

### Dr. Elizabet CASTILLERO-OSTIO

University of Málaga. Spain. [ecastillero@uma.es](mailto:ecastillero@uma.es). <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0546-7262>

### Dr. Andrea MORENO-CABANILLAS

University of Málaga. Spain. [amorenoc@uma.es](mailto:amorenoc@uma.es). <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1169-1607>

### Álvaro SERNA-ORTEGA

University of Málaga. Spain. [ams@uma.es](mailto:ams@uma.es). <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5374-4722>

## Political communication in the digital environment. Evaluation of interactivity strategies of European think tanks

## Comunicación política en el entorno digital. Evaluación de las estrategias de interactividad de los think tanks europeos

**Deadlines** | Received: 04/11/2023 - Reviewed: 15/01/2024 - Accepted: 06/03/2024 - Published: 01/01/2025

### Abstract

Think tanks, as social and political actors, have achieved an undeniable global influence on political decisions and the formation of public opinion. This study allows us to understand the digital communication, through official websites, of European think tanks in their relations in the virtual environment. The study sample consists of the 25 most influential Western European think tanks, based on the 2020 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report (McGann, 2021). Through a quantitative content analysis, the communicative tools of the websites of these organisations were examined, as well as the level of interactivity they provide. The results show that the unidirectional tools in most frequent use include graphic displays (information brochures or presentation spaces of the think tank and images and photographs) and the use of tools that enable a greater degree of interactivity. In terms of bi-directional tools, asymmetric ones predominate, such as subscription forms for content syndication, a web search system, file downloads and tools or buttons for sharing on social networks or sending information to external sites. Across the board, the research highlights the need for think tanks to move towards two-way online models to improve relations with their audiences.

### Keywords

Think tanks; digital communication; political communication; interactivity; Europe

### Resumen

Los think tanks, como agentes sociales y políticos, han alcanzado una influencia innegable a nivel mundial en las decisiones políticas y en la formación de la opinión pública. Este estudio permite entender la comunicación digital, a través de los espacios web oficiales, de los think tanks europeos en sus relaciones en el entorno virtual. La muestra de estudio está formada por los 25 think tanks de Europa occidental más influyentes, considerando el 2020 Global Go To Think tank Index Report (McGann, 2021). Mediante un análisis de contenido, de naturaleza cuantitativa, se han examinado las herramientas comunicativas de las páginas web de dichos organismos, así como el nivel de interactividad que proporcionan. Los resultados muestran que entre las herramientas unidireccionales más utilizadas se encuentran las expositivas gráficas (folletos informativos o espacios de presentación del think tank e imágenes y fotografías) y el empleo de herramientas que posibilitan un mayor grado de interactividad. Teniendo en cuenta las bidireccionales, predominan las asimétricas, como formularios de suscripción para sindicación de contenido, sistema de búsqueda en la web, la descarga de archivos y herramientas o botones para compartir en redes sociales o enviar información a sitios externos. De forma generalizada, la investigación resalta la necesidad de los think tanks de avanzar hacia modelos bidireccionales en línea para mejorar las relaciones con los públicos.

### Palabras clave

Think tanks; comunicación digital; comunicación política; interactividad; Europa

## 1. Introduction

Think tanks are now presented as organisations that play a prominent role in global social and political processes; even across political borders, they maintain their influence through the media and reach out to the general public (Almiron and Xifra, 2021; Landry, 2021).

Political parties and universities are not the only entities responsible for managing ideas, generating knowledge and providing expert analysis. Think tanks are primarily dedicated to proposing possible solutions to social problems or situations when making policy decisions. Like any other organisation, think tanks develop strategic plans and communication actions to disseminate and promote their activities and issues, in addition to managing their relationships with their relational universe (Castillo-Esparcia et al., 2020). Since communication is an essential activity for these research institutes that supports and benefits their other functions and political roles in relation to their environment, digital public relations is a fundamental tool for their performance (Castillo and Smolak, 2017). The web is the most prominent resource for 2.0 public relations in online communication (Aced, 2013; Holtz, 2002; Liberós, 2013). This website contains both unidirectional and bidirectional tools that help to build relationships with different audiences.

These organisations no longer intend to interact only with government agencies, so their communicative actions should not only focus on the dissemination of information, but also benefit from the strengthening of relationships with their different audiences. This will contribute to the expansion of the actions promoted by these organisations and the widespread dissemination of their proposals as thought leaders (Castillo-Esparcia et al., 2013; Coombs and Holladay, 2015; Gershon, 2016; Kent, 2013).

The communicative actions, both unidirectional and bidirectional, of think tanks do not differ from the strategic communicative approaches of other organisations, so their behaviour in this respect has shifted between the two models. From the monological perspective, approaches and activities have been disseminated, while the dialogical approach has sought a process closer to raising awareness and legitimising the proposals of these organisations.

Although the importance of interactivity in the virtual public relations of any organisation is well known, thanks to numerous contributions from the research community in this field, it is expected that a high percentage of the analysed organisations have not yet fully evolved to the Web 2.0 model, nor have they fully exploited the potentialities it offers. This is a significant obstacle for these centres, which need to achieve broad visibility and support to underpin the success of their actions and objectives.

Think tanks have been widely studied, especially in the last two decades, from various fields, including communication, but given that they have recently become not only political actors but also frontline communicative actors (Almiron and Xifra, 2021), an analysis of their relational behaviour through digital media is necessary, focusing on the interactivity they offer to their Internet users on their websites, which marks the support and culmination of their actions. This perspective has not been sufficiently explored and is crucial for their influence on their different audiences.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. Think tanks

There is a large body of research on think tanks, particularly at the international level, which has increased considerably in recent years. Most studies attempt to define or delimit the concept and typology of think tanks, making it difficult to reach a consensus on a global definition that covers all types of organisations (Abelson, 2012; Chuliá, 2018; McGann & Weaver, 2000; Medvetz, 2008; Mendizábal, 2014; Pautz, 2011; Stone, 2007; Weaver, 1989; Xifra, 2008). As Xifra and Almiron (2021) point out, there are five main reasons why defining think tanks is so complex: first, the human tendency to create global theories, which leads to an analysis of the concept based on specific types of think tanks; second, the lack of ideological transparency on the part of researchers; third, the use of terminology depends on the cultural context and can lead to conflicting meanings; fourth, the influence of one's own experiences on personal views; and fifth, the confusion created by the prescriptive or descriptive perspective of the concept.

Considering that these research centres aim to influence legislators and political decision-making processes and contribute to shaping public opinion by maintaining various links with political and social actors (Abelson, 2006; Boucher, 2004; Blanc, 2003; Cockett, 1995; Denham & Garnett, 1998; Landry, 2021; Lenglet & Vilain, 2011; Li, 2017; Oreskes & Conway, 2010; Ruser, 2019; Stefancic & Delgado, 1996), there are different definitions that try to distinguish them from four different perspectives: Pluralist, Elitist, Statist and Institutionalist. These perspectives try to determine the articulation of these idea labs and their relationship with other actors, but they do not represent all organisations, especially smaller or low-budget ones (Abelson, 2009), nor is it possible to specify how or to what extent they influence public authorities (Abelson, 2012; McLevey, 2013; Shaw et al., 2014). Abelson (2009), Domhoff (2010), McLevey

(2013) and Ponsa (2014) have reviewed these perspectives and positioned themselves according to what they consider to be the best options for their description.

The pluralist perspective views think tanks as merely one of many actors in policy intervention, with the executive acting as a mediator among all involved parties, each possessing an equal level of influence. Proponents of this view include Truman (1951), Dahl (1989), and Klüver (2011). Conversely, it faces criticism from scholars such as Abelson (2009) and Medvetz (2012), alongside indirect critiques from Lowery (2007) and Ponsa (2014).

In the elitist perspective, in which these think tanks are seen as having significant links with the elites of each country and explain why certain organisations are more successful in terms of visibility and prestige, proponents include Saloma (1984), Pescheck (1987), Domhoff (1990; 2010) and Ponsa (2014), while critics include Pautz (2011) and Medvetz (2012).

The statist prism holds that government leaders are ultimately responsible for policy decisions, but need the cooperation and advice of experts, such as the team that a think tank can provide. Finally, there is the institutionalist perspective, supported by Kingdon (1984) or Abelson (2009), which considers the extent of think tanks' influence on policy decisions to be indeterminate.

As can be seen, there is a diversity of positions on the universal definition of the concept, which complicates its understanding, since it is difficult to have a definition that can encompass the dimension of all these centres. As Almiron and Xifra (2021) point out, in order to specify the concept of a think tank, it can be approached from a prescriptive or normative perspective, determining what the ideal model of such a centre should be, or from a descriptive perspective, seeking to delimit the existing typologies, which currently represent very different realities.

To clarify the concept, it is considered important to adopt the prescriptive perspective to attempt to define the term, though it is recognized that not all research institutes that identify as think tanks can be included under this definition. This paper, drawing on the contributions of Castillo (2009) and Xifra (2005, 2008), defines a think tank as an organization composed of a variety of intellectual individuals, analysts, and relevant opinion leaders from the political sphere who, either on contract or on behalf of public or private organizations, engage in propositional interventions in public institutions through research, employing direct or indirect communication strategies to influence public opinion. It is deemed appropriate to specify that, in this ideal definition of a think tank, as outlined by Almiron and Xifra (2021), these idea laboratories generate knowledge and expert analysis aimed at the common good rather than specific interests. The latter category includes advocacy tanks or party think tanks: those with a clear ideology, defending interests, and engaging in political actions more closely aligned with interest groups or lobbies (Xifra, 2008).

