

# Queensland Election 2020 and COVID

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## Methodology

This poll is the second stage of our initial qualitative polling released on September 11, 2020.

As per that report the following tables and graphs are based on a sample which has been selected for voting intention based on the results of the YouGov poll published on June 7 in *The Courier Mail*.

Results should be taken as indicative in that the sample is not properly randomised, but it is unlikely that groups are completely unrepresentative.

In these tables we have amalgamated the Pauline Hanson One Nation, the Katter Australia Party and United Australia Party votes as one and labelled them "Nationalist". Given their small size in the sample, on their own they are not statistically significant, whereas combined in one group they are. These parties in our sample attract similar voters, with significantly more having voted Liberal or Liberal National previously than have voted Labor.

The poll was conducted August 27, 2020 through to September 2, 2020 using our online panel of over 13,000 Australian voters and only inviting people to participate who had Queensland postcodes.

Qualitative analysis was undertaken using Leximancer. Respondents were selected randomly from their various voting blocs. Quantitative analysis was undertaken using Microsoft Excel, and the respondents selected by voting intention for the qualitative analysis.

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## Executive Summary

The responses on COVID were surprisingly upbeat. On balance the sample seemed to be more positive than negative, almost as though COVID had given us some timeout for recuperation and regrouping for future growth.

While never stated, this is probably a product of the very low infection and death rates in Queensland.

Electorally it is an important issue with nearly three-quarters of our respondents (including 55% of LNP voters) rating COVID-19 as important to them in the next election, with only 12% rating it unimportant.

However, in an earlier unprompted question in the first half of the survey, only 18% mentioned COVID as the most important issue, with the economy (38%) and climate change (38%) more than twice as likely to be mentioned.

COVID is important but not the over-riding issue.

It is also an issue where the premier has an edge over the opposition. 65% agree with Anastacia Palaszczuk's border closure and only 24% disagree. In contrast support for the position of Deb Frecklington (which was initially to oppose, but now to support the closure) is relatively lukewarm but still positive at 51% approval.

The group most opposed to the border closure are One Nation and Katter Australian Party voters. Greens and the ALP are its strongest supporters, with the LNP participants only just in favour. Despite differences in the way the policy affects different parts of the state support appears to be very consistent everywhere.

While respondents supported Palaszczuk's border ban they also had questions about it. The "border bubble" idea was supported on the basis that you can't divide communities, but a number wanted to know why it couldn't extend further south, deeper into NSW, or why it couldn't be porous to a much wider range of locations, so long as they weren't hotspots.

Support for Frecklington's position on the borders is undermined to some extent by a suspicion that she is just posturing for votes and would have done something quite different if she were actually premier.

When it comes to wider COVID policy, there is more of a divergence between the public and the state government. We asked respondents to describe the government's policy, and then to describe their ideal policy. The difference in emphasis was enlightening.

The public sees the government's top two priorities as borders then people, whereas they would retain them as top priorities but put people first. They accept the government's position that they are just following medical advice, and that is what you should do, but nevertheless they have their own tweaks.

They put more emphasis on people who are vulnerable isolating themselves, and people who have infections quarantining themselves and that more weight should be put on distancing, testing and masks.

The voluntarism inherent in these suggestions mirrors the fact that in March, weeks before the lockdown, these are the sorts of things that people were doing themselves without the need for a government edict.

The most interesting responses in our survey were on the question of whether things would go back to normal.

Only slightly more than a third (36%) think things will go back to normal while 39% think things will change. 24% are unsure. But there is more agreement than you might think.

“Normal” is a dynamic concept for many respondents, and doesn’t mean things will be exactly the same, just that they expect an absence of COVID restrictions.

So the percentage who see COVID bringing permanent change is higher than the raw figures suggest because they believe that COVID has shown us better ways of doing the same things.

They foresee a continuation of trends such as working from home, internet shopping, less use of public transport, holidaying domestically rather than internationally, washing hands more frequently and telehealth.

They predict there will be an exodus to the suburbs and the regions, and hope that the pause in the automatic workings of the world will make us more introspective and less materialistic.

There’s a saying that you should “never let a good crisis go to waste”. Our respondents see plenty of opportunities in the COVID crisis. On the left it is a chance to push climate change agendas. This is part of the move away from materialism, as well as a perceived need to boost the economy through capital expenditure. The most obvious avenue is increasing the amount of renewable energy.

Protectionists – more the Nationalist minor party voters than anyone else – put the emphasis on localising production and bringing industries home. Surprisingly there was an awareness of the way in which universities have become beholden to overseas students and a belief this needs to change as well.

