

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

Introduction

1. The Standing Committee on Professional Salaries and Allowances (PSA) (see Appendix 1 for participants) met virtually on 17 January 2025 and in person on 4 February 2025 to pursue its agenda. The PSA Permanent Technical Committee also met on 4 February to discuss the establishment of a structured training-the-trainers programme for the effective completion of the cost-of-living surveys, to create a pool of certified trainers and ensure FICSA members had access to high-quality training and long-term support. That would reinforce FICSA's leadership in capacity building while aligning with its strategic goals by strengthening internal expertise, empowering member associations to more effectively advocate for professional staff during salary discussions. Future training sessions would also help to open avenues for revenue generation.

Recommendation

- **PSA recommended that the FICSA Executive Committee should take immediate steps to prioritize the allocation of resources, planning and implementation of the training-the-trainers (TTT) programme, with the FICSA Secretariat leading the project. Member associations should nominate suitable candidates to participate in the TTT programme (one per association) to ensure the success and sustainability of this initiative and provide them with the timeline.**

Activities during 2024

2. PSA discussed the actions taken to implement the relevant decisions [of the 77th FICSA Council](#).
3. Decision FICSA/C/77/D/15 had been implemented. PSA and the FICSA Executive Committee had developed draft terms of reference (TOR) for local survey committees (LSCs) based on the guidelines of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). The TOR were designed to address the need for consistency and clarity in the functioning of LSCs, building on the successful approach previously taken for local salary survey committees (LSSCs). The next steps would be to submit the TOR to ICSC for review and approval, and then distributing them

to FICSA members as a standard reference, ensuring they are available and consistently applied in preparation for future cost-of-living (COL) surveys.

4. In line with decision FICSA/C/77/D/16, FICSA organized multiple sessions to accommodate time-zone differences and linguistic diversity, ensuring accessibility for staff globally.
5. Implementing decision FICSA/C/77/D/17, PSA's co-chairs and vice-chair had been present during virtual meetings of the Task Force on the ICSC Compensation Review.
6. Decision FICSA/C/77/D/18 had also been implemented. In collaboration with PSA, the FICSA Secretariat had developed and conducted a survey to collect detailed information on age eligibility criteria for the education grant. The FICSA Secretariat collected and analysed the responses in close coordination with PSA, to identify patterns, variations, and potential gaps in policies governing education grant eligibility, providing a clear basis for further discussions by PSA/PTC at the 78th FICSA Council.
7. Decision FICSA/C/77/D/19 focused on advocating improvements to the [inter-agency mobility framework](#). Following a joint meeting of PSA and the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management, FICSA members had been surveyed to determine how the framework was being implemented, what were the effects on staff's acquired rights and how inter-agency transfers facilitated career development, exchange and mobility among staff. A Joint Inspection Unit report ([JIU/REP/2019/8](#)) concluded that current inter-agency mobility policies did not meet the needs of staff or organizations and called for substantial reforms to make the framework fit for purpose.
8. To further support this advocacy, the FICSA Executive Committee proposed commissioning an expert white paper or requesting the Joint Inspection Unit to produce an updated review of the inter-agency mobility framework. Those tools would provide actionable recommendations and a strong foundation to reinvigorate discussions in the Human Resources (HR) Network and other high-level forums.
9. Meanwhile, the current implementation of the framework remained highly fragmented, which often resulted in informalized and inconsistent practices, undermining the opportunities for career development and mobility that the framework was intended to promote. Organizations were reluctant to adopt a unified system, viewing mobility as a potential increased cost or liability, rather than a shared responsibility.
10. FICSA would continue to advocate a robust, unified inter-agency mobility framework that ensured the retention of acquired rights, supported career development and promoted meaningful exchanges across organizations. The findings from the survey and the possible white paper, combined with insights from the Joint Inspection Unit report, would form the basis of FICSA's strategic engagement on this issue in upcoming HR Network meetings.

