
Paying for Partisan Knowledge: Funding Regimes and the Missing Governance of Evidence in European Party Think Tanks

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Abstract

Purpose: Political parties in many European democracies run think tanks with public money, yet little is known about how funders govern the quality of the knowledge these organisations produce. This article compares the regimes that fund and regulate party think tanks in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Finland and at the level of the European Union, and asks which rules could make partisan knowledge more reliable without making it less partisan.

Method: The study uses a qualitative comparative design based on structured, focused comparison and on documentary analysis of statutes, court rulings, budget records, audit reports and parliamentary papers. Each regime is coded as it stood on 1 September 2026 on six ordinal dimensions: funding entrenchment, autonomy, transparency and audit, academic linkage, values conditionality and evidential standards.

Findings: Core public funding ranges from about €0.1 per inhabitant in Finland, before its grant was withdrawn, to about €1.8 in Germany. The regimes deal with their radical flanks in four ways: statutory screening in Germany and the EU, inclusion with financial audit in Austria, neutral organisational rules in the Netherlands, and ad hoc review followed by withdrawal in Finland. Recent reforms have tightened transparency and values tests, but no regime sets any standard for how funded organisations support their empirical claims.

Conclusion: Funders govern who may enter, not how knowledge is produced. The article develops the concept of evidential accountability, proposes an Evidence Quality Index and sets out a three-tier model of disclosure, methodological standards and academic partnership that stays neutral as to content.

Keywords: political party think tanks; evidential accountability; policy advisory systems; party finance regulation; comparative public policy; Finland.

1. Introduction

Parliamentary democracies draw on two supplies of policy knowledge. The first is non-partisan and fairly well studied: legislative research services, audit offices, statistical agencies and advisory councils that are expected to serve every member of the house on equal terms. The second is openly partisan and much less understood. It consists of think tanks that political parties own, sponsor or keep at arm's length: the political foundations in Germany, the party academies in Austria, the scientific institutes of Dutch parties, the small party think tanks of Finland and, at the level of the European Union, the European political foundations affiliated with the Europarties. These organisations draw public money, employ researchers, publish reports and train future office-holders. A good part of the analysis that ends up in manifestos, coalition agreements and parliamentary amendments passes through them on its way to the floor.

Their standing has become contested in the past three years. In February 2023 the German Federal Constitutional Court held that the way the federal budget had funded party-affiliated foundations, while leaving out the foundation close to the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), breached the party's right to equal opportunities, and that funding of this kind needed a dedicated statute (BVerfG, 2023). Parliament answered with the Foundation Financing Act (*Stiftungsfinanzierungsgesetz*, StiftFinG), which makes funding depend not only on the repeated parliamentary strength of the related party but also on whether the foundation offers, in an overall assessment, the guarantee that it will actively stand up for the free democratic basic order (Neelen, 2025a). The AfD-affiliated Desiderius-Erasmus-Stiftung applied for funding from 2026, and in mid-2026 the federal government told the Bundestag that its examination of the application had still not been concluded (Deutscher Bundestag, 2026a). At EU level, Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2025/2445 recast the rules on European political parties and foundations in November 2025, tightening donor transparency and values compliance and raising to 95 per cent the share of eligible costs the Union will pay (Council of the European Union, 2025). Finland moved the other way. In September 2024 the government proposed to abolish, from 2025, the modest general grant through which the state had supported party think tanks since the 2000s (Kalevi Sorsa Foundation, 2024).

These reforms point in different directions, but they share a blind spot. Each asks whether an organisation deserves to be funded, whether its political orientation is compatible with the constitutional order or with the values of Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, and whether the money has been spent for the purposes for which it was granted. None asks how well a funded organisation supports the empirical claims it brings into public debate. The quality of partisan evidence is left to reputation, to the market of ideas and to the self-discipline of each organisation. The emerging literature on political party think tanks (PPTTs) has mapped what they do and for whom (Pattyn et al., 2014; Timmermans et al.,

2015; Vande Walle & de Lange, 2025; Vande Walle, 2025), but it has said little about how funding and regulation bear on the quality of the knowledge these organisations produce.

This article compares how five European regimes fund and discipline party think tanks, and it asks what rules could make partisan knowledge more reliable without making it less partisan. Three questions guide the analysis. First, how do Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Finland and the EU level differ in the autonomy, transparency, academic linkage and political conditions they attach to public money for PPTTs? Second, in which direction have recent reforms moved these regimes? Third, which arrangements could raise the evidential quality of partisan knowledge while leaving the range of ideas untouched? The answer to the third question rests on a concept I call *evidential accountability*: standards that govern how claims are supported, not which conclusions are reached.

The article proceeds as follows. Section 2 states the problem in governance terms. Section 3 reviews research on think tanks, policy advisory systems, the politics of evidence and the regulation of party-related organisations, and builds the analytical framework. Section 4 explains the comparative design and the coding of regimes. Section 5 presents the five cases and the cross-case comparison. Section 6 discusses why funders govern the door rather than the room, proposes an Evidence Quality Index and a three-tier model of evidential accountability, and draws out the managerial implications. The final sections conclude, suggest further research and set out the study's limitations.

2. Problem Statement and Significance of the Study

Seen from a management angle, public funding of party think tanks is a purchasing problem with an unusual product. The state, or the European Parliament acting for the Union, pays for something it cannot easily see: a better-informed contest between parties. The organisations that deliver it are not neutral contractors. They are expected to take sides, and their value to their party depends on doing so. What the funder can observe cheaply are inputs and formal conduct: whether the grant was spent on eligible items, whether accounts were filed, whether donors were declared, whether the organisation or its party has been classified as extremist by a domestic intelligence service. What it cannot observe cheaply is whether a report on migration flows or carbon pricing rests on sound sources, discloses its methods and deals honestly with evidence that cuts the other way.

Accountability research predicts what happens in such conditions. When the performance that matters is hard to measure, oversight drifts towards what can be counted and certified (Power, 1997), and the forum to which an actor must explain itself ends up asking narrow questions (Bovens, 2007). For PPTTs this drift takes two forms. One is financial ritual: auditors check reserves, overheads and reporting deadlines, and say nothing about the substance of what was produced. The other is political gatekeeping: the funder asks whether an organisation is loyal enough to the democratic order to be admitted at all. Both have their place. Neither touches the everyday quality of partisan analysis, and the second invites litigation, because to the excluded party it looks like the state choosing among its competitors.

The issue matters beyond the organisations themselves. Polarised fields such as migration and climate are exactly where contested evidence travels from partisan producers into legislation. Research on migration policy shows that expert knowledge is often used to lend legitimacy to decisions as much as to inform them (Boswell, 2009). Research on climate politics documents how think tanks have organised doubt about well-established science (Jacques et al., 2008; Oreskes & Conway, 2010; Plehwe, 2014; Almiron et al., 2020). When such analysis is produced with public money, the way its quality is governed becomes a question of public management, not merely of political taste. It also bears on the funders' own legitimacy. A regime that pays for partisan knowledge but cannot say what it expects of that knowledge is hard to defend against the charge that it simply subsidises incumbents (Katz & Mair, 1995).

For management research the case is significant in two further respects. Party think tanks are knowledge organisations whose output is judged by professional as well as political standards, which makes them a telling case for designing professional accountability in politically charged settings (Romzek & Dubnick, 1987). And the regimes compared here are live policy instruments, several of them reformed within the last three years, so the comparison can inform funders who are rewriting their rules now.

3. Theoretical Foundations and Literature Review

3.1 Party think tanks within policy advisory systems

The think tank literature grew out of the study of American organisations and was built around typologies of independence from government and parties. Weaver (1989) distinguished “universities without students”, contract research organisations and advocacy tanks, and later work added party think tanks as a family of their own (McGann & Weaver, 2000). Stone (1996, 2007) questioned the assumption that think tanks are independent at all and treated them as organisations that trade in credibility across the boundaries of science, politics and the media. Rich (2004) showed that ideological think tanks in the United States gained visibility at the price of credibility, and Medvetz (2012) described think tanks as hybrids assembled from the resources of academia, politics, business and journalism. The common thread is that a think tank's authority depends on being seen as more than a mouthpiece.

