

Weighted Citizen Vote (WCV)

Toward a Democracy of Continuous Sovereignty:
Reversible Representation and Adaptive Participation

Total Democracy

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Abstract

The *Weighted Citizen Vote* (WCV) is a hybrid democratic mechanism that allows citizens to **temporarily reclaim their own political representation** on the issues they consider relevant. By default, sovereignty is exercised representatively: legislators deliberate and vote on behalf of the people. However, through the WCV, each citizen can recover their voice and decide directly on specific matters, proportionally reducing the weight of the legislature in that vote.

Participation is free, voluntary, and secret. Representation is not destroyed: it transforms dynamically according to the actual engagement of citizens. The final result combines the parliamentary and citizen decisions in a weighted manner, creating a transparent balance between institutional legitimacy and popular sovereignty.

The *Weighted Citizen Vote* (WCV) represents a fundamental evolution of democratic systems, integrating the legitimacy of parliamentary representation with direct popular sovereignty. The WCV enables the advancement of institutions beyond the technological limitations of the past.

Keywords: direct democracy, representative democracy, popular sovereignty, electronic voting, digital identity.

1 Introduction: Toward a Hybrid and Reversible Representation

The representative system was conceived as a practical solution to the material impossibility of gathering citizens to decide directly. For centuries, the act of electing representatives was the only way to translate popular sovereignty into the functioning of the state. However, in the digital era, that technical limitation has disappeared: citizens can now be informed, deliberate, and express themselves instantly.

The contemporary challenge is not to abolish representation, but to **redefine it**. The Weighted Citizen Vote proposes a new political architecture: to preserve representative delegation as the foundation, while allowing each citizen to **suspend it temporarily** whenever they wish to exercise their sovereignty directly.

In this way, democracy ceases to be a periodic event (elections) and becomes a continuous system in which power flows between representatives and represented according to the people's active will.

2 Representative Democracy and Direct Democracy

Throughout history, democratic theory has oscillated between two poles: **direct popular sovereignty**, which aspires for every citizen to participate without intermediaries, and **political representation**, which delegates decision-making to an elected body acting on behalf of the people. The *Weighted Citizen Vote* (WCV) proposes a synthesis between these two extremes: a mechanism that allows citizens to **temporarily recover their own representation** without dismantling existing institutions.

The key concept of this model is *reversible representation*, grounded in three core normative principles:

- **Residual sovereignty:** the power delegated to representatives is never absolute or permanent; it ultimately remains in the hands of the citizen body.
- **Dynamic legitimacy:** political authority must be continuously updated, reflecting the active will of the people on each relevant issue.
- **Individual autonomy:** each citizen retains the freedom to decide whether to exercise sovereignty directly or maintain it delegated to their representatives.

These principles manifest in three complementary dimensions that structure the hybrid democracy of the WCV:

- a) **Reversible representation:** citizens may temporarily and selectively reclaim the power they have delegated, without institutional disruption. Sovereignty is not transferred; it is lent—and can be resumed whenever citizens deem it necessary.
- b) **Continuous sovereignty:** democracy ceases to be an episodic act limited to elections and becomes an ongoing process of legitimation, where participation can be activated at any moment.
- c) **Adaptive freedom of participation:** direct voting is voluntary; abstention does not imply indifference but trust in representation. Each individual chooses when to intervene and when to delegate.

Within this framework, the WCV introduces the notion of *adaptive representation*, whereby the relative weight of the legislature and the citizenry adjusts dynamically according to the level of civic engagement in each issue. This principle resolves the classical dilemma between **governmental efficiency and democratic legitimacy**: when society participates actively, its voice carries more weight; when it does not, institutional representation exercises the mandate on its behalf.

“Representation is not a definitive transfer of power, but a flexible contract that citizens can modify according to their needs and priorities.”

3 Definition and Operation of the WCV

The WCV establishes that:

1. Citizen representation is **delegated by default** to the members of the legislature.
2. For certain laws or issues, **citizens may vote directly**, temporarily reclaiming their representation.
3. The more citizens self-represent, the **smaller the relative weight of the legislature** in the final decision.

Formally, if p is the proportion of the electorate that votes directly, the citizen weight is $w_P = p$ and the legislative weight is $w_C = 1 - p$. The final approval of a legislative initiative is calculated as:

$$\text{Final Decision} = w_P \cdot S_{\text{citizenry}} + w_C \cdot S_{\text{Legislature}},$$

where $S_{\text{citizenry}}$ is the percentage of affirmative citizen votes and $S_{\text{Legislature}}$ that of legislators.

Desirable properties:

- 1) **Continuity**: small changes in participation produce proportionally small changes in results.
- 2) **Inclusiveness**: all citizens are represented—either directly or through the legislature.
- 3) **Proportionality**: each sector’s weight precisely reflects the level of active citizen participation.

Thus, the legislature continues to represent those who do not exercise direct voting, preserving the balance between delegation and self-governance.

The system is non-mandatory and limited to the general approval of legislative initiatives. Each citizen can decide individually in which initiatives to reclaim representation and in which to delegate it by default.

4 International Comparative Analysis

4.1 Global Experiences in Digital Democracy

Country	System	Scope
Estonia	i-Voting	General elections
Switzerland	Cantonal e-voting	Referendums
Taiwan	vTaiwan	Deliberative consultations

4.2 How the WCV Differs

Unlike these models, the WCV is not merely a digitalization of existing electoral processes but a **transformation of the democratic model** that:

- Combines representation and direct participation in *a single decision*.
- Enables *selective participation* according to citizen interest (reversible representation).
- Preserves the deliberative role of the legislature.
- Creates a system of *self-adjusting dynamic weights*.

5 Simulated Case Studies

5.1 Case A: National Education Reform

Scenario. Bill for educational reform (curricular changes and funding).

WCV Participation. 35% of the electorate (8.4 million citizens).

Citizen Result. 62% in favor. **Legislature Result.** 45% in favor.

Final Calculation:

$$0.35 \times 0.62 + 0.65 \times 0.45 = 0.217 + 0.2925 = \mathbf{0.5095}$$

Result. Approved by a narrow margin, reflecting citizen support and legislative reservations.

5.2 Case B: Climate Emergency Law

Scenario. Declaration of climate emergency with restrictive economic measures.

WCV Participation. 12% of the electorate (2.9 million citizens).

Citizen Result. 78% in favor. **Legislature Result.** 51% in favor.

Final Calculation:

$$0.12 \times 0.78 + 0.88 \times 0.51 = 0.0936 + 0.4488 = \mathbf{0.5424}$$

Result. Approved with greater legislative weight due to lower citizen participation.

6 Conclusion: Toward a Democracy of the Future

The Weighted Citizen Vote represents more than a technical reform: it is a reconceptualization of the relationship between citizens and political power. In a world of instantaneous and verifiable communication, maintaining structures designed for pre-digital societies erodes the legitimacy of democratic systems.

The WCV offers an elegant and practical solution: it does not weaken representative institutions—it **strengthens** them by granting greater legitimacy to their decisions. Legislative representation retains its essential role of deliberation, negotiation, and consensus-building, while direct citizen participation contributes **legitimacy, transparency, and accountability**.

Delegate when you trust. Decide when it matters. Your voice, your power.