



The Loop

ECPR's Political Science Blog

ecpr

Report for the ECPR Publications Subcommittee

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This report analyses data on blog pieces published on The Loop between 1 January and 31 December 2022

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A note on our photos: all imagery that appears in this report accompanied a Loop blog piece at some point during 2022



The year in review



Volume and source of published output

Over the calendar year 2022, The Loop published **244** blog pieces, meeting the target stated in last year's PSC report to produce '240–250' by 31 December.

In 2021, 38% of blog pieces had been pitched direct. The most significant development of 2022 has therefore been the sea-change in the proportion of content coming direct



to us. Last year, **75% of published content arrived either via a direct pitch or through a third-party series editor** (see overleaf) – a resounding 37% rise on 2021.

Happily, this enabled The Loop to meet our ambitious output target while significantly reducing the burden on Martin and Johanne to commission new content via email and Twitter. Though this is of course a welcome development, there is, unfortunately, a downside for our gender balance statistics.



Author gender balance

In 2021, 38% of our total output was by female authors. We had hoped to improve a few percentage points on this in 2023. Sadly, however, the proportion of female-generated content dropped slightly, to 37%. This is because the steep rise in the proportion of pitched content in 2022 meant that we had less control over the gender balance of submitting authors – and we had already demonstrated that men are more likely than women to submit a cold pitch.



Last year, 75% of The Loop's published content arrived either via a direct pitch or a series editor. That's a 37% rise on 2021

We have impressed upon our existing series Editors (see page 5) Jean-Paul, Luca, Hager and Eduardo (who in 2022 generated 90 blog pieces, or 37% of our total output), and will stipulate strongly with all our forthcoming series Editors, that they must encourage more women than men to pitch, in order for the published output to end up more evenly balanced.

Geographic distribution of writers

As Table 2 on page 6 shows, the worldwide distribution of Loop authors has remained strikingly similar year on year, with a strong showing from the UK, Ireland, Germany, Austria and Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, USA and Canada, and scant contribution (1%) from French authors, who tend to prefer French-language outlets. The proportion of pieces from Italy and the Nordic nations was down, but USA and Canada was up, at 13% of the total. The percentage of contributions from Southern and Eastern Europe remained reasonably steady.



The year in review

It's worth breaking down the generic 'Rest of the World' category to give a sense of the impressive geographical spread of our contributors. In 2022 alone, we published new entries from authors in countries as varied as Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malta, Pakistan, Serbia, Singapore, Taiwan and Uruguay.



Career stage and membership status

As with Loop authors' geographical distribution, the spread of authors at different stages of their career has remained reasonably steady (Table 5), though year saw an 8% rise in PhD candidates and a 6% drop in postdocs. Last year also saw a 15% rise in contributors from non-member institutions, up to 45% of total output. More than half of contributors (55%), however, still hail from full- or associate-member institutions.



In 2022, 79 Loop authors were also members of at least one ECPR Standing Group or Research Network. See page 10 for a table of how many people belonged to which interest group.

Loop digest e-shots

Using ECPR's professional email software package, Send in Blue, Kate builds two- or three-weekly digest emails, each of which typically contains synopses, images and links to around 12–15 blog pieces published during that time period, along with a general call to action for submissions.



Despite Elon Musk's acquisition of Twitter, we hit our year-end target, reaching 3,517 followers

Digest emails are sent to more than 11,000 subscribers on ECPR's 'Publications' mailing list. The open rate varies wildly, but click-throughs remain more dependable, at around 3%. These mailshots consistently result in the submission of new pitches to our online form – typically 2–3 per broadcast – so in addition to boosting readership figures, they remain a valuable source of fresh content.

Twitter followers

Our year-end target was 3,500 followers (it stood at 2,212 at 31 December 2021). Growth rate was steady through the year until [Elon Musk's acquisition of the platform](#) at the end of October, which caused a dramatic slowdown in follower numbers, and an exodus to platforms such as Mastodon. We are relieved to report that [@ECPR_TheLoop](#) eventually managed to buck the trend, however, and we ended the year at a healthy **3,517** followers.





The year in review

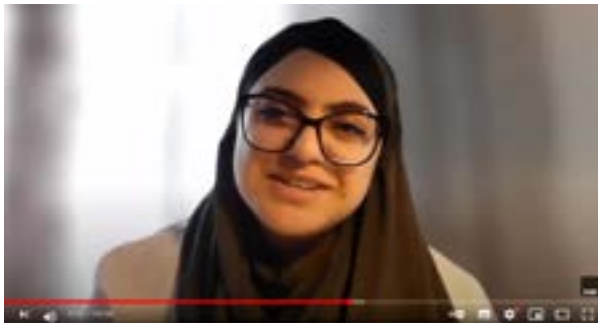


Loop presence on ecp.eu

The Loop slide on ECPR's home page carousel is refreshed each week by Kate with a header image and standfirst of a broad-appeal blog piece. In 2022, development work took place to include The Loop's 'broken diamond' logo on the ecp.eu mega-menu alongside all the social media platform icons.

The Loop at the General Conference

At the ECPR General Conference in late August, Kate presented a guide to key techniques in academic blogging, including in-house writing style and tips for Search Engine Optimisation.




The presentation was followed by a panel featuring regular contributors Ruairidh Brown and Hager Ali (above), in conversation with Martin about how they transform their academic ideas into journalistic blog pieces for The Loop. Watch the tutorial and discussion on [ECPR's YouTube channel](#).

Thematic series strands

In 2021 we introduced two discrete Loop content strands. By the end of 2022, the thriving Jean-Paul Gagnon-led [Science of Democracy](#) strand had attracted 77 entries, and Luca Manucci's [Illiberal Wave](#) series 25 submissions.



In 2022, these were joined by [Autocracies with Adjectives](#), a series spearheaded by Hamburg-based scholar Hager Ali examining the nuanced differences between autocratic regimes around the world. By the end of 2022, this series, distinguished by a  icon, had attracted a healthy 17 entries.



In 2022 alone, The Loop attracted authors from 13 new countries, including Georgia, Iran, Kenya, Taiwan and Uruguay



Finally, we launched [Measuring Human Rights](#), a strand led by Eduardo Burkle of the Human Rights Measurement Initiative, looking at the challenges and limits of methodologies for gathering human rights data. By the end of the year, we had published eight pieces in this strand.

We are working with our series editors to make more of an effort to redress the unequal gender balance when sourcing contributors. More on this tricky issue on page 9.





