

B  
GC

GOV/2001/39-GC(45)/22  
16 August 2001

International Atomic Energy Agency

# BOARD OF GOVERNORS GENERAL CONFERENCE

GENERAL Distr.  
Original: ENGLISH

---

Sub-item 25(b) of the Conference's provisional agenda  
(GC(45)/1)

## WOMEN IN THE SECRETARIAT

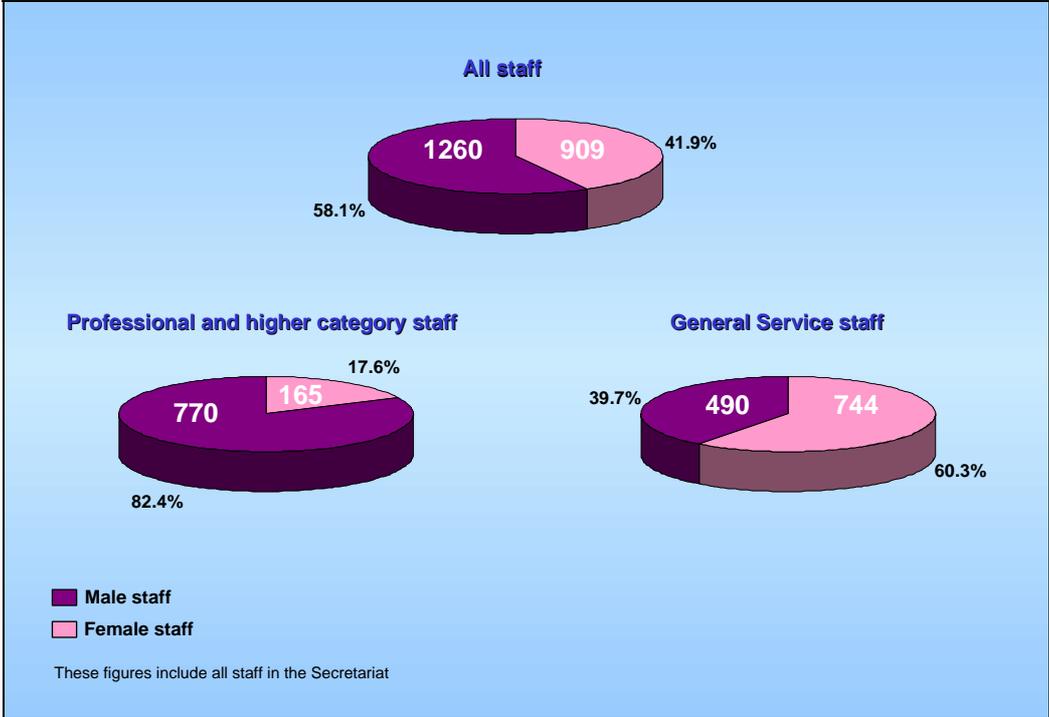
1. Resolution GC(43)/RES/21 (Women in the Secretariat) adopted by the General Conference on 1 October 1999, requires that the Director General report biennially on progress made in attaining gender equality and in improving the status of women in the Secretariat. This report presents the efforts made by the Secretariat and the challenges encountered in pursuing this goal.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number.  
Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

**Status of women in the Secretariat**

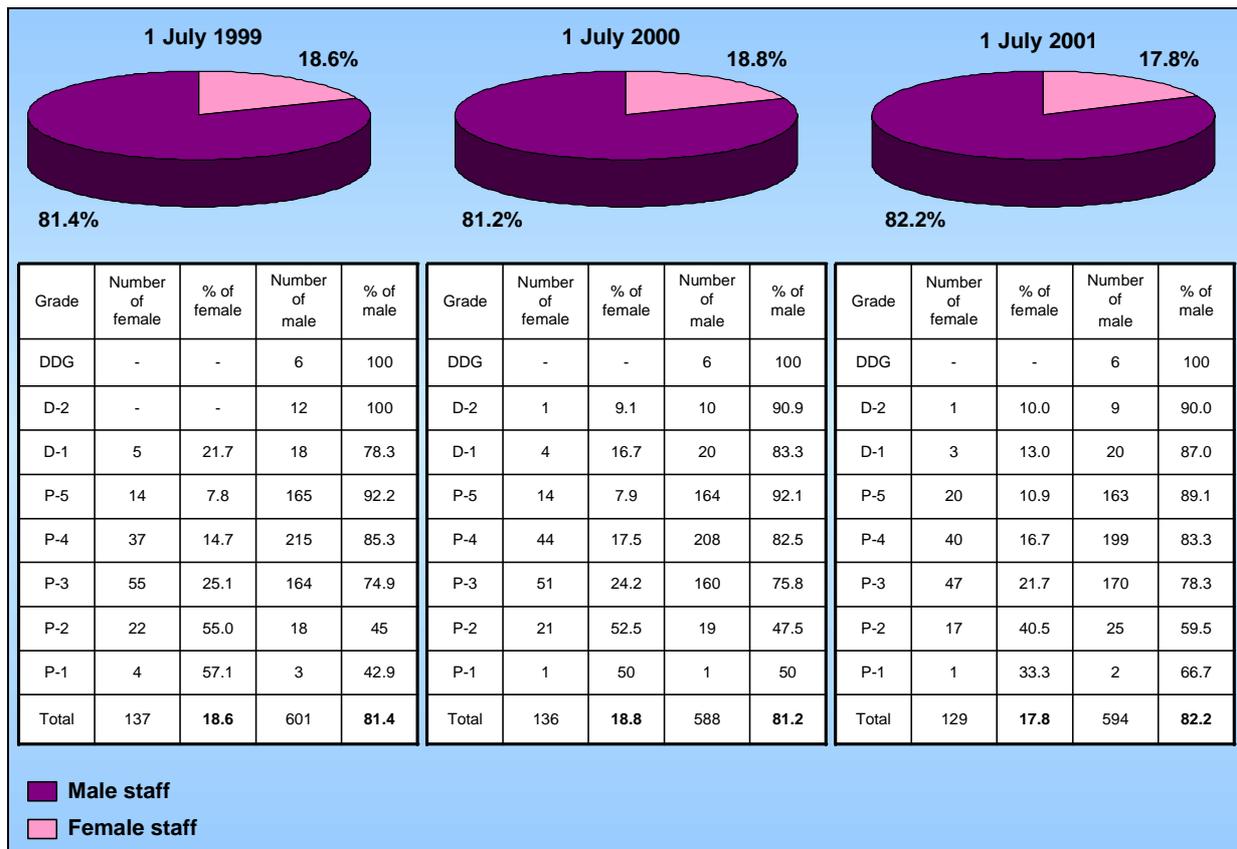
2. As at 1 July 2001, the total number of female staff in the Secretariat was 909, representing 41.9% of the overall staff complement. This number includes women from the General Service category (60.3% of all staff in that category) — comprising a variety of positions including, for example, laboratory technicians, public information clerks, accounting assistants and procurement clerks. The share of women in the Professional and higher categories (which includes, in addition to staff holding regular posts, all staff such as cost free experts, consultants and staff paid from extrabudgetary funds) is only 17.6%.

