

Overview of Waipā District

Economic activity in Waipā has managed to bounce back in the last few months, with Infometrics estimates suggesting economic activity in the September 2020 quarter was sitting 1.2% higher than the same quarter a year ago. The strong return of activity through the September quarter means that annual GDP is now only 0.6% lower than it was a year ago, despite the impact of Level 4 and 3 lockdowns. The contraction to GDP in Waipā is much smaller than the 2.1% contraction in the Waikato Region, and the 3.3% contraction for New Zealand as a whole.

Consumer spending shows evidence of a resilient economy in Waipā, as data from Marketview shows spending in the year to September 2020 is 0.7% higher than a year ago. This willingness of households to spend is showing up in car registrations too, with annual registrations now sitting 0.7% higher than a year ago.

The strong presence of dairy in the Waipā district is helping to keep the economy going, particularly as Fonterra has recently revised up their farm gate milk prices for the current season above previous expectations, helping to support local farmers.

Residential building activity is also looking strong in Waipā, as residential consents in the year to September 2020 are up 4.4%, despite falling 2.8% across the Waikato region. In contrast, non-residential consents in Waipā are much weaker, having fallen 19.5% in the year to September, a much sharper drop than what was felt in the rest of the Waikato region and New Zealand as a whole.

As Waipā is home to a strong and resilient economy, the unemployment rate remains low, with the annual average rate sitting at 2.7%. This low rate compares to the 4.0% unemployment across the Waikato Region as a whole.

Indicator	Waipā District	Waikato Region	New Zealand
<i>Annual average % change</i>			
Gross domestic product	↓ -0.6%	↓ -2.1%	↓ -3.3%
Traffic flow	↓ -9.1%	↓ -15.0%	↓ -10.5%
Health Enrolments	↑ 3.0%	↑ 2.3%	↑ 2.3%
Consumer spending	↑ 0.7%	↓ -0.6%	↓ -2.7%
Residential consents	↑ 4.4%	↓ -2.8%	↑ 3.5%
Non-residential consents	↓ -19.5%	↑ 4.5%	↓ -7.6%
House prices*	↑ 8.4%	↑ 11.7%	↑ 8.0%
House sales	↓ -4.6%	↓ -1.6%	↑ 1.1%
Tourism expenditure	↓ -9.9%	↓ -7.4%	↓ -16.5%
Car registrations	↑ 0.7%	↓ -11.5%	↓ -22.9%
Commercial vehicle registrations	↓ -17.0%	↓ -20.8%	↓ -26.1%
Jobseeker Support recipients	↑ 29.5%	↑ 25.5%	↑ 27.3%
<i>Level</i>			
Unemployment rate	2.7%	4.0%	4.4%

* Annual percentage change (latest quarter compared to a year earlier)

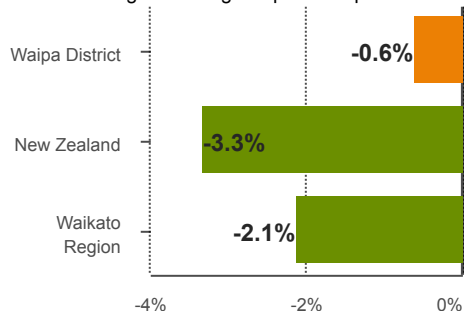
Overview of national economy

Economic activity rebounded strongly in the September 2020 quarter as the post-lockdown surge boosted spending levels and saw activity across various sectors attempt to make up for lost time. The pandemic still looms large over regional economies, and the pathway ahead is uncertain. But after a hammer blow to the economy in the first half of 2020, the economic rebound in the September quarter has set New Zealand on a more optimistic course ahead. Sustained export activity, combined with New Zealanders opening their wallets to domestic tourism, new cars, and home improvements, has buoyed confidence that the New Zealand economy will emerge from COVID-19 less battered than other parts of the world. The strength of the bounce back in economic activity is cause for celebration, but make no mistake, the pandemic has not finished yet.

Gross domestic product (provisional)

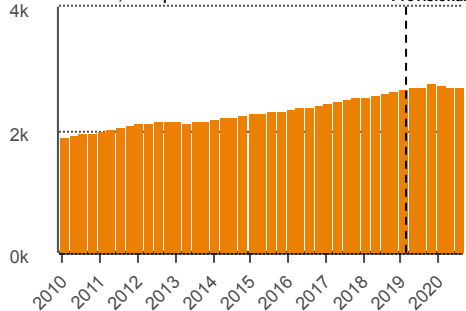
Gross domestic product growth (provisional)

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



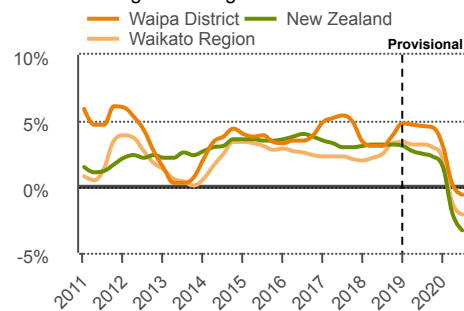
Gross domestic product (provisional, \$m)

Annual level, Waipa District



Gross domestic product growth (provisional)

Annual average % change



Highlights for Waipa District

- GDP (provisional) in Waipa District was down 0.6% for the year to September 2020 compared to a year earlier. Growth was higher than in New Zealand (-3.3%) and higher than in Waikato Region (-2.1%).
- GDP (provisional) was \$2,698 million in Waipa District for the year to September 2020 (2019 prices).
- Annual GDP growth in Waipa District peaked at 6.1% in the year to December 2011.

