

Meet the PCI for North Korea!

Glimpsing into the Hermit Kingdom using AI



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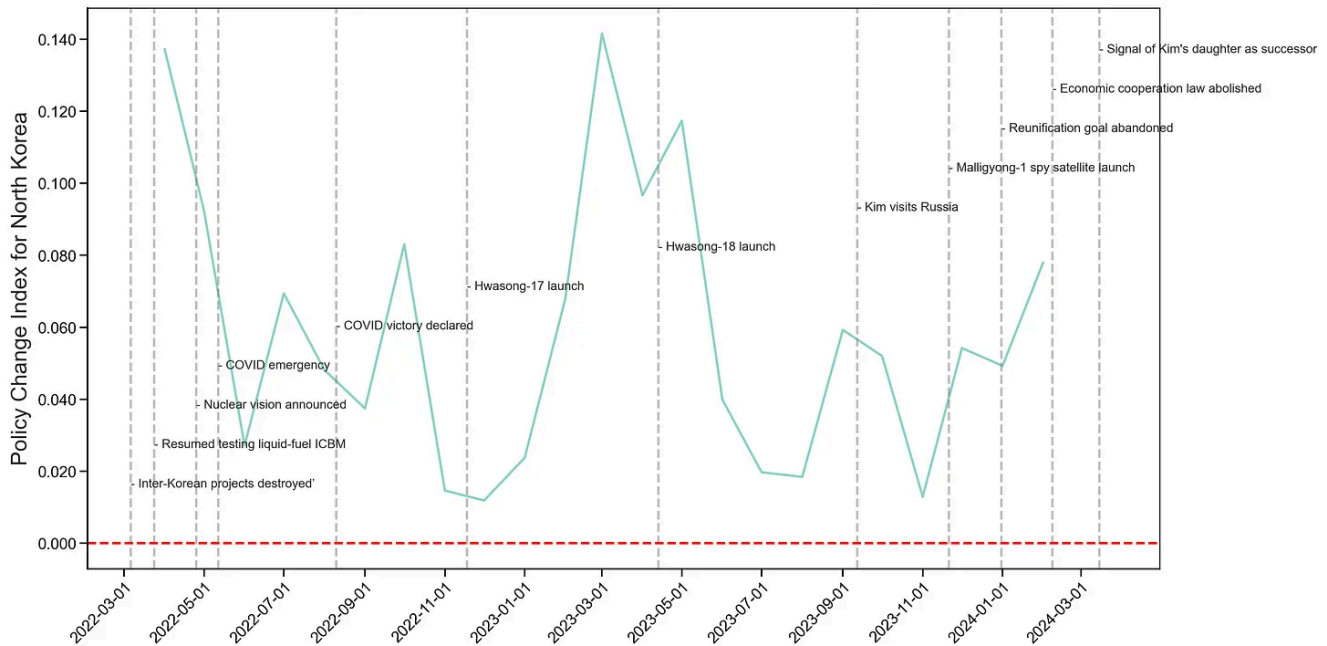
Dear Human Readers,

The AI algorithm development at the [Policy Change Index \(PCI\)](#) is ramping up. Today, we're excited to launch the PCI algorithm for North Korea in hopes of glimpsing into one of the world's most repressive and secretive autocracies.

PCI-NKO

Open source to crack closed regimes. North Korea, under the Kim family's rule for three generations spanning nearly 80 years, remains one of the most closed-up regimes on earth. But because North Korea's propaganda apparatus was modeled after that of Soviet Russia and Communist China, the same method of predicting policy changes by detecting propaganda shifts—as was implemented in the [PCI-China project](#) using the CCP's mouthpiece—may help observers like us anticipate significant moves by Pyongyang.

PCI for North Korea (PCI-NKO). [Zhiqiang Ji](#) and Weifeng Zhong just released the [Policy Change Index for North Korea \(PCI-NKO\)](#). The algorithm uses deep learning and large language models (LLMs) to detect and interpret propaganda changes in *Rodong Sinmun*, the equivalent of *Pravda* and the *People's Daily* for North Korea. Because of *Rodong Sinmun's* function of mobilizing North Koreans in support of Pyongyang's agenda, the index is, in effective, predictive of the Kim regime's upcoming policies.



PCI-NKO and Major Policy Events in North Korea, Apr. 2022 to Feb. 2024

Note: The PCI-NKO predicts if and when the North Korean government will change its policy priorities. A spike in the indicator represents a significant deviation from the propaganda baseline, while a vertical line marks a policy change labeled by the event.

Pyongyang's nuclear buildup. For example, on April 1, 2023, the PCI-NKO recorded a value of 0.1, one of the highest in the period studied. The spike indicates a major editorial pivot in *Rodong Sinmun* that included a more-than-usual emphasis on defense and national security issues, such as North Korea's advancement in intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) technology and military readiness.

Consistent with the algorithm's prediction, on April 13, North Korea conducted the inaugural launch of the [Hwasong-18](#), its first long-range, solid-fueled ICBM—a weapon that potentially puts the entire continental United States within Pyongyang's reach. That was followed by launches of North Korea's spy satellites, initially failing in May 2023 but succeeding in November that year.

For more, check out the interactive graph for the PCI-NKO and the technical details about the algorithm and its capabilities [here](#):

PCI-Personnel

Earlier this month, we launched the [PCI-Personnel project](#) that tracks the political fortune of top Chinese officials around President Xi Jinping. Among other uses, the index seems predictive of the rise and fall of Xi's top aids like former foreign minister Qin Gang and his successor Wang Yi.

Going forward, we will regularly update and upgrade the algorithm. We're also taking requests from our readers for persons of interest to add to the tracker. ***So, send us the names you have in mind!***

 Message Weifeng Zhong

PCI Resources

The open-source PCI projects are meant to crack a window to otherwise opaque political systems like China's, so everyone can look inside—for free. You can find out more about our projects on the [PCI website](#). And if you are a Macrobond user, you can now get the PCI data streams there, too. Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or ideas!

Edited by Weifeng Zhong and Julian TszKin Chan.

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