



**European Conference on
"the Best Interests of the Child"**

**Conférence européenne sur
"l'Intérêt Supérieur de l'Enfant"**

**Experts Biographies
Biographies des Experts**

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**FÉDÉRATION
WALLONIE-BRUXELLES**





Jorge CARDONNA LLORÉNS

Jorge Cardona Lloréns, born in Valencia on 30 April 1957. He is currently Professor of Public International Law and International Relations at the University of Valencia. Special Graduation Award (1980) and Special PhD Award at the University of Valencia (1984). Teacher of Public International Law at the Universities of Valencia (1980-1984; 1985-95; and since 2008), Alicante (1984-85) and Jaume I in Castellón (1995-2008). Director of the International Law Section at the Bancaja International Centre for Peace and Development (since 1997). Director (and foun-der) of the Bancaja Euro-Mediterranean Courses on International Law (since 1997). Holder of the Henri Rolin Chair at the Universities of Louvain-La-Neuve and Vrije Universiteit Brussel (2009) and the Jean Monnet Chair in Community Law (since 1997). President of the Mediterranean Institute of European Studies (since 1999). President of the [Centre for Studies on Law and International Relations](#) (since 2007). Visiting Professor at different Universities and University Institutes in Europe, Latin America and Africa. Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child since 2011.

Nigel CANTWELL

Nigel Cantwell is a Geneva-based international consultant on child protection policies who has been working on the human rights of children internationally for over 30 years. He founded the NGO Defence for Children International (DCI) in 1979, and coordinated the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child throughout the drafting of that treaty. As DCI representative, he participated actively in developing the 1993 Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. In 1994 he joined UNICEF, initially as a consultant on children's rights and protection issues and then as head of the 'Implementation of International Standards' unit at UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre in Florence until 2003. He played a lead role in drafting the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children approved by the UN General Assembly in 2009.

His work now focuses mainly on safeguarding children's rights in intercountry adoption and alternative care, and it was in relation to these issues in particular that he began examining more closely the ramifications of the importance given to "the best interests of the child" in a human rights context.

Ankie VANDEKERCKHOVE

Ankie Vandekerckhove studied Law and Criminology at the Ghent University where she graduated in 1987. She was involved as a researcher at the Ghent Centre for Children's Rights at that same university, working on issues like Juvenile Justice, Minors and the Police and the legal status of minors. After that she worked at the Flemish public agency 'Child and Family' as a policy advisor on children's rights and general family law issues. She was also one of the volunteers of the Ghent Children's Rights Shop. Between 1998 and 2009 she was the first Flemish Children's Rights Commissioner. During this time she was actively involved in ENOC (chair and bureau member), the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children. After that she worked as a policy advisor at the Flemish Intercountry Adoption Authority for a while before joining the Ghent VBJK, centre for Innovation in the Early Years. Since she finished her commissioner's mandate she has also been an independent children's rights advisor, working for the Council of Europe (e.g. technical expert on the Child Friendly Justice Guidelines), the EU (e.g. peer reviewing children's rights in Croatia and Serbia), Unicef (e.g. coaching the staff of the Serbian Commissioner for Equality).

Regína JENSDÓTTIR


Regína Jensdóttir is of Icelandic nationality and holds a law degree from the University of Iceland where she specialised in human rights and a post graduate degree (D.E.A.) from the University of Strasbourg in international public law.



She has been working for more than 16 years for the Council of Europe in many areas including protecting and promoting minority languages, developing legal norms in the area of public and private law, including the guidelines on child-friendly justice. Since 2010 she has been the Council of Europe Coordinator on Children's Rights and is currently heading the Children's Rights Division. In these capacities she follows the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2012-2015) and is at present launching the preparations for the elaboration of the next Council of Europe Strategy protecting children and promoting their rights.

Margaret TUIITE

Margaret Tuite is the European Commission coordinator for rights of the child since 1 November 2011 in the unit responsible for fundamental rights and the rights of the child of DG Justice, where the focus is on implementation of the [EU Agenda for the rights of the child](#). Together with a small team, Margaret works to coordinate Commission activities on rights of the child. Coordination is done with the help of regular meetings of an (internal) interservice group on rights of the child and an informal Member State expert group on rights of the child. Since 2012 the Commission has carried out three EU-wide studies: the first on [mapping, data collection and statistics on missing children in EU27](#); [a study to collect data on children's involvement in criminal, civil and administrative judicial proceedings](#) in EU28, for which the criminal justice phase results were published in [June 2014](#), and for which the administrative and civil justice phases have sections looking at how the best interests of the child are assessed in the justice system. The Commission is also finalising the results of a study on legislation, policy and practice on child participation (UNCRC Article 12 – the child's right to be heard) in EU28. In 2014, the Commission held an online public consultation on integrated child protection systems, following on from discussions at [the 2012 and 2013 European Fora on the rights of the child](#). Margaret has worked for the European Commission for 29 years, 14 of them in the justice and home affairs domain.



