

## **REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL SERVICE QUESTIONS**

### **Introduction**

1. The Standing Committee on General Service Questions (GSC – see Appendix 1 for participants) met virtually on 3 March and then again in person on 26 and 28 April 2022. Alberto Fernández (OPCW) and Silvia Mariangeloni (FAO/WFP-UGSS) served as rapporteurs.

### **Activities in 2021**

2. GSQ discussed the actions taken to implement the [decisions](#) of the 74<sup>th</sup> FICSA Council related to its focus area.

3. Since the 74<sup>th</sup> Council, the ICSC Working Group on the Review of the Salary Survey Methodology had agreed to discontinue the use of the dual salary scales in case of negative results of the salary survey, in principle. The review of the methodology was not yet complete. Once the new methodology was approved, FICSA would update the training material and organize training sessions upon demand.

4. [FICSA Communications 46/21](#) addressed the steps that members should take in case of interim salary adjustments for locally recruited staff. The survey was consequently considered to be redundant.

5. FICSA had raised the issue of the impact of digitalization and artificial intelligence as causes and enablers of organizational change within the limited time allocated by HLCM to the topic, by submitting its [White Paper](#) to the HLCM session.

### **Report of the Permanent Technical Committee for General Service Questions (PTC/GSQ)**

6. Appendix 2 comprises the report PTC/GSQ. It was very important that staff associations identify the participants in their local salary-survey committees and start preparation for their training well in advance, at least a year before the date of the survey, when possible, even before the schedule of new salary surveys had been made available. GSQ adopted PTC/GSQ's recommendation.

### **Recommendations**

7. **GSQ recommended that the FICSA ExCom should allocate funds in the amount of CHF 20,000 from the FICSA Training Fund, if needed, to update its training materials on general salary survey methodologies and organize the training of trainers as soon as the methodology for the next round of surveys was finalized.**

8. In view of ICSC's upcoming comprehensive review of the UN compensation package, GSQ recommended that the FICSA ExCom should continue monitoring ICSC reviews regarding the GS compensation package and keep FICSA membership duly informed.

## Conditions of service for locally recruited staff

9. GS staff recruitment in the UN common system was local and usually done through vacancy announcements. Several organizations had introduced rosters for staff recruitment. FAO's rosters included candidates applying from all over the world. WFP used rosters for recruitment of temporary staff at the G2 and G3 levels, which were considered entry levels.

10. One of the issues observed in the implementation of rosters was that the same people were always called for the interview, which defeated the principle of open competition. Recruitment procedures were not transparent, and rosters impeded fair and open competition. WFP was reviewing its recruitment policies for GS staff and UGSS was trying to identify best practices.

11. In the discussion, participants identified challenges, developments and best practices. The challenges included the lack of promotion and career progression for GS staff within their organizations, often overlooking staff performing functions at a higher level; the implementation of new recruitment practices without proper consultation with staff representatives; the publication of vacancy announcements externally without giving priority to internal candidates in the selection process; and the length of the recruitment process for some GS posts, which could be up to two years.

12. The correct classification of posts was important and duties and responsibilities should be periodically reviewed to identify job growth and promotion of the incumbent. Also, staff representatives, when possible, needed to identify weaknesses in the recruitment process and address them within their internal HR management structure. A few organizations had established appointment and promotion boards for GS staff and reclassification committees with the participation of staff associations.

13. Organizations and GS staff could increase mobility and greatly benefit from more opportunities by being part of the [Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the UN Common System of Salaries and Allowances](#). Staff representatives needed to be involved in all phases of recruitment, from providing comments before a vacancy announcement is issued to ensuring that requirements are in line with the ICSC master standards (and the internal generic job profiles) of the post, through selection to the final decision.

## Recommendation

14. **GSQ recommended that the FICSA ExCom should ask FICSA members to share their recruitment policies, which would allow the core group members to identify best practices on recruitment to be shared with FICSA membership, and actively encourage representatives of staff associations to take part as early as possible in the selection process and, as appropriate, in their organizations.**

## Nomination of GSQ officers and core group members

15. GSQ nominated Alberto Fernández (OPCW) as Chair, and Kay Miller (WHO/EURO), Eugenia Agostini (IAEA), and Silvia Mariangeloni (FAO/WFP-UGSS) as Vice-Chairs. Imed Zabaar (IAEA) and Alberto Fernández (OPCW) were nominated as joint coordinators of PTC/GSQ.