**OVERALL COMPOSITION OF STAFF BY GENDER AND CATEGORY:  
1 July 2001**

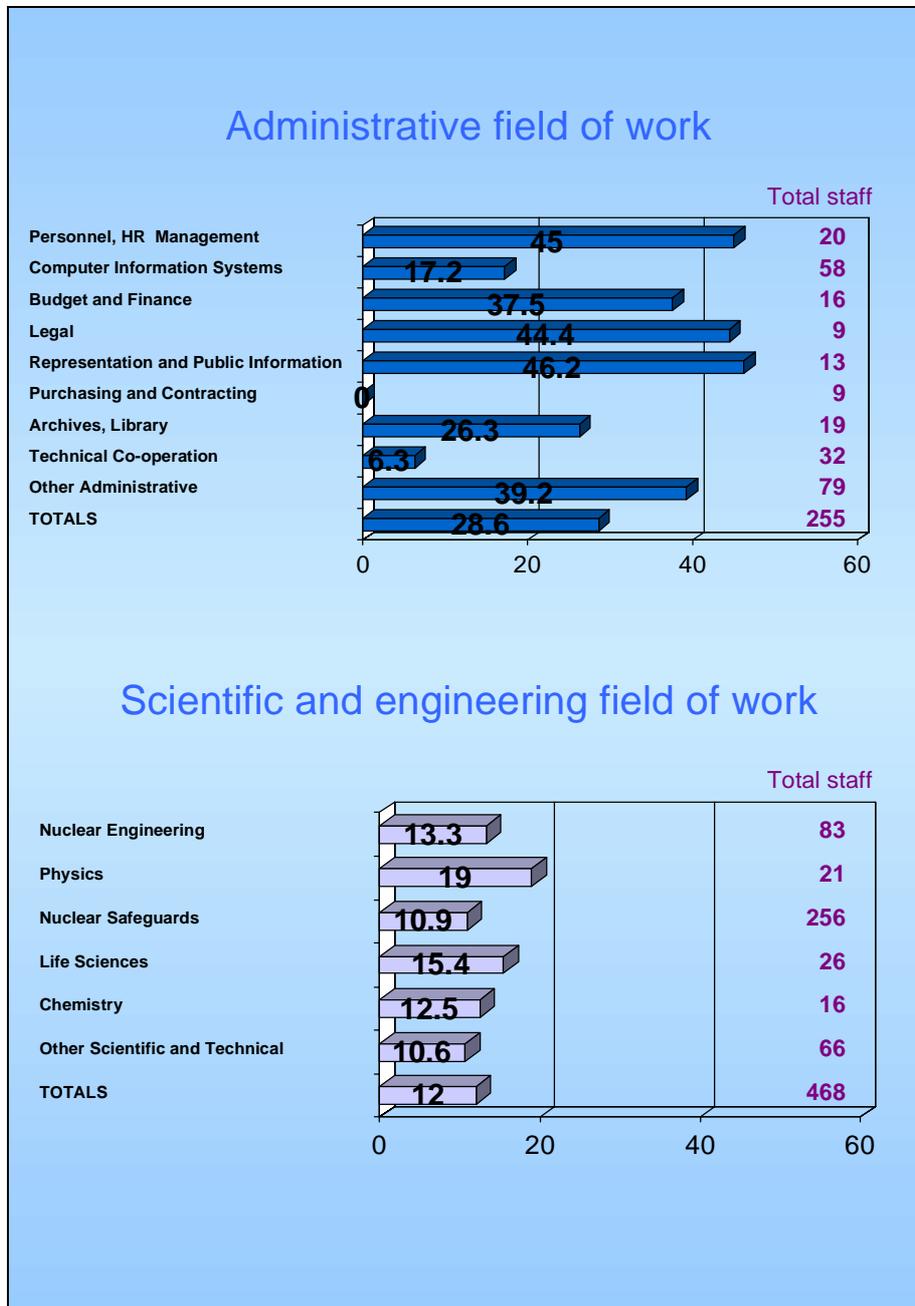


3. The remaining part of this report relates to “regular staff” in the Professional and higher category — defined as all staff in this category who are subject to the Staff Regulations and Rules, who have been appointed in accordance with standard recruitment procedures through funds provided in the Regular Budget, and who hold a fixed term contract of one year or more (this has been the basis for earlier reporting). The following charts show the number and percentage of women at each grade level in the Professional and higher categories and the number and percentage of women by occupational grouping.

**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
PERCENTAGE OF POSTS OCCUPIED BY WOMEN:  
1 July 2001**



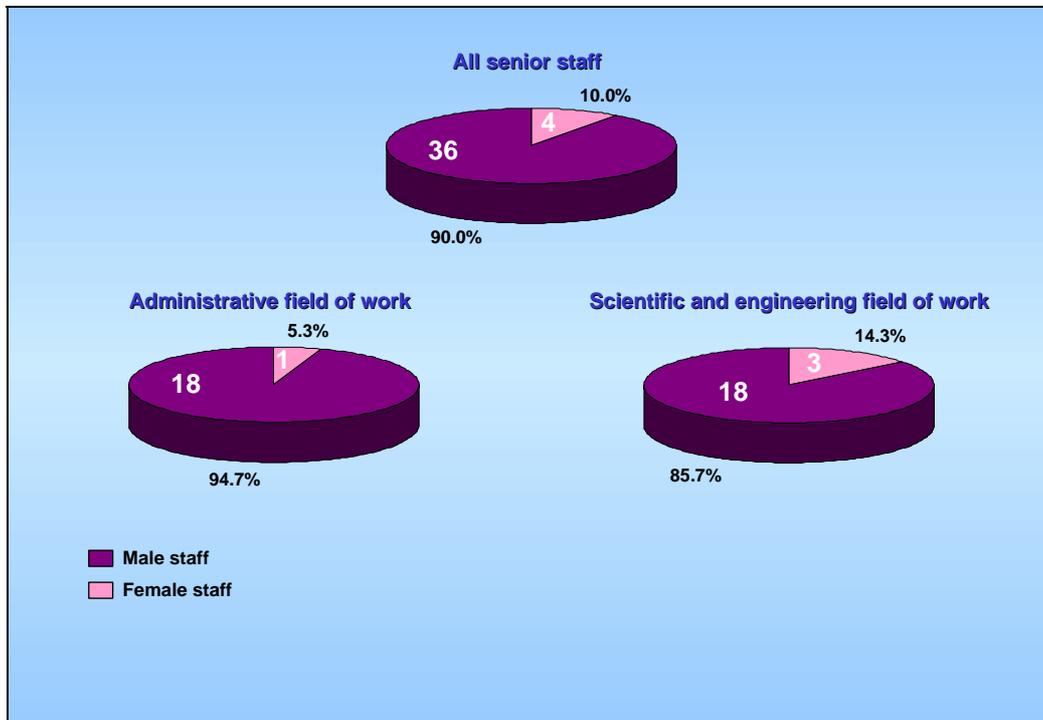
**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING  
PERCENTAGE OF POSTS OCCUPIED BY WOMEN:  
1 July 2001**



4. The percentage of women in the administrative field (28.6%) is more than twice that of women in the scientific and engineering fields (12%). These figures indicate that there is a more significant gender imbalance in the latter fields. (It should be noted that while technical co-operation administrators are included in the administrative field, recruitment criteria for these posts require a degree in nuclear sciences.)

5. The gender imbalance is also evident at the senior staff level in both the scientific and engineering and administrative occupational groupings, as reflected in the following chart.

