

Publication

The impact of postal voting on participation: evidence for Switzerland

JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

ID 47755

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Year 2007

Title The impact of postal voting on participation: evidence for Switzerland

Journal Swiss political science review

Volume 13

Number 2

Pages / Article-Number 167-202

Keywords postal voting, voting costs, voting participation, turnout

Many countries are forging ahead with convenient balloting methods, in particular electronic and postal voting, in order to re-engage voters. In this paper we test whether the cost reductions through postal voting increase turnout. The empirical analysis is based on a newly collected data set on the introduction of postal voting in Swiss cantons. We take advantage of the unique fact that voting by mail was introduced at different times across cantons. This allows identifying the impact of postal voting on turnout, independent of time, issue and canton-specific effects. The estimated average effect on turnout is roughly 4.1 2005.

Publisher Rüegger

ISSN/ISBN 1424-7755

edoc-URL <http://edoc.unibas.ch/dok/A5248940>

Full Text on edoc Restricted;

Digital Object Identifier DOI 10.1002/j.1662-6370.2007.tb00075.x

ISI-Number 000254059500001

Document type (ISI) Article