

# Managing the economy amidst global upheavals

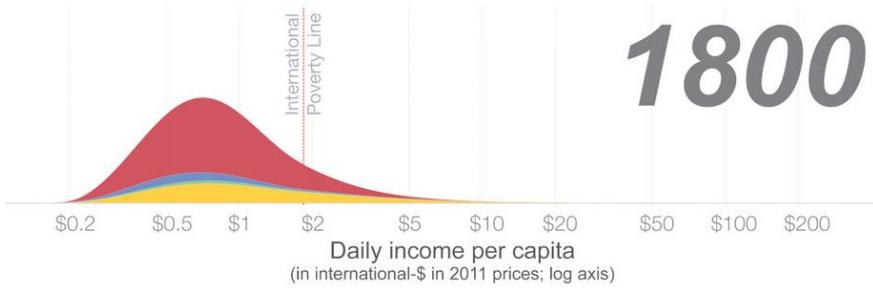
Geoff Bertram

Kapiti WEA 12 August 2023

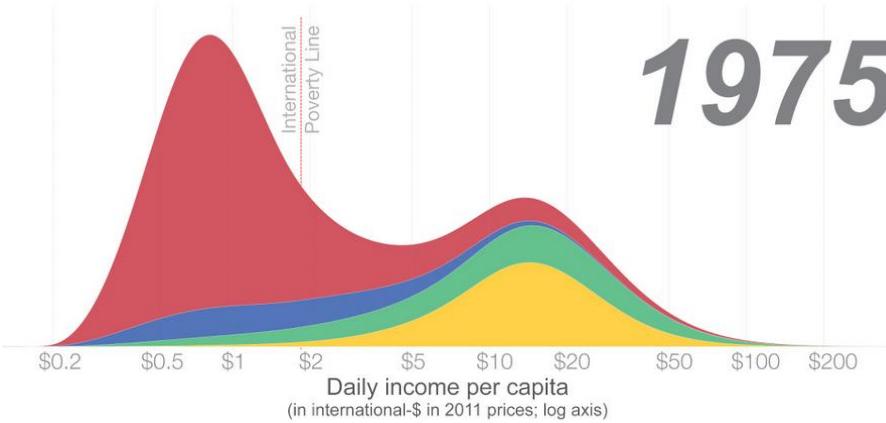
- The global conjuncture
- COVID
- Ukraine
- NZ macro situation
  - Balance of payments and sector balances
  - Income distribution
  - Monetary statistics
  - Fiscal and monetary policy

# Global conjuncture

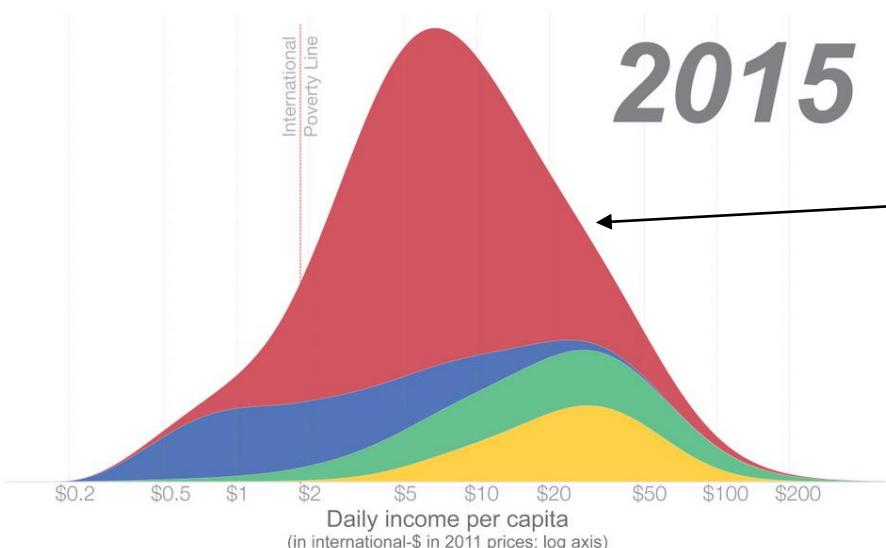
1800



1975



2015



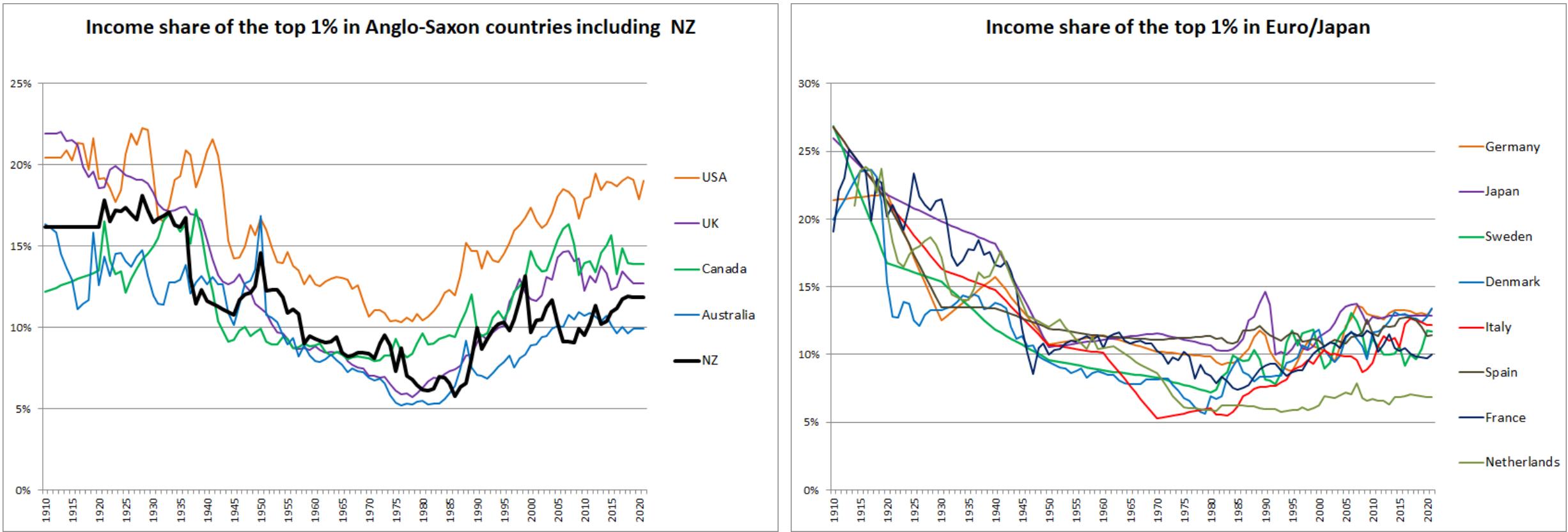
Changing global distribution of income (measured as real GDP per capita, in “Purchasing Power Parity” dollars).

Movie link:

[https://www.gapminder.org/tools/#\\$model\\$markers\\$bubble\\$encoding\\$frame\\$speed:208;;;;&chart-type=bubbles&url=v1](https://www.gapminder.org/tools/#$model$markers$bubble$encoding$frame$speed:208;;;;&chart-type=bubbles&url=v1)

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/cp/visualizing-global-income-distribution-over-200-years/> downloaded 18 July 2023

# Two contrasting experiences among the rich countries



Replication of <https://ourworldindata.org/how-has-income-inequality-within-countries-evolved-over-the-past-century> downloaded 18 July 2023 adding Australia and New Zealand, from <https://wid.world/data/> data extracted 18 July 2023. [File 'Top percentile and 0.1%' sheet 'Top 1%'.]

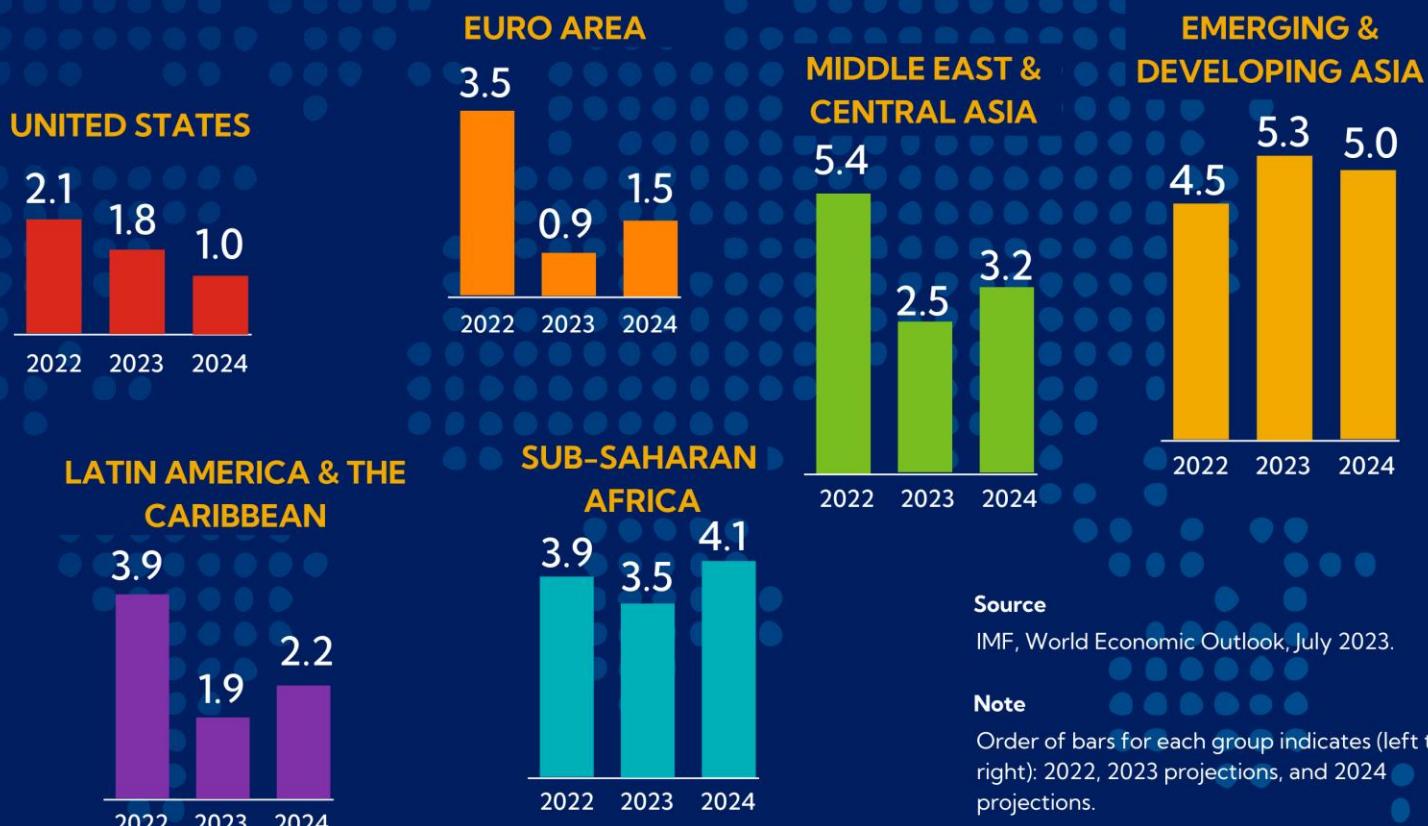
# COVID: New Zealand dodged the bullet

<https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/excess-deaths-cumulative-per-100k-economist?time=2023-07-16>

# GROWTH PROJECTIONS BY REGION



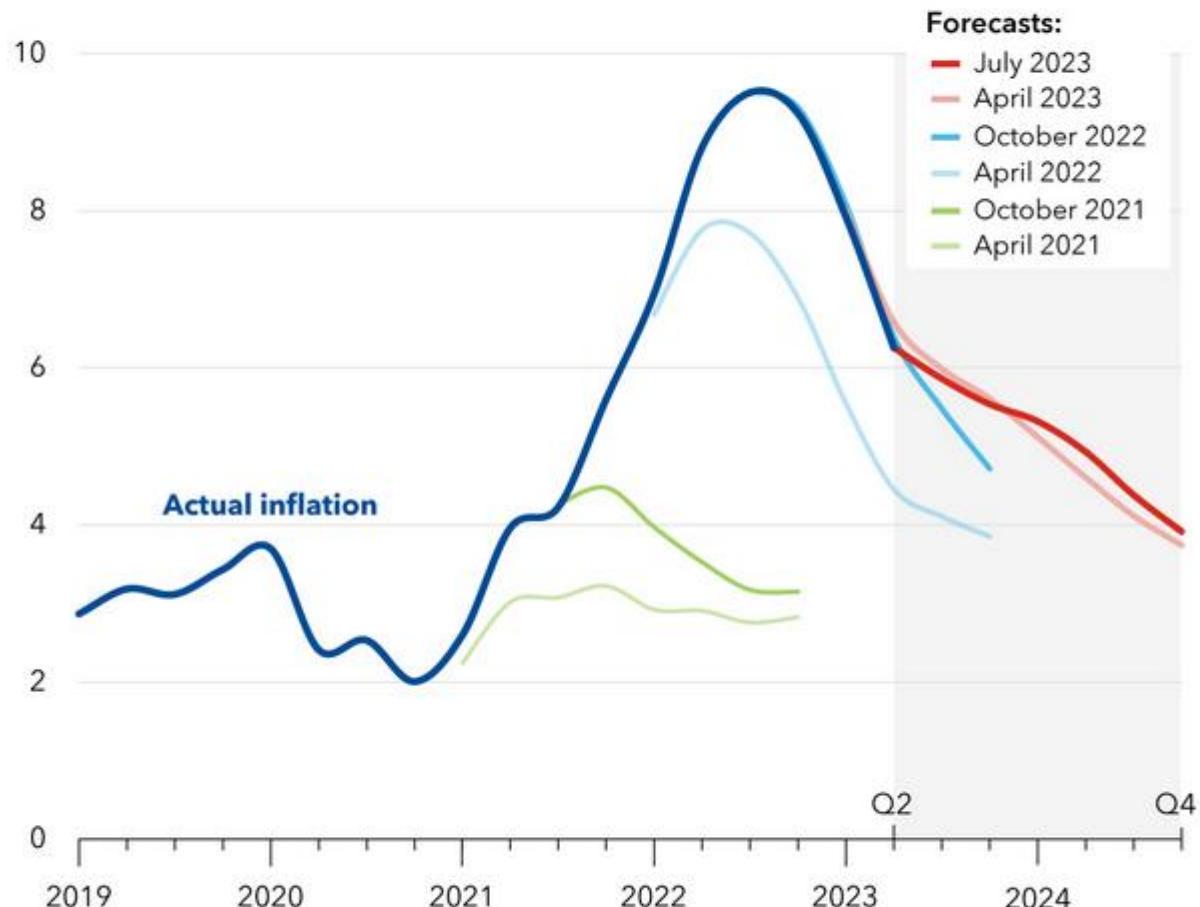
IMF.org



<https://www.imf.org/-/media/Images/IMF/Publications/WEO/2023/July/regional-projections-2.ashx?h=2160&w=3841&la=en>  
accessed 11 August 2023

## Headline inflation

Inflation is coming down, but the pace of disinflation is slowing.  
(world; percent; year-on-year)

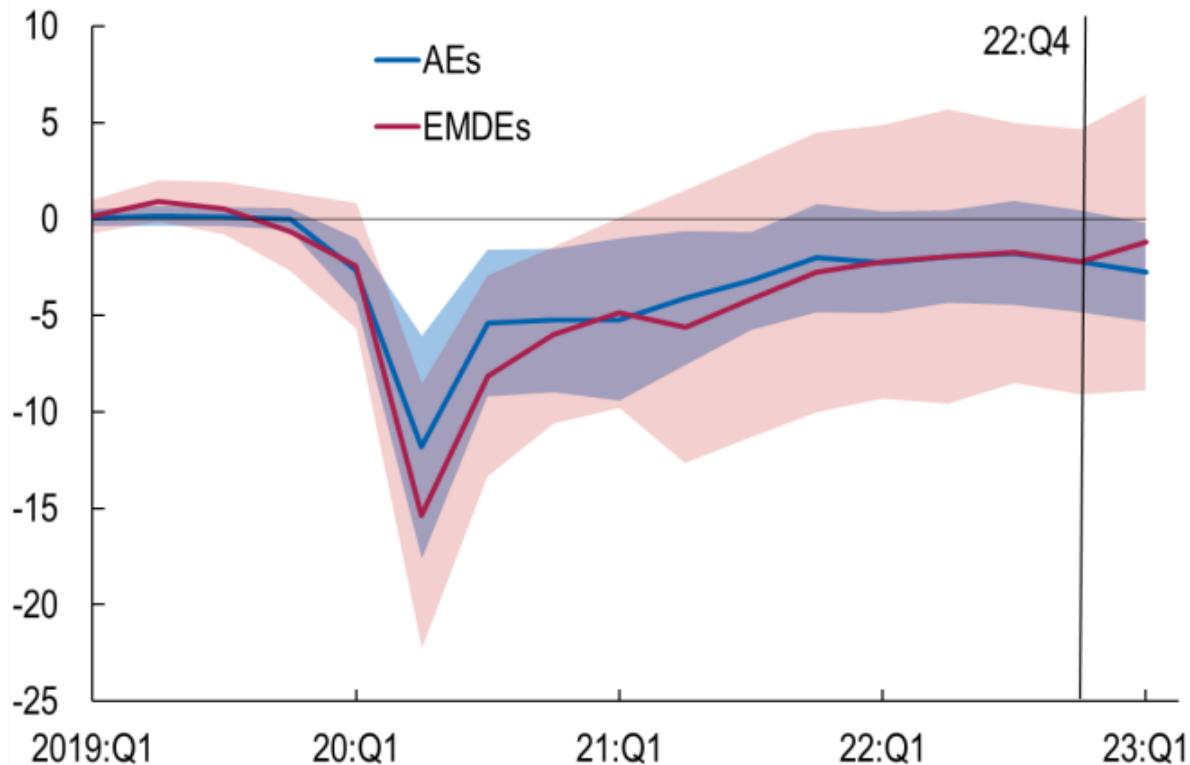


Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook; and IMF staff calculations.

IMF

<https://www.imf.org/-/media/Images/IMF/Blog/Articles/Blog-Charts/2023/July/WEO-Chart-2-July-2023.ashx> accessed 11 August 2023

**Figure 1. Value Added in the Services Sector: Distance to Pre-Pandemic Trends**  
(Percent)



Sources: Haver Analytics; and IMF staff calculations.

Note: The lines denote means and the bands represent one standard deviation around the means. For 18 AEs, the sample comprises AUS, CAN, CHE, CZE, DEU, DNK, ESP, FRA, GBR, ISR, ITA, KOR, NOR, NZL, SGP, SWE, TWN, and USA. For 16 EMDEs, the sample comprises ARG, BRA, CHL, CHN, COL, HUN, IDN, IND, MEX, MYS, PER, PHL, RUS, THA, TUR, and ZAF. Economy list uses International Organization for Standardization (ISO) country codes. AEs = advanced economies; EMDEs = emerging market and developing economies.

IMF *World Economic Outlook Update*  
<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2023/07/10/world-economic-outlook-update-july-2023> accessed 11 August 2023

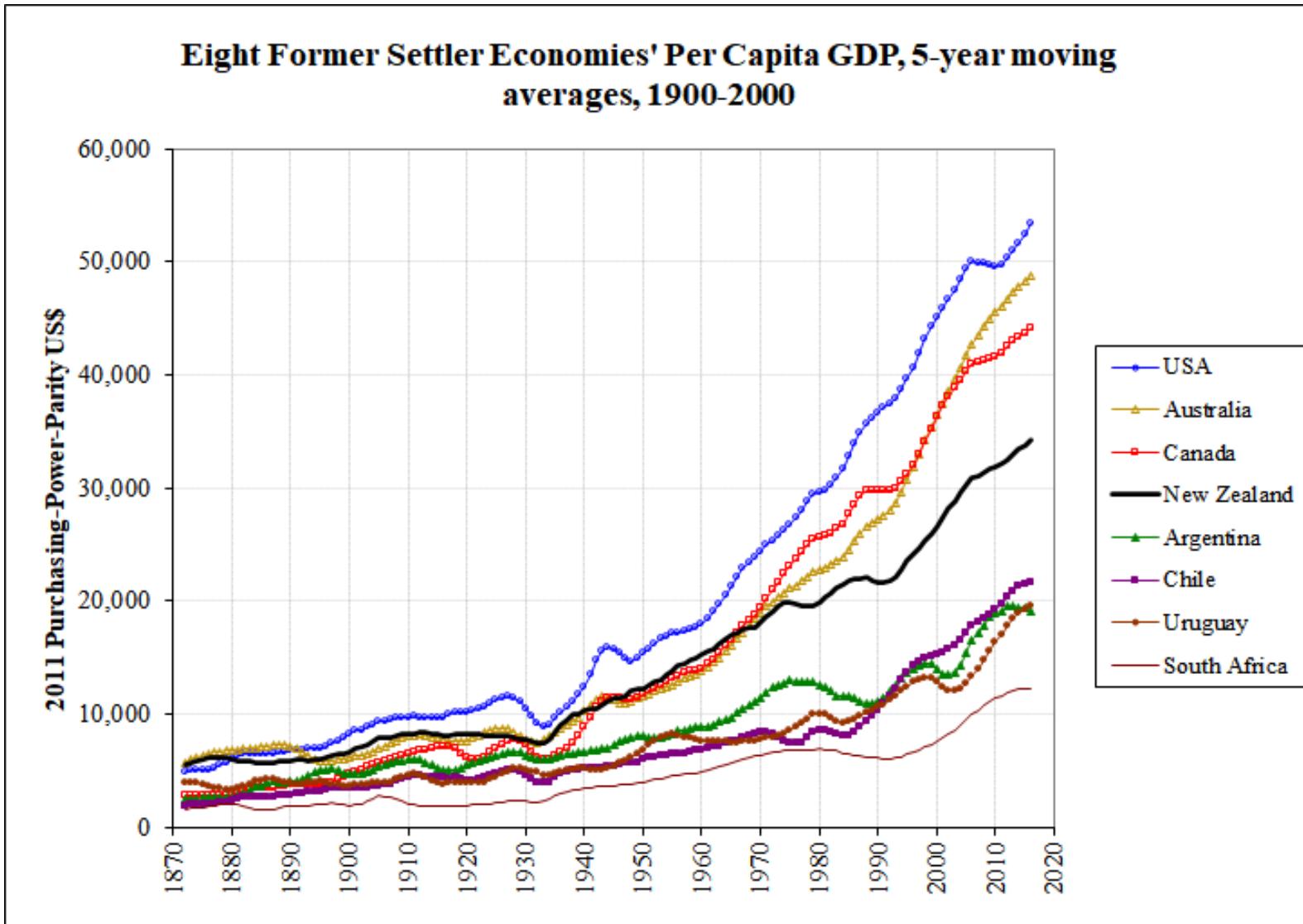
- *Upside risks.* More favorable outcomes for global growth than in the baseline forecast have become increasingly plausible.
  - Core inflation could fall faster than expected—from greater-than-expected pass-through of lower energy prices and a compression of profit margins to absorb cost increases, among other possible causes—and declining job vacancies could play a strong role in easing labor markets, which would reduce the likelihood of unemployment having to rise to curb inflation.
  - Developments along these lines would then reduce the need for monetary policy tightening and allow a softer landing.
  - Scope exists for more favorable surprises to domestic demand around the world, as in the first quarter of 2023. In numerous economies, consumers have not yet drained the stock of excess savings they accumulated during the pandemic; this could further sustain the recent strength in consumption.
  - Stronger policy support in China than currently envisaged—particularly through means-tested transfers to households—could further sustain recovery and generate positive global spillovers.
- *Downside risks.* Despite the recent positive growth surprises, plausible risks continue to be skewed to the downside:
  - Tight labor markets and pass-through from past exchange rate depreciation could push up inflation and risk de-anchoring longer-term inflation expectations
  - The war in Ukraine could intensify, further raising food, fuel, and fertilizer prices. The recent suspension of the Black Sea Grain Initiative is a concern in this regard.
  - Financial markets ... still expect less tightening than policymakers have signaled, raising the risk that unfavorable inflation data releases could—as in the first quarter of 2023—trigger a sudden rise in expectations regarding interest rates and falling asset prices. Such movements could further tighten financial conditions and put stress on banks and nonbank financial institutions whose balance sheets remain vulnerable to interest rate risk, especially those highly exposed to commercial real estate. Contagion effects are possible
  - Recent developments shift to the downside the distribution of risks surrounding China's growth forecast, with negative potential implications for trading partners in the region and beyond. The principal risks include a deeper-than-expected contraction in the real estate sector in the absence of swift action to restructure property developers, weaker-than-expected consumption in the context of subdued confidence, and unintended fiscal tightening in response to lower tax revenues for local governments.
  - [B]orrowing costs for emerging market and developing economies remain high, constraining room for priority spending and raising the risk of debt distress.
  - The ongoing risk that the world economy will separate into blocs amid the war in Ukraine and other geopolitical tensions could intensify, with more restrictions on trade (in particular that in strategic goods, such as critical minerals); cross-border movements of capital, technology, and workers; and international payments. Such developments could contribute to additional volatility in commodity prices and hamper multilateral cooperation on providing global public goods.

