

Effi P. Lambropoulou*

Bureaucracy and anti-corruption in Greece: An analysis of policy failures and the blame game

Bürokratie und Korruptionsbekämpfung in Griechenland: Eine Analyse von Politikversagen und Schuldzuweisungen

<https://doi.org/10.1515/mks-2026-0013>

Abstract: This article analyzes anti-corruption policy and political dynamics in Greece without treating corruption as an objective condition or perception indices as neutral measures of wrongdoing. It focuses on the extensive legislative reforms and oversight bodies established over the past three decades and their limited impact on international rankings and public trust. The study examines how macro-economic conditions shape expert-driven perception indices, how rival parties instrumentalize corruption scandals in political competition, and how these processes affect institutional trust. It finds that Greece's post-2012 improvement in corruption rankings was driven mainly by market liberalization under external conditionality rather than by effective governance reforms. At the same time, trust in political institutions did not increase, while a costly and bureaucratic anti-corruption apparatus expanded with limited results. The article argues that a persistent partisan ›blame game‹ marked by the strategic use of corruption allegations, generates recurrent scandals and superficial reforms that ultimately erode public trust and weaken democratic institutions.

Keywords: Trust, reforms, integrity, corruption, blame game, market liberalization

1 Introduction

Since the 1990s, Greece has ratified all relevant EU and international anti-corruption conventions, including those promoted by the OECD (1997) and the United Nations (2003).

These commitments were accompanied by successive waves of legislative reform and the creation of numerous oversight bodies aimed at preventing and controlling corruption in public administration. Anti-corruption has thus become a central pillar of governance reform.

Despite the extensive institutional and legislative effort, outcomes remain paradoxical. Anti-corruption measures have not resulted into a consistent improvement in Greece's standing in international corruption rankings, nor have they generated sustained increases in citizens' trust in political institutions. At the same time, Greece's performance in perception-based indicators – most notably the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) – has fluctuated in ways that do not straightforwardly correspond to domestic reform efforts, including a relative improvement after 2012 during a period of acute economic crisis. The divergence between policy activism, perception indices, and public trust raises important questions about how anti-corruption is evaluated, communicated, and politically mobilized.

The present study approaches this puzzle by departing from conventional corruption research. Without denying the occurrence of corrupt practices, it treats corruption as a perceived and strategically mobilized construct. It asks, first, how macro-economic conditions shape expert- and elite-driven corruption perception indices; second, how rival political parties mobilize scandal narratives or instrumentalize corruption scandals as part of adversarial political competition; and third, how these dynamics affect public trust in political institutions. By integrating structural conditions, elite-mediated perceptions, and strategic partisan conflict, the study seeks to explain why extensive anti-corruption reforms in Greece coexist with persistent narratives of failure and declining institutional trust.

*Corresponding author: Prof. Effi P. Lambropoulou, PhD,
Panteion University of Social & Political Sciences, School of Social
Sciences, Dpt. Sociology, 136, Syngrou Ave., GR-17681 Athens,
E-Mail: elambro@panteion.gr, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7976-9810>

2 General theories of corruption

Corruption is studied from various disciplinary perspectives, including criminology and sociology. However, theories for explaining corruption, such as principal-agent theory, collective action theory, institutional theory, and game theory have primarily been developed by economists and political scientists. These theories offer different explanations for corruption's persistence.

Economists were driven by corruption's negative impacts on economic growth, trade, and investment (Thede & Karpaty, 2022). Similarly, political scientists have explored political corruption, and corruption in relation to voting behavior, social capital, political culture, and development (Peters & Welch, 1980).

In business and organizational psychology, corruption is studied through the lens of business ethics, focusing on why leaders and employees engage in corrupt practices and how it becomes normalized (Rose-Ackerman, 2002; Nielsen, 2003). Social psychology also offers valuable insights on social norms, group dynamics, and moral decision-making (Dupuy & Neset, 2018; Köbis, Iragorri-Carter, & Starke, 2018; Moore, 2008).

Criminological research on corruption treats it as a serious, often organized form of white-collar crime that drains public resources and undermines institutions. It focuses on the abuse of power and draws on theories such as differential association, strain theory, and situational action theory to explain how practices such as bribery and fraud are learned and perpetuated (e.g., Kolthoff, 2020; Uhl, Herrmann, & Treiber, 2025; see also Anand, Ashforth, & Joshi, 2004). Sociological approaches, by contrast, examine the ›culture‹ of corruption and the normalization of misconduct, viewing it as a phenomenon that adapts to specific social, historical, and cultural contexts (e.g., Tänzler, Maras, & Giannakopoulos, 2012). Moreover, from a systemic or functionalist perspective, sociological approaches regard corruption thriving in the blurred boundary between public duty and private interest, often operating as an informal – albeit illegal – mechanism for accessing resources when formal systems fail (Rothstein & Tegnhammar, 2006; Hiller, 2010; Marquette & Peiffer, 2021).

3 Corruption in Greece: existing interpretations

Until recently, Greek analysts have increasingly examined national corruption, often drawing on earlier political studies and research on democratic governance. Empiri-

cal sociological research, however, remains limited (Prontzas, 2025; Jetton, 2018). For several years, the only empirical work came from Transparency International–Hellas, which relied mainly on public opinion polls to assess corruption levels, but this research ended in 2013 (Public Issue, 2009–2013). Even the intensified interest among economists since 2015, a few years after the crisis onset, has remained restricted to measuring perceptions and estimates (Pitoska, Ziaka, & Liana, 2020) or linking corruption to tax evasion (Litina & Palivos, 2015). Corruption rates are typically quantified through direct counts or estimates, focusing on economic costs and public awareness. For example, a 2010 national survey of 6,114 participants found that 4.4 % had been asked for bribes; the study then extrapolated these findings using census data to estimate the overall impact. While such approaches aim to quantify corruption's scale in Greece, they simplify a highly complex phenomenon (Lambropoulou, 2012b).

3.1 Clientelism, corruption, and social order: exploring the mainstream perspective

Greek analysts generally associate corruption with the country's political and economic development, often linking it to political patronage and clientelism, concepts central to discourse since the 1980s. Although these concepts remain relevant, academic and policy discussions have shifted towards exploring the causes, consequences, and solutions to political corruption.

In political science, clientelism refers to a system where politicians provide resources or privileges to voters in exchange for political support. Scholars distinguish between ›old‹ clientelism, which involves closer patron-client relations in developing countries, and ›new‹ clientelism, which is more prevalent in advanced economies and involves more distant relations, often absorbing social inequalities (Hopkin, 2006). Many Greek experts argue that ›new‹ clientelism better reflects contemporary Greece, seeing it not as an ›inherent cultural trait‹ but as a product of historical events and the state's development (Lyrintzis, 2005, p. 248). They suggest clientelism operated as a mechanism for redistributing wealth and ensuring social stability, especially in the absence of a ›rational welfare system‹, i.e. institutionalized and universalistic welfare system (Mouzelis, 1987). It also involves organized interests, such as trade unions and high-income voters, providing political support in exchange for benefits (Tsoukalas, 1987; Mavrogordatos, 1988).

Apart from clientelism, other scholars attribute Greece's high corruption levels to a weak civil society with low social capital, caused by a lack of trust between citizens and the

state (Jones, Malesios, Iosifides, & Sophoulis, 2008). The low trust is further reinforced by persistent clientelist relations, which are considered a form of ›negative‹ social capital. However, the concept of social capital remains ill-defined and difficult to measure in Greece due to differing interpretations (cf. Poupou, 2010), because social capital in general has not been measured in any common way (Paldam & Svendsen, 2000, pp. 348–354).

Some studies suggest that the key difference in Greece's development is that parliamentarism was established before industrialization, unlike other European countries. During the industrialization period, Greece, like other Balkan nations, was still under Ottoman rule. The ›premature‹ establishment of parliamentarism, without the parallel development of productive forces, led to the formation of a strong state but a weak civil society (Sotiropoulos, 1993). As a result, this imbalance contributed to the rise of corruption, which became one of the negative consequences of the process. Analysts discuss a complex network of interconnected ideas, including clientelism, weak civil society, low trust, and corruption, all feeding into each other. A central issue is the inaccessibility of resources to all citizens, often due to systemic barriers or elite capture (Lambropoulou, 2012a, p. 270).

Elite integrity, an important factor in combating corruption, has not been extensively studied in Greece. Elite integrity primarily concerns the ability of the political elite – both individuals and parties – to establish and maintain trustworthiness with the business and financial elite (Sandholtz & Taagepera, 2005; Welzel, Inglehart, & Klingemann, 2003; Piattoni, 2001). It is meant to reflect not only legal compliance but also ethical behavior based on societal norms. Elite integrity is seen as a manifestation of the rule of law, distinguishing a functioning democracy from a merely formal one (Dutta, 2009; Táiwò, 2022). International research shows that elite integrity, social mobility, accountability, and trust in institutions help fight corruption (Karstedt, 2003, pp. 398–399, 407–409). In Greece, the political elite in particular is often seen as disconnected from the citizens¹ and more influenced by ›Western capital‹, contributing to the dominance of foreign interests over internal

economic growth (Kondylis, 2011).² For Kondylis, ›Western capital‹ refers broadly to Western economic, technological, political, and institutional power structures rather than capital in a narrowly economic sense. In his view, the modern Greek state's clientelist and structurally weak political system often subordinated its primary national mission to internal factional interests. This, he argued, helps explain why Greek capital has historically remained ›larger‹ than the country's domestic capital accumulation.

3.2 Other approaches

Other studies, mainly drawing on moral, case-based reasoning and ontological interpretations, examine corruption as a symptom of modern or post-modern states, political systems, and globalization. These studies view corruption as both a cause and a result of development, moral decay, or societal crisis (Koutsoukis & Sklias, 2005; Chrysafis, 2017). The remaining studies focus on legal aspects, proposing legal amendments and exploring the roles of institutions like the Ombudsman or General Inspector of Public Administration in fighting corruption (e.g., Venetsanopoulou, 2014; Bitzilekis, 2024).

