Think Tanks: impartiality and influence

The views of MPs

FEBRUARY 2018
The London-based think tanks are a vital source of new policy ideas, providing much needed resource and original ideas to successive governments.

Every think tank I have ever spoken to wants to be recognised as influential and praised for the quality of its output. It is also important to most think tanks that they are seen as free from undue commercial influence and able to cross party divides.

ComRes has produced this research, which we update regularly, in order to help think tanks understand and manage their political reputation.

We hope it is of use.

Andrew Hawkins
Founder & Chairman, ComRes
@Andrew_ComRes

The data in this report are from two surveys of MPs: from September (n=120) and October 2017 (n=150). Data were weighted to be representative of all MPs in terms of party, length of service, age and marginality.
Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)
### Think Tanks Conservative MPs Consider to Be Most Influential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think Tank</th>
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<td>Demos</td>
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Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: Conservative MPs (n=54)
Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: Labour MPs (n=73)
Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Chatham House?

- Produces high quality output: 59%
- Is a leader in its field: 59%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 34%
- Has highly capable leadership: 29%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 3%

35% of MPs think Chatham House is an influential think tank

- 39% Labour MPs
- 30% Conservative MPs

Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)
Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Centre for Social Justice? Base: all respondents (n=120)

- Produces high quality output: 45%
- Is a leader in its field: 32%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 28%
- Has highly capable leadership: 19%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 14%

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)

- Centre for Social Justice is an influential think tank: 32%
- Labour MPs: 23%
- Conservative MPs: 45%
Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Institute for Economic Affairs? Base: all respondents (n=120)

- Produces high quality output: 39%
- Is a leader in its field: 32%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 16%
- Has highly capable leadership: 16%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 11%

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)

- Institute for Economic Affairs is an influential think tank: 30%
- Labour MPs: 18%
- Conservative MPs: 39%
MORE THAN HALF OF LABOUR MPS SAY IPPR IS INFLUENTIAL

Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with IPPR?

- Produces high quality output: 39%
- Is a leader in its field: 27%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 15%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 15%
- Has highly capable leadership: 13%

Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

30% of MPs think IPPR is an influential think tank

54% Labour MPs

11% Conservative MPs

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)
MORE THAN A THIRD OF CONSERVATIVES (34%) SAY TAXPayers’ ALLIANCE IS INFLUENTIAL

Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with TaxPayers' Alliance?

- Is too strongly politically aligned: 40%
- Is a leader in its field: 28%
- Produces high quality output: 26%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 15%
- Has highly capable leadership: 11%

26% of MPs think TaxPayers’ Alliance is an influential think tank

- 18% Labour MPs
- 34% Conservative MPs

Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)
Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

- Produces high quality output: 50%
- Is a leader in its field: 29%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 21%
- Has highly capable leadership: 16%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 6%

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)

- Centre for Policy Studies: 23%
- 21% Labour MPs
- 26% Conservative MPs
Almost half of almost half of almost half of almost half of MPs say Policy Exchange produces high quality output.

Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

- Produces high quality output: 48%
- Is a leader in its field: 24%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 14%
- Has highly capable leadership: 14%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 11%

20% of MPs think Policy Exchange is an influential think tank.

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)

- Labour MPs: 17%
- Conservative MPs: 24%
Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Institute for Government?

- Produces high quality output: 40%
- Is a leader in its field: 27%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 25%
- Has highly capable leadership: 20%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 5%

Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

19% of MPs think Institute for Government is an influential think tank

- Labour MPs: 27%
- Conservative MPs: 11%

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)
Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Resolution Foundation?

- Produces high quality output: 28%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 15%
- Is a leader in its field: 12%
- Has highly capable leadership: 9%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 3%

Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

12% of MPs think Resolution Foundation is an influential think tank

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)
Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Legatum Institute?

- Produces high quality output: 34%
- Is a leader in its field: 13%
- Has highly capable leadership: 13%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 11%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 6%

Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

10% of MPs think Legatum Institute is an influential think tank

- 7% Labour MPs
- 13% Conservative MPs

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)
Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Demos?

- Produces high quality output: 29%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 15%
- Is a leader in its field: 14%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 12%
- Has highly capable leadership: 5%

Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

- Labour MPs: 16%
- Conservative MPs: 0%

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)

7% of MPs think Demos is an influential think tank

16% Labour MPs

0% Conservative MPs
Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)

- Produces high quality output: 25%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 17%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 14%
- Is a leader in its field: 8%
- Has highly capable leadership: 7%

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)

- Labour MPs: 3%
- Conservative MPs: 8%

7% of MPs think ResPublica is an influential think tank
Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Social Market Foundation? Base: all respondents (n=120)

- Produces high quality output: 35%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 14%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 13%
- Is a leader in its field: 12%
- Has highly capable leadership: 9%

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)

- 6% of MPs think Social Market Foundation is an influential think tank
- 9% Labour MPs
- 2% Conservative MPs
Q. September 2017: Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with Reform? Base: all respondents (n=120)

- Produces high quality output: 24%
- Appears free from commercial influence: 19%
- Is a leader in its field: 10%
- Is too strongly politically aligned: 8%
- Has highly capable leadership: 7%

3% of MPs think Reform is an influential think tank

Q. October 2017: Which of the following think tanks, if any, do you believe are the most influential? Base: all respondents (n=150)

- Labour MPs: 0%
- Conservative MPs: 4%
Which of the following produces high quality output?

