

# The ImpleMéndez Newsletter

COST Action CA22128 – Establishing Networks to Implement the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations

#6 · June 2026

Welcome to the SIXTH EDITION of the ImpleMéndez Newsletter of 2026!

WE ARE NOW 438 MEMBERS FROM 60 COUNTRIES

## Your ImpleMéndez 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, Miet Vanderhallen

### WG2

#### Law, Human Rights, Criminal Justice

Leader: Anzelika Baneviciene

Co-leaders: Zeynep Reva, Denis Solodov, Ondrej Pavelek

### WG3

#### Vulnerability

Leader: Lore Mergaerts

Co-leaders: Hanna Lahtinen, Laura Pajon

### WG4

#### Institutional & Governmental Leadership

Leader: Vasylyna Yavorska

Co-leaders: Martijn van Beek, Olafur Bragason, Monty Mountford

### EVENT

## Welcoming New Members to ImpleMéndez

24 June 2026

On 24 June 2026, ImpleMéndez held a dedicated New Members Meeting online to welcome colleagues who recently joined the growing network. The meeting highlighted the remarkable expansion of the Action, which now counts 438 members from 60 countries with 18 active projects, networks, and Méndez Centres. Full article on the next page.

### WEBINAR

## WG1 Webinar: "What is Training and What is it Not?"

1 June 2026

Prof. Becky Milne delivered an online webinar on best practices in investigative interviewing training, focusing on the Framework of Investigative Transformation (FIT) and the challenges of maintaining high standards over time.

### EVENT

## ORBIT Training School, Dundee

10–11 June 2026

Forty Action members from 22 countries gathered at Abertay University in Dundee, Scotland, for a two-day ORBIT training programme led by Prof. Laurence Alison and Emily Alison. Full article on the next page.

## EVENT

## Welcoming New Members to ImpleMéndez

24 June 2026

On 24 June 2026, a dedicated New Members Meeting was held online, providing an introduction to the COST Action for colleagues who had recently joined our growing international network. Participants learned about the Action's structure, ongoing activities, and the many opportunities to become actively involved in advancing the implementation of the Méndez Principles. The meeting highlighted the remarkable growth of ImpleMéndez, which has expanded from 88 members in October 2023 to 438 members representing 60 countries, with 18 active projects, networks, and Méndez Centres supporting collaboration across research and practice. Members were introduced to the Action's achievements, including conference grants, Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs), publications, webinars, and forthcoming events planned throughout Year 3.

Representatives from the four Working Groups then presented their priorities and current initiatives, while project leaders showcased the diverse networks operating within ImpleMéndez. These included regional and thematic initiatives such as Project Polska, the Western Balkans Network, the German-speaking and Dutch-language Méndez Centres, subprojects focusing on emerging technologies, forensic linguistics, child interviewing, training curricula, credibility assessment, and implementation barriers.

The session also looked ahead to 2027, outlining plans for additional Training Schools, collaborative meetings, workshops, and new opportunities for members to contribute to research, publications, and implementation. Throughout the meeting, new members were encouraged to join Working Groups, participate in existing projects, and propose new ideas that will help ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of the ImpleMéndez network beyond the lifetime of the Action.

## WEBINAR

## WG1 Webinar: "What is Training and What is it Not? Ensuring Good Practice Over Time"

1 June 2026

On 1 June 2026, an online webinar entitled "What is Training and What is it Not? Ensuring Good Practice Over Time" was delivered by Prof. Becky Milne. The event focused on raising awareness of best interviewing practices and skills-based training in investigative interviewing.

A central theme of the presentation was the Framework of Investigative Transformation (FIT), which outlines the key factors required to develop and maintain high standards in investigative interviewing. The framework highlights the importance of leadership, organisational culture, knowledge, training systems, interviewer competencies, quality assurance mechanisms, technology, and agents of change. Particular attention was given to the role of training in fostering an open-minded investigative approach, reducing cognitive bias, and supporting evidence-based decision-making. Prof. Milne discussed the need for structured, tiered training programmes that combine theoretical knowledge with practical exercises, feedback, assessment, and continuous professional development.