# Historical perspective

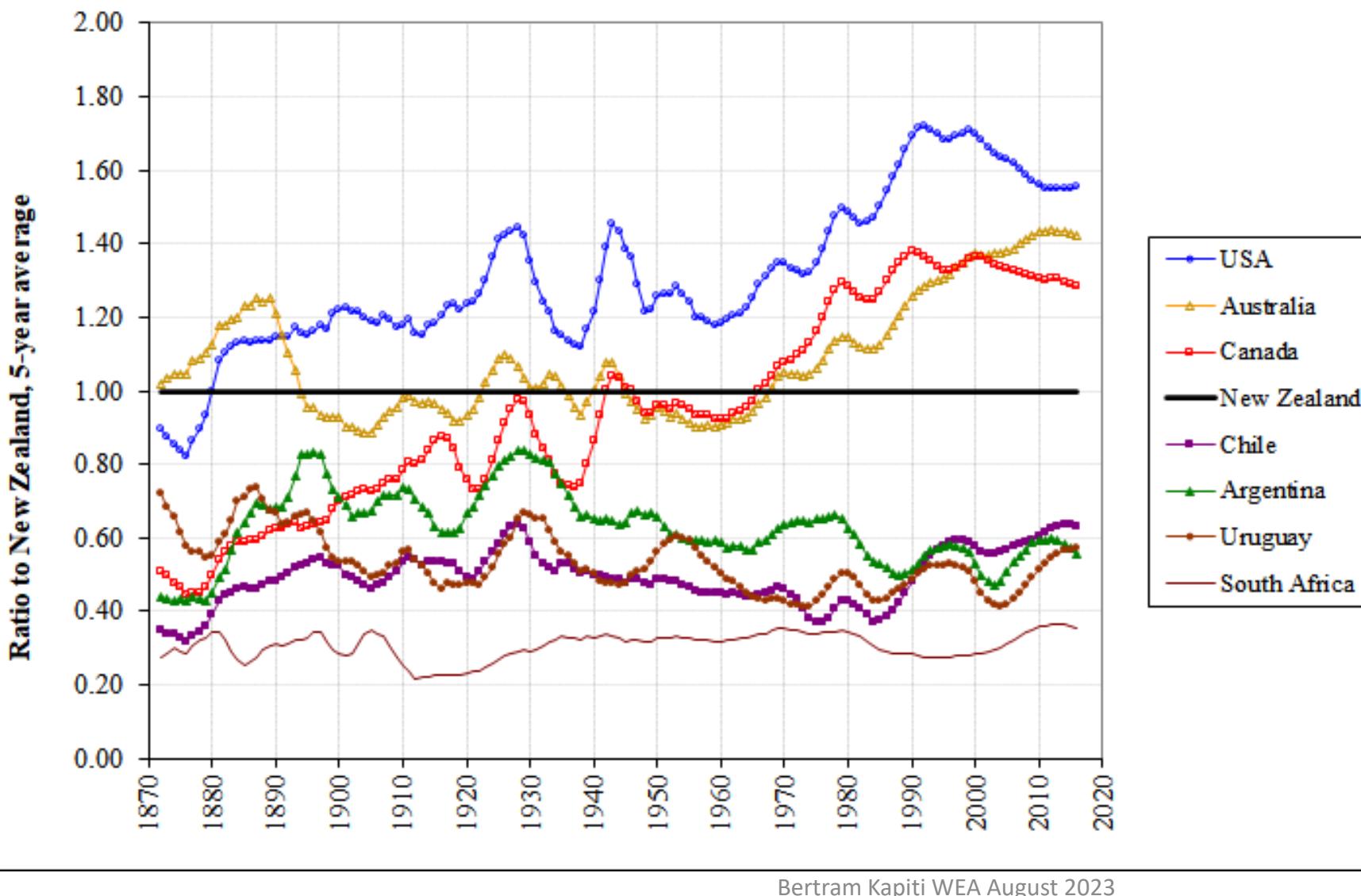
Eight temperate-zone countries have white-settler export economies that were imposed on top of indigenous economies, squeezing the latter

- All converged and flew high in the late nineteenth century on the back of pastoral, crops or mining exports
- In the twentieth century they diverged due to
  - Different market access
  - Different internal social dynamics (indigenous peoples/settlers/later migrants)
  - Different size of domestic market which determines scope for deep industrialization
  - Occasional destructive political episodes
- New Zealand/Aotearoa was in the leading bunch until the 1970s, then fell back

On a regular (arithmetic) scale the divergence is easier to see:



## Seven Former Settler Economies' GDP per Capita Relative to New Zealand



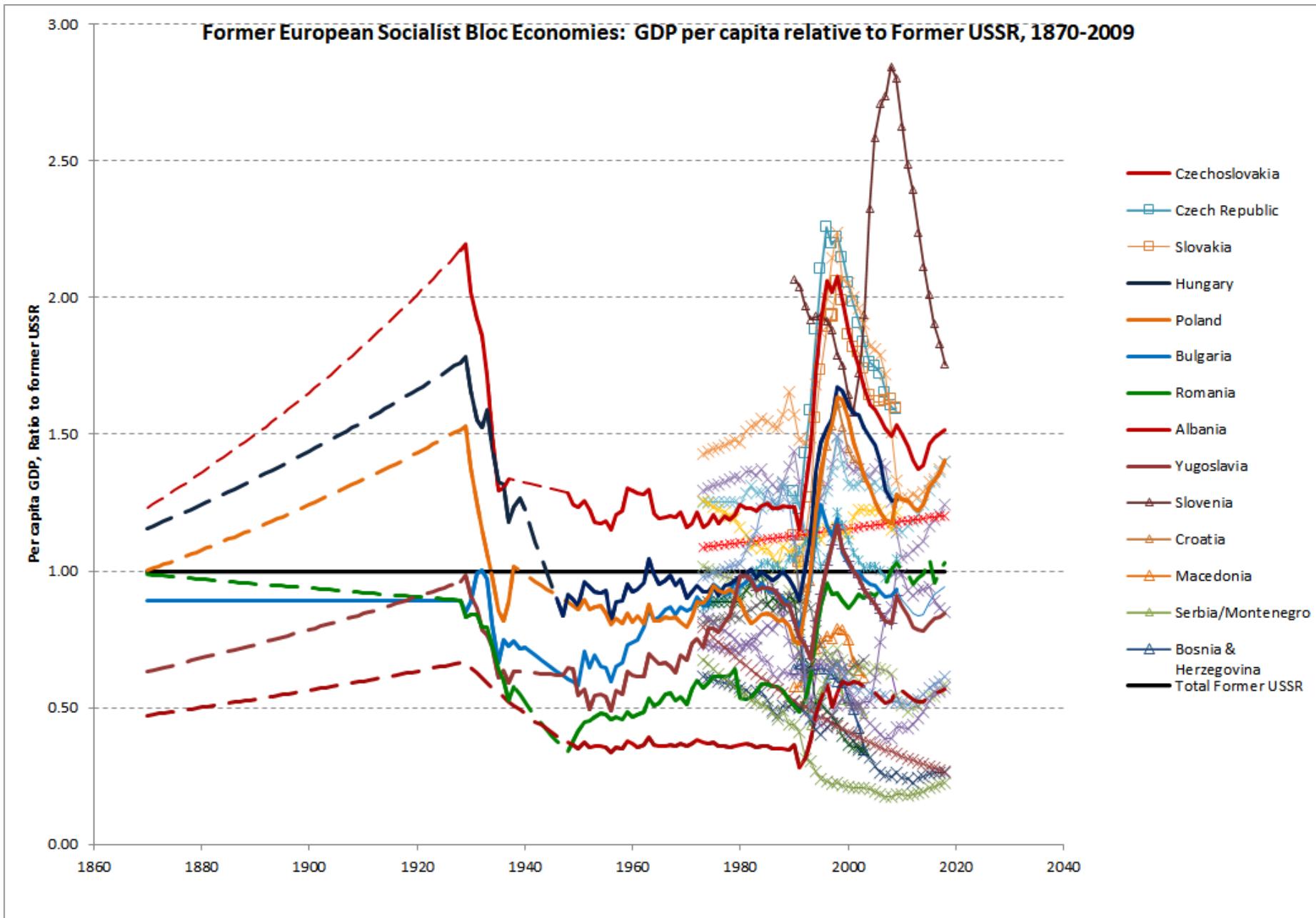
1970-2000 did the big damage

Since 2000 the gap to USA and Canada has narrowed, but Australia still powers away

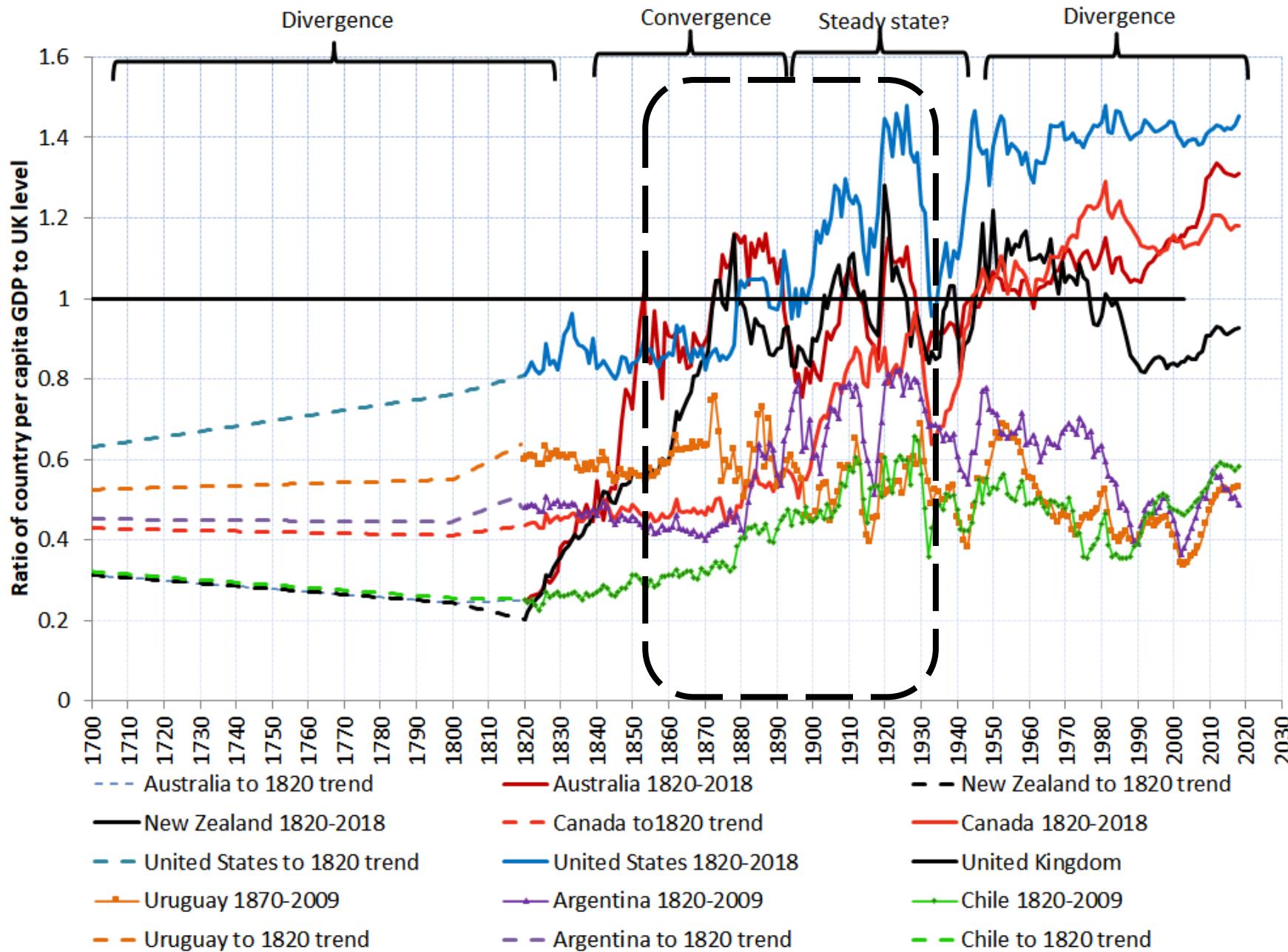
(Why does the NZ-Australia pair not have the time tight relationship as USA-Canada?)

Note that divergence was checked since 1990

## Convergence clubs and divergence forces: an example



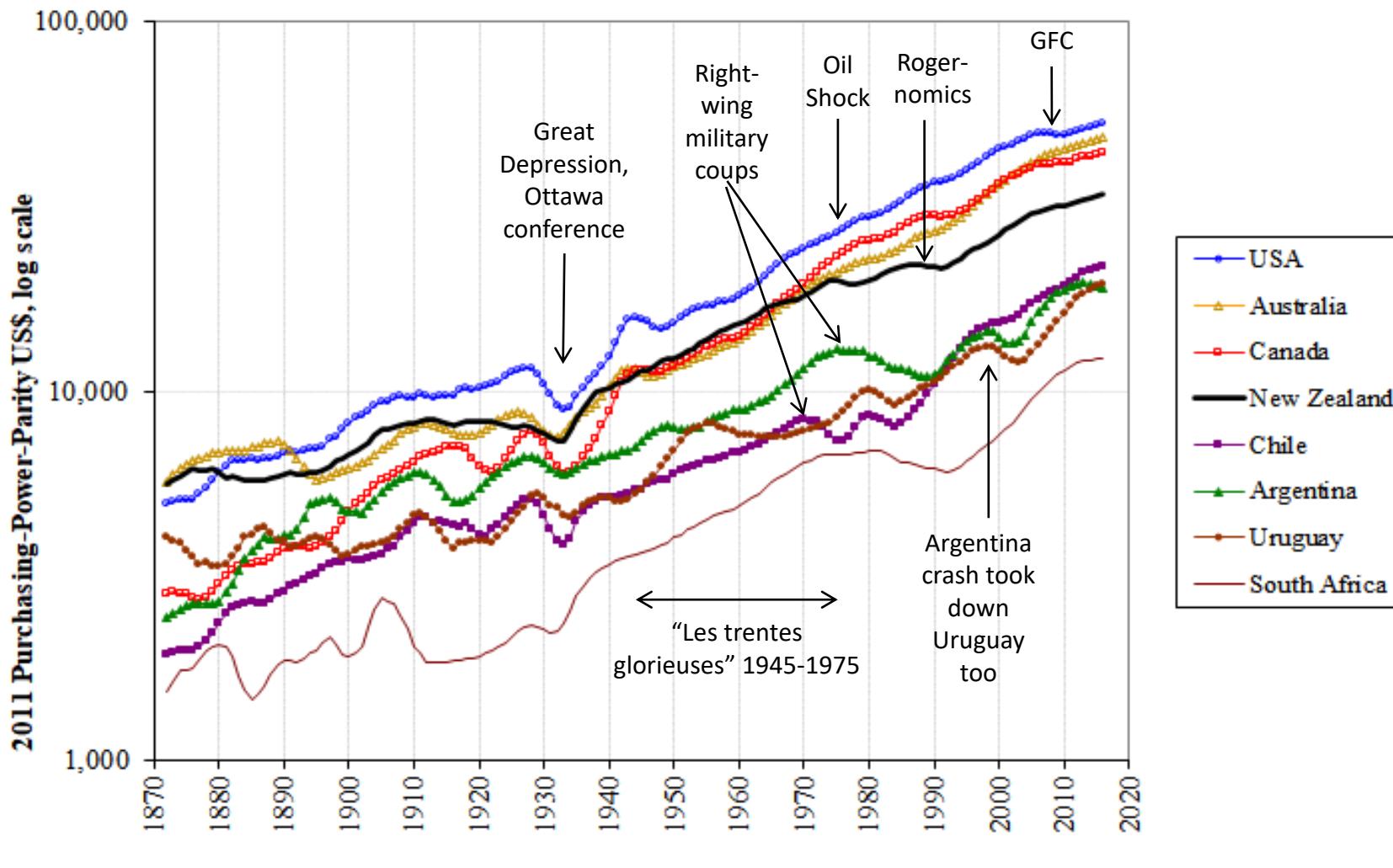
## Per capita GDP relative to UK, seven settler economies 1700-2018



## A couple of possible reasons for divergence

- Most important: ability to establish and sustain home-grown industrialization
  - USA, Canada and Australia [all boosted also by massive mineral reserves, especially oil and coal]
- Size does matter
- But so do domestic politics and the relationship between settlers and the indigenous populations

## Eight Former Settler Economies' Per Capita GDP, 5-year moving averages, 1870-2018



Sequential divergence:

USA upwards from 1890

South Africa downwards from 1880

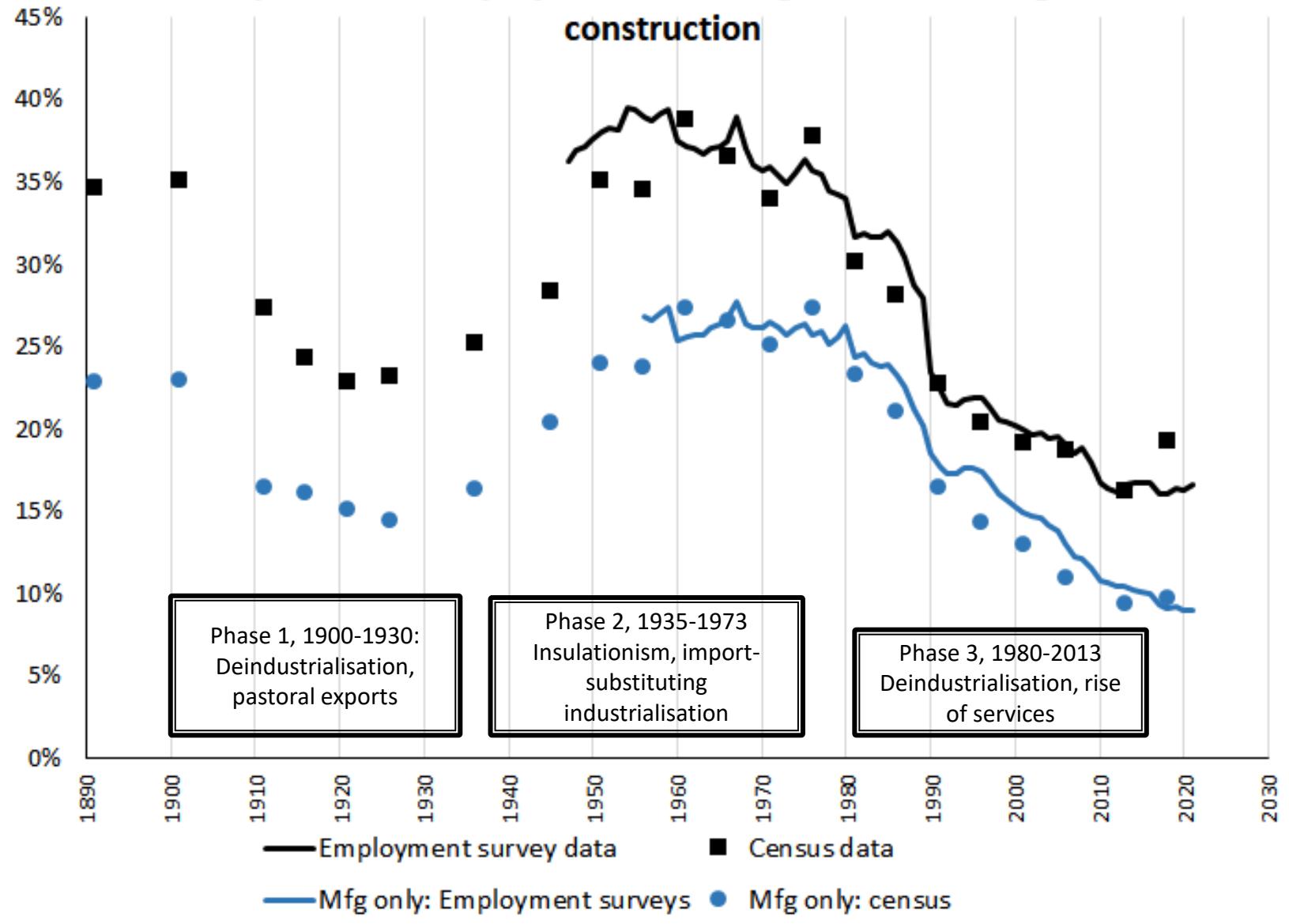
Argentina/Chile/Uruguay downwards from 1930, plus coups in 1976/1973/1973

New Zealand downwards from the other Anglos after 1975 (Oil Shock) and again from 1985 (Rogernomics)

IMPORTANT NOTE: THIS CHART IS ON A LOG SCALE – COMPARES GROWTH RATES

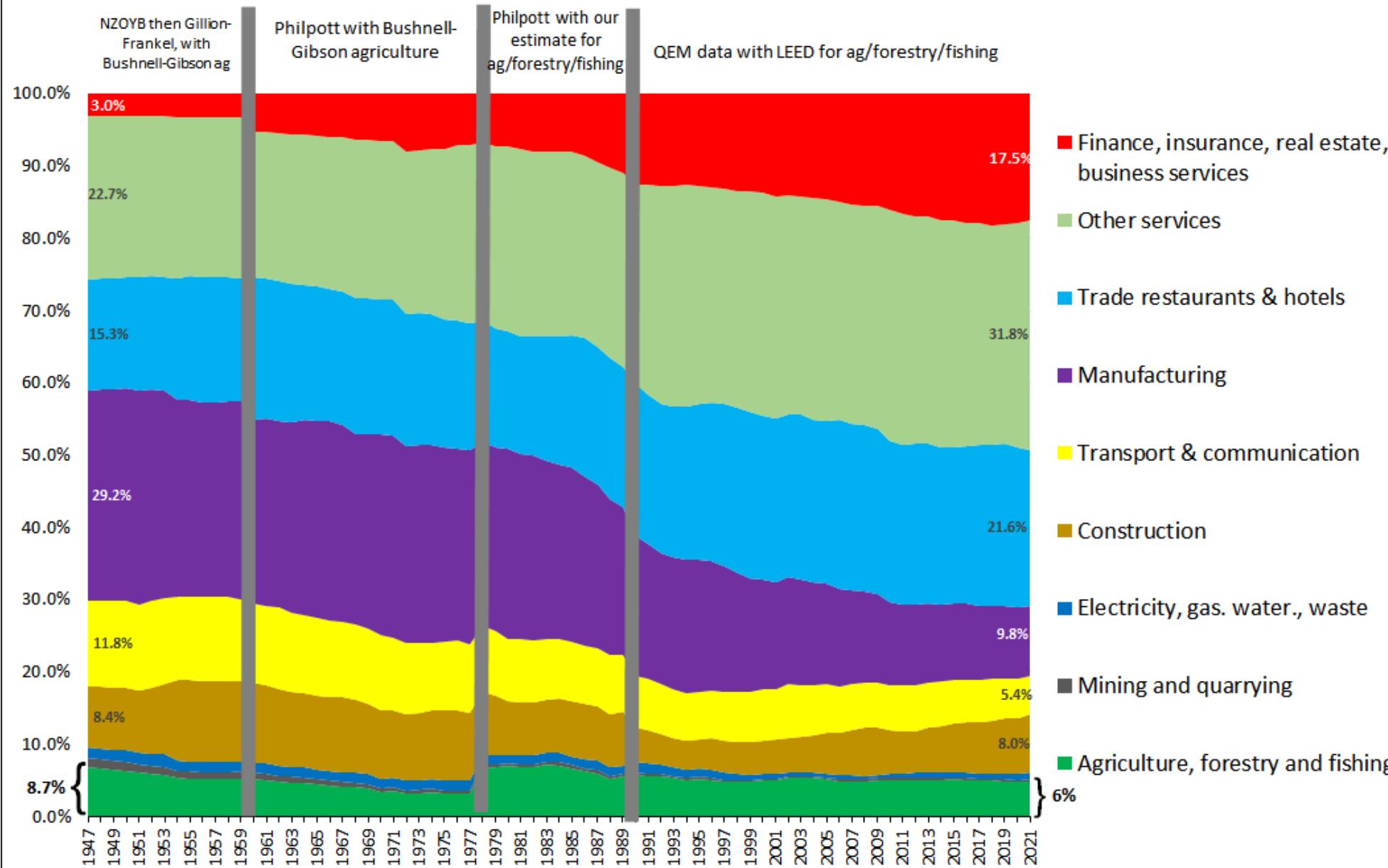
New Zealand did not sustain its mid-century  
industrial structure

## Proportion of employment in mining, manufacturing and construction

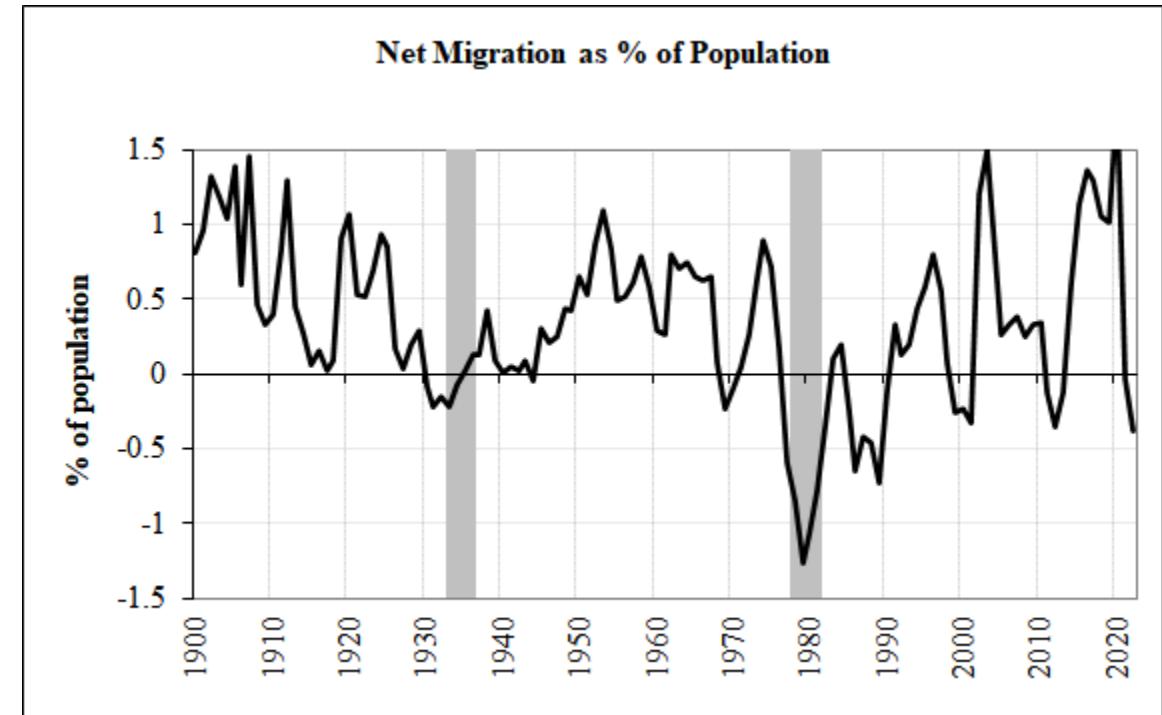
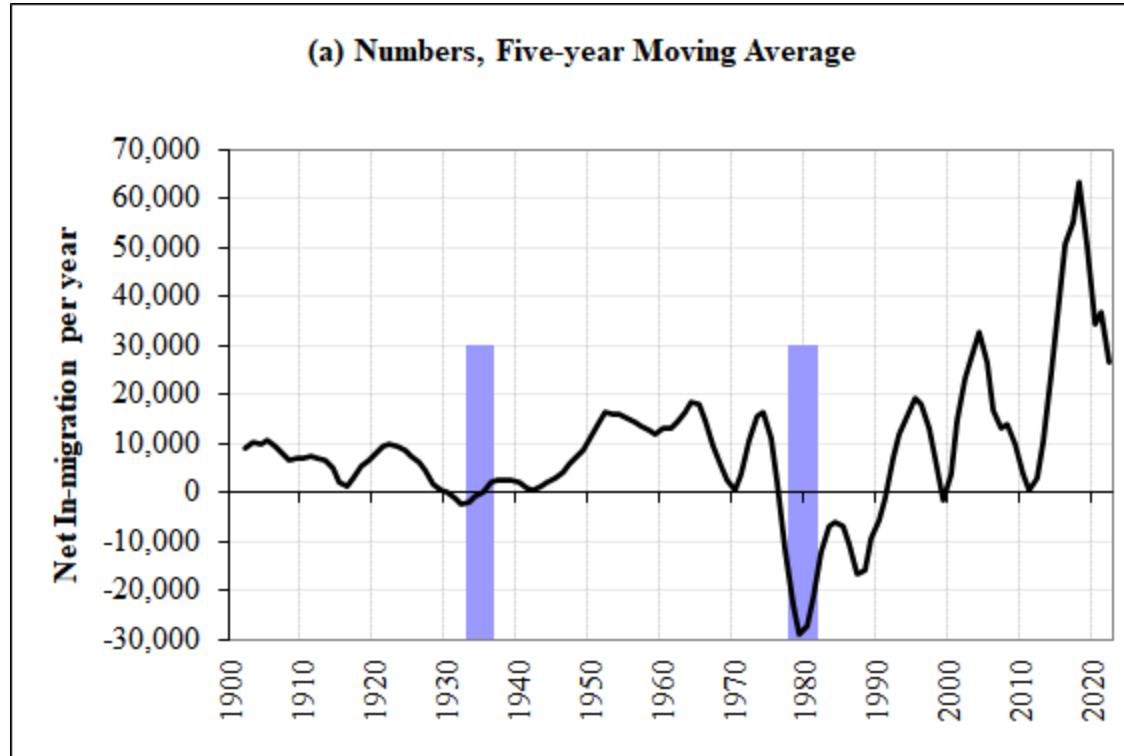


