

ISSUE 2410

“In Support of Progress”

Newsletter

The meaning of Anzac Day

5 May 2024

Elections in Tasmania

Migration

This section was written on Saturday, May 4 – Starwars Day
“May the “forth” be with you!”

May it indeed! Wars old new and ongoing – an obscenity for sure. Some to reflect on.

Anzac Day

On this day we pause to reflect on those who fought in the Great War, at Gallipoli and on the Western Front, and of those who served in later wars as well.

In WW1, on the western Front, troops were ordered “over the top” to face a hail of machine gun bullets, with the Generals knowing such an attack would not succeed. Yet time and time again they did so. Tens of thousands needlessly killed. Peter Fitzsimons writes movingly and with rage of this wanton slaughter, overseen by the generals who cared less about their own men. It was criminally negligent.

This year my dawn service was a solitary affair, from a balcony listening to waves crashing against the shore. Lest we forget!

Ukraine

Ukraine faces an aggressor that states the land over which they are presently fighting should be theirs – it isn't.

The US has been a supporter of Ukraine and has provided much of their armaments, which assisted in driving back the invader. But then that support dried up, with the US facing internal disagreements based around a domestic political environment, and some pretty ordinary tactics associated with that. It was a costly decision for the Ukraine, and for the reputation of the US. On the ground the tide turned. And with it more slaughter. Now, supplies have resumed, but again, so many wasted lives.

Middle East

The region is in a perpetual state of crisis, and has been for many many years. However, the recent conflict between Israel and the Hamas leadership in Palestine has captured our anxiety and fury. The response by Israel to the unprovoked October attack on Israeli citizens by Hamas has been brutal, it has been constant, and it has been without remorse. So many innocents have died, and in the process a society has been reduced to rubble.

We question and condemn the fury of the Israeli response, and we desperately hope it ceases, but what did Hamas expect would happen when they launched their evil attack in October?

Again, such an appalling loss of life. – such unnecessary carnage.

Australia has been a safe refuge for those fleeing from conflict and persecution, and in the main, Australia has offered a welcoming hand. However, Australia's success has been a result of the secular nature of its social structure, where freedoms are cherished, and nurtured, and foreign battles are left behind.

There is no room for the promotion of sectarian conflict here, and such behaviours, including sermons from pulpits, must be condemned, openly and strongly.

Elections

The elections season in Tasmania is almost over.

In the House of Assembly

The government's numbers increased from 11 (formerly 13) to 14, with the replacement of the two recalcitrants and winning a further seat in Franklin. Not a great result, considering the electorates are now 7 strong – once 5. Howlett left the Upper House to stand and win in Lyons, leaving the government with one less in the Leg Co (from 4 to 3).

On the other side of the fence, Labor had 8, having lost O'Byrne to the crossbench. It now has 10, with an additional number in both Franklin and Clark. However, like the Liberals, they did so at the expense of one in the LegCo, with Willey stepping down from Elwick to successfully contest Clark.

As we all know, the winners were the JLN (from 0 to 3) and the Greens, who achieved an increase of 3 without gaining any more votes.

The government, having decried minority government as a "coalition of chaos", has now entered into a "coalition" with the JLN and two independents in order to hold on to the Treasury benches.

Each of the three deals is different, and each has an escape clause which could send the government back to the polls at any moment. Everyone recognizes the tenuousness of this arrangement, including those who are a party to it. So the government is very much a minority government, and is walking on eggshells.

The best the government can do is to lock away its former arrogance, and to knuckle down to the task at hand, and it is a formidable task, for sure. Health, housing, and power (commercial and residential) are the big ones, not to mention managing the finances. The pressures will be significant.

It needs to move on the findings of the Commission of Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, and to confront a series of questions concerning governance and integrity. The Independents will be demanding that this happens.

Transparency is the new order of the day but it can be a difficult thing to manage, particularly if one has something to hide.

