

Agenda item 3(d)  
**Human resources report**

CE/116/3(d) rev.2  
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### **Executive summary**

The Structure of the Secretariat continues to be implemented as laid out by the Secretary-General in his report on Management vision and priorities (document [CE/108/5\(b\) rev.1](#)) within the approved resources and number of staff positions. This report also includes information on gender distribution of staff.

Members of personnel were recommended to work from home since March 2020, with a gradual return to work currently being implemented in view of the decline in infection rates and taking into account the necessary safety measures to ensure the health and well-being of all personnel.

Following the issuance of vacancy announcements, 10 staff posts have been filled. As of 1 April 2022, the total number of staff stands at 89 and the number of Service Contract holders stands at 73.

The induction and onboarding programme announced in previous human resources reports is still being implemented satisfactorily and has been expanded to personnel based at the Regional Office in Riyadh.

A new function of Staff Counsellor is being implemented, in line with other United Nations agencies, to offer psychosocial support to personnel and provide relevant trainings on the subject matter.

The efficiency of various internal resources is being improved through the implementation of electronic IT systems, contributing to more sustainable approaches.

Various policies are being developed or revised, mainly in the areas of recruitment and selection, learning and development, work-life balance and contractual mechanisms for personnel other than staff members. The Organization is also developing its policies on sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse. The Organization also launched a JIU survey on preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination.

This report also includes information on judgments concerning UNWTO delivered by the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT).

The independent report of the Ethics Officer for the period of 1 May 2021 to 30 April 2022 is annexed to this document (Annex I).

**DRAFT DECISION<sup>1</sup>**

**Agenda item 3(d)**  
Human resources report  
(document CE/116/3(d) rev.2)

*The Executive Council,*

*Having examined the report,*

1. *Takes note* of the information provided on the human resources of the Organization;
2. *Expresses* its satisfaction at the work currently being carried out by those persons in service of the Organization and their contribution to the Programme of Work, especially in view of the rising demands on the Organization with its limited resources and the extraordinary circumstances deriving from the COVID-19 pandemic;
3. *Expresses* its satisfaction on the management of the UNWTO workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic and the initiatives to ensure the health and well-being of all personnel;
4. *Takes note* of the information provided on the ICSC cost-of-living survey and the FICSA cost-sharing proposal;
5. *Approves* the exception to Staff Rule 14 (4) bis (a) in the interest of the Organization and considering United Nations policies on the matter;
6. *Encourages* Member States to send concrete proposals to the Organization for the financing of Junior Professional Officers; and
7. *Encourages* Member States to send to the Organization, Officials on Loan, especially in view of the rising demands of the Organization with its limited resources and to ensure additional human resources for the Regional Office for the Middle East in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and
8. *Thanks* the Ethics Officer for her report on the activities carried out from 1 May 2021 to 30 April 2022.

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<sup>1</sup>This 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. Reporting on the human resources situation of the Organization

1. This document contains updated information on the human resources situation of the Organization as of 1 April 2022. As in previous reports on human resources, it provides updated personnel statistics and information on personnel matters. Furthermore, it includes the annual report of the Ethics Officer for the period of 1 May 2021 to 30 April 2022.

## II. Budget authority and Organizational structure

2. The introduction of management changes communicated by the Secretary-General in his report on the Management Vision and Priorities (document CE/108/5(b) rev.1) continues to be undertaken with the approved resources and number of staff positions, which remain at 106, while maintaining the possibility to allow financing of additional posts using extra-budgetary funds.

### Breakdown of actual personnel data

3. Information on the number of staff and their distribution by grade, gender, nationality and age as of 1 April 2022, is contained in Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 below. As in previous reports to the Executive Council, the relevant breakdown has been made by category of staff within the UN common system: Professional category and above (with grades ranging from P.1 to ASG) and General Services category (with grades ranging from G.1 to G.7) and as indicated in the Organization's Programme of Work and Budget.

**Table 1(a): Staff distribution by grade and gender as of 1 April 2022**

Grade	P.1	P.2	P.3	P.4	P.5	Above	Total
Female	9	3	4	7	5	1	29
Male	1	3	7	6	3	2	22
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>51</b>
Grade	G.2	G.3	G.4	G.5	G.6	G.7	Total
Female		1	4	1	12	7	25
Male	1	2		4	4	2	13
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>38</b>

**Table 1(b): Staff distribution by grade as of 1 April 2022**

Grade	P.1	P.2	P.3	P.4	P.5	Above	Total
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>51</b>
Grade	G.2	G.3	G.4	G.5	G.6	G.7	Total
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>38</b>

**Table 2: Staff distribution by category and gender as of 1 April 2022**

Gender	P and Above	GS Category	Total
<b>Female</b>	29	25	54
<b>Male</b>	22	13	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>89</b>

**Table 3: Staff distribution by category and nationality (including SG and ED positions) as of 1 April 2022**

Country	GS	P and above	Country	GS	P and above
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Algeria	1	1	Morocco	1	1
Argentina	1	1	Netherlands		2
Austria	1	1	Nicaragua	1	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1		Niger		1
Cambodia		1	Peru		1
Canada		1	Portugal	2	1
China		1	Republic of Korea		2
Colombia		1	Republic of Moldova	1	
Dominican Republic		1	Romania		1
France		6	Russian Federation		2
Georgia		3	Saudi Arabia		1
Germany	1	2	Seychelles		2
Ghana	1		Spain	20	10
Hungary		1	Switzerland	1	
Indonesia	1		United Kingdom		1
Italy	2	4	United States of America	1	
Lebanon		1	Uruguay		1
Lithuania	1		Uzbekistan	1	
			<b>Total number per category of staff</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>51</b>
			<b>Total number of staff</b>	<b>89</b>	

4. Thirty-six (36) nationalities are currently represented in the Secretariat's staff. It is important to reiterate the Organization's commitment to recruiting staff from as wide a geographical basis as possible, while maintaining the highest standards of competence, efficiency and integrity, and taking into account the limited number of staff positions.
5. Women represent 60.7% of the staff, whilst men represent 39.3%, with the note that this representation varies across categories.

