How Accurate are Surveyed Preferences for Public Policies? Evidence from a Unique Institutional Setup

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Abstract

Opinion polls and other surveys are used to capture public sentiments on a variety of issues. If citizens are unwilling to reveal certain policy preferences to others, surveys may fail to characterize population preferences accurately. The innovation of this paper is to use unique data to measure survey biases for a broad range of policies. I combine data on 184 referenda held in Switzerland between 1987 and 2007, with post-ballot surveys that ask for each proposal how the citizens voted. The difference between stated preferences in the survey and revealed preferences at the ballot box provides a direct measure of survey bias. I find that these biases vary by policy areas, with the largest ones occurring in policies on immigration, international integration, and votes involving liberal/conservative attitudes. Also, citizens show a tendency to respond in accordance to the majority.

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1 Introduction

Researchers interested in eliciting citizens' values, attitudes or policy preferences often rely on surveys. Likewise, opinion polls are the main vehicle to extract information on voters' preferences in representative democracies. How accurate are surveyed preferences for public policies? Unfortunately, the only information available is the one expressed in the surveys (privately held opinions are unobservable), which makes it impossible to assess the truthfulness of its content. This lack of knowledge led especially researchers in economics to be careful in the use of subjective survey data (Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2001). On the other hand, policy makers in representative democracies lack information on voters' preferences for specific policies (Besley and Coate, 2008) and therefore have not much choice than taking opinion polls at face value.[1]

The innovation of this paper is to use unique data that allow to measure the accuracy of opinion polls for various types of public policies. The data come from Switzerland, the world leader in the use of direct democracy. In Switzerland, citizens vote on all major policies through referenda. The results of these ballots provide a measure of revealed preferences for policies, to which survey responses can be compared. Starting in 1987, telephone surveys have been conducted after each federal vote, covering samples of roughly 1,000 eligible voters (these surveys are called VOX-survey).[2] The survey is conducted 2-3 weeks after the vote and aims to gather information about the respondents' voting behavior, with questions ranging from whether and how the respondent voted, information on political views, knowledge about the ballot, the perceived importance of the ballot and various socio-demographic characteristics.

The key idea of the paper is to compare, for each vote, the approval stated in the survey (="share

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[1]Any political economy model where candidates care about re-election predicts policy effects from opinion polls, as long as they are used to extract information on voter preferences. Berinsky (2004) provides various anecdotal pieces of evidence for US politics.

[2]The samples are selected by random sampling based on the telephone book. Response rates to the survey fluctuate between 28 and 48 percent, and are slightly higher than the average response rate of similarly conducted telephone surveys by major news media in the US. Holbrook, Krosnick and Pfent (2007) analyze 114 telephone studies that were conducted by major American news media (ABC News, New York Times, Gallup, Washington Post etc.) between 1996 and 2005 and find an average response rate of 30 percent.

yes" of all respondents that indicate to have voted and reveal their result) with true approval as given

by the voting result (real "share yes" per ballot).[3] This difference between stated and revealed voter

preferences provides a direct measure of survey bias for a broad range of policy issues. Since Swiss

citizens are asked how they voted shortly *after* the vote, it gives rise to a clean experiment: in contrast

to pre-polls, there is no incentive for the respondents to strategically answer (unless the goal is to hide

the true policy preferences), and neither does the question allow for changing preferences over time.[4]

Therefore, any difference in approval between the vote and the post-vote survey must be caused by

either, differences in the population of voters and survey respondents who declare to have voted, or

citizens misreporting their preferences in surveys.

Information on revealed preferences for public policies is absent in representative democracies,

because citizens don't vote on public policies directly. Even in representative democracies with direct

democratic elements at the sub-federal level (e.g. California in the US), the number of votes held is

typically low, covering a small set of policies. Furthermore, exit-poll data are not publicly available at

large scale, which makes a more refined analysis impossible. In Switzerland, all individual-level post-

vote survey data are publicly available. This will allow me to shed some light on the determinants of

the survey bias.

The main interest of the paper lies in quantifying the extent of the survey bias, and to relate it to

the policy area of the vote. There are reasons to believe that the magnitude of the survey bias depends

on the topic of the survey. Economic research has advanced the argument that people care about their

image. One may therefore expect that citizens take actions that make them appear altruistic (Benabou

and Tirole, 2006; Tadelis, 2011), politically correct (Morris, 2001; Loury, 2004), or in line with the

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[3]The survey gives the options "Yes", "No", "No Answer", and "Don't Know" for the voting result. The "Share Yes" is calculated as the sum of "Yes" votes over the sum of "Yes" and "No" votes, to match the definition of the ballot results.

[4]The survey asks clearly: how did you vote in the ballot on topic X? Therefore, even if preferences change, it would not affect the answer. In contrast, a difference between the official voting result and answers in *pre-polls* can arise because citizens strategically mis-represent their preferences, in order to make the other citizens changing their votes; or, citizens, after learning the polling results, may change their minds on how to vote.

consensual view (Bernheim, 1994; Kuran, 1995). Citizens with politically incorrect views, for instance, may choose not to respond to the survey, or instead, to respond but then lie in their responses. Both channels lead to a gap between stated and revealed voter preferences on socially sensitive issues. To test for potential differences in survey accuracy with respect to the policy area shall be one of the main contributions of this paper.

The Swiss data allows one to measure survey accuracy for 184 federal votes. These votes cover all policy areas relevant in a mature democracy. To name a few examples, votes have been held on immigration, environmental protection, health, unemployment benefits, agriculture, the military, or various regulatory measures. The survey bias (defined as the vote-specific difference between the reported and effective share yes) is 4.7 percentage points on average. For roughly half of the votes, this survey bias is statistically significant at conventional levels. For the other half of the votes, there is no statistically significant survey bias at all. The amount of survey bias varies quite substantially across the votes. For instance, the vote with the biggest difference between stated and true preferences concerned a proposed law change to improve the conditions for working mothers. Here, 72 percent of survey respondents state to have voted in favor, whereas the approval at the ballot was only 55 percent. More generally, precisely the policy areas which have been subject to the political correctness debate (issues on gender, race and gay rights; see Loury, 1994) show the biggest distortions in the surveys. Other policy areas (health, retirement age, direct democracy) display no significant differences between stated and revealed preferences and the surveys describe the underlying preferences well.

Historically, politically correct views had a clear left-wing connotation (pro gender equality, against racism, pro gay rights, pro environment etc.). I explicitly test the hypothesis that votes supported by the left-wing party have higher expressed yes in the survey (relative to the ballot result) compared to the votes where the left-wing party recommended a "no". The data strongly support the existence of a "liberal bias". Votes supported by the left-wing party had a too high share of "yes"-votes in the survey, whereas votes where the left-wing party recommended a "no" displayed a too high share of

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"no"-votes in the survey. The difference in the survey bias (= stated approval in the survey minus true approval) between votes that were and were not supported by the left-wing party is 5 percentage points and statistically significant. This liberal bias persists when the individual survey data are re-weighted to correct for over-sampling of observable individual characteristics (including self-reported party affiliation). Therefore, selection on observables is unlikely to be the driver behind this bias. Either, citizens choose to respond to the survey based on unobservables such as their privately held policy preferences, or respondents falsify their preferences in the survey.[5] From a policy perspective, disentangling between these two channels is not that essential, since in both cases, there is not much the researcher can do to eliminate the bias in polls. Nevertheless, the data provide evidence that part of the people falsify their preferences in surveys. I compare for that votes held on the same day (leaving the respondent pool fixed)[6], which were perceived to be of either high or low importance for the Swiss nation as a whole. I hypothesize that for votes of small importance, there is little pressure to lie. If so, the liberal bias should be larger in votes that were salient and regarded of high-importance. In line with this intuition, the data show that in fact, the liberal bias is *only* present for votes of high importance. This again re-confirms the view that surveys are sometimes, but not always biased.

Next to identifying whether survey accuracy depends on the topic, the data allows one to test whether surveys suffer from a conformity (or winning) bias. Since the voting result is known at the time of the survey, a natural starting point is to investigate whether votes that were accepted (majority voted "yes") have a different bias compared to the votes that were rejected (majority voted "no"). The data reveal a clear pattern: the share yes in the survey is too high for votes that were accepted, and too low for votes that were rejected.[7] The gap between stated and revealed approval is 5 percentage

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[5]Note that the data rule out lying on turnout as the driver behind the liberal bias. If non-voters were more liberal than voters and stated to have voted in the survey, then a higher share of non-voters in the survey should lead to a larger liberal bias. However, the interaction term between the (measurable and ballot-specific) share of over-representation of voters in the survey times the dummy "Recommendation Left" is statistically insignificant.

[6]The respondent sample is constant in this case because the survey asks the respondent on how he voted on *all* votes that were held on a given day (see Section 2).

[7]Whether the behavioral motive is a desire to be on the winning-side, or a desire to be in conformity to others (Bernheim, 1994), is hard to distinguish.

point higher for votes that passed compared to the votes that were rejected, and this difference is 6 percentage point for votes accepted and rejected on a narrow margin. Note that part of the bias seems to be caused by citizens falsifying their policy preferences. Comparing how the same individual reports to have voted on various (simultaneously held) votes where her favorite party recommended a "no", the answer is more likely to be a "yes" when the vote was accepted (this result holds for votes accepted/rejected at a narrow margin).

Clearly, I expect these behavioral biases (a desire to appear politically correct or to be on the winning side) to matter outside the Swiss context. When it comes to answering to surveys or opinion polls, the first type of bias is most relevant. The following complementary evidence for the US is at least consistent with the existence of a political correctness bias in other settings: pre-polls on gay-rights have been particularly inaccurate in predicting later voting outcomes (with support in the pre-polls being too high; Egan, 2010 and Powell, 2013), and support for black candidates has also been overstated in surveys in the past (Hopkins, 2009).

The data at hand also allow me to investigate whether the accuracy of surveys differs by culture, religion, or economic development of a geographic unit. Switzerland is a very diverse country, with differences in languages (German-, Italian-, and French-speaking areas), religions (nearly equal share of Protestants and Catholics), economic opportunities and population size (city Cantons versus more rural Cantons). It turns out that Cantons of German speaking language (and culture) display significantly higher survey biases than the other Cantons (French/Italian speaking). This suggests a role for cultural differences in survey accuracy. Also, Cantons with higher population size have lower biases on average. This is consistent with previous research showing that social pressure is particularly high in small-knit communities (Funk, 2010), which may channel into public expression of preferences. Religion, on the other hand, does not appear to matter, once culture is accounted for.

The paper relates to various strands of the literature. First, it is relevant for a growing economic literature based on survey data. Even though economists have traditionally been sceptical with regard

to surveys on attitudes and preferences (Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2001), there has been a recent surge of influential papers explaining certain types of attitudes and preferences (Fong, 2001; Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2003; Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007). This paper shows that scepticism on surveyed preferences is justified in certain policy areas (e.g. racial attitudes, attitudes on gender equality), but less so in others (preferences for direct democracy, health, or federal finances). Furthermore, the data allows one to assess, how innocuous it is to compare survey-responses across cultures and religions. Second, the paper relates to a growing literature investigating the consequences of social pressure and image concerns. So far, various studies established that image concerns matter for voter participation (Gerber, 2008; Funk, 2010), contributions to charity (DellaVigna, List, and Malmendier, 2011), or worker effort (Mas and Moretti, 2009). This paper documents that opinion polls are particularly biased on topics with a predominant politically correct view, which is consistent with citizens caring about their image. Third, the paper complements a strand of papers (mostly in political science) which analyze the accuracy of polls in elections (e.g. Baretto, Guerra, Marks, Nuno and Woods, 2006; Stromberg, 2008; Hopkins, 2009). The key addition to these papers it to add knowledge on the accuracy of polls on *issues*. The setting of a direct democracy gives rise to a measure of true preferences (as revealed at the ballots), to which survey responses can be compared. Forth, a related literature in political science explores the role of item-non response for the survey quality of a *given* respondent sample (Berinsky, 1999; 2004). The data at hand allow to go one step further by contrasting survey responses to the true underlying preferences of the voting population. In line with Berinsky (1999; 2004), I find poor survey quality on issues involving race. Last, the paper relates to a strand of laboratory experiments that investigate the nature of lying (Gneezy, 2005; Lundquist, Ellingsen, and Johannesson, 2009). This paper suggests that for some policy areas, citizens prefer to hide their true opinion, even if it is merely a survey conducted by telephone.

The rest of this article is structured as follows. Section 2 describes the data and the gaps between stated and true approval for public policies. Section 3 investigates two major sources of bias. Section

4 investigates Cantonal differences in survey accuracy and Section 5 concludes.

2 Data

2.1 Official Voting Results

For Swiss citizens, having a say on politics is almost daily business. Switzerland has a long tradition in direct democracy; at the federal level alone, citizens have voted on more than 300 ballots in the last 50 years. Citizens can propose an initiative for a partial or total revision of the federal constitution. In addition, they can request a referendum about all laws issued by the federal government if 50,000 signatures are collected. Furthermore, a voter referendum is mandatory for any changes to the constitution and all international treaties. As a consequence, citizens vote on federal ballots several times each year.

In Switzerland, every person older than 18 is allowed to vote (before March 1991, the minimum age was 21). The eligible voter receives all the documents delivered by mail at home. These documents include all relevant information on the ballots (there are usually a couple of ballots bundled for a given voting day), such as the precise questions, the arguments for and against the propositions, a printed version of the parliamentary debates (if any) and often outside opinions by interest groups.[8]

Hence, Swiss citizens have easy access to information about the ballots both through the distributed documents and discussions in the media. Placing the ballot is also quite convenient. In contrast to the US, no registration to vote is necessary at all. Since 1995, the voter has additionally granted the option to vote by mail, in addition to placing the documents at the voting booth. Voter turnout in the last 20 years is 42 percent on average, with some variation depending on the topic.

On the webpage of the federal authorities ($http://www.ch.ch/abstimmungen\_und\_wahlen/$), all federal votes ever held are listed. Information on the votes include: the title, the date, the number of

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[8]These documents can be accessed online at http://www.ads.bar.admin.ch/ADS/showHome.do.

eligible voters, the number of effective voters, the number of valid votes, the number of empty votes, the number of yes votes and the number of no votes. The "Share Yes"-Votes is calculated as the number of yes votes in proportion of the total number of valid non-empty votes, and the "Share No"-Votes is calculated as the number of no votes in proportion of the total number of valid (non-empty) votes. The "Share Yes" and "Share No" sum up to 100 percent. The main variable of interest is the approval for each vote measured as the "Share Yes", which is to be compared to the stated approval in the VOX-Survey.

2.2   The Post-Election Surveys ("VOX-Surveys")

Since 1977 "Vox" surveys have been conducted after each federal vote. These surveys are conducted with samples of roughly 1,000 eligible voters (700 voters until 1987) and take place during the two or three weeks following the vote. As described in the technical documentation on the VOX surveys, the basis for selecting households is the Swiss telephone book. A random sample stratified by language area (German-speaking, French-speaking, Italian-speaking) is applied and households are contacted until roughly 1,000 respondents have been gained. Response rates fluctuate between 25 and 48 percent for the surveys conducted between 1998 and 2007.[9]

The main objective of these post election surveys is to understand the motives underlying the individual voting decision, and possible connections with the knowledge of the individuals. Most relevant for my study, the VOX survey asks for participation at the last federal votes, and the voting decisions.

