

OneUpAction International
Healing the Earth, one action at a time.



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

*HOW DID WE GET HERE, AND
HOW CAN WE BRING CHANGE?*

06

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INTRODUCTION

2020 has marked a year of groundbreaking achievements, global difficulties, and multiple twists and turns. Citizens across the world have mobilized to unite and combat issues — Black Lives Matter movements, COVID-19 support, gender justice, environmental justice — and the momentum is still growing.

And the heart of many of these issues in the United States has lied in the pearly white structure and sealed papers: politics. With 38 million young people active in this election, and millions more older participating, much of the new generation has yet to completely grasp an understanding of the local and national political systems. During an era of mobilization and direct action, it is imperative that we educate, incentivize, and act.

This guidebook will concisely describe the constitution, the governmental branches and purposes, government history and its various types, elections, and more. OneUpAction is dedicated to helping youth, and that begins here.



(Mat Reding)



(Mat Reding)

gov·ern·ment

/ˈgəvər(n)mənt/

1. The political direction and control exercised over the actions of the members, citizens, or inhabitants of communities, societies, and states; direction of the affairs of a state, community, etc.
2. The form or system of rule by which a state, community, or other area is governed

Many words have been used to describe "government" throughout the world and throughout history: monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy which are of Greek origin.¹

In order to understand the United States government and its complex structures, we must trace back the function of government and its roots throughout history. From the Sumerians to Japanese and Egyptians, each element, bill, and story of these periods has something to be learned of so that the future generations can improve and protect their communities and themselves.

HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT

THE SUMERIANS (4500-1900 BCE)

The Sumerians established the world's first and oldest government in 4500 in Modern-day Iraq. Today, Iraq is a Federal Parliamentary Republic. The Sumerians are also responsible for the oldest known law code found today, the Code of Ur-Nammu, which influenced many modern day criminal laws.¹

The Sumerians would use government to control not only their citizens but to regulate their environment. The invention of irrigation created the rule: "the control of the flow of water down the Tigris and Euphrates rivers had to be coordinated by a central authority".²

ANCIENT EGYPT 3050 BCE-641 CE

At the top of Ancient Egypt's government was the pharaoh who had complete control over Egypt's land, resources, and people. Currently Egypt is a unitary Semi-Presidential Republic. Their current Constitution was updated in January of 2014.¹

ANCIENT GREECE 1100 BCE-600 BCE

The Greeks were credited for establishing democracy - allowing citizens, though it was a limited group, to vote on community rules and regulations. Currently, Greece is a Unitary Parliamentary Republic.¹

ANCIENT ROME 753 BCE-1453 CE

The Romans had established a Republic for their government - one that would be copied by countries for centuries, such as the United States. This contained Consuls, a Senate, Assemblies, and other structures. Today, Italy is a Unitary Parliamentary Constitutional Republic.²



Stela of Ur-Nammu, Sumer (Frank Scherschel; Internet Archive Book Images)



Senate of the Roman Republic (Wikipedia)

TYPES OF GOVERNMENT

There are a multitude of government types that are practiced worldwide. Below are some examples of governments in the regions of OneUpAction chapters to help encapsulate the different types of governments that exist around the world.

GLOBAL GOVERNMENTS

KENYA (WEST AFRICA)

- Government name: Republic of Kenya
- Chief of State/Head of Government: President Uhuru Kenyatta
- Constitution Adopted: 2010—3 branches of government, bill of rights
- Index of Economic Freedom: 55.1²¹

Executive Branch:

- Appoints the cabinet, is in charge of executory tasks, and can ban political parties.
- Elected by qualified majority vote.
- Elected position lasts for 5 years²¹

Judicial Branch:

- Independent of other branches and has unlimited jurisdiction to hear and decide on any case.
- Chief and deputy chief justices are nominated by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) and appointed by the President with the approval of the national assembly. Other judges are nominated by the JSC and appointed by the President²¹
- Mandatory retirement age of 70

Legislative Branch:

- Consists of the senate and national assembly who are in charge of creating laws and policies
- The Senate has 67 members who are elected by qualified plurality vote. The national assembly has 349 members who are elected by qualified plurality
- Elected position lasts for 5 years.²¹



Kenya's Supreme Court Chief Justice David Maraga (VOA 2017)



Kenyan Cabinet Secretaries in 2020

GLOBAL GOVERNMENTS

ZIMBABWE (WEST AFRICA)

- Government name: Republic of Zimbabwe, formerly Southern Rhodesia and Rhodesia
- Government type: Presidential Republic
- President: Emmerson Mnangagwa
- No citizenship by birth
- Suffrage: 18 years old.²⁹

Executive Branch:

- Cabinet appointed by President, responsible for National Assembly.
- Each Presidential candidate nominated with a nomination paper signed by at least 10 registered voters (min. 1 candidate/province) and directly elected by absolute majority popular vote in 2 rounds if needed for a 5-year term.
- Co-Vice Presidents drawn from party of leadership.²⁷

