



Week beginning 18 November, 2024

# AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND WEEKLY

Analysis and forecasts for this week's key releases.

## In this week's edition:

**Economic Insight:** The real wage overhang hangover.

**The Week That Was:** Burgeoning confidence.

**Focus on New Zealand:** Activity is stabilising, inflation contained.

## For the week ahead:

**RBA:** Policy meeting minutes, Governor Bullock and Assistant Governor Kent are scheduled to speak.

**Australia:** Westpac-MI Leading Index.

**New Zealand:** Producer price index, services PMI.

**Japan:** CPI, core machine orders.

**Eurozone:** trade balance, HICP.

**United Kingdom:** CPI, retail sales, consumer confidence survey.

**United States:** House starts and sales, regional fed surveys.

**Global:** Preliminary manufacturing and services PMIs for November.

Information contained in this report current as at 15 November 2024

Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. The forecasts given above are predictive in character. Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure that the assumptions on which the forecasts are based are reasonable, the forecasts may be affected by incorrect assumptions or by known or unknown risks and uncertainties. The results ultimately achieved may differ substantially from these forecasts.

# The real wage overhang hangover



Luci Ellis  
Chief Economist, Westpac Group

The Wage Price Index increased 0.8% in the September quarter and 3.5% over the year. This was in line with our expectations but – as Westpac Economics Senior Economist Justin Smirk [pointed out](#) – slightly below consensus expectations. The extent of the step down in the year-ended growth rate was well anticipated, because it reflected the dropping out of the outsized 2023 National Wage Case and related decisions from the calculation.

The RBA does not publish a full quarterly wages forecast profile, only the forecasts for year-ended growth as at June and December quarters. So, we do not know exactly what they expected for the September quarter. However, it would now need to see a bounce back in quarterly growth to around 1% for the December quarter for its end-2024 forecast to come true. Even allowing for some recent health-care agreements, we consider such a bounce to be beyond the bounds of plausibility given how smooth this series tends to be. There are no strong reasons for a change of direction of this kind, either. Surveys, data on awards and enterprise agreements and feedback from our own customers would all suggest that a sudden bounce back in wages growth is not happening.

**We therefore expect that the RBA will have to revise down its near-term wages growth forecast again in February, having already done so in November.**

Forecasting is hard, so some revisions and near-term misses are par for the course. Even so, is there something going on with the way some observers think about domestic labour costs, that could be affecting their interpretation of the economic outlook? And in the case of the RBA, could this be affecting its monetary policy decision-making?

Some insights can be gleaned from the following passage from the latest Statement on Monetary Policy:

*At current rates of productivity growth, WPI growth remains somewhat above rates that can be sustained in the long term without putting upward pressure on inflation. All else equal, when productivity growth is positive, WPI growth is able to outpace inflation while still being consistent with inflation at the midpoint of the target range. As trend growth in labour productivity is likely below its*

*rate in previous decades, the sustainable WPI growth rate is probably lower than in the past and below the current rate of growth. That suggests it would be difficult to sustain wages growth at its current pace in the longer term without a higher pace of trend productivity growth.*

There are a few things worth noting about this passage.

First, this reasoning comes from the markup model for forecasting inflation. As explained in a [previous note](#), this model starts from the presumption that prices are a (roughly stable) markup over costs, including labour costs. A bit of algebra later leads to a relationship that states that wages growth minus productivity growth is approximately equal to inflation (prices growth). As discussed in that previous note, there are a lot of assumptions underlying the use of this relationship for forecasting. But more fundamentally, the WPI is not the measure of labour cost growth that maps most closely to the one implied in that relationship. Rather, the more volatile average earnings measures from the national accounts are more relevant.

Presumably the RBA has used the smoother WPI measure for ease of exposition. In that case, though, one should be even more circumspect about how tightly the relationship should hold.

Second, there are some interesting implied choices of time period used in that paragraph. For example, it is stated that future trend productivity growth is expected to be slower than the average of previous decades. This is not controversial: the late 1990s was a period of strong productivity growth globally, largely because of the adoption of personal computers and other new technologies. More recent productivity growth was slower, but not zero. The real question is whether future productivity growth will be slower than the average of more recent times, such as the years leading up to the pandemic. Perhaps this is true, but the reasons for a further slowdown have not been elucidated. While any boost from AI and other technology will indeed take time to show up in the productivity figures, just as PCs did, a further decline in global trend productivity growth is not the base case for the profession more broadly.

Third, even granting the reduced noise from using the WPI, and assuming a further slowdown in global productivity, there is the question of why the RBA repeatedly referenced the sustainability of the current rate of growth. At the time of publication, this was the year to the June quarter figure of 4.1%, not the year to September quarter figure of 3.5%

just reported. Yet the RBA surely anticipated the step down in growth that was already baked in to awards and many enterprise agreements. Why the focus on the sustainability of a growth rate that everyone knew was not going to be sustained? The question also arises of how we reconcile wages growth having already rolled over, to annualised rates in the low 3s, with the RBA's view that the labour market is still tight.

Later in the document, the step down in unit labour cost growth from 7% annualised to 3½% annualised in just six months was noted (as we had previously expected and [written about](#)). So why the implication that growth in labour costs was much stickier than that?

The deeper question is: with wages growth tracking in the low 3s and productivity growth not being zero, why has the RBA focused so much on the risk that wages growth is unsustainable?

