

BENOIT VAN KEIRSBILCK



Belgium's candidate for the Committee on
the Rights of the Child 2021-2025

Fully dedicated to the respect of the fundamental
rights and dignity of all children

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Working languages : French, English, Spanish, Dutch

During his 35-year career in the field of children's rights, Benoit Van Keirsbilck has been committed to foster a greater respect for children's rights enshrined in the CRC.

His fieldwork with young people and families has enabled him to become aware of the realities experienced by children and the importance of ensuring their participation in all issues that concern them.

As founder and director of Defence for Children International Belgium, Benoit Van Keirsbilck is actively involved in monitoring the implementation of the CRC in Belgium, in particular by taking part to the drafting of alternative reports for the United Nations treaty bodies and conducting projects to assess and improve the situation.

Professional experience

Since December 2012	Director of Defence for Children International- Belgium
2005 - 2017	Treasurer and then Chairman of the International Executive Council of Defence for Children International
1987 - 2012	Founder and Director of the <i>Service droit des jeunes</i> (Youth right service) of Brussels, a social service offering legal advice and social support to children and their families. www.sdj.be
Since 2007	Member and Teacher at Centre Interdisciplinaire des Droits de l'Enfant (CIDE - www.lecide.be)
Since 1990	Trainer in youth law and children's rights at <i>Jeunesse et Droit</i> (www.jdj.be)
Since 1990	Editor in Chief - Journalist at <i>Journal du Droit des jeunes</i> (www.sdj.be)

- ▶ Founding member of the INGO "Defence for Children International Belgium"
- ▶ Since 1995 Trainer and expert in children's rights, justice for children and child protection at international level
- ▶ Co-founder of the Interdisciplinary Centre for the Rights of the Child (CIDE)
- ▶ Founding member of the Association des Services droit des jeunes, the Federation of Youth Right Services of the French-speaking Region of Belgium
- ▶ Member of the advisory body of the National Commission on the Rights of the Child
- ▶ Member of the Advisory Committee of the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty

Selection of Expert work and international activities



Lecturer in numerous international symposiums, conferences and seminars in matters dealing with **migrant children, juvenile justice, access to justice, child protection, socio-legal defense of children**, etc.

International trainer in children's rights, juvenile justice, notably for the Council of Europe, the European Union, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, the International Organisation of the Francophonie and other international bodies, universities and research centres.

Participation in the **Council of Europe Expert Group in charge of the drafting of the Council of Europe Guidelines on Child Friendly Justice** and participation in the elaboration and evaluation of the **Council of Europe strategies on the rights of the child**.

Participation in the working group that developed an online training on child-friendly justice for the **Council of Europe HELP Programme**.

Participation in a European network "**Separated Children in Europe Programme**" (SCEP) on the situation of unaccompanied foreign minors in the different European countries.

Expert in child justice for many European projects: Children rights behind bars and 0.2, My Lawyer, my rights, Pro-jus, TALE, Twelve, AWAY, BRIDGE.

Experience in providing training, organising seminars, giving lectures, assessing policies and practices related to **children's rights, child protection and justice for children** in many countries and regions of the world, amongst others: Argentina, Benin, Canada, Congo DRC, Costa Rica, France, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mauritania, Niger, Palestine, Paraguay, Qatar, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, The Netherlands, Togo, Tunisia, Romania, United States.

Academic qualifications

1982–1985 Institut Supérieur de Formation Sociale –Brussels

- **Bachelor in Social Work**

1995 University of Ghent

- **Postgraduate studies on children's rights**

Other training and courses:

- Training in youth law and children's rights at the Training center *Jeunesse et Droit* and at the Summer School of the *University Institute Kurt Bosh* in Sion (University of Geneva – Switzerland)
- Numerous occasional training courses, participation in study days, symposiums, working seminars at national and international levels.

Selected Publications

Benoit Van Keirsbilck and Anna Tomasi, *Socio-legal Defense Model : Realising children's rights, in The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Taking Stock after 25 Years and Looking Ahead*, ed. Brill / Nijoff, edited by Ton Liefwaard and Julia Sloth-Nielsen, 2016

Benoit Van Keirsbilck et Sarah Grandfils, *Privation de liberté d'enfants, les défis du monitoring, in Justice Juvénile : les fondamentaux* ; ed. Institut International des droits de l'enfant, Genève, 2016 (sous la direction de Philip D. Jaffé, Michel Lachat, Paola Riva Gapany, Renate Winter, Jean Zermatten).

Benoit Van Keirsbilck et Géraldine Mathieu (dir.), *Les droits de l'enfant expliqués aux grands*, Couleur livres, Jeunesse & Droit (éd.), 2014

La privation de liberté des enfants, l'importance du monitoring, in *Justice Juvénile : les fondamentaux*, Institut international des Droits de l'Enfant, 2016

Rôle des ONG dans la mise en oeuvre de la Convention internationale relative aux droits de l'enfant, in «Regards croisés sur deux décennies d'application de la Convention des Nations-Unies relative aux droits de l'enfant au Nord et au Sud de la Méditerranée», 2014