

Report on the RC08 – Legislative Specialists activities between 25th and 26th IPSA World Congress (2018-2021), originally prepared for the business meeting held on July 14, 2021
<http://rc08.ipsa.org/>

Composition of the RC08 – Legislative Specialists Board in period 2018-2021

- **Dr. Zdenka Mansfeldova**, Chair (Czech Republic)
- **Prof. Irina Khmelko**, Vice-Chair (USA)
- **Dr. Michael Edinger**, Secretary – Program Chair (Germany)
- **Prof. Frederick (Rick) Stapenhurst**, Board member and Treasurer (Canada)
- **Prof. Dr. Omer Faruk Genckaya**, Board member (Turkey)
- **Prof. Werner Patzelt**, Board member (Germany)
- **Dr. Petra Guasti**, Board member (the Czech Republic and Germany)
- **Dr. Sven T. Siefken**, Board member (Germany)
- **Dr. Julia Schwanholz**, Board member (Germany)
- **Prof. Osnat Akirav**, Board member (Israel)
- **Prof. Da-Chi LIAO**, Board member (Taiwan)
- **Adjunct Prof. Ken Coghill**, Board member (Australia)
- **Adjunct Prof. Colleen Lewis, Board member (Australia)** resigned in April 2021

The Corona crisis is a challenge for all scientists, i.e., the social sciences, and the RC08 reflected this extraordinary situation in its activities. The following section provides an overview of the activities between the two congresses and ends with preparing the program for the 26th IPSA World Congress.

Parliamentary Committees in the Policy Process, workshop in Valencia, Spain, October 2019.

Parliamentary Committees are often seen as the central place where policy is made in modern democracies. However, what exactly is going on inside committees has not been studied very much, not the least because committees traditionally have held their sessions closed to the public in many parliaments. Thus, data access has been difficult. Renowned country experts take a close look at what goes on in committees and how it matters for policymaking.



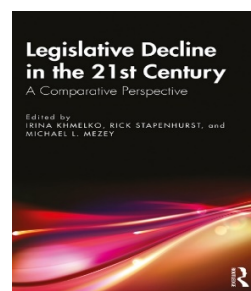
The result of the workshop is an edited volume on parliamentary committees to Routledge series Legislative Library edited by Lord Norton (Sven T. Siefken and Hilmar Rommetvedt (eds.). 2021. *Parliamentary Committees in the Policy Process*). This edited volume provides a comparative examination of the role of parliamentary committees of various political systems through a detailed and thick description of country cases based on a joint research framework.

RC08-LS Conference Within Conference in Puerto Rico, January 2020



RC08 organized a conference within the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association in Puerto Rico, USA. The forum built on the discussions that RC08-LS had started in RCLS's published symposium: *Decline in Legislative Powers and Rise of Authoritarianism*. Special issue of *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 52 (2), (April) 2019 (I. Khmelko, Ed.).

Following the conference in Puerto Rico, I. Khmelko, F. Stapenhurst, and M. Mezey published a volume on *Legislative decline in the 21st-century*, which focuses on legislative-executive relations worldwide. It discusses the decline of legislatures and the rise of populist executives in many countries of the world.



Khmelko, I., F. Stapenhurst, and M. Mezey.
*Legislative decline in the 21st Century:
 A Comparative Perspective*. Routledge. 2020.

RC08-LS participated in joint action **Disruption, Crisis, Opportunity: Whither Democratic Governance?**

The conference was organized jointly by the RC14 Politics and Ethnicity, RC28 Comparative Federalism and Multilevel Governance, RC13 Democratization in Comparative Perspective, RC08 Legislative Specialists, RC30 Comparative Public Policy. The conference was held online, 14 – 17 December 2020. This event can be seen as an excellent example of cooperation with other IPSA RCs.

Research activity "Parliaments in Pandemic" PiP

A new initiative was proposed to the RC08-LS members, "Parliaments in the Pandemic." The idea came in parallel from several RC08 board members. After many discussions among the members of the RC08 Board, a five-member coordination group was formed: Sven Siefken (head of the group, Germany); Ken Coghill (Australia); Petra Guasti (Czech Republic); Osnat Akirav (Israel); Werner Patzelt (Germany). The research is based on broad and comparative data collection and analysis through a network of country specialists on parliamentary research. Many thanks to them all.

First analyses were carried out and published as a first Working Paper in mid-April 2021. The Working Paper served as a basis for an online academic workshop, which was held on April 22 and 28, 2021, with the research coordinators and parliamentary specialists to discuss the first results and the research framework itself and plan the steps for a deeper analysis.

For more information, see: <http://rc08.ipsa.org/pages/Parliaments-in-the-Pandemic>

IPSA 2021 World Congress:

The preparation of the RC08 session was very complicated this time due to the pandemic. In the original term in 2020, 19 panels with more than 100 papers were prepared, which was a record in our history. Following the postponement of the congress for a year and the transition to the online form, significant changes took place, and several accepted papers were withdrawn.

