

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Soft power in global governance: fsQCA of thematic specialization strategies of European think tanks

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Abstract

This article analyzes the strategies designed after the Great Financial Crisis (GFC) by European think tanks specialized in economic policy and evaluates the main issues that served to boost their capacity for international influence between 2009 and 2018. It studies the 19 European think tanks in the economic policy category highlighted by the *2018 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report*. 91,393 news items published on the think tanks evaluated during the decade after the GFC are analysed and a causal model is proposed to understand the thematic specialization strategies of think tanks in the media sphere. The model includes economic and media diffusion attributes and was tested using Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA). The results confirm that the main areas of specialization of economic policy think tanks include emerging issues related to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The stability of the Eurozone is a cross-cutting issue that is integrated into the internal policy discourse. The solution to the proposed model reveals five strategies followed by European think tanks.

1 | THINK TANKS IN CONTEXT

Think tanks are organizations designed to generate and disseminate ideas and research to advise the political elite in the formulation of public policies (McGann & Weaver, 2000; Stone & Denham, 2004) and influence the different actors that operate in decision-making processes (McGann & Johnson, 2005). In recent years, they have been consolidated as new political elements with a great social, political and communicative presence (Castillo-Esparcia et al., 2017). These entities stand as instruments of soft power, since this concept has been used to refer to policies aimed at influencing social and public opinion (Pallin & Oxenstierna, 2017).

Studies on the process of elaboration of the political agenda based on the influence of think tanks have increased since the beginning of the twenty-first century (Abelson, 2006; Garcé, 2009; Stone & Denham, 2004). Several studies highlight that experts and academics, political parties, actors from non-governmental organizations, companies and the media participate

in the production of knowledge about public policies (Plehwe et al., 2018). For this reason, it is necessary for the research to contemplate the instrumentality of think tanks, expressed as the “marketing of knowledge” (Stone, 2007). Through the media, these entities shape the imaginary of public opinion (Marsh, 2020; Mendizabal, 2021). The soft power deployed by think tanks has contributed to the creation of narratives that can promote consensus and policies favourable to global elites that have even undermined the democratic principles on which they are based (Almiron, 2017). For this reason, it is considered relevant to analyse the theming strategies of think tanks.

Presence in the media is a necessity for think tanks, which adapt their strategies to this objective. The main strategy of think tanks to influence political decisions is to boost their presence in the media (Kelstrup, 2017). To increase their media impact, the Spanish think tanks' strategy uses specialization in a certain thematic area to become a source of reference for public opinion (Lalueza & Girona, 2016). The higher the level of specialization of

Spanish think tanks, the greater their ability to influence during the political process, especially in the adoption of political decisions (Barberà & Arregui, 2011). These think tank can be based on high specialization, focusing on a reduced number of issues or, on the contrary, proposing solutions for different areas that make it possible to overcome the consequences of the economic crisis (Lalueza & Girona, 2016).

There are other communication strategies designed to increase the visibility of Spanish think tanks in the media. For example, access the media that periodically disseminate the results of their studies, especially if there is an ideological affinity (Lalueza & Girona, 2016).

Previous research in the field of study has evaluated different perspectives such as the ideological representation of think tanks in a single medium (Lewis & Cushion, 2019), the trade-off between strategy/decision-making over time (González-Hernando et al., 2018) or the construction of dominant counter-frames concerning climate change (Almiron et al., 2020). This exploratory empirical study makes it possible to analyse and evaluate the behaviour patterns of European think tanks specialized in economic policy.

Based on the bibliography on the subject, the following research question is posed: What were the specialization strategies of European economic policy think tanks during the GFC?

To answer this question, the objective is to examine the differential thematic patterns and the specialization strategies of European economic policy think tanks during the period analysed. To this end, four research objectives are established:

1. Identify the main topics with which the analysed think tanks were projected in the media during the period 2009–2018.
2. Evaluate the main thematic differences between the think tanks under study.
3. Formulate a model to improve understanding of think tanks' thematic specialization strategies.
4. Test the proposed model to ensure its robustness and internal reliability.

Discussion of the results of this study allows scholars to improve their understanding of how think tanks articulate their influence strategies. The study findings show promising lines of inquiry for academics to develop new theoretical approaches and practitioners to improve their performance.

As reported, the dominant themes are analysed according to their media representation. The specialization strategies of European economic policy think tanks were analysed during the decade after the 2008 financial crisis using a model that was tested with Fuzzy-Set Comparative Qualitative Analysis (fsQCA). This methodology has also been used in research focused on media coverage (Brüggemann & Königslöw, 2013).

Policy Implications

- After the Great Financial Crisis (GFC), European economic policy think tanks designed differentiated thematic specialization strategies. Think tanks should take advantage of strategic options based on the economic attributes of the country in which each think tank is located.
- The media representation strategies of think tanks differentiate the British, Central European and other peripheral countries archetypes. Think tank managers must guide their strategies based on cultural archetypes and traditions.
- The main topics of think tanks in the media were linked to the Euro Crisis and the 2030 Agenda. The new global disruptions drive the heterogeneity of think tanks and management teams should design mechanisms to adapt to change.
- The SDGs focused on non-poverty and climate action have a lot of impact. The Top Management Team (TMT) of think tanks can take advantage of the new mainstream narratives to improve and boost their projection in the media agenda.
- Climate change constitutes a relevant analysis in new research trends, sustainable corporate strategies and new product development. Think tanks and their strategy design nuclei should align their positioning on the public agenda with the SDGs and ESG criteria.

The database of this study includes the main European think tanks ($n=19$) included in the international economic policy category of the 2018 *Global Go To Think Tank Index Report* (McGann, 2019). The period analysed includes the debate aroused in public opinion because of Brexit and the promotion of the 2030 Agenda.

2 | STATE-OF-THE-ART, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PROPOSITIONS

Think tanks present a strong heterogeneity that has generated many definitions to explain their characteristics and functions (Abelson, 2012; Medvetz, 2008). McGann and Weaver (2000) define them as non-governmental and non-profit organizations, dedicated to research, with organizational independence from the

government and the interests of society, such as political parties. Kelstrup (2017) adds the characteristics of the European context, where most think tanks are controlled by the government or to some extent depend on it. Baier and Bakvis (2001) report that the great dependence and cooperation between these entities and the political parties configures the pattern in which a large part of the think tanks of continental Europe are inscribed.

