



General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 August 2004

Original: English

Fifty-ninth session

Item 116 of the provisional agenda*

Human resources management

Consultants and individual contractors

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, which covers the use of consultants and individual contractors during 2002 and 2003, is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/305, section V, of 15 April 2003, in which the Secretary-General was requested to report biennially, starting at its fifty-ninth session, on the use of consultants and individual contractors within the Secretariat and the regional commissions and the factors contributing to that, with statistics for each year of the two-year period, including information on their duties. The report also conforms to requests made by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/221 of 7 April 1999, in which the Secretary-General was requested to report on consultants hired by the United Nations.

Implementation of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) was completed in the course of 2002 at all offices away from Headquarters. IMIS has therefore served as the main source of data for purposes of the present report covering the 2002-2003 reporting biennium.

* A/59/150.

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I. Introduction, mandate and definitions

1. In its resolution 57/305, section V, paragraph 8, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a biennial report on the use of consultants and individual contractors within the Secretariat and the regional commissions, as well as on the factors contributing to their usage, with statistics for each year of the two-year period, including information on their duties. In its resolution 57/305 of 15 April 2003, the General Assembly also reaffirmed the guidelines, principles and comments contained in section VIII, paragraph 11, of its resolution 53/221 of 7 April 1999, in which it requested the Secretary-General to continue to submit reports to the Assembly on consultants hired by the United Nations, with an indication of their functions. The General Assembly also reiterated that in areas where consultants are frequently hired for a period of more than one year, the Secretary-General should submit proposals, where necessary, for the establishment of posts and should report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session. The present report also responds to requests made by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/226, section VI, paragraph 7, of 3 April 1997, and by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/51/533, para. 44 and A/53/691, section III, para. 15).

2. The previous report of the Secretary-General on consultants and individual contractors (A/57/310) covered 2001 as a single reporting year. The present report starts with the year 2002 and covers the 2002-2003 biennium, with tables covering each year of the two-year period as well as the whole two-year period.

3. For the reporting period 2002-2003, data on consultants and individual contractors was obtained from the database of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS). A systematic collection of occupational data has been prepared for the purpose of this exercise. It is based on the United Nations common system denominator, the Common Classification of Occupational Groups (CCOG). Some of the data for the CCOG code were collected manually.

4. The present report records all engagements with a starting date in either 2002 or 2003. The duration of contracts and the fees paid to consultants and individual contractors are presented for their entire contractual period, even in those cases where the work involved extended beyond the recruitment year. Consequently, contracts that began before 2002 are not included in the present report even if they continued into that year.

II. Statistical data analysis (2002-2003)

5. Table 1 summarizes for the two years of the biennium (2002 and 2003, respectively) the number of persons engaged, the number of contracts, the days worked and the fees for both consultants and individual contractors. The table also indicates the number of women engaged, the work performed by former staff and the educational levels and performance evaluations for consultants and individual contractors. In 2002, a total of 3,307 persons were engaged as consultants for a total of 4,381 contracts; 925 consultants (28 per cent) were women, 84 were retirees (2.5 per cent), 16 were non-retired former staff aged 60 or over (0.5 per cent) and 12 were non-retired former staff under age 60 (0.4 per cent). In 2003, 3,543 persons were engaged as consultants for a total of 4,693 contracts; 1,051 (29.7 per cent)

