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Report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2022

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Report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2022



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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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Abbreviations

CCISUA	Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System
CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FICSA	Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNISERV	United Nations International Civil Servants Federation
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

Glossary of technical terms

The glossary of technical terms can be found in a separate document on the website of the International Civil Service Commission at: <https://unicsc.org/Home/Library>.

Letter of transmittal

Letter dated 12 August 2022 from the Chair of the International Civil Service Commission addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the forty-eighth annual report of the International Civil Service Commission, prepared in accordance with article 17 of its statute.

I should be grateful if you would submit the present report to the General Assembly and, as provided in article 17 of the statute, also transmit it to the governing organs of the other organizations participating in the work of the Commission, through their executive heads, and to staff representatives.

(Signed) Larbi **Djacta**
Chair

Summary of recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission that call for decisions by the General Assembly and the legislative organs of the other participating organizations

Paragraph
reference

A. Conditions of service applicable to both categories of staff

1. Framework for contractual arrangements

63 (a) The Commission recommends to the General Assembly that the provisions for annual leave for temporary appointments across the common system organizations should be harmonized at 2.5 days of leave per month.

B. Remuneration of staff in the Professional and higher categories

1. Base/floor salary scale

148 (a) and annex IX The Commission recommends to the General Assembly, for approval with effect from 1 January 2023, the revised unified base/floor salary scale, as well as the updated pay protection points for the Professional and higher categories, as set out in annex IX to the present report, reflecting a 2.28 per cent adjustment, to be implemented by increasing the base salary and commensurately decreasing post adjustment multiplier points, resulting in no change in net take-home pay.

2. Evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin

154 (a) and annex X The Commission reports to the General Assembly that the margin between the net remuneration of United Nations officials in the Professional and higher categories in New York and that of officials in comparable positions in the United States federal civil service in Washington, D.C., was estimated at 113.9 for the calendar year 2022.

3. Children's and secondary dependants' allowances: review of methodology and level

171 The Commission recommends to the General Assembly that, based on its decision to revise the methodology, as of 1 January 2023:

- (a) The child allowance be set at \$3,322 per annum;
 - (b) The disabled child allowance be set at \$6,645 per annum;
 - (c) The secondary dependant's allowance be set at \$1,163 per annum;
 - (d) At hard-currency duty stations, the United States dollar amount of the allowances, as established in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above, be converted to the local currency using the official United Nations exchange rate as of the date of promulgation and remain unchanged until the next biennial review;
 - (e) The dependency allowances be reduced by the amount of any direct payments received by staff from a Government in respect of dependants;
 - (f) Any transitional measures remaining in effect as a result of the revised methodology of 1 January 2009 would be discontinued in accordance with the Commission's earlier decision to discontinue such transitional measures upon the completion of two review cycles ([A/63/30](#), para. 129 (d)).
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Summary of financial implications of the decisions and recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission for the United Nations and other participating organizations of the common system

Paragraph
reference

A. Conditions of service applicable to both categories of staff

1. Review of the framework for contractual arrangements

46 The financial implications of harmonizing the accrual of annual leave across the common system for staff on temporary appointments were estimated at \$4.1 million per annum system-wide.

2. Parental leave

91 The financial implications associated with the parental leave provision of 16 weeks' leave for all parents were approximately \$1.3 million per annum and for the additional period of 10 weeks for birth mothers were approximately \$4.6 million per annum, for a total of \$5.9 million per annum system-wide.

B. Remuneration of staff in the Professional and higher categories

1. Base/floor salary scale

136 and annex IX The financial implications associated with the Commission's recommendation on an increase in the base/floor salary scale, as set out in annex IX to the present report, were estimated at approximately \$1.235 million per annum system-wide.

2. Children's and secondary dependants' allowances: review of methodology and level

157 The financial implications arising from the proposed methodology were estimated at \$15 million per annum system-wide.

3. Hardship allowance: review of level

219 and annex XI The financial implications for granting a 3.1 per cent increase to the hardship allowance, effective from 1 January 2023, were estimated at \$5 million per annum system-wide.

4. Mobility incentive: review of level

223 The financial implications associated with the proposed increase in the mobility incentive, effective from 1 January 2023, were estimated at \$2.5 million per annum system-wide.

Chapter I

Organizational matters

A. Acceptance of the statute

1. Article 1 of the statute of the International Civil Service Commission, approved by the General Assembly in its resolution [3357 \(XXIX\)](#) of 18 December 1974, provides that:

The Commission shall perform its functions in respect of the United Nations and of those specialized agencies and other international organizations which participate in the United Nations common system and which accept the present statute.

2. To date, 16 organizations have accepted the statute of the Commission and, together with the United Nations itself and its funds and programmes, participate in the United Nations common system of salaries and allowances.¹ One other organization, although not having formally accepted the statute, participates fully in the work of the Commission.² Therefore, 28 organizations, agencies, funds and programmes (hereinafter “organizations”) cooperate closely with the Commission and apply the provisions of its statute.

B. Membership

3. The membership of the Commission for 2022 is as follows:

Chair:

Larbi Djacta (Algeria)** (Chair)*

Vice-Chair:

Boguslaw Winid (Poland)* (Vice-Chair)***

Members:

Andrew Bangali (Sierra Leone)*
 Marie-Françoise Bechtel (France)*
 Claudia Angélica Bueno Reynaga (Mexico)***
 Spyridon Flogaitis (Greece)***
 Carleen Gardner (Jamaica)*
 Igor Golubovskiy (Russian Federation)**
 Misako Kaji (Japan)***
 Pan-Suk Kim (Republic of Korea)**
 Ali Kurer (Libya)*
 Jeffrey Mounts (United States of America)***
 Shauna Olney (Canada)***
 Xiaochu Wang (China)**
 El Hassane Zahid (Morocco)**

* Term of office expires 31 December 2022.

** Term of office expires 31 December 2024.

*** Term of office expires 31 December 2025.

¹ ILO, FAO, UNESCO, ICAO, WHO, UPU, ITU, WMO, IMO, WIPO, IAEA, UNIDO, UNWTO, the International Seabed Authority, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

² IFAD.

C. Sessions held by the Commission and questions examined

4. The Commission held two sessions in 2022: the ninety-third, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 21 March to 1 April; and the ninety-fourth, held at UNESCO in Paris, from 11 to 22 July 2022.

5. At those sessions, the Commission examined issues that derived from decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly and from its own statute. A number of decisions and resolutions adopted by the Assembly that required action or consideration by the Commission are discussed in the present report.

D. Programme of work of the Commission for 2023–2024

6. The programme of work of the Commission for 2023–2024 is contained in annex I.

Chapter II

Reporting and monitoring

A. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session relating to the work of the Commission

7. The Commission considered a note by its secretariat on the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly relating to the work of the Commission. In that note, the secretariat highlighted the statement made by the Chair of the Commission under agenda item 145 of the seventy-sixth session of the Assembly, entitled “United Nations common system”. The Chair had given a briefing to members of the Fifth Committee on the work of the Commission and had drawn their attention to the four items that called for decisions by the Committee, namely: (a) base/floor salary; (b) evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin; (c) education grant; and (d) payment of amount in lieu of settling-in grant at category E duty stations that are not designated as non-family. He had also provided the Fifth Committee with a detailed report on the post adjustment issues and highlighted other areas, such as the comprehensive assessment report on the compensation package for the common system, the mobility incentive and measures to address non-compliance with decisions and recommendations of the Commission. The Chair had given a further briefing to the Committee on areas that fell under the Commission’s monitoring role, such as age distribution, geographical diversity and gender policies, as well as the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the Commission and the Assembly.

8. Participants of the ninety-third session of the Commission were informed that, while the Chair of the Commission had been able to introduce the work of the Commission in person, questions from and responses to the Fifth Committee had been exchanged through correspondence. The questions had been numerous and detailed and had required extensive explanations from the secretariat. The education grant scheme, including representative schools, appeared to have led most of the discussions within the Fifth Committee. Numerous questions had also been asked regarding the post adjustment and the current round of cost-of-living surveys. Questions had been raised regarding individual elements of the compensation package and the package as a whole, with cost being a focus. Specific questions concerned the base/floor salary scale, non-family allowance, the pilot programme on the settling-in grant, locations classified as category D and E duty stations, danger pay, mobility incentive and relocation shipment.

9. After having reviewed the proposals of the Commission and having received detailed responses to the questions posed, the General Assembly adopted its resolution [76/240](#) without a vote on 24 December 2021.

10. With regard to the review of the jurisdictional set-up of the common system requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions [74/255 B](#) and [76/240](#), the relevant focal points of the Commission reviewed some of the draft proposals of the Secretary-General on the issue. The Chair subsequently consolidated the comments on the proposals, which will be reproduced in annex I to the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly (see [A/77/222](#)).

Discussion in the Commission

11. The representative of the Human Resources Network took note of the decisions of the General Assembly, adding that, while the requests and tasks were numerous and multifaceted, the Network wished to assure the Commission of the active cooperation of the organizations in addressing those requests. She drew particular

attention to the request for a comprehensive review of the compensation package for the common system on a five-year cycle. She said that, in the Network's view, the organizations of the common system viewed such comprehensive review efforts as an opportunity to jointly continue the reflection among all stakeholders on how the COVID-19 pandemic and other external factors were likely to change the work environment and modalities within the common system. The Network also noted that the Secretary-General was requested to provide to the Member States, on an annual basis starting at the seventy-eighth session, comprehensive data on system-wide compensation costs for all staff categories, including all compensation package components. While the Network was concerned that those requests would be taxing on the organizations' resources, she informed the Commission that the organizations had already started to discuss how to enhance their human resources analytics.

12. The representative of FICSA noted with appreciation that the General Assembly had approved all the recommendations of the Commission. However, given that the Assembly had asked the Commission to report on the impact of the adjustment of the base/floor salary on post resources, including separation payments, post adjustment and pension contributions, she said that, while it was understood that the focus on cost containment was necessary, zero growth in staff cost could not reasonably be expected when the cost of living had risen dramatically. With respect to the Assembly's request to undertake a comprehensive assessment and review of the compensation package on a five-year cycle, the representative stated that FICSA was of the view that Member States should be made aware of the enormous amount of human and financial resources needed to fulfil such a request. She reiterated the Federation's position that cost-efficiency should be achieved through comprehensive reviews of ways of working to preserve the independence of the international civil service and to ensure that it remained fit for purpose to serve its mandate, rather than through a continuous, ongoing cycle of resource-intensive reviews of the compensation package.

13. The representative of CCISUA took note of the document and welcomed the fact that the four recommendations of the Commission, which had been fully supported by the staff federations, had been approved by the General Assembly. However, regarding the issue of the education grant, she said that CCISUA was of the view that, while the new sliding scale was more beneficial to staff in the field, it negatively affected staff at headquarters duty stations. Consequently, CCISUA looked forward to future analyses of the impact of the changes made to the scheme. With reference to the Assembly's reaffirmation of its commitment to a single, unified common system, with the Commission playing a central role in regulating and coordinating conditions of service and entitlements, she added that without the Commission "the common system would not be what it is today". With regard to the request by the Assembly to conduct a comprehensive assessment and review of the compensation package on a five-year cycle, the representative indicated that CCISUA was interested in knowing how the assessment would be conducted and reiterated the importance of ensuring the full engagement of the staff federations. Similarly, she sought clarification on how the analysis relating to the possible use of external data for staff expenditure surveys would be conducted, adding that CCISUA failed to see the benefit of resorting to the use of external data, as the already modified methodology was fit for purpose. In the federation's view, the task called for the formation of a working group. Regarding the issues of geographical distribution and multilingualism, she likewise reiterated the need for a working group. Lastly, she stated that CCISUA was pleased to note that the Assembly had asked the Commission to look into ways of promoting the rejuvenation of the organizations of the common system, including through programmes to support interns from developing countries.

14. The representative of UNISERV expressed the Federation's appreciation for the overall positive outcome reflected in General Assembly resolution [76/240](#), which, in the Federation's view, was particularly beneficial to parents and staff in field locations and reflected the fact that the Assembly trusted the work of the Commission. He indicated that the Federation was in full support of the Assembly's request for more and better data, as it was believed that additional data would yield more positive results in the future, including with regard to reaching gender parity. It was also supportive of the call made by the Assembly to strengthen work in the areas of geographical distribution and multilingualism, as it was the Federation's belief that doing so would lead to reduced inequality, discrimination and toxic working environments.

15. The representative of ILO noted that the General Assembly had reaffirmed the central role of the Commission in regulating and coordinating conditions of service in the common system and had also reaffirmed the authority of the Commission to continue to establish post adjustment multipliers for duty stations in the common system under article 11 (c) of the statute of the Commission. He reiterated that ILO was fully committed to smooth collaboration with the Commission and all stakeholders, adding that it was the organization's belief that good progress had been made in the new round of surveys. Nevertheless, the speaker informed the Commission that ILO faced significant challenges in view of judgment No. 4134 of the ILO Administrative Tribunal and added that similar challenges could arise during the new round of surveys. In his view, while ILO was fully cognizant of its responsibilities to the common system in terms of the application of the respective agreements with the United Nations, it was also bound under the statute of the ILO Administrative Tribunal to abide by the latter's final and non-appealable judgments. As ILO was not aware of any concrete measures having been considered by the Commission and proposed to the Assembly to address the specific issues faced by ILO and the other specialized agencies concerned, ILO was of the view that the safest and most desirable solution would be to arrive at an agreement in which the Commission's decisions and recommendations were in full conformity with the judgments and jurisprudence of both the ILO Administrative Tribunal and the Administrative Tribunal of the United Nations. He further stressed that the legal obligation of ILO continued to be the full implementation of the relevant judgments of the ILO Administrative Tribunal. He drew the Commission's attention to what ILO considered was the sensitive and non-sustainable situation in which the resolutions of the Assembly had placed ILO and some other Geneva-based agencies and emphasized the urgent need for the current situation to be resolved as quickly as possible. The speaker concluded by calling the Commission's attention to the need for intensified communication throughout 2022 to achieve a more detailed appreciation of the governance and legal environment of ILO and the other specialized agencies concerned in order to address those challenges, and he looked forward to the Commission's support in that respect.

16. Members of the Commission took note with appreciation of General Assembly resolution [76/240](#). As always, the Commission looked forward to working with the staff and organizations to fulfil the Assembly's requests. Commission members were of the view that there was an urgent need to focus on geographical distribution, rejuvenation of the workforce and gender parity, all of which should be reviewed together to ensure that a holistic approach was taken to address issues such as equality, diversity and non-discrimination. The importance of multilingualism was also raised, and some Commission members added that the language incentive should be reintroduced to the Professional and higher categories of staff in an effort to promote multilingualism. While strong support was expressed for the Assembly's request that organizations submit the updated and reliable data necessary for the Commission's decision-making, members wondered whether the five-year review of the

compensation package would affect the periodic reviews of individual elements of the compensation package of the common system.

17. In response to the statement of the representative of the ILO, members of the Commission expressed a range of views. Commission members expressed concern that ILO had indicated that the new round of cost-of-living surveys could give rise to the same situation that had previously occurred in Geneva. It was pointed out that, in paragraph 6 of resolution 76/240, the General Assembly had reaffirmed the authority of the Commission to continue to establish post adjustment multipliers for duty stations in the United Nations common system under article 11 (c) of the statute of the Commission. Therefore, whatever results were obtained and approved by the Commission at the end of a cost-of-living survey should be implemented by all common system organizations at the location in question. In that context, Commission members reiterated that the decisions of the Commission and the Assembly should be respected and maintained, adding that litigation was not always the solution to a problem. After reminding participants that all stakeholders should be working in the interest of the common system, the Chair concluded the discussion by highlighting the role of the Commission as outlined in its statute and asked that everyone work in the spirit of good faith.

Decision of the Commission

18. The Commission decided to take note of General Assembly resolution 76/240.

B. Monitoring of implementation of decisions and recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission and the General Assembly

19. The Commission considered a note by its secretariat on the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the Commission (under article 17 of its statute) and the General Assembly. The note also provided broad information on other human resources matters of potential interest to the Commission. A questionnaire was disseminated by the secretariat to gather information, to which all of the common system organizations had responded.

20. The Commission had made several recommendations on the issue of age, geographical and gender diversity in its report for the year 2021 (A/76/30). In addition, the General Assembly, in its resolution 76/240, had encouraged the Commission to identify good practices and provide advice to common system organizations on ways to promote geographical diversity and rejuvenation, including through measures proposed in paragraph 144 of the Commission's report for 2021, such as programmes to support internship candidates from developing countries, and had noted the Commission's request to the organizations to establish clear indicators to track progress in that regard.

21. The information received from the organizations in 2022 did not reveal any additional notable measures taken by them on the issue of geographical and gender representation since the Commission's consideration of the issues in 2021. The Commission, in its annual report for 2021, had requested the organizations to publish more detailed and publicly available information on diversity, such as gender, age and geography, and several organizations had cited one or both of the following two sources of system-wide data: (a) the human resources statistics maintained by CEB,³ which were updated annually and contained a link to the most recent personnel statistics shown in several tables with breakdowns by category, nationality, gender

³ See <https://unsceb.org/human-resources-statistics>.

and age; and (b) the United Nations system-wide dashboard on gender parity,⁴ which was updated quarterly on the basis of the most recent data available from each organization. The biennial reports of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system provided an additional source of data and related analysis of Professional and higher categories of staff. Annex II sets out additional publicly available sources of data, usually published on the organizations' websites, the extent of detail of which varied considerably. In addition, some organizations also mentioned non-public data sources that were provided either to their governing bodies or to internal stakeholders, such as through dynamic dashboards to track progress on specific indicators.

22. With regard to internships and similar programmes, the following 19 organizations reported having provided some measure of financial support for internships: FAO, IAEA, IFAD, ILO, PAHO, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOPS, UN-Women, UNWTO, UPU, WFP, WHO, WIPO and WMO. Additional support specific to candidates from developing countries was provided by IFAD (housing and travel allowance) and by WFP and WIPO (reimbursement of travel tickets). WHO provided a living allowance to interns who needed financial support. The UNHCR policy would add a lump sum for travel to the current food and transportation allowance, which was seen as further eliminating potential barriers for interns from developing countries.

23. Of the remaining 10 organizations, which did not provide financial support for internships, UNESCO and UNIDO were exploring financial support through voluntary contributions. Several organizations mentioned that they were seeking to further facilitate remote internships, which could also increase opportunities for interns from developing countries, while UN-Women had introduced a stipend for remote internships. In addition to internships, fellowships were mentioned by several organizations, and some cited the related provision of financial support by the organization or partners.

24. Some of the measures implemented by the organizations to foster the dynamism, creativity and innovative contributions of younger staff members are outlined in annex III.

Discussion in the Commission

25. The representative of the Human Resources Network said that the Network took note of the report.

26. The representative of FICSA noted that all recommendations had been fully implemented and that, in its resolution 76/240, the General Assembly had requested oversight of the components of the common system compensation package in a holistic manner. She pointed out the intrinsic link between the Assembly's request for a holistic approach to the conditions of service of staff and the call for "geographic diversity and rejuvenation" and requested the Commission to bear that in mind when considering the agenda item on parental leave.

27. She stated that FICSA encouraged the organizations to leverage existing talent, many of whom were eager to bring innovation and change to the organizations if given the opportunity. It was noted that efforts to rejuvenate could sometimes have a demotivating effect on serving staff and could result in an increased use of other categories of personnel, such as interns, to effectively carry out staff tasks for little

⁴ See <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoia0GY5YjU4ZGEtYmE0ZS00ZDQ4LWJhNjgtNzNhMzJhNmFhMjZmIiwidCI6ImIzZTVkYjVILTl5NDQtNDgzNy05OWY1LTc0ODhhY2U1NDMxOSIsImMiOiJh9.>

or no pay. In that regard, she indicated that FICSA noted with concern the example of the agreed separations of 100 serving staff reported by one organization, and it hoped that the goal of achieving rejuvenation would not be at the expense of losing dedicated serving staff with years of institutional knowledge or increasing the number of non-staff personnel. She recalled that the purpose of the internship programmes was not to rejuvenate the organizations but to provide university students or recent graduates with the opportunity to gain practical work experience in line with their studies or interests and expose them to the work of the United Nations. At the same time, internships provided organizations with the support of qualified students specialized in various professional fields. She indicated that FICSA was of the view that creating more positions at the P-1 and P-2 levels, as well as supporting programmes such as the Junior Professional Officers Programme and the young professionals programme, were examples of effective ways to rejuvenate the workforce.

28. Regarding remote internships, the representative expressed concern about the documented negative impact of working remotely on mental health, transfer of knowledge, sense of belonging and teamwork, in particular with regard to the younger generations. She voiced support for paid internships but disagreed that payments could be based on the intern's country of origin.

29. The representative of CCISUA noted with regret that the organizations of the common system had not taken additional measures to achieve geographical and gender representation since the consideration by the Commission of those issues in 2021 and emphasized the importance of making the data publicly available. Regarding the issue of internships, she noted that interns were part of the future workforce of the United Nations and found it regrettable that the United Nations did not financially support candidates. The representative indicated that CCISUA was of the view that remote internships ran counter to the purpose of gainful experience, as they did not allow for on-the-job training and face-to-face interaction. She also cautioned against the use of paid fellowships as a means of cheap labour, as in the case of interns.

30. With respect to the representation of the younger generation in formal meetings, the representative of CCISUA expressed concern about their involvement and use as a sounding board with regard to relevant issues. She indicated that CCISUA questioned the legitimacy of including informal groups, such as the Young United Nations Network, stating that they operated outside any formal accountability or regulatory framework. She said that CCISUA cautioned against establishing a direct channel between the Commission and any groups that did not add value over and above staff federations, which remained the most relevant channel for consultations. The federation was of the view that increasing the number of P-1 and P-2 level staff and pursuing programmes such as the Junior Professional Officers Programme and the young professionals programme were the best ways to achieve the rejuvenation of the United Nations workforce. She also raised concerns regarding the reporting by one organization of agreed separations of some 100 staff as an opportunity to recruit relatively younger staff in lower-graded positions.

31. The representative of UNISERV expressed appreciation for the Commission's ongoing efforts to improve diversity in the common system, including with regard to gender, geographical origin and age, and fully supported all efforts in that regard by the organizations of the common system. He said that UNISERV was of the view that, where specific diversity measures were in place, organizations should ensure that they were clearly communicated and that staff selections were implemented with integrity, transparency and accountability. The Federation considered that the onboarding of staff with disabilities was an area on which the Commission should compile

information from the organizations on effective progress made and the measures taken to make the United Nations a more friendly workplace for persons with disabilities.

32. The representative of UNISERV expressed the Federation's strong support for paid internships and voiced strong reservations about the usefulness of remote internships, which, in the view of UNISERV, could defeat the objective of gainful hands-on experience and networking. Regarding measures to foster dynamism, creativity and innovation, it was supportive of networks that contributed to an enhanced flow of ideas, information and knowledge among staff. He stated that UNISERV collaborated frequently and had been enriched by its exchanges with some of those networks, such as the "#NewWork" staff initiative. However, it was concerned that informal groups were involved in formal consultations in ways that encroached on the exclusive role of the staff unions and federations.

33. The Commission expressed its appreciation for the fact that all the common system organizations had responded to the questionnaire from the ICSC secretariat. While noting that it would be helpful to have a common approach to the collection of data, the Commission took into consideration the various data and measures reported by organizations to address issues of diversity and the rejuvenation of the workforce and to increase the cross referencing of data, including by gender and geographic diversity. With regard to internships and similar programmes, especially for candidates from developing countries, and expanding opportunities for entry-level candidates, 19 organizations reported providing some measure of financial support for interns. Of the 10 remaining organizations that did not currently provide financial support for internships, two were exploring financial support through voluntary contributions. Several organizations mentioned that they were seeking to further facilitate remote internships, which could also increase opportunities for interns from developing countries. Some organizations had introduced a stipend for remote internships, and additional support specific to candidates from developing countries was provided by several organizations.

34. The Commission expressed its support for paid internships and acknowledged the need to increase internships for candidates from developing countries. Some Commission members raised concerns about the impact of remote internships, in particular with regard to candidates from developing countries who had limited access to electricity and technology. It was the Commission's view that in-person interaction with full access to face-to-face and hands-on learning was preferable for a successful internship experience. In that regard, the Commission heard from some organizations, such as UNDP, that there was a high demand for remote internships that allowed candidates from developing countries and diverse situations to work in different global environments. UNDP reported that, at the current time, 80 per cent of its interns were from the global South, in contrast to the participants of the Junior Professional Officers Programme, who were mainly from developed countries. Interns at UNDP were provided with financial support and included individuals with disabilities, persons from minorities and indigenous groups, and other specific diversity targets. The United Nations Secretariat informed the Commission that remote internships reflected options for the working environment of the future. A blended environment in which some personnel might, depending on the functions, be working remotely was inevitable, hence different options for internships were viable for the organizations. UNICEF also confirmed that remote internships allowed the organization to be more inclusive and to provide access and opportunities to candidates in diverse groups on the basis of culture or special situations, such as individuals who were unable to travel or persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations.

35. While the Commission pointed out that in-person internships were the preferable option, some members acknowledged that remote internships were a viable option for certain functions.

36. The Commission called for standardized policies and procedures among the common system organizations to ensure the equal treatment of all interns. The Commission noted that 66 per cent of the organizations had implemented payments for interns and, while acknowledging the progress made in that regard, expressed concern that the remaining organizations did not provide such financial support.

37. One Commission member requested that a consolidated table of decisions taken in the organizations of the common system should continue to be provided under the item, indicating whether those decisions had been initiated by secretariats or governing bodies. The list would give a realistic idea of the degree of involvement of Member States and human resources divisions on the issues considered within the Commission.

