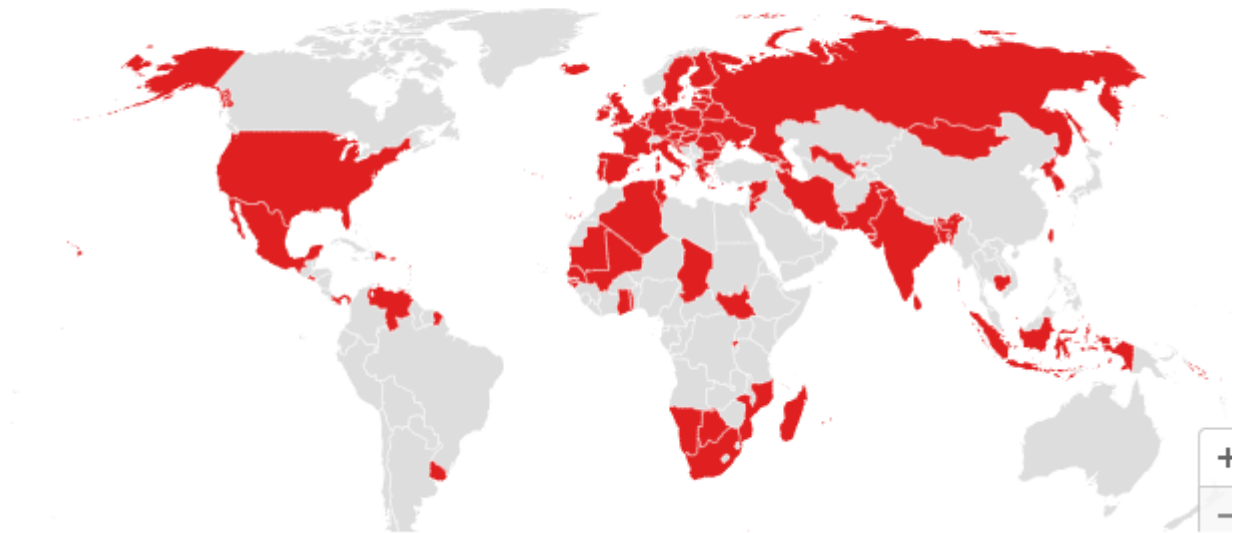


## AROUND THE WORLD

### 2024: The Ultimate Election Year Around the World

National elections are scheduled or expected in at least 64 countries, as well as the European Union, which all together represent almost half the global population.



See <https://time.com/6550920/world-elections-2024/>

### Text 1 - A Make-or-Break Year for Democracy Worldwide

BY [ASTHA RAJVANSHI](#) AND [YASMEEN SERHAN](#)

*TIME*, UPDATED: JANUARY 10, 2024

**E**lections are no guarantee of democracy. That much we know from who holds them. Even full-blown tyrants crave the legitimacy that, in the modern era, can be provided only by the ballot box—margins of victory doubling as one more tool of intimidation.

But it's also true that democracy does not exist without elections, which is why the year ahead carries such significance. In 2024, more than half the world's population will go to polls—4.2 billion citizens across approximately 65 countries in what, from a distance, at least appears to be a stirring spectacle of self-government. At closer range, however, the picture is cloudier, and warning lights flash red from the murk.

“2024 may be the make-or-break year for democracy in the world,” says Staffan Lindberg, the director of the Varieties of Democracy, or V-Dem, Institute, a Swedish think tank that analyzes the “complexity of the concept of democracy.”

Lindberg says that more than the sheer number of elections, or the fact that many of the countries holding them have global influence, the worry is that “so many have now empowered leaders or parties with antidemocratic leanings.”

Around the world, including in some of the biggest and most influential countries, experts have observed that the space for political competition and civil society is shrinking. At the same time, elected but illiberal leaders are cracking down on opponents and critics, eroding democratic institutions like the judiciary and the media that serve as a check on their power, and, finally, consolidating that power through changes in the constitution. When the leader next stands for office, it's in an election that may ostensibly be free but is no longer fair.

20 The process is already well along in much of the world. Of the 43 countries expected to hold free and fair elections this electoral megacycle, 28 do not actually meet the essential conditions for a democratic vote, according to the Democracy Index from the Economist's Intelligence Unit. And eight of the 10 most populous countries in the world, including India, Mexico, and the U.S.—all of which head to the polls this year—are grappling with the challenge of ensuring voter participation, free speech, and electoral independence while authoritarianism is on the rise.

25 “What does it mean to have a free and fair election? Is it possible to have a free but unfair election? And how unfair does it have to be to no longer be democratic?” asks Yana Gorokhovskaia, a research director at Freedom House who oversees the pro-democracy think tank's annual “Freedom in the World” report, the latest edition of which recorded a 17th consecutive year of global decline.

## TEXT 2 -2024 brings wave of elections with global democracy on the ballot

Analysis by [Ishaan Tharoor](#), Columnist, *The Washington Post*, January 3, 2024

More than 60 countries, with some 4 billion people, are set to stage national elections in 2024. That means roughly half the planet could go to the polls in what could be the greatest rolling spectacle of democracy in 5 human history.

We might not see this number of elections matched until 2048, when the world's political landscape could look considerably different. The “third wave” of democracy — the steady global expansion of democratic governments that surged through the end of the Cold War — has ebbed over the past decade. Elections are still staged, but the underlying political culture seems to be shifting worldwide.

In society after society, illiberal values and 15 politicians who embrace them are gaining ground. Numerous elected governments seem bent on undermining core tenets of the democratic project, from the freedom of the press to the independence of institutions such as the judiciary to the ability of 20 opposition parties to fairly compete against the ruling establishment.