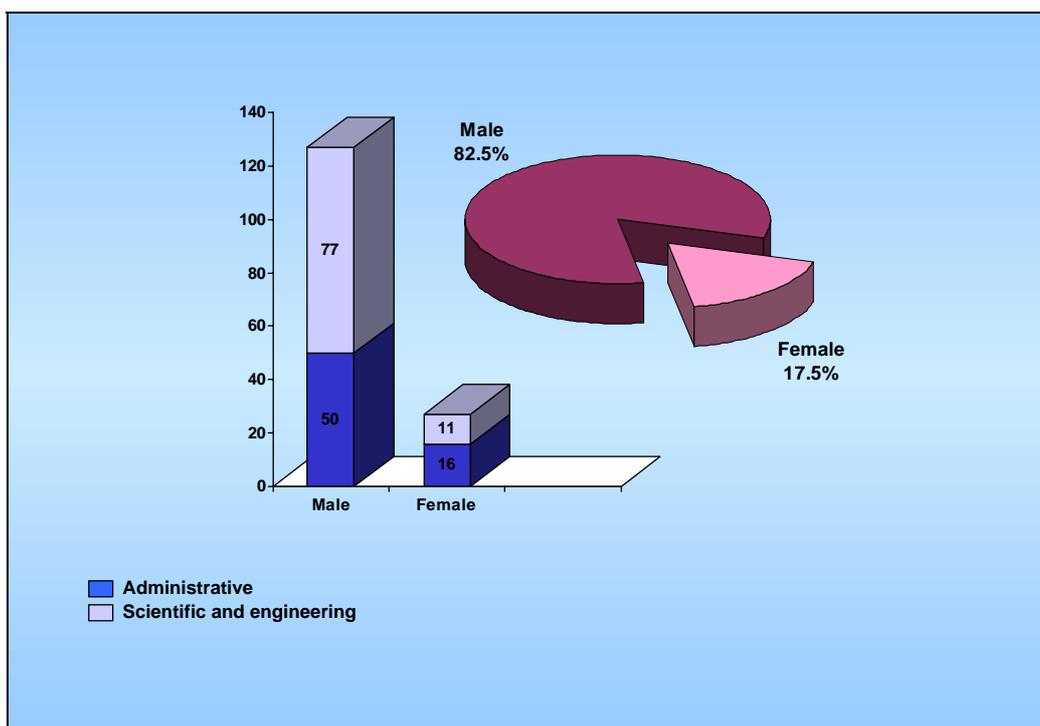
**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
(AT THE LEVEL OF DIRECTOR (D-1) AND ABOVE):  
1 July 2001**



6. Statistics from other technical/scientific agencies in the United Nations system illustrate that they also experience a problem of gender imbalance, although the share of women in these organizations is usually higher than in the Agency. For example, ITU reported for 2000 an overall total of 25% women in the Professional and higher categories; at senior management level, the figure is 12%, while in the technical/scientific sectors the percentage varies between 12 and 27%. Similarly, in the IMO, women in technical/scientific posts comprise 22.7%, while overall, 32.4% of all staff in posts subject to geographical distribution are women. The WHO records 31.9% of women among Professional staff, but only 23% of medical officers and 24% of scientists. ICAO also reports that in April 2001, there were no women at the level of Director, and out of the technical staff, only 9.28% are women. It seems clear therefore that a major factor in the Agency's problem rests with the unavailability of women scientists in nuclear fields.

7. Of the 66 new recruits to the Agency in the administrative field during the period July 1999 – July 2001, 16 (24.2%) were women, while only 11 (12.5%) of the 88 new staff in the scientific and engineering field were women. Taken together, the overall number of women recruited (27) represented 17.5% of all external appointments.

**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
PERIOD 1 JULY 1999 – 1 JULY 2001  
EXTERNAL APPOINTMENTS**

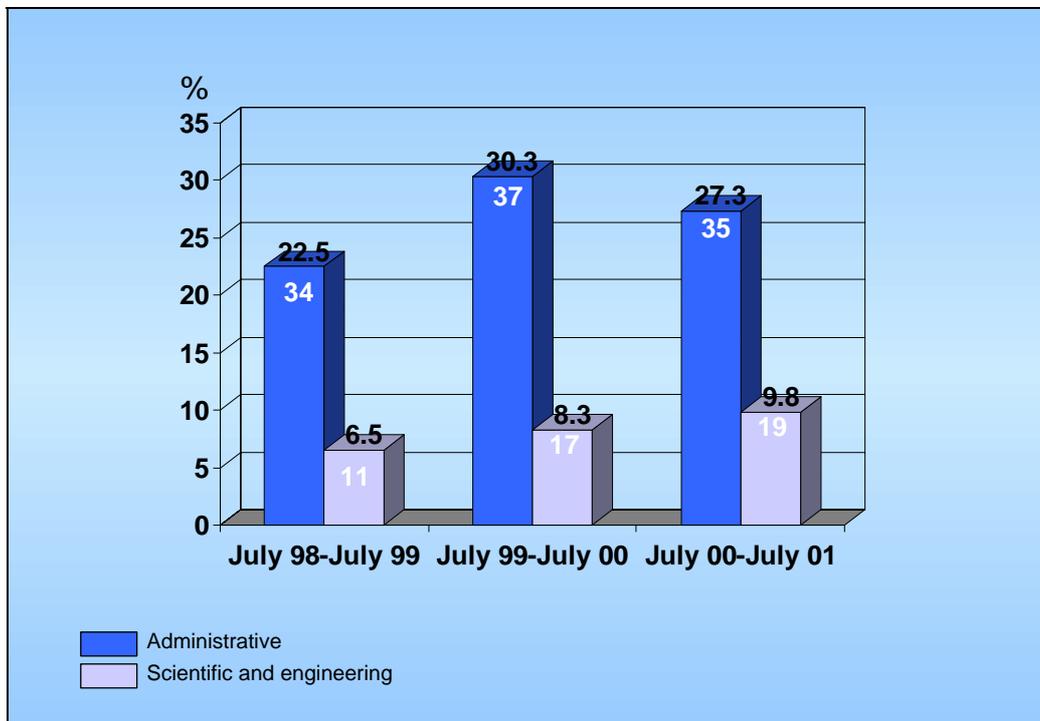


8. This low recruitment level may well be attributable to gender influenced career choices in both developed and developing countries. ILO studies show, for example, that less than 50% of university students enrolled in natural sciences and medicine in OECD countries, and for African countries less than 12% in technical programmes, are women.