The exact procedure of the survey is the following. The interviewer starts by presenting himself and asks whether there is an eligible voter in the household. The exact wording is the following: "Hello, i am an employee of the "Forschungsinstituts gfs.bern". We are conducting a survey on the last federal votes. The survey is anonymous. May I ask whether there is at least one household

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[9]Technical reports are not officially available for the earlier votes.

member older than 18? In case of several persons, which one has her birthday the earliest in the year? May I conduct an interview with that person?"

In case a survey respondent is recruited, the survey asks for voter participation (1) and voter decision (2) in the following way: For (1): Was it possible to you to participate in the federal vote from the date [DD.MM.YYYY]?" Answers are: Yes, No, don't know, no answer. As for (2), the precise question was: "How did you vote on the federal ballot [title X]"? Possible answers are Yes, No, Empty, Don't know, No Answer. In 2, all votes that were bundled on a given voting day are included. Hence, a respondent gives answers for all these votes.

Apart from these questions directly related to the vote, the survey also asks for various aspects relating to the voting decision such as knowledgeability on the topic, types of media consulted prior to the decision, the perceived importance of the vote or awareness of the favorite party's recommendation. An extensive set of questions aimed to gather individual characteristics (age, education, marital status, profession etc.) completes the questionnaire.

2.3 The Survey Bias

To compare approval in the survey for a certain vote with the one revealed at the ballot box, I first define the "Share Yes" in the Survey in an equivalent manner to the "Share Yes" of the voting result. That means taking the number of yes votes (from citizens who indicate to have voted) divided by the sum of yes and no votes. The key variable of interest is the difference between the "Share Yes" in the Survey and the "Share Yes" from the official voting outcome, which I define as "Survey Bias". A positive survey bias indicates that the approval stated in the survey is bigger than the official one, and a negative survey bias indicates the opposite.

I start comparing official voting outcomes with stated voting outcomes for *all votes* (initiatives and referenda) held in 1987 or later, where the VOX-survey had a sample size of roughly 1,000 citizens. The latest available data were VOX-surveys conducted in 2007, which gives a sample of 187 votes in

total, spanning all relevant policy areas in the last 20 years. Since three votes (Nr. 462, 463, 464) have an identical reported share yes, I drop these votes due to high likelihood of error. That leaves a sample of 184 valid votes.

To get a sense of the magnitude of these gaps, Figure 1 displays the kernel density. As can be seen therefrom, the reported share-yes is slightly bigger than the actual share yes, with a wide variation across different votes (the maximum difference between reported and real share yes is nearly 20 percentage points).

— insert Figure 1 about here —

What are the possible sources for these biases?

First, the sample of survey respondents may differ from the population sample (in terms of observables and unobservables). Second, for a given respondent sample, a certain share of respondents may not be willing to reveal their vote (in the survey, such an individual would answer "empty", "don't know" or "no answer", even though he voted "yes" or "no"). Third, survey respondents who answer with "yes" or "no" as their voting outcome either falsify their policy preferences, or their voting decision (i.e. non-voters declare to have voted). Let me discuss each of these sources of bias.

The first candidate for survey bias is having a selected respondent sample. To investigate this possibility, I compare the respondents' characteristics in terms of age, gender, religion, language and education with a representative sample of the Swiss population. Note that here, the right comparison is between *all* survey respondents (voters and non-voters) and the Swiss population. Information on the latter can be gained by using existing data on a random sample of 5 percent of the Swiss citizenry (called "Public Use Sample"), compiled by the Swiss Federal Office of Statistics for various years. To ensure anonymity, the PUS uses age classes of the respondents.[10] Subsequently, I focus on individuals

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[10]The PUS age classes are 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, 80 years and older.

with 20 years of age or more, in both, the VOX surveys and the PUS data.

— insert Table 1 about here —

As shown in Table 1, VOX respondents are quite similar to the random PUS-sample of Swiss citizens. In the year 1990, the share of protestants and the share of highly educated in the survey are slightly higher than in the population counterpart, and in the year 2000, the share of elderly people is additionally over-represented at the cost of the younger. Overall, however, the differences in average characteristics between survey respondents and the population sample are small.

To asses the role of sample selection in generating the observed survey biases, I re-weight all the survey samples to match the population precisely on religion, age above 60, and higher education (where the highest deviations have been found).[11] Note that re-weighting on a few observables is the standard procedure to correct for sample selection in opinion polls and surveys. As a rule of thumb, the recommendation is to re-weight if the difference between a specific survey characteristic (e.g. share elderly) and population characteristic is more than 5 percentage points (DeBell and Krosnick, 2009). As can be seen from Figure 2, the survey bias gets reduced somewhat, but but there is still a large variance.

— insert Figure 2 about here —

Taking as a starting point the survey bias left after re-weighting the surveys, I can investigate whether there is a significant relationship between survey bias and survey response rate, as could

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[11]I have to re-weight the complete survey (including voters and non-voters) since I have information on the characteristics of the whole population, but not the voters alone. Lack of this information is no major drawback, however, since re-weighting the whole survey sample is sufficient to eliminate selection on observables. Assume as an example that the population consists of 50% young and 50% old, but since elderly people are more likely to respond to surveys, the share elderly in the surveys is 80% (one can easily allow to vary this share by survey). Re-weighting the whole survey ensures that the survey sample corresponds to the population in age, i.e. 50% are old, and 50% are young. If in one ballot, mostly young people voted (e.g. the share of elderly voters is 20%), this share will be accurately depicted when analyzing approval of declared *voters* in the re-weighted survey sample.

be expected if there was selection on unobservables. Table 2 first column however shows that there is no such relationship. One could have imagined that people with certain views (e.g. politically incorrect views) respond less to surveys. On the other hand, the opposite may happen for people with a politically correct view and offset the effect on response rates. Next, for a given respondent sample, a bias may be created by respondents hiding their vote with a "no answer", "empty", or "don't know". If so, the higher the share of voters which reveal their voting decisions, the lower the bias should be. Second column Table 2 shows that this indeed is the case, albeit the variation in vote reveal rates cannot explain a large part of the variation in survey bias (the R-Squared including the explanatory power of the fixed effects is 0.23, and the R-Squared "within" is a mere 0.048). Last, misrepresentation of voter participation may create survey bias. Non-voters may claim to have voted and create a survey bias if their preferences are different from voters.[12] On the other hand, if voters are more likely to respond to surveys (but there is no lying on turnout and policy preferences), there should be no relationship between over-representation of voters in the surveys and the magnitude of the survey bias (since the survey bias is calculated for survey respondents who declare to have voted).[13] Since over-representation of voters in a given survey is directly measurable (= share survey respondents who declare to have voted minus real turnout, per ballot), I can easily investigate whether there is a significant effect of over-representation of voters on survey bias. The answer is no (see column 4). This preliminary evidence suggests that neither variation in the survey composition of observable individual characteristics, nor differences in over-representation of voters, item-non response or overall response rates to the surveys can explain a significant part of the variation in survey biases. I suspect the topic of the vote to matter, and will investigate this in the next section.

— insert Table 2 about here —

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[12]León (2013), however, provides evidence that voters and non-voters have comparable preferences on average.

[13]From research on elections, it is known that there are usually more voters in the survey-samples compared to the share of voters in the population (Karp and Brockington, 2005; Holbrook and Krosnick, 2010). The same pattern is found for the current surveys, where the share of voters in the survey is on average 9 percentage points higher than official voter turnout. However, as can be seen from the summary statistics in Appendix Table 1, there is substantial variation in the difference between reported and real turnout across surveys.

3 Two major Biases: Liberal Bias and Conformity Bias

To illustrate the votes with particularly large survey biases, Appendix table 2 reports the 184 valid votes, sorted by the amount of survey bias. The table also indicates the year of the vote, the VOX number, the title of the proposition and the number of survey respondents who declare to have voted and reveal their voting decision (# Obs.) To see whether the gap between the reported and true share yes is statistically significant, I conduct a T-Test for each vote. The P-Value indicates whether, based on she (survey) sample share yes, the null hypothesis (population mean equals the known true share yes as given by the voting result) can be rejected. As can be seen from Appendix table 2, the null is rejected for roughly half of the votes at standard levels of significance.[14] To give the reader an intuitive grasp about whether the votes with the highest survey bias have particularly low survey response rates, low vote reveal rates or a high over-representation of voters, I report the numbers for these last three variables as well. In line with Table 2, there does not seem to be a strong relationship with any of those.

Which are the topics of the votes with the largest gaps? From visual inspection, it looks like there are quite a few votes in the area of environment, immigration and redistribution, where the differences in stated and real ballot outcomes are high. To make a more systematic comparison, I define 12 broad policy areas, which are relevant beyond the Swiss context. These policy areas are international integration, immigration, military, protection environment, nuclear energy, federal budget, direct democracy, health, redistribution, retirement age, gender equality and liberal attitudes. I selected all votes in a policy area that had either the same or the opposite goal (e.g. either to facilitate or make more difficult immigration; either increase or decrease the size of the Swiss army etc.) Since framing of a ballot may matter (see Buetler and Marechal, 2007), I display the votes with opposing goals separately. Appendix table 3 shows the selection of the votes, per policy area. Overall,

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[14]At the 1% level of significance, I can reject the null for 65 votes, and at the 5%, for 83 votes.

92 votes could be assigned to these 12 policy areas, which leaves another 92 unclassified votes. Every selection process is to a certain degree subjective. To make this process as transparent as possible, I describe the goal of all 184 the votes (including the unclassified ones) in the Appendix.

Subsequently, I would like to test whether the Survey Bias differs by policy area. The model I estimate is the following:

$$Y_{ijt} = \beta_j \cdot D_j + \varepsilon_{ijt} \tag{1}$$

The dependent variable is the Survey-Bias (= the difference between the stated "Share-Yes" of voters in the survey and the effective "Share-Yes" of the voting result) per vote i that falls into policy area j and was voted upon in year t. D_j is a dummy for each of the 12 policy areas. Standard errors are clustered at the voting-day level, to account for possible correlation of errors within a given survey sample.

— insert Table 3 about here —

Table 3 first column shows the differences in survey biases by policy area. As can be seen therefrom, the survey bias is positive and relatively high for votes aiming at fostering international integration (5.6 percentage points), against nuclear energy (5.2 percentage points), for the protection of the environment (3.6 percentage points), pro gender equality (6.7 percentage points), or two votes involving a liberal attitude (8.5 percentage points). These last two votes with very high survey biases involved giving more rights to homosexual couples and liberalizing sexual rights of teenagers. High negative survey biases are found for votes that target to restrict immigration (-5.1 percentage points). Here, the share of respondents which admit to have voted for tighter immigration laws is lower in the survey compared to the ballot box. Finally, note also that there are some policy areas (health, retirement age, direct democracy, federal finances), where there are no significant gaps between survey approval

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and real approval. Unsurprisingly, I can reject the Null that the gaps are the same across policy areas at the 1% significance level.

So far, I have given each vote equal weight. Since votes differ by the number of observations available to calculate the survey bias, the latter may be measured more precisely with a larger number of observations (i.e. survey respondents who declare to have voted and reveal their result). Weighting the votes by observation count does not change the estimated coefficients substantially (see column 2). What are the reasons for these survey biases? A natural guess is that people with certain preferences (e.g. against immigration) do not respond to the survey, or they do respond but lie. However, it could also be the case that over-representation of individuals with certain observable characteristics explains these gaps. As shown in Table 1, the share of protestants, the share of elderly, and the share of highly educated is sightly higher in the survey compared to the shares in the census.

To assess the relevance of sample selection for the observed differences across policy areas, I re-weight the data, as is standard in polling research.[15] I correct for over-representation of elderly, the share of protestants, and the share of highly educated (column (3)). As can be seen from Table 2, column 3, the biases from the re-weighted samples are often somewhat smaller, but do not disappear. Note that this type of re-weighting procedure corresponds to the classic strategy used by most of the major US news media including New York Times, Gallup/CNN/USA today etc. (Blumenthal, 2004). There, opinion polls are weighted to match the U.S. census for gender, race, education and usually

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[15]To be precise, I re-weight the complete survey (including voters and non-voters) to match the population counterpart on certain characteristics for each vote separately. Then, I newly calculate the "Share-Yes" for the citizens who indicate to have voted. The correction for over-sampling of one specific characteristic in Stata can be done by either specifying poststrata within svy-estimation and indicating poststrata weights (see Levy and Lemeshow, 1999, p. 196 ff. for a concrete example); or, if one aims to correcting oversampling of various individual characteristics (as is done in Table 2), one can use a raking procedure. Apart from what is shown in Table 2, I also corrected for individual characteristics separately (all results available upon request), and found that correcting for education affects the estimates most. I cross-checked which of the individual characteristics matters most for voting decisions. Indeed, for many policy areas, the effect of having a higher education on the probability to vote yes is the most important explanatory variable. One caveat is that data on population shares are only available at the decennial level, which forces me to use interpolation to receive information on population shares for all the years. I check, however, whether interpolation seems to be a major drawback or not. For this, I select the policy areas, in which votes have been held in the years 1990 and 2000 (where I know the population characteristics exactly). The difference between weighted and unweighted estimates (per policy area) is very comparable, for the votes in the years 1990 and 2000, and the full sample with interpolated values. Therefore, using the full dataset seems justified. All results available upon request.

some geographic classification. Self-reported party affiliation is typically not used for re-weighting, because it is subject to error itself. Since I know the true voter preferences for the 184 surveys, it is nevertheless interesting to see whether the biases disappear if data are re-weighted according to self-reported party-identification. It turns out that the average share of self-declared left-wing voters in the survey (29 percent) is higher than the average share of left-wing vote shares in parliamentary elections (21 percent). Either, left-wing voters are more willing to respond to surveys, or some (plausibly ultra) right-wing voters do not indicate their favorite party.[16] Should the second explanation have some truth, then the share of self-declared left-wing voters in the survey is higher than the real share of left-wing voters in the survey, and re-weighting the survey data to match the left-wing vote shares in parliamentary elections weights down too much the left-wing voters views'. Having this caveat in mind, column (4) presents the results when over-representation of left-wing voters in the surveys is corrected for. Many biases still persist, and the one on budget balance even gets larger. Last, I investigate the sensitivity of the results with respect to controlling for the voting result (ballot accepted/rejected) (column (5)). The magnitude of the estimated coefficients are sometimes affected, but the results remain qualitatively similar.

Summing up, the accuracy of the post ballot survey differs by policy area. As shown in Table 3, selection on observables does not seem to have generated the differences in survey biases across topics. Also, maybe with the exception of gender equality, the policy areas with particularly high biases (international integration, immigration, nuclear energy, liberal attitudes) are not characterized by systematically low survey response or vote reveal rates (see Appendix Table 4). As such, it seems likely that either voters with certain (unobservable) policy preferences select into survey response, or survey respondents misrepresent their voting decisions on certain topics. In either case, there is not much the researcher can do to eliminate survey bias.

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[16]The share of self-declared left-wing voters is calculated in percentage of all survey respondents who indicate a favorite party.

More importantly, the analysis suggest that surveys are inaccurate in topics on international integration, immigration, gender equality and votes with a liberal attitude involved. These are the policy areas where a politically correct view is most obvious. Preferences on direct democracy, health, or the retirement age, however, appear to be less contaminated in surveys.[17] From visual inspection of Table 3, it also looks like liberal policies tend to have a positive gap. As shown in column (6), the policy areas with the biggest positive gaps (international integration, immigration, liberal attitudes) were largely supported by the left-wing party. That raises the question about existence of a liberal bias. To investigate a possible liberal bias systematically, I define a dummy variable that takes a value of 1 if the vote was supported by the left-wing party and 0 otherwise. Votes where the left-wing party made no recommendation are coded as a missing value (10 votes in total).

