

# CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY RESEARCH

Welcome to the Centre for Democracy Research newsletter for summer 2025. It's been a busy year with staff changes, a wide selection of events, and updates from our affiliated projects.

If you are aware of any new or incoming colleagues, postdoctoral researchers or PhD students who might be interested in joining the CDR, please tell them to get in touch with us at [cdr@ucd.ie](mailto:cdr@ucd.ie)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Event support



We are delighted to be able to continue the event support scheme for which all CDR members are eligible to apply. A single claim can be up to **800 euro**. For events to be held in Trimester 1, the Steering Committee will consider applications until **12th September 2025**. Full details on the scheme and the application form are available via this [link](#)

### New Staff



Lorraine Marrey joined at end of 2024 as CDR administrator, Lorraine is the Project Manager for two CDR Affiliated projects: *ELECT* and *Democracy Challenged*. You can contact Lorraine at [cdr@ucd.ie](mailto:cdr@ucd.ie) with any queries and they will be passed on to the committee.

## EVENTS ROUND-UP

The Centre for Democracy Research was delighted to deliver a mixed programme of events in 2024/2025 which included public events and seminars. If you have any suggestions for topics or speakers for either public events or seminars please send them to us at [cdr@ucd.ie](mailto:cdr@ucd.ie)

### Inside US Elections

**PUBLIC EVENT // OCTOBER 2024**

Attendees were addressed with insights on the upcoming US elections from **Biko Koenig** (*Franklin and Marshall College*) and **Shane Greer** (*Campaigns and Elections magazine*).



## Inside General Election

PUBLIC EVENT // NOVEMBER 2024

Just ahead of the Irish general election a panel of **Eoghan Murphy** (*former Housing Minister and OSCE Election Monitor*), **Mary Regan** (*RTE*), **Deirdre Grant** (*Red Flag*), **Margaret Ward** (*OSCE Election Monitor*), hosted by **Bryan Dobson** (*formerly RTE*) discussed the big issues of General Election 2024.



## Independents in politics and Government - a good development?

PUBLIC EVENT // MARCH 2025

A panel of experts including **Sean Defoe**, (*Newstalk*); **Finian McGrath** (*Minister of State in the 2016-2020 minority Government*); **Brian Murphy** (*Chief of Staff in the 2016-2020 minority Government*); **Sandra Hurley** (*RTE*) spoke in front of a large audience about how Independents are playing a greater role in the Irish government than ever before, and whether this was a positive development for the country.



## Rethinking currency internationalisation: Offshore euro creation and the EU's international monetary governance

SEMINAR // DECEMBER 2024



Events for 2024 were rounded off with a seminar on rethinking currency internationalisation from Jens van t'Klooster, Assistant Professor of Political Economy at the University of Amsterdam's Department of Political Science.

## Affective polarization and citizens' views of political discrimination

SEMINAR // MARCH 2025



A seminar from Markus Wagner, Professor, Department of Government, University of Vienna. The talk examined the extent to which people feel that they are treated unfairly due to their political stances and partisan affiliation.

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## AFFILIATED PROJECTS UPDATES

### Moral Agency in Election Campaigns (ELECT)

The ELECT project is in its second year and much of the fieldwork is close to completion. In collaboration with YouGov, the team has successfully conducted a survey of over 5,000 citizens in Germany, Italy, the UK and the US concerning citizens' attitudes towards democratic norms in election campaigns. Since January, the team has been dispersed across these four countries, doing in-person surveys and interviews with national election candidates, political professionals and journalists, attempting to understand their attitudes towards democratic norms in election campaigns. The team is excited to analyse our data and begin executing our publication plan in the coming year.

A big congratulations to our team member Leonardo Puleo, who has secured his own research funding to work on illiberalism and party competition at the Université Libre de Bruxelles. Leonardo will remain closely affiliated with the ELECT project going forward. In September, ELECT will welcome a new postdoctoral researcher to the team.



## Democracy Challenged

Since its launch in September 2024, Professor Aidan Regan's ERC-funded Democracy Challenged project has made significant progress in exposing how global profit-shifting and corporate tax avoidance fuel the wealth inequalities that undermine democracy. Our interdisciplinary team - spanning political science, economics, law, and data science - is conducting forensic investigations into multi-jurisdictional corporate groups (MJGs), particularly in Big Tech and Big Pharma, where intellectual property is central to tax avoidance and wealth concentration.

We have developed a detailed public-facing blog [democracychallenged.com/blog](https://democracychallenged.com/blog), where we publish in-depth investigations into global tax structures and democratic erosion. Our research was recently featured in a series of detailed articles in The Business Post, which can be accessed [here](#).

The project's [working paper series](#) is now live, showcasing our academic outputs and ongoing research. We have also hosted several public events, including a high-profile conference at the Royal Irish Academy featuring Gabriel Zucman and the EU Tax Observatory ([see events](#)).

Looking ahead, we are working on multiple research papers and continuing detailed forensic accounting investigations into specific Big Tech and Big Pharma groups. Our team is also engaged in fieldwork, EU policy engagement, and presenting findings at major academic conferences over the summer, including the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics (SASE).

## The Irish Polling Indicator

The Irish Polling Indicator (IPI), Ireland's leading polling aggregator, has received significant media attention over the past year. The IPI featured prominently in [five weekly data-driven articles](#) for the RTÉ News website in the run-up to the 2024 general election. The articles focused on turnout, incumbency advantage, public opinion, and vote transfers and were widely cited by major news organisations and political commentators. The IPI was [highly accurate](#) in predicting the 2024 general election. On average, the election results deviated by less than 0.6 percentage points from the aggregated estimate.

Maintainer Stefan Müller has appeared on multiple television and radio programmes in Ireland and abroad to discuss public opinion trends and electoral developments.

The Polling Indicator's influence has grown across the media landscape, with The Guardian and BreakingNews.ie launching their own poll trackers based on IPI data. Recently, a new dataset was released, compiling all polling results and aggregated estimates from 1987 to 2024.

**Website:** <https://pollingindicator.com>

**Dataset:** Tom Louwerse and Stefan Müller. 2025. Irish Polling Indicator Datasets: Stable Version (1987–2024). Harvard Dataverse. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/8YVVYX>

**Data-driven articles for RTÉ News:** <https://www.rte.ie/author/1478574-stefan-muller/>