

Saeima (Parliament of Latvia), State Chancellery, Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvian School of Public Administration

Working languages of the conference: Latvian and English (simultaneous interpreting will be provided)

<http://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/content/trauksmes-celeji>
www.knab.gov.lv

¹The draft Whistleblower Protection Law was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 7 March 2017 (available in Latvian here) and was submitted to the Saeima for deliberation.

#goodgovernance
#whistleblowing
#corruption

International conference

TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND BETTER GOVERNANCE: ENCOURAGING WHISTLEBLOWING, FIGHTING CORRUPTION, FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

9–11 OCTOBER 2017, RIGA, LATVIA

Venues:

Day 1:
Saeima
(Room "Baltiešu zāle", Jēkaba iela 6/8)

Day 2 and 3:
Tallink Hotel Riga
(Elizabetes iela 24)



LATVIJAS REPUBLIKAS SAEIMA



Valsts kanceleja



Valsts administrācijas skola



Objectives:

To promote an exchange of opinions, experience and good practice on whistleblowing and whistleblower protection endorsing the work that is currently underway to develop a single legal framework¹;

To discuss the progress Latvia has made in reducing corruption, as well as present and future challenges; to draw attention to issues related to political corruption and its impact on economic development and democratic processes; to debate measures for preventing and fighting political corruption; and to encourage exchange of best practice.

Day 1:
Monday, 9 October 2017

EFFECTIVE WHISTLEBLOWING AND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Venue:
Saeima, Jēkaba iela 6/8,
Rīga (Baltiešu zāle)

SESSION 1

During this session, two approaches to making a whistleblower report and reviewing it will be discussed: 1) the whistleblower approaches a single central institution which is then in charge of reviewing his or her report; 2) the complaint is filed to the public body responsible for the area which is the subject of the report. (The latter approach is used in the Draft Whistleblower Protection Law).

These two approaches will be illustrated by stories of experience from the Netherlands, where the House of Whistleblowers (central whistleblowing authority) was created in 2015, and the United States of America, where reporting is done to different competent authorities. The discussion will also cover the Latvian experience in dealing with citizen reports on corruption and other abuses.

The session participants will discuss how whistleblower reports are made and reviewed in the Netherlands, the United States of America and Latvia, focusing on the content and number of reports received, the resources required to review them, and the key challenges public bodies receiving whistleblower reports face (for example, addressing the question on how to ensure confidentiality, collaboration and information sharing in case the report falls within the competence of several public bodies, etc.).

08:30–09:00	Registration and coffee
09:00–09:30	Conference opening Moderator: Mr Lauris Liepa , Managing Partner of the law firm Cobalt Latvia and lecturer, Latvia Mr Sergejs Dolgopolovs , Member of the Saeima, Head of the Public Administration and Local Government Committee, Latvia Mr Jānis Citskovskis , Director of the State Chancellery, Latvia Mr Jēkabs Straume , Director of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia Ms Agita Kalviņa , Director of the Latvian School of Public Administration, Latvia
09:30–09:40	Draft Whistleblower Protection Law presentation Ms Inese Kušķe , State Chancellery, Latvia
09:40–09:55	International standards for efficient whistleblower protection Ms Leah Ambler , Anti-Corruption Division, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
09:55–12:00	SESSION 1: WHISTLEBLOWING TO COMPETENT AUTHORITIES
09:55–10:25	Whistleblowing and whistleblower protection in the United States Mr David Karasik , Securities and Exchange Commission, United States of America
10:25–10:55	Whistleblowing and whistleblower protection in the Netherlands Mr Alain Hoekstra and Ms Soëlla Mirshahi , House of Whistleblowers (Huis voor Klokkenluiders), Netherlands
10:55–11:15	Coffee break
11:15–11:30	Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau Report Centre Ms Ilze Jurča , Deputy Director, Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia
11:30 –11:45	Internal Security Bureau experience in examining reports Mr Valters Mūrnieks , Head of the Internal Security Bureau, Latvia
11:45–12:00	Questions and answers/ Discussion

SESSION 2

The draft Whistleblower Protection Law includes a requirement to ensure the existence of internal reporting channels in central and local public institutions, as well as in publicly-owned enterprises and private sector legal entities (enterprises, associations) with more than 50 employees. This norm derives from the Council of Europe and the OECD standards and recommendations and is also included in the laws of several other countries (Ireland, Netherlands, France, Australia, etc.). The panel discussion will focus on the development of such internal mechanisms that would provide workers with easily accessible and secure channels for reporting possible wrongdoings observed at the workplace, highlighting the benefits of such mechanisms for the organisation, be it a public body or an enterprise.