Due to dropouts at the deadline for registration, there must have been a significant reorganization. We, finally, had 11 panels with a total of 47 papers that were presented at the WC 2021 which might still be the largest number of panels since the founding of RC08-LS in 1971/72.

Various attempts to recruit more panel and paper proposals from civil society organizations, especially from Portugal, proved little successful. One reason was the transformation of the World Congress into a virtual event, another reason were the IPSA regulations requiring the regular registration of „external“ papergivers with full fees.

RC08 Panels at the IPSA 2021 World Congress

RC08.01 Parliamentary Indicators: Comparative Ways towards Performance Measurement

Chair: Dr. Sven T. Siefken

RC08.02 Candidate Selection and Intra-party Democracy

Chair: Dr. Benjamin Höhne

RC08.03 Populists in Parliament: The Parliamentary Practices and Performance of Populist Parties

Chair: Dr. Michael Edinger

RC08.04 Theory of Legislative-Executive Relations

Chair: Dr. Irina Khmelko

RC08.05 Legislative-Executive Relations: An Empirical Analysis

Chair: Dr. John Ishiyama

RC08.06 Parliamentary Committees in the Policy Process

Chair: Prof. Frederick Stapenhurst

RC08.07 Parliamentary Committees and Their Role in Legislation, Oversight and Scrutiny

Chair: Dr. Flemming Juul Christiansen

RC08.08 Legislative Activity and the Legislative Process

Chair: Dr. Petra Guasti

J-GS10-RC08.10 Coping with COVID-19: Case Studies on Parliamentary Reactions

Chair: Dr. Ken Coghill

J-RC02/08.01 Legislative Work and Career Paths of Elected Political Elites

Chair: Prof. Luca Verzichelli

J-GS10-RC08.09 Parliaments in the Pandemic: Comparing Challenges and Consequences

Chair: Prof. Osnat Akirav

Expression of our thanks goes to the RC08 Program Chair **Dr. Michael Edinger** who prepared the RC08 panels for the 26th IPSA Congress in an excellent way. Due to exceptional circumstances, he had to prepare the program in fact twice (2020 and 2021), and he did in an excellent way.

Reorganization of the RC08/RCLS website

Starting shortly after the IPSA World Congress in Brisbane, the RC08 website has been reorganized gradually. The successive changes were aimed at making the website more user-friendly; providing more up-to-date information on ongoing activities, conferences, and publications; expanding the documentation of previous RC activities; adding new links and tools. Some other improvements, including e.g. a list of former RC08-LS chairs, could not be carried out due to lack of resources.

Special thanks go to Dr. Erik Fritzsche, our long-term webmaster, for his great work on the website – and to Sebastian Hünermund (sebastian.huenermund@politik.uni-halle.de), our acting webmaster, for swiftly updating the website. Information for the website and ideas for improving it are always welcome.

David Olson Award 2021

At the RC08 Business Meeting, held during the IPSA World Congress in 2016 in Poznan, we had decided to establish an RC08 David M. Olson Award for best IPSA World Congress paper by a junior scholar.

The purpose of the David M. Olson Award is to honor a younger scholar engaged in parliamentary/legislative studies, the focus of David Olson's research and teaching. The recipient will be rewarded for the best self-authored paper presented in one of the RC08 panels at the 2021 IPSA World Congress. Eligible are doctoral students and PostDocs who completed their Ph.D. dissertation after 2013 (and not serving as a full professor). Authors of co-authored papers are only eligible if all authors satisfy this condition. The Award will then be split among the co-authors. The Award is funded by the Research Committee of Legislative Specialists / RC08 and will be given after the 2021 IPSA World Congress. Nominees must have uploaded their full papers on the IPSA website.

Criteria

- The paper must be of excellent quality.
- The paper must cover a highly relevant topic for parliamentary research.
- The paper must make a substantial contribution to parliamentary research.
- The paper should have an innovative approach.
- The paper should have a strong methodological basis.

Guidelines for nomination

Nominations for the Award can be made by one of the following ways:

- by a board member of the IPSA Research Committee 08 (RC08);
- by the convenor, chair, co-chair or discussant of any RC08 panel at the virtual IPSA World Congress 2021;
- jointly by two or more IPSA members of at least two different nationalities;
- by an incumbent IPSA Executive Committee (EC) member;
- by an IPSA Research Committee other than RC08 (in the case of co-sponsored panels).

Applications, including the paper presented at the virtual IPSA World Congress 2021, should be sent to Zdenka Mansfeldova by August 15, 2021 (zdenka.mansfeldova@soc.cas.cz). All chairs and discussants were invited to submit nominations of candidates who met the given criteria.

