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JAVIER MILEI
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US NEWS

2024 Newsmakers of the Year: Epoch Times Readers' Choice

From politics and innovation to sports and global leadership, these individuals were chosen by The Epoch Times' readers as the most influential figures of 2024.



By Tom Ozimek | December 25, 2024 Updated: December 25, 2024

The year 2024 will be remembered as one of profound transformation, marked by seismic political shifts, groundbreaking technological

innovation, and powerful stories of leadership and resilience. Against this backdrop, certain individuals emerged as key figures, captivating the world and steering its course.

These newsmakers, whose challenges and triumphs were closely watched this year, were chosen in a survey of 6,367 Epoch Times readers as the most significant of 2024.

US Newsmaker of the Year: Donald Trump

President-elect Donald Trump's resounding victory as The Epoch Times' U.S. Newsmaker of the Year—garnering 96.9 percent of first-choice votes—reflects the significance of his political comeback in 2024. In a year marked by upheaval, Trump dominated headlines, reshaped the political landscape, and cemented his status as a transformative figure in U.S. politics.

After a historic election in which he won both the Electoral College and the popular vote, Trump is poised to become the 47th president of the United States when he takes the oath of office on Jan. 20, 2025. His return to the presidency comes at a critical time as the nation grapples with economic struggles and global instability.

Trump's journey back to the White House was marked by extraordinary challenges, including multiple legal battles and two assassination attempts, underscoring his resilience, the unwavering loyalty of his political base, and the enduring appeal of his rallying cry: "Make America Great Again."

Trump has outlined an ambitious agenda for his second term, which he has promised to implement swiftly. His plans include sharp reductions in the federal workforce, mass deportations of illegal immigrants, strengthened border security, a rollback of transgender policies in education, pardons for many Jan. 6 detainees, a surge in domestic energy production, and sweeping tariffs on foreign imports.

“I want to close the border, and I want to drill, drill, drill,” Trump said recently, encapsulating key priorities for his first 100 days back in office.

Trump’s rousing pledge to restore America’s greatness—and his dramatic path back to power in the face of great challenges—has galvanized media attention. Trump was named Time magazine’s “Person of the Year,” marking the second time in the past decade that he has received the honor.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. placed second in The Epoch Times’ poll, followed by Vice President Kamala Harris, and President Joe Biden. Each played a significant role in shaping this year’s political narrative.

Kennedy’s surprising decision to drop his independent presidential campaign and endorse Trump made headlines, as did his subsequent nomination to lead the Department of Health and Human Services. Meanwhile, Harris’s historic yet unsuccessful bid for the presidency captured national attention, while Biden led an administration that oversaw critical events on the global stage, including the U.S. response to the Russia–Ukraine and Israel– Hamas wars.



(Top) The cover of Time magazine's "Person of the Year" shows President-elect Donald Trump before a ceremony at the New York Stock Exchange in New York City on Dec. 12, 2024. (Bottom Left) Robert F. Kennedy Jr., President-elect Donald Trump's nominee to run the Department of Health and Human Services, arrives on Capitol Hill on Dec. 16, 2024. (Bottom Right) President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris walk back to the Oval Office after an event in the Rose Garden of the White House on April 11, 2022. Alex Brandon/AP Photo, Benoit Tessier/Reuters, Drew Angerer/Getty Images

The write-in nominees for U.S. Newsmaker of the Year showcased a broad range of influential figures who left their mark on U.S. politics and culture in 2024.

Elon Musk stood out for his ongoing impact on innovation and public discourse, while Vice President-elect JD Vance and entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy emerged as rising voices reshaping the political landscape. Tulsi Gabbard and Tucker Carlson highlighted the enduring influence of unconventional and outspoken officeholders and commentators who continue to shape political and cultural debates in the United States.

International Newsmaker of the Year: Javier Milei

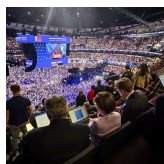
Argentinian President Javier Milei was overwhelmingly chosen as The Epoch Times' International Newsmaker of the Year, securing 76.6 percent of first-choice votes. Milei's transformative leadership and bold economic reforms resonated deeply with readers, establishing him as a global icon of libertarian ideals and fiscal discipline.

When Milei took office in November 2023, Argentina was grappling with near-catastrophic economic conditions: a monthly pace of inflation at about 25 percent, a poverty rate exceeding 40 percent, a fiscal deficit at 15 percent of gross domestic product, and an economy in recession.

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Milei has since implemented sweeping reforms aimed at stabilizing the economy, taking an axe to bureaucratic bloat, slashing government

spending by 30 percent, and rebalancing trade. His measures have dramatically reduced inflation to a monthly pace of 2.4 percent, and the country has achieved its first budget surplus in more than a decade, capturing international attention as a model of fiscal turnaround.

“We have passed the test of fire,” Milei recently told Argentinians. “We are leaving the desert, the recession is over, and the country has finally begun to grow.”