SESSION 3

This session will discuss the legal and institutional means necessary to effectively protect persons that suffer negative consequences because they raised concerns about possible wrongdoing at the workplace. The draft Whistleblower Protection Law sets out several protection measures: protection of confidentiality (anonymity); prohibition to create negative consequences; disciplinary responsibility in the public service; and the right to turn to the court or contest/appeal against the decision or action within the administrative procedure.

Experts from France and Ireland will share the experience of their countries. In Ireland, the Protected Disclosures Act came to force in 2014, providing a comprehensive framework for whistleblowing and guaranteeing state protection in the cases of both making a complaint to the Workplace Relations Commission and appeals to the Labour Court. In France, a new whistleblowing and whistleblower protection regulation was adopted last yearⁱⁱ, and Latvia may learn from the first steps in its implementation. The panel discussion will focus on the existing measures and additional steps needed to ensure that the state provides efficient protection to whistleblowers in Latvia.

ⁱⁱ Full text in French is available here.

12:00–13:00

SESSION 2: REPORTING MISCONDUCT INTERNALLY IN THE WORKPLACE

Panel discussion

"Internal reporting mechanisms as internal control, ethics and compliance measures"

Mr Liudas Jurkonis, Associate Partner, Ernst & Young Baltic UAB, Lithuania

Ms Ilze Znotiņa, Economic and Financial Crimes Prevention working group, Foreign Investors Council in Latvia

Mr Jānis Veinbergs, Internal Control Division, Rural Support Service of Latvia

Ms Sanita Mickevica, Smiltene Municipality, Latvia

Audience opinions:

Ms Inese Kušķe, the State Chancellery, **Mr David Karasik**, United States of America,

Mr Alain Hoekstra, Netherlands

13:00–14:15

Lunch (Cafeteria of the Saeima, Jēkaba iela 11)

14:15–16:30

SESSION 3: EFFECTIVE WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

14:15–14:35

Whistleblower protection regulation and its practical application in Ireland

Ms Evelyn O'Connor, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Ireland

14:35–14:55

Whistleblowing and whistleblower protection regulation and its practical application in France

Mr Pascal Filippi, Ministry of Finance, France

14:55–15:10

Coffee break

15:10–16:20

Panel discussion

Whistleblower protection in Latvia: Existing mechanisms, main challenges in their application and necessary improvements in the legislation

Participants:

Ms Laila Medina, Ministry of Justice, Latvia

Mr Edvīns Danovskis, Assistant Professor at the University of Latvia, Senior Advisor to the Legal Bureau of the Saeima

Mr Jānis Baumanis, Supreme Court, Latvia

Mr Raimonds Koņuševskis, Ombudsman's Office, Latvia

Mr Aivars Buliņš, Prosecutor General's Office, Latvia

Mr Jānis Veide, Transparency International Latvia-DELNA

16:20–16:30

Conclusions and recommendations

Day 2:
Tuesday, 10 October 2017

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Venue:
Tallink Hotel Rīga,
Elizabetes str. 24, Rīga

SESSION 1

The discussion will focus on meaning of political corruption and its impact on democratic processes and sustainable development of the country. The participants will give both general theoretical insight into the main issues of political corruption and global review of aspects concerning control of financing of political parties. Information regarding international recommendations on prevention and combating political corruption will be presented. Analysis of possible solutions and their effectiveness will be done.

