

RCSL NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON SOCIOLOGY OF LAW

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EDITORIAL

Sociology of Law as an International Undertaking

Considering the current geo-political tensions, it is worth remembering the responsibility of science in helping to build what might truly be called an international community. By chance, the present issue highlights several initiatives by which sociology of law seeks to meet this responsibility, providing appropriate examples for such a reminder.

Science must be practiced internationally, beyond the borders of the nation states. First, because what it seeks to understand is the world itself. This applies to the sociology of law as well, even when socio-legal research focuses on national legal systems. National legal systems develop in interaction with one another, through comparison, and through international references, and they coexist with regional and international legal orders. Many of us had the opportunity to discuss this international dimension of law in recent months while completing, under the coordination of Ulrike Schultz, Håkan Hydén and Peter Scharff Smith, the work on the International Encyclopedia of Sociology of Law. Second, because international debates offer ways of testing the scientific character of the discourses produced, which must be understandable and debatable beyond local epistemic communities. Third, because, as far as possible, all specialists working on the same domain

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of the world should have opportunities to debate their findings together, submitting them to the most thorough review possible. Fourth, because scientists should be allowed to work at some distance from national scientific organizations, within which they are subject to the direct authority of national powers, the knowledge interests of which may influence the collection and interpretation of data. Fifth, because science partakes the humanist ambition shared by modern cultural disciplines – an ambition admittedly deserving critique, and far from always realized – the aspiration to serve humanity.

The efforts undertaken by scientists, and more recently by international organizations, to establish the organizational conditions for such an international practice enable the scientific community to play a role at the international level which may have an impact beyond the scientific domain. What is at stake is to play this role as productively as possible, in particular at three levels:

- Scientific practice generates, via the cooperation it requires, and through the intensification of communication among researchers, an international community of specialists, that can contribute to strengthening the international community in the broader sense. In the case of the sociology of law, this is what happens at our yearly meetings (more about them below). This is also what happens when connections are built between RCSL and other internationally operating associations, such as the newly created *Asociación Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Derecho y Sociedad* (ALADES), links which motivated my participation in the 25th Conference of the *Sociedad Argentina de Sociología Jurídica*, last October, as well as in the *Seminario de Sociología Jurídica del Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas y Sociales* Ambrosio L. Gioja (Law School of the University of Buenos Aires) (see below p. 15–16). And, this is also why RCSL actively took part in the efforts, led by the Basque Deputy Minister for Justice and President of the IISL Governing Board Alfonso Gomez, to consolidate the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Oñati, by appointing, after the call published in the last issue of this Newsletter, a new Scientific Director, Camilo Umaña, so strengthening the links of the Institute with Latin America (more on this in the next issue of this Newsletter), and, with the generous support of the Basque Government, taking the measures necessary for the successful continuation of the Institute's activities (pay attention to its current [call for workshop proposals](#), closing on **16 March 2026**; more hereafter p. 14).

- Scientific practice produces knowledge and generates debates likely to inspire international

collective action. This is the case with our next annual meeting organized by Aldo Mascareño, to take place in Santiago de Chile, **31 August to 3 September 2026**, under the theme *The Democratic Rule of Law in World Society*, a topic that may be linked to efforts to assess and improve the institutional structures of the international community (see the call for this meeting, p. 13; pay attention to the [deadline](#) for the submission of abstracts and session proposals: **29 December 2025**). It is also the case with the V ISA Forum of Sociology, in which RCSL took part in July of this year 2025, under the heading *Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene*, a topic that may be connected to initiatives aimed at developing forms of collective action to address the current environmental challenges, at local and national, but necessarily also at international level (about this meeting, see p. 9 ff. the testimonies from young researchers who participated). In order for RCSL to contribute in the long term to discussions on environmental issues, we are currently working on the setting up of a new Working Group (WG) (see below, p. 20).

- Scientific practice offers examples of how individuals can actively engage in a certain type of international collective action, which takes advantage of individual creativity, and stimulated by that creativity, develops at the same time the grammars, as well as the education and communication devices, which make it possible to productively integrate individual contributions into collective work. These are examples of what could be called an international citizenship. Potentially our entire research community could illustrate this way of mobilizing, while taking advantage of such interconnected individual contributions. In this issue, we have the pleasure to highlight the contribution to sociology of law as a collective international undertaking of two colleagues in particular, Håkan Hydén and Ulrike Schultz, who won the Podgórecki Prize this year (see here, p. 3 ff., the Laudationes of Ferdinando Spina and Susana Santos, followed by the acceptance statements of the laureates). Another, in this sense, remarkable contribution is that of Guy Rocher, who left us on 3 September this year. He participated in the international development of sociology of law while simultaneously playing an active role in the educational and language policies of Québec (see p. 16 the tribute written by Yan Sénéchal).

Having recognized the relevance of these scientists' experiences of international citizenship, one crucial question remains, one to which the sociology of law could make a significant contribution, particularly through research on lay knowledge of the law (a

meeting on this topic takes place in Budapest in these weeks, organized jointly by our WG Comparative Legal Cultures and WG Knowledge and Opinion about Law – Legal Consciousness): how can this type of collective action based on creative individual involvement, combining collective achievements and individual self-actualization, be made accessible and meaningful to other people, in other contexts, also at international level? In parallel to the indispensable efforts to improve the material living conditions of less favoured social groups, answers to this question could contribute to weaken the foundations of populist arguments which currently shape global debates.

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PS : At the moment we are finalizing the present issue of the RCSL Newsletter, we received the sad news that Jean Van Houtte, RCSL President from 1980 to 1990, passed away on 22 November. Our thoughts of sympathy go to his family. We will miss him as a kind and extremely attentive colleague, whose contribution to the development of RCSL was crucial: as RCSL President and representative of ISA, he signed in Oñati on 23 December 1988, together with Lehendakari José António Ardanza, the agreement founding the International Institute for the Sociology of Law. A more developed tribute will be published in the next issue of this Newsletter.

PRESENTACIÓN DE LA NUEVA SECRETARIA DEL RCSL

Laura Noemi Lora

Mi inserción en el ámbito de la sociología jurídica se consolidó a partir de la aprobación y financiamiento de diversos proyectos de investigación presentados ante la Universidad de Buenos Aires, dentro del área de Sociología Jurídica. Estos proyectos, evaluados y aprobados por la Secretaría de Ciencia y Técnica, me brindaron el respaldo institucional necesario para participar activamente en los congresos organizados por el Research Committee on Sociology of Law (RCSL), así como en dos



congresos de la International Sociological Association (ISA), realizados en México y Lisboa.

El apoyo académico recibido favoreció mi incorporación a la Comunidad Internacional de Sociología Jurídica, permitiéndome en 2018 presentar un proyecto orientado a difundir las actividades del Comité Internacional de Sociología Jurídica. Posteriormente, renové mi participación para el período 2023–2027, y en mayo de este año fui invitada a integrarme al Comité en el rol de secretaria, consolidando así mi trayectoria y compromiso con el desarrollo del campo a nivel internacional.

Laura Noemi Lora
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2025 PODGÓRECKI PRIZE

The 2025 Podgórecki Prize was announced last July, in Rabat at the V ISA Forum, by this year's prize jury, Susana Santos (Chair), Ferdinando Spina and Joao Velloso. The award was presented to Professor Håkan Hydén, ex aequo with Professor Ulrike Schultz.



Podgórecki Prize Ceremony – Laureates' Announcement (Rabat, 09.07.2025)

Laudatio for Professor Håkan Hydén

by Ferdinando Spina, University of Salento

It is with great admiration and honour that I have the privilege, on behalf of the Jury of the Podgórecki Prize, to present the 2025 award to Professor Håkan Hydén, ex aequo with Professor Ulrike Schultz.

The nomination of Professor Hydén was jointly proposed by a group of colleagues from different institutions. Their proposal reflected the high regard in which he is held within the international socio-legal community, a recognition grounded in his seminal contributions to the sociology of law and his scholarly influence.

The Podgórecki Prize adds to the many honours Hydén has received over the course of his long and distinguished career, among them the prestigious

Samuel Pufendorf Professorship (2008–2011) and his membership in the World Academy of Art and Science (since 2009). He has also been honoured with a *Festschrift*, edited by R. Banakar, K. Dahlstrand, and L. Ryberg-Welander (Juristförlaget i Lund, 2018) comprising over fifty contributions by the international academic community.

These honours reflect Hydén's sustained commitment to promoting the autonomy of sociology of law as a social science in its own right. Throughout his long career of critical inquiry, he has addressed some of the most pressing issues at the intersection of law and society, from sustainability and labour regulation to the socio-legal implications of digitalisation and artificial intelligence.



Håkan Hydén

One of the most significant intellectual contributions of Håkan Hydén has been to expand the scope of sociology of law, developing it into what he has defined as a science of norms. This conceptual framework finds its most comprehensive synthesis in Hydén's landmark monograph *Sociology of Law as the Science of Norms* (Routledge, 2022). Hydén's theory provides a compelling account of the role of law in today's world, particularly in light of the challenges posed by the economy and new technologies. Reflecting on the emergence of "algo-norms" and on code as law, Hydén shows how digitalisation is reshaping our normative environment and how the sociology of law, reconceived as a norm science, enables us to understand the evolution of normative orders in an era where law often struggles

to keep pace, leaving space for code and algorithms to assume regulatory functions.

Beyond his theoretical contributions, Håkan Hydén has played a leading role in both scholarly development and academic governance. As Professor at the Department of Sociology of Law at Lund University, he has contributed decisively to the training and mentoring of new generations of socio-legal scholars, some of whom have become valued colleagues within our community. Beyond Lund, Hydén has played a pivotal role on the international stage. He has held numerous appointments as visiting professor and research fellow at foreign universities and collaborated in the Renato Treves International PhD Programme at the University of Milan. Currently, Hydén is co-editing, together with Ulrike Schultz and Peter Scharff Smith, the ambitious project of a new *Encyclopaedia of Sociology of Law* (Edward Elgar, forthcoming), which reflects the contemporary developments and challenges of our discipline and brings together hundreds of scholars from across the globe.

While we cannot here fully recall Professor Hydén's public engagement, we must not omit another element that, throughout the long-standing tradition of the Podgórecki Prize, has been one of the most significant reasons for its conferral: namely, service to the community. This commitment found expression in Hydén's role, from 2010 to 2013, as Vice-President of the Research Committee on Sociology of Law and as a member of the Governing Board of the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Oñati.

In acknowledging these roles, we are above all reminded of the cordiality, wit, and unfailing generosity that have always characterised Håkan Hydén as a person, most notably in his relations with younger scholars, as many of us can personally attest. His openness and encouragement have left a lasting imprint on generations of researchers, making him not only a leading figure in the field but also a greatly esteemed mentor and colleague. Even today, he retains a youthful intellectual energy and an undiminished curiosity about the world. The testimony of all who have worked with him converges in this shared recognition.

It is therefore with great honour that we confer the Podgórecki Prize 2025 on Professor Håkan Hydén.

Acceptance Letter by Håkan Hydén

It is with great pride and joy that I accept the honorable 2025 Podgórecki Prize, together with Ulrike Schultz.

First, I would like to thank those who nominated me, particularly Stefan Larsson, a former recipient of the Podgórecki Prize as a promising scholar, and Pedro Rubim Borges Fortes. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to the members of the 2025 Podgórecki Prize Committee—Susana Santos, Lisbon, Portugal (Chair), Ferdinando Spina, Lecce, Italy, and João Velloso, Ottawa, Canada—for selecting me as a senior scholar recognized for distinguished and outstanding lifetime achievements. A special thanks goes to Ferdinando Spina for his generous words in the laudation.

