

Omnibus Poll December 2015 Taxation

Sponsored by Leximancer



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*The Australian Institute for Progress exists to advance the discussion, development and implementation of public policy for Australia's future,
from its base in Brisbane. The future does not look after itself.*

Quantitative Analysis

The following graphs are based on a sample which has been weighted for voting intention based on the results of the Newspoll taken closest to our poll. Results should be taken as indicative in that the sample is not properly randomised, but it is unlikely that groups are completely unrepresentative.

“Minor” represents all those minor party voters who do not vote Greens.

The poll was conducted in December 2015 using our online panel of over 13,000 Australian voters.

Quantitative analysis was undertaken using Microsoft Excel. Qualitative analysis was undertaken using Leximancer, who sponsor our project. You can read more about Leximancer at <http://info.leximancer.com/>.

For further information contact Graham Young 0411 104 801.

Should Australians pay more or less tax?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Total
Much more	17%	8%	20%	4%	11%
A little more	47%	26%	54%	30%	38%
Neither more nor less	21%	23%	17%	34%	26%
A little less	5%	16%	2%	18%	12%
Much less	5%	27%	2%	10%	9%
Unsure	5%	0%	4%	5%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total more	64%	34%	74%	33%	48%
Total same or less	31%	66%	22%	62%	47%
Net more	33%	-33%	53%	-29%	1%

n=791

Currently Australians pay approximately 26% of GDP in all forms of taxation. In 1964 the ratio of GDP paid in tax was 18%. Should the ratio be higher than 27%, lower than 18%, or somewhere in-between?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Total
More than 26% of GDP	45%	20%	54%	20%	32%
26% of GDP	9%	8%	8%	11%	10%
Between 18% and 26% of GDP	32%	30%	18%	47%	37%
18% of GDP	2%	14%	3%	5%	5%
Less than 18% of GDP	2%	23%	0%	8%	7%
Unsure	10%	5%	18%	9%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

n=805

The most recent statistics comparing total taxation at all levels of government as a percentage of GDP show a large range with Denmark at the top on 49%, the UK on 39%, NZ on 34.5%, USA, 26.9%, Singapore on 14.2% and Hong Kong on 13%. Australia's taxation at all levels of government as a percentage of GDP is 25.8%.

In its taxation policies should Australia be more like Denmark, or more like Hong Kong?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Total
More like Denmark	36%	15%	49%	9%	23%
More like the UK or New Zealand	28%	12%	21%	18%	21%
Stay the same like Australia or the USA	20%	19%	19%	32%	25%
More like Hong Kong	6%	46%	3%	31%	21%
Unsure	10%	7%	8%	10%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

n=775

Would you personally be prepared to pay more tax?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Total
No	31%	62%	25%	54%	44%
Yes	69%	38%	75%	46%	56%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

n=799

As a percentage of your income, how much more would you be prepared to pay?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Total
More than 10%	16%	12%	20%	8%	13%
More than 5% but no more than 10%	13%	9%	11%	13%	13%
More than 2% but no more than 5%	32%	36%	33%	35%	33%
More than 1% but no more than 2%	23%	18%	15%	22%	21%
1% or less	6%	12%	3%	8%	7%
Unsure	10%	12%	18%	14%	13%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

n=426

It has been suggested that the GST should be increased to 15%. How strongly do you support or oppose this?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Total
Strongly support	2%	14%	3%	20%	12%
Support	10%	7%	10%	31%	19%
Neither support nor oppose	9%	7%	12%	19%	13%
Oppose	16%	20%	19%	14%	16%
Strongly oppose	62%	50%	54%	14%	38%
Unsure	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total support	12%	21%	13%	52%	31%
Total oppose	78%	70%	73%	28%	54%
Net support	-66%	-49%	-60%	24%	-23%

n=796

It has been suggested that there should be a cap on the amount of assets a taxpayer can have in a superannuation account so that it does not provide them with more than a comfortable lifestyle. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this in principle?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Total
Strongly agree	31%	11%	25%	15%	21%
Agree	25%	19%	33%	20%	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	16%	15%	15%	15%
Disagree	16%	15%	15%	19%	17%
Strongly disagree	11%	35%	5%	26%	20%
Unsure	3%	4%	7%	4%	4%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total agree	55%	29%	58%	35%	44%
Total disagree	27%	51%	21%	46%	37%
Net agree	28%	-21%	37%	-10%	6%

