



## **ImpleMendez Management Committee Meeting**

### **& Working Group Meeting**

**15/16 May 2024, University of Coimbra, Portugal**

#### **In attendance:**

Management Committee members: *Dave Walsh; Yvonne Daly; Ivar Fashing; Kristjan Kask; Lennart May; Anželika Banevičienė; Lore Mergaerts; Zvonimir Ivanovic; Becky Milne; Duarte Nuno Vieira; Adnan Fazlić; Ahmet Demirden; Denis Solodov; Eiríkur Valberg; Goran Čeranić; György Virág; Hanna Lahtinen; Igor Areh; Ilona Laurinaitytė; Irena Hoglund Matthews; Judit Szabó; Julia Korkman; Letizia Caso; Linda Geven; Luminitsa Diaconu; Maite Brunel; Marijana Cerovic; Ólafur Örn Bragason; Ondřej Pavelek; Paulo Marques; Steven Barela; Violeta Janusheva; Virginia Soldino Garmendia*

Working Group members: *Adriana Iuliana Stancu; Aura Marcela Preda; Georgina Heydon; Jaume Masip; Laura Pajon; Layla Skinns; Ray Bull; Telma Sousa Almeida; Zoe Colpaert*

### **Minutes**

#### **Membership and planned activities**

Dave Walsh (DW) welcomed everyone and began by outlining current membership of ImpleMendez – now 175 members in 47 countries. He outlined progress to date, including the increase in the Year 1 budget, and provided an overview of planned activities up to Oct 31<sup>st</sup> 2024. These include

- a meeting of the Independent Monitoring Board on June 4<sup>th</sup>;
- the first Training School in Slovenia on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>;
- proposed launch events for “Mendez Centres for Investigative Interviewing” in Norway (Sept 16) and Ireland (Sept 18) – subject to approval under the Protocol (discussed below) and discussion with Juan Mendez on use of his name;



- and, a meeting of members in late September to focus on project development (possibly in Liverpool, UK).

The importance of the visibility of ImpleMendez and of COST within our project activities was emphasised. The fact that this project is primarily focused on the practical implementation of the Mendez Principles (as well as building a scientific base) was highlighted.

### Communication

On Communication, it is proposed that MS Teams is used to greater effect for internal communication, including for the storage of final documents for meetings etc. Some training is needed to ensure that the possible functions of MS Teams in this context are fully understood (not least by DW and Yvonne Daly (YD)!). Also, the BCC function is to be used on large group emails so as to reduce “reply all” email traffic.

### Mendez Centres

YD gave an update on the Protocol on the Establishment and Oversight of Mendez Centres for Investigative Interviewing, talking the members through the Protocol as agreed at the Core Management meeting on 14 May.

### External Partners

Steven Barela (SB) gave an update on engagement with external partners, including the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), with whom Gisle Kvanvig has been working closely. There is potential for ImpleMendez to be a leading part of a UN side event in Vienna in May 2025. It might make sense to hold the next Management Committee meeting there at that time also. This is to be further considered.



## Inclusiveness Target Countries

Judit Szabo and Mariana Cerovic shared the results of a survey of members from ITCs which they conducted. This included the types of activities in which ITC members would like to be involved, such as networking, seeking funding, Training Schools, and Short-Term Scientific Missions (on which they would like more information). Ideas proposed for Training Schools included a) fundamental rights and safeguards; b) interview techniques in relation to vulnerable people; c) interviewing juvenile suspects; d) defence lawyers; e) Train the Trainer events.

## Young Researchers

Adnan Fazlic shared responses to a survey conducted with YRIs across ImpleMendez. Respondents indicated some of the activities in which they would like to be involved, including a) interaction with peers; b) exchange of learning; c) collaboration on research projects; d) attending meetings; e) publications and reports; and f) networking opportunities including in relation to funding and training.

## Year 2 – Project-Driven Strategy

DW presented the proposed move to a more project-focused approach from Year 2, with projects sitting under Working Groups, though some projects may cut across working groups. It is hoped that this will avoid any fall off in energy in Year 2 and will help to drive our vision for ImpleMendez forward. The plan for a meeting to be held, potentially in Liverpool, in late Sept, with a focus on project development, was also noted to members.

The need to include conclusion of projects within this plan was highlighted, and the suggestion made that when applicants are proposing projects they should be able to identify stakeholders who will be able to provide a testimonial at the end of the project which will indicate how the project impacted them and/or their practice.

The Project Group Structure was proposed by DW. An approximate group size of 8 people was suggested. Roles to be assigned within each project include

- Project Lead (probably needs to be someone in a secure employment position)
- Co-lead(s) – deputy of above
- Deliverables lead



- Networking lead
- Science/research lead
- Communications lead (internal)
- Communications lead (external)
- Sub- projects leads (e.g. research grant applications, training schools)

In the recent call for information on stakeholder partners 38 submissions were received. It was proposed, and agreed, that they would be assessed by the Management Committee and those successful could be designated Year 1A projects. A second call will be issued for additional project proposals, and those successful in that call will be deemed Year 1B projects. Expressions of interest could be sought by early July so that those who should be invited to the late September meeting can be identified in good time. It would be useful to include a template for project proposals.

Project submissions were assessed in small groups, followed by a plenary discussion and feedback session. While 10 submissions were thought promising, five were deemed to be “Year 1A” projects and five will need to reapply (along with others applying for the first time) to the new proposed call for which a template will be provided. Some feedback is to be given to all of those who made submissions by DW. Feedback from the small group discussions was noted and should be emailed to YD.