16. GSQ agreed to include all participants in its meetings as core group members.

## **Appendix 1. Participants**

### **Officers**

Chair	Alberto Fernández (OPCW)
FICSA President	Tanya Quinn-Maguire (UNAIDS)
FICSA General Secretary	Cosimo Melpignano (UNGSC)
FICSA Information Officer	Irwan Mohd Razali
FICSA ExCom members	Pilar Vidal (PAHO/WHO), Kay Miller (WHO/EURO)

### **Staff association/union**

FAO/WFP-UGSS	Paola Franceschelli, Dina Franchi, Cristina Lemmi
ICAO	Anthony Ndinguri
IMO	Folake Odulana
PAHO/WHO	Glenda Moreira Lopez
UNESCO	Claudine Mukizwa
UNFCCC	Marjorie Manduli, Mary Jean Abrazado
UNGSC	Salvatore Brunori
UPU	Stephane Vuillemin
WHO/AFRO	Symplice Mbola Mbassi, Harris Benito Koubemba Mona
WHO/GSC	Aizat Khalid
WHO/HQ	Neddy Mafunga, Jerome Zanga Foe
WHO/EMRO	Walla El Moawen
WHO/SEARO	Kim Sungchol
WHO/WPRO	Kristel Ann Siaga
WMO	Andres Orias Bleichner

### **Member with associate status**

OPCW	Arshad Qadri
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### **Member with observer status**

FUNSA Guinea	Lucie Gnongo Beavogui, Virginie Beavogui
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## Appendix 2. Report of the Permanent Technical Committee for General Service Questions

### Introduction

17. The Permanent Technical Committee on General Service Questions (PTC/GSQ – see Appendix 2.1 for participants, Appendix 2.2 for FICSA resource persons on GS salary survey methodology, Appendix 2.3 for a pilot review of the methodology for surveys of the best prevailing conditions of employment and Appendix 2.4 for ) met on 24 April to address its agenda. PTC/GSQ adopted an agenda and elected Alberto Fernandez (OPCW) and Silvia Mariangeloni (FAO/WFP-UGSS) as rapporteurs.

### Review of GS salary survey methodologies – pilot project on the use of external data

18. [UN General Assembly resolution 76/240](#) requested ICSCs to conduct a pilot application of external data for salary surveys, taking into account the opinions of all the parties concerned. The ICSC's Working Group on the Review of the Salary Survey Methodologies for GS staff and other locally recruited categories had held six meetings since 2019 and would meet in May in Warsaw.

19. The Working Group had initially planned to conduct pilot applications of external data implemented prior to the next round of conventional salary surveys in selected locations, but finally decided that the pilot will be conducted at all methodology I and II locations where external salary data from the two selected vendors were available. In locations where such external data was not available the conventional survey would be used.

20. The eighth round of surveys would be shortened to five years by scheduling two surveys at HQ locations per year and concurrently scheduling surveys for the other methodology I locations during the same period.

21. According to ICSC's decisions during the current review of the methodologies, salaries would be frozen in case the result of the survey was negative. The 2021 recommendation to abolish the secondary salary scale was successfully implemented in the review of the methodology. Where external data were used, positive results would be implemented up to three times the most recent external salary movement percentage reported by vendors.

22. Any increase not implemented at the time of the comprehensive survey would be implemented during the following interim adjustments up to the same threshold. Negative results would not be implemented. Notional scales would be used to track salary movement until the next survey if the gap was not closed earlier.

23. A pilot review mechanism would be established to review and analyse feedback provided on the pilot. It would be composed of one representative each from the staff federation, the organizations, the responsible agency and the ICSC Secretariat.

24. The ICSC Secretariat would provide regular status reports, based on the information from PRM, on the experience and lessons learned in conducting the pilot project during such period. The final evaluation of the pilot project would be conducted based on the interim reports to ICSC.

### Recommendation

25. **PTC/GSQ recommended that the GSQ request the FICSA ExCom, as soon as the methodology has been finalized, to allocate funds in the amount of CHF 20,000 to update its training materials on general salary-survey methodologies and organise the training of trainers in preparation for the next round of surveys.**

## Appendix 2.1. PTC/GSQ membership 2022–2023

Organization	Name	Email address
FAO/WFP-UGSS	Silvia Mariangeloni	<a href="mailto:silvia.mariangeloni@wfp.org">silvia.mariangeloni@wfp.org</a>
IAEA	Imed Zabaar	<a href="mailto:i.zabaar@iaea.org">i.zabaar@iaea.org</a>
OPCW	Alberto Fernández	<a href="mailto:alberto.fernandez@opcw.org">alberto.fernandez@opcw.org</a>
PAHO/WHO	Pilar Vidal Estevez	<a href="mailto:vidalpil@paho.org">vidalpil@paho.org</a>
SCBD	Véronique Allain	<a href="mailto:veronique.allain@cbd.int">veronique.allain@cbd.int</a>
UNGSC	Cosimo Melpignano	<a href="mailto:melpignano@un.org">melpignano@un.org</a>
WHO/EURO	Kay Miller	<a href="mailto:millerk@who.int">millerk@who.int</a>
WHO/GSC	Irwan Mohd-Razali	<a href="mailto:irwan.mohdrazali@un.org">irwan.mohdrazali@un.org</a>

