

Call for applications

GAP Institute, within the framework of the project with the International Budget Partnership (IBP), with the support of the European Commission, opens the call for the seventh cycle of analytical essays for bachelor's and master's level students in Kosovo. This competition aims to encourage students to get involved in research of public policies in Kosovo by rewarding their work with prizes.

The general topic is: **“The role of citizen engagement in increasing accountability and transparency in budget processes in Kosovo”**

Being informed about budget processes and having the space to engage in these processes is of great importance and ensures that the needs and priorities of a country's citizens are met. Kosovo's performance in budget transparency is similar to that of other Western Balkan countries and slightly better than global performance, measured according to international indices. Regarding public participation, Kosovo does not perform well and has work to do towards engaging the public in different stages of budget processes.

Issues that should be addressed and analysed within these analytical essays, including various other aspects and perspectives related to the topic:

“How does the budget drafting process work in Kosovo, according to the legislation in force? What are the good practices of budget processes that contribute to increased accountability and transparency according to international standards? What is the role of involving citizens and non-governmental organizations in all stages of budget processes?”

You are encouraged to create your own original topic and arguments based on the questions mentioned above or other issues related to the listed topics.

Application Guidelines

- Authors of essays must be undergraduate or graduate students;
- Essays must be original and unpublished. Plagiarized essays will be rejected;
- Essays must be written by one or two authors. Essays written by more than two co-authors will not be accepted;
- Essays must be up to 1,000 words. Longer essays will be automatically disqualified;
- Sources of data must be cited within the text/in footnotes. No reference list is required;
- Essays must be sent in MS Word format, to the email address info@institutigap.org. You must also attach a scanned copy of your student ID card or other proof that you are a student at one of the higher education institutions in Kosovo at the time of submission.
- In the subject line of the email, write “Essay Contest - First and Last Name”.
- The deadline for submitting essays is **December 6, 2024** at midnight.
- Essays submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

Essay Format

- Introduction
 - The introductory paragraph should include the thesis or purpose of the essay, informing the reader about its main topic. Do not use essential data or facts that support your arguments in this section.
- Body
 - Put all data and facts here. Organize your ideas into as many paragraphs as necessary that support the thesis or purpose of your essay. If you have three arguments, write them in three paragraphs, ranking them according to their importance and potential to support them.
- Conclusion
 - Do not put new information or data in this paragraph. Just summarize the essay well by restating its main arguments and signaling its end or making a "call to action" if your essay is written in a way that persuades readers to take action.

Essay Evaluation

The panel independently evaluates all essays based on the following criteria:

- Originality in the topics covered
- Fair use of data/Accuracy of data
- Quality and depth of research
- Writing style, grammar, spelling, punctuation and citation

Each panel member will evaluate the overall content with points and the three essays with the highest points will be awarded with prizes. The evaluation is done by GAP Institute.

Only the first three winners will be notified.

Prizes

First place: 250 Euros and recognition

Second place: 200 Euros and recognition

Third place: 150 Euros and recognition