European party think tanks sharpen this tension, because their tie to a party is formal and public. Research on the German foundations first dealt with their work abroad (Pinto-Duschinsky, 1991) and later with their part in the programmatic renewal of social democracy (Pautz, 2012). The European political foundations have been studied as instruments that strengthen the Europarties (Gagatek & Van Hecke, 2014). A Nordic special issue documented how party-linked and advocacy think tanks spread in countries where corporatist bodies and state research institutes had long dominated policy advice (Kelstrup, 2020; Allern & Pollack, 2020; Lounasmeri, 2020). In Finland, party think tanks appeared only from 2005 and remained modest in budget and visibility (Lounasmeri, 2016).

The most systematic recent work comes from the Low Countries. Drawing on 22 elite interviews in Flanders and the Netherlands, Vande Walle and de Lange (2025) classify

PPTTs by function and audience into Party Assistants, Party Supporters, Party Promoters and Party Intellectuals. Vande Walle (2025) shows that PPTTs can take on functions that fast-paced party politics tends to neglect, and her later study of mainstream Flemish PPTTs traces a gradual loss of intellectual autonomy (Vande Walle, 2026). Earlier Dutch and Flemish work had already placed these organisations in the space between party and think tank (Pattyn et al., 2014; Timmermans et al., 2015). This body of research tells us what PPTTs do. It does not tell us how good their evidence is, or how the rules under which they are funded affect it.

The policy advisory system literature offers a second frame. Halligan (1995) mapped sources of advice by their location inside or outside government and by their dependence on it, and Craft and Howlett (2012, 2013) described two linked shifts: externalisation, as advice moves to actors outside the public service, and politicisation, as partisan advisers gain weight. Studies of Germany find a hybrid pattern in which internal and external, political and technical capacities are combined (Veit et al., 2017; Hustedt & Veit, 2017). In this frame, party think tanks appear mainly as carriers of politicisation. That reading is not wrong, but it treats partisanship itself as the problem. This article treats partisan advice instead as a problem of evidence governance. The question is not whether the advice is partisan, which it is by design, but whether its claims can be checked.

3.2 Between will and reason

Caramani (2017) offers a useful way of seeing why PPTTs occupy a strategic position. He argues that party government faces two critiques. Populism attacks it in the name of the will of the people, technocracy in the name of reason and expertise. Party government, in his account, is valuable precisely because it joins the representation of interests and values to a claim of responsible, knowledge-based rule. Survey research confirms that technocratic attitudes are widespread among European citizens and coexist with support for democracy (Bertsou & Caramani, 2022), and Bickerton and Invernizzi Accetti (2021) describe a “technopopulist” logic in which political actors claim both the will of the people and the authority of competence.

Party think tanks are where parties try to hold both at once. They have to stay partisan to be useful to their party, and credible to persuade anyone outside it. In Guston’s (2001) terms they are boundary organisations whose survival depends on satisfying two principals with different standards. Pielke’s (2007) distinction between the “issue advocate” and the “honest broker” of policy alternatives helps here. PPTTs are legitimate issue advocates: nobody expects the foundation of a green party to weigh the case for new coal plants neutrally. The trouble starts when advocacy is presented as research without the grounds that would let a reader test it. A partisan conclusion is part of democratic competition. An unsupported empirical claim presented as research is a defect in the public supply of knowledge, whoever produces it.

3.3 From evidence-based policy to the good governance of evidence

Early work on research utilisation already showed that policymakers use research in many ways, including tactically and in support of positions taken on other grounds (Weiss, 1979).

The evidence-based policy movement later promised to discipline such use, but critics pointed out that evidence is always selected, framed and weighed within political contests (Head, 2008; Cairney, 2016). Reviews of the barriers to evidence use point in the same direction: access, timing and relationships shape whether research reaches decision-makers more than its intrinsic quality does (Oliver et al., 2014). Parkhurst (2017) draws the institutional conclusion. Rather than asking politics to defer to evidence, he proposes to govern evidence well, building arrangements that make its use appropriate to the question at hand, transparent and open to challenge, while accepting that value choices belong to democratic bodies.

The concept of evidential accountability developed here applies this idea to partisan producers. Following Bovens's (2007) definition of accountability as a relationship in which an actor must explain and justify its conduct to a forum that can pose questions and pass judgement, evidential accountability is the obligation of a knowledge-producing organisation to make visible, and answer for, the grounds of its empirical claims. It has four elements: the sourcing of key claims, the disclosure of methods, transparency about authorship and funding, and engagement with contrary evidence. It is content-neutral in a strict sense. It does not ask whether conclusions are right, balanced or compatible with any set of values, only whether a reader could reconstruct and contest the path from sources to claims. In Romzek and Dubnick's (1987) vocabulary, it is a form of professional accountability applied to organisations that are politically owned.

The concept needs to be kept apart from three neighbours with which it is easily confused. Financial accountability concerns the lawful and economical use of funds. Values conditionality concerns the eligibility of an organisation, judged by its commitment to the constitutional order or to shared values. Content control concerns conclusions and is incompatible with pluralism. Evidential accountability sits between these: it asks more than bookkeeping does, and far less than any review of conclusions would.

3.4 Regulating the party's satellites

Party finance scholarship explains why these organisations are regulated at all. Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) argued that parties increasingly rely on the state for resources and that public subsidies can entrench established competitors. Van Biezen (2004) described parties as public utilities whose access to state resources brings regulation in its wake, and van Biezen and Kopecký (2014) traced the tightening links between parties and the state across Europe. Comparative work on political finance shows wide national variation in how subsidies are paid and controlled (Nassmacher, 2009). Party think tanks extend these links into the field of knowledge, and they create a regulatory dilemma. The more closely a funder scrutinises what they say, the more it risks becoming a judge of political competition; the less it scrutinises, the harder it becomes to justify the money.

The German Constitutional Court addressed the first half of the dilemma in 1986, when it held that public funding of party-affiliated foundations was compatible with the Basic Law only if the foundations kept real distance from the parties (BVerfG, 1986). The 2023 judgment and the StiftFinG add a second layer drawn from the tradition of militant democracy (Loewenstein, 1937): an organisation that does not stand up for the democratic

order may be refused public money. Legal commentators have questioned whether a requirement of active support, rather than the absence of active hostility, is compatible with the parties' equal opportunities and with the demand for legal precision (Neelen, 2025a, 2025b). These debates concern who may be funded. They leave the quality of what funded organisations produce unexamined.

3.5 Research gap and analytical framework

Three gaps follow from this review. The PPTT literature describes functions but not evidential quality. The advisory systems literature treats partisan advice as politicisation rather than as knowledge that can be governed better or worse. And the party finance literature studies subsidies and eligibility but not the knowledge that subsidies buy. Figure 1 brings these strands together. A funding regime is characterised by the entrenchment of funding (D1), the autonomy it guarantees (D2), the transparency and audit it requires (D3), the academic linkage it encourages (D4), the political conditions it sets (D5) and the evidential standards it imposes (D6). These features shape the organisational conditions under which PPTTs work, which in turn shape their evidential practice and the quality of what reaches parties and the public. Ideology and the character of the policy field, value conflict in migration and strong scientific consensus in climate, act on this chain as moderators. Ideology and the character of the policy field, value conflict in migration and strong scientific consensus in climate, act on this chain as moderators.

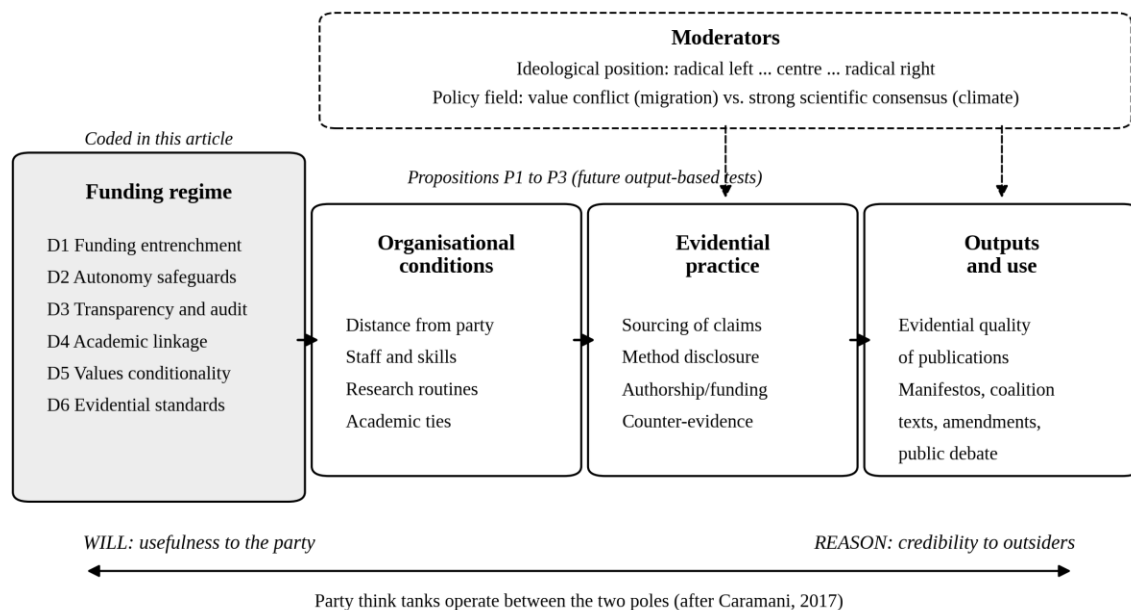


Figure 1. Analytical framework: from funding regime to the evidential quality of partisan knowledge

Source: Author.