The webinar also addressed the challenges of maintaining interviewing standards over time. Participants explored issues such as skill deterioration, the need for refresher training, supervision, trainer accreditation, and quality assurance processes. The discussion highlighted the importance of evaluating training outcomes and ensuring the transfer of acquired skills into everyday investigative practice. Another significant topic was the growing role of technology in investigative interviewing, including the use of body-worn video, digital recording systems, and emerging artificial intelligence tools. Prof. Milne stressed that technological solutions should complement, rather than replace, professional expertise and ethical investigative practice.

The event concluded with a discussion on what should legitimately be considered training and what should not.

Participants exchanged experiences from different jurisdictions and reflected on strategies for sustaining excellence in investigative interviewing and criminal investigations.

**EVENT**

## ORBIT Training School, Dundee

**10–11 June 2026**

On 10–11 June 2026, 40 Action members from 22 countries gathered at Abertay University in Dundee, Scotland, for a two-day ORBIT training programme. The training was hosted by Julie Gawrylowicz and led by Prof. Laurence Alison and Emily Alison. Over the course of two days, participants had the opportunity to learn about the ORBIT approach, develop practical communication skills, and exchange experiences with colleagues from across the network. A big thanks to Julie, Laurence and Emily!

Julie Gawrylowicz, along with Faye Skelton, Tom Pakkanen and (online) Shiri Portnoy, progressed their Barriers and Opportunities Project over the same two days, working with policing practitioners in gathering more data for their project.

**NETWORK**

## From Connection to Collaboration: Building Research Links Through ImpleMéndez and Erasmus+

Two forensic psychology experts, Hanna Lahtinen from Finland and Telma Sousa Almeida from Portugal, met through the ImpleMéndez project. Sharing a strong interest in interviewing vulnerable individuals, especially in relation to neurodiversity within the justice system context, they began exploring opportunities for collaboration.

The Erasmus+ Europe programme made it possible for Hanna Lahtinen to undertake a ten-day staff exchange visit to ISPA – Instituto Universitário in Lisbon. During her visit, she learned about the BEJUST project led by Telma in Portugal. BEJUST is a research initiative focused on improving the criminal justice system's approach to autistic and other neurodivergent individuals. The project aims to identify communication barriers and develop better legal practices to ensure genuine equality and accessibility in the courts.

During her stay, Hanna Lahtinen also delivered a lecture at ISPA titled *Child Sexual Abuse Disclosure in the Digital Age: New Challenges*. Her lecture generated considerable interest among both academics and practitioners, attracting participants from different



parts of Portugal, with around 30 attendees joining in person and a further 20 online. The event created a valuable space for discussion on vulnerable individuals and justice-related research.

The visit led to several plans for future collaboration between Portugal and Finland, including joint research and publications.

#### WORKING GROUP

## WG2 Research Initiative: Lawyers as Safeguards in Investigative Interviews

On 3 and 23 June 2026, members of WG2 met to discuss possible directions for a joint publication on the role of lawyers as safeguards during investigative interviews.

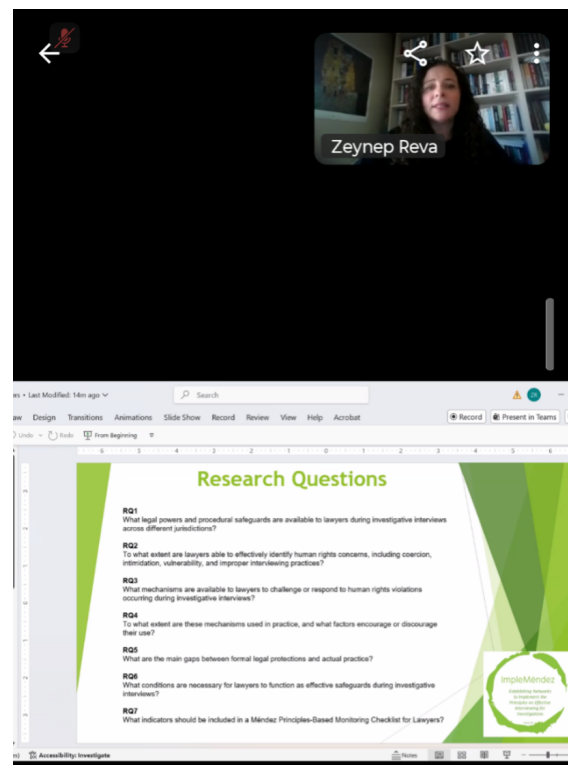
The meetings focused on identifying a suitable methodology for an international comparative study. Participants considered several options, including a survey of criminal defence lawyers, qualitative interviews with practitioners, and a comparative analysis of national legal frameworks and practices. The discussion highlighted the need for an approach that is both manageable across participating countries and capable of producing a strong international publication.

