El Síndico ha participado en la Conferencia internacional de Síndicos y Defensores celebrada en la ciudad de Gante (Bélgica) durante los días 14 y 15 de abril de 2008. El Programa de la Conferencia quiso centrarse en el “Impacto del Ombudsman” en la ciudadanía y entre otros temas se trató el impacto del Ombudsman local.
Programme

Monday April 14th 2008

09:00 - 09:45 Check in / Registration entrance hall of the city hall

09:45 - 10:00 Pacification hall
✓ Introduction by the ombudsman of Ghent, Rita Passemiers
✓ Welcome speech by the mayor of Ghent, Daniël Termont
✓ Presentation of the speakers by the chairman of the conference day, Herwig Reynaert, Professor, Centre for Local Politics, Department of Political Science, Ghent University

Part I: How to measure impact

10:00 “Assessing Ombudsmen Impact: Towards a Multifaceted Approach Exploring the Case of Ghent” by Kristof Steyvers, Assistant-Professor, Centre for Local Politics, Department of Political Science, Ghent University

10:30 “Perspectives on the effectiveness of the Ombudsman institution: a Finish study” by Secretary General of the office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman in Finland, Jussi Pajuoja, Doctor of Laws, Docent of Criminal Policy at the University of Helsinki

10:50 Questions

11:05 Coffee-break

Part II: Instruments of impact

11:20 “The impact of ombudsman work on officials’ integrity: the role of the ombudsman in whistle-blowing” by the former Flemish (regional) ombudsman, Bernard Hubeau, Professor, Faculty of law at the University of Antwerp

11:40 “The local ombudsman and politics: a strange marriage?” by the former mayor of Ghent, Frank Beke, Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of Ghent

12:00 Questions

12:15 Lunch Throne hall

Part III: Networks

13:45 “The impact of the European Ombudsman” by the European ombudsman, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros
14:05 “Belgian network experiment: Co-operation between local, Flemish, federal and sectorial ombudsman” by Belgian Federal ombudsman, Guido Schuermans

14:25 “The relations between ombudsman impact and networks and subsidiarity” by the Catalan Ombudsman, Rafael Ribo

14:45 Questions

Part IV: Workshops

15:00 Workshops:
- “How to improve the impact of the ombudsman” by chairman M.H.J.M. van Kinderen, ombudsman of Rotterdam
- “Which factors can influence the impact” by chairman Jean-Marie Hannesse, ombudsman of the pensions Belgium
- “The relation between ombudsmen and press” by chairman Alice Brown, Scotish Public Services Ombudsman

16:00 Coffee-break

16:15 - 17:00 Plenary-session with general conclusions by the chairmen of the workshops

19:00 Meeting in front of the city hall of Ghent & walk to the Saint-Peter’s Abbey

19:30 Diner with musical intermezzo’s in the Ceiling of the Library - the Art Hall of the Saint-Peter’s Abbey - Saint-Peter’s Square

Tuesday April 15th 2008

- Presentation of the speakers by the chairman of the conference day, Guido Herman, ombudsman of the Belgian Railway (NMBS) Pacification Hall

Part V: Different continents, different countries, different ombudsmen, different impact?

09:45 “Different Ombudsman-concepts in Europe: complaints office, people’s advocate, watchdog, mediator or human rights agency” by the ombudsman of Vorarlberg, Felix Dünser

10:05 “The Ombudsman of the Israeli Judiciary: A Theoretical, Comparative and Empirical View” by the Director of Research and Development of the Office of the Israeli Ombudsman of the Judiciary, Moran Svorai

10:25 Questions
10:40 Coffee-break

10:55 “The impact of the ombudsman in Scotland: What makes the difference?” by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, Alice Brown

11:15 “The role and the impact of the services of the ombudsman in the Republic of Benin” by the ombudsman of Benin, Albert Trévoédjrè

11:35 “The impact of the National Council of Human Rights and in particular of the Ombudsman Office in Egypt and in the Arab Region” by Hafez ElSaid Ahmed Abo-Saidaa

11:55 Questions

12:10 Lunch Throne hall

**Part VI: The impact of the local ombudsman**

14:00 “The added value of a local ombudsman: 25 years of experience and impact in Amsterdam” by the ombudsman of Amsterdam, Ulco van de Pol

14:20 “The local ombudsman in Spain” by Ricardo Cabrales del Valle, Professor in Constitutional Law Carlos III University of Madrid

**Part VII: The ombudsman and the press**

14:40 “Watching the Watchdog” by the ombudsman of Ireland, Emily O'Reilly

15:00 Coffee-break

15:15 Questions

15:30 General conclusions by Frédéric Bovesse, Regional Ombudsman of Wallonia

- Closing speech by Rita Passemiers
- Invitation by the mayor of Ghent, Daniël Termont, to join the reception “Ten years ombudsteam in Ghent”