



DEMOCRATIC
EROSION
CONSORTIUM

**Democratic Erosion Consortium
Annual Convening 2024
Agenda**

Latest version: June 4th, 2024

Day 1 Location

Room T07

📍 Hall of Science

American University

4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20016

Day 2 Location:

Founders Room (Floor 1)

📍 School of International Service

American University

4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20016

Day 1 - June 6, 2024

Time	Session Title	Session Description	Panelists
8:45– 9:00	Arrival, Check in, Continental Breakfast		
9:00– 9:30	Welcome & Introductions	The DEC and FFF outline the day’s agenda.	Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Directors, Professors Jessica Gottlieb, Rob Blair, and Laura Paler Linda Stern, National Democratic Institute (NDI) & Fundamental Freedoms Fund (FFF) Evaluation Lead
9:30- 10:15	Opening Session: Spotlight on Emblematic Cases of Erosion and Resistance Today	The Convening opens with a session exploring how backsliding is occurring today in emblematic countries with upcoming or recent elections. The main goal of the session is to introduce and ground in country cases the core themes we will discuss throughout the Convening. Drawing on three key cases - the United States, India, and Senegal - panelists will narrow down into the specifics of how erosion is occurring and how resistance to it is playing out today.	David Barker , Incoming Director, Social and Economic Sciences Division, Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate, National Science Foundation, & Professor of Government, American University, (US case) Devesh Kapur , Starr Foundation Professor of South Asian Studies, Johns Hopkins SAIS (India) Sophia Moestrup , Deputy Director for Central and West Africa, National Democratic Institute (NDI) (Senegal)

			<p><i>Moderator:</i> Rob Blair, Arkadij Eisler Goldman Sachs Associate Professor, Brown University, and Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p>
10:15-10:30	-- Coffee Break ---		
10:30-11:30	Plenary: Reflections on the Current State of Democratic Erosion	<p>What is the current state of academic research on democratic erosion? Panelists will share insights on broader cross-country trends in the study of backsliding, and foster conversation and debate about how, if, and why democratic erosion is happening today. The panel will aim to introduce audience members to the key academic debates happening today and the most recent insights from current research.</p>	<p>Rachel Riedl, John S. Knight Professor, Cornell University (Sub-Saharan Africa)</p> <p>Kurt Weyland, Professor, Mike Hogg Professor in Liberal Arts, University of Texas at Austin (Latin America)</p> <p>Dan Slater, James Orin Murfin Professor of Political Science, University of Michigan (Southeast Asia)</p> <p>Erin Snider, Assistant Professor of International Affairs, Texas A&M University's George H.W. Bush School of Government and Public Service (Middle East)</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Jessica Gottlieb, Associate Professor, University of Houston & Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p>

11:30-12:15	Resisting Erosion in this Year's Elections	<p>The year 2024 has been heralded as the “Year of the Election.” While the number of elections around the globe has not dramatically changed, the rise of autocracies has made the electoral stakes higher than ever. Given the high stakes, this panel will focus on the electoral process as both a risk for democratic erosion and an opportunity for resistance to it. The panel focuses on both horizontal and vertical resistance strategies in elections. We will explore the role of strengthening electoral management boards as a form of horizontal resistance to democratic erosion. For vertical resistance strategies, panelists will share their work in citizen election monitoring.</p>	<p>Adele Ravidà, Senegal Country Director, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)</p> <p>GNDEM (Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors), Representatives from Zambia and Guatemala:</p> <p>Pablo Hurtado, Executive Director, Association for Research and Social Studies (Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales - ASIES), Guatemala</p> <p>Peter Mwanangombe, Program Manager, Christian Churches Monitoring Group, Zambia</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Richard Klein, Director of Elections Programs, National Democratic Institute (NDI)</p>
12:15-1:15	--- Lunch ---		
1:15 - 2:30	Democratic Erosion and Legislative Oversight	<p>The legislature, and the political parties that represent it, are important realms of contestation in terms of both engaging in democratic erosion and resisting it once it occurs. This session will focus on these particular actors, considering both cross-country trends as well as country-specific examples, to understand the</p>	<p>Ken Opalo, Associate Professor, Georgetown University</p> <p>Robert Scott Heaslet, Senior Resident Director, National Democratic Institute (NDI), North Macedonia</p>