According to Abelson (2002), three broad theories are identified regarding the role of think tanks in the exchange of ideas between various actors, from government, the private sector, academia and civil society.

The pluralist approach developed from the findings of Truman (1951) and Dahl (1989) emphasizes the importance of diversity and inclusion in the decision-making process, seeking an indirect influence on the formulation of public policies. In this sense, think tanks play an important role in the construction of a broad political agenda, although they are not the main engines of political change.

The elitist approach is identified with the work of (Domhoff & Thomas, 1987) and suggests that think tanks are the main tools of direct influence of political elites, whose decisions reflect their common interests and not necessarily those of the majority of the population.

Finally, Kingdon's (1984)-derived institutionalist theory is based on the premise that think tanks have the ability to bring a unique and critical perspective to political issues, making them useful for engaging with a wide variety of others. Actors in the different stages of the decision-making process. "In this way, the unique priority of think tanks is not only to mark the content of public policies, but also their orientation, the way in which it is implemented, the issues that enter the political agenda and its orientation, the limits of the public debate, etc." (Barberà & Arregui, 2011, p. 6).

In the last decade, new issues have appeared and consolidated on the public agenda driven by disruptive events of a political (e.g. Brexit: Garnett & Lorenzoni, 2021) and strategic (e.g. 2030 Agenda: Rastrick, 2021) nature. In the period analysed, the viability of the European currency and the payment capacity of some of the euro zone states were questioned. The monetary policy response against the euro crisis had two perspectives. First, austerity policies based on the premise that adjusting public budgets to control a country's finances boosts its economy (Alesina & Ardagna, 2010). Second, Keynesian positions considered budget restriction socially and economically counterproductive (Blanchard & Leigh, 2013).

For a brief period, in 2008 and 2009, Western European governments adopted stimulus plans. However, the member states of the European Union quickly reversed this stance. The Eurozone¹ economy ministers chose to implement structural reforms

and strict austerity measures (Plehwe et al., 2018). Politicians sought to rely on the economic knowledge of specialized experts (Coman, 2019) to legitimize these unpopular decisions demanded by the markets. Parrilla-Guix et al. (2016) start from the assumption that Spanish think tanks created a consensus to favour the restructuring of the financial system through narratives aligned with austerity policies and assess to what extent the organization of said think tanks is consistent with this assumption. Not surprisingly, the global economic crisis of 2008 affected the financing and structure of think tanks (Parrilla-Guix et al., 2016).

In this sense, regarding the Eurozone crisis², "the dominant analysis of the crisis was made up of academics, think tanks, public and private sector actors, specifically German economists and powerful business and financial interests, whose ideas had long supported the institutional design of the euro in Maastricht and Amsterdam during the formative decade of the euro" (Matthijs & McNamara, 2016, p. 230).

Soft power establishes new categories and articulates subtle narratives that become fundamental for the generation and consolidation of discourses in public opinion. Thus, they act as intermediaries between experts/academics and States to disseminate political solutions that influence decision-making (Sherrington, 2000; Stone, 2007; Ullrich, 2004).

Beyond acting as "bridges" (Stone, 2007, p. 259), think tanks have a much more strategic vision. For example, during the Eurozone crisis, they managed to significantly increase their budgets and financial resources, as well as their networks of contacts. They became essential for the formulation of political recommendations and strengthened their reputation, credibility and visibility (Coman, 2019). In addition, if the messages are cohesive, the media have a greater diffusion, which favours the creation of states of opinion in the public debate (Davis, 2012).

Other research focused on the Spanish sphere, demonstrated that the media behaviour of think tanks is determined by their media performance in terms of trend (Castelló-Sirvent & Roger-Monzó, 2021) or total media representation (Roger-Monzó & Castelló-Sirvent, 2020). In the same way, the elements of economic contour (Parrilla-Guix et al., 2016) constitute important contingent factors for the design and implementation of their strategies.³

The 2030 Agenda established to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2016) is configured as a coordinated response from governments, civil society, the private sector, universities, think tanks and the media to the challenge that raises sustainability in the twenty-first century (Ayuso, 2017).

Mendizabal (2011) argues that think tanks should promote "logical leap of the mind" to develop a clear vision of how the problems of a society can evolve and anticipate future trends proactively. In this way, it is

possible to determine proposals aimed at establishing new models aligned with these trends. From this idea, it follows that think tanks can focus their attention on sustainability, projecting these issues on the public agenda as a tool for thematic specialization.

Think tanks have conditioned the discourse on sustainability in complicit media (Boykoff, 2011), becoming relevant for the debate on public policies related to water, energy or food (Axworthy & Adeel, 2014; Mohtar & Daher, 2016) and poverty (Fatonie, 2020).

At this point, it is worth emphasizing how think tanks obtain their intellectual credibility. According to Tchilingirian (2018), “credibility emerges from a complex web of relationships across established fields/professions (...) To maintain their integrity, researchers must try to keep in step with competing interests from different professions; at times aligning them, at other times blocking or obscuring them from one another.” (Tchilingirian, 2018, p. 161).

In this sense, think tanks also actively contributed to the generation of sceptical debates about global warming (Busch & Judick, 2021), adopting an increasingly ambiguous role (Plehwe, 2021). Norgaard (2011) reports outstanding action by US think tanks generalizing and negotiating meanings, while Almiron et al. (2020) highlight that think tanks have been generators of dominant counter-frameworks on climate change. Despite the heterogeneity of think tanks, they emphasize a focused interest in their ability to influence the generation of public policies (McGann & Johnson, 2005). This common goal can be apprehended through configurational methodologies that take advantage of the principles of equifinality and causal asymmetry (Fiss, 2011). According to the theoretical framework of this study and with the aim of identifying archetypes and strategic patterns of think tanks, the following propositions are formulated:

Proposition 1. European economic policy think tanks supported their strategy of specializing in discourses related to recession and economic growth.

Proposition 2. European economic policy think tanks increased their interest in sustainability.

Proposition 3. European economic policy think tanks showed a heterogeneous thematic concentration.

Proposition 4. European economic policy think tanks promoted their thematic specialization to increase their influence using different strategies.

