Welcome to the Mortgage Lender Sentiment Survey®, a quarterly survey conducted by Fannie Mae among senior mortgage executives like you. We need your help to gather your views and experience with the mortgage market. Your participation is critical to ensure that results portray a representative view of key mortgage industry indicators. We hope this research will provide intelligence to help you manage your business practices.

The information you provide in this survey will be kept confidential. All results will be reported in the aggregate, and responses will not be linked to any individual person or company.

Thank you for taking part in this survey, your participation is greatly appreciated.

NHS Questions

This first series of questions asks about the overall economy and mortgage lending industry, nationwide. We’re specifically interested in your opinion as a senior mortgage executive.

/* Q1 */ In general, do you, as a senior mortgage executive, think the U.S. economy overall is on the right track or the wrong track?

1) Right track
2) Wrong track
3) Don't know

/* Q1A */ Do you think it is very difficult, somewhat difficult, somewhat easy, or very easy for consumers to get a home mortgage today?

1) Very difficult
2) Somewhat difficult
3) Somewhat easy
4) Very easy
5) Don't know

/* Q2 */ Nationally, during the next 12 months, do you, as a senior mortgage executive, think home prices in general will go up, go down, or stay the same as where they are now?

1) Go up
2) Go down
3) Stay the same
4) Don't know

/* Q4a */ By about what percent do you, as a senior mortgage executive, think home prices nationally will go up on average over the next 12 months? /* OPEN END NUMERIC (0 TO 100) */

/* Q5a */ By about what percent do you, as a senior mortgage executive, think home prices nationally will go down on average over the next 12 months? /* OPEN END NUMERIC (0 TO 100) */
Consumer Demand

/* DISPLAY */ This section is about consumer demand for single-family mortgages. We will be asking you these questions across three market categories, GSE Eligible, Non-GSE Eligible, and Government. We will also be asking these questions separately by purchase market and refinance market.

/* DISPLAY */ Now, let’s focus on the consumer demand for single-family purchase mortgages your firm has experienced over the past three months.

/* METRIC A */ Over the past three months, apart from normal seasonal variation, did your firm’s consumer demand for single-family purchase mortgages go up, go down, or stay the same?

Hover over the terms “GSE Eligible,” “Non-GSE Eligible,” and “Government” in the table below to see the definitions.

### Consumer Demand for Purchase Mortgages for the Past 3 Months

1) Went up significantly
2) Went up somewhat
3) Stayed the same
4) Went down somewhat
5) Went down significantly
6) Not applicable

/* REPEAT CODES */

/* Q6a */ Purchase - [* GSE Eligible *] [- GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages meeting the underwriting guidelines, including loan limit amounts, of the Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac). Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

/* Q6b */ Purchase - [* Non-GSE Eligible *] [- Non-GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages that do not meet the GSE guidelines for purchase. These loans typically require larger down payments and may carry higher interest rates than GSE loans. Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

/* Q6c */ Purchase - [* Government *] [- Government Mortgages primarily include Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) insured loans but also includes other programs such as Rural Housing Guaranteed and Direct loans. -]

/* END SERIES */

/* Q7 */ ## IF (Q6a=c1, c2, c4, c5) OR (Q6b= c1, c2, c4, c5) OR (Q6c= c1, c2, c4, c5) ## What do you think drove the change in your firm’s consumer demand for single family purchase mortgages over the past three months? Please be as specific as possible. (Optional) /* OPEN END 1 BOXES 0 REQ */
/* METRIC A */ Now, let’s focus on the purchase mortgages over the next three months.

Over the next three months, apart from normal seasonal variation, do you expect your firm’s consumer demand for single-family purchase mortgages to go up, go down, or stay the same?

**Consumer Demand for Purchase Mortgages for the Next 3 Months**

1. Go up significantly
2. Go up somewhat
3. Stay the same
4. Go down somewhat
5. Go down significantly
6. Not applicable

/* REPEAT CODES */

/* Q14a */ Purchase - [* GSE Eligible *] [- GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages meeting the underwriting guidelines, including loan limit amounts, of the Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac). Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

/* Q14b */ Purchase - [* Non-GSE Eligible *] [- Non-GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages that do not meet the GSE guidelines for purchase. These loans typically require larger down payments and may carry higher interest rates than GSE loans. Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

/* Q14c */ Purchase - [* Government *] [- Government Mortgages primarily include Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) insured loans but also includes other programs such as Rural Housing Guaranteed and Direct loans. -]

