

Program and Budget Committee

Thirty-Seventh Session
Geneva, June 10 to 14, 2024

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT'S (JIU) RECOMMENDATIONS

prepared by the Secretariat

1. This document provides an overview of the status of implementation of outstanding recommendations addressed to the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Legislative Bodies and to the Executive Head of WIPO, resulting from the reviews of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) during the period January 1, 2019, to February 29, 2024. All recommendations prior to January 1, 2019 have been closed.
2. Annex I to the present document contains 10 recommendations addressed to the Legislative Bodies of United Nations system organizations, where these recommendations are marked for action by WIPO (out of which eight are new). The current status of acceptance/implementation of recommendations reflects the Secretariat's proposals and assessments for consideration by Member States.
3. Annex II to the present document contains 29 recommendations addressed to the Executive Head of WIPO, where these recommendations are marked for action by WIPO Secretariat (out of which 25 are new). The current status of acceptance/implementation of recommendations reflects the Secretariat's proposals and assessments for consideration by Member States.
4. WIPO did not accept two recommendations from the JIU report JIU/REP/2023/6 "Flexible working arrangements in United Nations system organizations", five recommendations from the JIU report JIU/REP/2023/4 "Review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations" and one recommendation from the JIU Report JIU/REP/2023/2 "Review of the internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms available to staff of the United Nations system organizations". The explanation is included in the Secretariat's proposal and assessments in Annex I and Annex II.

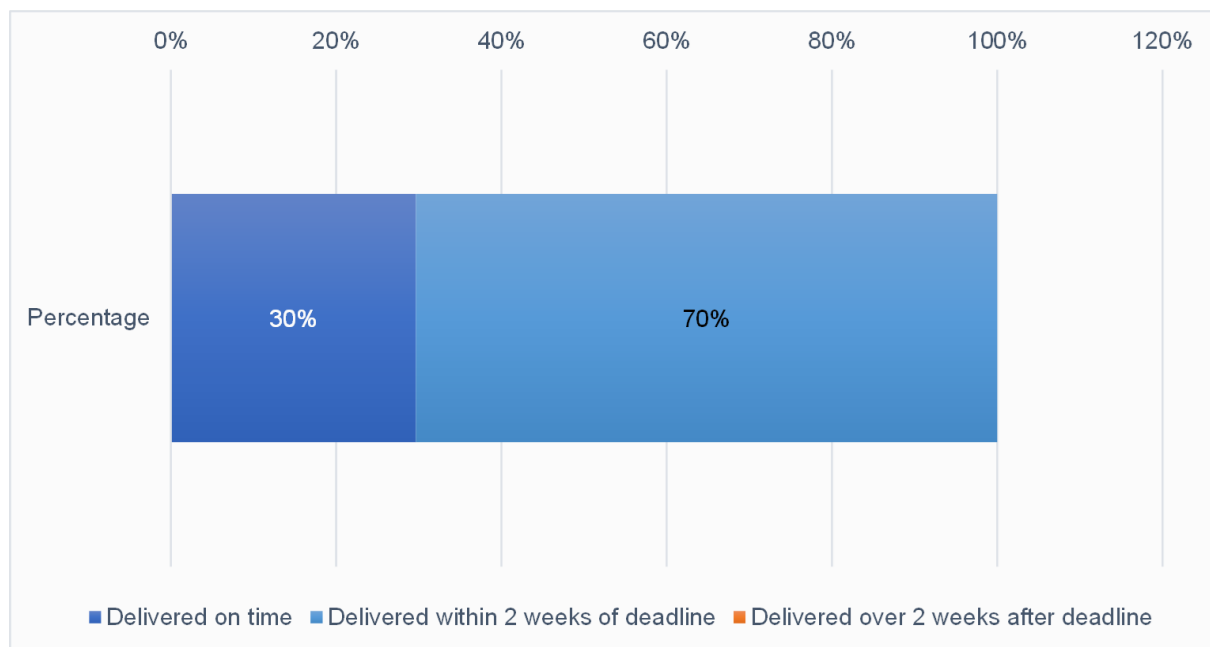
5. Annex III to the present document contains the list of seven active JIU reports relevant to WIPO as at February 29, 2024; including the appropriate links to the detailed active JIU reports.

6. Since the last report submitted to Member States (WO/PBC/35/2) on the same subject, five new Reviews (JIU/REP/2023/8 “Review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations”, JIU/REP/2023/6 “Flexible working arrangements in United Nations system organizations”, JIU/REP/2023/4 “Review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations”, JIU/REP/2023/3 “Review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations”, and JIU/REP/2023/2 “Review of the internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms available to staff of the United Nations system organizations”) relevant to WIPO have been issued.

7. WIPO attended and actively participated in the biennial meeting of JIU Focal Points of participating organizations from the 19 – 20 September 2023 at the Palais de Nations, Geneva. The meeting covered various subjects of interest to the JIU and to the participating organizations including the preliminary programme of work for 2024, the COVID and post-COVID experiences and challenges, tracking and implementation of JIU recommendations. The JIU also presented a summary of a JIU self-assessment inspection.

8. It is highlighted that in addition to the follow up of outstanding JIU recommendations, the Secretariat continues its work to facilitate and coordinate responses to the JIU’s questionnaires, surveys and interviews in relation to ongoing and new Reviews in a timely manner (see Summary Dashboard – Response Timeliness table below).

