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Inspiring Future Scientists

Open Doors Initiative Encourages Young Women to Pursue Careers in Nuclear Science

Staff Report

24 April 2009

In a bid to encourage young women and girls to pursue careers in nuclear science and related areas, the IAEA yesterday participated in this year's Vienna Daughter's Day, where staff took their daughters to work with them.

"The goal is to invite daughters of staff members to spend the day at the Agency to understand what their parents do at work," says Catherine Monzel, Head of Recruitment and Staff Development. "We hope this might encourage some of them to choose a less traditional female profession such as nuclear science or other technical subjects. This way the IAEA can help invest in the future and encourage girls to study in fields relating to the Agency's work."

Although *Take Your Daughter To Work Day* is principally observed in European and North American countries, the IAEA hopes that by its participation this year the Agency will inspire more of its Member States to have similar initiatives promoting women in non-traditional professions.

In 2007, approximately 15% of nuclear scientists and technicians in the IAEA were women. However, efforts are being made to increase the number of women working in the IAEA in these highly specialised and technical fields.

In 2007, IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei reported to the Agency's General Conference that the participation of women in certain branches of the natural sciences, engineering and technology is also low in the private sector and academia. Also, statistics show that the overall number of graduate students – particularly women – in nuclear-related areas remains small, meaning that the pool of women available for employment in the nuclear field is and will remain limited.

Therefore the IAEA's participation in this year's Vienna Daughter's Day is just one of the efforts to overcoming the lack of growth in the number of women pursuing scientific careers, in particular in the nuclear industry.

More than 50 daughters of IAEA staff members from 11 to 16 years old participated in tours of the Agency, had an opportunity to have an in-depth tour of one of the IAEA's six departments and visited the Incident and Emergency Centre.

The event was organised by the Agency's Sub-Committee on Gender Concerns and Women in Nuclear (WIN).

See Story Resources for more information



The IAEA is committed to increasing the participation of women in natural sciences, engineering and technology related fields. (Photo: D. Calma/IAEA)

Story Resources

- [Women In The Nuclear Field](#)
- [Women in the Secretariat](#)
- [Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation](#)
- [Women in Nuclear \(WiN\)](#)

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