/* END SERIES */

/* METRIC A */ ## IF Q14a=C1, C2 ## You mentioned that you expect your firm’s consumer demand for GSE eligible loans will go up over the next three months. Which of the following housing marketplace factors do you think will drive the demand to go up? Please select up to two of the most important reasons and rank them in order of importance. /* RANDOM ROTATE CHOICES */

1. Home prices are low
2. Mortgage rates are favorable
3. There are many homes available on the market
4. It is easy to qualify for a mortgage
5. Economic conditions (e.g., employment) overall are favorable
6. Other /* SPECIFY */ /* DO NOT ROTATE */

/* REPEAT CODES */

/* Q46a */ 1 - Most important
/* Q46b */ 2 - Second most important

/* END SERIES */
You mentioned that you expect your firm’s consumer demand for **GSE** eligible loans will go down over the next three months. Which of the following housing marketplace factors do you think will drive the demand down? Please select up to two of the most important reasons and rank them in order of importance. /* RANDOM ROTATE CHOICES */

1) Home prices are high
2) Mortgage rates are not favorable
3) There are not many homes available on the market
4) It is difficult to qualify for a mortgage
5) Economic conditions (e.g., employment) overall are not favorable
6) Other /* SPECIFY */ /* DO NOT ROTATE */

/* REPEAT CODES */

/* Q47a */ 1 - Most important
/* Q47b */ 2 - Second most important

/* END SERIES */

You mentioned that you expect your firm’s consumer demand for **Non-GSE** eligible loans will go up over the next three months. Which of the following housing marketplace factors do you think will drive the demand to go up? Please select up to two of the most important reasons and rank them in order of importance. /* RANDOM ROTATE CHOICES */

1) Home prices are low
2) Mortgage rates are favorable
3) There are many homes available on the market
4) It is easy to qualify for a mortgage
5) Economic conditions (e.g., employment) overall are favorable
6) Other /* SPECIFY */ /* DO NOT ROTATE */

/* REPEAT CODES */

/* Q49a */ 1 - Most important
/* Q49b */ 2 - Second most important

/* END SERIES */
You mentioned that you expect your firm’s consumer demand for Non-GSE eligible loans will go down over the next three months. Which of the following housing marketplace factors do you think will drive the demand down? Please select up to two of the most important reasons and rank them in order of importance.

1) Home prices are high
2) Mortgage rates are not favorable
3) There are not many homes available on the market
4) It is difficult to qualify for a mortgage
5) Economic conditions (e.g., employment) overall are not favorable
6) Other

You mentioned that you expect your firm’s consumer demand for government loans will go up over the next three months. Which of the following housing marketplace factors do you think will drive the demand to go up? Please select up to two of the most important reasons and rank them in order of importance.

1) Home prices are low
2) Mortgage rates are favorable
3) There are many homes available on the market
4) It is easy to qualify for a mortgage
5) Economic conditions (e.g., employment) overall are favorable
6) Other

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You mentioned that you expect your firm’s consumer demand for government loans will go down over the next three months. Which of the following housing marketplace factors do you think will drive the demand down? Please select up to two of the most important reasons and rank them in order of importance.

1) Home prices are high
2) Mortgage rates are not favorable
3) There are not many homes available on the market
4) It is difficult to qualify for a mortgage
5) Economic conditions (e.g., employment) overall are not favorable
6) Other /* SPECIFY */ /* DO NOT ROTATE */

The next section is about consumer demand for refinance mortgages. Similarly, we will be asking these questions across three market categories, GSE Eligible, Non-GSE Eligible, and Government.

Now, let’s focus on the consumer demand for single-family refinance mortgages your firm has experienced over the past three months.

Over the past three months, apart from normal seasonal variation, did your firm’s consumer demand for single-family refinance mortgages go up, go down, or stay the same?

Consumer Demand for Refinance Mortgages for the Past 3 Months

1) Went up significantly
2) Went up somewhat
3) Stayed the same
4) Went down somewhat
5) Went down significantly
6) Not applicable

Refinance - [* GSE Eligible *] [- GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages meeting the underwriting guidelines, including loan limit amounts, of the Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac). Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

Refinance - [* Non-GSE Eligible *] [- Non-GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages that do not meet the GSE guidelines for purchase. These loans typically require larger down payments and may carry higher interest rates than GSE loans. Exclude Government loans from this category. -]
Now, let’s focus on the refinance mortgages over the next three months.

