

## **WIPO Coordination Committee**

**Eightieth (52<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary) Session**  
**Geneva, October 4 to 8, 2021**

### **ANNUAL REPORT ON HUMAN RESOURCES**

*prepared by the Secretariat*

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. This Annual Report on Human Resources (HR), covering the period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, covers all HR matters for which reporting to the WIPO Coordination Committee is required and other staff matters of interest to Member States.
2. The Report includes information on progress made towards staffing goals and an overview of HR-related policies, initiatives and activities that are aligned with WIPO's HR Strategy 2017-2021.
3. The Annual Report is structured into five parts as follows:
  - the first section provides a snapshot of key workforce trends;
  - the second section covers matters of obligatory reporting to Member States;
  - the third section features the changes at WIPO during the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - the fourth section highlights overall progress made and developments over the past year; and
  - the last section presents an outlook with respect to HR objectives for the next biennium and beyond.

## II. WORKFORCE AT A GLANCE

4. As at June 30, 2021, WIPO's total workforce stands at 1,572.

5. As compared to the last reporting period<sup>1</sup>, the core<sup>2</sup> workforce has remained stable (1,083 instead of 1,090), representing 68.9 per cent of the workforce, whereas the flexible<sup>3</sup> workforce elements have increased slightly (to 489 from 418), or 31.1 per cent of the workforce.

6. From a gender perspective, women represent 52.7 per cent of the workforce (828), whilst men represent 47.3 per cent (744), noting that this representation varies across categories. With respect to the core workforce of 1,083, women represent 54 per cent (585) of this category with men representing 46 per cent (498). The combined average age of the core workforce is 49.2 years.

7. From an overall diversity perspective and as a result of a suite of outreach efforts, 121 Member States are now represented at all levels and categories of staff, whereas 109 Member States are represented on posts subject to geographical distribution.<sup>4</sup>

8. A separate document containing key data and metrics on WIPO's workforce, diversity, talent sourcing, development and training as well as conflict management, either covering the same reporting period or by calendar year, is accessible [online](#). Updates, where applicable, will be provided to Member States every semester, as of June 30 and December 31 of a given year.

## III. MATTERS FOR OBLIGATORY REPORTING TO THE WIPO COORDINATION COMMITTEE

### TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENTS

9. WIPO Staff Regulation 9.2(g) requires the Director General to report to the WIPO Coordination Committee all cases of termination of appointments of staff. The following terminations took place between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021:

- five for health reasons in accordance with Staff Regulation 9.2(a)(2);
- 10 in the interest of the good administration of the Organization and with the consent of the staff members concerned, in accordance with Staff Regulation 9.2(a)(5).

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<sup>1</sup> In the last reporting period, the total workforce was 1,508 with a 72/28 proportion between core and flexible resources.

<sup>2</sup> Staff holding a fixed-term, continuing or permanent appointment on regular budget funding.

<sup>3</sup> Staff holding a temporary appointment on regular budget funding; Staff on non-regular budget funding (Reserves and Funds-in-Trust); UN Staff on Loan; Junior Professional Officers including United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) JPOs; Interns; Fellows; Monthly/daily translators/revisers; Individual Contractor Services (ICS); Agency Workers; External Providers; and individuals from the SYNI program of the Swiss Bureau of Subsidized Temporary Employment.

<sup>4</sup> The posts subject to geographical distribution are all staff positions in the Professional and higher categories, which are funded under the regular budget except language positions and the post of Director General.

## EXTENSIONS OF TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

10. At its annual meeting in September 2018, the WIPO Coordination Committee requested the Secretariat to include systematically in its Annual Report on Human Resources detailed information on the number of temporary appointments extended by the Director General beyond two years under Staff Regulation 4.16(a)<sup>5</sup> and the rationale for the use of this exceptional measure.

11. During the reporting period ending on June 30, 2021, 8 staff members on temporary appointments were extended beyond two years. The reasons for these exceptional extensions were as follows:

- One temporary appointment was exceptionally extended (by one month) owing to the COVID-19 situation and the fact that the staff member could not return home due to the unavailability of flights.
- Three temporary appointments were exceptionally extended (one for six months and two for 12 months) owing to business needs, ensuring continuity of functions.
- Two temporary appointments were exceptionally extended (one for six months and one for 12 months) to ensure business continuity while the Program and Budget for the biennium 2022/23 was being prepared.
- Two temporary appointments were exceptionally extended (both for six months) in the interest of the Organization given the transition of the new Senior Management Team (SMT).