Recommendation

- **PSA recommended that the FICSA Executive Committee should develop and circulate to member associations a checklist of benefits and entitlements, asking which were retained during inter-agency mobility.**

Update on PSA-related topics in organizations

11. PSA discussed the issue of the low post adjustment in Rome (document [ICSC/CIRC/PAC/601](#)). [ICSC will hold the next](#) salary survey in 2026, so not much can be done at present. There would be an annual adjustment to accommodate the fluctuation of exchange rates in February. Post adjustment had been reviewed in 2024 for all duty stations covered by the UN common system organizations ([ICSC/CIRC/GEN/02/2024](#)).
12. A discussion of how the lump-sum option for home leave was handled showed wide variations in practices and calculation methods between organizations. The use of the lump-sum option has declined since the discontinuation of IATA fares in 2018, which had previously been used as a reference for calculating lump-sum travel entitlements. In the absence of an alternative shared methodology within the UN system, organizations have adopted different approaches, resulting in inconsistencies.
13. PSA also discussed the decisions of the UN General Assembly on ICSC's recommendations on the adjustment of the base/floor salary scale and the levels of hardship allowance, mobility incentive and danger pay. It had not made a decision on the adjustment to the children's and secondary dependants' allowances or approved adjustment for budget implications and impact on the finance of the overall system.
14. PSA discussed various scenarios for the education grant in 2025/2026 that might arise as a result of the ICSC comprehensive review of the compensation package. It was suggested to reshape the discussion to emphasize support to children, in the context of diversity, equity and inclusion activities and of the need for staff members' families to retain ties with their home countries. The exchange rate fluctuation was also raised. The eligibility of staff with 5-year-olds to access the education grant was discussed. PSA members thought that the education grant threshold for dependants with special needs should be increased to accommodate disabilities.
15. The FICSA survey on eligibility for the education grant had received only 23 responses; all respondents confirmed an eligibility range of 5–25 years. Nevertheless, if staff could prove that country regulations required an earlier mandatory enrolment age, access to the education grant could be obtained by staff with children younger than 5 years. PSA members identified the need to follow up on several questions to obtain more data, and suggested that the FICSA Executive Committee conduct that follow-up.

Key roles of staff associations/unions

16. PSA encouraged Council delegates to explore additional ways to increase staff awareness and understanding of the key roles that staff associations/unions could play, including through regular meetings held by staff representatives, participation in FICSA webinars and increased use of staff association/union websites.

Nomination of officers and core group members

17. PSA nominated the following delegates as officers:
 - Houcine Mhadhbi (IAEA) as Co-Chair

- James Howlett (WHO/WPRO) as Co-Chair
- Mariia Mikheieva (IAEA) as Vice-Chair
- Birahim Fall (UPU) as Vice-Chair.

18. PSA nominated the following as members of the core group:

- Monica Buggi (IFAD)
- Maryam Navi (UNCC)
- Gautam Basu (WHO/SEARO).

Appendix 1. Participants

Chair/Coordinator	Houcine Mhadhbi (IAEA)
Vice-Chair	James Howlett (WHO/WPRO)
Rapporteur	Monica Buggi (IFAD)
Staff association/union	
AP-in-FAO	Ilias Animon, Vanda Ferreira dos Santos
IAEA	Mariia Mikheieva
ICAO	Marisa Collis
IMO	Fola Odulana, Leedwine David Pichon
UNESCO	Simone Grego, Federica Delconte
UNFCCC	Maryam Navi
UNRWA	Diab El-Tabari
UPU	Birahim Fall
WHO/AFRO	Harris Benito Koubemba, Prisca B Ndongo-Mombo, Christian Tounta
WHO/HQ	Jérôme Zanga Foe
WHO/GSC	Aizat Khalid
WHO/SEARO	Ritesh Singh, Gautam Basu
WMO	Guilherme Varro, Vanessa Mazarese
Members with associate status	
CERN	Flavio Costa
ESO	Paola La Penna
OPCW	Arshad Hussain Kadri
Green Climate Fund	Candace Leung Woo-Gabriel
Members with consultative status	
WIPO SC	Sherine Greiss