3 | METHODOLOGY

The objective of this research is to analyse the main themes and specialization strategies of European think tanks on international economic policy during the period

2009–2018. This period includes the beginning of the crisis in the Euro zone, the bailouts of Greece, Ireland and Portugal, the process of financial assistance to Spain for the restructuring of its financial system, the stage of design and dissemination of adjustment measures and the recovery stage of the economic growth path.

The international economic policy category of the 2018 *Global Go To Think Tank Index Report* (McGann, 2019) is used, which includes 87 think tanks. The sample included 28 European think tanks. According to Kelstrup (2017), the European think tanks that exceed the threshold of 100 mentions in the press during the period under study have been selected. Although this criterion rules out those entities with a low level of media representation, it is necessary to guarantee an adequate analysis of the think tanks that are active (Kelstrup, 2017). Finally, 19 think tanks are analysed.

Factiva® is used to search for news related to think tanks. It is a database owned by Dow Jones & Company© that provides access to more than 33,000 news sources and offers support to academic researchers and information management professionals. Several studies have confirmed the rigour of the results provided by Factiva® (Griffin et al., 2011; Tetlock, 2007).

The content search is carried out in all media, for any language, on the headline and/or the summary of each published content. The full name of the think tank is used in quotation marks, regardless of its acronym, to avoid false positives, since in many cases these acronyms represent identifying terms of other entities. Thematic and language assignment has been done automatically by Factiva®. The database of the 19 think tanks includes 91,393 news items represented in 25 languages.³

Table 1 shows an outcome (TS) and six conditions (VRMR, TREND, GDP, GDPpc, COMP, NX). The outcome (TS) is defined as the thematic specialization of a think tank, according to its degree of thematic concentration during the decade after the 2008 crisis. Thus, the higher the thematic concentration registered by Factiva®, the greater the specialization of the think tank. To construct this condition, the percentage that represents the Top 10 of topics of a think tank with respect to the total content of that think tank during the period 2009–2018 is calculated ((Total of news included in the Top 10/Total of news of the think tank) * 100).

Media and economic conditions are defined:

- VRMR: Variation rate of media representation.
- TREND: Coefficient of determination (R^2) of media representation for the decade after the crisis (2009–2018).
- GDP: Gross Domestic Product.
- GDPpc: Gross Domestic Product per capita.
- COMP: Country score on the Competitiveness Index.
- NX: Net exports according to the trade balance.

The mean value is taken over the period analysed to stabilize the values of the series, smoothing its

TABLE 1 Conditions and sources used.

Conditions		Indicators		Sources
Outcome	Thematic specialization	TS	Percentage of thematic concentration in international media according to the accumulation of the 10 main topics, for each think tank, in the period 2009–2018	<i>Factiva</i> ®
Media conditions	Average interannual variation rate	VRMR	Average interannual variation rate of the media representation of each think tank for the period 2009–2018 according to the total number of contents registered worldwide.	<i>Factiva</i> ®
	Long-term trend	TREND	Long-term trend observed for the evolution of the media representation of each think tank according to the coefficient of determination (R ²) for the period 2009–2018	<i>Factiva</i> ®
Economic conditions	Gross Domestic Product	GDP	Average annual GDP expressed in millions of dollars, for the period 2009–2018, as the absolute monetary value of the production of goods and services in final demand, at market prices, for each country in which each think-tank carries out its main activity. Tank. This indicator is expressed in constant dollars and incorporates inflation adjustment with 2010 values.	The World Bank Group
	Gross Domestic Product per capita	GDPpc	Annual average per capita GDP for the period 2009–2018, as average per capita income. It is obtained as a result of dividing GDP by the number of inhabitants of each country in which each think tank carries out its main activity. This indicator incorporates adjustment for differences in purchasing power between countries, taking 2011 prices and purchasing power parity according to their value in dollars.	The World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund (IMF)
	Competitiveness	COMP	Annual average for the 2009–2018 period of the Global Competitiveness Index prepared by the World Economic Forum (WEF), taking values for each country in which each think tank carries out its main activity, in transformation to a base index number 100 from on a scale of measurement 1–7.	World Economic Forum (WEF)
	Balance of the Trade	NX	Average balance for the period 2009–2018 of the trade balance expressed in millions of dollars for each country in which each think tank carries out its main activity. • If $NX > 0$, there is a surplus in the trade balance, since the value of exports is greater than the value of imports. • If $NX < 0$, there is a deficit in the trade balance since the value of imports is greater than the value of imports.	The World Bank Group

Source: Own research.

intertemporal behaviour and minimizing the risk of stochastic alterations.

Table 1 shows the different conditions used, their acronyms, form of calculation and data source used.

3.1 | Fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA)

The Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) methodology was developed by Charles Ragin (1987, 2009) from the use of Boolean logic. fsQCA is used as a suitable tool to test the existing theoretical relationships between sets in social science models, identifying logical connections between the expected result and certain combinations of causal conditions.

It is a recommended methodology for small samples, based on 15 observations (Ragin, 2009). fsQCA improves understanding of the factors that produce a particular result. This section introduces the fundamentals of fsQCA. For detailed information, reading Pappas and Woodside (2021) is recommended. This methodology broadens the factual knowledge base according to a deep analysis of the attributes and phenomena studied for each of the causal configurations of the solution to the proposed model (Chang & Cheng, 2014).

fsQCA assesses the existence of sufficiency between the result and various possible sets of condition configurations (Mendel & Korjani, 2012). Therefore, it is possible to identify which causal conditions may be necessary and / or sufficient to explain the occurrence of the analysed result.

This methodology identifies asymmetric relationships and shows connections that occur in the cases studied and that are ignored in conventional statistical methodologies, since they are not high enough to produce statistically significant results in a dependent variable (Woodside, 2013). In this way, fsQCA allows a deeper understanding of the cases and causal relationships that occur in the phenomenon studied. Following the standards of the main statistical methodologies, for an effect not to be attributed to randomness, being attributable to sampling conditions, it is necessary that it presents statistical significance (e.g. $p < 0.001$). The convention in inferential statistical methods assumes that in any case the existing relationships between variables with high p -values (e.g. $p > 0.05$) could be the result of chance in the selection of the sample and not correspond to the intrinsic characteristics of the population. Faced with these quantitative methodologies, configurational methodologies focus on case studies (Thomann & Maggetti, 2020) and allow the analysis of small samples (Fiss, 2011; Marx, 2006; Ragin, 2009; Woodside, 2013), to capture causal relationships between cases. Thus, the significance parameter is not considered and others such as consistency and coverage are used. As a consequence, configurational methods such as fsQCA can present causal relationships that allow explaining the outcome for one or more than one case, identifying combinations of conditions that contribute to explaining the phenomenon studied. If this same relationship were tested with inferential statistical methods (e.g. regressions), the existence of a single case would offer low significance, since it would not be relevant. In the presence of causal conditions, fsQCA helps to explain cases that could be unique (Ragin, 2009), and that offer researchers new perspectives to understand reality (e.g. asymmetric relationships: Woodside, 2013) based on case studies (Thomann & Maggetti, 2020).

