

COGJUS

Laboratório de Ensino e Pesquisa em Cognição e Justiça

Impact Report

2024

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Presentation

CogJus, the Laboratory for Teaching and Research in Cognition and Justice, has the mission of promoting the use of evidence-based practices to improve the interactions of the justice and public security system with victims, witnesses, and suspects.

CogJus was founded in 2021 as a project of Atitus Educação in collaboration with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights. In 2024, it also became a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and, more recently, received the status of a Research Group linked to the Graduate Program in Law at Atitus Educação.

CogJus aims to foster **continuous dialogue between researchers and professionals from the Justice and Public Security System to implement procedures for interviews, interrogations, and eyewitness identification.**

Our goal is to create environments for technical training, applied research, and experience exchange that are aligned with national realities, always grounded in scientific and empirical knowledge and in human rights principles. To achieve this, we offer specialized training, develop educational materials, and organize events that connect theory and practice, directly contributing to the professional qualification of actions.

This report aims to present the main advances, actions, and results achieved by CogJus in 2024, in partnership with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR), the Ministry of Justice, the United Nations, and Civil Police officers from different Brazilian states. Additionally, the report seeks to promote transparency regarding the project's activities, providing relevant information to different stakeholders and contributing to the dissemination of ethical and effective investigative practices aligned with the Méndez Principles, reinforcing our organization's commitment to a fairer justice system in Brazil.

Why Do We Need Dialogue Between Cognition and Justice?

Victims, witnesses, and suspects are essential sources of information for the Justice and Public Security System. Through interviews, interrogations, and eyewitness identification procedures, critical information is produced for the investigation and adjudication of cases. These accounts can directly influence judicial decisions and have profound impacts on the lives of those involved.

The quality and reliability of information obtained during interviews, interrogations, and identifications are directly linked to how it is collected. Poorly formulated questions during interviews or interrogations can limit the account or in-

duce responses, compromising the truthfulness of the information. Inadequate interviewing techniques may lead victims and witnesses to provide inaccurate information, foster the formation of false memories, or even induce innocent suspects to confess to crimes they did not commit. Similarly, methods used for suspect identification may bias the responses of victims and witnesses, leading to the wrongful identification of individuals as perpetrators.

Research indicates that the lack of standardized protocols and training based on scientific evidence contributes to harmful practices, such as the use of suggestive questions and psychological coercion^{1,2}.

1 Clarke, C., & Milne, R. (2001). A national evaluation of the PEACE Investigative Interviewing Course (p. 187). London: Home office.

2 Cecconello, W. W., Milne, R., & Stein, L. M. (2022). Oitivas e interrogatórios baseados em evidências: considerações sobre entrevista investigativa aplicado na investigação criminal. Revista Brasileira de Direito Processual Penal, 8, 489-510.



Faulty procedures are also frequent in eyewitness identification. It is estimated that in most cases of wrongful imprisonment, the innocent person was identified by one or more witnesses³. A study by the Public Defender's Office of the State of Rio de Janeiro showed that, in just one year, 58 innocent people — 70% of whom were Black — were wrongfully identified as perpetrators of crimes they did not commit⁴.

Errors in interviews, interrogations, and identifications have been studied for over five decades by international researchers. This extensive body of evidence, grounded in Cognitive Psychology, identifies procedures that increase the risk of error and those that favor the collection of more reliable evidence. Cognitive Psychology investigates how individuals perceive, process, understand, and recall information — whether they are victims, witnesses, suspects, or professionals within the justice and public security systems.

The application of knowledge from Cognitive Psychology has led to significant changes in justice systems around the world, with the creation of protocols, guidelines, and training programs grounded in scientific evidence and aligned with human rights. In Brazil, CogJus operates precisely to foster this transformative dialogue between cognition and justice, promoting the adoption of more effective and respectful investigative practices. For interviews and interrogations, CogJus advocates the replacement of coercive methods and suggestive questioning with **Investigative Interviewing**, an approach based on building rapport and using effective questioning. This methodology seeks not only to enhance police performance but also to ensure respect for due process. It has been recommended by police professionals from various countries, international organizations, and the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering (Méndez Principles)⁵.