## Appendix 2.2. FICSA resource persons on GS salary survey methodology 2022

Name (subject)	Working language	Email address	Location	Level of trainer
Jeanne d'Arc Matuje Mukamwiza (non-HQ)	English/French	dArc.MatujeMukamwiza@fao.org	Africa	Intermediate
Varghese Joseph (HQ and non-HQ)	English/French	vjosephvarghese@gmail.com	Europe	Advanced
Edmond Mobio (HQ and non-HQ)	English/French	mobioed@gmail.com	Europe	Advanced
Mauro Pace (HQ and non-HQ)	English/French/ Spanish	Mauropace58@gmail.com	Europe	Advanced
Imed Zabaar (HQ)	English/French/ Arabic	i.zabaar@iaea.org	Europe	Advanced
Irwan Mohd Razali (non-HQ)	English	irwan.mohdrazali@un.org	Asia	Intermediate
Pilar Vidal Estevez	English/Spanish	vidalpil@paho.org	Americas	Intermediate
Véronique Allain	English/French/ Spanish	veronique.allain@cbd.int	Americas	Intermediate

## Appendix 2.3. Review of the methodology for surveys of the best prevailing conditions of employment – pilot project



### Review of the methodology for surveys of the best prevailing conditions of employment

Possibility of using external data – Pilot Project

Imed Zabaar



### Background

At its ninety-second session, the Commission decided that the possibility of using external data should be further explored and piloted at certain representative duty stations in parallel with the conventional survey methodology.

The task force held six meetings. During the first two meetings, representatives of the organizations, staff federations and responsible agency expressed their views on the possible use of external data and its compatibility with the Flemming Principle and the methodologies.

One of the fundamental differences expressed by the participants related to the definition of a "pilot".

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A/RES/76/240

“requests the Commission to conduct a pilot application of external data for salary surveys, taking into account the opinions of all the parties concerned;”



### Terms of reference and parameters for the pilot project

- The pilot project will be conducted at all methodology I and methodology II locations where external salary data from the two selected vendors are available. In locations where such external data is not available the conventional survey shall be used.
- The 8th round of surveys will be shortened to five years by scheduling two surveys at headquarters locations per year and concurrently scheduling surveys for the other Methodology I locations during the same period.

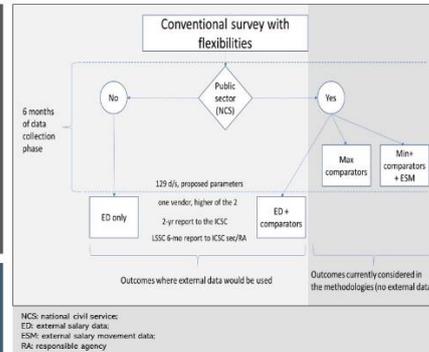
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## Terms of reference and parameters for the pilot project

- The data collection phase of the survey process will be up to six months from the reference date of the survey. Exceptionally, this phase could be extended by one additional month if the participation of additional employers proposed during the preparation phase has been secured within this period.

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## The Pilot



## Protection measures

- According to the decisions taken by the Commission during the current review of the methodologies, salaries would be frozen in case the result of the survey is negative.
- Where external data were used, positive results would be implemented up to three times the most recent external salary movement percentage reported by vendors. Any increase not implemented at the time of the comprehensive survey would be implemented during the following interim adjustments up to the same threshold.
- Negative results would not be implemented. Notional scales would be used to track salary movement until the next survey if the gap was not closed earlier.

7

## Pilot Review Mechanism (PRM)

a Pilot Review Mechanism (PRM) will be established to review and analyse feedback provided on the pilot.

The PRM should be composed of one representative of the Staff Federation, one representative of the organizations, one representative of the responsible agency and the ICSC Secretariat.

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## Pilot Review Mechanism (PRM)

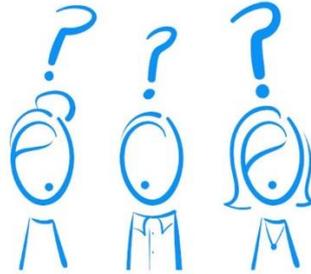
The ICSC secretariat will provide regular status reports to the Commission, based on the information from PRM, on the experience and lessons learned in conducting the pilot project during such period of time.

The final evaluation of the pilot project will be conducted based on the interim reports to the Commission.

## Training

The working group agreed that once the final text of the methodologies was approved, training to stakeholders, in particular to the LSSCs, should be provided by the ICSC secretariat and the responsible agency.

THANK YOU



## **Appendix 2.4. Terms of reference and parameters for the pilot project for the use of external data**

1. The working group recommended the following terms of reference and parameters for the pilot project for the use of external data to be implemented during the 8th round of salary surveys in order to conduct its assessment over a reasonable period of time.

