



**2016/2224(INI)**

23.5.2017

## **DRAFT OPINION**

of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

for the Committee on Legal Affairs

on legitimate measures to protect whistle-blowers acting in the public interest when disclosing the confidential information of companies and public bodies (2016/2224(INI))

Rapporteur (\*): Molly Scott Cato

(\*) Associated committee – Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure

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## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs calls on the Committee on Legal Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas whistle-blowers played an important role in the LuxLeaks, SwissLeaks and Panama Papers revelations, thus contributing to increased reforms to combat financial and tax fraud, money laundering and corruption, which hamper economic development and the rule of law;
- B. whereas whistle-blowing is not restricted to economic and financial matters, and persons who report or disclose information in the public interest often suffer reprisals, as do family members and colleagues, resulting for example in the loss of their careers;
- C. whereas EU law already contains certain provisions protecting whistle-blowers against reprisals, including with regard to money laundering, but does not yet provide for horizontal legislation applying to all public and private bodies;
  - 1. Calls on the Commission to present horizontal legislation to protect whistle-blowers as soon as possible;
  - 2. Points out the need to ensure that whistle-blowers are able to report not only illegal activities but also wrongdoing and any information in the public interest;
  - 3. Argues that whistle-blowers should be free to report both internally, within the workplace, and externally, and should be protected regardless of their choice of reporting channel;
  - 4. Stresses that whistle-blowers should not bear the burden of proof when it comes to demonstrating that they acted in good faith, as what matters is whether the information disclosed is in the public interest, or exposes wrongdoing and other misconduct;
  - 5. Calls on the Commission to ensure that whistle-blowers have access to independent legal advice and financial and psychological support, and can claim compensation for harassment or the loss of their current or future livelihood if said harm is caused in retaliation for a disclosure made under whistle-blower protection.