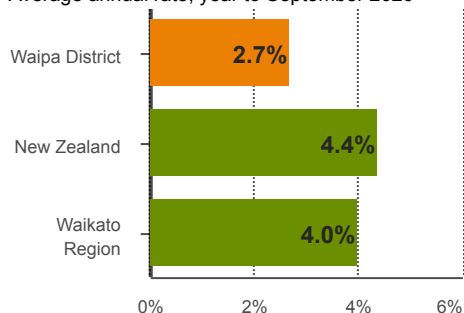
National overview

Economic activity in New Zealand expanded 11.8% in the September quarter, according to provisional estimates from Infometrics. After recording the sharpest quarterly fall in economic activity on record in the June quarter, September's rebound was always going to sound impressive. Although New Zealand is now technically out of a recession (for now), economic activity in September was still 3.3%pa below 2019 levels. Tourism-based sectors and others originally unable to operate drove the rebound in the September quarter after being severely restricted from operating during higher Alert Levels, although the Auckland restrictions in August took the shine off activity in the third quarter.

Unemployment rate

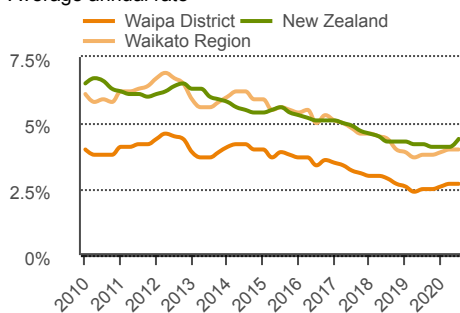
Unemployment rate

Average annual rate, year to September 2020



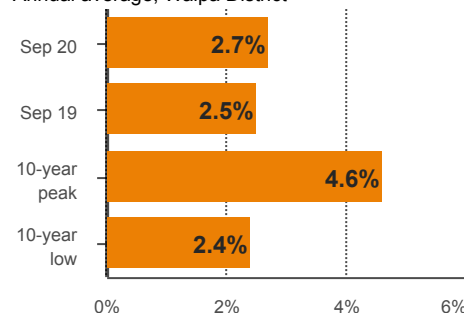
Unemployment rate

Average annual rate



Unemployment rate

Annual average, Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- The annual average unemployment rate in Waipa District was 2.7% in September 2020, up from 2.5% a year earlier.
- The unemployment rate in Waipa District was lower than in New Zealand, where the unemployment rate averaged 4.4% over the year to September 2020.
- Over the last ten years the unemployment rate reached a peak of 4.6% in June 2012;

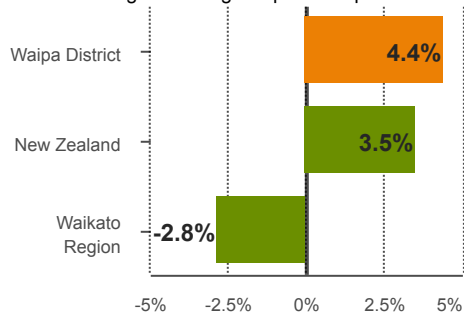
National overview

The national unemployment rate rose to 5.3% (seasonally adjusted) in the September 2020 quarter, as job losses continued to mount. On average over the last 12 months, the unemployment rate nationally was 4.4%, highlighting just how fast the pandemic has shifted economic conditions. Our system focuses on annual averages to smooth out volatility at a regional level each quarter, but the sharp rise in unemployment has been felt across the country. The labour market hit from COVID-19 has been less severe than originally feared, with fewer job losses than forecast. The labour market hit is coming through various channels. Some workers are still employed but working fewer hours, whereas others are out of a job, but not looking for a new role yet. However, women, Māori, and young people continue to be hardest hit by the downturn, and we expect that unemployment will continue to rise as we head into 2021.

Residential consents

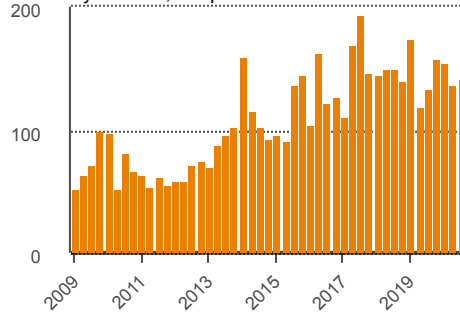
Growth in no. of new dwelling consents

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



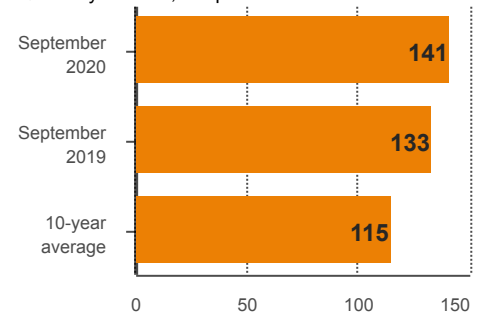
Residential consents

Quarterly number, Waipa District



Number of new dwelling consents

Quarterly number, Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- A total of 141 new residential building consents were issued in Waipa District in the September 2020 quarter, compared with 133 in the same quarter last year.
- On an annual basis the number of consents in Waipa District increased by 4.4% compared with the same 12-month period a year ago. The number of consents in New Zealand increased by 3.5% over the same period.

