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ECONOMIC, POLITICAL & INVESTMENT PULSE

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Authorised by AJ von Dadelzen, 315 Fourth Avenue, Tauranga

184 DAYS UNTIL ELECTION DAY

Labour's current approach to announcing election policy lacks substance compared to past election cycles.

By this stage in 2023, Christopher Luxon's National Party had already released a wide-ranging suite of detailed policies across tax, housing, energy, and law and order. Similarly, in 2017, Labour—then led by Andrew Little - had outlined major initiatives such as KiwiBuild, Healthy Homes, and Reserve Bank reform.

In contrast, under Chris Hipkins, Labour is portrayed as offering very little in the way of new policy direction. This narrow platform creates political risk as it allows opponents to speculate about hidden agendas, limits Labour MPs to attacking rivals rather than promoting their own vision, and risks making the party appear passive or lacking ambition.

WE LIVE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

The global economy in 2026 is growing modestly but unevenly, with resilience masking underlying fragility. The International Monetary Fund expects steady but below-trend growth, as high interest rates, elevated debt levels, and geopolitical tensions continue to weigh on activity. Inflation has eased from its post-pandemic peaks, allowing central banks to begin cautiously loosening policy, though rates remain restrictive.

The United States is holding up relatively well, supported by consumer demand, while Europe faces sluggish growth amid weak industrial output and energy uncertainty. Political risk remains a key worry for many New Zealanders.

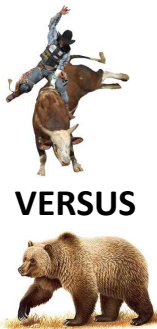
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STATISTICS NZ & TREASURY DATA			
Estimated NZ population	at 5-May-26		5,352,425
Population: 1950: 1,911,608 2000: 3,855,266 Growth -1.87% this year			
<small>(StatsNZ - 2025 to 2048) European 65.9% to 52.3%; Asian 20.8% to 33.3%; Māori 17.4% to 20%; Pac 9.1% to 11.4%; Indian 7.2% to 11.8%; Chinese 6.2% to 8.2%; Samoa 4.4% to 5.6% Mid East/Latin 2.2% to 3.8%</small>			
Māori population	Est. Dec-25	(17.5 % of NZ total)	932,500
Births / Deaths	Dec-25 year	Births: 57,705	Deaths: 37,491
Deaths per 1,000 live births: Pasifika: 7.3 Māori: 5.7 European: 3.8			
Net Migration	Feb-26 yr		↑ 25,200
<small>(NZ: -36,400; Non NZ: 61,600)</small>			
NZer Migration	Dec-25yr	(Depart: 62,700; Arriv: 26,300)	↓ (36,400)
Non NZ Migration	Dec-25yr	(Depart: 48,300; Arriv: 110,000)	↑ 61,600
Net migration by country	<small>India: 11,200; China: 11,000; Philippines: 7,600; Sri Lanka: 5,200 United Kingdom: 400; Australia: 1,200; United States: 2,100</small>		
Annual GDP Growth	Dec-25 year	(Qtly Dec-25: 0.2%)	0.2%
Annual GDP Per Capita	Mar-25 year	(Qtly Mar-25: 0.8%)	0.8%
Size of NZ Economy (GDP)	Dec-25 year	(Auckland = \$160 billion)	\$430 bn
Size of Māori Economy	2025	(2013: \$43bn; 2020: \$69bn)	~ \$126 bn
NZ Core Crown Revenue	FY2025	(FY2024: \$167.3bn)	\$169.8 bn
NZ Core Crown Expenses	FY2025	(FY2024: \$180.1bn)	\$182.2 bn
NZ Core Expenses/GDP	FY2025	(FY2024: 42.9%)	42.1%
NZ Core Govt Debt	FY2025	(FY2024: \$175.7bn)	\$183.5 bn
NZ Core Govt Debt/GDP	FY2025	(FY2024: 42.9%)	41.8%
Gross Disposable H/hold Income	Mar-25 year	Jun-25 year	\$105,278
Inflation Rate (CPI)	Dec-25 year	(↓from 7.3% at 2022 peak)	3.1%
Non-Tradable Inflation	Dec-25 year	(Domestic)	3.5%
Food Price Inflation	Feb-26 year	Monthly - Frb-26 -0.1%	4.5%
Household Cost of Living	Sep-25 year		↓ 2.4%
Retail Spending - Electronic trans	Sep-25 mth		\$34 m
Minimum Wage	from 1-Apr-26	(up from \$23.50)	\$23.95
Living wage	from 1-Sep-25		\$28.95
NZ Median Wage	Jun-25		\$33.56
Average Wages per hour	Sept-25		\$43.68
Annual Wage Inflation	Sep-25 year	(Dec-24 yr: 3.3%)	3.9%
Labour force participation rate	Dec-25	(Sept-25 qtr: 66.6%)	66.7%
Increase in total employed	Dec-25		15,000
Total Unemployed	Dec-25	Pacifica 12.3% Maori 11.2%	165,000
Unemployment	Mar-26	Asian 4.4% European 4.2%	5.4%
Unemployment Dec-25 Men:5.3% Women: 5.6%			
Youth Unemployment	Dec-25	(Dec-24: 23.8%)	16.5%
Beneficiaries	Jun-25	(Jobseeker/Solo/Supported living)	401,604
Jobseeker Support numbers	Jun-25	(11.6% of working-age population)	216,009

May 2026



VERSUS

WEBSITE:
vond.co.nz



SHAREMARKETS	CODE	1yr	5 yr/pa
New Zealand	^NZ50	6.8%	8.1%
Australia	^AXJO	7.1%	16.2%
United Kingdom	^FTSE	20.7%	35.4%
US - Dow Jones	^DJI	20.6%	48.2%
US - S&P500	^GSPC	28.3%	72.7%
US - NASDAQ	^IXIC	41.3%	100.0%

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

MY PROPOSITION FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM IN THE BAY OF PLENTY



On Tuesday 5th May, Ministers Chris Bishop & Simon Watts released a “fast track proposal” for local government reform.

“Our message to councils is simple: lead your own reform, or we will do it for you. Either way, change is coming,” Minister Watts said. “From today, councils have three months to work with others in their region and put forward proposals for how they want to reorganise their local government arrangements. Proposals should focus on creating larger, more efficient unitary authorities that streamline functions, reduce duplication and improve decision-making.

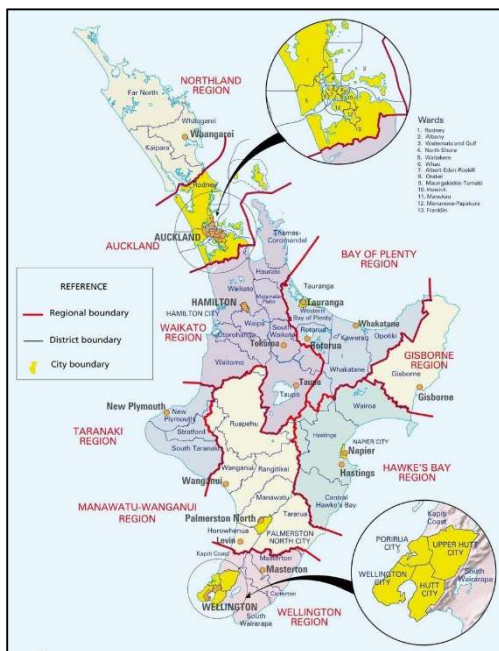
I totally agree that we need to reform local government to ensure that Resource Management reform is undertaken in an effective and timely manner.

I went into the last local government election advocating for amalgamation of local councils to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The proposition that Minister

Watts first came up with was, in my opinion, fatally flawed – as his then proposition was for all councils within each region to disband the elected members and ask the mayors within the region to complete the governance functions of the existing regional councils. I argued strongly that past experience with Mayoral Forums and Regional Transport Committees told me that Mayors would only pay lip service to this added governance role, and that they would remain inwardly focused on their own “patch” which wouldn’t improve efficiency and effectiveness.

My view is that the Bay of Plenty needs just three unitary councils. Joining Western Bay and Tauranga City makes



absolute sense. These two councils make up approximately 67% of the population of the whole of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council and this makes absolute sense.

The second unitary should be “the geothermal Unitary of Kawerau, Rotorua – and include Taupo (currently in the Waikato region).

That leaves Whakatane and Opotiki, and these two should joint with the (already Unitary Council) Gisborne – to establish an East Cape Unitary Council.

This would mean that, instead of 9 separate councils (many small) you would reduce this to just 3 unitary councils – more effective and efficient if structured properly.

This isn’t rocket science – it is a pragmatic resolution that is long overdue. It won’t inhibit “localism” and it should be pretty easy to instigate. Larger unitary councils than I propose could well be problematic and not be incorporated effectively, but the three I suggest would see local government working much more effectively, without the bureaucratic duplicity that we have with 9 separate entities.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CO-GOVERNANCE

Source: Elizabeth Rata, University of Auckland

An invented history has been taught to at least two generations of New Zealand schoolchildren. It includes the reinterpreted Treaty of Waitangi as a 'partnership' and a sacred covenant (hence the need to remove secularism). Accurate, verifiable accounts of the past are replaced by tales of oppressor and oppressed. Most Māori were as committed to building a new nation as were the colonists. A comprehensive history of New Zealand education makes that clear.

The co-governance of New Zealand's institutions, including parliament itself, by both a tribal entity and a democratic one is impossible. There is no 'co' in democratic governance. Have we reached the tipping point in the neo-tribal elite's march through the nation's institutions? Can we re-claim the pre-1970s' commitment to democracy which enabled both Māori and colonists to build New Zealand as a prosperous modern nation with a well-educated population?

Elizabeth Rata is a leading curriculum expert and sociologist of education at the University of Auckland.

I strongly believe that we need to get back to genuine democracy where every New Zealander has equal rights and responsibilities. You can be sure that Queen Victoria never intended the Treaty of Waitangi to be manipulated into allowing Māori the right of sovereignty.

This is not a race issue – it is solely about restoring every New Zealanders democratic rights and obligations.

“One law for all”

“In local government, you are asked to do the impossible by the ungrateful and judged in hindsight by the ill-informed”

Tauranga City Mayor Mahé Drysdale



SPOTLIGHT ON THE ENERGY CRISIS

The products that can be produced from one barrel of crude oil:

a. diesel	32%	} Oil though, ends up in many, many final products and has been hard to replace.
b. petrol	27%	
c. liquified petroleum gas (LPG)	15%	
d. kerosene	9%	
e. naphtha and petroleum	8%	
f. fuel oil products	7%	
g. other products	2%	
	<u>100%</u>	

Where are the world's largest known oil reserves:

Venezuela	303 million barrels
Saudi Arabia	267 million barrels
Iran	208 million barrels
Iraq	145 million barrels
UAE	113 million barrels
USA	45 million barrels
Russia	80 million barrels
Brazil	16 million barrels
Canada	4 million barrels

Where is the world's oil coming from currently (2025 year)?

	<u>percentage</u>	<u>barrels per day</u>
North America	29.9%	31.8 million barrels
Middle East	29.1%	31.0 million barrels
Russia, Kazakhstan & Azerbaijan	12.8%	13.6 million barrels
Asia Pacific	8.9%	9.4 million barrels
Central and South America	8.4%	8.9 million barrels
Africa	7.2%	7.6 million barrels
Europe	<u>3.7%</u>	<u>4.0 million barrels</u>
	<u>100%</u>	<u>106.3 million barrels per day</u>

Where is New Zealand power and energy coming from in the 2025 year?

Hydro	55%	} Approximately 88% is from renewables in the 2025 year, which is a sound feature.
Geothermal	22%	
Gas	8%	
Wind	9%	
Coal	3%	
Solar	2%	
Other	<u>1%</u>	
	<u>100%</u>	

What was the New Zealand power and energy consumption per sector in the 2025 year

Residential	35%
Industrial	33%
Commercial	24%
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing	7%
Transport	<u>1%</u>
	<u>100%</u>

Number of registered vehicles on New Zealand roads in 2024

Light vehicles (cars)	3,698,864	(75.21%)
Light vehicles (hybrids)	44,300	(0.90%)
Fully electric vehicles	89,900	(1.83%)
Light commercial	824,029	(16.75%)
Heavy vehicles	30,000	(0.61%)
Motorcycles	221,669	(4.51%)
ATV vehicles	<u>9,243</u>	<u>(0.19%)</u>
	<u>4,918,005</u>	<u>(100.00%)</u>

Fuel type of New Zealand vehicles as at February 2026:

Petrol	32.6%
Diesel	27.2%
Hybrid	26.2%
Phev	7.4% (plug in electric vehicle)
Bev	<u>6.6%</u> (battery electric vehicle)
	<u>100.00%</u>

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POLITICAL CLIMATE

PLEASE NOTE: All political comments are my personal views, and do not purport to represent the views of the New Zealand National Party – of which I am now a Board Director.



THE NUMBERS DO NOT LIE Source: Kiwiblog, 26-Apr-26

A guest post from Owen Jennings

Everyone seems to have an opinion on Christopher Luxon’s future. Why not? He is Prime Minister, after all. He has to be open to scrutiny.

But, is what we are encountering the normal, hurly burly of politics and strong media coverage? Or is there some other force at play?

Some homework, using Artificial Intelligence, suggests there is and it’s something that should concern every New Zealand voter.

In a ChatGPT analysis of the Herald – the country’s leading print media and a self-determined, major opinion former – the results on opinion pieces showed:

Tone	Luxon	Hipkins
✘ Negative	73%	50%
✔ Positive	14%	30%

Luxon is three times more likely to receive a bad rap than Hipkins. He gets five negative articles to every positive one while Hipkins gets less than two. They have similar numbers of news items and similar numbers of opinion pieces. That is not just difference at the margins – it is heavyweight bias.

We know that opinion pieces are more prominently placed, more interpretive, more influential, and more memorable.

The Herald does not claim to be neutral, but it does state very clearly it provides balanced journalism. The numbers above show it fails woefully and dangerously. ‘Woefully’ because it doesn’t come anywhere close to a balance and ‘dangerously’ because it holds a highly responsible position as a leading media outlet. It is in danger of being interpreted as running a deliberate and planned campaign to oust Luxon and, with him, the current Coalition.

The mainstream media has lost a huge amount of credibility in the last few years. That is due, in no small measure, to its inability to get anywhere near balance in its output.

