

(DIS)CONNECTING PEOPLE? THE LAW AND PRACTICE OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, 9-10 SEPTEMBER 2021, GHENT UNIVERSITY & UNIVERSITY OF ANTWERP

Family reunification is a legal pathway to (re)unite family members living in different countries. It is a complex field of law, as **different rules** apply depending on the nationality and status of the persons involved. During the past decades, rules on family reunification have been made more stringent, especially for third country nationals. **From a human rights perspective**, the right to respect for family life has only in specific circumstances led to an obligation for states to admit family members. Families are thus increasingly facing legal and practical obstacles, which have an impact on their psychosocial well-being and intra-family relationships, both during and after the family reunification process. **From a societal perspective**, family reunification regimes and practices are key to reflect on a wide number of debates in social sciences, such as the limits of transnationalism and the gap between legal frameworks, institutional policies and street level bureaucracy.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Dr. Milena Belloni, FWO, Department of Sociology, University of Antwerp
Sarah Den Haese, Institute for Private International Law, Ghent University
Prof. Ellen Desmet, Migration Law Research Group, Ghent University
Hester Kroeze, Ghent European Law Institute, Ghent University
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Prof. Dirk Vanheule, Government & Law Research Group, University of Antwerp
Prof. Peter Van Elsuwege, Ghent European Law Institute, Ghent University
Prof. Jinske Verhellen, Institute for Private International Law, Ghent University
Prof. Gert Verschraegen, Department of Sociology, University of Antwerp

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Prof. em. Kees Groenendijk (Radboud University)
dr. Federica Infantino (European University Institute)

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The conference will take place on 9 and 10 September 2021 at Ghent University, Universiteitstraat 4, 9000 Ghent (Belgium). We aim at organizing a physical conference. If travel restrictions are imposed, online presentations will be possible.

WEBSITE

www.ugent.be/re/epir/en/familyreunification

CALL FOR PAPERS

This conference aims to establish a **dialogue** on family reunification **between the legal and social sciences**, as well as to cross bridges **between academia, policy and practice**. To that end, it will bring together scholars from various disciplines (such as law, sociology, anthropology, social work, political sciences, geography) as well as policy makers and practitioners, in order to discuss conceptual and practical challenges regarding family reunification.

We welcome in particular abstracts on one or more of the following topics:

- The divergent legal rules applicable to EU citizens, 'static' nationals, third country nationals (in general), Turkish migrants, refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection etc.
- The perceptions and strategies of the various actors involved in the law and practice of family reunification
- The obstacles - legal, as well as social, economic, bureaucratic and emotional - faced in practice by families, social workers, lawyers and NGOs to realize family reunification
- The relevance of the right to respect for family life in family reunification
- The contrast and overlap between emic and legal understandings of categories, such as families, love, couples and parenthood
- The role of family reunification in bordering processes and practices
- Cross-cutting issues relating to, for instance, the resources requirements, the recognition of foreign documents, children's rights, and the principle of non-discrimination

Submissions should be made by 1 May 2021 on

<https://easychair.org/my/conference?conf=fr2021#>

and include:

- Title of the submission
- Abstract of up to 300 words and
- Contact details and brief biography for each author

We will respond to all submissions by 15 June 2021.