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Development and Evaluation Report of Think Tanks Cooperation between China and CEEC (2015-2016)

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Development and Evaluation Report of Think Tanks Cooperation between China and CEEC (2015-2016)

Edited by Huang Ping, Co-author: Liu Zuokui, Ju Weiwei, Ma Junchi¹

I. Objectives

In order to examine the exchanges and cooperation of think tanks between China and Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC), the secretariat of China — CEEC Think Tanks Exchanges and Cooperation Network (shorted as 16+1 Think Tanks Network) has been collecting and codifying all the relative exchanges and cooperation events among 16+1 Think Tanks Network and its partners. such as think tanks, universities and governmental institutions in CEEC. In this article, a systematic index for evaluation on the degree and importance of think tanks exchange and cooperation has been set up. On the basis of this evaluation, we can check the progress, problems and challenges.

II. Researching methods

Firstly, the 16+1 Think Tanks Network has collected all the data about the exchanges and cooperation within Chinese and CEEC Think Tanks since its establishment.

Secondly, it has built up an index system reflecting features of think tanks' interaction. Moreover, an evaluation has been carried out with regard to the origins, natures and features of the communication as well as the degrees and efficiency of partner's participation. Due to this system, a set of specific codes have be automatically generated after each chance of exchange and cooperation.

Thirdly, the formulated codes have been put into statistical software utilized for

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cross-comparison.

Finally, the results from statistics and comparison will facilitate the compilation of research report.

III. Main information on index system

(1) The time period of examination ranges from Dec. 2015 to Dec. 2016.

(2) Types of partners: the types of organizations and institutions which 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network has cooperated with, include governmental and non-governmental think tanks, universities and academic institutes, government agencies etc.

(3) Countries: CEEC include Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, Romania, and Bulgaria.

(4) Exchanging channels: the primary channels in China—CEEK exchanges are co-host international forums and the ones hosted by each side, bilateral talks, cooperation agreements signed, joint researches initiated by each side, two-way mutual academic visits and co-built research centers.

(5) Identity of partners: incumbent officials, former officials, heads and scholars of think tanks etc.

(6) Degrees of participation: the index evaluates the degrees of cooperation between 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network and CEEK Think Tanks, which is classified as high participation (4 points); relatively high participation (3 points); medium degree of participation (2 points); low participation (1 point); very low participation (0 point).

(7) Effectiveness of exchanges and cooperation: the index illustrates the after-effect or influences towards the collaboration among bilateral institutions, think tanks and evolution of national relations in two areas after each interaction. Five levels are dissected: High effectiveness (4 points); relatively high effectiveness (3 points); medium level of effectiveness (2 points); low effectiveness (1 point) and no effectiveness (0 point).

IV. Reliability and professionalism of data sources

Initiated by Premier Li Keqiang and supported by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, the 16+1 Think Tanks Network is an international think tank and platform facilitating exchanges towards CEEC countries under the coordination of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). 16+1 Think Tanks Network is a national exchange platform for think tanks around China and CEECs. Since its establishment in 2015, 16+1 Think Tanks Network have engaged in intensive exchange and cooperation activities with CEEC think tanks, universities and related governmental agencies, all of which have shown the comprehensiveness of China — CEEC cooperation, representing the mainstream and characteristics of this framework. As the organizer of 16+1 Think Tanks Network and one of the most significant national think tanks in China, CASS enjoys high reputation and influences in the fields of academia and think tanks both at home and abroad. Its abundant expertise and resources are also a good treasure for CASS. Under the coordination of CASS, 16+1 Think Tanks Network has a relatively high-level in professionalization. The Institute of Europeans Studies (IES) in CASS takes charge of daily routines, with the help of its domestic resources of experts on European issues. Therefore, substantial backup is available for 16+1 Think Tanks Network. The secretariat for 16+1 Think Tanks Network has made great efforts for each activity in terms of organization and its content, which promotes the formation of a more complete archive. All mentioned above could guarantee the reliability and professionalism of data used by the index system.