3 Stein, L. M., & Ávila, G. N. (2015). Avanços científicos em psicologia do testemunho aplicados ao reconhecimento pessoal e aos depoimentos forenses (Série Pensando Direito, No. 59). Secretaria de Assuntos Legislativos, Ministério da Justiça.

4 West, E., & Meterko, V. (2015). Innocence project: dna exonerations, 1989-2014: Review of data and findings from the first 25 years. Albany Law Review, 79(3), 717-795.

5 APT – Associação para a Prevenção da Tortura. (2021). Princípios sobre entrevistas eficazes para investigações e coleta de informações. <https://www.apt.ch/pt/pt/node/3101/principios-sobre-entrevistas-eficazes>



CogJus also supports the use of appropriate methods for Eyewitness Identification Procedures, focusing on the collection of clues and evidence through witness memory. This includes the standardization of procedures — from the instructions given to witnesses to the way suspects are presented and responses are recorded. These practices, based on scientific evidence, are aligned with recent national regulations, such as Resolution No. 484 of the National Council of Justice.

The updating and standardization of procedures based on Cognitive Science represent a concrete path toward a fairer and more effective system. International experience demonstrates the effectiveness of these practices, which are now gaining traction in Brazil through **collaboration among researchers, justice professionals, and public security agents**. The provision of regular, science-based training contributes to the consolidation of a system that respects human rights and promotes effectiveness in law enforcement.



Our Team



**William Weber
Ceconello**

**General Coordinator and
Implementation Supervisor**

Coordinates and monitors project implementation. Facilitates national and international partnerships.



**Lilian Milnitsky
Stein**

Senior Consultant

Oversees the development of curricula, research, and training programs.



Denis Lino

**Research and Supervision
Coordinator**

Plans and conducts research and supports the development of pedagogical practices.



Fernando H. Guzzi

**Content Developer and
Training Supervisor**

Creates and reviews training materials and assists in conducting training sessions.



**Arielle Sagrillo
Scarpatti**

**Researcher Specializing in
Gender-Based Crimes**

Develops materials on trauma and gender and assists in conducting training and events.



Mônica Bernardes

**Implementation and
Evaluation Coordinator**

Supports the development of pedagogical tools and evaluation methods and assists in conducting training and events.



**Emanuélly Fátima
Katzer**

**Project Assistant and General
Support**

Provides logistical and technical support for events and training sessions. Assists in the production and review of materials.

How We Work

Our work is structured around two main areas:

1

Training / Education and Capacity Building

We offer and encourage the development of specialized training programs in Investigative Interviewing Techniques and Eyewitness Identification Procedures. The goal is to promote the ethical and efficient collection of information, with an emphasis on understanding the scientific foundations behind testimony. Additionally, we develop lectures, manuals, and training materials (e.g., video lessons, exercises) to provide professionals with access to evidence-based practices.

2

Evaluation and Research

We develop assessment materials using both direct and indirect methods to measure the impact of our interventions. Thus, we produce quantitative and qualitative studies in collaboration with instructors and professionals from civil police academies, aiming to improve the effectiveness of practices. Our contribution to academic research expands the understanding of Investigative Interviewing and related topics, offering benefits not only to law enforcement professionals but also to the field of criminal justice by providing new data and perspectives.

Where We Work

We have recently expanded the geographical reach of our actions. We work in partnership with professionals and judicial police institutions from all regions of Brazil.



States: Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Paraná, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Distrito Federal, Goiás, Espírito Santo, Sergipe, Bahia, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Tocantins, Alagoas, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Rio Grande do Norte, Piauí, Pará, Amazonas, Amapá, Acre, Rondônia, Roraima.