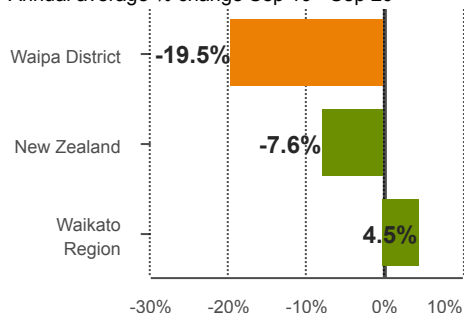
National overview

Residential building consents were up 3.5% over the year to September 2020. New townhouses were responsible for most of the growth over the year, up 34%, driven by an incredibly hot housing market and rapid house price growth. Apartment and retirement buildings were dragging the chain for the quarter. We expect the number of residential consents to weaken throughout next year. However, the heat in the housing market continues to provide upside risks, particularly as interest rates are set to be lower, and loan to value ratio restrictions are still a few months away at earliest.

Non-residential consents

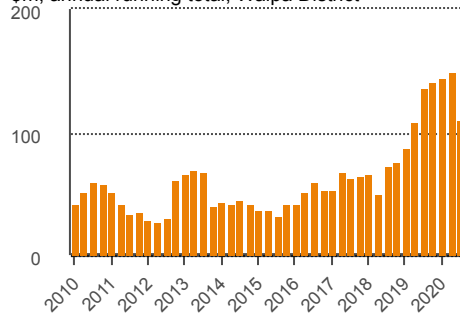
Growth in value of consents

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



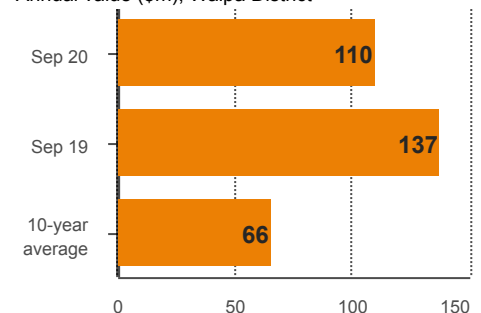
Non-residential consents, Waipa District

\$m, annual running total, Waipa District



Value of non-residential consents

Annual value (\$m), Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- Non-residential building consents to the value of \$110 million were issued in Waipa District during the year to September 2020.
- The value of consents decreased by -19.5% over the year to September 2020. By comparison the value of consents in New Zealand decreased by -7.6% over the same period.
- Over the last 10 years, consents in Waipa District reached a peak of \$149 million in the year to June 2020.

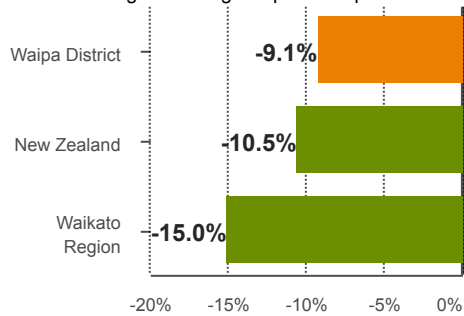
National overview

Non-residential building consents were strong in the September 2020 quarter, helping to offset some of the weakness earlier in the year, with consents now down 7.6% over the year to September 2020. New consents were responsible for all the growth in the last quarter, while the value of alterations and additions contracted. Social, cultural, and religious building consents have been particularly strong in recent months. We expect the government to open their purse strings to help support the COVID-19 recovery, and therefore expect strong public non-residential consents going forward. Conversely, we expect private consents to weaken over the next year as businesses struggle with a weaker economy going forward.

Traffic flow

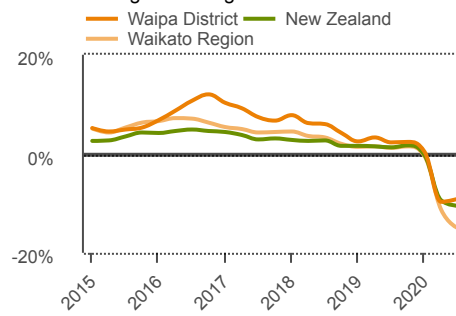
Annual change in traffic flows

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



Traffic volume growth

Annual average % change



Highlights for Waipa District

- Traffic flows in Waipa District decreased by -9.1% over the year to September 2020. This compares with an decrease of -10.5% in New Zealand.

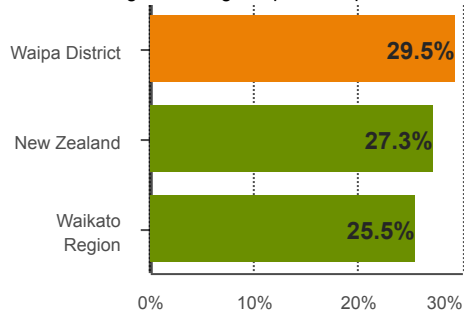
National overview

Vehicle movements in the September 2020 quarter recovered substantially from lower levels in June, as Kiwis got moving again. However, traffic activity was still 3.3%pa lower than a year earlier, with fewer tourists in the country and lower trade activity overall. The effects of the Auckland restrictions in August are clear, with Auckland and neighbouring Waikato recording sustained hits to traffic activity even as most of the country saw a sustained bounce-back from the Level 4 lockdown hit the previous quarter. Otago recorded an annual decline, partially stemming from the lack of tourist activity, while both Wellington and Canterbury also saw weak traffic activity as major urban centres remained harder hit.

