



ILO Staff Union Regional meeting

Europe and the Arab States

Budapest, September 19-21, 2023

The Regional Staff Union representatives from ROAS (ILO Regional Office for the Arab States) and Europe met on September 19-21 at the ILO office in Budapest to discuss issues impacting staff in their regions. The discussions highlighted a number of issues on which action/attention of various levels of the ILO Administration and the global Staff Union is needed, and where respective local Staff Union Committees (SUC) will be following up on their commitments. Strategic recommendations and commitments related to these discussions are presented in this report.

The meeting was attended by:

- Anna Sokolova, Representative Moscow
- Anne-Françoise le Grelle, Representative Berlin, Brussels, Lisbon, Madrid, Paris
- Ayşe Emel Akalın, Representative Ankara
- Éva Mihlic, Titular for Europe and the Arab States
- Ildikó Rigó, Representative Budapest
- Séverine Deboos, SU Chair
- Zeina Mezher, Representative ROAS

The opening session was joined by Beate Andrees (Regional Director of Europe & Central Asia), Peter Rademaker (Deputy Regional Director, Director DWT Arab States), and Ludovic Caprini (Substitute member for Europe and the Arab States).



Recommendations and Commitments

1. Recruitment and selection (R&S)

Issue: Different recruitment processes used for i) HQ and field offices and ii) for different staff categories¹ - this system leads to unfair practices, lack of transparency and contradicts the principle of One ILO.

Recommendations to the Administration at HQ

Short-term recommendations:

- Organize training for panel members on R&S including components on ethics and interviewing skills.
- Organize training for internal applicants on filling applications and interview skills.

Medium-term recommendations:

- Negotiate one collective agreement on R&S with the objective of harmonizing processes throughout the ILO.
- Ensure that R&S is considered in the negotiation on mobility and the harmonization of contractual relations of staff.

Recommendation to the Administration at regional level

Involve the SU in the R&S process as full-fledged panel members.

Recommendations to the global SU

- Consider negotiation on one collective agreement on R&S as a priority.
- Develop guidelines for and train panel members on principles of fair, transparent R&S practices.
- Ensure that R&S is considered in the negotiation on mobility and harmonization of contractual relations of staff.

¹ Staff hereinafter meaning all staff categories irrespective of source of funding or contract type

Commitments of the local SUC

- Adhere to the ethical principles of fair, transparent R&S.
- Train and guide SU panel members on principles of fair, transparent R&S practices.

2. Salaries

Issue 1: Local Salary Survey (LSS) results often do not compensate for deteriorating living conditions, especially in countries in crisis or in fragile situations.

Issue 2: Poor LSS outcomes put the ILO at risk of not attracting and retaining talent, thereby ceasing to be an employer of choice.

Issue 3: Salaries of international and local staff do not compensate for the fluctuation and/or deterioration of living conditions equally.

Recommendation to the Administration at HQ

Play a leading role among UN agencies and in negotiations with the ICSC to ensure that wages are set adequately and are protected.

Recommendation to the Administration at regional level

Play a proactive role in ensuring that the LSS Committee operates to the benefit of staff.

Recommendations to the global SU

- Invest in training of SU members on new salary survey methodologies.
- Prepare FAQ related to salaries to guide SU representatives on salary-related issues.
- Establish a network of knowledgeable and trained SU members on LSS methodologies.



Commitments of the local SUC

- Facilitate knowledge sharing on strategies to promote and protect adequate salaries for staff and ensure continuity of institutional memory.
- Enable participation of knowledgeable and trained SU members in the LSS Committee and share developments with staff.

3. Security and wellbeing of staff in fragile countries

Issue: Lack of preparedness, protection mechanisms, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in fragile countries protecting staff in case of emergencies.

Recommendations to the Administration at HQ, regional and local levels

- Improve and build on good practices to develop and/or implement measures protecting staff in fragile countries – both physically and mentally.
- Keep the focus on the special needs of ILO staff in Kyiv with regard to the opening and functioning of Country office Ukraine.

Recommendations to the global SU

- Continue to advocate for the development and/or implementation of measures protecting staff in fragile countries – both physically and mentally.
- Organize knowledge sharing and guidance for local SU representatives on adequate response during crisis.

Commitment of the local SUC

Ensure there is close coordination with the administration on issues of staff security and wellbeing.



4. Moscow office

Issue: The uncertain future of the ILO Moscow office jeopardizes the wellbeing and job security of staff.

Recommendation to the Administration at HQ

Safeguard the wellbeing and job security of staff and ensure the operational capacity of the Moscow office.

Recommendations to the Administration at regional and local levels

- Share information in a transparent and timely manner on all issues affecting staff.
- Advocate for timely measures safeguarding the wellbeing and job security of staff and for ensuring the operational capacity of the Moscow office.

Recommendation to the global SU

Advocate for timely measures safeguarding the wellbeing and job security of staff and for ensuring the operational capacity of the Moscow office.

Commitment of the local SUC

Coordinate closely with the administration at the local level and with the Staff Union on issues of wellbeing and job security for staff.



5. Change management in project offices

Issue: Lack of transparency around project continuation, downsizing and mitigation measures in place.

Recommendation to the Administration at HQ, at regional and local levels

Comply with the Joint Negotiating Committee guidelines on change management.

Recommendation to the global SU

Provide timely and proactive guidance and support on change management as required.

Commitment of the local SUC

Coordinate closely with the administration at the local level and the Staff Union to mitigate risks and ensure the ILO administration's duty of care towards its staff.

6. Staff Union Funds

Issue: Staff Union funds not used by local SUC to full potential.

Recommendations to the global SU

- Facilitate access to the local SU funds.
- Share previous and current good practices on the use of funds in various offices.

Commitment of the local SUC

Prepare a yearly budget on the use of local funds in line with the SU's strategy in the region and use resources in an efficient and transparent way.



7. Communication

Issue: Irregular communication on Staff Union-related issues.

Recommendations to the global SU

- Enhance sharing of communication updates with local representatives in a regular and timely manner.
- Conduct internal consultation on improving the monthly broadcast and solidarity messages.
- Develop a leaflet template to promote the SU mandate and activities to staff.

Commitments of the local SUC

- Contribute to the development of promotional material prepared by the global SU.
- Provide timely input to reports, communication tools, and campaigns of the global SU.
- Timely dissemination of communication material received from the global SU.
- Consult SU members on their expectations re communication.

Training needs

Staff Union representatives at the regional meeting have identified the following areas in which training of SU representatives and/or staff is needed:

- Local salary-setting mechanisms
- Conflict prevention/management
- Staff Union Assistance Fund
- OSH/Mental Health
- SHIF



Accomplishments

Staff Union representatives at the regional meeting have identified the following issues in which significant success was achieved:

- Salary survey successfully concluded to the benefit of staff after five years of negotiations with the ICSC (Brussels)
- Teleworking implemented smoothly during COVID (Budapest)
- The SU engages actively in social dialogue with management (Moscow)
- The SU negotiated the right to appoint an observer in recruitment panels (ROAS)
- Effective communication established among SU representatives in both regions