



The Loop

ECPR's Political Science Blog

ecpr

Report for the ECPR Publications Subcommittee

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April 2026



Why The Loop exists

ECPR does not believe that research findings should remain enclosed in academic journals, books or conferences. In 2020, ECPR launched The Loop as a public platform to bring political science scholarship into open debate.

Political science is a public good; it matters beyond the academy, within the societies it seeks to understand. Its insights belong in accessible conversations about power, democracy, conflict, governance, and justice.

The Loop is where those conversations happen.



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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 2025



The Loop's core values

1. Rigour

The Loop publishes analysis grounded in evidence, theory, and methodological expertise.

Our blog pieces reflect the clarity and integrity that define the discipline.

2. Independence

Our editorial judgement is guided by scholarly merit, relevance, and analytical quality.

The Loop maintains intellectual autonomy, and does not align itself with political or commercial interests.

3. Accessibility

The Loop rejects jargon. Political science can be precise without being obscure.

We also believe in free flow of information. You can republish all our articles for free, under a Creative Commons license.

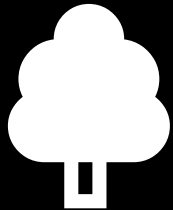
4. Pluralism

The Loop welcomes disagreement! Debate strengthens knowledge.

We encourage contributions that reflect the breadth of the discipline and the diversity of its scholarly community.



What we publish



**'Evergreen'
research
explainers – c.60%**

Timeless pieces that distil published or ongoing research (journal articles, datasets, books) into accessible insights that remain valuable months or years from publication.



**Reactive
analysis – c.40%**

Expert commentary that interprets unfolding events, such as elections, conflicts, institutional crises, and norm shifts, from a political science perspective.



The year in review



Volume and source of published output

In 2021, our first full year of publication, only 38% of published blog pieces had been pitched to us direct; however, in 2022 this figure leapt to 75%. In 2024, the proportion of pitched blogs in our published output had jumped to a resounding 96.5%, and **in 2025 all published blogs came to us via our online pitch form, or through a third-party series editor.** See Table 13. Our total output for the year was **299** blog pieces, or an average of about 1.2 per working day (there were 253 UK working days in 2025).



Author gender balance

As the output from pitches and third-party series editors has grown, it has become tougher to achieve gender parity: men continue to be more likely than women to submit a cold pitch. Throughout the year, we have therefore been extremely strict



with our series editors (some of whom are very prolific), to ensure that they focus on attracting contributions from female authors. Although we have not yet succeeded in achieving equal representation, our efforts have still made a significant positive change. **In 2025, we pushed The Loop's proportion of published female authors up by 2%, to 48%.** Given the comparably low female representation throughout our journals and books portfolio, this statistic is an ECPR publishing outlier.



In 2025, all 299 blog pieces published on The Loop came via our online pitch form, or through a third-party series editor. For the first time ever, Martin and Johanne made no commissions

Geographic distribution of writers

As Table 2 on page 10 shows, the worldwide distribution of Loop authors has remained strikingly similar year on year.

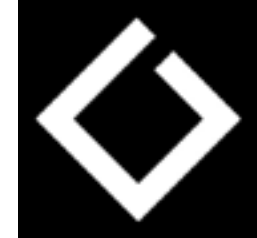
The UK continues to provide the most contributors (63 or 16%), followed by Germany with 52 or 13.3% and the US with 33 or 8.4%. Italy contributed 27 authors, or 6.9% of the total, and the Netherlands and Belgium were equally well represented, with 26 or 6.6% apiece. France continued to be under-represented on The Loop, with only two authors, or 0.5% of the 2025 total.

We published authors from 42 countries, as far afield as Ghana, India, China, Georgia, and Mexico. Appearing for the first time in 2025 were Algeria and Saudi Arabia. Since our launch in 2020, we have published authors from 64 countries.





The year in review



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 year on year (Table 6). 2025 saw a 4.5% rise in the percentage of pre-doc and PhD students, but when



we look at the combined cohort of early-career scholars (up to postdoc level), the proportion is just 1.5% up on the previous year. The year-on-year proportion of member and non-member contributors is also pretty consistent. Full or Associate Member affiliates made up 64% of contributions in 2023, 65.5% in 2024, and 62.5% in 2025.

In 2025, 206 or 53% of Loop authors were also members of at least one ECPR Standing Group or Research Network – and many, of course, belong to several. That's a 17% rise on last



year's figure of 36%. See page 14 for a breakdown of how many authors belonged to which Group or Network.

Loop Digest e-shots

Using ECPR's email software package, Brevo, we build biweekly 'Digest' e-campaigns, each of which contains synopses, images and links to all blog pieces published during that period, along with a general call to action for submissions. Open rate for e-shots in the first half of the year hovered at



As social media users continue to desert Twitter-X, followers on The Loop's new Bluesky account have leapt to more than 2,500

a slightly disappointing 20%. In the second half of the year, however, numbers rallied, remaining consistently above 30%, from August until the end of December. Click-through rates followed a similar pattern, with rates exceeding 5% in five separate broadcasts in the latter half of the year.

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, as borne out by our Author Feedback (see Q4 pie chart on page 25).



Bluesky and X

The Loop's X account has continued to attract new followers, but given the continuing post-Musk attrition rate, our overall following dropped by a couple of hundred, from 5,100 to 4,900. In January 2026, ECPR made the difficult decision to suspend activity across all X accounts managed in-house, including



The year in review



[@ecpr_TheLoop](#), although the archival content will remain accessible. Since launching The Loop's [@ECPRTheLoop.BSky.Social](#) account in March 2024, we have attracted more than 2,500 followers.

We predict healthy growth figures on this challenger platform throughout 2026 as the X-odus continues apace.



The Loop at ECPR's General Conference

Building upon the success of our 2023 and 2024 General Conference 'Blog Bootcamp' sessions for early-career scholars in Prague and Dublin, we repeated the exercise at the 2025 General Conference in Thessaloniki. Martin began our sessions with first-time bloggers by offering broad-brush advice on

how to approach the task of crafting a blog piece. Participants were then invited to work with The Loop's WordPress editing software, guided by Kate. We urged those taking part to bring along raw copy of their own for editing in Loop house style, to gain a realistic sense of how heavy an edit a real submission might receive. Alternatively, participants were given some unedited (anonymised) copy from The Loop archive with which to carry out the exercise.



Bootcamp is a great outreach exercise for attracting young non-native English speakers who may feel daunted submitting to an English-language blogsite

We had 17 bookings: 10 women and 7 men, resulting in three published blog pieces, one by [Zoé Perko](#); two by [Gilles Pittoors and colleagues](#). Another, by Marta Kołczyńska, is currently in production. The outreach certainly paid dividends: several further projects are in the 2026 pipeline as a result of Thessaloniki meetings. Bootcamp continues to serve as a valuable resource for early-career scholars, attracting younger, non-native English-speakers who may have felt daunted by the prospect of submitting to an English-language blogsite.

Loop presence on ecpr.eu

The Loop slider on ECPR's home page carousel continues to be refreshed each week by Charlie with a header image and standfirst of a broad-appeal blog piece.





The year in review



Scholarly collaboration

Spring 2025 enjoyed a continuation of our [Gendering Illiberalism](#) sub-series, in collaboration with the [Illiberal Wave](#) series lead Luca Manucci alongside Andrea Pető (CEU) and Alina Dragolea (NUPSPA Bucharest / Civica).

