

Winter Term 2017/18

Direct Democracy

Prof. Dr. André Kaiser

Class Time: Fri 12.00 – 13.30

Classroom: Hörsaal des Forschungsinstituts

First session: 13 October 2017

Course description:

We will explore empirically the manifold institutions of direct democracy. All of them allow citizens to decide directly on actual policies, however in very different ways. We concentrate on the positive analysis of direct legislation across space and over time and study its effects on political interaction and policy output. Hence, we are not concerned with normative considerations of the pros and cons of direct democracy. We simply start from the assumption that direct democracy is a complementary aggregation mechanism for decision making in modern democracies alongside representative democracy.

Logistics:

Enrolment will take place in the first session. After that, no further enrolments will be accepted. Students are expected to:

- attend sessions regularly
- actively contribute to class discussions
- complete assigned readings according to schedule
- give a presentation in the seminar (for all participants)
- write a term paper of about 15 pages in length (individual research papers, team research papers with individual contributions of about 8 pages), handed in on 15 March 2018 (late assignments will be penalized, unless prior arrangements are made!).

Since nearly all reading assignments are in English, this will be the general classroom language as well. Participants therefore must know enough English to be able to participate actively. Perfection is not required – you just need to understand and make yourself understood.

Readings:

Maduz, Linda (2010). Direct Democracy. *Living Reviews of Democracy* 2 (<http://democracy.livingreviews.org/index.php/lrd/index>).

Jung, Sabine (2001). *Die Logik direkter Demokratie*. Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag.

A reader with the required texts will be made available to participants from early October.

Course schedule:

Course Introduction

- R: Lupia, Arthur and John G. Matsusaka (2004) Direct Democracy: New Approaches to Old Questions. *Annual Review of Political Science* 7: 463-82.

Types of direct democracy

- R: Jung, Sabine (2001) *Die Logik direkter Demokratie*. Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, chapter 3 (in particular pp. 80-96).

Variations in usage across space and over time

- R: Setälä, Maija (1999) Referendums in Western Europe – A Wave of Direct Democracy? *Scandinavian Political Studies* 22(4): 327-40.

Effects on voters: Participation and knowledge

- R: Benz, Matthias and Alois Stutzer (2004) Are Voters Better Informed When They Have a Larger Say in Politics? Evidence for the European Union and Switzerland. *Public Choice* 119(1-2): 31-59. Mendelsohn, Matthew and Fred Cutler (2000) The Effect of Referendums on Democratic Citizens: Information, Politicization, Efficacy and Tolerance. *British Journal of Political Science* 30: 685-98. Smith, Mark A. (2002) Ballot Initiatives and the Democratic Citizen. *Journal of Politics* 64(3): 892-903.

Effects on political parties: In the driver's or in the back seat?

- R: De Vreese, Claes H. (2006). Political parties in dire straits? Consequences of national referendums for political parties. *Party Politics* 12(5): 581-598. Uleri, Pier Vincenzo (2002) On Referendum Voting in Italy: YES, NO or non-vote? How Italian Parties Learned to Control Referendums. *European Journal of Political Research* 41(6): 863-83.

Effects on social movements and interest groups

- R: Kriesi, Hanspeter and Dominique Wisler (1996) Social Movements and Direct Democracy in Switzerland, *European Journal of Political Research* 30: 19-40. Elisabeth R. Gerber (1999) *The Populist Paradox. Interest Group Influence and the Promise of Direct Legislation*. Princeton, NJ: University of Princeton Press, chapters 6-7 (pp. 101-36).

The power of money

- R: Bowler, Shaun and Todd Donovan (2000) *Demanding Choices. Opinion, Voting and Direct Democracy*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, chapter 8 (pp. 147-63).

Minority rights

- R: Frey, Bruno S. and Lorenz Goette (1998) Does the Popular Vote Destroy Civil Rights? *American Journal of Political Science* 42(4): 1343-8. Gamble, Barbara S. (1997) Putting Civil Rights to a Popular Vote. *American Journal of Political Science* 41(1): 245-69. Haider-Markel, Donald P., Alana Querze and Kara Lindaman (2007) Lose, Win or Draw? A Reexamination of Direct Democracy and Minority Rights. *Political Research Quarterly* 60 (2): 304-14. **Optional:** Vatter, Adrian and Deniz Danaci (2010). Mehrheitstyannei durch Volksentscheide? Zum Spannungsverhältnis zwischen direkter Demokratie und Minderheitenschutz. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 51: 205-222.

Does direct democracy make a political system more democratic?

- R: Altman, David (2013). Bringing Direct Democracy Back In: Toward a Three-Dimensional Measure of Democracy. *Democratization* 20(4): 615-641.

Who uses direct legislation instruments and why?

- R: Hug, Simon (2004) Occurrence and Policy Consequences of Referendums. A Theoretical Model and Empirical Evidence. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 16(3): 321-56.

Direct democracy and the welfare state

- R: Obinger, Herbert (1998) Federalism, Direct Democracy, and Welfare State Development in Switzerland. *Journal of Public Policy* 19(3): 241-63.

Direct democracy and the tax state

- R: Feld, Lars P. and John G. Matsusaka (2003) Budget Referendums and Government Spending: Evidence from Swiss Cantons. *Journal of Public Economics* 87: 2703-24.

Direct democracy and economic performance

R: Feld, Lars P. and Marcel R. Savioz (1997) Direct Democracy Matters for Economic Performance: An Empirical Investigation. *Kyklos* 50(4): 507-38. Freitag, Markus and Adrian Vatter (2000) Direkte Demokratie, Konkordanz und Wirtschaftsleistung: Ein Vergleich der Schweizer Kantone. *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Volkswirtschaft und Statistik* 136(4): 579-606.

Final session: The relevance of direct democracy for political interaction and policy outputs – what have we learned?