The framework yields three propositions that this article states but does not test, because testing them requires the output corpus described in Section 6. P1: where public money comes with transparency duties, evidential quality is higher across the whole ideological spectrum. P2: distance from academic networks predicts weak evidence more strongly than ideological extremity does. P3: content-based eligibility tests change which organisations are funded but do not raise the evidential quality of those that remain. What the article does examine, with documentary evidence, is the prior question on which all three depend: which of the six regime features are present in European regimes, and in which direction they have recently moved.

4. Research Methodology

The study follows a qualitative comparative design based on structured, focused comparison (George & Bennett, 2005). The unit of analysis is the funding-and-regulation regime that applies to party think tanks in a given polity, not the individual organisation. Each regime is examined with the same set of questions, derived from the framework in Figure 1, so that the cases can be compared systematically while their legal and historical particularities are kept in view.

Five regimes were selected on a diverse-case logic (Seawright & Gerring, 2008), aiming at variation in the two features most discussed in current reforms: the scale and entrenchment of public funding, and the presence of political conditions for eligibility. Germany combines large statutory funding with a new democratic-commitment test. Austria also funds party academies by statute, at a much smaller scale, and has funded the academy of the radical-right Freedom Party throughout without any comparable test. The Netherlands funds the scientific institutes of parties through an earmarked part of the general party subsidy and ties eligibility to party membership. Finland, a consensual Nordic democracy, supported party think tanks through a small discretionary grant and then moved to withdraw it. The EU level adds a supranational regime overseen by an independent authority. All five are European multiparty democracies, which holds the broad context constant while the regime features vary (Lijphart, 1971). Table 1 summarises the cases.

Table 1. The five regimes compared

Regime	Legal basis	Funded organisations	Funding channel and scale	Oversight	Recent change
Germany	Art. 21 Basic Law (equal opportunities of parties); BVerfG 1986 and 2023; StiftFinG 2024	Six party-affiliated foundations (KAS, FES, FNS, HBS, RLS, HSS); Desiderius-Erasmus-Stiftung as applicant	Federal global grants, about €148 million (2022), plus project funds from ministries	Federal Ministry of the Interior (eligibility); Federal Court of Audit	Statute after the 2023 judgment; democratic-commitment test; AfD-affiliated application pending
Austria	Publizistik-förderungsgesetz 1984 (PubFG)	Academies of all parties with a parliamentary group (ÖVP, SPÖ, FPÖ, Greens, NEOS)	Federal grant calculated from election results, about €10.5 million a year	Federal Chancellery; Court of Audit (report by 31 May)	No reform; critical audits in 2014, 2019 and 2025
Netherlands	Wet financiering politieke partijen (Wfpp), in force 2013	Political-scientific institutes of subsidised parties (seat and at least 1,000 members)	Earmark within the party subsidy: €201,008 plus €20,825 per seat (2025)	Ministry of the Interior; donor disclosure above €4,500	Political Parties Bill (2025): independent authority, register of affiliated bodies
Finland	Annual budget and grant decisions; no dedicated statute	Eight think tanks close to parliamentary parties (e.g. e2, Toivo, Kalevi Sorsa, Suomen Perusta)	General grant of the Ministry of Education and Culture, about €0.6–0.7 million a year, by seats	Annual activity report to the ministry; ad hoc review (2020)	Grant abolished from 2025 (budget proposal of September 2024)

Regime	Legal basis	Funded organisations	Funding channel and scale	Oversight	Recent change
EU level	Regulation 1141/2014; Regulation 2025/2445 (recast)	European political foundations (e.g. Martens Centre, FEPS, ELF, GEF)	European Parliament grants covering up to 95% of eligible costs (from 2027)	Authority for European Political Parties and Foundations ; European Parliament	Recast 2025: donor identification above €3,000, Art. 2 TEU declarations , gender and harassment rules

Source: Author's compilation from the documents listed in Appendix A.

The data are documents. For each case I collected the relevant statutes and regulations, court decisions, budget documents, reports of supreme audit institutions, parliamentary papers, official guidance and press statements, together with the secondary literature. Appendix A lists the principal sources. The period covered runs from the Austrian *Publizistikförderungsgesetz* of 1984 to September 2026, and the regimes are coded as they stood on 1 September 2026. Finland is coded twice, before and after the 2025 withdrawal of its grant, and Germany's position before the 2023 judgment is shown for comparison. Documents were analysed with the procedures of qualitative document analysis, moving from skimming to close reading and interpretation and paying attention to the authorship and purpose of each text (Bowen, 2009).

Each regime was coded on six dimensions with ordinal scores from 0 to 3, following the anchors in Table 2. The coding rules were fixed before scoring, and every score reported in Table 3 is tied to an identifiable provision or official finding, so that readers can check and contest individual codes. This is a transparency safeguard rather than a reliability statistic: the scores were assigned by a single researcher and are meant to summarise documented legal features, not to measure behaviour. Where law and practice diverge, as with pending examinations or bills still before parliament, the text says so and the code reflects the law in force.

Table 2. Coding frame: dimensions and anchors

Dimension	What is coded	0	1	2	3
D1 Funding entrenchment	Legal security and relative scale of public money	No dedicated public funding	Discretionary grant on a small scale	Statutory or earmarked funding on a moderate scale	Statutory funding on a large scale, or public money as the dominant share of budgets
D2 Autonomy	Legal protection of the organisation against its party	No organisational separation from the party	Separate entity, but dependent on money passed on by the party	Separate legal person funded directly or through an earmark	Constitutionally anchored requirement of distance from the party
D3 Transparency and audit	Reporting duties, audit rights, donor disclosure	None	Reporting to the funder only; weak audit rights	Regular audit and donor disclosure	Independent supervisor with publication duties and sanctions
D4 Academic linkage	Links to universities or to a research mission set by the regime	Regime silent	Regime assigns a scientific or research mission, or funds ties to higher education, without requirements	Funder rewards academic co-production or review	Funder requires co-production, peer review or academic advisory structures

Dimension	What is coded	0	1	2	3
D5 Values conditionality	Political conditions for eligibility	None beyond electoral or organisational criteria	Exclusion only by court judgment or through ad hoc review	Budgetary or administrative loyalty condition	Statutory test of commitment to democratic values
D6 Evidential standards	Rules on how funded outputs support their claims	None	Voluntary standards recognised by the funder	Required disclosure at the level of publications	Required methodological standards checked by sample audit

Source: Author. Scores are ordinal and summarise legal provisions and official findings, not observed behaviour.

5. Findings

5.1 Germany: statutory money, conditional entry

Germany has the largest and most entrenched system of the five. For the six foundations close to parties with a long presence in the Bundestag (the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung and Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung), the 2022 federal budget earmarked about €148 million in global grants (LTO, 2022), and project funds from other ministries come on top of that sum. Their autonomy rests on the 1986 doctrine that foundations must keep genuine distance from the parties (BVerfG, 1986). Their ties to universities are real but indirect: through scholarship programmes financed by the federal research ministry, the foundations support large numbers of students and doctoral candidates.

