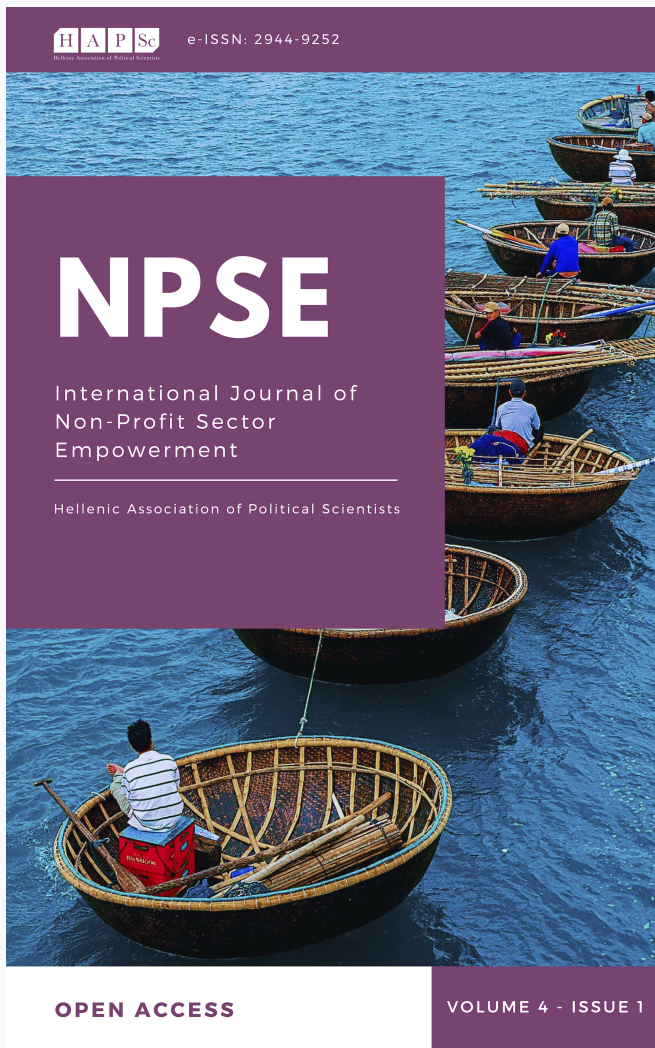


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## The Role of NGOs in Promoting Strategic & Security Studies in Greece: A Case Study of the Academic Landscape in Greece

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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## The Role of NGOs in Promoting Strategic & Security Studies in Greece: A Case Study of the Academic Landscape in Greece

Georgios Koukakis 

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### Abstract

The study of Strategic & Security Studies – two scientific fields of the International Relations discipline – is of great importance as it not only enhances the overall geopolitical situational awareness but contributes to the establishment of a security culture as well. Unfortunately, even though the Hellenic Republic has established a multifaceted education system, the study of these two scientific fields has not been given enough attention in Greece as far as its institutional level is concerned. The purpose of this article is to highlight the important role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in promoting the underdeveloped Strategic & Security Studies in Greece.

**Keywords:** Greece, General Adult Education, Non-formal Education, Political Science, International Relations, Strategic Studies, Security Studies, Non-Governmental Organization, Non-Profit Organization, Think Tank

### 1. Introduction

Strategic & Security Studies are of great importance not only for policy makers but for the academic community and citizens as well, as the study *great power politics* and the *multidimensional nature of security* that they mainly deal with, enhances the overall *geopolitical situational awareness* and contributes to the establishment of a *security culture* which are vital factors for the resilience of every society (Koukakis, 2023a). Unfortunately, despite the fact that Greece has established a multifaceted education system, the study of Strategic & Security Studies has not been given proper attention as far as the state institutional level is concerned.

The purpose of the article is to highlight the role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in promoting Strategic & Security Studies in Greece, as these two scientific fields of the International

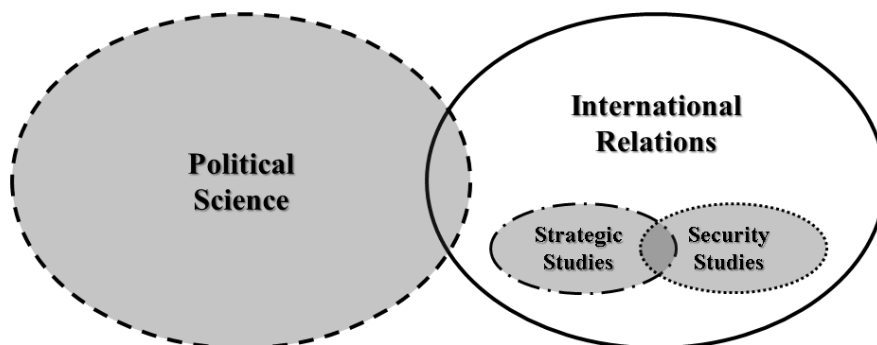
Relations (IR) discipline have not been given enough the academic attention (Koukakis, 2023b). Its importance lies not only on the fact that the aforementioned security culture is a necessity due to the contemporary security environment of permacrises and polycrises we live in (Koukakis, 2023c), but also because the article provides current information regarding the Greek education system and the study of Strategic & Security Studies in a systematic way, contributing to the related literature. Its main conclusion is that NGOs play a vital role in promoting Strategic & Security Studies through a variety of academic activities, while their non-governmental and non-profit character ensures a high level of impartiality.