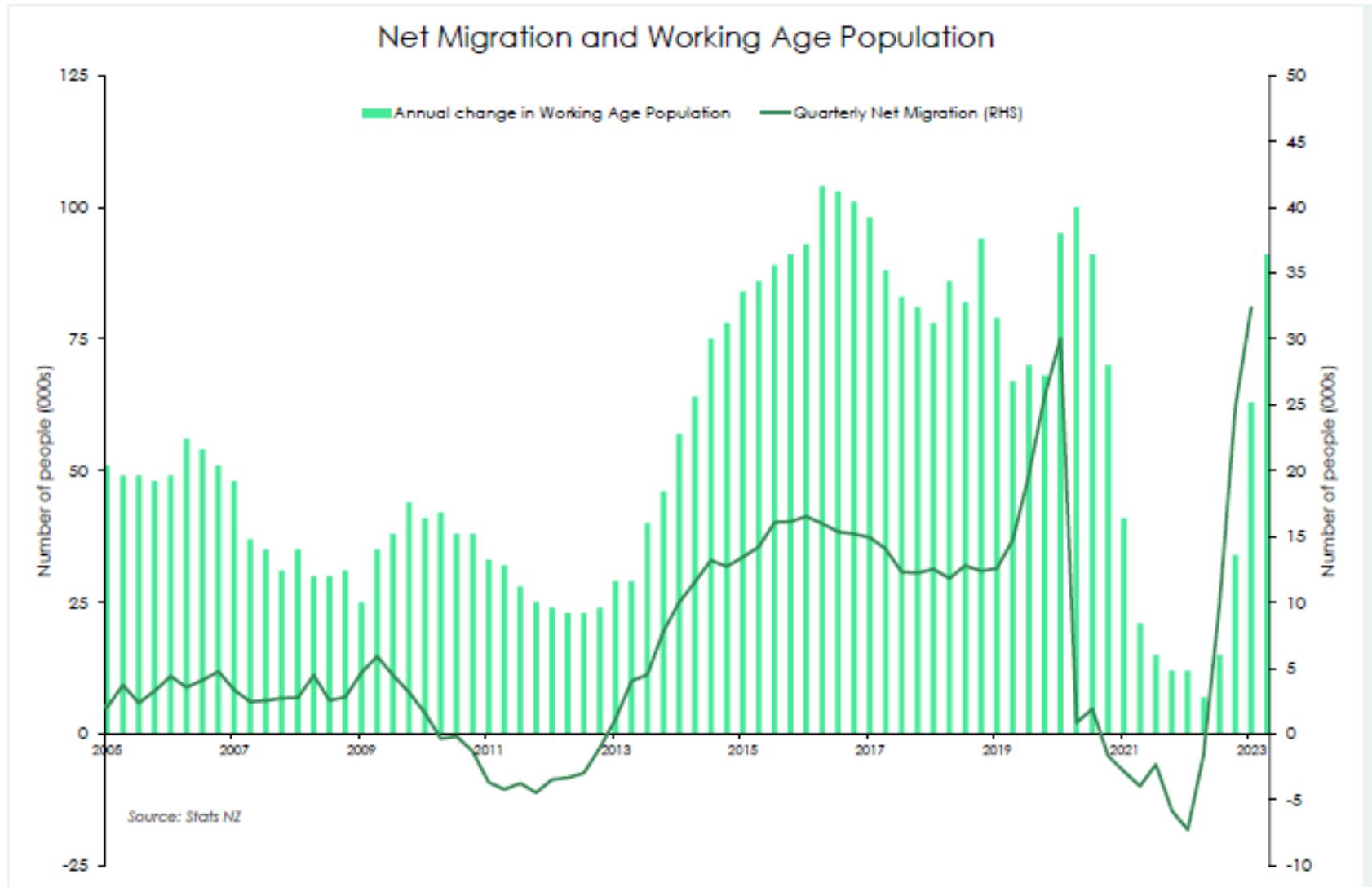
Updated and revised  
version of Figure 1 in  
my 2009 *New Oxford  
History chapter*

**Figure 10: Sector distribution of wage- and salary-earning employees, 1954-2021**



Following destruction of much human capital in the 1980s, skilled labour became increasingly scarce and dependence on migration increased

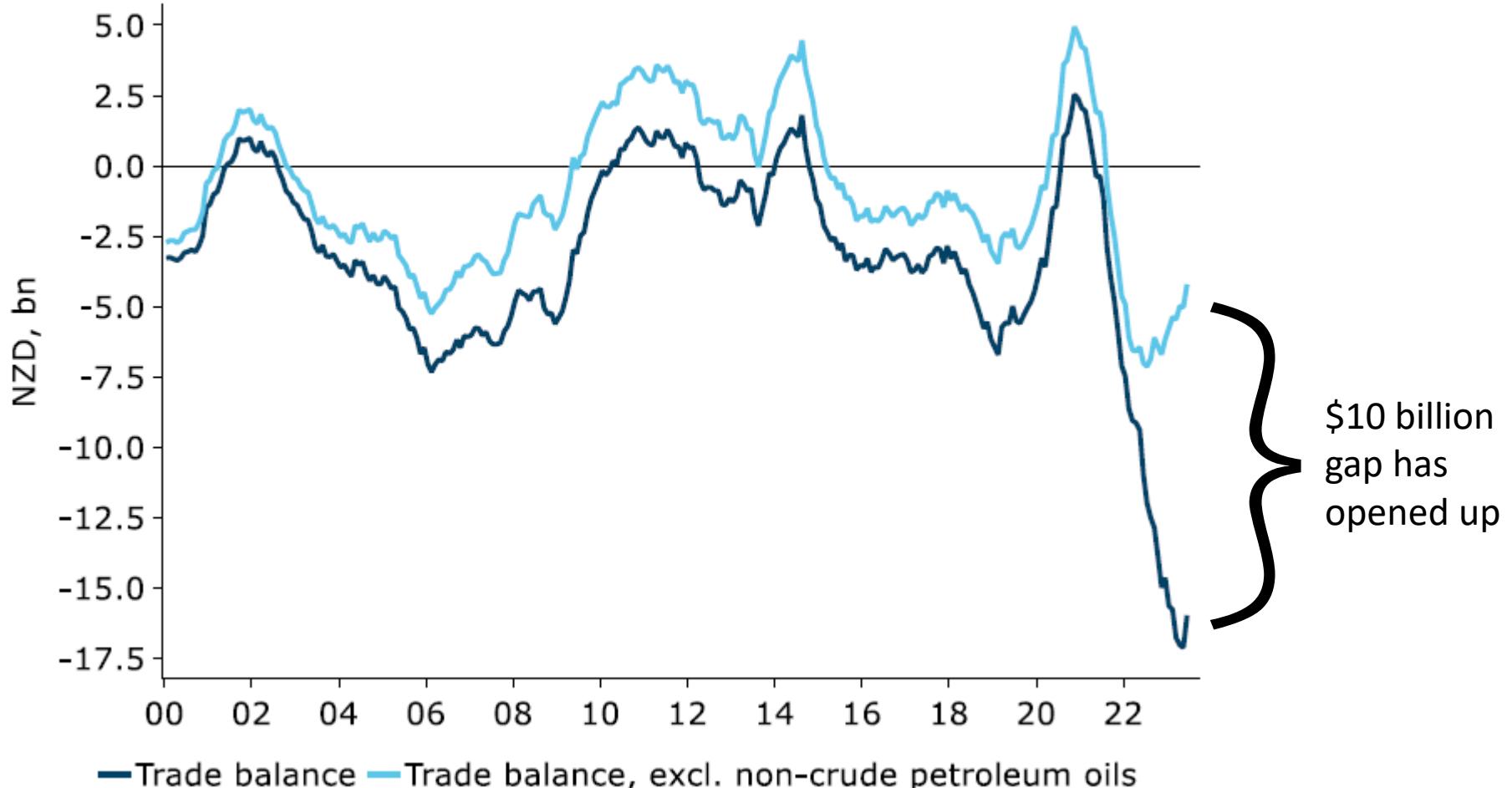




Kiwibank First View 7 August 2023 p.2.

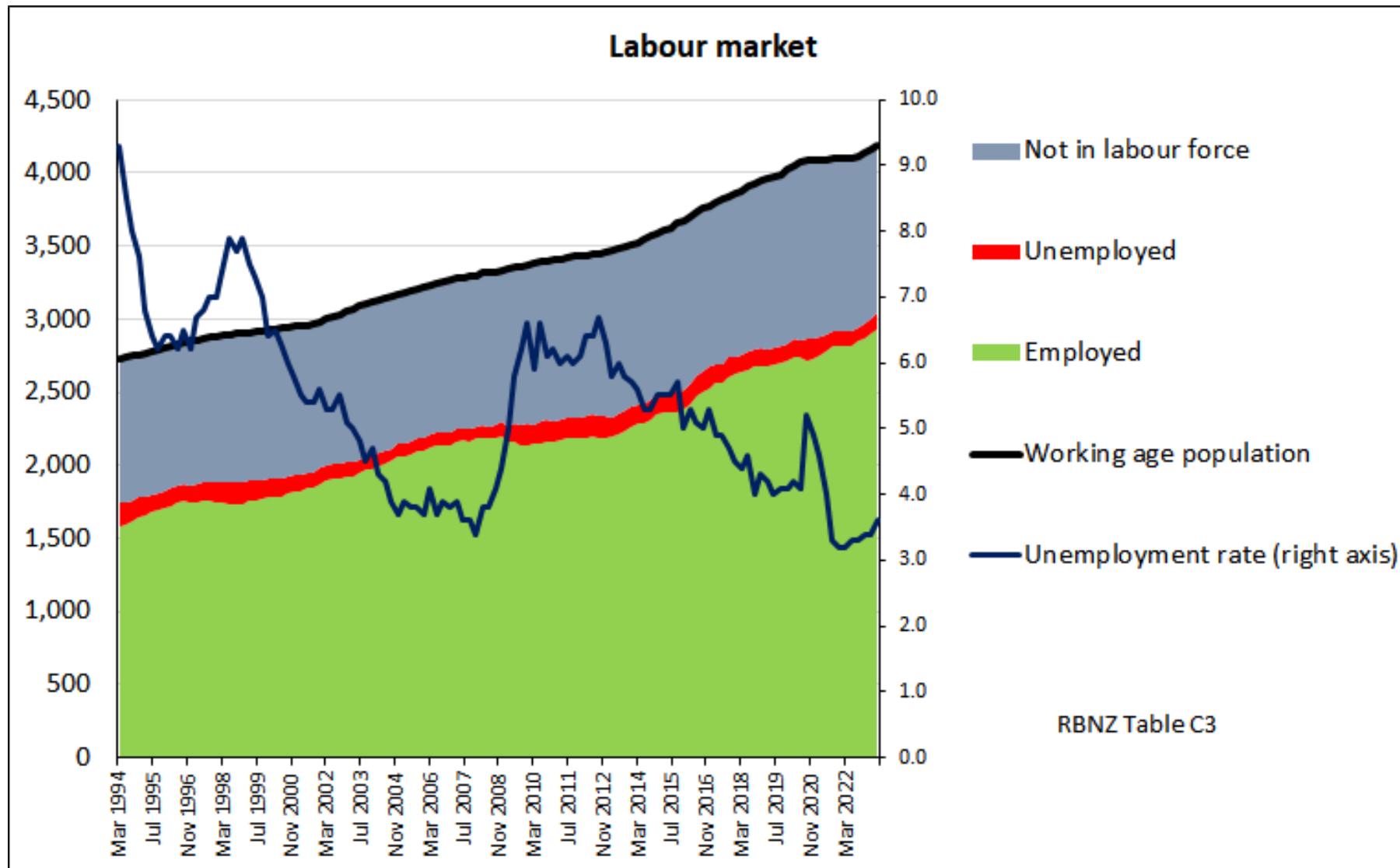
Latest bit of de-industrialization: losing the Marsden Point refinery made a big difference to the trade balance

Figure 20. Merchandise trade balance



ANZ Quarterly Economic Outlook August 2023 p.11.

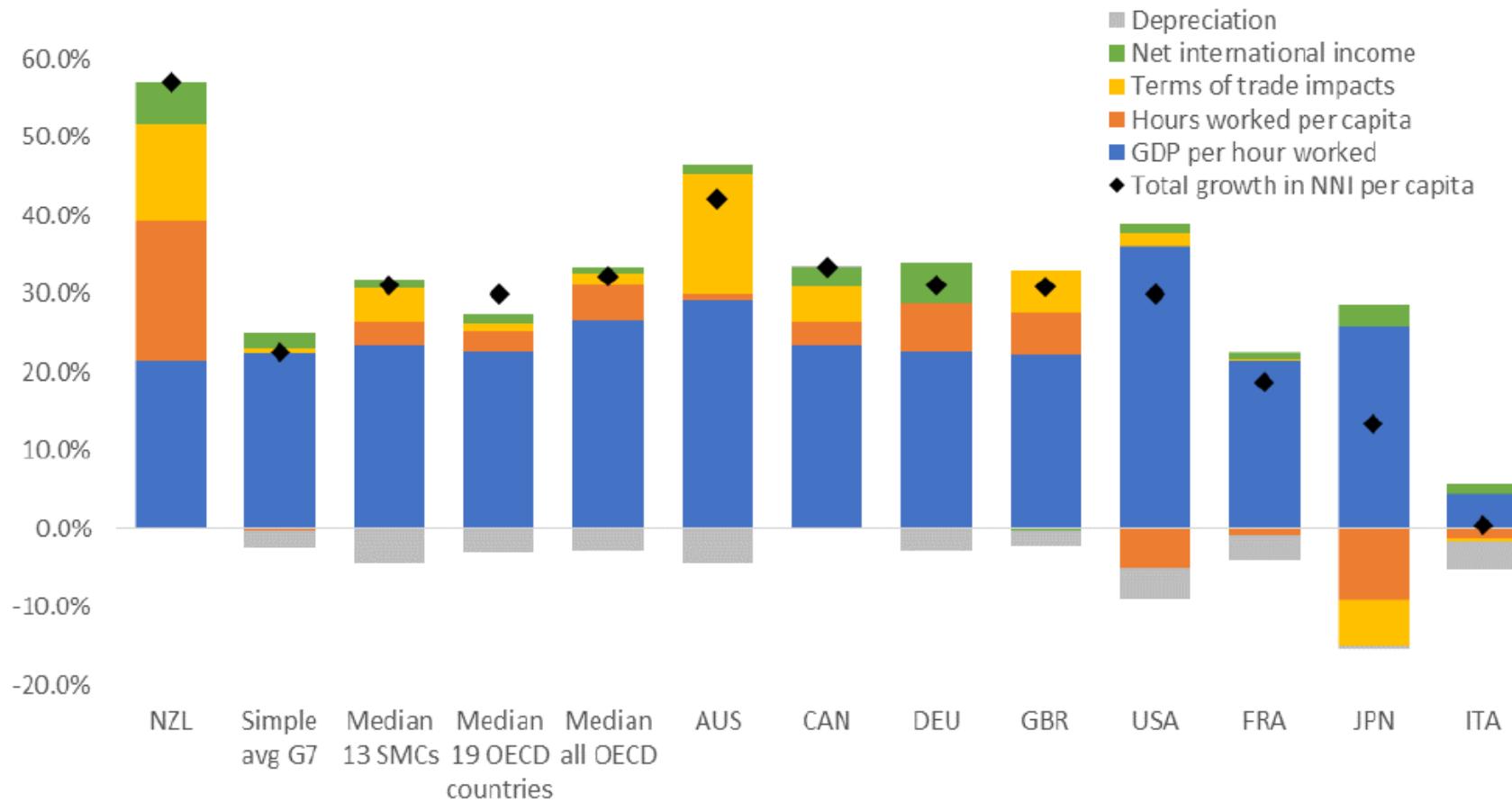
But unemployment has stayed low



In the past two decades rising average income has come less from productivity than from working longer hours and getting trade windfalls

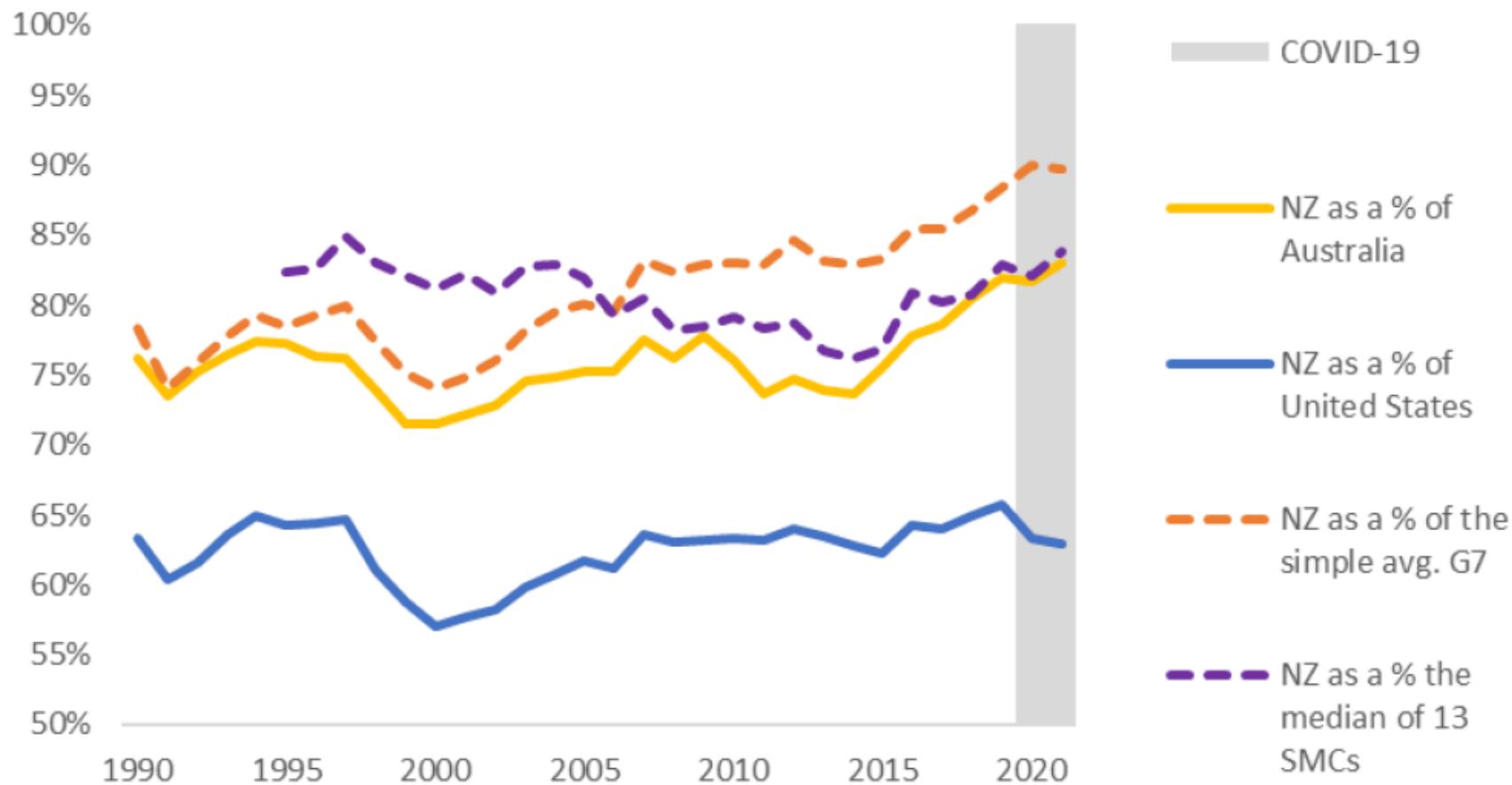
**Figure 10: Contributions to growth in real NNI per capita from the 1995-2002 average to 2019**

**(a) New Zealand, group averages, Australia, and the G7**



Matthew Galt, *Examining New Zealand's increased rate of income growth between the late 1990s and 2019* Treasury Analytical Note 23/04, June 2023, p.18.

**Figure 21: New Zealand's average annual wages for an FTE relative to other countries (constant 2021 prices and PPPs)**



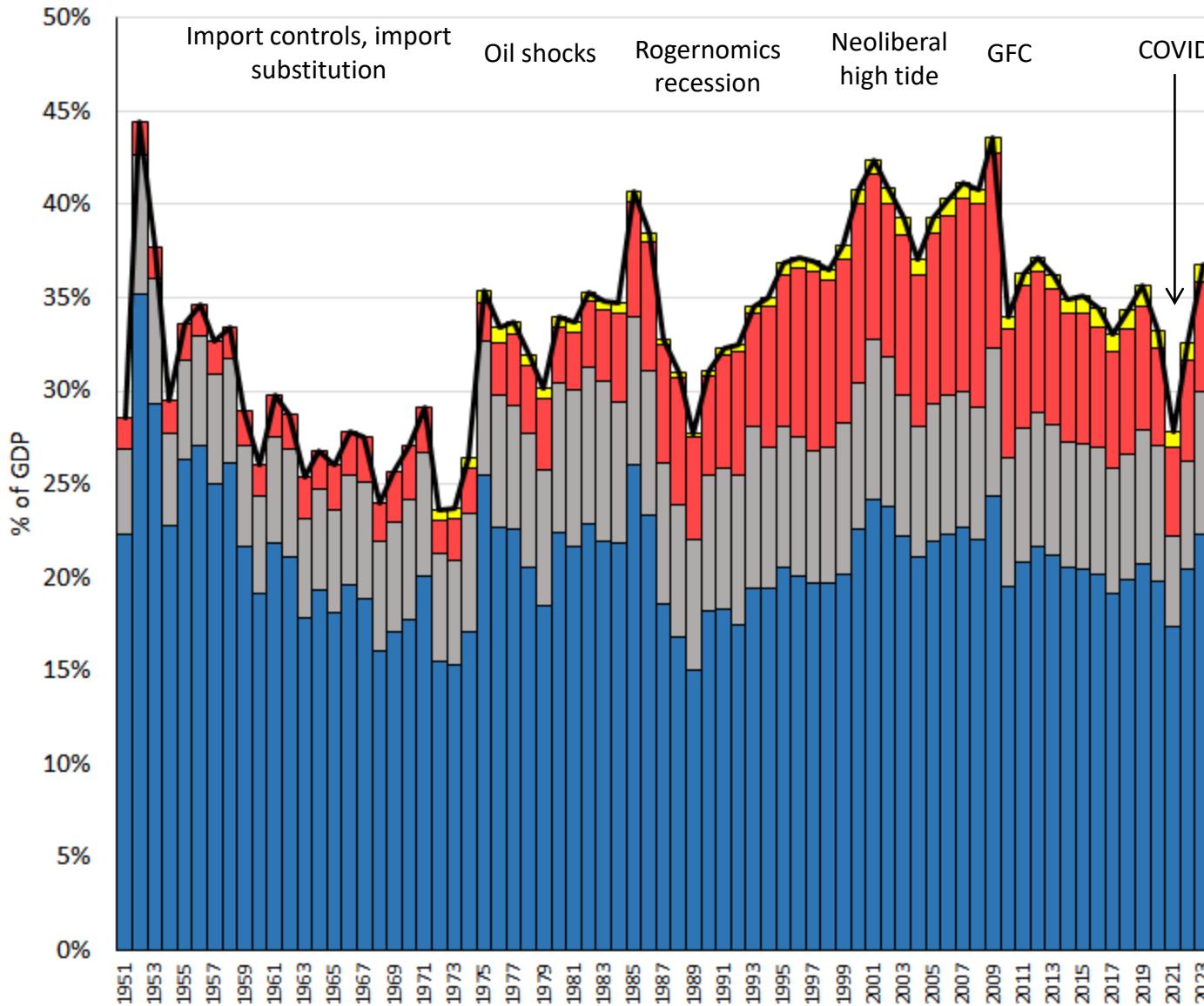
Source: OECD, author's calculations

Matthew Galt, *Examining New Zealand's increased rate of income growth between the late 1990s and 2019* Treasury Analytical Note 23/04, June 2023, p.31.