I can't help thinking that this partly reflects deep-seated narratives about the Australian economy not being competitive. These narratives stemmed from the so-called 'real wage overhang' that emerged in the 1970s following the policy-induced wages breakout then. Another bout of this belief system emerged after the mining boom and attendant strong income growth. Since then, restoring competitiveness by crimping wages growth has been a common go-to in the policy discourse in Australia, far more than elsewhere in my observation. It is as if people forget that exchange rates tend to move much faster than domestic labour costs.

In any case, even if productivity growth averages a touch lower than 1% (worse than recent history), then by the RBA's own figuring, WPI growth averaging 3.2% (the annualised rate of the past three quarters) is well and truly consistent with inflation averaging 2½% or below. Perhaps we need to let go of the pandemic-era hangover.

# Cliff Notes: burgeoning confidence

Elliot Clarke, Head of International Economics  
Mantas Vanagas, Senior Economist  
Ryan Wells, Economist

In Australia, the latest [Westpac-MI Consumer Sentiment Survey](#) provided another encouraging update on the health of the consumer. An impressive 11.8% rebound over the past two months has left the headline index at 94.6, the strongest reading in over two-and-a-half years and well within striking distance of a 'neutral' reading. Most of the improvement in sentiment has been centred on forward-looking measures, namely year-ahead views on the economy (+23% vs. Sep) and family finances (+7.3% vs. Sep).

While the sub-indexes tracking 'family finances versus a year ago' and 'time to buy a major household item' have seen some improvement, they both remain at historically weak levels – consistent with evidence from [card activity](#) data that points to a limited pick-up in spending following the introduction of the Stage 3 tax cuts. An added complication was the reaction to the US Presidential Election, which saw sentiment deteriorate notably over the course of the survey week – the net effect being greater-than-usual uncertainty about how the rapid recovery in confidence may evolve as the year draws to a close.

Consumers remain confident in the jobs outlook – unsurprising given the strong growth in employment evinced by the [labour force survey](#). Coming off a multi-month above-trend performance, employment growth slowed in October, printing a modest gain of 15.9k. However, that was still enough to keep the employment-to-population ratio unchanged at a record high of 64.4% – a signal employment is still keeping pace with historic population growth.

## A marginal easing in labour force participation also left the unemployment rate at 4.1% for a third consecutive month.

These results, together with little-change in average hours worked and other broader measures of labour underutilisation, imply the labour market remains in robust health, with slack building only at the margin. If sustained, this trend will see nominal [wages growth](#) continue to moderate through 2025, but enough momentum persist to deliver further modest real income gains. The outlook for wages, inflation and RBA policy was discussed at length this week by Westpac Chief Economist Luci Ellis.

Before moving offshore, the latest [NAB business survey](#) provided further confirmation of a stabilisation in business conditions, the index marking time at +7 points in October. This is consistent with our view that economic growth is current

at or near its nadir, having slowed to 1.0%yr mid-year. With consumers having begun to receive their tax cuts and monetary policy easing around the corner, businesses are becoming more optimistic on the outlook, confidence up seven points to +5 in the month. Westpac sees GDP growth accelerating to 1.5%yr by year-end, then 2.4%yr by December 2025.

Globally, financial markets this week continued to assess the implications of a second Trump presidency, attempting to ascertain the President-elect's priorities through appointment announcements for the incoming administration. The US dollar rallied and longer-dated Treasury yields meanwhile rose as a Republican majority, albeit a slim one, was confirmed for the House of Representatives, giving President Trump more freedom to implement his agenda, centred around lowering taxes, deregulation and reducing immigration.

As we discussed [this week](#), while an extension of the household income tax cuts due to expire next year should be easily achievable, agreement on other tax changes might prove more difficult and/or time-intensive to achieve, with views on next steps for tax policy varied even amongst Republicans. Import tariffs, another critical piece of Trump's agenda, should support an expansion of domestic manufacturing activity, but only gradually and not without negative effects on consumers, with the price of imported and local production to lift. Note as well there is a timing difference too: tariffs will impact inflation and spending long before investment in new domestic supply can be planned, built and commissioned. We expect these policies to have a meaningful and sustained effect in consumer inflation which the FOMC will have to respond to in late-2026 when we have two 25bp rate hikes forecast – for full detail see Westpac Economics' [Market Outlook November 2024](#).

Between now and late-2025, the current disinflationary trend is expected to persist however, allowing the FOMC to reduce the fed funds rate to 3.375% by September 2025, a rate we regard to be broadly neutral for the economy. This week, October's CPI report again confirmed that inflation pressures are benign, 0.2%*mt* and 0.3%*mt* increases in headline and core prices in line with the prior month as well as market expectations. Shelter is now the one significant laggard for inflation, with annualised and annual growth near 5%. The FOMC continue to show little-to-no concern over this item however, given rental growth for current agreements is close to zero. As the shelter component of the CPI factors these results in, annual headline inflation will tend from 2.6%yr currently towards the FOMC's medium-term target of 2.0%yr.

Turning to Asia, just released October activity data for China showed authorities shift towards pro-active support

is paying dividends, but more so that additional stimulus is necessary. Retail sales surprised to the upside, the annual rate accelerating from 3.2%yr in September to 4.8%yr in October, although year-to-date the pickup was considerably more timid, from 3.3%ytd to 3.5%ytd. House prices also responded to authorities' directives, new and existing home price declines slowing abruptly, from -0.7%mtm and -0.9%mtm in September to -0.5% in October. Growth in fixed asset investment and industrial production was little changed though, at 3.4%ytd and 5.8%ytd.