Judicial Branch:

- Highest court: Supreme Court—consists of Chief Justice and 4 judges; Constitutional Court—Chief and Deputy Chief Justices and 9 judges.
- SC judges appointed by President upon recommendation from Judicial Service Commission
- Normally serve until 65 years of age, but can elect to serve until age 70
- Serve nonrenewable 15-year terms²⁷

Legislative Branch:

Bicameral Parliament consists of:

- Senate (80 seats)
 - 60 members directly elected in multi-seat constituencies—6 seats in each of the 10 provinces—by proportional representation vote, 16 indirectly elected by the regional governing councils, 2 reserved for the National Council Chiefs, and 2 reserved for members with disabilities; Members serve 5-year terms²⁷
- National Assembly (270 seats)
 - 210 members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote and 60 seats reserved for women directly elected by proportional representation vote; members serve 5-year terms.²⁷



Supreme Court of Zimbabwe members

GLOBAL GOVERNMENTS

TUNISIA (NORTH AFRICA)

- Full government name: Al Jumhuriyah at Tunisiyah
- Government type: Parliamentary Republic³²
- Head of State: President Kais Saied
- Prime Minister: Hichem Mechichi³¹
- Won Independence from France on March 20, 1956³²
- Index of Economic Freedom: 55.4³¹

Administrative Divisions:

The country is divided into 24 administrative areas called wilāyāt (provinces; singular wilāyah), each of which is headed by a wālī (governor).³⁰

- Each province is designated by the name of its chief town and subdivided into units called mu'tamadiyyāt (delegations).
- Delegations are administered by a mu'tamad and are divided into 2,000+ districts called minṭaqah turābiyyahs.
- Finally, Tunisia is divided into scores of municipalities and rural councils as well.³⁰

Legal System:

- Mixed legal system based on the French civil code and Islamic law.
- The Constitutional Court rules on the constitutionality of laws and treaties.
 - The Court has 12 members of whom four each are appointed by the president, a Supreme Judicial Council, and an Assembly of the People's Representatives. Members serve a single nine-year term.²⁹

President Controls:

- The President acts as Head of State and exercises executive authority along with the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Directly elected for a five-year term and may be reelected only once.
- Candidates for president must be:
 - Muslim
 - at least 35 years old
 - Tunisian citizens by birth.³⁰
- Is the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and conducts foreign policy but cannot declare war or enter treaties without the approval of the Assembly of the People's Representatives. The Assembly of the People's Representatives can impeach the president with a two-thirds vote.³⁰



Kais Saied, President of Tunisia. Photo from PlanetRulers.

e·lec·tion sys·tem

/ə'lekSH(ə)n 'sistəm/

a formal and organized process of electing or being elected, especially of members of a political body.¹³

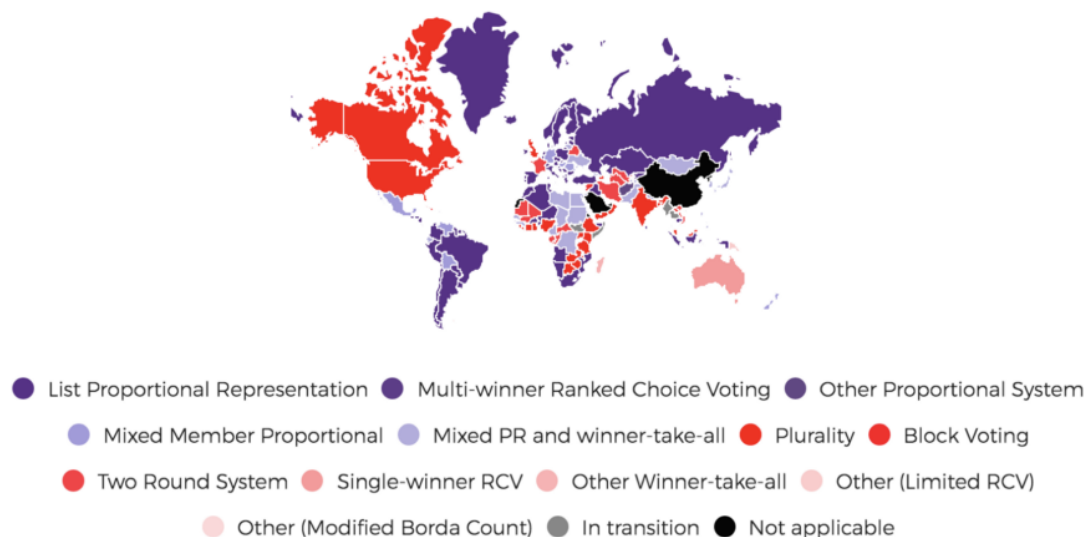
i. the right, power, or privilege of making a choice.

