

Enfranchising children through proxy voting: welfare and demographic implications*

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Abstract

The idea that parents should proxy vote for their children (an idea also known as Demeny voting) is gathering attention in the face of a general sense of political short-terminism and democratic deficit that characterize many democracies and also in the face of rapid population decline that some countries are already experiencing. We present a probabilistic voting model where citizens can vote for the production of a public good which produces immediate benefits and for investing in education which benefits society over time. Fertility is endogenous and political conflict arise between parents and non-parents over public spending. We show that Demeny voting increases fertility, future-oriented spending such as education and, under some conditions, it increases long term welfare also for non-parents.

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