Late last Friday, China's run of policy announcements continued, a debt swap package already mooted detailed to the market. CNY10trn in new special bond issuance will be made available through two programs over 3 and 5 years to local governments to refinance 'hidden debt' onto public balance sheets. The primary benefit is an expected CNY600bn reduction in interest payments over 5 years. The measures will also aid the bring forward of infrastructure spending into late-2024 and early-2025 and ready local governments to buy up housing assets and land from 2025, another initiative previously announced, and intended to provide lasting support to home prices and construction. Authorities clearly remain focused on strengthening the financial position of both the public and private sector, removing impediments to growth and encouraging new activity. But by refraining from announcing outright stimulus, they continue to disappoint the market and, potentially, are putting confidence amongst consumers and business at risk.

Note though, last Friday, Finance Minister Lan Fo'an reportedly promised "more forceful" fiscal stimulus next year and, while discussing today's data the NBS spokesperson pledged to achieve 2024's annual growth target of 5.0%. As such, outright stimulus is arguably a matter of time, the length of the waiting period likely to depend on the evolution of US trade policy and global economic uncertainty.

# Activity is stabilising, inflation contained.



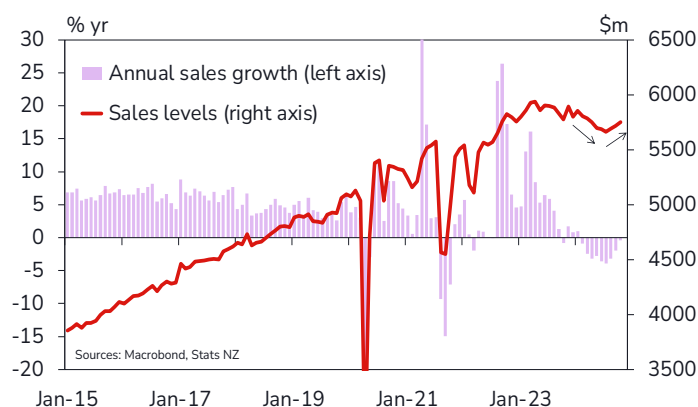
Satish Ranchhod  
Senior Economist

The latest updates on activity have left us with a picture of mixed economic conditions. In some parts of the economy the downturn that we saw over the past year has flattened off and we're starting to see some early signs of a firming in demand. However, overall growth looks likely to remain sluggish through the final months of the year. At the same time, inflation is continuing to soften, meaning further interest rate reductions are in the pipeline.

Starting off with the household sector, October saw retail spending rise 0.6%. That was the third increase in a row and comes on the back of tax cuts in late July, as well as the start of the RBNZ's rate cutting cycle in August.

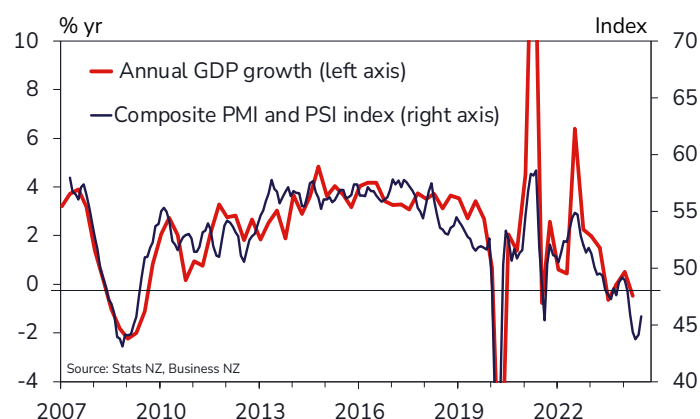
The rise in retail spending over the past few months follows sharp falls through the first half of the year, and spending is still down on where it was at the start of 2024. However, the gains that we are now seeing are an encouraging sign, especially as the full impact of interest rate cuts is yet to be felt.

## Core retail spending



Other parts of the economy are also starting to firm, but only gradually with overall conditions remaining sluggish. Notably, while the October manufacturing PMI did suggest that forward orders are declining at a slower pace, overall conditions remained subdued. As a result, the deadline index declined modestly to 45.8, consistent with further softness in the manufacturing sector.

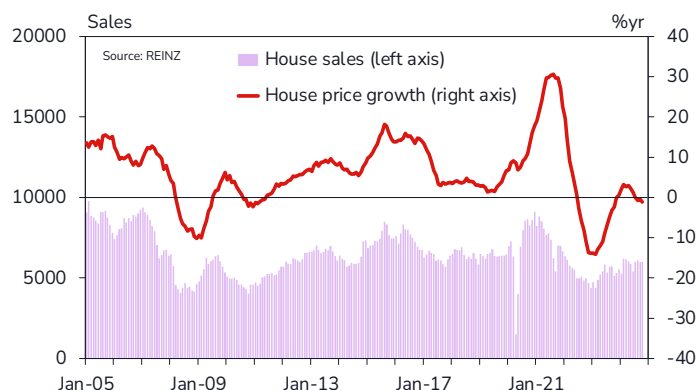
## Activity indicators and GDP



Similarly, in the construction sector the declines in both dwelling consent numbers and concrete production have flattened off, but they are yet to turn higher. We expect residential building activity will remain subdued through the final months of this year and early part of next year, with signs of a material turn higher not expected until the latter part of 2025.

A key influence on both the strength of household spending and construction activity will be the strength of the housing market. On this front, things are still looking pretty flat. Sales have been tracking sideways. Similarly, prices edged down 0.5% in October and have effectively been flat to slightly down over the past year.