were women, 101 were retirees (2.9 per cent), 19 were non-retired former staff aged 60 or over (0.5 per cent) and 10 (0.3 per cent) were non-retired former staff under age 60. In 2002, 1,443 persons were engaged as individual contractors for a total of 2,902 contracts; 765 persons (53 per cent) of the individual contractors were women, 47 (3.3 per cent) were retirees, 51 (3.5 per cent) were non-retired former staff aged 60 or over and 24 (1.7 per cent) were non-retired former staff under age 60. In 2003, 1,401 persons were engaged as individual contractors for a total of 2,652 contracts; 768 persons (54.8 per cent) of the individual contractors were women, 55 (3.9 per cent) were retirees, 47 (3.4 per cent) were non-retired former staff aged 60 or over and 16 (1.1 per cent) were non-retired former staff under age 60. Since 2001, the percentage of women consultants has continued to grow and has increased by 3 per cent, to 29.7 per cent in 2003; for individual contractors an identical trend of increase of 4.2 per cent was noted, from 50.6 per cent in 2001 to 54.8 per cent in 2003. Activities by consultants in 2002 totalled 12,023 person-months (109 workdays per consultant on average); in 2003 the total decreased to 8,770 person-months (74 workdays per consultant on average), a 23 per cent reduction compared to 2002. Activities by individual contractors in 2002 covered 5,794 person-months (120 workdays per contractor on average); in 2003, they covered 4,355 person-months (93 days per contractor on average), a 25 per cent reduction compared to 2002.

6. The number of consultants engaged for 2002-2003 increased by 243 (7.1 per cent), as compared with 2001 (A/57/310).¹ However, the number of individual contractors over the same period decreased by 96 (6.4 per cent).² The total number of consultants and individual contractors increased by 147 (3.1 per cent) between 2001 and 2003. Figures 1, 2 and 3 represent the graphical evolution between 2000 and 2003, respectively, of the number of consultants and individual contractors engaged, the total days worked and the fees paid.

Figure 1
Consultants and individual contractors engaged
(2000-2003)