Jobseekers

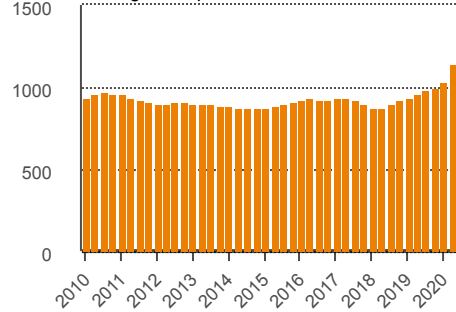
Annual change in Jobseekers

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



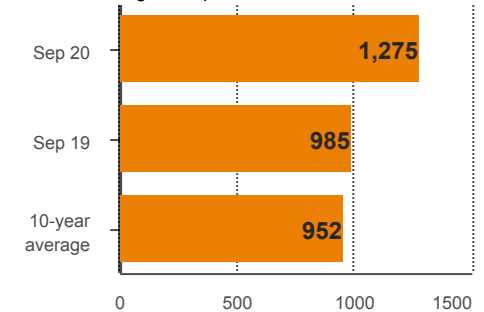
Jobseekers

Annual average, Waipa District



Jobseekers

Annual average, Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- Working age Jobseeker Support recipients in Waipa District in the year to September 2020 increased by 29.5% compared with the previous year. Growth was higher relative to New Zealand, where the number of Jobseeker Support recipients increased by 27.3%.
- An average of 1,275 people were receiving a Jobseeker Support benefit in Waipa District in the 12 months ended September 2020. This compares with an average of 952 since the start of the series in 2010.

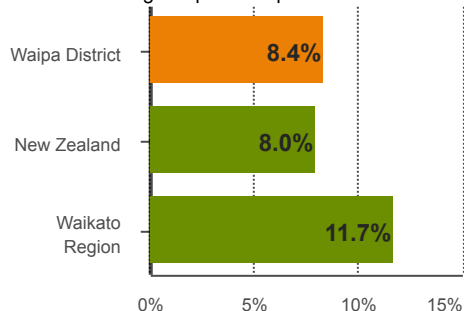
National overview

The number of Jobseeker Support has continued to rise, as job losses mounted across the economy. In total, over 204,000 New Zealanders are on a Jobseeker Support benefit, up over 61,000 from September 2019 – a 43%pa rise. There were also a considerable number of Kiwis on the COVID-19 Income Relief Payment (CIRP). In August, nearly 25,000 people were CIRP recipients, which provides a 12-week payment. With entitlements now ending, just under 12,000 CIRP recipients were recorded at the end of September 2020.

House prices

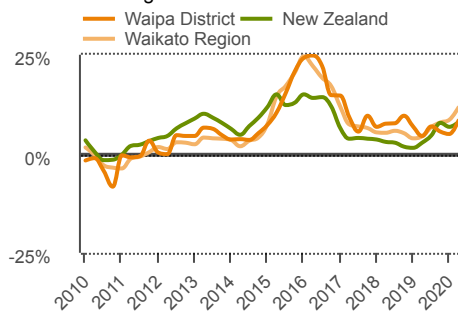
Annual change in house prices

Annual % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



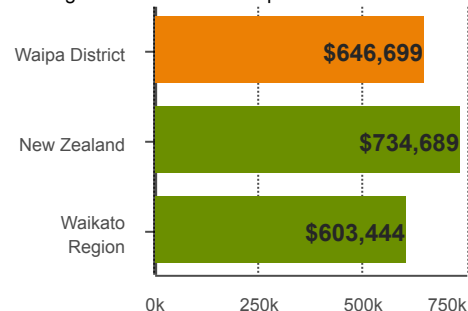
House price growth

Annual % change



Average current house value

Average for 12 months to Sep 2020



Highlights for Waipa District

- The average current house value in Waipa District was up 8.4% in September 2020 compared with a year earlier. Growth outperformed relative to New Zealand, where prices increased by 8.0%.
- The average current house value was \$646,699 in Waipa District over the September 2020 year. This compares with \$734,689 in New Zealand.

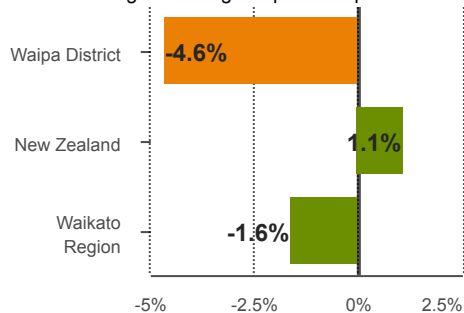
National overview

House prices have shot ahead in the September quarter, rising 8.0% on average over the year to September 2020. This incredibly strong growth has been driven by high net migration at the beginning of the pandemic, and incredibly low interest rates. We expect house prices to continue to grow through summer, as the Reserve Bank implements policy to lower interest rates further, while threatening the return of loan to value ratio restrictions. This strong growth in house prices is at a time where housing is already highly unaffordable to most first home buyers, and the economy battles its sharpest contraction on record.

House sales

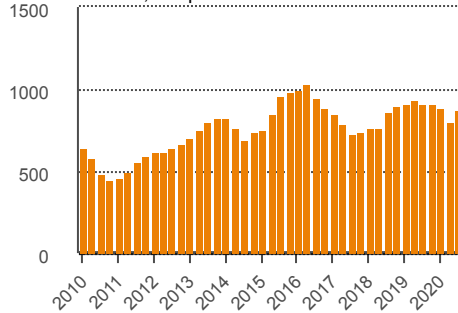
Annual change in house sales

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



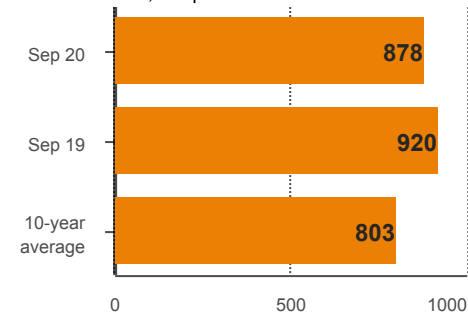
House sales

Annual number, Waipa District



House sales

Annual number, Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- House sales in Waipa District in the year to September 2020 decreased by 4.6% compared with the previous year. Growth underperformed relative to New Zealand, where sales increased by 1.1%.
- A total of 878 houses were sold in Waipa District in the 12 months ended September 2020. This compares with the ten year average of 803.

