

# WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED  
**WT/BFA/W/84**  
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## Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration

### RETENTION DIFFICULTIES

1. In the course of its consideration of the report by the external consultant on the survey of salaries and allowances (document WT/BFA/W/80), the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration requested the Secretariat to provide further details concerning the retention difficulties being experienced by the Organization. The present paper has been drafted in response to that request.

2. As previously explained, the Secretariat has detected a significant trend in the pattern of separations from the Organization in the course of recent years, with increasing numbers of staff leaving to take up more attractive employment elsewhere. The following table summarizes the experience over the period since 1999 and also highlights the cases of separations attributable to "retention difficulties", that is, cases where staff have left to pursue more attractive opportunities with other employers.

Year	Total separations	As a percentage of total staff at year-end	Separations attributable to retention difficulties
1999	12	2.3%	4
2000	14	2.6%	4
2001	22	3.9%	11
2002 (up to 31 October)	33	5.6%	9

3. The following tables analyse further the cases attributable to retention difficulties which have occurred since 1999.

**Breakdown of retention cases by grade and by occupational group**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Total</b>
3	2
4	2
6	1
7	5
8	5
9	7
10	3
11	3

<b>Occupational Group</b>	<b>Total</b>
Economist	11
Information Technology	2
Lawyer	11
Support	4

4. The average length of service of staff leaving the Secretariat to take up more attractive employment elsewhere has been 4 years 2 months over the period since 1999.

3. The above statistics show a significant increase in the rate of separations due to retention difficulties in the past two years, with a concentration in the professional grades and among economists and lawyers in particular where the turnover rate has been over **10 per cent and 20 per cent**, respectively. This provides further evidence of the lack of competitiveness caused by the compression of the upper ranges of the WTO salary scale.

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