9. On a broader front, a recent study by the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)<sup>1</sup> reports that the overall number of graduate students in nuclear related areas of study remains low because of the perception of poor job prospects as nuclear plants are privatized and government support for nuclear programmes is reduced. Ageing faculties, reduced university budgets and consequently inadequate nuclear courses further exacerbate this decline of interest. Within such a scenario, it is not surprising that the number of available women in the nuclear field, which was never adequate, has further diminished. As the following chart shows, the well qualified women applicants for Agency posts are concentrated in the administrative occupations.

<sup>1</sup> Nuclear Education Training. Cause for Concern? A Summary Report, OECD, Paris (2000).

**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
OUTSIDE APPLICATIONS FOR WHICH THE SELECTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED  
FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 1998 – 1 JULY 2001  
WELL QUALIFIED WOMEN**



10. In spite of this external environment, however, there has been some improvement in the number of well qualified women applying for posts in the scientific and engineering field of work over the past two years. The number has risen from 6.5% in 1999 to 9.8% in 2001. This increase may be partly due to the Agency's efforts to achieve wider outreach in the recruitment process.

11. While every effort is made to appoint well qualified women to vacant posts, these efforts are sometimes in conflict with competing interests generated by other General Conference resolutions related to increasing the representation of staff from unrepresented, under-represented or developing Member States. Of the vacancies for which well qualified women applied during the period July 2000–July 2001, there was in most cases only one well qualified woman. However, in 64.7% of those cases where at least one of the external women applicants was rated as well qualified, a woman was selected for the position. In the remaining cases, internal female candidates or external male candidates from developing countries were selected. The percentage of well qualified women selected in the preceding period (July 1999–July 2000) was somewhat lower. This indicates that stronger emphasis has subsequently been placed on the selection of well qualified women.

## **Measures taken in the Search for Women in Science**

### ***Coping with a diminishing interest in nuclear science***

12. The Secretariat has attempted to deal with the problem of increasing the number of women staff in the scientific and engineering fields in the following ways:

- Instructions have been issued by the Director General to all programme managers to give special attention to well qualified women candidates in the recruitment process to ensure that in cases of comparable qualifications and suitability they are given preference over men.
- The Director General has urged managers to try to increase the representation of women at Agency conferences, seminars and workshops and to promote the involvement of women scientists in co-ordinated research programmes and technical co-operation projects.
- Briefing sessions have been held in Member States to support the recruitment process by engaging them in the search for potential candidates.
- Career seminars have been arranged in Member States upon request to encourage young women to pursue studies in nuclear sciences.
- A short video on the contribution of women has been prepared for use as an information tool for different audiences.
- A web site entitled “Women in Safeguards” has been developed by the Secretariat.
- An international advisory group — with membership drawn from the professional association Women in Nuclear and other professional bodies in Member States — has been established to advise the Director General and to recommend ways in which gender concerns may be addressed in the Agency’s programmes. This Group held its first meeting in July 2001 and the recommendations to the Director General will be completed by September.
- A programme is being designed to provide opportunities to women through internships for graduate students in nuclear science and technology.
- A web site which highlights the contribution of nuclear to health and other matters of particular concern to women is being developed.
- A mentoring programme is being developed to support the professional development of young women scientists in Member States by allowing them to participate in the Agency’s work in international forums.
- Training in gender awareness and appropriate methodologies for mainstreaming<sup>2</sup> gender in programmes is included in the activities for the coming biennium.

### ***Establishing a “Family Friendly” Work Environment***

---

<sup>2</sup> “Gender mainstreaming” is a term used for a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities — policy development, research, advocacy/dialogue, legislation and planning, and the implementation and monitoring of programmes.