Chart 1 Summary Dashboard – Response Timeliness



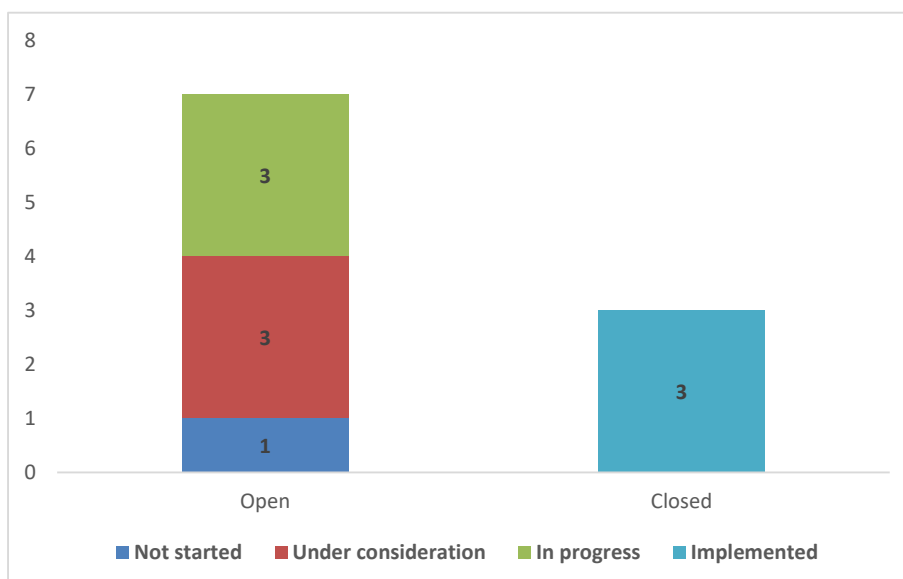
9. The following Reviews are ongoing at the time of finalization of the present document:

Table 1 JIU Reviews relevant to WIPO planned in 2024

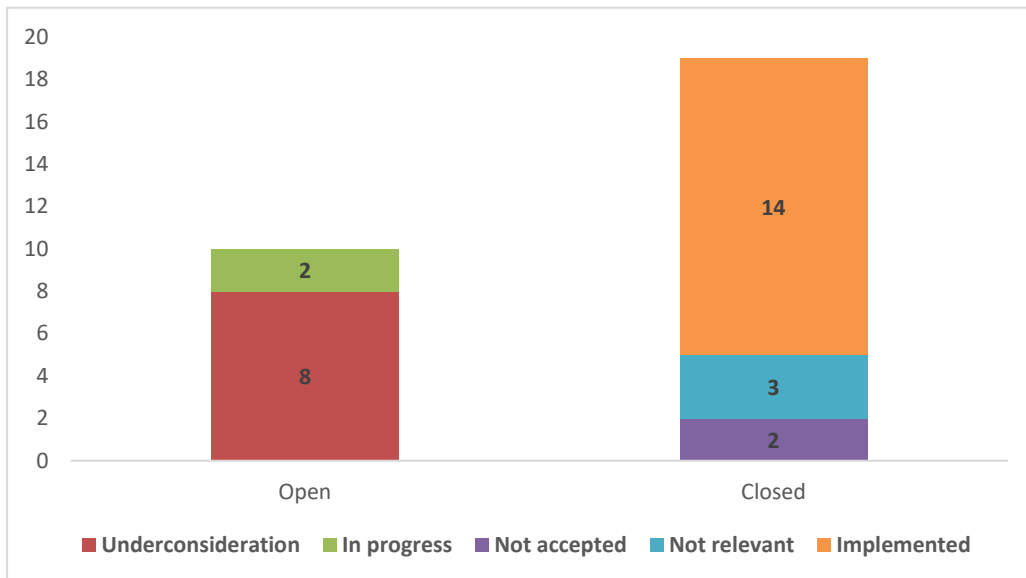
A457 - Review of policies, measures, mechanisms and practices to prevent and address racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system	2021 PoW
A466 - Review of the acceptance and implementation of JIU recommendations by the United Nations system organizations, the process of handling the JIU reports by the JIU participating organizations and their consideration by their legislative/governing bodies	2022 PoW
A467 - Review of quality, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of health insurance schemes in the United Nations system organizations	2022 PoW
A473 - Budgeting in organizations of the United Nations system	2024 PoW
A474 - The single-audit principle and the impact of additional oversight requirements by donors	2024 PoW
A475 - Review of the implementation of the principle of mutual recognition within the United Nations system	2024 PoW
A476 - Review of policies and practices to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in United Nations system organizations	2024 PoW

10. As at February 29, 2024, subject to the endorsement of Member States in respect of recommendations contained in the present report, there will be seven recommendations addressed to WIPO's Legislative Bodies and ten recommendations addressed to the Executive Head, which remain outstanding. All other recommendations have been closed (implemented, considered not relevant to WIPO, or not accepted).

**Chart 2 JIU Recommendations addressed to Legislative Bodies
Status as at February 29, 2024**



**Chart 3 JIU Recommendations addressed to the Executive Head
Status as at February 29, 2024**



11. The following decision paragraph is proposed.

12. *The Program and Budget Committee (PBC):*

(i) *took note of the present report (document WO/PBC/37/6);*

(ii) *welcomed and endorsed the Secretariat's assessment of the status of the implementation of recommendations under:*

- *JIU/REP/2023/8 (Recommendations 3, 4, 5 and 6)*
- *JIU/REP/2023/6 (Recommendations 1, 3, 5 and 6)*
- *JIU/REP/2023/4 (Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10 and 11)*
- *JIU/REP/2023/2 (Recommendations 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7)*
- *JIU/REP/2019/8 (Recommendation 4);*
- *JIU/REP/2018/4 (Recommendation 10) as set out in the present report; and*

(iii) called on the Secretariat to propose assessments for the open recommendations made by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) for Member States' consideration.