Bertram Kapiti WEA August 2023

For a small open economy the eternal issue is how to pay for what it buys from the rest of the world  
=> balance of payments is crucial

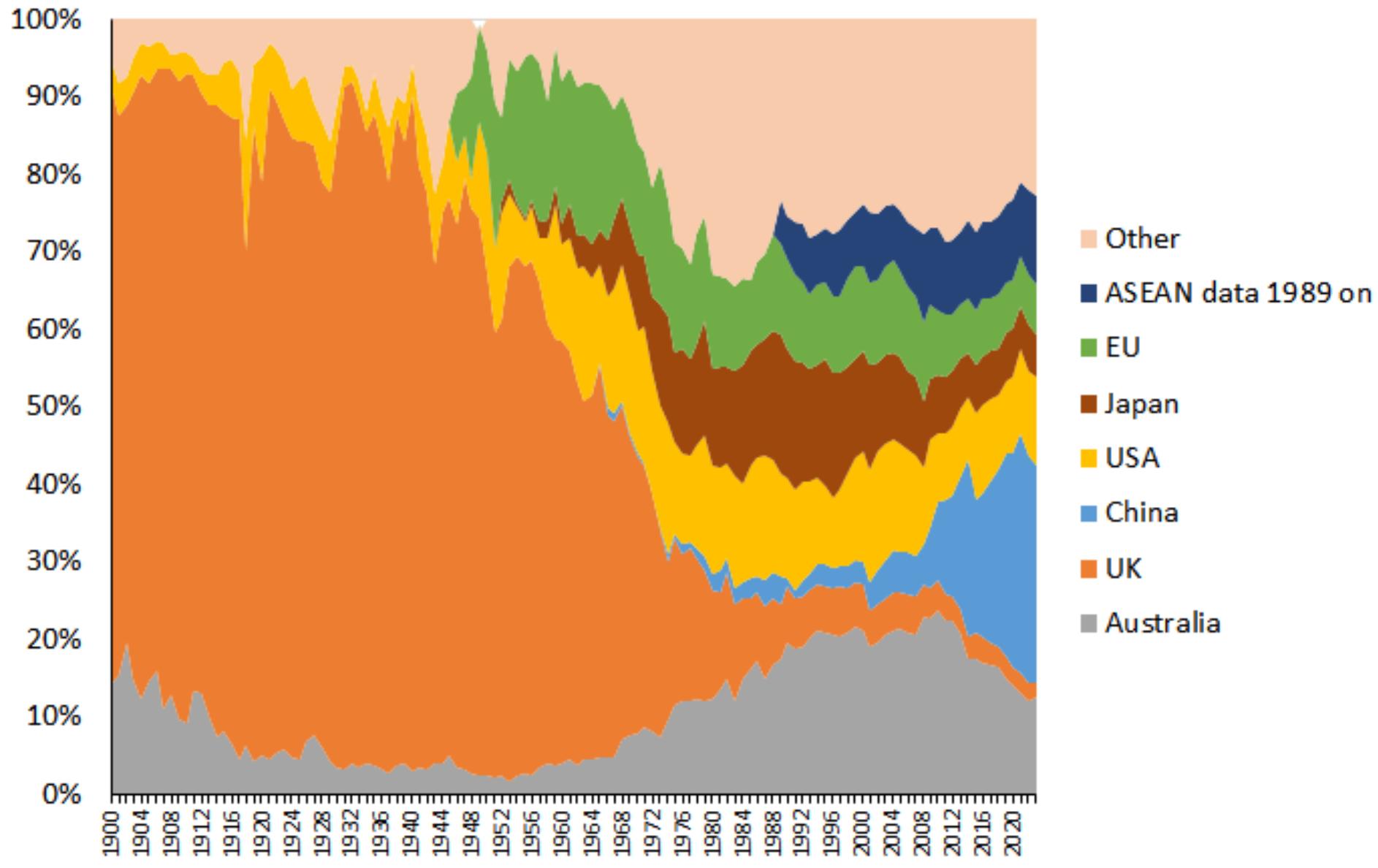
## Balance of payments current account: what has to be paid for

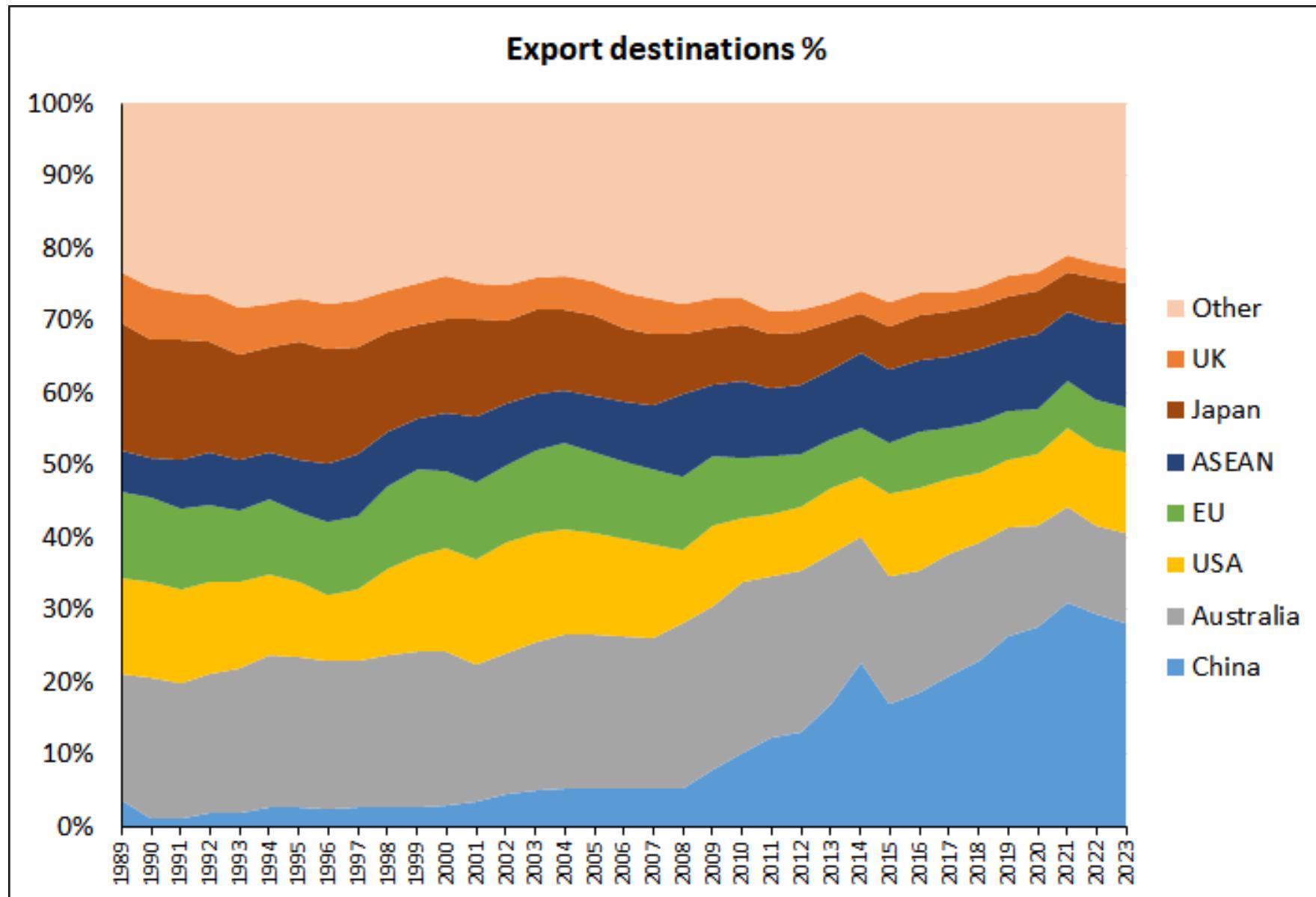


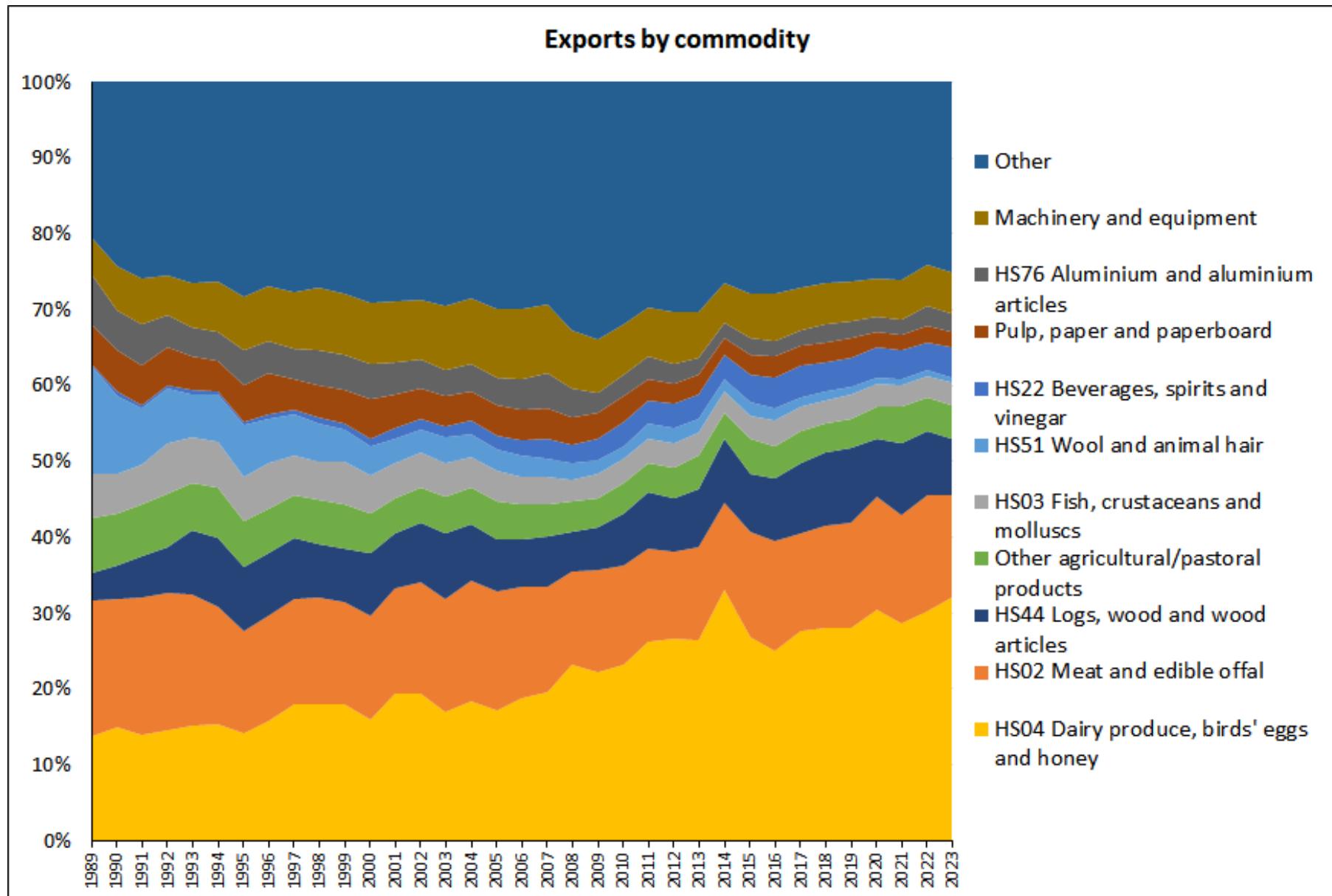
**Bottom line: we need overseas earnings of around 35% of GDP**

- Transfers/secondary income debit 1% or less
- Investment income/primary income debit <2% 1951; 11% in 2008; now 5%
- Imports of services fob Average 7%, rose from 2% in 1951 to peak of 10% 2002-2003, now just under 8%
- Imports of goods fob Fairly steady 21% ± 5%
- Current account debit total

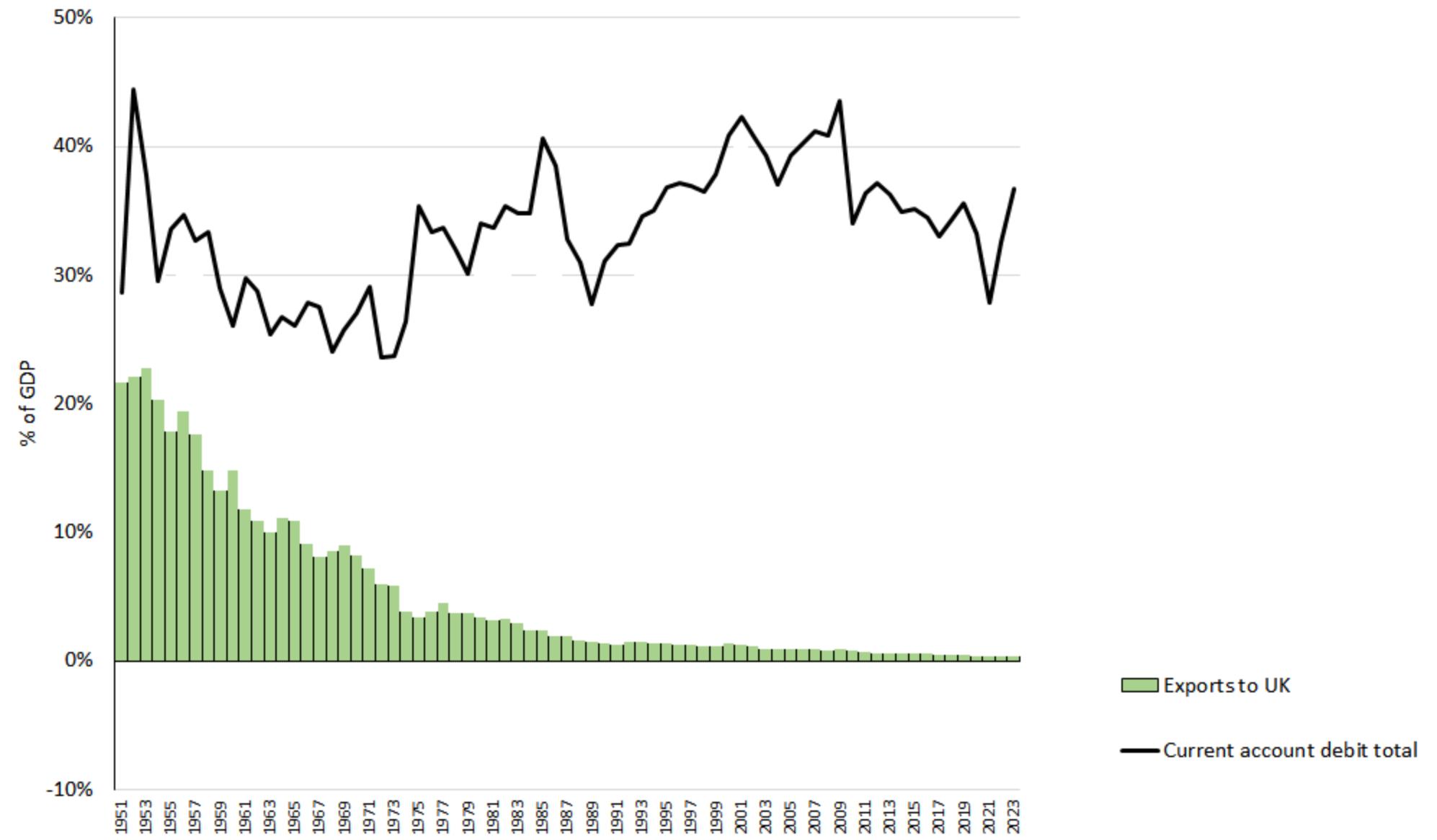
## Export destinations %



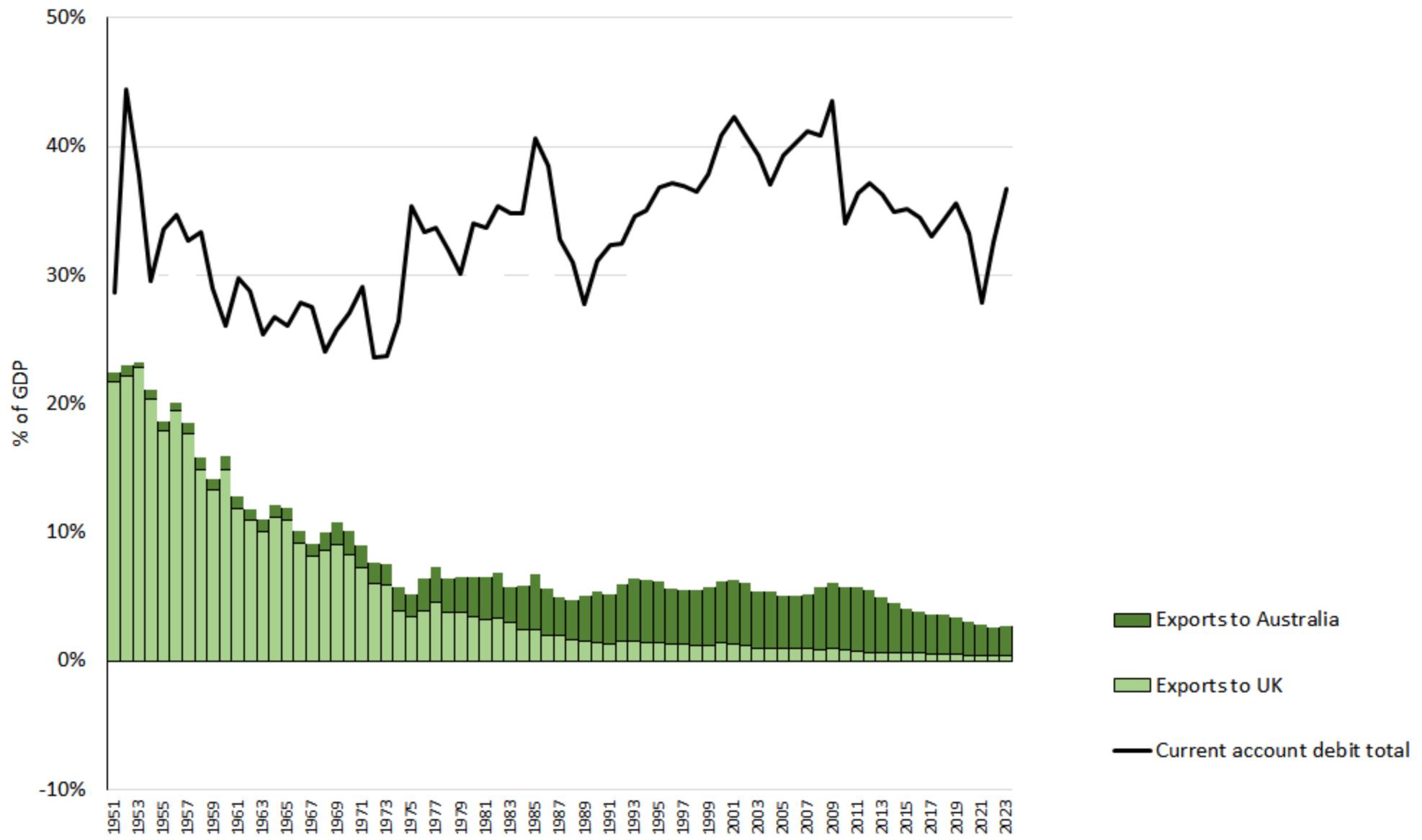




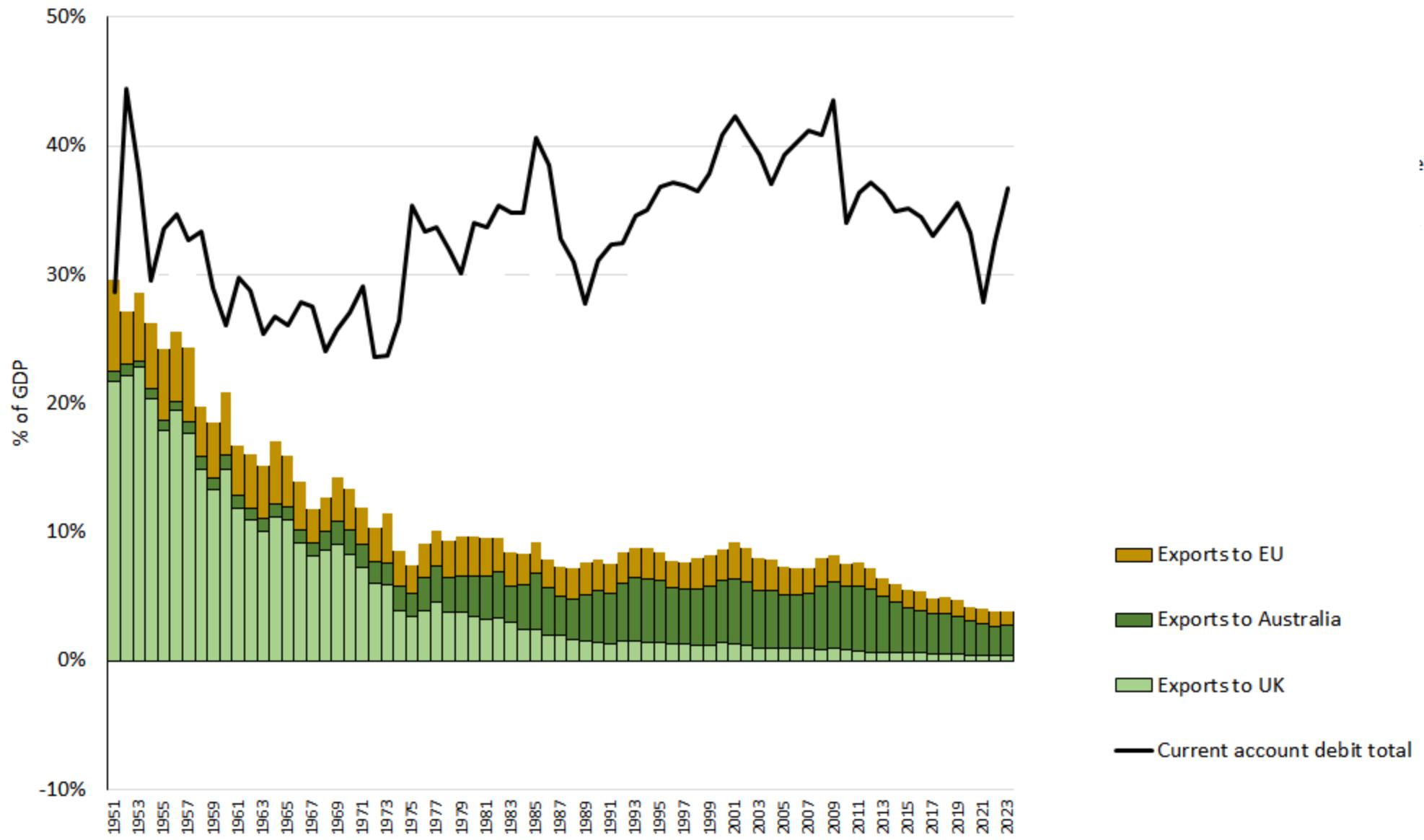
### Balance of payments current account: how we pay