HOW THEY WORK:

Across the world, a majority of countries follow either system for elections: Proportional Representation or Winner-Takes-All (WTA). Outside of the United States, proportional representation is the most common type of electoral system with 89 of the 195 countries below using it. Of those 89 countries, 79 use list proportional systems, with two using multi-winner RCV and three using other proportional systems.¹⁵

An additional 34 countries mix proportionality and winner-take all. 64 countries use winner-take-all, including 37 that use plurality, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada.¹⁵

Electoral Systems of the World



(International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance; Fair Vote)

COUNTRY BREAKDOWN

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Australia— WTA | 22. Panama— PR |
| 2. Austria— PR | 23. Poland— PR |
| 3. Belgium— PR | 24. Portugal— PR |
| 4. Canada— WTA | 25. Slovakia— PR |
| 5. Chile— PR | 26. Slovenia— PR |
| 6. Costa Rica— PR | 27. South Korea— WTA and PR
Mixed |
| 7. Croatia— PR | 28. Spain— PR |
| 8. Czech Republic— PR | 29. Sweden— PR |
| 9. Denmark— PR | 30. Switzerland— PR |
| 10. Finland— PR | 31. Taiwan— WTA and PR Mixed |
| 11. France— WTA Runoff | 32. United Kingdom— WTA |
| 12. Germany— MMP | 33. United States— WTA |
| 13. Ghana— WTA | 34. Uruguay— PR ²⁸ |
| 14. Hungary— MMP | |
| 15. Ireland— RCV | |
| 16. Italy— PR | |
| 17. Japan— WTA and PR Mixed | |
| 18. Lithuania— WTA and PR Mixed | |
| 19. Netherlands— PR | |
| 20. New Zealand— MMP | |
| 21. Norway— PR | |

LEGEND:

WTA = Winner Takes All

PR = Proportional
Representation

MMP = Mixed Member
Proportional

RCV = Ranked Choice Voting

KEY TERMS

After discussing the various forms of international and national government history and structure, we will tie it back to a United-States focus to prepare you, the youth, for the future.

ABSENTEE BALLOT: A ballot filed by a voter who cannot be present at their polling place on Election Day.

- Often filed by people who are living abroad, serving in the military, traveling, or attending school in a different state than their legal state of residence.

BALLOT: A list of candidates and proposed laws that voters mark to make choices.

- A ballot may be made of paper and marked with a pen or hole punch, or electronic where voters mark their choices with the push of a button or by touch screen.

BALLOT INITIATIVE: A proposed law drafted by citizens and placed on the ballot.

- Citizens will vote to approve or reject it. Ballot initiatives are usually drafted by groups who are passionate about an issue.

CAMPAIGN FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE: A report on how a candidate has spent the money raised for their campaign and where that money came from.

CAUCUS: A meeting held by members of a party to decide an issue. Most often, caucuses are statewide meetings held in presidential election years.

- Members of a party choose a candidate to support or they elect members to a state nominating committee.

CONSTITUENT: A person who lives, works, or pays taxes in an area that a politician represents.

DISTRICT (OR WARD): A geographical area that an elected official serves or represents.

DELEGATE, CONVENTION (UNPLEDGED, PLEDGED, AND SUPER):

Someone chosen to represent their town or state at a national political convention.

- A pledged delegate must support the candidate chosen by the voters they represent.
- An unpledged delegate is not bound to support a specific candidate.
- A superdelegate is often a party official or veteran politician. Superdelegates are not required to be chosen or elected to the position. They can support any candidate they choose.

ELECTION FRAUD: Criminal activity that impacts the integrity of an election.

Election fraud can include:

- Bribery
- Tampering with ballots
- Other illegal ways to interfere with the result of an election.

ELECTION OFFICIAL: This includes Poll Workers, Election Clerks, and Election Judges. These people are appointed to:

1. Monitor the voting process at a polling place
2. Make sure voters follow state requirements
3. Certify an election was conducted legally
4. Give the official vote count

ELECTOR: A person who is certified to represent their state's vote in the Electoral College.

ELECTORAL COLLEGE, ELECTORAL VOTE: The process Americans use to elect the President and Vice President. The number of electors a state receives is equal to that state's number of U.S. senators and representatives.

- Those electors then gather to cast the state's votes in the Electoral College. They vote for the candidate who won in their state during a presidential election.

GENERAL ELECTION: A final election for a political office with a limited list of candidates. The candidates in the general election are the people who won their party's primary election.

- Happen at a local, state, and national level.

IMPEACHMENT: The process to remove a high-level government official such as a President, Vice President, Federal Judge, Representative, or Senator.

- On the federal level, the House of Representatives investigates and brings impeachment charges. The Senate holds the impeachment trial. Some states and cities use impeachment to remove governors, mayors, or other elected officials. Other states allow officials to be removed through a recall election instead of impeachment. (see "Recall Election" on page 14)

INAUGURATION: A day of ceremony in which a newly-elected official takes office. This usually involves a swearing-in ceremony, speeches, and celebrations.

- Typically held for Presidents and Vice Presidents, Mayors, and Governors.

