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

PART III

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

ADDENDUM

COMMENTS BY THE UNESCO STAFF UNION (STU)

Pursuant to item 9.2.E.7 of the UNESCO Human Resources Manual, the UNESCO Staff Union (STU) submits its comments on the report by the Director-General.



Job: 20210123

C. Report on geographical distribution and gender balance of the staff of the Secretariat
(Follow-up to 209 EX/Decision 5.III B and 210 EX/Decision 5.IV)

1. We are sceptical about the proposals made, both in terms of modifying UNESCO's methodology for calculating the geographical distribution of posts and in terms of the proposed programme for mid-level professionals, which are unconvincing and will not help UNESCO to combat the imbalance in geographical distribution, with Group I occupying more than 60% of posts subject to geographical mobility. Consequently, our remarks on this subject at the last Executive Board are still valid.
2. STU regrets that UNESCO has not been able to find a way to comply with the request of Member States to include Project Appointment (PA) posts in the calculation of the geographical distribution. Despite the complexity of such an exercise, this calculation must take into account all items regardless of the origin of the funds. While the proposed option 2 seems the most reasonable, it should include not only the posts funded from the Special Account for Management Costs and revenue-generating funds, but also the PA posts, financed from extrabudgetary funds. The inclusion of PA posts in the proposed revision of the methodology is required, especially since UNESCO has grouped these two budget sources (regular and extrabudgetary) into a single integrated budget, which means that the argument of the source of funds is no longer plausible, and that PA posts have virtually no time limit and have become almost permanent posts. These posts tend to favour the representatives of certain Member States and their geographical distribution is therefore not equitable.
3. The proposal for a Mid-Level Professionals Programme (P-3/P-4 posts) to improve the geographical representation of Member States seems to be a good initiative, which should help to identify a larger number of candidates from unrepresented countries while respecting the principles of Article VI.4 of the Constitution of UNESCO.
4. The absence of the P-5 and Director categories in these proposals is questionable, as is the lack of mention of gender balance or the priority that would be given to field posts. STU remains convinced that an improvement in geographical distribution cannot be achieved without integrating the gender dimension, which remains a thorny issue at the P-5 level and above. The dimensions of geographical distribution, both at Headquarters and in the field, and gender balance should go hand in hand.
5. While UNESCO should draw inspiration from the best practices of other United Nations agencies, it can also play a pioneering role by inspiring others. To do so, it must include PA posts in the geographical distribution.