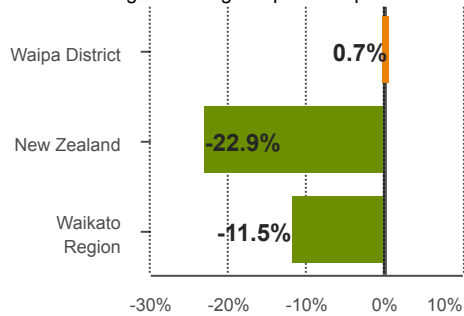
National overview

The number of houses sold in the year to September 2020 was sitting 1.1% higher than the same period a year earlier. Growth in sales has been particularly high through the last couple of months, as prices race ahead and interest rates fall lower, encouraging even more buyers into the market. We expect real estate activity to remain hot through summer, as buyers look to take advantage of record low interest rates before loan to value ratio restrictions return.

Car registrations

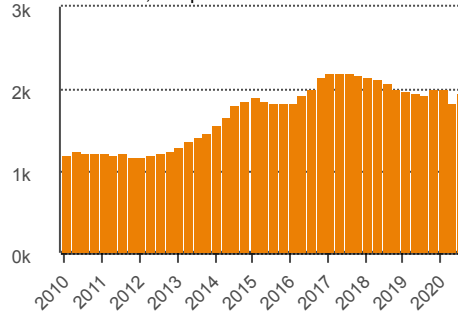
Car registrations

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



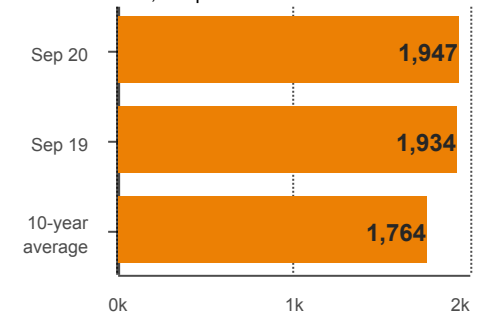
Car registrations

Annual number, Waipa District



Car registrations

Annual number, Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- The number of cars registered in Waipa District increased by 0.7% in the year to September 2020 compared with the previous 12 months. Growth was higher than in New Zealand, where car sales decreased by -22.9%.
- A total of 1,947 cars were registered in Waipa District in the year to September 2020. This compares with the ten year average of 1,764.

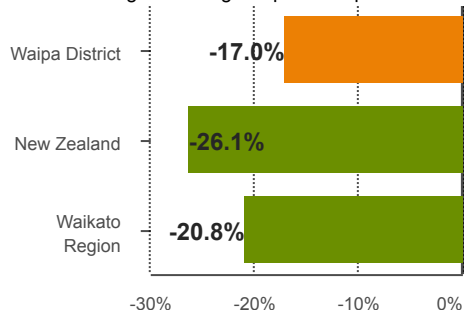
National overview

Car registrations recovered ground after lockdown, as pent up demand and a shift in spending patterns seeing a focus on vehicle sales. However, registrations in the September quarter were still 19% below registration levels last year. The momentum in car registrations is unlikely to continue, as job losses in the economy mount, the lack of international tourism reduces registrations of new rental cars, and potential constraints on the international supply of both new and used cars start to bite.

Commercial vehicle registrations

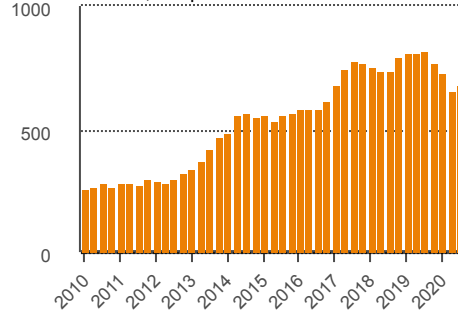
Commercial vehicle registrations

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



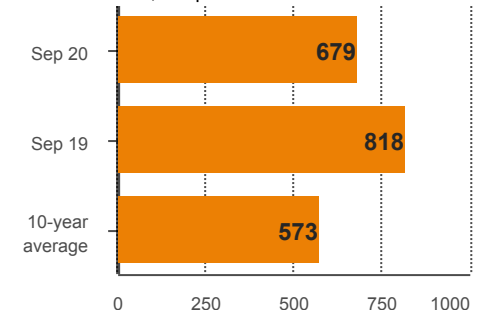
Commercial vehicle registrations

Annual number, Waipa District



Commercial vehicle registrations

Annual number, Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- The number of commercial vehicles registered in Waipa District decreased by -17.0% in the year to September 2020 compared with the previous 12 months. Growth was higher than in New Zealand, where commercial vehicle sales decreased by -26.1%.
- A total of 679 commercial vehicles were registered in Waipa District in the year to September 2020. This is higher than the ten year annual average of 573.

