

Utilitarianism, Degressive Proportionality and the Constitution of a Federal Assembly

Bovens, Luc and Hartmann, Stephan (2005) Utilitarianism, Degressive Proportionality and the Constitution of a Federal Assembly.

Full text available as:

[PDF](#) - Requires a viewer, such as [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) or other PDF viewer.

Abstract

A federal assembly consists of a number of representatives for each of the nations (states, Länder, cantons,...) that make up the federation. How many representatives should each nation receive? What makes this issue worth quibbling about is that the model of representation that is instituted will have an impact on the welfare distribution over the nations in the federation that will ensue over due course. We will investigate what models of representation yield welfare distributions that score higher on a utilitarian measure. First, we construct a continuum of models of representation ranging from equal to proportional representation. In between these extremes are models of degressive proportionality. We run a Monte-Carlo simulation in which a large number of motions are voted up or down within different contexts of evaluation and investigate how well the resulting welfare distributions score on the utilitarian measure. Subsequently, we will provide matching analytical results for a slightly idealized case. We conclude with a discussion of the significance of our results and of the role of simulations and analytical results and point to further work.

Keywords: Utilitarianism, Degressive Proportionality, Federal Assembly, Modeling

Subjects: [General Issues: Decision Theory](#)

ID Code: 2339

Deposited By: [Hartmann, Stephan](#)

Deposited On: 21 June 2005