

Policy Matters



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

Are evaluations a waste of time and money?

Better evaluations lead to better policy decisions. Right? [In this honest article](#), On Think Tanks' Enrique Mendizabal shares his doubts, along with the unsettling news that even when evaluation evidence shows that a policy is failing, it's rarely cancelled.

(A little plug here... At next week's [R2R Conference in London](#), one of your editors will be on a panel discussing how research influences policy. If you're going, come say hello!)

Nothing to fear but fear itself

In advanced economies, growth is slowing and government debt is growing. [According to the author of this IMF paper](#), high government debt is itself a factor in slowing growth, because it's weakening consumer and investor confidence. The good news (Donald Trump, look away now) is that open financial systems and innovation-friendly policies can mitigate the negative effects.

Electricity: the new oil

With electrification, AI datacenters, and EVs driving demand, keeping tabs is vital—making the [IEA's annual global forecast report](#) essential reading. The report examines renewable energy expansion, with wind and solar PV expected to supply 95 percent of demand growth, while coal's share in power generation continues to decline.

Speaking of the IEA, they've [just released an AI tool](#) to help “explore” last year's World Energy Outlook. It's the first time we've seen an AI tool being used like this. Sadly, we weren't blown away by the results.

CC licenses, why the alphabet soup?

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Tracking global risks: the data

Last week, we highlighted the multipolar [Munich Security Report](#) that was discussed at the heated Munich Security Conference. Now MSC has released their [annual Index, which presents data on 33 major risks](#).

Climate risks: the data

The annual [Climate Risk Index](#), first published in 2006, is back. It compares weather related damage events (storms, floods, heat waves, etc.) and their impacts on 171 countries around the world. China, Dominica, and Honduras were the most impacted countries between 1993 and 2022. In 2022, seven in ten of the most impacted were high-income countries.

Reducing gun deaths: research evidence to inform state policy

Consider these three data points: In the US, someone is killed by a gun every eleven minutes; seventy-two percent of Americans support “firearm purchaser licensing” (FPL) laws; yet only eleven states and the District of Columbia have FPL laws. [This evidence-based report](#), designed to inform policy at the state level, shows that licensing laws are among the most effective ways to reduce gun violence.

Other reports that caught our eye last week:

- [Generative AI and Journalism: Content, Journalistic Perceptions, and Audience Experiences](#), from RMIT
- [Identifying the Economic Implications of Artificial Intelligence for Copyright Policy](#), from the US Copyright Office
- Remake's [Fashion Accountability Report 2024](#)

A message for government document librarians

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Toby Green & Gary Price
Policy Matters

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