

Policy Matters



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

School's back

Student life can be lonely and challenging, especially at the start. So as universities and colleges gear up for the new academic year, [this report on loneliness, resilience, and mental health](#) is timely reading. And how do high school students choose their colleges? With difficulty, according to a new study from ACT; [nearly 40 percent struggle to get the information they need](#). Finally, the OECD has published its annual "at a glance" report that [compares education systems](#) across more than eighty countries—and despite its title, it comes in just shy of 500 pages!

Housing shortages: can AI help?

The UK's housing policy is outdated, slow, and fails to meet the growing demands for affordable housing. [A report](#) from the Tony Blair Institute calls for strategic land planning, using AI tools for better decision-making, and reforming the mortgage market to make home ownership more accessible. There are lessons here for other countries, too.

Bleak: the state of England's National Health Service

In July, the incoming UK government commissioned the health expert Lord Darzi to report on the state of the health service in England. His [report](#) and [technical annex](#) (packed with charts) make for sober reading. Sarah Woolnough, Chief Executive of The King's Fund said: "The report is more than a gloomy assessment of how long it will take to recover services, it is a mandate for government to take bold, decisive action."

AI and LLMs

Are librarians ready to embrace AI?

A new survey by Clarivate finds that while most librarians have a plan for AI, they're constrained by tight budgets and skill shortages. [The report](#) combines feedback from a survey of more than 1,500 respondents from academic, national, and public libraries across the world, with follow-up interviews. The [dataset](#) is also available.

GPT-generated articles are infiltrating the scholarly record

Academic journals, archives, and repositories are seeing an increasing number of questionable research papers that were clearly produced using generative AI, [according to a new paper from Harvard Kennedy School](#). Many are about applied, often controversial topics susceptible to disinformation: the environment, health, and computing. Speaking of questionable papers, a [new preprint](#) reckons that the APC funding model encourages this sort of low-quality research and recommends abandoning author-paid publication fees.

Talk left, vote right

In the US and Europe, the far right, having moved left on socioeconomic issues, is often portrayed as the defender of the working class. However, [a new study shows](#) that while far-right parties in Europe talk left-wing, they still back right-wing anti-worker policies.

What on earth are we thinking about?

Earth4All and the Global Commons Alliance commissioned Ipsos UK to survey global attitudes toward some of the most pressing issues of our time, from the economy to the state of nature. The results are divided into two reports: the [Global Commons Survey](#), addressing planetary stewardship, and the [Earth for All Survey](#), focusing on economic systems change.

Climate crackdowns

Climate protests in Australia, Germany, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States are facing disproportionate crackdowns that violate basic rights to protest and assemble, according to a [new report](#) from Climate Rights International. Meanwhile, Big Oil is having to defend itself in court more often. [Cases have tripled](#), according to an analysis by Oil Change International.

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