In regard to its structure, the article begins by briefly presenting the institutional academic framework that has been established in Greece in order to provide formal and non-formal education to its citizens, then it analyses the context of the Strategic & Security Studies, after that it refers to the Greek formal education institutions and the developed programmes regarding International Relations and Strategic & Security Studies, proceeds to the case study of the Greek NGOs that promote either Strategic or Security Studies, and concludes by stressing the importance of the contribution of these NGOs to the overall promotion of Strategic & Security Studies in Greece.

## 2. The Scientific Fields of Strategic and Security Studies

Both Strategic and Security Studies are part of the *International Relations* discipline that was founded in 1919, the year when the *Chair of International Politics* at Aberystwyth University in Wales was established (Aberystwyth University, n.d.). It must also be noted that despite that International Relations initially focused on relations between states, the subsequent establishment of international and regional organisations led to the broadening of the scope of their study to include the relations of these organisations with states, as well as among organisations.

**Figure 1.** The interconnection of Political Science, IR, Strategic and Security Studies

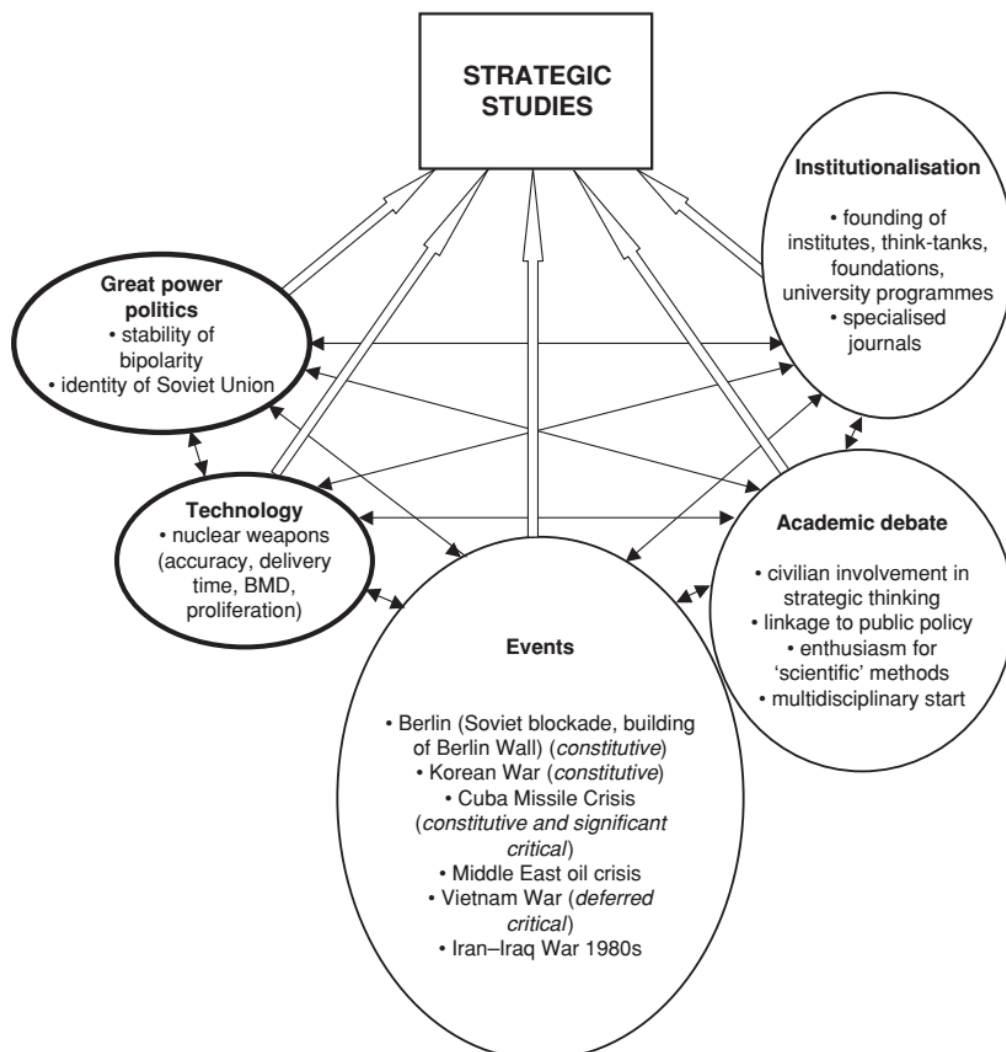


Source: Compiled by the Author