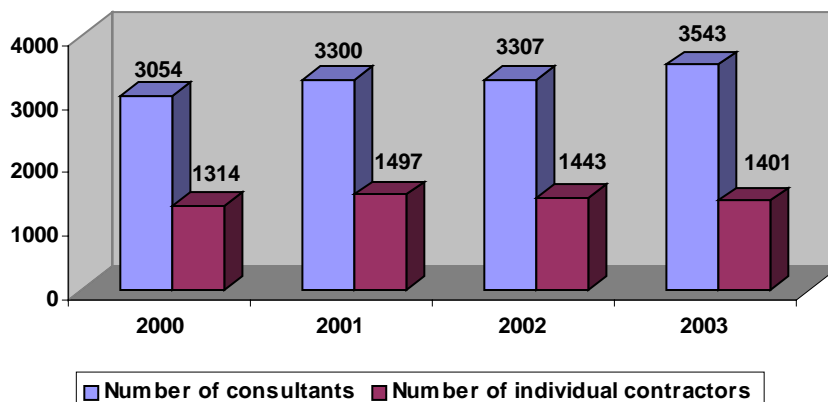
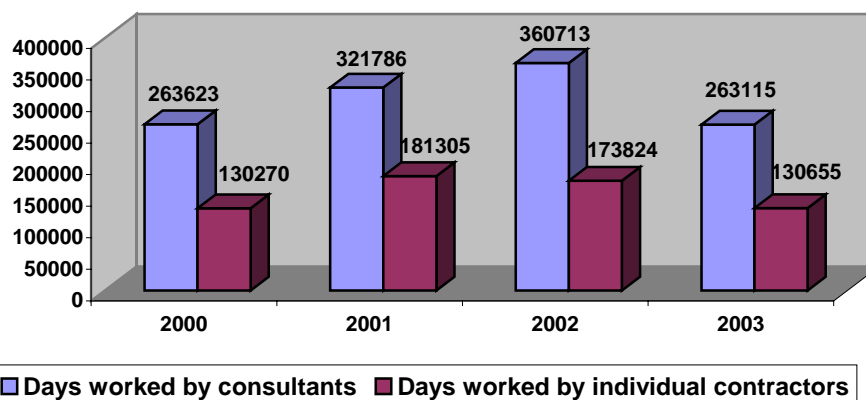
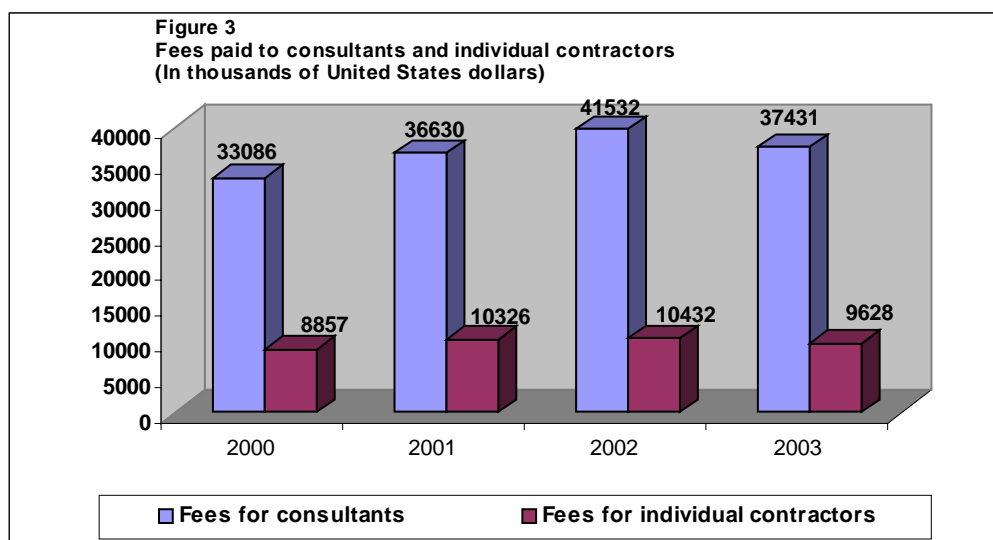
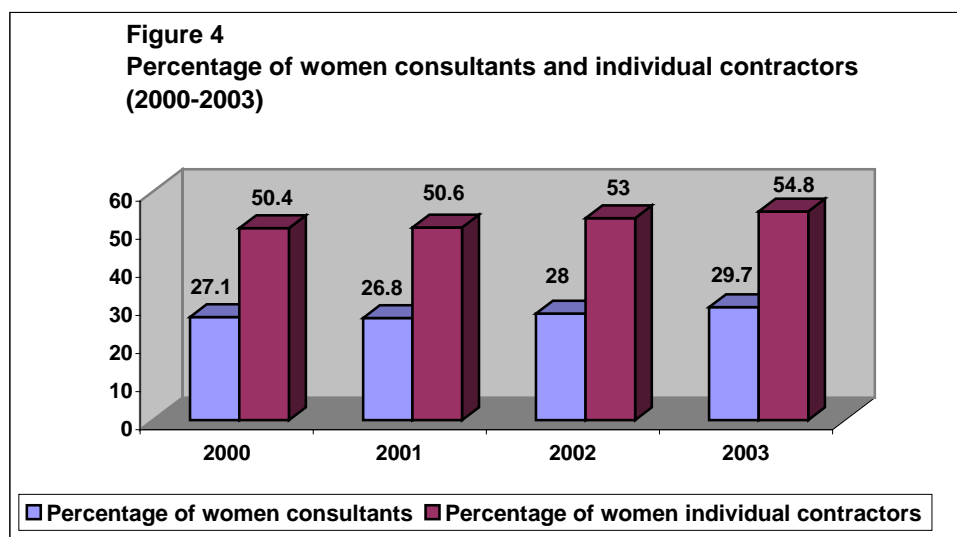


Figure 2
Total days worked by consultants and individual contractors
(2000-2003)





7. There has been little change in the female representation of consultants (0.6 per cent increase, from 28.1 per cent in 1999 to 28.7 per cent in 2003). Female representation among individual contractors rose 4.8 per cent, from 49.7 per cent in 1999 to 54.5 per cent in 2003. Figure 4 graphically represents the percentage of women consultants and individual contractors between 2000 and 2003.



