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Department of  
Foreign Affairs and  
International Trade

Ministère des  
Affaires étrangères et  
du Commerce international

Foreign Service  
Le Service  
extérieur



Canada

Dept. of External Affairs  
Min. des Affaires extérieures

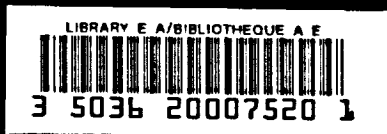
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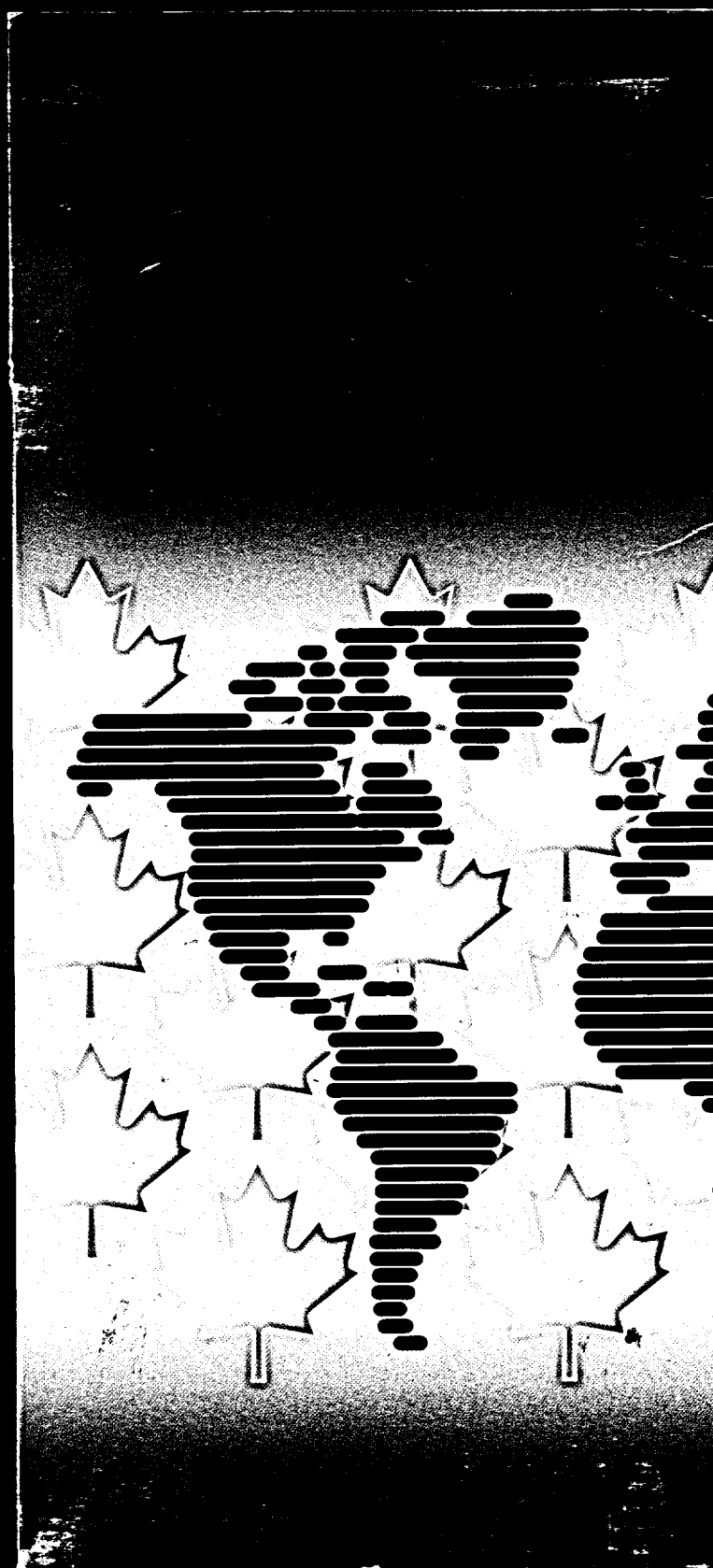
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# THE FOREIGN SERVICE