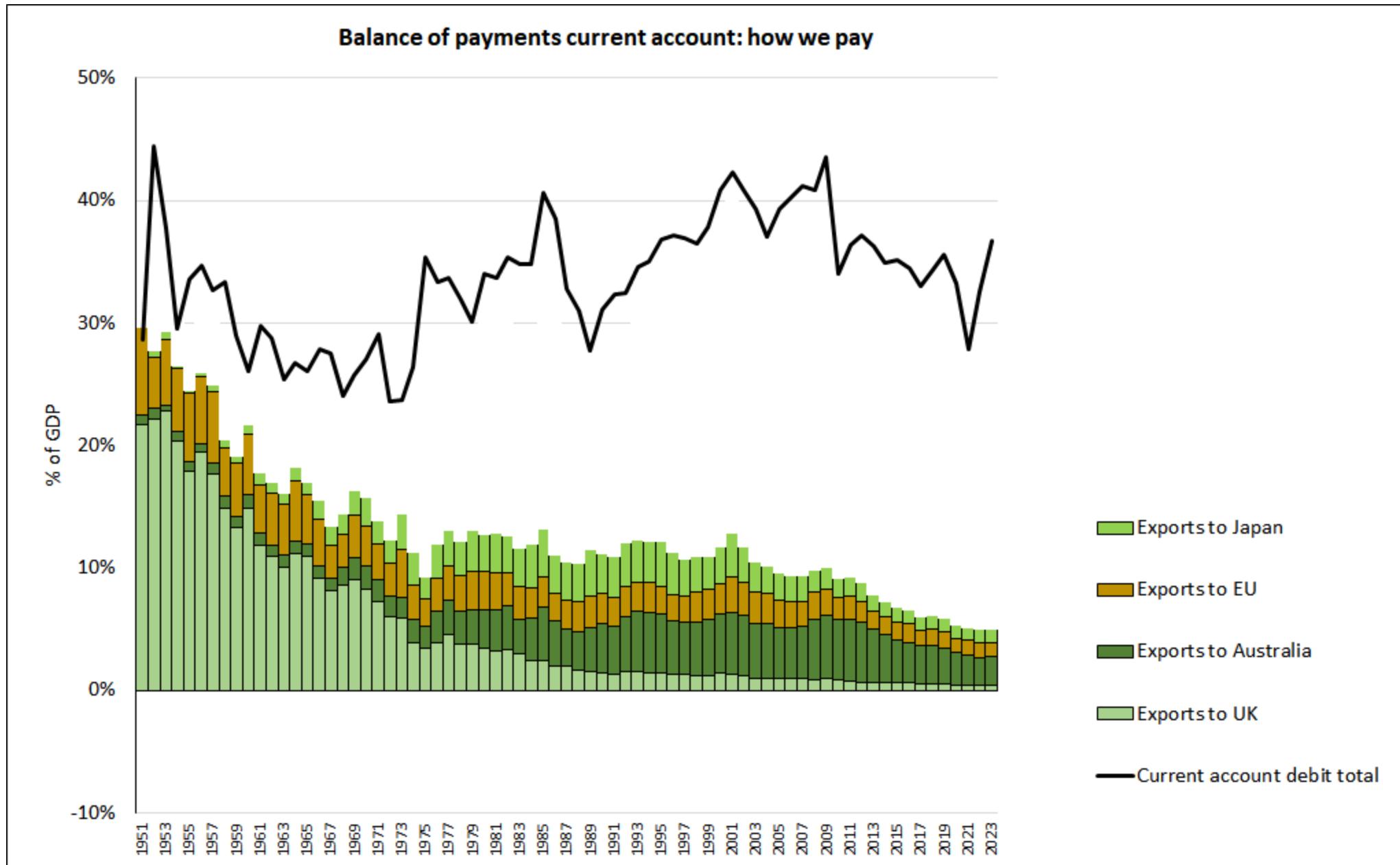


### Balance of payments current account: how we pay

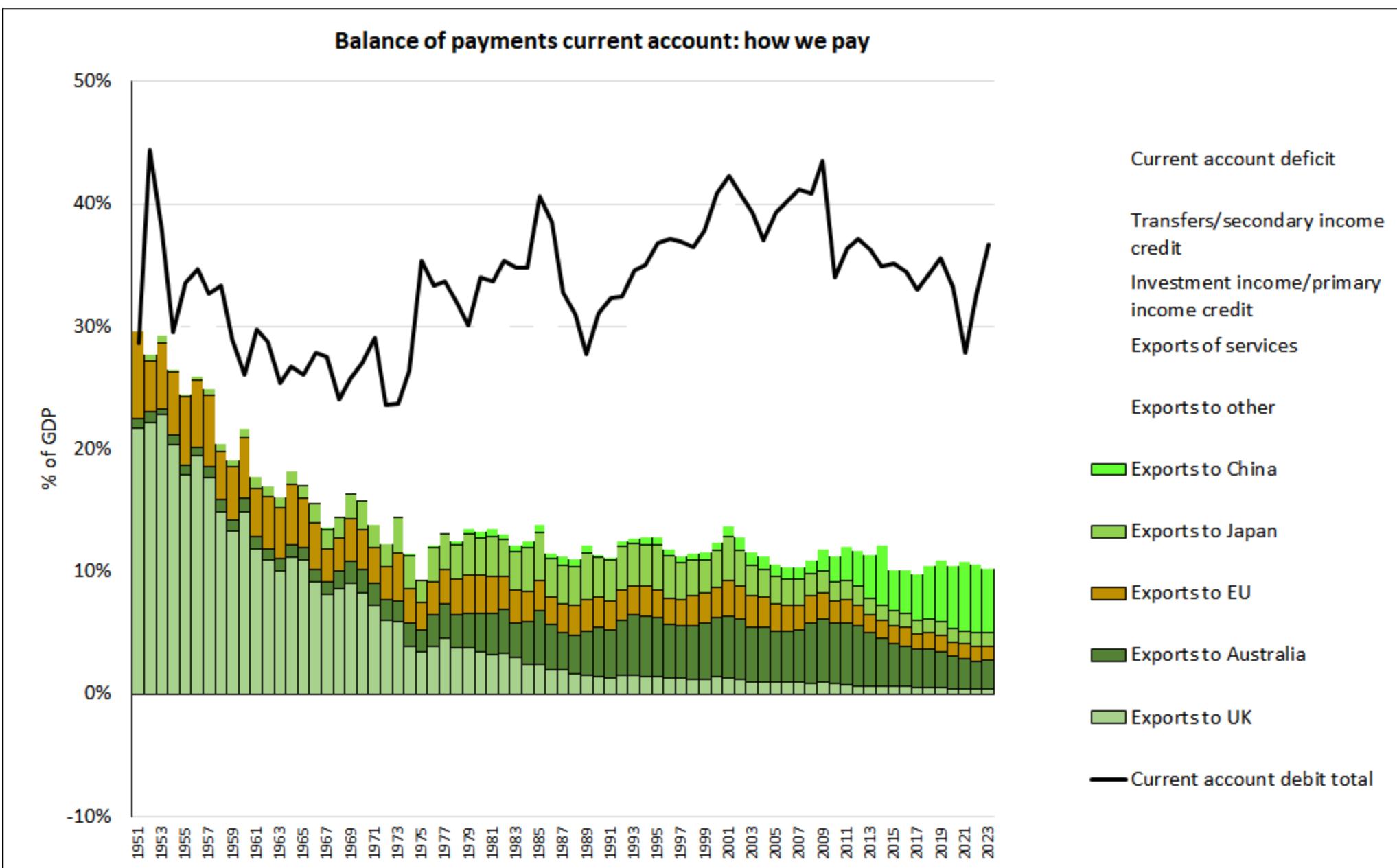


### Balance of payments current account: how we pay

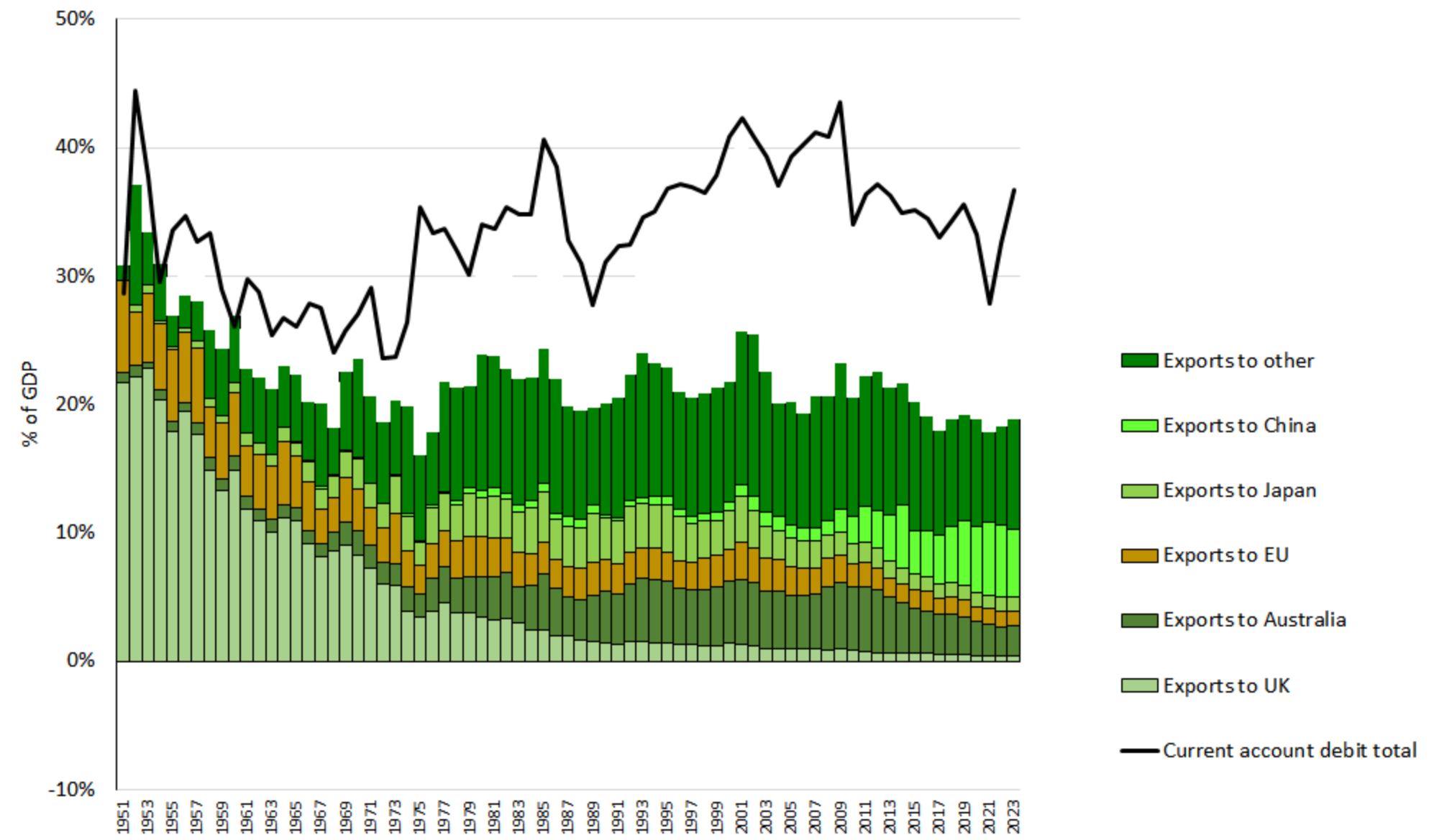


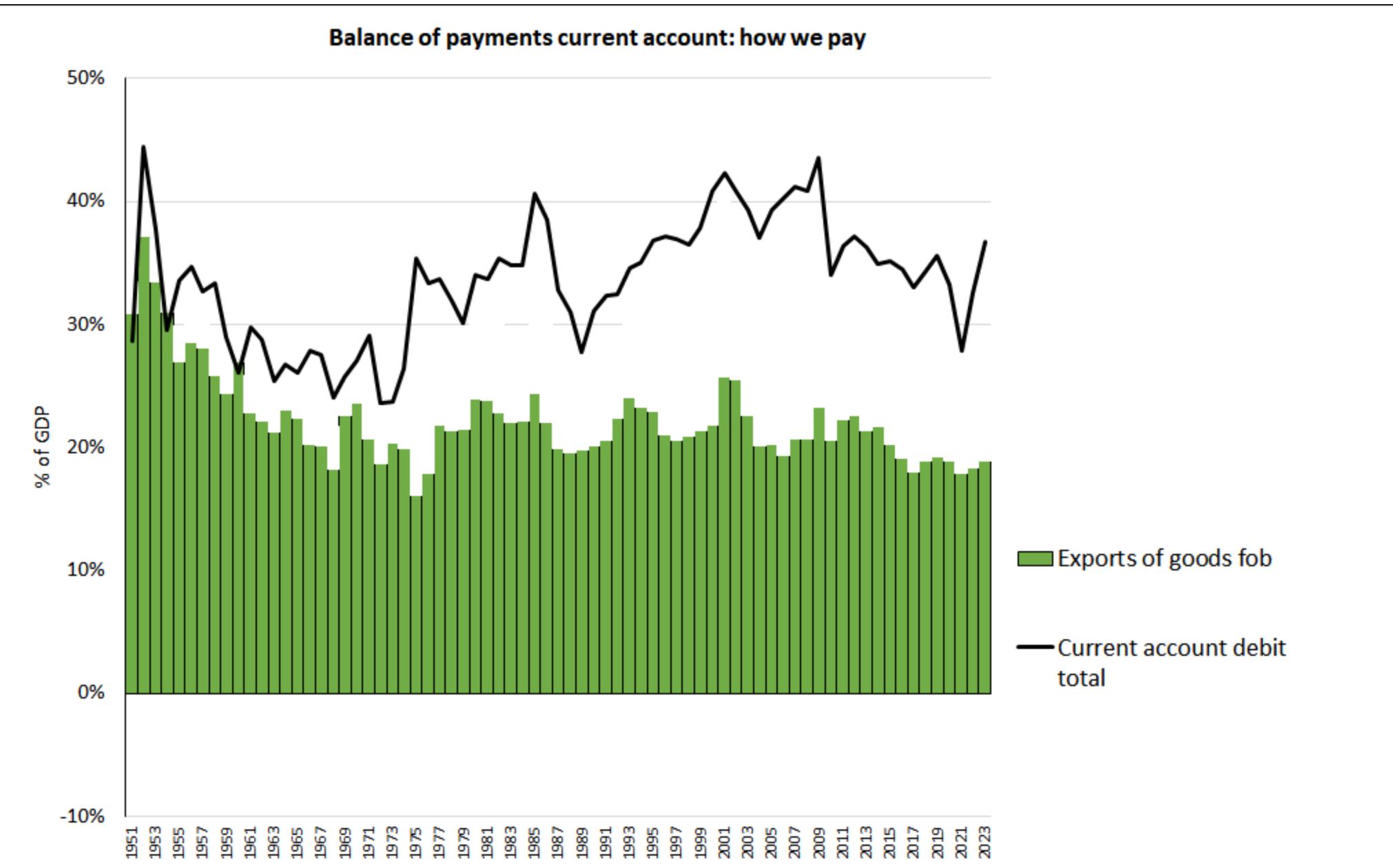


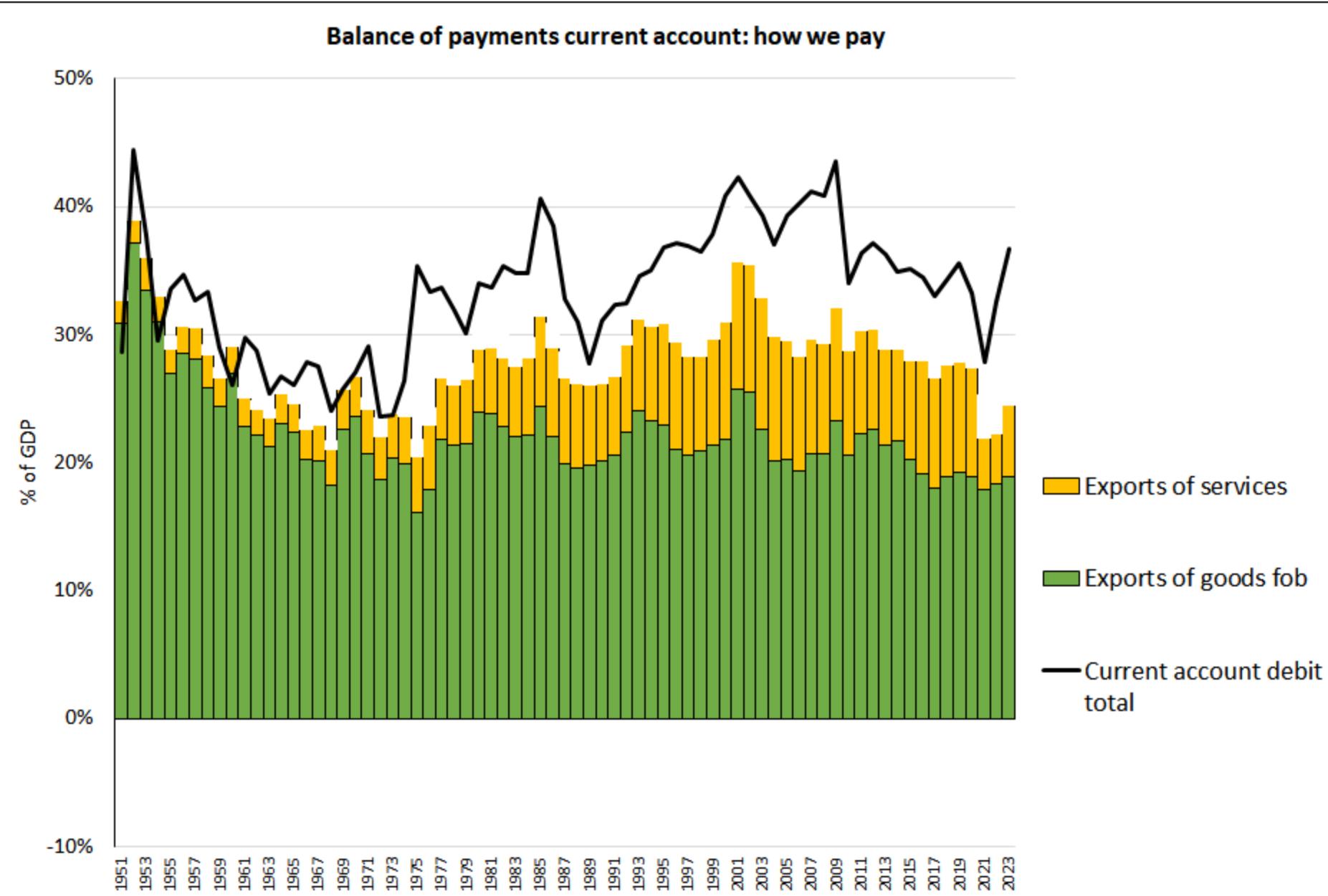
### Balance of payments current account: how we pay



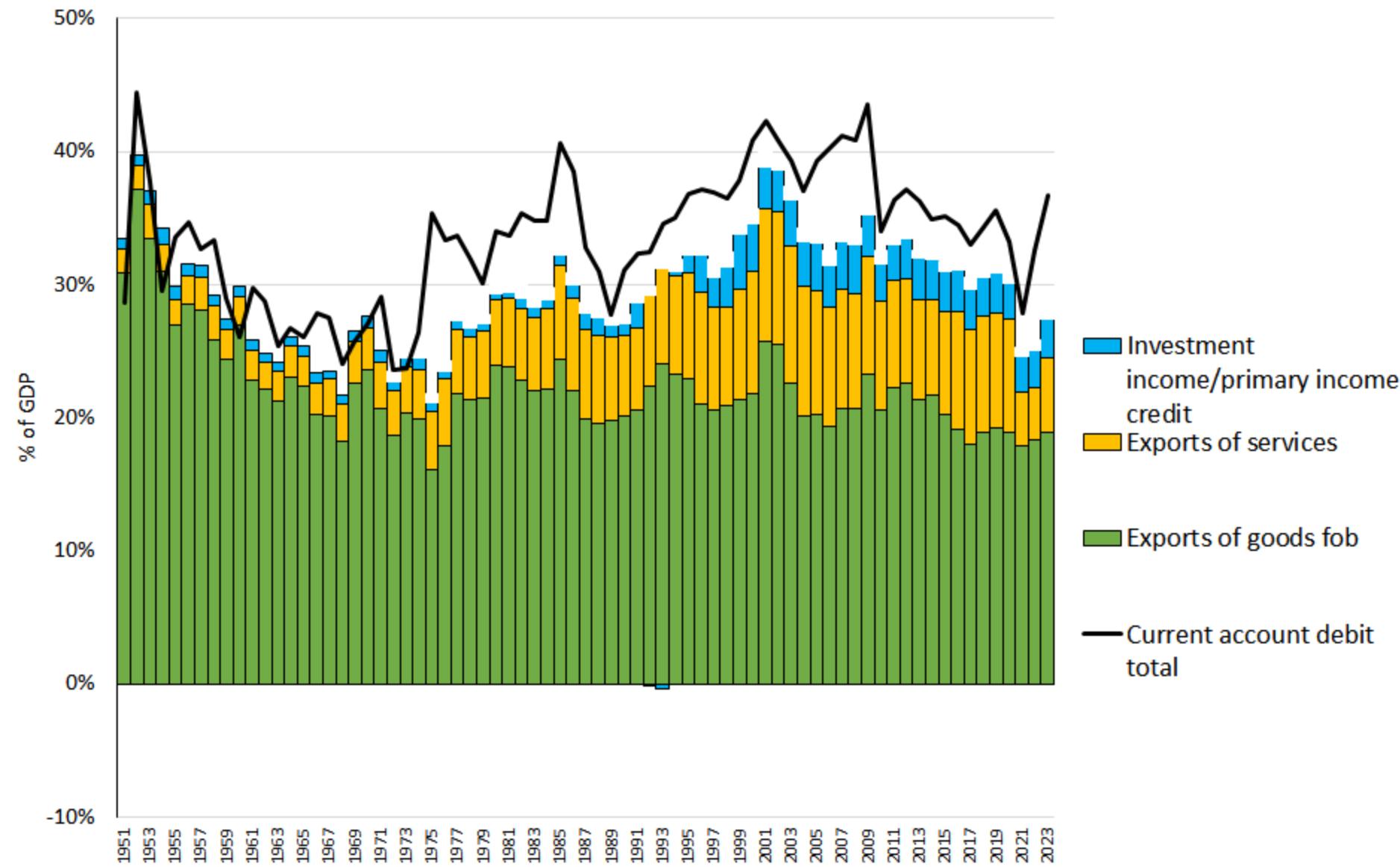
### Balance of payments current account: how we pay

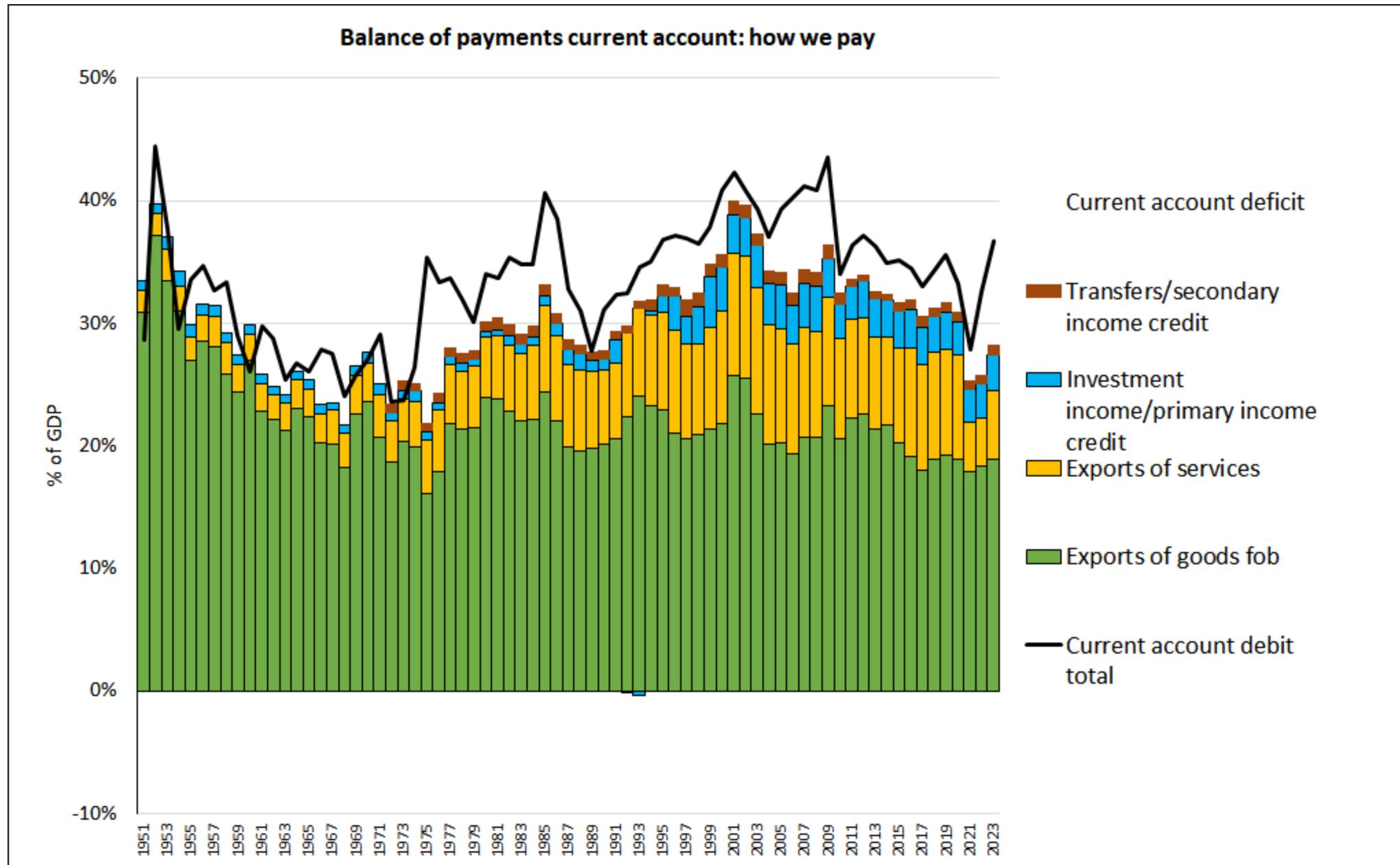




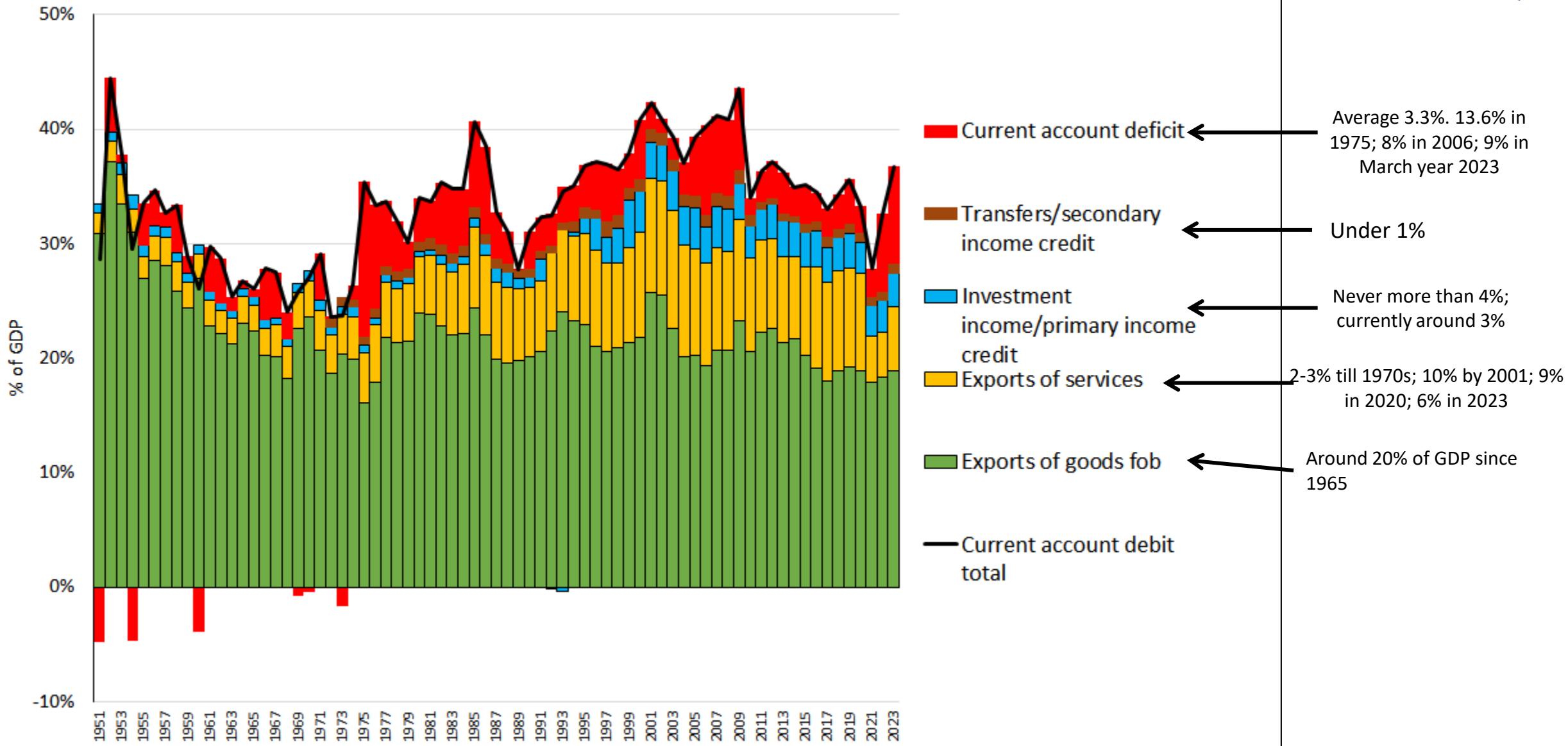


### Balance of payments current account: how we pay

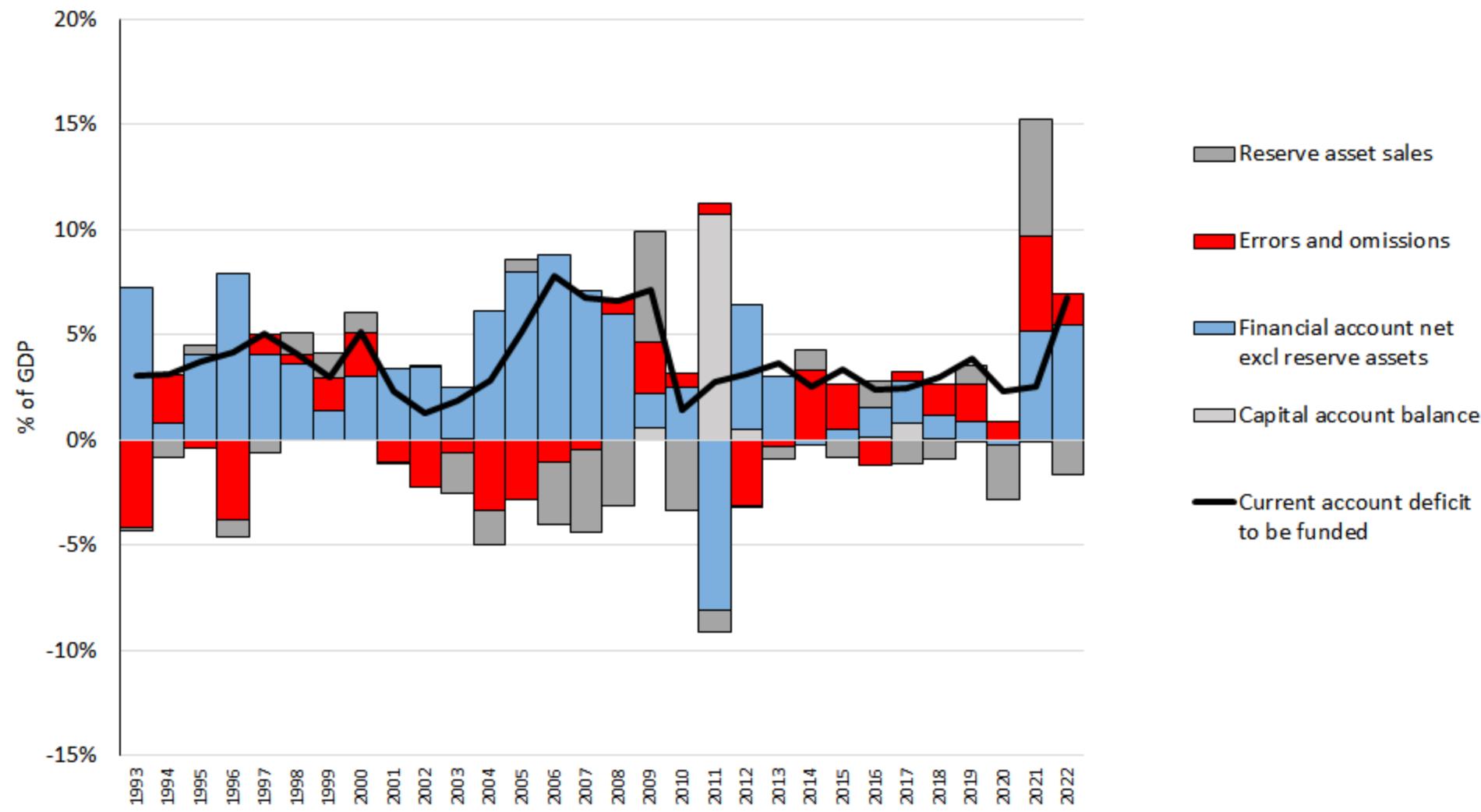




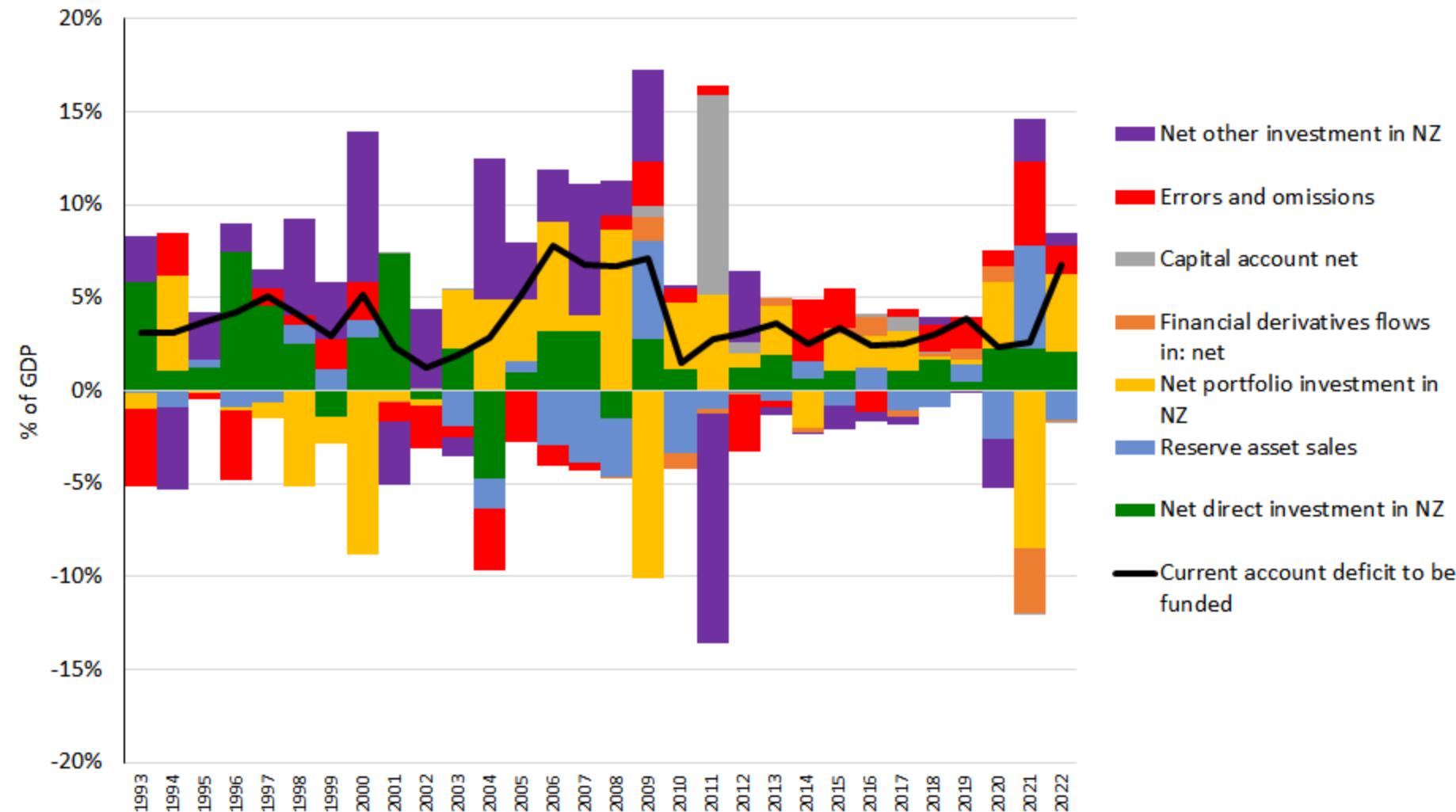
## Balance of payments current account: how we pay



