

REFERENDUMS

Arguments for and against the idea that more referendums would produce greater democracy.

FOR:

- guide government in decision making (e.g. May 2011 AV referendum)
- local or national level (e.g. Edinburgh congestion charge)
- help the government to get decisions through Parliament
- raise levels of political awareness and political participation
- complements representative democracy
- people make decisions about moral issues (e.g. Wales' Sunday drinking)
- stop future governments going against previously expressed will of the people
- demonstrate governmental legitimacy

AGAINST:

- low turnout
- expensive
- moral issues are not easily answerable
- neverendums
- tyranny of the majority
- their results can be ignored by government
- not legally binding
- leaders don't have to call referendums
- potential emotional, not rational responses from voters, or voters voting on what they think the question asks, not what it actually does ask