38. The Commission pointed out the need for a unified approach to reporting on workforce diversity, including on geographical representation, and suggested that consideration should be given to creating or enhancing a single United Nations system-wide database of relevant human resources statistics.

Decision of the Commission

39. The Commission took note of the information provided and urged the United Nations common system organizations:

(a) To continue to standardize the financial support for internships and similar programmes;

(b) To expand opportunities that foster diversity, including equitable geographic distribution, and to enhance the recruitment of young professionals and interns from developing countries and underrepresented regional groups.

Chapter III

Conditions of service applicable to both categories of staff

A. Report of the working group on the review of the framework for contractual arrangements

40. The Commission first adopted the framework of guidelines for contractual arrangements in 2005, which consisted of three types of appointments, namely continuing, fixed-term and temporary (A/60/30 and A/60/30/Corr.1, annex IV). At that time, the Commission confirmed the existence of two types of requirements under temporary appointments: one of a short-term nature for less than one year; and the other for functions that could be required for up to four years to accommodate urgent operational requirements for defined periods (i.e. appointments of limited duration), such as peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance or special projects.

41. In 2010, in examining the broader use of appointments of limited duration, the Commission was of the view that such contracts no longer met the needs of the organizations given that the compensation offered under such contracts was not comparable to other types of contracts in the common system organizations. As a result, the Commission considered that they created inequity among staff working side by side at the same duty station and affected staff morale. The Commission therefore decided at that time to remove the reference to appointments of a limited duration of up to four years from the short-term appointment modality under its current framework for contractual arrangements (A/65/30, annex V). In 2012, the Commission affirmed that it did not require organizations to implement all three types of appointments as described in the framework and that they could implement any combination of the defined contract types in accordance with the particular needs of the organization (A/67/30 and A/67/30/Corr.1, para. 104 (c)).

42. At its ninetieth session, the Commission reviewed the information provided by the organizations in the context of a review of the implementation of the framework for contractual arrangements and considered that any changes to the contractual framework should be based on sufficient and convincing reasons. It therefore decided to establish a working group to review the implementation of the current contractual framework by the organizations and any possible improvements within the current framework, and to make recommendations as needed at its ninety-second session (A/75/30, para. 40).

43. The working group established by the Commission met in Copenhagen from 11 to 15 October 2021. During the course of its discussions, it considered information submitted by 26 common system organizations,⁵ the practices of a few other international organizations (the World Bank, European Union institutions and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and information from the ILO EPLex⁶ database on national legislation relating to fixed-term contracts. It was indicated in the information from the organizations that around 66 per cent of staff were on fixed-term appointments, 24 per cent were on permanent or continuing appointments and the remaining 10 per cent were on temporary appointments.

44. The working group concluded that:

(a) The ICSC framework for contractual arrangements in the organizations of the common system, as contained in the Commission's annual report for 2010 (A/65/30, annex V) and the Commission's further decision on the issue in its annual

⁵ Including PAHO. Three organizations, namely the International Seabed Authority, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and WMO, did not respond to the questionnaire.

⁶ Available at <https://eplex.ilo.org/fixed-term-contracts-ftcs/>.

report for 2012 ([A/67/30](#) and [A/67/30/Corr.1](#), para. 104 (c)), was adequate and provided sufficient flexibility to the organizations;

(b) While it is recognized that the current trends in the nature of funding affect the ability of organizations to issue long-term appointments, organizations should continue to adhere to the contractual framework in their planning and funding processes;

(c) The provisions for annual leave for temporary appointments across the common system organizations should be harmonized at 2.5 days of leave per month;

(d) The impact on the framework of emerging trends and developments in the future of work was not sufficiently clear at the current time and could be reviewed at a later stage, as appropriate.

45. In addition, the working group had encouraged the Commission to consider drawing the attention of the General Assembly and governing bodies to the impact of the current trends in the nature of funding on the implementation of the ICSC contractual framework, as contained in annex V to document [A/65/30](#).

46. The financial implications of the recommendation to harmonize the accrual of annual leave across the common system for staff on temporary appointments were estimated at \$4.1 million per annum system-wide. The estimate was calculated using the data on the commutation of unused annual leave in those organizations that currently provided 1.5 days of annual leave to staff on temporary appointments.

Discussion in the Commission

47. The representative of the Human Resources Network thanked the participants of the working group for the frank, constructive and comprehensive discussions and agreed with the summary and the recommendations contained in the report to the Commission. Those recommendations pointed towards the conclusion that, for the time being, the current range of contractual modalities was broadly adequate. They also established that the impact on the framework of emerging trends and developments in the future of work was not sufficiently clear at the current time and could be reviewed at a later stage, as appropriate. Discussions in the High-level Committee on Management related to those issues were ongoing, as contractual arrangements and compensation systems should support the fast-changing workforce and ways of working.

48. The representatives of the three federations said that they agreed with the conclusions of the working group. Regarding the working group's recommendation to harmonize the annual leave for temporary appointments across the common system organizations to 2.5 days per month, they were of the view that doing so was important from the perspective of the principle of equitable conditions of service for all staff in the United Nations system. In that regard, the representative of CCISUA cautioned against the use of such harmonization as a cover for granting more temporary appointments.

49. While acknowledging the concerns raised by the representatives of the organizations, the representative of FICSA said that FICSA supported the conclusion of the working group that such concerns could be addressed within the current framework. In the view of FICSA, the key issue was not the current contractual framework, but rather the fact that earmarked funding was restricting the ability of the organizations to hire individuals on contracts that fit within the ICSC framework, which had led to the increasing use of consultants and other types of personnel. While acknowledging that the issue was beyond the mandate of the Commission, she stated that FICSA was of the view that it should be brought to the attention of the Member States. The representative also stated that no in-depth discussions on the future of

work had taken place in the working group, as the implications for the ICSC contractual framework were not clear at the current time.

50. The representative of CCISUA stated that assumptions that not everyone who joined the common system organizations might want to build a long-term career were factually wrong. According to a survey that CCISUA had conducted in 2021, one element attracting employees to the United Nations, regardless of their age, was contractual stability. With regard to the issue of the predictability of funding, CCISUA believed that temporary contracts provided the organizations with the required flexibility to address their needs and that resorting to precarious contracts was going too far. The United Nations could not expect to attract and retain the most qualified candidates, in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, without having any liability towards them.

51. While recognizing the organizations' concerns relating to funding, the representative of UNISERV said that the Federation was nevertheless concerned about the non-use or diminishing use of the continuing contract modality. In its view, notwithstanding the organizations' efforts to provide better working conditions for various United Nations personnel on "non-staff" contracts, the growing use thereof raised issues of compliance with the principle of equal pay for equal work and had implications for achieving gender balance and for the reporting of fraud, misconduct and discrimination, as personnel on precarious contracts were less likely to report such allegations. Overall, he stated that UNISERV rejected the notion that contractual instability supported operational efficiency and expressed concern about the undermining of the independence, neutrality and effectiveness of the international civil service.

52. The Commission recognized that the framework had rationalized and consolidated the multitude of staff contractual arrangements that had existed prior to its adoption. The Commission concluded that the three appointment types recognized under the contractual framework had greatly simplified the issue and that the framework therefore continued to serve as the logic underpinning the current contractual needs of the organizations. The Commission also agreed that the framework broadly struck a balance between stability and flexibility, thus recognizing the differences between the organizations of the common system in terms of, *inter alia*, their mandates and structures.

53. The Commission, while acknowledging the flexibility within the contractual framework, expressed the view that organizations should make use of that flexibility while also ensuring fairness and equity in the treatment of staff when it came to the granting and extension of appointments. Some Commission members further stated that the extension of fixed-term appointments based on performance could be perceived as a control mechanism. Some Commission members, while recognizing that it was not easy to increase funding in the face of fiscal austerity, were also of the view that organizations should not overemphasize flexibility at the expense of stability. While the organizations relied on voluntary funding – albeit some more heavily than others – their activities were, for the most part, of a continuous nature.

54. Some Commission members noted that, while jobs were once presumed to be permanent, that was no longer the case. International organizations did not have steady budgets, and the use of temporary appointments had developed rapidly because of the flexibility they afforded and perhaps as a result of deficiencies in the classic employment model, such as long recruitment times. As the organizations required agile processes for onboarding employees based on changes in their business environment, the Commission might consider how the organizations recruited staff for more stable contracts. Other Commission members noted that the contractual framework did not impose any particular recruitment procedures on the organizations,

but stated that continuing and fixed-term appointments should be acquired through open and transparent selection procedures in accordance with the relevant staff regulations and rules of the organization.

55. Some Commission members further noted that, while there appeared to be a view that the granting of continuing appointments would lead to more committed staff, they did not observe any automatic link in that regard. In their view, it was inconceivable that any organization would make contractual decisions without considering their funding situation. Some members of the Commission commented that fixed-term appointments provided a relative degree of stability, as they could be issued for periods of up to five years at a time with successive renewals. Moreover, the Commission pointed out that, according to the jurisprudence of the tribunals of the common system, staff members had an expectation of renewal of fixed-term contracts and should be given valid reasons for the non-renewal of such contracts.

56. The Commission was informed that CEB statistical data on personnel showed that the proportion of women on continuing and fixed-term appointments in the Professional and higher categories of staff in the common system had increased from around 38.7 per cent to 40.6 per cent from 2015 to 2019, while the proportion of staff on temporary appointments had increased from 4.3 per cent to 5.3 per cent during the same period. In that regard, several members of the Commission highlighted the need for further information and data disaggregated by gender, age and geographical distribution with regard to appointment types and non-staff contracts.

57. The Commission was informed that, according to the most recent report of the Secretary-General on improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system (A/76/115), which covered the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019, women and men were equally likely to leave the United Nations system owing to appointment expiration, whereas resignation continued to account for a larger proportion of women's separations compared with men's. The finding was in contrast to the previous report (A/74/220), in which it had been found that the proportion of women separating owing to appointment expiration had been some 3.5 percentage points higher than for men. Some Commission members expressed concern that women were resigning in higher numbers than men. They considered that it would be useful to continue to be apprised of the issue, including in the context of the Commission's studies on diversity, so as to better understand the reasons why women were resigning. They noted that the next report of the Secretary-General would include data that coincided with the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, which could therefore provide some important insights.

58. The representative of ILO voiced support for the use of the ICSC contractual framework, where possible, to promote a career in the international civil service, while also underscoring that the framework had to be adaptable to the needs of the organizations.

59. Commission members expressed support for the working group's recommendation to harmonize the accrual of annual leave for temporary appointments across the common system at 2.5 days per month. While a question was raised as to whether the development could lead to a greater use of temporary contracts, most members of the Commission saw no indication to suggest that that would be the case. Members of the Commission noted that the difference in annual leave had implications for productivity and equity, and that the organizations and staff had highlighted the impact on the morale of staff who often worked side by side but with different annual leave entitlements. The Commission noted that the related estimated financial implications would be in the order of \$4.1 million per annum system-wide and that the estimate was arrived at using data on the commutation of unused annual leave in those organizations that currently provided 1.5 days of annual leave to staff on

temporary appointments. Some Commission members considered that the financial implications could be offset by encouraging staff to take annual leave at regular intervals, although it was recognized that for various reasons it was not always possible to utilize such leave fully given exigencies of service.

60. The Commission also considered the issue of changes in the nature of funding and contractual types and, while it recognized that the increasing proportion of earmarked funding was a concern for the organizations in terms of foreseeability, it was of the view that the contractual framework should continue to be implemented. Some Commission members added that, in the absence of more data from the organizations that correlated the effect of changes in funding with the contractual framework, the Commission could not make any relevant recommendations to the General Assembly. Other members were of the view that it was clear that the decreasing predictability of funding would have implications for the implementation of the contractual framework.

61. Several Commission members expressed their belief that some aspects of the future of work were already a reality, as telecommuting and remote working had become far more prevalent across all the organizations than they had been prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, some Commission members expressed the view that, in principle and for a number of reasons, in-person work in the office was the most efficient way of delivering on an organization's mandate. The representative of FICSA noted that, while working remotely worked well for some, it was also necessary to consider its well-documented negative impact, especially on mental health, in particular among younger members of the workforce, as well as the impact on other areas, such as promotion and creativity, and on the prevalence of domestic abuse. She stated that the lack of reliable access to power and Internet connectivity in some parts of the world could have a negative effect on the ability to recruit staff in accordance with geographical distribution and would therefore need to be studied. The representative of the Human Resources Network said that, while the pandemic had already provided lessons learned with regard to ways of working, further reflections were needed among all stakeholders so as to better clarify how to put those lessons into practice in a sustainable way. The Network was of the view that the comprehensive review of the compensation package, requested by the General Assembly, might provide the best opportunity to consider those reflections in a holistic manner.

62. Commission members stated that they looked forward to the outcome of the CEB Task Force on the Future of the United Nations System Workforce and indicated that it would be important for the Commission to examine the issue of the future of work holistically. The Commission expected that it would be kept apprised of any proposals that had possible implications for the common system. As things stood, the Commission agreed that it was unclear what, if any, implications the discussions on the future of work would have for the ICSC contractual framework.

Decisions of the Commission

63. The Commission decided:

(a) To recommend to the General Assembly that the provisions for annual leave for temporary appointments across the common system organizations should be harmonized at 2.5 days of leave per month;

(b) To endorse the conclusion of the working group that the ICSC framework for contractual arrangements in the organizations of the common system, as contained in the Commission's annual report for 2010 ([A/65/30](#), annex V) and the Commission's further decision on the issue in its annual report for 2012 ([A/67/30](#) and

[A/67/30/Corr.1](#), para. 104 (c)), was adequate and provided sufficient flexibility to the organizations;

(c) To recommend that the common system organizations should continue to adhere to the contractual framework in their planning.

B. Review of the standards of conduct for the international civil service

64. The Commission's standards of conduct for the international civil service embody the values promoted by the organizations of the common system. The intention behind the standards was to reflect the overarching ideal of behaviour and conduct for an international civil service committed to serving the world for global peace and prosperity. Their ultimate purpose was to inform and inspire the staff in the organizations of the common system by articulating some basic standards that form the ethical and philosophical underpinnings of the international civil service.

65. The standards of conduct are also considered as one of the key elements in the integrated framework for human resources management (see [A/71/30](#), annex II) of ICSC, which the General Assembly took note of in its resolution [71/264](#) and which was further revised by the Commission in 2018 in order to add a workforce diversity component (see [A/73/30](#), annex V).

66. In 2012, the Commission adopted the revised standards of conduct and recommended their approval by the General Assembly and the legislative organs of the other participating organizations. In its resolution [67/257](#), the Assembly approved, with effect from 1 January 2013, the revised standards of conduct (see [A/67/30](#) and [A/67/30/Corr.1](#), annex IV).

67. In 2021, the Commission decided to include a review of the standards in its programme of work for 2022–2023 (see [A/76/30](#)). At its ninety-fourth session, the Commission considered the establishment of a working group to review the standards of conduct.

Discussion in the Commission

68. The Commission took note of the proposed framework of action for the 2022–2023 review of the standards of conduct (see annex IV) and agreed with the proposed activities and timelines. In the light of the importance of the topic, the Commission agreed to establish a working group on standards of conduct, composed of members of the Commission and representatives of the organizations and staff federations, to review the current ICSC standards of conduct and make necessary proposals for their revision.

Decisions of the Commission

69. The Commission decided:

(a) To undertake a revision of the current ICSC standards of conduct for the international civil service to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the organizations;

(b) To form a working group, composed of members of the Commission and representatives of the organizations and staff federations, to examine the current ICSC standards of conduct and make proposals for their revision.

C. Report of the working group on parental leave

70. At its eighty-ninth session, in 2019, the Commission reviewed a report prepared by its secretariat containing information on available paid parental leave policies and practices in the common system, other international organizations, countries around the world and the private sector. The Human Resources Network also presented a report in which it proposed a new parental leave policy for the common system. The Commission considered parental leave to be an important issue for all families, affecting both the new parent and the newborn child. It also underscored that maternity leave provisions had been well established by ILO in the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), under which a minimum of 14 weeks of paid leave was required for all mothers of infants. At that session, members of the Commission had asked questions regarding the utilization rate of the current parental leave policies and the impact of such provisions on the recruitment and retention of staff, as well as regarding mobility patterns, the correlation between parental leave provisions and the promotion rate of female staff, the broader financial implications of the Human Resources Network proposal, including replacement costs, the impact of the proposed increased time provisions on the organizational budgets, and the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed extended leave provisions in the context of the global labour market.

71. The Commission recognized that it was timely to conduct a comprehensive review of all available parental leave provisions and other relevant measures to determine their fitness for meeting the current and future needs of staff in the common system who were parents. It requested its secretariat to conduct an analysis of available parental leave policies and practices in international organizations with reference to national systems and private sector organizations, covering all geographical regions. The Commission decided to establish a working group composed of members of the Commission and representatives of organizations and staff federations to examine the parental leave entitlements of the common system in a holistic and comprehensive manner and to develop a proposal for its consideration.

72. The working group established by the Commission to study the parental leave policies met on two occasions. In accordance with its terms of reference, the working group considered the following tasks under its agenda and presented its recommendations for consideration by the Commission at its ninety-fourth session:

(a) To review parental leave policies and practices in international organizations with reference to national systems and private sector organizations, covering all geographical regions;

(b) To examine the parental leave entitlements of the common system in a holistic and comprehensive manner;

(c) To develop a proposal for consideration by the Commission.

73. The Commission considered a report containing information on the working group's reviews of parental leave policies and practices in organizations outside the common system and the parental leave entitlements of the common system. The report also provided details of the approach that was applied by the working group in developing the proposal for enhanced parental leave provisions, including information on the relevant conventions and recommendations of entities and organizations in the United Nations system, as well as the agreed guiding principles for enhancing parental leave provisions. The information on parental leave policies and practices in global and regional multilateral organizations is presented in annex V. The current policies and practices of the common system organizations in relation to the duration of parental leave entitlements are shown in annex VI. The relevant

conventions and recommendations of entities and organizations in the United Nations system that were considered by the working group are summarized in annex VII.

74. The following set of guiding principles was developed by the working group to help shape the proposals for improving parental leave provisions, which should:

(a) Reflect the values of the United Nations that promote equality and social progress for all persons, taking into account the conventions and recommendations of entities and organizations in the United Nations system on gender equality, maternity protections for women workers, workers with family responsibilities, and maternity and infant health and welfare;⁷

(b) Harmonize policies across the common system, contribute to equity and gender parity, and ensure an inclusive, enabling and empowering work environment that meets the needs of the current and future workforce;

(c) Protect the physical and mental health needs of birth mothers during and after pregnancy by granting a specific period of leave that is allocated for that purpose;

(d) Recognize the role of all parents and the importance of supporting them in meeting their family responsibilities without discrimination;

(e) Enhance the attractiveness and capacity for staff retention of the common system as a global employer of choice for all current and future staff members, men and women, to enable them to effectively balance family and work responsibilities while serving in all duty stations.

75. The working group made the following recommendations to the Commission for its consideration:

(a) Recommendation 1: the following enhancements should be made to the current provisions for parental leave:

(i) Maternity leave (for birth mothers): increasing the current provision of 16 weeks to 26 weeks, beginning 2 weeks prior to the estimated date of delivery;

(ii) Paternity leave: increasing the current provision of 4 weeks to either 12 or 16 weeks;

(iii) Adoption leave: increasing the current provision of 8 weeks to either 12 or 16 weeks;

(b) Recommendation 2: the current maternity, paternity and adoption leave policies should be replaced with one parental leave that is equal in length for all parents. The specific pre- and post-delivery needs of birth mothers should be covered with additional leave, in line with the WHO recommendation to provide six months of leave to allow for breastfeeding and bonding with the child. Accordingly, within the proposed provision of 26 weeks, birth mothers would have additional periods for prenatal and postnatal protection;

(c) Recommendation 3: in the interest of duty of care, the organizations must adopt policies that safeguard the health and safety of staff members serving in field

⁷ Including World Health Assembly resolution 65.6; the WHO global targets for 2025 to improve maternal, infant and young child nutrition; the ILO conventions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender and promoting equality, namely the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), and the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), and its accompanying Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191); and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979.

duty stations without adequate medical facilities. Such measures should include allowing birth mothers to travel away from the duty station six weeks prior to the commencement of the parental leave entitlement. The six-week period should exclude any travel time. If an absence from work is required, any such period between leaving the duty station and the prenatal protection period shall not be deducted from parental leave;

(d) Recommendation 4: in the interest of duty of care, the organizations must adopt policies that safeguard the physical and mental health of staff members. Such measures must include granting staff members fully paid leave outside the parental leave entitlement in cases such as medical complications related to pregnancy and birth, including the death of a newborn.

Discussion in the Commission

76. The representative of the Human Resources Network noted that the need to examine the current provisions for parental leave within the common system had come as a direct result of consultations conducted as part of the preparation of the Secretary-General's system-wide strategy on gender parity. The finalized strategy contained a recommendation to expand parental leave provisions to foster an enabling environment for gender parity within the United Nations system, which was strongly supported by all executive heads of the United Nations system, including the Secretary-General. She indicated that the Network therefore broadly concurred with the working group's report, as it captured its own positions with regard to recommending an enhanced leave period of 26 weeks for situations of maternity (pregnancy and childbirth), in line with relevant health guidance issued by WHO, and a unified period of 16 weeks' parental leave for all other situations of parenthood, regardless of their specific nature.

77. The representative further noted that there was a general trend towards greater consideration of expanded parental leave from various angles, including gender parity at work and demographic and socioeconomic considerations, as well as increased focus on employer attractiveness and retention. She said that the Network was therefore convinced that the enhancement of maternity leave provisions and a unified approach to all other forms of parental leave would go a long way towards enhancing employee engagement at a relatively modest cost that could be directly controlled by Member States through the regular budgetary processes, as applicable. She underscored that the approach was in line with the policy position taken by the United Nations system organizations in advocating expanded parental leave in the interests of parents and children.

78. The representative of CCISUA, while welcoming the review of parental leave in the common system, noted with concern that there was no longer a consistent approach to parental leave policies by the organizations, as some organizations had been more progressive than others in that regard. While the majority of conclusions reached by the working group were in the right direction, she noted with regret that, in recommendation 1, a distinction was made between maternity, paternity and adoption leave, which was in contradiction to recommendation 2, in which the working group called for the maternity, paternity and adoption leave policies to be replaced with one parental leave. She stated that CCISUA believed that it was important to avoid differentiating between "maternity" and "paternity" or "non-birth" and "birth" parents by employing gender-neutral and inclusive language referring to "parental leave" in order to promote equal caregiving, in accordance with the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his reports on improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system. CCISUA was of the view that a minimum period of 16 weeks should be granted to all parents, with the necessary adaptations for birth parents. In addition, CCISUA considered that parental leave

should be made mandatory for birth parents. If the unified parental leave was not made mandatory for both parents, there was a risk that fathers would not take it, as there was currently a negative perception of fathers who did so, owing to an organizational culture that had negatively shaped the mentality of staff, including managers. Under its current practice, the United Nations automatically placed the burden of childcare on women by providing them with more time off work for that purpose, thus making the motherhood penalty a sad reality and leading to consequences including a lack of gender parity in the mid- and senior-level leadership of the Organization.

79. Furthermore, the representative of CCISUA found it regrettable that the report of the working group did not address from a policy perspective the special demands on parents of multiple births and adoption or surrogacy involving more than one child, as was outlined in the ILO Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191). It was also disappointing that miscarriages and stillbirths were not addressed in the report, as such events would have a negative physical and emotional impact on the parents and, thus, a reasonable number of leave days should be granted to the affected parents. She stated that the federation was concerned that the report did not cover leave for parents with children with special needs and that it was therefore not in line with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy. While CCISUA understood that the Commission's mandate covered common system staff only, the representative indicated that CCISUA was of the view that, for the Commission to remain a credible advocate of parental rights, the revised policies should also be applied to non-staff personnel, provided that certain criteria were met. That approach would be in line with the recommendation of the Secretary-General to expand parental leave coverage to all personnel, including those on long-term non-staff modalities.

80. The representative of FICSA said that the Federation actively participated in the meetings of the working group and also contributed to the work of the technical task force, which comprised representatives of the organizations and staff federations. FICSA approached all related discussions with a view to ensuring the equitable treatment of all staff with regard to parental leave and simplifying and harmonizing the vastly different maternal, paternal and other variations of leave for parents in the United Nations system to the benefit of both staff and the organizations. She stated that FICSA considered the agreed guiding principles on parental leave provisions to be one of the key outcomes of the working group. Those principles ensured that organizations had the required tools to meet their obligations, in accordance with the Charter, to attract and retain staff with the highest level of competence. They also ensured that the organizations could remain as the employers of choice of the next generation of staff, an oft-repeated request of the General Assembly, while also contributing to the agreed goals of the Assembly towards achieving gender parity and an inclusive, enabling and empowering work environment. In addition, the guiding principles would help organizations to effectively reflect the values of the common system in the workplace and fulfil their duty of care to staff in all duty stations.

81. The representative said that FICSA fully supported parental leave provisions that fulfilled all the agreed guiding principles, namely to provide a simplified, unified parental leave entitlement guaranteeing 26 weeks of leave for birth mothers and 16 weeks of leave for all other parents. FICSA also supported policies that would allow organizations to fulfil their duty of care and safeguard the health and safety of staff members serving in field duty stations. That recommendation referred specifically to staff serving at category D and E duty stations, where birth mothers were obliged to leave a duty station where there were no adequate medical facilities for childbirth and/or in the event of complications related to childbirth. Furthermore, she stated that FICSA was a proud and active supporter of the United Nations System Mental Health and Well-being Strategy and had often referred in the current and in other forums to

the need for a holistic approach in that regard. The Federation therefore fully supported the recommendation requiring organizations to adopt policies that safeguarded the mental and physical health of staff in cases such as medical complications related to pregnancy and birth, including the death of a newborn.

