

Pros and Cons of Electoral College

By Breana Noble | Thursday, 02 Jul 2015 11:43 PM

The United States does not elect its presidents by a popular vote, but instead uses an Electoral College process to select its leader, which may not be the politicians a majority of voters favored.

The most recent example occurred in 2000 when Al Gore won the popular vote, but George W. Bush earned more electoral votes, giving him the presidency.

The founding fathers set up the Electoral College originally to retain a representative form of government. Each state is allotted a number of electors equal to its number of members of the U.S. House and Senate, [according to History](#).

These electors typically vote for the candidate for which their state popularly voted.

Numerous movements have aimed to go from an Electoral College to a popular election, but the system remains. Here are some of the pros and cons of the Electoral College.

Pros

1. It protects minority interests.

The Electoral College preserves the voice of states with lower populations and [more rural areas](#), [Occupy Theory noted](#). Especially in contemporary times, urban areas tend to be more populated, but the Electoral College saves the interests of farmers and those found in less bustling locations.

2. It facilitates a two-party system.

Some political activists may not be fans of the two-party system, but the Republican versus Democrats structure creates more stability, [according to the Asia-Pacific Economic Blog](#). The small number of political parties allows for generalized platforms instead of parties focused on specific issues.

3. It directs more power to the states.

States are given the power to select the delegates to the Electoral College, allowing them to participate in the selection of a president. It maintains the representative form of government, [according to the U.S. Election Atlas](#).

Cons

1. The person a majority of Americans favor may not win.

Certain smaller states have a larger percentage of Electoral College votes than their percentage of population of the United States. This is because the minimum number of Electoral College votes for a state is three. Some consider this to not be democratic.

2. It's complicated and dissuades people from voting.

A popular vote is a simple majority, but the Electoral College consists of redistributing votes every 10 years because of population changes and electing delegates. There are many more steps involved, which may give citizens the feeling that their vote does not matter, encouraging them to stay home instead of visiting the ballot box on election days, according to the U.S. Election Atlas.

3. Small states and swing states get more power.

One man does not equal one vote. California's 55 Electoral College votes mean there are 705,454 people per vote while there are only 194,717 people for each of Wyoming's three electoral votes, [according The Green Papers](#).