

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

**Ankie (Ann) Vandekerckhove**

📍 Raas van Gaverestraat 67A, 9000 Ghent, Belgium

☎ 09/232.47.35 📠 0473/543.522

✉ [ankie.vandekerckhove@vbjk.be](mailto:ankie.vandekerckhove@vbjk.be)

Sex female | Date of birth 18/11/1963 | Nationality Belgian

## POSITION /FUNCTION

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**Project collaborator**

**WORK EXPERIENCE**  
Aug 1988 – march 2011

Aug. 1988 – Oct. 1991: apprenticeship (3 years) and entry at the Ghent bar, with a focus on family law.

Oct. 1988 – Jan. 1991: part time researcher at the Ghent University, Centre for Children's Rights, with Prof. E. Verhellen. Research project for the Minister of Internal Affairs on 'Minors and the Police', preparation of seminars on juvenile justice and juvenile delinquency, work on the legal position of minors.

Oct. 1991– June 1998: advisor in Child & Family, a Flemish public agency, working on early child care, prevention and family support. I worked as a legal advisor on ombudswork, on adoption, on child abuse, on refugee issues and was also training the staff on family law issues and children's rights.

June 1998 – June 2009: appointed by the Flemish Parliament as first Flemish Children's Rights Commissioner. (for all information, in Flemish, [www.kinderrechtencommissariaat.be](http://www.kinderrechtencommissariaat.be)). Actively involved in the European Network of Ombudsmen for Children.

March 2009 – Oct. 2010: technical expert for the working group on Child Friendly Justice of the Council of Europe, drafting the guidelines and memorandum for child friendly justice. Followed by several public presentations and articles on the topic of child friendly justice.

Aug. 2009 – march 2011:

- (90%) policy advisor for the Flemish Central Authority for Inter-country Adoption.
- (10%) Independent advisor on children's rights issues

As of march 2011

Staff member and project coordinator at VBJK, Gent (Centre for Innovation in the Early Years). 90%

Independent advisor on children's rights issues (speaking engagements, projects for the EU, Council of Europe, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, Unicef...). 10%

Some of the projects I am or have been involved in for VBJK:

- **Social Inclusion, Education and urban policy for young children (2017 – 2019) – Erasmus+**

In this project, partners from 5 countries, work towards developing a competence framework and educational framework for inclusive ECEC. Inclusion is considered to be a broad concept, a process towards involving all children in high quality ECEC: children with special needs, children living in poverty, children with a migration/asylum background and so forth. The combination of partners in academics, from practice and local policy level makes this project quite interesting and rich in bringing different perspectives together.

- **Multilingual early childhood education and care for young refugee children (2017-2019) Erasmus +**

The overall objective of this project is to enhance the quality of Early Childhood Education and Care for young refugee children (age 0-4) by providing tools to educators, child care professionals and policy makers. The project focuses on issues of accessibility (and availability) and language learning, since both elements can facilitate refugee children's wellbeing, development and further integration in their new countries. While primary education seems quite accessible to this group of children, this is often not the case for ECEC provision. In the project inspiring practices will be collected and analysed and a toolbox will be developed for ECEC professionals working specifically with young refugee children.

- **NESET II (2018) research paper**

PPMI (Vilnius) is coordinating a research paper on 'Role and place of ECEC in integrated work benefiting vulnerable groups, such as Roma', where VBJK will be involved in drafting part of the content on integrated work as well as conducting 3 case studies.

- **INTESYS project (2016-2019) – Erasmus +**

This project is looking into different ways of integrated working (across sectors, across age groups, across policy levels...) to better serve the needs of children and families in vulnerable living conditions (poverty, minorities...) Potential benefits of integrated work can be found on the level of efficiency, accessibility and overall quality. Surveys will be made on local and European level, as well as pilots on integrated working in 4 partner countries. Also, innovative tools will be developed and policy recommendations will be drafted.

- **Transatlantic Forum on Inclusive Early Years (2012 - 2016)**

VBJK and MPI (US) are the operational partners in this Forum, under the umbrella of the Belgian King Baudouin Foundation and funded by a consortium of several European and American foundations. In the course of 7 high level meetings, current issues on inclusive early years are being discussed by academics, practitioners and policy makers. VBJK co-organised meetings on (the lack of) accessibility of ECEC services, on professionalization, on parent involvement, on evaluation of ECEC services, on integrated systems, on multilingualism. The final meeting will be in Torino in February 2016, after which some project-publications will be prepared

- **Social inclusion in childcare provisions in Brussels (2007-2010)**

Action research project in Brussels under the authority of the Commission of the Flemish Community to increase the accessibility in early childhood care and education for vulnerable groups. This project ran for about 10 years and VBJK provided professional support for over 80 childcare centres in learning communities as well as training on diversity and social policy

- **EQUAP, (2014-2017) – Erasmus+**

Enhancing Quality through Participation, and Erasmus+ project on parent involvement in ECEC in the 7 partner countries, including research on different policies and indicators as well as job shadowing activities among ECEC practitioners.