Comparing statistical techniques with configurational methodologies allows to understand sections of reality that could be hidden in terms of inferential statistics according to their standards of robustness and significance. Although both techniques offer two different ways to methodologically approach a research question, there is currently an incipient trend that is guiding the academic tradition towards the combination of both techniques (Pappas & Woodside, 2021) with the aim of expanding the knowledge base generated by empirical studies, complementing these techniques and managing to build better theories for complex phenomena, which allows closing gaps in academic literature.

The comparative analysis of the specialization strategies followed by think tanks provides a clear vision of the factors that increase the thematic concentration of their discourse, based on different logical configurations. The research design process has avoided

developing a mechanical approach, establishes various iterations within a perspective oriented to the cases under study (Rihoux, 2013; Rihoux & Lobe, 2009) and guarantees methodological control (Rihoux, 2017).

In this context, two types of conditions are identified: the outcome or phenomenon that must be explained expressed as the degree of thematic specialization of each think tank (TS) and, the conditions or explanatory attributes of the result (VRMR, TREND, GDP, GDPpc, COMP, NX).

The following causal analysis model is proposed for the study of the specialization strategies of think tanks during the period 2009–2018:

$$TS = f(\text{VRMR, TREND, GDP, GDPpc, COMP, NX}).$$

According to the fsQCA methodology, the first step is to calibrate the model conditions to allow their categorization. The original data must be transformed into scores adapted to fuzzy sets (Ragin, 2009; Woodside, 2013), taking values within a range (0–1). In this way, the belonging of the observed cases to a fuzzy set for each condition is identified, according to three cut-off points that delimit their total membership (>0.95), an area of maximum ambiguity ($=0.5$) or not membership (<0.05). In fsQCA, cases whose membership score is 0.50 are ignored since it is not possible to indicate the presence or absence of a condition for the phenomenon under study to occur (result).

The method followed to establish the three cut-off points is based on an in-depth knowledge of the think tanks and the countries analysed. This method avoids the imposition of pre-established reference values for other investigations and guarantees adequate cut-off points for each attribute (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012).

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for each condition used in the model and the three cut-off points established for their calibration (Ragin, 2009).

The second step involves the construction of a “truth table” that integrates all possible logical combinations of the conditions included in the proposed model to explain the result (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). A cut-off point of 0.80 is established and the configurations between the chosen cut-off point and 1 are taken. The cut-off threshold allows distinguishing configurations that are sufficient to explain the thematic concentration of think tanks, compared to configurations that are not they do are. The cut-off point established to study the existing causal relationships in the specialization strategies of think tanks takes a consistency threshold of 0.8346, higher than the minimum required.

The third step is the construction of the solution to the proposed model. There are three types of solution: “complex”, “parsimonious” and “intermediate”. The intermediate solution to the model is superior to

TABLE 2 Attributes, calibration and descriptive statistics.

Attributes	Calibration			Statistics		
Condition	Fully inside	Maximum ambiguity	Fully outside	Max.	Min.	Average (St. deviation)
TS	60%	50%	40%	68.61%	39.02%	56.01% (8.24%)
VRMR	22.40%	10.39%	0.00%	43.98%	−4.89%	10.39% (12.00%)
TREND	0.7000	0.5000	0.2000	0.8216	0.0017	0.3555 (0.2866)
GDP	3,138,988.94\$	1,829,918.13\$	138.000.00\$	3,598,888.89\$	138,000.00\$	1,829,918.13\$ (1,309,070.82\$)
GDPpc	44,040.54\$	39,360.00\$	35,000.00\$	44,500.00\$	23,990.00\$	39,360.00\$ (4,680.54\$)
COMP	95.00	85.00	80.00	100.00	78.15	94.50 (5.95)
NX	121,001.72\$	27,434.99\$	0\$	230,048.98\$	−50,418.67\$	27,434.99\$ (93,566.73\$)

Source: Own research.

the complex and parsimonious solution since it does not allow the elimination of the necessary conditions (Ragin, 2009). It is advisable to use the intermediate solution to analyse and interpret the results of the proposed model.

4 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 | Descriptive analysis of media representation

Table 3 offers detailed information for each analysed think tank (denomination, quartile and country) and their representation in media (total of articles published, annual minimum and maximum, annual mean and standard deviation).

The order of priority established in the McGann (2019) think tank ranking in the international economic policy category places 31.58% of think tanks in the first quartile, and 15.79% in the second quartile, 10.53% in the third quartile and 42.11% in the fourth quartile. One in four European think tanks has low relative importance in the international context, compared to other countries such as the United States, Israel, Russia, Brazil, China and India, among others.

Table 4 shows the relative importance of the countries in which the analysed think tanks were created.

The analysis of the total media representation achieved for the post-crisis period under study (2009–2018) reveals that a few think tanks place their media representation above the average: *Chatham House* (40.797), *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development*, *OECD* (13.068), *Austrian Institute of Economic Research* (7.629), *Adam Smith Institute* (6.492), *Centre for European Policy Studies* (5.097), *Kiel Institute for the World Economy* (4.941) and *National Institute of Economic and Social Research* (2.978).

United Kingdom places all its economic policy think tanks among those with the highest international

media representation, reaching 55% of the total international representation in the press media of European think tanks. Its capacity is articulated from a proactive use of the Anglo-Saxon axis in the international discourse on public policies and supports its action in a long secular tradition of direct action reserved for the media. Previous studies about think tanks are likely to impact on the discourse in public opinion and on the approach and lines of analysis adopted by other think tanks, constituting international networks (Coman, 2019; Plehwe et al., 2018; Sánchez & Pizarro Miranda, 2014). In this sense, the language strategies of think tanks (Castelló-Sirvent & García-García, 2022) could represent a suitable causal vector for the analysis of international collaboration networks.