To be more precise, according to Buzan and Hansen (2009:98) *Strategic Studies* were founded upon the Cold War (Britannica, 2024) in order to study the superpower rivalry between the United States and the USSR and how this rivalry affected the military, political, technological and strategic fields (Buzan & Hansen, 2009:66), also noting that the main drivers of Strategic Studies (Buzan & Hansen, 2009:98-99) include:

- ✓ *Great power politics*, especially between the United States and Russia.
- ✓ *Technology*, especially as far as nuclear weapons are concerned.
- ✓ Several *key events*, especially in the 1940s and 1950s.
- ✓ The internal *academic debates*, especially as far as the epistemology is concerned.
- ✓ Their *institutionalisation*, in order to develop a new academic field.

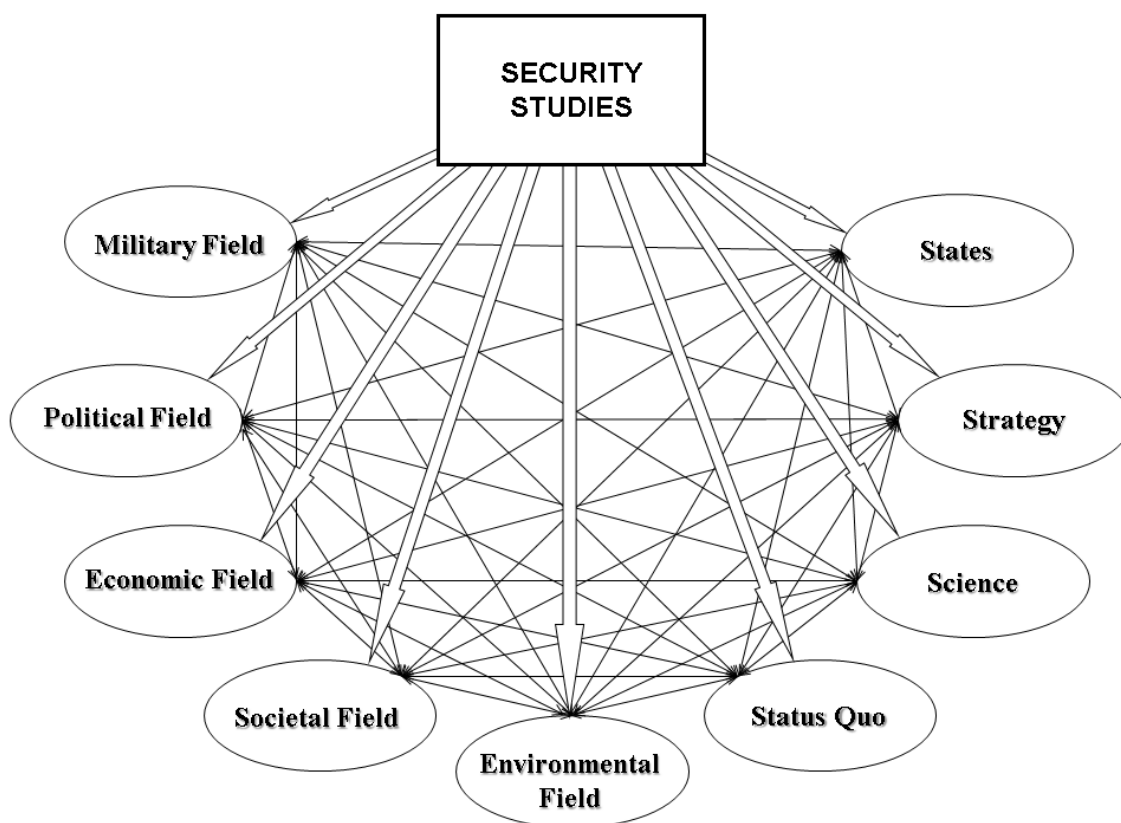
**Figure 2.** The main drivers of Strategic Studies



**Source:** Buzan & Hansen (2009)

*Security Studies* on the other hand, is a broader scientific field that does not focus on a specific actor or policy field. On the contrary, it studies any issue that is related to security trying to identify the respective threats, assess their impact and identify the best way of minimising it (Carleton, 2024). Moreover, according to Williams (2008:3) Security Studies are related not only to the security of states (national security) but to the security of human collectivities as well. He also stresses that they advocate political realism and the study of *states*, *strategy*, *science* and the *status quo* –widely known as the four Ss– adding that Security Studies are interconnected with the military, political, economic, societal and environmental field (Williams, 2008:4).