The cooperation between CEEC and China is not limited in 16+1 Think Tanks Network. However, due to the purpose of its establishment and impetus, 16+1 Think Tanks turns to be the most representative one in China. Meanwhile, 16+1 Think Tanks is regarded as the flag in bilateral exchange around think tanks, since it owns many communicating channels, concentrates on highlight issues and its institutional nature. Hence, the index system for evaluation made by 16+1 Think Tanks Network could reflect the general status of exchange between China and CEEC. In particular, it needs

to be pointed out that the statistics and analysis derived from this system can only reveal the cooperation situation between 16+1 Think Tanks Network and those of CEEC partially, which cannot cover a full view around the cooperation between China and CEEC.

V. Analysis of China—CEEC exchanges and cooperation index

A. Ranking of the cooperation between CEEC think tanks and 16+1 Think Tanks Network

1. National Ranking

According to the two indexes of “degree of participation” and “effectiveness of cooperation”, the evaluation system makes a cross-over analysis for the collaboration status with the think tanks in 16 countries. The grading results in exchanges with each country from the perspective of 16+1 Think Tanks Network has been calculated. While the national ranking is realized given to the index system in the end (shown in the table 1).

Table 1: Ranking of China—CEEC Exchanges and Cooperation

Rank	Nation	Exchanges and cooperation (times)	Degree of participation (points)	Effectiveness (points)	Total (points)
1	Poland	12	33	30	63
2	Slovenia	11	28	24	52
3	Czech Republic	8	21	19	40
4	Serbia	7	19	19	38
5	Hungary	7	18	19	37
6	Latvia	8	19	16	35
7	Romania	7	18	15	33
8	Slovakia	8	16	13	29
9	Macedonia	5	13	12	25
10	Montenegro	5	13	10	23

11	Lithuania	5	10	7	17
12	Albania	4	9	7	16
13	Bulgaria	4	7	6	13
14	Croatia	3	7	4	11
15	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	7	4	11
16	Estonia	3	6	4	10

Table 1 shows that Poland is the most active participator in the exchanges and cooperation with 16+1 Think Tanks Network among all, whose total points prominently surpasses the others. Slovenia, as a small country in CEEC, ranks second to Poland, yet much higher than the scores of some bigger countries in CEEC like Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania. Still Czech Republic, Serbia, Hungary, Latvia and Romania as the traditional Chinese friends, only gain their scores between 30 and 40, among which Serbia, Hungary and Romania have an honorably profound friendship with China, while the relations with Czech Republic and Latvia have grown rapidly in recent years. As a Baltic country, Latvia illustrates a “new highlight” in this regions in terms of the China—CEEC cooperation. Slovakia scores 29, ranking in the eighth place, which means V4 group is in the upper team of think tanks exchanges and cooperation. However, in the bottom team, Macedonia and Montenegro overrun Albania, Bulgaria and Croatia in obvious advantage despite of their countries’ size, while Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Estonia perform unsatisfactorily are in the last ones in the ranking.

2. Ranking of institutions

The index system has selected CEEC think tanks, universities and government agencies whose involvement with 16+1 Think Tanks Network is more than twice (only the activities participated by CEEC embassies in China and think tanks count). We give the grades for the degree of participation and effectiveness, and the totals are listed in the table 2.