82. The representative of UNISERV highlighted the fact that there was full alignment with regard to the agreed guiding principles and recommendations of the working group on the part of the staff and the organizations. He emphasized the need for a harmonized approach to parental leave across the common system on the basis of the agreed guiding principles outlined in the report of the working group. In addition, the representative stressed the need for the common system organizations to “walk the talk”, to lead by example on the basis of sound principles and practices that had been accepted by the scientific and medical community concerning the importance of opportunities for parents to bond with their children, which was vital for parents and children alike.

83. The representative recalled the continuous emphasis on achieving gender parity within the United Nations, which continued to be a major challenge, in particular in field operations. He said that the Federation considered that the problem did not necessarily lie with the ability to attract female talent, but rather with the retention of female staff. Based on direct experience, UNISERV was of the view that a major factor in terms of retention had to do with inadequate parental leave provisions, which often led to women in particular exiting the workforce following a change in their family situation. Enhancing and improving parental leave provisions would therefore play an important part in fixing that particular problem. He indicated that UNISERV therefore supported the recommendations made by the working group to enhance the current provisions, with a strong preference for recommendation 1 providing 26 weeks’ leave for birth mothers and 16 weeks of leave for other parents. Since the representational base of UNISERV included a very large population of field staff, the Federation also supported recommendation 3, according to which birth mothers would be able to travel away from their duty station six weeks prior to the commencement of their parental leave entitlement.

84. The Commission observed that most multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the African Development Bank, had revised their internal parental leave policies to increase benefits for their staff. It further noted that the trend was not limited to any particular region, sector or type of organization and that it was a global phenomenon that mirrored increased attention to workers’ rights, infant and maternal health, employee well-being and the need to level the playing field for women in the workplace.

85. The Commission noted that staff members of the common system had been entitled to 16 weeks of maternity leave since 1979, paternity leave for a total period of up to 4 weeks since 2004, and adoption leave of 8 weeks granted as special leave with full pay. It further noted that several organizations of the common system had implemented supplementary policies in recent years, expanding parental leave entitlements to allow staff members more time to bond with and care for their newborn or adopted children during their first year of life. The Commission also recognized that the introduction of those new policies and practices had not been consistent across the common system, leading to notable disparities in the benefits packages of staff in the common system. It therefore emphasized the need to harmonize parental leave provisions to eliminate the differences observed among common system organizations and eliminate any inherent disparities based on organization, gender or category of staff.

86. The Commission took note of the numerous conventions and recommendations of entities and organizations in the common system on gender equality, maternity

protections of women workers, workers with family responsibilities, and maternity and infant health and welfare that had been taken into account by the working group with regard to revising parental leave provisions. The Commission agreed with the guiding principles that had been developed by the working group for evaluating proposals for improving parental leave provisions. A Commission member noted that additional leave for all parents encouraged the sharing of care responsibilities, which had traditionally fallen disproportionately on women and contributed to deep-rooted inequality in the labour market and society.

87. The Commission was in agreement that the current maternity, paternity and adoption leave provisions in the common system should be enhanced by replacing them with a parental leave provision of 16 weeks for all parents. It further agreed that an additional period of 10 weeks should be provided to birth mothers to meet their specific pre- and post-delivery needs, in line with the WHO recommendation to provide six months of leave to allow for breastfeeding.

88. With regard to allowing birth mothers to leave their duty station six weeks before the beginning of parental leave, one Commission member expressed the need for the organizations to establish general criteria to outline the circumstances in which staff members would be required to travel outside of the duty station six weeks prior to the onset of parental leave.

89. The Commission noted the need for particular requirements for staff in designated field locations where there was a genuine need for a staff member to travel elsewhere to gain access to specific medical facilities or to meet certain travel requirements. It agreed that, in the interest of duty of care, the organizations must adopt policies to safeguard the health and safety of staff members serving in particular field duty stations. Such measures should include allowing birth mothers to travel away from the duty station six weeks prior to the commencement of the parental leave entitlement. The six-week period should exclude any travel time. If an absence from work was required, any such period between leaving the duty station and the prenatal protection period should not be deducted from parental leave.

90. Furthermore, the Commission recognized the need for the organizations to adopt policies that safeguarded the physical and mental health of staff members, in the interest of duty of care. Members noted that such measures should include granting staff members fully paid leave outside the parental leave entitlement in cases such as medical complications related to pregnancy and birth, including the death of a newborn.

91. The Commission believed that the enhancement of the current parental leave provisions in the common system would pave the way for an enabling environment for staff members, men and women alike, to balance their personal, family and professional commitments effectively. The Commission noted that the financial implications associated with the provision of 16 weeks' leave for all parents would be approximately \$1.3 million per annum and the additional period of 10 weeks for birth mothers would cost approximately \$4.6 million per annum, for a total of \$5.9 million per annum. The Commission also underscored that the enhanced parental leave provisions would place the common system on a par with any global employer with attractive family-friendly policies and maintain its competitive position as a global employer of choice for the best qualified men and women.

Decisions of the Commission

92. The Commission decided:

(a) To replace the current maternity, paternity and adoption leave provisions with a parental leave provision of 16 weeks for all parents;

(b) To provide an additional period of 10 weeks to birth mothers to meet their specific pre- and post-natal needs.

D. Multilingualism of the workforce

93. Pursuant to resolution [76/240](#) of 24 December 2021, in which the General Assembly invited the Commission to include the issue of multilingualism of the workforce in its programme of work for 2022–2023, the Commission considered a report prepared by its secretariat containing background information on the issue of the multilingualism of the workforce and its importance and value to the Organization.

94. The General Assembly had consistently underlined the importance that multilingualism plays in achieving the goals of the United Nations as set out in the Charter. On the occasion of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter, the Assembly, in its resolution [50/11](#), recalled, inter alia, that the universality of the United Nations and its corollary, multilingualism, entailed for each State Member of the Organization, irrespective of the official language in which it expresses itself, the right and the duty to make itself understood and to understand others.

95. The General Assembly recognized, in its resolution [71/328](#), that multilingualism, as a core value of the Organization, contributed to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations, as set out in Article 1 of the Charter. It also recognized that the United Nations pursued multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting and preserving the diversity of languages and cultures globally, as well as of improving the efficiency, performance and transparency of the Organization. In its resolution [73/346](#), the Assembly recognized, inter alia, that multilingualism promoted unity in diversity and international understanding, tolerance and dialogue, and recognized the importance of the capacity to communicate to the peoples of the world in their own languages, including in formats accessible to persons with disabilities, by contributing to the ownership and sustainability of the actions of the United Nations.

96. Noting that no official definition of multilingualism had been established, the secretariat presented the report on multilingualism through the lens of diversity and as an inherent element of workforce diversity that facilitates the Organization's mandate. It found that the subject of multilingualism was inherent to the work of all United Nations organizations and entities, including that of the Commission.

97. The Commission had previously examined the issue of multilingualism, including through the consideration of gender-sensitive policies and all aspects of diversity. In 2016, the Commission recognized that, in the international civil service, geographical distribution and gender parity of staff were priority issues. In addition, other aspects of staff composition, including age distribution, language capacity and cultural diversity, needed to be managed through policies that encouraged inclusiveness and prevented discrimination, harassment and abuse. In 2017, the Commission expressed the need to promote a better appreciation of the broader concept of diversity through the framework for human resources management, noting that doing so would provide the organizations with a common frame of reference to establish their policies on workforce diversity. In 2018, the Commission decided to add a workforce diversity component to its human resources management framework. It is stated in the component that the staff composition of the common system organizations should reflect a workforce that was diverse from a variety of perspectives, including equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, as well as cultural, generational and multilingual perspectives and the perspectives of persons with disabilities. In its resolution [73/273](#) on the common system, the General

Assembly approved the inclusion of a workforce diversity component in the Commission's updated framework for human resources management.

98. In 2021, at the ninety-second session, during the discussions on geographical diversity in the common system, some members of the Commission were of the view that the language requirements for posts in the common system organizations should be reviewed because they considered that encouraging multilingualism would support efforts to increase geographical diversity. At that time, the Commission, while highlighting the value placed on multilingualism within the organizations, was of the view that, instead of a monetary incentive, it could be promoted through other means, such as non-pensionable cash or non-cash awards or incentives.

99. The Joint Inspection Unit reports on multilingualism ([JIU/REP/2011/4](#), [JIU/REP/2020/6](#) and [JIU/REP/2020/6/Corr.1](#)), in which the Unit reviewed how multilingualism was addressed in the organizations of the United Nations system, were also brought to the Commission's attention. In its 2020 report, the Unit concluded that there was a lack of a holistic perspective translated into a strategic framework and action plans, and that there was slow progress in system-wide initiatives supporting multilingualism as a system core value.

100. It was also highlighted in the ICSC secretariat document that multilingualism remained the cornerstone of multilateralism and that multilingualism was a founding principle and a core value of the United Nations. Language touched all aspects of the work of the United Nations system, both internally and externally, and was a key driver for achieving the goals as set out in the Charter. The General Assembly advocated its mainstreaming throughout the Organization, including all its information and communications activities. Organizations of the common system had been working towards strengthening multilingualism, as well as on increased diversity and inclusion. Using multiple languages paved the way for more harmonious communication through multilingualism. In other words, multilingualism could be seen as the intersection between multilateralism, communication and diversity and inclusion.

101. Multilingualism ensured the effective participation of all in the Organization's work, as well as greater transparency and efficiencies and better outcomes, by promoting dialogue, tolerance and understanding. By promoting tolerance, multilingualism ensured fruitful and greater participation of the United Nations country teams that worked tirelessly worldwide to support countries in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations system organizations communicating in the languages of the peoples on the ground, including local languages, contributed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. The multilingualism of the workforce, as part of the workforce that was diverse from a variety of perspectives (including equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, as well as cultural, generational and multilingual perspectives and the perspectives of persons with disabilities) strengthened the Organization and its ability to deliver.

102. Nurturing and bringing about an organizational culture that supported language diversity was an important component of human resources management. Multilingualism was the reflection of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the workforce. It also made the United Nations more accessible and transparent for all citizens of the world, which was essential for the success of the Organization's mission. To remain effective, the United Nations system needed to plan more linguistically plural and inclusive ways of engaging with Member States, civil society and the public and private sectors in order to facilitate knowledge transfer and participation, thereby ensuring that no one was left behind.

Discussion in the Commission

103. The representative of the Human Resources Network noted that the document on multilingualism had been prepared at the request of the General Assembly and was being considered under article 16 of the statute of the Commission. The organizations had confirmed that multilingualism was a fundamental pillar of the work of the international civil service. The organizations were fostering multilingualism through a variety of measures, such as specific language requirements in published vacancies, the expansion of the language options on public information, including websites (depending on available budgets), and the provision of language training and certification. Since specific actions depended largely on the specific mandates and contexts of the organizations, she said that the Network did not see the need for any additional specific system-wide action at the current time.

104. In a joint statement delivered on behalf of FICSA and UNISERV, the representative of UNISERV stated that it was fitting to address the issue of multilingualism at the headquarters of UNESCO, a long-standing champion of language diversity. Both federations fully supported the sentiment that multilingualism was an inherent element of workforce diversity that facilitated the mandates of the various organizations in the common system. The two federations also believed that a genuinely multilingual workforce was an important factor in promoting diversity and inclusion. It was worth recalling that, when referring to multilingualism in the United Nations workforce, the reference was generally to knowledge of the six official languages, which did not include local languages in many of the duty stations or languages in formats accessible to persons with disabilities. When discussing multilingualism, the broader universal dimension of world languages had to be kept in mind. He said that, while on paper and in theory the organizations supported multilingualism as a concept, language skills did not appear to be valued across the organizations, despite the fact that language proficiency contributed to two out of three of the core requirements under Article 101 of the Charter, namely, efficiency and competence. In offices around the world, it was often the General Service staff who spoke English plus the local language. International staff, even those who had been at the duty station for many years, were fluent in English only (and, where applicable, their mother tongue); the assumption was that local staff would translate when needed. In addition, in some organizations the United Nations language proficiency examination was not given due respect. Perceived imbalances in access to information related to language skills were among the most common causes of workplace tension between local and international staff. Technical experts were not recruited for their language ability, although it was not always easy to distinguish those functions that required knowledge of the local language from those that did not – and at what level of proficiency. While many staff brought language skills with them upon recruitment, a career with the United Nations should be synonymous with a commitment to ongoing language development. It was essential that all organizations heed recommendation 4 of the Joint Inspection Unit, as contained in its report of 2020 on multilingualism ([JIU/REP/2020/6](#) and [JIU/REP/2020/6/Corr.1](#)), according to which organizations that had not yet done so should introduce, by the end of 2022, learning policies that encourage continuous learning and improvement of the language skills of their staff members in the official languages of the respective organizations as well as in other languages, as appropriate, securing sufficient funding for that purpose. He said that the two federations strongly supported the reinstatement of the language incentive for Professional and higher categories of staff. They also supported retaining the language allowance for General Service staff, as well as full implementation of the provision allowing for language requirements to be reflected in the form of additional points in determining the grade level. As with all learning and professional development initiatives, it was, in their

view, essential to integrate language training into each staff member's workplan and time management so that learning initiatives did not conflict with meeting programmatic goals. The representative noted with concern that, in the Unit's report of 2020 on multilingualism, reference was made to the lack of strategic frameworks and slow progress in system-wide initiatives supporting multilingualism as a core value. While he noted with appreciation the efforts made, he said that FICSA and UNISERV strongly supported increased efforts by the organizations in that regard, ideally as part of a coordinated approach. The appointment of a coordinator for multilingualism was a welcome step in that direction, and the most recent resolution of the General Assembly on multilingualism (resolution [76/268](#)) offered clear guidance on those efforts.

105. The representative said that FICSA and UNISERV welcomed the United Nations Language Framework, a home-grown mechanism that established how languages were learned and assessed within the United Nations. In line with recommendation 5 in the Joint Inspection Unit report of 2020, the two federations supported using the initiative as the basis for a framework shared by the common system. Against a stable frame of reference, organizations would be able to clearly establish when languages were required for a post and at what level of proficiency. If done correctly, it would contribute to the standardization of selection practices and mobility. The framework might, in turn, provide a clear set of benchmarks against which to develop more targeted language incentives, thus creating a virtuous circle of tangible incentives for objective progress in language proficiency. He indicated that UNISERV and FICSA therefore invited the Commission to address the issue of language incentives holistically, measuring them against shared and objective standards, and to keep the matter under review as an area of rich potential for the common system going forward. He stated that, in recommendation 7 of its report of 2020, the Unit had addressed another interesting angle – the potential for greater synergies around multilingualism at the country level. Significant efforts were already being made by the organizations, Member States and staff themselves to enhance the use of non-official languages. Those efforts were critical to increasing the reach of the United Nations message, mobilizing resources and political support and enabling the more effective implementation of programmes on the ground. The current system-wide transformation, which tended towards closer United Nations system coordination, shared services and even shared premises at the country level, also offered rich potential for the development of language training skills, public communication and language resource mobilization across a range of languages beyond the six official languages of the United Nations. The representative also noted the lack of comprehensive data on the language skills of staff and suggested that a skills inventory might be a helpful tool for individual organizations and the common system in general. In addition to being key to diversity and inclusion, it would facilitate targeted learning and development for staff. As with other areas, it was suggested by FICSA and UNISERV that an empowering organizational culture, which took a holistic approach to the topic, including through onboarding, training, career development, performance evaluation, mobility, diversity and inclusion, was imperative to achieve a genuinely multilingual workforce.

106. The representative of CCISUA reaffirmed the federation's commitment to multilingualism as a fundamental value of the United Nations and one of the means of promoting the diversity of the workforce. She said that CCISUA welcomed the fact that, in the document prepared by the ICSC secretariat, it was recognized that multilingualism went beyond the six official languages of the United Nations and noted that it also covered sign language, which was one of the means of communication for deaf persons. The representative welcomed the fact that sign language had already been introduced into formal meetings organized by the United Nations Secretariat and expressed the hope that funds would be made available to

ensure that the United Nations and its legislative bodies were accessible to persons with disabilities, in accordance with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy. She indicated that, in the opinion of CCISUA, data on multilingualism among staff members were essential to obtain a real picture of the state of multilingualism in the organizations of the common system. She stated that CCISUA recommended that the Commission ask the organizations for data on the subject, which it considered should be available given the digitization of personnel data. The representative said that CCISUA was of the view that monetary and non-monetary incentives for language study should be used to encourage staff to acquire new official languages of the Organization. The fact that accelerated step increments had been eliminated in the previous review of the compensation package on the grounds that only one organization had used it was not convincing. While the accuracy of the information was not in question, it was noted that, for members of the United Nations Secretariat at least, accelerated step increments were automatically granted when the staff member passed the language proficiency test in the newly acquired language. She stated that CCISUA considered that if the language incentive was reintroduced and civil servants were well informed about it, a greater number of them would be able to benefit from it. The representative indicated that CCISUA invited the Commission to consider favourably the reintroduction of the language incentive during the upcoming review of the compensation package. She emphasized that, while CCISUA understood that monetary considerations were important, the incentive to study languages was beneficial to the Organization, as it allowed staff members to work in multiple contexts and be more helpful in achieving the goals of the United Nations, which was supposed to serve the people of the world.

107. With regard to the non-monetary incentives, the representative of CCISUA stated that the acquisition of additional languages during a staff member's career could be considered with regard to granting continuous contracts, promotions and mobility, especially in hardship duty stations. Regarding mobility, for example, in the hypothetical case in which two candidates had equal competencies but one had more official languages than the other, priority should be given to the candidate with the additional languages. The same comment was valid in the case of recruitment and selection. Knowledge of languages was currently one of the criteria used in vacancy announcements; however, such knowledge was not systematically used when it came to making the final choice of candidates. She stated that, in the view of CCISUA, another aspect of the non-monetary incentive was the granting of sufficient time to civil servants who wished to acquire a new language. Learning a new language required time and energy, which was lacking for many civil servants who sometimes found it difficult to complete the tasks assigned to them and therefore did not manage to devote the time necessary for the acquisition of a new language. While those suggestions concerned civil servants already employed, it was certain that if one wanted to change the situation, one had to act at the time of recruitment by ensuring that those who joined the Organization mastered several languages. She said that CCISUA found it regrettable that, for most positions at headquarters locations and in the field, fluency in only one of the working languages of the Organization, namely French and/or English, was required. Knowledge of the other official languages was, in most cases, listed as a desirable criterion. That fact was very often explained by the nature of the post and the location of the assignment, but there were cases in which it was not justified. The representative indicated that, in the view of CCISUA, it was important to review that aspect of recruitment so as to improve the future of multilingualism within the common system.

108. At the outset, the Commission acknowledged that multilingualism was of paramount importance to the common system and thanked the representative of UNISERV and FICSA for his comprehensive statement, which had touched on various aspects of multilingualism, including those that had at times been overlooked.

109. The Commission noted that the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution [76/240](#) was a broad one. The Commission was of the view that more had to be done on multilingualism in order to effectively serve the goals of the United Nations, noting that the organizations of the common system were not only multilingual but also multicultural.

110. The Commission noted that, although the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional and higher categories was determined mainly by budgetary contributions, there were many measures that could be taken to encourage and promote multilingualism, including some concrete proposals that had been made by all three federations. Those and other possible measures should be studied, including the possible reintroduction of the language incentive for certain occupational groups as a measure to enhance multilingualism, bearing in mind that a language allowance continued to be payable to General Service staff. Since the language incentive had been discontinued during the previous comprehensive review of the compensation package, consideration of the introduction of a possible incentive for languages could be considered in the forthcoming comprehensive review.

111. It was the view of some members of the Commission that learning languages was important for staff in the Professional and higher categories so that they could better communicate with representatives of Member States and other stakeholders. The ICSC secretariat could study the impact of multilingualism on promotions, for example whether staff members who spoke two or more languages were rewarded with expanded career opportunities.

112. Regarding the Commission's view that multilingualism was an inherent element of workforce diversity, some members of the Commission stated that they would like to see an expansion of the languages that had been selected in 1946, citing Kiswahili and Creole as examples of languages that had been growing in usage. The General Assembly, in its most recent resolution on multilingualism (resolution [76/268](#)), which was adopted on 10 June 2022, after the preparation of the document under discussion, expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the Department of Global Communications in highlighting some recent important communications and messages of the Secretary-General in non-official languages, such as Portuguese, Hindi, Kiswahili, Persian, Bangla and Urdu, in addition to official languages, in order to promote multilingualism.

113. Some members of the Commission considered that it was not in the Commission's purview to suggest expansion of the official languages of the United Nations. However, the Commission reiterated that multilingualism was an important element of workforce diversity, as recognized in the framework for human resources management, and noted that there were other institutions that were working on multilingualism. Given that at the current session the Commission had decided to review the framework for human resources management, it considered it important to examine multilingualism as part of that review, through various lenses, including job requirements, job classification, performance management, rewards and recognition, diversity, and learning and development.

114. The Commission noted various aspects of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit ([JIU/REP/2020/6](#) and [JIU/REP/2020/6/Corr.1](#)), according to which, inter alia, most United Nations entities were committed to encouraging multilingualism as a core value; however, there was slow progress in system-wide initiatives supporting multilingualism as a system core value. Some members of the Commission stated that knowledge of two official languages of the United Nations should be one of the requirements for candidates to work for the Organization, as multilingualism was one of the idiosyncrasies of its work. That said, candidates that demonstrated competency in languages other than English and French should score more points in the recruitment process, based on objective criteria. The Commission mentioned

publishing vacancies in several languages and in various media as another way to encourage multilingualism. The Commission noted the ongoing development of the United Nations Language Framework, noting that, once completed, it could help to establish consistency across language standards and objective criteria for language assessments.

115. While no official definition of multilingualism had been established, the Commission considered that multilingualism should not be equated merely with knowledge of multiple official languages. In the Commission's view, the scope of what it meant to be multilingual should be broadened and more should be done to celebrate multilingualism, as it meant standing up for cultural diversity. Noting that multilingualism was a core value of the Organization, as had been recognized by the General Assembly in its resolution [71/328](#), the Commission stated that knowledge of languages also contributed to gender initiatives. Therefore, adopting the broadest possible view of multilingualism would help with culture change initiatives and diversity inclusion.

116. In summary, the Commission reiterated that it was very favourable towards further promotion of multilingualism, noting that the issue would be included in the review of the framework for human resources management. In addition, the forthcoming comprehensive review of the common system compensation package would be a good opportunity to consider multilingualism and possible incentives to encourage it.

Decisions of the Commission

117. The Commission decided:

- (a) To take note of the comprehensive report presented by its secretariat, underscoring that multilingualism was a core value of the Organization and an inherent element of workforce diversity that facilitated the Organization's mandate;
- (b) To request that its secretariat continue to study the issue of multilingualism as an important element of workforce diversity;
- (c) To include multilingualism in the current review of its framework for human resources management;
- (d) To revisit the issue of the language incentive in the next comprehensive review of the compensation package.

E. Standards of accommodation for air travel

118. In response to General Assembly resolution [72/262](#) B, the Commission reviewed the system-wide standards of accommodation for air travel and considered possible approaches to harmonize and modernize those standards among the common system organizations. The approaches included:

- (a) Establishing distinct standards for three travel categories: travel on official business or mission, human resources-related travel (appointment or reassignment, repatriation or separation, security evacuation, medical evacuation) and entitlement travel (learning and development, home leave, family visit, education grant, rest and recuperation);
- (b) Piloting, in 2023, the application of revised criteria for travel on official business or mission on the basis of the following guidelines:
 - (i) Upgrading daytime travel of six or more hours' duration from economy to premium economy class;

- (ii) Upgrading overnight travel of 6 or more hours' duration, as well as "any time" travel of over 9.5 hours, to business class;
- (c) Harmonizing the travel standards for human resources-related travel on the basis of one of the following criteria:
 - (i) Using the same standards as those applied to travel on official business or mission;
 - (ii) Offering economy class travel with no upgrades;
 - (iii) Offering a lump sum;
 - (d) Harmonizing entitlement travel on the basis of providing a lump sum at the rate of 75 per cent of the cost of the economy class ticket;
 - (e) Adopting minimum wellness standards for travel which would include:
 - (i) Advance seat assignment;
 - (ii) Carry-on and checked-in luggage;
 - (iii) Choice of departure and arrival time.

Discussion in the Commission

119. The representative of the Human Resources Network said that the Network appreciated the comprehensive nature of the analysis presented by the ICSC secretariat, in particular the well-being and duty-of-care aspects, and considered the approaches to be pragmatic and reasonable for further harmonization among the common system organizations. It also fully supported the recommendations related to each category of air travel.

120. The representative of FICSA stated the Federation's view that the health and safety of staff must be the primary consideration of any discussion on the topic and that any agreed standards must be simple, fair, transparent and predictable for both staff and the organizations. She said that any rules related to travel must conform to the security procedures of the Department of Safety and Security. It was the Federation's strong recommendation that no decisions should be made with regard to the standards of accommodation of air travel before a thorough study had been carried out, taking into account the experience and perspective of staff members. Such a study should also consider non-staff travel costs.