We are not the Third Reich nor are we expecting a banning of junior reporter’s attempt at writing opinion

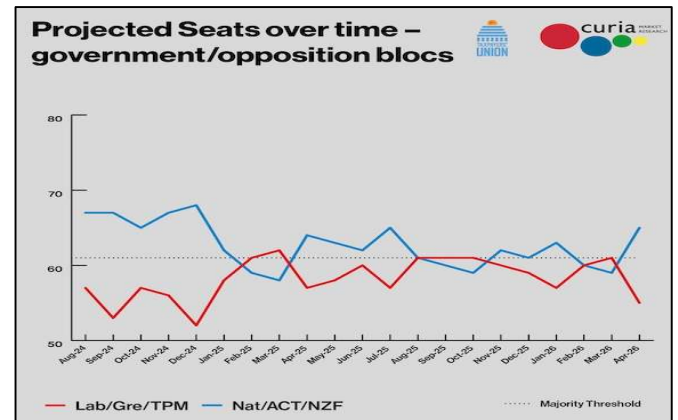
columns. But we have every right to a professional and more obvious adherence to the norms of balanced journalism.

TAXPAYERS' UNION / CURIA April-26 POLL				
Party	Vote	Change*	Seats	Change**
National	29.8%	1.4%	37	(12)
ACT	9.0%	1.5%	11	0
NZ First	13.6%	3.9%	17	9
Labour	33.4%	(1.0%)	42	8
Green	7.8%	(2.7%)	10	(5)
Māori	2.6%	(0.6%)	3	(3)
Other	3.8%	(0.4%)	-	nc

* Change from February 2026 ** Change since election

Polling Period: 1st to 2nd April 2026

In the latest Taxpayers’/Curia Poll, the combined projected seats for the Government Parties bloc is up 6 seats to 65. The combined seats for the Opposition Parties bloc is down 6 to 55. On these numbers, the current three Parties of Government (National, NZ First & Act) would be able to retain the governing benches.



ONENEWS/VERIAN POLL ALSO NOTED “A BLEAK ECONOMIC OUTLOOK”

The public is expressing deep anxiety regarding the nation’s financial trajectory, which is undoubtedly influencing this poll. The poll reveals a dramatic shift in economic sentiment:

Economic Optimism:	26%	(▼ 14%)
Economic Pessimism:	52%	(▲ 21%)

This plunge in consumer confidence arrives directly ahead of the highly anticipated inflation announcement, compounded by recent warnings from the Reserve Bank that inflation could spike further in the coming months.

DATE	Polling Organisation	Sample size	NAT	ACT	NZF	LAB	GRN	TPM	TOP	Others
1-22 Mar 2026	Roy Morgan	872	26.5	10	11	34	11	3	4	0.5
2-12 Mar 2026	Talbot Mills	1,059	32	7	11	35	11	1.7	2.4	-
12-20 Mar 2026	RNZ/Reid	1,000	30.8	7	10.6	35.6	10.1	3.2	2	0.7
1-2 Apr 2026	Taxpayers'/Curia	1,000	29.8	9	13.6	33.4	7.8	2.6	2	1.8
11-15 Apr 2026	OneNews/Verian	1,010	30	7	10	37	11	2	3	-
Combined Average			30.2	7.7	11.7	34.5	10.2	2.4	2.7	0.7

NOTE: If we look at the data above, the Roy Morgan poll is the most negative to National of all the polls - and has been continuously for the last 2.5 years. However, the analysis of the Roy Morgan Poll (below) does make interesting reading.

ROY MORGAN March 2026 POLL				
Party	Vote	Change*	Seats	Change**
National	26.5%	(4.5%)	33	(16)
Act	10.0%	2.0%	13	2
NZ First	11.0%	1.5%	14	6
Labour	34.0%	4.0%	42	8
Green	11.0%	(3.5%)	14	(1)
Māori	3.0%	0.5%	4	(2)
Other	4.5%	NC	-	-
* Change from Jan/Feb ** Change since election				
Polling Period: 23 rd February to 22 nd March 2025				

The March Roy Morgan Poll was an “outlier” as can be seen table at the top of the page – but it’s analysis does give some valuable insights into voter intentions...

A DEEPLY FRAGMENTED ELECTORATE BY GENDER & AGE

The Roy Morgan poll shows a very pronounced demographic split—arguably one of the clearest in recent NZ polling:

- Men → strongly centre-right
- Women → strongly centre-left
- Older voters → more conservative
- Younger voters → more progressive (especially women)

This is not marginal—it is structurally significant.

New Zealand is now running two parallel electorates: a male, older, centre-right bloc—and a younger, female, centre-left bloc.

The election won’t be won in the middle of the spectrum. It will be won at the intersection of age and gender—particularly among women who are not yet locked into either camp.

BOTTOM LINE

This poll is not just “close”—it reveals a structural realignment:

- Gender has overtaken class as the key political divide
- Age reinforces—but does not override—that divide
- Election outcome will hinge on middle-aged women and younger men

GENDER DIVIDE (VERY PRONOUNCED)

Men

- 57% support the Government (National/ACT/NZ First)
- 38.5% support Opposition

A ~18–19 point advantage for the centre-right

Women

- 55.5% support Opposition (Labour/Greens/TPM)
- 39.5% support Government

A ~16 point advantage for the centre-left

Interpretation

- This is a textbook “gender polarisation” election
- Comparable to trends seen in:
 - US (Trump-era gender gap)
 - UK (post-Brexit realignment)

Politically: **Women** are now the Opposition’s core base, whereas **Men**—especially older men—anchor the National-led Government

AGE + GENDER INTERACTION (WHERE IT GETS INTERESTING)

1. Younger Men (18–49)

- Opposition: **48%**
- Government: **46.5%**

Essentially **split / marginal lean left**

Key takeaway:

Young men are no longer a reliable right bloc

2. Older Men (50+)

- Government: **67.5%**
- Opposition: significantly lower

This is the **Government’s strongest demographic by far**

Key takeaway:

Older men = electoral backbone of the coalition

3. Younger Women (18–49)

- Strongly Opposition-leaning (implied from broader trend)
- Very negative “country direction” sentiment

Likely the **most anti-Government group**

Key takeaway:

This cohort is driving Labour/Greens momentum

4. Older Women (50+)

- Opposition: **50%**
- Government: **46.5%**

Slight lean left, but far more balanced

Key takeaway:

Older women are the true swing bloc

PARTY-LEVEL SIGNALS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

From the breakdown:

- National strongest with older men (44%)
- Labour strongest with women 50+ (39%)
- ACT heavily male-skewed
- NZ First strongest among older voters (especially men)

This reinforces:

- Right = older, male, status quo voters
- Left = female, younger, change-oriented voters

STRATEGIC INTERPRETATION

1. This election will be decided by women, not men

Men are already "locked in":

- Government has dominant male support
- Opposition has dominant female support

The marginal vote sits with women 40–65

2. The Government has a demographic concentration risk

- Heavily reliant on:
 - Older men
 - Provincial / traditional voters

Risk:

- Limited growth ceiling
- Vulnerable if turnout shifts

3. The Opposition coalition has a coalition-building advantage

- Strong across:
 - Women
 - Younger voters
- More demographically diverse

But:

- Needs to **convert sentiment into turnout**

4. Younger men are the true "floating voter bloc"

- Almost perfectly split

THIS GROUP WILL DECIDE:

- Urban electorates & Provincial swing seats

Finance Minister Nicola Willis said "*she has never felt so dependent on the actions and feelings of one administration and its leaders,*" as concerns grow about the fuel shock triggered by the US-Israel war on Iran.

THE PM HAS GOT HIS MOJO BACK



Source: Kiwiblog by David Farrar, 5-Apr-26

I've been impressed with what I would call the PM getting some mongrel in the last few weeks, as his leadership came under attack. Let's look at what he did.

1. Someone (not necessarily the PM) arranged for the names of suspected dissident MPs to be given to Hosking.
2. Called a vote of confidence in his own leadership, forcing people to put up or shut up.
3. At the press conference refused to take questions from media, correctly judging that the result would speak for itself.
4. Hit back at Peters (along with Willis) when Peters decided he would become a political commentator on the National leadership, reminding people he put Ardern and the Greens into power.
5. Got a complaint filed against TVNZ banging on the office door of National MP Stuart Smith, demanding he come out
6. Pulled out of Breakfast TV as it became apparent the interviews were more about gotcha moments (can you name your Māori Ministers) than discussing issues that matter to NZers.

I think it is good the PM is showing some teeth. Something I have picked up anecdotally is that there has been a bit of a sympathy backlash in the PMs favour, as people think that breathless coverage updated hourly over bad poll results is just ridiculous. Several people I know who are not particularly political have said that they think it was just too much, and they felt sorry for Luxon.

STUNNING FACT

The top 50 NZ high schools have an average of 85.6% of their leavers with University Entrance.

The bottom 50 NZ high schools have an average of 4.8% of their leavers with University Entrance.

"The problem with market research is people don't think what they feel; don't say what they think; and don't do what they say."

David Ogilvy

THE INCONVENIENT TRUTH

New Zealand's fiscal reality is tightening — and politicians across the spectrum are still avoiding the hard choices.

Despite Finance Minister Nicola Willis claiming \$44 billion in “savings” across recent Budgets, that money has largely been reallocated to new spending and tax relief, leaving the underlying problem untouched.

Officials from Inland Revenue, Treasury, and mainstream economists are aligned on one uncomfortable truth: the country faces a persistent structural deficit of around 2% of GDP — roughly \$9 billion annually — that must be closed through spending cuts, tax increases, or both.

The challenge is politically brutal. Core areas like superannuation, health, and education are effectively untouchable, while rising defence commitments and escalating debt-servicing costs (projected to exceed \$13 billion annually) further squeeze the budget.

In practice, closing the gap would require drastic cuts — potentially up to 40% across “discretionary” spending areas such as transport, housing, and environmental programmes — an outcome widely seen as unrealistic.



OPINION

The Peril of a Labour Comeback: Why Another Term Could Mean the End of New Zealand as We Know It

Meanwhile, both major parties are offering partial solutions. Labour signals higher taxes but plans to spend the proceeds, while National leans on growth assumptions that, by definition, won't fix a structural deficit.

The bottom line: New Zealand is still borrowing more than it earns, debt continues to rise, and no major political force is yet willing to level with voters about the scale of adjustment required.

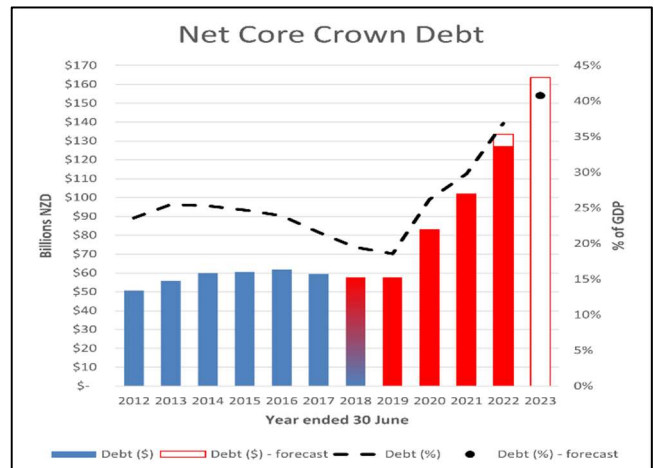
NEW ZEALAND'S DEBT

New Zealand's government debt story over the six years of Ardern's Labour government is stark. On a per-household basis, Crown borrowing has effectively doubled — from around \$60,000 in 2017 to roughly \$120,000 by 2023. Finance costs have followed, rising from about \$2,000 to \$4,000 per household.

Some of that was unavoidable. COVID demanded a strong fiscal response. But the real issue is what happened next.

A large share of that temporary borrowing became permanent spending. Core government expenditure jumped sharply and stayed high. At the same time, the public service expanded from roughly 48,000 to over 63,000 employees. The result is a structural deficit — with National government still spending more than it earns, even in normal conditions. That's why the ongoing deficit equates to roughly \$7,000 per household.

This is the legacy the current Christopher Luxon government has inherited.



To its credit, the current National-led Government is attempting to slow spending growth, trim the public service, and return the books to surplus over time. **But progress is, at best incremental. Debt is still rising in dollar terms, and the structural gap remains.**

The bottom line is simple: New Zealand doesn't just have a debt problem — it has a spending baseline problem. Until that is addressed, we will continue to see rising debt, higher interest costs, and less fiscal flexibility when the next crisis hits.

Our Minister of Finance seems wedded to the Wellington beltway, which has seen her resist making measurable reductions to the number of employed bureaucrats.

Without a serious reduction — New Zealand will continue to slip further down the productivity ladder globally — and New Zealanders will just get poorer as a result.

“Plans are nothing ... but planning is everything.”

US President Dwight D. Eisenhower

MURDER DATA

Source: Kiwiblog by David Farrar, 5-Apr-26

David read an overseas article that cross-tabulated homicide data by ethnicity for both the victim and the killer. I thought this was interesting, so asked for NZ equivalent data. Sadly, it was declined on privacy grounds, but they did provide the data without the cross-tabulation.

For those interested the breakdown by ethnicity for homicide victims for the last ten years is:

1. Māori 35%
2. European 27%
3. Unknown 22%
4. Pacific 6.8%
5. Asian 3.5%
6. Indian 3.1%
7. Middle Eastern 1.5%
8. African 0.5%
9. Hispanic 0.1%
10. Fijian 0.1%

And the breakdown for homicide offenders is:

1. Māori 48%
2. European 30%
3. Unknown 1.4%
4. Pacific 15.0%
5. Asian 2.6%
6. Indian 2.9%
7. African 0.1%
8. Hispanic 0.1%

NOTE: If you kill multiple people, you get counted once for each death, so the European total includes 50+ counts for the Christchurch Al Noor Mosque terrorist, Brenton Tarrant.

INDIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT SIGNED

Winston Peters grandstands again – like he did when New Zealand signed the FTA with China in 2008.

However, Labour has once again joined National in agreeing to sign into law this FTA with India, bypassing any NZ First shananagins.

On 27th April, Prime Minister Luxon and Trade Minister McClay ratified the agreement in Delhi, India with the Indian Government.

