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

PART III

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

ADDENDUM

SUMMARY

**B. Annual report (2022) by the International Civil Service
Commission (ICSC): Report by the Director-General**

Pursuant to Item 9.2.7 of the UNESCO Human Resources Manual, the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU) submits its comments on human resources issues (document 216 EX/5.III.B).

1. In its capacity as Vice-President of the United Nations International Civil Servants Federation (UNISERV), the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU) actively participates in the work of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). On this basis, we invite the Administration to heed the recommendations and decisions of the ICSC, as well as those of the General Assembly of the United Nations associated therewith. The harmonization of the conditions of service of the staff members throughout the United Nations helps to ensure transparency and fairness and facilitates, inter alia, inter-agency mobility, which, as the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) has stated, also helps to: improve the functioning of the United Nations system; increase efficiency in the acquisition, development and management of know-how; and provide opportunities for civil servants to continue their professional development.



Job: 202301273

2. Document 216 EX/5.III.B in particular deals with parental leave policy, which, it should be noted, brings together such vital issues as staff welfare, gender equality and the Organization's continuity of operations, the poor management of which can lead to additional work for the teams in place. This in itself would be an undermining of staff welfare and a serious source of inefficiency in the conduct of the missions entrusted to the Secretariat by the Member States. Neglecting any one of these matters would be detrimental to UNESCO, hence the need to accept the cost of this policy, the effectiveness of which partly determines the integrity and effectiveness of any organization. With respect to this issue of integrity and effectiveness, we would like to highlight the fact that the recent evaluation conducted by the Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) with regard to the UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022 emphasized the need for the Organization to intensify its efforts to meet the staff's reasonable welfare-related expectations. Human resources policies must absolutely ensure that the mental, physical and psychological health of staff is protected from harm. We will therefore be very carefully examining the draft revised parental leave policy. We will fulfil our advisory role to make sure that this policy fully integrates respect for well-being, gender equality and operational effectiveness.

3. In this connection, we would like to draw Member States' attention to an anomaly in the process followed by the Administration when consulting the staff associations. On several occasions, we found significant changes which had been introduced to the text at some point between the submission of the draft policy to ISAU for comment and the publication of the final policy. Although obviously the Administration is not obligated to follow our recommendations, it is nonetheless unusual that significant provisions of the policies examined are being changed **after** the staff associations have been consulted. This kind of practice undermines the credibility of the Administration because it exposes it to the accusation that these consultations are a mere exercise in formality. We have notified the Administration of our concerns regarding the matter, and we reiterate our strong wish to see a spirit of collegiality and a concern for rationality prevail throughout this consultation process.

4. We would like to make three preliminary observations on the parental leave policy under consideration. First of all, we welcome the goal of ensuring equal benefits in this area in order to rebalance gender roles. We believe, moreover, that this rebalancing will also make it possible to reduce, to a certain extent, gender-based discrimination at the time of recruitment.

5. Secondly, according to the document, the costs of replacing staff members during their parental leave would concern staff on **fixed-term appointments**. What about holders of project-appointment (PA) contracts, who are, after all, staff members? We ask that their situation be clarified with respect to the revised parental leave policy.

6. Finally, it has to be admitted that full funding for the replacement of staff members on parental leave, following the reform of the policy in question, is likely to cause difficulties for the Administration. For this reason, instead of concluding in advance that there is a complete or partial inability to see these changes through, we suggest considering provisional means of overcoming such difficulties, such as, for example, allowing eligible staff members to stagger their parental leave, if they so wish, over a longer period as of the birth or adoption of their child.



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PART III

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

SUMMARY

**B. Annual report (2022) by the International Civil Service
Commission (ICSC): Report by the Director-General**

The present document transmits the annual report of the ICSC for 2022 to the Executive Board and describes measures affecting the conditions of service of UNESCO staff members which were implemented following ICSC recommendations/decisions and/or decisions taken by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/77/256 of 30 December 2022.

Decision required: paragraph 16.



