

# Australian Visual Atlas Co-operative History Project

Nikola Balnave

(Macquarie University), Olivera Marjanovic

(UTS) and Greg Patmore (The University Of Sydney)

ARC Discovery Project - Co-operatives in Australia – Explaining Growth, Decline and Revival  
(DP170100573)

# The Visual Atlas Project

- Specifically, the project aims to:
  - Develop an online, interactive visual database of co-operatives, here called the Visual Atlas of Australian Co-operatives, that charts their development both over space and time in a visual and highly interactive way
  - Fill major gaps in the existing literature on co-operatives in Australia by undertaking detailed case studies of co-operatives
  - Develop a theoretical framework based on the atlas/database that attempts to explain the growth, decline and revival of co-operatives in Australia since their first appearance in the 1820s

# The Visual Atlas Project

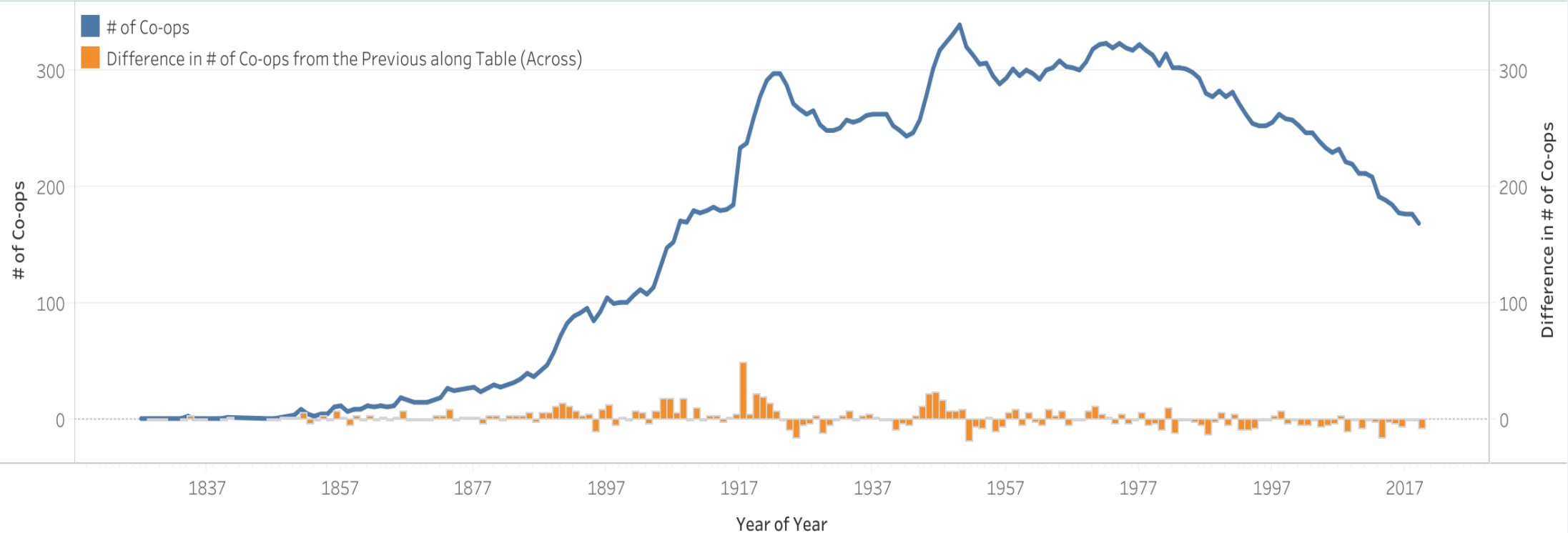
- Long term and deep time research on why co-operatives form, grow, decline and die
- Covers all co-operatives including co-operative federations and co-operative auxiliaries (Women's Co-operative Guilds)
- Range of data sources including Trove and UK Co-operative Wholesale Society records
- Accompanied by case studies
- A central, open-data platform of co-operatives
- Inspired by the National Atlas of Productive Ageing/Quinlan
- Data Visualisation Software: Back end: Tableau (licensed software); Front end: Public Visualisation interface (called Tableau Public)
- Main data in the Visual Atlas include location, date of operation, type of co-operative, membership, employment and finances
- Can provide other information such as the average life of co-operatives and trends in mutualisation/demutualisation
- Multi-disciplinary project
- Australian Research Council funding until end of 2019 but resources being made available to continue beyond that date.