Taken together, existing approaches to corruption in Greece – whether emphasizing clientelism, institutional weaknesses, or socio-political norms – provide valuable insights into the origins and functioning of corrupt practices. However, they remain primarily concerned with explaining the causes, forms, and persistence of corrupt practices, and some of them tend to adopt deterministic, linear cause-and-effect explanations. They offer limited analytical leverage for understanding (a) how corruption is perceived and evaluated by expert communities under changing macro-economic conditions, and (b) how corruption allegations are strategically mobilized within partisan competition. Addressing these gaps requires a shift in analytical focus – from corruption as a social phenomenon to corruption as a constructed perception and a political instrument. The following section develops the theoretical framework that guides this study.

¹ European Parliament, Parliamentary questions, 27/06/2011, E-006139/2011, Question for written answer to the Commission, Rule 117, Andreas Mölzer (NI), Subject: Greek Prime Minister speculating against his own country, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2011-006139+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>; and the four-line answer given by Mr. Rehn on behalf of the Commission, Parliamentary questions, 15/09/2011, E-006139/2011, OJ C 128 E, 03/05/2012, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-006139&language=EN>.

² For Panajotis Kondylis, any form of ›capital‹ – whether economic, geopolitical, or intellectual- is always a mechanism utilized by various social or ideological subjects to establish dominance and expand their power.

4 Theoretical framework of the present study

The present study departs from conventional corruption research in two fundamental ways. It does not examine the prevalence, levels, or cultural embeddedness of corrupt practices – although it does not deny their occurrence, nor does it treat corruption perception indices as neutral reflections of underlying wrongdoing. Thus, the study is neither a theory of corruption causes, or of accountability effectiveness or a theory of institutional reform. Instead, it conceptualizes corruption perceptions as elite-mediated constructions shaped by both structural conditions and strategic political conflict. In this perspective, a country's level of economic development influences how expert and elite communities evaluate governance and produce perception-based indicators such as the CPI (Donchev & Ujhelyi, 2014; Cobham, 2013; Georgiou, 2024). At the same time, rival political parties may promote corruption allegations or instrumentalize corruption scandals in order to establish or maintain political dominance, often irrespective of the broader negative consequences for public trust in political institutions. Under conditions of intense political competition, corruption allegations become a powerful discursive resource whose effectiveness derives from their moral resonance and low informational costs for voters. While such practices can yield short-term electoral gains, their repeated use generates a systemic externality – the erosion of public trust – that remains electorally rational for individual parties. Corruption is therefore approached here not as an objective condition to be measured, but as a perceived and strategically mobilized construct.

4.1 Economic development and the social construction of corruption perceptions

The first pillar of the present analysis examines the relationship between macro-economic conditions and corruption perceptions. Mainstream approaches implicitly assume that perception-based indicators – such as the CPI – approximate real levels of corruption. By contrast, this study builds on constructivist and institutionalist insights to argue that such indices reflect expert and elite interpretations of governance environments, which are themselves influenced by macro-structural conditions (Treisman, 2000).

Economic development constitutes a key background variable in this process. Higher levels of economic development tend to be associated with stronger state capacity, more institutionalized bureaucracies, and greater interna-

tional embeddedness, all of which shape how domestic and transnational experts interpret and evaluate governance practices. Conversely, economic crisis, fiscal instability, and institutional volatility create environments in which governance is more likely to be perceived as deficient or suspect, independently of measurable changes in actual corrupt behavior. Thus, corruption perception indices are treated here as context-sensitive evaluative constructs, not as direct proxies for corruption.

4.2 Strategic scandal instrumentalization in party competition

The second pillar of the present analysis conceptualizes corruption scandals as strategic political instruments deployed within adversarial party competition. In contemporary competitive democracies, parties operate under a 'permanent campaign' logic, seeking continuous reputational advantage over their rivals. Within this environment, corruption allegations function as a particularly powerful delegitimizing resource, given their strong moral value and low informational costs for voters.

Building on theories of strategic framing, negative partisanship, and blame attribution, this study examines how political actors strategically deploy corruption allegations within partisan competition in order to shape public perceptions and contest political legitimacy (Thompson, 2000). Scandals are therefore not treated as exogenous revelations of wrongdoing, but as discursively mediated events whose political salience depends on elite promotion and partisan competition.

The same logic applies across the ideological spectrum. As will be shown in the alternation in accusations among rival parties, they engage in reciprocal scandalization, deploying corruption narratives whenever it is strategically advantageous, regardless of their previous positions or the broader systemic consequences. Anti-corruption discourse thus operates as a competitive weapon rather than a purely accountability-enhancing mechanism.

4.3 Systemic externalities: public trust as a collective cost

While instrumentalizing corruption allegations may yield short-term partisan gains, repeated scandalization generates a broader systemic effect: the erosion of public trust in political institutions. Yet these collective costs rarely discourage political actors, who remain primarily concerned with gaining an advantage over their rivals rather than

with the longer-term harm to the reputation of the political system as a whole and to the country's international image (Easton, 1975).

4.4 Integrated theoretical expectation

In sum, the framework advances a dual expectation. On the one hand, macro-economic conditions shape elite-driven corruption perception indices, independent of actual corruption levels. On the other hand, party competition systematically produces the strategic use of corruption scandals as tools of delegitimation, contributing further to the volatility and politicization of corruption perceptions. The interaction of these structural and strategic dynamics helps explain fluctuations in perceived corruption and declining institutional trust without presuming corresponding changes in underlying corrupt practices.

Guided by this theoretical framework, the empirical section examines how economic conditions, scandal instrumentalization, and public trust interact in Greece. The following section therefore outlines the data, methods, and case evidence used in the analysis.

5 Research design, Data and Methods

5.1 Research design

The study adopts a qualitative-interpretive research design, focusing on Greece over the period 1990–2025, with particular emphasis on the post-2009 economic crisis period. Rather than measuring corruption as an objective phenomenon, the study examines how corruption is constructed, perceived, and strategically mobilized within political and institutional discourse. The analysis combines a) institutional analysis, b) longitudinal interpretation of governance indicators, c) analysis of political scandals and public rhetoric, d) and secondary analysis of survey and administrative data relating to public trust and corruption perceptions.

5.2 Data sources

The analysis draws on five categories of material:

(1) *Political and media discourse.* The study analyses examples of corruption rhetoric and scandalization processes in Greek public life as expressed in national and interna-

tional media, parliamentary debates, and broader political discourse since the early 1990s, with particular emphasis on the period from the onset of the economic crisis in 2009/10 to the present. Scandalization refers to the sustained public amplification and political circulation of corruption allegations through media and partisan discourse.

(2) *Institutional, legislative and policy documents.* The analysis of anti-corruption reforms, institutions and governance mechanisms draws on European Commission reports, OECD reports, reports and policy documents of the Greek Ministry of Justice, of the General Inspector of Public Administration, of the Inspectors-Controllers of Public Administration, and publications of Transparency International-Hellas.

(3) *Administrative and judicial statistics.* Empirical evidence on corruption-related offenses and institutional control mechanisms is drawn from Crime Statistics of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) for the period 1980–2023, including a) registered offenses reported by the Hellenic Police, and b) court conviction statistics, as well as prosecutions and investigations reported by anti-corruption authorities.

(4) *Survey data and governance indicators* on trust, corruption perceptions and institutional performance. The study draws on survey datasets to examine public trust, corruption perceptions, and evaluations of institutional performance. Survey data are drawn from the European Social Survey (ESS), European Values Study (EVS), and World Values Survey (WVS) to analyse (a) trust in political institutions, (b) confidence in politics, (c) perceptions of corruption, and (d) attitudes toward unethical practices.

The analysis also utilizes international governance and corruption evaluation indices, including Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Sustainable Governance Indicators (SGI) of the Bertelsmann Stiftung, the Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index (EIU Democracy Index), and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI).

5.3 Operationalization

Corruption perceptions are operationalized through perception-based survey items and international governance evaluations, including the CPI, WVS corruption items, and governance indicators relating to institutional accountability (SGI, WGI, EIU Democracy Index).

Public trust is operationalized through survey measures of confidence in political institutions, politicians, and representative bodies (ESS, EVS, WVS).

Strategic scandal instrumentalization is examined qualitatively through media discourse, parliamentary debate,

Table 1: Timeline of political scandals, anti-corruption reforms, corruption perceptions, and political trust in Greece

Period	Major events	Anti-corruption reforms	CPI trend	Trust trend
1990s (revelation 1988)	Koskotas scandal	Initial reforms	decline	distrust rises
2010s (revelation 2006–08)	Siemens' scandal	Further reforms	decline	distrust continues to rise
2009–2018	Debt crisis	Troika conditionality-reforms	sharp decline	collapse
2016–2020 (revelation February 2018)	Novartis case	National Anticorruption Plan reforms	moderate increase	low trust persists
2020–2025	Restructuring of anti-corruption oversight	National Transparency Authority	fluctuation	distrust remains

partisan accusations, and major corruption cases during periods of intensified political competition.

Anti-corruption governance and institutional reform are operationalized through legislative frameworks, policy documents, and reports produced by national and international oversight bodies.

Corruption-related activity and enforcement are operationalized through administrative and judicial statistics on offenses, convictions, investigations, and prosecutions.

5.4 Limitations

The analysis faces several data limitations. The first limitation is that Greece has participated only in the half rounds of the ESS and EVS surveys, thus limiting longitudinal comparability. The second challenge is that court statistics (i.e., conviction data) are available only up to 2010 and are therefore used indicatively. To partially address these constraints, the study supplements official judicial statistics with reports from the General Inspector of Public Administration and the Inspectors-Controllers of Public Administration.

6 Empirical analysis

The empirical analysis proceeds in three steps. It first examines strategic scandalization in party competition, then evaluates anti-corruption reforms and measurable corruption trends, and finally assesses their relationship to public trust and corruption perceptions. Table 1 provides a chronological overview of the main developments examined.

