

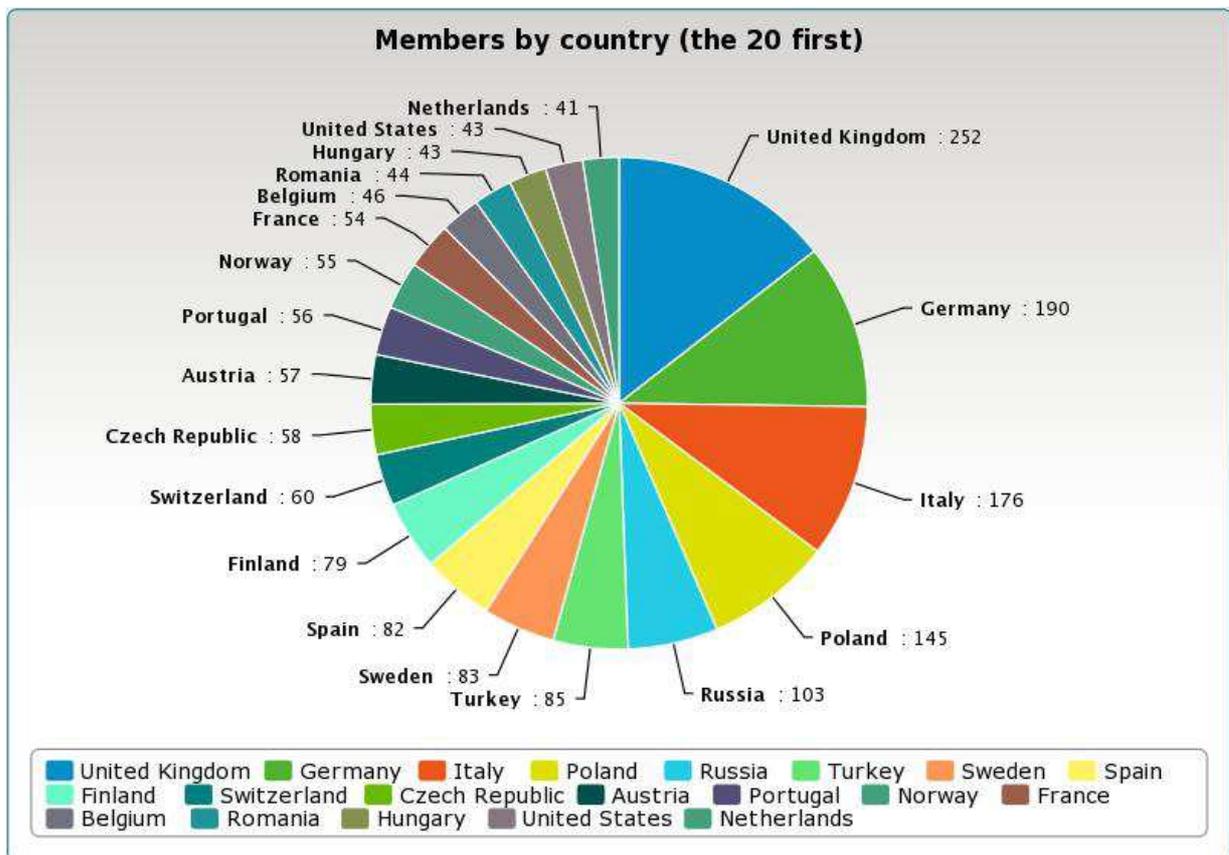
Report to the General Assembly of the ESA President 2013-2015 (Carmen Leccardi)

1. ESA Membership

The number of members in good standing has risen by 127 between 2013 and 2015. We are returning to 2011's data (and we hope to exceed it in the next two years)

2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
758	1731	2126	1965	2118

Regarding membership subdivided by country, this is the present situation:



The top 5 countries for number of members are the following (August 2015):

- UK 252
- Germany 190
- Italy 176
- Poland 145
- Russia 103

Regarding membership, a last point must be referred to. To foster the participation of early careers scholars coming from countries in particular economic difficulty (from countries with GDP less than 20,000 USD) at the Prague Conference, the Executive Committee proposed to reduce their membership fees by 50 Euro. The reduction is granted to those who are attending the conference and have had their abstracts accepted. Early career scholars are defined as people who were awarded their PhD within the last ten years. This proposal, however, seems to have met only a portion of the requests proposed by ESA members who live in economically disadvantaged countries (the requests made were, in fact, very few: 9 in all).

2. The Executive Committee

In this mandate, the following have been part of the Executive Committee: Maria Carmela Agodi, Pertti Alasuutari, Ellen Annandale, Luis Baptista, Roberto Cipriani, Ricca Edmondson, Robert Fine, Tally Katz-Gerro, Krzysztof Konecki, SokratisKoniordos, Ruth McDonald, Tiziana Nazio, Luigi Pellizzoni, Anne Ryen, Helena Serra and Frank Welz.

Only Krzysztof Konecki, Ruth McDonald, Tiziana Nazio and Helena Serra were on their first mandate. All other members of the Executive Committee were elected for the second time.