In her previous post as deputy head of unit for criminal law, Margaret was responsible for [European e-Justice](#), contributing to the improvement of access to justice and crossborder judicial cooperation.

Ursula KILKELLY

Professor Ursula Kilkelly of University College Cork (Ireland) is an international children's rights scholar who has published widely on children's rights in Europe. Her work is concerned with the implementation of children's rights including in the areas of juvenile justice and healthcare and she has also published extensively on the European Convention on Human Rights and children. She has undertaken commissioned research for the Ombudsman for Children in Ireland, UNICEF UK and the International Juvenile Justice Observatory and she has worked closely with the Council of Europe-the CPT, the Commissioner of Human Rights and the Children's Rights Division on child-friendly justice, detention, participation and child-friendly healthcare issues. She is currently undertaking a two year project on child rights advocacy funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies with particular emphasis on use of the law to advance children's rights. At UCC, she teaches Child Law, Juvenile Justice and Children's Rights and she is director of the Child Law Clinic at UCC, a legal research service that enables students to support lawyers to litigate children's rights issues nationally and internationally.

Tam BAILLIE

Before becoming the Scotland's Commissioner in May 2009, Tam Baillie worked with children and young people for 30 years, both directly and as a manager. He mainly worked with young offenders, young people in and leaving care and young homeless people. Tam Baillie has worked in Scotland and England in government and voluntary organisations. He worked as the Director of Policy for Barnardo's Scotland from 2003 and worked extensively on children's rights policy issues.



Anita GOH

Anita Goh works as the Advocacy Officer of Child Rights Connect, a non-profit network of 82 national, regional and international child rights organisations and coalitions, since 2009. She coordinated the NGO campaign for the drafting, adoption and ratification of the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (OP3 CRC). In particular, she participated to the drafting of provisions of the OP3 CRC and subsequent rules of procedure and working methods of the Committee on the Rights of the Child related to the best interests of the child. She also provided suggestions and comments during the drafting of the Committee's General Comment No. 14 (2013) and coordinated advocacy on the issue of the "protection of the family" at the UN Human Rights Council.

Urszula MARKOWSKA-MANISTA

A Ph.D, assistant professor at the Pedagogy Institute, scientific secretary at the J.Korczak UNESCO Chair of Interdisciplinary Studies on Child Development and Wellbeing, Chair of Basic Education, Academy of Special Education in Warsaw. Lectures (as a co-operating lecturer) on the problem of children's everyday life and children's rights in a multicultural perspective at the Freie University Berlin (Department of Education and Psychology, M.A. in Childhood and Children's Rights) as well as children's rights, care and support for children with adaptation difficulties at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. Cooperates with the International Korczak's Association. An author and co-author of books and articles, including articles for teachers dedicated to, among others, intercultural problems of a child. She conducted field research concerning the everyday life of children "out-of-place" in Central Africa, the Horn of Africa and presently, in the South Caucasus.



Margrite KALVERBOER

Margrite Kalverboer is a Professor of Child, Pedagogy and Migration Law. She studied law and clinical child and adolescent studies at the University of Groningen. In 1996 she gained a PhD with research on the way that educational and care problems are reported to the Child Care and Protection Board Northern Division. From 1996 to 2002 she was a behavioural scientist and head of Care at the Het Poortje young offenders' institution in Groningen. After that she became university reader in the Youth Care section of the department of Special Needs Education and Youth Care of the University of Groningen. As a lawyer and special needs expert, Kalverboer is trying to expand the understanding between those two worlds. Her research concentrates, inter alia, on the explanation and implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child from a pedagogical perspective, in order to clarify the legal procedures that can be faced by children in the Netherlands and abroad. She is project leader of the Centre for Children, Migration and Law and of the research project "Interests of the Child in Immigration Law and Policy".