[Annexes follow]

JIU RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF JIU PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS – STATUS AS AT FEBRUARY 29, 2024

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JIU REVIEWS HELD IN 2023


JIU/REP/2023/8 “Review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)


This report was issued by the JIU on March 4, 2024. The recommendation is therefore new within the context of this report.

 Recommendation 5	The legislative and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads who have not yet done so to include in their reports on human resources relevant data and information on the use of non-staff personnel, such as the number of non-staff personnel, years of service, location of employment, nationality and gender.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	In respect of years of service, contracts under WIPO's Individual Contractor Services (ICS) non-staff personnel modalities are limited by time. We currently report on nationality and gender and this reporting is considered adequate. The reporting will evolve if needed based on Member States requirements.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	Implemented
Responsible Officer	Director/Central Services Division (CSD)

JIU/REP/2023/6 “Flexible working arrangements in United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)


This report was issued by the JIU on February 19, 2024. The recommendations are therefore new within the context of this report.

 Recommendation 4	Rec. 4 The legislative organs and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request, by the end of 2025, that the executive heads provide, as part of reporting on human resources management, periodic updates on the implementation of flexible working arrangements and teleworking policies, including statistical data, disaggregated by gender and other relevant dimensions, with a view to ensuring data-driven and evidence-based decision-making on flexible working arrangements management.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	Legislative organs and governing bodies are already provided a range of information on HR matters that focuses on issues at the strategic level in the form of an annual Human Resources Report. The inclusion of flexible working arrangements and teleworking policies in this Report that would be consistent with its strategic intent and tone will be considered holistically.
Acceptance	Under consideration
Implementation	
Responsible Officer	Director/Human Resources Management Department (HRMD)

 <p>Recommendation 5</p>	<p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should ensure, by 2025, that a quantifiable definition of “commuting distance” is included in their organization’s policy guidance on flexible working arrangements, for headquarters and field duty stations, in order to improve compliance with the exigencies of service provision. The executive heads should ensure that the commuting distance for field duty stations is established and reviewed, as appropriate, in close cooperation with all United Nations system entities physically present at the country level, under the auspices of the resident coordinators.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>WIPO Staff Regulation 1.10 (“Place of Residence”), which entered into force on 1 October 2023, requires staff to have their primary residence within the area of their duty station. Locations within 100 km by road of WIPO premises and accessible by land transportation within no more than 1.5 hours are generally considered within the area of the duty station.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Implemented</p>
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>Director/Central Services Division (CSD)</p>


JIU/REP/2023/4 “Review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)


This report was issued by the JIU on August 29, 2023. The recommendation is therefore new within the context of this report.

 <p>Recommendation 3</p>	<p>Legislative and/or governing bodies of United Nations system organizations should request that executive heads provide, by the end of 2026, an update on the development and implementation of their mental health and well-being workplace action plan developed according to their evidence-based and data-driven organizational approach on the matter.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>The WIPO Secretariat provides a strategic overview of issues relating to human resources to Legislative and Governing Bodies through its Annual Human Resources Report. A holistic approach will be considered as to the strategic information to be provided in the report depending on the information required by Member States for their consideration. In this regard information considered relevant and requested by Member States will be reported under the umbrella of the Occupational Safety and Health framework.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Under consideration</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>Director/Human Resources Management Department (HRMD)</p>

JIU/REP/2023/3 “Review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)


This report was issued by the JIU on July 5, 2023. The recommendations are therefore new within the context of this report.


 Recommendation 1	The legislative organs and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request their executive heads to assess their organization’s accountability framework against the updated JIU reference accountability framework and adjust it as necessary, by the end of 2024.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The revision/update of the accountability framework is planned for 2024, the assessment will therefore be done in the course of that revision/update. An assess of WIPO’s accountability framework will be made against the updated JIU reference accountability framework and an update will be provided to the governing bodies in 2025 of any adjustments.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	In progress
Responsible Officer	Assistant Controller

 Recommendation 2	Beginning in 2025, the legislative organs and/or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that the oversight plans of internal oversight offices cover all elements of their respective accountability framework within a reasonable time frame and that, if coverage is incomplete, a rationale is provided.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	From 1 January 2024, IOD will undertake annual testing of the design, implementation and operating effectiveness of the key controls of the organization which are derived from the key provisions of the Financial Rules and Regulations and Staff Rules and Regulations. With effect from the year ending 31 December 2025, Internal Oversight Division will issue a formal independent opinion on the Statement of Internal Control. In addition to the above, IOD will continue with its risk based annual oversight plan and its execution, while closely collaborating, as appropriate, with other assurance providers like the organization’s External Auditors, in their respective coverage of the accountability framework.
Acceptance	Under consideration
Implementation	
Responsible Officer	Director/Internal Oversight Division (IOD)

JIU/REP/2023/2 “Review of the internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms available to staff of the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)

This report was issued by the JIU on October 31, 2023. The recommendations are therefore new within the context of this report.

