

Omnibus Poll, November 2016

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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.*

Analysis

The following graphs are based on a sample which has been weighted for voting intention based on the results of the most recent Newspoll, as published in *The Australian*.

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. There is a mix of left and right wing entities in this figure, but it is more right than left.

The poll was conducted in the five days ending Friday, November 18, 2016 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.

Thinking about Australia would you agree or disagree that the country is heading in the right direction?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Strongly Agree	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%
Agree	4%	39%	2%	6%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	29%	7%	15%	19%
Disagree	38%	23%	38%	37%	32%
Strongly disagree	42%	5%	54%	41%	29%
Unsure	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total agree	4%	41%	2%	6%	18%
Total disagree	80%	29%	91%	79%	61%
Net agree	-76%	13%	-89%	-73%	-43%

n=1020

Thinking about your vote in the House of Representatives, which group, Labor or Coalition, would you direct your preferences to favour - that is, which would you prefer to form the government?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
ALP	99%	2%	100%	39%	54%
Coalition	1%	98%	0%	61%	46%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

n=900

Thinking about your opinion in general of the performance of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of it?

	ALP	Coalition	Greens	Minor	Total
Strongly approve	0%	6%	0%	0%	2%
Approve	3%	34%	0%	6%	15%
Neither approve nor disapprove	7%	30%	5%	11%	16%
Disapprove	28%	23%	26%	28%	26%
Strongly disapprove	61%	6%	69%	53%	40%
Unsure	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total approve	3%	40%	0%	6%	17%
Total disapprove	89%	30%	94%	81%	66%
Net approve	-86%	10%	-94%	-75%	-49%

n=1020

Thinking about your opinion in general of the performance of Opposition Leader Bill Shorten, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of it?

Shorten	ALP	Coalition	Greens	Minor	Total
Strongly approve	16%	1%	2%	3%	7%
Approve	55%	2%	35%	8%	26%
Neither approve nor disapprove	23%	11%	37%	12%	18%
Disapprove	4%	20%	19%	18%	14%
Strongly disapprove	1%	66%	8%	57%	34%
Unsure	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total approve	70%	3%	37%	11%	33%
Total disapprove	5%	86%	26%	75%	48%
Net approve	65%	-83%	10%	-64%	-15%

n=1018

Who is your preferred Prime Minister?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Bill Shorten	86%	0%	76%	25%	45%
Malcolm Turnbull	2%	95%	2%	42%	43%
Unsure	12%	5%	22%	33%	12%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

n=860

How necessary or unnecessary do you think trade unions are in Australia today?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Very necessary	76%	6%	71%	28%	43%
Somewhat necessary	19%	48%	23%	36%	33%
Neither necessary nor unnecessary	3%	18%	2%	11%	10%
Unnecessary	1%	19%	0%	15%	9%
Very unnecessary	1%	10%	3%	9%	6%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Necessary	95%	53%	94%	65%	75%
Unnecessary	2%	29%	3%	24%	15%
Net necessary	93%	24%	91%	41%	60%

n=999

Do you think trade unions have too much or too little power in Australia today?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Significantly too much power	0%	55%	1%	37%	26%
Too much power	6%	34%	6%	21%	18%
Neither too much nor too little power	54%	9%	38%	25%	32%
Too little power	28%	1%	35%	9%	16%
Significantly too little power	9%	0%	15%	6%	6%
Unsure	3%	1%	5%	3%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Too much power	6%	89%	7%	58%	44%
Too little power	38%	1%	50%	14%	22%
Net too much	-32%	88%	-43%	44%	23%

n=999

Should trade union membership ever be compulsory as a condition of being employed by any Australian company?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
No	57%	97%	57%	85%	76%
Yes	30%	1%	22%	10%	16%
Unsure	13%	2%	21%	5%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

n=999

The government has introduced the Australian Building and Construction Commission Bill to the Commonwealth Parliament which would set up a special commission for the building industry to regulate the conditions through a building code which applies primarily to construction companies which tender for government work. Those who don't comply with the code will be prevented from tendering. How strongly do you support or oppose this bill?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Strongly support	3%	72%	3%	39%	34%
Support	9%	21%	4%	17%	14%
Neither support nor oppose	16%	4%	20%	15%	12%
Oppose	19%	1%	23%	9%	11%
Strongly oppose	47%	2%	40%	14%	25%
Unsure	5%	2%	9%	6%	4%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Support ABCC	12%	92%	7%	57%	48%
Oppose ABCC	67%	2%	64%	23%	36%
Net support ABCC	-55%	90%	-56%	34%	12%

n=999

Trade unions often come to arrangements where special amendments are made to the awards which benefit the employer, conditional that the employer makes it a virtual condition of employment that employees join the union and that the fees be automatically deducted from their wages. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Strongly agree	7%	2%	4%	5%	5%
Agree	26%	3%	15%	5%	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	27%	4%	26%	11%	16%
Disagree	25%	21%	30%	21%	23%
Strongly disagree	12%	67%	19%	54%	39%
Unsure	4%	3%	6%	4%	4%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total agree	33%	6%	19%	9%	18%
Total disagree	36%	88%	49%	75%	62%
Net agree	-4%	-82%	-30%	-65%	-44%

n=999

Trade unions are sometimes paid fees by companies for things such as training, marketing, workplace health and safety advice and programs. This was identified in the Trade Union Royal Commission as a problem because although large amounts of money were paid, that money was not used for training or other specified purposes. How strongly would you agree or disagree that companies should not be able to pay any money to trade unions?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Strongly agree	8%	65%	8%	46%	35%
Agree	15%	8%	13%	12%	12%
Neither agree nor disagree	30%	6%	35%	13%	19%
Disagree	30%	8%	27%	9%	18%
Strongly disagree	15%	12%	13%	16%	14%
Unsure	2%	1%	4%	3%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total agree	23%	73%	21%	58%	47%
Total disagree	44%	20%	40%	25%	32%
Net agree	-21%	53%	-18%	33%	15%

n=999

The CFMEU is the major building union. How concerned are you about the number of officials who have been charged or convicted of criminal offences while acting as union officials?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Very concerned	12%	84%	11%	59%	46%
Concerned	34%	11%	44%	20%	24%
Neither concerned nor unconcerned	22%	1%	22%	9%	12%
Unconcerned	18%	0%	13%	6%	9%
Very unconcerned	9%	3%	5%	3%	6%
Unsure	5%	1%	6%	3%	3%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total concerned	46%	95%	55%	79%	70%
Total unconcerned	27%	3%	18%	9%	15%
Net concerned	19%	92%	37%	70%	55%

n=999

The CFMEU is the major building union. How concerned are you at their use of strikes, go slows and stoppages for political purposes?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Very concerned	5%	84%	4%	55%	41%
Concerned	20%	12%	18%	15%	16%
Neither concerned nor unconcerned	25%	1%	27%	10%	14%
Unconcerned	29%	1%	32%	9%	16%
Very unconcerned	18%	2%	15%	8%	10%
Unsure	3%	0%	4%	2%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total concerned	25%	96%	22%	71%	58%
Total unconcerned	47%	3%	46%	17%	26%
Net concerned	-23%	93%	-24%	54%	31%

n=999

The CFMEU is the major building union. How concerned are you at the increase in the cost of housing as a result of their actions?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Very concerned	5%	77%	6%	55%	39%
Concerned	17%	14%	15%	13%	15%
Neither concerned nor unconcerned	23%	4%	27%	13%	15%
Unconcerned	20%	2%	21%	8%	12%
Very unconcerned	27%	2%	19%	8%	14%
Unsure	8%	1%	12%	3%	5%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total concerned	22%	91%	21%	68%	54%
Total unconcerned	47%	4%	40%	16%	26%
Net concerned	-25%	87%	-19%	52%	28%

n=999

The CFMEU is the major building union. How concerned are you at the donations they have made to political parties and political activist groups?

	ALP	Coalition	Grn	Minor	Total
Very concerned	3%	74%	9%	59%	38%
Concerned	11%	15%	12%	11%	12%
Neither concerned nor unconcerned	23%	8%	21%	9%	15%
Unconcerned	28%	1%	31%	10%	16%
Very unconcerned	34%	2%	22%	8%	17%
Unsure	2%	0%	4%	2%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total concerned	14%	89%	21%	70%	51%
Total unconcerned	62%	3%	53%	18%	33%
Net concerned	-48%	86%	-32%	52%	18%