INCUMBENT: The person currently in a particular job or political office.

MIDTERM ELECTION: The federal election for members of Congress held between presidential elections.

NOMINEE: The final candidate chosen by a party to represent them in an election.

PLATFORM: A collection of beliefs, legislative goals, morals, and ideals that a political party's platform outlines its principles and plans to govern.

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC): A group organized to raise money or support for a politician or cause.

POLITICAL PARTY: A group whose intent is to govern and legislate in a specific way based on a chosen set of principles or platform.

POLLING PLACE (POLLING STATION): The location in which you cast your vote. Your area may hold voting in schools, churches, community centers, or other central public places. Your polling place is assigned based on your legal address.

POPULAR VOTE: The votes cast during an election for a candidate or about an issue. Whichever candidate or decision about an issue gets the most votes has won the popular vote.

- U.S. president and vice president are determined by an Electoral College vote.

PRECINCT (ELECTION DISTRICT, VOTING DISTRICT): Each city, county, or geographic area is divided by address into precincts to assign polling places and gather votes.

- A precinct can sometimes be called an election district or voting district.

PRIMARY ELECTION (OPEN AND CLOSED): An election held to choose which of a party's candidates will be nominated for the general election.

- In an open primary, all voters can vote for any candidate they prefer, regardless of the voter's or candidate's party affiliation.
- In a closed primary, voters can only vote for a candidate from the party that the voter belongs to.

PROVISIONAL BALLOT: Type of ballot used to collect a vote when there are questions about the voter's identity or ability to vote at that precinct.

- A provisional ballot is counted when the voter's information is confirmed.

RECALL ELECTION: An election for voters to choose whether to remove an elected official from office before the end of the official's term. A recall election can generally take place if enough voters sign a petition asking for one.

- Rules on the number of voters needed and the officials who can be recalled are different from state to state.
- Federal officials cannot be recalled, only impeached (see "Impeachment" on page 13)

RECOUNT: Counting the votes again because of a suspected error in totaling them the first time.

REFERENDUM: A proposed new law or a proposal to repeal an existing law, passed to the voters to approve or reject.

- Some states require the following to be approved by a referendum before they can be adopted: Spending bills, Bond issues, Constitutional amendments

REGISTERED VOTER: Someone who is qualified, has applied, and been added to their area's voter registration system

SAMPLE BALLOT: An example of what the official ballot will look like. These can be used to help people make decisions, and are often published by newspapers or websites.

SPECIAL ELECTION: An election to fill a vacant position if an officeholder dies, resigns, or is impeached. It is not part of the regular election schedule.

SUPER TUESDAY: The day when the most states and territories hold presidential primary elections or caucuses.

- The candidates who win on Super Tuesday are more likely to win their party's nomination.

TERM: The set length of time for someone to serve in an elected office.

- The President and Vice President of the United States serve a four-year term.
- U.S. representatives serve two years and U.S. senators serve six years.

TERM LIMIT: The total amount of terms that an officeholder is allowed to serve in a particular position. Laws set term limits for elected offices.

- No one can serve more than two terms as President of the United States.
- There are no laws about term limits for U.S. Representatives or Senators
- Term limits for Governors and other elected officials are different in each state and locality.

TICKET: The group of candidates that a party is running in an election.

TOWN HALL MEETING OR DEBATE: A setting in which candidates for office answer questions from voters. In a town hall-style debate, a moderator helps ensure candidates follow the rules they agreed to.

VOTER FRAUD (ELECTION FRAUD): Interfering with the results of an election by doing illegal things that affect the vote's outcome. Types of voter fraud include:

- Bribery
- Illegal voter registration
- Tampering with voting machines/ballot boxes
- Voter impersonation
- Vote buying
- False advertising about the election date or how to vote

VOTER INTIMIDATION (VOTER SUPPRESSION): An attempt to prevent eligible people from voting or forcing them to vote a certain way. The attempt may be made by an official, individual, or group. Some voter intimidation tactics include:

- Using verbal or physical threats
- Testing literacy, property ownership, or citizenship
- Threatening with weapons or jail time
- Poll taxes

HISTORY OF U.S. GOV'T

The Constitution of the United States divides the federal government into three branches to make sure no individual or group will have too much power:

1. **Legislative**—Makes laws (Congress, comprised of the House of Representatives and Senate)
2. **Executive**—Carries out laws (president, vice president, Cabinet, most federal agencies)
3. **Judicial**—Evaluates laws (Supreme Court and other courts)²⁴

Each branch of government can change acts of the other branches:

1. The President can veto legislation created by Congress and nominates heads of federal agencies.
2. Congress confirms or rejects the President's nominees and can remove the President from office in exceptional circumstances.
3. The Justices of the Supreme Court, who can overturn unconstitutional laws, are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate.
 - a. "This ability of each branch to respond to the actions of the other branches is called the system of checks and balances".²⁴

"Under the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, all powers not granted to the Federal Government are reserved for the States and the people. All State Governments are modeled after the Federal Government and consist of three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The U.S. Constitution mandates that all states uphold a "republican form" of government, although the three-branch structure is not required".²⁴

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH²⁷

THE CONGRESS



SENATE HOUSE



100 Senators

435 Representatives

Architect of the Capitol

United States Botanic Garden

Government Accountability
Office

Government Printing Office

Library of Congress

Congressional Budget Office

US Capitol Police

EXECUTIVE BRANCH²⁷

THE PRESIDENT



THE VICE PRESIDENT



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



15 Cabinet Members

White House Office

Office of the V.P.

