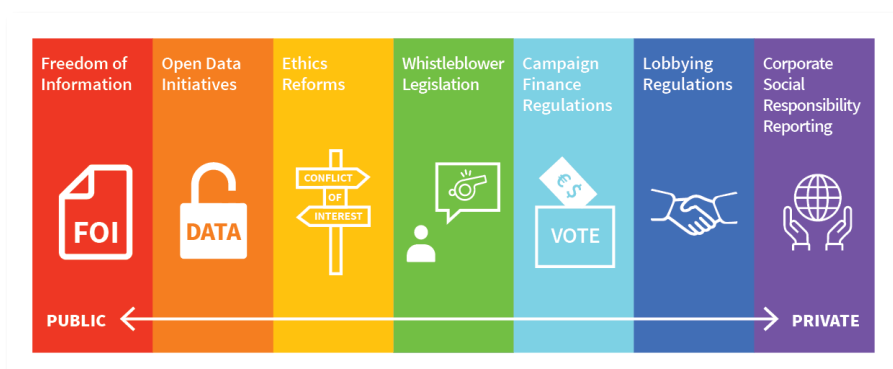




National and Global Affairs



Holding Influence to Account

Public trust in government has never been a given. It must be earned, and it can just as easily be eroded in the absence of clear rules governing the relationship between policymakers and those who seek to influence them.

Professor Raj Chari has long been at the forefront of shaping such safeguards. He has advised governments and institutions worldwide on the design of lobbying laws in countries such as the UK and Scotland, the Czech Republic, Serbia and Finland. His work has sought to strike a delicate balance: recognising lobbying's legitimate role in public policymaking, while ensuring robust protections against undue influence, and promoting transparency.

His expertise has also been sought by major international bodies, including the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. He has authored reports for organisations such as the United Nations.

From 2014 to 2018, he served as an independent researcher for the Open Government Partnership, assessing Ireland's performance on transparency and reform. More recently, in 2022, he was appointed to the Advisory Council Against Economic Crime and Corruption, where he contributes to developing policy measures aimed at tackling financial crime and reducing corruption at its root.

This work showcases how Trinity is using comparative research to highlight policy and legislative choices in the rules governing public administration. It is also showing how such work can lead to expert roles in public governance or regulation bodies.

*Prepared by Trinity Civic Engagement for Societal Impact,
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Professor Raj Chari

SCHOOL

Dept of Political Science,
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PARTNER AGENCIES

United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration Council of Europe Open Government Partnership Advisory Council Against Economic Crime and Corruption

FUNDERS:

Enterprise Ireland Open Government Partnership Irish Research Council Institute for International Integration Studies (IIS)

SUBJECT AREAS

Comparative Public Policy Lobbying Registers Political Lobbying Government Regulations Economic Policy-Making Deregulation Privatisation



Regulation of Lobbying

Following a winning bid to carry out research for the Irish Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Professor Chari and Professor Gary Murphy's 2007 report presented international best practices for lobbyist regulation, emphasising the urgency of tracking lobbying to uphold public trust.

The report recommended the creation of a regulated lobbying register, a milestone in the push for transparency in Irish public life.

This work led to Professor Chari, Professor Murphy and Dr John Hogan writing the high-profile *Regulating Lobbying: A Global Comparison* (Manchester University Press, 2010), which developed a novel classification scheme for lobbying regulation typologies across jurisdictions, based on quantitative indices and elite interviews. This comparative lens equips policymakers with a clearer understanding of regulatory strengths and weaknesses, offering transferable lessons for reform.

This assured Professor Chari's continued involvement with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform between 2012 and 2013, further cemented his role in shaping Ireland's lobbying legislation, with the then-Minister publicly acknowledging his contributions. The Regulation of Lobbying legislation was enacted in 2015.

Advisory Council against Economic Crime and Corruption

In 2022, Professor Chari was appointed by the Minister for Justice to the Advisory Council against Economic Crime and Corruption. The Council's role is to advise on strategic and policy responses about combatting economic

crime and corruption. It also acts as a 'centre of excellence', one which coordinates research and analysis, training, public education and awareness-raising, and promotes best practice.

Access to Policymaking in Ireland

Professor Chari explored, at a granular level, the composition and dynamics of policymaking access in Ireland. The 2023 paper '*Interest Group Access to Policymaking in Ireland*', co-authored with Dr Michele Crepez, states that while certain organisations have the resources and capacity to access policymaking and employ former policymakers in 'revolving-door' employment practices to enhance access, policy influence in Ireland is less skewed toward 'economic interest' groups compared to other European systems.

Transparency Assessment

Beyond lobbying, Professor Chari has authored influential transparency assessments. His analysis of Ireland's National Action Plan under the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2016 commended landmark reforms such as the introduction of politics as a Leaving Certificate subject and robust whistleblower protections. A follow up report for the 2016–2018 OGP cycle, however, flagged concerns over stagnation in anti-corruption and climate transparency, while praising improvements in governance standards for charities. Through these appraisals, he underscores the need for continual innovation in civic engagement and accountability mechanisms.

Outputs

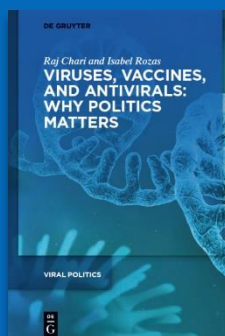
CEPA strategy guidance note on Lobbying registers (2024)

This guidance note developed by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) addresses lobbying registers, which are associated with the principle of transparency and can contribute to strengthening the accountability of institutions. It is part of a series of such notes prepared by renowned experts under the overall direction of the CEPA Secretariat in the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.



“Lobbying regulation has improved over the past few decades, with more countries adopting laws. However, the lobbying industry has evolved, particularly with the rise of digital lobbying and foreign interference. To ensure the integrity of policymaking, regulations must continually adapt.”

Professor Raj Chari & Jack O'Neill,
Lobbying Regulation in Comparative Context and Future Considerations
2024

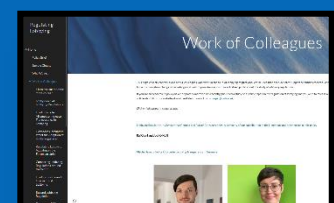


Viral Politics (2025)

Edited by Professor Chari and Professor Isabel Rozas, this series addresses viral politics with an initial focus on the ‘COVID phenomenon’: more than a viral infection, COVID-19 has impacted how scientists find solutions, what governments do, and how societies react. The series seeks to understand this phenomenon and address future challenges when other pandemics or health emergencies arise.

Regulating Lobbying Blog

The website to accompany the book *Regulating Lobbying*, now in its second edition, also has an active blog under the heading ‘Work of Colleagues’ providing a platform for blog postings on aspects of lobbying such as voluntary registration of lobbying in the European Union or the effect of corruption on the adoption of registers.





Professor Raj Chari's academic work is the study of comparative public policy, with a particular focus on lobbying regulation, along with the relationship between business and politics. Beginning his academic career in Canada, he has authored ten books, edited volumes, and special issues with leading academic presses including Oxford University Press and Manchester University Press.

Recent highlights include a two-part Special Issue on Lobbying Regulation in Interest Groups and Advocacy, and the forthcoming Oxford Handbook on Lobbying and its Regulation, due in 2026. He has also published 40 papers and book chapters.

In 2025, he was also honoured with the Inspiring Educator Award from Trinity and has been appointed as the Director of TRiSS (Trinity Research in Social Sciences) interdisciplinary research centre that unites social science researchers from various disciplines to foster collaboration on contemporary public issues.

For More Information

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