**METRIC A** Over the next three months, apart from normal seasonal variation, do you expect your firm’s consumer demand for single-family refinance mortgages to go up, go down, or stay the same?

**Consumer Demand for Refinance Mortgages for the Next 3 Months**
1) Go up significantly
2) Go up somewhat
3) Stay the same
4) Go down somewhat
5) Go down significantly
6) Not applicable

**REPEAT CODES**

**Q18a** Refinance - [*GSE Eligible*] [- GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages meeting the underwriting guidelines, including loan limit amounts, of the Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac). Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

**Q18b** Refinance - [*Non-GSE Eligible*] [- Non-GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages that do not meet the GSE guidelines for purchase. These loans typically require larger down payments and may carry higher interest rates than GSE loans. Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

**Q18c** Refinance - [*Government*] [- Government Mortgages primarily include Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) insured loans but also includes other programs such as Rural Housing Guaranteed and Direct loans. -]

**END SERIES**

**Profit Margin**

**DISPLAY** Now you will see some questions regarding your firm’s profit margin outlook.

**Q22** Over the next three months, how much do you expect your firm’s profit margin to change for its single-family mortgage production?

1) Increase significantly (25+ basis points)
2) Increase somewhat (5 - 25 basis points)
3) Remain about the same (0 - 5 basis points)
4) Decrease somewhat (5 - 25 basis points)
5) Decrease significantly (25+ basis points)
6) Not sure/ Prefer not to answer/ Not applicable
What do you think will drive the decrease in your firm’s profit margin over the next three months? Please select the two most important reasons and rank them in order of importance. /* RANDOM ROTATE CHOICES */

1) Consumer demand
2) Competition from other lenders
3) Government monetary or fiscal policy
4) Government regulatory compliance
5) GSE pricing and policies
6) Non-GSE (other investors) pricing and policies
7) Operational efficiency (i.e. technology)
8) Staffing (personnel costs)
9) Marketing expenses
10) Servicing costs
11) Market trend changes (i.e. shift from refinance to purchase)
12) Other /* SPECIFY */ /* DO NOT ROTATE */

/* REPEAT CODES */
/* Q24a */ 1 - Most important
/* Q24b */ 2 - Second most important
/* END SERIES */

What do you think will drive the increase in your firm’s profit margin over the next three months? Please select the two most important reasons and rank them in order of importance. /* RANDOM ROTATE CHOICES */

1) Consumer demand
2) Less competition from other lenders
3) Government monetary or fiscal policy
4) Government regulatory compliance
5) GSE pricing and policies
6) Non-GSE (other investors) pricing and policies
7) Operational efficiency (i.e. technology)
8) Staffing (personnel costs) reduction
9) Marketing expense reduction
10) Servicing cost reduction
11) Market trend changes (i.e. shift from refinance to purchase)
12) Other /* SPECIFY */ /* DO NOT ROTATE */

/* REPEAT CODES */
/* Q26a */ 1 - Most important
/* Q26b */ 2 - Second most important
/* END SERIES */

You mentioned earlier that “market trend changes” is an important factor for your firm’s profit margin to decrease. What market trend changes are you seeing? Please share details with us. (Optional) /* OPEN END 1 BOXES 0 REQ */
You mentioned earlier that “market trend changes” is an important factor for your firm’s profit margin to increase. What market trend changes are you seeing? Please share details with us. (Optional) /* OPEN END 1 BOXES 0 REQ */

You mentioned earlier that “GSE pricing and policies” is an important factor for your firm’s profit margin to decrease. How are you seeing it affect profit margin? Please share details with us. (Optional) /* OPEN END 1 BOXES 0 REQ */

You mentioned earlier that “GSE pricing and policies” is an important factor for your firm’s profit margin to increase. How are you seeing it affect profit margin? Please share details with us. (Optional) /* OPEN END 1 BOXES 0 REQ */

Credit Standards

This section is about your firm’s credit standards for approving applications from individuals for mortgage loans.

Now, let’s focus on the past three months.

Over the past three months, how did your firm’s credit standards for approving consumer applications for mortgage loans change (across both purchase mortgages and refinance mortgages)? Please answer for GSE Eligible mortgages, Non-GSE Eligible mortgages, and Government mortgages.