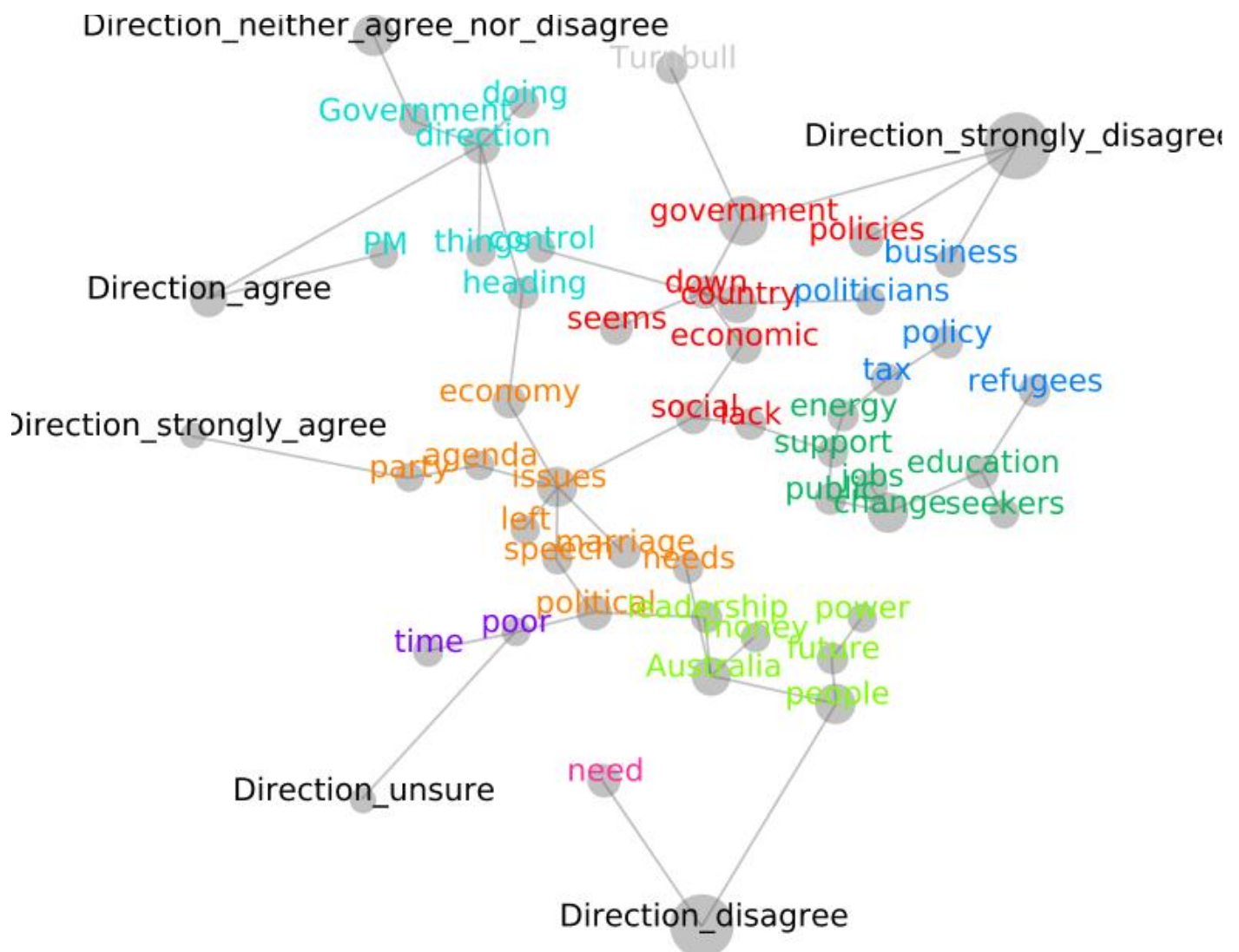
n=999

Qualitative Analysis

Our qualitative analysis looks at the reasons given by respondents for their various judgements. The following maps are generated from the data by Leximancer and overlay the key words over the variables from the question – generally the answer to the question plus voting intentions. Words that are most closely associated will cluster together. The most frequently used words are brighter than those used less frequently.

We do not edit the verbatims and all spelling and grammatical errors are reproduced. Editing the transcripts would take away from some of the unique tone of each response. The verbatims are selected so as to give a better insight into how the individual words are being used.

Thinking about Australia would you agree or disagree that the country is heading in the right direction?



Verbatims

There is a general lack of coherent policy direction and supportive action on major issues as characterized, for example by: Disregard for climate change, both through failing to establish coherent adaption strategies and by continuing to support various facets of the fossil fuel industry; inhumane politicization of, and cruel, divisive government approaches to, refugee issues;

practical inaction (.as opposed to rhetoric) on provision of sustainable job opportunities and workplace equity; failure to empower, and properly address ongoing wrongs suffered by, Aboriginal Australia; trivialization of the whole suite of mechanisms (including adequate NGO funding) necessary for educational, economic and social advancement of currently disadvantaged Australians.

We, the majority, voted for a conservative government and instead we are plagued with moves towards things that are not of our political DNA. I refer to climate change scams becoming high priority again, single sex marriage violating what many of my generation and political colour find quite distasteful, while not denying people of those persuasions having legal rights equal to those of the baby makers, and .

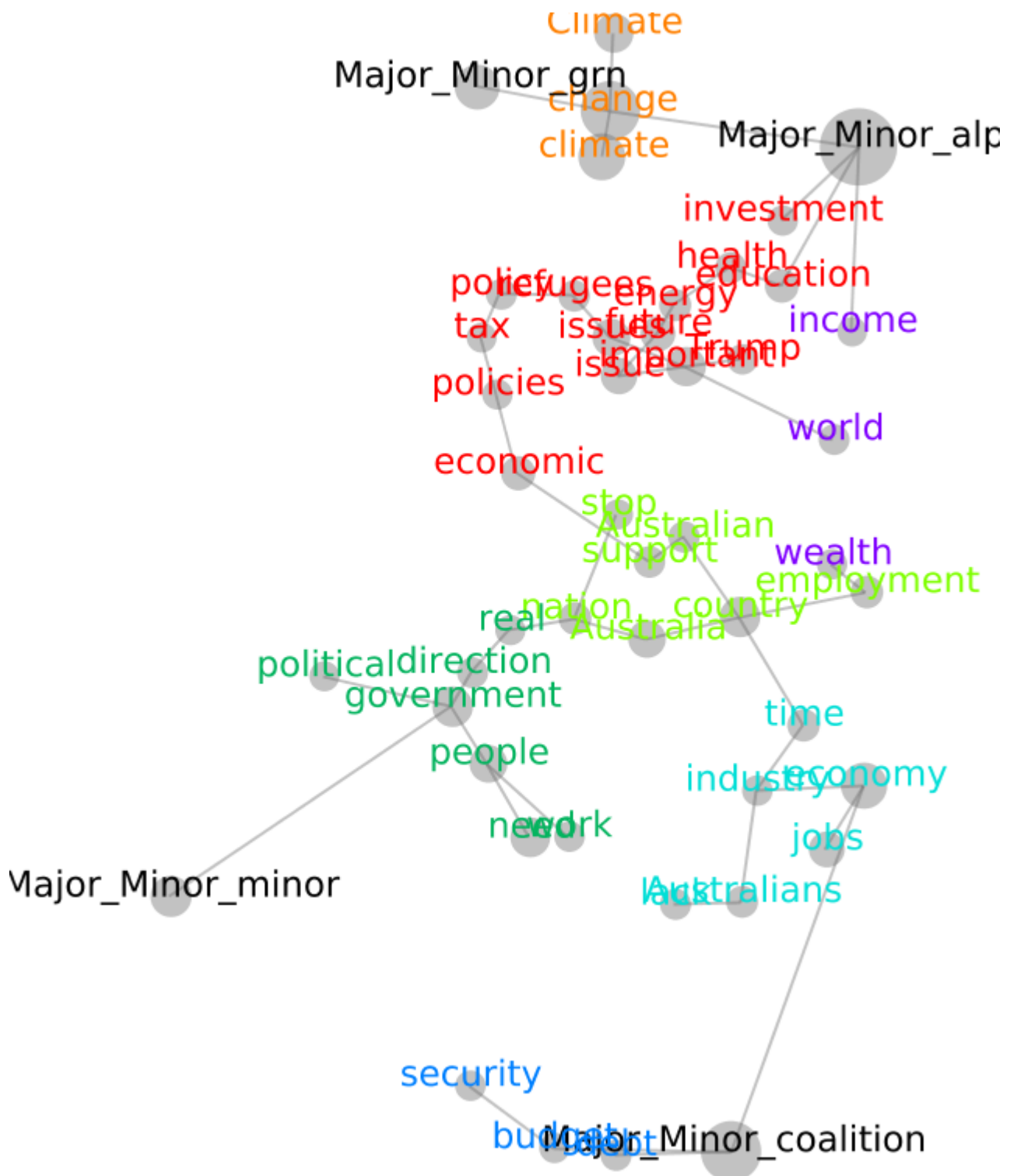
A successful community and economy depend on positive attitudes to work, individual self-dependence and resilience, contributing to society beyond oneself, common cultural values, small government, light-handed regulation, rewards for effort and enterprise, freedom of speech and a free press. Australia is heading in the wrong direction on all of these factors.

Lack of leadership from a government and PM more obsessed with trying to wedge the opposition than in fixing known problems of housing affordability, corporate/tax fraud or improving the nation or preparing it for the future opportunities and threats. A do-nothing government that seems internally obsessed with trivia and derelict in its duty to govern and lead.

A PM who presents as a paper bag with a sonorous voice box, who lacks the character to address the key issues which will mould our future...climate change, inequality, public education.

We are becoming far too outlandish with Safe Schools, same sex marriage, unions interfering in the political process, climate change which is doubtful, too much control by the UN, Greens and their crazy ideology instead of driving this country forward it is retreating. Extremist Muslims need to be removed from our country.

Thinking about Australia again, in a short paragraph please tell us what is the most important issue facing the country?



Verbatims

Identification of who we really are and the development of an independent nation not blinded by the defunct "American Dream". I believe both Government and policy works in this country need to sit back and seek to identify what is the real Australia in the 21st Century and what is it that is

truly unique and what initiatives can be pursued which buttress the direction we elect to head forwards in.

FAIRNESS, pay the CEOs a lot less, crack down on multi nation tax rorts, remove the charity status of the IPA which is a part of the Liberal party, more open Govt, leave 18c alone if you want Free Speech change the defamation laws, stop lying, cheating rorting politicians. Cut the Subsidies paid to Mining Company's, strengthen the regulators give them the power to get the corporate criminals.