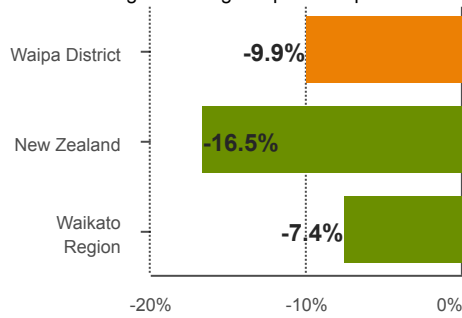
National overview

Commercial vehicle registrations have recovered some ground from their sharp fall experienced during lockdown earlier this year. This recovery points to continued resilience in the primary sector, where demand for New Zealand's food products remains high, and in construction, where sharp growth in house prices is stimulating residential construction activity. Despite this recovery, commercial registrations remain considerably weaker than pre-pandemic, with commercial vehicle registrations in the September quarter still sitting 13% lower than a year ago.

Tourism Spending

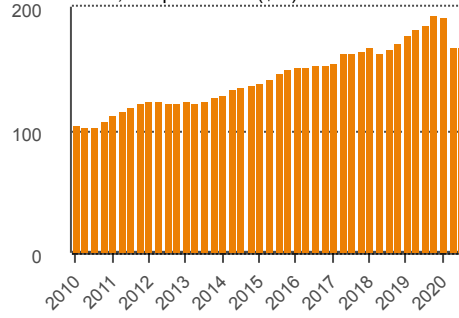
Tourism expenditure

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



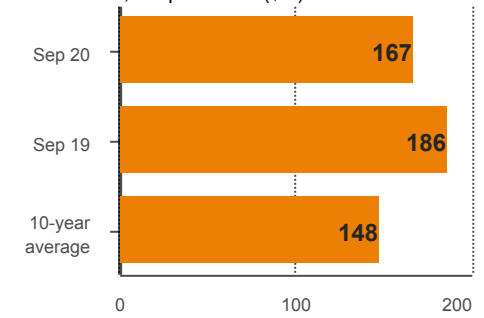
Tourism expenditure

Annual total, Waipa District (\$m)



Tourism expenditure

Annual total, Waipa District (\$m)



Highlights for Waipa District

- Total tourism expenditure in Waipa District decreased by 9.9% in the year to September 2020. This compares with a decrease of 16.5% in New Zealand.
- Total tourism expenditure was approximately \$167m in Waipa District during the year to September 2020, which was down from \$186m a year ago.

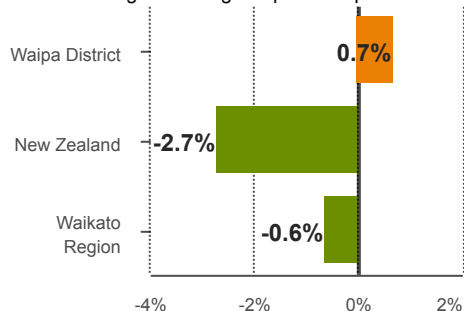
National overview

With New Zealand's borders remaining closed to all but essential travellers and returning citizens and residents, tourism expenditure continued to decline, falling 16.5% over the year to September 2020. This decline was despite relatively successful efforts to promote domestic tourism during the July school holidays. Auckland was the worst affected region, with visitor spending declining by 24% over the year to September 2020, partly as a result of the second lockdown in August. Other regions heavily affected include Otago (-21%) and the West Coast (-20%). Tourism spending figures are likely to continue this downward trend through the summer months, as the lack of international tourists becomes more acutely felt.

Consumer Spending

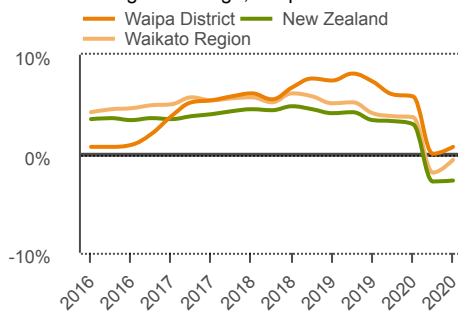
Growth in consumer spending

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



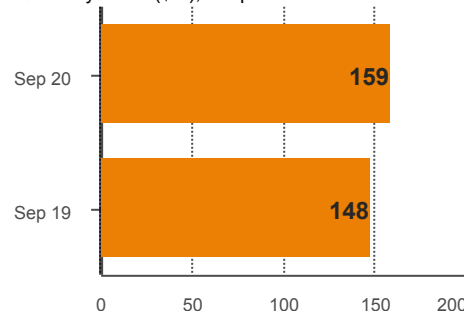
Consumer spending (\$m)

Annual average % change, Waipa District



Consumer spending

Quarterly value (\$m), Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- Electronic card consumer spending in Waipa District, as measured by Marketview, increased by 0.7% over the year to September 2020 compared to the previous year. This compares with an decrease of -2.7% in New Zealand.

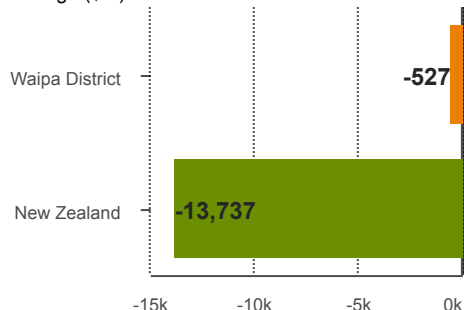
National overview

Consumer spending roared back into life after lockdown, growing 3.0%pa in the September 2020 quarter according to Marketview data. Declines in spending categories such as hospitality and accommodation were offset by growth in retail spending, particularly in the food and home improvement segments. Despite the impressive bounce back, considerable risk exists for spending to soften as the wage subsidy and COVID-19 Income Relief Payment benefit come to an end, and consumers feel the need to hold onto their wallets. The December quarter is expected to provide something of a litmus test for retailers – if spending levels hold up relatively well, it may relieve some of the pressure on employers to make further staff cuts in the new year.