The right and the left also seemed to agree that we should look at our immigration levels again and reduce them. Reasons for this are varied, from protecting the environment, to moderating house prices and decreasing congestion.

From the regions, and with the idea of the need to reboot the economy as an ally, there was also a call for a greater emphasis on water conservation projects, like dams.

Some respondents defined a return to normal as the complete absence of COVID, putting a lot of faith in an effective vaccine. At the same time others were very skeptical about a vaccine with one participant describing it as a “hope” rather than a solution. For others normal meant learning to live with COVID.

On balance, irrespective of whether they thought things would return to normal, however defined, most respondents were optimistic seeing a “same but different” future. There were, however, a few pessimists who thought COVID had done that much damage that nothing would ever be the same again.

## Quantitative Analysis

Thinking about government and opposition policies to deal with COVID-19, how important will they be in determining your vote at the next state election?

	ALP	Grns	LNP	Nationalist	Other	Total
<b>VI</b>	71%	33%	26%	35%	17%	42%
<b>SI</b>	29%	47%	29%	29%	33%	32%
<b>N</b>	0%	10%	23%	21%	33%	14%
<b>Un</b>	0%	10%	15%	9%	17%	9%
<b>VU</b>	0%	0%	6%	6%	0%	3%
<b>U</b>	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>TI</b>	100%	80%	55%	65%	50%	74%
<b>TU</b>	0%	10%	22%	15%	17%	12%
<b>NI</b>	100%	70%	33%	50%	33%	62%

n=241

Code: VI=Very Important, SI=Somewhat Important, N=Neither Important nor Unimportant, Un=Unimportant, VU=Very Unimportant, U=Unsure

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk has closed the border between Queensland and New South Wales, but allows movement across the border for those in an area called the "border bubble". How strongly do you agree or disagree with this policy?

Row Labels	ALP	Grns	LNP	Nationalist	Other	Total
<b>SA</b>		47%	43%	13%	6%	28%
<b>A</b>		44%	37%	34%	35%	37%
<b>N</b>		4%	3%	14%	9%	9%
<b>D</b>		4%	10%	18%	6%	10%
<b>SD</b>		0%	0%	18%	41%	13%
<b>U</b>		1%	7%	2%	3%	3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>TA</b>		91%	80%	47%	41%	65%
<b>TD</b>		4%	10%	37%	47%	24%
<b>NA</b>		87%	70%	10%	-6%	41%

n=240

Code: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree, U=Unsure, TA=Total Agree, TD=Total Disagree, NA=Net Agree

Opposition leader Deb Frecklington originally called for the border to be opened by July, but now supports the premier's policy. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of this position?

	ALP	Grns	LNP	Nationalist	Other	Total
<b>SA</b>	23%	14%	7%	11%	50%	14%
<b>A</b>	41%	46%	37%	17%	33%	36%
<b>N</b>	16%	11%	21%	11%	0%	16%
<b>D</b>	8%	4%	23%	31%	0%	17%
<b>SD</b>	11%	14%	11%	26%	0%	13%
<b>U</b>	1%	11%	2%	3%	17%	3%
Total	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>TA</b>	64%	61%	43%	29%	83%	51%
<b>TD</b>	19%	18%	34%	57%	0%	30%
<b>NA</b>	45%	43%	10%	-29%	83%	21%

n=235

Code: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree, U=Unsure,  
TA=Total Agree, TD=Total Disagree, NA=Net Agree

Do you believe that Queensland will ever get back to the way it was before COVID-19?

	ALP	Grns	LNP	Nationalist	Other	Grand Total
<b>Y</b>	33%	23%	40%	46%	17%	36%
<b>N</b>	45%	40%	37%	34%	33%	39%
<b>U</b>	22%	37%	23%	20%	50%	24%
Grand Total	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>NY</b>	-12%	-17%	3%	11%	-17%	-3%

