

## Law cataloguing and classification in Poland. A journey through the time (and practices)

**Barbara Szczepańska**

Hogan Lovells (Warszawa) LLP, Warsaw, Poland

E-mail address: [barbara.szczepanska@hoganlovells.com](mailto:barbara.szczepanska@hoganlovells.com)



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### **Abstract:**

*Solutions currently used in Poland for the preparation of subject indexes and the classification of law-related collections needs to be discussed in relation to the experience in creation and preparation of subject indexes of other types of library materials. Law-related collections do not have a unique information language, although work on it was quite intensive in the 1970s. Law-related collections in universal libraries are developed using various subject heading languages (Automatic Catalogs of Academic Libraries Subject Headings KABA, the National Library's JHP [Język Haseł Przedmiotowych – Subject Heading Language, SHL]), and recently with the used of descriptors and facets. In specialized libraries, where more detailed information needs are met, thesauri are created. This paper presents the most important information languages used in preparation of law-related subject indexes and examples of the descriptions of the same documents using various SHLs and descriptors.*

**Keywords:** classification, cataloguing, Poland, legal resources, subject heading language

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### **Introduction**

Solutions currently used in Poland for the preparation of subject indexes and the classification of law-related collections cannot be discussed in isolation from the experience of creation and preparation of subject indexes of other types of library materials. Law-related collections do not have a unique and widely-used subject heading language (SHL), although work on it was quite intensive in the 1970s. Libraries gathering law-related collections (legal libraries, among which I include law faculty libraries, the Library of the Parliament, the Library of the Institute of Legal Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Supreme Court Library, as well as libraries in courts, prosecutors' offices and law firms, etc.) must therefore use SHLs developed for collections of a general nature or, more frequently, create their own information languages, mainly in the form of thesauri, in which detailed vocabulary helps to handle the very narrow and specialized user queries.

### **The classification scheme of legal documents**

In the early 1970s, at the Institute of Legal Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences (ILS PAS), work began on creating a draft of a classification scheme of legal documents. One of the reasons for undertaking this work was the belief that the UDC did not meet the needs of libraries due to ideological reasons, that it was outdated and that it did not conform to the Marxist classification of sciences.

Work was conducted by a team made up of the invited law faculty libraries and main university libraries. This was the first attempt to establish cooperation between law libraries in order to work together on developing a subject index. In addition to political doctrines, the classification consisted of 17 basic divisions marked with letters, which were expanded in an alphanumeric system. The project underwent consultations with academic staff, but the project itself, as well as the proposed division into the law of socialist and capitalist states, using two classifications – the Soviet and the UDC – was not well received. The classification was very detailed, almost meticulous from the very beginning; it was actually more like a thesaurus, which made it difficult to apply in practice. Over several years of consultations, new versions of the scheme were created, the division into the law of capitalist and socialist states was abandoned, but ultimately, none of the versions were implemented in law libraries.

### **Polish Legal Bibliography**

In the 1960s, the Institute of Legal Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences began the creation of the Polish Legal Bibliography (PLB). Its core is a classification scheme based on UDC. 24 divisions were identified, the first six of which concern legal sources or general texts (legal files, bibliographies, journals, etc.). The divisions are developed in-depth, currently to 4 levels of detail. While some divisions develop dynamically into more and more specific issues, some, despite great dynamics in the creation of new, very narrow legal specifications, remain at a high level of generality. Expanding the classification is a complex process, carried out in consultation with the scientific editor and reviewers. The last major change took place in 2004, when divisions concerning the European Union were created. However, a separate section on the law of the European Union has not been distinguished in the classification. Issues related to EU law are categorized in individual legal divisions.

The Civil Law classification scheme, as outlined below, illustrates how different details in one class are distinguished. The subclass “Copyright. Invention law. Industrial property” is divided into narrower domains. Insurance law, despite the tremendous dynamics resulting from such factors as further EU directives, is not divided into more detailed subclasses. It is worth mentioning that in the teaching of law and related literature, two areas of intangible property law are currently distinguished: intellectual property law and industrial property law. Invention law is an outdated term, which is practically no longer used.

