

FOR DECISION

Agenda item 4(a)

**Report on the current status of the UNWTO
Regional Office in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

CE/116/4(a)
Madrid, 17 May 2022
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Executive summary

Pursuant to the agreement signed between UNWTO and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia signed on the opening of a Regional Office in the Middle East, a comprehensive evaluation of the human resources requirements for the Regional Office was conducted.

Following the advertisement of vacancy announcements, competitive recruitment processes were carried out for the selection of personnel. Members of personnel based at the UNWTO Secretariat in Madrid have also provided daily support on institutional, operational, administrative, and other pertinent matters of the Regional Office since January 2021.

Several policies were revised to ensure appropriate application in Riyadh, in line with UN practices. The areas of learning and development, health and well-being and support to newcomers at the Regional Office have been fully aligned with the Secretariat to ensure a consistent approach throughout the Organization.

DRAFT DECISION¹

**Report on the current status of the
UNWTO Regional Office in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
(document CE/116/4(a))**

The Executive Council,

Having examined the report on the current status of the UNWTO Regional Office in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia,

1. *Takes note* of the information provided in the report on the current status of the UNWTO Regional Office in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and
2. *Expresses* its satisfaction at the work currently being undertaken in relation to the staffing of the Regional Office in Riyadh, especially in view of the rising demands on the Organization with its limited resources

¹This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.

I. Status on the staffing of the Regional Office in Riyadh

1. Pursuant to the agreement signed between UNWTO and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the opening of a Regional Office in the Middle East, a comprehensive evaluation of the human resources requirements for the Regional Office was appropriately conducted.
2. Following this review and in consultation with the relevant supervisors, appropriate terms of reference were developed for the positions. All positions were advertised on the UNWTO employment page. Vacancy notices and calls for expression of interest were furthermore disseminated through UNWTO social media to increase recruitment outreach and circulated to the Organization's Member States.
3. Approximately 2,500 applications were received for all advertised positions representing around 130 nationalities. 46% of the applications were received from women and 54% from men. The regional distribution of applications is as follows: Middle East (15%), Africa (35%), Americas (10%), Asia and the Pacific (14%) and Europe (26%). Nationals of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia represented 5% of the total number of applications received.
4. In July 2021, the Organization advertised various roster vacancies for the development of a talent pool for Riyadh, to ensure the continuous availability of personnel, as needs arise, and consequently reduce recruitment timeframes.
5. Approximately 20 to 25 members of personnel based at the UNWTO Secretariat in Madrid have been providing daily support to the activities of the Regional Office, in matters pertaining to institutional relations, operations and administration. Frequent missions were also conducted by various members of personnel to assess matters ranging from the development of activities of the Regional Office, to security, administration, infrastructure and information and communication technologies, among others.
6. In the shortest term, 23 members of personnel are deployed to the Regional Office, as follows:
 - (a) 2 staff members were deployed in May and September 2021;
 - (b) 3 staff members are being deployed in early June, upon completion of visa formalities; and
 - (c) 18 service contract holders are gradually being deployed between May and mid-June 2022, pending completion of visa and other administrative formalities.
7. A comprehensive review of UNWTO policies has been undertaken, in alignment with United Nations policies, to ensure their appropriate application in Riyadh, mainly in the areas of salaries and related entitlements, health and accident services, working hours, public holidays, financial aspects, learning and development, and health and well-being.
8. To assist newly arrived personnel and their families in Riyadh, a practical guide was developed to offer information on emergency and security services, health services, culture and local traditions, climate, transportation, customs and social etiquette, administrative formalities, accommodation, childcare and education, shops, restaurants and social activities. All members of personnel undergo an induction workshop that allows newcomers to better integrate in the Organization and be briefed by several UNWTO departments on their respective areas of work.
9. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the health and well-being services of the Organization are being further improved, following the establishment of a strategy that focuses on relevant training activities and psychosocial support. This is further supported by various learning and development activities being implemented throughout 2022 in the areas of conflict management, ethics, project management, writing/communication skills, public speaking, health and well-being and team building.
10. The Organization is evaluating the possibility of carrying out a UNWTO Career Outreach event for the Middle East region to inform potential applicants of the Organization's

recruitment procedures and employment benefits with the aim of improving the visibility of the Organization as an employer of choice.