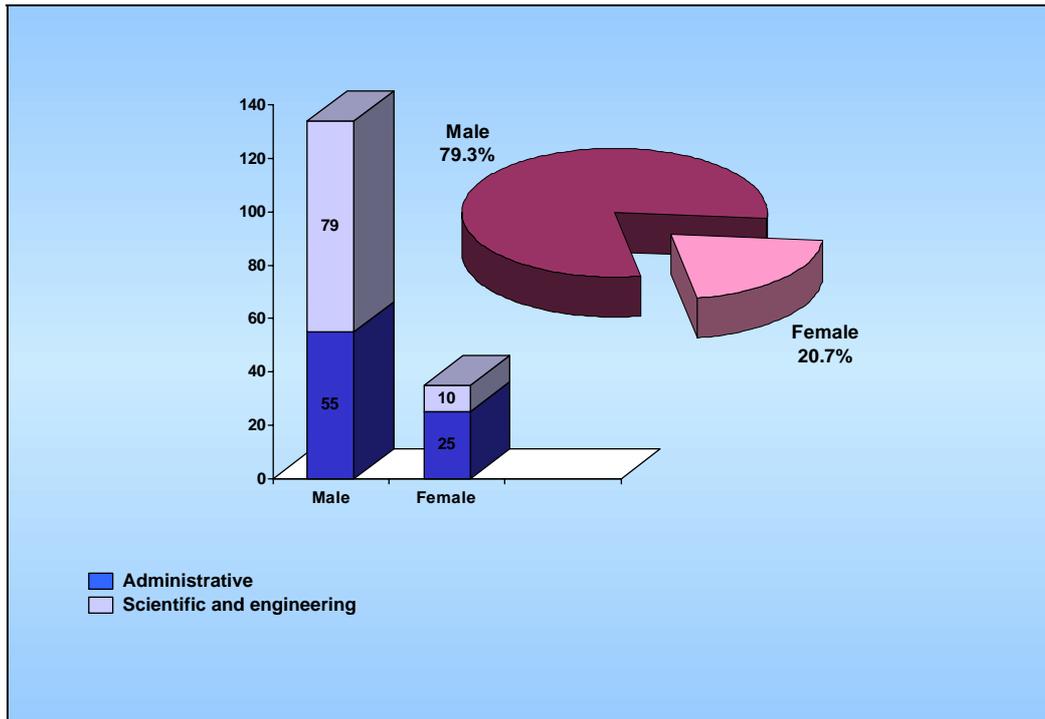
13. In addition to the lack of women scientists in the nuclear field, social norms often cause professional women to experience greater difficulties than men in relocating a dual income family when jobs are not readily available for the second income earner. In the light of such difficulties, and to make the Agency a more attractive employer to families, the Secretariat has devoted considerable effort to ensure that it provides a supportive environment which enables staff to combine work and family responsibilities. These include the following arrangements which are currently in place:

- Female staff are granted 16 weeks paid maternity leave and the possibility of taking a further 96 weeks of unpaid leave up to the second birthday of the child. The father of a new-born child can also take parental leave (unpaid) for a similar period of time.
- Staff are allowed to use their uncertified sick leave (a maximum of seven days a year) for family emergencies. Compassionate leave, including travel days if appropriate, may also be granted in situations such as the birth of a child or the death of a close family member.
- The Vienna-based organizations will be opening the VIC Child Care Centre in September 2001; this will provide 148 places for children (from the age of three months until school age) of parents working at the VIC (84 places for Agency staff). The hours of this facility correspond to the working hours of the VIC.
- New mothers are granted two half-hour breaks for nursing — these may be taken separately or combined as one hour for convenience.
