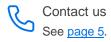


New Zealand Weekly Data Wrap

19 June 2025

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ANZ Proprietary data

Check out our latest releases below

- ANZ Business Outlook: May 2025
- ANZ-Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence: May 2025
- ANZ Truckometer: May 2025
- ANZ Commodity Price Index: May 2025
- ANZ NZ Merchant and Card Spending: May 2025

Key forecasts and rates Our forecasts can be found on page 4.

Confused by acronyms or jargon? See a glossary <u>here</u>.

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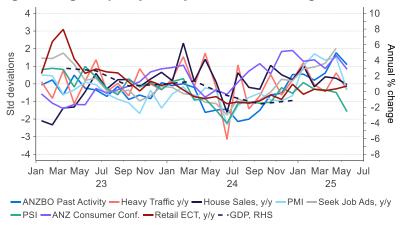
Mixed signals

Overview: Q1 GDP surprised our and the RBNZ's forecast to the upside, but with the signal on Q2 growth looking softer (the PMI and PSI dropped sharply in May) we don't think the RBNZ will conclude this is a threat to the inflation outlook. We continue to pencil in a cut in July, but if the RBNZ puts more weight on the starting point than the outlook they may well decide to pause. We remain comfortable that the OCR will need to go below 3%, but it could take a little longer to get there.

Q1 GDP slightly stronger than forecast, but underlying momentum appears about par with our previous expectation: The economy expanded 0.8% q/q in Q1, above our expectation of 0.7% and the May MPS forecast of 0.4% q/q. However, growth in Q4 was revised down 0.2%pts to +0.5% q/q, which, combined with the weaker signals emerging for Q2 GDP growth (see PSI below), suggests underlying economic momentum isn't significantly stronger than previously thought. Given the Matariki holiday, we'll update our GDP forecasts next week.

But the weak PSI adds to picture of growth stalling more recently: The Business NZ-BNZ PSI was 44.0 in May, a sharp drop from the 48-50 range it had held for the previous six months. A reading below 50 indicates that the services sector is contracting, and May's reading is at a level that suggests fast contraction. The PSI is the latest high-frequency indicator to show a slowing in growth momentum over May, following earlier downward movements in the PMI, the ANZ Business Outlook, ANZ Consumer Confidence and the ANZ Heavy Traffic Index (figure 1). Uncertainty and disruption from tariffs are likely to have played a part in this. It will take another month or two of data to assess the extent and persistence of the slowdown. Not all high-frequency activity indicators have been as negative as the PMI and PSI, and have held up better in levels terms. In addition, the ANZ Business Outlook suggested that conditions were better at the end of May than they were at the start.

Figure 1. High-frequency activity indicators and GDP growth



Source: Stats NZ, BusinessNZ, AIA, REINZ, Seek NZ, Macrobond, ANZ Research

The risk of a pause in July has increased, but we remain comfortable that the RBNZ will eventually need to take the OCR into stimulatory territory. With Q1 GDP surprising the RBNZ's forecast to the upside, the odds that the RBNZ delivers OCR cuts at a slower pace from here has lifted. But if the RBNZ does pause in July, we expect the Monetary Policy Committee will choose to deliver a 25bp cut in August as data disappoints. We see material downside risks to the RBNZ's medium-term non-tradable inflation outlook, but don't expect the RBNZ to come around to that view by July, meaning a pause could end up being the path of least resistance.

