

## **Network of European Integrity and Whistleblowing Authorities (NEIWA)**

Declaration with a final call  
Adopted on 17 September 2021

NEIWA currently consists of the following members:

|                                  |                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Austria</b>                   | Ministry of Justice                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Belgium</b>                   | Federal Ombudsman<br>Vlaamse Ombudsman                                                                                                 |
| <b>Bulgaria</b>                  | Bulgarian Commission for Anti-Corruption and Illegal Assets Forfeiture                                                                 |
| <b>Croatia</b>                   | Ombudswoman                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Czech Republic</b>            | Ministry of Justice                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Denmark</b>                   | Data Protection Authority                                                                                                              |
| <b>Estonia</b>                   | Ministry of Justice                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Finland</b>                   | Ministry of Justice                                                                                                                    |
| <b>France</b>                    | Défenseur des Droits                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Greece</b>                    | National Transparency Authority                                                                                                        |
| <b>Hungary</b>                   | Commissioner for Fundamental Rights                                                                                                    |
| <b>Ireland</b>                   | Garda Ombudsman                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Italy</b>                     | Autorità Nazionale Anticorruzione                                                                                                      |
| <b>Latvia</b>                    | State Chancellery                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Lithuania</b>                 | General Prosecutor's Office                                                                                                            |
| <b>Netherlands</b>               | Huis voor Klokkenluiders                                                                                                               |
| <b>Portugal</b>                  | Portuguese Ombudsman's Office<br>Prosecutor General                                                                                    |
| <b>Romania</b>                   | Ministry of Justice                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Slovenia</b>                  | Commission for the Prevention of Corruption                                                                                            |
| <b>Slovakia</b>                  | Whistleblower Protection Bureau i.o.<br>Whistleblower Protection Office of Slovakia                                                    |
| <b>Spain</b>                     | Agencia Valenciana Antifrau<br>Oficina Antifrau de Catalunya<br>Prevention and Fight against Corruption Office of the Balearic islands |
| <b>Sweden</b>                    | Ministry of Employment                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Montenegro<br/>(observer)</b> | Agency for Prevention of Corruption                                                                                                    |

*Recalling* that the Network of European Integrity and Whistleblowing Authorities (NEIWA), currently representing 22 EU Member States and one observer, has been established in May 2019 to offer a platform to cooperate and exchange knowledge and experiences in the field of integrity and whistleblowing.

*Highlighting* that NEIWA at the moment focuses its efforts on the transposition of the Directive (EU) 2019/1937 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law (hereafter: "the Directive") and aims at strengthening the level of protection of whistleblowers within the European Union (EU).

*Recalling* the previous recommendations of NEIWA in the Paris declaration of 2 December 2019, the Rome declaration of 26 June 2020, the Brussels declaration of 17 December 2020 and the Utrecht declarations of 4 June 2021.

We, members of NEIWA<sup>1</sup>, within the spirit of sharing best practices, recommend to all governments, administrations and other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Directive to, at least:

1. ensure that the Directive is implemented correctly and on time, so before the deadline of 17 December 2021.
2. uphold that ethics, integrity and the creation of a speak-up culture remains a top priority for public and private employers and managers.
3. make sure that the external reporting channels, set up by the competent authorities, have sufficient organizational and financial autonomy needed to perform their functions properly and providing them with sufficient resources.
4. consider appointing an authority that is recognized and positioned as the main, central or pivotal authority within the Member State or region and that gives the Directive and the national implementing law a name, a face and a phone number.
5. provide for a clear legal prohibition of retaliation, which will have an important dissuasive effect.
6. ensure that reporting persons are granted protection status, where this is foreseen by national legislation.
7. ensure that competent authorities have, where appropriate, dissuasive tools to prevent any form of retaliations and impose sanctions on the individual and / or organization taking retaliatory measures.
8. provide that reporting persons benefit from effective legal, psychological and financial support when reporting, regardless of their personal or financial situation. These services could be provided by governmental or non-governmental organizations or other professional associations with the necessary funding, expertise and independence.

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<sup>1</sup> The Hungarian Commissioner for Fundamental Rights has not participated in the vote.