Without drawing too long a bow, questions do need to be asked regarding the way the bureaucracy is managed and also as to how senior bureaucrats are appointed. The new head of Premier and Cabinet (who was moved into that position on the sudden resignation of the former head), was once the head of Health, having taken on that position from being head of Justice. While at the same time a senior officer was moved to head up Justice from Health. Similar "movements" have involved the leadership in State Growth.

What was the process followed in each of these translocations? I suspect the new Minister for Business, Industry and Resources will have more than a passing interest in such matters.

With the government now settling in, the position of Speaker now needs to be resolved. No doubt the government will have its own nominee in Mark Shelton, the former Speaker, but the gossip is that Michelle O'Byrne may also nominate, supported by Labor and the Greens.

That will be a very interesting vote. On the one hand it will be a loss to the government on Day 1, and thus the perception that the government does not have control of the parliament, but on the other hand, the Opposition will also be weakened with the loss of "a number".

For the O'Byrne's, it would be great publicity, but I suspect not how they would have wanted it.

In the Legislative Council

There are now 3 seats in the Leg Co being contested. Three southern seats went to the polls on Saturday, and for each, the question is whether the election will bring about any real change.

- In Prosser - can the Liberals hold it?
- In Elwick – can Labor hold it?
- In Hobart - can the Greens really win it?

Even though pundits have been pronouncing certainty, at the time of writing these were open questions, as each seat will have to go to preferences to decide the winner.

What is also of interest is whether there has been any change in elector sentiment since the March election, and even whether such a sentiment flows over into the Legislative Council election.

The following Table shows that comparison. NB H of A percentages are based on the relevant polling booths

	ELWICK			HOBART			PROSSER		
	HofA	Leg Co		HofA	Leg Co		HofA	Leg Co	
LIB	25%	34%	Thomas	20%	22%	Kelly	37%	39%	Vincent
	4%	Hickey							
ALP	38%	29%	McLaughlin	26%	19%	Kamara	33%	29%	Green
	9%	Johnston	19%	Cangelosi					
Green	16%	19%	Shelley	33%	37%	O'Connor	11%	11%	Sharp
Other				8%	12%	Burton	4%	13%	Shooters
				4%	Hickey		9%	(JLN)	

There has been some tweaking and "leaps of faith" in the treatment of some independents here, although the alignments shown are not without merit.

Maybe it is not a surprise how closely aligned the voting pattern is between the two elections, occurring so close together, but it is still worth noting.

In Elwick (Newtown, Moonah and some of Glenorchy), Liberal-leaning mayor Bec Thomas is ahead, however the combined vote of McLaughlin and Cangelosi, both ALP or ALP aligned, will likely make it a win for Labor. One interesting byplay is who will be cut up first between Shelley and Cangelosi.

In Hobart (inner city and Newtown), O'Connor is the likely winner, but it is a bit cheeky for the Greens to be calling it with only 37% of votes counted in her favour. If she wins it will be a win for the Greens, but a loss for Independents.

In Prosser (Sorell and the East Coast), it is obvious that Sorell mayor Vincent will be successful. So, a win for the Liberals, who retain the seat.

If these predictions run true, then the makeup of the Legislative Council will have changed only in that a "progressive" Independent replaced by a Green.

There will be eight (8) on the "progressive" side (including 4 ALP), five (5) on the "conservative" side (including 4 Liberals), and two (Armitage and Rattray) being truly independent and unaligned.

Not an easy path for the government!

Immigration

Immigration is a hot topic at present, with accusation and counter accusation being thrown about like confetti as to whether the intake is too high and causing social upheaval. We are told that there has been a sudden and large increase in numbers - certainly the numbers have leap-frogged since Covid - and that the government has been too slow to react.

That may or may not be true - there is as a starting point a fair argument that immigration should be controlled – even targeted - and it is fair to say that no-one believes we should have no migration, or – at the other extreme - open borders.

So what is the present situation? The following three graphs are a direct lift from the ABS and are presented here to help provide context to inform the debate.

