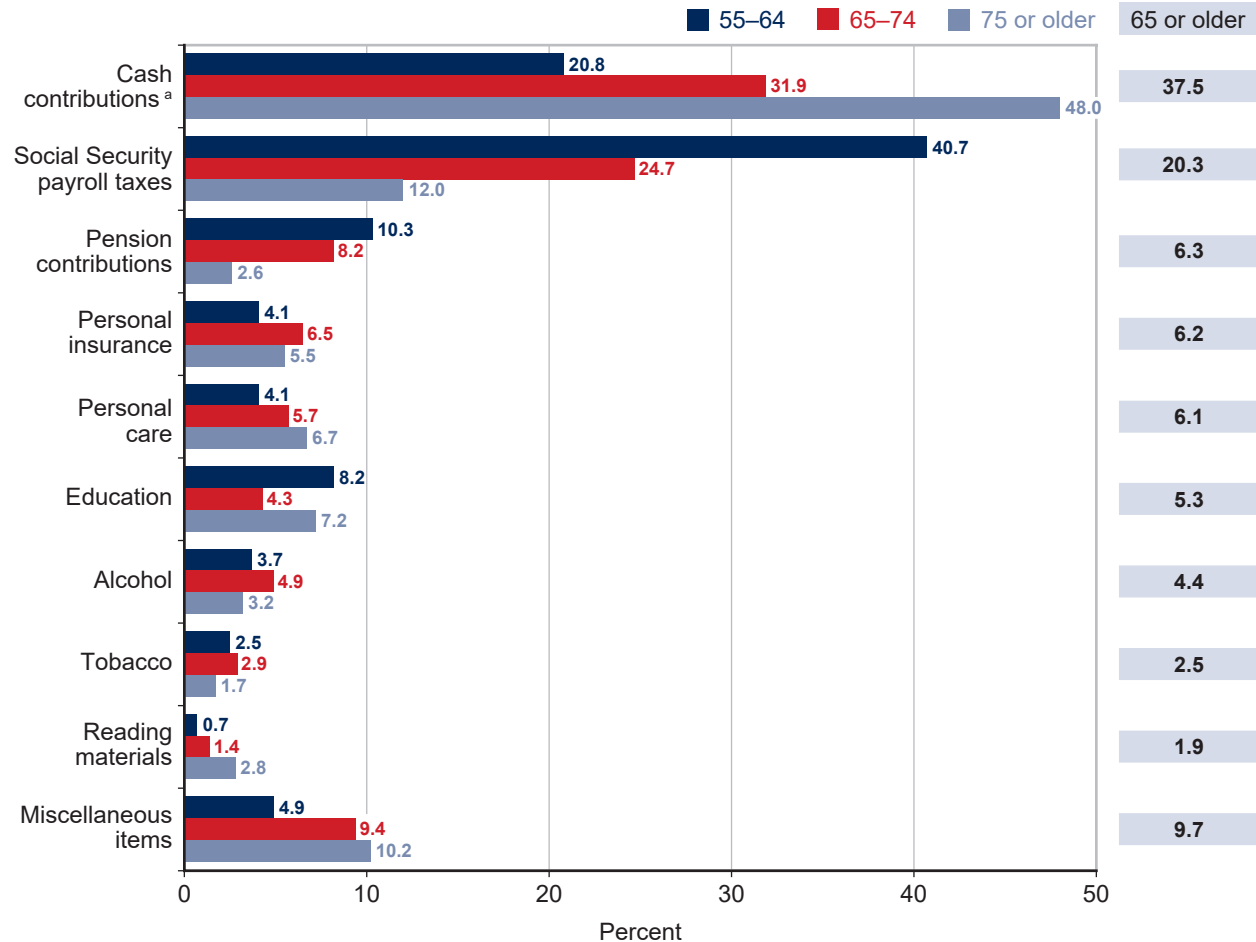


SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

Components of Other Expenditures

The allocation of other expenditures differed among age groups. Cash contributions were the largest component of other expenditures for CUs aged 65–74 and 75 or older (32 percent and 48 percent, respectively). Social Security payroll taxes were the largest component of other expenditures for CUs aged 55–64 (41 percent).

