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ReSocial

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PROJECT INFORMATION

RESOCIAL ('User vulnerabilities and Resilience on SOCIAL media platforms and the metaverse: a sociolegal and design perspective', an NWO-NWA Synergy Grant Project) seeks to identify, measure, and thereby mitigate human **vulnerabilities** on social media platforms (including the metaverse and immersive technologies), thereby fostering the **resilience** of their users.

THE PROJECT'S CO-APPLICANTS

RESOCIAL brings together an impressive team of co-applicants. This includes four members from **Leiden Law School** – Dr Michael Klos (Institute of Jurisprudence), Prof. Simone van der Hof (eLaw), Dr Carlotta Rigotti (eLaw), and Prof. Vanessa Mak (Institute of Private Law) – along with two other distinguished academics: Dr M. Birna van Riemsdijk, an Associate Professor of Intimate Computing at the **University of Twente**, and Dr Ben Wagner, an Associate Professor of Human Rights and Technology at both the **University of Delft** and **InHolland University**.



ASSOC. PROF.
GIANCLAUDIO MALGIERI
Main Applicant

Data Protection Law and
Vulnerability Theories

DR. CARLOTTA RIGOTTI

Women's Digital Rights



PROF.
VANESSA MAK

Vulnerable Consumer
Protection Law



ASSOC. PROF.
BIRNA VAN RIEMSDIJK

Intimate Computing and
Value-Sensitive Design

ASSIST. PROF.
MICHAEL KLOS

Social Media Regulation



PROF. SIMONE VAN DER HOF

Children's Rights Online

ASSOC. PROF.
BEN WAGNER

Human Rights in Technology Policy



In the next phase, RESOCIAL will move from analysing survey responses to preparing its main deliverables on social media and vulnerability. The team is now starting to bring together findings from the survey, legal analysis and design research into a set of **guidelines for a vulnerability-aware implementation of EU on social media**, alongside best practices and a draft code of conduct for platforms and extended realities.

These outputs are intended for policymakers, regulators, civil society organisations, industry partners and individuals. The goal is to turn RESOCIAL's work into practical directions: how to pay attention to situations of vulnerability, which protections matter most for groups of users that experience vulnerability, and how social media operators and public authorities can respond in a more consistent and appropriate way.

GIANCLAUDIO MALGIERI ON THE DIGITAL PERIOD

Gianclaudio Malgieri was recently a guest on *The Digital Period*, the podcast hosted by philosopher and lawyer Judith Zoë Blijden. In this episode on "Vulnerability and data protection", they discuss how power, intersectionality and design choices influence digital risks, particularly for users who may experience different forms of vulnerability.

In this episode, Gianclaudio explains how the RESOCIAL project works to **identify, measure and mitigate human vulnerabilities on social-media platforms**, by linking legal research, empirical work and collaboration with partners outside academia. Whether you are interested in value-based design, protecting groups of users that experience vulnerability online, or increasing participation in development processes, this episode offers rich insights and practical questions.



Beyond this episode, *The Digital Period* has been engaging with questions that are very close to RESOCIAL's concerns. A previous season focused on dating apps, looking at intimacy, safety, self-presentation and the social pressure that can build up in digital encounters. Together, these conversations offer a rich backdrop for thinking about how people navigate risk, care and connection online, topics that are also at the heart of RESOCIAL's research.

Listen to the episode [here](#): "Vulnerability and data protection" on The Digital Period podcast.



S2. Ep. 3. Vulnerability and data protection with dr. Gianclaudio Malgieri

open.spotify.com

RESOCIAL main applicant Gianclaudio Malgieri co-organised the 2025 edition of PLSC-Europe together with his e-Law colleagues Gavin Robinson, Maëlle Picout and Manon Carrere. The conference was hosted by eLaw – Center for Law and Digital Technologies at Leiden Law School on 23-24 October 2025 and brought nearly 100 scholars to Leiden to discuss 36 work-in-progress papers in an intensive workshop format.

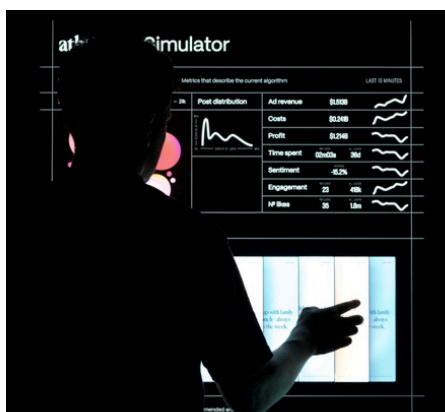
PLSC Europe is a conference focused on privacy and data protection. The Leiden programme included eight parallel sessions discussing draft papers on topics such as AI supervision and enforcement, cross-border access to data, GDPR enforcement practice, platform governance, children's rights, biometrics, and automated decision-making.

The selection of this year's Top Policy Provocation Award was carried out by the PLSC Standing committee composed of Aurelia Tamò-Larrieux, Michael Veale, Gloria González Fuster, and Kristina Irion. Awarded authors will present their work in Brussels in January 2026 during CPDP's Data Protection Day.



During this year's event, it was announced that the next edition of PLSC-Europe will be hosted by the Centre for IT & IP Law at KU Leuven in autumn 2026. See you there!