# Some Early Findings of the AVACHP

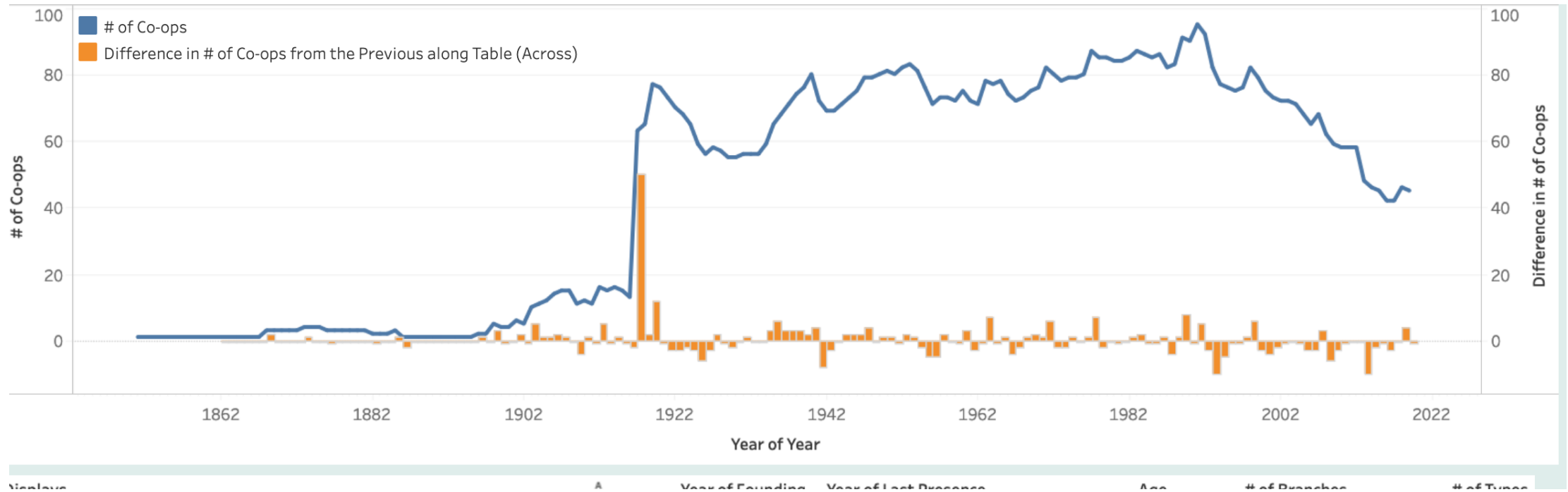
- [https://public.tableau.com/profile/algon.turi#!/vizhome/CoopFinalVer13\\_0/Welcome?publish=yes](https://public.tableau.com/profile/algon.turi#!/vizhome/CoopFinalVer13_0/Welcome?publish=yes)
- 1,510 co-ops currently in database
- 543 agricultural co-operatives including 38 fishing co-ops and 9 irrigation co-ops
- 354 consumer co-operatives + 7 consumer wholesale co-operatives
- 271 financial co-operatives
- 56 retailer co-operatives
- 35 worker co-operatives + 20 producer co-operatives
- 13 housing co-operatives
- 1 platform co-operative

