

# THE WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION OFFICE

## OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN 2025

**THE WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION OFFICE** (the "WPO") is an independent state authority that protects the rights and legitimate interests of whistleblowers. The operation of the Whistleblower Protection Office, as well as the overall design of whistleblowing and whistleblower protection in Slovakia, is regulated by Act No. 54/2019 Coll. on Whistleblower Protection and on Amendments to Certain Acts.

As the **competent authority for receiving whistleblowing reports**, it receives and verifies whistleblowing reports, which then, in cooperation with the whistleblower, refers to authorities competent to investigate them, such as the Public Prosecutor's Office or administrative authorities.

In the **protection agenda**, the WPO investigates acts of retaliation against whistleblowers and adopts decisions on whistleblower protection matters. The WPO provides advice and support to whistleblowers.

The WPO also advises employers on designing their internal whistleblowing systems and issues expert opinions and methodological guidance.

In its **supervisory role**, the WPO monitors the application of the Act and has the power to impose penalties for administrative offences and misdemeanours.

This brief overview provides basic statistics on the WPO operation and the broader societal context of whistleblowing.

### A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

In 2025, the WPO focused on enhancing the infrastructure for external reporting. The office organised several meetings and training sessions for selected administrative bodies legally designated to receive and verify whistleblowing reports, known as external bodies. Additionally, the WPO strengthened its collaboration with the National Labour Inspectorate and other regional inspectorates. As part of this effort, a new manual was developed, outlining the responsibilities of these bodies in managing external whistleblowing channels and in granting protected whistleblower status. The office also continued paying attention to the development of internal whistleblowing practices, introducing new training programs for individuals responsible for managing internal reporting systems. Furthermore, it assisted to various organisations in establishing these systems.

The year 2025 was remarkable for the Office, as it received nearly twice as many submissions as in previous years. Additionally, the number of individuals reporting retaliatory measures taken against them for their disclosures increased. To address this, a separate submission form was introduced at the beginning of the year. However, there was a significant decline in the number of preventive protections granted by the prosecutor's office and administrative authorities when compared to 2024 and 2023.

In 2025, the Office issued more fines, a result of enhanced control activities that have been implemented the previous year. A total of eight fines were imposed in first-instance proceedings, amounting to 122,200 euros. Additionally, five of these fines were also resolved in second-instance proceedings. All decisions are available on the Office's website.

The Office actively participated in international cooperation in 2025. The President of the Office was elected to lead the Network of European Integrity and Whistleblowing Authorities (NEIWA).

### DATA SOURCES

#### The WPO's own data

The data in the Whistleblowing Reports and Protection Measures section originates from the WPO's activities. The information on the number of protection measures granted is based on the notifications of protection granted that a prosecutor or an administrative authority is obliged to send to the WPO. The information regarding criminal complaints and referrals to an administrative authority combines data on criminal complaints and referrals made by the WPO and information on submissions to the competent authorities made by the whistleblowers themselves, with whom the WPO works.

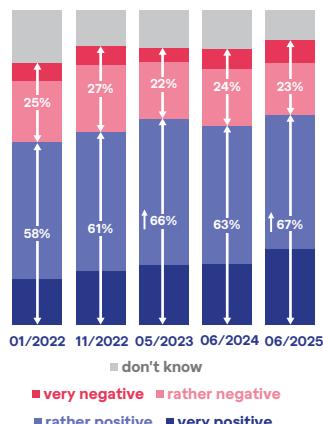
#### Public opinion poll

One of the WPO's activities includes monitoring of the public opinion on whistleblowing and whistleblower protection. The aim is to raise awareness about whistleblowing in Slovakia and about the whistleblower protection options. The opinion polls are conducted in cooperation with Focus agency in the form of personal interviews with a representative sample of the Slovak population aged 18 and over. Data collected between 19-26 January 2022 on a sample of 1,017, 2-8 November 2022 on a sample of 1,017, 24-31 May 2023 on a sample of 1,012, 5-12 June 2024 on a sample of 1,025, and 2-9 June 2025 on a sample of 1,034.

## WHISTLEBLOWING AND SOCIETY 2025

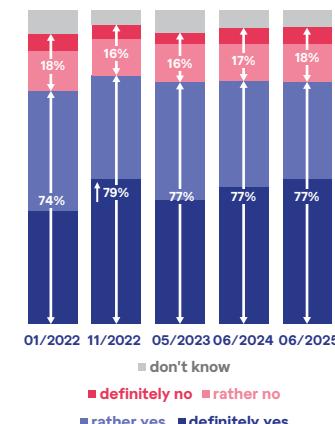
### WHISTLEBLOWER PERCEPTION

Imagine if your colleague reported corrupt conduct or fraud committed by another colleague or supervisor. What would be your opinion on this person?



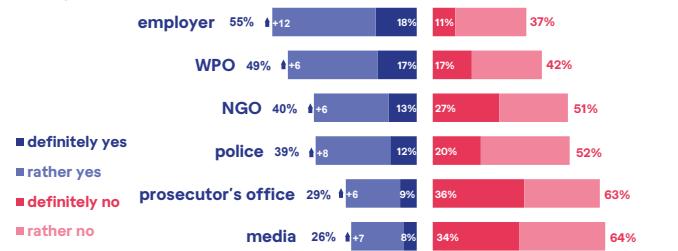
### DEMAND FOR WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

In your opinion, should the state provide legal protection to such people, i.e. whistleblowers of corruption and fraud, through its institutions?



