



FAQ - THE WHISTLEBLOWING DIRECTIVE

The Whistle-blower Directive is a European directive which will in principle be transposed into Belgian law by 17 December 2021.

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What is this directive about, what does it mean for the Aertssen Group and its employees, customers, suppliers and partners?

1. What? The directive in "a nutshell"

Europe wants to make it easier for whistle-blowers to report all kinds of abuses in a company. The Whistle-blower Directive therefore provides for minimum standards, on the one hand for **reporting channels** and on the other hand for the **protection of the whistle-blower against retaliation**.

In this way the European legislator wants to remove thresholds for 'whistle-blowers'.

2. You can ring my bell - what abuses can one ring the bell for?

The whistle-blowing directive is aimed at infringements of rules that fall within the competence of the EU. So that's very broad: anti-money laundering legislation, environmental rules, public health, malpractice in public procurement, financial services, fraud, security in the transport sector... but compliance with the ubiquitous GDPR rules is also targeted.

3. Internal contact point - online platform

Our internal contact point considers specific requirements concerning independence, confidentiality and data protection.

- **Independence:** we ensure that there is no conflict of interest in the contact point. The contact point also has a direct line to the (co-)CEO and the Business unit manager.
- **Confidentiality:** the identity of the reporter will be kept confidential at all times.
- **Data protection:** The information received is properly secured. This means, among other things, that unauthorised staff members have no access to it.



4. Deadlines

Every reporter receives a **confirmation of receipt within 7 days** of receiving his/her report.

The substantive follow-up and feedback follow within a reasonable period of time, **not exceeding 3 months** after the acknowledgement of receipt. If the case is particularly complex, this period may be extended to **6 months**.

5. Which whistle-blowers enjoy protection?

The Directive protects a broad category of people from victimisation if they become aware of abuses and report them. Firstly, there are the employees, who could, for example, fear for their jobs.

But also, for consultants, freelancers, (employees of) subcontractors or suppliers there can be a lot at stake: non-renewal of a contract, damage to reputation... They therefore also enjoy protection.

Finally, the Directive also gives protection to former employees, job applicants, trainees, volunteers, shareholders and directors.

6. How does it work?

Abuses can be reported using the form below.

[FORM](#)