

## Glossary of technical terms

Average	Context: United States federal civil service/United Nations system salary comparisons. A single number representing a set of numbers, computed such that it is not smaller than the smallest or larger than the largest number in that set.
Base/floor salary scale	For the Professional and higher categories of staff, a universally applicable salary scale is used in conjunction with the post adjustment system. The minimum net amounts received by staff members around the world are those given in this scale.
Common scale of staff assessment	Scale used for adding taxes to the pensionable remuneration scale for both Professional and General Service categories of staff; rates are derived from average taxes at the eight headquarters duty stations. This is different from the tax assessment rates used in conjunction with the Tax Equalization Fund.
Comparator	Salaries and other conditions of employment of staff in the Professional and higher categories are determined in accordance with the Noblemaire principle by reference to those applicable in the civil service of the country with the highest pay levels. The United States federal civil service has been used as the comparator since the inception of the United Nations. See also “highest paid civil service” and “Noblemaire principle”.
Contributory service	All United Nations common system staff members meeting certain criteria participate in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and contribute a percentage of their pensionable remuneration to the Fund. The period over which this contribution is made is termed “years of contributory service”.
Competencies	A combination of skills, attributes and behaviours that are directly related to successful performance on the job. Core competencies are the skills, attributes and behaviours which are considered important for all staff of an organization, regardless of their function or level. For specific occupations, core competencies are supplemented by functional competencies related to respective areas of work.
Consolidation of post adjustment	The base/floor salary scale for the Professional and higher categories is adjusted periodically to reflect increases in the comparator salary scale. This upward adjustment is made by taking a fixed amount of post adjustment and incorporating or “consolidating” it into the base/floor salary scale. If the scale is increased by consolidating 5 per cent of post adjustment, the post adjustment multiplier points at all duty stations are then reduced by 5 per cent, thus ensuring, generally, no losses or gains to staff. This method of implementation, referred to as “no gain/no loss”, results in no change in take-home pay for staff and produces no additional costs related to salary for the organizations.
Cost-of-living differential	In net remuneration margin calculations, the remuneration of United Nations officials from the Professional and higher categories in New York is compared with their counterparts in the comparator service in Washington, D.C. As part of that comparison, the difference in the cost of living between New York and Washington, D.C., is applied to the comparator salaries to determine their “real value” in New York. The cost-of-living differential between New York and Washington, D.C., is also taken into account in comparing pensionable remuneration amounts applicable to the two groups of staff mentioned above.
Danger pay	Danger pay is a special allowance established for internationally and locally recruited staff who are required to work in locations where very dangerous conditions prevail.
Dependency rate	Net salaries determined for staff with a primary dependant.

salaries

Federal Employees Retirement System	Defined contribution scheme for employees of the United States federal civil service hired in 1984 and thereafter.
Flemming principle	The basis used for the determination of conditions of service of the General Service and other locally recruited categories of staff. Under the application of the Fleming principle, General Service conditions of employment are based on best prevailing local conditions.
General Schedule	A 15-grade salary scale in the comparator (United States) civil service, covering the majority of employees.
Group I duty stations	Countries with convertible currencies and where out-of-area expenditures reported by staff members account for less than 25 per cent of the total expenditures.
“H” duty stations under the mobility and hardship scheme	Headquarters locations and locations where there are no United Nations developmental or humanitarian activities or locations which are in countries which are members of the European Union.
Headquarters locations	Headquarters of the organizations participating in the United Nations common system are: Geneva, London, Madrid, Montreal, New York, Paris, Rome and Vienna. While the Universal Postal Union is headquartered at Berne (Switzerland), post adjustment and General Service salaries at Geneva are currently used for Berne.
Highest paid civil service	Under the application of the Noblemaire principle, salaries of United Nations staff in the Professional and higher categories are based on those applicable in the civil service of the country with the highest pay levels, currently the United States. See also “comparator” and “Noblemaire principle”.
Income inversion	Context: comparison of gross salaries (pensionable remuneration) of General Service staff with the pensionable remuneration of the Professional staff. The phenomenon relates to situations where the same or lower net remuneration received by staff in one category leads to a pensionable remuneration higher than that of staff from another category receiving the same or higher net remuneration.
Income replacement ratio	The ratio of pension to average net salary received during the same three-year period used in the determination of the pension benefit.
Interim adjustment	Context: pensionable remuneration. Adjustment to pensionable remuneration amounts between comprehensive reviews.
Net remuneration	Base/floor plus post adjustment.
Net remuneration margin	The Commission regularly carries out comparisons of the net remuneration of the United Nations staff in grades P-1 to D-2 in New York with that of the United States federal civil service employees in comparable positions in Washington, D.C. The average percentage difference in the remuneration of the two civil services, adjusted for the cost-of-living differential between New York and Washington, D.C., is the net remuneration margin.
Non-family duty stations	Duty stations where the Chair of the Commission decides, upon recommendation by the Department of Safety and Security of the United Nations Secretariat, that for reasons of safety and security all eligible dependants are restricted from being present at the duty station for a period of six months or longer.