The Foreign Service is dedicated to serving Canadians and Canadian interests at home and abroad. We are seeking dynamic, innovative individuals who have outstanding judgment and analytical skills and who thrive on change. If you are prepared to take up the challenge of a demanding career that will test you professionally and personally, and if you meet the eligibility criteria, consider this an invitation to compete for a position as a member of the Canadian Foreign Service.

## OUR MANDATE

The Foreign Service advises the Canadian government on foreign policy matters and acts on Canada's behalf abroad. The work at headquarters in Ottawa and at our missions abroad includes economic and political analysis and reporting; promoting Canada's economic, commercial and financial interests; participating in international negotiations; managing administrative, personnel, financial and materiel programs; managing immigration programs; carrying out public affairs activities; and assisting Canadians who are travelling, studying and working abroad.

## JOB ROTATION: OTTAWA AND ABROAD

Officers in the Canadian Foreign Service have made a commitment to work on a rotational basis in Ottawa and at any of Canada's missions abroad. Some officers may spend half to two thirds of their career working and living abroad. Although many



people find the prospect of moving from one assignment to another challenging and invigorating, rotation can put a great deal of stress on officers and their families.

Versatility and adaptability are essential to deal with changing work and home environments, frustrations and culture shock.

## **CAREER PROGRESSION**

New recruits are based in Ottawa, where they undergo formal classroom and on-the-job training. Training programs differ for each career specialty and last from one to four years, including training in one of Canada's official languages (if required), several months of common training at the Canadian Foreign Service Institute and possible pre-posting foreign language training. First international assignments last from two to four years, after which officers typically return to Ottawa or are assigned to another post abroad.

There is a one-year probationary period upon entry into the Public Service. From this point, promotions are based on annual performance appraisals, serving a minimum number of years at each level and the availability of positions at the next level. Opportunities exist at each level for officers to expand their experience and develop their skills.

## **IMPACT ON FAMILIES**

The rotational Foreign Service lifestyle has been likened to life on a roller-coaster, and there is no doubt that officers experience ups and downs as they repeat the cycle of going on postings and re-integrating themselves into life in Canada. Life in foreign environments can mean restrictions on personal movements due to political or safety considerations, exposure to unfamiliar

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products in shops and markets, and losing touch with friends and family. Although it may seem strange to anyone who has not already experienced it, returning to Canada can also provoke a certain amount of culture shock. Potential Foreign Service Officers must consider very carefully what this nomadic lifestyle may mean for children's education, spousal employment and family well-being.

## **CHILDREN'S EDUCATION**

Foreign Service parents make many decisions concerning their children's schooling. Because the quality of overseas education can vary from country to country, it is not always possible to ensure continuity of subject matter and instructional methods for children. Abroad, most Canadian diplomatic children attend British, American or French schools. An education counsellor is available to help families find the schools that best meet their children's needs.

## **SPOUSAL EMPLOYMENT**

Continuous professional employment overseas is usually not possible for spouses. In many countries, despite the lifting of formal barriers, it is difficult for spouses to find work due to linguistic and economic restrictions on the employment of foreigners. Some spouses find salaried work with an international agency, an embassy or an international school; others do volunteer work or studies related to their careers or personal interests. Self-employment has been the approach taken by those with an entrepreneurial bent and portable skills.

A spousal employment counsellor is available at headquarters to advise on employment possibilities that do exist abroad and to assist spouses with job-hunting techniques on their return to Ottawa.

## **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The starting salary for a Foreign Service Officer (FS-1) is \$32 945. The Government of Canada also has health, dental and pension benefits for all employees and their families.

