ANZ-Roy Morgan NZ Consumer Confidence

2 February 2024



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Sharon Zollner for more details.

See page 6.

The next issue of the ANZ-Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence is scheduled for release on 1 March 2024 at 10am.

Confused by acronyms or jargon? See a glossary here.

Still very subdued

Key points

- ANZ-Roy Morgan consumer confidence rose 1 point in January to 93.6.
 Perceptions of current conditions jumped, but confidence about the future fell.
- Inflation expectations bounced back, lifting from 3.9% to 4.3%.

Figure 1. ANZ-Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence



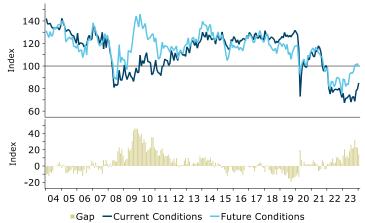
Source: Roy Morgan, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Turning to the detail:

- The future conditions index made up of forward-looking questions fell 3 points to 99, while the current conditions index rose 5 points to 85.
- Perceptions of current personal financial situations rose another 4 points to -12%, still low but the highest since January 2022.
- A net 19% expect to be better off this time next year, down 6 points.
- A net 19% think it's a bad time to buy a major household item, up 6 points. That's the highest level since August 2022 probably related to falling inflation but the weak level suggests ongoing soft per capita spending.
- Perceptions regarding the economic outlook in 12 months' time eased 1 point to -22%. The 5-year-ahead measure also fell 1 point, to +1%.
- House price inflation expectations were drifted lower to 3.9% y/y.
 Wellington has now fallen to the back of the pack at 3.4% y/y
- Two-year-ahead CPI inflation expectations lifted from 3.9% to 4.3%.
 Household inflation expectations can be volatile, but they did a good job of identifying the inflation pick-up promptly in 2020, so are worth watching on the way down as well.

The wide gap between the current and forward-looking questions in the survey is starting to close. It's early days, but such a pattern is typical as an economy recovers after a recession (figure 2).

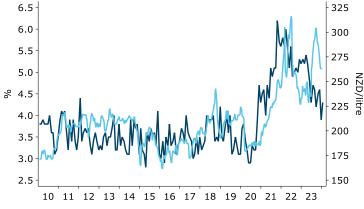
Figure 2. Current and future conditions indexes



Source: Roy Morgan, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Inflation expectations bounced from 3.9% to 4.3% (figure 3) but are still trending downward quite sharply. Household inflation expectations are of secondary importance insofar as households don't set prices, but their expectations matter insofar as they can impact wage demands and also the ease with which businesses can pass through price increases. The fact that petrol prices remain well off their highs has likely helped maintain the downward trajectory of inflation expectations.

Figure 3. Consumer inflation expectations and petrol prices

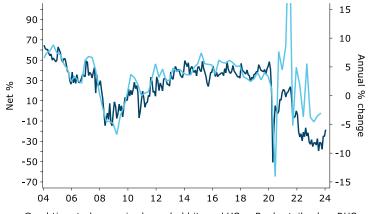


—Inflation Expectations, LHS —Petrol Discounted Retail Price, NZD, RHS

Source: Stats NZ, MBIE, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Consumers continue to report ongoing extreme wariness about purchasing major household items, but this question is well off its lows (figure 4). In practice this series has been strongly inversely correlated with inflation in recent years, and the lift may well reflect declining perceptions of inflation more than anything else. That's welcome, but it does limit the good news for retailers compared to, say, an increase driven by a strengthening labour market. The decline in this question over 2021 and early 2022 overstated the decline in retail sales, and thus equivalently, a recovery off these unprecedented lows is less likely than in normal (low inflation) times to indicate a jump in spending ahead. All that said, the data dovetails nicely with the lift in retailer sentiment evident in our January Business Outlook survey earlier this week.

Figure 4. Good time to buy a major household item vs. real retail sales



—Good time to buy major household item, LHS —Real retail sales, RHS

Source: Stats NZ, Roy Morgan, Macrobond, ANZ Research

This month saw the perceptions gap close re whether it's a good time to spend between those paying off a mortgage and those who are not (figure 5). Interest rates are still high and hurting, but there is a perception that the worst is past on that front, with market expectations for cuts leading to declines in wholesale rates, allowing fixed mortgage rates to retreat from their peaks.

