




Rethinking Whistleblowing:
the work of
Wim Vandekerckhove



I just came out of
a class on
whistleblowing
protection—super
interesting!

Oh really?

Got five minutes?
I'll tell you about it...

Let me introduce
you to his resume...



Wim Vandekerckhove



- Professor of Business Ethics at EDHEC



- Advised many international organisations



- Led the development of a standard dedicated to whistleblowing systems
(ISO 37002:2021)



- Several awards and distinctions, including the ISO Excellence Award in 2021

He publishes many articles, books, reports...
and his work is widely cited and recognised!

So, this class on whistleblowing?

First, whistleblowing involves reporting or disclosing irregularities, fraud, or danger within an organisation.

How?

By bringing them to the attention of an employer or administrative authority, or by making them public.

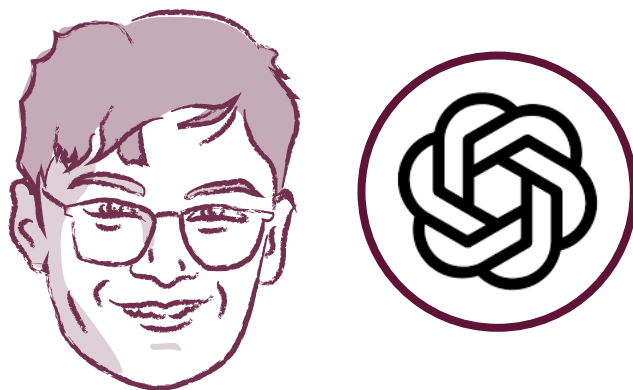
Examples of whistleblowers :

Raphaël Halet



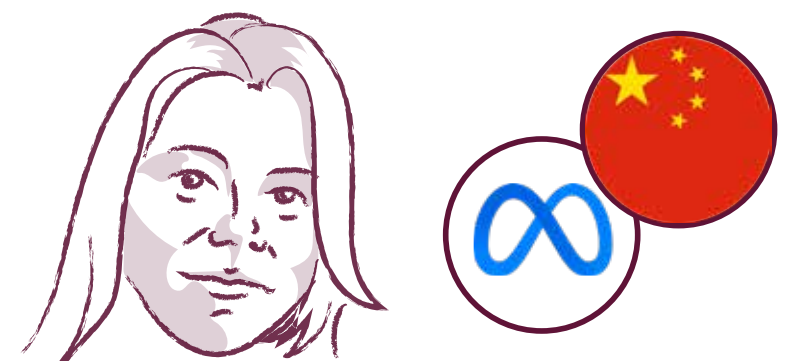
Revealed the LuxLeaks scandal (widespread tax evasion)

Suchir Balaji



Revealed improper use of copyrighted data in training AI tools at OpenAI

Sarah Wynn-Williams



Reported complicit behaviour by Meta in lowering privacy and free speech protections to enter the Chinese market