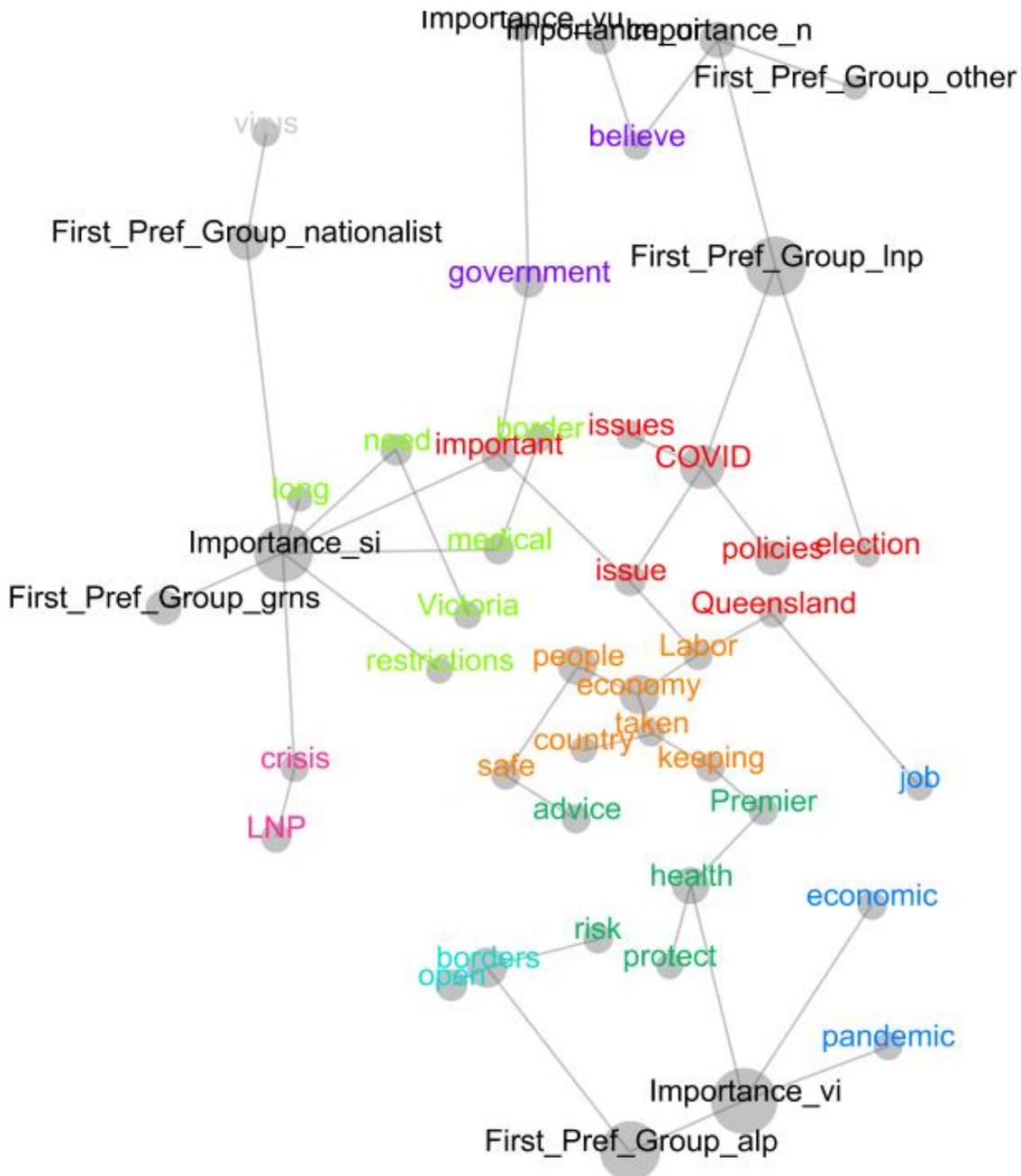
n=241

## 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 government and opposition policies to deal with COVID-19, how important will they be in determining your vote at the next state election?



Verbatims

The **Premier** has stuck to her policies; she has taken advice from health experts and been proven to be correct in keeping **Qlders** safe and trying to control this **Virus**. The **NLP** has called for borders to be re-opened regardless of the risk to health and again proven that the **NLP** is more concerned about supporting the economy than protecting people. and reducing deaths.

The **Labor Govt's** handling of the **Covid-19** crisis has been largely determined by expert medical advice, and a determination to be very cautious and conservative about travel

restrictions. The **LNP's** opportunistic attacks on travel restrictions have not found community support.

*How a government responds to a crisis is an important consideration, as we do need people who know how to do what is required to keep everyone (and I mean everyone, including the old, the disabled, the immunocompromised) safe and supported.*

*I don't believe this will be a lot of difference in policies on this matter except that the **Premier** has been strong in protecting our health even if it will be to the detriment of the economy.*

*I believe that keeping a tight border has been a potential vote-winner for **Labor**. The lack of state assistance for myself and many I know is a big negative and the anti-landlord stance for rental defaults was shameful.*

**Labor** keeping the borders closed has kept the state running in relative normality compared to **Victoria** and **NSW** the only two states to have open borders .

