

Human resources

Report of the International Civil Service Commission

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

1. The Secretariat presented the human resources annual report and the report of the International Civil Service Commission: amendments to the statute of the International Civil Service Commission.¹
2. The Committee commended the Secretariat's progress towards achieving overall gender parity. It noted, however, that this has yet to be achieved for WHO Representatives in country offices, and among staff at higher levels. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the gender balance among WHO Representatives had improved since the cut-off date of the report, and described the efforts to increase the number of successful female candidates on the roster, while recognizing that further work remained to be done.
3. The Committee encouraged the Secretariat to enhance efforts to improve geographical representation, taking advantage of lessons learned from other areas (such as the Young Professionals Programme and the Global Internship Programme) and engaging Member States in outreach initiatives. It further requested information on improvements expected from the new recruitment module in the Business Management System, and whether it would speed up the recruitment process. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the new tool would make use of artificial intelligence for the initial screening of applicants and minimize the need for manual intervention in data entry, thus improving the ability to track and report on the process. This work was part of the replacement of the enterprise resource planning system by the new Business Management System.
4. Praising the work done by the Secretariat to make data available on the web-based portal, Member States asked that more information be provided on grade levels by country, not simply by region. In addition, concerns were expressed at the increase in the numbers of external contractors employed.
5. In response to further points raised by the Committee related to seeking the perspective of staff members, the Secretariat indicated that an all-staff survey was under preparation and would be launched later this year. The survey would comply with the Joint Inspection Unit recommendation that such surveys be conducted every two years.
6. Responding to a query regarding WHO's efforts to enhance career pathways for staff with caring responsibilities through flexible working arrangements, the Secretariat cited the example of the

¹ Documents A76/26 and A76/27, respectively.

arrangements that had been put in place for new parental leave, noting that the new flexible working arrangements policy made it easier to balance work and family life. In response to a further question from the Committee, the Secretariat explained that a training course aiming to eliminate fraud and corruption was already available, and information would be included in future reports.

7. Regarding the report of the International Civil Service Commission, the Committee stressed the importance of adopting the Commission's revised statute, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/256 A–B.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

8. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Health Assembly should note the reports contained in documents A76/26 and A76/27 and adopt the draft resolution contained in document A76/27. It proposed, as guidance for the Secretariat's implementation of existing mandates, that the Secretariat should:

- (a) continue to make every effort to improve geographical representation;
- (b) make efforts to improve the efficiency of the recruitment process;
- (c) continue working towards gender parity at all levels of the Organization, especially among WHO Representatives in country offices and those in higher graded positions; and
- (d) continue surveying and reporting to the Executive Board on workforce perspectives regarding the Organization's many reform and cultural change efforts, paying specific attention to gauging staff confidence in and experience with WHO's internal oversight functions.

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