Cheap, readily-available and very reliable forms of conventional power supply and the undermining of this critically competitive edge that Australia has enjoyed for some time. Politically-driven agendas, with no regard for people or their livelihoods, are seriously threatening the future prosperity of this country and the hard gains it has achieved in the past.

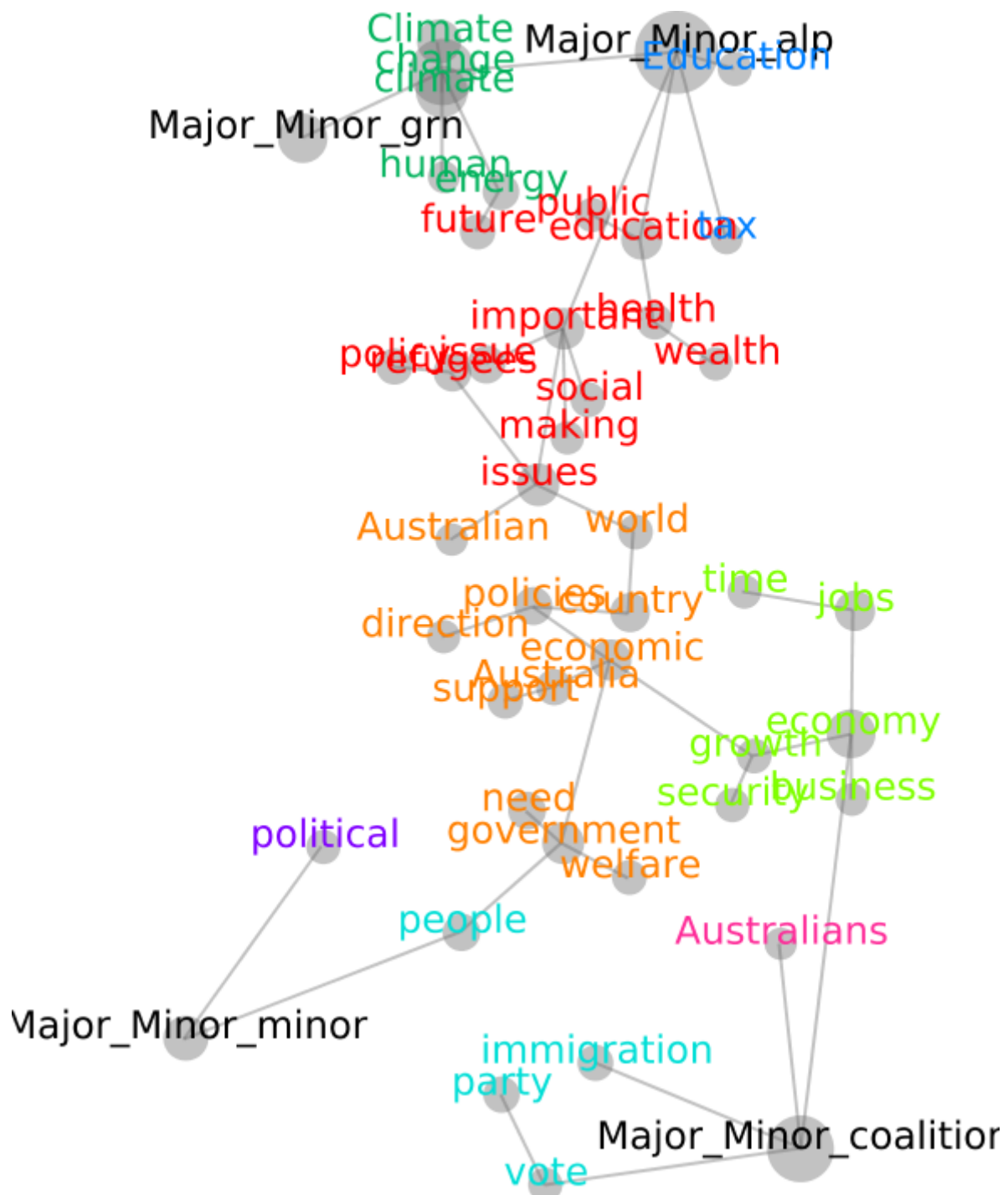
Lack of clear direction from government about any positive moves to grow the economy or improve our ability to capitalise on assets and abilities and potential. Housing affordability as a direct result of bad tax policies that are being ignored by government and which are making a whole generation being actively denied the opportunity of home ownership with severe economic and retirement consequences

the time for tending to local vested interests is over; being a citizen of the world will get dearer when Trump gets countries to pay more for US protection - we have been using them to secure our sovereignty since 1942 if you think about it. Really standing on our own two feet is the most important issue facing the country.

The most important issues facing Australia in my view are: a) Building the economy over a 15 to 20 year timeline b) Sorting out how we deal with our neighbours China and Indonesia c) Achieving some sort of rapprochement with the Trump administration. d) Improving our attitude on human rights - we have become a global pariah

No matter what the IMF says I think the most important issue facing the country is debt. If we weren't in debt and having to pay over \$1b a month in interest we could build more up to date hospitals, schools, universities, fast trains, the list goes on.

If an Australian election were to be held next weekend, in a short paragraph please tell us what issue would affect your voting intention the most.



Verbatims

There are so many important issues: the economy, terrorism, helping to maintain peace in the world, decreasing carbon emissions are just a few. However, if we can get the economy right, the government will have enough money to fund education, health, social welfare, immigration, refugees and all the other pressing issues.

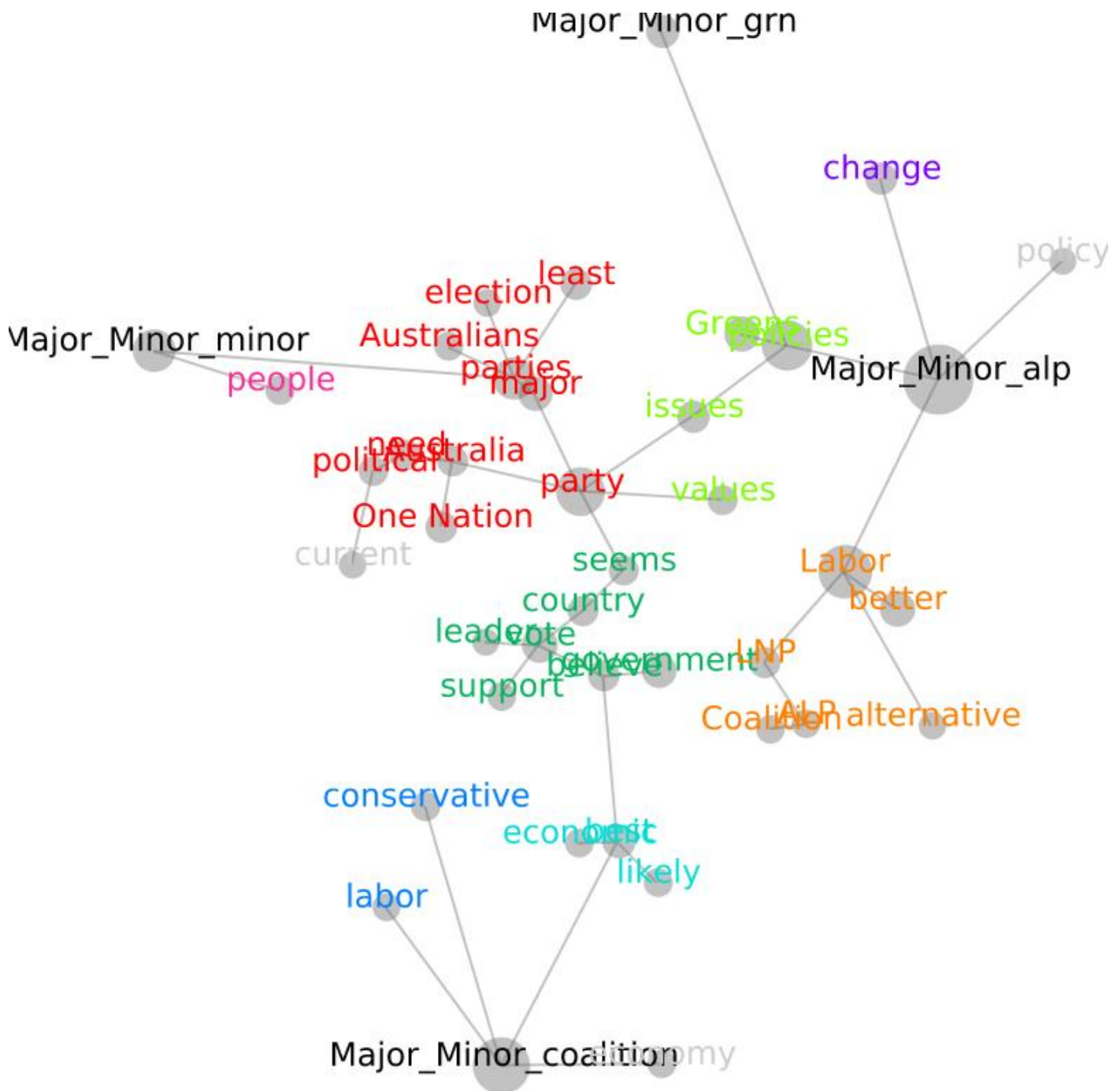
Lack of clear direction from government about any positive moves to grow the economy or improve our ability to capitalise on assets and abilities and potential. Housing affordability as a direct result of bad tax policies that are being ignored by government and which are making a whole generation being actively denied the opportunity of home ownership with severe economic and retirement consequences

A vision for the nation that prepared for the future, a future that has clear and unmistakeable trends and challenges. This includes climate change, energy, education, health and restoring faith in the public sector and a move away from the voodoo of market based "solutions" and myths that masquerade them as being in the best interests of the community, when they never have been and never will.