Milei’s leadership has also sparked a cultural shift, with his rhetoric on liberty and personal responsibility challenging decades of entrenched socialist ideals in Argentina. By dismantling bureaucratic inefficiencies and promoting free-market policies, Milei has reshaped the national conversation, igniting debate about the future of governance and economic freedom.

Runners-up for International Newsmaker of the Year reflected a diverse set of global leaders making significant impacts.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi earned second place for his continued leadership in positioning the world’s largest democracy as a rising global power and for securing a historic reelection mandate. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum ranked third, recognized for her trailblazing victory as Mexico’s first female president, with her party securing a supermajority that allows it to pass controversial constitutional reforms.



(Top) Argentinian President Javier Milei attends a ceremony celebrating the 214th anniversary of the May Revolution, which marked the beginning of the country's independence from Spain, in Cordoba, Argentina, on May 25, 2024. (Bottom Left) Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi reviews a military honor guard during a visit to Polish Prime Minister's Office in Warsaw, Poland, on Aug. 22, 2024. (Bottom Right) Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum attends a military parade commemorating the 114th anniversary of the Mexican Revolution, on the Zocalo square in Mexico City, on Nov. 20, 2024. Nicolas Aguilera, File/AP Photo, Sergei Gapon/AFP via Getty Images, Rodrigo Oropeza/AFP via Getty Images

The write-in nominees reflected the broad spectrum of leaders whom readers recognized for their significant impact on global affairs in

2024.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu received notable mentions for navigating the challenges of the Israel– Hamas war, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy remained a symbol of resilience during his country’s prolonged war with Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin also appeared among write-ins, reflecting his continued influence on global geopolitics.

Trump also appeared in the write-in list for International Newsmaker of the Year, signifying his influence on conservative agendas across the globe, shaping debates on trade, immigration, and national sovereignty.

Innovation Newsmaker of the Year: Elon Musk

Elon Musk dominated the innovation landscape in 2024, earning 96.5 percent of first-choice votes as The Epoch Times’ Innovation Newsmaker of the Year.

Under Musk’s guidance, SpaceX set new benchmarks in reusable spaceflight by using metal pincers to catch a Starship booster rocket, while Neuralink achieved a groundbreaking first with a human brain chip implant. Tesla, which is led by Musk, continued its reign as the leader in the electric vehicle industry, solidifying his influence across multiple sectors.

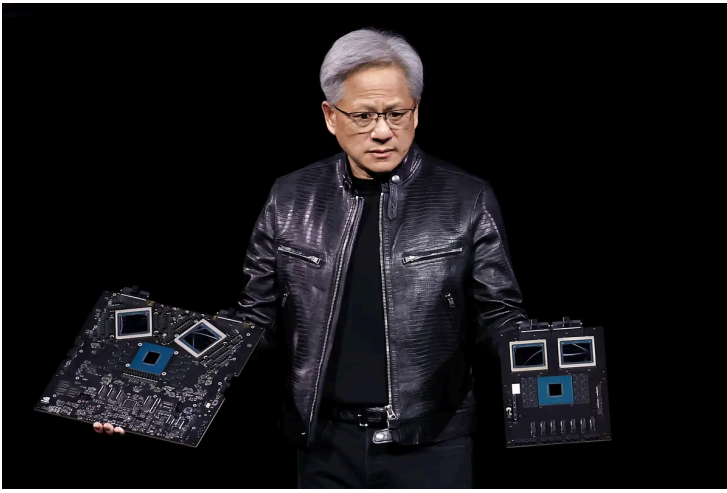
Beyond his headline-grabbing achievements, Musk also spearheaded advancements in renewable energy and transportation infrastructure. In 2024, Tesla started producing prototype battery cells using dry cathode technology, a development that promises to deliver significant cost reductions and pave the way for more affordable electric vehicles. Also, Musk’s Starlink satellite network reached a new

milestone in global internet coverage, bringing high-speed connectivity to underserved regions and fostering economic opportunities in remote areas.

Runners-up for Innovation Newsmaker of the Year included Jensen Huang, who drove Nvidia's advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), and OpenAI's Sam Altman, whose contributions sparked crucial conversations on the ethical dimensions of AI. Mads Krogsgaard of Novo Nordisk also earned recognition for game-changing innovations in health care.

The write-in nominees highlighted a wide range of innovators who left their mark in 2024, with names such as Alex Karp of Palantir and Vivek Ramaswamy showcasing the interplay of technology, leadership, and cultural influence.