6.1 Political scandalization and the ›blame game‹

Beginning in 2009, in the aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis, Greece entered a sovereign debt crisis marked

by fiscal instability, successive bailout agreements with the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as well as austerity policies and intensified external oversight of economic governance and public administration. The crisis profoundly affected political competition, public trust, and debates surrounding corruption, accountability, and state reform, while also generating significant social unrest, including local riots and nationwide protests.

During the debt crisis (2009–2018), international media often depicted Greece and its citizens as both bankrupt and corrupt, with austerity measures framed as justified punishment. Then-Prime Minister George Papandreou reinforced this narrative in a December 2009 BBC interview, attributing Greece's economic struggles to systemic corruption, clientelism, and tax evasion, which he blamed on the previous administration. He pledged to address these issues through government reforms (*BBC News*, 2009). A month later, in January 2010, while negotiating EC and IMF support in Davos/Switzerland, Mr. Papandreou speaking with representatives of twenty-five foreign newspapers, shifted his stance (*BBC News*, 2010). He asserted that »corruption is not in Greeks' DNA« (Mourtis, 2010) and could be healed. This change in rhetoric subtly transferred responsibility from political figures (previous administration) to the citizens, reinforcing the idea that the economic crisis was a result of their corruption. Such arguments have been repeatedly employed by politicians, businesspeople and local anti-corruption NGOs (Lambropoulou, 2012a).

However, the scandals and corruption cases that shook Greek public opinion were less about the actions of citizens or public administration and more about the ongoing power struggle between rival political parties. In this context, exposing systemic corruption became less a means of addressing the issue and more a tool for political leverage. Accordingly, ›blame game‹ refers here to the recurrent strategic attribution of responsibility and corruption allegations among rival political parties for purposes of delegitimation and electoral competition.

Corruption became a major issue in Greece for the first time in the early 1990s when Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou (PASOK government³) and several ministers were implicated in a financial scandal involving a private bank.⁴ He was accused of directing state corporations to transfer funds to the bank, allegedly benefiting his political party. This was the first time a Greek Prime Minister faced corruption charges.

Public trust in politics and justice eroded further due to political debates and legal controversies before the case was tried in a Special Court (Greek Constitution, Art. 86), ordered by the Greek Parliament. The Prime Minister accepted political responsibility but denied criminal wrongdoing (i.e. intent or knowledge of wrongdoing) and refused to appear in court. The trial, held from 1991 to 1992, ended with his acquittal by a narrow vote (7–6/13). Over time, it became evident that the accusation of the Prime Minister's involvement in passive bribery had been orchestrated by the leader of the main opposition party (Konstantinos Mitsotakis, Nea Dimokratia⁵) for political reasons.

Over the thirty years following this notorious case, it became routine for the main opposition party to expose ›scandals‹ and accuse the government of corruption, with the government in power countering by accusing the previous administration. These denunciations typically occurred whenever a government faced difficulties, serving to distract citizens from its political choices, failures or problems, or when the main opposition party's ratings were falling. The scandalization of political life and its harmful impact on eroding and destabilizing public trust in democratic institutions, however, were largely ignored.

It was only after 2004 that the rhetoric around *scandals* resurfaced at the forefront of the *corruption* debate, becoming a significant issue alongside the growing influence of TI and its international reports. TI is a global NGO dedicated to combating corruption and promoting transparency, accountability, and integrity across all levels and sectors of society. One of its most notable tools is the CPI, which ranks countries based on the perceived corruption of their public sectors, as assessed by experts and business executives.

The rise of corruption rhetoric as a distinct political narrative coincided with the emergence of the Siemens case in September 2005. The case first came to light after Siemens was listed on the New York Stock Exchange in March 2001,

and following the confiscation of three Swiss bank accounts in June 2000, which were operated as trust funds for Siemens AG. The case involved illicit dealings between Siemens and Greek government officials and executives of Greece's dominant telecommunications organization, OTE, during the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, particularly regarding the purchase of security systems (Lambropoulou, 2015). This was in addition to purchases made in the 1990s by OTE. Siemens had engaged in illicit payments to secure contracts in various countries around the world, including Italy, Libya, and Liechtenstein, with such payments regarded as part of the company's ›business model‹. A parliamentary commission of inquiry had already estimated in 2011 that the scandal had cost the country approximately two billion euros.

In February 2017, eleven years after the investigations had begun, the trial related to the scandal in Greece began at the Three-Member Court of Appeals (Court of First Instance for Serious Crimes). A total of 64 defendants were involved, including Greek and German nationals, former Siemens Hellas executives, and OTE executives, all of whom were charged with bribery. In 2019, 22 individuals were sentenced to prison terms ranging from seven to 15 years for corruption. However, in September 2022, after sixteen years of legal proceedings and numerous delays, the Athens Court of Appeal acquitted 20 of the 22 convicted individuals. Even Michalis Christoforakos, the former head of Siemens' Greek subsidiary – who had fled to Germany at the start of the investigation – was not sentenced because the statute of limitations had expired.

According to the center-right newspaper *Kathimerini*, this outcome illustrates ›the inability of the political and judicial system to complete a 16-year investigation‹ (according to Rafenberg, 2022). Furthermore, the news website *News247* remarked, ›In Greece, the elite believe that the citizens are either so resigned or so cynical (or both) that they will not react, no matter what. That is the reason why even the pretense of justice is abandoned, why injustice is carried out so defiantly, and why there is such arrogance and contempt toward the citizens‹ (Albanis, 2022).

In the meantime, in February 2018, the Novartis⁶ case became another major episode in the broader process of political scandalization, when Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras brought the affair before Parliament and accused high-profile politicians, as well as doctors and senior civil servants, of accepting kickbacks from the multinational pharmaceutical company. The allegations were based on the supposed

³ PASOK-Panhellenic Socialist Movement is a social-democratic party.

⁴ The scandal is referred to as the ›Koskotas scandal‹, named after George Koskotas, a Greek-American millionaire who was indicted in 1988 on charges of forgery and embezzlement.

⁵ *Nea Dimokratia* is a centre-right party.

⁶ *Novartis* is a global pharmaceutical and biotechnology corporation headquartered in Basel, Switzerland.

testimonies of three whistleblowers. The case implicated two former Prime Ministers, Antonis Samaras and Panagiotis Pikramenos, along with eight ministers from the previous coalition (center-right and social democratic party)⁷ government (2012–2014). The charges included active and passive bribery, as well as disloyalty.

However, it became apparent that the evidence to support the charges was lacking, and the whistleblowers' testimonies were questioned. It emerged that their accounts had either been fabricated or that the whistleblowers themselves were involved in the affair. As a result, the prosecutor closed the case files one after the other.

In response, nearly one year after the initial allegations, the Tsipras government reintroduced the case in Parliament in January 2019, possibly in reaction to a significant decline in voter support ahead of the upcoming elections (July 2019). Opposition parties, particularly *Nea Dimokratia* and *Kinima Allagis*,⁸ were quick to react, accusing the Secretary of the General Secretariat against Corruption of a conflict of interest and suggesting the abuse of power by an advisor to one of the Cabinet ministers. The atmosphere in Parliament became tense, with heated debates taking place daily. This is a typical example of the blame game between rival parties, where proceedings often descend into political rhetoric, with accusations frequently serving as strategic attempts to discredit opponents. It underscores how intense party competition can transform legal and political processes into instruments of manipulation rather than justice.

According to U.S. federal prosecutors, the Greek subsidiary of Novartis later admitted to paying kickbacks between 2012 and 2015 to employees of public hospitals in order to boost sales of its products. Novartis held a commanding position in the Greek healthcare market, which allowed it to inflate prices, even as Greece was grappling with a severe financial crisis. Greek officials have estimated that the scheme cost the state approximately three billion euros (\$3.25 billion) in inflated prices (Agence France-Presse, 2024).

The cases discussed so far illustrate how corruption allegations function as recurring instruments of partisan delegitimation rather than solely as mechanisms of institutional accountability. At the same time, the Siemens affair demonstrates that declining trust and negative corruption

perceptions were not driven solely by the political exploitation of scandals. Together, the cases suggest that both political instrumentalization and perceived shortcomings in institutional accountability, sometimes reflected in the slow and often limited effectiveness of judicial proceedings, may reinforce corruption perceptions and contribute to declining confidence in political institutions.

6.2 Corruption prevention: expansion of anticorruption institutions and reforms

Alongside these processes of political scandalization, successive governments expanded the institutional architecture of anti-corruption governance. Greece has developed strong anti-corruption legislation over the years, addressing both the public and private sectors. It has ratified various conventions from the EU, Council of Europe, OECD, and UN, integrating them into national law. Key laws, like Law 3023/2002 and Law 3242/2004 (Art.16), aim to ensure transparency in political party financing and combat political corruption.

Several institutions were established to fight corruption, such as the Police Division of Internal Affairs (1999), the General Inspector of Public Administration (2002), and an expanded role for the Ombudsman (2003). Moreover, public administration is subject to parliamentary and judicial control. Parliamentary oversight is carried out particularly by six standing committees and independent authorities, like the Ombudsman and the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP). Judicial control is provided by administrative courts, the Council of State, and the Court of Audit, with the Court of Audit playing a vital role in overseeing public expenditures.

In May 2013, Law 4152 established a National Coordinator for anticorruption, supported by a committee of government executives, high-ranking civil servants, heads of anti-corruption services, and a small advisory body of experts. The framework for the National Coordinator was based on the »Roadmap for technical assistance in the field of corruption« (European Commission, 2012; 2014; Ministry of Justice, 2013). The roadmap represented a government commitment and was a key component of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in October 2012 between the European Commission-Task Force for Greece (TFGR)⁹ and the Ministries of Administrative Reform and e-Governance, Finance,

⁷ Of the center-right party *Nea Dimokratia* and the social-democratic party *PASOK*.

⁸ It is a coalition between the party of *PASOK* and two other smaller parties founded in March 2018 under the name »Movement for Change«. Five parties are currently participating in the coalition, including *PASOK*.