Projects and Actions

Monitoring of Investigative Interviews in Brazil

Our central project, which encompasses our two main areas of action, focuses on strengthening Investigative Interviewing as a technical and ethical practice within the Brazilian justice system. This initiative integrates training, evaluation, production of educational materials, and institutional support.

Objective

To strengthen the adoption of Investigative Interviewing techniques, based on evidence and human rights, within Brazilian police forces, promoting alignment with the **Méndez Principles**.

Méndez Principles

Also known as the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering, they are a set of guidelines aimed at improving the quality and legitimacy of interviews conducted during investigations and other information-gathering contexts. They are grounded in science, law, and ethics and propose an alternative to coercive and confession-based interrogation methods.



Impact

Training of new multipliers in **25 Brazilian states** and the Federal District, as well as support for implementation in 8 Brazilian states, through training sessions, workshops, meetings, and local practice monitoring.

Since the beginning of our project:

- We have supported the development of a national curriculum with modules and content based on the Psychology of Testimony;
- We have created original educational materials, such as simulated videos, manuals, and evaluation forms;
- We have worked on integrating practice and research by collecting and analyzing data from simulated interviews.





Group of Supervising Instructors (GPS)

To enable the monitoring of Investigative Interviews in Brazil, we established partnerships with professionals from the judiciary police, forming:

national network of instructors from state police academies, with a strategic role in multiplying Investigative Interviewing within public institutions. The GPS serves as a link between CogJus and the states, adapting the training to local realities.



Origins

The idea of creating a Group of Supervising Instructors (GPS) emerged from the first training sessions conducted by CogJus. Initially, a course was designed to train eight instructors from Police Academies who had participated in CogJus training and were interested in enhancing their teaching skills in Investigative Interviewing techniques within their respective states. The group expanded, and various actions were carried out, such as seminars with international experts and the collective development of a standardized national curriculum for teaching Investigative Interviewing in Brazil.

In this context, the GPS stands out as an innovative initiative by providing, for the first time, a **structured space for shasharing among police officers from different Brazilian states on the teaching of scientific techniques for gathering statements.**



By bringing together professionals with diverse backgrounds and institutional realities, the GPS **strengthens a national network**, expanding the shift in interview practices.

By 2024, the GPS had brought together instructors from police academies in eight Brazilian states: Acre, Tocantins, Bahia, Goiás, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Paraná, and Santa Catarina. The instructors meet monthly for in-depth discussions on integrating and teaching Investigative Interviewing in their academies' curricula.



GPS Actions in 2024

In 2024, we aimed to expand the group, increasing the number of participants operating in eight states, covering all **five regions of the country** and advancing gender parity, with seven women among its fifteen members. The group's expansion and progress in gender parity strengthened the initiative's operational capacity and its sensitivity to the country's different realities.

Aligned with the goals of continuous support and capacity building set for 2024, the GPS organized **thematic study groups** during the first semester of the year, **focusing on specific areas of Investigative Interviewing**. These groups were created to meet police instructors' demands for support in advanced techniques, especially in conducting interviews with uncooperative suspects and with children, and to contribute to the implementation and evaluation of the shared curriculum.

Another key activity was a **training session on the ORBIT model** (Observing Rapport-Based Interpersonal Techniques) for the GPS teaching group, conducted by a expert at the United Nations (UNODC) headquarters. The event included a theoretical introduction to the ORBIT approach, a practical demonstration of the technique, interactive workshops, and a Q&A session. Participants deepened their knowledge of rapport-based interview methods and empathetic communication, practicing advanced techniques for dealing with uncooperative suspects.



Record of the ORBIT model training session held at the UN headquarters in July 2024



To assess the impact of GPS activities and map the training conducted throughout the year, a questionnaire was applied to the instructors in the group. The survey **collected information on training in Investigative Interviewing and Special Testimony**, covering aspects such as the

number of participants, the training models applied, and the instructors' participation as facilitators or curriculum designers.