Author profiling

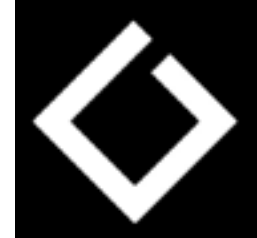


Table 1: Published authors 2022, by region *Many of The Loop's articles are multi-authored; the total number of authors is therefore greater than the number of published articles*

Regions	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total	%
United Kingdom & Ireland	2	11	6	8	3	6	6	8	5	11	10	3	79	25.5
Germany, Austria & Switzerland	4	2	6	2	3	8	4	5	4	4	5	4	51	16
France		2			1								3	1
Italy	4	1	3		1	1	2		1		2	1	16	5
Spain, Portugal & Greece	2		2		1	2	1	1	2	2		2	15	5
Benelux	6	2	1	1		2	2	3	3	3			23	7.5
Nordics		5	2			1	1	1	2	2	1		15	5
Central and Eastern Europe	3	1	3		3	3	1			1	3		18	6
United States & Canada	1	1	4	2	5	2	1	11	2	6	3	2	40	13
Rest of World	3	3	10	4	4	2	4	6	7	3	4		50	16
Total	25	28	37	17	21	27	22	35	26	32	28	12	310	

2022 authors, by country

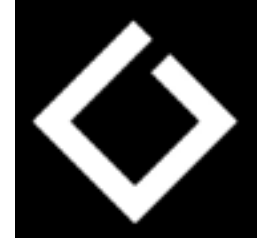
Bosnia & Hgz 1	Denmark 3	Hungary 4	Kenya 1	Pakistan 2	Sweden 3
Brazil 10	Estonia 2	India 5	Luxembourg 1	Poland 4	Switzerland 10
Argentina 1	Bulgaria 1	Iran 1	Malta 1	Portugal 9	Taiwan 1
Australia 7	Canada 10	Georgia 1	Netherlands 13	Serbia 1	Turkey 1
Austria 3	Chile 1	Germany 38	New Zealand 1	Singapore 1	UK 75
Azerbaijan 1	China 4	Greece 1	Italy 16	South Africa 2	Uruguay 1
Belgium 9	Czech Republic 4	Hong Kong 3	Kazakhstan 2	Norway 9	USA 30

Table 2: Published authors, by region; year-on-year comparison

Year	UK & Ireland	Germany, Austria & Switzerland	France	Italy	Spain, Greece & Portugal	Belgium & Netherlands	Nordic countries	CEE countries	USA & Canada	Rest of the World
2021	23.5%	19%	1%	9.5%	3%	7%	10.5%	5%	8%	13.5%
2022	25.5%	16%	1%	5%	5%	7.5%	5%	6%	13%	16%



Author profiling



Loop authors, by career stage

The Loop aims to publish pieces by scholars at every stage of their career, and we have continued to maintain a consistent spread of contributions from doctoral candidates to senior professors. Analysis shows no correlation between the seniority of the author and the popularity (readership figures) of a piece; some of our most-viewed blogs have been by the youngest scholars, so we aim to continue this balanced approach rather than trying to attract particularly senior or junior contributors.

Authors' institutional membership

The Loop is a benefit for scholars at ECPR Member institutions, and an outlet for those outside our membership community.

By the end of 2022, figures show that 55% of our contributions had come from scholars at Full or Associate Member institutions. But the 45% of contributions from authors at non-member universities demonstrates that we are also reaching out to scholars from less affluent countries who may not have the resources to take part in (eg) ECPR academic events.

Table 3: Published authors 2022, by career stage

Month	Pre-doc, PhD or not affiliated	Postdoc	Lecturer	Senior / Prof	Total
January	8	8	6	3	25
February	4	3	12	9	28
March	10	11	13	3	37
April	3	7	2	5	17
May	6	2	8	5	21
June	7	7	5	8	27
July	4	5	6	7	22
August	15	3	12	5	35
September	7	7	8	4	26
October	15	6	9	2	32
November	10	7	8	3	28
December	4	1	4	3	12
Total	93	67	93	57	310
%	30	22	30	18	

Table 4: Published authors 2022, by institutional membership

Month	Non-Member	Full Member	Associate Member	Total
January	8	17		25
February	8	19	1	28
March	18	17	2	37
April	6	10	1	17
May	11	9	1	21
June	7	20		27
July	12	10		22
August	16	16	3	35
September	11	14	1	26
October	16	16		32
November	19	9		28
December	7	5		12
Total	139	162	9	310
%	45	52	3	

Table 5: Published authors, by career stage; year-on-year comparison

Year	Pre-doc, PhD or not affiliated		Postdoc		Lecturer		Senior or Professor		Total
2021	65	22%	63	21%	107	36%	63	21%	298
2022	93	30%	67	22%	93	30%	57	18%	310

Table 6: Published authors, by institutional membership; year-on-year comparison

Year	Non-member		Full member		Associate member		Total
2021	88	30%	203	68%	7	2%	298
2022	139	45%	162	52%	9	3%	310



Pitches vs commissions

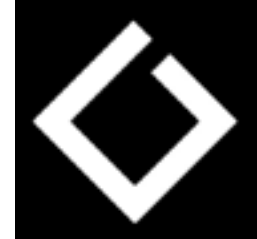


Table 7: Published authors 2022, by gender

Month	Male	Female	Total authors	% Female
January	15	10	25	40
February	20	8	28	29
March	19	18	37	49
April	9	8	17	47
May	12	9	21	43
June	23	4	27	15
July	16	6	22	27
August	19	16	35	46
September	14	12	26	46
October	21	11	32	34
November	18	10	28	36
December	10	2	12	17
Total	196	114	310	
%	63	37		

Table 8: Published blogs 2022, pitches vs commissions

Month	Pitches	Commissions	Total	% Pitches
January	9	9	18	50
February	4	14	18	22
March	14	11	25	56
April	6	8	14	43
May	15	5	20	75
June	19	2	21	90
July	15	2	17	80
August	21	4	25	84
September	21	4	25	84
October	26	2	28	93
November	20	1	21	95
December	12	0	12	100
Total	182	62	244	
%	75	25		

Table 9: All pitches 2022 (including not published*)

Month	Total	Female	Male	% Female
January	9	1	8	11
February	5	2	2	50
March	15	5	9	36
April	6	2	4	33
May	15	6	9	40
June	19	2	17	5
July	15	3	12	20
August	22	6	15	29
September	21	9	12	40
October	27	7	19	27
November	21	6	14	30
December	13	2	10	17
Total	188	51	131	28

*In 2022, we received six online pitches that were rejected by our Academic Editors. All were from men

Table 10: Published authors, by gender; year-on-year comparison

Year	Male	Female	Total	% Female
2021	186	112	298	38
2022	196	114	310	37

Table 11: Published blogs, pitches vs commissions; year-on-year comparison

Year	Pitches	Commissions	Total	% Pitches
2021	82	136	218	38
2022	182	62	244	75

Table 12: All pitches (including not published), male vs female; year-on-year comparison

Year	Male	Female	Didn't say	Total	% Female
2021	63	31	2	96	32
2022	137	51		188	27



Pitches vs commissions



Gender targets for published pieces

When The Loop launched in October 2020, one of our key aims was for at least half of published pieces to come from female authors. We also aim to publish authors from a broad range of nationalities and university affiliations, and at all levels of academic seniority. Achieving gender balance, however, has been our toughest challenge.