— insert Table 4 about here —

Table 4 first column shows that votes that were supported by the left-wing party had 4.9 percentage point higher approval than the votes where the left-wing party recommended a "no". As can be seen from the constant, votes where the left-wing party recommended a "no" had a negative survey bias (stated - true approval) of -1.7. Votes where the left-wing party recommended a yes had a positive average survey bias of 3.2 (=4.9-1.7), which is statistically different from zero. The result that votes supported by the left-wing party have a higher approval in the survey (I call this "liberal bias") is robust to using weights in the regressions (column 2), and controlling for the result of the vote (column 3). It also persists when identified from within-survey sample variation (column 4). Columns 5 to 6 account for differences in the composition of survey respondents, (with regard to age, religion, and

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[17]Note that if my behavioral mechanism is true (citizens with politically incorrect views either not responding to surveys, or falsifying their answers), I would expect larger survey biases on sensitive topics in pre-polls as well. Pre-polls have been conducted for only a selected set of votes, and the survey data are not publicly available. By checking media mentions on pre-polls, one can, however, identify the stated approval in pre-polls and calculate a survey bias with regard to the later voting outcome (see footnote 4 for other factors that create a survey bias in pre polls). Interestingly, the votes with particularly high biases in post-polls (gender equality, immigration) also had high survey biases in pre-polls.

education (column 5), and self-declared party-affiliation (column 6)). Again, re-weighting the data according to self-reported party affiliation is likely to bias the results towards not detecting any liberal bias. Nevertheless, the estimated liberal bias persists.[18]

A natural interpretation of the results is that left-wing parties support more politically correct views (Liberal Attitude, Pro-Environment, Pro-Redistribution, Pro-Immigration etc.) and this causes people with politically incorrect views either not to respond to the survey, or to respond and misrepresent their preferences. Under which conditions are citizens likely to lie?[19] Of first order priority seems to be the importance of the vote. Votes with large consequences for the country are more salient and also more frequently discussed in the media. To admit a politically incorrect view seems more costly in this situation. Since the VOX survey asks for the perceived importance of the vote for Switzerland as a whole, I can classify the votes according to whether they were ranked above or below the mean importance of the vote. The dummy variable Importance Vote takes a value of 1 if the vote was above the mean, and 0 otherwise. As can be seen in column (7), the bias is significantly larger for important votes. Column (8) relies on variation across votes that were held on the same day. Here, the set of survey respondents is the same. Again the liberal bias is only present in salient votes, even though the estimated interaction term is insignificant. To check robustness with regard to other measures of the importance/salience of a vote, I take campaign advertisement in newspapers prior to the votes.[20] High Ads is an indicator variable taking a one if a vote had above-average advertisement. Columns (9) and (10) suggest that the liberal bias is of double size in votes that attracted a lot of campaign spending. This is suggestive of survey-respondents falsifying their preferences according to liberal views, which may correlate with political correctness.

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[18]Note also that the estimated interaction terms recommendation Left-Wing Party times turnout gap, and recommendation Left-Wing Party times vote reveal rate are insignificant. Therefore, the liberal bias is unlikely to be caused by item non-response or non-voters being more liberal and pretending to have voted (see Appendix Table 5).

[19]People may deliberately lie, or unconsciously misrepresent their preferences. See Bazerman and Gino (2013) for various examples of and explanations for unintentional dishonesty.

[20]Hanspeter Kriesi developed an indicator based on the size of advertisement space occurring in 6 major newspapers prior to the federal votes. I thank him for generously sharing these data with me.

Another apparent bias comes from knowing the result of the vote. Accepted ballots have a higher positive survey bias than rejected ballots. Table 5 investigates the nature of this bias in more detail.

— insert Table 5 about here —

Table 5 displays regression results where the dependent variable is the survey bias (stated - true approval) and the variable of interest a dummy-variable "Vote Accepted", which takes a value of 1 if more than 50% of the electorate said yes, and 0 otherwise. As can be seen from column (1), votes that were accepted showed a 4.8 percentage points bigger survey bias than the votes that were rejected. Interestingly, for the votes that were rejected (see constant term), there was no bias at all. Columns (2) to (6) show weighted regressions, add year fixed effects, control for the voting result in a non-binary way (separate and in addition to the dummy "Vote Accepted"), and also control for the left-wing parties' recommendation. The magnitude of this bias is quite robust across various specifications. Column (7) add controls for the topic of the vote, and column (8) uses variation of the votes for a given day (and therefore for a fixed respondent sample). If it is the case that passage of a vote matters, then the effect would also hold for narrowly accepted or rejected votes. Column (9) shows an even bigger effect, identified from votes within a narrow margin. Last, to see whether the relevant factor is whether a vote was accepted or rejected, or increased support of the population more generally, I conduct a placebo test which takes all the votes which were narrowly rejected (between 40 and 50 percent) and code "Vote Accepted" as 1 if approval was between 45 and 50 percent. This "placebo vote accepted" shows no relationship with the survey bias at all. This evidence suggests that what matters for the bias is whether the vote was accepted or not. Possible explanations for this result could be citizens' desire to be conform with the majority view, or being on the winning-side.

Especially in light of the results in column (8) (here, due to voting day fixed effects, the effect is identified from a constant respondent sample), it is hard to imagine that the conformity (or winning)

bias is entirely due to people strategically not responding ("no"-voters not responding if the vote was accepted or vice versa).[21] Nevertheless, I can analyze individual level survey responses to investigate this issue further. Remember that an individual is asked to respond for all votes that were held on a given day, giving rise to multiple observations per individual. If citizens lie, I would expect the same individual to report a "yes" with higher probability if the vote was accepted. Table 6 investigates this issue, where the unit of interest is now the individual. First column regresses a dummy yes (taking a value of 1 if the individual voted "yes", and 0 otherwise) on the dummy vote-passed and individual fixed effects. Individuals have a 36 percentage point higher probability to say "yes", if the vote was accepted. While consistent with lying, this is no evidence for it. After all, a vote may have been accepted precisely because individuals voted yes. Instead, I now restrict my sample to individuals which indicated a favourite party. Furthermore, for each individual, I only analyze votes where their favorite party recommended to vote "no". An individual deviates from the party's recommendation if he states to have voted "yes", and 0 otherwise. The empirical strategy will be to test whether an individual is more likely to deviate from the party's recommendation (which is "no") if the vote was accepted. Columns (2) to (5) regress the Indicator variable Deviation Party on the dummy vote accepted and individual fixed effects. Individual fixed effects capture individual's innate propensity to deviate from their favourite party. Clearly, a deviation is up to 35 percentage points more likely if the vote passed. Column (6) analyzes all individuals together. Again, a deviation is 23 percentage points more likely if the vote passed. Column (7) restricts the set of votes to those where announced approval by the parties (weighted by their vote shares in elections) is similar to approval by the voters (i.e. the difference is smaller than 10 percentage points). The conformity bias persists and alleviates concerns that a vote could have been accepted precisely because voters deviate from party-recommendations. Last, columns (8) and (9) restrict the sample to narrowly accepted and rejected votes and finds a

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[21]It could be the case, however, that voters do not reveal their result instead of lying. Appendix Table 5 shows that in the regressions with voting day fixed effects, a higher vote reveal rate indeed lowers the conformity bias - though there is still some bias left even if the vote reveal rate is 100 %.

smaller, but qualitatively similar effect. Since the party-recommendation occurred before the vote, but the result is revealed after the vote, it is hard to explain this result by other channels than lying.

— insert Table 6 about here —

The evidence thus far suggests that surveys are biased towards a liberal and majority view. Very likely, part of these biases are generated by survey respondents falsifying their preferences. Even though falsification of answers in surveys is a severe problem, the problem is less grave if one is interested in analyzing differences in survey responses between groups (i.e. gender, religion) and the degree of mis-representation is the same between groups. The next section sheds light on this issue.

4 Canton-Characteristics and Differences between Stated and Official Approval

Switzerland offers a rare opportunity to shed some light on whether survey-biases vary across subgroups of people. This is especially relevant for researchers using the Eurobarometer or the World Value Survey to compare political attitudes or values across countries. If survey biases are comparable across countries, this type of study makes perfectly sense. If, however, due to different social norms, different type of people respond and/or lie, such an analysis may be less convincing. There is no way one can asses the accuracy of the measured attitudes across countries (since the "true attitudes" for the population are unobserved). The Swiss data allows one to compare at least whether survey accuracy differs for different cultures and religions within a country.

The basis for this analysis are voting results at the canton level (available for every federal vote), which I can compare to the stated share yes votes of residents of a given Canton.[22] The Swiss Cantons are very diverse, in terms of culture, religion, and economic richness. While the majority of Swiss

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[22]The VOX-Survey asks for the respondents' canton of residence.

Cantons are of German language, there are also a couple of French-speaking Cantons and an Italian-speaking Canton (plus one Canton (Graubuenden) which has "Romantsch" as its official language). It is well-known that cultural differences between the German and Non-German speaking Cantons are large. For instance, there is the official term "Roestigraben", which refers to the consistently different voting outcomes between the German and Non-German speaking Cantons. Likewise, the Swiss Cantons are heterogenous with regard to religion. While certain Cantons are predominantly Catholic, others are predominantly Protestant, and others are mixed. Last, Cantons vary with regard to other characteristics such as income, age structure, education, and population size.

These data allow me to uncover interesting correlations, but not necessarily causal relationships. However, there are usually *no data available* to shed light on whether survey biases on reported attitudes (in this case for different policies) vary across cultures and religions. Again, the reason is that there is information as given in the surveys, but no comparison group revealing "true preferences". Having this caveat in mind, I analyze correlations between the absolute value of survey bias and various Canton-characteristics, taking Canton-level voting results (from federal votes) between 1987-2000 as the basis of the analysis. Since some smaller Cantons have very few survey respondents, I run weighted regressions, with the number of surveyed voters per Canton and ballot assigned as weights.

As can be seen from Table 7, Cantons with a higher share of Protestants have lower biases on average. However, the significance of this result vanishes once more Canton-controls are added. The strongest partial correlations come from the language area and population size. Non-German speaking Cantons have on average a 2.7 percentage points lower biases, compared to German speaking Cantons. Preferences of citizens in large cities are also more accurately represented in surveys. While the exact mechanism behind this result is beyond the scope of this paper, there is supplementary evidence that social norms and the pressure to act accordingly is lower in large cities compared to small-knit communities (Funk, 2010). It is therefore possible that citizens used to express their opinions freely and used to act in an environment of low social pressure also have less problems in revealing their true

preferences in surveys.

5   Conclusion

This paper analyses how accurately political preferences are represented in surveys. Using unique data on all Swiss votes between 1987-2007, I find that the average difference between stated and real approval is 4.7 percentage point, or 9 percent evaluated at the mean approval. I find large differences with regard to policy areas. For instance, citizens inaccurately reveal their preferences (either by non-responding or falsification) on issues related to integration, immigration, the environment, and certain types of regulation, but not on federal finances, health, and institutions. Therefore, the paper sheds light on which types of survey questions are more or less likely to be contaminated. Moreover, researchers are often interested in comparing survey answers across different groups. In this case, the relevant question is whether the survey biases are similar across groups. For the predominant religions in Switzerland (Catholicism and Protestantism), the differences in the survey-biases become insignificant, once other factors are controlled for. However, cultural differences in survey accuracy persist and call for caution when comparing survey responses across cultures.

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A   For Online Publication: Appendix

Description of the Votes, by Policy Area

Agriculture (AGRI):

1. Initiative against Animal Farms (1989): 371

   Goal Initiative: To restrict federal subsidies to agricultural farms that employ family members and cover the animals food by their own production.

2. Against Subsidies for Corn Production (1994): 541

   Goal Federal Resolution: Abolish subsidies for Swiss corn.

3. Counterproposal to the Initiative "for an ecological and effective agriculture" (1995): 561

   Goal Federal Resolution: create legal framework for an ecological and dynamic agriculture. Introduce direct compensations to farmers for ecological farming and cultivating the countryside.

4. Resolution on Dairy Farming (1995): 562

   Goal Federal Resolution: Bring more flexibility of the system of milk quota by allowing farmers to trade.

5. Law on Farming (1995): 563

   Goal Federal Law: Regulate payments among farmers for actions (e.g. advertisement) that benefits the whole agricultural sector.

6. Counterproposal to the Initiative "for a natural agriculture" (1996): 591

   Goal Federal Resolution: Define the functions and duties of agricultural farmers in the constitution.

7. Initiative "for cheap aliments and ecological agriculture" (1998): 642

   Goal Initiative: Abolish all regulations in the agricultural market, and use instead direct compensations for farmers.

8. Federal Resolution on a new Corn Article (1998): 652

   Goal Federal Resolution: Liberalization of the market for corn, which was traditionally heavily regulated to guarantee enough corn in cases of wars and crises.

Age Insurance (AI):

1. Initiative for decreasing the retirement age (1988): 352

   Goal Initiative: Decrease the retirement age for men from 65 to 62, and for women from 62 to 60.

2. Measures for Protecting the Social Insurances (1993): 513

   Goal Federal Resolution: Giving the parliament the competence to increase the VAT by 1 percentage point, in order to have more funding for the age insurance.

3. Law on Age Insurance (1995): 571

   Goal Federal Law: Equal treatment of women and men. Separate payments for husbands and wives, and stepwise increase of womens retirement age to 64.

4. Initiative for better age insurance (1995): 572

   Goal Initiative: Higher payments for retired people, retirement age 62 for all.

5. Initiative "10th Revision of the Age Insurance without increasing the retirement age" (1998): 643

   Goal Initiative: Nullify the planned increase in women's retirement age to 64.

6. Initiative "for a flexible Age Insurance": 721, "for a flexible Retirement Age" (2000): 722

   Goal Initiatives: Allow a flexible retirement age from 62 years onwards for women and men. No reduction in benefits.

7. Initiative "for a secure Age Insurance" (2001): 752

   Goal Initiative: Enact higher taxation on energy to finance the Swiss age insurance system.

8. Federal Resolution on Financing the Age Insurance trough higher taxes (2004): 842

   Goal Federal Resolution: Increase VAT with an amount of 0.8 percentage points to have more funding for the age insurance.

9. Initiative Profits of the Swiss National Bank into the Age Insurance (2006): 911

   Goal Initiative: Use the profits from the Swiss National Bank to cover the age insurance (apart from 1 billion Swiss Franks that is meant to go to the Cantons).

10. Law on Age Insurance (2004): 841

    Goal Federal Law: Guarantee the financing of the age insurance through the following measures: increasing the retirement age for women to 65, adapting the rents to inflation every 3 instead of 2 years, and increasing the VAT. The referendum was seized because the ballot affects women more than men, and because of the planned increase of the VAT.

Education (EDU):

1. Initiative for sufficient occupational training (2003): 824

   Goal Initiative: Give each individual a constitutional right to have an apprenticeship opportunity.

Environment (ENV):

1. Train 2000 (1987): 341

   Goal Federal Resolution: Enlarge the Swiss railway network. The referendum was seized because of the financial means necessary, and the losses in nature where the railway is planned to be constructed.

2. For Protection of the Swiss Moors (1987): 343

   Goal Initiative: Prohibit building constructions in moor sceneries such as the planned shooting range in the Rothenturm moor area.