The total media representation of economic policy think tanks of origin and activity based in France hold a share of 20.23% of the total content generated during the decade 2009–2018 in the analysed international press media.

The limited share of media representation of the influential economic policy think tanks in Germany stands out (6.61%). This fact shows that the influence of a think tank is based, only in part, on the amount of content generated in the media. The dissemination of their research through other actions, such as publications and events, would be other indicators to consider (Kelstrup, 2017).

The think tanks promoted from countries such as Sweden, Finland, Italy and Hungary have a much more modest international media representation, managing to concentrate, together, only 2.16% of the total representation reached by the main European think tanks analysed. Their role was highly relevant in the context of the public debate on economic adjustment policies, cuts and public austerity (Coman, 2019).

The evidence found reveals that UK think tanks project their action towards public opinion in the

TABLE 3 Main think tanks in European politics.

Think tanks			Media representation			
Name	Quartile ^a	Country	Total	Max.	Min.	Average (St. deviation)
<i>Bruegel</i>	Q1	Belgium	1,085	159	46	108.50 (37.62)
<i>Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies</i>	Q1	Austria	484	84	15	48.40 (21.80)
<i>Adam Smith Institute</i>	Q1	United Kingdom	6,492	848	316	555.30 (180.38)
<i>Chatham House</i>	Q1	United Kingdom	40,797	5,473	2,907	4,079.70 (963.91)
<i>Centre for European Policy Studies</i>	Q1	Belgium	5,097	729	388	509.70 (116.87)
<i>Kiel Institute for the World Economy</i>	Q1	Germany	4,941	615	363	494.10 (79.79)
<i>European Centre for International Political Economy</i>	Q2	Belgium	329	49	18	32.90 (9.89)
<i>Institute for International Economic Studies</i>	Q2	Sweden	110	22	4	11.00 (5.27)
<i>Centre d'Etudes Prospectives et d'Informations Internationales</i>	Q2	France	789	120	28	78.90 (31.76)
<i>French Institute of International Relations</i>	Q3	France	2,167	274	164	216.70 (31.64)
<i>Austrian Institute of Economic Research</i>	Q3	Austria	7,629	915	544	762.90 (116.96)
<i>Institute for International Political Studies</i>	Q4	Italy	689	113	27	68.90 (32.46)
<i>Macroeconomic Policy Institute</i>	Q4	Germany	714	110	38	71.40 (22.73)
<i>National Institute of Economic and Social Research</i>	Q4	United Kingdom	2,978	373	195	297.80 (66.19)
<i>TARKI Social Research Institute</i>	Q4	Hungary	913	132	35	91.30 (30.22)
<i>World Institute of Development Economics Research</i>	Q4	Finland	263	74	8	26.30 (19.97)
<i>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)</i>	Q4	France	13,068	1,574	1,094	1,306.80 (149.82)
<i>Institut Montaigne</i>	Q4	France	2,464	355	105	246.40 (85.28)
<i>Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change</i>	Q4	Germany	384	65	21	38.40 (15.59)

Source: Own research based on McGann (2019) and data provided by Factiva®.

^aQuartile in the Economic Policy Think Tank Ranking included in the 2018 *Global Go To Think Tank Index Report*, prepared by the University of Pennsylvania (McGann, 2019).

short term. It is significant that these think tanks have greater visibility in the media during the period analysed. This widespread strategy had serious consequences on the credibility of British think tanks during the Brexit debate and the stages after the 2016 referendum. The need to attract donors moved their position away from academic criteria and encouraged the generation of populist content for the media (Garnett & Lorenzoni, 2021).

Even though Germany is the first economy of the Eurozone (Eurostat, 2023), German think tanks have less presence in the media. These results are congruent with Kelstrup (2017), which confirms that the activity of German think tanks focuses on advising political actors through public relations actions. The German think tanks leave their appearance in the media for a less relevant or subsidiary plane.

4.2 | Thematic analysis

There was the rescue of Greece, Portugal and Ireland, as well as the request for financial help from Spain to restructure its financial system (Di Mascio & Natalini, 2015; Dukelow, 2011). Reinhart and Rogoff (2010) stated that there was a maximum level of public debt compatible with growth. Krugman (2013) rejected this research, among other aspects, due to the serious and obvious calculation errors that it presented. All think tanks argue that “the contents of their studies are determined in the first place by the standards of rigor established by communities of experts, independent of political, economic and cultural pressures” (Medvetz, 2012, p. 141). Similarly, former studies found that think tanks achieve their credibility by balancing the interests of the academic, corporate

TABLE 4 European economic policy think tanks by country.

Country	Number
France	4
Belgium	3
United Kingdom	3
Germany	3
Austria	2
Sweden	1
Hungary	1
Italy	1
Finland	1

Source: Own research based on McGann (2019).

and governmental sectors (Tchilingirian, 2018). Other studies indicate that think tanks depend on academic actors to guarantee the rigour of the research carried out (Wiarda, 2008), but political and economic interests can displace said academic rigour (Parrilla-Guix et al., 2016).

The main issue of economic policy focuses on growth and recession issues, validating Proposition 1.

Table 5 reveals the five main lines of public debate that address countercyclical adjustment and stimulus policies. They account for 45.28% of the total media representation reached by European economic policy think tanks. The austerity policies of the Eurozone, mainly from the beginning of the euro crisis (Parrilla-Guix et al., 2016; Plehwe et al., 2018), accumulated 29.55% of the total thematic representation of European think tanks in the international press. It also highlights the debate on domestic economic policies related to inflation control, the labour market and business stimulus. (E.g. Euro Zone, domestic politics, international relations, European Union).

The analysis of the Top 5 topics for each think tank (Table 6) reveals that the German think tank *Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change*, focused on the analysis of climate change, addresses sustainability from a transversal perspective with tracks such as public health and cancer, corporate strategies, sciences and new products or research.