121. The representative of CCISUA pointed out that more and more staff, mainly those who were on technical assistance projects, were required to travel on the basis of the mandate of the organization concerned, which had an impact on their personal and family life. Those staff would not have enough time to rest on arrival, resulting in the need to upgrade from economy to business class. Thus, upgrading should not be seen as a luxury but rather as a necessity to ensure that staff were fully productive and able to deliver. She stated that the federation also believed that the same standards of accommodation should apply to all staff, regardless of their level, and that it fully agreed that any proposal to modify the standards of accommodation should be supported by analytical results that indicated a comparative advantage over the existing standards with respect to effectiveness, efficiency and impact on staff wellness and productivity, which was at the core of the staff federation's mandate. It fully concurred with the recommended approaches.

122. The representative of UNISERV said that the Federation was of the view that harmonization was an important goal at a time when staff in the common system were increasingly working together in shared offices. He said that UNISERV supported the proposed pilot. Moreover, UNISERV was of the view that the enhancement of

advance booking and the reduction of the administrative burden achieved through the elimination of the dual-threshold model might mean that the revised standards of accommodation suggested in the document could turn out to be more cost-effective than expected. The representative stated that UNISERV strongly supported the use of lump-sum options for human resources-related and entitlement travel. At the same time, it considered it important that the lump-sum option remain voluntary and that the organizations retain the capacity and the obligation to issue tickets at no upfront cost to the staff member as required, given the complexity of some of the routes required by United Nations staff.

123. The Commission noted significant differences in the travel accommodation standards across the common system organizations (see annex VIII). Although the basic class of air travel was economy in all organizations, the conditions for upgrading varied. While some organizations had established dual-upgrade thresholds for direct and indirect flights, others had applied only one to all flights. The thresholds too varied by organization, ranging from 7 to 12 hours. Some organizations took the flight time alone into the calculation of travel time, while others included layover time, which might or might not be limited to a pre-established maximum length. In the case of round trips, some organizations granted an upgrade for both legs of the trip when the journey exceeded a threshold in any one direction, while in other organizations, outward and return journeys were considered separately to determine the applicable travel class.

124. The Commission recognized that some of the differences in approach could be attributed to the diverse mandates of the organizations and their significantly different travel requirements. In that regard, it recalled its earlier decision on this subject (A/52/30, para. 275), namely, that it was neither desirable nor feasible to impose a uniform approach on all organizations. Nevertheless, mindful of its functions and powers under article 11 (b) of its statute, the Commission considered that broad guidance could be provided with a view to ensuring greater uniformity vis-à-vis the travel standards of the organizations.

125. The Commission considered it advisable to distinguish the accommodation standards by type of travel, given the different tasks and commitments of staff at destination, depending on the nature of the trip, with higher standards applied to travel on official business or mission. In particular, staff travelling on official business were required to perform their duties shortly after arrival at a destination, whereas that requirement might not apply or be as stringent with regard to the other types of travel. The Commission therefore found it appropriate to ensure a reasonable level of accommodation for official business or duty travel, including upgrade possibilities, in order to minimize the impact of travel on staff productivity.

126. The Commission noted that some common system organizations, including the United Nations Secretariat, had separate thresholds for upgrading to a higher travel class for direct and indirect flights. Members agreed that the dual-threshold arrangement required labour-intensive manual input of multiple factors, which was not supported by airline ticketing systems or online booking tools, and thus resulted in operational challenges and additional administrative and processing costs. The Commission therefore favoured a “one threshold” system, which was applied in many common system organizations. It also considered that layovers between connecting flights were an integral part of a journey and should be included in the calculation of the total travel time. The Commission further recalled that, in 2021, the Secretary-General had made a similar proposal to introduce a single-threshold system in the Organization, which would be considered by the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session (see resolution 75/253 B). Under the proposal, an upgrade to business class would be granted if the total flight time (consisting of the combined flying time of all legs of the journey to a given destination) was 9.5 or more hours’ duration. The

threshold had been obtained based on an estimated savings of 0.4 per cent in overall ticket expenditures compared with the existing dual-threshold model. The Commission was supportive of the proposal and considered that it could serve as a guideline for the other organizations.

127. The Commission saw merit in introducing premium economy into the standards of accommodation for travel on official business or mission because of the benefits offered by that relatively new class of travel, including a greater degree of comfort compared with economy, through extra legroom, wider seats and a deeper seat recline; the availability of Wi-Fi connection and laptop power ports on the seat; and, in some cases, priority check-in, lounge access and priority baggage handling upon arrival, at much lower costs than for business class. While there were still variations among airlines regarding some of those amenities, the Commission believed that it was worthwhile introducing the class into the standards of accommodation when the duration of travel was over six hours.

128. The Commission reviewed a proposal to upgrade from economy to business class in the case of an overnight trip when the travel time was of less than 9.5 hours' duration. While some members were in favour of the proposed model, considering the need for a staff member travelling on official business to rest during an overnight flight before reporting for duty at destination, other members could not support it. The Commission therefore preferred a simpler model, whereby upgrading from economy to premium economy would be granted for a journey of 6 or more hours, regardless of the time of departure/arrival, and upgrading to business for a journey of 9.5 or more hours' duration, including layovers. Nevertheless, given the various parameters to be taken into consideration, it was agreed that a task force comprising representatives of organizations, staff federations and the ICSC secretariat should be established, which would collaborate to search for the most practical solutions.

129. While agreeing in principle to the aforementioned modifications, the Commission was of the view that, before deciding on any changes to the travel accommodation standards, more data, research and analysis were required. Given the organizations' limited experience of using premium economy, such data were not currently available. It therefore agreed that the proposed model should be introduced on a pilot basis. The data and feedback relating to the pilot would be critical for estimating any financial implications of implementing the proposed arrangements, as well as for developing more effective and efficient travel accommodation standards.

130. Regarding human resources-related or entitlement travel, the Commission was of the view that the standards applied to those types of travel should be simplified so as to reduce operational and administrative costs and provide staff with reasonable flexibility in making travel arrangements. The Commission considered that the lump-sum option would address those objectives. In that regard, it was supportive of the recent proposal by the Secretary-General to establish the lump sum for those types of travel at the level of 75 per cent of the economy class ticket.

131. The Commission stressed that, irrespective of the type of travel, the safety, security, health and well-being of staff should remain an overarching priority. It therefore favoured the adoption of minimum standards for common system travellers, such as advance seat assignment, carry-on and checked-in luggage allowances and reasonable departure and arrival times.

Decisions of the Commission

132. The Commission decided:

- (a) To invite the common system organizations to harmonize their standards of accommodation for air travel to the extent practicable;

(b) To invite the organizations to conduct a pilot application, in 2023, of the revised criteria for determining the class of travel for travel on official business or mission, namely, upgrading from economy to premium economy class for travel of over 6 hours' duration and to business class for travel of over 9.5 hours' duration, including layovers;

(c) To request its secretariat to collect empirical data from the organizations that may agree to participate in the pilot project, including information on the comparative merits and cost of the existing and revised standards, and to report its findings to the Commission at its session in mid-2024;

(d) To encourage the common system organizations to consider harmonizing their standards of accommodation applicable to human resources-related travel from the system-wide equity perspective;

(e) To encourage the common system organizations to offer lump-sum options at the rate of 75 per cent of the least restrictive economy class ticket for entitlement travel;

(f) To invite the common system organizations to provide staff, as a minimum travel accommodation standard, with tickets inclusive of advance appropriate seat assignments, carry-on and checked-in luggage allowances and reasonable departure and arrival times, or to provide compensatory time off where reasonable departure and arrival times are not practicable;

(g) To inform the General Assembly that it would revert to it on the standards of accommodation for air travel after the completion of the pilot study.

Chapter IV

Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories

A. Base/floor salary scale, including the review of staff assessment rates used in conjunction with gross salaries and response to General Assembly resolution 76/240

133. The concept of the base/floor salary scale was introduced, with effect from 1 July 1990, by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/198 (sect. I, H, para. 1). The scale is set by reference to the General Schedule salary scale of the comparator civil service, currently, the federal civil service of the United States of America. Periodic adjustments are made on the basis of a comparison of net base salaries of United Nations officials at the established reference point of the scale (P-4, step VI) with the corresponding base salaries of their counterparts in the United States federal civil service (step VI in grades GS-13 and GS-14, with a weight of 33 per cent and 67 per cent, respectively).

134. A 2.2 per cent increase in the base General Schedule scale of the comparator civil service was implemented with effect from 1 January 2022. In addition, tax changes were introduced in the United States in 2022. In the federal tax system, the income levels of tax brackets and the standard deduction amounts were increased. Tax brackets have been adjusted in the District of Columbia. No changes were registered in the tax legislation of the State of Virginia and the State of Maryland in 2022.

135. In order to reflect the combined effect of the movement of gross salaries under the General Schedule and the tax changes in the United States and to maintain the common system salaries in line with those of the comparator, an increase of 2.28 per cent in the base/floor salary scale with effect from 1 January 2023 was proposed. In addition, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/244 of 23 December 2015 (sect. III, paras. 9 (a) and (b)), the adjustment to the salary scale should also be applied to the pay protection points for staff whose salaries were higher than those at the maximum steps of their grade upon conversion to the unified salary scale. The proposed salary scale and pay protection points are shown in annex IX to the present report.

136. The annual system-wide financial implications resulting from an increase in the base/floor salary were estimated as follows:

(United States dollars)

(a) For duty stations with low post adjustment where net remuneration would otherwise fall below the level of the new base/floor	2 300
(b) In respect of the scale of separation payments	1 235 000

137. In accordance with its programme of work, the Commission reviewed the staff assessment rates used in conjunction with gross salaries in the Professional and higher categories in order to determine if any adjustment was required to the Tax Equalization Fund. The Fund, managed by the United Nations Secretariat, is used to reimburse staff members for national income tax levied by some Member States which have not accepted the relevant sections of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, under which United Nations officials are to be exempt from national taxation of their United Nations emoluments.

138. In addition, in its resolution [76/240](#), the General Assembly requested the Commission to report to the Assembly at its seventy-seventh session on the impact of the base/floor salary scale revision on the expenditures on post resources for 2022, including separation payments, post adjustment payments and pension contributions from member organizations. The Commission reviewed additional information and comparison calculations regarding this matter.

Discussion in the Commission

139. The representative of the Human Resources Network concurred with the recommended 2.28 per cent increase of the base/floor salaries as of 1 January 2023. The representatives of the staff federations, noting the increase in the comparator civil service base salaries, also supported the increase in the base/floor salary scale. The representative of UNISERV noted that the remuneration system, including staff assessment, was not generally well understood by staff and encouraged the Commission and common system organizations to redouble their efforts to educate staff, offering their support in this endeavour.

140. The Commission agreed with the proposed 2023 increase in the base/floor salary which would be implemented through the standard no-gain/no-loss consolidation procedure, namely by increasing the base/floor salary scale and commensurately decreasing post adjustment multipliers. In accordance with resolution [70/244](#), this procedure would also be applied to adjust the pay protection points.

141. With respect to the review of the staff assessment rates used in conjunction with gross salaries, the Commission noted that, following consultations with the United Nations Secretariat, no revision of the rates was proposed at the present stage. In this regard, it recalled General Assembly resolution [66/235 A](#), by which the Assembly endorsed the decision of the Commission to review the staff assessment rates every three years. The Commission therefore agreed that the next review of the rates would be conducted in 2025 unless a change in the situation of the Tax Equalization Fund necessitated earlier action.

142. In response to General Assembly resolution [76/240](#), the Commission observed that adjustments to the base/floor salary scale could affect post resources expenditures of the common system organizations only in two categories: net remuneration for the Professional and higher categories and separation payments, as reported in paragraph 136 above.

143. Regarding the first category, the Commission noted that, generally, increases in base/floor salary scale did not affect the resulting levels of net remuneration (base salary plus post adjustment) of staff in the Professional and higher categories. This situation was due to the no-gain/no-loss consolidation procedure whereby base salary increases were absorbed by the commensurate reduction in post adjustment. In this regard, the Commission reviewed the example of grade P-4 (step VI) in New York from 2017 to 2022 as an illustration of the method of consolidation followed in the implementation of revisions to the base/floor salary scale. It was pointed out that minor variations in resulting net remuneration were explained by rounding and were unavoidable. The differences between pre-consolidation and consolidated amounts are shown in table 1.

Table 1
Consolidation of post adjustment multiplier points into base/floor salary,
2017-2022

(United States dollars)

<i>Salary month and year</i>	<i>Base/floor salary</i>		<i>New York post adjustment</i>		<i>Net remuneration</i>	<i>Change in net remuneration (percentage)</i>
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Increase (percentage)</i>	<i>Multiplier</i>	<i>Amount</i>		
Dec 2017	6 528		66.1	4 314	10 842	
Jan 2018	6 591	0.97	64.5	4 251	10 842	–
Dec 2018	6 591		66.9	4 409	11 000	
Jan 2019	6 712	1.83	63.9	4 288	11 000	–
Dec 2019	6 712		67.5	4 529	11 241	
Jan 2020	6 793	1.21	65.5	4 449	11 242	–
Dec 2020	6 793		70.3	4 775	11 568	
Jan 2021	6 922	1.90	67.1	4 644	11 566	–
Dec 2021	6 922		69.3	4 797	11 719	
Jan 2022	6 986	0.92	67.8	4 736	11 722	–

144. The Commission observed that, while usually cost-neutral, the adjustment of base/floor salary could result in financial implications for net remuneration. This situation would happen at locations where the post adjustment multiplier was too low to absorb the increase of the base/floor salary scale through no-gain/no-loss consolidation. In these cases, the new level of the base salary would surpass the sum of the existing base salary and post adjustment (i.e. net remuneration) and, consequently, the financial implications would occur. The Commission recalled that such cases were extremely rare and had not occurred in at least the past 10 years. However, it noted that there was currently one duty station where the existing level of post adjustment (a multiplier of 0.8) was too low to absorb the 2.28 per cent increase in base salary in 2023. Accordingly, the financial implications in respect of the net remuneration for that duty station were reported under the 2023 base/floor salary adjustment proposal.

145. The second category in which the adjustment of the base salary could result in financial implications included separation payments, such as termination indemnity, repatriation grant and death grant. Since all of these payments were established as number of weeks or months of base salary – without accounting for the post adjustment element – the no-gain/no-loss consolidation procedure therefore did not apply to them. Consequently, any change in the base/floor salary scale resulted in an increase of expenditures under this category. The related financial implications for these items were routinely reported by the Commission to the General Assembly.

146. Regarding other compensation elements, such as pension contributions or mobility and hardship payments, the Commission recalled that the adjustment of the base/floor salary scale had no effect on their levels and, accordingly, led to no financial implications. In particular, pension contributions were based on a global scale of pensionable remuneration for the Professional and higher categories which did not change with the base/floor salary scale but was adjusted in sync with the net remuneration in New York. Therefore, even if one or more duty stations had low post adjustment multipliers that could not absorb a base/floor salary increase, the scale of pensionable remuneration and, consequently, pension contributions would not change and would therefore not be impacted by the adjustment to the base/floor salary scale.

With regard to other allowances that were part of the compensation package of the staff in the Professional and higher categories, such as the mobility incentive, hardship allowance, non-family service allowance, or danger pay, it was noted that all these allowances were established as a flat rate and were adjusted under their own review cycles. Accordingly, they were not affected by adjustments to the base/floor salary scale.

147. Based on the above, the Commission confirmed that the adjustment of the base/floor salary scale could only result in financial implications under the two categories as explained above.

Decision of the Commission

148. The Commission decided to recommend to the General Assembly:

(a) That the General Assembly approve with effect from 1 January 2023, the revised unified base/floor salary scale as well as the updated pay protection points for the Professional and higher categories, as set out in annex IX to the present report, reflecting a 2.28 per cent adjustment, to be implemented by increasing the base salary and commensurately decreasing post adjustment multiplier points;

(b) That the current rates of staff assessment used in conjunction with gross salaries be maintained until their next regular review in 2025, unless a change in the situation of the Tax Equalization Fund necessitated an earlier review;

(c) That the Commission would inform the General Assembly that financial implications of the adjustment of the base/floor salary scale could arise only under the net remuneration for staff in the Professional and higher categories or under separation payments, as routinely reported to the Assembly by the Commission in its annual reports.

B. Evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin

149. Under a standing mandate from the General Assembly (resolution [44/198](#), sect. I.C, para. 4), the Commission reviews the relationship between the net remuneration of United Nations officials in the Professional and higher categories in New York and that of United States federal civil service officials in comparable positions in Washington, D.C. For that purpose, the Commission tracks, on an annual basis, changes occurring in the remuneration levels of both civil services. In addition, in its resolution [71/264](#), the Assembly requested the Commission to include information on the development of the margin over time in an annex to its annual reports.

150. As at 1 January 2022, the comparator civil service implemented a 2.2 per cent increase in base salaries of federal employees under the General Schedule and other statutory systems. The locality pay applicable in Washington, D.C., increased from 30.48 per cent in 2021 to 31.53 per cent in 2022. Other developments relevant to the comparison were:

(a) Revisions to the federal tax brackets and the standard deduction amounts, as well as changes in the tax brackets in the District of Columbia;

(b) An increase in the post adjustment multiplier for New York, from 67.8 for January to 73.8 as from 1 February 2022, owing to the normal operation of the post adjustment system, that is, the evolution of the cost of living at the duty station.

151. On the basis of the above, the Commission was informed that the estimated net remuneration margin for 2022 amounted to 113.9. The details of the comparison and information on the development of the margin over time are shown in annex X to the present report.

Discussion in the Commission

152. The representatives of the Human Resources Network and the staff federations took note of the findings of the latest margin comparison. They further noted that the secretariat of the Commission would continue to monitor the margin level so that, should the margin fall below 113 or rise above 117, corrective action would be taken through the operation of the post adjustment system.

153. The Commission noted that the updated margin had been estimated on the basis of the cost-of-living differential between New York and Washington, D.C., and personnel statistics available at the time of consideration. It was noted that, should further data updates become available, a revised margin estimate would be presented by the Chair to the General Assembly during the introduction of the Commission's annual report.

Decisions of the Commission

154. The Commission, noting that its Chair would provide an updated margin estimate to the General Assembly, as might be required based on the availability of the most recent staff statistics, decided:

(a) To report to the General Assembly that the margin between the net remuneration of United Nations officials in the Professional and higher categories in New York and that of officials in comparable positions in the United States federal civil service in Washington, D.C., was estimated at 113.9 for the calendar year 2022;

(b) To continue to monitor the margin level so that corrective action could be taken as necessary through the operation of the post adjustment system should the trigger levels of 113 or 117 be breached in 2023.

C. Children's and secondary dependants' allowances: review of methodology and level

155. Under the existing methodology, the child allowance is reviewed biannually and is calculated as a global flat-rate amount in United States dollar terms. The flat-rate amount reflects the levels of child-related tax abatements and social legislation payments at the eight major headquarters duty stations at a reference income corresponding to the P-4 (step VI) level (including the spouse allowance). The values of the child benefits at each of the headquarters duty stations are converted to United States dollars using the average exchange rates over the 12 months preceding the review. The United States dollar amounts are then aggregated arithmetically and weighted by the number of staff members at the corresponding duty stations. Calculated on this basis, the revised level of the child allowance would amount to \$4,998 per annum. The secondary dependant's allowance, set at 35 per cent of the child allowance, amounted to \$1,749 and the disabled child allowance, set at two times the child allowance, \$9,996 per annum. At hard-currency locations, the global amount is converted to local currency using the official United Nations rate of exchange as at the date of promulgation. The local currency amounts at those locations remain unchanged until the next review.

156. During several prior reviews of the methodology of the dependency allowances, the Commission expressed concern over the impact one duty station might have on

the overall level. In this context, in addition to the proposed levels of the dependency allowances calculated on the basis of the current methodology, the Commission was also presented with an alternative method of calculating the child allowance. Under this approach, the level of the allowance would be set as a flat amount equivalent to a percentage of net base salary in United States dollars at the reference income of P-4 (step VI), at the time of review. Similar to the current methodology, this flat amount would be paid globally, applicable to all income levels, and would remain unchanged until the next review. During the next review of the level, the flat-rate amount would be updated by applying the same percentage on the current net base salary. It was proposed to use an amount of 4 per cent of net base salary. The percentage was based on an analysis of the previous and the current levels of the allowance, approved by the General Assembly, which were determined to be 3.9 and 4.0 per cent of net base salary, respectively. Based on the proposed methodology, the level of the child allowance would be \$3,322 per annum, and the secondary dependant's and disabled child allowances would amount to \$1,163 and \$6,645 per annum, respectively.

157. The financial implications arising from the proposed adjustment of the allowances under the current methodology were estimated at \$79 million per annum system-wide, while under the proposed methodology, the financial implications were estimated at \$15 million per annum.

Discussion in the Commission

158. The representative of the Human Resources Network took note of the document to advance and conclude the long-standing discussions on a technical review of the children's and secondary dependants' allowance. While the Network acknowledged the merits of both proposals in addressing previously raised issues of undue overweight of changes in individual duty stations, she stated that the proposed methodology might provide more stability in the methodology as it would delink the calculation from the practices in the eight headquarter duty stations.

159. The representative of CCISUA noted with regret that the children's allowances had not been updated since 2011 despite the fact that the allowances continued to be important elements for all international civil servants. She stated that, as a social benefit, the allowances were in line with policies adopted by most Governments and that international civil servants were generally deprived of these benefits once they were employed by the United Nations. She stated that CCISUA was of the view that the current methodology had been efficient, despite the issues raised with it in the past, and believed that it should remain unchanged. Therefore, it supported the revised levels under the current methodology. Although CCISUA did not support a change in the methodology itself, it hoped the General Assembly would recognize the importance of updating the level of child allowance in 2022.

160. The representative of FICSA also noted with concern that there had been no adjustments to the dependency allowances approved by the General Assembly since 2011, despite previous recommendations by the Commission to do so. She stated that FICSA was of the view that the children's and other dependency allowances were a fundamental pillar of the United Nations benefits and compensation package. Furthermore, FICSA considered that dependency allowances as an element of the compensation package were also a key factor when holistically addressing the issue of gender, diversity and the rejuvenation of the workforce to ensure that the United Nations remained an employer of choice and would continue to attract and retain the best. It was recalled that when this topic had last been considered, an ad hoc calculation had been proposed based on a review of the average changes in child-related benefits in local currency since the previous review. The representative also recalled that the proposed ad hoc calculation was not accepted by the General Assembly and stressed that given that several years had passed since the previous

review, it was unrealistic to continue without adjusting the level. The representative indicated that FICSA supported retaining the current methodology and that it strongly urged the Commission to make every effort to ensure that the children's allowance was implemented in line with the legitimate expectations of staff.

161. The representative of UNISERV stated that the failure in recent years to update the allowances for children, secondary dependents and children with disabilities was one of the most frequent sources of concern and frustration expressed by their constituents. The representative was of the view that these allowances were a key expectation for staff and were essential in attracting and retaining female candidates and young parents. Furthermore, it was essential to ensure that the United Nations remained a supportive employer for staff members with children with disabilities, in particular in strengthening the culture of awareness and support on disability issues. Although UNISERV would prefer to maintain the current methodology, it would not oppose the proposed option. However, should the revised methodology be endorsed by the Commission, he stated that UNISERV would propose an annual review of the level, particularly in a period of high inflation and less predictability in staff purchasing power. In the view of UNISERV, these uncertainties tended to have a graver effect on young parents on the lower level of the income scale.

162. The Commission reaffirmed the importance of the allowance as part of the compensation package for all staff, noting that the General Assembly had continuously validated the child allowance as a social benefit since its inception in 1947. Furthermore, the Commission reiterated that the initial rationale of the General Assembly for the child allowance was to establish a social benefit for United Nations staff similar in nature to that which was offered by national Governments to their citizens. The Commission recalled that the purpose of the allowance was not to compensate for actual expenses for children but, rather, to establish an equitable benefit among all international civil servants, regardless of their nationality or place of assignment. In cases in which a staff member did receive a direct payment in respect of dependants from the home country, the amount of the United Nations child allowance would be reduced by the amount of any such payment.

163. The Commission reviewed the current methodology that establishes the allowance based on the child benefits received in the form of tax abatements and social payments at the duty stations of the eight headquarters. It recognized that the eight headquarters were used as a proxy for the entire system because modelling the child benefits of all duty stations was neither feasible nor necessary to establish a fair and transparent allowance.

164. The Commission acknowledged that, overall, the current methodology had worked well for many years. However, it was also cognizant that issues had been raised in the past. In particular, it noted the fact that any one of the eight duty stations could have a significant impact on the overall level as was observed during the past several reviews. This dominant effect of one duty station continued to be a concern for the Commission and the General Assembly. The Commission therefore considered that the new proposal in the calculation method of the child allowance was an attempt to address this issue.

165. The Commission noted that the proposed methodology retained the features of the current methodology that had worked well, such as establishing a global flat rate for all income levels, regardless of nationality or place of assignment. Set as a flat rate, the allowance would decrease in terms of the percentage of net remuneration as the income level increased, which was a common feature of most national child benefit schemes. The Commission also welcomed the fact that the proposed methodology was no longer dependent on the child benefits of the eight headquarters duty stations – which could change unpredictably – but on a stable, well-established

uniform base across all duty stations that had already been approved by the General Assembly: the net base salary. The Commission considered that this simplified the calculation method, effectively removing the dominance of any one duty station and addressing a longstanding shortcoming of the current methodology.

166. The Commission noted that the levels of the past two rates of the child allowance that were based on the child benefits of the eight headquarters duty stations were equivalent to approximately 4 per cent of the net base salary at the P-4 (step VI) level. Therefore, the establishment of a new level of the allowance at 4 per cent of net base salary was fully aligned with these prior two allowances that had been approved by the General Assembly in 2008 and 2010 (see resolutions [63/251](#) and [65/258](#)).

