



International Panel on the Information Environment

2025 Year in Review

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IPIE
International Panel on the
Information Environment

About Us

The information environment is under unprecedented stress. In our fast changing digital world, false and harmful information spreads faster than ever. It weakens trust in important institutions and inflames economic problems and social unrest. Addressing these issues requires a coordinated, global effort.

Led by top researchers from different countries and fields, the IPIE provides fair, science based recommendations so governments, tech companies, and communities can take smart, timely decisions. The IPIE produces scientific assessments to help solve major policy problems and give decision makers useful tools to improve how we navigate the digital world.

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A Note from Phil Howard

2025 was a landmark year for IPIE. We published ground-breaking research — including our Climate Information Integrity Report, which set a new benchmark for how scientific evidence can inform global policy debates — convened world-leading experts, and deepened our partnerships with institutions that share our commitment to a healthier information environment.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of our staff, the generosity of our funders, and the trust of the researchers, policymakers, and practitioners who engage with our work. We are proud of what we have built together.

As the information environment grows more complex and the stakes for governance higher, the IPIE's work has never been more urgent. In 2026, we will build on this year's foundations to deliver research that is not only rigorous but actionable, equipping policymakers and institutions with the evidence they need to make informed decisions at a critical moment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'P', 'H', and 'I' in a stylized, cursive font.

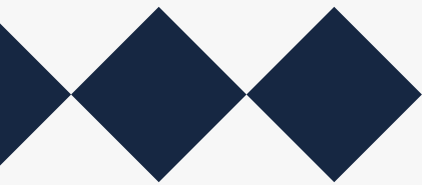
Professor Phil Howard, President of the IPIE



2025 in Figures

This year's figures reflect a period of significant momentum, with the launch of new research panels, the addition of a diverse group of research affiliates, and an expanded program of events and webinars. Alongside the publication of several new reports, these developments demonstrate sustained growth and a deepening contribution to insight, collaboration, and knowledge across the sector.





Our Global Network

Our affiliates represent 73 nationalities, live in 59 countries, and are affiliated with 154 universities and institutions across six continents. The network spans 22 academic disciplines, with more than half of all affiliates bringing expertise across multiple fields. We are proud that 24% of our affiliates identify with an under-represented group, and that women make up 45% of our network.