According to Freedom House, a Washington think tank that monitors the health of democracies, global freedom declined for the 17th consecutive year in 2023. 25 The organization's annual report cites a wave of coups that ousted elected leaders in Africa and increasing threats to the rights of journalists in dozens of countries. Separately, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, a Sweden-based 30 intergovernmental watchdog, said in its annual report that “across every region of the world, democracy has continued to contract” and that 2022 marked a sixth consecutive year in which more countries experienced net democratic declines than 35 improvements, per its data. It projects that 2023 will be no better.

The news this year could be more drastic still. The outcomes of pivotal elections in the United States — the

world's oldest democracy — and India — the world's 40 largest — may underscore a deepening public appetite for norm-bending strongman rule. In their shadow, elections from Mexico to the European Union to Bangladesh may each offer their own showcase of the growing traction of nationalist, authoritarian politics. 45 “We're electing illiberal leaders democratically.” Maria Ressa, a prominent journalist and Nobel laureate from the Philippines, said during an address to the National Press Club in Washington in September. “We will know whether democracy lives or dies by the end of 2024.” 50 Here's a brief, and hardly comprehensive, rundown of some of the elections to watch in the coming months.

### United States

The U.S. presidential cycle will justifiably command global attention. No matter his mounting legal 55 headaches, former president Donald Trump appears poised to win the Republican presidential nomination at a canter. He would face President Biden in a presidential vote in November.

His party's base is falling in lockstep, and many of 60 his party's lawmakers are either staunch Trump loyalists or too wary of harming their own political fortunes by defying him. A new joint Washington Post-University of Maryland poll found that Republican voters are more sympathetic to those who stormed the 65 U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, than they were almost three years ago, while more than a third of Americans say President Biden's 2020 election win was illegitimate, no matter the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. (...)

70 Trump's purveying the “big lie” of 2020 electoral fraud appears to be good politics — as does vowing to pursue immediate retribution if elected against a host of perceived enemies, from Democratic lawmakers to undocumented migrants. Opinion polls of potential 75 Iowa caucuses voters found that the prospect of locking up Trump's political opponents made close to a fifth of

those surveyed more likely to vote for him. Parallel to this is heightened risk of political violence, with some Trump supporters openly voicing willingness to take up 80 arms in his name, as they did in 2021.

The toxicity of the moment has spiraling effects for Americans. “Democratic deliberation, but also compromise and coalition-building have become more difficult.” Britain’s Chatham House think tank noted 85 last month. “Efforts to reduce income inequality have so far failed, and data in the swing states suggests this is worse than ever, according to the Federal Reserve’s recent Survey of Consumer Finances. This is the context in which the 2024 elections are unfolding.”

## 90 Europe

A similar sense of crisis roils European politics. The far right’s steady capture of the political mainstream, fueled by public angst over migration and stagnating economies, may see its crowning moment in E.U. 95 parliamentary elections in June.

“It is entirely possible that the various forces of the far right could emerge as the single biggest bloc,” John Kampfner wrote in Foreign Policy. “This might not lead to a change in the composition of the European 100 Commission (the diminished mainstream groupings would still collectively hold a majority), but any such extremist upsurge will change the overall dynamics across Europe.”

Either in coalition or at the head of a ruling bloc, the 105 far right also appears set to come to power in Portugal in March and Austria in June. In Germany, Europe’s economic engine, the surging far right could clinch unprecedented victories in a handful of state elections. Britain’s floundering Conservatives, meanwhile, 110 have made migrants a punching bag in a desperate bid to stave off what seems an imminent electoral defeat this year to the opposition Labour Party, led by Keir Starmer, a political moderate. The vote is not yet scheduled.

## 115 Bangladesh

Away from the West, other major ballots show the perilous state of various democracies. Elections this weekend in Bangladesh will extend the mandate of long-ruling Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who critics 120 say has turned the country into a de facto one-party state.

## India

Next door in India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Hindu nationalists are likely to deepen their 125 stranglehold on power in national elections, expected to be held in April and May, through its dominance in north and central India. A fresh five-year term for Modi will further drift the Indian republic away from the pluralist and secular ethos of its founding.

## 130 South Africa

The long-entrenched African National Congress faces its toughest test yet from the opposition, in elections that have not yet been scheduled, amid broader voter disenchantment and frustrations with the country’s post-135 apartheid democracy. Nearly three-fourths of South Africans in a recent poll said they were willing to sacrifice their democracy if a leader could deliver jobs and reduce crime.

## Other key elections

140 The stakes are different elsewhere: Elections in Indonesia in February and Mexico in June could see term-limited outgoing presidents extend their influence through friendly successors, much to the chagrin of rival political elites. And Pakistan, plunged 145 in a rolling political crisis since the 2022 ouster (and later arrest) of populist Prime Minister Imran Khan, is trying to turn the page with elections in February, though Khan’s faction remains outraged over alleged attempts to stack the vote against them.

150 The regime of President Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela is expected to hold elections this year, after negotiations with the country’s beleaguered opposition. It’s unclear how free or fair they will be. In Ukraine, presidential elections are supposed to be held at the end of March, 155 but the ongoing emergency imposed by Russia’s invasion may see President Volodymyr Zelensky postpone the vote.

In Taiwan, which holds elections this month, a victory for the ruling Democratic Progressive Party is expected 160 to inflate the possibility of Chinese military escalation over the straits — something that has been highlighted by the opposition Kuomintang, which is friendlier toward Beijing. Whatever the outcome, observed the Guardian’s Simon Tisdall, the vote “will provide a 165 valuable demonstration of how highly democracy is still valued — when a determined people are allowed a real choice amid fierce external pressures.”

