



The Influence of Social Service Professionals' Demographic Characteristics on the Protection of Human Rights of Vulnerable Social Groups

Dr. Alexandros Chaidas

Head of the Social Assistance Department of the Region of Western Greece, Greece

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***Corresponding Author:** Dr. Alexandros Chaidas

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Abstract	Original Research Articles
This study investigates whether, and to what extent, the demographic characteristics -gender, place of residence, educational level, knowledge of a foreign language, possession of additional degrees, professional specialization, employment status, employment sector, and service category- of social service professionals influence the development of their knowledge, as well as the shaping of their attitudes, behaviors, and mobilization toward the protection of human rights of vulnerable social groups (VSGs). The study was conducted from June 2023 to December 2023. Using a closed-ended self-report questionnaire, data were collected from four hundred and fifty-three professionals representing thirty-five specialties across twenty categories of social services in the Region of Western Greece. The findings reveal that demographic factors of educational level, employment status, service category, professional sector, and specialization constitute a significant role in shaping attitudes, behaviors and mobilization regarding the protection of human rights. An additional significant finding was that professionals with lower academic credentials, despite exhibiting limited knowledge concerning human rights issues, nonetheless demonstrated greater involvement in activities related to the promotion and protection of human rights. Also, informal learning emerged as a critical driver of practical and applicable knowledge in the field of human rights, complementing formal education. All the above findings highlight the importance of implementing multidimensional professional development strategies through formal education, non-formal education, and informal learning. These strategies must aim to enhance the capacity of social service professionals to safeguard and promote the human rights of vulnerable social groups. Keywords: Human Rights Knowledge, demographic characteristic, professionals, social services, vulnerable social groups. Copyright © 2025 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)	

1. INTRODUCTION

The socioeconomic transformations of recent decades have prompted the member states of European Union to introduce social reforms aimed at reducing poverty and exclusion (European Commission, 2008; OECD, 2019; Eurofound, 2022). These initiatives, enshrined in binding and non-binding EU instruments, consistently emphasize democracy, human rights, equal access to welfare, and social solidarity (European Commission, 2010; FRA, 2018; de Schutter, 2018).

Within this institutional framework, social services established pursue two foundational objectives: safeguarding the rights of VSGs -including access to social security, housing, healthcare, education, employment -and ensuring respect for human

dignity (Lammens & Robben, 2025). The realization of these aims depends on professionals who, beyond ethical and professional codes, must demonstrate both competence and sensitivity to human rights principles, as these constitute the normative foundation of service provision (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2011; World Health Organization, 2023).

Nevertheless, empirical evidence documents cases of neglect, discriminatory practices, and even racist attitudes within service provision, eroding trust in public institutions (Houston et al., 2016; Roma Human Rights Advocacy Observatory, 2022). Such deficits underscore the necessity of sustained professional development. Specifically, lifelong learning, particularly Human Rights Education (HRE), has been identified as a crucial mechanism for equipping professionals



with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required for effective and equitable service delivery (UNESCO, 2015; Tibbitts, 2017). HRE, recognized as a lifelong process spanning formal, non-formal, and informal education, not only strengthens professional competencies but also fosters empathy, civic responsibility, and commitment to equality. In this way, social service professionals can be empowered to integrate human rights into daily practice and to defend both their own rights and those of beneficiaries with whom they interact (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2013).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Human Rights Education (HRE) and professionals

Empirical research demonstrates that participation in human rights education (HRE) -through courses, training, and practical exercises- enhances the knowledge base and professional skills of current and future social service professionals (Ewert, Baldwin-Ragaven & London, 2011; Giomatari & Pitsou, 2025; Stellmacher & Sommer, 2008; Tibbitts, 2016). In parallel, although the impact of human rights education on shaping attitudes and behaviors varies in degree—being more pronounced in some cases and less in others—evidence suggests that, even in this case, HRE can foster meaningful engagement in the protection of human rights, including formal complaints and incident reporting (Newham et al., 2020; Ju et al., 2013; Pitsou & Balias, 2014). Barriers to attitudinal and behavioral change largely stem from entrenched values, prejudices, and limited intercultural competence, often resulting in reduced tolerance for diversity and discriminatory practices (Altinova, Duyan & Megahead, 2019; Pitsou & Koios, 2025; Redman et al., 2012). Consequently, it is important, leadership within social services must acknowledge the organizational and societal benefits of integrating HRE into professional development and service provision (Ezer & Overall, 2013). The global prioritization of HRE by the United Nations further underscores its significance for public institutions, linking cognitive gains with the strengthening of democracy, equality, and the rule of law (UN OHCHR, 1993; United Nation General Assembly, 2005; HRE, 2020).