The research community began to take an interest in think tanks in the 1980s, with Weaver's (1989) research primarily aimed at establishing a triple classification of these organisations. This systematisation was supported by subsequent studies such as those by Xifra (2005; 2008), McGann and Weaver (2009) or Tello-Beneitez (2013), although it was later revised and extended to four typologies: Academic or 'non-student universities', dedicated to research, usually with a research staff made up of university professors, funded by foundations, corporations or individual donors, and not offering formal education to students as universities do. Research organisations contracted by public or private bodies to carry out studies based on the interests of the contracting party. Thirdly, there are advocacy tanks, which may or may not be linked to political parties, with a strong ideology in their proposals and whose primary purpose is to influence political debate rather than research. Finally, Castillo (2009) adds partisan think tanks, created or supported by these political formations, whose research is proprietary, although they act as suppliers to these formations; they are directly at the service of party or government elites.

Subsequently, the multiplicity of these organisations has led to other publications that focus on understanding think tanks on a global scale (McGann, 2021a; McGann & Johnson, 2005; Stone & Denham, 2004; Stone et al., 1998). McGann, for his part, initiated the Think tanks, Politics and Public Policy project in 2001, and subsequently the TTCSP Global Go to Think Tank Index Report (McGann, 2021b) has been published annually from 2008 to 2021 by the University of Pennsylvania, categorising the most prominent think tanks globally and by region according to different classification categories.

The emergence of different types of think tanks, depending in particular on the country, the context, the objectives pursued, the activities carried out, the access to resources and sources of funding, among other factors, also gives rise to different works that focus on the geographical area in which they are located. In Europe, research on think tanks includes works by Sherrington (2000a), Boucher (2004), Villumsen (2007) and Bermejo (2016). From a communication perspective, those by Pautz (2014) and Anstead and Chadwick (2018) in the UK and in Eastern Europe, those by Castillo and Castellero (2012) and Castillo-Esparcia et al. (2015) are noteworthy.

Some focus on the United Kingdom (Arshed, 2017; Denham, 2005; Denham & Garnet, 1998; Houghton & Allmendinger, 2016; Michaels, 2014; Pautz, 2013, 2017; Sherrington 2000b; Simon, 1993), others on Germany (Pautz, 2008), the Czech Republic (Devaux, 2006), Sweden (Allern & Pollack, 2020) or Scotland (Pautz, 2007).

Studies on idea labs in Spain have increased in the last two decades, through doctoral theses or other scientific publications (Barberà & Arregui, 2011; González-Capitel & Ponsa, 2015; González-Capitel et al., 2017; Montobbio, 2013; Parrilla et al., 2016; Ponsa & Xifra, 2012; Requejo, 1999; Tello-Beneitez, 2013; Urrutia, 2013, 2017; Xifra, 2008). Specifically, from a communicative perspective, contributions by Castelló-Sirvent and Roger-Monzó (2021), Castillo-Esparcia et al. (2017), Castillo-Esparcia et al. (2020), Guerra (2014), Lalueza and Girona (2016), Martínez-Oña (2016), Pineda et al. (2019), Planells (2017), Planells-Artigot et al. (2020), Ponsa (2014, 2016), Roger-Monzó and Castelló-Sirvent (2020), and those of Santillán (2012) are found.

There are also other comparative publications, such as that of Freres, Seabra and Moraes (2000) between Spanish and Portuguese think tanks, Braml's (2006) between German and American ones, Pautz's (2010) between the UK and Germany, Fischer and Plehwe's (2017) between Europe and Latin America, and Morales's (2017) Ph.D. thesis comparing those from Europe, the United States, Africa, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region. From a communicative perspective, noteworthy are Sánchez and Pizarro's (2014) between Europe, Latin America and the United States, and Smolak's (2017) doctoral thesis focusing on Eastern Europe and Asia.

## **2.2. Interactivity and digital dialogical communication**

Since Kent and Taylor (1998) began to include the term interactivity in their publications from the perspective of public relations mediated by technological elements and the Internet, several authors have followed suit (Duhé, 2015; Gustavsen & Tilley, 2003; Jo & Kim, 2003; Mofion, 2001; Saffer et al., 2013). The digital medium has facilitated connections between organisations and different audiences through interactive and/or collaborative resources and platforms; therefore, various studies have highlighted the benefits they offer (Avidar, 2013; Capriotti, 2011; Capriotti & Kuklinski, 2012; Guillory & Sundar, 2014; Ingenhoff & Koelling, 2009; Kent & Taylor, 2002; Oliveira & Capriotti, 2014). Other studies have also shown the evolution from a web that only offers monological tools (web 1.0) to one that also allows dialogue with the internet user - web 2.0 (Heinze & Hu, 2006). However, the fact that the online medium has been able to contribute to strengthening the relationship of organisations with their relational universe is only possible when there is feedback, a prerequisite for an interactive experience (López-Rabadán & Mellado, 2019). In fact, some studies support that although new technologies offer a high level of dialogue, it is underutilised in favour of a one-way format (Kent, 2013). In this regard, some authors believe that dialogue cannot take place on digital platforms because, although two-way communication (symmetric or asymmetric) can be experienced, its main purpose is persuasion to achieve organisational goals rather than focusing on interaction and understanding (Kent & Lane, 2021; Kent & Taylor, 2021). However, it is important to make a distinction here, as it is necessary to distinguish between interactivity as a process or as a product (Stromer-Galley, 2004). As a process, it refers to dialogue or conversation between people, and as a product, it refers to technology-mediated interaction (López-Rabadán & Mellado, 2019). In this research, the first perspective is studied in dialogue tools, and the second in monological and some bidirectional resources.

The online scenario has therefore allowed us to show that interactivity, the basis of dialogic communication through the digital medium (Guillory & Sundar, 2014), is used by different organisations to establish a stronger bond with their different audiences (McAllister-Spooner, 2009; Taylor & Kent, 2014). This interactivity, as a fundamental feature of the Internet (Castells, 2001; Kioussis, 2002; Leiner & Quiring, 2008), has been the subject of much research in the field of digital public relations, as it is the basis of dialogical communication between an organisation and its audience (Van Ruler, 2015), with the website being one of the most studied spaces. Literature analysing communication on websites has been approached from different perspectives: from graphic design (Ramírez-Torres et al., 2020; Rovira & Marcos, 2013; Soto, 2020), user experience or usability (Bustos, 2021; Hassenzahl & Tractinsky, 2006; Paz, 2017), the quality of the information presented (Codina et al, 2014; Fernández-Cavia et al., 2014), or the level of interactivity; an aspect that has been focused on in the present research (Capriotti & González-Herrero, 2017; Capriotti & Moreno, 2007; Guillory & Sundar, 2014; Heinze & Hu, 2006; Jo & Jung, 2005; Jo & Kim, 2003; Kim et al., 2010; McAllister-Spooner, 2009; Park & Reber, 2008).

The main objective of this study is to understand the communicative situation of European think tanks in their online relational environment, through their official web platforms. Unlike other previous studies, this one focuses on interaction and dialogue and collects up-to-date information about these centres. The specific objectives (SOs) of this research are as follows

- SO1: To examine the types of information dissemination tools used on the different digital platforms of the think tanks studied, as well as the tools they use to maintain dialogue and interaction with Internet users.

- SO2: To assess the level of interactivity and dialogic communication implemented in the digital sphere through the think tank websites.
- SO3: To identify which think tanks offer their audiences the best opportunities to engage with them on their websites.

### 3. Methodology

The research question is Have the official websites of think tanks considered as the most influential centres in Western Europe moved towards more dialogical communication patterns (Web 2.0), or do their digital communications remain monological (Web 1.0)?

To answer this question and achieve the proposed objectives, a sample consisting of the top 25 think tanks in Western Europe was considered, as determined by the globally recognized 2020 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report (McGann, 2021). The report contains several rankings based on different criteria. For the purposes of this research, the focus was on the top 25 most influential centres leading the classification.

The list of the most influential think tanks (McGann, 2021) includes centres from the United Kingdom (n=7), Germany (n=6), Belgium (=3), France (n=3), Spain (n=2), Italy (n=2), the Netherlands (n=1) and Denmark (n=1). The 25 web platforms analysed, in order of ranking, belong to the following centres:

**Table 1: Ranking of the most influential think tanks in Western Europe**

Think tank	Country
1. Bruegel	Belgium
2. Real Instituto Elcano	Spain
3. Clingendael, Netherlands Institute of International Relations	Netherlands
4. French Institute of International Relations (IFRI)	France
5. Chatham House	United Kingdom
6. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)	Germany
7. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)	Germany
8. International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)	United Kingdom
9. Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)	Belgium
10. Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS)	Denmark
11. Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI)	Italy
12. Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB)	Spain
13 German Development Institute (DIE)	Germany
14. Ecologic Institute	Germany
15. Adam Smith Institute (ASI)	United Kingdom
16. Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)	Italy

Think tank	Country
17. LSE IDEAS	United Kingdom
18. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Europe Center	Belgium
19. Amnesty International (AI)	United Kingdom
20. Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS)	United Kingdom
21. Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques (IRIS)	France
22. Notre Europe Jacques Delors Institut	France
23. Transparency International (TI)	Germany
24. German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP)	Germany
25. Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)	United Kingdom

Source: McGann 2020 Report (McGann, 2021)

In order to achieve the defined objectives, a methodology based on quantitative content analysis of different online platforms will be used. Analysis templates have been developed in order to collect specific information related to the object of study. The choice of this methodology is justified by its previous application in previous research on the evaluation of the level of interactivity achieved by websites (Capriotti et al., 2016), with adaptation to the typology of the analysed organisations.

