

# Women on Market Volatility

Our research revealed that while recent economic uncertainty and market volatility affected them, women continued to exemplify many of the attitudes and behaviors of ideal investors. For example, women generally re-engaged with their financial plan and made shifts toward stability during this period but resisted the urge to make significant changes to their portfolio.

Consider the following research findings on how women weathered uncertainty and specific steps advisors can take to help them navigate these conditions going forward.

## Insights

**Volatility as a wake-up call** – Many women considered the recent events a financial wake-up call, encouraging them to reaffirm their financial goals and pay more attention to their investment plan. Two out of three women under 40 said they now believe they needed more of a financial plan, with a similar number saying they need to engage more with their investments.

**Staying the course or adjusting for risk** – 20% of women made an active effort not to adjust their investments during this period, but those that did make changes shifted investments to focus more on financial stability and long-term goals such as retirement savings. The volatility also led women investors to place even more emphasis on mitigating risk, with 66% of women ranking it very important in 2020, up from 54% in 2018.

**Mindfulness for smart decisions** – The majority of women (73%) took steps to be more mindful and proactively reduce bias in their investment decision-making during this period. Many reported that they also would have benefited from more educational content. Specifically, 30% said they want to hear from advisors on strategies to cope with market volatility and 28% are looking for advice on investment opportunities that arise in down markets.

SOURCE: PIMCO, 2020, Calm, Cool and Invested

## Action

**Recognize the time-constraints of women investors** – COVID-19 has placed an undue burden on women (McKinsey), many of whom have taken on the bulk of childcare and caring for sick family members. Women are interested in working with advisors who understand the realities of their lives and are flexible in accommodating them, with respect to meetings and communications.

**Share real-time market updates** – Most women want touchpoints that are less frequent, but more meaningful. At the top of their list is real-time market analysis, with more than 20% of women saying they want that information available on demand.

**Provide education** – Offer straightforward, easy-to-understand education on market volatility, including a historical perspective. Seeing how long past periods of volatility lasted and how markets recovered afterwards can help investors resist the urge to overreact.

**Offer strategic portfolio recommendations** – 30% of women say they would like to receive monthly communications from their advisor if it included strategies relevant to current conditions.

**Prospect new clients** – 58% of the women surveyed already had a financial advisor, but among those that didn't, 14% said they wish they had one to turn to during the economic situation and 11% said they planned to work with a professional advisor as soon as possible.

SOURCE: PIMCO, 2020, Calm, Cool and Invested

For more information visit [global.pimco.com/women-investing](https://global.pimco.com/women-investing).

## About the Survey

### Background

In 2018, PIMCO commissioned The Harris Poll to conduct an online survey of 1,500 U.S. adults 18 and older, including 748 women. All respondents had over \$10,000 in investable assets and at least some financial decision-making responsibility within the household. 317 women had over \$100,000 in investable assets. The research findings were published as Women, Investing and the Pursuit of Wealth-Life Balance.

### Current Survey

PIMCO and The Harris Poll conducted a similar online survey this year to gauge if and how the climate of uncertainty had affected women's attitudes and behavior toward investing. The survey was conducted from September 9 through 17, 2020, reaching 1,001 U.S. adults 18 and older, including 448 women. Again, all respondents had over \$100,000 in investable assets and at least some financial decision-making responsibility within the household. The research findings have been published as Calm, Cool and Invested.

**All investments contain risk and may lose value.** Investors should consult their investment professional prior to making an investment decisions.

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