The 2023 judgment forced a change of legal form. Until then the grants had rested on budget lines and an informal practice of funding foundations whose party had been repeatedly represented in the Bundestag; in 2022 a budget note had also made funding conditional on constitutional loyalty. The Court held that excluding the AfD-affiliated foundation in this way violated the party's equal opportunities, because a decision with such consequences for political competition required a statute (BVerfG, 2023). The StiftFinG, applicable from the 2024 budget year, supplies it. A foundation becomes eligible when its related party has been represented in the Bundestag in parliamentary-group strength for the third consecutive time. It may nonetheless be excluded if, in an overall assessment, it does not offer the guarantee that it will actively stand up for the free democratic basic order and for international understanding. The Act lists indicators, among them past work that did not serve these aims and the influence of persons suspected of anti-constitutional activity, and it

contains a rebuttable presumption that a foundation classified by the domestic intelligence service as a suspected or confirmed extremist organisation lacks the guarantee. A negative decision excludes the foundation for the rest of the legislative term, and the Federal Ministry of the Interior examines the conditions (Neelen, 2025a).

The AfD entered the Bundestag for the third consecutive time in February 2025, which made the Desiderius-Erasmus-Stiftung eligible on the continuity criterion from the 2026 budget year. The ministry set up a project group on foundation financing in September 2025 to examine the conditions for all foundations, and in June 2026 the government could still not say when the examination of the AfD-affiliated foundation would be concluded; the AfD parliamentary group has since pressed the point in further parliamentary questions (Deutscher Bundestag, 2026a, 2026b). Whatever the outcome, the German regime is now organised around a question of political character: is this organisation a trustworthy participant in democratic competition? The statute has a great deal to say about who may enter. It says nothing about the standards of evidence that those admitted must meet. Germany, in short, governs the door but not the room.

5.2 Austria: inclusive money, thin oversight

Austria has funded party academies since the *Publizistikförderungsgesetz* of 1984 (PubFG). Each party with a parliamentary group in the Nationalrat nominates a legal entity, usually an association, to receive federal funds for civic education, and the amounts are calculated from the results of the last general election (Bundeskanzleramt, 2026). In total the academies receive about €10.5 million a year (Rechnungshof Österreich, 2019b). The recipients cover the parliamentary spectrum: the Politische Akademie of the ÖVP, the Renner-Institut of the SPÖ, the Freiheitliches Bildungsinstitut of the FPÖ, the Green academy FREDa and NEOS Lab (Rechnungshof Österreich, 2025). Entitlement follows electoral presence and nothing else. When the Greens dropped out of parliament in 2017, their academy received no funds in 2018 and 2019 (Rechnungshof Österreich, 2019a). There is no test of democratic commitment comparable to the German one, and the FPÖ academy has been funded throughout.

Oversight has been financial, and weak even on its own terms. In 2019 the Court of Audit criticised unclear and deficient rules, noted that the Federal Chancellery as funder had no direct rights of inspection and that the academies were no longer obliged to report annually to the Court or to the government, and repeated recommendations it had first made in 2014 (Rechnungshof Österreich, 2019a, 2019b). Its audit of the ÖVP academy found that between 15 and 30 per cent of the funds earmarked for international education had been spent on administration, above the statutory ceiling of 15 per cent (Rechnungshof Österreich, 2019c). The Chancellery now requires every application to include a commitment to report on the use of funds to the Court by the end of May of the following year (Bundeskanzleramt, 2026). Yet the 2025 audit found that several academies had built reserves that the Act does not provide for, and that clarifications recommended in 2014 and 2019 were still outstanding (Rechnungshof Österreich, 2025). Neither the statute nor the audits deal with academic linkage or with the evidential quality of what the academies publish. The Austrian case shows

that an inclusive regime, one that funds the radical right on the same terms as everyone else, is legally workable. It also shows how easily such a regime settles into audit ritual.

5.3 The Netherlands: earmarking as an autonomy device

The Dutch regime folds the funding of party think tanks into the general subsidy for political parties. Under the Political Parties Financing Act (*Wet financiering politieke partijen*, Wfpp), in force since May 2013, a party qualifies if it holds a seat in either chamber and has at least 1,000 members. A party that designates a political-scientific institute receives an additional earmarked amount, which for 2025 was a base of €201,008 plus €20,825 per parliamentary seat (Staatscourant, 2026). The institute must be a separate legal person engaged wholly or mainly in political-scientific activities, a requirement that goes back to the subsidy legislation of 1999, which also barred parties from attaching conditions of their own to the subsidy agreement (Staatsblad, 1999). Donations to parties and to their affiliated bodies, the institutes included, must be made public above €4,500 per donor per year (Tweede Kamer, 2025).

The Dutch government has been explicit about the philosophy behind these rules. Answering parliamentary questions in 2011, it described the institutes as a bridge between science and politics and defended the earmark as a way of protecting their independent position. It rejected an EU-style values condition for party subsidies, arguing that the subsidy rests on objective criteria, that the state must have no power to intervene in the content of subsidised activities, and that it would be undesirable for a minister to judge the ideology or democratic credentials of a party. Only a criminal conviction of the party for discrimination ends its entitlement, and dissolution is left to the courts; objectionable ideas, in the government's words, are to be fought primarily with arguments (Tweede Kamer, 2011). The membership rule nonetheless has political effects. The Party for Freedom (PVV), which has no ordinary membership, receives no subsidy and therefore has no funded institute, but its exclusion follows from an organisational rule that applies to all, not from an assessment of its politics.

In Vande Walle and de Lange's (2025) typology, the liberal Teldersstichting is a Party Intellectual and the scientific bureau of GroenLinks a Party Supporter, which gives a sense of how widely the institutes vary under a single legal framework. A new Political Parties Act (*Wet op de politieke partijen*), submitted in May 2025 and still before the House of Representatives in mid-2026, would move supervision to an independent Dutch Authority for Political Parties, register the parties' affiliated bodies including their scientific institutes, and regulate the banning of parties (Tweede Kamer, 2025). Like the other reforms, it strengthens financial transparency and political safeguards. It sets no standard for the evidence the institutes produce, even though the word "scientific" is written into their legal definition.

5.4 Finland: a small grant, a public quarrel and a withdrawal

Finland shows what happens at the low end of the funding scale. The first party think tanks were founded in 2005 (Lounasmeri, 2016), and the governments of Matti Vanhanen decided in 2007 to develop think tank activity so as to broaden research that could support public decision-making (Ajatuspaja Toivo, 2026). The Ministry of Education and Culture then

distributed a general grant, financed from the proceeds of state gambling, among think tanks close to parliamentary parties in proportion to their seats. The total stayed at about €600,000 a year for a long period (Yle, 2019). In 2018 it was shared among eight organisations, from the Centre-originated e2 and the National Coalition's Toivo at the top to the Christian Democrats' Kompassi at the bottom (Lounasmeri, 2020), as panel (b) of Figure 4 shows. For some recipients the grant was vital: in 2015 Toivo drew 79 per cent of its budget from the state (Lounasmeri, 2020). Recipients reported to the ministry within a few months of the end of each year on the reports they had produced and the events they had held (Yle, 2019).

Two episodes reveal the character of the Finnish regime. In 2020 a book published by Suomen Perusta, the think tank close to the Finns Party, provoked public outrage, and the minister responsible announced that the ministry would examine whether the publication conflicted with the terms of the grant decision (Verkkouutiset, 2020). Without statutory criteria, content could thus trigger ministerial review on an ad hoc basis, which is the least predictable form of content control. Then, in September 2024, the government's budget proposal for the following year abolished the general grant altogether. By that time the grant amounted to about €700,000, of which the Social Democrats' Kalevi Sorsa Foundation received €130,500 (Kalevi Sorsa Foundation, 2024). The think tanks protested that a trivial sum for the state budget carried great weight for knowledge-based policymaking (Ajatuspaja Visio, 2024). Toivo, for one, now describes its operating grant as coming from its party (Ajatuspaja Toivo, 2026).

The Finnish case matters for the argument in two ways. It shows how fragile discretionary funding is: without a statute, the money can disappear in a single budget round. And it shows a perverse effect of withdrawal. The grant had given the think tanks an income that did not pass through the party. Afterwards, what remains comes largely through party subsidies, which are supervised by the National Audit Office and which parties may pass on to other bodies only under a contract concluded in line with the State Subsidies Act (Eduskunta, 2025). Organisational autonomy falls just when the case for independent research most needs it. The one place where evidential standards appear in the Finnish record is voluntary: the director of the Kalevi Sorsa Foundation stressed in 2024 that its research follows the same research-ethics guidelines of the national advisory board as universities and research institutes do (Verkkouutiset, 2024).