## IMPLEMENTATION OF WIPO'S POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY

12. As per its Policy on Gender Equality, WIPO has adopted a two-pronged approach in its efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment: it both implements gender-specific initiatives and mainstreams gender considerations in others, in alignment with UN system-wide gender equality related priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These initiatives are both inward-facing (for example, the equal representation of men and women in the workforce) and outward looking (for example, programmatic work in support of Member States), and are highlighted in the next paragraphs.

### *Gender mainstreaming in organizational functions*

13. With regard to UN system-wide work, in 2020, WIPO continued to implement the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP). The UN-SWAP is an accountability mechanism approved by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).<sup>6</sup> Between 2019 and 2020, WIPO's compliance rate improved by 6 percentage points. As a result, in 2020, WIPO is meeting or exceeding requirements for 47 per cent of ratings, or eight indicators.<sup>7</sup>

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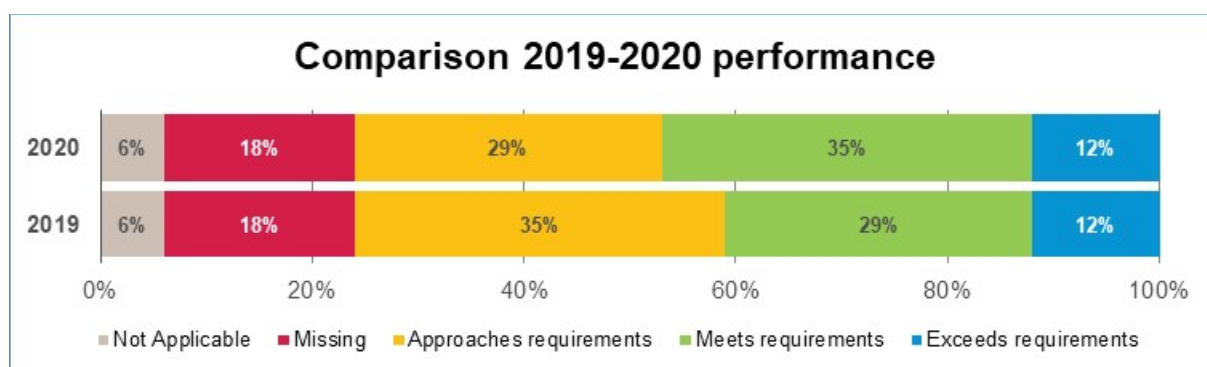
<sup>5</sup> See document [WO/CC/75/3](#).

<sup>6</sup> The UN-SWAP operationalizes the UN System-wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women adopted in 2006 by the CEB.

<sup>7</sup> In 2020, WIPO:

- exceeds requirements for (PI4) Evaluation and (PI5) Audit;
  - meets requirements for (PI6) Policy, (PI7) Leadership, (PI8) Gender-Responsive Performance Management, (PI11) Gender Architecture, (PI13) Organizational Culture, and (PI17) Coherence;
  - approaches requirements for (PI9) Financial Resource Tracking, (PI12) Equal Representation of Women, (PI14) Capacity Assessment, (PI15) Capacity Development, and (PI16) Knowledge and Communication;
  - misses requirements for (PI1) Strategic Planning Gender-related SDG Results, (PI2) Reporting on Gender-related SDG Results and (PI10) Financial Resource Allocation.
- (PI 3) Programmatic Gender-related SDG Results is not applicable.

14. The chart below reflects WIPO's UN-SWAP results for 2020 compared to 2019:



15. Since the beginning of the current UN-SWAP cycle in 2018, WIPO has improved compliance to requirements by 23 percentage points, from 24 percent in 2018 to 47 percent in 2020.

