



Think Tanks

- ✓ TRENDS
- ✓ CHALLENGES
- ✓ PERSPECTIVES



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MAIN THESES OF THE SPEECH BY PROFESSOR VUSAL QASIMLI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC REFORMS AND COMMUNICATION, DOCTOR OF ECONOMIC SCIENCES, AT THE “I FORUM OF THINK TANK CENTRES IN AZERBAIJAN.”

The role of think tanks on a global scale is increasingly significant against the backdrop of the information and technological revolution, as well as the growing complexity of policy issues. In Azerbaijan, think tanks play a crucial role in data-driven strategic management by focusing on five main areas of activity. These areas include conducting various types of surveys and analyses, utilizing big data generated by e-government systems for analytical purposes, monitoring and researching social media trends, carrying out technical scientific research, and analyzing data related to the monitoring and evaluation of social and economic reforms.

The Presidential Decree “On Some Measures Related to Improving Governance in the Field of Science and Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan” holds great importance in strengthening the interaction between science

and education while enhancing governance in these areas.

Furthermore, the Strategy for Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2022–2026 outlines the expansion of research across various scientific fields. It emphasizes engaging young people with modern and creative thinking in scientific research from an early age. A competitive and targeted financing mechanism for scientific research will be established, and support will be provided for the commercialization of scientific research and technical design work (SRTD). Research initiatives aimed at these objectives will receive funding, and the development of SRTD infrastructure will be prioritized.

This comprehensive approach is expected to significantly contribute to Azerbaijan’s socio-economic and scientific progress.



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Given the prioritization of technology commercialization in innovative development during the modern era, efforts will focus on ensuring the transformation of research results into marketable products. Existing obstacles to scientific research will be identified and addressed to facilitate the delivery of innovations to the market. Additionally, the share of expenditures on research, development, and innovation (R&D&I) in the GDP will be increased to 0.1%. Plans are also underway to establish two research universities by restructuring two existing universities with high research potential in the country.

The communication strategies of think tanks differ significantly from other forms of communication. American economist Thomas Stewart, in an interview with "Fortuna Magazine", emphasized that the greatest task of intellectual capital managers is to "create organizations that can share knowledge."

He likened unshared intellectual capital to a wise man sitting alone in an empty and useless room. Stewart underscored the importance of establishing networks within think tanks to facilitate the transfer of information. These networks serve as critical bridges connecting audiences, listeners, suppliers, and other stakeholders.

Globally, there are over 5,500 active think tanks, many of which continue to conduct research to establish standards for effective communication, enhance their influence, and measure their impact. In this context, the "I Forum of Think Tanks in Azerbaijan" holds significant importance, providing a platform to discuss these issues and propose practical solutions. This initiative is a step toward fostering innovation, strengthening communication networks, and addressing challenges faced by think tanks both locally and globally.



1 Think Tank Centers INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE



THINK TANK CENTERS IN INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Over the past 30 years, think tanks worldwide have developed various global initiatives aimed at bridging the gap between **knowledge and policy** in key areas such as globalization and governance, international economics, environmental issues, international peace and security, poverty reduction, health and global health, and information and society.

Today, think tanks are contributing to the strengthening of civil societies globally by enhancing international cooperation efforts, improving the policymaking process, and fostering the creation of regional and international networks. Research centers specializing in economic policy analysis play a pivotal role in civil society.

These institutions engage the world's leading scientists and experts, who develop policy documents addressing critical issues. Notable examples include initiatives by international organizations, such as the

Think-20's scientific recommendations for G20 countries (Think-20), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Partnership Platform (SDGs Partnership Platform), and the OECD Global Forum (OECD Global Forum).

The University of Pennsylvania publishes the annual Global Go To Think Tank Index, which ranks the world's leading think tanks across various categories. The index is compiled by a panel of over 1,796 institutions and experts representing print and electronic media, academia, public and private donor organizations, and governments.

This annual index serves as a valuable resource for academics, journalists, donors, and the public, helping them identify and connect with the world's leading public policy research centers.



THINK TANK CENTERS IN INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The primary objective of the index is to elevate the visibility and activities of think tanks and to educate the public about their critical role in shaping government policies and strengthening civil societies worldwide.

To date, the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) has delivered technical assistance and capacity-building programs in 85 countries. Additionally, efforts are underway to develop regional and global networks of think tanks.

These initiatives aim to foster sustainable institutional and state-level partnerships by engaging think tanks capable of producing high-quality policy research and influencing public and elite opinions and actions for the greater public good.

Think tanks and academic institutions should prioritize addressing issues that are systemic, cross-sectoral, globally interdependent, and beyond the capacity of any single country to resolve.

Examples include challenges such as poverty, environmental change, migration, and food security, all of which are critical determinants of development. Addressing these complex issues requires engagement with high-level political actors at the local level, civil society representatives, and global stakeholders.

Think tanks and academic institutions focusing on economic development should advocate for the principle of universality. Knowledge should be regarded as a “global public good,” necessitating the sharing of insights and solutions at national, regional, and global levels. While each country may encounter unique challenges in achieving developmental goals, the concept of “universality” provides a robust framework for addressing problems that demand global collaboration. This revision ensures grammatical correctness, maintains clarity, and adopts a formal academic tone suitable for professional or scholarly contexts.



