Report on Deliberation

# Introduction

On May 1st, 2021, approximately 600 Americans aged 18 to 29 were brought together to deliberate the future of our presidential elections. These participants were recruited through The Generation Lab—a polling firm targeting younger Americans—and partnerships with over 30 universities around the country.

The conversation was hosted on The Stanford Online Deliberation Platform—a video chat platform capable of hosting dozens of auto-moderated deliberations simultaneously. Prior to the deliberation, the participants were surveyed about their opinions on the Electoral College and the proposals. After completing the pre-event survey, they received balanced [briefing materials](http://deliberations.us/briefing-videos) approved by a bipartisan [Advisory Board](https://www.deliberations.us/advisory-board) of experts on the Electoral College and electoral reform. Over the course of an hour and a half, the participants deliberated three proposals for changing the Electoral College—[a national popular vote](https://www.deliberations.us/the-electoral-college/a-national-popular-vote), [fractional proportional](https://www.deliberations.us/the-electoral-college/fractional-proportional), and [ranked-choice voting](https://www.deliberations.us/the-electoral-college/ranked-choice-voting)—and developed questions about the proposals for a bipartisan [panel of experts](https://www.deliberations.us/events/the-electoral-college/05/01/2021-3). After the deliberations, the panel answered a selection of the questions in a [live, Zoom webinar](https://www.deliberations.us/events/the-electoral-college/05/01/2021-3) viewed by all the participants. After the deliberations and expert panel, the participants were surveyed a second time to measure changes in opinions, attitudes, and knowledge as a result of the event.

The deliberation not only produced more informed, empathetic, and optimistic Americans, it also demonstrated that—when given the facts, the best arguments from all sides, and the opportunity to speak with a diverse group of peers—Americans can find common ground on divisive issues like Electoral College reform. After deliberation, a majority of Democrats, independents, and Republicans supported fractional proportional and ranked-choice voting, while a majority of Democrats and independents supported a national popular vote.

In this report, we outline these results in detail. First, by providing a quantitative description of the opinion changes. And, second, by discussing select statements from some of the participants. These statements—recorded during the deliberations—can help explain the thinking of the participants and the statistical trends observed.

# Quantitative Results

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