n=789

It has been suggested that taxpayers should not be able to take their superannuation as a lump sum and only access it as an annuity. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Total
Strongly agree	15%	8%	10%	14%	13%
Agree	25%	14%	20%	18%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%	20%	22%	19%	22%
Disagree	15%	23%	29%	21%	20%
Strongly disagree	14%	31%	12%	24%	20%
Unsure	4%	4%	8%	4%	5%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total agree	40%	23%	29%	33%	34%
Total disagree	29%	54%	41%	45%	40%
Net agree	11%	-31%	-12%	-12%	-7%

n=791

Company tax is currently 30% and the government has just implemented a 28.5% rate for companies with less than \$2M turnover. Should companies pay a higher or lower rate than this?

	ALP	Minor	Grn	LP	Grand Total	
Much higher		10%	1%	13%	2%	6%
Higher		26%	10%	37%	8%	17%
Neither higher nor lower		44%	36%	27%	40%	40%
Lower		9%	34%	11%	35%	24%
Much lower		0%	12%	0%	5%	4%
Unsure		11%	7%	12%	10%	10%
Grand Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total higher		36%	11%	50%	10%	23%
Total lower		10%	46%	11%	40%	27%
Net higher		26%	-35%	39%	-31%	-4%

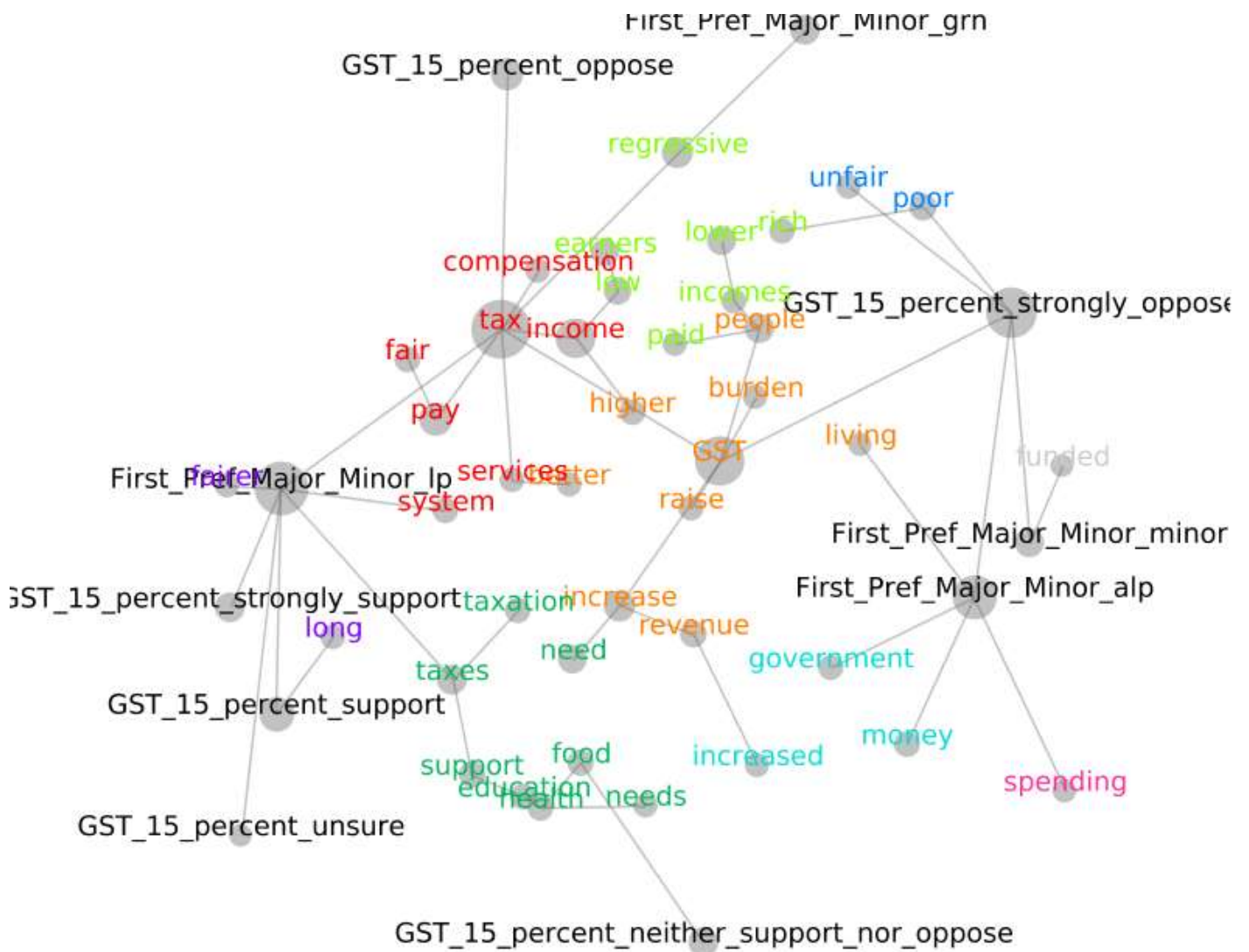
n=779

We give huge subsidies to mining interests, pay too much welfare to migrants some who bludge on the system. Tax the low and middle income earners and allow many companies to pay no tax and rich individuals the same.

Australians are very well off but whinge about their circumstances yet want all the services tha governments provide. Too many people cheat their taxes especially tradies who do 'cashies' to avoid GST and big business that avoids tax all together.

I like many Australians have consistently said we are happy to pay more tax for a good welfare net - free health, education, pensions - but it doesn't suit big business and right wing ideologues. In the end none of us want to pay tax to see it squandered on corporate welfare and political rorts, off-shore detention centres etc.

It has been suggested that the GST should be increased to 15%. How strongly do you support or oppose this?



Verbatims

It is a regressive tax which imposes burdens on those who can least afford to pay. Many people find things tough enough now Fix the tax system to ensure that everyone pays the income tax that they are supposed to and get rid of the concessions etc for the wealthy and those better off, before expecting the families and battlers to carry the burden of an increase and brooding of the GST.

A GST is a sensible and easily administered tax and acts as a brake (if fairly applied) on conspicuous consumption. However to avoid regressive unfairness it needs to have an associated rebate or discount system (means tested coupons for example) for lower income earners to allow for exemptions (difficult) or rebates (easier but there is a cash flow issue).

As part of re-organisation of taxation systems it could be beneficial but not to increase tax. Many inefficient State taxes could be abolished and low income earners would need alternate support/compensatory mechanisms.

There are several problems with raising the GST: everybody pays more for products resulting in low income earners having a lower capacity to buy things, and those on higher incomes can use it to