## REINZ house prices and sales



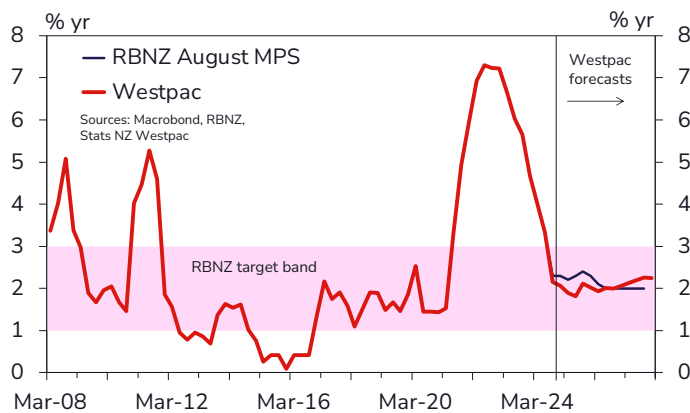
We expect that the softness in the housing market and economic activity more generally will give way to stronger activity over the year ahead. That's due to the easing in financial conditions that is already rippling through the economy and which is helping to offset the squeeze on household and businesses' finances that we've seen over the past few years.

A big part of that easing in financial conditions has been the decline in inflation pressures. Inflation slowed to 2.2% in the year to September, and Stats NZ's latest update pointed to further downward pressure on inflation in the final part of the year. The October prices report showed that food prices have fallen 0.9% over the past month. We're also seeing more subdued pricing pressure in areas like hospitality, fuel and rent.

While some of the recent softness in consumer prices has been in volatile areas, the overall trends that we're seeing are consistent with a continued cooling in underlying inflation pressures. Reflecting those trends, the RBNZ's own survey of inflation expectations painted a picture of well contained pressures. Although there was a slight tick higher in longer-term inflation expectations, they remain close to 2%, and expectations for inflation over the coming year have fallen sharply.

We're currently forecasting a 0.4% rise in consumer prices in the December quarter, and this week's updates indicate downside risk to that forecast. Importantly, our forecast is already lower than the RBNZ's last published forecast from August for a 0.5% quarterly rise in consumer prices. We expect the updated projections in the RBNZ's 27 November policy statement will incorporate a lower near term inflation outlook, with inflation likely to track close to 2% over the coming year, with some risk of a temporary dip below 2%.

## Consumer price inflation

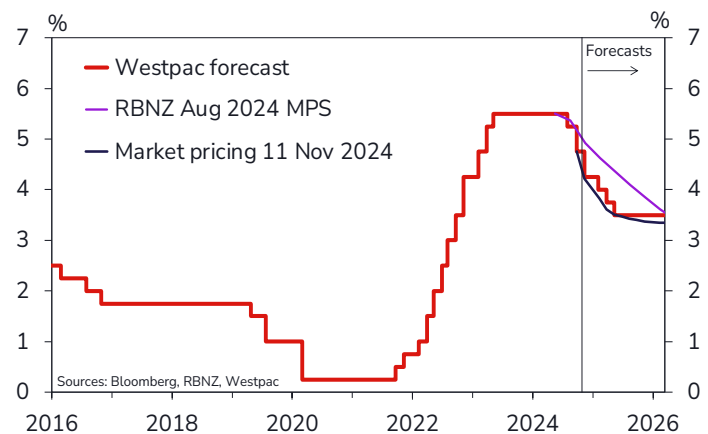


With that well contained inflation outlook, we expect that the RBNZ will deliver a 50bp cut in the OCR at the upcoming November meeting.

But even with inflation pressures looking much better contained than they have for a long time, the risks are not all in one direction. The global landscape is looking a lot rockier, especially in the wake of the recent US election, and the related downside risks for the NZD could offset some of the recent softness in imported inflation. At the same time, we are still seeing strong increases in some domestic costs, like local council rates and insurance charges. Those increases mean that non-tradables inflation (a key focus for the RBNZ) is easing only gradually, and that's limiting the downside for overall inflation.

In light of such concerns, we expect that the RBNZ will adopt a more gradual and data dependent approach to policy changes next year. We're forecasting that the RBNZ will continue to cut the cash rate in the early part of next year, but in more measured 25bp increments, with the cash rate expected to reach a low of 3.50% by mid-2025.

## RBNZ Official Cash Rate





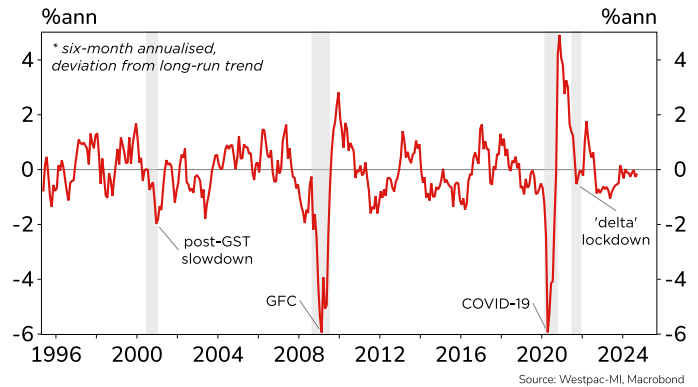
## AUS: Oct Westpac-MI Leading Index (%ann'd)

**Nov 20, Last: -0.15%**

The Leading Index lifted from -0.26% in August to -0.15% in September. The growth rate has been slightly negative for the best part of a year now, suggesting that the current 'sluggishness' in conditions is persisting.