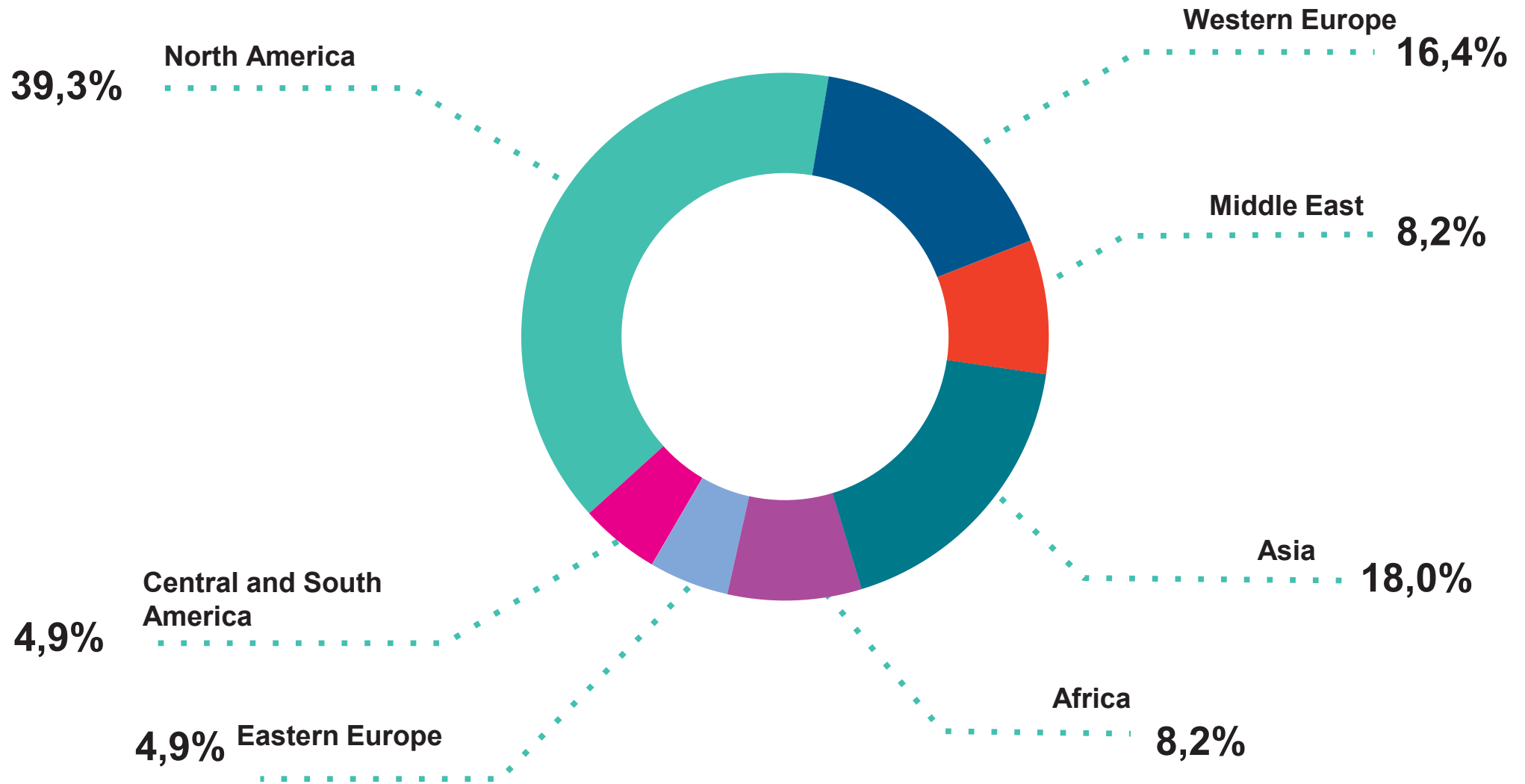
KEY MESSAGES

- Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires transformative governance that emphasizes partnerships.
- Six key areas need increased focus to ensure progress toward these development goals.