More and more countries are protecting whistleblowing



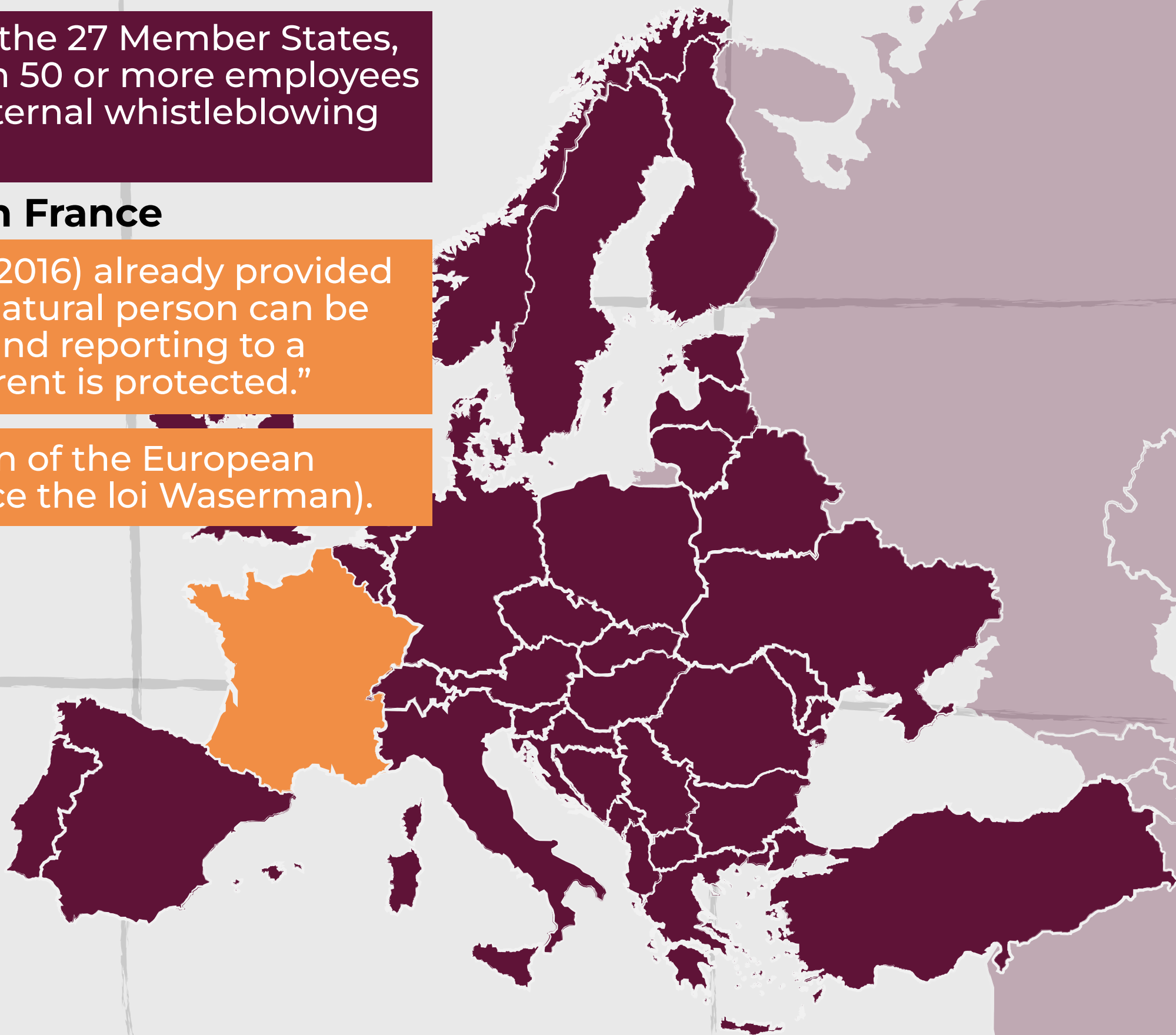
In the EU

2019 Directive : In the 27 Member States, organisations with 50 or more employees must set up an internal whistleblowing system.

In France

The Sapin II Law (2016) already provided protection: "Any natural person can be a whistleblower, and reporting to a supervisor or referent is protected."

2022: transposition of the European Directive (in France the loi Wasserman).



Except that... according to Wim, this transposition made things more complicated in France. Now, you have to go through "the framework of the formal internal disclosure procedure" to be recognised as a whistleblower.



