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PUBLIC SECTOR EXPATRIATION

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CONTENT, ABSTRACT, REFERENCES

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ABSTRACT

A public sector expatriate is an employee who is sent abroad by their organization, for an organizational mission, for a precise period of time, and expected to return to their home organization, in their home country, after that time. When the assignment abroad lasts less than 1 year, we usually speak about short-term international assignment.

Public sector organizations have a long tradition of sending personnel to other countries for a variety of purposes, such as diplomatic and military service (Groeneveld [2008](#)). Indeed, they have been doing this as long as countries as such have existed – even before then rulers were sending their armies into other rulers' territories. Nowadays, the number of public servants working as expatriates (i.e., living and working outside their own countries for a time-determined period) seems to be continually increasing (Midura [2008](#)).

Despite this long history, research attention to issues of expatriation and the problems of managing expatriates has been almost entirely conducted in the private sector among multinational companies (MNCs). Research on public sector expatriates and their unique working conditions is scarce (Fenner and Selmer [2008](#); Fisher et al., [2015](#); Green [2012](#); Groeneveld [2008](#); Selmer and Fenner [2009](#)). The situation of expatriates in the public and private sector has both similarities and differences. There is a need for more attention to be paid to the situation in the public sector.

In this chapter, we outline the different elements of the public sector that have expatriates, discuss the main differences between expatriation in the private and public sectors, outline some of the key issues in public sector expatriation and draw some conclusions.

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