 Recommendation 4	The legislative organs and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request their respective executive heads who have not yet done so to undertake a thorough review of their regulatory frameworks and practices concerning internal specialized recourse mechanisms, with a view to assessing their continued utility and adequate functioning within the broader framework of internal appeal mechanisms, including eliminating duplicative or ambiguous process paths in the interest of procedural efficiency, and to report to them thereon, no later than 2025.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	A major review of the internal justice system was already performed in relatively recent years, leading to the elimination of duplicative layers. The new system was implemented in 2014 and was further refined in the following years to evolve to what is in existence now. Hence for WIPO this recommendation has already been implemented by the work done in 2014 and the subsequent further refinements.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	Implemented
Responsible Officer	Legal Counsel

 Recommendation 5	The legislative organs and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request their respective executive heads who have not yet done so to report to them annually, starting in 2025, on the functioning of their formal internal appeal mechanisms, including the specialized recourse mechanisms. The reports should include details on the number, subject matter and outcome of appeals, including cases deemed irreceivable, information on the demographics of applicants and information on whether the appealed decisions were upheld or revised, disaggregated by type of procedure, as applicable.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	Information on the functioning of the formal internal appeal mechanisms could be provided to the WIPO legislative organs and governing bodies. An “Annual Report of the Director General on the Administration of Justice” and an “Annual Report of the WIPO Appeal Board” are already made available to staff, and could be provided to Member States in the future. These documents provide, inter alia, details on the number, subject matter, and outcome of cases, including cases deemed irreceivable, information on the demographics of applicants and information on whether the appealed decisions were upheld or revised.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	Not started
Responsible Officer	Legal Counsel

II. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JIU REVIEWS HELD IN 2021

JIU/REP/2021/3 “Cybersecurity in the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)

Recommendation 2	The legislative and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should consider the reports on the elements contributing to improved cyberresilience prepared by the executive heads and provide strategic guidance on further improvements to be implemented in their respective organizations, as necessary.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The report for the PBC 2024 will be provided in a timely manner and will include details regarding the ISO 27001 certification audit and other Internal Oversight Division audit activities as agreed during PBC in 2023.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	In progress
Responsible Officer	Chief Security Officer (CSO)

No change from previous status

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JIU REVIEWS HELD IN 2020

JIU/REP/2020/7 “Blockchain applications in the United Nations system: towards a state of readiness” [LINK](#)

Recommendation 6	The governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should encourage Member States to engage with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law in its exploratory and preparatory work on legal issues that relate to blockchain in the broader context of the digital economy and digital trade, including on dispute resolution, which is aimed at reducing legal insecurity in that field.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The Secretariat of WIPO intends to encourage WIPO Member States to engage with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) in its exploratory and preparatory work on legal issues that relate to blockchain in the broader context of the digital economy and digital trade as recommended at the twelfth session of the Committee on WIPO Standards which will take place in September 2024.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	In progress
Responsible Officer	Chief Information Officer (CIO)

*No change from previous status
Assessment has been updated*


[Annex II follows]


JIU RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE EXECUTIVE HEADS OF JIU PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS – STATUS AS AT FEBRUARY 29, 2024


I. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JIU REVIEWS HELD IN 2023


JIU/REP/2023/8 “Review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)


This report was issued by the JIU on March 4, 2024. All recommendations are therefore new within the context of this report.


 <p>Recommendation 1</p>	<p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not already done so should adopt, by the end of 2025, the term “affiliate personnel” as the common system-wide nomenclature for referring to all categories of contract holders who are not considered staff and include the term in their relevant policy documents by the end of 2027.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>This is under consideration. As with recommendation 2, WIPO finds the recommendation to adopt the term “affiliate personnel” and to reflect the latter in all relevant policy documents to be too prescriptive and not consistent with WIPO’s methodology of identifying the most appropriate resources for a requirement, including the drawing on individuals obtained through outsourcing, such as administrative staff from temporary agencies, or individual experts obtained through specialized institutional suppliers.</p> <p>There is also lack of clarity on the applicability of this definition to loaned personnel who are administered by the releasing UN system organizations, or personnel who are hired through and administered by another UN system organization (UNDP, UNOPS, ICC, etc.). For example, WIPO JPOs are administered by and are subject to UNDP Staff Regulations and Rules, while WIPO considers them as staff members, not dissimilar to staff on loan.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Under consideration</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/CSD and D/HRMD</p>

 <p>Recommendation 2</p>	<p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2025, adopt the following as a common system-wide definition of all categories of contract holders who are not considered staff: “Any individual engaged by a United Nations system organization to perform work or services for a limited period of time or for a period of time tied to a specific project, and whose contractual relationship is not governed by a letter of appointment subject to the staff regulations and rules of the respective organization.”</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>This is under consideration. As with recommendation 1, WIPO finds the recommendation to adopt as a system-wide definition of all categories of contract holders who are not considered staff to be too prescriptive and not consistent with WIPO’s methodology of identifying the most appropriate resources for a requirement, including the drawing on individuals obtained through outsourcing, such as administrative staff from temporary agencies, or individual experts obtained through specialized institutional suppliers.</p> <p>There is also lack of clarity on the applicability of this definition to loaned personnel who are administered by the releasing UN system organizations, or personnel who are hired through and administered by another UN system organization (UNDP, UNOPS, ICC, etc.). For example, WIPO JPOs are administered by and are subject to UNDP Staff Regulations and Rules, while WIPO considers them as staff members, not dissimilar to staff on loan.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Under consideration</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/CSD and D/HRMD</p>