Table 2: Ranking of CEEC Think Tanks Exchanges Institutions

Ranks	Names of Exchanges Institutions	Degree of institutions (points)	Effectiveness (points)	Total (points)
1	Latvian Institute of International Affairs	15	14	29
2	Embassy of the Republic of Poland in China (think tanks cooperation)	12	10	22
2	Institute of International Politics and Economics, Serbia	11	11	22
2	Polish Institute of International Affairs	11	11	22
3	Ljubljana University, Slovenia	10	9	19
3	EURISC Foundation of Romania	10	9	19
4	Institute of International Relations, Prague	9	8	17
5	University of Montenegro	8	8	16
6	Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia	8	7	15
7	Embassy of Hungary in China (think tanks cooperation)	7	5	12
8	IEDC-Bled School of Management, Slovenia	5	5	10
8	Institute of New Silk Road, Prague	5	5	10
8	GKI, Hungary	5	5	10
8	Embassy of Romania in China (think tanks cooperation)	6	4	10
9	Embassy of Slovenia in China (think tanks cooperation)	5	4	9
10	Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in China (think tanks cooperation)	5	2	7
10	Embassy of Czech Republic in China (think tanks cooperation)	4	3	7

11	Institute of Asian Studies, Slovakia	4	2	6
11	Embassy of Latvia in China (think tanks cooperation)	4	2	6
11	Embassy of Lithuania in China (think tanks cooperation)	4	2	6

From Table 2 we can see that Latvian Institute of International Affairs takes the highest spot among all institutes. Embassy of the Republic of Poland in China, Institute of International Politics and Economics, Serbia and Polish Institute of International Affairs get the same score, ranking as the second place, among which Embassy of the Republic of Poland shares the closest ties with 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network. The third place comes to the Ljubljana University of Slovenia and EURISC Foundation of Romania. In sum, the top three are institutions from Latvia, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, and Romania, etc. In regards to national perspective, think tanks in V4, Slovenia, Serbia and Romania from Southeastern Europe, as well as Latvia in Baltic Region win points above 10.

B. Analysis of cooperation between CEEC think tanks and 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network

Table 3: Types of Partner Institutions

	Frequency	Percentage
Governmental think tanks	29	28.2
Universities and academic institutions	21	20.4
Non-governmental think tanks	7	6.8
Governmental agencies	29	28.2
Others	17	16.5
Sum	103	100.0

Table 3 shows the frequent contact of 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network with governmental think tanks, academic institutions and governmental agencies. The

former two categories account for the majority by 28.2% respectively, which illustrates that 60% of the exchange programs are accompanying with the assistance of government. All these reminds us of the importance the CEEC attached to 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network. At the same time, we always keep close eyes to critical policies in CEEC. The percentage of 20.4% in universities and academic institutions demonstrates the focus of 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network on the field of academia. In comparison, exchange to non-governmental participators, however, takes a little portion for 6.8%, illuminating the further endeavors we need to make in order to diversify the partnership.

Table 4: National Data on Exchanges and Cooperation with CEEC Think Tanks

Nation	Exchanges and cooperation (times)	Degree of participation (points)
Czech Republic	8	7.8
Poland	12	11.7
Hungary	7	6.8
Slovakia	8	7.8
Latvia	8	7.8
Estonia	3	2.9
Lithuania	5	4.9
Serbia	7	6.8
Slovenia	11	10.7
Croatia	3	2.9
Montenegro	5	4.9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	2.9
Macedonia	5	4.9
Albania	4	3.9
Romania	7	6.8
Bulgaria	4	3.9

Table 4 shows that think tanks from Poland, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia and other CEEC exchanges quite frequently cooperate with 16+1 Think Tanks Network, among which the score of Poland is overwhelming as a great power and this promising developmental trend has been continuously growing in recent years. Slovenia as a minor country in CEEC ranks secondly, showing that the think tanks of Slovenia cherishes a thriving relation with China. Next comes to the three countries--- Hungary, Romania and Serbia, they share the same value in exchange with 16+1 Think Tanks Network. Consequently, we contact more often with V4 and the traditional faithful friends in Central and Eastern Europe like Serbia and Romania. The ones in Balkan, and South and Eastern Europe countries exchange less times with 16+1 Think Tanks Network; the Baltic countries excepting Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania present the same situation.