Within this framework, the present study—which constitutes a secondary analysis of selected findings from the author’s doctoral dissertation—initially presents research data concerning the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and motivation of social service professionals regarding the protection of the human rights of VSGs. It then proceeds with a detailed analysis of those demographic characteristics that shape and influence the development of these critical dimensions.

2.2 Demographic characteristics: Their role in shaping attitude, behaviors and mobilization of professionals

In parallel with the studies above, literature review highlights the role of demographic characteristics in shaping attitudes and behaviors within professional environments.

Regarding the educational level, studies indicate that professionals with higher or tertiary formal education more often exhibit less stereotypical attitudes and higher levels of social sensitivity toward VSGs, which in turn enhances the provision of high-quality services (Fjeld & Andvig, 2016; Lesińska-Sawicka, 2022; Venables et al., 2023). At the same time, research has highlighted the crucial contribution of informal learning in maintaining ethical and professional conduct toward beneficiaries from VSGs, underscoring the positive influence of individuals’ engagement and exposure to diversity both within and outside the workplace (experiential learning in the workplace, participation in collectives, interaction with diverse population groups in social and family settings, visits to exhibitions, etc.) (Eraut, 2004; Cooper et al., 2021; Chaidas et al, 2024).

Moreover, foreign language proficiency and potential bilingualism of professionals are demographic characteristics that may contribute to greater awareness of social inequalities, improved interpersonal approach and collaboration between staff and beneficiaries, and better management of obstacles and conflicts in the workplace (Vesely et al., 2014; Morales & Sheafor, 2014; Borrayo et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the demographic characteristic of employment status (permanent vs. contract-based) appears to influence the delivery of services to VSGs, as permanent employment is a factor that more strongly supports deeper engagement and higher-quality service provision to beneficiaries, compared to contract workers (Kokolakis et al., 2024; Kouvonen et al., 2013; Park & Kim, 2022; Local Government Association, 2023).

Other demographic variables that influence the formation of human rights’ attitudes and behaviors include the sector of employment (public or private) and the specific category of social service in which professionals are employed. Specifically, employees in the private sector-compared to their counterparts in the public sector- tend to exhibit higher levels of motivation and organizational commitment, a difference potentially attributable to heightened performance demands (Todorović et al., 2024).

Finally, the service category appears to impact on the degree of professional engagement and mobilization regarding the protection of VSGs (Zlotnik et al., 2021). Distinct differences are observed in the type of staff-beneficiary interactions depending on the service setting. For instance, professionals in counseling centers and psychosocial support units or elderly care facilities typically maintain closer relational proximity and longer contact time with beneficiaries, compared to those working in one-stop-shop services, where interactions may be more task-oriented or structurally limited (Vagni et al., 2022).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Purpose and Research Question

The aim of the present research is to examine whether, and to what extent, the demographic characteristics of gender,

place of residence, knowledge of a foreign language, educational level, possession of additional degrees, professional specialization, employment status, employment sector, and service category influence the development of knowledge, as well as the shaping of attitudes, behaviors, and mobilization of social services professionals towards the protection of human rights of VSGs?

Based on this objective, the following research question was formulated:

Whether and to what extent do demographic characteristics of social services professionals influence the development of their knowledge and the shaping of their attitudes, behaviors and mobilization towards the protection of human rights of VSGs?

3.2. Research Approach: Data Collection and Analysis

This study, which was conducted from June 2023 to December 2023, adopted a quantitative design, utilizing a structured questionnaire distributed to nearly one thousand and one hundred and thirty-five employees working in three regional units of Western Greece. A total of four hundred and fifty-three professionals completed the survey, corresponding to a response rate of about forty per send. The quantitative data collection technique was done by combining convenience sampling, purposive sampling and homogeneous sampling (Cohen et al., 2008; Creswell, 2011), as the professionals participating in the study were accessible to the researcher (readily available), their selection was based on the specific criterion of their employment in the Western Greece Region and their exclusive work in its social services.

