Infometrics

QUARTERLY ECONOMIC MONITOR

Tairāwhiti

Contents

Overview of Tairāwhiti

Spotlight

	Tairāwhiti	New Zealand
GDP	-0.7% ▼	+0.4% ▲
Consumer spending	+0.4% ▲	-0.3% ▼
Employment	-1.9% ▼	-0.8% ▼
Unemployment	6.2% ▲	5.3% ▲
House values	$559,254 ▼	$871,831 ▼

Economic activity was flat at the start of 2026 for Tairāwhiti, with GDP unchanged in the first quarter compared to a year earlier, according to provisional estimates from Infometrics. The fall in annual average economic activity is provisionally expected to have narrowed to a 0.7%pa decline, an improvement from the 1.4%pa fall recorded over the year to September 2025.

Continued severe weather has buffeted the Tairāwhiti economy at the start of 2026, with the region under a State of Emergency for nearly a quarter of the period and repeated closures or restrictions to the Waioweka Gorge. Tourism activity was already restrained heading into the new year, and was unable to regain further momentum, with guest nights down 9.1%pa.

Jobs activity locally has been limited, with filled jobs down 1.6%pa in the March 2026 quarter, keeping the annual average decline in jobs at 1.9%pa. There has been a lift in forestry, education, arts and recreation, and health roles, but these gains have been more than offset by declines in professional services, accommodation and food services, and manufacturing. Although the unemployment and NEET rate remain higher, both appear to be plateauing or reducing slightly.

Tairāwhiti's primary sector has experienced a range of trends recently, with a 6.1%pa lift in harvested wood volumes on the East Coast over the last 12 months. Forestry product prices remain subdued, but have inched higher more recently. Horticulture activity has been buoyant too, despite some moderation in commodity prices, with horticulture activity expected to have improved at the start of 2026. Meanwhile, the meat sector in Tairāwhiti has been less upbeat, with total livestock kill weights across the combined Gisborne and Hawke's Bay down 4.0% over the last year, with meat prices levelling off too, albeit at high levels.

Marketview card spending data shows a 0.4% lift in retail spending over the March 2026 year, the first spending increase in over a year. However, with cost-of-living pressures still hitting, Infometrics estimates that spending volumes dropped 0.2%pa over the last year locally. Non-residential consent values are down nearly 30%pa in Tairāwhiti, with a downward trend in building investment recently. In contrast, residential consent numbers have increased nearly 20% over the same period, with another strong quarter at the start of 2026. Housing outcomes are also looking slightly better locally, with lower house values, slightly better housing affordability, and lower emergency grants and housing register applicants, but rents have increased recently.

Economic indicators

Overview

Table 1. Overview of economic indicators

Indicator	Tairāwhiti	New Zealand
Gross domestic product (provisional)	-0.7% ▼	+0.4% ▲
Business counts	-0.2% ▼	+1.2% ▲
Consumer spending	+0.4% ▲	-0.3% ▼
Traffic flow	+9.4% ▲	+1.6% ▲
Tourism expenditure	+18.8% ▲	+11.5% ▲
Guest nights	-9.1% ▼	+4.2% ▲
Non-residential consents	-29.8% ▼	+1.2% ▲
Electric vehicle registrations	+76.9% ▲	+38.9% ▲
Car registrations	+0.5% ▲	+2.9% ▲
Commercial vehicle registrations	+6.1% ▲	+4.8% ▲
Greenhouse gas emissions (provisional) 🕒	-4.2% ▼	-2.3% ▼

🕒 Data up to the December 2025 quarter.

All measures are annual average percentage changes.

Gross domestic product

Figure 1. Gross domestic product growth (provisional)

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

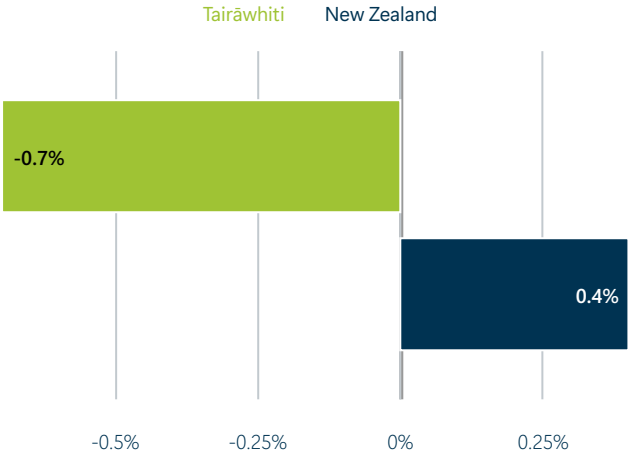
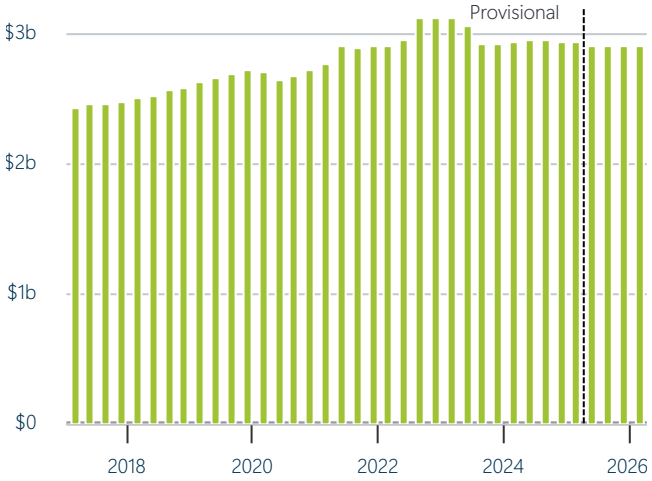


Figure 2. Gross domestic product

Annual level, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- GDP in Tairāwhiti was provisionally down 0.7% for the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. The decline was greater than in New Zealand (0.4% growth).
- Provisional GDP was $2,905 million in Tairāwhiti for the year to March 2026 (2025 prices).
- Annual GDP growth in Tairāwhiti peaked at 9.8% in the year to June 2021.

National overview

Economic momentum appeared to be building in early 2026, but mostly pre-date the more challenging economic outlook that has since emerged as a result of the Iran War. Provisional estimates from Infometrics suggest that economic activity expanded 0.7%pa in the March 2026 quarter compared to a year ago, boosting the annual average growth rate to 0.4%pa. Primary sector activity remained upbeat, adding further to provincial economies, alongside better international tourism activity, and a lift in manufacturing and construction expectations. Spending trends and the jobs market had been improving, but at a slow and patchy pace. Soaring fuel costs has seen business and consumer confidence fall at the end of the March quarter, and expectations for an economic recovery have been pushed out, once again.

Business counts

Figure 3. Growth in number of business units

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

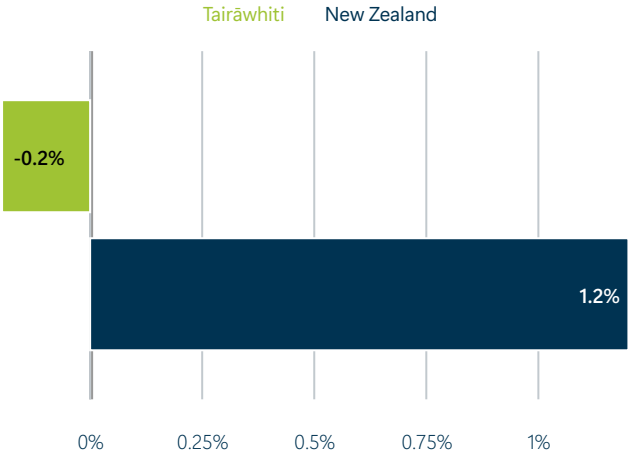
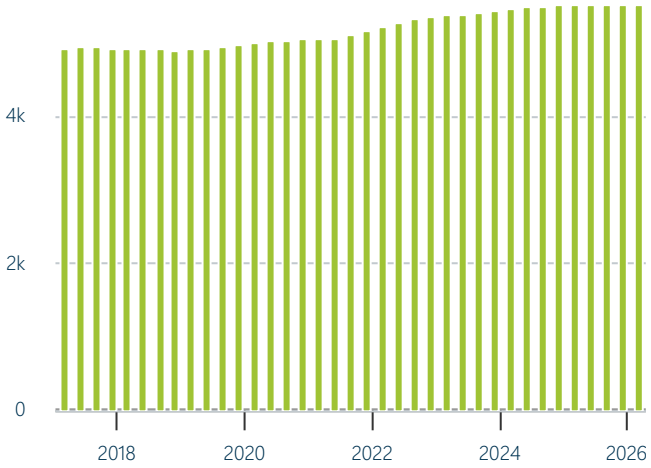


Figure 4. Business units

Annual level, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- The number of business units in Tairāwhiti was down 0.2% for the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. The decline was greater than in New Zealand (1.2% growth).
- The number of business units in Tairāwhiti reached an annual average of 5,522 in the year to March 2026, down from 5,532 in the previous 12 months.
- Annual growth in the number of business units in Tairāwhiti peaked at 4.3% in the year to June 2022.

National overview

The number of business units rose 1.2%pa in the year to March 2026 and in the March 2026 quarter. Business unit growth has tracked between 1-1.5% since 2024, mid-2023, after peaking at nearly 5% in 2022. With weak economic activity and consumer spending, it is a difficult time to start a business. However, it's noteworthy that business units are growing faster than employment (which is down 0.8%). People may be starting businesses to work as contractors after losing their jobs, or in anticipation of better economic conditions ahead.

Consumer spending

Figure 5. Growth in consumer spending

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

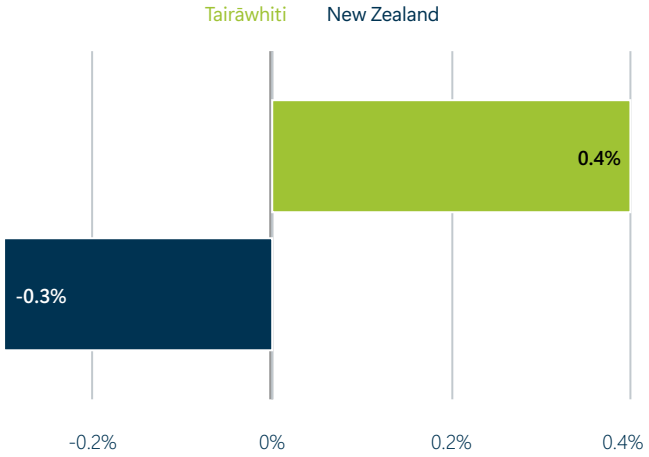
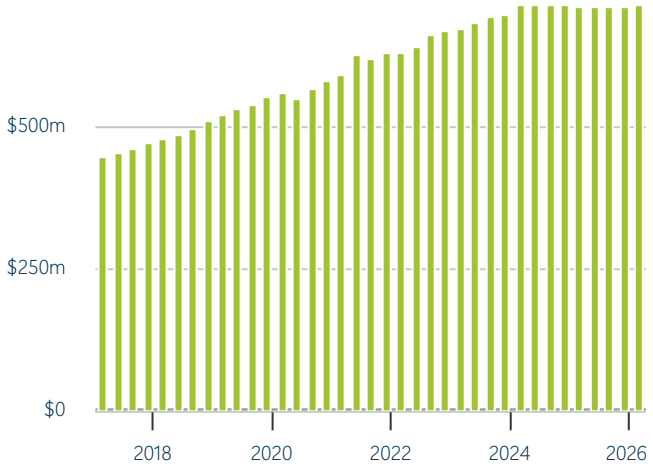


Figure 6. Consumer spending

Annual level, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Electronic card consumer spending in Tairāwhiti as measured by Marketview, increased by 0.4% over the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. This compares with a decrease of 0.3% in New Zealand.

National overview

Marketview card spending data shows a 0.3% lift in retail spending in the March 2026 quarter compared to a year earlier, narrowing the annual average decline to 0.3%pa over the last 12 months. After adjusting for retail price inflation, Infometrics estimates that spending volumes fell 0.8%pa over the last year. The March quarter result does include the early impacts of higher fuel prices, although the overall impact is muted, given higher fuel prices were only present for a third of the quarter, and fuel only accounting for 5.7% of total retail spending in 2025. Early signals suggest that higher prices for fuel are being paid for by reducing overall fuel use, and with reductions in spending on apparel and hospitality.