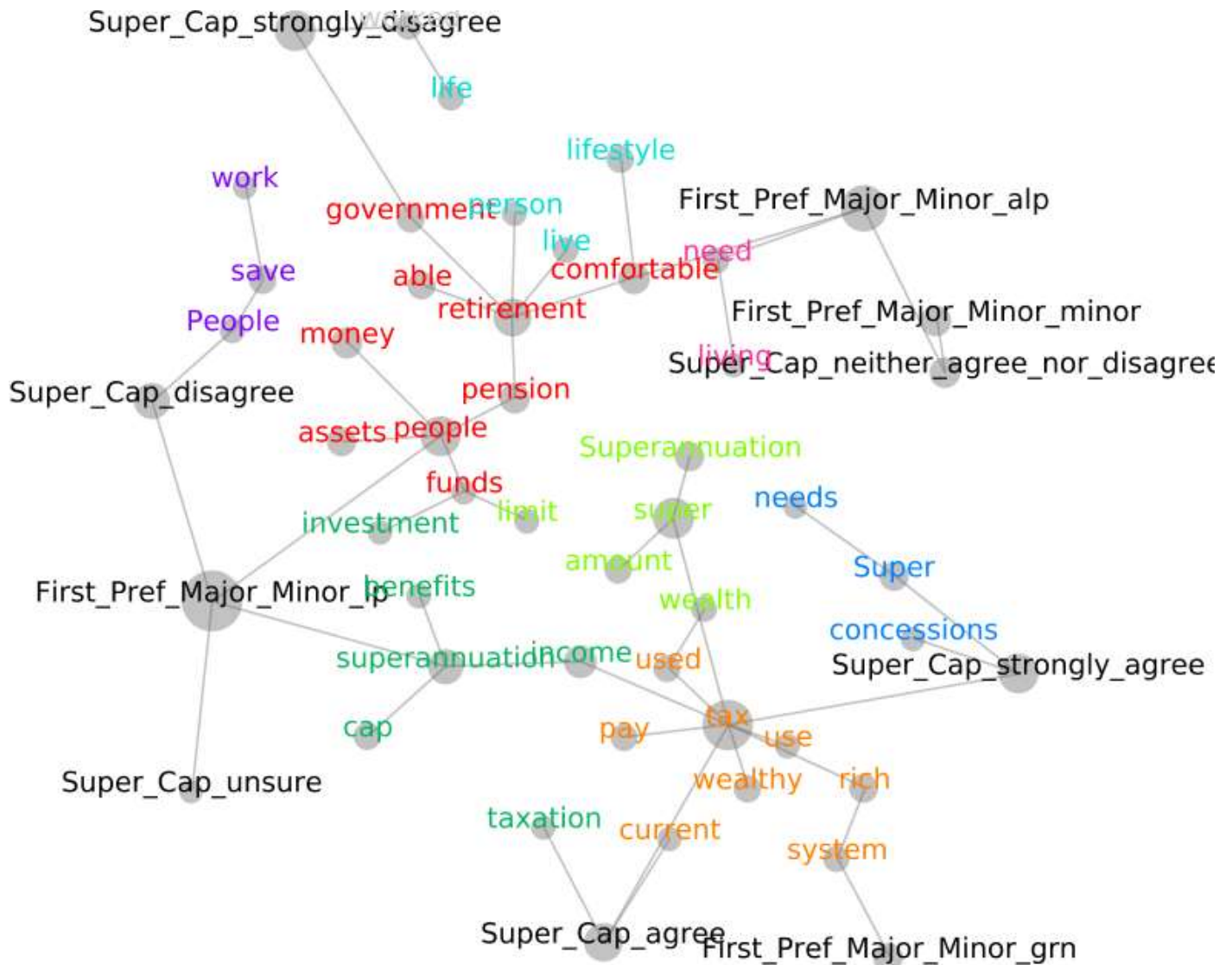
actually avoid tax simply by not buying things or living on cheap products (this of course is the case if personal income tax rates are reduced to compensate for the rise in GST)

If the increased revenue was guaranteed to go toward providing a Denmark style welfare system I'd be happy to pay the tax necessary to achieve it. I'm not happy to pay more to fund private schools, private health, corporate welfare (though support small business assistance, the eradication of pensions, negative gearing etc.

creates an unfair burden on lower income earners. Instead, tax the luxuries, the rich, leave the poor alone.

I believe GST is a much better, fairer and more efficient form of taxation than income tax. I would only support a higher GST if income taxes were lowered and the total tax take remained the same or less.

It has been suggested that there should be a cap on the amount of assets a taxpayer can have in a superannuation account so that it does not provide them with more than a comfortable lifestyle. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this in principle?



Verbatims

Superannuation was introduced as a retirement funding strategy - it would appear that superannuation has also become a tax minimisation strategy and estate planning strategy - so i don't have a problem with there being some limits on Super. On the otherhand the Superfunds now hold substantial investment funds - that would be more useful if they could be directed into public good instead of offshore - so it may be a better idea to rather than to limit super to encourage its investment in Australian infrastructure and food production.