All procedures adhered strictly to established criteria of research ethics, validity, and reliability (Cohen et al., 2008; Creswell, 2012; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Galanis, 2019).

Senior officials from welfare and social care departments reviewed the preliminary version of the instrument to ensure contextual relevance and clarity. Following this stage, a pilot test with forty-three social service professionals was conducted to examine its practical applicability. The primary dataset was analysed using IBM SPSS, Version 28. Moreover, given that three of the five questionnaire sections were derived from two well-established foreign-language scales, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to determine whether each subsection corresponded to a single latent construct or to multiple ones (Cohen et al., 2011; Sarris, 2021). Furthermore, to guarantee conceptual and linguistic accuracy, a back-translation method was followed: two bilingual translators performed the initial translation, and a third independent bilingual expert evaluated the equivalence.

3.3. Research instrument

The research instrument was structured into six sections, from which the first, the second, the fifth and the sixth one, contained questions regarding demographic characteristics, lifelong learning, attitudes, behaviours, and

mobilization of professionals, respectively. The closed-ended self-report questionnaire was initially sent out as a pilot and then, after identifying and improving weaknesses, in a final stage. To compile the questionnaire, a synthesis of internationally recognized tools and frameworks, indicators, categorizations and scales from international organizations and surveys was carried out such as questions from human rights surveys conducted in Irish (Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 2015) and Hong Kong (Lo, Leung & Chow, 2015), the UNESCO and Danish Institute Human Rights Education Indicators (2015), the FRA and European Court of Human Rights categorizations of fundamental rights (FRA & European Court of Human Rights, 2011), the quality principles of the European Framework of Social Services (2010), the European (European Ombudsman, 2015) and Greek (Ministry of Interior & National Transparency Authority, 2022) codes of ethics for civil servants, as well as the typology of emerging human rights education models by Tibbitts (2017). This research instrument was developed in the context of the author's doctoral thesis (Chaidas, 2025). The items of the questionnaire were intentionally formulated to be straightforward, precise, and directly connected to the research objectives, while avoiding unnecessary complexity or ambiguity.

3.4. Research Participants

The research participants work in twenty categories of social services, including: public and private social services, social structures, social welfare services, social organizations, non-profit social structures, creative employment centers for children, day care centers for the elderly, supported living homes, psychosocial counseling centers, welfare institutions for children and the elderly, etc. Furthermore, the participants in the survey were from thirty-five different specialties/branches of professionals, such as social workers, sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, intercultural mediators, nurses, occupational therapists, kindergarten teachers, educators, special educators, administrative employees etc., who staff social services.

3.5. Survey Reliability and Validity

To identify potential statistically significant differences among two or more demographic subgroups, the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis's test was applied. Spearman's Rho was employed to examine the correlations between ordinal and numerical variables, whereas Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the reliability of the ordinal subscales. The level of statistical significance was set at $\alpha=0.05$, and Cronbach's Alpha values were found to be above 0.7, indicating satisfactory reliability.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Prior to addressing this research question, we quote a brief overview of the research findings on the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, and mobilization of professionals regarding human rights issues.

Overall, participants demonstrated a moderate level of knowledge about binding human-rights legal instruments, protection mechanisms, professional codes of ethics and conduct, and the core characteristics and values of human rights. The highest mean scores were recorded for familiarity with “codes of ethics and professional conduct that govern their work” ($M = 3.58$) and for understanding “human-rights values: fundamental freedoms, non-discrimination, equality, participation and inclusion, solidarity and democracy” ($M = 3.56$). Knowledge related to mechanisms for the protection of human rights ($M = 3.25$) and to the characteristics of human rights ($M = 3.24$) was close to the moderate range, while the lowest familiarity concerned the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international, European and national human-rights texts” ($M = 3.12$). The overall mean for the scale which measured the level of knowledge about human rights was 3.35 (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.911$). With respect to the contexts in which social services professionals acquired this knowledge, the findings show that informal learning was the principal source ($M = 4.12$), followed by formal education ($M = 3.46$) and non-formal education ($M = 3.31$). Cronbach’s alpha values for these sources were 0.846 (informal), 0.700 (formal) and 0.921 (non-formal), respectively.

