Association Internationale de Droit de la Famille  
International Society of Family Law  
Internationale Geselleschaft für Familienrecht

Membership Booklet

Directory of Members and Officers  
Description of the Society  
History & Purposes of the Society  
Conferences & Publications of the Society  
By-Laws of the Society

(February 2009)

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A Brief Introduction to

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF FAMILY LAW
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DE DROIT DE LA FAMILLE
INTERNATIONALE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR FAMILIENRECHT

The International Society of Family Law is an international scholarly organization dedicated to the study and discussion of problems of family law. At present (February 2009) the Society has more than 630 members (scholars, lawyers, government officials, and other professionals) in 60 different countries around the world. English and French are the official languages of the Society.

The Society sponsors world conferences and regional international conferences. The Thirteenth World Conference convened September 16-20, 2008 in Vienna, Austria. The Twelfth
World Conference convened in July 2005 in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Eleventh World Conference was in Copenhagen, Denmark and Oslo, Norway (2002). The tenth World Conference held by the Society met in Brisbane, Australia in 2000. Previous conferences have been held in Durban, South Africa (1997); Cardiff, Wales (1994); Opatija, Croatia (1991); Tokyo, Japan (1988); Brussels, Belgium (1985); Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA (1982); Uppsala, Sweden (1979); Montreal, Canada (1977); and the first was convened in West Berlin, FRG (1975). In between world conferences of the Society, various regional conferences have been held periodically in North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia.

The Society publishes three kinds of materials. The Family Letter - a newsletter for members of the Society announcing forthcoming conferences of professional interest, noting publications of interest, and conveying news of the Society - is sent to all members twice each year. The International Survey of Family Law, reporting developments in family law in selected countries around the world, and growth in international law regarding family law, is published and sent to all members (and sold to many non-members) every year. During the past decade, reports from 80 different countries have been published in the Survey. Additionally, selected papers presented at the world conferences are published in volumes edited by officers of the Society. Those volumes are available for purchase by members of the society at a discount price. The objectives of the International Society of Family Law are the study and discussion of problems of family law. To this end, the Society sponsors and promotes: International co-operation in research on family law subjects of world-wide interest; Periodic international conferences on family law subjects of world-wide interest; Collection and dissemination of information in the field of family law by the publication of the International Survey of Family Law, and by publication of relevant materials in family law, including papers presented at conferences of the Society; Co-operation with other international, regional or national associations having the same or similar objectives; Interdisciplinary contacts and research; The advancement of legal education in family law by all practical means including furtherance of exchanges of teachers, students, judges and practising lawyers.

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<th>Membership dues</th>
<th>One year</th>
<th>Three years</th>
<th>Five years</th>
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<tr>
<td>From 21 September 2008</td>
<td>50 Euros</td>
<td>120 Euros</td>
<td>180 Euros</td>
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Please note there is a 15 Euro surcharge for cheques payable in another currency.

For further information about the Society or to join the Society, please contact the President, Professor Bea Verschraegen (email bea.verschraegen@univie.ac.at) or the Secretary General, Professor Marsha Garisson (email marsha.garrison@brooklaw.edu).

Persons interested in submitting articles to the International Survey may contact the General Editor, Professor Bill Atkins, (email Bill.Atkin@vuw.ac.nz).
THE HISTORY & PURPOSES OF THE SOCIETY

The International Society of Family Law (Society) is an international society of scholars and professionals interested in issues of family law and policy. The Society was launched at the University of Birmingham, UK, in April 1973, on the initiative of Professor Zeev Falk (Hebrew University, Israel). Two years later, when the Society convened its first world conference, it attracted more than 200 participants, mostly academics and government officials. The Society has experienced significant growth since then, due to its consistent, high-quality programs and materials. The Society sponsors world conferences at intervals of approximately three years, as well as regional conferences, and produces a number of professional publications for the benefit of its members.

The nature and objectives of the Society are reflected in the principles adopted at the first Annual General Meeting of the Society held in the Kongresshalle of West Berlin on Saturday, 12 April 1975.

