Description of the Field

The international security field has organizations in every sector, be it government, private, or nonprofit. The goal of many intelligence service providers is to produce reports consisting of evaluated information and forecasts that political, military, and government leaders can then use in decision making. The government is the largest employer of international security professionals, but opportunities also exist with think tanks, defense contractors, and NGOs.

Career Paths and Entry Salaries

Entry-level employees generally are assigned to gather information. With previous experience and training, they can instead qualify for analyst positions. Advancement may include postings requiring more responsibility and assignments to foreign countries. International security specialists are promoted and given assignments according to the needs of the government. Further advancement leads to management positions.

In the government, case officers stationed overseas gather intelligence and then relay the information to analysts who interpret the data for their reports. There are specialized officers known as technical analysts, as well as cryptographic technicians who are experts in coding, decoding, and sending secret messages. There are three categories of intelligence operations: strategic intelligence, tactical intelligence, and counter-intelligence. Strategic intelligence agents keep track of world events, watch foreign leaders carefully, and study a foreign country’s politics, economy, military status, and scientific advances. Tactical intelligence consists of determining which groups hold power and looking at foreign policy, public opinion, and voting statistics. Economic factors include trade agreements, the gross national product, and possible famines, all of which can influence domestic and foreign policies. Counter-intelligence consists of keeping valuable information away from the enemy and preventing subversion and sabotage.

The Department of Defense International Security Affairs Division develops defense positions in political, military, and foreign economic affairs, including arms control and disarmament. Its functions include the negotiating and monitoring of agreements with foreign governments concerning military facilities and the status of the armed forces. Those with advanced degrees are hired at the GS-9 grade with the step depending on experience. The GS-9 salary ranges from the low $40,000s at Step 1 to the mid
$50,000s at Step 10. Updated GS Pay Scale information, including additional pay adjustments, can be found at: http://www.opm.gov/oca/10tables/pdf/gs.pdf.

**Demand**

Intelligence operations are closely linked to the world political situation. People with specialized skills or backgrounds in the languages and customs of countries in which the US faces security challenges will continue to be in high demand.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) merged several intelligence-related federal agencies into one agency that has the capability to anticipate, preempt, and deter threats to the nation whenever possible, as well as the ability to respond quickly when such threats do materialize. DHS is responsible for assessing the vulnerabilities of the country’s critical infrastructure and cyber security threats and will take the lead in evaluating these vulnerabilities and coordinating with other federal, state, local, and private entities to ensure the most effective response.

**Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field**

An advanced degree is recommended for those entering the international security and defense field. Other important qualifications include the ability to speak and read a foreign language, computer literacy, and excellent analytical, oral, and written communication skills. Studies in military technology, international economics, US foreign policy, Russian studies, Chinese studies, and East Central European studies are valued. Experience gained through an internship will make one more competitive, while for those wanting to work in the Department of Defense, the Presidential Management Fellowship is often the only way to enter as a civilian.

**Sample Group of Employers**

**Private Sector**

BAE Systems - http://www.baesystems.com/

Boeing - http://www.boeing.com/

General Dynamics - http://www.generaldynamics.com/

Lockheed-Martin - http://www.lockheedmartin.com/

Northrup-Grumman - http://www.northropgrumman.com/
Raytheon - http://www.raytheon.com/
Textron – http://www.textron.com
TRW - http://www.trw.com
United Technologies - http://www.utc.com/

**Government Agencies**

Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) - http://www.dia.mil
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) - https://www.cia.gov/
Department of State - http://www.state.gov
Department of Energy - http://www.doe.gov
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) - http://www.fbi.gov
Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) - http://www.ice.gov/
Department of Treasury - http://www.ustreas.gov/
Coast Guard - http://www.uscg.mil/USCG.shtm

**Non-Government Organizations**
Center for Defense Information (CDI) - http://www.cdi.org/
The Brookings Institute - http://www.brookings.edu/
Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation - http://www.armscontrolcenter.org/
Center for Strategic and International - http://csis.org/
SAIC - http://www.saic.com/

Resources for Additional Information

Associations

Association of Former Intelligence Officers
6723 Whittier Ave., Suite 200
McLean, VA 22101-4533
Tel: 703-790-0320
http://www.afio.com/
afio@afio.com

Women In International Security
Center for Peace and Security Studies
Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service
Georgetown University
3600 N Street, NW, Lower Level
Washington, DC 20007
Tel: 202-687-3366
Fax: 202-687-3233
Internet Resources

ASIS International - http://www.asisonline.org/

Resource for security professionals. Formerly known as the American Society for Industrial Security, ASIS International is an international organization. Visitors to this site can read the latest issue of Security Management.

Intelligence Careers - http://www.intelligencecareers.com

A good starting point for information intelligence professionals to find career opportunities. This is not an IT-recruiting website. This website is about the pursuit of "information intelligence" - careers that balance the need for world knowledge with the ability to use technology to achieve action.

