

Survey instrument

“How to Improve Elite Perceptions of Public Opinion? Experimental Evidence”

Informed Consent

We invite you to participate in a research study being conducted by investigators from the University of Geneva and Washington University. You are being asked to participate in this research study because you showed interest in taking part in a follow-up survey of the 2017 National Survey of Municipal Executive Members. The purpose of the study is to learn about your expectations for upcoming referendums. Approximately 2,000 people will take part in this study.

If you agree to participate, we would like you to ask about your opinion on different policy issues, and your expectations about the results of upcoming referendums. The survey is short and will not take more than 5 minutes. You are free to skip any questions that you prefer not to answer. If at any point you want to interrupt your participation, you can simply close the webpage.

There are no known risks from being in this study, and you will not benefit personally. However we hope that others may benefit in the future from what we learn as a result of this study.

You will not have any costs for being in this research study. You will not be paid for being in this research study.

We will keep the information you provide confidential by not asking you any personal questions. However, federal regulatory agencies and Washington University, including the Washington University Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) and the Human Research Protection Office may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. If we write a report about this study we will do so in such a way that you cannot be identified.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in the study you may stop participating at any time. Any data that was collected as part of this study will remain as part of the study records and cannot be removed. If you decide not to take part in the study or if you stop participating at any time, you won't be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

We encourage you to ask questions. If you have any questions about the research study itself or if you feel you have been harmed from being in the study, please contact: Professor Nathalie Giger (University of Geneva, nathalie.giger@unige.ch) or Miguel Pereira (Washington University, m.pereira@wustl.edu). If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Research Protection Office at hrpo@wustl.edu. General information about being a research participant can be found on the Human Research Protection Office web site, <http://hrpo.wustl.edu>. To offer input about your experiences as a research participant or to speak to someone other than the research staff, call the Human Research Protection Office at the number above.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this research study.

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Q1	We would like to start by asking you about <u>your own position</u> on a set of issues that will be subject to popular votes. Please indicate whether you Oppose or Support the following initiatives:			
		Oppose	Support	<i>Code</i>
A	For the dignity of farm animal (Horned Cow Initiative): The initiative aims to encourage farmers to raise cows and goats with horns through federal incentives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	0,1
B	Initiative for self-determination «Swiss law instead of foreign judges»: Requires that in cases of conflict between Swiss law and international law, the former prevails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	0,1
C	Legal basis for supervising insurance providers: To expand the surveillance capabilities of social insurance agencies investigating cases of suspicion involving social security beneficiaries.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	0,1

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Now, we like to ask you about the most recent elections in your municipality.

Q2.1	In the last local election for your office, was there more than one candidate or party running? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes; <input type="checkbox"/> No; <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable		
IF Q2.1 = Yes (If Q2.1 = No or Not Applicable, jump to Q2.4)			
Q2.2	In that election, what vote share did you or your party (if running in a list) receive? <u>If you are not sure about the answer, just give us your best guess. You don't need to look it up.</u> [Note: non-responses coded as 99] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> % votes		
Q2.3	Given your original expectations about the election, how did you feel about the result obtained ? [Note: non-responses coded as 99]		
	The election results were...	Answer	Code
	Very much below my expectations.	<input type="radio"/>	1
	Slightly below my expectations.	<input type="radio"/>	2
	Just as I expected.	<input type="radio"/>	3
	Slightly above my expectations.	<input type="radio"/>	4
	Very much above my expectations.	<input type="radio"/>	5
Q2.4	Does your party or list hold a majority of seats in the executive? [Note: non-responses coded as 99]		
		Answer	Code
	Yes.	<input type="radio"/>	1
	No.	<input type="radio"/>	2
	Not applicable.	<input type="radio"/>	3

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On the 25th of November, Swiss citizens will be asked to vote on **three federal referendums**. On the next pages, we are interested in your expectations about the results of the referendums in your municipality: the share of voters in [CITY NAME] that you expect to support each initiative.

