



RBC STUDY FINDS HOME PURCHASING INTENTIONS REBOUND IN ATLANTIC CANADA

Majority say it's a buyer's market

HALIFAX, March 4, 2009 — Homebuying intentions in Atlantic Canada have increased over last year surpassing 2007 levels, according to the 16th Annual RBC Homeownership Survey. The poll found that 25 per cent of Atlantic Canadians were likely to purchase a home within the next two years, up from 20 per cent in 2008 and 24 per cent in 2007.

“We’re likely to see increased home buying activity in Atlantic Canada over the next two years, with purchase intentions springing back from last year,” said Craig Bannon, regional manager, Mortgage Development RBC. “The change in sentiment may be due to more favourable mortgage rates and housing prices, which have many in the region convinced it’s a buyer’s market.”

The survey, conducted by Ipsos Reid, found that a majority (58 per cent) believe it is a buyer’s market right now. Given current housing prices and economic conditions, most Atlantic Canadians (56 per cent) believe it makes more sense to buy now, rather than wait until next year.

An overwhelming 84 per cent of those polled in Atlantic Canada said that buying a home is a good or very good investment. On average, homeowners in the region approximate the value of their home at \$181,555. They also estimate that the market value of their homes increased by 14 per cent over the last two years.

Among those who plan to purchase this year or next, 26 per cent said they will do so because their current home does not meet their needs. Sixty-four per cent said they plan to purchase resale and most (84 per cent) will opt for a detached house.

Future Atlantic Canadian homebuyers also said that environmental considerations would weigh on their purchase decision. Almost all respondents (98 per cent) indicated that buying a home with low energy consumption was important to them and 82 per cent said the same about environmentally-friendly features. Further, 94 per cent of those surveyed were interested in having standardized energy ratings for their homes.

Regional Differences	Nat	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	AT
Own a home	67%	69%	69%	70%	68%	60%	67%
Percentage of homeowners who have a mortgage	61%	56%	46%	62%	64%	66%	60%
Percentage who believe it is a buyer's market	65%	78%	72%	34%	73%	52%	58%
Owners and renters who are 'likely' or 'very likely' to purchase a home in the next two years	27%	26%	35%	25%	30%	22%	25%
Believe mortgage rates will be higher in one year's time	33%	28%	26%	35%	33%	33%	46%
Believe housing prices will be higher in one year's time	25%	20%	23%	27%	26%	25%	36%
Believe buying a home is a good investment	83%	81%	86%	83%	84%	79%	84%
Homebuyers planning to purchase a detached home	68%	76%	63%	63%	69%	60%	84%
Homebuyers planning to buy a bigger home	47%	42%	40%	69%	52%	49%	20%
Homebuyers planning to buy a resale home	74%	83%	71%	60%	76%	75%	64%
Homebuyers planning to buy a new home	26%	17%	29%	40%	24%	25%	36%

These are some of the findings of an RBC poll conducted by Ipsos Reid between January 6 and 9, 2009. The online survey is based on a randomly selected representative sample of 2,026 adult Canadians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error for residents of Atlantic Canada is ± 7.8 per cent (N=160) and the margin of error for Atlantic Canadian homeowners is ± 9.4 per cent (N=108). The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2006 Census data.

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For full tabular results, please see the Ipsos Reid website at www.ipsos.ca.