



Universität Stuttgart

Institut für Sozialwissenschaften

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Politische Theorie und Empirische Demokratieforschung

**If I'll win it,
I want it.**

The Role of Strategic Considerations in Explaining Support for Direct Democracy

Across established democracies citizens express support for more direct democracy. The literature on value change suggests that this is the consequence of a more assertive citizenry that poses new expectations of the inclusiveness of democracy.

Yet, does this support as measured in surveys indeed indicate a normative preference for decision making by citizens? In this paper I argue that the desire for direct democracy is also driven by strategic considerations. Specifically, citizens that perceive themselves to be in the majority with their policy preferences express a higher support for the use of referendums. Using an original dataset collected in the Netherlands, I show empirically that process preferences vary across issues and the perceived likelihood of winning a referendum plays an important role in determining whether citizens want one or not.

This effect holds across issues and levels of governance. This study contributes to uncovering the actual meaning of citizens preferences more inclusive decision making procedures and emphasizes that a variety of reasons can drive such preferences that are potentially unrelated to citizens normative democratic ideals.

**Hannah
Werner**

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**Montag, 4. Dezember 2017,
17:30 - 19:00 Uhr, M 2.31**

Alle sind herzlich eingeladen!

KU LEUVEN



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