## See also:

- **Democracy's Super Bowl: 40 elections that will shape global politics in 2024**

From Russia to South Africa, India to the US, the coming year's contests could embolden dictators or revitalise democracies

[Simon Tisdall](#), *The Guardian*, Sun 17 Dec 2023

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/dec/17/democracys-super-bowl-40-elections-that-will-shape-global-politics-in-2024>

- [The World Ahead](#) | **Graphic detail - 2024 is the biggest election year in history**

A very good and thorough infographic document

<https://www.economist.com/interactive/the-world-ahead/2023/11/13/2024-is-the-biggest-election-year-in-history>

- **A radio programme 2024 is the year of the ballot box, NPR, JANUARY 3, 2024**

<https://www.npr.org/2024/01/03/1198909517/1a-draft-01-03-2024>

## IN EUROPE

### TEXT 3 - Shaping the future: What's at stake in the 2024 EU elections?

*The upcoming European elections – considered the largest transnational vote in the world – are poised to bring about shifts in policies and leadership that will reverberate across the continent. RFI takes a look at what's at stake.*

By: [David Coffey](#), RFI, Jan 12, 2024

From 6 to 9 June this year, more than 400 million European voters will choose a new five-year parliament. Elections in the European Union's 27 member states will decide the make-up of the roughly 700-seat assembly, 5 charged with overseeing European legislation.

The Strasbourg-based parliament will also confirm the appointment of Brussels' top officials, including the president of the European Commission.

The EU's last election was held in 2019, with member 10 states choosing a polling day according to their national traditions.

The Netherlands, for example, votes on a Thursday, Malta on a Saturday and France on Sunday.

This year's vote will be the first European election 15 without British candidates, the UK having officially left the EU in 2020.

#### **Balancing the budget**

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has said she won't run as an MEP, but is nonetheless 20 expected to seek a second term as head of the Commission – and is likely to retain the backing of centre-right MEPs and key member states if she does.

Whether von der Leyen remains in post or not, the introduction of new policy priorities by the European 25 Council and Parliament – alongside the appointment of

new commissioners – will inevitably reshape the political agenda.

The shift comes against the backdrop of crucial issues for Europe and the world, including the war in Ukraine, 30 the Israel-Hamas conflict, the green transition and economic challenges.

The EU is grappling with the aftermath of borrowing approximately €807 billion over the past four years to mitigate the economic and social impact of the Covid- 35 19 pandemic.

The extension of EU foreign policy actions – such as providing aid and managing migration in conflict zones like Ukraine and southern European states – is expected to pressure the bloc to disburse an additional €70 billion 40 in 2024.

As the EU budget comes under scrutiny, the bloc is seeking to revive pre-Covid fiscal rules designed to contain debt and deficits, typically a touchy issue among member states.

45 Decisions on these matters rest in the hands of EU finance ministers and a compromise of sorts was reached in December, when ministers agreed to maintain limits on how much governments can go into the red while giving them more time and flexibility to 50 bring their spending down.

The European Parliament has to sign off on the proposal before it can become law, which its proponents are hoping will happen before the elections in June.

### **Top issues for Europe**

55 Aside from public spending, incoming MEPs and EU commissioners will have plenty to tackle.

Energy and climate policy

In the wake of the recent Cop28 climate conference in Dubai, the EU is under pressure to reinforce its  
60 commitment to sustainable practices and a green transition.

### **Geopolitics**

With the war in Ukraine showing no sign of ending and the Israel-Hamas conflict threatening both regional and  
65 international security, key geopolitical concerns – including relations with China, the United States, Russia and the African continent – will demand strategic attention from the EU's incoming leadership.

### **EU expansion**

70 Progress has been made on the contentious issue of integrating states from the Western Balkans, notably Albania and North Macedonia. But relations between Serbia and Kosovo remain strained and Bosnia and Herzegovina also has urgent internal issues to address  
75 before it can join the bloc.

### **Security**

Emphasis will be placed on security, defence, cybersecurity, data protection and telecommunications. The spike in hostilities between Israel and its  
80 neighbours over the conflict in Gaza has also raised the spectre of radicalisation and Islamist terrorist attacks within the European Union.

### **Artificial intelligence**

As technology advances, regulations surrounding  
85 artificial intelligence will likely be on the agenda to balance innovation with ethical considerations. The EU has already positioned itself as the benchmark legislator for regulating AI development.

### **EU competitiveness**

90 The new Commission will face pressure on issues related to industry, infrastructure, regulations, workforce skills, investments, technology, trade, innovation and the overall economy.

### **Economic security**

95 Addressing capital markets, health and economic security will be critical to ensure the resilience of the European economy.

### **Tax regulation and workers' rights**

The EU leadership is likely to address tax regulations,  
100 workers' rights and income distribution, responding to the evolving needs of the European workforce.

### **Trade disputes**

Within the framework of the World Trade Organization, efforts to resolve multilateral trade disputes are  
105 anticipated to be a priority.

### **Shifting sands**

Amidst these challenges, political landscapes across Europe have shifted in the five years since the last EU elections.

110 The centrist European People's Party (EPP) – to which von der Leyen belongs – faces historic weakening within the European Council, but her candidacy remains a prominent and popular option for EU heads of state and governments.

115 Meanwhile, like some member states' assemblies, the European Parliament is expected to shift to the right in the June elections.

While the EPP is likely to maintain its position, smaller member states may be key in shaking up the status quo.

120 Predictions suggest a challenging environment for the centre-left. French President Emmanuel Macron's centrist Renaissance party is losing ground in France and the Greens are facing similar challenges in Germany.

125 Potential outcomes range from a far-right Europe to a conservative coalition; a green and centre-right alliance; or a continuation of the existing centre-left and centre-right coalition.

Whatever the outcome, the 2024 European elections  
130 will reshape Europe's politics, policies and leadership.

