

1724 Connecticut Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20009
 (202) 234-5570

Interviews: 1,355 adults
 Dates: April 8-14, 2014

FINAL

Study #11127
 MacArthur How Housing Matters Survey
 April 2014

48 Male
 52 Female
[109]

Please note: all results are shown as percentages unless otherwise stated.

1. Do you own or rent your current residence? For the purpose of the survey, you own your home even if you have outstanding debt that you owe on your mortgage loan.

Own	63	[149]
Rent.....	32	
Living at home (VOL).....	3	
Other (VOL).....	2	
Not sure	-	

2a. Approximately what percentage of your total household monthly income would you say you spend on your rent or mortgage payment?

Twenty percent or less.....	40	[150/151]
Twenty-one to thirty percent	18	
Thirty-one to thirty-five percent	9	
Thirty-six to forty percent	5	
Forty-one to fifty percent.....	6	
More than fifty percent.....	6	
Not sure	16	

(ASKED ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY NOT SURE IN Q.2c)

2b. Well, can you tell me whether you think you spend more than thirty percent of your total household monthly income or less than thirty percent of your total household monthly income on your rent or mortgage?

More than thirty percent.....	9
Less than thirty percent	29
Not sure	62

Q2a/b COMBINED	
Less than thirty percent	63
More than thirty percent.....	28
Not sure	9

3. Looking ahead to the next five years or so, do you feel more hopeful and confident or more worried and concerned about what the future holds for the country?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
More hopeful and confident	32	32	[158]
More worried and concerned	61	63	
Not sure	7	5	

4. Thinking now about your own personal situation, looking ahead to the next five years or so, do you feel very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic, or very pessimistic about what the future holds for you and your family?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Very optimistic	34	27	[159]
Somewhat optimistic.....	39	43	
Somewhat pessimistic	14	16	
Very pessimistic.....	10	11	
Not sure	3	3	

5. Thinking about issues the United States is facing today, please tell me how much of a problem you think each of the following is--is it a very serious problem, a fairly serious problem, just somewhat of a problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY VERY OR FAIRLY SERIOUS PROBLEM

	<u>Very Serious Problem</u>	<u>Fairly Serious Problem</u>	<u>Just Somewhat Of A Problem</u>	<u>A Minor Problem</u>	<u>Not A Problem At All</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>	
The budget deficit and national debt							[163]
April 2014.....	68	11	11	4	3	3	
March 2013.....	71	10	12	3	3	1	
The economy and jobs							[160]
April 2014.....	59	18	16	3	3	1	
March 2013.....	62	15	18	2	2	1	
Access to affordable health care							[162]
April 2014.....	44	17	19	9	9	2	
March 2013.....	54	14	20	5	5	2	
The housing market.							[161]
April 2014.....	25	17	33	11	8	6	
March 2013.....	27	19	34	9	8	3	

6. Now I am going to mention several specific aspects of life. For each, tell me whether generally you believe it is much more likely to occur today compared with twenty or thirty years ago, somewhat more likely to occur today, somewhat less likely to occur today, or much less likely to occur today compared with twenty or thirty years ago.

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY MUCH MORE LIKELY TO OCCUR TODAY

	Much More Likely To Occur Today	Somewhat More Likely To Occur Today	Somewhat Less Likely To Occur Today	Much Less Likely To Occur Today	Neither More Or Less Likely To Occur Today/ Depends (VOL)	Not Sure	
Banks foreclosing on homeowners							[164/168]
April 2014.....	49	27	12	5	3	4	
March 2013.....	55	26	11	4	1	3	
Moving to a new city or state for a job							[170]
April 2014 **	46	23	11	14	4	2	
March 2013.....	47	28	12	9	1	3	
Renting a home after age thirty							[171]
April 2014 **	45	26	11	11	3	4	
March 2013.....	43	29	13	9	2	4	
Moving or relocating after retirement							[166]
April 2014 *	26	23	21	19	5	6	
March 2013.....	24	25	24	18	4	5	
Having enough money to put a twenty percent down payment when buying a home or condo							[167]
April 2014 *	11	12	29	42	3	3	
March 2013.....	10	9	29	48	1	3	
Families building equity and wealth through homeownership							[165/169]
April 2014.....	10	20	32	32	2	4	
March 2013.....	9	16	37	32	2	4	

* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

** Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

For the rest of this survey we are going to focus on housing.

