

Dear members of EASP,  
dear participants of the General Meeting 2020 in Cracow,

As you all know the Corona pandemic made our General meeting in July impossible. With great hope for quick improvements we postponed the meeting to July 2021. As you can imagine, one can neither organize nor cancel such a large meeting at short notice. We had to make decisions now, also to prevent large financial losses for EASP. Under the current Polish pandemic regulations, hosting an onsite meeting is not possible. It is hard to forecast what the situation will look like in summer 2021, and we could not gamble and hope for a change for the better. Hence we explored other online options. To help making our decision, we reached out to you and almost 500 responses reached us. It was heartwarming to read how much the General Meeting means to all of you and how much you benefit from the exchange with your colleagues. The preferences were divided between cancelling and holding an online meeting. What further informed our decision was the response that almost 1/5 would not be able to get participation in an online meeting reimbursed by their institutions, and that additionally only 23% would be willing to pay for a fee structure that would cover the actual costs. Online meetings, especially of this size, are quite costly even though they may not look like it.

After serious discussions during the last Executive Committee meeting, we came to the conclusion that we are going to cancel the 2020/21 General Meeting.  
EASP has never had to cancel a General Meeting and we hope it will be a solitary decision.

The next General Meeting will be held 2023 in Cracow. We are very thankful that the local organizers are willing to invest their time and effort again, and we are hopeful that 2023 will turn out to be a great onsite meeting. 2023 will hopefully give all vaccination efforts enough time to show their effects and allow travel to resume safely.

We are aware that cancelling a General Meeting can have serious consequences for individual researchers. Hard work went into the planned presentations, networking and putting oneself on the job market now has to take place in other formats. We are aware of these challenges and will announce opportunities for online meetings to be held in 2021 soon. The Corona pandemic demands new formats of scientific communication, and we need to adjust.

While the location, Cracow, remains unchanged the program will be novel. It does not make sense to present work to each other that is four years old. As unfortunate as this is, it is part of the costs that a cancellation of a meeting brings about. We are going to announce a call for papers mid 2022.

To conclude, we hope that you can understand our decision. It had to be made now to avoid substantial financial losses for EASP, and we also wanted to provide clarity for all members and participants.

Best regards, stay healthy,

Kai J. Jonas – President  
Malgorzata Kossowska – Local organizer  
Karen Douglas – Programme committee chair