# The Development of Australian Co-ops

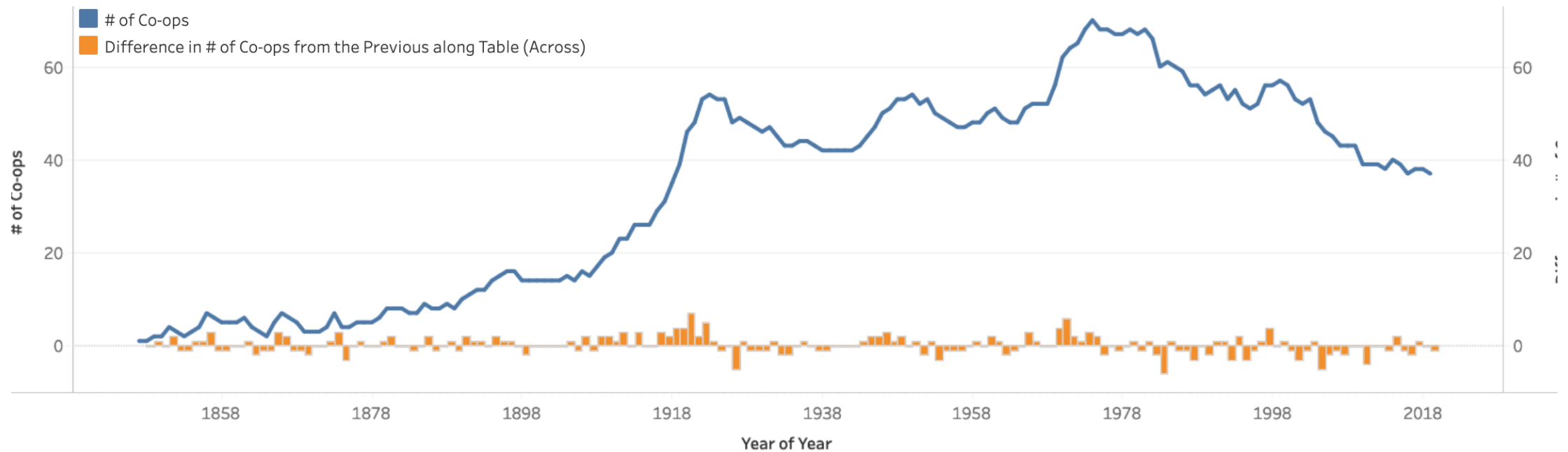
## Overview of Australian Co-ops



# Differing State Patterns - WA

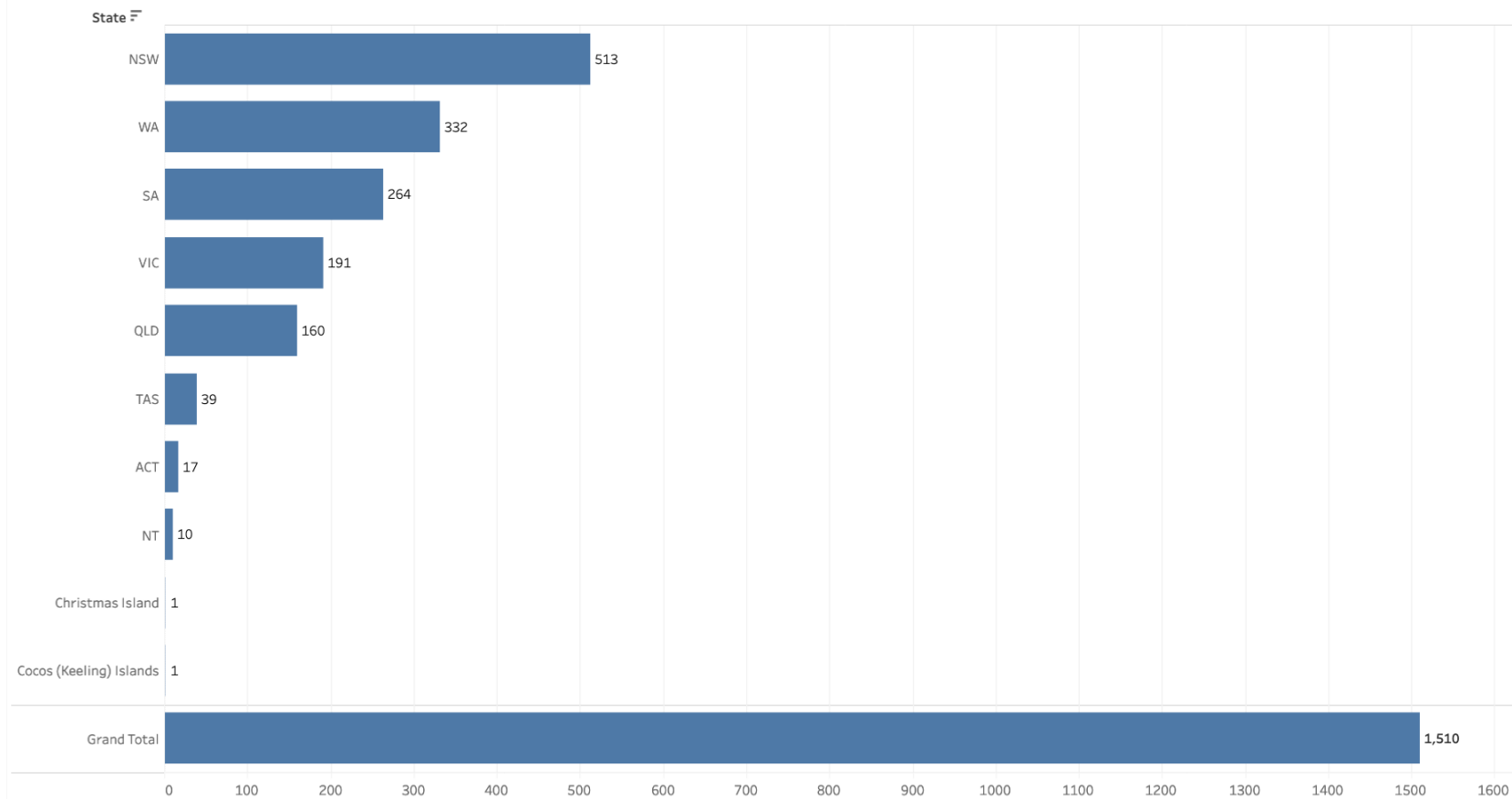