NZ Economic News

ANZ's latest data releases, forecast updates and insights

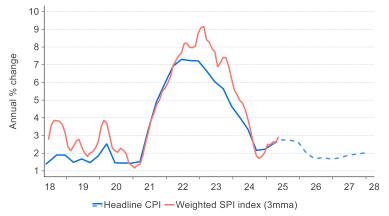
- NZ GDP: decent growth in Q1 but at risk of stalling
- NZ REINZ housing data: still subdued
- NZ Economic Outlook: walking a tightrope
- NZ Property Focus: slow and steady
- RBNZ MPS Review: A 25bp cut delivered; OCR track bottoms at 2.85%
- NZ Budget 2025: much as advertised
- NZ Forecast Update: milk price revised up to \$10/kgMS this season and next
- NZ labour market: when labour supply meets demand
- NZ Property Focus: a quick look over the neighbour's fence
- NZ CPI Review: nothing much to see here
- NZ Forecast Update and OCR Call Change
- RBNZ MPR Review: keep calm and carry on... but ready to act
- NZIER QSBO: no hurdle to ongoing cuts
- NZ Property Focus: plodding along
- NZ Property Focus: paving the road to recovery
- NZ scenarios and risks around the OCR outlook
- NZ Property Focus: starting 2025 on a more stable footing
- NZ CPI Review: more disinflation than meets the eye
- NZ GDP: Thunk.
- NZ 2024 HYEFU: staying the course amid choppy seas
- NZ Agri Focus: sun going down on 2024
- NZ Insight: FTA with Gulf countries bolsters trade opportunities
- NZ Insight: fiscal musings
- NZ Insight: playing by the rules?
- NZ Carbon Market: Emissions Trading Scheme settings
- NZ Insight: China consumer caution impacting NZ exports

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Current account deficit narrows in Q1: As a share of GDP, the annual current account deficit narrowed 0.4% points to 5.7% – that's solid progress from 9.2% of GDP in December 2022, but still too wide to call sustainable. A narrowing of the annual goods deficit was once again the main driver of improvement as solid commodity export prices combined with favourable weather conditions to see growth in goods exports again outpace imports. Conversely, the annual services deficit was little changed, and is a far cry from the 1-2% of GDP surpluses NZ benefitted from prior to the pandemic. And with domestic demand gradually picking up (taking imports with it) and the shine starting to come off our export prices, it's fair to say that unless short-term visitor arrivals recover beyond their pre-pandemic level soon (they appear to be plateauing around 80-90% of pre-pandemic levels) then it could be some time before we see an annual current account deficit with a 4-handle. Widening primary income deficits (reflecting the cost of maintaining our net debt position with the rest of the world) also highlight NZ's external vulnerability.

Selected Price Indexes broadly in line with our expectation: Looking through the usual unders and overs, the May SPI data was broadly consistent with our Q2 headline CPI forecast of 0.6% q/q (RBNZ: 0.5% q/q). However, these data do suggest the composition might be a little different, with slightly stronger tradable inflation than our forecast (ANZ: 0.0% q/q; RBNZ: 0.1% q/q) but weaker nontradable inflation (ANZ: 1.0% q/q; RBNZ: 0.7% q/q). Importantly, we continue to see mild upside risk to the RBNZ's Q2 pick for non-tradables. Turning to the details, the volatile components lived up to their reputation with both airfares and domestic accommodation falling sharply. Food prices (up 0.5% m/m) came in a little stronger than expected but rents (up 0.1% m/m) were weaker. The 2.3% m/m rise in electricity prices was close to our expectation, suggesting the recent rise in electricity lines charges is being passed on to the consumer.

Figure 2. ANZ CPI inflation forecast vs aggregated SPI index



Source: Stats NZ, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Housing market largely going sideways, pointing to downside risk to our house price forecast: The seasonally adjusted REINZ House Price Index rose just 0.1% m/m in May, extending on the last six months of very small rises. Indicators of market tightness, such as days to sell and the auction clearance rate, have mostly been tracking sideways, indicative of a largely flat market. Sales volumes are stabilising around their historical average. Plenty of willing sellers have come forward recently and new listings and inventories remain high, keeping a lid on house price growth. Our forecast is that house prices will accelerate over the second half of the year in response to lower interest rates, to a monthly pace closer to 0.5% m/m. However, with high-frequency economic activity indicators soft of late, and housing market indicators still going sideways for the most part, the risks are tilted towards slower house price inflation than this.

Dairy prices ease back from high levels: The GDT dairy price index was down 1.0% in USD terms at this week's auction compared to the last full event. The index has now retracted a total of 3.3% from its recent high at the start of May, still leaving dairy prices at high levels for now. It's reasonable to expect dairy prices will recede further in the coming year as global (and local) production responds to elevated prices.