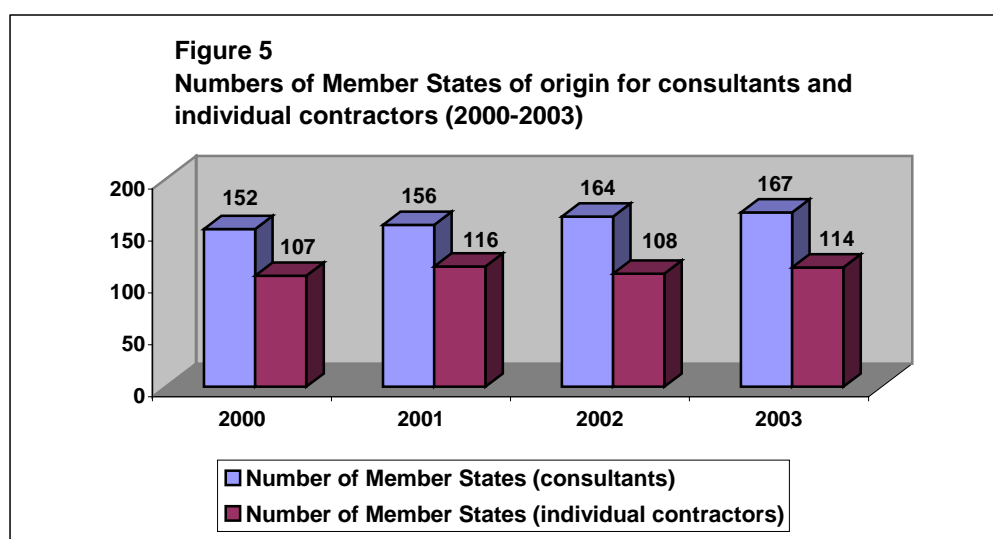
8. As compared to 2001, the number of days worked in 2003 decreased by 58,671 for consultants (an 18.2 per cent decrease between 2001 and 2003; a 12.1 per cent increase between 2001 and 2002, followed by a 27 per cent decrease between 2002 and 2003) and by 50,640 for individual contractors (a 27.9 per cent decrease: a 4.1 per cent decrease between 2001 and 2002, and a 24.8 per cent decrease between 2002 and 2003). The average duration of all contracts decreased between 2001 and 2003 (by 20.4 days for consultants and by 12.4 days for individual contractors). The number of consultant contracts decreased by 11.6 per cent (489 contracts) and the

number of individual contractor contracts decreased by 10.2 per cent (301 contracts) between 2001 and 2003.

9. Global costs (fees) for consultants increased by \$801,000 (2.1 per cent) between 2001 and the end of 2003; they decreased by \$698,000 (6.7 per cent) for individual contractors. The average cost of a consultant contract in 2003 went down by \$737, as compared with 2001,³ while the cost of contract of an individual contractor (generally between one third and one half of the consultant cost) increased by \$117.⁴

10. In 2003, the combined expenditure on consultants (\$37.4 million) and individual contractors (\$9.6 million) totalled \$47 million. Compared with 2001 (\$46.9 million), that represents a slight increase of 0.3 per cent. The average daily cost of a consultant in 2003 was \$142.3 (\$27.7 more than in 2001) and \$73.7 of an individual contractor (\$16.8 more than in 2001).⁵

11. Table 2 summarizes the number of persons engaged, the number of contracts awarded, the total number of days worked and the fees paid, by nationality and contract type, for 2002 and 2003, respectively, and the biennium 2002-2003. In 2002, consultants were engaged from 163 countries (7 countries more than in 2001); 19 countries accounted for 57 per cent of all engaged consultants.⁶ Individual contractors came from 108 countries (7 countries less than in 2001); 11 countries⁷ accounted for two thirds (67 per cent) of all engagements. In terms of consultant fees, nationals from 19 countries accounted for 61 per cent of the total expenses.⁸ Engagements of individual contractors from 11 countries⁹ accounted for two thirds (66 per cent) of fees.