⁹ The TFGR was established in July 2011 by José Manuel Barroso, the President of the European Commission at the time, to deliver and coordinate the technical assistance required for Greece to meet its obligations under the economic adjustment program.

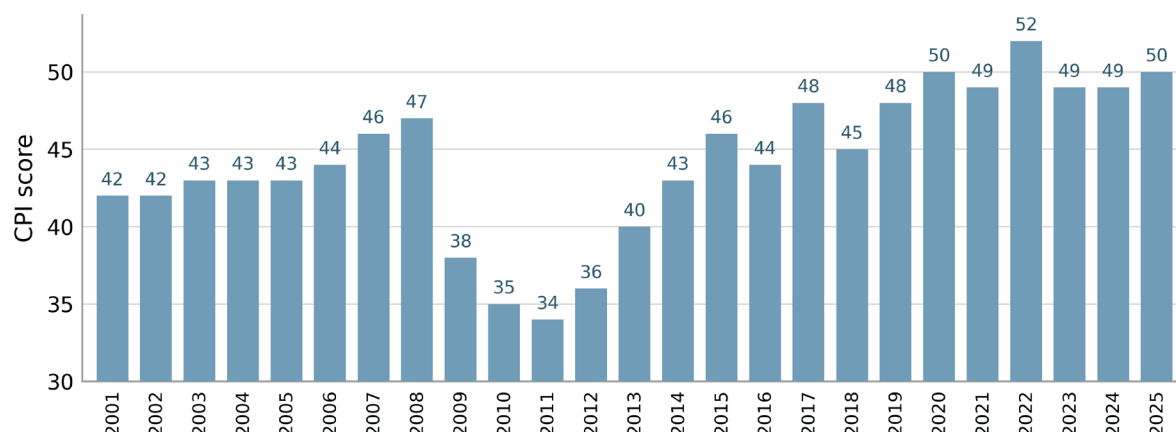


Figure 1: Corruption Perception Index – Greece (2001–2025)

Source: <https://statbase.org/data/grc-corruption-perceptions-index/>

Justice, and Public Order.¹⁰ The National Coordinator, reporting directly to the Prime Minister, led 12 control services and independent authorities involved in the process. The TFGR focused its attention, among others, on »helping the various Greek institutions involved with anti-money laundering and financial crime [...] to fight *tax evasion* [...] and on the adoption of a legal and procedural framework to combat corruption in the *tax administration*« (emphasis by E.L.) (European Commission-TFGR, 2012, pp. 13, 14; cf. Kurtz & Schrank, 2007).

In March 2015, the newly elected coalition government (25 January 2015), which included both leftist and far-right parties (SYRIZA-ANEL),¹¹ replaced the National Coordinator with the General Secretariat Against Corruption, which consisted of thirty employees (2015/2016: 26) and operated under the supervision of a general secretary reporting to the Deputy Minister of Justice (Law 4320/2015).

A year later, in 2016, Greece, the OECD, and the European Commission launched a joint project aimed at increasing integrity and reducing corruption. The project focused on enhancing the capacity of Greek authorities to implement the revised 2015 National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP). The project emphasized combating corruption in the private sector, strengthening law enforcement, raising public awareness, and supporting capacity building. It concluded in January 2018 (OECD, 2018).

Interestingly, in August 2019, the center-right government, Nea Dimokratia, shortly after assuming office, abolished six anti-corruption bodies and replaced the General Secretariat with an independent authority, the *National Au-*

thority of Transparency (EAD), under Law 4622/2019, Article 82 (National Transparency Authority, 2022, 2024). Separate internal control units, established in 2016, operate across 13 of the 20 ministries under the Authority. In 2020, the government further merged the Office of the Economic Crime Prosecutor with the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor, representing the latest in the Greek government's efforts to combat corruption.

The developments described above illustrate how anti-corruption governance continued to expand and evolve under changing political administrations and crisis-driven reform agendas. The expansion of anti-corruption institutions raises the question of whether these reforms corresponded to changes in corruption perceptions or measurable corruption-related activity.

6.3 Corruption perceptions versus measurable corruption trends

Greece implemented substantial reforms aimed at strengthening integrity, transparency, and anti-corruption governance. Nevertheless, its CPI score improved only modestly over the long term. After falling from around 50/100 in the late 1980s and 1990s to 38 in 2009, the CPI score reached its lowest level (34) at the height of the economic crisis in 2011 (80th/183 countries). It then recovered gradually, reaching 52 in 2022 (51st/180) before declining again to 49 in 2023 (59th/180), and rising slightly to 50 in 2025 (56th/182), remaining broadly within the range observed since the end of the economic crisis (TI-CPI, 1996–1998, 2003–2025) (Figure 1).

Moreover, the 2017 results of the WVS7 revealed a widespread perception of corruption in Greece, with 87 % of the sample acknowledging varying degrees of corrup-

¹⁰ On 27 January 2015, the Ministry of Public Order was renamed the Ministry of Citizen Protection.

¹¹ Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) – Independent Greeks (ANEL).

tion in the country. Specifically, respondents identified high levels of corruption in state institutions (71 %) and the media (79.2 %), while majorities also perceived corruption in public authorities (56.3 %), local authorities (58.5 %), and among business executives (52 %) (WVS7, 2017: Q112–Q117; WVS7, 2018, pp. 189–193: Tables 28.1–28.5). Similarly high (85.4 %) are the rates of acknowledging varying degrees of corruption (scale 6–10) in the country in 2025 (WVS8 2025, p. 163: Table 28); however, unlike the previous wave, this round does not include any institution-specific items, and therefore provides no disaggregated information on the institutions concerned.¹²

The media in Greece has played a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions of corruption. The commercialization of the sector and the deregulation of the state broadcasting monopoly in 1989, which facilitated more market-oriented and tabloid forms of reporting, created new opportunities for influencing political discourse (Papathanassopoulos, 2004). The tabloidization of news coverage (Johansson, 2020) has been important both in communicating public distrust and in contributing to the scandalization of political life (Luhmann, 1996, pp. 61–62, 82–84). Moreover, these changes in the media sector coincided with the growing involvement of business interests, as entrepreneurs from shipping, banking, construction, real estate, tourism, and other sectors acquired significant influence over major media outlets (Hallin & Papathanassopoulos, 2002).

Despite the widespread perception of corruption, 65 % of the WVS7 sample believes that the risk of being held accountable for giving or receiving a bribe, gift, or favor in return for public service is high (WVS7, 2017: Q120;¹³ WVS7, 2018, p. 139: Table 31). By 2025, this perception declines sharply to 19.6 % (scale 7–10), with no explanation provided by the survey authors (WVS8, 2025, p. 165: Table 29).

Justice statistics also reveal that crimes classified as »crimes against duties and service« have remained consistently low over the years. Between 1980 and 2005, they represented only 0.01 to 0.02 % of total recorded offenses, while from 2006 to 2023, these crimes accounted for only 0.01–0.02 % of total recorded offenses, increasing to 0.04–0.12 % between 2006 and 2023 (ELSTAT, 1980–1996, 1997–2023, Table B1). In terms of convictions, crimes »against duties and service« accounted for 0.09 % to 0.12 % of all convicted offenders after 1998 (ELSTAT, 1980–2010, Table B4). Among them, felonies represent a small portion – between 1.6 %

and 4.3 % – while misdemeanors account for the remaining 95.7 % to 98.4 % (ELSTAT, 1980–1996, 1997–2023, Table B1).

Similar findings emerge from various anti-corruption bodies. For example, from 2011 to 2016, only a small percentage of the 8,614 cases submitted to the General Inspector of Public Administration (GIPA) for investigation were related to corruption. These cases accounted for just 0.6 % to 4 % of the total over the seven-year period, with corruption-related cases representing 2.4 % of the 1,123 cases in 2017 (GIPA 2017, 31; GIPA 2018, 28, 34). The rate was even lower between 2004 and 2010, though it is important to note that during this period, the field was not as overregulated as it is now, which directly impacted the number of charges, prosecutions and convictions (GIPA, 2012, pp. 28, 39; 2013, pp. 26–27).

Furthermore, in the 2015 and 2016 Inspectors-Controllers' of Public Administration reports – which include all prosecutions of civil servants and police officers categorized as »corruption crimes« (n: 267 and 310, respectively) – bribery, disloyalty, embezzlement, forgery, and money laundering, accounted for 10.7 % and 13.4 % of the total prosecutions (SEEDD, 2015/2016, pp. 344, 346–347; 2016/2017, pp. 273–274).

Overall, the evidence suggests that measurable corruption-related activity remained comparatively limited in official statistics and oversight reports, whereas corruption perceptions and public narratives conveyed a broader and more pervasive image of corruption within political and institutional life. Against this backdrop, anti-corruption policy became an increasingly prominent field of institutional experimentation, marked by a series of reforms, organizational restructuring, and externally supported initiatives that received considerable public attention and governmental promotion. This divergence is consistent with the study's argument that corruption perceptions are shaped not only by measurable corruption-related activity but also by broader political, institutional, and discursive processes.

6.4 Public trust and institutional legitimacy

The described blame game, together with the slow pace and limited effectiveness of corruption investigations and prosecutions, contributed to the low level of trust citizens had in the country's political system, particularly during the economic crisis, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 presents levels of public trust in three political institutions – *political parties, politicians, and the parliament* – across three rounds of the European Social Survey

¹² In contrast to the large samples used in the EVS, ESS and WVS7 rounds (2,700–3,892 respondents), Greece's participation in the WVS8 is based on smaller samples of approximately 1,200 respondents.

¹³ Author's calculations using data from WVS7, 2017–2022, Online Analysis, scale 7–10, and WVS8 2025, scale 7–10.

Table 2: Trust in political institutions, (ESS5) 2010/11, (ESS10) 2020/21, (ESS11) 2024.