Credit Standards over the Past 3 Months

1) Eased considerably
2) Eased somewhat
3) Remained basically unchanged
4) Tightened somewhat
5) Tightened considerably
6) Not applicable

/* REPEAT CODES */

GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages meeting the underwriting guidelines, including loan limit amounts, of the Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac). Exclude Government loans from this category. -

Non-GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages that do not meet the GSE guidelines for purchase. These loans typically require larger down payments and may carry higher interest rates than GSE loans. Exclude Government loans from this category. -

Government Mortgages primarily include Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) insured loans but also includes other programs such as Rural Housing Guaranteed and Direct loans. -

/* END SERIES */
What do you think drove the change in your firm’s credit standards for approving consumer applications for purchase and refinance mortgage loans over the last three months? Please be as specific as possible. (Optional) /* OPEN END 1 BOXES 0 REQ */

Now let’s focus on the next three months.

Over the next three months, how do you expect your firm’s credit standards for approving applications from individuals for mortgage loans to change (across purchase mortgages and refinance mortgages)?

Credit Standards over the Next 3 Months

1) Ease considerably
2) Ease somewhat
3) Remain basically unchanged
4) Tighten somewhat
5) Tighten considerably
6) Not applicable

What do you think will drive the change in your firm’s credit standards for approving consumer applications for purchase and refinance mortgage loans over the next three months? Please be as specific as possible. (Optional) /* OPEN END 1 BOXES 0 REQ */

/* GSE Eligible */ [- GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages meeting the underwriting guidelines, including loan limit amounts, of the Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac). Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

/* Non-GSE Eligible */ [- Non-GSE Eligible Mortgages are defined as mortgages that do not meet the GSE guidelines for purchase. These loans typically require larger down payments and may carry higher interest rates than GSE loans. Exclude Government loans from this category. -]

/* Government */ [- Government Mortgages primarily include Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) insured loans but also includes other programs such as Rural Housing Guaranteed and Direct loans. -]
Rotating Questions – Mortgage Servicing Challenges

/* DISPLAY */ In the next section, we would like to gather your views and experiences with mortgage servicing.

/* DISPLAY */ ## FOR MORTGAGE SERVICING OVERSAMPLE ## Welcome to the special section of the Q4 2020 Mortgage Lender Sentiment Survey® that focuses on mortgage servicing. With your expertise in the mortgage servicing business, we would like to gather your views and understand your experiences with helping homeowners in response to COVID-19.

Your participation is critical to ensure the survey’s results portray a representative view of key industry trends and challenges. We hope this research will provide industry intelligence to help you manage your business practices.

The information you provide in this survey will be kept confidential. All results will be reported in the aggregate, and responses will not be linked to any individual person or company.

Thank you for taking part in this survey, your participation is greatly appreciated.

/* QR420 */ Does your firm retain MSRs (Mortgage Servicing Rights), servicing loans either in-house or via a sub-servicer?

1) Yes
2) No
3) Don’t know/not sure

/* QR421 */ ## IF RETAINS MSRs (QR420=C1) ## Does your firm service mortgage loans in-house or via a sub-servicer?

1) In-house
2) Via a sub-servicer
3) Both
4) Don’t know/not sure

/* METRIC A */ ## IF SERVICES IN-HOUSE OR BOTH (QR421=C1,C3) ## With COVID-19, many homeowners are entering mortgage forbearance, which allows them to pause or lower monthly payments for up to 12 months. In exiting forbearance, homeowners will need to work with servicers on a payment solution to pay back the amount of reduced or paused payments.

In working with homeowners on mortgage-relief options such as forbearance and payment plans, what are the biggest challenges your mortgage servicing business has faced? Please select up to two and rank them in order of importance.

/* RANDOM ROTATE CHOICES */

1) Customer-facing staffing capacity
2) Technology advancements to efficiently and effectively manage mortgage-relief and loss mitigation options
3) Data technology and standards to transmit mortgage-relief and loss-mitigation options
4) Customer-facing staff training to provide guidance to homeowners on mortgage-relief and loss-mitigation options
5) Investor/guarantor access to expedite required approvals on loss mitigation options (e.g., modifications, short-sale, & deed-in-lieu)
6) Easing the process for homeowners to request mortgage payment assistance
7) Quality assurance and control mechanisms to prevent errors
8) Keeping up with policy changes from investors (such as the GSEs)
9) Don’t know/not sure /* DO NOT ROTATE */

/* GRID */
/* QR422a */ Biggest challenge
/* QR422b */ Second biggest challenge
/* END GRID */

/* QR423 */ ## IF SERVICES IN-HOUSE OR BOTH (QR421=C1,C3) ## Did you personally work in the mortgage servicing area at any organization during the 2008 housing crisis?