**Table 4: Staff distribution by age and category as of 1 April 2022**

Age	GS Category	P and Above	Total
30 to 39	4	14	18
40 to 49	17	19	36
50 to 54	7	8	15
55 to 59	7	4	11
60	0	1	1
61	2	1	3
62 or more	1	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>87</b>

6. Staff members holding a managerial fixed-term appointment and the Secretary-General are not included in Table 4 above.
7. As previously presented in the Human Resources report to the 103<sup>rd</sup> Executive Council, a new scheme was implemented on 1 January 2016 for personnel not subject to the UNWTO Staff

Regulations and Rules. The scheme was developed pursuant to recommendations of the JIU draft report A.385. The Executive Council is presented, in Tables 5 and 6 below, with information on the number of Service Contract holders, who are part of this scheme, and their distribution by gender, nationality and age, as of 1 April 2022.

**Table 5: Service Contract holders' distribution by nationality and gender as of 1 April 2022**

Country	Female	Male	Country	Female	Male
Azerbaijan		1	Lebanon	1	
Belarus	1		Maldives	1	
Belgium		2	Mexico		1
Bosnia and Herzegovina		1	North Macedonia	1	
Chile		1	Philippines	2	
China		1	Portugal	2	
Colombia		1	Romania	2	
Egypt	2		Slovenia	2	
France	2		Spain	19	11
Georgia	1	1	Syrian Arab Republic	1	
Greece		1	Tajikistan		1
Iran, Islamic Republic of	1		United Kingdom	2	2
Italy	2	2	Uruguay	1	
Japan		1	Uzbekistan		1
Kenya		1	Venezuela		1
<b>Total</b>				<b>43</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total number of Service Contract holders</b>				<b>73</b>	

**Table 6: Service Contract holders' distribution by age as of 1 April 2022**

Age	SC Holder
29 or less	20
30 to 39	32
40 to 49	19
50 to 54	2
55 to 59	0
60 to 61	0
62 or more	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>

### III. Human resources matters

8. Since its previous report on human resources matters, several developments have taken place as indicated below.

#### Decisions of the Secretary-General

9. In accordance with Staff Regulation 15 (b), the Secretary-General decided to appoint Ms Zoritsa Urosevic (Seychelles) to the post of Executive Director, D.2. This nomination comes at a moment where the work of the Secretariat is more relevant than ever for the recovery and resilience of societies and economies – expanding our delivery for the benefit of

member States through regional presence – as well as the need to fully embrace the United Nations Reform and “Our Common Agenda” framework.

10. In the interest of the Organization, an exception to Staff Rule 14 (4) bis (a) was made and the Secretary-General decided to grant an appointment to the spouse of a staff member, in line with United Nations policies, considering the qualifications required for the position.
11. In line with negotiations between the Government of Japan and UNWTO and in view of exceptional circumstances, the Secretary-General decided to appoint Ms Orianne Derrier (France) to the post of Programme Officer, P.1, in the Regional Department for Asia and the Pacific and based at the UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific in Japan. In accordance with Staff Regulation 15 (a), it was not considered practical to carry out a selection on a competitive basis.

#### **Management of the UNWTO workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic**

12. It is recalled that in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and as announced in the Human Resources Report to the 112<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Council (CE/112/3(d)), members of personnel were recommended to work from home since March 2020, in line with the recommendations from the Host Government and practices of other UN-system Organizations.
13. A broad range of support was provided to all personnel for remote working and the Organization offered various webinars on stress management, in addition to a variety of medical and other resources.
14. After a careful review of the situation and in light of the gradual decline of infection rates in Spain, a hybrid return to the UNWTO premises is being carried out, whilst continuing to safeguard the health and well-being of all personnel. Premises have been prepared to ensure the safe return of all personnel, this includes hygiene measures, physical distancing and appropriate communication.

#### **Selection processes**

15. Following the issuance of a vacancy announcement, the following positions have been filled:

<b>Vacancy reference</b>	<b>Post title, department and grade</b>	<b>Name of incumbent and nationality</b>	<b>Duty station</b>
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/25/COSE/2020	Translator (Russian), Conference Services Department (P.2)	Ms Ekaterina Kopylova (Russian Federation)	Madrid (Spain)
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/01/TMIC/2021	Senior Programme Officer, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department (P.3)	Mr Michel Julian (Dominican Republic)	Madrid (Spain)
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/01/TMIC/2021	Senior Programme Officer, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department (P.3)	Mr Javier Ruescas (Spain)	Madrid (Spain)

UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/03/COMM/2021	Senior Programme Assistant, Communications Department (G.6)	Ms Marina Tejerina (Spain)	Madrid (Spain)
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/04/STAT/2021	Programme Officer, Statistics Department (P.1)	Ms Leandry Moreno (France)	Madrid (Spain)
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/02/RDAP/2021	Programme Officer, Regional Department for Asia and the Pacific (P.1)	Mr Li Yang (China)	Madrid (Spain)
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/08/INNO/2021	Programme Officer, Innovation, Education and Investments Department (P.2)	Mr Ismail Meghfour (Algeria)	Riyadh (Saudi Arabia)
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/20/TMIC/2021	Programme Officer, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department (P.2)	Ms Federica Iellici (Italy)	Riyadh (Saudi Arabia)
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/25/TMIC/2021	Programme Officer, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department (P.2)	Ms Patricia Carmona (Spain)	Madrid (Spain)
UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/26/TMIC/2021	Senior Programme Assistant, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department (G.7)	Ms Soledad Gaído (Italy)	Madrid (Spain)