In order to classify the presented communication tools, a classification was carried out to evaluate the level of participation and interaction that these research centres can promote among virtual visitors. Twelve types of tools for disseminating information to the general public were identified, while twenty-one were identified in terms of resources for interaction and dialogue.

In order to systematise the types of communicative resources appearing in different web spaces, the elements used by think tanks to display and disseminate information through unidirectional media were examined. These are characterised by unidirectional information configurations that require minimal participation or commitment on the part of the target audience. Communication is unidirectional and control over it is almost entirely in the hands of the think tank rather than the website user. The organisation determines the content of the information with the aim of establishing a relationship with the web visitor, although this relationship has the sole purpose of displaying and disseminating institutional information to keep internet users informed. User participation in these websites is practically non-existent, the flow of communication is from the think tanks to the users, who do not have the possibility of sending or modifying information on the website, so there is no feedback. In this context, the following three categories can be identified:

1.1. Informative: It includes elements that facilitate the dissemination of information to the user, who is generally receptive and passive. Within this classification, a distinction is made between graphic and audio-visual tools.

1.2. Hypertextual: it groups the use of links that allow the user to go to other sites, offering a higher level of interactivity than purely expository resources. This is because they allow the active search for complementary information and facilitate the exploration of topics related to the research institute.

1.3. Participatory: It gathers elements oriented towards a higher level of interaction by the Internet user compared to the previous tools. In this option, the focus is on connecting with a web visitor with a higher degree of participation, distinguishing between interactive resources, such as graphics and infographics, and participative resources, such as buttons for following social networks. The latter allow the web user to interact with the site's content at a higher level, extending the information and demonstrating interest in the centre.

**Table 2: Types of one-way (monologic) tools used on think tank websites**

Categories		Tool types	
ONE-WAY (Monologic) TOOLS	Present and disseminate information	Publications: studies, thematic reports, books, articles, periodicals (journals)	
		Information brochure (think tank presentation)	
		Institutional yearbooks (annual reports)	
		Graphic	Publication of an events calendar
		1.1. Informative	Online press room (press releases)
			Blogs not allowing users to comment
			News published on the website
			Photographs and images
		Audio-visual	Multimedia files embedded on the website (audios, videos)
		1.2. Hypertextual	- External links to other websites or institutions
	Interactive resources (graphics and infographics)		
1.3. Participatory	- Participatory resources ("follow" on social media button/tool)		

Source: authors' own compilation based on Capriotti et al. (2016)

Furthermore, the resources used by these centres on their websites to establish interaction and dialogue with users were classified, including dialogue tools. These are based on bidirectional communicative configurations, whether asymmetric or symmetric. They involve greater interaction and dialogue and offer various opportunities for information exchange, discussion and collaboration, which are characteristic of the dialogic process. Within these, different categories are distinguished according to the level of participation and involvement they seek to offer the web user:

2.1. Connectivity: This dimension includes tools that limit the request for information from the user, demonstrating a fairly limited degree of involvement and interaction.

2.2. Sharing: This dimension groups resources that offer the possibility of disseminating or sharing information from the think tank, as well as allowing visitors to follow content of interest, configuring customisation options in tracking. These tools allow for minimal participation and involvement of the website's audience.

2.3. Reviewing/Commenting: This category includes tools that allow web users to review, comment, rate and respond. Followers of the think tank are given some freedom to consume the content and also initiate limited participation in two-way communication. In summary, these options involve actions by web users with a moderately low level of interaction and participation.

2.4. Participatory: It gathers elements that contribute to communication in all directions; there is feedback, but the communicative action still tends to favour the think tank. Although greater participation and initiative are encouraged by the site users, they still lack control over both the communicative development and the content of the site. These tools offer a high degree of reciprocity between the parties involved.

2.5. Collaborative: These are spaces that offer the possibility of co-creating the content of the site and of establishing an equitable communication between the parties involved - a characteristic of dialogue. Users are provided with tools to edit or add information without direct restrictions from the think tanks. User participation and initiative is complete, representing the maximum level of interactivity that the organisation can offer through the online medium.

**Table 3: Types of two-way (dialogic) tools used on think tank websites**

Categories	Tool type	
2.1. Connectivity (asymmetric two-way)	Subscription forms for content syndication (social media/ newsletters)	
	Intranet registration	
	Web search engine	
	File download	
	Register for contracting researchers/services/ projects/internships	
2.2. Sharing (asymmetric two-way)	Members' area	
	Button/tool for tagging or sending information to external sites	
2.2. Sharing (asymmetric two-way)	Button/tool for sharing on social networks	
	Content personalisation (follow favourite authors, posts, etc.)	
TWO-WAY (Dialogic) TOOLS	Surveys	
	2.3. Reviewing/commenting (asymmetric two-way)	Option to leave comments on the website
		Blog allowing a user response
		Option to evaluate or rate web content
	2.4. Participatory (symmetric two-way)	Shop section
		Sign users' petitions
		Section for requesting to attend events in person or online
		Enquiries section
		Online section to offer support, donations or sponsorship
	2.5. Collaborative (symmetric two-way)	Suggestions section
Forums (online discussion sites)		
2.5. Collaborative (symmetric two-way)	Section to collaborate as an online expert or volunteer or to upload content (co-creation of web content)	

Source: authors' own compilation based on Capriotti et al. (2016)

Having established the categorisation of the analysis, a Likert scale was implemented to assess the level of interactivity by assigning a weighted value to each type of tool identified. The scale ranges from 1 to 5, with 1 representing very low interactivity and 5 representing very high interactivity.

In order to diagnose the presence or absence of these tools on each analysed website of each think tank, a dichotomous "yes/no" structure was applied, with presence being represented by 1 and absence by 0. This measure was linked to the categories previously defined on the basis of the likelihood of interaction of the websites, taking into account the unidirectional (monological) tools designed to present and disseminate information (see Table 4). Thus 'graphics' were given a score of 1 (very low interactivity), 'audio-visuels' were given a score of 2 (low interactivity), 'hypertextuals' were given a score of 3 (medium interactivity), 'interactive resources' were given a score of 4 (high interactivity) and 'participatory resources' were given a score of 5 (very high interactivity).

**Table 4: Evaluation of the interactivity level of think tank websites according to one-way (monologic) tools for presenting and disseminating information**

<b>Interactivity level</b>					
<b>One-way (monologic) tools for presenting and disseminating information</b>					
Tools for presenting/ disseminating information	Interactivity scale (Likert scale)	Assigned value (AV)	Presence (P)	Points obtained (PO)	Result (interactivity level)
			NO-YES	AV x P	
Graphics	Very low interactivity	1 point	0-1	AV x P	= Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) (PO / 5)
Audio-visual	Low interactivity	2 points	0-1	AV x P	
Hypertextual	Medium interactivity	3 points	0-1	AV x P	
Interactive	High interactivity	4 points	0-1	AV x P	
Participatory	Very high interactivity	5 points	0-1	AV x P	

Source: authors' own compilation based on Capriotti et al. (2016)

In order to assess the degree of interactivity offered by the different sites in terms of tools that allow interaction and dialogue with the visitor, weighted scores were assigned to each of the established categories on the basis of their interactive potential (see Table 5). Thus, a score of 1 (very low interactivity) was assigned to 'connect', 2 (low interactivity) to 'share', 3 (medium interactivity) to 'review and comment', 4 (high interactivity) to 'participate' and 5 (very high interactivity) to 'collaborate'.

**Table 5: Evaluation of the interactivity level of think tank websites according to two-way (dialogic) tools for interaction and dialogue with users**

<b>Interactivity level</b>					
<b>Two-way (dialogic) tools for interaction and dialogue with users</b>					
Tools for interaction and dialogue	Interactivity scale (Likert scale)	Assigned value (AV)	Presence (P)	Points obtained (PO)	Result (interactivity level)
			NO-YES	AV x P	
Connectivity	Very low interactivity	1 point	0-1	AV x P	= Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) (PO / 5)
Sharing	Low interactivity	2 points	0-1	AV x P	
Reviewing/ commenting	Medium interactivity	3 points	0-1	AV x P	
Participatory	High interactivity	4 points	0-1	AV x P	
Collaborative	Very high interactivity	5 points	0-1	AV x P	

Source: authors' own compilation based on Capriotti et al. (2016)

Finally, the average is calculated by summing the total weighted scores of each resource on each web page of each think tank surveyed, which allows the level of interactivity of each resource to be determined. This assessment is measured on a scale of 0 to 3 points: from 0 to 1 is considered "low or

poor interactivity", from 1.1 to 2 is considered "medium interactivity" and from 2.1 to 3 is considered "high or significant interactivity".