Table 1 The Civil Law classification scheme

18. CIVIL LAW
18.00. General issues and studies on the whole
18.01. Issues of the general part of civil law
18.02. Property rights
18.03. Obligations
18.03.00. Studies on the whole and general issues
18.03.01. General part of obligations law
18.03.02. Detailed part of obligations law
18.03.03. Securities. Stock exchange trading

- 18.04. Commercial law. Business law (see also 10.4.013)
  - 18.04.01. General issues. Non-contractual agreements
  - 18.04.02. Business entities and business organizations
  - 18.04.03. Non-governmental organizations. Foundations
  - 18.04.04. Cooperative societies. Cooperative societies law
  - 18.04.05. Companies. Company law
- 18.05. Family law
- 18.06. Law of succession
- 18.07. Copyright law. Invention law. Industrial property
  - 18.07.01. Copyright and neighboring law
  - 18.07.02. Invention law
  - 18.07.03. Industrial property. Trade marks. Advertisement (see also 10.4.014)
- 18.08. Insurance law
- 18.09. Civil law of the foreign and European Union countries
  - 18.09.01. Civil law of the European Union
  - 18.09.02. Civil law of the foreign countries
- 18.10. Review of the works published abroad

With the publication of the electronic version of the Bibliography, the bibliographic descriptions were supplemented with descriptors, which allow for the more detailed presentation of the subject characteristics of the documents. New descriptors are added on a regular basis by the developers of the compilations.

Although the classification and descriptors used in the Bibliography correspond to the needs of specialized libraries, they have not been adopted by any of them. It is difficult to point out a clear cause. In the case of university law libraries, it is the result of their organizational structure – they are part of a larger library system and are therefore obliged to use universal information languages.

### The Subject Heading Language of the National Library

One of the most developed universal information languages is the Subject Heading Language of the National Library, created for the needs of the National Library and the national bibliography. It is used by many other libraries, particularly public ones, as well as large specialist libraries, such as the Library of the Parliament. The National Library SHL was created and developed over several decades, and it flourished in the 1980s and 1990s. Since 1995, it has been under the control of the master files. The vocabulary of the National Library SHL consists of topics and subdivisions. For the needs of law-related collections, instead of a chronological subdivision, the “state on” is used, indicating the date of the legal state of the document described.

Table 2 Subject article structure of the National Library SHL

NU = not to be used term  
 U = used term  
 TS = broader term  
 TW = narrower term  
 TK = related term

Table 3 Sample record for the subject heading “Real Estate - law” in the National Library SHL

subject heading/subdivision: **Real estate – law**  
 related term Border courts  
 related term Uusufruct (law)  
 narrower term Division of the property  
 narrower term Neighbouring rights  
 narrower term Mark out land

## Descriptors of the National Library

In 2013, the National Library decided to discontinue the development work on the SHL. At the same time, work began on creating a new model of cataloging collections using descriptors and supplementing the subject characteristics of facets. Descriptors are based on the National Library SHL. The changes are a result of the decrease in use of subject characteristics in the process of searching for information in library catalogs, but also from the transfer of users' internet habit of using full-text searches.

The facets that narrow down search results are:

- 336 – content type
- 337 – media type
- 338 – carrier type
- 380 – form of work
- 385 – audience
- 386 – cultural and ethnic trait
- 388 – time of document creation
- 648 – chronological scope of the issues contained in the document
- 658 – area (subject) covered by the document

Some of them, such as the chronological range or content type in the SHL had the characteristics of a subdivision and were contained in the subject characteristics of the document but for instance field 658 is new and it will be limited a to maximum of 100 facets.

