



Case Study

» **Working in partnership:** Kromann Reumert and EQS Group «

In 2019, leading Danish law firm Kromann Reumert began their partnership with Got Ethics, now EQS Group, with the aim of offering their clients a compliant, effective and intuitive whistleblowing hotline. The partnership has proven extremely successful, and now over 40 Kromann Reumert clients use EQS Integrity Line as their internal whistleblowing hotline. This case study looks at how the partnership started and how it now works in practice.

The beginnings of the partnership

Kromann Reumert originally had their own whistleblowing IT solution, which they offered to their clients. However, when the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force, they realised that the new GDPR requirements such as auditing and data security and the certifications they would have to obtain would require additional developments of their in-house system. At that time, they looked at the different options and opted to establish a partnership with a dedicated external whistleblowing service provider to continue being able to offer a high-quality, secure system to their clients. In 2019, Kromann Reumert opted for Got Ethics, a Danish company which in 2021 became part of EQS Group.



How the partnership works in practice

If clients are subject to specific national law implementing the EU Directive on the protection of whistleblowers, Kromann Reumert recommends that they should have a whistleblowing solution in place. If a client contacts Kromann Reumert about implementing EQS Integrity Line, Kromann Reumert arranges an initial discussion with the client about the scope of the features required by the client (packages range from standard to premium). The scope usually depends on the number of employees in the company. At this point, Kromann Reumert also asks the client if they require legal assistance in relation to the additional requirements for the implementation of the system. This might include drafting the whistleblowing policy and internal guidelines for the employees in charge of the internal whistleblower scheme.

Kromann Reumert performs the role of „ombudsman“ and monitors the reports submitted through their clients' whistleblowing hotlines. They then pass on the reports, including an initial legal indication, to the relevant parties within the client's company. If the report leads to an internal investigation, Kromann Reumert also offers their specialist legal assistance in this matter.

The Danish government sometimes asks law firms to conduct investigations in specific matters, and often Kromann Reumert will use EQS Integrity Line in such cases. A good recent example: Kromann Reumert recently conducted a #metoo-related investigation for a client, using EQS Integrity Line to encourage the filing of reports.

Questions to **Tina Brøgger Sørensen,** Partner Kromann Reumert

Why is the cooperation between Kromann Reumert and EQS Group such a good fit?

We have great confidence in the technical solution and we have an excellent working relationship with EQS Group. They are very responsive. Our services are also highly complementary; we provide the legal expertise, and EQS Group provides the digital system. We are each experts within our particular fields, and we do not step on each other's toes.

How has the cooperation improved your business?

If we receive a report that requires a full investigation, we offer this service to our clients. So offering a whistleblowing hotline product is an integral part of our offering as a full legal services provider. Some other law firms have their own IT-systems but we see the benefit of offering a whistleblowing hotline from a trusted service provider that always ensures compliance with legal requirements and stays continuously updated and at top of the list in terms of functionalities and features. It is important for us that our clients trust not only us but also the software solution EQS Integrity Line. In addition, we have together with EQS Group launched many joint marketing initiatives such as webinars to keep our clients up to date and share high-quality thought leadership content with them.

Working together, we are also in a unique position to react quickly to changes in legal interpretations. In June 2021, Denmark was the first member state to transpose the EU Directive into national law. During the law-making process there were extensive discussions about the interpretation of specific rules in the EU Whistleblowing Directive concerning the establishment of company joint schemes and whether large group companies with more than 249 employees could be part of a joint group scheme or whether such companies should implement their own whistleblowing system.

It has now been clearly stated in the Danish Act that despite the size of each group company, one joint scheme for all group companies is sufficient.

This interpretation could, however, be reversed if the EU Commission and other member states object. In that case, we will be able to respond quickly together with EQS Group and make the necessary adjustments for our clients.



Tina Brøgger Sørensen

is specialised in data protection law and employment and labour law. She heads Kromann Reumert's practice group that deals with personal data protection law and rules on and administration of whistleblower schemes. Tina is a Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP/E) and is an IAPP approved official instructor of CIPP/E training courses.

How do your clients benefit from EQS Integrity Line?

With EQS Integrity Line, our clients build credibility and trust with their employees and partners. This is proof that when it comes to compliance, our clients actually walk the talk. EQS Integrity Line provides an effective anonymous channel for people who wish to report something serious, which gives people the confidence to come forward. We have seen this recently in Denmark with the #metoo movement.

In your experience, does offering anonymity lead to an increase in the number of reports?

Definitely. Most people file reports on an anonymous basis. In our situation they also have the additional comfort of knowing that there is a neutral intermediary, in the form of a law firm, between them and the organisation, making sure their report is forwarded to the right person within the organisation.

Is EQS Integrity Line easy to use from a case management perspective?

I am not very technical but I find it very straightforward to use! I find it easy to communicate with our clients and, importantly, it is GDPR-compliant. EQS Group also provides excellent instructions on how to use the system, and that is very helpful.



INTEGRITY LINE
CERTIFIED PARTNER

Become a partner of the EQS Integrity Line whistleblowing hotline

Use EQS Group's digital whistleblower solutions for your customers and clients. Join an international network of partners offering Europe's leading whistleblower solution: EQS Integrity Line. We offer several attractive models tailored to your individual needs.

Find out more and become a partner
or send a mail to partners@eqs.com

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