

Policy Matters



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

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New Book

The Researcher's Guide to Influencing Policy

Exceptionally, we're drawing attention to a book, because we're fans of academics' escaping their ivory towers to make an impact in the messy world of policy. Professor Mark Reed's [Fast Track Impact](#) program has helped more than 10,000 researchers across fifty-five countries become more impactful. Now for the first time, he's condensed his research, learning, tools, and tips into a practical book: [The Researcher's Guide to Influencing Policy](#). And because informed policymaking matters, we highly recommend it.

Have you been defrauded?

If you have, you're not alone. According to a [new report](#) that surveyed fifteen countries, on average one in five of us fell victim to fraud in 2021–2023. Americans experienced the highest level (31%), Japan the lowest (8%). However, the country with the highest fraud prevalence threat is Singapore.

IEA pops the hydrogen hype

Dubbed “excellent” by Ember's programme director [Dave Jones](#), [IEA's new report on hydrogen energy](#) shows that many people have underestimated its prices and complexity. That's likely to pop the hydrogen hype, because the energy source will likely have a more niche role than many hoped. (He also noted that [IEA's hydrogen project data](#) is awesome.)

“We should have given them more weapons”

“. . . we should have provided Ukraine with much more military support much earlier,” Jens Stoltenberg, outgoing NATO chief, told the Financial Times over the weekend. So why was the West so slow to provide military support? [This extensive report](#) from CSIS documents and explains the reasons.

How to wean yourself off coal

One hundred forty-two years after opening the world's first coal-powered electricity generation plant, the UK has just shuttered its last one, the first G7 country to do so. [This article from Carbon Brief](#) tells the story of how the UK managed to wean itself off coal, and it has valuable lessons for others trying to go coal free. It's also a [positive story](#) of how unions and management can work together to ensure affected workers get supportive pathways into the future.

Secureconomics

Some reckon stability is a key pillar for growth. But would a little dash of uncertainty work even better? To find out, researchers at the IMF built a database of news-based fiscal policy uncertainty across 189 countries. [They found that unsettling news stories](#) can harm real economic activity across all income groups. Worse, these effects can cross into other countries and lead to higher borrowing costs.

Circularonomics

A rush of reports on the circular economy:

- Chatham House supposes it could [revive the SDGs](#).
- IKEA, UNDP, and Ashoka discuss why [informal workers](#), whose work is usually aligned with circular principles, aren't included in circular systems and discussions.
- A report commissioned [to inform the Irish government's circular economy strategy](#) has just been released. (It has a bibliography of 500+ items!)

Other reports that caught our eye last week:

- Aon, a risk and reinsurance company, [released a summary of the effects](#) of Hurricane Helene.
- [Demystifying the State](#) deconstructs the workings of the New Zealand government by reflecting on human behavior within institutions. Lessons are here for anyone working to improve public service.
- [This comprehensive report](#) from the Australian government explores the growing phenomenon of using technology, including geolocation tools, to exert control in the context of domestic and family violence. [An accompanying paper](#) looks at how COVID lockdowns amplified the phenomenon.

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