

International Civil Service

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Introduction

International civil service term is used for all those general and professional employees or staff members, who are employed or working in an international organization or intergovernmental organization.

As defined by OECD international civil servants are persons working for international organizations located in a country other than their own. They usually reside in that country under special visas or permits. Their dependents and domestic employees are generally allowed to accompany or join them.

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Sir Harold Duncan (1954) defines it as – “It comprises the permanent and temporary employees of international institutions who are expected, throughout their employment, to place the interests of the institution by which they are employed above all else, refusing to take instructions from any other authority, even that of their nation”.

Article – 7 of Charter of the League of Nations made first attempt on these services.

Article-100 of Charter of United Nations also make such provisions for Secretary General and the staff of U.N.

Contd.-

Article 100 says that –

In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.

Each Member of the United Nations undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Contd.-

Article 101 says-

The staff shall be appointed by the Secretary-General under regulations established by the General Assembly.

Appropriate staffs shall be permanently assigned to the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, and, as required, to other organs of the United Nations. These staffs shall form a part of the Secretariat.

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. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

Features

International Civil Service are mainly concerned and controlled by the United Nations.

General Assembly is the 'personnel- policy' making agency of these services.

International Civil Service Commission deals establishment and other routine tasks of employees.

Any qualified citizen of member state can be the part of these services.

These services are two types- permanent and contractual.

A common system of salary, allowances, pensions and other benefits is applied by U.N., its funds and programmes and specialized agencies (except World Bank).

ICSC

The International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) is an independent expert body established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974. Since its inception, the ICSC has redoubled its efforts to strengthen and maintain high standards in the international civil service, while balancing the needs and concerns of its major stakeholders.

The ICSC is assisted by an expert subsidiary body, the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions (ACPAQ), which provides technical advice on the methodology of the post adjustment system.

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The Commission is composed of fifteen members who serve in their personal capacity. They are appointed by the General Assembly for four-year terms, with regard for broad geographical representation. On some matters, such as the establishment of daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and post adjustment (i.e., cost-of-living element, hardship entitlements), the Commission itself may take decisions. In other areas, it makes recommendations to the General Assembly, which then acts as the legislator for the rest of the common system. Such matters include Professional salary scales, the level of dependency allowances and education grant.

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In support of the work of the Commission, the ICSC secretariat performs the substantive and administrative work, such as performing studies, producing analytical papers and making recommendations on policies and practices related to human resources management. Headed by an Executive Secretary, the secretariat is comprised of more than 40 staff members whose work is divided among three divisions: Cost-of-Living, Salaries and Allowances, and Human Resources Policies Division, each headed by a division chief.