Figure 1.1 shows the migration inwards and outwards over the past 10 years. There was a significant dip during Covid, but the inflow has been greater than the trend line since Covid.

Figure 1.2 shows that the majority of those arriving are on Temporary Visas, and temporary visas are issued to people who are here for a short period of time, whether that be work-related or students. It is not a permanent residency.

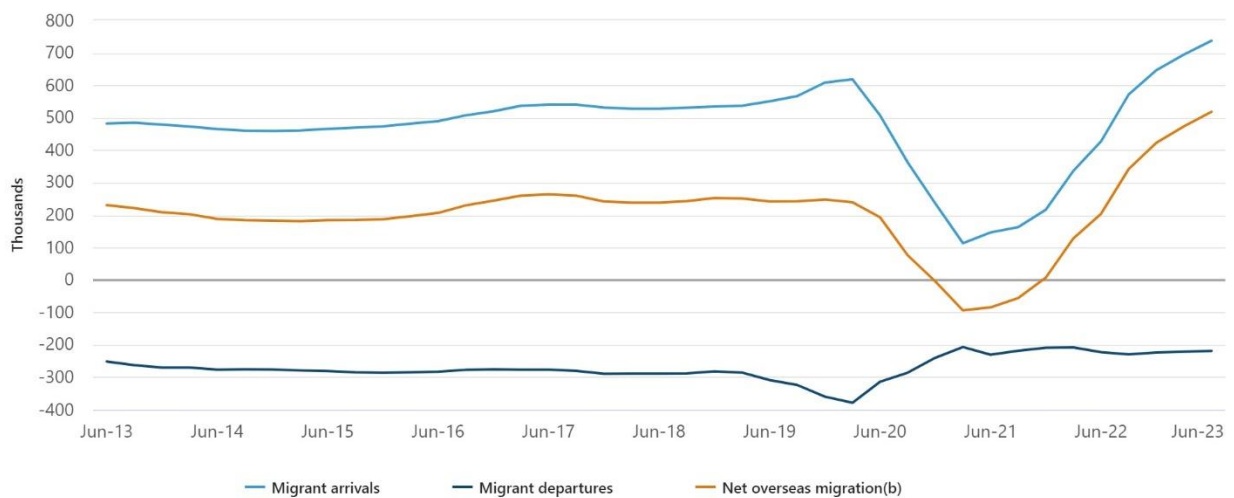
The ABS advises that those numbers are:

Temporary visas	554,000
Include overseas students	283,000
And temporary workers	49,000

And Figure 2,2 shows those students to come from primarily India and China.

The education of overseas students is a big export earner for the country, and those two countries are important “markets” for us. Having good relations with them is important, and education is a good starting point.

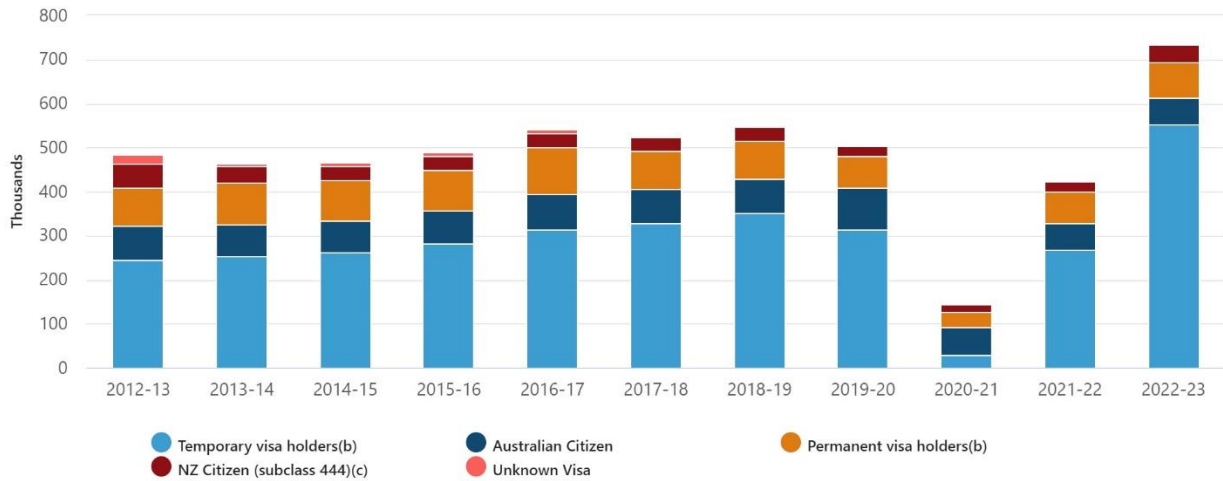
Graph 1.1 - Overseas migration - Australia - year ending(a)



