



31 March 2026

PRESS RELEASE

Needs Analysis Report on whistleblower protection systems across EU countries - main conclusions -

Across the European Union, there is a significant gap between the promise of whistleblower protection and the real experiences of those who report wrongdoing. Current evidence underscores the urgent need for a fundamental strategic shift in both the conception and implementation of whistleblower protection, reveals the **Needs Analysis Report** released today by VoiceGuard project team.

Individuals who report wrongdoing play a crucial role in exposing corruption and other forms of misconduct that threaten public welfare. Whistleblowers have contributed to safeguarding lives and conserving public resources through their disclosures. However, those who disclose such information often face significant personal risks, including loss of employment, workplace harassment, exclusion from future opportunities.

Protecting whistleblowers from unjust consequences, including retaliation, discrimination, or other adverse actions, encourages greater reporting of misconduct. Such protection increases the likelihood that wrongdoing will be prevented, detected, and sanctioned. Therefore, safeguarding individuals who report wrongdoing is essential for enhancing legal compliance.

VoiceGuard project research reveals practical challenges faced by individuals reporting wrongdoing, including difficulties with reporting channels, the sufficiency of protective measures, the accessibility of support services, and the effectiveness of the legal framework in practice.

Our evidence, collected across six EU Member States, shows three key themes of systemic failure.

- First, internal reporting channels often act as a facade, creating a false sense of compliance through procedural hostility. Reports disappear into a “black hole” of institutional silence, a tactic that erodes trust. This procedural hostility is not just passive neglect; it is the first step in a complex strategy of retaliation.
- Second, retaliation is rarely just a simple act of dismissal; it is a calculated strategy aimed at professional and psychological destruction. An organization's first impulse is often not to investigate the report but to discredit the person, deploying tactics that are specifically adapted to the profile of the whistleblower to maximize their vulnerability.
- Third, the entire protection system is weakened by a major structural flaw: it depends on after-the-fact solutions. Legal professionals highlight a serious temporal mismatch between the rapid pace of retaliation and the slow process of justice. This delay means that any subsequent legal victories are largely symbolic, arriving long after the damage is done.



This systemic failure carries a heavy human toll. The personal impact on whistleblowers is made clear through tactics like social isolation, mobbing, and professional blacklisting that ruin careers.

Current evidence underscores the urgent need for a fundamental strategic shift in both the conception and implementation of whistleblower protection. It is evident that the prevailing model, which relies primarily on ex-post remedies, has proven ineffective.

Data from high-performing outlier jurisdiction (Luxembourg) demonstrates that effective protection is achievable. The current widespread failure is a result of local cultural resistance, not an unfixable flaw in the mandate to protect whistleblowers.

- The Needs Analysis Report released today by VoiceGuard project team is available on the project website: <https://voiceguard-project.eu/>
- Best practices and policy recommendations are prepared by our experts and will be also launch during the project implementation.
- VoiceGuard project is developing a comprehensive support network of organizations and professionals, including legal experts, psychologists, counselors, and advocacy groups that will be able to provide diverse and holistic support to whistleblowers.

VoiceGuard project is a pan-European support structure for whistleblowers throughout the European Union, and an advocate for their protection following the EU Directive 2019/1937. Meeting the challenge of fragmentation and inconsistencies in whistleblower protection laws, VoiceGuard project fills the gaps by creating a pan-European whistleblower protection umbrella. The support system developed into the project will provide legal and practical services, such as a whistleblower hotline and other useful resources for public and private sector.

The project is implemented by a consortium that includes both NGO`s and companies with relevant experience in the field: The Baltasar Garzón International Foundation (FIBGAR), Transparency International Romania (TI-RO), Transparency International Bulgaria (TI-BG), MD BRAINNOVATION, OŽIVENÍ Z.S, NOVEL Group. Project co-funded by the European Union through the European Commission - Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV).

Find more about VoiceGuard project ambitious objectives, activities and results on [project`s website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).