The Society's objectives are the study and discussion of problems of family law. To this end, the Society sponsors and promotes:
(a) International co-operation in research on family law subjects of world-wide interest.
(b) Periodic international conferences on family law subjects of world-wide interest.
(c) Collection and dissemination of information in the field of family law by the publication of a survey concerning developments in family law throughout the world, and by publication of relevant materials in family law, including papers presented at conferences of the Society.
(d) Co-operation with other international, regional or national associations having the same or similar objectives.
(e) Interdisciplinary contact and research
(f) The advancement of legal education in family law by all practical means including furtherance of exchanges of teachers, students, judges and practising lawyers.
Other objectives in furtherance of or connected with the above objectives.
MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

There are four categories of Membership:

1. **Ordinary Membership**, which is open to any member of the legal or a related profession. The Council may defer or decline any application for membership.

2. **Institutional Membership**, which is open to interested organizations at the discretion of, and on terms approved by, the Council.

3. **Student Membership**, which is open to interested students of law and related disciplines at the discretion of, and on terms approved by, the Council.

4. **Honorary Membership**, which may be offered to distinguished persons by decision of the Executive Council. Each member except honorary members shall pay such annual dues as may be established from time to time by the Council.

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Members who are currently in payment of dues receive at no cost the *Membership Booklet with Directory of Members*, the semi-annual "Family Letter" *Newsletter*, and the annual *International Survey of Family Law*, as well as discounts on the published proceedings of the world conferences of the Society, and reduced registration at most Society conferences. Please contact the Treasurer, Professor Adriaan P. van der Linden (email a.vanderlinden@law.uu.nl) for a membership application form.
CONFERENCES

The Society's first international conference was held in West Berlin, Germany in April 1975 on the theme *The Child and the Law*. There were over 200 participants, including representatives of governments and international organizations. The second world conference was held in Montreal, Canada in June 1977 on the subject *Violence in the Family*. There were over 300 participants from over 20 countries. A third world conference on the theme *Family Living in a Changing Society* was held in Uppsala, Sweden in June 1979. There were over 270 participants from 35 countries.

The fourth world conference was held in June 1982 at Harvard Law School, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A. There were over 180 participants from 26 countries. The fifth world conference was held in July 1985 in Brussels, Belgium on the theme *The Family, The State and Individual Security*, under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Fabiola of Belgium, the Director-General of UNESCO, the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe and the President of the Commission of the European Communities. More than 100 papers were presented to approximately 300 participants. The sixth world conference on *Issues of the Aging in Modern Society* was held in April 1988 in Tokyo, Japan under the patronage of H.J.H. Prince Takahito Mikasa. There were over 450 participants.

The seventh world conference was held in May 1991 in Opatija, Yugoslavia on the theme, *Parenthood: The Legal Significance of Motherhood and Fatherhood in a Changing Society*. There were over 200 participants. The Eighth world conference convened in Cardiff, United Kingdom in July 1994 on the theme *Families Across Frontiers*. More than 350 participants from 51 nations attended. The Ninth World Conference was held in Durban, South Africa, in July 1997 on the theme of *Changing Family Forms: World Themes and African Issues*. The Tenth world conference took place in Brisbane, Australia in July 2000 and focused on *Family Law: Processes, Practices and Pressures*.

The Eleventh world conference was held in Copenhagen and Oslo on August 2 – 7th 2002, on Family Life and Human Rights. Details of the conference may be may be found at [www.jus.uio.no/ifp/isfl/](http://www.jus.uio.no/ifp/isfl/) or obtained from the co-convenors, Professor Peter Lødrup, of the Faculty of Law, University of Oslo (email peter.lodrup@jus.uio.no) or Professor Linda Nielsen, Faculty of Law, University of Copenhagen (email linda.nielsen@jur.ku.dk). The Twelfth World Conference of the ISFL convened in Salt Lake City, Utah, on July 19-23, 2005. The Theme of that conference was *Family Law: Balancing Interests and Pursuing Priorities*. Two hundred twenty-eight (228) persons registering for the conference, including 197 academics or professionals from 34 nations, who presented 165 papers. The Thirteenth World Conference addressing Family Finances met September 16-20, 2008 in Vienna, Austria; at least 180 papers from more than 220 participants were presented.