Regarding the level of attitudes and behaviors that professionals of social services have developed towards the protection of human rights of VSGs, the inquiry findings reveal that the personal attributes of VSGs -such as gender identity, ethnicity, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, or disability status- exerted only minimal influence on the provision of services ($M = 1.69$, $\alpha = 0.978$). This outcome reflects a strong orientation toward fairness and non-discrimination. In addition, the data show very high compliance with professional codes of ethics and conduct ($M = 4.59$, $\alpha = 0.870$). Furthermore, regarding the mobilization of professionals for safeguarding the rights of VSGs, the findings indicated a level slightly above the midpoint ($M = 3.64$, $\alpha = 0.881$).

Research question: Whether and to what extent do demographic characteristics of social services professionals influence the development of their knowledge and the shaping of their attitudes, behaviors and mobilization towards the protection of human rights of VSGs?

According to the research findings highlighted a range of individual, professional and contextual factors that significantly influence the development of knowledge about human rights as well as the shaping of attitudes, behaviors and mobilization of social services professionals for the protection of human rights of VSGs. Specifically, based on each categorical demographic characteristic of the research participants (gender, place of residence, knowledge of a foreign language, level of education, possession of a second bachelor’s degree, specialization, employment status, employment sector, service category), the following research findings were obtained:

Gender: The gender of the research participants seems not to influence the variables under study.

The place of residence: The place of residence (urban, semi-urban and rural place) of the research participants seems not to influence the variables under study.

Level of knowledge of a foreign language: The level of Knowledge of a foreign language seems to influence only the field of Knowledge, and particularly the Knowledge of human rights official, binding or non-binding, texts/documents. Specifically, the higher the level of knowledge of even one foreign language, the higher the level of knowledge of human rights official, binding or non-binding, legal texts/documents ($R = 0.277$ / the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level).

Educational level: Graduates of compulsory, secondary, and post-secondary non-tertiary education appear to demonstrate statistically significantly lower levels of “Knowledge of official, binding or non-binding, texts, protection mechanisms, codes of ethics and conduct, characteristics, and values related to human rights” ($M=2.95$), compared to those with a university degree ($M=3.42$) and those holding a Master’s and/or PhD degree ($M=3.58$), with $p < 0.05$.

Moreover, for individuals with compulsory, secondary, and post-secondary education, the various characteristics of VSGs (gender identity, ethnicity, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, or disability status) appear to act as significantly greater barriers in the provision of services to these groups ($M=2.49$), compared to university graduates ($M=1.42$) and holders of postgraduate and doctoral degrees ($M=1.44$), also with $p < 0.05$.

Similarly, holders of a master or / and PhD in human rights appear to have statistically significantly greater “Knowledge of official, binding or non-binding, texts, protection mechanisms, codes of ethics and morals, characteristics and values for human rights” ($M=4.00$) compared to holders of a master or/and PhD in another field ($M=3.45$) and to non-holders of a master or/and PhD ($M=3.25$), with $p<0.05$. Also, those who do not hold a Master’s degree and/or PhD appear to have a statistically significantly higher “Degree to which various characteristics of the VSGs have an inhibitory effect on the provision of services to VSGs” ($M=1.80$) compared to those who hold a Master’s degree and/or PhD in human rights ($M=1.44$) and those who hold a Master’s degree-PhD in another field ($M=1.44$), with $p<0.05$. In parallel, those who hold a master’s degree or/ and PhD in human rights appear to be mobilized to a statistically significantly higher degree ($M=3.92$) compared to those who hold a master’s degree or/and PhD in another field ($M=3.61$) and those who do not hold a master’s degree and/or PhD ($M=3.80$).

However, despite lower levels of knowledge regarding human rights and protection mechanisms, and higher levels regarding the existence of obstacles in the provision of services, is noteworthy that graduates of compulsory, secondary, and post-secondary education demonstrate statistically significantly higher levels of “Mobilization for the protection of the rights of vulnerable social groups” ($M=3.92$) in comparison to university graduates ($M=3.74$) and Master’s / PhD holders ($M=3.66$), with $p < 0.05$.

Possession of a second degree: The research data showed that holders of a second bachelor's degree appear to have statistically significantly greater "Knowledge of official texts, protection mechanisms, codes of ethics and conduct, characteristics and values for Human Rights" (M=3.65) compared to those who do not hold a second bachelor's degree (M=3.32), with $p < 0.05$.