We welcomed another four collaborative pieces from young female and nonbinary scholars, and contributions were once again accompanied by a branded banner (below) acknowledging the three collaborating institutions:



New series: ☢️ and 🗨️

In April, Vrije Universiteit Brussel's [Mahmoud Javadi](#) published his foundational blog piece for a new series we've christened the ☢️ [Nuclear Politics Paradox](#). By the end of 2025, Mahmood's highly topical series had chalked up an impressive 31 contributions, 23 of them from female / nonbinary scholars or a female-led team.



In December, we launched a series inspired by the [REDIRECT](#) project led by former ECPR Executive Committee member [Luca Verzichelli](#) (Siena) and [Elisabetta Mannoni](#) (LUISS), exploring changes in representative democracy in Europe: the so-called 🗨️ [Representative Disconnect](#). By year-end, the series had attracted five contributions, with more to come in 2026.

Also in December, the founding editors of [Gendering Democracy](#), [Conny Roggeband](#) (UvA) and [Andrea Kriszán](#) (CEU), felt the time was right to [hand over to a new team](#). Three scholars from ECPR's [Gender and Politics Standing Group](#), Paloma Caravantes González, Laura Eigenmann and Francesca Feo, took up the mantle. [Read Kate's news story](#).

Best Blog Prize 2024 (awarded 2025)

Fourteen 2024 blog pieces made this year's longlist. Our jurors were [Brandon Mack](#), University of Houston, [2023 Best Blog](#) winner; [Aleksandra Spalińska](#), [Polish Academy of Sciences](#), and [Benjamin Carver](#), [European University Institute](#), who has worked with us on his blog-writing for political science course.

In spring 2025, our jurors scored each longlisted piece for its originality, readability, and significance / relevance. When the scores were tallied, the contribution [UN collusion with the Taliban is betraying Afghan women](#), by [Priscyll Anctil Avoine](#) and [Lida Ahmed](#), had claimed the top spot.

Priscyll and Lida make a powerful case that the UN is failing to uphold the principles enshrined in its charter, with appalling consequences. The laudation noted how 'this blog piece's social and political relevance, timely nature, and excellent writing... makes full use of the form's freedoms to link research findings to political conviction, and powerfully confronts the double standards of states and institutions in clear, impactful prose... It covers an impressive amount of ground, without ever becoming thinly argued.'

Read the full story [in Kate's blog piece](#).





Author profiling

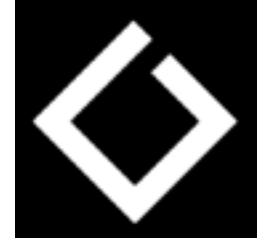


Table 1: Published authors 2025, by region Many Loop articles are multi-authored; the total number of authors is therefore greater than the number of published articles

Regions	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total	%
United Kingdom & Ireland	2	5	7	4	5	6	12	6	11	6	4	4	72	18.5
Germany, Austria & Switzerland	5	4	6	10	6	2	7	5	5	5	13	6	74	19
France							1		1				2	0.5
Italy	5	2		1	1	1	3	3	2	3		6	27	7
Spain, Portugal, Greece & Malta			1	2	3	1		3	3	1		2	16	4
Benelux		2	9	4	8	4	6	4	4	5	3	3	52	13
Nordic countries	1	1	1	4	2	3	2	1	2	3	8	3	31	8
Central and Eastern Europe	1	3	1		3	2	6	4	2		3	2	27	7
United States & Canada	5	2	3	4	2	3	4	4		6	2	4	39	10
Rest of the World	3	1	3	3	3	3	5	6	5	9	5	5	51	13
Total	22	20	31	32	33	25	46	36	35	38	38	35	391	

Table 2: % Percentage of published authors, by region; year-on-year comparison

Year	UK and Ireland	Germany, Austria and Switzerland	France	Italy	Spain, Greece, Portugal and Malta	Benelux	Nordic countries	Central and Eastern European countries	USA and 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
2023	18	18.25	0.25	8.5	6.25	8	10	5	13	12.75
2024	22.5	17	2	7	7.5	6.5	10	6.5	9.5	11.5
2025	18.5	19	0.5	7	4	13	8	7	10	13
All-time average %	21.6	17.85	0.95	7.4	5.15	8.4	8.7	5.9	10.7	13.35

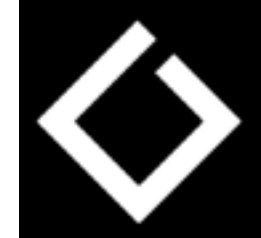
Table 3: Published authors 2025, by individual country

Algeria	1	China	3	Ghana	2	Italy	27	Pakistan	1	Spain	7
Australia	7	Czechia	4	Greece	4	Japan	5	Poland	3	Sweden	14
Austria	12	Denmark	3	Hong Kong	4	Malta	1	Portugal	4	Switzerland	10
Belgium	26	Finland	4	Hungary	5	Mexico	2	Romania	6	Türkiye	13
Brazil	2	France	2	India	4	Netherlands	26	Russia	1	UK	63
Bulgaria	2	Georgia	1	Ireland	9	Nigeria	1	Saudia Arabia	2	Ukraine	4
Canada	6	Germany	52	Israel	3	Norway	10	Slovakia	2	USA	33





Author profiling



Loop authors, by career stage

The Loop has maintained a consistent spread of contributions from scholars at every stage of their career. This year saw our highest-ever proportion of predoctoral contributors: 37%. Published pieces from senior scholars was up 1.5% on the previous year, at 13%. Taking PhDs and postdocs as a combined 'early-career scholar' cohort, output from these authors accounted for 52% of the total, compared with 50.5% in 2024 and 45% in 2023.

Authors' institutional membership

The Loop is a benefit for scholars at ECPR Member institutions, and, at the time of writing, also an outlet for those outside our membership community. By the end of 2025, **57%** of our contributions had come from scholars at Full or Associate Member institutions; a significant 8.5% drop on the previous year. However, the data in Table 7 confirms that the proportion of member and non-member contributors has remained reasonably steady year on year, averaging out at 62.5% member-generated content across the lifetime of the site since its launch.

Gender targets for published pieces

We are proud to report that we once again succeeded in achieving a 2% year-on-year rise in the annual proportion of female published authors, up to 48% from 46% in 2024. See Table 9. From January–March and during July and December, we matched or exceeded parity.

Table 4: Published authors 2025, by career stage

Month	Non-academic	Pre-doc, PhD	Postdoc	Lecturer	Senior / Prof	Total
January	1	5	2	11	3	22
February		10	4	3	3	20
March		10	4	9	8	31
April	2	12	5	13		32
May	1	8	4	16	4	33
June	4	9	4	7	1	25
July	5	15	7	15	4	46
August		12	3	13	8	36
September	3	12	4	15	1	35
October	2	12	4	16	4	38
November	4	9	8	10	7	38
December	2	8	11	8	6	35
Total	24	122	60	136	49	391
%	6	31	15	35	13	

As Tables 10–15 on page 13–14 show, the spontaneous pitches we receive are more likely to come from men than from women, although the gap continues to narrow. In 2025, the proportion of pitched *published* content from a woman or a female-led team rose to its highest ever level: **48.5%** (Table 12). And even if we include the pitches rejected by our Editors in our analysis, the total figure is still 2% up on the 2024 figure, at **46%** (Table 14).