Institution	ESS5-2010 No Trust at All	ESS10- 2020 No Trust at All	ESS11- 2024 No Trust at All	ESS5-2010 Low Trust	ESS10- 2020 Low Trust	ESS11- 2024 Low Trust	ESS5-2010 High Trust	ESS10- 2020 High Trust	ESS11- 2024 High Trust	ESS5-2010 Complete Trust	ESS10- 2020 Complete Trust	ESS11- 2024 Complete Trust	ESS5-2010 Neither Nor	ESS10- 2020 Neither Nor	ESS11- 2024 Neither Nor
Political Parties	47.2	8.6	15.0	38.5	43.1	54.7	1.8	9.7	6.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	12.3	38.4	23.9
Politicians	47.2	8.6	16.5	38.9	42.7	54.4	1.06	9.9	5.9	0.1	0.3	0.0	12.7	38.6	23.5
Parliament	36.9	5.8	10.4	37.2	32.7	50.6	4.5	16.8	7.56	0.6	0.3	0.3	20.8	44.4	31.2

(ESS5, 2010/11; ESS10, 2020/21; ESS11, 2024)¹⁴ on a scale from zero («no trust at all») to ten («complete trust»). For each institution, it reports the percentage of respondents expressing no trust at all (0), low trust (1–3), neither trust nor distrust (4–6), high trust (7–9),¹⁵ and complete trust (10).

Across all three institutions, trust is consistently low, with most respondents reporting either *no trust at all* or *low trust*, and very small shares expressing high or complete trust. The particularly high levels of «no trust at all» recorded in the 5th round (2011) are likely linked to the severe economic crisis affecting Greece at the time, which intensified public dissatisfaction with political institutions and eroded confidence in their performance. By 2021, extreme distrust declines sharply and shifts toward low trust and more neutral attitudes. However, by 2024, distrust rises again, with *low trust* becoming the most common response and a noticeable increase in those reporting *no trust at all*.

Across the survey waves, the pattern indicates persistently weak confidence in political institutions, with only a brief softening of attitudes in 2021 and renewed scepticism by 2024. Although parliament consistently performed slightly better than parties and politicians, it also experienced high levels of distrust.

The absence of trust in politics and politicians does not necessarily signify a rejection of democracy, which remains highly valued by Greek citizens (98.3% affirm the «importance of democratic governance»), as shown in the 7th wave of the World Values Survey (WVS7, Koniordos, 2018, pp. 94, 97: Table B13.4 / E250). Nevertheless, as expected, satisfaction with the functioning of the government is especially low, scoring just 4.2 on a 1–10 scale (1 = *not at all satisfied*; 10 = *very satisfied*). Low satisfaction is consistent with the perceived quality of democratic governance in Greece, which stands at 5.4. These two variables are statistically significant (paired t-test, p-value = 0.00), suggesting a strong relationship between the perceived shortcomings in democratic governance and dissatisfaction with the political system (Fanaras, 2018, p. 23: Fig. 15).

In this context, Greece's position in the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) *Democracy Index* for 2018 was 7.29 out of 10, placing the country 39th out of 167 countries. The lowest score was in the «functioning of government» category, which stood at 5.36 (EIU, 2019, pp. 13, 14, 37). In comparison, Greece's rank was 8.13 in 2006, placing it 18th out of 167 countries (EIU, 2019, p. 41). After a decade of decline (2010–

¹⁴ In Greece, the data collection periods for ESS were: Round 5, 06.05.2011–05.07.2011 (n=2,715); Round 10, 09.11.2021–23.05.2022 (n=2,799); and Round 11, 05.02.2024–09.05.2024 (n=2,757).

¹⁵ Author's calculations using data from ESS5, ESS10, ESS11 Online Analysis.

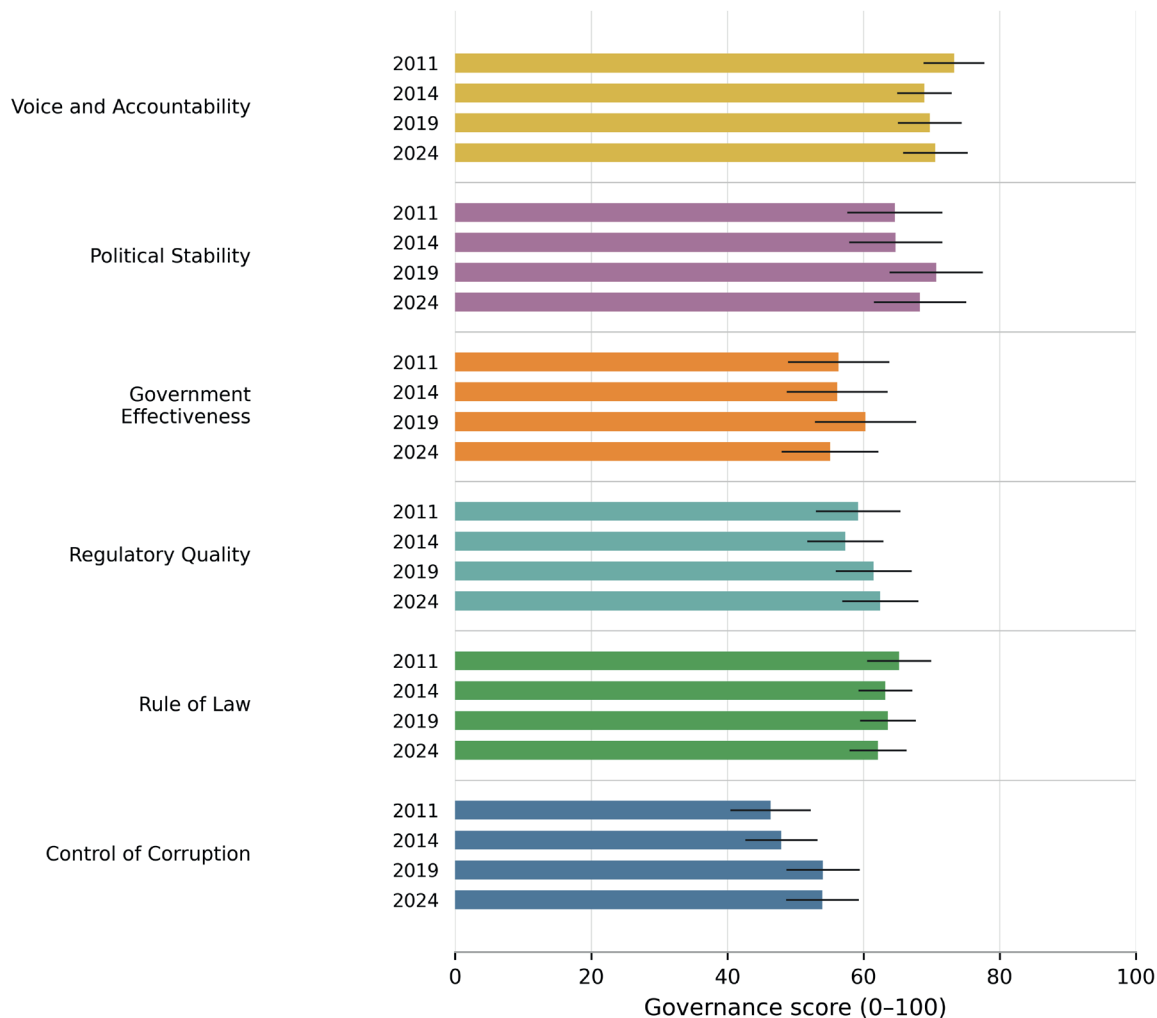


Figure 2: Worldwide Governance Indicators – Greece (2011, 2014, 2019, 2024)

Source: Graph View, World Bank Group, 2023, Interactive Data Access, Worldwide Governance Indicators.

2020: 7.92–7.39; EIU, 2024, p. 17: Table 3), Greece's ranking rebounded in 2023 to 8.14, matching its 2006 position, and it moved up to 20th place out of 167 countries (EIU, 2024, p. 9: Table 2). Unfortunately, in 2024, Greece again moved down to 25th place (–5) out of 167 countries (8.07), with its »functioning of government« score declining from 7.14 in 2023 to 6.79 (EIU, 2025, pp. 15–16: Table 2). The »functioning of government« indicator has consistently ranked the lowest among Greece's governance metrics.

The empirical evidence suggest a persistent gap between support for democratic principles and confidence in the functioning of democratic institutions in Greece. While democratic governance remains strongly valued, low evaluations of government performance, widespread perceptions of corruption, and declining confidence in accountability mechanisms point to a broader crisis of institutional trust. Such conditions appear to be reinforced by the

interaction of governance shortcomings, political scandalization, and media dynamics.

At the same time, the observed gap raises a broader question: how can widespread distrust and negative corruption evaluations coexist with strong moral disapproval of corruption among citizens? The following section addresses this apparent paradox by examining attitudes toward unethical behaviour alongside governance and corruption perception indicators.