501

Research Affiliates

73

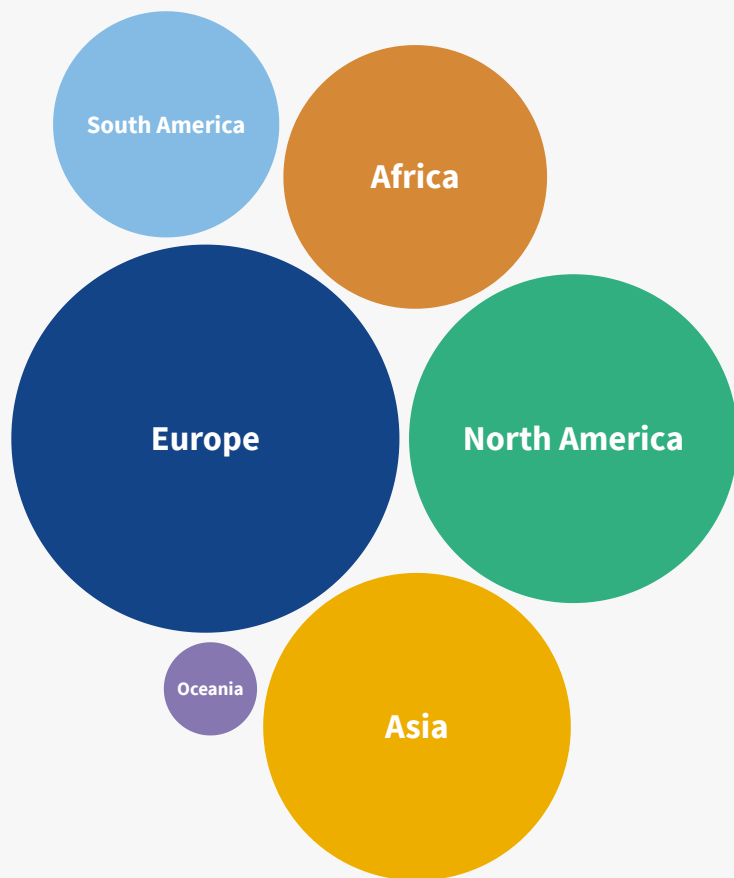
Nationalities

59

Countries

154

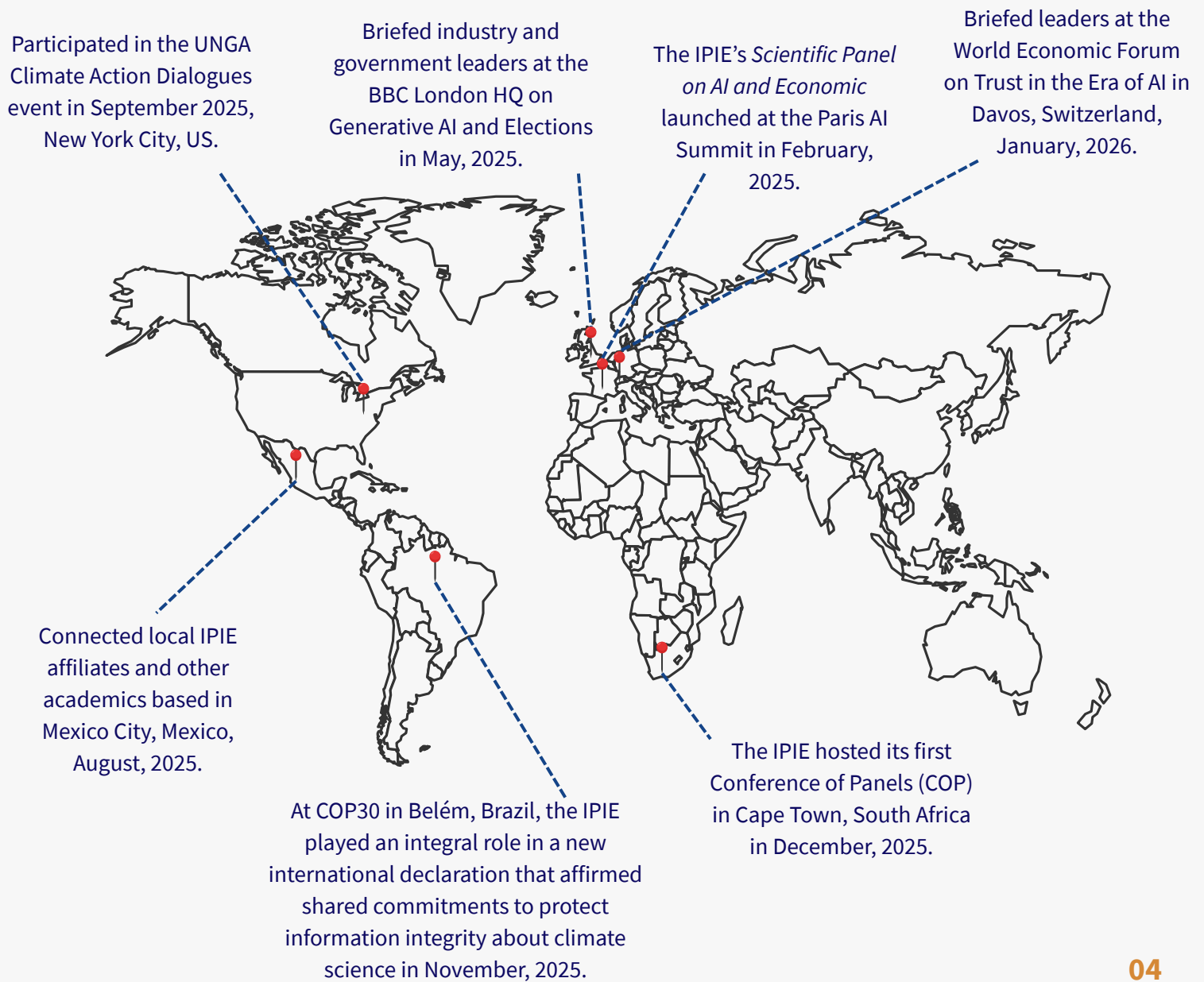
Institutions



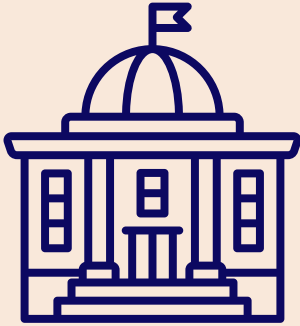


Our Global Network

From Geneva to Belem, the IPIE convenes leading scientists, policymakers, and civil society voices at events across the globe. Our presence at international forums reflects our commitment to ensuring that evidence-based research shapes AI and information policy wherever decisions are being made.



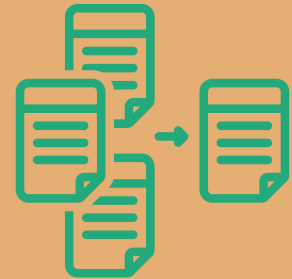
Research & Publications



5 policy submissions to policymakers and regulators around the world



2 technical papers published providing policy analysis on AI and peacebuilding, and the role of GenAI in global elections



3 synthesis reviews and 5 summaries for policymakers published

Digital Reach & Media: Highlights



3,401 followers on LinkedIn



IPIE's climate report was covered across 115 articles and received a reach of 719 million



1,305 subscribers to our newsletter

2025 Key Milestones

Q1

European Parliament briefing on democracy in the age of social media.

Briefed leaders at the World Economic Forum on Trust in the Era of AI.

Publication of the IPIE's **inaugural AI auditing framework**.

Q3

Publication of the technical paper: *Artificial Intelligence and Peacebuilding: Opportunities & Challenges*.

Connected local affiliates and other academics based in Mexico City, Mexico.