Contributors to The Loop can pitch their idea spontaneously using our simple online form. Alternatively, Academic Editors may reach out to a potential contributor, by email or on Twitter, asking them to write for us on a timely topic.

As tables 9, 11 and 12 on the previous page show, the spontaneous pitches we receive are far more likely to come from men than from women. In 2022, the proportion of published pieces emanating from pitches increased sharply. The Loop's gender gap has therefore widened accordingly.



Strategies to maintain gender balance

Our primary strategy to counteract this trend is to commission more blogs from women than from men. In 2022, 67% of our commissions were of women (see Table 13, bottom right). That's an impressive 27% rise on the previous year. At times when our level of commissioning has been higher, we have achieved a better gender balance in published pieces. However, not all authors are available to write for us when we contact them – and this, too, often runs along gendered lines.

For example, we reached out to eleven potential authors in July 2022, nine of whom were women (or a team led by a woman). Five were unable to write for us at all, and a further two unavailable until later in the year.

In gender balance terms, we reached our low point in June, during which 90% of published articles had arrived as spontaneous pitches (Table 8). In one sense, of course, that's a great achievement! However, the corollary was that female representation dropped to an all-time low of 15% (Table 7).

So, while we can't control pitchers' gender balance, we can ensure the editorial process doesn't reinforce existing male bias. If a female commissioned author turns us down, we often ask them to suggest other experts to write on the same topic. And women, more often than men, recommend other women.

We also tell contributors that we're flexible on timing, offering deadlines that fit around responsibilities such as childcare. Johanne and Martin have written a blog, to be published in spring 2023, on the challenges of achieving gender balance.

Female bloggers have the edge!

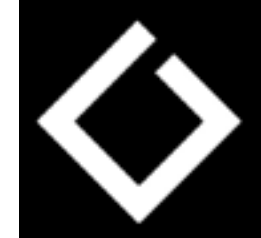
Of our ten most-read 2022 blog posts (page 13), six are authored or co-authored by women, and four have a single male author. We'll continue striving to encourage more women to pitch. And given the sharp rise in content generated by our themed series Editors (only set to rise further in 2023), we will impress upon these third-party Editors the importance of encouraging pitches from a greater proportion of women than men, to create better gender balance in our published output.

Table 13: All commissions, including published pieces and those not accepted, male vs female; year-on-year comparison

Year	Male	Female	Multi-author, led by male	Multi-author, led by female	Total	% female or female-led
2021	93	69	19	5	186	40
2022	14	37	5	2	58	67



Standing Group members



Correlation of authors published on The Loop during 2022 with membership of ECPR Standing Groups and Research Networks

Standing Group or Research Network	No. of authors
(Anti-)Corruption and Integrity	1
Affective Polarization	1
Analytical Politics and Public Choice	4
Central and East European Politics	9
Citizenship	3
Comparative Political Institutions	15
Critical Peace and Conflict Studies	8
Democratic Innovations	18
Differentiated Integration in the EU	10
Elites and Political Leadership	10
Energy Politics, Policy, and Governance	1
Environmental Politics	4
European Union	22
Extremism and Democracy	16
Federalism and Regionalism	5
Gender and Politics	6
Human Rights and Transitional Justice	5
Identity	10
Interest Groups	4
International Political Theory	8

Standing Group or Research Network	No. of authors
International Relations	11
Internet and Politics	7
Kantian Political Thought	1
Knowledge and Governance	5
Knowledge Politics and Policies	3
Latin American Politics	5
Law and Courts	3
Local Government and Politics	7
Mediterranean Politics and Society	2
Methods of Normative Political Theory	2
Migration and Ethnicity	10
Organised Crime	2
Parliaments	4
Participation and Mobilisation	12
Political Anticipation	1
Political Communication	8
Political Concepts	5
Political Culture	5
Political Economy & Welfare State Politics	6
Political Methodology	11

Standing Group or Research Network	No. of authors
Political Networks	6
Political Parties	13
Political Psychology	8
Political Representation	11
Political Sociology	12
Political Theory	10
Political Violence	9
Politics and Technology	3
Politics and the Arts	1
Presidential Politics	1
Public Opinion and Voting Behaviour in a Comparative Perspective	10
Regulatory Governance	4
Religion and Politics	4
Southern European Politics	9
Statehood, Sovereignty and Conflict	4
Teaching and Learning Politics	3
Theoretical Perspectives in Policy Analysis	4
Voting Advice Applications	1
Young ECPR Network on Europeanisation	3



Published blogs, by category

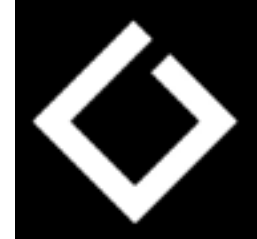
Category	Number of blogs
Democracy	147
Political Theory	69
European Union	65
International Relations	56
Science of Democracy	47
Security	43
Autocracy	41
Political Concepts	37
Political Participation, Political Communication	35
Elections	32
Western European Politics	31
Populism, Foreign Policy	30
Eastern European Politics	28
Warfare, Illiberalism	27
Ukraine	25
Russia	24
Public Policy, Political Representation	23
Political Parties	21
Radical Right-Wing Politics	20

Category	Number of blogs
Presidential Politics	19
Illiberal Wave, Autocracies with Adjectives	18
Gender and Politics, Environmental Policy, Democratisation, Democratic Innovations	16
Italy, Climate Change	15
Green Politics, Covid-19	14
Parliaments, Human Rights	13
Political Economy, International Organisations, China	12
EU Economic Policy, Energy Policy, American Politics	11
Political Science Methodology, Latin American Politics, Health Policy, Feminism	10
Migration, European Integration	9
Social Media, Politics and Religion, Middle East, Measuring Human Rights, International Development, EU Foreign Policy, Corruption, British Politics, Africa	8


Category	Number of blogs
Terrorism, Public Accountability, Political Trust, Brazil, Asian Politics	7
Trade Policy, Deliberative Democracy	6
Refugees, Referendums, Politics and the Media, Political Violence, Law & Courts, India, Independence Movements, Globalisation, Constitutions, Comparative Politics, Coalitions, Citizenship	5
UN, Turkey, Political Sociology, Political Campaigns, MENA, Germany, Education Policy, East Asian Politics, Afghanistan	4
Social Movements, Islam, Balkans	3
West Asian Politics, Welfare, Teaching & Learning, South Asian Politics, Scottish Independence, Radicalisation, Judicial Politics, Ireland, Federalism, Brexit	2
WTO, Socialism, Protest Movements, LGBTQI, Clientelism, Anti-Corruption	1



Key themes of 2022



Political fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic was a persistent theme through 2021. In 2022, entries in this category fell from 21 to 14 as Russian aggression began to dominate headlines.