Anne-Marie DIEU

Anne-Marie Dieu est Licenciée en Sciences Politiques et Docteure en Sociologie. Après une carrière dans le milieu universitaire et dans l'associatif, elle a rejoint l'Observatoire de l'enfance, de la jeunesse et de l'aide à la jeunesse en 2011 en tant que directrice de recherches. Elle supervise ou mène différentes recherches portant sur les enfants et les jeunes, dans lesquelles leur point de vue est sollicité, via des méthodes qualitatives ou quantitatives. Elle a également mené des évaluations de politiques publiques destinées aux enfants et aux jeunes.



Hanne OP DE BEECK

Hanne has a master's degree in Criminological Sciences from the University of Leuven, for which she did internships at the 'Regina Alternative Measures Program' (a restorative justice program for youth in Regina, Canada) and at the 'Terrorism Prevention Branch' (United Nations, Vienna). After her graduation in 2006, she obtained an additional Academic Teacher's degree, also at the University of Leuven. From 2008 to 2011, she worked as a researcher at the Youth Research Platform; in December 2011 she defended her doctoral thesis (title: 'Strain and youth delinquency. A dynamic relation? Testing two central mechanisms from Agnew's General Strain Theory'). Since January 2012, Hanne has a halftime position at KeKi and remains a research fellow at the Leuven Institute of Criminology (LINC) of the University of Leuven.

Bruno VANOBBERGEN

Bruno Vanobbergen (1972) got his PhD in Educational Sciences at Ghent University (Belgium) in 2003 with a research on the commodification of childhood. He published several articles in international journals on (the history of) childhood. He was professor at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (The Netherlands) and visiting scholar at Rutgers University, Camden (USA). In June 2009 the Flemish Parliament appointed him as the Flemish Children's Rights Commissioner appointed. As a Commissioner he is responsible for monitoring children's rights in Flanders by mediating, investigating complaints and giving policy recommendations. He is a member of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC). Bruno Vanobbergen is also guest professor childhood studies at Ghent University.



Gerison LANSDOWN

Gerison Lansdown was the founder director of the Children's Rights Alliance for England, and is now an international children's rights consultant and advocate who has published and lectured widely on the subject of children's rights. She was actively involved in the drafting of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, is a visiting scholar at Queen's University Belfast, a senior associate of the International Institute for Child Rights and Development in Victoria, Chair of Child to Child and a member of the Editorial Board of the Canadian Journal of Children's Rights.

Karl HANSON

Karl Hanson is Professor in Public Law at the Children's Rights Unit, University Institute Kurt Bösch (IUKB) in Sion, Switzerland. He obtained his doctorate in Law from Ghent University, Belgium, where he worked as a Researcher at the Children's Rights Centre and as a Senior Researcher at the Human Rights Centre. His publications and main research interests are in the emerging field of interdisciplinary children's rights studies and include theorizations on children's rights and childhood studies, child labour and working children, juvenile justice and the role of independent national children's rights institutions. He is a member of the Scientific Committee of the National Observatory on Childhood in Danger (ONED, France) and an editor of the journal *Childhood* (Sage). He teaches at the IUKB in the Master interdisciplinaire en droits de l'enfant (MIDE). He is also the Programme Director of the Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights (MCR) and a member of the Directive Committee of the European Network of Masters in Children's Rights (ENMCR).



Jacques FIERENS

Avocat au barreau de Bruxelles depuis 1977. Responsable de la coopération universitaire à la Faculté de droit de Namur. Chargé de cours à l'Ulg et titulaire du cours "Droit de l'aide sociale" depuis l'année académique 1997-1998. Professeur visiteur à l'UCL (cours "Individu, famille, Etat"). Professeur visiteur à l'Université nationale du Rwanda de 1997 à 2006 (cours de "Philosophie générale et philosophie du droit"). Professeur visiteur à l'Université du Burundi (cours de "Philosophie des droits de l'homme"). Professeur visiteur à l'Université de Lubumbashi (cours de "Principaux systèmes juridiques contemporains" en faculté de droit, divers cours à l'Ecole de criminologie). Consultant de la Coopération technique belge et de la Commission des Communautés européennes en matière de "bonne gouvernance" et d'appui à la justice dans l'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Représentant du CIUF au sein de la Commission nationale des droits de l'enfant. Membre du Comité scientifique de l'Institut de formation judiciaire (loi du 31 janvier 2007). Membre du comité de rédaction de la revue Actualités du droit de la famille. Membre du comité de rédaction du Journal du droit des jeunes.