The PM acting like Tony Abbott but with better public presentation skills Bending to the far right on almost every question of public social policy. Denial of Climate change The slow / fast erosion of our gun policies edging closer to the US ideas on open slather on gun ownership.

Education... watering down Gonski reforms, energy sources: failure to start on winding back our reliance on fossil fuels and change over to renewable energy sources, Housing: failure to provide for the lower income individuals that cannot afford high rental costs (and may I add, many of whom mums and dads with their single negatively geared investment property wouldn't want to house due to potential of damage.

If an Australian election were to be held next weekend, which of the following parties would receive your first preference?



Verbatims

I believe that Labor, whilst not perfect and currently too right-wing under Shorten's leadership, are the preferable government. I would vote for them because Shorten has stated his allegiance and support to State education which the elitist LNP have maliciously defunded at federal and State level over the last three years whilst providing HUGE financial benefits to elite, private schools many of which will only use the money on extravagances!

One Nation are a rump party that I vote for to let the major parties realise that there is a silent majority out there who cannot stand the diction that the political parties have taken us to.

Personally, I believe One Nation to be useless ,but at least they are proud to represent true Australians.

The LNP seems more likely to implement policies that are beneficial to the collective population while maintaining a reasonable balance between income and expenditure. The Labor party is more likely to implement policies that would be funded by increasing borrowings and therefore adding to the national deficit.



We desperately need a centrist, solutions-based voice, a party that is not interested in political point-scoring by being obstructionist but is willing to work with whoever is in government to get to the best legislation possible.

It is more likely that a Coalition government would attempt to manage the budget in a responsible manner without incurring substantial and ongoing increases in indebtedness. It is more than probable that a Labor government or any government that is beholden to the Greens would consider increasing indebtedness as acceptable.

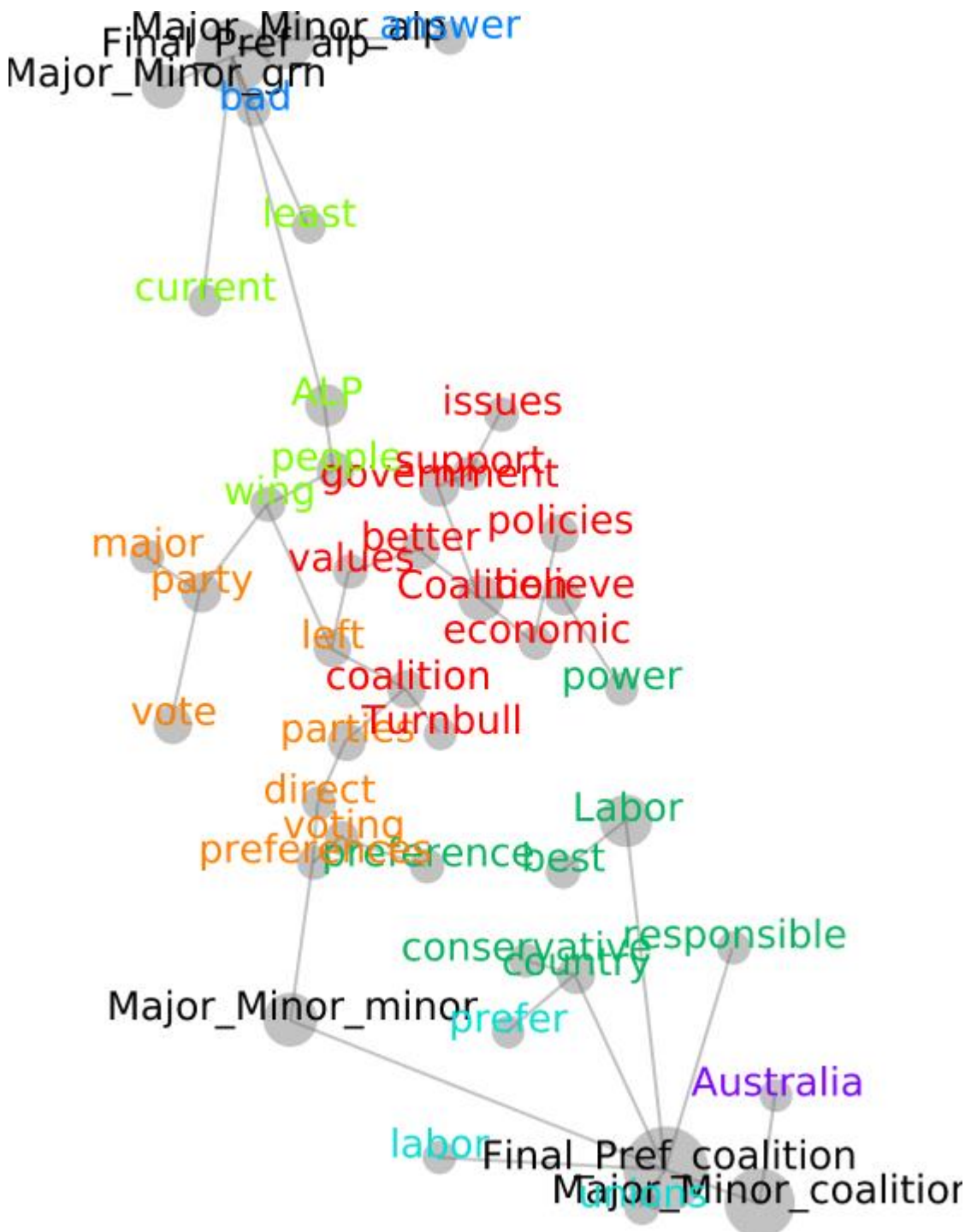
Labor simply bothers me, I feel they are lost. I am currently not into minor parties I am desperate to have a majority government so they can truly govern and not be a party of second guessers and hand ringers due to a hostile senate.

The major parties are totally bankrupt and the only way to kickstart a political revolution in this country is to support the minors.

Accepting the reality of a 2 party vote in the Reps I'll go along with the party least likely to cause major damage.

It may need to be a two step process. Get Turnbull (aka Turdball), and his stick insect political consort out of power, then when the need makes itself clear, either rebirth the part under TA, for there is no other and bring the current disparate bunch of largely right wingers together under one flag where they can learn discipline and loyalty to a sensible and fully developed set of policies.

Major_Minor_answer



The coalition have policies that are better than those of Labor but don't seem able to implement those policies, the minor parties are mostly obstructionist and not worth voting for. I feel that One Nation are probably the best of the minor parties and I will probably direct my second preferences to them.

A Coalition government is more likely to pursue responsible economic policies that would provide support to all segments of the population within acceptable parameters without disadvantaging any individual group to an unacceptable degree.

Until the last election I was a generational ALP voter, but now I am completely disillusioned with the left wing policies that have completely failed to remedy major economic and social problems confronting this nation. ALP now last.

Anything to do with Labor is toxic albeit the fact that the current leadership of the coalition is not much better given to the left wing tendencies of the current coalition Cabinet

The coalition favour big business, lobbyists, for their gain in power and money. ALP favours the working people & attempts, mostly, to provide solutions for social issues.

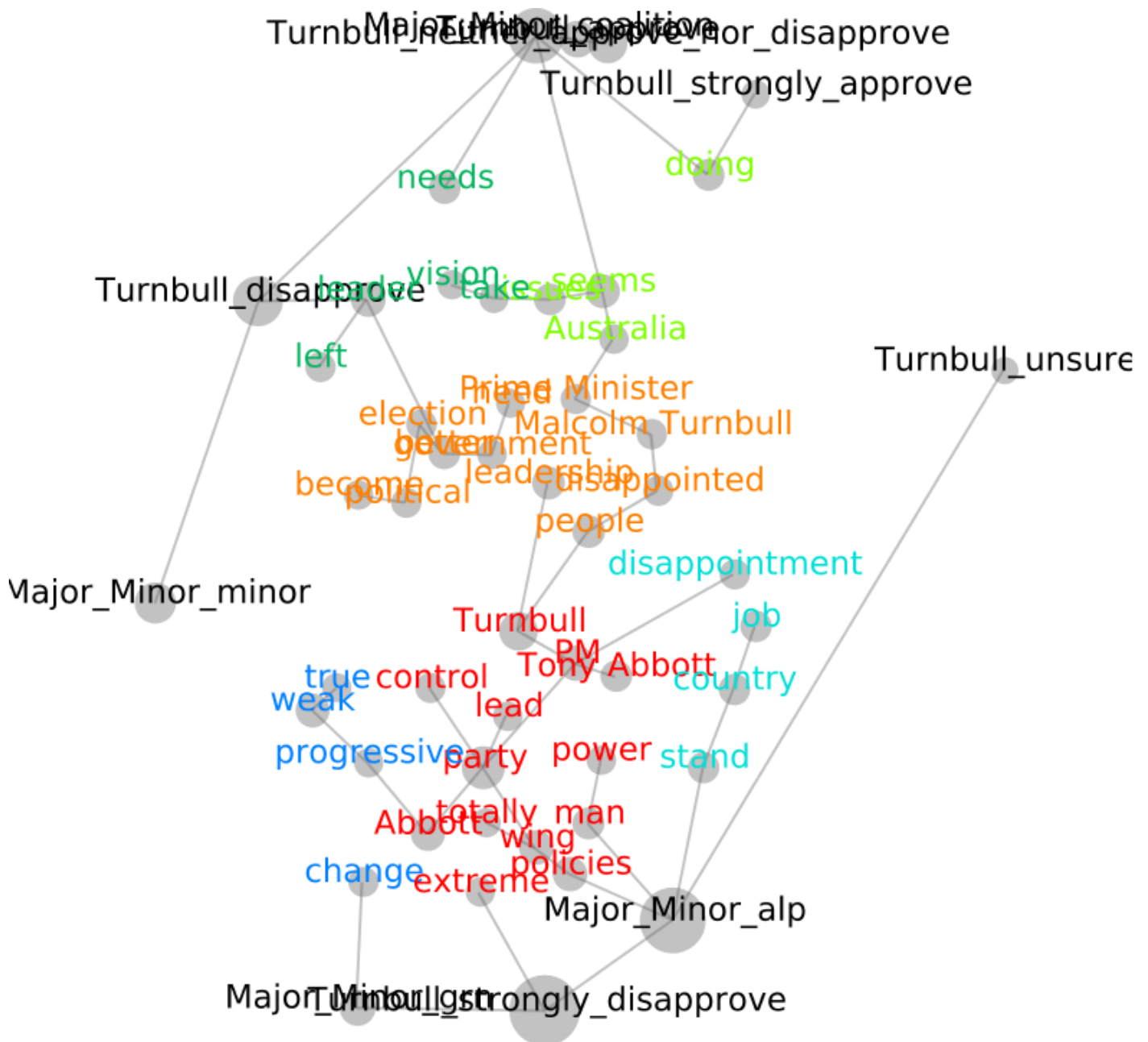
I believe Labor would be able to work with the minor parties and cross-benchers better and thus provide more stable government.