- 7a. Thinking more broadly and not for you personally, given our nation's current economic situation, generally speaking, do you think that buying a home has become more appealing, less appealing, or that our current economic situation has had no impact on whether buying a home is appealing?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Buying has become more appealing	31	27	[172]
Buying has become less appealing.....	54	57	
Current economic situation has no impact	12	12	
Not sure.....	3	4	

7b. Thinking more broadly and not for you personally, given the changes that have occurred over the past several decades in the way we live our lives, generally speaking, do you think that renting a home has become more appealing, less appealing, or that these changes have had no impact on whether renting a home is appealing?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Renting has become more appealing	51	54	[173]
Renting has become less appealing	27	24	
Changes have no impact	18	18	
Not sure	4	4	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY OWN IN Q.2b.)

8a. Have you ever owned a home, condominium, or apartment?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Yes	37	29	[174]
No	63	71	
Not sure	-	-	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY RENT IN Q.2b.)

8b. Have you ever rented an apartment or house either alone, with someone else, or in a group situation?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Yes	73	78	[175]
No	27	22	
Not sure	-	-	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY OWN IN Q.2b.)

9. Is homeownership something you aspire to?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Yes	70	72	[176]
No	26	26	
Not sure	4	2	

10a. How do you feel about your current housing situation--do you feel very stable and secure, fairly stable and secure, just somewhat stable and secure, fairly unstable and insecure, or very unstable and insecure?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Very stable and secure	56	55	[177]
Fairly stable and secure	24	25	
Just somewhat stable and secure	12	11	
Fairly unstable and insecure	4	5	
Very unstable and insecure	4	4	
Not sure	-	-	

10b. Compared to your housing situation six years ago, before the housing market crisis started, would you say that now you feel more stable and secure, less stable and secure, or about the same level of stability and security in your housing situation?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
More stable and secure	24	18	[178]
About the same level of stable and secure	53	57	
Less stable and secure	21	25	
Not sure	1	-	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY VERY, FAIRLY, OR JUST SOMEWHAT STABLE AND SECURE IN Q.10a.)

11. Thinking back throughout your life, has there ever been a time when you felt your housing situation was not stable and secure?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Yes	43	40	[179]
No	57	60	
Not sure	-	-	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY OWN OR RENT IN Q.2b.)

12. Now I'm going to mention things that some people worry about. Please tell me how often you personally worry about each one--very often, somewhat often, from time to time, or almost never.

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY WORRY VERY OR SOMEWHAT OFTEN

	<u>Worry Very Often</u>	<u>Worry Somewhat Often</u>	<u>Worry From Time To Time</u>	<u>Almost Never Worry</u>	<u>Does Not Apply (VOL)</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>	
Struggling to keep up with your bills							[180/211]
April 2014	17	15	22	43	3	-	
March 2013.....	16	18	22	41	3	-	
Not being able to someday own a home *							[215]
April 2014	17	14	18	44	6	1	
March 2013.....	18	14	17	42	8	1	
Struggling to keep up with your mortgage or rent payments							[208/212]
April 2014	9	9	14	56	12	-	
March 2013.....	8	10	15	59	8	-	
Having to move because you cannot keep up with your mortgage or rent payments							[209/213]
April 2014	6	7	10	64	13	-	
March 2013.....	6	7	11	68	8	-	
Being foreclosed on or evicted from your home							[210/214]
April 2014	5	5	8	70	12	-	
March 2013.....	4	6	7	75	8	-	

* Asked only of respondents who say "RENT" (Q.2b).

13. I am going to read two statements about renting and owning a home. Please tell me which one comes closest to your point of view.