## TEXT 4 - Why are younger voters flocking to the far right in parts of Europe?

Jon Henley and Piotr Sauer in Volendam, *The Guardian*, Fri 1 Dec 2023

Lunching on a tuna sandwich in the central market of Volendam, a picturesque fishing port north of Amsterdam, Gerald, 24, was lucid about his choice in last week's Dutch election. "I voted for Wilders, and many of my friends did too," he said. "I don't want to live with my parents for ever. I want my own home, and to be able to provide for my family later on. Wilders wants to figure out the housing crisis, and make our healthcare better. Those are the most important topics for me."

If everyone who voted in the election had been aged under 35, Geert Wilders, the far-right populist whose Party for Freedom (PVV) shocked Europe by winning the most parliamentary seats, would have won even more.

In last year's French presidential runoff, Marine Le Pen won 39% of votes from people aged 18-24 and 49% of those aged 25-34. Before Italy's election in September last year, Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy was the largest party among under-35s, on 22%.

Across the continent, the image of the radical-right voter – typically white, male, non-graduate and, above all, old – is changing, and studies suggest that in several countries, support for the far right is growing fastest among younger voters. Several factors may explain the phenomenon, analysts say. "We really should be careful about assuming a cultural or ideological alignment between young voters and the far right," said Catherine de Vries, a political scientist at Italy's Bocconi university. "We know in many countries young people are more pro-immigration than older voters. They have not become xenophobic. But their lives are more precarious. These are often votes for what in this Dutch election was called 'livelihood security'."

The Dutch word *bestaanszekerheid* translates roughly as an existence with a sufficient and predictable income, a satisfactory home, adequate access to education and healthcare, and a cushion against unexpected eventualities. Issues such as housing, overcrowded classes and struggling hospitals were key to the youth vote, De Vries said. "Wilders may want 'Dutch people first' but he promises to fix these things," she said. "The government parties imposed austerity."

In Volendam, where the PVV won 42.9% of the vote, that was Gerald's point. "Younger people, the woke ones from the big cities, care about the climate and gender stuff but they are ignoring the real problems that we have here and now," he said. "I am not a racist because I voted for Wilders. It frustrates me that migrants receive more help from the government than Dutch people – but I'm not against Islam; I don't want mosques closed. I just think we need to control immigration better." (...)

Far-right parties are not the preferred option – or even second choice – for younger voters everywhere in Europe, analysts caution. The trend appears strongest in countries such as Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark.

Pawel Zerka, a senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, said: "It's a different story in eastern Europe, and often in the south. But it's certainly the case that far-right parties are attracting a lot of support among younger voters." (...)

Zerka also identified economic insecurity as the most significant factor. "Young voters haven't moved rightwards on migration, abortion, minority rights," he said. "Far-right parties have convinced them that they offer a credible economic alternative."

Other factors include some far-right parties "managing to position themselves as a 'cool' electoral option", Zerka said. "They are increasingly offering younger voters equally young, often charismatic politicians – people who speak their language."

Jordan Bardella, the president of France's National Rally (RN), for example, was only 23 when he led the party's successful 2019 European election campaign, and 27 when he succeeded Le Pen as the far-right party's official leader last year.

Zerka also cites far-right parties' social media skills: Spain's Vox has a particularly slick operation, and Sławomir Mentzen, the 37-year-old leader of Poland's ultra-liberal far-right Konfederacja (Confederation) party, has 800,000 followers on TikTok.

Several far-right parties have also proposed specific policy initiatives to attract younger voters: Le Pen's 2022 manifesto promised to scrap taxes for the under-30s, provide financial assistance to student workers and boost student housing.

And finally, said De Vries, there was "simply, normalisation. For many of these young voters, far-right parties have been part of the political landscape their whole lives. They've grown up with them. There's not the stigmatisation there once was."

## Text 5 - General election: When is the next one and who decides?

### BBC News, 16 January 2024

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has said he expects to call a general election "in the second half" of 2024.

There had been speculation it could be held in May, when some local elections take place.

#### ●When is the next general election due?

The latest a Parliament can be dissolved for a general election is on the fifth anniversary of the day it first met.

For the current Parliament, that date is 17 December 2024.

However, 25 working days are then allowed to prepare for the election.

That means the next election must be held by 28 January 2025.

#### ●Who decides when an election takes place?

The prime minister decides, but this has not always been the case.

In 2011, legislation removed the PM's power to choose the date of an election, and instead gave control to the House of Commons.

Under those rules, an early election before the end of the five-year term could only be held under certain circumstances - such as if two-thirds of MPs agreed.

However, after winning the 2019 election, the Conservatives introduced the Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Act 2022. This restored the PM's power to call a general election at a time of their choosing, within the five-year period.

#### ●How does the PM call a general election?

The PM formally asks the King to "dissolve" Parliament - the official term for closing Parliament ahead of an election.

The poll generally takes place 25 days later.

At the point of dissolution, MPs lose their status, and have to campaign for re-election if they wish to carry on. Some MPs choose to stand down.

Government also enters a pre-election period - previously known as "purdah" - which restricts ministerial and departmental activity during the campaign.

#### ●How is the general election decided?

The UK is divided into 650 areas, called constituencies. Each one elects an MP to represent its residents in the House of Commons in London.

On election day, registered voters in each constituency vote for their preferred candidate in their local polling station. Some people vote by post in advance.

Most candidates represent a specific political party but some stand as independents.

In a general election, each person has one vote. Under the "first past the post" system, the candidate who gets the most votes becomes the MP for that area.

After the votes have been counted, the King asks the leader of the party with the most MPs to become prime minister and to form a government.

The leader of the party with the second highest number of MPs becomes the leader of the opposition.

If no party ends up with a majority of MPs - meaning it cannot pass legislation with just its own MPs - the result is a hung Parliament. At this point, the largest party might form a coalition government with another party. Under this arrangement, MPs from both parties serve as government ministers.

