

# EMIGRANT INFORMATION PACK 2012



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# Introduction

## The Emigrant Information Pack 2012

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Emigration is a part of our history that sadly continues to repeat itself. The current economic crisis is once again forcing thousands of Irish people to go abroad in search of new opportunities. In many ways the experience of emigration has changed dramatically since the last generation of emigrants left our shores. Cheaper air travel means that, at least from Europe and North America, it is not as difficult to come home to visit. The emergence of technologies like Skype has made it less expensive and easier to stay in touch with loved ones. The internet has made it easier for emigrants to research opportunities and to build new networks and make connections. Many recent emigrants are well educated and are finding good, long-term positions abroad.

Despite these changes Irish emigrants today face many of the same challenges as the emigrants of previous generations. These include practical challenges -- finding affordable accommodation and good employment -- and social challenges, including trying to fit into a new culture and dealing with feelings of loneliness and isolation. Emigrants need to be prepared for the experience and, above all, it is crucial that they stay within the legal system of their host country. We hope the practical information contained within this pack will help people to prepare for emigration so it will be as positive an experience as possible.

With the focus on those leaving it can be easy to overlook the fact that emigration also affects those who are left behind. The emigration of a loved one can be a devastating experience for parents, siblings and other relations. We hope this Emigrant Information Pack will help to raise awareness of the reality of emigration and the effect it has on Irish families.

We would like to thank the Irish immigration centres and organisations that provided us with information about their work. These centres and organisations work tirelessly to assist Irish emigrants of all generations and contribute a huge amount. We would like to extend special thanks to the emigrants and families who kindly shared their experience of emigration with us. Their stories highlight the challenges facing emigrants and the significant impact that emigration has on family life.

When we interviewed emigrants for this information pack we asked what they missed most about Ireland and we kept hearing the same response -- family and friends. Clearly the most difficult part of emigration is the effect it has on human relationships. People can learn to live without Barry's tea, RTÉ, and an Irish fry, but emigrants never stop missing the people they have left behind and they in turn will always be missed.

# Message from Bishop John Kirby

## Chair of the Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants

As we prepare to celebrate St. Patrick's Day it is important that we remember and pray for our emigrant population. Sadly this population is increasing due to the difficult economic situation we currently face. Many Irish people are being forced to travel abroad in the hope of making a new life for themselves, leaving behind loved ones and creating a void in Irish families and parish communities.

Although the experience of emigration has improved in many ways we must not underestimate the challenges faced by Irish emigrants today. Many of these challenges are similar in nature to those faced by previous generations. In addition to practical assistance emigrants need spiritual and emotional support. I commend those who work tirelessly to assist Irish emigrants of all generations, particularly the Irish chaplaincies in Britain, Australia and the United States. They provide essential pastoral outreach to Irish emigrants as they strive to build a new life for themselves far from home.

As a Church and a people we must support those emigrants who for a variety of reasons may find themselves vulnerable, isolated and alone. We remember in particular the elderly members of the Irish community in Britain and elsewhere and the undocumented Irish people living in the United States. We also remember those who are imprisoned abroad and the work of the Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas which helps to ease the burden facing prisoners and their families.

May we be guided and affirmed by these words from *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*:

"May the Virgin Mother, who together with her Blessed Son knew the pain of emigration and exile, help us to understand the experience, and very often the drama, of those who are compelled to live far from their homeland, and teach us to serve them in their necessities, truly accepting them as brothers and sisters, so that today's migrations may be considered a call, albeit a mysterious one, to the Kingdom of God, which is already present in His Church, since its beginning, and an instrument of Providence to further the unity of the human family and peace".

Críost linn.



**John Kirby**

*Bishop of Clonfert*

*Chair of the Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants*

*March 2012*

# The Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants

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The Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants (IECE) was founded in 1957 and is the response of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference to the needs of emigrants prior to and following departure. The work of the IECE reflects the caring face of the Church and is particularly committed to the needs of the vulnerable involuntary emigrant. The IECE strives to be a significant voice on behalf of emigrants-condemning involuntary emigration and seeking rights and adequate services for them. It provides services for potential emigrants and, in conjunction with the host church, responds to the needs of the Irish as an immigrant community.

The plight of Irish emigrants in Britain was brought to the attention of the Irish Bishops in the mid 1950's by a group of Columban priests working in Manchester. Following their appeal and the obvious need for support the Irish Bishops' Conference asked that priests be released to minister to this wave of Irish emigrants. Initially the work involved celebrating the Sacraments; however, more and more attention was paid to the living and working conditions of these emigrants, many of whom were on the verge of destitution. The response was formalised by the Irish Bishops' Conference in 1957 when it set up the Irish Chaplaincy Scheme in Britain. This response was replicated in the United States in the mid 1980's when large numbers of young people left Ireland in the hope of a brighter future and again in Australia in more recent times.

