Building an Oecumene of Historians: Documents on the History of the Comité International des Sciences Historiques 1926–2026

Special Event

International Committee of Historical Sciences | 26–30 August 2026 | Leipzig, Germany

DATE	LOCATION
28 Aug 2026, 15:00 - 16:00	House 5 HS015 (Campus Jahnallee)
THEME	CONFERENCE
Not assigned	International Committee of Historical Sciences

Overview

«Not only international … oecumenic may in future be the community of our scientific cooperation!» – In May 1926, in Geneva, scholars from numerous countries founded the Comité international des sciences historiques (CISH). In the aftermath of the First World War, this initiative sought to restore scholarly exchange and to establish a permanent framework for international cooperation in historical research. From the outset, it reflected a tension between national traditions and the aspiration to create a broader community of historians. Over the twentieth century, this network developed despite political crises, ideological divisions and global conflict. Through congresses, commissions and collective projects, CISH helped structure an international space for historical scholarship and gradually expanded its borders to include an increasing number of countries and specialised historical organisations. This volume presents 50 documents and provides access to a total of approximately 340 documents through the Dodis database, tracing these developments from 1926 to 2026. It brings together sources from several archives showing how cooperation among historians was organised, transformed and sustained across changing political and intellectual contexts.

Sacha Zala, Prof. Dr., director of the Dodis research centre and professor at the University of Bern

Lila Zeller, M.A., PhD candidate, University of Reunion Island

Two former presidents of CISH comment on the new documents and on the recent history of CISH in general:

Marjatta Hietala, Prof. Dr., University of Tampere, president of CISH from 2010 to 2015
Jürgen Kocka, Prof. Dr., Free University of Berlin, president of CISH from 2000 to 2005

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