



JIU/REP/76/2

# **Report on the Use of Travel Funds in the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

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**Joint Inspection Unit**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report is the fourth in the series undertaken by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the use of travel funds by the organizations of the United Nations system.
2. The study on the use of the travel funds by UNESCO was begun after the Executive Board of UNESCO had twice discussed the question of official travel in connexion with the JIU report on the use of travel funds in the United Nations (JIU/REP/72/4). In compliance with the request of the Executive Board at its 95th session (95 Ex/Decisions item 3.9.3) the Director-General had submitted his report on the use of funds for official missions by staff members to the ninety-seventh session of the Executive Board (97 Ex/30). That report was based upon a study made by the Secretariat of UNESCO. Thus, the task of the Inspector was facilitated to some extent by the fact that a study had already been undertaken by UNESCO and some additional measures had been introduced for the control of the use of the travel funds.
3. In his investigation the Inspector examined travel data for the year 1974. A full year's data was not available for 1975 at the time of the study and 1975 was an exceptional year for UNESCO because of budgetary restrictions and an extensive reorganization of the Secretariat.
4. The findings and the conclusions of the Inspector as reflected in his recommendations are intended to complement the measures already taken by UNESCO and to provide the Executive Board with an outside independent view on how the approved travel funds were used in the course of the year 1974.
5. The Inspector is glad to state that the measures already taken by the Director-General in 1975 clearly show his determination to strengthen the control of the expenditures of the whole organization and particularly in the very sensitive area of travel.
6. The Inspector has based his analysis on the data furnished to him at his request by the Sectors of UNESCO and he wants to underline the good co-operation of the staff of UNESCO and to express his gratitude for the help given to him in his task.

7. The findings and conclusions of the Inspector are contained in each chapter and in the interest of brevity are not summarized elsewhere. However, the report concludes with a summary of the main recommendations of the Inspector.



## II. TRAVEL OF MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

8. Since UNESCO, unlike some of the other organizations of the United Nations system, does not refund travel expenses for members of delegations attending the General Conference, the Inspector in this section limits himself to the question of travel expenses paid by the Organization for members of the Executive Board.

9. UNESCO reimburses the cost of first class return travel for each of the forty members of the Board, plus per diem allowances. In addition to travel of the members of the Executive Board to attend meetings of the Board, UNESCO pays for the travel of a Board member or any other person specially appointed by the Board, to perform a mission on behalf of the Board, within the terms of a specific decision of the Board. Such travel is also by first class.

10. The Inspector is aware that the Executive Board of UNESCO has consistently shown a keen interest in achieving maximum economy, particularly in the use of travel funds. Considering that air fares have increased greatly and that it is difficult to increase travel funds proportionately, the Inspector is of the opinion that the Executive Board might wish to consider the possibility of following the example of the FAO Council regarding the class of travel. At its fifty-ninth session (1972) the FAO Council decided that, with the exception of the Chairman of the Council, all members of the Council and its Programme and Finance Committees be reimbursed the cost of air travel by economy class by the most direct route and with no distinction in terms of distance.

11. Thus the FAO Council, the first among the Governing Bodies of the United Nations system, set a good example and opened a new avenue for achieving economy. In his report on the use of travel funds in WHO (JIU/REP/74/3) the Inspector expressed the view that if the action taken by the FAO Council was followed by similar bodies of other United Nations organizations, this would set a desirable trend.

12. If the Executive Board of UNESCO was to accept this suggestion of the Inspector and apply it to all persons covered by the Rules and Procedures of the Executive Board, with the exception of the Chairman, such a decision would also have implications for the class of travel of senior members of the Secretariat. These implications are discussed in paragraphs 72-79.

### III. OFFICIAL TRAVEL OF STAFF

13. Chapter 27 of the Manual of UNESCO sets forth the rules and procedures concerning travel of staff members and their dependants, for which the Organization pays the cost.

14. This study is limited to the analysis of travel and the use of travel funds in connexion with travel on official mission. Item 2740 of the UNESCO Manual specifies that travel on mission is travel for the purpose of programme execution by staff members and non-staff members (e.g. consultants, supernumeraries, fee contractors, participants in meetings). Travel on mission is authorized only when its contribution to the effective execution of the programme justifies its cost and, in the case of a staff member, his absence from his regular duties.

15. The same Manual item specifies the priorities for authorizing travel on mission. To help ensure that only essential travel is authorized, ADGs give priority to the following: (a) project inspection and visit, (b) attendance at UNESCO-organized meetings, (c) attendance at United Nations co-ordination meetings, (d) attendance at the major meetings of NGOs, which are considering UNESCO programmes and (e) recruitment missions.

16. The same item also gives guidance on other aspects of travel as, for example: planning and approval, review of travel, limit on absence, briefing, notification outside Headquarters, reports on completion of travel on mission etc.

17. Thus Manual chapter 27 provides in detail all the required instructions dealing with travel. The Inspector analyses some of these instructions in this report and makes suggestions in the light of his findings.

18. As in previous studies on the use of travel funds in other organizations, the Inspector concentrates on basic issues with major financial or management implications. Data is analyzed in detail for the year 1974 which in contrast to 1975 was less affected by financial difficulties or substantial reorganization. However, the Inspector did have occasion to refer to partial 1975 data and used it to cross check his main findings.