Alternatively, it can form a minority government, filling all the ministerial roles with its own MPs but relying on votes from other parties to pass any laws.

#### ●Who can vote in a general election?

Anyone on the electoral register aged 18 or above on polling day has a vote as long as they are:

- a British citizen, a qualifying Commonwealth citizen or a Republic of Ireland citizen with a UK address
- all UK citizens who live abroad can now register to vote in the constituency where they were previously on the electoral roll
- not legally excluded from voting

You can register to vote at any time if you are 16 or over - or 14 or over in Scotland.

## TEXT 6 - The fear of a looming Trump dictatorship

Analysis by [Ishaan Tharoor](#), Columnist, December 4, 2023

Former congresswoman Liz Cheney of Wyoming is the poster child of a Republican establishment abandoned by the party's far-right base. Now, she's billboarding what may come next: In an interview with CBS aired Sunday, Cheney lamented the extent to which the Republican Party had been "co-opted" by Trumpism and said she feared the potential of a vengeful Trump presidency in 2025.

"One of the things that we see happening today is a sort of a sleepwalking into dictatorship in the United States," Cheney said.

Cheney's refusal to accept former president Donald Trump's false claims that the 2020 election had been stolen from him — and her decision to publicly rebuke Trump for his role in stoking the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol riot — got her ostracized from the GOP and cost her the House seat. She has spent the months since campaigning against his potential reelection, to little avail. Trump is the heavy favorite to emerge as the Republican presidential nominee, no matter the slew of legal cases against him and even the prospect of imprisonment.

In her CBS interview, Cheney said a Trump victory could mark the end of the American republic. "He's told us what he will do," she said. "It's very easy to see the steps that he will take."

**This isn't mere hyperbole.** As my colleagues have reported over the past year, Trump has made clear his stark, authoritarian vision for a potential second term. He would embark on a wholesale purge of the federal bureaucracy, weaponize the Justice Department to explicitly go after his political opponents (something he claims is being done to him), stack government agencies across the board with political appointees prescreened as ideological Trump loyalists, and dole out pardons to myriad officials and apparatchiks as incentives to do his bidding or stay loyal.

In election rallies, Trump has vowed punitive action on all perceived enemies. "I am your retribution," he told supporters at one event. In another, he promised to "root out the Communists, Marxists, fascists, and the radical-left thugs that live like vermin within the confines of our country, that lie and steal and cheat on elections."

Scholars of 20th-century fascism are less than impressed. "Trump is also using projection: note that he mentions all kinds of authoritarians — communists, Marxists, fascists and the radical left — to set himself up as the deliverer of freedom," Ruth Ben-Ghiat, a historian at New York University, told The Washington Post last month. "Mussolini promised freedom to his people too and then declared dictatorship."

Jennifer Mercieca, a historian of American political rhetoric at Texas A&M University, underscored the point over the weekend after Trump cast President Biden at an Iowa rally as "the destroyer of American democracy." "Trump's Iowa speech continues his use of fascist rhetoric: it's us versus them, he tells his supporters, and 'they' are enemies who cheat," Mercieca told my colleagues. "Authoritarians have a lot of rhetorical tricks for explaining away anti-democratic actions as actually 'democratic.'"





45 **Some commentators are looking squarely at Trump and Trumpism as a direct existential threat to the future of U.S. democracy.** In a widely circulated opinion essay for The Post, Robert Kagan charted how, “in just a few years, we have gone from being relatively secure in our democracy to being a few short steps, and a matter of months, away from the possibility of dictatorship.”

Kagan sees a scenario where Trump’s mounting legal challenges galvanize his push for power, rather than check his rise. “Indicting Trump for trying to overthrow the government will prove akin to indicting Caesar for crossing the Rubicon, and just as effective,” he wrote. “Like Caesar, Trump wields a clout that transcends the laws and institutions of government, based on the unswerving personal loyalty of his army of followers.”

50 Share this article No subscription required to read Share

Not for nothing have a bevy of Trump-inclined, right-wing intellectuals floated the idea of “Caesarism” — an embrace of a strongman to flush out the perceived weaknesses and failures of the republic — as a necessary political solution for the moment. In Kagan’s view, the institutional checks and balances of the United States are failing to arrest this authoritarian drift.

55 In the event of a return to the White House, Trump and his allies have already said they would marshal more executive power than his predecessors. A Trump election victory could also boost Republican congressional control, and many members of the GOP seem content to march in lockstep with Trump. Then there are the courts, which the former president stacked with a huge number of loyalists.

60 “A conservative litigant can guarantee a sympathetic judge by filing their lawsuit in a federal court in Texas, where a handful of hard-right judges have exclusive control over the docket,” noted the New Republic’s Matt Ford. “From there they go on to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, where conservatives have a clear majority — Trump alone appointed almost half of its members. And then the last stop is the Supreme Court, where half of the conservative supermajority are also Trump appointees.”

65 **Among traditional allies of the United States, there’s no shortage of trepidation over what might be around the corner.** “Whoever comes to the White House, one case would be a catastrophe, the other case would be much better,” German defense minister Boris Pistorius told reporters last week.

But while European policymakers are fretting about Trumpist disturbances to transatlantic ties, the future of the NATO alliance and U.S. support for the war in Ukraine, they are more circumspect about the threat to American democracy itself. Far-right movements are in the ascendant in many countries in Europe, including Germany, but the continent’s parliamentary structures may restrain them more effectively than an anachronistic U.S. system that seems primed to usher in minority rule.

70

“The Trump dictatorship will not be a communist tyranny, where almost everyone feels the oppression and has their lives shaped by it,” wrote Kagan. “In conservative, anti-liberal tyrannies, ordinary people face all kinds of limitations on their freedoms, but it is a problem for them only to the degree that they value those freedoms, and many people do not.”