*Because until this **Pandemic** is under some sort of control, the country/State can't think of getting back to full capacity in terms of the economy generally, employment, studies/training, mental health of many people affected by it (the **Pandemic**).*

*Good management of this health issue is important because mismanagement can be extremely costly in terms of both bad health outcomes as well as the economic impact that can damage small businesses.*

*The opposition would put the economy ahead of health, throw open the borders and, almost certainly, we'd end up like **Victoria**.*

*The sanitized and brief statistics do not give the true picture of infections and deaths with the latter, in the majority of cases, elderly and infirm people with pre-existing medical conditions. The long term effects of the infection post recovery in all age groups is a major concern and once again politicians are not future saviors of the population in the long term.*

**Sweden** seems to have come through without destroying their economy or the morale of the people (look at the **Victorians**, imprisoned without parole) ditto **Taiwan** and **Singapore**. **Protect** the elderly and screen everyone accessing **Aged Care** facilities to protect the truly vulnerable.



*from COVID but for the economy it is devastating and Qld is a tourist destination and a lot of businesses rely on those tourists.*

*The current strategy is to drastically restrict access to people coming from the Hot zones in NSW and turning back those people from trying to arrive in Queensland from those NSW affected areas. There is an economic bubble in situ around border areas.*

*Lock the borders and close their eyes and hope it all goes away.*

*But it is clear they actually want to eliminate the virus, and to wait for a vaccine. Waiting for a vaccine isn't even a strategy, it is a hope.*



**Maintain** restrictions for people who desire entry from areas where the disease is established but provide less onerous conditions for others while retaining the ability to establish proof of exemption status. **Instead** of a general quarantine in **Queensland** stop entry at the border until bona fides are established.

Within 60 days the strategy was obvious. **Personal** hygiene and distancing **Firewall** the vulnerable with extra support **Test** sensibly **Trace**, isolate and quarantine **Border** closure as a last resort **Limit** restrictions to hot spots only rather than statewide

*I would have locked down more aggressively and kept the borders shut for longer, as well as provided whatever support possible for people out of work because of that, but honestly I'm not an expert.*

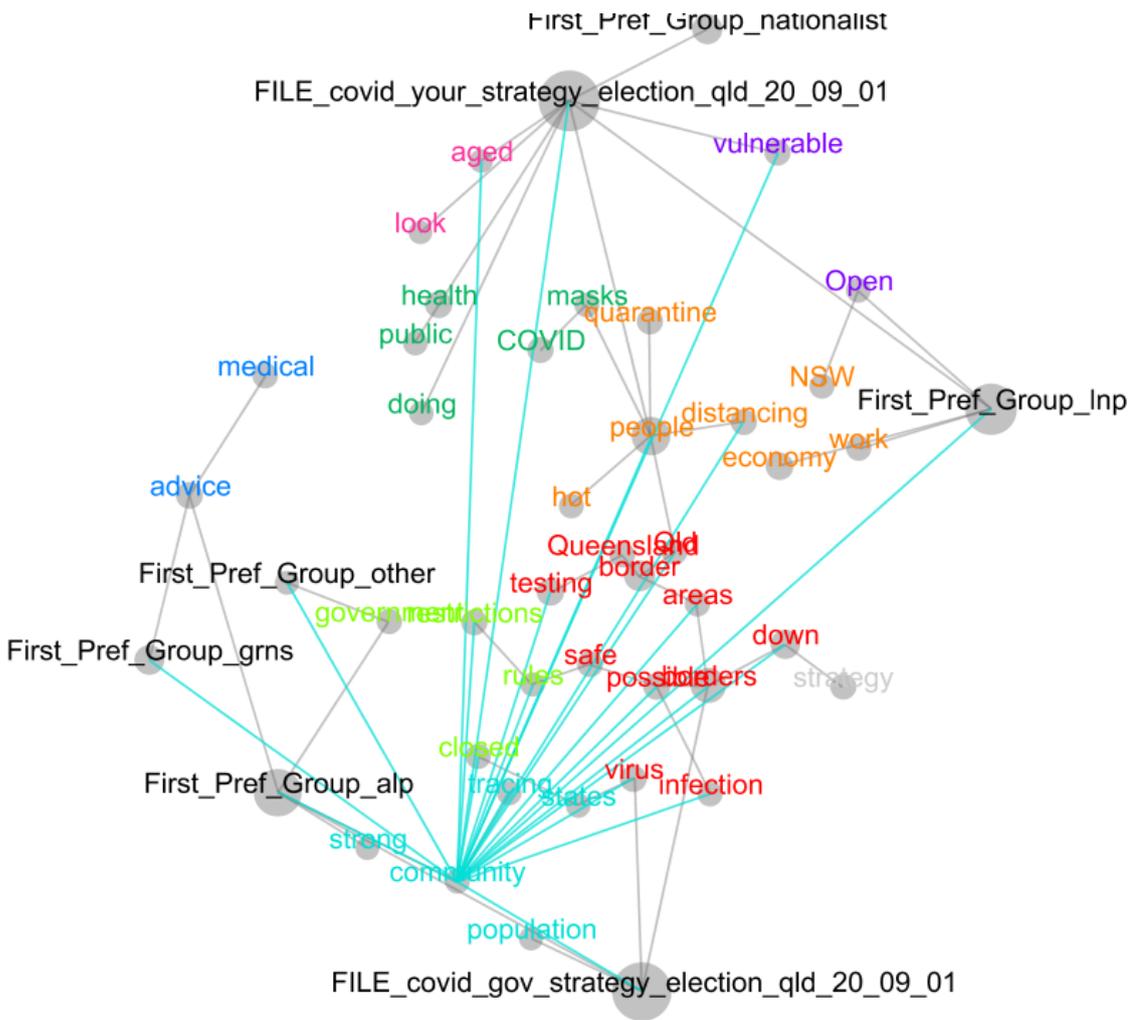
*I think I would do what has been done: take advice from health experts; keep borders closed from unnecessary transits; keep health institutions well funded and staffed; keep the public informed; stay true to good advice*