In 2003, consultants came from 167 countries (4 countries more than in 2002), while 19 countries¹⁰ accounted for 54 per cent of all consultants. Individual contractors came from 114 countries (6 countries more than in 2002); in this category, 11 countries¹¹ accounted for 60 per cent of all engagements. In terms of fees, consultants from 19 countries¹² accounted for nearly 61 per cent of the total expenses; individual contractors from 11 countries¹³ accounted for nearly two thirds (65 per cent) of the fees. Figure 5 illustrates graphically the evolution of the number

of Member States of origin of consultants and individual contractors over the period 2000-2003.

12. Table 3 shows a breakdown of the purposes of engagement of consultants and individual contractors. The main purposes of engagement of consultants worldwide related to advisory services (10 per cent in both 2002 and 2003), programme implementation (8 per cent in 2002 and 14 per cent in 2003), special analytical studies (6 per cent in 2002 and 5 per cent in 2003), the drafting of manuscripts (4 per cent in 2002 and 5 per cent in 2003) and lectures and training courses (4 per cent in 2002 and 5 per cent in 2003). The bulk of engagement purposes of individual contractors related to programme implementation (5 per cent in 2002 and 3 per cent in 2003), the preparation of meetings (3 per cent in 2002 and 4 per cent in 2003) and training activities (3 per cent in 2002 and 2003).

13. Table 4 shows the engagement of consultants and individual contractors in terms of the occupational groups codified in the Common Classification of Occupational Groups by job family level. For consultants in 2002, contracts for professional, managerial and technical work constituted the largest occupational group (758 contracts, 17 per cent); other occupational groups strongly represented included economists (431 contracts, 10 per cent), technical cooperation related groups (471 contracts, 11 per cent), medical specialists (101 contracts, 2 per cent) and writers (169 contracts, 4 per cent). For consultants in 2003, technical cooperation constituted the largest occupational group (861 contracts, 18 per cent); other occupational groups strongly represented included professional, managerial and technical work (837 contracts, 18 per cent), economists (318 contracts, 7 per cent), training specialists (132 contracts, 3 per cent), medical specialists (152 contracts, 3 per cent), social scientists (122 contracts, 3 per cent) and environmental specialists (100 contracts, 2 per cent).

14. In 2002, for individual contractors, the largest occupational group represented was professional, managerial and technical work (509 contracts, 17 per cent); other groups represented were economists (118 contracts, 4 per cent), editors (104 contracts, 4 per cent) and translators and revisers (262 contracts, 9 per cent). In 2003, the largest occupational group represented was professional, managerial and technical work (355 contracts, 13 per cent). Others included interpreters (216 contracts, 8 per cent), translators and revisers (212 contracts, 8 per cent), meeting services-related groups (107 contracts, 4 per cent), secretarial support (108 contracts, 4 per cent) and writing, translation and interpretation-related staff (142 contracts, 5 per cent).

15. Table 5 summarizes information on the duration of contracts. In 2002, the duration of the bulk of contracts was up to three months (64 per cent of consultants and 78 per cent of individual contractors). The duration of 20 per cent of consultant contracts and 17 per cent of individual contractor contracts was between three and six months, while 14 per cent of consultants and 5 per cent of individual contractors had a contract that continued beyond six months, without exceeding one year. In 2003, the duration of the bulk of contracts was for less than or up to three months (75 per cent of the consultants and 81 per cent of the individual contractors). The duration of 19 per cent of consultant contracts and of 13 per cent of individual contractor contracts was between three and six months, while 7 per cent of consultants and 6 per cent of individual contractors had a contract that continued beyond six months, but for not more than 12 months.

16. Table 6 summarizes the time actually worked for contracts that commenced in 2002 and 2003, respectively, and for the biennium 2002-2003. In 2002, a third (33

per cent) of all consultant engagements and individual contractor engagements were for less than one month; a third of consultant contracts and 39 per cent of individual contractor contracts were between one and three months; 19 per cent of consultant contracts and 20 per cent of individual contractor engagements extended beyond three months, up to six months; and 14 per cent of consultant contracts and 7 per cent of individual contractor engagements were between 6 and 12 months. In 2003, 41 per cent of all consultant engagements and 47 per cent of all individual contractor engagements were for less than one month; 37 per cent of consultant contracts and 29 per cent of individual contractor contracts were for between one and three months; 17 per cent of consultant contracts and 18 per cent of individual contractor engagements extended beyond three months, up to six months, and 6 per cent of consultant contracts and 5 per cent of individual contractor engagements extended beyond 6 months, up to 12 months.