KEY OUTCOMES FOR NZ INCLUDE:

- Tariff elimination or reduction on 95% of our exports.
- Duty-free access on almost 57% of New Zealand's exports from day one, increasing to 82% when fully implemented, with the remaining 13% being subject to sharp tariff cuts.
- Immediate tariff elimination on sheep meat, wool, coal and over 95% of forestry and wood exports.
- Duty-free access on most seafood exports, including mussels and salmon, over seven years.

- Duty-free access on most iron, steel and scrap aluminium, over 10 years or less.
- Duty-free access for most industrial products, over five to 10 years.
- 50% tariff cut for large quota of apples – nearly double recent average exports.
- Duty-free access for kiwifruit within a quota almost four times our recent average exports, and tariff halved for exports outside of quota.
- Duty-free access for cherries, avocados, persimmons and blueberries, over 10 years.
- Tariffs on wine reduced from 150% to either 25% or 50% (depending on the value of the wine) over 10 years plus a Most Favoured Nation (MFN) commitment.
- Tariffs on mānuka honey cut from 66% to 16.5% over five years.
- MFN status and liberalisation across services exports.
- Duty-free access for dairy and other food ingredients for re-export from day one.
- Duty-free access for bulk infant formula and other high-value dairy preparations over seven years.
- 50% tariff cut for high value milk albumins within a NZ-specific quota equal to current export volumes.



"The benefits of this FTA are widespread, and our business community is excited to see the doors of opportunity open to 1.4 billion people whose economy is set to become the third largest in the world," Prime Minister Luxon said.

CARBON CREDITS

**Paying for something that doesn't exist, to somebody that doesn't own it,
with money that is not yours, for a result you can't see,
and something that will never be proven.**

20 YEARS - HYDRO DAM FINALLY GETS CONSENT !!!



After two decades of delay, obstruction, and bureaucratic churn, the West Coast's Waitaha hydro scheme is finally approved — and it matters.

A 23MW project in the Waitaha Valley, led by Westpower Limited, will deliver reliable, local renewable energy to the West Coast — a region long penalised by distance, high costs, and reliance on a fragile 550km transmission lifeline.

Let's be clear — it is disgraceful that this project took 20 years to get consented. The "looney-left" continually blocked progress — despite claiming we need more renewable energy.

It survived a full public process, a 2016 hearing, and was ultimately declined in 2019. Labour sat on their hands and never helped. This proposal sat in limbo until the fast-track regime cut through the inertia — securing all approvals in just five months. Thanks to the National Party recognising the value to all New Zealanders. That contrast tells its own story.

And the benefits are real:

- **Power for ~12,000 homes each year**
- **Up to 129,000 tonnes of CO₂ avoided annually**
- **Greater resilience in dry years**
- **\$160–200 million of regional investment**
- **70+ jobs during construction**

Yet here's the uncomfortable truth: many of the same voices calling for urgent climate action consistently oppose the very projects that deliver it.

You can't demand decarbonisation while blocking generation.

You can't call for resilience while resisting infrastructure.

The West Coast gets this. When the rain is falling there, it's often not falling elsewhere. Harnessing that advantage is not just logical — it's strategic.

This is what progress looks like: practical, regional, renewable — and finally, delivered.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE INITIATIVES WORKING

The threat of prosecution has been effective at getting students re-enrolled at school, the Associate Education Minister said.

34 cases have been formally notified to the Ministry of Education's

Prosecutions Unit.

17 cases were resolved before a prosecution had to be taken. As of 28 April 2026, one prosecution was underway.

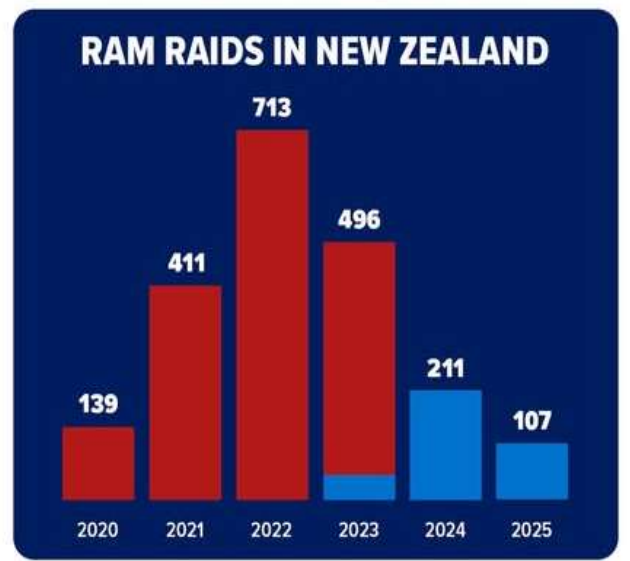


"This is the first time a prosecution related to attendance has gone to court since 2020. As it is before the courts, I will not be commenting on it any further."

In most of the 17 resolved cases the resolution was parents re-enrolling their children in school. It's disappointing to see Labour's education spokesperson already wants to remove the initiative, despite it clearly working to get chronic non-attenders in school.

NOTE: One attendance-related prosecution is currently before the courts but neither the Ministry nor the Minister will provide comment on that, to protect the privacy of the children involved and avoid prejudicing the legal case. Nor will any details be provided on the cases cited above.

This is what happens when you have a Govt that's tough on crime



"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."

US President Dwight D. Eisenhower

FITCH EXPOSES LABOUR'S SECRET TAX AGENDA

A new report from Fitch Ratings has ignited political debate over how New Zealand should return to fiscal balance, highlighting a clear divide between the major parties.

According to National's Finance Minister Nicola Willis, the report suggests a Labour-led government would rely on "revenue measures"—which she argues is code for higher taxes—to reduce deficits.

She is calling on Labour leader Chris Hipkins to clarify what additional taxes may be planned, questioning how Labour can both ringfence revenue from a proposed capital gains tax while also using it to improve the fiscal position.

Chris Hipkins



BEWARE THE BIG BAD WOLF

Willis also points to unresolved fiscal pressures, including pay equity commitments, potential funding gaps, and the loss of dividends under Labour's proposed investment structures. Her argument is that the numbers do not yet add up without further tax increases.

The debate goes to the heart of New Zealand's fiscal outlook - whether to prioritise spending restraint or revenue increases to restore surplus.

The Fitch report has become a political flashpoint, reinforcing the central election question—will fiscal repair come from cutting spending, raising taxes, or a mix of both?

FEWER WOFS - BIG SAVINGS, SAME SAFETY

The Government has announced significant changes to New Zealand's vehicle inspection regime, arguing current rules are outdated and impose unnecessary costs on motorists. Modern vehicles are safer and more reliable, yet New Zealand has required more frequent inspections than many comparable countries. Ireland, Germany, Japan, and Australia inspect every one to two years or at ownership change and achieve comparable or better safety outcomes.

Under the new system, most light vehicles under 14 years old will shift from annual to **two-yearly Wof inspections**, while new vehicles will go **four years before their second check**.

Older vehicles, motorcycles, and rentals will move from six-monthly to **annual inspections**.

The Government estimates these changes will deliver **\$2.6–\$4.1 billion in net benefits over 30 years**, driven by lower compliance costs, reduced time burden, and fewer unnecessary repairs.

International comparisons suggest similar or better safety outcomes can be achieved with less frequent inspections. Most US states, Australian states and Canadian provinces don't even have any mandated regular check. Our new regime is a sensible compromise.

This is a pragmatic reform—reducing costs for motorists while maintaining safety standards, and bringing New Zealand more in line with global practice.

THE PRODUCTIVITY PROBLEM WE KEEP IGNORING

New Zealand doesn't have a work ethic problem—it has a productivity problem. And it's costing us dearly. Put simply, we are not generating enough value per hour worked. Compared to leading OECD economies, we sit around 20–30% behind—and we're not closing the gap. That's why wages feel stuck, businesses struggle to scale, and economic growth underwhelms. The causes are well known—and largely self-inflicted. Too much of our national wealth is tied up in housing instead of productive investment. Too many of our businesses remain small and inward-looking. And too often, regulation—particularly under the Resource Management Act 1991—slows down investment, adds cost, and kills momentum.

Layer on infrastructure deficits, patchy technology uptake, and a long tail of underperforming firms, and the result is predictable: a low-productivity economy. Here's the uncomfortable truth: until we shift capital into productive sectors, scale our businesses, and remove the regulatory handbrake, nothing much will change.

Governments of all stripes talk about growth. But unless they tackle the fundamentals—investment, scale, infrastructure, and regulatory reform—New Zealand will remain stuck in a low-productivity trap. Productivity isn't just an economic issue—it's the issue. This isn't an economic theory. It's a long-term constraint on the country's future prosperity.

If we are serious about lifting wages and living standards, we must act now. We have had decades of talk and conjecture – now it is time for ACTION.

Right now, we're not treating it with anything like the urgency it deserves.



GLOBAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

The IMF has turned distinctly cautious. Earlier 2026 global growth was ~3.3%, but risks are now skewed lower, with scenarios drifting toward ~2.5% if shocks persist.

Global growth remains positive but fragile, with the Iran conflict pushing up energy prices, tightening financial conditions, and lifting recession risks. Public debt is already near record highs and rising. For New Zealand, the outlook is modestly positive—growth around 2–3% and inflation back near target—but the recovery is shallow and highly exposed to global shocks. In short: the world economy is still expanding, but the margin for error has narrowed sharply.

GLOBAL INFLATION EXPECTED TO INCREASE & GROWTH TO WEAKEN
Prior to the onset of conflict in the Middle East, global economic growth had been resilient. Global inflation

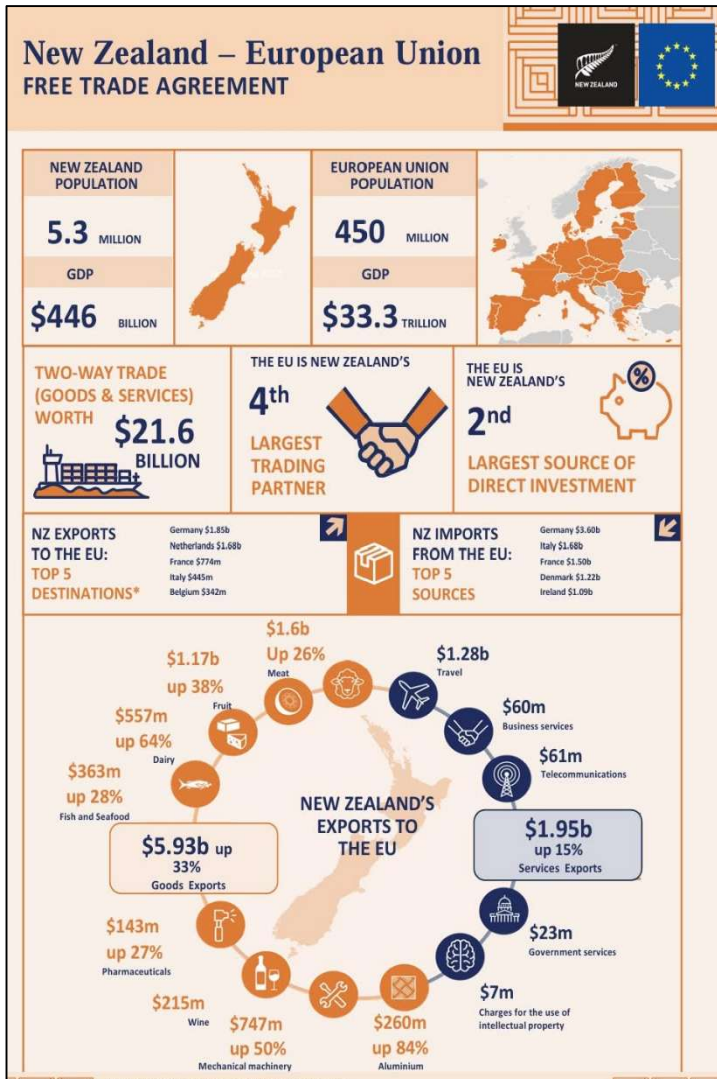
was also generally declining towards respective countries' inflation targets. Disruptions to global supply chains and higher oil prices are likely to lead to higher inflation and weaker growth in the near term, particularly in countries heavily dependent on Middle East oil and gas. This includes many of New Zealand's trading partners in Asia.

SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTIONS

Annual consumers price inflation increased to 3.1% in the December 2025 quarter, slightly above the Committee's 1 to 3% target band. Higher oil prices will result in higher headline inflation in the near term. The extent of this increase will depend on how the conflict in the Middle East evolves and the magnitude and duration of the disruption to supply chains.

NZ TRADING PARTNER REAL GDP (calendar years)

	Annual average % change			
	2024	2025	2026	2027
Australia	1.0	2.0	1.8	1.2
China	5.0	5.0	4.7	4.6
United States	2.8	2.1	1.5	1.6
Japan	-0.2	1.2	0.6	0.8
East Asia ex China	4.5	4.7	4.2	4.2
India	7.1	7.6	6.5	6.7
Euro Zone	0.9	1.5	0.8	1.3
United Kingdom	1.1	1.4	0.7	1.2
NZ trading partners	3.0	3.2	2.7	2.7
World	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.2



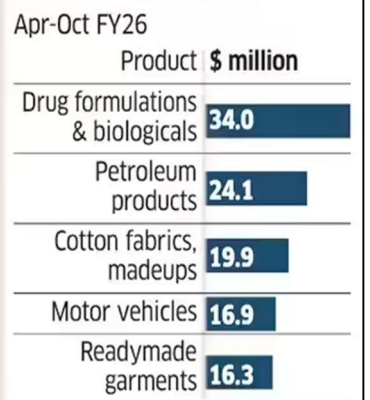
India-NZ trade pact



India-NZ goods trade



India's key exports



FTA aim

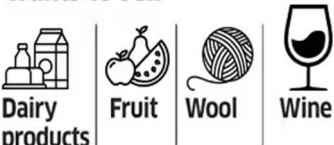
Promote trade flows, investment linkages

Strengthen supply chain resilience

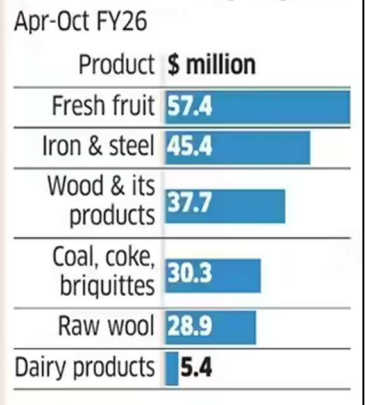
Address goods market access

Resolve tariff, non-tariff barriers

What New Zealand wants to sell



New Zealand's top exports



NEW ZEALAND'S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Population: 5.34 million

The conflict in the Middle East has cast a long shadow across the New Zealand economy, with a softening in demand, rising costs and winding back of plans for hiring.