Table 5: Published authors 2025, by institutional membership

Month	Non-Member	Full Member	Associate Member	Total
January	12	10		22
February	7	12	1	20
March	9	22		31
April	9	23		32
May	11	22		33
June	12	13		25
July	24	21	1	46
August	16	17	3	36
September	14	20	1	35
October	23	15		38
November	18	19	1	38
December	14	21		35
Total	169	215	7	391
%	43	55	2	

Series-linked content

Of the 299 blog pieces we published in 2025, 118, or 39%, were attached to one of our series threads. The year's most prolific series were Veronica Anghel's [EU Enlargement Dilemmas](#) and Mahmoud Javadi's [Nuclear Politics Paradox](#), which generated 32 and 31 entries respectively.



Author profiling

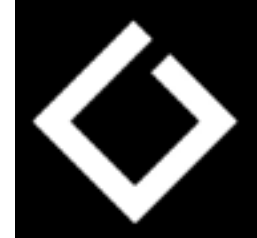


Table 6: Published authors, by career stage; year-on-year comparison

Year	Pre-doc, PhD or not affiliated / non-academic		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
2023	103	25%	82	20%	129	31%	101	24%	415
2024	97	32.5%	54	18%	115	38%	35	11.5%	301
2025	146	37%	60	15%	136	35%	49	13%	391
All-time average %	29%		19%		34%		18%		

Table 7: Published authors, by ECPR 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
2023	149	36%	251	60%	15	4%	415
2024	104	34.5%	192	64%	5	1.5%	301
2025	169	43%	215	55%	7	2%	391
All-time average %	37.5%		60%		2.5%		

Table 8: Published authors 2025, by gender

Month	Male	Female / other	Total	% Female / other
January	11	11	22	50
February	10	10	20	50
March	13	18	31	58
April	17	15	32	47
May	17	16	33	48
June	13	12	25	48
July	23	23	46	50
August	19	17	36	47
September	21	14	35	40
October	22	16	38	42
November	24	14	38	37
December	14	21	35	60
Total	204	187	391	
%	52%	48%		

Table 9: Published authors, by gender; year-on-year comparison

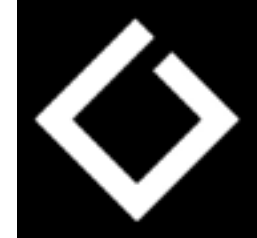
Year	Male	Female / other	Total	% Female / other
2021	186	112	298	38
2022	196	114	310	37
2023	232	183	415	44
2024	164	137	301	46
2025	204	187	391	48
All-time average published authors, % female / other				43%

“
2025 saw The Loop’s highest-ever proportion of female and nonbinary authors, at 48%





Pitches vs commissions



Routes to publication

In 2025, **all 299** Loop blog pieces arrived through a pitch or via a third-party series editor. Table 15's 'Total' column tracks the sharp yearly decline in commissions. Published pitched blog pieces by a woman or a female/other-led team stood at 48.5%; this is fractionally higher than the overall female-published figure because it counts articles rather than individual authors.

Table 10: Published blog pieces 2025, pitch vs commission

Month	Pitches	Commissions	Total	% Pitches
January	17		17	100
February	17		17	100
March	19		19	100
April	25		25	100
May	25		25	100
June	23		23	100
July	34		34	100
August	31		31	100
September	28		28	100
October	28		28	100
November	25		25	100
December	27		27	100
Total	299	0	299	
%	100%	0%		

Table 11: All published pitched blog pieces, 2025

Month	Total	Female / other or F/O-led	Male or M-led	% Female or F-led
January	17	8	9	47
February	17	8	9	47
March	19	9	10	47
April	25	11	14	44
May	25	14	11	56
June	23	12	11	52
July	34	21	13	62
August	31	15	16	48
September	28	12	16	43
October	28	12	16	53
November	25	7	18	28
December	27	16	11	59
Total	299	145	154	48.5%



Table 12: All published pitched pieces; year-on-year gender comparison

Year	Pitches	Female / other or F/O-led	Male or M-led	% Female / other or F-led
2021	<i>data unavailable</i>			
2022	188	51	131	28
2023	270	118	152	43.5
2024	209	90	119	43
2025	299	145	154	48.5

All-time average pitched published output from female / other or female / other-led: 41%



Pitches vs commissions



Routes to publication

Table 13 shows that in 2025, all published output was either pitched to us direct or routed through a third-party series editor; a rise of 3.5% on the previous year. **46%** of all pitches came from female/other or female/other-led teams (Table 14) – an impressive 6% rise on 2024. The majority of cold pitches we receive are still from male authors, though the gap appears to be closing. As ever, male authors also make up the lion's share of the small number of pitches our Editors reject each year.

Table 13: Published blog pieces, pitches vs commissions; year-on-year comparison

Year	Pitches	Commissions	Total	% Pitches
2021	82	136	218	38
2022	182	62	244	75
2023	270	17	287	94
2024	209	8	217	96.5
2025	299		299	100

All-time average published output from pitches, 80.7%



In 2025, all 299 Loop blog pieces arrived through a pitch or via a third-party series editor

Table 14: All pitches (including those rejected*), male vs female; year-on-year comparison

Year	Male or M-led	Female or F-led	Didn't say	Total	% Female
2021	63	31	2	96	32
2022	137	51		188	27
2023	162	125		287	44
2024	144	96		240	40
2025	189	158		347	46

All-time average pitches from female / other, 38%

*In 2025, 42 online pitches were rejected by Academic Editors; 33 (79%) from men and 9 (21%) from women



Table 15: All commissions, including published pieces and those not accepted or delivered, 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
2023	3	19	2	8	33	82
2024	3	3		2	8	62.5
2025						0

All-time average commissioned output from female / other, 63%



Standing Group members



Correlation of 2025 authors with membership of ECPR Standing Groups and Research Networks – **53%** belonged to at least one Group

Standing Group or Research Network	No. of authors
(Anti-)Corruption and Integrity	9
Affective Polarisation	15
Analytical Politics and Public Choice	4
Autocracies and Global Governance	16
Central and East European Politics	21
Citizenship	10
Comparative Political Institutions	21
Comparative Regime Studies	7
Critical and Interpretive Policy Analysis	9
Critical Peace and Conflict Studies	11
Data Linkage in Political Science	2
Democracy and Representation in a Transnational Space	7
Democratic Innovations	24
Differentiated Integration in the EU	16
Digital Authoritarianism	8
Elites and Political Leadership	23
Energy Politics, Policy, and Governance	8
Environmental Politics	16
European Union	52
Extremism and Democracy	32
Federalism and Regionalism	6
Food Policy and Governance	4
Gender and Politics	43
Human Rights and Transitional Justice	5
Identity	9
Interest Groups	15

Standing Group or Research Network	No. of authors
International Political Theory	13
International Relations	33
Internet and Politics	15
Kantian Political Thought	5
Knowledge and Governance	9
Knowledge Politics and Policies	7
Latin American Politics	9
Law and Courts	8
Local Government and Politics	6
Mediterranean Politics and Society	8
Methods of Normative Political Theory	9
Migration and Ethnicity	12
Organised Crime	1
Parliaments	29
Participation and Mobilisation	15
Political Anticipation	2
Political Communication	24
Political Concepts	13
Political Culture	5
Political Economy and Welfare State Politics	10
Political Methodology	22
Political Networks	7
Political Parties	31

Standing Group or Research Network	No. of authors
Political Psychology	18
Political Representation	23
Political Sociology	20
Political Theory	15
Political Violence	10
Politics and Technology	6
Politics and The Arts	1
Presidential Politics	4
Public Opinion and Voting Behaviour	31
Public Policy	15
Regulatory Governance	10
Religion and Politics	6
Southern European Politics	11
Statehood, Sovereignty and Conflict	5
Teaching and Learning Politics	13
The Political Theory of Elections	5
The Politics of Crisis Management	6
The Sciences of the Democracies	27
US Foreign Policy	4
Voting Advice Applications	4
Young ECPR Network on Europeanisation (YEN)	8



