

WTO Secretariat

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- As of 31 December, the WTO employed 623 staff members on fixed-term and regular contracts, slightly down from 627 the year before. Of the professional staff, 48 per cent were women, up from 47 per cent in 2021.
- The WTO's recruitment activity remained high, with 39 fixed-term vacancies filled in 2022.

In February 2022, DG Okonjo-Iweala established the Transformation Office to strengthen the Secretariat and ensure that it is equipped to meet future work needs. Initial transformation work addressed specific subjects of concern and work processes that could be improved, as identified by staff and external consultants McKinsey and Company during a diagnostic phase conducted in 2021 (see below).

The WTO's recruitment activity remained high, with 39 fixed-term vacancies filled in 2022.

Background

As international civil servants, WTO staff members are required to discharge their duties solely with the interest and objectives of the WTO in view. Staff members may neither seek nor accept any instruction relating to the performance of their duties from any government or other entity or person external to the WTO. The recruitment policy of the WTO aims to attract and retain staff with the highest standards of competence, efficiency and integrity.

As of 31 December, the WTO employed 623 staff members on fixed-term and regular contracts, down slightly from 627 in 2021. Professional staff account for 63 per cent of the total regular budget staffing, and support service staff for 37 per cent. Women continue to outnumber men at the WTO, by 340 to 283 (see Figure 1). Of the professional staff, 48 per cent are female and 52 per cent male (see Figure 2), compared to 47 and 53 per cent, respectively, in 2021. Male staff members outnumber females at director levels (see Figure 1).

WTO Secretariat staff come from 85 different WTO members, up from 81 in 2021, showing the widening geographical diversity of WTO staff (see Figure 4).

Figure 1: WTO staff on regular budget by grade and gender, as of 31 December 2022

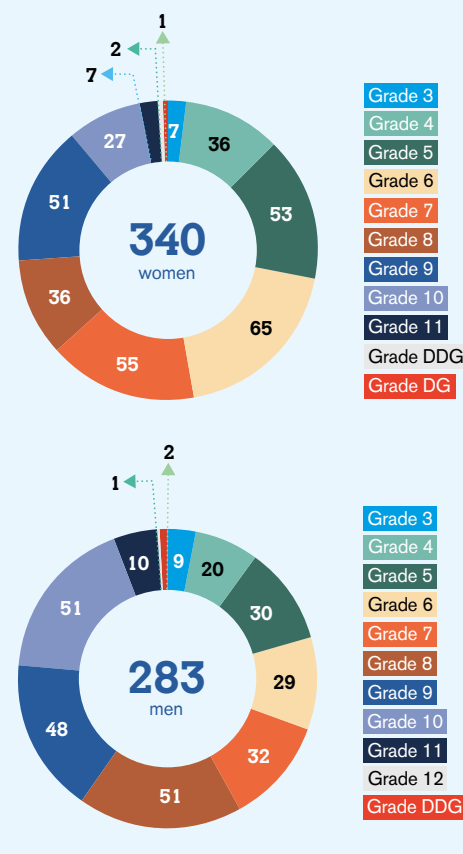
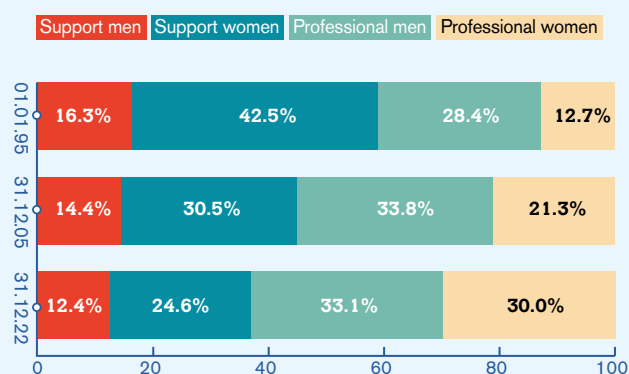


Figure 2: Percentage of WTO staff by professional/support category



Positions continued to be systematically advertised through social media outlets, such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook, to attract a deep pool of qualified candidates. On average, there were 160 applicants for every external vacancy in 2022.

Fourteen young professionals joined the Young Professionals Programme (YFP) in January 2022 (see page 149). The group included professionals from Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Georgia, Ghana, Kenya, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Zambia. They were selected from more than 7,000 candidates following a competitive selection process. The programme was established in 2016 as part of the Secretariat's efforts to broaden diversity and increase the number of professionals from under-represented members from developing economies and least-developed countries.

