

Speakers and Moderators

By alphabetic order

Masha Antokolskaia

Masha Antokolskaia is full professor of family law at VU University Amsterdam and Chair of the Amsterdam Centre of Family Law (ACFL) and head of the Department of private law. She is Chair of the Family Law in Europe Academic Network (FL-EUR) <https://fl-eur.eu/>, President of the International Society of Family Law (ISFL), member of the Academia Europaea, Member of the Expert Group of the Commission on European Family Law (CEFL), Editor-in-chief of the double-blind peer-reviewed full open-access Journal Family & Law and member of the editorial boards of several other journals. She is author of the comparative-historical study 'Harmonisation of Family Law in Europe: a Historical Perspective. A Tale of Two Millennia', handbooks on Russian family law and more than hundred articles and reports in Dutch, English and Russian. For the list of publications see: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6452-7587>

Main fields of interest: Family law, Comparative Law, Legal history, Protection of Elderly & Vulnerable Persons, Empirical Legal Studies, Marriage & Divorce, Post-Divorce Parenting,

Michelle Cottier

Michelle Cottier is Full Professor at the Faculty of law and the Director of the Centre for legislative studies (CETEL) at the University of Geneva. She is the Swiss expert in FL-EUR Family Law in Europe: Academic Network. Her fields of specialization include family law, comparative law, sociology of law, interdisciplinarity in law, and the study of gender, sexuality and law.

Michelle Cottier is currently the principal investigator for two projects funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation: "The negotiation of divorce agreements and gender (in)equality in Switzerland (2019-2023) and "Integrity, autonomy and participation in child protection: How do children and parents experience the proceedings of Child and Adult Protection Authorities? (NRP 76, 2018-2022). From 2019 to 2021 she has been a member of the expert group for the review of Swiss parentage law commissioned by the Swiss Federal Office of Justice. She is a member of the board of directors and one of the managers of the cluster on children and youth politics at the Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights. She is also co-editor of the German Journal of Law and Society and of the only Swiss journal specialized in family law "La pratique du droit de la famille".

Formerly she has been an Assistant Professor at the University of Basel, a Visiting Professor at Humboldt University in Berlin and a Visiting Researcher at Harvard Law School as well as at the Universities of Kent, Cardiff, Keele and Utrecht.

Nina Dethloff

Nina Dethloff holds a Chair in Civil Law, Private International Law, Comparative Law and European Private Law and is Director of the Institute for German, European and International Family Law at Bonn University as well as Director at the Center for Advanced Study 'Law as Culture'. Her research focus is on comparative and international family law where she has published extensively. She is engaged in numerous committees and associations on the European and international level, inter alia as member of the Executive Council of the International Society of Family Law (ISFL) and of the Coordinating Committee of Family Law in Europe: Academic Network (FL-EUR) as well as the Expert Group of the Commission on European Family Law (CEFL). She is a member of the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR) and of the Committee for the Excellence Initiative as well as the Working Group 'Gender Studies' and Head of the Working Group 'Digitalization of teaching and studies' of the German

Council of Science and Humanities (WR). Nina Dethloff is also member of the Ständige Deputation, the Executive Committee of the Association of German Jurists. From 2018 until 2020 she was Deputy Head of the Expert Group for the Ninth Family Report of the German Government. She has been elected member of the American Law Institute (ALI) as well as of the Academia Europaea (AE) where she chairs the Law Section. Nina Dethloff studied law in Hamburg, Geneva, Freiburg as well as Washington, D.C., where she received an LL.M. at Georgetown University. She has been admitted to the New York bar.

Philippe Lortie, First Secretary, HCCH

Philippe Lortie joined the Permanent Bureau of HCCH in September 2001 as First Secretary. Philippe Lortie has primary responsibility for the 2000 Protection of Adults and the 2007 Child Support Conventions as well as the 2007 Protocol on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations. He also has joint responsibility for the International Hague Network of Judges including Direct Judicial Communications and the Judges' Newsletter. He is responsible for the development of information technology tools in support of Hague Conventions such as the iSupport electronic case management and secure communication system under the 2007 Child Support Convention.

Before joining the HCCH, from 1991 to 2001 Philippe Lortie was Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice of Canada. In that capacity, he acted as Head of Canadian delegations to the HCCH, Unidroit and UNCITRAL. Philippe Lortie is a member of the Québec Bar since 1991 and holds degrees in Civil Law (LL.L.) and Common Law (LL.B.) both from the University of Ottawa. He also holds a Master's degree (LL.M.) in international law from the same university. Finally, he holds a degree in Business Administration (B.A.A.) from the *École des Hautes Études Commerciales (HEC) de Montréal*.

Krista Nadakavukaren Schefer

Krista Nadakavukaren Schefer is a Vice Director of the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law. She is also on the faculty of the World Trade Institute in Bern and is an adjunct instructor at the Universities of Basel and Bern. Krista's teaching and research centers on international economic law, teaching international investment law and World Trade Organization law courses at several law faculties in Switzerland as well as at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade. Not a specialist of either family law or disabilities law, she led the Institute's report on the voting rights of persons deemed to lack legal capacity and has begun looking at the questions surrounding how to determine what the law considers a disability. Krista received her juris doctor from Georgetown University Law School, and her doctorate and Habilitation from the University of Bern.