My lifelong relationship with the sociology of law began in the 1970s, when I studied law at Lund University. It was then that I met Professor Per Stjernquist, who taught Civil Law. He pioneered the sociology of law as an academic subject and secured support from the Government (Olof Palme) to establish a dedicated Department of Sociology of Law at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University. This gave me the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree in social sciences with a major in sociology of law.

At that time, there were only two doctoral candidates in the field—me and Karin Widerberg, who later succeeded Vilhelm Aubert in Oslo. We became the first to defend PhD dissertations in Sociology of law, in June 1978. My dissertation, *Societal Functions of Law*, was influenced by the French structuralist school, with authors such as Louis Althusser, Étienne Balibar, and Nicos Poulantzas providing key inspiration. Unfortunately, because the thesis was written in Swedish, it received limited attention outside Scandinavia. Very little literature in social or legal science was available in English at that time.

In the mid-1980s professorship in Sociology of Law was announced. My first achievement was 1988 when I was appointed Professor of Sociology of Law at the Faculty of Social Sciences. Since then, I have supervised more than 35 doctoral students to successfully complete their PhDs. Many of them are now prominent professors, while others hold influential positions outside academia. One of my first doctoral students was Reza Banakar.

The topics chosen by these researchers have been highly diverse, which has made it challenging to accumulate knowledge systematically within the field. The development of sociology of law has expanded its breadth rather than its depth. Over time, this observation has become increasingly clear to me—something reinforced during my work with the *International Encyclopedia of Sociology of Law*. There, we find enormous breadth, but comparatively less depth. Sociology of Law has a tendency to bring in

more subjects after time without putting existing knowledge together. By organising the *International Encyclopedia of Sociology of Law* into thematic sections we try to compensate for that.

Unlike many other social sciences, sociology of law is not anchored in a central praxis or institutional domain that binds the field together—such as political science in relation to political systems, economics to markets or fiscal policy, or cultural geography to the physical landscape.

This has led me to reflect on a key question: *What, then, is the equivalent foundational domain of knowledge for sociology of law?* To me, the answer is evident: **norms**. However, norms must be understood in a broader sense than is customary in social science, where they are often tied primarily to social interaction or social systems. In my view, norms are fundamentally about **expectations** — and expectations arise not only from social relations but also from systems humanity has created for its well-being, such as various forms of technology, market-based economic systems, and administrative structures like bureaucracy.

This broader conceptualization of norms enables us to see them as encompassing both interests and values, and to examine how legal norms today are increasingly challenged by anonymous—or system-generated—sources, such as digital technologies and artificial intelligence.

This understanding of norms, even if not always articulated as such, is deeply embedded in the work of sociological classics, including Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, and others, as well as contemporary thinkers like Michel Foucault, Zygmunt Bauman, Jürgen Habermas, and Niklas Luhmann. For me, recognizing this has been one of the most significant insights of my career. It allows me to revisit earlier areas of work—such as labor law, human rights, environmental law, sustainable development, and the implementation of law—in a new light.

With these new analytical lenses, it becomes possible to systematize and accumulate empirical knowledge in a way that gives the sociology of law its own distinct field of inquiry, rather than merely supplementing the specific areas it studies.

Laudatio for Professor Ulrike Schultz

by Susana Santos, Iscte – University Institute of Lisbon

It is with great pleasure and honour that I provide a summary of the reasons behind the decision of the 2025 Podgórecki Prize Jury to award Ulrike Schultz the RCSL-ISA Podgórecki Prize – lifetime achievements – year 2025, ex aequo with Professor Håkan Hydén.

To support this decision, I would like to briefly focus on three pivotal aspects of the distinguished career of Ulrike Schultz:

1. scientific contribution;
2. ability to overcome disciplinary boundaries and strengthen an international community;
3. training of the new generations of sociolegal scholars.

Professor Schultz's scholarly achievements span an impressive range of subjects and decades. Her early empirical work on lawyers in the European Community in the 1970s laid the groundwork for a comparative understanding of legal professions. As a member of the renowned Abel/Lewis group first settled in Bellagio, Italy in 1984, she contributed the seminal chapter on Germany to the landmark "Lawyers in Society" series (1988/89). Decades later, she co-led the monumental "Lawyers in the 21st Century Societies" project (2020, 2022), editing two volumes that brought together 46 national reports and thematic analyses—setting a new global standard for comparative socio-legal research. This major publication is a landmark of the International Working Group for Comparative Studies of Legal Professions, established in 1985, which Ulrike Schultz cofounded. She has participated in all the biannual meetings since 1986 and lead the Women/Gender in the Legal Profession Sub-Group for the four decades since and currently heads a notaries group. She has also served as chair of this large and fruitful group.

Ulrike Schultz's contributions to gender and law are equally remarkable. As the initiator and leader of international research networks, she has edited and co-edited a series of influential volumes on Women in the World's Legal Professions, Gender and Judging, Gender and Careers in the Legal Academy in addition to many other comparative publications, most recently on Gender in Customary and Indigenous Law and Proceedings. Her work has been central in integrating gender perspectives into socio-legal theory and practice, and in fostering a global dialogue on equality in legal professions creating spaces for newcomers from different geographies.

Ulrike Schultz has taught at universities around the world and for over a decade (2010– 2024) at the IISL Masters course in Oñati, where she designed and led

courses on Alternative Dispute Resolution, on Rhetoric, Communication, Negotiation, and Mediation and on Legal Professions – Theory and Practice. As the organizer of the welcoming week, she was among the first familiar and supportive faces students encountered, helping them to feel part of the academic community from the very beginning of their studies. She has also organised numerous workshops at the IISL in Oñati.

From 2018 to 2023, Professor Schultz served as **President of the Research Committee on Sociology of Law (RCSL)**. Through her extraordinary leadership and dedication to the internationalization of socio-legal studies, she managed to maintain our international community during a pandemic, allowing us to continue our regular work. She was responsible for the RCSL Conference for the 30th anniversary of the International Institute for the Sociology of Law (IISL) in Oñati (2019), a virtual RCSL meeting during the pandemic (2021), and the RCSL Conference in Lund (2023). These initiatives not only sustained but also strengthened the global socio-legal network through challenging times.



Ulrike Schultz

She has played a *decisive and pathbreaking role* in establishing and organizing international collaboration within our field and in laying the groundwork for a thriving, inclusive community—particularly for women scholars. Her leadership, scholarship, and commitment to international dialogue have profoundly influenced the development of the sociology of law worldwide. In recognition of her international standing, she received the **International Prize of the Law and Society Association in 2020**.

Beyond academia, Ulrike Schultz has served as an international expert on gender, judging, and legal education for the **EU Commission**, the **European Parliament**, and the **European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)** and for the international branches of the German Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Justice. Her work has informed policy and promoted tangible progress on issues of gender justice and equality in law.

In 2021, she summed up her life and experiences in sociology of law in an IISL Memory Lecture "Breaking the Bowl: Integrating women's, gender and socio-legal issues into teaching and research in law", which was published in a special number of the OSLs Series 12.1 (2022) entitled *Institutional Memory Papers*. <https://doi.org/10.35295/osls.iisl/0000-0000-0000-1285>

On a personal note, Ulrike continues to inspire younger scholars by demonstrating how to face challenges with grace, create lasting friendships, and find genuine inspiration in others' work. She reaches out to everyone, including the most reserved, taking the time to listen, understand our ideas, and connect us thoughtfully with others.

For all these reasons, the jury is delighted to award Ulrike Schultz the 2025 Podgórecki Prize, honouring her outstanding and inspiring lifetime achievements in socio-legal scholarship.



Podgórecki Prize Ceremony – Laureates' Announcement (Rabat, 09.07.2025)

Acceptance Letter by Ulrike Schultz

It is a great joy for me that – together with Håkan Hydén – I have received the Podgórecki Prize 2025. My deepest thanks go to my colleague and friend Susanne Karstedt, who, together with Konstanze Plett and Avrom Sherr, nominated me for the prize with a spirited and detailed tribute to my life's work, and to the Podgórecki Prize Committee—Susana Santos, Portugal (Chair), Ferdinando Spina, Italy, and João Velloso, Canada—who selected me, and to Susana Santos for the wonderful and moving laudation.

I am very grateful for the prize, because it recognizes my lifetime commitment and achievement in the sociology of law. And that commitment was by no means always easy.

I began studying law in Munich in 1966, when law in Germany was still a hard male domain. There were under 10% of female law students. The first woman to become a professor of law was appointed in 1965; in 1980, the year my second daughter was born, it was just a handful, i.e. 2%, and even today, in 2025, the proportion of female professors of law has not exceeded 20%, although the proportion of women in the judiciary is now over 50% and in the legal profession just under 40%. That means that even today, students rarely, or sometimes not at all, encounter a woman as a lecturer in law.

The dogmatics oriented toward Roman law brought me only limited pleasure; I found legal history and comparative law exciting, and I first truly enjoyed the application of law when I studied English law which is closer to life at summer courses in London. Among other things, I wrote a paper on the historical writ system. In 1968, Andreas Heldrich offered a seminar in Münster on the sociology of law—possibly the first ever in Germany—and it spontaneously ignited my enthusiasm for the sociology of law. In 1971, during semesters at what is now the German University for Administrative Sciences in Speyer, I wrote a paper on *Rechtstatsachenforschung* for a seminar on sociology of law with Hans Ryffel, and had the opportunity to learn methods of empirical social research. In 1972, I received a small Council of Europe scholarship for work on the empirical aspects of freedom of establishment for lawyers in Europe. My delight in the topic also stemmed from the fact that I aspired to become an internationally active lawyer—an aspiration that at that time proved illusory for a woman with family obligations. Since I had also qualified in higher education didactics, I obtained a position in 1976 at the newly established Distance University of Hagen as a didactics expert for the legal field.¹ In 1977, I became one of the first members of the newly founded *Vereinigung für Rechtssoziologie* (now the Association for Law and Society), and later of the Sociology of Law Section of the German Sociological Association, where I also served on the board. In 1981, encouraged by Erhard Blankenburg, I took part in the RCSL meeting in Oxford, which was like a revelation for me. Topics were discussed there that I found immediately socially relevant and that I wanted to commit myself to.

My position at the Distance University gave me the opportunity to live my passion for sociology of law, though not to the extent I would have wished, so much

of the work fell into my leisure time. In practice, I did a great deal of media work and developed and conducted continuing education programs on teaching law in schools, on women and the law—through which I became one of the pioneers in addressing the deficiencies of the law for women²—on a practical skills training for young lawyers, and on virtual international gender studies, which all included a massive amount of work. Later came the module on Gender and Law in the Master of Laws. Alongside this, and over the last 30 years, I conducted extensive research on sociological and gender aspects of the legal professions.³ In addition, as Gender Equality Officer and Chair of the Equality Commission, I was a practitioner of gender equality. When my career stalled at one point, I qualified—supported by the university leadership—as a communication trainer and mediator, thus entering ADR, and for decades I conducted courses at the German Judicial Academy and the Judicial Academy of my state of North Rhine-Westphalia,⁴ including courses on the didactics of teaching law⁵.

How difficult things were for women in (legal) academia in Germany is hardly imaginable for young people today. Although I got a life-time position as a civil servant very quickly, I was often regarded as “material at disposal,” subject to higher powers, and as a luxury woman who was allowed to work in a comfortable position even though she had a husband who could support her financially.

Since the early 1980s, as described in the laudatory speech, I have been very active in the RCSL Working Group on Legal Professions and have since led a kind of double life—a national one as jurist, women’s rights advocate, gender expert, and didactics expert, and an international one in the context of RCSL. Since the meeting of the Legal Profession Group in Bellagio in 1984, my aim has been to engage in international comparative research on women in legal academia and legal practice. The work intensified in the 1990s and resulted in numerous publications on the subject. Without my friend Gisela Shaw, who supported me in preparing the publications—also through linguistic editing of contributions—this would not have been possible. For all of us in socio-legal studies who do not have English as a native language, such projects are an immense challenge. In my current and probably also my final major socio-legal project, the International Encyclopedia for Sociology of Law, which I edit together with Hakan Hyden and Peter Scharff-Smith, translation programs and AI are now of assistance although they do not offer the quality of a specialist in the field.

