



12 October 2016

Executive Board: 200th session  
Finance and Administrative Commission (FA)  
Item 5 of the agenda

**Oral statement by ISAU on item 5:**

**FOLLOW-UP TO DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY  
THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE  
AT THEIR PREVIOUS SESSIONS**

**PART IV: Human resources issues (FA)  
(200 EX/5 Part IV (A) and (B))**

- A. Use of consultant and other specialist contracts in 2015
- B. Human resources management strategy

Madam Chairperson,  
Madam representative of the Director-General,  
Ladies and gentlemen, members of the FA Commission,  
Excellencies,

It is an honour to address you, despite the very little time allocated to us.

The International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU) denounces the **ongoing climate of insecurity** that is demotivating staff and creating deep concerns. The Administration does not seem to have a human resources policy **fit for the issues and challenges** of our Organization.

UNESCO's efficiency is being undermined, since for staff, every biennium of the programme and budget **entails uncertainties at Headquarters and in the field**. Unfortunately, the variable that may be adjusted is the staff, **which means a constant reduction in staff numbers**. This situation is particularly worrying given that the non-replacement of staff leaving on retirement is considered a performance indicator in staff management. **Is this the kind of human resources planning that is worthy of our institution, which aspires to such an ambitious programme?**

ISAU and the staff it represents cannot conceive of **even the idea of any new reductions in posts**. It has been emphasized here in this very room that the Organization's most precious asset is the **women and men who work for it**. I will add that what is even more precious for staff, regardless of their grade, is the serenity offered by **job security, and the possibility of building a career** to help the Organization achieve its noble ideals.



## A. Use of consultant and other specialist contracts in 2015

Let us now tackle consultant contracts. The constant rise in the number of consultant contracts, which was 31% higher in 2015 than 2014 and which exceeds the number of staff contracts, is worrying. **The imbalance is striking.** UNESCO is on its way to becoming a **consultancy**, thereby losing a large part of its institutional memory.

What can explain the fact that 35% of consultant contracts are financed by the regular programme, to the detriment of activities?

The regular programme budget cuts have led to the **excessive use** of extrabudgetary resources which are, themselves, tied to the conditions set out by the donors, and particularly by the implicit choice of their national experts to implement said projects. Thus, 61% of the consultants come from Group I countries.

Furthermore, ISAU deplors the fact that the number of retired staff members hired as consultants (often without respecting the statutory time-frame) has **doubled in one year**, which shows a lack of planning in staff management and a failure to respect the rules.

## B. Human resources management strategy for 2017-2022

As for the 2017-2022 strategy, ISAU regrets that its request for a review of the 2011-2016 strategy and proposal for a staff questionnaire went unheeded. Once again, how can a new strategy be formulated **without an objective assessment of the previous strategy** and, moreover, **without consulting members of staff**?

ISAU is concerned by the **lack** of any real career development plan, as it is affecting the motivation of dedicated staff members who, over the last few years, have had to bear the brunt of the financial crisis and the reforms. We request that the measures set out in the “UNESCO Competency Framework” **truly** encourage the in-house recruitment, particularly regarding the **respect for diversity**, and benefit staff members in terms of **learning and training**.

Neither training programmes nor evaluations are linked to career development, making internal promotion increasingly rare at UNESCO. Managers too often favour external candidates to the detriment of colleagues who have gained pertinent experience and know the Organization’s culture, a key element for the effective implementation of our programmes. An analysis of the cost effectiveness of the “training or reinforcement of the skills of internal candidates with a view to promotion” option and the “external recruitment” option must be carried out.

ISAU deplors the lack of proper training on recruitment, which leads to **demotivation and frustration**, **inefficiency** in programme delivery, a **drop in performance** and **loss of credibility** for the Organization.

It is not our intention here to reject all external recruitment, which we also recognize does have merit in certain cases. We are simply pointing out the fact that without real career development plans the systematic use of external recruitment can sometimes damage the Organization’s effectiveness. **An organization that does not offer career development opportunities to its staff is an organization that risks failing in its mission.**

In the same vein, recruitment procedures should also be more **efficient and transparent**, particularly in terms of the selection and interview panels. The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) should be more vigilant and effective so as to ensure that appointment decisions **are not imposed** by the sector or the direct supervisors of the vacant posts, and meet the targeted needs of the Organization.

Regarding the geographical balance within the Organization, ISAU regrets that, despite assurances from the Director-General, recent appointments have still too often come from Group I.

As to mobility, ISAU requests that the principle also be applied to General Service category staff, albeit as part of a voluntary programme of short duration.

We welcome the adoption of teleworking and hope that future measures such as flexible working hours will soon be implemented.

To conclude, it is now essential to ensure a sustainable budget, **that measures up to the interests and challenges set**, in line with a substantial contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as foreseen in the Medium-Term Strategy and the Programme and Budget.

ISAU continues to favour an ongoing dialogue with the Administration and asks to be **involved more closely** in discussions on the challenges relating to human resources, including the Association's **active and effective participation** in decisions concerning the lives of staff members, UNESCO's sustainable human capital.

Thank you for your attention.