Read carefully the description of each issue under consideration before giving your prediction.

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[Order of first two initiatives randomized]

IF CONTROL = 1

Title: **Initiative for Self-Determination (Swiss Law over foreign judges)**

Description: The initiative launched by the SVP/UDC seeks to solve conflicts between the Federal Constitution and the international treaties signed by Switzerland. The idea is that if a popular initiative supported by a majority is in conflict with a pre-existing international treaty, the constitution will have to prevail (subject to preemptory rules of international law, such as the prohibition of torture). Currently, in the event of conflicts between the constitution and an international treaty, a solution through democratic processes is favored. In most cases, these conflicts are solved through a law change subject to an optional referendum.

It is always hard to anticipate the results of popular votes, but we would like to ask you to **predict the share of voters in [CITY NAME] that will SUPPORT the Initiative for Self-Determination.** Please give us your best guess from 0% to 100%:

Q3.1.1_control

Q3.1.2_control How confident are you in your prediction? (Options: Not confident at all; slightly confident, moderately confident, confident)

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On the next page, you will be asked to consider a different initiative that will be voted on the 25th of November.

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Title: For the dignity of livestock (Horned Cow Initiative)

Description: Launched by the interest group “Hornkuh”, this initiative aims to encourage farmers to raise cows and goats with horns. Today, 3 out of 4 cows are dehorned. Dehorning facilitates free-range cattle growing because it reduces the risk of injury. However, dehorning is a controversial practice. Since raising horned animals entails higher costs, the authors of the initiative would like the Confederation to support livestock producers.

It is always hard to anticipate the results of popular votes, but we would like to ask you to **predict the share of voters in [CITY NAME] that will SUPPORT the Horned Cow Initiative.** Please give us your best guess from 0% to 100%:

Q3.2.1_control

Q3.2.2_control How confident are you in your prediction? (Options: Not confident at all; slightly confident, moderately confident, confident)

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[TREATMENT VIGNETTES FOR INITIATIVE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION]

IF INFO = 1 OR INFO+DEBIAS = 1

Title: Initiative for Self-Determination (Swiss Law over foreign judges)

Description: The initiative launched by the SVP/UDC seeks to solve conflicts between the Federal Constitution and the international treaties signed by Switzerland. The idea is that if a popular initiative supported by a majority is in conflict with a pre-existing international treaty, the constitution will have to prevail (subject to peremptory rules of international law, such as the prohibition of torture). Currently, in the event of conflicts between the constitution and an international treaty, a solution through democratic processes is favored. In most cases, these conflicts are solved through a law change subject to an optional referendum.

We will ask you to predict the share of voters in your municipality that will support the Initiative for Self-Determination. However, because it is hard to anticipate the results of popular votes, we will give you some tips in advance.

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Title: Initiative for Self-Determination (Swiss Law over foreign judges)

When thinking about the preferences of voters, it often helps **considering the views of different groups in the constituency**. To help you in this process, think about the residents of [CITY NAME] and give us your best guess to the following questions:

Q4.1_info	In the 2015 federal elections, what share of voters in [CITY NAME] voted for the SVP? □□ %
Q4.2_info	What share of the population in [CITY NAME] was born outside of Switzerland? □□ %

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Title: Initiative for Self-Determination (Swiss Law over foreign judges)

To give you some reference points, here are your answers along with the most recent data from the Federal Statistical Office in your municipality and in Switzerland as a whole.

	Your answer	[CITY NAME]*	Switzerland*
% SVP Supporters in 2015	<i>X</i>	<i>W</i>	29.4%
% Foreigners	<i>Y</i>	<i>Z</i>	24.6%

*Federal Statistical Office

[X and Y are piped text based on the officials' previous response; W and Z are piped text based on the official's municipality]

This information is intended to help you consider the preferences of the average voter in your municipality.

