Final Session

How to communicate research through policy briefs

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Thank you for submitting your Policy Briefs!

- You were an excellent group
  - Everyone that joined the first session submitted a policy brief

- Feedback and grades given were good,
  - But remember: high grading is less useful than good feedback

Peer Feedback – Breakout Rooms

First Name	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4
Richard	note taker	brief	reviewer	reviewer
Jean	reviewer	note taker	brief	reviewer
Orpha	reviewer	reviewer	note taker	brief
David	brief	reviewer	reviewer	note taker
Micky	note taker	brief	reviewer	reviewer
Ambrose	reviewer	note taker	brief	reviewer
Njeri	reviewer	reviewer	note taker	brief
Ntakirutiman	brief	reviewer	reviewer	note taker

Good Example 1: Very clear structure

- Follows recommended structure
- Aim is clear from the beginning
- Includes abstract and policy recommendation highlights
- Clearly delineated sections, logical flow
- Sections are balanced in length

[Link to Policy Brief 1]
[Link to Policy Brief 2]

Crowded Orbits:
What's at Stake with Space Sustainability

23/04/2025 ***Francesca Alfonzi,*** Master's student in International Relations at *La Sapienza* University of Rome.

Highlights

- **The sustainability of outer space is increasingly at risk due to the accumulation of space debris and rising levels of orbital congestion.**
- **If left unaddressed, these trends could render parts of Earth orbit inaccessible: a scenario that would severely impact communication, navigation, weather forecasting, and all other activities that rely on space-based infrastructure and data.**
- **Existing international guidelines mark important milestones toward sustainability, but their voluntary nature and limited enforcement significantly reduce their overall effectiveness.**

Introduction

Outer space plays a vital role in modern life. Societies and economies around the world depend on space-based infrastructure for essential functions — including communication, health, education, navigation, security, and broader socio-economic development. However, this interconnection extends far beyond the realm of technology: space matters increasingly shape politics, geopolitics, and policymaking at both national and international levels. Given this deep and growing reliance, ensuring continued access to outer space is no longer just a concern for space agencies or private companies — it is a matter of public interest and global equity. Yet, this access is increasingly under threat.

One of the most urgent and visible threats is the accumulation of orbital debris. Commonly known as "space junk," this includes, for example, defunct satellites, abandoned rocket stages, and fragments from past collisions, explosions, or malfunctions. These objects pose significant risks to active satellites and space missions, with the potential to trigger chain-reaction collisions, disrupt critical services on Earth, and limit the future use of orbital space. The issue of space debris is part of a much broader challenge: space sustainability. This concept refers to "the use of outer space in a manner that maintains its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations." [1] It underscores the importance of preserving outer space for peaceful purposes, scientific progress, and socio-economic benefit.

Understanding space sustainability — and why it matters — is essential for anyone involved in shaping policy today, and increasingly, for society at large. For this reason, this brief outlines the key risks to sustainable space activity and explains why they deserve attention beyond the space sector alone.

[1] Sergio Marchisio, Security in Space: Issues at Stake, in Space Policy, 2015

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POLICY BRIEF

SAFEGUARDING WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE AI ERA: A CALL FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE POLICIES

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping our societies - from hiring decisions and healthcare diagnostics to content recommendations and digital security. Yet, as it becomes more embedded in everyday life, AI systems are increasingly reproducing and amplifying harmful gender biases. This policy brief advocates for regulatory frameworks to ensure AI development and usage is fair, transparent, and gender-inclusive.

What's at stake?

Bias in AI is not just a technical flaw - it is a human rights issue. It stems from skewed datasets, flawed model design, and the underrepresentation of women in AI development. The result? Automated systems that consistently deliver unequal outcomes for women and marginalised groups.

