



# **Competition Handbook**

Version 1

1<sup>st</sup> March 2025

**2026 World Masters Athletics Marathon Championship**  
**Zagreb, Croatia**  
**Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2026**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**World Masters Athletics Marathon Championship**

The World Masters Athletics Marathon Championship is open to men and women who are aged 35 years and over on the first day of competition and who are medically fit to compete. Athletes must be registered members of their national Masters Athletics federation. Proof of membership will be required during the registration process.

**Official Championship Website:** [www.wmamc2026.com](http://www.wmamc2026.com)

**Host City – Zagreb, Croatia**

Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, is a vibrant city known for its rich history, stunning architecture, and warm hospitality. With excellent infrastructure, a safe environment, and a thriving sports culture, Zagreb provides the perfect setting for an international athletics championship. The city offers world-class dining, cultural attractions, green parks, and a lively atmosphere that will make your championship experience truly memorable.

**Transport**

**Arrival by Air**

Zagreb is well-connected by air through Zagreb Airport (ZAG), located 17 km southeast of the city. Regular shuttle buses and taxis connect the airport to the city centre in approximately 30 minutes. Many major European airlines operate direct flights to Zagreb.

**Arrival by Road**

Zagreb is easily accessible by road from neighbouring countries. The city is connected by modern motorways to Ljubljana (140 km), Budapest (345 km), and Vienna (370 km), Belgrade (400 km).

**Accommodation**

There are different standards of accommodation available for competitors. The options and booking instructions will be listed on the Championship website.

**Visa Information**

Citizens of EU/EEA countries do not need a visa to enter Croatia. Citizens of many other countries may enter visa-free for stays up to 90 days. Athletes from countries requiring a visa should begin the application process early. The organizing committee can provide invitation letters to support visa applications upon request. All information regarding applications for a visa can be found online:

- <https://gov.hr/en/visas/1216>
- <https://mvcp.gov.hr/services-for-citizens/consular-information-22802/visas-22807/22807>

Croatia is a European Union member and a Schengen area member. If you're travelling to the championship as a citizen of a non-EU country, you may need to apply for a Schengen Visa. Together with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, if necessary, Zagreb Athletics Association will assist any delegate / team, in order to get visa to enter Croatia.

Before an invitation letter can be issued, you must be registered for the Championships and have your registration accepted by your Member country (i.e., listed as "accepted" on the registration lists). Once both of these requirements are met, please contact Mr Neven Kovačev – [info@wmamc2026.com](mailto:info@wmamc2026.com).

General information regarding the conditions of entry on the territory of Croatia, list of states whose citizens, holders of simple passports, are required a visa upon entry on the Croatian territory and list of states whose citizens, holders of simple passports, are not required a visa to travel to Croatia can be found on the website of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia – <https://mvep.gov.hr/services-for-citizens/consular-information-22802/visas-22807/22807>.

## **WMA COMPETITION INFORMATION**

### **WMA Rules of Competition**

The World Masters Athletics Championships are governed by the WMA Rules of Competition and the technical rules of World Athletics (WA). The WMA Competition Rules are available online at [www.world-masters-athletics.org](http://www.world-masters-athletics.org).

### **Venue Location Map and Course Map**

**Venue Location** – Ban Josip Jelačić Square

**Start Area** – Ban Josip Jelačić Square, in front of the Ban Josip Jelačić monument

Warm up area – A warm-up area will be available close to the start of the event, for example on the adjacent Zrinjevac Square.

Changing rooms – tents in the Kurelčeva Street

Toilets:

- public toilet in Augusta Caesarca Street
- toilets in the Kurelčeva street
- toilets along the race route:
  - near the refreshment station in the Vlačka Street
  - near the refreshment station in the Martićeva Street
  - near the refreshment station at the Francuske Republike Square.

### **Transport around Zagreb**

Travelling around the city is easy and various options are available. Apart from walking, public transport is highly recommended.

#### **Public transport**

Buses and trams – ZET Company – <https://www.zet.hr/en>

Paper tickets may be purchased in ZET's ticket offices or at *Tisak* and *iNovine* kiosks, as well as from the drivers.

Prices

- 30-minute trip – 0,53 € at the kiosks / 0,80 € bought from the driver
- 60-minute trip – 0,93 € at the kiosks / 1,33 € bought from the driver
- 90-minute trip – 1,33 € at the kiosks / 1,99 € bought from the driver

You can always find the best route to your destination using Google Maps – it will inform you, in real time, about waiting times, delays (if the case), alternative routes, onboard crowdedness.