To move things forward, he manages the **European BRIGHT project**



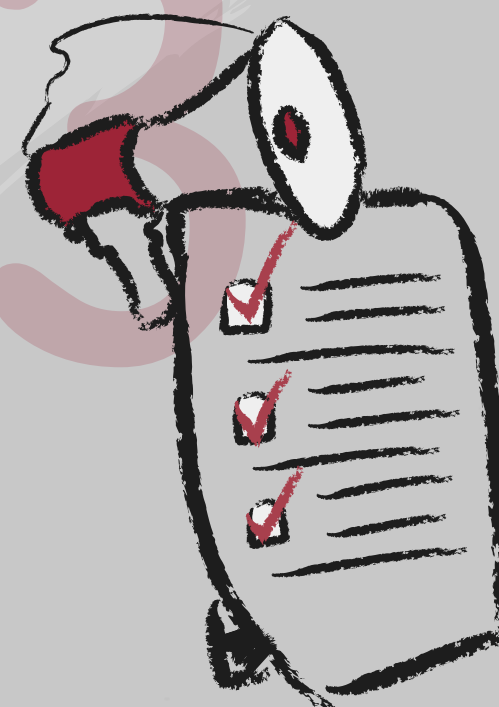
Building **R**esilience through **I**ntegrity, good **G**overnance, and **H**onesty **T**raining



Research and development of tools



Advocacy and dialogue on policies to be implemented



Practical guides to help organisations establish whistleblowing procedures

Within this framework, the Speak-Up Self-Assessment tool (SUSA) was set up. It's a free, anonymous online platform enabling professionals to self-assess the compliance of their whistleblowing systems with ISO and European Directive.

The problem is that...



Whistleblowers are **often isolated**.



Managing whistleblowing cases **within organisations is often difficult**.



Protections are only activated when the formal mechanism is triggered.



Those who handle alerts internally face **conflicting expectations** from employees and management.

For example, Yasmine Motarjemi...

↳ Reported the harmfulness of Nestlé baby products.

↳ Then she was placed under the supervision of the person implicated, which blocked her actions.

↳ Then she was fired.



More broadly, we should move from simple reporting mechanisms (alert channels) to a true "speak-up culture."



More on this paper!

Signalling Trustworthiness of Internal Whistleblowing Channels in Organisations: Temporality matters! (2025)

So... how do we get there?

Wim Vandekerckhove explains that it's far from being easy, but it's not impossible!
He recommends organisations to...



- Offer not just one, but **several channels to express alerts**
- Organise follow-up systems** with sufficient resources and management support
- Encourage managers** to respond quickly and explain the steps clearly
- Regularly inform employees** about the progress of follow-up and legal constraints
- Evaluate the reporting systems** and continuously improve them

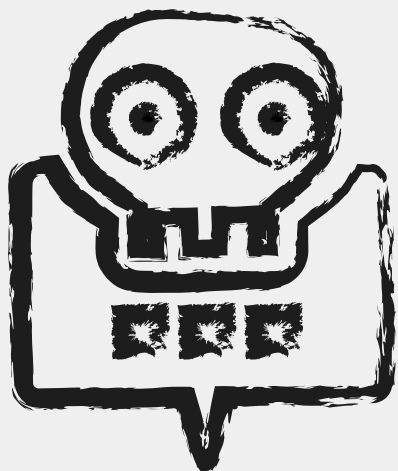
Wow, that's a lot...

And that's not all! Professor Vandekerckhove is also interested in other topics about organisational life. For example...