Overall, the methodology adopted in this study is based on the proposal of Capriotti et al. (2016), who conducted an evaluation of the interactivity of museum websites. In order to adapt this approach to the specific characteristics of this study and the nature of think tanks, an adaptation of the tools evaluated was carried out, breaking down or simplifying the different sections as appropriate. The scoring procedure for the indices remained unchanged. In order to validate the design of the analysis templates, a preliminary exploratory study was carried out on ten think tank websites. This initial assessment made it possible to measure the suitability of the methodology and to identify and facilitate adjustments to those elements that might hinder the achievement of the defined objectives.

Once a template with validated reliability had been obtained, the values relating to all the websites of the organisations in the sample were coded. This process took place between September and October 2002. It is worth noting that the coding was carried out independently by the three researchers in order to compare the results and reach a consensus on any discrepancies.

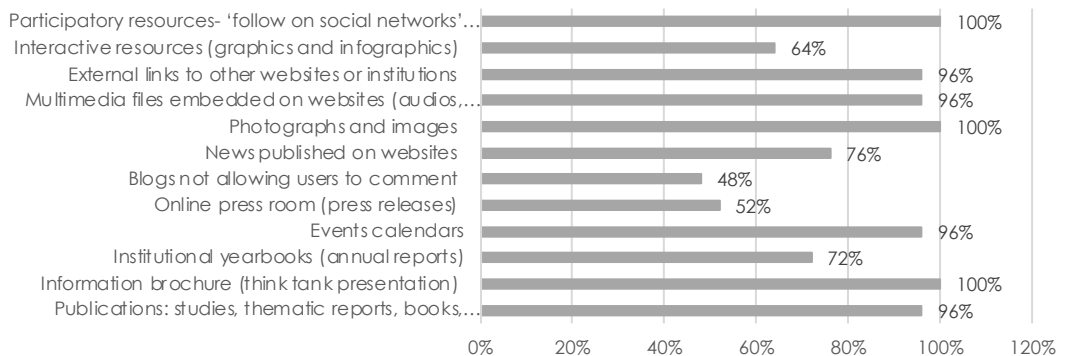
## 4. Results

### 4.1. One-way (monologic) tools

With regard to the data relating to resources of a monological nature, i.e. those whose objective is the presentation and dissemination of information by the research centre, as shown in Figure 1, the use of tools that allow a higher degree of interaction with the Internet user stands out. This is the case of the "follow on social media" button, which is present on all the sites analysed. Within the category of expository tools, the presentation of information about the think tank and photos and images stand out, as they are present in 100% of the sites. These are followed by publications - of various types: studies, thematic reports, books, articles in periodicals, etc. -, the presentation of event agendas, multimedia files -audio and video- and external links to other websites, all of which are present in 96% (n=24) of the digital spaces analysed. In the case of multimedia files, the use of podcasts is increasing and is present on more than half of the think tank sites. In the case of videos, some sites display them as redirected links outside the site, rather than embedding them in the site itself.

The least used resources are blogs (n=12, 48%), the virtual press room with press releases and press notes (n=13, 52%) and interactive resources such as graphics or infographics (n=16, 64%).

**Figure 1: Use of one-way tools (monological) tools on think tank websites**



Source: authors' own work

Comparing the level of interactivity presented by the different think tanks on their respective websites with regard to the use of tools in the category of presentation and dissemination of information, it can be seen that 100% of these web spaces have a high or significant level of interactivity, as all of them have a level between 2.1 and 3, the range representing the maximum level within the established scale.

### 4.2. Two-way (dialogic) tools

Looking at the analysis of the sample of tools that allow greater interaction with internet users (see Figure 2), resources belonging to the asymmetric bidirectional dimension stand out in terms of frequency of use, especially those in the categories of 'connecting' and 'sharing'. In 100% of portals there are: subscription forms for content syndication, web search systems, file downloads and tools or buttons for sharing on social media or sending information to external sites. It is also common to have a space

or registration for hiring researchers/services/projects/internships (n=20, 80%), a section dedicated to affiliation or membership (n=19, 76%), or a section where users can register to attend an event, either in person or online (n=16, 64%).

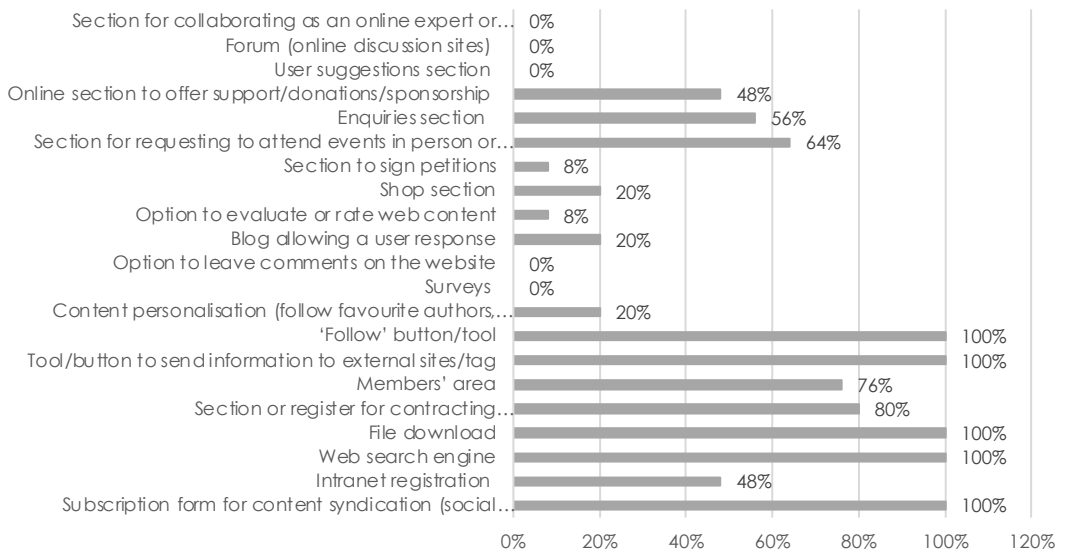
On the other hand, the least used tools include the ability to sign user petitions and to rate or review web content, which is only available on two sites (8%). The first option is only offered by the international NGOs Amnesty International - AI (UK) and Transparency International - TI (Germany) and the second by the Real Instituto Elcano (Spain) and the Adam Smith Institute - ASI (UK), where users can indicate that they like the web content.

The tools that represent the highest level of interaction - in the "collaborate" category - are not included in any digital space, nor are those that include a section dedicated to user-specific suggestions, the possibility of commenting on web content - apart from forums that allow it - and surveys.

It is worth noting that of the blogs that allow web users to comment (n=5, 20%), some require registration on the intranet. This is the case for Amnesty International - AI (UK), the French Institute of International Relations - IFRI (France) and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation - KAS (Germany).

It was also noted that the inclusion of an intranet on the website means that certain content is restricted to registered users. This is the case for the websites of Chatham House (UK) and the Royal United Services Institute - RUSI (UK).

**Figure 2: Use of two-way (dialogic) tools on think tank websites**



Source: authors' own work

The analysis of the level of interactivity shown by different think tanks on their respective websites in terms of the use of tools to facilitate interaction and dialogue shows that the majority, 88% (n=22) of the think tanks evaluated, present a medium level of interactivity. Only 12% (n=3) are classified as having a low or poor level of interaction.

### 4.3. Comparison of think tanks' communication tools and interactivity levels

The individual observation of online communication on think tanks' websites makes it possible to identify differences that may exist between the analysed organisations on the basis of the level of interaction. Table 6 shows, in descending order, the level of interactivity in the monological and dialogical tools offered by different think tanks on their web portals.

In both scales - measuring the use of monological and dialogical tools - the Real Instituto Elcano and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) are the think tanks with the highest level of interactivity in the two aspects analysed. There are other research centres with the same level as the two think tanks, but none of them manages to reach the maximum level in both scales.