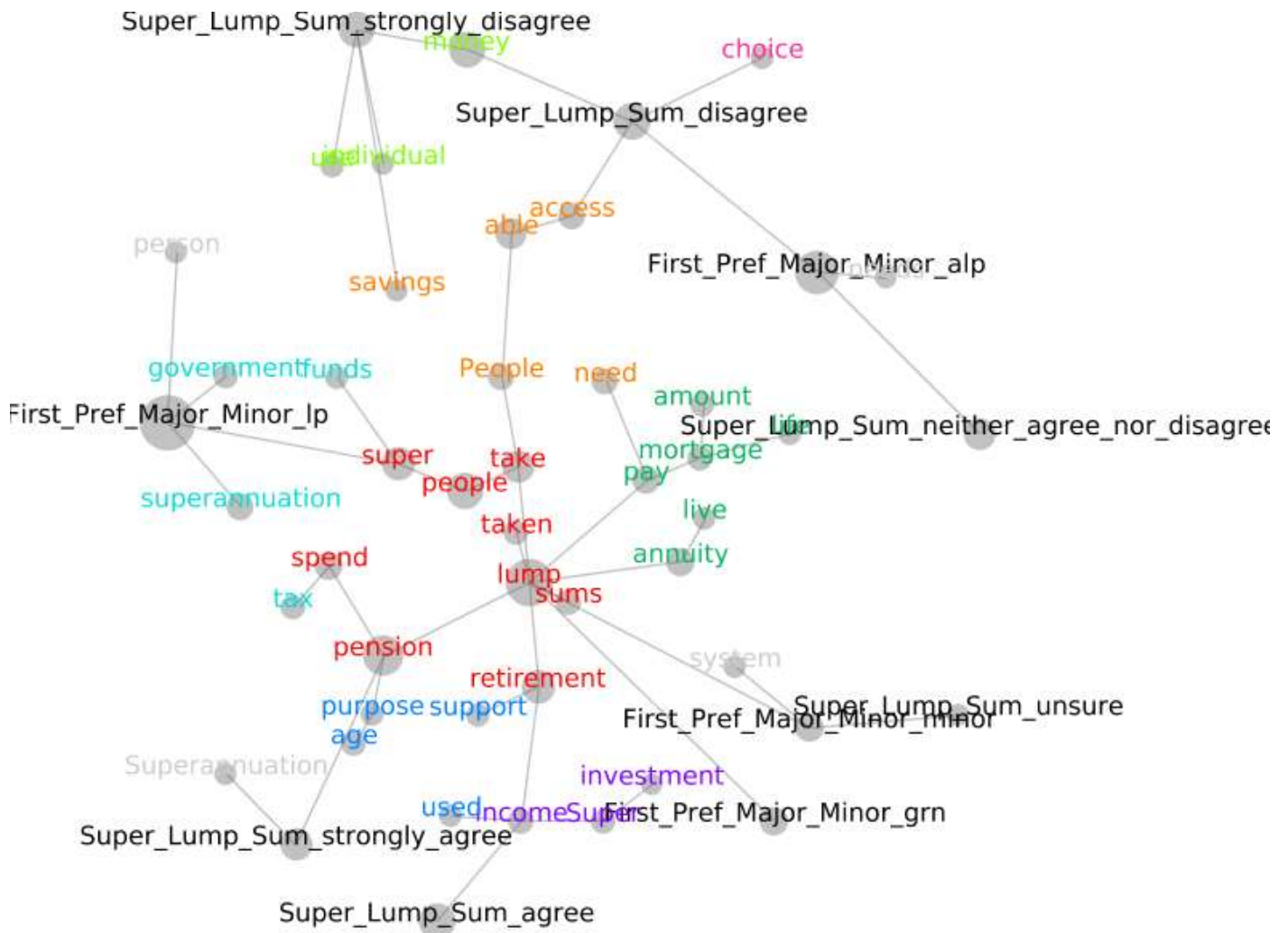
Superannuation should be aimed at providing an adequate lifestyle in retirement, not a wealth management strategy for people with very high assets. I have a friend with 3 Mercedes Benz vehicles, his own home, lots of new "toys" and who travels overseas regularly.

Super is being used too much by wealthy to reduce their yearly income tax commitments. Limit this to a reasonable amount that assures them of a good standard of living, but at the same time allowing for taxes to be raised for the so many community needs and expectations.