Ride-sharing: Uber, Bolt available.

### **Entries and Validation**

An athlete must be a member of their country Masters National Member to compete. All entries are required to be validated by the athlete's WMA Member.

## **EVENT INFORMATION**

### **Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> October**

- [Timetable to be published soon.]

### **Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> October**

- 9:00 – Race Start – Ban Josip Jelačić Square
- 13:00 (until 16:00) – Awards Presentations – Ban Josip Jelačić Square

## **WELCOME CENTRE**

### **Location**

[The location and operating hours to be published soon.]

The purpose of the Welcome Centre is to provide services to the athletes, support staff, media, language services, lost property and provide for Protest and Appeals.

### **Accreditation Centre**

After arriving in Zagreb, report to the Accreditation Centre. [The location and operating hours to be published soon.]

### **Registration Pack and Accreditation Pass Collection**

All registered athletes, officials, accompanying persons and supporting personnel must collect their registration pack from the Accreditation Centre. The registration pack will include an accreditation pass, bib numbers, pins, technical T-shirt.

### **Accreditation Passes**

Accreditation is a process designed to ensure that participants and guests are provided with the appropriate level of physical access to all venues and areas.

All registered athletes, accompanying persons and supporting personnel (e.g., media, medical staff, team managers) will receive an event accreditation pass upon registering at the Accreditation Centre. To collect their accreditation pass, registered athletes, accompanying persons and supporting personnel must present a passport or other government-issued identification (with picture included).

### **Competition Numbers (Bibs)**

All athletes will receive two bibs in their registration pack, which must be collected from the Accreditation area. For security reasons, a third bib will be provided for attaching to the athlete's personal bag.

### **Uniform and Shoes**

In WMA Championships, all athletes **MUST** wear a competition top that is approved by their national Masters Member. In WMA Championships where team events are contested, or where an athlete does not have an affiliated Masters Member, it is mandatory to wear a uniform clearly identifying the country that the athlete represents, and which must be accepted by the Call Room Referee or the WMA Technical Delegate. A Club singlet or vest is **NOT** acceptable.

The athlete must wear two bibs, properly attached to their competition top, with one bib on the front (the one with the timing chip attached) and one on the back. The bibs will have the competitor number and the competitor age group on it. The bibs must not be cut, bent, or otherwise modified, under penalty of disqualification.

Place the bib with the chip timing and your name on the front of the vest. Place the bib with the number at the back.

Any advertising on athletes' uniforms or bags must comply with WA rules. Items not in compliance will be confiscated and returned at the end of the event.

All shoes in the event shall not have soles more than 40mm. The Call Room Chief has the power to check either visually or against the WA list.

### **Steps to Compete**

Step 1. Accreditation Centre – obtain your bibs, chip, and accreditation before competing.

Step 2. CALL ROOM: the athlete must report to the Call Room by the scheduled Call Room time.

### **Confirmation**

No final confirmation is required for the WMA Marathon Championship event.

### **CALL ROOM PROCEDURES**

[The call room location to be published soon.]

To go to the call room is obligatory!

Following warm-up, athletes **MUST** report directly to the Call Room (Rule 4.5) by the required time shown below.

Call Room Opens 90 minutes before start time.

Call Room Closes 30 minutes before start time.

All necessary information concerning the competition will be provided to the athletes in the Call Room. The Call Room officials will verify the accreditation, competition number, uniform, shoes and personal effects of the athletes.

Once checked, all athletes will go from the Call Room to the start line. It will be a five (5) minute walk to the start.

### **Secure Bag Drop**

A secure bag drop facility for athletes will be available at the competition venue. Athletes are advised to bring personal bags clearly labelled with their name and bib number. These bags will be stored in a secure location throughout the duration of the event and can then be collected after the race using your bib number.

### **Starter's Commands**

In accordance with WA rules, the starter will give the commands in English.

1. "On your marks!"
2. Electronic Gun/Pistol.

The race will start at 9:00 AM, by Gun Time. Men and women will start together. All WMA Championships runners will start on the specific WMA Start line.

### **Race Cut-Off Time**

To ensure the safety of all athletes, a cut-off time of 6 hours will be in place.

A safety car will follow the last marathon runner. If, after the 6-hour cut-off time, a runner is within a distance of 30 minutes to the finish line, she / he will be allowed to finish the race, on the condition to be able to safely run the rest of the race (with no sign of injuries or other health issues).