5.5 The EU level: supervised foundations under a new regulation

European political foundations have been funded by the European Parliament since 2008 and regulated since 2014 by Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014, which created an independent Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations to register, control and sanction them. Regulation 2025/2445 recast these rules. Adopted on 26 November 2025, it entered into force on 28 December 2025, and its funding provisions apply from the 2027 budget year (Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations [APPF], 2026a). The Union will now cover up to 95 per cent of eligible costs for parties and foundations alike, and foundations may raise self-generated income of up to 5 per cent of their annual budget (Council of the European Union, 2025). Donors of more than €3,000 must be fully identified, and donations are published annually or, above €12,000,

immediately (Council of the European Union, n.d.). Foundations must adopt internal rules on gender balance and harassment, report each year on representation gaps, and declare that their member organisations, including those from outside the Union, respect the values of Article 2 TEU (European Parliament, 2025). The Authority has made clear that paper declarations are not enough and that parties and foundations answer for the actual conduct of their members (APPF, 2026b).

The foundations span the spectrum, from the Wilfried Martens Centre (European People's Party), FEPS (Party of European Socialists), the European Liberal Forum and the Green European Foundation to Transform Europe on the radical left and foundations of the conservative and radical-right families. The EU regime is the most demanding of the five on transparency and values, and the most financially dependent: at a co-financing rate of 95 per cent, the foundations are in effect public bodies with private statutes. Yet it too is silent on evidence. Publications financed from the grant carry a statement that the European Parliament assumes no responsibility for the facts or opinions expressed in them (see, for example, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, 2026). The disclaimer is a sensible safeguard of pluralism. It also captures the gap this article describes: the funder disowns the content without asking anything about the way it is produced. Where academic ties exist, as with the Martens Centre's academic council, they are voluntary.

5.6 Cross-case comparison

Table 3 reports the coded scores and the provisions behind them. Figures 2 and 3 summarise the pattern, and Figure 4 indicates the scale of funding.

Table 3. Coded scores and the provisions behind them (as of 1 September 2026)

Regime	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Basis for coding
Germany	3	3	2	1	3	0	StiftFinG continuity rule and large statutory grants (D1); distance doctrine, BVerfGE 73, 1 (D2); audit of federal grants, no general publication duty (D3); scholarship programmes funded by the research ministry (D4); active-commitment test with presumption based on intelligence classification (D5); no rule on evidence (D6)
Austria	2	2	1	0	0	0	PubFG grant of about €10.5 million a year (D1); academies funded directly as separate entities (D2); no inspection rights, reporting duty lapsed and recommendations outstanding (D3); civic-education mandate only (D4); entitlement follows parliamentary presence (D5); no rule on evidence (D6)

Regime	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Basis for coding
Netherlands	2	2	2	1	1	0	Wfpp earmark (D1); separate legal person, parties barred from adding conditions (D2); donor disclosure including affiliated bodies (D3); political-scientific mission in the legal definition (D4); loss of subsidy only on conviction for discrimination (D5); no rule on evidence (D6)
Finland (to 2024)	1	2	1	1	1	0	Discretionary grant of about €0.6 million (D1); paid directly to the think tanks (D2); annual activity report to the ministry (D3); research purpose of the 2007 decision (D4); ad hoc ministerial review in 2020 (D5); no rule on evidence (D6)
Finland (2025–)	0	1	1	0	0	0	Grant abolished (D1); remaining money passed on by parties under State Subsidies Act contracts (D2); audit office supervises party subsidies (D3); no grant-related mission or conditions (D4, D5); no rule on evidence (D6)
EU level	3	2	3	0	3	0	Up to 95% co-financing (D1); registered legal entities funded directly (D2); independent Authority, donor identification and publication, sanctions (D3); academic ties voluntary (D4); Art. 2 TEU declarations covering members (D5); disclaimer on content, no rule on evidence (D6)

Note: D1 funding entrenchment; D2 autonomy; D3 transparency and audit; D4 academic linkage; D5 values conditionality; D6 evidential standards. Before the 2023 judgment Germany scored 2 on D5 (budget note of 2022); its other scores were unchanged. Source: Author's coding.

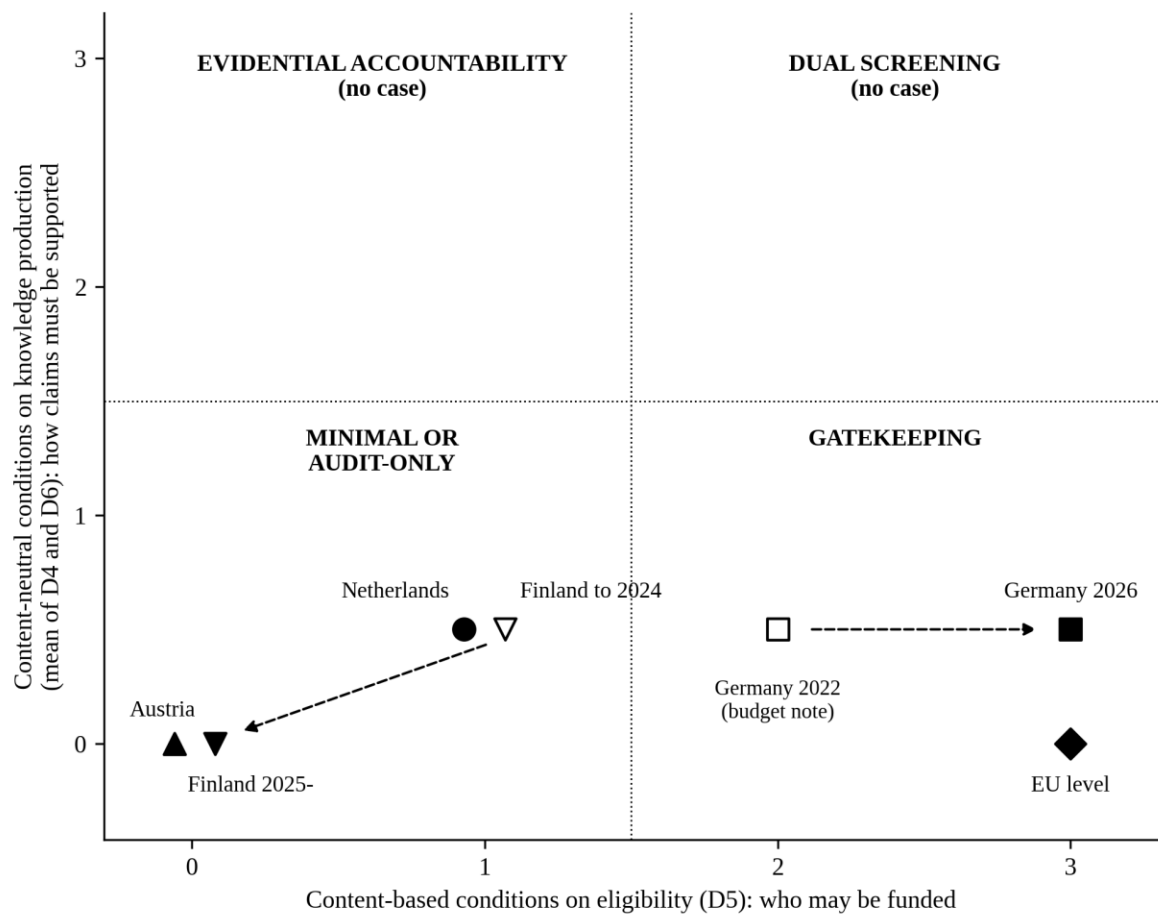


Figure 2. Governing the door versus governing the room: content-based conditions on eligibility (D5) against content-neutral conditions on knowledge production (mean of D4 and D6)

Note: Filled markers show the rules in force on 1 September 2026; open markers show earlier positions. Arrows indicate the direction of change. Source: Author's coding (Table 3).