In addition to their usual salary, officers assigned abroad receive a premium for service abroad, a cost of living and/or hardship allowance where applicable, and supplemental vacation leave with the payment of some travel costs. Officers also receive a moving allowance for shipping their personal effects. At most posts, officers may rent government-leased and furnished accommodation. The government pays most of the education costs for children overseas and seeks to provide equivalent-to-Canada medical care.

## **FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALTIES**

Foreign Service Officers work in a variety of specialties, which are described on the enclosed inserts:

- Management and Consular Affairs
- The Trade Commissioner Service
- Political and Economic Affairs
- The International Service—Citizenship and Immigration

Details of how to get more information on these specialties and on the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's Employment Equity Program are provided on two additional inserts:

- A Diverse Foreign Service
- Where to Get More Information

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# MANAGEMENT AND CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Management and Consular Affairs Officers are responsible for the delivery of administrative, personnel, financial, materiel and consular programs. To do their job successfully, they need sound judgment, strong interpersonal skills and proven financial acumen.

The international and domestic operations of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade present a management challenge of tremendous proportions: the Department manages a portfolio of hundreds of properties and employs thousands of local staff at Canadian missions in over 80 countries. Many of our missions are located in countries with difficult operating conditions. Examples include local business and government practices that differ greatly from standard Canadian practices, financial situations that require the use of multiple exchange rates and telephone systems that breakdown regularly.

One of the Department's highest profile activities is the provision of consular services to Canadians in distress overseas. With an increasing number of Canadians travelling, studying and working abroad, the demand for these services continues to rise.

Assignments at headquarters include

- deputy area management adviser (Asia and Pacific Region): this officer is involved in managing the resources required to ensure the

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functioning of our missions  
in this region;

- supervisor (Honorary Consul Program): Canada appoints honorary consuls in countries that are popular with Canadian tourists. The supervisor ensures qualified people are chosen to represent Canada and that the program is delivered satisfactorily.

Typical duties at a Canadian diplomatic mission include

- arranging the logistics for a visit by a cabinet minister;
- arranging the medical evacuation of an injured Canadian;
- surveying salaries paid in the local market to determine the compensation of locally engaged staff;
- managing the mission's financial affairs;
- recruiting qualified local staff to assist in the delivery of a broad range of programs.

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# THE TRADE COMMISSIONER SERVICE

International trade is becoming increasingly complicated, sophisticated and competitive. Canada's Trade Commissioners are responsible for promoting our commercial and economic interests in this challenging environment. As well as identifying and developing export markets, Trade Commissioners work to develop trade policies and maintain trade relations that protect and advance Canada's international interests.

Trade Commissioners focus on the ins and outs of the global business environment; their expertise helps Canadian companies to achieve their international marketing goals, overcome entry barriers to new and existing markets, obtain new technologies and funding, and identify international investment opportunities.

Assignments at headquarters include

- desk officer for France, responsible for all commercial relations with France and the development of Canada's trade strategy for that country;
- trade policy officer, responsible for monitoring and analysing Canada-U.S. trade relations in automobiles and technical standards;
- desk officer, responsible for co-ordinating Canada's international

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business development efforts in the apparel, housewares, energy and agricultural machinery sectors.

Typical duties at a Canadian diplomatic mission include

- advising visiting Canadian business representatives on local business practices;
- conducting a market feasibility study for a Canadian product;
- reporting to headquarters on new local government policies that may affect Canadian business interests;
- developing contacts with local business people who are interested in representing Canadian companies.

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# POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Political/Economic Officers promote Canadian political and economic interests abroad. They monitor and interpret world events and their implications for Canada, make policy recommendations based on solid analysis and negotiate with foreign and domestic interlocutors to advance Canadian objectives.

At headquarters or abroad, Political/Economic Officers deal with subjects as diverse and multifaceted as human rights, peacekeeping, disarmament, environmental degradation, war crimes, macroeconomic policy, economic law, summit co-ordination, debt, treaty negotiation, technical assistance, cultural and academic programs, and reform of multilateral institutions.