Traffic flow

Figure 7. Annual change in traffic flows

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

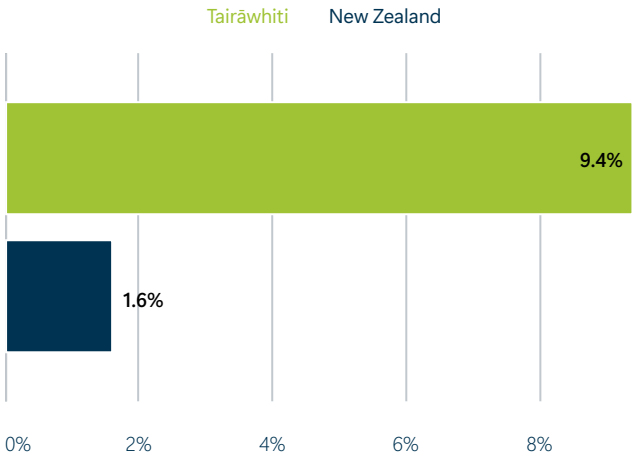
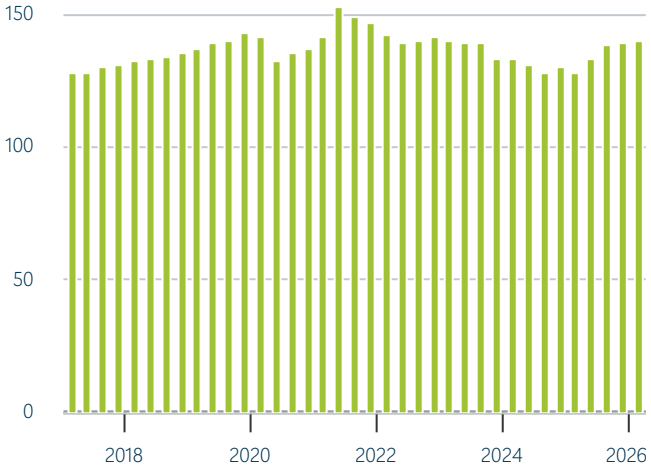


Figure 8. Traffic

Annual level, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Traffic flows in Tairāwhiti increased by 9.4% over the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 1.6% in New Zealand.

National overview

Traffic flows rose 1.6% in the year to March 2026 year, driven by a 2.3%pa increase in the March 2026 quarter, which reflects ongoing economic recovery. The March quarter largely misses the effects of the Iran War, but we expect softer flows from the June quarter onwards as high fuel prices curtail traffic flows.

Tourism expenditure

Figure 9. Tourism expenditure

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

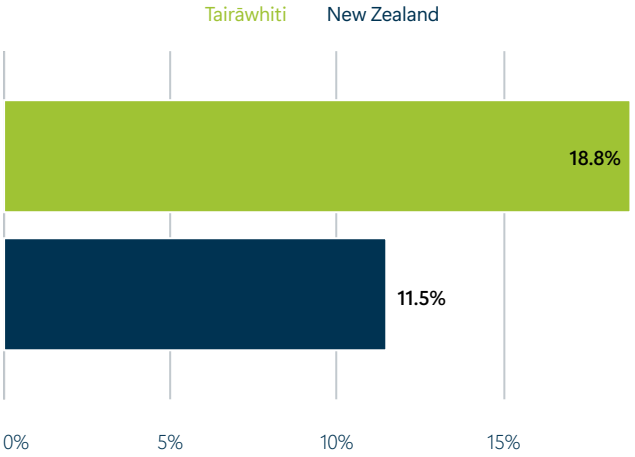
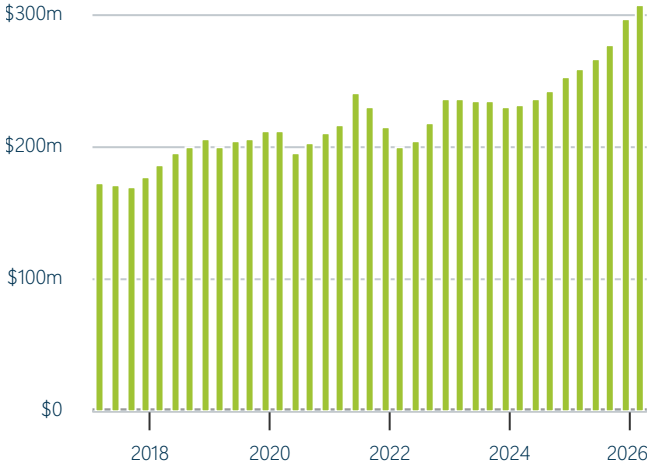


Figure 10. Tourism expenditure

Annual total, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Total tourism expenditure in Tairāwhiti increased by 18.8% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 11.5% in New Zealand.
- Total tourism expenditure was approximately $307.5 million in Tairāwhiti during the year to March 2026, which was up from $258.8 million a year ago.

National overview

Tourism expenditure rose 12% in the year to March 2026, driven by a 24% increase in international tourist expenditure, according to MBIE's monthly regional tourism estimates (MRTE). International visitor arrivals to New Zealand rose 6.8% in the year to February 2026, which implies a significant increase in spending per tourist. Domestic tourism expenditure rose by a modest 3.6%, reflecting that households remain squeezed.

MBIE paused the MRTE in February 2024 and resumed the series at the end of March 2026. The tourism expenditure series in the Quarterly Economic Monitor and Regional Economic Profile has been replaced with the new MRTE series.

Guest nights

Figure 11. Guest nights

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

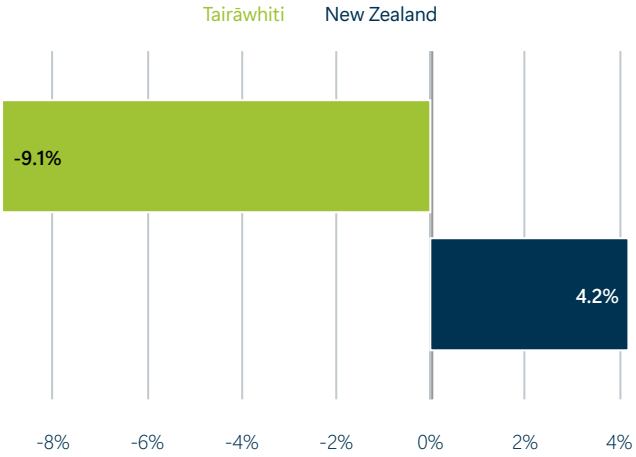
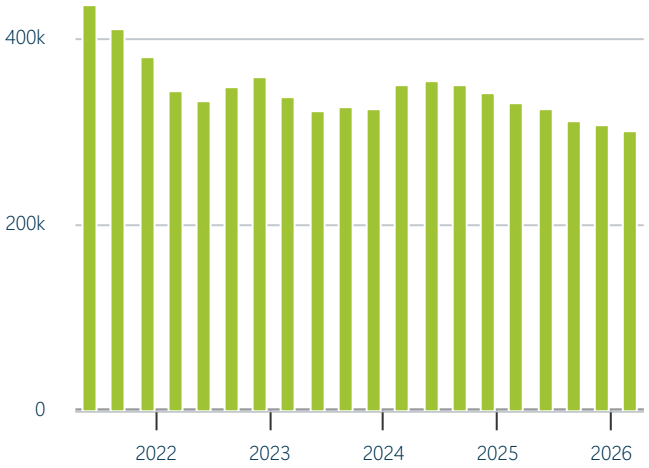


Figure 12. Guest nights

Annual number, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Total guest nights in Tairāwhiti decreased by 9.1% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 4.2% in New Zealand.
- Visitors stayed a total of 300,100 nights in Tairāwhiti during the year to March 2026, which was down from 330,200 a year ago.

National overview

Guest nights continue to improve with a solid 4.2% increase in the year to March 2026, led by a 4.6%pa increase in the March 2026 quarter. International guest nights continue to do the heavy lifting, with an 8.2%pa increase in the March 2026 quarter. It is also encouraging to see domestic guest nights rise 2.4%pa in the March 2026 quarter, after a fall in the December 2025 quarter.

Global disruption from the Iran War could bring downside risk to guest nights in coming quarters. Higher fuel costs may dent demand for long haul flights bringing international visitors to New Zealand. High fuel and general inflation may squeeze household budgets, limiting domestic appetites for travel.

Non-residential consents

Figure 13. Growth in value of consents

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

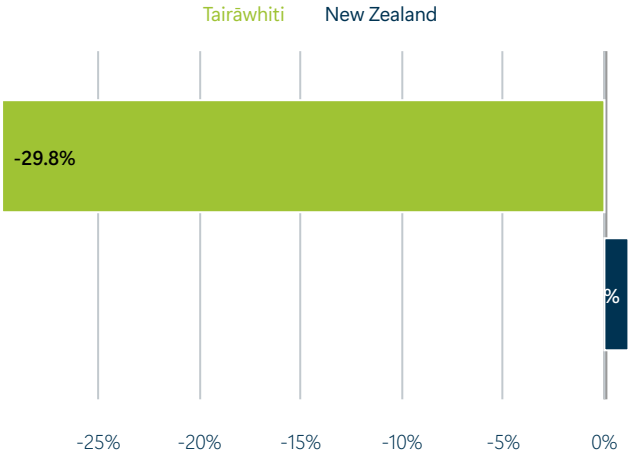
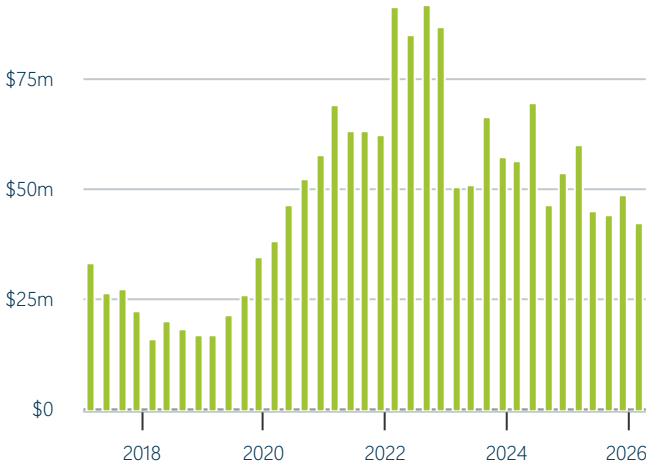


Figure 14. Non-residential consents, Tairāwhiti

Annual running total, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Non-residential building consents to the value of $42.2 million were issued in Tairāwhiti during the year to March 2026. This compares with the ten year annual average of $47.5 million.
- The value of consents in Tairāwhiti decreased by 29.8% over the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. In comparison, the value of consents increased by 1.2% in New Zealand over the same period.

National overview

The value of non-residential consents issued across New Zealand over the March 2026 year totalled just under $9.0b, up 1.2%pa from a year earlier. The South Island has dominated both the highs and lows for this indicator, with Southland, Tasman, and Marlborough having experienced stronger non-residential consent intentions recently, but Nelson, West Coast, and Otago seeing the largest annual falls. Public sector work has driven the overall increase in non-residential consents, with higher education and social building intentions, although hospital consents are down considerably from their peak. Private sector consents are still in decline, with businesses unable or unwilling to commit to new investments in the current economic climate.

Dairy payout

Figure 15. Total dairy payout

May years

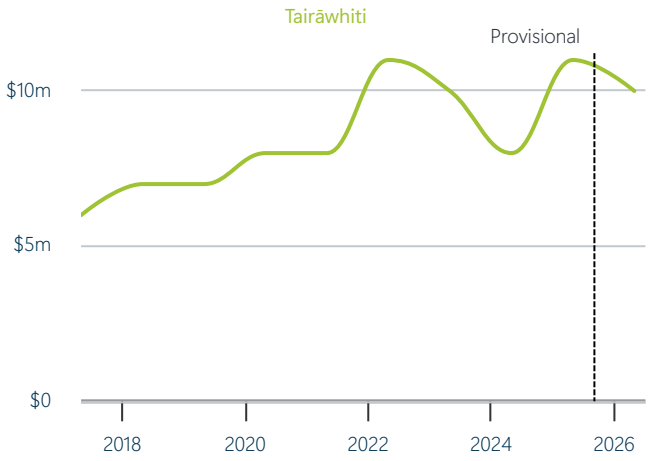
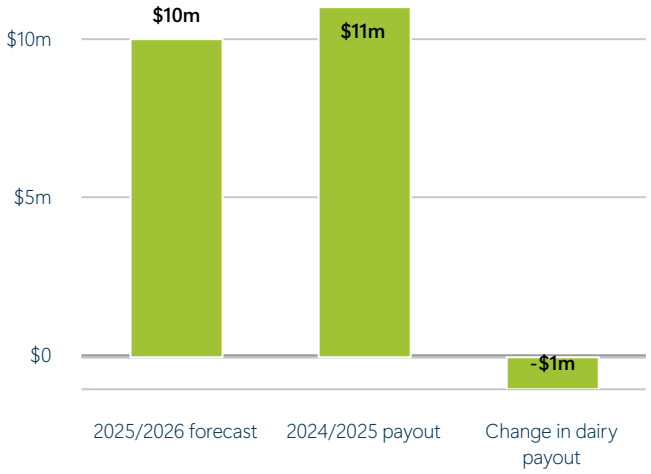


Figure 16. Total dairy payout

May years



Highlights

- Tairāwhiti total dairy payout for the 2024/2025 season is estimated to have been approximately $11 million.
- Tairāwhiti's dairy payout for the 2025/2026 season is expected to be approximately $10 million, $1 million 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 $19,678 million in the 2024/2025 season, and is expected to be $182 million lower in the 2025/2026 season.

