

About the GIC

The Global Ideas Center (GIC) is a non-profit, independent and virtual think tank. It operates a global network of reform-oriented practitioners, academics and civil society actors. Our goal is to apply their insights to critical issues of national and international concern in a solutions- and reform-oriented manner.

The Global Ideas Center often uses cross-border comparisons to model its analyses. The principal purpose is (1) to contribute to improving/optimizing relations between countries and (2) to highlight specific lessons from individual countries that others might learn from and attempt to implement domestically.

The Global Ideas Center's mission thus is to catalyze new solutions across countries and societies through "The Power of Comparisons." The GIC tackles powerful interests and challenges conventional wisdom to drive an open, honest, educated and results-oriented debate.

We look forward to you joining us on this journey.

1. Our key focus areas

Democratic openness and accountability

- Democracy is increasingly in peril. It is under pressure not only from authoritarians, but also from skeptical blocs within democratic electorates. What perhaps matters most is strengthening the transparency and accountability of our political institutions.

Equitable and sustainable economic development

- Is globalization truly dead, as some claim? And how can economic growth be used to benefit populations? The Global South is probably keener to know the answers than the Global North. Either way, an equitable and environmentally sustainable model for global economic development has yet to be found.

Values-based global cooperation

- In the face of growing global systemic threats and geoeconomic strife, it is both more important and harder than ever for nations to work together to address common challenges, let alone reaffirm common values — even inside the West, values-based cooperation is fraying. Is there a way forward for global cooperation?

2. Our theory of change

We live in an age during which individuals as much as nations are grappling with decreasing levels of certainty and an increasing number of challenges.

But even though today's world is more globally connected and complex than ever, most nations still limit their national politics to historically familiar patterns. As a result, most nations are constrained by the political economy of their home country and have limited their ability to affect or react to far-flung processes that affect them intimately.

That is not the only obstacle to implementing smart solutions that are equitable, innovative and productive.

Populists have risen to political prominence around the world by offering false solutions and peddling mantra-like shortcuts to prosperity and success. Some seek salvation in the arms of the nation-state or the narrower confines of group identity. Others point to abstract concepts like neoliberalism or globalization as scapegoats for problems that exist.

In fact, their approaches often tend to obscure, rather than help solve, the underlying real-world issues. Simply put, we live in a world that is shaped by so much complexity that the old faultlines of political ideology — the left and the right — are no longer adequate or useful.

3. Cross-border learning

We are aware of the challenges that go along with making a case for cross-border comparisons. However, we firmly believe this approach provides a creative stimulus.

After all, many societies are coping with similar challenges. Some may already have found promising solutions to problems others have yet to solve.

A willingness to consider solutions that have worked elsewhere has always been a key part of human progress, long before the nation-state emerged. In modern times, it is useful to almost every sector — from democracy, economic growth and the environment to health and housing, food and educational systems, as well as to social security.

The GIC believes that the key to solving modern problems is to think much more, not less, about the connections between the local, regional, national and global dimensions of our lives. In our view, this holds true for nations, societies and companies as much as for individuals and families. All of us can find inspiration beyond our own borders.

A readiness for change is the first step. What then matters most is a focus on what works—effectiveness and implementation are the core values. Regardless of the nature of the challenge, the task ahead is to develop flexible, responsive and common-sense solutions.