*First up, quality **Australian** made masks at a fair price, to our correct manufacturing standards. Then, all sufferers to be taken to 'field' hospitals separate to the public/private health system unless you declare a hospital solely for **COVID** sufferers **ONLY**.*

*A clear message from the start of the campaign that the economy would stay open and that sick people would stay home until they recovered just like they do with the usual flu. A message that life can't be preserved at all costs.*

*We need to continue social distancing and continue to be able to track people for identification purposes, but we should also be allowing "some" natural build up of natural immunity from this bug - this means allowing people to slowly come together. The closing of the **NSW/ QLD** border is a political stunt aimed squarely at the re election of the **Labor Government** and I think most ordinary **QLD's** will see through that.*

Comparison of government strategy with preferred strategy



Government Strategy			Your Strategy		
Word-Like	Count	Relevance	Word-Like	Count	Relevance
borders	32	36%	people	33	34%
people	24	27%	borders	22	23%
border	18	20%	vulnerable	18	19%
down	17	19%	down	17	18%
virus	13	15%	health	16	16%
possible	12	14%	advice	15	15%
economy	12	14%	border	14	14%
strategy	12	14%	medical	14	14%
advice	12	14%	quarantine	13	13%
safe	10	11%	economy	12	12%
infection	10	11%	distancing	10	10%
community	10	11%	testing	10	10%
tracing	9	10%	doing	10	10%
testing	9	10%	government	10	10%
population	9	10%	masks	9	09%
closed	8	09%	open	9	09%
restrictions	8	09%	possible	9	09%
contact	8	09%	work	9	09%
states	7	08%	aged	9	09%
control	7	08%	public	8	08%
keeping	7	08%	virus	8	08%
government	7	08%	strategy	7	07%
strong	7	08%	areas	6	06%
health	7	08%	hot	6	06%
transmission	6	07%	protect	6	06%
necessary	6	07%	cases	6	06%
cases	6	07%	need	6	06%
areas	6	07%	business	5	05%
hope	6	07%	support	5	05%
businesses	5	06%	start	5	05%
rules	5	06%	including	5	05%
			stay	5	05%



*I am very glad we're not experiencing the same incidence as **Victoria** or **NSW** hotspots so restrictions had to be in place. From day one there should have been a border bubble that was well planned for local access to hospitals, schools and work instead of sealing everything off then making incremental decisions as anger rose.*

***People** living in border areas need to be able to cross imaginary border lines for work/study/family etc. This is okay providing that they undergo frequent **Tests** for the virus.*

*It is insufficient - most local **Govt** areas of **Qld** have no recorded infections yet are excluded from any so called "bubble" enabling free movement*