I find Malcolm Turnbull's position to have been compromised so much by his subservience to One Nation and the right wing of his own party that I just cannot vote for him. The coalition's front and back bench have a collection of really awful people.

Labor got much more done under Gillard, than Abbott or Turnbull could even dream about. The great "unwashed" bought the economic crisis "scare" peddled out by the Coalition.

As above but also I require a government that is willing to discuss issues and negotiate outcomes and clearly reflects societal values. the Tony Abbot approach of bullying is immature, hate fuelled and destructive.

Thinking about Malcolm Turnbull as Prime Minister, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of the job that he is doing?



Verbatims

I think everyone hoped and believed and Turnbull would have been preferable to the vile, self serving and totally corrupt fascist, Abbott. Sadly, people's optimism quickly turned to despair when they realised that Turnbull was just like the rest of the weak, self-entitled members of the morally bankrupt LNP, and nothing more than a shallow, ineffective liar who turned out to be an obsequious minion to the hysterical, ultra right wing members of Abbott's lunatic fringe.

He is soft, weak, left wing and pandering. He also has no business in unprofessional behaviour such as slandering other elected leaders (ie Trump) or effectively selling out our country and culture by dining with islamists and making us pick up the bill for his moral preening and political correctness display.

I suppose because I was happy with Tony Abbott as PM perhaps my opinion is biased, but I felt he was a stronger man than Turnbull and more people oriented. he never hesitates when it comes to joining in public fund-raising, surf lifesaving and fire fighting.

Turnbull is certainly an improvement on the stuttering Tony Abbott, BUT, Turnbull is still not blunt; decisive; active/progressive, and needs to keep his backbenchers and Abbott in tighter control.

Turnbull is in an impossible situation with the right wing of the party led by Tony Abbott continually criticising his leadership. If the liberals had any spine they would dismiss Abbott from the party.

Turnbull has well and truly lived up to the promise of poor, untrustworthy performance, as apparent in his earlier role in the Republic referendum, his disreputable conduct as then Opposition Leader concerning Mr Gotch, and his two-facedness/wimpishness, especially on major environmental and justice issues, during the Howard government years and, now, as Prime Minister himself.

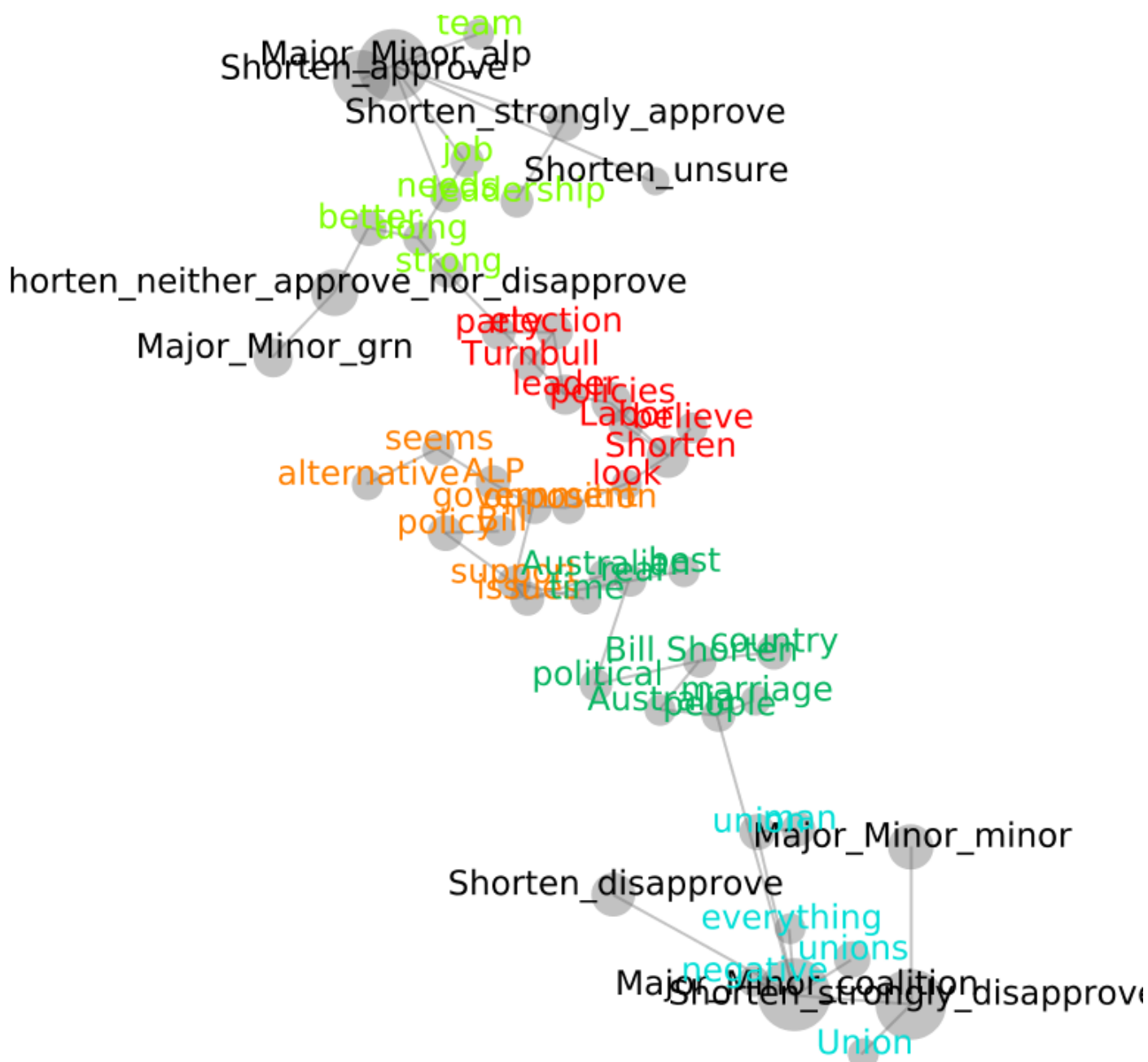
I was very pleased when Malcolm Turnbull became Prime Minister, since then I have become very disenchanted with his performance. I recognise he has a difficult time having such a small majority in the lower house but he seems to have become bogged down in petty issues.

He has sacrificed his own principles (to judge from the stance he has taken previously on some issues) for the sake of obtaining the leadership of the party. He also continues the trend of previous recent political leaders in seeking to politicise issues wherever possible.

Has not done enough to gather support from the people and continuing to follow Tony Abbotts policies not creating his own being a stand alone PM, party mechanics have him over a barrel

He isn't a good enough politician, he has no vision for Australia and can't relate with the working class. He claims to be pragmatic but this appears to hide his weaknesses, I'm disappointed that he hasn't come out with a statement about his views on the freedom of speech issues facing Australia.

Thinking about Bill Shorten as Leader of the Opposition, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of the job that he is doing?



Verbatims

Shorten has grown in the role of Opposition Leader, despite any limp support at the most from popular media - to my mind, he is more trustworthy, honest, caring, even-handed and competent than Turnbull could ever pretend to be. He has been right to resist various government pressures to support bad decisions for Australia and has proven to be good at maintaining Party discipline.

Mr Shorten's denial of a public vote on the definition of marriage has made sure that I will NOT support Labor at all, even though, in the past, I was a member of the Labor Party for a long time and served on election campaigns, Federal Electorate Council and State Electorate Council plus other committees.

When Shorten was chosen as ALP leader I was not very impressed with him He has proven me wrong by uniting a divided party and focussing on policy development to make labor a viable candidate for government.

He is a negative self interested individual hell bent on doing everything he can for himself, the ALP and the unions he had no interest of the long term good of the country at heart

He is a two faced whingeing pathetic excuse who wont be honest with the Australian people and admit that Labor caused the debt problem we have and continue to block attempts to fix the problem. He is a typical Labor leader - all puff and no substance.

During the recent election Shorten highlighted the government's deficiencies and put forward viable policies to address the issues confronting the country. He continues to do so in the new parliament.

