

Policy Matters



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

AMOC and climate tipping points

You probably saw the "bad news for humanity" headlines about AMOC's tipping point, prompted by a (very) technical paper published in *Science Advances*. Thankfully, [this post](#) provides a commentary on the paper in terms non-physicists like us can understand.

With **sixteen** new reports on **climate tipping points** already added this year, don't miss out on new ones. To receive alerts by email, [just click the Follow button at the top of this search](#).

Other **climate-related reports** we recommend from last week:

- [Initial Findings From The Maui Wildfire Exposure Study](#)
- [Climate Whiplash: Wild Swings Between Weather Extremes](#) in Australia
- [Fueling a Transition Away from Fossil: Outlook for Global Fossil Fuel Demand](#)
- [Batteries](#) (they're booming)
- [Paris Referendums on SUVs and Electric Scooters \(2023-2024\)](#)

Geopolitics

At a time when Donald Trump openly questions NATO, and when more and more states define their success relative to others, a vicious lose-lose cycle of relative-gains thinking and geopolitical tensions threatens to unroll. This makes the 2024 edition of the authoritative [Munich Security Report](#) very timely indeed. It zooms in on four regions where lose-lose dynamics are particularly pronounced: Eastern Europe, the Indo-Pacific, the Middle East, and the Sahel region.

Meanwhile, the French Defense and Security Agency has just [released a report](#) detailing a **Russian misinformation campaign**, dubbed "Portal Kombat," launched in support of their Ukrainian invasion. (Also available in [French](#))

Asylum seekers and the United Kingdom's Rwanda policy

The UK government's controversial Rwanda legislation that deems the African country as a safe place to deport people was subject to two damning reports last week: [the first](#) from the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture, [the second](#) from the UK Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights.

Research Impact

In the US, a team at University of Michigan has been digging through the data to see how politicians have been [using science to inform their policymaking](#). The good news is that there's been a sixfold increase in its use since 2000. The bad news is that there's a strikingly low degree of bipartisan engagement.

A classic sting operation [showed that it's possible to buy citations](#), highlighting the need to look beyond citation counts when evaluating scholars.

And thanks to a new listserv on open scholarship called *Open Café* (more about it below), we heard about these two 2023 reports from Elsevier: [Back to Earth: Landing real-world impact in research evaluation](#) and [The future of evaluation: Emerging consensus on a more holistic system](#).

Human rights

Amnesty International released [Primer: Defending the rights of refugees and migrants in the digital age](#). Shockingly, the most prevalent form of modern slavery in the UK isn't the exploitation of refugees or migrants; it's [the exploitation of British teenagers and vulnerable adults](#). Meanwhile, the [2023 census of jailed journalists](#) has been released.

TESCREAL, the acronym behind AI doomerism

[In this podcast](#), Dave Troy is joined by Dr. Timnit Gebru and Émile Torres, two prominent critics of AI doomerism, to cut through the noise and look at where the ideas of Transhumanism, Extropianism, Singularitarianism, Cosmism, Rationalism, Effective Altruism, and Longtermism (TESCREAL) came from and offer suggestions on how we might look at these problems differently. If you prefer reading to listening, [TESCREAL: The Acronym Behind Our Wildest AI Dreams and Nightmares](#) is a good place to start.

Other reports that caught our eye:

- **Shrinkflation.** Australia's Council of Trade Unions released the findings of their [Inquiry Into Price Gouging and Unfair Practices](#).
- **Domestic terrorism.** [What NIJ Research Tells Us About](#) violent extremism in the US.
- **Elections and governance in the UK.** The Institute for Government thinks now is a good time to reset the government's [approach to transparency](#). Meanwhile, the Resolution Foundation has been digging through the data see [how voting across generations](#) has changed since 2019.
- **Charity.** [Donation Nation: The geography of charitable giving in the UK](#).
- **Sharks.** Why worry? [There have been just 6.800 recorded shark attacks](#) since the 1500s.

Open scholarship. A big shout-out to BYU's Rick Anderson for launching a new listserv on the topic of open scholarship called [Open Café](#). With Rick's blessing, we've launched an [Open Café Commons List](#) to capture and preserve all the grey literature mentioned in the posts. Just last week, we captured thirty-one items. Over time, the List will build into a community-curated collection of the best reports and commentary on open scholarship.

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