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
For the most part, renters are not as successful as owners at achieving the American Dream	32	28	[216]
For the most part, renters can be just as successful as owners at achieving the American Dream	58	61	
Depends/some of both (VOL).....	8	9	
Not sure.....	2	2	

14. Thinking now about the housing crisis that started in 2008 when many people and families defaulted on their mortgages and lost their homes, do you think the housing crisis is pretty much over, that we are still in the middle of it, or that the worst is yet to come in terms of the housing crisis?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>3/13</u>	
Housing crisis is pretty much over	25	20	[217]
Still in the middle of it.....	51	58	
The worst is yet to come.....	19	19	
Not sure	5	3	

15. Now I want you to imagine a family with two children that find themselves really struggling to afford to stay in their home. I am going to mention several actions they may need to consider, in order to be able to pay their rent or mortgage. Understanding that some tradeoffs have to be made somewhere, please tell me how likely you think they would be to do each of the following--would they be very likely, fairly likely, just somewhat likely, or not likely at all to **(READ ITEM)**?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY VERY OR FAIRLY LIKELY

	<u>Very Likely</u>	<u>Fairly Likely</u>	<u>Just Somewhat Likely</u>	<u>Not Likely At All</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>	
Take on an additional job or work more hours at their current job	67	15	13	4	1	[221]
Stop saving for retirement.....	60	13	15	10	2	[219]
Accumulate credit card debt.	58	14	15	11	2	[220]
Cut back on health care, such as not taking medications, not going to the doctor, or switching to less expensive health insurance	46	16	24	12	2	[218]
Cut back on healthy, nutritious food.....	40	15	26	18	1	[223]
Move to a place where the schools are not as good.....	22	15	31	28	4	[224]
Move to a neighborhood that they feel is less safe	22	15	29	31	3	[222]

16. I am going to read that list again. Still thinking about that family that is struggling to be able to afford to pay their rent or mortgage, this time tell me the TWO OR THREE actions that you think would have the biggest negative impact on their life and their household. **(ACCEPT UP TO THREE. IF RESPONDENT SELECTS MORE THAN THREE, SAY:)** If you could only pick THREE, which three do you think would have the biggest negative impact on their life and household?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE

Accumulate credit card debt	47	[225/226]
Cut back on health care.....	44	>
Move to a neighborhood that they feel is less safe	33	
Cut back on healthy, nutritious food.....	26	
Stop saving for retirement	25	
Move to a place where the schools are not as good.....	24	
Take on an additional job or work more at their current job	17	
None of these would have a negative impact (VOL).....	-	
Depends (VOL).....	1	
Not sure	2	

17. I'm going to read this list one more time. This time please tell me which of these actions, if any, you personally have had to do in the past three years because you were struggling to be able to pay your rent or mortgage.

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE

Take on an additional job or work more at their current job	21	[227]
Stop saving for retirement	19	>
Accumulate credit card debt	16	
Cut back on health care.....	14	
Cut back on healthy, nutritious food.....	12	
Move to a neighborhood that they feel is less safe	6	
Move to a place where the schools are not as good.....	3	
None of these/not sure	48	

These next few questions are about the housing situation in your community.

18. Now I'm going to mention some housing issues in your community. Please tell me whether you think it is very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat challenging, or very challenging (**READ ITEM**) in your community.

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY VERY OR SOMEWHAT CHALLENGING

	<u>Very Easy</u>	<u>Somewhat Easy</u>	<u>Somewhat Challenging</u>	<u>Very Challenging</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>	
For a family of four with an income of about twenty-four thousand dollars to find affordable quality housing	3	7	16	72	2	[231/235]
For young adults who are just entering the labor force to find affordable quality housing **	5	17	33	42	3	[237]
For a family with children to find affordable quality housing near quality public schools *	14	22	32	28	4	[233]
To find affordable quality housing to buy.....	13	24	29	30	4	[229]
For retired people or senior citizens to find affordable quality housing	13	23	30	29	5	[232/236]
To find affordable quality rental housing	13	23	29	29	6	[228]
For a family of four with an income of about fifty thousand dollars to find affordable quality housing	13	27	33	25	2	[230/234]

* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

** Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

19. Thinking now about people close to you who are getting older--whether they be your parents, grandparents, other relatives or close friends--do you think they will face major challenges, some challenges, only small challenges, or no challenges at all in having housing that (**READ ITEM**)?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY MAJOR OR SOME CHALLENGES