167. The Commission agreed that the level of the allowance should not change automatically with every change in the net base salary. Rather, the percentage level of the net base salary could be reviewed periodically, taking into consideration the general trend of the evolution of child benefits amongst other indicators. A Commission member suggested that after the implementation of the revised methodology, further discussions on this issue should take place as part of the upcoming comprehensive review of the compensation package.

168. Considering both options, the Commission favoured the new proposal and concluded that it achieved the objective of eliminating the impact of any one duty station on the overall level as it reflected the level of the child benefit which was approved by the General Assembly before the dominant effect of one duty station had been introduced in the calculations. The Commission emphasized that this new methodology created a more stable updating mechanism based on credible and pragmatic parameters which were aligned to the increases in the net base salary.

169. The Commission also affirmed that the proposed methodology was in line with the broad principles of staff well-being, duty of care and gender equality as described in the human resources framework. It further concluded that the dependency allowances had to remain current as a duty of care benefit and noted with concern that the present level of the allowance had not been updated in 10 years.

Decisions of the Commission

170. The Commission decided to inform the General Assembly of the following decisions:

(a) The child allowance should be established as a global flat-rate amount calculated as 4 per cent of net base salary in United States dollars at the reference income of P-4 (step VI), at the time of review;

(b) At hard-currency duty stations, the United States dollar amount of the allowance would be converted to local currency using the official United Nations exchange rate at the time of its promulgation and would remain unchanged until the next biennial review;

(c) The flat amount would be recalculated on the same basis at the time of every subsequent review of the level;

(d) The percentage of the net base salary that is used to establish the child allowance could be reviewed periodically, taking into consideration the general trend of the evolution of child benefits;

(e) The secondary dependant's allowance should be established at 35 per cent of the proposed child allowance;

(f) The disabled child allowance should be established as two times the proposed child allowance.

171. The Commission also decided to recommend to the General Assembly that, based on its decision to revise the methodology, as of 1 January 2023:

- (a) The child allowance be set at \$3,322 per annum;
- (b) The disabled child allowance be set at \$6,645 per annum;
- (c) The secondary dependant's allowance be set at \$1,163 per annum;
- (d) At hard-currency duty stations, the United States dollar amount of the allowances, as established in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above, be converted to the local currency using the official United Nations exchange rate as of the date of promulgation and remain unchanged until the next biennial review;
- (e) The dependency allowances be reduced by the amount of any direct payments received by staff from a Government in respect of dependants;
- (f) Any transitional measures remaining in effect as a result of the revised methodology of 1 January 2009 would be discontinued in accordance with the Commission's earlier decision to discontinue such transitional measures upon the completion of two review cycles (A/63/30, para. 129 (d)).

D. Review of the implementation of the recruitment incentive

172. In its resolution 70/244, the General Assembly approved an incentive payment for the recruitment of experts in highly specialized fields in instances in which the Organization was unable to attract suitably qualified personnel, as described and recommended in paragraphs 271 and 279 (c) of the annual report for 2015 of the Commission (hereinafter referred to as "recruitment incentive"). In accordance with the Assembly's decision in the resolution that the Commission assess the scheme after a period of three years from the date of its implementation, the Commission conducted a review in 2020. As the information provided by the organizations had shown at that time that only one organization had made a payment, the Commission decided to inform the Assembly that it would conduct a further review of the incentive payment in two years' time, with a view to assessing its use.

173. At its ninety-fourth session, the Commission reviewed the implementation of the recruitment incentive based on a questionnaire from the ICSC secretariat seeking information from the organizations, to which all the common system organizations responded. The Commission had recognized that the recruitment incentive would be used under very limited circumstances. The data from the questionnaire responses revealed that only two organizations, UNICEF and WIPO, reported making recruitment incentive payments to a total of two staff members as shown in table 2. Including the payment reported by UNDP at the time of the previous review in 2020, three organizations in total have reported making recruitment incentive payments since its inception.

Table 2
Details of recruitment incentive payments

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Years for which payments were made</i>	<i>Total amount of incentive paid to date (United States dollars)</i>	<i>List duty station(s) at which the payment(s) were made</i>
World Intellectual Property Organization	P-4	Male	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Senior Solution Developer and Support Manager	2020 and 2021 (3 instalments)	17 500	Geneva
United Nations Children's Fund	P-4	Female	United States of America	Partnerships	2020	15 000	Washington, D.C.

174. Information on the external market in some countries appeared to show increasing competition for certain high demand skills, such as those in the information technology-related field, and it was considered that it would be important to see whether and to what extent such developments had an impact on the common system organizations.

Discussion in the Commission

175. The representative of the Human Resources Network took note of the review of the recruitment incentive. She highlighted the fact that the recruitment incentive had been introduced following the previous comprehensive compensation review as a payment for the recruitment of experts in highly specialized fields in instances in which the Organization was unable to attract suitably qualified personnel. By this very definition, successful implementation of the incentive would not be synonymous with a high number of cases, as it was rather meant to be an instrument to deal with specific, rare situations.

176. She informed the Commission that the implementation of such an incentive in many organizations required dedicated changes in financial and personnel regulations including exchanges with governing bodies. Therefore, the current period for reviewing the implementation of the incentive might not yet be sufficient to obtain a comprehensive and complete picture.

177. The representative said that the Human Resources Network continued to regard the recruitment incentive as an important and valuable tool to ensure sustained competitiveness of the common system in very specific and often technical labour markets. Therefore, the Network concurred with the recommendation to continue regular monitoring and reporting. The Network did not see the necessity for any modifications in scope and parameters at this point. It believed that any further in-depth review of the incentive should be conducted in the context of the comprehensive compensation review, as warranted.

178. The representative of FICSA stated that FICSA fully understood and supported the rationale for the incentive. In general, FICSA was also in agreement with the statement of the Human Resources Network. However, FICSA introduced some caution and requested that the incentive be implemented in a clearly transparent way and not be used as a “bargaining chip” by potential employees which was an area where it was documented that male applicants did better. The representative of FICSA stated that the implementation of the recruitment incentive should follow clear rules and criteria.

179. The representative of CCISUA noted that the recruitment incentive had been introduced in 2015 to respond to the request of organizations to introduce an initiative

aimed at attracting candidates with highly specialized skills wherever the recruitment process could not yield appropriate candidates. The information provided showed that only three organizations reported making use of the recruitment incentives payments and that the number of staff who benefitted from the incentive was limited to two. These data raised questions on the usefulness of the recruitment incentive.

180. The representative expressed concern about the statement on “the new world of work etc...” raised by one organization. While the statement reflected the views of one organization, she stated that CCISUA found it hard to believe that for jobs that were advertised worldwide, there was not a single candidate who would accept a job offer in Geneva. If that reasoning was correct, then the United Nations would never be able to recruit anyone in hardship duty stations. Despite everything, the United Nations was today a good and attractive employer. It had been stated by CCISUA in various forums that those who joined the United Nations did not always join it because of the entitlements but out of belief in the values and objectives pursued by the Organization.

181. The representative stated that CCISUA believed that there was a need to establish objective and clear criteria for granting the recruitment incentive in order to ensure consistency, fairness and equity and eliminate any risk of favouritism. CCISUA believed that enhancing the compensation package instead of further reducing it might be the best way to attract highly skilled staff for all categories of posts, based on article 101 of the Charter and agreed with the recommendation, to review the recruitment incentive during the upcoming review of the compensation package.

182. The representative of UNISERV expressed scepticism over any compensation elements that established parallel tracks to the consolidated compensation system shared across the common system. He stated that UNISERV would not want to see an evolution in which some organizations that were in a financial position to do so, exercised an advantage over others that might be facing tighter financial constraints. While UNISERV was aware that the common system was going through a period of high competition for specialized talent, it believed the organizations should respond to this environment through a consistent, agile adaptation of their job descriptions and levels, not through the application of ad hoc and selective measures. On this point, the representative noted that a number of the job titles used were outdated and tended to lower the profile of otherwise attractive positions in the system. He stated that UNISERV believed it was essential to obtain more information from the organizations as to the reasons why the incentive had such a low uptake in the reporting period. Without more data it was difficult for the Federation to take a position on this matter. The representative indicated that UNISERV would support the recommendation to keep the recruitment incentive under review, if the use remained highly specialized and limited.

183. The Commission expressed its appreciation that all the common system organizations had responded to the questionnaire from the ICSC secretariat. Some members of the Commission questioned the limited use of the recruitment incentive by the organizations and whether there was a need to retain it. Other members were of the opinion that the low utilization rate could be attributed to the lack of clarity on the definition of “highly specialized fields”. Some Commission members recommended the use of more active methods such as recruitment strategies that included the use of head-hunting companies, vacancy announcements in newsletters and an outreach to professional societies of required fields, for example, fields related to information technology and nuclear technology.

184. In response to the Commission, the representative of ICAO reiterated the importance and relevance of a flexible scheme like the recruitment incentive,

especially in the current times, when the competition for talent had become much more intense. The representative highlighted that now, more than ever before, ICAO was witnessing increasing declined offers and increasing attrition rates. Even though at the time of reporting to the ICSC secretariat, the use of the incentive had not become commonplace within ICAO, that was likely to change as ICAO faced growing difficulty in attracting and retaining specialized skills, in information technology and other digital related fields. However, ICAO believed that the recruitment incentive in its construct could benefit from increased structure and direction, for example, the Commission could request that organizations clarify and seek approval of any specialized skills up front and ahead of offering it to any candidate. The representative stated that ICAO believed the competition for talent had been topical for years, but the pandemic had rapidly accelerated the competition in the past two years; and by some projections, this situation could last another decade. Indeed, ICAO might always have people available to work for the organization. However, the real question remained whether it would have the right quality of talent seeking to work for the organization.

185. Some members of the Commission supported the view expressed by the representative of the Human Resources Network that the recruitment incentive served its purpose as another tool for the organizations to use when they had difficulties in recruiting the right talent. The Commission noted, however, that in order to ensure consistent and fair application of the recruitment incentive, it was necessary to clearly define criteria for granting it and to clarify what was meant by “highly specialized fields”.

186. A member of the Commission also pointed out the importance of avoiding the recurrence of a situation where any organization paid a generous “incentive bonus” to all its staff as had occurred in the past in the context of performance incentives. Such baseless payments undermined the core principles of the common system. The organization should also avoid duplication of payment of any incentives related to recruitment.

187. The same member of the Commission drew attention to data showing that only citizens of two developed countries were granted recruitment incentives. The Commission member pointed out that secretariats should not resort to this type of payments only when recruiting citizens from developed countries. However, the Commission might explore options of using recruitment incentives with the aim to contribute to the equitable geographical representation.

188. The Commission therefore agreed that the comprehensive review of the compensation package would be an opportune time to consider defining areas in which the incentive should be used.

Decisions of the Commission

189. The Commission decided:

(a) To review the incentive for the recruitment of experts in highly specialized fields at the time of the next comprehensive review requested by the General Assembly in its resolution [76/240](#);

(b) To request the organizations to continue to report on the implementation of the recruitment incentive to the Commission every two years, until the comprehensive review of the compensation package by the General Assembly was undertaken.

E. Post adjustment issues

190. Pursuant to article 11 of its statute, the Commission continued to keep under review the operation of the post adjustment system, and in that context considered the report of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions on its work at its forty-third session, which was held from 6 to 13 June 2022 in a hybrid mode in New York. All five Committee members attended the session (Corrine Becker Vermeulen, Switzerland; Eileen Capilit, Philippines; Michel Mouyelo-Katoula, Congo; Pedro Luis do Nascimento Silva, Brazil; and Andrey Tatarinov, Russian Federation), in addition to representatives of the organizations and staff federations. The Commission considered the Committee's report covering, inter alia:

(a) The secretariat's implementation of the methodology, procedures and guidelines approved by the Commission for the 2021 baseline surveys;

(b) The Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding the collection of survey data in New York for the purpose of cost-of-living comparisons with other duty stations; and the results of the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys conducted at the headquarters duty stations (Geneva, London, Madrid, Montreal, Paris, Rome and Vienna), and Washington, D.C., in October and November 2021.

191. The methodology underpinning the 2021 round included a change in the calculation of the average price of an item from an arithmetic to a geometric average; the inclusion of expenditures on supplementary medical insurance in the determination of the medical insurance index and weight; and the use of survey data collected from homeowners in the processing of housing data, except for rent, for which imputed values of average rents from renters of the same dwelling classes, as reported in the survey, would be used. Regarding price data collection, the Advisory Committee and all participants noted the high volume of price data collected in New York with the secretariat's use of automatic online price collection, known as "web scraping", relative to manual price data collection from websites or the traditional modalities of store visits and phone calls. There was general agreement that web scraping was an efficient data collection modality that was likely to yield accurate data and more reliable average prices, but some participants pointed out that there were also challenges related to the huge amount of time and resources required for processing the large amounts of data generated. The Advisory Committee agreed that the use of web scraping was in line with the practice of many statistical agencies, adding that the sources of data used in the surveys were acceptable, and it therefore recommended the use of the price data collected from them.

192. The Advisory Committee reviewed the rates of participation of staff in the expenditures surveys, which led to the estimation of the new common expenditure weights as well as to duty station-specific weights used in post adjustment index calculations and concluded that the weights met the accuracy criteria set for their estimates and that other weighting patterns derived from the housing and household expenditures were sufficiently reliable for use. It also considered that housing and household expenditures had been collected in accordance with approved guidelines and procedures, thus leading to valid results. Specifically, it recommended that estimates of average expenditures derived from staff-reported survey data, as well as the price data collected in New York, be used as a base for cost-of-living comparisons with all other duty stations.

193. In reviewing the results of the baseline surveys and making recommendations thereon, the Advisory Committee confirmed that all aspects of the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys had been conducted by the secretariat in all concerned duty stations, in accordance with the methodology, procedures and guidelines approved by the Commission for the 2021 round of surveys, except for a few modifications that the

Advisory Committee considered reasonable, correct, and justifiable, given the circumstances. It therefore recommended that the results of the surveys be approved by the Commission.

194. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee expressed views on a wide range of matters, the most debated of which were the reliability, stability and transparency of collected data (prices and expenditures), considerations related to market rent data, and, specifically, to the methodological deviation used in the rent index calculations; the independent observation of the New York price survey; the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on spending patterns and supply chain effects; and the causes of shocks in post adjustments upon the implementation of survey results between survey rounds.

Discussion in the Commission

195. The representative of the Human Resources Network expressed appreciation for the work of the ICSC secretariat as well as survey coordinators, members of local survey committees and other parties involved in conducting the baseline cost-of-living surveys, adding that the surveys were conducted after the assessment of feasibility criteria and were broadly compliant with the approved methodology as confirmed by the Advisory Committee. The representative also expressed appreciation for the opportunity of desk reviews by stakeholders, of the secretariat's analysis of the survey data, during which large parts of the data could be reviewed. Emphasizing the need to ensure stability, transparency, and predictability of pay setting, the representative indicated that there were differences and variations in the "return to normal" after the COVID-19 pandemic, with differentiated inflation patterns, price levels and exchange rate trends, which was why the Network had requested an objective and comprehensive evaluation of the impact of these factors on the survey results, with the Advisory Committee given a role in advising the Commission. However, such an analysis of influencing factors had still not been done, even as there were clear indications of the negative impact on survey results, particularly regarding rent comparisons and the relative weight of the housing component, in most duty stations. The negative impact was further aggravated by the recent Commission-approved changes to the methodology, related to the inclusion of homeowner expenditures. Supplementary analyses conducted by the secretariat on these aspects were insufficient, and more in-depth discussions and practical solutions were needed, including the implementation of these solutions in the current survey round. Furthermore, a detailed analysis of the impacts of web scraping used for the New York data collection was needed. The representative also pointed out that the revised operational rules had been discussed and agreed to, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and, while they were expected to be adequate for the normal operation of the post adjustment system, they might not be so for any major distortions due to extraordinary circumstances.

196. A representative of ILO stated that spending patterns were expected to shift from one survey round to another, adding that the secretariat's analysis of the shifts in spending patterns across three consecutive rounds, dealt with the common expenditure weights, which were averages across duty stations, not duty station-specific spending patterns such as those associated with the housing component. He cited examples of shifts in expenditure patterns, attributable, at least in part, to changes in methodology that turned out to have a negative impact on the results of Geneva and other Europe-based duty stations. The representative also stated that the introduction of web scraping was a significant issue as it had increased the volume of price data considerably and should have been tested more extensively earlier but concurred with the proposal to conduct a deeper analysis, at the next Advisory Committee session, of this issue and others, such as market rent data and the compilation of the rent index, given its high weight in the comparisons. He pointed

out that the effect of inflation since the survey date was the primary reason that survey results provisionally updated to June 2022 were all positive, even though the benchmark results were less so.

197. The representatives of the three staff federations welcomed the increased collaboration during the process which greatly increased the transparency. They supported the statements of the Human Resources Network and of ILO, in particular regarding analyses specific to duty station and the importance of the housing index, adding that the report of the Advisory Committee accurately reflected the discussions at the session. Considering that surveyed spending patterns might not be reflective of the reality for the next five years, they welcomed the plan of the secretariat to institute a mechanism for monitoring shifts in spending patterns and requested details about the plan. They informed the Commission that staff were expecting that the strong inflation witnessed in all headquarters duty stations would be reflected in the pay levels. However, there were no guarantees as to the final outcomes of the surveys at the time of implementation. They noted the uncertainty about macroeconomic trends and that, after the reservations expressed at the start of the survey round and the hard work during the surveys, staff needed to keep trusting the post adjustment system. Building such trust would be greatly facilitated by a better understanding of how survey results were derived, and in this regard they expressed appreciation for the provision of technical and non-technical explanations of the survey results prepared by the ICSC secretariat. They also pointed out that the survey in New York took place when many companies and organizations were setting return-to-office policies, and that the situation had led to sharp increases in rent that might be temporary but increased the comparative cost of New York relative to other locations, as comparable increases in rents did not happen in other locations due to the nature of differing rental markets. They noted the considerable challenges faced by the secretariat while conducting the baseline surveys, particularly in terms of staff participation and collection of data, specifically market rent data, which necessitated the introduction of solutions alternative to the approved methodology. The most difficult question staff representatives had to face was why increases in net remuneration were not guaranteed even with high levels of inflation. They indicated that the discrepancy between high inflation and survey results, even if positive, made it difficult to justify the rationale of the Noblemaire principle and of the post adjustment system. In the face of rapid inflation, the Commission should perhaps consider special measures to better support the net remuneration of staff at a time that purchasing power was eroding quickly.

198. The representative of FAO expressed agreement with the statements made by the Human Resources Network and the representative of ILO. She pointed out that the collaboration between agencies in Rome was very close in the support of the baseline survey, as it was with the ICSC secretariat, which had led to high staff participation, yet results of the survey were low, which was a concern for the duty station, as Rome already had the lowest post adjustment across all headquarters duty stations. The representative of ICAO noted that surveys had not been conducted in the best of times, as the COVID-19 pandemic had not yet disappeared, adding that the results were reflective of spending patterns that were in part normal and in part abnormal. The representative of UNESCO expressed appreciation for the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the Advisory Committee of some key agenda items, such as the review of web scraping, the neutralization of the effects of methodological change and an investigation into the causes of shocks when moving from updating to benchmarking of the rent index.

199. The Commission expressed appreciation for the work of the secretariat and of stakeholders, as well as the level of collaboration among them, from the preparation to the conduct and review of the baseline surveys, the significant shift in openness and trust that had been built since the implementation of the results of the 2016 round

of surveys, and the collaboration brought by Geneva-based experts in the review of the methodology and operational rules. Noting that post adjustment was a complex subject matter, the Chair of the Advisory Committee was commended for leading its work in a transparent manner. A member of the Commission recalled that the revision of the statistical methodology and of the operational rules governing the post adjustment system required significant work, cooperation with stakeholders including representatives of organizations and staff associations. She pointed out that the secretariat's work in operating the post adjustment system was essentially about the measurement of change, specifically, change in cost-of-living relativities, adding that she was impressed by the emphasis put by the secretariat on building trust with stakeholders. In any case, the Commission relied on the advice and guidance provided by the Advisory Committee, which had indicated that the approved methodology had been followed in compiling the new post adjustment indices. Also, the secretariat had provided further information on web scraping at this session, and on the results of its analysis of changes in spending patterns across the previous three consecutive rounds, showing that the aggregate level of change measured in 2021 was similar to that from the past.

200. Another member of the Commission, while recognizing, with appreciation, the restored sense of trust among stakeholders, and noting that the results were all trending positive, asked whether increases were the only way of measuring success. The goal of the system was to ensure a fair degree of purchasing power parity and that could lead to decreases as well. The Advisory Committee needed to address the issue of staff in Geneva residing outside of Switzerland, as prices and market rent data needed to be collected also in neighbouring France. Another Commission member pointed out that there was consensus on the correct application of the approved methodology and even if everyone would have preferred to see better results, the updates provided indicated that post adjustments compensated for local inflation, but not on a lock-in-step basis as the post adjustment index was also subject to other inflationary factors.

201. In response to the proposal to collect price and market data in neighbouring France, raised by the Commission member, the secretariat explained that there was a long-standing mandate from the General Assembly for the Commission to keep this issue under review, and the most recent attempt to address the issue had been at the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions of the Advisory Committee. The results of a special study, which included price and market rent data collection in neighbouring France, indicated that collecting prices for groceries was not a problem. However, not all items in the market basket were available in neighbouring France, for instance, certain services were not, or less available in neighbouring France than Geneva. Furthermore, the incorporation of neighbouring France in the data collection areas for Geneva, would require that the Advisory Committee change the concept of what expenditures were to be considered "in-area" or "out-of-area", as the current definition was based on national boundaries. At its thirty-fifth session, the Advisory Committee indicated that in principle, prices of goods and services as well as market rent data should be collected from all areas where staff were primarily located, including neighbouring France, but in practice, it was not yet possible to do so. Even if these technical considerations were resolved, there would still be some legal impediments to a comprehensive resolution of the request by the Assembly.

202. A member of the Commission pointed out that no one could predict crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, or the subsequent rise in the cost of living that was felt in many parts of the world. The Noblemaire principle did not imply detachment from the reality experienced by other workers, by Governments or private companies. There were staff members who were still telecommuting away from their duty stations. Some of the changes caused by the pandemic might remain as a permanent

feature of economies, and the secretariat did well in capturing the prevailing status in terms of the impact on such economies. In her view, the reviews of the statistical methodology and operational rules had achieved a good balance between competing desirable features, namely, that stakeholders were involved in the process of reviewing these aspects of the system, as well as the implementation of that methodology. Stakeholders should trust that any residual concerns could be dealt with by the new post adjustment system.

203. The secretariat pointed out that stability, predictability and transparency were important principles in the production of statistics used for remuneration purposes and that this approach was part of the secretariat's *modus operandi* throughout the entire survey process. In the development of the statistical methodology, through the work of the task force for the review of the conceptual basis of the post adjustment index, and the working group on operational rules, all proposals for the adjustment of the methodology were evaluated jointly with stakeholders before being submitted to the Advisory Committee, which then made judicious choices among the options considered by the stakeholders to be among the highest priority. The new package of operational rules was also the result of the secretariat's collaboration with stakeholders through their representatives participating in the working group and was ultimately agreed to by all members of the working group. It should be noted that the new operational rules were much more oriented towards achieving higher stability in the evolution of pay levels, as well as predictability in their adjustments.

204. Regarding the suggestion that the Advisory Committee should provide guidance to the Commission on the assessment of the impact of the pandemic and other factors that might negatively influence the survey results, the secretariat pointed out that this was indeed the *raison d'être* of the Committee. At its forty-second session, the Advisory Committee provided guidance to the Commission by recommending a set of methodological changes for the 2021 round of surveys, recommendations that also considered the practicability of certain methodological choices. Having carefully considered all concerns and arguments about the timing of the surveys, the Advisory Committee recommended that the surveys be conducted, in line with the practices of the national statistics offices of Member States and other similarly situated statistical agencies. Web scraping was used as part of an effort by the secretariat to keep up with best practices in data collection, at a time when in-person data collection from physical outlets was impossible or impracticable. For New York, as the base of the system, web scraping was very appropriate because it enabled the secretariat to expand the geographical boundaries of data collection beyond Manhattan, consistent with the residential patterns of New York-based staff members and covering other boroughs or counties distant from the centre of the city. Thus, web scraping would help achieve a more representative base of price data, even though it might present challenges in the management of the higher volume of data generated. Manual data collection was based on the assumption that the data collector *a priori*, had a perfect knowledge of the market, but as good as that knowledge was, it could not possibly include extensive and up-to-date information on available brands and products, or services, compliant with the specifications that could be obtained via web scraping. No evidence had been produced to show whether there were systematic biases attributable to web scraping, but spot checks conducted by the secretariat on items considered to be the most susceptible to "web scraping bias" at the Advisory Committee session – in the sense that differences between automated and manual data collection were likely to be higher – revealed no such biases.