Non-pensionable component	Context: General Service pensionable remuneration. Some outside employers used in General Service salary surveys pay, in addition to gross salaries, a number of allowances and fringe benefits, some of which they consider as “non-pensionable”, that is, not taken into account in determining the retirement benefits of their employees. Those are added together to arrive at the “non-pensionable component”. The sum of all “non-pensionable” elements is expressed as a percentage of net salary, which is reduced by the applicable threshold to arrive at the “non-pensionable component”.
Noblemaire principle	The basis used for the determination of conditions of service of staff in the Professional and higher categories. Under the application of the principle, salaries of the Professional category are determined by reference to those applicable in the civil service of the country with the highest pay levels. See also “comparator” and “highest paid civil service”.
Pensionable remuneration	The amount used to determine contributions from the staff member and the organization to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. Pensionable remuneration amounts are also used for the determination of pension benefits of staff members upon retirement.
Performance management	The process of optimizing performance at the level of the individual, team, unit, department and agency and linking it to organizational objectives. In its broadest sense, effective performance management is dependent on the effective and successful management of policies and programmes, planning and budgetary processes, decision-making processes, organizational structure, work organization and labour-management relations and human resources.
Place-to-place survey	Survey carried out as part of the process of establishing a post adjustment index. It compares living costs between a given location and the base city, New York, at a specified date.
Post adjustment index	Measurement of the living costs of international staff members in the Professional and higher categories posted at a given location, compared with such costs in New York at a specific date.
Post adjustment classification	Classification of a duty station that is based on the cost-of-living index. It is expressed in terms of multiplier points. For example, staff members at a duty station classified at multiplier 5 would receive a post adjustment amount equivalent to 5 per cent of net base salary as a supplement to base pay.
Separation payments	Upon separation from service, staff may receive compensation for one or more of the following: accumulated annual leave, repatriation grant and termination indemnity. Death grant is payable to the survivor of a staff member.
Single rate salaries	Net salaries determined for staff without a primary dependant.
Special pay systems	Under the salary system for the United States federal civil service, staff of some federal agencies or in specific occupational groups may be paid according to pay scales applicable to those agencies or occupations, as appropriate. These pay scales, known as special pay systems, are used, inter alia, in cases of demonstrated recruitment and retention difficulties.
Staff assessment	Salaries of United Nations staff from all categories are expressed in gross and net terms, the difference between the two being the staff assessment. Staff assessment is a form of taxation, internal to the United Nations, and is analogous to taxes on salaries applicable in most countries.
Tax abatement	In the context of dependency allowances, tax credit or relief provided to taxpayers who are responsible for the financial support of dependants (spouse, children, parents, etc.) in the tax systems of a number of countries.

Tax Equalization Fund	A fund maintained by, for example, the United Nations, that is used for reimbursing national taxes levied on United Nations income for some staff members.
Workforce planning	A process to ensure that the right number of people with the right skills are employed in the right place at the right time to deliver an organization's short- and long-term objectives. It embraces a diverse and extensive range of activities that will vary between organizations and situations. Workforce planning should be linked to strategic business goals and viewed as an important part of the strategic business planning process.