16. In the reporting period, WIPO continued to strengthen the capacities of Gender Focal Points to support gender mainstreaming in both programming as well as organizational functions. In 2020, capacity building sessions on “Diversity, inclusion and belonging”, “Influencing others” and “The UN-SWAP” were delivered. In addition, regular check-in sessions are scheduled at least monthly and Gender Focal Points receive individualized support when needed. Moreover, a dedicated Learning Path and a collaborative site for the exchange of learning resources have been created.

#### *Gender balance*

17. For the 2022/2023 biennium, it is proposed to WIPO Member States to approve gender balance targets for the D2, D1, P5 and P4 , levels, as follows:

Grades	Target
D2	33%
D1	41%
P5	35%
P4	50%

18. As at June 30, 2021, women represented 54.2 per cent of WIPO staff.<sup>8</sup> However, their representation varies significantly across categories, with women being least represented in managerial positions: women constitute 80 per cent of National Professional Officer staff, 62.7 per cent of General Service staff, 47.3 per cent of Professional staff and 33.3 per cent of Director-level staff. Positively, over the last year, the P4 level has remained on target, having already been achieved in 2020. In addition, as the table below shows, the D1 level has also met its target, six months ahead of the deadline. Conversely, both the D2 and P5 levels have registered regressions, which have required a recalibration of gender parity targets for the next biennium.

<sup>8</sup> Staff on fixed-term, permanent and continuing appointments, based on post grade, regular budget. Temporary staff and the executive category are excluded.

Grades	Status as at June 30, 2017	Status as at June 30, 2018	Status as at June 30, 2019	Status as at June 30, 2020	Status as at June 30, 2021	Targets for December 2021
D2	18%	16.7%	15.4%	15.4%	10%	24%
D1	31%	34.6%	36.8%	34.9%	37.1%	37%
P5	35%	33.3%	32.4%	32.7%	29.7%	43%
P4	45%	47.2%	48.7%	50.0%	50%	50%

19. WIPO's efforts to improve gender balance among its staff are supported by targeted outreach. WIPO participated in two virtual career fairs specifically aimed at attracting senior female professionals: over 300 women representing approximately 80 nationalities visited WIPO's booths. Furthermore, during the reporting period, through its talent pools, WIPO received expressions of interest from 5,515 professionals, including 3,676 women (67 per cent). For select senior positions, which are either hard to fill or in fields of work where women are still under-represented, WIPO enlists the services of executive search firms to ensure a solid pool of qualified female candidates. WIPO also carried out a campaign targeting female professionals, whereby three senior female staff members were interviewed on their experience at the Organization. These interviews were then posted on career websites.

#### *Gender mainstreaming in programming*

20. The coordination and support of gender equality programmatic activities is carried out through the work of WIPO's Gender and Diversity Specialist within the Human Resources Management Department (HRMD), who works across WIPO's different sectors. During the reporting period, several activities were implemented in collaboration with various Sectors, for example:

- Copyright and Creative Industries Sector: a capacity building workshop series was delivered to IP Offices in the Latin American and Caribbean region focusing on how to design and use gender equality plans and related tools;
- IP Innovation and Ecosystems Sector, and within the framework of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property's (CDIP) four-year project on Women and IP: research dissemination events and capacity building activities for participating IP Offices and prospective women IP users have taken place, both at the national and inter-regional levels;
- Regional and National Development Sector: a series of sharing sessions on the gender gap in IP have been organized, in response to a request by Member States. To date, the events discussed the gender-related barriers to the use of the IP system, good practices and multi-stakeholders initiatives to bridge the gap;
- Administration, Management and Finance Sector: work has been carried out to support the use of inclusive language at WIPO, in the six official languages of the Organization; and
- Global Challenges and Partnerships Sector: training on gender equality and inclusion has been provided to the participants of the training on Genetic Resources and IP.

21. A more detailed description of gender-related programmatic activities and their objectives is included in the document entitled "Report on Women and IP: Gender mainstreaming, capacity building and assistance to Member States", prepared for the CCDIP at its twenty-sixth session in July 2021 (document [CDIP/26/8](#)).