Eva Nachtschatt

Dr. Eva Nachtschatt completed her law degree and doctorate at the University of Innsbruck. After completing her judicial and administrative internship in Austria and abroad, Dr Nachtschatt worked as a project assistant at the University of Innsbruck, at the Institute for Civil Law (project: Observing legislative processes: Implementation of UNCPRD, 2014-2016). This was followed by a position as a research project assistant at the University of Kassel, in the Department of Social Law (project: Participatory monitoring of the current development of rehabilitation and participation law, 2016-2017). Until the end of September this year, Dr Nachtschatt was a member of the Max Planck Fellow Group researching on the topic of "Dis(cover)ability & Indicator for Inclusion". At the same time, she taught as a research assistant at the Chair of Sociology of Diversity at the Technical University in Munich. Her research areas capture the life situations of people with disabilities and their legal situations in terms of equality, self-determination and inclusion. Ms Nachtschatt has been working as a lawyer at VAScage GmbH since August 2019.

Nadia Shabani

Director, Bulgarian Center for Not-for-Profit Law

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Nadia Shabani is the Director of the Bulgarian Center for Not-for-Profit Law where she is developing projects in the area of legal and financial framework of CSOs, human rights protection and good governance. She provides assistance to public officials on central and local level, lawyers, professional groups, parental organizations and social service providers for developing policies, strategic documents, drafting legislation changes and impact assessments in social area. BCNL was among the leading organizations in ratifying UNCRC in 2012 in Bulgaria. Since that time, together with the Bulgarian Association of People for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Global Initiative in Psychiatry Bulgaria was developed a community based pilot program for introducing the supported decision-making as an alternative to guardianship. As a result of the program findings was drafted a new very progressive law on legal capacity in accordance with the standards of article 12 (Equality before the law) of the UNCRC.

Nadia has been the Chairperson of the Bulgarian State Agency for Child Protection where she has been in charge with coordinating all government policies in the field of children welfare area and with monitoring all relevant state institutions and social services providers in view of the children rights respect. Furthermore, she has been involved in drafting one of the main documents for changing the welfare system for children in Bulgaria, the "National strategy for Deinstitutionalization of children in Bulgaria".

Frederik Swennen

Frederik Swennen is Dean of, and Tenured Full Professor of Family Law and Kinship Studies at, the [Faculty of Law of the University of Antwerp](#) (Belgium). He is the principal investigator of the Research Council – Flanders (FWO) Scientific Research Network [RETHINKIN](#) (Rethinking Family and Family law in the Low Countries). He is also a member of the Executive Council of the [International Society of Family Law](#), member of the coordinating group of [FL-EUR – Family Law in Europe](#), and Belgian Expert in the [Commission on European Family Law](#). He was a founding editor (2012-) and editor-in-chief (2015-2019) of [Family & Law](#). Theoretically informed and empirically grounded, his research focuses on the boundaries of family and kinship, and on international and comparative family law. Among his books is *Contractualisation of Family Law – Global Perspectives* (Springer 2015, editor). He teaches both national and international family law, incl. private international law and family proceedings. Frederik Swennen is also an attorney at the Antwerp Bar (www.deloittelegal.be). More information at www.frederikswennen.be; frederik.swennen@uantwerpen.be.

Paula Távora Vítor

Paula Távora Vítor is Professor of Family and Succession Law at the University of Coimbra (Portugal) and researcher at the *Institute for Legal Research* (UCILeR) – Faculty of Law, University of Coimbra. She is member of the Coordinating Group of *Family Law in Europe Academic Network* (FL-EUR), member of the Executive Council of the *International Society of Family Law* (ISFL) and of the *International Academy of Comparative Law* (IACL).

She is also a member of the Direction Board of *Centro de Direito da Família* (Family Law Center) of the University of Coimbra as well as of the Editorial Board of *Lex Familiae – Revista Portuguesa de Direito da Família* and of the double-blind peer-reviewed full open-access Journal *Family & Law*.

She is co-author of law reform projects in the field of the legal regime of capacity and currently she is a member of the Expert Group in charge of reviewing the Portuguese Mental Health Law.

Paula Távora Vítor is author of monographs and articles written in Portuguese and English. Her main research areas are Family Law, Succession Law and Personal Law, with particular regard to the law relating to vulnerable persons, capacity, elder law, marriage and divorce (patrimonial aspects).

Velina Todorova

Velina Todorova is a lawyer (1981) and Ph.D. in Sociology of Law (1989), Associate Professor on Civil and Family Law at the Law Faculty, Plovdiv University and Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. She has an extensive experience in *research* and in *law making* in the areas of human rights protection, social protection and family law (1997 to date). Publishes nationally and internationally and is both expert (2001) and a member (2014-2019) to the Commission on the European Family Law. Member to the European Family Law Academic Network (FLEUR) since 2019. A founder of the Governmental Agency for Child Protection (2001). She has always combined her academic career with a strong activism as a member and supporter of various human rights initiatives and NGOs. A Deputy Minister of Justice (2011-13). Member to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2017-2021, 2021-2025).

Adrian D Ward

Adrian D Ward has a long international record as expert and campaigner in law, rights, policy and practice relating to people with psycho-social, intellectual and cognitive disabilities, and in creating service delivery projects for them. He has been published in many countries and many languages over more than three decades. He is author of the standard texts on Scots adult incapacity law, and one of the editors and principal authors of "The International Protection of Adults" (OUP 2015). He is in frequent demand, nationally and worldwide, as lecturer and adviser. He has advised governments and international organisations. As consultant to Council of Europe he completed and published in 2018 a review of implementation of the Council's Recommendation on principles concerning powers of attorney and advance directives. He is a member of the steering group of the International Advisory Board for these World Congresses; expert adviser to the Centre for Mental Health and Capacity Law, Edinburgh Napier University; and a research affiliate to Essex Autonomy Project, University of Essex. He has been convener of the Law Society of Scotland's Mental Health and Disability Sub-Committee for over 30 years. His many awards include MBE for services to people with learning disabilities, for charitable work and journalism, lifetime achievement, and honorary membership of the Law Society of Scotland.