The sociology of law has been and continues to be an extraordinarily enriching aspect of my life. I have travelled around the world, have organised innumerable sessions and panels at socio-legal meetings also in the context of the Law and Society Association. I am as all of you may know a keen networker, internationally but also locally and enjoy stimulating exchange on socio-legal subjects with friends in many different countries. It has been and remains important to me to pass this enthusiasm on to the younger generation. This is why I had chosen as theme for the 2019 Oñati conference: “Linking generations for global justice”. I thank the IISL that I had the opportunity over many years to mentor the master’s students during an induction week and thus, so to speak, infect them with my enthusiasm. The IISL as the anchor of RCSL is a major concern for me, and I am pleased that since 2006 I have had the opportunity as a Board Member to accompany and support the development of the RCSL.

I hope that I may continue to contribute ideas to the socio-legal world and take part in projects for many years to come.

1) ‘Legal Education in Germany’, in: Bradney, Anthony and Cownie, Fiona (2025): Elgar Concise Encyclopedia of Legal Education. Northampton: Elgar Publishing, 186–189.

2) ‘Equal Rights for Men and Women in Germany. How a constitutional principle was transformed into reality’ in Heinrich Boell Stiftung South Caucasus ed. *Fight for the Public Space: When Personal is Political*. Tiflis 2016, S. 85 – 96. <https://ge.boell.org/en/2016/12/29/fight-public-space-when-private-political>
 ‘Gender in Socio-Legal Teaching and Research in Germany’ *German Law Journal*, 21(7), 1345–1361. doi:10.1017/glj.2020.86
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/german-law-journal/article/gender-in-sociolegal-teaching-and-research-in-germany/EDF8562F17429BF28E8A2A010FDD551C>

3) ‘Sexism in Law and the Impact of Gender Stereotypes in Legal Proceedings’ in Heinrich Boell Stiftung South Caucasus, ed. *Fight for the Public Space: When Personal is Political*. Tiflis 2016, S. 97 – 108.
<https://ge.boell.org/en/2016/12/29/fight-public-space-when-private-political>

4) ‘Judicial Education – The example of Germany’, in Turenne, Sophie and Moussa, Mohamed Research *Elgar Handbook on the Judiciary*. Northampton: Elgar Publishing, 2025, 125–147.

5) ‘Knowledge and Opinion About Law – The importance of Law Related Education’, in Hyden, Hakan; Nelken, David; Cotterell, Roger and Schultz, Ulrike (eds.) *Combining the Legal and the Social Sociology of Law. Anthology in Memory of Reza Banakar*, Oxford. Bloomsbury, 2023, 161–172.
<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/61932>

REPORTS ON RABAT – V ISA FORUM OF SOCIOLOGY 2025 (I)



Venue at the Annex of the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences (ASJE), Mohammed V University, Rabat

RCSL grantees on their experience attending the ISA Forum and the RCSL Meeting in Rabat, Morocco

This was my first experience at the ISA Forum. It was a much larger event than I had expected, and sometimes, I found it difficult to decide which of the simultaneously held sessions to attend. In the RCSL sessions, discussions revolved around the theme of “Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene.” I witnessed how the concept of “Anthropocene” was interpreted differently by researchers from various countries. Meeting people from different parts of the world broadened my perspective both academically and personally.

The academic sessions were especially valuable for someone at the beginning of their career. Hearing people’s comments and critiques on each other’s work made me realize that these conferences are also a way for researchers to advance their studies. Understanding what people are working on, how they frame their research, and what is being studied around the world was truly enriching. Also, being given the opportunity to present as someone very early in their career, and to express myself in a joint session with several professors, was incredibly exciting for me. I felt that my ideas were valued just as much as those of scholars who are far more experienced than I am. I strongly believe that giving young people a voice and a place in academia is the way to encourage their participation.

Meeting very different people –even reconnecting with friends I already knew but who live on the other side of the world– was wonderful. Dining at a local restaurant in Rabat and discussing how the food compared to that of our home countries took the experience beyond just the academic. When there

were no seats left at a café near the university, I looked at participants’ badges and ended up joining the table of conference attendees I had never met before. Spending about an hour chatting with two strangers is also something I count as part of this experience.

ISA Forum in Rabat was very joyful for me, and I hope to meet with others at the next conferences of the following years!

Bengisu Mert

My first participation in both an RCSL and ISA meeting could not have been more fitting. With the theme ‘Justice in the Anthropocene,’ a topic I have been working on for several years in my doctoral thesis in sociology of law, the event seemed tailor-made for my career path. In fact, I could hardly believe it when I learned about the event’s topic. I have been a member of both the RCSL and the ISA since 2023, when I spent four months as a Visiting Scholar at the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Oñati.



RCSL after-session with Pierre Guibentif, Luisa Hedler and Cassiano Ribas.

However, I had not previously had the opportunity to meet the members of these associations. Meeting them in Rabat and discussing a topic so dear to me – which I consider fundamental for addressing contemporary socio-legal issues –was the best gateway I could have hoped for. The event’s extensive programme greatly enriched my approach to the topic, and I followed it almost to the point of

exhaustion. I wished I could have split myself into several people so that I could participate in different sessions at the same time. Unfortunately, science has not yet reached that point. I sincerely hope that the RCSL will continue to promote debate on the topic so that Rabat remains a presence in our discussions. I must also thank the RCSL for its support, without which I would not have been able to attend the event. I hope to see you again soon and help make Rabat an integral part of our institution's agenda.

Cassiano de Toledo Ribas

I participated in the 5th ISA Forum of Sociology, held from 6 to 11 July 2025 at Mohammed V University in Rabat, Morocco. This was my first ISA Forum and my second participation in an RCSL conference, following the event in Lund, Sweden, in 2023. In addition to the academic programme, the Forum was also my first opportunity to visit this part of the world. It gathered scholars from diverse contexts and disciplines, providing space for comparative reflections on justice and law in changing social and environmental conditions, which was very intellectually stimulating.

I presented a paper titled "From the Bottom to the Top: Legal Skepticism in Serbia", co-authored with my supervisor Danilo Vuković (University of Belgrade, Faculty of Law). This was our first joint presentation, and I was especially excited about it. I delivered the talk, and we both took part in the discussion that followed.



Mila Đorđević presenting her paper

The presentation was part of the RCSL panel "Legal Alienation in Ordinary Legal Consciousness: Everyday Experiences (Part I)", organized by Fekete Balázs (HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences, Hungary). The panel brought together scholars working on legal consciousness in various national contexts. I was pleased to reconnect with colleagues such as Patrícia

André (NOVA School of Law, Portugal), who presented her research on perceptions of insolvency law in Portuguese courts. I had previously met her during a research visit to Portugal. Also on the panel was Marta Bucholc (University of Warsaw), who presented a comparative study on abortion debates in Poland and Argentina. I met her at the RCSL conference in Lund in 2023, where she moderated my panel, so it was a pleasure to see her again in Rabat.

A particularly meaningful moment for me was the opportunity to discuss my work with Professor Agnieszka Kubal (Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford), whose research I engage with in my own work. Her presence in the audience and our exchange during the Q&A provided valuable feedback and encouragement.



Mila Đorđević at the Forum

Outside of the panel, I had the chance to connect with other researchers and learn about upcoming academic initiatives. During one informal discussion, I learned about the first workshop on Legal Cultures and Legal Consciousness, to be held in Budapest in December 2025. This event is a joint initiative of the RCSL working groups on Comparative Legal Cultures and Legal Consciousness, and I look forward to participating.

Beyond the academic programme, the Forum offered the opportunity to explore a new cultural and regional context. I visited Marrakesh, Rabat, and Casablanca,

and valued the chance to learn more about everyday life in Morocco through informal conversations with local residents and fellow participants. Experiencing Moroccan food, cities, and social environments contributed to my understanding of how socio-legal perspectives are shaped by their settings.

I would like to thank the RCSL for their support in enabling my participation. The Forum was an important experience for me, both academically and personally, and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to and learn from this global scholarly community.

Mila Đorđević

REPORTS ON RABAT – V ISA FORUM OF SOCIOLOGY 2025 (II)

Accounts from the RCSL Working Groups

Here are but a few examples of the RCSL programme in Rabat, highlighting the activities of our WGs in the conference:

Civil Justice and Dispute Resolution

WG Dispute Resolution held two sessions at the Rabat meeting. One was on Dispute Resolution and Innovation, bringing together research on the context of utilizing technologies such as AI and online tools in dispute resolution procedures. The other was on Gender Issues and Access to Justice.

Hideaki Irie



Room ASJE001 or Salle 1 – RCSL sessions main room at the Forum

Comparative Legal Culture

Our session, *The Contribution of Legal Cultures to Our Understanding of Justice in the Context of the Anthropocene* (8 July 2025), brought together scholars from across Central and Eastern Europe to explore how comparative legal cultures shape access to justice and human rights practices. It was also an opportunity to promote our forthcoming open-access volume with UCL Press, *Who Are the Humans Behind Human Rights? Comparative Perspectives from Central Eastern Europe and Russia*.

The papers examined legal consciousness among denied claimants before the ECtHR, the dynamics of accession across post-socialist states, professionalisation of the human rights field, and the everyday experience of engaging with Strasbourg. The session sparked rich discussion and helped us engage meaningfully with the conference theme of the Anthropocene by situating legal culture within broader questions of human vulnerability, systemic inequality, and the shifting boundaries of justice.

Agnieszka Kubal



Venue at the Annex of the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences (ASJE), Mohammed V University, Rabat

Digitalization, AI and Society

"Knowing Digital Justice in the Anthropocene: Developments in Digitalization and AI in Public Sector and Governance" was a joint session by the Working Groups Digitalization, AI and Society and Law and Development, organized by Julia Dahlvik and Pedro Fortes. It focused on current developments in digitalization and AI in the public sector from a governance and a Law and Development perspective. We departed from several observations: Automated-decision making and potentially discriminatory algorithms may influence the distribution of individual benefits, social welfare, and the quality of public administration; digitalization and AI may radically transform governance, ideology, democracy, and justice; digital access to public services may actually exclude the (digitally) underprivileged.

Importantly, digital governance may contribute to sustainable development, social justice, and the transition from global to local related to contemporary opportunities and challenges like climate change and environmental degradation. The aim of the session was to investigate these questions from different theoretical and empirical approaches, including individual, societal as well as organizational/institutional perspectives. We heard Ellinor Blom Lussi from Lund University, Sweden, on "Who Is the Problem Represented to be? Subjectification and the Social Division of Automated Welfare Surveillance". This was followed by "Law, Hiperconnectivity, and the Anthropocene: Reflections on Challenges of Digitalization and AI" by Pedro Fortes from UERJ, Brazil. The session concluded with "AI-Assisted Court System: System Design and People's Attitude" by Shozo Ota from Meiji University, Japan. In sum, the engaging discussion of all contributions also highlighted key issues for future research.

Julia Dahlvik
Stefan Larsson

Gender, Law and Society

The Gender, Law and Society WG focuses on the gendered nature of law and the legal construction of gender, taking as its starting point the law in its contexts. The WG aims to provide a space for discussing theoretical and empirical research on a variety of related topics. The following session was organised: "Environmental Justice as a Gender Issue", 5th ISA Forum of Sociology "Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene, Rabat (Morocco), 6-11 July 2025.

