Preferences over Information in Collective Decisions
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Abstract

Unlike individual decision making, in collective decisions some agents sometimes prefer the group to stay uninformed before making a decision. This happens because information may affect how other agents vote and change the outcome in an unfavorable way for the former. We setup a model of collective decision making in which information may become available before voting. The closer the voting rule to simple majority, the more agents prefer no information. If agents can vote for obtaining information, setting both voting rules to simple majority is optimal. If obtaining information depends stochastically on the fraction of agents that want it, setting a super-majority rule for the final choice is optimal. Finally we look at the case where information is provided by a biased informer. In this case, setting unanimity for the vote on information and simple majority for the final choice is optimal.