

Registering and searching for a will

→ What are the different types of will in Belgium?

- * the **notarial will**, drawn up by a notary.
- * the **holographic will**, written, dated and signed by the testator.
- * the **international will**, written, dated and signed by the testator in the presence of two witnesses and a notary.

→ Does a register of wills exist in Belgium?

Yes, there is a central register of wills (CRT) managed by the Royal Federation of Belgian Notaries (FEDNOT). The register is kept in electronic form.

The CRT is interconnected with its European counterparts, i.e. a search in the register of another State can be carried out electronically by a Belgian notary.

In addition to the data of the wills, this register also records the data of all general and specific inheritance agreements.

Important

These questions and answers are a source of general information, current as of November 2024. In the event of particular difficulty, consult a notary. This practical sheet has been produced by ENRWA with the participation of the European Commission and the Notaries of Europe.

I. Registering a will

→ Why register a will?

Not all wills have to be registered (for example, a holographic will may be kept at home). However, **if a will is not found, it is equivalent to a non-existent will.**

That is why **it is advisable to enter each will in the register.** The testator can then be certain that his/her last wishes will be found and thus respected upon his/her death.

→ Who can perform the registration?

The notary registers the wills. Indeed, although it is possible to draw up a will on your own, the help of a notary will be particularly valuable given that they are specialists in the field of asset transfer. A notary's advice will enable a will to be drawn up that complies with the law and will therefore not risk being annulled.

It is not the content of the will that is recorded in the register but, rather, information that enables it to be found.

→ Who keeps the will?

The notary is responsible for keeping notarial and international wills, and holographic wills entrusted to him/her by the testator.

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→ How much does it cost to register a will?

The registration of a will in the CRT costs **€17.40 (+ VAT)**.

II. The search for a will

→ Who can search the register of wills, and when?

The existence of the will and its contents will remain secret throughout the lifetime of the testator.

Upon the death of the testator, any interested person may consult the register of wills themselves or through a legal professional (notary, judge, lawyer). **This search is essential** in order to ensure that the last wishes of the testator are respected.

→ Is it compulsory to provide a death certificate?

Yes, the interested party will need to provide a death certificate in order to conduct a search. This measure ensures that the existence of the will remains secret during the testator's lifetime.

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Belgium

→ How much does a search cost?

A search in the Belgian CRT is **free of charge**, as is a correction or deletion of data from an existing registration.

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