The implementation of a cloud-based HR/ payroll platform called "Workday" continued during 2022, incorporating human resources core activities of recruitment, absence, payroll, benefits and compensation. A second phase is planned, involving learning and development, performance management and other areas.

Learning and development programme

The Learning Service programme in 2022 took account of recommendations from the

New recruit

Aichetou Ba

Economic Affairs Officer – Standards and Trade Development Facility

Nationality:
Mauritanian
Joining date:
1 November 2022



I started out at the WTO in 2021, joining the Agriculture and Commodities Division (AGCD) as a Young Professional. I assisted the division in its work on cotton and in supporting the Committee on Agriculture.

Prior to the WTO, I worked on monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) and project management at the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation based in Wageningen, the Netherlands, which aimed to foster food security and fight poverty in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.

I now have the privilege to be a part of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), where I support STDF's MEL work and projects to improve food safety and animal and plant health to facilitate safe trade.

As a woman and an African, I feel honoured to be at the WTO under the leadership of the current DG, who is a true source of inspiration. I am thrilled to work with so many talented colleagues on enhancing agriculture trade which respects international norms and standards and pays close attention to issues such as gender equality and environmental sustainability in developing economies.

New recruit

Kotaro Okada

**Paralegal,
Rules Division**

Nationality:
Japanese

Joining date:
14 November 2022



In Japan, the WTO is well-known as a forum to adjudicate international trade disputes, with wins and losses and subsequent policy changes that could affect the life of ordinary people being reported in the media.

Prior to joining the WTO, I worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism before coming to Geneva to join Japan's WTO mission. During my time working for the Government, I researched and advised on trade remedies, subsidies and other trade measures and was part of a team representing the Government in dispute settlement proceedings. When I was looking for a new opportunity to pursue my passion for trade law, the WTO was a natural path.

In my current role as a paralegal, my main responsibilities involve providing panels with secretarial and technical support and assisting the panel composition process. I am looking forward to the privilege of being able to work on many different cases together with wonderful colleagues.

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transformation exercise, especially in the areas of performance management, leadership and managerial capabilities and innovation. In the "Leadership, Innovation and Change" learning programme, Secretariat staff interacted with leaders of innovation from various international organizations. Emphasis continued to be placed on diversity, equity and inclusion. The first-ever workshop on racism was conducted in 2022, with the aim of ensuring an inclusive, safe and productive working environment.