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IF INFO+DEBIAS = 1 (Note: page specific to information+debias group)

Finally, one last tip. Decades of research show that people tend to project their own preferences on others. **Without noticing, we often overestimate approval for issues we support, while underestimating approval for issues we oppose.** Try to take this into account when making your prediction.

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With this in mind, give us your expectation of **the share of voters in [CITY NAME] that will SUPPORT the Initiative for Self-Determination.** Please give us your best guess from 0% to 100%:

Q3.1.1_info

Q3.1.2_info How confident are you in your prediction? (Options: Not confident at all; slightly confident, moderately confident, confident)

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[TREATMENT VIGNETTES FOR HORNED COWS INITIATIVE]

IF INFO = 1 OR INFO+DEBIAS = 1

Title: For the dignity of farm animals (Horned Cow Initiative)

Description: Launched by the interest group “Hornkuh”, this initiative aims to encourage farmers to raise cows and goats with horns. Today, 3 out of 4 cows are dehorned. Dehorning facilitates free-range cattle growing because it reduces the risk of injury. However, dehorning is a controversial practice. Since raising horned animals entails higher costs, the authors of the initiative would like the Confederation to support livestock producers.

We will ask you to predict the share of voters in your municipality that will support the Horned Cow Initiative. However, because it is hard to anticipate the results of popular votes, we will give you some tips in advance.

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Title: For the dignity of farm animals (Horned Cow Initiative)

When thinking about the preferences of voters, it often helps **considering the views of different groups in the constituency**. To help you in this process, think about the residents of [CITY NAME] and give us your best guess to the following questions:

Q4.3_info	What share of the workers in [CITY NAME] works in the primary sector (including agriculture, forestry, or fishing)? □□ %
Q4.4_info	In the 2015 federal elections, what was the combined share of votes received by the SP and the GPS in [CITY NAME]. □□ %

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Title: For the dignity of farm animals (Horned Cow Initiative)

To give you some reference points, here are your answers along with the most recent data from the Federal Statistical Office in your municipality and in Switzerland as a whole.

	Your answer	[CITY NAME]*	Switzerland*
% Workers in the primary sector	<i>X</i>	<i>W</i>	3.2%
% SP and GPS supporters	<i>Y</i>	<i>Z</i>	25.9%

*Federal Statistical Office

[X and Y are piped text based on the officials' previous response; W and Z are piped text based on the official's municipality]

This information is intended to help you consider the preferences of the average voter in your municipality.

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IF INFO+DEBIAS = 1 (Note: page specific to information+debias group)

Finally, one last tip. Decades of research show that, people tend to project their own preferences on others. **Without noticing, we often overestimate approval for issues we support, while underestimating approval for issues we oppose.** Try to take this into account when making your prediction.

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With this in mind, give us your expectation of **the share of voters in [CITY NAME] that will SUPPORT the Horned Cow Initiative.** Please give us your best guess from 0% to 100%:

Q3.2.1_info

Q3.2.2_info How confident are you in your prediction? (Options: Not confident at all; slightly confident, moderately confident, confident)

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In the prediction tasks above, which tips were you provided?

- No tips
- Information about the electorate
- Information about the electorate and a suggestion to avoid projecting my own preferences on voters
- The results from an old referendum

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We're almost done! The next pages will ask you about your expectations regarding the third and last issue on the ballot in the November vote.

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[VIGNETTES FOR SURVEILLANCE INITIATIVE]

IF INEQUALITY_PRIME = 0

Title: Legal basis for supervising insurance providers

Description: Social insurance aims to protect citizens in need. Today, social benefits are granted solely on the basis of consultation, documents, and medical reports. This amendment aims to define new rules to verify whether beneficiaries are really entitled to their benefits. The novelty of this law is the introduction of “covert surveillance” for cases when there is concrete evidence of wrongdoing. At the end of the surveillance period, the person will be informed and will have the opportunity to take legal action. If the amendment is rejected, no observation will be possible.