Electric vehicle registrations

Figure 17. Growth in number of EV registrations

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

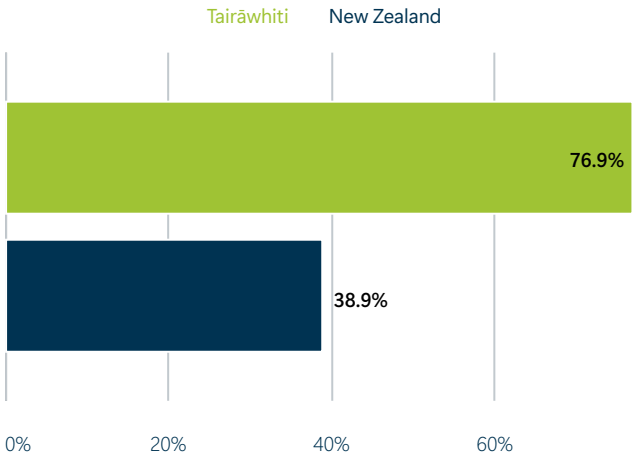
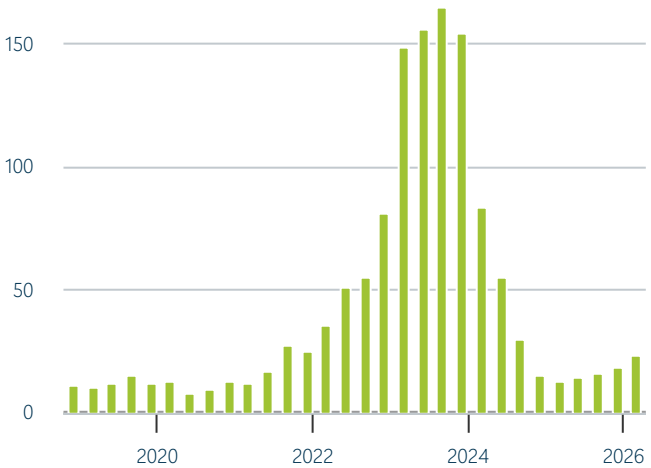


Figure 18. EV registrations

Annual level, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- The number of EV registrations in Tairāwhiti increased by 76.9% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. Growth was higher than in New Zealand (38.9%).
- The number of EV registrations in Tairāwhiti reached an annual total of 23 in the year to March 2026, up from 13 in the year to March 2025 and 83 in the year to March 2024.

National overview

Electric vehicle (EV) registrations rocketed up by 39% in the year to March 2026, driven by a 115%pa increase in the March 2026 quarter. EV registrations were modest up to February 2026, but the Iran War's effect on fuel prices has driven a resurgence in interest in EVs. The sudden surge in EV sales will have diminished in-country stock levels, which will constrain registrations in the coming quarter.

Car registrations

Figure 19. Car registrations

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

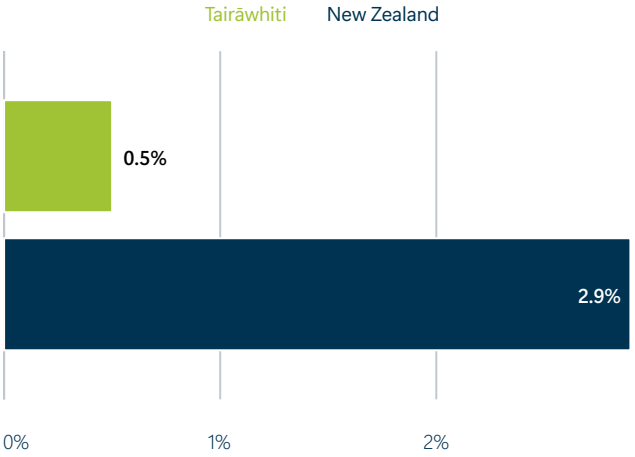
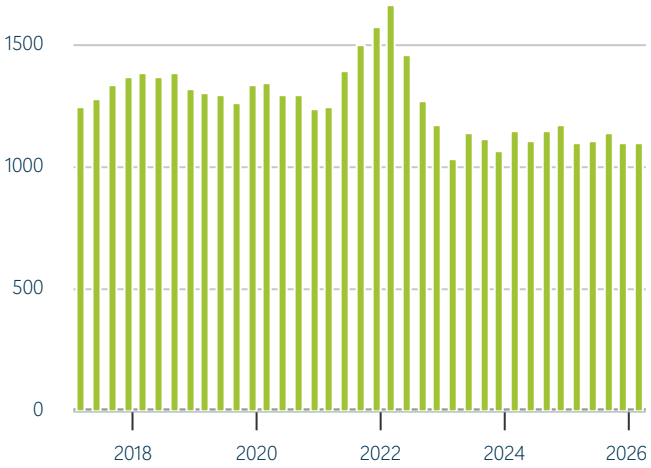


Figure 20. Car registrations

Annual number, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- The number of cars registered in Tairāwhiti increased by 0.5% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (2.9%).
- A total of 1,098 cars were registered in Tairāwhiti in the year to March 2026. This compares with the ten year annual average of 1,254.

National overview

There were just under 49,000 car registrations in the March 2026 quarter, up 9.1%pa from the same quarter in 2025. The strong quarterly result was bolstered by a near 17%pa lift in passenger car registrations in the March month alone, as soaring fuel prices led to a large lift in electric vehicle registrations, with 4x more full battery EV and 3x PHEV registrations than last March. Car registration trends earlier in the quarter weren't nearly as strong, with households still somewhat reluctant to commit to large purchases. Lower consumer confidence since the Iran War is likely to limit passenger car purchases going forward.

Commercial vehicle registrations

Figure 21. Commercial vehicle registrations

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

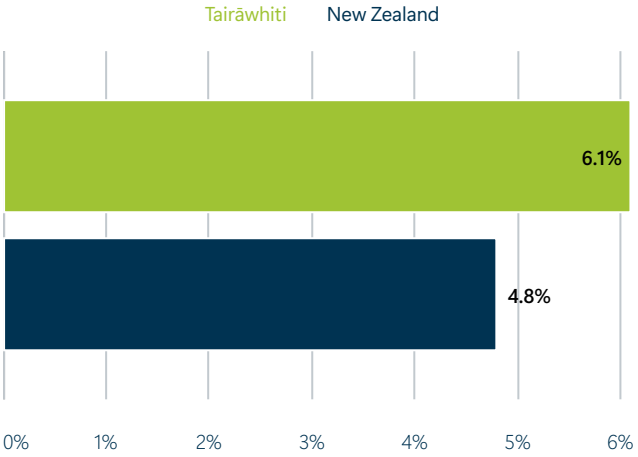


Figure 22. Commercial vehicle registrations

Annual number, Tairāwhiti

Highlights

- The number of commercial vehicles registered in Tairāwhiti increased by 6.1% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. Growth was higher than in New Zealand (4.8%).
- A total of 487 commercial vehicles were registered in Tairāwhiti in the year to March 2026. This is lower than the ten year annual average of 577.

National overview

Annual commercial vehicle registrations rose 4.8%pa on average over the 12 months ending March 2026, the first annual average increase since the end of 2024. Commercial vehicle registrations totalled just under 46,000 over the last year, with the recent lift supported by a surge of EV and hybrid light commercial vehicles in March as fuel prices surged and diesel utes fell out of favour – at least momentarily. Although stronger primary sector returns are likely to be assisting with higher commercial registrations, regional trends aren't as obvious, with Nelson, Northland, and Bay of Plenty seeing the largest increase in commercial registrations. However, overall commercial registrations remain lower than a year ago in some areas, like in the Manawatu, Hawke's Bay, and Auckland, suggesting a still mixed bag.

Greenhouse gas emissions

Figure 23. Greenhouse gas emission growth (provisional)

Annual average % change December 2024 - December 2025

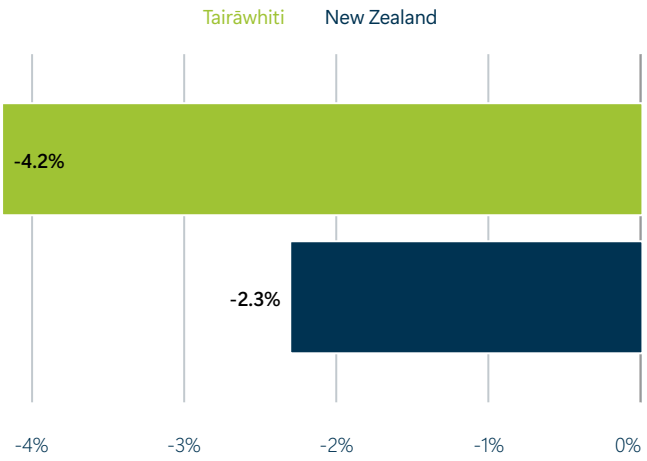


Figure 24. Greenhouse gas emissions

Annual level kilotonnes CO_2-e, Tairāwhiti

Highlights

- Greenhouse gas emissions in Tairāwhiti were provisionally down 4.2% for the year to December 2025, compared to a year earlier. The decline was greater than in New Zealand (2.3%).
- Provisional greenhouse gas emissions were 1,179 kilotonnes CO_2-e in Tairāwhiti for the year to December 2025.
- The sharpest decline in greenhouse gas emissions in Tairāwhiti occured in the year to March 2023, with a fall of 8.2%.
- *Please note that greenhouse gas emissions is not yet available for the year to March 2026. Data for the year to December 2025 is displayed instead.*

National overview

Greenhouse gas emissions, in terms of carbon dioxide equivalents, eased 2.3% nationally in the year to December 2025, driven by less use of fossil fuels in electricity generation and manufacturing.

Our greenhouse gas emissions estimates are based on Stats NZ's estimates of national and regional emissions, and our own modelling with GDP and employment.

Labour market indicators

Overview

Table 2. Overview of labour market indicators

Indicator	Tairāwhiti	New Zealand
Employment (place of residence)	-1.9% ▼	-0.8% ▼
Jobseeker Support recipients	+4.4% ▲	+5.8% ▲
Unemployment rate ^	6.2% ▲	5.3% ▲
NEET rate ^	17.8% ▲	13.6% ▲

All measures are annual average percentage changes unless:

^ Levels

Employment (place of residence)

Figure 25. Employment (place of residence) growth

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

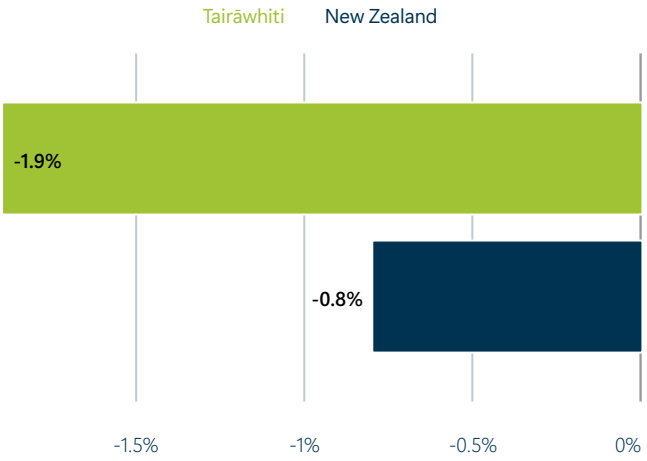
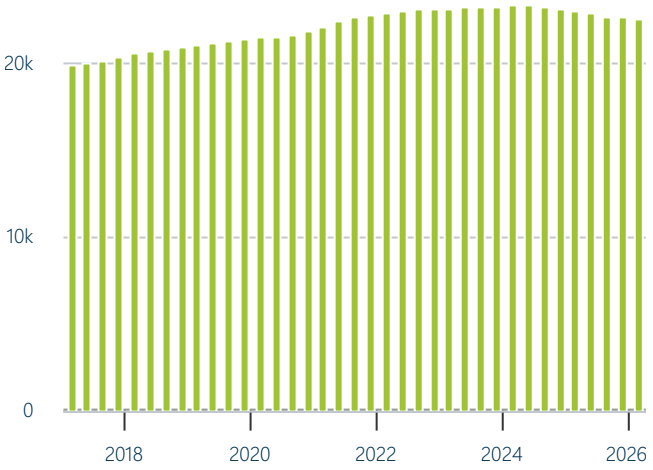


Figure 26. Employment (place of residence)

Annual level, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Employment for residents living in Tairāwhiti was down 1.9% for the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. The decline was greater than in New Zealand (0.8%).
- An average of 22,542 people living in Tairāwhiti were employed in the year to March 2026.
- Annual employment growth for Tairāwhiti residents peaked at 4.4% in the year to September 2021.

