

Is COVID the Grinch that's going to steal Christmas?

It's all over the news: **supply chain disruption** making it notoriously difficult for consumers to buy everything from [cars to laptops to bicycles](#). And despite the holiday season fast approaching, this side effect of the pandemic shows no signs of slowing.

"This year, Christmas will be very different," Steven Melnyk, a professor of supply chain and operations management at Michigan State University [told Vox](#) this month. "We won't see as many blowout sales leading up to the holidays, and prices are going to go up."

It seems COVID is working overtime to disrupt Christmas.

So... did we see this coming?

Year Published

2021	547
2020	1,172
2019	4
2018	6
2017	3
2016	3
2015	4
2014	6
2013	2
2012	5

To find out, I used our new proximity search tool. Proximity searching allows you to search based on how closely two or more terms appear together in a paper. I typed supply chain disruption NEAR pandemic into our search engine and *was amazed to see [so few reports prior to 2020](#)* on the risks of a pandemic on the global supply chain. Shout-out to the [Aspen Institute](#) for predicting it in their 2019 [call for the development of a universal influenza vaccine](#).

Still, IGOs and NGOs recognized the issue [early on in February](#) of last year. They're now writing about how to improve supply chain resilience—like this paper from [CEPAL](#) on the role that [Latin America and the Caribbean could play in post-pandemic US supply chain resilience](#).

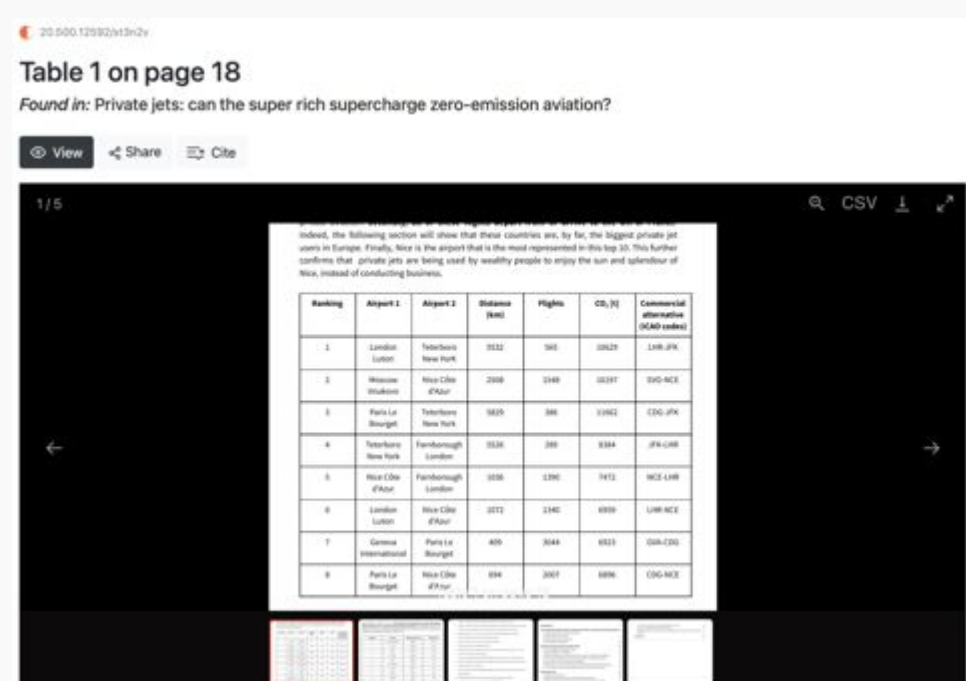
Our NEAR operator won't get that bicycle to you any faster, but it may well help you stay ahead of the curve and spot emerging trends early.

Now it's easier to find TABLES and extract data!

Last month, we asked for volunteers to test our new tables feature. **Many thanks to those who gave up their time to help us fine-tune this new service!**

To illustrate the power of this new feature, let's head to Nice, France. A [recent report on private jets](#) from the think tank [Transport & Environment](#) includes a table showing that this Mediterranean resort appears in 30% of the top private-jet journeys in Europe, suggesting that this most climate-threatening form of transport is being used for sumptuous sojourns in the sun, not urgent business.

Without our new tool, finding tables buried in reports is tedious. Now, you can narrow your search to include *only* publications with tables, open them directly from the search results, and extract the data in CSV format with one click.



(As I write this, we've extracted tables from over 400,000 publications. Please bear with us as we extract and process tables from the remaining 2.6 million items in *Policy Commons*. Working through the backlog will take us a few more weeks.)

Visualizing data: a super cool toolkit we wanted to share.

There are so many ways to visualize data—how to know which one to pick? To help, *The Financial Times* recently teamed up with the Royal Geographical Society to produce a fantastic [Visual Vocabulary](#) toolkit. It has simple coloured categories to help you decide which data relationship is most important in your story, and the tool leads you to the different types of chart that might work best. You need never get your deviation muddled with your correlation again!



A free policy event for readers of our newsletter.

Policy Commons has partnered with [STEPPS](#), a new society for those interested in strengthening and transferring evidence between researchers and policymakers to create a "learning government." **Readers of our newsletter are being offered free attendance to their next event: [Knowledge Brokering between Research and Government](#)** on September 22nd.

Speakers include:

- Kathryn Newcomer, Professor, George Washington University
- Annette Boaz, Founding Editor, *International Journal of Evidence and Policy*
- Jonathan Breckon, Founder, Alliance for Useful Evidence, NESTA
- Armin Grunwald, Head of Technology Assessment, German Bundestag

Contact [Frank Zwetsloot](#) for more information.

And finally, COP26, the UN's climate conference, is at the end of October.

The starting gun for COP26 was sounded on August 9th when the IPCC released the [first part](#) of their 6th Assessment Report (AR6). Understandably, this [hit the headlines](#). But IPCC also released a set of factsheets and data, some of which has been used by NASA to [model sea level rise](#). Even the IPCC website doesn't have

all the parts and spin-offs from AR6. But Policy Commons does—because we've pulled them all together under the [IPCC organization entry](#). Over the coming months, our editorial team is keeping a sharp eye out for the many reports, datasets, and more that will serve as input for the COP26 discussions.

Follow our [Climate Topic](#) to make sure you don't miss out.

Looking forward to sharing more news and stories next month.

Toby Green

Publisher, *Policy Commons*

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