Members in various geographical regions have held regional conferences under the auspices of the Society addressing family law subjects of regional interest. Recent conferences include Vancouver, B.C., Canada in 2007; Chester, U.K. in 2007; The Netherlands, in 2005; Beijing, China in 2004; Eugene, Oregon, USA in 2003; Girona and Tossa de Mar, Spain, in 2003; Kingston, Ontario, Canada in 2001; Prague, Czech Republic in 1998; Seoul, South Korea in 1996; Lyon, France (2002 and 2004); Scandinavia (multiple conferences); and in North America (Jackson Hole, Wyoming; Quebec City, Quebec; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and Eugene, Oregon, at various intervals from 1993-2004). A regional conference was held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, in November 2005, on Child Protection and Juvenile Courts. A regional conference on “Family Law in a Multicultural Environment” will convene in Israel on June 7-9, 2009.
THE SOCIETY’S PUBLICATIONS

The Society regularly publishes three publications: the *International Survey of Family Law*, the *ISFL Family Letter*, and books of ISFL World Conference proceedings. All members receive the first two with payment of membership dues, and then may purchase the third at a significant discount.

*The International Survey of Family Law*, is published annually by Family Law (Jordan Publishing, Bristol, UK). Its predecessor, *The Annual Survey of Family Law*, was published from 1985-1995 in the University of Louisville Journal of Family Law, USA. The *Survey* provides information on current developments in family law throughout the world. Typically, reports from 25-35 nations are included in any given year. The General Editor is Professor Bill Atkin of the Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. The former editors were Dr. Andrew Bainham, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, UK, and Professor Michael Freeman of Kings College London, UK. The Associate Editors (for Africa) Bart Rwezaura, University of Hong Kong. *The International Survey* is circulated to all members, or may be obtained from Family Law ([www.familylaw.co.uk](http://www.familylaw.co.uk)). The new editor (beginning 2007 edition) will be Professor Bill Atkin of Victoria University Wellington, New Zealand. Persons interested in submitting articles to the International Survey may contact the Editor, Professor Atkin, ([Bill.Atkin@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Bill.Atkin@vuw.ac.nz)).

Twice a year, in March and September, the Society publishes its Newsletter, *The ISFL Family Letter*. The Newsletter contains reports on the official activities of the Society, announcements of conferences and activities of interest to members, and notification of recent publications about family law, contributed by members of the Society. The Newsletter is published by Prof Margaret F Brinig, of the College of Law, Notre Dame University, Law School, Box 780, Notre Dame, IN 46556, USA. [mbrinig@nd.edu](mailto:mbrinig@nd.edu).

A *Directory of Members* of the Society also is available to all members. Copies may be obtained from the Treasurer.
CONFERENCE BOOKS


Selected papers from the Thirteenth World Conference in Vienna, Austria, will be provided under the title FAMILY FINANCES by Verlag Jan Sramek.
BYE-LAWS OF THE SOCIETY

Article I
-Name
1. The name of the Society is "International Society of Family Law".

Article II
-Nature and Objectives
1. The Society is an international, voluntary membership organization not for profit. The Society is non-political and shall not engage in any political activities nor take a position on any international or national political or religious matter.
2. The Society's objective is the study and discussion of family law. To this end, the Society sponsors and promotes:
   (a) international co-operation in research on family law and family law reform;
   (b) periodic international conferences on family law subjects of world-wide interest;
   (c) collection and dissemination of information in the field of family law by the publication of a Survey and newsletter concerning developments in family law throughout the world, and by publication of relevant materials in family law, including papers presented at conferences of the Society;
   (d) co-operation with other international, regional or national associations having the same or similar objectives;
   (e) interdisciplinary contact and research;
   (f) the advancement of legal education in family law by all practical means including furtherance of exchanges of teachers, students, and practising lawyers;
   (g) other objectives furthering or connected with the above objectives.