- Flexible work schedules allow staff, particularly mothers, to plan a more convenient working day. This flexibility includes the option of a reduced lunch break for those who may be obliged to shorten their working day.
- Job sharing (or part time work) has been an established practice for the support service category for some time, with staff having the option of either a 50% or 80% work schedule, subject to the needs of their area of work. This flexibility is available to the General Service category only; however, consideration is being given to extending this to the Professional category.
- A Learning Resource Centre has been established with the help of Member States and has provided a wide range of material for staff members and their families to assist them in professional and personal development. Funding is now provided through the Regular Budget.
- A policy for the prevention of sexual harassment and other forms of unfair or discriminatory treatment of staff has been established and is maintained by the Secretariat through the Staff Counselor along with a network of Mediators.
- Preferential access to the local labour market for dependants who are non-EU nationals has been negotiated with the Host Government.

*Internal staffing measures taken*

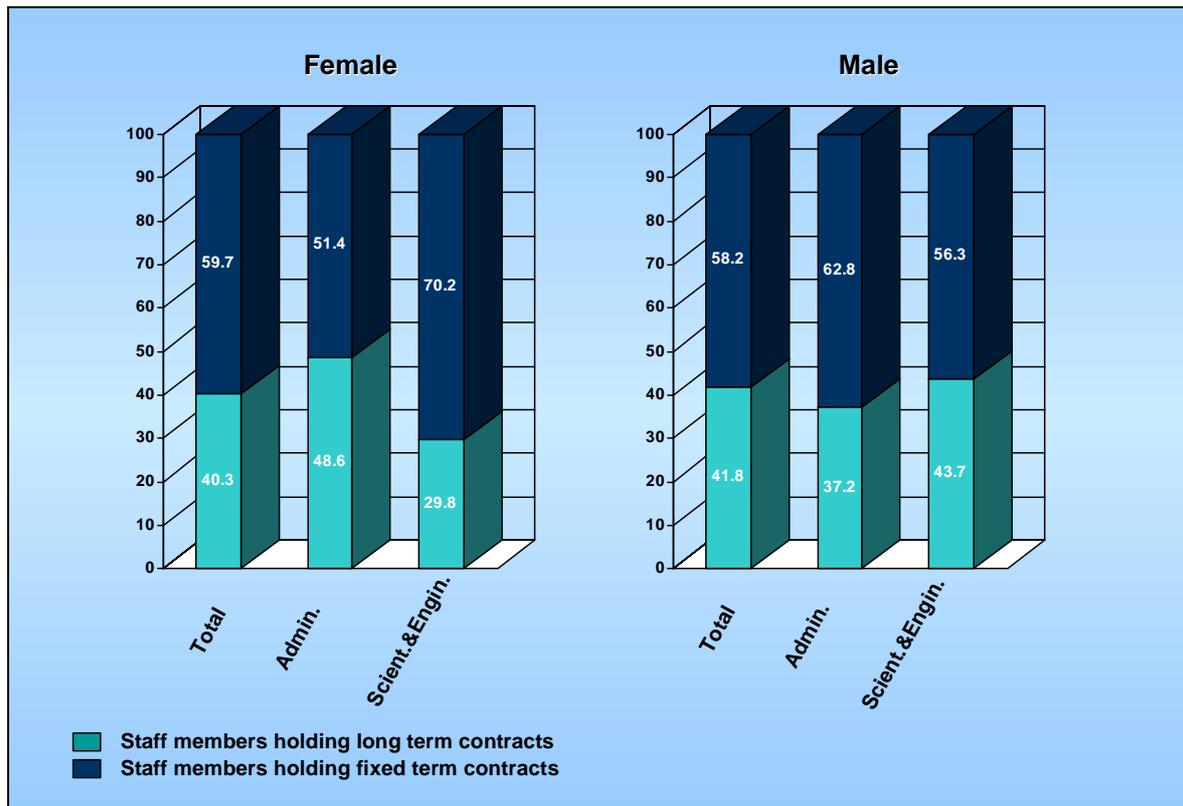
14. The constant turnover of staff through retirement and rotation represents both a challenge and an opportunity for the Agency in the recruitment process. It is not always easy to use the opportunities presented, however. As the following chart shows, over the past two years women represented 20.7% of separating staff, but only 17.5% of external recruits.