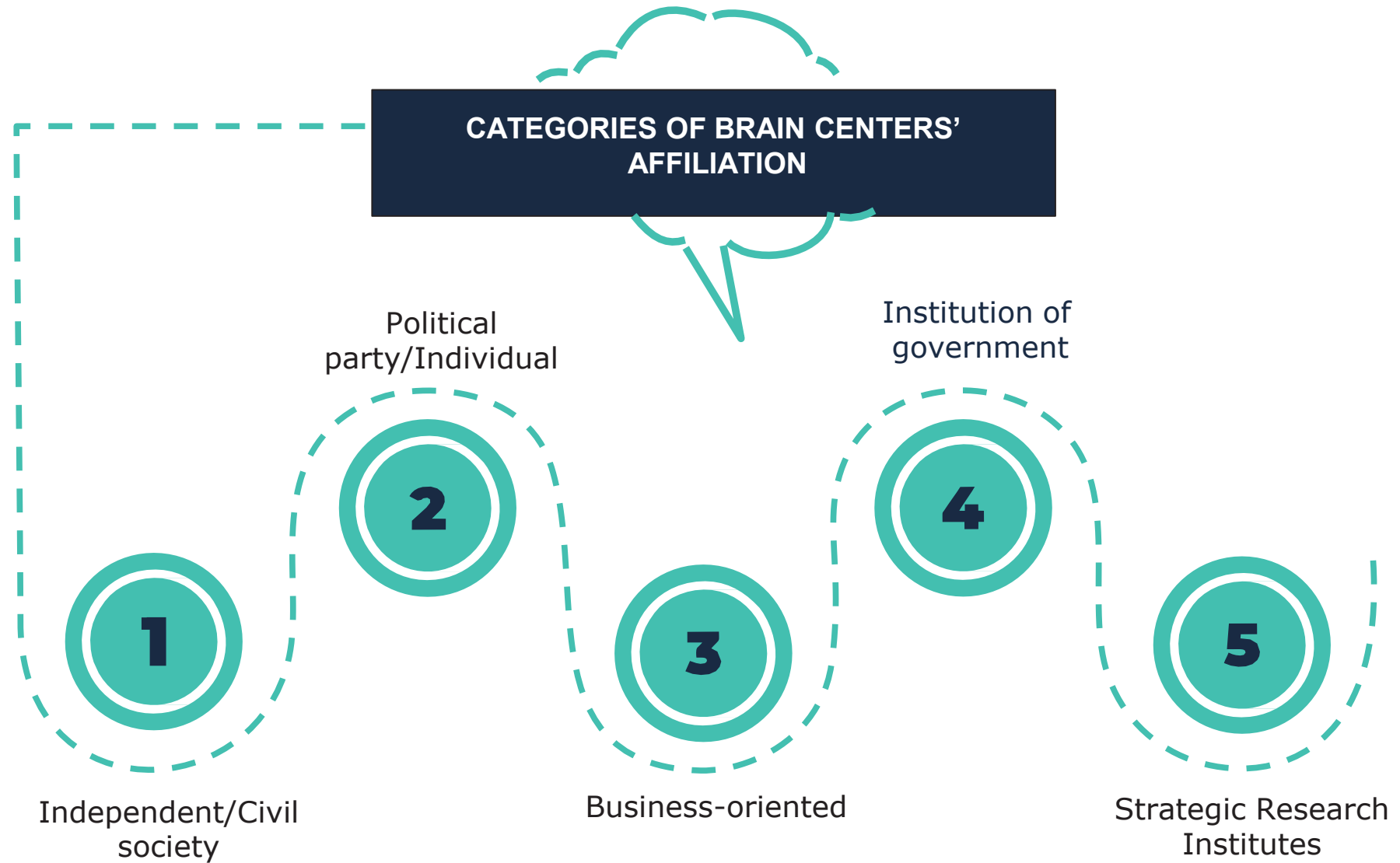
**REGIONAL DIVISION
OF BRAIN CENTERS**



"Global Go To Think Tank Index" Report, 2021, prepared by the University of Pennsylvania, 2021