Since January 2017, all materials are cataloged using descriptors. The constructions used in the SHL, build of the subject and subdivision, are gradually replaced by multi-element expressions. Thus, naturally, but not very conveniently for the users, the catalog may contain differences in the subject characteristics of books from 2017 and from earlier years.

Table 4 Differences in the description depending on the use of the National Library SHL and descriptors

<b>Kodeks postępowania administracyjnego: komentarz [Administrative Proceedings Code: Commentary] /ed. Roman Hauser. C.H. Beck.</b>	
Edition 2017 – Descriptors	Edition 2015 – National Library SHL
380 Books 380 Specialist publications 380 Scientific publications 385 Lawyers 388 2001- 521 For judges, court assistants, legal counsels, solicitors, civil servants, PhD students, legal trainees, students 648 2001- <b>650 Administrative proceedings</b> <b>651 Poland</b> 655 Commentary 658 Law and judiciary UDC 351.077.3(438)	521 8 For practitioners, PhD students, legal trainees, students 648 2001- <b>650 Administrative proceedings  zPoland</b> 655 Textbooks

At the same time, the description is supplemented by the UDC classification, which, in this particular case, directs the user to the **Administrative proceedings in Poland** section.

## The KABA (Katalogi Automatyczne Bibliotek Akademickich [Automatic Catalogs of Academic Libraries]) Subject Heading Language

In 1992, work began on creating a new universal information and search language, common to academic libraries, meeting the needs of modern integrated computer systems. Initially, four academic libraries worked on it, over time the KABA-creation team was joined by other libraries, until 2017, when they formed a network of more than 30 libraries creating the language and 150 libraries using KABA in preparation of subject indexes of their collections. The French RAMEAU textbook (National Library in Paris) was used in the creation of the KABA SHL, which determined the method of creating the subject headings. The KABA SHL is also compatible with the SHLs of the Library of Congress and the Library of the Université Laval in Canada – the corresponding French and English subject headings are added to the record in the master subject heading file. Thanks to this solution, the KABA SHL is fully translatable into two very popular SHLs in the world.

The KABA entries are composed of: the adopted title term, equivalents (rejected terms), terms in the compatible languages (RAMEAU, RVM Laval, LCSH), other terms of reference connected by relations and complementary orientation links. Additionally, records may be supplemented with notes about the meaning and rules of use of individual headings, as well as methodological notes.

During the many years of work on the KABA SHL, there has been heated debate over the proper adaptation of headings originating in RAMEAU to the lexicon of the KABA SHL. Of interest to us, such discussions took place regarding, for example, the heading “Property rights,” which in KABA functions only as variant form (reference) added to headings “Dobra (prawo) (Things (Law))” and “Własność (Property),” which is sometimes difficult to accept for lawyers.

Table 5 The master heading file for the headings “Things (Law)” and “Property” (headings with no English equivalents in KABA are omitted)

83	4 \$a 340 \$c Law	150	\$a Property
150	\$a Things (Law)		\$i subdivision \$a -- i property \$i use under
360	\$i Headings starting with Good.	360	names of individual persons, names of institutions and organizations
450	\$a Estates.		\$a subdivision \$a -- government ownership
450	\$a <b>Property rights.</b>	360	<--OG> \$i use under names of types of industries and business
450	\$a Goods (law).		\$i subdivision \$a -- property \$i use under
472	\$a Biens (droit) [f]	360	ethnic groups, types of industries and topical headings for national and international journals and the likes
472	\$a Property [c]	450	\$a <b>Property rights.</b>
472	\$a Things (Law) [c]	450	\$a Property \$x law.
550	\$w g \$a Civil law.	450	\$a Property (law).
550	\$w g \$a Estates (law).	450	\$a Private property (law).
550	\$a Property.	472	\$a Propriété [f]
550	\$w h \$a Res extra commercium.	472	\$a Property [c]
550	\$w h \$a Division of property (law).	472	\$a Right of property [c]
550	\$w h \$a Real property.	550	\$w g \$a Economics.
550	\$w h \$a Personal property.	550	\$w g \$a Free enterprise.
550	\$w h \$a Security (law).	550	\$w g \$a Human rights.
		550	\$w g \$a Civil law.

