

**FOR  
INFORMATION**

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## MISSION CHIEF AND DESK ECONOMIST COUNTRY-TEAM TENURE

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This staff report provides a report of data on average mission chief and desk economist tenure in line with the commitments under action 1.4 of the Implementation Plan in Response to the Executive Board-Endorsed Categorization of Open Actions in Management Implementation Plans (MIPOA).

As part of the Fund's commitments to strengthen the continuity of its relationship with member countries, action 1.4 of the MIPOA is to enhance the reporting of mission chief and desk tenure to the Board. According to the MIPOA, departments should aim for the three-year average tenure, and should start targeting median tenure for mission chiefs at 2.5 – 3 years as an intermediate operational target.

The data shows that average mission chief tenure at the beginning of FY23 (May 1, 2022) was 2.6 years, slightly below the 3-year target. There is some dispersion across departments and by country group, with a wider range for Small Developing States. The data also show that the average desk tenure estimate is close to that of mission chiefs, at 2.5 years.

Going forward, subsequent reporting of data on mission chief and desk economist tenure will be included in the annual Recruitment and Retention paper as outlined in the MIPOA actions.

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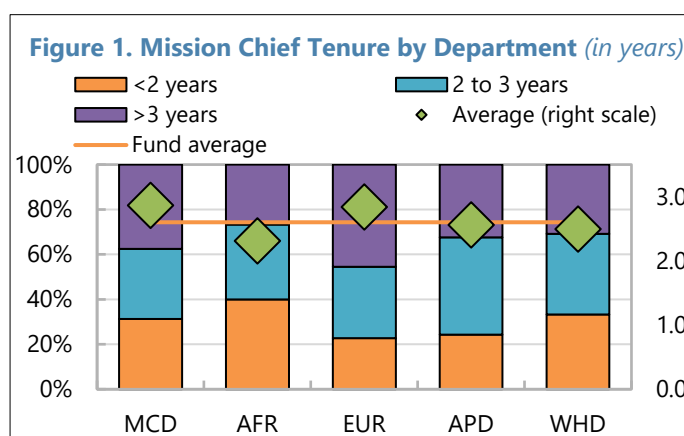
## BACKGROUND

1. **As part of the Fund’s commitments to strengthen the continuity of its relationship with member countries, one of the actions of the MIPOA is to enhance the reporting of mission chief and desk economist tenure to the Board.** While mission chief tenure has been reported twice a year to Management as a key performance indicator as part of the Accountability Framework, action 1.4 in the MIPOA entails starting regular reporting to the Board of data on mission chief and desk-economist tenure, including by analytical country groups by end-December 2022 to enhance transparency and accountability.
2. **Since the inception of reporting in the Accountability Framework, mission chief tenure has generally been below the 3-year target initially envisaged.** The MIPOA paper notes that while departments should aim for the three-year average tenure, they should start targeting median tenure for mission chiefs at 2.5–3 years as an intermediate operational target.
3. **The information presented in this paper is primarily descriptive and focused on data reporting.** Action 1.5 of the MIPOA, to be delivered by end-December 2023, will provide a comprehensive analysis of the underlying drivers of mission chief and desk economist tenure and how average tenure is impacted by factors such as mobility, turnover, promotions, and Fund policies and strategic priorities.

### A. Country-team Tenures of Mission Chiefs and Desk Economists

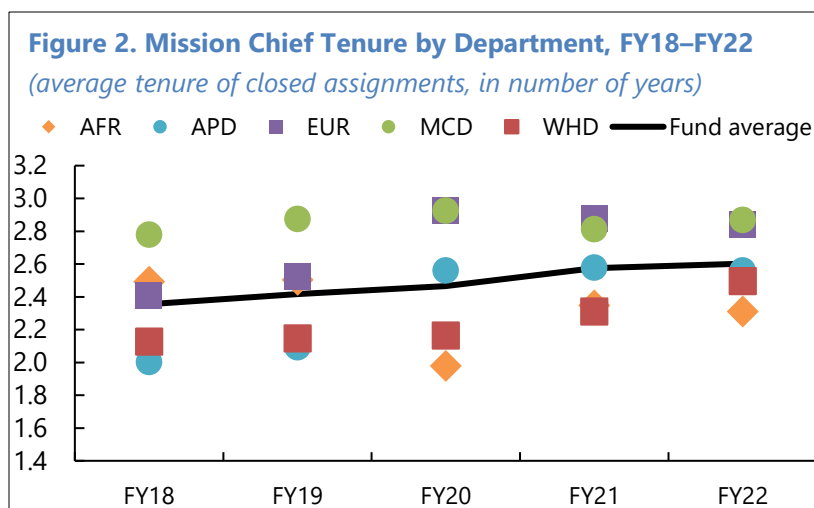
4. **Average mission chief tenure remains below the 3-year target, but progress has been made in the last 3 years.** At the beginning of FY23, the average tenure of recently ended (“closed”) mission chief assignments reached 2.6 years, compared with 2.4 years in FY19 (see Figures 1 and 2).<sup>1</sup> The median at the beginning of FY23 was close to the average at 2.5 years, a small improvement relative to FY19. In addition:

- Average mission-chief tenure is longest for EUR and MCD (slightly under 3 years), whereas AFR has the shortest mission-chief tenure at 2.3 years (see Figure 1). Compared with FY19, most departments have contributed to the increase in the (Fund-wide) average mission chief tenure (Figure 2).