If any of the event's officials considers that a runner is not able to safely finish the race, the runner will be stopped and taken to the finish line.

### **Timing Chips and Lap Counting**

Each athlete will receive a bib with a pre-programmed tag already attached. Use the bib with the timing chip as your front bib. Timing will be managed using mats and side-antennas.

### **Safety Officers**

The WMA Technical delegate shall have overall responsibility for the safety of masters athletes competing; safety aspects at the venue and generally to ensure the overall safety of all aspects of the competition.

The WMA Safety Officer has the authority to withdraw from competition any athlete whose continued participation in the competition would, in the opinion of the Safety Officer, endanger the athlete's health and/or the safety of the other competitors. The decision to withdraw an athlete from any competition may be exercised by the Safety Officer and medical staff if it is a medical issue. The WMA Safety Officer and any appointed Deputies will be clearly identified. The Safety Officer will (1) issue a yellow card. The second yellow card will require the runner to be withdrawn from the course WMA rule 3.2.

### **Personal Drinks and Food**

Refreshment tables will be provided of the Marathon course, as stipulated in the regulations of the WA and WMA.

Athletes with their own refreshments will leave them at the indicated place at the start line before 7:00. Personal refreshments will be identified by the bib number of the athlete. The athlete must also specify on which refreshment table these are to be placed. Personal refreshments will be available on tables specially provided for this purpose. NO refreshments to be issued outside the refreshment zone. Other athletes or country representatives must not in any way interfere with the progress of the race.

An athlete who receives or collects refreshment or water from a place other than the official stations or takes the refreshment of another athlete, should, for a first such offence, be warned by the Referee normally by showing a yellow card. For a second offence, the Referee shall disqualify the athlete, normally by showing a red card.

Support staff may be stationed behind the table to manage the personal refreshments of the athletes competing.

### **Awards – Medal Ceremony**

[The official medal ceremony schedule will be published soon.]

The Medal Presentation area is located at the stage located on the Ban Josip Jelačić Square. Presentations for Individual medallists will be done in age groups and then followed by team medallists once results are published.

A Schedule for presentation of Awards will be published on the event's website.

Athletes are requested to attend the medal ceremony in an outfit representative of their country. During the medal ceremony, the athletes will stand on the dais, medals will be presented to each athlete (first, second and third).

Athletes are not permitted to bring country flags onto the dais.

A medal ceremony may be delayed if there is an appeal with regards to the results.

Where an appeal has been lodged, the medal presentation will be held over until the final result has been declared.

### **Team Medals**

Team medals will be awarded for the WMA Marathon Championship. The rules for Team Scoring are in the WMA Rules of Competition (Rule 13). If there are three (3) or more athletes in the same age group from a country, the registration of a team is NOT required. Team awards are based on the combined times of the first three (3) athletes of that country in each age group.

To form a team where a country does not have three (3) athletes in the same age group, all of the WMA Competition Rules listed in rule 13 MUST be followed, otherwise the team will be disqualified. The team registration form is available at the Welcome Centre and must be submitted by the Team Manager or other authorised person to the Welcome Centre before 17:00 on Saturday 10 October – the day before the event.

### **Rule 13**

*13.1 There shall be no overall Team Championships.*

*13.2 Non-Stadia Team Scoring*

*13.2.1 When the team competitions are included in any road races, cross-country races and road walk races, there shall be three team awards on the basis that each Member is entitled to count one team (best three to score) in each five-year age group. The result shall be computed on a cumulative time basis. In inter-regional competition, regional teams shall score on a similar basis.*

*13.2.2 In road race, cross-country races and road walk races, every athlete competes individually in their own age group. For team scoring purposes, athletes will only be permitted to drop to a lower age group to compete the required number for a team (3). All athletes on the team must compete and score in the race of the youngest member of the team.*

*13.2.2.1 The lower age group shall be in the same race as that in which the athlete competes individually.*

*13.2.2.2 The athlete's country does not have a sufficient number of athletes in that age group to make up a full team in that age group.*

*13.2.2.3 The submitted form must show the names, bib numbers and original age group of the athletes competing in a particular age group team.*

*13.2.2.4 An athlete may only score for one team.*

*13.2.2.5 A maximum of two athletes from an older age group may be declared in a team not for their age group. Athletes may drop down more than one age group.*

*13.2.2.6 An athlete who joins a team of a lower age group will not lose the right to an individual medal in their own age group as long as all of the above rules are followed.*

*13.2.2.7 Should it be found that an athlete has entered for the team scoring in a younger age group wherein the Member has already sufficient athletes within the team's age group to make up a full team, the team will be disqualified.*

*13.2.2.8 Athletes who join an age group team, in a race that does not include their age group, will lose the right to an individual medal and only count for the team.*

*13.2.2.9 Ties in a team scores will be broken by best time of the first athlete to finish on the tied teams.*

### **Protests and Appeals**

A protest is an immediate disagreement about any aspect of any event. An appeal is a disagreement with a Referees' decision about a protest. There cannot be an appeal without a protest being held and a Referee decision.