Specialization: The occupational categories/specialties of Psychosocial, Legal Support & Mediation appear to demonstrate:

a) A statistically significantly higher "Knowledge of official, binding or non-binding, documents, protection mechanisms, codes of ethics and conduct, and characteristics and values related to human rights" (M = 3.69),

b) A statistically significantly lower "Degree to which various characteristics of VSGs act as barriers to the provision of services" (M= 1.29), and

c) a statistically significantly higher "Adherence to ethical principles and codes of conduct when interacting with VSGs (M=4.70), compared to all other occupational categories/specialties of administrative personnel (M = 3.30, 1.41, 4.64) health sciences professionals (M = 3.09, 2.37, 4.49), staff in education-related fields/specialties (M= 3.33, 1.58, 4.50), and auxiliary/caregiving staff (M = 2.77, 2.64, 4.53) who participated in the study ($p < 0.05$).

Conversely, a statistically significantly higher "Mobilization for the protection of the human rights of VSGs" (M= 4.06, $p < 0.05$) was observed among the occupational categories/specialties of Auxiliary Personnel – Caregivers, compared to all of the aforementioned professionals categories/specialties (Administrative sectors / Administrative staff M=3.57, Health sciences sectors M=3.77, staff in education-related fields/specialties M=3.82, Psychosocial support sectors M=3.74, Psychosocial, Legal Support & Mediation M=3.74).

Employment Status: Employment status also appears to have an impact on certain variables under investigation. Specifically,

regarding the attitudes of social services professionals toward VSGs, permanent public employees report a statistically significantly lower "Degree to which various characteristics of VSGs act as barriers to the provision of services" (M = 1.37), compared to those employed under open-ended private law contracts (M = 2.02), fixed-term private law contracts (M = 1.58), and external collaborators (M = 1.40).

Additionally, employees under open-ended private law contracts demonstrate a statistically significantly higher level of "Mobilization for the protection of the human rights of VSGs" (M = 3.90), in comparison to their colleagues employed as permanent public servants (M = 3.62), under fixed-term private law contracts (M = 3.72), or as external collaborators (M = 3.58) ($p < 0.05$).

Employment Sector: The type of employment sector also emerged as an influential factor. Participants employed in the private sector reported a significantly higher degree of mobilization than those working in public sector institutions.

Service Category: The professional domain within which individuals are employed further differentiates responses:

- i. Individuals working in Counselling Centres and Psychosocial Health Services reported a lower degree of influence of VSGs characteristics on the delivery of services, (M =1, 24), compared to those working in educational services for children and adolescents (M = 1.60), those working in adult care and goods provision services (M =2.02) and those working in local government administrative social services (M =1.32).
- ii. A higher degree of mobilization was recorded among professionals working in adult care and goods provision services (M.=3.90), compared to those working in educational services for children and adolescents (M = 3.82), those working in Counselling Centres and Psychosocial Health Services (M=3.60), and those working in local government administrative social services (M=3.49)

A summary of the above-mentioned results is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1.

Demographic characteristic	Main findings	Statistical significance
Gender	It does not affect the variables under study	-
Place of residence	It does not affect the variables under study	-
Level of knowledge of a foreign language:	The level of Knowledge of a foreign language seems to influence only the Knowledge of human rights official, bindings or non-binding, texts / documents. Specifically, the higher the level of knowledge of even one foreign language, the higher the level of knowledge of official human rights official texts/documents.	R= 0, 277
Educational	Lower levels of human rights knowledge were observed among graduates of compulsory, secondary, and post-secondary non-tertiary education (M=2.95), compared to university graduates (M=3.42) and holders of master's and /or PhD degrees (M=3.58).	$p < 0.05$