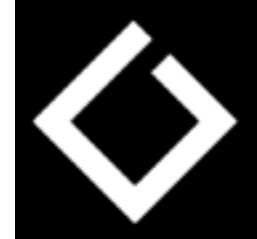
Published blogs, by category

Category	Number of blogs
European Union	71
International Relations	68
Security	54
Democracy	47
🕒 EU Enlargement Dilemmas	32
☢️ Nuclear Politics Paradox	31
Eastern European Politics	30
Gender and Politics	26
Populism	22
European Integration	21
American Politics, Political Theory	20
🦋 Science of Democracy	19
Ukraine, United Nations	16
🌈 Gendering Democracy, Social Media	15
Middle East, Migration, Russia	14
Public Policy, Political Representation, Elections	13
Warfare	12
China	11
Radical Right-Wing Politics	10
Latin American Politics	9

Category	Number of blogs
Political Communication, Turkey, Africa	8
Artificial Intelligence, Illiberalism, 🌊 Illiberal Wave, LGBTQ+, Health Policy, Environmental Politics, Germany, India	7
Western European Politics, Political Science Profession, Asian Politics, International Organisations	6
Protest Movements, Political Participation, 📍 Representative Disconnect	5
Democratic Innovations, Feminism, Political Trust, East Asian Politics, Balkans, Energy Policy, 🗳️ Democratic Transformations, Climate Change	4
Corruption, Covid-19, EU Foreign Policy, Foreign Policy, Politics and the Media, 🌐 Future of Populism, Brazil, Law and Courts, MENA, Political Economy	3
Autocracy, British Politics, International Development, Parliaments, Welfare, Trade Policy, Coalitions, Ireland, Political Parties, Politics and Religion, Terrorism, Political Violence	2
🔗 Constraints on Academic Freedom, Afghanistan, 🇮🇹 Rescuing Democracy, Italy, Education Policy, Teaching and Learning, Eurasia, West Asian Politics, Citizenship, Housing Crisis, Human Rights, Local Politics, Political History, Political Science Methodology, Presidential Politics, Referendums, Sport	1



Key themes of 2025



Populism, far-right and illiberal politics

A number of articles highlighted the rise of [populism](#) and [radical-right movements](#). Contributors focused on authoritarian tendencies in electoral politics and civil-society repression, particularly of minority groups. Output showed sustained concern with how [illiberal forces](#) are reshaping European (and global) politics, and threatening democratic norms.

[James Downes](#) analysed the dramatic electoral breakthrough of the far-right party [AfD](#) in Germany, the collapse of the country's centre-left coalition, and the ensuing risks to political stability and EU cohesion. [Federico Taddei](#) reported on the formation of a new coalition of disparate extreme-right groups in Italy, which suggests the increased coordination and strength of far-right networks. [Varvara Prodan](#) documented how EU member state Hungary has recast LGBTQ activism as a security threat. In banning Pride events and using repressive measures, she says, Hungary's government is shrinking civic space and embodying the growing illiberal trend across Europe.



Social media / digital realm and AI

Another cluster delved into the ways digital communication and [social media](#) shape politics, [influence elections](#), and redefine public discourse. Authors examined the effect on traditional political structures, but also on the evolving media ecology and how it redefines power: who speaks, who mobilises, who influences. Contributions by [Mimi Mihăilescu](#), [James Rice](#), [Hilde Coffé](#), [Thomas Evans](#), [Soumi Banerjee](#), [Friedel Marquardt](#), [Ilana Hartikainen](#) and [Madalina Botan](#) and others explored how online networks amplify conspiracy narratives, reshape political mobilisation, and reconfigure political identity and behaviour.



2025 output showed sustained concern with how illiberal forces are reshaping global politics and threatening democratic norms

Geopolitics, conflict, and security

Many blog pieces analysed developments in the European Union, [global geopolitics](#), and [international security](#), including [EU enlargement](#), EU institutional strategy, and global conflicts. Contributions were attuned to how larger international and regional transformations such as war, shifting alliances, EU enlargement pressure, and [migration governance](#) are reshaping political realities and institutional strategies.

A noticeable portion of 2025 pieces grapple with security, conflict (Ukraine, Afghanistan), nuclear politics, and global risk, reflecting the turbulent international context. The Loop is engaging seriously with existential global issues including warfare, nuclear risk, and defence policy, signalling that political science commentary remains deeply relevant to high-stakes international security debates.

Contributions to Veronica Anghel's [EU Enlargement Dilemmas](#) series, launched December 2024, had reached 35 instalments by the end of 2025. The ongoing conflicts in





Key themes of 2025



[Ukraine](#) and [Gaza](#), and their wide-ranging influence seeped into the content of many pieces, even if war was not their primary theme. Notable contributions include those by [Aly Verjee and Valerie Sticher](#), [Maksym Beznosiuk](#), and [Sebastian Jäckle and colleagues](#). Finally, [foreign policy / security-oriented](#) pieces, including those by [Amélie Jaques-Apke](#), [Geoffrey Swenson](#) and [Daphna Canetti and colleagues](#) focused on geopolitical shifts beyond Europe.



Gender politics and minority rights

Many authors addressed structural inequalities – gender, minority rights, economic justice – and how political institutions and parties responded (or failed to respond) to them.

Some focused on social-justice issues, including [gender equality](#), [labour/economic equity](#), and the rights of minorities such as [LGBTQ+ people](#).



Renée Krug and co-authors examined [German parties' visions for gender economic equity](#): Lucas Sudbrack posited that [Rising inequality is driving Europe's far-right surge](#). And Marcela Linková revealed how [European universities are using intersectionality to tackle gender-based violence](#).

Silvia Díaz Fernández revealed how proponents of the far-right metapolitical project are [shaping public discourse to fit their anti-democratic interests](#). And Orly Siow, Ashlee Christoffersen and Ceri Fowler uncovered [striking inequalities in who gets access to political decision-makers](#).



Many authors addressed structural inequalities, and how political institutions responded (or failed to respond) to them

Democracy and democratic theory

The Loop deepens debates on what democracy means, how it evolves, and how it should respond to present-day challenges.

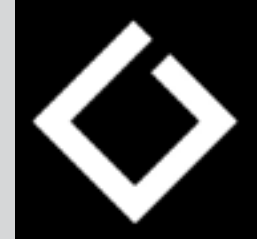
2025 contributors continued to examine the nature, crisis, evolution, or re-imagination of democracy. Themes included [institutional representation versus participatory democracy](#); the conceptual [plurality of democracy](#); and the challenges of [democratic quality](#) in contemporary societies.

[Agnieszka Pawłowska](#) proposes that plain democracy would empower citizens to recognise and use the fundamentals of democracy. Based on research presented at the 2025 ECPR Joint Sessions, [Erica Dorn and Sofía Bosch Gómez](#) show how we can redesign democratic governance to centre on community and collective care. And [Hong Do](#) offers a sharp critical reflection on the [new phase of Jean-Paul Gagnon's Science of Democracy series](#), highlighting the risk of what she calls 'romantic pluralism' in global democratic traditions.