- Chatham House: 59%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 50%
- Policy Exchange: 48%
- Centre for Social Justice: 45%
- Institute for Government: 40%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 39%
- IPPR: 39%
- Social Market Foundation: 35%
- Legatum Institute: 34%
- Demos: 29%
- Resolution Foundation: 28%
- Taxpayers' Alliance: 26%
- ResPublica: 25%
- Reform: 24%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)
7 in 10 Conservative MPs say Chatham House produces high quality output (69%).

Which of the following produces high quality output according to Conservative MPs?

- Chatham House: 69%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 62%
- Centre for Social Justice: 62%
- Policy Exchange: 58%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 56%
- Legatum Institute: 48%
- Institute for Government: 43%
- Taxpayers’ Alliance: 40%
- ResPublica: 34%
- Social Market Foundation: 33%
- Reform: 30%
- Demos: 24%
- Resolution Foundation: 24%
- IPPR: 23%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: Conservative MPs (n=40)
Which of the following produces high quality output according to Labour MPs?

- IPPR: 65%
- Chatham House: 55%
- Policy Exchange: 42%
- Demos: 41%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 39%
- Institute for Government: 39%
- Social Market Foundation: 38%
- Resolution Foundation: 32%
- Centre for Social Justice: 29%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 27%
- Legatum Institute: 24%
- ResPublica: 19%
- Reform: 18%
- Taxpayers' Alliance: 11%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: Labour MPs (n=66)
CHATHAM HOUSE IS CONSIDERED A LEADER IN ITS FIELD BY MAJORITY OF MPS AND ACROSS PARTIES (59%)

Which of the following is a leader in its field?

- Chatham House: 59%
- Centre for Social Justice: 32%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 32%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 29%
- Taxpayers’ Alliance: 28%
- Institute for Government: 27%
- IPPR: 27%
- Policy Exchange: 24%
- Demos: 14%
- Legatum Institute: 13%
- Social Market Foundation: 12%
- Resolution Foundation: 12%
- Reform: 10%
- ResPublica: 8%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)
Which of the following is a leader in its field according to Conservative MPs?

- Chatham House: 64%
- Taxpayers' Alliance: 46%
- Centre for Social Justice: 45%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 42%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 39%
- Policy Exchange: 34%
- Institute for Government: 23%
- Legatum Institute: 19%
- IPPR: 18%
- Social Market Foundation: 12%
- Reform: 12%
- Demos: 12%
- ResPublica: 9%
- Resolution Foundation: 3%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: Conservative MPs (n=40)
Which of the following is a leader in its field according to Labour MPs?

Chatham House: 59%
IPPR: 44%
Institute for Government: 34%
Centre for Policy Studies: 24%
Centre for Social Justice: 22%
Institute for Economic Affairs: 22%
Resolution Foundation: 20%
Demos: 18%
Policy Exchange: 17%
Social Market Foundation: 14%
Legatum Institute: 8%
ResPublica: 7%
Reform: 7%
Taxpayers' Alliance: 7%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: Labour MPs (n=66)
For one third of MPS, Chatham House appears free from commercial influence (34%).

Which of the following appears free from commercial influence?

- Chatham House: 34%
- Centre for Social Justice: 28%
- Institute for Government: 25%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 21%
- Reform: 19%
- ResPublica: 17%
- Taxpayers' Alliance: 15%
- IPPR: 15%
- Demos: 15%
- Resolution Foundation: 15%
- Policy Exchange: 14%
- Social Market Foundation: 14%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 11%
- Legatum Institute: 11%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)
Which of the following appears free from commercial influence according to Conservative MPs?

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Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: Conservative MPs (n=40)
Which of the following appears free from commercial influence according to Labour MPs?

- Chatham House: 38%
- IPPR: 34%
- Institute for Government: 30%
- Resolution Foundation: 30%
- Centre for Social Justice: 22%
- ResPublica: 19%
- Demos: 18%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 17%
- Reform: 17%
- Legatum Institute: 16%
- Policy Exchange: 14%
- Social Market Foundation: 14%
- Taxpayers' Alliance: 8%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 7%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: Labour MPs (n=66)
Which of the following has highly capable leadership?

- Chatham House: 29%
- Institute for Government: 20%
- Centre for Social Justice: 19%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 16%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 16%
- Policy Exchange: 14%
- IPPR: 13%
- Legatum Institute: 13%
- Taxpayers’ Alliance: 11%
- Resolution Foundation: 9%
- Social Market Foundation: 9%
- Reform: 7%
- ResPublica: 7%
- Demos: 5%

Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)
Which of the following has highly capable leadership according to Conservative MPs?

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Which of the following has highly capable leadership according to Labour MPs?

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Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: Labour MPs (n=66)
Which of the following is too strongly politically aligned?

- Taxpayers' Alliance: 40%
- Institute for Economic Affairs: 16%
- IPPR: 15%
- Centre for Social Justice: 14%
- ResPublica: 14%
- Social Market Foundation: 13%
- Demos: 12%
- Policy Exchange: 11%
- Reform: 8%
- Centre for Policy Studies: 6%
- Legatum Institute: 6%
- Institute for Government: 5%
- Chatham House: 3%
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Q. Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you associate with each of the think tanks listed below? Base: all respondents (n=120)
Which of the following is too strongly politically aligned according to Conservative MPs?

- IPPR: 23%
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- ResPublica: 12%
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Q. Which of the following is too strongly politically aligned according to Labour MPs?
Understanding what your key stakeholders think

Bespoke opinion research to evidence your policy agenda

Polling to support your research launches and events
TO DISCUSS HOW WE CAN ASSIST:

Contact James Laws
James.laws@comresglobal.com
020 7871 7655