16. Following the issuance of vacancy announcements, the recruitment and selection process for the following posts is currently being undertaken. The outcome of the selection processes will be communicated in a subsequent human resources report.
- (a) Manager, P.3, Information and Communication Technologies Department (UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/21/ICTC/2019)
  - (b) Chief, P.4, Statistics Department (UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/06/STAT/2021)
  - (c) Programme Coordinator, P.4, Innovation, Education and Investments Department (UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/39/INNO/2021) – Regional Office for the Middle East
  - (d) Programme Coordinator, P.4, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department (UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/38/TMIC/2021) – Regional Office for the Middle East
  - (e) Senior Assistant, G.7, Information and Communication Technologies Department (UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/40/ICTC/2021)

- (f) Senior Assistant, G.7, Budget and Finance Department (UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/41/BDFN/2021)
- (g) Programme Officer, P.2, Innovation, Education and Investments Department (UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/29/IEID/2021)
- (h) Director, P.5, Regional Department for the Americas (UNWTO/HHRR/VAC/01/RDAM/2022)

#### Internal administrative processes and HR tools

- 17. The efficiency of internal resources is being improved through the implementation of an electronic IT system, allowing the Organization to provide a more efficient customer service-oriented process, client-responsive communications and data-driven solutions, contributing to a more sustainable approach in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

#### Gender and diversity

- 18. To further support the Organization's commitment to gender mainstreaming, UNWTO continued to implement the framework of the *United Nations system-wide action plan for mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN-SWAP)*.
- 19. As part of its efforts to ensure gender parity across the Organization and the UN system, and provide greater transparency, UNWTO participates since 2021 in the UN system-wide dashboard on gender parity. The dashboard serves as the first of its kind and offers up-to-date data on the representation of women and men across the United Nations system.

#### ICSC cost-of-living survey

- 20. At the end of 2021 a place-to-place survey was conducted by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for the purpose of determining the post adjustment and evaluating expenditure patterns and other characteristics of the household of staff in the Professional and higher categories, in comparison with the cost-of-living in New York. Said survey is conducted every five years at Headquarters' duty stations. The results of the survey are expected to be announced in June-August 2022.

#### FICSA cost-sharing proposal

- 21. In 2022, the Organization decided to participate in a cost-sharing proposal on funding models for FICSA-elected officials, in line with recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) ad-hoc working group.
- 22. FICSA, created in 1952, represents its member Staff Associations / Unions at the interagency, UN Common System level (at the ICSC, CEB, HLCM, HR Network, UN Pension Fund, IASMN and other interagency forum and entities). The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) at the UN Common System level, decided in 1973, that local staff associations/unions should raise matters of general importance through FICSA, as it was deemed impossible to expect the individual staff associations/unions to represent staff at the common system level.
- 23. The UN General Assembly, through its resolution 3357(XXIX) in December 1974, recognized FICSA as an interlocutor to be consulted by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to represent its members, as stated in Article 4, 12, 17, 24, 25, 28 of its Statutes. To facilitate that process, the CCAQ reaffirmed in 1980 the paid full-time release of the FICSA President and General Secretary. However, such release has always been at the discretion of the employing Organizations. Consequently, situations have arisen in both the distant and recent past in which Organizations have refused to grant paid release. To address some of those refusals, the CCAQ established ad hoc cost-sharing arrangements under which the costs related to the salary and allowances of any FICSA officer in this position would be shared amongst the Organizations having staff associations/unions affiliated to the Federation. The principle of the cost sharing is reiterated again in the JIU report in 2012 titled *Staff Management relations in the United Nations specialized agencies and common system*.
- 24. The FICSA Executive Committee is comprised of seven elected officers who, in accordance with the FICSA Statutes, must come from seven different member staff associations/unions.



Only two of those officers (the President and General Secretary) are released on a full-time basis from their respective Organizations, and their salaries and allowances are currently paid by their releasing Organizations while serving as FICSA officers.

25. The proposal is for the Organizations whose Staff Associations / Unions are members of FICSA, as is the case of UNWTO, to share the cost for the release of the two elected FICSA Officers – FICSA President and FICSA General Secretary, instead of the fully funded release by the releasing Organization that had taken place since 1980 onwards, through the inter-agency MOU administered by the CEB Secretariat on behalf of the HLCM.

### **Induction and onboarding of personnel**

26. As announced in recent Human Resources Reports to the Governing Bodies, to ensure that newly appointed personnel are prepared for their new role and familiarize themselves with the Organization, thus helping them become effective as soon as possible, an induction and onboarding programme for newly recruited personnel was developed and finalized in 2021. The programme is broadly structured in three main areas: (1) the issuance of an induction booklet to provide practical information for new personnel arriving at the Secretariat, (2) a new intranet site for all members of personnel providing relevant information on administrative procedures and entitlements and (3) a mandatory training for newcomers, prepared in coordination with UNWTO departments, with valuable information regarding the Organization's mission, goals and objectives, values and competencies, internal procedures and activities. This programme is furthermore aimed at continuing to create a positive and welcoming environment for the newly arrived. This programme has been expanded to the newly established Regional Office in Riyadh. In 2021, the mandatory course on "*Ethics and integrity (e-learning)*" was discontinued. Its development and implementation fall within the terms of reference of the Ethics Officer as per paragraph 7 of the "*Report of the Ethics Officer on the activities carried out in 2021-2022*", enclosed as Annex I.

