

## Americans More Optimistic About Housing, Economy – March 12, 2012

Americans' concerns over housing and the economy are subsiding, according to Fannie Mae's National Housing Survey from February.

An improving job market is a big part of what's behind Americans feeling more confident about the housing market and the direction of the economy, according to the survey.

“The pickup in the pace of hiring over the past few months has helped soothe consumer concerns, lifting their moods regarding their personal finances, the direction of the economy, and their views on the housing market,” says Doug Duncan, chief economist of Fannie Mae. “As a result, we've seen more potential for economic upside, creating a more balanced near-term outlook.”

The survey found that 28 percent of Americans expect home prices to increase over the next 12 months while 53 percent say prices will likely stay the same. Fifteen percent say they expect home prices to decline.

Meanwhile, the majority of those surveyed see rental prices continuing to increase over the next year.

Sixty-five percent of those surveyed say that if they were going to move they'd buy their next home; 29 percent say they would rent.

With low mortgage rates and falling home prices, 70 percent of those surveyed say now is a good time to purchase a home. Also, more Americans surveyed say now is a good time to sell, rising to 13 percent in February, which is the highest level in more than a year but still low by historic standards.

Overall, Americans expressed more confidence about their personal financial situation, with only 12 percent saying they expected their personal financial situation to worsen in the next 12 months — which is the lowest number in more than a year.

[Source: Fannie Mae](#)