Other activities

RC08 members were periodically invited to provide information about their publishing activities for our site (<http://rc08.ipso.org/pages/Publications>). The response was not very great; it does not correspond to the publishing activity of our members. In times of lockdown and meetings only in the virtual world, mutual information about our activities is essential. We hope that the willingness to inform each other will improve in the next term.

Elections for IPSA Research Committee 08 – Legislative Specialists Board

RC08 members were informed by email on June 7, 2021, that elections would be held at the business meeting organized on July 14. The letter invited them to nominate candidates for this election. They were also informed about the basic rules for the nominations and elections. The committee received five nominations within the set deadline.

Five new candidates ran for election, and three existing members ran for re-election following the rules, see table. The mandate of the four members of the Board continued.

RC08 had a business meeting, and the following candidates were nominated for the election to the RC 08 Board:

<i>Bord members, whose mandate continues</i>	Country	E mail address
Dr. Sven T. Siefken	Germany	sven.siefken@politik.uni-halle.de
Prof. Da-chi Liao	Taiwan	dcliao@mail.nsysu.edu.tw

Dr. Julia Schwanholz	Germany	julia.schwanholz@uni-due.de
Prof. Osnat Akirav	Israel	osnatak@bezeqint.net
<i>Board members who were re-elected at the meeting</i>		
Prof. Irina Khmelko	USA	irina-khmelko@utc.edu
Dr. Petra Guasti	Czech Republic	petra.guasti@fsv.cuni.cz
Prof. Omer Faruk Genckaya	Turkey	genckaya@bilkent.edu.tr
<i>New candidates who were elected to the RC 08 Board</i>		
Dr Stephen Holden Bates	UK	S.R.Bates@bham.ac.uk
Dr. Maya Kornberg	USA	mayakornberg@gmail.com
Benjamin Ekeyi	Nigeria	benygina@yahoo.com
Prof. Anne Marie Camissa	USA	Anne.Cammisa@georgetown.edu
Prof. Milind Thakar	USA	mthakar@uindy.edu

One week before the business meeting (July 7, 2021), RC08 members received a list of candidates, including their brief CVs, so that they can study them in peace. The elections took place in two steps on July 14, 2021. According to the rules, Board members were elected first. Officers were elected in the second step.

The new composition of the RC08 Board is as follows:

<i>Officers</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>E mail address</i>
Prof. Irina Khmelko, Chair	USA	irina-khmelko@utc.edu
Dr. Sven T. Siefken, Vice-chair	Germany	sven.siefken@politik.uni-halle.de
Dr. Petra Guasti, Secretary/Pogram chair	Czech Republic	petra.guasti@fsv.cuni.cz
<i>Board members</i>		
Prof. Da-chi Liao	Taiwan	dcliao@mail.nsysu.edu.tw
Dr. Julia Schwanholz	Germany	julia.schwanholz@uni-due.de
Prof. Osnat Akirav	Israel	osnatak@bezeqint.net
Prof. Omer Faruk Genckaya	Turkey	genckaya@bilkent.edu.tr
Dr Stephen Holden Bates	UK	S.R.Bates@bham.ac.uk
Dr. Maya Kornberg	USA	mayakornberg@gmail.com
Benjamin Ekeyi	Nigeria	benygina@yahoo.com
Prof. Anne Marie Camissa	USA	Anne.Cammisa@georgetown.edu
Prof. Milind Thakar	USA	mthakar@uindy.edu

Suggestion for future activities

The prerequisite for several activities as David Olson Award and others is to have sufficient funds. The need to have our financial sources was one reason for the (unanimous) decision to

reintroduce the membership fee. At the RC08 Business Meeting, held in 2016 in Poznań, we decided to reintroduce the membership fee from 1.1.2017 (25 USD per two years, if not paid three times, then the membership is discontinued). After four years we must state that the payment morale of the members is approaching zero due to, among other things, high bank fees for money transfers. Our treasurer is setting up a Paypal account, making it easier to send membership fees.

Recruitment of new members.

RC08 – Legislative Specialists has around 200 members; however, the absolute number of those who apply to RC08 cannot be verified. The problem is that IPSA informs about those members who have paid individual membership in IPSA and indicates interest in membership in RC08. However, according to the Rules, anyone who is a member of the National Political Science Association, a collective member of IPSA, can be a member of RC08. Recruiting new members should probably be an ongoing priority for any organization. If so, what population(s)/ groups should we target first? We need to engage with scholars from Asia/Pacific, Latin America, Africa. We also need to focus on early-stage researchers and Ph.D. students.

Upcoming conferences, workshops

Irina Khmelko will propose an RC08 panel within the Southern Political Science Association in the US (SPSA) conference in New Orleans, USA (January 2023).

Scientific event organized on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of our RC08-Legislative Specialists (1972).

Cooperation with other thematically related IPSA RCs and ECPR Standing Group "Parliaments" will continue and will be strengthened if possible.

8th August, 2021

Zdenka Mansfeldová in cooperation with Michal Edinger and Irina Khmelko