**Figure 3.** The main areas on interest of Security Studies



Source: Compiled by the Author

### **The Institutional Academic Framework in Greece**

On September 21, 2010, the Government of the Hellenic Republic issued *Law 3879/2010* entitled ‘Development of the Lifelong Learning and other provisions’ (Newspaper of the Government of the Hellenic Republic, 2010), having as purpose (article 1):

“[...] *the development of lifelong learning, through the recognition of alternative educational pathways, the networking of lifelong learning institutions and the assurance of transparency and quality, in order to achieve the interconnection of lifelong learning with employment, the formation of an integrated personality the integration of individuals and, in general, the social and economic development*”.

One of the novelties introduced by the aforementioned Law was that fact that it recognised the continuing character of education throughout a person’s life, defining *Lifelong learning* in its article 2 as:

“[...] *all forms of learning activities throughout a person's life, aimed at the acquisition or development of knowledge, skills and competences which contribute to the formation of an integrated personality, to the professional integration and development of the individual, to social cohesion, to the development of the capacity for active citizenship and to social, economic and cultural development*”.

Law 3879/2010 also provided that Lifelong Learning comprised three types of learning activities: *formal education*, *non-formal education* and *informal learning*. As far as *formal education* is concerned, the aforementioned Law defines it as the education which leads to the acquisition of certificates that are recognised by the state (Newspaper of the Government of the Hellenic Republic, 2010:3401), also referring that this type of education is provided within the *formal education system* which comprises the following three categories (**Table 1**):

✓ *Primary Education* which comprises the 2-years compulsory education for children between the age of *five* and *six* provided by the *Kindergarten* and the 6-years compulsory education for children between the age of *seven* and *twelve* provided by the *Primary School*.

✓ *Secondary Education* which comprises the 3-years compulsory education for teenagers between the age of *thirteen* and *fifteen* provided by *Middle School* and the 3-years non-compulsory education for teenagers between the age of *sixteen* and *eighteen* provided by *High School*.

✓ *Higher Education* which comprises the non-compulsory education for adults above the age of *eighteen* provided by *Higher Education Institutes* (Universities, Polytechnics, the Higher School of Fine Arts and the Higher Ecclesiastical Academies).

The second type of Lifelong Learning according to Law 3879/2010 is *non-formal education*, which is defined as the education provided by institutions that –despite the fact that they are part of an organised

educational setting– are not included in the formal education system, also leading to the acquisition of certificates that are recognised by the state (Newspaper of the Government of the Hellenic Republic, 2010:3401-3402). This type of education is further divided in the following sub-categories:

✓ *Initial vocational training*, which is defined as “[...] training which provides basic vocational knowledge, competences and skills in specialisations and specialisations with a view to integration, reintegration, occupational integration, vocational training, vocational rehabilitation and employment. mobility and career development of human resources the labour market, as well as vocational and personal development” (Newspaper of the Government of the Hellenic Republic, 2010:3402),

✓ *Continuing vocational training*, which is defined as “[...] training for human resources which complements, updates and/or upgrades knowledge, competences and skills acquired through vocational education and training systems or work experience by with a view to integration or reintegration into the labour market, securing employment and vocational and occupational personal development.” (Newspaper of the Government of the Hellenic Republic, 2010:3402), and

✓ *General adult education*, which “[...] includes all organised learning activities for adults aimed at enriching knowledge, developing and improving competences and skills, developing the individual's personality and active citizenship, and reducing educational and social inequalities. It is provided by formal education institutions and by non-formal education providers” (Newspaper of the Government of the Hellenic Republic, 2010:3402).

The non-formal education in Greece is provided by a large number of entities (institutes, centers, laboratories, foundations, schools, etc.) that belong to the public or private sector such as:

- ✓ Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning Centers.
- ✓ Institutes for Vocational Training.
- ✓ Centers for Vocational Training.
- ✓ Centres for post-secondary education.
- ✓ Free Studies Laboratories.
- ✓ The Institute for Continuing Adult Education.
- ✓ The National Youth Foundation.
- ✓ Second Chance Schools.
- ✓ Parents' Schools.
- ✓ Consultancy services providers.

- ✓ Employment Promotion Centers.
- ✓ The National Centre of Public Administration and Local Government.
- ✓ The Labour Institute.
- ✓ The Centre for Educational Policy Development.
- ✓ The Institute of Small Enterprises (IME).
- ✓ The Social Polycenter.
- ✓ The Inter-Balkan Institute of Public Administration.

