



Network of European Integrity and Whistleblowing Authorities (NEIWA)

Brussels Declaration

June 13th, 2025

AUSTRIA	Viennese's External Reporting Office for EU Infringements
BELGIUM	Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights Federal Ombudsman Flemish Ombudsman Office Ombuds Brussels Ombudsman of the German-speaking Community Ombudsman of Wallonia and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation
BULGARIA	Commission for Anti-Corruption Commission for Personal Data Protection
CROATIA	Office of the Ombudswoman
CZECH REPUBLIC	Ministry of Justice
FRANCE	Defender of Rights
GERMANY	Federal Office of Justice
GEORGIA	Anti-Corruption Bureau
GREECE	National Transparency Authority
IRELAND	Fiosrú - Office of the Police Ombudsman Office of the Protected Disclosures Commissioner
ITALY	National Anticorruption Authority
LATVIA	State Chancellery - Contact Point of Whistleblowers
LUXEMBOURG	Office for Whistleblowers
LITHUANIA	General Prosecutors' Office
MONTENEGRO	Agency for Prevention of Corruption
POLAND	Commissioner for Human Rights
PORTUGAL	National Anti-Corruption Mechanism
ROMANIA	Ministry of Justice National Integrity Agency
SLOVAKIA	Whistleblower Protection Office
SLOVENIA	Commission for the Prevention of Corruption
SPAIN	Andalusian Office Against Fraud and Corruption Castilla y León's Independent Authority on Corruption Matters Catalan Anti-Fraud Office Independent Authority for the Protection of Whistleblowers Valencian Anti-Fraud Agency

SWEDEN	Swedish Work Environment Authority
THE NETHERLANDS	Dutch Whistleblowers Authority

Recalling that NEIWA, currently representing 23 countries and 35 authorities, was established in the Hague in May 2019 and formalized its governance with the adoption of NEIWA's Constitution at its 8th General Assembly in March 2023 in Rome as well as the Rules of procedures at its 9th General Assembly in April 2024 in Valencia;

Recalling NEIWA's declarations adopted in Paris (2019), Rome (2020 and 2023), Brussels (2020), Utrecht (2021), Dublin (2021), Barcelona (2022) and Valencia (2024);

Highlighting that one of NEIWA's core objectives is to offer a platform for cooperation and the exchange of knowledge, documentation, best practices and experiences in the areas of integrity and whistleblowing;

Emphasizing that NEIWA's members play a central and/or pivotal role in the field of whistleblowing at national level, with most members being designated as competent authorities in accordance with 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;

Stressing that by sharing their practical experiences, the challenges encountered and the best practices identified, NEIWA members aim to strengthen the protection of whistleblowers across the European Union and provide a safe place for people to speak-up and safely report breaches of law in the workplace, and by doing so, protect the public interest;

Welcoming the results of NEIWA's two working groups who analysed issues related to the handling of whistleblower's reports, in particular regarding anonymous reports, the legal risks of reporting outside the dedicated channels, the different levels of protection provided to whistleblowers, as well as the support measures provided to whistleblowers such as psychological support, financial support and other legal, material and remedial support;

Highlighting the materials developed by NEIWA members to raise awareness and promote whistleblowing;

Noting the disparities and the varieties of models following the implementation of the Directive (EU) in national frameworks as well as the different interpretations among NEIWA members regarding common concepts derived from the Directive (EU) such as the recognition of the whistleblower's status or the public disclosure;

Acknowledging that corruption threatens the stability and security of societies and our democracies;

Recalling that whistleblowing is considered one of the most effective tools to prevent, detect and ultimately prosecute corruption cases;

Expressing concerns for the setbacks in anticorruption policies, integrity institutions and rule of law implementation occurring in several European countries, and reaffirming the central and

increasing role of the European Union as a point of reference for the protection of civil rights and of our democracies;