**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
PERIOD 1 JULY 1999 – 1 JULY 2001  
SEPARATIONS**



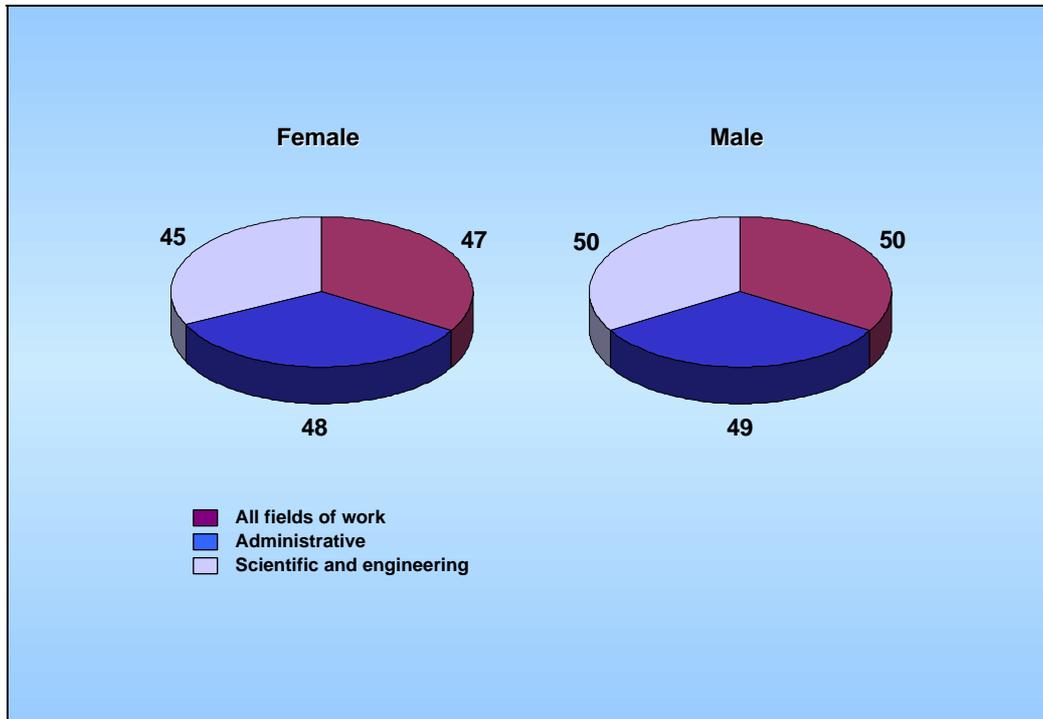
15. The Agency is taking steps to retain existing women on staff in the light of the difficulties of external recruitment. The share of women holding long term contracts in the administrative field of work is 11.4% higher than is the share of men. The share of women holding long term contracts in the scientific and engineering field needs still to be improved, however, as it is 13.9% lower than for male counterparts in that field.