### **Health and well-being**

27. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of health and well-being has become increasingly more important. Since the outset of the pandemic, UNWTO personnel have adapted quickly and exceedingly well to the new reality. The mental health and well-being of its personnel is of utmost importance for the Organization. Although the challenges resulting from the pandemic have been unprecedented, UNWTO remains conscious of the challenges that continued remote working puts on the mental health and well-being of its personnel and therefore the Organization is embedding several health and well-being strategies into its core activities.
28. In view of the challenging circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and following consultations with the United Nations, the Organization is implementing the function of the Staff Counsellor, aimed at providing psychosocial services to UNWTO personnel and support, and train them in tools adapted to their needs in order to be prepared to positively cope with stress, as well as develop appropriate trainings and mechanisms for the benefit of the Organization and its personnel.
29. In October 2021 the Organization took part in the UN system-wide initiative of *UN World Mental Health Month*, providing dedicated information and resources to all personnel.
30. The Organization also participated in a UN system-wide *Staff Health and Safety Risk Assessment* survey intended to evaluate and respond to the current health and safety risks facing UN personnel and to understand more fully the impact of the pandemic on physical and mental health of the UNWTO workforce. The survey will also guide the Organization in the development and adjustment of health and well-being strategies.

### **JIU survey on preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination**

31. In the framework of a review by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on *measures and mechanisms for preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination in the institutions of the United Nations* system, UNWTO personnel participated in a web-based survey to gather perceptions on the subject matter. The survey was made available in three languages and the information will be used to guide policy, enhance accountability and make improvements in all efforts against discrimination.

## Policies

32. To ensure continued alignment of policies with other UN common-system Organizations whilst also ensuring the efficient administration of resources, several policies are being developed or revised, mainly in the areas of recruitment and selection, learning and development, flexible working arrangements, parental leave and contractual mechanisms for personnel other than staff members. The Organization is also developing its policies in the areas of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.

## Officials on Loan

33. In 2022, there has been an increasing interest among Member States in the Organization's capacity-building option, whereby tourism experts and officials may be sent by a Member State, on a non-reimbursable basis, to participate in the activities of the Secretariat for a set period of time. This arrangement is formally being done through a Memorandum of Understanding. Member States are particularly encouraged to avail of this option, especially in view of ensuring additional human resources for the newly established UNWTO Regional Office for the Middle East in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

## Junior Professional Officers

34. The UNWTO concluded with the UNDP an Agreement concerning the management of the UN-wide Junior Professional Officer programme. Interested Member States may place their young professionals at UNWTO for 1-3 years by financing the post through this framework agreement.

## IV. Judgments concerning UNWTO delivered by the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT)

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35. In accordance with Staff Regulation 32, the Organization recognizes the jurisdiction of the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT) for the settlement of disputes brought by officials, alleging non-observance of their terms of appointment and the UNWTO's Staff Regulations and Rules.
36. This note aims at providing the Executive Council with an overview of the judgments delivered by the ILOAT in January 2022 regarding five complaints<sup>2</sup> filed by two former senior officials. These complaints were aimed at contesting their summary dismissals on account of several serious misconducts in their areas of responsibility as revealed by the multinational audit and accounting firm KPMG following the review of the internal control systems in relation to strategic activities of the Organization conducted in March 2018<sup>3</sup>.
37. Such misconducts were related to their violation of procurement, financial management and financial reporting duties in the period 2013- March 2018. These complaints have been duly reported in the Financial Statements for the years ended 2018, 2019 and 2020, submitted to the Governing Bodies, and a provision for litigation was accordingly established.
38. While dismissing one of the complaints (Judgment No. 4455), the ILOAT decided to set aside the challenged decisions of summary dismissal on account of a single procedural failure. According to the Tribunal, the Organization should have been more specific in checking and rebutting "in a fair and balanced way" the post facto testimonies submitted by the former Secretary-General, stating that he was aware of, and approved, the actions committed under his mandate. On this account, the Tribunal did not order the reinstatement of the officials but awarded payment of a total of 132,000 EUR in moral damages and legal costs for the procedural failure committed.
39. It is worth underlining that, in considering that the misconducts were proven, the Tribunal shared the view of the Joint Appeals Committee<sup>4</sup> (JAC). The JAC also found that there were no procedural flaws or breach of due process rights of the complainants, and concluded that the testimonies of the former Secretary-General did not exclude the personal responsibility of

<sup>2</sup> Judgments No. [4452](#), [4453](#), [4454](#), [4455](#) and [4456](#).

<sup>3</sup> See document [CE/108/5\(b\) rev.1](#)

<sup>4</sup> The Joint Appeals Committee is an administrative body with staff participation established pursuant to Staff Regulation 31 to advise the Secretary-General on appeals lodged by UNWTO officials against an administrative decision or disciplinary action if they consider that they have been treated in a manner incompatible with their terms and conditions of employment.

the complainants for their misconducts in areas under their responsibility, noting that in accordance with Detailed Financial Rule I.7 “[o]fficials involved in any action that is contrary to the Financial Regulations, the Detailed Financial Rules, the policies or administrative instructions of the Organization may be held personally responsible for the consequences of such action”.

40. Finally, the Tribunal considered that there was “no persuasive evidence or analysis to demonstrate that there was bias, ill will, malice, bad faith or other improper purpose” in the Secretariat’s actions. The Tribunal hence rejected the complainants’ requests aiming at the award of exemplary damages, the removal of all disciplinary materials from their personal files, and a wide publicity given to the judgments delivered.
41. The Tribunal did not award yet any compensation for the material damages claimed (primarily loss of salaries and pension), but decided that, “if any” material damages had to be paid, they needed to be further determined following a detailed claim of the complainants and a detailed response by the Organization. In that respect, it is worth underlining that the Tribunal concluded in both cases that, in any event, the officials “may well have been found guilty of the misconduct alleged, even taking into account, in a fair and balance way, the evidence of the former Secretary-General” and that this finding “may have led to a sanction that had financial consequences for the [complainants]”.
42. The Secretariat has been supported by external legal counsel before the ILOAT, and still is, while exploring any appropriate remedial actions available to safeguard the interests of the Organization, in particular in the context of the ongoing process of analyzing and making decisions with regard to the determination of claimed material damages by the complainants. The Secretariat will report accordingly to the Executive Council, including on the outcome of this process.