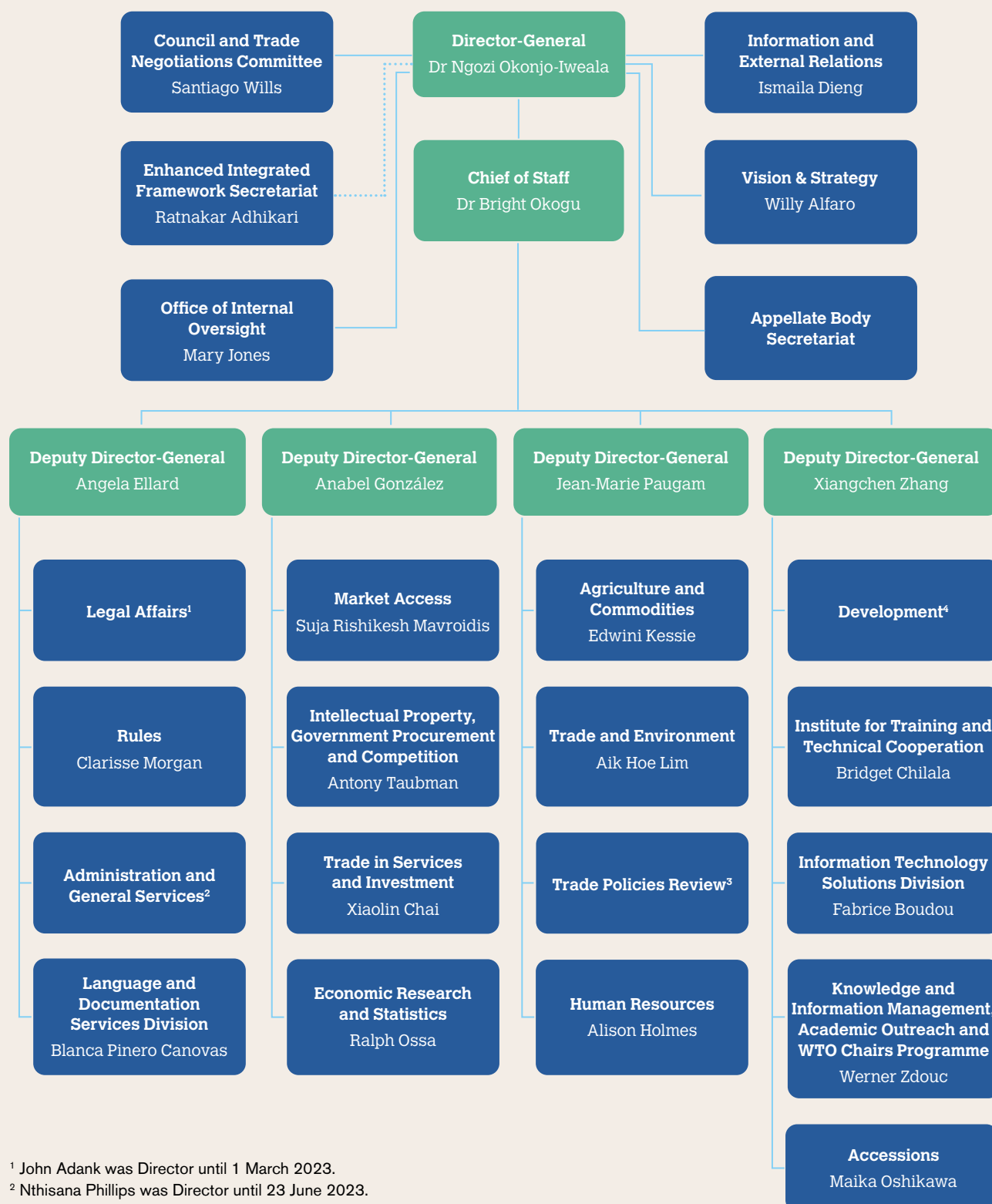
Digitalization initiatives

In 2022, WTO members continued to make use of virtual platforms that allow them to participate remotely in WTO meetings with simultaneous interpretation. They also benefited from the dispute online registry application (DORA), which permits the filing of submissions in ongoing disputes remotely through a secure portal. These tools, which were not available prior to COVID-19, have particularly benefitted delegates working from capitals. In 2022, over 2,500 WTO meetings were conducted via conferencing platforms – Interprefy, Zoom or Webex – with over 112,000 participants.

The Secretariat launched a new platform for WTO members' notifications of trade measures – the WTO Notifications Portal. The portal displays the status of notifications by WTO agreement and by member. The eAgenda, which supports information exchanges among members ahead of meetings on topics such as specific trade concerns, was extended to the Import Licensing Committee. In addition, the Secretariat implemented an updated version of ePing, allowing traders to register to receive alerts on changes to technical requirements for the export of goods. The platform also contains trade concerns discussed in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee and Technical Barriers to Trade Committee.

Cybersecurity remains a core area of attention, notably in view of emerging cyber threats related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The WTO is closely monitoring the threat of cyber-attacks to prevent or mitigate the potential impact on its operations.

Figure 3: WTO Secretariat organizational chart, as of end-May 2023



New recruit

Roberta Allport

Economic Affairs Officer, Development Division

Nationality:
Dominican
Joining date:
1 August 2022



Early in my career, I worked for a non-profit and advocacy group that interviewed farmers across the Caribbean and advocated on their behalf with national governments and international organizations. Many of the farmers' problems stemmed from barriers to international trade.

I decided to deepen my knowledge with a Masters in Global Affairs from Yale University. It was there, during a course on international trade law, that I became aware of the WTO and its role in governing multilateral trade.

Currently, I help organize meetings of the Informal Group of Developing Countries, a forum where developing members can share experiences and perspectives on current negotiations. I also coordinate work related to monitoring achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Agenda for Financing for Development and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries. Finally, I assist in the organization of Geneva Week.

Working with Development Division colleagues has expanded my understanding of trade and development policy, and I enjoy benefiting from their many years of expertise.

Many of the farmers' problems stemmed from barriers to international trade.

Transformation Office

The overall goals of the transformation exercise are to ensure that the Secretariat is equipped with the skills, experience and tools needed to serve members' needs effectively and be able to modernize as those needs evolve. The objective is to develop a more agile and collaborative Secretariat, where information and best practices are shared and where staff are fully engaged in fulfilling the WTO's mandate, with the opportunity to build rewarding careers.