#### A. Planning and approval of travel on mission

19. Provision for each mission has to be made under the appropriate project of the annual Programme Activity Details (PAD) with an indication of the nature, purpose

and estimated cost. In addition, a general budgetary provision may be made in the PAD, under the appropriate project, when at the time of preparation of the PAD it is anticipated that travel will be required but the precise purpose or destination is not yet known (Manual chapter 27 - item 2740 C.1).

20. The duties of the Administrative Officers in each Sector are to co-ordinate and evaluate the travel plans and to send them to the Assistant Director-General with their own comments. The Inspector had talks with the Administrative Officers of all Sectors and exchanged views on problems concerning the programming, co-ordination and the control of travel on mission. He noted that there was no uniform approach to this matter in the past. While in the Education Sector there exists a Co-ordination Unit in charge of planning, execution and follow-up, in other Sectors this is the duty, as mentioned above, of the Administrative Officer.

21. The set-up which the Inspector found in the Education Sector merits detailed analysis because, in the view of the Inspector, it offers a good example of a reasonable measure of control of the use of travel funds. In order to establish a coherent system for travel on mission, the ADG for Education issued an internal memorandum setting forth the procedures for the Education Sector (ADG/ED memo 75-094 of 9 March 1973). This memorandum placed emphasis on planning aspects and on budgetary constraints; it also called for the use of the technical competence of the Regional Offices. It required the completion quarterly of a simple form by units of the Sector. Decisions were taken by the ADG in consultation with the Co-ordinating Committee (Co-ordinating Unit and the three Department Directors).

22. But the experience of this first systematic exercise led to a second memorandum dated 5 September 1973 (notes supplementing ADG/ED/memo 75-094 of 9 March 1973) in which Department Directors were asked to centralize the proposed missions for the following quarter, thus giving an overall view of visits to different regions and countries. There was also a request for justification (e.g. letters of invitation) indicating the purposes of the mission.

23. Other measures concerning travel were instituted for all Sectors. After an enquiry carried out by the Organization and Methods Division, the Assistant Director-General for Administration issued an instruction (ADG/ADM/301 of 3 November 1973) which set forth the following criteria concerning the element of

judgement in the authorization of travel on mission: its relation to the programme and its contribution to efficient execution; judgement based on the knowledge of the relations between the Organization and the Member States and particularly the role which should be played in this connexion by the Regional Offices and by other staff away from Headquarters and finally a judgement on the observance of procedures and financial rules. The former Bureau of Relations with Member States and International Organizations and Programmes had a key role to play in the control of travel; the Inspector examined a well prepared analysis of travel on mission made in accordance with instructions of this Bureau for the year 1974.

24. Although the present study concerns essentially travel during 1974, the Inspector draws attention to a new attempt made to improve the system, particularly by co-ordinating the activities of the Regional Offices with those of Headquarters. In a memorandum dated 14 February 1975 the ADG for Education stressed the importance of such co-ordination. He pointed out that many trips were made to the same country and that it was sometimes possible to charge one traveller with supplementary tasks to reduce the number of trips. The objectives of each mission were to be clearly stated and justification provided. The participation of Headquarters staff in meetings in the field was to be reduced to a minimum.

25. In a further memo dated 28 March 1975, the ADG/ED established priority criteria to guide staff members in planning missions. While high priority was given to advisory services to Governments on sectoral programming, less important but nevertheless justifiable were missions to attend meetings or seminars at IGO, NGO or national institutional level since these are considered to be a good means for the Secretariat to obtain useful information. Decisions were to be taken at the Divisional and Sectoral level, in the latter case with the Co-ordinating Committee. Final decision on the mission plan should be guided by considerations such as programme objectives, frequency and overlap, as well as staff absence and urgency.

26. In spite of these efforts, particularly during 1974, the control over the use of travel funds was not fully successful. Frequent visits to some cities or countries, extensive travel undertaken by some limited categories of staff, long absence of some staff members from their duty station are convincing examples which will be detailed later in this report.

27. To improve the situation the Director-General in 1975 issued instructions aimed at ensuring a tighter control on the use of travel funds. Two co-ordinating bodies were established to review among other things travel plans. The Co-ordinating Committee on Operational Activities (CCO) reviews operational travel; all other travel is reviewed by the Co-ordinating Committee for Inter-sectoral Activities (CCI).

28. In addition the Director-General decided, after consulting the Executive Board (97th session) to establish a general inspection service (D6/Note 75/15 - 27.6.1975) headed by an Inspector-General with a very broad mandate.

29. The above-mentioned two committees - CCO and CCI - at the time of the Inspector's visit to the Headquarters of UNESCO in October 1975 were just starting to work. CCO had held only one meeting while CCI had not yet met. Both Committees have Secretaries in charge of the preparation of the meetings and necessary documentation. It is too early to express any judgement about the efficiency of these two bodies but, as needed instruments for control, they should be welcomed.

30. Bearing in mind that travel on mission by the Headquarters' staff members is one of the essential means of communication which the Secretariat has at its disposal, it is important to make travel as effective as possible in order to increase the efficiency of the execution of the programme and to strengthen the relationship between UNESCO and its Member States. It is also important, as was clearly stated in the resolution adopted by the General Conference (18C/Resolution 9.1) that "although travel by staff members is a significant part of the Secretariat's consultations with the Member States and of the implementation of the Organization's programme, every attempt should be made to keep such travel to a reasonable level".