Establishment of the **Law and Policy Strategy Group**.

Q2

Expanded the Secretariat team with two new Officer Positions.

Briefed industry, government and civil society leaders at the BBC on Generative AI and Elections.

Publication of the systematic review: *Information Integrity about Climate Science*.

Q4

Publication of the *Third Annual Global Expert Survey*.

Publication of the **Declaration on Information Integrity on Climate Change at COP30**, Brazil.

The **IPIE's first Conference of Panels** convening global experts in Cape Town, South Africa.



Programmatic Focus Areas

Information Integrity about Climate Science

Advancing Scientific Leadership

In 2025, the *Scientific Panel on Information Integrity about Climate Science* expanded its role as a global reference point for understanding how misleading information distorts public understanding of the climate crisis. The Panel convened leading experts across climate science, communication, and social science to assess emerging risks and provide independent, evidence-based guidance to policymakers.

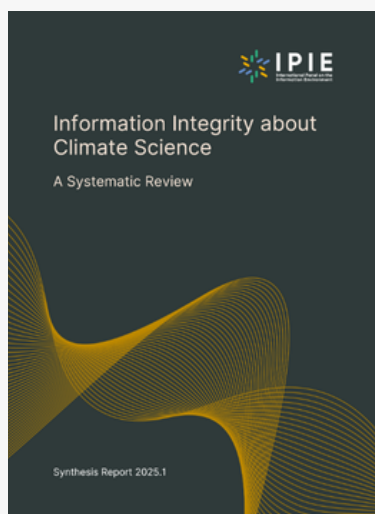
Publishing a Landmark Review

A major milestone was the publication of *Information Integrity about Climate Science: A Systematic Review*, which synthesized hundreds of studies to chart how disinformation, ranging from organised denial networks to misleading narratives about renewable solutions, continues to undermine trust, and delay policy progress.