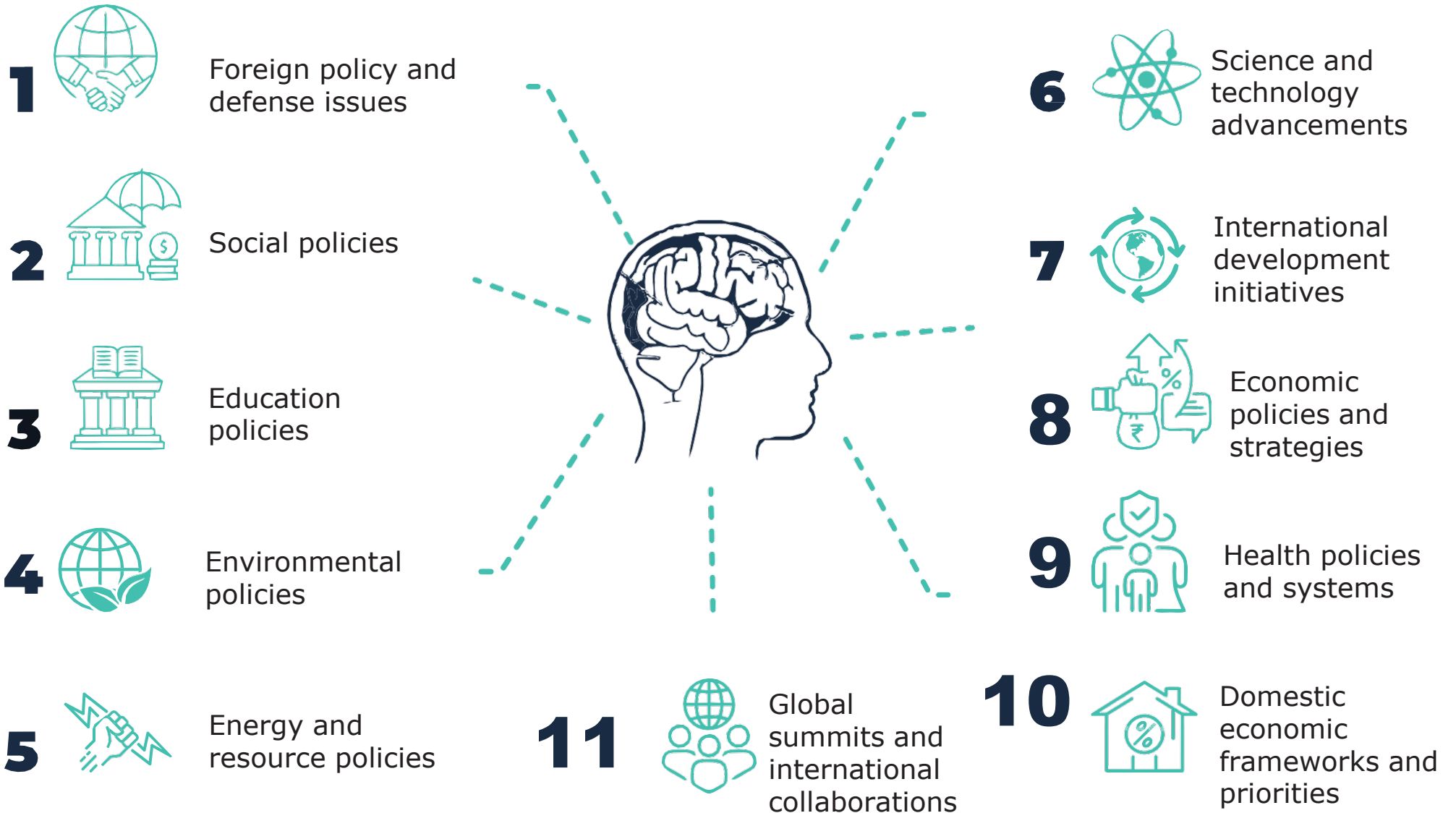


CATEGORIES OF BRAIN CENTERS' AFFILIATION



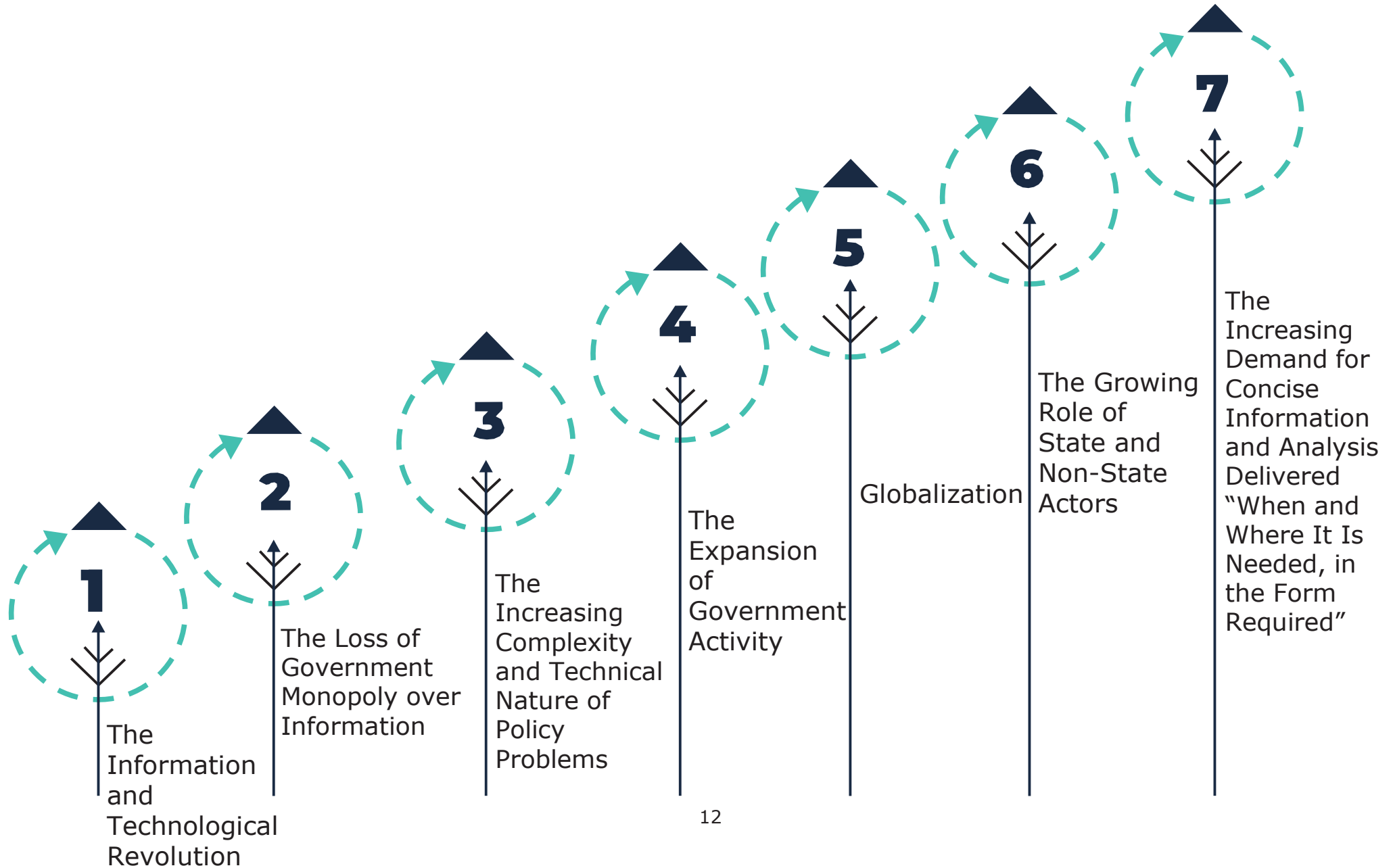


FUNCTIONAL CATEGORY OF THINK TANKS





REASONS FOR THE GROWTH OF THINK TANKS IN THE 21ST CENTURY





BASIC ACTIVITY CRITERIA OF THINK TANKS



Academic Performance
and Reputation



Capacity to Build Relationships
Between Policymakers and the
Public



Ability to Earn Trust Within
Policymaking Bodies



Societal Impact

Capacity to Foster
Collaboration Between
Academia and Policymakers



Ability to Introduce New
Voices into the
Policymaking Process



Initiator of Innovative Policy
Ideas and Programs





2 THE ROLE OF BRAIN CENTERS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SCIENCE



THE ROLE OF BRAIN CENTERS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SCIENCE

According to the information published on the website of the Higher Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, there are **103** scientific institutions operating in Azerbaijan. Additionally, the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in scientific research is approximately **50**.