Jobseeker Support recipients

Figure 27. Annual change in Jobseeker Support recipients

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

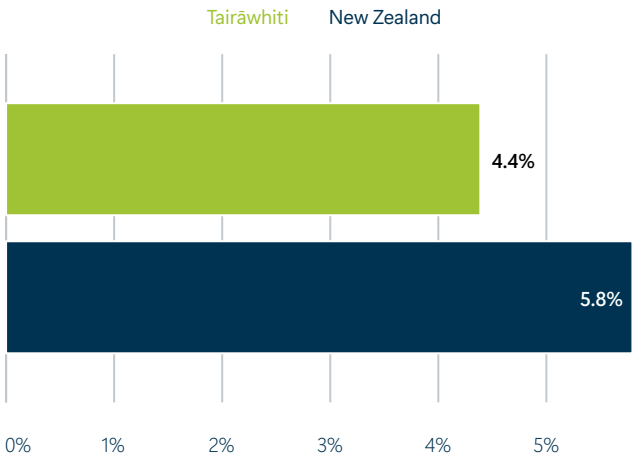
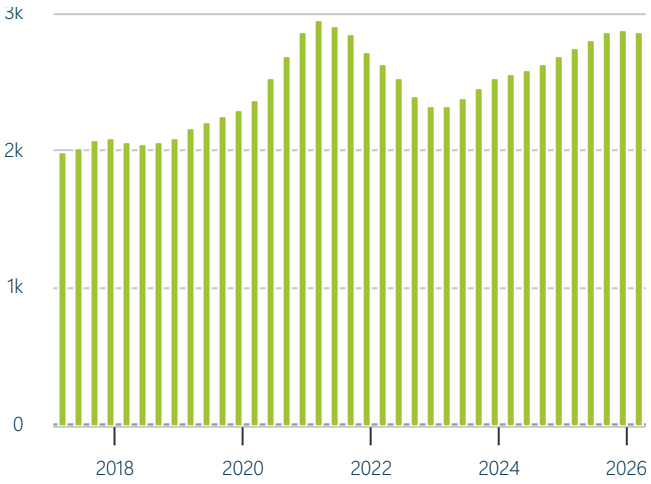


Figure 28. Jobseeker Support recipients

Annual average, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Jobseeker Support recipients in Tairāwhiti in the year to March 2026 increased by 4.4% compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (5.8%).
- An average of 2,872 people were receiving a Jobseeker Support benefit in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the ten year annual average of 2,467.

Unemployment rate

Figure 29. Unemployment rate

Annual average rate to March 2026

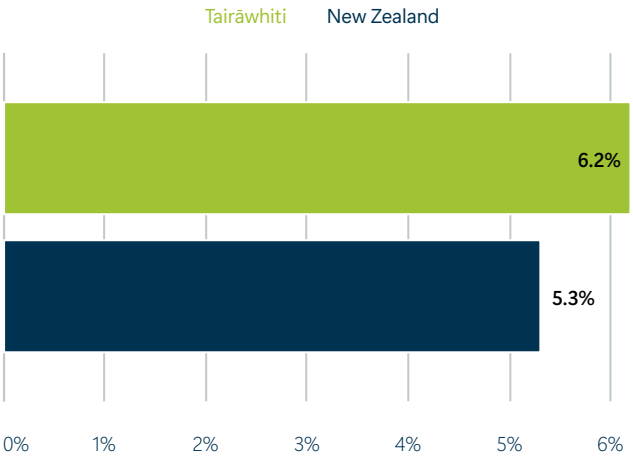
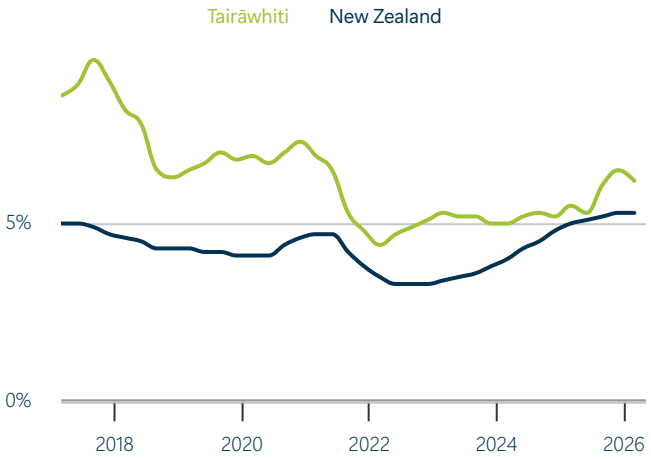


Figure 30. Unemployment rate

Annual average rate



Highlights

- The annual average unemployment rate in Tairāwhiti was 6.2% in the year to March 2026, up from 5.5% in the previous 12 months.
- In the year to March 2026, the annual average unemployment rate in Tairāwhiti was higher than in New Zealand (5.3%).
- Over the last ten years the annual average unemployment rate in Tairāwhiti reached a peak of 9.6% in September 2017.

NEET rate

Figure 31. NEET rate

% of people aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training, annual average rate to March 2026

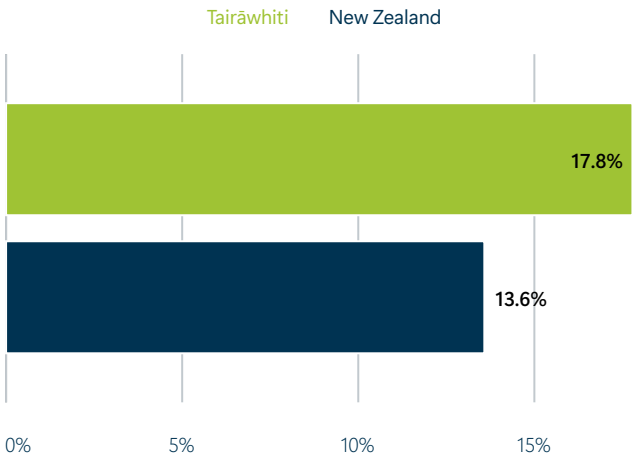
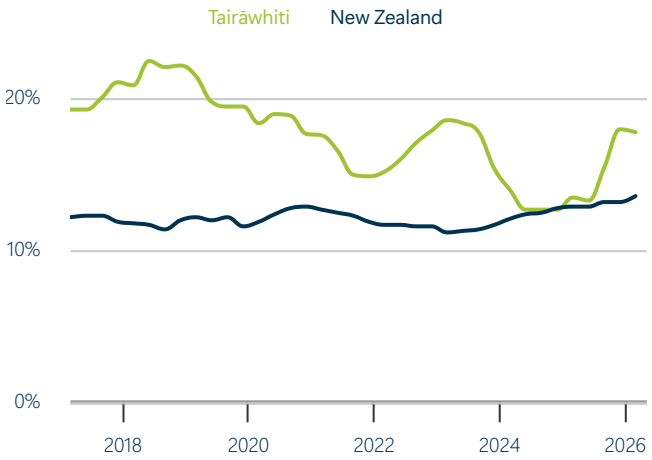


Figure 32. NEET rate

% of people aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training, annual average rate



Highlights

- The annual average NEET rate in Tairāwhiti was 17.8% in the year to March 2026, up from 13.5% in the previous 12 months.
- In the year to March 2026, the annual average NEET rate in Tairāwhiti was higher than in New Zealand (13.6%).
- Over the last ten years the annual average NEET rate in Tairāwhiti reached a peak of 22.5% in June 2018.

Housing indicators

Overview

Table 3. Overview of housing indicators

Indicator	Tairāwhiti	New Zealand
Residential consents	+19.6% ▲	+11.0% ▲
House sales	+3.2% ▲	+7.8% ▲
Real estate listings	+20.8% ▲	+2.2% ▲
House values *	-0.1% ▼	-0.8% ▼
Housing affordability ^	4.1 ▼	5.9 ▼
First Home Loan purchases	+0.0% ▶	+38.1% ▲
Residential rents	+0.4% ▲	-1.2% ▼
Rental affordability ^	21.5% ▼	19.8% ▼
Emergency housing grants	-88.2% ▼	-59.2% ▼
Housing register applicants	-21.4% ▼	-10.1% ▼
Public housing stock	+2.9% ▲	+3.2% ▲

All measures are annual average percentage changes unless:

* Annual percentage changes

^ Levels

Residential consents

Figure 33. Growth in number of new dwelling consents

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

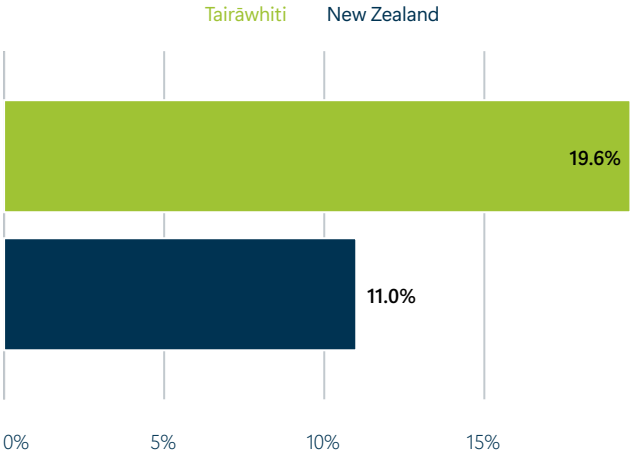
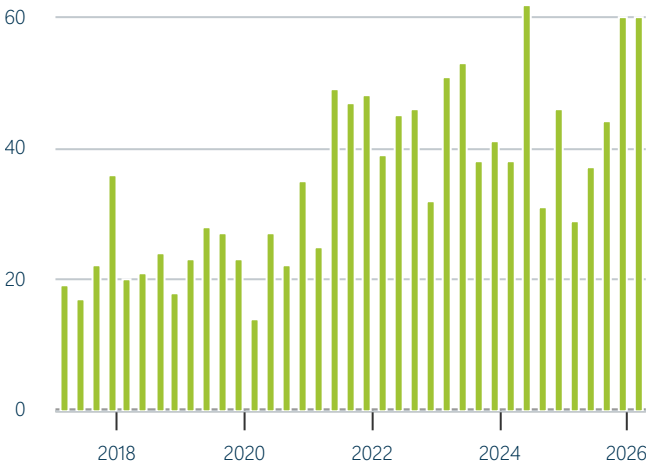


Figure 34. Residential consents

Quarterly number, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- A total of 60 new residential building consents were issued in Tairāwhiti in the March 2026 quarter, compared with 29 in the same quarter last year.
- On an annual basis the number of consents in Tairāwhiti increased by 19.6% compared with the same 12-month period a year before. This compares with an increase of 11.0% in New Zealand over the same period.

National overview

Residential consent numbers have continued to improve, with an 11%pa lift to 37,813 over the 12 months to March 2026. The underlying trend for consents recently does suggest more of a sideways shift from here, with a lack of lift in house prices likely limiting an even greater surge in construction intentions. Townhouses have led the continued growth in residential consents, up 14%pa, followed by standalone houses – up 9.2%pa. Retirement units and apartment consents also rose, up at a slower pace and off a lower base. Regionally, growth has been driven by Auckland and Canterbury, with larger lifts in Southland, Nelson, and Gisborne too.

House sales

Figure 35. Annual change in house sales

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

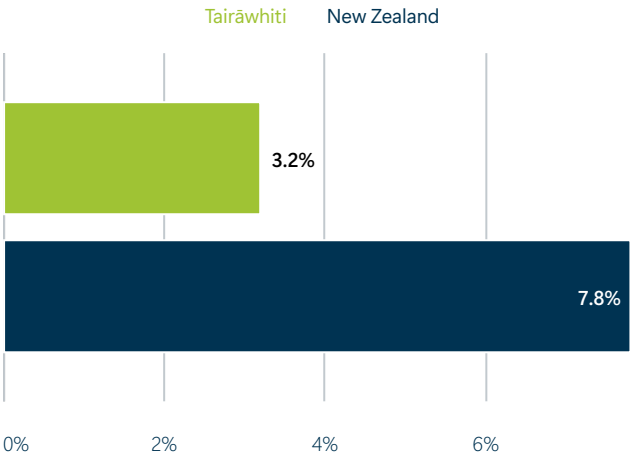
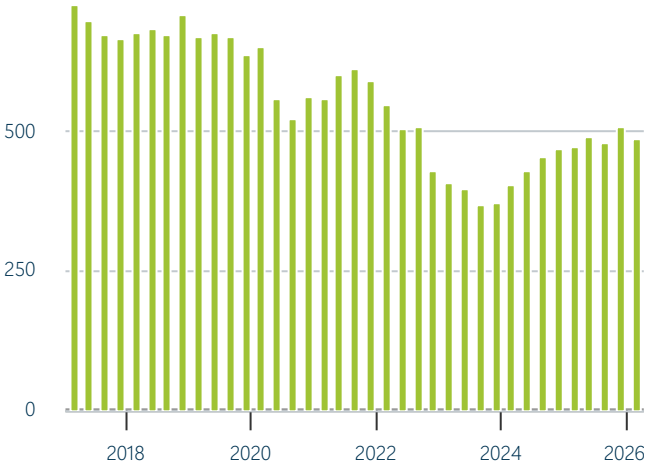


Figure 36. House sales

Annual number, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- House sales in Tairāwhiti increased by 3.2% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 7.8% in New Zealand.
- A total of 488 houses were sold in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the ten year annual average of 560.