The October read looks like it will capture some positive monthly component updates. Commodity prices – a key driver of recent softness – exhibited a partial turnaround, rising 4.0% in AUD terms. Dwelling approvals also made up some ground from last month's decline. Sentiment readings have continued to rally across expectations and the labour market views, the latter mirroring solid outcomes in official data on hours worked too. Meanwhile, equities pulled back a touch while the yield spread became much less inverted as bond rates moved higher.

## Westpac-MI Leading Index





# What to watch

For	Data/Event	Unit	Last	Market f/c	Westpac f/c	Risk/Comment
<b>Mon 18</b>						
Aus	RBA Assist' Governor (Fin Market)	–	–	–	–	Kent speaking in Canberra at 5:30pm AEDT.
NZ	Oct BusinessNZ PSI	index	45.7	–	–	Continues to indicate contraction of services activity.
	Q3 PPI	%qtr	1.1	–	–	Accelerated in the first half of the year.
Jpn	Sep Core Machinery Orders	%mth	-1.9	1.5	–	Fading momentum points to downside risk to investment.
Eur	Sep Trade Balance	€bn	11.0	–	–	At risk of further narrowing near-term, on soft demand.
US	Nov NAHB Housing Market	index	43	42	–	Some firming in recent months, but a long road ahead.
<b>Tue 19</b>						
Aus	Nov RBA Minutes	–	–	–	–	Board did not actively consider a rate hike or cut, like September.
Eur	Oct HICP Inflation	%ann	2.0	–	–	Final estimate detail to support ECB's patient approach to rates.
US	Oct Building Permits	%mth	-3.1	1.2	–	Lower borrowing costs should support activity...
	Oct Housing Starts	%mth	-0.5	-1.2	–	... but the effect will probably come with a lag.
<b>Wed 20</b>						
Aus	Oct Westpac-MI Leading Index	%ann'd	-0.15	–	–	Set to capture positive changes in key components.
UK	Oct CPI	%ann	1.7	2.1	–	Focus on services inflation.
<b>Thu 21</b>						
Aus	RBA Governor Bullock	–	–	–	–	Speaking at the Women in Payments Conference, 7:00pm AEDT.
Eur	Nov Consumer Confidence	index	-12.5	–	–	Scope for confidence recovery to speed up, on inflation and rates.
US	Nov Philly Fed	index	10.3	–	–	Manufacturing broadly characterised as subdued...
	Nov Kansas City Fed	index	-4	–	–	... across most of the nation.
	Oct Leading Index	%mth	-0.5	–	–	Pointing to downside growth risks.
	Oct Existing Home Sales	%mth	-1.0	1.0	–	Holding at its nadir as sellers wait patiently for lower rates.
	Initial Jobless Claims	000s	–	–	–	Downside risks to the labour market are growing.
	Fedspeak	–	–	–	–	Goolsbee, Hammack.
<b>Fri 22</b>						
Jpn	Oct CPI	%ann	2.5	2.3	–	Confidence over inflation growing; BOJ monitoring global risks.
	Nov Jibun Bank Manufacturing PMI	index	49.2	–	–	Contracting as demand, both local and global, weakens...
	Nov Jibun Bank Services PMI	index	49.7	–	–	... with early signs broadening into services activity.
Eur	Nov HCOB Manufacturing PMI	index	46.0	46.0	–	Manufacturing stuck in contraction for over two years...
	Nov HCOB Services PMI	index	51.6	52.0	–	... continued growth in services provides a meaningful offset.
	ECB President Lagarde	–	–	–	–	Keynote address at the Frankfurt European Banking Congress.
UK	Nov GfK Consumer Sentiment	index	-21	–	–	Reception to UK Budget in focus; backdrop otherwise improving...
	Oct Retail Sales	%mth	0.3	–	–	... as improving real wages coincide with higher retail spending.
	Nov S&P Global Manufacturing PMI	index	49.9	–	–	UK manufacturing on relatively firmer footing compared to peers...
	Nov S&P Global Services PMI	index	52.0	–	–	... but services are where inflationary pressures persist.
US	Nov S&P Global Manufacturing PMI	index	48.5	–	–	Headwinds linger for US industry...
	Nov S&P Global Services PMI	index	55.0	–	–	... while services provide a welcome offset.
	Nov Uni. Of Michigan Sentiment	index	73	72.0	–	Final estimate.

# Economic & financial forecasts

## Interest rate forecasts

Australia	Latest (15 Nov)	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26
Cash	4.35	4.35	4.10	3.85	3.60	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35
90 Day BBSW	4.42	4.42	4.19	3.96	3.73	3.50	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55
3 Year Swap	4.11	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.85	3.90	3.90	4.00
3 Year Bond	4.18	3.95	3.80	3.80	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.70	3.70	3.80
10 Year Bond	4.65	4.50	4.45	4.45	4.50	4.55	4.65	4.75	4.85	4.85
10 Year Spread to US (bps)	19	20	15	15	10	5	5	5	5	5
<b>United States</b>										
Fed Funds	4.625	4.375	3.875	3.625	3.375	3.375	3.375	3.375	3.625	3.875
US 10 Year Bond	4.46	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.40	4.50	4.60	4.70	4.80	4.80
<b>New Zealand</b>										
Cash	4.75	4.25	4.00	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.75	3.75	3.75
90 Day Bill	4.45	4.25	3.80	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.70	3.85	3.85	3.85
2 Year Swap	3.91	3.80	3.80	3.80	3.85	3.95	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
10 Year Bond	4.70	4.55	4.55	4.60	4.60	4.70	4.75	4.80	4.85	4.85
10 Year Spread to US (bps)	24	25	25	30	20	20	15	10	5	5