#### **V. Clarifications from the Organization in response to the Report of the Ethics Officer on the activities carried out in 2021-2022**

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43. The Organization wishes to provide clarifications to the Report of the Ethics Officer on the activities carried out in 2021-2022, contained as Annex I to the present Human Resources Report.
44. Pursuant to the decision from the Executive Council (CE/DEC/6/CIX) to review the PaR policy in order “to establish appropriate mechanisms for handling such complaints”; the review was completed by the Ethics Officer in 2019. The proposed text of a new Section 9 of the PaR policy dealing with “Allegations against the Executive Head of the Organization” was included in full in the report of the Ethics Officer for the period 2019-2020 (cf. its paragraph 14). This section was included in full as part of the proposed policy on “*Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct or cooperating with duly authorized fact-finding activities (whistleblowing policy)*”, which intended to replace the current whistle-blowing policy in force, which was revised to include several other amendments. In March 2020, the Ethics Officer was provided with the proposed final version of said policy prior to circulation for internal approval. To date, this policy continues to be with the Ethics Officer and the previous handling of this type of complaints (in 2016 and 2018, as reported to the Executive Council) through external services to ensure the impartiality and objectivity of the proceedings. Likewise, the signature of a framework agreement with UN OIOS for investigation requires the establishment of a policy on “*Addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority*”, which is currently pending with the Ethics Officer.
45. Concerning the complaints received by the Ethics Officer and reported to the Executive Council, it is regrettable that no assessment is being made as to whether these are substantiated and that except for one, none of these have been reported internally (with due anonymity) so that the Human Resources Department or Management could take effective action, as required.
46. Moreover, regarding the alleged bypassing of the exercise concerning the reclassification of posts, the Organization wishes to note that the exercise was initially announced to all personnel in February 2020. Following the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 and the resulting unstable global financial situation, all members of personnel were informed via internal circular of the temporary postponement of said exercise. In January 2022, the Organization informed all personnel via internal circular that the reclassification exercise would be resumed and provided tentative timeframes for its completion. It also allowed other

members of personnel who had not initially submitted their request for reclassification in February 2020, to submit their request accordingly. Following this announcement, a significant number of requests were received by the Organization, representing approximately 30% of eligible members of personnel. Understandably, the Organization was required to properly assess the financial and structural impact of these requests to continue to maintain a sound financial stability. The requests have been reviewed and the first round of reclassifications is expected to be finalized by mid-July. Moreover, in view of the needs of the newly established Regional Office in Riyadh and in line with the Programme of Work, the Organization carried out several competitive recruitments for personnel. The Organization also wishes to note that in accordance with its priorities and Programme of Work, several other vacancies were announced to regularize the long-outstanding human resources needs of various departments providing relevant support to the activities of the Regional Office, previously carried out through temporary contractual mechanisms, therefore reinforcing the permanent staffing requirements for the provision of services. This is in line with the procedures of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies and ensures more stable working environments and improves the visibility of the Organization as an employer of choice.

47. In reference to amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules, the Organization wishes to note at the outset, that these fall outside the terms of reference of the Ethics Officer (please refer to paragraph 7 of the Ethics Officer's report<sup>5</sup>) and the powers attributed to this function by the Governing Bodies. The Ethics Officer is not empowered to consider, review or clear internally amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules. Rather, these fall under the exclusive purview of the Human Resources Department, as per the powers attributed by the Governing Bodies. Moreover, all proposed amendments are compatible with the conditions of service of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies in accordance with Staff Rule 33 (1)<sup>6</sup> and appropriately consulted with the relevant offices and, where applicable, the Staff Association Committee, prior to their presentation by the Secretary-General to the Executive Council and to the General Assembly for approval through the Human Resources Report.
48. Despite the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the activities of UNWTO, the Organization wishes to reiterate its commitment to the importance of the ethics function and its independence and will report in due time, as indicated to the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly<sup>7</sup>, on the proposal to the Governing Bodies for the creation of three (3) positions for internal oversight, ethics and monitoring and evaluation.
49. The Organization also highlights that numerous initiatives are gradually being implemented in the area of health and well-being, and learning and development, aiming at enhancing psychosocial support and providing personnel and supervisors with appropriate tools to manage stress, conflict, biased behaviour and working harmoniously in an international environment, as outlined in the present Human Resources Report.

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<sup>5</sup> CE/116/3 (d) Annex I

<sup>6</sup> Rule 33 (1) Application and amendment of the Rules

- (a) The Secretary-General shall be responsible for the application of these Rules. He shall be responsible for the provisional application of the changes introduced by the United Nations in the common system of salaries and those concerning the allowances and other conditions of service established in accordance with the common system and changes thereof decided by the United Nations General Assembly, until their approval by the Executive Council.
- (b) The amendments to these Rules shall be compatible with the common system of salaries, allowances and other conditions of service of the United Nations and specialized agencies.
- (c) The Secretary-General may make exceptions to the Rules in specific cases, provided that such exceptions are not inconsistent with the Staff Regulations and do not constitute a breach of contract or prejudice the acquired rights of, and are in the interests of the Organization. Such exceptions shall be made a matter of record and made known to the Executive Council or the General Assembly on request.
- (d) In case of doubt with regard to the interpretation and/or application of the Staff Rules and of administrative instructions related thereto, the Secretary-General shall be guided by the United Nations practices.

<sup>7</sup> See Document A/24/5 (c ) Add.

## **Annex I: Report of the Ethics Officer on the activities carried out in 2021-2022**

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On 2 May 2018, the Secretary-General designated Ms. Marina Diotallevi, Head of the Ethics, Culture and Social Responsibility Department as the independent in-house Ethics Officer. The appointment was acknowledged by the Executive Council ([CE/DEC/15\(CVIII\)](#)). The Ethics Officer reports directly to the Secretary-General and the Executive Council.