Table 1 – Number of Professionals Trained in Investigative Interviewing and Special Testimony by State

State	Investigative Interviewing	Special Testimony
São Paulo	3.700	3.540*
Santa Catarina	75	20
Acre	350	0
Bahia	1.269	0
Tocantins	200	30
Goiás	258	22*
Paraná	100	0
Rio de Janeiro	640	80
Total	6.242	3.692

*The 3,540 police officers who participated in the Special Testimony training in São Paulo and Goiás also attended the Investigative Interviewing training. Therefore, these numbers are repeated.

The activities carried out in 2024 are directly related to the initial objectives of the GPS, which include promoting continuing education, developing teaching materials, encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration, and supporting the evaluation and maintenance of teaching quality. In this context, CogJus aimed to meet the demand for ongoing support and

qualification of group members, especially in advanced investigative interviewing techniques. By training and supporting participants to implement these practices in their states, the GPS also strengthened its commitment to the national dissemination of methods aligned with human rights and the Méndez Principles.



In 2024, a partnership was established between CogJus, the Ministry of Justice through the National Secretariat for Public Security (SENASP), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Convention Against Torture Initiative (CTI), and the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR), resulting in the realization of the International Seminar on Hearings and Police Interrogations: Generating Results, Ensuring Rights, and Protecting People, held on July 30 and 31 in Brasília.

International Seminar on Hearings and Police Interrogations: Generating Results, Ensuring Rights, and Protecting People



Record of the Seminar held at the Ministry of Justice in July 2024.

The event brought together representatives from all 27 states, with the primary goal of promoting the incorporation of Investigative Interviewing as a regular subject in Brazilian police academies. The seminar was divided into two days and followed an expository methodology, with technical presentations, roundtable discussions, and thematic sessions. The discussions were organized around four main axes: training and awareness, impact metrics, teaching materials, and pedagogical evaluation.

The participation of representatives from all Brazilian states resulted in concrete proposals for adopting the technique, including clear definitions regarding training needs, impact metrics, teaching materials, and evaluation strategies. The involvement of partner entities and international experts contributed to the dissemination of Investigative Interviewing and the Méndez Principles in Brazil.



FiTE – Initial Training in Investigative Interviewing Techniques

FiTE is an online training program in Investigative Interviewing, focused on raising **awareness among public security professionals about the use of ethical and scientifically based techniques when conducting interviews with victims, witnesses, and suspects**. For many police academy instructors, FiTE represented their first formal contact with Investigative Interviewing before beginning their roles as multipliers of the technique.

In 2024, the training was especially aimed at instructors who participated in the "International Seminar on Hearings and Police Interrogations: Generating Results, Ensuring Rights, and Protecting People". A total of 32 civil police professionals from 21 Brazilian states took part in the training. Of these, 27 responded to questionnaires about their knowledge and perceptions

regarding interviews with victims, witnesses, and suspects, the results of which are presented below.

Regarding participants' perceptions on how interviews with victims and witnesses should be conducted, after FiTE, they showed lower agreement with inadequate techniques such as relying on intuition, using closed questions, and detecting lies based on nonverbal behavior. They also showed greater adherence to recommended techniques such as rapport and open-ended questions.



Table 2 – Officers' Agreement (1 – Totally Disagree; 5 – Totally Agree) on Practices in Interviews with Victims/Witnesses or Suspects, Before and After FiTE