A study at Berkeley Haas Center identified 133 AI systems exhibiting bias, with over 44% showing gender bias and 26% combining gender and racial bias. These systems aren't just unfair - they are unsafe. These systems frequently erase marginalised identities, especially in facial recognition technologies, pose health risks, including misdiagnoses in skin cancer detection for Black women and deliver lower-quality services to women and non-binary individuals as in voice recognition failures.[1]

But the problem runs deeper than data. AI is shaping how we think. A cognitive study revealed that even brief exposure to biased search results was enough to alter participants' perceptions about gender roles - underscoring how algorithmic bias reinforces social inequality.[2]

Without urgent action, AI will not only mirror our existing inequalities - it will magnify them. The risk is not just technological failure. It is the erosion of hard-won gains in gender equality, dignity, and human rights.

SUMMARY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1.Promote Global AI Frameworks: Encourage the adoption of international AI frameworks rooted in human rights to ensure a consistent and safe global approach.

2.Support Binding Agreements on AI and Equality: Advance international and regional legal instruments that address gender-based and intersectional harms in AI systems.

3.Ensure Inclusive Global Participation: Establish fair and diverse global forums where all states and stakeholders can shape AI governance.

4.Strengthen Accountability in AI Systems: Require companies and institutions to assess and address bias in AI systems, especially in areas impacting human rights.

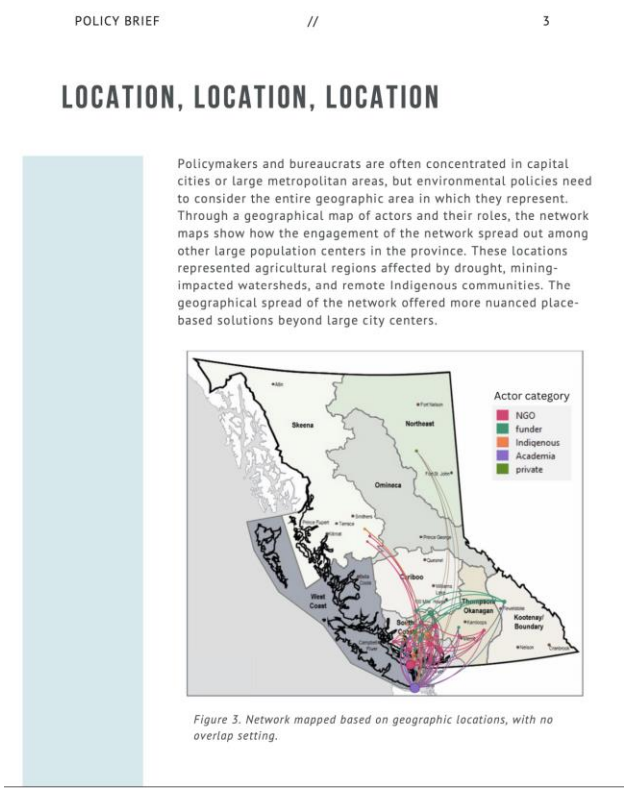
5.Increase Diversity in AI Development: Promote gender equality and inclusion in AI teams to foster more just technologies.

Good Example 2: Visually contributing to the story

- Use of maps and graphs
- Appealing design that improves the reading and makes it more interesting
- Eye catching images that contributes to the story

[Link to Policy Brief 1]

[Link to Policy Brief 2]