Mean percentage allocated to components of other expenditures, by age of reference person



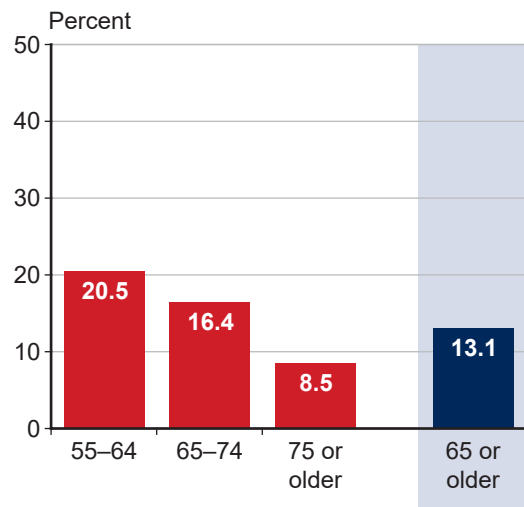
SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

a. Cash contributed to persons or organizations outside the CU, including alimony and child support payments; care of students away from home; and contributions to religious, educational, charitable, or political organizations.

Travel Expenditures

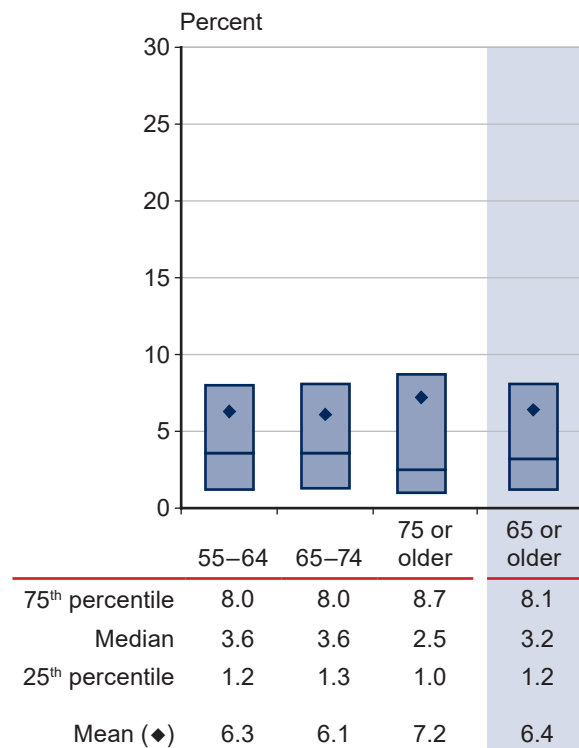
No more than 21 percent of CUs in the three age groups had travel-related expenditures in 2020, and the percentage that had such expenditures decreased with age. Travel comprises elements from the housing, food, transportation, and entertainment expenditure categories that were spent on out-of-town trips. This category includes food; alcohol; lodging; gas; rental of autos, trucks, motorcycles, boats, campers, and other vehicles; parking; tolls; fares for travel by airplane, bus, train, and taxi; and recreation and entertainment expenses on out-of-town trips. About 21 percent of CUs aged 55–64, 16 percent of CUs aged 65–74, and 9 percent of CUs aged 75 or older had some expenditures for travel. Among CUs with travel expenditures, the median share of total expenditures allocated to travel was about 3 percent to 4 percent across all age groups.

Percentage of CUs with any travel expenditures, by age of reference person



SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Travel expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures for CUs with any travel expenditures, by age of reference person



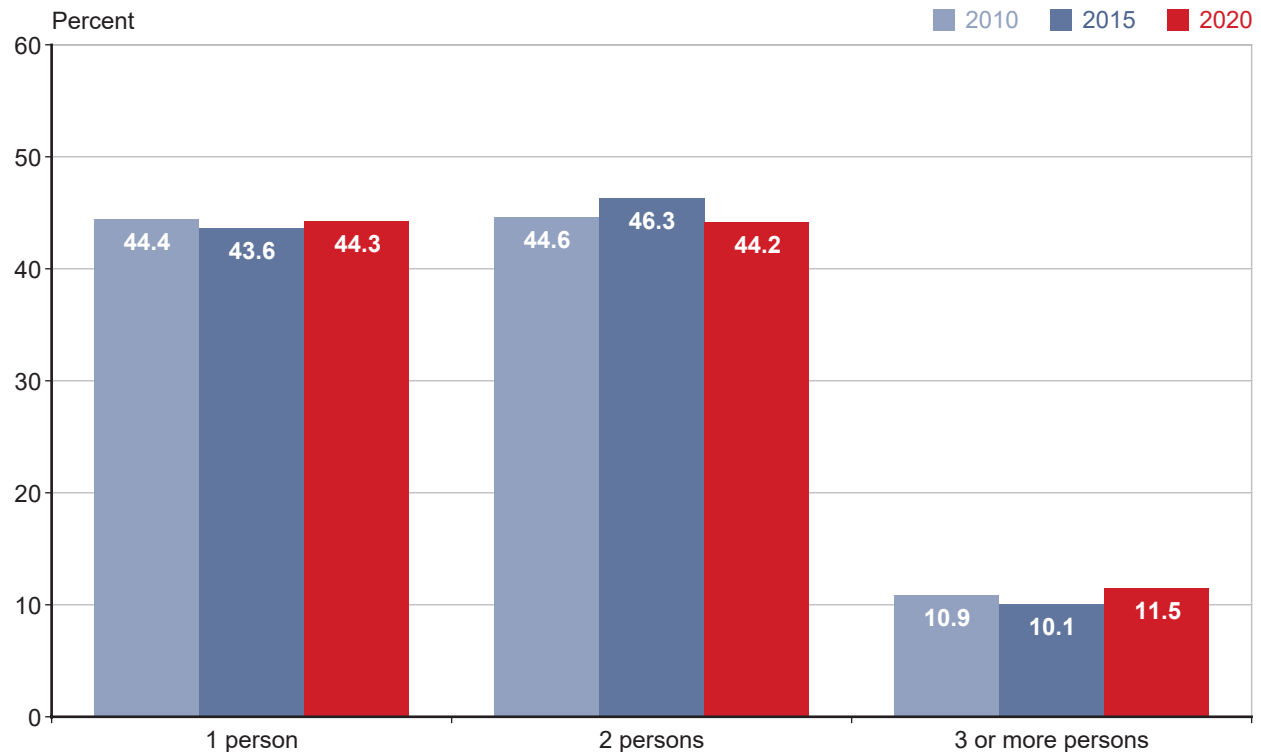
SOURCE: Interview portion of the 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Means were computed using both the interview and diary portions of the survey.