## REWARDS AND RECOGNITION PROGRAM

22. At its annual meeting in September 2018, the WIPO Coordination Committee requested the Secretariat to report systematically on the implementation of its Rewards and Recognition Program (RRP) and on changes introduced since the previous Annual Report on Human Resources.
23. The 2020 RRP Ceremony was held virtually for the first time due to the pandemic. As requested by Member States, the “Organizational Performance” reward was removed from the RRP.
24. The 2021 RRP has been put on hold pending the results of the recently commenced review by the Internal Oversight Division (IOD) of WIPO’s Performance Management and Staff Development Framework (cf. Chapter VI for more details on this review).

## REPORTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (ICSC) AND OF THE UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF PENSION BOARD (UNJSPB)

25. The attention of the WIPO Coordination Committee is drawn respectively to the 2020 reports of the ICSC (UN document [A/75/30](#)) and of the UNJSPB (UN documents [A/75/9](#) and [A/75/9/Add.1](#)).

## IV. A YEAR OF CHANGE IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

26. Faced with the unanticipated and unprecedented challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the past year has been a challenging period for the Organization and its staff as a whole. Throughout this period, HRMD found itself at the forefront of crisis management, remote working, risk handling, redeployment of the workforce, safety, wellbeing, i.e. retaining the human element in human resources.
27. From the outset of the crisis, HRMD adapted and streamlined many of its work processes to ensure continued delivery of services to employees and Member States. With respect to its workforce, HRMD temporarily implemented *ad hoc* measures and derogations to a number of policies and procedures in order to facilitate management in crisis mode.
28. The pandemic also coincided with an Organization in transition due to the appointment of a new Director General and that of a new Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as well as a major restructuring of the Organization. Furthermore, the Director General designated the former Deputy Director of HRMD to assume the role of Acting Director as from October 1, 2020, as the mandate of the former Director of HRMD had come to an end on September 30, 2020.

### *COVID-19 – challenge, impact and management*

29. It is recalled that WIPO initially closed the office at its headquarters in Geneva on March 16, 2020, in the face of the evolving COVID-19 health crisis and lockdown decisions taken by the Host Government. For the first time, WIPO personnel were required to work from home, with the exception of a small critical presence on premises consisting of Medical, Buildings, IT, Security, Office of the Director General, Communications and HR staff needed to perform essential services that could not be provided remotely.

30. WIPO initiated a carefully planned and phased return-to-premises program in June 2020, in light of the gradual decline of infection rates in the Geneva region and the scaling back of lockdown measures by the Host Government. However, due to the evolving epidemiological situation and the increasingly rapid spread of the virus in October 2020, the Organization decided, once again, that all staff would need to resume remote work as of Monday, November 2, 2020. This second phase of remote working was facilitated by the lessons learnt during the initial lockdown of March 2020.

31. Since the onset of the pandemic, WIPO and HRMD have become increasingly aware of the impact of the pandemic on the psychosocial aspects and mental health of employees. In response and especially during the times of mandatory teleworking and social isolation, HRMD, in coordination with the Medical Unit as well as the Staff Counsellor, provided comprehensive advice as well as a broad range of support to staff working remotely. The Medical Unit followed up on health matters and the Staff Counsellor provided psychosocial support services to individuals and training to staff at large, disseminating mainly through dedicated Intranet pages and thematic materials on psychosocial wellbeing.

32. Mental health recommendations and guidance for employees were developed and continuously fine-tuned with the primary aim of boosting individual and collective resilience; and a number of other initiatives were taken to address staff concerns during the pandemic. HRMD focused on the wellbeing of colleagues by offering sessions on wellbeing, mindfulness and burnout prevention. In addition to individual coaching sessions, the internal coaching team offered monthly lunchtime sessions on self-management and coping tools.

33. Additionally, infection prevention controls and workplace assessments were put in place by the Medical Unit according to guidelines issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Medical Directors, in order to create a safe working environment for all employees and visitors. Informative sessions were organized to discuss preventative measures, correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and to enhance the protection of incoming staff. The Medical Unit also coordinated with and participated in the UN System-wide Covid-19 vaccination Program, in order to support staff in WIPO's External Offices to get their vaccinations.