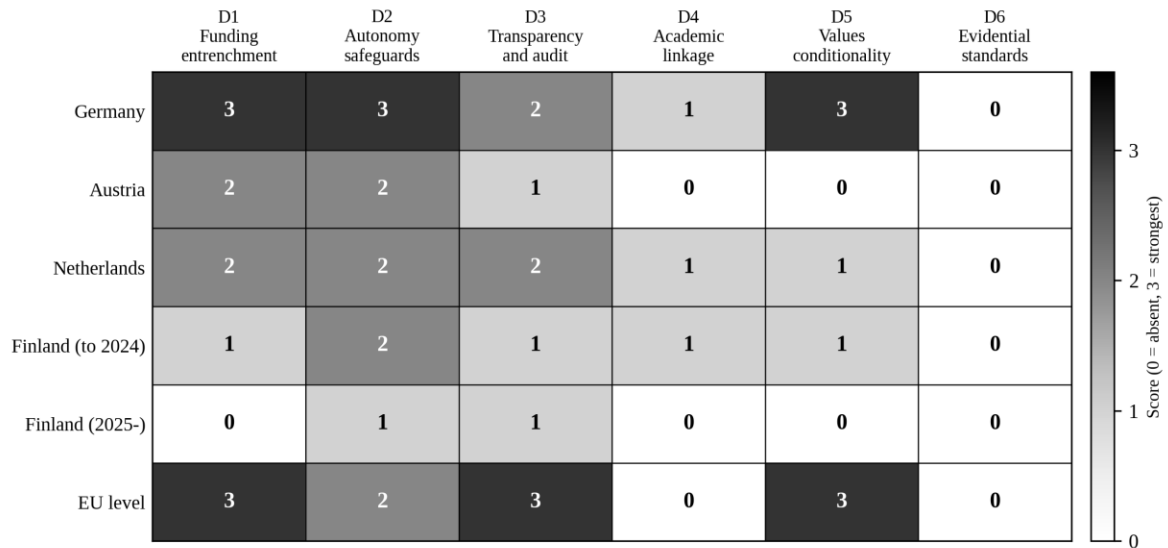


Figure 3. Coded profiles of the five regimes on six dimensions (0–3)

Note: Darker cells indicate higher scores. Finland is shown before and after the withdrawal of its grant. Source: Author's coding (Table 3).

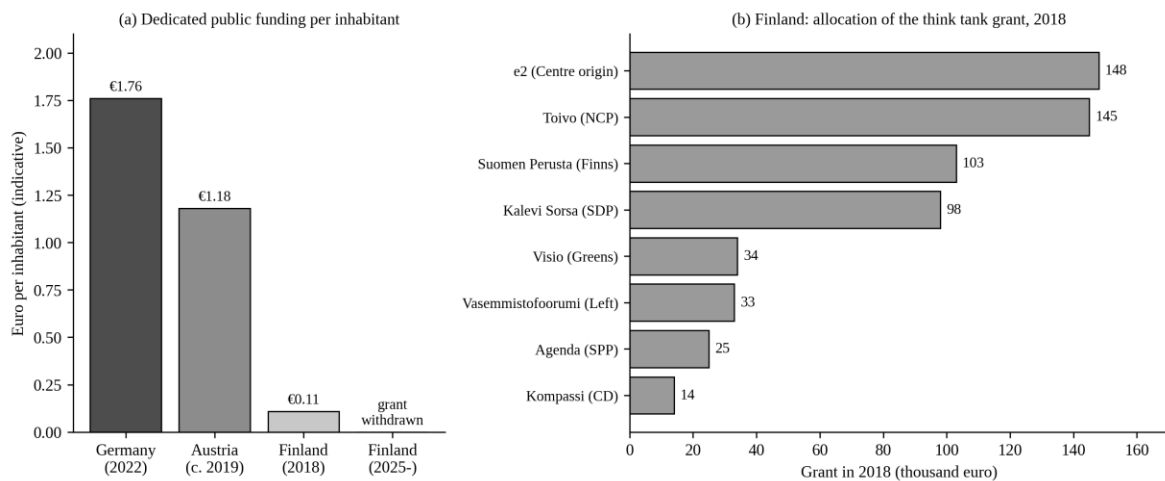


Figure 4. Scale of public funding for party think tanks: (a) core public funding per inhabitant; (b) allocation of the Finnish think tank grant, 2018

Note: Per-inhabitant values are computed from about €148 million for 84.1 million inhabitants (Germany, 2022), €10.5 million for 8.9 million (Austria, c. 2019) and €0.6 million for 5.5 million (Finland, 2018). Project funds are excluded. The Dutch earmark is paid per party and per seat and is not shown. Values are indicative orders of magnitude. Sources: LTO (2022); Rechnungshof Österreich (2019b); Lounasmeri (2020); Kalevi Sorsa Foundation (2024).

Five patterns stand out. First, regulation follows money and loyalty, not knowledge. The dimensions on which regimes score highly are funding entrenchment, transparency and audit, and values conditionality. Evidential standards score zero in every case. No regime requires funded organisations to source their key claims, disclose their methods, identify authors and funders at the level of individual publications, or engage with counter-evidence.

Second, the regimes handle their radical flanks in four different ways. Germany and the EU screen eligibility against democratic values. Austria includes all parliamentary parties and relies on audit. The Netherlands excludes only through neutral organisational rules and criminal convictions, and says so on principle. Finland first reviewed content ad hoc and then withdrew the funding altogether. Only the first route requires the state to judge political character, and it is the route that has drawn the most litigation.

Third, autonomy devices exist but protect a different good. The German distance doctrine and the Dutch earmark shield the organisation from its party. They do not give readers any means of checking the organisation's claims. An institute can be perfectly independent of its party and still publish poorly sourced work.

Fourth, reform between 2023 and 2026 has been uneven. Germany and the EU moved further on values conditionality, and the EU also on transparency. Finland moved down on funding and, as a consequence, on autonomy. The Netherlands has a reform pending that concentrates on supervision and transparency. Austria has stayed where it was despite three rounds of audit criticism. None of the five moved on evidential standards (Figure 2).

Fifth, where evidential standards appear at all, they are voluntary: a think tank director's commitment to national research-ethics guidelines in Finland, academic councils at some European foundations, scholarship networks in Germany. They depend on the goodwill of each organisation, which means they are weakest where they would be most needed.

6. Discussion

6.1 Why funders govern the door rather than the room

The comparison suggests a plain explanation for the missing governance of evidence. Funders regulate what they can observe and defend. Financial compliance is observable and legally uncontroversial. Political eligibility is controversial, but it has a doctrinal home in militant democracy and can be decided once per organisation and legislative term. Evidential quality is neither cheap to observe nor easy to defend, because any review of publications looks at first sight like content control. Faced with this choice, funders have stayed out of the room.

Staying out has costs. Values tests act only at the margin: in Germany, one foundation out of seven is in question, and the other six face no scrutiny of their evidence at all. Such tests are also legally fragile. The German test replaces the constitutional threshold of active hostility to the democratic order with a demand for active support, and it leans heavily on intelligence classifications (Neelen, 2025a); several years of litigation may pass before its fate is settled. Meanwhile, the question that matters most for the quality of public debate, whether partisan claims are well supported, is put to nobody. Proposition P3 expresses the

expectation that follows: gatekeeping changes the composition of the funded population but not the evidential practice of those inside it.

Content-based gatekeeping and content-neutral evidential standards are not two points on a single scale. The first asks which conclusions an organisation may hold. The second asks how it must support whatever conclusions it holds. A regime can use either, both or neither, as Table 4 sets out. What the five cases show is that European funders have invested in the first and ignored the second, even though the second is the one that fits the constitutional commitment to equal treatment of parties. The Dutch government's refusal to judge the ideology of parties and the German litigation over the AfD-affiliated foundation point to the same lesson from opposite directions: rules that are to survive in a pluralist order must be neutral as to content. Evidential accountability meets that condition by construction.

Table 4. Governing the door and governing the room

Feature	Values conditionality (the door)	Evidential accountability (the room)
Question asked	Is this organisation a trustworthy participant in democratic competition?	Can a reader trace and contest the grounds of this publication's claims?
Object assessed	The organisation, its party and the persons around it	Individual publications, drawn as a sample
Neutrality as to content	Low: requires a judgement of political character	High: conclusions are not assessed
Coverage	Organisations at the margin (in Germany, one of seven)	Every funded organisation
Timing	Once per organisation and legislative term	Recurring, for example an annual sample
Information used	Intelligence classifications, conduct of members, past activities	The texts themselves, coded without identifiers
Legal exposure	High: challenges based on equal opportunities and legal precision	Low: comparable to existing grant conditions
Examples in the five regimes	StiftFinG test of active commitment; Art. 2 TEU declarations under Regulation 2025/2445	None; only voluntary commitments to research ethics

Source: Author.