Partly because of the launch of our  Autocracies with Adjectives series, but also as a general reflection of the rise of autocratic regimes around the world, blog pieces under the category Autocracy rocketed from 12 in 2021 to 41 in 2022.



War in Ukraine

Back in 2021, we published 10 pieces in the category Security, 1 under Russia, and nothing on Warfare or Ukraine. Since war broke out in 2022, we have published 43 pieces on Security, 24 on Russia, 27 on Warfare and 25 on Ukraine. Noteworthy blogs in readership terms were articles by [Paul Whiteley](#) on 11 March, [Grant Dawson and Nicholas Ross Smith](#) on 28 March, [Consuelo Thiers](#) on 1 April, and [Richard Sakwa](#) on 13 April. All these pieces were written in the first weeks after invasion, during which there was intense media and public interest.



Climate emergency

2022 saw a sharp rise in submissions focusing on elements of the climate crisis, most notably from [Ian Budge](#) on 11 February, [Andre Andrade](#) on 15 March, and [Peter Gardner et al](#) on 10 August. Interestingly, despite the rising interest from contributors, this trend was not borne out in our readership figures. None of the pieces focusing on environmental politics made it into our 2022 Top 20 most-read (see overleaf).



Since Russia's aggression in February 2022, we have published 43 blog pieces on 'Security', 27 on 'Warfare', 25 on 'Russia' and 25 on 'Ukraine'

Re-emergence of the far right

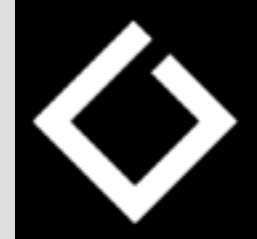
Away from the war, our contributors' single biggest focus was the continuing rise of right-wing (populist) parties and politicians, particularly in Italy. On 17 October, [Arianna Giovannini and Davide Vampa](#) turned the spotlight on Matteo Salvini's Lega. On 4 July, The Loop's own [Martin Bull](#) speculated about the fate of Italy's once-powerful 5 Star Movement. And three separate Loop articles dealt specifically with the 2022 rise to power of Giorgia Meloni: [Giovanni Capoccia](#) on 30 September (who on 6 April [also wondered about](#) Marine Le Pen's chances in the French Presidential elections), [Massimo D'Angelo](#) on 3 November, and [Dario Mazzola](#) on 8 November.

Elsewhere in Europe, blog pieces by [Gefjon Off](#) on 6 July and [Orlaith Rice](#) on 17 October scrutinised the recent success of the right-wing Sweden Democrats. [Kinga Koranyi](#) examined Hungarian President Viktor Orbán's 'racist rhetoric' on 5 August, and on 4 November [Sabine Volk](#) delved into the methods of far-right German protest movement, Pegida.







Top 20 most-read of 2022



Figures captured 11 January 2023

Blog title	Author/s	Page views
 Political crisis in Pakistan: is democracy responsible?	Fizza Batool 20 May	3,394
A welcome for Ukrainian refugees, but not those from the Middle East	Irene Landini 7 March	2,935
Putin's game of 'chicken' in Ukraine	Paul Whiteley 11 March	2,361
The psychology of war: analysing Putin's motivations	Consuelo Thiers 1 April	1,954
Why Catalan pro-independence parties want their own state	Anwen Elias, Núria Franco-Guillén 21 February	1,515
Explaining Swedish exceptionalism in its pandemic response	Orlaith Rice 14 March	1,487
Whatever happened to the Italian Five Star Movement?	Martin Bull 4 July	1,432
India's soft power diplomacy in the Modi era	Shreeya Patil 14 July	1,371
 Christian democracy is to blame for Europe's democratic backsliding	Martino Comelli 10 May	1,364
 A 'cat-dog' called electoral autocracy	Adrián del Río 7 July	1,314

Blog title	Author/s	Page views
 Autocracies with adjectives: we need better typologies of authoritarian regimes	Hager Ali 6 May	1,313
A second 'Pink Tide' rises in Latin America, but will it last?	Valesca Lima 28 January	1,304
Putin's revolt against liberal modernity	Richard Sakwa 13 April	1,171
Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent democratic theory	Ramin Jahanbegloo 16 February	1,099
 The authoritarian consolidation attempt in Turkey	Görkem Altınörs, Ümit Akçay 22 February	954
Great Power competition and the path to democracy	Zarina Burkadze 12 September	948
Why Putin's invasion of Ukraine had to happen	Grant Dawson, Nicholas Ross Smith 28 March	934
The Italian elections and the threat to European integration	Giovanni Capoccia 24 August	866
Failures in constitutional design are at the heart of the crisis in western democracies	Timothy Hellwig 24 August	795
Turkey's veto on NATO application from Sweden and Finland will not hold for long	Nikolaos Lampas 1 June	713