Simon HOFFMAN

After practicing at the Bar from 1997-2006 (civil law and public law), Simon Hoffman joined Swansea University College of Law. Since 2012, he has been Co-director of the Wales Observatory on Human Rights of Children and Young People. He has acted as an expert witness to the Children and Young People Committee of the National Assembly for Wales, and has provided advice to the Wales Monitoring Group on the UNCRC, as well as to the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Simon's general research interests include implementation of Human Rights and Children's and Young Person's Rights at regional level. He has a particular interest in compliance mechanisms, focusing on accountability, impact assessment and budget allocation. His current research is Children's and Young Person's Rights and how these are given effect through government action at devolved level.



Carla VAN OS

Carla van Os works as a researcher at the Study Centre for Children, Migration and Law of the University of Groningen (the Netherlands). Her research focuses on the assessment of the Best Interests of the Child in the first phase of asylum procedures. From 2005 till August 2014 Carla van Os worked at the Dutch section of Defence for Children where she combined her studies in law, pedagogy and journalism in the advocacy for the best interests of children in migration policy. The main topics in the advocacy work were the abolishment of migration detention, the right to shelter, the protection of unaccompanied minors and the realization of a children's amnesty for undocumented children who resided for more than five years in the Netherlands. From 1996 till 2005 Carla van Os worked at the Dutch Refugee Foundation where she promoted the humanitarian assistance for refugees who stayed in the region of conflict areas.

Frans BASTIAENS

Frans Bastiaens is managing director of HIT Foundation, an innovation platform in the field of migration. HIT Foundation performs action research and develops methodologies, for instance on the (re-) integration of migrants in EU-member states and countries of origin. HIT Foundation co-developed a Monitoring & Evaluation methodology to determine the situation of returned asylum seeking children. Collaborating with the University of Groningen, the Best Interest of the Child model (operationalizing the best interest into 14 concrete conditions for development of children) was used to determine the development perspective of these returned children in the local context.



Aida GRGIĆ

Aida Grgić, Lawyer at the European Court of Human Rights. Aida Grgić graduated from Zagreb University in 2001 and holds a Master's degree in European law from Dresden University. Since 2004 she has been employed as a Croatian lawyer at the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights. Initially, Aida was involved in preparing drafts of decisions and judgments in cases against Croatia and Serbia. Currently she is a member of the Jurisconsult's Department of the Court, tasked with following the Court's case-law and ensuring its consistency. As a member of the Court's Case-law Information and Publications Division Aida also manages joint projects with the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), resulting in handbooks which include both EU and ECHR law on selected topics. In 2015 one of those projects will result in a Handbook on children's rights, done in cooperation with the FRA and the CoE's Children's Rights Division.

Jakub DYSARZ

Jakub Dysarz obtained his degree of master in law in 2014. During his studies he was an exchange student at University of Antwerp (2011/12) and intern at the Children's Rights Knowledge Centre in Ghent (2014). He was also a conference assistant at two editions of Human Rights for Development summer course (2012, 2014). Currently, he is volunteering at the District Committee for the Protection the Rights of the Child in Gdańsk, Poland.



Valeriu GHILETCHI

Valeriu Ghiletchi (EPP group) is a member of the Parliament of the Republic Moldova and of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe since 1998 and herein Vice-Chairperson of Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development as well as contact parliamentarian regarding the ONE in FIVE campaign of the Council of Europe to stop sexual violence against children. In his parliament, Valeriu Ghiletchi (Parti Libéral-Démocrate) is a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and European Integration since 2009. He was a member of the Commission on Human Rights, religious cults, ethnic minorities and foreign communities of the Parliament of Republic Moldova from 1998 to 2001. At the European level, he was rapporteur on Fighting “child sex tourism” (Doc. 13152), a report debated by the Parliamentary Assembly in April 2013, and on “Combating sexual violence against children: towards a successful conclusion of the ONE in FIVE Campaign” (Doc. 13502), a report debated in May 2014.

Cristina MARTINS

Cristina Martins has a degree in Social Work. Since 1995, she has been working at the Portuguese Institute of Oncology of Porto, Francisco Gentil and has worked in the Paediatric Service, Transplantation of Medulla Ossium Service and in General Surgery Services until April 2012. She has been a Member of the “Supporting Families and Children’s Team” and Member of the “Oncology Paediatric Palliative Care Team”. She also supervises students from Social Work Schools for professional placements in the Hospital. In January 2012 she was appointed by the board of the Hospital to join the Hospital’s Discharge Team, that works in line with the National Network for Integrated Continuous Care. She has served as President of the North Delegation of the Portuguese Association of Social Workers (APSS) and is still a member of the International Relations Group of the Association. In 2008, Cristina Martins became an Executive member of IFSW Europe and its President in 2012.



