

Statement on registrations fees of WMA meetings

PREAMBLE

1. In 2023, the WMA Associate Membership counted around 1,900 individual physicians.
2. The WMA Associate Members are invited to take part in both Council meetings and General Assemblies as observers. Those are unique interacting and learning opportunities that allow the AMs to build a strong and productive network supporting the WMA's activities.
3. Also, two chosen representatives of the AMs have the right to participate in the General Assembly (right to speak and right to introduce policy or proposals passed at meetings of the Associate Membership).
4. Only small groups of AMs gather in person at these meetings. Hybrid meetings allowing online participation have not taken place since the return to in person format after COVID19; the WMA rules currently don't support hybrid meetings.
5. AM Registration fees to the CM and GA have increased by around one third between 2023 and 2024. As it is arguable that meeting expenses may be higher in high-income countries than in low- and medium-income countries, it was observed that the registration fees were however identical in 2022 (Paris, Berlin) and 2023 (Nairobi, Kigali).
6. High participation fees may be perceived as an obstacle to AM participation to the bi-annual Council meetings and even more regrettably to the General Assemblies. Especially, more economically vulnerable groups of AMs may be most affected by this financial burden, such as members from low- and medium-income countries and senior or younger members (once they cease qualifying as JDN).
7. The WMA, representing physicians worldwide, should aim for the highest inclusivity of its members, including Associate Members.
8. The WMA should provide opportunities for a broad and equal engagement of its AMs, who show high levels of investment and take a great role in the WMA's activities.

RECOMMENDATION

9. The WMA should engage in containing registration fees for its associate members, in order to allow a larger group to participate in in-person meetings and to contribute to the development of the Association's activities and network.

REFERENCES

Procedures and operating policies of the world medical association
Articles and bylaws of the World Medical Association