



Chapter 23

Zonta in Europe – An Overview¹

Development of Zonta in the Nordic and Baltic Countries

Year	New Clubs	Closed Clubs	Gain/loss	Active Clubs
1930–1939	4			4
1940–1949	7		7	11
1950–1959	15		15	26
1960–1969	18		18	44
1970–1979	33		33	77
1980–1989	50	1	49	126
1990–1999	53	1	52	178
2000–2009	15	12	3	181
2010–2017	10	23	-13	167
Total	205	38	167	

Development of Zonta in Europe (apart from the Nordic and Baltic Countries)

Year	New Clubs	Closed Clubs	Gain/loss	Active Clubs
1930–1939	2		2	2
1940–1949	2		2	4
1950–1959	13		13	17
1960–1969	36		36	53
1970–1979	52	6	46	99
1980–1989	98	10	88	187
1990–1999	108	17	91	278
2000–2009	98	34	64	342
2010–2017	39	41	-2	340
Total	448	108	340	

¹ Research compiled by Eva Nielsen, updated 20 August 2018.

1929: The confederation of Zonta clubs celebrated its tenth anniversary and Nina Broderick Price, Elizabeth J. Lawless and Helen Cleveland organized the first Zonta friendship tour to make new contacts for the formation of Zonta clubs in Europe. The tour started 19 July 1929 and London, Paris, Geneva, Venice, Vienna, Prague and Berlin were on the itinerary.

1930: The first European Zonta club was chartered in Vienna, Austria. Clubs in Europe were non-districted until 1962.

1931: The second European club was chartered in Hamburg, Germany.

1935: Zonta Clubs of Copenhagen I in Denmark and Stockholm I in Sweden were chartered.

1937: The Zonta Club of Aalborg in Denmark was chartered.

1939: The Zonta Club of Gothenburg in Sweden was chartered.

1941: The Zonta Club of Reykjavik in Iceland was chartered.

1947: After World War II, organization work started in Norway and Finland, followed in 1948 by Sweden and Switzerland.

1958: Zonta's Nordic Council was established.

1960: The Middle European Area was established.

The pre-convention meeting of the Zonta International board was held in Toronto, Ontario in Canada. Zonta International President Audra E. Francis proposed establishing two European districts. The proposal was adopted by the International Board.

1961: Nordic Meeting No. 12 occurred in Oslo, Norway. Zonta International President Ellen Harris attended. The European meeting was held in Vienna, Austria for clubs in countries outside of the Nordic countries. The decision to create two European districts was on both agendas.

1962: Zonta International created District XIII, the Nordic District, and District XIV, the European District.

1986: District XIII, the Nordic District, was split into:

- District XIII for clubs in Denmark, Norway and Iceland
- District XX for clubs in Finland
- District XXI for clubs in Sweden.

1990: Zonta International decided to change the district designations from Roman to Arabic numerals.

1991: Estonian clubs became part of District 20.

1993: Latvian clubs became part of District 21.

1994: Lithuanian clubs became part of District 13.

The previous District 14 (formerly District XIV) encompassed:

- 222 clubs in 16 countries
- 18 non-districted clubs in seven former eastern European countries with strong relations to the district.

For a couple of biennia, clubs in District 14 debated a division of the district. However, they had difficulty agreeing on the principles of a division.²

The Zonta International board decided to divide the district into Districts 14, 27, 28, 29 and 30. The division did not follow state boundaries, just as District XIII did not when divided in 1986. The European district map looks like a layer cake, with layers from west to east:

- District 14 encompassed clubs in Austria, Italy, Germany, Greece and Hungary
- District 27 encompassed clubs in Belgium, France, Germany, Poland and Ukraine
- District 28 encompassed clubs in Germany, Italy and Switzerland
- District 29 encompassed clubs in France, Germany, Russia, England, Ireland and The Netherlands
- District 30 encompassed clubs in France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Bulgaria.

2018: As of March 2018, clubs had the following membership numbers:

- The Nordic and Baltic club members totaled 4,491.
 - District 13 had 1,026 members
 - District 20 had 1,571 members
 - District 21 had 1,896 members.
- The European clubs had 8,047 members.
 - District 14 had 1,206 members
 - District 27 had 1,831 members
 - District 28 had 1,457 members
 - District 29 had 1,730 members
 - District 30 had 1,823 members.
- The total number of Zonta members in Europe reached 12,538.

2019: As of 31 December 2019, membership totals were as follows³:

- Nordic and Baltic clubs (Districts 13, 20 and 21) – 4,191 members
- European clubs (Districts 14, 27, 28, 29, 30) – 8,067 members
- Total – all Europe – 12,258 members.

From 1930 until 1980, only six European clubs disbanded. In the decade from 1980 to 1989, ten European clubs disbanded, and 98 new ones were chartered, equaling a net gain of 88 clubs.

The 1990–1999 decade saw 108 new European clubs established, while 17 clubs disbanded.

² See: District XIV

³ Zonta International membership records

The 2000–2009 decade brought 98 new European clubs, but the number of closed clubs increased to 34, producing a net gain of 64 clubs.

The period between 2010 and 2017 saw a net loss of two European clubs as 41 European clubs disbanded, but only 39 new clubs were chartered. Many of the disbanded clubs were located in the former Eastern Europe region.

From 1935 until 1999, only two Nordic clubs were lost. In the 2000–2009 decade, 12 clubs were lost, and 15 new ones were chartered, producing a net gain of three clubs. In the period from 2010–2019, 26 clubs were lost, and only 12 were chartered, which created a net loss of 14 clubs.