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How Likely am I to Return Home? A Study of New Zealand Self-Initiated Expatriates

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Most of the current literature on expatriates relates to organisational expatriates (OEs) with relatively little focus in self-initiated expatriates (SIEs). This study investigates factors that influence the likelihood of SIEs returning to their home country. Based on a sample of 248 New Zealand SIEs, using hierarchical regression analysis, the study finds that: 1) relational considerations, life style factors, and perceived economic opportunities in the home country pull SIEs home; 2) females, lack of social networks abroad, and availability of spouse job in the home country significantly enhances the likelihood to repatriate; and 3) SIEs with high overseas experience, located in Australia and North America, and European (Pakeha) ethnicity are less likely to repatriate. The study also showed that the impact of economic opportunities and relational considerations is moderated by gender and overseas experience (time spent abroad). The implications, limitations and future research direction are discussed. (For more information, please contact: Revti Raman, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand: revti.raman@vuw.ac.nz)