Top 20 most-read of 2025



Figures captured 2 January 2026

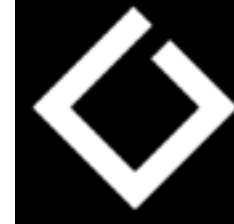
Blog title	Author/s and publication date	Page views
Explaining the Trump loyalty cult phenomenon	Elizaveta Gaufman, Adrian Favero 2 April	15,025
The 2025 German election: far-right surge and coalition collapse	James F. Downes 4 March	8,108
Is 'Trump Derangement Syndrome' a genuine mental illness?	Ela Serpil Evliyaoğlu 13 October	5,399
The cancelled elections and the mainstreaming of the far right in Romania	Ana Țăranu 30 January	5,019
Hungary and the future of Europe	John Chin, Mirren Hibbert 3 March	4,920
Are young men increasingly supporting the far right?	Đorđe Milosav 1 May	4,366
Limited shift in public opinion on same-sex marriage in Japan	Robert Nordström 10 February	3,712
 El Salvador's crackdown on gang violence has failed to make life safer for women	Julia Zulver, Anne Ruelle 2 October	2,893
Elon Musk, Călin Georgescu and the Soros spectacle	Mimi Mihăilescu 4 March	2,884
Russia's changing Arctic policy: from economic ambitions to military dominance	Doğuş Sönmez 11 April	2,215
Where are China and Russia in the Israel-Iran conflict?	Jonathan Roll 3 July	1,911

Blog title	Author/s and publication date	Page views
Albania's AI minister: 'avatar democracy' and the spectacle of accountability	Vera Tika 14 October	1,842
Why Netanyahu has been forced to accept the US peace plan	Paul Whiteley 9 October	1,601
Milei's Argentina and the unmaking of diplomacy	Consuelo Thiers 21 August	1,296
 Who's afraid of the Istanbul Convention? Understanding the debate over gender equality in Europe	Andrea Krizsán, Conny Roggeband 10 March	1,272
Why the EU's migrant 'return hubs' are doomed to fail	Zeynep Şahin Mencütek, Soner Barthoma 5 May	1,241
Georgia's Second Rose Revolution	John Chin, Anastasia Kim 9 January	1,173
Christian Democracy's pact with the far right	Martino Comelli 19 February	1,134
Can the EU form an autonomous military alliance?	Morgiane Noel 27 February	1,112
Promoting Poland's democratic U-turn	John Chin, Ellie Kim 4 February	1,054

Of our 20 most-read 2025 blog posts, seven are by a single male or all-male group, and seven by a single woman or all-female group. This is an improvement on the previous year, when 13 were by a single male or all-male group, and only five by a single woman or all-female group. Of the three mixed-gender pieces, two were female-led and three male-led. So, a very balanced overall picture.



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	1.2m	Țăranu	+447	Mihăilescu	1.92K	georgia protests	+104	dark maga	699	Mobile	10K	USA	5.92K	
		Chin + Kim	+276	Radford	1.14K	romania election	+88	what is dark maga	288	Desktop	9.81K	UK	2.99K	
		Whiteley	+215	Whiteley	879	romanian elections	+54	kamala harris ethnicity	171	Tablet	290	India	1.11K	
February	1.88m	Nordström	+9.59K	Nordström	7.59K	japan sex	+2.26K	japan sex	2.26K	Mobile	20.7K	USA	9.56K	
		Țăranu	+4.83K	Țăranu	5.28K	japanese sex	+1.05K	japanese sex	1.05K	Desktop	12.6K	India	3.93K	
		Trillo-Figueroa	+270	Mihăilescu	2.02K	sex japan	+938	sex japan	938	Tablet	506	UK	3.25K	
March	1.78m	Downes	+5.24K	Downes	5.24K	german elections	+776	german elections	776	Mobile	15.3K	USA	8.96K	
		Mihăilescu	+1.6K	Mihăilescu	1.65K	germany elections	+641	dark maga	673	Desktop	14.6K	UK	4.07K	
		Chin + Hibbert	+1.25K	Mihăilescu	1.6K	german elections 2025	+3916	germany elections	641	Tablet	500	Canada	2.04K	
April	1.47m	Gaufman	+1.55K	Gaufman	1.55K	trump cult	+444	trump cult	444	Desktop	9.81K	USA	5.88K	
		Cenusa	+87	Fodor	716	brothers of italy	+58	why is hungary still in the eu	157	Mobile	7.63K	UK	2.19K	
		Fodor	+86	Downes	654	is trump a cult leader	+26	dark maga	136	Tablet	268	Canada	1.13K	
May	1.8m	Milosav	+381	Gaufman	1.65K	iran	+122	trump cult	341	Desktop	9.52K	USA	4.97K	
		Gergiieva	+291	Downes	578	iran news	+79	dark maga	122	Mobile	7.76K	UK	2.36K	
		Mencütek	+201	Fodor	503	hungarian child policy	+50	iran	122	Tablet	299	Canada	905	
June	1.81m	Gaufman	+253	Gaufman	1.9K	is maga a cult	+117	trump cult	215	Desktop	6.72K	USA	3.76K	
		Güngör	+184	Whiteley	321	maga is a cult	+55	is maga a cult	117	Mobile	6.39K	UK	1.66K	
		Brown	+120	Milosav	319	axis of evil	+41	why no elections in gaza since 2006	104	Tablet	220	India	621	



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	2.06m	Roll	+1.21K	Gaufman	2.84K	is maga a cult	+247	is maga a cult	364	Mobile	8.9K	USA	5.27K
		Gaufman	+944	Roll	1.21K	maga cult	+192	trump cult	272	Desktop	7.38K	UK	1.95K
		Mihăilescu	+604	Mihăilescu	604	why no elections in gaza since 2006	+150	why no elections in gaza since 2006	254	Tablet	280	India	993
August	2.43m	Whiteley	+307	Gaufman	2.6K	why no elections in gaza since 2006	+120	why no elections in gaza since 2006	374	Mobile	8.15K	USA	4.83K
		Jensehaugen	+213	Jensehaugen	683	maria merkouraki	+78	is maga a cult	297	Desktop	6.73K	UK	1.79K
		Moonakal	+149	Milosav	341	trump approval rating	+34	trump cult	216	Tablet	272	India	834
September	2.41m	Gaufman	+555	Gaufman	3.15K	why no elections in gaza since 2006	+261	why no elections in gaza since 2006	635	Desktop	10K	USA	6.86K
		Bortun	+472	Jensehaugen	847	is maga a cult	+207	is maga a cult	504	Mobile	9.9K	UK	2.39K
		Milosav	+283	Milosav	624	maga cult	+80	maga cult	258	Tablet	352	Canada	1.01K
October	2.27m	Evliyaoğlu	+2.14K	Gaufman	3.13K	trump derangement syndrome	+306	why no elections in gaza since 2006	786	Desktop	12.6K	USA	9.35K
		Whiteley	+1.52K	Evliyaoğlu	2.14K	netanyahu approval rating	+297	is maga a cult	367	Mobile	12.3K	UK	3.07K
		Tika	+613	Whiteley	1.52K	albania ai minister	+248	trump derangement syndrome	306	Tablet	461	Canada	1.51K
November	1.82m	Evliyaoğlu	+499	Evliyaoğlu	2.64K	trump derangement syndrome meaning	+124	trump derangement syndrome	307	Desktop	10.3K	USA	7.09K
		Mumladze	+164	Gaufman	2.06K	is trump mentally ill	+46	albania ai minister	230	Mobile	7.79K	UK	1.99K
		Jäckle et al	+162	Tika	659	ai minister albania	+46	is maga a cult	177	Tablet	353	Canada	993
December	2.11m	Sarkar	+543	Evliyaoğlu	2.5K	trump derangement syndrome bill	+90	trump derangement syndrome	209	Desktop	8.66K	USA	6.39K
		Ntaflos	+222	Gaufman	1.81K	what is trump derangement syndrome	+69	trump derangement syndrome bill	166	Mobile	7.54K	UK	1.86K
		Chukwukere	+108	Sarkar	543	germany wage hike migration	+52	is maga a cult	130	Tablet	296	India	846



Google analytics



Clicks and page impressions

Our top-performing month of 2025 was August, with 2.43 million impressions and 15,200 individual clicks. The former figure is well over treble the number during the same month in the previous year. Monthly page impressions topped two million for the first time in July, and remained above the 2m mark until the end of the year bar a slight dip in November.