Superannuation is there to relieve government of the pension - if something is able to support themselves by more superannuation - then they should be able to do so - however, policies that cap and uncap strongly affect investment in property and shares and this needs to be balanced against superannuation caps.

My answer assumed that superannuation accounts in pension mode get favourable tax treatment (extremely favourable at present). Impose a cap on balance of a pension member, and then somehow tax the income from amount over the balance as incremental normal income thus taxed at marginal rate.

It has been suggested that taxpayers should not be able to take their superannuation as a lump sum and only access it as an annuity. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this?



Verbatims

People should be encouraged to take an annuity but there will be some who need to pay off a mortgage, deal with a divorce or other personal issues, and they should not be restricted if they need the lump sum for such a purpose. I object, however, to people taking a lump sum to invest in an expensive place of residence and then claim the pension or part-pension.

Superannuation ought to be regarded as providing income support after retirement, not as a tax avoidance facility. Also, it is not sensible to enable people to save large amounts in super, then withdraw and spend it, and then claim the age pension or part thereof.

People should only be able to take out small lump sums. There's no point in providing large tax incentives to save money in super to then have it not help to alleviate the cost of the aged pension on the budget.

There should be no restriction on the individuals use of his superannuation funds above a certain amount that allows an annuity at the same amount as the Age pension (couples or single rate as appropriate) thereby ensuring they do not have access to the aged pension.

In theory, having an annuity should mean that people live off their own savings for longer, without blowing the lump sum and then going onto the pension.

But if we want people to downsize, and to have enough for medical care/nursing home bonds, etc, if needed, then lump sums may be important.

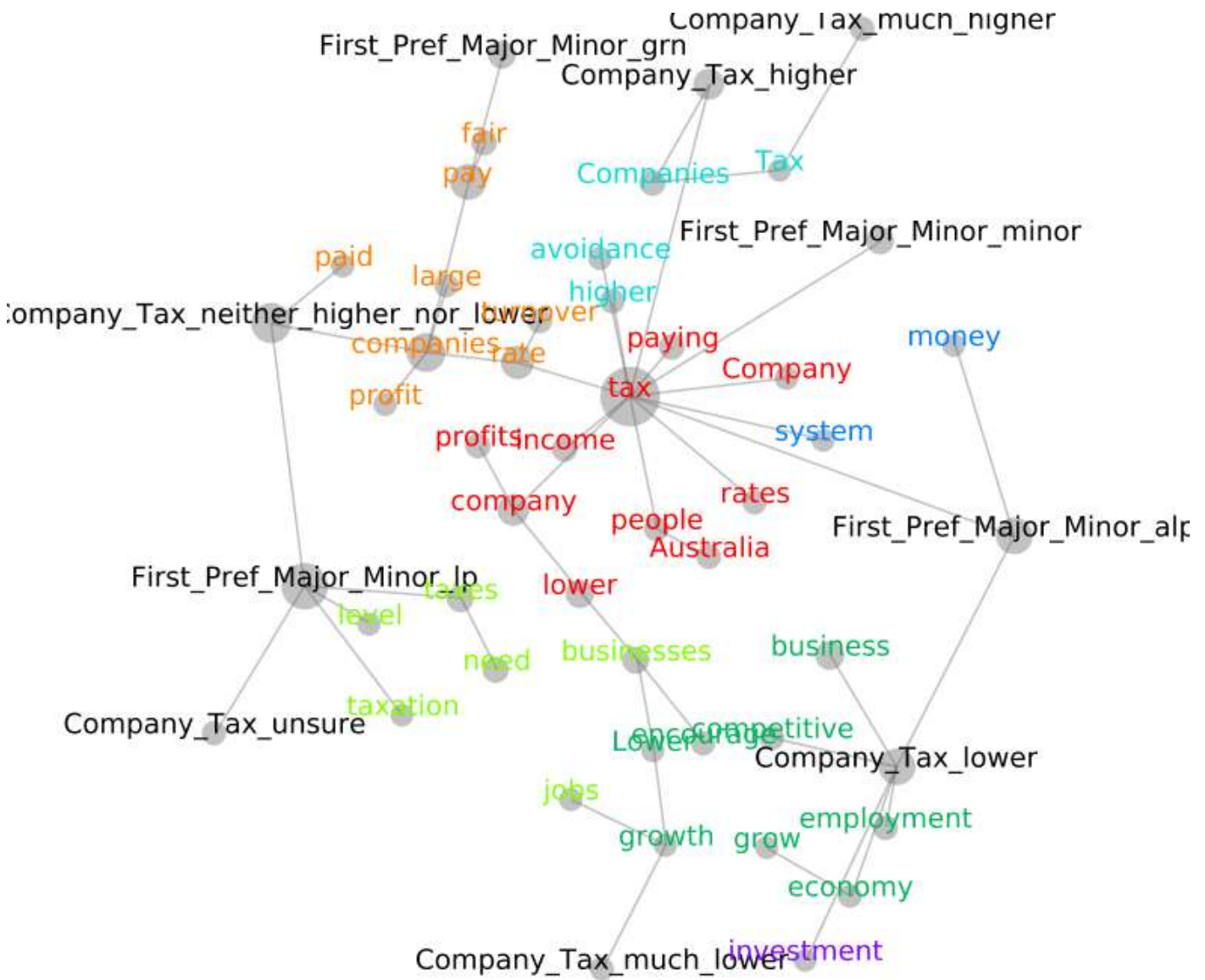
As long as there are limits and conditions to lump-sum withdrawals it would be a poor policy choice to ban the practice. People in desperate circumstances would be well-served by being able to access lump sum super payouts.