National overview

House sales rose 7.8%pa on average over the 12 months to March 2026, although the annual total has levelled off over the March 2026 year at much the same level seen over the 2025 calendar year. Housing activity has failed to sustain as much momentum in 2026 as was seen in 2025 generally, with a level of stabilisation in the housing market but no real further upward momentum in the first few months of this year. Rising retail mortgage rates in the last couple of months, and lower consumer confidence due to the Iran War, is likely to curb housing activity in the near-term, although stronger migration-driven population growth could add to house sales later in the year.

Real estate listings

Figure 37. Real estate listings

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

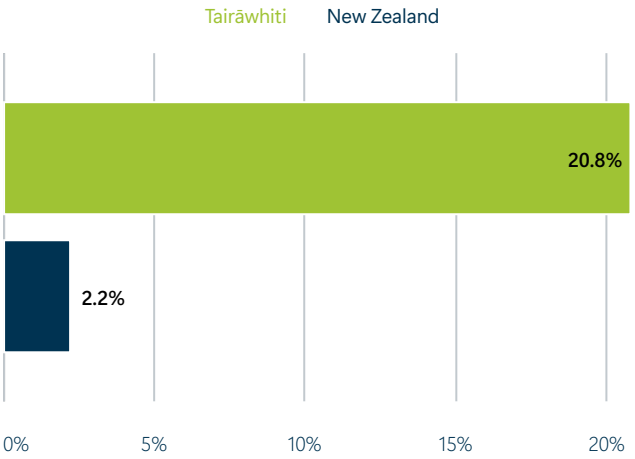
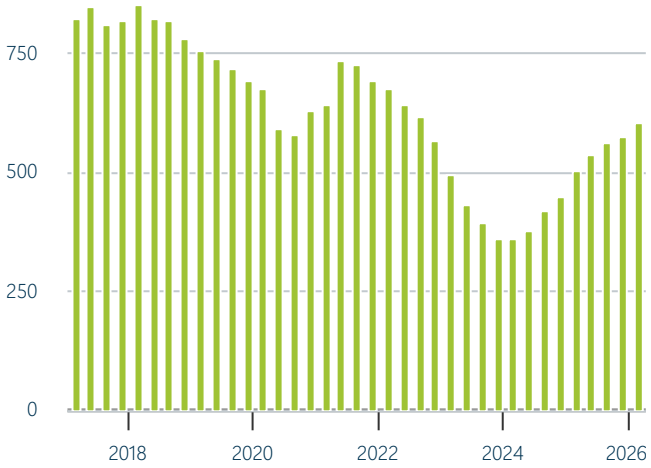


Figure 38. Real estate listings

Annual number, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- The number of new real estate listings in Tairāwhiti increased by 20.8% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. Growth was higher than in New Zealand (2.2%).
- There were an average of 605 new real estate listings in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the ten year annual average of 638 new real estate listings.

National overview

Annual new real estate listings rose 2.2% in the year to March 2026, to a total of 114,300, the highest since the year to June 2021. New listings continue to significantly outnumber sales, with 80,800 sales signed in the year to March 2026, although sales are growing faster than listings. Despite low interest rates, high unemployment and uncertainty around the Iran War is limiting the willingness of households to engage in the housing market.

House values

Figure 39. Annual change in house value

Annual % change in house value March 2025 - March 2026

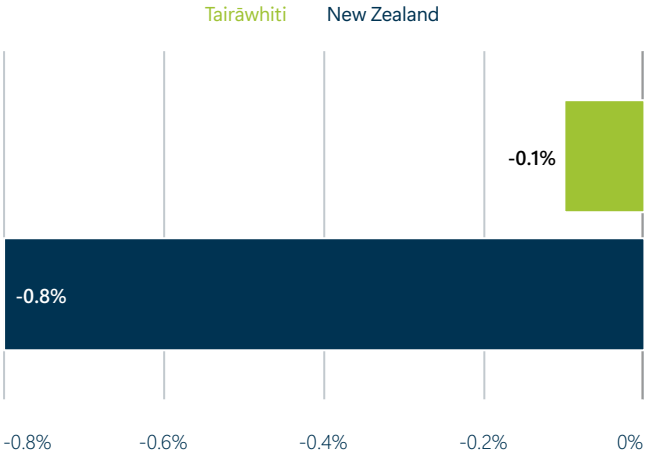
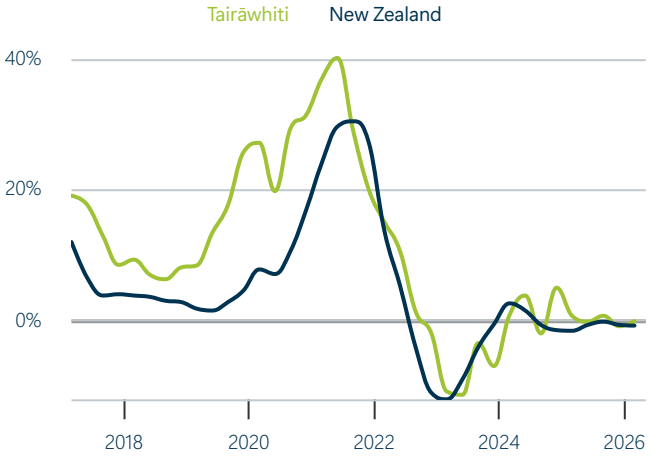


Figure 40. House value growth

Annual % change



Highlights

- The average current house value in Tairāwhiti was down 0.1% in March 2026, compared to a year earlier. The decline was not as low as in New Zealand (0.8%).
- The average current house value was $559,254 in Tairāwhiti in March 2026. This compares with $871,831 in New Zealand.

National overview

The average house value in New Zealand fell 0.8%pa in the March 2026 quarter, to sit at nearly $872,000. House values have continued to trend sideways in recent months, with no real momentum noticeable in either direction. There is still a considerable volume of unsold houses available on the market, which has kept a limit on further growth in values. Higher mortgage rates are likely to curb any enthusiasm for housing too, with recent indicators suggesting a sharper pull-back in housing activity as the effects of the Iran War and wider economic concerns filter through to households.

Housing affordability

Figure 41. Housing affordability

Ratio of house prices to household incomes, year to March 2026

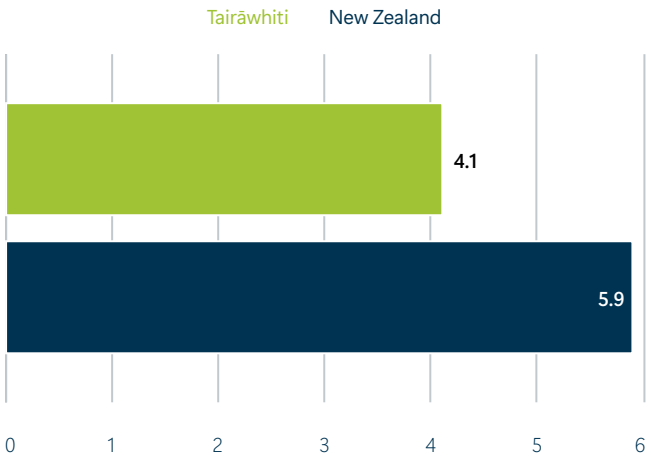
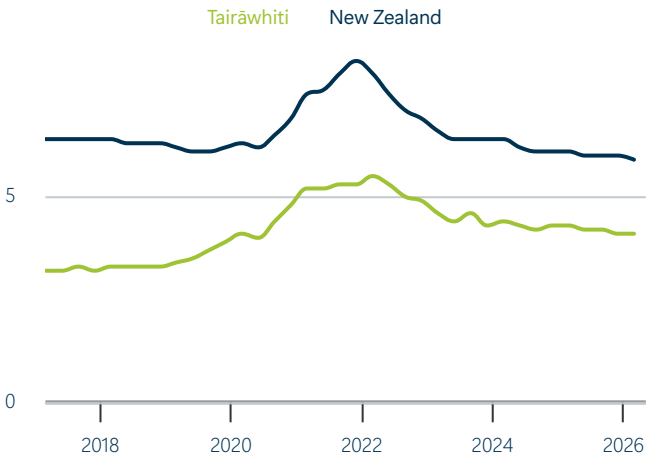


Figure 42. Housing affordability

Ratio of house prices to household incomes, annual average



Highlights

- Housing in Tairāwhiti (4.1) was more affordable than in New Zealand (5.9) in March 2026, based on the ratio between mean house values and mean household incomes.
- Housing affordability in Tairāwhiti improved on average between March 2025 and March 2026. Housing affordability has improved in New Zealand over the same period.
- During the last ten years, housing in Tairāwhiti was most affordable in December 2017, when the index reached a low of 3.2.

National overview

Housing affordability improved in the year to March 2026, as incomes increased slightly and house values fell slightly. In the year to March 2026, the average house value amounted to 5.9 times the average household income, down from 6.1 in the year to March 2025. The housing affordability multiple was last under 6 in March 2016, so the current level is among the most affordable in the past decade.

The average household would need to spend 35% of their household income servicing a mortgage on an average house – down from a peak of 45% in March 2022, and up from 33% in 2016.

First Home Loan purchases

Figure 43. Annual change in First Home Loan purchases

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026, First Home Loan purchases

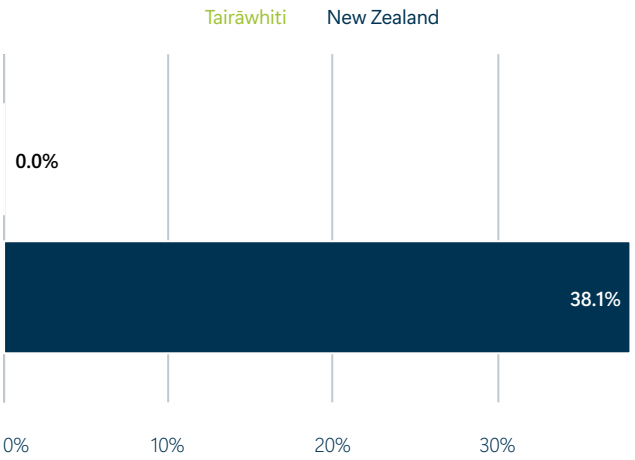
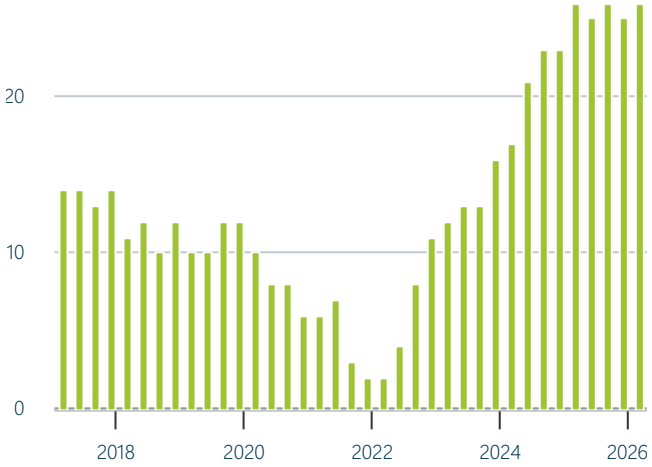


Figure 44. First Home Loan purchases

Annual number First Home Loan purchases, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Purchases using the Kainga Ora First Home Loan scheme in Tairāwhiti were unchanged in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 38.1% in New Zealand.
- A total of 26 properties were purchased using the Kainga Ora First Home Loan scheme in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the ten year annual average of 13.

National overview

Purchases using First Home Loans rose 38% in the year to March 2026, to an annual total of 3,906, the highest level on record.

First Home Loans counts the number of purchases made using Kainga Ora's First Home Loan scheme. First Home Loans have stricter eligibility criteria than First Home Grants, so represent a smaller, and different, portion of first home buyer activity. In the year to March 2026, First Home Loans amounted to 16% of all first home buyer purchases, based on the Cotality – Westpac First Home Buyer Report.

