



POLICY ON SUBSIDIZING COST OF DELEGATES TO THE THIRTEENTH ASSEMBLY

I. Preamble

The Assembly is the highest decision-making body of the LWF. The Assembly is normally held every six years. The official delegates at the Assembly will represent each of the 148 member churches. As the principal authority of the LWF, the Assembly:

- Is responsible for the Constitution;
- Gives general direction to the work of the Federation;
- Elects the President and the members of the Council;
- Acts on the address of the President, reports of the General Secretary and the Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

According to the LWF Constitution, every member church has the **right** to participate in the Assembly. They also have the **responsibility** to help finance the cost of the Assembly. The “Fair share” concept and formula seeks to ensure that every church can make a financial contribution that is commensurate with their financial circumstance. This method of apportionment is consistent with the way churches’ membership fees are calculated. These contributions – both for the Assembly and through membership fees are a sign of commitment and responsibility towards the solidarity of a global communion of 148 churches. It is important that every member church endeavours to support the cost of the Assembly according to its ability.

It is also recognized that not every church will have the means to cover the full cost of travelling to and from the Assembly. The total budgeted cost of the Assembly (borne by all) includes anticipation that some delegates will require additional financial support from the LWF for their accommodation and their travel.

II. Mutuality in giving and receiving – the theological basis for this policy

The LWF Strategy describes mutuality as a fundamental feature of communion relationships in the LWF. This mutuality is expressed in a readiness to share and to receive and to exchange gifts and responsibilities while LWF member churches journey and witness together as a global communion of churches:

“In mutual accompaniment, member churches depend on the gifts they give one another: the Gospel message; resources, experience and mutual support; advice and admonition to deepen and expand self-understanding. Receiving is as important as giving and openness and appreciation for different perspectives is essential.” (LWF Strategy)

This document further outlines the policy on providing financial subsidies for the delegates to the Thirteenth Assembly to ensure accountability, transparency and responsibility in a spirit of mutuality.

III. Constitutional Right to participate

Every member church should be represented in the Assembly.

The LWF Communion Office shall ensure that all member churches are represented in the Assembly. Where needed, at least the one official delegate to the Assembly shall be subsidized with transportation and accommodation cost for the full duration of the Assembly.

After the first delegate from every member church is secured, the cost of additional delegate/s, if any, may be subsidized based on the requirements outlined in this policy.

IV. Criteria for subsidizing Official Delegates to the Assembly

For any additional delegate who has been nominated by an LWF member church, she/he will be eligible for subsidy when ALL of the following criteria are met:

1. The member church should first ensure that all avenues of financial support have been explored. Churches in need of financial support are encouraged to seek bilateral support from their partner churches (or other mission partners). LWF may assist in this process by alerting other member churches of this opportunity to offer solidarity within the communion. A discussion with the member church confirming that efforts have been made to cover participation costs by other means will be documented.
2. The member church commits to pay the mandatory Registration Fee of 120 Euros at the start of the Assembly.
3. The LWF Fair membership contribution for 2022 has been paid.
4. The member church Assembly Fee has been paid before the start of the Assembly (September 2023.)
5. A request for financial subsidy has been made by the member church to the Assembly office by the stated target date of 31 January 2023. *A form will be developed for this purpose.*

V. Priorities for the allocation of a financial subsidy

If funding is limited, then priority may need to be given to ensure full and inclusive participation from every member church. To ensure the widest possible participation, the priority will be:

1. To assist **one** delegate from **each** member church (regardless of the criteria stated above).
2. To further assist member churches to achieve the desired quota of women and youth participation and regional representation.
3. A church's payment of membership fees in previous years will be considered.

VI. Subsidized costs

The following cost shall be covered for member church delegates who are eligible for a financial subsidy:

1. Return travel to the Assembly site (Krakow, Poland)
2. Accommodation and meals for the duration of the Assembly
3. Upon arrival in Krakow the transfer from airport to hotel
4. On departure, the transfer from hotel to airport

VII. Cost not eligible for subsidy

The following cost shall not be covered and will be the responsibility of the member church/delegate:

1. Registration fee of 120 Euros
2. Travel related costs: visa fees, internal transportation costs in home country, inoculations, and travel taxes
3. Personal accommodation-related costs: telephone, room service, or other personal charges

VIII. Procedure for applying for subsidy

1. A request for financial subsidy is made by the member church to the Assembly office.
2. The LWF Assembly office shall send a response to the application. If the application is approved, the LWF Assembly Office will send clear instructions on how to proceed along with a travel and reimbursement guideline.

IX. Exceptions to this policy

Exceptional circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis. The decision of the LWF General Secretary is final.