It is always hard to anticipate the results of popular votes, but we would like to ask you to **predict the share of voters in [CITY NAME] that will SUPPORT the Surveillance Referendum**. Please give us your best guess from 0% to 100%:

Q3.3.1_control

Q3.3.2_control How confident are you in your prediction? (Options: Not confident at all; slightly confident, moderately confident, confident)

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IF INEQUALITY_PRIME=1

Title: Legal basis for supervising insurance providers

Description: Social insurance aims to protect citizens in need. Today, social benefits are granted solely on the basis of consultation, documents, and medical reports. This amendment aims to define new rules to verify whether beneficiaries are really entitled to their benefits. The novelty of this law is the introduction of “covert surveillance” for cases when there is concrete evidence of wrongdoing. At the end of the surveillance period, the person will be informed and will have the opportunity to take legal action. If the amendment is rejected, no observation will be possible.

Again, we will ask you to predict the share of voters in your municipality that will support the Surveillance referendum. However, because it is hard to anticipate the results of popular votes, we will give you some suggestions in advance.

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Title: Legal basis for supervising insurance providers

When you think about the surveillance of social insureds and the issue of social assistance in your municipality more generally:

- How do you describe the living conditions of social assistance dependents in [CITY NAME]? Please write down some key words in the box below. (Text box provided)
- What is the share of social assistance dependents in [CITY NAME]?

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Title: Legal basis for supervising insurance providers

With this in mind, give us your expectation of **the share of voters in [CITY NAME] that will SUPPORT the Surveillance referendum**. Please give us your best guess from 0% to 100%:

Q3.3.1_primed

Q3.3.2_primed How confident are you in your prediction? (Options: Not confident at all; slightly confident, moderately confident, confident)

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Next, we would like to know about your opinions on the differences between rich and poor in Switzerland.

Would you rate the income differences in Switzerland as fair or unfair?

- Options: fair, rather fair, neither nor, rather unfair, unfair.

We would like to know why you think it is that in Switzerland today some people have better jobs and higher incomes than others. Here are some possible explanations and we would like you to tell us how important you think each is (Options: very important, somewhat important, not so important, not important at all)

- Some people just don't work hard.
- Government policies favor high-income earners.
- The globalized economy system favors high-income earners.

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Last, we present you a list with things you might consider doing in the near future. Please indicate for each of them how likely it is that you engage in such an activity. (Options: very unlikely, unlikely, likely, very likely)

- Taking a public stance to defend Swiss sovereignty
- Taking a public stance to support animal friendly agriculture
- Taking a public stance against poverty

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IF CONTROL = 1 OR INEQUALITY_CONTROL = 1

Now, we would like to know a bit more about your municipality. If you are not certain about a particular question, simply give us your best guess:

<i>If CONTROL = 1</i>	
Q4.1_control	In the 2015 federal elections, what share of voters in [CITY NAME] voted for the SVP?
Q4.2_control	What share of the population in [CITY NAME] was born outside of Switzerland?
Q4.3_control	What share of the workers in [CITY NAME] works in the primary sector (including agriculture, forestry, or fishing)?
Q4.4_control	In the 2015 federal elections, what was the combined share of votes received by the SP and the GPS in [CITY NAME]?
<i>If INEQUALITY_CONTROL = 1</i>	
Q4.5_control	What is the share of social assistance dependents in [CITY NAME]?

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This is your final screen. We know that survey questions sometimes don't allow one to tell the full story. We would welcome any feedback or suggestions you have on the survey in the box below

Qf1

Qf2 Would you like to be contacted with any reports we create based on this survey? We believe this can make your experience in the study more interesting. (Options: Yes/No)

In 2019, we will send out a similar questionnaire about a different set of popular votes. You can decide then whether you want to take part in the second wave of the study, but we would highly appreciate your collaboration.

That concludes the survey. Thank you for your time!