Council of Economic Advisors

Council on Environmental Quality

National Security Council

Office of Administration

Office of Management and
Budget

Office of National Drug Control
Policy

Office of Policy Development

Office of Science and
Technology Policy

Office of the US Trade
Representative

JUDICIAL BRANCH²⁷

THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES



9 Justices

U.S. Courts of Appeals

U.S. District Courts

Territorial Courts

U.S. Court of International Trade

U.S. Court of Federal Claims

Administrative Office of the U.S.
Courts

Federal Judicial Center U.S.
Sentencing Commission

SIGNIFICANT REPORTING ENTITIES²⁷

Department of Agriculture

They develop and execute federal laws related to farming, forestry, rural economic development, and food.

Department of Commerce

They are concerned with promoting economic growth by setting industry standards and collecting business data.

Department of Defence

They coordinate and supervise all gov't agencies and functions related to national security and the U.S. Armed Forces.

Department of Education

They establish policies on federal aid for education, monitor funds, collect data and research, and combat educational issues.

Department of Energy

They manage U.S. nuclear infrastructure, administer energy policy, and fund scientific research in the field.

Department of Justice

They enforce U.S. law and defend the country's interests according to law, ensure public safety, and prevent and control crime.

Department of Health and Human Services

They protect the health of Americans and provide essential human services, including social service programs.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

They are responsible for policy and programs that address housing needs, improving and developing communities, and enforcing fair housing laws.

Department of Homeland Security

They are generally responsible for the security and safety of the government and its citizens. Some forms include cybersecurity, maritime security, and protection of national leaders.

Department of The Interior

They are dedicated to conserving America's outdoors and ensuring that generations can enjoy our natural and cultural treasures.

Department of Labor

They are responsible for occupational safety, wage and hour standards, all areas of employment, and some economic statistics.

Department of State

They are responsible for the nation's foreign policy and international relations.

Department of Transportation

They are responsible for planning and coordinating federal transportation projects. They also set safety regulations for all major modes of transportation.

Department of The Treasury

They manage crucial government functions such as paying all U.S. bills, collecting taxes, and managing federal finances.

Department of Veteran Affairs

They provide integrated life-long healthcare services to eligible military veterans.

OTHER REPORTING ENTITIES²⁷

1. Environmental Protection Agency
2. General Services Administration
3. National Aeronautics and Space Administration
4. National Science Foundation
5. Office of Personnel Management
6. Small Business Administration
7. Social Security Administration
8. US Agency for International Development
9. US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
10. Defense Security Cooperation Agency
11. Export-Import Bank of the United States
12. Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation
13. Federal Communications Commission
14. Railroad Retirement Board
15. General Fund of the US Government
16. Millennium Challenge Corporation
17. National Credit Union Administration
18. Overseas Private Investment Corporation
19. Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
20. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
21. Securities and Exchange Commission
22. Smithsonian Institution
23. Tennessee Valley Authority
24. US Postal Service

NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBE STRUCTURE

"Our Government officially recognizes 573 Indian tribes in the contiguous 48 states and Alaska. The US observes tribal sovereignty of the American Indian nations to a limited degree, as it does with the states' sovereignty. American Indians are US citizens and tribal lands are subject to the jurisdiction of the US Congress and the federal courts.

Like the states, the tribal governments have a great deal of autonomy with respect to their members, including the power to tax, govern, and try them in court, but also like the states, tribes are not allowed to make war, engage in their own foreign relations, or print and issue currency".

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ELECTORAL COLLEGE & PROCESS

To discuss the Electoral College and Electoral Process, we must begin at the U.S. Presidential Election Process.

