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## Call for Papers 3rd International Conference on (Cyber)bullying (CICY3)

**(Cyber)bullying: Norms and resistance in Mediterranean societies and beyond**

**April 27-28 2026  
Galatasaray University (Istanbul)**

After a first edition held in Nancy (University of Lorraine) from December 5 to 7, 2022, followed by a second edition hosted on June 3 and 4, 2024 at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (Poland), **the International Conference on (Cyber)bullying (CICY) is preparing its third edition.** The conference **will take place at Galatasaray University (Istanbul, Turkey) on April 27 and 28, 2026.** It continues the scholarly discussions initiated during the previous meetings, which created opportunities to exchange theoretical, methodological, and interdisciplinary perspectives on contemporary forms of bullying, harassment, and cyberviolence. Entitled **“(Cyber)bullying: Norms and Resistance in Mediterranean Societies and Beyond,”** this edition aims to broaden its geographical scope by emphasizing the specific dynamics of the Mediterranean region, while maintaining its commitment to **international and comparative dialogue.**

As in previous editions, the conference welcomes papers addressing the mechanisms and effects of bullying, harassment, cyberbullying, and online hate speech, as well as the tools used to combat them. Practical and collaborative workshops will also be included in the program in order to foster dialogue between researchers, practitioners, institutional stakeholders, and civil-society organizations involved in preventing digital violence. For the 2026 edition, four thematic areas are proposed, exploring different dimensions of cyberviolence: its forms and dynamics, vulnerabilities linked to life-course trajectories, issues related to terminology and social recognition, and the evaluation of prevention mechanisms and knowledge-transmission practices. Each theme invites critical and comparative analyses of individual, collective, and institutional responses to digital violence, as well as the tools used to understand and counter it.

### **1. Exploring (cyber)bullying: Cross-perspectives in the Mediterranean and beyond**

This first theme focuses on (cyber)violence in the Mediterranean context, examining the specific forms it takes, both online and offline, in a region characterized by diverse political systems, social structures, and cultural traditions. Contributors are invited to explore the extent to which these forms of violence—whether bullying, harassment, threats, the non-consensual dissemination of intimate images, intimidation campaigns, or digital attacks—are linked to gender dynamics typical of patriarchal societies, particularly regarding notions of shame, honour, social control of the female body, and family reputation (Dilmaç, 2021).

Proposals may highlight specific cases of violence observed in contemporary Mediterranean societies, especially those involving threats to the social image of individuals or groups. In many patriarchal Mediterranean contexts, family reputation constitutes a major locus of power. When harassment or cyberbullying involves the circulation of images or videos revealing bodies—particularly women’s bodies—its consequences can be severe. Such dissemination can inflict lasting damage on the reputation not only of the targeted person but also of their family, potentially affecting their integration into marriage networks and, in extreme cases, leading to so-called “honour” crimes (Dilmaç, 2025). The victim—typically a woman—may thus be punished a second time, fatally. This type of violence illustrates the force of patriarchal norms and the mechanisms of social control that operate across digital and social spheres.

Various forms of harassment, whether offline or online, may be examined within this theme. Submissions may also address online mobbing culture or public lynching dynamics (Diler, 2024), purging logics, and forms of harassment tied to political or identity-based conflicts. Likewise, proposals may analyze the persistent invisibility of certain populations (based on sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or perceived deviance), provided that the mechanisms of repeated invisibilization or public humiliation are clearly identified.

Papers may also explore the groups most frequently targeted by these forms of violence—women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, journalists, migrants, feminist activists, and human-rights defenders (Corroy & Jehel, 2019)—and the sociocultural, political, or religious mechanisms that heighten their vulnerability. For instance, contributors may examine the central role of patriarchy in upholding gender norms by imposing standardized and codified behaviours on individuals who remain constantly subject to community scrutiny. To what extent does this system of social control encourage certain forms of harassment, particularly through rumour (Calogirou, 1994) or public stigmatization? Is this form of regulation more prevalent in some Mediterranean societies than in others? Should it be interpreted as a problematic mechanism generating symbolic and social violence, or is it perceived instead as a legitimate form of community surveillance that reinforces collective norms and preserves a supposed social order?

Special attention will also be given to research examining the role of political and state discourse in producing humiliation or perpetuating harassment against certain populations. In some Mediterranean contexts, contributors may question how public authorities, political leaders, or the media contribute to humiliation, explicit denigration, incitement to hatred, or, conversely, the invisibilization of certain groups. What mechanisms or ideologies—such as familialism—at the meso or macro level reinforce these dynamics of exclusion, stigmatization, or invisibility?

From this perspective, the Mediterranean region provides fertile ground for comparative analyses that highlight local specificities while opening the discussion to other contexts. Papers may thus contribute to a better understanding of both the convergences and divergences in patterns of (cyber)violence, demonstrating how the modes of expression of these attacks, the populations they target, and the forms of resistance they elicit vary from one region to another—or reveal common dynamics despite contextual differences.