75

Indeed, as my colleague Philip Bump observed last month, recent polling shows considerable numbers of Americans, and a plurality among right-wingers, endorse the idea that the country needs a strong leader who may bend the rules. “For many Americans, a turn toward authoritarianism isn’t seen as a negative,” Bump wrote. “Many Americans support that idea.”

## TEXT 7 - La démocratie, enjeu du scrutin américain de novembre 2024

**ÉDITORIAL, Le Monde, 6 janvier 2024** Trois ans après, le traumatisme de l’assaut du Capitole par les partisans de Donald Trump, le 6 janvier 2021, continue de marquer le paysage politique et pèse sur la campagne électorale pour le scrutin présidentiel américain du 5 novembre.

A la veille de cet anniversaire, vendredi 5 janvier, le président Joe Biden a donné un puissant coup d’envoi à son nouveau duel électoral avec Donald Trump en présentant le scrutin à venir comme un test pour la survie de la démocratie aux Etats-Unis. Dans un discours passionné aux accents visionnaires, le président démocrate a très clairement posé l’alternative qui, selon lui, s’offrira à l’automne aux électeurs : le maintien du régime démocratique aux Etats-Unis ou le chaos politique.

Quelques minutes plus tard, la Cour suprême fédérale faisait savoir qu’elle examinerait la question de l’inéligibilité de Donald Trump à partir de février. Cette question est posée depuis la décision de deux Cours suprêmes d’Etats fédérés,

le Colorado et le Maine, qui considèrent que, en vertu du 14<sup>e</sup> amendement de la Constitution, interdisant la fonction publique aux citoyens ayant participé à une insurrection, l'ancien président ne peut pas se présenter à l'élection du 5 novembre. Des procédures similaires visant à empêcher M. Trump d'être candidat ont été déposées devant les Cours suprêmes de plus de trente autres Etats.

### Décision à haut risque

Il était donc urgent que la Cour suprême fédérale, devant laquelle l'ancien président républicain a fait appel de la décision de la Cour du Colorado, se prononce sur cette question, alors que s'ouvre la saison des élections primaires au sein des partis. Pour la plus haute juridiction du pays, dont trois des neuf juges ont été nommés par Donald Trump, c'est une décision à haut risque : on ne peut pas exclure que, en cas de jugement confirmant que le 14<sup>e</sup> amendement s'applique à la candidature de l'ex-président républicain, ses partisans aient de nouveau recours à la violence et mettent en cause la légitimité de la Cour. Autre danger : une décision prise par une trop courte majorité des neuf juges, révélatrice de la division de la Cour suprême, aggraverait la polarisation du pays.

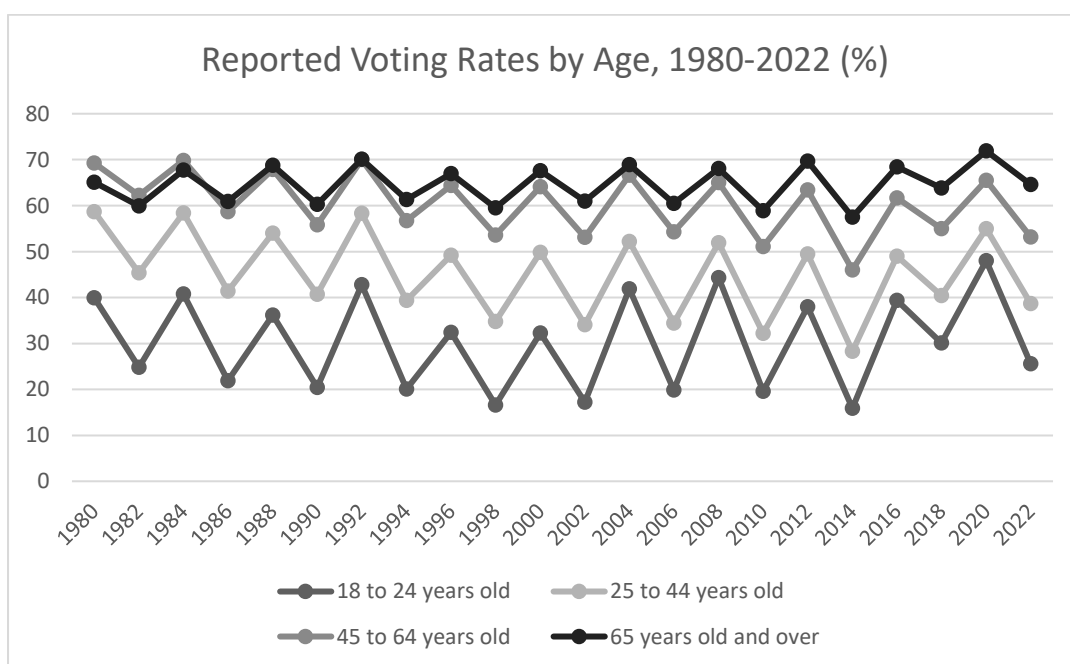
Actuellement donné favori par les sondages, Donald Trump, qui continue de contester le résultat de l'élection de 2020, ne fait aucun mystère de son soutien aux émeutiers du 6 janvier 2021. Il rend régulièrement hommage à ceux d'entre eux qui ont été condamnés par la justice à des peines de prison et qu'il qualifie d'« *otages* » ou de « *prisonniers politiques* ».

Joe Biden, qui a déjà fait savoir qu'il était candidat à un second mandat malgré son âge (81 ans) essentiellement pour faire barrage à Donald Trump, a donc décidé de présenter l'enjeu de cette élection en termes existentiels pour la démocratie aux Etats-Unis. Vendredi, il avait choisi pour cadre de son discours un lieu symbolique : Valley Forge, en Pennsylvanie, où George Washington, accompagné de La Fayette, avait installé ses troupes pendant l'hiver 1777 pour résister aux Britanniques.

