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# Executive Board

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# 202 EX/5

# Part IV (A) Add.2

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

### PART IV

### HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

### ADDENDUM 2

### COMMENTS BY THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION OF UNESCO (ISAU)

#### SUMMARY

#### **A. Use of non-staff contracts including consultants in 2016**

Pursuant to item 9.2.E.7 of the UNESCO Human Resources Manual, the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU) submits its comments on the reports by the Director-General concerning human resources issues (document 202 EX/5 Part IV (A)).

1. With regard to the use of non-staff contracts, including consultants, ISAU notes a number of problems concerning:

- **lack of planning;**
- **lack of human resources management.**

These problems have persisted since at least 2011, which is very early on in the period covered in document 202 EX/5 Part IV (A).

2. The most striking symptom of these shortcomings is particularly evident in the fact that the Organization now employs 49% of non-staff members (in 2012 the percentage of non-staff members was 66%) and what is more, in the data provided by the Administration temporary staff and project



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posts are included in the number of staff members. **We therefore request full information on the exact number of temporary staff and project posts.**

3. This development is of particular concern because it reflects the risk of a loss of the Secretariat's expertise. At this rate, the number of non-staff will exceed that of civil servants, thus reducing UNESCO to a "temping agency". It is stated in Human Resources Manual item 5.2, paragraph 58, that when posts are advertised externally, priority should be given to internal recruitment or to the regularization of staff with long-term temporary contracts or project posts, who are strangely regarded as external staff in the recruitment policy while they are otherwise counted as staff members.

**The lack of planning and management is particularly evident in the following cases:**

4. Although the number of consultants has decreased, it is not normal that they still account for 21% of UNESCO employees. It should be noted that the 11% decrease in the number of consultants, the 16% decline in the number of contracts and the 3% reduction in the total cost of consultants is **misleading, because the average amount paid per contract increased by 17% between 2015 and 2016 in spite of the measure to reduce by 20% the fee element of all new consultant contracts.**

5. Noting that in 2016, UNESCO signed 3,847 consultant contracts while the number of individual consultants totalled 2,671, we therefore request information on the frequency of renewal of these contracts. Indeed, it is a matter of concern that the tables provided show figures per annum rather than biennium, which prevents comparisons from being drawn on the reality of the situation. As stipulated in the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, **consultants should only be hired on an ad hoc basis and only when the expertise required is not available within the UNESCO Secretariat.**

6. Some 66% of one-month to six-month contracts signed in 2016 were for field offices. We request that the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) take appropriate measures to address this situation. It should also be noted that 61% of the service contracts are financed from extrabudgetary funds in the field offices. We note that 81% of service contracts are also in field offices, at a total cost of \$13,400,000 or 67% of spending on consultant contracts. Special efforts should be made in terms of planning in order to reduce these figures, which are far too high.

7. In 2016, non-staff members in the field offices accounted for 65% of total employees. This situation gives cause for concern, as this figure has been steadily increasing (up 10%) since 2012. **This raises the question of the lack of planning and human resources management since 2011.** The extensive recourse to this category of contract confirms a deficit in the creation of posts in field offices, which explains the high number of people employed on such contracts over several years. We request the Administration to remedy this situation, which is no longer sustainable.

8. Moreover, a year ago, ISAU criticized the **predominance of consultants from Group I** countries, which stood at 61%. We regret that this figure has increased further still to 67%. In addition, in all the field offices, not counting the quota of posts allocated to nationals, staff from Group I are also predominant.

9. ISAU regrets that a large proportion of expenditure is earmarked for Group I. Indeed, while their numeric proportion among consultants is 67%, they account for 72% of total expenditure.

10. ISAU highlights that the substantial funding from extrabudgetary sources is linked to the conditions required by donors, in particular owing to the implicit choice for their own national experts to carry out the projects. We also note that two programme sectors, Education and Culture, account for 43% of service contract spending at Headquarters, while at the field offices, 69% of service contract holders are hired for the Education and Culture sectors and the Division of Field Support and Coordination (FSC).

11. We welcome the reduction in the number of contracts awarded to retired staff members, but request that their number to be reduced further, hence the importance of setting up appropriate mechanisms and their strict implementation. The establishment by HRM of a handover policy is essential.

12. For the sake of transparency, ISAU recommends the involvement of HRM in the selection of consultants.