



GROUP FOR LEGAL
AND POLITICAL
STUDIES

A brief overview

Group for Legal and
Political Studies

legalpoliticalstudies.org

Group for Legal and Political Studies

is an independent, non-partisan and non-profit public policy organization based in Prishtina, Kosovo.

Our mission is to conduct credible policy research in the fields of politics, law and economics and to push forward policy solutions that address the failures and/or tackle the problems in the said policy fields.

Mission & profile

Through advocating the policy solutions deriving from our policy research, we aim to support four **fundamental policy developments**:

to strengthen the rule-of-law capacity and performance via informed policy solutions and practical advocating strategies;

- ♦ to support the democratization of the polity with regard to institutional and substantive policy reform;
- ♦ to enhance the economic growth and development by promoting market strategies that increase the rate of growth and stability, and
- ♦ to help improve regional cooperation and Kosovo's presence at the international level.

We are dedicated to provide high-quality public policy research through prominent

- ♦ scholars drawn from international and European centres of excellence in research, while aiming to be globally competitive for our quality research and impact in the fields of political science, law and economics.

We pursue our mission:

by **producing public policy analysis** addressing specific challenges that Kosovo faces within the context of the said policy fields, and offering policy solutions and ways to improve the efficiency, integrity, objectivity and credibility of the polity;

by **engaging with the governmental, civic, media and community-based stakeholders** to advocate that certain policy challenges be tackled with more progressive, informed and effective policy responses;

by **offering innovative policy responses to institutions and the public** on how to tackle certain challenges in the long-term, and engaging with them to channel the voice for better reform and development strategies;

by **stimulating the public, the civic groups and the communities** with ways to increase their role in the decision-making and agenda-setting, therein promoting a vibrant civil society and public opinion formation?;

by **organizing opened, informed, level-headed and policy-responsive public debates**, wherein governmental and non-governmental stakeholders push forward open-minded policy choices and solutions.

Impact through world-class research!

Institutional Principles

The Group for Legal and Political Studies is committed to advancing the policy and decision-making processes in Kosovo through public policy research, analysis, and professional advice and advocacy.

The following principles are essential to our mission.

Non-partisanship and no political agenda

Group for Legal and Political Studies is an organization free from any political party affiliation, bias, or designation. Its mission is not based on or influenced by any political party, any political organization, forum, or other institutions related to political parties. Its activities do not aim to support the interests and/or policies of any political party or ideological organization. In addition, the Group refuses to pursue and/or support policies or issues that aim to advance the agenda of any political party or political organization.

Conflict of Interest

Group for Legal and Political Studies is committed to avoid any conflict of interest. Its members' duties are to act in the benefit of the public interest and to respect our organisational values and principles constantly. Group members are therefore obliged to act for, and in the benefit of, the public other than using their position within the organization for personal benefit.

Non-profit status

Group for Legal and Political Studies is a non-profit (pro bono publico) organization. Group's mission is to serve as a framework and outlet for civil participation in the policy and decision-making process. It consists of people who are assembled and work toward common/public aims, with the purpose of serving to the benefit of public and society at-large. Moreover, it is not in the Group for Legal and Political Studies aim or mission to generate, accumulate and/or distribute personal profits for its members, board or individuals.

Transparency and openness

Group for Legal and Political Studies' work is based on the principle of transparency and openness. Group is prepared to disclose, avail, and allow access to relevant information about the functioning of its bodies, adopted decisions, finances and activities. It is within its mission to provide reasons for its decisions and action, and to make available information about institutional changes and other related changes. Group for Legal and Political Studies finances are constantly audited by external, credible auditors, and their reports are made available for the public regularly.

Quality, objectivity, fairness, integrity and equality

Group for Legal and Political Studies is committed to the principles of quality, objectivity, fairness, integrity and equal opportunity. Our work is based on the quality and objectivity as inherent values and distinguished characteristics of GLPS. In addition, the Group is devoted to the respect for the principles of integrity and fairness. The Group is an equal opportunity organization; therefore, any discrimination on whatever basis is against our mission and values.