NOTE: The previous edition of the *Expenditures of the Aged Chartbook* showed expenditures for 2015. The remainder of this edition shows expenditures in 2010, 2015, and 2020 for CUs aged 65 or older. The Consumer Expenditure Survey is a cross-sectional survey in which the sampled households change from year to year. Therefore, the data presented in these charts are snapshots of all CUs aged 65 or older in those three years; that is, the charts do not represent the experience of the same group of households from year to year. Expenditures have been indexed to 2020 dollars using the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U).

Trends in CU Size

In general, the size of CUs aged 65 or older changed little between 2010 and 2020. The proportion of CUs with just one person was stable at 44 percent, while the proportion with two persons rose from 45 percent to 46 percent between 2010 and 2015, then fell to 44 percent in 2020. The proportion of CUs with three or more persons was 11 percent in 2010 and 12 percent in 2020.

Distribution of CUs by size, selected years

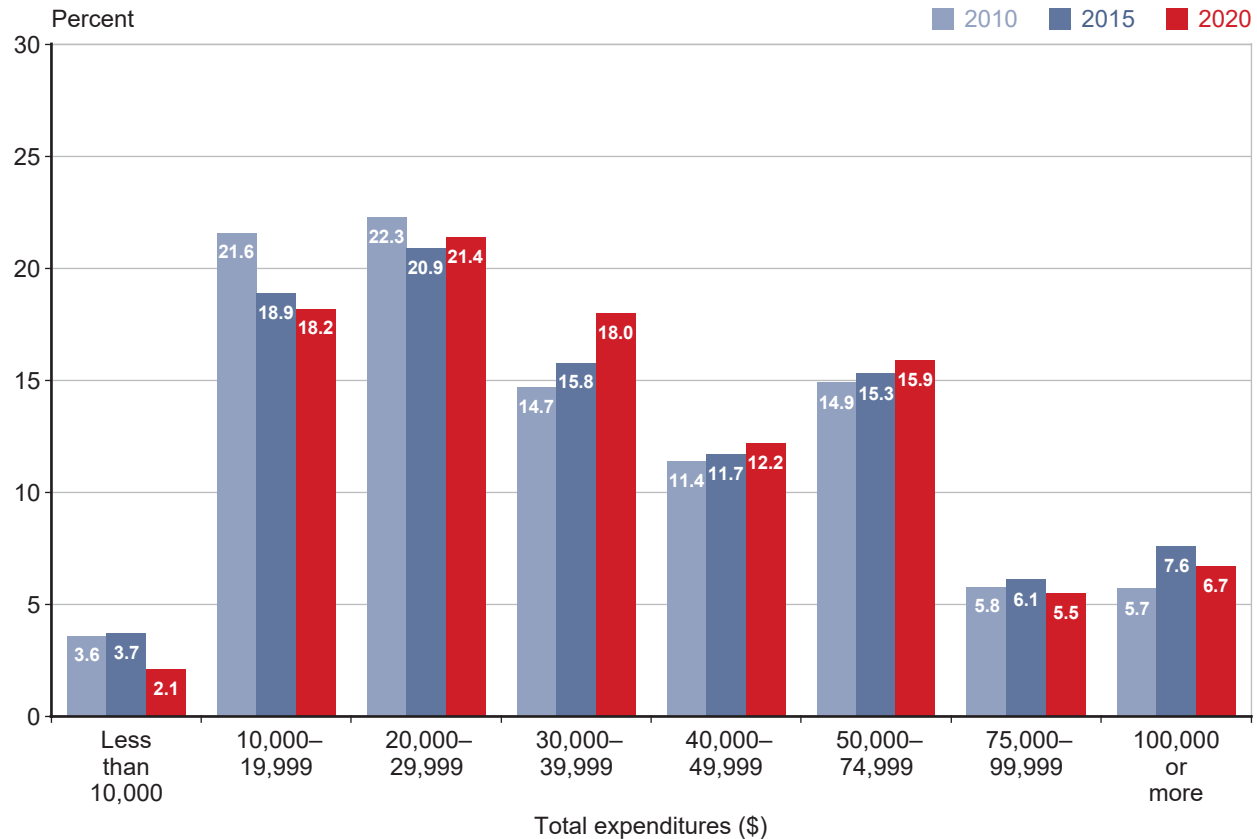


SOURCE: Interview portions of the 2010, 2015, and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys.

Trends in Expenditures

Measured in 2020 dollars, median expenditures among CUs aged 65 or older increased from \$31,428 in 2010 to \$33,684 in 2015 and to \$34,088 in 2020 (not shown). The proportion of CUs with total expenditures under \$20,000 fell from 25 percent in 2010 to 23 percent in 2015 and to 20 percent in 2020, and the proportion with expenditures over \$50,000 increased from 26 percent in 2010 to 29 percent in 2015, then fell slightly to 28 percent in 2020.

Distribution of CUs by total expenditures, selected years

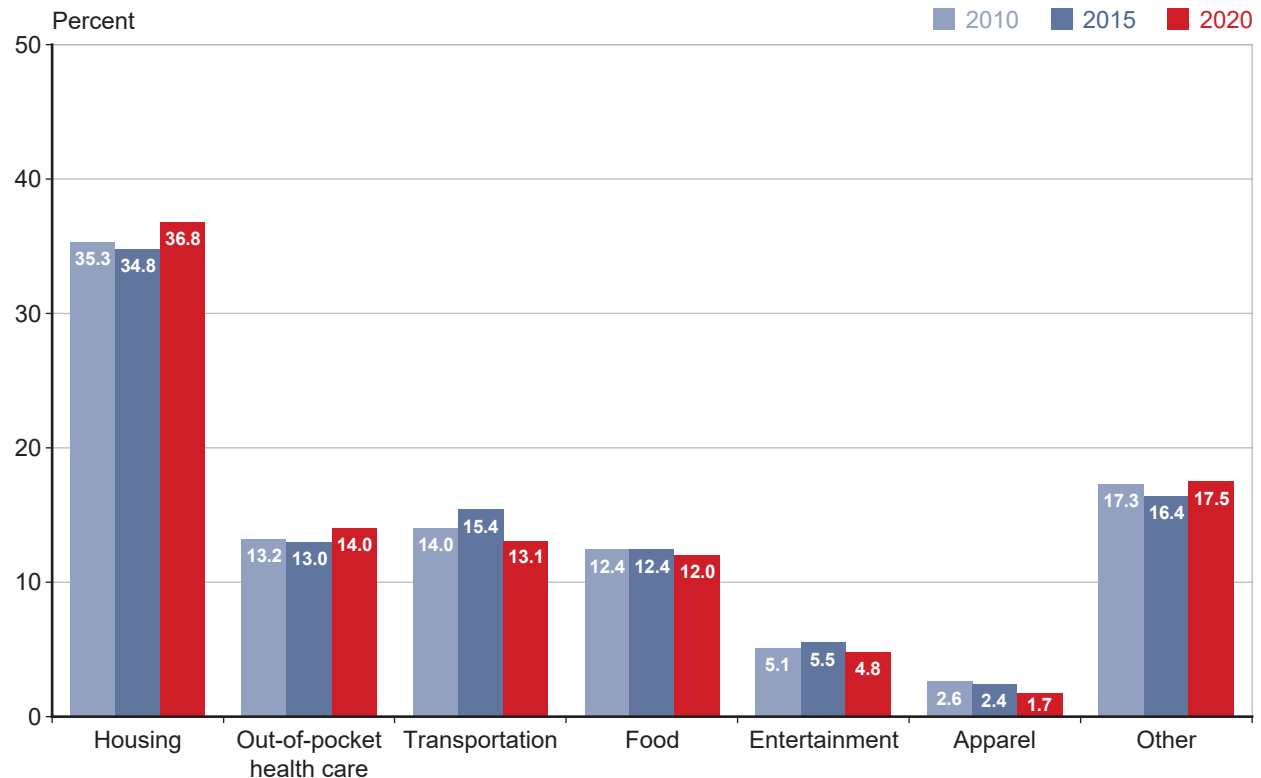


SOURCE: Interview portions of the 2010, 2015, and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys. Expenditures indexed to 2020 dollars using the CPI-U.