### **Annual Report of the Ethics Officer**

The present Report has been prepared by the UNWTO Ethics Officer and is presented to the 116th session of the Executive Council for information and decision.

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  - C. Advice and guidance
  - D. Financial Disclosure Programme
  - E. Standard setting and policy support
- IV. The Ethics Network of Multi-Lateral Organizations
- V. Final considerations

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The in-house Ethics Function was established in May 2018 as a separate and independent entity within the UNWTO Secretariat ([CE/DEC/12\(XCIV\)](#)). Previous to that date, the Ethics Function was externalized to UNOPS based in Copenhagen (from 2013 to 2016) and subsequently to a retired UNWTO official based in Chile (from 2017 to 30 April 2018).
2. The decision of the Secretary-General to have an in-house Ethics Officer for the first time (NI/04/18) was taken pursuant to a recommendation from a KPMG audit report on “Quality Review of Internal Policies” (NI/02/18) aiming at strengthening UNWTO’s internal governance and enabling the implementation of necessary internal reforms and ethical policies.
3. Due to the small size of the Organization, the responsibilities of the independent Ethics Function at UNWTO were assigned - as a dual function - to Ms. Marina Diotallevi of the Head of UNWTO’s Ethics, Culture and Social Responsibility Department.
4. The present Report is the fourth report of the in-house UNWTO Ethics Officer; it is the ninth annual report since the establishment of the Ethics Function in 2013.

#### **II. Background and general information**

5. In accordance with the benchmarks applied by the United Nations, the Ethics Function is aimed at promoting an ethical organizational culture based on integrity, accountability, transparency and respect. It is an internal, management system to uphold the integrity of personnel.
6. The Ethics Function at UNWTO was first established in 2013 by decision [CE/DEC/12\(XCIV\)](#) of the Executive Council. In the same decision, the EC approved the terms of reference of the Ethics Function in UNWTO which include the standards suggested by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in its report “Ethics in the UN System”

(JIU/REP/2010/3), with the addition of a number of other discretionary function.

7. The terms of reference of the Ethics Function at UNWTO are as follows:

**JIU standard functions:**

- (i) Development and dissemination of ethical standards;
- (ii) Development and implementation of mandatory ethics training;
- (iii) Provision of confidential ethics advice and guidance to all personnel of the Organization whatever their contractual status;
- (iv) Administering the organization's policy for the protection of staff against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations (so-called "whistle-blower protection policy");
- (v) Administering the organization's financial disclosure programme.

**Additional functions agreed by the Executive Council in 2013 are:**

- (vi) Receiving complaints of unethical conduct, including harassment, and advising on whether there appears to be a *prima facie* case thereof, and suggesting to management the best approach for handling the case;
- (vii) Using the ethics hotline to receive not just ethical issues in a narrow sense (i.e. JIU suggested), but to receive all reports or complaints of misconduct, with appropriate referral;
- (viii) Assisting with mediation between staff if requested by the SG; and/or
- (ix) Assisting in the identification of suitable investigators where cases necessitate an investigation.
- **One additional function agreed by the Executive Council** at its 109<sup>th</sup> session held in Manama, Bahrain, 30 October-1 November 2018 ([CE/DEC/6\(CVIX\)](#)) authorizing the UNWTO Ethics Officer to:
  - (x) Conduct an initial consideration of complaints concerning allegations of misconduct against the Executive Head of the Organization with a view to recommending actions as appropriate.

### III. Activities of the Ethics Officer during the period 1 May 2021 to 30 April 2022

#### A. **Protection of staff against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations**

8. UNWTO's policy on Protection against Retaliation (PaR) for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations -also known as Whistle-blower policy- (Circular NS/768) was issued on 2013 for the purpose of:
  - (i) encouraging and protecting staff members who disclose information relating to misconduct that may not otherwise be discovered or cooperate with a duly authorized fact-finding activity;
  - (ii) ensuring the Organization can effectively address such cases and manage risks; and
  - (iii) ensuring the Organization functions in a transparent and accountable manner with the objective of enhancing good corporate governance.
9. The Ethics Office confidentially receives reports of misconduct or complaints of retaliation and conducts a preliminary assessment to determine, *inter alia*, whether there is a sufficient *prima facie* case that may entail the referral of the case for formal investigation.
10. During the period covered by this report, no reports of misconduct or complaints of retaliation

have been received by the Ethics Officer.

11. With regards to complaints against the Secretary-General of the Organization, it should be noted that in 2018 the Ethics Officer had been instructed by the Executive Council (CE/DEC/6/CIX) to review the PaR policy in order “to establish appropriate mechanisms for handling such complaints”; this review was completed in 2019. The proposed text of a new Section 9 of the PaR policy dealing with “Allegations against the Executive Head of the Organization” was included in full in the report of the Ethics Officer for the period 2019-2020 (cf. its paragraph 14). It was then channeled through the Human Resources Department for the approval of the Secretary-General prior to its official submission to the Executive Council. At the date of the present report, it is still awaiting internal approval.

## **B. Outreach, training and education**

12. The last mandatory Ethics and Integrity e-learning course was taken by all members of personnel between March and June 2019 (Information Note IC/10/19). Newly recruited personnel are, in principle, requested to complete this course within the first months of joining the Organization.
13. The Ethics and Integrity e-learning course is a mandatory course that all UNWTO personnel at all levels without exception have to complete. The course was provided free-of-charge through the platform of the United Nations System Staff College with the purpose of enhancing the awareness about the core values and standards of integrity to be observed within the workplace environment. However, it had to be discontinued in 2021 due to the e-course no longer being available on the UNSSC platform.
14. As other UN agencies, UNWTO is obliged to develop a tailor-made inter-active e-course based on the one previously offered by UNSCC, for which a new platform and an expert will have to be sought as soon as financial resources allow. The same holds for the refresher course on Ethics and Integrity for all UNWTO personnel including senior management which was planned for 2020 but had to be postponed.
15. Throughout the period under consideration, the intranet pages of the ethics site have been updated on a regular basis and completed with links to relevant documents of UNWTO's institutional bodies related to the mandate of the Ethics Function.

