



Brookings Reigns Supreme in Ranking of World's Think Tanks

University of Pennsylvania Places Cato Institute 16th, Best of the Free Marketeers

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On Thursday, January 22, the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania released what amounts to the who's who ranking of policy institutes. The honor of the world's number one slot went to the DC-based [Brookings Institution](#), for the seventh consecutive year, as calculated in the [2014 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report](#).

The GGTTI studies the role that think tanks play worldwide — their trends and challenges — with the objective of improving their performance and impact. The comprehensive review includes 6,618 think tanks from 182 countries (1,830 in the United States), and received the support of more than [1,500](#) institutions and experts.

James McGann compiled this year's edition, the eighth of its kind, and shared the findings via a press conference at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. In addition to Brookings, he highlighted the success of [Chatham House](#) (United Kingdom), the [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#) (United States), the [Center for Strategic and International Studies](#) (United States), and [Bruegel](#) (Belgium).

Moreover, the GGTTI report presents the top think tanks according to their region. Starting with Sub-Saharan Africa, the [Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis](#) and the [IMANI Center for Policy and Education](#) (Ghana) take the lead.

Moving on to China, India, Japan, and Korea, the [Korea Development Institute](#) (KDI) and [Japan Institute for International Affairs](#) (JIIA) rank best, as do the Australian Institute for International

Affairs (AIIA) and Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

Latin-American institutions have a strong showing as well. The Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV) of Brazil is the top think tank in Central and South America, and place 18th worldwide. The Fraser Institute is the next best outside the United States and leads the standings in Canada and Mexico.

Aside from geography, the GGTTI report ranks the institutes according to particular areas of performance. For instance, Amnesty International (AI), Chatham House, and Human Rights Watch (HRW) have the distinction of having the best use of social networks.

On the other hand, the BRICS Policy Center (Brazil), the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), and the Association for International Affairs, AMO (Czech Republic) lead the “Think Tank to Watch” ranking.

What of the Free-Market Think Thanks?

Alejandro Chafuen, president and CEO of the Atlas Economic Research Foundation, was quick to weigh in on the performance of free-market think tanks in the 2014 GGTTI. He highlights that although the Cato Institute ranks highest among US free-market think tanks, the Heritage Foundation received the most positive appearances throughout the report (21), followed by Cato (20), and the American Enterprise Institute (16).

Outside the United States, “the Fraser Institute (Canada) is again the leader with 18 mentions, followed by Libertad y Desarrollo, in Chile, with 13.” The Venezuelan Center for Dissemination of Economic Knowledge, CEDICE Libertad, is next with nine mentions.

In addition, he recommends that people read the introductory chapters of the GGTTI report: “It should be a mandatory reading for all those interested in the work of think tanks, which means everyone interested in public policy.”

However, he expresses concern regarding the relative absence of free-market institutions in fundamental areas: “As in previous years, there are very few free-market thinks tanks appearing in the rankings in areas of extreme importance. On environment, only two (out of 70), PERC and CEI. On energy one (out of 20), [the American Enterprise Institute], and on education, only three (out of 50), and a similar weak performance on think tanks with some focus in science and policy.”

“In future rankings, I expect that we will see additional free-market centers, such as the Free-Market Institute at Texas Tech University, or the Navarra Center for International Development, appearing in this field of the Go To Ranking.”

Finally, Chafuen states that free-market institutions will have to “continue enhancing their operations and adapt to the market,” to have an impact in their respective civil societies. He asserts that rankings such as the GGTTI “will have to be perfected, and those of us in the

industry should not only learn from it but also provide advice, constructive criticism, and collaboration.”