**Table 1.** Data regarding the institutional framework of education in Greece

Learning Activity	Educational Category	Duration	Age	Provided by	Remarks
Formal education	Primary Education	2 years	5-6	Kindergarten	Compulsory
		6 years	7-12	Primary School	Compulsory
	Secondary Education	3 years	13-15	Middle School	Compulsory
		3 years	16-18	High School	Non-Compulsory
	Higher Education	1-6 years	>18	Higher Education Institutes	Non-Compulsory
Non-formal education	Initial vocational training	2 years	16-29	Institutes & Centers for Vocational Training	Non-Compulsory
	Continuing vocational training	2 years	16-29	Apprenticeship Vocational Schools (EPAS)	Non-Compulsory
	General adult education	----	----	Formal education institutions & Non-formal education providers	Non-Compulsory
Informal learning	----	----	----	----	Non-Compulsory

**Note:** The table was created using data from the ‘Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports’ and the ‘Public Employment Service’ (DYPA) of the Hellenic Republic

**Source:** Compiled by the author

Finally, Law 3879/2010 defines *informal learning* as the third type of Lifelong Learning, referring that it comprises all the learning activities –not included in either the formal or the informal education– which take place during a person’s leisure time, professional environment, and social or cultural

interactions, using a variety of educational means (books, magazines, computer, etc.) and/or infrastructures (residence, libraries, etc.), in the context of self-education leading to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences (Newspaper of the Government of the Hellenic Republic, 2010:3402).

### 3. The Status Quo of Strategic & Security Studies in Greece

Despite the fact that International Relations is a discipline that is quite developed in Greece as there are several Universities that provide related knowledge, none of them provide Undergraduate Studies that lead to the acquisition of a *Bachelor Degree* –Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BSc)– that is specialised in either Strategic or Security Studies. These Universities are the following:

✓ The *University of Crete* which provides undergraduate studies in ‘Political Science’, focusing on the study of every dimension of the phenomenon of power (University of Crete, n.d.).

✓ The *Panteion University* which provides undergraduate studies in ‘International, European and Area Studies’, focusing on international economic relations, international relations, European integration and international law and institutions (Panteion University, n.d.b).

✓ The *University of the Peloponnese* which provides undergraduate studies in ‘Political Science and International Science’, focusing on political science and international relations (University of the Peloponnese, n.d.).

✓ The *University of Piraeus* which provides undergraduate studies in ‘International and European Studies’, focusing on international relations and European studies (University of Piraeus, n.d.).

✓ The *University of Macedonia* which provides undergraduate studies in ‘International and European Studies’, focusing on political science and diplomacy and international and European economic studies (University of Macedonia, n.d.b) and undergraduate studies in ‘Balkan, Slavic and Eastern Studies’, focusing on the study of study economic, social and political relations between the Balkan, Slavic and Oriental countries and Greece (University of Macedonia, n.d.a).

✓ The *University of Western Macedonia* which provides undergraduate studies in ‘International and European Economic Studies’, focusing on international relations, European studies and economic science (University of Western Macedonia, n.d.).

✓ The *University of the Aegean* which provides undergraduate studies in ‘Mediterranean Studies: Archaeology, Linguistics and International Relations’, focusing on international relations and organisations, archaeology and linguistics of the South-Eastern Mediterranean (University of the Aegean, n.d.b).

✓ The *Democritus University of Thrace* which provides undergraduate studies in ‘Political Science’, focusing on the historical, geographical and political aspects of power (Democritus University of Thrace, n.d.).

As far as the *Programmes of Postgraduate Studies* –providing a Master of Arts (MA) or Master of Science (MSc) degree– are concerned, specialized knowledge on Strategic and Security Studies in Greece is only provided by the following institutions:

✓ The Department of ‘International, European and Area Studies’ of the *Panteion University* in collaboration with the *National Defence College (NDC)*, providing a Programme of Postgraduate Studies in ‘Strategic Security Studies’ which refers only to NDC students which comprise uniformed personnel of the Hellenic and Foreign Armed Forces and Security Bodies, in addition to public servants of several Departments of the Hellenic Republic (Panteion University, n.d.a).

✓ The Law Department of the *Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH)* in collaboration with the *Supreme Joint War College (SJWC)*, providing a Programme of Postgraduate Studies in ‘Strategic Studies’ which refers to uniformed personnel of the Hellenic and Foreign Armed Forces and Security Bodies, public servants of several Departments of the Hellenic Republic and non-uniformed/non-governmental civilians (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, n.d.).

✓ The *National Security School* of the Hellenic Police, providing a Programme of Postgraduate Studies that leads to the acquisition of a diploma in ‘Strategy and National Security Policy Studies’ which refers only to uniformed personnel of the Hellenic and Foreign Armed Forces and Security Bodies, and public servants of several Departments of the Hellenic Republic (Hellenic Police, n.d.).