La démocratie américaine, averti le président, ne résistera pas aux nouveaux assauts de Donald Trump et à la « *violence politique* » qu'il encourage. « *Nous savons tous qui est Donald Trump, a-t-il dit. La question qui se pose est : qui sommes-nous ?* » C'est aussi à cette question, aux conséquences lourdes pour le reste du monde démocratique, que d'une certaine manière vont devoir répondre les neuf juges de la Cour suprême.

## YOUNG VOTERS IN THE U.S.

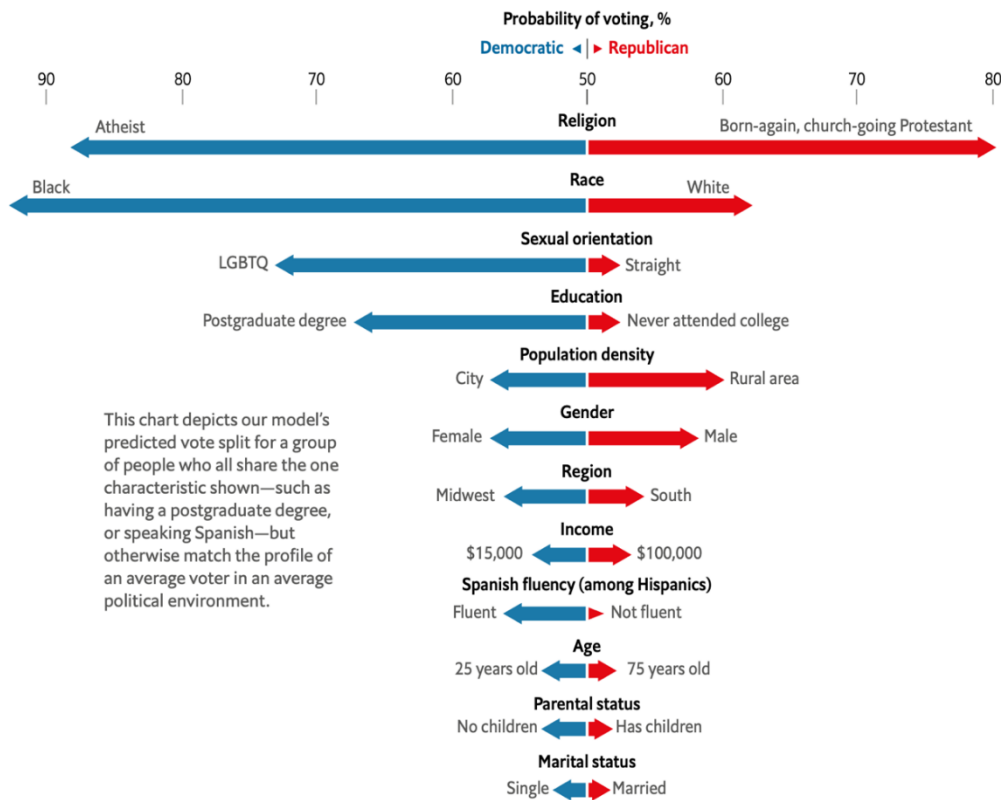
### DOCUMENTS 8A and 8B



Source of the data: US Census Bureau, "Reported Voting Rates by Age, 1980-2022", 2023.

### What has the biggest effect on congressional voting intention?

Strongest predictors by demographic category



“How to forecast an American’s vote”, *The Economist*, 3 November 2018

## Text 9 - Why Donald Trump is gaining ground with young voters

*The Economist*, 20 December 2023 (abridged)

As tastemakers, the two previous American presidents could not present a sharper contrast. Barack Obama, with his elegance and irony, still issues year-end lists of the best music, movies and books, each a triumph of accessible urbanity that blends in just enough Lizzo and “Top Gun: Maverick” to help the Abdulrazak Gurnah go down. To Mr Obama’s mix-mastery Donald Trump counterposed a signature style of ostentatious kitsch. His braggadocio, his 5 combativeness, his gilded lairs, his manner of associating with women: all these led a New Yorker writer, Jelani Cobb, to note as far back as 2015, “in all the ways that matter, save actual performing, Donald Trump is not a politician—he’s a rapper.”

And yet, as president, Joe Biden has found a way to stand apart from both the DJ and the rapper, and from all other presidents of the modern era: he is leaving almost no cultural imprint whatsoever. John Kennedy may have 10 altered the course of men’s fashion by not wearing a hat during his inauguration, but Mr Biden failed to spark a revival of The Staple Singers by including their music on his inauguration playlist. Aviator glasses and ice cream cones, maybe a ride in Delaware on a bicycle, are the pop signifiers, to date, of the Biden presidency.

It would, of course, be patronising to suggest that Mr Biden’s lack of engagement with the broader culture, rather than his handling of weighty affairs such as the war in Gaza, is behind his struggle to connect with young 15 Americans. But it cannot be helping. What is clear is that he has a problem, one that encapsulates his overall challenge headed into his re-election campaign. Young voters, who were key to his win in 2020, are just not into him.

No Republican candidate for president has won most voters under the age of 30 since 1988. But a poll by the New York Times and Siena College published on December 19th found Donald Trump leading Mr Biden by 49% to 43% among voters aged 18 to 29. That is a swing in this poll to Mr Trump of ten points since July. According to the 20 Pew Research Centre, in 2020 Mr Biden won that age group by 24 points, 59% to 35%.

