

THE ImpleMéndez newsletter



WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE **IMPLEMÉNDEZ NEWSLETTER OF 2026!**

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

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 Banevičienė

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

Latest developments

A Note of Appreciation for the Méndez Principles in a UN Resolution

A recent United Nations resolution on "Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" includes, in paragraph 17, a note of appreciation for the Méndez Principles. This acknowledgment highlights the growing international recognition of the Principles and their importance in promoting ethical and effective investigative interviewing practices. The full text of the resolution is available to read online [here](#).

STSM Application Window Open

The application window for Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) **will open on the 3rd of February for all ImpleMéndez Members**, except those from International Organisations, International Partner Countries, and Third States, who are not eligible for this funding. Applications must be submitted online via your COST profile (Go to "My Grant Applications" - Select the STSM section). The deadline for STSM applications is **16 February**. In addition to the online application, applicants must complete the form previously sent by Fiona and submit it by 16 February.

Webinar: *Interviewing Younger Witnesses*

On 22 January 2026, an online webinar titled “Interviewing Younger Witnesses: Evidence-Based Recommendations, Challenges, and Unique Considerations” took place. The session focused on evidence-based recommendations, practical challenges, and considerations specific to interviewing children and young people in investigative contexts. The discussion highlighted the importance of adapting interviewing practices to the needs and vulnerabilities of younger witnesses, in line with ethical standards and best practice.

WG4 – Conversations with leadership

26th of January 2026 saw the launch of the Working Group 4 (WG4) hosted series of “Conversations with leadership”. This initiative forms part of the revised WG4 strategy which highlights the central role of leadership in ensuring successful implementation of, and sustained adherence to, the Méndez principles. Events will occur approximately every six weeks over the next year, each focused on a different country. Our intention is to enable a better understanding of leadership perspectives of our work and to assist ImpleMéndez members in building stronger links with supportive leaders. The first event focused on Ukraine, and our guest was Mr Yuriy Bielousov who, until recently, led the War Crimes Department in the Prosecutor General’s Office of Ukraine. Over 50 ImpleMéndez members attended what was an extremely thought-provoking discussion. Among the perspectives shared were: Using competitive rivalry between leaders to encourage implementation, and the contribution that key individuals in mid-level and training roles can make toward encouraging institutional use of ethical techniques. Our next event will be on **10th March at 12:00 CET** – focused on Finland. An invitation will be sent out shortly so be sure to look out for your chance to take part in this great opportunity.

(Contribution by Monty Mountford)

IIIRG 2026 Conference Leuven, Belgium, 8–10 July 2026

Abstract submissions for this year’s conference of the International Investigative Interviewing Research Group (IIIRG) in Leuven, Belgium on 8–10 July 2026 are now open. Submissions may be based on individual research, joint publications, ongoing (ImpleMéndez) projects, or interdisciplinary collaborations. IIIRG welcomes a broad range of contributions, including individual oral presentations, pre-arranged symposia or panel sessions including roundtable discussions, and practitioner case studies. Relevant perspectives include human trafficking and asylum procedures, special inspection services, speech, language, translation, legal and defence lawyers’ perspectives. Members with an idea but no collaborators yet are encouraged to contact the relevant Working Group (co-)leads, or Lore Mergaerts (Belgium), who is hosting the conference. In addition, contributors are currently sought for a roundtable submission focusing on making the conceptualisation of vulnerability under Principle 3 of the Méndez Principles more actionable for practitioners, considering a wide range of contexts, e.g. police interviewing, asylum procedures, special inspection services. Interested members should contact Lore Mergaerts by the end of January.

Abstract submission deadline: 13 February 2026

Important note: Members requiring financial support may apply for an individual ImpleMéndez conference travel grant. The call for grants will be open from 9 to 27 February 2026, with further details to follow.

Symposium "Interviews in Criminal Prosecution"

Bern, 13 March 2026

On 13 March 2026, a symposium entitled "Interviews in Criminal Prosecution" will take place in Bern (Switzerland). The event is organised by ImpleMéndez/the Méndez Center for the German-speaking countries (Zentrum für effektive und faire Befragung – ZEFAB), in cooperation with the Bern Cantonal Police, the Swiss Police Institute, and the University of Bern. Ten members of our Action will participate in the symposium as speakers. The event will be held in three languages: German, French, and English. The symposium forms part of the 10th Symposium on Police Law.

