



CHANGE OF VENUE FOR 2025 CONGRESS

IHEA strives to ensure that all our events, structures and processes are inclusive, and that they enable participation by our diverse and global membership. We oppose all forms of discrimination. Visa discrimination is one practice which threatens the ability of members, particularly those from the global South, to attend conferences, research meetings, training, and other in-person events.

In selecting the venue for its biennial congresses, the IHEA board considers ease of securing visas as one of the criteria, and this was a factor when Calgary, Canada was selected to be the location of the 2025 IHEA congress.

In recent months we were made aware of the severe delays in securing outcomes of applications for Canadian visas for some nationalities (up to 8 months in some cases), and the onerous processes and high costs involved. We worked to identify ways of speeding up processes, including registering the congress with Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada (IRCC), but we were told that this would not guarantee that visas could be processed in a reasonable timeframe. A particular challenge is that many members cannot apply for a visa until their abstract is accepted and they have secured funding. We brought various deadlines forward to help with this, but despite all our best efforts we were legitimately concerned that equitable attendance at the event would be threatened. After the 2023 congress in Cape Town, South Africa, where a record 106 countries were represented, this is not a risk that we are willing to take.

It is thus with regret that we are changing the location of the 2025 Congress. We are enormously grateful to the University of Calgary, particularly the Local organizing committee, co-chaired by Aidan Hollis and Deborah Marshall, for their contributions in planning for the congress.

The 2025 IHEA Congress will now take place in Bali, Indonesia, hosted by the Indonesian Health Economics Association (InaHEA). More information will be provided in the near future; the Congress will be held on the same dates as originally planned: July 19-23, 2025.

Visa discrimination is not just an issue of “North” vs “South”: many countries have harsh immigration regimes that prevent the movement of people with legitimate reasons to travel. Other forms of discrimination in some countries, including against the LGBTQI+ community, is another barrier to holding global events in some locations. In this unsettled world, facilitating research and policy conversations among scholars from different parts of the globe, who are free to bring their true selves along with their ideas, seems more important than ever. We urge governments to re-think their mobility policies, and end visa discrimination.

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