Respect for the law

Group for Legal and Political Studies is committed to respect the law and other regulatory obligations. Its members have therefore the obligation to adhere to the law and other rules of conduct. It is moreover the Group's mission to deliver policies and further develop its concepts within the principles of the rule of law, justice and equality.

Reputation

The Group staff and members have the duty and the responsibility to maintain, protect and develop the inherent values and principles of the organization, and Group's reputation as a distinguished source of high quality, objective, and non-partisan public policy research and analysis.

Policy Areas

Research is the origin to all Group for Legal and Political Studies activities. Our public policy research is both independent and rigorous, as it strives to affect the agenda setting and to shape the policy choices with a more progressive, contemporary and innovative tone.

We focus in four, broadly conceived, policy areas:

democratization and democratic institution-building

as a concept that requires that there be a political system that allows the replacement of the government via fair, free and equal elections, wherein citizens are an active part of the agenda setting and policy making process, in addition that the government protects the human rights (including the ethnic minority rights) and provides for an equal rule of law in the polity. Besides, citizens have equal access to public services and administration wherefrom interest groups remain equally represented in the agenda setting process, adding that the governance is decentralized on basis of the principle of subsidiarity with the local governments playing a key role in community development. In addition, the political scene does not allow for monopolistic leanings, and that a qualitative party pluralism forms part of not only the political scene but also the parties themselves. Whereas, the mechanisms in place to fight the unaccountability and abuse of power are stable and provide for efficient reaction, with a special role attached to free and independent media and civic actors.

rule-of-law

as a concept that requires that governmental agents are accountable under the law, whereas laws are equal, clear, stable, efficiently implemented, fair, publicized and protect fundamental rights, most importantly the security of persons and property, in addition that the process of enactment of laws is freely accessible, fair and common-good oriented. Besides, the administration of justice is legally certain and is provided by competent, independent (both subjectively and objectively), professional, efficient and morally-just mechanisms, equipped with sufficient resources whereby mirroring the community confidence in justice, whereas persons have efficient and free access to the justice system.

economic growth and development

as a concept that requires that there be an established and efficient market mechanism that fights monopolies and generates stable incomes and provides for a just distribution of the wealth under an efficient competition policy, wherein a regionally competitive business environment offers for the swift flow of foreign capital and investments. Besides, the macroeconomic policy favours the business growth and offers space for a legally certain business environment and foreign direct investments, while also stimulating the improvement of the standard of life through supporting competitive productivity and services. In addition, the government orients the public investments in underdeveloped sectors, with the aim of increasing the development of the economy in each policy sector.

improved regional cooperation and foreign policy

as a concept which requires that the polity choose efficient and competitive strategies to safeguard its interest and to reach its goals at the international stage, via promoting good neighbourhood relations, increased presence at the international stage and promotion of peace, security and tolerance in bilateral and multilateral communications with states, international organizations and non-state actors. Besides, the government chooses foreign policy choices to maximize the benefits from regional and international cooperation whereby promoting a positive image of the state in international relations, in light of the globalization trends and perspectives.

A wide range of policy reports, policy analysis, policy notes and working papers are published each year on these inclusive fields of policy. In addition, Group for Legal and Political Studies regularly hosts high-level speakers in both public discussion conferences and closed-for-public saloons to discuss the developments and/or policy implication and progress in the abovementioned policy areas.

Research Standards

We are committed to ***well-organized and understandable research***. We ensure that our research has a clear and well-formulated research question, addressing a tangible policy problem in as much complete as possible, and that it poses a significant, important policy question that can be investigated empirically and that contributes to the policy improvement. The research problem thus should be very readable and address thoroughly the overall implications originating therein. Our research is also understandable to the audience, and clear enough to address its conclusions and recommendations in an effective and sustainable manner.