Some general points of feedback on proposed projects:

- We do not wish for projects emanating from consultancy agencies. We cannot be seen to be certifying certain consultancy training.
- A written agreement may be needed with partners in relation to the intellectual property rights relating to any materials developed.
- Projects will need to come to a conclusion, and provide evidence of impact at that point, including testimonials from stakeholder partners.

## **Parallel Meetings**

### 1) APT

A very productive meeting was led by the Secretary General of the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) Barbara Bernath (BB). She outlined the work the APT has done to date in terms of supporting the Mendez Principles and their



implementation. BB indicated the value that academics can bring to this work. She outlined the materials already created by the APT, including some translations of the Mendez Principles, a shorter brochure on the Principles, and an animation.

It was clear that there are many opportunities for knowledge exchange and synergies between APT and ImpleMendez on this issue and both parties are very open to constructive collaboration. BB indicated that some of the most frequently asked questions on the Mendez Principles that APT receives relate to persons with additional vulnerabilities. She spoke about the value of engagement within jurisdictions so as to enhance the sense of ownership of materials, training etc that might be developed. The value of case studies or examples from jurisdictions which are viewed as peers was thought to be particularly valuable, especially given the potential view of the Mendez Principles as a westernised project.

Some discussion on the visits of the CPT as a catalyst for engagement with individual jurisdictions also took place, as investigative interviewing methods are now being considered within such visits.

The need to see small developments as success was emphasised, along with the fact that change takes a long time. While policy change is needed and would be fantastic, raising awareness, exchanging information with stakeholders (both giving and receiving information), and providing education on the Mendez Principles are all very important too.

Recording of interviews was discussed as a specific concern, with need for improvements in many jurisdictions.

## 2) Human Trafficking issues

A group of approximately 10 met to discuss specific issues around the implementation of the Mendez Principles in the context of investigations into trafficking in human beings. This was a great opportunity to bring a group of those specifically interested in this topic together, to get to know one another and each other's work, and to think about how the group could work together within the context of this COST Action to plan activities and projects. Potential ideas discussed included developing "tools"/ "white papers" with guidelines and evidence-based recommendations for initial contact with trafficking victims and interviewing (using the Mendez Principles). Further conversations are planned in order to define the scope, context, and partners to take this specific issue forward.



### 3) Communication

Internal and external communication plans were discussed at this meeting.

#### Internal

There is an ongoing concern around a high level of email traffic. Kristjan Kask (KK) and Iona Lauritayte (IL) informed those present that for internal communication (storing files, chat, online meetings) the environment will be MS Teams linked to DMU. Once it is ready to use, this should be communicated to the members and a training on using the environment should be provided for those who need it. What should be clarified with MS Teams is that how people get access with it (with their work or personal emails).

It was agreed that the Newsletter should be short and informational (working group summaries, past and future events, major decisions, deadlines etc.). WG leaders need clearer guidance on what to say in 4-5 statements/sentences on the progress of the groups. IL is starting to create the first newsletter.

What needs to be in the Newsletter regarding the use of MS Teams:

- All meetings to be arranged via Fiona on MS teams using outlook diaries
- Notice of meetings to Fiona with preferred meeting time no less than two weeks before scheduled date
- Fiona will monitor for new members and add them in to meeting invites
- All group emails – BCC to addressees

#### External

For podcasts, list of ideas should be generated along with person(s) responsible for it. One idea is to start with introducing principles one principle a time (6-7 episodes; why are the principles important from different angles); another idea is the country overviews. Needs to be clarified who are the hosts and who are the experts.

To hold two webinars per year; one in late 2024. Needs to be clarified who are the hosts and who are the guests.

Social media – Alan Cusack (AC) is collecting information about the members (science fair) and starts posting them in social media with other social media coordinators.



Another idea was to create a Youtube channel where the podcasts could also be put in. This can be done easily when we have the episodes.

A question raised in here was podcasts in other languages than English – should we do them and if yes, then to create subtitled versions (which could be a lot of work).

For illustrating materials, Agreement of Disclosure file should be created that the members in our meetings could sign. KK to follow up.

Another suggestion also to create also a confidentiality agreement form (to only publish activities after they have finalized). Needs a decision whether we need one.

It was advised that when giving interviews to media, try to put in / say COST Action number 22128 as this is something COST monitors.

## **May 16th**

### Theory of Change

DW introduced the “Theory of Change” concept as a way to measure success, and strategically plan the work of Working Groups and individual projects within the new ImpleMendez structure.

Members broke into WG teams to conduct a Theory of Change exercise, which was seen as very helpful in thinking about priorities, strategies, and future success.

### Venue for MC3

There was a brief discussion on the potential venue for the third Management Committee meeting. It might make sense to hold it at the same time as the proposed side event to the UN meeting in Vienna in May 2025.

### Side meeting with CEPOL

*Maria Joao Guia from CEPOL (the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training) met with DW, Ivar Fashing and Paulo Marques (PM) to outline the upcoming CEPOL conference on organised crime, and the work of CEPOL more*



*generally, and to explore potential opportunities for collaboration with ImpleMendez. PM will continue to engage with CEPOL on behalf of ImpleMendez.*

### **Action Items:**

1. MS Teams training to be arranged – KK and IL
2. Finalise Protocol on Establishment and Oversight of Mendez Centres of Investigative Interviewing – YD
3. Respond to all applicants (re projects/stakeholders) with feedback - DW
4. Develop Project Proposal template, to include Timeline, budgetary matters, Theory of Change including reference to external partner experience of implementation/evidence of impact at end of project – YD
5. Seek expressions of interest for Year 1B projects – early July (with full submission by Sept 1<sup>st</sup>) – YD/DW
6. Make plans for September meeting – DW and Core Management Group
7. Plans for UN side event in Vienna in May 2025 to be further developed and consideration given to holding MC3 adjacent to this – Core Management Group