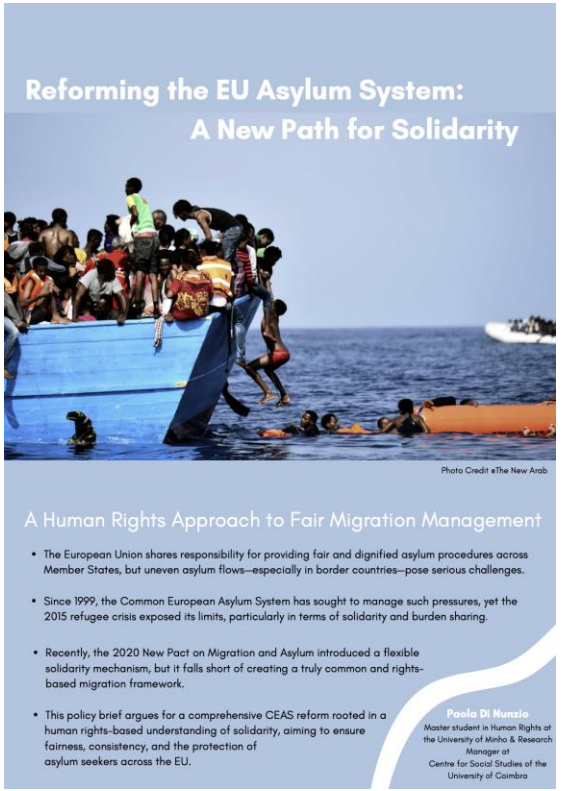


POLICY BRIEF // 3

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Policymakers and bureaucrats are often concentrated in capital cities or large metropolitan areas, but environmental policies need to consider the entire geographic area in which they represent. Through a geographical map of actors and their roles, the network maps show how the engagement of the network spread out among other large population centers in the province. These locations represented agricultural regions affected by drought, mining-impacted watersheds, and remote Indigenous communities. The geographical spread of the network offered more nuanced place-based solutions beyond large city centers.

Figure 3. Network mapped based on geographic locations, with no overlap setting.



Reforming the EU Asylum System:
A New Path for Solidarity

Photo Credit eThe New Arab

A Human Rights Approach to Fair Migration Management

- The European Union shares responsibility for providing fair and dignified asylum procedures across Member States, but uneven asylum flows—especially in border countries—pose serious challenges.
- Since 1999, the Common European Asylum System has sought to manage such pressures, yet the 2015 refugee crisis exposed its limits, particularly in terms of solidarity and burden sharing.
- Recently, the 2020 New Pact on Migration and Asylum introduced a flexible solidarity mechanism, but it falls short of creating a truly common and rights-based migration framework.
- This policy brief argues for a comprehensive CEAS reform rooted in a human rights-based understanding of solidarity, aiming to ensure fairness, consistency, and the protection of asylum seekers across the EU.

Paola Di Nunzio
Master student in Human Rights at the University of Minho & Research Manager at Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra

Good Example 3: Very clear policy advice

- Clarity and conciseness
- Clear link to what was presented in the body of the brief
- Backed by evidence

Link to Policy Brief

Key Policy Recommendations

1. Guarantee the effective implementation of FPIC
Adopt a rights-based approach in energy project planning by ensuring that prior consultation processes respect the full scope of FPIC, including the community's right to withhold consent in cases of significant cultural or territorial impact.

2. Align climate policies with collective rights
Design climate action strategies that place indigenous peoples' rights at the center of renewable energy policy, ensuring that environmental goals do not override social justice and self-determination.

3. Promote intercultural governance mechanisms
Establish permanent intercultural dialogue platforms where indigenous communities, state institutions, and project developers can co-design solutions and decision-making processes that honor traditional knowledge systems and community priorities.