 <p>Recommendation 3</p>	<p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should conduct periodic reviews of their non-staff contractual modalities with a view to identifying critical positions of a continuous nature for the possible establishment of staff positions, funds permitting.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>This is done already within the wider framework of organizational biennial planning and workplace planning.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Implemented</p>
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/CSD and D/HRMD</p>


 <p>Recommendation 4</p>	<p>Taking into consideration the employment relationship principle, the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2026, develop social benefit policies or schemes applicable to non-staff personnel performing functions of a continuous nature, with clear guidelines for their implementation.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>Contracts under WIPO’s non-staff personnel modalities are limited by time and scope and exclude the use of contracted non-staff personnel for staff functions of a continuous nature.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Not relevant</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/CSD and D/HRMD</p>


 <p>Recommendation 6</p>	<p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organization who are not already doing so should include non-staff personnel in their regular workforce assessments so as to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of their policies and practices relating to the use of non-staff personnel.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>This is done within the wider framework of workplace planning. We specifically plan resources for interns / fellows and Individual Contractor Services (ICS) within Program & Budget workplans.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Implemented</p>
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/HRMD</p>


 <p>Recommendation 7</p>	<p>Taking into consideration the various organizational mandates and the diversity of non-staff contracts, as well as the diverse operational environments, the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, in their capacity as members of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), should request the Human Resources Network of the High-level Committee on Management to review and set minimum standards and principles for non-staff contractual modalities commonly used by the United Nations system organizations, with a view to enhancing system-wide coherence and harmonization by the end of 2028.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>This will be raised within the Human Resources Network of the High-Level Committee on Management and WIPO will actively engage on this matter.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Under consideration</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/HRMD</p>


JIU/REP/2023/6 “Flexible working arrangements in United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)

This report was issued by the JIU on February 19, 2024. All recommendations are therefore new within the context of this report.

 Recommendation 1	The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should ensure, at the earliest opportunity or in the context of established internal policy review processes, that a generic definition of flexible working arrangements is included in their organization’s policy guidance, in order to clearly establish the scope of the policy and differentiate the arrangements from other forms of flexible work.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	This was already defined in WIPO’s “Policy on working hours and flexible working arrangements”, Office Instruction no. 19/2021 of 15 October 2021. This policy was superseded by the section on “Working hours and flexible working arrangements” in the HR Manual on 15 March 2023. Finally, a revised Flexible Work Arrangements policy entered into force on 1 January 2024.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	Implemented
Responsible Officer	D/HRMD


 Recommendation 2	The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should develop, by the end of 2026, methods to measure the impact of the assumed benefits and the unintended consequences of flexible working arrangements, including the effects of prolonged teleworking modalities, to ensure that the arrangements in place are in the best interests of the personnel and the organization.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	<p>This recommendation overlaps with Recommendation 6 as one cannot happen without the other.</p> <p>While WIPO’s ERP system already allows for systematic collection of relevant data related to the usage of Flexible Working Arrangements, systemwide guidance and clarity should be jointly developed to guide and support organizations on how to measure the qualitative aspects in a coherent manner.</p> <p>Learning from the lessons drawn during the COVID-19 pandemic and the generalization of teleworking, WIPO already promulgated a revised FWA policy effective on January 1, 2024, to find a better balance between flexibility for staff and the need to continue building a culture of innovation, teamwork, learning and community that can only come through in-person connection and collaboration.</p> <p>A new staff regulation was also introduced in 2023, establishing a requirement for staff to have their primary residence within commuting distance from the office premises as a result of the lessons-learned from the past teleworking practices.</p> <p>WIPO, however, is not in a position to support this recommendation in its entirety, at this stage, without the above-mentioned clear systemwide understanding and guidance, which is better suited to be developed at the UN Common System level.</p>
Acceptance	Under consideration
Implementation	
Responsible Officer	D/HRMD


 <p>Recommendation 3</p>	<p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should integrate flexible working arrangement considerations into the next iteration of their organization's human resources management strategy, in order to ensure a strategic approach to flexible working arrangements.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>WIPO has a clear reference to hybrid work environment in its current HR strategy, supported by a comprehensive Policy on Flexible Working Arrangement which is consistent with the Staff Regulations and Rules. The combination documents the strategic approach to flexible working arrangements. Hence this recommendation is considered implemented.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Implemented</p>
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/HRMD</p>


 <p>Recommendation 6</p>	<p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should review, by 2025, the management systems and tools related to data collection and analysis of flexible working arrangements and ensure that they are upgraded as necessary and fit for purpose, in order to support data-driven and effective management of flexible working arrangements.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>This recommendation overlaps with Recommendation 2 as one cannot happen without the other.</p> <p>However, WIPO already uses Oracle PeopleSoft HCM for the administration of Flexible Working Arrangements through Employee Self Service. Data is extracted through PeopleSoft queries and can be done on ad hoc basis. Furthermore, analytical functionalities and dashboards are currently being built to enable real time data reports.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Implemented</p>
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/HRMD</p>


JIU/REP/2023/4 “Review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)


This report was issued by the JIU on August 29, 2023. All recommendations are therefore new within the context of this report.