We are committed to ensure that the approach we select to tackle the research problem is both ***appropriate and reaches the targeted purpose*** (apply methods that best address the research questions of interest). For the research product to be credible, there should be logic and suitability between the approach followed and the policy problems being addressed. Not only a match between the methods and questions posed is significantly important, but also the selection of subjects, the measurement of outcomes, and the protection against systematic bias, nonsystematic bias, and inferential error must be constantly observed. Therefore, we ensure that our research addresses the policy problems in a competent manner whereby concluding and offering recommendations that are reasonably expected to repair/impact the causes casing the policy problem. To reach this level of research credibility, we apply a diverse range of evidence-based research methods from those with a pure quantitative nature to those with a pure qualitative nature. Overall, the research design, methodology, and practices are satisfactorily transparent and ensure an independent, balanced, and objective approach to the research.

We are committed to demonstrate that ***our research consults and goes through related and alternative policy studies and choices***. Our policy products aim at examining policy issues based on alternative choices and studies and demonstrating consulting of related research, and if appropriate, building upon them. We aim to prove that our policy research is not isolated from the rest of policy knowledge on related issues, and that it is based on obvious chains of inferential analysis supported and justified by a complete coverage of the relevant literature and policy documents.

We ensure that ***our research is based on credible information and data***. Our policy products must therefore build upon credible and as much comprehensive as possible data, thereby examining the issue on basis of policy evidence. We assure that the data and information which our research is based upon is properly screened, correct, clearly specified, easily verifiable, while also expressing the quality of data and information provided. We are committed to ensuring that our policy research raised assumptions in as much strict as possible manner. To ensure that our policy products remain credible sources for stakeholders, we assure that speculation and/or opinionating arguments are used only in minor occasions and in strict contexts.

Research Standards (cont.)

We are committed to ensure that ***our research produces novel policy knowledge on central policy issues***. It is in our organizational strategy to approach policy problems with novelty and originality, and to strictly omit to conduct activities that duplicate or overlap with similar findings/conclusions in the past. Ensuring that our policy research advances policy knowledge and provides novel policy solutions, we remain a credible partner to the stakeholders as to the innovative solutions that our policy research pushes forward.

We are committed to ***engage with real-world and practically relevant policy problems***, with the aim of making a tangible/doable/practical contribution to the improvement of the state-of-affairs in a certain policy issue. We ensure that our policy research is not only remarkable, but most importantly, that the policy stakeholders find it useful and relevant with the problems evidenced in practice. The entire final aim of our policy research is to affect the improvement of a certain policy issue, thus we make the research inasmuch attractive as possible for the stakeholders to engage with it and improve problems. Our research products contain adequate information for the informed reader to assess their validity, including all the information that would be essential for the stakeholders to be convinced for the policy solutions' integrity.

We are committed to ensuring that ***our recommendations respond properly to the policy problems***. We ensure that our policy recommendations provide for doable policy choices/solutions, and offer solutions which stakeholders see as realistically achievable. Our policy recommendations are strictly based on the analysis, evidence and knowledge, thereby we strictly omit to provide recommendations on basis of speculation or opinions.

We are committed to ensuring that ***our policy research is independent, objective, balanced and credible***. Our policy research is based upon intellectual maturity, and omits from taking into consideration partisan or biased opinions/arguments. We ensure that through our research our voice reflects credible and unprejudiced policy choices and analysis, whereby convincing the stakeholders that our policy products offer safe ways to improve the policy. Our research also ensures that a fair treatment and balance between informed scientific and policy perspective is constantly observed. We also ensure that peer-review be an essential component in the conduct of research.

We ***prohibit every form of misconduct in research in proposing, performing or reviewing our policy research***. We thus strictly prohibit the fabrication, falsification or plagiarism. We are also committed to an opened policy research, thereby discussing and opening our results and policy solutions to the public and relevant stakeholders.