Shorten is constantly belittled by some in the media but he has focused on talking to Australians, holding town hall meetings and he has surrounded himself with bright and forward thinking colleagues who are supporting his policies to make this country a better place for all not just the wealthy few!

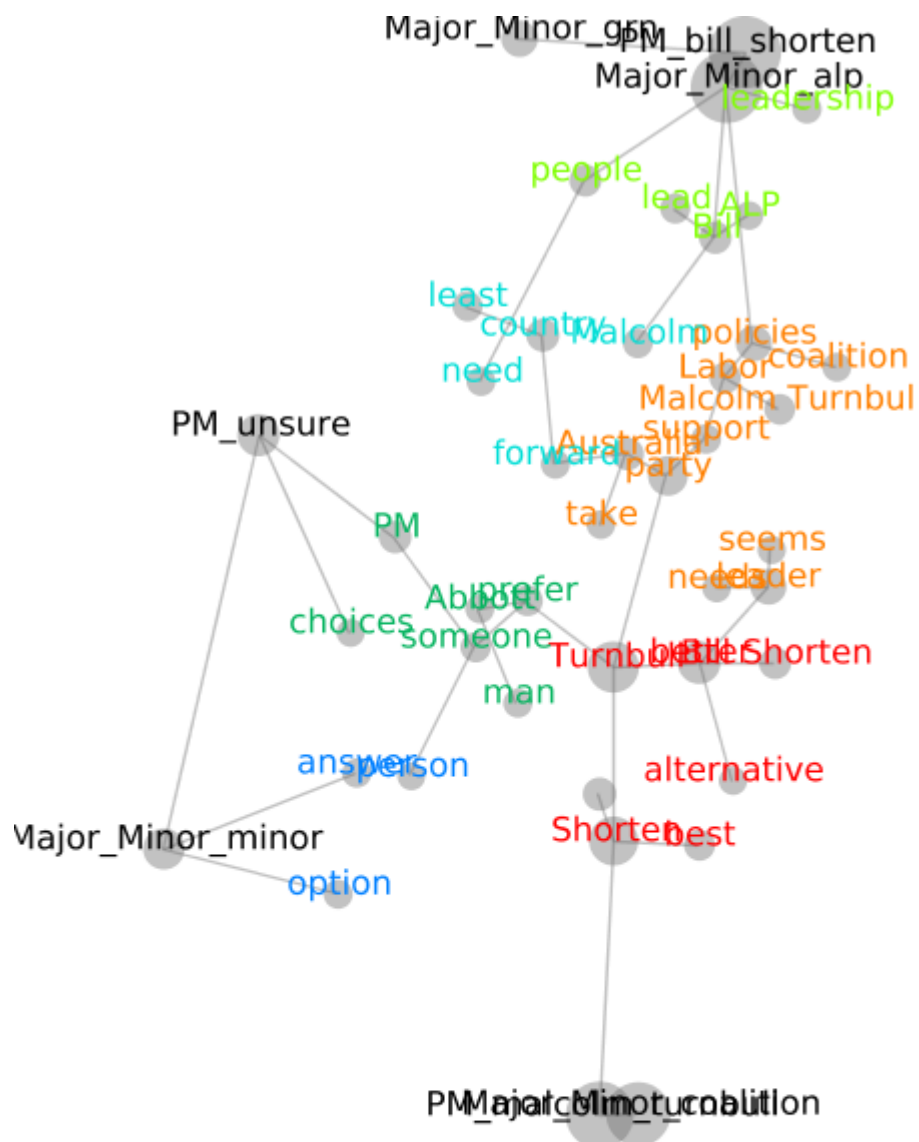
I don't feel confident that Bill Shorten is a strong leader. I worry the Labor party is obstructionist for the sake of political point scoring.

Bill Shorten introduced blatant dishonesty into the election (lies about Medibank) and into every day Australian life. He will criticise a policy using incorrect information and facts and nobody can do anything.

Bill Shorten has to my surprise become very good in the job as leader but he does have a great team behind him who make him shine.....and I do notice he is clever enough to put great Ministers like Penny Wong and Anthony Albanese and Tanya Pleibercz out in front to make him look good.

Verbatims

choice



the tax man Morrison, the group of religious freaks and then there is (Rudd) I mean Abbott it is good to watch him wrecking Malcolm.

Shorten's policies are better for Australia. He leads a united party which has learnt its lessons while Turnbull is struggling with a divided party whose extremists I fear .

I think Turnbull has a better presence than Shorten, but I would prefer to see someone else leading the country - I just can't identify that person yet.

Do not generally support the liberal party, but also not sure how good Shorten would be. Turnbull is the best statesman the nation has followed by Julie Bishop.

I think Mr Shorten's view of the world and Australia's place in it is more realistic than Mr Turnbull's, Mr Shorten seems to me to be trying to build policies that will advance Australia while Mr Turnbull seems more intent in holding onto his leadership of the Coalition.

I prefer Turnbull if and when he acts as we expected, especially when he replaced Abbott. However if he continues to fall short of expectations then I prefer Shorten.

Actually my answer is "Neither" but that option is not offered. Turnbull has been a disappointment and Shorten a distasteful disaster - bring back Tony Abbott even with his faults

Besides, a man so privately wealthy who could sit at home and retire has to be admired for caring enough to put himself through all the crap a PM has to take to make the differences he sees is needed for Australia whether you agree with him or not.

In the current predicament of wage stagnation and undermining of skills training and the "work choices" by stealth state of affairs trade unions are critical to protection of workers' rights, working in collaboration with employers to ensure decent pay and working conditions. The full-time employee workforce in this country is shrinking, as more jobs are converted to contract only (teachers, nurses, community workers).

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Compared to any other organisation in Australia, including religious, trade unions represent the largest group of people. They are the only thing standing between the continuation of worker rights and the minimum wage and employers wanting to reduce wages and conditions.

the unions once looked after the workers - now they just look after the unions. They have traded away conditions whenever they could screw a few dollars out of employers to fatten the union coffers and then give that money to political wings or other parties.

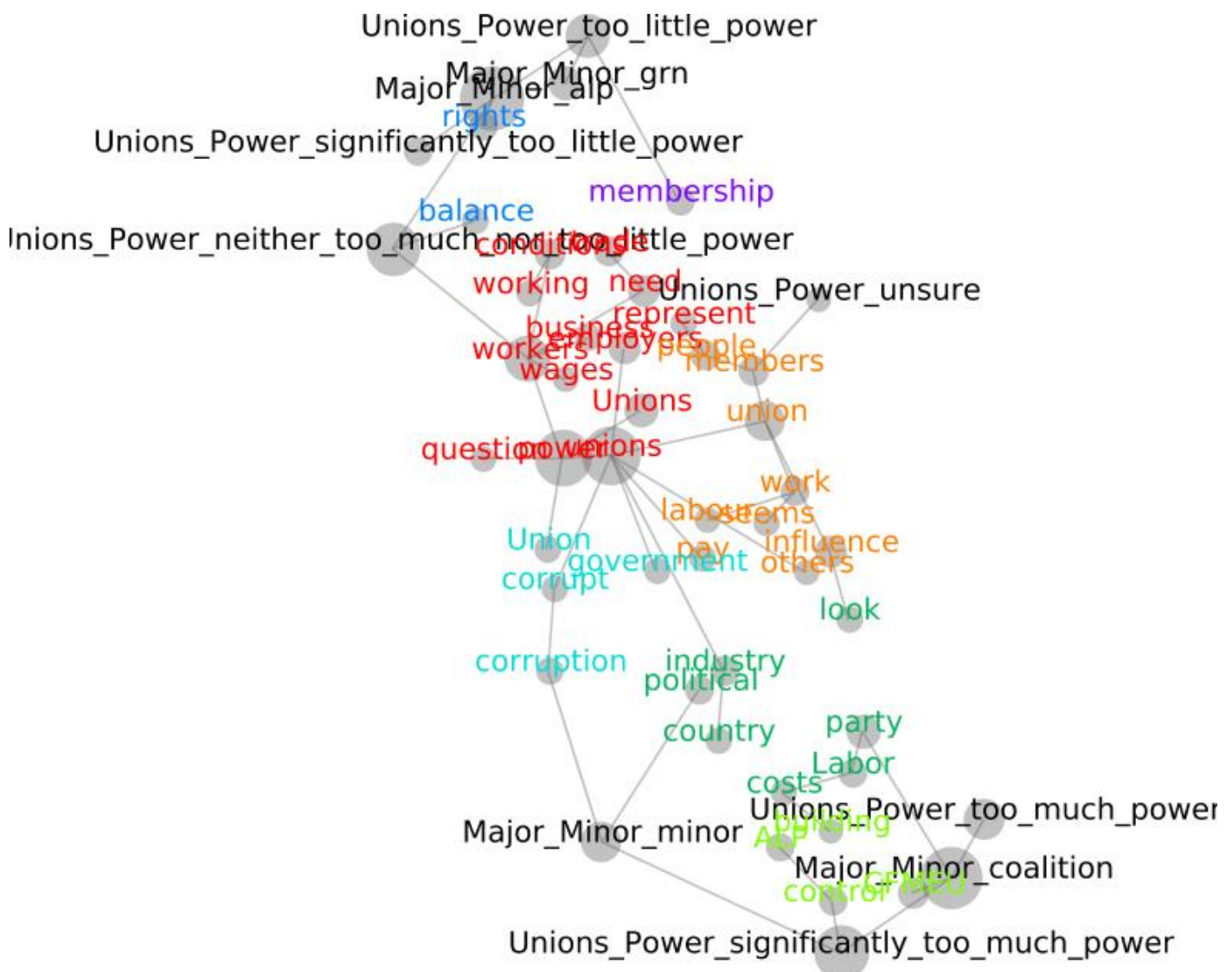
When labour regulations had to be enforced after the first world war the unions did good work in developing better working conditions and wages. Now the unions are all about wielding power, forcing those they don't like or won't play their games out of business and giving preferential deals to their mates.