Total dairy payout

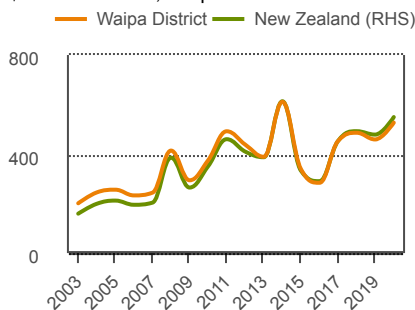
Total dairy payout

Change (\$m) between 2019/20 and 2020/21 seasons



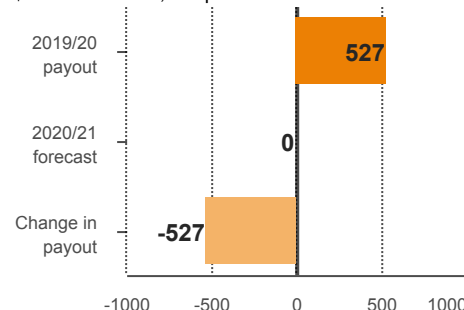
Total dairy payout

\$m each season, Waipa District



Total dairy payout

\$m each season, Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- Waipa District's total dairy payout for the 2019/20 season is estimated to have been approximately \$527m.
- Waipa District's dairy payout for the 2020/21 season is expected to be approximately \$0.00m, \$527m lower than last season, assuming that production levels from last season are maintained.
- The total dairy payout for New Zealand is estimated to have been approximately \$13,737m in the 2019/20 season, and is expected to be \$13,737m lower in the 2020/21 season.

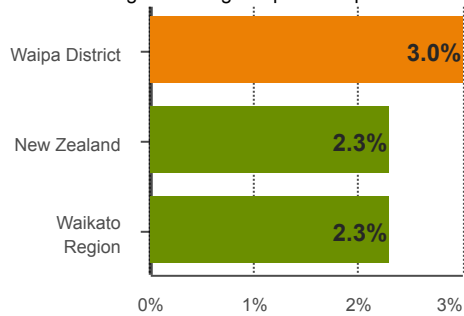
National overview

Primary sector performance remains robust, as New Zealand exports continue their solid run. Dairy export values since February remain up 3.8%pa, although activity weakened in September and through into October. Dairy won't escape the expected hit from COVID-19 but will weather the blow better. Fonterra has recently revised the midpoint milk price for the 2020/21 season to \$6.80/kgms off the back of stronger GlobalDairyTrade performances – a 40c lift from May's forecast. This rise in pay-out will bring an additional \$758m into the economy. However, the 2020/21 pay-out is lower than the pay-out last season, with a \$644m gap year-to-year.

Health Enrolments

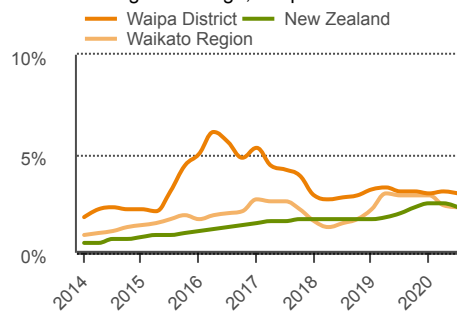
Annual change in Health enrolments

Annual average % change Sep 19 - Sep 20



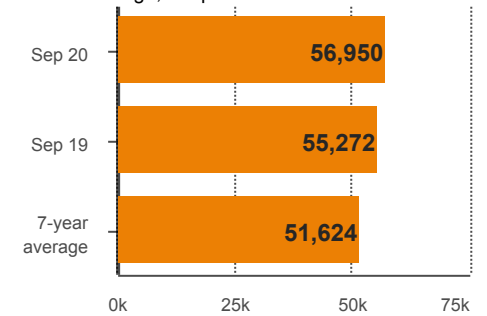
Health enrolments

Annual average % change, Waipa District



Health enrolments

Annual average, Waipa District



Highlights for Waipa District

- The number of people enrolled with a primary health organisation in Waipa District in the year to September 2020 increased by 3.0% compared with the previous year. Growth was higher relative to New Zealand, where the number of enrolments increased by 2.3%.
- An average of 56,950 people were enrolled with primary healthcare providers in Waipa District in the 12 months ended September 2020. This compares with an average of 51,624 since the start of the series in 2013.

National overview

Population growth is slowing, with health enrolment figures rising at a slower pace of 2.3%pa over the 12 months to September 2020. Recent months have driven the deceleration in population growth, with total health enrolments in the September 2020 quarter up just 1.7%pa – the slowest since the end of 2018. The key driver of New Zealand’s population growth – migration – has collapsed. Although there are a steady stream of people moving through Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) facilities, migration estimates from Stats NZ point towards a collapse in inward migration since COVID-19 forced New Zealand to close its borders. Net migration over the last six months has been just 2,513, compared to nearly 30,000 for the same period in 2019.

Technical notes

Building Consents

Building consents data is sourced from Statistics New Zealand. The number of residential consents issued for new dwellings is the measure for residential consents. For non-residential consents, the measure is the value of both new buildings and alterations.

Consumer Spending

The consumer spending data is sourced from Marketview. It measures total electronic card spending using spending through the Paymark network and adding to it an estimate of non-Paymark network spending using the pattern of BNZ card holder spending at non-Paymark retailers. For further breakdown of the data by storetype and other variables contact Marketview.

