



EJA CONFERENCE ON CIRCUMCISION, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND THE FUTURE OF JEWISH LIFE IN BELGIUM

Wednesday 24 June 2026 at 10:00-12:30

Venue: Lab62, Av. de Tervueren 62, 1040 Brussels

9:30 Registration

10:00 Opening Remarks by EJA Chairman, Rabbi Menachem Margolin

Keynote on Religious Freedom and Minority Rights in Europe

- Message by EU Commissioner for Health, H.E. Olivér Várhelyi

10:15 Panel I: Why Circumcision Matters

- Chief Rabbi Binyomin Jacobs, Chairman of EJA Committee Against Antisemitism
- Imam Nordine Taouil, President of RMG Muslim Scholars of Belgium
- Rev Rik Hoet, former Episcopal Vicar for Ecumenical Dialogue and f. President of Belgian Catholic Commission for Dialogue with Judaism

Moderator: Ralph Pais, EJA Ambassador

10:45 EU and Pan-European Perspective

- Katharina von Schnurbein, European Commission Coordinator on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish life

11:00 Panel II: Medical Reality and Best Practice

- Dr. Sas Barmoshe, Urological Surgeon, Specialist in onco-urological surgery and circumcision, Chirec Hospital Group, Brussels
- Dr. Michael Ben Akon, Director of Pediatric Department Laniado Hospital, Member of Israel's Ministry of Health Committee for Certification of Mohalim
- Dr. Nuphar Veiga, Scientist & Expert in Drug Discovery, KU Leuven University

Moderator: Alex Benjamin, EJA Vice-Chairman for Content and Communications

11:30 Best Practice in Religious Circumcision: The UK Model of Training, Standards and Community Integration

- Dr Joseph Spitzer, Medical Officer, The Initiation Society BRIS, UK

11:45 Panel III: Politics, Law and Public Policy

- Jinnih Beels, Deputy at Provincial Executive, Province of Antwerp
- Prof. Rik Torfs, Emeritus Professor at Faculty of Canon Law, KU Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium
- Andre Gantman, Provincial Councillor at Province of Antwerp

Moderator: Ralph Pais, EJA Ambassador



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12:15 The Future of Jewish Life in Europe

- Baroness Regina Sluszný, President of Forum of Jewish Organisations (FJO) in Belgium
- Jonathan Arkush OBE, Co-Chairman of Milah UK, Representative body of the Jewish Community of the UK
- Eliezer Sternlicht, Head of Legal Affairs & Executive Vice-President of the Antwerp Belz Community, Belgium

Moderator: Rabbi Menachem Margolin, Chairman of European Jewish Association (EJA)

12:30 Networking Lunch