

The project: “Legitimacy and Accountability
for better protection of Whistleblowers_LAW”



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Legitimacy and Accountability for better protection of Whistleblowers_LAW

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The whistleblowing training programme - first results

Whistleblowers’ reports enhance transparency and accountability and are a key component of the enforcement chain of Union and national law, as they feed authorities with information, leading to effective detection, investigation and prosecution of breaches. When reporting breaches of the law, whistleblowers make use of their right to freedom of expression as enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union.

Targeted guidance can help person appointed in charge with whistleblowing protection, at institution and corporation level, to understand their responsibilities when setting up and running reporting procedures, handling and investigating reports and preventing and addressing retaliation.

By targeting training programs LAW project aim to support the participants understanding of the new legal framework, from the general obligations at institutional level, their competence to develop specific instruments and procedures, to the implementation of internal reporting channels. As a result of the trainings, the participants in training sessions will be much better prepared in the field of whistleblowing protection, with extended benefits both for the institutions they work for and also for the potential whistleblowers they will interact with.



The training sessions emphasize the practical application of knowledge and skills learned during the training, providing opportunities for participants to apply their learning in real-life scenarios, work-based projects, or simulations.



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180

participants from
Romania and
Bulgaria



The training sessions are very well received. 58 persons from Romania already participated at such targeted sessions.

The next training sessions are scheduled in autumn, both in Romania and Bulgaria.

By the end of the LAW project, at least 180 participants from the two countries will benefit from training sessions regarding whistleblowing protection/ specific procedures applied in organizations/ institutions.



The LAW project will contribute at enabling potential whistleblowers to benefit from better information about their legal rights and obligations, gain access to safe and reliable channels to report wrongdoing, and receive adequate organizational support.

The training programme emphasize the practical application of knowledge and skills learned during the training, providing opportunities for participants to apply their learning in real-life scenarios, work-based projects, or simulations. It also encourage reflection on their experiences and facilitate discussions on how to transfer the newly acquired knowledge and skills to their workplace or daily lives.



The 25th anniversary of the proclamation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU

The 25th anniversary of the proclamation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union is an opportunity to raise awareness of the protection it offers to people in the EU and to reflect further on the enforcement of fundamental rights in the EU.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights is the EU’s bill of human rights. It contains 50 articles with substantive rights and principles, followed by four articles with general provisions. Member States have a duty to respect the rights and observe the principles of the Charter whenever they are acting within the scope of binding EU law.

The requirement to comply with the Charter covers all actions of the EU Member States when they are implementing EU law, including lawmaking and EU funds.

Info regarding the use and added value in EU Member States are available on the [FRA website](#)

Article 11 - Freedom of expression and information

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.

2. The freedom and pluralism of the media shall be respected.

By specific objectives and estimated results, the LAW project contribute to improve whistleblowing protection, as an additional guarantee of respect for freedom of expression and the right to information, taking into account that insufficient protection of whistleblowers against reprisals affect people’s the freedom of expression.



The Fundamental Rights Report 2025

In the 2020 Charter strategy, the European Commission invites the Member States to ‘use impact assessments and legislative scrutiny procedures to ensure that initiatives implementing EU law comply with the Charter and develop guidance and training for national and local administration’.

Recently released by European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, the Fundamental Rights Report 2025 dedicate a chapter to implementation of the Charter of fundamental rights at national level.

According to the conclusions report, awareness raising and training on the Charter is flourishing, thanks to EU-funded opportunities, but differences among the Member States in knowledge on the Charter continue to exist. In this context it is worth to mention two of the FRA opinions on the subject.

Awareness raising and training

Dedicated EU funding has played a major role in increasing training and awareness raising on the Charter. Legal professionals continued to benefit significantly from training on the Charter. For example, the Council of Europe’s EU-funded Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals course on the interplay between the ECHR and the Charter continued to gain relevance among legal professionals. The course has been translated and launched in national languages in Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Spain. For example, Lawyers in private practice were trained in Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Hungary, Malta, Slovakia and Spain. Civil servants received training on the Charter in Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal and Romania. *(The Fundamental Rights Report 2025)*