31. In the view of the Inspector, before a mission is approved, it is necessary to determine whether the proposed travel is in fact the most effective means of communication available to the Secretariat or whether other less costly means would serve the purpose. Once it is decided that travel is required, consideration should be given as to who should undertake the travel - a staff member from Headquarters or from a Regional Office. At the same time the possibility of

combining the trip with another official mission or with home leave travel should be considered.

32. Travel on mission should be planned in advance. In addition to the tentative plan contained in the annual PAD, a more realistic travel plan for each quarter should be established and should be directly related to the requirements of the programme so that unplanned missions should be either avoided completely or be resorted to only in the case of genuine emergencies.

33. In each Sector, the ADG should appoint a small group of senior officials to examine travel plans. This Travel Review Committee would meet each quarter and be empowered to obtain any additional information or justification needed to facilitate its review of the travel plan of the Sector for the next three months. It would report to the ADG who would then forward the plan with his observations to the Co-ordinating Committees (CCO-CCI). The Co-ordinating Committees would then advise the ADGs on the travel plans from the point of view of avoiding duplication, making best use of planned trips and eliminating marginal travel. The ADG would then decide on the travel plan.

34. However, before the two Co-ordinating Committees make their proposals, the Secretaries should meet and examine the proposed travel plans in order to determine whether it is possible to combine some of the trips. If they find any such possibilities and are not able to agree on a solution with the Director concerned, they should draw the attention of the Chairmen of CCO and CCI to such cases. This would enable both Chairmen to have a complete picture of the travel situation. Bearing in mind that the operational activities are inter-related with the other activities of the Organization, the two Chairmen must maintain close contact in order to ensure better co-ordination.

35. The Inspector-General, who is a member of the two Co-ordinating Committees, should raise with the Deputy Director-General or Director-General any problems which he feels are not being adequately treated after first discussing them with the officials concerned.

36. The quarterly travel plans proposed by each Sector should follow a standard format to provide all needed information and to facilitate comparison

(see suggested format in Annex I). Copies of these plans should be distributed to the DG, DDG, all ADGs, the Co-ordinating Committees and to the Inspector-General.

37. Better control of the use of travel requires information on already completed travel presented in a convenient format. Such information does not now exist at UNESCO. If it did it could be used as an ex post facto control and to draw lessons for future planning. The information might be presented under the following three headings:

Schedule I. Trips grouped by organizational unit and within each by traveller

Schedule II. Trips grouped by destination

Schedule III. Trips to attend meetings

Annex II presents a suggested format for these schedules which should be prepared with the assistance of a computer.

38. The information described above should be made available regularly to ADGs, the Co-ordinating Committees and the Inspector-General and be used by them to investigate any anomalies of the past and in their examination of future plans.

#### B. Travel itineraries

39. Although the Inspector in his studies on the use of travel funds in other United Nations organizations had noted many instances in which travel itineraries were too long, he found few such cases in UNESCO. There were no cases in UNESCO where a single trip covered more than one or two continents. There were examples of itineraries covering several countries in one continent, including major capitals, but in analyzing these cases the Inspector concluded that these itineraries were justified in that they avoided separate trips to each country.

40. Nevertheless, it would seem that with better co-ordination some of these missions, or parts of them, could have been carried out by staff of Regional Offices. For example: (a) the itinerary of a staff member from the Communication Sector (COM) included Teheran, New Delhi, Bombay, Singapore, Hong Kong, Seoul, Tokyo (cost \$3,344 - duration 25 days). The purpose of the mission was to visit Foundations in Iran, India, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea and Japan and to participate at the regional meeting for the promotion of the UNESCO clubs in Asia. The

Inspector questions whether this trip could not have been carried out by a staff member of the Regional Office if well briefed on the subject. This would have resulted in economy and more rational use of the funds; (b) the itinerary of a staff member from the Education Sector included many capitals of Latin American countries (Mexico City, San José, La Paz, Caracas, Port of Spain, Grenada); the cost was charged to extra-budgetary funds - UNDP (\$2,306) and the duration was 29 days; the purpose of the travel was to prepare a regional project. The Inspector questions whether this task could not have been done as efficiently by the Director of the Regional Office, who should be thoroughly informed and familiar with problems of his region and who would eventually have a major role to play in the project; (c) a similar question could be raised for another case - the itinerary of a staff member from the Education Sector who travelled to Latin America included visits to Mexico City, San Salvador, Cali, Bogota, Santiago, Panama City and New York. Duration of the trip was 32 days at the cost of \$5,104 (extra-budgetary funds). The purpose was inspection and preparation of national programmes; (d) a clear example of what could have been done by the staff of the Regional Office is the travel on mission of a Director in the Education Sector. His travel to Asia included visits to Jakarta, Bangkok, Katmandu, Pokia, New Delhi, with a duration of 22 days and at the cost of \$4,042 (regular budget). The purpose was the inspection of the UNESCO programme in education.

41. The Inspector does not wish to quote too many examples and he has limited himself to some cases where it was evident that better co-ordination between the Headquarters and the Regional Offices could result in economy. This leads to the conclusion that the time has come for the Director-General to consider measures for decentralization and consequent strengthening of the Regional Offices to achieve a better distribution of work.

#### C. Frequent visits to some cities

42. As in some other organizations inspected, there is an obvious trend towards the concentration of visits to some cities or to some countries. From the official data<sup>1/</sup> submitted to the Inspector, he made his own calculations and found the following:

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<sup>1/</sup> The data covers the four Programme Sectors: Education, Science, Social Science, Humanities and Culture, Communication. The Administrative Sector and Units reporting directly to the Director-General and for which travel was less significant are not included.