Protests concerning the conduct or the result of an event should be made verbally to the Referee of the event as soon as possible and must be made in compliance with the rules of WA and WMA.

If the athlete does not agree with a decision made by the Referee, the athlete or their team manager may then make a written appeal to the Jury of Appeal. Any appeal must be lodged at the Welcome Centre. The time limit for lodging an appeal is 30 minutes from the time the results are posted at the venue.

The Appeal shall be in writing using the form provided for this purpose. The form can be requested from the Welcome Centre and should be signed by the team manager, the athlete or official acting on behalf of the athlete concerned and lodged at the Welcome Centre.

A deposit of 100€ will be required to confirm the appeal. If the appeal is not upheld, the deposit of 100€ will not be returned. The Jury of Appeal shall issue a written decision. The decision will be available at the Welcome Centre.

### **Medical Services**

Medical staff will be located around the course and close to the finish line.

First aid services will be provided by qualified first-aid staff along the competition route. They are skilled in case of emergency. Maps and signage indicating first aid locations will be present at the venue. Medical staff will offer basic first aid and transportation to a hospital if further care is deemed necessary.

Any health care services provided outside of these first aid facilities will be at a cost to the individual, including the cost of all health, medical, hospital and associated resources and services.

### **Emergency**

For other emergency and ambulance services, dial 112.

### **Anti-Doping Procedures**

#### **Anti-doping Control**

World Masters Athletics, in collaboration with BRC, will conduct drug testing as part of the 2026 World Masters Athletics Marathon Championship. Testing will be carried out under WA/WMA Rules, in compliance with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) provisions.

### **Selection Procedures**

If you are selected for a test, a clearly identified and accredited drug testing official (Chaperone) will inform you. You will be escorted to the testing control area for the doping test. Please note, refusing to take the test will be considered equivalent to a positive result.

### **Testing Procedures**

The testing procedure will be fully explained to you by the control team. You may request information about the drug testing procedure at any time during or after completing the required forms. Any queries or complaints should be noted before signing the forms. If you have been granted a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE), carry a copy with you as proof when being tested and provide details on the drug testing form.

### **Athletes' Rights**

An athlete is normally advised of their selection for a drug test immediately after they have completed an event. The drug testing official (DCO, Chaperone) who advises you of the selection will then remain with you until such time as you are presented at the testing control area. You may nominate another person (one only) to accompany you to the drug testing process. With the consent of your drug testing official, and always in full view of the official, you may:

- Attend a victory ceremony
- Receive necessary medical attention
- Fulfil media commitments
- Warm down (cool off) or recuperate

### **Athletes' Responsibilities**

It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure that the following is done during the sample collection process:

- You are aware of and comply with the WA / WMA / WADA doping control regulations
- You comply with the drug testing procedure
- You control the urine sample until it is sealed in the sample collection kit
- The sealed sample collection kit is secured and identified
- All appropriate documentation is accurate, complete and signed.

### **Athlete Support**

Athletes should initially reach out to their Team Manager for any inquiries or issues they encounter. For further assistance and information, they are encouraged to visit the Welcome Centre.

### **GENERAL ADVICE**

- Limit the amount of cash you carry with you.
- Keep a copy of your passport, credit card numbers separate from your wallet and your money.
- Police services dial: 112

### **Health Advice**

All international visitors are strongly advised to obtain travel insurance, including medical coverage, prior to arriving in Croatia.

It is recommended that athletes and other tourists obtain any required vaccinations and check that their medical insurance covers travel and accidents in Croatia.

### **Hospitals**

- Klinički bolnički centar Zagreb (Clinical Hospital Centre Zagreb): Kišpatićeva 12, Zagreb
- Klinički bolnički centar Sestre Milosrdnice (Clinical Hospital Centre Sestre Milosrdnice): Vinogradska cesta 29, Zagreb
- Emergency phone number: 112

**WMA Marathon Championship Handbook, 2026.**