



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **First Quarter 2021 Citi Residential Property Ownership Survey**

*Nearly one-third of respondents expect property prices to rise in the coming year, unaffected by volatile COVID-19 developments*

Citi Hong Kong conducted a survey in March 2021 on residential property ownership in Q1 2021, examining the impact of COVID-19 on the residents' attitudes towards residential property ownership. According to the survey results:

- 7% of respondents considered it a good time to buy a home in Q1 2021, a figure that remains higher than that recorded throughout the eight years before the COVID-19 outbreak.
- 17% of the respondents expressed interest in property ownership in Q1 2021. Based on the survey results, it was estimated that over 450,000 people toured real estate in February and March this year.
- Confidence in the property market recovered despite the COVID-19 outbreak. Nearly one-third of the respondents believe that property prices will rise in the coming year, while nearly half of them expect that property prices will remain stable, and the percentage of respondents holding a generally bearish view of the property market dropped significantly compared with the previous quarter.
- Although the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 rebounded in March, the respondents did not indicate any discouragement regarding home ownership, instead they held a positive view on the outlook for property prices.

### **33% of respondents expect property prices to rise and it is estimated that over 450,000 people toured real estate in February and March this year**

According to the survey results, 7% of respondents considered Q1 2021 a good/excellent time to buy a home, a percentage similar to that of the fourth quarter of 2020, and still higher than the level recorded in the eight years before the COVID-19 outbreak.

17% of the respondents expressed an interest in buying a home in Q1 2021, which is same as the last quarter. Based on the survey results, it is estimated that about 451,000 people toured real estate in February and March this year, showing an increase of nearly 50% compared with the same period last year, which reflects that many people were actively searching for suitable properties despite the volatile COVID-19 developments.

33% of the respondents in this quarter's survey believe that the property prices will rise in the coming year, while 47% expect them to remain stable. Both figures are higher than the corresponding figures in the fourth quarter of last year. The percentage of respondents holding a generally bearish view on the property market also declined from 36% in the last quarter to 20% this quarter, indicating a recovery in the confidence of respondents in the outlook of property prices. The survey was conducted in March, when the COVID-19 outbreak turned volatile and the tally of confirmed cases briefly picked up, but the respondents' interest in home ownership remained undeterred and they held a positive view



on the outlook for property prices. The result indicates that the public, who are showing strong resilience, have adapted to the cyclical changes of the outbreak, and their confidence in the property market has not been undermined by the outbreak's momentary fluctuations.

<b>If you do not own any property now, taking into consideration your current standard of living and family finances, do you think now is a good time to purchase a home?</b>					
<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>					
	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021
<b>A good/excellent time to purchase</b>	10%	11%	10%	8%	7%
<b>Neutral</b>	38%	35%	36%	39%	37%
<b>A bad/terrible time to purchase</b>	52%	54%	54%	54%	56%

Base: All Respondents

<b>How interested are you in purchasing a property now?</b>					
<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>					
	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021
<b>Very/rather interested</b>	17%	21%	17%	17%	17%
<b>Neutral</b>	31%	27%	28%	27%	29%
<b>Very/rather uninterested</b>	52%	52%	55%	56%	54%

Base: All Respondents

<b>How do you think home prices will trend in the next 12 months?</b>					
<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>					
	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021
<b>Upward</b>	16%	33%	23%	22%	33%
<b>Flat</b>	28%	34%	34%	43%	47%
<b>Downward</b>	57%	33%	43%	36%	20%

Base: All Respondents

“The results show that the public generally hold an optimistic view of the property market in Q1 2021,” said Josephine Lee, Head of Retail Banking of Citi Hong Kong. “Their interest in purchasing properties remains stable, with the percentage of respondents considering it’s a good time to buy a home remaining at a higher level than before the pandemic. Lately, there were even more people touring real estate. Even with the occasional fluctuations of the outbreak, many still expect property prices to rise in the coming year, restoring confidence in the development of the property market. With the gradual retreat of the outbreak, the economy is expected to further recover, and conditions are right to unlock the accumulated demand for home ownership. We suggest that interested homebuyers assess their financial condition comprehensively and choose a mortgage plan that best meets their needs.”

Citibank commissioned The University of Hong Kong Social Sciences Research Centre to conduct the survey, interviewing a random sample of over 500 Hong Kong respondents by



phone in March 2021. Since 2010, Citibank has been conducting quarterly surveys on the Hong Kong housing market to assess the current state of home ownership in the SAR, gauge public intentions towards home ownership, and track public expectations of future housing price trends.

Source: Citibank Q1 2021 Residential Property Ownership Survey

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