## Exchange rate forecasts

	Latest (15 Nov)	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26
AUD/USD	0.6466	0.67	0.67	0.68	0.69	0.70	0.71	0.71	0.72	0.72
NZD/USD	0.5845	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.60	0.60	0.61	0.61
USD/JPY	156.33	152	151	150	149	148	146	144	142	141
EUR/USD	1.0542	1.08	1.09	1.09	1.10	1.10	1.11	1.11	1.11	1.11
GBP/USD	1.2675	1.30	1.31	1.31	1.32	1.32	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.33
USD/CNY	7.2337	7.10	7.05	7.00	6.95	6.90	6.85	6.80	6.75	6.70
AUD/NZD	1.1035	1.13	1.14	1.15	1.17	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18

## Australian economic growth forecasts

	2024				2025				Calendar years			
% Change	Q1	Q2	Q3f	Q4f	Q1f	Q2f	Q3f	Q4f	2023	2024f	2025f	2026f
GDP %qtr	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	–	–	–	–
%yr end	1.3	1.0	1.2	1.5	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.4	1.6	1.5	2.4	2.4
Unemployment rate %	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	3.9	4.2	4.6	4.6
Wages (WPI) %qtr	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	–	–	–	–
%yr end	4.1	4.1	3.5	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.9	4.2	3.2	2.9	3.4
CPI Headline %qtr	1.0	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.9	1.1	0.7	–	–	–	–
%yr end	3.6	3.8	2.8	2.5	2.1	2.0	2.9	3.3	4.1	2.5	3.3	2.8
CPI Trimmed Mean %qtr	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	–	–	–	–
%yr end	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.3	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.8	4.2	3.3	2.8	2.6

## New Zealand economic growth forecasts

	2024				2025				Calendar years			
% Change	Q1	Q2	Q3f	Q4f	Q1f	Q2f	Q3f	Q4f	2023	2024f	2025f	2026f
GDP %qtr	0.1	-0.2	-0.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	–	–	–	–
Annual avg change	0.3	-0.2	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.3	0.9	1.5	0.7	0.0	1.5	2.8
Unemployment rate %	4.4	4.6	4.8	5.1	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.4	4.0	5.1	5.4	4.6
CPI %qtr	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.9	0.3	–	–	–	–
Annual change	4.0	3.3	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.8	2.1	2.0	4.7	2.1	2.0	2.1

Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. The forecasts given above are predictive in character. Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure that the assumptions on which the forecasts are based are reasonable, the forecasts may be affected by incorrect assumptions or by known or unknown risks and uncertainties. The results ultimately achieved may differ substantially from these forecasts.



# Corporate Directory

## Westpac Economics / Australia

Sydney  
Level 19, 275 Kent Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Australia

E: [economics@westpac.com.au](mailto:economics@westpac.com.au)

Luci Ellis  
Chief Economist Westpac Group  
E: [luci.ellis@westpac.com.au](mailto:luci.ellis@westpac.com.au)

Matthew Hassan  
Head of Australian Macro-Forecasting  
E: [mhassan@westpac.com.au](mailto:mhassan@westpac.com.au)

Elliot Clarke  
Head of International Economics  
E: [eclarke@westpac.com.au](mailto:eclarke@westpac.com.au)

Justin Smirk  
Senior Economist  
E: [jsmirk@westpac.com.au](mailto:jsmirk@westpac.com.au)

Pat Bustamante  
Senior Economist  
E: [pat.bustamante@westpac.com.au](mailto:pat.bustamante@westpac.com.au)

Mantas Vanagas  
Senior Economist  
E: [mantas.vanagas@westpac.com.au](mailto:mantas.vanagas@westpac.com.au)

Illiana Jain  
Economist  
E: [illiana.jain@westpac.com.au](mailto:illiana.jain@westpac.com.au)

Neha Sharma  
Economist  
E: [neha.sharma1@westpac.com.au](mailto:neha.sharma1@westpac.com.au)

Jameson Coombs  
Economist  
E: [jameson.coombs@westpac.com.au](mailto:jameson.coombs@westpac.com.au)

Ryan Wells  
Economist  
E: [ryan.wells@westpac.com.au](mailto:ryan.wells@westpac.com.au)

## Westpac Economics / New Zealand

Auckland  
Takutai on the Square  
Level 8, 16 Takutai Square  
Auckland, New Zealand

E: [economics@westpac.co.nz](mailto:economics@westpac.co.nz)

Kelly Eckhold  
Chief Economist NZ  
E: [kelly.eckhold@westpac.co.nz](mailto:kelly.eckhold@westpac.co.nz)

Michael Gordon  
Senior Economist  
E: [michael.gordon@westpac.co.nz](mailto:michael.gordon@westpac.co.nz)

Darren Gibbs  
Senior Economist  
E: [darren.gibbs@westpac.co.nz](mailto:darren.gibbs@westpac.co.nz)

Satish Ranchhod  
Senior Economist  
E: [satish.ranchhod@westpac.co.nz](mailto:satish.ranchhod@westpac.co.nz)

Paul Clark  
Industry Economist  
E: [paul.clarke@westpac.co.nz](mailto:paul.clarke@westpac.co.nz)

## Westpac Economics / Fiji

Suva  
1 Thomson Street  
Suva, Fiji

Shamal Chand  
Senior Economist  
E: [shamal.chand@westpac.com.au](mailto:shamal.chand@westpac.com.au)



 [westpaciq.com.au](https://westpaciq.com.au)

©2024 Westpac Banking Corporation ABN 33 007 457 141 (including where acting under any of its Westpac, St George, Bank of Melbourne or BankSA brands, collectively, “Westpac”). References to the “Westpac Group” are to Westpac and its subsidiaries and includes the directors, employees and representatives of Westpac and its subsidiaries.