3. Federal Resolution on the Energy Article (1990): 403

   Goal Federal Resolution: Generate a constitutional article that sets guidelines in energy policy. It obliges the government and the cantons to guarantee sufficient supply of energy whilst creating incentives for an economic use.

4. Initiative for Promoting Public Transportation (1991): 412

   Goal Initiative: Make the promotion of public transportation a constitutional duty of the federal government. Increase the infrastructure and levy higher fuel taxes.

5. Law on Protection of Waters (1992): 442

   Goal Federal Law: To protect the rivers and lakes by putting limits on the amount of waters that can be taken. The Swiss energy producers seized the referendum because they feared not to have enough water for their hydropower plants.

6. Initiative for Saving the Waters (1992): 443

   Goal Initiative: Enact strict restrictions on water usage.

7. Federal Resolution on Building the Swiss Railway (1992): 461

   Goal Federal Resolution: Extend the Swiss railway network build two new tunnels.

8. Law on Customs on Fuel (1993): 481

   Goal Federal Law: Increase fuel taxes to extend and improve the national streets.

9. Federal Resolution on Charges of National Streets (1994): 521

   Goal Federal Resolution: Increase the charges for users of the Swiss highways from 30 to 40 Sfr. The increase was meant to correct for inflation over the last years.

10. Federal Resolution on Traffic Road Charges (1994): 522

    Goal Federal Resolution: Keep levying a tax on heavy traffic and adjust it to inflation.

11. Federal Resolution on usage-dependent Traffic Road Charges (1994): 523

    Goal Federal Resolution: Gradually make the tax on heavy traffic usage dependent.

12. Initiative for Protection of the Alps (1994): 524

    Goal Initiative: Divert all transit traffic on railway within a time span of ten years.

13. Federal Resolution on Funds for the Infrastructure on Public Traffic (1998): 651

    Goal Federal Resolution: Use federal funds of 1.5 billion Swiss franks per year to improve the infrastructure of the Swiss railway system.

14. Law on user-dependent heavy Traffic Charge (1998): 641

    Goal Federal Law: Enact a user-dependent heavy traffic charge to give incentives to use the railway instead of the streets.

15. For a Pigouvian Tax on Energy (2000): 713

    Goal Federal Resolution: Give the constitutional permission for enacting a Pigouvian tax on energy, that is fully re-distributed to the citizens.

16. Initiative for Promoting Solar Energy (2000): 711

    Goal Initiative: Enact a charge on non-renewable energies for 25 years, with the charge steadily increasing over time.

17. Initiative "for cutting motorized Road Traffic into Half" (2000): 695

    Goal Initiative: Reduce the motorized traffic on the roads into half, within a time span of 10 years.

18. Federal Resolution "For promoting renewable Energies" (2000): 712

    Goal Federal Resolution: Create a charge on renewable energies for maximal 15 years (which is lower than the one proposed by the solar initiative).

19. For a car-free Sunday per quarter (2003): 815

    Goal Initiative: Define one Sunday per quarter, where no private cars are allowed.

EU:

1. Federal Resolution on the European Economic Area, (1992): 471

    Goal Federal Resolution: Guarantee free movement of goods, labor, services and capital between Switzerland and 18 countries of the European Economic Area.

2. Initiative "Direct Democracy for Negotiations with the EU", (1997): 611

    Goal Initiative: Have a vote on whether the federal council should be allowed to start negotiating about the Swiss joining the EU.

3. Federal Resolution on Bilateral Agreements between Switzerland and the EU, 1 (2000): 701

    Goal Federal Resolution: Enact various bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the European Union. The referendum was seized because of the fear of massive immigration to Switzerland.

4. Initiative "Initiative Yes to Europe!", (2001): 731

    Goal Initiative: Force the federal council to start negotiating the terms about Switzerland joining the EU.

5. Federal Resolution on Bilateral Agreements between Switzerland and the EU, 2 (2005): 871

    Goal Federal Resolution: Switzerland to take part on the bilateral agreement "Schengen", which facilitates entry between EU countries, and fosters collaboration in Asylum and Visa matters. The referendum was seized because of the fear that abolition of boarder controls increases crime.

6. Federal Resolution on freedom of movement of new EU member States (2005): 881

Goal Federal Resolution: Work towards the free movement between Swiss and residents of new EU member States. The referendum as seized because of the fear of a large inflow of foreigners, and increase in unemployment, and harsher competition on the labor market for the Swiss.

7. Law on Cooperation with Eastern Europe (2006): 921

Goal Federal Law: Give financial aid to formerly communist countries to help them develop. The referendum was seized because of the financial consequences for the federal budget.

Finances (FIN):

1. Initiative: "Excessive Gold Reserves for the age insurance (2002): 781

Goal Initiative: Use supplementary gold reserves from the Swiss National Bank to cover the deficit in the Age Insurance (AHV).

2. Federal Resolution on Reorganizing the Federal Finances (1991): 421

Goal Federal Resolution: Convert the old Sales Tax into a VAT and allow an increase in taxes to finance the age insurance.

3. Federal Resolution on Federal Finances (1993): 511

Goal Federal Resolution: Convert the old Sales Tax into a VAT.

4. Federal Resolution for Healthy Federal Finances (1993): 512

Goal Federal Resolution: Increase tax rate by 0.3 percentage point, if change to the VAT accepted.

5. Federal Resolution on Consumption Taxes (1993): 514

Goal Federal Resolution: Concert customs duty of cars and petroleum into consumption taxes.

6. Law on Reducing Federal Expenses (1995): 564

Goal Federal Resolution: Make it harder to pass federal laws with significant expenses: the majority of all parliamentary members is needed, and not only the voting parliamentary members.

7. Federal Resolution on Measures for Budget Balancing (1998): 632

Goal Federal Resolution: Give guidelines to the federal council and the parliament to reduce the Swiss deficit.

8. Federal Resolution promoting a Debt Break (2001): 751

Goal Federal Resolution: Make a binding rule in the constitution that ties federal spending to federal revenues.

9. Counterproposal Initiative "Excessive Gold Reserves for AHV" (2002): 782

Goal Counterproposal: Keep the money from the Swiss gold reserves, but distribute the interests as follows: 1/3 to finance the age insurance, 1/3 for the cantons, and 1/3 to a solidarity fund for people in need.

10. Federal Resolution on the Swiss Financial Regime (2004): 862

Goal Federal Resolution: Renew the federal competence to tax income and to enact a VAT.

Foreign (FOR):

1. Federal Resolution on Switzerland joining the Bretton Woods (1992): 441

Goal Federal Resolution: To join the Bretton Woods Institutions. The referendum was seized with the argument of the ineffectiveness of these institutions and the payment of a fee.

2. Law on Military Forces with Peaceful Missions (1994): 531

Goal Federal Resolution: The federal level should receive the competence to send Swiss military people to UN operations with peaceful missions. The referendum was seized with the argument that this federal resolution contrasts the Swiss no-vote on joining the UN.

3. Initiative for joining the United Nations (2002): 761

Goal Initiative: Swiss should join the United Nations.

Health (HEALTH):

1. Law on Health Insurance (1994): 551

   Goal Federal Law: Stop the increasing costs of health premia by allowing for increasing competition between insurances and health suppliers. Include some new services (e.g. elderly care at home) in the mandatory insurance, and subsidize poor people's premia. The referendum was seized because of subsidies, which increase government spending.

2. Law on Insurance of Disabled (1999): 684

   Goal Federal Law: Take measures to stop the deficit in the disability insurance. Increase the VAT tax on 1 percentage point, and take measures to save costs. The referendum was taken because the cost-saving measures included reducing some part of the benefits.

3. Law on Health Insurance (1987): 342

   Goal Federal Law: Take measures to stop the continuing explosion of costs in the health sector, and grant better conditions for working women who give birth to a child.

4. Initiative for a cheap (better: financially secured) Health Insurance (1992): 431

   Goal Initiative: Increase the federal subsidies for health insurance premia.

5. Initiative for Reducing Problems with Alcohol (1993): 515

   Goal Initiative: Prohibit advertisement of products containing Alcohol.

6. Initiative for Reducing Problems with Tabacco (1993): 516

   Goal Initiative: Prohibit advertisement of Tobacco products.

7. Initiative for a healthy Health Insurance (1994): 552

   Goal Initiative: Make health premia dependent on income, and thereby increase the solidarity between rich and poor.

8. Initiative "Youth Without Drugs" (1997): 621

   Goal Initiative: Prescribe a federal policy that directly aims at abstinence. Prohibit the release of narcotic substances.

9. Initiative "for a reasonable drug policy" (1998): 653

   Goal Initiative: Exempt the consume of drugs from punishment.

10. Federal Resolution on Medical Prescription for Heroine (1999): 683

    Goal Federal Resolution: Create the legal base for the continuation of medical prescription of Heroine for heavy drug addicts. The referendum was seized because of the costs involved with the program.

11. Law on the Insurance of Mothers (1999): 685

    Goal Federal Law: Improve conditions for working women. Guarantee 80 % of the salary for the first 12 months after giving birth. The referendum was seized because of the costs associated with the insurance for working mothers.

12. Law Regulating Abortion (2002): 771

    Goal Federal Law: Legalize abortion within the first twelve weeks of pregnancy, if the women is in need.

13. Initiative "Protection of Mother and Baby" (2002): 772

    Goal Initiative: Legalize abortion within the first twelve weeks of pregnancy only if the mothers life is in danger.

14. Initiative "For reasonable Health Costs" (2003): 814

    Goal Initiative: Increase subsidies of health care premia by increasing the VAT, and make newly health premia dependent on income.

15. Initiative "Equal Rights for Disables" (2003): 821

    Goal Initiative: Give disabled people the right have convenient access to building with public interest.

16. Initiative "For a social Health Insurance" (2007): 931

    Goal Initiative: Create one single mandatory health insurance, and make the health premia dependent on income.

Immigration (IMM):

1. For restricting immigration (1988): 363

   Goal Initiative: Restrict the share of immigrants to 2/3 of foreigners leaving the country, as long as the Swiss population exceeds 6.2 million people.

2. For easier naturalization of Immigrants (1994): 533

   Goal Initiative: Regulate and facilitate the naturalization of immigrants.

3. Initiative against Illegal Migration (1996): 601

   Goal Initiative: Make the procedure of seeking political asylum in Switzerland less attractive.

4. Initiative for Restricting Immigration (2000): 714

   Goal Initiative: Reduce the share of foreigners to 18 percent of the Swiss population.

5. Initiative against Misuse in Asylum Matters (2002): 791

   Goal Initiative: The initiative requires to directly reject petitions for asylum if the asylum seeker is in a safe country.

6. For easier Naturalization of Immigrants of 2 Generation (2004): 851

   Goal Federal Resolution: Facilitate the Naturalization of Immigrants of 2 Generation.

7. Federal Resolution on Naturalization of Immigrants of 3 Generation (2004): 852

   Goal Federal Resolution: Change the constitution so that immigrant children of the 3 generation automatically receive Swiss citizenship at birth.

8. Law on Foreigners (2006): 912

   Goal Federal Law: Facilitate the integration of highly qualified foreigners coming from outside the EU. The referendum was seized because of apparent discrimination for low-skilled workers outside the EU.

9. Change of the Asylum Law (2006): 913

   Goal Federal Law: Decrease misuse by facilitating means of rejection of asylum seekers who refuse to reveal their identity. Also, reduction of federal aid for people, who did not get granted asylum. The referendum was seized because the law was found to be inhuman.

10. Asylum Law (1987): 321

    Goal Federal Law: Procedural Changes in the Asylum Law that facilitate and fasten the judgment of the increasing amount of asylum seekers.

11. Law on Residence on Foreigners (1987): 322

    Goal Federal Law: Procedural Changes in the Law on Residence on Foreigners that facilitate and fasten the judgment of the increasing amount of asylum seekers.

12. Law on Mandatory Measures in Immigration Law (1994): 553

    Goal Federal Law: Take measures to facilitate expulsion of rejected asylum seekers.

13. Asylum Law (1999): 681; Federal Resolution on Urgent Matters in the Area of Asylum (1999): 682

    Goal Ballots: Take measures against abuse in the area of asylum seeking. For instance: Do not grant the same rights to asylum seekers who hide their identity or apply after having resided illegally in Switzerland.

Institutions (INST):

1. Law on Procedures on Initiatives with Alternative Drafts (1987): 324

   Goal Federal Resolution: Allow for two yes-votes if there is an initiative as well as a counter-proposal to vote on.

2. For reducing the voting age from 21 to 18 (1991): 411

   Goal Federal Resolution: Decrease the voting age from 21 to 18.

3. Federal Resolution on a new Federal Constitution (1999): 671

   Goal Federal Resolution: Revise the federal constitution with regard to harmonization and modernization.

4. Initiative for Faster Direct Democracy (2000): 692

   Goal Initiative: The initiative asks for a vote no later than 12 month after the initiative has been submitted.

5. Initiative for Direct Democracy in Military Expenses (1987): 323

   Goal Initiative: Create the possibility to seize the referendum for military expenses.

6. Federal Resolution on the Eligibility in the Federal Council (1999): 661

   Goal Federal Resolution: Abolish the strict rule than no more than one council member can come from the same Canton.

7. Federal Resolution on the Reform of the Judiciary (2000): 691

   Goal Initiative: Harmonize the cantonal laws on procedure on civil and criminal suits. To bring relief to the federal courts, courts of lower instances should be created.

8. Initiative "More rights for the people thanks to the Referendum with Counter Proposal" (2000): 715

   Goal Initiative: Extend citizens rights by creating a new institution - called the constructive referendum. The constructive referendum gives citizens the possibility to propose a counter-proposal to certain passages of federal laws, if 50'000 citizens sign.

9. Federal Resolution on Changes of Citizens' Rights (2003): 801

   Goal Initiative: Extend citizensrights by creating the possibility of initiatives for laws at the federal level.

Military (MIL):

1. Federal Resolution for a Civilian Service for Military Deniars (1992): 445
   Goal Federal Resolution: To offer civil service instead of prison for people who refuse to go to the military.

2. Initiative for a Switzerland without Army (1989): 382
   Goal Initiative: Complete Abolishment of the Swiss Army

3. Swiss Military Law (1991): 422

   Goal Federal Resolution: Revise criminal code such that military denial is no longer punishable by prison, but instead by community service.

4. Initiative "No more than 40 places for Arms" (1993): 491
   Goal Initiative: Prohibit the new construction of places for arms.

5. Initiative "For a Switzerland without new Fighter Jets" (1993): 492
   Goal Initiative: Prohibits buying new fighter jets until the year of 2000.

6. Initiative "Against Exporting Arms" (1997): 612

   Goal Initiative: Prohibit the export and passing of any arms and munitions.

7. Against Federal Regulations on Gun Powder (1997): 613

   Goal Federal Resolution: Abolish the federal monopoly to fabricate and sell gun powder.

8. Initiative Federal Law on the Army (2001): 741

   Goal Federal Law: Revise the military law such that Swiss military corps in peaceful operations have the right to arm themselves if necessary.

9. Federal Law on the Army (Cooperation in Education) (2001): 742

   Goal Federal Resolution: Give the federal government the right to negotiate international agreements for cooperation in military education.

10. Initiative "for a Switzerland without Army" (2001): 753

    Goal Initiative: Abolish the Swiss Army.

11. Initiative "for a voluntary civil service" (2001): 754

    Goal Initiative: create a civil service for peaceful missions in and outside of Switzerland, on a voluntary basis.

