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Forecast updates

Recent ANZ NZ Forecast Updates can be found here.

- RBNZ MPS Preview Stay the course
- Labour Market Review and OCR Call Change
- Labour Market Preview and Forecast Update
- CPI Preview and Forecast Update
- Farmgate milk price forecast revised up
- ANZ NZ Insight: Weighing it up possible OCR paths

Our other recent publications are on page 2.

What's the view?

- GDP moves broadly sideways over 2021
- Unemployment peak: 5½%
- Inflation picks up
- · OCR on hold
- LSAP extended to Dec-22

Our forecasts are on page 3.

Balance of risks

Risks now more balanced



Unemployment



Inflation



Monetary policy



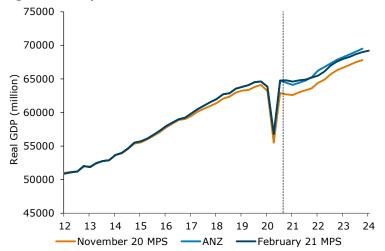
How has the view changed?

The Minister of Finance announced yesterday that housing would be added to the RBNZ's Financial Stability Remit, stating that, 'the Bank will have to take into account the Government's objective to support more sustainable house prices, including by dampening investor demand for existing housing stock to help improve affordability for first-home buyers.' The Minister has asked the RBNZ for advice on debt-to-income limits and interest only loans, which could lead to the RBNZ's macro-prudential powers being beefed up. But these appear likely to apply to investors only.

When setting monetary policy, the RBNZ will also have to "assess" the impact on housing sustainability. That means the interaction between monetary policy settings and housing is likely to become a more prominent part of RBNZ communications, but it won't have a meaningful impact on policy settings.

On the topic of monetary policy, a return to 'watch, worry and wait' was the main theme of Wednesday's monetary policy announcement by the RBNZ. A raft of better-than-expected domestic data meant that current policy settings are now considered sufficient to generate a sustained return to 2% annual CPI inflation and maximum sustainable employment. While an unchanged OCR was almost universally expected, we were expecting an extension to the time-frame of the LSAP until the end of 2022. That wasn't something that had to happen in February and the market was unperturbed.

Figure 1. GDP production level



Source: Stats NZ, RBNZ, ANZ Research

What happened this week?

Retail Trade Survey – Q4. Fell 2.7% q/q (sa) to be up 4.8% y/y. Given data volatility caused by lockdown, we think the y/y is providing the better signal.

RBNZ Monetary Policy Statement – February. A stronger economic outlook, policy unchanged, and caution about the medium term. See our Review for more.

ANZ Business Outlook – February. Most indicators were slightly lower than their preliminary readings, likely influenced by the snap lockdown.

ANZ Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence – February. Pretty steady, with confidence little changed. Inflation expectations are still really high; house price expectations are even stronger.



Looking ahead



Recent Publications

ANZ produces a range of in-depth insights.

- NZ Insight: Climate change and the path ahead
- ANZ NZ Property Focus: Off the beaten track
- ANZ NZ Insight: The path to normal
- ANZ NZ Agri Focus: Reaping the rewards
- ANZ NZ Property Focus: On the horizon – Key themes for 2021
- NZ Forecast Update: Farmgate returns to soften further
- ANZ NZ Property Focus: Housing affordability – unlocking the solution
- ANZ NZ Insight: The intergenerational divide

Click here for more.

Data calendar

| Date | Data/event |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Tue 2 Mar | Terms of Trade - |
| (10:45am) | Q1 |
| Wed 3 Mar | GlobalDairyTrade |
| (early am) | auction |
| Wed 3 Mar | Building Permits – |
| (10:45am) | Jan ANZ Common differen |
| Wed 3 Mar (1:00pm) | ANZ Commodity Price Index- Feb |
| Fri 5 Mar | Building Work Put |
| (10:45am) | in Place – Q4 |
| Tue 9 Mar | ANZ Truckometer |
| (10:00am) | - Feb |
| Tue 9 Mar | Economic Survey |
| (10:45am) | of Manuf – Q4 |
| Tue 9 Mar | ANZ Business |
| (1:00pm) | Outlook – Mar P |
| Wed 10 Mar (10:45am) | Electronic Card Transactions – Feb |
| Thu 11 Mar | |
| (10:45am) | Food Price Index – Feb |
| Thu 11 Mar | Rental Price Index |
| (10:45am) | - Feb |
| Fri 12 Mar | BusinessNZ Manuf |
| (10:30am) | PMI – Feb |
| Mon 15 Mar | Performance |
| (10:30am) | Services Idx – Feb |
| Mon 15 Mar (10:45am) | Net Migration – Jan |
| Wed 17 Mar | GlobalDairyTrade |
| (early am) | auction |

What are we watching?

NZGB yields have risen markedly in recent weeks, steepening the curve. Some steepening was to be expected, following the recent string of better economic data and as the long end is swept up in the global tide that is the current bond bear market (see Markets Outlook for further details).

Figure 2. NZ, Australian and US 10-year bond yields



Source: Stats NZ, ANZ Research

Stepping back, higher yields raise wholesale funding costs, which could lead to tighter credit conditions for people on the street in New Zealand, particularly if domestic deposits don't keep pace with credit demand. This may stand in the way of the RBNZ's inflation and employment mandate, but RBNZ Governor Orr indicated in Wednesday's press conference that the RBNZ stands ready to act should tightening financial conditions warrant further policy easing. For now, the RBNZ will want to wait and see the data flow over the next few months before changing policy settings.