Google analytics



	Page impressions	Top-growing pages compared to previous month		Top-performing pages, by clicks		How people find The Loop, by clicks		Top-performing search queries, by clicks		Devices, by clicks		Top countries, by clicks	
January	320,000	Neuhold	+295	van Esch	752	democratic deficit	+50	angela merkel leadership style	149	Desktop	4.84K	USA	1.39K
		Hudson	+117	Hertner	494	eu democratic deficit	+44	vox spain	64	Mobile	2.29K	UK	1.3K
		Capoccia	+92	Neuhold	346	how to measure democracy	+25	democratic deficit eu	55	Tablet	110	Germany	383
February	297,000	van Esch	+152	van Esch	904	angela merkel leadership style	+47	angela merkel leadership style	196	Desktop	4.69K	USA	1.44K
		Stokes	+150	Hertner	437	neo statism	+16	vox spain	46	Mobile	2.08K	UK	864
		Hudson	+51	Santana	326	western canada separation 2021	+13	angela merkel leadership qualities	38	Tablet	76	Canada	479
March	348,700	Landini	+1.16K	Landini	1.16K	the loop ecpr	+52	angela merkel leadership style	192	Desktop	6.11K	USA	1.61K
		Whiteley	+310	van Esch	878	ukrainian refugees behaviour	+23	the loop ecpr	89	Mobile	2.99K	UK	1.44K
		Knutsen	+158	Hertner	513	germany refugee policy	+20	democratic deficit eu	52	Tablet	120	Canada	505
April	322,000	Thiers	+138	van Esch	683	putin psychology	+25	angela merkel leadership style	139	Desktop	5.78K	USA	1.72K
		Capoccia	+133	Landini	463	according to hager ali, why did the u.s. armed forces fail to train the afghan army?	+23	the loop ecpr	54	Mobile	2.4K	UK	1.1K
		Rice	+111	Hertner	462	frexit polls	+14	democratic deficit eu	42	Tablet	108	Germany	386
May	343,000	Keating	+113	van Esch	648	why does catalonia want independence	+22	angela merkel leadership style	143	Desktop	5.96K	UK	1.41K
		Neuhold	+98	Neuhold	476	turkey authoritarian	+15	eu democratic deficit	50	Mobile	2.54K	USA	1.37K
		Gerbaudo	+96	Hertner	452	eu democratic deficit	+13	the loop ecpr	47	Tablet	125	Germany	388
June	219,400	Lampas	+359	van Esch	373	richard sakwa	+32	angela merkel leadership style	84	Desktop	2.95K	USA	668
		Batool	+153	Lampas	359	turkey veto	+31	the loop ecpr	46	Mobile	1.94K	UK	583
		Sakwa	+54	Hertner	244	turkey veto nato	+23	richard sakwa	37	Tablet	64	Germany	317



Google analytics



	Page impressions	Top-growing pages compared to previous month		Top-performing pages, by clicks		How people find The Loop, by clicks		Top-performing search queries, by clicks		Devices, by clicks		Top countries, by clicks	
July	227,700	Batool	+352	Batool	544	Corbynism	+115	Corbynism	122	Desktop	2.43K	USA	602
		Roe-Crines	+145	van Esch	304	democracy in Pakistan	+72	democracy in Pakistan	83	Mobile	2K	UK	529
		Bull	+91	Roe-Crines	156	democracy is not just the right to vote it is the right to live in dignity	+15	angela merkel leadership style	70	Tablet	84	Pakistan	461
August	214,000	Home page	+85	Batool	590	ecpr the loop	+22	democracy in Pakistan	89	Desktop	2.33K	USA	589
		Patil	+58	van Esch	266	the loop ecpr	+11	the loop ecpr	58	Mobile	1.76K	Pakistan	472
		Batool	+46	Home page	207	political instability in Pakistan	+11	angela merkel leadership style	52	Tablet	66	UK	372
September	329,000	del Rio	+395	Batool	599	electoral autocracy	+170	electoral autocracy	182	Desktop	4.21K	USA	1.26K
		Bull	+380	van Esch	468	angela merkel leadership style	+66	angela merkel leadership style	118	Mobile	3.13K	UK	747
		Capoccia	+294	Bull	434	the loop ecpr	+52	the loop ecpr	110	Tablet	112	India	558
October	349,000	Neuhold	+217	Batool	564	suwalki gap	+23	angela merkel leadership style	120	Desktop	5.66K	USA	1.6K
		Burkadze	+206	van Esch	491	differentiated integration eu	+19	the loop ecpr	82	Mobile	3.04K	UK	1.05K
		Thiers	+140	Neuhold	343	angela merkel leadership qualities	+15	electoral autocracy	76	Tablet	118	Pakistan	568
November	366,000	Burkadze	+269	Batool	598	electoral autocracy meaning	+41	angela merkel leadership style	107	Desktop	6.18K	USA	1.76K
		Patil	+76	van Esch	494	great power competition democracy	+18	electoral autocracy	82	Mobile	2.98K	UK	1.26K
		del Rio	+61	Burkadze	478	gandhi's theory of non violence	+14	electoral autocracy meaning	60	Tablet	102	India	697
December	323,000	Mikovic	+104	Batool	473	suwalki gap	+28	the loop ecpr	69	Desktop	4.55K	USA	1.36K
		Singh	+92	van Esch	278	the loop ecpr	+13	angela merkel leadership style	56	Mobile	2.15K	UK	758
		Regnier	+87	Patil	232	is israel supporting ukraine with weapons	+12	suwalki gap	46	Tablet	100	Pakistan	581



Google analytics



Clicks and page impressions

Our top-performing months in 2022 were March (9,220 across 25 blog pieces), and November (9,279 across 21 blog pieces). These monthly rates are more than 2K higher than during November 2021, which had been our highest-performing pre-2022 month to date.