Registration deadline: 6 March 2026

Registration website: click [here](#).

For further details on the programme and speakers, please consult the event website.

New Podcast on the Science of Nonverbal Communication

Our colleague Vincent Denault (Canada) has launched Season 1 of a new podcast, *Beyond Lie Cues – A Podcast About the Science of Nonverbal Communication*. His research focuses on how witnesses' nonverbal behaviour is perceived and interpreted in legal and investigative contexts. The podcast brings together researchers working on nonverbal communication and related topics, with the aim of presenting research-based perspectives on the field. Each episode features a guest researcher responding to five structured questions, in a concise format lasting approximately seven minutes.

The first five episodes are now available on [Spotify here](#).

Season 1 – Available episodes:

- Episode 1: The Presentation – Why a Podcast on Nonverbal Communication?
- Episode 2: Norah Dunbar (University of California, Santa Barbara, USA)
- Episode 3: Glynis Bogaard (Maastricht University, Netherlands)
- Episode 4: Erik Mac Giolla (Atlantic Technological University, Ireland)
- Episode 5: Fiona Gabbert (Goldsmiths, University of London, UK)

New episodes are released every Wednesday.

The podcast will be of interest to researchers, practitioners, and students working on investigative interviewing, testimony, and the scientific study of nonverbal behaviour.



Reminder: Upcoming Webinars

2026	FEBRUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	

This is a reminder of upcoming online webinars previously announced in our newsletter and by our chair, Dave, organised within COST Action ImpleMéndez:

3rd February 2026 at 13.00–15.00 CET

Undertaking Media Interviews

Speakers: Ozlem Ozdemir, Elif Basak Sarpca Sarioglu (both Turkiye), and also Martijn Van Beek (Netherlands)

Webinar: Linguistic Strategies and the Méndez Principles

2026		FEBRUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28		

11th February 2026, 10:00 CET

Introduction to Linguistic Strategies and the Méndez Principles

Speaker: Professor Georgina Heydon (Australia)

24th February 2026, 12:00 CET

Language Barriers and Rapport in Investigative Interviewing: Cross-Linguistic and Cross-Cultural Aspects

Speaker: Dr Maria Gomez-Bedoya (Spain)

Both webinars address key aspects of ethical and effective investigative interviewing, the use of the linguistic research in legal practice.

We warmly encourage all members to join these events.

Research Contribution to UK House of Lords Inquiry on Police Transcription Practices Kate Haworth

The UK House of Lords Public Services Select Committee has published the outcome of its Police Transcription Inquiry, to which evidence was submitted, among others, by our ImpleMéndez colleague Kate Haworth (UK). The inquiry examined current practices in the recording, transcription, and presentation of police interviews as criminal evidence. The Committee's report endorses key recommendations made by the research team regarding how spoken evidence is recorded and transcribed, recognising the significant impact that transcription practices can have on evidential quality within the criminal justice process. Despite their importance, these practices often receive limited scrutiny. Among the issues highlighted in the report is that transcripts are often used instead of original audio-visual recordings in court, even though transcripts are a transformed version of the evidence and may distort meaning. Experts argued that relying on transcripts alone can deny courts access to crucial information such as tone, hesitation, interactional dynamics, and speaker behaviour. The report recommends expanding the use of original audio-visual recordings alongside transcripts. While recognising efficiency gains, the report warns that AI transcription currently performs unevenly across accents, dialects, and demographic groups. Experts stressed that AI transcripts must be treated as drafts, always validated by humans.

Kate Haworth provided evidence to the Committee alongside James Tompkinson, Helen Fraser, Lauren Harrington, and Zoe Adams, with additional substantial contributions from Dr Felicity Deamer and Emma Richardson as part of the wider research team. For those in relevant positions who are interested in learning more, or in being part of the evolution of evidential transcription practices—especially if you are using AI—please do get in touch with Kate or other abovementioned contributors. Read Kate's LinkedIn post [here](#).