205. The secretariat further clarified that the new approach in the treatment of homeowners entailed using all housing-related information, obtained directly from homeowners, except for rent, as opposed to imputing such expenditures with average values obtained from renters (of the same dwelling class as the homeowners)

responding to the survey, as had been done in the past. Under the new methodology, only rent information was imputed for homeowners. This new treatment of homeowners was a methodological choice recommended at the fortieth session of the Advisory Committee. There were good reasons for that choice, as homeowners had historically complained about their expenditures not being properly accounted for in cost-of-living surveys. Furthermore, for duty stations where the prevalence of homeowners was high, imputing to them averages derived from renters of the same dwelling classes, for all housing-related expenditures, not just for rent, was either impossible, because there were no renters in those dwelling classes, or at risk of serious biases, as there were often too few renters whose average expenditures were imputed on many more homeowners of the same dwelling classes. Although effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the weights associated with the housing component for several duty stations could not be ruled out, there was clear evidence that the new treatment of homeowners had an impact, positive for North American duty stations, and negative for European ones. The Advisory Committee was forward-looking when it recommended this change, cognizant of the fact that homeowners most likely incurred such expenditures on the maintenance of the dwelling, other housing costs, or even utilities that were likely to be different from those of renters. Going back to the prior methodology was not justifiable as there was evidence that these housing expenditures were indeed different between renters and homeowners. However, the Advisory Committee indicated its willingness to revisit the issue of the neutralization of the effects of methodological change so that it could be implemented in tandem with the development of the methodology for future rounds of surveys.

206. Regarding the issue of the high expectations of staff about the results of the surveys, the secretariat pointed out that, while it could indeed take into account suggestions and comments of stakeholders to improve the measurement of the cost-of-living relativity of duty stations with New York up to the close of the Advisory Committee session, the next steps, entailing the updating of survey results, depended on macroeconomic indicators and other factors that could neither be predicted, nor controlled. The secretariat had been consistently clear about relating higher participation only to higher accuracy of results, not higher levels of pay. It was, of course, possible that positive results could result from the implementation of the surveys, but such an outcome was never guaranteed. As to the high levels of inflation which were repeatedly highlighted during the discussion, the secretariat reiterated that it tracked inflation on a monthly basis, precisely because the evolution of inflation had an impact on the post adjustment index, which was ultimately used to determine salaries. Evidence of this was the review of post adjustment classifications that took place in February 2022, resulting in increases in salaries across all group I duty stations, even though there was no one-to-one correspondence with local inflation, as not all components of the post adjustment index were subject to local inflation. In response to other questions on how to monitor shifts in spending patterns, the secretariat clarified that one approach it was considering was to monitor the annual changes in weighting patterns of the national consumer price indices, which represented national, not United Nations staff, spending patterns in headquarters duty stations, and to measure these annual shifts by means of a measure of aggregate change across sets of weights in three consecutive rounds.

207. A Commission member expressed satisfaction that the Commission had completed the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys at headquarters duty stations and appreciated the collaborative participation of all stakeholders in the process. The Commission member stressed, however, that the core problem regarding the post adjustment for Geneva needed to be resolved. The ILO Administrative Tribunal rendered a judgment in 2019 that the Commission was not competent to determine/set the post adjustment for Geneva or, in fact, any other duty station. The Commission member also referred to and expressed appreciation for the fact that recent General

Assembly resolutions confirmed the authority of the Commission to set post adjustments. The Commission member stated that it would be interesting to see how the various Geneva-based organizations would justify the implementation, or non-implementation, of the results of the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys at their respective headquarters duty stations, adding that this issue was especially important because some Geneva-based organizations had been selectively implementing positive cost-of-living adjustments in some duty stations while simultaneously “freezing” recent negative cost-of-living adjustments in other duty stations.

208. In response to the preceding intervention, the representative of ILO clarified that any perception that organizations were deliberately and selectively implementing post adjustments in an inconsistent manner was not warranted. He stressed that ILO was obliged, in full respect of the rule of law, to abide by legally binding judgments issued by the competent Tribunal, as did the other specialized agencies affected by the relevant ILO Administrative Tribunal judgments. A sustainable resolution of the present challenges was very much desired, and this would require close and appreciative cooperation between the Commission and organizations. He emphasized that ILO stood ready for such collaboration in order to address the root causes of the present situation.

209. Commission members underlined the imperative of the timely implementation of the revised post adjustment which was reaffirmed by the recent United Nations General Assembly resolutions. The Commission endorsed the results of the new round of cost-of-living surveys based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, which could only be achieved through the participation of all stakeholders. The Commission members confirmed that the results of the surveys were expected to align the level of net remuneration with economic realities. Some Commission members proposed the conduct of such surveys more frequently to take into account changes in the global economy.

210. The agenda of the Advisory Committee for its forty-fourth session was provisionally approved, subject, however, to further adjustments following the solicitation of inputs from stakeholders by the Chair of Advisory Committee.

Decisions of the Commission

A. Methodological aspects of the cost-of-living surveys

211. The Commission decided:

(a) To endorse the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that:

(i) The collection and processing of the data from the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys were carried out in accordance with the approved methodology, procedures and guidelines;

(ii) The sources used for price data collection and collected price data were valid, and their processing for the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys was carried out in accordance with the approved methodology;

(iii) The adjustments of the approved methodology followed by the secretariat with regard to data collection and processing, including the estimation for 2020 and 2021 market rent levels based on extrapolating the 2019 rent levels of the International Service for Remunerations and Pensions, using inflation factors derived from Mercer data were necessary, appropriate, and justifiable in light of the reported circumstances.

(b) To approve the use of the new common weights based on results of the household expenditure surveys conducted at headquarters duty stations and in

Washington, D.C., as well as on the most recent place-to-place surveys conducted in Bangkok and Nairobi, for the 2021 round of surveys;

- (c) To grant the secretariat the flexibility:
 - (i) To introduce minor modifications to the staff expenditure survey questionnaire to be used in the 2021 round of surveys, in the light of experience acquired during the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys;
 - (ii) To make minor modifications to the specifications of some items and to remove from the market basket any items deemed difficult to find or to compare across markets, on the basis of experience acquired during the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys.

B. Results of 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys

212. The summary of the results of the survey are set out in table 3. The Commission decided:

- (a) To approve the use of the survey data collected for New York as a base for cost-of-living comparisons with all other duty stations;
- (b) To approve the results of the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys conducted in all headquarters duty stations (Geneva, London, Madrid, Montreal, Paris, Rome and Vienna), and Washington, D.C., as recommended by the Advisory Committee, and summarized in the table below;
- (c) That the results of all baseline cost-of-living surveys be implemented on 1 August 2022, taking into account inflation and exchange rate fluctuations between the survey date and the date of implementation of the results, in accordance with the new system of operational rules.

Table 3

Summary of the results of the 2021 baseline cost-of-living surveys, as at the survey date

<i>Duty station</i>	<i>Survey date</i>	<i>Post adjustment index</i>		<i>Difference (percentage)</i>
		<i>Survey (2021 round)</i>	<i>Updated (2016 round)</i>	
Geneva	Nov 2021	175.26	176.7	(0.8)
London	Nov 2021	168.18	168.0	0.1
Madrid	Nov 2021	132.13	132.9	(0)
Montreal	Nov 2021	152.69	149.7	2.0
Paris	Oct 2021	156.85	153.3	2.3
Rome	Nov 2021	127.55	133.4	(4.4)
Vienna	Oct 2021	146.08	149.4	(2.2)
Washington, D.C.	Nov 2021	156.75	154.0	1.8

213. The Commission decided:

- (a) To approve in principle the agenda of the forty-fourth session of the Advisory Committee and to request that the Chair of the Advisory Committee solicit inputs from stakeholders before finalization of the agenda and its submission to the Commission for approval;

(b) To request the Advisory Committee to continue its work on improving the methodology underpinning the post adjustment system, in collaboration with representatives of administrations and staff federations of the United Nations common system.

F. Hardship allowance: review of level

214. The current amounts payable under the hardship allowance came into effect on 1 January 2020. During its current review of the level of hardship allowance, the Commission considered an analysis of the application of three adjustment factors, in accordance with its decision in 2016 on the review cycle of the level of allowances under its purview (A/71/30, para. 92(a)) in the context of the comprehensive review of the compensation package of the United Nations common system. The following three adjustment factors were reviewed:

(a) Average movement of the net base salary plus post adjustment at the eight headquarters of the United Nations system, which produced an increase of 6.6 per cent;

(b) Movement of the out-of-area index used for post adjustment based on inflation factors in 26 countries, which produced an increase of 5.2 per cent;

(c) Movement of the base/floor salary scale, which produced an increase of 3.1 per cent.

Discussion in the Commission

215. The representative of the Human Resources Network noted that the analyses of the evolution of the three adjustment factors had revealed that the movement of the base/floor salary scale was the most stable over time, while the other two factors appeared more volatile, as they were directly affected by inflation and exchange-rate fluctuations. She stated that the Network therefore supported the amounts calculated by applying the existing methodology – the base/floor salary scale – which represented an increase of 3.1 per cent according to the analysis.

216. Representatives of the three federations stated that the federations agreed with the Human Resources Network and considered that the movement of the net base salary, which was the most stable over time, should be used as a point of departure for reviewing the amounts payable under the hardship allowance. The representative of CCISUA questioned the rationale behind linking the level of hardship allowance to the staff grade when the level of hardship was the same for every staff member, irrespective of their grade. She reiterated the importance of the equal treatment of all staff, including with regard to the amounts payable under the hardship allowance.

217. The Commission noted that one of the three factors – the movement of the base/floor salary scale for the professional and higher categories – was the most stable, while the other two factors – the average movement of net base salary plus post adjustment in the eight headquarters of the United Nations system and the movement of the out-of-area index used for post adjustment based on inflation factors in 26 countries – appeared to be more volatile, as they were directly affected by inflation and exchange-rate fluctuations. The Commission agreed that an increase of 3.1 per cent in proportion to the movement of the base/floor salary scale would be reasonable.

218. The Commission noted that an overall increase of 3.1 per cent, effective from 1 January 2023, would result in an additional estimated cost of \$5 million for 2023. The estimates were calculated on the basis of the current amounts payable under the hardship allowance, using staff data for 2020 and based on the assumption that the

hardship ratings of field duty stations effective from 1 January 2022 would remain unchanged during 2023. The revised amounts payable under the hardship allowance, incorporating a 3.1 per cent increase and rounded to the nearest \$10, are provided in annex XI to the present report.

Decision of the Commission

219. The Commission decided to grant a 3.1 per cent increase to the hardship allowance, effective from 1 January 2023, in accordance with article 11 (b) of its statute (see annex XI for revised amounts of the hardship allowance).

G. Mobility incentive: review of level

220. In accordance with the current review cycle, the level of the mobility incentive is reviewed every three years. In 2015, the Commission had decided to recommend a mobility incentive, in lieu of the previous mobility allowance, to encourage mobility of staff to field duty stations (A/70/30, para. 431). The incentive, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/244, was established as from 1 July 2016.

221. The previous review of the level was carried out in 2019 and at that time the annual amount for the P-1 to P-3 grade band (100 per cent of the weighted average monthly net base salary) was set as the lower limit (\$6,700). The amount for the P-4 and P-5 grade band was set at 125 per cent of the limit (\$8,375) and the amount for staff at the D-1 and above levels was set at 150 per cent of the limit (\$10,050). In accordance with resolution 70/244, the mobility incentive applies to staff with five consecutive years of prior service in an organization of the common system and from their second assignment (that is, following the first geographical move), excluding category H duty stations, and is increased by 25 per cent upon the fourth assignment and by 50 per cent upon the seventh assignment. Therefore, the mobility incentive is reflected in a matrix that varies by grade bands and number of assignments. The incentive is discontinued after staff have spent five consecutive years at the same duty station.

222. In accordance with the adjustment methodology approved by the Commission, the weighted average monthly net base salary of staff in the Professional and higher categories in the year of the review is to be used to revise the amounts of the mobility incentive. On the basis of the applicable net base salaries effective 1 January 2022, and the latest available staff data from the CEB personnel database as at 31 December 2020, the mobility incentive for the P-1 to P-3 grade band (for 2 to 3 assignments) amounted to \$6,900 per year, which corresponded to 100 per cent of the weighted average monthly net base salary. The rest of the matrix has been recalculated accordingly, as shown in table 4.

Table 4
Proposed new amounts for the mobility incentive

(United States dollars)

<i>Assignment number</i>	<i>Group 1 (P-1 to P-3)</i>	<i>Group 2 (P-4 to P-5)</i>	<i>Group 3 (D-1 and above)</i>
2 to 3	6 900	8 625	10 350
4 to 6	8 625	10 781	12 938
7 or more	10 350	12 938	15 525

223. The financial implications associated with the proposed increase in the mobility incentive, effective from 1 January 2023, were estimated at \$2.5 million per annum, system-wide.

Discussion in the Commission

224. The representative of the Human Resources Network noted that continued staff mobility was a necessity for the common system, and that the current work environment caused by the pandemic raised concerns regarding the retention of current levels of motivation of the global workforce, not only within the common system but beyond, to move between locations in the same manner as before the pandemic. She recalled that, while mobility was a requirement in many organizations, the main purpose of the mobility incentive was to foster continued mobility throughout the entire career of staff, pointing towards a continued need for an adequate mobility incentive. She stated that the Network supported the updating of the lower limit of the mobility incentive to \$6,900, resulting from the review.

225. The representative of FICSA noted that according to the methodology, the weighted average monthly net base salary of staff in the Professional and higher categories in the year of review was to be used to calculate the level of mobility incentive. Therefore, the representative noted that the lower limit of the mobility incentive should be updated to 100 per cent of the weighted average monthly net base salary for the P-1 to P-3 grade band, resulting in an increase in the mobility incentive amount. She stated that FICSA also reflected whether the pandemic should have had an impact on the maximum number of years in a duty station for eligibility for mobility incentive; many staff members had surpassed the maximum time limit due to pandemic restrictions, and the federation called for consideration for such cases that were beyond the control of staff members. The representative of CCISUA stated that the mobility incentive element was very important in order to be able to attract more staff to the field, especially in hardship duty stations. She reiterated the previous position of CCISUA, namely that this element should be paid for all movements between all duty stations and not only to the field and hoped that this issue would be revisited when reviewing the compensation package. The representative of UNISERV agreed with the proposed updated lower limit of \$6,900 and expressed the hope of UNISERV that the Commission would decide to recommend accordingly.

226. The Commission noted that mobility for internationally recruited staff members was an integral part of their service and that staff members in this category were expected to be mobile. It was recalled that, during the comprehensive review of the compensation package, which had earlier included a mobility allowance, the Commission had discussed whether mobility should be incentivized. It had recommended a flat amount as a payment to incentivize mobility to field locations and recalled that it was the decision of the General Assembly at that time to increase the amount of the allowance by 25 per cent for the fourth to sixth assignments and by 50 per cent for the seventh and subsequent assignments of staff. During the review of the purpose of the mobility incentive in 2021, the Commission considered that the mobility incentive in general was a good tool that needed to be retained for duty stations where there might be shortfalls in staffing. Also, while noting the progress made in instilling a culture of mobility, the Commission had also noted the related uneven progress among the organizations.

227. The Commission noted that the present review was focused on the level of the mobility incentive and not the purpose of the incentive or how it was being used. The Commission supported the proposal for an increase in the mobility incentive, considering it reasonable on the basis of the results of the review. It further considered that the adjustment methodology remained appropriate and had provided a measure of stability in adjustments.

Decisions of the Commission

228. The Commission decided:

(a) To approve the amounts in the mobility incentive matrix as shown in table 4 above, with effect from 1 January 2023;

(b) To review the level of the mobility incentive again in three years' time in accordance with the established schedule (A/71/30, annex IV).

H. Non-family service allowance: review of level

229. In line with the review cycle of the level of allowances as outlined in annex IV of the Commission's annual report for 2016 (A/71/30), a review of the level of the non-family service allowance is conducted every three years. The previous review was carried out in 2019, at which time the level of the allowance was maintained at \$19,800 per year for staff with eligible dependants and at \$7,500 per year for staff without dependants (A/74/30, para. 139).

230. The non-family service allowance was established by the Commission in 2015 (A/70/30, para. 421) and approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/244. The non-family service allowance is an incentive for staff to undertake assignments at non-family duty stations and serves as recognition of the increased level of financial and psychological hardship incurred by mandatory separation from family members, including additional service-related costs.

231. The review carried out in 2022 was in accordance with the adjustment methodology approved by the Commission, which stipulates that the rent data under the post adjustment system are to be used. The ICSC secretariat conducted a review of the level of the allowance by carrying out a detailed analysis of the rent data and calculated an average global rent for a dwelling size of up to and including two bedrooms from the latest survey in each duty station for the three years preceding the review (2019–2021), excluding countries with non-family duty stations. The resulting average global rent amount was \$1,653 per month, or \$19,836 per year, which was slightly higher than the current non-family service allowance of \$19,800 per year, for staff members with eligible dependants.

Discussion in the Commission

232. The representative of the Human Resources Network said that the Network took note of the analysis and was of the view that the current level of non-family service allowance should be maintained at this point in time since the calculated increase was marginal.

233. The representative of FICSA expressed agreement with the position of the Human Resources Network and agreed with the recommended action, namely, to maintain the non-family service allowance at \$19,800 per year (\$1,650 per month), which was at a par with the average global rent, which a staff member serving in a non-family duty station might incur by maintaining a second residence for his or her dependants. The representative of CCISUA observed that the increase in the average global rent amount was not a significant one but wondered how large such an increase would need to be to trigger a change in the level of the allowance. The representative of UNISERV recognized that the increase was nominal; however, he stated that UNISERV was of the view that the resulting minor increase of \$3 per month (e.g. from \$1,650 to \$1,653), bringing the allowance to a yearly amount of \$19,836, should be approved and expressed hope that the Commission would decide to approve the increase accordingly.

234. Some Commission members recalled that the non-family service allowance was an incentive for staff to accept posts in non-family duty stations with mandatory separation from family. While the concept of mandatory separation from family and service in non-family duty stations was not necessarily present in various foreign service contexts, the Commission noted that non-family duty stations in the United Nations context were those duty stations where the physical presence of all eligible dependants was prohibited for reasons of safety and security. The Commission was of the view that it was not unreasonable to maintain the amount at \$19,800 per annum, recalling that in the previous review, in 2019, it had not implemented the slight decrease that would have resulted at that time from the review (recalling that the average global rent in 2019 was some \$1,600 per month, or \$19,200 per year, which was slightly lower than the prevailing amount of the non-family service allowance for staff members with an eligible dependant).

235. The Commission briefly discussed the methodological issues and, took note of the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 76/240 for the Commission to review the scope and parameters of the non-family service allowance, in particular the eligibility of staff without dependants, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-eighth session.

236. The Commission concluded that it would be appropriate to maintain the current level of the non-family service allowance at \$19,800 per year for staff members with eligible dependants. The applicable amount for staff members without dependants would be maintained at \$7,500 per year.

Decisions of the Commission

237. The Commission decided:

(a) To maintain the current levels of the non-family service allowance at \$19,800 per year for staff with eligible dependants and at \$7,500 per year for staff without eligible dependants;

(b) To review the level of the allowance again in three years' time in accordance with the established schedule (A/71/30, annex IV).

I. Relocation shipment: review of the ceiling for payments

238. In 2015, the Commission had concluded its comprehensive review of the United Nations compensation system, including the elements of the remuneration package relating to relocation. During its deliberations, the Commission had identified an urgent need for streamlining and simplifying the various elements relating to relocation. Hence, the Commission decided at its eighty-first session to establish a new relocation package consisting of three main features: relocation travel, relocation shipment and a settling-in grant. It also decided, inter alia, the following (A/70/30, para. 399):

(a) To provide full removal of household goods for relocation shipment if that option were available, and, if not, to provide the option of full removal up to the established entitlement, which would be reimbursed to staff upon presentation of an invoice. In lieu of full removal, one of the following options could apply:

(i) Lump-sum option established at 70 per cent of the actual cost of relocation shipments;

(ii) Lump sum set by organizations based on 70 per cent of costs of past shipments, not exceeding \$18,000;

(b) To provide an entitlement for the relocation shipment of household goods for staff with assignments of two years or more up to a standard 20-foot container for single staff and a 40-foot container for staff with eligible family members, regardless of the weight of household goods, through the most cost-effective route and mode of transportation.

239. Furthermore, in 2015, the Commission requested the organizations to report on the actual annual costs of relocation under the current and new relocation package after two years of implementation of the new compensation system, in order to conduct its review.

240. In its resolution [70/244](#), the General Assembly approved the above-mentioned decisions of the Commission, and the new relocation package came into effect on 1 July 2016.

241. In line with its review cycle, the Commission had reviewed the ceiling for relocation shipment-related lump-sum payments at its eighty-eighth session, held in 2019, and had decided to maintain the ceiling for the relocation shipment-related lump-sum payments, in lieu of full removal by the organizations, at \$18,000. The Commission also decided to review the ceiling for relocation shipment-related payments every three years using actual shipment cost data obtained from the organizations of the United Nations common system. In order to do so, the Commission requested the organizations to report on the actual annual costs of relocation shipments ([A/74/30](#), para. 160).

242. The ICSC secretariat presented a report reviewing the ceiling for relocation shipment-related lump-sum payments using the data on actual costs for relocation shipments received from the organizations. It also provided information on relocation shipment options offered by the organizations in the common system. Based on the analysis of the actual relocation shipment cost data for the period from 2018 to 2020, the ICSC secretariat proposed to maintain the ceiling for relocation shipment at the current level of \$ 18,000.

Discussion in the Commission

243. The representative of the Human Resources Network concurred with the findings presented by the ICSC secretariat and supported maintaining the ceiling at the current level of \$ 18,000.

244. The representatives of the three federations were in agreement with the Human Resources Network as well as the ICSC secretariat's recommendation to maintain the ceiling for the relocation shipment lump-sum payment at the current level of \$18,000, in accordance with the methodology. Furthermore, noting that some organizations in the common system only provided for full removal of goods by the organization and not a lump sum, the representative of FICSA urged the organizations to provide maximum flexibility to fit individual circumstances, especially in a time of movement restrictions and supply chain interruptions.

245. The Commission noted that 23 out of the 27 reporting organizations⁸ were offering full removal of household goods for relocation by the organization. In three of these organizations, however, there had been no request for relocation shipments by the organization for the period from 2018 to 2020 as all relocating staff members

⁸ The following responded to the questionnaire survey conducted by the ICSC secretariat: FAO, IAEA, ICAO, IFAD, ILO, IMO, International Seabed Authority, ITC, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, ITU, PAHO, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty, United Nations, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, UPU, UN-Women, UNWTO, UNRWA, WFP, WHO and WIPO. UNAIDS and WMO did not respond.

had opted for the lump-sum option. The Commission expressed its concern that only 14 out of the remaining 20 organizations had provided data on the actual costs of relocation shipments handled by the organization. The Commission reiterated the importance of organizations providing such cost data which would allow a comprehensive and meaningful review of relocation shipments based on a thorough analysis by its secretariat.

246. The Commission observed the emerging trend towards more staff opting for the lump-sum option in those organizations that offered both full removal of household goods by organization and the lump-sum option. It considered that the data and trend on the proportions of staff who opted for any of the two options would be useful to monitor and to make an informed decision, as necessary, regarding cost data requirements in the future.

247. The Commission recognized that the current increases in prices due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other economic factors such as increases in energy prices, could also have had an impact on the prevailing shipping rates. The members of the Commission acknowledged, however, that any such increases in shipping costs would be fully captured during the next periodic review which would cover the period from 2021 to 2023.

248. The Commission noted that while the analysis showed a decrease in average shipping costs over the period under review (i.e., from 2018 to 2020), it was agreed that the rate of the ceiling for the relocation shipment-related lump-sum payment should be maintained at the current level of \$18,000 due to recent increases in inflation and concomitant costs.

Decisions by the Commission

249. The Commission decided:

(a) To take note of the information pertaining to the review of ceiling for relocation shipment;

(b) To maintain the ceiling for the relocation shipment-related lump-sum payment in lieu of full removal by organization at the current level of \$18,000;

(c) To request its secretariat to review the ceiling for relocation shipment payment every three years using actual shipment cost data obtained from the organizations of the United Nations common system;

(d) To request all organizations of the United Nations common system to provide data on the actual costs of relocation shipments and other relevant information every three years in order to conduct the Commission's review effectively.

Chapter V

Conditions of service of General Service and other locally recruited categories: review of the General Service salary survey methodologies

250. The General Service and other locally recruited categories account for 60 per cent of staff in the common system. In addition to the General Service and National Professional Officer categories, the two most populous categories, there are other categories of locally recruited staff including Security Service, Trades and Crafts, Language Teachers and Public Information Assistants, in use mainly by organizations in New York.

251. The salaries of staff in the General Service and other locally recruited categories are set on the basis of the Flemming principle, which was initially promulgated by the Committee of Experts on Salary, Allowances and Leave Systems, known as the Flemming Committee, in 1949. It has been reconfirmed by both the Commission and the General Assembly on numerous occasions. The current formulation of the Flemming principle reads as follows:

It is stated under Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations that the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. To comply with the standards established by the Charter as regards the employment of locally recruited staff, the organizations of the United Nations system must be competitive with those employers in the same labour market who recruit staff of equally high calibre and qualifications for work which is similar in nature and equal in value to that of the organizations. Remaining competitive in order to both attract and retain staff of these high standards requires that the conditions of service for locally recruited staff be determined by reference to the best prevailing conditions of service among other employers in the locality. The conditions of service, including both paid remuneration and other basic elements of compensation, are to be among the best in the locality, without being the absolute best.

252. The responsibilities of ICSC with regard to the establishment of salaries for staff in the General Service and other locally recruited categories are specified in the Commission's statute. According to article 10 (a), it makes recommendations to the General Assembly on "the broad principles for the determination of the conditions of service of the staff." Under article 11 (a), the Commission establishes "the methods by which the principles for determining conditions of service should be applied." Finally, under article 12 (1), at the headquarters duty stations "and such other duty stations as may from time to time be added" at the request of CEB, the Commission is expected to "establish the relevant facts for, and make recommendations as to, the salary scales of staff in the General Service and other locally recruited staff."