6.2 Measuring evidential quality: the Evidence Quality Index

To make evidential accountability workable, this article proposes an Evidence Quality Index (EQI) for policy publications (Table 5). It has four components, each scored on indicators that a trained coder can apply to a text without knowing which organisation produced it. The unit is the individual publication, and organisational scores are averages over a sample. The index deliberately avoids any judgement of whether conclusions are true, balanced or desirable. A radical-right report on migration and a green report on climate would be scored with the same instrument, and either could score high or low.

Table 5. The Evidence Quality Index (EQI)

Component	Indicators	Points	Not assessed
C1 Sourcing of key claims	Share of key empirical claims traceable to a named source; accessibility of those sources; clear separation of data from opinion	0–25	Whether the sources favour a particular conclusion
C2 Methodological disclosure	Statement of method and data; description of sample, period and limits; calculations that can be reproduced for quantitative claims	0–25	Which method was chosen, provided it is disclosed
C3 Authorship and funding transparency	Named authors and affiliations; funding source of the publication; declared review procedure (internal or external)	0–25	Who the authors or funders are
C4 Engagement with counter-evidence	Acknowledgement of contrary findings or positions; response to the strongest objection; stated uncertainty	0–25	Whether the counter-evidence is judged convincing

Note: The index ranges from 0 to 100. An organisation's score is the mean over a random sample of its publications. Texts are coded with organisational identifiers removed, and a double-coded subsample is used to report Krippendorff's alpha for each component. Source: Author.

Three design choices protect the index from misuse. Coding is done on texts stripped of organisational identifiers, which limits the risk that coders reward familiar ideologies. Inter-coder reliability is reported for every component (Krippendorff, 2018). And the indicators are few and observable, to resist the drift towards box-ticking that Power (1997) warned against. An organisation should not be able to raise its score by adding footnotes that do not support its argument, which is why the sourcing component asks whether the key claims can

be traced, not whether every sentence carries a reference. The EQI is the instrument through which P1 and P2 can be tested on a corpus of migration and climate publications. Building and coding that corpus is the next stage of the research programme; the present article supplies the regime data against which output quality can later be compared.

6.3 A three-tier model of evidential accountability

Figure 5 and Table 6 translate the concept into a design that funders could adopt within their existing supervisory structures. The model has three tiers, which differ in how strongly they bind.

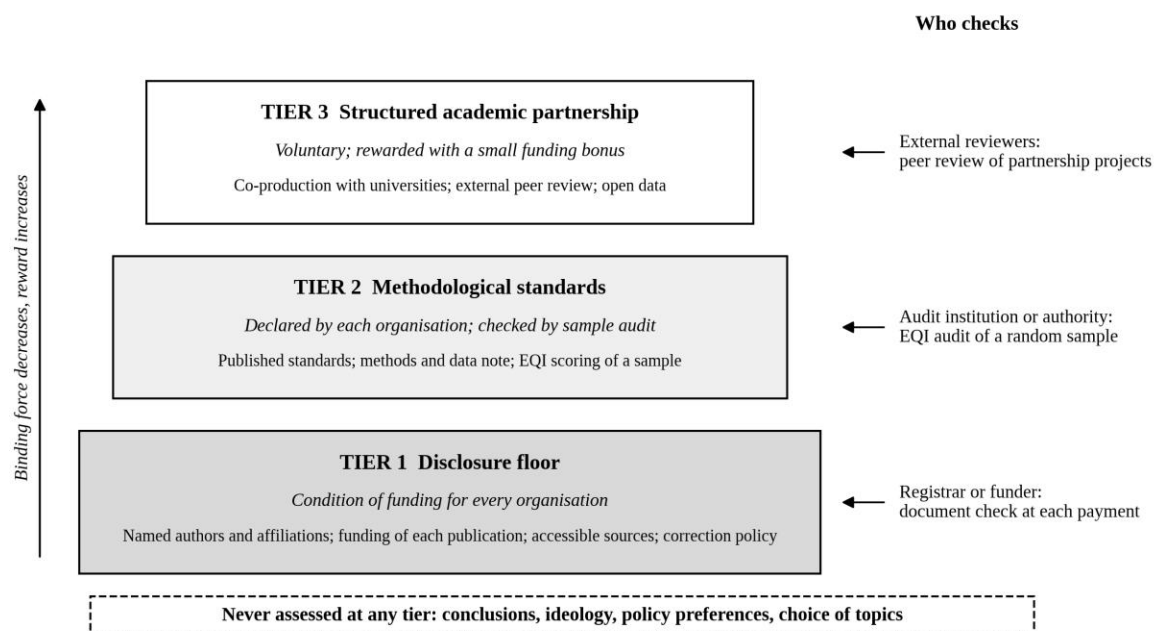


Figure 5. A three-tier model of evidential accountability for publicly funded party think tanks

Source: Author.

Table 6. A three-tier model of evidential accountability

Tier	Requirements	Binding force	Who checks	What remains free
1. Disclosure floor	Named authors and affiliations; funding statement for each publication; principal sources accessible; published correction policy	Condition of funding for all organisations	Existing supervisor, by desk check	Topics, arguments and conclusions
2. Methodological standards	Published statement of research standards; note on methods and data in empirical publications; annual random sample coded with the EQI; aggregate scores published	Condition of funding, scaled to budget size	Existing supervisor with independent coders (e.g. Court of Audit, EU Authority, proposed Dutch authority)	Choice of methods and sources; ideological orientation
3. Structured academic partnership	Co-production with universities; external peer review; open data	Voluntary, rewarded through a small reserved share of the budget	Funder, with academic reviewers	Whether to take part; the research agenda

Source: Author.

The first tier is a disclosure floor, a condition of funding for every organisation. Each publication names its authors and their affiliations, states how the work was funded (including any earmarked project money), makes its principal sources accessible and follows a published correction policy. These duties are cheap, easy to verify and entirely neutral as to content. They extend to the level of individual publications the donor transparency that the EU and the Netherlands already require of organisations.

The second tier sets methodological standards. Each organisation publishes a short statement of its research standards, and each empirical publication carries a note on methods and data. Compliance is checked by the existing supervisor through audits of a random sample of publications, coded with the EQI and published as aggregate scores. The Austrian Court of Audit, the EU Authority, the German interior ministry and the Dutch authority envisaged in the new bill already oversee these organisations; adding a sample-based check of publications would change the object of their attention more than their workload.

The third tier, structured academic partnership, is encouraged rather than required. Funders could reserve a small share of the budget, a few per cent, for projects co-produced with universities, reviewed by external peers or accompanied by open data. The Finnish record suggests why such incentives matter: the one clear commitment to academic standards in it came from an organisation that had chosen to align itself with university research ethics. A partnership tier turns that private virtue into a rewarded choice.

The model has limits. It cannot stop an organisation from choosing weak arguments; it can only make weak grounding visible. It can be gamed, as any set of indicators can, and it would need periodic revision. It also adds some administrative burden, which small organisations such as the Finnish think tanks would feel more than the German foundations do; scaling the duties to budget size would deal with that.

6.4 Managerial and policy implications

For the directors of party think tanks, the findings suggest that evidential standards are a reputational asset rather than a constraint. Rich (2004) found that ideological think tanks trade credibility for visibility. An organisation that can show high EQI scores is in a position to claim both. For funders, the implication is to rebalance oversight away from pure financial compliance and one-off eligibility decisions towards a light, recurring check of what the money buys. For parliaments, the findings concern the interface between partisan and non-partisan knowledge. Parliamentary research services, which are expected to serve all members equally, already work under norms of sourcing and transparency, and work on performance management in legislative policy-research systems links their effectiveness to explicit standards and evaluation (Mahdavian Sadr et al., 2025). The same principles can be extended to the partisan layer without asking it to give up its partisanship.

The argument also travels beyond Europe. In many political systems parties lack institutionalised knowledge organisations, and parliamentary research centres, ministries and university institutes carry most of the burden of policy analysis. Where party-based or faction-based think tanks do emerge, often with public or quasi-public money, funders face the same choice between governing the door and governing the room. Starting with content-neutral evidential standards is safer for pluralism and easier to defend than starting with tests of political character.

