

The role of expert advice in the Dutch asylum procedure.

An (unfinished) advice of the Advisory Committee on Migration Affairs

Nearly every asylum procedure can be characterized by a lack of objective information. Nevertheless, civil servants of the Immigration and Naturalization Service have to decide on every asylum application diligently. To aid them in their decision making, and to compensate for the lack of objective information civil servants of the IND can call upon a battery of experts to advise them on matters relevant for the decision making. Their advice can relate to the person of the applicant, the reliability of documents or the situation in the country of origin.

The Advisory Committee on Migration Affairs is in the process of drafting a report on the role of these experts in the Dutch asylum procedure. It deals with both legal and other standards that apply to the experts and their advice. Furthermore it gives a description of how the advice is currently being used in the asylum procedure.

In preparation for the report the Advisory Committee held two expert meetings in which experts working for the IND, representatives of the IND, representatives of NGO's, lawyers and counter-experts gave their views on the role of expert advice in the Dutch system.

In this presentation Ralph Severijns will present the main findings of the report and (as the report is not finished yet) will give his own views and conclusions. These views could form the starting point of a dissertation he will start working on this afternoon.

Ralph Severijns works as a policy officer for the Advisory Committee on Migration Affairs and recently started as a (part-time) PhD Candidate at the Centre for Migration Law at the Radboud University.