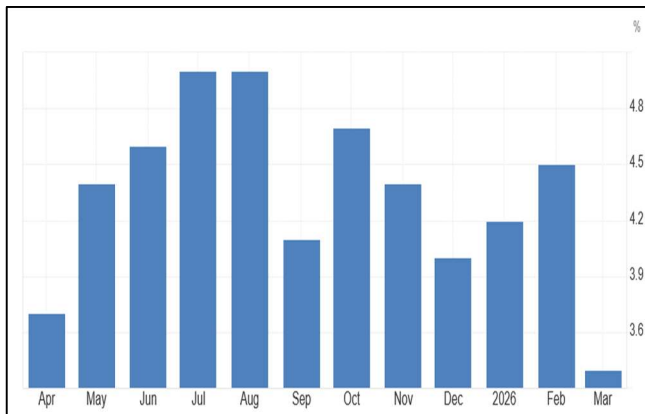
INFLATION

Inflation is already at elevated levels and it's set to take a large step higher over the next few months. All of this leaves the RBNZ with a particularly challenging balancing act. But while there are questions about how quickly the RBNZ will adjust the OCR, the direction of those movements will be upwards.

ANNUAL FOOD INFLATION

Finally some good news - Annual food inflation in New Zealand slowed to 3.4% in March 2026 from 4.5% in the previous month, marking the first monthly moderation in three months.

NEW ZEALAND FOOD INFLATION – TO MAR-26



The latest figure also represented the lowest level since February 2025. The meat, poultry, and fish group rose 7.3% (vs. 7.5% in February), making the largest contribution to the annual increase in food prices, followed by restaurant meals and ready-to-eat food, which rose 2.8% (vs. 2.7% in February).

By contrast, prices for olive oil and free-range eggs fell 7.6% and 10.3%, respectively. On a monthly basis, food prices fell 0.6%, mainly driven by declines in fruit and vegetables (-2.9%) and grocery food (-0.8%).

NZ ECONOMY

New Zealand's economy expanded by 1.3% year-on-year in the three months to December 2025, marking its second consecutive annual growth. This followed a 1.1% expansion in the previous period and was less than the expected 1.7% growth. The rebound was driven by a recovery in primary industries, led by strong growth in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (0.5%, up from -0.1%).

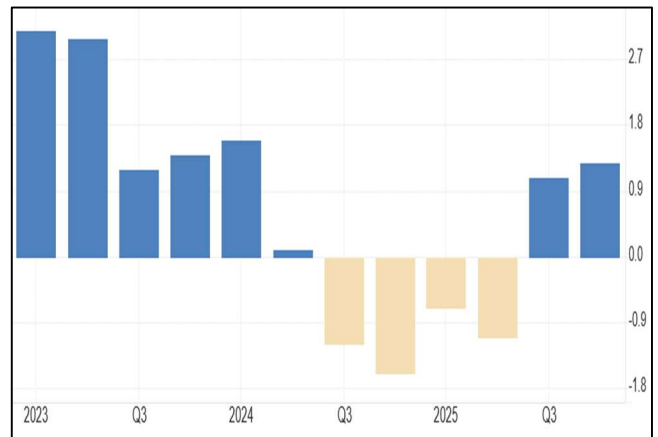
IMF APRIL UPDATE

NZ is in a moderate recovery phase after recession, the IMF reports. Growth is positive but not strong. Inflation is largely under control and the recovery is being helped by:

- Lower interest rates
 - Export demand
 - Gradual pickup in consumption
- But the IMF has flagged several risks:
- Highly exposed to global shocks (energy, trade, tourism)
 - Small, open economy = volatility
 - Recovery is cyclical, not structural (i.e. not yet productivity-driven)

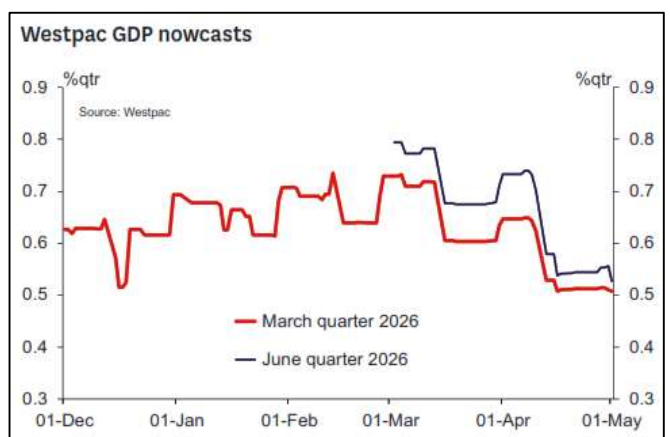
In summary, NZ's recovery was "fragile" even before the latest global shock and energy price spikes and weaker global demand could stall momentum.

NEW ZEALAND ANNUAL GDP GROWTH



RESERVE BANK KEEPS OCR ON HOLD AT 2.25% (8th April 2026)

- The Reserve Bank has left the Official Cash Rate on hold at 2.25%.
- RBNZ warned that "in the near term, inflation is expected to increase and the economic recovery to weaken. The Middle East conflict has disrupted global supply chains, leading to significantly higher prices for oil and refined petroleum products," the monetary policy committee said.
- The Committee has updated its outlook for inflation and now expects the annual Consumers Price Index inflation to peak at 4.2% in the June 2026 quarter.
- Markets viewed the statement as being slightly more hawkish than expected, and the New Zealand dollar rallied by about a quarter of a US cent to US58.18c in response to it.



SOURCE: Westpac, 28-April-26

PRODUCTIVITY REMAINS THE KEY

Productivity is a measure of how efficiently capital and labour are used within the economy to produce outputs of goods and services. A higher productivity rate means a nation can either produce a higher level of goods and services with the same level of inputs or produce the same level of goods and services with a lower level of inputs. Labour productivity primarily takes the hours people work into account, whereas capital productivity only takes capital inputs, such as land, machinery, and equipment, into account.

New Zealand's economy faces a persistent, long-term productivity challenge, characterized by low growth and a substantial gap compared to OECD peers. While workers log high hours, value generation per hour is low, with productivity growth slowing to only roughly 0.2% annually over the past decade. This, combined with low economic growth, is constraining income growth.

New Zealand ranks well below top OECD countries on this measure—and the gap has widened over the past decade. This is the one area of the economy that neither major party has been able to address for more than the past decade.

New Zealand's productivity problem isn't about effort—it's about structure. Too much capital in housing, too many small firms, too little investment in technology and scale. Until those fundamentals

change, sustained wage growth and economic outperformance will remain out of reach.

NZ TREASURY ESTIMATES (YEAR TO 30-JUN-26)

These are the New Zealand Treasury estimates for key New Zealand government expenses for the year to end 30 June 2026:

	Est Total Cost	Est Cost / day
Health	\$33.222 billion	\$91 million
National super	\$24.778 billion	\$68 million
Education	\$21.500 billion	\$59 million
Interest	\$8.895 billion	\$24 million
Job Seeker Scheme	\$4.934 billion	\$13 million
Benefit payments	\$16.319 billion	\$45 billion
(excluding Job Seeker and National Superannuation)		
GDP	\$454.5 billion	\$1,245 million
Core crown expenses	\$149.05 billion	\$408 million
(total government costs)		
Core crown tax revenue	\$124.198 billion	\$340 million
Other crown revenue	\$12.721 billion	\$35 million
Total Beneficiary numbers	1,762,000	Equivalent to the population of Auckland
includes national superannuation)		

NEW ZEALAND POPULATION ESTIMATES

SOURCE: StatsNZ

Ethnicity Year at 30 June	Total people, ethnic group	% change	European or Other (including NZer)	% change	Māori	% change	Pacific + Samoan	% change	Asian	% change	Chinese	% change	Indian	% change	Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	% change
2023	5,200,000		3,493,800		911,200		687,400		973,700		308,300		338,000		103,700	
2024	5,290,100	1.7%	3,487,800	-0.2%	921,000	1.1%	704,400	2.5%	1,063,000	9.2%	319,600	3.7%	370,500	9.6%	111,000	7.0%
2025	5,336,700	0.9%	3,487,100	-0.0%	930,700	1.1%	720,500	2.3%	1,107,700	4.2%	328,000	2.6%	386,300	4.3%	116,900	5.3%
2026	5,387,700	1.0%	3,488,700	0.0%	944,900	1.5%	735,900	2.1%	1,152,000	4.0%	336,600	2.6%	403,000	4.3%	121,900	4.3%
2027	5,440,600	1.0%	3,491,100	0.1%	959,800	1.6%	751,500	2.1%	1,195,700	3.8%	345,500	2.6%	419,800	4.2%	126,800	4.0%
2028	5,494,800	1.0%	3,493,600	0.1%	975,400	1.6%	767,200	2.1%	1,239,800	3.7%	354,400	2.6%	436,600	4.0%	131,900	4.0%
2029	5,549,600	1.0%	3,495,800	0.1%	991,100	1.6%	783,000	2.1%	1,284,200	3.6%	363,500	2.6%	453,300	3.8%	136,900	3.8%
2030	5,604,700	1.0%	3,497,700	0.1%	1,007,000	1.6%	798,900	2.0%	1,329,000	3.5%	372,600	2.5%	469,900	3.7%	142,000	3.7%
2031	5,659,500	1.0%	3,499,200	0.0%	1,023,000	1.6%	814,900	2.0%	1,374,200	3.4%	381,700	2.4%	486,500	3.5%	147,100	3.6%
2032	5,713,700	1.0%	3,499,800	0.0%	1,039,200	1.6%	831,200	2.0%	1,419,400	3.3%	390,900	2.4%	502,900	3.4%	152,200	3.5%
2033	5,767,300	0.9%	3,499,700	-0.0%	1,055,500	1.6%	847,700	2.0%	1,464,700	3.2%	400,000	2.3%	519,300	3.3%	157,500	3.5%
2034	5,820,500	0.9%	3,498,800	-0.0%	1,071,800	1.5%	864,300	2.0%	1,510,100	3.1%	409,000	2.3%	535,500	3.1%	162,800	3.4%
2035	5,873,200	0.9%	3,497,100	-0.0%	1,088,300	1.5%	881,100	1.9%	1,555,600	3.0%	418,000	2.2%	551,700	3.0%	168,200	3.3%
2036	5,925,600	0.9%	3,494,800	-0.1%	1,104,800	1.5%	898,100	1.9%	1,601,300	2.9%	427,100	2.2%	568,000	3.0%	173,700	3.3%
2037	5,977,600	0.9%	3,491,700	-0.1%	1,121,400	1.5%	915,200	1.9%	1,647,200	2.9%	436,100	2.1%	584,300	2.9%	179,200	3.2%
2038	6,029,400	0.9%	3,488,100	-0.1%	1,138,000	1.5%	932,300	1.9%	1,693,400	2.8%	445,100	2.1%	600,600	2.8%	184,900	3.2%
2039	6,080,900	0.9%	3,483,800	-0.1%	1,154,700	1.5%	949,700	1.9%	1,739,800	2.7%	454,100	2.0%	617,100	2.7%	190,700	3.1%
2040	6,132,100	0.8%	3,479,000	-0.1%	1,171,400	1.4%	967,100	1.8%	1,786,600	2.7%	463,200	2.0%	633,700	2.7%	196,500	3.0%

AUSTRALIAN ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Population: 27.6 million

Australia's economy is dominated by the service sector (65% of total GDP). Yet its economic success in recent years has been based on the mining (13.5% of GDP) and agriculture (2% of GDP) as the country is a major exporter of commodities. Other sectors include: manufacturing (11%) and construction (9.5%).



AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY - SOLID ON THE SURFACE, STRAINED UNDERNEATH

The latest assessment from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) paints a picture of an economy that is holding together—but only just.

Australia is tracking toward a “**soft landing**”, with growth expected to sit around **2% in 2026**, supported by earlier interest rate easing and recovering demand. That’s respectable in a sluggish global environment and reflects a still-resilient labour market and the tail end of earlier policy tightening.

UNEMPLOYMENT remains low, and on the surface, the economy looks stable.

But beneath that stability lies a more uncomfortable truth – inflation is proving stubborn.

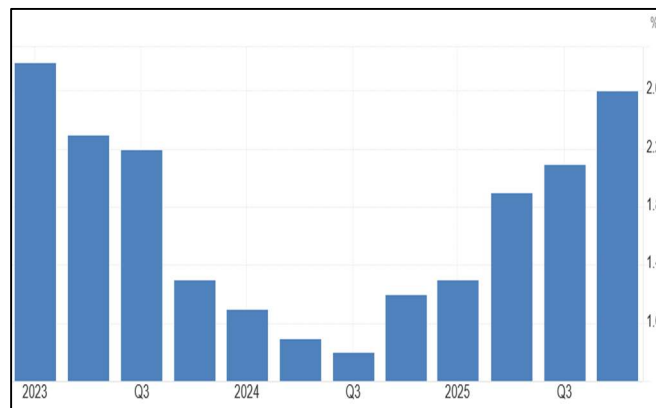
INFLATION Recent updates suggest inflation **at around 4% in 2026**, higher than many advanced economies. The IMF is clear that price pressures—particularly in services—are lingering longer than expected, with inflation unlikely to return to the Reserve Bank’s target band until **well into 2027**. In other words, the cost-of-living squeeze is not going away anytime soon.

This creates a policy bind. Interest rates cannot fall too quickly without risking a resurgence in inflation. However, holding them higher for longer will continue to suppress household demand and business investment. Add in **weak productivity growth**, and the outlook becomes even more constrained.

The real concern, however, is external. Rising geopolitical tensions, volatile energy markets, and slowing global trade all threaten to tip Australia from a soft landing into something harder. The IMF is increasingly warning of a “**stagflation-lite**” scenario—where growth underperforms while inflation remains elevated.

BOTTOM LINE: Australia is performing relatively well—but it is doing so on a narrow ledge. The economy is stable, not strong; resilient, but exposed. The next 12–18 months will be decisive.

AUSTRALIA –ANNUAL GDP GROWTH



KEY RISKS

The IMF is increasingly cautious due to global conditions:

- Energy shocks / Middle East conflict → higher inflation, slower growth.
- Global trade tensions and weaker external demand.
- Risk of “lower growth + higher inflation” (stagflation-lite).