Trends in Expenditures by Component

The distribution of expenditures among CUs aged 65 or older changed relatively little between 2010 and 2020. Housing expenditures accounted for 35 percent of total aged CU expenditures in both 2010 and 2015 and 37 percent in 2020. Out-of-pocket spending for health care, including insurance premiums, constituted 13 percent of expenditures in 2010 and 2015 and 14 percent in 2020. Transportation expenditures increased from 14 percent of spending in 2010 to 15 percent in 2015, then fell to 13 percent in 2020. Expenditures for food accounted for 12 percent of total expenditures in all three years. Expenditures on entertainment were about 5 percent of total expenditures each year, while spending on apparel fell from 3 percent to 2 percent of expenditures between 2010 and 2020. The share of expenditures allocated to all other spending fell slightly from 17 percent in 2010 to 16 percent in 2015 before rising again to about 17 percent in 2020.

Mean percentage allocated to components of total expenditures, selected years

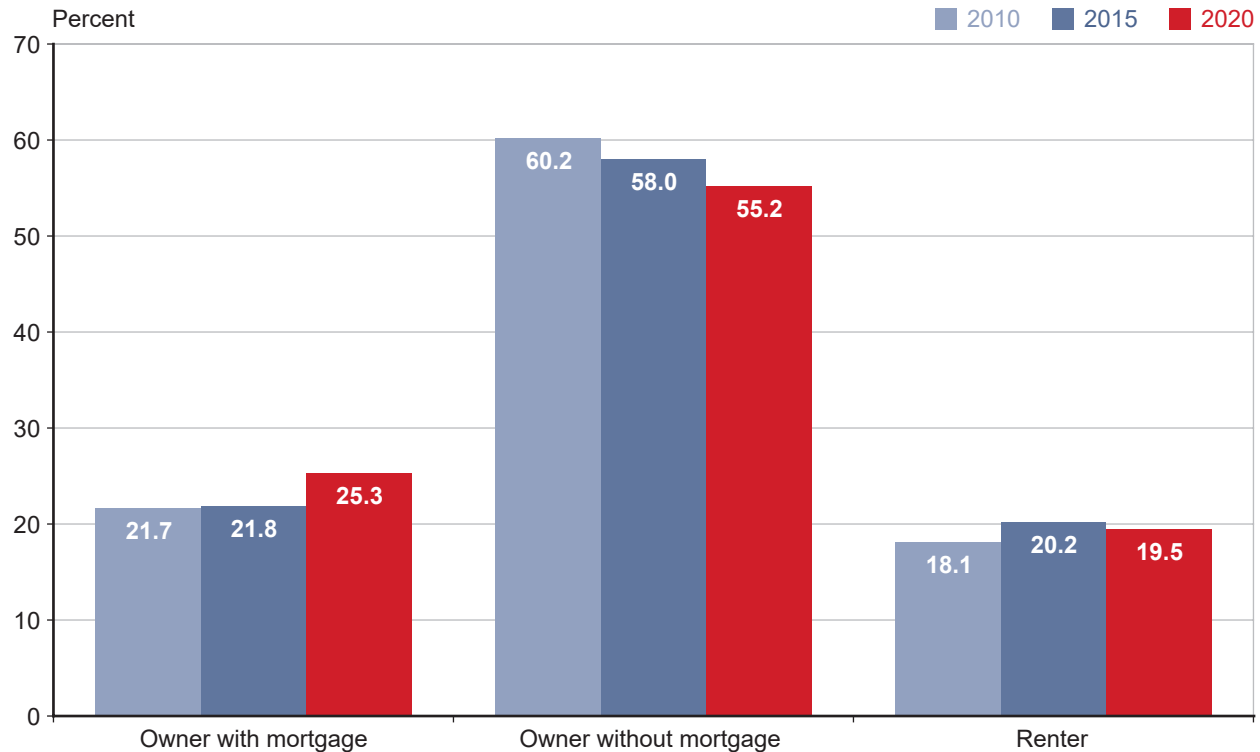


SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2010, 2015, and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys.