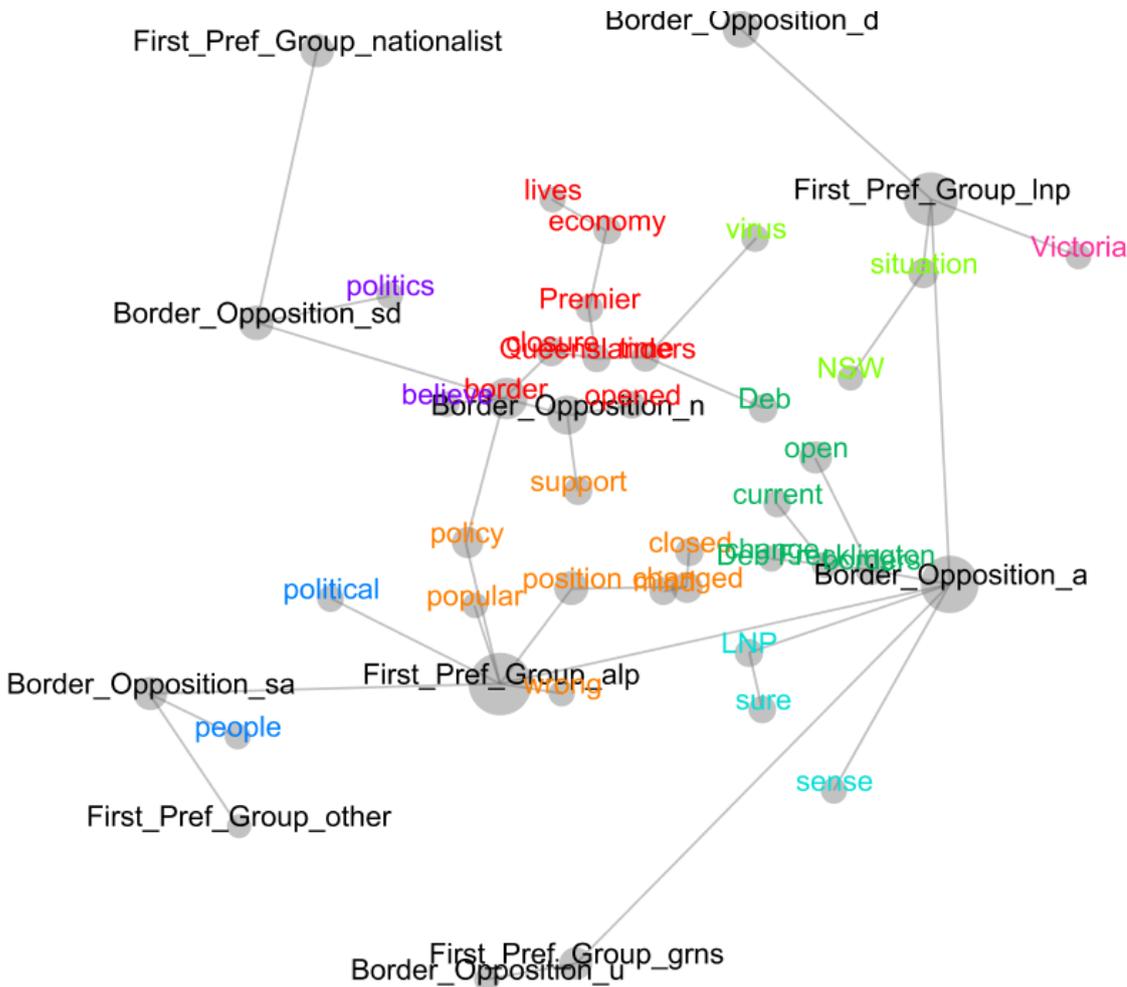
***QLD Police Commissioner** in the beginning suggested that border checks be conducted over **Tweed** river allowing a bubble to be in place to allow free movement for work, medical, agriculture and schooling necessities*

*The border is only closed to **Tourists** from infected communities and states. The alternative is to have infected people coming into the state and continuing to spread the virus in the community.*

*We have all made sacrifices to try to minimise the terrible effect this virus will have on our **Nation** so in my mind .. people who just want to visit to party and have fun can do so in their home town or State and do **NOT** have a right to come to **Qld** if that puts our citizens at risk.*

*The economic cost of running around shutting down businesses and areas that have community spread is way far worse than any limited border restriction. **NSW** is an example of the alternative - months of chasing their tails and still to curtail the virus.*

Opposition leader Deb Frecklington originally called for the border to be opened by July, but now supports the premier's policy. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of this position?