(a) In the course of the year 1974 staff members from the four Programme Sectors visited 391 cities. Among the cities most frequently visited were the following: Geneva 162 times, London 83, New York 75, Rome 65, Washington 48, Cairo 46, Bangkok 45, Dakar 37, Brussels 34, Beirut 34, Nairobi 32, New Delhi 32, Moscow 31, Vienna 30, Mexico City 29, Bucharest 27, Teheran 26, Tokyo 24, Madrid 24, Copenhagen 22, Warsaw 22, Lagos 21, Budapest 20, Strasburg 20, Jakarta 16, Rabat 16, San José 15, Munich 15, Accra 14, Kinshasa 13, Baghdad 13, Stockholm 13, The Hague 12, Colombo 12, Addis Ababa 12, etc.

(b) From this listing it is clear that many countries frequently visited are those where the headquarters or large offices of other United Nations organizations are located and those in which UNESCO Regional Offices are situated, although to find London in second place is surprising.

(c) The very frequent visits to some of the cities which are near the Headquarters of UNESCO raise the question whether it is not possible to use some other means of communication (letters, cables, telephone). When attendance at meetings is involved, the missions should be judged strictly according to the benefits which would be obtained from the participation of staff at the meeting. There should be a very conscientious scrutiny of every meeting which UNESCO staff proposes to attend in order to establish necessary priorities. Not all the meetings are of the same importance, in particular, many of the meetings of the non-governmental organizations might have lower priority. It is hoped that the new measures of control and scrutiny of travel plans which are to be carried out through CCO and CCI and particularly the role of the newly established Inspector-General will result in less extensive and frequent visits to some cities and countries.

D. Frequent travel by individuals and long absence from duty station

43. In his analysis of travel completed during 1974, based on the data supplied to him by the Secretariat, the Inspector found a large and frequent movement of staff from Headquarters to the field or to the headquarters of other organizations. He was surprised at the long absence of some staff members from their duty station, particularly of some senior officers - directors or chiefs - who should, in his view, usually run and guide their divisions or units from Headquarters.

44. The Inspector will again limit himself to the four Programme Sectors leaving aside the Administrative Sector where the movement of the staff and duration of absence from the duty station were less significant.

45. A useful ceiling had been established in 1966 on the absence of staff from Headquarters (ODG/DDG/3076 of 7 September 1966). This ceiling provided a maximum of 20 weeks of absence on leave and mission from Headquarters for each staff member for each biennium or 70 calendar days per year. The Inspector estimates that of these 70 days per year some 40 days could represent the ceiling for travel on mission if an average of slightly over four weeks or 30 calendar days is deducted for annual leave. Absence on mission significantly in excess of 40 days per year, particularly for senior staff, suggests that the staff member concerned was not able to devote all the time necessary to directing the unit for which he is responsible. The Inspector examines below for each Sector the extent to which absences of senior individuals on mission exceeded 40 days in 1974.

#### Education Sector

46. The table below summarizes the calculations made by the Inspector for travel on mission by staff of the Education Sector in 1974.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. of Travellers</u>	<u>No. of Trips</u>	<u>No. of days Absence from H.Q.</u>	<u>No. of Travellers absent more than 40 days in 1974</u>
ADG	1	5	56	1
D-2	3	28	175	2
D-1	13	47	387	4
P-5	55	165	1791	20
P-4	43	107	1559	10
P-3	9	18	245	2
P-2	18	23	385	1
P-1	2	2	42	-
G-S	3	3	22	-
Total:	147	398	4662	43

(a) Of the 398 trips, 240 or 60 per cent amounting to 2353 days were made by staff P-5 to D-2 and the total absence was 4662 days.

(b) Some examples of lengthy absence from Headquarters are:

- Two D-2 staff members were absent on mission for 92 and 53 days respectively.

- Four D-1 staff members were absent respectively for 78, 56, 45 and 42 days.

- Twenty P-5 staff members were absent for more than 40 days; their total absence was 1213 days or an average of 60 days each.

#### Science Sector

47. The Inspectors calculations produced the following table:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. of Travellers</u>	<u>No. of Trips</u>	<u>No. of days Absence from H.Q.</u>	<u>No. of Travellers absent more than 40 days in 1974</u>
ADG	1	11	91	1
D-2	2	21	171	2
D-1	6	49	364	6
P-5	27	142	1349	13
P-4	31	143	1231	13
P-3	8	18	166	-
P-2	1	4	31	-
P-1	-	-	-	-
G-S	-	-	-	-
Total:	76	388	3403	35

(a) Absence on mission in excess of 40 days is apparent in this Sector. The two D-2s were absent for 88 and 83 days respectively; of the six D-1s absent more than 40 days, one was away from Headquarters 76 days and two over 60 days. One P-5 staff member was absent for 159 days and another for 122 days.

(b) Of the 388 trips, 212 or 55 per cent amounting to 1884 days were made by staff P-5 to D-2 and the total absence was 3403 days.

(c) Thirteen P-5 staff were absent for more than 40 days. Their total absence was 1004 days or an average of 77 days each.

Communication Sector

48. Figures for the Communication Sector are as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. of Travellers</u>	<u>No. of Trips</u>	<u>No. of days Absence from H.Q.</u>	<u>No. of Travellers absent more than 40 days in 1974</u>
ADG	1	4	53	1
D-2	2	21	138	2
D-1	6	27	216	2
P-5	18	66	572	3
P-4	33	80	683	3
P-3	15	37	299	1
P-2	8	18	150	-
P-1	-	-	-	-
G-S	9	9	95	-
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Total:	92	262	2206	12

(a) Of the 262 trips, 114 or 44 per cent were made by staff P-5 to D-2. Twenty-six staff members of the same category were absent from Headquarters for 926 days or 42 per cent of the total absence of the staff.