Presidential Election Process:

1. **Primaries, Caucuses, Political Conventions**

- a. "The election process begins with primary elections and caucuses. These are two methods that states use to select a potential presidential nominee tooltip . In general, primaries use secret ballots for voting. Caucuses are local gatherings of voters who vote at the end of the meeting for a particular candidate. Then it moves to nominating conventions, during which political parties each select a nominee to unite behind. During a political party convention, each presidential nominee also announces a vice presidential running mate. The candidates then campaign across the country to explain their views and plans to voters. They may also participate in debates with candidates from other parties." ¹⁶

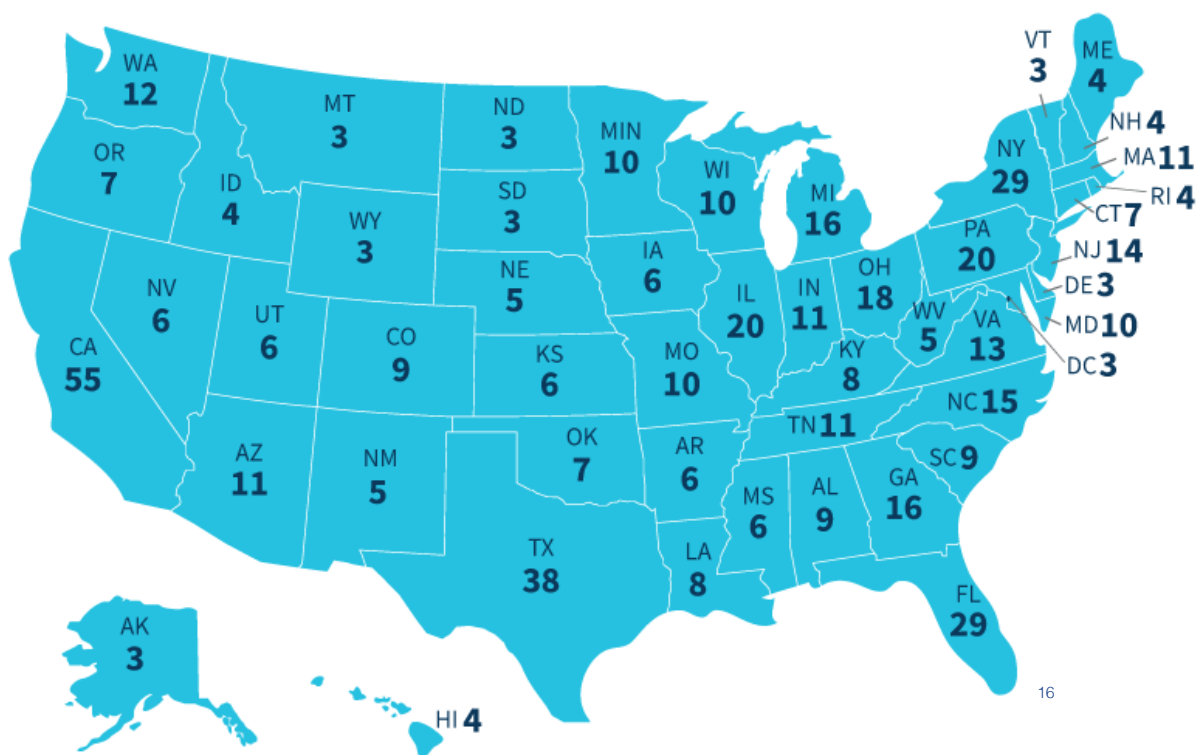
Presidential Election Process:

2. The Role of the Electoral College

a. "During the general election, Americans go to their polling place to cast their vote for president. But the tally of those votes—the popular vote—does not determine the winner. Instead, presidential elections use the Electoral College. To win the election, a candidate must receive a majority of electoral votes. In the event no candidate receives a majority, the House of Representatives chooses the president and the Senate chooses the vice president"¹⁶

b. The Electors:

- i. "Each state gets as many electors as it has members of Congress (House and Senate). Including Washington, D.C.'s three electors, there are currently 538 electors in all. See the distribution of electors by state"
- ii. "Each state's political parties choose their own slate of potential electors. Who is chosen to be an elector, how, and when varies by state"¹⁶



Presidential Election Process:

2. The Role of the Electoral College

c. How Does The Electoral College Process Work?

- i. "After you cast your ballot for president, your vote goes to a statewide tally. In 48 states and Washington, D.C., the winner gets all the electoral votes for that state. Maine and Nebraska assign their electors using a proportional system. A candidate needs the vote of at least 270 electors—more than half of all electors—to win the presidential election. In most cases, a projected winner is announced on election night in November after you vote. But the actual Electoral College vote takes place in mid-December when the electors meet in their states"¹⁶
- ii. "While the Constitution doesn't require electors to follow their state's popular vote, many states' laws do. Though it's rare, electors have challenged those laws and voted for someone else. Electors must follow their state's popular vote, if the state has passed such a law"¹⁶

d. Special Situations

- i. It is possible to win the Electoral College but lose the popular vote. This happened in 2016, in 2000, and three times in the 1800s.
- ii. "If no candidate receives the majority of electoral votes, the vote goes to the House of Representatives. House members choose the new president from among the top three candidates. The Senate elects the vice president from the remaining top two candidates. This has only happened once. In 1824, the House of Representatives elected John Quincy Adams as president"¹⁶

