



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR JUSTICE AND CONSUMERS

The Director-General

Brussels
JUST.C.4/FD/ms (2026)2613149s

Permanent Representation

Subject: Appointment of focal point and alternate focal point for the new mandate of the Expert Group Against SLAPP

Dear Ambassador,

As referred to in the Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative on the European Democracy Shield,¹ a cornerstone of healthy and thriving democracies is a pluralistic debate. Citizens must have access to reliable information and be able to form their own judgements in a public space where diverse views can be expressed. Journalists and human rights defenders play a crucial role in nurturing this public debate, including by investigating and informing citizens on issues of public interest.

The Commission adopted the Anti-SLAPP initiative on 27 April 2022, consisting in a Directive² (in force since 6 May 2024, hereafter “Anti-SLAPP Directive”) and a Recommendation³ (hereafter: “the Recommendation”). The latter, amongst others, recommends that Member State establish one national focal point that gathers and shares information on available resources to assist the targets of manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings against public participation.

The Commission's 2025 Rule of Law Report⁴ notes that EU legislation and the Recommendation on SLAPP have helped stimulate further steps in national legislation. On

(¹) JOIN(2025) 791 final of 12.11.2025.

(²) Directive (EU) 2024/1069 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on protecting persons who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded claims or abusive court proceedings (“Strategic lawsuits against public participation”) *OJ L*, 2024/1069, 16.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1069/oj>

(³) Commission Recommendation (EU) 2022/758 of 27 April 2022 on protecting journalists and human rights defenders who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings (“Strategic lawsuits against public participation”), *OJ L* 138, 17.5.2022, pp. 30–44, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2022/758/oj>.

(⁴) COM(2025) 900 final of 8.7.2025.

the other hand, reform processes are pending in some Member States, in spite of concerns about journalist's safety and their working conditions.

As announced in the Communication on the "European Democracy Shield", Commission's Directorate-General Justice and Consumers ('DG JUST') has taken the initiative to renew the mandate of the informal Commission expert group on SLAPPs, in place since 2022. This renewed group, which is expected to operate for an indefinite period, shall support the Commission in monitoring the follow-up to the Recommendation and in its review process.

The mission of the expert group is to:

- (1) advise DG JUST in the context of the implementation of the Directive on SLAPP and the follow-up to the SLAPP Recommendation,
- (2) provide DG JUST with a single point of contact to consult legal practitioners and civil society organisations on SLAPP-related issues,
- (3) exchange on activities and best practices between Member States,
- (4) advise DG JUST on guidelines and measures to support victims of SLAPP and create synergies between the relevant activities of civil society organisations, professional organisation and Member States,
- (5) provide legal practitioners and practitioners' associations with a forum to engage at the EU level, including on cross-border cases to encourage the development of their supporting mechanisms for victims of SLAPP.

The composition of the expert group will include individuals appointed in a personal capacity (i.e. practitioners in law, journalists, or academics); individuals appointed to represent a common interest shared by civil society organisations operating in any area of representation and legal support of journalists or other actors involved in the defence of public interest and professional organisations representing the interests of media professionals and legal professionals.

In addition to the above, **Member States' competent authorities are invited to nominate one permanent focal point as their representative and one alternate focal point.**

The deadline for communicating these appointments is **30 March 2026**.

We kindly invite you to send your reply to: JUST-ANTI-SLAPP-EXPERT-GROUP@ec.europa.eu.

Should your authorities need any additional information, including details that may further support the nomination process, you could ask questions via the same mailbox (contact person: Marie-Hélène Boulanger, Head of Unit JUST C4).

Looking forward to your active participation in the expert group, the Commission stands available to answer any of your questions and queries.

Yours sincerely,

Ana GALLEGO