



Koninklijke Notariële
Beroepsorganisatie

United Kingdom, set up a Central Register of Wills'

15 November 2017

It would be useful for the United Kingdom to set up an official Central Register of Wills (*Centraal Testamenten Register, CTR*). A CTR guarantees that a deceased person's last wishes are respected and strengthens the legal certainty. That recommendation was given by ARERT, the European network of central registers of wills, to the Law Committee in London.

This autumn, the Committee - which advises the British government on changes in legislation - asked for comments on the consultation report *Making a will*. The report revealed that, in practice, it can be difficult to locate a will. This situation is due to the fact that anyone in England and Wales can write their own will, which is valid even if it has not been executed by a notary. It is possible, though, to register a will in a commercial register.

Hook up

Despite this issue, the Law Committee does not recommend a change in legislation due to the costs involved, among other things. ARERT [responded](#) to the report by recommending to set up a Central Register of Wills nonetheless. 'It can hook up to our network', explained Geertjan Sarneel, ARERT board member. 'There are so many Dutch people and other Europeans living in England and vice versa. It should be possible to locate their wills quickly and without a great deal of difficulty.'

Notaries Society

Two members of the Notaries Society, which represents some 850 notaries in England and Wales, visited the KNB in the Hague in September to learn about our CTR. According to former chair Anthony Northey, 'The comments from ARERT are extremely useful and dovetail in excellently with our Notaries Society's submission.'