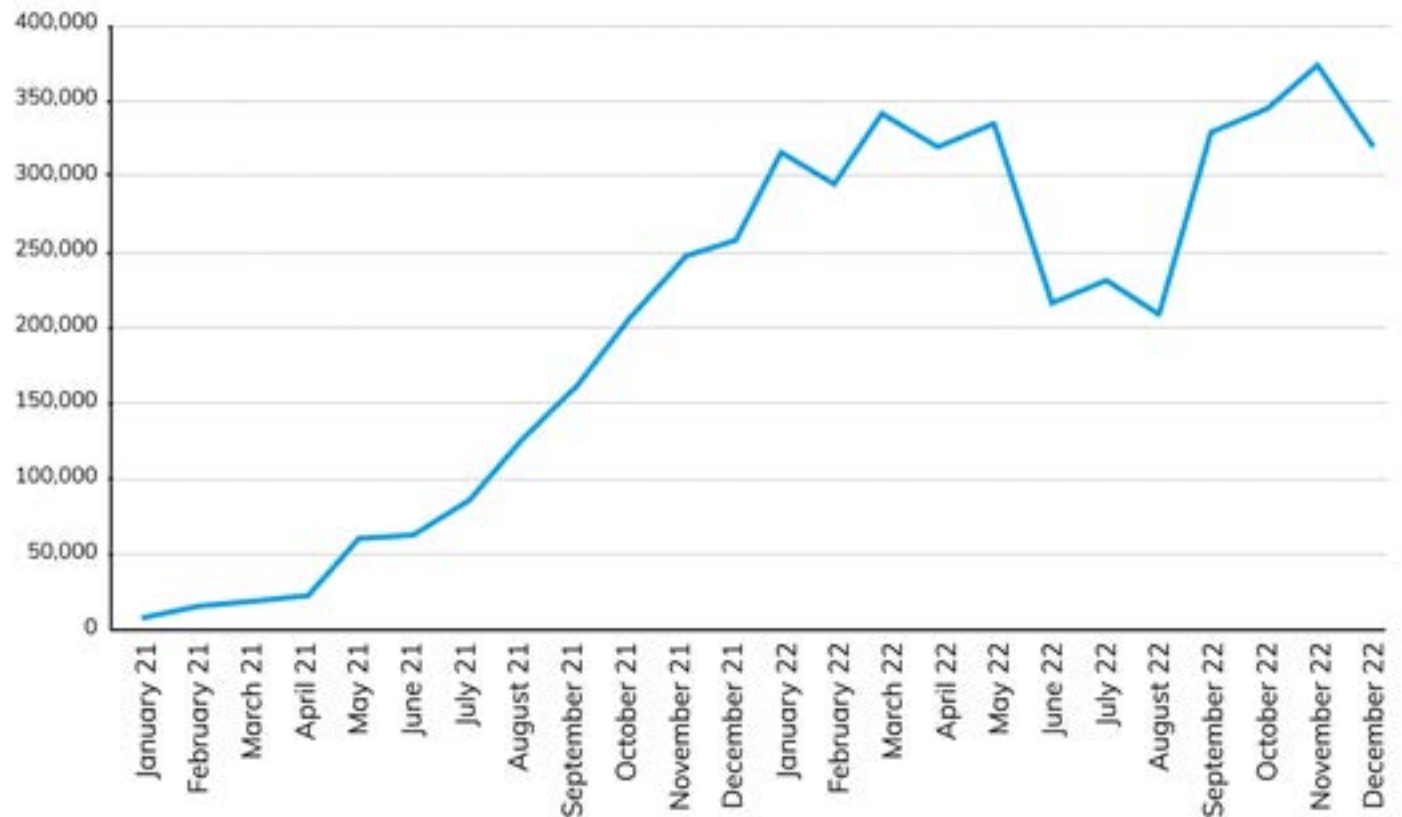


Page impressions and clicks show a clear slump between June and August, suggesting The Loop is part of our readership academic life as opposed to a leisure-time read. This is not necessarily what we want from the blog site in the long term, however! Figures on what devices are used to read The Loop bear this theory out: there is a strong preference for reading The Loop on desktop computers over mobile phones or tablets.

Since October 2021, our clickrate has remained comfortably above 4,000, even during The Loop's quietest months.

Page impressions 2021–2022

How often someone saw a link to theloop.ecpr.eu on Google





Google analytics



Search term analysis

The blog pieces by [Isabelle Hertner](#) and [Femke van Esch](#) on Angela Merkel and her legacy continued to dominate search terms in the first half of the year, and the van Esch piece into the second half, too. Germany appears as the third most clicked-from country in four of the first six months of the year.

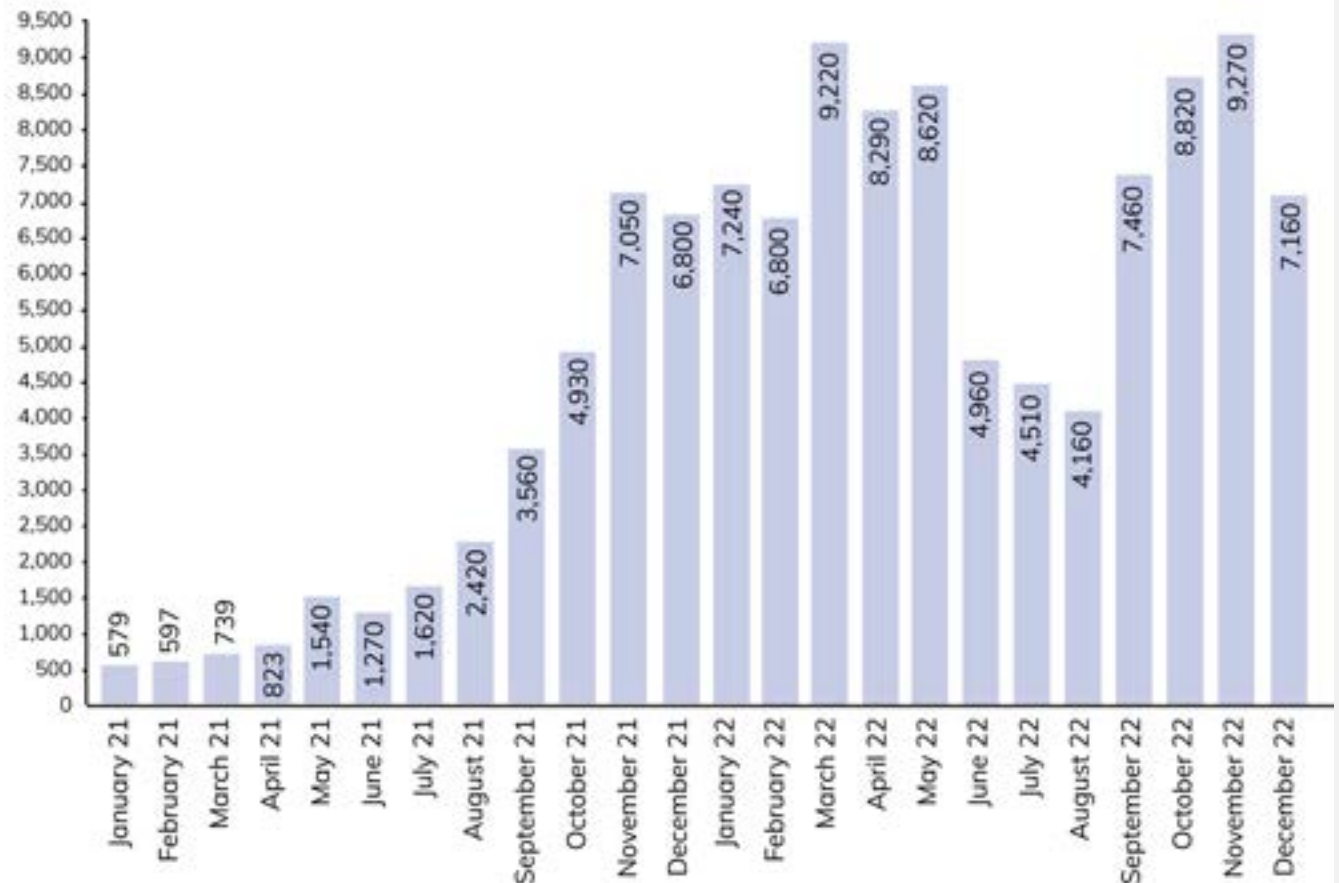
From July onwards, however, the picture changes, with either Pakistan or India appearing alongside the UK and USA as top-referring countries.