(b) Twelve staff members were absent for more than 40 days. Two D-2s were absent 138 days. One 58 the other 80 days. Two D-1 staff members were absent for more than 40 days. One 71 and the other 55 days. One P-5 staff member was absent for 151 days.

(c) Thirty-three staff members in the category P-4 made 80 trips or 30 per cent of the total number of trips. They were absent for 683 days or 31 per cent of the total number of absences.

Social Sciences, Humanities and Culture Sector

49. Absences for this Sector were as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. of Travellers</u>	<u>No. of Trips</u>	<u>No. of days Absence from H.Q.</u>	<u>No. of Travellers absent more than 40 days in 1974</u>
ADG	1	8	54	1
D-2	4	21	148	2
D-1	7	23	214	2
P-5	27	73	681	5
P-4	17	52	601	4
P-3	9	15	171	-
P-2	8	16	232	3
P-1	1	1	9	-
G-S	6	7	59	-
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Total:	80	216	2169	17

(a) Of the total number of trips made by the staff of this Sector, 117 or 54 per cent were made by staff of P-5 to D-2. The same category was absent for 1043 days or 48 per cent of the total absences.

(b) One D-2 staff member was absent for 66 days. Two D-1s were absent more than 40 days. One was absent for 61 days. Five P-5 staff members were absent for more than 40 days, their total absence was 283 days or an average of 56 days each. Four P-4 staff members were absent for more than 40 days, the total absence was 276 days or an average of 69 days each.

Summary of Information concerning the four Programme Sectors

50. The table below totals the calculations for the four Programme Sectors:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. of Travellers</u>	<u>No. of Trips</u>	<u>No. of days Absence from H.Q.</u>	<u>No. of Travellers absent more than 40 days in 1974</u>
ADG	4	23	254	4
D-2	11	91	632	8
D-1	32	146	1181	14
P-5	127	446	4393	41
P-4	124	382	4074	33
P-3	41	88	881	3
P-2	35	61	798	4
P-1	3	3	51	-
G-S	18	19	176	-
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Total:	395	1264	12440	107

(a) The Inspector notes that the total absences from Headquarters on mission for four Sectors amounted to 12440 days or 34 man years. This reinforces his observation on the need to re-examine the possibility of decentralization of staff and functions to Regional Offices.

(b) Out of 395 staff members travelling during 1974, 107 or 27 per cent did not observe the established ceiling of absence from Headquarters.

(c) Out of 395 travellers, 174 or 44 per cent belong to the staff P-5 to ADG.

(d) Out of 1264 trips, 711 or 56 per cent were made by staff P-5 to ADG.

(e) Out of 12440 days of absence, 6460 days or 52 per cent belong to the category of staff P-5 to ADG.

(f) Out of 107 staff members who did not observe the ceiling of absence from Headquarters, 67 or 63 per cent belong to the category of staff from P.5 to ADG.

51. In spite of the views expressed by the Assistant Director-General for the Administration (ADG/ADM/311 of November 1973) with regard to the number of missions executed by a limited number of officials, particularly those belonging to the higher categories and that a contrary trend would be desirable, namely that the missions should be entrusted to officials charged with direct supervision of the projects (most often P-3 to P-5), it can be seen from the above analysis that there is a rather large movement of the staff in general and long absence from the duty station of senior staff who are entrusted with the management of large units of the Secretariat.

52. In the opinion of the Inspector, the large movement of staff on official travel and the particularly heavy travel schedules of some senior staff, some examples of which were quoted above, is due partly to the lack of sufficient control and co-ordination in 1974 and insufficient delegation of authority to Regional Offices. One cannot help wondering why the staff of Regional Offices were not used for many missions particularly since these would help the Regional Office to maintain essential contact with the Member States of the region and involve them more directly in the substance of the work. Perhaps part of the answer is that some staff now stationed at Headquarters could be better used if they were located in Regional Offices provided that at the same time the Regional Offices were given real authority.

53. The long absence of some staff members from Headquarters raises the question of good management. It is apparent to the Inspector that the ceiling for absence from Headquarters (ODG/DDG/3026 of 7 September 1966) including leave which was established at 20 weeks for a biennium was often not observed. 107 cases in which the ceiling on absence for 1974 was exceeded are listed in paragraph 50.

54. The Inspector considers that the Director-General should now review the policy on absence from Headquarters from two points of view: to consider the possibility of reducing the 20 week limit on absence during a biennium of senior staff and to devise procedures to reinforce the limit. Any exceptions should require the approval of the Deputy Director-General.

55. At the same time the Director-General should also consider the question of decentralization and delegation of authority to the Regional Offices so as to be

able to entrust the Regional Offices with more tasks. The strengthening of the Regional Offices and, in some cases, their consolidation would open the possibilities of better distribution of the work between the Headquarters and the Regional Offices and would result in the long run in economy.

E. Multiple travel for the same purpose

56. The Inspector, during his study, came across cases in which, in his view, there was an unnecessary multiple attendance at meetings of two or more staff members travelling for a similar purpose.