Scientific institutions = **103**

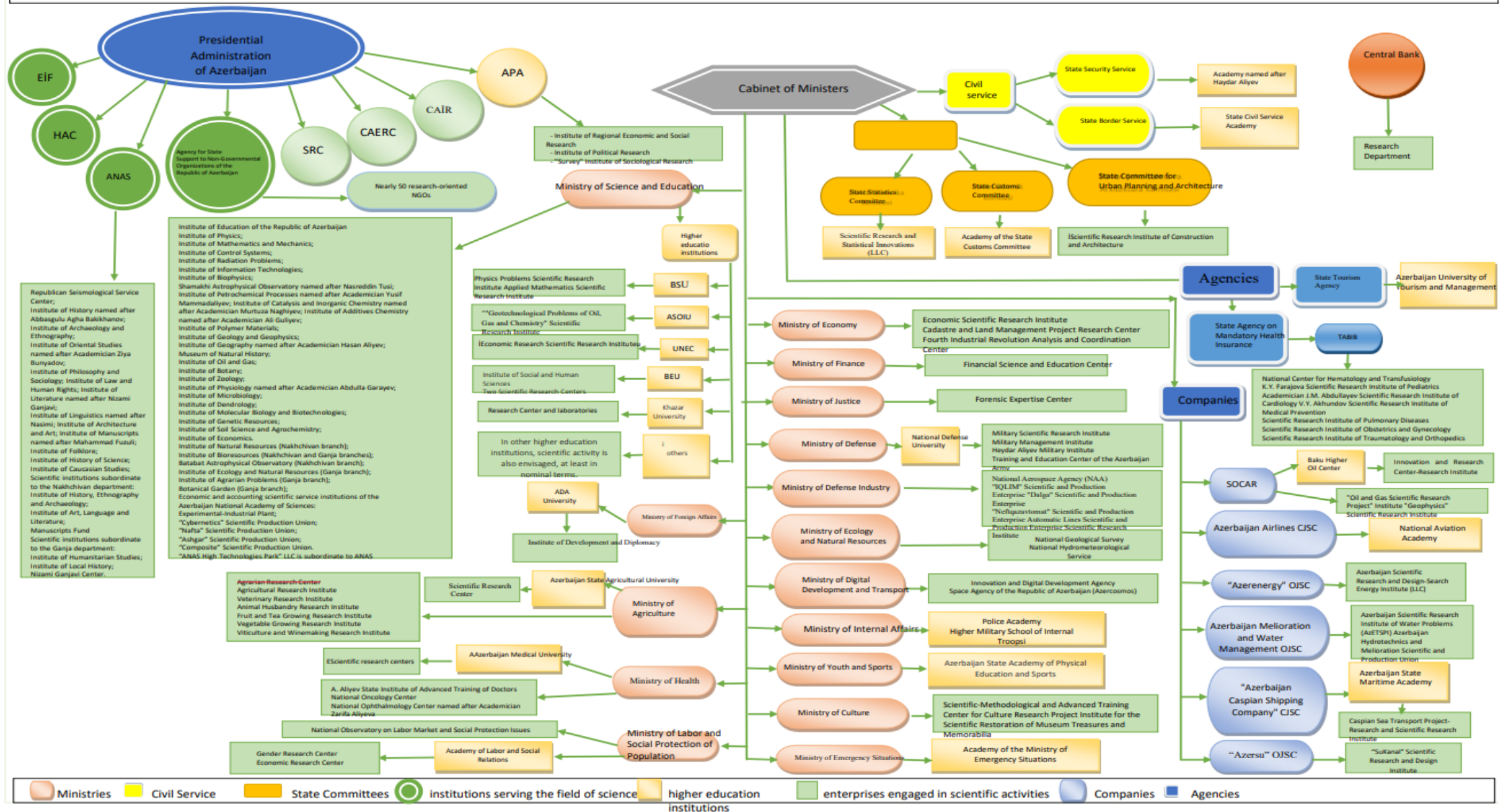


Non-Governmental Organizations = **50**



CURRENT SITUATION IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE MANAGEMENT IN AZERBAIJAN

Current situation in science management in Azerbaijan





3

Think Tanks

Their Role In Strategic Management



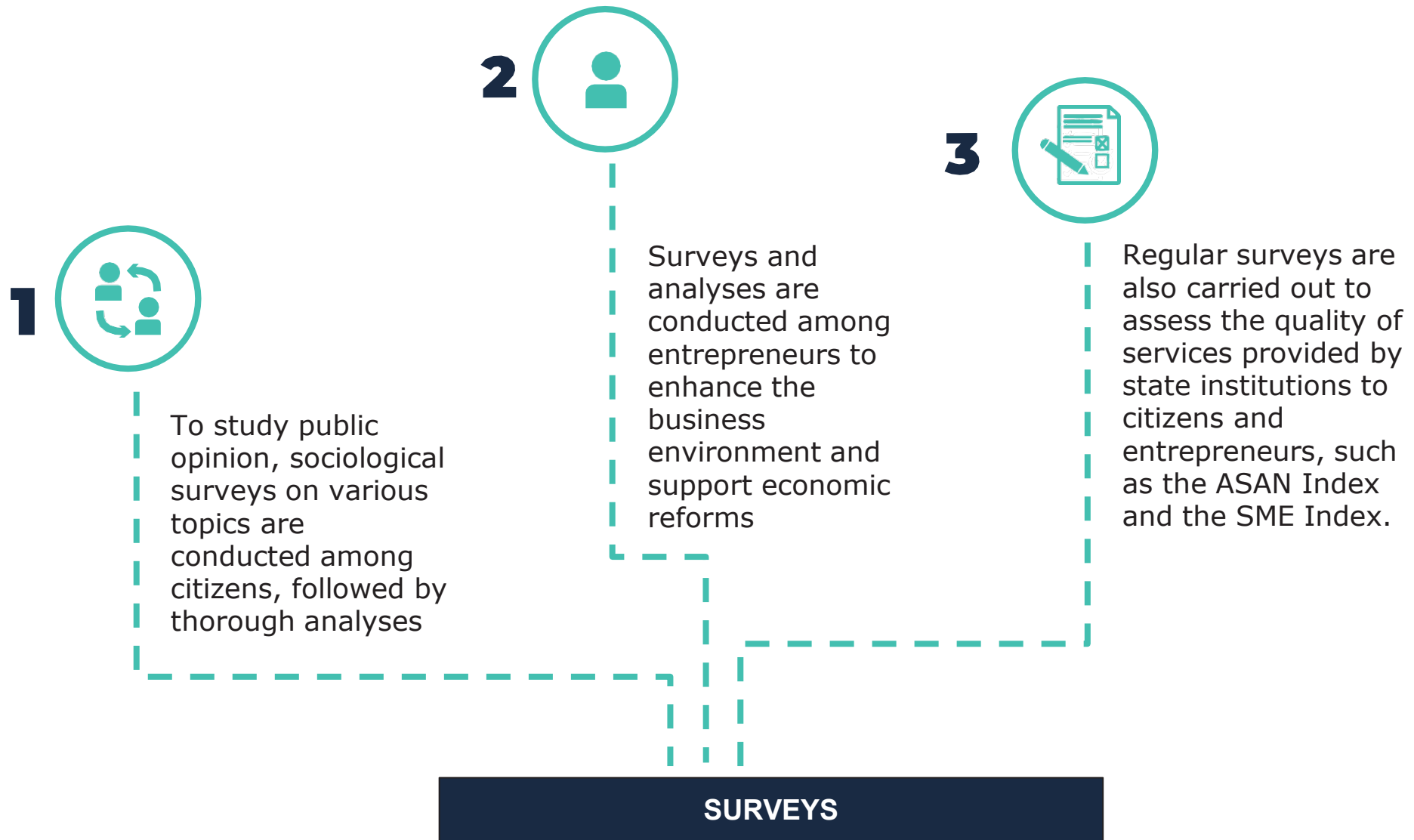
THE ROLE OF BRAIN CENTERS IN AZERBAIJAN IN DATA-BASED STRATEGY MANAGEMENT

The activities of think tanks operating in Azerbaijan play a crucial role in data-driven strategic management across four key areas. These include conducting and analyzing various types of surveys, leveraging and analyzing Big Data generated by e-government initiatives, monitoring and researching social media, and analyzing data related to the monitoring and evaluation of social and economic reforms.