From July until the end of the year, Fizza Batool's Illiberal Wave contribution [Political crisis in Pakistan: is democracy responsible?](#) remained consistently in the top three for clicks, and was clearly attracting a great deal of web traffic from her home nation.

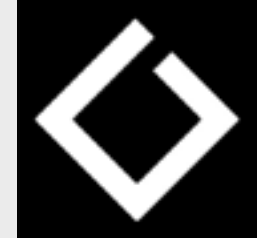
Clicks per month, 2021–2022

How often someone clicked a link from Google to theloop.ecpr.eu





Author survey feedback



A Survey Monkey questionnaire captures contributors' experiences. The anonymous 1–2 minute survey comprises five questions, followed by a free-text box for additional comments, a selection of which are reproduced overleaf. A weblink to complete the survey appears in the message authors receive when their blog is published. Between 1 January and 31 December we received **114 responses**, precisely the same number as during the previous year.

Response analysis

99% of contributors were either satisfied or very satisfied with the editing of their blog; 4% higher than the previous year's figure of 95%. In 2021, 5% of authors were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Encouragingly, this year, that figure had dropped to none.

A comparable 98% of authors were satisfied or very satisfied with the speed of the editorial process, up 1% on last year's figure, and 96% satisfied or very satisfied with their overall experience – again, a 1% rise on 2021.

Q1: How satisfied were you with the editing of your blog piece?

	2021	%	2022	%
Very satisfied	92	81	96	84
Satisfied	16	14	17	15
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied			1	1
Dissatisfied	5	4		
Very dissatisfied	1	1		
Total	114		114	

Contributors find their ways to us via a number of routes. It is heartening that ECPR communications remain the most common, particularly since we introduced standalone Digest mailshots in July 2021. It is also reassuring that Twitter and academic word of mouth bring a significant proportion of authors to our door. We are delighted to see that 100% of respondents would publish with us again.

Q2: How satisfied were you with the speed of the editorial and production process?

	2021	%	2022	%
Very satisfied	91	80	94	83
Satisfied	20	18	17	15
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2	2	2	2
Dissatisfied	1	1	1	1
Very dissatisfied				
Total	114		114	

Q3: How would you rate your overall experience?

	2021	%	2022	%
Very satisfied	96	84	96	84
Satisfied	12	11	14	12
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4	4	4	4
Dissatisfied	1	1		
Very dissatisfied	1	1		
Total	114		114	

Q4: Where did you hear about The Loop?

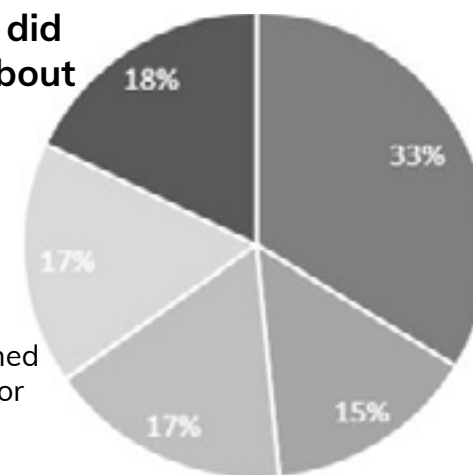
33% ECPR comms

15% word of mouth

17% approached by a Loop editor

17% Twitter

18% Other



100%
Yes

Q5: Would you publish with The Loop again?

“

Great experience;
super-cool blog and
very intensive effort
and collaboration from
editorial staff 25 March



“

My most positive
experience with
scholarly publishing
to date 18 February



Friendly,
professional
and fast

3 June



“

Highly effective editing,
speedy publication.
Very professional unit!

15 June

“

Very smooth experience overall, from pitching an idea to the editing and publishing part 31 March



“

Fantastic job! Friendly and fast correspondence, transparent processes – and The Loop team has an eye for catchy phrases to distil from the text 11 October



The team was very patient and supportive. Overall, excellent

18 November



“

The ideal world: nice system and nice people running it

4 May



Email feedback from authors



Ivaylo Dinev 12 January

■ Amazing refining of the text. Thank you!



Martino Comelli 2 May

■ Thank you so much for your help! Your editing was really crucial to improve the text. I am grateful for your work.



Kees Terlouw 2 September

■ Many thanks for the big improvements in readability while retaining my argumentation.



Clareta Tregler 23 February

■ Thank you very much for hosting me, and for the extremely accessible process.



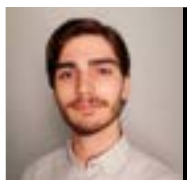
Frowin Rausis 5 May

■ It has been a great pleasure to write for The Loop. Every stage of the process has substantially improved our text and given us a great learning experience.



Aida Halilovic 6 September

■ Many many thanks! Your contribution really improved this piece.



João Alípio Correa 2 March

■ Thank you for your excellent editing skills on my blog piece; it is incredibly more comprehensible and straightforward now.



Erica Dorn 16 June

■ It was such a pleasure to work on this. We look forward to promoting the piece and ... to more collaborations.



Kandida Purnell 16 September

■ Many thanks again for your highly productive input into my piece.



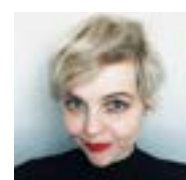
Joyce Wu 8 March

■ Wonderful! Thanks to the team for such a smooth and pleasant process! Looking forward to sharing the blog with my colleagues and friends.



Alexandr Burilkov 18 June

■ Many thanks, it's amazing how much more readable the text is now.



Aleksandra Samonek 27 September

■ I am extremely grateful for the helpful changes from all the editors who helped me with the blog. Thank you so much!



Valentina Ausserladscheider
23 March

■ Thank you for the super-helpful comments and this incredibly smooth process. Really great experience!



Simon Schunz 22 July

■ Thank you so much in general for the very professional process of handling this contribution.



Iren Marinova 10 November

■ Thank you for all your help and for making this process smooth and easy.

“

Thanks to @ECPR_TheLoop editors for excellent support, and to @ProfMartinJBull for encouraging us to write it.

@KofronJan, 29 March

“

Thanks to @ECPR_TheLoop for inviting me to write this rant that's been on mind for ages. Super proud of the result!

@dawud_ansari, 2 November



It's a pleasure to work with @ActuallyHager and @ECPR_TheLoop. I really enjoyed it.