1) Yes
2) No
3) Don’t know/not sure

/* METRIC A */ ## IF WORKED IN MORTGAGE SERVICING DURING HOUSING CRISIS (QR423=C1) ## For each area listed below about mortgage servicing, do you think the area is more or less challenging today, compared to the 2008 housing crisis?

/* RANDOM ROTATE CHOICES */
1) Helping homeowners overcome hardship and stay in their homes
2) Customer-facing staffing capacity
3) Technology advancements to efficiently and effectively manage mortgage-relief and loss mitigation options
4) Data technology and standards to transmit mortgage-relief and loss-mitigation options
5) Customer-facing staff training to provide guidance to homeowners on mortgage-relief and loss-mitigation options
6) Investor/guarantor access to expedite required approvals on loss mitigation options (e.g., modifications, short-sale, & deed-in-lieu)
7) Easing the process for homeowners to request mortgage payment assistance
8) Quality assurance and control mechanisms to prevent errors
9) Keeping up with policy changes from investors (such as the GSEs)

/* GRID */
/* QR424a */ More challenging than 2008
/* QR424b */ About the same as 2008
/* QR424c */ Less challenging than 2008
/* QR424d */ Don’t know/Not sure
/* END GRID */
### Does your mortgage servicing business offer a website to provide homeowners with mortgage-relief information or to request mortgage payment assistance?

1) Yes  
2) No  
3) Don’t know/not sure

### For each of the following services, please indicate the status of availability on your website.

1) Educate homeowners on the forbearance program (what it is & how it works)  
2) Educate homeowners on post-forbearance payment options (payment deferral, repayment, & loan modification)  
3) Allow homeowners to request or activate a forbearance themselves on a self-service basis  
4) Allow homeowners to request loan modifications  
5) Offer an online chat functionality to address homeowners’ questions online  
6) Allow homeowners to upload required documents  
7) Provide a payment/status tracker to show mortgage payments, amounts of reduced/paused payments, and post-forbearance payment schedules

### How has your firm’s website helped reduce call center volume related to homeowners’ inquiries about forbearances?

1) It has helped significantly reduce call center volume  
2) It has helped somewhat reduce call center volume  
3) It has not helped much to reduce call center volume  
4) It has not helped at all to reduce call center volume  
5) Don’t know/Can't rate

### Below are some possible challenges mortgage servicers might face in assisting or interacting with homeowner customers. What are the two most significant challenges your servicing business has faced? Please select up to two and rank them in order of importance.

1) Shortening the wait time for inbound calls
2) Explaining clearly the terms of mortgage forbearance to homeowners
3) Explaining clearly the potential implications of taking a forbearance to homeowners
4) Explaining clearly post-forbearance payment plans to homeowners
5) Giving homeowners a post-forbearance payment plan that meets their needs
6) Providing a single point of contact for homeowners to work with
7) Periodically checking in with homeowners to see if they are ready to exit forbearance
8) Offering multiple channels (such as digital and phone consultation) to help homeowners
9) Don’t know/not sure /\* DO NOT ROTATE */

/\* GRID */
/\* QR428a */ Biggest challenge
/\* QR428b */ Second biggest challenge
/\* END GRID */

/\* Q43 */ This is the last question. Are there other topics that you think would be interesting or useful to be included in the future quarterly survey among senior mortgage executives like yourself? (Optional) /\* OPEN END 1 BOXES 0 REQ */

/\* DISPLAY */ This now completes the survey. We really appreciate you taking the time to contribute to this important industry research.

You can find the previous quarters’ results as well as special topic analyses on the Mortgage Lender Sentiment Survey® page on FannieMae.com.

Please note that responses to the survey questions will be aggregated and analyzed solely to identify important topics, trends, and issues surrounding the mortgage industry. Fannie Mae will not publish respondent names or affiliated institutions.

At this point, you may close your browser window or click below to enter your email address if you would like to receive a copy of this quarter’s Mortgage Lender Sentiment Survey® report when it’s released. To ensure that your survey responses remain anonymous, after clicking on the link you will be directed to a separate website to enter your email address.