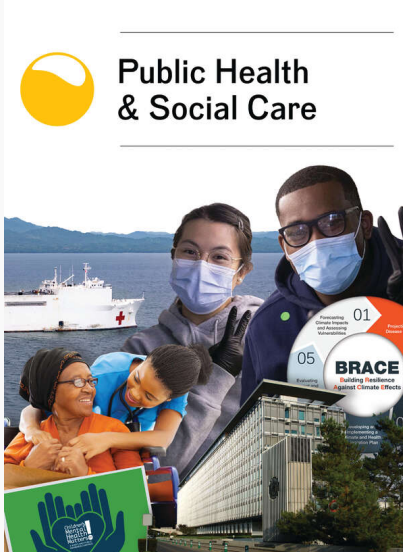


# Policy Matters



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



What's new in our *Public Health and Social Care* module?

## Forever chemicals found near fashion factories

ESDO, a Bangladesh NGO, and IPEN [have found high levels of harmful "forever chemicals"](#) (PFAS) in water sources near factories that make clothing for some of the world's best known fashion brands.

## "I can't cool"

As temperatures climb, [this report](#) examines the consequences and risks of extreme heat through a human rights lens and offers recommendations to protect populations from harm. Viewing climate change from this perspective can help identify actionable solutions and the responsibilities of governments, companies, and others to act.

## Allied health governance failings for residential aged care in Australia

[A new policy brief](#) from AHHA's Deeble Institute shows that minimum care standards, workforce structure, funding, and data collection for allied health services in residential aged care are significant barriers to providing restorative and wellbeing care in Australia.

## How did the pandemic change public attitudes on public health?

[The purpose of this research](#) was to examine the impact of COVID-19 on New Zealanders' attitudes and behaviors towards public health measures and to use this knowledge to better prepare the Ministry and other decision makers for future pandemics and other major health threats.

## The state of healthcare workers' mental health and well-being

[This two-page fact sheet](#) features the challenge dimension and facts, policy discourse, and management outlook on healthcare workers' mental health state and well-being in Europe.

Read more about our new *Public Health and Social Care* module [here](#).

Other reports that caught our eye this week:

### Artificial Intelligence: everyone's talking about it, but few actually use it

Reuters Institute for Journalism has surveyed awareness and use of generative AI in six countries (Argentina, Denmark, France, Japan, the UK, and the US). While many have tried AI (especially ChatGPT) and most agree that it will have a "large impact on virtually every sector of society in the next five years," [frequent use is rare](#).

**LLMs and personal data:** EU's data protection board's task force on LLMs has just issued its [preliminary report](#).

**How is the UN using AI to deliver on the SDGs?** [The ITU has analyzed and identified 408 AI projects across the UN](#).

## If SUVs were a country, they would be the world's fifth largest emitter of CO2

[Last year, nearly half of all new car sales were SUVs](#), and they now make up 25% of the world's car fleet. Their size and weight means that they need more critical minerals and emit ~20% more CO2 than a normal car, and their growing popularity means they're wiping out emission efficiencies seen in smaller cars. No wonder some countries and cities are beginning to look at reining in demand through higher taxes.

## An assessment of Israel's actions with respect to the provision of aid, shelter, safe passage, and assistance to evacuees in Gaza

[A report by Forensic Architecture](#) was prompted by this question posed to the Israeli legal team by ICJ judge Georg Nolte on May 17: Can Israel provide information about the existing humanitarian conditions in the designated evacuation zones, in particular Al-Mawasi, and how it would ensure safe passage to these zones, as well as the provision of shelter, food, water and other humanitarian aid and assistance to all evacuees that are, and can be expected to arrive, in these zones?

## Carbon offsets: buyers desert the market

The market for carbon offsets fell 61% last year to USD \$723m from \$1.9bn (£1.5bn) in 2022, [says Forest Trends' Ecosystem Marketplace](#). Buyers were discouraged by a series of reports that found many

offsetting schemes do nothing to mitigate the climate crisis.

### Can public parks build community?

Studies show that people are experiencing extreme levels of loneliness, polarization, and division. Can public parks be part of the solution? [This report examines the data.](#)

### Are podcasts replacing radio?

Cumulus Media's 2024 [Audioscape report](#) examines the latest podcast consumer trends from Edison Research's Q4 2023 "Share of Ear" study and from Nielsen Scarborough's Fall 2023 Podcast Buying Power report.

### Electricity generation in the US: why no competition?

Electric utilities in the US are a "platform monopoly" because they use their exclusive control over their industry's infrastructure—the electricity distribution grid—to obstruct competition and favor their own business. [A new report from Institute for Local Self-Reliance](#) also shows how utilities use their control over consumer data to evade regulatory oversight and accountability.

### Mentions—a new tool for measuring impact

*"There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about."* – Oscar Wilde

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Toby Green & Gary Price  
*Policy Matters*

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