Financial Markets Update

Data calendar

What's coming up in the months ahead.

What's coming up in the months ahead.						
Date	Data/event					
Wed 25 Jun (10:45am)	Merchandise Trade – May					
Fri 27 Jun (10:00am)	ANZ-RM Consumer Confidence – Jun					
Mon 30 Jun (10:45am)	Employment Indicators – May					
Mon 30 Jun (1:00pm)	ANZ Business Outlook – Jun					
Tue 1 Jul (10:00am)	NZIER QSBO – Q2					
Tue 1 Jul (10:45am)	Building Permits – May					
Wed 2 Jul (early am)	Global Dairy Trade auction					
Wed 3 Jul	ANZ Commodity Price					
(1:00pm) Wed 9 Jul	Index – Jun RBNZ Monetary					
(2:00pm)	Policy Review					
Thu 10 Jul (10:00am)	ANZ Truckometer – Jun					
Thu 10 Jul (10:45am)	Net Migration – May					
Friday 11 Jul (10:30am	BusinessNZ Manuf PMI – Jun					
Mon 14 Jul (10:30am)	Performance Services Index – Jun					
Mon 14 Jul (10:45am)	Electronic Card Transactions – Jun					
Wed 16 Jul (early am)	Global Dairy Trade auction					
Thu 17 Jul (10:45am)	Selected Price Indices – Jun					
Mon 21 Jul (10:45am)	CPI – Q2					
Tue 22 Jul (10:45am)	Merchandise Trade – Jun					
Mon 28 Jul (10:45am)	Employment Indicators – Jun					
Wed 30 Jul (1:00pm)	ANZ Business Outlook – Jul					
Fri 1 Aug (10:00am)	ANZ-RM Consumer Confidence – Jul					
Fri 1 Aug (10:45am)	Building Permits – Jun					
Tue 5 Aug (1:00pm)	ANZ Commodity Price Index – Jul					
Wed 6 Aug (early am)	Global Dairy Trade auction					
Wed 6 Aug (10:45am)	Labour Market – Q2					
Thu 7 Aug (3:00pm)	RBNZ 2Yr Inflation Expectations – Q3					
Wed 13 Aug (10:45am)	Electronic Card Transactions – Jul					
Friday 15 Aug (10:30am	BusinessNZ Manuf PMI – Jul					
Friday 15 Aug	Net Migration – Jun					
(10:45am) Mon 18 Aug	Performance Services					
(10:30am) Wed 20 Aug	Index – Jul RBNZ MPS					
(2:00pm) Thu 21 Aug	Merchandise Trade –					
(10:45am)	Jul					

Interest rate markets

New Zealand interest rates have been more settled this week. They unwound Friday's fall (which was driven by a ramping up of Middle East tensions) as the week got underway, before trading broadly sideways as the week progressed. US interest rates have been more sensitive to geopolitics, soft US data and the Fed decision, but as overnight dips in US bond yields were typically unwound quickly, local markets avoided much of the volatility seen during US hours.

The big debate locally is whether the RBNZ will cut or pause in July. Most in the market acknowledge that more cuts are needed, especially with PMI and PSI data weaker, the overall "vibe" among consumers still very cautious, and the housing market going nowhere. However, there is still plenty of debate as to how quickly the RBNZ will deliver those cuts given the cautious mood of the Acting Governor's post-MPS press conference, today's stronger-than-expected Q1 GDP data, and the uptick in inflation expectations. While we can definitely envisage a pause given that backdrop, and acknowledge that the best course of action for the RBNZ is not as clear-cut as recent decisions have been, for now we still expect a cut, mindful of ample spare capacity in the economy and the fact that mortgage rates have only just dipped below 5%. While mortgage rates at that level could be characterised as broadly neutral (and some way below where they have been, but well above where they were during COVID), the risk of the housing market taking off seems low. And with demand still weak and the labour market still loose, it's easier to dismiss the lift in surveyed inflation expectations. In sum, even though there is broad consensus that rates need to fall further, there is more uncertainty around how quickly that will happen and what the endpoint will be, and with the RBNZ taking the view that the OCR is in the "neutral range" now, some caution is needed.

