

# Retail sales



- In the year ended March 2002, the eight cities contributed \$24.1 billion out of New Zealand's total of \$47.1 billion in retail expenditure (51%).
- The highest proportion of retail spending occurs in Auckland.

## WHAT THIS IS ABOUT

Change in retail expenditure reflects the health of a local economy. Locally spent dollars potentially contribute to more jobs for local residents and higher profits for local businesses. Increases in retail spending may also be linked to increased disposable income and higher levels of employment.

This indicator shows the annual percentage change in retail expenditure from 1998 to 2002. The data are taken from the Retail Trade Survey published by Statistics New Zealand and are indicative only (due to small sample sizes within each region).<sup>46</sup>

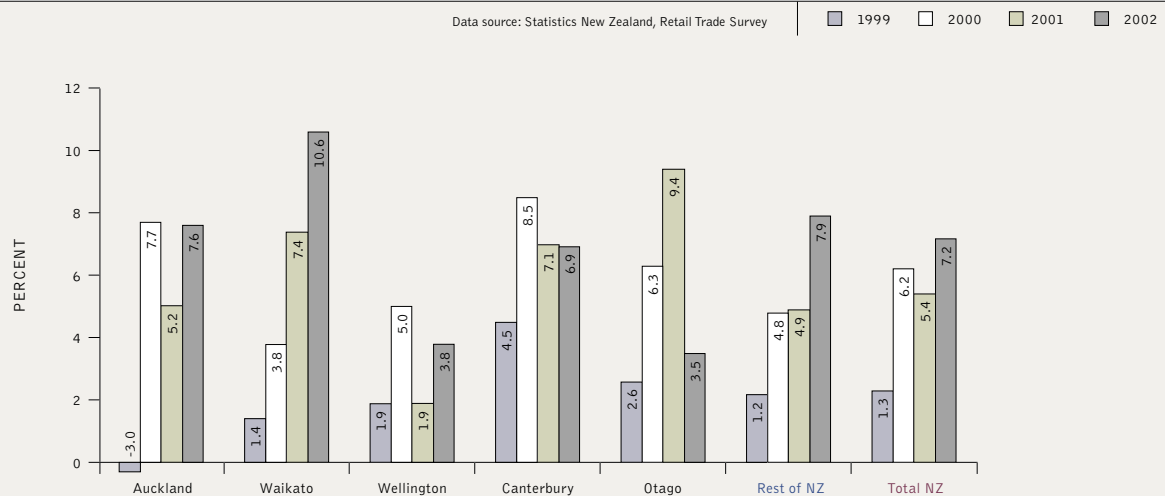
## WHAT DID WE FIND?

Retail expenditure involves significant amounts of money. In the year ended March 2002, there was \$47.1 billion retail expenditure in New Zealand, of which \$24.1 billion was in the eight cities. Among the eight cities, the highest proportion of retail spending occurs in Auckland, with one quarter (\$6.4 billion) of the total eight city retail sales expenditure recorded to year ended March 2002.

The annual percentage changes in retail sales expenditure has fluctuated in all of New Zealand's main regions over the period 1999 to 2002. In New Zealand as a whole, retail expenditure increased substantially in the year ended March 2000 (6.2%). This pattern was observed in all regions and across the rest of New Zealand. The Auckland region experienced a decrease in retail sales in the year ended March 1999, probably as a result of the Asian economic downturn in mid 1998, but enjoyed an increase of 7.7% the following year.

In the 1999 to 2002 period, expenditure increased overall in all regions. This reflects general economic growth in this period. It is also a period when unemployment rates continued to decrease.

ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN RETAIL SALES, BY REGION (YEARS ENDED MARCH 1999 TO 2002)



<sup>46</sup> The survey has a sample of 4,000 enterprises with a turnover of \$30,000 or more, and is stratified according to store type and size at the national level.