		role of the legislature and political parties today within the broader phenomenon of democratic backsliding.	<p>Jorida Tabaku, Member of Parliament, Albania</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Berk Esen, Associate Professor, Sabancı University, Turkey</p>
2:30-3:45	Democratic Erosion and the Judiciary	This panel explores the role of the judiciary as another key site of both democratic erosion and resistance to it. The aim is to delve into, first, the key patterns we see across the globe in how the judiciary is co-opted by executives and other actors to engage in democratic erosion. Then we will center on how various actors and institutions are using the courts to resist efforts at backsliding, and how the courts (as well as lawyers and civil society organizations) are defending themselves from attacks on their integrity and independence.	<p>Eric Kramon, Associate Professor, George Washington University</p> <p>Raquel Aguilar, Honduras Program Coordinator, American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI)</p> <p>Catherine Anite, Freedom of Expression Hub, Uganda, International Center for Non-Profit Law (ICNL)</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Agustina Giraudy, Professor of Political Science, American University</p>
3:45-4:00	--- Coffee Break ---		

4:00-5:15	Resisting Erosion: Civil Society and the Media	Civil society groups represent perhaps the best hope of resisting democratic backsliding. The goal of the session is to highlight the diversity of ways that civil society is challenging democratic erosion today. Panelists will explore civil society's unique role in resisting erosion, particularly compared to governmental actors and insider politicians, and through a focus on the media, youth, and marginalized populations.	<p>Liz Sperber, Assistant Professor, University of Denver</p> <p>Nasir Maimanagy, Director, Salam Afghan radio network Salam Watandar</p> <p>Melissa Sarah Hamalambo, Executive Director, Center for Young Leaders in Africa (CYLA), Zambia</p> <p>Mirosława Makuchowska, Director, Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH), Poland</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Natalie Trisilla, Director for Evidence and Learning, Center for Global Impact, International Republican Institute (IRI)</p>
5:15-5:45	Day 1 Reflections and Closing	Participants identify common themes across sessions, inventorying key gaps in evidence and identifying potential collaborative research questions.	Facilitated by: Linda Stern, National Democratic Institute (NDI) & Fundamental Freedoms Fund (FFF) Evaluation Lead
6:00	--- Group Dinner ---		

Day 2 - June 7, 2024

Time	Session Title	Session Description	Panelists
8:45– 9:00	Arrival, Check in, Continental Breakfast		
9:00– 9:15	Welcome & Plan for the Day	The DEC and FFF outline the day’s agenda.	<p>Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Directors, Professors Jessica Gottlieb, Rob Blair, and Laura Paler</p> <p>Linda Stern, National Democratic Institute (NDI) & Fundamental Freedoms Fund (FFF) Evaluation Lead</p>
9:15– 10:15	Measuring Democratic Erosion: Country-level to Project-level Measures	Measuring democratic erosion is both an academic and a policy challenge. Whether at the country or cross-national level, or at the more micro-, project level, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners alike need concrete strategies to effectively study and evaluate processes and interventions related to democratic erosion. This panel will explore challenges and latest trends related to measurement at three different levels: cross-national; national; and project-level. More broadly, the panel aims to explore how data can best	<p>Amanda Edgell, Assistant Professor, Univ. of Alabama & Research Fellow, V-Dem Institute</p> <p>Rob Blair, Arkadij Eisler Goldman Sachs Associate Professor, Brown University, and Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director, Democratic Erosion Event Dataset (DEED)</p> <p>Marcia Mundt, Research, Evaluation & Learning Director, CEPPS</p>

