

Report by the Chairman of TREF, Mr B. Dormy, to the Finance Committee on 19 June 2013

TREF held its 83rd meeting on 3 May 2013. We had the pleasure to welcome Professor Agnieszka Zalewska, the President of Council, and Céline Grobon, one of the two Vice-Presidents of the Staff Association. We also expressed appreciation to Dr Johann Spitzer of Austria, who attended TREF for the last time.

2012 Personnel Statistics

The meeting began with a presentation and discussion of the annual personnel statistics. This is a very interesting and detailed document which includes information on the number of staff members, fellows, associates, users and students; breakdowns by professional category, gender, nationality, age, type of contract, seniority, etc.; details of applications, recruitments and departures; and trends in many of these areas. The presentation drew attention, among other things, to the change in the staff/non-staff ratio, which means that performance has to be increased on all fronts in order to serve an increasing number of users within fixed resource constraints. Other issues highlighted included the globally positive ten-year trend in gender statistics and the continuing decrease in the average number of years of service. On the recruitment side, TREF took note that the outstanding physics results at the LHC and the associated media coverage have helped to maintain CERN's attractiveness as an employer. However, there has been an increase in the number of refused offers, which is largely attributable to the limited duration contract policy. Furthermore, in spite of significant ongoing efforts, the Organization still has difficulties to attract applicants for staff positions from several Member States across several professions.

The annual personnel statistics have been continuously supplemented and improved over the years in response to feedback from TREF and help to identify any problem areas and to monitor the results of measures taken to address them. The Member State delegations expressed appreciation for the tables, charts and figures, noting that they are among the most comprehensive provided by international organisations. Copies of the 2012 personnel statistics can be obtained from the Council Secretariat and I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to read them.

Imbalance in the gender of persons consulting the CERN Ombuds

TREF then heard a short presentation by the CERN Ombuds drawing attention to the fact that, in terms of the respective populations of men and women at CERN, proportionally twice as many of the people contacting him to discuss difficulties in the workplace are female. An initial survey of other international organisations based in Geneva suggests that this is a feature common to organisations with a male-dominated workforce and that in a mixed-gender working environment, i.e. where the two populations are equal, women do not consult the Ombuds any more frequently than men. TREF took note that a more in-depth analysis of the cases brought to the Ombuds over the last three years will be carried out with a view to establishing whether any corrective actions need to be envisaged.

The CERN Diversity Programme Leader pointed out that while it is inevitable for CERN to remain male-dominated in terms of absolute numbers, efforts should be made to counteract its effect on organisational culture. In this context, she underlined that the various awareness-raising events organised in the framework of the Organization's new diversity programme have been well attended so far and constitute a useful tool for addressing any issues faced by women as well as other minorities at CERN. TREF looks forward to discussing the diversity programme report at its next meeting in the autumn.

CERN Health Insurance Scheme

As I informed you in my previous report in December 2012, TREF heard a detailed report last autumn on the implementation and impact of the decisions relating to the CERN Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS) taken in the framework of the 2010 five-yearly review and on subsequent measures decided by the Director-General with a view to limiting future increases in expenditure. TREF took note on that occasion that the CHIS situation was improving but that it would not be possible to make a first global assessment of the impact of the various measures taken until late 2014. TREF also invited the Management to present an overview of the purpose, basic principles, structure and main features of the CHIS in the spring. This was thus the subject of the final item on the agenda of our May meeting.

During the presentation we were reminded that the CHIS consists of two parts: a health insurance component, and a long-term care component introduced in 2001 to address the future increase in cases of dependency among the insured population, which are expected to peak around 2025 to 2030. We were also reminded of the types of membership and contribution rates and of the level of benefits, which were found to be globally equivalent to those of other international organisations in the last five-yearly review. TREF took note of the atypical age distribution of the insured population, where the proportion of members over the age of 65 is much higher than in the national systems of the Member States. In 2012 the balance between contributions and expenditure was back in positive territory for the two components of the CHIS, and a healthy situation was reported both for the HIS reserve, which mostly serves as a buffer against year-to-year fluctuations or "catastrophic" events such as epidemics that can significantly increase annual expenditure, and for the capital of the long-term care sub-scheme, set up in anticipation of the future increase in expenditure for dependency. The CHIS is administered by a contractor, currently UNIQA, which is responsible for a range of tasks including the checking and processing of reimbursement claims but does not serve as an insurer. The cost of this outsourcing was shown to be lower than that incurred by the other international organisations surveyed. The contract is due to be retendered in 2014.

Chairman, this concludes my report on the issues covered at TREF's May 2013 meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for 21 November, when the main items on the agenda will be a report on diversity, and information on the five-yearly review procedure in preparation for the discussions that will take place in 2014 and 2015. I should like to take the opportunity to encourage those Member State delegations which are not yet represented at TREF to participate in its meetings, particularly with the forthcoming five-yearly review in mind.