As for the long end – bond yields are holding up, taking their lead from the US. While we see scope for New Zealand to benefit from global diversification flows (as offshore investors tilt their portfolios away from the US), that's likely to be a slow burn. Directionally, it is difficult to envisage a meaningful fall in local long-end rates without US rates falling too, which would, in turn, require markets to be satisfied that the US is going to get its fiscal house in order. But prospects for that seem very dim.

FX markets

While the Kiwi is off the 2025 highs just shy of 0.61 seen earlier this week, it remains at the upper end of trading ranges and has benefitted from the USD correction lower as markets re-rate the dollar's reserve currency status, and as US data slows. Higher local interest rates are also helping, but with markets in our view underestimating how much lower the OCR will eventually go, we are mindful not to take recent NZD strength for granted. NZD strength is expected over 2026, but that is expected to be fuelled as much by USD weakness as it is by NZ-specific factors.

The week ahead

Overseas Merchandise Trade - May (Wednesday 25 June, 10:45am).

Merchandise trade has moved from deficit to near balance in recent months, supported by high export prices and restrained imports (reflecting subdued domestic demand). We expect this broad trend to continue over the coming months, although the data can be volatile month-to-month.

ANZ-Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence – June (Friday 27 June, 10:00am).

Key Forecasts and Rates

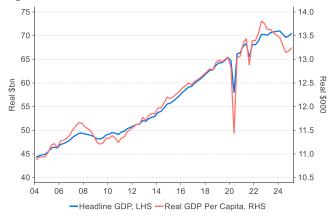
		Actual				Forecast (end month)			
FX rates	Apr-25	May-25	Today	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26
NZD/USD	0.592	0.596	0.603	0.550	0.570	0.590	0.600	0.610	0.620
NZD/AUD	0.926	0.928	0.927	0.902	0.905	0.922	0.923	0.924	0.925
NZD/EUR	0.521	0.526	0.525	0.491	0.500	0.509	0.517	0.517	0.525
NZD/JPY	84.7	85.9	87.3	79.8	79.8	81.4	81.6	81.7	81.8
NZD/GBP	0.443	0.443	0.449	0.423	0.432	0.440	0.441	0.449	0.449
NZ\$ TWI	69.2	69.1	69.7	65.6	67.5	69.5	70.3	70.9	71.6
Interest rates	Apr-25	May-25	Today	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26
NZ OCR	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	2.75	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50
NZ 90 day bill	3.43	3.32	3.29	2.97	2.62	2.62	2.62	2.70	3.05
NZ 2-yr swap	3.06	3.29	3.30	3.15	3.04	2.96	3.07	3.18	3.27
NZ 10-yr bond	4.44	4.57	4.62	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50

Economic forecasts

	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26
GDP (% qoq)	0.5	0.8	l la den ner derr						
GDP (% yoy)	-1.3	-0.7	Under revi	ew					
CPI (% qoq)	0.5	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.4
CPI (% yoy)	2.2	2.5	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.7
Employment (% qoq)	-0.2	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Employment (% yoy)	-1.2	-0.7	-0.7	0.3	0.9	1.3	1.8	2.1	2.3
Unemployment Rate (% sa)	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.1	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.5

Figures in bold are forecasts. mom: Month-on-Month; qoq: Quarter-on-Quarter; yoy: Year-on-Year. Click here for full ANZ forecasts

Figure 3. GDP level



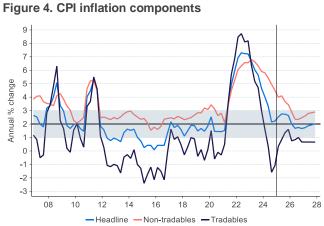
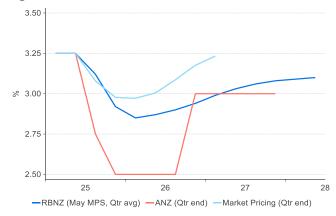


Figure 5. OCR forecast



Source: Stats NZ, RBNZ, ICAP, Bloomberg, Macrobond, ANZ Research

Figure 6. Unemployment and participation rate



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