(a) For example, six staff members (four of whom were from Headquarters) were members of an Education Policy Mission to Nigeria (2-9 March 1974), the purpose of which was to review the implementation of the first phase of an educational project and to discuss the strategies for the second phase including the additional national and international inputs required.

(b) In another example three staff members participated in the collective consultations in Köln (Consultation on International Training). During the first day even the Director of the department attended, apparently only to welcome the assembly but the report was written by only one of the participants.

(c) Three staff members from the Education Sector visited the UNESCO Regional Office for Arab States for the purpose of reviewing the regional operations of UNICEF/UNESCO and the UNICEF Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office.

(d) Three staff members spent eight days each attending the second session of the group of experts for the evaluation of an experimental programme of functional literacy.

(e) Two staff members from Headquarters, one D-1 (6 days - cost \$2,300), one P-4 (12 days - cost \$2,889) and the Director of the Karachi Center represented UNESCO at the second regional meeting of the Asian Co-publication Programme. One wonders whether it was necessary to have three persons attending this meeting at which, in the view of the Inspector, UNESCO could have been represented either by a D-1 (if the question of the representation required an official of this rank) or by a P-4 staff member if UNESCO could have been represented at the working level. If this had been done, it would have resulted in savings and would represent a good example of the rational use of the funds.



(f) One P-5 staff member (the chief of a unit) and one P-2 staff member spent approximately eight days each in Yaoundé to participate in consultations for the establishment of a Regional Centre for the promotion of books in Africa. While there was a clear need for the P-5 staff member's attendance, was it necessary for the P-2 to assist him?

(g) Three staff members from one Division travelled to Bucharest (for five days) to attend the Seminar on the Planning of Statistical Activities of CEDES at which only nine countries were present. Was it necessary to send three staff members from the Headquarters?

(h) The Inspector also came across several cases of secretaries accompanying higher staff members on mission. A similar question is raised when a D-2 is accompanied either by a P-5 staff member or by staff of a lower rank.

(i) While the Inspector understands that the Director-General should be accompanied if necessary when on official mission or visit and, in some exceptional cases, the ADGs when representing the Director-General, he cannot understand that D-2 or D-1 staff should be accompanied on their missions. They are or should be capable of accomplishing the task alone.

57. Therefore, the Inspector considers that scrutiny of travel on mission, in order to reduce multiple attendance at meetings or other multiple travel to the required reasonable minimum, is particularly important.

#### F. Unscheduled travel

58. In the data submitted to the Inspector, information was supplied only on travel completed. It was not possible to compare the travel planned with that completed. In particular it was not possible to see how many trips were unscheduled. In the view of the Inspector there might be occasions when unscheduled trips have to be undertaken and could not be planned in advance, but this should be exceptional and the unscheduled trips should be reduced to a minimum.

59. When studying the use of travel funds in FAO (JIU/REP/75/1), the Inspector had the possibility of comparing the planned and unexecuted travel with that planned and executed and also the unscheduled (not planned) with the completed and planned travel but, as noted above, this was not possible at UNESCO. The Inspector recommends that any travel proposal not previously approved through the planning process be permitted only in case of genuine emergency and with the agreement of the Chairmen of the Co-ordinating Committee and the ADG concerned.

#### IV. MISSION REPORTS

60. The Inspector examined a good number of the mission reports. In view of the many missions accomplished in the course of 1974, the Inspector was obliged to make his examination on a selective basis.

61. Speaking in general, with the exception of some cases where the reports were missing, the picture as a whole was satisfactory and contrasted with that found by the Inspector in other organizations.

62. In many cases, although not being expert in the field, the Inspector found reports to be concise and clear and to include an assessment of the mission and findings.

63. Although all the mission reports available were submitted to the Inspector, some did not exist. For one director who was absent from his duty station for 92 days on missions which were not of a confidential character, only seven mission reports were available while six other mission reports were missing.

64. Each mission requires the expenditure of funds which should be justified. Also if one accepts that official travel is to be used only when warranted by the importance of the mission, it follows that there should be an official record of the travel in the form of a mission report, otherwise some of the benefits of the trip might be lost and it would not be possible for supervisors to assess the value of a trip and to use this assessment in planning other similar trips; also follow-up on the results of the mission would be difficult. Word of mouth communication is not sufficient. Although the situation found by the Inspector in UNESCO was generally satisfactory, there is some room for improvement.

65. Although the mission reports requested by the Inspector were submitted when available, it took some time to collect them. The Inspector found that in the Co-ordination Unit of the Education Sector, mission reports were included in regional files. Although this is useful, the reports should also be filed under the name of the staff member so that all reports prepared by each staff member would be filed together and give a complete picture of all trips made.

66. All mission reports which are submitted for the consideration of the ADGs or DDG should be accompanied by a short memo from the Director of the Division or Unit drawing attention to major points and giving his views on problems raised in the report as well as the Director's assessment of the mission.

67. Since mission reports frequently contain important proposals for action, including changes in previously approved plans, it is important that the appropriate action be taken in good time. The Inspector-General should receive regularly copies of the mission reports for his information. He should be free to call the attention of an ADG, DDG or DG to any points and should make spot checks to see that appropriate follow-up action is taken. Depending on the subjects treated, copies of mission reports should be sent to other units concerned.

## V. SOURCE OF TRAVEL FUNDS

68. The Inspector was informed that because UNDP Agency Overhead Costs are integrated with the UNESCO regular budget, it is not possible to identify in the accounts of the Organization travel or other expenses paid from Agency Overhead Costs. Thus trips which by their purpose should be charged to Agency Overhead Costs are shown as being financed by the Regular Budget.