34. The delivery of training was heavily affected by the pandemic. Training offers had to be progressively adapted to the exclusively virtual environment, taking into account shorter attention spans through focused content and shorter sessions. Consequently and due to the challenging circumstances, the number of training days per staff member decreased from 4.8 in 2019 to 2.7 in 2020. However, eLearning solutions delivered in bite-size formats replaced traditional classroom training and staff were able to select courses from a much wider range of options. Through this evolution, WIPO colleagues were empowered to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning and development. For instance, over 600 active users now access more than 5,000 self-paced courses on LinkedIn Learning.

35. Moreover, most Programs had to adjust their objectives and work plans for this biennium. The possibility to record and update progress throughout the year, via WIPO's Performance Management and Staff Development system (PMSDS), has enabled both the Organization and its staff to be more agile in the face of change.

### *Welcoming a new administration*

36. Mr. Daren Tang was appointed as WIPO's new Director General on May 8, 2020, and assumed his functions on October 1, 2020. He pledged that the work of the Organization would be guided by the interests and needs of all Member States and would be conducted on the principles of integrity, transparency and accountability toward the construction of an inclusive, balanced, vibrant and forward-looking global IP ecosystem.

37. The public health situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic provided many challenges and obstacles to the Director General when he was first appointed and when he subsequently assumed his duties. In light of this exceptional situation, the Director General-Elect was unable to undertake the process of consultation and nomination of a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) so that it would be in place for the commencement of his mandate. Accordingly and as proposed by the Director General-Elect at that point, the WIPO Coordination Committee approved the exceptional re-appointment for three months (until December 31, 2020) of seven of the former Deputy Directors General (DDGs) and Assistant Directors General (ADGs) to assist the Director General in managing the transition until the new DDGs and ADGs were to be appointed as from January 1, 2021.

38. On August 3, 2020, Member States of WIPO were notified by the then Director General-Elect that he intended to seek the approval and advice of the WIPO Coordination Committee for the new appointments of four DDG's and four ADG's to take effect on January 1, 2021. In addition, the Director General-Elect invited governments to nominate candidates. The nominated candidates were also requested to submit application materials through a dedicated WIPO recruitment platform, including their personal history, a motivation letter stating their requisite experience and how they intended to contribute to WIPO.

39. In his submission to the WIPO Coordination Committee, the Director General also proposed the creation of a new Sector, the IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector, under the supervision of an ADG. This new Sector would focus on programs that look at IP not just from a legal perspective, but also from the enterprise and economic perspectives, supporting the movement of ideas to the market.

40. A total of 49 applications were received, of which 26 per cent were from female candidates and 74 per cent from male candidates. All candidates were invited to an individual meeting with the Director General. Each candidate was carefully considered in order to evaluate their experience, intended contribution to the Organization, technical and managerial competence, leadership qualities and ability to work as a team. Due regard was also given to geographic and gender balance. This recruitment process, which stretched over several months, culminated in the appointment of three women out of the four DDG's.

### *Realigning WIPO with the new priorities*

41. Following the onboarding of the new DDG's and ADG's on January 1, 2021, and further to extensive consultations between the Director General, the Sector Leads (i.e. the DDG's and ADG's) and relevant internal stakeholders across the Organization, requisite structural changes to make the Organization function more effectively were implemented on March 1, 2021. Some of the key elements of the restructuring were as follows:

- the Office of the Director General (ODG) was reduced in size and streamlined to improve information flow and speed of coordination between the ODG and other parts of the Organization;



- work units were consolidated to set up the new IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector, focusing on the enterprise and economic aspects of IP, IP commercialization and IP dispute resolution;
- other Sectors also saw movements of work units, especially those whose work was connected and where the changes would allow them to work better together; and
- new areas of focus were created, such as the Future of IP, IP and Frontier Technologies, Youth, etc. in order to address issues of emerging importance to the Organization and its stakeholders.

## V. THE “NEW NORMAL”

42. The pandemic has highlighted the need for adaptability and resilience in WIPO’s workforce, accelerating the shift towards a more digital organization and the importance of people in the new normal. HR is one function that saw an especially dramatic shift in purpose and processes.

43. In line with the Organization’s new Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2022-2026, HRMD aims to move towards a more employee-centric Organization and to foster a team-based culture, where cross-sectoral collaboration becomes the norm and in which all employees feel valued.