## **2. Disrupted Biographies and Exposure to Online Bullying: Understanding Digital Vulnerabilities**

In this second theme, we encourage the submission of papers exploring the links between cyberviolence and different stages of life, in order to analyze how its forms and impacts vary according to age and context: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age. These different periods of life are shaped by distinct social institutions (school, university, work, retirement clubs, etc.), which address online violence in different ways; generational affiliation and age may also be tied to specific psychological states. We also encourage papers focusing on transitions and turning points in the life course.

During adolescence, peer groups play a key role in shaping individuals' experiences, taking over from parental role models and allowing adolescents to psychologically separate from their parents as they forge their own identities. At this stage, peer groups offer protection through provisional identities. Peer groups and youth subcultures also provide spaces for experimenting with new behaviours, styles, or ideas (Smetana, 2011; Pasquier, 2020). In addition, joining online groups or communities can influence how adolescents construct, perceive, and define their identity. Young people's use of social media is thus linked to learning a form of autonomy from the family sphere and integrating into peer social circles, which contributes to the socialization process (Balley's, 2018). How can belonging to a subculture or engaging in certain cultural practices (music, reading, etc.) expose young people to online violence as victims, witnesses, or perpetrators? Can creating or joining a subculture protect against violence or help counter it? How do individuals reshape their social relationships, practices, and tastes in adulthood after experiencing stigmatization of their cultural identity during adolescence?

Retirement and aging can offer some people opportunities to develop their digital lives and online social skills (by joining a community of interest, meeting new people, or communicating with their children or grandchildren via social media). However, older people are far from a homogeneous group. Some are very comfortable with digital technologies and have strong digital literacy, while others are particularly affected by digital exclusion (Hill et al., 2015; Delias, 2021; Augne, 2022). Overall, the digital divide is more social than generational. What do we know about the digital practices of retirees and older adults? What do we know about the online abuse they face? Are there specific forms of violence or cybercrime that particularly target them? Are older women at greater risk than men? Integrating a new school, emigrating to a new country, getting divorced, or experiencing professional upheaval can make individuals more vulnerable to types of bullying or violence they were not previously exposed to. Conversely, harassment or cyberbullying can force victims—or even perpetrators—into unexpected life transitions, such as moving in order to protect themselves. For example, migrant or refugee children are often victims of bullying or cyberbullying in their host country and school (Simona et al., 2016), becoming targets of attacks they had never previously experienced.

Turning to another aspect, famous people or public figures (politicians, intellectuals, actors, etc.) are particularly vulnerable to attacks on their image and privacy (Karthika, 2022). Becoming famous overnight (after winning a television show, becoming an influencer, or receiving extensive media coverage for an artistic or political achievement) can be a challenging experience due to media exposure: negative feedback and intense public scrutiny can have harmful social and psychological consequences. Recent examples also show that some highly engaged fans may become harassers when a celebrity's behaviour no longer meets their expectations.

### **3. Naming Violence: Terminological Issues and Frameworks for Social Recognition**

The terms used to describe certain forms of aggression vary considerably depending on cultural and legal contexts. While in France the terms “school harassment” [harcèlement scolaire] and “cyberharassment” [cyberharcèlement] are commonly used, Quebec prefers “intimidation” and “cyberintimidation.” In Anglo-Saxon countries, the terms “mobbing” and “bullying” refer to similar realities, but within specific social and legal frameworks. Likewise, the expression “revenge porn,” used to describe the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, can be interpreted as a form of victim blaming—the word “revenge” implying that the humiliated person did something to deserve it.

This terminological diversity reflects the complexity of social realities and the representations attached to them, referring to distinct sociocultural contexts, different registers of legitimacy—legal, moral, or media-related—and unequal degrees of recognition and visibility of violence. In the legal sphere, precise vocabulary is essential: the classification of an act determines its legal acknowledgment and the possible actions and sanctions. The choice of words thus becomes a matter of power, justice, and symbolic recognition. As Maend Kullaj (2025) points out, the vocabulary used to describe sexual violence is never neutral: certain terms can trivialize the offense or stigmatize the victim. The author advocates for terminology that emphasizes the harm suffered rather than the actions of the perpetrator, in order to improve victim protection and legal clarity. In this respect, the law adopted on October 23, 2025, in France—which explicitly introduces the notion of “non-consent” into the criminal definition of rape and sexual assault—illustrates how a change in terminology can strengthen victims’ recognition and broaden the scope of penalties.

In some societies, gossip, rumours, and social control function as mechanisms of collective regulation, sometimes blurring the line between tolerated sociability and symbolic violence. In Mediterranean contexts, the legal recognition of harassment highlights how crucial terminology is: national legislation regulates these behaviours according to diverse cultural sensibilities, moral concepts, and legal traditions. Naming violence gives it legal existence, social visibility, and the possibility of reparation.

How does the diversity of terminology used to describe forms of harassment influence their recognition, classification, and legal treatment in different cultural contexts? How does the precision or ambiguity of terminology affect the legal recognition of harassment and the protection of victims in Mediterranean regions? How do terminological variations surrounding harassment reflect power relations, social norms, and differentiated representations of violence in Mediterranean societies? Does the terminology of harassment allow for a clear distinction between symbolic violence and social regulation, or does it contribute to blurring the boundaries between the two? Between legal recognition and social legitimacy, what terminological issues are at stake in the definition and classification of harassment?