Barbara Giovanna Bello
Letizia Mancini

Social and Legal Systems

Our Working Group had one panel in the conference, "Justice Communication in the Anthropocene – A Systems Theory Approach". Featuring three presentations, the discussions ranged from an analysis of Birmingham's Bin Workers' plight for fair wages by Kirandeep Kaur, the ways in which "the environment" is communicated about in Healthcare Trade Fairs by Luisa Hedler, and the different points of observation of the legal personhood which was granted to a river in New Zealand by Maria Kaalund. Though diverse in theme, the presentations showcased the interesting, fresh perspectives unfolded through the use of systems theory, and sparked a lively debate, connecting the themes with larger questions about strategies of ecological conservation, the role of the State vis a vis destructive

corporate practices, and more. We are grateful to the presenters, for sharing their work, for Julia Dahlvik for chairing, and for the community for participating and engaging with us!

Stine Piilgaard Porner Nielsen
Luisa Hedler

RCSL Organizing Meetings and Concluding Debate

Within the framework of the ISA Forum, the RCSL convened its Board meeting on 8 July in Rabat, attended by those Board members present in person together with some invited participants.



Board meeting attendees – photograph kindly provided by Agnieszka Kubal

On the following day, 9 July, the RCSL held the Committees' Business Meeting, which was conducted by Pierre Guibentif with the presence of Shalini Randeria.

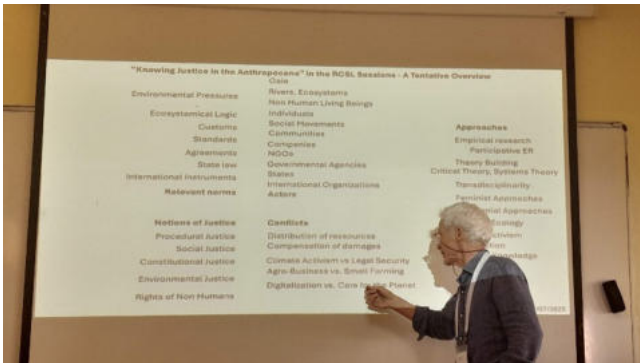


RCSL business meeting



RCSL business meeting

As a conclusion of the RCSL Sessions at the 5th ISA Forum of Sociology, on Friday 11 July, Pierre Guibentif, president of RCSL, introduced the concluding debate, assessing the discussions held throughout the week and addressing the Forum's topic "Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene", with a view to the planning of future activities of RCSL on environmental issues.



Final RCSL session with Pierre Guibentif

His tentative overview might be found [here](#).

RCSL ANNUAL MEETING 2026

The Democratic Rule of Law in World Society

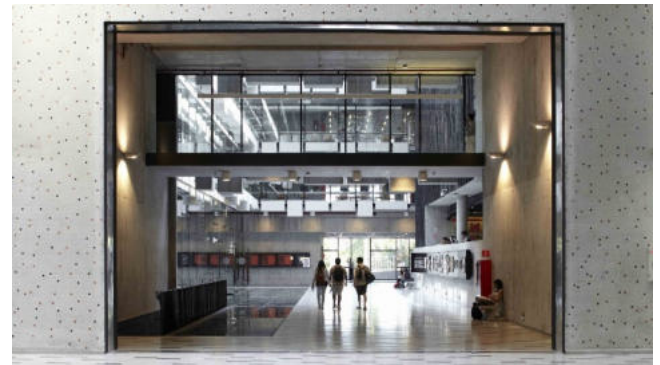


Santiago skyline

The 2026 RCSL Annual Meeting will be hosted by Diego Portales University (UDP) in **Santiago de Chile** from **August 31 to September 3, 2026**.

Conference Theme

The theme of the RCSL Santiago Conference 2026 is *The Democratic Rule of Law in World Society*. We welcome paper and session proposals on this theme as well as other relevant topics in the sociology of law and justice. This international conference will gather distinguished scholars, practitioners, and students to reflect on and discuss the challenges and prospects of the democratic rule of law in a global context.



Faculty of Social Sciences (UDP)

This RCSL Conference will primarily explore whether liberal representative democracy—a cornerstone of modern political and legal systems—can effectively meet the diverse needs of a world society that is now structurally, culturally, and territorially varied. The conference will examine if the normative and legal foundations, as well as the mechanisms of representative democracy, which have historically underpinned the political systems of Western societies and led to significant achievements such as equality before the law, fundamental rights, property rights, the welfare state, and human rights, can still address the conflicts, inequalities, and new technological challenges present in today's global society.

Key Challenges

Modern societies seem to be facing various centrifugal forces that weaken the rule of law. In addition to traditional challenges such as territorial wars and forms of patrimonial domination, we are presented with new complexities today. These include:

- Ethnonational conflicts among indigenous peoples intensified by confrontational decolonization strategies
- The emergence of fundamentalist para-state structures in the Middle East
- The dominance of drug cartels and organized crime networks, particularly in Latin America and Africa, which violently challenge existing social orders

- Neo-nationalist state strategies aimed at rebuilding pan-regional zones of cultural influence and political control
- Massive waves of migration across Europe, North America, and Latin America
- The increasingly urgent effects of climate change
- Rapid global transformations driven by new digital technologies, including social networks, big data, and artificial intelligence

Consequently, the evolutionary achievement of the rule of law is currently facing significant challenges at the global level, both old and new. These challenges call into question its basic assumptions: that it can independently manage the rules governing coexistence in modern society, that no particular form of domination is permitted within its framework, and that the future remains open for alternative perspectives that can adapt both cognitively and normatively to the abstract principles of the rule of law.



Law School (UDP)

The 2026 RCSL Conference in Santiago aims to address global socio-legal issues in a comprehensive manner. The conference seeks to engage scholars from various regions of the world to discuss the foundations, history, present status, and future projections of the rule of law. It will also explore different variants of the rule of law in contemporary society. Additionally, the call for papers invites proposals for sessions and papers on other relevant issues within the sociology of law and justice.

Call for Proposals and Registration

We welcome paper and session proposals (abstracts) on the conference theme as well as other relevant topics in the sociology of law and justice.

Individual Papers: Submit an abstract of your research paper / **Session Proposals:** Organized panels with multiple papers on a related theme.

Submission period: **October 20 – December 29, 2025**

Decisions will be communicated by the Scientific Committee on **January 30, 2026**.

All accepted participants must register by **March 31, 2026**, to appear in the final program.

Registration will open after the preliminary program is published in **April 2026**. Early bird rates will be offered for those who register **before May 4, 2026**.

Local Organizing Committee

The 2026 RCSL Annual Meeting is co-organized by the School of Sociology and the School of Law, Universidad Diego Portales (UDP, Chile).

Scientific Committee

Prof. Dr. Aldo Mascareño, Centro de Estudios Públicos

Prof. Dr. Rodrigo Cordero, School of Sociology (UDP)

Prof. Dr. Maite de Cea (UDP)

Prof. Dr. Domingo Lovera, School of Law (UDP)

Executive Committee

Sofía Abuhadba, School of Law, Universidad de Chile

Juan Rozas, Centro de Estudios Públicos

Dr. Fabián Belmar, Centro de Estudios Públicos

Dr. Ricardo Valenzuela, School of Sociology (UDP)

All details and information @ <https://rcsl2026.udp.cl>

CALL FOR WORKSHOPS 2027 AT THE OÑATI INSTITUTE

Put your topic in the spotlight

The International Institute for the Sociology of Law (IISL) invites workshop proposals for 2027 in Oñati, a unique meeting place in the Basque Country.

Deadline:
16 March 2026.

Gather with scholars from across the world to debate cutting-edge issues in socio-legal studies.

Here are the relevant links for the application process:

List of preferred topics:

<https://www.iisj.net/en/workshops/regulations-presential-workshops-2027/relevant-topics>

Guidelines and link to application form:

<https://www.iisj.net/en/workshops/regulations-2027-workshops>

NOTA SOBRE LA PARTICIPACIÓN DEL RCSL EN EL XXV CONGRESO NACIONAL Y XV PRE-CONGRESO LATINOAMERICANO Y DEL CARIBE DE SOCIOLOGÍA JURÍDICA

Compartimos con ustedes algunas de las actividades del XXV Congreso Nacional y XV Pre-congreso Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Sociología Jurídica, que se realizó en la provincia de Tucumán, República Argentina, los días 22 a 24 de octubre 2025. El congreso fue organizado conjuntamente por la Sociedad Argentina de Sociología Jurídica (SASJu) junto a la Universidad Nacional de Tucumán, la Universidad San Pablo T, la legislatura de Tucumán y la Municipalidad de San Miguel de Tucumán contando con el auspicio de la Asociación Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Derecho y Sociedad (ALADES). El lema elegido ha sido "Derecho, Educación y Sociedad en tiempos de cambio: Desafíos y resistencias".

El Congreso contó con la presencia de Pierre Guibentif (actual presidente del Research Committee on Sociology of Law, ISA y de Laura N. Lora actual secretaria y Tesorera del RCSL/ISA).



Acto de Doctorado Honoris Causa a Pierre Guibentif

En el marco del Congreso, el día 22 de octubre 2025 a las 19 hs Pierre Guibentif fue distinguido con el Doctorado Honoris Causa. El acto de entrega se realizó en el Aula Magna de la Facultad de Derecho y Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad Nacional de Tucumán, contó con la presencia del Rector de la Universidad de Tucumán Dr. Sergio Pagani, con la Decana Dra María Cristina Grunauer de Falú y de reconocidos especialistas del ámbito jurídico y social así como también docentes, estudiantes, investigadores e investigadoras con interés en problematizar el derecho como fenómeno social, histórico y político <https://www.sasju.org/l/congreso-tucuman/>.

La lección magistral de Pierre Guibentif se tituló: "La sociología del derecho en la construcción de la ciudadanía mundial".

El día 23 de octubre tuvo lugar un conversatorio entre Carlos Lista, ex director científico del IISJ (2007-2009) y ex Presidente de la Sociedad Argentina de Sociología Jurídica y Pierre Guibentif, moderado por Matías Castro de Achaval, que permitió hacer un recorrido histórico acerca del IISJ, el RCSL y la Sasju. Con esta participación la Sasju y el RCSL/ISA han logrado reforzar los lazos entre las dos asociaciones e institucionalizar más firmemente la comunidad internacional de investigación en Sociología del Derecho.

Asimismo es importante mencionar la llegada de Pierre Guibentif a la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, y más precisamente su visita a la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad de Buenos Aires donde el día 28 de octubre 2025 dictó la Conferencia titulada "Las imágenes globales de la Sociedad y el futuro del Derecho", actividad desarrollada en la Sala Margarita Argúas del Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas y Sociales Ambrosio L. Gioja, organizada conjuntamente por la Secretaría de investigación el Seminario Permanente de Sociología Jurídica del Instituto Gioja, el Departamento de Ciencias Sociales, y el Proyecto UBACyT Programación científica 2023-2025 (Lora Laura directora), todos con sede en la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad de Buenos Aires. Asimismo, ha participado en clases destinadas a estudiantes de grado de la carrera de abogacía y de la Maestría en Derecho Constitucional, Escuela de Posgrado de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad de Buenos Aires.

Laura Noemi Lora

lauranoemilora@derecho.uba.ar

CONGRESS ON LEGAL SOCIOLOGY AND CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Buenos Aires, Argentina / Mexico City, Mexico – July 2025

With a strong and unified message on the need to place children and adolescents at the center of public policy, international law, planning, and budgeting, Dr. Laura N. Lora, researcher at the Ambrosio L. Gioja Institute for Legal and Social Research at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), and Professor Javier Espinoza de los Monteros, from the Institute for Legal Research at Universidad Anáhuac México, closed the 4th Federal, International, and Interdisciplinary Congress: "Legal Sociology and Children's Human Rights in the 21st Century."

