

Manipulated Electorates and Information Aggregation

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Abstract

We study information aggregation with a biased election organizer who elicits voters at some costs. Voters are symmetric ex-ante and prefer policy “left” in state L and policy “right” in state R, but the organizer prefers policy “right” regardless of the state. Each elicited voter observes a private signal that is imperfectly informative about the unknown state, but does not learn the size of the electorate. In contrast to existing results for large elections, there are equilibria in which information aggregation fails: As the voter elicitation cost disappears, a perfectly informed organizer can ensure that policy “right” is implemented independent of the state by appropriately choosing the number of elicited voters in each state.