

## **Classification and Subject Indexing System of the Institute of Research on Law of the National Autonomous University of Mexico**

*English translation of the original paper: “Sistema de Clasificación e Indización Temática del Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México”.*

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### **Abstract:**

*Undoubtedly, subject indexing and classification of information resources in a specialized library that supports research on Law is a complex issue, due to several factors, among them the following: the specialized meaning of legal terms, which differs from the common meaning; the meaning of terms in the different Law branches; the meaning of terms in different legal systems prevailing in different countries; the meaning of terms in different languages. The previous mentioned issues led to the development of a classification and subject indexing system that would respond to the major challenges dealing with classification and indexing of specialized resources, in order to efficiently retrieve the books, book chapters and journal articles housed by the Library “Dr. Jorge Carpizo” pertaining to the Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas (IIJ)[Institute of Research on Law] of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México UNAM [National Autonomous University of Mexico]. This tool, in whose development participated institute scholars, has 2,296 highly specialized terms or descriptors in legal matters, grouped into 19 main categories in its own classification system. Considering that this tool facilitates subject indexing and classification of legal information*

resources, since the terms and classification are appropriate to the characteristics of the systems of Mexican and Latin American law, the purpose of this paper is to show how this library developed its legal classification schemes and subject terms in response to the particular Law features. Additionally, to show its origins, features and future prospects for this classification system and subject indexing.

**Keywords:** Law indexing, Law classification, Law Subjects, Law terminology

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## **The Institute of Research on Law of the National Autonomous University of Mexico**

The *Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas* (IIJ) [Institute of Research on Law] of the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM) [National Autonomous University of Mexico], made up of more than 100 researchers, has as its mission.

*Contribute to the solution of social and political problems related to national and international legal phenomena. Its work focuses in particular on the study, teaching, dissemination and generation of elements for the effective application and efficiency of law, through comparative and interdisciplinary research, allowing the generation and dissemination of expert knowledge and excellence in these areas (UNAM. IIJ, 2017).*

The IIJ origin was the establishment in 1940 of the *Instituto de Derecho Comparado de México* [Institute of Comparative Law of Mexico], as an initiative of the Spanish professor Felipe Sanchez Roman, who proposed the creation of a studies center where, using the comparative method, the development of Mexican law was promote, as well as research on the world legal systems, especially those from Ibero-American countries (Elola, 1965).

The *Instituto de Derecho Comparado de México* purposes were, among other ones, the following (Eola, 1965, p. 10):

*“e) To gather and classify the necessary materials for the accomplishment of its works, especially the legislative, national and foreign documentation...and in general those necessary elements for the Comparative Law study.  
f) establishment of a specialized library”*

In December 1967, the *Instituto de Derecho Comparado de México* was transformed into the current *Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas* (UNAM, 1990).

Currently, the *Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas* of UNAM, as mentioned above, has more than 100 full-time researchers, who carry out research in twelve lines (UNAM. IIJ, 2017), which are as follows:

- 1) Rights, Social Conflicts and Politics
- 2) Rights, Migration and Mobility
- 3) Roman Law and Roman Tradition
- 4) Law and Informal Economy
- 5) Methodology of Legal Research and Law Teaching
- 6) Energetic Matter

- 7) Towards an International Rule of Law
- 8) Institutions, Political Representation and Democracy
- 9) Public Policies and Development, Law Economic Analysis, and Economic Competitiveness
- 10) Promotion and Protection of Child Rights
- 11) Criminal Accusatory System in Mexico
- 12) Legislative Transparency, Accountability and Democracy

The *Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas* of UNAM is the main institution of research on Law and also one of the leading research institutions in Latin America. Each year it publishes more than 150 books, as well as twelve research journals.

### **The Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas (IIJ) Library**

Research projects developed in the *Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas* (IIJ) are supported by the Library "*Dr. Jorge Carpizo*," which has the most complete Law collection in Mexico and one of the most valuable in Latin America.

This library is integrated to date by more than 230,000 books and 2,000 journal titles, including approximately 110, 000 issues, from more than 50 countries, mainly from Latin America and Europe, having an important Law tradition.

The works that make up the library collection are mostly from foreign origin (78%), that is, only 22% of its titles were published in Mexico. Also, 60% of the library's books were written in other languages different than Spanish (Chavez-Hernández, 2016).

### **Information indexing and retrieval in the Law**

One of the principles on which information organization is based deals with establishment of necessary access points to retrieve information than a user requires. The main access points that have been handled in the library catalog, and in any other information retrieval tools are author, title and subjects, among which the last one has particular importance, since it requires content analysis of information resources in order to determine what are the topics or subjects covered in them, but also a selection of the best representation for them, through standardizing terms and/or classification symbols that will be used to accurately indexing and retrieve information resources dealing with the topics or subjects a user requires.