Residential rents

Figure 45. Annual change in residential rents

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

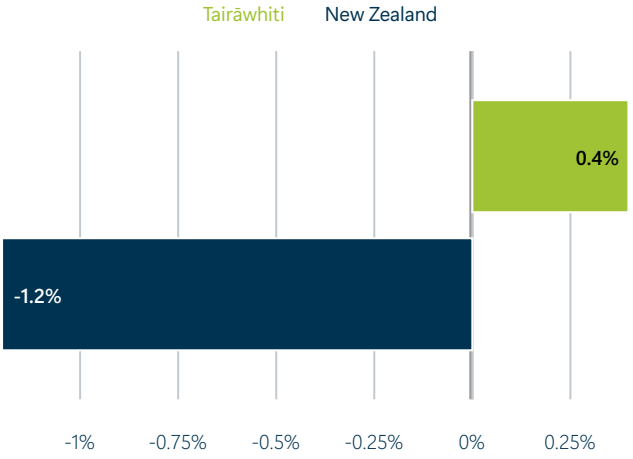
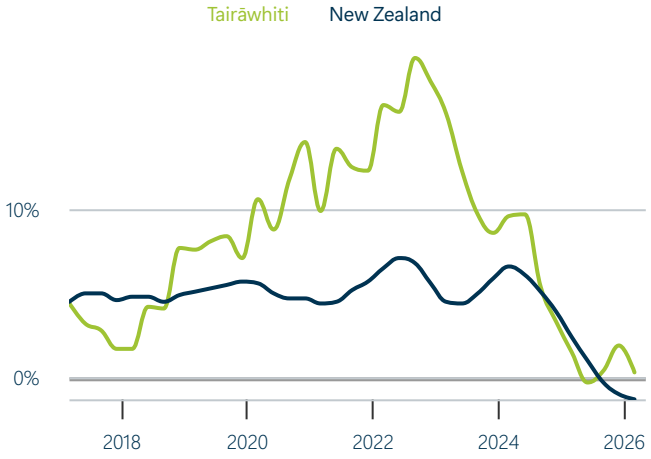


Figure 46. Residential rents growth

Annual average % change



Highlights

- The average residential rent in Tairāwhiti was up 0.4% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. Growth was higher than in New Zealand (-1.2%).
- The average residential rent in Tairāwhiti was $565 in the year to March 2026. This compares to $564 in New Zealand.
- Annual growth of residential rents in Tairāwhiti peaked at 19.1% in the year to September 2022.

Rental affordability

Figure 47. Rental affordability

Rents as % of household income, year to March 2026

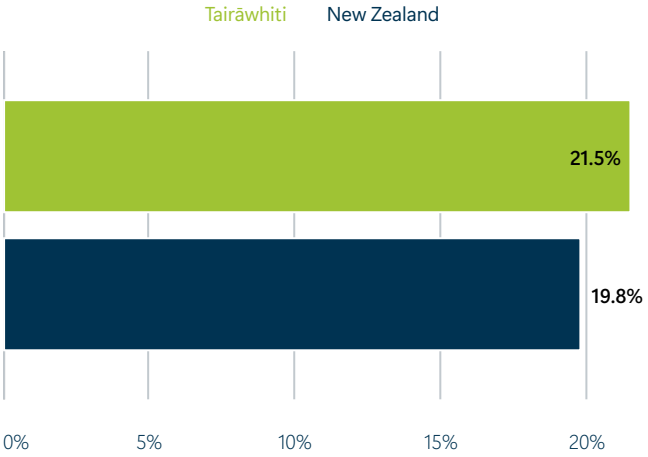
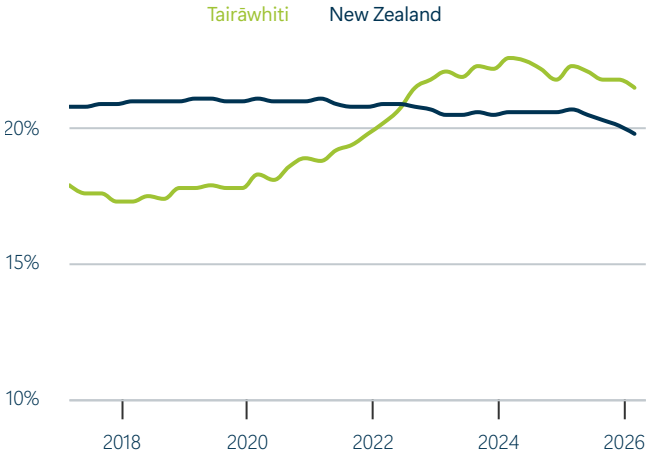


Figure 48. Rental affordability

Rents as % of household income, annual average



Highlights

- Renting in Tairāwhiti (21.5%) was less affordable than in New Zealand (19.8%) in the year to March 2026, based on the ratio of mean rents to mean household incomes.
- Rental affordability in Tairāwhiti improved on average between March 2025 and March 2026. Rental affordability has improved in New Zealand over the same period.
- During the last ten years, renting in Tairāwhiti was most affordable in March 2018, when the index reached a low of 17.3%.

Emergency housing grants

Figure 49. Households in emergency housing

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

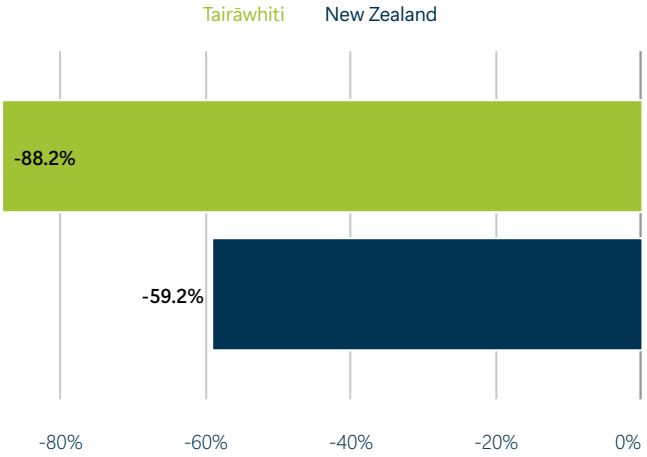
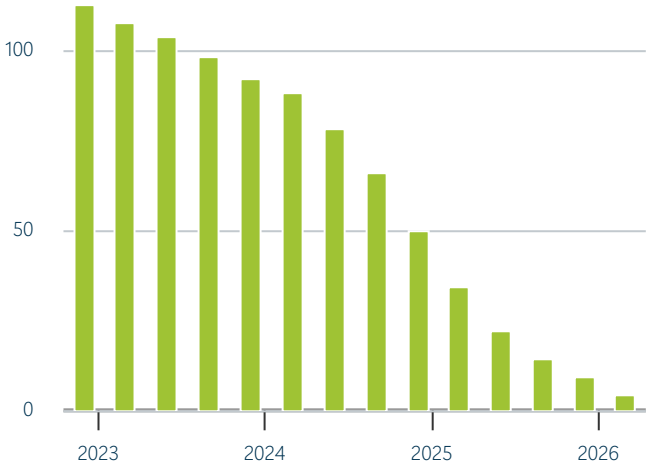


Figure 50. Households in emergency housing

Annual average, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- The number of households in emergency housing in Tairāwhiti decreased by 88.2% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. This compares with a decrease of 59.2% in New Zealand.
- An average of 4 households were in emergency housing in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the five year annual average of 59.

Housing register applicants

Figure 51. Annual change in housing register applicants

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

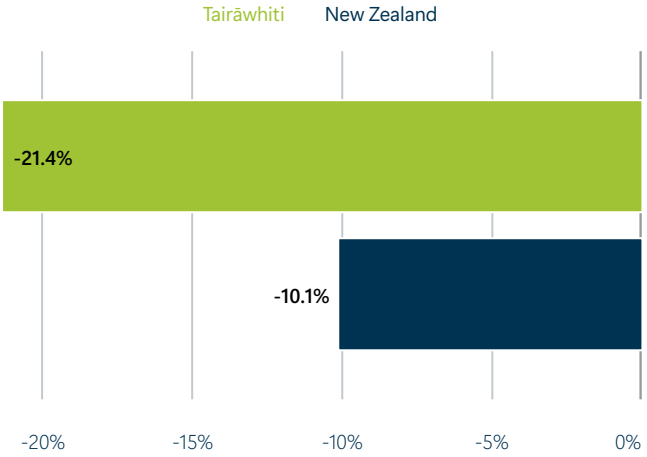
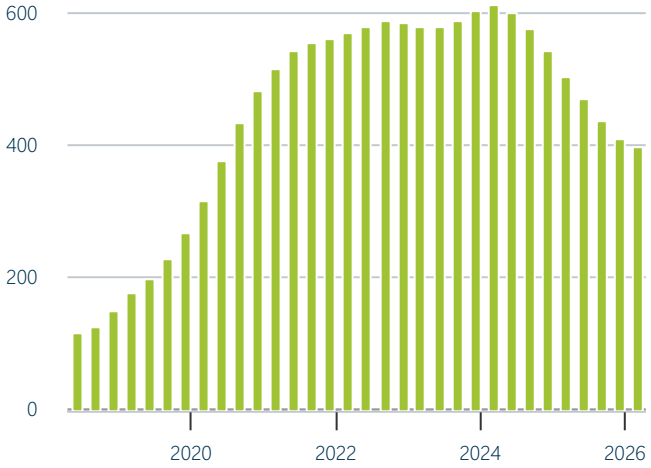


Figure 52. Housing register applicants

Annual average, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- The number of applicants on the housing register in Tairāwhiti decreased by 21.4% in the year to March 2026, compared to a year earlier. This compares with a decrease of 10.1% in New Zealand.
- An average of 397 applicants were on the housing register in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the nine year annual average of 460.

Public housing stock

Figure 53. Public housing stock

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

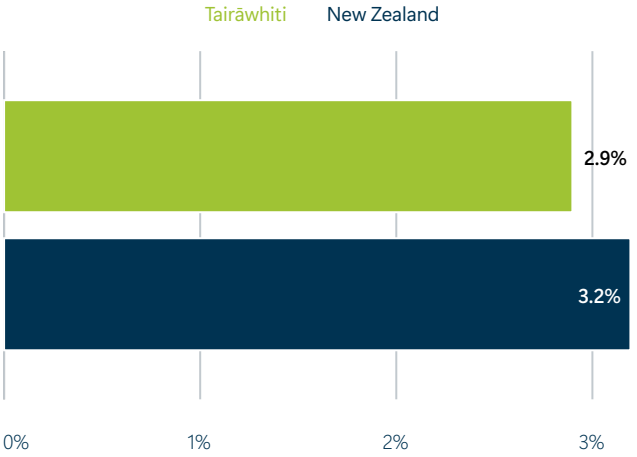
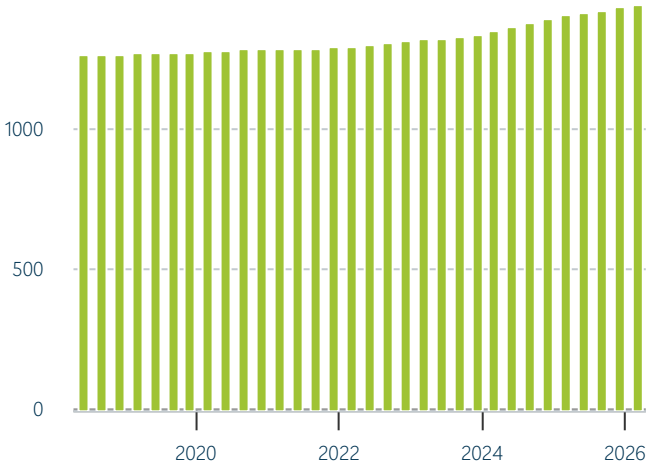


Figure 54. Public housing stock

Annual average, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- The number of public houses in Tairāwhiti in the year to March 2026 increased by 2.9% compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (3.2%).
- There were an average of 1,448 public houses in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the nine year annual average of 1,332.

National overview

The public housing stock grew 3.2%pa in the year to March 2026, adding around 2,600 public houses over the year, but down from 4,600 added in the year to June 2025. The annual average grew to around 87,300.

Public housing includes properties that are owned or leased by Kāinga Ora and other registered Community Housing Providers (CHPs) that can be tenanted by people who are eligible for public housing. The totals presented include both occupied and vacant houses. Public housing was previously referred to as social housing. This data is sourced from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

Social indicators

Overview

Table 4. Overview of social indicators

Indicator	Tairāwhiti	New Zealand
School attendance ^ 🕒	45.4% ▲	58.0% ▲
Gaming machine profits 🕒	-5.8% ▼	+0.2% ▲
Crime rate ^	459 ▼	212 ▼
Health enrolments	+0.0% ▶	+1.0% ▲
Other benefit recipients	+3.4% ▲	+3.3% ▲

🕒 Data up to the December 2025 quarter.