Figure 5. "Good time to buy a major household item" split by mortgage status



Source: Roy Morgan, Macrobond, ANZ Research

The odds that the RBNZ will hike the OCR again have receded as evidence of the impact of monetary policy has accumulated and inflation fallen. But the odds are not zero or even close to zero, given the amount of inflation still in the system. As things stand it's not a great baseline, as it leaves the inflation fight at the mercy of factors beyond the RBNZ's control, like oil prices and shipping costs. Domestic inflation needs to come down further to bring overall inflation sustainably lower, but we're getting there. And the negative impact of high inflation on households – which has been writ large in this survey over recent years – suggests it's a battle worth fighting.

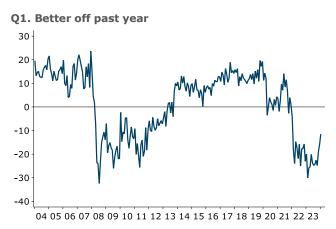


Tables and charts

Survey Summary	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24
No. of Interviews	1,003	1,019	1,009	1,004	1,008	1,003	1,008	1,003
24 11			66.61		66.11			
Q1. Would you say you		-			-			
Better Off	23	23	22	24	22	22	24	24
Worse Off	47	48	46	46	47	41	39	35
Net Balance	-24	-25	-24	-23	-25	-19	-16	-12
Q2. This time next year	r do you and y	our family e	xpect to be b	etter off fina	ncially or wo	orse off than	you are now	?
Better Off	37	38	41	39	38	40	45	45
Worse Off	25	27	28	25	22	25	21	26
Net Balance	11	11	13	15	16	16	25	19
Q3. Thinking of econom	nic conditions i	n New Zeala	and as a who	le, in the nex	kt 12 months	s, do you ext	pect we'll hav	ve good
times financially, bad ti								J
Good Times	15	14	13	14	19	21	18	19
Bad Times	49	45	47	46	37	42	39	41
Net Balance	-34	-32	-34	-32	-18	-21	-21	-22
Q4. Looking ahead, wh	at would you s	av is more l	ikoly: that in	Now Zoalan	d as a whole	wo'll bayo	continuous a	and time
during the next five year						we ii iiave (continuous gt	Jou times
Good Times	24	25	23	24	26	33	24	28
Bad Times	23	22	22	21	21	25	22	26
Net Balance	1	3	1	3	5	9	2	1
Q5. Generally, do you t	think now is a	good time	or a had time	for people	to huy maio	r household i	items?	
Good Time to Buy	25	19	24	24	20	26	24	29
Bad Time to Buy	53	59	56	56	58	51	49	47
Net Balance	-27	-39	- 31	-32	-38	-25	-25	-19
Net Balance	-21	-39	-31	-32	-36	-23	-23	-19
Q6. During the next 2 yup, what is the expecte			ces in genera	al will go up,	go down, or	stay where	they are now	? And if
Go Up	72	72	75	75	72	72	71	74
Go Down	8.7	8.2	6.3	5.1	7.5	7.8	8.3	7.6
Expectation (%)	4.3	4.7	4.6	4.2	4.5	4.6	3.9	4.3
Q7. Specifically thinking general will go up, go d								s in
Go Up	41	45	49	60	68	70	69	73
Go Down	26.4	23.3	17.8	10.0	10.8	9.7	9.7	8.8
Expectation (%)	1.6	1.9	2.4	3.2	3.8	4.2	4.1	3.9
. ,								
ANZ Roy Morgan Con	sumer Confid	lence Ratin	g (100 plus	the unweigh	ted average	of the net ba	alances of Q1	5)
Overall Index	85.5	83.7	85.0	86.4	88.1	91.9	93.1	93.6
Current Conditions	74.5	68.0	72.3	72.9	68.7	78.1	79.6	85.0
Carrent Conditions								



Tables and charts

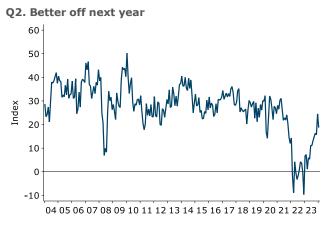




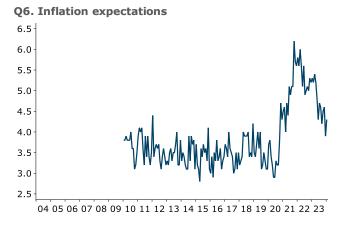




Source: Roy Morgan, Macrobond, ANZ Research











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