7. Conclusion

European democracies pay for partisan knowledge in very different ways. Germany pays generously by statute and now screens eligibility against democratic commitment. Austria pays modestly by statute, funds the academies of all parliamentary parties and relies on audits that have repeatedly found its rules wanting. The Netherlands protects its parties' scientific institutes with an earmark and, as a matter of principle, refuses to judge the ideology of the parties it funds. Finland paid little, reviewed content once when a publication caused offence, and then withdrew the grant. The EU pays almost everything its foundations spend and has built the most demanding regime of transparency and values compliance. Across these

differences one feature is constant: no regime asks how the funded organisations support the empirical claims they bring into public debate.

This gap is not accidental. Funders govern what they can observe and defend, and the quality of evidence seemed to lie too close to content control. The concept of evidential accountability shows that it need not. Standards of sourcing, method disclosure, authorship and funding transparency, and engagement with counter-evidence can be applied to any organisation without judging its conclusions, and they fit the equal treatment of parties better than the value tests now in use. The Evidence Quality Index and the three-tier model proposed here offer a practical route. Partisan knowledge does not need to become less partisan in order to become more reliable. It needs rules that govern the room as carefully as the door.

8. Research Suggestions

Four suggestions follow for policymakers. First, funders in all five regimes could add a disclosure floor at the level of publications (authors, funding, sources, corrections) as a condition of funding; this can be done within existing audit arrangements. Second, the recast EU regulation foresees a reassessment of the financing of European political foundations, and that review is the natural occasion to introduce sample-based evidential audits at EU level. Third, the Dutch bill still under consideration could give the new authority a mandate for methodological standards alongside financial supervision, in keeping with the scientific character written into the legal definition of the institutes. Fourth, Finland could restore a small, rule-based grant tied to evidential standards rather than to political review, which would return some autonomy to the think tanks without reviving ad hoc content control.

For researchers, the next step is to build the Evidence Quality Corpus: policy publications on migration and climate issued by around twenty organisations across the ideological range, scored with the EQI and linked to the regime data reported here. This would allow P1 and P2 to be tested, and it would show whether P3 holds once the German examination has been concluded. Elite interviews with directors, researchers and party staff could explain how organisations respond to funding rules in practice. Extending the comparison to Belgium, Sweden and to Central and Southern Europe would show whether the patterns hold in regimes with weaker or no dedicated funding. Finally, recording the gender and background of authors and cited experts would make it possible to ask whether the “reason” side of party politics is less diverse than the parties’ elected ranks.

9. Limitations

The study has limits that readers should keep in mind. It compares legal regimes, not organisational behaviour, and the scores summarise documented provisions rather than observed practice. The coding was carried out by one researcher; each code is linked to its source so that it can be checked, but no reliability statistic is reported. Some developments were still open when the regimes were coded, notably the German examination of the AfD-affiliated foundation and the Dutch Political Parties Bill, and their outcomes may change individual scores. The Finnish post-2025 code rests on the government’s budget proposal

and on the think tanks' own later descriptions of their funding. The funding figures come from different years and exclude project funds, so Figure 4 indicates orders of magnitude only. Finally, the propositions on evidential quality are derived from the framework and remain to be tested on output data.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Data Availability

The study relies entirely on publicly available documents. The sources used for coding are listed in Appendix A, and the coding rules and scores are reported in Tables 2 and 3.

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- Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations. *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 317, 4 November 2014, 1–27.
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- *Stiftungsfinanzierungsgesetz* (StiftFinG) [Foundation Financing Act] of 22 February 2024 (Germany).
- *Wet financiering politieke partijen* (Wfpp) [Political Parties Financing Act], in force since 1 May 2013 (the Netherlands).

Appendix A. Documentary Sources

The table below lists the principal sources on which the case narratives and the codes in Table 3 rest. Where a statute was read through official guidance or audit reports, both are listed.

Table A1. Principal sources by case

Case	Legal and official sources	Parliamentary, audit and press sources	Secondary literature
Germany	BVerfG (1986), 2 BvE 5/83; BVerfG (2023), 2 BvE 3/19; Stiftungs-finanzierungs-gesetz (2024)	Deutscher Bundestag (2026a, 2026b); LTO (2022)	Neelen (2025a, 2025b); Pinto-Duschinsky (1991); Pautz (2012)
Austria	Publizistik-förderungsgesetz 1984; Bundeskanzleramt (2026)	Rechnungshof Österreich (2014, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2025)	Nassmacher (2009)
Netherlands	Wet financiering politieke partijen; Staatsblad (1999); Staatscourant (2026)	Tweede Kamer (2011, 2025)	Pattyn et al. (2014); Timmermans et al. (2015); Vande Walle and de Lange (2025)
Finland	Ajatuspaja Toivo (2026); Kalevi Sorsa Foundation (2024)	Eduskunta (2025); Yle (2019); Verkkouutiset (2020, 2024); Ajatuspaja Visio (2024)	Lounasmeri (2016, 2020)
EU level	Regulation 1141/2014; Regulation 2025/2445; APPF (2026a, 2026b)	Council of the European Union (2025, n.d.); European Parliament (2025); Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies (2026)	Gagatek and Van Hecke (2014)

Note: Full references are given in the reference list and in the list of legal instruments.

چکیده

هدف: احزاب سیاسی در بسیاری از دموکراسی‌های اروپایی اندیشکده‌هایی را با بودجه عمومی اداره می‌کنند، اما درباره اینکه نهادهای تامین‌کننده مالی چگونه بر کیفیت دانش تولیدشده در این سازمان‌ها نظارت می‌کنند، شناخت اندکی وجود دارد. این مقاله رژیم‌های تامین مالی و تنظیم‌گری اندیشکده‌های حزبی را در آلمان، اتریش، هلند، فنلاند و سطح اتحادیه اروپا مقایسه می‌کند و می‌پرسد کدام قواعد می‌توانند دانش حزبی را قابل‌اتکاتر کنند، بی‌آنکه از حزبی بودن آن بکاهند.

روش: پژوهش با طرح تطبیقی کیفی و بر پایه مقایسه ساختاریافته و متمرکز انجام شده است. داده‌ها از تحلیل اسنادی قوانین، آرای دادگاه‌ها، اسناد بودجه، گزارش‌های نهادهای عالی حسابرسی و اسناد پارلمانی به دست آمده‌اند. هر رژیم بر اساس وضعیت آن در اول سپتامبر ۲۰۲۶ در شش بعد ترتیبی کدگذاری شده است: تثبیت تامین مالی، استقلال سازمانی، شفافیت و حسابرسی، پیوند دانشگاهی، مشروط‌سازی ارزشی و استانداردهای شواهد.

یافته‌ها: سرانه تامین مالی عمومی از حدود ۰.۱ یورو در فنلاند، پیش از حذف کمک‌هزینه، تا حدود ۱.۸ یورو در آلمان متغیر است. این رژیم‌ها با جناح‌های رادیکال خود به چهار شیوه روبه‌رو می‌شوند: غربالگری قانونی در آلمان و اتحادیه اروپا، شمول همگانی همراه با حسابرسی مالی در اتریش، قواعد سازمانی بی‌طرف در هلند، و بررسی موردی و سپس قطع کمک در فنلاند. اصلاحات اخیر شفافیت و آزمون‌های ارزشی را سخت‌گیرانه‌تر کرده‌اند، اما هیچ‌یک از این رژیم‌ها معیاری برای اینکه سازمان‌های دریافت‌کننده بودجه چگونه از ادعاهای تجربی خود پشتیبانی کنند، تعیین نکرده است.

نتیجه‌گیری: نهادهای تامین‌کننده مالی بر ورود به میدان نظارت می‌کنند، نه بر شیوه تولید دانش. مقاله مفهوم «پاسخ‌گویی شواهدی» را پرورش می‌دهد، «شاخص کیفیت شواهد» را پیشنهاد می‌کند و الگویی سه‌سطحی شامل الزام افشا، استانداردهای روش‌شناختی و همکاری ساختاریافته با دانشگاه ارائه می‌دهد که نسبت به محتوای دیدگاه‌ها بی‌طرف می‌ماند.

کلیدواژه‌ها: اندیشکده‌های حزبی؛ پاسخ‌گویی شواهدی؛ نظام‌های مشاوره سیاستی؛ تنظیم‌گری تامین مالی احزاب؛ سیاست‌گذاری عمومی تطبیقی؛ فنلاند