

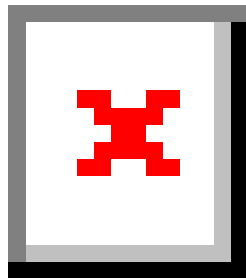
**From:** The Conversation  
**Sent:** Fri, 30 Apr 2021 06:29:52 +1000  
**To:** Andrew Johnson  
**Subject:** Government to keep debt high until unemployment goes down

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AU Edition | 30 April 2021



Academic rigour, journalistic flair

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On Thursday Josh Frydenberg broke with the past, adopting a platform far more radical than an Australian government, Labor or Coalition, in the past 50 years.

He pledged to drive the unemployment rate down to between 4% and 5%, so that, [as Michelle Grattan put it](#), the rate would have “a four in front of it”.

This morning The Conversation publishes [the results of an exclusive poll](#) of 60 leading economists selected by the

Economic Society for their expertise and breadth of experience.

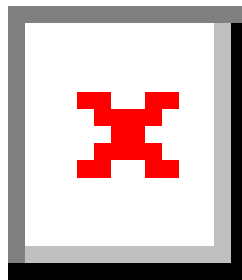
47 back the government's move. 13 would like it to go further.

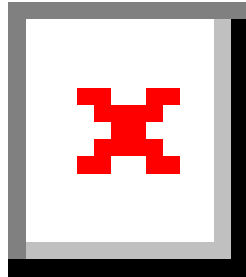
The new target of an unemployment rate between 4% and 5% will mean about 200,000 more Australians in work than the old target adopted in last year's budget of an unemployment rate "comfortably below 6%".

The Treasurer says he won't begin to tighten the budget settings until that happens. If unemployment does get that low and is sustained, it would be the first time since the governments of Robert Menzies, Harold Holt, John Gorton and William McMahon in the 1960s and early 1970s.

**Peter Martin**

Section Editor, Business and Economy



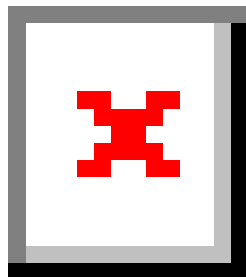


MIA Studio/Shutterstock

### **Exclusive. Top economists back budget push for an unemployment rate beginning with '4'**

Peter Martin, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University

47 of the 60 leading economists surveyed by the Economic Society and The Conversation back the Treasurer's decision to aim for an unemployment rate of less than 5%.

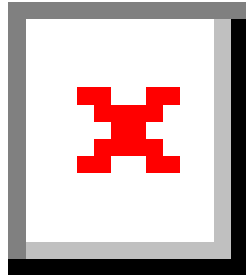


Shutterstock/Jason Benz Bennee

### **The First Australians grew to a population of millions, much more than previous estimates**

Corey J. A. Bradshaw, Flinders University; Alan N Williams, UNSW; Frédéric Saltré, Flinders University; Kasih Norman, University of Wollongong; Sean Ulm, James Cook University

It took just 5,000 years for large and well-organised groups of people to populate all corners of the continent.

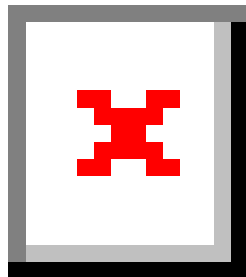


Author provided/The Conversation

### **We mapped the ‘super-highways’ the First Australians used to cross the ancient land**

Stefani Crabtree, Santa Fe Institute; Alan N Williams, UNSW; Corey J. A. Bradshaw, Flinders University; Devin White, University of Tennessee; Frédéric Saltré, Flinders University; Sean Ulm, James Cook University

We now have a glimpse into where early Indigenous Australians likely travelled all those tens of thousands of years ago.



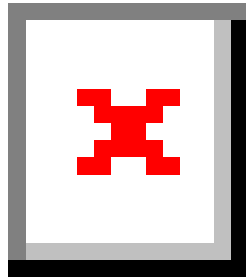
Piyal Adhikary/AAP

### **Grattan on Friday: Australians should not be left**

## stranded in India

Michelle Grattan, University of Canberra

Getting the right “balance” is one of the main challenges when framing and executing policies. The difficulties of achieving this are being exposed currently on two fronts – the repatriation of Australians and relations with China.

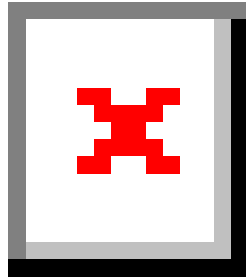


Taiwan's military has been on alert amid large numbers of Chinese war plane incursions in its air space. Chiang Ying-ying/AP

## Australia would be wise not to pound ‘war drums’ over Taiwan with so much at stake

Tony Walker, La Trobe University

The likelihood of open conflict is low, given the risks to China and the US. With the Biden administration treading carefully over Taiwan, why is there so much loose talk of war in Canberra?

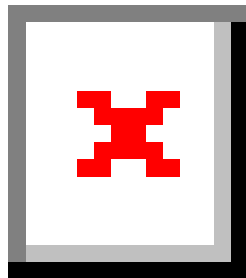


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**Government demands for arbitrary performance targets are contributing to ambulance delays, paramedic exhaustion**

Simon Sawyer, Australian Catholic University

The public deserves an ambulance service that advocates for their staff and their patients, not the needs of politicians who want a simple number to demonstrate their effectiveness.