Stressing the crucial importance of a prompt approval of the Proposal for a EU Directive on combating corruption and the importance of collaboration with our partners, among which the European Network Against Corruption of which NEIWA is a member, in our common goals to protect public interest and ensure the rule of law;

We, members of NEIWA, gathered in Brussels, Belgium on June 12th and 13th 2025 for NEIWA's 10th General Assembly,

Welcome the following new members and partners:

- Viennese's External Reporting Office for EU Infringements (Austria) – member
- National Anti-Corruption Mechanism (Portugal) - member
- Castilla y León's Independent Authority on Corruption Matters (Spain) - member
- Agency for Prevention of Corruption (Kosovo) – partner

Recommend our members to:

- When the legislation allows anonymous reports, use specific tools allowing further communication with the anonymous whistleblower as additional information or documentation is often required when following up on the report.
- Collect data to analyse the percentage of anonymous reports resulting in an investigation to evaluate the quality of anonymous reports and to identify elements to improve their quality.
- Raise awareness among staff members about the importance of transferring whistleblower's reports between authorities in a secure way to ensure only authorized persons will have access to the confidential information contained in the report.
- Enhance capacity-building measures, including training and certification programs specifically designed for legal professionals and support units involved in whistleblower cases.

Call upon legislators, governments and all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the whistleblowing legislations across the European Union to:

Regarding the rule of law and anti-corruption agenda:

- Uphold the rule of law, the anticorruption policies and institutions and the whistleblowing as the exercise of the human right to freedom of expression and information, all at the very core of our democracies.
- Promptly approve the Proposal for a EU Directive on combating corruption as it is increasingly necessary to uniform and strengthen anticorruption rules and legislation across Europe.

Regarding the protection of whistleblowers:

- Establish clear guidelines and criteria to determine the qualification and certification process of whistleblowers, enhancing legal certainty and reducing ambiguities regarding formal whistleblower status recognition, for example clarify under which conditions a whistleblower filing a report outside the established legal channels can

enjoy the protection foreseen for whistleblowers in cases where no dedicated channels exist or are inefficient or their use could lead to a risk of reprisal for the whistleblower.

- Strive for an harmonized implementation of the Directive (EU) 2019/1937 aiming to provide legal certainty and a high-level of protection to whistleblower, as well as provide a uniform interpretation of legal concepts foreseen in the Directive (EU), such as the meaning of “public disclosure” or the management of the exceptions to the confidentiality of the identity of the whistleblower.
- Establish a system that offers multiple levels of protection: not only judicial but also administrative such as certification of the status, support measures, non-judicial protection procedures against retaliation. Ensure a flexible and forward-looking approach to the material scope of whistleblower reports within the existing national legislation, in line with the objectives of Directive (EU) 2019/1937.
- Encourage the systematic analysis of relevant case law as a key tool for assessing the practical effectiveness of whistleblower protection frameworks.

Regarding support measures for whistleblowers:

- Adopt psychological assistance measures for whistleblowers, leveraging best practices from NEIWA authorities already successfully implementing these services.
- Expand and standardize psychological support provisions within national legal frameworks, addressing widespread deficiencies and disparities across European countries.
- Provide effective mechanisms for implementing economic support measures, addressing the current substantial gap in financial assistance available to whistleblowers.
- Advocate for increased material and remedial support, including targeted advisory services, immediate assistance hotlines, legal representation, and post-disclosure follow-up, to improve comprehensive protection mechanisms for whistleblowers.
- Foster inter-agency cooperation and establish multi-sectoral dialogue platforms among public institutions, civil society, and the private sector to enhance preventative and remedial whistleblower support strategies.

Regarding awareness-raising:

- Develop educational campaigns and promote awareness about effective whistleblower’s protections so that the whistleblowers feel comfortable in engaging in the process of reporting.
- Develop specific training addressed to magistrates and judges in Member States in order to raise awareness on the national whistleblowing law and the role and responsibilities of the competent authorities.