To develop the subject indexing tasks, it has been used subject headings lists, being one of the most popular the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), as well as specialized thesaurus in diverse areas, in addition to classification systems like the LC Classification and the Dewey Classification. Nevertheless, criticism in relation to these and other tools used for subject indexing have been, the generality of terms included in them, but above all, local and cultural influence prevalence in these tools.

Undoubtedly, subject indexing and classification of information resources in a specialized library for Law research is a complex issue, due to diverse factors, being some of them the following: specialized meaning of legal terms, which differs from the common meaning; the

meaning of terms in different Law branches; the meaning of terms in diverse Law systems prevailing in different countries; the meaning of terms in different languages.

Certainly, legal concepts and their representation by means of precise terms is a complex matter, since they have their own language, different from common language, and the peculiarities of legal systems for each country. There are also terms that seem alike, however, their meaning is totally different, so it is imperative to have knowledge on different Law branches to be able to identify them correctly, and define their precise meaning. For example: [*Derecho del mar*] Sea Law (branch of International Law) and [*Derecho marino*] Maritime Law (branch of Commercial Law); [*Régimen de Asamblea*] Assembly regime (Constitutional Law) and Assembly (term of Mercantile Law).

There are also terms in which a literal translation from English to Spanish would be erroneous: For example, "*Rule of Law*", whose literal translation into Spanish would be "*Regla de Derecho*"; however, according to legal meaning of these terms should be translated as "*Estado de Derecho*." Another case is "*Judicial Review*", whose correct Spanish translation in a legal sense is "*Control constitucional*", not "*Revisión judicial*" (Chávez-Hernández, 2016). Figure 1 shows a series of terms in different languages, whose translation to Spanish would not be literally done, being instead necessary to select those terms that really reflect the meaning of legal concepts.

**Illustration 1. Spanish translation of Law terms in different languages**

<i>Law terms in Spanish</i>	<i>Law terms in English</i>	<i>Law terms in French</i>	<i>Law terms in German</i>
Actuaciones (procesales)	Proceedings	Débats	Verhandlung
Agravio, daño	Tort	Préjudice	Unerlaubte Handlung
Albacea	Executor of a will	Exécuteur testamentaire	Testamentsvollstrecker
Auto (mandamiento procesal)	Writ	Ordre	Gerichtsbefehl
Derecho jurisprudencial	Case law	Droit jurisprudencial	Rechtsprechung auf Grund von Präzedenzentscheidungen
Desahucio	Eviction	Dépossession	Eviktion
Embargo	Sequestration	Séquestration	Zwangsverwaltung
Excepción dilatoria	Dilatory plea	Exception dilatoire	Auschiebende Einrede
Impuestos sobre la renta	Income tax	Impôt sur le revenu	Einkommensteuer
Insolvencia	Insolvency	Faillite	Zahlungsunfähigkeit
Interdicto	Injunction	Injonction	Anordnung des Gerichts
Legislación contra los monopolios	Anti-trust law	Loi contre les monopoles	Anti-Trust-gesetz
Prenda (promesa)	Pledge	Nantissement	Bürgschaft
Recopilación de leyes	Law digest	Recueil de lois	Sammlung von Gesetzen
Servidumbre	Servitude	Servitude	Servitut
Usufructo	Usufruct	Usufruit	Niessbrauch

The above situation involves two major challenges, the first one is to have an indexing tool that includes terms with great precision in its meaning, but also the personnel in charge of subject analysis and indexing have a Law formation in order to perform a precise content analysis of information resources, and additionally, the identification and better selection of terms that reflect those contents. In the case of the Library "Dr. Jorge Carpizo", the *Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas* personnel taking care of subject indexing has Law formation, in some cases at the graduate level. Additionally, there is a tool for indexing that was developed by the library staff in collaboration with institute scholars and librarians. In this way, the library responds to the information needs of Law scholars having a high academic level, who need to retrieve information on subjects of their interest.

Additionally, it is important to note that subject analysis and indexing of information resources are not limited to books, but they have been extended to the articles included in the journals fascicles and to book chapters.

The result of these activities has generated four catalogs: Catalog of Books until 2015 (125,377 records); Catalog of Books from 2016 and electronic books (approximately 5,000 records); Catalog of Book Chapters (107,140 records); and Catalog of Journal Articles (428,993 records)(<http://biblioteca.juridicas.unam.mx:8991/F>)

### **Classification and subject indexing system**

Development of the classification and subject indexing system of the *Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas* involved the selection of terms highly specialized in Law matters (UNAM. IJ, 2017b). At the present time there are 2,296 terms grouped in 19 categories of the classification system, which are showed in the illustration 2.