Charter e-learning

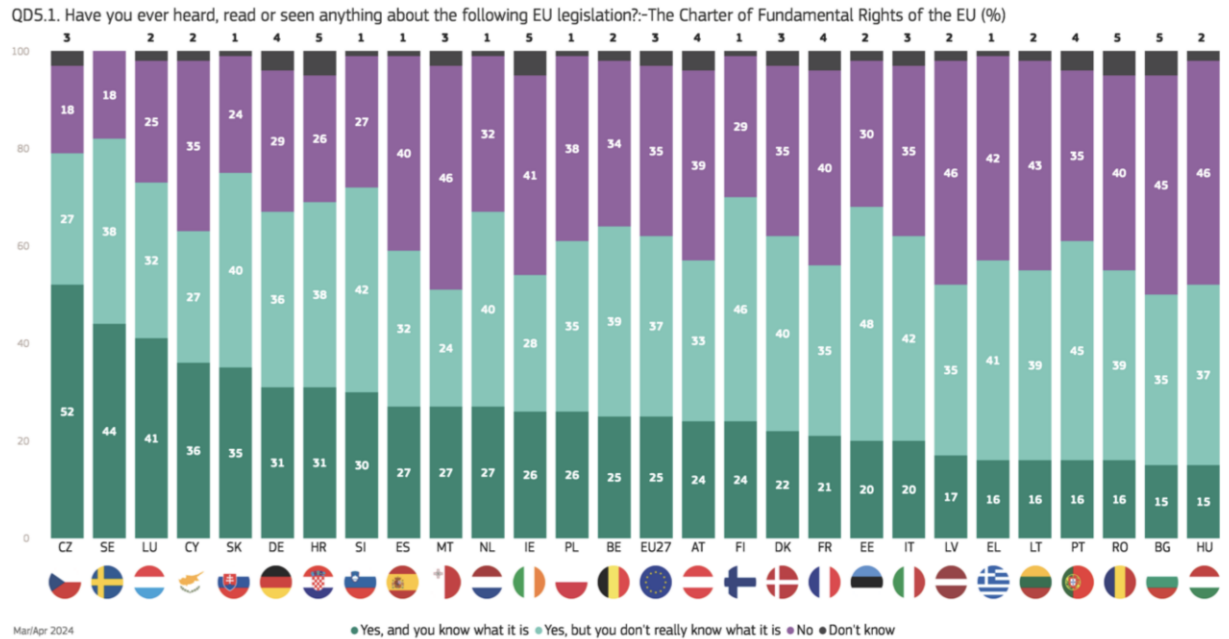
FRA created an e-learning course on the Charter, providing guidance on the scope of application of the Charter, practical case studies, video tutorials and more.



Although the training on fundamental rights is increasingly provided to legal professionals, FRA recommends that civil servants could benefit more from such training. And at the same time emphasise that will be important for the Member States to continue promoting the Charter at different levels of public administration.

Another key finding of the report reveal that awareness-raising activities on the rights enshrined in the Charter are numerous, although differences in the level of knowledge on the Charter remain among the Member States.

[The 2024 Eurobarometer survey on justice, rights and values](#) showed that, on average, 62 % of people in the EU-27 are aware of the Charter. Highest recognition is in Sweden (82%), Czechia (79%) and Slovakia (75%) and lowest in Romania (55 %), Hungary (52%) and Bulgaria (50%).



Source: Special Eurobarometer 552 Perceptions on Justice, Rights and Values, 2024



Key information about the LAW project

The main goal of the LAW project is to contribute to national and EU efforts to support and protect whistleblowers and build capacity of national authorities and legal practitioners to ensure adequate legal remedies to protect whistleblowers.

We anticipate that, through participants involved and implemented activities, the LAW project will strengthen the application of the Directive (EU) 2019/1937 and of national framework in Romania and Bulgaria, in line with respect for transparency, good governance, accountability and freedom of expression.

The path of the two countries in terms of legal framework in the field of whistleblowers protection is quite different. Based on these differences, valuable information can be gleaned about how the two countries manage to ensure the protection of whistleblowers after the legislation transposing the EU Directive was approved. The lessons learned can have a transnational dimension, useful for other EU member states, including from the perspective of respecting the right to freedom of expression.

Considering the challenges in Romania and Bulgaria, the project identified a few types of key target groups that will have a major impact in whistleblowers protection on the short and medium term.

The focus is on CSOs, experts active in the field of WB protection, persons in charge of handling whistleblowers' reports and also students as future experts in the field. It is expected that through events such as training sessions, workshops and seminars the project will support at least 400 persons to improve their knowledge to assure adequate counseling and protection for potential whistleblowers.

To improve general public awareness, at least 3 million people will benefit from better information about their legal rights and reliable channels to report wrongdoing. Also, the project will contribute to increase whistleblowers protection, as an additional guarantee of respect for freedom of expression and the right to information, as insufficient protection of whistleblowers against reprisals affects the freedom of expression.



Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme (CERV)

Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme aims to protect and promote rights and values as enshrined in the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights in particular by supporting civil society organisations active at local ,regional, national and transnational level.

The CERV programme seeks to support and develop open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies based on the rule of law. That includes a vibrant and empowered civil society, encouraging people's democratic, civic and social participation and cultivating the rich diversity of European society, based on our common values, history and memory.

Launched in 2021 the CERV programme will run for seven years until 2027. It was created along with the 2021-2027 Justice programme under the Justice, Rights and Values Fund.

Civil society organisations active at local, regional, national and transnational level, as well as other stakeholders, can apply to receive CERV funding for initiatives aimed at citizens' engagement, equality for all and the protection and promotion of rights and EU values.

The project “Legitimacy and Accountability for better protection of Whistleblowers_LAW” is co-financed by European Union, trough the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme.