

## Direct Democracy

### ⇒ Uncertainty

There may be uncertainty surrounding where voters stand on specific issues, such that parties are not aware of the median voter's position. They therefore choose to compete on the known issue space (where the position of  $X_m$  is approximately known), ignoring the unknown space. If a referendum is then held on this issue space, the results can be surprising.

Additionally, voters themselves may have little information or preference about a certain issue, meaning their choices on a simple referendum may be capricious or ill-informed.

Partisanship – accounts for the divisions in the salient issue dimension, but critically not in the secondary dimension.

Moreover, if there is uncertainty about the median voter on the issue-dimension related to the referendum and parties value policies, parties will take on the positions of the minimal and maximal possible median voter. The higher the uncertainty of the median voter on that dimension, the further the competing parties will be distanced from the expected median voter and take on quite polarised positions. Then, if a referendum is held on that policy-dimension, the actual outcome is likely to be quite different from the parties' position. Such a surprise is more likely with increasing uncertainty.



