

IASSIST

European Regional Secretary Report 2026

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Colour-full Europe

Membership insights

Let's start the report with some numbers.

IASSIST has 63 European members from 13 different countries. 34 are from the UK (although one member actually listed "England" as their country), seven each are from Germany and Switzerland, and the remaining ten countries have one to three members each.

44+ members are from academia, while five+ are from governmental organisations and two are from non-profit organisations.

More than half of the members have been with IASSIST for more than 15 years. One member has been participating since 1974, the organisation's first year.

In addition to the "European Secretary" from Switzerland, the European Region of IASSIST has three "Members at Large" from Germany and Italy. Apart from these positions, only two past IASSIST presidents hold additional roles within IASSIST. All other positions, including "Ex-Officio Officers" and "Committee Chairs", are held by members from the USA and Canada. So, we see, Europa is a flavour-full community of IASSIST that is not participating too much in central roles.

Europa – many Countries

Writing the yearly report is always a bit of a challenge. Developments in Europa are still mainly national developments. There are some uniting activities (like funding programs from the European Union; whereby Switzerland, UK and Norway (44 of the 63 members) are not members of the European Union and therefore only associated to those funding programs).

In other words, many challenges European IASSIST members face in their daily work lives are challenges connected to their home country.

For Switzerland, for example, especially the Social Science are getting into trouble. Funding was cut and big national initiatives give money to a lot of things but not to Social Sciences.

Accordingly, infrastructures are under pressure and additional developments are disappearing from the agendas.

Love Data and the Conference

In preparation for this report, input was requested from European members. One reply came in. Even by social science standards, this is a low response rate. But that one reply was worth the request. It was about "Love Data", how much this is appreciated, and how it serves as a core connecting point for IASSIST members. The following quotation was offered: "I appreciate the one that works with data carefully and is satisfied only if the data is properly cleared and ready for the analysis." I guess this is what keeps all 63 European members of IASSIST moving, and it is a focal point for IASSIST in general.

But why was there not more input from European members? My guess would be that, besides loving data and being busy with data every day throughout the year—not always an easy relationship, I suppose—European members are members of IASSIST mainly because of one reason.

They love the annual conference, where they can meet all the other members. If this assumption is true, having a virtual conference in 2026 is a sad twist. IASSIST should therefore continue to hope and work for its international heart: coming together every year to listen to one another, discuss with one another, and: dine and dance together. This is what builds the international community of IASSIST and is likely what European members benefit from the most.

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