

Speaker profiles



Prof. dr. ir. Bart Preneel

Professor, KU Leuven

Prof. Bart Preneel is a full professor at the KU Leuven. He heads the COSIC research group, which has 100 members. He was visiting professor at five universities in Europe. He has authored more than 400 scientific publications and is inventor of five patents. His main research interests are cryptography, information security and privacy.

Bart Preneel has served as president of the IACR (International Association for Cryptologic Research) and is co-founder and chairman of the Board of the information security cluster LSEC. He is a member of the Permanent Stakeholders group of ENISA, of the Academia Europaea and of the knowledge center of the new Belgian Data Protection Authority. He has been an invited speaker at more than 120 conferences in 50 countries.

He received the RSA Award for Excellence in the Field of Mathematics (2014), the IFIP TC11 Kristian Beckman award (2015) and the ESORICS Outstanding Research Award (2017). In 2015 he was elected as fellow of the IACR. He frequently consults for industry and government about security and privacy technologies. He is co-founder and Board Member of the start-up nextAuth and member of the Advisory Board of Tioga Capital Partners.



Cathy Berx

Governor of the Province of Antwerp

Since 2008, Cathy Berx has been Governor of the Province of Antwerp. She studied Law at the University of Antwerp, where she obtained her Master of Laws degree as well as her Ph.D. in public law. From 2000 onwards, Dr Cathy Berx has been Professor of Law at the University of Antwerp. Before 2008, she was a top staff member of former Minister-President and Prime Minister Yves Leterme; member of the Antwerp City Council and Vice-Chairman of its Social Service Department. From 2003-2008, she was Vice-Chairman of the Christian Democratic Party. She joined the Flemish Parliament from 2004-2008.

Furthermore, Cathy Berx is Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp (ITG) and of the Management Committee of FondsBELVUE, as well as of the Flemish Road Safety Forum. She is a board member of various other institutions supporting arts, education, and civil security.

During recent years, she published books and papers on a wide range of (policy) topics.



Antoni Rytel

Deputy Director of GovTech, Poland.

Antoni is the Deputy Director of the GovTech Poland Programme. GovTech is a procurement programme that encourages small businesses to bid for government projects, and ordinary citizens to share their ideas.



Dr Sarah Gibney

Senior Researcher, Department of Health, Ireland.

Dr Sarah Gibney is a Senior Researcher in R & D and Health Analytics in the Department of Health (Government of Ireland), and a member of the Irish Government Economics and Evaluation Service (IGEES). With a background in Public Health and Social Epidemiology, Sarah was a member of the COVID Tracker App for Ireland Development Team with responsibility for emerging evidence surrounding digital contact tracing, public perspectives and user experience and, monitoring and evaluation.

Sarah is the principle investigator for the European Health Literacy Survey 2019-2021 in Ireland, part of the European Health Information Initiative - WHO-Europe Action Network on Measuring Population and Organisational Health Literacy (M-POHL), and with a particular interest in digital health literacy.



Dr Eddie O'Neill

Medical Adviser, Department of Health

Dr Eddie O'Neill is a Consultant Medical Adviser on secondment to the Department of Health NI.

He is currently the Product Manager, leading on several projects, including the 'StopCOVID NI' proximity app and the 'COVIDCare NI' symptom checker / information services app.

He is a General Practitioner, still working in the provision of clinical urgent care services.

He has broad experience, across previous senior leadership roles, in health and social care.

