



The 2026 Annual Meeting of the [Research Committee on the Sociology of Law](#) (RC12), part of the International Sociological Association (ISA), will be hosted by [Universidad Diego Portales](#) (UDP) in Santiago, Chile, from August 31 to September 3, 2026.

Located in the heart of Santiago—the capital and symbolic center of Chile’s social, political, and cultural history—UDP is a leading institution with research and teaching programs that span from astrophysics to philosophy. The University is recognized for its distinctive commitment to the humanities and social sciences, and for its outstanding research in the fields of sociology and law.

The theme of the RCSL Santiago Conference 2026 is The Democratic Rule of Law in World Society. We invite proposals for papers and sessions addressing this theme, as well as other relevant topics within the sociology of law and justice. The conference will bring together scholars, practitioners, and students from around the world to reflect on the challenges and prospects of the democratic rule of law in a globalized context.

We warmly invite you to join us in Santiago in 2026 for this landmark event, and to contribute to an open, diverse, and forward-looking dialogue on law, democracy, and society in the twenty-first century.

## The Conference Theme

The 2026 RCSL Conference will explore whether liberal representative democracy—a cornerstone of modern political and legal systems—can still meet the diverse needs of a world society that has become structurally, culturally, and territorially complex.

The conference will examine whether the normative and legal foundations, as well as the mechanisms of representative democracy—responsible for shaping Western political systems and 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 of today’s global society.

Modern societies face centrifugal forces that threaten the stability of the **rule of law**. Alongside enduring challenges such as territorial wars and patrimonial domination, new dynamics have emerged, including:

- Ethnonational conflicts and decolonization struggles among indigenous peoples;
- Fundamentalist para-state formations in the Middle East;

- The violent influence of organized crime, drug cartels, and illegal markets, especially in Latin America and Africa;
- Neo-nationalist strategies that seek to rebuild zones of cultural or political dominance;
- Mass migration across Europe, North America, and Latin America;
- The increasingly urgent impacts of climate change.
- Rapid global transformations driven by new digital technologies (social media, big data, and artificial intelligence) impacting every aspect of society.

These developments raise critical questions about the resilience and the future of the rule of law as a global normative ideal. Can the rule of law still regulate coexistence in modern societies? Can it continue to prevent domination in its various forms? Can it remain open to alternative perspectives that reinterpret its abstract principles in ways both cognitively adaptive and normatively inclusive?

The 2026 RCSL Santiago Conference aims to address these questions and challenges through a comprehensive global dialogue. We invite contributions examining the foundations, historical trajectories, current transformations, and possible futures of the rule of law in contemporary world society. Proposals engaging with other significant issues in the sociology of law and justice are also welcome.

## Relevant dates

The key dates for the 2026 RCSL Santiago Conference are as follows:

	Dates
Submission of paper and session proposals (abstracts)	October 20 (2025) — December 29 (2025)
Decisions of the Scientific Committee on the proposals received	January 30
Deadline for Registration for participants whose paper(s) or session(s) are to appear in the final program	March 31
Publication of preliminary program	April 20
Last day for early bird reduced fee	May 31
Reception of papers to be uploaded on this site before the Conference	August 17
Publication of final program	August 24
RCSL Santiago Conference	August 31 — September 3

## Submissions

Paper and session proposals must be submitted by **December 29, 2025**, via the conference website: <https://www.rcsl2026.udp.cl/>. Proposals may be submitted to any of the RC12 Working Groups:

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| 1. Civil Justice and Dispute Resolution     | 9. Knowledge and Opinion about the Law |
| 2. Comparative Legal Culture                | 10. Law and Development                |
| 3. Comparative Studies of Legal Professions | 11. Law and Migration                  |
| 4. Digitalization, AI and Society           | 12. Law and Politics                   |
| 5. Gender, Law and Society                  | 13. Law and Popular Culture            |
| 6. Histories of the Sociology of Law        | 14. Legal Pluralism                    |
| 7. Human Rights                             | 15. Social and Legal Systems           |
| 8. Judicialization of Social Problems       | 16. Sociology of Constitutions         |

For questions about submissions or any other aspect of the conference, please contact the Local Organizing Committee at: [rcsl2026@mail.udp.cl](mailto:rcsl2026@mail.udp.cl)

## **Local Organizing Committee**

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

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