### Funding the current account deficit



### Funding the current account deficit: detail



# Two ways to think about the current account deficit

1. The balance of flows of current spending in the economy: imports and exports of goods and services plus investment income and transfers
2. The balance of asset sale and purchase decisions between domestic and overseas wealth holders

Either of these can “drive” the current account

- Sometimes current export earnings fall short, leading to a required financial inflow
- Sometimes financial flows dominate, leading to adjustment of net exports

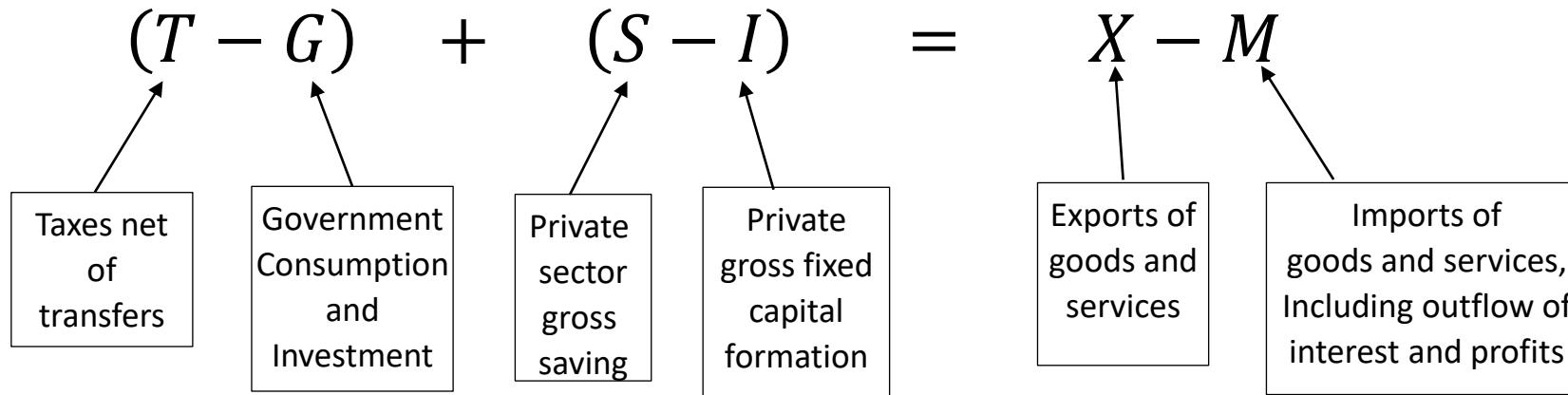
# Macro balances

- Aggregate demand and supply must always balance
- Start from the textbook macro identity

$$C + I + G + X - M \equiv Y$$

Aggregate demand for output = Supply of domestic output

- Which can be dissected and rearranged to give

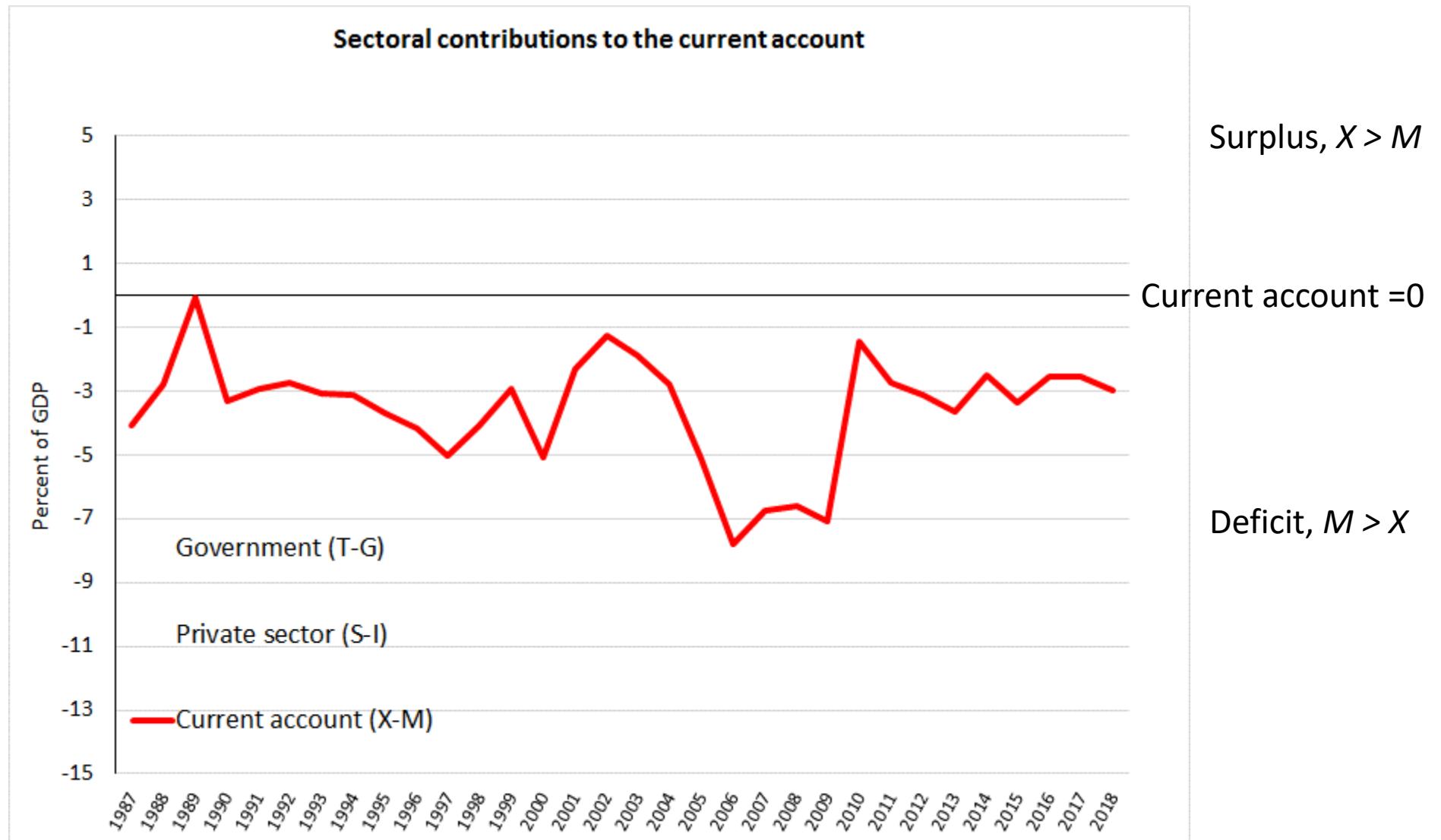


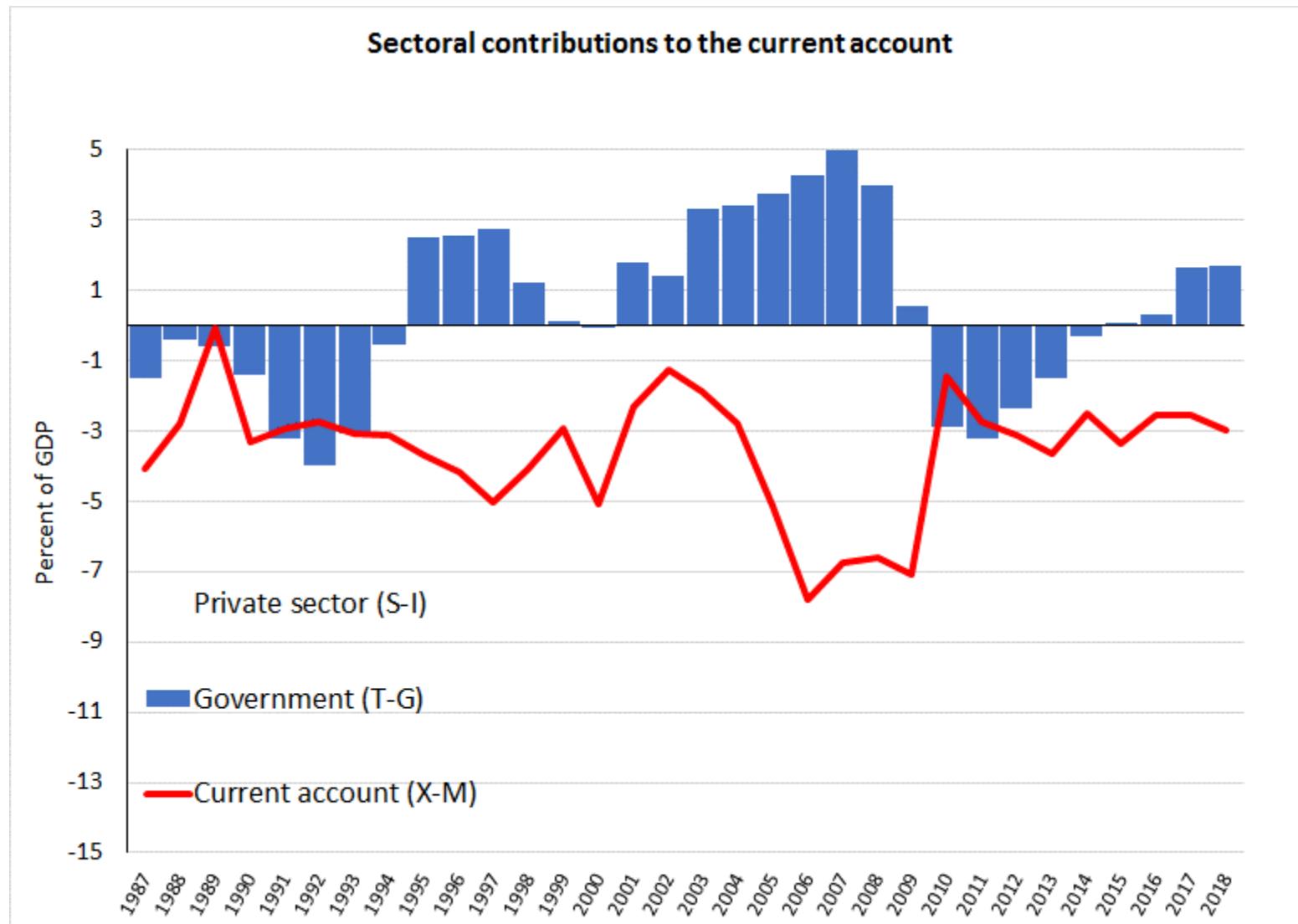
FISCAL SURPLUS + PRIVATE SECTOR SURPLUS = BALANCE OF PAYMENTS CURRENT ACCOUNT

-----TOTAL NATIONAL SAVINGS-----

$$(T - G) + (S - I) = X - M$$

- For government to run a surplus  $(T - G) > 0$ , there must be a matching imbalance somewhere else:
  - Either a private-sector deficit  $(S - I) < 0$
  - Or a current account surplus  $(X - M) > 0$
  - Or both
- Too much “budget responsibility” fiscal surplus means private sector borrowing unless the current account is in surplus
- New Zealand runs persistent current account deficits so the left-hand side of the equation is persistently negative: at least one sector must be in deficit





### Sectoral contributions to the current account

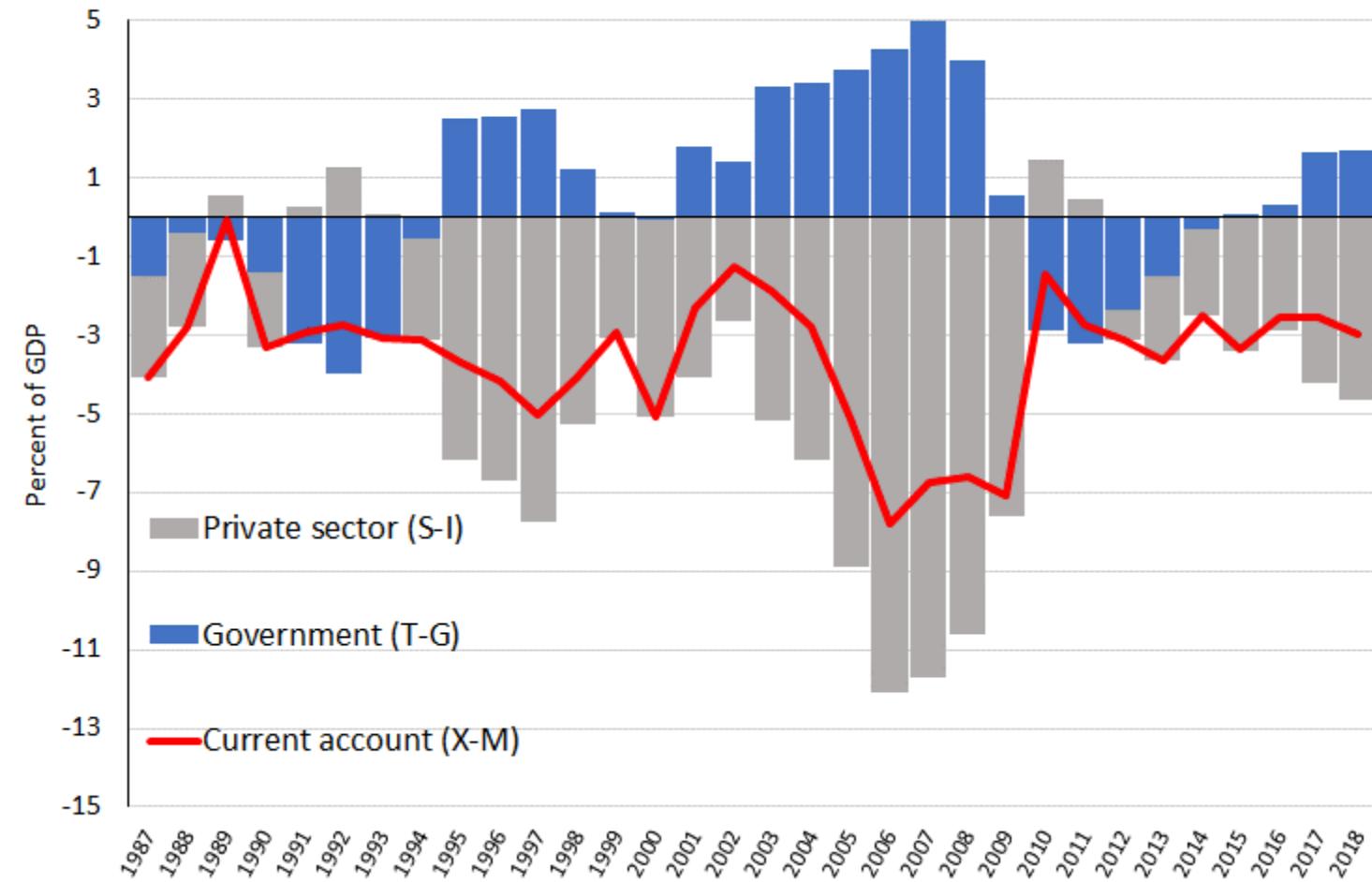
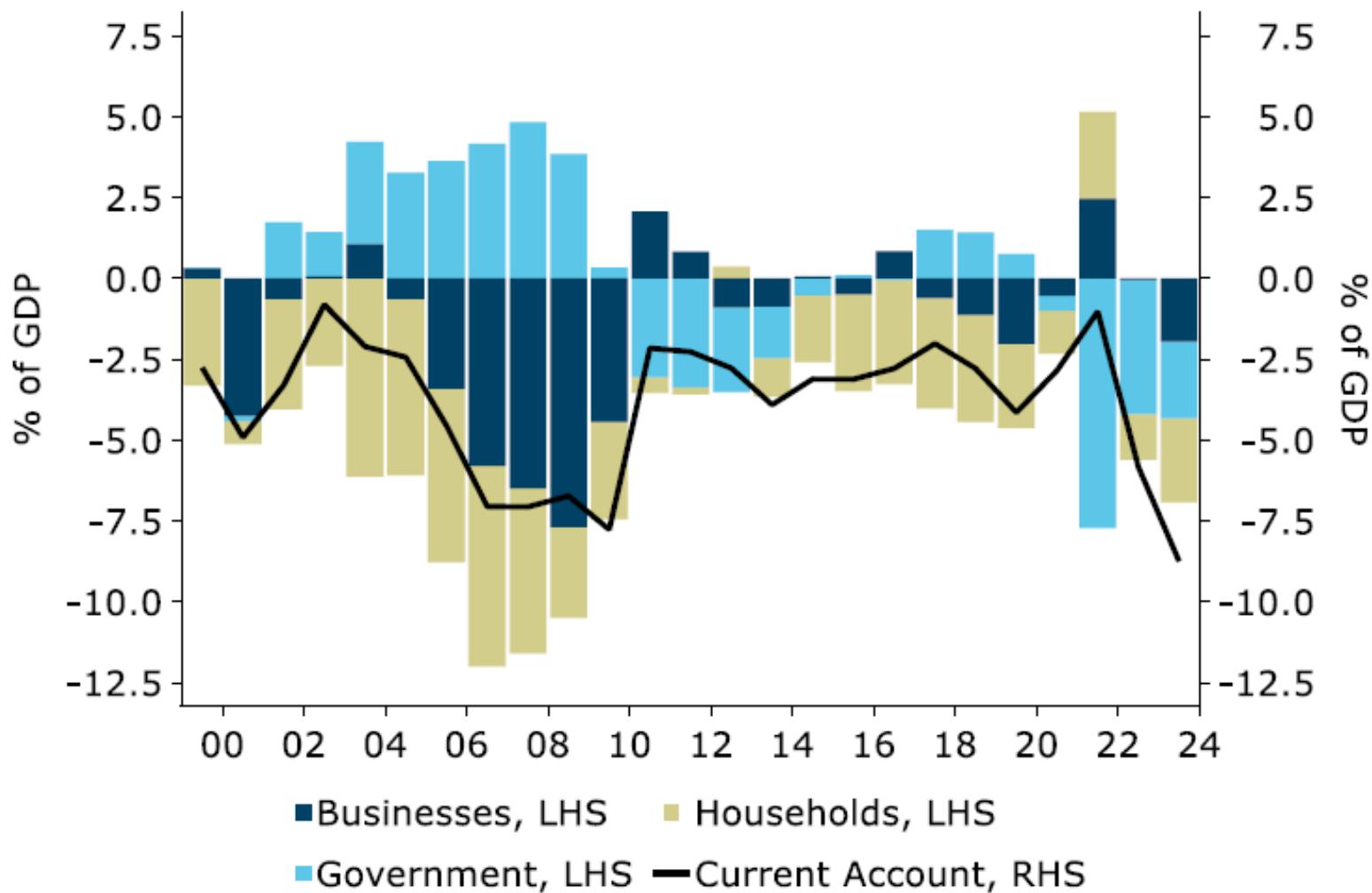
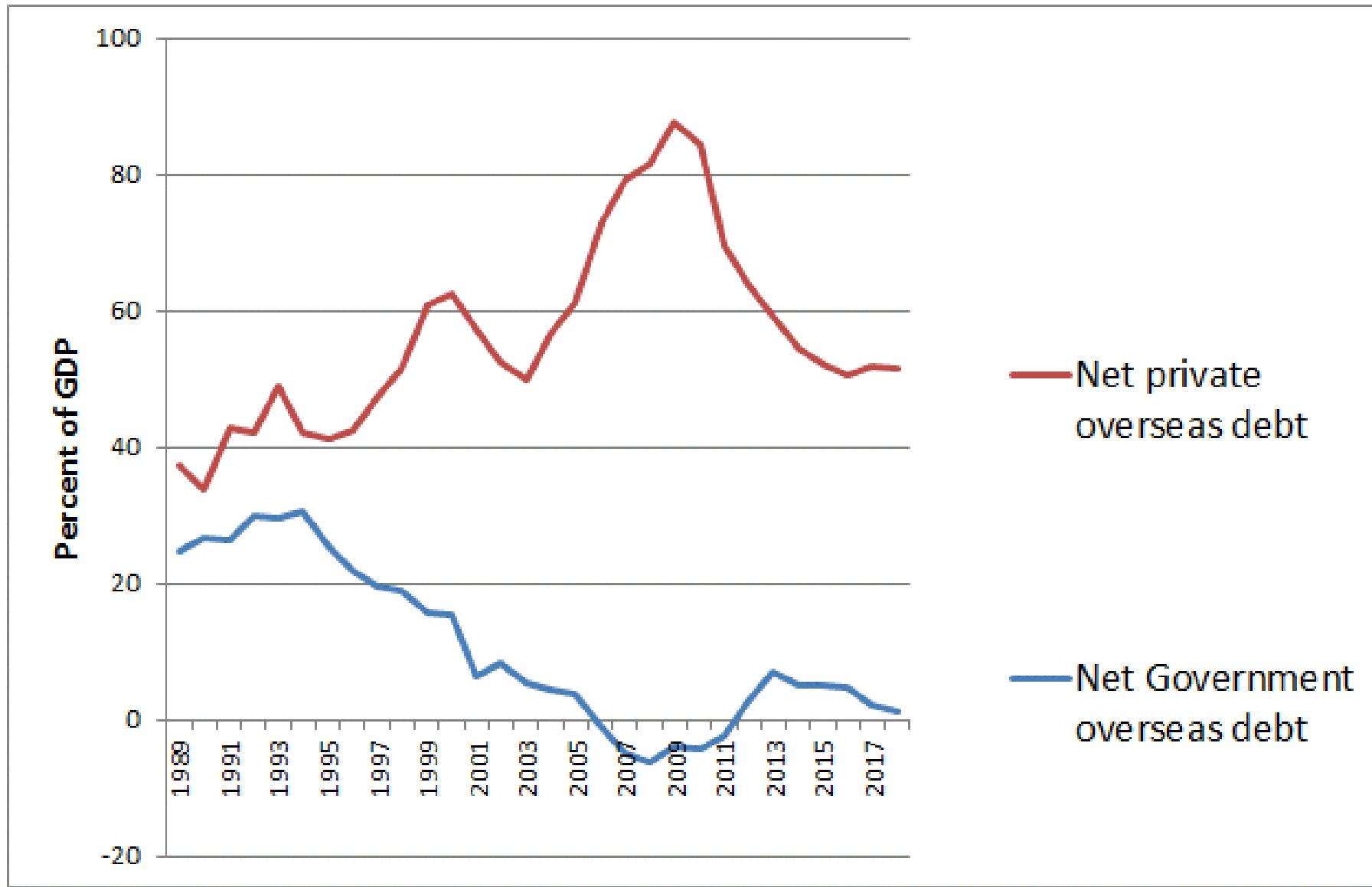


Figure 28. Sector contributions to current account deficit



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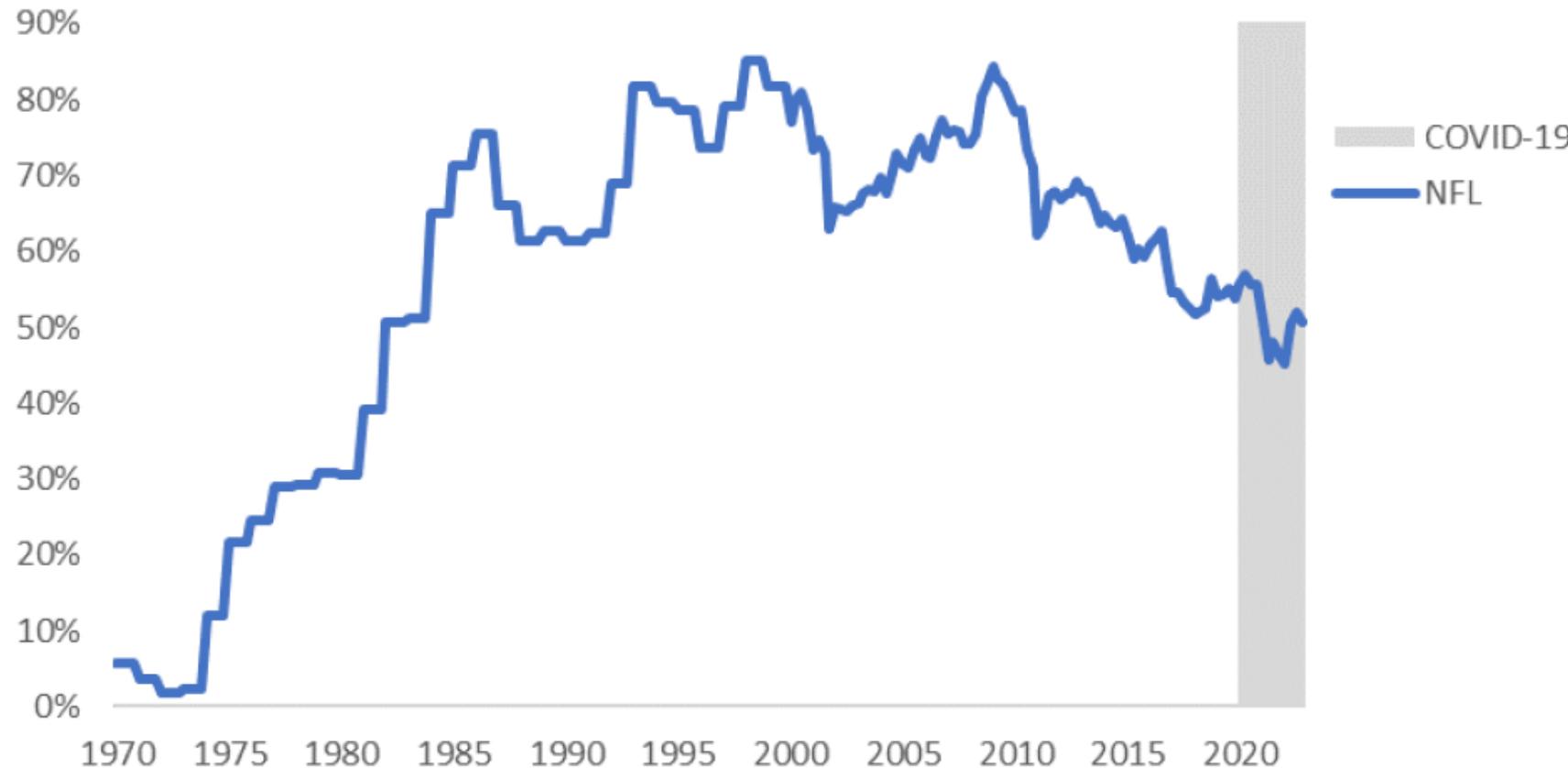
## Implications for public and private external debt accumulation