Informing the Global Agenda at COP30

At COP30 in Belém, information integrity rose to the top of the climate policy conversation. The Panel’s evidence and recommendations shaped high-level discussions, underscoring that public trust in science is foundational to implementing effective climate action.



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Information Integrity about Climate Science: A Systematic Review

Powerful actors—including corporations, governments, and political parties—intentionally spread inaccurate or misleading narratives about anthropogenic climate change. These narratives circulate across digital, broadcast, and interpersonal communication channels. The result is a decline in public trust, diminished policy coordination, and a feedback loop between scientific denialism and political inaction.



Programmatic Focus Areas

GenAI and Elections

Assessing the Global Footprint of Generative AI

The technical paper, *The Role of Generative AI Use in 2024 Elections Worldwide*, offers the first global, data-driven assessment of GenAI's role across all 50 countries that held competitive national elections in 2024, capturing incidents ranging from synthetic audio and video to AI-driven voter targeting.

Key Findings and Policy Implications

Our findings show that GenAI incidents occurred in 80% of 2024 national elections, with 90% involving generated content such as images, videos, audio, or social media posts, and nearly 70% of these described as having a harmful role in electoral processes. This evidence base fills critical gaps in understanding how synthetic content interacts with political communication and underscores the urgency of policy responses to protect electoral integrity and public trust.

A.I. Is Starting to Wear Down Democracy

Content generated by artificial intelligence has become a factor in elections around the world. Most of it is bad, misleading voters and discrediting the democratic process.

Listen - 10:48 min

Share full article

By **Steven Lee Myers** and **Stuart A. Thompson**

Published June 26, 2025 Updated June 27, 2025

Since the explosion of generative artificial intelligence over the last two years, the technology has demeaned or defamed opponents and, for the first time, officials and experts said, begun to have an impact on election results.

Free and easy to use, A.I. tools have generated a flood of fake photos and videos of candidates or supporters saying things they did not or appearing in places they were not — all spread with the



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International | Artificial intelligence

Could AI tilt the outcome of elections?

New research shows it is being used for good and ill

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Jul 2nd 2025 | 2 min read

THE GLOBAL wave of elections in 2024 was heralded as the first of the artificial-intelligence (AI) era. But opinions about what that meant varied. Would it remove a veil of million-dollar and large-language-model-generated

Shaping International Dialogue

The scientific assessment sparked significant international media coverage in 2025. *The New York Times* analysed how AI tools are reshaping election campaigns and democratic norms, while *The Economist* explored whether AI could tilt electoral outcomes. *The Guardian* highlighted expert warnings about AI-powered “bot swarms” on social platforms posing threats to democratic discourse. These discussions elevated the topic across policy and public spheres and illustrated the global relevance of our evidence.



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The Role of Generative AI Use in 2024 Elections Worldwide

- 80% of the countries holding elections in 2024 had GenAI incidents.
- The vast majority (90%) of incidents involved content creation, such as audio messages, images, videos, and social media posts.
- Almost half of the incidents have no known source (46%), a quarter were produced by political candidates and parties (25%), and a fifth were produced by foreign actors (20%),



**Recommendations for a Global
AI Auditing Framework**

Summary of Standards and Features

Summary for Policymakers 2024.2

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Programmatic Focus Areas

Setting the Standard: A Global Framework for AI Auditing

Recommendations for a Global AI Auditing Framework

The IPIE's *Scientific Panel on Global Standards for AI Audits* published *Recommendations for a Global AI Auditing Framework: Summary of Standards and Features*. Bringing together 16 experts spanning computer science, the social sciences, and the humanities, the Panel set out to establish independent, cross-disciplinary consensus on what makes an AI audit effective and trustworthy.