Verbatims

**Deb** couldn't be seen to disagree with the border closure with all the panic going on in **Sydney** and **Melbourne**. The **Premier** would be scoring points off her big time, boasting how she's saving **Queenslanders** where **Deb** would seem to care more about the economy than lives.

**Frecklington's** call to open the border prematurely was unwise and unjustified, and she had no option other than to support the **Premier**. It's an example of the **LNP's** cynical opportunism, and was always doomed to fail.

I'm not really sure that she supports the position, or whether an **LNP** government would have followed the same strategy and allowed the borders to remain open instead of closing them back in **March/April**.

Well ... which position? **Deb Frecklington** changed her position when the polling showed that **Qlders** did NOT want the borders open ... so how can we trust her to not change her position again ... if she thinks that will benefit her?

I am quite aware of **Deb Fecklington's** call at the time and it did appear to have substance till the virus stamped it's presence in **NSW**. The about face of her call is correct given how the situation with the virus in **Queensland** is evolving.

The **LNP** position has seemingly been solely to seek political advantage or representing a preference to prioritise the economy over public health.

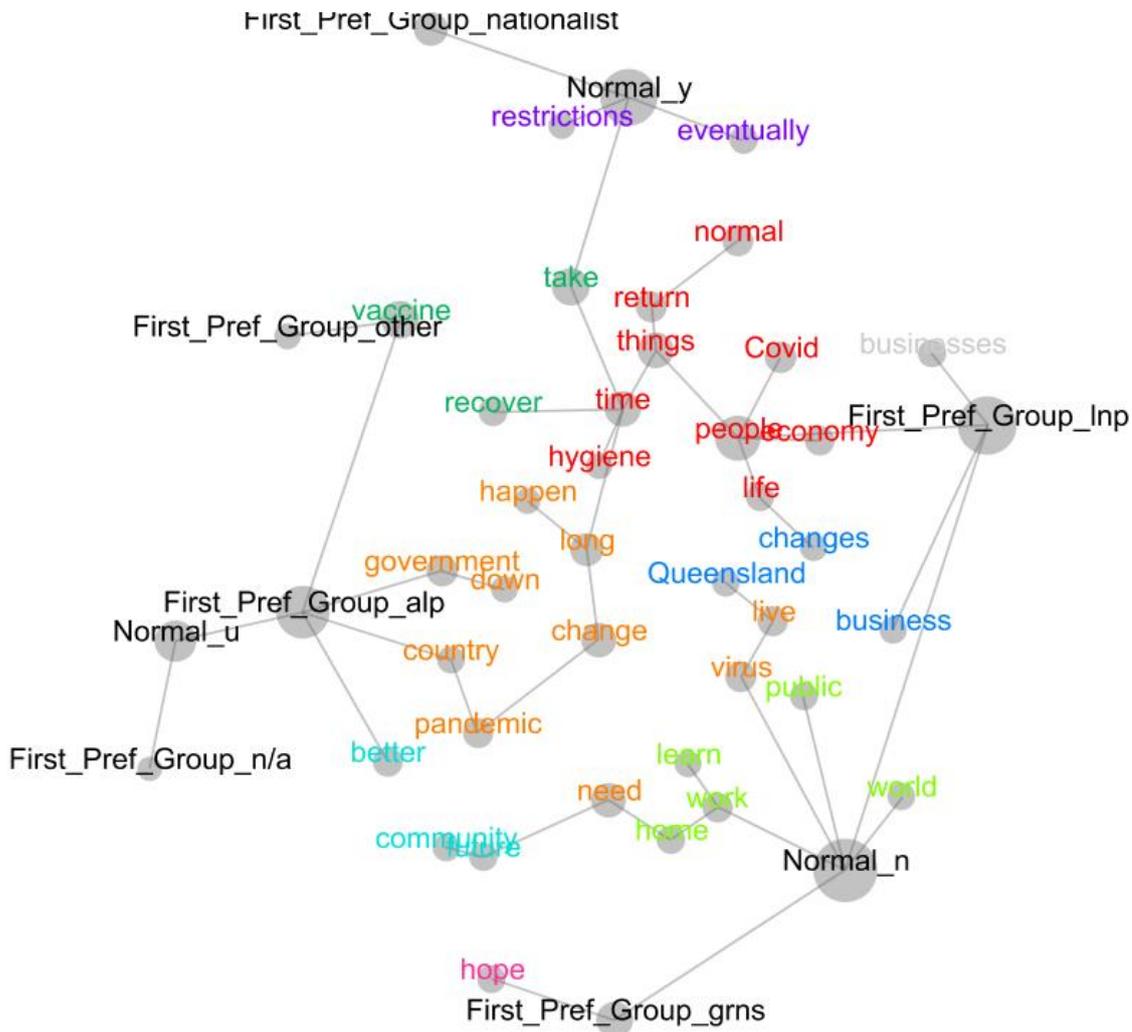
Yes, was a mistake to call for border to be opened. She doesn't understand the disease, human nature or is overly influenced by sectors who care about profit over the health of vulnerable **Queenslanders**.