The exercise is driven by the Transformation Office, which is overseen by the Transformation Steering Committee. Staff at all levels are encouraged to get involved in the design and implementation work. The Steering Committee is chaired by the DG and composed of the Chief of Staff and the four DDGs.

In 2022, work focused on various talent-management policies and practices, such as reforms in staff rewards, mobility, promotions and career pathways. A second focus was improving ways of working in specific areas - for example, risk management, procurement and recruitment. A digital transformation effort was also begun, aiming to optimize efficiency and leveraging opportunities related to data, technology and innovation.

The Steering Committee endorsed proposals for several new policies and practices. The Transformation Office and small teams of staff volunteers are working to implement the approved changes, engaging with experts and consulting with directors and staff focus groups. Work completed in 2022 led to the adoption of new policies on staff recognition and rewards and on procurement. The Transformation Office also held consultations with members on their experiences with Secretariat digital tools, such as the "docs online" search facility for WTO documents, the dispute settlement registry, eAgenda and ePing.

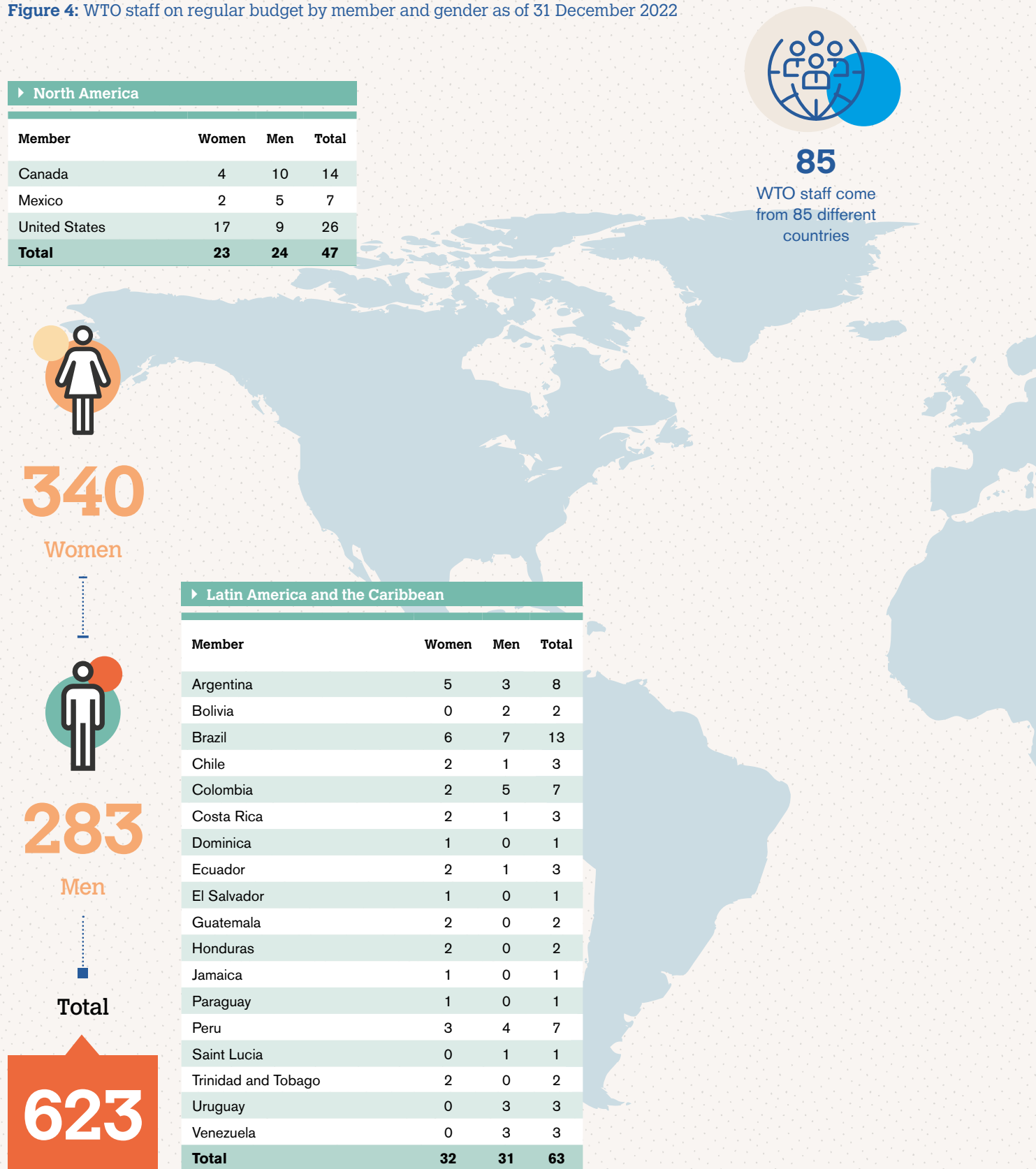
WTO members receive updates on progress in the transformation exercise through regular reports to both the General Council and the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration.