APATHOS AT DUTCH DESIGN WEEK 2025



RESOCIAL researcher Lorena Sánchez Chamorro contributed to Apathos, an installation on social media harms presented at Dutch Design Week 2025 in Eindhoven (18-26 October). Developed by Studio Falkland and shown in the Digital Futures exhibition at the Next Nature Museum, the installation invited visitors to experiment with how social media feeds are designed and how different incentives influence what users see.

Apathos visualised how scrolling, liking and other interactions lead to new recommendations, making visible that recommendation algorithms are not neutral and can encourage problematic content. Lorena's involvement in the project connects her research on manipulative interface design and user vulnerability to a wider public through an interactive, experiential format.



Over the past months, several colleagues who helped launch RESOCIAL have moved on to new positions. We warmly thank **Janneke Schokkenbroek**, **Maëlle Picout** and **Constanța Roșca** for their work on the project and their role in building the team.

Dr. Janneke Schokkenbroek concluded her role as postdoctoral researcher on RESOCIAL at TU Delft in November to take up a position as Assistant Professor at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Her research focuses on how digital technologies affect dating and romantic relationships, and she is the author of the popular science book *Appily Ever Afteron* about love in the digital age.



Maëlle Picout worked on RESOCIAL as a Research Assistant at eLaw, where she contributed to the project's research, communication and overall development. She helped establish RESOCIAL's public presence, including the project website and newsletter, and played an important role in connecting work across the consortium and supporting project activities.

Dr. Constanța Roșca worked on RESOCIAL as a postdoctoral researcher at eLaw. In December 2024, she defended her PhD thesis *Digital Arms for Digital Consumer Harms: Mapping Legal and Technical Solutions for Dark Patterns in EU Consumer Law*, and she has now taken up a role as Policy Officer at the European Commission.



We thank Janneke, Maëlle and Constanța for their contributions to RESOCIAL, and we wish them all the best in their next steps.

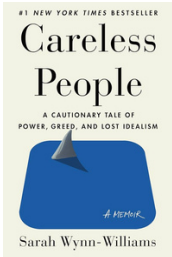
MEET THE NEW RESOCIAL TEAM MEMBERS

Manon Carrere has joined RESOCIAL as a Research Assistant at eLaw. She works on the project's research and coordination. Manon holds a Master's in International and European Law from the University of Lille. Before joining Leiden University, she has worked on AI governance and fundamental rights in previous roles at European and international organisations.



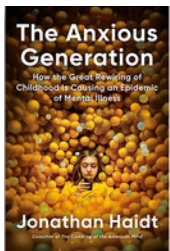
Dr. Nina Baranowska, LL.M (Ottawa) joined the RESOCIAL team in November as a researcher at e-Law, Leiden University. Her research focuses on legal aspects of AI and other digital technologies, with particular attention to data protection, liability, non-discrimination and fundamental rights. Before coming to Leiden, Nina worked as a researcher at Radboud University's iHub on the Horizon Europe project FINDHR, which focused on detecting and preventing discrimination risks in algorithmic hiring.

With the days getting shorter and the weather turning colder, we have put together a small selection of books and films for train rides, long journeys and quiet evenings at home.



Careless People: A Cautionary Tale of Power, Greed, and Lost Idealism – Sarah Wynn-Williams

A whistleblower memoir by a former Facebook public policy director, this book offers an inside look at how one of the world's biggest platforms handled crises, political pressure and human rights concerns, including its role in events such as the Rohingya genocide.



The Anxious Generation – Jonathan Haidt

Haidt explores how the move from play and independence to smartphones and social media since the early 2010s has affected young people's mental health, arguing that this "great rewiring" has fuelled anxiety, depression and self-harm, and suggesting practical norms for families, schools and policymakers.



So You've Been Publicly Shamed – Jon Ronson

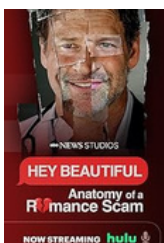
Ronson investigates modern online shaming, following people who have found themselves at the centre of viral outrage and examining how platforms like Twitter turned humiliation into a public spectacle, raising questions about justice, forgiveness and life after being "canceled".

If you are more into films, there is also plenty to watch on a cold day:



The Tinder Swindler (Netflix)

This documentary follows an Israeli con artist who used Tinder to present himself as a wealthy jet-setting businessman, then emotionally manipulated women into financing his lifestyle. It offers a striking look at trust, deception and financial harm in the context of dating apps.



Hey Beautiful: Anatomy of a Romance Scam (Hulu)

This docuseries traces how sophisticated online romance scams are built: fake identities, elaborate stories and emotional pressure used to extract money from victims. By following several cases, it shows both the techniques scammers use and the impact on those targeted.



The Search for Instagram's Worst Con Artist (Netflix)

A two-part docuseries about wellness influencer Belle Gibson, who used Instagram and a fabricated cancer story to target followers looking for hope while dealing with illness. It highlights how health misinformation on social media can exploit people in vulnerable physical or emotional situations.

When do you feel vulnerable on social media?



Whether it's navigating privacy concerns, encountering harmful design patterns, or feeling the pressure of constant online engagement, **we'd love to hear your story.**

Your story might even be featured in our newsletter in order to highlight real issues.

Send your submissions to: resocialproject@law.leidenuniv.nl



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The RESOCIAL Project

User Vulnerabilities and Resilience on SOCIAL
Media Platforms and the Metaverse: a Sociolegal
and Design Perspective



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