Law Enforcement Jobs - http://www.lawenforcementjobs.com/

Resource for those interested in the law enforcement area of the security field. The jobs are open for all to review and one can register to receive announcements of new jobs as they are posted. They also have training resources, books, and a calendar of training sessions being offered by various organizations and agencies.


Check out education and training opportunities, learn about professional certification, or get information on scholarship and grant programs from the association. Members can also access the association’s extensive career center.

Security Jobs Network - http://securityjobs.net/

Resource for security and law enforcement professionals. Job listings require a paid subscription, but much of the resource information is free including great research links to additional online security and law enforcement resources.
Future Challenges of the Profession

The international security field faces a range of challenges, from the increasing dependence on the Internet and its vulnerability to outside attack, to the effects of global poverty on terrorist activity. These issues not only will require further integration and cooperation between international security institutions, but also a concerted effort to recruit, train, and retain talented individuals so as to be best equipped to maintain security and stability.
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN INTELLIGENCE

Description of the Field

A career in intelligence involves the collecting, analyzing, and distribution of information used for strategic and tactical national security decision making. These professionals translate foreign language documents, develop new intelligence technology, design software and hardware, write reports for the president, analyze the conduct of other countries, provide policy makers information to assist them with determining national security strategies in relation to particular counties, and more. Not every person in the Intelligence Community (IC) works out in the field; for every field officer employed there is a large network of essential support staff. Those in intelligence address key challenges by exploring advanced research and development; focusing on disruptive technology leaps; integrating the Intelligence Community Science and Technology enterprises; and developing, evaluating, and promoting innovation in intelligence activities.

Career Paths and Entry Salaries

While there is no single career template in intelligence, there are some characteristics common throughout the Intelligence Community. Entering the field can prove daunting, as lengthy application procedures include multiple tests, interviews, security checks, and/or polygraphs. Each IC agency will have its own application examinations, and some have a trial period for new employees. In many cases, those with undergraduate degrees will enter with a GS-7 level, while graduate degree holders start at a GS-9 level. Typically, one will remain in the same agency throughout one’s career, and advance in position and pay according to increasing experience and expertise. Specific career paths will depend on the particular intelligence agency one works for, as well as the position in that agency. The nature of the field requires, however, that one must be able to shift focus and acquire new expertise if world events and national security demand it.

Demand

The size and emphasis of recruitment of intelligence agencies varies each year. In general, demand has increased after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, with further changes in recruiting expected as intelligence shifts to emphasize counter-terrorism and as inter-agency cooperation increases. (Segal & Kocher, 81) Individual Intelligence Community agencies will have their own particular demands and needs, making it important to check the various IC member sites.

Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field
Those wanting to become intelligence analysts must have the ability to think and analyze information both strategically and dynamically. Intelligence professionals must be able to squeeze the most comprehension possible from fragmented information and be willing to work on the toughest and least rewarding problems if there are national security reasons to do so. Candidates with overseas experience, a bachelor’s or graduate degree in international affairs or other related fields, fluency in foreign languages (especially non-European languages), and an ability to translate original material (rather than conversional ability) are desired. (Segal & Kocher, 80) In many situations, military experience is required or highly desired. One must also be able to pass a security clearance, which evaluates the candidate’s reliability, trustworthiness, and integrity.

Sample Group of Employers

Defense Intelligence Agency - http://www.diajobs.dia.mil
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Directorate of Intelligence - http://www.fbijobs.gov
Office of the Director of National Intelligence - www.dni.gov/
US Intelligence - http://www.intelligence.gov/

Future Challenges of the Profession

As detailed by Volko Ruhnke in “Careers in International Affairs,” more is required from the intelligence community than ever before, as the United States confronts a greater diversity of threats and challenges. The defining characteristic of the age, globalization, requires global intelligence coverage. In addition, US national security challenges will be shaped by the dramatic advances in telecommunications, technology, new centers of economic growth, and the consequences of crises within traditional cultures. (Carland & Faber, 146)

Resources for Additional Information
Internet Resources

Association of Former Intelligence Officers, Careers - http://www.afio.com/14_careers.htm
Cleared Connections - http://www.clearedconnections.com/
Go Army - http://www.goarmy.com/JobDetail.do?id=155
Intelligence Careers - http://www.intelligencecareers.com/

Publications

American Intelligence Journal, National Military Intelligence Association

Careers in Secret Operations: How to Be a Federal Intelligence Officer, David Atlee Phillips, University Publications of America, 1984


CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN NONPROLIFERATION

Description of the Field
Nonproliferation professionals work to reduce or end the development of nuclear weapons and respond to potential conflict. Those in the field promote the safe use of nuclear science and work to insure it is not being used for military purposes.

