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PROJECT

Elections and Democracy: Voter ID, Electoral Integrity, and Access to the Ballot Box

In recent years, elections and fundamental democratic rights have become highly politicized in many democracies. Debates about introducing or tightening mandatory voter ID in contexts where many voters lack the requisite identification are central to this trend and make voter suppression a major concern. Currently, these debates affect over a billion voters worldwide, including in the UK, Australia, India, and the US. This project examines how elections and democracy are impacted when mandatory voter ID is introduced in a democracy where a significant share of the electorate lacks the required ID.

Scientifically, the effects of voter ID remain poorly understood because existing studies reach contradictory findings and focus overwhelmingly on the US, a polarized democracy from which conclusions do not easily generalize. This project makes use of a unique opportunity to study – in real time – a national reform introducing mandatory voter ID in the UK, a less polarized context, from which findings are more easily generalizable. I will examine the causal effect of mandatory ID on voter behaviour and attitudes, using innovative regression discontinuity and difference-in-differences approaches. The project employs (i) original surveys examining the effect of UK voter ID in real time, (ii) historical data from the introduction of voter ID in Northern Ireland (2002), and (iii) survey data from the voter ID trials of 2018/19. Academically, the project provides the first comprehensive study of the effects of voter ID at local and national levels in any developed democracy to date.

Recommended Reading

Schleiter, Petra, Tobias Böhmelt, Lawrence Ezrow, and Roni Lehrer (2021). "Social Democratic Party Exceptionalism and Transnational Policy Linkages." *World Politics* 73 (3): 512–544. <https://www.doi.org/10.1017/S0043887121000022>.

Schleiter, Petra, Margit Tavits, and Dalston Ward (2022). "Can Political Speech Foster Tolerance of Immigrants?" *Political Science Research and Methods* 10 (3): 567–583. <https://www.doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2021.37>.

Tavits, Margit, Petra Schleiter, Jonathan Homola, and Dalston Ward (2024). "Fathers' Leave Reduces Sexist Attitudes." *American Political Science Review* 118 (1): 488–494. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055423000369>.

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE FELLOWS' LIBRARY

Schleiter, Petra (New York, NY [u.a.],2024)

Fathers' leave reduces sexist attitudes

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1895818362>

Schleiter, Petra (Cambridge,2022)

Can political speech foster tolerance of immigrants?

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=189581166X>

Schleiter, Petra (Baltimore, MD,2021)

Social democratic party exceptionalism and transnational policy linkages

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1895809320>