@t_laohabut, 23 December

“

Thanks for the opportunity to write this blog post! It's fun to explore this kind of writing... Special thanks to @ProfMartinJBull for this very smooth process. @GefjonOff, 6 July

Thanks to @ProfMartinJBull and @ECPR_TheLoop for great editing!

@DarioMazzola89, 13 November

“

Thank you @ECPR_TheLoop for space to share my thoughts!

@KingaKoranyi, 4 April



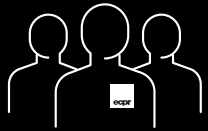


Headline statistics, 2022



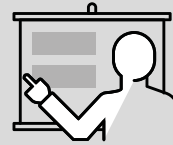
100%

authors would
publish with
The Loop again



244

published articles



52%

authors are early
career scholars



47

authors based
in 47 countries
worldwide

310



published authors



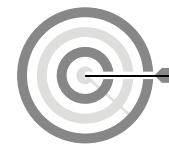
Democracy

most written-about
topic (again!)



3,517

followers on Twitter
at 31 December



37%

female authors



3,394

page views of
our most-read
blog piece at
11 January 2023

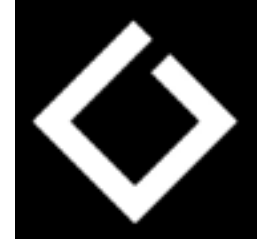


55%

authors from
ECPR member
institutions



Looking ahead



Thematic goals for 2023

At least three new series threads will go live during 2023. In early spring, our 🗣️ Future of Populism series, led by Mattia Zulianello and Petra Guasti, launches with a piece dispelling three die-hard myths about populism. A thread on 🗣️ Academic Freedom (unique name not yet fixed), led by ECPR Executive Committee members Daniela Irrera and Hana Kubátová, will examine the specific constraints upon intellectual freedoms in a variety of academic contexts around the world. A third strand, 🗣️ Democratic Transformations, led by ECPR 2022 Rising Star Prize-winner Hans Asenbaum, explores individuals' freedom to change in democratic politics. This series is scheduled to launch in May 2023.

We are in early-stage discussions to develop three further series. The first, provisionally entitled 'How political science can save democracy', has been suggested to us by the independent scholar Titus Alexander. His proposal deals with how



universities can teach political skills in a non-partisan, critical way, to produce more democratically engaged citizens.

We have also met with Conny Roggeband (UvA) and Andrea Krizsan (CEU) to talk about the possibility of a Gender and Politics-based series. They have confirmed they will submit a formal series proposal in mid-February. Finally, Dannica Fleuß (HSU Hamburg) has proposed a spin-off series from Jean-Paul Gagnon's Science of Democracy strand, focusing on how political scientists can mobilise democratic theory to develop action-guiding proposals.

AGORA PhD training proposal

In June 2022, we were approached by Asimina Michailidou at ARENA, Oslo, enquiring whether The Loop would be willing to develop and deliver a three-part training programme in blog-writing skills for Year 2 PhD students. After some

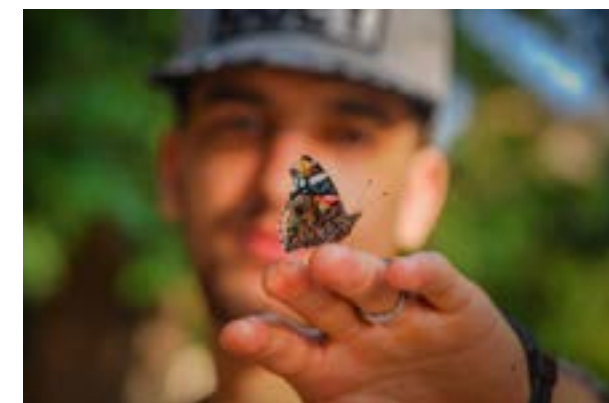
negotiation have now submitted a funding application for the project **Strengthening Europe's democratic resilience in the post-truth age (AGORA)** within the call **HORIZON-MSCA-DN-2022**. ECPR is seeking €600 to train each of the 10 PhD students on the project; an income of €6,000 in total. We will deliver the training in three strands:

What makes a good academic blog article?

- Commissioning academic blogs
- Transforming academic arguments into language that is accessible by non-academics
- Learning how to retain simplicity in one's writing style, while still allowing for nuance
- Understanding how to avoid merely summarising one's academic research article

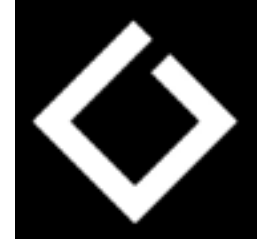
Writing and editing

- Full training in The Loop's WordPress content management system. (WordPress is the world's most widely used blogging platform; this therefore counts





Looking ahead



as a transferable skill.)

- Learning how to structure a blog piece
- Crafting effective standfirsts and crossheads – with particular reference to SEO
- Best practices for writing; blogging dos and don'ts
- Search Engine Optimisation

Outreach, engagement

- How to craft effective social media posts that engage in dialogues with others
- Using blog articles as part of the curriculum
- Importance of outreach; using personal networks to bring your work to a wider readership

ECPR House Series talks

In 2022, The Loop organised two House Series roundtable events, based on the Science of Democracy and Illiberal Wave series, respectively.



In 2023, we are planning at least three more events based on existing and forthcoming Loop series threads. We are already in discussion with Autocracies with Adjectives series lead Hager Ali to organise a debate on this topic, to include at least one (though preferably more) speakers from outside academe.

Attracting practitioners as Speakers will also be a priority for our roundtable based on the Measuring Human Rights series, for which series lead Eduardo hopes to secure contributions from people working in think tanks and NGOs.

NEW: Loop Best blog prize

By the end of 2022 we had longlisted 17 blog pieces for this inaugural annual prize. Martin and Johanne have whittled this list down to 12-strong shortlist. These blog pieces will now be forwarded to three Jury members for formal consideration. Our jurors will give each blog piece a score out of a possible 10 for three different qualities:

- Originality
- Readability
- Importance

Thus giving each a cumulative total out of a potential 30. Suggested deadline is early May. When the numbers are in, we will identify the three top-scoring blog pieces of 2022. In the event of tied scores, the blog piece with the higher readership goes through. In mid-May, the jury will deliberate by Zoom or email to decide which piece most deserves the award.

Our targets, in numbers

Building on our 2022 figure of 244 published articles, we hope to build on this output in 2023, to achieve **250** published pieces. We're seeking to improve the proportion of female contributors, from 37% to nearer **45%**, achieving parity by the end of 2025. On Twitter, we aim to build our following to around **5,000**. 