6.5 Market liberalization, governance evaluations and Greece's CPI ranking

The European Values Study (EVS) and the World Values Survey (WVS) consistently show very high levels of moral disapproval toward bribery and related unethical practices

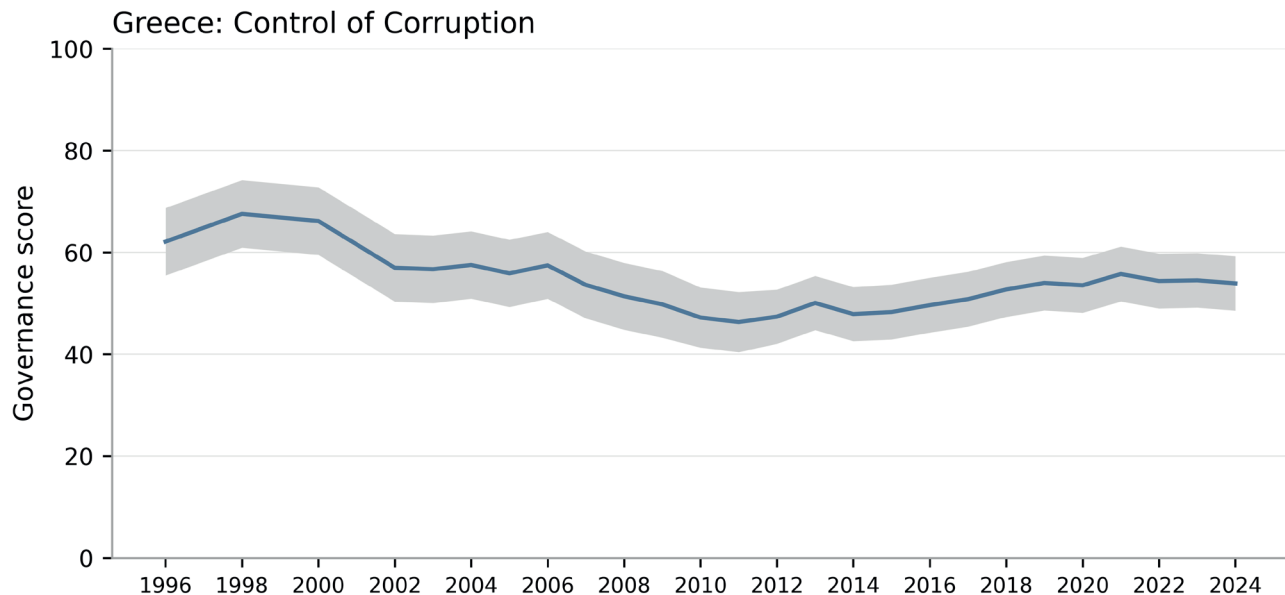


Figure 3: Worldwide Governance Indicators: Control of corruption – Greece (1996–2025)

Source: Country Data View, World Bank Group, Interactive Data Access, Worldwide Governance Indicators.

among Greek respondents. Across survey waves, over 90 % condemned »corruption-bribery«, large majorities (over 81 %) affirmed compliance with the law, and substantial shares (over 87 %) rejected behaviors such as tax evasion and fare evasion (EVS 1999/2000; 2008/2009; WVS7, 2017).

The contrast between widespread moral disapproval of corruption and persistently low integrity and transparency evaluations suggests that corruption perceptions cannot be reduced to individual moral tolerance or acceptance of unethical conduct alone, but are embedded in broader political and institutional narratives. Although processes of moral disengagement – through which individuals justify or rationalize unethical practices – may partly account for the disparity (Diefendorff & Mehta, 2007, p. 967), the persistence of low integrity and transparency evaluations despite widespread normative disapproval points to the need for a more careful examination of how corruption perceptions are formed and mediated across survey waves.

If corruption perceptions cannot be explained solely by citizens' moral attitudes, attention must also be directed toward the broader criteria through which corruption and governance are evaluated internationally.

The CPI increasingly reflects broader evaluations of governance performance and economic development (Pelagidis, 2014), with corruption viewed primarily as a challenge tied to political and economic liberalization. It is also a key factor in determining a nation-state's ranking on the index of economic freedom.

One of the primary data sources for the construction of the CPI is the Sustainable Governance Index (SGI) of Bertels-

mann Stiftung. The SGI evaluates governance performance through indicators of executive capacity and accountability, assessed by national experts.

SGI indicators reveal a pattern of gradual improvement in Greece's governance performance after 2011. Overall *governance scores* increased from 4.54/10 in 2011 to 6.6 in 2024, accompanied by sustained gains in *executive accountability* and *executive capacity* (Bertelsmann, 2014, p. 17; 2018, pp. 134–136; Bertelsmann, 2020, 2023).¹⁶ While governance performance remained comparatively weak during the height of the economic crisis, successive SGI rounds recorded progressively stronger evaluations across governance and accountability dimensions, including *democratic government* (vertical, diagonal, and horizontal accountability; score 7.4 and 18th/30 countries) and *horizontal accountability* (independent supervisory bodies, rule of law, legislature; score 7.8 and 16th/30 countries) in the most recent assessments (Schiller & Hellmann, 2025, p. 81: Fig. 47; p. 52: Fig. 28; p. 54: Fig. 29; see also pp. 110–112).¹⁷

The improvement in SGI governance evaluations coincided with Greece's improved CPI performance after 2012. By contrast, democracy-related indicators appear less closely associated with changes in the CPI. As noted in Section 6.4,

¹⁶ Indicators are no longer available online under these terms.

¹⁷ These are the updated terms for indicators, now encompassing more variables than in earlier versions.

the EIU Democracy Index shows only modest fluctuations in Greece's democratic performance during this period (see also the Bertelsmann 2018, p. 15: Fig. 2; 2020), while the CPI improved from 43 to 50/100. The differing trajectories of these indicators suggest that improvements in corruption perceptions were more closely associated with governance capacity and policy performance than with broader assessments of democratic quality.

Notably, Greece's *control of corruption* score remained below 50/100 until 2017, when it increased to 50.82/100 (Indicator ID: BS.SGI.138, World Bank Group, 2024). Figure 2 provides an overview of governance indicators in a 14-year time series in Greece, while Figure 3 illustrates the control of corruption, as measured by the Governance Indicator, since 1996 (World Bank Group, 2024). SGI's Control of Corruption indicator should not be confused with CPI. While the CPI measures perceptions of public-sector corruption, the SGI indicator is broader and assesses the extent to which corruption is effectively prevented, detected, and sanctioned through institutional safeguards, accountability mechanisms, and the enforcement of anti-corruption policies (e.g. the transparency of government decision-making; rules on party financing and campaign funding; the ability of courts and prosecutors to investigate and sanction corruption).

The findings so far imply that shifts in governance and corruption perception indicators may have been influenced more by macro-economic stabilization and externally driven institutional reforms than by demonstrable changes in recorded corruption offenses. The findings support the theoretical expectation that corruption perception indices reflect broader evaluations of governance environments rather than direct measurements of corruption itself.

7 Discussion and Conclusions

The preceding analysis allows for several broader conclusions regarding corruption perceptions, anti-corruption governance, and political trust in Greece.

The evidence suggests that the slight improvement in the CPI was associated more closely with market liberalization measures and externally driven governance reforms implemented during the economic crisis than with demonstrable improvements in corruption control or democratic quality. In this sense, the improvement appears to reflect more favorable evaluations of governance performance among expert and business respondents.

Meanwhile, the number of authorities tasked with combating corruption has increased. The original Coordinator on Anti-Corruption evolved into a Secretariat and was later

replaced by an Independent Authority with substantially expanded personnel and responsibilities. As noted earlier, Greece, in addition to the National Transparency Authority, has three judicial bodies – the Council of State, the Court of Audit, and the administrative courts – that also play a role in corruption control, particularly within public administration. Furthermore, four supervisory institutions, including the Bank of Greece and the Capital Market Commission, are integral components of Greece's anti-corruption apparatus (Ministry of Justice, 2017).

In total, numerous bodies operate within and outside Greek public administration, with their primary mandate being the control of corruption or supporting the fight against it (see also Sotiropoulos, Huliaras, & Karadag, 2022, pp. 44–45). New instruments have been added to the existing anti-corruption architecture, also aligning with the demands of the European Troika (EC, ECB, IMF). The result is a complex bureaucratic mechanism with significant administrative costs and questionable outcomes. The ethics of politicians have not changed, nor has citizens' trust in the Greek political system increased.

The constant presentation of scandals, illegal economic activities, and endless legal ›reforms‹ – accompanied by statements and declarations that remain ineffective and merely serve to capture public interest – does not enhance trust, nor does it improve Greece's ranking in corruption indices. On the contrary, it erodes trust, especially when the aforementioned tactics are employed between competing power groups or political opponents (Voigt, 2000). The same effect may result from the slow pace and limited effectiveness of corruption investigations and prosecutions, which can reinforce perceptions of institutional ineffectiveness and accountability deficits. In this context, both media and politicians tend to overestimate society's tolerance (Luhmann 1996, pp. 46–48, 63–64) for being bombarded with stories and images of corruption scandals, most of which are unverified (Kumlin & Esaiasson, 2012). This constant exposure often leads to feelings of disorganization, habituation, disbelief, and, ultimately, widespread disillusionment with democracy itself.

As it has been outlined, the issue is not the individuals involved in illegitimate practices due to ›low morals‹ or *habitus* (›DNA‹!), as politicians often claim (section 6.1.), but rather the relentless political strife and power struggles where every means is used. Consequently, the scandalization of corruption has not only helped politicians discredit their opponents, but it has also created a negative international image of Greece. Anti-corruption reforms have provided every new government with an opportunity to present itself as the political savior of transparency and anti-corruption efforts.

The present study has argued that the limited effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts in Greece cannot be adequately understood through conventional accounts that focus on the prevalence of corrupt practices or on institutional design alone. By reconceptualizing corruption as a perceived and strategically mobilized construct, it has shown how macro-economic conditions shape expert-driven evaluation indices, while partisan competition incentivizes the instrumental use of corruption scandals as a delegitimizing resource. Within this environment, anti-corruption policies and bureaucratic reforms operate not only as governance tools but also as political signals, whose meaning and impact are filtered through elite narratives and adversarial conflict. The resulting dynamic helps explain why extensive reforms coexist with volatile perception indicators and persistently low levels of public trust. Understanding this interplay between structural conditions, elite-mediated perceptions, and strategic blame attribution is therefore essential for explaining the enduring gap between anti-corruption policy activism and its perceived outcomes in Greece.

References

[All internet sources were retrieved in December 2025 and re-accessed for verification in February 2026].

