THINK TANKS AND GOVERNMENTS

BRIDGING THE GAP

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Penn’s TTCSP and the TTCBP

Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP)
- “Think Tanks’ Think Tank”
- Research and data on think tanks
- Global Database and network Think Tanks
- Global Go-To Think Tank Index

Think Tank Capacity Building Program (TTCBP)
- Knowledge exchange and capacity-building for governmental and NGO think tanks

Current Studies
- Think Tanks in the BRICS and G20
- Think Tanks in India & China
- Trends and Transitions Security and International Affairs Think Tanks
- Global Think Tanks and Policy Advice & Governance
- Fifth Estate: Think Tanks and US Domestic and Foreign Policy
Presentation Structure

I. Global Overview of Think Tanks
II. European Think Tanks
III. Comparison: US and EU Think Tanks
IV. US Think Tanks: the Fifth Estate
   US Presidential Candidates and Think Tanks
V. Italian Think Tanks
VI. Overview of Global Go To Think Tank Rankings Report
GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF THINK TANKS
THINK TANK:

A public policy research, analysis and engagement organization

- Knowledge-based, policy-oriented institutions
- Serve governments, intergovernmental organizations, and civil society
“Within universities, research is frequently driven by arcane theoretical and methodological debates only distantly related to real policy dilemmas. Within government, officials immersed in the concrete demands of day-to-day policy-making are often too busy to take a step back and reconsider the broader trajectory of U.S. policy. Think tanks help bridge this gap between the worlds of ideas and action.”

- Richard Haass
  President, Council on Foreign Relations
  “Think Tanks and U.S. Foreign Policy: A Policy-Maker’s Perspective”
"Got an elbow joint?"
Role of Think Tanks

- Generate policy-oriented research, analysis, and advice
- Engage and educate policymakers, media and public on policy issues
- Identify, train, and develop talent
- Provide a home for public figures who are out of office
- Convene experts to float policy proposals and build consensus
- Serve as bridge between knowledge and policy communities
- Help bridge the gap between policymakers and the public
- Be in the vanguard of political and economic development, and of policy innovation
- The canary in the mine: key civil society indicator
## Types of Think Tanks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party-Affiliated</td>
<td>• Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Germany)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Jaures Foundation (France)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Progressive Policy Institute (U.S.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governmental</td>
<td>• China Development Institute (China)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Institute for Political &amp; International Studies (Iran)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Congressional Research Service (U.S.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quasi-governmental</td>
<td>• Institute for Strategic &amp; International Studies (Malaysia)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Korean Development Institute (Korea)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Woodrow International Center For Scholars (U.S.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autonomous and Independent</td>
<td>• Pakistan Institute of International Affairs (Pakistan)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Institute for Security Studies (South Africa)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Institute for International Economics (U.S.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quasi-independent</td>
<td>• European Trade Union Institute (Belgium)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• NLI Research Institute (Japan)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Center for Defense Information (U.S.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>University-affiliated</td>
<td>• Foreign Policy Institute, Hacettepe University (Turkey)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Institute For International Relations (Brazil)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University (U.S.)</td>
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COMPARISON: US AND EU THINK TANKS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Europe</th>
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<tr>
<td>Porous and highly decentralized system of government</td>
<td>Highly centralized, unitary form of government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light government, weak bureaucracy</td>
<td>Strong civil service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak and individualistic political parties</td>
<td>Strong political parties in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US President’s candidacy is not tied to party</td>
<td>Prime Minister’s fate is tied to party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperpluralistic society and pluralist political system</td>
<td>Corporatist political system</td>
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</table>
| More wealthy donors in the US  
  • Examples: Bill Gates ($35.6 Billion), George Soros (> $8 billion) | More government funding |
EU has 1,836 think tanks

The European countries with the most think tanks are: the UK (2858), Germany (194), France (177), Russia (122), Italy (107) and Sweden (77)

Less influential in policy decisions
  •  Less media savvy
  •  Lack of ‘revolving door’

