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Standard Life's Financial Confidence Index remains at all-time low

In Standard Life's most recent quarterly survey of more than 1,000 adults, the overall index remained unchanged from the previous quarter, which was its all-time low of 50.5%.*

"Despite continued uncertainty in the last quarter, it's positive that it hasn't dipped lower," said Brendan Barr, head of marketing at Standard Life. "It would be nice to think we are at the low point - but it's impossible to call in this environment."

The most financially secure group of people are those aged 65+ with a score of 60%. Interestingly, retired respondents' confidence score increased from 56.2% to 58.9%. "This survey was conducted before the Revenue Department's recent controversial dispatch of over 100,000 letters to pensioners stating that they had under-paid their income tax bill on their state pension benefit," said Barr. "We expect retired people's sentiment to be negatively impacted by this development in the next quarter."

Good call from government on pensions policy

"We are delighted the government chose the sensible option of maintaining Income tax relief on pension contributions at existing levels", said Barr. "We need people to remain incentivised regarding their retirement savings. (Standard Life's survey shows that just 26% of those surveyed think 'now' is a good or a very good time to invest in pensions, compared with an 80% approval rating for pensions in June 2007.) "We appreciate common sense prevailing and that a 'greater good' policy decision was made that does not inflict irreparable long term damage for hundreds of thousands of people," he said. "We hope the government continues with its sensible pensions' policy approach in 2012."

Financial Confidence Index contd....

- Men continue to be more confident than women scoring 53.1% compared with 48%
- The least financially confident respondents are 45 to 54 year olds, scoring 44.2% out of a possible 100%
- The second least confident group were 35 to 44 year olds, scoring 46.7%, followed by 25 to 34 year olds who scored 49.4%

Dubliners and 65+ year olds remain the most financially secure

On a regional basis Dubliners (52.8%) are the most financially secure albeit less secure than the previous quarter's score of 54.1. Munster people are the second most secure (51%).

Ends.

Notes for Editors

*The Standard Life Financial Confidence Index hit its all time high of 66.7 in March 2008.

These results are based on an independent online survey conducted by Research Plus Ltd on behalf of Standard Life Ireland; 1,005 adults aged 18+, in The Republic of Ireland, were surveyed between 21st December 2011 – 3rd January 2012.

Standard Life Financial Confidence Index*	Dec 2011	Sep 2011	3mth Change	Dec 2010	12mth Change
Republic of Ireland Adults 18+	50.5	50.5	0.0	52.7	-2.2
Male	53.1	53.0	0.1	55.6	-2.5
Female	48.0	48.1	-0.1	49.9	-1.9
18-24	53.4	48.4	5.0	50.6	2.8
25-34	49.4	52.1	-2.7	52.1	-2.7
35-44	46.7	47.5	-0.8	47.3	-0.6
45-54	45.9	44.2	1.7	49.5	-3.6
55-64	50.7	54.3	-3.6	58.6	-7.9
65+	60.0	58.8	1.2	61.9	-1.9
Dublin	52.8	54.1	-1.3	55.7	-2.9
Rest of Leinster	49.0	47.8	1.2	50.4	-1.4
Munster	51.0	49.6	1.4	52.5	-1.5
Connaught/Ulster	48.2	50.1	-1.9	51.7	-3.5
Retired	58.9	56.2	2.7	63.0	-4.1
Non-retired	49.3	49.6	-0.3	50.9	-1.6
Working	51.9	52.4	-0.5	53.6	-1.7
Non-working & Non-retired	44.6	43.9	0.7	44.6	0.0
Save on regular basis	55.0	n/a	n/a	56.7	-1.7
Do not save on regular basis	42.3	n/a	n/a	45.6	-3.3

The Standard Life Financial Confidence Index is a measure of how financially secure people feel on a scale of 1 to 10. The results are averaged and then converted to give a total score on a percentile basis.

- Dublin refers to Dublin city and county. Rest of Leinster refers to Leinster excluding Dublin. Connaught/Ulster refers to Connaught plus Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan.

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