Nikki Short/AAP

**Friday essay: my belly is angry, my throat is in love — how body parts express emotions in Indigenous languages**

Ma'ia Ponsonnet, The University of Western Australia

Australian Indigenous languages use a fascinating array of expressions drawing on body parts to describe emotions. Here is a guide to some of the most intriguing ones.

## Education

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### **Starting behind: more than half of young Australian kids living in adversity don't have the skills they need to learn to read**

Sharon Goldfeld, Murdoch Children's Research Institute; Hannah Bryson, Murdoch Children's Research Institute; Jodie Smith, La Trobe University

By the age of five, most children can name at least ten letters. In our study, 58.6% of children living with disadvantage could not name the expected number of alphabet letters.

## Environment + Energy

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### **Feral desert donkeys are digging wells, giving water to parched wildlife**

Erick Lundgren, University of Technology Sydney; Arian Wallach, University of Technology Sydney; Daniel Ramp, University of Technology Sydney

Incredibly, once the wells dried up some became nurseries for the germination and establishment of wetland trees.

### **Risky business: 54% of Australian companies plan to slow 'green' initiatives due to COVID**

Sukhbir Sandhu, University of South Australia

Businesses have long been a big part of the climate problem. They shouldn't scale back environmental initiatives when it all feels too hard.

### **'We know our community better than they do': why local knowledge is key to disaster recovery in Gippsland**

Celeste Young, Victoria University; Roger Jones, Victoria University

First the fires, then the pandemic. It's not just the damage to infrastructure, houses, environment and farmland that makes recovery difficult; the emotional and physical toll is often gruelling too.

## Business + Economy

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### **Vital Signs: 3 economic facts point to a big-spending federal budget**

Richard Holden, UNSW

Inflation, interest rates and booming mining royalties give the Morrison government scope to ignore the deficit daleks.

## Arts + Culture

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### **Sashay or stay — will RuPaul's Drag Race Down Under erase Australia's 'ocker' drag past?**

Joanna McIntyre, Swinburne University of Technology

Drag Down Under airs this Saturday. It will be intriguing to see how this slick TV show — built on US histories of drag — approaches the Australian drag tradition.

### **What were the Spartans like? Note to Lego Masters: they didn't build city walls**

Duncan Keenan-Jones, The University of Queensland

In a recent episode of Lego Masters, contestants were asked to build a castle in the style of the Spartans. It had white city walls — but the real Spartans famously refused to build a wall.

## Politics + Society

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### **As pressure builds on India's Narendra Modi, is his government trying to silence its critics?**

Usha M. Rodrigues, Deakin University

As India's COVID crisis deepens, the government is taking a harder line with any social media content it finds objectionable.

### **As boundaries between work and home vanish, employees need a 'right to disconnect'**

Barbara Pocock, University of South Australia

Victoria Police recently won the rights not to be contacted out of work hours. They are not the only employees who need a proper break from work.



## Health + Medicine

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### Even if Olympians are jumping the COVID vaccine queue, that's not necessarily wrong. A bioethicist explains

Diego S. Silva, University of Sydney

It's easy to call Australian Olympians who receive their COVID shot early 'queue jumpers'. But the argument for them having early access to the vaccine is more nuanced. Here's why.

### Yes, ADHD could explain some of Andrew Laming's behaviour. But it doesn't make it OK

Alison Poulton, University of Sydney

Impulsiveness, a key characteristic of ADHD, might help us understand some of Laming's behaviour. None of this excuses his actions, though.

### More than half of Australians will experience trauma, most before they turn 17. We need to talk about it

Meera Atkinson, University of Notre Dame Australia

Now, for the first time in Australian history, trauma is trending in the wider public discourse. What does this shift in public consciousness mean, and where is it taking us?

### 'We always come last': Deaf people are vulnerable to disaster risk but excluded from preparedness

Emma Calgaro, University of Sydney; Dale Dominey-Howes, University of Sydney; Leyla Craig, University of Sydney

Those with disaster experience said they hadn't received proper warnings, which led to confusion, helplessness and panic. There was a sense that 'we always come last'.

## Featured jobs

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Associate Director, International  
— Townsville QLD, Australia

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### Executive Officer

— Canberra ACT, Australia

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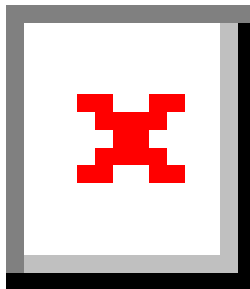
### Research Office Product Advisor

— South Wharf VIC, Australia

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#### MORE JOBS

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#### Featured Events & Courses

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### Behavioural Insights (BI) and Policy Course (Online)

Level 21, 15 Broadway, Ultimo, New South  
Wales, 2007, Australia — University of  
Technology Sydney

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### Applying Behavioural Science to Create Change

8 week online course by BehaviourWorks  
Australia, Clayton, Victoria, 3800, Australia —  
Monash University



### Reimagining Government: Learning to listen again

Online, Free webinar, Victoria, 3067, Australia  
— Australia and New Zealand School of  
Government (ANZSOG)



### Global biodiversity hotspot with cutting-edge compute!

Forrest Hall, 21 Hackett Drive, Crawley,  
Western Australia, 6009, Australia — The  
University of Western Australia

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