Relationship to academia: research rather than policy

Greater reliance on government funding

Lack of transparency

Smaller budgets and staff
  •  Most of the top 25 think tanks in the U.S. have budget over $20 million
  •  1 or 2 of top 10 European think tanks have budget over $20 million
CHARACTERISTICS OF US THINK TANKS

- More of them
  1,823 think tanks in 49 states (Wyoming is the only exception)
  394 based in Washington, DC

- Larger budgets and staff (2010 Stats)
  Budgets: BI ($90m), HF ($80m), Rand ($247m), CFR ($48m), CAP ($38 million), CNAS ($5M), Baker ($5m), CSIS ($34m), AEI ($29m), CEIP ($23m), Cato ($22m)
  Staff: BI (450), HF (269), Rand (1700), CFR (293), CAP (242), CNAS (24), Baker (55), CSIS (150), AEI (NA), CEIP (160), Cato (120)

- Greater Specialization with Increasing Organizational Diversity
  80% of all think tanks created since 1980 are specialized (functional and/or ideological)
  World’s most active laboratory for new think tank brands, products, marketing strategies and distributions methods

- Greater visibility and influence
  The ‘revolving door’ phenomenon
  Testimony and briefings for Congress and White House
  Research used by the Electronic and Print Media

- Significant independence
  Financial
  Government and Political Parties
The four Rs of High Impact Think Tanks

**Relevance**
- Timely and accessible research & analysis that is in “the right form, at the right time”

**Rigor**
- Scholars and analysts who consistently produce high quality, independent research & analysis

**Reliability**
- Data, research & analysis that is evidence based, subjected to a careful review process and quality controls

**Reach**
- A range of high quality, accessible products that meet the needs of policy-makers, journalist & policy elites that are carefully marketed to key stakeholders
The Fifth R

- Based on the quality of a Think Tank’s ideas, independence and influence
- Think Tank is only as good as its last good idea, so keep the ideas coming
- Go-to place (GTP) for research and analysis on an issue or for a leading expert on a topic
- “Critical mass of positive buzz”
- In US, the GTP for the 2000 plus policy-makers, journalists and policy elites who shape public policy
## Hybridization of Think Tanks

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Increasing blend of organizational types</th>
<th>Changing nature of staffing patterns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➤ Academic Center</td>
<td>➤ Academic Scholar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Consulting Firm</td>
<td>➤ Analysts/Technocratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Advocacy Group</td>
<td>➤ Activist/Ideologue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Policy Enterprise</td>
<td>➤ Marketing/Sales Exec.</td>
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<tr>
<td>➤ Media Tank</td>
<td>➤ Journalist</td>
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<tr>
<td>➤ Techie Tank</td>
<td>➤ Techie or Social Networker</td>
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# Think, Do and Tweet Tanks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think Tank</th>
<th>Research &amp; Analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Think &amp; Do Tank</td>
<td>Turns Ideas into Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk Tank</td>
<td>Convenes Policy Elites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Tank</td>
<td>Pushes Other People’s Ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techie Tank</td>
<td>Let Technology Do the Talking</td>
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CHALLENGES – THE “4 Ms”

- Think tanks clearly face unique challenges depending on nature and state of political and economic system in which they operate.

- All think tanks, however, face a common set of challenges that can be summarized by 4 Ms:

  MISSION
  MANPOWER
  MONEY
  MARKET
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>What are think tanks and how do they establish their research priorities in a fast changing world?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manpower</td>
<td>How and where do think tanks recruit and retain top talents?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Who funds think tanks and how independent are they?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>How do think tanks convince policy-makers of their worth?</td>
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It is for this reason that we propose a regional think tank summit that will provide for a peer-to-peer exchange of best practices in think tank management and policy development.
AVOID THE TRAPS

- **Donor Trap** (dominated by single donor)
- **Here and Now Trap** (driven by headlines)
- **Academic Trap** (not policy relevant)
- **Discipline/School Trap** (one size fits all)
- **Ideology Trap** (ideology defines ideas)
- **Influence Trap** (moth to the flame)
- **Ego Trap** (individual’s ego smothers institutional identity)
- **Establishment Trap** (captured by policy, corporate & media elites)
- **Status Quo Trap** (conventional wisdom)