12. Initiative "saving the military" (2002): 723

    Goal Initiative: cut federal expenses for the military within 10 years, to half of the level of military expenses in 1987.

13. Federal Law on the Military (2003): 811

    Goal Federal Resolution: Change the military law as follows: Release the Swiss men earlier from their military duty, but increase the duration of the military education. The total weeks spent in military service are reduced. The referendum was seized with the argument that the new army would not be capable of defending Switzerland.

Nuclear Energy (NUC):

1. Initiative against Powerplants (1990): 402

    Goal Initiative: Prohibit building new nuclear powerplants for 10 years.

2. Initiative against Nuclear Energy (1990): 401

    Goal Initiative: Shut down all current nuclear powerplants and forbid building any new ones.

3. Initiative "Against Nuclear Power Plants" (Strom ohne Atom) (2003): 822

    Goal Initiative: Shut down step-by-step the current five nuclear power plants from Switzerland.

4. Initiative "For Restricting Nuclear Risks" (2003): 823

    Goal Initiative: Prohibits building new nuclear powerplants for the next ten years.

Redistribution (REDIST):

1. Measures on Unemployment Insurance (1993): 505

    Goal Federal Resolution: Increase the number of eligible days from 300 to 400, but reduce the amount of the last income from 80 to 70 percent. The referendum was seized because of the reduction of the money from 80 to 70 percent.

2. Federal Resolution on further Increases in Health Insurance Premias (1993): 504

    Goal Federal Resolution: Regulation of Health Insurance Premias. The referenda was seized because the federal resolution wanted a minimal cost-sharing from the patients of 10 Sfr. per hospital day. This minimal cost-sharing was perceived as asocial.

3. For lower costs of hospitals (2000): 724

    Goal Initiative: To reduce the services included in the mandatory health insurance to hospital costs. Through this measure, the rising costs of the health insurance premia are supposed to be decelerated.

4. Initiative for low Pharmaceutical Prices (2001): 732

    Goal Initiative: The goal of the initiative is to only re-imburse the consumer with the health insurance, if he used the cheapest medicament. Through this measure, the rising costs of the health insurance premia are supposed to be decelerated.

5. Federal Resolution on Taxation of Families, Properties and Stamp Duties (2004): 843

    Goal Federal Law: The goal of the ballot is to change tax law to eliminate the disadvantage of married couples. The tax law was also revised to give incentive to own property. The referendum was seized because of the last point, which supposedly favors the rich.

6. Initiative Postal Services for all (2004): 853

   Goal Initiative: To force the government to guarantee a broad supply of postal services. If necessary, services are covered by federal funds.

7. Federal Resolution on Financing the Unemployment Insurance (1997): 622

   Goal Federal Resolution: Decrease the payments to the unemployed by 1-3 percentage to help stopping the growing deficit in the unemployment insurance.

8. Initiative "Proprietary for Everybody" (1999): 662

   Goal Initiative: Provide tax incentives to encourage buying property.

9. Federal Law on the Unemployment Insurance (2002): 792

   Goal Federal Law: Ensure the financing of the unemployment insurance through various measures: subsidies by Cantons and the federal government, shorter period during which unemployment benefits can be received. The referendum was seized because of the latter change.

10. Initiative "Yes to Fair Rental Prices" (2003): 813

    Goal Initiative: Tie the rental prices to the interest rates for mortgages - in cases of increasing as well as decreasing interest rates. The parliament and the federal council recommended voting no to this initiative, because they work on a revision of the law that wants to tie rental prices to inflation instead of interest rates for mortgages.

Regulation (REG):

1. Federal Resolution on Building Vines (1990): 395

   Goal Federal Resolution: Continue existing Regulatory Measures such as import quota and add new ones to enhance the quality of wines (e.g. defining different classes of quality). The referenda was seized because of the ongoing existence of import quota, which gives rise to economic rents to importers and increases wine prices in Switzerland.

2. Change Swiss Criminal Code/ Swiss Military Code (1992): 446

   Goal Federal Law: Modernize the laws concerning sexual matters. Strict Prohibition of hard Pornography, and rape within married couples newly a criminal act. The Referendum was seized because of the quasi-legalization of soft pornography, and the more lenient regulation of sexual acts between young people of similar age.

3. Law on Paysants' Land Rights (1992): 466

   Goal Federal Law: Regulates and ensures access to land for agriculture. The referendum was seized because of a general opposition against regulatory measures in agriculture.

4. Federal Resolution on the Union of the community Laufen with the Canton BS (1993): 502

   Goal Federal Resolution: Enable the District Laufen to join the Canton BS.

5. Federal Resolution on Abolishing Permissions to build Dioceses (2001): 743

   Goal Federal Resolution: Delete a paragraph in the constitution that regulates catholic churches with dioceses.

6. Initiative for lower working hours (2002): 762

   Goal Initiative: Reduce the average regular working load from 40 to 36 hours.

7. Law on the Electricity Market (2002): 783

   Goal Federal Law: Deregulate the Electricity Market by letting consumers choose their supplier. The referendum was seized with the argument that a free electricity market threatens the quality of the services.

8. Change of Swiss Code of Obligations (2004): 832

   Goal Federal Counter Proposal: Modernize the tenancy law. Tie the rents to inflation and set up new criteria ("comparable rents") for judging abusive rental prices. The referendum was seized because of a fear of increasing rental prices.

9. Change Compensation Law (2004): 854

   Goal Federal Law: Improve the conditions for working women after giving birth to a child. The referendum was seized by the right-wing party SVP, because it would cause an increase in government spending.

10. Law on Homosexual Couples (2005): 872

    Goal Federal Law: Create the possibility for homosexual couples to have similar legal rights as married heterosexual couples. The referendum was seized because of an apparent threat to the family.

11. Initiative for food without Gen-Technology (2005): 891

    Goal Initiative: Prohibit the use of gen-technologically modified plants and animals in the Swiss agriculture for 5 years.

12. Law on the Organization of the Federal Judicature (1990): 396

    Goal Federal Law: The goal of the initiative was to bring relief to the federal judiciary, which suffered from a high number of cases and too little personal. The referendum was seized because of two changes: the increase of the amount in dispute necessary for a case to go to a federal judiciary, and the increased power of federal judges to check for the relevance of the cases to be eligible for a federal dispute. The fear was an undermining of the Swiss legal system.

13. Initiative against Speculation with Properties (1988): 361

    Goal Initiative: Prohibit buying land with the purpose of investment. Land should be assigned to people who use it for living, working, or farming.

14. Initiative for Shorter Working Hours (1988): 362

    Goal Initiative: Restrict the maximal legal working hours to 40 hours per week.

15. Initiative for Restricting Animal Testing (1992): 432

    Goal Initiative: Prohibit animal testing by law.

16. Counterproposal to the Initiative "Against Misuse in Gentechnology" (1992): 444

    Goal Initiative: Put guidelines in the constitution to regulate and avoid misuse of Gen-Technology.

17. Swiss Criminal Code on Military Law (1994): 542

    Goal Federal Resolution: Revise criminal code and military law such that racist acts are treated as criminal offenses.

18. Law on Acquisition of Property through Foreigners (1995): 573

    Goal Federal Resolution: Change the law in order to facilitate possession of Swiss property by foreigners.

19. Federal Resolution on the Revision of the Language Article (1996): 581

    Goal Federal Resolution: Put new paragraphs in the federal constitution that support the diversity of languages in Switzerland.

20. Federal Resolution on the union of the community Vellerat with the Canton JU (1996): 582

    Goal Federal Resolution: Allow the bernese community Vellerat to join the Canton Jura.

21. Against the Federal Duty to buy Spirits (1996): 584

    Goal Federal Resolution: Release the federal government from the obligation to buy Swiss spirits.

22. Federal Law regulating working conditions (1998): 654

    Goal Federal Resolution: Revise the law to allow for more flexible regulations concerning working hours. At the same time, guarantee better protection and compensation of night shifts and working women giving birth.

23. Initiative "for Protection against Gen-Manipulation" (1998): 631

    Goal Initiative: Prohibit Gen-Manipulation with Animals, and prohibit the release of genetically manipulated organisms.

24. Initiative "S.o.S. - Schweiz ohne Schnffelpolizei" (1998): 633

    Goal Initiative: Restrict the polices' possibilities to gather information on citizens to cases with known criminal offenses.

25. Federal Law regulating working conditions (1998): 654

    Goal Federal Resolution: Revise the law to allow for more flexible regulations concerning working hours. At the same time, guarantee better protection and compensation of night shifts and working women giving birth. Compared the the federal resolution (1996), which was rejected by the voters, the measures for protection were expanded.

26. Federal Resolution on Regulating Transplantation Medicine (1999): 664

    Goal Federal Resolution: Set the legal framework for transplantation medicine in the constitution.

27. Federal Law on City and Regional Planning (1999): 663

    Goal Federal Resolution: Allow for a more flexible use of former agricultural land and buildings.

28. Initiative "for a fair Representation of Women in the Government" (2000): 693

    Goal Initiative: Introduce Quota for the federal parliament and the judiciary.

29. Initiative "against Manipulations in the Technology of Reproduction" (2000): 694

    Goal Initiative: Restrict the use of artificial insemination.

30. Federal Law on the Employees of the Government (2000): 725

    Goal Federal Resolution: Make the conditions for government employees more competitive. Abolish the status as a civil servant, but instead guarantee a good protection against layoffs.

31. Federal Law on Cantonal Contributions to Treatments in Hospitals (2003): 802

    Goal Federal Resolution: Revise the federal law on health to regulate Cantons' subsidies for hospital stays of patients with complementary insurances.

32. Federal Law on Civil Protection (2003): 812

    Goal Federal Resolution: Coordinate and regulate the different cantonal and communal measures for protecting civilians in case of catastrophe.

33. Initiative "Stricter Regulation for Sexual Offenders" (2004): 833

    Goal Initiative: Prescribe Life-Long custody for dangerous sexual offenders who do not respond to treatment.

34. Law on Research on Embryonic Stem Cells (2004): 863

    Goal Federal Resolution: Regulate by law the conditions under which research on stem cells can be conducted.

35. Federal Law on Opening Hours of Shops (2005): 892

    Goal Federal Resolution: Allow shops in airports and train stations to be open on Sundays.

Traffic (TRAFF):

1. For higher Speed Limits 130/100 (1989): 381

   Goal Initiative: increase the speed limit on highways from 120 to 130, and from 80 to 100 on regular roads.

2. Counter Proposal to the Avanti Initiative (2004): 831

   Goal Counter Proposal: To extend the road network to guarantee a well functioning and efficient road infrastructure.

3. Initiative for Restricting Road Making (1990): 391

   Goal Initiative: Restrict the Swiss road network to the size of 1986. Only allow to build new roads if existing roads are abolished.

4. Initiative against Freeway between Murten and Yverdon (1990): 392

   Goal Initiative: Against building the planned freeway between Murten and Yverdon.

5. Initiative against Freeway in the Knonauer Amt (1990): 393

   Goal Initiative: Against building the planned freeway in the Knonauer Amt.

6. Initiative against Freeway between Biel and Solothurn/Zuchwil (1990): 394

   Goal Initiative: Against building the planned freeway between Biel and Solothurn/Zuchwil .

7. Law on Road Traffic (1990): 404

   Goal Federal Resolution: Change the federal law on road traffic with the goal to guarantee security on the streets. The referendum was seized because of the planned increase of the maximal latitude of cars in accordance with EU standards. The arguments of the opponents was a further increase in truck traffic.

8. Initiative "for a better security on the streets with speed limit 30" (2001): 733

   Goal Initiative: Reduce speed limits in town from 50 to 30 km per hour.

Federalism (FED):

1. Federal Resolution on Coordination on Traffic Policy (1988): 351

   Goal Federal Resolution: Give the competence to the federal government to coordinate traffic policy. Create the possibility of levying road charges to ensure an ecological development of private and public traffic. There was a debate on who should have the responsibility, federal or cantonal level.

2. Federal Resolution in financial compensation between Federal/Cantonal level (2004): 861

   Goal Federal Resolution: Re-organize and systematize the share of duties between federal and cantonal level. Furthermore, determine the transfers between rich and poor cantons.

3. Federal Regulation of Misuse of Arms (1993): 501

   Goal Federal Resolution: Make regulation of arms a federal instead of a cantonal matter. The main objective is to be able to better control abuse of arms.

4. Law on Aviation (1994): 525

   Goal Federal Law: Create legal competence to ask for charges for landing. Regulatory measures on airport security newly federal instead of cantonal authority, against which the referendum was seized.

5. Federal Resolution on the Promotion of Culture (1994): 532

   Goal Federal Resolution: To give the authority to foster culture also to the federal level, and not until now, only to the cantonal level.

6. Federal Resolution on the Cantonal Authority on Personal Military Equipment (1996): 583

   Goal Federal Resolution: Make the purchasing of military equipment a federal instead of Cantonal authority. Note, the vote was: Would you like to abandon the cantonal authority in military equipment?

7. Federal Resolution on Constitutional Matters on Education (2006): 901

   Goal Federal Resolution: Harmonize the Swiss Education system across Cantons. While secondary education continues to be a cantonal matter, the Cantons would be forced to harmonize the starting age, length and degrees.

8. Law on Family Surpluses (2006): 922

   Goal Federal Law: To harmonize the different Cantonal regulations on surpluses for families. The referendum was seized because of opposition against a federal interference in cantonal matters.

FIGURE 1

Distribution Survey Bias ("Share Yes" Survey - "Share Yes" Ballot)
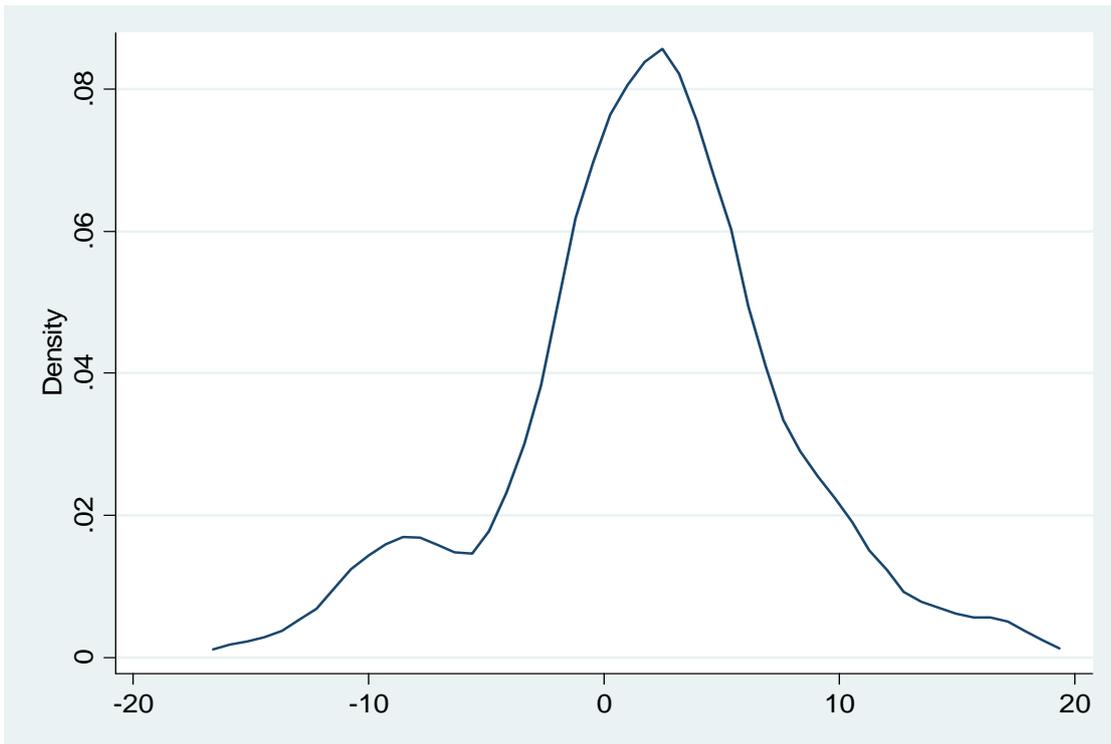
Notes: Figure 1 shows the kernel distribution of the gaps between reported share yes in the VOX survey and and actual share yes at the ballot. Data Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office; VOX-Data.