		support programming and learning at all levels.	<p>Linda Stern, National Democratic Institute (NDI) & Fundamental Freedoms Fund (FFF) Evaluation Lead</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Jessica Gottlieb, Associate Professor, University of Houston & Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p>
10:15-10:45	Hands-On Analysis: Using Data to Answer Pressing Questions about Democratic Erosion	This practical session highlights existing datasets participants can access and use to better understand democratic erosion both in their countries of interest as well as to understand cross-country patterns. We will walk through how to use the datasets, leave time for Q&A, and participants can continue to work with the data and ask questions of facilitators during the extended coffee break after the session.	<p>Visualization demonstrations:</p> <p>Bright Line Watch:</p> <p>Stuart Jordan, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Rochester</p> <p>Democratic Erosion Event Dataset (DEED):</p> <p>Jessica Gottlieb, Associate Professor, University of Houston & Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p> <p>Hannah Baron, Postdoctoral Fellow, The Center for Inter-American Policy & Research (CIPR) & Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Founder</p>
10:45-11:15	--- Coffee Break ---	<i>Note:</i> During this extended Coffee Break, participants can continue to use and practice with the datasets and	

		visualizations, and facilitators will be on hand to answer questions.	
11:15-11:45	Teaching and Learning about Democratic Erosion	The session will share the DEC’s latest pedagogical resources for the DRG community, and then discuss and debate best practices for teaching and learning about democratic erosion for academics, policymakers, and practitioner audiences.	<p>Rob Blair, Arkadij Eisler Goldman Sachs Associate Professor, Brown University, and Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p> <p>Berk Esen, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Sabancı University, Turkey, and Democratic Erosion Course Instructor, Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC)</p> <p>J. Salvador Peralta, Professor, University of West Georgia and Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Curriculum Developer</p>
11:45-12:15	Synthesizing Evidence on Democratic Erosion	This session will highlight some of the strategies we use for synthesizing across the evidence base for democratic erosion, including through the DEC’s Evidence Briefs series. We will also grapple with how to use and apply evidence from one context or population to inform policy and practice in a different setting.	<p>Laura Paler, Associate Professor, Department of Government, School of Public Affairs, American University, and Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p>
12:15 – 1:00	--- Lunch ---		

<p>1:00-2:00</p>	<p>Refining the Research Agenda</p>	<p>Through multi-stakeholder break out sessions, participants will co-generate specific research questions and content for upcoming Democratic Erosion Consortium Evidence Briefs as well as identify priority research areas for future programming across our entire community.</p>	<p>Julie Anne Weaver, Research Director, Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC)</p> <p><i>Breakout Group Moderators:</i></p> <p><i>Electoral Fraud:</i> Rob Blair, Arkadij Eisler Goldman Sachs Associate Professor, Brown University & Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p> <p><i>Polarization and Democratic Erosion:</i> Jessica Gottlieb, Associate Professor, University of Houston & Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p> <p><i>Voting for Anti-Democratic Candidates:</i> Laura Paler, Associate Professor, Department of Government, School of Public Affairs, American University & Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director</p> <p><i>The Judiciary and Democratic Erosion:</i> Julie Anne Weaver, Research Director, Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC)</p> <p><i>Marginalization and Democratic Erosion:</i> Jordan Kyle, Research Fellow, Poverty, Gender, and Inclusion Unit,</p>
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			International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
2:00-2:45	Vote Choice and Campaigning for Democracy in Contexts of Erosion	Grounded in recent and upcoming elections in Europe, we'll learn about democratic erosion as a campaign issue, and what the data suggests about how to encourage voters to consider backsliding in their vote choice and how to convince politicians to campaign on a platform of strengthening democracy.	Brian Paler, Chief Strategy Officer, Dataprxis <i>Moderator:</i> Laura Paler , Associate Professor, Department of Government, School of Public Affairs, American University, and Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Director
2:45-3:00	--- Coffee Break ---		
3:00-3:45	Fostering academic-policy-practitioner collaboration	In this participatory session, we will discuss different models of academic-policy-practitioner collaboration, and use small group work to explore the barriers to collaboration across different stakeholders.	Facilitated by: Linda Stern, National Democratic Institute (NDI) & Fundamental Freedoms Fund (FFF) Evaluation Lead
3:45-4:00	Closing and Next Steps		Democratic Erosion Consortium (DEC) Co-Directors, Professors Jessica Gottlieb, Rob Blair, and Laura Paler Linda Stern, National Democratic Institute (NDI) & Fundamental Freedoms Fund (FFF) Evaluation Lead

	--- Happy Hour -----		
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