**Table 6: Ranking of think tank websites according to their level of interactivity based on their use of monologic and dialogic tools**

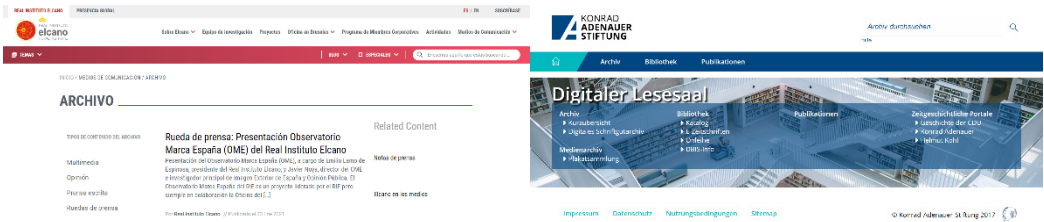
Interactivity monologic tools		Interactivity dialogic tools	
Think tank	Level	Think tank	Level
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung	3	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung	2
Real Instituto Elcano	3	Real Instituto Elcano	2
Danish Institute for International Studies	3	Adam Smith Institute	2
German Development Institute	3	LSE IDEAS	2
Transparency International	3	Amnesty International	2
Bruegel	3	Bruegel	1.4
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung	3	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung	1.4
International Institute for Strategic Studies	3	International Institute for Strategic Studies	1.4
Centre for European Policy Studies	3	Centre for European Policy Studies	1.4
Barcelona Centre for International Affairs	3	Barcelona Centre for International Affairs	1.4
Ecologic Institute	3	Ecologic Institute	1.4
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Europe Centre	3	Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Europe Centre	1.4
Institute for Fiscal Studies	3	Institute for Fiscal Studies	1.4
Notre Europe Jacques Delors Institut	3	Notre Europe Jacques Delors Institut	1.4
Clingendael, Netherlands Institute of International Relations	2.6	Transparency International	1.4
Institute for International Political Studies	2.4	Institute for International Political Studies	1.4
Chatham House	2.2	Chatham House	1.4
Istituto Affari Internazionali	2.2	Istituto Affari Internazionali	1.4
Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques	2.2	Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques	1.4
German Council on Foreign Relations	2.2	German Council on Foreign Relations	1.4
Royal United Services Institute	2.2	Royal United Services Institute	1.4
Adam Smith Institute	2.2	German Development Institute	1.2
French Institute of International Relations	2.2	French Institute of International Relations	0.4
Amnesty International	2.2	Clingendael, Netherlands Institute of International Relations	0.4
LSE IDEAS	2.2	Danish Institute for International Studies	0.4
Mean	2,67	Mean	1,39

Source: authors' own work

The analysis of the monological resources used by the most interactive websites, as shown in Table 7, shows that both the Real Instituto Elcano (Spain) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) (Germany)

stand out for implementing a wide range of information dissemination tools. This indicates that both think tanks have recognised the importance of disseminating their content in a wide and accessible way, using different available means that are systematised in this category, allowing them to reach a wide and diverse audience.

**Figure 3: Aspect of the websites of the think tanks: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) and Real Instituto Elcano**



Sources: <https://www.kas.de/de/> and <https://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/>

Bidirectional communication, a crucial aspect of interactivity and user engagement, shows a quantitative difference between the two think tanks mentioned. Although both have identical scores on the interactivity scale, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) has an advantage in terms of the number of tools (11 compared to 8). However, this quantitative factor is not the only determinant of the quality of interactivity. The typology and effectiveness of the tools used are also crucial for facilitating a meaningful and participatory dialogue with the audience.

It is noteworthy that while other centres, such as the Adam Smith Institute (ASI) and Amnesty International (AI) in the UK, have a greater number of dialogue tools (13 in total), this does not necessarily translate into a higher level of interactivity. This suggests that the mere accumulation of interactive resources is not enough; the way in which these resources are integrated and aligned with users' needs and expectations is equally important. Effective interactivity requires a careful balance between quantity and quality, ensuring that tools are not only present but also accessible, intuitive and relevant to dialogue.

Other think tanks that match KAS with 11 tools demonstrate the diversity of approaches in the think tank field. Institutions such as Chatham House, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), the Ecologic Institute, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Europe Center, and the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) reflect how different organisations, even within the same region, can implement similar strategies of interactivity in number, but potentially different in execution and effectiveness.

**Table 7: Dialogic tools used by the websites with the highest level of interactivity**

Categories	Tools	Real Instituto Elcano (SPAIN)	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) - (GERMANY)
2.1. Connectivity	Subscription forms for content syndication (social networks/ newsletters)	1	1
	Intranet registration	0	1
	Web search engine	1	1
	File download	1	1
	Registration for contracting researchers/services/projects/internships	1	1
	Members' area	0	1

	Tool/button to send information to external sites/ tag	1	1
2.2. Sharing	'Follow' button/tool	1	1
	Content personalisation (following favourite authors, posts, etc.)	0	0
	Surveys	0	0
2.3. Reviewing/ commenting	Option to leave comments on the website	0	0
	Blog allowing a user response	0	1
	Option to evaluate or rate web content	1	0
	Shop section	0	0
	Sign users' petitions	0	0
2.4. Participatory	Section for requesting to attend events in person or online	1	1
	Enquiries section	0	0
	Online section to offer support, donations or sponsorship	0	1
	Suggestions section	0	0
2.5. Collaborative	Forums (online discussion sites)	0	0
	Section to collaborate as an online expert or volunteer or to upload content (co-creation of web content)	0	0

Source: authors' own work

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

The study of the digital environment of the most influential Western European think tanks, as identified in the McGann report (20-21), has revealed a greater variety of unidirectional tools on their websites, particularly those of a graphical nature, compared to other typologies. However, it is worth noting that participatory tools, which are the closest to interaction in this category, are present in 100% of the sample. In terms of the index of interactivity of these spaces in relation to the use of monologic tools, they reach the maximum level. Conversely, when measuring the interactivity of resources that allow for greater interaction and dialogue, none of the think tanks analysed reaches the maximum level of interactivity in the use of these dialogical tools, although the majority of the sample is positioned at the intermediate level. Focusing on bidirectional tools, the use of asymmetric tools continues to stand out.

The findings of most studies to date (Capriotti et al., 2016; Capriotti and González-Herrero, 2017; Capriotti and Moreno, 2007; Guillory and Sundar, 2014; Heinze and Hu, 2006; Ingenhoff and Koelling, 2009; Jo and Jung, 2005; Kim et al., 2010; McAllister-Spooner, 2009; Park and Reber, 2008) show that organisations, regardless of their typology, have not yet fully exploited all the benefits and potential offered by the digital medium, as a large percentage of websites do not fully utilise the dialogic model, often presenting sites with a more informative character, using a communication model that is closer to unidirectional than bidirectional. This lack of interest in exploiting the interactivity offered by the digital medium can lead to a deterioration in relationships with different audiences.

The data collected in this research are consistent with the findings of previous studies on digital communication and interactivity of think tanks from different regions and contexts (Castillo-Esparcia et al., 2020; Castillo and Smolak, 2016, 2017). Although these research centres, like other organisations and institutions, are adapting to new communication processes, offering a variety of communication tools to improve their links with their relational universe and including digital resources that increase the degree of interaction, further evolution is still needed to move towards bidirectional communication models, where relations with different publics are closer and offer greater participation and engagement with the organisation. The situation pointed out by La Porte (2019) is also confirmed: although think tanks are aware of the need to implement communication strategies aimed at fostering dialogue and participation from different publics, efforts are still focused on audiences made up of researchers, direct staff or a very specific and limited audience. The lack of effective bidirectional communication and the

under-utilisation of tools that promote interaction can have consequences for relations with the other publics of these organisations. It can lead to a perception of distance and detachment between the organisation and its audiences, which in turn can affect user trust and loyalty.

It is therefore crucial for organisations to understand the importance of moving towards participatory models in the digital environment in order to strengthen their links with their various audiences. However, the transition to a new approach to communication involving interaction is challenging. Despite initial progress, the study shows that there is still a long way to go to achieve optimal levels of interaction and dialogue with audiences. The constant search for more effective communication models in the digital environment remains an area of great importance in order to maximise the potential of these organisations to communicate and influence in the current context.

At this point, it is appropriate to examine the possible correlation between the degree of interactivity presented by think tanks and their own intrinsic structural configuration. The four categories outlined by McGann and Weaver (2009) and Castillo (2009) are manifested to a greater or lesser extent in the organisations that make up the sample of this research. Given that the activity panorama of these organisations has gradually moved towards a context of increasing complexity in the development of their functions, it may seem limiting to try to identify differences between them without taking into account their multifaceted nature. However, if the analysis is simplified and focused on the theme, it highlights that, although there is no evidence of a direct link with statistical support between the categories of the aforementioned taxonomy, there is a preponderance in the top positions of the ranking - established according to the level of interactivity in the use of bidirectional tools - of think tanks that have an ideology, such as advocacy tanks or idea labs linked to political parties - Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), Adam Smith Institute (ASI) and Amnesty International (AI) - as well as those oriented towards academic research - Real Instituto Elcano and LSE IDEAS. Furthermore, focusing on the perspective that measures interactivity as a process promoting dialogue and communication, it is found that these same types of research centres are closer to positions favouring bidirectional communication or active listening. Conversely, the last positions in the above classification are occupied by those idea labs that carry out their research activities under public or private contracts and declare themselves to be independent - Clingendael, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) and the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS). This finding confirms that, although the role of disseminating information is common to all the think tanks analysed, the more dialogical role corresponds to academic think tanks or those with a more policy-oriented role. The latter, by their very nature, have to develop more active and dialogic communication strategies, oriented towards the search for cognitive change (Quintana and Castillo, 2019), the acceptance of behavioural patterns that benefit their ideas, and the consequent support of their audiences. However, this dialogical communication in the online medium should be of interest not only to those associated with political ideologies, but to all think tanks, which must focus their transition towards a bidirectional communication with all their publics, which contributes to the survival of these centres and, at the same time, allows them to "listen" to proposals in order to generate relevant proposals for the common good, important prerequisites for being considered a think tank, according to Almiron and Xifra (2021).