Dairy

Dairy data has been sourced from the “New Zealand Dairy Statistics”, a publication co-owned by DairyNZ and LIC, as well as calculations made by Infometrics. The data accords to dairy seasons, which run from June to May. Total dairy payouts in each territorial authority have been calculated by Infometrics by utilising milk solids production in conjunction with Fonterra’s farmgate milk price (excluding dividends) from the dairy season in question. For the current season, Infometrics calculates a payout forecast using our own expectation of the farmgate milk price and the assumption that milk solids production continues running at the same level from the previous season.

Earnings

The earnings data comes from the quarterly Linked Employer Employee Data (LEED) published by Statistics New Zealand. LEED publishes the mean earnings of full quarter jobs for each quarter. Full quarter jobs may include full time and part time jobs. Earnings include overtime and lump sum payments. We sum the mean earnings for the four quarters making up the year to arrive at an estimate of average annual earnings. Infometrics projects average annual earnings to the current quarter using growth rates in industry earnings measured in the Labour Cost Index.

Gross Domestic Product

Gross Domestic Product is estimated by Infometrics. A top down approach breaks national industrial production (sourced from production based GDP measures published by Statistics New Zealand) is broken down to TA level by applying TA shares to the national total. Each TA’s share of industry output is based on earnings data from LEED. GDP growth in recent quarters is based on a model which uses the various partial economic indicators presented in this report as inputs. Estimates of GDP for these most recent quarters are provisional until Infometrics updates its annual GDP series in the Regional Economic Profile at the beginning of each year. Gross domestic product is measured in 2019 dollar terms.

Health Enrolments

Health enrolments are sourced from the Ministry of Health. They record the number of people in each area who are enrolled with a Primary Health Organisation (PHO). Enrolment is voluntary, but most New Zealanders enrol at a general practice for health reasons and for the benefits of enrolment, such as cheaper doctors’ visits and reduced costs of prescription medicines. Changes to how the Ministry of Health recorded this data led to Infometrics revising our approach to health enrolment figures for the March 2019 Quarterly Economic Monitor onwards. Our new approach completely revises our timeseries of health enrolments, so care should be taken when comparing the March 2019 report with previously downloaded reports.

Previously, the data provided was only for those people whose addresses are able to be accurately recorded by the Ministry of Health. We have now switched to breaking down TA-level health enrolments based on trends in stated health enrolments by area, to ensure that the total number of enrolees published in the Monitor align with the national-level figures published by the Ministry of Health. A new system for classifying and recording health enrolment addresses from March 2019 onwards by the Ministry means significantly higher numbers of unallocated enrolees, resulting in the need to review our model.

House Sales

The number of house sales is sourced from REINZ. The indicator measures the number of house sales at the point when the sale becomes unconditional. The unconditional date is the date when all the terms of an agreement have been satisfied and the sale and purchase can proceed to settlement.

House Values

House value (dollar value) are sourced from QVNZ. The levels quoted in the report are average current values over the past 12 months. An average current value is the average (mean) value of all developed residential properties in the area based on the latest house value index from QVNZ. It is not an average or median sales price, as both of those figures only measure what happens to have sold in the period. These average current values are affected by the underlying value of houses (including those not on the market) and are quality adjusted based on the growth in each house’s price between sales.

Jobseekers Support

In July 2013 the New Zealand’s welfare system changed to better recognise and support people’s work potential. As part of this the Jobseekers Support benefit was introduced. This benefit is for people who can usually look or prepare for work but also includes people who can only work part-time or can’t work at the moment, for example, because they have a health condition, injury or disability.

Tourism Expenditure

Tourism expenditure data is sourced from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) Monthly Regional Tourism Estimates. These are estimated values for tourism spending that approximate values found in the International Visitor Survey (IVS) and Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), using modelling of a sample of electronic card spending throughout New Zealand from domestic and international accounts.

Traffic Flow

Traffic flow growth rates are calculated from the number of vehicles passing approximately 110 sites monitored by New Zealand Transport Agency. Each of the sites has been mapped to a territorial authority.

Unemployment

Regional level unemployment rates are sourced from Statistics New Zealand's Household Labour Force Survey. Trends in the number of Jobseekers are used to break down regional unemployment rates to TA levels. The TA level unemployment rates are benchmarked on census following the release of each census. To reduce volatility the unemployment rate is presented as an average for the last four quarters.

Vehicle Sales

Car and commercial vehicle sales data are sourced from New Zealand Transport Authority. Sales are based on new registrations which include the first time registration of new vehicles and used vehicles imported from overseas.

Household Income

The Infometrics household income series is a comprehensive estimate of household incomes within each territorial authority area. The series captures labour market earnings (wages, salaries and self-employment) as well as allowances (e.g. Disability Allowance), benefits (e.g. Jobseeker Support) and superannuation. Investment income is excluded. Infometrics models the series with a top-down approach, first measuring all incomes received by households in New Zealand, then apportioning them to territorial authorities using various sources of administrative data. As there is a time lag in the availability of administrative data we use contemporary indicators to project our estimates to the most recent quarter. Infometrics estimates of the number of occupied private households are used to translate total income in each territorial authority area into a per household mean. Mean household incomes are then translated into median household incomes using a Pareto distribution. The Infometrics household income series tends to be slightly higher than Census measures. Census tends to underestimate household incomes because individuals often fail to recall all of their income when completing their Census form.

Weekly Rents

Rents (\$ per week) are averaged across the quarter in question from monthly rental data sourced from MBIE. Rental data pertains to averages from data collected when bonds are lodged and does not control for specifications of the home (eg. size, number of bedrooms, age of home, etc).