All measures are annual average percentage changes unless:

^ Levels

School attendance

Figure 55. School attendance

% of school students attending greater than 90% of classes, annual average to December 2025

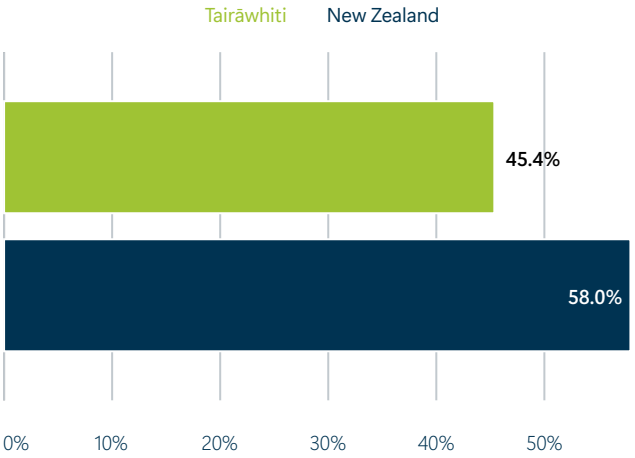
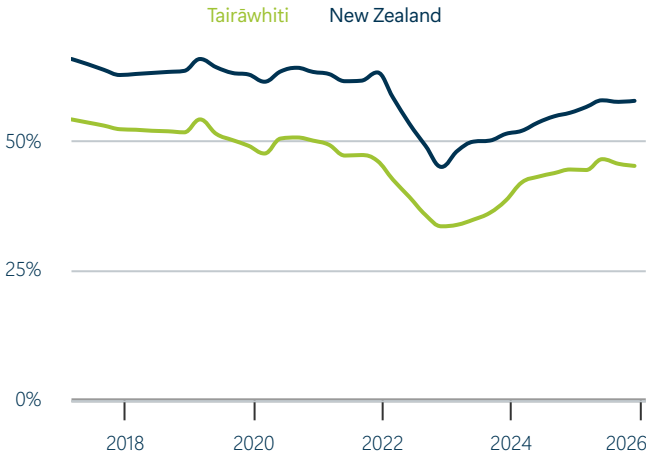


Figure 56. School attendance

% of school students attending greater than 90% of classes, annual average



Highlights

- The annual average school attendance rate in Tairāwhiti was 45.4% in the year to December 2025, up from 44.7% in the previous 12 months.
- In the year to December 2025, the annual average school attendance rate in Tairāwhiti was lower than in New Zealand (58.0%).
- Over the last nine years the annual average school attendance rate in Tairāwhiti reached a peak of 54.4% in March 2019.
- *Please note that school attendance is not yet available for the year to March 2026. Data for the year to December 2025 is displayed instead.*

National overview

School attendance continues to improve, from 55.7% in the year to December 2024 to 58.0% in the year to December 2025, reflecting an ongoing focus by the government and schools on attendance. However, improvements are starting to diminish, with a 2 percentage point improvement over 2025, compared to a 4-point improvement in 2024-and 6-point improvement in 2023.

Gaming machine profits

Figure 57. Gaming machine profits

Annual level, Tairāwhiti

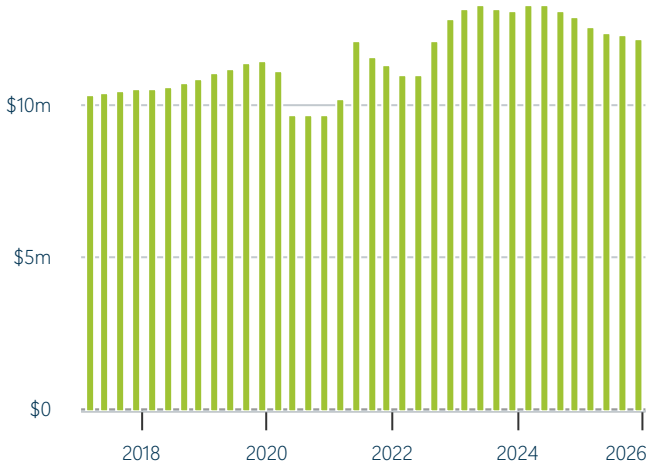
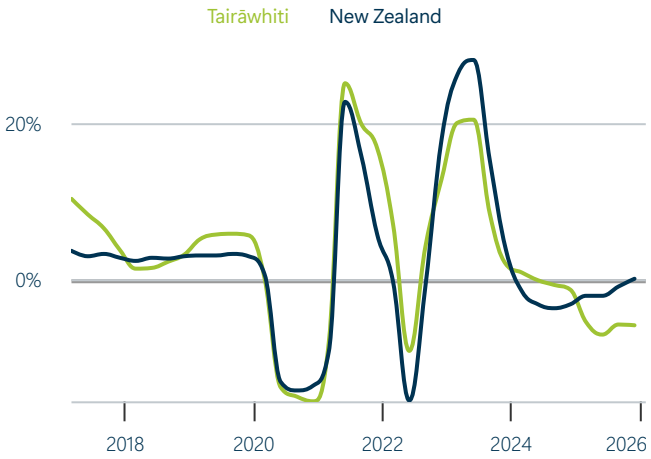


Figure 58. Gaming machine profits

Annual average % change



Highlights

- Gaming machine profits in Tairāwhiti decreased by 5.8% over the year to December 2025, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 0.2% in New Zealand.
- Gaming machine profits in Tairāwhiti totalled $12.20 million in the year to December 2025.
- Annual gaming machine profit growth in Tairāwhiti peaked at 25.4% in the year to June 2021.
- *Please note that gaming machine profits is not yet available for the year to March 2026. Data for the year to December 2025 is displayed instead.*

National overview

Gaming machine profits measure the profits from pokie machines in pubs – which effectively measures the amount of money taken out of communities, before considering what is returned in the form of community grants. Gambling reflects a combination of structural socioeconomic factors and current economic conditions.

Gaming machine profits edged up 0.2% in the year to December 2025, the first increase following declines in 2024 and 2025. By comparison, Marketview card spending fell 0.4% in the year to December 2025, showing that although household budgets remain under pressure, some are prioritising gaming machines.

Crime rate

Figure 59. Crime rate

Criminal proceedings per 10,000 residents, annual average to March 2026

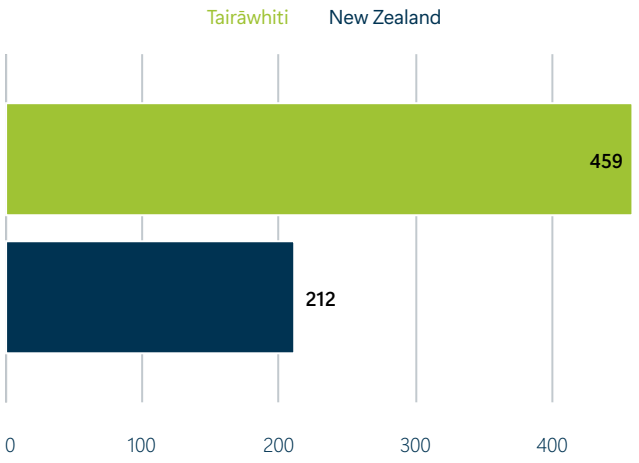
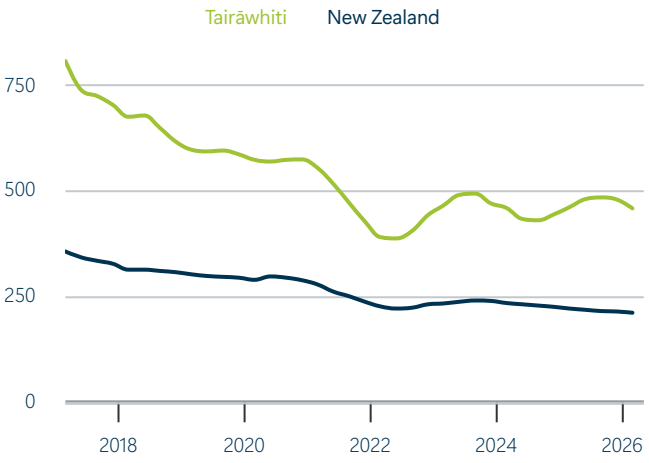


Figure 60. Crime rate

Criminal proceedings per 10,000 residents, annual average



Highlights

- The crime rate in Tairāwhiti was 459 (per 10,000 residents) in the year to March 2026, down from 462 in the previous 12 months.
- In the year to March 2026, the crime rate in Tairāwhiti was higher than in New Zealand (212).
- Over the last ten years the annual average crime rate in Tairāwhiti reached a peak of 808 in March 2017.

National overview

New Zealand's reported crime rate continued to ease over the past year, from 222 criminal proceedings per 10,000 people in the year to March 2025, to 212 in the year to March 2026.

A fall in traffic and vehicle offences accounted for 38% of the fall in proceedings, with a fall in drink driving offences leading the fall.

Health enrolments

Figure 61. Annual change in health enrolments

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

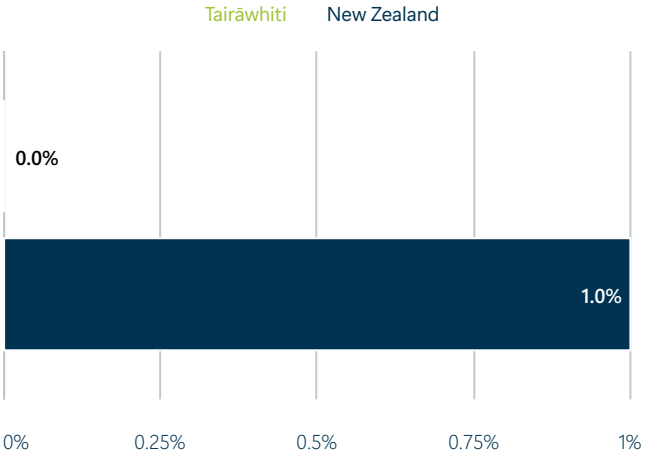
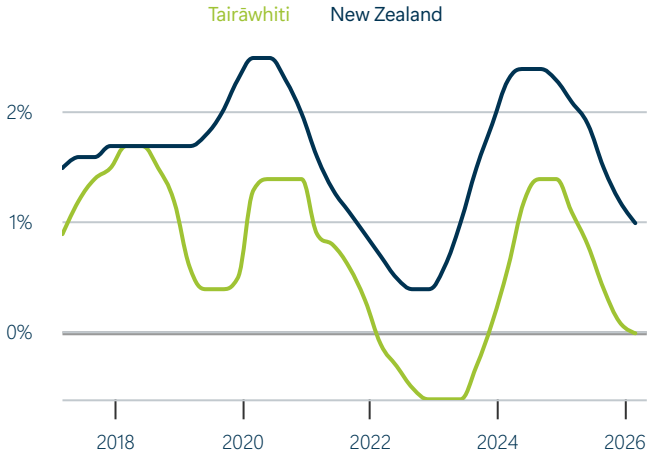


Figure 62. Health enrolments

Annual average % change



Highlights

- The number of people enrolled with a primary health organisation in Tairāwhiti in the year to March 2026 was unchanged compared to a year earlier. Growth was positive in New Zealand (1.0%).
- An average of 49,780 people were enroled with primary healthcare providers in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the ten year annual average of 48,805.

Other benefit recipients

Figure 63. Annual change in other benefit recipients

Annual average % change March 2025 - March 2026

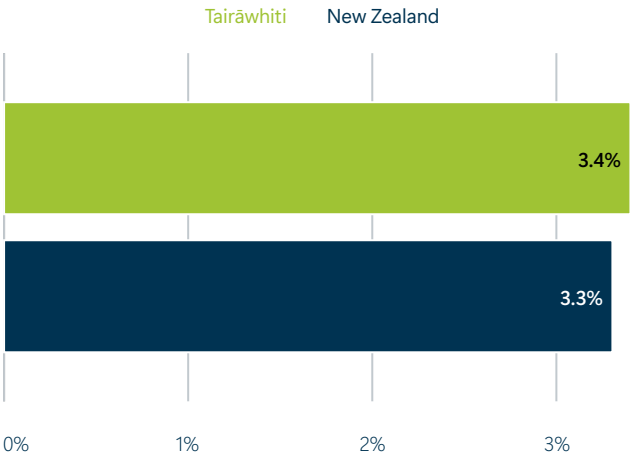
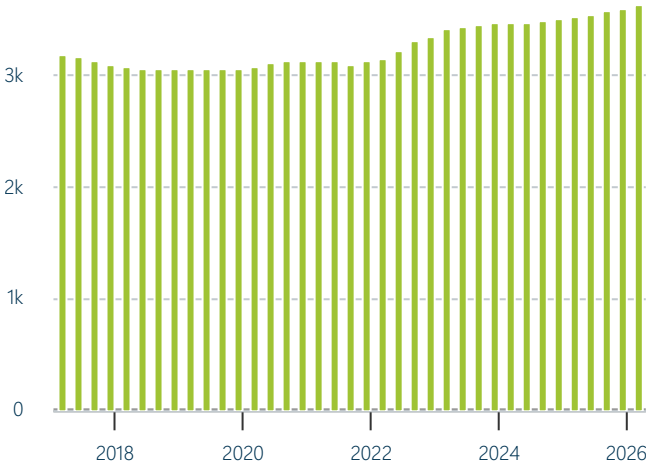


Figure 64. Other benefit recipients

Annual average, Tairāwhiti



Highlights

- Other benefits recipients (including Sole Parent Support and Supported Living Payment) in Tairāwhiti in the year to March 2026 increased by 3.4% compared to a year earlier. Growth was higher than in New Zealand (3.3%).
- An average of 3,641 people were receiving an other benefit (including Sole Parent Support and Supported Living Payment) in Tairāwhiti in the 12 months ending March 2026. This compares with the ten year annual average of 3,274.