Continuing the legacy of the previous three editions, all activities of the 4th Congress were streamed live through the Ambrosio L. Gioja Institute for Legal and Social Research at the University of Buenos Aires YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWq9BaxlOv7yRLUs5POTFg>

This event was co-organized by teams from the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), including researchers from two UBACyT projects:

1. "Law and Society: Theoretical Contributions and Practical Approaches to the Challenges Affecting Children and Adolescents," directed by Dr. Laura N. Lora
2. "Invisible Girls: Multiple Vulnerabilities and Protections in Juvenile Justice," directed by Dr. Mary Beloff

Other institutions involved included the Department of Social Sciences and the Gioja Institute (UBA), the Legal Sociology Seminar, and the Institute for Legal Research at Universidad Anáhuac México. The Congress gathered professionals from 15 different countries and more than 50 institutions, including public hospitals, courts, child and youth protection agencies, universities, bar associations, and civil society organizations. There were 754 people registered, and the YouTube livestreams received over 1,200 views, showing the growing interest and international reach of this space.

The agenda was wide-ranging and interdisciplinary, addressing the multiple factors that jeopardize children's rights and stressing the importance of safeguarding their dignity. Key themes included child labor, forced migration, the digital divide, access to justice, various forms of structural violence, and the

obligations of states to protect children's rights. The Congress also served as a platform for consolidating an academic and professional network committed to the defense of children's and adolescents' rights.

The opening session featured remarks from leading academic and institutional figures:

Silvia Nonna (Vice Dean, UBA); Luciana Scotti (Research Secretary, Gioja Institute); Ricardo Rabinovich-Berkman (Chair, Department of Social Sciences, UBA); Mary Beloff (Professor and Director of one of the UBACyT projects); Laura N. Lora (Academic Undersecretary and UBACyT Project Director); Pierre Guibentif (President, RCSL/ISA); Rebeca Arévalo and Javier Espinoza de los Monteros (Universidad Anáhuac, México).

During the closing session, Dr. Lora and Prof. Espinoza de los Monteros announced the upcoming publication of a joint book and new academic activities on juvenile justice, which will be carried out by a new Ibero-American network created to follow up on the work and outcomes of this Congress. With this fourth edition, the Congress has positioned itself as a reference point for dialogue between Latin America and Europe on legal and human rights issues affecting children and adolescents.

Laura Noemi Lora

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IN MEMORIAM

Guy Rocher and the Development of the Sociology of Law in Quebec

It is with great emotion that we share the news of the passing of sociologist Guy Rocher, lovingly surrounded by his family, on September 3, 2025, in Montreal (Quebec/Canada) at the age of 101. His friends and colleagues remember him as a man of immense kindness and generosity, as well as a man of knowledge and action. An academic by vocation and an intellectual by conviction, he embodied the ideal of public sociology before the term was even coined. Recipient of numerous honours, his contribution to the evolution and influence of Quebec society was also recognized during a National Tribute Ceremony held by the Government of Quebec on October 2, 2025.

Guy Rocher had long been a friend of the International Sociological Association, from the 1960s onwards, and of the Research Committee on Sociology of Law since the 1980s, a period during which he undertakes to

contribute to the then-undeveloped field of sociology of law in Quebec. A look at his personal and professional trajectory opens a window onto the place of law and sociology in Quebec society.



Guy Rocher (image kindly provided by Yan Sénéchal)

Born on April 20, 1924, in Berthierville, on the outskirts of Montreal, Guy Rocher began his classical college in 1935 without a clear vocation. Apart from his father, a civil engineer who died when he was only 8 years old, his family included several judges, lawyers, and notaries. Despite this predetermined path, he hesitated between law and religion. At the end of college, he decided to join the Dominican Order but left the convent after a few months, nostalgic of the social activism he had practiced during his adolescence with the Young Christian Studies Movement. Rocher then joined the French-Canadian Central Office of the Movement and, at the same time, enrolled in the Faculty of Law at the University of Montreal in 1944. Fascinated by the legal logic but unmoved by the lawyering practice, he abandoned law school after the first year to devote himself entirely to Specialised Catholic Action. His encounter with young communists in Europe at the end of World War II, while he was Canadian president of the movement, motivated him to acquire scientific knowledge and skills to better understand the world transforming before his eyes. Thus, in 1947, he entered the Faculty of Social Sciences at Laval University in Quebec City then headed by Dominican Georges-Henri Levesque. The discovery of sociology was a huge shock for him and awakened his true vocation. After two years of doctoral studies at Harvard University, he began a

thesis on *The relations between Church and State in New France during the Seventeenth Century* under the supervision of sociologist Talcott Parsons and, at the same time, was appointed professor of sociology at Laval University. The completion of his thesis in 1957 made him one of the very first holders of a PhD in sociology in Quebec.

Guy Rocher's work truly took off during the period of rapid and profound transformations known as the "Quiet Revolution". In 1960, he left Laval University to become the first secular director of the Department of Sociology at the University of Montreal. While fulfilling his administrative duties and teaching his courses, which increased his reputation as an exceptional educator, he gained notoriety as a public intellectual by serving on the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec (1961–1966). After having closely participated in the reform of a more accessible education system as a commissioner, he returned exclusively to academic life and published his remarkable *Introduction to General Sociology* (1968). The book enabled thousands of students in Quebec to discover, in their own language, a scientific perspective for observing, describing, analysing, understanding, and explaining social reality. Republished in France and translated into five languages, this magnum opus brought Quebec sociology to the international stage, just like his *Talcott Parsons and American Sociology* (1972), also published in France and translated into several languages. During this period, he contributed to the development of the sociology of education by co-directing with sociologist Pierre W. Bélanger a major longitudinal research project on students' academic aspirations and career orientations to evaluate the reforms implemented following the recommendations from the Commission he had served on in the 1960s.

Following the election of the Parti Québécois in the mid-1970s, he joined the Government of Quebec twice as Deputy Minister (1976–1979 and 1981–1983) and notably participated in the development and implementation of the *Charter of the French Language* (Bill 101). With his experience as a sociologist and his expertise as a legislator, he was offered a research position at the Public Law Research Centre of the University of Montreal with the mandate to develop the field of sociology of law in Quebec. For nearly thirty years, from 1980 to 2010, he tried to rally jurists to interdisciplinarity in law and to interest non-jurists in law as a sociological object. His *Studies in Sociology of Law and Ethics* (2016), which brings together around twenty texts written over three decades, as well as his *Treatise on the Sociology of*

Law and the Legal Orders (2022), begun in the 1980s but unpublished until recently, testify to the anchoring of a sociology of law within general sociology. Guy Rocher envisioned sociology as a “perspectivist science”. In other words, the sociologist does not observe reality with the naked eye. Rather, he uses “intellectual instruments” such as concepts. Equipped with his conceptual lenses, the sociologist can cast a sociological look – that is, an “oblique glance” – at law. Recognizing the omnipresence of legal phenomena in modern and contemporary societies, he gradually built what turns out to be, in retrospect, elements of a theoretically and empirically oriented research program, whose core revolves around four fundamental questions and one transversal problematic:

First question: what is law?

Starting from this foundational question, Guy Rocher invites sociologists and especially jurists not to limit their view to positive law and, in doing so, to acknowledge the existence of legal pluralism, still very much alive in the social world. To study State law and non-State laws, and to make them comparable, he used the concept of “legal order”.

Second question: how is law produced?

Here, he emphasized the relationships between the various norms that coexist in a society (religious, moral, ethical, legal, etc.), highlighting their divergences and convergences using the concept of “internormativity.”

Third question: how is law applied?

With the concept of “effectivity,” he paid attention not only to the expected effects by the producers of legal norms but more broadly to all their observable effects (unintended, symbolic, etc.).

Fourth question: how is law experienced?

Through the concept of “legal culture,” he sought to make intelligible the collective ways of thinking, feeling, and acting with respect to law among laypeople, professionals, and scholars – the specific nature of each of these cultures, their respective diversity, and the complex interactions between them.

Transversal problematic:

The importance of these fundamental questions is heightened by considering the links between law, power, and change in contemporary democratic societies.

These elements of a research program in sociology of law reflect the great originality, relevance, and

timeliness of Guy Rocher’s work. It is a true legacy for younger generations to observe law differently in order to know society contrastively in a world under transformation.

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Yan Sénéchal

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100TH ANNIVERSARY ADAM PODGORECKI (1925–1998)

Presentation on the occasion of an online conference in memory of Adam Podgorecki on the 18th of August 2025, organised by Krzysztof Motyka the Katholicki Uniwersytet Lubelski.

It is a pleasure for me to get the possibility to speak in honour of Podgorecki at his 100th birthday, who was a pioneer of the sociology of law, one of the founders of the Research Committee on Sociology of Law – RCSL together with William Evan and Renato Treves in 1962.

Let me mention three things:

1. Personal memories

I met Podgorecki in September 1983 at the RCSL meeting in Antwerp which Jean van Houtte had organised. You can find the programme on the RCSL website. (The registration fee was \$20 including RCSL membership for 1980–1982.)

Most of the speakers mentioned have either passed away or dropped out of the work in our field because of their age: As far as I can see, they were all men, except for Britt-Marie Blegvad from Copenhagen was mentioned in the programme as chair of a working group “European Institute of Sociology of Law”. Times have changed. Meanwhile often women make a majority in programmes of RCSL conferences.

On Saturday September 10th Podgorecki gave the closing speech on “Three levels of operation of Law”. At the time he had a position in Ottawa/Canada. He started his speech mentioning that the day before he had been to an exhibition in Antwerp of the Flemish painter James Ensor (1860–1949) talking about his impressions watching the pictures. Ensors oeuvre is very diverse in terms of content and style. He is considered as part of the avantgarde, a representative of modernism who received late recognition. This lends itself to drawing parallels between Sociology of Law and Ensor. Evans and Podgorecki had said at the ISA World Conference explaining the reason for their proposal to found RCSL “In the past 50 years several efforts have been made to develop the sociology of law. It now appears that the intellectual climate, as far as sociological theory and methodology are concerned, is conducive to significant progress in this interdisciplinary field». <https://rcsl.hypotheses.org/william-m-evan>



James Ensor, Les Juges [The Judges], 1898, oil on canvas. Public domain. Image source: [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:James_Ensor_-_Les_Juges_-_WGA01499.jpg)



James Ensor, Squelette arrêtant masques (Skeleton Stopping Masks), 1891. Oil on canvas. Public domain. Image via [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:James_Ensor_-_Squelette_arrêtant_masques_-_WGA01499.jpg)

2. The second point I want to mention is Podgorecki's importance for research on Knowledge and Opinion about Law. This was as far as I can see the first

international comparative project in the field of sociology of law. It started in the late 1960s and in 1973 Podgorecki published together with Jean van Houtte (Belgium), Vincke (The Netherlands), Berl Kutchinsky (Copenhagen) a small book (at the time books still tended to be slim) on the subject (London, Robertson). The aim of the research was: “What is known, at the moment, about the so-called legal consciousness of the common man?” As a young student and scholar I was fascinated by the research which was also taken up by my German colleagues Wolfgang Kaupen, Holger Volks and Raymund Werle. Becoming RCSL President in 2018 one of my goals was to revitalize this comparative research which is also related to Marina Kurkchian's work with the RCSL working group on Legal Cultures she has chaired for many years. In particular I dealt with the aspect of gender in KoL (“are there differences in the knowledge and opinion about law between men and women”) and the importance of teaching law at school in our increasingly multi-cultural societies in order to harmonize KoL in different groups of society¹. I gave a presentation on my special aspects of KoL titled “Podgorecki and the Importance of Teaching Human Rights” at the online conference “Complete and Crippled Human Rights: On the Concepts of Adam Podgorecki” on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Podgorecki's death on the 14th of December 2023. The Conference was also organised by Krzysztof Motyka of the Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II. I was lucky that in Eastern Europe legal consciousness/knowledge and opinion about law was revisited as a current topic by Grazyna Skapska in Poland and Balazs Fekete in Hungary and several other colleagues. Balazs Fekete was able to set up a RCSL Working Group on the topic in 2023 and is organising a workshop on “Legal Cultures and Legal Consciousness” in Budapest on the 8th of December 2025. <https://rcsl.hypotheses.org/7549> This shows how vividly Podgorecki lives on in our memory and how strongly he continues to influence our work in sociology of law to this day.