Trends in Housing Tenure

Between 2010 and 2020, the proportion of CUs aged 65 or older that owned a home with no mortgage fell from 60 percent to 55 percent. The proportion of CUs that owned a home with a mortgage rose from 22 percent in 2010 and 2015 to 25 percent in 2020. The proportion of CUs that rented a house or apartment increased from 18 percent in 2010 to about 20 percent in both 2015 and 2020.

Distribution of CUs by housing tenure, selected years

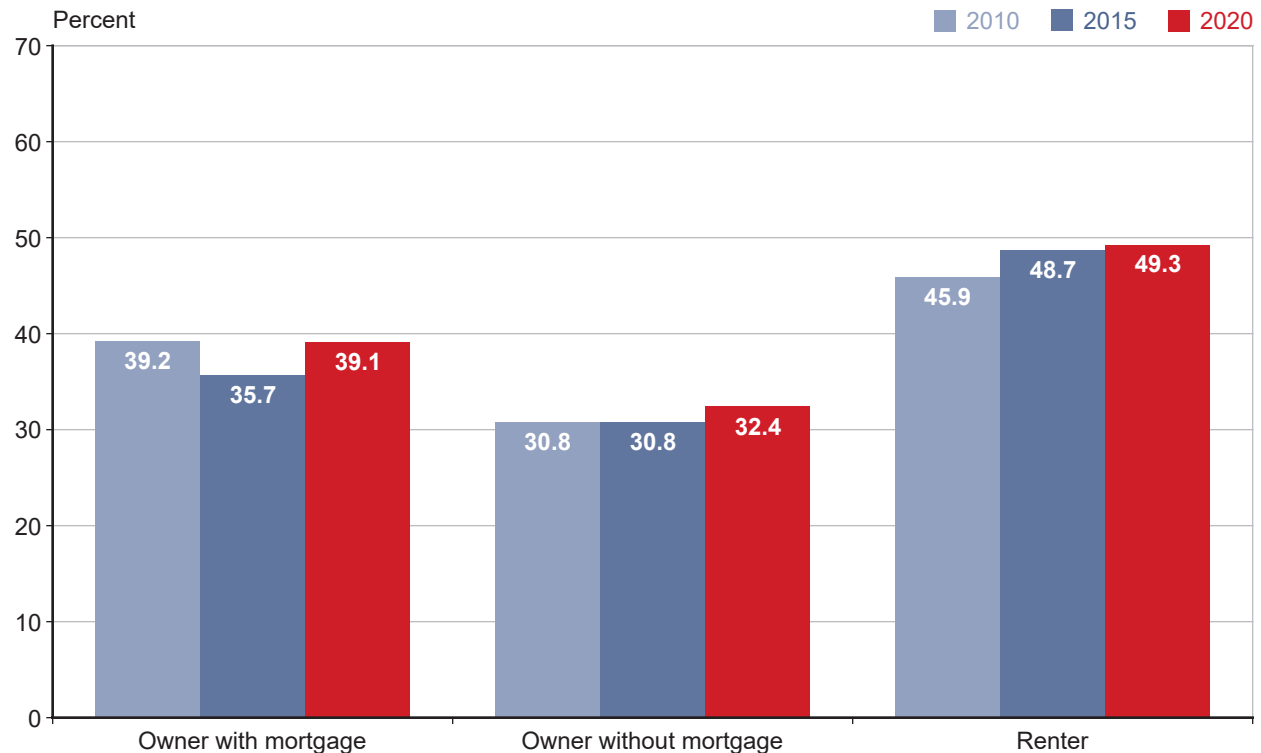


SOURCE: Interview portions of the 2010, 2015, and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys.

Trends in Housing Expenditures by Tenure

As shown earlier, the housing share of total expenditures increased among CUs headed by persons aged 65 or older from 35 percent in 2010 and 2015 to 37 percent in 2020. Among homeowners aged 65 or older with a mortgage, housing as a share of total expenses fell from 39 percent in 2010 to 36 percent in 2015 before rising again to 39 percent in 2020. Among homeowners aged 65 or older without a mortgage, housing as a share of total expenses increased slightly to 32 percent in 2020 from 31 percent in both 2010 and 2015. Among CUs aged 65 or older that rented a home, housing as a share of total expenditures rose from 46 percent in 2010 to 49 percent in both 2015 and 2020.