 Recommendation 1	The executive heads of those United Nations system organizations that do not already participate on the Implementation Board of the United Nations System Mental Health and Well-being Strategy should nominate a representative to serve on the Board by its first meeting in 2024.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	WIPO is represented by its Staff Counsellor in the United Nations Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy Board since its commencement as well as by its Head of HR Operations in the Strategy Implementation Board, and actively participates in the work of the Board. WIPO appreciates the importance of being represented in the Implementation Board, not only to have up-to-date information on inter-agency development to assist the organization with the implementation, but also to ensure that the specificities of the organization are also duly recognized and taken into consideration by the Board.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	Implemented
Responsible Officer	D/HRMD


 Recommendation 2	Executive heads of United Nations system organizations, who have not already done so, should define an evidence-based and data-driven organizational approach to the mental health and well-being of their personnel and design, by the end of 2025, a workplace action plan and reflect its principles in their enterprise risk management process, their occupational health and safety framework and their human resources strategies.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	<p>WIPO is appraised of the main principles of the UNMHWB Strategy and plans to integrate the relevant elements into the broader Occupational Safety and Health action plan in due course. It should be noted that the current WIPO HR strategy reflects WIPO’s support of these principles.</p> <p>While fully supportive of the need for an evidence-based and data driven approach to mental health and well-being, WIPO is cognizant of the challenges to define what needs to be measured to assess concrete impact. The UN Mental Health and Well-Being strategy scorecard, as it stands, still focuses on reporting on activities rather than impact.</p> <p>More guidance and collaboration are needed to develop meaningful indicators at the UN Common System level that would serve as valid evidence to support a truly impactful data-driven approach to assess effectiveness of mental health and well-being initiatives, beyond counting activities.</p> <p>As such, WIPO is not in a position to accept this recommendation which is not implementable in an impactful and meaningful way in the near future.</p>
Acceptance	Not accepted
Implementation	
Responsible Officer	D/HRMD


 <p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p> <p>Acceptance</p> <p>Implementation</p> <p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>By the end of 2024, executive heads of United Nations system organizations should review the rules governing the return to work of personnel, including provisions for granting accommodations to facilitate the return process, in order to ensure the inclusiveness of mental health-related considerations, and develop standard operating procedures that clearly identify roles and responsibilities, including decision-making.</p> <p>WIPO has developed Return to Work guidelines and they are being applied. Integration of these guidelines in the upcoming broader policy on Reasonable Accommodations is being considered.</p> <p>Accepted</p> <p>Implemented</p> <p>D/HRMD</p>
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 <p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p> <p>Acceptance</p> <p>Implementation</p> <p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>By the end of 2024, executive heads of United Nations system organizations should assess and identify any gaps or areas to improve their counselling function in their organizational context, using the guidance on professional standards for counsellors prepared by the United Nations Staff/Stress Counsellors Group and endorsed by the Human Resources Network of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, as well as key elements highlighted by the Joint Inspection Unit in the present report.</p> <p>While appreciating the importance of this recommendation in a wider United Nations Common System context, WIPO would like to highlight the fact that the staff counsellor function in each organization is largely influenced by the specific context and mandate of the organization, and as such not all elements included in the guidance on professional standards for counsellors document will be relevant to all organizational contexts. WIPO has one Staff Counsellor who provides counselling service to all managers, staff, non-staff personnel, dependents and retirees but also broader staff welfare services. The WIPO staff counsellor receives monthly professional supervision and regular professional training in line with the UNSCG guidance document on professional standards for counsellors.</p> <p>Accepted</p> <p>Implemented</p> <p>D/HRMD</p>
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 <p>Recommendation 8</p> <p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p> <p>Acceptance</p> <p>Implementation</p> <p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>Executive heads of United Nations system organizations should ensure that their organizations collaborate on the mapping of psychosocial support capacity available in all locations and consider the system-wide capacity when designing their workplace action plans, capitalizing on shared services, cost-sharing and other models for cost effective and efficient delivery.</p> <p>While this recommendation is not fully applicable to the context of WIPO as a HQ based organization, WIPO is fully engaging with the UN system organizations through the UN Mental Health and Well Being Strategy Implementation Board through its representatives.</p> <p>Not relevant</p> <p>D/HRMD</p>
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 <p>Recommendation 9</p>	<p>Executive heads of United Nations system organizations should ensure that their workplace action plans on the mental health and well-being of their personnel, to be designed by the end of 2025, identify barriers to accessing psychosocial support services, including prioritizing stigma reduction through mental health literacy initiatives, outreach and health-promotion measures.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>WIPO will give due consideration to barriers to accessing psychosocial support services, and prioritizing stigma reduction through Mental Health literacy initiatives and health-promotion measures as part of the broader Occupational Safety and Health action plan (see response to Rec. 2) in due course. However WIPO will not be preparing a singular plan on mental health and prefers a holistic approach that covers Occupational Safety and Health. By incorporating these initiatives in the Occupational Safety and Health action plan the spirit of the recommendation would have been implemented.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Under consideration</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/HRMD</p>


 <p>Recommendation 10</p>	<p>To maximize return on investment, executive heads of United Nations system organizations should, by 2026, ensure that well-being programmes and activities are embedded in and complement the evidence-based and data-driven approach of the organization to mental health and well-being and are routinely monitored and assessed.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>While fully appreciative of the need to measure impact, the challenges as already expressed under recommendation 2 remain. The UN Mental Health and Well-Being strategy scorecard, as it stands, still focuses on reporting on activities rather than impact. More guidance and collaboration are needed to develop meaningful indicators that would serve as valid evidence to support a truly impactful data-driven approach to assess effectiveness of mental health and well-being initiatives, beyond counting activities. Therefore, the WIPO Secretariat will reconsider the recommendation when more maturity is gained at the United Nations Common System level, as the development of such indicators in a vacuum would not provide any valuable information.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Not accepted</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>D/HRMD</p>


