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Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

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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.



**A. Report on geographical distribution and gender balance of the staff of the Secretariat, and progress on the implementation of the measures taken to redress any imbalance**  
(Follow-up to 204 EX/Decision 5.III.A)

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Concerning the geographical distribution of posts, STU notes with concern the drop in the number of Member States represented in the Secretariat from 160 Member States to 153, and regrets that 22% of Member States are still non-represented (an increase of 4% compared to 2017) and that 31% are under-represented. As STU has been stressing these last few years, the Organization is relying too strongly on the young professionals programme to solve the problem.

As for gender balance, STU welcomes once again the progress made on gender balance at all levels, and most particularly at Director's level (51%) but expresses concern once more about the long-standing gender disparity at P-5 level, where only 30% of staff are female (an increasing gap since 2017). As already pointed out by STU on repeated occasions, gender parity at this level is particularly important, as it is the level that may allow internal female staff to pursue later a career at managerial level. Lack of opportunities at this level can only result in low access levels to managerial positions for internal female staff, reinforcing the *internal glass ceiling* for mid-level female staff.

As for geographical distribution, here again current efforts will not suffice. Moreover, the STU is not convinced that the decrease of women at P-5 level is "the result of the promotion of women in P-5 posts to Director posts" and would have liked to see concrete data in the document supporting this assertion.

STU also observes with concern that gender disparity persists particularly in the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the Natural Science Sector (SC) and the Communication and Information Sector (CI), where women are less than 50% of staff. The STU also notes some inconsistencies between the percentages and data provided in the narrative part (paragraph 24) and those shown in Table 7, which generate a lack of clarity with regard to progress made towards gender parity in those sectors.

Consequently, the STU calls for increased efforts to ensure the implementation of effective measures to improve the geographical representation, as well as redress the gender imbalance especially at P.5 level and the overall gender parity in Sectors lagging behind.