Technical notes

Building consents

Building consents data is sourced from Stats NZ. 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.

Business counts

This data is from Business Count Indicators (BCI) from Statistics New Zealand. It is a series is based on a monthly count of geographic units as at the end of each month, mostly sourced from administrative data. Geographic units represent a business location engaged in one, or predominantly one, kind of economic activity at a single physical site or base (eg a factory, a farm, a shop, an office, etc).

The business counts data is different from the annually published Business Demography Statistics.

This series is limited to economically significant enterprises. It can be an individual, private-sector and public-sector enterprises that are engaged in the production of goods and services in New Zealand. These enterprises are maintained on the Statistics NZ Business Register, which generally includes all employing units and those enterprises with GST turnover greater than $30,000 per year.

Calculating changes

We use several different calculations to calculate change in the indicators used in the Quarterly Economic Monitor.

- Annual average percentage change: Annual average percentage change compares average values over the past year with those in the prior year. For example, the change from the year ending March last year to the year ending March this year.
- Annual percentage change: Annual percentage change compares the value this quarter to the value in the same quarter last year. For example, the change from March quarter last year to March quarter this year.
- Levels: In the case of levels, such as unemployment rate, we do not calculate the change in level – we simply show the latest level value.

Consumer spending

The consumer spending data is sourced from Marketview. It measures total electronic card spending at 'bricks + mortar' retailers using a combination of spending through the Paymark network and modelled estimates at non-Paymark retailers. For further breakdown of the data by storetype and other variables contact Marketview.

Crime

The crude crime rate is calculated as the number of crimes committed and recorded (offender proceedings) in an area per 10,000 residents. Crime counts are sourced from the New Zealand Police. Population data is sourced from Stats NZ and Infometrics own population projections (for the most recent quarters).

The data available at a detailed level only included reported crime and does not provide a dimension of how safe people feel. However, higher crime is an obvious proxy for unreported crime (more reported crime would seem to imply a higher overall crime burden), and more crime would logically see people feel less safe.

Dairy

Dairy data has been sourced from the *New Zealand Dairy Statistics*, a publication jointly produced 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 as the last 12 months.

Emergency housing

Emergency housing measures the number of households living in emergency housing at the end of each quarter. This is recorded based on data from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) on the number of emergency housing special needs grants (EH SNG) issued for individuals and families staying in short-term accommodation such as motels if they are temporarily unable to access a contracted transitional housing place or private rental.

Please note that some publications, such as the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's Public housing regional factsheets, report the number of emergency housing grants issued. This number is generally much higher than the number of households living in emergency housing, as the grants have to be renewed every few weeks. For example, a household living in emergency housing continously through a quarter would receive several grants during that time. We present the number of households as this better reflects the ongoing use of emergency housing.

Employment (place of residence)

Employment data is based off a range of Stats NZ employment datasets, and represents the number of filled jobs, based on the area of residential address for the employee (rather than workplace address). This place of residence location means that the employment series reflects trends in employment of an area's residents, which may be different to trends in employment at businesses in an area, particularly when there are strong commuting flows. The most recent quarter is based off the average of Monthly Employment Indicator (MEI) filled jobs from Stats NZ for the past three months, with previous quarters being backcasted using the percentage change in the quarterly Business Data Collection dataset published by Stats NZ.

First Home Loan purchases

First Home Loan purchases are measured using data from Kainga Ora on the number of properties bought (settled) using a Kainga Ora First Home Loan. First Home Loans are low-deposit (as low as 5%) home loans underwritten by Kainga Ora and issued through trading banks. First Home Loans were previously known as Welcome Home Loans. First Home Loans have additional eligibility criteria including a maximum income, and carry a 0.5% insurance premium to cover risks associated with such a low deposit. The uptake of First Home Loans varies by area, but changes in the number of purchases using the scheme serve as a useful indicator of changes in first home buyer activity.

First Home Loan purchases were introduced in the September 2024 Quarterly Economic Monitor to replace First Home Grants, which were closed to new applications in May 2024.

Gaming machine profits

Gambling activity is estimated using gaming machine profits (GMP) data published by the Department of Internal Affairs. This GMP data is based on Class 4 gambling which represents electronic gaming machines, commonly known as 'pokies', located in venues such as pubs and clubs. This excludes all sports betting and casino-based gaming. GMP represents money spent by gamblers which is not returned to gamblers in the form of winnings. A minimum of 40% of GMP are required by law to go back to the community in the form of grants.

Data for South Taranaki District, Stratford District, Kaikoura District, Hurunui District and Central Hawke's Bay District is not available separately from DIA. From December 2024, Hastings District contains data from one venue in Central Hawke's Bay District.

Greenhouse gas emissions

Greenhouse gas emission estimates are modelled using Stats NZ emissions estimates for industries and regions, coupled with Infometrics estimates of GDP and employment.

Stats NZ's emissions estimates are produced using the System of Environmental-Economic Accounts (SEEA) framework, designed to align greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions data to economic indicators such as GDP. These are production-based emissions of greenhouse gas emissions for ANZSIC industries and households. Emissions are expressed in carbon dioxide equivalents (CO_2-e), which are the emissions of greenhouse gases weighted by their 100-year global warming potential.

Using a production-based approach means that emissions associated with consumption are not accounted for. For example, the emissions associated with burning coal for home heating will accrue to the area in which the coal is burnt. However, the emissions associated with burning coal to generate electricity accrue to the area with the power station, not the area which uses the resulting electricity to heat their homes.

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 Stats NZ) to TA level by applying TA shares to the national total. Each TA's share of industry output is based on labour market data from LEED. GDP growth in recent quarters is based on a model which uses residence-based employment from Monthly Employment Indicators that have been mapped to place of work. Estimates of GDP for these 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 2025 prices.

Guest nights

The number of guest nights is sourced from the Accommodation Data Programme, which is funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and managed by Fresh Info. A guest night is equivalent to one guest spending one night at an establishment. For example, a motel with 15 guests spending two nights would report that they had provided 30 guest nights

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. Health enrolments are attributed to territorial authorities based on the residential address of patients, regardless of where their general practice is located.

The Ministry of Health changed how health enrolments were coded to areas in 2023, which caused a break in the series between the June 2023 and September 2023 quarter. We have undertaken modelling to combine the series over this period.

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 values (dollar value) are based on Cotality's Hedonic Home Value Index, the previous Cotality SPAR Index, and the Cotality/CoreLogic/QV/Valuations New Zealand long-term quality adjusted House Price Index. This index assesses the market value of all housing stock (not just properties sold) based on analysis of recent house sales and the characteristics on properties in the area. The level presented is the quarterly average house value of all properties in the area for the quarter in question.

Household income

In 2024 we revised our methodology for estimating household incomes to incorporate new data sources. Previously we relied heavily on Stats NZ's LEED-Annual for historical income estimates, however, we have since uncovered a number of issues with how regional incomes are distributed to territorial authorities within some regions.

Previously, we eschewed Census data, due to its tendency to under-report incomes, due to challenge of accurately recollecting incomes when filling out a Census form. Stats NZ have started producing the Administrative Population Census (APC) which draws upon tax data to more completely record incomes, partially overcoming the problem of Census data. In light of the issues with LEED-Annual at a territorial authority level, we now use APC data to indicate each territorial authority's share of regional income. The APC still underestimates incomes, but is a reliable indicator of relative incomes.

These changes have resulted in historical revisions of our household income and housing affordability estimates for many areas, however, we expect future revisions to be minimal. We always recommend that you download a complete time series if looking to compare changes over time.

Housing affordability

Housing affordability is measured by comparing average current house values from CoreLogic with Infometrics' estimate of annual average household income. Household incomes are a better measure for housing affordability than individual incomes as it reflects the true ability of a household to afford housing. We present a ratio of average house values to average household incomes. A higher ratio, therefore, suggests that average houses cost a greater multiple of typical incomes, which indicates lower housing affordability.

Housing register applicants

The housing register counts applicants who are not currently in public housing , who have been assessed as eligible for public housing and who are ready to be matched to a suitable property. This is often referred to as the public housing waiting list. Public housing was previously referred to as social housing.

Data is sourced from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and are shown as the average number of applicants. One applicant could represent a single person, couple or family looking for housing. Applicants could be living in emergency housing, unaffordable private rentals, or other insecure arrangements such as couch-surfing or rough-sleeping.

Jobseeker Support recipients

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.

Data presented for the September 2013 quarter onwards is provided by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Data prior to September 2013 are Infometrics estimates based on re-grouping pre-July 2013 benefit categories to be consistent with the post-July 2013 benefit categories. The pre-July 2013 benefit categories used to estimate the number of Jobseekers Support recipients are: Unemployment Benefit and Unemployment Benefit Hardship; Unemployment Benefit Training and Unemployment Benefit Hardship Training; Sickness Benefit and Sickness Benefit Hardship; Domestic Purposes Benefit - Sole Parent (if youngest child is 14 or over); Women Alone and Widow's Benefit (without children or with children 14 or over)

NEET

NEET rates measure the proportion of young people aged 15-24 that are not in education, employment or training.

Infometrics estimates NEET rates by territorial authority. The following datasets are used in to estimate territorial authority NEET rates: Stats NZ's Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS), Census data, Jobseeker Support recipients by age, and transient secondary school student numbers.

Territorial authority estimates are benchmarked on annual average regional NEET rates from the HLFS, which at this level of disaggregation can be volatile from year to year. Large year-to-year changes are likely to be partially caused by sampling errors in the HLFS, rather than actual fundamental shifts in NEET rates. As the HLFS is the official measure of youth NEET in NZ, we benchmark our data to align with published NEET rates.

Other benefits

Other benefits include Sole Parent Support, Supported Living and other residual main benefits (excluding Jobseeker Support). Data is sourced from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and are shown as the average number of beneficiaries in each benefit category across each quarter for the current year. Further details of the benefit categories can be found on MSD's website.

Public housing stock

Public housing includes properties that are owned or leased by Kāinga Ora and other registered Community Housing Providers (CHPs) that can be tenanted by people who are eligible for public housing. The totals presented include both occupied and vacant houses. Public housing was previously referred to as social housing. This data is sourced from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

Real estate listings

Real estate listings measure the number of new listings for residential dwellings on realestate.co.nz. It is based on the number of listings added each quarter or year.

Rental affordability

Rental affordability is measured by comparing average annualised rents from CoreLogic with Infometrics' estimate of annual average household income. Household incomes are a better measure for housing affordability than individual incomes as it reflects the true ability of a household to afford housing. We present a ratio of an annual ratio of average rent to average household incomes. A higher ratio, therefore, suggests that average rents cost a greater multiple of typical incomes, which indicates lower rental affordability.

Residential rents

Residential rents ($ per week) are sourced from monthly data provided by MBIE and averaged across each quarter or year using weighted geometric means. 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).

School attendance

School attendance is presented as the percentage of school students who attend greater than 90% of their classes. This includes students at primary, intermediate and secondary schools. Some individual students have legitimate absences which bring their attendance to below 90%, but are still counted in this measure as the aim is to reflect overall trends in school attendance. This should not be taken as a proxy for truancy however.

The Ministry of Education provides attendance data on a school term basis. We have apportioned Terms 1, 2, 3 and 4 to the March, June, September and December quarters respectively.

Tourism expenditure

Tourism Expenditure is based on MBIE's monthly regional tourism estimates (MRTEs). The MRTEs are based on electronic card transaction data, calibrated to be consistent with national tourism expenditure data shown in Stats NZ's Tourism Satellite Account. This calibration takes into consideration the International Visitor Survey, so that differences in propensities to use cards versus cash for visitors from various countries of origin are accounted for.

The current MRTE series runs from December 2023 onwards, and we have spliced this onto previous MRTE and TECT series to provide a complete timeseries back to 2009.

Traffic flow

Traffic flow growth rates are calculated from the number of vehicles passing approximately 110 sites monitored by New Zealand Transport Agency. Each territorial authority has been mapped to one or more sites. Traffic flow is presented as an index, with a base of 100 in September 2012 for each area.

From October 2022 until September 2024, there was a substantial level of non-reporting of traffic sites, forcing Infometrics to interpolate a high proportion of traffic activity based on adjacent reporting sites, or reporting sites that usually had a similar trend to a non-reporting site. Data over this period should be treated with caution.

Unemployment rate

Regional level unemployment rates are sourced from Stats NZ'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. Electric vehicle registrations are based on new sales of battery electric cars (excluding hybrid, plug-in hybrid or fuel cell cars).