Risks remain skewed to the downside.

UNITED STATES ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Population: 349.03 million

It is predicted that there are at least a 14m undocumented (illegal) migrants in the US currently.

US ECONOMY

US consumers shrugged off the Middle East conflict in March, with retail sales rising a stronger-than-expected 1.7% mth. And while higher spending on fuel was the key driver, spending excluding food and fuel still increased a solid 0.6% mth. In addition, the preliminary Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) is pointed to a rebound in activity in April.

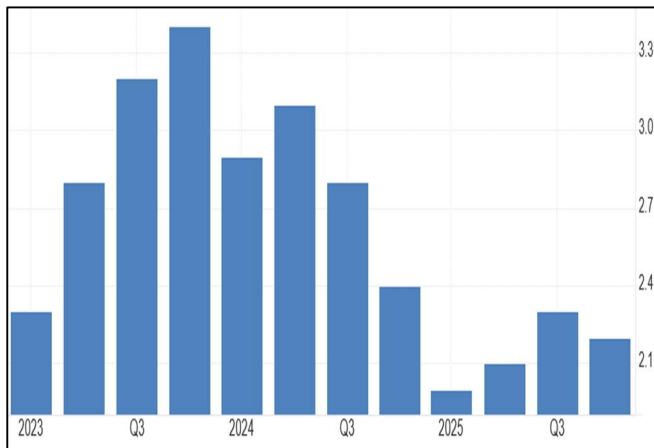
The PMI is considered a leading indicator because it provides a near-real-time snapshot of the economy before official government data like GDP or employment figures are released.

The current key focus will be 29th April’s FOMC meeting. While the Fed’s policy rate is expected to remain unchanged, investors will be interested in Chair Powell’s update on how the Middle East crisis is impacting the economic outlook.

US data flow is highlighted by Friday’s advance Q1 GDP report. Other releases include the Conference Board’s consumer survey, the ISM manufacturing survey and personal spending, income and core inflation data for March.



UNITED STATES – ANNUAL GDP GROWTH RATE



GROWTH

Growth is expected to remain solid at around 2.3–2.5% in 2026, underpinned by strong productivity gains, fiscal stimulus, and earlier interest rate cuts.

The IMF notes that the U.S. has adapted remarkably well to policy shifts, with broad-based productivity setting it apart from global peers. The labour market also remains resilient, with unemployment holding near 4% despite slower job creation.

INFLATION

However, the real issue is inflation. Price pressures have eased only gradually, with tariffs and supply-side factors keeping inflation **above the Federal Reserve's 2% target until at least 2027**. This leaves policymakers walking a tightrope: ease too quickly and inflation resurges; hold too tight and growth slows.

THE MORE STRUCTURAL CONCERN IS FISCAL

THE IMF IS UNUSUALLY BLUNT: U.S. DEFICITS ARE RUNNING AT 7–8% OF GDP, EVEN WITH THE ECONOMY NEAR FULL CAPACITY. PUBLIC DEBT IS ON TRACK TO EXCEED 140% OF GDP, POSING A LONGER-TERM STABILITY RISK NOT JUST DOMESTICALLY, BUT GLOBALLY. Overlay this with rising geopolitical tensions, trade frictions, and energy risks, and the outlook becomes more fragile than headline growth suggests.

IN SUMMARY

The U.S. remains the world's economic engine—but it is increasingly debt-fuelled and policy-sensitive. Growth is strong, but imbalances are building. The IMF's message is clear: performance today is solid, but sustainability tomorrow is far less certain.

Franklin D. Roosevelt served as US President the longest, over twelve years, before dying early in his fourth term in 1945. He is the only U.S. president elected to the office four times, Roosevelt led the United States through two of the greatest crises of the 20th century: the Great Depression and World War II. In so doing, he greatly expanded the powers of the federal government through a series of programs and reforms known as the New Deal.

CHINESE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

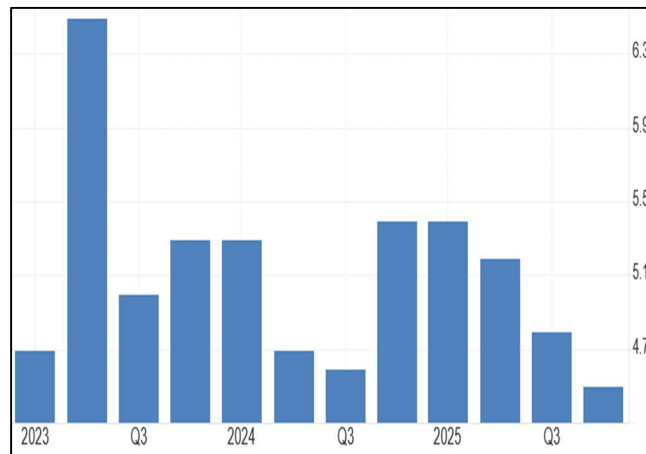
Population: 1.413 billion ↓

CHINESE ECONOMY

China's economy is running at 5% GDP growth for the three months January to March 2026. Considering the effects of the Iran War, this is much stronger than expected.



CHINA – ANNUAL GDP GROWTH RATE



SLOWING GIANT, STRUCTURAL PRESSURES BUILDING

The latest assessment from the IMF highlights an economy in transition—still growing, but increasingly weighed down by structural challenges.

GROWTH

Growth is expected to ease to around 4.5–4.8% in 2026, continuing a gradual slowdown from the high-growth era. China remains a major global driver, but the IMF is clear: the economy is shifting from property- and investment-led growth toward a more consumption-driven model—and that transition is proving uneven.

THE PROPERTY SECTOR

This sector remains the central drag. Ongoing developer stress, weak housing demand, and falling prices continue to undermine confidence, local government revenues, and financial stability. The IMF notes that without deeper restructuring, this sector will keep constraining growth.

INFLATION

Unlike in Western economies, inflation remains subdued, reflecting weak domestic demand. This gives policymakers room to ease—but also signals a lack of momentum in household consumption.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Youth unemployment and cautious consumer behaviour are reinforcing this softness.

POLICY SUPPORT is increasing, with targeted fiscal measures and selective monetary easing. However, the IMF cautions against excessive reliance on short-term stimulus, urging deeper structural reforms—particularly around local government debt, state-owned enterprises, and the financial system.

Externally, China faces rising trade tensions, supply chain shifts, and geopolitical risk, all of which are weighing on exports and investment flows.

IN SUMMARY

China is not collapsing—but it is clearly slowing. Growth remains relatively strong by global standards, yet increasingly fragile. The IMF’s message is blunt - without structural reform, China risks drifting into a prolonged period of lower growth, weaker confidence, and rising financial vulnerability.

UNITED KINGDOM ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

POPULATION: 69.2 million

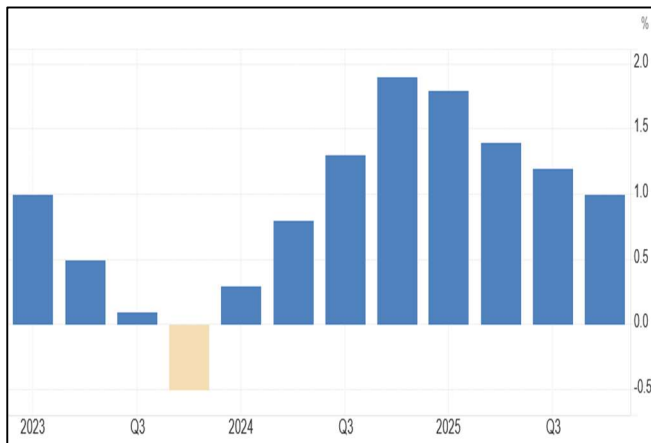
The latest assessment from IMF presents a sobering view of the UK economy—one of the weakest performers among advanced economies, with only a gradual and fragile recovery underway.



GROWTH

Growth is expected to remain subdued at around 1.0–1.3% in 2026, reflecting weak productivity, soft business investment, and lingering structural constraints post-Brexit. While the economy has avoided recession, momentum is thin and easily disrupted.

UNITED KINGDOM – ANNUAL GDP GROWTH RATE



INFLATION

Although easing, inflation is still above the Bank of England’s 2% target, particularly in services and wages. The IMF expects inflation to decline only gradually, meaning interest rates are likely to stay higher for longer than many households and businesses would prefer. This continues to weigh on mortgage holders and consumer spending.

The labour market is cooling but remains tight by historical standards. However, a key concern is the UK’s persistent productivity problem, which is limiting wage growth and long-term economic

potential. Without productivity gains, stronger growth will be difficult to sustain.

Fiscal policy is also constrained. Public debt is high, and the IMF is urging the government to maintain credible fiscal discipline, limiting its ability to stimulate the economy in the short term.

Externally, the UK faces ongoing challenges from weaker European demand, trade frictions, and global uncertainty.

IN SUMMARY

The UK is not in crisis—but it is stuck in low gear. Growth is weak, inflation is sticky, and policy options are limited. The IMF’s message is clear - without structural reform to lift productivity and investment, the UK risks remaining trapped in a prolonged period of economic underperformance.

EUROZONE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

POPULATION: 351.4 million

HUNGARY OUSTS 16-YEAR REIGN OF PRIME MINISTER VIKTOR ORBAN

The defeat of Viktor Orbán on 12th April - after 16 years - marks a significant turning point in European politics.

Orbán had become the leading figure of “illiberal democracy” within the European Union, frequently clashing with Brussels over rule-of-law issues, media freedom, and judicial independence. His loss weakens the bloc of nationalist, Eurosceptic governments that have challenged EU cohesion.

The rise of Péter Magyar as Hungary’s incoming Prime Minister signals a potential realignment. A strong parliamentary majority (expected to be at least a ⅔rd majority) would give him scope to reverse constitutional and institutional changes

made under Orbán, restore closer alignment with EU norms, and unlock frozen EU funding tied to governance concerns. This could strengthen the EU’s internal unity at a time of geopolitical strain.

Internationally, the result is a setback for leaders such as Vladimir Putin, who benefited from Orbán’s relatively Russia-friendly stance, and for populist movements across Europe that saw Hungary as a model. It may also influence the broader European political centre ahead of upcoming elections, reinforcing pro-EU, reformist narratives.

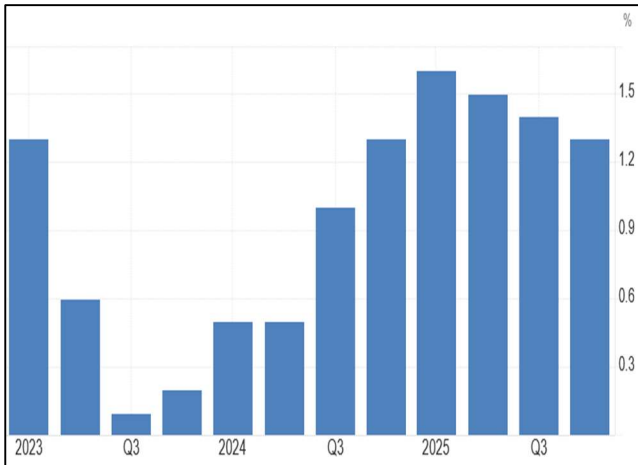
Overall, Hungary’s shift could tilt Europe back toward deeper integration, stronger institutional norms, and



a more unified foreign policy posture—particularly on Russia and regional security.

EU ECONOMY

EUROZONE – ANNUAL GDP GROWTH RATE



The preliminary PMI reports for April pointed to a further dip in euro area sentiment, with the composite PMI falling to a 17-month low of 48.3. Separately, Germany’s ZEW expectations index slumped to a more than 3 year low.

The OECD’s message on Europe remains cautiously positive — but hardly exciting. The EU is the second largest economy in the world.

GROWTH

Growth is running at just 1.2%, well the global average; and **INFLATION** is expected to breach 5% this year.

JAPAN’S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Population: 122.8 million

THE JAPANESE ECONOMY

IMF’s latest assessment highlights a turning point for Japan—inflation is finally back, but sustainable growth remains uncertain.

INFLATION RETURNS, BUT GROWTH STILL ELUSIVE

After decades of deflation, Japan is now experiencing moderate inflation (around 2–2.5%), driven by higher wages and imported cost pressures. This marks a significant shift and has allowed the Bank of Japan to begin normalising ultra-loose monetary policy, including moving away from negative interest rates. However, growth remains modest. The IMF expects GDP growth of around 1% in 2026, reflecting weak domestic demand and a soft external environment. Consumption is improving gradually, supported by wage increases, but households remain cautious after years of stagnant income growth.

DEMOGRAPHICS REMAIN A HUGE ISSUE

A major structural challenge is demographics. Japan’s ageing and shrinking population continues to



constrain labour supply, productivity, and long-term economic potential. The IMF stresses that without stronger labour market reforms—particularly increasing female and older worker participation—growth will remain limited.

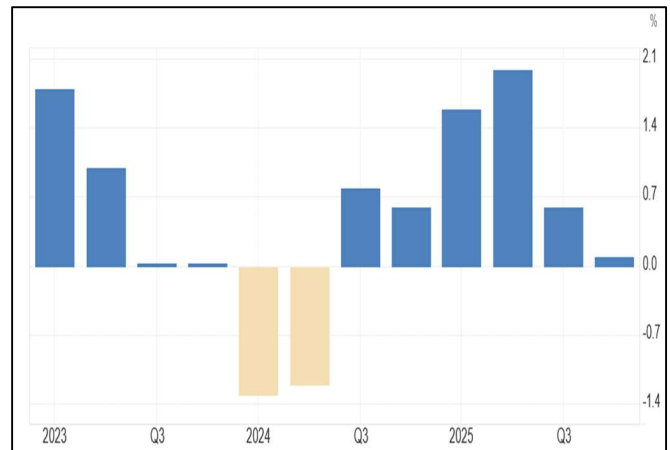
PUBLIC DEBT

Japan’s fiscal position is another concern. Public debt remains extremely high (over 250% of GDP), leaving little room for large-scale fiscal stimulus without risking long-term sustainability.

On the positive side, corporate reforms and improved governance are supporting better capital allocation and shareholder returns. Export sectors remain competitive, although vulnerable to global slowdowns and currency volatility.

Bottom line - Japan is finally exiting its deflationary era, but not yet achieving strong growth. Inflation is a milestone, not a solution. The IMF’s message is clear: without deeper structural reform, Japan risks remaining a low-growth economy despite this long-awaited policy shift.