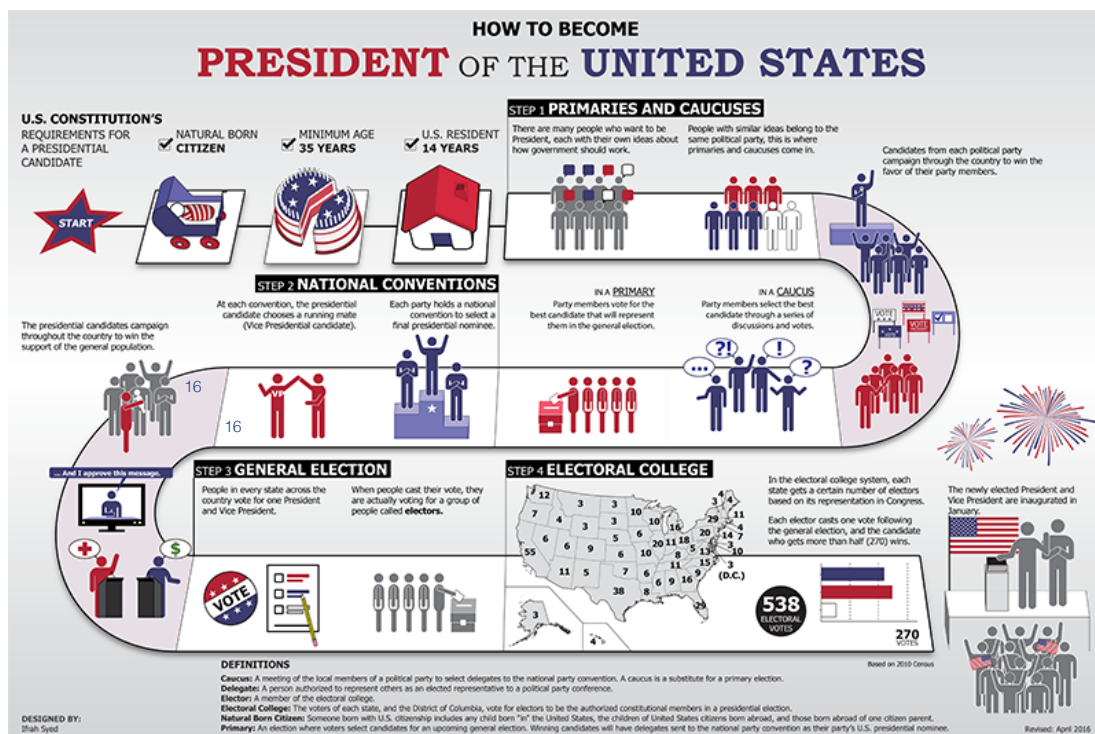
e. How to Change the Electoral College

- i. The Electoral College process is in the U.S. Constitution. It would take a constitutional amendment to change the process. For more information, contact your U.S. senator or your U.S. representative.

Presidential Election Process:

3. What is a Typical Presidential Election Cycle?

- a. The presidential election process follows a typical cycle:
 - i. **Spring of the year before an election:** Candidates announce their intentions to run.
 - ii. **Summer of the year before an election through spring of the election year:** Primary and caucus tooltip debates take place.
 - iii. **January to June of the election year:** States and parties hold primaries tooltip and caucuses.
 - iv. **July to early September:** Parties hold nominating conventions to choose their candidates.
 - v. **September and October:** Candidates participate in presidential debates.
 - vi. **Early November:** Election Day
 - vii. **December:** Electors tooltip cast their votes in the Electoral College.
 - viii. **Early January of the next calendar year:** Congress counts the electoral votes
 - ix. **January 20:** Inauguration Day ¹⁶



GLOBAL STATISTICS

- The United States trails most developed countries in voter turnout.¹²
- “Nearly 56% of the U.S. voting-age population cast ballots in the 2016 presidential election, representing a slight uptick compared with 2012 but less than in the record year of 2008”.¹²
- “The Census Bureau estimated that there were 245.5 million Americans ages 18 and older in November 2016, about 157.6 million of whom reported being registered to vote”.¹²
- “In recent decades, major changes in electoral systems have been adopted in New Zealand, France, Italy and Japan. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have adopted electoral systems vastly different from that in the United Kingdom”.¹⁴
- Reported Voting and Registration, by Race, Hispanic Origin, Sex, and Age, for the United States: November 2016.
- Reported Voting and Registration of Family Members, by Age and Family Income: November 2016.
- Reasons for Not Voting, by Selected Characteristics: November 2016.
- Over 30 countries require a Head of State to be of a certain religion.¹⁷

UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Natural-born citizen of the United States.
2. Minimum of 35 years old.
3. Must be a resident of the United States for a minimum of 14 years.
4. “Once a candidate raises or spends more than \$5,000 for their campaign, they must register with the Federal Election Commission. That includes naming a principal campaign committee to raise and spend campaign funds”.¹⁶