## **C. Advice and guidance**

16. Pursuant to its advisory mandate, the Ethics Office provides independent confidential ethics advice and guidance to UNWTO personnel, management, and departments in order to ensure that decision-making is consistent with the values, principles and rules of the United Nations. Dedicated telephone and email helplines have been made available for confidential advice.
17. During the period under review, the Ethics Officer was directly approached by, or has reviewed requests of, twelve officials of whom four were women, seven men and one anonymous. Advice and guidance provided by the Ethics Officer included clarification or interpretation of the UNWTO regulations, rules and standards concerning prohibited or restricted activities, such as personal conflicts of interest, outside activities and acceptance of honors.
18. Three formal requests for outside activities addressed to the Secretary-General have been channeled, as per established practice, through the Human Resources Department to the Legal Counsel and the Ethics Officer for appropriate advice before their submission to the Secretary-General for final decision.
19. Confidential advice and guidance was provided by the Ethics Officer during this period on workplace harassment, including abusive language and demoralizing style of management (two members of personnel); abuse of authority and threats by supervisor not to renew contract (one member of personnel); specific clarification on conflict of interest (one member of personnel); discrimination, side-lining and abuse of authority preventing the incumbents to carry out the responsibilities pertaining to their positions (two members of personnel); unprofessional handling of a selection process of an external vacancy for a senior position (one external candidate); special advice on internal regulation on receiving honors, favors, gifts and

remuneration (one member of personnel), as well as about the rights of international civil servants (one member of personnel); and lastly, the apparent bypassing of the expected reclassification exercise for a selected number of officers by opening new positions at a higher grade for the job the latter are currently occupying (several members of personnel).

20. With respect to this last complaint, it should be noted that the long-awaited reclassification exercise to reclassify the posts at the UNWTO Secretariat was first announced by the Human Resources Department in February 2020 (AI/918/20), with deadline for the submission of requests of 20 March 2020, but had to be postponed on 7 April 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly two years later, in January 2022, a new circular (IC/04/20/ Rev.3) was issued informing that the exercise would be resumed and the external reclassification specialist would be conducting desk audits in February/March 2022, for which the requests would have to be resubmitted by 28 January 2022. Unfortunately, at 30 April 2022, date of this report, no information or practical follow-up was given to this circular nor was the specialist seen at Headquarters.
21. However, during this same period (2020 – 2022) several vacancy announcements for creation of new posts were issued whose work was being already carried out by personnel at a lower grade. After the internal selection process, the same incumbents were promoted to the new position corresponding in practice to a promotion. Seen objectively, this procedure is giving a legitimate impression of constituting a way to circumvent the reclassification exercise just for a few colleagues, depriving many others of the opportunity to opt for a promotion in case their post is rightfully reclassified at a higher grade by the external reclassification expert, whose hiring now seems uncertain.
22. Finally, the Ethics Officer received an anonymous written complaint from a whistle-blower bringing to the attention a series of potential prohibited conducts from senior management and several incongruities in the field of human resources, many of which coincide with individual complaints already mentioned in the above paragraphs. One worrying aspect raised in this communication is the general lack of transparency in this area and, in particular, the lack of consistency in communicating promotions and special step allowances. These conducts and shortcoming are a source of grave concern to the Ethics Officer as they could put in jeopardy UNWTO's reputation as an international body with an ethical organizational culture based on integrity, accountability, transparency, and respect.

#### **D. Financial Disclosure Programme**

23. The UNWTO financial disclosure programme (FDP) of November 2013 (Circular NS/774), has been revised and replaced by Administrative Instruction (AI/915/19) on the Declaration of Interest Statements, as promulgated by the Secretary-General on 9 July 2019.
24. The new Declaration of Interest (DOI) Policy of the Organization sets an obligation for a specific group of UNWTO staff members to file their DOI Statements on an annual basis and submit them to the Ethics Officer.
25. Pursuant to AI/915/19, the following staff members have an obligation to file an annual declaration of interest statement:
  - (a) All staff members at the P.5 level and above.
  - (b) The Chief Procurement Officer and all staff members whose principal occupational duties are the procurement of goods and services for UNWTO.
  - (c) The Director of Administration and Finance, the Chief of Budget and Finance, UNWTO's Treasurer and all staff members whose principal occupational duties relate to the investment of the assets of the Organization or of any accounts for which UNWTO has a fiduciary or custodial relationship.
  - (d) Staff members whose direct access to confidential procurement (staff in the General Service or staff in the Office of the Legal Counsel) or investment information, or whose engagement in a procurement activity for a limited duration or under specific exceptional circumstances, warrants the completion of a declaration of interest statement.
  - (e) All staff members serving in the Procurement Review Committee.
  - (f) Other staff members, members of personnel and individuals designated by the



Secretary- General, where he or she deems it appropriate and necessary in the best interests of the Organization.

26. The list of staff members required to file a DOI Statement is provided to the Ethics Officer by the Human Resources Department, after approval of the Secretary-General.
27. On 26 June 2021, the Ethics Officer received a list containing the names of twenty-six officials for the purpose of completing the DOI Statement for the year 2020. Of these, two officials were no longer working at UNWTO at that date, thus reducing the number to twenty-four.
28. A personalized communication of the Ethics Officer was addressed on 1 July 2021 to the twenty- four designated officials, including the Secretary-General, with a request to complete the online DOI form and to submit it by 31 July 2021. Nineteen filed their respective Declaration within the deadline, three requested an extension and two filed their declaration with a delay.
29. Of these twenty-four, there were twenty staff members (83%) where no actual conflict of interest was found. Four staff members (16%) where there could have been a possible appearance of conflict of interest: one (4%) with a spouse working in the UN System, two (8%) owned stock options or have a financial interest in companies which had no relation to UNWTO and one (4%) had an outside activity with a UNWTO partner institution which was duly authorized by the Secretary- General, thus no conflicts of interest were found in any these four cases.