In addition to the aforementioned specialised *Programmes of Postgraduate Studies*, there are also some Greek Universities that provide knowledge regarding Strategic and Security Studies but only as a small part of the overall knowledge they provide regarding International Relations or other scientific fields. Some of these are the following:

✓ The Department of ‘International, European and Area Studies’ of the *Panteion University*, providing a Programme of Postgraduate Studies in ‘International Relations and Strategic Studies’ (Panteion University, n.d.c).

✓ The Department of Turkish Studies and Contemporary Asian Studies of the *National and Kapodistrian University of Athens*, providing a Programme of Postgraduate Studies in ‘Geopolitical

Analysis, Geostrategic Synthesis and Defence and International Security Studies’ (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, n.d.).

✓ The Department of ‘Mediterranean Studies: Archaeology, Linguistics and International Relations’ of the *University of the Aegean*, providing a Programme of Postgraduate Studies in ‘Governance, Development and Security in the Mediterranean’ (University of the Aegean, n.d.a).

**Table 3.** Data regarding the Greek institutions that promote International Relations and Strategic & Security Studies (chronological order from oldest to newest)

Name	Foundation	Status/Affiliation
ELIAMEP	1988	Non-profit think tank
IDIS	1989	Academic Institute affiliated with the Department of International & European Studies at Panteion University of Social & Political Sciences
IIER	1993	Institution established by the Greek Association of S.A. & Ltd companies
KEMEA	2005	Legal person governed by private law, overseen by the Minister of Citizen Protection
CEMMIS	2008	Academic Center affiliated with the Department of Political Science & International Relations of the University of Peloponnese
HEL.I.S.S.	2012	Non – Profit Organization
Research Unit for European & International Politics	2013	Academic Institute operating within the purview of the Department of Mediterranean Studies of the University of the Aegean
ODETH	2014	Zero-budget think tank
KEDISA	2015	Non – Profit Organization
Hermes I.I.A.S.GE.	2017	Non – Profit Organization
FAINST	2020	Non-profit organization
KEAMEP	2023	Center affiliated with IIER

**Note:** The table was created using data from the official websites of the Institutions mentioned in it

**Source:** Compiled by the author

Finally, as far as the non-formal education is concerned, Strategic and Security Studies fall under the category of ‘*general adult education*’ provided by formal education institutions and non-formal education providers. In regard to the *formal education institutions*, some of the main ones related to International Relations are *Institute of International Relations (IDIS)* which is affiliated with the Department of International and European Studies at Panteion University of Social and Political

Sciences (Institute of International Relations, n.d.), the *Centre for Mediterranean, Middle East & Islamic Studies* (CEMMIS) which is affiliated with the Department of Political Science and International Relations of the University of Peloponnese (Centre for Mediterranean, Middle East & Islamic Studies, n.d.), and the *Research Unit for European and International Politics* which is affiliated with the Department of Mediterranean Studies of the University of the Aegean (University of the Aegean, n.d.c).

In addition to the aforementioned formal education institutions, each Greek University is operating a *Continuing Education & Lifelong Learning (CE-LL) Center* through which several educational products are offered the public. Despite the fact though that there are many CE-LL educational programmes about International Relations, only a few of them examine either Strategic or Security Studies, such as the ‘*Security Studies in the Mediterranean*’ programme of the CE-LL Center of the University of the Aegean (Continuing Education & Lifelong Learning Center of the University of the Aegean, n.d.).

As far as the *non-formal education providers* are concerned, the Greek academic landscape comprises several private *Think Tanks, Institutions, Research Centers*, etc. of different organisational structure that also contribute to the advancement of the International Relations and Strategic and Security Studies. These include both Profit and Non-Profit Organisations, the second category of which is going to be analysed in the following section.

#### **4. Case studies of Greek NGOs that promote Strategic & Security Studies**

Even though there are several Non-Governmental Institutions, Centers and Think Tanks in Greece that are related to International Relations (**Table 2**) –such as the *Foreign Affairs Institute* (FAINST) (Foreign Affairs Institute, n.d.), the *Center for Security Studies* (KEMEA) (Center for Security Studies, n.d.), the *Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy* (ELIAMEP) (Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy, n.d.), the *Institute of International Economic Relations* (IIER) (Institute of International Economic Relations, n.d.), the *Center for Analysis of Middle East Politics* (KEAMEP) (Center for Analysis of Middle East Politics, n.d.), and the *Association for International & European Affairs* (ODETH) (Association for International & European Affairs, n.d.)– only a few identify themselves as organizations that promote Strategic or Security Studies, in terms of name and mission (**Table 3**).

