

Candidate 1 evidence

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| | Do referendums strengthen democracy? |
| | referendums are a form of direct Democracy, which was originally used in ancient athen's. referendums are used for big issue topics which could affect the country in a big way such as independance. instead of elected officials voting on a law referendums are a vote where the people decide. In recent years referendums in especially britain have become very popular and very significant, as in the 2014 scottish independance referendum and the EU referendum in 2016. However referendums arent at all new to britain and have been happening for years. referendums do strengthen democracy in the way of involvement and popularity however they can damage Democracy in the way of voters being misguided and referendums being a two |

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the two option problem

One key way referendums strengthen Democracy is involvement. referendums encourage people to look more into politics as it is usually on a big issue that will affect them. a consequence of this is a higher voter turnout to referendums which is shown in a BBC news page where it shows the Scottish referendum results for independence and the voter turnout is "84.54%" whereas in the 2015 general election the BBC News website also stated the turnout in Scotland was only "71.71%". the two voter turnout in the space of a year in Scotland shows that the referendum encouraged people to go out and vote on a particular issue more than a normal general election. also the Scottish referendum was the highest voter turnout recorded in any vote in Britain which emphasises how good referendums are in getting even people who

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don't usually vote casting their vote.

another way referendums strengthen democracy through involvement is that they give people a say on laws rather than a mp in parliament. In the book British Constitution and politics written in 1982 it stated about the EEC 1974 referendum "gave every voter a chance to feel involved in the European decision" which supports the claim that referendums make people feel involved and a say in what they want their country to do on big issues affecting them.

another way referendums are good for involvement is that some may argue that they are simple as it is a yes or no answer rather than a general election where there is different parties promising different things and disagreeing on others which may make voters feel confused or pressured.

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Overall referendums are a good way too get people more involved in politics as it improves turnout which reflects more of the ~~peop~~ peoples view.

Another positive aspect of referendums is they are popular. referendums attract much media attention due to the importance and the involvement of the issue and as a consequence links back to a higher voter turnout. media attention in the 2014 Scottish referendum was massive and even more in the 2016 Brexit referendum. In the 2014 Scottish referendum a BBC news article said: "first independence debate between Scotland's first minister Alex Salmond and better together leader Alistair Darling was watched by 1.2 m viewers in Scotland" ~~this an implication of the effect that~~ this shows how interested and engaged the Scottish people were in 2014. a implication of this is that more people through

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watching the news and TV debates become better informed about the country's politics and more aware of what is happening in the economy because of referendums.

also, in Scotland in 2014 on the run up to the referendum popularity grew in young people about politics as schools were running debates and mock elections for pupils. This ~~in turn~~ resulted in a better politically informed younger generation because of the referendum popularity surrounding referendums do strengthen democracy as they 'force' people to become more informed about politics and the country's political situation.

Although referendums do have good sides, they also have a bad side too that which can affect democracy in a bad way. One bad way referendums can affect democracy is that voters are easily misled.

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In a referendum both sides of the argument can play to voters' fears and emotions.

In the 2014 independence referendum in Scotland the better together campaign played on voters' fears as they warned the Scottish voters about what currency Scotland was going to use if they left. They also scared many Scottish voters about membership of the EU if Scotland left but if they stayed in Britain they would be apart of the EU as they knew Scotland was in favour of being apart of the EU. These tactics to scare voters of the risk for Scotland being independent may of scared voters for ticking yes on the ballot box these tactics may have consequently been the reason Scotland didn't become independent and if people stuck to their own views maybe the vote would have gone the other way.

The same tactics were used by the leave campaign

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In 2016 as the Independent news article in 2016 on the leave ~~was~~ campaign bus said on it "we send £350 million a week lets fund our NHS instead" it played to many voters emotions as working class voters rely on the NHS to provide them welfare and care when they are ill or injured.

The leave campaign also focussed on immigration in the campaign and played to many peoples fears about immigration and some peoples views on immigrants especially in working class towns. playing to peoples fears and emotions show that voters are very easily swayed and that MPs should vote on big issues as they are experts in the field.

Another problem with referendums is the two options. two options for voters can be argued as not enough of a choice for voters. two is very closely linked to the faces of power and the

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non-decision making face where the people in power don't give the voters another choice to suit the agenda such as the Brexit vote as there was only a option to remain or leave and not a third option such as staying in the single market or the ~~border~~ open borders. Consequently voters were unable to have another option which may of changed the vote very much so. another example of this was in the Scottish 1978 referendum where the Westminster made that Scotland had to ~~have~~ have a 40% approved electorate and the majority of the vote which ~~was~~ had consequences of Scotland ~~gaining~~ not gaining more powers either than they did.

A New York Times article in 2016 said "voters face a problem in any referendum: they need to distill difficult policy choices down to a simple yes or no" this emphasises that it is hard for voters

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| | <p>to decide between a simple yes or no and also initially back too care voters qualified enough too make these big decisions or should mps/elected officials who are qualified.</p> |
| | <p>In conclusion referendums do strengthen democracy in some ways as they increase involvement and are very popular which increases voter turnout and involvement in politics however they are very easily manipulated as sides to an argument can play to voters fears and emotions and also</p> |
| | <p>In conclusion referendums do strengthen democracy in some ways as they increase citizen involvement as the importance and the effect they have does increase voter turnout and political involvement. popularity also strengthens democracy as also increases political involvement via media and increases involvement in</p> |

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young people. which consequently
~~gives a generation of more~~
gives a generation of more
politically involved people.
however referendums can
damage democracy as they
makes ~~both sides~~ easier for
both sides to play to voters
emotions and fears which
may consequently change the
result of a election.
referendums also damages
democracy as the two vote
options problem leads the voter
with ~~less than two~~ at
a dilemma if they do not know
what to vote for as there
is never a third option

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| Politics Higher Resource Sheet | | | |
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| Candidate Name | | Scottish Candidate Number | 1 |
| Do referendums strengthen democracy? | | | |
| BBC news website 2014 Scottish independence referendum results "84.59% turnout" | | | |
| BBC news website 2015 General election results in Scotland "71.71% turnout" | | | |
| J Harvey and L Bather, the British constitution and politics, 1982 "gave every voter a chance to feel involved in the European decision" | | | |
| BBC news article 2014 "first independence debate between Scotland's first minister Alex Salmond and better together leader Alistair Darling was watched by 1.2m viewers in Scotland" | | | |
| Independent news article 2016- leave campaign bus "we send the EU £350 million a week lets fund our NHS instead" | | | |
| Independent news article 2016- leave campaign bus "take back control" | | | |
| New York times article, October 2016 "They need to distil difficult policy choices down to a simple yes or no" | | | |