THE ROLE OF BRAIN CENTERS IN AZERBAIJAN IN DATA-BASED STRATEGY MANAGEMENT: **SURVEYS**





THE ROLE OF BRAIN CENTERS IN AZERBAIJAN IN DATA-BASED STRATEGY MANAGEMENT: **MONITORING OF SOCIAL NETWORKS**

MONITORING OF SOCIAL NETWORKS



1



Social networks are monitored, focusing primarily on texts, opinions, hashtags, keywords, and other relevant elements

2



This monitoring aims to analyze user behavior and assess relationships within social networks

3



Additionally, by establishing interactive connections with citizens, the necessary information and data are effectively communicated to the audience through social media platforms



THE ROLE OF BRAIN CENTERS IN AZERBAIJAN IN DATA-BASED STRATEGY MANAGEMENT: **ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT (E-GOV)**

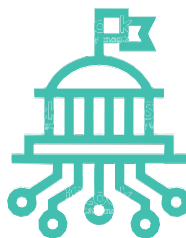
1 E-government plays a crucial role in fostering mutual relationships between the state, citizens, and the business sector, thereby contributing to the generation of Big Data



2

Big Data created through e-government initiatives is utilized for flexible and rapid decision-making in both social and economic policy

ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT (E-GOV)



3

The next generation of e-government (E-government 3.0) will be instrumental in transforming raw information and data into actionable knowledge



THE ROLE OF BRAIN CENTERS IN AZERBAIJAN IN DATA-BASED STRATEGY MANAGEMENT: **MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF REFORMS**



1

Big Data is generated through the monitoring and evaluation of state strategies, programs, and action plans in the social and economic spheres (monitoring.az)



2

The Azranking.az portal facilitates the implementation of reforms by leveraging its database



3

The monitoring and evaluation of reforms establish a functional connection—a 'wise circle'—between the monitoring.az and azranking.az portals

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF REFORMS



4

THINK TANKS
COMMUNICATION



The greatest responsibility of intellectual capital managers is to 'create organizations that facilitate knowledge sharing.' Intellectual capital that is not shared is akin to a wise individual sitting alone in a room, rendered ineffective. To enable the transfer of information, networks must be established within think tanks and intellectual hubs. These networks serve as bridges connecting audiences, listeners, suppliers, and all other stakeholders



From an interview with American economist THOMAS STEWART in "Fortune Magazine"

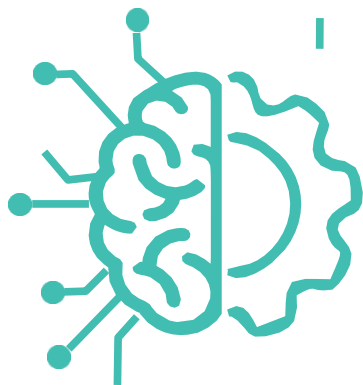


HOW SHOULD COMMUNICATION BE ESTABLISHED FOR BRAIN CENTERS?

Think tank communication is distinct from all other forms of communication. It involves creating and promoting intellectual outputs, engaging in scientific research, developing new economic models, pursuing innovative solutions, and effectively transmitting this information to society. However, presenting such complex outputs through traditional communication methods is not always feasible.

Currently, more than 5,500 think tanks operate globally, with many of them still researching ways to establish effective communication standards, enhance their influence, and develop criteria for measuring impact.

In developing countries, this process is further complicated by the dual role of think tanks, as they often act as executive bodies ('Think and Do Tanks'). Despite these challenges, think tanks share a common mission: conducting analyses, generating new ideas and strategies, and communicating the insights derived from their activities—both directly and indirectly—to society.



Establishing the right communication for think tanks begins with the preparation of the right strategy. That is, the success of think tanks with the right goals, clear mission and clear goals the probability of winning is higher.

(<https://bit.ly/3Uq3bBA>)