* References marked with an asterisk indicate studies in Greek language

- Agence France-Presse (2024, October 26). Row sparked in Greece after Novartis probe witnesses exposed. <https://neoskopos.com/en/2024/10/26/news/row-sparked-in-greece-after-novartis-probe-witnesses-exposed/>.
- Albanis, Y. (2022, September 28)*. Siemens scandal: Greece worse than Banana Republic. *News247*. <https://www.news247.gr/gnomes/giannhs-almpans/skandalo-siemens-i-ellada-cheiroteri-kai-apo-mpnanania.9772921.html>.
- Anand, V., Ashforth, B.E., & Joshi, M. (2004). Business as usual: The acceptance and perpetuation of corruption in organizations. *Academy of Management Executive*, 18(2), 39–53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4166202>.
- BBC News (2009, December 15). Greece PM Papandreou sets out anti-corruption plan. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8413391.stm>.
- BBC News (2010, February 21). Greece ›not looking for bailout, Papandreou tells BBC. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8526736.stm>.
- Bertelsmann Stiftung (Ed.) (2014). *Policy performance and governance capacities in the OECD and EU, Sustainable Governance Indicators/ SGI 2014*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung. <https://sl1nk.com/1sdNO>.
- Bertelsmann Stiftung (Ed.) (2018). *Policy performance and governance capacities in the OECD and EU, SGI 2018*. Gütersloh: BS. https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/SGI_Projektbroschuere_2018_englisch.pdf.
- Bertelsmann Stiftung (Ed.) (2020). *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2020, Greece*. Gütersloh: BS. <https://www.sgi-network.org/2020/Greece>.
- Bertelsmann Stiftung (Ed.) (2023). *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2023, Greece*. Gütersloh: BS. <https://www.sgi-network.org/2023/Greece>.
- Bitzilekis, N. (2024)*. *Crimes against duties and service*. Athens et al.: Sakkoulas.
- Chryssafis, G. (2017)*. Corruption in Greece: Empirical evidence and theoretical implications. In G. Maggini, V.P. Solomou-Papanikolaou, H. Karabatzaki, & K.D. Koskeridis (Eds.), *Philosophy and crisis responding to challenges. To ways of life in the contemporary world*, Volume II, (pp. 355–370). University of Ioannina, Sector of Philosophy & Washington D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.
- Diefendorff, J.M., & Mehta, K. (2007). The relations of motivational traits with workplace deviance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(4), 967–977. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.4.967>.
- Dupuy, K., & Neset, S. (2018). *The cognitive psychology of corruption: Micro-level explanations for unethical behavior*. U4 Issue 2, Norway: Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI). <https://www.u4.no/publications/the-cognitive-psychology-of-corruption>.
- Dutta, D. (2009, October). *Elite capture and corruption: Concepts and definitions bibliography – with an overview of the suggested literature*. National Council of Applied Economic Research: Delhi/India. https://www.academia.edu/237917/Elite_Capture_and_Corruption_Concepts_and_Definitions.
- Easton D. (1975). A re-assessment of the concept of political support. *British Journal of Political Science*, 5(4), 435–457. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123400008309>.
- Economic Intelligence Unit (Ed.) (2019). *Democracy Index 2018: Me too? Political participation, protest and democracy*. London et al.: EIU. https://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=Democracy2018.
- Economist Intelligence Unit (2024). *Democracy Index 2023: Age of conflict*. London et al.: EIU. <https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2023/>.
- Economist Intelligence Unit (2025). *Democracy Index 2024: What's wrong with representative democracy? Age of conflict*. London et al.: EIU. <https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2024/>.
- ELSTAT – Hellenic Statistical Authority (Ed.)*. *Justice Statistics*. Criminal Justice. Crime Statistics 1980–1996, Athens: National Printing Office.
- ELSTAT (Ed.)*. *Justice Statistics*. Criminal Justice/Convictions 1980–2010 (since 1997 online). <https://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SJU06/>.
- ELSTAT*. *Justice Statistics*. Criminal Justice. Crime Statistics 1997–2023, online. <https://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SJU03/->.
- EU ICS (2005). *The burden of crime in the EU: A comparative analysis of the European Survey of Crime and Safety*. https://unicri.it/sites/default/files/2021-06/EUICS_-_The_Burden_of_Crime_in_the_EU.pdf.
- European Commission (2012, October 1). *Road Map for technical assistance in the field of Anti-Corruption*. <https://ketlib.lib.unipi.gr/xmlui/handle/ket/672>.
- European Commission – Task Force for Greece (Ed.) (2012). *Second Quarterly Report (March 2012)*. https://ec.europa.eu/archives/commission_2010-2014/president/news/speeches-statements/pdf/q_r_march2012_en.pdf.
- European Commission (2014, February 3) COM(2014) 38, final ANNEX 8 GREECE to the EU Anti-Corruption Report. Brussels. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:058aef0-d9b7-11e3-8cd4-01aa75ed71a1.0012.01/DOC_9andformat=PDF.
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC) (2023). ESS round 1–2002. Immigration, Citizen involvement. Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. <https://doi.org/10.21338/NSD-ESS1-2002>.

- ESS ERIC (2023). ESS round 4–2008. Welfare attitudes, Ageism. Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. <https://doi.org/10.21338/NSD-ESS4-2008>.
- ESS ERIC (2025). ESS round 5–2010. Family work and wellbeing, Justice. Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. <https://doi.org/10.21338/NSD-ESS5-2010>.
- ESS ERIC (2025). ESS round 10–2020. Democracy, Digital social contacts. Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. <https://doi.org/10.21338/NSD-ESS10-2020>.
- ESS ERIC (2025). ESS round 11–2023. Social inequalities in health, Gender in contemporary Europe. Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. <https://doi.org/10.21338/ess11-2023>.
- EVS/European Values Study (Ed.) (2010). *European Values Study 2008 – Greece*. Cologne GESIS Data Archive, ZA4776, Data file Version 2.0.0. <https://doi.org/10.4232/1.10148>.
- EVS (Ed.) (2012). *European Values Study 1999 – Greece*, GESIS Data Archive, Cologne, ZA3801, Data file Version 3.0.1. <https://doi.org/10.4232/1.11536>.
- Fanaras, S. (2018, September)*. Values, democracy and trust. Athens: diaNEOsis. <https://www.dianeosis.org/research/world-values-survey/>.
- Fisman, R., & Golden, M. A. (2017). *Corruption: What everyone needs to know*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- GIPA/General Inspector of Public Administration (Ed.) (2012, 2013, 2017, 2018)*. *Annual Report(s) 2011, 2012, 2016, 2017*. Athens (reports no longer available online).
- General Secretariat against Corruption (Ed.) (2017)*. *Annual Report (March 2015–June 2016)*. Athens (no longer available online).
- Hallin, D. C., & Papathanassopoulos, S. (2002). Political clientelism and the media. Southern Europe and Latin America in comparative perspective. *Media, Culture and Society*, 24(2), 175–195. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437020400202>.
- Hiller, P. (2010). Understanding corruption: how systems theory can help. In G. de Graaf, P. von Maravic, & P. Wagenaar (Eds.), *The good cause: Theoretical perspectives on corruption* (pp. 64–82). Opladen: Budrich.
- Hopkin, J. (2006). *Conceptualizing political clientelism: Political exchange and democratic theory*. Paper prepared for APSA Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, USA, 31/08–03/09/2006, Panel 46–18 ›Concept Analysis: Unpacking clientelism, governance and neoliberalism‹. <http://personal.lse.ac.uk/hopkin/apsahopkin2006.pdf>.
- Jetton, R. (2018, July 4). Evaluation of the level of corruption in Greece and the impact on quality of government and public debt. University of Macedonia, Dpt. of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, Thessaloniki. https://www.transparency.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Corruption_Greece_proof3_sections.pdf.
- Johansson, S. (2020, February 28). Tabloid journalism and tabloidization. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. <https://oxfordre.com/communication/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228613-e877>.
- Jones, N., Malesios, C., Iosifides, T., & Sophoulis, C.M. (2008). Social capital in Greece: Measurement and comparative perspectives. *South European Society and Politics*, 13(2), 175–193. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13608740802156687>.
- Karstedt, S. (2003). Macht, Ungleichheit und Korruption: Strukturelle und kulturelle Determinanten im internationalen Vergleich. In D. Oberwittler & S. Karstedt (Eds.), *Soziologie der Kriminalität*, KzFSS Sonderheft 43 (pp. 384–412). Wiesbaden: Springer VS.
- Köbis, N. C., Iraragorri-Carter, D., & Starke, C. (2018). A social psychological view on the social norms of corruption. In I. Kubbe, & A. Engelbert (Eds.), *Corruption and norms. Political corruption and governance* (pp. 31–52). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-66254-1_3.
- Kolthoff, E. (2020). Criminological responses to corruption. In A. Graycar (Ed.), *Handbook on Corruption. Ethics and integrity in public administration* (pp. 433–446). Cheltenham, UK & Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Kondylis, P. (2011)*. *The causes of the decline of modern Greece*. Athens: Themelio.
- Koniordos, S. (2018, September)*. *Presentation report of the Greek results from the Round 7 (World Values Survey-7)*. Athens: diaNEOsis. <https://www.dianeosis.org/research/world-values-survey/>.
- Koutsoukis, K., & Sklias, P. (Eds.) (2005)*. *Corruption and scandals in public administration and politics*. Athens: I. Sideris.
- Kumlin, S., & Esaiasson, P. (2012). Scandal fatigue? Scandal elections and satisfaction with democracy in Western Europe, 1977–2007. *British Journal of Political Science*, 42(2), 263–282. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000712341100024X>.
- Kurtz, M., & Schrank, A. (2007). Growth and governance: A defense. *Journal of Politics*, 69(2), 563–569. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2508.2007.00551.x>.
- Lambropoulou, E. (2012a). Corruption discourse as a wild card: Politics and Media in Greece and the ›modern‹ triumphalism of anti-corruption. In D. Tänzler, K. Maras & A. Giannakopoulos (Eds.), *Social construction of corruption in Europe* (pp. 265–296). Surrey, England: Ashgate.
- Lambropoulou, E. (2012b). Myths and realities about corruption in public administration and its discourse in Greece. *Amsterdam Law Forum*, 4(3), 77–96 (no longer available online).
- Lambropoulou, E. (2015). The appearances and realities of corruption in Greece: The cases of MAYO and Siemens AG. In G. Barak (Ed.), *The Routledge International Handbook of the Crimes of the Powerful* (pp. 427–440). Abingdon Oxon, New York: Routledge.
- Litina, A., & Palivos T. (2015, June). Corruption and tax evasion: reflections on Greek Tragedy. Working Paper 193, Economic Analysis and Research Department – Special Studies Division, Bank of Greece. Athens. <https://www.bankofgreece.gr/Publications/Paper2015193.pdf>.
- Luhmann, N. (1996). *Die Realität der Massenmedien* (2nd ed.). Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.
- Lyrantzis, C. (2005). The changing party system: Stable democracy, contested ›modernization‹. *West European Politics*, 28(2), 242–259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402380500058845>.
- Marquette H., & Peiffer, C. (2021). *Corruption functionality framework*. Washington D.C.: GI-ACE. <https://giace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/GI-ACE-Research-Paper-Corruption-Framework.pdf>.
- Mavrogordatos, G. (1988)*. *Between Pityokamptes and Prokroustes: Corporate interests in contemporary Greece*. Athens: Odysseas.
- Ministry of Justice (Ed.) (2013). ›Transparency‹: National Action Plan against Corruption. Athens: Moj (no longer available online).
- Ministry of Justice, General Secretariat against Corruption (2017). Mapping of judicial, auditing, prosecutorial, administrative, independent and supervisory authorities, services and organs/ bodies participating in the network of anti-corruption, February. Athens: Moj (no longer available online).
- Moore, C. (2008). Moral disengagement in processes of organizational corruption. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80, 129–139. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9447-8>.