3. And finally it is an honour and pleasure for me to mention that exactly this year I have won together with Hakan Hyden the Podgorecki Prize the Research Committee for the Sociology of Law awards every two years for lifetime achievement in sociology of law. The prize was established in 2006 “in honour and memory of the lifetime achievements of Adam Podgorecki and his inaugurate place in the history of RCSL”, as Alex Ziegert stated in an article for the RCSL Newsletter. Ziegert also emphasized: Podgorecki “became one of the great leaders in the field with a large number of innovative contributions to socio-legal research,

delivered with his inimitable personal style, which was direct, engaging and uncompromising and is fondly remembered by his many admiring colleagues in Warsaw, Oxford and Ottawa and all over the world.”

<https://rcsl.hypotheses.org/adam-podgorecki>

1) Knowledge and Opinion About Law – The importance of Law Related Education, in: Combining the Legal and the Social in Sociology of Law. Anthology in Memory of Reza Banakar, ed. Hakan Hyden, David Nelken, Roger Cotterell, Ulrike Schultz. Oxford. Bloomsbury, 161–172.

Ulrike Schultz

ulrike.schultz@fernuni-hagen.de

WORKING GROUPS REPORTS

Law in the Anthropocene – Proposal for a New RCSL Working Group

A proposal is currently underway to create a new Working Group within the RCSL focused on the intersections between law, society, and the environment in the context of the Anthropocene – an epoch defined by humanity’s profound and irreversible impact on Earth’s systems.

This initiative arises from the recognition that the ecological transformations of our time call for renewed socio-legal inquiry. The Anthropocene challenges long-standing assumptions about law’s foundations, revealing the limits of anthropocentric and state-centered paradigms when facing the global, intergenerational, and multispecies dimensions of environmental crises. Legal scholars and sociologists alike are increasingly engaging with issues such as climate litigation, environmental constitutionalism, rights of nature, and ecological governance, yet there remains a pressing need for an integrated space to exchange perspectives and build comparative and transnational analyses.

The proposed RCSL Working Group aims to offer such a platform. It would bring together researchers examining how legal norms, institutions, and practices are being reshaped by ecological change – and how, in turn, law contributes to shaping our collective responses to it. Themes of interest might include, but not exclusively: (1) the social dynamics of climate and environmental justice movements; (2) the relationship between law, environment, and local forms of knowledge; (3) the redefinition of core legal categories such as responsibility, personhood, and property; and (4) the role of law in mediating global and local environmental transformations.

Building on the conversations initiated at the 5th ISA Forum of Sociology (*Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene*, Rabat, 2025), this Working Group seeks to consolidate a community of scholars addressing these questions from diverse methodological and regional perspectives. It will encourage dialogue across traditions and promote critical, interdisciplinary engagement with environmental challenges.

At this preliminary stage, the initiative remains open to collective definition. The precise focus, name, and structure of the group will be developed collaboratively. An **online meeting is planned for Easter 2026** to discuss the proposal and prepare the formal application to the RCSL.

Colleagues interested in contributing—whether as founding members or collaborators—are warmly invited to express their interest by emailing cassiano.ribas@outlook.com **before 30th January 2026**. All scholars working on environmental law, climate justice, ecological governance, or related fields are welcome.

The complete version of the proposal, including references and conceptual framing, is available at <https://rcsl.hypotheses.org/law-in-the-anthropocene-proposal-for-a-new-rcsl-working-group>

Cassiano de Toledo Ribas

RCSL WG Comparative Studies of Legal Professions

Notice of Meeting:

Lawyers and the Rule of Law Under Pressure

In an era marked by global crises, shifting societal expectations, and rapid technological change, the legal profession and the nature of lawyering are under unprecedented pressure. Lawyers are navigating shifting conceptions of lawyer behaviour and involvement, with complex ethical dilemmas, increasing workloads, a growing demand for faster, more accessible justice and the benefit or pressure of an uncertain digital intrusion. As a result, what it means to be a lawyer must be continually reexamined and redefined.

Our next working group meeting will be in **Rotterdam at Erasmus University from 22nd to 23rd June 2026** (please put these dates in your calendar), thanks to Nina Holvast, who will co-host the Meeting.

As an **organising theme**, we aim to discuss what it means to be a lawyer under crisis and pressure:

–What do these developments tell us about the nature of lawyering itself?

-How do lawyers uphold the rule of law when the systems that support it are strained?

-What reforms are needed to sustain the profession without compromising its core values?

-Can lawyers continue to serve justice while also protecting their own well-being?

-How have lawyers managed with crises in the past?

-Can we educate Lawyers for turmoil and change?

As usual, these themes are not intended to be prescriptive and all issues, themes and approaches are welcome. Sub-group leaders will wish to develop their own group themes and interests. A list of sub-groups and leaders with emails is included below.

The Working Group Meeting will open with a **plenary session** based around Rick Abel's five books on "*Defending American Democracy- Resistance to Trump and Trumpism*": How Autocrats are held Accountable; How Autocrats Subvert Elections, How Autocrats Seek Power, How Autocrats Abuse Power and; How Autocrats Attack Expertise (all Routledge, 2023-5). The author will present the series in the context of the Working Group interests. Rick asks for comments on autocracy from other countries.

The **Working Group sessions** will be divided as usual into sub-group sessions and sub-group leaders will organise how many sessions their group needs depending on the number of papers.

We will be asking for Abstracts together with an indication of attendance by **31st January 2026**. Registration will be by **28th March 2026**.

We are very grateful to Nina Holvast to organise the meeting for us at her university. We will circulate more information later.

And remember to contact the **subgroup heads** in whose sessions you want to present:

- Legal Ethics, Tamara Butter: t.t.butter@uva.nl
- Family, Policy and the Law, Benoit Bastard and Mavis Maclean: benoit.bastard1@gmail.com, mavis.maclean@spi.ox.ac.uk
- International Lawyering and Large Law Firms, Gabriele Plickert: gplickert@cpp.edu
- Judiciary, Nina Holvast and Luca Verzelloni: holvast@law.eur.nl, luca.verzelloni@unimib.it
- Access to Justice and Legal Aid, Alan Paterson: prof.alan.paterson@strath.ac.uk
- Legal Education, Avrom Sherr: avrom.sherr@gmail.com
- Legal Professional Values and Identities, Hilary Sommerlad: h.a.k.sommerlad@leeds.ac.uk
- Women/Gender in the Legal Profession, Ulrike Schultz: ulrike.schultz@fernuni-hagen.de

- Legal Histories, Eyal Katvan: drkatvan@gmail.com
- Lawyers and State Transformation/Imperialism, Sara Dezalay: sara.dezalay@gmail.com
- Notaries, Ulrike Schultz: ulrike.schultz@fernuni-hagen.de

Ulrike Schultz

ulrike.schultz@fernuni-hagen.de

RCSL WG Histories of Sociology of Law

The Working Group "Histories of Sociology of Law" had a first, very productive meeting in November 2024. A couple of projects are underway or being planned: among other things, members participate in the section on history in the Encyclopedia on the Sociology of Law, research is being done on the archive of André-Jacques Arnaud, and a workshop on methodological issues will take place at the Max-Planck-Institute in Frankfurt in 2026.

The Working group has a mailing list and welcomes new members.

The second meeting took place in November 2025.

If you are interested, write to

Christian Boulanger

boulanger@ihlt.mpg.de

RCSL WG Law and Popular Culture

From 17 to 18 July 2025, the RCSL Working Group on Law and Popular Culture held workshop at the International Institute for Sociology of Law in Oñati. Its topic was "The impact of artificial intelligence on popular culture and law: a socio-legal analysis". It was organised by Iker Nabaskues and Francisco Javier Fernández Galarreta who also presented papers. The Working Group's Chair, Stefan Machura, gave the opening presentation "Law and technology in popular culture". Peter Robson spoke about "Court architecture and the digital world", Guy Osborn and Mark James addressed the topic "Out with the law? Can technology fix a broken event ticketing system?", and Leire Berasaluze Gerrikagoitia about "The recruitment of human trafficking victims through the internet". Among the other participants who contributed papers were some who held their first ever conference presentation. The workshop was very well supported by staff from the Oñati Institute.

Stefan Machura

RCSL WG Gender, Law and Society

The "Gender, Law and Society" WG focuses on the gendered nature of law and the legal construction of gender, taking as its starting point the law in its contexts. The WG aims to provide a space for discussing theoretical and empirical research on a variety of related topics. The following sessions were organised in 2023–2025:

- "Environmental Justice as a Gender Issue", 5th ISA Forum of Sociology "Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene, Rabat (Morocco), 6–11 July 2025,
- "Women in Law: An International Perspective", RCSL Annual Meeting "Representing Law, Bangor University (UK), 3–6 September 2024
- "Gender in Law and Society", Annual Meeting del RCSL "Law, Society and Digital Pasts, Presents and Futures", Lund (Sweden), 30 August – 1 September 2023

To become a member of the WG and share your ideas, contact

Barbara Giovanna Bello (Tuscia University)
 Letizia Mancini (University of Milan)
 at: genderwg@gmail.com

RCSL WG Civil Justice and Dispute Resolution

WG Dispute Resolution held two sessions at the Rabat meeting. One was on Dispute Resolution and Innovation, bringing together research on the context of utilizing technologies such as AI and online tools in dispute resolution procedures. The other was on Gender Issues and Access to Justice. As WG Dispute Resolution, we held a webinar on March 11, 2025. It compared mediation procedures in Italy and Japan.

Hideaki Irie
hirie@law.kyushu-u.ac.jp

INTRODUCING INSTITUTIONS

Portuguese Thematic Section on Sociology of Law and Justice (ST-SDJ)

Part of the Portuguese Sociological Association (APS), ST-SDJ was established in 2014, building on the earlier

work developed by the thematic area "Law, Crime, Dependency".

ST-SDJ brings together scholars from several national and international institutions, promoting dialogue across disciplines such as Sociology, Law, Criminology, Psychology, and related fields. It provides a dynamic space for interdisciplinary debate, collaboration, and scientific production on key issues concerning law and justice in our contemporary societies.

Its main activities include organising biennial national and international scientific meetings (from the [First meeting](#) at the University of Coimbra in 2016 to the [Fifth meeting](#) at the University of Maia in 2024), coordinating thematic sessions at APS Conferences, editing special issues of academic journals, developing research networks, and promoting public-facing initiatives such as publications and, very soon, a podcast.



Session at the ST-SDJ V National Meeting 2024 – University of Maia, Portugal

Since its creation, ST-SDJ has been committed to interdisciplinarity, international engagement, and critical reflection on justice systems, rights, and social inequalities.

ST-SDJ welcomes all scholars interested in these topics, encouraging academic and professional contributions that enrich the debate and strengthen the community of sociology of law and justice in Portugal and beyond.

VI Meeting 2026 – Celebrating 10 Years of ST-SDJ

The Sixth National Meeting of ST-SDJ will take place on **30–31 March 2026** at the University of Coimbra, marking the 10th anniversary of the Section. Coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the Portuguese Constitution, the meeting's theme is "The Constitution of the Social and Political: Affirming Fundamental Rights, Responding to Challenges and Imagining the Future".

The event features a plenary conference with keynote speaker Roberto Gargarella alongside Pierre Guibentif, exploring constitutionalism and fundamental rights from international perspectives. The meeting is co-organized by the Faculty of Economics (FEUC), the Centre for Social Studies (CES-UC), and the Doctoral Programme in Sociology of the State, Law and Justice, with the Court of Appeal of Coimbra as partner institution.