### WHERE SLOVAK RESIDENTS WOULD POTENTIALLY FILE WHISTLEBLOWING REPORTS:

If you witnessed corruption or fraud in your workplace, would you be willing to report it to:



### WILLINGNESS TO REPORT CORRUPTION AND FRAUD TO AT LEAST ONE ENTITY

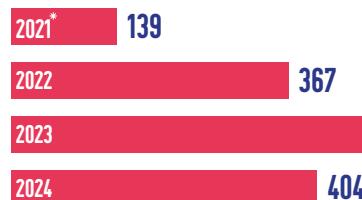


↑ a statistically significant difference from the previous measurement

# WHISTLEBLOWING REPORTS AND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION 2025

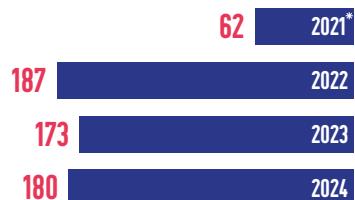
## NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE CONTACTED THE WPO

via the form, the hotline, regular mail and other communication channels.



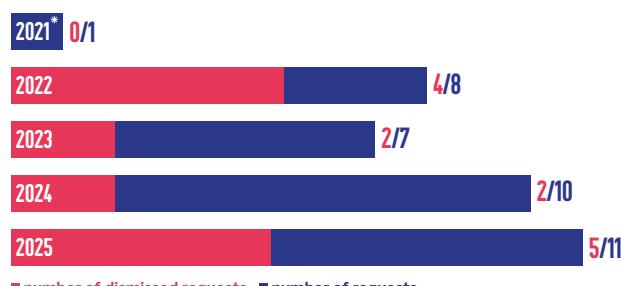
## NUMBER OF RECEIVED SUBMISSIONS

received by the WPO as the authority competent to receive external whistleblowing reports (including retaliation complaints).



## NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR CONSENT TO AN EMPLOYER'S EMPLOYMENT-RELATED MEASURE

– that the employer intended to take against a protected whistleblower.



■ number of dismissed requests ■ number of requests

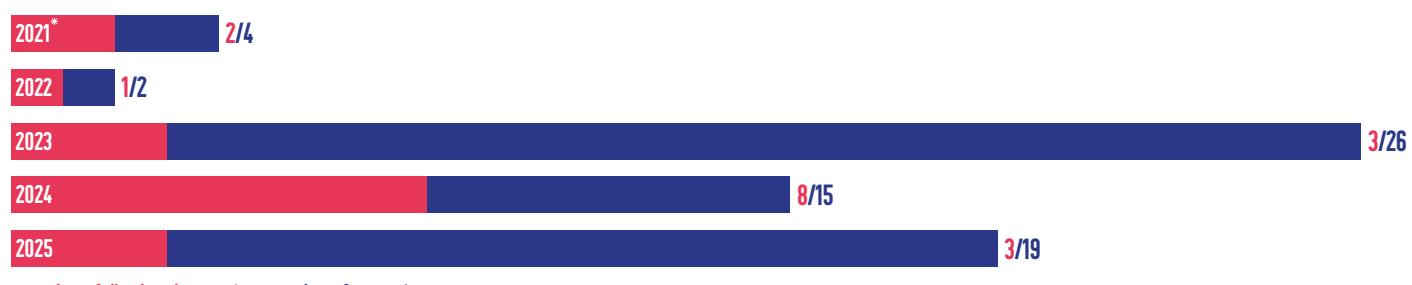
## NUMBER OF WHISTLEBLOWERS WHO HAVE BEEN GRANTED PROTECTION

on the basis of qualified whistleblowing reports that have been granted protection by the PublicProsecutor's Office or another administrative authority.



## NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR SUSPENSION OF AN EMPLOYER'S EMPLOYMENT-RELATED MEASURE

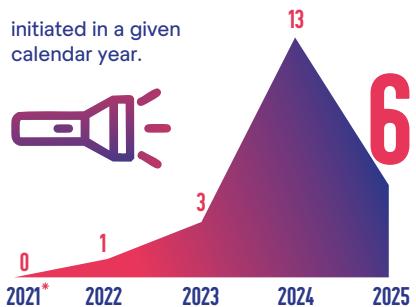
Suspensions of adverse employment-related measures taken against whistleblowers in connection with their whistleblowing reports.



■ number of dismissed requests ■ number of requests

## NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS

initiated in a given calendar year.



## NUMBER OF CASES

→ with a criminal complaint



## NUMBER OF CASES

→ with a submission filed to administrative authorities



Includes criminal complaints filed and referrals to an administrative authority in relation to the whistleblowing reports received.

## NUMBER OF WPO PROCEEDINGS

related to whistleblower protection, inspection activities, fine imposition, or a misdemeanour, granting of a reward, as well as assisting whistleblowers facing retaliation and assisting whistleblowers in filing whistleblowing reports, and more.



\*All 2021 data includes only the period September – December 2021