**Table 3.** Data regarding the Greek NGOs that promote Strategic & Security Studies

Name	HEL.I.S.S.	KEDISA	Hermes I.I.A.S.GE.
<b>Foundation</b>	2012	2015	2017
<b>Status</b>	Non – Profit Organization	Non – Profit Organization	Non – Profit Organization
<b>Location</b>	Athens (Attica)	Piraeus (Attica)	Katerini (Macedonia)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://elisme.gr/">https://elisme.gr/</a>	<a href="https://kedisa.gr/">https://kedisa.gr/</a>	<a href="https://www.hermesresearch.eu/">https://www.hermesresearch.eu/</a>
<b>Language</b>	Greek/English	Greek/English	English
<b>Board of Directors</b>	<u>Total of 12 members</u> - President - Vice President - Secretary General - Financial Director - Director of Research - Chief Editor - Public Relations Officer - 5 Members	<u>Total of 7 members</u> - President - Vice President/ Director of Research - Secretary General - Financial Director - 3 Members	<u>Total of 12 members</u> - President, - Vice President, - Secretary General, - Financial Director, - Director of Research, - Chief Editor, - Public Relations Officer, - 5 Members
	<b>Type of Publications</b> - Geopolitical Analysis and Study Notebooks - Bimonthly magazine - Articles - Research papers	- Analyses - Research papers	- Short Comments - Briefing Notes - Occasional papers - Greece at a Glance - Southeastern Europe at a Glance - Interviews - The experts' corner
<b>Events</b>	- Workshops - Conferences - Speeches - Seminars - Book presentations	- Workshops - Seminars	- Conferences - Meetings/Lectures - Seminars

**Note:** The table was created using data from the official websites of the Strategic & Security Institutes

**Source:** Compiled by the author

#### 4.1 Hellenic Institute of Strategic Studies (HEL.I.S.S.)

The *Hellenic Institute of Strategic Studies* (HEL.I.S.S.) is a Non-Profit Organization that was founded in 2012 in the city of Athens (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.e), aiming at:

*The uninhibited and reliable articulation of public discourse - with a view to making an advisory contribution to the fulfilment of the respective National Interests and European integration on geopolitical issues (geostrategy, geoeconomics), foreign and domestic issues of national interest,*

*international issues, with emphasis on issues of European interest, and the study and provision of assessments and recommendations to public and private sector bodies, resulting from the analysis of the above issues* (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.h).

**Figure 4.** The logo of HEL.I.S.S.



**Source:** HEL.I.S.S.

It comprises a *Board of Directors* of 12 members, namely a President, a Vice President, a Secretary General, a Financial Director, a Director of Research, a Chief Editor, a Public Relations Officer, and five Members (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.a). As far as the promotion of Strategic & Security Studies is concerned, HEL.I.S.S. organizes on a regular basis several events such as workshops (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.l), conferences (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.c), speeches (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.j), seminars (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.k), and book presentations (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.b), while its *publications* –which are primarily in Greek and secondarily in English– include a scientific journal entitled ‘*Geopolitical Analysis and Study Notebooks*’ (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.d),<sup>1</sup> and a bimonthly magazine entitled ‘*Reflections*’ (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.f),<sup>2</sup> as well as *articles* (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.g) and *research papers* (HEL.I.S.S., n.d.i) categorized in the following 14 thematic areas:

- ✓ International developments & strategic assessments,
- ✓ National issues of foreign policy,
- ✓ Education, History, Culture, Sports & the environment,
- ✓ Defence - Security,
- ✓ International Relations - Geopolitics,
- ✓ International organisations – International Law,
- ✓ International economy – Energy Issues,

<sup>1</sup> The title of the journal in Greek is ‘Τετράδια Γεωπολιτικής Ανάλυσης και Μελετών’.

<sup>2</sup> The title of the journal in Greek is ‘Προβληματισμοί’.

- ✓ The Balkans – Black Sea – Caucasus – Central Asia,
- ✓ Middle East – North Africa – Eastern Mediterranean,
- ✓ The American continent,
- ✓ The Asian continent,
- ✓ The African continent,
- ✓ Miscellaneous issues, and
- ✓ COVID-19.