JAPAN – ANNUAL GDP GROWTH RATE



But the structural challenges remain severe: an ageing and shrinking population, weak productivity, and very high government debt.

THE IRAN WAR adds risk through higher energy import costs, given Japan’s heavy reliance on imported fuel.

THE REALITY: Japan is stabilising — but long-term growth remains constrained by demographics and debt.

INDIA’S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Population: 1.476 billion

India has overtaken China as the highest population nation in the world.

FASTEST GROWTH, BUT NOT WITHOUT FRICTION

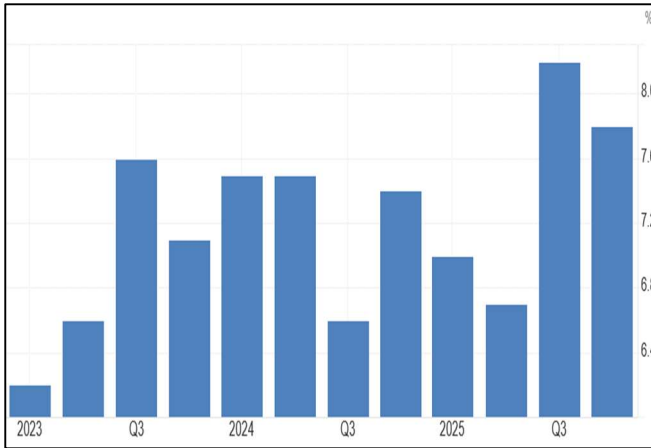
The IMF positions India as the **standout growth engine** of the global economy—yet one still facing meaningful structural constraints.



GROWTH

Growth is forecast at a robust **6.5–6.8% in 2026**, making India the fastest-growing major economy. This expansion is being driven by **strong domestic demand**, rising infrastructure investment, and a rapidly growing middle class. Government capital spending and digital transformation are also supporting productivity and formalisation across the economy.

INDIA – ANNUAL GROWTH RATE



INFLATION

Inflation is relatively contained compared to many peers, expected to sit around **4–4.5%**, broadly within the Reserve Bank of India target band. This provides policymakers with more flexibility than most advanced economies, although food price volatility remains a recurring risk.

PUBLIC DEBT

The IMF highlights India's **fiscal discipline improving**, but public debt remains elevated, and continued consolidation will be important to maintain investor confidence.

Structurally, India's outlook is positive—but not without challenges. Labour market participation, particularly among women, remains low. Job creation must accelerate to absorb a young and expanding workforce. Infrastructure gaps, while narrowing, still constrain efficiency in some regions.

Externally, India is benefiting from **global supply chain diversification**, attracting investment as companies look beyond China. However, it remains exposed to energy price shocks and global trade disruptions.

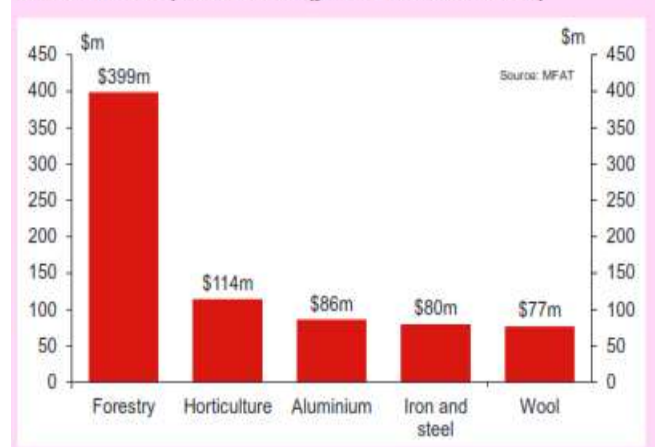
IN SUMMARY

India is the global growth leader—and likely to remain so. But scale brings complexity. The IMF's message is clear - strong momentum today must be matched with sustained reform to ensure that rapid growth translates into durable, broad-based prosperity.

NEW ZEALAND / INDIA FTA FINALISED

The recently signed free trade agreement with India aims to provide improved access for New Zealand exporters to the India's market of around 1.4b consumers. The agreement will see the removal of tariffs on 57% of our exports on day one, rising to 82% over time.

New Zealand exports to India (year to December 2025)



There will also be a sharp reduction in tariffs on a further 13% of our exports. Key products that will see improved access include forestry products, sheep meat, wool, coal, seafood, horticultural products, wine and mānuka honey.

With regards to dairy, the agreement includes a commitment to implement a dedicated fast-track mechanism to facilitate the supply of New Zealand products duty-free to India for further manufacturing and export. Tariffs on some products, like bulk infant formula, will be phased out over seven years.

Tariffs will also be removed on Indian goods imported into New Zealand, which should lower prices for Indian goods purchased by New Zealanders such as electrical goods, machinery, fabric and textiles. MFAT expects the benefits of the FTA to grow over time as India's economy continues to expand.

“The most common error of a smart engineer is to optimize a thing which should not exist.”

Elon Musk

COMMODITIES

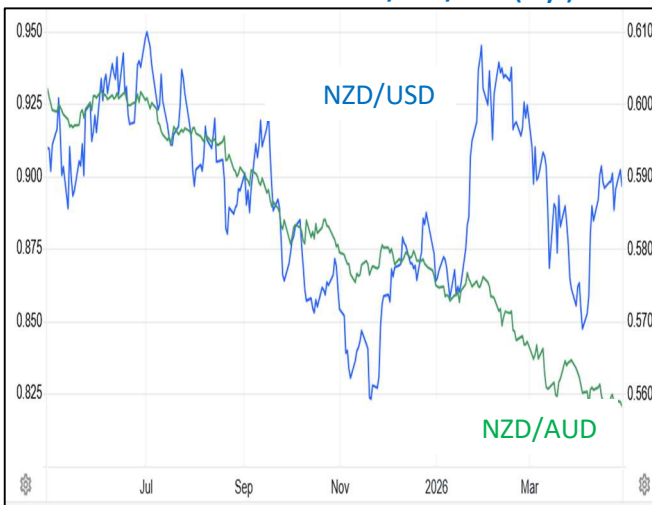
NZ FOREIGN EXCHANGE

The NZ dollar (NZD) remains soft and volatile, reflecting a mix of domestic weakness and global forces. A widening current account deficit and relatively weak productivity are weighing on the currency, while interest rate differentials—particularly with the U.S. Federal Reserve—continue to favour the US dollar.

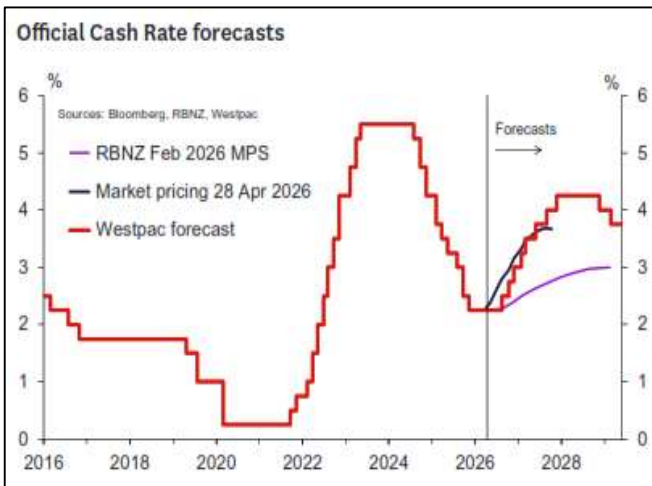
Commodity prices (especially dairy) are providing some support, but not enough to offset broader pressures. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand faces a delicate balance - cutting rates risks further NZD weakness, while holding firm constrains growth.

In short - the NZD is likely to remain range-bound but biased lower, highly sensitive to global risk sentiment.

NZ EXCHANGE RATES – NZD/USD/AUD (1-yr)



	Historical data				F'cast
	Spot	3mth range	5yr range	5yr avg	Dec-26
USD	0.575	0.573-0.605	0.553-0.728	0.623	0.62
AUD	0.837	0.824-0.871	0.824-0.971	0.916	0.85
EUR	0.500	0.491-0.511	0.484-0.637	0.564	0.52
GBP	0.433	0.427-0.444	0.426-0.531	0.483	0.45
JPY	92.1	90.2-94.4	74.7-98.6	85.9	95.5



SOURCE: Westpac, 28-April-26

OIL – BRENT CRUDE

Brent crude futures climbed above \$111 per barrel in the last week of April, advancing toward levels last seen in March as stalled efforts to end the US–Iran conflict and reopen the Strait of Hormuz kept markets on edge.

President Trump was reportedly dissatisfied with Iran’s latest proposal, with Tehran’s nuclear program remaining a central point of contention in negotiations.

BRENT CRUDE (5-YR)



NOTE: New Zealand trades in Brent Crude Oil

BRENT CRUDE (10-YR)



Iran conveyed through Pakistan that hostilities could cease if Washington lifted its naval blockade, agreed to a revised framework for transit through Hormuz, and provided assurances against future military action.

Now in its ninth week, the conflict has pushed energy prices higher and disrupted supply across key markets, while the International Energy Agency has warned of an unprecedented supply shock alongside rising risks of a demand slowdown. Flows through the Strait of Hormuz, typically accounting for roughly 20% of global energy consumption, remain effectively halted, sustaining upward pressure on prices.

GOLD

Gold fell toward \$4,600 an ounce at the end of April, extending losses as investors assessed renewed diplomatic efforts to resolve the US–Iran conflict, which has triggered a historic energy supply shock and intensified inflation concerns.

GOLD (1-YR)



GOLD (10-YR)



BITCOIN

Quantum computers are arriving sooner than we think. They pose a huge threat to Bitcoin, which relies on cryptographic codes to remain secure.

Fewer qubits may be required from quantum computers to breach the cryptographic codes of Bitcoin and Ethereum, Google has suggested. They believe it

may take only 500,000 qubits, a figure that is 20 times lower than previous estimates. All of this has been derived from studies by Google Researchers, meaning Q-Day may arrive sooner than we think.

BITCOIN (1-YR)



BITCOIN (10-YR)



THE FUTURE OF CRYPTOCURRENCY

Quantum computers are arriving sooner than we think. They pose a huge threat to Bitcoin, which relies on cryptographic codes to remain secure. The double whammy of unstable global politics and the threat of Quantum computing seems to be cooling the desire for cryptocurrency. Inflows to spot ETFs cooled, suggesting more traditional investors and those with low-risk appetites are turning away from it.

AGRIBUSINESS – LOOKING FROM THE OUTSIDE IN



BEEF + LAMB CHAIR POSITIVE FOR HER SECTOR

Kate Acland, chair of Beef + Lamb NZ commented on the Mid-Season Update report, saying the average farm profit is forecast to climb to \$287,600/farm in 2025-26.

She said: “Red meat farmers are expected to generate \$8.5 billion on-farm this year and spend \$16 million every day on goods and services, largely in their local communities.”

FONTERRA APPOINTS NEW CEO

Fonterra's appointment of **Richard Allen** as CEO indicates that the co-op wants someone who understands its strategic direction after its consumer divestment sale.

Allen will step into the CEO role on May 1, with Hurrell staying with Fonterra in an advisory role until September to assist with the leadership transition.

McBride said Allen is an exceptional leader who will bring to the CEO role a strong connection with farmer-shareholders and customers, and a deep knowledge of Fonterra's global operations and markets.

"Richard is passionate about our co-operative. His most recent role is president global ingredients, responsible for Fonterra's Ingredients sales, optimisation, risk management, trading and global manufacturing.

"He joined Fonterra as a graduate in 2008 and since then his career has spanned our global supply chain. He led our farmer facing business Farm Source for five years, has worked in China as vice-president of our foodservice business, was the founding CEO of MyMilk, and more recently served as president Atlantic based in Chicago, responsible for relationships with a number of our global key accounts."



NORTHLAND LOOKS AT WTANOL OPPORTUNITY

SOURCE: Farmers Weekly, 15-April-26

A proposed maize-to-ethanol plant in Northland is gaining momentum as New Zealand reassesses its heavy reliance on imported energy following recent global disruptions.

Backed by iwi and industry, the concept would use locally grown maize to produce biofuel, while leveraging Brazil's well-established ethanol expertise. Brazil—where plant-based ethanol already supplies nearly half of light vehicle fuel demand—is rapidly expanding its corn ethanol sector, highlighting the potential for New Zealand to follow on a smaller, tailored scale.

The proposal centres on producing around 50 million litres of ethanol annually, potentially including sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), with Marsden Point identified as a strategic hub for storage and distribution. However, the scale is ambitious: it would require up to 150,000 tonnes of maize annually—close to New Zealand's entire current production.



Supporters believe Northland has untapped potential, with around 100 farmers capable of supplying feedstock under contract. For Māori landowners in particular, the opportunity is significant, though access to capital remains a key barrier—highlighting the importance of long-term offtake agreements.

Beyond energy security, the project offers wider economic benefits, including regional development and stronger agri-business links with Brazil. It could also reduce reliance on imported feed supplements, given ethanol by-products are already widely used in New Zealand's livestock sector.

A feasibility study, expected to be confirmed shortly, will be critical in determining whether the concept stacks up commercially. If viable, it represents a bold step toward energy resilience and regional growth.

For my money – if this proposition stacks up, then Central Government should be investing and not granting funds (maybe investing as high as say 30%).

IS THE PROPOSED RMA REFORMS FLAWED?

SOURCE: Farmers Weekly, 13-April-26



Waikato farmer Don Coles has raised serious concerns about the environmental limit-setting framework in the proposed replacement for the Resource Management Act, warning it risks unfairly penalising landowners.

Under the new system, central government will set environmental limits for water and ecosystems, while regional councils will enforce them across defined "management units."

However, there is currently no clear method for determining responsibility when those limits are breached—particularly where contamination may be diffuse, naturally occurring, or generated by multiple sources.