# Differing State Patterns - SA



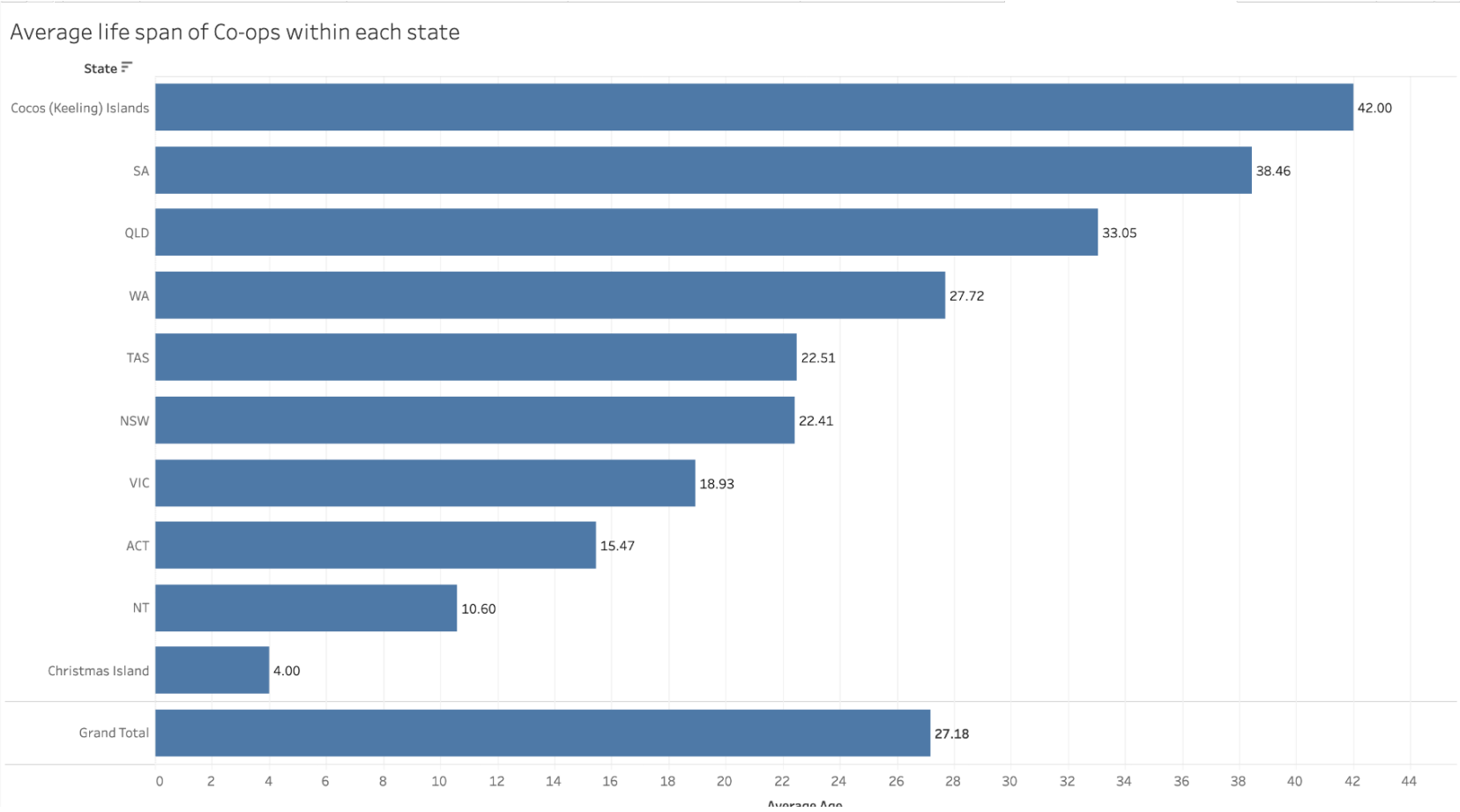
# Co-operatives Entered

Total Co-ops within each state



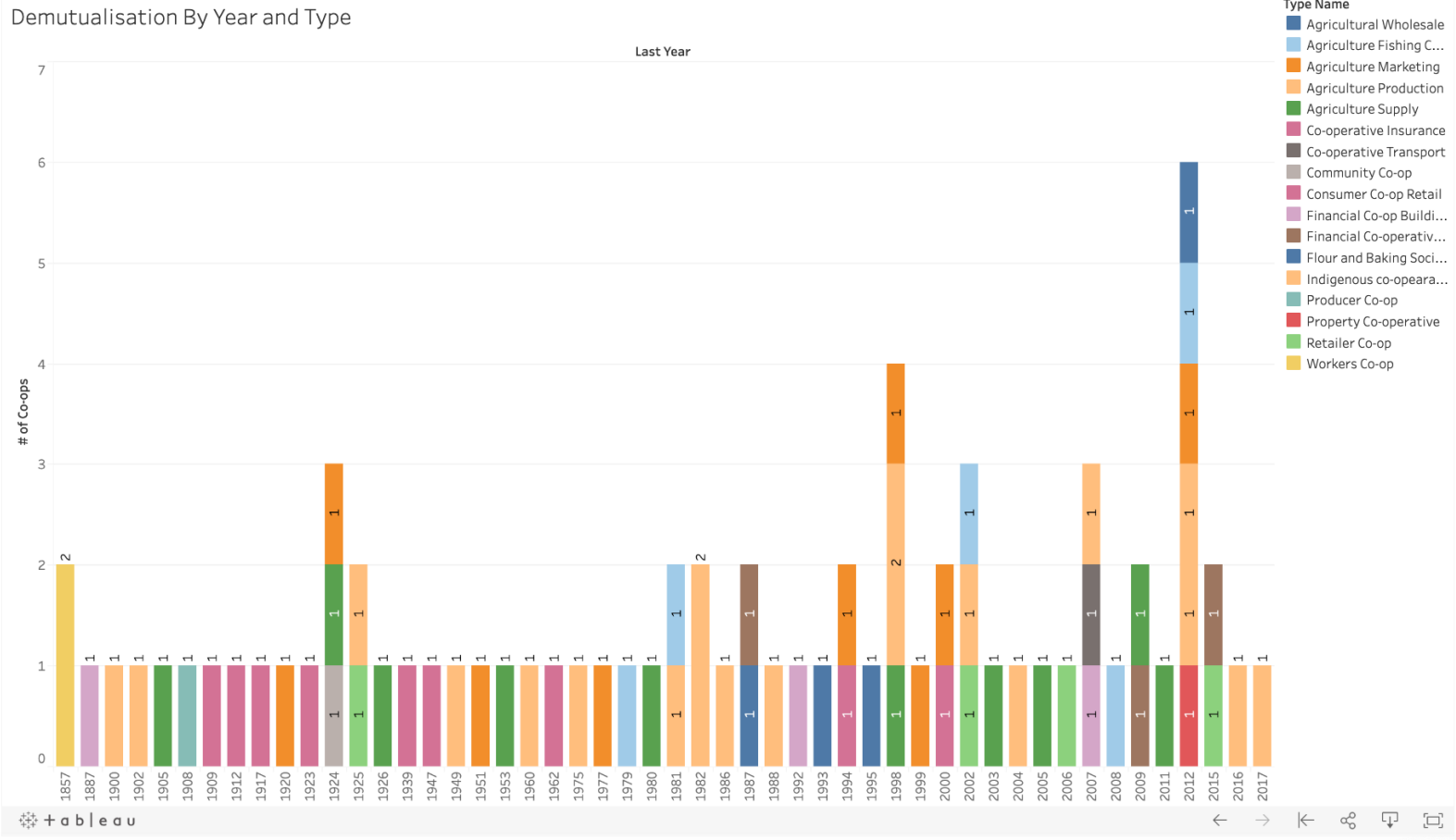