I think at least some should be able to be taken as a lump sum, especially since some people go into retirement with debt, such as a mortgage, and need to pay that off.

Super is new, a lot of people have bugger all when it comes to trying to live on it as an income stream. Suppose you had, at retirement, or even at age 60, just a few thousand dollars, say \$50k, why not take it all out and pay off debt or have a couple of holidays with it - it's not going to assist you to live to 90 is it?

It would be grossly iniquitous for someone to withdraw millions of dollars tax-free, but someone with a rather lesser amount may need the money e.g. to pay off remaining mortgage at retirement.

Company tax is currently 30% and the government has just implemented a 28.5% rate for companies with less than \$2M turnover. Should companies pay a higher or lower rate than this?



Verbatims

The rate is competitive globally, we just need to enforce compliance and ensure some sectors actually pay tax. I am related to farmers who have never paid tax but I have to support with flood and drought relief (sometimes in the same year) and these bludgers use my taxes to use the roads to sell their products and get a diesel rebate!!!

No matter what the company tax rate is, big business in particular keeps on baying for it to be lowered, whilst very large business pay almost no tax in Australia anyway. Our company tax rate should be competitive, and not benchmarked on the lowest taxing countries around the world.

Fair tax of 35% for all companies - but real efforts should be made to radically simplify tax laws and stop all the minimisation/avoidance experts from plying their grubby schemes. I am not the best authority in this area, but perhaps we could start cleaning up the bookkeeping standards in Australia, by setting up independent Govt auditing of the existing auditing firms - who currently think they are clever in reducing their clients' tax burden to 5-10% or less, when they should be much higher.

While I'm not a fan of large business exploiting massive tax loopholes and redirecting their profits offshore, it does make sense to be able to compete globally with the likes of places like Ireland and Singapore. More businesses, more growth, more jobs, better economy.

Once again, people who can funnel their income through companies can avoid the taxes that other have to pay. If a company is an artificial person, why should that person get such a massive tax break - especially as small businesses almost always is just one-man companies where all the benefits only goes to one person.

As long as companies utilise lower taxation arrangements to boost employment and production (rather than just boosting profits for owners), I'd support lower company taxes.

With the proviso that only large companies, like multinationals should be paying a much higher tax rate. Small businesses I would presume wouldn't turn over more than 2 mill per annum.

Needs to be a reform of tax concessions to force businesses to positively invest-in, create and build, rather than milk the economy. The current system has rewarded oligopolistic behaviour, and we have a generation of business bleeders, bludgers and bilkers - they are miners of the economy, not creators.