

Human resources: annual report

Report of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board to the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly

1. The twentieth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee was held in Geneva from 14 to 16 May 2014 under the chairmanship of Dr Dirk Cuypers (Belgium).¹ The Committee adopted its agenda, with the deletion of items 2.9 and 2.10.²
2. The Committee considered the annual report³ and the update on the implementation of the human resource strategy since January 2014.
3. The Committee was informed that achievements have been made in the following areas: (i) the harmonization of the selection process has been promulgated globally for internationally recruited professional positions; (ii) a focused campaign has been organized to improve both geographical representation and gender balance, in which permanent missions in Geneva are encouraged to disseminate the Organization's vacancy announcements through their national networks; (iii) a Corporate Framework for Learning and Development has been developed to provide the foundation for staff development activities; (iv) in order to foster a respectful and ethical working environment, a Management Development Programme has started with three cohorts of managers at headquarters in order to enhance managerial capacity; and (v) a review of the Organization's internal justice system has begun in a collaborative effort involving human resource staff and staff representatives.
4. It was highlighted that there are two items on the agenda of the forthcoming session of the International Civil Service Commission that will have an impact on WHO, namely: (i) the review of the staff compensation package (in particular, the salaries and allowances of expatriate staff) which may affect current WHO staff and future candidates to WHO posts; and (ii) the proposed extension of the mandatory age of separation to age 65 for serving staff which, if approved by the United Nations General Assembly, would affect WHO succession planning and hamper the Organization's ability to align its staffing structure with its evolving priorities.
5. The Committee stressed the importance of human resources to the success of WHO and asked to receive regular written updates on the implementation of the human resource strategy, through a more analytical reflection of the data.

¹ The list of participants is available in document EBPBAC20/DIV./1.

² Document EBPBAC20/1.

³ Document A67/47.

6. The Committee indicated that priority should be given, and proactive measures taken, to improve geographical representation and to promote intergenerational and gender balance, noting that globally gender balance had improved in the last two decades but that the figures by region showed varying trends. The Secretariat should continue to work to reach parity at more senior levels.

7. The presentation of the update on human resources for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, contained in the Annex to the annual report, was welcomed. The Committee asked the Secretariat to give careful consideration to the impact that the eventual eradication of polio may have on other areas of the Organization.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

8. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly note the human resources annual report.

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