

INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION  
RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON SOCIOLOGY OF LAW (RC12)  
An International Association of Legal Sociologists

STATUTES – DRAFT PROPOSAL – JUNE 2010

Preamble

The Research Committee on Sociology of Law (RCSL) was established by the International Sociological Association in 1962 with a view to opening up a broader range of opportunities for the participation of individual members in the activities of the Association in the field of sociology of law.

Part - 1. Aims and Objectives

- 1.1. The RCSL shall act, principally in the framework of the International Sociological Association, as a free association of scholars active in sociology of law or socio-legal studies all around the world, whatever their nationality, opinion and scientific or methodological tendency.
- 1.2. In order to achieve its institutional ends, the RCSL shall undertake measures:
  - a. to secure and develop personal and associational contacts between scholars active in sociology of law or socio-legal studies throughout the world;
  - b. to encourage the international dissemination and exchange of information on significant developments in the sociology of law or socio-legal studies;
  - c. to promote the development of scientific activities in the field of sociology of law or socio-legal studies;
  - d. to facilitate and promote meetings and research, on both the international and the local level, in the field of sociology of law or socio-legal studies;
  - e. to encourage the official recognition and the development of sociology of law or law and society as a teaching subject, at all levels, in universities, academies and similar institutions;
  - f. to cooperate with these institutions and associations which seek similar ends in the field of sociology of law, socio-legal studies or in neighbouring fields,
  - g. to establish links with governmental and nongovernmental agencies which might be interested in facilitating the development of research in law and society;
  - h. actively to help scholars from non-represented or less favoured countries to use its own structures and facilities.
- 1.3. RCSL shall therefore:
  - a. organize a set of sessions at the World Congresses;
  - b. organize at least one major mid-term conference;
  - c. facilitate the organization of, and publicity for, other conferences;
  - d. publish a biannual newsletter;
  - e. maintain a website;
  - f. undertake organisational activities and implementation of a research network in the sociology of law.
  - g. hold at least one business meeting ('Members' Assembly') of available regular members in good standing during each 4 year cycle

Part-2. Membership

- 2.1. Members of the RCSL may be regular or affiliated. Regular members shall be individuals or collective members in good standing with ISA. Affiliated members shall be individuals or institutions interested in the activities of RC12, who are not member of ISA. Members should be individuals active in research, publication or teaching in the field of sociology of law, socio-legal studies or neighbouring fields or associations which support the development of socio-legal studies. Scholars or associations not showing these qualifications may be admitted as observer members.
- 2.2. Individual members shall be admitted upon application to the RCSL Secretary, whose decision shall have immediate executive effect
- 2.3. Associations shall be admitted by the Board, whose decision shall have immediate executive effect, subject to ratification by the first subsequent Members' Assembly.
- 2.4. Individual members and associations (through their representative or spokesperson) shall have the same rights and duties and must adhere to the stipulations of the present Statutes.
- 2.5. The members of the RCSL shall pay a membership fee to RCSL, the amount of which shall be decided by the Board, subject to ratification by a majority of the regular members in good standing. Regular members in good standing must also be paid-up members of ISA. Affiliated and observer members in good standing must be paid up members of RCSL.
- 2.6. The RCSL shall encourage its members to become regular members of the ISA.

### Part - 3. Members' Assembly

- 3.1. The Members' Assembly of RCSL shall be convened on the occasion of each conference of the RCSL.
- 3.2. The Members' Assembly shall put forward proposals for future activities, shall accept the plan for the work of RCSL and shall express its opinion about the initiatives proposed by the Board.
- 3.3. All members can take part in the meeting, but only members in good standing in the RCSL shall have the right to vote. Proxies shall not be admitted.
- 3.4. The decisions of the Assembly shall be taken by a simple majority (50% of the participating members plus one) by open vote.

### Part. - 4. Working Groups

- 4.1. The RCSL shall facilitate the establishment of working groups aimed at developing projects of scientific and intercultural cooperation in the diverse sub-fields of the sociology of or law and society. Such working groups, once recognised, shall act as subcommittees and shall enjoy autonomy, both organisational and financial, in seeking their own ends. They shall elect their own chairperson, who shall represent them within the RCSL Board.
- 4.2. The RCSL working groups shall consist of no less than twenty RCSL individual members, representing at least eight different countries.
- 4.3. The formation of working groups shall be acknowledged by the RCSL Board, with a majority vote of its members, on the basis of evidence given of the activity that members of the putative group shall have performed already and of the composition required by art. 4.2. The Board's decision shall have immediate executive effect.
- 4.4. The RCSL Working Groups shall hold their mandates for the duration of the Board's period of office. After that deadline, they shall renew their application for acknowledgment and may be acknowledged on the basis of evidence given of the activity performed and with the same procedure as described in part - 4.3.
- 4.5. The Working Groups' shall elect their own chairpersons, who shall not hold office after two terms consecutively. The nomination and election procedure shall be modelled upon the RCSL procedures.
- 4.6. The Working Groups are expected to meet periodically and organize one or more sessions in the RCSL conferences.
- 4.7. The chairpersons of the Working Groups shall be regular members of the ISA in good standing.
- 4.8. Existing Working Groups shall be listed by name on the RCSL membership Application/Renewal Form, and can be joined when completing and submitting the Form.
- 4.9. An RCSL member who wants to be a member of a Working Group can become a member at any time by notifying the Working Group chairperson. A member of a Working Group may resign from the Working Group at any time by sending a notice of resignation to the chairperson of the Working Group. The notices shall be sent by e-mail or by postal mail.