The evidence found suggests that the start of the 2030 Agenda in 2016 (UN, 2016) taps into think tanks' interest in SDG-related topics through multiple tracks: personal income (Top 4 of *Macroeconomic Policy Institute*); employment (Top 4 of *Institute for International Economic Studies*); economic performance (Top 5 of *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development*); labour issues (Top 4 *Institut Montaigne*). In fact, the think tank *World Institute of Development Economics Research* places SDG 1 (no poverty) and 13 (climate action) (UN, 2016) in its Top 5, and articulates debates on poverty and climate change in one of every five published contents. This result partially validates Proposition 2,

TABLE 5 Relative importance of the thematic concentration of representation in the media of the main European economic policy think tanks.

Main topics	Importance
Economic policy. Growth and recession	18.46%
National governments	11.09%
International relations	5.71%
Companies and labour market	5.41%
Monetary politics. Inflation control	4.61%

Source: Own research from data provided by Factiva®.

Note 1: The thematic groupings shown correspond to the classification made by Factiva®.

Note 2: The percentages of importance are expressed in relative terms with respect to the total news analysed (n = 91,393).

Note 3: The calculation of the importance is according to this expression: $I = (MTN / TNA) * 100$, where: I: Importance; MTN: Main Topics News; TNA: Total News Analysed.

since there is not a majority of think tanks that incorporate topics related to the SDGs in the Top 5, highlighting only one think tank that emphasizes its interest in climate change.

The evaluation of the percentage of thematic concentration of the Top 5 topics of the analysed think tanks shows a high degree of heterogeneity (between a concentration of 32.58% and 57.59%). Proposition 3 is supported by the evidence found.

The topic field of international relations includes opinions related to financial flows, trade balances, protectionist tariff policies, as well as international policy coordination in the post-2008 crisis context. In this sense, the analysis of the 91,393 news items suggests a heterogeneous behaviour. The fsQCA methodology used facilitates detailed observation of the strategies of the 19 think tanks under study.

4.3 | Fuzzy sets qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA)

Necessity analysis assesses the existence of conditions that must be present for a result of the studied phenomenon to occur. Table 7 shows the necessity analysis of the model conditions.

The standards established by Ragin (1987, 2009) reveal that there are no necessary conditions for the implementation of specialization strategies of think tanks (consistency >0.9). These entities follow different recipes to articulate their strategic lines of thematic concentration in international public opinion.

The solutions to the proposed model verify the validity of Proposition 4: European think tanks used 5 different strategies to articulate their media specialization strategies after the great financial crisis of 2008 (Table 8).

The solution to the model has an adequate level of consistency (>0.75), and coverage (>0.25) (Ragin, 2009;

TABLE 6 Concentration thematic Top 5 Subject 2009–2018.

Bruegel		Vienna institute for international economic studies		Adam smith institute		Chatham house	
Euro zone	10.60%	Growth/recession	11.15%	Domestic politics	19.53%	Domestic politics	17.72%
Domestic Politics	9.86%	Corporate	7.75%	Government	6.51%	International Relations	11.44%
Government	7.22%	Economic News	6.95%	Corporate	6.05%	Military Action	5.14%
Economic News	6.64%	Euro Zone	6.79%	International Relations	4.02%	Corporate	5.14%
Corporate	5.16%	Political	5.98%	Opinions	3.19%	Terrorism	3.64%
Top 5 Subject	39.48%	Top 5 Subject	38.62%	Top 5 Subject	39.31%	Top 5 Subject	43.09%
Centre for European Policy Studies		Kiel Institute for the World Economy		European Centre for International Political Economy			
Euro zone	10.80%	Growth/recession	11.65%	Trade		21.77%	
Domestic Politics	10.42%	Economic Performance	9.47%	European Union		7.61%	
European Union	8.19%	Corporate	7.69%	Domestic Politics		7.61%	
Government	5.60%	Economic News	6.88%	International Relations		7.26%	
International Relations	5.21%	Political	6.29%	Corporate		4.78%	
Top 5 Subject	40.22%	Top 5 Subject	41.99%	Top 5 Subject		49.03%	
Institute for International Economic Studies		Centre d'Etudes Prospectives et d'Informations Internat.		French Institute of International Relations		Austrian Institute of Economic Research	
Growth/recession	16.28%	Corporate	7.79%	International relations	12.55%	Growth/recession	18.62%
Foreign Direct Investment	7.56%	Interviews	6.75%	Domestic Politics	12.13%	Political	9.87%
Economic News	6.98%	Domestic Politics	6.16%	International Relations	6.96%	Economic Performance	8.23%
Employment	6.40%	Government	4.82%	Political	6.34%	Economic News	8.19%
Economic Performance	6.40%	Trade Barriers	4.30%	Interviews	4.85%	Domestic Politics	6.15%
Top 5 Subject	43.60%	Top 5 Subject	29.82%	Top 5 Subject	42.83%	Top 5 Subject	51.06%
Institute for International Political Studies		Macroeconomic Policy Institute		National Institute of Economic and Social Research		TARKI Social Research Institute	
Domestic politics	19.92%	Growth/recession	14.76%	Growth/recession	22.24%	Domestic politics	16.21%
Executive Branch	9.78%	Economic Performance	9.74%	Economic Performance	7.89%	Elections	21.53%
Political	9.12%	Economic News	9.74%	Domestic Politics	6.99%	Growth/Recession	9.99%
International Relations	6.42%	Personal Income	5.98%	International Relations	2.99%	Political	6.23%
State Department	5.34%	Corporate	5.90%	Economic News	2.92%	Legal Action	3.63%
Top 5 Subject	50.57%	Top 5 Subject	46.13%	Top 5 Subject	43.03%	Top 5 Subject	57.59%
World Institute of Development Economics Research		Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development		Institut Montaigne		Mercator Research Institute G. Commons-Climate Change	
Poverty	11.75%	OECD	17.35%	Domestic politics	12.01%	Cancer	18.15%
Books and conferences	10.92%	Corporate	5.60%	International Relations	6.04%	Corporate	7.63%
Opinions	7.92%	Growth/Recession	5.53%	Government	5.88%	Sciences	6.76%
Climate Change	7.10%	Domestic Politics	5.12%	Labour Issues	4.52%	New Products	6.51%
Domestic Politics	7.10%	Economic Performance	4.99%	Religion	4.13%	Research	5.51%
Top 5 Subject	44.80%	Top 5 Subject	38.58%	Top 5 Subject	32.58%	Top 5 Subject	44.56%

Source: Own research.

TABLE 7 Necessary analysis.

