

# THE ImpleMéndez newsletter



WELCOME TO THE TWELFTH EDITION OF THE **IMPLEMÉNDEZ NEWSLETTER!**

## Your ImpleMendez Core Management (CM) group

### Chair

Dave Walsh

### Vice-Chair

Yvonne Daly

### Special coordinators

#### Science Communication Co-ordinator

Kristjan Kask

#### Grant awarding co-ordinator

Ivar Fahsing

## Latest developments

***Our team is growing!***

***By 17.12.2025 we have 375 members representing 60 countries!***

### WG1

#### Investigation and Interviewing

*Leader:* Lennart May

*Co-leaders:* Linda Geven, Telma Sousa Almeida, Becky Milne and Miet Vanderhallen

### WG2

#### Law, Human Rights, Criminal Justice

*Leader:* Anželika Banovičienė

*Co-leaders:* Zeynep Reva, Denis Solodov and Ondrej Pavalek

### WG3

#### Vulnerability

*Leader:* Lore Mergaerts

*Co-leaders:* Hanna Lahtinen and Laura Pajon

### WG4

#### Institutional and Governmental Leadership

*Leader:* Vasylyna Yavorska

*Co-leaders:* Martijn van Beek, Ólafur Bragason and Monty Mountford

## COST Progress Review: Rapporteur's Assessment of the ImpleMéndez Action

This is very good news. The members of the Management Committee have been informed that the COST Rapporteur's review of the ImpleMéndez Action's first two years of activity (Progress Review at 24 months) has been completed. The review assesses the Action's progress during the period 5 October 2023 – 5 October 2025 and provides an external evaluation of achievements, impacts, deliverables, and governance. The overall assessment is largely positive, with the Action being evaluated as "Very Good" in relation to its objectives, outputs, dissemination activities, and anticipated impacts. The Rapporteur highlights, in particular:

- the Action's significant growth in membership and international reach;
- a high level of activity compared to

other COST Actions, including meetings, training schools, and grants;

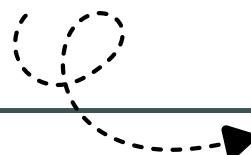
- strong progress in research coordination, capacity building, and practitioner engagement;
- tangible outputs, including joint publications, progress towards major research funding, and the establishment of Méndez Centres to support sustainability beyond the Action's lifetime.

The review concludes that ImpleMéndez is well-positioned to complete its remaining objectives and to continue supporting the implementation of the Méndez Principles across jurisdictions.

## International CSARRN Conference in Valencia



On 4–5 December 2025, representatives of our COST Actions participated in the 3rd Annual Child Sexual Abuse Reduction Research Network (CSARRN) Conference, held at the Faculty of Law, University of Valencia and hosted by a colleague of ours Virginia Soldino (Spain). Among the distinguished speakers were Prof. Ray Bull (UK), who presented "Improving Investigative Interviewing in Child Abuse Cases" and Hanna Lahtinen (Finland), whose team presented research on female CSAM users in "Women as CSAM Users: Self-Reports from Anonymous Users Searching for CSAM".



## Annual Conference of the Romanian Society of Victimology 2025

The Romanian Society of Victimology held its Annual Conference on 29 November 2025 (organised by Aura Preda representing Romania in our COST Action), bringing together leading scholars, practitioners, and experts from across Europe, Asia, and the Americas. The event, hosted on the second day online, offered several presentations delivered by our ImpleMéndez colleagues (Violeta Vasiliauskiene, Hava Dayan, Anželika Baneviciene, Dobrinka Chankova, Lütfiye Kaya Cicerali, Denis Solodov and others) addressing emerging challenges, research findings, and possible solutions in the field of victimology.



Here is an after-event post published on LinkedIn by our colleague Lütfiye Kaya Cicerali from Turkey:

**“**Grateful to Aura Preda, my friend from ImpleMéndez (COST Action CA22128), for the opportunity to present yesterday at the Romanian Victimology Congress. I enthusiastically introduced a new framework explaining how state-level norm violations can trigger Cross-Norm Inhibition processes,

*weakening societal empathy and undermining victims' rights. It was inspiring to share this work with colleagues across Europe, even virtually. Key message of my presentation: When institutions normalize impunity or selective justice, they don't just harm individuals – they erode the norms that hold society together. This research is a reflexive, context-embedded qualitative study, grounded in my lived experience, like a Participatory Action Research. It sits at the intersection of critical victimology, social psychology, and institutional trust. Thank you to everyone who joined, engaged, and pushed these conversations forward. We need transparency, accountability, and norm restoration now more than ever*

## APT and ImpleMéndez Expand Access to the Méndez Principles

The Association for the Prevention of Torture (**APT**) is proud to announce the successful completion of its project enhancing the accessibility of the Méndez Principles. With support from the EU Cost Action ImpleMéndez, six new language translations have now been produced – Bulgarian, Georgian, Italian, Lithuanian, Romanian, and Ukrainian – significantly broadening global access to the Principles.

All new translations are available on the **official repository** of the Méndez Principles as well as on the **APT website** ensuring broad access for all.

In addition, three language versions of **APT's free online course on the Méndez Principles** available on the APT Torture Prevention Village e-learning platform, are now accessible in Italian, German, and Portuguese. These expanded translations support wider uptake of non-coercive, human rights-based interviewing practices worldwide.

The APT and project lead Valentina Cadelo extends warm thanks to all ImpleMéndez Members who contributed their expertise and time to this collaborative initiative, including: Anželika Banevičienė, Yury Belousov, Dobrinka Chankova, Letizia Caso, Rusudan Beriashvili, Nicola Palena, Aura Preda, Violeta Vasiliauskienė, Vasylyna Yavorska, and Mariam Tsurtsumia. Special thanks to the Chair Dave Walsh, Co-Chair Yvonne Daly, Steve Barela, and Fiona Walsh for their support and excellent cooperation throughout the project.