2. The pilot project will be conducted at all methodology I and methodology II locations where external salary data from the two selected vendors are available. In locations where such external data is not available the conventional survey shall be used:

- a. For monitoring and evaluation purposes, the 8th round of surveys will be shortened to five years by scheduling two surveys at headquarters locations per year and concurrently scheduling surveys for the other Methodology I locations during the same period;
- b. Considering the concerns raised by stakeholders with regard to employer participation, the required number of employees per retained employer would be set at 20 for all locations. Employers with less than 20 employees will not be considered. Each of the retained employers must have job matches for at least 1/3 plus one of the benchmark jobs and at least for 1/2 plus one of the surveyed grades, single incumbent job matches shall not be considered with exception of one-of-a-kind jobs. At category III, IV and V duty stations, the “plus one” requirement shall not be applied to global comparators endorsed as such by the responsible agency;
- c. The data collection phase of the survey process will be up to six months from the reference date of the survey. Exceptionally, this phase could be extended by one additional month if the participation of additional employers proposed during the preparation phase has been secured within this period;
- d. At duty stations where the participation of the required number of employers (20, 15, 10, 7, 5 or 3, respectively) is achieved within the six months’ period, the positioning assessment of common system salaries will be conducted based on data collected from interviewed employers only;
- e. At duty stations under M-I and those in categories I and II under M-II, when at least the minimum number of employers is achieved (13, 11 and 7, respectively), external salary movement data will be used to replace data from missing employers, where the LSSC confirms that efforts for identifying and securing the participation of additional employers have been exhausted within six months;
- f. If the participation of the required number of public sector employers, including the national civil service, where required, is not secured within the six month’s period, the assessment of salary positioning will be conducted using only external salary data;
- g. When the data of the required number of public sector employers, including the national civil service, where required, has been collected, the LSSC may unanimously decide either to proceed with replacing all private sector employers with external salary data or to continue collecting the data from the required number of employers. If the required minimum number of surveyed and retained employers is not reached within the six months’ period, the missing employers will be replaced with external salary data. No surveyed employer that meets the methodology requirements will be excluded from final analysis unless the maximum required number of employers is exceeded.

3. When external data are used, these data will be extracted from the 2 vendors at the 75th percentile according to the grade level equivalencies that most accurately reflects the UN grades. External data will be filtered by location, where possible. Data from the vendor producing the highest salary levels will be used for a comparison with common system salaries at the reference level of step

4. In accordance with the Commission's earlier decision, negative survey results will not be implemented. Notional scales will be established to track salary movements during interim adjustments until the gap between the frozen scale and the notional scale is closed or until the next comprehensive survey is conducted.

5. Positive results, when external salary data was used, will be implemented up to 3 times the most recent external salary movement. Any percentage of the increase not implemented at the time of the assessment will be carried forward for implementation during subsequent interim adjustments which will be subject to the same threshold.

6. Interim adjustments will be conducted based on the Commission's earlier decisions, i.e. based on external salary movement data, an index or a combination of indices, or a mini-survey. These adjustments will be initiated by the responsible agency or the ICSC secretariat, as appropriate.

7. Upon completion of the salary survey, the LSSC will be required to submit to the ICSC secretariat or the responsible agency a report (using a standard template) on its experience with the pilot project taking into account the project evaluation criteria included in annex II to this document. This report should describe, inter alia, the efforts made to achieve the required number of comparators within the data collection period. Qualitative comments on the overall experience of their participation in the pilot project should also be included. Comments from the assigned salary survey specialist regarding the overall experience of the pilot project at that duty station will also be collected by the secretariat or responsible agency, respectively.

8. It is recommended that a Pilot Review Mechanism (PRM) be established to review and analyse feedback provided on the pilot. The PRM should be composed of one representative of the Staff Federation, one representative of the organizations, one representative of the responsible agency and the ICSC Secretariat.

9. The ICSC secretariat will provide regular status reports to the Commission, based on the information from PRM, on the experience and lessons learned in conducting the pilot project during such period of time.

10. The final evaluation of the pilot project will be conducted based on the interim reports to the Commission.

11. The ICSC secretariat, for monitoring purposes, will purchase annually external data for the 8 Headquarters duty stations and for 12 additional duty stations representing all categories. The results of the analysis based on these data will be included in the evaluation of the pilot project at the end of the 8th round of surveys.

12. The ICSC secretariat and the responsible agency will provide the LSSC with all information relevant to the survey and in particular with access to external data for verification purposes. Throughout the process, all parties shall be privy to the same information and be subject to confidentiality agreement.

13. ICSC and the responsible agency will continue to provide training to members of the LSSC.

14. To accommodate special circumstances, following a request from the LSSC and the salary survey specialist, through the responsible Agency, the Chair of the ICSC may exceptionally approve exceptions to these rules.