Taking into account the objectives set in this research, it can be confirmed that they have been achieved, since the study has allowed us to know the communicative situation of European think tanks in their relational online environment through web platforms, analysing the use of unidirectional and bidirectional communication tools that have made it possible to establish the level of interactivity achieved by each of these centres in the digital realm, as well as those that lead more interactive and dialogic strategies. Therefore, the research question can be answered by confirming that, in general, the official websites of the think tanks studied exhibit patterns closer to monologic or asymmetrical dialogue. Although some attempts can be seen, there is still a long way to go before it can be assumed that these research centres are opting for more interactive communication strategies that allow them to exploit the dialogical potential that the digital medium can offer.

The conclusions drawn from this analysis suggest several promising lines of research in the field of think tank communication in the digital environment. One of these areas focuses on the adaptation of communication strategies in response to changing political events, such as elections or government crises. This approach would allow us to understand how think tanks remain relevant and effective in dynamic political contexts.

Another line of research is the impact of narrative on think tanks' digital communication. Exploring how coherent and engaging stories influence public perception and the ability of these organisations to shape public policy emerges as a crucial issue. To achieve this, the use of effective metrics to measure the impact of digital communication strategies is advisable, as is maintaining the comparative approach used in this study. Finally, in a constantly evolving context, research into online citizen participation and the use of artificial intelligence in think tanks' virtual communication also emerge as essential areas of study, with the aim of developing more effective and efficient strategies on the web.

## 6. Contributions

Contributions	Author 1	Author 2	Author 3
Conceptualisation	X	X	X
Content curation	X	X	X
Formal analysis	X	X	X
Fundraising	X	X	X
Research	X	X	X
Methodology	X	X	X
Project management	X	X	X
Resources	X	X	X
Software	X	X	X
Supervision	X	X	X
Validation	X	X	X
Visualisation	X	X	X
Drafting	X	X	X
Review and editing	X	X	X

## 7. Acknowledgement

Translator: professional translator of the Translation and Interpreting Service of the General Foundation of the University of Malaga.

## 8. Funding

This work was supported by the Ministry of Economy and Digital Transformation. State R&D&I Programme. 2020 Programme. (Project code: PID2020-118584RB-I00). Project Lobbying and Communication in the European Union. Analysis of their communication strategies.

## 9. Conflict of interest declaration

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

## 10. References

- Abelson, D.E. (2006). *A Capitol Idea. Think Tanks and US Foreign Policy*. McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Abelson, D.E. (2009). *Do think tanks matter?: Assessing the impact of public policy institutes*. McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Abelson, D.E. (2012). *Think tanks, Social Democracy and Social Policy*. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 66(4), 894-902. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gss051>
- Aced, C. (2013). *Relaciones Públicas 2.0*. Editorial UOC.
- Allern, S., & Pollack, E. (2020). The Role of Think Tanks in the Swedish Political Landscape. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 43, 145-169. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9477.12180>
- Almiron, N., y Xifra, J. (2021). *Repensar los think tanks. Expertos vs. impostores*. Prensas de la Universidad de Zaragoza. <https://bit.ly/3lzh9Kz>
- Arshed, N. (2017). The origins of policy ideas: The importance of *think tanks* in the enterprise policy process in the UK. *Journal of business research*, 71, 74-83. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.10.015>
- Avidar, R. (2013). The responsiveness pyramid: Embedding responsiveness and interactivity into public relations theory. *Public Relations Review*, 39(5), 440-450. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.05.004>

- Barberà, P., y Arregui, J. (2011). *Naturaleza e influencia de los think tanks en el proceso político en España*. Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials.
- Bermejo Siller, C. (2016). *La comunicación online en los think tanks de Europa occidental* [Tesis Doctoral, Universidad de Málaga]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bitly.ws/39Lwr>
- Blanc, R. C. (2003). *From Thatcher to the Third Way. Think-Tanks, Intellectuals and the Blair Project*. Ibdem-Verlag Haunschild.
- Boucher, S. (ed.) (2004). Europe and Its *Think tanks*: A promise to be fulfilled. *Notre Europe. Studies and Research*, 35. <https://bit.ly/33MV6kU>
- Braml, J. (2006). U.S. and German *Think tanks* in Comparative Perspective. *German Policy Studies*, 3(2), 222-267. <https://bit.ly/31BDSpi>
- Bustos Zapata, M. P. (2021). *Evaluación de usabilidad y calidad de la Información en portales web de instituciones del Trabajo en Chile, Paraguay y Uruguay* [Tesis doctoral, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bitly.ws/39Lwf>
- Capriotti, P., Carretón, C., & Castillo, A. (2016). Testing the level of interactivity of institutional websites: from museums 1.0 to museums 2.0. *International Journal of Information Management (UK)*, 36(1), 97-104. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2015.10.003>
- Capriotti, P., & González-Herrero, A. (2017). From 1.0 Online Pressrooms to 2.0 Social Newsrooms at Museums Worldwide. *Communication & Society*, 30(2), 2017, 113-129. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.30.2.113-129>
- Capriotti, P., & Moreno, A. (2007). Corporate citizenship and public relations: the importance and interactivity of social responsibility issues on corporate websites. *Public Relations Review*, 33(1), 84-91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2006.11.012>
- Capriotti, P., y Pardo Kuklinski, H. (2012). Assessing dialogic communication through the Internet in Spanish museums. *Public Relations Review*, 38(4), 619-626. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.05.005>
- Castelló-Sirvent, F., y Roger-Monzó, V. (2021). Los *think tanks* españoles durante los períodos de crisis y recuperación económica: un análisis de su concentración mediática. *Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, 174, 23-46. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5477/cis/reis.174.23>
- Castells, M. (2001). *La galaxia Internet*. Areté.
- Castillo, A. (2009). Relaciones públicas y *think tanks* en América Latina. Estudio sobre su implantación y acción. *Razón y Palabra*, 70, 1-22. <https://bit.ly/3nVldfo>
- Castillo, A., y Castillero, E. (2012). Los *think tanks* como actores de influencia política en Europa. Análisis de su implantación en Europa del Este. *Trípodos. Extra*, 129-146. <https://bitly.ws/39Lx7>
- Castillo-Esparcia, A., Almansa-Martínez, A., & Smolak-Lozano, E. (2015). East European *think tanks* in social media - Towards the model of evaluation of effective communication /PR strategist: Case study analysis. *Catalan journal of communication and cultural studies*, 7(2), 231-250. [https://doi.org/10.1386/cjcs.7.2.231\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/cjcs.7.2.231_1)
- Castillo-Esparcia, A., Castillero-Ostio, E., y Castillo-Díaz, A. (2020). Los *think tanks* en España. Análisis de sus estrategias de comunicación digitales. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 77, 253-273. <https://www.doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2020-1457>
- Castillo-Esparcia, A., García-Ponce, D., y Smolak-Lozano, E. (2013). Movimientos sociales y estrategias de comunicación. El caso de 15-M y de Occupy Wall Street. *Estudios Sobre El Mensaje Periodístico*, 19(1), 71-89. [http://dx.doi.org/10.5209/rev\\_ESMP.2013.v19.n1.42508](http://dx.doi.org/10.5209/rev_ESMP.2013.v19.n1.42508)
- Castillo-Esparcia, A., Guerra-Heredia, S., & Almansa-Martínez, A. (2017). Political communication and *think tanks* in Spain. Strategies with the media. *El profesional de la información*, 26(4), 706-713. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2017.jul.14>
- Castillo, A., y Smolak, E. (2016). La comunicación de los *think tanks*. Análisis de la estrategia digital. *Opción*, 32(9), 327-342. <https://produccioncientificaluz.org/index.php/opcion/article/view/21740/21525>
- Castillo, A., y Smolak, E. (2017). Relaciones públicas digitales. Análisis de las estrategias de comunicación de los *think tanks*. *Obra Digital*, 13, 59-80. <https://bit.ly/3rMay8L>