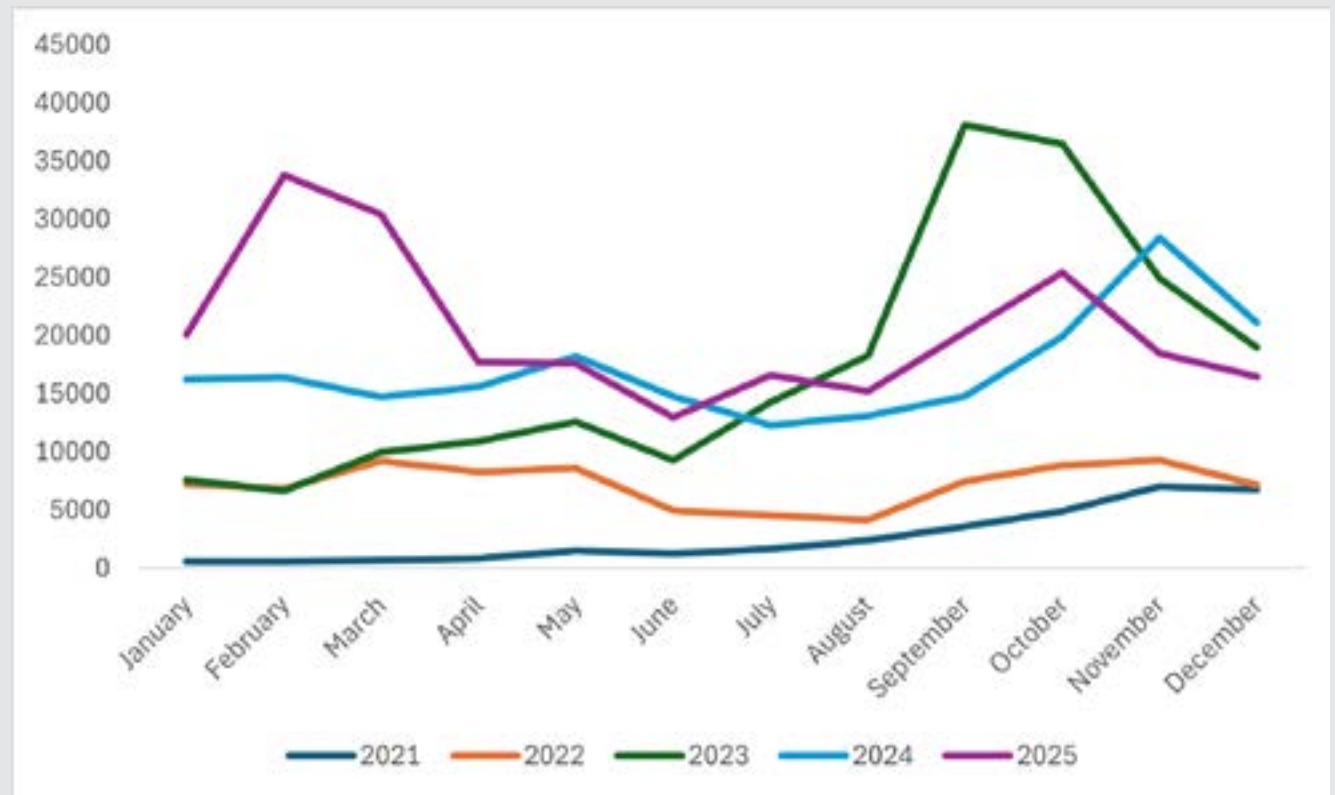


From January–March, and again in July and August, more readers accessed The Loop on a mobile device than they did on a desktop computer. There still doesn't appear to be a clear trend towards one or the other.

Readers remain most likely to be based in the US, followed by the UK (although India did pip the UK to second spot in February). Third place has otherwise alternated between India and Canada.

Clicks

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





Google analytics



Search term analysis

Dominant content themes included political analysis and elections, US politics, international conflicts and polarising socio-cultural topics.

Elections in Romania, Germany, and UK appeared multiple times. There was recurring exploration of far-right support, and young men's political leanings. Interest in the 'Trump loyalty cult' and 'Trump derangement syndrome' started in April and peaked between October and December.

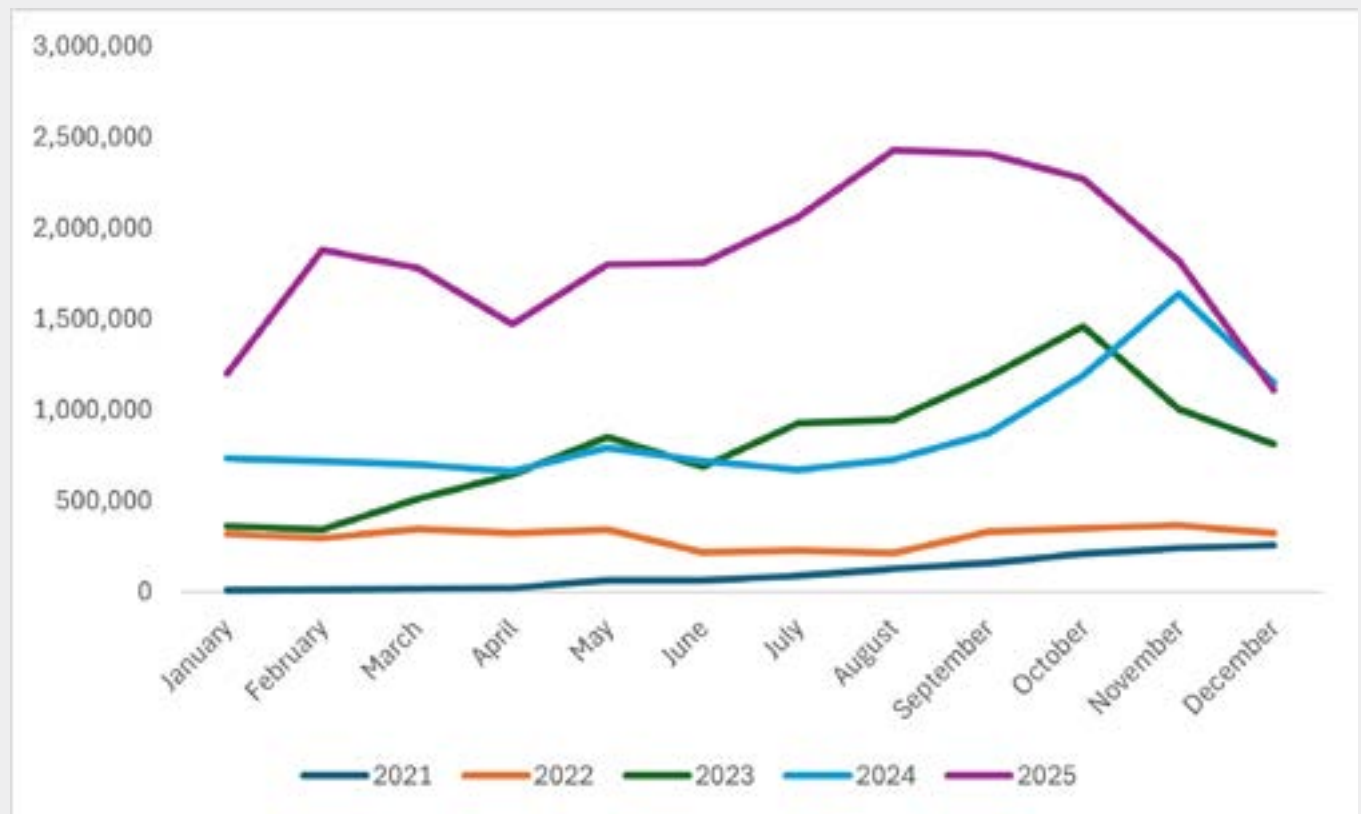
Trump-focused content was a major driver. Queries like 'is MAGA a cult', 'trump cult', and 'trump derangement syndrome' repeatedly ranked among top searches. Related discussions included MAGA memes, radical belief systems, and Trump's foreign policy decisions.