Mean percentage allocated to housing expenditures, by housing tenure, selected years

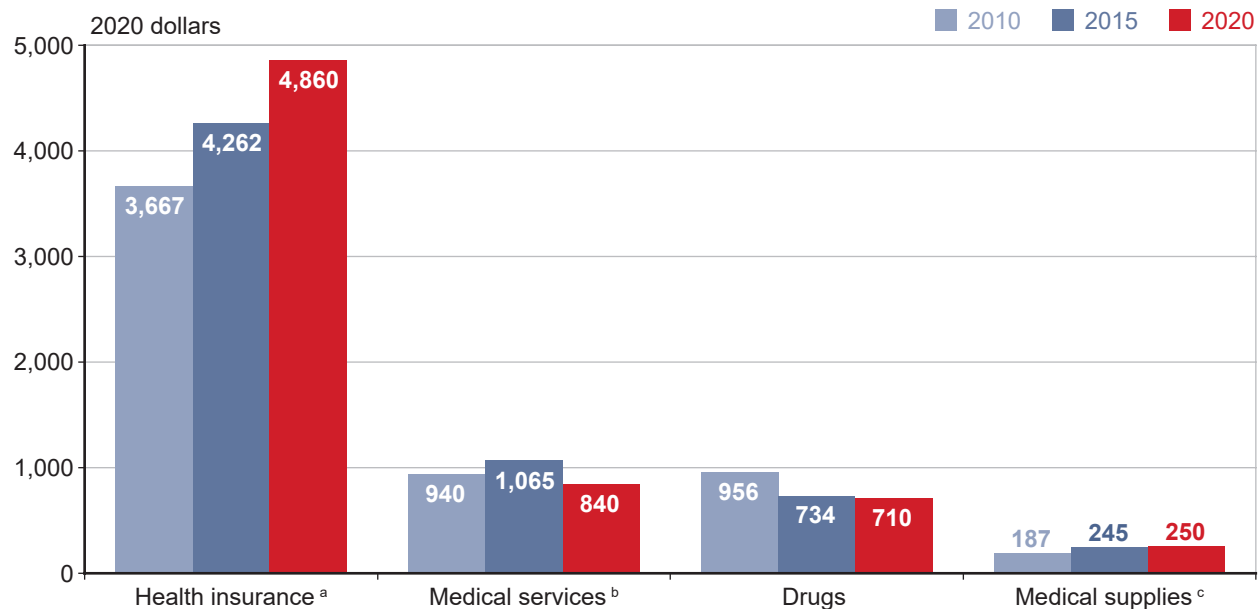


SOURCE: Interview portions of the 2010, 2015, and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys.

Trends in Out-of-Pocket Health Care Expenditures

Between 2010 and 2020, expenditures for health insurance rose sharply, while expenditures for prescription and over-the-counter drugs fell among CUs aged 65 or older. Measured in 2020 dollars, mean CU expenditures for health insurance premiums rose from \$3,667 in 2010 to \$4,262 in 2015 and \$4,860 in 2020. Mean CU expenditures for drugs fell from \$956 in 2010 to \$734 in 2015 and to \$710 in 2020. Expenditures for medical services rose from \$940 in 2010 to \$1,065 in 2015, then fell to \$840 in 2020. Expenditures for medical supplies rose from \$187 in 2010 to \$250 in 2020, but this category accounted for only about 4 percent of out-of-pocket health care expenditures among elderly CUs in 2020.

Mean out-of-pocket health care expenditures, by component, selected years



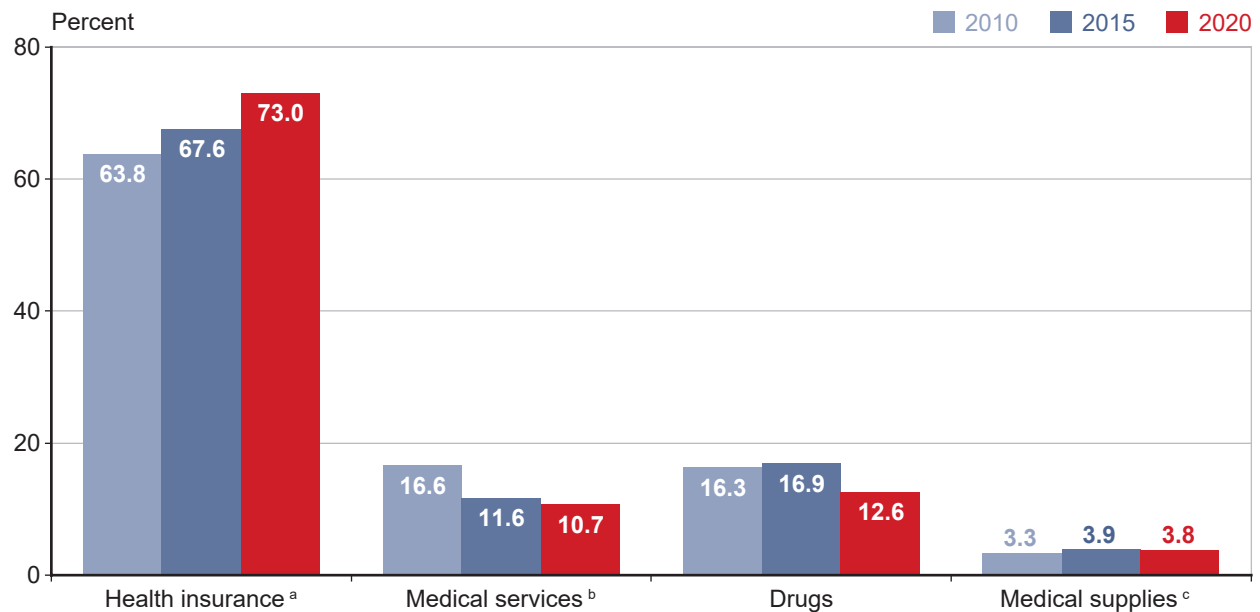
SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2010, 2015, and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys.

