

BENOIT VAN KEIRSBILCK



Belgium's candidate for the Committee on
the Rights of the Child (2nd term) 2025-2029

Fully committed to respecting the
fundamental rights of all children

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Belgium's candidate for a second term on the Committee
on the Rights of the Child - 2025-2029

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 children's rights.

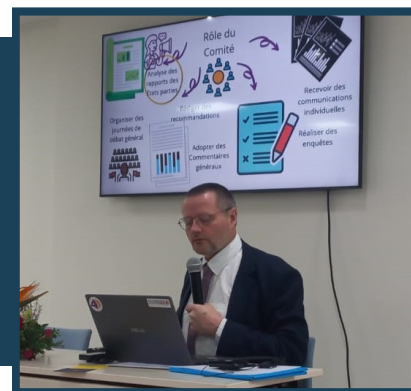
Professional experience

Since December 2012	Founder and Director of Defence for Children International-Belgium
2005 - 2017	Treasurer and then President 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 socio-legal defense center for 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)

Working languages : French, English, Spanish, Dutch

- ▶ 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**, **child 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 and the HELP Programme, the European Union, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency 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 and updated an online training on child-friendly justice for the **Council of Europe HELP Programme**.

Chair of the **“Child-Friendly Justice European network”** aiming at improving the justice systems in Europe to adapt them to children's rights and needs.

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.

Experience on the Committee on the Rights of the Child

Since his election to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, **Benoit Van Keirsbilck** has actively participated in the Committee's work; he contributes to the review of States parties' reports and the drafting of the concluding observations addressed to them. He is a member of the Working Group on Individual Communications and has coordinated it since 2022; he also participates in the Working Group on Inquiries and has had the opportunity to conduct one and to draft the report sent to the State concerned. He participates in several other working groups, including the one devoted to working methods and discussions on the reform of the treaty bodies (Agenda 2020 – resolution 68368). It has taken part in a pilot project to examine the situation of children's rights during visits to two countries (Sierra Leone and Granada) and has carried out follow-up missions on the concluding observations and their implementation in two other countries (Luxembourg and Tunisia).

In September 2023, he was appointed co-coordinator of the Working Group in charge of the drafting of the next General Comment on the right of the child to access to justice and remedies, a two-year project involving numerous consultations, meetings with experts and the participation of children.