Interest in Middle East politics, including the Israel-Palestine conflict, Gaza elections, and events in Iran, spiked from June–September. Russia and China's geopolitical roles featured in content on Iran and on Israel's war in Gaza. US-China relations (rare earths, trade) and European policies (Hungary, EU migration) were also recurring topics. Attention-grabbing, sometimes provocative topics, such as 'japan sex' drew search traffic, especially earlier in the year.

Some spikes correspond to current events (elections, Middle East developments). Others (Trump cult, MAGA, far-right youth) show enduring audience interest. US Trump politics consistently drives the largest traffic spikes, in clicks and recurring queries.

Page impressions

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





The Loop versus ecpr.eu



Number of page views, 2023–2026 YTD

● theloop.ecpr.eu ● ecpr.eu



Number of active users, 2023–2026 YTD

● theloop.ecpr.eu ● ecpr.eu



Google analytics comparison of theloop.ecpr.eu and ecpr.eu

From 1 January 2023, Google changed the analytics format type, so analysis of data prior to 2023 is, sadly, not possible. But this still leaves us with comparative data from three full years of Loop activity, along with the year-to-date figures for 2026.

In page view terms, The Loop increased its share from 17.5% of all ECPR-related traffic in 2023 to 46.3% in 2026 to date – figures captured Monday 20 April. Between 2024 and 2025 it gained more than 20% of views over the main site. The Loop therefore has a few years to go before it attracts a higher number of individual page views than the main ECPR website, though this is a feasible prediction.

By number of active individual users, the picture is even more impressive. By 2024, The Loop had already outstripped the main site, and year-to-date figures show that of all users of the two websites, 82% of them are going to The Loop. As with the page-view figures, the leap was greatest between 2024 and 2025, so gains are likely to proceed more incrementally from now on. The general direction of travel, however, appears to be emphatically in The Loop's favour.



Author survey feedback



Response analysis

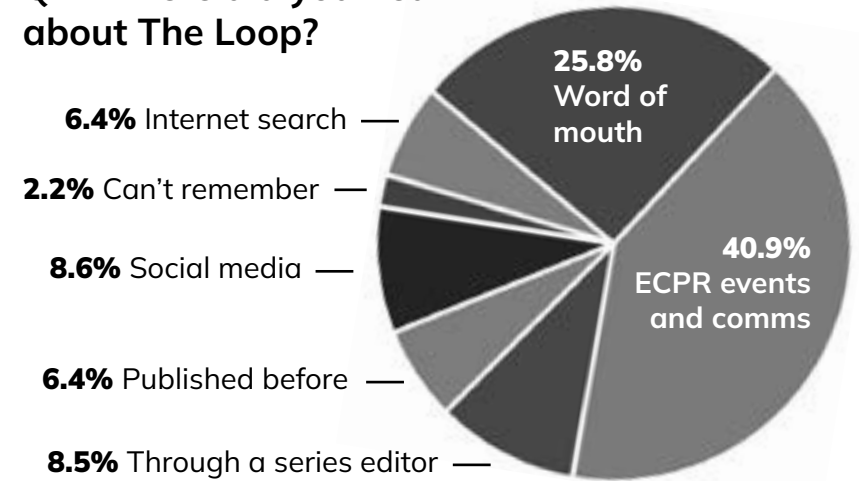
In 2025, 98% of contributors were satisfied or very satisfied with our editing; 2% up on 2024. And 92% of authors were satisfied or very satisfied with the speed of the process; a 1% rise on the previous year. A resounding 99% were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience – our highest-ever figure. And we are delighted to report that we regained our 100%-would-publish-again stat!

ECPR comms such as the website and Digest, and in-person events such as the annual ECPR General Conference, are the most common routes to finding The Loop. At 25.8%, the proportion of word-of-mouth recommendations is a couple of percentage points down on 2024, but remains a significant path to publication.

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

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
2021	80%	17.5%	1.5%	1%	
2022	82.5%	14.5%	2%	1%	
2023	79%	15%	5%	1%	
2024	68%	24%	4%	4%	
2025	60%	33%	5%	1%	1%
Mean %	73.9%	20.8%	3.5%	1.6%	0.2%

Q4: Where did you hear about The Loop?



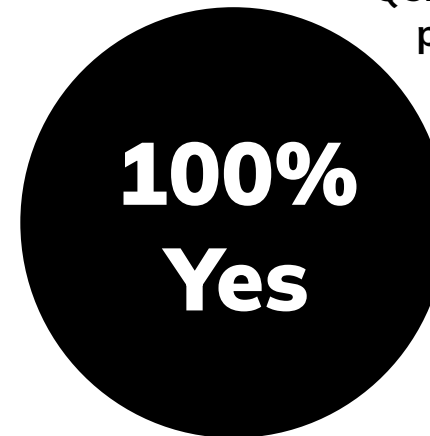
Q1: How satisfied were you with the editing of your blog piece?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
2021	81%	14%		4%	1%
2022	84%	15%	1%		
2023	84%	12%	1%	3%	
2024	74%	22%		1%	3%
2025	77%	21%	2%		
Mean %	80%	16.5%	1%	1.5%	1%

Q3: How would you rate your overall experience?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
2021	83%	11%	4%	1%	1%
2022	84%	12%	4%		
2023	84%	13%	2%	1%	
2024	75%	21%		4%	
2025	75.5%	23.5%	1%		
Mean %	80.3%	16.1%	2.2%	1.2%	0.2%

Q5: Would you publish with The Loop again?



“

The communication with the team was excellent... it has been a very pleasant experience.

2 June



“

Thank you to the editors for their swift, supportive assistance.

24 June



Such a professional and speedy process.

23 February



“

The process was very smooth and the team was very communicative. I will recommend The Loop to my friends and colleagues!

30 January

“

The editing quality was on a par with the highest standards

7 October



“

One of the best experiences... Team was so kind, the approach they have is so balanced

13 October



“

Thank you for the smooth editorial process and valuable feedback

17 November



“

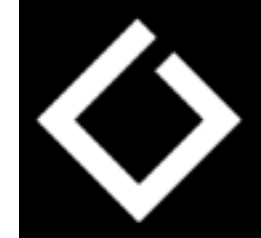
I found the whole process very transparent and professional

24 November





Email feedback



Ana Taranu 20 January

■ Thank you for all the insightful revisions!



