

Participant Profiles

FRANCE

Foreign Service Structure. France has five levels in its Foreign Service, which is part of the overall public service. Progression to the next level is based on a review of performance appraisals, years of experience and the existence of an opening at the next level. Most officers spend one year at the entry level, 5-10 years at the second level, 5-10 years at the third level, and 10 years at the fourth level.

Foreign Service Officers are responsible for political/economic affairs, administration, culture, immigration, and aid. There are officers specializing in immigration at all postings. All officers have, if they so wish, the possibility to be unionized. Trade officers are separate from the Foreign Service.

New Recruits. New recruits must (and do) have a Master's degree and knowledge of two foreign languages. Certain categories of officers are required to be fluent in one language that is deemed difficult. Based on a new policy, all new recruits must have a basic understanding of German. New recruits attend a short training program that includes on-the-job training, classroom courses, self-study courses, and language training. They then have an average of 8 days of training per year. There is little mid-career recruiting; where it does occur, individuals are hired from within the Public Service.

Assignments. Foreign postings average three years in length. Officers may rotate between home and foreign postings, or be reassigned immediately to another posting (return home after two consecutive stays). Although officers can influence the location of their posting, other factors override their personal choice.

One of the most frequent reasons for turning down a posting is the inability of the spouse or partner to work at the posting location. The French Foreign Service has noted an increase over the last few years in officers turning down posting for that reason. Attrition is very low, averaging 0-2 percent.

Compensation. Compensation is shown in Canadian dollars in the following table:

Title	Job Match	Minimum	Maximum	Average Actual
Foreign Affairs Secretary	Job A Match +			\$43,192
Foreign Affairs Counsellor	Job B Match			\$55,535
Foreign Affairs Counsellor, Hors Classe (1 st echelon)	Job C Match +			\$87,360
Foreign Affairs Counsellor, Hors Classe (3 rd echelon)	Job C Match +			\$94,704