Conditions tested	Consistency	Coverage
GROWTH	0.4778	0.7961
~GROWTH	0.6563	0.8329
TREND	0.3552	0.6883
~TREND	0.7594	0.8710
GDP	0.5487	0.7300
~GDP	0.5412	0.8505
INCOME	0.6572	0.8800
~INCOME	0.4969	0.7750
COMPETITIVENESS	0.8572	0.7171
~COMPETITIVENESS	0.1902	0.9872
TB	0.3194	0.9373
~TB	0.7157	0.6835

Source: Own research.

Woodside, 2013). The five pathways from the solution to the model have high consistencies (between 83% and 98.18%). Applying the approach of Fiss (2011), our analysis distinguishes between core conditions and peripheral conditions. So that the peripheral ones show neutral permutations that could lead to the same result following the principle of equifinality.

In a differential analysis by countries, it is observed that causal configuration 1 is consistent between think tanks created and promoted in Finland, Austria, Sweden or Belgium, while causal configuration 2 is followed by think tanks from the United Kingdom and France. Causal configuration 3 is followed by two major German think tanks. Causal configurations 4 and 5 help to provide the conditions that are decisive for think tanks from Hungary and Italy.

Causal configuration 1 explains the thematic concentration strategies of think tanks in whose countries of origin the GDPpc and the level of competitiveness were high, the GDP was low and there was a deficit in the trade balance (Austria, Belgium, Sweden and Finland). According to Table 2, attributes calibration shows maximum ambiguity threshold. Above the cut-off point, the conditions are considered to have high values; below the cut-off point, the conditions are considered to have low values (e.g. GDP higher (lower) at \$1,829,918.13; GDPpc higher (lower) at \$39,360.00; and so on). The think tanks that follow this specialization strategy are *Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies*, *Austrian Institute of Economic Research*, *Bruegel*, *Centre for European Policy Studies*, *European Centre for International Political Economy*, *Institute for International Economic Studies* and *World Institute of Development Economics Research*.

Causal configuration 2 is characteristic of those think tanks whose strategy of concentration did not promote the growth of media representation in the long term. These think tanks have their headquarters and

design their strategies from countries with economies with high GDP and low GDPpc, high competitiveness with a deficit in their trade balance. This strategic line is followed by entities belonging to countries with high GDP and competitiveness, low GDPpc and trade balance deficit (United Kingdom and France). The think tanks that follow this solution are *French Institute of International Relations*, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*, *OECD*, *Chatham House*, *National Institute of Economic and Social Research* y *Adam Smith Institute*.

Kiel Institute for the World Economy, *Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change* and *Macroeconomic Policy Institute* develop a third path of specialization (causal configuration 3). These think tanks drive their activity from countries with a surplus in the trade balance, high competitiveness, high GDP and high GDPpc (Germany). In this strategic option, think tanks manage to specialize their discourse without registering increases in media representation (VRMR and TREND).

Causal configuration 4 explains the strategy of the *Tarki Social Research Institute*. This entity manages to focus its discourse on a few issues without significantly increasing its media representation (absence of VRMR and TREND), and it is in a country without relevant economic attributes (absence of GDP, GDPpc, COMP and NX), like Hungary.

Finally, the *Institute for International Political Studies* (causal configuration 5) designs a thematic specialization strategy by increasing its media representation (VRMR), consistently throughout the decade 2009–2018 (TREND). This think tank is based in Italy and the country's macroeconomic conditions are high GDP, low GDPpc, low competitiveness and trade balance deficit.

The proposed model fails to explain the thematic specialization strategies of two of the three French think tanks: *Center d'Etudes Prospectives et d'Informations Internationales* and *Institut Montaigne*.

Table 9 offers a map of strategic preferences of the analysed think tanks. The country of origin of each entity and the causal configuration used are shown.

Results are consistent with the approach introduced by Campbell and Pedersen (2015, 2014, 2011) in the academic tradition on the field, according to the persistence of national differences on the production of political ideas. Despite the common imaginary, convergence is limited from a thematic point of view (Table 6). As reported, national contexts act as contingent factors for the design of think tank strategies. The results affect the economic characteristics that constitute a vector of decisive momentum in the construction of think tank strategies (Table 8). In addition, the evidence found shows an important connection between countries in the paths followed during the construction of archetypes for the design of thematic specialization strategies (Table 9). The empirical evidence found after

TABLE 8 Sufficiency analysis for the outcome thematic concentration of European economic policy think tanks. Intermediate solution.

Attributes	1	2	3	4	5
VRMR		○	○	○	●
TREND			○	○	●
GDP	○	●	●	○	●
GDPpc	●	○	●	○	○
COMP	●	●	●	○	○
NX	○	○	●	○	○
Raw coverage	0.3818	0.2614	0.1862	0.1077	0.0729
Unique coverage	0.2861	0.1694	0.1532	0.0628	0.0361
Consistency	0.8565	0.8300	0.9476	0.9818	0.9673
Intermediate coverage	0.8045				
Intermediate consistency	0.8660				
Cutoff	1				
Cutoff consistency	0.8246				

Note: Black circles indicate the presence of a condition, white circles indicate its absence, and blank spaces indicate "do not care". Core conditions are represented by large circles and peripheral conditions by small circles.

Source: Own research.

the identification of causal configurations (CC) highlights important groupings of countries (CC1: Austria, Belgium, Sweden, Finland; CC2: United Kingdom, France; CC3: Germany; CC4: Hungary; CC5: Italy and France). (Table 9).

4.4 | Robustness and internal reliability

Following the sensitivity methodology proposed by Paykani et al. (2018), a robustness analysis of the model was carried out, applying a double Optimal Stress Test (OST) that modified the point of maximum ambiguity. A variation of the crossover point $\pm 10\%$ (OST1: +10%; OST2: -10%) was applied according to Stevens (2016) and Fiss (2011).

The model was again rolled using the Quine-McCluskey Algorithm and consistency was observed for both intermediate solutions. The consistency gaps of the original solution were calculated with respect to the average of the consistencies of both stress tests (OST1 and OST2), according to Castelló-Sirvent and García-García (2022).

The value of the robustness coefficient (RC-value) was calculated according to Castelló-Sirvent (2023). The robustness adjustment is measured according to the requirement of the stress tests ($0.9900 \leq RC \leq 1$, strong robustness **; $0.9500 \leq RC \leq 0.9899$, moderate robustness *; $0.900 \leq RC \leq 0.9499$, weak robustness).