	550	\$a Wealth.
	550	\$a Things (law).
	550	\$w h \$a Income.
	550	\$w h \$a Government ownership.
	550	\$w h \$a Restraints on alienation.
	550	\$w h \$a Transfer (Law).
	550	\$w h \$a Offenses against property.
	550	\$w h \$a Res extra commercium.
	550	\$w h \$a Division of property (law).
	550	\$w h \$a Servitudes.
	550	\$w h \$a Property insurance.
	550	\$w h \$a Usufruct.
	550	\$w h \$a Public domain.
	550	\$w h \$a Eminent domain.
	550	\$w h \$a Real obligations.
	550	\$w h \$a Res nullius.
	550	\$w h \$a Church property.
	550	\$w h \$a Joint tenancy.
	550	\$a Possession (Law).
	550	\$w h \$a Freedom of testation.
	550	\$w h \$a Uses (Law).
	550	\$w h \$a Property and socialism.
	550	\$w h \$a Socialist property.
	550	\$w h \$a Newspaper \$x Ownership.
	550	\$w h \$a Abandonment of property.
	550	\$w h \$a Emphyteusis.
	670	\$a RAMEAU
	670	\$a NEP \$b (The law related to possession of a thing by a natural or legal person)
	680	\$i Use for general works on property.
	680	\$i For works related to specific type of property use appropriate heading for example \$a Estates <--OG>
	680	\$i Subdivision -- property use under topical heading \$a Conflict of laws <--OG>

As a result, a classic handbook on Property rights must be cataloged using two subjects:

**Prawo rzeczowe [Property rights] / Edward Gniewek. C.H. Beck, 2010.**

Things (Law) -- Poland -- academic handbook.  
Property -- Poland -- academic handbook.

The KABA SHL is managed by the NUKAT Center, which is a branch of the Library of the University of Warsaw that supervises the operations of the NUKAT central catalog of scientific libraries. In 2015, in addition to the KABA SHL, facets and filters to narrow down search results were introduced to the central catalog. Among them are year of publication and type of publication, i.e., information also contained in the subdivisions. The decision to add

facets was dictated by the needs of users to receive faster and more accurate search results, which the highly hierarchical KABA SHL was unable to provide.

Libraries that use the NUKAT central catalog of scientific libraries mechanically import bibliographical descriptions, but they have the ability to modify them, for example by supplementing the subject characteristics. For example, the Library of the Lazarski University – a private university, specializing in law and economics – supplements the description with additional keywords.

Table 6 Subject characteristic of the Property rights handbook at the Library of the Lazarski University

**Prawo rzeczowe [Property rights] / Edward Gniewek. C. H. Beck, 2010.**

Things (Law) -- Poland -- academic handbook.

Property -- Poland -- academic handbook.

Mortgage register; Property; Law of property; Property rights; Ownership; Co-ownership; Real estate business; Perpetual usufruct; Limited rights in property; Usufruct; Servitude; Right to premises of a cooperative member; Pledge; Mortgage;

The changes introduced at the National Library also affected the KABA SHL. The editors of KABA made several decisions to “simplify” the KABA SHL structure: reducing the number of subdivisions and adding field 083 – the Dewey Decimal System Classification Symbol.

### **The Law Thesaurus of the Library of the Parliament**

A similar solution is used by the Library of the Parliament, which is one of the largest specialist libraries. In addition to legal collections, it also includes literature on economics, social sciences, history and economics. The basic search language at the Library of the Parliament is the National Library SHL, which replaced the local variant of the UDC 20 years ago. However, it is not sufficient for the specialist information needs of Library users; therefore, the Library is creating and developing its own STEBIS (System Tezaurusów Biblioteki Parlamentowej [Thesaurus System of the Library of the Parliament]) thesaurus, the vocabulary of which complements the subject characteristics based on the National Library SHL.