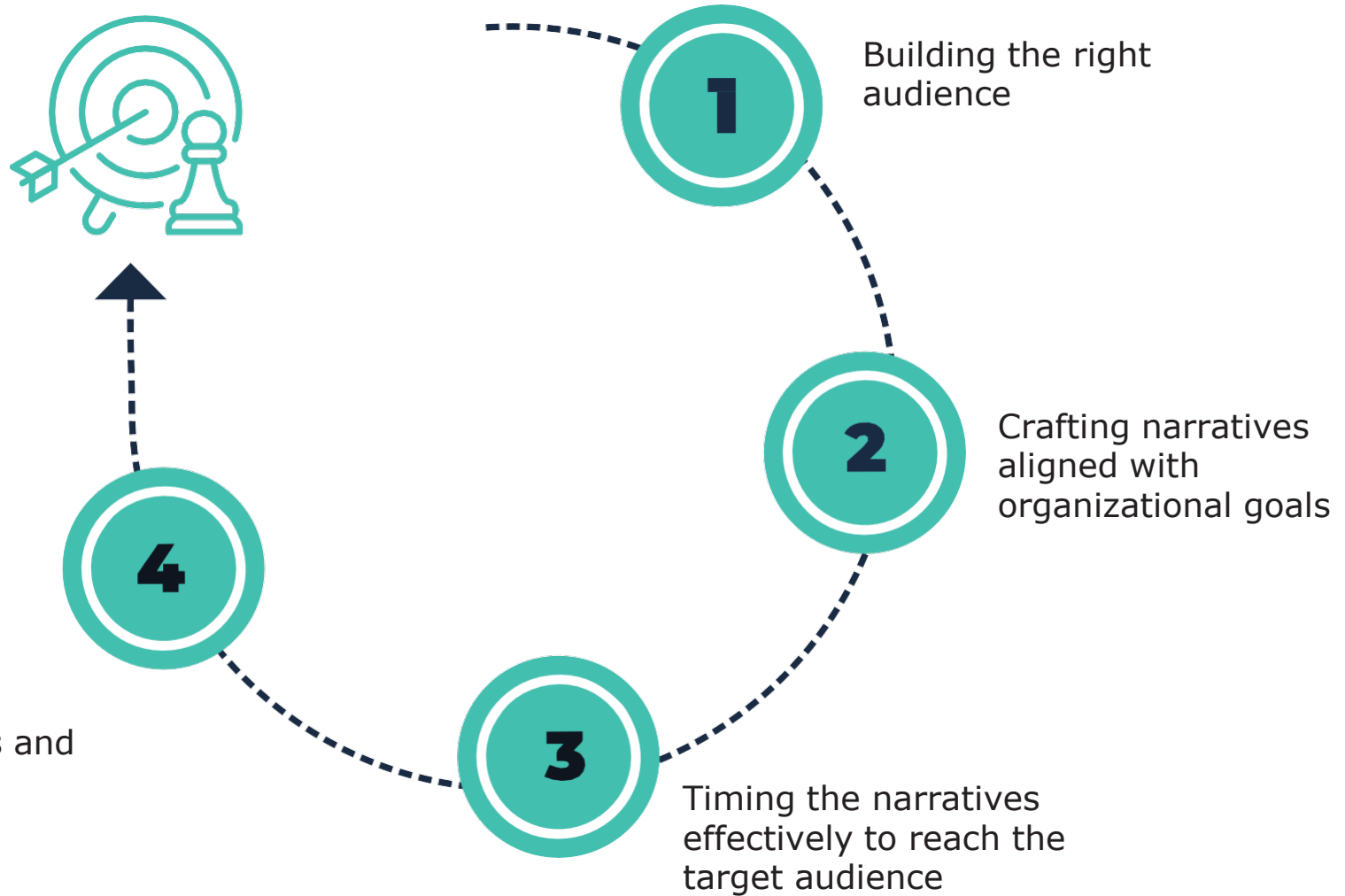


American specialist in media and communication at the international conference "Thinking centers - facing the changing world"

FRED KUNTZ



HOW SHOULD COMMUNICATION BE ESTABLISHED FOR BRAIN CENTERS?





PROPER AUDIENCE FORMATION

Think tanks must first identify the right audience to effectively fulfill their mission. Clearly defining their mission and goals significantly increases the likelihood of success. A think tank should determine which audience it seeks to influence through its activities.

But how can the right audience be identified?

This can be achieved by asking the target audience specific questions, such as: 'How would you like to receive updates on innovations?' or 'How can think tanks enhance communication with you?' Think tanks can also evaluate feedback from their regular collaborators to identify both effective and ineffective practices. Such assessments help improve cooperation and relationships with the audience.



Developing the target audience is not just about increasing numbers but also about improving communication with both existing and new audiences. Communication can be strengthened by listening to these audiences, incorporating their suggestions, and delivering messages in a simpler and more accessible format. By listening to and understanding the audience, we can build and maintain their trust."

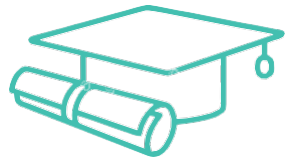


As noted by British communications specialist
CLAIR GRANT-SALMON



EFFECTIVE AUDITORIUMS FOR BRAIN CENTERS

The Center for Global Development (CGD) categorized the target audience for information dissemination into **four key areas** in its study. According to their findings, think tanks previously influenced audiences primarily by engaging directly with political channels and media organizations that shaped policy. However, in recent years, the rise of social media has elevated the role of the general public. This shift has significantly impacted the operations of think tanks. As a result, think tanks must ensure that their major ideas and objectives address all relevant audience segments effectively.



Academic Audience



The academic audience is engaged through the publication of scholarly research in reputable, ranked journals. Success in this area includes obtaining citations or references from books, articles, or other academic works. Additionally, it involves contributing to and modernizing academic debates by aligning them with the latest research findings



Political Audience



Conveying information in a clear and simplified language, ensuring accessibility, and revitalizing the structure of public debates



Public Audience



Research and information play a vital role in fostering political development, facilitating engagement with politicians based on demand, and revitalizing political debates



Media



Presenting information in a clear and simplified language, ensuring accessibility, and reshaping the structure of public debates.

Source: Center for Global Development article



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