253. To carry out these functions, the Commission established two methodologies to conduct surveys of best prevailing conditions of employment at different locations: one for headquarters duty stations (approved in 1982), to which a number of additional locations with similar market conditions were later added; and the other for all other duty stations (approved in 1983). Both methodologies are based on the Flemming principle and are essentially similar. They differ, however, in certain parameters of how the surveys are conducted depending on the degree of sophistication of the local labour market, for example, availability of international and other employers, diversity of economic sectors, and numbers of common system staff.

254. To ensure their efficiency and effectiveness, both methodologies are reviewed and revised as necessary at the end of each round of headquarters salary surveys based on experience gained and lessons learned during the completed survey round. Previous such reviews started after the second survey round and were conducted in 1987, 1992, 1997, 2003 and from 2008 to 2011.

255. The current review was launched by the Commission at its eighty-seventh session upon the completion of the seventh headquarters survey round (2012–2019). As part of the preparations for the review, a survey was conducted in 2018 among stakeholders, including the common system organizations and staff representatives, as well as local salary survey committees, about their salary survey experience. The input received helped to identify in a comprehensive manner all issues and concerns with the methodologies, which needed to be addressed during the review. These concerns, grouped by broader categories, related, *inter alia*, to: lack of employer participation; categorization of duty stations for salary survey purposes; adequate representation of the national civil service; the role of the local salary survey committee; collection and analysis of survey data; application of results and interim adjustments; special measures in situations of extreme difficulty; and other issues.

256. Prior to and during the review, the General Assembly made two requests relevant to the subject. In 2016, in its resolution [71/264](#) (sect. III.A), it requested the Commission, during the next review of the General Service salary survey methodologies under the Flemming principle, to consider the possibility of further increases in the weight of the local national civil services among the retained employers, taking into account the fact that the United Nations is a civil service organization, as well as past experiences of the Commission from previous rounds of surveys. In 2021, in its resolution [76/240](#) (para. 16), the Assembly requested the Commission to conduct a pilot application of external data for salary surveys, taking into account the opinions of all of the parties concerned. Both these requests were addressed during the review as detailed below.

257. In addition, in 2018, all Member States were contacted for data on compensation of their national civil service. In particular, information was requested on jobs comparable to the General Service staff within their domestic national civil service structures. Although a total of 20 responses were received, the feedback proved instrumental in subsequent deliberations of issues requested by the General Assembly, such as the nomination of a mandatory national civil service agency in local surveys as well as the weight assigned to the national civil service agency in the local salary surveys.

258. To facilitate the review, the Commission established a tripartite working group consisting of ICSC members and representatives of common system organizations and staff federations. The working group was, *inter alia*, tasked with:

- (a) Addressing the issues identified during the seventh round of salary surveys and proposing solutions to those problems for the consideration of the Commission;
- (b) Reviewing ways of obtaining the survey data, including the possibility of purchasing data from external sources;
- (c) Studying the adequate representation of the national civil service;
- (d) Proposing revisions to the text of both methodologies accordingly.

259. The working group met seven times between 2019 and 2022, both virtually and in person. The meetings of the working group were conducted in a constructive and open atmosphere with full participation and engagement of all stakeholders. Every effort was made to ensure transparency and inclusiveness of the group's proceedings and to address the concerns identified with the views of all participants duly taken

into account. As a result, all of the group's recommendations were adopted by consensus.

260. After each of its meetings, the working group reported its progress to the Commission which reviewed the group's proposals and provided further guidance. The review was completed at the Commission's ninety-fourth session in July 2022 when the Commission finalized the revision of the two methodologies based on its decisions on a modified approach to the assessment of the conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited staff to be applied during the next survey round. A general overview of these decisions is provided in the section below.

Discussion in the Commission

261. The Commission and all its stakeholders, noting the request of the General Assembly in 2016 (see para. 256 above), agreed that any modifications to the salary survey approach should continue to be based on the Flemming principle. This was a fundamental and overriding consideration that underlay the Commission's review of the working group's proposals.

262. The Commission recognized that issues relating to employer participation and collecting the necessary compensation data accounted for a significant share of the concerns identified by stakeholders prior to the review. In order to address these concerns, it decided to introduce a pilot project whereby conventional salary surveys would be complemented with, or replaced by, the use of externally purchased compensation data. The Commission was informed that the estimated financial implications of the pilot project amounted to up to \$4.6 million depending on the actual number of locations for which external data are purchased.

263. The pilot project would be implemented during the eighth round of surveys and would be evaluated upon the completion of the round. While agreeing that the pilot project should be run over a reasonable period of time to allow for a meaningful assessment, the Commission considered that the typical duration of a round, 8 to 10 years, would be too long. It therefore decided to shorten the next round of surveys to about five years, by scheduling two surveys per year from the eight headquarters duty stations. Surveys at all non-headquarters duty stations would be conducted once during that period according to the established survey periodicity.

264. Under the terms of the pilot project, a conventional survey could still be conducted, provided that all the survey requirements were met. However, if the survey could not be completed within a reasonable time, external salary data, when available, would be used to replace data from missing comparators. In addition, the local salary survey committee could unanimously decide to dispense with the collection of data from private sector employers and proceed to the use of external data.

265. With regard to the coverage of external salary data, it was observed that the national civil service compensation data were generally not captured in commercial vendor databases. In this connection, mindful of the significance attached by the General Assembly to including public sector and national civil service employers in the salary review process, the Commission was of the view that data from these employers should be secured prior to considering the use of external data in a salary survey. In order to address the delays experienced during the seventh round owing to the lack of participation of national civil service employers at some locations, representatives of the organizations proposed that the selection base for these employers should be expanded and that national civil service employers should be represented by a mainstream national ministry (e.g. ministry of finance, interior, treasury or the like) and not limited to the ministry of foreign affairs as was currently the case. The Commission, agreeing with the proposal, considered that in order to improve the rate of participation, national civil service employers could also be

contacted by the Chair of the Commission through their permanent missions to the United Nations and by the heads of the coordinating agencies locally, in addition to the local survey committees. Furthermore, the Assembly could also be requested to solicit the cooperation of Member States in encouraging the participation of their national civil service employers in salary surveys.

266. As to the appropriate representation of the national civil service, it was recalled that, currently, a one-to-one comparison of common system salaries with the national civil employer was conducted with a pre-assigned weight, which was already double that of any other employer. The Commission agreed that, in order to establish whether a further increase in the weight of this comparison was appropriate or advisable, the full scope of the General Assembly request should be assessed, namely, whether such an increase would be in line with the Flemming principle and whether it would be supported by the Commission's experience in the previous round of surveys. It was noted in this regard that a further increase in the weight of the one-to-one comparison with a single individual employer could constitute a deviation from the Flemming principle, especially if that single employer reflected neither the best nor the prevailing conditions of employment in the locality. Moreover, the experience with the previous survey round of surveys had shown that, in some cases, the current weighting approach might have unduly boosted the negative impact on the overall survey results. Thus, having reviewed the issue, the Commission agreed that the existing weight assigned to the mandatory employer should be maintained.

267. In order to further alleviate problems relating to employer participation in conventional surveys, the Commission considered it necessary to revise the requirements for the size of participating comparators. In this regard, the representatives of the staff federations suggested to standardize the required number of General Service-type employees per employer to 20 at all duty stations and to align it with the minimum requirement currently applicable to field duty stations with developing labour markets. The Commission decided to approve this revision, recalling that, during the seventh round, the size of comparators limited the retention of competitive employers, did not correspond to the size of some common system organizations at many duty stations, and/or did not reflect the realities of local conditions in some labour markets, even at some headquarters duty stations, whose economies were dominated by small or medium-size companies. At the same time, the Commission agreed that, given this new flexibility, the time allocated to the data collection from comparators should not remain unlimited. With the reduction of the number of employees, the pool of potential comparators would be increased. Consequently, the previous difficulties related to employer participation should be resolved or at least reduced. Taking this into account, the Commission decided to limit the conventional survey data collection period to a maximum of six months, after which external data would be used to finalize the survey if needed.

268. The Commission noted that, as a result of implementing the pilot project at all duty stations, the reference check process used instead of conventional surveys at duty stations with low numbers of local staff would be discontinued. Nevertheless, the need for a flexible process that took into account the capacity of local committees at those duty stations remained valid. In this regard, the Commission decided to adapt the parameters of the pilot project accordingly. In particular, the list of benchmark jobs would not be based on the local job inventory as is the practice at duty stations with a larger number of local staff, but it would rather be based on a predetermined list of jobs likely to be found at most comparators.

269. The Commission considered the impact of changing the source of data in salary assessments and concluded that operational rules and transitional arrangements were necessary in order to maintain stability in local salaries of the common system. It decided that, in cases where external data were used, unexpected and excessive

positive results would be phased-in taking into consideration the general market salary movement at the locality. In the same vein, the Commission decided that, in cases of negative results, regardless of the data source, salaries would be frozen until labour market salaries, tracked by a notional scale, converged with the existing scale. Noting that in some duty stations two scales were already in effect and taking into account their recommendation to no longer continue this practice, the Commission decided to accelerate the closing of the gap between the two scales taking into consideration survey results and the general market salary movement at the locality.

270. In addition to abolishing the practice of administering dual salary scales, the Commission also decided to phase out multiple rates of dependency allowances. Currently, if a survey results in a lower allowance, the new rate is only applied to newly hired staff while the old, higher rate is grandfathered indefinitely for staff already on board. The Commission, at the proposal of the organizations, decided to limit to 12 months the period for which those allowances would be grandfathered.

271. The Commission assessed the implications of the pilot project for other locally recruited categories in use globally by common system organizations. Two issues emerged. The first issue related to the fact that the survey methodology used during the seventh round at the headquarters duty stations was not designed to review salaries of the National Professional Officers category since this category of staff was not prevalent in these duty stations. However, the methodology had also been applied to an additional six non-headquarters duty stations with similar market conditions, where National Professional Officers were normally recruited. Taking this into consideration, the Commission decided that during the eighth round of surveys those six locations would be surveyed under the same methodology applied to all other non-headquarters duty stations which also provided details for surveying National Professional Officers.

272. The second issue associated with the global implementation of the pilot project referred to different categories of staff in New York, in particular the Security Service category. When the Commission noted the difficulties in finding suitable comparators and establishing relevant job matches during the survey conducted in the sixth round, it had decided that for the next round, the results of the survey for jobs in the General Service and other locally recruited categories would also be applied to the Security Service salary scale. During the most recent review of the methodologies, the representatives of the staff federations reported recruitment and retention difficulties for this category of staff throughout the seventh round. In view of this as well as the fact that a separate salary scale existed for this category in New York, the Commission decided that during the eighth round, a survey for the Security Service category in full compliance with the established methodology would be conducted. Should any substantial difficulties be encountered, the results of the General Service salary survey would be applied to the Security Service salary scale.

273. The Commission noted that due to the implementation of the pilot project and the required streamlining of some aspects of the methodologies, it was necessary to review the roles and responsibilities of the survey actors, in particular the local salary survey committee, which is an independent technical committee composed of representatives from both the organizations and the staff members serving in the survey duty station and which acts as the principal partner at the locality for the purpose of implementing the methodology. The Commission decided that in view of the additional responsibilities assigned to the local salary service committees related to the use of external data, adequate training should be provided to their members either online or in person as necessary. The training would allow the committees to perform their functions efficiently and to improve the communication within the committee and within the duty station taking into account the confidentiality measures already in place.

274. In addition to the recommended changes to the methodologies detailed in the working group report, the Commission also endorsed other technical recommendations pertaining to the quantification of benefits, periodicity of interim adjustments, the calculation of the non-pensionable component, the survey schedule (annex XII), categorization of duty stations for salary survey purposes, the revised survey questionnaire and other items.

275. Finally, the Commission noted that the success of a global implementation of the pilot project depended not only on its application to all duty stations and all categories of staff, but also on the implementation of results in a coordinated manner among organizations in each duty station. This coordination would be required both at the time of comprehensive surveys and interim adjustments.

Decisions of the Commission

276. Taking into account the recommendations of the working group and the requests from the General Assembly, the Commission decided:

- (a) To approve the changes outlined above and reflect them in the revised methodologies I and II for application in the eighth round of surveys;
- (b) To implement at all duty stations the pilot project for external data as detailed in annex XIII;
- (c) To adopt the following approach with respect to national civil service employers:
 - (i) That the national civil service should be represented by a mainstream national ministry (e.g. treasury, finance, interior, foreign affairs or a similar ministry);
 - (ii) That the requirement of retaining a national civil service employer should be maintained at methodology I and designated methodology II locations;
 - (iii) That, given the experience of the seventh round of surveys, the current weight given to the national civil service employer should be maintained, but its effects should continue to be monitored and reviewed upon the completion of the survey round;
- (d) To approve the schedule for the eighth round of surveys at headquarters duty stations as shown in annex XII;
- (e) To invite the General Assembly to consider soliciting the commitment of Member States to encourage the participation of national civil service employers in common system surveys;
- (f) To request the common system organizations to implement changes resulting from salary reviews and interim adjustments in a coordinated manner in each duty station.

Annex I**Programme of work of the International Civil Service Commission for 2023–2024**

1. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the legislative/governing bodies of the other organizations of the common system.
2. Conditions of service applicable to both categories of staff:
 - (a) Review of the human resources framework;
 - (b) Review of the standards of conduct;
 - (c) Standards of accommodation for air travel;
 - (d) Multilingualism of the workforce;
 - (e) Geographical diversity and rejuvenation of the workforce;
 - (f) Global staff survey.
3. Conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories:
 - (a) Base/floor salary scale;
 - (b) Evolution of the United Nations/United States net remuneration margin;
 - (c) Pensionable remuneration: review of common scale of staff assessment;
 - (d) Post adjustment issues: reports and agendas of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions;
 - (e) Children's and secondary dependants' allowances: review of methodology and level;
 - (f) Education grant: review of level;
 - (g) Review of the implementation of the recruitment incentive;
 - (h) Hardship allowance: study of best practices in hardship classification of duty stations;
 - (i) Hardship allowance: improvement of data collection modalities;
 - (j) Review of the definition of category H duty stations;
 - (k) Payment of amount in lieu of settling-in at category E duty stations that are not designated as non-family: review of the impact of ICSC recommendation on payment;
 - (l) Non-family service allowance: scope and parameters;
 - (m) Danger pay: review of level;
 - (n) Security evacuation allowance.
4. Conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited categories:
 - (a) Implementation of local salary survey methodologies: surveys at headquarters locations;
 - (b) Study on the feasibility and impact of establishing a separate General Service salary scale for Bern.
5. Review of the consultative process and working arrangements of the International Civil Service Commission.
6. Monitoring of implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission and the General Assembly.

Annex II

Sources of information on diversity in the United Nations common system organizations

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Publicly available sources</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Geographical distribution</i>	<i>Gender</i>
CTBTO	–			
FAO	–			
IAEA	“Personnel: women in the Secretariat”	x	x	x
ICAO	“Status of the ICAO workforce”	x	x	x
IFAD	“Diversity at IFAD”	x	x	x
ILO	“Composition and structure of the ILO staff”	x	x	x
IMO	–			
ISA	–			
ITC	Annual report		x	x
ITLOS	–			
ITU	Human resources reporting and statistics ^a	x	x	x
PAHO	–		See WHO	
United Nations	Report of the Secretary-General entitled “Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics” ^b	x	x	x
UNAIDS	Brochure “Update on human resources management issues: people of UNAIDS 2020” ^c	x	x	x
UNDP	–	x	x	
UNESCO	“Key data on UNESCO staff”			
UNFPA	–			
UNHCR	“Age, gender and diversity accountability report”	x	x	x
UNICEF	Information on careers website ^d		x	x
UNIDO	–			

Organization	Publicly available sources	Age	Geographical distribution	Gender
UNOPS	Annex I to the annual report of the Executive Director ^e	x	x	x
UNRWA	–			
UN-Women	–			
UNWTO	Human resources report ^f	x	x	x
UPU	–			
WFP	Gender parity ^g			x
WHO	Workforce data as at 31 July 2021 ^h	x	x	x
WIPO	WIPO workforce 2021 ⁱ	x	x	x
WMO	–			

Abbreviations: CTBTO, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IAEA, International Atomic Energy Agency; ICAO, International Civil Aviation Organization; IFAD, International Fund for Agricultural Development; ILO, International Labour Organization; IMO, International Maritime Organization; ISA, International Seabed Authority; ITC, International Trade Centre; ITLOS, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea; ITU, International Telecommunication Union; PAHO, Pan American Health Organization; UNAIDS, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UNHCR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund; UNIDO, United Nations Industrial Development Organization; UNOPS, United Nations Office for Project Services; UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; UN-Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; UNWTO, World Tourism Organization; UPU, Universal Postal Union; WFP, World Food Programme; WHO, World Health Organization; WIPO, World Intellectual Property Organization; WMO, World Meteorological Organization.

^a See <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiYzQ3ZThiNDgtNzE2Yi00N2Q3LTIiZWmYTVVjNDFjMTg5NjJjIiwidCI6IjZlZTQ2NGQ3LTA0ZTYtNGI4Ny05MTNjLTI0YmQ4OTIxOWZkMyIsImMiOiJ9>.

^b A/76/570 and A/76/570/Corr.1.

^c See www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/People%20of%20UNAIDS%202020%20_single%20pages.pdf.

^d See www.unicef.org/careers/equity-inclusion-and-diversity-unicef.

^e See https://content.unops.org/documents/libraries/executive-board/documents-for-sessions/2021/annual-session/unops-segment-item-15-annual-report-of-the-executive-director/en/DP-OPS-2021-4-Annex-1_EN.pdf.

^f See https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-10/A24_05_c_Human%20resources%20report_En_0.pdf?jeeX5FDn9ndAbM4DkVsNeS3REoe0WUrP.

^g See www.wfp.org/gender-parity.

^h See www.who.int/publications/m/item/workforce-data-as-at-31-july-2021.

ⁱ See www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo_workforce_2021.pdf.

Annex III**Measures to foster dynamism, creativity and innovative contributions and enhance/expand recruitment opportunities for younger candidates**

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Young professionals programme</i>	<i>Recruitment/outreach (e.g. career fairs, new platform)</i>	<i>Increasing entry-level posts (Professional and higher)</i>	<i>Junior Professional Officers</i>	<i>Youth groups</i>	<i>Other initiatives</i>
CTBTO		x			CTBTO Youth Group	
FAO	x					
IAEA				x	x (United Nations-Nuclear Young Generation)	Youth-focused mentoring programme
ICAO						Young Aviation Professionals programme, OurICAO; direct communication with the Office of the Secretary-General
IFAD		x			x (Youth Network)	Innovation challenge
ILO			x			Staff ideas initiative portal; review of entry-level requirements (e.g. experience, education and languages)
IMO					x (Young IMO)	
ISA				x		Lunch-and-learn sessions
ITC		x				Mentoring programme; Innovation Lab; intern network
ITLOS	x			x		

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Young professionals programme</i>	<i>Recruitment/outreach (e.g. career fairs, new platform)</i>	<i>Increasing entry-level posts (Professional and higher)</i>	<i>Junior Professional Officers</i>	<i>Youth groups</i>	<i>Other initiatives</i>
ITU	x (under creation)	x				Mentorship and learning opportunities
PAHO						Roster mechanism for positions normally filled by young professionals
United Nations	x	x		x	x (Young UN)	Innovation Network; Innovation Day; #NewWork initiative; Emerging Talent Programme; CEB Task Force on the Future of the United Nations System Workforce; talent pool initiative
UNAIDS			x (agreed separation for some 100 staff provides an opportunity to recruit relatively younger staff and make available lower-graded positions)			Revised consideration of “international” experience requirements for National Professional Officers and entry-level Professional positions could reduce recruitment barriers
UNDP		x		x		UNDP-UNV Talent Programme for Young Professionals with Disabilities, graduate programme
UNESCO		x		x	x (Young UNESCO)	Mentoring programme
UNFPA		x				Intern round tables

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Young professionals programme</i>	<i>Recruitment/outreach (e.g. career fairs, new platform)</i>	<i>Increasing entry-level posts (Professional and higher)</i>	<i>Junior Professional Officers</i>	<i>Youth groups</i>	<i>Other initiatives</i>
UNHCR				x		Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board; talent pools; United Nations Youth Volunteers
UNICEF				x	x (Young UNICEF)	Employee resource groups, YoU Are Leaders
UNIDO	x (proposed)	x		x		Mentor programme
UNOPS				x		Recruitment process for junior national roles (ICSC-3 and ICSC-4, equivalent to GS-3 and GS-4) must consider transferable skills rather than only past technical experience
UNRWA				x		United Nations Secretariat Together Mentoring and Networking Programme
UN-Women						Young Women Leaders Initiative with UNV; remote detail assignments
UNWTO				x		Students' League; Academy; Jobs Factory; Global Youth Summit
UPU		x	Restructuring to lower the level of some positions, with the possibility of upgrading later	x		Involvement of young staff in activities and events; mentoring programme for university students

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Young professionals programme</i>	<i>Recruitment/outreach (e.g. career fairs, new platform)</i>	<i>Increasing entry-level posts (Professional and higher)</i>	<i>Junior Professional Officers</i>	<i>Youth groups</i>	<i>Other initiatives</i>
WFP			Creation of P-1 level positions for Budget Programming Officers and Junior Emergency Response Officers		x (Youth Network)	Advisory board of young people; Innovation Accelerator; memorandum of understanding with UNV to increase numbers
WHO	x (under development)			x		Structured career support
WIPO						Youth coordinator; youth focal points in each sector; Create Lab to promote innovation
WMO			x (introduced P-1 level posts in administrative and technical departments)			

Abbreviations: CTBTO, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IAEA, International Atomic Energy Agency; ICAO, International Civil Aviation Organization; IFAD, International Fund for Agricultural Development; ILO, International Labour Organization; IMO, International Maritime Organization; ISA, International Seabed Authority; ITC, International Trade Centre; ITLOS, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea; ITU, International Telecommunication Union; PAHO, Pan American Health Organization; UN, United Nations; UNAIDS, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UNHCR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund; UNIDO, United Nations Industrial Development Organization; UNOPS, United Nations Office for Project Services; UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; UNV, United Nations Volunteers programme; UN-Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; UNWTO, World Tourism Organization; UPU, Universal Postal Union; WFP, World Food Programme; WHO, World Health Organization; WIPO, World Intellectual Property Organization; WMO, World Meteorological Organization.

Annex IV

Proposed framework of action for the 2022–2023 review of standards of conduct

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
Establishment of a working group on standards of conduct for the international civil service by the International Civil Service Commission	Commission	July 2022 (94th session)
Request for the nomination of representatives	All organizations and staff bodies	By 15 August 2022
Collection of preliminary data and views	Nominated representatives of organizations	15 September 2022
Organization of the working group, development of the terms of reference and preparation of necessary documentation	ICSC secretariat	30 September 2022
First meeting of the working group to develop a detailed road map for conducting the review of the standards of conduct based on the views of all stakeholders	Working group: representatives of organizations (a smaller group as selected by CEB) and staff bodies, some Commission members and ICSC secretariat	November 2022
Submission of a progress report to the Commission	Organizations, staff bodies, Commission and its secretariat (Commission session)	March 2023 (95th session)
Implementation of the road map of the working group and finalization of the revision of the standards of conduct	Working group: representatives of organizations (a smaller group as selected by CEB) and staff bodies, some Commission members and ICSC secretariat	April–December 2023
Submission of finalized draft to the Commission	Organizations, staff bodies, Commission and its secretariat (Commission session)	March 2024 (97th session)

Abbreviations: CEB, United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination; ICSC, International Civil Service Commission.

