

# [***Olympic sports bodies criticize track and field's move to pay $50,000 for Paris gold medalists***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BV3-8H51-JC5B-G4RK-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

GENEVA — Olympic sports bodies criticized World Athletics on Friday for promising to pay $50,000 for each track and field gold medal won at the Paris Olympics.

Last week's [*move by the track body*](https://apnews.com/article/world-athletics-olympic-prize-money-867d25da6c5a25abbaef5b5859f4e780) and its president Sebastian Coe broke with tradition because the International Olympic Committee does not pay prize money, though many state governments and national Olympic bodies do.

“For many, this move undermines the values of Olympism and the uniqueness of the games,” the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations, known by the acronym ASOIF, [*said Friday.*](https://www.asoif.com/news/asoif-statement-world-athletics%E2%80%99-decision-award-prize-money-olympics)

It also fueled speculation about the IOC presidential contest next year when Thomas Bach’s 12-year limit expires. However, his allies want the Olympic Charter [*changed to let him stay*](https://apnews.com/article/ioc-olympic-president-thomas-bach-1577fd2e5650898b6144340d0850326f) while Coe turns 68 this year and could be stopped by age limit rules.

Coe, a two-time Olympic champion in the men’s 1,500 meters, pledged $2.4 million — $50,000 for each of 48 gold medals in track and field — from his sport’s share of the IOC’s multi-billion dollar income. WA got about $39.5 million from the IOC for the Tokyo Olympics held in 2021.

A former lawmaker in the British parliament, Coe said the money acknowledged that “athletes are the stars of the show.”

“There has been consensus that Olympic revenues should, at least for the more commercially successful and financially independent IFs, be invested as a priority into development and integrity matters,” said ASOIF, based in the Olympic home city Lausanne, Switzerland.

The timing of Coe’s pledge also surprised many as it came one day after the ASOIF annual meeting, held in Birmingham, England, and he is a member of its ruling council.

“During the last days, ASOIF’s membership has expressed several concerns about World Athletics’ announcement,” the group said.

“One cannot and should not put a price on an Olympic gold medal and, in many cases, Olympic medalists indirectly benefit from commercial endorsements,” ASOIF said. “This disregards the less privileged athletes lower down the final standings."

ASOIF suggested “not all sports could or should replicate this move, even if they wanted to.” Paying prize money “goes against the principle of solidarity” and could take money away from governing bodies’ work that was their duty compared to commercial promoters of sports events.

The backlash from Olympic sports — whose leaders are among about 100 IOC members who elect the president — likely was predicted by Coe, who has elevated the issue of how to reward athletes in the often insular world of IOC ***politics***.

The cash promise was [*popular with United States athletes*](https://apnews.com/article/olympics-money-gold-medals-track-c687f8a774346d7763bc455fd6b046db) in various sports preparing to compete in Paris, who can earn $37,500 from their team for gold medals, $22,500 for silver and $15,000 for bronze. The Paris Olympics start July 26

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AP Summer Olympics: [*https://apnews.com/hub/2024-paris-olympic-games*](https://apnews.com/hub/2024-paris-olympic-games)

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