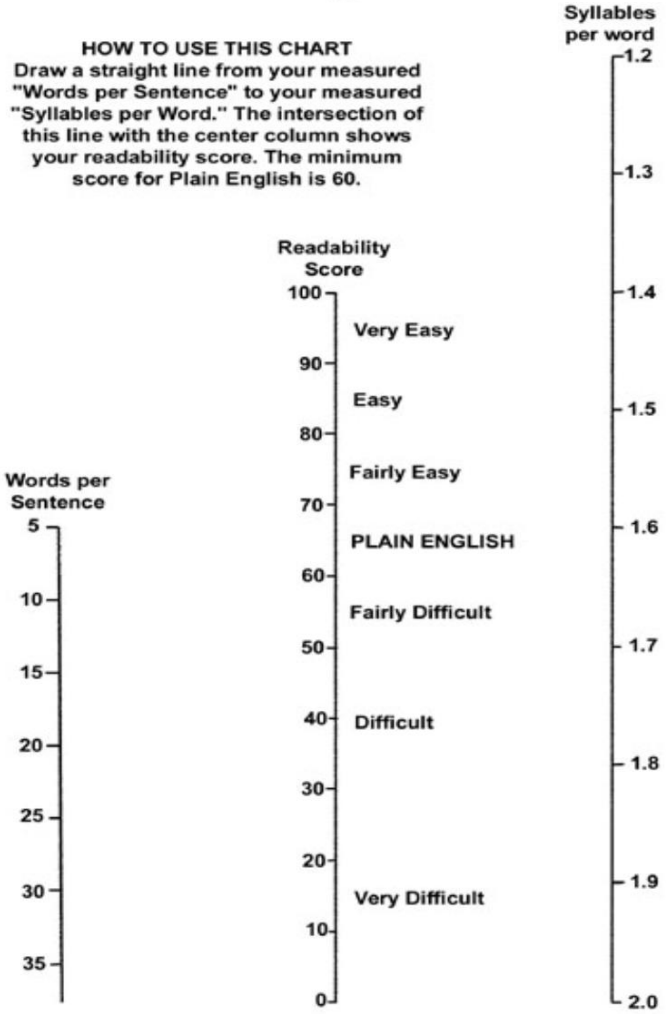
4. Support global governance and soft law instruments
Encourage international cooperation to develop and apply flexible governance tools that harmonize climate goals with human rights obligations, drawing on UNDRIP principles and best practices from other jurisdictions.

Main feedback points we observed

- Forgetting to put basic information [contact, university and link to full paper]
- Not having an interesting, eye-catching, title
- Not having a clear, specific aim/topic
- Very short (or missing) core/main body
- Recommendations not linked to the core
- Boring layout. No colors, no boxes, no visuals. No incentives to read.
- Not including highlights
- Not including reference list, or in-text references.
- Not using simple language (or having grammatical/orthographical errors)

Readability Chart

HOW TO USE THIS CHART
Draw a straight line from your measured "Words per Sentence" to your measured "Syllables per Word." The intersection of this line with the center column shows your readability score. The minimum score for Plain English is 60.