Likewise, it has been assigned an alphabet letter to each one of these categories, leaving some of them free for future areas of the legal knowledge that may arise. Moreover, each one of these categories has been subdivided into subcategories, representing each one of them the main subject subfields. Likewise, it has been assigned to each subcategory three numbers, like in the subdivisions for Constitutional Law showed in the Illustration 3

#### **Illustration 2. Classification System Categories**

<b>A000</b>	<b>Obras de consulta</b>
<b>B000</b>	<b>Teoría del Estado, ciencia política, sociología</b>
<b>C000</b>	<b>Obras generales de derecho, derecho comparado, filosofía del derecho, sociología jurídica</b>
<b>D000</b>	<b>Derecho internacional público y privado</b>
<b>E000</b>	<b>Derecho constitucional</b>
<b>F000</b>	<b>Derecho administrativo</b>
<b>G000</b>	<b>Derecho financiero y aduanero</b>

H000 Derecho procesal civil y penal  
J000 Derecho penal  
K000 Derecho civil  
L000 Derecho mercantil  
M000 Derecho agrario  
N000 Derecho del trabajo y de la seguridad social  
P000 Otras disciplinas jurídicas: Derecho aéreo y espacial, derecho canónico, derecho militar, derecho minero, derecho económico  
R000 Derecho romano e historia del derecho  
T000 Universidades  
V000 Historia  
W000 Filosofía  
Y000 Economía

### Illustration 3. Classification System Subcategories

- E000 *DERECHO CONSTITUCIONAL*
- 010 Obras generales de derecho constitucional: manuales, compendios, historia, etcétera
  - 030 Derecho constitucional mexicano (obras generales, manuales, compendios, historia, etcétera); legislación constitucional mexicana comentada (constituciones, documentos, leyes constitucionales y proyectos legislativos)
  - 050 Derecho constitucional comparado
  - 100 Legislación constitucional comentada (constituciones, documentos, leyes constitucionales comentadas y proyectos legislativos)
  - 500 Derechos humanos (nota: para aspectos internacionales véase D150), garantías individuales y sociales, estado de sitio
  - 600 Formas de gobierno, presidencialismo, parlamentarismo, régimen de asamblea, órganos del gobierno
  - 610 Poder ejecutivo
  - 640 Poder legislativo, derecho parlamentario
  - 670 Poder judicial
  - 700 Sistemas de control de la constitucionalidad, tribunales constitucionales, amparo, *habeas corpus*, *judicial review*
  - 800 Derecho electoral, sistemas electorales, partidos políticos (aspectos jurídicos), legislación electoral comentada (proyectos legislativos), representación
  - 850 Estado unitario, Estado federal, Estado regional
  - 900 Derecho político

On the other hand, in the Subject Authority List, each one of the terms or descriptors has been associated with their corresponding classification number, as can be noticed in the Illustration 4.

#### Illustration 4. Terms in the Subject Authority List associated with their classification numbers

##### CATALOGO DE AUTORIDADES (TEMAS)

Voz - Rubro(s) -Observaciones

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Abandono de Buque L900                  | 42. Administración de Justicia H750                    |
| 2. Abandono de Personas J700               | 43. Administración de Sociedades L300                  |
| 3. Abastos F300                            | 44. Administración del Trabajo N600                    |
| 4. Abogacía F900                           | 45. Administración Fiscal G500                         |
| 5. Abordaje L900                           | 46. Administración Local F575                          |
| 6. Aborto J780                             | 47. Administración Pública - Bibliografías A680        |
| 7. Abrogación C500                         | 48. Administración Pública - Estadística F725          |
| 8. Absolutismo B400                        | 49. Administración Pública - Funciones Función Pública |
| 9. Abuso de Autoridad J600                 | 50. Administración Pública - Memorias F725             |
| 10. Abuso de Confianza J800                | 51. Administración Pública - Órganos F400              |
| 11. Abuso de Menores J600                  | 52. Administración Pública F400                        |
| 12. Abuso de Poder B600                    | 53. Administración Pública Federal F500                |
| 13. Abuso del Derecho C500                 | 54. Administración Regional F575 Administración Local  |
| 14. Acceso K520                            | 55. Administrado (Voz Secundaria)                      |
| 15. Acceso a la Información F500 D150 E500 | 56. Adopción K345                                      |
| 16. Acceso a la Justicia H750              | 57. Aduanas G710 G825                                  |
| 17. Accidentes Aéreos N100                 | 58. Adul Secundaria                                    |
| 18. Accidentes de Trabajo N710             | 59. Adulterio K340                                     |
| 19. Accidentes de Tránsito F850 F975 J600  | 60. Adultos Mayores B950 E500 D150                     |
| 20. Acción Cambiaria L700                  | 61. Aeronaves P100                                     |
| 21. Acción Civil H100                      | 62. Aeropuertos P100                                   |
| 22. Acción de Inconstitucionalidad E700    | 63. Aforismos y Máximas (Voz Secundaria)               |
| 23. Acción H100                            |  |
| 24. Acción Pauliana K600                   |  |

In some cases, several descriptors have been associated with a unique classification number, as it is showed in the Illustration 5, where various terms are linked to the same subcategory number. In this case *Derechos Humanos* [Human Rights] (E500) has several types of rights, associated to its classification number.