Laura MERLA

Laura Merla est politologue et docteur en sociologie. Elle occupe actuellement les fonctions de co-directrice du Centre Interdisciplinaire de Recherche sur les Familles et les Sexualités (CIRFASE) et de chargée de cours invitée à la Faculté ESPO, Université catholique de Louvain. Elle est également Honorary Research Fellow à l'Université d'Australie occidentale. Ses travaux portent principalement sur la sociologie de la famille, avec une attention particulière portée à la thématique du care et des solidarités intergénérationnelles dans les familles dites 'transnationales', à l'articulation entre vie professionnelle et familiale, à la paternité, et aux politiques sociales. Elle a publié deux ouvrages collectifs en 2014: 'Distances et liens' paru chez Academia-L'Harmattan (avec Aurore François); et 'Transnational families, migration and the circulation of care: understanding mobility and absence in family life' paru chez Routledge (avec Loretta Baldassar).

Ruth FARRUGIA

Dr Ruth Farrugia is an advocate and senior lecturer in the Faculty of Laws at the University of Malta. She studied at the University of Malta, University of Strasbourg, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies and Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Tribunal. She is a former consultant to the deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Policy, the Minister for Family, the Social Affairs Committee in Parliament and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees Office in Malta. She served for a number of years as Chairperson of the Children Care Orders Board and drafted numerous laws including the Child Protection Bill currently before Parliament. Ruth has served as legal advisor to many national and international entities and has published widely in the field of family law, child law and human rights and has been Coordinator of the University of Malta Human Rights Programme since 2012. In June 2014 she was appointed the first Director General of the President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society.




Rachel BIRNBAUM

Dr. Birnbaum teaches in the area of children and families and on the intersection between law and social work. She's cross appointed with Childhood & Social Institutions (Interdisciplinary programs) and Social Work. She has presented and published both nationally and internationally on child custody and access assessments, child legal representation, children's participation in family disputes, and access to justice. She is the AFCC recipient of the 2014 Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award (an award given by an international group of interdisciplinary and international family justice professionals). Her research is interdisciplinary and collaborative with colleagues in law, medicine, psychology and social work. Dr. Birnbaum has co-authored several books regarding separation and/or divorce, on research methodologies and authored several Department of Justice papers on children's participation during parental breakdown.

Natia PARTSKHALADZE

Natia Partskhaladze, MD, MSW. Earned degrees from the leading schools in the United States, Europe and Georgia. She is presently working on PhD research on the Quality of Life of Deinstitutionalized Children in Alternative out of home Care in Georgia. Natia Partskhaladze has 15 years of experience in the field of child care and social protection system strengthening work, both at the policy and programming level. Dr Partskhaladze is a founder and current Chairperson of the Georgian Association of Social Workers professional organization supporting the development of the social work profession and social services in different fields and uniting over 500 social workers and other social service professionals. Dr Partskhaladze has worked in UNICEF Child Protection for over 7 years. As a senior national child protection specialist in Georgia, she has contributed towards developing child protection system and successful implementation of child care system reform, resulting in development of preventive and alternative care services and deinstitutionalization of the system.



Dr Partskhaladze has a proven track record of providing strategic support to government partners in developing and implementing sustainable programmes to reach highly vulnerable groups, convening and effectively coordinating work of state and non state actors in child care and social protection sectors.

Bragi GUDBRANDSSON

Mr Bragi Guðbrandsson is the Director General of the Government Agency for Child Protection Iceland. He has been actively involved nationally and internationally in children's rights, child abuse and neglect issues for two decades. Mr Guðbrandsson has worked extensively within the framework of the Council of Europe (CoE). Currently he serves as the Chair of the Lanzarote Committee. His previous work include drafting the CoE Rec (2005)⁵ on the rights of children living in residential institutions and the CoE Rec (2011)¹² on children's rights and social services friendly to children and families. He is the author of the CoE publication on "Children at Risk and in Care" (2006) and co-author of the CoE publication "Protecting Children from Sexual Violence" (2010). Mr Guðbrandsson is a member of the Expert Group on "Children at Risk" within the Council of the Baltic Sea States since 2002.