level	- The same group reported experiencing greater barriers arising from the characteristics of VSGs (M=2.49), compared to university graduates (M=1.42) and Master's/PhD holders (M=1.44). - Additionally, for the same group, a higher level of mobilization for the protection of human rights was reported (M=3.92), compared to university graduates (M=3.74) and those with a master's/doctoral degree (M=3.66)	
Holders of Master or / and PhD	Holders of Master or / and PhD in Human Rights: - Significantly higher level of knowledge (M=4.00) compared to holders of a Master's/PhD in another field (M=3.45) and non-holders (M=3.25), - Fewer barriers in service provision (M=1.44) compared to those who do not hold a master's degree and/or PhD (M=1.80) - Higher mobilization (M=3.92) compared to those who hold a master's degree or / and PhD in another field (M=3.61) and those who do not hold a master's degree and/or PhD (M=3.80).	p<0.05
Second degree (bachelor's degree)	Holders of a second degree demonstrated higher levels of knowledge regarding official, binding and non-binding, texts, mechanisms, and codes (M=3.65) compared to non-holders (M=3.32).	p<0.05
Specialization	- Psychosocial, Legal Support & Mediation: higher knowledge (M=3.69), fewer barriers (M=1.29), stronger adherence to ethical principles (M=4.70). - Auxiliary personnel/caregivers: higher mobilization (M=4.06) compared to all other specialities.	p<0.05
Employment status	- Permanent public employees: reported lower levels of barriers (M=1.37). - Employees under open-ended private law contracts: demonstrated higher mobilization (M=3.90) compared to permanent public employees (M=3.62), fixed-term private law employees (M=3.72), and external collaborators (M=3.58).	p<0.05
Employment Sector	Professionals employed in the private sector demonstrated higher levels of mobilization compared to their counterparts in the public sector.	p<0.05
Service Category	- Counselling Centres & Psychosocial Services: less influence from the characteristics of VSGs (M =1.24). - Adult care and goods provision services: higher mobilization (M =3.90) compared to educational services (M =3.82), counselling / psychosocial services (M=3.60), and municipal administrative services (M=3.49).	p<0.05

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This inquiry attempted to present the results of a quantitative research study, which aimed to examine whether the demographic characteristics of gender, place of residence, knowledge of a foreign language, level of education, specialization, employment status, employment sector, service category of the social services professionals influence the development of their knowledge and the shaping of their attitudes, behaviors and mobilization towards protection of human rights of VSGs?

Specifically, the research findings indicated that the development of knowledge regarding human rights is not “homogeneous” but is influenced by most of the demographic characteristics under study, except for gender and place of residence. This highlights the importance of adopting multidimensional strategies for the professional development of professional strategies that must consider both formal and informal learning pathways, as well as the structural dynamics of the workplace.

Regarding the mobilization for the protection of human rights

of VSGs, it is worth noting that greater mobilization was found to be among professionals with lower academic qualifications. This may indicate the presence of a compensatory mechanism among individuals possessing fewer formal qualifications (Bandura, 1986). The development of alternative strategies may function as a “counterbalance” to their perceived disadvantages, potentially leading to a higher degree of personal commitment—particularly in professions related to social care (Nussbaum, 2011).

Regarding the research findings on the variable for the nature of employment where non-permanent employees demonstrated statistically significantly higher levels of mobilization compared to their permanent colleagues, this may reflect an increased sense of adaptability or proactive engagement of professionals in more precarious employment conditions compared to professionals with permanent jobs (Feldman, 2006).

Furthermore, the fact that the research results reveal greater mobilization of professionals staffing the private sector for the protection of VSGs compared to the mobilization of professionals staffing the public sector, this could be attributed

to different organizational cultures, performance expectations or exposure to diverse populations within private structures (Todorović, et al., 2024).

In addition, regarding the results that the professionals staffing Counseling Centers and Psychosocial Health Services are less influenced by the characteristics of VSGs in the way they provide services, this can be interpreted as a result of the intensive professional training and ethical culture that governs these specialized spaces, where the principle of equal treatment is promoted regardless of social identity or vulnerability (Banks et al., 2020; Reamer, 2018).

Moreover, the increased mobilization of professionals in adult care and goods provision services may possibly be related to direct and daily contact with VSGs, which enhances empathy and a sense of personal and social responsibility towards these population groups (Thomas et al., 2016; Tronto, 2013). Finally, it is necessary to note, even more specifically, the increased level of mobilization of care and support professionals to defend the human rights of beneficiaries, which can also be justified because of the close relationship that these professionals maintain with the beneficiaries. More generally, this interpersonal proximity reveals an orientation towards respect for human dignity, which in our study functions as a catalyst in recording increased care provision (Hugman, 2014; Banks & Williams, 2005).

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About the Authors: Chaidas Alexandros (PhD) is head of the department of Social Welfare of Region of Western Greece, Greece.

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