

# Chapter 9

## Building Trust Through Ethics, Leadership, and Organizational Integrity in Greece's Health Sector

**Konstantinos Giannakos**

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3409-6875>

*University of Thessaly, Greece*


**Athanasios Koustelios**

*University of Thessaly, Greece*

**Nikolaos Tsigilis**

*College of Education, United Arab Emirates University, UAE*

**Christos Papademetriou**

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7167-7786>

*Neapolis University Pafos, Cyprus*

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter explores the concept and practice of ethical leadership in the public sector, focusing on key dimensions such as fairness, power sharing, role clarification, people orientation, integrity, ethical guidance, and concern for sustainability. The objective is to identify how ethical leadership contributes to effective governance, accountability, and trust-building in public organizations globally, with a special emphasis on the Greek context. The research reveals that ethical leadership is a critical enabler of transparency, employee engagement, and sustainable public value creation. Internationally, ethical leaders tend to promote trust, reduce corruption,*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-2600-0246-9.ch009

*and foster inclusive decision-making. In Greece, while ethical leadership principles are increasingly recognized, systemic challenges such as political patronage, limited transparency mechanisms, and hierarchical rigidity hinder consistent application. Nonetheless, emerging policies and leadership development programs indicate growing momentum.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Over the last ten years, the Greek public health sector has undergone significant changes, driven by a series of major structural reforms, the impact of the financial crisis, and ongoing struggles with governance and ethical issues (Viterouli et al., 2025a,b; Ntalakos et al., 2025; Kriemadis et al., 2023; Viterouli et al., 2024). As a result of their complex stakeholder ecosystems, substantial financial flows, and the general ethical principle of promoting public health, healthcare organizations are more exposed than any other social institution to the occurrence of ethical problems (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Kalshoven et al., 2011). Ethical leadership has, therefore, become a key factor in an organization's success, the psychological well-being of its employees, and the quality of the medical services provided (Belias et al., 2023a; Belias et al., 2023b). Still, the extent of its presence in the Greek healthcare sector remains an open question.

The Greek healthcare system has been affected by a lack of investment for several years. Its current spending is at 8.5% of GDP in 2022, compared to an average of 10.4% for the EU27. Additionally, the healthcare system continues to face challenges in management due to its susceptibility to frequent changes in top staff associated with political cycles (WHO, 2023). These weaknesses in the structural progress have been compounded by health sector issues stemming from corruption. The European Commission has pointed out that Greece is highly exposed to bribery, procurement irregularities, and informal payment practices (Ecorys, 2017; Stamouli et al., 2025). In such a framework, ethical leadership becomes even more necessary as a tool that can ensure integrity, transparency, and long-term organizational performance.

Ethical leadership according to Brown, Treviño, and Harrison (2005) is basically a leader's "own personal behavior and interaction with people, which is in accordance with the norms, and also the leader's influence on the followers for such behavior through mutual communication, support and decision making." (p. 120). This way of leading comprises not only the "moral person" aspect that shows the leaders' personal traits like integrity, trustworthiness, and fairness, but also the "moral manager" aspect, where leaders go ahead to set ethical standards, to communicate the ethical expectations, and to make the employees responsible (Treviño et al., 2003; Brown & Treviño, ).

34 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/building-trust-through-ethics-leadership-and-organizational-integrity-in-greeces-health-sector/404567](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/building-trust-through-ethics-leadership-and-organizational-integrity-in-greeces-health-sector/404567)

## Related Content

---

### Gender Sensitivity of Adult Education Activities of Community-Based Organizations in Ghana

Louis Caleb Kutameand Abigail Aryeh-Adjei (2020). *International Journal of Public and Private Perspectives on Healthcare, Culture, and the Environment* (pp. 41-51). [www.irma-international.org/article/gender-sensitivity-of-adult-education-activities-of-community-based-organizations-in-ghana/243477](http://www.irma-international.org/article/gender-sensitivity-of-adult-education-activities-of-community-based-organizations-in-ghana/243477)

### Environmental Disclosure as a Tool for Public Sector Legitimacy: A Twitter Intelligence Approach

Enrique Bonsón, David Pereaand Michaela Bednárová (2020). *International Journal of Public Administration in the Digital Age* (pp. 1-31). [www.irma-international.org/article/environmental-disclosure-as-a-tool-for-public-sector-legitimacy/264239](http://www.irma-international.org/article/environmental-disclosure-as-a-tool-for-public-sector-legitimacy/264239)

### Collaborative Governance Matters to E-Government Interoperability: An Analysis of Citizen-Centric Integrated Interoperable E-Government Implementation in Saudi Arabia

Akemi Takeoka Chatfieldand Jazem AlAnazi (2015). *International Journal of Public Administration in the Digital Age* (pp. 24-44). [www.irma-international.org/article/collaborative-governance-matters-to-e-government-interoperability/122570](http://www.irma-international.org/article/collaborative-governance-matters-to-e-government-interoperability/122570)

### Incentivizing Patients to Live Healthy Lives: Does it Work?

Markus Lungen, Anna Marie Passonand Stephanie Stock (2012). *International Journal of Public and Private Healthcare Management and Economics* (pp. 1-6). [www.irma-international.org/article/incentivizing-patients-live-healthy-lives/68797](http://www.irma-international.org/article/incentivizing-patients-live-healthy-lives/68797)

### Facilitating Knowledge Sharing in E-Governance: Online Spatial Displays as Translating Devices

Jarkko Bambergand Pauliina Lehtonen (2012). *E-Governance and Civic Engagement: Factors and Determinants of E-Democracy* (pp. 149-172). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/facilitating-knowledge-sharing-governance/60077](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/facilitating-knowledge-sharing-governance/60077)