

2 April 2019

Implementation of the Mobility policy

Mobility policy is a vital element of Human Resources Management and an integral part of the career of international civil servants.

ISAU is clearly in favour of mobility **as long as the process is transparent and fair**. However, the current mobility reform does not seem to be taking this direction. Many questions remain unanswered. At the Town Hall meeting held on 6 March, the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) struggled to meet expectations and answer certain questions, which greatly surprised colleagues. This has created an impression of confusion and unpreparedness that is not conducive to reassuring staff about their professional future in the context of the mobility reform, which seems to be conducted on a trial and error basis, without a clear vision. It should be recalled that the effectiveness of such a reform depends to a large extent on the support of staff members. From this perspective, it appears that the meeting did not map out an inclusive approach and clear principles to ensure a fair and effective mobility policy.

In order to accompany the reform in the interest of all our colleagues, the Organization and Member States, ISAU intends to raise the following points:

- We have noted a **haste** in the implementation of the reform, which raises a number of questions. To begin with, the July 2019 deadline does not seem sustainable given the complexity of the various cases to be managed.

This haste seems all the more problematic as it conflicts with the major reforms under way, such as the restructuring of the Sectors and the Strategic Transformation. **Moreover, this haste does not take into account the reform of the Field offices, which has still not been completed.** This could disrupt UNESCO's operations by transferring staff even before all future functions of UNESCO and its components (Sectors and Bureaux) are specified, at the risk of reassigning the same staff before the end of their standard duration of assignment. This will inevitably have budgetary and human implications that will have a lasting impact on the strategic transformation process sought by the new management team.

- We also have serious concerns about the **transparency** of the process, including the management of the carry-over of funds, both with regard to operations and staff. Many colleagues who are directly concerned **have expressed to us their lack of understanding as to the application of the criteria that governed the selection of posts subject to mobility**. Indeed, at the time of writing, we do not have an updated list of the posts actually

subject to mobility for the year 2019. With regard to the information circular IC/HR/156 on “the designation of posts not subject to geographical mobility”, it appears that the list is fluctuating; for example, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in Montreal is to be granted a one-year postponement for all staff eligible for mobility, instead of the three posts announced in that circular. What about the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), for example, where only the post of Director is not subject to geographical mobility?

ISAU is concerned about the risk of arbitrary treatment that could lead to a multiplication in proceedings against the Organization.

- We regret that ISAU’s request, during consultations with HRM, to provide incentives such as the granting of two additional step increments to encourage geographical mobility, was not taken into account. Such an incentive would make mobility more effective by better integrating it with career development prospects. In addition, HRM should communicate better on existing incentives in the mobility process.

In the light of the above, ISAU urges the Administration to undertake the reform **by giving priority first to those who are voluntarily participating** in the mobility exercise, whether or not they are in posts subject to geographical mobility.

On all these issues, **ISAU will be vigilant within the geographical mobility review panel** (Item IV of Administrative Circular AC/HR/65 of 7 December 2018) and remains available for all colleagues requesting support.

Finally, ISAU welcomes the inclusion of posts in the general service category in future functional mobility exercises.

ISAU Executive