Article III
-Membership and Dues
1. There are four categories of membership in the society:
   (a) Ordinary membership which is open to academic teachers of law or related disciplines and members of the legal or related professions.
   (b) Institutional membership which is open to interested organizations, at the discretion of, and on terms approved by the Council.
   (c) Student membership which is open to interested students of law and related disciplines at the discretion of and on terms approved by the Council.
   (d) Honorary Membership. The Council may propose to the General Meeting of the Society that persons of distinction be elected as Honorary Members. Election shall be by majority votes of members present. Proposals for honorary membership should be made through a Committee consisting of the President, the General Secretary and the two past presidents.

Article IV
-Officers
1. The officers of the Society are:
   (a) The President and six Vice-Presidents,
   (b) the General Secretary (and any Regional Secretary who may be approved by the General Meeting on the recommendation of the Council),
   (c) the Treasurer,
   (d) the Editor of the International Survey (appointed by the Council).
2. The Council may establish such other officers as it may consider appropriate.
3. Any member of the Society is eligible to serve as an officer. The officers hold office until the end of the General Meeting next following their election. Excepting the President, the officers are eligible for re-election, but may not (except the Treasurer) serve more than three consecutive terms in the same office. If an officer resigns or for any other reason cannot hold office, the other officers shall appoint a successor from among the membership of the Council to hold office for the unexpired term.

4. President and Vice Presidents. The President, or in his absence, a Vice-President, shall preside at all meetings of the Society and the Council. The President in collaboration with the Vice-Presidents, shall formulate and present at each General Meeting of the Society a report of the work of the Society for the years then closing. The President and the Vice-Presidents shall appoint the Chairman and members of all Committees of the Society and shall plan and superintend the programme of the Society, its Conferences and General Meetings during their terms, subject to the advice and approval of the Council. The President and the Vice-Presidents shall superintend the performance of all activities of the Society, shall keep the Council duly informed and carry out its decisions. The President and the Vice-Presidents shall perform such other duties and acts as usually pertain to their offices or as may be designated by the Council.

5. General Secretary. The Secretary shall consult with and assist other Officers of the Society in the work of the Society in such manner and to such extent as they may request. The Secretary is custodian of all books, papers, documents and other property of the Society, except money. He shall keep a true record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Society and of the Council. In conjunction with the President and the Vice-Presidents and as authorized by the Council, he shall attend generally to the business of the Society.

6. Regional Secretary or Secretaries. The Council may appoint Regional Secretaries and delegate to them such portion of the General Secretary’s functions as it may deem necessary or desirable.

7. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of the money belonging to the Society. He shall keep an accurate record of all money appropriated to and expended for the use of the Society.

Article V - Council

1. The Council comprises the Officers of the Society, the immediate Past President and nineteen other members with power to appoint further members as it may deem necessary or desirable.

2. The composition of the Council shall reflect so far as reasonable and possible, the international character of the Society.

3. Members of the Council shall vacate their office after the General Meeting next following their election. They are eligible for re-election.

4. The Council is charged with the general supervision of the management of the Society's affairs by the officers and has such additional powers, duties and responsibilities as are delegated to it by the General Meeting. Committees to further the objects of the Society may be established by the Council with such powers, functions and duties as the Council may determine.

5. The Officers shall call meetings at such places and at such times as they may consider convenient and necessary, but at least once each year.

6. Three of the members of the Council and two officers shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any duly called meeting of the Council. Binding action of the Council and shall be by majority vote of the members present or voting by mail as hereinafter provided. There shall be no voting by proxy.
7. As soon as practicable after each Council meeting, the Secretary shall submit to each member of the Council a copy of the minutes of the meeting specifying the decisions reached and actions taken at the meeting.

8. On matters deemed by them to be of substantial importance and when time permits the President and the Vice-Presidents may direct that the Council vote by mail. In such a case, the Secretary shall circulate to the members of the Council a statement describing the matter(s) to be voted on, along with other available information which may include position statements prepared by the officers or by proponents or opponents of the action proposed. The Secretary shall prepare appropriate ballots and establish reasonable time limits and procedures for the transmission of information and the taking of the vote. He shall keep on file all ballots returned to him. The votes of a majority of the members of the Council who are participating in the vote shall constitute binding action.