- Chuliá, E. (2018). Una aproximación a los *think tanks* como organizaciones proveedoras de información y análisis a la sociedad. *Revista española de sociología*, 27(2), 333-340. <https://doi.org/10.22325/fes/res.2018.27>
- Cockett, R. (1995). *Thinking the Unthinkable: Think-tanks and the Economic Counter-revolution, 1931-83*. Fontana Press.
- Codina, L., Pedraza-Jiménez, R., Díaz-Noci, J., Rodríguez-Martínez, R., Pérez-Montoro, M., y Cavaller-Reyes, V. (2014). Sistema Articulado de Análisis de Cibermedios (SAAC): Una propuesta sobre el qué y el cómo para estudiar medios de comunicación digitales. *Hipertext.net*, 12. <https://bitly.ws/39Lxf>
- Coombs, T., & Holladay, S. (2015). Public Relations 'relationships identity' in research: Enlightenment or Illusion. *Public Relations Review*, 41(5), 689-695. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.12.008>
- Dahl, R. A. (1989). *Democracy and its critics*. Yale University Press.
- Denham, A. (2005). *British think-tanks and the climate of opinion*. Routledge.
- Denham, A., & Garnett, M. (1998). *British Think Tanks and the Climate of Opinion*. UCL Press.
- Devaux, S. (2006). Old networks, new roles? The role of environmental *think tanks* in the Czech Republic. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 7(2), 221-235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850600840072>
- Domhoff, G. W. (1990). *The Power Elite and the State: How Policy Is Made in America*. Aldine de Gruyter.
- Domhoff, G. W. (2010). *Who Rules America? (6ª ed.)*. McGraw Hill.
- Duhé, S. (2015). An Overview of New Media Research in Public Relations Journals from 1981 to 2014. *Public Relations Review*, 41(2), 153-169. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2014.11.002>
- Fernández-Cavia, J., Rovira, C., Díaz-Luque, P., & Cavaller, V. (2014). Web Quality Index (WQI) for official tourist destination websites. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 9, 5-13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2013.10.003>
- Fischer, K., & Plehwe, D. (2017) Neoliberal *Think tank* Networks in Latin America and Europe: Strategic Replication and Cross-National Organizing. In A. Salas-Porras y G. Murray (eds.), *Think Tanks and Global Politics* (pp.159-186). Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56756-7\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56756-7_7)
- Freres, C., Seabra, M., & Moraes, M. R. (2000). *Think tanks* in Spain and Portugal: Searching for relevance. En J.G. McGann y R.K. Weaver. (eds.), *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalysts for Ideas and Actions*. Transaction Publishers.
- Gershon, R. (2016). *Digital Media and Innovation. Management and Design. Strategies in Communication*. Sage.
- González-Capitel, J., y Ponsa, F. (2015). *Radiografía de los think tanks en España. Informe Funciva*. <https://bit.ly/3Hc1sbO>
- González-Capitel, J., Ponsa, F., Guasp, M., Quintana, F., y López, M. (2017). *La financiación de las ideas. Índice de transparencia financiera de los think tanks españoles (2016)*. Observatorio de los *think tanks*.
- Guerra Heredia, S. (2014). *La comunicación de los think tanks en España. Panorama y estrategias comunicativas* [Tesis doctoral, Universidad de Málaga]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bitly.ws/39Lxi>
- Guillory, J. E., & Sundar, S. S. (2014). How does website interactivity affect our perceptions of an organization? *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 26(1), 44-61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2013.795866>
- Gustavsen, P., & Tilley, E. (2003). Public relations communication through corporate websites: Towards an understanding of the role of interactivity. *Prism*, 1(1). <http://www.prismjournal.org>
- Hassenzahl, M., & Tractinsky, N. (2006). User experience-a research agenda. *Behaviour & information technology*, 25(2), 91-97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01449290500330331>

- Haughton, G., & Allmendinger, P. (2016). Think tanks and the pressures for planning reform in England. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, 34(8), 1676-1692. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263774X16629677>
- Heinze, N., & Hu, Q. (2006). The evolution of corporate web presence: a longitudinal study of large American companies. *International Journal of Information Management*, 26(4), 313-325. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2006.03.008>
- Holtz, S. (2002). *Public relations on the Net: winning strategies to inform and influence the media, the investment community, the government, the public, and more*. Amacom.
- Ingenhoff, D., & Koelling, A. M. (2009). The potential of websites as a relationship building tool for charitable fundraising NPOs. *Public Relations Review*, 35(1), 66-73. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2008.09.023>
- Jo, S., & Jung, J. (2005). A cross-cultural study of the world wide web and public relations. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 10(1), 24-40. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563280510578187>
- Jo, S., & Kim, Y. (2003). The effect of Web characteristics on relationship building. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 15(3), 199-223. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1503\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1503_1)
- Kent, M.L. (2013). Using social media dialogically: public relations role in reviving democracy. *Public Relations Review*, 39(4), 337-345. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.07.024>
- Kent, M. L., & Lane, A. (2021). Two-way communication, symmetry, negative spaces, and dialogue. *Public Relations Review*, 47(2), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2021.102014>
- Kent, M.L., & Taylor, M. (1998). Building dialogic relationships through the worldwide web. *Public Relations Review*, 24(3), 321-334. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0363-8111\(99\)80143-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0363-8111(99)80143-X)
- Kent, M.L., & Taylor, M. (2002). Toward a dialogic theory of public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 28(1), 21-37. <https://bit.ly/343yWdW>
- Kent, M.L., & Taylor, M. (2021). Fostering Dialogic Engagement: Toward an Architecture of Social Media for Social Change. *Social Media+Society*, 7(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120984462>
- Kim, S., Park, H., & Wertz, E. K. (2010). Expectation gaps between stakeholders and web-based corporate public relations efforts: focusing on Fortune 500 corporate websites. *Public Relations Review*, 36(3), 215-221. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2010.04.001>
- Kingdon, J. (1984). *Agendas, alternatives and public policies*. Brown.
- Kiousis, S. (2002). Interactivity: a concept explication. *New Media and Society*, 4(3), 355-383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146144480200400303>
- Klüver, H. (2011). The contextual nature of lobbying: Explaining lobbying success in the European Union. *European Union Politics*, 12(4), 483-506. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116511413163>
- Lalueza, F., & Girona, R. (2016). The Impact of *Think tanks* on Mass Media Discourse Regarding the Economic Crisis in Spain. *Public Relations Review*, 42(4), 271-278. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2015.09.006>
- La Porte, T. (2019). Las reglas del "nuevo poder de influencia": Un análisis de las estrategias de think tanks globales desde una perspectiva comunicativa. *Austral Comunicación*, 8(1), 9-36. <https://doi.org/10.26422/aucom.2019.0801.lap>
- Landry, J. (2021). *Critical Perspectives on Think Tanks: Power, Politics and Knowledge*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Leiner, D., & Quiring, O. (2008). What interactivity means to the user: essential insights into and a scale for perceived interactivity. *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, 14(1), 127-155. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2008.01434.x>
- Lenglet, R., & Vilain, O. (2011). *Un pouvoir sous influence - Quand les think tanks confisquent la démocratie*. Armand Colin.
- Li, Ch. (2017). *The Power of Ideas: The Rising Influence of Thinkers and Think Tanks in China*. WSPC.
- Liberos, E. (coord.) (2013). *El libro de Marketing Interactivo y la Publicidad Digital*. ESIC Editorial.

- López-Rabadán, P., & Mellado, C. (2019). Twitter as a space for interaction in political journalism. Dynamics, consequences and proposal of interactivity scale for social media. *Communication & Society*, 32(1), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.32.37810>
- Lowery, D. (2007). Why Do Organized Interest Lobby? A Multi-goal, Multi-Context Theory of Lobbying. *Polity*, 39(1), 29-54. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.polity.2300077>
- Martínez-Oña López, M<sup>a</sup> E. (2016). *La comunicación de los think tanks económicos en España* [Tesis doctoral, Universidad de Málaga]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bitly.ws/39Lxk>
- McAllister-Spooner, S. (2009). Fulfilling the dialogic promise: a ten-year reflective survey on dialogic Internet principles. *Public Relations Review*, 35(3), 320-322. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2009.03.008>
- McGann, J.G. (2021a). *The Future of Think Tanks and Policy Advice Around the World*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- McGann, J.G. (2021b). *2020 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report. TTCSP Global Go To Think Tank Index Reports*. <https://bitly.ws/39Lxq>
- McGann, J.G., & Johnson, E. (2005). *Comparative Think Tanks, Politics and Public Policy*. Edward Elgar.
- McGann, J.G., & Weaver, R. K. (eds.) (2000). *Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalysts for Ideas and Actions*. Transaction Publishers.
- McGann, J.G., & Weaver, K. (eds.) (2009). *Think tanks and civil societies: Catalysts for action*. Transaction Publishers.
- McLevey, J. (2013). *Producing and Promoting Policy Ideas: A Study of Think Tanks in Canada* [Tesis doctoral, McMaster University]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bitly.ws/39Lxu>
- Medvetz, T. (2008). *Think Tanks as an Emergent Field*. The Social Science Research Council. <http://bit.ly/1qCXTR>.
- Medvetz, T. (2012). *Think Tanks in America*. University of Chicago Press.
- Mendizábal, E. (2014). *What is a think tank? Defining the boundaries of the label. On Think Tanks. On Think tanks*. Independent Research, Ideas and Advice. <http://bit.ly/2ojBsIE>
- Michaels, J.H. (2014). The Heyday of Britain's Cold War Think tank: Brian Crozier and the Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1970-79. In L. van Dongen, S. Roulin y G. Scott-Smith (eds.), *Transnational Anti-Communism and the Cold War. The Palgrave Macmillan Transnational History Series* (pp. 146-160). Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137388803\\_10](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137388803_10)
- Montobbio, M. (2013). *La geopolítica del pensamiento. Think tanks y política exterior*. CIDOB y Real Instituto Elcano.
- Morales, J.C. (2017). *Los centros de pensamiento y su influencia en la política exterior y de seguridad* [Tesis doctoral, UNED]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bit.ly/3fV4YLP>
- Motion, J. (2001). Electronic relationships: Interactivity, Internet branding and the public sphere. *Journal of Communication Management*, 5(3), 217-230. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13632540110806785>
- Oliveira, A., & Capriotti, P. (2014). Internet as a key tool for publics to communicate with organizations. The case of the Spanish energy sector. *Catalan Journal of Communication & Cultural Studies*, 6(1), 143-151. <https://bit.ly/3lrollK>
- Oreskes, N., & Conway, E. M. (2010). *Merchants of Doubt. How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming*. Bloomsbury.
- Park, H., & Reber, B. H. (2008). Relationship building and the use of websites: how Fortune 500 corporations use their Websites to build relationships. *Public Relations Review*, 34(4), 409-411. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2008.06.006>
- Parrilla, R., Almiron, N., & Xifra, J. (2016). Crisis and Interest: The Political Economy of Think tanks During the Great Recession. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 60(3), 340-359. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764215613404>