The results obtained (RC-value = 0.9847**) guarantee strong robustness of the model tested in this study.

The internal reliability of the proposed model facilitates its extrapolation to other contexts of analysis of think tanks, like differentiated periods, groupings of think tanks compared by countries or think tanks thematically linked to particular debates. Consequently, scholars are invited to carry out exploratory work that takes advantage of the findings of this study.

5 | CONCLUSIONS

This study provides a new vision on the main topics of interest to think tanks in the period after the euro crisis, a systemic crisis in the European Union (Copelovitch et al., 2016). This study focuses on a research field rarely covered by the scientific literature and identifies the main topics of interest to think tanks in the period after a systemic crisis. A qualitative methodology based on Boolean logic is used that is suitable for small samples (Ragin, 1987, 2009) and promotes the theory according to the causal relationships detected by the proposed model and a deep prior knowledge of the cases (Rihoux, 2017). The proposed model has been tested with the fsQCA and reveals five causal configurations that explain the specialization strategies of think tanks on the international public agenda.

The evidence found reveals that after the 2008 financial crisis, European economic policy think tanks designed heterogeneous thematic specialization strategies. The analysis of European think tanks specialized in economic policy confirms the existence of

TABLE 9 Causal configurations proposed by the model.

Think tank		Causal configurations				
Name	Country	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Austrian Institute of Economic Research</i>	Austria	X				
<i>Bruegel</i>	Belgium	X				
<i>Centre for European Policy Studies</i>	Belgium	X				
<i>European Centre for International Political Economy</i>	Belgium	X				
<i>Institute for International Economic Studies</i>	Sweden	X				
<i>Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies</i>	Austria	X				
<i>World Institute of Development Economics Research</i>	Finland	X				
<i>Adam Smith Institute</i>	United Kingdom		X			
<i>Chatham House</i>	United Kingdom		X			
<i>French Institute of International Relations</i>	France		X			
<i>National Institute of Economic and Social Research</i>	United Kingdom		X			
<i>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)</i>	France		X			
<i>Kiel Institute for the World Economy</i>	Germany			X		
<i>Macroeconomic Policy Institute</i>	Germany			X		
<i>Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change</i>	Germany			X		
<i>TARKI Social Research Institute</i>	Hungary				X	
<i>Institute for International Political Studies</i>	Italy					X
<i>Centre d'Etudes Prospectives et d'Informations Internationales</i>	France					
<i>Institut Montaigne</i>	France					

Source: Own research.

asymmetric behaviours by geographical areas. The media representation strategies of think tanks differentiate British, Central European and other peripheral countries archetypes, although in all cases they are main issues linked to the Euro Crisis and the 2030 Agenda.

The stability of the Euro is a cross-cutting theme that is integrated into the discourse on domestic policy, international relations and the European Union. The SDGs focused on no poverty and climate action have a lot of impact. Climate change constitutes a relevant analysis in new research trends, sustainable corporate strategies and new product development. The fight against poverty combines policy aspects related to economic performance, labour market, employment or personal income in its debates.

The results corroborate that think tanks take advantage of strategic options depending on the economic attributes of the country in which each think tank is located. The macroeconomic context acts as a contingent factor for the construction of think tank's agendas. Scholars can take advantage of the internal reliability of

the tested model to extend its application to other contexts of analysis, such as periods, countries or public debates on differential topics.

A finding of this article is the causal importance of economic and media conditions for the intervention of the soft power in Europe. The use of a non-statistical configurational methodology represents an important novelty in research on economic policy think tanks. The use of fuzzy sets and logical configurations makes it easier for scholars to develop new theoretical and practical approaches. The contribution to the literature of this study offers scholars promising lines of research that integrate previous theoretical approaches, both from the micro, meso and macro perspectives. In this sense, the robustness and internal reliability of the model proposed for the analysis and evaluation of the thematic specialization strategies of European economic policy think tanks have been validated. Future research will be able to test hypotheses derived from the findings of this article in accordance with other moments, taking into consideration conjunctural changes such as COVID-19 or the war in Ukraine. This model

constitutes a promising opportunity for the development of future empirical studies. Researchers can extend the implications of the results of this article by applying the proposed model to the analysis of other think tanks specialized in other thematic areas of policy (e.g. health, education, energy and resource, defence and national security, foreign and international affairs). The methodology used guides and advises practitioners in the design and performance of thematic specialization strategies based on case studies of the best practices of European economic policy think tanks.

This research is not without limitations. The methodology used limits the possible number of analysis conditions. In addition, this research does not address an analysis of the political sentiment of the discourse of think tanks that should be studied in future research with methodologies of semantic analysis and deep learning of public opinion projected on social networks. The data source used *Global Go To Think Tank Index Report* could represent a sample selection bias. Other investigations should replicate this study by expanding the database, adding other complementary sources.

Next lines of research should delve into the strategies followed by European think tanks after Brexit and the economic impact of COVID-19 on the Eurozone. Future studies should analyse the evolution of the 2030 Agenda in the post-pandemic new normal and develop strategies to track configurations over time with fsQCA for the pandemic and post-pandemic period.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

These authors contributed equally to this work.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data available on request to the authors.

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ENDNOTES

¹ The Eurozone includes 20 States that have adopted the Euro as their currency. On January 1, 1999, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Spain, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Portugal adopted the single currency. Subsequently, they adopted the Euro: Greece (2001), Slovenia (2007), Cyprus (2008), Malta (2008), Slovakia (2009), Estonia (2011), Latvia (2014), Lithuania (2015), Croatia (2023).

² The crisis reached the sovereign debt, the banking system and the economic system of the Eurozone countries. The intensification of the crisis meant that the finance ministers approved on May 9, 2010

a rescue package of 750,000 million euros aimed at ensuring stability with important measures in 2010 such as the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) or European Stability Mechanism (ESM). The evolution of the crisis lasted during 2011 and 2012, and brought notable political changes, generating power shifts in Greece, Ireland, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Slovakia, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

³ The data served by Factiva includes the following languages around the world: Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Melayu, Bulgarian, Catalan, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish. The search carried out in this study used all the languages available in Factiva media and agencies (N=25)

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