

# Sophie Bols

Driven **legal professional** with a passion for **human rights**, specialised in gender and migration law. Possesses extensive legal and social-scientific knowledge thanks to a master's degree in law and a Master's in **Gender and Diversity**. Professional experience in legal advice, decision-making, and research. Oriented towards social and challenging roles with a **positive societal impact**.

## Relevant Experience

### **PhD researcher – Ghent University**

As a doctoral researcher at the Law & Diversity and the Migration Law Research Groups at Ghent University (Belgium), I examine how EU externalisation migration policies construct masculinity. This PhD project is supported by the Flemish Research Fund (FWO).

### **Protection Officer – Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (current position)**

As a Protection Officer, I conduct extensive interviews with applicants for international protection regarding all aspects of their case, actively listening to their stories and circumstances. With a thorough understanding of the countries of origin, I assess the credibility of the applications. Based on immigration law, I determine whether the stated reasons meet the criteria for a protection status. Additionally, I carefully motivate decisions regarding the granting or denial of refugee status or subsidiary protection.

### **Gender Advisor – Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (October 2023 – May 2024)**

As a member of the CGRS-gender unit, I contributed to the development of gender policy. This involved analysing relevant legal doctrine and case law, drafting policy proposals, providing training, and communicating with relevant stakeholders in the field.

### **Council of State – Youth Parliament**

As a Corporate Tax Advisor, I had the opportunity to work in a team on various projects for large multinationals. My responsibilities mainly included advising clients on new tax legislation, analysing the potential tax implications of a client's businessplan, assisting clients during a tax audit by the tax authorities, and negotiating tax rulings.

### **Volunteer Legal Advisor – Legal Advice Centre for Rental Issues**

I advised low-income individuals in rental disputes and mediated between tenant and landlord to find a mutually agreeable solution.

### **Vice President – European Law Students Association (2018 - 2020)**

Within ELSA, I was responsible for organizing the annual moot court competition, coordinating various practice-oriented workshops and international study trips, with a highlight being the visit to the United Nations in New York.

## Education

2022-2025: Master's in Gender and Diversity, Ghent University

2019-2022: Master's in Law, KU Leuven (Cum Laude)

2019-2020: Erasmus, Luiss Guido Carli University, Rome, Italy

2016-2019: Bachelor's in Law, KU Leuven

## Skills and Characteristics

Legal expertise and research – Strong written and verbal communication – Empathetic – Gender and cultural sensitivity – Problem-solving – Critical thinking – Organisational skills – Proactive – Result-oriented – Decisive – Integrity – Driven – Optimistic – Helpful – Accurate – Bridge building – Independent – Eager to learn

## Language Skills

Dutch (native), French (fluent), English (fluent), Italian (good)



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