

President's Message

Dear and Esteemed Colleagues,

Greetings from Jaipur, India and Ishwar Modi.

Let me first of all wholeheartedly thank and express my gratitude to all the members of the Research Committee on Sociology of Leisure of the International Sociological Association for once again electing me unanimously the President of RC 13. It is only in rare instances that the same person is re-elected as President of any ISA Research Committee. I am really overwhelmed by your expression of trust and faith in me. In fact it is the endorsement of the members of RC 13 towards what the Board of RC 13 could achieve with me as President during the last tenure of the Board (2006 – 2010). As such, I also take this opportunity to thank all the members of that Board particularly Dr. Veena Sharma, the Secretary of RC 13 (who also once again has been elected as Secretary) for their wholehearted support to my functioning. I would also like to express my happiness that hopefully I could also meet the expectations of all the three immediate past Presidents - Teus Kamphorst, Ken Roberts and Francis Lobo of strengthening RC 13 at a critical juncture of its existence when its membership had come down tremendously.

It is now widely known and appreciated that of late RC 13 has become one of the largest Research Committee of ISA. As on today it has more than 185 members spread over in approx. 40 countries and all the continents. Now it has members right from Australia and New Zealand to Brazil and Venezuela. It now also has members from such countries where it had no presence earlier. At the same time, its membership in several countries across the globe has increased significantly. In about a dozen countries it now has a significant presence. As such, it was in the fitness of things that the Board of RC 13 was enlarged in the business meeting of RC 13 in Gothenburg and it now has representation from 14 countries. What is most heartening is that the elections to such a big board were made unanimously. Thanks to the efforts made by Prof. Francis Lobo, the immediate past-President of RC 13 who acted as the Returning Officer for conducting the elections. He did it very smoothly and efficiently. The Board is now composed of the most senior and old stalwarts to the young and new members. This happy situation will ensure both continuity and change in the functioning of RC 13 and also help it grow from strength to strength. I take this opportunity to appeal all the members of RC 13 to motivate young and other scholars to join RC 13 in their respective countries and regions and wherever else they can. Once you decide to undertake this task, you will not find it difficult since leisure is one of the widest phenomenon deeply connected to several other social and cultural phenomena as well as to all categories of human beings.

Now that RC 13 is one of the most established research committee of ISA having very large participation of its own members as well as that of the members of other research committees which collaborated with us in organizing joint sessions both at the First ISA Forum of Sociology in Barcelona and the 17th ISA World Congress of Sociology in Gothenburg, it is now high time that we not only continue our collaboration with all these RCs but also seek new avenues of collaboration with other ISA RCs. It would help all of us to connect to all such areas of research which we have not pursued so far significantly.

In my view, it is now also high time that RC 13 seriously considers bringing out a journal of its own besides as many post-conference/congress volumes as possible. I will soon be sharing my ideas on this issue. Quality and viability are serious issues to be taken care of in this regard. Please feel free to apprise me with your ideas and suggestions.

Successful organization of the RC 13 mid-term conference in Beijing, China in October 2009 (wherein a large number of participants both from China and many other countries made

their presentations) and the subsequent publication of the selected papers presented there in a book entitled: *Leisure and Civilization: Interdisciplinary and International Perspectives* (edited by Ishwar Modi, Ma Huidi and Ning Zequn) in a very short period (as is evident from its release at the ISA World Congress in Gothenburg in July 2010), has greatly inspired us to organize RC 13 mid-term conferences in such countries and regions of the world where there is new emerging enthusiasm for leisure studies. Such members who attended the ISA Congress in Gothenburg would recall that our two members Fabio Massimo Lo Verde and Gianna Cappello had expressed desire and offered to hold the next mid-term conference of RC 13 in Palermo, Italy in the business meeting of RC 13 and it readily accepted their offer.

The Call for Papers for the next ISA RC 13 Mid-term Conference on the main theme of "Mapping Leisure across Borders", Palermo, Italy, September 29-30 / October 1, 2011 is attached separately in this newsletter. I do hope that a large number of RC 13 members and many others would be participating in this conference.

However, RC 13 would be happy to receive proposals from other members for organizing the RC 13 mid-term conferences under the auspices of their institutions in their countries. Such a conference by you in your country would not only strengthen leisure studies in your own country and region but would also pave the way for several new avenues to you and your colleagues.

A new tradition was established when ISA RC 13 felicitated its all the past-Presidents in appreciation and recognition of their continuing contributions to the advancement of sociology of leisure on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of ISA RC 13 at the 17th ISA World Congress of Sociology in Gothenburg, Sweden. While the RC 13 past-Presidents Teus Kamphorst (1990-1994), Ken Roberts (1998-2002) and Francis Lobo (2002-2006) were honoured at the Congress itself, the Plaque of Honour to the senior most past-President Anna Olszewska (1978-1986) who could not make it to Gothenburg was presented personally by me in Poland where I had been invited by the Polish Sociological Association to participate at the International Symposium at their 17th Annual Congress during September 8-11, 2010. The Plaque of Honour to Gilles Pronovost (1994-1998) was delivered to him by the fellow Canadian, Robert Stebbins, Vice-President RC 13.

Both me and Veena Sharma, Secretary RC 13 and Editor of our Newsletter, would appreciate to receive information on your achievements and publications. Please do also let us know about your participation in any seminar / conference / congress etc wherein issues related to leisure were also discussed. Reports by you on these events will hopefully find place in the RC 13 Newsletter. Please do also keep us informed about any forthcoming events related to leisure studies or new publications / book reviews on leisure which come to your notice.

I would like to share with you that I have been elected as a Member of the Executive Committee of the International Sociological Association for 2010-2014.

I would much appreciate receiving your ideas, suggestions and communications which you think will strengthen RC 13.

With best wishes and regards,

Prof. Dr. Ishwar Modi

President, Research Committee on Sociology of Leisure
& Delegate to the Assembly of Councils

International Sociological Association.

Email: iiiss2005modi@yahoo.co.in