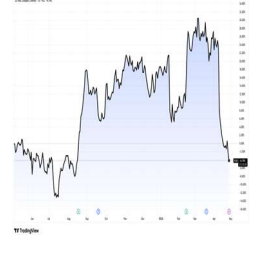
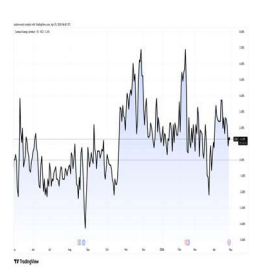
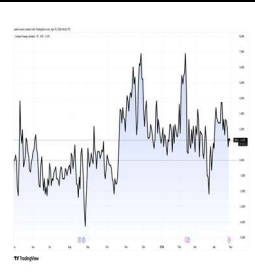
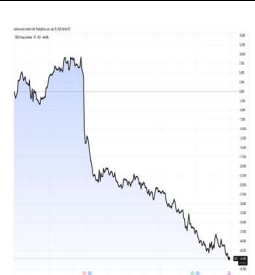
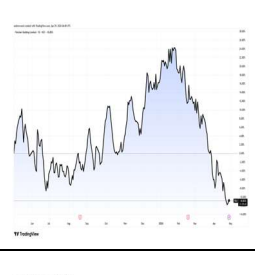
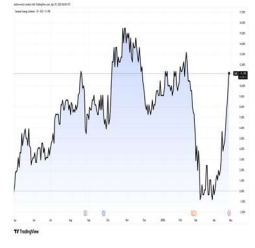
The core issue is attribution. If a river exceeds a contaminant threshold, it may be extremely difficult—scientifically and legally—to identify which landowner is responsible, or in what proportion. This creates a risk that compliant farmers could still face penalties simply because they operate within a failing management zone.

Don argues this approach undermines natural justice, effectively creating "guilt by association rather than action." There are also concerns about the economic impact, with action plans potentially imposing significant compliance costs on affected landowners.

More broadly, the criticism is that the policy has not been sufficiently tested in real-world conditions before being embedded in legislation.

STOCKS TO WATCH NEW ZEALAND

PRICES AS AT 30TH APRIL 2026

ALL GRAPHS ARE ONE YEAR	THE A2 MILK COMPANY	Research: 20 th April	NZX Code: ATM Share Price: \$8.63 12mth Target: \$9.40 Projected return (%) Capital gain 8.9% Dividend yield (Net) 1.5% Total return 10.4% Rating: NEUTRAL 52-week price range: 7.80-11.90
	<p>ATM's full year result is likely to be below expectations, due to supply chain problems in China. It had re-established strong earnings momentum, driven by infant formula growth in China and improving brand positioning, but this was curtailed due to the US/Iran war. FY25 delivered NPAT of ~\$203m (+21%), with revenue nearing \$1.9bn and the company initiating dividends. Recent 1H26 results confirm continued growth, with profit up ~9%. However, the investment case remains China-dependent, exposed to declining birth rates and competitive pressures. Bottom line: a recovering growth stock with strong margins and balance sheet — but higher risk than infrastructure peers due to market concentration. 2026 P/E: 35.0 2027 P/E: 32.0 2026 EPS: 29.5 2027 EPS: 32.0</p>	Research: 28 th April	NZX Code: AIA Share Price: \$8.20 12mth Target: \$8.14 Projected return (%) Capital gain -0.7% Dividend yield (Net) 1.7% Total return 1.0% Rating: NEUTRAL 52-week price range: 7.36-9.18
	<p>AIA is a core NZ infrastructure asset, benefiting from the recovery in international travel and strong commercial property income. FY25 delivered underlying profit of ~\$310m (+12%), with continued passenger growth and revenue exceeding \$1bn. Momentum remains positive, with FY26 guidance of \$295–320m and improving connectivity supporting earnings growth. However, heavy capital expenditure (>\$1bn annually) and regulatory scrutiny on pricing constrain near-term returns. This is a high-quality, long-duration growth asset — but capital-intensive, with valuation reflecting future expansion rather than current yield. The cost of fuel adds risk to AIA's traveller throughput – suggesting caution. 2026 P/E: 44.0 2027 P/E: 40.0 2026 EPS: 18.0 2027 EPS: 19.5</p>	Research: 27 th April	NZX Code: CEN Share Price: \$9.44 12mth Target: \$10.93 Projected return (%) Capital gain 15.8% Dividend yield (Net) 3.1% Total return 18.9% Rating: OVERWEIGHT 52-week price range: 8.71-9.90
	<p>CEN is a leading NZ electricity generator-retailer, increasingly positioned around renewables (geothermal, hydro) and decarbonisation. FY25 delivered NPAT of ~\$331m (+13%), with strong EBITDAF growth driven by geothermal expansion and improved wholesale conditions. The outlook is positive, supported by the Manawa Energy acquisition and rising demand for electrification. Dividends remain a key attraction, with FY25 total DPS of 39c and guidance for gradual increases. Bottom line: a high-yield, defensive utility with steady growth — though capital intensity and regulatory exposure temper upside. 2026 P/E: 19.0 2027 P/E: 18.0 2026 EPS: 43.0 2027 EPS: 45.0</p>	Research: 25 th April	NZX Code: EBO Share Price: \$21.27 12mth Target: \$29.00 Projected return (%) Capital gain 36.3% Dividend yield (Net) 6.3% Total return 42.6% Rating: OVERWEIGHT 52-week price range: 20.85-41.98
	<p>Broker sentiment on EBOS Group is constructively positive but cautious. Consensus ratings remain firmly “Buy”, with most analysts pointing to defensive healthcare exposure, scale advantages, and steady earnings growth of around 8–10% annually. However, near-term expectations have softened and analysts have trimmed price targets (mid-\$30s range) and earnings forecasts following cost pressures—particularly fuel, logistics, and margin compression. Valuation is now seen as undemanding (below long-term averages), which supports upside if execution improves. Analysts broadly like EBOS for its defensive growth and market position, but see limited short-term catalysts, with recovery dependent on margin stabilisation and cost control. 2026 P/E: 17.9 2027 P/E: 15.5 2026 EPS: A126c 2027 EPS: A140c</p>	Research: 28 th April	NZX Code: FBU Share Price: \$2.77 12mth Target: \$4.32 Projected return (%) Capital gain 56.0% Dividend yield (Net) 0.0% Total return 56.0% Rating: OVERWEIGHT 52-week price range: 2.65-3.97
	<p>FBU is priced as a turnaround rather than a growth stock. FY26 reflects a low earnings base, but FY27 points to a sharp recovery as restructuring gains and margins normalise. Execution—not macro—will determine whether that rebound is delivered. Following the announced sale of the Construction division, analysts reduced the company-specific equity risk premium applied to FBU. The investment case hinges on execution—if earnings rebound, the multiple quickly looks reasonable. 2026 P/E: 22.1 2027 P/E: 16.8 2026 EPS: 13.8 2027 EPS: 21.5</p>	Research: 28 th April	NZX Code: GNE Share Price: \$2.44 12mth Target: \$3.05 Projected return (%) Capital gain 25.3% Dividend yield (Net) 6.5% Total return 31.8% Rating: NEUTRAL 52-week price range: 2.13-2.56
	<p>GNE is seen as a defensive yield stock rather than a growth story. It has reliable income, but limited upside unless execution on renewables materially lifts earnings. The key issue is growth. Analysts expect flat to modest earnings, with EPS forecasts broadly stable and long-term growth limited to low single digits. Revenue is even expected to decline slightly, reflecting portfolio reshaping and customer attrition. That said, sentiment is supported by strong cashflows, dividends, and progress on renewables, including solar and battery investments under the Gen35 strategy. 2026 P/E: 14.0 2027 P/E: 15.0 2026 EPS: 18.0 2027 EPS: 17.0</p>	Research: 28 th April	NZX Code: GNE Share Price: \$2.44 12mth Target: \$3.05 Projected return (%) Capital gain 25.3% Dividend yield (Net) 6.5% Total return 31.8% Rating: NEUTRAL 52-week price range: 2.13-2.56

My thoughts are to remain invested
- but focus your New Zealand portfolio on defensive monopolistic utilities.
Globally, stock picking is harder
- I suggest using Investment Trusts to give your portfolio a good global spread.

	<p>INFRATIL Research: 29th April</p> <p>IFT remains one of New Zealand's premier listed infrastructure investors, with diversified exposure across renewable energy, data centres (CDC), telecommunications (One NZ), airports, and healthcare. FY25 delivered strong operational EBITDAF of ~\$986m (+8.6%), driven by digital infrastructure and energy assets. The growth outlook remains robust, underpinned by structural demand for data centres and decarbonisation. However, earnings are complex (non-GAAP), capital-intensive, and valuation (~low-20s P/E) reflects growth expectations. Bottom line: a high-quality, growth-oriented infrastructure compounder — less about yield, more about long-term capital growth.</p> <p>2026 P/E: 22.0 2027 P/E: 20.0 2026 EPS: 46.0 2027 EPS: 50.0</p>	<p>NZX Code: IFT Share Price: \$12.40 12mth Target: \$14.97 Projected return (%) Capital gain 20.7% Dividend yield (Net) 1.4% Total return 22.1% Rating: BUY 52-week price range: 10.02-12.85</p>
	<p>MERCURY ENERGY Research: 29th April</p> <p>MCY remains a high-quality, low-drama performer that generates renewable power and produces a steady dividend stream for investors. Its core assets are hydro (Waikato River), geothermal and wind. It remains New Zealand's largest renewable electricity generator/retailer. Analysts are attracted to Mercury's earnings growth profile (~15–18% EPS growth), driven by strong hydro generation, operational upgrades, and improved wholesale electricity pricing. However, revenue growth is expected to remain low (~1%), highlighting limited top-line expansion. This stock is viewed as a quality renewable utility with growth optionality, supported by capital investment and electrification trends. This is a defensive growth utility—more upside than peers, but valuation and capital intensity remain key watchpoints.</p> <p>2026 P/E: 23.0 2027 P/E: 20.0 2026 EPS: 22.0 2027 EPS: 35.0</p>	<p>NZX Code: MCY Share Price: \$6.71 12mth Target: \$7.40 Projected return (%) Capital gain 10.3% Dividend yield (Net) 3.5% Total return 13.8% Rating: OVERWEIGHT 52-week price range: 5.60-6.96</p>
	<p>PORT OF TAURANGA Research: 30th April</p> <p>Port of Tauranga remains New Zealand's dominant freight gateway, benefiting from scale, strong export flows (particularly dairy and forestry), and resilient joint-venture earnings. FY25 results were solid, with underlying NPAT of ~\$126m and dividends of 16.7cps, reflecting stable cash generation. Expect FY26 Earnings of ~\$135m and dividend of 17.5cps & FY27 Earnings of ~\$142m and a dividend of 18.5cps. Near-term momentum is positive, with FY26 interim profit up 16.6%, supported by volume growth and operational efficiencies. However, growth remains constrained by capacity limits and regulatory delays (e.g. Stella Passage), while valuation appears full relative to modest earnings growth. Once "Stellar Passage is resolved expect a strong 10-year growth profile. Overall, POT is a high-quality, income-oriented infrastructure stock with limited upside but strong defensive characteristics.</p> <p>2026 P/E: 29.0 2027 P/E: 27.0 2026 EPS: 27.5 2027 EPS: 29.0</p>	<p>NZX Code: POT Share Price: \$8.27 12mth Target: \$7.50 Projected return (%) Capital gain -9.3% Dividend yield (Net) 2.3% Total return -7.0% Rating: NEUTRAL 52-week price range: 6.11-8.35</p>
	<p>SCALES CORPORATION Research: 19th April</p> <p>Analyst sentiment on SCL is positive but nuanced, reflecting strong recent performance alongside emerging risks. They are encouraged by strong recent earnings growth, particularly from horticulture and logistics, and ongoing expansion in premium apple varieties. However, forward expectations are more tempered. EPS growth is expected to slow or even decline, with some forecasts pointing to weaker earnings momentum over the next few years. There are also emerging concerns around earnings quality and dividend sustainability, which have been flagged as risks in recent updates. Bottom line - brokers view Scales as a high-quality agribusiness with solid momentum, but with increasing execution and earnings risks, making it attractive—but no longer without caution.</p> <p>2026 P/E: 15.0 2027 P/E: 19.2 2026 EPS: 38.0 2027 EPS: 33.2</p>	<p>NZX Code: SCL Share Price: \$6.08 12mth Target: \$6.35 Projected return (%) Capital gain 4.4% Dividend yield (Net) 4.0% Total return 8.4% Rating: OVERWEIGHT 52-week price range: 4.15-6.41</p>
	<p>SKY CITY ENTERTAINMENT Research: 29th April</p> <p>Broker sentiment on SKC is positive but high risk, with consensus leaning towards "Buy" despite operational challenges. Analysts see significant upside (50–70%+) to price targets, reflecting depressed current valuation and recovery potential. The investment case centres the NZICC convention centre opening, and potential online gaming upside. However, sentiment is tempered by high debt, regulatory risks, and execution uncertainty, particularly in Australia. Brokers view SkyCity as a leveraged recovery play—high upside if execution improves, but with elevated risk compared to other NZ consumer stocks.</p> <p>2026 P/E: 19.4 2027 P/E: 12.0 2026 EPS: 4.0 2027 EPS: 7.0</p>	<p>NZX Code: SKC Share Price: \$0.63 12mth Target: \$0.90 Projected return (%) Capital gain 44.0% Dividend yield (Net) 4.0% Total return 48.0% Rating: OVERWEIGHT 52-week price range: 0.65-1.49</p>
	<p>TOURISM HOLDINGS Research: 29th April</p> <p>Sentiment for THL remains positive but cautious, reflecting a cyclical recovery story with execution risk. Analysts generally lean towards "Overweight", supported by strong expected earnings growth (~35–40% p.a.) as tourism demand normalises and restructuring benefits flow through. Price targets imply meaningful upside (30–40%), suggesting the stock is viewed as undervalued relative to recovery potential. However, sentiment is tempered by balance sheet leverage, earnings volatility, and recent downgrades, with FY26 still seen as a transition year. THL is seen as a leveraged tourism recovery play - high upside, but with cyclical and execution risks.</p> <p>2026 P/E: 11.0 2027 P/E: 9.0 2026 EPS: 20.8 2027 EPS: 29.6</p>	<p>NZX Code: THL Share Price: \$2.02 12mth Target: \$3.39 Projected return (%) Capital gain 67.8% Dividend yield (Net) 3.8% Total return 71.6% Rating: OVERWEIGHT 52-week price range: 0.63-1.17</p>