	<u>Major Challenges</u>	<u>Some Challenges</u>	<u>Only Small Challenges</u>	<u>No Challenges At All</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>	
Meets their physical needs as they age	25	41	16	15	3	[239]
Is affordable	25	40	15	17	3	[238]
Is located close to family or other social supports.....	19	39	18	20	4	[240]

20. Which of the following two statements comes closest to how you feel about home ownership?

Statement A: Buying a home is an excellent long-term investment because it is likely to increase in value over time and it is one of the best ways for people to build wealth and assets.

Statement B: Buying a home may once have been an excellent long-term investment and one of the best ways for people to build wealth, but that is no longer the case today.

Statement A: Excellent long-term investment, one of best ways to build wealth.....	50	[241]
Statement B: No longer the case today	43	
Some of both/neither (VOL)	6	
Not sure.....	1	

21. Realistically, how much do you think can be done to solve the problem of housing affordability--a great deal, a fair amount, just some, or nothing at all?

	<u>4/14</u>	<u>10/03¹</u>	
A great deal.....	31	30	[242]
A fair amount.....	30	28	
Just some.....	25	25	
Nothing at all.....	9	9	
Not sure	5	8	

¹ Results shown for adults age 22 and older

These next few questions are about government policy on housing.

22. Do you think your state and local governments are doing enough to ensure that there is sufficient affordable quality (**READ ITEM**) in your community, or do you think your state and local governments should be doing more?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY GOVERNMENT DOING ENOUGH

	Government Doing <u>Enough</u>	Government Should Be <u>Doing More</u>	Doing Too Much <u>(VOL)</u>	Not Sure	
Rental housing	31	58	4	7	[243]
Housing to buy	29	58	5	8	[244]

Over the next year, elected leaders at the federal, state, and local levels will be debating a number of policies related to housing and home ownership. Through this survey, we are trying to get a sense of whether people favor or oppose some of these proposals.

23. As you may know, many communities have zoning regulations that limit the size and type of housing that can be built.

Statement A: (Some/Other) people say that it's better to relax zoning regulations now so developers can build more different kinds of housing to meet the needs of the community.

Statement B: (Some/Other) people say communities should keep zoning regulations in place to preserve the current character and quality of life of the community.

Which of these comes closest to your point of view--that communities should relax zoning regulations to allow more housing to be built, or that communities should keep zoning regulations to preserve the character and quality of life of the community? *

Statement A: Relax zoning regulations/build more housing	36	[245]
Statement B: Keep zoning regulations/preserve current character and quality of life.....	52	
Some of both/neither (VOL).....	9	
Not sure	3	

* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

24a/b. As you may know, the mortgage interest tax deduction allows homeowners to deduct from their federal taxes the amount they pay in interest on their home mortgage for homes valued up to one million dollars, including for second homes. Some people say that the mortgage interest deduction should be eliminated for second homes and for mortgages on homes worth more than five hundred thousand dollars, and that the money saved should be used to fund federal government programs that increase access to low- and moderate-income housing.

Would you favor or oppose eliminating the mortgage interest deduction on second homes and for mortgages on homes worth more than five hundred thousand dollars? **(IF RESPONDENT MAKES A CHOICE, ASK:)**
 Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat? **

Favor	47	
Strongly	28	[246/247]
Somewhat	19	
Oppose	40	
Somewhat	14	
Strongly	26	
Not sure	13	

** Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

25. When it comes to housing policy, what do you think is more important for the federal government to do right now?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE

Invest in policies that provide more affordable quality rental housing	8	[248]
Invest in policies that support homeownership	16	
Invest in both--they are equally important.....	58	
Do not invest in either.....	14	
Not sure	4	

FACTUALS: These final questions are for statistical purposes only.

F1. How long have you lived in your current residence?

Less than one year	8	[249]
Between one and two years	12	
Between three and five years	14	
Between six and ten years	18	
Between eleven and fifteen years.....	13	
Between sixteen and twenty years	8	
More than twenty years	25	
Not sure	2	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO CURRENTLY OWN IN Q.2b.)