# Average Life Span of Co-operatives



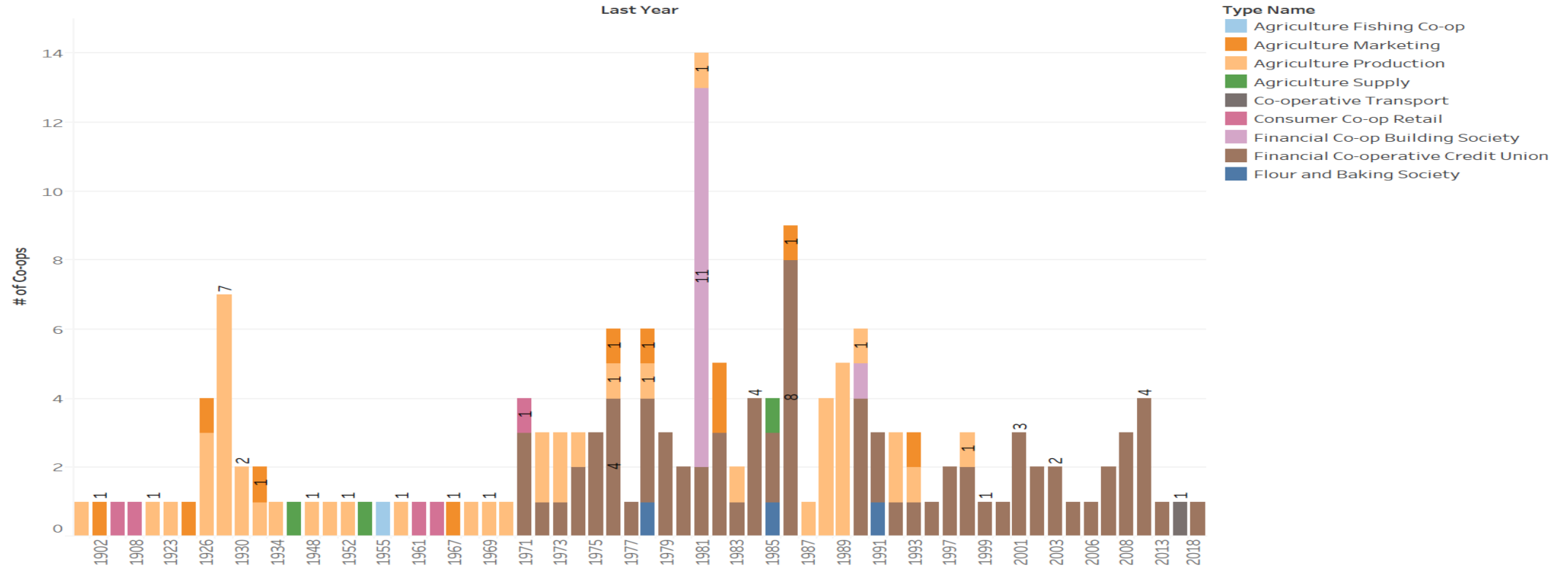
# Australian Demutualisation Over Time

Demutualisation By Year and Type



# Amalgamations

Amalgamation By Year and Type



# of Co-ops for each Last Year. Color shows details about Type Name. The marks are labeled by # of Co-ops. The data is filtered on Exit Type, which keeps Amalgamation.