For the call for papers and further details, see page 24. For inquiries, contact the

ST-SDJ Coordination Team
@ direito@aps.pt

PODCAST SPOTLIGHT

In this new 'Podcast Spotlight' section, we highlight audio resources that engage with socio-legal scholarship, methodological approaches, and substantive issues relevant to our community. Each newsletter will feature selected podcasts that showcase innovative research, stimulating conversations, and the work of scholars within or relevant to our field, offering members an additional way to engage with current debates and developments in sociology of law.

"Uncommon Sense" from The Sociological Review

While not specifically focused on socio-legal scholarship, "Uncommon Sense" – the podcast from The Sociological Review – offers a creative and intellectually stimulating resource for scholars working at the intersection of law and society. The podcast's distinctive format organizes each episode around a single concept viewed through sociological perspectives, many of which have direct relevance to socio-legal inquiry.

Hosted by Rosie Hancock (University of Notre Dame Australia) and Alexis Hieu Truong (University of Ottawa), the podcast brings insights to familiar terms, encouraging listeners to question taken-for-granted ideas about society. Now in its fourth season, the series has built an notable catalog of episodes examining concepts like "rules," "community," "privilege," "margins," and "solidarity"—all central to socio-legal analysis.



Of particular interest to RCSL members is the episode featuring socio-legal scholar Swetha Ballakrishnen on "Rules," which explores what rules are for, who makes them, and what's at stake when we assume they are neutral.

The podcast also provides open access PDF files with notes and transcripts for each episode, making it a valuable teaching resource.

For socio-legal scholars looking to enrich their conceptual toolkit or seeking fresh perspectives on familiar research terrain, "Uncommon Sense" offers an opportunity to engage with sociology's theoretical contributions to understanding law's social dimensions.

Available at [Uncommon Sense](#)

"A just state for everyone?" Researching access to administrative justice in the digital era"

by Julia Dahlvik

In this podcast Julia Dahlvik gives insights into her research project on access to justice in the context of increasing digitalization of public services. The project's starting point is the observation that the digital



transformation of public services comes along with two interlinked challenges: the risk of social groups being excluded from these services (digital inequality) and, as a result, restricted access to justice – a fundamental right that is also a prerequisite to exercising other rights. Applying a qualitative mixed-methods approach in a multi-sited case study she will investigate citizens' experiences as well as public ombuds institutions' practices in promoting equal access to administrative justice for all.

Find more about Julia's project [here](#).

Available on [You Tube](#), [Spotify](#) and [Apple Podcasts](#).

"On the Frontlines of Democracy" with Sanjay Ruparelia

In an era of democratic turbulence, the podcast "On the Frontlines of Democracy" offers critical reflections on the challenges facing democracies worldwide. Launched in April 2023 and hosted by Professor Sanjay Ruparelia, holder of the



Jarislowsky Democracy Chair at Toronto Metropolitan University, this series explores fundamental questions about democratic resilience, institutional reform, and the balance between rights and collective action.

The podcast addresses urgent contemporary issues: How can democracies protect individual rights and the rule of law amid popular mistrust, severe partisanship, and resurgent nationalism? How might they reduce inequalities of power, wealth, and status while defending deep diversity and confronting climate change in the digital age? What strategies can revitalize civic engagement, empower public institutions, and resist autocratic threats?

Recent episodes feature conversations with economist Branko Milanović on globalization and inequality, former Canadian Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin on the judiciary's role in constitutional democracy, political theorist Anne Norton on reimagining democracy as "wild" and expansive, and journalist Carol Off on how political language has been weaponized. Other notable guests include Ho-Fung Hung on the political economy of US-China relations and Edward Luce on American power.

For socio-legal scholars interested in the institutional, political, and normative dimensions of democracy, this podcast offers rich analysis that bridges political theory, comparative politics, and contemporary policy challenges.

The series is accompanied by a companion lecture series, both produced through the Jarislowsky Democracy Chair.

Available at [Frontlines of Democracy Podcast](#)

Patrícia André

patricia.andre@novalaw.unl.pt

BOOK REVIEWS

Call for Contributions: New Book Review Section

Starting from the next newsletter, we are excited to announce a new section featuring brief reviews of books within the area of socio-legal studies. This is a great opportunity to highlight new scholarship, share insights with the RCSL community and spark interesting discussions.

Reviews should take up to 600 words, summarizing key arguments and including critical engagement and reflections.

Book suggestions and reviews should be sent to newsletter.rcsl@gmail.com.

Luisa Hedler

lthf.bhl@cbs.dk

CALLS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

In this section, we share events and calls for papers, conferences, and other opportunities that might be of interest to the RCSL community.

APPROACHING DEADLINES

VI Meeting of the Thematic Section on Sociology of Law and Justice – Portuguese Sociological Association (APS)

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts

Location: Faculty of Economics, University of Coimbra

Format: In-person

Date: 30–31 March 2026

Title: **The Constitution of the Social and Political: Affirming Fundamental Rights, Responding to Challenges and Imagining the Future**

Description: The Sixth Meeting of the Thematic Section on Sociology of Law and Justice of the Portuguese Sociological Association will take place on 30–31 March 2026, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the Portuguese Constitution. Co-organized by the Faculty of Economics (FEUC), the Centre for Social Studies (CES-UC), and the Doctoral Programme in Sociology of the State, Law and Justice, with the Court of Appeal of Coimbra as partner institution, this interdisciplinary gathering invites reflection on fundamental rights and their role in social transformations.

On 2 April 2026, Portugal commemorates fifty years since the Constituent Assembly approved the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic. This historic milestone invites reflection on fundamental rights and their role in social transformations. The meeting will serve as a space for plural dialogue on the present and future of democracy, addressing contemporary challenges such as disinformation, polarization, nationalism, and armed conflicts.

The meeting welcomes researchers and practitioners working in law and justice from all disciplinary backgrounds and institutional settings, with particular emphasis on encouraging participation from early career researchers and scholars working in Portuguese-speaking and international contexts.

Deadline: 15 December 2025

More Info: direito@aps.pt / [website link](#)

ECPR General Conference 2026 – Section on Judicial Politics in an Age of Democratic Contestation

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts

Institution/Location: Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland

Date: 8–11 September 2026

Description: The Standing Group on Law and Courts invites paper submissions for the section "Judicial Politics in an Age of Democratic Contestation" at the 2026 ECPR General Conference. The section includes ten pre-planned panels: Towards trustworthy AI in adjudication; Judicial authority and political intent: Quantitative approaches to judicial decision-making; Specialised courts in multilevel governance: Authority, dialogue, and institutional dynamics; Judicial independence and policymaking; Off-bench judicial politics: External determinants of judicial behaviour and outcomes; Courts and their allies; The aftermath of non-compliance: Responses and political dynamics; The politics of strategic litigation: Democratic safeguard or threat?; The politics of judicial reform; Juridification and accountability in the welfare sector. Submission options: Option 1 (recommended): Contact relevant panel chairs directly by **15 December 2025** to submit to a specific panel; Option 2: Submit individual papers directly to the section by **5 January 2026**.

More Info: Section Chairs: Thalia Gerzso (thalia.gerzso@york.ac.uk) and Johan Karlsson Schaffer (j.k.schaffer@gu.se) / [website link](#)

Research Workshop on Open Constitutional Democracy

Announcement Type: Call for Applications

Institution: University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Date: 26–27 August 2026

Description: The University of Lausanne invites applications from early career scholars to participate in a research workshop exploring the compatibility of deliberative democratic innovations with existing constitutional institutions. The workshop aims to bring together early career and senior scholars whose research engages with how deliberative democratic mechanisms—citizens' assemblies, participatory fora, digital platforms, and other innovations—can be integrated within constitutional frameworks at domestic, regional, and international levels.

A public roundtable with invited senior scholars will take place on the evening of 26 August 2026, following the first day of the workshop. Eligibility: Early career scholars (including PhD candidates, postdoctoral

researchers, and researchers within approximately eight years of completing their doctorate) working in law, political science, philosophy, or related disciplines with an interest in the workshop's themes.

Deadline: 19 December 2025

More Info: chiara.valsangiaco-balmelli@unil.ch / [website link](#)

RC21 Conference 2026: Inequalities and the City

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts and Posters

Institution: Research Committee on Sociology of Urban and Regional Development (RC21)

Date: 20–22 July 2026

Location: University of Vienna, Austria

Description: The Research Committee on Sociology of Urban and Regional Development (RC21) invites scholars and researchers to submit abstracts for its 2026 conference exploring critical urban issues and fostering dialogue on urban inequalities.

Paper presentations: The conference features 108 thematic sessions covering diverse topics including housing and land taxation, migration and the post-migrant city, organized crime and urban inequality, digital frontiers, climate adaptation, platform labour, megaprojects, food systems, gentrification, urban displacement, informal housing, care inequalities, educational divides, policing and urban resistance, tourism and overtourism, housing decarbonization, and many others. "Pitch Your Work" sessions: Opportunity to present books, documentaries, or movies published or released between 2024 and 2026. Session organizers will conduct abstract selection. Contact session organizers directly with questions about abstract selection or session-related matters.

Deadline: 29 December 2025

More Info: [website link](#)

Ethnography and Law: Methods and Challenges in Times of Crisis

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts

Institution: University of Hamburg, Germany

Date: 2–3 July 2026

Description: This interdisciplinary workshop explores methodological approaches to studying law ethnographically against the backdrop of contemporary crises of the rule of law. Paper proposals invited on: Innovative ethnographic approaches to studying contemporary law; Methodological challenges and opportunities in ethnographic legal research; Questions of positionality, access, and critique in ethnographic studies of law; Bridging perspectives from legal anthropology, legal sociology, socio-legal studies,

and jurisprudence; Capturing law's transformation in times of global crisis.

Deadline: 31 December 2025

More Info: ethnography-and-law-conference@uni-hamburg.de

Australasian Society of Legal Philosophy Essay Competition 2026

Announcement Type: Essay Competition
Institution: ASLP - Australasian Society of Legal Philosophy

Description: The ASLP invites submissions for its annual Essay Competition, designed to encourage original research and writing in legal theory and philosophy of law by early career scholars around the world. The winning essay will receive a cash prize of AU\$1,000 plus a contribution of up to AU\$500 towards attendance at the Society's annual conference to present the essay as a paper. The competition is open to students currently enrolled in a postgraduate degree program (Master's or Doctoral) in any discipline. Essays may address any topic in legal theory or philosophy of law.

Deadline: 30 January 2026

More Info: AusLegalPhil@gmail.com / [website link](#)

Law, Culture, and Humanities 28th Annual Conference: Uprooted Law: Reflecting on the Origins and Outgrowths of Law

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts
Institution: DePaul University College of Law, USA
Format: In-person conference
Date: 17-18 June 2026

Description: What do we follow when we follow the law? Is law what is on the books, or what is observed, or what should be observed? Particularly today, when the line between legal norms and norms rooted elsewhere has blurred, it is difficult to determine law's location. What is law's function in times of technological, political, and societal change? Does the law have a responsibility toward itself, and if so, who can be trusted with its observation?

This conference invites reflections on the origins of law in the broadest sense. What substantiates the rule of law in practice, and how does law itself mediate the difference between original and copy, present and past? How do an ensemble of methods, disciplines, movements, texts, and technologies come together to help law create the past and future? Given that law borrows from other areas of culture—from literature and rhetoric to the sciences and dramatic arts—the humanities are in a premier position to respond to these questions.

The conference welcomes papers, roundtables, and work-in-progress sessions that help us understand law's current position by looking at it through a humanistic lens.