Astrid HIRSCHMANN

Astrid Hirschelmann est née en 1971 à Bonn en Allemagne. Elle a mené ses études en Psychologie à l'Université Toulouse le Mirail et y a soutenu en 1999 sa thèse de doctorat sur le passage à l'acte meurtrier, ses fonctions, son sens et son rapport avec la (non)pathologie. Depuis 2000, elle est Maître de Conférences à l'Université Rennes2 où elle enseigne la psycho-criminologie. Elle est actuellement directrice adjointe du Centre interdisciplinaire d'analyse des processus humains et sociaux (CIAPHS, EA 2241) et dirige l'Institut de Criminologie et Sciences Humaines.



En lien avec le public d'enfant, Astrid Hirschelmann a dirigé un groupe de recherche et d'action sur la prévention des violences chez les enfants. Elle intervient également comme expert dans une recherche-action sur l'alternative au placement et formalise des méthodes d'intervention auprès de familles vulnérables pour les travailleurs sociaux et éducateurs. Ces différentes expériences ont fait l'objet de sa habilitation à diriger des recherches soutenues en 2012 sur l'analyse et le développement des discours et pratiques autour des violences subies et agies, et se trouvent aussi à l'origine de la recherche-action sur « Regards d'enfants sur l'incarcération : Mise en place d'un groupe d'expression d'enfants de parents ou proches incarcérés (RESI) qu'elle présentera dans le cadre de cette conférence européenne sur l'Intérêt supérieur de l'enfant.

Olga KHAZOVA

Olga Khazova is an Associate Professor at the Institute of State and Law (Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow). She holds a Ph.D. from the same Institute and LL.M. from Cornell University Law School (USA). The main field of her expertise is connected with comparative family law. Apart from teaching family law, Olga serves as a consultant/advisor on family matters, children's rights and human reproduction issues for governmental bodies, courts and law firms. She participated in drafting of the Russian Family Code 1995; currently she is a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Olga is the author of "Marriage and Divorce in Western Family Law" and of numerous articles on family law matters published in Russia and abroad. She is a member of the International Academy of Comparative Law and a Vice-president of the International Society of Family Law.



Géraldine MATHIEU

Géraldine Mathieu est Docteur en Sciences juridiques. Sa thèse de doctorat, qu'elle a soutenue le 24 avril 2014, porte sur le secret des origines en droit de la filiation (adoption, accouchement secret, procréation médicalement assistée avec donneur, gestation pour autrui, inceste, empreintes génétiques). Elle est Maître de conférences à l'Université de Namur où elle enseigne le droit de la famille ainsi que la Bioéthique et les droits de l'homme. Elle est aussi chercheuse au centre Vulnérabilités et Sociétés (UNamur), membre du [Centre interdisciplinaire des droits de l'enfant](#), du Centre de droit de la personne, de la famille et de son patrimoine (CeFAP-UCL), de la Commission jeunesse de la Ligue des droits de l'Homme et du Conseil supérieur de l'adoption. Elle est par ailleurs chargée de projets pour l'ONG Défense des enfants international ([DEI-Belgique](#)). Ses recherches portent principalement sur la filiation, l'adoption, la procréation, les droits de l'enfant, la bioéthique et les droits de l'homme.

Johanna NYMAN

Johanna Nyman is a Board member of the European Youth Forum. Her areas of responsibility in the board include the promoting youth rights, youth participation in elections and the European parliament elections. Her grass-root civil society activity has been mainly with the scout movement, an organization she has also represented on the national and international level. Apart from being a youth NGO-activist, Johanna studies Environmental Biology at the University of Helsinki.



Jana HAINSWORTH

Jana Hainsworth joined [Eurochild](#) as Secretary General in January 2006. She is responsible for the day-to-day running of the network, which brings together over 90 member organisations from across Europe to promote the rights and welfare of children. Jana previously worked in a Brussels-based communications consultancy where she was project manager for a communications contract under the EU's Community Action Programme to combat discrimination. Jana also managed a network of organisations promoting long-term voluntary service in the youth field and has worked for several years in a research and consultancy firm on different technical assistance contracts for the European Commission. She has a Masters degree in environment, development and policy from Sussex University and an Honours degree in Natural Sciences from Durham University in the UK.

Bernard DE VOS

Since March 2008, Bernard De Vos is the General Delegate (Ombudsman) of Children's Rights in the French Community of Belgium. He is the previous Chairman of ENOC, the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, (September 2013 - September 2014). Bernard De Vos has been Director of a special service provided to young people in Brussels during more than 15 years. He has also created several innovative services in the field of youth protection and assistance and he is the author of several books and articles on childhood and youth issues.