Members also noted that the topic may benefit from a narrower focus. To support further discussion, relevant publications, previous research, presentation materials, and draft survey questions have been shared in the group's drive folder.

Before the next meeting, members are invited to reflect on the most appropriate methodological approach and share their views. Feedback is welcome on:

- a survey-based comparative study;
- a comparative analysis of legal frameworks and practices, or
- alternative approaches that could strengthen the project.

Contact person: Zeynep Reva, Co-Lead of WG2.



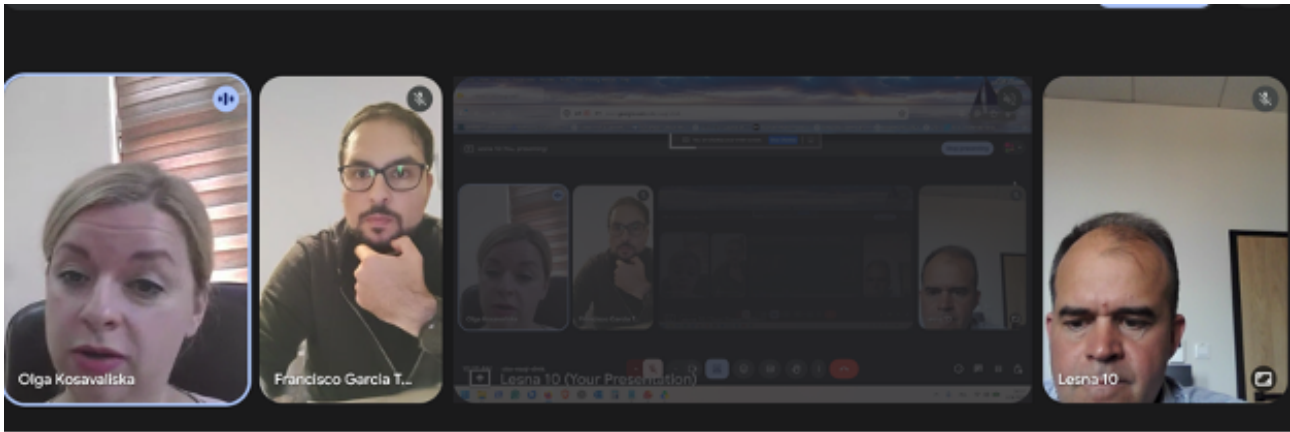
#### WORKING GROUP

## WG2 Research Initiative: Audiovisual Recording as Evidence in Information-Gathering Interviewing

On 8 June 2026, WG2 held an online meeting as part of the research initiative on audiovisual recording as evidence in information-gathering interviewing.

During the meeting, participants discussed possibilities for future cooperation and networking in the context of developing a scientific research article, or a series of articles. The group agreed on the general idea for the paper and is currently working on developing the details.

Information about the date of the next meeting will be shared through the WG2 network.



Contact person: Denis Solodov, Co-Lead of WG2.

#### WEBINAR

## Webinar on Remote Hearings with Child Victims of Violence

29 June 2026

On 29 June 2026, the Barnahus Network and the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations (HEUNI), organised a webinar on remote hearings with child victims of violence.

The event examined the growing use of remote hearings in judicial proceedings, particularly in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic. Speakers discussed how remote hearings can help safeguard children's procedural rights and support their participation in justice processes, while also highlighting that remote hearings differ from the pre-recorded interviews commonly conducted in Barnahus. Particular attention was given to the preparation, execution, and follow-up of remote hearings, as well as to the need for clear guidance for professionals involved in these procedures. The programme included contributions from Judge Nina Immonen from Finland, who addressed good practices in preparing and conducting remote hearings with child victims of violence; Julia Korkman from HEUNI and Åbo Akademi, who presented research findings on remote hearings with child victims; H el ene Paillard, who introduced key elements of guidance for lawyers; and Shawna von Blixen-Finecke from the Barnahus Network, who presented key elements of ground rules guidance.

The webinar also included a discussion with participants, allowing professionals, legal experts, children's rights specialists, researchers, and others with relevant experience to exchange views and provide feedback on forthcoming guidance materials.