STEBIS consists of 10 disciplinary thesauri, including the Law Thesaurus. It covers primarily legal terminology, as well as vocabulary traditionally assigned to other fields, and included as narrower terms in relation to the names of divisions of law of which they are subjects. The Law Thesaurus vocabulary is created based on the EUROVOC thesaurus; however, it cannot be considered to be a mirror of EUROVOC. Some of the terms that had no application were not introduced, while some sections had to be expanded to take into account both the specificity of the collection, the specificity of Polish law, as well as the needs of the Library of the Parliament users.

Table 7 Example of the refined details of the term “Kodeks handlowy [Commercial code]” in the Law Thesaurus

EUROVOC	Law Thesaurus
commercial code	commercial code
12 LAW	TT Sources of law
MT1206 sources and branches of the law	BT Code
BT1 legal code	BT Commercial law
BT2 source of law	RT Economic offence
RT commercial law [ 2006 ]	RT Commercial court
URI <a href="http://eurovoc.europa.eu/8425">http://eurovoc.europa.eu/8425</a>	RT Commercial transaction
	RT Trade regulations
	RT Trade
	RT International Trade Agreement
	RT Code of commercial companies
	FT (Eng) commercial code
	FT (Fre) code de commerce
	FT (Ger) Handelsgesetz

### Examples

The examples below illustrate how the use of a specific method of preparing a subject index influences the precision of the information. Two different types of publications were selected for a better effect: a legal guide that presents a cross-section of general aspects of real estate law, as well as a specialized and narrowly-themed monograph on copyright, additionally dealing with the new but dynamically developing issue of orphaned works. The subject characteristics are taken from the National Library, the Library of the Parliament, the Legal Library, as well as the NUKAT Center and two libraries working with NUKAT and using KABA – the Scientific Information Centre and Academic Library (CINiBA) and the Library of the University of Warsaw – but using different classifications.

### Legal handbook: Prawo nieruchomości [Real estate law]/ Ryszard Strzelczyk. C.H. Beck, 2017.

**The National Library (2017) (National Library SHL Descriptors)**

380 Books  
 380 Specialist publications  
 380 Scientific publications  
 385 Lawyers  
 385 Real estate managers  
 650 Real estate  
 650 Civil law  
 651 Poland  
 655 Commentary  
 658 Law and judiciary

UDC: 347.235(438) (Land property. Real estate)

**The National Library (edition 2015) (National Library SHL)**

650 Real estate|xlaw|zPoland



**Library of the Parliament  
(National Library SHL; Law Thesaurus)**

**SHL:** Real estate|xlaw|zPoland,

**Descriptors:**

**Main term:** Real property, Real property management

**Secondary term:** Polish legislation

**Polish Legal Bibliography**

Real estate, Real estate business, Title to premises, Division, Property rights

[10.04.04] Land management and real estate business. Planning and spatial development. Construction law. Public roads and motorways

[10.04.06] Housing administration. Housing law

[18.02] Property rights

**NUKAT (KABA SHL)**

650 Real property \$z Poland \$x history  
650 Real property \$z Poland \$y 1990-

**CINiBA (KABA SHL)**

650 Real property \$z Poland \$x history  
650 Real property \$z Poland \$y 1990-

UDC: 347.2 (Property rights)

**The Warsaw University Library (KABA SHL)**

650 \$a Real property \$z Poland \$x history  
650 \$a Real property \$z Poland \$y 1990-699 Real property \$z Poland

050 \$a LCC 683 \$b .S765 2017 (Civil and commercial law (PL))

**Monograph: Lobbying w procesie kształtowania prawa autorskiego w Unii Europejskiej: studium przypadków : czas trwania praw pokrewnych, dzieła osierocone. ACTA [Lobbying in Formation of Copyright Law in the European Union Case Studies: Term of Protection of Related Rights, Orphan Works, ACTA] /Agnieszka Vetulani-Cęgiel. Wolters Kluwer, 2014.**