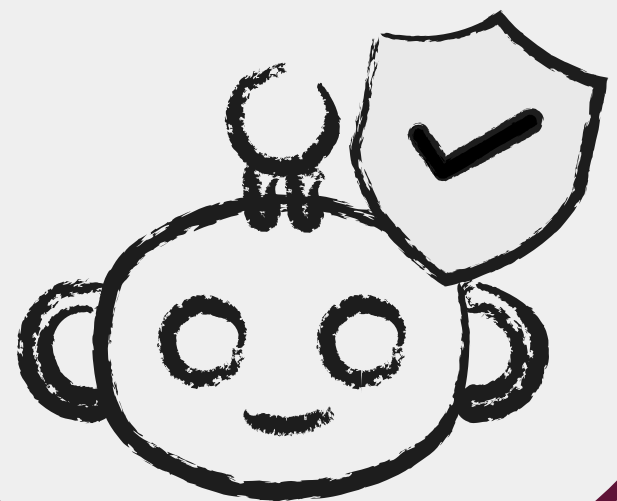
Reasons for employee silence

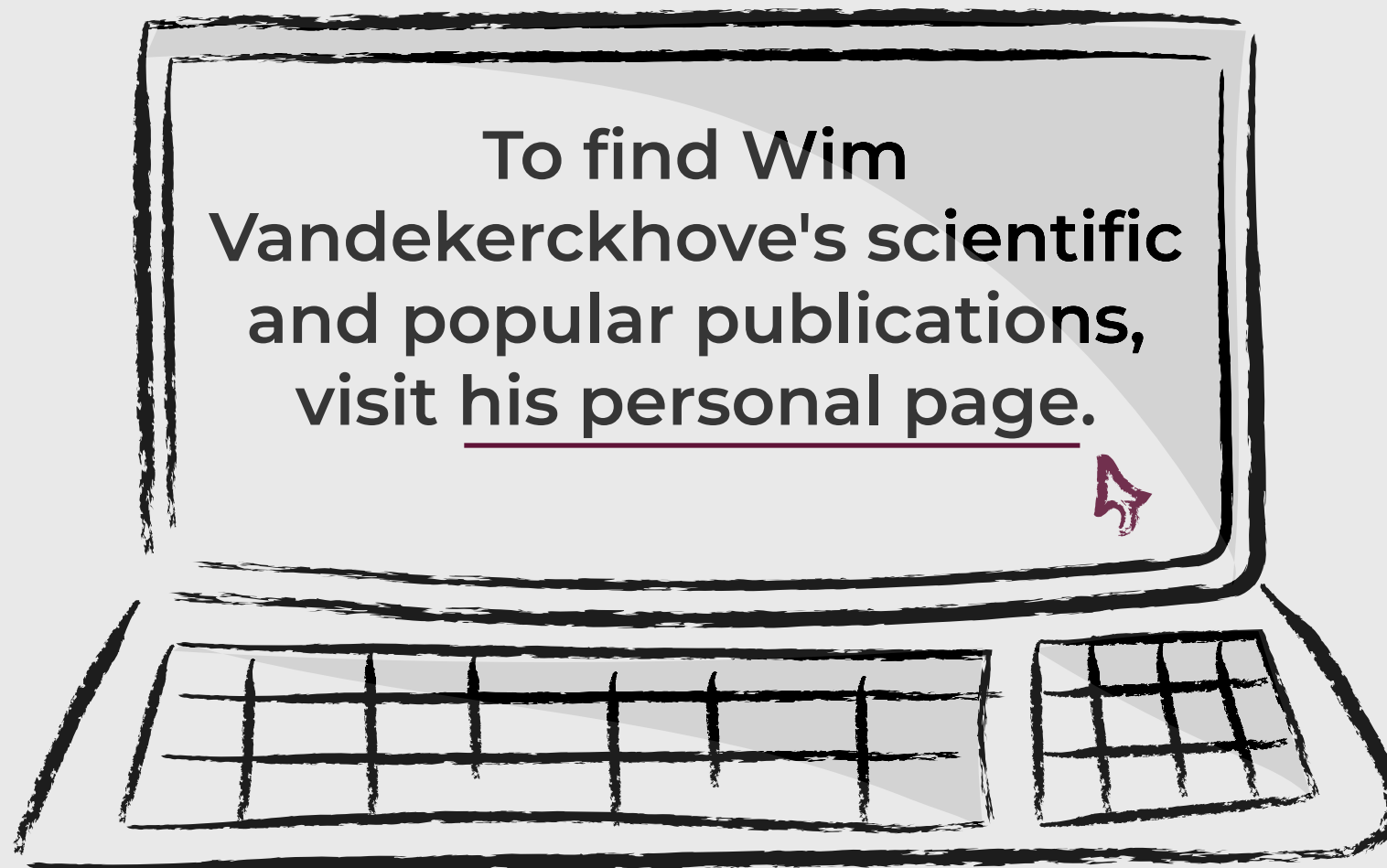


Workplace harassment by superiors



Trustworthy AI





And to go further, you may read...