Assignments at headquarters include

- geographic desk officer for Mexico, responsible for monitoring and analysing political and economic trends and developing a coherent policy to promote Canada's relations with Mexico;
- legal adviser on fisheries issues, responsible for representing the Department's interests in the drafting of domestic and international legal instruments, and for liaison with other government departments and provincial interests to ensure a consistent Canadian policy in various international forums;

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- economic policy officer, responsible for analysing developing country debt issues and devising strategies for multilateral debt restructuring negotiations.

Typical duties at a Canadian diplomatic mission include

- reporting on host government policies on democratic development, foreign relations, and political and economic issues;
- managing the post's public affairs and media relations programs;
- lobbying the host foreign ministry to support Canadian initiatives ;
- negotiating bilateral co-operation agreements;
- building a constituency of informed local contacts to support Canadian interests;

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# THE INTERNATIONAL SERVICE— CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

The International Service Group of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration is responsible for the overseas delivery of Canada's immigration program. The Group employs more than 300 Foreign Service Visa Officers. At any given time, about two thirds of these officers are serving abroad. The remainder work at headquarters in a variety of assignments related to the management and design of the immigration program.

Assignments at headquarters include

- desk officer for Eastern Europe, responsible for dealing with all immigrant, visitor, control, reporting and recruitment issues in Poland and the former Soviet Union;
- desk officer, monitoring and analysis, responsible for tracking delivery of immigration levels at missions, adjusting targets where necessary;
- desk officer, program co-ordination, responsible for developing and examining new or revised immigration policies, and advising on the probable impact of these policies on program delivery abroad.

Typical duties at a Canadian mission abroad include

- assessing, interviewing and counselling prospective immigrants to Canada;

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Department  
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and Immigration

- liaison with local airline companies to advise them on fraudulent documents;
- reporting to headquarters on actual or potential refugee movements, analysing their impact on Canada's refugee policies and program delivery, and making recommendations for action;
- conducting information seminars in co-operation with provincial government and business representatives to attract potential immigrants with skills needed in the Canadian economy.

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# A DIVERSE FOREIGN SERVICE

The diversity of the Canadian population is an invaluable resource upon which Canada will draw to meet the economic challenges of the future. Our multicultural heritage gives us an important competitive edge in the international arena.

As a representative of Canada on the international scene and as an employer, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is increasingly aware of the importance of linguistic and cultural skills as a key to success in the international environment. This is illustrated in the Department's efforts to have a Foreign Service that mirrors the diverse make-up of the Canadian population. Our commitment is further evident in the programs and initiatives already in place to encourage the equitable participation of women, Aboriginal peoples, members of visible minority groups and persons with disabilities.

A career in the Foreign Service requires adopting a lifestyle in which flexibility, mobility and respect for cultural differences are vital elements. Your personal initiatives, strengths and your own cultural heritage and linguistic talent will certainly contribute to your success and our strength in international and diplomatic forums.

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For more information on the Department's  
Employment Equity Program, please contact

Department of Foreign Affairs and  
International Trade  
Employment Equity Unit (SPSC)  
D-4, 125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0G2  
Tel.: (613) 992-0365

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# WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

If you are interested and ready for a challenging career as a Foreign Service Officer, representing Canada and Canadians abroad, you can obtain further information by contacting a campus placement office or nearest Public Service Commission of Canada office. Alternatively, you can write to

For information on Management and Consular Affairs, the Trade Commissioner Service or Political and Economic Affairs,

Foreign Affairs and  
International Trade  
Recruitment Services (SPSR)  
D-4, 125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0G2

For information on the International Service Group of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration of Canada,

International Service Sector  
Personnel Division  
140, promenade du Portage  
Place du Portage, Phase IV  
Hull, Quebec  
K1A 1L1



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