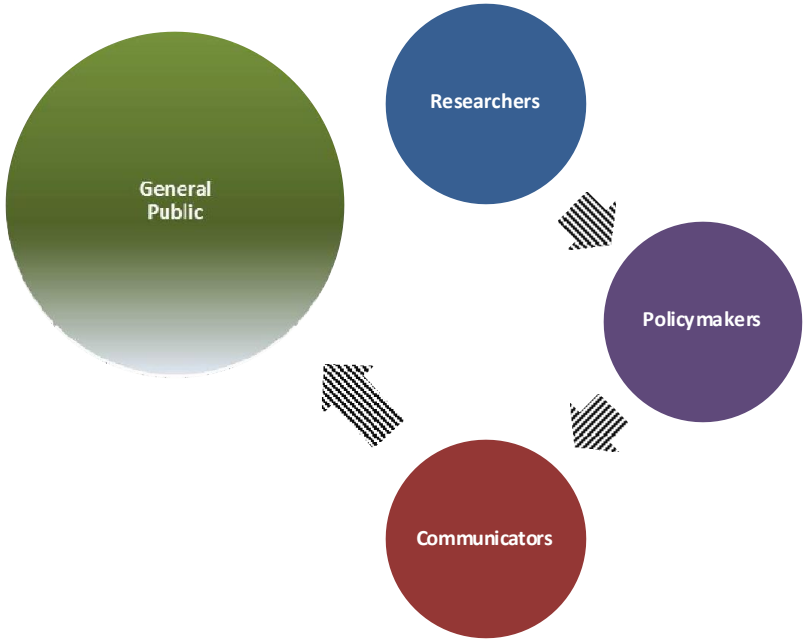


Reminder: the aim is to make research more read

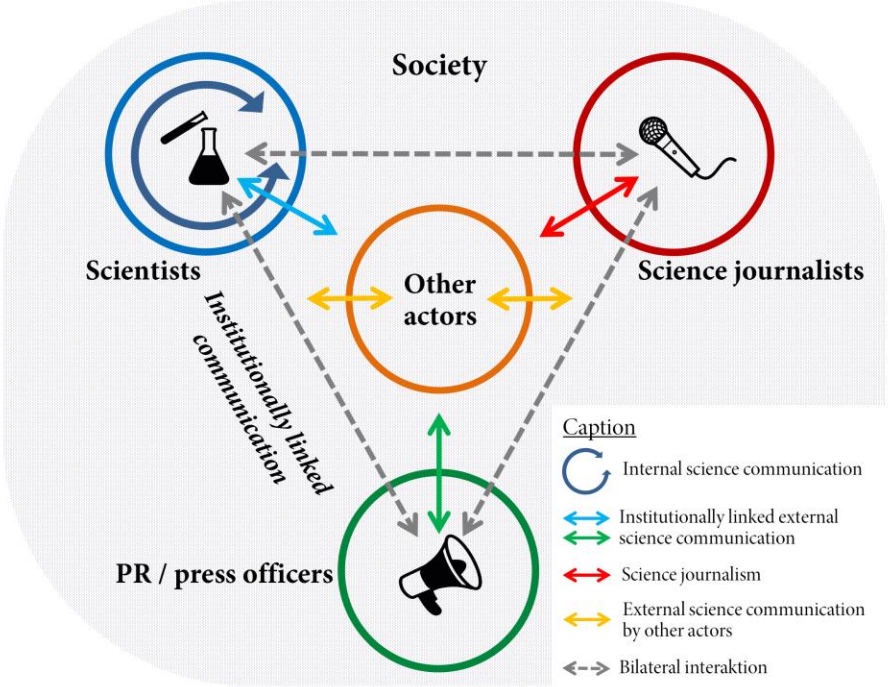
- 'We need to improve **incentives** for researchers to communicate; build communication skills at individual and institutional levels; and strengthen capacity for evidence in policy and practice.'

- 'Communication should be an **integral part of the research cycle and not an add-on**… all bilaterally funded research programmes should allocate a minimum 10% of the budget to communication.'

Researchers should also be responsible (and held accountable and rewarded) to share their learnings



Science Communication is a shared responsibility , check in with your faculty or university or institute how they include research communication and can assist you.



What to focus on in sharing your policy brief

- Use your policy brief as a platform to showcase your work beyond traditional media

- Are there any surprising elements? A key recommendation that will contribute towards solving a problem? Use this to promote your work.

- Is there someone who would appreciate a personal email informing them about the brief? Send the brief to your institution or project partners.

- Is there a personal story behind the brief? Is the topic showcased in the news or media due to a current event? Use the angle to showcase the brief.

Dissemination Worksheet

Project Title	
Principal Investigator	
Research Partners	
Division of roles	
Communication objectives; What information do you want to convey? Why do you want to share this information?	
Identifying key stakeholders	
Setting up a timeline; Identifying the best time to start the dissemination process.	
Dissemination Methods	
Best suited platforms	
Communication plan for each platform selected	
Potential obstacles	
Resources and Funding Needed	
Institutional support available	
Outreach and impact evaluation strategy	

Dissemination ideas

- Report back to your thesis participants (interviewees, institutions, donors)
- Share the policy brief with your thesis supervisor / institutional communications department
- Share the policy brief on your social media
- Add the link to the policy brief to your CV
- Add policy brief to job applications
- Use the policy advice summary in your thesis concluding chapter
- Create a profile on research gate and share it there
- Selected policy briefs shared as educational material (with your consent)

Last steps:

- Peer feedback will be shared individually
- We will send the certificates next week