Job: 202300563

Introduction

1. Article 17 of the Statute of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) provides that the “ICSC shall submit an annual report to the General Assembly, including information on the implementation of its decisions and recommendations. The report shall be transmitted to the governing organs of the other organizations, through their Executive Heads”.
2. In [114 EX/Decision 8.5](#), the Executive Board approved a proposal by the Director-General to submit all future ICSC annual reports to the Executive Board at the spring session following the publication of the report, which was subsequently endorsed by the General Conference in [22 C/Resolution 37](#).
3. In [214 EX/Dec.5.III.B](#), the Executive Board invited the Director-General to continue to ensure UNESCO’s participation in the work of the ICSC and to take into account its recommendations and the decisions of the General Assembly thereon.
4. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly examined the [ICSC’s annual report for 2022](#) and its recommendations, at its 77th session, and adopted resolution [A/RES/77/256](#)¹ which contains its decisions on the report. By virtue of [41 C/Resolution 60](#) adopted by the General Conference at its 41st session in 2021, the Director-General is authorized to apply to UNESCO staff members measures affecting the salaries, allowances and benefits of United Nations common system staff adopted by the General Assembly or by the ICSC.

United Nations common system

5. The General Assembly decided for clarification purposes and without altering the Commission’s authority or affecting the current operational reality, to amend articles 10 and 11 of the statute of the ICSC to read as follows:

Article 10

The Commission shall make recommendations to the General Assembly on:

- (a) The broad principles for the determination of the conditions of service of the staff;
- (b) The salary scale [and the value of the post adjustment multiplier] for staff in the Professional and higher categories;
- (c) Allowances and benefits of staff which are determined by the General Assembly;*
- (d) Staff assessment.

**Dependency allowances and language incentives for staff in the Professional and higher categories, education grant, home leave, repatriation grant and termination indemnity.*

Article 11

The Commission shall establish:

- (a) The methods by which the principles for determining conditions of service should be applied;
- (b) Rates of allowances and benefits, other than pensions and those referred to in article 10 (c), the conditions of entitlement thereto and standards of travel;
- (c) The post adjustment applicable to each duty station.

¹ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/003/52/PDF/N2300352.pdf?OpenElement>

6. UNESCO was consulted on this amendment². The representative of the Director-General informed the Chairperson of the ICSC that in order to endorse the amendments to the ICSC Statute, UNESCO shall follow the same procedure as for initial acceptance. UNESCO initially accepted the Statute by virtue of a decision by the Executive Board at its 97th session in May 1975 (97 EX/Decision 8.1.1.) further to the General Conference resolution at its 18th session in November 1974 (18 GC/Resolution 28.1). Therefore, the amendments, as approved by the United Nations General Assembly, are to be submitted for acceptance to the UNESCO General Conference at its next session in November 2023. The Director-General of UNESCO will thereafter notify the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the Organisation's decision, in accordance with Article 1 of the ICSC Statute.

Comprehensive review of the compensation package

7. The General Assembly, recognizing the global financial challenges faced by Member States, which will impact its consideration in 2023 of the cost implications of the decisions and recommendations of the Commission, underlined the importance for it to maintain a comprehensive oversight of the common system compensation package and consider its components in a holistic manner.

8. The ICSC was requested to provide, for the consideration of the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, a detailed outline of its approach for the next comprehensive review of the compensation package, including the structure, parameters and timelines.

Conditions of service applicable to both categories of staff

9. The General Assembly welcomed the establishment of the new parental leave framework and requested the Secretary-General to implement the framework in the Secretariat of the United Nations within existing resources, on an exceptional basis, for the year 2023, and encouraged executive heads of other organizations of the common system to follow such practice.