Key Findings and Policy Implications

The report identifies five core requirements for any credible AI audit: common standards and procedures, auditor independence, access to evidence, transparent reporting, and assessment of global impacts. It further proposes a seven-feature framework covering audit scope, auditor role, stakeholder engagement, context-appropriate criteria, evidence requirements, methodology, and post-audit activities. The report calls on policymakers to adopt this framework to build an audit ecosystem that is genuinely global, independent, and centred on human rights.



Looking Forward to 2026-27

The Road Ahead

Policy Forward

In 2026, we are expanding our leadership with two new senior appointments to lead on policy engagement, partnerships, and EU affairs, reflecting our commitment to deepen policy engagement across key geographies as we enter an ambitious new chapter.

Exploitation by Design

Led by the IPIE's *Scientific Panel on Child Protection and Social Media*, our upcoming paper *Exploitation by Design* will examine how platform design and monetization mechanisms contribute to online child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Indexing the Political Information Environment

Building on this momentum, we will also publish the foundational work for a first-of-its-kind index focused on political information environments. *The Conceptual Framework for a New Index* will lay the theoretical groundwork, followed by a data and gap analysis mapping what is needed to move from concept to implementation.

Climate Science and Information Integrity

The IPIE is launching its *Scientific Panel on Information Integrity and the Climate Transition*, which will synthesize global research on how information environments shape public understanding of climate policy, examine the financial structures sustaining climate misinformation, and provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, regulators, and technology platforms.

Dr. Alondra Nelson, Member of the *Scientific Panel on Global Standards for AI Auditing*

“The future of AI must be one where auditing is not an afterthought but a cornerstone. As we look ahead, the question is not simply whether AI systems work but whether they work equitably, transparently, and in service of all people.”

Professor Sebastian Valenzuela, Chief Science Officer

“We are living through a defining moment for the information environment and the evidence we produce today will shape the decisions that matter most tomorrow.”

Professor Melissa Aronczyk, Chair of *Scientific Panel on Information Integrity & the Climate Transition*

“The intersection of climate and information integrity is one of the most consequential battlegrounds of our time and this panel will ensure that policymakers have the evidence they need to act with confidence.”

Dr. Jen Schradie, Chair of the *Scientific Panel on AI and Economic Inclusion*

“AI is not a neutral force. It reflects the inequalities of the world it was built in, and our work is to ensure that evidence, not assumption, drives how we design systems that are fair for everyone.”



Get Involved

The IPIE's work depends on a global community of researchers, institutions, and partners who share our commitment to a healthier information environment. There are several ways to be part of that mission.

Join Our Affiliate Network

Become part of a growing international network of universities, research institutions, and civil society organisations working at the forefront of information environment research.



Support Our Work

Independent science requires independent funding. If you believe in evidence-based governance and a better global information environment, please support the IPIE's research programmes.



A Note from the Board



Susan Doniz

**Chair of the IPIE's Foundation
Board of Trustees**

2025 was a year that demonstrated, beyond any doubt, why independent scientific bodies like the IPIE matter. As the information environment grew more contested and the pace of technological change accelerated, the demand for rigorous, trusted evidence only intensified. The IPIE rose to meet that demand — and I could not be prouder of what this organisation achieved.

Looking ahead, I am confident in the strength of the foundation we have built. Our scientific panels span some of the most pressing challenges of our time — from AI and economic inclusion, to child protection online, to the integrity of climate information. In 2026, we will continue to grow in reach and influence, ensuring our research gets to the policymakers, regulators, and institutions who need it most.

On behalf of the entire board, I want to express my profound gratitude to our partners, funders, and the global scientific community who make this mission possible.

Susan Doniz,
Chair of the IPIE's Foundation Board



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