Vincenzo Cicchelli, on his second mandate as member of the Executive Committee, resigned in November 2014 due to health issues. In line with the terms of the statutes (art. 9), the vacancy in the Executive Committee was to be filled by the unelected candidate who received the most votes. At the last election three candidates, Airi-Alina Allaste, Luis Baptista and Georg Vobruba each received 65 votes. To decide on Vincenzo Cicchelli's replacement, a drawing was therefore held in the ESA offices in Paris on 31 January 2014. The ESA secretary, GisèleTchinda-Falcucci, organised the drawing, while the president, Carmen Leccardi, and two of the three vice presidents, Ellen Annadale and Frank Welz, along with Pertti Alasuutari, followed proceedings via Skype.

The name drawn was Luis Baptista, who accepted to participate in the Executive Committee (also in his case for a second mandate).

The responsibilities within the Executive Committee were the following:

Vice Presidents: Ellen Annandale, Ruth McDonald and Frank Welz

Treasurer: Tally Katz-Gerro

General Secretary: Vincenzo Cicchelli was initially nominated (he also had fulfilled this role in the previous mandate). After his resignation, and following careful reflection, the Executive Committee chose not to nominate a substitute for Cicchelli: no other component of the EC resided in Paris (as in Cicchelli's case) or had the possibility of supervising the work of secretary and travelling regularly to France.

Gisèle Tchinda-Falucchi, in quality of executive assistant to the ESA, was therefore asked if she would accept at least a part of the role covered by the General Secretary, in particular regarding the following tasks: management of all the payments (by cheque, credit card or bank transfer) and relationship with the bank; declarations to the Préfecture for the legal status of the association; in collaboration with the bookkeeper, declarations to several French government bodies for pension, social security, vocational training). Gisèle accepted these new responsibilities with a salary adjustment.

In the 2013-15 term the following Committees were appointed:

Finance Committee: Chair and Treasurer: Tally Katz-Gerro

Committee for RNs: Chair: Ruth McDonald

Committee for Publications, Communications and Public Relations: Co-Chairs: Pertti Alasuutari and Robert Fine

Committee for Conference Programme: Initially, the Committee had two co-chairs, Tiziana Nazio e Krzysztof Konecki. On 1 February 2015, Krzysztof Konecki communicated that, due to time availability connected to health problems, he would no longer be able to fulfil his role as co-chair of the Committee. From that moment on, Tiziana Nazio has performed the function of chair of this Committee.

Committee for Post-graduate Research: Chair: Ellen Annandale

Committee for External Relations and for ESA Policy: Co-Chairs: Carmen Leccardi and Maria Carmela Agodi

Committee for National Associations: Chair: Roberto Cipriani

The Council of National Associations and the Council of Research Networks nominated, in Turin, Roberto Cipriani and Ruth McDonald as chairs, respectively.

In this term the following 5 meetings of the Executive Committee took place:

November 2013 (Paris), May 2014 (Prague), November 2014 (Paris), May 2015 (Prague), August 2015 (Prague).

3. Conferences

For the Prague conference details see Tiziana Nazio's report.

As regards the invitations to the Conference, the current Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation (2014-19), Carlos Moedas, declined the invitation.

The same did the ERC (European Research Council) current President, Jean-Pierre Bourguignon. After several requests, he informed of his unavailability to participate at the conference – without indicating, although the ESA has underlined this opportunity, an eventual substitution.

The 2017 biennial ESA conference will be held in Athens. Other bids were received from Istanbul and Saragoza.

A significant development in relation to ESA conference policy is a mid-term conference organised jointly by ESA and one of the National Associations. In this term of office, a few months later than originally planned, the conference was held in June 2015 at the Federico II University of Naples, one of the oldest universities in Europe - by chance, the conference was held during the celebrations for its 791st anniversary. Entitled 'From Memories to the Future. Collective Memories and Horizons of Expectations in Contemporary Europe', the conference was co-organised by the ESA and the Italian Sociological Association (AIS) in collaboration with various Italian universities, the University of Paris Ouest Nanterre and the University of Exeter. In scientific terms, it was a great success, both due to the highly topical subject matter and the qualified attendance (including a considerable number of early career scholars). In short: it is undoubtedly an initiative worth repeating, in other areas, addressing different themes and involving other National Associations as it represented a key opportunity for networking, constructing shared conceptual platforms – and, of course, giving visibility to the work of the National Associations. Besides that, it could be an occasion to further spread our Association among colleagues not yet registered with the ESA.

4. Headquarters

An important change for the Association in this term was the Paris office moving to a new location. This happened in Spring 2015. We moved from premises shared with another association, in these years generously made available free of charge by the CNRS, to a real headquarters for the ESA: a small but efficient office in the FondationMaison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris.

Thanks to the precious help of Michel Wieviorka, current administrator of the FMSH and, since July of this year, Chairman of its board of directors, the ESA has been given the opportunity to rent this new space for a symbolic fee. The importance of this change lies not only in improving the organization capabilities of the Association and its staff. It also regards the opportunities that the FMSH offers both in terms of international scientific exchanges - further reinforcing the ESA's international profile - and place of high level debate and discussion on the key issues facing social sciences today.