Statements	Victims/ Witnesses Before	Victims/ Witnesses After	Suspects Before	Suspects After
Planning interview topics beforehand	4.81 (0.40)	5.00 (0.00)	4.93 (0.27)	5.00 (0.00)
Intuition is a valuable tool for interviews	3.00 (1.18)	2.30 (1.14)	2.96 (1.19)	2.19 (1.14)
Time to build rapport	3.59 (1.19)	4.33 (0.78)	3.78 (1.09)	4.26 (0.90)
Showing interest and not interrupting	4.56 (0.70)	4.93 (0.27)	4.33 (0.83)	4.81 (0.40)
Giving the interviewee a chance to explain their version, even against evidence	4.22 (0.75)	4.59 (0.50)	4.37 (0.88)	4.74 (0.45)
Prioritizing open-ended questions	4.63 (0.56)	4.93 (0.27)	4.30 (0.87)	4.93 (0.27)
Prioritizing closed-ended questions	1.74 (1.13)	1.15 (0.36)	2.04 (1.19)	1.15 (0.36)
Lie detection through body language	3.07 (1.27)	2.00 (1.00)	3.04 (1.34)	2.00 (1.00)
Interrupting if suspect appears to hide information or lie	2.26 (1.20)	1.70 (1.10)	2.11 (1.15)	1.37 (0.49)
Planning the interview to obtain a confession	-	-	3.07 (1.33)	1.81 (1.08)
Presenting evidence before suspect gives their account	-	-	2.04 (1.16)	1.26 (0.59)
Making it clear to the suspect that they are believed to be guilty	-	-	1.74 (1.02)	1.19 (0.40)



An analysis of participants' responses regarding the implementation of Investigative Interviewing in their states shows that many recognized that some of the taught practices, such as free narrative, rapport, and open-ended questions, are already applicable in their contexts. The practical challenges of implementing and teaching Investigative Interviewing were widely discussed. The main obstacles included cultural resistance, particularly among more senior officers, and a lack of infrastructure and personnel. In terms of

education, participants emphasized the need for greater investment in both initial and continuing training.

Finally, there was a strong interest expressed in partnerships with CogJus. The partnership was seen as an opportunity to expand training and promote a more human-centered culture in policing practices.

Testimonies from police officers participating in FiTe 2024

Here in my state, interviews are recorded, so now I'm using free narrative and asking questions at the end.

The biggest challenge here in my state will certainly be changing ingrained habits, convincing colleagues of the real need to apply the techniques.



Testimonies from police officers participating in FiTe 2024

CogJus would be very important to help improve our state, collaborating on projects that bring modern scientific knowledge about investigative interviews to all civil police officers.

This topic was never taught in training courses, so we'll have to 'start from scratch'.

The Initial Training in Investigative Interviewing Techniques (FiTE) has been the main entry point for CogJus into police academies and the source of emerging partnerships. FiTE's reach in 2024 covered nearly the entire country, allowing Investigative Interviewing techniques to become **known to multiplying members of police forces in all regions of Brazil.**

FiTE's effectiveness in building partnerships depends on its planning, execution, and

impact. Based on comparative pre- and post-test results, we can confirm that FiTE had the expected impact. This is evident in the number of significant changes observed in how professionals think about their own practice. Participants showed greater motivation to use appropriate questions during interviews, prioritize information gathering over confessions, build rapport with all interviewees, and apply evidence-based techniques to guide decision-making during interviews.



Training in Eyewitness Identification Procedures

The training in eyewitness identification is offered to civil police officers on how to conduct procedures in a scientific manner. In 2024, training sessions were held in partnership with the Civil Police Academy of Santa Catarina. The goal was to provide technical and standardized training to prevent identification errors and improve witness identification procedures.

Three training sessions were conducted. The first was held with 12 police officers from the GPS group representing different states, aiming to collect feedback on potential improvements. The second session involved 55 professionals from the Civil Police of Santa Catarina. Finally, a third session was conducted for 48 officers from Santa Catarina, with invitations extended to civil police officers from other Brazilian states, totaling 54 participants.

The trainings included practical activities and performance assessments before and after the sessions. One of the tasks assigned lineups, before and after training, to assess

participants' ability to apply technical criteria for building a fair lineup in accordance with scientific guidelines.