- Pautz, H. (2007). Scottish Think-Tanks and Policy Networks. *Scottish Affairs* 58(1), 57-77. <https://doi.org/10.3366/scot.2007.0004>
- Pautz, H. (2008). Think-tanks in Germany: the Bertelsmann Foundation's role in labour market reform. *Zeitschrift für Politikberatung*, 1, 437-456. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12392-008-0044-8>
- Pautz, H. (2010). *Think tanks* in the United Kingdom and Germany: Actors in the Modernisation of Social Democracy. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 12(2), 274-294. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856X.2010.00402.x>
- Pautz, H. (2011). Revisiting the think-tank phenomenon. *Public Policy and Administration*, 26(4), 419-435. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0952076710378328>
- Pautz, H. (2013). The *Think tanks* behind 'Cameronism'. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 15, 362-377. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856X.2012.00518.x>
- Pautz, H. (2014). British think-tanks and their collaborative and communicative networks. *Politics*, 34(4), 345-361. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9256.12056>
- Pautz, H. (2017). Managing the crisis? Think-tanks and the British response to Global Financial Crisis and Great Recession. *Critical Policy Studies*, 11(2), 191-210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2016.1166974>
- Paz Espinoza, F.A. (2017). *Método para la evaluación de usabilidad de sitios web transaccionales basado en el proceso de inspección heurística* [Tesis doctoral, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú - CENTRUM Católica]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bit.ly/3FYxsPs>
- Pescheck, J. G. (1987). *Policy Planning Organizations: Elite Agendas and America's Rightward Turn*. PA. Temple University Press.
- Pineda, A., Hernández-Santaolalla, V., Algaba, C., & Barragán-Romero, A. (2019). The politics of *think tanks* in social media: FAES, YouTube and free-market ideology. *International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics*, 15(1), 3-25. [https://doi.org/10.1386/macp.15.1.3\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/macp.15.1.3_1)
- Planells, E. (2017). *Análisis de la representación e impacto de los think tanks españoles en la prensa online (2012-2016)* [Tesis doctoral, Universidad de Valencia]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bitly.ws/39LxH>
- Planells-Artigot, E., Martí-Sánchez, M., & Moreno-Castro, C. (2020). Presence of *think tanks* in the Spanish digital press. *Profesional De La Información*, 29(5). <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2020.sep.17>
- Ponsa, F. (2014). *Evolució històrica i models de Think Tanks a Catalunya. El cas de les fundacions dels partits polítics* [Tesis doctoral, Universitat Pompeu Fabra]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bit.ly/3KE9xs5>
- Ponsa, F. (2016). Anàlisi de la influència del *think tanks* interns dels partits polítics catalans a través de la presència mediàtica. *Comunicació: Revista de Recerca i d'Anàlisi*, 33(1), 27-51, doi:10.2436/20.3008.01.141.
- Ponsa, F., y Xifra, J. (2012). *Guia de think tanks a Catalunya*. Sehen.
- Quintana Pujalte, L., y Castillo Esparcia, A. (2019). Relaciones públicas avanzadas: estudio del nivel de interactividad de los Think Tanks destacados en el uso de redes. *International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Social Science (IJLRHSS)*, 2(8), 44-54. <https://bitly.ws/39LxK>
- Ramírez-Torres, P. X., Paredes-Amaguaya, A. I., Bejarano-Gavilanes, X. P., y Pomaquero-Yuquilema, M. L. (2020). Análisis de tendencias de diseño gráfico aplicadas en diseño web. *Dominio de las Ciencias*, 6(2), 923-932. <http://dx.doi.org/10.23857/dc.v6i3.1257>
- Requejo, F. (1999). *Els think tanks a Catalunya*. Universitat Pompeu Fabra.
- Roger-Monzó, V., y Castelló-Sirvent, F. (2020). *Think tanks* españoles: análisis longitudinal de su presencia en medios nacionales e internacionales (2004-2018). *El Profesional de la Información*, 29(3), e290331. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2020.may.31>
- Rovira, C., y Marcos, M.C. (2013). Diseño de sitios web: disciplinas, materias y esquemas integradores. *Hipertext.net*, 11. <https://bit.ly/3lzdFaX>
- Ruser, A. (2019). *Climate Politics and the Impact of Think Tanks: Scientific Expertise in Germany and the US*. Palgrave MacMillan.

- Saffer, A. J., Sommerfeldt, E.J., & Taylor, M. (2013). The effects of organizational Twitter interactivity on organization-public relationships. *Public Relations Review*, 39(3), 213-215. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.02.005>
- Saloma, J. (1984). *Ominous Politics: The New Conservative Labyrinth*. Hill and Wang.
- Sánchez, J. A., y Pizarro, J. (2014). *Ideas locales que viajan en inglés: análisis de redes de think-tanks en Twitter*. Real Instituto Elcano. <https://bit.ly/348fPzy>
- Santillán, J. R. (2012). *Think tanks y sus estrategias comunicativas*. *Redmarka*, 8, 201-222. <https://doi.org/10.17979/redma.2012.01.08.4749>
- Shaw, S., Rusell, J., Greenhalgh, T., & Korica, M. (2014). Thinking about *think tanks* in health care: a call for new research agenda. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 36(3), 447-461. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.12071>
- Sherrington, P. (2000a). Shaping the policy agenda: *Think tank* activity in the European Union. *Global Society*, 14(2), 173-189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600820050008430>
- Sherrington, P. (2000b). British *think tanks*: Advancing the intellectual debate? *The British journal of politics & international relations*, 2(2), 256-263. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-856X.00036>
- Simon, J. (1993). The idea brokers: the impact of *think tanks* on British government. *Public administration*, 71(4), 491-506. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9299.1993.tb00988.x>
- Smolak, E. (2017). *Relaciones públicas 2.0 y Think Tanks. Análisis de Social Media como estrategia de comunicación* [Tesis doctoral, Universidad de Málaga]. Repositorio Institucional. <https://bitly.ws/39LxP>
- Soto, M.J. (2020). La interacción del usuario con el diseño web en función de su composición cromática. *MADGU. Mundo, Arquitectura, Diseño gráfico y Urbanismo*, 3(5), 17. <https://doi.org/10.36800/madgu.v3i5.49>
- Stefancic, J., & Delgado, R. (1996). *No Mercy: How Conservative Think Tanks and Foundations Changed*. Temple University Press.
- Stone, D. (2007). Recycling Bins, Garbage Cans or *Think tanks*? Three Myths Regarding Policy Analysis Institutes. *Public Administration*, 85(2), 259-278. <http://bit.ly/1xjA2Wa>
- Stone, D., & Denham, A. (2004). *Think Tank Traditions: Policy Research and the Politics of Ideas*. Manchester University Press.
- Stone, D., Denham A., & Garnett, M. (eds.) (1998). *Think Tanks across Nations: A comparative Approach*. Manchester University Press.
- Stromer-Galley, J. (2004). Interactivity-as-product and interactivity-as-process. *The Information Society*, 20(5), 391-394. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01972240490508081>
- Taylor, M., & Kent, M. (2014). Dialogic engagement: clarifying foundational concepts. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 26(5), 384-398. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2014.956106>
- Tello-Beneitez, M. (2013). *Guía de think tanks en España*. Centro Francisco Tomás y Valiente. UNED Alzira-Valencia. <https://bit.ly/3fWBnla>
- Truman, D. B. (1951). *The Governmental Process; political interests and public opinion*. Knopf.
- Urrutia, O. (2013). El papel de los *think tanks* en la definición y aplicación de las políticas y estrategias de defensa. *Revista del Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos*, 2(7), 189-222. <https://bitly.ws/39LxQ>
- Urrutia, O. (2017). Foreign policies in Spain: The role of *think tanks* in the battle between Central State and Catalonia? In D. Abelson, S. Brooks y X. Hua (eds.), *Think tanks, Foreign Policy and Geo-Politics*. Routledge. <https://bit.ly/3nXkxab>
- Van Ruler, B. (2015). Agile Public Relations Planning: The Reflective Communication Scrum. *Public Relations Review*, 41(2), 187-194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2014.11.008>
- Villumsen, T. (2007). *Think tanks* in Europe: Shaping ideas of security. *Militært Tidsskrift*, 136(2), 143-161. <https://bit.ly/3F5slLe>

Weaver, R. K. (1989). The changing world of think tanks. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 22(3), 563-578.

Xifra, J. (2005). Los *think tanks* y advocacy tanks como actores de la comunicación política. *Anàlisi*, 32, 73-91. <https://bitly.ws/39LxX>

Xifra, J. (2008). *Los think tanks*. Editorial UOC.