

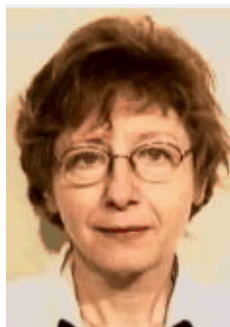
Insights into employment opportunities at IFC and EBRD

On March 7 and 8, 2011, International Finance Corporation (IFC) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) come to Switzerland to inform Swiss professionals about employment opportunities at their institutions. *cinfo* asked Anne-Marie Klein, International Recruitment Officer at the IFC, and Jo Hardiman, HR Manager at the EBRD, what they aim at obtaining during their stay in Switzerland and why Swiss nationals are encouraged to apply.

cinfo: You will be travelling to Switzerland in March 2012 to inform Swiss professionals about employment opportunities. What are you hoping to achieve with your trip? Are you looking for Swiss bankers?



Jo Hardiman (EBRD): Yes, we are looking for bankers. There is a strong financial market in Switzerland, so there are many well-qualified professionals. We believe the best way to attract qualified Swiss professionals is to visit Switzerland and, with *cinfo*'s help, educate them about the opportunities at EBRD. We are mainly looking for bankers, because many of our opportunities are in that area- approximately half of our total staff work in banking teams. We also recruit across other sectors, for instance, we often have vacancies for qualified lawyers, economists, risk professionals, human resources professionals, etc. So whilst we predominantly focus on bankers, there are other opportunities as well.



Annemarie Klein (IFC): IFC has a long tradition of successful collaboration with Swiss institutions for the financing of private sector projects and the delivery of advisory services in developing countries. We would like to see more Swiss nationals joining IFC: people who share our vision to reduce poverty and improve lives in developing countries, and who are able to operate effectively in a global environment. By presenting IFC at this event, we hope to raise awareness about IFC and its various activities, and to attract candidates for current and future job opportunities. IFC is one of the leading development institutions, and offers interesting and rewarding career opportunities but only few people, even in the banking sector, know IFC and what these opportunities are.

We expect to meet professionals who already have solid work experience. Through presentations and individual discussions we want to inform finance professionals on what it is that makes IFC attractive as a potential employer, advise them on where their profile would potentially fit, inform about the recruitment process and other issues important to consider when joining an international organisation.

And which types of profiles is it you are specifically interested in?

Klein: At any time of the year, you will find Investment Analyst and Investment Officer positions on the IFC career website. Investment Analysts are junior professionals with strong financial analysis and modelling skills. Investment Officers have to have experience in project, structured and corporate finance, mostly combined with experience in a given sector, such as infrastructure, general manufacturing, natural resources, health and education, etc. IFC's Advisory Services is recruiting Operations Officers who have experience in project management and expertise in areas such as Access to finance, Investment climate improvement, Sustainable Development or Public-Private Partnerships for example. On the career website, you will also see positions in corporate functions, such as Corporate Relations, Human Resources, Information Technology or Legal. Most positions are in field and hub offices, only few positions are in Washington, D.C.

The topic of forum cinfo 2012¹ is green economy and green jobs. Are you searching for environmental profiles as well?

Hardiman: Energy efficiency and sustainable energy projects are both very important areas for the EBRD. All of the projects we finance have an environmental focus and an environmental specialist is attached to each project team.

So yes, although we do mainly look for bankers, we are also interested in candidates who have a background in the environmental domains as well. That being said, opportunities within that area are fairly limited.

Sometimes we also look for bankers who come from a more technical or engineering background, so that we get good industry knowledge combined with banking acumen.

Klein: IFC has made Climate change a top priority, and there are many positions in this field. Right now we are searching for an Industry Specialist who will advise the Corporation on climate change policies and projects with a high climate change impact.

What are the requirements in terms of professional experience and competencies for professionals when applying to your organisation?

Klein: Regardless of the job stream, all positions require a university degree; the minimum is a Bachelor for analysts, and a Masters or equivalent for all other positions. In addition to technical skills in their respective field of expertise, candidates have to have excellent communication skills in English, ideally combined with additional language skills, and have to demonstrate strong interpersonal and client relationship skills. Analysts have up to 4 years of experience, Officers 5+ and Senior and Principals 8, respectively 10+ years of experience.

Hardiman: In Banking, the EBRD prefers candidates who have a minimum of three years of relevant work experience. Usually this experience comes from the private sector, but not necessarily. We expect candidates to have already gained a master's degree, although we will consider candidates with a bachelor's degree, if they also have relevant work experience. Our business is project finance, so we look for people who have expertise and experience in that area, particularly debt and equity. There are a number of core skills we expect, including financial analysis and financial modelling. We also look for people who have some exposure to our region, which covers Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Fluent English language skills are essential, and other languages such as Russian and other Eastern European languages are also welcomed. We will be moving into new markets in the near future, in North Africa and parts of the Middle East. This means that we will also increasingly be looking for people who have Arabic language skills, as well as some exposure to that region.

Jo Hardiman, you say that candidates need to have had exposure to a certain region. How can this exposure look? Do they necessarily need to have lived in the country or region?

Hardiman: Not necessarily, but it helps if they have lived and worked in the region as they will have a deeper understanding of the local market. It is sometimes sufficient if the candidate has worked on projects in our countries of operation without living there.

¹ Forum *cinfo* 2012 is a fair focusing on trends in the international employment market. It will take place on Friday, 31 August, 2012. Find more information on www.cinfo.ch

What procedures need to be followed for somebody wanting to work in your organisation?

Hardiman: We have an online recruitment system. Most of our vacancies are advertised publicly on the bank's website on www.ebrdjobs.com. We ask candidates to complete a personal profile and then upload their resume, and to confirm firstly that they are a national of one of our member countries, and secondly that they do not already have a close relative working at the EBRD. Providing they meet both of those criteria, the application can proceed. Sometimes there are additional questions attached to specific roles, asking for more clarity on particular areas of expertise or experience.

Once the application has been completed, resumes are always reviewed by an experienced recruiter and a long-list is presented to the hiring manager, from which a shortlist for interview is selected. There are usually two or three interview stages. The first round of interviews will be with the hiring team, including the hiring manager, and will generally focus on the technical expertise of the individual and how their skills will complement the existing team. At the second stage, the Human Resources team will also do an interview, which is more competency-based and measures soft skills, such as communication, leadership and their ability to work across teams. The final stage of the interview usually involves the director or the managing director for the team.

Occasionally we also incorporate technical or language skills tests, but this is not typical for all positions.

Klein: People who would like to work with IFC should submit their online application on our career website www.ifc.org/careers and include a CV and cover letter explaining their motivation and why they are suitable for the job. Note that only candidates who are selected for interviews will be contacted, but candidates can find out about their status shortly after the position is closed.

Switzerland is underrepresented in many multilateral institutions, among them the IFC and the EBRD. Why do you think this is the case?

Klein: The issue of underrepresentation is most probably due to lack of information, and in many cases lack of international experience. In addition, even if we find the right candidates, overall conditions in Switzerland don't always allow us to compete.

Hardiman: We have a very small number of Swiss nationals working in the Bank, and actively seek opportunities to hire more, hence our participation at this event. Switzerland has a strong financial market with many qualified individuals, but it is difficult for us to compete with the excellent working conditions in Switzerland.

Interview: Jacqueline Breidlid, cinfo