

## **The Legal Profession Group**

The **International Working Group for Comparative Studies of Legal Professions** was established, more than twenty years ago, by Richard Abel and Philip Lewis, to carry out an international research project on lawyers – how they developed as a profession and how they control their markets. 27 scholars from all around the world met to discuss the subject in Bellagio in 1984. This research was published, at the end of the 1980s in the three volumes of *Lawyers in Society* (Berkeley / Los Angeles / London: University of California Press 1988/89).

In 1985, at the RCSL (Research Committee on Sociology of Law) Conference in Aix-en-Provence the decision was taken to carry on work as a RCSL working group. The WG is involved in the activities of RCSL, especially in its bi-annual meetings, and the activities of ISA (the International Sociological Association) of which the RCSL is part.

The successive Chairs of the WG have been: Terry Halliday, Bill Felstiner, Benoit Bastard, Emmanuel Lazega, Ulrike Schultz and since 2014 Rosemary Auchmuty (E-mail: r.auchmuty@reading.ac.uk)

The research topics covered by the WG are increasingly diverse: they include studies of other professions in a comparative perspective, such as the judiciary or notaries. The WG is divided in thematic sub-groups (see below their titles and the names of sub-group leaders). Sub-groups have their own agenda and have regular meetings, either within the WG meetings and RCSL congresses, or specific ad hoc meetings, or Onati workshops. WG meetings are devoted to the presentation and discussion of comparative research projects carried out by members. A great number of publications have come out of their activities, particularly collective books or special issues of journals.

The Working Group holds a specific meeting every two years, preferably in France.

WG members have to be members of the RCSL. They are scholars of different origins and affiliations – mainly sociologists and lawyers - interested in socio-legal studies, university teachers as well as members of research centres etc. The WG has more than 100 members who contribute effectively to its conferences and/or to sub-group activities. The WG welcomes new participants and will organize sessions on several issues related to the legal professions at forthcoming RCSL, LSA and ISA meetings. The next meeting of the Legal Profession Group will take place in July 2016.

### **Videostreams**

Videostreams of sessions at the meetings in Königswinter 2012 and Frauenchiemsee 2014 are accessible via

[http://www.fernuni-hagen.de/videostreaming/rewi/l\\_s\\_haratsch/20140627.shtml](http://www.fernuni-hagen.de/videostreaming/rewi/l_s_haratsch/20140627.shtml)

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<http://www.fernuni-hagen.de/jurpro/>