Research Products

Group for Legal and Political Studies publishes Policy Notes, Policy Analysis, and Policy Reports in response to significant events and/or to provide information, analysis, recommendations related to particular areas of interest.

Policy Notes

Policy Notes provide short, concise, timely, informative, and policy oriented analysis on specific issues. Policy Notes are short papers which outline the rationale for choosing a particular policy alternative of action in a current policy/issue debate. They are commonly published in response to a specific event aimed at advocating a professional stand of the Group for Legal and Political Studies. Indeed, the Policy Note is a more action and advocacy-oriented document, which provides arguments for the adoption/amendment of a particular policy choice that aims to influence the target audience on the significance/implications/solutions of the current problem, and therefore brings recommendations to policy-makers, civil society and media, and the general public.

Policy Analysis

Policy Reports are lengthy papers which provide a tool/forum for the thorough and systematic analysis of important policy issues, designed to offer well informed both scientific and policy-based solutions for significant public policy problems. In general, Policy Reports aim to presenting value-oriented arguments, proposing specific solutions in public policy - whereby influencing the policy debate on a particular issue - through the use of evidence as a means to push forward the comprehensive and consistent arguments of our organization. In particular, they identify key policy issues through reliable methodology which helps explore the implications on the design/structure of a policy. Policy Reports are very analytical in nature, hence they not only offer facts or provide a description of events but also use facts and descriptions to evaluate policies, to develop questions for analysis, to provide arguments in response to certain policy implications and to offer policy choices/solutions in a more comprehensive perspective, which serve as a tool for influencing decision-making and calling to action the concerned groups/stakeholders.

Policy Report

Policy Analysis in general is a policy advice paper which particularly aims to influence the key means through which policy decisions are made in both local and central levels of government. The purpose of Policy Analysis is to address more in-depth a particular problem, to examine the arguments related to a concerned policy, and to analyze the implementation of the policy. Through Policy Analysis, Group for Legal and Political studies seeks to stimulate wider comprehensive debate on the given issue via presenting informed policy-relevant choices and recommendations to the key stakeholders and parties of interest.

Opinions and Comments

Opinions and Comments are pieces that include articles through which we reflect our position as to certain policy issues to press, as well as contributions by prominent external experts on issues of topical relevance for us. In principle, opinions expressed are of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Group for Legal and Political Studies.

Group for Legal and Political Studies
is part of the following professional/civic
international networks:



Stockholm Network

"The Stockholm Network is the leading pan-European think tank and market oriented network. It is a one-stop shop for organisations seeking to work with Europe's brightest policymakers and thinkers. Today, the Stockholm Network brings together more than 110 market-oriented think tanks from across Europe, giving us the capacity to deliver local and locally-tailored global messages across the EU and beyond. Combined, think tanks in our network publish thousands of op-eds in the high quality European press, produce many hundreds of publications, and hold a wide range of conferences, seminars and meetings. As such, the Stockholm Network and its members influence many millions of Europeans every year."

Group for Legal and Political Studies is a [full member](#) of the Stockholm Network.



Europe's World and its 'Think Tank Europe' Network

"Europe's World is the only independent Europe-wide policy journal, produced in association with over 140 leading European think tanks and academic institutions. Since its launch in 2005 it has become the premier ideas platform for new thinking on political, economic and social issues, read by over 100,000 of the most influential decision makers and opinion formers across Europe. To date over 500 authors, including Heads of State, corporate chiefs, top academics, leading NGO activists or policymakers, have contributed articles, firmly cementing Europe's World's reputation as a platform for new thinking and ground-breaking ideas."

Group for Legal and Political Studies is a [full member](#) of the Think Tank Europe Network.



The European Information Network on International Relations and Area Studies (EINIRAS)

"The European Information Network on International Relations and Area Studies (EINIRAS) is an association of research institutions dealing with information and documentation on international relations in research and political practice. EINIRAS's long-term objective is to establish a common European database on international relations and area studies. Its short-term objectives include the expansion of practical cooperation and the exchange of information, bibliographical data and publications."