The Q4 GDP partials continue to roll in next week. Building work put in place is expected to confirm residential construction's status as an outperformer – a theme that's expected to persist for a while yet, and will be discussed in greater detail in our upcoming Quarterly Economic Outlook. But the \$64,000 question is whether or not strong housing-induced domestic momentum will be enough to avoid a technical recession in Q4-Q1 (when the pain from MIA international tourists is at its worst). That said, even if headline GDP wobbles a little in coming quarters, New Zealand's recovery thus far has been impressive. Just look at figure 3 (over).

The week ahead

Overseas Trade Indices – Q4 (Tuesday 2 March, 10:45am). Higher export prices are expected to lead the terms of trade 1.6% q/q higher.

GlobalDairyTrade auction (Wednesday 3 March, early am). Prices are expected to lift another 2%.

Building consents – January (Wednesday 3 March, 10:45am). Housing momentum persisted, suggesting consents held up in January.

ANZ Commodity Price Index – February (Wednesday 3 March, 1:00pm).

Work Put in Place – Q4 (Friday 5 March, 10:45am). We've pencilled in a 3.5% q/q rise, led by residential construction.



Markets and forecasts

Markets outlook

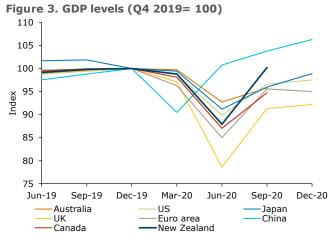
Global long-end interest rates have climbed sharply this week, taking the NZGB 10-year bond yield above the 2% mark. That's not only around half a percentage point higher than where we closed at the end of last week; it's also well above where we were pre-crisis. Bond markets are capitulating locally and globally. The messaging thus far from central banks has been that they are comfortable with moves that have occurred, mainly because they have coincided with a run of better data. However, equity markets are beginning to wobble, and while there is some logic in allowing markets to move freely and do some of the tightening for central banks, the speed and magnitude of the move may elicit a response in coming days or weeks, especially with liquidity very thin, and markets becoming mildly dysfunctional. Even if we see a pull-back (be it as a result of central bank intervention or not), we expect the trend toward higher and steeper curves to continue. 10-year bond yields are already at our year-end targets and our forecasts are under review. The Kiwi is also elevated and running ahead of our forecasts, and while there is scope for it to pull back too (the market has, in our view, misinterpreted RBNZ remit changes), the domestic economic outlook is deserving of an elevated NZD.

| | | Actual | | | | Forecast (end month) | | | |
|-------------------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--------|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| FX rates | Dec-20 | Jan-21 | Today | Mar-21 | Jun-21 | Sep-21 | Dec-21 | Mar-22 | Jun-22 |
| NZD/USD | 0.724 | 0.719 | 0.737 | 0.71 | 0.72 | 0.73 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.74 |
| NZD/AUD | 0.936 | 0.941 | 0.937 | 0.92 | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.90 | 0.90 | 0.90 |
| NZD/EUR | 0.589 | 0.593 | 0.606 | 0.58 | 0.58 | 0.58 | 0.58 | 0.58 | 0.57 |
| NZD/JPY | 74.6 | 75.3 | 78.3 | 73.8 | 74.2 | 74.5 | 75.5 | 75.5 | 75.5 |
| NZD/GBP | 0.529 | 0.525 | 0.526 | 0.52 | 0.52 | 0.53 | 0.53 | 0.52 | 0.52 |
| NZ\$ TWI | 75.2 | 74.7 | 76.4 | 73.5 | 73.6 | 73.9 | 74.2 | 74.1 | 73.7 |
| Interest rates/QE | Dec-20 | Jan-21 | Today | Mar-21 | Jun-21 | Sep-21 | Dec-21 | Mar-22 | Jun-22 |
| NZ OCR | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 |
| LSAP (\$bn) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| NZ 90 day bill | 0.27 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.30 |
| NZ 10-yr bond | 0.99 | 1.12 | 2.01 | 1.25 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 |

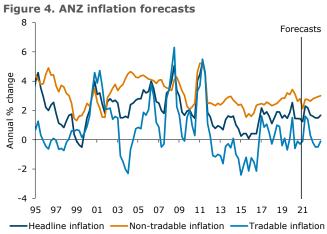
Economic forecasts

| | Sep-20 | Dec-20 | Mar-21 | Jun-21 | Sep-21 | Dec-21 | Mar-22 | Jun-22 | Sep-22 |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| GDP (% qoq) | 14.0 | -0.5 | -0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 1.5 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| GDP (% yoy) | 0.4 | -0.3 | 0.4 | 13.4 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 4.0 |
| CPI (% qoq) | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| CPI (% yoy) | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Employment (% qoq) | -0.8 | 0.6 | -0.1 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Employment (% yoy) | 0.2 | 0.7 | -0.4 | -0.2 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 2.6 |
| Unemployment Rate (% sa) | 5.3 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 5.3 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.5 |

Figures in bold are forecasts. mom: Month-on-Month; qoq: Quarter-on-Quarter; yoy: Year-on-Year



Source: Macrobond, Statistics NZ, ANZ Research



Source: Statistics NZ, ANZ Research



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[1 February 2021]

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