Religious Requirements for Heads of State

Countries where the law requires the head of state to be ...*

CHRISTIAN	MUSLIM
Andorra	Afghanistan
Lebanon	Algeria
	Brunei
BUDDHIST	Iran
Bhutan	Jordan
Thailand	Malaysia
OTHER (PANCASILA)	Maldives
Indonesia	Mauritania
NOT CLERGY	Morocco
Bolivia	Oman
Burma (Myanmar)	Pakistan
Costa Rica	Qatar
El Salvador	Saudi Arabia
Honduras	Somalia
Mexico	Syria
Nicaragua	Tunisia
Venezuela	Yemen

(Pew Research Center)

VOTER TURNOUT¹²

COUNTRY	% OF VOTING-AGE POPULATION	% OF REGISTERED VOTERS
Belgium (2019)	77.94%	88.38%
Turkey (2018)	88.97%	86.24%
Sweden (2018)	82.08%	87.18%
Australia (2019)	80.79%	91.89%
South Korea (2017)	77.92%	77.23%
Netherlands (2017)	77.31%	81.93%
Denmark (2019)	76.38%	84.60%
Hungary (2018)	71.65%	69.68%
Norway (2017)	70.59%	78.22%
Finland (2019)	69.43%	68.73%
Germany (2017)	69.11%	76.15%
France (2017)	67.93%	74.56%
Mexico (2018)	65.98%	63.43%
Poland (2020)	65.40%	68.18%
Slovakia (2020)	65.39%	65.81%
Italy (2018)	65.28%	73.05%
Austria (2019)	64.40%	75.59%
Greece (2019)	63.53%	57.78%
New Zealand (2020)	63.16%	68.35%
Canada (2019)	62.42%	67.04%
United Kingdom (2019)	62.32%	67.86%
Portugal (2019)	61.13%	48.60%
Spain (2019)	60.29%	66.23%
Lithuania (2019)	59.28%	53.88%
Czech Republic (2017)	58.02%	60.79%
Colombia (2018)	57.28%	53.38%
United States (2016)	55.72%	86.80%

MORE RESOURCES

Branches of Government: <https://www.usa.gov/branches-of-government>

57 Nations Across the World That Are Not Free:

<https://www.businessinsider.com/countries-that-arent-free-report-2019-5#western-sahara-55>

Tunisia Country Profile: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14107241>

Indonesia Global Edge: <https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/indonesia>

Zimbabwe Government: <http://www.theopc.gov.zw/>

US Bilateral Relations Fact Sheet: <https://www.state.gov/u-s-bilateral-relations-fact-sheets/>

Voter Turnout By Country: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/voter-turnout-by-country>

How The World Votes: <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2019/how-the-world-votes-2019/index.html>

Global Open Data Index Election Results: <https://index.okfn.org/dataset/elections/>

Indiana University Global Election Statistics Resource Guide:

<https://libraries.indiana.edu/global-election-statistics-resource-guide>

UC San Diego Worldwide Elections Guide: <https://ucsd.libguides.com/c.php?g=90733&p=584828>

Voter Turnout Database: <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout>

Global Elections Database: <http://www.globalelectionsdatabase.com/>

Princeton University Library Voting Data Guide, US and International:

<https://libguides.princeton.edu/elections/foreign>

Election Guide: <https://www.electionguide.org/elections/>

CITATIONS

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- 2: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/government>
- 3: <https://www.electionguide.org/elections/>
- 4: <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/p20-580.html>
- 5: <https://ucsd.libguides.com/c.php?g=90733&p=584828>
- 6: <https://libraries.indiana.edu/global-election-statistics-resource-guide>
- 7: <https://index.okfn.org/dataset/elections/>
- 8: <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2019/how-the-world-votes-2019/index.html>
- 9: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/voter-turnout-by-country>
- 10: <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout>
- 11: <https://libguides.princeton.edu/elections/foreign>
- 12: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/05/21/u-s-voter-turnout-trails-most-developed-countries/>
- 13: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/election>
- 14: https://www.fairvote.org/research_electoralsystems_world
- 15: <https://www.usa.gov/voting-and-election-definitions>
- 16: <https://www.usa.gov/election>
- 17: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/07/22/in-30-countries-heads-of-state-must-belong-to-a-certain-religion/>
- 18: <https://www.ft.com/content/0901fc42-4ce7-11e5-b558-8a9722977189>
- 19: https://staticshare.america.gov/uploads/2016/04/Elections-USA_In-Brief-Series_English_Lo-Res.pdf
- 20: <https://www.businessinsider.com/countries-that-arent-free-report-2019-5#yemen-56>
- 21: <https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/kenya/government>
- 22: <https://www.heritage.org/index/>
- 23: <https://www.state.gov/u-s-bilateral-relations-fact-sheets/>
- 24: <https://www.usa.gov/branches-of-government>
- 25: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/our-government/>
- 26: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/state-local-government/>
- 27: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/zi.html>
- 28: <http://archive.fairvote.org/factshts/wta-va.htm>
- 29: <https://www.un.int/zimbabwe/zimbabwe/country-facts>
- 30: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Tunisia/Government-and-society>
- 31: <https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/tunisia/government>
- 32: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ts.html>