

SAVE THE DATE
Conference on the “best interests of the child”
Within the framework of the 25th anniversary of the
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
(Brussels, 9 to 10 December 2014)

In November 2014, the children’s rights community will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. At the same time, Belgium will take on the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. For the Council of Europe and its member states, children’s rights, and human rights in general, have always been a high priority. For this reason the Belgian authorities decided to place children’s rights on the agenda with the view of supporting the full implementation of the UN CRC.

On 29 May 2013, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child came forward with the General Comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration (art. 3, para. 1 UN CRC).

To provide substantial input to this General Comment, Belgium will organise on **9 and 10 December 2014**, with the support of the Council of Europe Children’s Rights Division, a **European Conference on the best interests of the child**.

The aim of the conference is to improve the understanding and implementation of this complex concept. The various positive aspects as well as the tensions of the concept will be examined as they are perceived by stakeholders, policy-makers and other experts who are involved in determining the best interests of the child. The conference will also focus on the best interests of the child in family cases. The medium-term objective of the conference is to build on existing norms and guidelines as well as to develop ethical, procedural and further practical guidelines to support practitioners and policy makers in determining the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. Council of Europe member states, children’s rights experts, non-governmental organisations across Europe and international organisations will be invited to attend with the view on generating a dialogue between theory and practice.

A more detailed conference programme will be sent out in mid-September 2014 via the Council of Europe network of children’s rights coordinators. These coordinators will be invited to select two experts with different backgrounds and profiles to take part in the Conference.

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