Trade unions represent a balance in employer/employee relations, preventing railroading of workers and the imposition of dangerous working conditions to make a buck. They are the most effective balance available in society to counter this.

The days of Trade Unions working in the workers interests has far gone - today they are nothing less than a mixture of thugs or people manipulating power and a pathway to being endorsed for parliamentary elections

The general public today takes for granted the working conditions and industrial protections that trade unions have secured for them. I guess trade unions are a bit like teachers - no matter the good they do, they are also very soft targets for right ring press run by elites with an agenda that doesn't exactly fit the common good.

Do you think trade unions have too much or too little power in Australia today?



Verbatims

If unions like the CFMEU can shut down fair workplaces at the drop of a hat and cost employers millions of dollars, if they pay the fines the times they are caught and go right on breaking the law while bankrolling leftist political groups outside the electoral laws on donations something needs to change. The ALP and Greens are their subbranches.

There are some trade unions that are way out of step and I don't like the hold they have over the Labor party, but on the while they are responsible and work well with fair employers. Trade unions are actually good for fair employers as they make certain the ratbags can't get away with unjustly lowered labour costs.

Successive Tory governments have undermined the ability of unions to properly do their job by watering down trade union rights in legislation, tipping the balance of power towards employers.

I do not blame the rank and file workers but i do blame the organisers. For the past fifty years we have seen the rise of the political union leader who used the weaker unions as a stepping stone to their own power.

They are a necessary evil to balance the power of employers, who too often want to take advantage of workers. We're no longer routinely paralysed by general strikes and working conditions and wages are slipping, but not too drastically so.

When we see the outcomes when trade unions have too little power; - such as the black lung disease in Queensland miners, the exploitation of workers in businesses like 24/7, the death and serious injuries in the construction industry - the consequences for workers are unacceptable.

We need to see trade unions as a power balance. However, in many people's mind they've been totally delegitimized, especially by workers who still enjoy what unions have negotiated over the years.

Unions engage lie and mislead people in policy debates. They argue for higher pay and unreasonable conditions, without any expectation of better performance or greater productivity, and the fact that they have no interest in seeing a business increasing productivity or doing well just results in people losing jobs and factories closing.

Day by day unions are being emasculated by those who are anti-labour. By all means get rid of union bully boys, and those who encourage them, but workers should support their unions more openly to strengthen their ability to see off governments who want to use labour hire companies that they can control

A network graph visualization showing relationships between various terms. The central node is 'Unions_Compulsory_no'. Other nodes include 'Major_Minor_alp', 'Major_Minor_grn', 'Major_Minor_minor', 'Major_Minor_coalition', 'Unions_Compulsory_yes', 'Unions_Compulsory_no', 'benefits', 'work', 'conditions', 'employers', 'workers', 'need', 'members', 'working', 'employees', 'Union', 'Unions', 'able', 'support', 'choose', 'rights', 'unionism', 'power', 'political', 'party', 'choice', 'free', 'country', 'freedom', 'Freedom', 'forced', 'join', 'job', 'people', 'believe', 'union', 'member', 'fees', 'compulsory', 'membership', 'unions', 'major', 'minor', 'coalition', 'party', 'no', 'yes', 'grn', 'alp', 'min', 'coal', 'party', 'no', 'yes'.

We all have the power to elect our political representative so why should a worker be forced to join unions which have a history of violence towards, intimidation of, and complete disregard for

its members. Unions should be optional and completely transformed back to the original reason for their being to protect and enhance the working life of its membership.

I answered that way because when unions and their members are able gain benefits or improvements in working conditions, all employees access them. Those who are unwilling to pay for membership or take reasonable industrial action in support of their unions are riding free on the coat tails of those who do.

Even though I seriously support unions, I don't believe that membership should be compulsory. In simple terms, employees should be given a choice as to whether (or not) they join a union - it is undemocratic to force people to join an organisation they do not want to join or cannot afford to join.

If you choose to accept the wages and conditions negotiated by Unions you should pay the membership fees The Professional workers like doctors and chemists, pilots etc call their union an Association and all have to be Members for insurance and other matters

I am not sure that forcing people to be in a union would improve people's attitudes towards them. On the other hand, along with a campaign demonstrating improved workers rights attributable to the unions and how quickly these rights can be stripped away, compulsory union membership might be the way to go.

Because sadly, even in 2016, workplaces can be unsafe and exploitative and even bully people and not everyone (especially with lower paid work) has the intellect or the literacy to be able to fight for their rights against companies with lawyers and staff that are educated to defend the companies position. That is why unions work for ordinary workers.

If Unions performed for the benefit of their members there would be no reason to make union membership compulsory - workers would join.

Union dues are a burden to the average worker and the payments they are forced to make are not helping anyone but union bosses. Unions, rather than being there to support the worker, have become rich businesses in themselves and those they employ enjoy good wages and excellent working conditions - sometimes unlike those they purport to help.

[illegible]

Construction costs are sky high, which limits ability of government and others to build infrastructure. Part of the problem is that unions thwart the proper functioning of the site, causing unnecessary delays, and talking with some people I know in the industry they tell me that [name of underworld figure deleted] operates a business where construction companies pay him to negotiate with unions so they don't cause problems, and he pays them a cut.

There are already agencies that could enforce a building code, and the criminal law could be used to ensure that any union officials who resort to unlawful practices are dealt with. While the government is content in letting the banks and large corporations be dealt with by non-specific commissions, and there are all too often examples of the ordinary person being taken advantage of by these organisations, it is biased to concentrate on unions.

I support the establishment of a commission for the building industry because I believe that there has been corruption and standover tactics by union officials in the building industry. I have a friend who is involved in the building industry and some of the stories that he has told me, about unions abusing their power, have influenced my support.

Because it will begin to break the criminal association between stand-over unionists and compliant companies who accede to their bully-boy tactics, thus pushing up the cost of government infrastructure projects - thus saving the taxpayer a lot of money that could be more profitably used elsewhere (even retiring debt), and just as importantly, severely crimping the union's ability to bankroll the equally criminal ALP.

There is corruption in the building industry but to target only unions and their officials instead of the industry as a whole is discriminatory. Some provisions in the legislation abrogate human rights and are symptomatic of totalitarian regimes.

While the bill may seem heavy handed, the construction unions only have themselves to blame because of their appalling behaviour which is more about union bosses' power than workers' legitimate rights.

I can't say I understand the details of the bill but as you have stated it it would be unfair to exclude tenders. I don't have a problem with regulation but I find it ironic that the government touts a free market except when it suits them to apparently regulate this particular industry in order to put the boot into unions

probably just another bureaucratic body that is there only for government to wave a big stick at a particular union, beligerant members of which could be neutralized through common laws that are already in place, without taking out the main functions of the union concerned (such as collective bargaining, taking care of safety of the workers, representing members in legal situations etc.)

While I do not believe everyone should be forced to join a union, this is a good way for employees to pay their fees with less pain than a lump sum, and ensures that all gains made by the union are paid for by those who receive the gains. It can ensure good working relationships between employer and employee if used appropriately by giving a balanced of power.

Another example of thuggery where Unions can push employers to agree to conditions while stripping away the rights of men and women to perform a job to the best of their abilities. People should take a good look at big constructions like the Commonwealth Games to see where sweetheart deals do not necessarily mean good practice.

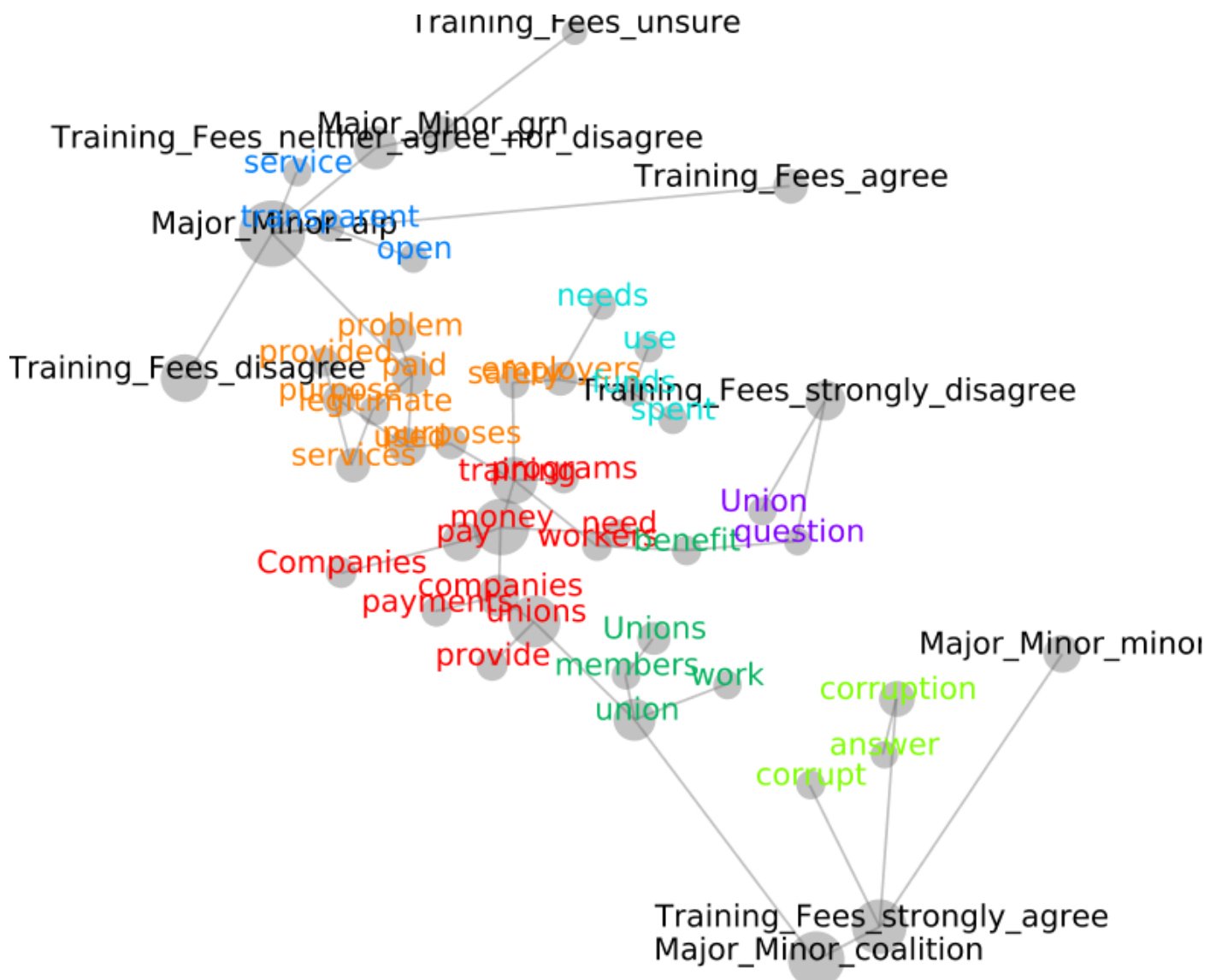
this counters the freedom of choice every Australian should have. I approve of employers making it easy for employees to have TU fees deducted from their pay but it should not be compulsory.