The polling has been so dismal for Mr Biden, and also so erratic, and confidence in polling has been so shaken in recent years, that a debate has broken out among political obsessives over whether to trust the numbers. Within

national polls, subgroups such as young voters comprise smaller samples and so yield larger margins of error. To control for this, a group called Split Ticket in early December aggregated subgroups across numerous national polls. The results showed Mr Biden leading Mr Trump by a diminished but still substantial margin of 16 points among voters under 30, yet by only three points when young voters were defined as those under 34. That is a sign both that there is static in the numbers, and that the danger to Mr Biden’s re-election is real.

Republicans sense an opportunity. Joe Mitchell, a former Iowa state representative who runs a group called Run GenZ that recruits young conservative candidates, says what he hears most is that “we had more money in our pockets when Donald Trump was president”. But he argues that Mr Trump’s cultural heft is an advantage as it has not been since 2016. Mr Biden, he says, has passed more progressive legislation than Mr Obama but is less admired by progressives because he lacks Mr Obama’s cachet. By contrast, the indictments of Mr Trump have restored his celebrity gleam. “People were displaying his mugshot in a positive way,” says Mr Mitchell, who is 26. “He’s up with the Tupacs of the world.”

The Republican National Committee has created a “youth advisory council”, and it staged its first primary debate in concert with a group for young conservatives. But Republicans have problems of their own. When a college student at that debate asked how the candidates would calm “fears that the Republican Party doesn’t care about climate change”, most of them ducked for cover. And in mid-December, five of the 16 members of the youth advisory committee quit, citing a problem evocative of the Trump years: a lack of organisation, goals and vision.

The latest iteration of the Harvard Youth Poll found that Americans under 30 did not much trust either probable nominee. But they trusted Mr Trump more on the economy, national security, the Israel-Hamas war, crime, immigration and strengthening the working class. They trusted Mr Biden more on such issues as climate change, abortion, gun violence and protecting democracy. [...]

## DOCUMENT 10 (on Cahier de Prépa) - Video

**CBS Pittsburgh, “New data suggests Taylor Swift boosts voter registration, especially among young voters”, 25 September 2023.**

### **Text 11 - Republicans are trying harder than ever to suppress the youth vote**

Victor SHI, MSNBC, December 10, 2023 (abridged)

As recent elections have shown, Republicans are struggling on the national, state and local levels. In 2020, Donald Trump became the first incumbent president who lost re-election since 1992. The “red wave” so many Republicans predicted for the 2022 midterm elections never materialized. This year, including November’s off-year elections, Republicans faced more defeats up and down the ballot — even in states and districts historically thought of as favoring Republicans.

The youth vote continues to play a major role in Democrats’ electoral success. A recent analysis found that Democrats maintain a 21-point advantage over Republicans with young voters. The GOP understands this problem well: As former Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker admitted earlier this year on Fox News, “Young people are the problem,” and Republicans must “turn it around if [they] are going to win again.”

But Republicans are not “turning it around.” Despite holding the majority in the House, the GOP isn’t doing anything to address young people’s most specific concerns — whether it’s gun violence, climate change or student loans. Instead, the party — often behind closed doors — is taking a page out of the anti-democracy playbook. That is, Republicans are currently waging a sustained, intense and targeted war to disenfranchise young people in 2024.

Voter suppression is of course a well-trodden strategy for the GOP. The party continues to target racial and ethnic minorities like Black and Hispanic Americans through tactics like gerrymandering, enacting stricter voter ID requirements, and restricting early voting options. So it’s no surprise that as young voters turn out at robust levels, Republicans are doing more than ever to block me and my fellow students from casting our ballots in 2024.

One chilling instance that highlights the depth of the GOP’s commitment came from Cleta Mitchell, a conservative lawyer who helped Donald Trump in his efforts to overturn the 2020 election. At a large Republican

donor retreat earlier this year, Mitchell not only decried the ease of voting on college campuses, but detailed an elaborate, 50-page plan to establish “election integrity task forces” across the country to make it harder for young people to vote.

25 Mitchell’s plans are being reflected in legislation across the country. A study from the Voting Rights Lab reveals that at least 15 states have introduced or enacted legislation that would make it harder — or even illegal — for students to use their college ID to vote in elections. As Republicans know better than anyone else, elections are won on the margin. If they can keep one young voter from voting, they know it can make or break the election. And as Republicans have demonstrated, they will not back down from their sustained attacks on voting rights — whether they’re on Black voters or on young voters — because that is the only way for them to win elections. 30 They will, quite literally, do anything to achieve and maintain power, even if it means undermining the fabric of democracy: the ability to vote.

35 Against this backdrop, it is critical for voters not to become apathetic or tap out. Instead, organizers, activists and the media must highlight how Republicans are undermining voting rights for racial and ethnic groups and young people. Put simply, 2024 will be a binary choice between a party that believes in democracy and a party that does not believe in democracy — and voters and the media must feel that threat and act with the urgency that this moment demands.

40 And it’s equally crucial to support efforts to register young people to vote. When those who do not vote are asked why, many young people cite how confusing the political process is. Luckily, every parent and every person who knows a young person in their life can make a difference by helping them register, make time to vote and navigate the complex electoral realities of not just national elections, but state and local elections too. As my government teacher often told me and my peers, young people should embrace the “civics lifestyle” — and that happens by talking to young people and showing them how they too can make a difference.

45 Republicans know they are losing — which is exactly why they are engaging in a concerted effort to suppress one of the most important voting groups in 2024: young people. But we must not be deterred by their efforts. We must push back, expose their blatantly anti-democratic actions, and start building the democracy we all want to live in. If we don’t, not only will Republicans win — but it may well be the beginning of the end of democracy as we know it

*Victor Shi is a rising senior at UCLA, co-host of the iGen Politics Podcast and strategy director for Voters of Tomorrow.*

**DOCUMENT 12 (on Cahier de Prépas) – AUDIO document**

**NPR, “What young voters want in 2024”, 26 November 2023.**