

# Policy Matters



Your weekly digest of policy reports that **matter**.  
Edited by [Toby Green](#) and [Gary Price](#) of *Policy Commons*.

## Democracy in action

For a deeper understanding of public sentiment towards democracy, Australia Public Service Reform ran two surveys in 2023. [Its findings paint a nuanced picture of democracy](#) in Australia.

Meanwhile, Liberties, an EU-based civil rights watchdog, has found in their annual [Rule of Law Report](#) that European governments continue to weaken democratic checks and balances, highlighting in particular a sharp rise in restrictions on the right to protest.

As the American presidential election campaign starts in earnest, the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) [has released a timely two-page brief on combating deepfakes](#).

On the other side of the pond, election fever is starting in the UK, too. With a huge number of MPs stepping down and the polls looking distinctly uncomfortable for others, Polimapper [has looked at the profiles of 327 candidates](#) who might replace them and found *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* (the more things change, the more they stay the same), because their profiles are so similar.

## Impact at scale

Getting impact at scale is tough. It requires perseverance, problem solving, and collaboration. Drawing on the experiences of more than 100 practitioners and experts across Australia's social sector, [this practical report](#) from Social Ventures Australia will help people across the social impact sector to develop new perspectives and build a shared vocabulary.

## Urban planning: How dense is your city?

You've almost certainly been misled about how big the world's cities are. [In this article](#), Jonathan Nolan explains why and how he's built [a new tool](#) that solves the problem of accurately comparing city densities.

## Butchering the planet

Feedback, an environmental campaign group, has updated their report on the meat industry. Mapping global financial flows to the world's largest 55 industrial livestock companies (who make up 20% of the world's butchery business), [they show that new financing](#) is driving unsustainable increases in global meat and dairy production.

## Mass shootings

The Independent Commission to investigate the 2023 mass shooting in Lewiston, Maine, has just [released their initial interim report](#) on the tragedy.

## Executive pay versus taxes paid

Americans for Tax Fairness [has just calculated](#) that big corporations are paying their top executives more than they pay Uncle Sam.

## Call for evidence about people living in poverty

Have you been involved in, or are you aware of, UK-based work that enabled those affected by poverty to articulate the issues that they face and what they feel are the most important things to invest in? GMCVO and Greater Manchester Poverty Action have been funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) to conduct an evidence review. [Click here if you have evidence to share](#). Deadline is 18 April 2024.

## What's going to be in our new *Public Health and Social Care* module?

In the weeks leading up to its launch in May, we continue to give examples of what you'll be finding there. This week, good news from the UN's IGME: [Child mortality is trending down](#). And the Covid Collective, a project that brought expertise together on COVID-19 and international development, has [released an end-of-project report on what they've learned](#). Read more about our new *Public Health and Social Care* module [here](#).

## Editors' Choice 2024

Many thanks to those who have shown appreciation for Policy Matters; we're flattered. Some have asked that we compile a list of our weekly selections—so here it is, [our Editors' Choice list for 2024](#). Do share. And if you have recommendations of reports we've missed, [please let us know](#).

If you have announcements you'd like to put in front of our readers, please [drop us a line](#).

Thanks for staying informed with Policy Matters from *Policy Commons*—with over 11 million working papers, policy briefs, data sources, and media from more than 31,000 municipalities, IGOs, NGOs, think tanks, and research centers around the world.

We choose reports from definitive sources around the globe that are data-rich and timely. Most often they'll be hot off the press, but sometimes we'll include older reports we've just uncovered. From time to time, we also share key product updates and information through this channel.

You may [unsubscribe](#) at any time.

Visit us!