69. Therefore, it was difficult for the Inspector to get a clear picture of the budgetary source of travel funds. Although the tabular presentation prepared at the request of the Inspector of travel completed during 1974 gave some indication of the source of funds, one main source - UNDP Agency Overhead Costs - could not be indicated. Also in the column marked "funds" in many cases there was only the mention "extra-budgetary funds" while in some other cases the source of funding was specified as "UNDP" or "UNFPA".

70. The Inspector is of the opinion that, without putting into question the principle of integration of funds, there should be for each trip a clear indication given on the Travel Plan and Travel Authorization showing the source of funds: Regular Programme, or for the extra-budgetary funds, a breakdown by fund. Thus it would be clear how each trip was financed even though such information is not always included in the official accounts at UNESCO. With the help of the UNESCO computer, it would not be difficult to produce reports showing travel costs by source of funds which would make it possible to judge whether UNDP overheads are being used properly.

71. The incorporation of UNDP overheads in the Regular Budget and the lack of any identification of the use of such overheads for individual trips made it impossible for the Inspector to judge whether the source of funds used to pay for a trip was appropriate to the purpose of the trip.

## VI. MODE AND CLASS OF TRAVEL

72. In his report on the use of travel funds in the United Nations (A/8900), the Inspector had recommended that all travel be limited to economy class, except for the Secretary-General and those who accompany him.

73. The decision of the General Assembly (A/RES/3198 of 12 December 1973) applied later by almost all members of the United Nations system, reduced the standard of travel from first to economy class for D-2 staff members only.

74. As for UNESCO's standards, the Manual of UNESCO (Item 2715 C) stipulates that travel by air should be as follows: (a) DG is entitled to the first class accommodation on all flights; (b) DDG and ADGs for travel within Europe and the Mediterranean area (including Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and the Mediterranean islands), tourist class, and on all other flights, first class; (c) Grade D-2 and below tourist or economy class on all flights.

75. The Director-General may exceptionally authorize travel by first class in particular cases (for reasons of medical necessity, for reasons of protocol, when the Director-General considers it necessary that a staff member accompany him on an official mission to a Member State).

76. The provisions of the Manual are clear about the mode and standard of transport.

77. If the Executive Board were to find it possible to adopt the example of the FAO Council which travels by economy class (see Chapter II) and if this action was also adopted by the other governmental bodies of the United Nations system, it would follow that all staff of secretariats should travel economy class, except when accompanying the Director-General.

78. The Inspector was very much encouraged when he found, during his investigation that a very senior official, although entitled to first class accommodation, almost always travelled by tourist or economy class. This example might be followed by the ADGs even without any formal decision so that all staff would normally travel by economy class.

79. Travel by economy class is justified not only as a principle but also as a measure of economy, bearing in mind the very high increase in costs of travel by air, the large difference between the costs of first and economy class and the difficult financial situation of the United Nations system.

## VII. EXCESS BAGGAGE

80. In the UNESCO Manual, Chapter VII, Item 2725, it is stipulated that when official travel of staff members is by air in tourist or economy class, the Organization pays for excess baggage up to a maximum equivalent to the difference between the amount allowed free of charge by air companies for the same journey in first class and that allowed in tourist or economy class, subject to a maximum of 10 kilos; but that the baggage costs in excess of those specified above are not payable or reimbursable by the Organization except where such costs are incurred as a result of transporting by authorized means material determined to be essential to the accomplishment of official missions.

81. The Inspector was informed that there were no cases of abuse of the above rule. Whenever the question of the excess baggage arose, control was exercised and the rules very strictly observed.

82. The payment of 10 kilogrammes of excess baggage when travel is by economy class should not be needed for trips of short duration when 20 kilogrammes would normally suffice. Therefore, the Inspector recommends that UNESCO change its rule in consultation with other organizations to provide automatic payment of excess baggage only for trips exceeding two weeks. For other trips justification should be required. No excess baggage should be paid for trips on home leave. These proposals take account of the fact that travel by economy class is now the accepted standard for all staff members D-2 and below and that provisions for excess baggage were made at the time when the standards were reduced to ease the transition.

VIII. INCREASED USE OF REGIONAL OFFICES FOR MISSIONS

83. Throughout this report the Inspector has suggested that staff of Regional Offices should carry out many of the missions now undertaken by Headquarters and pointed out policy statements of the Secretariat to this effect.<sup>2/</sup>

84. The Regional Offices, even more than Headquarters, have to acquire and maintain an intimate knowledge of the relevant activities of Member States and UNESCO's contribution to these activities. The Regional Offices should also have a major role in the planning and supervision of technical co-operation. If more missions were carried out by Regional Office staff, this would contribute to the efficacy of the Regional Offices.

85. It would appear that if more missions were carried out from Regional Offices, costs could be reduced since distances would be shorter. Also some missions now carried out from Headquarters could, with proper planning, be combined with the normal missions of staff of Regional Offices.

86. As pointed out in paragraph 50, staff of the four Programme Sectors at Headquarters spent the equivalent of 34 man years on mission in 1974. This is a further indication that the transfer of posts from Headquarters to Regional Offices would lead to greater efficiency and economy.

87. In view of the above and the relevant findings in other parts of this report (see footnote <sup>2/</sup> below), the Inspector considers that:

(a) The travel of staff of Regional Offices should be included in the planning process recommended in Chapter III(A) to be able to co-ordinate such travel with that of Headquarters staff.