The percentage of correct lineups—those consisting of a single suspect and fillers matching the witness's description—**increased from 37% to 60% after the training**. The quality of the instructions written by police officers to be provided to witnesses before the procedure was also evaluated. Instructions play a key role in protecting against bias, reinforcing witness autonomy, and ensuring the reliability of the identification.



After the training, there was a significant increase in the frequency of key instructions recommended by the scientific literature:

Table 3 – Instructions participants would provide to the witness before the procedure

Instruction	Before (%)	After (%)
The perpetrator may not be present	45%	100%
You are not required to identify anyone	50%	95%
The investigation will continue regardless of your answer	25%	90%
You may say you don't know	10%	20%
The victim's confidence level will be recorded after the identification	25%	50%

At the end of the training, participants were asked to evaluate the course and share their impressions. The feedback reinforced the technical quality of the training, its institutional relevance, and its practical impact on daily work routines. Participants highlighted the depth of the

topics, the instructors' technical expertise, and the clarity of the teaching methods. The clarity in presenting the content helped facilitate understanding and strengthened the scientific credibility of the training. The importance of the training for improving police practices was emphasized.



Many participants suggested institutionalizing the course, noting that the content should be mandatory in police academies and continuing education programs. Finally, several participants reported that the course prompted significant reflection on the procedures currently adopted in police stations. The knowledge gained was perceived as both applicable and transformative, with the potential to improve the quality of criminal investigations.



Conclusion

The training in eyewitness identification had a positive impact on the technical qualifications of professionals, promoting alignment with scientific and ethical guidelines. The results indicate improvements in the construction of lineups and in the instructions provided to witnesses, contributing to fairer and more reliable procedures. Participant feedback reinforces the practical relevance of the course and suggests its potential for integration into police training curricula and national standardization.

Excellent course, it shows us how much we still have to learn and implement in a standardized way in our police stations.

The Investigative Interviewing course and this one, in my opinion, should be mandatory for all civil police officers, we would reach a new and higher institutional level.

The course provides sufficient information for us to adapt our practices in a technical way, based on scientific knowledge.



Support in the Creation of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Special Testimony in the Civil Police of Goiás

In partnership with the Civil Police of the State of Goiás, CogJus contributed to the development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) aimed at conducting special testimony for children and adolescents who are victims or witnesses of violence. The initiative seeks to address existing gaps in the implementation of Law No. 13.431/2017, which establishes qualified hearings based on scientifically recognized techniques. The document organizes guidelines grounded in Cognitive and Testimonial Psychology, ensuring greater

legal security, protection of victims' rights, and effectiveness in the production of evidence.

The development of the SOP was made possible through collaboration with police officers from Goiás. Building on the existing experience in investigative interview training, the partnership enabled the development of specialized training programs on special testimony, reinforcing the institutional commitment to evidence-based practices and respect for human rights.



Participation in Events

International Events



Investigative Interviewing for Fair and Effective Administration of Justice

CogJus took part in the Professional Training Workshop – Investigative Interviewing for Fair and Effective Administration of Justice, held from April 22 to 24, 2024, in Suriname. Organized by the Convention Against Torture Initiative (CTI) in partnership with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR), the event focused on training security forces through ethical and non-coercive investigative practices.



Over the course of three days, the training covered Investigative Interviewing as an evidence-based alternative, emphasizing rapport-building and respect for human rights. The content was adapted to the local legal context, enhancing the qualifications of officers at various hierarchical levels.

This initiative contributed to the international dissemination of the technique, strengthening institutional ties and the commitment to more effective justice.



UNCOPS 2024

During the fourth edition of the United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS), held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, CogJus participated in a panel on investigative interviewing and human rights. The event focused on the presentation of the UN Manual and the promotion of safe, effective investigative practices aligned with the rule of law. We represented Brazil alongside international experts and Juan E. Méndez, former UN Special Rapporteur on Torture. CogJus' participation reinforced its strategic presence in international discussions and contributed to expanding the dialogue on ethics and effectiveness in investigative practices.