### Things you should know

We respect your privacy: You can view our [privacy statement at Westpac.com.au](#). Each time someone visits our site, data is captured so that we can accurately evaluate the quality of our content and make improvements for you. We may at times use technology to capture data about you to help us to better understand you and your needs, including potentially for the purposes of assessing your individual reading habits and interests to allow us to provide suggestions regarding other reading material which may be suitable for you.

This information, unless specifically indicated otherwise, is under copyright of the Westpac Group. None of the material, nor its contents, nor any copy of it, may be altered in any way, transmitted to, copied or distributed to any other party without the prior written permission of the Westpac Group.

### Disclaimer

This information has been prepared by Westpac and is intended for information purposes only. It is not intended to reflect any recommendation or financial advice and investment decisions should not be based on it. This information does not constitute an offer, a solicitation of an offer, or an inducement to subscribe for, purchase or sell any financial instrument or to enter into a legally binding contract. To the extent that this information contains any general advice, it has been prepared without taking into account your objectives, financial situation or needs and before acting on it you should consider the appropriateness of the advice. Certain types of transactions, including those involving futures, options and high yield securities give rise to substantial risk and are not suitable for all investors. We recommend that you seek your own independent legal or financial advice before proceeding with any investment decision. This information may contain material provided by third parties. While such material is published with the necessary permission none of Westpac or its related entities accepts any responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of any such material. Although we have made every effort to ensure this information is free from error, none of Westpac or its related entities warrants the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of this information, or otherwise endorses it in any way. Except where contrary to law, Westpac Group intend by this notice to exclude liability for this information. This information is subject to change without notice and none of Westpac or its related entities is under any obligation to update this information or correct any inaccuracy which may become apparent at a later date. This information may contain or incorporate by reference forward-looking statements. The words “believe”, “anticipate”, “expect”, “intend”, “plan”, “predict”, “continue”, “assume”, “positioned”, “may”, “will”, “should”, “shall”, “risk” and other similar expressions that are predictions of or indicate future events and future trends identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements include all matters that are not historical facts. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance, nor are forecasts of future performance. Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure that the assumptions on which any forecasts are based are reasonable, the forecasts may be affected by incorrect assumptions or by known or unknown risks and uncertainties. The ultimate outcomes may differ substantially from any forecasts.

**Conflicts of Interest:** In the normal course of offering banking products and services to its clients, the Westpac Group may act in several capacities (including issuer, market maker, underwriter, distributor, swap counterparty and calculation

agent) simultaneously with respect to a financial instrument, giving rise to potential conflicts of interest which may impact the performance of a financial instrument. The Westpac Group may at any time transact or hold a position (including hedging and trading positions) for its own account or the account of a client in any financial instrument which may impact the performance of that financial instrument.

**Author(s) disclaimer and declaration:** The author(s) confirms that no part of his/her compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to any views or (if applicable) recommendations expressed in this material. The author(s) also confirms that this material accurately reflects his/her personal views about the financial products, companies or issuers (if applicable) and is based on sources reasonably believed to be reliable and accurate.

**Further important information regarding sustainability-related content:** This material may contain statements relating to environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics. These are subject to known and unknown risks, and there are significant uncertainties, limitations, risks and assumptions in the metrics, modelling, data, scenarios, reporting and analysis on which the statements rely. In particular, these areas are rapidly evolving and maturing, and there are variations in approaches and common standards and practice, as well as uncertainty around future related policy and legislation. Some material may include information derived from publicly available sources that have not been independently verified. No representation or warranty is made as to the accuracy, completeness or reliability of the information. There is a risk that the analysis, estimates, judgements, assumptions, views, models, scenarios or projections used may turn out to be incorrect. These risks may cause actual outcomes to differ materially from those expressed or implied. The ESG-related statements in this material do not constitute advice, nor are they guarantees or predictions of future performance, and Westpac gives no representation, warranty or assurance (including as to the quality, accuracy or completeness of the statements). You should seek your own independent advice.

### Additional country disclosures:

**Australia:** Westpac holds an Australian Financial Services Licence (No. 233714). You can access [Westpac's Financial Services Guide here](#) or request a copy from your Westpac point of contact. To the extent that this information contains any general advice, it has been prepared without taking into account your objectives, financial situation or needs and before acting on it you should consider the appropriateness of the advice.

**New Zealand:** In New Zealand, products and services are provided by either Westpac (NZ division) or Westpac New Zealand Limited (company number 1763882), the New Zealand incorporated subsidiary of Westpac (“WNZL”). Any product or service made available by WNZL does not represent an offer from Westpac or any of its subsidiaries (other than WNZL). Neither Westpac nor its other subsidiaries guarantee or otherwise support the performance of WNZL in respect of any such product. WNZL is not an authorised deposit-taking institution for the purposes of Australian prudential standards. The current disclosure statements for the New Zealand branch of Westpac and WNZL can be obtained at the internet address [www.westpac.co.nz](http://www.westpac.co.nz).