### *Health, wellbeing and work-life balance*

44. Perhaps one of the most unexpected and challenging new tasks HRMD has had to address during this pandemic was to fill the role of health administrator. During the past 15 months, even though the pandemic relentlessly affected many areas of work and daily lives were severely disrupted, WIPO’s employees adapted quickly and exceedingly well to this new reality. WIPO needs to continue to be dynamic and adaptable when confronted with such challenging and ever-changing circumstances.

45. The mental health and wellbeing of employees has always been of the utmost importance at WIPO. Whilst it has had to recognize that these are extraordinary times, WIPO remains conscious of the challenges that continued remote working puts on the mental health of its employees. Therefore, WIPO has turned its focus on embedding employee welfare strategies into the core of business, recognizing the rewards that can be reaped from prioritizing and protecting the health of employees and, in turn, the business. Hence, implementation efforts of the WIPO Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy continued with the integration of wellness considerations and mainstreaming of wellbeing and mental health aspects in the Organization.

46. The pandemic compelled a reassessment of WIPO’s working practices. There is no doubt that the past year and a half has expanded empathy for work-life balance and renewed the opportunity to make flexible working more standard practice. This is suddenly seen as normal, albeit a new form of normal. Most notably, perhaps, flexible practices are no longer seen as a benefit, but as an essential part of working life. HRMD has been instrumental in expanding this new approach to support the work-life balance of staff, particularly realizing that a flexible approach to working is business critical. This will be embedded in the long-term through a policy on a hybrid work model that supports both office and remote working.

47. Furthermore, significant changes were made to the policy on parental leave, to the benefit of staff and in support of work-life balance. The changes further aim to promote gender equality and inclusion, notably by recognizing that all parents have equal care responsibilities and that care responsibilities should be equally shared between parents. To this end, the leave

entitlements were increased for most categories of staff and parents, and more flexibility was granted for the use of these entitlements.

48. As WIPO starts planning a return to the workplace, HRMD will focus on introducing the necessary measures to ensure the safety and well-being of our people and improve work-life balance. WIPO launched a Health and Wellbeing survey in June 2021 in order to assess the impact of the pandemic and home-based work as well as the impact of the activities and policies currently in place on staff wellbeing and productivity. This will give the Organization a basis for the development of future preventive programs and measures to enhance health and wellbeing at work.

### *Agility and diversity*

49. The pandemic basically drove WIPO and HRMD to consider not only how it will continue to manage a remote workforce, but also how it intends managing a more hybrid workforce, composed of employees working remotely, in the office, part-time and under flexible working arrangements. HRMD has had to recognize and embrace an agile work culture. This greater agility has also enabled employees to adapt and respond to challenges as they arose, as well as keeping them engaged in their work irrespective of their physical location.

50. At the same time, WIPO has continued to focus on its aim to attract and recruit diverse and qualified staff and remained committed to respecting the principle of recruiting staff of the highest standards of competence, efficiency and integrity. It also recognized that this systematic drive needs to be carried out in tandem with the aim to achieve equitable geographical representation and gender balance through enhanced recruitment outreach programs and initiatives in partnership with Member States.

51. Accordingly, HRMD continued to strengthen, as much as the circumstances permitted, its outreach efforts to attract qualified candidates. In the context of the Focal Point Initiative for unrepresented Member States, HRMD held a series of webinars with key officials and potential applicants and interacted closely with Focal Points. It held targeted webinars for focal points in Albania, Estonia, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia and Sudan leading to 24 per cent more applications from Slovenia and 28 per cent from Sudan to fixed-term vacancies. Applications to Talent Pools also increased from unrepresented Member States, particularly from those where webinars were held. Furthermore, the quality of applications from unrepresented Member States improved, demonstrating that the initiative is providing a return on investment with the collaboration and support of the Focal Points.

52. HRMD also increasingly used relevant online job boards such as Impact Pool and social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Twitter, as well as targeted advertising for select senior or hard-to-fill vacancies. In 2020, WIPO undertook a talent mapping exercise through LinkedIn to establish the talent available in unrepresented Member States, as well as scarce talent across the globe. This information was used to better inform and direct targeted outreach efforts. Following the creation of talent pools in 2019, WIPO continued to review the profiles of candidates in those pools for select specialized and/or senior vacancies and those identified as possible matches were contacted and encouraged to apply.