Read the Committee's report [here](#)!



Nomination for the title of “Personality of the Year 2025” in the Science category in Poland



We are pleased to announce that our colleague Denis Solodov (Poland), has received a nomination from the Editorial Board of Gazeta Olsztyńska for the prestigious Personality of the Year 2025 title in the Science category. The Chapter recognized D. Solodov’s contribution to the development of science, in particular for the project “Establishing Networks to Implement the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations (ImpleMéndez)”, which focuses on the implementation of the Méndez Principles in Poland and other countries.

The Personality of the Year plebiscite honours individuals whose scientific activity and innovative achievements have a significant impact on the development of knowledge and social life. Winners of the regional stage advance to the nationwide final, which culminates in a ceremonial gala in Warsaw. More information about the plebiscite is available [here](#) (in Polish).

An Introduction to the Role of Intermediaries *Irish Méndez Centre event*

On Friday January 23rd the Irish Méndez Centre for Investigative Interviewing held an event focused on the role of Registered Intermediaries in the criminal justice system. The seminar, hosted by the School of Law at the University of Limerick, was attended by members of An Garda Síochána (the Irish police), staff from Tusla (the Child and Family Agency), criminal defence lawyers, and academics.



From left to right: Prof Yvonne Daly, Dr Áine Kearns, David O'Shea, Dr Alan Cusack

The co-directors of the Irish Méndez Centre, Prof Yvonne Daly and Dr Alan Cusack, delivered a presentation focused on the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights on the protections necessary for vulnerable suspects in the pre-trial process, including both access to legal assistance and intermediaries to ensure understanding of rights. Dr Cusack and Dr Áine Kearns then outlined the law and practice in relation to Registered Intermediaries (RIs) in the courts in Ireland, and introduced attendees to the training programme for RIs which is delivered jointly by the School of Law and the School of Allied Health at the University of Limerick.

David O'Shea, a qualified speech and language therapist and graduate of that programme, then outlined the skills and expertise of RIs and walked attendees through the assessment process and the support that RIs can offer within the criminal process. Their ability to ensure clarity in communication is a wonderful addition to the process, so as to ensure that all parties understand and can be understood.

Given the focus of the Méndez Principles on vulnerability (Principle 3), it is hoped that RIs may be given a greater role in the investigative interviewing context in Ireland as necessary.

Postdoctoral Research Fellowship *Enhancing interviewer memory*

An interesting fellowship application opportunity has opened recently in the UK to potential candidates who might be interested in putting together an application (working with Lorraine Hope as a Research Advisor) on the topic of 'Enhancing Interviewer Memory' ([see call details here](#)). With some overview (although please see eligibility details via link for other specific requirements including date of PhD award):

- The Government Office for Science offers UK Intelligence Community (IC) Postdoctoral Research Fellowships to outstanding early-career researchers in science and engineering. These Fellowships are designed to promote unclassified basic research in areas of interest to the intelligence, security and defence communities. Organisations represented in the UK Intelligence Community for this scheme include the National Protective Security Authority, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Home Office, the National Cyber Security Centre, and UK National Authority for Counter-Eavesdropping.
- One round of applications is held annually. Research topics are identified each year by members of the IC, and applicants are expected to work with their university research advisor to develop and submit a research proposal that align with their chosen topic. The research is conducted by the Research Fellows while working in partnership with the University Research Advisor and collaborating with an advisor from the Intelligence Community (IC Advisor). The Research Fellowships are aimed at early-career researchers from all branches of science and engineering who have up to five years postdoctoral experience. Only citizens of Andorra, Australia, Canada, the EEA, Monaco, New Zealand, San Marino, Switzerland, the UK, the US or Vatican city are eligible to apply. Each application for the UK IC Postdoctoral Research Fellowships is capped at a maximum contribution of £250,000 over the 2-year period, at 80% of the full economic costs (fEC).

Anyone who is interested should get in touch with Lorraine Hope directly!

Contact: lorraine.hope@port.ac.uk

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
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Share your achievements with us!



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