## Causality is obviously an issue

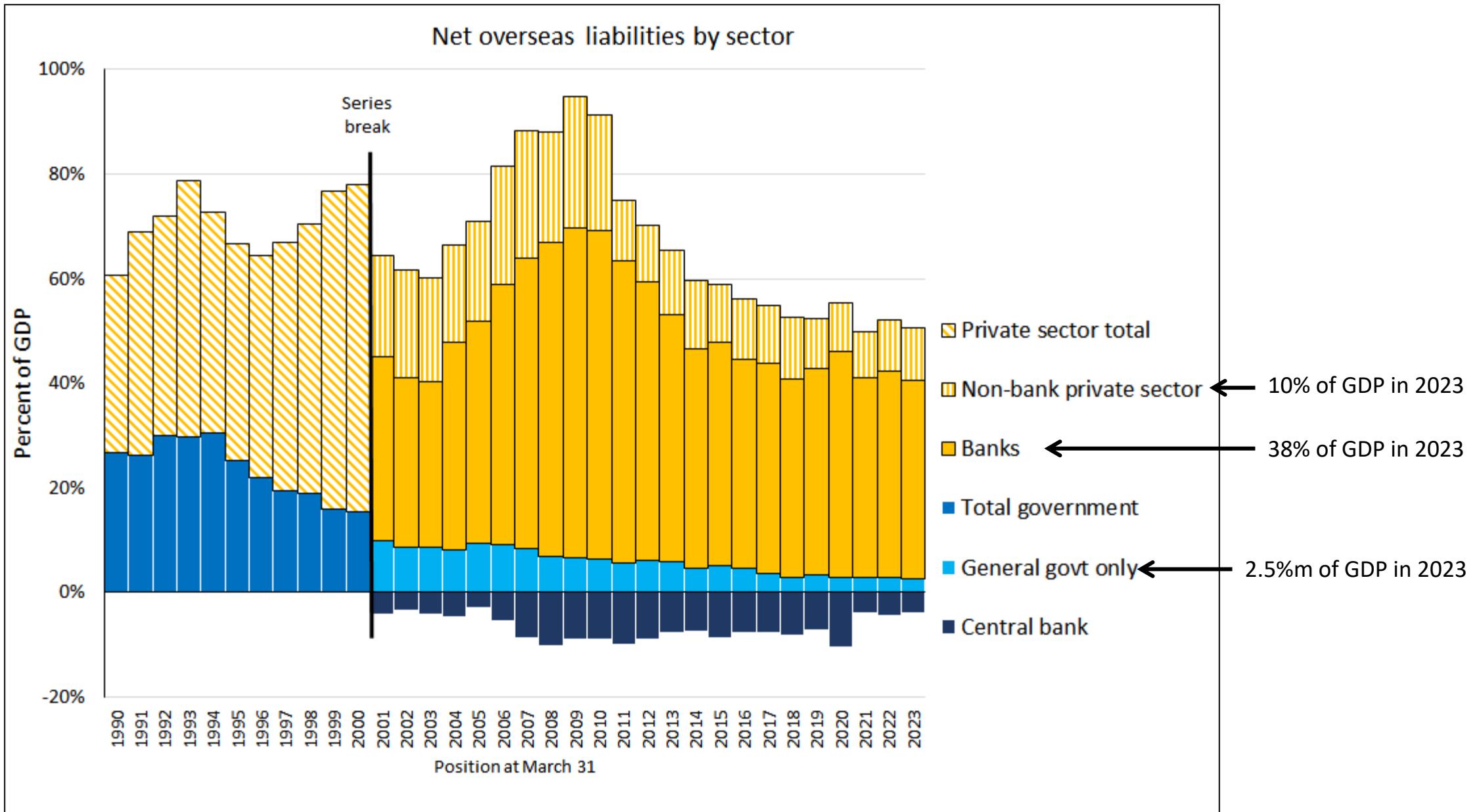
- So the Budget has to be designed with an eye to the macro externalities
- Fiscal policy only sometimes drives the balance of payments current account
- Achieving a fiscal surplus against an unresponsive current account forces the private sector to take on more external debt, unless the desired fiscal surplus is suppressed by feedback from the macro-economy

**Figure 27: New Zealand's net foreign liabilities (% of GDP)**

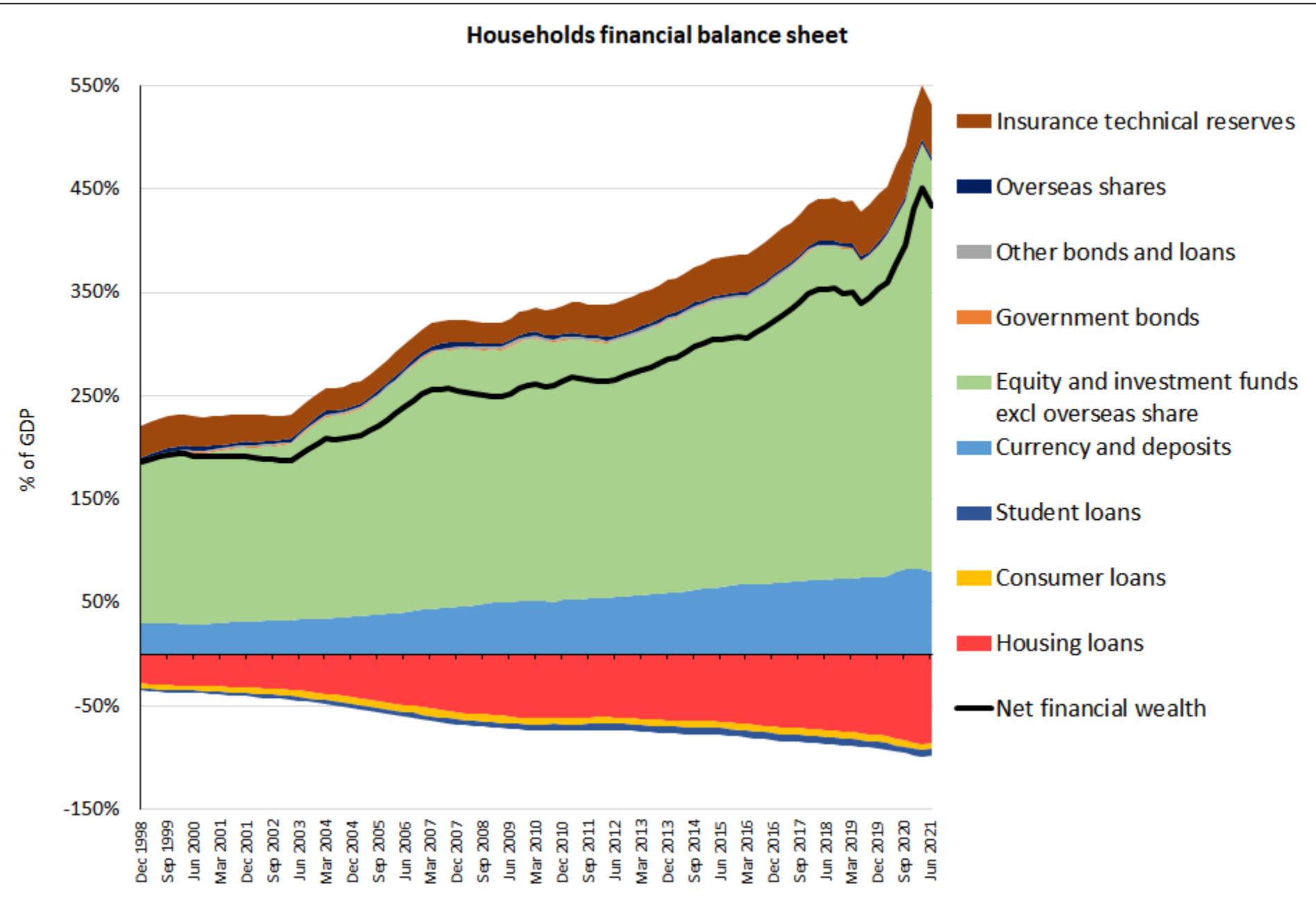


Source: Haver Analytics/Stats NZ for data from 1989. Data prior to 1989 sourced from Lane & Milesi-Ferretti (2016)

Matthew Galt, *Examining New Zealand's increased rate of income growth between the late 1990s and 2019* Treasury Analytical Note 23/04, June 2023, p.36.

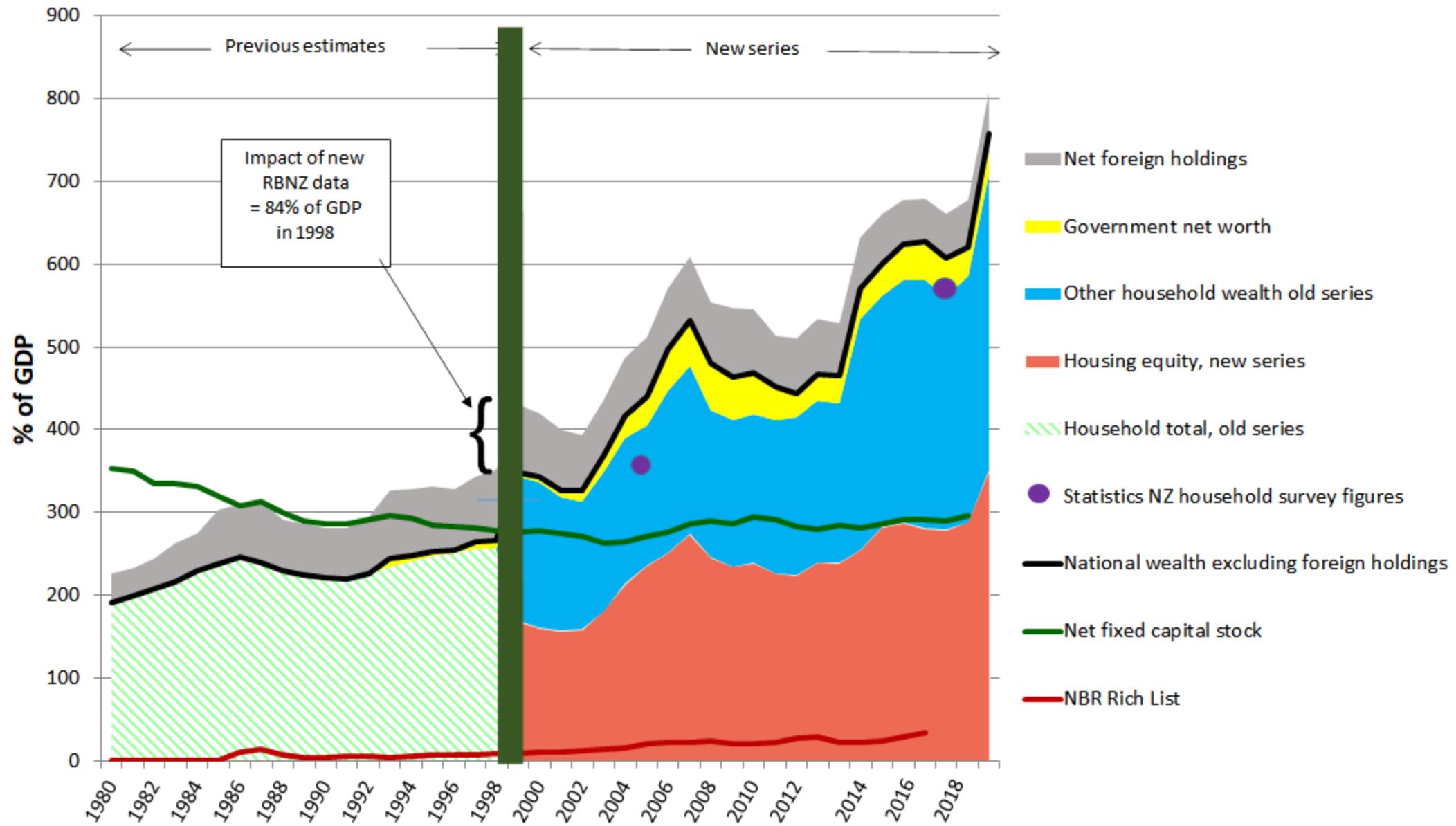


# Balance sheets within the NZ economy



RBNZ Table C22

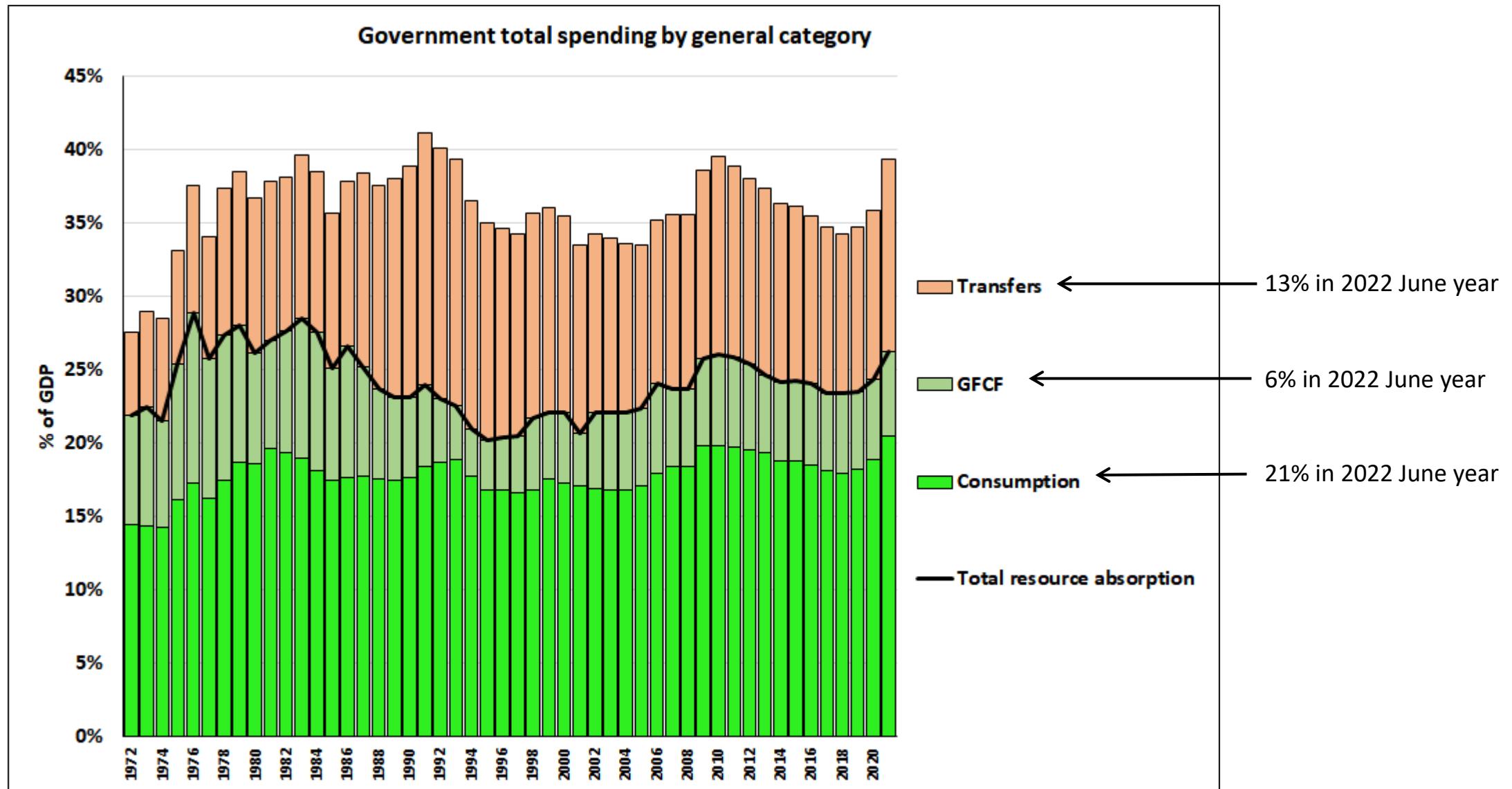
## New Zealand wealth as % of GDP: RBNZ, StatsNZ and Rich List estimates



But very and increasingly unequally distributed – especially the equity component

=> The transfer problem/issue and portfolio balance

# How big is the state sector – 39%, 27%, 21% of GDP?



- It is anomalous to treat tax/transfer flows as part of “the size of the state” in the same sense as government consumption and investment
- Transfers are different from Government consumption and investment spending
- Government’s consumption and investment spending involve direct claims which draw the economy’s resources into production of goods and services to be delivered by the government to citizens (including dependents)
- In a fully employed economy,  $G$  (government consumption and investment excluding transfers) draws real resources away from private sector and/or external sector – so taxes to finance these do reduce private disposable income
- But transfers simply shift purchasing power from one part of the population to another, so the taxes required to finance them do not represent any withdrawal of aggregate purchasing power from the private sector
- $T$  in the macroeconomic equation is taxes minus transfers – but in the financial statements transfers are not netted out from either  $T$  or  $G$

# What tax-financed transfers do and don't do

- They change the distribution of income, and hence over time the distribution of wealth
- They mitigate hardship and improve well-being in one group at the expense of others – from a wellbeing point of view this should be positive-sum, but not pareto-improving
- They shift the composition of final demand, probably towards greater demand for basic needs goods and services, and smaller demand for luxuries
- They do not increase the state's direct claim on the economy's scarce resources

The 2017 pre-election document *Labour's Fiscal Plan: Post-PREFU revision*,  
<https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/nzlabour/pages/8301/attachments/original/1504048898/20170829 - Labour's Fiscal Plan.pdf?1504048898>, laid down five “rules” as follows:

1. ***The Government will deliver a sustainable operating surplus [OBEGAL] across an economic cycle.***
2. ***The Government will reduce the level of Net Core Crown Debt to 20% of GDP within five years of taking office***
3. ***The Government will prioritise investments to address the long-term financial and sustainability challenges facing New Zealand***
4. ***The Government will take a prudent approach to ensure expenditure is phased, controlled, and directed to maximise its benefits. The Government will maintain its expenditure to within the recent historical range of spending to GDP ratio. During the global financial crisis Core Crown spending rose to 34% of GDP. However, for the last 20 years, Core Crown spending has been around 30% of GDP and we will manage our expenditure carefully to continue this trend.***
5. ***The Government will ensure a progressive taxation system that is fair, balanced, and promotes the long-term sustainability and productivity of the economy***

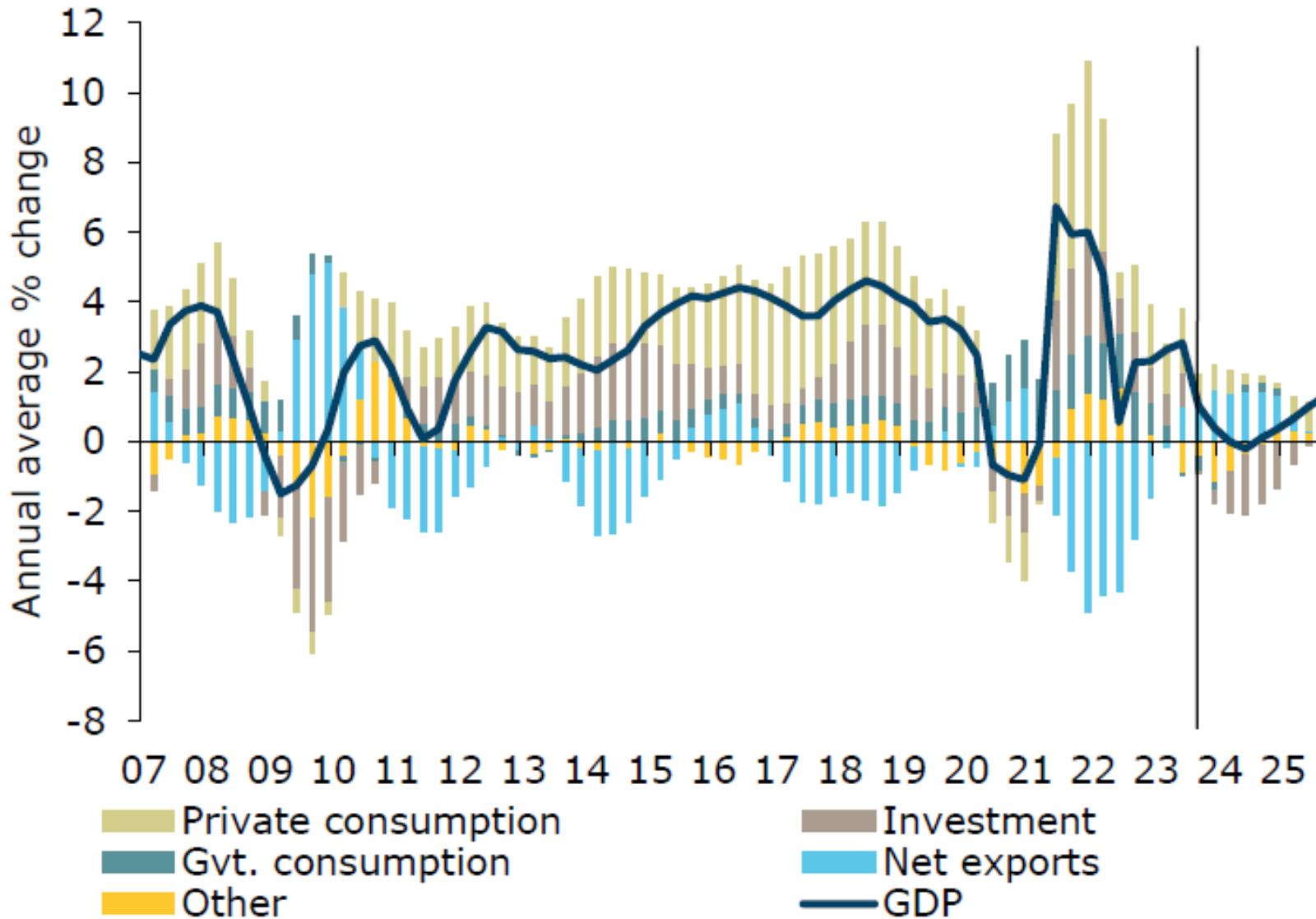
# From the Public Finance Act 1990

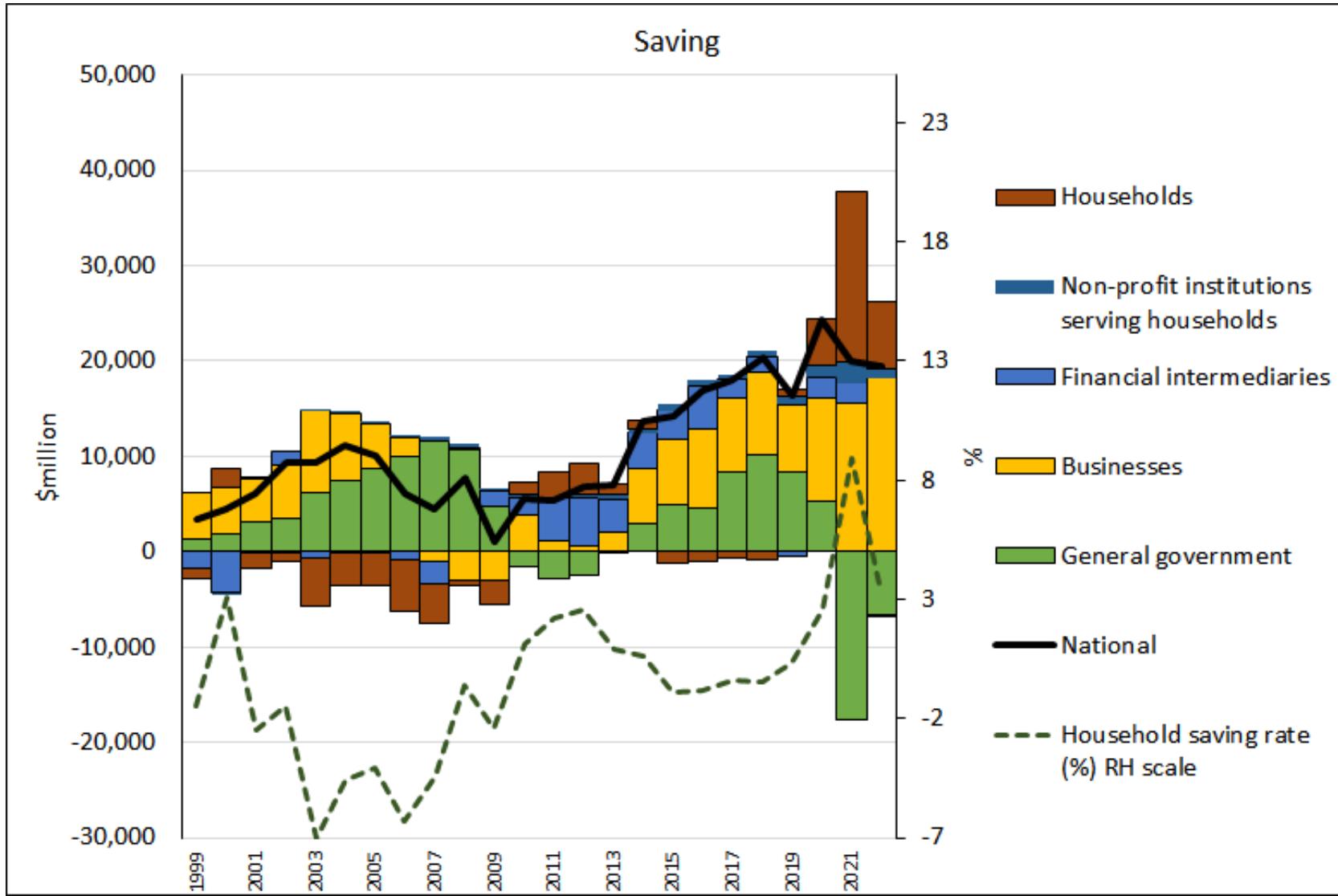
## **26G Principles of responsible fiscal management**

(1) The Government must pursue its policy objectives in accordance with the following principles (the **principles of responsible fiscal management**):