Non union labour should not benefit from the success of unions in securing conditions and rights for their members.

The virtual condition that employees join the union is not acceptable. There is nothing wrong in employers deducting union subscription from employees' wages/salaries and remit to the unions in payroll.

In my opinion it is immoral for unions to be interfering with workers and their relationship with employers. We have laws enough to protect employees without union bullying.

Trade unions are sometimes paid fees by companies for things such as training, marketing, workplace health and safety advice and programs. This was identified in the Trade Union Royal Commission as a problem because although large amounts of money were paid, that money was not used for training or other specified purposes. How strongly would you agree or disagree that companies should not be able to pay any money to trade unions?



Verbatims

I think that it would be legitimate for companies and trade unions to contribute to funds for relevant workplace and industrial projects such as training. If money is to pass from corporates to unions, then there needs to be transparency and certainty that the projects have been conducted, and attended by the workers who were intended to benefit.

I see no problem with companies helping in training etc but the whole deal should be transparent and open so the union members could see where the money was going and if it was being used for the purpose advertised

It's fine if companies pay unions money, but it MUST be for a real and specific purpose and MUST be spent on that purpose. Fine the shit out of any union that uses it as a "slush fund", and debar any of its officials who were involved in such corruption.

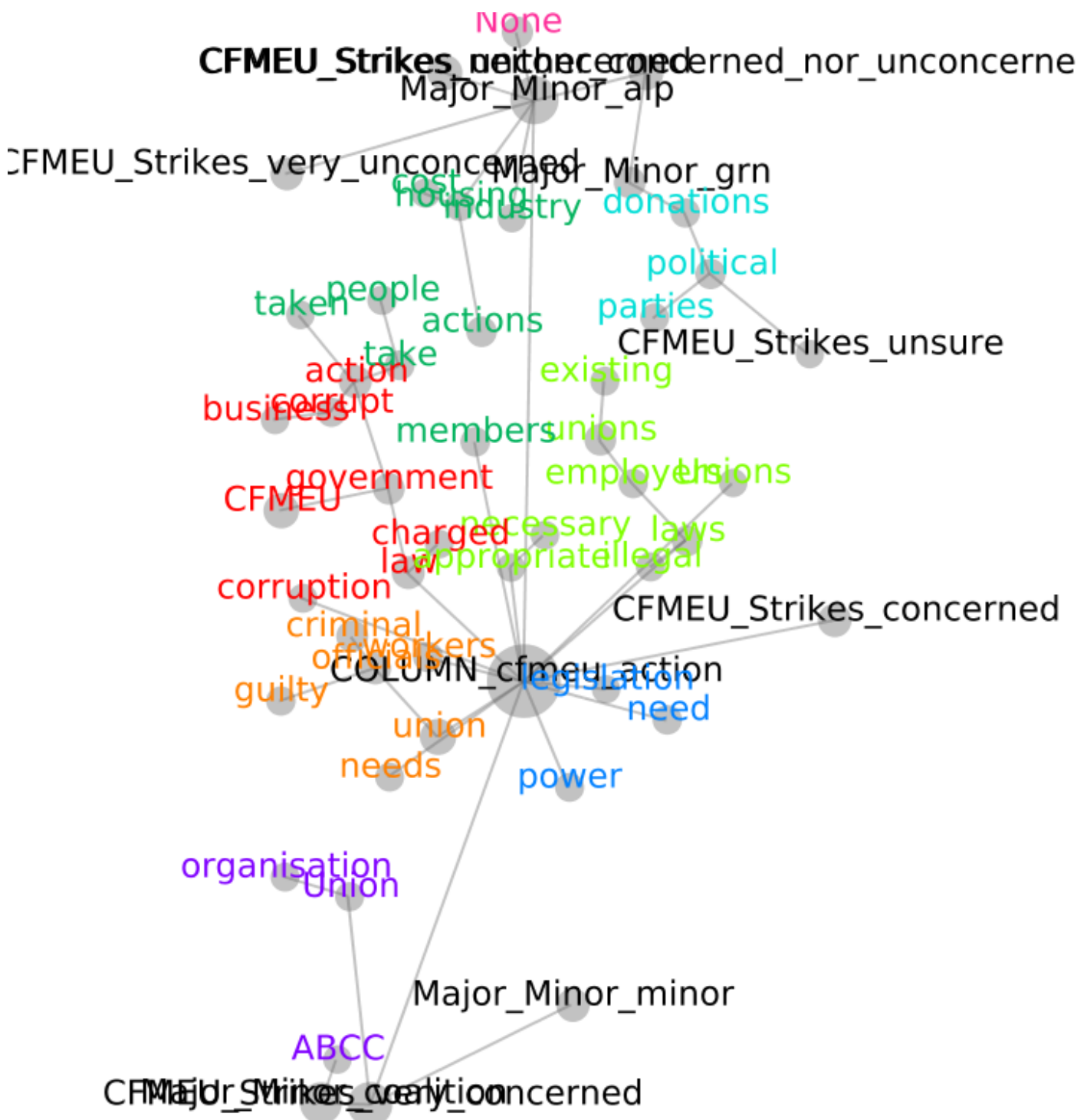
Again if the agreement to pay for training and other specified purposes is made openly and explained to all parties including the workers I have no problem with such payments. They are only problematic when the deal and its purposes are kept secret between the trade union leaders and the employers.

That appears to me to assist the unions in their corrupt control of the building companies. It is known that much money has been siphoned off by corrupt union leaders and there is not enough supervision of the use of the collected monies which can lead to more and more corruption of both the company bosses and union leaders.

The problem is not that companies pay money to trade unions, the problem is lack of checks and balances. If money is paid for a specific purpose, then that is what it should be used for.

Unions MUST be held liable for any funds provided to them by employers if those funds are spent elsewhere. The clear and transparent use of corporate and membership funds is imperative if unions wish to maintain credibility.

In your own words, what action, if any, do you think the federal government should take against the CFMEU?



Verbatims

The government should take any appropriate action on a case by case basis and using existing laws and legislation which already largely exist for any alleged illegal activity. There is no case to

create additional laws which are likely only intended to curb union power for political and ideological reasons.

The CFMEU is a law unto itself, and unfortunately has such resources that apparently significant fines are (eventually) paid, and regarded as a normal cost of "doing business" In fact they are in many cases in open rebellion against the rest of Australia, and they bully pretty well any one they choose with no real consequences at the moment. The solution is to charge, convict and imprison officials proven to be guilty of offences, and continue to do so until the problem is gone.

The federal government should take no less nor more action than is available under general federal law concerning unlawful actions by union officials or any other individual (including employers and managers). If federal law does not apply (and is unable to, for constitutional reasons), then action should be left to State law if applicable.

I think the Federal Government should treat malfeasance by CFMEU members - none of which has gone to court yet, and which was determined by a royal commissioner who was extremely biased and should never have been appointed - as individual criminal actions. It would also be nice to see a similar focus on the actions of the building industry, which is notoriously corrupt but which has been largely ignored by the government to date.

Wherever there is evidence that the CFMEU has broken the law they should be prosecuted. Union officials found guilty of corruption or other criminal activity should be banned from all future involvement in the union movement.

Both the officials of the CFMEU and the employers who were believed to be involved in criminal activities should be charged, tried and if found guilty dealt with in accordance to the criminal law. I don't see any need for special laws.

None!! When the government of the day takes action against business owners that screw workers , go bankrupt at the expense of tradies then I'll be more concerned about Unions actions.

Steps should be taken to: 1) Protect workers's rights and conditions, 2) Stamp out corruption in the union's operations, 3) Prevent the union from adopting standover tactics against employing companies, 4) Prevent unwarranted strikes or other actions that adversely affect the project's progress.