**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
BREAKDOWN BY CONTRACT:  
1 July 2001**



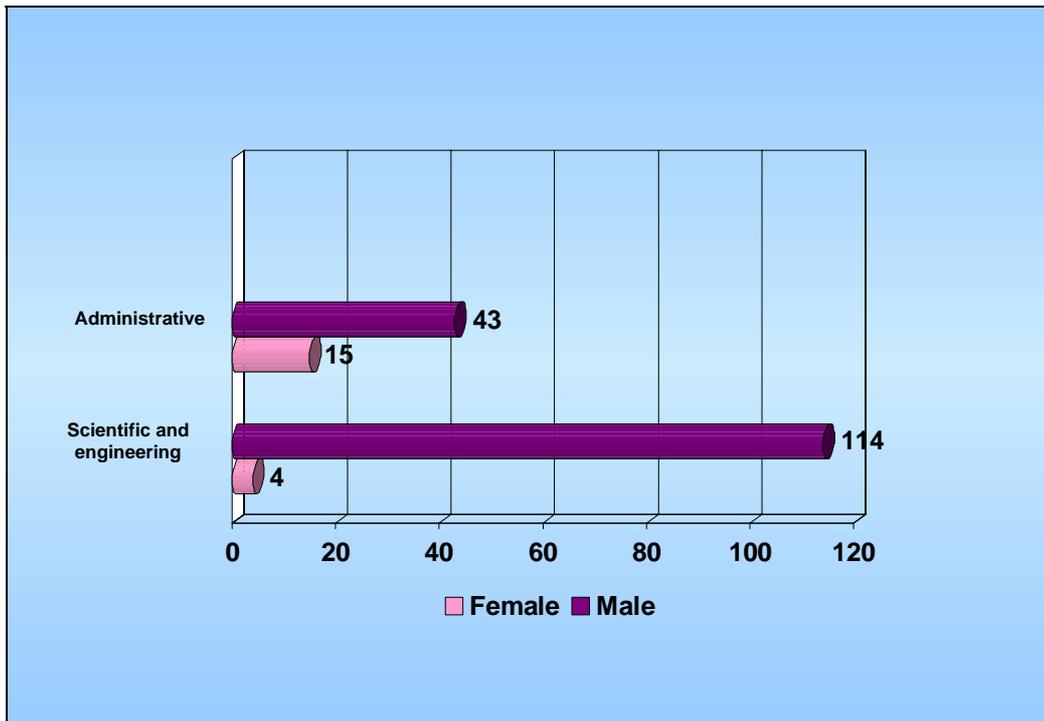
16. In general, the average age of women staff (Professional and higher categories) in the Agency is lower than that of men (see below) and, while the rotation policy applies equally to men and women, this gives a greater possibility for long term contract extensions to women.

**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
AVERAGE AGE:  
1 July 2001**



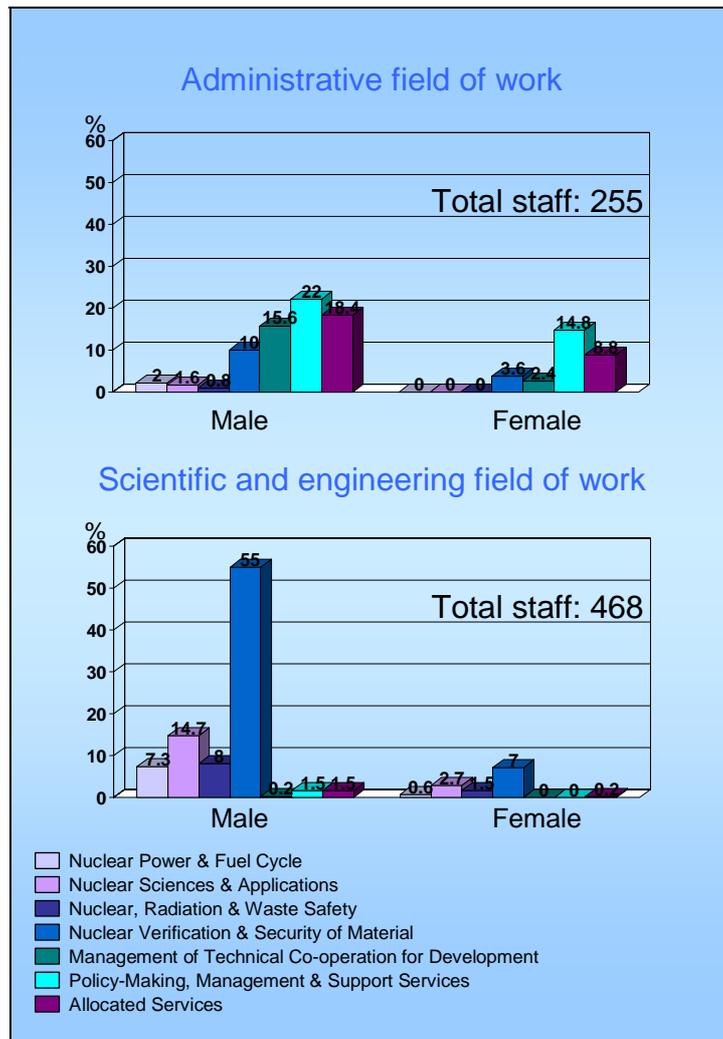
17. In the next five years it is expected that 114 men in the scientific and engineering fields will be separating from the Agency as a result of retirement, while only 4 women in this field will have attained retirement age. In the administrative field, 43 men and 15 women are expected to retire during this period.

**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
NUMBER OF STAFF LEAVING IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS**



18. The Secretariat will use the opportunity to further address the gender imbalance across the Agency. Significant changes will be required in some major programmes as indicated below.

**PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER CATEGORY REGULAR STAFF  
STAFF BY MAJOR PROGRAMME:  
1 July 2001**



**Conclusion**

19. It is clear that increased efforts are necessary if the level of women in the Secretariat is to increase significantly. However, the proactive search for well qualified women demands the full contribution and involvement of Member States as well as the Secretariat.

20. The Secretariat reiterates its commitment to improving the status of women and it is hoped that Member States will provide support to enable it to meet this goal.