a. Estimates from September quarter 2022 onwards are preliminary. See revision status on the methodology page.
 b. Net overseas migration is calculated by the number of migrant arrivals minus the number of migrant departures.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Overseas Migration 2022-23 financial year

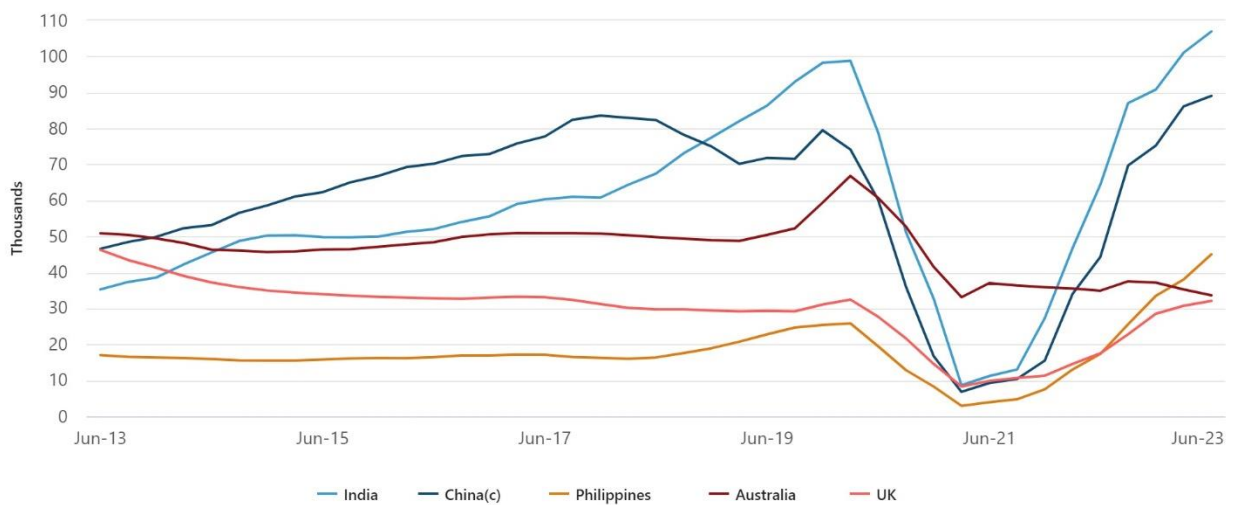
Graph 1.2 Overseas migrant arrivals - visa and citizenship groups(a)



a. Estimates for 2022-23 are preliminary. See revision status on the methodology page.
 b. The visa at time of traveller's overseas migration arrival date. The number of visas here should not be confused with information on visas granted by the Department of Home Affairs as visas can be granted onshore.
 c. Visa subclass 444 is granted to New Zealand citizens upon arrival in Australia if they have not already been granted another visa.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Overseas Migration 2022-23 financial year

Graph 2.2 Overseas migrant arrivals(a) - top 5 countries of birth(b) - year ending



a. Estimates from September quarter 2022 onwards are preliminary. See revision status on the methodology page.
 b. Top 5 countries of birth by the number of migrant arrivals in year ending June 2023.
 c. Excludes SARs and Taiwan.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Overseas Migration 2022-23 financial year

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