Annex V

Parental leave-related policies in global and regional multilateral organizations

Table 1
Parental leave benefits in major global institutions

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Maternity leave</i>	<i>Paternity leave</i>	<i>Adoption leave</i>
United Nations common system	16 weeks	4 weeks at family duty stations 8 weeks at non-family duty stations	8 weeks
World Bank (effective 1 December 2018)	As parental leave: 100 working days (20 weeks) for primary caregiver	As parental leave: 100 working days (20 weeks) for primary caregiver; 50 working days (10 weeks) for secondary caregiver	As parental leave: 100 working days (20 weeks) for primary caregiver; 50 working days (10 weeks) for secondary caregiver
International Monetary Fund	As parental leave: 12 weeks (birth mother) 8 weeks (non-birth mother)	As parental leave: 8 weeks	As parental leave: 8 weeks
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	16 weeks; 26 weeks if expectant mothers have had 2 live births or there are 2 dependent children in the household under the age of 20; 34 weeks for multiple births; additional 6 weeks for single parents	4 weeks for single births and 6 weeks for multiple births	10 weeks of parental leave starting from the date of the child's arrival in the household

Table 2
Parental leave benefits in regional institutions

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Maternity leave</i>	<i>Paternity leave</i>	<i>Adoption leave</i>
Asia and the Pacific			
Asian Development Bank (new policy effective 1 January 2021)	26 weeks if primary caregiver is the birth mother; otherwise, 20 calendar weeks	20 weeks if primary caregiver, otherwise 20 working days	20 weeks if primary caregiver, otherwise 20 working days
Association of Southeast Asian Nations	90 calendar days	5 working days	Not available

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Maternity leave</i>	<i>Paternity leave</i>	<i>Adoption leave</i>
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation	16 weeks, of which 8 weeks may be taken flexibly over 12 months after the child's birth; also entitled to 6 days of childcare leave per year for children under 7 years, 2 days for children between 7 and 12. Child medical leave of 3 days per year up to age 12	2 weeks; also entitled to 6 days of childcare leave per year for children under 7 years, 2 days for children between 7 and 12 years. Child medical leave of 3 days per year up to age 12	No information available
Europe			
European Union institutions	20 weeks; 24 weeks for multiple or premature birth, or the birth of a child with disabilities or serious illness. Also entitled to parental leave	Special leave of 10 days with full pay, 20 days if the child has disabilities. Parental leave of up to six months with partial pay (allowance)	20 weeks, rising to 24 weeks if the child adopted has disabilities
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe	16 weeks, with an additional 2 weeks for multiple births (two hours off daily to nurse the child up to age 1)	4 weeks; 8 weeks in non-family duty stations	10 weeks
North Atlantic Treaty Organization	Prenatal and postnatal leave of 14 weeks plus parental leave of 6 weeks, for total of 20 weeks; additional 1 week each for multiple births	Parental leave of 6 weeks; additional 1 week for multiple births	Parental leave of 6 weeks; additional 1 week for the adoption of 2 or more children
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development ^a	22 consecutive calendar weeks; 33 weeks for multiple births. The paid leave could be followed by a further 30 weeks of unpaid leave (45 weeks for multiple births)	Up to 20 working days of paid birth leave, 30 working days for multiple births. An additional 30 consecutive calendar weeks could be approved as unpaid birth leave	Up to 22 consecutive calendar weeks or up to 20 working days, to be decided by the Director of Human Resources. An additional 30 calendar weeks of unpaid adoption leave may be granted

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Maternity leave</i>	<i>Paternity leave</i>	<i>Adoption leave</i>
Africa			
African Development Bank (new policy effective summer 2021)	16 weeks on full pay, which may be extended for 2 more months with half-time work paid at full salary for the first month and half salary for second month	4 weeks	8 weeks if the child is under 6 months of age, 10 working days if the child is over 6 months
East African Community	60 working days at full salary, subject to once every two years	10 working days, subject to once every two years	No information available
Southern African Development Community	90 days (including non-working days)	5 working days	30 days if child is less than 3 months old
Americas and the Caribbean			
Organization of American States	12 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks
Inter-American Development Bank (effective March 2020)	100 working days for the birth mother as the primary caregiver	100 working days if the primary caregiver, 50 working days if the secondary caregiver	100 working days if the primary caregiver, 50 working days if the secondary caregiver
Caribbean Community	14 weeks if in service for 2 years or more; 8 weeks if service of 1 year; prorated if less than 1 year (4 weeks minimum)	4 weeks (may be taken in a continuous period or separate periods, within 12 months from the child's birth)	Not available
Eastern Caribbean Central Bank	3 months, of which 2.5 months at full pay	No information available	No information available
Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR)	14 weeks, followed by 3 months of reduced work schedule to permit breastfeeding	10 working days	14 weeks for the new mother and 10 working days for the new father
Andean Community	10 weeks	5 calendar days	Not available

^a A staff member of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development eligible for paid birth leave, paid adoption leave or paid surrogacy leave where the staff member is not the primary caregiver for the dependent child shall, subject to terms and conditions determined by the Managing Director of Human Resources and Organizational Development, be entitled to up to 14 consecutive calendar weeks of paid shared leave. The adoption leave entitlements also apply to surrogacy. A staff member is also eligible for up to 13 weeks of unpaid parental leave to help to facilitate the giving of care to each of the staff member's dependent children under the age of 18 years.

Annex VI

Current parental leave policies and practices in the United Nations common system

Organization	Maternity leave (in weeks)		Paternity leave (in weeks)		Adoption leave (in weeks)			
	16	Additional 8 special leave with full pay	4 at family and 8 at non-family duty stations	Additional 8 special leave with full pay	8	10	16	18
United Nations Secretariat	✓		✓		✓			
UNDP	✓		✓		✓			
UNFPA	✓	✓	✓	✓ ^a			✓	
UNOPS	✓		✓		✓			
UNHCR	✓	✓	✓					✓
UNICEF	✓	✓	✓	✓ ^b			✓	
UNRWA	✓		✓		✓			
ITC	✓		4 weeks only		✓			
ILO	✓		✓		✓			
FAO	✓	✓	✓			✓		
WFP	✓	✓	✓			✓		
UNESCO	✓	✓	✓		✓			
WHO	✓ ^c	✓	✓ ^d				✓ ^d	
ICAO	✓		4 weeks only		✓			
UPU	✓		2 weeks only		2 weeks only			
ITU	✓		4 weeks only					
IMO	✓		4 weeks only		4 weeks only			
WIPO	✓	✓	8 weeks only		✓		✓ ⁱ	
IFAD	✓	✓	8 weeks		✓			
UNIDO	✓		4 weeks only		4 weeks only			
IAEA	✓		4 weeks only		✓			
UNWTO	✓		4 weeks only		✓			
UN-Women	✓	✓ ^e	✓	✓ ^e			✓	
ISA	✓		✓		4 weeks (family duty stations) and 8 weeks (non-family duty stations)			
UNAIDS	✓ ^c	✓	✓ ^f	✓			✓ ^g	

Organization	Maternity leave (in weeks)		Paternity leave (in weeks)		Adoption leave (in weeks)			
	16	Additional 8 special leave with full pay	4 at family and 8 at non-family duty stations	Additional 8 special leave with full pay	8	10	16	18
CTBTO	✓ ^h		4 weeks only		✓			
PAHO	✓		✓		✓			

Abbreviations: CTBTO, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IAEA, International Atomic Energy Agency; ICAO, International Civil Aviation Organization; IFAD, International Fund for Agricultural Development; ILO, International Labour Organization; IMO, International Maritime Organization; ISA, International Seabed Authority; ITC, International Trade Centre; ITU, International Telecommunication Union; PAHO, Pan American Health Organization; UNAIDS, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UNHCR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund; UNIDO, United Nations Industrial Development Organization; UNOPS, United Nations Office for Project Services; UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; UN-Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; UNWTO, World Tourism Organization; UPU, Universal Postal Union; WFP, World Food Programme; WHO, World Health Organization; WIPO, World Intellectual Property Organization.

^a UNFPA grants an extra 12 weeks of paternity leave for staff at family duty stations to bring the total to 16 weeks for paternity leave irrespective of the duty station.

^b UNICEF grants 16 weeks in total for paternity leave irrespective of the duty station (family or non-family).

^c WHO and UNAIDS both have a basic maternity leave policy of 20 weeks for multiple births.

^d WHO grants an extra 4 weeks of paternity leave in the event of multiple birth and an extra 2 weeks of adoption leave if more than one child is adopted; in addition, WHO provides surrogacy leave of 16 weeks (18 weeks if more than one child) in the form of special leave with full pay.

^e UN-Women adds 8 weeks of pre-delivery leave to the maternity entitlement of staff serving at category D and E duty stations, making it a total of 32 weeks of paid time off; paternity leave totals 16 weeks for all staff, meaning that staff at headquarters get 12 weeks of special leave with full pay in addition to the normal 4-week paternity leave entitlement.

^f UNAIDS basic paternity leave is 4 weeks for single births and 8 weeks for multiple births, supplemented by 12 weeks and 8 weeks, respectively, of special leave with full pay.

^g UNAIDS has basic adoption leave and surrogacy leave of 8 weeks, supplemented by 8 weeks of special leave with full pay for single births and 10 weeks for multiple births.

^h CTBTO grants 20 weeks of maternity leave for births of twins and 22 weeks for triplets, plus an additional 4 weeks if delivery is by caesarean section.

ⁱ WIPO grants an additional 8 weeks of special leave with full pay to staff on fixed-term, continuing and permanent appointments, which brings the total duration of adoption leave to 16 weeks.

Annex VII

Parental leave: relevant conventions and recommendations of entities and organizations in the United Nations system

The working group on parental leave reviewed the following conventions and recommendations of entities and organizations in the United Nations system on gender equality, maternity protection for women workers, workers with family responsibilities and maternal and child health and welfare that had been important in framing new policies in several United Nations common system organizations:

(a) Maternity protection for women workers has been a core issue for the International Labour Organization (ILO) since its foundation in 1919, when the governments, employers and trade unions of member States adopted the Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3), the first of its kind. Maternity protection has two aims: to preserve the health of the mother and the newborn and to provide a measure of job security (protection from dismissal and discrimination, the right to resume work after birth and the maintenance of wages and benefits during maternity). In its Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), ILO states that all countries, regardless of income, should guarantee women a minimum of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave. In its accompanying Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191), ILO suggests that its member States should endeavour to increase maternity leave to at least 18 weeks. According to ILO standards, women should be guaranteed at least two thirds of their previous earnings during paid maternity leave to ensure a suitable standard of living;

(b) Through the adoption of the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), ILO recognized that “a change in the traditional role of men as well as the role of women in society and in the family is needed to achieve full equality between men and women”, as stated in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979, to ensure effective equality of opportunity for men and women with family responsibilities to engage in employment without discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities;

(c) In 2012, the World Health Assembly, in its resolution 65.6,¹ endorsed a comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition, in which six global nutrition targets for 2025 were specified.² The fifth target is focused on increasing the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months to at least 50 per cent. The World Health Organization (WHO) therefore recommends that mothers worldwide exclusively breastfeed infants for the first six months to achieve optimal growth, development and health. It further recommends the promotion of improved complementary feeding practices for all children from 6 to 24 months of age;

(d) The WHO recommendations are based on the particular needs of birth mothers during and after pregnancy as the body adapts to changes. The ILO conventions also serve to recognize the particular needs of pregnant workers and the possible need for adapted work tasks to ensure the safety and health of both the mother and the developing child. The provisions related to minimum periods of protected leave during the immediate prenatal (2 weeks) and postnatal period (6 weeks)³ should therefore be consistent with the guidance provided by WHO concerning the most critical aspects of maternal and infant health. In its guidance, WHO has adopted the use of a single term, postnatal, to refer to all issues pertaining to the birth mother

¹ World Health Organization (WHO), document WHA65/2012/REC/1.

² WHO, document WHO/NMH/NHD/14.1.

³ WHO, document WHO/RHR/15.05.

following the delivery. The postpartum period begins immediately after the birth of a child as the mother's body, including hormone levels and uterus size, returns to a non-pregnant state. The immediate postpartum period is commonly understood to comprise the first six weeks following childbirth. As the interchangeable use of the terms postpartum, which denotes issues pertaining to the mother, and postnatal, which denotes issues pertaining to the baby, sometimes causes confusion, WHO prefers the use of the term postnatal to refer to both types of issues. However, defining the postnatal period at six weeks is arbitrary. In connection with maternal deaths, WHO refers to the extended postpartum period, which can last for up to one year. This definition includes the possibility of depression and suicide occurring during the first year and whether or not such a suicide should be classified as a maternal death. WHO advocates this definition in its 2012 guide to the application of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems to maternal mortality.⁴ In addition, factors such as lack of sleep as a result of caring for a newborn and other conditions influence the length of time that it takes the body of the birth mother to recover completely. Consequently, any parental leave provisions should take into consideration the specific needs of the birth mother for a mandatory fixed period of leave to be taken immediately after the birth of the child;

(e) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development makes maternity protection and work and family measures key to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 3, on good health and well-being, and Goal 5, on gender equality. First, by reducing child and maternal mortality and morbidity, maternity protection promotes the health and well-being of mothers and their babies. Second, by safeguarding women's employment and income security during pregnancy and after childbirth and promoting the equal sharing of unpaid care work between women and men, maternity protection and measures to support care responsibilities are a precondition for gender equality at work and in the home. Therefore, family policies, such as child allowances, and maternity and parental leave, and preschool education and care policies are crucial to achieving these global ambitions;

(f) The Global Commission on the Future of Work proposed a human-centred agenda that strengthens the social contract by placing people and the work that they do at the centre of economic and social policy and business practice. The agenda is focused on implementing transformative and measurable actions for gender equality. As the world of work begins at home, it highlights that, from parental leave to investment in public care services, policies need to foster the sharing of unpaid care work in the home to create genuine equality of opportunity in the workplace;⁵

(g) On 13 September 2017, the Secretary-General launched his system-wide strategy on gender parity⁶ to operationalize system-wide efforts to advance this priority at the United Nations. It provides a road map for reaching parity at the senior levels of leadership in the Organization by 2021 and across the board by 2028. In particular, it covers targets and accountability, special measures, an enabling environment, senior appointments and mission settings. To create an enabling environment, one of the recommended actions is to replace the current maternity, paternity and adoption leave policies with one parental leave policy that provides a period that is equal in length for all parents, provided that specific pre- and post-delivery needs of the birth mother are covered with additional leave in line with the WHO recommendation to provide leave of six months to allow for breastfeeding and bonding with the child. A single policy for parental leave that is equal in length,

⁴ WHO, *The WHO Application of ICD-10 to Deaths during Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Puerperium: ICD-MM* (Geneva, WHO Press, 2012).

⁵ International Labour Organization, *Work for a Brighter Future: Global Commission on the Future of Work*, (Geneva, 2019).

⁶ See www.un.org/gender/sites/www.un.org/gender/files/gender_parity_strategy_october_2017.pdf.

regardless of the parental modality, would neutralize stigmatization and possible fears of hiring women in their childbearing years, as all staff, men and women alike, would have equal access to parental leave. In addition, this approach would help to tackle social norms that place the burden of unpaid childcare on women, as it would give non-birth mothers equal access to the role and encourage more equitable parenting;

(h) The Enabling Environment Guidelines for the United Nations System⁷ and their accompanying supplementary guidance,⁸ both developed in 2019 by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in response to the Secretary-General's system-wide strategy on gender parity, provide guidance on recruitment, workplace flexibility, talent management, standards of conduct and family-friendly policies aimed at creating a more diverse, inclusive and respectful work environment – as both a precursor to achieving gender parity and a key to sustaining it – and have as such been a crucial consideration for the work of the technical task force on parental leave. The second thematic area of the Guidelines specifically addresses family-friendly policies, establishes a high-standard baseline for United Nations organizations and offers a sustainable outlook for securing the position of the United Nations as a valued employer. The following is noted in the Guidelines:

Family-friendly policies are those that further enable staff to effectively balance personal, family and professional commitments as needed throughout the span of their career. They are central to an employer's organizational competitiveness and ability to function efficiently. Such policies have been shown to be strong drivers of employee engagement and often constitute a make-or-break point in terms of retention and career progression for staff. Organizations that provide staff with sufficient support to balance their professional and personal lives are more likely to attract a wider range of qualified candidates and have staff with higher levels of organizational commitment, job satisfaction and, on average, more productive and present work practices.

Policies focused on parental leave have been the main policies addressing family needs, but employees are increasingly facing other care demands and responsibilities as well, such as related to an ageing parent or a sick sibling. Also, consideration of the wide range of disabilities should be accounted for, including psychosocial and intellectual impairments, which are often less recognized. Finally, the supportive nature of these policies should not come at the expense of personnel who do not have children, elder or dependent care issues.

⁷ Available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3799577/files/GenderparityEnabling.pdf>.

⁸ Available at www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2019/Gender-parity-Enabling-environment-guidelines-Supplementary-guidance-en.pdf.

Annex VIII

**Summary of the current standards of accommodation for travel on
official business or mission**

<i>Two thresholds</i>		<i>One threshold</i>		
Single-leg journey of 9+ hours or multi-leg journey of 11+ hours including layover (maximum of two hours connecting time)	Single-leg journey of 9+ hours or multi-leg journey of 11+ hours including layover (maximum of four hours connecting time)	Journey of 12+ hours	Journey of 9+ hours including layover	Journey of 7+ hours of flying time
CTBTO, IMO, ITC, ITLOS, ITU, UNHCR, UNIDO, United Nations, UNRWA, UN-Women, UNWTO, WHO	ISA, UNICEF, UNESCO	UNAIDS	FAO, IAEA, ICAO, ILO, PAHO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, WFP, WIPO	IFAD

Abbreviations: CTBTO, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IAEA, International Atomic Energy Agency; ICAO, International Civil Aviation Organization; IFAD, International Fund for Agricultural Development; ILO, International Labour Organization; IMO, International Maritime Organization; ISA, International Seabed Authority; ITC, International Trade Centre; ITLOS, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea; ITU, International Telecommunication Union; PAHO, Pan American Health Organization; UNAIDS, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UNHCR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund; UNIDO, United Nations Industrial Development Organization; UNOPS, United Nations Office for Project Services; UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; UN-Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; UNWTO, World Tourism Organization; WFP, World Food Programme; WHO, World Health Organization; WIPO, World Intellectual Property Organization.

Annex IX**Proposed salary scale and pay protection points (effective 1 January 2023)****A. Proposed salary scale for the Professional and higher categories showing annual gross salaries and net equivalents after application of staff assessment**

(United States dollars)

Level		Steps												
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII
USG	Gross	212 632												
	Net	155 837												
ASG	Gross	193 080												
	Net	142 933												
D-2	Gross	154 212	157 747	161 282	164 820	168 359	171 895	175 429	178 968	182 503	186 038			
	Net	117 280	119 613	121 946	124 281	126 617	128 951	131 283	133 619	135 952	138 285			
D-1	Gross	137 890	140 817	143 750	146 680	149 599	152 683	155 789	158 889	161 998	165 102	168 206	171 308	174 415
	Net	106 023	108 072	110 125	112 176	114 219	116 271	118 321	120 367	122 419	124 467	126 516	128 563	130 614
P-5	Gross	118 901	121 393	123 886	126 373	128 866	131 353	133 847	136 336	138 827	141 316	143 809	146 294	148 790
	Net	92 731	94 475	96 220	97 961	99 706	101 447	103 193	104 935	106 679	108 421	110 166	111 906	113 653
P-4	Gross	97 139	99 353	101 701	104 104	106 507	108 910	111 317	113 720	116 123	118 523	120 931	123 329	125 733
	Net	77 326	79 008	80 691	82 373	84 055	85 737	87 422	89 104	90 786	92 466	94 152	95 830	97 513
P-3	Gross	79 764	81 813	83 863	85 909	87 961	90 008	92 057	94 108	96 155	98 203	100 279	102 501	104 727
	Net	64 121	65 678	67 236	68 791	70 350	71 906	73 463	75 022	76 578	78 134	79 695	81 251	82 809
P-2	Gross	61 680	63 512	65 343	67 175	69 011	70 845	72 680	74 507	76 341	78 172	80 005	81 842	83 672
	Net	50 377	51 769	53 161	54 553	55 948	57 342	58 737	60 125	61 519	62 911	64 304	65 700	67 091
P-1	Gross	47 471	48 896	50 349	51 905	53 459	55 017	56 570	58 128	59 682	61 239	62 793	64 347	65 904
	Net	39 401	40 584	41 765	42 948	44 129	45 313	46 493	47 677	48 858	50 042	51 223	52 404	53 587

Abbreviations: ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; USG, Under-Secretary-General.

Note: The normal qualifying period for in-grade movement between consecutive steps is one year. The shaded steps in each grade require two years of qualifying service at the preceding step.

B. Proposed pay protection points for staff whose salaries are higher than the maximum salaries on the unified salary scale

(United States dollars)

<i>Level</i>		<i>Pay protection point 1</i>	<i>Pay protection point 2</i>
P-4	Gross	128 140	130 544
	Net	99 198	100 881
P-3	Gross	106 950	109 173
	Net	84 365	85 921
P-2	Gross	85 504	
	Net	68 483	
P-1	Gross	67 458	
	Net	54 768	

Annex X

Yearly comparison and the development of the margin over time

A. Comparison of average net remuneration of United Nations officials in the Professional and higher categories in New York and United States officials in Washington, D.C., by equivalent grades (margin for calendar year 2022)

Grade	Net remuneration (United States dollars)		United Nations/United States ratio (United States, Washington, D.C. = 100)	United Nations/United States ratio adjusted for cost-of- living differential	Weights for calculation of overall ratio ^d
	United Nations ^{a,b}	United States ^c			
P-1	74 232	60 615	122.5	108.5	0.6
P-2	96 050	75 914	126.5	112.0	11.0
P-3	123 192	96 892	127.1	112.6	30.3
P-4	148 112	115 226	128.5	113.8	33.3
P-5	175 615	131 969	133.1	117.9	17.7
D-1	198 639	151 992	130.7	115.8	5.4
D-2	216 204	188 523	114.7	101.6	1.7
Weighted average ratio before adjustment for New York/Washington, D.C., cost-of-living differential					128.5
New York/Washington, D.C., cost-of-living ratio					112.9
Weighted average ratio, adjusted for cost-of-living differential					113.9

^a For the calculation of average United Nations salaries, personnel statistics of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination as at 31 December 2020 were used.

^b Average United Nations net salaries by grade, reflecting 1 month at multiplier 67.8 and 11 months at multiplier 73.8 on the basis of the salary scale in effect from 1 January 2022.

^c For the calculation of average United States federal civil service salaries, personnel statistics as at 31 December 2020 received from the Office of Personnel Management were used.

^d These weights correspond to the United Nations common system staff in grades P-1 to D-2, inclusive, serving at Headquarters and established offices as at 31 December 2020.

B. Calendar-year net remuneration margin levels, 2013–2022

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Margin	119.6	117.4	117.2	114.5	113.0	114.4	113.4	113.0	113.4	113.9

Annex XI**Revised annual amounts payable under the hardship allowance,
effective 1 January 2023**

(United States dollars)

<i>Hardship category</i>	<i>Group 1 (P-1 to P-3)</i>	<i>Group 2 (P-4 and P-5)</i>	<i>Group 3 (D-1 and above)</i>
A	–	–	–
B	6 110	7 330	8 560
C	11 010	13 440	15 890
D	14 670	17 130	19 550
E	18 340	22 000	24 460

Annex XII**Schedule for the eighth round of surveys at headquarters duty stations**

<i>Duty station</i>	<i>Notification to executive heads</i>	<i>Pre-survey consultations</i>	<i>Pre-survey document to Chair</i>	<i>Survey date</i>	<i>End of data collection phase</i>	<i>Survey review</i>
Rome	January 2023	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	November 2023	May 2024	Summer 2024
Montreal	June 2023	Autumn 2023	Winter 2023–2024	April 2024	October 2024	Spring 2025
Paris	December 2023	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	October 2024	April 2025	Summer 2025
London	July 2024	Autumn 2024	Winter 2024–2025	May 2025	November 2025	Spring 2026
New York	December 2024	Spring 2025	Summer 2025	October 2025	April 2026	Summer 2026
Geneva	November 2025	Winter 2025–2026	Spring 2026	September 2026	March 2027	Summer 2027
Madrid	January 2026	Spring 2026	Summer 2026	November 2026	May 2027	Summer 2027
Vienna	June 2026	Autumn 2026	Winter 2026–2027	April 2027	October 2027	Spring 2028

Annex XIII

Terms of reference and parameters of the pilot project on the application of external data

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

(a) For monitoring and evaluation purposes, the eighth round of surveys will be shortened to five years by scheduling two surveys at the 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 will be set at 20 for all locations. Employers with fewer than 20 employees will not be considered. Each of the retained employers must have job matches for at least one out of every three plus one of the benchmark jobs, and for at least one out of every two plus one of the surveyed grades. Single incumbent job matches shall not be considered, with the 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 last for 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 (3, 5, 7, 10, 15 or 20) is achieved within the six-month period, the positioning assessment of common system salaries will be conducted on the basis of data collected from interviewed employers only;

(e) At methodology I and II duty stations in categories I and II, when at least the minimum number of employers is reached (7, 11 or 13), external salary movement data will be used to substitute for data from missing employers if the local salary survey committee confirms that efforts to identify and secure the participation of additional employers have been exhausted within six months;

(f) If the participation of the required number of public sector employers, including from the national civil service, where required, is not secured within the six-month 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, where required, from the national civil service, have been collected, the local salary survey committee may unanimously decide either to proceed with replacing all data from 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-month period, the missing employer data will be replaced by external salary data. No surveyed employer that meets the methodology requirements will be excluded from the final analysis unless the maximum required number of employers is exceeded.

2. When external data are used, these data will be extracted from the two vendors at the seventy-fifth percentile, according to the grade level equivalencies that most accurately reflect the United Nations grades. Where possible, external data will be

filtered by location. 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 1.

3. In accordance with the earlier decision of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), 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.

4. When external salary data are used, a positive result will be used if it is within the range of up to three times the most recent external salary movement percentage reported by vendors. 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.

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

6. Upon completion of the salary survey, the local salary survey committees will be required to submit to the ICSC secretariat or the responsible agency a report, based on a standard template, regarding its experience with the pilot project, taking into account the project evaluation criteria included in annex XIV to the report of the Commission on survey methodology I for headquarters duty stations (ICSC/94/R.16) and reflected in annex IX to the report on survey methodology II for duty stations other than headquarters and similar duty stations (ICSC/94/R.17). The 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 by the assigned salary survey specialist regarding the overall experience of the pilot project at that duty station will also be collected by the ICSC secretariat or responsible agency.

7. It is recommended that a pilot review mechanism be established to review and analyse feedback provided on the pilot. The mechanism should be composed of one representative of the staff federations, one representative of the organizations, one representative of the responsible agency and the ICSC secretariat.

8. The ICSC secretariat will provide regular status reports to the Commission, based on the information collected from the pilot review mechanism, on the experiences and lessons learned in conducting the pilot project during the specific time period.

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

10. The ICSC secretariat will, for monitoring purposes, 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 eighth round of surveys.

11. The ICSC secretariat and the responsible agency will provide the local salary survey committees 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 agreements.

12. The ICSC secretariat and the responsible agency will continue to provide training to members of the local salary survey committees.

13. To accommodate special circumstances, following a request from a local salary survey committee and a salary survey specialist through the responsible agency, the Chair of the Commission may exceptionally approve exceptions to these rules.