#### 4.2 Center for International Strategic Analyses (KEDISA)

The *Center for International Strategic Analyses (KEDISA)* is a *Non-Profit Organization* that was founded in 2015 in the city of Piraeus (KEDISA, n.d.j), having has a *mission* to:

*[...] analyze International Relations and Global Security issues, emphasizing on issues of Strategic nature; study energy security and pipeline diplomacy issues; scrutinize EU migration policy issues; examine the complex South Eastern Europe (SEE) and Middle East & Northern Africa (MENA) security environment; analyze the EU external relations with NATO, the US and the BRICS countries; organize and implement a series of educational programmes, that promote the Centre's scientific mission (KEDISA, n.d.f).*

**Figure 5.** The logo of KEDISA



**Source:** KEDISA

It comprises a *Board of Directors* of seven members, namely a President, a Vice President-Director of Research, a Secretary General, a Financial Director and three Members (KEDISA, n.d.c), a *Scientific Committee* (KEDISA, n.d.i), and a number of *Senior Researchers* (KEDISA, n.d.h), *Analysts* (KEDISA, n.d.b) and *Junior Analysts* (KEDISA, n.d.e). As far as the promotion of Strategic & Security Studies is concerned, KEDISA organizes on a regular basis several events such as seminars and webinars (online seminars) (KEDISA, n.d.d), while its *publications* –which are primarily in Greek and secondarily in English– are divided into *research papers* (academic papers of significant length)

(KEDISA, n.d.g) and *analyses* (short academic articles) (KEDISA, n.d.a) categorized in the following 16 thematic areas:

1. Africa,
2. Balkans & EastMed,
3. BRICS,
4. Cultural Diplomacy,
5. Energy Security,
6. EU & NATO,
7. Greek Foreign Policy,
8. Intelligence & Security,
9. International Developments,
10. Middle East,
11. Migration,
12. North & Latin America,
13. Russia & Eurasia,
14. Strategy & Defence,
15. Sustainable Development & Climate Change, and
16. Terrorism, Organised Crime & Security.

#### **4.3 Hermes Institute of International Affairs, Security & Geoeconomy (I.I.A.S.GE.)**

The *Hermes Institute of International Affairs, Security & Geoeconomy* (I.I.A.S.GE.) is a an independent, Non-Governmental, *Non-Profit Organization* named after the ancient Greek God Hermes –believed to be inter alia the messenger of gods and the inventor of language, often referred to as ‘Λόγιος’ (Scholar) as he was also believed to be the protector of letters being famous for his fluent and clear speech– that was founded in 2017 in the city of Katerini (Hermes I.I.A.S.GE., n.d.a.), aiming at:

*[...] providing objective, scientific, and reliable research analysis through a variety of studies contributing effectively and constructively in the public dialogue and the evolution of scientific knowledge* (Hermes I.I.A.S.GE., n.d.a).

**Figure 6.** The logo of Hermes I.I.A.S.GE.



**Source:** Hermes I.I.A.S.GE.

It comprises a *Board of Directors* of three members, namely a President-Director of Research of the Southeastern Europe Directorate, a Director of Research of the Strategic Analysis & Studies Directorate, and a Director of Studies (Hermes I.I.A.S.GE., n.d.b), and a number of *Research Associates* (Hermes I.I.A.S.GE., n.d.e). As far as the promotion of Strategic & Security Studies is concerned, HERMES I.I.A.S.GE. organizes on a limited basis events such as seminars (Hermes I.I.A.S.GE., 2024), while its *publications* –which are only in English– are divided into *occasional papers* (academic papers of significant length) (Hermes I.I.A.S.GE., n.d.d.), *briefing notes* (academic papers which aim to brief audience on several international events/issues) (Hermes I.I.A.S.GE., n.d.c.), and *shorts comments* (short academic articles which aim to provide short commentaries on recent events).

## **Concluding Remarks**

To conclude, it must be stressed that the data presented in the article reveal that Strategic & Security Studies are still perceived in Greece as two scientific fields that lie in the interest –and therefore must be studied mainly by – of ‘uniformed personnel’ rather than civilians, as there is no specialised undergraduate programme for Strategic or Security Studies and most of the postgraduate programmes available are conducted by Universities in cooperation with military institutions and for the benefit of the latter’s personnel.

In this context, the role of Non-Governmental Organisations that provide non-formal education regarding Strategic & Security Studies is vital, as the papers published by them in addition to the educational activities they conduct such as workshops, conferences, speeches, seminars, book presentations, and meetings/lectures facilitate the promotion of the two scientific fields in Greece outside the narrow boundaries of the military community, acting in a complimentary manner to the formal education that is being provided regarding International Relations.

Moreover, the fact that these Greek NGOs publish research in English provides the opportunity to researchers and scholars from Greece –given the fact that English is the most spoken language globally– to promote their research on Strategic and Security Studies all around the world, also promoting several national issues that are related to the aforementioned scientific fields.

Nevertheless, the existing undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Greece provided in the institutional context of the formal education need to be further complemented by specialised programmes focusing on the strategic and security aspect of the International Relations discipline in order for Strategic & Security Studies to be further developed, also leading to the enhancement of the Greek citizens' geopolitical awareness, the society's resilience and the establishment of a security culture in Greece.

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