Part of the ARCh research unit (Analysis of adaptation, resilience and change processes for clinical and societal applications) at the Université de Liège, the Clinical Psychology of Delinquency (PsyCrim) department is headed by Prof. Fabienne Glowacz. It develops its research, teaching and clinical activities with a view to integrating scientific knowledge and field practice.

Criminological psychology

The first area of research is criminological psychology, focusing on the analysis of developmental processes leading to the emergence of interpersonal violence (intra-family violence, domestic violence, maltreatment and sexual abuse, juvenile delinquency, sexual delinquency, homicide, female criminality, terrorism, etc.).

Desistance

The processes of desistance and resilience are particularly studied in order to integrate them into psycho-legal and social interventions. The department offers psycho-legal assessments and psychological follow-up. A number of studies on the desistance process have been carried out with various populations: juvenile offenders, sexual offenders (Glowacz, F., Puglia, R., & Devillers, B. (2020)), minors who have participated in terrorist activities (Glowacz, F. (2020)) and perpetrators of domestic violence (Dziewa, A., & Glowacz, F. (2024)).

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Doctoral student Lucie Pelz won an award for her dissertation entitled 'Processus de désistance, quelle place pour la religion et la spiritualité?' Produced under Prof. Glowacz's supervision, it won the Prix de la thèse 2022 awarded by the General administration of the houses of justice of the Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles (Wallonia-Brussels Federation).

Prof. Glowacz is also supervising several joint theses on street children and juvenile delinquents in Haiti, Burundi and the DRC, in the context of developing countries.

Intimate partner violence

Another subject with far-reaching societal implications: 'Regards croisés sur la violence entre partenaires intimes…' This study was carried out by an interdisciplinary and inter-university research team, including researcher Amandine Dziewa from the PsyCrim department, with Fabienne Glowacz, Catherine Fallon and Charlotte Vanneste as promoters.

This inter-university research was developed and funded by BELSPO (Federal Science Policy) as part of the BRAIN.BE project. Its aim was twofold: to understand the phenomenon of domestic violence from the point of view of its impact and the underlying processes, as well as the public policies developed in this area.

A second study on partner violence during and after the COVID pandemic crisis, funded by BELSPO and coordinated by Prof. Glowacz (IPV DACOVID conducted from 2021 to 2023), assessed the changes and evolution of public policies and actions involving multiple areas and players: police, justice, health and associations, during and after the Covid-19 crisis.

Ongoing research and collaborations

Violence between intimate partners is at the heart of current research and doctoral theses. Anthony Depireux is looking more specifically at sexual coercion within relationships, Nell Oger at the impact of children's exposure to domestic violence, and Amandine Dziewa (PhD) is continuing her work on the discharge and care processes for perpetrators of domestic violence.

Close collaboration has been developed with research teams in Quebec (RAIV) and more specifically with Prof. Geneviève Lessard (Université de Laval), Audrey Brassard (Université de Sherbrooke), and CRIPCAS.

BEHAVES: Well-being, harassment, sexist and sexual violence in higher education

The BEHAVES study (Bien-être Harcèlement et Violences en Enseignement Supérieur – Wellbeing, Harassment and Violence in Higher Education), directed by Prof. Glowacz, was funded by the Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles (FWB). Its aim was to take stock of situations of harassment and violence in full-service higher education establishments (EES): universities, colleges of higher education and higher arts schools recognised by the French Community.

The BEHAVES study, conducted from December 2022 to December 2023, is based on a mixed sequential methodology (quantitative and qualitative). An extensive online survey of students and staff at the FWB's 41 higher education institutions (HEIs) was launched on 15 February 2023.

Front-line psychology

In collaboration with the KULeuven, PsyCrim has conducted cutting-edge research into front-line psychological care in Belgium. This work resulted in the publication of a bilingual French-Dutch book: 'La psychologie de première ligne en Belgique' by Dr Leontien Jansen, Prof. Fabienne Glowacz and Prof. Ronny Bruffaerts, Academic & Scientific Publishers, 2024.

The ultimate aim is to create a new intervention framework for psychologists that values early intervention, with satisfactory levels of accessibility and proximity for patients, as well as a highly valued community dimension. A new research project (EPCAP3) will continue the evaluation of new front-line psychology practices.

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Pre Fabienne GLOWACZ
Service psychologie clinique de
la délinquance (PsyCrim) – ARCh – ULiège
Bât. B33 – Quartier Agora
Place des Orateurs 1 – B-4000 Liège
Tel.: +32 (0)4 366 22 71
Email : Fabienne.Glowacz@uliege.be
www.psycrim.uliege.be