
One in five millionaires would pay more tax

By Editor Test Thu, Jan 19, 2012

But 65% just want to be left alone by the government to enjoy the wealth they've earned, an annual PNC survey shows.

When asked to comment on Warren Buffett's now-famous call for the wealthy to pay more taxes and give more to charity, 49% of U.S. millionaires agreed but said they're not in Buffett's league, 29% said Buffett was wrong, and 22% agreed.

Those statistics were among the findings of the eighth annual [Wealth and Values Survey](#) by PNC Wealth Management, a unit of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc.

Despite the nation's financial troubles, the number of millionaires who agree or strongly agree with the statement, "I have an obligation to give back to my community," remains at 59%, the same number as in 2008.

To improve the national economy, 31% of millionaires would "reduce taxes on individuals and businesses," while 20% support raising taxes on the wealthy, 15% would reduce the costs of Social Security, Medicare and/or Medicaid, 15% would reduce the defense budget, and 10% would provide new government stimulus by the government.

The number of millionaires concerned about their ability to give to charities has declined to 11% from 20 percent in 2008, according to the survey of 555 Americans with assets of \$1 million or more.

The survey showed that 22% intend to cut back on charitable giving, while 46% plan no change and 21% plan to increase their giving.

In addition, 83% believe that investment in private business and industry is the best way to improve society. At the same time, 70% feel a responsibility to help the less fortunate and 64% believe they should give "substantial sums" to charities to improve society.

The number who donated between \$25,000 and \$999,000 to charity doubled in 2010, to 24%, from 12% in 2008.

Other findings in the *Wealth and Values Survey* by PNC, which is among the nation's top 10 bank-owned wealth management firms, also revealed insights about the following issues:

- **Greta Garbo syndrome:** 65% say they "want to be left alone by politicians" to enjoy their earned wealth however they choose, and 80% view reinvestment as the key to progress.
- **Institutional dysfunction:** 76% feel that the U.S. government has serious flaws in how it works, 85% say the U.S. political system has serious flaws, and 47% believe the U.S. financial system is flawed.
- **Response to higher taxes:** If taxes increase, nearly four in 10 millionaires would "change their

investment strategy” and one in four would give less to charity. Thirteen percent would work less, 7% would work harder, while 41% would not change anything.

- **Bearish on the future:** 71% of millionaires believe they are “much better off compared to parents at this same age.” Only 10% believe their children will be able to say the same when they are older.

Survey Methodology

The *Wealth and Values Survey* was commissioned by PNC to identify attitudes about wealth among high-net-worth individuals, how it affects their lives and their needs in managing wealth. Artemis Strategy Group conducted the online survey from September 15 to October 11, 2011.