



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# Executive Board

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

## **FOLLOW-UP TO DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT THEIR PREVIOUS SESSIONS**

### **PART IV**

### **HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES**

### **ADDENDUM**

### **COMMENTS BY THE UNESCO STAFF UNION (STU)**

Pursuant to Item 9.2.7 of the UNESCO Human Resources Manual, the UNESCO Staff Union (STU) submits its comments on the report by the Director-General.



Job: 210003424

**Report on the geographical distribution and gender balance of the staff of the Secretariat and measures taken to redress any imbalance**

(Follow-up to 209 EX/Decision 5.III.B)

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The Secretary-General of the United Nations has announced that gender equality and parity have been reached in senior management posts in the United Nations Secretariat, and yet UNESCO has made only minimal improvements to the imbalances in geographical distribution and gender balance inequalities in professional categories and above.

The UNESCO Staff Union (STU) deplores that, of the 193 UNESCO Member States, 73 (38%) are normally represented, 21 (11%) are over-represented, 58 (30%) are under-represented and 41 (21%) are non-represented. Furthermore, it is unfortunate that women hold only 35% of positions at grade P-5, but 60% in the General Service categories.

With a view to finding solutions to the problems that have been identified and proposing relevant measures that would help to correct these inequalities, STU recommends a detailed diagnosis of the situation. This is not reflected, however, in the data included in document 210 EX/5.IV, and it would be interesting to cross-reference the statistics. While information on the geographical distribution of staff is indispensable for judging which regions and nationalities are under-, over- and non-represented, knowing which categories of posts are occupied by staff of different nationalities and at which levels and grades would be just as useful.

For example, staff members in the Africa Group represent 19% of Education Sector staff, which is two percentage points more than for UNESCO as a whole. However, we do not have an idea of their distribution in the Education Sector according to categories and grades of posts, as this information is missing from the document.

The same is true regarding gender. To say that UNESCO enjoys the best gender balance, and even an over-representation of women among its staff, is irrelevant if these women are mostly in General Service categories and often at the lower grades. It would also be useful and relevant to know the regions and countries of origin of these women. For example, while we only have 35% of women at grade P-5, which in itself is already problematic, the fact that certain regions and nationalities are over- and under-represented adds to the problem.

It is therefore also necessary to reconcile geographical representation with the distribution of different nationalities by gender and by employment level.

STU is also surprised that the proposed measures are only in relation to external recruitment. What about existing staff whose distribution by type, gender and level of employment could also see improvement? The recruitment programme aimed at professional categories and above, the Young Professionals Programme and the promotion of existing staff which takes into account gender and geographical representation criteria, are solutions that should go hand in hand.