(b) Approval of travel on mission of Headquarters staff should depend upon a decision that the mission could not be carried out from a Regional Office for technical or workload reasons.

(c) Every effort should be made to have at least some of the missions that would otherwise be carried out from Headquarters performed instead by staff of Regional Offices.

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<sup>2/</sup> Paragraphs 21, 23, 24, 31, 40, 41, 50, 52, 55

(d) The process of strengthening Regional Offices by transfer of posts from Headquarters should be accelerated in order, inter alia, to permit more travel to be undertaken from Regional Offices.



## SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

### Travel of members of the Executive Board

1. The Executive Board might consider adopting the practice of the FAO Council under which all members except the Chairman travel by economy class (paragraphs 8-12).

### Planning and approval of travel on mission

2. Travel proposals should be made by each Division quarterly and examined within each Sector by a Travel Review Committee who would propose a quarterly travel plan to the ADG. The ADG would submit the plan for advice to the Co-ordinating Committees (CCO-CCI). The ADG would then decide on the plan (paragraphs 19-35).

3. Quarterly travel plans of each Sector should follow a standard format (paragraph 36 and Annex I).

4. The Inspector-General should participate in the review of travel plans and be empowered to raise any problems with the DDG or DG (paragraph 35).

5. Information on already completed travel should be presented in a convenient format as an aid to control and planning (paragraphs 37-38 and Annex II).

### Travel itineraries

6. Reduction in travel costs could be made by entrusting Regional Offices with responsibility for more missions (paragraph 41).

### Frequent visits to some cities

7. The many trips for attendance at meetings should be carefully scrutinized to eliminate those of low priority (paragraph 42).

### Frequent travel by individuals and long absence from Headquarters

8. The Director-General should review the policy on absence from Headquarters from two points of view: to consider the possibility of reducing the 20 week limit on absence during a biennium of senior staff and to devise procedures to reinforce the limit. Any exceptions should require the approval of the Deputy Director-General (paragraphs 43-54).

9. Travel by senior staff should be limited and replaced whenever possible by travel of staff members grades P-3 to P-5 who are usually responsible for the supervision of projects (paragraph 51).

#### Multiple travel for the same purpose

10. The scrutiny of travel on mission in order to reduce multiple travel to a reasonable minimum is particularly important (paragraphs 56-57).

#### Unscheduled travel

11. Any travel not previously approved through the planning process should be permitted only in case of genuine emergency (paragraphs 58-59).

#### Mission reports

12. Although the preparation of mission reports by UNESCO compares favourably with other organizations inspected, both as regards their content and presentation, further efforts are needed to ensure that reports are prepared for all missions and that these reports are distributed and filed in such a way as to facilitate and encourage follow-up (paragraphs 60-67).

#### Mode and class of travel

13. If the Executive Board adopts recommendation 1 above, then all UNESCO staff should travel by economy class except the Director-General and staff accompanying him. If not, ADGs might voluntarily accept to travel normally by economy class (paragraphs 72-79).

#### Excess baggage

14. For travel by economy class, the automatic payment of excess baggage up to a limit of 10 kilogrammes should be allowed only for trips of which the duration exceeds two weeks and not at all for travel on home leave (paragraphs 80-82).

#### Increased use of Regional Offices for missions

15. The travel of staff of Regional Offices should be co-ordinated with that of Headquarters staff with a view to having more missions carried out from Regional Offices (paragraphs 83-87).

16. If Regional Offices are gradually strengthened by transfer of posts from Headquarters, many more of the missions now carried out by Headquarters staff should be entrusted to Regional Offices (paragraphs 83-87).



## ANNEX 1

Suggested format for quarterly travel plan

Travel Plan for \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter 19 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Division

<u>Destination</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Duration</u> Days	<u>Name of</u> Traveller	<u>Estimated</u> Cost
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Note: Justification for each trip (including any letter of invitation) should be attached. This justification should cover the following points, as appropriate:

(a) If more than one staff member is to participate in the mission, an explanation of the functions of each and the reasons why one person would not suffice.

(b) Reason why mission could not be entrusted to a staff member stationed at a Regional Office.

(c) If mission is for attendance at a meeting of another organization, explain the contribution that attendance will make to UNESCO's programme.

(d) If the mission would result in the staff member being away from Headquarters during the year more than the authorized limit of days, explain why the mission cannot be entrusted to another staff member and how the travellers normal duties at Headquarters will be carried out.



## ANNEX II

### Suggested format for information on official travel by UNESCO staff

(To be prepared with the assistance of the UNESCO computer). Beginning each budgetary period, each schedule would be produced quarterly and would be cumulative.

Schedule I. Trips grouped by organizational unit and within each by traveller.

#### Organizational Unit

<u>Name of Traveller</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Cities Visited</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates and Days Absent from H.Q.</u>	<u>Purpose (Code)</u>
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Schedule II. Trips grouped by destination (country and city). When a trip includes more than one destination it would be shown under each.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Destination</u>	<u>Name of Traveller</u>	<u>Sector Division</u>	<u>Dates of Visit</u>	<u>Purpose (Code)</u>
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City 1

City 2

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Schedule III. Trips grouped by meetings away from H.Q. attended by UNESCO staff.

<u>Meeting Title</u>	<u>Location (City)</u>	<u>Names of Staff Members Attending</u>	<u>Dates of Attendance</u>
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