Photo record of the United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS), held in May 2024 in New York, USA.



CCPCJ Side-event – Cooperation Towards Enhanced Justice: Advancing Investigative Interviewing Practices



Record of the 33rd Session of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), held in May 2024 in Vienna.

At the 33rd Session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), held from May 13 to 17, 2024, in Vienna, CogJus participated in two side events focused on Investigative Interviewing, alongside representatives from Thailand, Ghana, Germany, and Norway. The events highlighted Investigative Interviewing as an effective, ethical, and human rights-compliant approach to interviewing victims, witnesses, and suspects. Drawing on the practical experiences of countries such as Thailand, Norway, and Brazil, the discussions empha-



sized shared efforts and aspirations for justice reform based on non-coercive investigative methods.

During the event, CogJus presented Brazil's experience, emphasizing how Investigative Interviewing has contributed to more effective, humane, and evidence-based investigations. The participation reinforced Brazil's international recognition as a reference in the field and expanded prospects for international technical cooperation to strengthen ethical practices in criminal justice.



The Police, Investigative Interviewing and Human Rights: Legal, Psychological and Practical Aspects

From May 22 to 24, 2024, CogJus participated in the international conference held at the Hochschule der Polizei des Landes Brandenburg, in Oranienburg, in the metropolitan region of Berlin, Germany. Representing Brazil at the workshop "Investigative Interviewing and Police Practice," CogJus representatives William Ceconello and Fernando Fuzzi presented the country's progress and challenges in adopting Investigative Interviewing. Their

presentation addressed the technique's impact on criminal investigations, emphasizing the importance of adapting it to Brazil's legal and institutional context.



Photo record of the international conference held at Hochschule der Polizei des Landes Brandenburg, in Oranienburg, in May 2024.

The conference brought together international experts in Law, Psychology, Public Security, and Human Rights to discuss the foundations, limitations, and effects of Investigative Interviewing. The debates also addressed the Méndez Principles, the treatment of individuals in vulnerable situations, and the training of police officers for ethical and effective practice. CogJus's participation reaffirmed its institutional commitment to evidence-based practices and the promotion of human rights within the justice system.



The event also provided opportunities for establishing future partnerships in research, training, and international technical cooperation.



CTI Workshop – Human Rights-Compliant Policing and Investigative Interviewing in the Caribbean

From December 10 to 12, 2024, CogJus participated in the technical workshop promoted by the Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI), held in Nassau, the capital of The Bahamas. Representing Brazil, William Weber Ceconello and Fernando H. Guzzi presented CogJus's experiences in implementing Investigative Interviewing in the Brazilian context, highlighting the development of national curricula, the training of instructors, and interinstitutional coordination to consolidate evidence-based practices aligned with human rights.

The event brought together representatives from major public security agencies of Caribbean states, as well as international experts, to discuss challenges and good practices in human rights-compliant policing. The program included



Photo record of the CTI Workshop – Human Rights-Compliant Policing and Investigative Interviewing in the Caribbean, held in December 2024 in Nassau, Bahamas.

sessions on the Méndez Principles, the use of CTI tools for institutional strengthening, and strategies to prevent torture through ethical investigative methodologies. CogJus's participation strengthened the international visibility of the Brazilian experience and expanded possibilities for technical cooperation and exchange among countries of the Global South.



National Events



Online Symposium – Psychology of Testimony in the Justice System

On September 25 and 26, CogJus held a free virtual symposium featuring national and international experts. The event gathered over 800 registrants and focused on the use of the Psychology of Testimony to improve procedures such as eyewitness identification and interviews with victims.

The program included lectures on false memories with Dr. William Weber Ceconello and Dr. Lilian Milnitsky Stein (CogJus), vulnerabilities, and interviews with children and women victims of violence with MSc. Mayra Zavattaro (TJPR) and Dr. Arielle Sagrillo Scarpatti (CogJus), as well as eyewitness identification, addressed by Dora Cavalcanti (Innocence Project). The discussions highlighted the importance of technique and brought diverse perspectives, from Psychology, Law, and the Judiciary.