**The National Library (National Library SHL)**

650 Pressure groups \$z European Union Countries

650 4 Copyright \$z European Union Countries

**UDC:**

328.18(4-67) (Relations between Parliaments, Governments, Administrations, Representations of people in the European Union)

347.78(4-67) (Copyright in European Union. Artistic and literary property in the European Union law)

**Library of the Parliament  
(National Library SHL; Law Thesaurus)**

**SHL:** Pressure groups – European Union Countries

Copyright – European Community Law

**Descriptors**

Topical term: Interest group

Secondary term: Copyright

Secondary term: European Union Countries

Secondary term: Lobbying in the European Union

Secondary term: Related rights

**Polish Legal Bibliography**

Lobbying, law making\* legislation \* European Copyright Law \* Related rights \* Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement \*, European Union Countries \* orphan works

[18 09 01] Civil law of the European Union

[12 01 02] European Union law and harmonization of legislation of European Union Countries

**NUKAT (JHP KABA)**

650 \$a Lobbying \$z European Union Countries \$y 1990-.  
650 \$a Copyright \$z European Union Countries \$y 1990-.

**CINiBA (JHP KABA)**

650 \$a Lobbying \$z European Union Countries \$y 1990-.  
650 \$a Copyright \$z European Union Countries \$y 1990-.

UDC: 347.77.78 (Copyright. Industrial Property)

**The Warsaw University Library (JHP KABA)**

650 \$a Lobbying \$z K European Union Countries \$y 1990-.  
650 \$a Copyright \$z European Union Countries \$y 1990-.  
699 \$a Lobbying \$z European Union Countries.  
699 \$a Copyright \$z European Union Countries.

LCC 2655.V48 2014 (History of the European Union Law. Law of the European Communities. European Union Law)

**Application in specialist libraries**

Specialist libraries – among which I consider the libraries of law firms, as well as the Supreme Court Library, and those of other law-related institutions – must handle the specific information needs of their internal users. Therefore, they construct their own thesauri, which are often defective from the formal side, but very detailed on the technical side. Formal headings play an important role in these thesauri, indicating the type of material (commentary, textbook, monograph). The advantage of such local solutions is the ability to quickly respond to emerging specializations or sub-disciplines of the law, as well as the ability to use new terms (for lawyers dealing with the EU financial markets, these are abbreviations of specific directives, such as EMIR, MIFID, Solvency, Omnibus, IDD, which had entered the legal language and practically no practitioner uses the full names of these legal acts). Before universal libraries can go through the process of validating a new heading or descriptor, small units are able to prepare subject indexes of their collections using new terminology.

**Conclusions**

Attempts to create one common method of preparing subject indexes of law-related collections have not brought expected success. Instead, general subject heading languages and thesauri were created. These are used together to better reflect the substance of the content of the document. What has worked out is standardization, within the context of the recipients of a given SHL. 150 scientific libraries using the KABA SHL and several hundred libraries using the National Library SHL provide users with essentially identical subject characteristics.

Support of different types of users requires a variety of tools. Sophisticated solutions are addressed to expert users – academics, practicing lawyers, judges and prosecutors. The inclusion of journal articles and book chapters in OPACs also involves the need for more detailed information languages, because the subjects covered are usually very narrow. At the same time, future generations of users expect that library catalogues and bibliographies will be searchable in the same way as online sources, while providing answers as precisely as the most detailed SHL or thesaurus. Perhaps soon the library catalogs will have to handle inquiries posed in a natural language, for example, I'm looking for a book on divorce.”

It is difficult to decide which model (SHL with additional use of facets, descriptors, or a mixed system) is the most optimal, although the direction of changes in preparation of subject indexes visible in the world and in Poland seems to indicate the growth of descriptors.

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