08:30–09:00	Registration and coffee
09:00–09:20	Opening Mr Jēkabs Straume , Director of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia Mr Ainars Latkovskis , Member of the Saeima; Chairman of the Defence, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Committee, Latvia Mr Ēriks Kalnmeiers , Prosecutor General, Latvia
09:20–09:40	Presentation of the postage stamp dedicated to Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau's 15th Anniversary Mr Jēkabs Straume , Director of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia Mr Mārcis Vilcāns , SJSC Latvijas Pastas (Latvian Post) Chairman of the Board, Latvia
09:40–10:20	PRESENTATION "PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS OF CORRUPTION PREVENTION AND COMBATING BUREAU: OVERVIEW OF 15 YEARS" <i>Summary of KNAB's performance and insight into the future challenges</i> Mr Jēkabs Straume , Director of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia Ms Ilze Jurča , Deputy Director (on prevention matters) of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia Mr Jānis Roze , Deputy Director (on enforcement matters) of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia
10:20–10:30	Questions& answers
10:30–10:50	Coffee break
	SESSION 1: OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND POSSIBILITIES OF COUNTERACTION Moderator Mr Valts Kalniņš , Senior Researcher of PROVIDUS, Assistant Professor of the University of Latvia, Latvia
10:50–11:15	General insight into the main issues of political corruption Ms Rasma Kārklīņa , political scientist and professor emeritus of political science, Latvia
11:15–11:40	Global review of the control of political parties financing – Why it is important? Success stories Mr Marcin Walecki , Head of the Democratization Department, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
11:40–12:05	Preventing policy capture: OECD recommendation on public integrity Mr Yukihiko Hamada , Public Sector Integrity Division, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
12:05–12:30	GRECO recommendations. Examples of good practice. Mr Yves-Marie Doublet , Expert, Council of Europe-GRECO
12:30–12:45	Questions & answers

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SESSION 2

The discussion will focus on aspects of identification and fight against political corruption. Specific examples in other countries will be taken into account

- 12:45–14:00 Lunch (venue: Tallink Hotel Riga, Restaurant)
- SESSION 2: IDENTIFICATION, PREVENTION AND COMBATING POLITICAL CORRUPTION: BEST FOREIGN PRACTICES**
Moderator **Mr. Jānis Volberts**, anti-corruption and law expert
- 14:00–14:25 **The Carwash Operation: the largest scandal of corruption in any democracy ever. The beginning and the middle of a story that hasn't ended yet**
Mr Sergio Bruno Cabral Fernandes, Public prosecutor, Brazil
- 14:25–14:50 **Assessment and Monitoring of Corruption and Anti-corruption in Southeast Europe**
Mr. Aleksander Gerganov, Senior Analyst of the Economic Programme of the Centre for the Study of Democracy, Bulgaria
- 14:50–15:15 **Monitoring Political Finances In Georgia**
Mr. Zurab Aznaurashvili, Head of Political party Financing Service, Georgia
- 15:15–15:30 Questions & answers
- 15:30–15:55 Coffee break
- 15:55–16:40 **Panel discussion "Current and future challenges in the fight against political corruption"**
Moderator: **Mr Ivars Ījabs**, Head of Political Science Department, University of Latvia, Latvia
Participants:
Mr Jēkabs Straume, Director of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia
Ms Iveta Kažoka, researcher of the Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS, Latvia
Mr Kārlis Seržants, Member of the Saeima, Deputy Chairman of the Defence, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Committee, Latvia
Mr Sergejs Dolgopolovs, Member of the Saeima, Head of the Public Administration and Municipalities Commission, Latvia
Ms Viorika Jirgena, Prosecutor, Office of the Prosecutor General, Latvia
Ms Baiba Liepiņa, Chairman of the Board, Advertising Association of Latvia, Latvia
Ms. Marcin Walecki, Head of the Democratization Department, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Mr Sergio Bruno Cabral Fernandes, Public prosecutor, Brazil
- 16:40–17:00 Conclusions and Recommendations of the 2nd day

Day 3:
Wednesday, 11 October 2017

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Venue: Tallink Hotel Riga,
Elizabetes str. 24, Riga