SIMPÓSIO

Psicologia do Testemunho Aplicada ao Sistema de Justiça





III International Congress on Human Rights of the Federal Police

In September 2024, CogJus participated in the III International Congress on Human Rights of the Federal Police, held in Brasília (DF). During the event, CogJus contributed to the UN's Tapajós Project by conducting training for 60 federal police officers. The training focused on supporting trauma victims and investigative interviewing techniques. The activity was conducted in partnership with UNODC, with an emphasis on effective and humane strategies to combat human trafficking. The training was structured based on the latest scientific evidence and the Méndez Principles.



Record of the III International Congress on Human Rights of the Federal Police, held in September 2024 in Brasília, DF.

The congress was part of the Federal Police's Annual Meeting and brought together around 60 delegates from different regions of the country, aiming to improve practices to combat human trafficking. CogJus's participation focused on training delegates to address trafficking for forced labor, particularly the challenges associated with illegal mining in the Amazon. Topics covered included identifying trafficking cases in mining areas, victims' rights, proper referral procedures, the use of indicators during interviews, and the impact of trauma on victims' responses during investigations. Practical activities included simulated interviews, with analyses led by experts.



Record of the III International Congress on Human Rights of the Federal Police, held in September 2024 in Brasília, DF.



Simulated Investigation Workshop on Human Trafficking Cases

In November 2024, CogJus took part in the Simulated Investigation Workshop on Human Trafficking Cases, held in Pirenópolis (GO) and organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The activity aimed to strengthen institutional capacity for investigating human trafficking crimes through case simulations and the application of international best practices. The event brought together federal prosecutors, labor prosecutors, federal police officers, public defenders, labor inspectors, and representatives from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, fostering interinstitutional cooperation and experience exchange among various justice system bodies.

Researchers William Ceconello and Mônica Bernardes, representing CogJus, presented on Investigative Interviewing in sensitive contexts, with a focus on victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches. Their participation also included support in the workshop's practical activities, such as case analysis, simulated interviews, and the drafting of reports and indictments. The workshop was part of the Tapajós Project, a UNODC initiative aimed at preventing and combating human trafficking and forced labor.



Record of the Simulated Investigation Workshop on Human Trafficking Cases organized by UNODC Brazil, held in Pirenópolis in November 2024.



Programs with CogJus Participation



Falas Negras - TV Brasil

On November 20, 2024, Black Consciousness Day in Brazil, CogJus participated in a special edition of the TV Globo program Falas Negras, dedicated to discussing wrongful convictions and eyewitness identification. The initiative focused on the risks associated with flawed visual procedures and the fragility of human memory, particularly in contexts marked by racial bias. The program highlighted how inadequate identification practices can contribute to wrongful convictions, disproportionately affecting Black individuals. During his participation, researcher William Cecconello emphasized the importance of using scientific evidence to improve eyewitness identification and prevent injustices within the criminal justice system.



Conclusion

The year 2024 marked a period of growth and expansion for CogJus. Throughout the year, we worked with determination to bring more just, technical, and humane investigative practices to different regions of Brazil. Whether in police academy classrooms, meetings among instructors, or national and international conferences, our mission remained clear: to promote the use of science as an ally of justice.

The results achieved demonstrate that change is possible when built collaboratively, grounded in evidence, and respectful of local contexts. The trainings, materials, partnerships, and events described in this report are the result of a growing network of professionals committed to a more transparent, efficient, and humanized justice system.

We move forward with the conviction that this is a continuous and collective journey, and we will maintain our focus on the qualification of practices, the strengthening of alliances, and listening as a tool for transformation. CogJus remains steadfast in its purpose of contributing to a Brazil where the words of victims, witnesses, and suspects are gathered in an effective and ethical manner.