#### **E. Standard setting and policy support**

##### **Policy reviews**

30. The Ethics Officer has provided comments to the 2021 UN-SWAP Report for a United Nations system-wide action plan for mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women in UN entities and participated in a meeting/discussion on the related Strategic Planning with regard to the normative work of the Organization in this field.
31. The Ethics Officer was requested to review and provide comments to JIU's draft report "Review of the ethics function in the United Nations System" including the related "Overview of actions to be taken by participating organizations on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit".
32. The Ethics Officer further contributed to JIU A/457 questionnaire on Measures and Mechanisms for preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination in the institutions of the United Nations System.

##### **OIOS audit**

33. The United Nations Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), to which UNWTO has outsourced its internal audit function, conducted in 2021 an audit in the field of project management to which the Ethics Officer was requested to participate in order to identify potential risks in the area of technical cooperation.

#### **IV. The Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations**

34. The UNWTO Ethics Officer participated in Part 1 and Part 2 of the 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations (ENMO) which was held in virtual format respectively on 7-8 July 2022 and 17-19 November 2022, and was hosted by the European Central Bank with ECB President Christine Lagarde delivering the welcome address to ENMO members.
35. The Ethics Network was founded in 2010 within the framework of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) to promote system-wide collaboration and coherence in the field of ethics and integrity, with the participation of ethics officers from the United Nations Secretariat, funds and programs, the United Nations specialized agencies, and international financial institutions. The Ethics Network counted 43 organizations among its Members in 2021.

36. Among the various, interesting topics discussed during the two virtual meetings were topics such as ethical challenges/risks due to teleworking and the “new normal”; internal speak up culture and how to promote and measure the workplace climate; ethics and social media: the use of personal devices and social media sites and associated risks; and addressing discrimination and racism in international organizations.
37. Full information on the work of the Ethics Network is provided in the Report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Activities of the Ethics Office (document [A/76/76](#)).

## **V. Final considerations**

### **Recent trends to amend Staff Rules and Regulations**

#### **A. Appointment and Promotions Board (APB)**

38. As already mentioned in the previous 2020 and 2021 annual reports, the Ethics Officer continues to be of the opinion that the new internal procedures on appointments and promotions, although approved by the governing body as an amendment to the UNWTO Staff Rules and Regulations (SGB/08/19) still leave ample scope for improvement from an ethical perspective.
39. According to Staff Rule 5(c), the Appointment and Promotions Board has the mandate to make recommendations to the Secretary-General about appointments, promotions, and other related issues. In 2019, an amendment to the Rules replaced the Deputy Secretary-General with the Secretary-General as Chair of the Board (Rule 5(d)9), thus creating a somewhat confusing situation where the latter would in practice make recommendations to himself. Although the Secretary-General can designate a representative to chair the sessions, there is a lack of transparency concerning who is chairing the Board at any of the APB sessions, while the risk of potential conflicts of interest remains flagrant.
40. It is regrettable to note that of all the amendments to the Staff Rules and Regulations - initiated since 2018 by the Human Resources Department and/or the Office of the Secretary-General which underwent verification by the Legal Department prior to their submission to the Executive Council for approval- none had been consulted in advance with the Ethics Officer in order to assess the possible ethical implications. The Ethics Officer would therefore suggest that the Ethics Function be included in the official Procedure and circuit for amendments to Basic Documents. On this point, the Ethics Officer would like to quote the Institute of Business Ethics which states that “Ethics starts where the law and regulations end”; since not all that is legal is necessarily ethical.

#### **B. Lack of commitment and support given to the Ethics Function**

41. In line with the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit ([JIU/REP/2010/3](#)), the ethics function should operate independently from management and for this reason it is recommended that the post of the Ethics Officer should be established at a senior level, usually at P-5 / D-1 level.
42. The recent JIU Report on the Review of the Ethics Function in the United Nations system ([JIU/REP/2021/5](#)) which was released on 31 March 2022, features in Annex III a comparative table with the levels of the positions of officers responsible for the ethics function in twenty-two UN organizations. The table clearly shows that the Ethics Officer at UNWTO is the only official whose grade is at a lower level than that recommended by the JIU, even at UN organizations where the function is carried out on a dual basis as in UNWTO.
43. This lower grade of seniority of the position, combined with the persisting lack of resources, both human and financial, dedicated to the ethics function by the current senior management during the last four and the current year -and this despite a decision of the Executive Council ([CE/DEC/12\(XCIV\)](#)) that sets the provision for this function at 30 000 EUR per annum-, are a clear illustration of the absence of any commitment or interest by top management to promote, cultivate and nurture a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability in the Organization.

44. The absence of support provided to the in-house Ethics Function, alongside the attempts to marginalize the Function as well as the work of the operational department (Ethics, Culture and Social Responsibility) headed in parallel by the Ethics Officer in her dual modality, are the reason why the Ethics Officer once again repeats the call to senior management to return to the previous formula consisting in the outsourcing of this confidential and complex Function to a professional Ethics Officer from a similar body in the UN system.
45. At the same time, the Ethics Officer strongly recommends that the pending agreement between UNWTO and the United Nations Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) be concluded as soon as possible for the externalization of internal investigations, since the agreement signed in December 2019 with OIOS only provides for the outsourcing of the audit function for a duration of three years, but does not include any investigation services.

Marina Diotallevi  
Ethics Officer, UNWTO  
30 April 2022