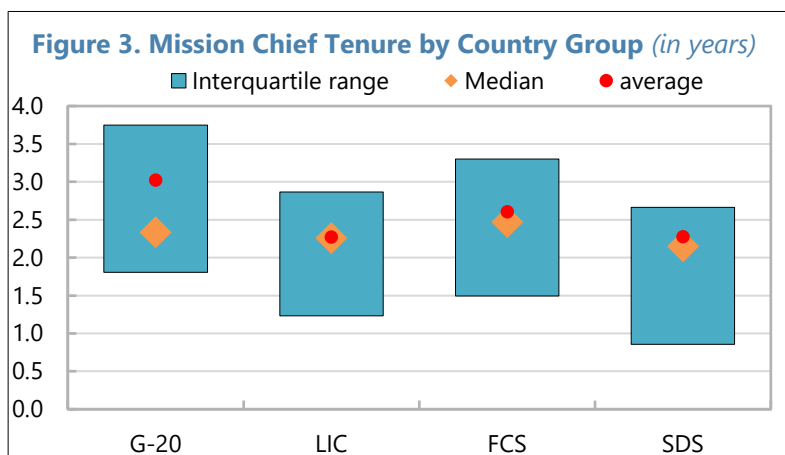


<sup>1</sup> Note that this indicator is not the average tenure of active mission chiefs; it is the average tenure of the most recently closed mission chief assignments. A similar definition is applied to desk economists below.

- In addition, Figure 1 also shows the distribution of mission chief tenure across all area departments. For instance, in MCD and EUR, 40–45 percent of mission chiefs averaged more than 3 years in their assignments, while the corresponding shares are in the 25–33 percent range for AFR, APD, and WHD. This heterogeneity reflects differences in the relative concentration of FCS (and SDS) across departments, as mission chief tenure is generally shorter for those country groups (see Figure 3).<sup>2</sup>



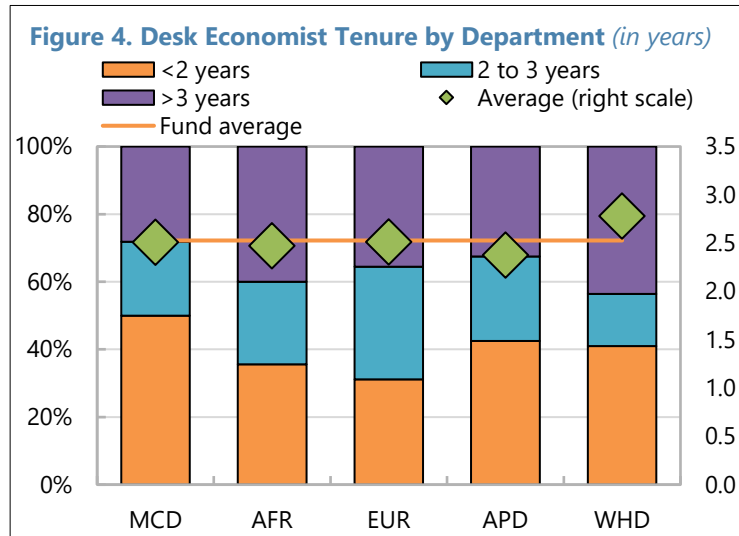
- In terms of country groups, the data also shows significant differences in the range of mission chief tenures (Figure 3). While the medians are similar across all country groups, the average mission chief tenure for G-20 assignments is higher at 3 years, reflecting a number of assignments with mission chief tenure above 3 years (as can be seen from the interquartile range—shown in the shaded bars). In contrast, the average for LIC, FCS, and SDS ranges from 2.2–2.5 years, with a significant number of assignments below the average/median in those groups (also shown in their respective interquartile ranges).



<sup>2</sup> There is also the additional effect of the higher share of A14 mission chiefs in smaller countries, which is more prevalent in APD and WHD, and the large number of LIC and FCS countries in AFR. The impact of country size/type, program and surveillance engagement with the Fund, and grade of mission chiefs will be analyzed in more detail by December 2023 as part of the comprehensive analysis as required by action 1.5 in the MIPOA and is beyond the scope of this paper.

5. **In the case of desk economists, our estimates show that average tenure was 2.5 years at the beginning of FY23 (the median was 2.4 years).** In comparison to mission chiefs, there is

more uniformity across departments, as the average tenure ranged from 2.4 to 2.8 years (Figure 4). More importantly, since the measurement of desk tenure is new and there are a number of desks with multiple country assignments (especially in smaller countries), estimates of desk economist tenure should be treated with caution. Going forward, these estimates will be further refined (by closely monitoring of data issues related to dual assignments and mobility to ensure more harmonized reporting) for tracking progress.



## B. Reporting Going Forward

6. **As laid out in the MIPOA, HRD will report data on mission chief and desk economist tenure in the annual Recruitment and Retention Board Paper (by end–FY23).** Subsequently, as part of action 1.5 in the MIPOA, HRD will prepare a separate paper with an analysis of the impact of turnover (such as retirements and resignations), promotions, and mobility on mission chief and desk tenure by December 2023.