#### WEBINAR

## UNODC Webinar: Rapport-Building During Interviewing Processes in Criminal Investigations

16 June 2026

The webinar *Rapport-Building During Interviewing Processes in Criminal Investigations* was held on 16 June 2026 as part of the UNODC Accelerating Justice Team's efforts to support the professionalization of investigative practices.

The session focused on rapport-building as a critical skill in criminal investigations, helping interviewers foster cooperation, encourage open communication, and obtain reliable information from victims, witnesses, and

suspects of crime. The discussion emphasized the importance of preparation, self-awareness, and a structured approach to communication during investigative interviewing.

The webinar featured Emily Alison and Laurence Alison, who shared practical insights and professional experience relevant to criminal justice and law enforcement practitioners.

[Click here to access the webinar recording and resources!](#)

#### EVENT

## ImpleMéndez at the IAFL: Forensic Linguistics and the Méndez Principles in Portuguese

25 June 2026

On the 25th of June, Daniela Rodrigues (Portugal) presented an exploratory study titled *A Critical Analysis of the Méndez Principles Translation into Portuguese* on the 6th European Conference of the International Association for Forensic and Legal Linguistics in Montpellier, France. She was awarded one Short Scientific Mission Grant and her work focused on how translation errors and inadequacies impact the comprehensibility and accurate implementation of the Méndez Principles.



#### EVENT

## Therése Rytter at the OSCE: Preventing Torture Through Investigative Interviewing

29–30 June 2026

On 29–30 June 2026, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) held its third Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting of the year in Vienna, dedicated to preventing torture and ill-treatment and to strengthening co-operation and implementation across the criminal justice system. Among the speakers was our ImpleMéndez colleague Therése Maria Rytter, Legal Director of DIGNITY – Danish Institute against Torture, a member of the steering committee that drafted the Méndez Principles and Vice-President of the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT). Drawing on both her normative and practical experience, she called for a fundamental shift in criminal justice systems, away from coercive interrogation and towards investigative, rapport-based interviewing designed to obtain accurate and reliable information.

In her intervention, Rytter set out three priorities for States: adopting transparent, investigative interviewing methods and embedding them in police training curricula; guaranteeing legal safeguards from the moment of arrest, including access to a lawyer, medical care, and the right to notify one's family; and systematically making electronic recordings of all suspect interviews in order to create authentic records. Above all, she stressed that lasting change depends on transforming mindsets within police institutions and the wider justice system, noting that reliance on confessions will persist for as long as prosecutors require them and judges accept information obtained under coercion. [You can listen to Therése here.](#)

## Calls for cooperation

### OPPORTUNITY

## Call for Papers: Charter of Rights of Victims and Survivors of Torture – Towards Implementation

Deadline: 30 July 2026

In March 2026, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture presented the Charter of Rights of Victims and Survivors of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (A/HRC/61/42) to the Human Rights Council. Developed through three years of survivor-led consultations across Bogotá, Nairobi, and Kathmandu, and informed by more than 120 submissions from survivors worldwide, the Charter represents a landmark effort to place survivors' experiences, perspectives, and demands at the centre of anti-torture policy and practice. The Charter outlines seven core rights and calls on States, international organisations, civil society actors, and rehabilitation practitioners to adopt it as a framework for action. Torture Journal invites submissions that critically engage with the Charter and its implications for policy, practice, research, and advocacy. Contributions may explore:

- The foundations, concepts, and principles of the Charter
- Opportunities and challenges for implementation across different sectors and jurisdictions
- Clinical, empirical, legal, and policy perspectives on survivors' rights
- The role of governments, international organisations, civil society, and professional communities in advancing the Charter
- Survivor-led approaches to justice, rehabilitation, and prevention

Submissions from survivors, survivor-led organisations, researchers, clinicians, lawyers, and human rights practitioners are particularly encouraged. Papers may be empirical, conceptual, legal, or clinical in nature, and interdisciplinary contributions are especially welcome.

Papers will be selected based on relevance, methodological rigour, and their contribution to advancing debate and practice in the field.

Authors wishing to discuss the suitability of a proposed submission may contact the Editor-in-Chief, Pau Pérez, at [pauperez@runbox.com](mailto:pauperez@runbox.com).

