

ABSTRACT:

**MAJORITY VOTING WITH AN ENDOGENOUS AGENDA:  
THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION.**

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Majority decisions, where a group makes a choice between two alternatives, are characterized by symmetry. Each group member has the option to belong to the pivotal group. However, if the object of the vote is endogenous, this symmetry may be broken by strategic aspects and by subgroup communication. The subject of our experimental analysis is how information about strategic conditions and the possibility to communicate affect agenda and voting behavior. This question is relevant because voting with endogenous agenda setting is the norm in corporations and many organizations. We use The Pirate Game as an experimental model. Assuming that subjects are unable to determine the perfect equilibrium of the game, we study the effect of information about this equilibrium and communication in sub-groups, the plenum, and sequential communication in subgroups and the plenum. Crucially, three clearly identifiable players are pivotal in the equilibrium. It turns out that information about the equilibrium favors the pivotal group, that communication leads to a stronger equal distribution in the communicating group, and that in sequential communication the plenum can limit but not neutralize the power of the pivotal group.

(with Dmitri Bershadskey and Florian Sachs)