### **4. Measuring the impact of prevention measures and new forms of knowledge transmission**

While the types of cyberviolence and their effects are now widely documented (Stassin et al., 2025), the social, institutional, and individual responses they elicit call for an in-depth analysis of their actual impact. For example, evaluations of the Finnish KiVaKoulu program, which focuses on developing empathy for victims, highlight the limitations of certain prevention initiatives. Despite positive effects on the overall reduction of bullying, studies have shown that power dynamics within student groups can hinder change: the most popular bullies tend to maintain their behavior to

preserve their status and influence (Williford et al., 2013; Garandeanu & Salmivalli, 2018). Similar limitations have been observed in other national contexts. In France, the student ambassador program against bullying relies on the genuine commitment of students, often motivated by their own experiences as victims or witnesses. However, their actions remain heavily supervised by adults, limited to a small number of interventions, and constrained by the institutional calendar and ministerial directives, which restrict their autonomy and the scope of their engagement (Stassin & Lechenaut, 2021). In Mexico, the national PNCE program (Programa Nacional de Convivencia Escolar) aims to promote tolerance, empathy, and peaceful conflict management. Despite the support of educational teams, its implementation is hindered by insufficient resources, brief training, and a lack of regular monitoring, which undermine the program's adoption and sustainability (López et al., 2019).

This theme therefore invites submissions that go beyond describing prevention, protection, or awareness-raising measures, and instead examine their measurable impact in terms of behavior change, reduction of violence, or strengthening the capacity for action of the populations, both in the Mediterranean and beyond. Preference will be given to studies evaluating the outcomes of existing awareness-raising or educational campaigns: which approaches have proven most effective in combating cyberviolence? What formats, languages, or media (drawing, theatre, video, digital, visual arts, etc.) have a tangible effect on the perception, understanding, or prevention of such violence? Analyses may focus on community, institutional, or educational initiatives, examining their reception, appropriation, and limitations.

This line of research includes both empirical case studies and comparative analyses, highlighting the contextual factors (cultural, religious, linguistic, gender-related) that determine the effectiveness of responses to cyberbullying. Certain forms of harassment, such as sexual extortion or doxxing, take on different meanings and effects depending on prevailing social norms, which influences the relevance and scope of the measures implemented.

The discussion will also explore the evaluation of methods for disseminating and mediating knowledge about cyberviolence: how does this knowledge circulate, and what are its effects? Which emerging forms—such as creative research, collaborative artistic practices, or participatory digital tools—are most effective in producing critical and sensitive dissemination of knowledge? The focus is not merely on describing these approaches, but on measuring their capacity to transform social representations and practices.

Finally, this theme encourages examination of individual strategies for resistance and their effectiveness in the face of cyberviolence. This involves analyzing the extent to which those targeted by such violence can protect themselves, fight back, or rebuild their image by using tools—legal action, technological measures (blocking, anonymity, encryption), or self-narrative practices (storytelling, performance, humor)—and by developing new knowledge related to the violence they face. These practices can be considered positive coping strategies that enable (former) victims to understand and manage the situation. The focus is not simply on describing these strategies, but on measuring their real potential to act as levers for emancipation and self-reappropriation, in interaction with institutional mechanisms and knowledge dissemination practices.

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## **Submission Guidelines**

Proposals should be sent by **December 28, 2025** to the following address:

[colloquencyberharcelement@protonmail.com](mailto:colloquencyberharcelement@protonmail.com)

To ensure a **double-blind review process**, please submit:

- **An anonymous document** containing your proposal (maximum 6,000 characters / 2 pages), including the title, the chosen theme(s), an abstract presenting the research question, a brief literature review and/or theoretical framework, methodological elements, and a few bibliographic references;
- **A separate document** specifying the title of your presentation, your full name, and your institutional affiliation.

Acceptance notifications will be sent on **February 15, 2026**. A publication is planned at a later stage following the conference

### **Organizing Committee**

- Ipek Boldaç, Galatasaray University (Turkey)
- Elif Can, IFEA (Turkey)
- Lucie Delias, Paul-Valéry University, Montpellier (France)
- Julie Alev Dilmaç, Galatasaray University (Turkey)
- Seçil Ergin Doğuç, Galatasaray University (Turkey)
- Mélanie Lallet, Catholic University of the West (France)
- Bérengère Stassin, University of Lorraine (France)
- Kerem Ahmet Yılmaz, Galatasaray University (Turkey)

### **Scientific Committee (under formation)**

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- Mathieu Bégin, University of Sherbrooke (Canada)
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- Lucie Delias, University of Montpellier Paul-Valéry (France)
- Julie Alev Dilmaç, Galatasaray University (Turkey)
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- Bérengère Stassin, University of Lorraine (France)
- Małgorzata Wójcik, SWPS University (Poland)