F2. Do you currently owe more on your home or condominium than the property is worth? This is sometimes called being under water or upside down on your mortgage.

Yes	11	[250]
No.....	85	
Not sure.....	4	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO CURRENTLY OWN IN Q.2b.)

F3. Is renting a house or apartment something you would consider as a housing option in the future, whether that is in the near future or closer to your retirement?

Yes	37	[251]
No.....	58	
Not sure.....	5	

F4. Are you currently employed? **(IF "NO," ASK:)** Are you a student, a homemaker, retired, or unemployed and looking for work?

Employed	54	[252]
Student	5	
Homemaker	5	
Retired	26	
Unemployed, looking for work	5	
Not sure.....	5	

F5. What is the last grade that you completed in school?

Grade school.....	1	[253/254]
Some high school.....	6	
High school graduate	24	
Some college, no degree	21	
Vocational training/2-year college	10	
4-year college/Bachelor's degree	22	
Some postgraduate work, no degree	2	
2 or 3 years' postgraduate work/master's degree.....	9	
Doctoral/law degree	2	
Not sure/refused.....	3	

F6. Are you currently single and never married, married, separated, widowed, or divorced?

Single, never married	25	[255]
Married	49	
Separated.....	1	
Widowed.....	9	
Divorced	12	
Other (VOL).....	1	
Not sure/refused.....	3	

F7. How would you describe the area in which you live--a city, a suburb near a city, a small town that is not near a city, or a rural or country area?

City	32	[256]
Suburb near a city	28	
Small town not near a city	18	
Rural or country area.....	19	
Not sure.....	3	

F8. Are you currently registered to vote at your current home address?

Yes, registered	84	[257]
No, not registered.....	13	
Not sure.....	3	

F9. Regardless of how you may be registered, how would you describe your overall point of view in terms of the political parties? Would you say that you are mostly Democratic, leaning Democratic, completely independent, leaning Republican, or mostly Republican?

Mostly Democratic	27	[258]
Leaning Democratic.....	10	
Completely independent	27	
Leaning Republican.....	9	
Mostly Republican	17	
Not sure	10	
Total Democratic	37	
Total Republican	26	

F10. If you added together the yearly income of all the members of your family who were living at home last year, would the total be less than ten thousand dollars, between ten thousand dollars and twenty thousand dollars, between twenty thousand dollars and thirty thousand dollars, between thirty thousand dollars and forty thousand dollars, between forty thousand dollars and fifty thousand dollars, between fifty thousand dollars and seventy-five thousand dollars, between seventy-five thousand dollars and one hundred thousand dollars, or more than one hundred thousand dollars?

Less than \$10,000	6	[259]
Between \$10,000 and \$20,000	9	
Between \$20,000 and \$30,000	11	
Between \$30,000 and \$40,000.....	8	
Between \$40,000 and \$50,000.....	8	
Between \$50,000 and \$75,000.....	16	
Between \$75,000 and \$100,000	10	
More than \$100,000	14	
Not sure/refused	18	

F11. For statistical purposes only, and to ensure a representative sample, would you please tell me how old you are? (IF "REFUSED," ASK:) Well, would you tell me which age group you belong to?

18-24	9	[153/154]
25-29	9	
30-34	9	
35-39	8	
40-44	7	
45-49	7	
50-54	10	
55-59	11	
60-64	8	
65-69	8	
70-74	6	
75 and over.....	8	
Refused/not sure	-	

F12. Do you have any children under age eighteen currently living in your household?

Yes, kids under 18 in household	31	[155]
No, no kids under 18 in household ...	69	
Not sure.....	-	

F13. To ensure that we have a representative sample, would you please tell me whether you are from a Hispanic or Spanish-speaking background?

Yes, Hispanic.....	13	[156]
No, not Hispanic	87	
Not sure/refused	-	

F14. And again, for statistical purposes only, what is your race--white, black or African American, Asian, or something else?

White	71	[157]
Black/African American	12	
Asian	1	
Other	5	
Hispanic (VOL)	10	
Not sure/refused	1	