

Formal criteria for contributions to the Think Tank on IFAIR.eu

These formal criteria are valid as of 1st November 2019, but do not apply retroactively.

All contributions have to be assigned to one of IFAIR's **regional divisions** and conform to one of the following **categories**:

1

Analysis

- **Tone:** analytical, critical
- **Length:** 1500 words **max.**
- **Examples:**
 - Short versions of term papers
 - Analyses of current issues in International Relations
 - Work linking research and practice
- **Images:**
 - Please provide a portrait picture of yourself
 - Please also provide a photo accompanying the article (public domain source or picture copyrighted by the author that can become public domain), © photographer/picture database (if applicable)
- **Structure:**
 - Up to two levels of structure
 - Use „1., 2., ...“ (bold) for subdivisions on the first and „a), b), ...“ (italics) for subdivisions on the second level
- **Sources** (works and data cited in or inspiring the contribution):
 - In the text: (Last name Year: Page)
 - Bibliography: Last name, first name Year: Title, in: Last name, First name (ed.), Book title, Location: Publisher (or in: Journal title (Volume/Number)), pages x-y.

2

Short Article

- **Tone:** descriptive, commentarial
- **Length:** 500 words **max.**
- **Examples:**
 - Statements on current topics
 - Policy advice
 - Book or video reviews
 - Field reports
 - Interviews
 - Recommendations about jobs or events
- **Images:**
 - Please provide a portrait picture of yourself
 - Please provide a photo accompanying the article (public domain source or picture copyrighted by the author that can become public domain), © photographer/picture database (if applicable)
- **Structure:**
 - Up to one level of structure
 - Use „1., 2., ...“ (bold) for subdivisions
- **Sources:** no references are required

In case of questions, please contact Johanna Hartz-Goiteom (chief editor) at johanna.hartzgoiteom@ifair.eu

10 Tips for writing an IFAIR article

1 Think about the purpose of your text!

Why is your idea important? What do you want to achieve with your article? Do you want to analyze a problem, develop solutions or raise awareness on an issue?

2 Connect it to politics and real-world issues!

Make sure your article tackles topics that are – in a broad sense – related to international relations, global affairs or politics.

3 Narrow your topic!

Your analysis gains in clarity if the scope of your article is focused. For instance, instead of writing about global inequality, maybe focus on economic inequalities within one specific region.

4 Have a clear structure!

You probably already know it: Have an introduction, main body and conclusion. State the issue in your introduction, develop your argument or analysis in the main body and finish with a concrete message (maybe even recommendations).

5 Do not just shorten your term paper but adapt it to our format!

A think tank article substantially differs from an academic term paper. The aim is NOT to contribute to a highly specialized academic discourse or test a theory but to deal with a real-world issue in a pragmatic and easily digestible way.

6 Avoid making it too theory-oriented!

While theories are surely important in an academic context, you do not need to have a guiding theory to make your point. Of course, if it makes sense, use one. Generally, however, focusing on your analysis is sufficient – and more interesting.

7 Do not write to specialists/scholars but to a broad audience!

Keep in mind that the people who will read your article might not have heard about your topic before. You should keep it simple and try to avoid abbreviations so that every reader can understand your article.

8 Use common English!

Avoid overly complicated terms and expressions and make your text as easily understandable as possible.

9 Keep your sentences short and simple!

One sentence should not contain more than one idea. Try to avoid long sentences and overly complex structures.

10 Do not hesitate to state recommendations (at the end)!

Policy-oriented papers usually contain concrete recommendations to solve problems. Feel free to state your own. However, this is not a must!

More information
& resources

<https://infusion.media/blog/george-orwells-six-rules-for-writing/> / <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/policy-briefs/>
/ https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/hks-communications-program/files/lb_how_to_write_pol_mem_9_08_17.pdf