- **IMPRES Improving Preschool Education in Serbia (2013-2014)**

In this project, I was responsible, together with the project partners, to write a manual on actions and strategies to enhance access to preschool for children from vulnerable groups and to work on diversification of programs. (see [http://www.vbjk.be/files/IMPRES.%20Manual%20for%20diversification%20of%20programs%20for%20pre-school%20education\\_Final%20Report%20Belgrade%202013.pdf](http://www.vbjk.be/files/IMPRES.%20Manual%20for%20diversification%20of%20programs%20for%20pre-school%20education_Final%20Report%20Belgrade%202013.pdf))

- **Eurofound, PPMI and others**

I was involved as expert in several projects and publications on a variety of subjects regarding early years (parenting support, inclusive ECEC, learning communities...)

Projects on Children's rights:

- Technical expert child friendly justice guidelines (Council of Europe)
- Peer reviewer on children's rights policy in the context of accession procedures; Croatia, Serbia (EU)
- Review on rights of children in residential care (ENOC)

Presentations at several conferences on children's rights issues.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**Master in Law and Criminology**

1981 – 1988

1987 - 1988: Master in criminology at the State University of Ghent.  
 1982 - 1987: Bachelor and master in law school respectively at the Catholic University Louvain and the State University of Ghent.  
 1981 - 1982: Intercultural exchange student programme to the US, AFS,  
 1975 - 1981: Secondary education, Latin/Greek gymnasium, St.-Bavo, Ghent, Belgium.

1988 until now

Post-academic education:  
 Annual post-academic courses on children’s rights at the Ghent Centre for Children’s Rights (1992 until 1998),  
 Interdisciplinary, international courses on children’s rights at the Ghent Centre for Children’s Rights (July 1996),  
 Several local and international conferences and studies on children’s rights issues (e.g. violence, family law, advocacy and ombudswork...)  
 Several local and international conferences on ECEC

**PERSONAL SKILLS**

Mother tongue(s)

Dutch

Other language(s)

|         | UNDERSTANDING |         | SPEAKING           |                   | WRITING |
|---------|---------------|---------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|
|         | Listening     | Reading | Spoken interaction | Spoken production |         |
| English | C2            | C2      | C2                 | C2                | C2      |
| French  | B2            | B2      | B2                 | B2                | B2      |

Communication skills

Strong communication skills (both spoken and written), used to give lectures and presentations, chair meetings and comfortable in networking

Organisational / managerial skills

Experience in leadership (formerly responsible for a team of 12 people), project implementation, design-set up-reorganisation of networks and organisations (e.g. the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, the Ghent Children’s rights shop)

Job-related skills

- Providing content input on issues of Early Years and children’s rights
- Advocacy and policy advisory skills
- Writing reports and project documents
- Supporting learning networks

Driving licence

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Some publications

- Vandekerckhove, A., Wat er ook speelt in een land, laat het vooral de kinderen zijn (Loesje), *KIDDO* 6, 2014
- Vandekerckhove, A., Trikić, Z., Miskeljin, L., Peeters, J., Lakicević, O., Koruga, D. (2013), *Manual for diversification of programs for pre-school education*, Serbia, Belgrade, Unicef, European Union, Republic of Serbia, IMPRES, Vrtki Bez Granica.
- Jan Peeters and Ankie Vandekerckhove A meeting place for policy-makers and researchers: the Transatlantic Forum on Inclusive Early Years, *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 2015, vol. 23, nr. 3, 329-337
- Ankie Vandekerckhove, Care and education inspired by children's rights, *Exchange*, July/August 2011, p 24-28.
- Ankie Vandekerckhove, Bringing stories to life, *Children in Europe*, nr 29
- Michel Vandebroek (Université de Gand Département du travail social et de la pédagogie sociale) and Ankie Vandekerckhove (VBJK), La fonction sociale des crèches en région bruxelloise, *La nouvelle revue de l'adaptation et de la scolarisation (NRAS)*, numéro 75, 2016, p. 267-285.
- Ankie Vandekerckhove en Anke Van Keulen (2016) *5 steps to quality, Training package for Early Childhood Training providers, European Quality Framework for ECEC*, in cooperation with Issa.
- Gordon, J., Peeters, J. En Vandekerckhove, A. (2017) *Integrated Early Childhood Education and Care Results of a European Survey and Literature Review* (<http://www.europe-kbf.eu/~media/Europe/Intesys/Review-Report/INTESYS-European-Survey-and-Literature-Review-Report.pdf>)

### Memberships

Founding member of the Ghent Children's Rights Shop, and former member of the board.  
Former member of the editor's board of the 'Tijdschrift voor Jeugd- en Kinderrechten'.  
Former member of the board of DECET (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training).  
Former Member of the editorial board of Children in Europe.  
Former chair of ENOC, the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children

### References

Reference persons:  
Regina, Jensdottir, Children's rights coordinator, Council of Europe  
Michel Vandebroek, Ghent university  
Bruno Vanobbergen, Flemish Children's Rights commissioner