53. Moreover, the WIPO Fellowship Policy was revised in order to consolidate the various fellowship programs and individual fellowships into five broad categories, based on the type of functions performed, in line with WIPO's organizational needs. The new categories facilitate the administration of fellowships and provide greater consistency in employment conditions between fellows across WIPO. In particular, the stipends were harmonized, leading to increases for some fellows, and WIPO now provides a contribution towards travel expenses for

all categories of fellows, which was not the case previously. We hope that by continuing to offer a meaningful experience to young professionals we will boost WIPO's branding as an employer.

54. In terms of career support, career-related courses were delivered virtually, and the external studies program was maintained. Building on the mentoring pilots conducted in 2018 and 2019, the WIPO Mentoring Program was launched in 2020 as a cost-effective addition to the existing career support offering.

55. Finally, with respect to strategic workforce planning and in order to better advise the Sector Leads and managers, a comprehensive dashboard for managers, integrating HR data and analytics, has been developed for release in the third quarter of 2021. These dashboards will provide easy access to key information, such as staffing, gender and geographical representation, retirement, absence, performance appraisals, amongst others. This tool will also strengthen the capacities of managers to manage their workforce, track and monitor their teams, as well as hopefully improve the gender and geographical representation of their workforce.

#### *Accelerated digitalization and streamlining*

56. For the past few years, HRMD has embarked on the implementation of a slate of new HR tools, processes and procedures, through a digital transformation process, in order to achieve an increasingly enabling HR function. In the past year alone, HRMD, in coordination with other internal units, has led the development and implementation of the leave and flexible working arrangements dashboards and ensured a variety of remote learning options being made available to staff.

57. In mid-2021, HRMD launched the HR Digitization Project to digitize the current paper-based files of active staff members in order to improve the single digital repository of employee documents and records, and consequently strengthen HRMD's capability to consult securely information online from the office and remotely. Similarly, in order to improve sick leave management and for a better information flow between employees and the relevant units, the Medical Unit has been putting in place an interface between the AIMS HR database and the medical database, EarthMed. The Medical Unit has also resumed the digitization project of medical paper files with the aim to have a single digital repository of employee medical records.

58. Additionally, while WIPO had already been moving slowly to virtual recruiting, the pandemic compelled HRMD to make the transition more quickly. The entire recruitment process from planning and talent sourcing to assessing, selecting and hiring are now conducted in a virtual environment. Along with this, HRMD has recognized that remote onboarding, along with its own challenges, has also become a key part of virtual recruiting. A new project in this respect is now underway.

59. As part of the continued enhancement of the HR policy framework, some 20 new or revised Office Instructions and other administrative issuances were released during the reporting period, accompanied where necessary by general communications to ensure that personnel understood the policy developments.<sup>9</sup> For example, for the first time, a policy was developed on compensatory leave for staff in the National Professional Officer, Professional and higher categories who have been required to work overtime for substantial or recurrent periods. The new policy lays the foundation for compensatory leave to be granted to these categories of staff in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.

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<sup>9</sup> The online HR Handbook also continued to be updated regularly to provide members of personnel with a comprehensive and clear overview of all HR policies at WIPO, as well as links to the relevant administrative issuances.

60. Finally, facilitating the integration of newcomers while working remotely represented a challenge that was addressed through a combination of supportive measures: a new Intranet page for newcomers was launched and a buddy System was put in place. Through the buddy system, newcomers were connected with a dedicated colleague for informal and friendly support, introducing them to WIPO's culture and helping them navigate through WIPO's administrative systems and procedures. The first virtual Induction Program took place in November 2020. The overall quality of the Induction Program was improved through shorter presentations, whilst a welcome chat with the Director General was included in the opening session of the program.

## **VI. OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT BIENNIUM AND BEYOND**

61. A new [HR Strategy](#) covering the period 2022 to 2026 is being drafted for consideration by Member States at the forthcoming Assemblies. The Strategy, guided by the new MTSP, will focus on ensuring a more agile and fit-for-purpose workforce through effective talent sourcing, skills realignment, mobility, training and career support, all of which will be tailored to meet the evolving needs of the Organization as well as of its staff. It will also include the commitment and accountability towards effective people management by building a human-centered culture based on trust, inclusiveness and by promoting enhanced cross-sectoral horizontal cooperation through new ways of working.