**Singapore:** This material has been prepared and issued for distribution in Singapore to institutional investors, accredited investors and expert investors (as defined in the applicable Singapore laws and regulations) only. Recipients of this material in Singapore should contact Westpac Singapore Branch in respect of any matters arising from, or in connection with, this material. Westpac Singapore Branch holds a wholesale banking

*Disclaimer continues overleaf ►*

licence and is subject to supervision by the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

**U.S.:** Westpac operates in the United States of America as a federally licensed branch, regulated by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. Westpac is also registered with the US Commodity Futures Trading Commission ("CFTC") as a Swap Dealer, but is neither registered as, or affiliated with, a Futures Commission Merchant registered with the US CFTC. The services and products referenced above are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC"). Westpac Capital Markets, LLC ("WCM"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Westpac, is a broker-dealer registered under the U.S. Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ('the Exchange Act') and member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ('FINRA'). This communication is provided for distribution to U.S. institutional investors in reliance on the exemption from registration provided by Rule 15a-6 under the Exchange Act and is not subject to all of the independence and disclosure standards applicable to debt research reports prepared for retail investors in the United States. WCM is the U.S. distributor of this communication and accepts responsibility for the contents of this communication. Transactions by U.S. customers of any securities referenced herein should be effected through WCM. All disclaimers set out with respect to Westpac apply equally to WCM. If you would like to speak to someone regarding any security mentioned herein, please contact WCM on +1 212 389 1269. Investing in any non-U.S. securities or related financial instruments mentioned in this communication may present certain risks. The securities of non-U.S. issuers may not be registered with, or be subject to the regulations of, the SEC in the United States. Information on such non-U.S. securities or related financial instruments may be limited. Non-U.S. companies may not be subject to audit and reporting standards and regulatory requirements comparable to those in effect in the United States. The value of any investment or income from any securities or related derivative instruments denominated in a currency other than U.S. dollars is subject to exchange rate fluctuations that may have a positive or adverse effect on the value of or income from such securities or related derivative instruments. The author of this communication is employed by Westpac and is not registered or qualified as a research analyst, representative, or associated person of WCM or any other U.S. broker-dealer under the rules of FINRA, any other U.S. self-regulatory organisation, or the laws, rules or regulations of any State. Unless otherwise specifically stated, the views expressed herein are solely those of the author and may differ from the information, views or analysis expressed by Westpac and/or its affiliates.

**UK and EU:** The London branch of Westpac is authorised in the United Kingdom by the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) and is subject to regulation by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and limited regulation by the PRA (Financial Services Register number: 124586). The London branch of Westpac is registered at Companies House as a branch established in the United Kingdom (Branch No. BR000106). Details about the extent of the regulation of Westpac's London branch by the PRA are available from us on request.

Westpac Europe GmbH ("WEG") is authorised in Germany by the Federal Financial Supervision Authority ('BaFin') and subject to its regulation. WEG's supervisory authorities are BaFin and the German Federal Bank ('Deutsche Bundesbank'). WEG is registered with the commercial register ('Handelsregister') of the local court of Frankfurt am Main under registration number HRB 118483. In accordance with APRA's Prudential Standard 222 'Association with Related Entities', Westpac does not stand behind WEG other than as provided for in certain legal agreements (a risk transfer, sub-participation and collateral agreement) between Westpac and WEG and obligations of WEG do not represent liabilities of Westpac.

This communication is not intended for distribution to, or use by any person or entity in any jurisdiction or country where such distribution or use would be contrary to local law or regulation. This communication is not being made to or distributed to, and must not be passed on to, the general public in the United Kingdom. Rather, this communication is being made only to and is directed at (a) those persons falling within the definition of Investment Professionals (set out in Article 19(5) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005 (the "Order")); (b) those persons falling within the definition of high net worth companies, unincorporated associations etc. (set out in Article 49(2) of the Order); (c) other persons to whom it may lawfully be communicated in accordance with the Order or (d) any persons to whom it may otherwise lawfully be made (all such persons together being referred to as "relevant persons"). Any person who is not a relevant person should not act or rely on this communication or any of its contents. In the same way, the information contained in this communication is intended for "eligible counterparties" and "professional clients" as defined by the rules of the Financial Conduct Authority and is not intended for "retail clients". Westpac expressly prohibits you from passing on the information in this communication to any third party.

This communication contains general commentary, research, and market colour. The communication does not constitute investment advice. The material may contain an 'investment recommendation' and/or 'information recommending or suggesting an investment', both as defined in Regulation (EU) No 596/2014 (including as applicable in the United Kingdom) ("MAR"). In accordance with the relevant provisions of MAR, reasonable care has been taken to ensure that the material has been objectively presented and that interests or conflicts of interest of the sender concerning the financial instruments to which that information relates have been disclosed.

Investment recommendations must be read alongside the specific disclosure which accompanies them and the general disclosure which can be found [here](#). Such disclosure fulfils certain additional information requirements of MAR and associated delegated legislation and by accepting this communication you acknowledge that you are aware of the existence of such additional disclosure and its contents.

To the extent this communication comprises an investment recommendation it is classified as non-independent research. It has not been prepared in accordance with legal requirements designed to promote the independence of investment research and therefore constitutes a marketing communication. Further, this communication is not subject to any prohibition on dealing ahead of the dissemination of investment research.