

A Comparison of Voting Policies & Procedures in Venezuela & U.S.

	Venezuelan 2012 Presidential Election ¹	United States 2012 Presidential Election ²
% of those eligible to vote who <u>actually registered</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71.1% White³ 12.5% Blacks³ 10.8% Hispanics³ 3.8% Asian³
Voter turnout (all ethnicities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61.8%⁴
Security providers for voters and voting materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The military, responsible for transporting materials and protecting voters against intimidation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Election Authority. Private Voting-Machine Contractors. Election Judges. Police on call in some precincts.
Observers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each party has a trained representative at each voting table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poll workers are trained by political parties or non-partisan groups.
Poll workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen <u>by lottery</u> from voter list. Trained by Election Authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-volunteered. Trained by local election authority.
Security of electronic voting system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political party and technical experts participate in pre-election audits of the system hardware, software, and voter-fingerprint databases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voting software is 'proprietary' and 'secret,' owned by private corporations. Contractors working for software companies program the machines.
Software encryption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Software on each machine gets encrypted. Party experts review the software source code for errors and malware. To unencrypt the software (for instance, to make changes), it must be jointly "Opened" by the two political parties and the Election Authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encryption is minimal or absent. Testing of machines by local election authorities only involves "functionality". No <u>testing for malicious codes etc.</u> No independent or party testing of programming, codes etc.
Voter verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voting machine is activated by voter ID and fingerprint. Judge can override machine and allow voting if he or she deems the voter's fingerprint to be a good match. 93% of all registered voters were in the database as of 2012. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voter rolls in most jurisdictions are on paper. Election judges check the identity of voters, but does not entirely filter out imposters—for instance, those who adopt the identities of people who are known to vote infrequently. Over-restrictive voter ID laws in some states disenfranchise some voters.
Secrecy of the vote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Software scrambles the order of the votes and the order of voter IDs. Votes and voter IDs are stored separately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic voting in the U.S. does not provide some of the secrecy safeguards used in Venezuela.
Status of ballots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic ballot is the official result of the vote. Voter receives a printed record of his voted ballot to compare with the electronic version. Voter deposits printed record in ballot box, for election-night check with electronic tally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic results get treated as the "official" vote count. The paper record usually gets employed to verify the electronic results only if a recount is required (for instance, in a close election).
Manual verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of the day, the count of paper ballots is compared to the electronic tally in the presence of party witnesses. Later, a comparison is conducted in public on a 53% of the voting tables, <u>selected at random</u>. The Election Authority gives each party a CD with the results of <u>each machine</u>. The CD contents are published on the Web. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manual verification is minimal or absent. On election night, poll watchers and candidates receive a printed report of the precinct's vote totals. The report does not segregate paper-ballot totals and digital ballot totals. Citizens may later obtain a copy of the above results.
Early voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No early voting. Elections are held on a Sunday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 30% of e-votes are cast "early." Security and chain of custody are an issue.

¹ "Carter Center Study Mission Pre-Election Report for Oct.7 2012 Presidential Election."

² U.S. Census Bureau and various Election Monitoring Agencies. (Cf. <http://www.nonprofitvote.org/voter-turnout.html>)

³ U.S. Census Bureau, "The Diversifying Electorate," page 5, <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p20-568.pdf>

⁴ Ibid, page 1.