 Recommendation 11	Executive heads of United Nations system organizations should explore integrating, by the end of 2024, mental health and well-being considerations into training programmes, in particular for managers, as a means to provide opportunities for facilitated discussions and enhanced learning and to support employees with mental health conditions.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	<p>In cooperation with the Human Resources Management Department (HRMD), trainings on Mental Health and well-being are organized regularly per year. HRMD has focal points for the overall solution for this organization, and WIPO Academy is implementing various levels of training accordingly.</p> <p>In 2023, 3 sessions of Training on Mental Health Well-being were organized: I) Introduction to Mental Health and Well-being - "Mental Health is Everybody's Business", March 7, 2023. 320+ staff members attended. II) 'Mental Health and Well-being Training for Managers' (to a small group of managers 12-18 staff attended), March 2023. III) 'Mental Health - Developing Your Resilience', is on enrollment notice for 40 staff and will be held during early, December 2023.</p>
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	Implemented
Responsible Officer	D/HRMD and Executive Director/WIPO Academy

JIU/REP/2023/3 “Review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)

This report was issued by the JIU on July 5, 2023. All recommendations are therefore new within the context of this report.


 Recommendation 3	The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, starting from 2025, present to their legislative organs and/or governing bodies a regular report on the implementation of the accountability framework and on the costs of its key components.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	<p>WIPO will need to assess if such an approach would provide added value to governing bodies.</p> <p>Compiling the costs of the key components of the accountability framework is a rather manual and complicated exercise. As a result, the estimated costs are, at best, a good guesstimate. The value to the organization of this exercise is therefore questionable. The estimates be also not easily be compared to those of other organizations.</p>
Acceptance	Under consideration
Implementation	
Responsible Officer	Director/Program Performance and Budget Division (PPBD)


 Recommendation 4	The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should prepare, by the end of 2024, through consultations held in the appropriate inter-agency mechanisms, a common United Nations system reference accountability framework maturity model, taking into consideration the updated JIU reference accountability framework.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The process relates to interagency mechanisms, the implementation of this recommendation is not under the sole control of WIPO. Updates will be provided based on progress made on this matter in the appropriate interagency mechanisms.
Acceptance	Under consideration
Implementation	
Responsible Officer	Assistant Controller


 Recommendation 5	The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should prepare, by the end of 2025, an assessment of the maturity of their own accountability frameworks against the common United Nations system reference accountability framework maturity model and share the results with their respective legislative organs and/or governing bodies for information.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The process relates to interagency mechanisms, the implementation of this recommendation is not under the sole control of WIPO. Updates will be provided based on progress made on this matter in the appropriate interagency mechanisms.
Acceptance	Under consideration
Implementation	
Responsible Officer	Assistant Controller


JIU/REP/2023/2 “Review of the internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms available to staff of the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)

This report was issued by the JIU on October 31, 2023. All recommendations are therefore new within the context of this report.

 Recommendation 1	The executive heads of United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should, by the end of 2025, harmonize the time limits for their administrations' response to requests for management evaluation or administrative review to a minimum of 45 calendar days and a maximum of 60 calendar days, irrespective of whether the request originates from a staff member at headquarters or in a field location; or propose this harmonization for decision by their legislative organs or governing bodies.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The WIPO Staff Regulations and Rules already provide for a time limit of 60 calendar days to respond to a request for review, which is applicable to all staff members, whether assigned to WIPO headquarters or to one of its external offices (see Staff Rule 11.4.3(a)).
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	Implemented
Responsible Officer	Legal Counsel

 Recommendation 3	The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should, where applicable and by the end of 2025, establish terms of reference or similar instruments for the Chairs and secretaries of their peer review bodies that set out the required qualifications, including legal expertise, their functions and reporting lines, in order to provide the safeguards necessary for their structural independence and impartiality.
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The terms of reference for the Chair and Deputy Chair and the job description of the Secretary set out the required qualifications, including legal expertise, functions and reporting lines, which provide the safeguards necessary for their independence and impartiality.
Acceptance	Accepted
Implementation	Implemented
Responsible Officer	Legal Counsel

 <p>Recommendation 6</p>	<p>The executive heads of United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should, by the end of 2025, review the procedural rules governing formal internal appeal mechanisms regarding the time limits applicable to the administrations' responses at different stages of the internal appeal processes, and specify the conditions for extending the time limits, with a view to reducing associated delays and fostering legal certainty and accountability.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>Under the WIPO Staff Regulations and Rules, time limits applicable to the Administration's responses at the different stages of the internal appeal processes are reasonable and mandatory. These time limits can only be extended in the narrow case of "exceptional circumstances" (see Staff Rules 11.4.1(c), 11.4.2, 11.4.3 and Rule 11.5.3(i)).</p> <p>The need to justify an extension of a time limit by reference to "exceptional circumstances" provides the requisite safeguard to ensure that the submission of the Administration's responses are not unduly delayed.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Implemented</p>
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>Legal Counsel</p>

 <p>Recommendation 7</p>	<p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so should, by the end of 2025, adjust the regulatory frameworks of their organizations and remove all restrictions regarding legal representation of their staff in internal justice processes, with the aim of allowing staff to choose their legal counsel freely and without restriction.</p>
<p>Management/Focal Point Assessment</p>	<p>Under WIPO's regulatory framework there is no restriction on the right of staff to choose their own legal representatives.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p>	<p>Accepted</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Implemented</p>
<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>Legal Counsel</p>

II. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JIU REVIEWS HELD IN 2021

JIU/REP/2021/3 “Cybersecurity in the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)

Recommendation 1	The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should prepare, as a matter of priority and no later than 2022, a comprehensive report on their cybersecurity framework and present it to their respective legislative and governing bodies at the earliest opportunity, covering the elements contributing to improved cyberresilience examined in the present report.	
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The report for the PBC 2024 will be provided in a timely manner and will include details regarding the ISO 27001 certification audit and other Internal Oversight Division audit activities as agreed during PBC in 2023.	
Acceptance	Accepted	<i>No change from previous status</i>
Implementation	In progress	
Responsible Officer	(CSO)	

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JIU REVIEWS HELD IN 2019

JIU/REP/2019/8 “Review of staff exchange and similar inter-agency mobility measures in United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)

Recommendation 4	Executive heads should, by the end of 2021, revise the 2012 Agreement to specify procedures for the handling of allegations of misconduct by staff who have moved to another organization under the terms of the Agreement.	
Management/Focal Point Assessment	<p>The 2012 Agreement is a system-wide agreement, hence this recommendation should be considered within the framework of the CEB HLCM following prior consultations with the human resources and legal networks of participating organizations (a focus group was to be formed in 2022 to initiate discussions on this issue, but this has not advanced yet).</p> <p>This was raised again by WIPO with the CEB Secretariat in 2023. It was confirmed that there was very little progress simply as the overall interest or appetite in the HR Network to look into the Agreement wasn't very visible.</p> <p>Having recently checked via the CEB Secretariat with other participating organizations, and in alignment with many of them, until there is joint initiative for a comprehensive review the 2012 Agreement, WIPO considers this recommendation as not relevant, noting that the implementation of this recommendation does not depend solely on WIPO's actions.</p> <p>Nevertheless, and should there be a review, WIPO is committed to actively participate in and contribute to the revision of the 2012 Inter-Agency Agreement.</p>	
Acceptance	Accepted	<i>Previously "in progress"</i>
Implementation	Not relevant	
Responsible Officer	Director/HRMD	

JIU/REP/2019/5 “Managing cloud computing services in the United Nations system” [LINK](#)

Recommendation 1	The executive heads of the United Nations organizations should ensure that business continuity planning includes strategies and measures to mitigate the risk of failure by cloud service providers to deliver the contracted services.	
Management/Focal Point Assessment	Concept note and 1 st version of the document are ready and will be presented at upcoming Digital and Technology Network session which will take place in Nairobi (Nov. 27-29, 2024).	
Acceptance	Accepted	<i>No change from previous status</i>
Implementation	In progress	
Responsible Officer	CIO	

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JIU REVIEWS HELD IN 2018




JIU/REP/2018/4 “Review of whistle-blower policies and practices in the United Nations system organizations” [LINK](#)

Recommendation 10	By the end of 2019, executive heads of United Nations system organizations should ensure that all supervisors and managers are required to complete specific training on whistleblowing policies and on how to appropriately respond to and handle misconduct/wrongdoing and retaliation reports.	
Management/Focal Point Assessment	The new mandatory training on “Ethics and Integrity at WIPO” launched in November 2022, was revised to also include specific lessons on (i) protection against retaliation, (ii) the qualities of ethical role models (managers/supervisors) and (iii) other specific guidance for managers/supervisors on their heightened responsibility to act ethically and take the correct steps when receiving reports of misconduct. Thus, the recommendation is considered closed. The Ethics Office will continue to strengthen the above messages through tailored guidelines and open forum discussions with managers/supervisors, as required from time to time.	
Acceptance	Accepted	<i>Previously “In progress”</i>
Implementation	Implemented	
Responsible Officer	Chief Ethics Officer (CEO)	

[Annex III follows]

LIST OF ACTIVE¹ JIU REPORTS RELEVANT TO WIPO AS AT FEBRUARY 29, 2024

This annex serves to provide links to active JIU reports relevant to WIPO. All JIU reports, notes and management letters may be accessed/are available through the JIU's website. [LINK](#)

REFERENCE	LINK TO JIU REPORT	OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS (LB and EH) ²	CEB COMMENTS	OTHER DOCUMENTS
 JIU/REP/2023/8	Review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations	3 EH	Not yet available	
 JIU/REP/2023/6	Flexible working arrangements in United Nations system organizations	1 EH	Not yet available	
 JIU/REP/2023/4	Review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations	1 LB 1 EH	CEB Comments	
 JIU/REP/2023/3	Review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations	2 LB 3 EH	CEB Comments	
 JIU/REP/2023/2	Review of the internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms available to staff of the United Nations system organizations	1 LB	Not yet available	
JIU/REP/2021/3	Cybersecurity in the United Nations system organizations	1 LB 1 EH	CEB Comments	Review Highlights
JIU/REP/2020/7	Blockchain applications in the United Nations system: towards a state of readiness	1 LB	CEB Comments	Review Highlights
JIU/REP/2019/5	Managing cloud computing services in the United Nations system	1 EH	CEB Comments	Review Highlights

¹ JIU reports containing outstanding recommendations, including all those included in the present report.

² Subject to the endorsement of Member States in respect of recommendations addressed to WIPO's Legislative Bodies (LB) and to the Executive Head (EH).