17. Table 7 sets out the use of consultants and individual contractors by department, gender, level of education, duration of contract and evaluation of performance. The departments and offices that made the most use of consultants and individual contractors in 2002 were the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (15 per cent of all consultants), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (10 per cent), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (11 per cent), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (7 per cent), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (4 per cent), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (3 per cent). Those 11 entities accounted for nearly 82 per cent (2,937 persons) of all consultants engaged, or 57 per cent of all persons (consultants and individual contractors) engaged. In 2003, the greatest users of consultants and individual contractors were ECLAC (15 per cent), UNCTAD (9 per cent), ECA (8 per cent), the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (10 per cent), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (12 per cent), ESCAP and UNEP (6 per cent), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (5 per cent), UNITAR, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations Office at Geneva (3 per cent). Those 11 entities made the most use of consultants alone and accounted for 81 per cent of all persons engaged.

18. In terms of the educational level, 2002 data show that 30 per cent of persons engaged held a second university degree and slightly over a quarter held a first university degree; 23 per cent of the persons held an advanced university degree and 22 per cent had no university degree. A majority of performance evaluations (97 per cent) were either good or excellent, with only 3 per cent reflecting acceptable or unsatisfactory performance. In 2003, 32 per cent of persons engaged held a second university degree, 24 per cent held a first university degree, 22 per cent held an advanced university degree and 22 per cent had no university degree. Ninety-four per cent of performance evaluations were either good or excellent, with 6 per cent reflecting an acceptable or unsatisfactory performance.

19. Table 8 shows fees paid to consultants and individual contractors by source of funding. Data on expenditures are derived from IMIS for both Headquarters departments and offices, as well as for offices away from Headquarters. In 2002, a total of \$52 million was paid in fees to consultants and individual contractors from all sources of funds, which was \$5 million more than in 2001 (an increase of 11 per

cent). The consultants' cost was \$41.5 million (22 per cent from the regular budget and 78 per cent from extrabudgetary sources) and the individual contractors' cost was \$10.4 million (48 per cent from the regular budget and 52 per cent from extrabudgetary sources). Consultant costs borne by UNCTAD, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and ECA benefited mainly technical cooperation projects. Consultant costs from regional commissions (ECA, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), ECLAC, ESCWA and ESCAP) represent 20 per cent of the total budget. Seventy-four per cent of the total fees paid to individual contractors in 2002 were accounted for by the Department of Public Information, ECA, ECLAC, UNEP, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Department of Management.

20. In 2003, consultants and individual contractors cost a total of \$47.1 million from all sources of funds: (\$4.9 million less than in 2002, a decrease of 9 per cent). Consultants cost \$37.4 million (25 per cent from the regular budget and 75 per cent from extrabudgetary sources). Individual contractors cost \$9.6 million (51 per cent from the regular budget and 49 per cent from extrabudgetary sources). Consultant costs for UNCTAD, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and ECA mainly benefited technical cooperation projects. The total cost for regional commissions was 23 per cent. The cost for individual contractors in 2003 for the Department of Public Information, ECA, ECLAC, UNEP, UNCTAD, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Department of Management amounted to 76 per cent.