- Mourtis, V. (2010, January 30). [3] Papandreou meets foreign Press at Davos. Athens News Agency – Macedonian News Agency. In *Daily News Bulletin in English* (no longer available online).
- Mouzelis, N.P. (1987)*. *Politics in the semi-periphery: Early parliamentarism and late industrialization in the Balkans and Latin America*. Athens: Themelio (in Greek from the original in English, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986).
- National Authority of Transparency (2022, August 1)*. *Annual report 2021*. Athens.
- National Authority of Transparency (2024, September 6)*. *Annual report 2023*. Athens (reports available at <https://aead.gr/publications/essays>).
- Nielsen, R.P. (2003). Corruption networks and implications for ethical corruption reform. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 42, 125–149. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021969204875>.
- OECD. Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, Adopted by the Negotiating Conference on 21 November 1997, OECD/LEGAL/0293. <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/public/doc/205/205.en.pdf>.
- OECD (2018, April). *Baseline Report on Greece's National Anti-Corruption Action Plan: Revision and M & E Processes*. Greece-OECD Project: Technical Support on Anti-Corruption. https://aead.gr/images/manuals/esskd/2018-2021/Baseline_Report_on_NACAP__2015_2018.pdf.
- OECD (2020, May). Collective action and the fight against corruption. Policy briefing note. Paris: OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/about/programmes/grc/grc-see/integrity/Collective-Action-and-Fight-Against-Corruption-Policy-Briefing-Note-May2020.pdf>.
- Paldam, M., & Svendsen, G.T. (2000). An essay on social capital: Looking for the fire behind the smoke. *European Journal of Political Economy*, 16(2): 339–366. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0176-2680\(99\)00064-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0176-2680(99)00064-6).
- Papathanassopoulos, S. (2004)*. *Media and politics. The case of Southern Europe*. Athens: Kastaniotis.
- Pelagidis, T. (2014). Policies against corruption. In M. Massourakis, & C. Ghortos (Eds.), *Competitiveness and development: Policy proposals* (pp. 575–588). Athens: Hellenic Bank Association.
- Peters, J.G., & Welch, S. (1980). The effects of charges of corruption on voting behavior in congressional elections. *The American Political Science Review*, 74(3), 697–708. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1958151>.
- Piattoni, S. (2001). *Clientelism, interests, and democratic representation: The European experience in historical and comparative perspective*. Cambridge/UK et al.: Cambridge University Press.
- Pitoska, E., Ziaka V., & Liana, A. (2020). Corruption in the Greek public sector: An empirical research. In N. Tsounis & A. Vlachvei (Eds.), *Advances in cross-section data methods in applied economic research*. ICOAE 2019, Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics. Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-38253-7_28.
- Poupou, I.M. (2010)*. *Social capital in Greece*. Athens: Centre of Planning and Economic Research/KEPE.
- Prontzas, D. (2025). Forms of the Corruption Phenomenon in Greek Local Government: A Theoretical Approach. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 27(2), 237–249. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2025.27.2.2858>.
- Rafenberg, M. (2022, October 3). Anger mounts over endless Greek corruption scandals. *Le Monde*. https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2022/10/03/anger-mounts-over-endless-greek-corruption-scandals_5998949_4.html.
- Rose-Ackerman, S. (2002). »Grand« corruption and the ethics of global business. *Journal of Banking and Finance*, 26(9), 1889–1918. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-4266\(02\)00197-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-4266(02)00197-8).
- Rothstein, B., & Tegnhammar, T. (2006). The mechanisms of corruption. interest vs. cognition. QOG Working Paper Series. The Quality of Government Institute. Göteborg: Göteborg Institute. https://www.gu.se/sites/default/files/2020-05/2006_3_Rothstein_Tegnhammar.pdf.
- Schiller, C., & Hellmann, T. (2025). *Assessing progress in Sustainable Governance in EU and OECD countries. Results of the Sustainable Governance Indicators Survey*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung. <https://doi.org/10.11586/2025022>.
- Scott, W.R. (2004). Institutional theory. In G. Ritzer (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, Vol. I, 408–414. Thousand Oaks et al./CA: Sage.
- SEEDD/Inspectors-Controllers' Body for Public Administration. *Annual Report(s) 2015/2016, 2016/2017*. Ministry of Administrative Reform and E-government (Ed.). Athens: National Printing Office (no longer available online).
- Sotiropoulos, D. (1993). A Colossus with feet of clay: The state in post-authoritarian Greece. In H. J. Psomiades & S. Thomadakes (Eds.), *Greece, the new Europe and the changing international order*, (pp. 349–365). New York: Pella.
- Sotiropoulos, D.A., Huliaras, A., & Karadag, R. (2022). *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2022, Greece Report*. Bertelsmann Stiftung (Ed.). Gütersloh: Bertelsmann. <https://doi.org/10.11586/2022097>.
- Sykes, G., & Matza, D. (1957). Techniques of neutralization. *American Sociological Review*, 22(6), 664–670. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2089195>.
- Tänzler, D., Maras, K., & Giannakopoulos, A. (Eds.). *Social construction of corruption in Europe*. Surrey. England: Ashgate (<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315552835>).
- Táiwò, O.O. (2022). *Elite capture: How the powerful took over identity politics (and everything else)*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books.
- Thede, S., & Karpay, P. (2022). Effects of corruption on foreign direct investment: Evidence from Swedish multinational enterprises. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 51(1), 348–371. <https://www.doi.org/10.1016/j.jce.2022.10.004>.
- Thompson, J.B. (2000). *Political scandal: Power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- TI/Transparency International, *Corruption Perception Index 1996–1998, 2003–2019*. <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi>.
- TI, *Corruption Perception Index 2023, 2024, 2025*. <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023/index/grc>; <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2024/index/grc>; <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2025/index/grc>.
- TI Hellas/Public Issue (2009, February 17)*. *National research about corruption in Greece 2008*. Athens: TI Hellas (no longer available online).
- TI Hellas/Public Issue (2010, March 2)*. *National research about corruption in Greece 2009*. Athens: TI Hellas (no longer available online).
- TI Hellas/Public Issue (2011, March 16)*. *National survey on corruption in Greece 2010*. Athens: TI Hellas. <https://www.publicissue.gr/en/corruption-2010/>.
- TI Hellas/Public Issue (2012a, April 4)*. *National survey on corruption in Greece 2011*. Athens: TI Hellas. <https://www.publicissue.gr/en/corruption-2011/>.
- TI Hellas/Public Issue (2012b)*. *Presentation of national research on corruption in Greece 2007–2012*. Athens: TI Hellas. <https://11nq.com/Pw2IK>.
- TI Hellas/Public Issue (2013, March 7)*. *National survey on corruption in Greece 2012*. Athens: TI Hellas. <https://www.publicissue.gr/en/corruption-2012/>.

- Treisman, D. (2000). The causes of corruption: A cross-national study. *Journal of Public Economics*, 76(3), 399–457. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0047-2727\(99\)00092-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0047-2727(99)00092-4).
- Tsoukalas, K. (1987)*. *State, society, labor in post-war Greece*. Athens: Themelio.
- Uhl, A., Herrmann, C., & Treiber, K.H. (2025). Corruption: A situational action view. *Theory and Society*, 54, 161–184. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-024-09590-3>.
- United Nations Convention against Corruption. General Assembly resolution 58/4 of 31 October 2003, A/RES/58/4. <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n03/453/15/pdf/n0345315.pdf>.
- Venetsanopoulou, V. (2014)*. *Maladministration and corruption in public administration*. Athens et al.: Sakkoulas
- Voigt, R. (2000). *Recht – Spielball der Politik? Rechtspolitik im Zeichen der Globalisierung*. Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- Wayne, S., & Taagepera, T. (2005). Corruption, culture, and communism. *International Review of Sociology*, 15(1), 109–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03906700500038678>.
- Welzel, C., Inglehart, R., & Klingemann, H. (2003). The theory of human development: A cross-cultural analysis. *European Journal of Political Research*, 42(3), 341–379. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.00086>.
- World Bank Group – Prosperity Data360 (2022). Sustainable Governance Indicators: Quality of Democracy, Dataset 2014–22. <https://prosperitydata360.worldbank.org/en/indicator/BS+SGI+119>.
- World Bank Group (2024). Worldwide Governance Indicators. Interactive Data Access, Greece. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators/interactive-data-access>.
- World Values Survey Wave 7 (2017–2022) Greece Study # WVS–2017 v3.0. <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>.
- World Values Survey Wave 7 (2018, September). Athens: diaNEOsis. https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/wvs_2018_4-09-2019.pdf.
- World Values Survey, Wave 8 (2025, July). Athens: diaNEOsis. https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/WVS-2025_VERSION_22.07.2025.pdf.