Ruairidh Brown 23 June

■ I have been contacted about [my] Loop articles more than any other area of publication, from Scotland to India to Germany, and nearly always from people outside academia.



Mateusz Łabuz 16 July

■ Thank you very much, it was my pleasure to cooperate with you!



Michael Walsh 21 January

■ Thank you for all your hard work.



Esra Serim 1 July

■ Thank you very much for this opportunity again. Working with you has been amazing. Thanks again!



Magdalena Frennhoff Larsén 28 July

■ Many thanks for your great edits.



Elie Kallab 20 February

■ It's been a great experience contributing to the series, and I'll certainly be writing more in the future.



Roland Benedikter 2 July

■ The text has much gained by your help – I appreciate this a lot.



Stefan Messingschlager 18 August

■ It has been a pleasure working with you, and hopefully there will be an opportunity for future collaboration!



Süleyman Güngör 2 June

■ Thank you for your support during the publication of my blog post... Your assistance made the process smooth and was greatly appreciated.



Avery Gozu 16 July

■ Thanks again for the edits, they are incredibly helpful and the blog post looks great!



Tim Pires Alves 27 October

■ Thank you very much for the very smooth publication process!



Author spotlight

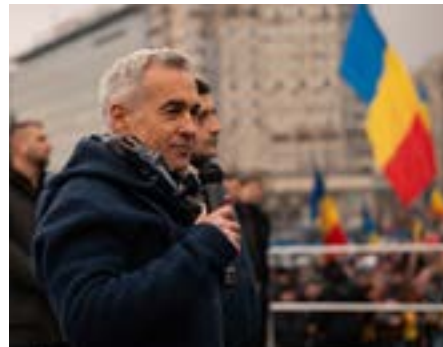
Mimi Mihăilescu

We first met Mimi when she booked in for Blog Bootcamp at the 2024 General Conference in Dublin. A self-described 'meme-ologist', her research dives deep into the messy spaces where internet culture and politics collide, from memes and online activism to the hidden dynamics of social media communities. Mimi's work examines how digital spaces amplify human behaviour, influence collective decision-making, and blur the lines between the personal and the political.

On that first meeting, Mimi described how another Conference attendee had trivialised her research field, believing it lightweight and inconsequential. She was not surprised to encounter such prejudice in the academy. But Mimi's [popular subsequent despatches](#) prove her field of enquiry is swiftly growing in salience, and there is plenty of appetite for such fare – within and outside academe.



Since that meeting, Mimi has become one of our most prolific contributors. At the time of writing, she has [published 13 pieces with The Loop](#) which, in total, have amassed more than 25,000 reads.



Many of Mimi's pieces deal with events in Eastern Europe, with a focus on her native Romania, though she has also published pieces on topics as varied as [Melania Trump](#), ['Dark MAGA'](#), [the Trump-Musk ego war](#), and [Charlie Kirk and the meme-ification of terror](#).

Her work has been longlisted twice, by two separate independent juries, for our Best Blog prize. First, in 2024, she made the cut for [How Călin Georgescu's TikTok tactics rewired Romanian politics](#) (this also went on to be [shortlisted for the prize](#)) and was longlisted again in 2025, for [The 'Dead Internet Theory' and the rise of synthetic politics](#).

Mimi's accessible, conversational writing style made her one of only two Loop blog pieces to be [picked up for republication by the prestigious EUObserver website](#). Her Loop blogs have even garnered her interviews with, among others, the [Wall Street Journal](#), [Al Jazeera](#), and BBC4's [The Media Show](#).

Our readers loved...

Mimi's top four most-read blog pieces:

6 Nov 2024 [How Dark MAGA memes are shaping radical belief systems](#)

12,208 reads

4 Mar 2025 [Elon Musk, Călin Georgescu and the Soros spectacle](#)

3,009 reads

28 Nov 2024 [How Călin Georgescu's TikTok tactics rewired Romanian politics](#)

1,757 reads

11 Nov 2025 [The 'Dead Internet Theory' and the rise of synthetic politics](#)

1,669 reads

Readership figures captured 20 April 2026



Talking to you at the Conference was the highlight of my experience, and the opportunity that followed meant a great deal to me... I have become a great spokesperson for The Loop, urging others to read and submit!

As an early-career researcher, those moments of encouragement really stay with you, and I've always appreciated how welcoming and supportive the whole process felt.



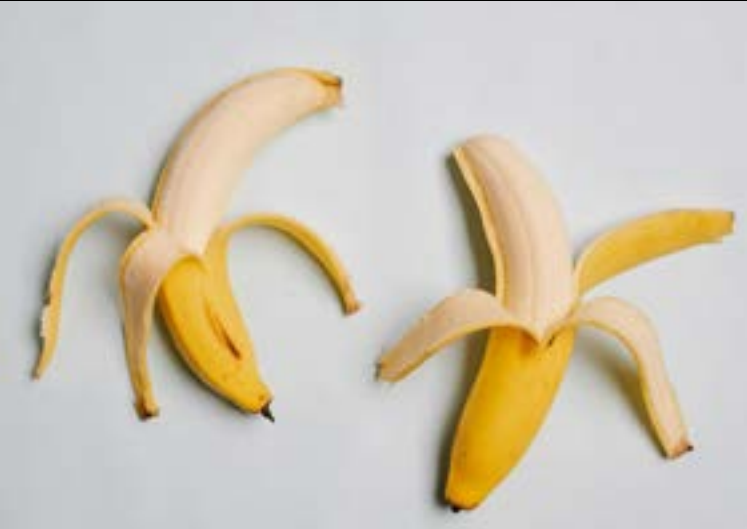
[@kagegirl.bsky.social](#)

“

A special thank you to the
@ECPR_TheLoop
for hosting my short essay
@maretadimitra, 29 September

“

Thanks to the great team
@ecprtheloop.bsky.social
for publishing my latest text!
@krycztof.bsky.social, 8 April



Special thanks to the
editors of **@ECPR_TheLoop** for their
swift and supportive
processing.

@x_shiqi, 26 June

“

Highly recommend publishing
quick, contemporary pieces
with **@ecprtheloop.bsky.social**
— always a great experience
and great editorial team!
@dmpullan.bsky.social, 13 June

It's a wrap for the
#genderingilliberalism series
hosted by **@ecprtheloop.bsky.social**. Thanks to the great
editors who brought this
series to light!

@alinadr.bsky.social, 18 August

“

It was a real pleasure to be
invited on to **@BBCNews** to
discuss the article Sara Tzinieris
and I wrote for **@ECPR_TheLoop**

@zoha_naser, 15 May

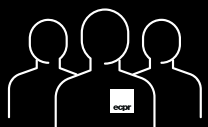




Headline statistics, 2025

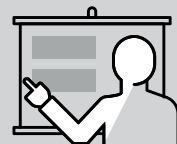
100%

authors would publish with The Loop again



299

published articles



47%

of authors were early career scholars



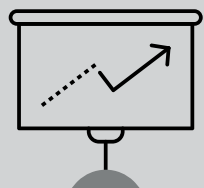
42

number of countries in which Loop authors were based

391



published authors

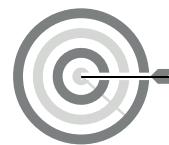


22.04 million

page impressions

2,505

followers on BlueSky at 31 December 2025 (and 4.9K on X)



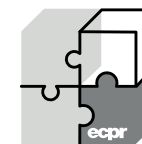
48%

female authors



15,025

page views of our most-read 2025 blog piece, at 31 December



57%

authors from ECPR member institutions