FIGURE 2

Distribution Survey Bias, weighted and unweighted samples
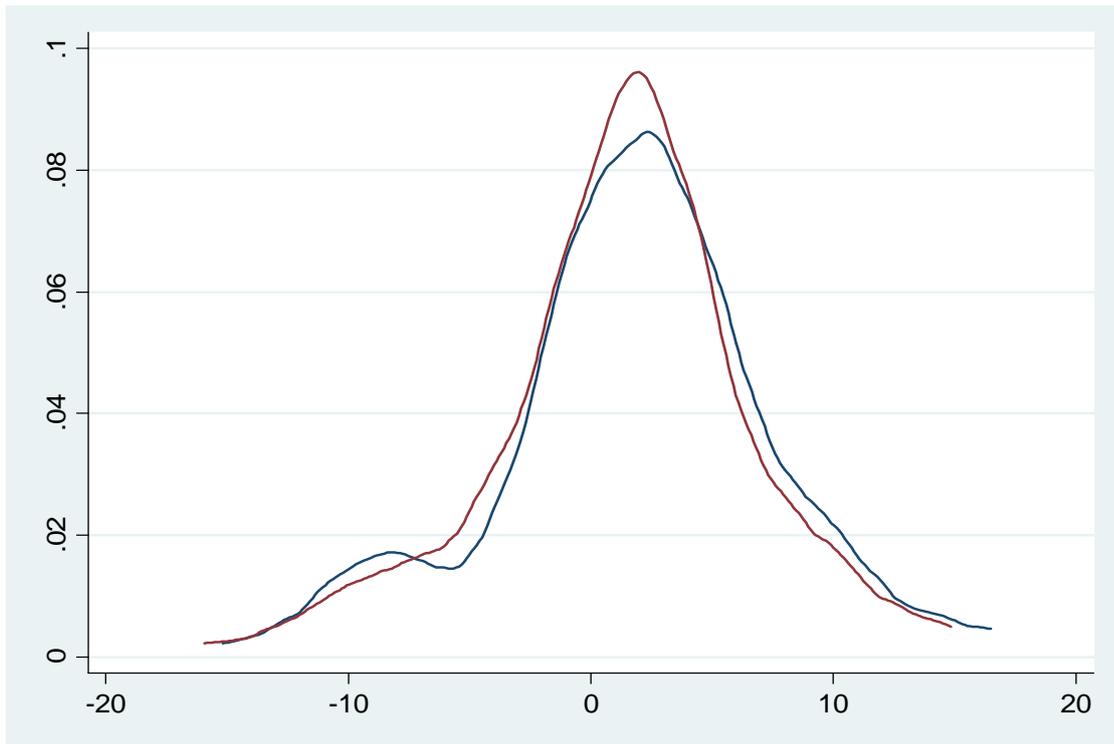
Notes: Figure 2 shows the kernel distributions of the gaps between reported share yes in the VOX survey and and actual share yes at the ballot. The black line uses unweighted data, the red line the weighted data. Data Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office; VOX-Data.

TABLE 1

Summary Statistics, VOX Sample and Swiss population sample (people older than 20)

	VOX Mean (1990)	Swiss (PUS Data) Mean (1990)	Test Diff. in Means P-Value	VOX Mean (2000)	Swiss (PUS Data) Mean (2000)	Test Diff. in Means P-Value
Share Women	0.50	0.51	0.1117	0.51	0.52	0.9605
Share Protestants	0.44	0.41	0.0002	0.43	0.35	0.0000
Share Catholics	0.47	0.46	0.4768	0.43	0.42	0.0556
Age 20-39	0.41	0.42	0.7039	0.35	0.38	0.0000
Age 40-59	0.35	0.33	0.2787	0.35	0.36	0.0050
Age 60plus	0.24	0.25	0.3030	0.30	0.26	0.0000
Linguistic Area: Geman	0.72	0.72	0.8968	0.69	0.71	0.0118
Linguistic Area: French	0.23	0.23	0.7538	0.24	0.24	0.4949
Linguistic Area: Italian	0.05	0.05	0.8133	0.06	0.05	0.0004
Higher Education	0.21	0.19	0.0084	0.30	0.27	0.0000

Notes: The data displays characteristics of VOX-survey respondents for the years 1990 and 2000, and a representative sample of 5% of the Swiss population (Public Use Sample - PUS) for the same years. The characteristics to be compared are sex, religion, age, language and education. Higher Education is a dummy variable taking a value of 1 if the individual has a high-school degree or higher. Individuals older or equal to 20 years are considered.

TABLE 2

Characteristics Survey Sample and Survey Bias (Absolute Value)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Cooperation Rate (in %)	-0.0380		-0.0260		-0.0292
	(0.0978)		(0.102)		(0.102)
Vote Reveal Rate (in %)		-0.101***	-0.0240		-0.0207
		(0.0320)	(0.0503)		(0.0533)
Turnout Gap				-0.0654	-0.0520
				(0.141)	(0.165)
Constant	5.777	13.21***	7.452	5.231**	8.080
	(3.724)	(2.871)	(5.161)	(2.279)	(5.210)
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of Votes	73	184	73	184	73
R-squared	0.274	0.232	0.275	0.194	0.276

Notes: Dependent variable is the absolute value of the difference between the share "Yes" in the survey and the official share "Yes" of the ballot result (with surveys being re-weighted on age, religion and education). Cooperation rate is the share of contacted people who respond to the survey. Vote Reveal Rate is the share of voters (per vote) which reveal their voting decision (answer with "yes" or "no"). Turnout Gap is the difference between reported turnout in the survey and official turnout at the ballot (in %). Standard errors clustered at the voting day level in parantheses. *** denote significance at the 1% level, ** significance at the 5% level, and * significance at the 10% level.

TABLE 3
Survey Bias, by Topic

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6) Share of votes supported by Left
PRO INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION (9)	5.646***	5.389***	3.648***	5.355***	3.015***	100
	(0.939)	(1.014)	(0.917)	(0.940)	(0.972)	
PRO IMMIGRATION (4)	6.947	7.314	4.942	8.066	4.973	75
	(5.454)	(5.188)	(4.251)	(4.846)	(6.280)	
CONTRA IMMIGRATION (8)	-5.123***	-5.127**	-3.530**	-3.234	-7.097***	0
	(1.869)	(1.940)	(1.719)	(2.161)	(1.182)	
CONTRA INCREASE ARMY (10)	2.946***	2.900***	2.131***	-0.130	1.761**	86
	(0.565)	(0.520)	(0.628)	(1.134)	(0.728)	
PRO PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT (23)	3.616**	3.898***	3.164**	4.059***	1.556	100
	(1.345)	(1.388)	(1.350)	(1.302)	(1.328)	
CONTRA NUCLEAR ENERGY (4)	5.187***	5.164***	4.119***	1.772***	4.200***	100
	(0.739)	(0.768)	(1.291)	(0.211)	(0.306)	
PRO BUDGET BALANCE (2)	2.663	2.688	2.666	6.010***	-1.284	0
	(1.655)	(1.655)	(1.687)	(1.596)	(2.052)	
PRO DIRECT DEMOCRACY (5)	2.190	2.367	1.580	1.712	0.611	60
	(3.568)	(3.617)	(3.088)	(2.354)	(3.154)	
PRO LIBERALIZATION HEALTH (5)	0.937	0.801	0.0327	1.109	-0.473	100
	(1.539)	(1.682)	(1.234)	(1.947)	(1.854)	
CONTRA LIBERALIZATION HEALTH (5)	-0.374	-0.456	-0.672	0.901	-0.374	67
	(0.668)	(0.620)	(1.003)	(1.139)	(0.673)	
PRO REDISTRIBUTION (7)	3.871***	3.951***	3.210***	1.901**	3.307**	100
	(0.977)	(0.967)	(1.006)	(0.775)	(1.425)	
PRO INCREASE RETIREMENT AGE (2)	-3.436	-3.741	-3.673	0.880	-5.409***	50
	(2.695)	(2.674)	(2.876)	(2.638)	(1.312)	
CONTRA INCREASE RETIREMENT AGE (5)	0.106	-0.0915	0.662	-2.787	0.106	100
	(1.408)	(1.445)	(1.610)	(2.606)	(1.418)	
PRO GENDER EQUALITY (3)	6.661	7.018	5.316	5.473	5.816*	100
	(4.663)	(4.752)	(3.528)	(3.412)	(3.416)	
PRO LIBERAL ATTITUDES (2)	8.515***	8.695***	6.030***	7.817***	4.568***	100
	(0.780)	(0.755)	(0.274)	(0.0404)	(1.445)	
Use of Weights to calculate Survey Bias	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	
Use of Weights in Regressions	No	Yes	No	No	No	
Characteristics		# Revealed Voting Decisions	Age, Religion Education	Left-Wing Voters		
Controls	None	None	None	None	Ballot Accepted	
Number of Votes	91	91	91	91	91	
R-Squared	0.477	0.505	0.373	0.418	0.559	
H0: Equality of estimated coefficients (P-Value):	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	

Notes: The dependent variable in (1) to (5) is the difference between a ballot's approval in the survey ("stated share yes") and true approval as measured at the ballot box ("real share yes"). The number in (6) is the share of votes per policy area, where the left-wing party recommended a "yes". In column (2), regressions are weighted according to the number of voters (per ballot) who reveal their result. In column (3) The surveys are re-weighted to match the population on age, religion and education. In column (4), surveys are re-weighted to match vote-shares of the left-wing party in elections. Standard errors clustered at the voting day level in parantheses. *** denote significance at the 1% level, ** significance at the 5% level, and * significance at the 10% level.

TABLE 4
Liberal Bias

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Recommendation Left-Wing Party	4.949***	5.337***	4.992***	3.378***	3.443***	3.127**	1.314	-0.0756	3.523***	2.700*
	(1.083)	(1.096)	(1.156)	(1.150)	(1.080)	(1.175)	(1.615)	(1.606)	(1.122)	(1.443)
Rec. Left-Wing * Importance Vote							4.960**	4.092		
							(1.993)	(2.521)		
Importance Vote							-3.927**	-3.757		
							(1.704)	(2.323)		
Rec. Left-Wing * High Ads									3.981*	2.027
									(2.137)	(2.017)
High Ads									-2.616	-1.506
									(1.859)	(1.639)
Constant	-1.659*	-1.842**	-3.727***	-2.571**	-3.109***	-2.679**	-1.071	0.111	-2.750**	-2.052
	(0.913)	(0.896)	(1.067)	(1.116)	(1.025)	(1.102)	(1.615)	(1.516)	(1.095)	(1.283)
Use of Weights to calculate Survey Bias	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Use of Weights in Regressions	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Characteristics	NO	# Revealed Voting Decisions	NO	NO	Age, Religion Education	Left-Wing Voters	NO	NO	NO	NO
Controls	None	None	Ballot Accepted	Ballot Accepted	Ballot Accepted	Ballot Accepted	Ballot Accepted	Ballot Accepted	Ballot Accepted	Ballot Accepted
Year Fixed Effects	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Voting Day Fixed Effects	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
Number of Votes	174	174	174	174	174	174	132	132	174	174
R-squared	0.361	0.377	0.463	0.688	0.419	0.405	0.461	0.713	0.485	0.691

Notes: Dependent variable is the difference between the share "Yes" in the survey and the official share "Yes" of the ballot result. Importance Vote is a dummy variable that takes a value of 1, if the vote was above the mean level of importance of all votes, and 0 otherwise. High Ads is a dummy variable taking a value of 1, if campaign advertisement was above average, and 0 otherwise. In (1)-(3), and (5)-(7) and (9), standard errors clustered at the voting day level in parantheses. In (4), (8) and (10), robust standard errors in parantheses. *** denote significance at the 1% level, ** significance at the 5% level, and * significance at the 10% level.

TABLE 5
Acceptance of Ballot and Positive Survey Bias

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Vote Accepted	4.783***	4.834***	4.046***		5.288***	4.168***	4.561***	4.646***	5.936**	-1.468
	(0.830)	(0.846)	(0.711)		(1.491)	(0.725)	(0.773)	(1.550)	(2.293)	(2.386)
Yes Official				0.0794***	-0.0390					
				(0.0224)	(0.0444)					
Recommendation Left-Wing Party						4.992***	4.090***	2.466*		
						(1.156)	(1.351)	(1.305)		
Constant	-0.587	-0.465	4.361*	2.935	5.594*	0.707	0.757	-2.657*	-0.922	0.546
	(0.740)	(0.748)	(2.561)	(2.956)	(2.838)	(2.012)	(2.673)	(1.413)	(1.936)	(2.148)
Weights in Regressions	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Control Topics	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Year Fixed Effect	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Voting Day Fixed Effects	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Sample	Full	Full	Full	Full	Full	Full	Full	Full	Narrow M 45-55	Narrow M Placebo 40-50
Nr. Votes	184	184	184	184	184	174	174	174	36	31
R-squared	0.177	0.183	0.329	0.285	0.332	0.463	0.523	0.717	0.213	0.011

Notes: The dependent variable is the difference between a ballot's approval in the survey ("stated share yes") and true approval as measured at the ballot box ("real share yes"). Vote accepted is a dummy variable taking a value of 1 if the ballot was approved by the Swiss electorate. Yes Official is the share of yes votes by the Swiss electorate. Recommendation Left-Wing Party is a dummy variable taking a value of 1 if the left-wing party recommended to accept the ballot. Column (9) restricts the sample to the votes that were accepted or rejected at a narrow margin (i.e. approval between 45 and 55%). Column (10) presents a placebo test, where the sample is restricted to votes that were narrowly rejected (share yes between 40 and 50%). Vote Accepted in this placebo test is a dummy variable that takes a value of 1 if the approval is bigger than 45 percent. Standard errors clustered at the voting day level in parantheses. *** denote significance at the 1% level, ** significance at the 5% level, and * significance at the 10% level.