Table 5: Data on Partners' Identity

	Frequency	Percentage
Incumbent officials	35	34.0
Former officials	10	9.7
heads of think tanks	29	28.2
Scholars	27	26.2
Others	2	1.9
Sum	103	100.0

Table 5 calculates partners' identity, indicating their official and governmental background. In the CEEC partners, incumbent officials take up the percentage of 34% and former officials account for 9.7%. It is clear that we keep a close relationship with governmental agencies in CEEC. Meanwhile, the proportion of heads of think tanks reaches up to 28.2% with intensive emphasis on mutual interaction.

Table 6: Participation Degree of CEEC Think Tanks

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low participation	6	5.8
Medium degree of participation	59	57.3

Relatively high degree of participation	28	27.2
High participation	10	9.7
Sum	103	100.0

Here comes to the overall degree of exchanges and cooperation between CEEC think tanks and 16+1 Think Tanks Network. It shows the importance of CEEC think tanks's activities. For example, single scholar visits is graded as low participation degree; several scholars or heads of think tanks visits takes medium degree of participation; intensive talks on one issue joint by two parts is regarded as relatively high degree of participation; the highest level one belongs to the vital conference or forum hosted by one side, focusing on CEEC issues with attendance of well-known heads from think tanks and political leaders both at home and abroad. From table 4, we can learn that the medium degree activities dominate the whole at the ratio of 57.3%; next is the relatively high degree of participation occupying 27.2%. As a result, the two extremes account for a quite low part.

Table 7: Effectiveness of Exchanges and Cooperation

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low effectiveness	29	28.2
Medium effectiveness	47	45.6
Relatively high effectiveness	19	18.4
High effectiveness	8	7.8
Sum	103	100.0

Table 7 reflects the effectiveness of cooperation between CEEC think tanks and 16+1 Think Tanks Network. It shows the effects of bilateral exchanges. For instance, if two institutes have established relation without any other achievement, it is counted as low effectiveness. Bilateral scholars visit inspired by certain discussion is graded as medium effectiveness; relatively high effectiveness refers to a series of action prompted by exchanges such as rise of cooperation intention, signing of cooperation agreement, implementation of joint research, etc. The most efficient one has to impose certain influence in the field of politics, culture or media worldwide. According to

table 5, medium effectiveness holds the largest share by 45.6%, followed by relatively high effectiveness by 18.4%; low effectiveness accounts for 28.2%; high effectiveness holds the smallest share, only taking up 7.8%. We can see that effectiveness of think tanks exchanges activities mainly concentrates on the levels above average, quite similar to the result in participation degree.

In the index system, there are “very low participation” and “no effectiveness” in degrees of participation and effectiveness for think tanks. However, these two have not been realized in practice. Pragmatics and achievement orientation are two distinctions in exchanges between CEEC think tanks and 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network in reality.

Table 8: Channels of Exchanges

Nation	Exchanges and cooperation (times)	Degree of participation (points)
Co-host international forum	8	7.8
International forum hosted by 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network	56	54.4
International forum hosted by partners	3	2.9
Bilateral talks	8	7.8
Signing of cooperation agreements	6	5.8
Joint research initiated by partners	1	1.0
Academic visits by 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network	7	6.8
Academic visits by partners	12	11.7
Co-built research center	1	1.0
Others	1	1.0
Sum	103	100.0

Table 8 shows exchanging channels connecting CEEC and 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network. It is clear that international forums hosted by 16+1 Thinks Tanks Network

dominate all exchanging channels by the ratio of 54.4%. Conference and meeting amounts to 70%, and mutual visits account for 18.5%. In terms of bilateral exchanges, 16+1 Think Tanks Network is closely related with partners by joint study and co-built research centers yet the share of this means is quite low. In conclusion, the relation between Chinese and CEEC think tanks is still in development by traditional means like conference and visits as the mainstream. Therefore, we need to work out to evolve much deeper and advanced cooperation methods in the future.