- a. Includes fee-for-service health plans, preferred-provider health plans, health maintenance organizations, commercial Medicare supplements, Medicare premiums, and other health insurance.
- b. Includes hospital room and services, professional and physicians' services, eye and dental care, lab tests and X-rays, medical care in a retirement community and convalescent or nursing home, and other medical care service.
- c. Includes antiseptics, dressings and bandages, first aid kits, contraceptives, syringes, ice bags, thermometers, vaporizers, heating pads, medical appliances (such as braces, canes, crutches, walkers, eyeglasses, and hearing aids), and rental and repair of medical equipment.

Trends in Out-of-Pocket Health Care Expenditures by Component

As a proportion of all out-of-pocket expenditures for health care among CUs aged 65 or older, health insurance premiums increased from 64 percent in 2010 to 68 percent in 2015 and 73 percent in 2020. Expenditures for drugs were 16 percent of health care spending in 2010, 17 percent in 2015 and 13 percent in 2020. Combined expenditures for medical services and medical supplies declined from 20 percent of total out-of-pocket health care spending in 2010 to 16 percent in 2015 and 15 percent in 2020.

Mean percentage allocated to components of out-of-pocket health care expenditures, selected years



SOURCE: Interview and diary portions of the 2010, 2015, and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys.

a. Includes fee-for-service health plans, preferred-provider health plans, health maintenance organizations, commercial Medicare supplements, Medicare premiums, and other health insurance.

b. Includes hospital room and services, professional and physicians' services, eye and dental care, lab tests and X-rays, medical care in a retirement community and convalescent or nursing home, and other medical care service.

c. Includes antiseptics, dressings and bandages, first aid kits, contraceptives, syringes, ice bags, thermometers, vaporizers, heating pads, medical appliances (such as braces, canes, crutches, walkers, eyeglasses, and hearing aids), and rental and repair of medical equipment.

Comparison of Estimates Based on Consumer Expenditure Survey Public-Use File and Bureau of Labor Statistics Published Estimates

Estimated mean expenditures of CUs 65 or older, by data source and expenditure category, 2020

Expenditure category	Consumer Expenditure Survey public-use file			Bureau of Labor Statistics		
	Mean (\$)	Standard error (\$)	Coefficient of variation (%)	Mean (\$)	Standard error (\$)	Coefficient of variation (%)
Total expenditures	47,457	804	1.7	47,579	799	1.7
Food	5,681	204	3.6	5,698	204	3.6
Housing	17,469	322	1.8	17,435	306	1.8
Apparel and services	818	68	8.3	821	68	8.3
Transportation	6,216	251	4.0	6,221	252	4.1
Health care	6,661	118	1.8	6,668	122	1.8
Entertainment	2,291	116	5.1	2,293	116	5.0
Personal care products and services	505	19	3.7	505	19	3.7
Reading materials	156	17	10.9	157	17	10.8
Education	440	74	16.9	450	75	16.6
Alcoholic beverages	364	32	8.9	363	32	8.9
Tobacco products	207	14	6.6	207	14	6.5
Miscellaneous	805	99	12.3	921	107	11.7
Cash contributions	3,121	218	7.0	3,119	217	7.0
Insurance and pensions	2,724	134	4.9	2,721	136	5.0

SOURCES: 2020 Consumer Expenditure Survey public-use file and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (<https://www.bls.gov/cex/tables/calendar-year/mean-item-share-average-standard-error/reference-person-age-ranges-2020.pdf>).

NOTE: Mean values may differ between the public-use file and Bureau of Labor Statistics published estimates because some expenditures are top-coded.