TABLE 6

Deviations from Party Recommendations

	(1) Prob. Yes	(2) Left (SP)	(3) Middle (CVP)	(4) Right (FDP)	(5) Deviations from Party Recommendations Ultra Right (SVP)	(6) 4 Big Parties	(7) 4 Big Parties	(8) 4 Big Parties	(9) 4 Big Parties
Vote Accepted	0.360***	0.283***	0.174***	0.347***	0.125**	0.235***	0.331***	0.129***	0.137**
	(0.00449)	(0.0330)	(0.0270)	(0.0414)	(0.0591)	(0.0178)	(0.0697)	(0.0388)	(0.0628)
Constant	0.343***	0.179***	0.166***	0.185***	0.241***	0.191***	0.166***	0.245***	0.243***
	(0.00254)	(0.0153)	(0.00902)	(0.00642)	(0.00800)	(0.00489)	(0.0172)	(0.0164)	(0.0237)
Individual Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Votes	All	All	All	All	All	All	Congruent	Margin 40-60	Margin 45-55
Observations	98,604	4,500	5,075	5,302	3,421	18,298	7,871	6,145	3,231
R-squared	0.568	0.821	0.643	0.751	0.718	0.738	0.860	0.878	0.926

Notes: The dependent variable in (1) is a dummy variable taking a value of 1 if the survey respondent states to have voted "yes", and a 0 in case of a "no" vote. The dependent variable in (2)-(9) is whether an individual deviates from the recommendation of her preferred party (which is to vote "no"). The variable takes a value of 1 if the individual states to have voted "yes", and a value of 0 if the individual states to have voted "no". Vote Accepted is a dummy variable taking a value of 1 if the ballot has been approved by the Swiss electorate, and 0 otherwise. Congruent Votes (column (7)) are those where the parties and voters had similar approval (difference <10%). Margin 40-60 (column (8)) are votes with a share yes in that range, and Margin 45-55 are votes with approval rates between 45 and 55% (column (9)). Robust standard errors reported. *** denote significance at the 1% level, ** significance at the 5% level, and * significance at the 10% level.

TABLE 7

Canton Characteristics and Survey Biases (in Absolute Values)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Share Protestants	-0.0871***	-0.0287	0.00916	0.0110	0.000991	0.00911	0.00668
	(0.0289)	(0.0224)	(0.0210)	(0.0235)	(0.0218)	(0.0189)	(0.0196)
Age above 65	0.547**	0.262	0.343**	0.354*	0.367**	0.343**	0.347**
	(0.244)	(0.172)	(0.156)	(0.187)	(0.163)	(0.153)	(0.158)
Education	-0.0897	0.153**	0.178	0.181	0.140	0.177	0.204*
	(0.0853)	(0.0676)	(0.112)	(0.115)	(0.108)	(0.132)	(0.111)
Non-German-Speaking		-2.766***	-2.282**	-2.270**	-1.959**	-2.277*	-2.569***
		(0.669)	(0.978)	(0.970)	(0.938)	(1.249)	(0.884)
Income		-0.000107***	8.92e-05**	9.16e-05**	0.000103**	8.93e-05**	8.96e-05**
		(1.71e-05)	(3.44e-05)	(3.50e-05)	(4.29e-05)	(3.37e-05)	(3.51e-05)
Percentage Rural Population			0.0486	0.0484	0.0450	0.0484	0.0518
			(0.0358)	(0.0357)	(0.0335)	(0.0395)	(0.0357)
Population Size (in 1000)			-0.0112***	-0.0114***	-0.0115***	-0.0112***	-0.0114***
			(0.00203)	(0.00199)	(0.00221)	(0.00205)	(0.00214)
Support Left-Wing				-0.00253			
				(0.0163)			
Support Middle					-0.00826		
					(0.0116)		
Support Right Wing						-0.000180	
						(0.0169)	
Support Ultra Right							0.0115
							(0.0103)
Constant	6.694*	8.345***	5.745	6.469*	5.760	5.602	5.272
	(3.417)	(2.662)	(3.556)	(3.471)	(4.099)	(3.823)	(3.609)
Ballot-Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year-Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2,539	2,539	2,539	2,539	2,539	2,539	2,539
R-squared	0.443	0.473	0.482	0.483	0.482	0.482	0.483

Notes: Dependent Variable is the difference between the reported and the effective share of yes-votes in absolute values, at the canton-level. Share Protestants is in percentage of the total population. Non-German-Speaking is a dummy variable for a Canton with (predominantly) french or italian language. Age above 65 is the share of Canton inhabitants with more than 65 years. Education is defined as the share of people older than 19 holding a high-school degree and higher. Percentage rural population is the share of Canton inhabitants living in rural areas. Support Left-Wing is the percentage of total votes (per Canton), the left wing party (SP) received at the federal elections. Support Middle is the vote share of the CVP, support right of the FDP, and support ultra right of the SVP. Standard errors clustered at the Canton-level in parantheses. *** denote significance at the 1% level, ** significance at the 5% level, and * significance at the 10% level.

APPENDIX TABLE 1
Summary Statistics, VOX Samples

	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Share Women (%)	184	50.7	1.7	48.1	55.3
Share Protestants (%)	184	42.5	3.7	33.4	49.5
Share Catholics (%)	184	42.8	2.9	36.9	50.3
Age 20-39 (%)	184	36.7	3.4	28.2	43.2
Age 40-59 (%)	184	34.4	1.6	30.4	37.4
Age 60plus (%)	184	26.7	3.9	20.4	33.8
Higher Education (%)	184	33.0	7.0	20.9	51.7
Linguistic Area: Geman (%)	183	70.6	1.4	68.5	75.0
Linguistic Area: French (%)	183	23.8	1.1	20.0	26.4
Linguistic Area: Italian (%)	181	5.5	0.8	2.0	6.7
Survey Bias (%)	184	1.85	5.80	-15.19	17.93
Survey Bias (Absolute Value) (%)	184	4.67	3.90	0.02	17.93
Turnout Gap (%)	184	9.22	5.33	-12.91	22.68
Non-Cooperation Rate (%)	74	63.85	6.13	52.00	74.80
Share Left-Wing Voters (%)	184	29.98	5.16	21.82	42.66
Share Middle Voters (%)	184	14.95	3.51	8.13	23.16
Share Right-Wing Voters (%)	184	21.53	3.60	14.96	30.25
Share Ultra Right-Wing Voters (%)	184	17.33	6.47	7.07	29.95
Share Emtpy Votes (%)	184	11.03	8.41	1.03	60.34
Importance Vote	138	6.75	0.90	4.35	8.48

Notes: The variables are averages per vote. Survey Bias is the difference between the Share Yes in the Survey and the Share Yes of the voting result. Turnout Gap is the difference between Turnout in the Survey and official Turnout at the ballot. Non-Cooperation Rate is the Share of contacted people who refused to participate in the VOX-Survey. Share Left Wing Voters is the share of voters with the socialist party (SP) as their favourite party (in % of voters which indicated a favourite party); share Middle Voters the respective share of CVP Voters; share Right-Wing Voters the respective share of FDP Voters; share Ultra-Right-Wing Voters the respective share of SVP Voters. Share Empty Votes is the share of votes (per ballot) that were left blank by the voters. Importance Vote is a dummy variable that takes a value of 1, if the vote was above the mean level of importance of all votes, and 0 otherwise.

Year	VOX Number	Title of Proposition	# Obs. (Mean: 536)	Survey Bias	P-Value	Coop. Rate (Mean: 36)	Vote Reveal-Rate (Mean: 89)	Over-Rep. Voting (Mean: 15)
2004	854	Change Compensation Law	614	16.49	0.000	28	93.74	11.70
1987	341	Train 2000	612	16.04	0.000		94.30	17.00
1987	324	Law on Procedures on Initiatives with Alt. Drafts	444	15.53	0.000		78.17	14.74
1996	583	Fed. Res. Cantonal Authority Military Equipment	228	-15.19	0.000		49.14	14.18
1993	505	Measures on Unemployment Insurance	488	14.64	0.000		91.90	13.73
2004	832	Change of Swiss Code of Obligations	558	-13.50	0.000	31	89.00	17.30
2004	851	Easier Naturalization of Immigrants of 2 Generation	613	12.59	0.000	28	93.59	11.70
1991	411	For Reducing the Voting Age from 21 to 18	429	12.38	0.000		97.28	11.61
2004	852	Fed. Res. Naturalization Immigrants of 3 Generation	607	12.23	0.000	28	92.67	11.70
1990	396	Law on the organization of the federal judicature	433	-11.83	0.000		77.46	16.01
1994	533	For easier Naturalization of Immigrants	622	11.83	0.000		97.65	17.51
2000	724	For lower Costs of Hospitals	478	-11.21	0.000	39	82.84	15.35
1987	343	For Protection of the Swiss Moors	612	11.15	0.000		94.30	17.00
1992	466	Law on Paysants' Land Rights	533	10.75	0.000		84.34	17.20
2002	783	Law on the Electricity Market	503	-10.62	0.000	32	83.14	16.32
1993	502	Fed. Res. Union Laufen with the Canton BS	439	10.45	0.000		82.67	13.73
2000	713	For Pigouvian Tax on Energy	448	-10.35	0.000	41	79.15	11.17
1988	363	For Restricting Immigration	661	-10.31	0.000		92.84	17.80
2001	743	Fed. Res. Dioceses	390	10.16	0.000	42	72.36	10.95
2003	815	For a car-free Sunday per Quarter	518	9.98	0.000		89.31	8.13
2004	831	Counter Proposal to the Avanti Initiative	594	-9.76	0.000	31	94.74	17.10
2005	872	Law on Homosexual Couples	705	9.52	0.000	29	93.50	17.86
1990	402	Initiative against Nuclear Power Plants	555	9.46	0.000		94.23	18.61
1994	532	Federal Resolution on the Promotion of Culture	606	9.40	0.000		95.13	17.51
1994	525	Law on Aviation	470	9.33	0.000		83.78	16.04
2005	891	Initiative for food without Gen-Technology	607	9.21	0.000	29.5	94.99	20.63
2001	732	Initiative for Low Pharmaceutical Prices	678	-9.07	0.000	46	91.87	16.10
2004	843	Fed. Res. Taxation	617	-8.98	0.000	35	94.20	14.57
2006	912	Law on Foreigners	558	-8.86	0.000	25.2	88.29	13.49
2006	913	Change of the Asylum Law	561	-8.80	0.000	25.2	88.77	13.49
1996	585	Against Federal Subsidies for Parking Spaces	216	-8.53	0.013		46.55	15.18
2004	853	Initiative Postal Services for All	553	8.43	0.000	28	84.43	12.00
2002	791	Initiative against Misuse in Asylum Matters	554	-8.38	0.000	29	89.94	13.17
1993	504	Fed. Res. Health Insurance Premias	493	8.34	0.000		92.84	13.73
2006	921	Law on Cooperation with Eastern Europe	589	8.06	0.000	28.2	92.32	17.98
2002	761	Initiative for joining the United Nations	696	8.04	0.000	48	94.57	14.87
2005	881	Fed. Res. freedom of movement new EU members	672	7.99	0.000	33	94.65	15.59
1994	551	Law on the Health Insurance	575	7.85	0.000		94.42	17.18
1992	441	Fed. Res. on Switzerland joining the Bretton Woods	472	7.76	0.001		87.90	16.35
1989	381	For higher Speed Limits 130/100	759	-7.70	0.000		97.68	11.85
1992	446	Swiss Military Code	490	7.51	0.000		91.25	15.35
2003	813	Initiative «Yes to Fair Rental Prices»	550	7.45	0.218		94.83	8.03
2006	922	Law on Family Surpluses	598	7.42	0.000	28.2	93.73	17.98
1989	371	Initiative against Animal Farms	508	7.20	0.001		91.86	19.59
2000	714	Initiative for Restricting Immigration	518	-7.05	0.000	41	91.52	10.17
2004	841	Law on Age Insurance	623	-6.90	0.000	35	95.11	14.57
2000	711	Initiative for Promoting Solar Energy	496	6.80	0.002		87.63	11.17
1988	351	Fed. Res. on the Coordination on Traffic Policy	597	6.76	0.001		92.85	19.26
1998	651	Fed. Res. Funds for Infrastructure on Public Traffic	527	6.71	0.001	36	93.11	16.90
2003	824	Initiative for sufficient Occupational Training	528	6.66	0.002		87.56	10.40
1992	442	Law on Protection of the Waters	506	6.63	0.001		94.23	15.35
2000	692	Initiative for faster Direct Democracy	460	-6.52	0.001	43	84.71	12.35
1996	601	Initiative against Illegal Immigration	533	-6.15	0.004		88.25	13.68
1990	395	Federal Resolution on Building Vines	446	-6.12	0.009		79.79	16.01
2000	701	Fed. Res. Bilateral Agreements CH - EU	644	6.09	0.001	45	94.01	19.35
2002	781	Initiative Gold Reserves for Age Insurance	557	-5.83	0.005		92.07	15.32
2004	861	Fed. Res. compensation Federal/Cantonal Level	453	5.80	0.007	30	89.88	13.55
1987	342	Law on Health Insurance	610	5.73	0.003		93.99	17.00
2006	901	Fed. Res. on Constitutional Matters on Education	437	5.70	0.000	26.8	95.21	17.16
1999	671	Federal Resolution on a new Federal Constitution	595	5.67	0.004	30	93.85	17.70
2003	823	Initiative «For Restricting Nuclear Risks»	512	5.67	0.011		84.91	10.40
1999	684	Law on the Insurance of Disabled	590	-5.38	0.003	39	80.71	15.87
1994	521	Fed. Res. on Charges on National Strees	532	5.37	0.005		94.83	16.04