[Click here to access the full call for papers!](#)

## New publications and podcasts

### PUBLICATION

## New resources to support implementation of the Méndez Principles

The Association for the Prevention of Torture has launched two new publications aimed at supporting the

practical implementation of the Méndez Principles. The first publication, [\*Shifting Mindsets, Transforming Practice: An Implementation Guide for the Méndez Principles\*](#), provides practical recommendations for policymakers, institutions, practitioners, civil society, and other actors seeking to incorporate the Principles into legislation, policies, procedures, training, and operational practice. The second publication, [\*Toolkit for Defence Lawyers: Applying the Méndez Principles in Legal Practice\*](#), was developed jointly by APT and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute. It is particularly relevant to the work of WG2, as it highlights the vital role of defence lawyers in preventing coercion, safeguarding procedural rights, promoting fair trial guarantees, identifying risk factors, challenging unlawful practices, and advocating for interviewing methods that are both effective and rights-based.

#### PUBLICATION

## ImpleMéndez colleagues published in the latest issue of Criminal Justice Issues

We are pleased to share that the latest issue of *Criminal Justice Issues / Kriminalističke teme* has now been published. This issue is especially important for the ImpleMéndez network, as it includes articles authored by colleagues involved in the Action and reflects the productive academic cooperation developed through the Western Balkans Project. The publication is a concrete result of networking, collaboration, and shared research interests that grew from the Western Balkans network meeting held in Sarajevo in October 2025. The issue can be accessed [here](#). Congratulations to all contributing authors for their valuable work and collaboration. Special thanks are due to Adnan Fazlić and Irma Deljić for their important role in supporting and coordinating this publication effort.

#### PODCAST

## New Podcast Episode: Justice Under Fire

Our ImpleMéndez colleagues have released a new episode of the Beyond a Reasonable Doubt podcast from Davidhorn. Recorded live at the Davidhorn Police Interview Summit 2026 in Manchester, the episode features Dr Ivar Fahsing in conversation with Vasylyna Yavorska — Ukrainian lawyer, criminal justice reformer, and CEO of JUST Group.

Together, they discuss what it means to pursue criminal justice reform in the middle of a war, exploring the challenges of system transformation under extreme pressure, the role of legal professionals in times of crisis, and the importance of maintaining fairness, accountability, and public trust.

### [Watch the episode here!](#)

There are also recent podcast episodes in that series with other ImpleMéndez members which are very interesting, including with Dr Adrian Gates on written memos of interviews versus transcripts in Ireland, and with Therése Rytter on Torture Prevention in Europe. [We strongly recommend you to check it here.](#)



## PODCAST

## Member of ImpleMéndez on the Legalny Podcast

Our ImpleMéndez colleague, Denis Solodov (Poland), was a guest on episode 6 of Legalny Podcast, titled "Crimes Without a Body, Digital Traces and the End of the Police Bluff." The conversation focused on contemporary standards in criminal proceedings, investigative work, and the challenges currently facing the justice system. The episode discussed ImpleMéndez COST Action and the Méndez Principles, which set new global standards for conducting investigative interviews.



The discussion also addressed changes in interview methods in recent years in Poland, the effectiveness of traditional investigative interviewing techniques, the growing importance of digital evidence, psychology, and behavioural analysis. Other issues included mistakes made during the first hours of an investigation, problems with securing evidence, and the impact of new technologies on the work of law enforcement agencies. The episode also covered topics related to cybercrime, state security, information warfare, and contemporary challenges facing Polish forensic science and criminal procedure.

[Watch the episode here!](#)

For subtitles in your language, turn on automatic subtitles.

## PUBLICATION

## Congratulations to Lütfiye Kaya Cicerali

We are delighted to share that Lütfiye Kaya Cicerali from Türkiye has published a research article in the Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling (Volume 23, Issue 3, October 2026), entitled *From Norm Breach to Cascades: Judicial Responses to Suspect Interviewing Across Legal Cultures and the Cross-Norm Inhibition Effect*. The article examines judicial responses to suspect interviewing across different legal cultures, offering important insights into the cross-norm inhibition effect and its implications for investigative practice. Congratulations to Lütfiye on this significant achievement and valuable contribution to the field.

[Click here to access the article!](#)



## The Reminder

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Those submitting a paper for publication should follow the COST Annotated Rules to ensure proper recognition of COST funding. Use the following formula:

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

Newsletter prepared by

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*Share your achievements with us!*

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