Table 1: Allocation of posts by division, as of 31 December 2022 (number of posts)*

	Grades 1-10	Senior Management and Directors	Total
Senior Management (DG, DDGs and their assistants)	9.0	6.0	15.0
Accessions Division	8.0	1.0	9.0
Administration and General Services Division	67.6	1.0	68.6
Agriculture and Commodities Division	30.8	1.0	31.8
Council and TNC Division	12.0	1.0	13.0
Development Division	18.8	1.0	19.8
Economic Research and Statistics Division	35.5	0.0	35.5
Executive Secretariat for the Enhanced Integrated Framework	9.0	1.0	10.0
Human Resources Division	25.8	0.0	25.8
Information and External Relations Division	26.8	0.0	26.8
Information Technology Solutions Division	33.5	1.0	34.5
Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation	37.5	1.0	38.5
Intellectual Property, Government Procurement and Competition Division	13.5	1.0	14.5
Knowledge and Information Management, Academic Outreach and WTO Chairs Programme	15.8	1.0	16.8
Language and Documentation Services Division	90.5	1.0	91.5
Legal Affairs Division	29.0	1.0	30.0
Market Access Division	22.0	1.0	23.0
Office of Internal Oversight	3.0	0.0	3.0
Office of the Director-General	12.8	1.0	13.8
Rules Division	34.0	1.0	35.0
Trade and Environment Division	16.0	1.0	17.0
Trade in Services and Investment Division	13.4	1.0	14.4
Trade Policies Review Division	50.6	1.0	51.6
Total	614.9	24.0	638.9

*Includes posts not yet filled. Figures in decimals indicate staff members who work a percentage of the working week (e.g. 80 per cent).

Figure 4: WTO staff on regular budget by member and gender as of 31 December 2022



▶ Europe							
Member	Women	Men	Total	Member	Women	Men	Total
Austria	2	2	4	Lithuania	0	1	1
Belgium	3	2	5	Netherlands	0	4	4
Bulgaria	2	4	6	Norway	0	1	1
Croatia	1	0	1	Poland	3	1	4
Czech Republic	1	0	1	Portugal	0	4	4
Denmark	1	1	2	Romania	3	0	3
Estonia	1	0	1	Russian Federation	5	1	6
Finland	3	2	5	Spain	33	12	45
France	94	65	159	Sweden	2	2	4
Germany	8	13	21	Switzerland	10	12	22
Greece	4	2	6	Ukraine	1	0	1
Hungary	1	3	4	United Kingdom	34	12	46
Ireland	11	0	11	Total	235	158	393
Italy	12	14	26				

▶ Africa			
Member	Women	Men	Total
Benin	0	3	3
Botswana	1	0	1
Burundi	0	1	1
Cameroon	1	0	1
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	2	2	4
Egypt	3	1	4
Gambia	2	0	2
Ghana	1	0	1
Guinea	0	1	1
Kenya	3	0	3
Malawi	0	1	1
Mauritius	0	3	3
Morocco	1	3	4
Nigeria	1	1	2
Rwanda	0	1	1
Senegal	0	1	1
South Africa	0	1	1
Tanzania	2	0	2
Tunisia	2	2	4
Uganda	1	1	2
Zambia	1	0	1
Zimbabwe	2	0	2
Total	23	22	45

▶ Asia			
Member	Women	Men	Total
Bangladesh	0	1	1
China	8	6	14
India	2	11	13
Japan	2	4	6
Jordan	1	0	1
Korea, Republic of	4	0	4
Malaysia	0	2	2
Nepal	0	1	1
Pakistan	0	3	3
Philippines	6	7	13
Singapore	0	1	1
Sri Lanka	2	0	2
Tajikistan	0	1	1
Türkiye	1	3	4
Total	26	40	66

▶ Oceania			
Member	Women	Men	Total
Australia	1	7	8
New Zealand	0	1	1
Total	1	8	9