5. Office Organization

Gisèle Tchinda-Falcucci, ESA Executive Assistant, in the months immediately preceding the Paris Conference and in the following month – as is imaginable, a particularly intense period for the Association – was and will be supported by an intern (Salih Yazar, from Turkey and active from July to September), and by a part-time collaborator (Andrea Sousa Dantas, from Brazil, hired for the same period of time). From July to August, Andrea Sousa Dantas has helped in several administrative tasks such as sending invoices to members, updating the ESA website, editing the ESA Monthly Bulletin, updating the ESA records. Salih Yazar has worked on collecting information from previous ESA conferences websites and publishing it on the ESA website. He also helped in the sorting of all the ESA paper archives. In each case, the collaboration has been very positive and the experience can certainly be proposed again in the future.

Thanks to the new office, the ESA can finally hope to achieve something that its governing bodies have been talking about for a few years now, but which has not been feasible to date due to its unsuitable premises. I refer to the opportunity to appoint a managerial figure based in Paris to handle the day-to-day running of the Association as well as the general organization of its biennial conferences. The fact that there was no General Secretary during this term has made this all the more pressing. I am pleased to report that the Association's positive financial situation – mainly a result of the success of the 2013 ESA Conference, also in financial terms – will help make this project possible in the future.

6. Website

After launching a call for bids in relation to the revamping of the website, we first received two proposals from French companies (February 2014), which were both rejected. Three other bids - from Portugal, Germany and Poland - came later (July 2014).

After a long evaluation we decided, at the end of 2014, to entrust the job to the Polish company (Millenium Studio, Daniel Rózański).

The cost of the new website is 18,000€. Considering the additional fee in relation to the PhD forum (3,000€) the total will be 21,000€.

In view of this not insignificant cost, the new website will offer, among other things, the following benefits:

- a. a private section for RN coordinators to update their content by themselves
- b. an elections system included in the new website
- c. members will be able to post job offers on the new website

- d. there will be a social networks feed on the homepage
- e. a template for the ESA Newsletter will be available for the editor
- f. a PhD forum will be launched after the new website is online
- g. members will be able to access their membership information (ESA ID numbers in a private section)

At the moment, the new site is not finished (it will be completed by September).

7. ESA specific initiatives 2013-2015

- a. Horizon 2020 and petition to the European Commission against the sidelining of SSH (Social Sciences and Humanities)

Against the policy of sidelining SSH in European research, this Executive Committee took a very active position. The first initiative was a letter sent in March 2014 by 5 European Scientific Associations in the field of SSH - namely The European Sociological Association (ESA), the European Confederation of Political Science Associations (ECPSA), the European Educational Research Association (EERA), the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) and the European Consortium for Humanities Institutes and Centres (ECHIC) – to Ms. Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, at that time Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science. The letter was sent in cc to members of Parliament, members of the Programme Committee for Challenge 6 (H2020) and media in member states.

In the letter, we asked for a meeting with the Commission in relation to the financing of SSH within the Horizon 2020 research programme (reduced in relation to the previous 7th Framework Programme, unlike other scientific disciplines) and, more in general, denouncing the lack of involvement of SSH research for societal challenge. After several months – the letter from the Head of Cabinet of the Commissioner was dated the beginning of August 2014 – the response was negative and the meeting refused.

The petition that the ESA took the initiative to launch in February 2015, broadening it to other scientific associations in the field of SSH, constitutes a further development of the letter sent the previous year. The petition is addressed to the European Commission and asks for more support of SSH, both in relation to research and general recognition of the centrality of sociology in the contemporary European context. The petition has been launched on the ESA website and sent to ESA members

(https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/SSH_community_members_Call_to_Action/?nuRwgjb)

Up to now it has been signed by 7,236 people.

b. Statement of ethical principles

Together with the proposed changes in the statutes, which will be discussed in a later point in the order of the day of the Assembly, the Executive Committee has drawn up a 'Statement of Ethical Principles' that ESA members are required to respect in their scientific work. The 12 Principles (enclosed with the proposed new version of the statutes) bring the ESA in line with the major current scientific associations. Up to today, in fact, the ESA was without its own code of ethics.

8. Relations with other European scientific associations

In this term, there have been strong relations above all with:

- ISE (Initiative for Science in Europe, director Maria Leptin), very active in Europe regarding the development of European research policy
- EASSH (European Alliance of Social Sciences and Humanities, president Lejf Moos), whose Constitutive Assembly was held in Paris in January 2015. More than 50 associations of scientific networks in the field of social and human sciences adhere to the EASSH.

This networking activity has entailed the participation of numerous meetings and assemblies in different European cities (Paris, Louvain, Berlin, Brussels).

9. Voters for the ESA elections

In spite of the delayed online elections (due to the withdrawal of two candidates for the presidency, and the necessity of re-opening an extraordinary call for nomination from 15 July to 15 August), I am glad to communicate that the number of voters doubled compared with previous ESA elections:

2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
*	440	457	329	779

The increase in the number of voters is, in fact, a positive sign of participation in the life of the Association.