

Press release

For immediate release

30 January 2025

Annual membership census reveals global state of the physiotherapy profession

Responses to the latest World Physiotherapy annual membership census (AMC) reveal how the global physiotherapy workforce is developing and evolving.

World Physiotherapy publishes data from its member organisations every year on a range of issues, including professional regulation, practice, education, and the physiotherapy workforce. This data provides a comprehensive and valuable global profile of the profession. At a national level, the AMC data can be used as a powerful advocacy tool to help foster regulatory changes that will improve the profession.

The AMC regional reports include case studies from World Physiotherapy member organisations in [Colombia](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Guyana](#), [Korea](#), and [Slovenia](#) that demonstrate how the global profession is evolving and developing around issues including education, leadership, rehabilitation.

The AMC date was 30 June 2024.

The most recent data is based on the census completed by 120 of World Physiotherapy's 125 member organisations in mid-2024. The high response rate, 96% (2023: 93.7%), is consistent with the rates in previous years and demonstrates strong engagement between World Physiotherapy and its member organisations. The data gives a global snapshot of the physiotherapy profession across the world, showing variations in the density of physiotherapists in different countries/territories and between World Physiotherapy regions.

For the first time in the 2024 AMC, member organisations were asked to identify their advocacy priorities and were able to indicate multiple priorities.

Education was identified as an advocacy priority by 72% of member organisations. Other advocacy priorities included professional issues, physiotherapy workforce, and direct access.

Other highlights of the 2024 AMC include:

- 65% of respondents (2023: 61%) said membership of their organisation had increased
- 39% of respondents (2023: 35%) said there was full direct access in their country/territory, where people could go to a physiotherapist without a referral from another health professional

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- 61% of physiotherapists around the world (2023: 63%) are women contrasting with 43% of member organisations (2023: 43%) that have women presidents or chairs
 - 18% of member organisations (2023: 14%) said their organisation had specific policies or programmes to support women in leadership roles

World Physiotherapy interim chief executive officer Tracy Bury said: “The responses to the AMC from our member organisations are critical to planning how the World Physiotherapy team can continue to provide ongoing advocacy support.

“The advocacy priorities highlighted by our member organisations will help inform the support and services we offer to continue to develop the global physiotherapy community.

“It is good to see the increase in direct access because this means people who need physiotherapist services are able to access this directly from a physiotherapist, without having to go through another healthcare professional. We still have more to do to address the lack of growth of women in leadership positions within our member organisations”

The profile maps, which are developed from responses to the annual membership census, allow people to see how the global profession has evolved since 2013. The maps are an interactive resource that can be printed or downloaded and can be accessed [here](#).

Annual membership census 2024:

- [global report](#)
- [Africa region report](#)
- [Asia Western Pacific region report](#)
- [Europe region report](#)
- [North America Caribbean region report](#)
- [South America region report](#)

Related links

[World Physiotherapy member organisations](#)

[About the annual membership census](#)

Note to World Physiotherapy member organisations: please use this information in your magazine, journal, newsletter or social media channels. It may also be forwarded to your local or national media.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

About physiotherapy

Physiotherapists are experts in developing and maintaining people's ability to move and function throughout their lives. With an advanced understanding of how the body moves and what keeps it from moving well, they promote wellness, mobility and independence. They treat and prevent many problems caused by pain, illness, disability and disease, sport and work related injuries, ageing and inactivity.

Physiotherapists are educated over several years, giving them a full knowledge of the body's systems and the skills to treat a wide range of problems. This education is usually university-based, at a level that allows physiotherapists to practise independently. Continuing education ensures that they keep up to date with the latest advances in research and practice. Many physiotherapists are engaged in research themselves.

About World Physiotherapy

World Physiotherapy is the profession's global body representing over 600,000 physiotherapists from member organisations in 129 countries/territories. More information: www.world.physio