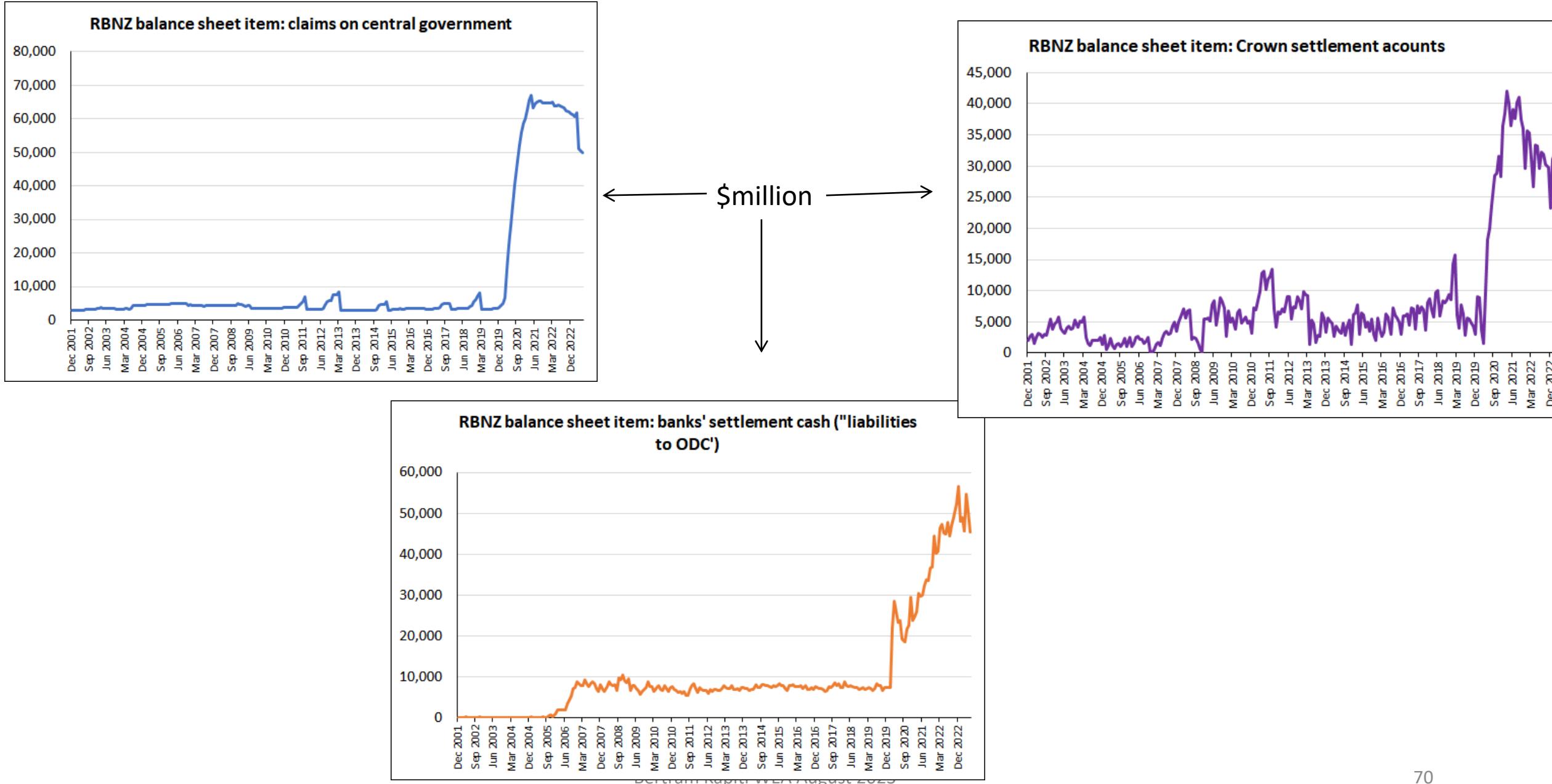
- (a) reducing total debt to prudent levels so as to provide a buffer against factors that may impact adversely on the level of total debt in the future by ensuring that, until those levels have been achieved, total operating expenses
- (b) once prudent levels of total debt have been achieved, maintaining those levels by ensuring that, on average, over a reasonable period of time, total operating expenses do not exceed total operating revenues; and
- (c) achieving and maintaining levels of total net worth that provide a buffer against factors that may impact adversely on total net worth in the future; and
- (d) managing prudently the fiscal risks facing the Government;

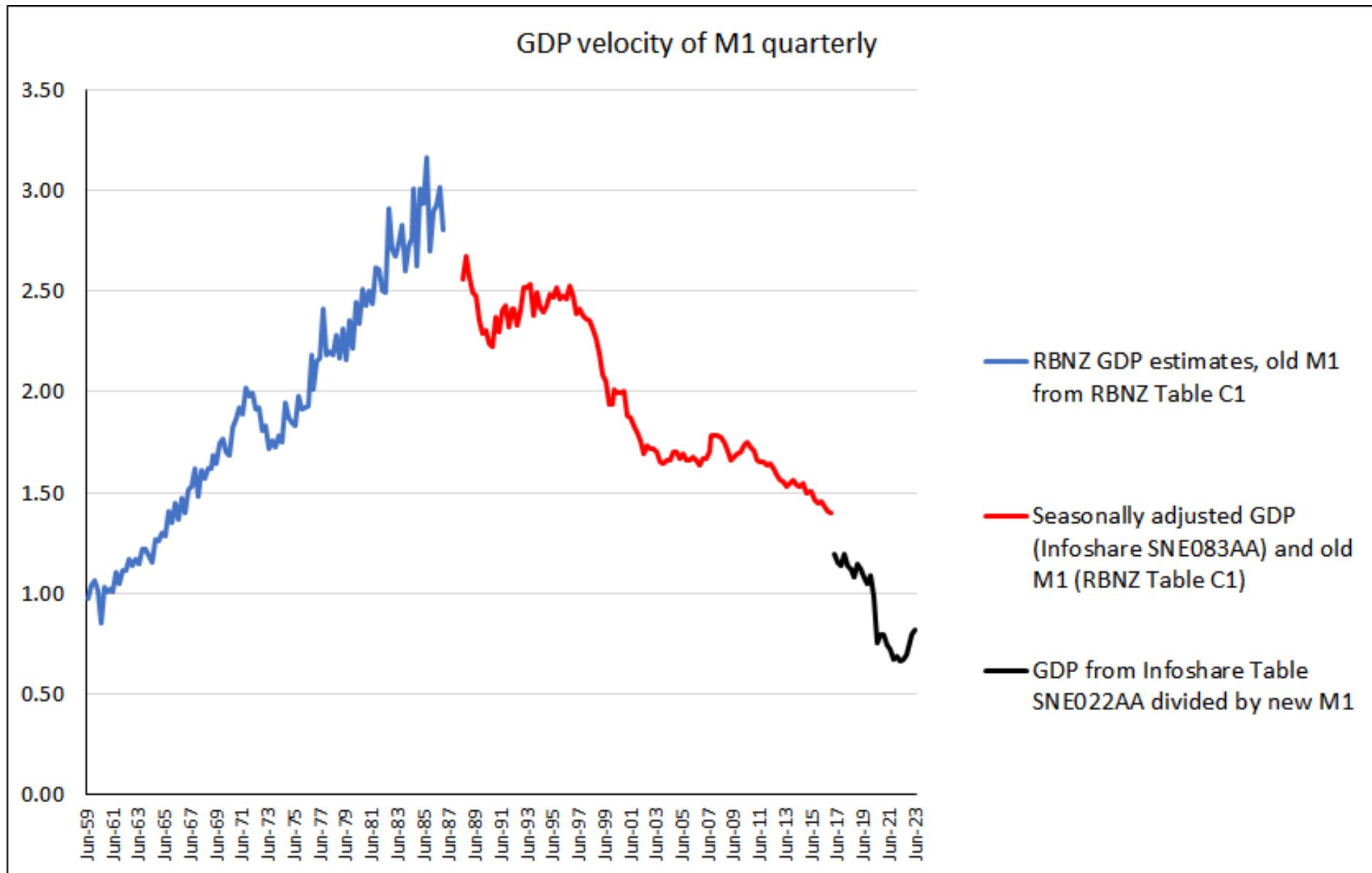
## Government and Net Exports stabilizing influences



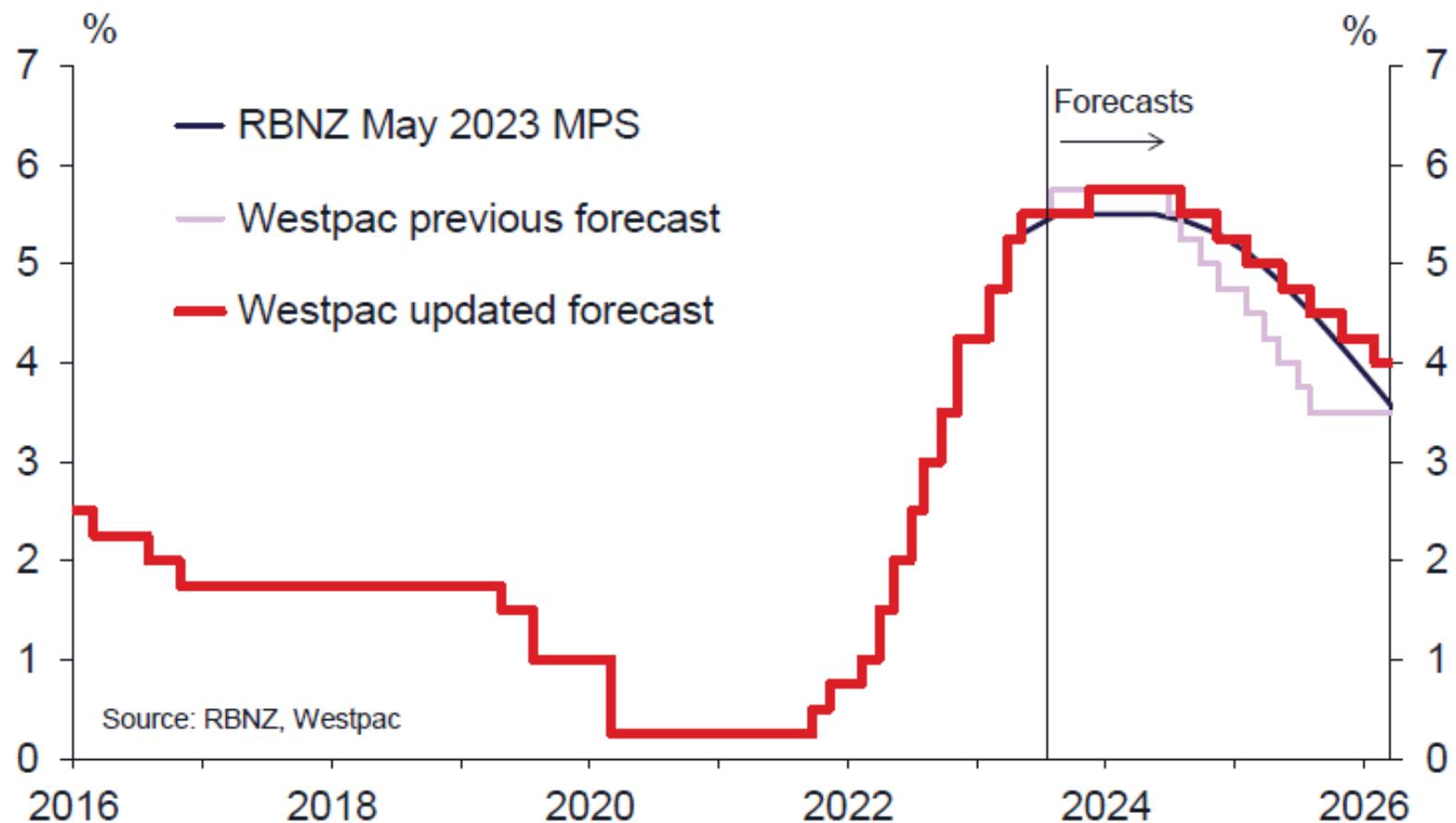


# Monetary and fiscal policy: three charts



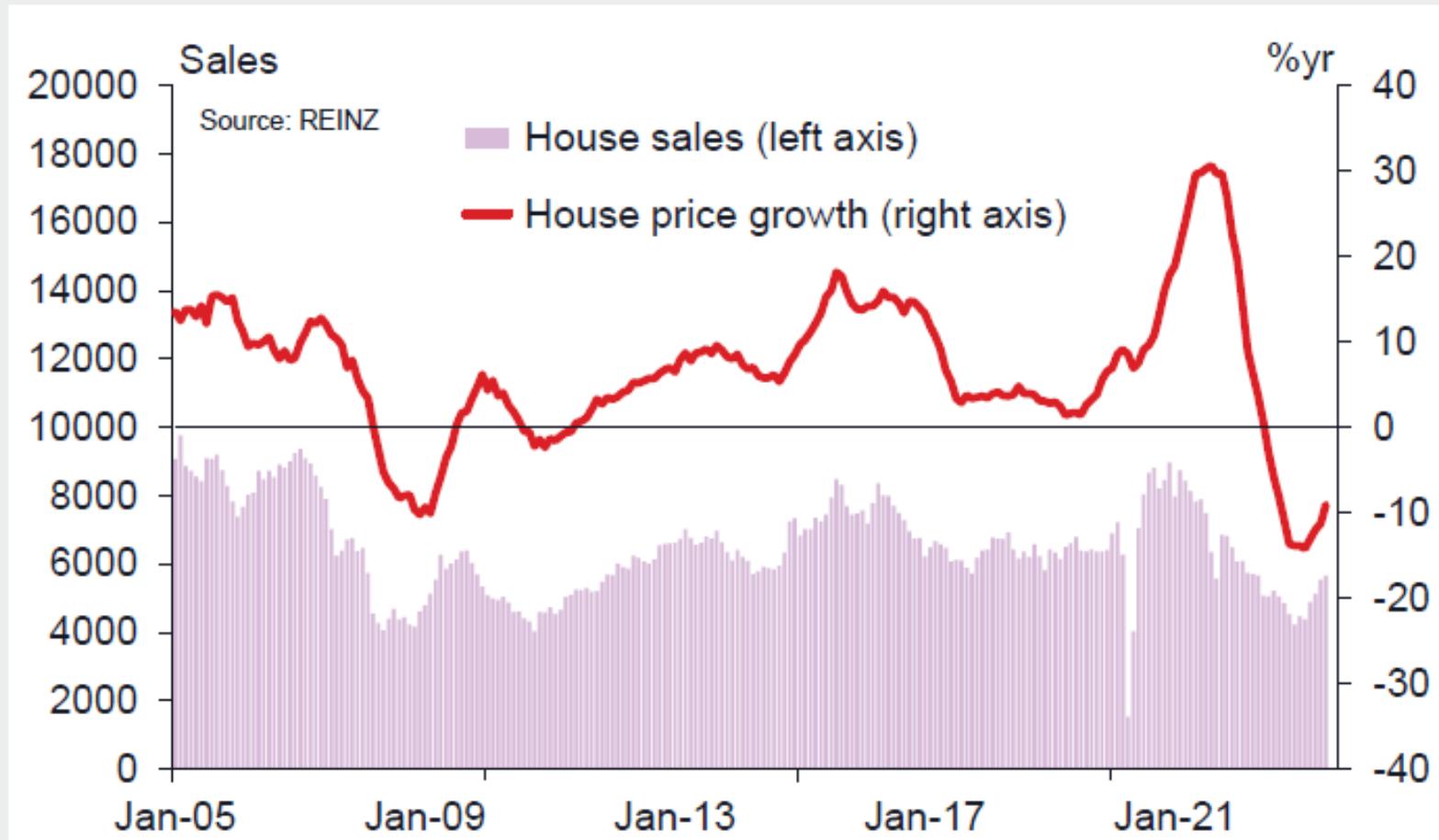


## Official Cash Rate forecasts



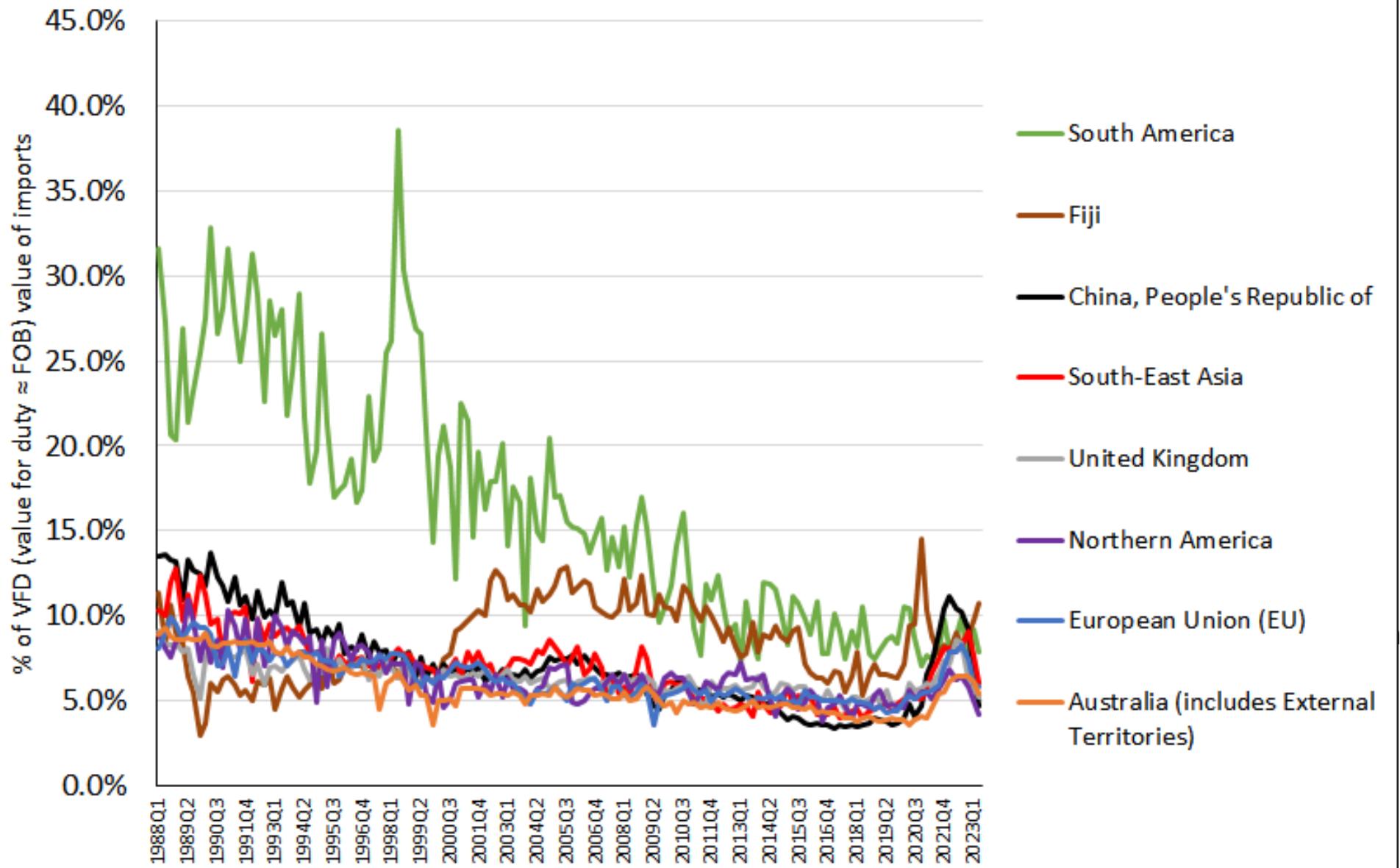
Westpac Weekly Economic Commentary 7 August 2023 p.2.

## REINZ house prices and sales

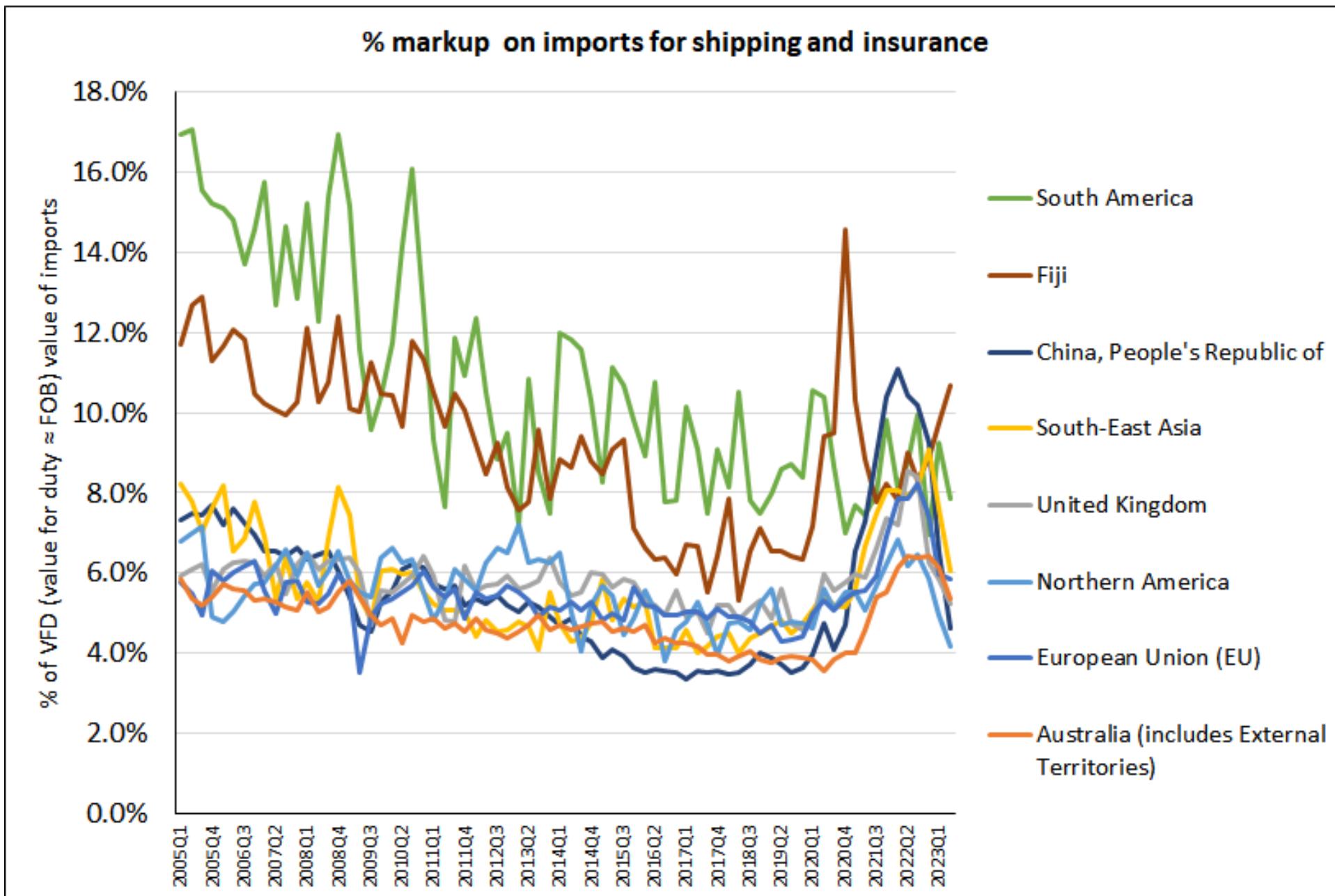


Westpac Weekly Economic Commentary 7 August 2023 p.3.

## % markup on imports for shipping and insurance

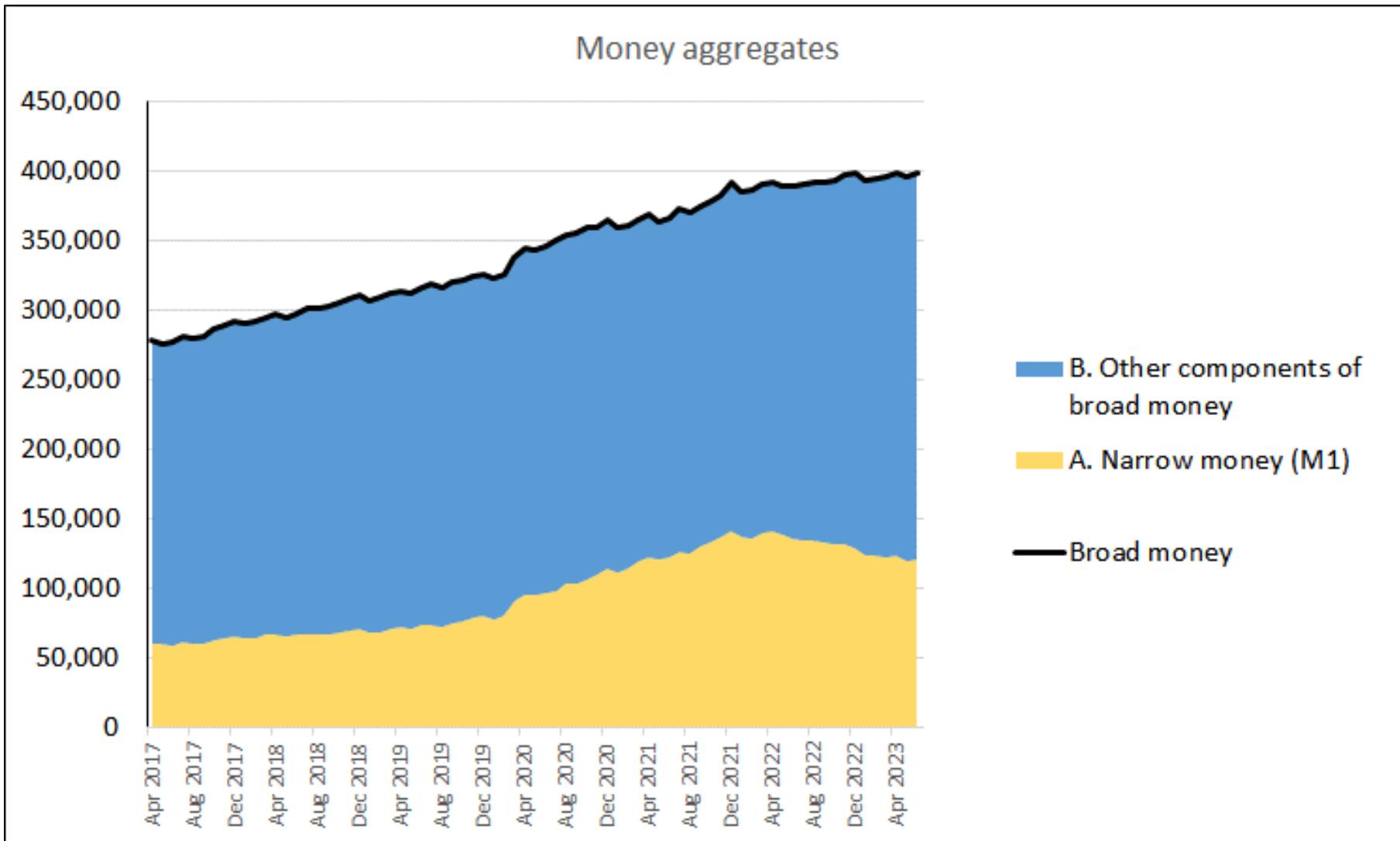


us CIF  
sheet



## Money & credit aggregate annual growth rates (Banks & RBNZ)





<https://www.rbnz.govt.nz/-/media/project/sites/rbnz/files/statistics/series/c/c50/hc50.xlsx>