Deadline: 31 January 2026

More Info: Ich@lawculturehumanities.com / [website link](#)

Environment and Society in East-Central Europe Conference (ESIEE)

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts
Institutions: European Society for Environmental History, Slovak Historical Society, University of Ostrava, and the Department of History at the University of Ostrava
Location: University of Ostrava, Czechia
Date: 28-29 May 2026

Description: The Environment and Society in East-Central Europe Conference 2026 invites scholars from history, environmental studies, sociology, geography, and related disciplines to explore how humans have shaped—and been shaped by—the environment in the East-Central European region. Topics include environmental change and resource use; environmental activism and civil society; borders, cross-border regions, and environmental cooperation; forests, woodlands, and commons management; technology and nature; envirotechnical systems in history; narratives of "slow hope" in times of crisis. Keynote speakers: Stephen Brain (Mississippi State University, USA) and Doubravka Olšáková (Charles University, Czechia).

Deadline: 31 January 2026

More Info: cesh@osu.cz / [website link](#)

ICON•S 2026 Annual Conference: Reimagining Public Law for a Fractured World: Technology, Identity & Truth

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts and Panels
Institution: ICON•S - International Society of Public Law

Description: ICON•S invites submissions for its 2026 Annual Conference. While submissions relating to the conference theme are particularly encouraged, proposals addressing all areas of public law, broadly defined, are welcome. Submission types: individual papers; fully-formed panels/book roundtables; participant in fully-formed panel/book roundtable. Requirements: Title, abstract/description (maximum 250 words), and biographical details. Active ICON•S membership required to submit. Membership fee waivers available for those facing financial hardship.

Deadline: 15 February 2026

More Info: [website link](#)

XXXV Latin American Congress of Sociology – 75th Anniversary

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts

Institution: ALAS – Latin American Sociological Association

Location: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Date: 26–31 July 2026

Title: Between Polycrisis and Alternatives: Horizons of Critical Latin American Sociology

Description: Founded in 1950, the Latin American Sociological Association (ALAS) celebrates its 75th anniversary with a congress addressing the multiple crises facing Latin American and Caribbean sociology today. The congress theme explores how political, economic, climate, and geopolitical crises intersect while highlighting counter-tendencies through Indigenous peoples, Black and peasant communities, feminisms, environmentalisms, and urban experiences developing alternatives across the Americas. The congress features 27 Working Groups, including the WG on Socio-legal Studies and Institutions. Submission types: working group papers and roundtables.

Deadline: 15 February 2026

More Info: [website link](#)

Special Issue: People-Centered Justice in Latin America

Announcement Type: Call for manuscripts

Publication: Revista Direito GV

Format: Special Issue

Description: Revista Direito GV invites original empirical research for a special issue on People-Centered Justice in Latin America. The editors seek rigorous, data-driven studies that illuminate how civil justice systems impact the lives of everyday people across the region. Civil justice challenges are universal, yet they do not affect everyone equally. Low-income populations and groups minoritized by religion, ethnicity, race, sexuality, gender, or disability bear the heaviest burdens. Over the past two decades, scholars have shifted from analyzing court structures, legal traditions, or statutory content to centering the justice experiences of everyday people, including how they understand, use, and shape law and legal institutions. Guest Editors: Luciana Gross Cunha (FGV DIREITO SP); Rebecca Sandefur (Arizona State University); Daniela Gabbay (FGV DIREITO SP)

Deadline: 15 February 2026

More Info: revistadireitogv@fgv.br / [website link](#)

8th International Conference Social Boundaries of Work: The Meanings of Work in Organizational Contexts

Announcement Type: Call for Group Proposals and Paper Abstracts

Institution: Sociology of Work Section of the Polish Sociological Association

Location: University of Łódź, Poland

Date: 21–23 October 2026

Description: The co-organizers invite participation in this international conference exploring the meaning of work from the perspective of various social groups in diverse regional and local contexts.

The world of work is experiencing overlapping crises: armed conflicts, refugee movements, the COVID-19 pandemic, and climate change are forcing labor market changes. Digital transformation and artificial intelligence are redefining traditional work roles. Gig and platform work challenge existing notions of social security and corporate responsibility. Remote and hybrid work have blurred boundaries between home and office. The conference seeks answers to questions about which entities are shifting work boundaries, where traditional boundaries are blurring fastest, what new forms are emerging, and how different groups of workers experience and negotiate these changes. Submission types: thematic group proposals – **by 15 December 2025** – to socialboundariesofwork@gmail.com; paper proposals – **15 January – 1 March 2026**.

The conference welcomes submissions from academics, practitioners, trade union representatives, labor movements, employers' organizations, journalists, and anyone interested in work-related issues.

More Info: [website link](#)

UC Berkeley Center for the Study of Law and Society – Visiting Scholars Program 2026–27

Announcement Type: Call for Applications

Institution: CSLS – Center for the Study of Law and Society, Berkeley Law

Date: 2026–27 academic year

Description: The CSLS invites applications for its Visiting Scholars Program for the 2026–27 academic year. The Center fosters empirical research and theoretical analysis concerning legal institutions, legal processes, legal change, and the social consequences of law. Closely linked to Berkeley Law, CSLS creates a multidisciplinary environment with distinguished socio-legal scholars in sociology of law, political science, criminal justice studies, law and economics, legal history, law and psychology, and legal and social philosophy, along with visiting scholars from the United States and around the world. Benefits include library privileges at the Law School and all campus libraries; invitation to the weekly CSLS

Speaker Series, workshops, and scholarly exchanges; UCB campus privileges (athletic facilities, permission to audit classes); and, when possible, shared or other office space and use of computer, internet, and other facilities.

Deadline: 2 March 2026

More Info: pamelaerickson@berkeley.edu / [website link](#)

32nd IVR World Congress: Law in the Face of the Changing Problems of the World

Announcement Type: Call for Abstracts or Workshop Proposals

Institution: IVR – International Association for Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy

Location: Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

Date: 28 June – 3 July 2026

Description: The IVR invites proposals for special workshops and individual papers for its 32nd World Congress. While the congress theme is "Law in the Face of the Changing Problems of the World," papers and panels need not be restricted to this theme. Proposals on topics related to philosophy of law and social philosophy in a broader sense are welcomed. Special Workshop Proposals: Convenors should submit proposals dealing with a particular theme or subject (maximum 750 words). Individual Paper Proposals: Authors may submit proposals (maximum 300 words). Joint submissions with up to two authors are permitted; each co-author must register individually and indicate co-authorship in the submission. The organizing committee will create working groups for individual paper submitters on similar topics, to be posted on the website prior to the Congress. Create an account and submit through <https://submit.ivr2026istanbul.org/> by **30 May 2026**. The organizing committee will contact authors by the end of each month. Accepted proposals will be posted on the Programme menu.

More Info: info@ivr2026istanbul.org / [website link](#)

Special Issue: Global Value Chains in Transition: Deglobalization, Innovation, and the Future of Competitiveness

Announcement Type: Call for Papers

Publication: Journal of the Knowledge Economy

Format: Journal Special Issue

Description: As global value chains (GVCs) undergo profound shifts driven by geopolitical tensions, protectionist trade policies, technological advancements, and post-pandemic restructuring, the foundations of global competitiveness are being redefined. This special issue invites scholars to explore these dynamic transformations and their implications

for firms, industries, and economies, examining the intersection of GVC restructuring, innovation, technological change, and economic policy in a time of increasing global uncertainty and fragmentation.

Deadline for manuscripts: 31 May 2026

More Info: mweres@sgh.waw.pl / [website link](#)

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

Access to Justice in a Changing World

Announcement Type: Call for Monographs and Edited Collections Proposals

Description: Edinburgh University Press invites proposals for monographs and edited collections for the book series *Access to Justice in a Changing World*. Access to justice is a widely studied phenomenon, relevant to jurisdictions around the world and different fields of law. Technology, alternative justice forums, and non-legal actors are becoming increasingly central to debates around the everyday realisation of rights and interests. This series takes an explicitly bottom-up and decentred approach to access to justice, contrasting with the top-down, law-framed, and court-focused approach of orthodox scholarship. A result of this approach is that the series particularly welcomes empirically-based work, interdisciplinary approaches that combine legal and other perspectives, and work which considers access to justice in a wider social and comparative context. In addition, the series particularly welcomes work from the Global South, which remains under-represented in current scholarship.

Deadline: Rolling

More Info: [website link](#). You can also contact the Series Editor for further information and advice: Chris Gill, Professor of Socio-Legal Studies, University of Glasgow, chris.gill@glasgow.ac.uk.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Neuroscience, Neurotechnology, and Human Rights Conference 2026

Announcement Type: Conference

Institution: Centro de Estudios sobre Genética y Derecho, Universidad Externado de Colombia

Location: Universidad Externado de Colombia, Building H, Bogotá, Colombia

Format: Hybrid: in-person and virtual via Microsoft Teams

Date: 19–20 January 2026

Description: The Centro de Estudios sobre Genética y Derecho at Universidad Externado de Colombia hosts this conference bringing together professors, researchers, policymakers, and students from Colombia and abroad. The conference will be

conducted mostly in English. Keynote speakers: Prof. Matthias Mahlmann, Universität Zürich; Prof. Christoph Bublitz, Universität Hamburg; Prof. Sjors Ligthart, Universiteit Utrecht & Tilburg

Conference themes: Day 1: Fundamentals of human rights and new technologies: from history to the essential nucleus of protection; Day 2: Neurorights, neurotechnology, and regulation in Latin America.

More Info: centro.genetica@uexternado.edu.co / [website link](#)

Equal Access to Justice: Between Normativity and Reality

Announcement Type: Conference

Institution: WZB – Berlin Social Science Centre

Organizers: Michael Wrase, Alexander Graser, Anna Löbbert

Location: WZB, Reichpietschufer 50, 10785 Berlin, Raum A 300.

Date: 26 – 27 March 2026

Description: Equal access to justice is a central prerequisite for democratic societies. Yet, empirical evidence from around the world shows that the gap between normative aspirations and real experience remains wide. Legal aid systems are under pressure, digital innovations open up new opportunities but also create new barriers, and social inequalities have a profound impact on legal consciousness and the use of law. In times of growing social and economic polarisation, the question of how to implement equitable access to justice becomes ever more pressing. The conference brings together international and German perspectives to discuss these challenges in an interdisciplinary setting and to identify empirically grounded paths for future research on access to justice. Over two days, current issues and research in the field of access to justice research will be explored. The aim is to strengthen the dialogue between existing empirical research in German-speaking countries and leading international scholarship.

More Info: lgi.events@wzb.eu / [website link](#)

SLSA Annual Conference 2026

Announcement Type: Conference

Institution: Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA)

Location: University of Sussex, Brighton & Hove, United Kingdom

Date: 30 March – 1 April 2026

Description: The conference has been running since the association was founded in 1990 and is an opportunity for those in the field of socio-legal studies to share knowledge and network with others.

More Info: slsa2026@sussex.ac.uk / [website with access links](#)

75 Years of Sociology / BSA Annual Conference 2026

Announcement Type: Conference

Institution: BSA – British Sociological Association

Location: University of Manchester

Date: 8 – 10 April 2026

Description: The British Sociological Association Annual Conference returns in April 2026. Held on the eve of the Association's 75th anniversary, this year's conference offers a moment to think sociologically with time: how we periodise change, how we inherit and rework ideas, and how our histories shape the contours of our present.

As the BSA approaches its seventy-fifth year, the conference welcomes reflexive engagements with the discipline itself – its trajectories, tensions, boundaries, and blind spots. What have been sociology's dominant frames, and who has been left out of the telling? How has the discipline responded to shifts in political life, knowledge production, and the university – and where might it go next?

Plenary speakers include Jason Arday and Les Back.

More Info: events@britsoc.org.uk / [website link](#)

Patrícia André

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Book reviews
Other scholarly activities relevant to our socio-legal community

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When submitting, please include a brief headline and your contact information. Images are welcome (please include photo credits).

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