



COMMUNICATIONS

INFORMATION FROM THE ICSC ON BASELINE COST-OF-LIVING SURVEYS AT THE HEADQUARTERS DUTY STATIONS

41/21**Geneva****10 August 2021**

To: FICSA Members based in Geneva, London, Madrid, Montreal, Paris, Rome Vienna and Washington D.C

For Information: All FICSA Members

From: Tanya Quinn-Maguire, President

Dear colleagues,

Further to [FICSA Communications 37/21](#) on baseline Cost-of-Living Surveys for International Professional and higher categories of staff at HQ duty stations, please find the following information materials shared by the ICSC:

- [Changes to the set of operational rules, for application in the 2021 round of surveys](#)
- [Relevant extract from the report on the work of the International Civil Service Commission at its ninety-first session \(ICSC/91/R.13\)](#) on approved changes to the methodology and the criteria to ascertain the feasibility of conducting the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys
- [Schedule of activities for the surveys](#)

Members of Local Survey Committees (LSCs) should be able to obtain the same information materials and more specific information from your respective duty station's Survey Coordinator. It is important that your staff association/union are represented on your duty station's LSC (refer to [FICSA Comms 37/21 add2](#))

You can find ICSC's responses to questions that you raised through [FICSA Comms 37/21 add1](#) below:

1. Is the [Post Adjustment Booklet](#) (Methodology for Compilation of the Post Adjustment Index and Operational Rules for Determination of the Post Adjustment Multiplier) updated, since there is mention of the 2016 cycle of surveys instead of the 2021?

The methodology, procedures and guidelines underpinning the 2021 round of surveys were approved only in May 2021, so there has been no time to update the booklet. However, the essence of the changes is outlined in the sessional report of the 91st session of the ICSC (ICSC/91/R.13).

2. **Is there a summary of what has recently changed in the Post Adjustment and Operational rules? If you have any other resources that we should share with staff representatives that will be on the LSCs, please do not hesitate to let us know.**

Refer to information resources mentioned above.

3. **Will ECP data still be used for EU duty stations? Can LSCs opt not to use it?**

No. ICSC is conducting its own surveys at all duty stations.

4. **What happens if the LSC in a duty station decides that conditions are not suitable to go ahead with the survey? Will it be postponed until a later time when conditions are right? Will the ICSC continue to use the existing post adjustment multiplier, updated based on the standard operational rules?**

The role of the LSC is to make a recommendation to the ICSC chair after a detailed assessment of pre-specified criteria in collaboration with the ICSC secretariat. This assessment must be based on objective indicators, from both official or private company sources. The ICSC chair makes the final decision, not the LSC or the ICSC Secretariat. In the event that a survey is not conducted on account of the pandemic conditions and attendant restrictions, the ICSC will continue to update the relevant indices with inflation measures and exchange rate movements as well as movements in other components such as medical insurance, pension contribution and out-of-area indices.

5. **What is the recommended LSC composition? Some duty stations seem to have one staff rep and one alternate, and one management rep and one alternate, per organization. Is this the standard practice?**

This is up to the duty station. It is expected that both administrations and staff associations are well represented in the committee. Some LSCs indeed have both primary members and alternates, in order to share the burden of participation.

6. **What is the time commitment foreseen for the LSC members?**

Again, this is up to the duty station how many meetings they organize in preparation for the surveys. LSCs have major responsibilities the process, such as mobilizing staff for participation in the survey, helping to collect some of the data, and supporting the survey coordinator in fulfilling her role before, during and after the surveys.

7. **Will the ICSC provide any comprehensive training, beyond the customary half-day briefing prior to the survey, to the LSC?**

The ICSC secretariat expects to provide relevant information and training during the pre-survey consultations and even during the survey. We can also do special training workshops upon request. It is entirely up to the LSC. There is sufficient capacity in some duty stations but not in others. We are ready to support you in any way you want, in person, if possible, or virtually if not.