### Part. 5. Board

- 5.1. The Board shall be responsible for the institutional and administrative activities of the RCSL. It shall hold office for a four year term, in correspondence of the ISA World Congresses. Specifically it shall
  - elaborate and implement the plan of activities of the Research Committee;
  - identify the topics for the sessions at the World Congress and take responsibility for the organization of those sessions;
  - identify the topics for at least one mid-term conference and take responsibility for the organization of those sessions;
  - discuss problems referring to the development in sociology of law research in various regions;
  - promote scholarly and organisational contacts with other Research Committees, Working Groups and Thematic Groups of the ISA;
  - establish contacts with the governing bodies of the ISA;
  - report its activities at each meeting of the Members' Assembly;
  - report the activities of the Research Committee to the governing bodies of the ISA.
  - examine the state of membership every two years and take the actions necessary to maintain and increase membership.
- 5.2. The Board shall consist of the RCSL president, 7 elected members, the chairpersons of the recognised working groups and the immediate past RCSL president. In its first meeting, it shall elect from among its members two vice-presidents, one secretary and the RCSL representative and alternate to the Research Council of the ISA. In due course, it shall also designate the RCSL representatives within the Board of Directors of the International Institute for the Sociology of Law of Oñati and within any other pertinent body. The RCSL past presidents shall be non-

- voting members of the Board. The winner of the Podgórecki Prize for emergent legal scholars shall be a non-voting member of the Board for the subsequent two years.
- 5.3. Each member of the Board must be a member in good standing of both the RC12 and of the ISA in accordance with the ISA Statutes. The places of any Board member not in good standing with either the ISA or RCSL shall be declared temporarily vacant by the President, and the vacancy filled according to paragraph 5.4.
  - 5.4. Temporary vacancies in the Board between consecutive ISA World Congresses shall be filled by appointment by the President, in accordance with ISA Statute 4.5.
  - 5.5. The president of the RCSL shall not be immediately re-elected. The other elected members of the Board shall not be elected more than twice consecutively.
  - 5.6. The Board may co-opt up to four observer members, with no voting rights, in order to extend RCSL activities in specific areas or to take care of specific activities, or to represent a continent or country which is lacking in the Board. The scientific director of the International Institute for the Sociology of Law of Oñati shall be an additional observer member of the RCSL, provided he/she is not already an elected or ex officio member. Should they not be Board Members, the founders of the RCSL shall be invited to attend the Board's sessions.
  - 5.7. The RCSL president shall represent the Committee towards its members as well as towards third parties. Should he/she resign or die, or should his/her activities be seriously hindered, his/her powers shall be exercised by the vice president oldest in age, who shall be the acting president until the next elections.
  - 5.8. The secretary shall execute the initiatives decided upon by the Board, admit new individual members in the first instance, update the membership list and send a newsletter to the RCSL members at least every six months in order to inform them about activities undertaken and planned. The secretary shall also act as treasurer and in this capacity he/she shall collect the membership fees for RCSL and its constituent working groups and submit to the Board an annual budget of the Committee every year.
  - 5.9. A quorum of half the Board's voting members shall be necessary for the Board to take decisions. The Board shall take its decisions by the majority of those present and voting, unless a qualified majority is required by the Bylaws. In the case of parity within the Board, the President shall have the casting vote. In case of need or lack of quorum, votes can be taken by postal ballot or by e-mail ballot, on President's proposal.
  - 5.10. The Board may establish an Executive-Committee composed of the president, the vice-presidents, the secretary and two members, whose task shall be that of dealing with current business between Board meetings.
  - 5.11. Reports on the funds of the RCSL shall be made every year and sent to all RCSL members. Decisions on the use of funds shall be made by the Board annually.

#### Part - 6. Elections

- 6.1. All individual members, either regular or affiliated, and collective members shall be entitled to vote for the Board. All individual regular members in good standing shall be eligible for election as president or as Board members.
- 6.2. Six months prior to the next ISA World Congress, a nominating committee shall be formed by the Board, in order to identify possible candidates for nomination. The nominating committee shall prepare a form inviting nominations, to be sent to all regular members at least twenty weeks before the forthcoming World Congress.
- 6.3. All regular members of RC12 shall be entitled to nominate candidates for the Board. Nominated candidates must be regular members of RC12 and must agree in writing to be a candidate.
- 6.4. The nominating committee shall prepare a ballot listing all nominated candidates for the respective positions on the Board and providing each candidate's CV. In case of several nominations for the same position, the nominated candidates shall be listed on the ballot in alphabetical order.
- 6.5. The vote shall be secret and taken either by postal mail or by electronic procedure, according to the Board's decision. Valid votes shall only be those received by the President no later than 14 days before the first day of the ISA World Congress.
- 6.6. All members may express one vote for the president and seven votes for the board, separately. If there is a tied vote, the candidate oldest in age shall prevail.

#### Part. - 7. Annual Conference

7. 1. The Board shall do everything within its power to arrange a conference of the RCSL at least once a year. The meetings shall preferably be devoted to specific theoretical and methodological themes, although general sessions may be held in addition. The selection of the themes and the call for papers shall be the responsibility of the Board, in cooperation with the local organising committee. The Board shall encourage countries not represented to participate and to send suggestions and contributions.

#### Part. - 8. Statutes amendment

- 8.1. Proposals for amendment to the statutes can be submitted by any member of the Board, or by any five members in good standing of RC12. They shall be collected by the secretary, then submitted first to the Board for discussion

and subsequently to the members for a vote through a postal ballot or by electronic procedure, preferably in the election year and at the same time as the election for the president and other Board members.

8.2. Amendments to the statutes shall be deemed to be adopted if they are approved by a 2/3 majority of those voting.