Year	No.	Title						
1994	531	Law on Military forces with Peaceful Missions	616	5.25	0.009		96.70	17.51
1999	663	Federal Law on City and Regional Planning	550	5.19	0.013		80.53	18.62
1993	501	Federal Resolution on Misuse of Arms	489	5.11	0.000		92.09	13.73
2000	725	Federal Law on the Employees of the Government	442	4.92	0.022	39	76.60	15.35
2005	871	Fed. Res. Bilateral Agreements CH - EU	718	4.87	0.008	29	95.23	17.76
1998	632	Fed. Res. on Measures for Budget Balancing	510	4.79	0.012	40	84.72	19.90
1993	512	Federal Resolution for Healthy Federal Finances	588	4.71	0.019		93.19	17.79
2000	721	Initiative «for a flexible Age Insurance»	498	4.68	0.036	39	86.31	15.35
1992	432	Initiative for Restricting Animal Testing	543	4.65	0.031		96.28	13.32
2002	762	Initiative for Lower Working Hours	689	-4.65	0.003	48	93.61	14.87
2004	862	Federal Resolution on the Swiss Financial Regime	417	4.62	0.023	30	82.74	13.55
2007	931	Initiative «For a social Health Insurance»	636	4.53	0.016	32.7	94.78	16.03
1992	445	Fed. Res. for a Civilian Service for Military Deniars	508	4.51	0.003		94.60	15.35
1998	641	Law on user-dependent heavy Trafffic Charge	623	4.44	0.023	43	92.99	15.07
2001	741	Federal Law on the Army	498	4.42	0.048	42	92.39	10.95
1993	492	Initiative Switzerland without new Figher Jets	697	4.40	0.020		96.01	17.38
1993	481	Law on Customs on Fuel	716	4.30	0.020		97.81	20.98
2001	742	Federal Law on the Army (Cooperation in Education)	473	4.29	0.061	42	87.76	10.95
2003	811	Federal Law on the Military	507	4.28	0.016		87.41	8.33
1991	422	Swiss Military Law	449	4.21	0.070		92.39	15.31
2003	801	Federal Resolution on Changes of Citizens' Rights	381	4.14	0.065		89.44	13.27
1994	542	Swiss Criminal Code on Military Law	590	4.04	0.047		96.25	15.75
1994	552	Initiative for a healthy Health Insurance	556	-3.98	0.018		91.30	16.43
1997	612	Initiative «Against Exporting Arms»	489	3.88	0.052		92.61	18.07
1998	633	Initiative «S.o.S. - Schweiz ohne Schnüffelpolizei»	471	3.85	0.065	40	78.24	19.90
1991	412	Initiative for Promoting Public Transportation	409	3.73	0.126		92.74	11.61
2004	863	Law on Research on Embryonic Stemm Cells	471	3.66	0.084	30	93.45	13.35
1994	524	Initiative for Protection of the Alps	540	3.66	0.088		96.26	16.04
1990	392	Initiative against Freeway Murten-Yverdon	521	3.58	0.090		93.20	15.01
2003	802	Fed. Law Cant. Contributions Treatments in Hospitals	372	3.51	0.086		87.32	13.27
1993	513	Measures for Protecting the Social Insurances	575	3.49	0.078		91.13	17.79
2000	715	Initiative Referendum with Counter Proposal	319	-3.38	0.192	41	56.36	11.17
1993	503	Initiative "For a Federal Holiday on August 1"	504	3.30	0.028		94.92	13.73
1999	685	Law on the Insurance of Mothers	674	3.28	0.085	39	92.20	15.87
1988	362	Initiative for Shorter Working Hours	673	-3.25	0.070		94.52	17.80
1996	581	Fed. Res. on the Revision of the Language Article	428	3.24	0.098		92.24	14.18
1997	622	Fed. Res. on Financing the Unemployment Insurance	533	-3.23	0.135		87.52	20.84
1988	352	Initiative for Decreasing the Retirement Age	621	-3.22	0.086		96.58	18.26
2001	754	Initiative «For a voluntary civil service»	428	3.20	0.134	37	78.39	17.38
1992	465	Law on Stamp Duties	552	3.17	0.120		87.34	17.20
1997	611	Initiative Direct Democracy for Negotiations with EU	479	-3.14	0.102		90.72	18.07
1992	461	Federal Resolution on Building the Swiss Railway	604	3.12	0.104		95.57	17.20
1997	613	Against Federal Regulations on Gun Powder	371	2.98	0.108		70.27	18.07
1993	514	Federal Resolution on Consumption Taxes	538	2.97	0.153		85.26	17.79
1999	661	Fed. Res. on the Eligibility in the Federal Council	609	2.97	0.079		89.17	17.62
2001	753	Initiative «for a Switzerland without Army»	493	2.85	0.144	37	90.29	17.38
1990	401	Initiative against Nuclear Energy	555	2.81	0.186		94.23	18.61
2003	822	Initiative «Against Nuclear Power Plants»	567	2.81	0.166		94.03	10.30
1998	652	Federal Resolution on a new Corn Article	410	2.80	0.140	36	72.44	16.90
2005	892	Federal Law on Opening Hours of Shops	606	2.70	0.184	29.5	94.84	20.53
2001	752	Initiative «for a secure Age Insurance»	433	-2.58	0.184	37	79.30	17.38
1995	573	Law on Aquisition of Property through Foreigners	478	2.55	0.265		84.75	14.02
1994	523	Fed. Res. on usage-dependent Traffic Road Charges	497	2.52	0.223		88.59	16.04
1990	393	Initiative against Freeway in the Knonauer Amt	523	2.44	0.239		93.56	15.01
2002	792	Federal Law on the Unemployment Insurance	508	-2.36	0.287		82.47	13.17
2000	712	For promoting renewable Energies	470	-2.32	0.310		83.04	11.17
1992	431	Initiative for a cheap Health Insurance	536	2.30	0.280		95.04	13.32
2003	821	Initiative «Equal Rights for Disables»	537	-2.29	0.195		89.05	10.40
1998	642	Initiative cheap aliments and ecological agriculture	549	-2.23	0.198	43	81.94	15.07
2006	911	Initiative Profits Swiss National Bank into Age Insurance	565	-2.23	0.279	25.2	89.40	13.79
2002	782	Counterproposal Initiative Gold Reserves for AHV	538	-2.16	0.314		88.93	15.32
1993	483	Initiative against Animal Experiments	702	2.11	0.222		95.90	20.98
1990	394	Initiative against Freeway Biel-Solothurn/Zuchwil	521	2.08	0.323		93.20	15.01
1999	664	Fed. Res. on Regulating Transplantation Medicine	542	2.05	0.114		79.36	18.62
1996	602	Federal Law regulating working conditions	536	-2.03	0.310		88.74	13.68
1996	592	Law Organization of the Executive and Administration	401	-1.99	0.410		86.42	14.90
1993	491	Initiative "No more than 40 places for Arms"	704	1.89	0.315		96.97	17.38
1991	421	Fed. Res. on Reorganizing the Federal Finances	436	-1.79	0.452		89.71	15.31
1992	443	Initiative for Saving the Waters	497	1.73	0.429		92.55	15.35

Year	VOX	Title	Obs	Bias	p-Value	Resp. rate	Reveal rate	Turnout gap
1993	482	Federal Resolution on Gambling Houses	712	1.66	0.313		97.27	20.98
1999	683	Fed. Res. on Medical Prescription for Heroine	632	1.61	0.415	39	86.46	15.87
1993	511	Federal Resolution on Federal Finances	593	1.60	0.404		93.98	17.79
2004	842	Fed. Res. Finance Age Insurance with higher Taxes	624	-1.59	0.385	35	95.27	14.57
1998	654	Federal Law regulating working conditions	425	1.54	0.506	36	75.09	16.90
1990	404	Law on Road Traffic	546	-1.52	0.479		92.70	18.61
1992	471	Federal Resolution on the European Economic Area	863	1.52	0.373		98.97	10.53
1995	563	Law on Farming	505	1.45	0.496		93.52	16.05
1989	382	Initiative for a Switzerland without Army	756	1.44	0.414		97.30	11.85
1995	561	Counterproposal Ini. ecological and effective agriculture	509	-1.36	0.540		94.26	16.05
1997	621	Initiative "Youth Without Drugs"	558	-1.34	0.480		91.63	20.84
2000	691	Federal Resolution on the Reform of the Judiciary	435	-1.34	0.433	43	80.11	13.35
1998	643	Ini. Age Insurance without increasing the Retirement Age	595	-1.33	0.508	43	88.81	15.07
1990	391	Initiative for Restricting Road Making	520	1.31	0.515		93.02	15.01
2001	733	Ini. security on the strees with speed limit 30	699	-1.27	0.392	46	94.72	16.10
1993	515	Initiative for Reducing Problems with Alcohol	607	-1.25	0.473		96.20	17.79
2001	731	Initiative «Yes to Europe!»	708	1.24	0.445	46	95.93	16.10
2000	723	Initiative «Saving in the Military»	467	-1.20	0.591	39	80.94	15.35
1987	323	Initiative for Direct Democracy in Military Expenses	505	1.18	0.591		88.91	14.74
2000	693	Ini. fair Representation of Women in the Government	470	1.15	0.527	43	86.56	12.35
2004	833	Initiative «Stricter Regulation for Sexual Offenders»	586	1.14	0.578	31	93.46	17.20
2001	751	Federal Resolution promoting a Debt Break	475	-1.12	0.510	37	87.00	17.38
1992	444	Counterproposal Ini. "Against Misuse in Gentechnology"	491	-1.09	0.588		91.43	15.35
2000	694	Ini. Manipulations in the Technology of Reproduction	459	-0.97	0.642	43	84.53	12.35
2002	772	Initiative «Protection of Mother and Baby»	497	0.91	0.605	34	87.81	15.49
1987	322	Law on Residence of Foreigners	488	0.90	0.674		85.92	14.74
1993	516	Initiative for Reducing Problems with Tabacco	607	-0.79	0.653		96.20	17.79
2000	722	Initiative «for a flexible Retirement Age»	498	0.79	0.725	39	86.31	15.35
1988	361	Initiative against Speculation with Properties	653	0.75	0.682		91.71	17.80
1995	562	Resolution on Dairy Farming	505	0.73	0.736		93.52	16.05
1990	403	Federal Resolution on the Energy Article	532	0.70	0.718		90.32	18.61
1995	564	Law on Reducing Federal Expenses	498	0.54	0.745		92.22	16.05
1996	582	Fed. Res. union Vellerat with Canton JU	406	0.52	0.699		87.50	15.18
2000	695	Initiative «for cutting motorized Road Traffic into Half»	481	-0.51	0.783	43	88.58	12.35
1998	631	Initiative «for Protection against Gen-Manipulation»	562	0.51	0.799	40	93.36	18.90
2003	814	Initiative «For resaonable Health Costs»	500	0.50	0.803		86.21	8.13
1996	591	Counterproposal Ini. «for a natural agriculture»	406	0.48	0.816		87.50	14.90
2002	771	Law Regulating Abortion	527	0.48	0.807	34	93.11	15.49
1999	681	Asylum Law	617	0.39	0.832	39	84.40	15.87
1995	572	Initiative for better Age Insurance	452	-0.39	0.853		80.14	14.02
1994	553	Law on mandatory measures in Immigration Law	572	-0.35	0.852		93.92	17.18
1999	682	Fed. Res. on Urgent Matters in the Area of Asylum	562	-0.34	0.861	39	76.88	15.87
2001	755	Initiative «for Taxation of Capital Gains»	451	0.27	0.905	37	82.60	17.38
2007	941	Law on Insurance against Disability	600	-0.25	0.898	34.4	96.46	24.84
1998	653	Initiative «for a reasonable drug policy»	522	0.25	0.899	36	92.23	16.90
1987	321	Asylum Law	505	0.22	0.914		88.91	14.74
1996	584	Against the Federal Duty to buy Spirits	184	0.18	0.951		39.66	15.18
2003	812	Federal Law on Civil Protection	511	-0.17	0.923		88.10	8.33
1994	541	Against Subsidies for Corn Production	544	0.11	0.959		88.74	15.75
1994	522	Federal Resolution on Traffic Road Charges	508	0.04	0.982		90.55	16.04
1995	571	Law on Age Insurance	522	0.03	0.990		92.55	14.02
1999	662	Initiative «Proprietary for Everybody»	605	0.02	0.991		88.58	17.62

Notes: Fed. Ref. abbreviates Federal Resolution and Ini. abbreviates Initiative. The table displays the year of the vote, the VOX number, the title of the vote, the observation count (= number of self-decleared voters who reveal their voting result), the survey bias (=difference between reported and official share yes), the p-Value from a t-test (share yes survey=approval ballot), the overall response rate to the survey, the vote reveal rate (in %), and the turnout gap (= turnout reported - turnout official), in %.

APPENDIX TABLE 3
Description Policy Areas

Policy Area	Number of Votes	Content Votes	VOX Number Votes	
International Integration	10	Relationship with the European Union, Joining International Organizations (Bretton Woods, UN)	441, 471, 531, 701, 731, 761, 871 ,881, 921	PRO
Facilitated Immigration	12	Votes on Restricting/Facilitating Immigration	533, 851, 852, 912	PRO
			363, 553, 601, 681, 682, 714, 791, 913	CONTRA
Increase Army	11	Votes that target at strengthening/weakening the Swiss Army	382, 422, 445, 491, 492, 612, 723, 753, 754, 811	CONTRA
Protection Environment	23	Votes that target at protecting the environment, mostly by regulations, financial incentives (charges, taxes) and traffic policy	341 , 343, 391, 392, 393, 394, 403, 412, 442, 443, 461, 481, 521, 522, 523, 524, 641, 651, 695, 711, 712, 713, 815	PRO
Nucler Energy	4	Votes that prohibit building new power plants, or ask to shut down all existing powerplants	401, 402, 822, 823	CONTRA
Budget Balance	2	Measures to reduce the Federal Deficit	564, 632	PRO
Direct Democracy	5	Measures to extend/facilitate direct democratic participation	323, 324, 692, 715, 801	PRO
Liberal Policies Health	8	Votes with more/less liberalization in the health sector: working conditions for women,	342, 653, 683, 685, 771	PRO
			515, 516, 772	CONTRA
Redistribution	7	Subsidies Health Premia, Regulations Rental and Postal Service Market	551, 431, 552, 931, 853, 813	PRO
Increase Retirement Age	7	Votes with the goal of increasing/decreasing the retirement age	571, 841	PRO
			352, 572, 643, 721, 722	CONTRA
Gender Equality	3	Improve conditions for working women after giving birth to a child, Introduce gender quota for the federal parliament and judiciary.	685, 693, 854	PRO
Liberal Attitudes	2	Regulation Sexual Acts Teenagers, Rights for Homosexual Couples	446, 872	PRO

APPENDIX TABLE 4

Survey Bias, Cooperation Rate and Vote Reveal Rate, by Topic

	(1) Survey Bias	(2) Cooperation Rate (Mean: 36)	(3) Vote Reveal Rate (Mean: 89)
PRO INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION (9)	5.646	38.20	94.47
PRO IMMIGRATION (4)	6.947	27.07	93.05
CONTRA IMMIGRATION (8)	-5.123	34.64	88.31
CONTRA INCREASE ARMY (10)	2.946	37.67	90.69
PRO PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT (23)	3.616	40.75	91.69
CONTRA NUCLEAR ENERGY (4)	5.187		91.85
PRO BUDGET BALANCE (2)	2.663	40.00	88.47
PRO DIRECT DEMOCRACY (5)	2.190	42.00	79.52
PRO LIBERALIZATION HEALTH (5)	0.937	30.36	78.68
CONTRA LIBERALIZATION HEALTH (5)	-0.374	34	93.40
PRO REDISTRIBUTION (7)	3.871	30.35	91.57
PRO INCREASE RETIREMENT AGE (2)	-3.436	35	93.83
CONTRA INCREASE RETIREMENT AGE (5)	0.106	40.33	87.63
PRO GENDER EQUALITY (3)	6.661	26.55	64.61
PRO LIBERAL ATTITUDES (2)	8.515	29	92.37

Notes: The table shows the survey bias, the response rate to the survey (Cooperation Rate) and the vote reveal rate, by policy area.

APPENDIX TABLE 5

Voter Reveal Rate and Turnout Gap, Liberal Bias and Conformity Bias

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
		Liberal Bias				Confomity Bias		
Recommendation Left-Wing Party	4.949***	-17.02	1.591	6.328				
	(1.083)	(15.84)	(20.11)	(5.395)				
Recommendation Left * Vote Reveal Rate		0.247	0.0144					
		(0.179)	(0.224)					
Recommendation Left * Turnout Gap				-0.0852				
				(0.317)				
Vote Accepted					4.046***	13.07*	19.51**	0.779
					(0.711)	(6.777)	(8.446)	(5.798)
Vote Accepted * Vote Reveal Rate						-0.0985	-0.180*	
						(0.0748)	(0.0950)	
Vote Accepted * Turnout Gap								0.219
								(0.367)
Vote Reveal Rate		-0.130	0.0638			0.191**	0.229**	
		(0.177)	(0.221)			(0.0762)	(0.0879)	
Turnout Gap				0.107				-0.334
				(0.331)				(0.379)
Constant	-1.659*	9.858	-5.857	-3.372	4.361*	-12.90*	-20.31**	9.492
	(0.913)	(15.85)	(19.90)	(5.558)	(2.561)	(7.222)	(7.866)	(6.460)
Year Fixed Effects	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Voting Day Fixed-Effects	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Observations	174	174	174	174	184	184	184	184
R-squared	0.361	0.382	0.631	0.361	0.329	0.358	0.662	0.336

Notes: Dependent variable is the difference between the share "Yes" in the survey and the official share "Yes" of the ballot result. Vote Reveal Rate is the share of voters (per vote) which reveal their voting decision (answer with "yes" or "no"). Turnout Gap is the difference between reported turnout in the survey and official turnout at the ballot (in %). Standard errors clustered at the voting day level in parantheses. *** denote significance at the 1% level, ** significance at the 5% level, and * significance at the 10% level.