NEW ZEALAND EQUITIES WATCH LIST

AS AT 30TH APRIL 2026

NEW ZEALAND EQUITY WATCH LIST as at 30-April-2026		Rating	30-Apr-26 Price	31-Mar-26 Price	Monthly % Change	Annual % Change	12-month Target
AIA	Auckland International Airport	NEUTRAL	\$8.25	\$7.97	3.5%	(5.2%)	8.14
ATM	A2 Milk Company	NEUTRAL	\$8.67	\$11.55	(24.9%)	(76.2%)	9.40
CEN	Contact Energy	OVERWEIGHT	\$9.50	\$9.25	2.7%	(0.9%)	10.93
CHI	Channel Infrastructure	UNDERWEIGHT	\$3.04	\$2.90	4.8%	(0.9%)	2.52
CNU	Chorus	UNDERWEIGHT	\$9.73	\$9.38	3.7%	(0.7%)	8.51
EBO	Ebos Group	OVERWEIGHT	\$21.28	\$22.25	(4.4%)	4.4%	29.00
FBU	Fletcher Building	OVERWEIGHT	\$2.79	\$2.95	(5.4%)	2.9%	4.32
FPH	Fisher & Paykel Healthcare	NEUTRAL	\$36.55	\$37.39	(2.2%)	(12.0%)	39.30
FRW	Freightways	UNDERWEIGHT	\$12.65	\$12.00	5.4%	1.8%	11.43
HGH	Heartland Group	NEUTRAL	\$1.13	\$1.19	(5.0%)	1.5%	1.15
IFT	Infratil	BUY	\$12.47	\$11.65	7.0%	(2.1%)	14.97
MCY	Mercury	OVERWEIGHT	\$6.70	\$6.24	7.4%	0.5%	7.40
MEL	Meridian Energy	OVERWEIGHT	\$5.68	\$5.53	2.7%	(0.9%)	6.51
MFT	Mainfreight	OVERWEIGHT	\$59.00	\$57.79	2.1%	19.3%	72.00
NZX	NZX	OVERWEIGHT	\$1.40	\$1.31	6.9%	(0.3%)	1.83
OCA	Oceania Healthcare	NEUTRAL	\$0.75	\$0.70	6.4%	0.4%	0.84
POT	Port of Tauranga	NEUTRAL	\$8.30	\$7.78	6.7%	(0.1%)	6.44
RYM	Ryman Healthcare	NEUTRAL	\$2.12	\$2.12	0.0%	6.5%	2.94
SCL	Scales Corporation	OVERWEIGHT	\$6.07	\$5.95	2.0%	0.5%	6.15
SKC	Sky City Entertainment Group	OVERWEIGHT	\$0.635	\$0.70	(9.3%)	1.7%	0.95
SKL	Skellerup	OVERWEIGHT	\$5.87	\$5.20	12.9%	0.9%	5.40
SPK	Spark	OVERWEIGHT	\$2.08	\$2.07	0.5%	2.9%	2.82
SUM	Summerset Group Holdings	NEUTRAL	\$8.16	\$8.88	(8.1%)	0.5%	11.96
THL	Tourism Holdings	OVERWEIGHT	\$2.07	\$2.18	(5.0%)	1.3%	3.39
VCT	Vector	NEUTRAL	\$4.85	\$4.72	2.8%	0.5%	4.79

COMPARISON OF NZX50 INDEX v ASX200 (1-year)



AUSTRALIAN EQUITIES WATCH LIST

AS AT 30TH APRIL 2026

AUSTRALIAN EQUITY WATCH LIST as at 30-April-2026		Rating	30-Apr-26 Price (A\$)	31-Mar-26 Price (A\$)	Monthly % Change	28-Apr-25 Price (A\$)	Annual % Change	12-month Target (A\$)
ALL.AX	Aristocrat Leisure	N	47.28	45.13	4.8%	67.66	(30.1%)	72.00
ALQ.AX	ALS	U	21.28	36.07	(41.0%)	17.28	23.1%	18.40
ANZ.AX	ANZ Banking Group	O	36.65	37.64	(2.6%)	30.36	20.7%	35.00
BHP.AX	BHP Billiton*	N	53.72	50.50	6.4%	38.08	41.1%	48.28
CBA.AX	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	S	173.66	169.54	2.4%	169.66	2.4%	100.00
CSL.AX	CSL	O	124.37	141.03	(11.8%)	256.41	(51.5%)	283.00
CWY.AX	Cleanaway Waste Management	O	2.22	2.27	(2.2%)	2.63	(15.6%)	3.00
IGO.AX	IGO	N	7.43	7.97	(6.8%)	3.94	88.6%	5.15
JHX.AX	James Hardie Industries	O	29.1	25.74	13.1%	37.72	(22.9%)	37.17
MQG.AX	Macquarie Group*	N	235.08	199.70	17.7%	197.97	18.7%	220.00
NAB.AX	National Australia Bank	U	39.88	41.60	(4.1%)	36.49	9.3%	29.00
NXT.AX	NEXTDC*	O	14.24	11.30	26.0%	12.55	13.5%	21.02
QBE.AX	QBE Insurance Group	O	22.34	21.42	4.3%	21.55	3.7%	21.30
RHC.AX	Ramsay Health Care	O	38.98	39.65	(1.7%)	34.29	13.7%	42.40
RIO.AX	Rio Tinto*	N	167.4	161.00	4.0%	116.66	43.5%	153.55
RMD.AX	Resmed	O	29.78	31.93	(6.7%)	37.26	(20.1%)	45.10
S32.AX	South32*	N	4.03	4.40	(8.4%)	2.83	42.4%	4.32
SEK.AX	Seek	B	13.84	13.64	1.5%	21.61	(36.0%)	29.80
TCL.AX	Transurban Group	N	14	14.05	(0.4%)	14.38	(2.6%)	13.60
TLS.AX	Telstra Group	O	5.32	5.34	(0.4%)	4.58	16.2%	4.80
WDS.AX	Woodside Energy	O	33.55	35.22	(4.7%)	20.61	62.8%	25.20
WES.AX	Wesfarmers	N	72.92	73.27	(0.5%)	79.56	(8.3%)	70.50
WOR.AX	Worley*	O	11.82	11.21	5.4%	12.36	(4.4%)	16.77
WOW.AX	Woolworths	O	34.39	26.86	28.0%	32.68	5.2%	31.00
XRO.AX	Xero	B	80.04	78.27	2.3%	170.25	(53.0%)	150.00

Note: Prices shown in local currency *Target price reflects consensus Source: Thomson Reuters

INVESTMENT TRUST WATCH LIST

AS AT 30TH APRIL 2026

INVESTMENT TRUST WATCH LIST as at 30th April 2026		31-Mar-26 Price £	30-Apr-26 Price £	28-Apr-25 Price £	Month % Change	Annual % Change	Ticker		31-Mar-26 Price £	30-Apr-26 Price £	28-Apr-25 Price £	Month % Change	Annual % Change
ATR.L	Schroder Asian Total Return	6.26	5.60	4.45	11.8%	40.7%	JEGI.L	JPM European Inv. Trust	1.37	1.29	1.16	6.2%	18.1%
BGFD.L	Baillie Gifford Japan Trust	9.18	8.38	7.51	9.5%	22.2%	JFJ.L	JPMorgan Japanese	7.58	7.03	5.89	7.8%	28.7%
BNKR.L	Bankers Invest. Trust	1.40	1.28	1.13	9.4%	23.9%	JGGI.L	JPM Global Growth	5.84	5.42	5.28	7.7%	10.6%
BRWM.L	Blackrock World Mining	9.25	8.81	4.68	5.0%	97.6%	MWY.L	Mid Wynd International	1.43	1.54	1.99	(7.1%)	(28.1%)
CTY.L	City of London Investment Trust	5.50	5.38	4.71	2.2%	16.8%	MNKS.L	Monks ITC	15.42	14.04	11.90	9.8%	29.6%
IAD.L	Asia Dragon Trust	4.45	4.15	3.29	7.2%	35.3%	NAIT.L	Nth American Inc. Trust	4.08	3.76	3.10	8.5%	31.6%
ESCT.L	Euro Small Comp. Trust	2.25	2.01	1.90	11.9%	18.4%	PCT.L	Polar Cap Tech	6.03	4.80	3.03	25.6%	99.0%
FCIT.L	F&C Investment Trust	12.84	12.03	10.64	6.7%	20.7%	RCP.L	RIT Capital Partners	21.95	21.00	19.00	4.5%	15.5%
GSCT.L	Global Smaller Companies Trust	1.88	1.75	1.51	7.4%	24.5%	SDP.L	Schroder Asia Pacific	7.49	6.61	5.20	13.3%	44.0%
HVPE.L	HarbourVest Global Private Eq.	32.3	30.20	24.15	7.0%	33.7%	SMT.L	Scottish Mortgage Trust	14.1	11.91	9.44	18.4%	49.4%
JAM.L	JPM American	11.54	10.68	9.61	8.1%	20.1%	TEM.L	Templeton Emerg.	2.83	2.45	1.70	15.5%	66.5%
JEDT.L	JPMorgan Eur Discovery Trust	6.20	5.75	5.11	7.8%	21.3%	WWH.L	Worldwide Health	3.33	3.34	2.95	(0.3%)	12.9%

GLOBAL EQUITIES WATCH LIST

AS AT 30TH APRIL 2026

GLOBAL EQUITY WATCH LIST as at 30-Apr-2026		30-Apr-26 Price	31-Mar-26 Price	28-Apr-25 Price	Monthly % Change	Annual % Change	12-month Target
80700.HK	Tencent Holdings	409.00	435.20	440.40	(6.0%)	(7.1%)	743.90
AAPL	Apple	271.35	255.63	181.46	6.1%	49.5%	285.14
AMZN	Amazon	265.06	210.57	175.26	25.9%	51.2%	293.18
APH	Amphenol	147.27	127.70	60.90	15.3%	141.8%	163.89
APO	Apollo Global Management	128.72	110.25	112.36	16.8%	14.6%	165.07
ASML	ASML	1438.99	1320.83	573.80	8.9%	150.8%	1266.29
AXP	American Express	323.05	301.45	234.28	7.2%	37.9%	374.53
BRK-B	Berkshire Hathaway	473.60	478.50	490.38	(1.0%)	(3.4%)	537.00
CBOE	CBOE	300.09	280.29	207.27	7.1%	44.8%	278.45
COP	ConocoPhillips	125.78	128.38	85.67	(2.0%)	46.8%	113.12
GOOGL	Alphabet	384.80	297.39	146.75	29.4%	162.2%	328.17
IBE.MC	Iberdrola	19.95	20.07	14.43	(0.6%)	38.3%	18.17
JPM	JPMorgan	313.23	295.38	214.44	6.0%	46.1%	337.83
LLY	Eli Lilly	934.60	954.52	723.73	(2.1%)	29.1%	1137.93
LULU	Lululemon	137.70	158.81	265.00	(13.3%)	(48.0%)	221.45
MA	MasterCard	502.92	491.65	485.52	2.3%	3.6%	655.89
MC.PA	LVMH Moet Hennessy	451.40	471.10	519.80	(4.2%)	(13.2%)	645.92
MSFT	Microsoft	407.78	369.37	357.86	10.4%	13.9%	600.84
NVDA	NVIDIA	199.57	175.75	97.64	13.6%	104.4%	254.21
OR	L'oreal Royalties	36.91	40.11	143.60	(8.0%)	(74.3%)	395.63
ORCL	Oracle	161.39	145.23	127.16	11.1%	26.9%	289.60
SU.PA	Schneider Electric	268.60	239.95	192.34	11.9%	39.6%	274.30
TSLA	Tesla	381.63	381.26	233.29	0.1%	63.6%	392.05
UNH	United Health	370.48	273.98	524.70	35.2%	(29.4%)	375.27
WMT	Walmart	131.93	124.74	83.83	5.8%	57.4%	122.39

Source: Thomson Reuters

Target Prices reflect consensus

FIXED INTEREST BONDS

AS AT 30TH APRIL 2026

Ticker	SECURITY	Credit Rating	Coupon Rate	30-Apr-26 Yield %	31-Mar-26 Yield %	Monthly Change	Maturity
AIA240	Auckland Airport	A-	3.29%	3.15%	2.82%	(11.7%)	17-Nov-26
TRP100	Transpower NZ	AA	4.63%	3.73%	2.91%	(28.2%)	16-Sept-27
CNU030	Chorus Limited	BBB	1.98%	4.15%	3.23%	(28.5%)	2-Dec-27
IFT310	Infratil	Not rated	3.60%	5.68%	4.75%	(19.6%)	15-Dec-27
ANB180	ANZ Bank New Zealand	AA-	5.22%	3.97%	3.04%	(30.6%)	16-Feb-28
FBI220	Fletcher Building Industries	Not rated	6.50%	6.30%	6.04%	(4.3%)	15-Mar-28
KPG050	Kiwi Property Group	BBB+	2.85%	4.78%	3.79%	(26.1%)	19-Jul-28
SBS020	Southland Building Society	BBB+	6.14%	4.45%	3.68%	(20.9%)	7-Mar-29
FCG060	Fonterra Co-Operative	A-	4.60%	4.42%	3.67%	(20.4%)	8-Nov-29
SUM050	Summerset Group Holdings	Not rated	6.43%	5.40%	4.50%	(20.0%)	8-Mar-30
MEL070	Meridian Energy	BBB+	3.73%	4.66%	3.68%	(26.6%)	23-Mar-30
LGF170	NZ Local Govt Funding Agency	AAA	3.74%	4.45%	3.72%	(19.6%)	15-May-30
LGF140	NZ Local Govt Funding Agency	AAA	4.50%	4.74%	3.40%	(39.4%)	15-May-31
SPF600	Spark Finance	A-	5.45%	4.23%	4.00%	(5.7%)	18-Sept-31
HYBRID	HYBRID SECURITY	Credit Rating	Coupon Rate	Price/Yield		Monthly Change	Reset
ANB170	ANZ Bank Subordinated Notes	A	3.00%	4.23%	4.13%	(2.4%)	17-Sept-26
IFTHA	Infratil Perpetual Infrastructure Bond	Not rated	5.51%	67.9	70.17	3.2%	1-yr swap rate
KWB1T2	Kiwibank Subordinated Notes	BBB	2.36%	99.91	101.84	1.9%	12-May-28
VCT110	Vector Perpetual Capital Bonds	BB+	6.40%	5.60%	5.40%	(3.7%)	15-Jun-27
WNZHA	Westpac Perpetual Preference Shares	BBB+	7.10%	1.025	1.044	1.8%	-

PLAYING WITH AI



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