

Research Committee of Legislative Specialists RC08
Business meeting held on 09.07.2012 in Madrid

Present: 25 members

Presided over by: Werner Patzelt, (European) co-chair of RC08

Program:

1. Welcome
2. Report on RCLS activities by European and US co-chairs
3. Election of new officers
4. Appointment of other officials
5. Discussion

Ad 2. During the 3-years period a website was established (www.rcls-ipsa.org) and has functioned as an effective means of communication as well as a mailing list. Two conferences were held in Europe – one in Dresden and one in Prague, as well as one panel in Luxembourg, and three conferences in the US were organized in cooperation with Southern Political Science Association (SPSA) and World Bank. At the XXII IPSA World Congress in Madrid four panels were organized by the RC08 Program Chair Zdenka Mansfeldova.

For practical reasons the meetings in US and Europe are separated; securing financial resources for overseas trips has become more difficult. Hopefully in the future joint meetings will be possible again. One of the challenges for the future is to go beyond organizing workshops, conferences and panels at various events, but working together on key problems facing legislative bodies worldwide. We should also do something to foster development of the discipline as such – dedicating time and energy to defining the basic terms and concepts of our rapidly evolving discipline.

Ad 3. Elections

There are three elected positions in RC LS

Two observations were made: first, it is our tradition that the incumbent searches for his or her successor, second, that the officers serve two terms to ensure continuity of the RCLS, thus the US co-chair was asked to continue. European co-chair Werner Patzelt asked Zdenka Mansfeldova to succeed him and Zdenka Mansfeldova accepted the candidacy. Hilmar Rommevedt accepted candidacy for the position of programme chair.

According to the changes in IPSA constitution and other rules the IPSA World Congress will be held every second year, and all IPSA offices will have two-year terms, however, the RCs have retained the power to decide whether their officers will be elected for two years or four years.

In the round of discussion, members of RC08 expressed their opinion. There were different opinions and support for both two-year and three-year variant of elected officials of the RCLS with their pros and cons. To summarize the discussion: there was strong support for continuity and allowing new officers to gain time for learning. The continuity is ensured by overlapping terms by the US and European co-chairs. It was decided that 1) the period between IPSA World Congress in Madrid and IPSA World Congress in Montreal will be seen as a trial period – in Montreal, based on our own experience, and experiences of other RCs we can adopt changes in the length of term of elected officials to most suit the functioning of the RCLS; and 2) the incoming officers should have an important word in this, as they will be most affected by the change in the length of term in office. Hence it was agreed unanimously that the term for the new RCLS will be two years.

Chairs & Officers for the next period are:

Peverill Squire, Co-Chair (for the second term)

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Zdenka Mansfeldová, Co-Chair (for the first term)

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Department of sociology of politics

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Programme Chair

Hilmar Rommevedt

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Norwegian Research Center for Organization and Management

Zdenka Mansfeldová, Hilmar Rommevedt, and Peverill Squire were the candidates for the three elected positions. The RC08 refused a secret ballot and opted for acclamation. All three candidates were elected. Out-going chair Werner Patzelt congratulated the newly elected officers.

After the elections Werner Patzelt turned over the meeting to Zdenka Mansfeldová as newly elected European Co-chair.

Subsequently, RCLS members agreed with appointment of two other positions:

An important position is webmaster. Erik Fritzsche at the Technical University Dresden is doing an excellent job. RCLS expresses its appreciation and is in agreement with continuation of Erik as official Webmaster of RCLS.

[Erik Fritzsche](#), Webmaster

Dresden University of Technology (Technische Universität Dresden)

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Another appointed position is Research Director. For practical purposes in order to represent the RC08 in organizing activities in the US, there is suggestion to continue in this practice. Irina S. Khmelko (University of Tennessee, Chattanooga) was re-appointed as the RCLS Director for Research.

Irina S. Khmelko, RCLS Director for Research

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Ad 4.

A few additional points on the agenda:

1. Informal consultation with past co-chairs were used quite often in the past; there was a proposal to adopt the position of past-co-chair formally. The RC08 members agreed and Werner Patzelt was unanimously accepted as past-co-chair.

Werner J. Patzelt, Past-Co-Chair
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In the future, maybe at the IPSA World Congress in Montreal, we can consider ways to bringing closer colleagues from Asia in a similar way like the colleagues in the US – this helps us to increase the visibility of the RC08. It was also a result of business meeting in Prague, where we discussed the number of meetings. The RC08 is interested in strengthening the linkages to the national political science associations, as more links between RC08 and domestic political scientists leads to higher RCLS exposure.

Another issue is the possible attempts to try to find funding possibilities for comparative initiatives in the future.

Last issues within this point of the agenda was the reevaluation of the need for the position of treasurer. Treasurer Ned Schneier did an excellent job and the RCLS has expressed its strong appreciation and words of thanks. However, the time has changed, however, fees were collected irregularly and a number of RCLS members did not contribute. Furthermore, the banking costs as well as transfer costs have risen significantly and consumed most of the members' contributions. Hence, RCLS decided to stop the practice of collecting a fee. There is still money left and it might be spent on maintaining the RCLS internet domain. Zdenka Mansfeldova will communicate with Ned Schneier and the members of the RCLS concerning the size of funds, money spent etc. – in a financial report at the forthcoming IPSA world Congress in Montreal.

Ad 5, Discussion.

Pev:

The next two years will be a learning experience as the IPSA tries to fill the shorter gap between congresses, cooperation with the Southern Political Science Association is very fruitful and mutually beneficial.

Zdenka:

Cooperation with ECPR should be also strengthened. In developing themes, so we should use some of the ideas, also from the Madrid RCLS session themes, some topics can be tested in future panels, Please use the discussion forum on the RCLS website for exchange of opinions, we can also cooperate with the ECPR standing groups on parliaments, and SG on Central European Politics.

Guest, John Ishymaya: introduced new APCR editorial group, which wants to diversify and improve the efficiency of the review process, and is open to questions and discussions;

In subsequent discussion round members are also invited to submit articles to *the Legislative Studies Quarterly* and *Journal of Legislative Studies*. The members should be however, aware, that most submissions accepted in the US have a certain methodology, and so the warm words of encouragement might not result in acceptance of the articles by European scholars not sharing the mainstream methodological approaches.

Post-Communist Parliaments the second volume edited by David Olson - it has been a pleasure to pull these together, David thanks all authors.

Minutes taken by Petra Guasti, 09.07.2012

Revised by Zdenka Mansfeldova on 25.07.2012 and Peverill Squire on 30.07.2012