Group for Legal and Political Studies is a [full member](#) of EINIRAS.



The Economic Freedom Network

"The Economic Freedom Network is devoted to promoting economic freedom around the world. The network has member institutes in over 80 nations. The Economic Freedom Network publishes annually the Economic Freedom of the World. The index published in Economic Freedom of the World measures the degree to which the policies and institutions of countries are supportive of economic freedom. Group for Legal and Political Studies contributes with data representing Kosovo in the index, and represents it officially in Kosovo." Group for Legal and Political Studies is a full member of The Economic Freedom Network The European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN) – "The European Sustainable Development Network is an informal network of public administrators and other experts dealing with sustainable development (SD) strategies in Europe."

*Group for Legal and Political Studies is an **associated member** of ESDN.*



The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)

"The Coalition for the International Criminal Court includes 2,500 civil society organizations in 150 different countries working in partnership to strengthen international cooperation with the ICC; ensure that the Court is fair, effective and independent; make justice both visible and universal; and advance stronger national laws that deliver justice to victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide."

*Group for Legal and Political Studies is a **full member** of CICC.*



ACE Practitioners Network

"The ACE Practitioners' Network is (in pair with the ACE Regional Centres) the backbone of ACE. It brings together election professionals from different countries – with diverse and complementary experience and specialisation – into the first ever online global knowledge network in the field of elections. The aim of the Practitioners' Network is to constantly generate new qualified electoral knowledge and to be cutting edge and push the field of elections forward. The network also offers an opportunity for its members to obtain peer advice and support and to extend their own professional networks."

*Group for Legal and Political Studies is **represented** at the ACE Practitioners' Network with one senior member.*



VITA Europe

"Vita Europe was born from within the well-established Vita nonprofit contents group which, since 1994, has been publishing the benchmark third sector weekly newspaper in Italy. Vita Europe is an English language news portal that aims to create an identity and culture for European civil society. It gives voice to the sector's protagonists, their stories and best practices, all the while measuring their economic weight country by country."

*Group for Legal and Political Studies is a **core partner** of VITA Europe.*



Central and Eastern European Online Library (CEEOL)

"Central and Eastern European Online Library is the result of 10 years of work by the Frankfurt Eastern/Western European Cultural Center PALAIS JALTA. During the 1990's, the annual book fairs in Frankfurt offered the most appropriate opportunities for networking among publishers, as well as for discussions and all kinds of public events. Today as leading CEE online resource, C.E.E.O.L. offers an outstanding portfolio of 100,000 + articles of 500+ journals which are published by prestigious scholarly and independent institutions. Our titles cover the full spectrum of humanities and social studies, and include numerous titles placed at the top of their fields of Central and Eastern European studies."

Group for Legal and Political Studies is a [full member](#) of CEEOL.



International Relations and Security Network (ISN)

"The International Relations and Security Network is the world's leading open access information service for international relations and security professionals. ISN strives to meet the rapidly evolving information and educational needs of our users by working with the world's leading think tanks, universities, research institutes, NGOs and international organizations. ISN partner network continues to grow in tandem with the changing international agenda. This allows ISN to offer its users a broad selection of views and opinions on the major issues of our day."

Group for Legal and Political Studies is a [full member](#) of ISN.



The European Parties Elections and Referendums Network (EPERN)

"The European Parties Elections and Referendums Network is a network of scholars researching the impact of European integration on parties, elections and public opinion. The Network produces an ongoing series of briefings on the impact of European integration on election campaigns. EPERN emerged as the successor to the Opposing Europe Research Network (OERN) that was launched at a June 2000 workshop at the Sussex European Institute as a network of scholars interested in researching the comparative party politics of Euroscepticism. Over the next three years, OERN organised a series of ESRC-funded seminars together with a workshop at the ECPR joint sessions and a series of conference panels."

Group for Legal and Political Studies is [represented](#) at EPERN with two senior members.



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