Who Benefits When Elections and Referendums Are Held Concurrently?

The literature has revealed that holding elections concurrently is an effective way to increase turnout. However, such an increase in political participation might also cause an unintentional voter mobilization and affect electoral outcome. In this article, I analyze the effect of concurrent federal referendums on turnout, electoral outcome, and voting behavior of the cantonal parliamentary elections in Switzerland. I exploit a quasi-experiment in which some elections were held concurrently with federal referendums. A concurrent federal referendum increases turnout, incumbent vote share, share of empty ballots and the share of left-wing party votes. Furthermore, I find that the effect on incumbent vote share increases with the number of concurrent federal propositions.