9. Reports and publications shall be prepared and distributed upon such terms and conditions as the Council may provide.

Article VI
Nomination and Election of Officers and Council Members
At each General Meeting, the Officers (other than the Editor of the International Survey) and Members of the Council shall be elected in the following manner:
1. Any two members of the Society may nominate a member to the Council, if the name of such nominee signifying his approval to the nomination is contained in a letter signed by the nominating members and received not later than 60 days in advance of the General Meeting.
2. Any five members of the Society may nominate a member to be an officer if the name of such nominee signifying his approval to the nomination is contained in a letter signed by the nominating members and received not later than 60 days in advance of the General Meeting.
3. Each candidate shall have the right to submit a statement of not more than 200 words which shall be included with the ballots (if received in sufficient copies before the ballots are sent out).
4. The ballot for members of the Council and the Officers with appropriate instructions shall be sent to all members of the Society not later than 45 days in advance of the General Meeting.
5. Each member shall be required to return his ballot to the General Secretary so that it will be received at least 10 days in advance of the General Meeting unless it is to be handed to the Secretary or his representative in person at least 24 hours before the General Meeting. Ballots may be returned by fax or email or postal mail or hand delivery. No ballot shall be counted unless the member has paid his dues.
6. Ballots shall be secret, but members may waive confidentiality and return ballots by fax or email if they choose. In order to ensure that a ballot is legitimate, a member may be required to sign a separate enclosure accompanying the ballot.
7. Not later than 24 hours in advance of the General Meeting, at least three people, none of whom is a candidate, and appointed by the Council, shall jointly open the ballot boxes and tally the votes. Election shall be by a plurality of the votes cast.

Article VII
General Meeting
1. A General Meeting of the membership shall be held in conjunction with the Society's periodic Conference, or at not less than at intervals of three years.
2. The Agenda for the General Meeting shall be prepared by the Secretary in consultation with the officers and members of the Council. The agenda shall include a report by the President, a report by the Society's Treasurer or Auditor, and such other matters as may be relevant. The
Agenda for the General Meeting shall be sent with the ballot papers to all the members not later than 45 days in advance of the General Meeting.

3. At or before the conclusion of each General Meeting, the tentative theme, date and location of the next Conference and General Meeting shall be considered and recommendations may be formulated.

4. The members of the Society present at the General Meeting, who are in good standing, shall constitute a quorum. All binding action, except the election of officers and members of the council and the amendment of these bye-laws shall be by a majority vote of such members.

5. In its discretion, the Council may direct that a matter be submitted to the members of the Society for vote by mail. In such event binding action shall be by a majority of the votes received from members in good standing in accordance with rules fixed by the Council.

Article VIII
- Conferences
1. Conferences shall be held on such family law subjects of current interest and at such times and places as may be determined by the Council, taking into account recommendations made by the General Meeting. The Council shall appoint a Convener and an Organizing Committee which will have authority to make decisions as authorized by the Council. If practicable, such conferences shall be held at least every three years in conjunction with the General Meeting.

2. The following persons shall be entitled to attend the conferences:
   (a) Members of the Society,
   (b) All persons accredited by member organizations,
   (c) Persons invited by the Convener and Organizing Committee to attend,
   (d) Observers approved by the Convener and Organizing Committee,
   (e) Members of the Press.

Article IX
- Amendment of the Bye-Laws
Provided a proposed amendment shall first have been approved by a majority of the Council, the Bye-Laws of the Society may be amended by the vote of a majority of the members of the Society voting at a General Meeting or by mail. Notice of any proposed amendment shall be given in writing to all members as part of the agenda for the General Meeting.

Article X
- Financial Affairs and Accounting
1. The expenses of the Society shall be met by dues from the members and subscribing organizations and by such subsidies, donations, and other income as the Council shall see fit to accept. No expenditures shall be made or liabilities incurred beyond the amount of the funds available.

2. The financial affairs of the Society involving fundraising and budgeting shall be the responsibility of the Council which may delegate certain duties to the officers or to appropriate committees.

3. The Society's financial year shall be the calendar year (September 1991 Resolution) [previously it commenced on April 1st and end on March 31st].

4. The Executive Council may in its discretion appoint an Auditor or auditors who shall submit a statement of accounts.