## WG2 online meeting on 16.12.2025

Members of WG2 on Law, Human Rights and Criminal Justice (led by Anželika Banevičienė, Lithuania) met online on 16 December 2025 to discuss ongoing issues, review current developments within the Group, and define priorities. The meeting was opened by Anželika Banevičienė, WG2 Lead, who underlined the need to move beyond networking towards structured joint activities, including collaborative research, publications, and practice-oriented initiatives. WG2 welcomed Zeynep Reva (Türkiye) as the new Co-Lead. Members shared ongoing and planned work relevant to the implementation of the Méndez Principles. Several forward-looking ideas were discussed, including proposals for joint WG2 publications with country-specific content analysing legal frameworks and investigative interviewing from a human rights perspective, as well as closer coordination with sub-groups, including those working on emerging technologies. The discussion highlighted practical challenges in investigative interviewing, such as issues related to forensic linguistics and the risks of misunderstanding or secondary victimisation when interviewees' comprehension is assumed rather than assessed (as proposed by Daniela Rodrigues). The meeting concluded with an agreement to develop concrete proposals ahead of the next WG2 meeting, scheduled for early February 2026.

## Webinar: *Linguistic Strategies and the Méndez Principles*

An online webinar entitled “Introduction to Linguistic Strategies and the Méndez Principles” will take place on **11 February 2026 at 10:00 CET**. The webinar will be delivered by Professor **Georgina Heydon**, former President of the International Association of Forensic and Legal Linguistics. Based on more than two decades of research on police interviewing, the session will introduce key linguistic insights relevant to investigative interviewing and the practical implementation of the Méndez Principles. The webinar will examine how linguistic and conversational strategies can contribute to safeguarding procedural rights and improving interview quality. It will address:

- how actions are performed through language in interviews;
- the different speaker roles adopted by interview participants;
- conversational turn-taking and its relevance for eliciting a free narrative;
- topic management in investigative interviews;
- linguistic approaches to assessing the voluntariness of confessions.

The link has been sent by Fiona.



## Webinar: *Language Barriers and Rapport in Investigative Interviewing. Cross-linguistic and Cross-cultural Aspects*



An online webinar entitled “Language Barriers and Rapport in Investigative Interviewing: Cross-linguistic and Cross-cultural Aspects” will take place on Tuesday, 24 February 2026, from 12:00 to 13:30 (CET). The webinar hosted by **Maria Gomez-Bedoya** (UK, Spain) will examine effective communication strategies in police contexts in both monolingual and bilingual settings. Drawing on empirical research and professional practice, it will outline best practices for conducting monolingual interviews and for working with interpreters to address language barriers. Attention will be paid to rapport-building from a cross-cultural perspective, with a focus on managing linguistic and cultural differences in investigative interviewing. The link to the event has been provided by Fiona.

## WG3 Webinar

### *Interviewing Younger Witnesses: Evidence-Based Recommendations, Challenges, and Unique Considerations*

We invite you to an insightful 1-hour session online on the 22nd of January 2026 at 2pm CET. Led by Dr. Francesco Pompedda, and chaired by Dr Hanna Lahtinen, this webinar aims to deepen your understanding of key principles for interviewing young witnesses, particularly **preschool-aged children and those in the early years of schooling**, and highlight how their needs, memory, and communication patterns differ from older children and adults, and how these core principles can enhance interview quality across **all** cases. This webinar is open to all ImpleMéndez Members.

## Key learning objectives

- Familiarise with best practice recommendation in investigative interviews of children;
- Familiarise with key principles for interviewing younger children;

## About the speakers

Hanna Lahtinen, PhD, is a forensic psychology expert and lecturer at the University of Eastern Finland. She coordinates forensic psychology studies, publishes research related to child sexual abuse victims and perpetrators, and trains investigative interviewers. She co-initiated Finland's first child investigative interviewing program with her colleagues.



Dr. Francesco Pompedda is a Senior Researcher at the INVEST Research Flagship Center at the University of Turku in Finland. Prior to joining the University of Turku, he served as the Academic Course Leader for the BSc in Forensic Psychology and as a Senior Lecturer at the University of Gloucestershire (UK). He co-developed Empowering Interviewer Training (EIT), the world's first child-interviewing simulator featuring interactive avatars with response algorithm. A tool that he used it in training and research for more than 10 years. In addition to his academic work, Dr. Pompedda is a licensed psychologist (Italy) and an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society.

## New publications

Our colleague **Dobrinka Chankova** (Bulgaria) has published a paper entitled "Does Implementing Méndez Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering Serve Victims of Crime?" in the GATR Journal of Management and Marketing Review. The publication contributes to the ongoing discussion on the practical implications of the Méndez Principles, with a particular focus on their relevance for victims of crime. The article is available [here](#)! Congratulations to Dobrinka on this publication!

PS: The Bulgarian and Georgian translations of the Méndez Principles were launched on 4 December as part of the translation activities of our Action, carried out in cooperation with the Association for the Prevention of Torture.

The Bulgarian and Georgian versions are available [here](#).

## The Reminder

Those submitting a paper for publication should follow the COST Annotated Rules to ensure proper recognition of COST funding. In short: just use the following "formula":

**This article is based upon work from COST Action CA22128 (ImpleMéndez), supported by European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST).**

The newsletter has been prepared by Sofia Meneses-Silva and Denis Solodov.

Share your achievements with us!



anasofsilva14@gmail.com  
denis.solodov@uwm.edu.pl