

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the first issue of the IASSIST Newsletter. It represents an international cooperative effort on the part of individuals managing, operating or utilizing machine-readable data archives, data libraries and data services. The Newsletter has as its primary intent the dissemination and exchange of information on significant developments in these information centers. Four times a year this Newsletter will report on activities related to the production, acquisition, preservation, processing, distribution, and utilization of machine-readable data carried out by its members and others in the international social science community. Your contributions and suggestions for topics of interest are encouraged and welcomed. In the end, the success of the Newsletter as a communications mechanism depends on you.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

A series of IASSIST meetings were held on August 16-20, 1976, in conjunction with the International Political Science Association World Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland. These meetings were held to finalize the Constitution, approve the operational structure of the Association, review the progress of the regional sectors, project future activities, and formally establish IASSIST.

The Steering Committee members present were Per Nielsen, Alice Robbin, Judith Rowe, Joseph Bonmariage, Cees Middendorp, Guido Martinotti, Bjørn Henrichsen, Thomas Madron, Ekkehard Mochmann, and Carolyn Geda.

A draft Constitution was reviewed and rewritten based on IASSIST experiences of the past year and a half. The individuals involved with writing the Constitution were Allen Barton, Columbia University, United States; Joseph Bonmariage, University of Louvain, Belgium; Carolyn Geda, University of Michigan, United States; Bjørn Henrichsen, University of Bergen, Norway; Thomas Madron, Western Kentucky University, United States; Guido Martinotti, University of Milan, Italy; Ivor Crewe, University of Essex, England; Cees Middendorp, Steinmetzarchives, Netherlands; Ekkehard Mochmann, University of Cologne, Federal Republic of Germany; Per Nielsen, Danish Data Archives, Denmark; Alice Robbin, University of Wisconsin, United States; Judith Rowe, Princeton University, United States; and, Marcia Taylor, University of Essex, England.

We recognize that in a dynamically growing organization the Constitution will be subject to change. Your comments on the Constitution will be welcome.

Membership dues were established on the basis of the information provided by the various regional representatives. Although the association has been created on the basis of individual membership, the dues structure has been developed to accommodate the need for institutional affiliation. Complete fee information is provided on the last page of this Newsletter.

An IASSIST Newsletter will be produced quarterly. It will be the official vehicle for communication and will systematically report on the activities of the Association. We would like to take this opportunity to urge you to make contributions to the Newsletter as well as suggestions of topics that you would like to see addressed. This first issue is being edited by Alice Robbin who has graciously accepted the responsibility to compile the existing reports on IASSIST activities.

A list of steering committee members is included on the cover of this Newsletter. Changes occur as previous members move to different institutions or countries and as the Association expands to warrant the creation of new regions of affiliation, thereby necessitating the appointment of a Regional Secretariat.

The Regional Secretariats have made a great deal of progress the past year. The United States, Canadian and European Secretariats have produced several mailings to the membership. As a result, Action Group chairpersons have been designated for each of these regions.

The Canadian Secretariat activities are now handled by Sharon Chapple of the Data Clearing House for the Social Sciences. The Asia-African Secretariat has also changed. Naresh Nijhawan of the Indian Council of Social Science Research will assume this responsibility. Activities in this region have been delayed temporarily, but will resume when Mr. Nijhawan returns to the Council at the end of November after a leave of absence. Krzysztof Ostrowski of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology in Warsaw has volunteered to act as the East European Secretariat.

Reports from the United States, Canada, and West European Secretariats are included in this Newsletter. Information on Latin American, East European, and Asia-African activities will appear in future Newsletters.

The mandate and definition of the Action Groups were revised somewhat at the Edinburgh meetings. These revisions were made in response to the need for the United States and West European Action Groups to focus on slightly different problem areas. These changes are fully captured by the descriptions provided in the Action Group section of the Newsletter.

Papers were presented at an IASSIST panel chaired by Ivor Crewe at the IPSA World Congress on the theme of the contribution of data archives to the empirical study of public policy. Carolyn Geda acted as discussant. Copies of the papers are available from the authors.

Further activities of IASSIST include a North American working conference during February 1977, an international meeting in Ann Arbor, Michigan during August 1977, and an international meeting in Uppsala, Sweden in conjunction with the International Sociological Association World Congress in August 1978.