SESSION 1

The discussion will concern experience of the Baltic sea region countries in their struggle against corruption. Success stories and questions to be solved will be presented, taking into account Latvian, Polish, Estonian and Lithuanian examples

SESSION 2

The role of information processing solutions (technological, legal, organisational and other) in detection, prevention and combating corruption and related financial crimes will be analysed from theoretical and practical point of view

09:00–09:30	Registration and coffee
09:30–09:55	Ms Ilze Ćirule , Director General of the State Revenue Service Mr Viesturs Burkāns , Head of the Office for Prevention of Laundering of Proceeds Derived from Criminal Activity (Financial Intelligence Unit) Mr Juris Stukāns , Chair of the Judicial Panel of Criminal Cases, Deputy Chair of Riga Regional Court SESSION 1: CURRENT ANTI-CORRUPTION TOPICS IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION Moderator Mr Haralds Burkovskis , journalist, Latvia
09:55–10:10	Experience of Latvia in combatting corruption Mr Igors Ivanovs , investigator, Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia
10:10–10:25	Central Anticorruption Bureau experience in fighting corruption in Poland Mr Grzegorz Ociecek , Deputy Head of Central Anticorruption Bureau, Poland
10:25–10:40	Need for change of the attitude Mr Mati Ombler , Head of Corruption Crimes Bureau of the Central Criminal Police of Estonian Police and Border Guard Board
10:40–10:55	Experience of Estonia in combatting corruption Mr Meelis Ratasapp , Head of Internal Security Service (KAPO), Estonia
10:55–11:10	Evolution of Special Investigation Service in Lithuania Mr Daumantas Pocius , Head of Vilnius Department of Special Investigation Service, Lithuania
11:10–11:25	Combating Corruption in North-Rhine-Westphalia Mr Jens Bomberg , Detective Chief Superintendent, State Bureau of Criminal Investigation of the State of North-Rhine-Westphalia, Germany
11:25–11:40	Questions & answers
11:40–12:00	Coffee break
	SESSION 2: USE OF MODERN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN PREVENTION AND COMBATING OF CORRUPTION AND RELATED OFFENCES Moderator Mr Uldis Ķinīs , Assistant Professor of the Riga Stradins University, Faculty of Law, Latvia
12:00–12:25	Impact of financial crime to internal security of the European Union Mr Kaspars Valpēteris , State Revenue Service Liaison Officer at Europol, Latvia, Latvia
12:25–12:50	Using technology to effectively prevent, detect, and predict corruption Ms Kimberly Benoit , Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Technology at the U.S. Postal Service Office, USA
12:50–13:05	The role of forensics in financial and corruption crimes investigation Mr Raimonds Apinis , Deputy Director of the State Forensic Science Bureau, Latvia
13:05–13:20	Legal consequences for a bribe in the cryptocurrency Mr Juris Janums , Ph.D. student at the University of Latvia, Latvia
13:20–13:35	Questions & answers
13:35–14:45	Lunch (venue: Tallink Hotel Riga, Restaurant)

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- 14:45–16:05 **Panel discussion "Current and Future Challenges of Corruption Mitigation"**
Moderator: **Mr Arnis Krauze**, journalist
Participants:
Mr Jēkabs Straume, Director of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Latvia
Mr Filips Rajeuskis, Political Scientist, Latvia
Mr Māris Urbāns, prosecutor, Office of the Prosecutor General, Latvia
Ms Diāna Hamkova, Assistant Professor of the University of Latvia, Faculty of Law, Department of Criminal Law, Latvia
Mr Meelis Ratassepp, Internal Security Service (KAPO), Estonia
Mr Juris Stukāns, Chair of the Judicial Panel of Criminal Cases, Deputy Chair of Riga Regional Court, Latvia
Ms Kimberly Benoit, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Technology at the U.S. Postal Service Office, USA
- 16:05–16:25 **Conclusions and Recommendations of the 3rd day. Closing of the conference**
- 16:25–17:30 Coffee break (informal discussion)

Contact details of organisers:

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