21. Table 9 presents aggregate data on institutional contractors engaged at each duty station in 2002 and 2003, respectively, and during the biennium 2002-2003. Institutional or corporate contractors are institutions that provide goods or services to the United Nations on a contractual basis (see ST/AI/327). The total expenditure in 2002 was \$12.1 million and in 2003 was \$5.5 million. In 2002, there were 358 fewer institutional contractors (64 per cent) engaged than there were in 2001, for 540 (63 per cent) fewer contracts, which resulted in a \$13.4 million decrease (53 per cent), as compared with 2001. This can be attributed in part to an improved recording in IMIS (correct case identification is a requisite of the IMIS system introduced in 2002 and has resulted in a reduction in the number of institutional contractors, which previously were misidentified and therefore overreported).¹⁴ The further \$6.6 million decrease (55 per cent) in 2003, as compared with 2002, was due to the reduction in contract duration from 1,193 months (2002) to 538 months (2003). Five fewer institutional contractors were engaged in 2003, for 50 fewer contracts. The major reduction in the number of contracts at Headquarters (18 per cent less), their duration (58 per cent less) and expenditure on contracts (55 per cent less) explains most of the decrease in 2003.

22. Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly, in its resolution 55/258 and its decision 56/460, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/310), a study was undertaken by the Secretariat on the question of geographical representation of consultants and individual contractors. The Secretary-General submitted his report on that study to the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-second session (see E/AC.51/2002/3).

III. Conclusions

23. The present report covers the use of consultants and individual contractors during the 2002-2003 reporting biennium. Up to the year 2001, such reports were prepared on a yearly basis. Since 2002, IMIS has been the main source for data reporting.

24. Overall numbers show a slight increase in the number of consultants and a decrease in the number of individual contractors between 2001 and 2003. The average duration of all contracts was shorter; the average individual cost of a consultant went down, whereas the cost of an individual contractor went up slightly. Total expenditure for consultants and individual contractors went up by 0.3 per cent, as compared to 2001. Female representation increased, in the case of consultants to 29.7 per cent and of individual contractors to 54.8 per cent. Geographical diversity also improved (167 countries were represented for consultants and 114 countries for individual contractors in 2002-2003). Consultants and individual contractors were used mainly for advisory services, programme implementation, special analytical studies and the preparation of meetings, working as professionals, managers or technicians, and as economists and in technical cooperation related areas. They were employed mainly by ECLAC, ECA, UNCTAD, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, ESCAP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNEP. The number of institutional contractors engaged during 2002-2003 was significantly less than in 2001.

25. The Secretary-General invites the Assembly to take note of the report.

Notes

¹ There were 7 consultants (0.2 per cent) more between 2001 and 2002 and 236 consultants (7.1 per cent) more between 2002 and 2003.

² There were 54 (3.6 per cent) fewer individual contractors between 2001 and 2002; and 42 (2.9 per cent) fewer contractors between 2002 and 2003.

³ From \$8,713 in 2001 to \$7,976 in 2003.

⁴ From \$3,513 in 2001 to \$3,630 in 2003.

⁵ In 2002, the average daily cost was \$115.1 for a consultant and \$60 for an individual contractor.

⁶ Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Kenya, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

⁷ Argentina, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Lebanon, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

⁸ Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Kenya, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

⁹ Argentina, Canada, Chile, China, Ethiopia, France, Kenya, Lebanon, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

¹⁰ Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Kenya, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

- ¹¹ Argentina, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Lebanon, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- ¹² Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Kenya, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- ¹³ Argentina, Canada, Chile, China, Ethiopia, France, Kenya, Lebanon, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- ¹⁴ No data were entered in IMIS for new contracts in the reference period from nine duty stations: ECE, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ITFY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), UNHCR, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, UNCTAD, UNEP, the United Nations Office at Geneva and the United Nations Office at Vienna.

Acronyms used in tables 7 and 8

DDA	Department for Disarmament Affairs
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DGACM	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
DM	Department of Management
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPI	Department of Public Information
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FMADPKO	Field Missions Administered by DPKO
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
INTERORG	Interorganizational
ITC	International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OCSS	Office of Central Support Services
ODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OHRLLS	Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
OHRM	Office of Human Resources Management
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OIP	Office of Iraq Programme
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
OPPBA	Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts
OSRSGCAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
OUNSC	Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator
OUSG	Office of the Under-Secretary-General

UNCC	United Nations Compensation Commission
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFIP	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNJSPF	United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi
UNOV	United Nations Office at Vienna