# Amalgamations and demutualisation

- Amalgamations

- 1927 (dairying), 1981 (building societies), 1985-1986 (credit unions), 1987-1993 (dairying), since 1997 largely credit unions

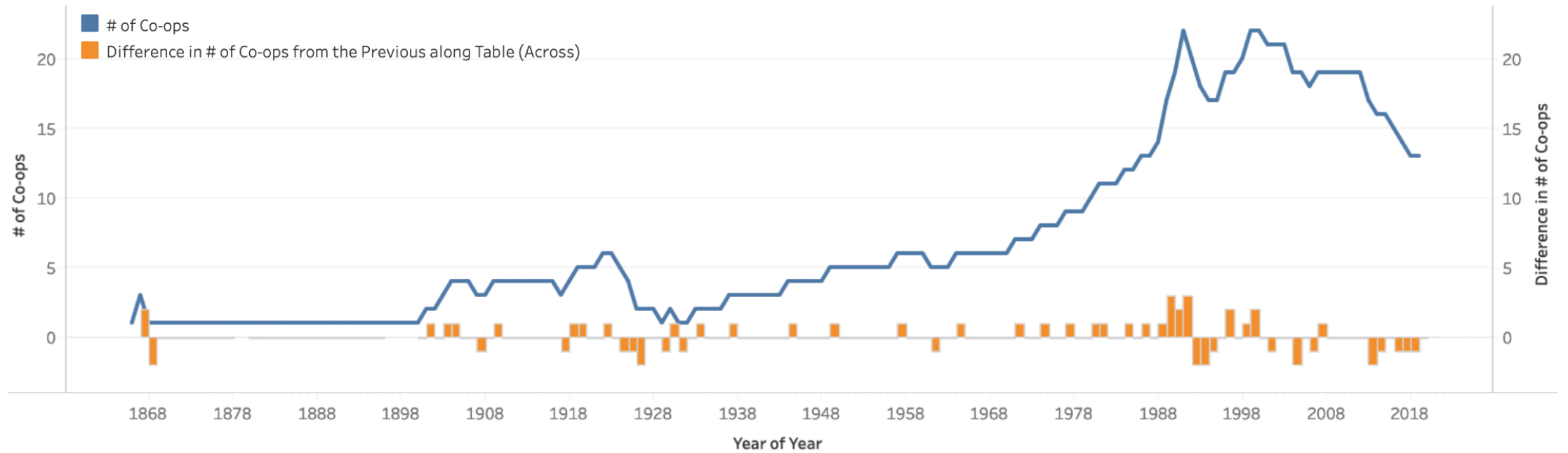
- Demutualisation

- 1857 (goldmining), 1923-1926 (Co-operative Legislation NSW), 1979-1982, 1986-1988, 1992-1995, 1998-2000, 2002-2017 (peak year – 2012)

# Other features

- Co-operatives among small business
  - US example is ACE Hardware and New Zealand example is Foodstuffs
  - Form of collective bargaining by small business
  - Newsagents, butchers, hairdressers, publicans
- Indigenous Co-operatives
  - From the 1940s – encouraged in recent times by federal government to form corporations
- Wide range of co-operatives (transport, energy, retail, agriculture, community)

# Retailer Co-operatives



# Our acknowledgments and thanks to the Visual Atlas team members

Mr. Jiang Zhu – Research Assistant/PhD Student (UTS) – Development of VA in Tableau

Dr. Yasmin Rittau - Research Assistant, Macquarie University

Garry Cronan, Research Assistant, The University of Sydney

Caitlin Gardner, Research Assistant, The University of Sydney