Career Paths and Entry Salaries

A career in nonproliferation may begin by getting an internship or fellowship with a governmental agency, nongovernmental organization, or multinational organization that works in nonproliferation. A typical career path includes working in an entry level position in one of these organizations and working your way up over time. See current GS pay levels for the federal government for an idea of expected salary, other hiring organizations will vary depending on sector.

Demand

There is a demand for professionals well-educated in nuclear science and engineering, many people in the field will be retiring by 2013. Nuclear nonproliferation experts in general will also continue to be needed, as new challenges such as the emergence of new proliferating states and the added threat of terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons will require new and revised strategies.

Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field

Public policy makers and researchers need to have an understanding of political conflict, nuclear history, strong communications skills, and an ability to understand different approaches to problem solving and cultural differences.

Sample Group of Employers


Brazilian–Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, http://www.abacc.org


Nuclear Energy Institute, http://www.nei.org


Associations

International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms, http://www.ialana.net

Future Challenges of the Profession

Nonproliferation professionals face challenges of new technology and the increasing threat of non-state actors.

Resources for Additional Information

Internet Resources

James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Student Internships, http://cns.miis.edu/edu/internships.htm
Job posts in arms control, http://www.armscontrol.org/employment
Friends Committee on National Legislation, Quaker Lobby, Jobs Post, http://fcnl.org/about/jobs/

Publications


CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN POLITICAL RISK ANALYSIS

Description of the Field

The term “political risk” refers to the possibility that investors will lose money or make less money than expected due to political decisions, conditions, or events occurring in the country or emerging market in which they have invested. Specific problems include government instability, currency inconvertibility, nationalization, and expropriation. In addition, political risk analysis examines social conditions such as crime levels – the number of recent kidnappings, for example – and land rights issues when evaluating the level of risk associated with any investment.

Typically, political risk analysts gather information on an area or a country, determine the causes and sources of any related risks, and forward their findings to those making investment decisions. Analysts may also be asked to prescribe risk management solutions and offer recommendations to clients hoping to invest in a specific area of the world. Although political risk analysis has been developing as a field since the 17th century, it has seen a dramatic increase in importance only in the past 25 years.

While the political risk divisions of large consulting and insurance companies have traditionally been most involved with this field, today’s analysts may find employment with international organizations, smaller financial companies, rating services, energy firms, and online sites specializing in the sale of political risk information. Three departments within most large banks perform political risk analysis: credit, fixed income, and equities. The equity department supports equity research analysts by forecasting key economic variables and may require advanced economic skills, often at a doctoral level.

Those employed in rating agencies, lending institutions, and organizations such as the State Department may be required to make in-depth economic analysis and would be classified as specialists. Analysts with more general knowledge about countries, legal systems, and business practices may find employment with smaller consulting companies that gather and analyze information and then sell their findings to others.

Career Paths

Internships are strongly recommended, especially if they will strengthen one’s accounting and financial skills or offer some insight into the political process. Moreover, prior experience is becoming increasingly
important in finding employment in certain organizations, such as the World Bank. Requirements appear to be more flexible for employment with smaller companies, particularly those that are Internet-based.

With expanding markets and levels of foreign direct investment increasing, forecasts for jobs in this field seem strong. Additionally, the increasing number and types of firms practicing political risk analysis ensure that this field will be attractive to many different types of people.

**Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field**

Political risk analysts typically hold degrees in business, international relations, political science, economics or related areas but may also have backgrounds in law, intelligence, journalism, or law enforcement. Representation of investigative journalists and former intelligence agents is particularly high in online companies specializing in political risk information. Banking experience is always beneficial and may be required for those students hoping to work in a financial company. Although concentrating in an area study will certainly be useful, many analyst positions will focus on more than one area of the world. Successful analysts excel at adapting their knowledge to new and uncertain situations. Excellent research, analysis, and decision making abilities as well as good communicative and writing skills are necessary to succeed in this field. Companies look for well-informed people who may be described as intelligent risk takers.

The ability to decipher a balance sheet, understand a country’s balance of payments, or offer insight into the politics of a particular region will be very useful. Therefore, it is recommended that students interested in pursuing a career in political risk analysis take classes in finance, monetary economics, trade and political science. The latter will be most useful for entry-level positions, while business-related classes will help those pursuing a more specialized track. Specific classes include the following: accounting, corporate finance, private sector project finance, international monetary system, and country risk analysis.

**Sample Group of Employers**

*International/Governmental Organizations*


OPIC - The Overseas Private Investment Corporation - [www.opic.gov/Insurance](http://www.opic.gov/Insurance)

*Private Sector*
Resources for Additional Information

Books

Professional Associations
Berneunion - http://www.berneunion.org.uk/
Global Association of Risk Professionals - http://www.garp.org/
Society for Risk Analysis - http://www.sra.org/

Internet Resources
Global Risk Affairs - http://www.globalriskaffairs.com/
Marvin Zonis - http://www.marvinzonis.com
PRS Group - http://www.prsgroup.com/
Risk World – http://riskworld.com