#### Illustration 5. Terms associated to the same classification number

Derecho a la Educación	E500
Derecho a la Información	E500
Derecho a la Intimidad	E500
Derecho a la Vida	E500
Derecho al Trabajo	E500
Derecho de Petición	E500
Derecho de Resistencia	E500
Derechos Colectivos	E500
Derechos Culturales	E500
Derechos de la Personalidad	E500
Derechos de los Pacientes	E500
Derechos Políticos	E500

Additionally, there is the possibility of using geographical subdivisions with each one of the terms or descriptors, as it is showed in the Illustration 6. Moreover, there are a set of 245 geographical subdivisions, assigning to each one of them three digits.

## Illustration. 6. Geographical subdivisions

93. Fiji 507	140. Macao 368
94. Filipinas 351	141. Macedonia 282
95. Finlandia 244	142. Madagascar 493 (nuevo)
96. Francia 216	143. Malasia 348
97. Gabón 454	144. Malawi 472
98. Gambia 414	145. Maldivas 338
99. Georgia 263	146. Malí 426
100. Ghana 420	147. Malta 279
101. Gran Bretaña 211 Incluye Escocia, Gales, Inglaterra e Irlanda del Norte.	148. Marruecos 437
102. Grecia 273	149. Mauricio 492
103. Grenada 140	150. Mauritania 412
104. Guatemala 121	151. Medio Oriente 301 (sólo cuando se refiera a la región específicamente)
105. Guinea 416	152. <b>México 113</b>
106. Guinea Bissau 415	153. Moldova 263
107. Guinea Ecuatorial 452	154. Mónaco 220
108. Guyana 161	155. Mongolia 361
109. Haití 133	156. Montenegro 283 A partir del 28 de junio de 2006
110. Honduras 122	157. Mozambique 488

## Illustration 7. Record with geographical subdivision in the classification

Registro 8 de 149

No. de sistema	001874830
Clasificación IJ	E500.113 H43D IDUNAM
Núm. de Inventario	<b>67642</b> <b>67643</b>
ISBN	9786077291176
Autor	• <a href="#">Hernández Cruz, Armando, autor.</a>
Título	Los <b>derechos</b> económicos, sociales, culturales y ambientales en el nuevo modelo constitucional de <b>derechos humanos</b> en México / Armando Hernández
Datos de publicac.	• <a href="#">México : Comisión Nacional de los <b>Derechos Humanos</b>, 2015</a>
Descr. Física	144 páginas
Serie	• <a href="#">( Colección Sobre los <b>derechos</b> económicos, sociales Culturales y Ambientales (DESCA) : : Fascículo 6)</a>
Notas	"25 años. CNDH, México"
Materia	• <a href="#">Derechos humanos -- México</a> • <a href="#">Derechos sociales -- México</a>
Materia geográfico	• <a href="#">México Política cultural</a>
Colección	<a href="#">Biblioteca Jurídicas</a> 

The numbers for each geographical subdivision are used in combination with the numbers assigned to each category or subcategory in the classification schemes. In the illustration 7 it can be noticed that to the Human Rights number (E500) has been added the corresponding numbers for the subdivision Mexico.

In this way, the Library “*Dr, Jorge Carpizo*“ face the great challenge, represented by giving answer to questions like the following ones: How to get that Law scholars would to find suitable material for their research, taking into account that Law terminology has great complexity? How retrieve efficiently and accurately the books, book chapters and articles from the journals included in the library collection?

## Challenges and prospective for the classification and indexing system

The classification and indexing system developed by the Library "Dr. Jorge Carpizo" is an effort of many years, in which specialists in Law have participated, jointly with librarians. Obviously, as any indexing and subject retrieval system, it has a number of strengths, but also a series of challenges that need to be faced in the future. The main virtue of this system is the compilation of a "corpus" of specialized terms in the Law field. However, it will have to be updated, as well as undertake the task of establishing synonymy and hierarchy relationships among the terms. In addition, it will also be necessary to review and redefine the categories and subcategories included in the classification system, as well as to add new subjects in them, and consequently the classification numbers them. Obviously, this task involves to develop a project that take into account the participation of Law specialists, librarians and computation people, and obviously to have software for developing of thesaurus. The corpus of terms that currently the IJ has, constitute the core of this project to develop a thesaurus in Law for indexing and retrieving information resources by their subject content in IJ library and in many other similar of Mexico and Latin America.

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