

Homeownership Rate Pulls Back from 11 Year High

By: Jann Swanson | Wed, Apr 28 2021, 8:42 AM

The national homeownership rate moved fractionally higher in the first quarter of 2021 when compared to the same quarter in 2020 but was lower than in each of the prior three quarters. The U.S. Census Bureau put the rate at 65.6 percent compared to 65.3 percent a year earlier. The rate had spiked over 6.5 percent in both the second and third quarters of 2020, **the highest rates since 2009**.

Homeownership was highest in the Midwest at 70.3 percent, followed by the South (67.4 percent), Northeast (63.1 percent) and lowest in the West at 59.7 percent. The rate in the Midwest was a point higher than a year earlier while the other regions' changes are not considered statistically different.

Among the various age groups, those under age 35 had the lowest rate at 38.1 percent followed by those between the ages of 35 and 44 at 62.0 percent. The highest rate was, as usual, in the oldest age group, **those over 65, at 79.3 percent**. Those three groups were the only one to post annual increases, although they were small.

The gap between white and black homeownership narrowed slightly over the course of the prior year. White non-Hispanic ownership was 73.8 percent, statistically unchanged from the first quarter of 2020 while black homeownership increased by more than a point to 45.1 percent, still the lowest among racial and ethnic groups. Hispanic and Asian/Native/Pacific Islanders had rates of 49.3 percent and 59.6 percent, both essentially unchanged from a year earlier.

The national rental vacancy rate was 6.8 percent in the first quarter, statistically unchanged from the first quarter of 2020 while the homeowner vacancy edged down to 0.9 percent from 1.1 percent. The number of housing units increased year-over-year from 140.365 million to 141.533 million. Of the current number 125.944 units are occupied. Of those occupied units, **58.3 percent are owner occupied and 30.6 percent are rental units**.

The median asking rent for vacant rental units in the first quarter was \$1,226 per month. The median asking price for vacant units that were for sale was \$200,900.

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