(Top) Elon Musk (C), President-elect Donald Trump, Sens. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), and Rep. Ronny Jackson (R-Texas) attend a viewing of the launch of the SpaceX Starship rocket in Brownsville, Texas, on Nov. 19, 2024. (Bottom Left) Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang delivers a keynote address during the Nvidia GTC Artificial Intelligence Conference at SAP Center in San Jose, Calif., on March 18, 2024. (Bottom Right) OpenAI CEO Sam Altman speaks during the Microsoft Build conference at the Seattle Convention Center Summit Building in Seattle on May 21, 2024. Brandon Bell/Getty Images, Justin Sullivan/Getty Images, Jason Redmond/AFP via Getty Images

Sports Newsmaker of the Year: Caitlin Clark

Caitlin Clark's meteoric rise in 2024 had a transformative impact on U.S. women's basketball, earning her 45.9 percent of first-choice votes as The Epoch Times' Sports Newsmaker of the Year.

Clark's remarkable talent and dynamic play have elevated the popularity and viewership of women's basketball, a phenomenon referred to as the "Caitlin Clark effect."

During her college years, Clark's games attracted unprecedented audiences. The 2023 NCAA women's basketball championship game, featuring Clark, became the most-watched women's college basketball game in history, drawing an average of 9.9 million viewers.

Following a record-breaking college career, Clark joined the Indiana Fever as the first overall pick in the 2024 WNBA draft, with an immediate impact on viewership. She helped propel the Fever to their

first playoff appearance since 2017, captivating fans with her exceptional shooting range and playmaking abilities.

After being named 2024 WNBA Rookie of the Year, she was also picked for the All-WNBA First Team, making her just the fifth rookie in the 28-year history of the league to make the first team.

Runners-up for Sports Newsmaker of the Year included gymnast Simone Biles, who made a triumphant Olympic comeback with multiple gold medals, and swimmer Katie Ledecky, whose dominance at the Paris Olympics further solidified her status as one of the greatest athletes of all time. Novak Djokovic also received recognition for his record-breaking achievements in men's tennis.

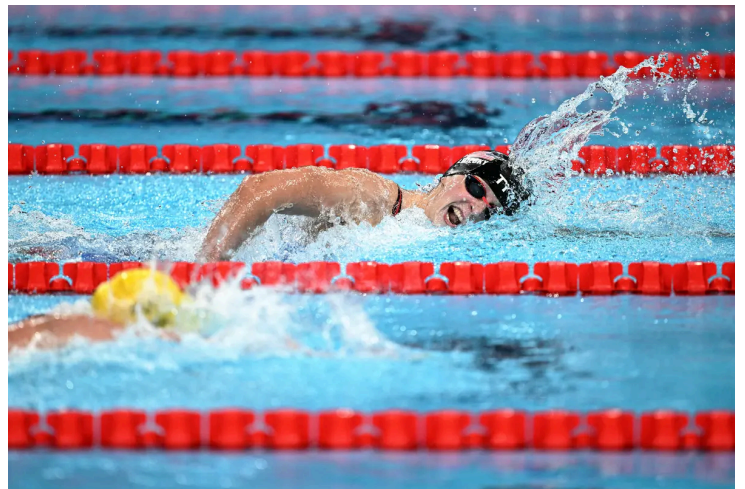
Write-in nominees such as Shohei Ohtani and Lionel Messi highlighted the global nature of sports and the enduring impact of athletes who continue to inspire across different disciplines.

The newsmakers of 2024 demonstrated how individual action can shape the course of nations, industries, and culture. Leaders such as Trump and Milei reshaped political landscapes, while Musk and Clark pushed the boundaries of what's possible in innovation and sports.

As the page turns to 2025, their stories serve as a reminder that great challenges create great opportunities.



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(Top) Caitlin Clark #22 of the Indiana Fever shoots a ball during the first half against the Los Angeles Sparks at Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles on May 24, 2024. (Bottom Left) Simone Biles of Team USA competes on the uneven bars during the Women's Artistic Gymnastics Qualification at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris on July 28, 2024. (Bottom Right) Katie Ledecky competes in the final of the women's 800m freestyle swimming event

during the 2024 Olympic Games in Nanterre, west of Paris, on Aug. 3, 2024. Harry How/Getty Images, Naomi Baker/Getty Images, Jonathan Nackstrand/AFP via Getty Images

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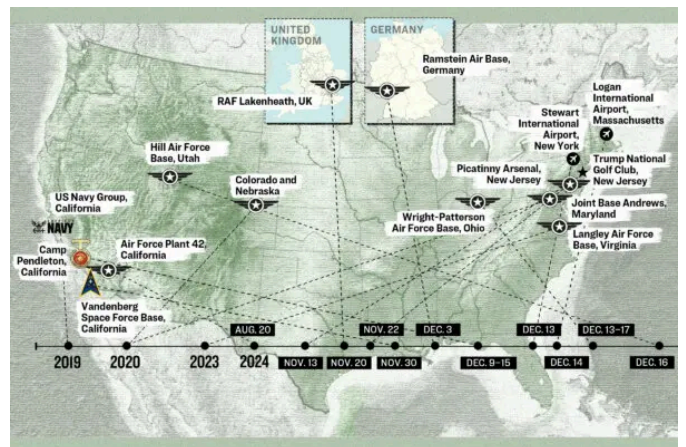
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