Because she did not articulate her initial policy she had nowhere to go when **Palaszczuk** extended the border closure. **Had Frecklington** argued her case strongly **Palaszczuk** would never been able to extend the border closure

**Mrs Frecklington** was placed in an impossible position as she was not briefed on the subject and was being 'pushed' by her **Gold Coast** members. Since the order opened a bit she has adopted a different stance but I believe it is different to that of the **Government**.

I am not certain of **Ms Frecklington's** sincerity. If she had the opportunity after the election, would she revert to her original position, in spite of the **Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate** saying that the border should stay closed?

Do you believe that Queensland will ever get back to the way it was before COVID-19?



### Verbatims

Maybe we will work at how more often; maybe we will fund **TAFE** better; maybe we will start manufacturing our needs instead of importing everything; maybe we will only grow things that are needed by **Australians** and let some of our land be dedicated to a nurturing environment, providing enough water for rivers (not just growing cotton); maybe we will spend more time discovering our own country rather. that the almost obsequious need for 'overseas holidays'; and maybe we will realise that we need to tackle **Climate Change** to save our planet .... now that we have experienced what can happen when **Nature** takes control of a system we have broken ... maybe we will **LEARN** form this?

The economy will recover. Some things may change for the better: more flexible working hours/ working from home for part of the week/ more studies online/ all this necessitating less use of transport (public and private); people being more hygiene aware; etc. etc.

*It will take time, but eventually we will return to normal. **Having** said that people and businesses will have learnt to do things differently and these will not change - further innovation and how people purchase things will change permanently.*

*The responses to **Covid-19** have shown that the concept of business as usual in the face of **Covid-19** or another pandemic and in blissful ignorance of climate change is no longer acceptable. Therefore, we must undertake the necessary restructure without delay and the major changes which follow will preclude a return to past practices which are now unacceptable.*

*I sort of hope that maybe this pause in our lives may have given some people the impetus to evaluate what their lives were, and how they might change for the better. Perhaps we will collectively decide that we need to take better care of our country and our people.*

***COVID-19** provides us with some opportunities to improve the way the economy performs, people interact. A good government which is forward thinking needs to grasp the opportunities it will provide to make any required changes and improvements in **Queensland**.*

*The long march of, and to the **Left**, is well along the path to a socialist utopia in the lucky country. The **Left** have very effectively infiltrated our schools, universities, public sector and institutions affecting our values, way of life and corrupting our kids with progressive ideologies*

*The **Govt** will rebadge a flu vaccine in quick time and the bedwetters will get a jab and wonder what all the fuss was about. **After Labor** wins the election they will start to wind back the restrictions and encourage everyone to get a rebadged flu vaccine and get the economy back on track lol*

*Even were the virus to be eliminated, it ought to have taught the community the risk and benefits of future pandemics. **Adjusted** work practices, such as working from home where possible, may (and in my view should) become the norm.*

*we need a government who don't have blood on their hands abortion to full term, and spending \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ on pathetic changing the name of the **Lady Client Hospital** simply out of spite and proven to have **LIED** about the rigid survey. **Need** a government who want to govern not for the unions alone but all **Qlder's** and are prepared to start paying back the debt as well as proper planning for the future **IE**: - **Bradfield Scheme**.*

***Businesses** have found that people don't necessarily need to be in big cities to do their work so in the future more people will be working remotely. **People** have found that cities are not necessarily the best places to live and have begun moving to regional **Queensland**.*

*How many people have to work as baristas so they can afford to buy coffee? We need to get back to the real world where people could at least wait to get home for a coffee - or god help them, make their own cup of tea!*

**Universities** *have been going down the corporate route for a long time and it has been a disaster during the pandemic; it would be a good idea to completely overhaul the university system so it is not so dependent on any one student sector for its survival, and it regains some of its 'learning for its own sake' ethos and practice.*

*I have no confidence in the **Australian** government to manage the flow of people into our country because they mad such a mess at the beginning of the pandemic by being slow to shut down our borders and then being very lax in their management of ports and airports allowing many infected people to come directly into the community.*