10. UNESCO, in consultation with other agencies from the United Nations common system, is in the process of developing a new parental leave policy (including amendments to relevant Staff Rules), in line with the framework being elaborated by the United Nations Secretariat and United Nations specialized agencies, to be implemented in 2023 (see Annex). The additional cost for implementing the revised parental leave provisions is estimated to be approximately US \$750,000 per year, representing an additional budget for the replacement of staff members on fixed-term appointments while on the new parental leave modalities. Equal parental leave benefits for all parents contributes to the promotion of equal care giving and a rebalancing of gender roles. At the same time, considering cost implications, it is anticipated that UNESCO may not be able to fully fund replacements of staff on parental leave during the total duration of their absence on leave within the current budget period, and accordingly will report back at a future session on the actual implementation of this new policy entitlement.

Conditions of service of staff in the Professional and higher categories

Base/floor salary scale

11. In order to maintain the common system salaries in line with the comparator civil service (currently the federal service of the United States), the United Nations General Assembly approved a 2.28% increase of the unified base/floor salary scale for the Professional and higher categories, as recommended by ICSC. This increase reflects the movement of gross salaries of the comparator service and the tax changes in the United States and is to be implemented by increasing the base salary and commensurately reducing post adjustment multiplier points (that is, on a “no loss, no gain” basis) with effect from 1 January 2023. This measure equally applies to pay protection points

² A/C.5/77/L.5, Draft decision submitted by the Chair of the Committee following informal consultations.

approved by the General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/70/244 for staff whose steps under the previous scale were higher than those foreseen in the new salary scale.

12. The new salary scale³ came into effect in UNESCO on 1 January 2023. The adjustment affects the amount of the repatriation grant and of the termination indemnities, calculated from the net base salary scale and is accommodated within the [41 C/5](#) Approved budget.

Evolution of the margin and margin management around the desirable midpoint

13. The margin between the net remuneration of officials in the Professional and higher categories of the United Nations in New York and officials in comparable positions in the United States federal civil service in Washington, D.C., for the calendar year 2022 was estimated at 113.9. The United Nations General Assembly reaffirmed that the range of 110 to 120 for the margin between net remuneration of officials in the Professional and higher categories of the United Nations in New York and officials in comparable positions in the comparator civil service should continue to apply, on the understanding that the margin would be maintained at a level around the desirable midpoint of 115 over a period of time. The General Assembly recalled its decision contained in resolution 70/244 that, if the margin trigger levels of 113 or 117 are breached, the ICSC should take appropriate action through the operation of the post adjustment system.

Allowance for children with disabilities

14. While asking the ICSC to further refine the structure of the children's and secondary dependants' allowances and to review the feasibility of applying a means-tested methodology, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, the General Assembly approved as a compensation measure, the allowance for children with disabilities in the amount of \$6,645 per annum until the children's and secondary dependants' allowances are further adjusted.

15. UNESCO implemented the revised amount as of 1 January 2023. The costs are accommodated within the [41 C/5](#) Approved budget.

Proposed draft decision

16. In light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling [114 EX/Decision 8.5](#), [22 C/Resolution 37](#), [41 C/Resolution 60](#) and [214 EX/Decision 5.III.B](#),
2. Having examined document 216 EX/5.III.B,
3. Takes note of the content thereof;
4. Invites the Director-General to continue to ensure UNESCO's participation in the work of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and to take into account its recommendations and the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly thereon.

³ <https://icsc.un.org/Home/GetDataFile/7424>

ANNEX

UNESCO current policy vs. the recommended parental leave framework			
	UNESCO current policy	New Parental Leave Framework	Enhancement in UNESCO
Maternity Leave <i>(Parental Leave for Birth Parent)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 weeks + 8 weeks special leave with full pay for breastfeeding = 24 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 weeks in total 	+ 2 weeks compared to current UNESCO policy
Paternity Leave <i>(Parental Leave for Non-birth Parent)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally 4 weeks • 8 weeks if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-family duty station or • death/inadequate medical facilities/ complications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 weeks 	+ 12 weeks for paternity leave
Adoption Leave <i>(Parental Leave for Non-birth Parent)</i>	8 weeks		+ 8 weeks for adoption leave
Other observations/ notes			
Funding mechanism – best practices noted by ICSC: Explicit funding of the replacement costs of staff on parental leave. This represents an estimated annual additional cost of \$750,000.			