62. Changing WIPO's culture is a key priority of the new administration and this will have a significant impact on HR management. With hybrid working becoming the standard, it is essential that WIPO establishes new communication channels to hear the voice of its employees. An engagement survey will be conducted during the last quarter of 2021 and every two years thereafter. The survey will aim to be both a high level and in-depth climate survey, one that is focused on the pulse, culture and values of the Organization and also include some detailed focus at a sectoral level. Following this 'baseline' survey, the intention is to put in place tools to listen regularly to employees through pulse surveys in order to identify what works and what does not, and to include the voice of employees in business decisions. Efforts will continue in order to maintain a conducive and productive work environment and to ensure that all major staff concerns are duly taken into account, especially relating to the safe return to premises as well as other, health and wellbeing aspects. Internal consultations between the administration, staff and staff representatives will also be critical.

63. Increased workforce planning can help to support WIPO to redesign organizational structures and roles in order to accommodate the new ways of working post-pandemic. WIPO will become more agile and look at flexible structures to facilitate the effective redeployment of employees and a more horizontal distribution of work. In the context of the mobility initiatives, HRMD will focus on tools to support this new distribution of work and empower employees to adapt, re-skill and assume new roles. This workforce development should build the resilience that WIPO will require in order to navigate constant change.

64. Additionally, in line with the trends on the broader labor market, WIPO will need to rethink its sourcing model with an increased reliability on contingent workers and the externalization of services. Consideration should be given to the nature of the work, and whether skills required are aligned with WIPO's core expertise or can allow reasonable career progression within the Organization on a long-term basis.

65. Furthermore, remote working has changed the way WIPO works, which will need to be taken into account in designing a new Performance Management and Staff Development framework, notably to increase focus on outcomes. IOD has initiated a review to assess whether the existing framework is fit-for-purpose and empowers WIPO's staff to perform at the highest level. HRMD hopes that this review will enable it to better understand to what extent the resources, systems and tools in place support this framework (and what changes, if any, are required) and are fit-for-purpose for effective delivery, as well as whether WIPO's organizational culture promotes and rewards performance.

66. Therefore, learning and development will also be a key focus to ensure WIPO is ready for the new post-pandemic work model. For example, COVID-19 has accelerated the dependency on technologies to deliver WIPO's work, hence the need to ensure that employees are well equipped to understand and use technologies. Fostering learning agility and strengthening the innovation capacity of WIPO's workforce will be an important enabler for the successful implementation of the new MTSP and the Program and Budget for 2022/23. This will be an integral part of a new training framework, which will include links to career development and internal mobility. Additional focus will be given to transferrable skills that can support more flexibility in the redeployment of the workforce to priority areas as needed, both in training and in hiring new people. There is a need for employees who can provide a more forward-looking outlook and who are able to adjust to change on a continuous basis.

67. Additionally, HRMD will introduce diversity and inclusion initiatives to create an environment that promotes trust and engagement. A Young Expert Program (YEP) targeted at global, diverse, young and talented individuals will be established with an aim to welcome WIPO's first YEP cohort in early 2022. This program will contribute to attain at least three<sup>10</sup> of the Strategic Pillars of the MTSP as well as its Foundation.<sup>11</sup> The program will also contribute to WIPO's diversity and inclusion strategies from at least gender, geographical, age and social economic perspectives. It will also facilitate the development and recognition of actual and potential talent with a key objective to build capacity and democratize intellectual property (IP) so that YEP alumni can further their career inside or outside of WIPO whether in the international or national contexts.

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<sup>10</sup> Three Pillars – "Reach out worldwide to explain the potential for Intellectual Property to improve the lives of everyone, everywhere; Bring people together and partner with stakeholders to shape the future of the global Intellectual Property ecosystem; Support governments, enterprises, communities and individuals to use Intellectual Property as a tool for growth and sustainable development."

<sup>11</sup> Foundation – "Empower our people to work effectively, collaboratively and innovatively by providing them with the right resources, training and environment."