The IECE is particularly concerned for those emigrants whose journey has been a difficult one. During the Supporting Irish Abroad (SIA) campaigns of 2004, 2005 and 2006, the donations made by so many Irish people provided funding for various front-line, outreach services. We are especially mindful of the elderly Irish emigrant community, the Irish Traveller community in the UK, our undocumented in the United States and Irish prisoners overseas. Funding has been primarily focused on these most vulnerable categories of Irish emigrants. The generosity of parishioners throughout Ireland has helped sustain the work of the IECE, as we continue to highlight the longstanding problems facing generations of Irish emigrants.

# Emigration Statistics

Figures released by the Central Statistics Office in September 2011 showed that there has been a sharp rise in emigration among Irish nationals. Between April 2010 and April 2011 overall emigration is estimated to have reached 76,400 and almost 53% (40,200) of those who emigrated were Irish nationals.

During this period there were large increases in emigration to the UK and the 'Rest of World' while there was a fall in emigration to the EU. 18,900 people emigrated to the UK; 4,400 emigrated to the USA; 22,900 emigrated to the EU and 30,100 emigrated to the 'Rest of World'. The CSO figures showed that 33,100 of those who emigrated were in the 15 - 24 age group and 34,400 were in the 25 - 44 age group.

Figures released by the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship showed that 11,911 Working Holiday visas were granted to Irish citizens in 2011, compared to 8,923 visas the previous year.

In the United Kingdom 16,130 national insurance numbers were granted to Irish citizens in the 12 months to March 2011. This was an increase of 56% on the previous year.

Canada issued 3,869 work permits to Irish citizens in the first six months of 2011. The quota for Irish participants in the 2012 International Experience Canada initiative is 5,350.

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# Information for Emigrants



## Emigrating to the United Kingdom

*The United Kingdom continues to be one of the most popular destinations for Irish emigrants.*

### **Visa**

One of the biggest advantages for an Irish citizen moving to the UK is that you do not need a visa to live and work there; however, it is necessary to obtain a National Insurance number if you wish to work or claim benefits in the UK. A National Insurance number is a reference number for the whole social security system. It ensures that the National Insurance contributions and tax you pay are properly recorded. You will need to give your National Insurance number to your employer. Call Jobcentre Plus on +44 845 600 0643 to apply for a National Insurance number. Lines are open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

### **Accommodation**

One of the biggest challenges people face in moving to the UK and to London in particular is trying to find good accommodation at an affordable price. Landlords often request two references-a personal reference and a reference from a previous landlord. You should have these documents and a deposit ready so you can act quickly when you find a property you like.

You should ask to see a Tenancy Agreement before you hand over any money. It is recommended that people do not arrive in the UK with the intention of applying for social housing as it may take months just to get on the waiting list.

### **Employment**

If possible you should begin your job search before you leave for the UK. Start by sending out your Curriculum Vitae (CV) to get an idea of the jobs available in your sector. Recruitment agencies may be useful depending on the industry. There are many job websites and these can be a good place to begin your search.

### **Health Insurance**

If you are ordinarily resident in the UK you will be entitled to free National Health Service (NHS) hospital treatment. You are ordinarily resident in the UK if you are lawfully entitled to be in the UK and you usually live there. You will also have the right to be registered with a GP, but it is up to a GP to decide whether to accept someone onto their list of NHS patients. You may be asked to show that your stay in the UK has a degree of permanence.



*Westminster, London, UK*



## What to Do Before You Go

- Research job opportunities and begin sending out your CV
- Identify several areas where you may find suitable accommodation
- Bring sufficient funds to live on until you get paid and to cover additional expenses like rent deposits
- Bring several forms of identification-passport, driver's licence, birth certificate
- Bring references from previous employers and landlords

## What to Do When You Arrive

- Contact Jobcentre Plus to arrange an interview to get a National Insurance number
- Make contact with a local Irish advice service as the staff there can assist with problems
- Register with employment agencies
- Register with a local GP
- Open a bank account-this may take some time if you do not have proof of address
- Meet people by getting involved in a local activity like a sports team or theatre group
- Register with your local parish and ask if there are other Irish people in the area

## Useful Contacts

Support & Assistance:

### **The Irish Chaplaincy in Britain**

50-52 Camden Square, London NW1 9XB

Phone: +44 20 7482 5528

Website: [www.irishchaplancy.org.uk](http://www.irishchaplancy.org.uk)

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### **Irish Embassy in London**

17 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7HR

Phone: +44 20 7235 2171

Website: [www.embassyofireland.co.uk](http://www.embassyofireland.co.uk)

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### **The Federation of Irish Societies**

Phone: +44 20 7833 1226

Email: [info@irishinbritain.org](mailto:info@irishinbritain.org)

Website: [www.irishinbritain.org](http://www.irishinbritain.org)

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### **Recruitment Agencies & Job Websites**

[www.adecco.co.uk](http://www.adecco.co.uk)

[www.hays.co.uk](http://www.hays.co.uk)

[www.monster.co.uk](http://www.monster.co.uk)

[www.jobsite.co.uk](http://www.jobsite.co.uk)

[www.reed.co.uk](http://www.reed.co.uk)





## “It’s a much faster paced way of life”

Mark works in digital marketing and moved to London in 2003 when he was promoted. He felt it was the best option for his career development and he had a network of friends who had also moved to London around the same time. This made it easier for him to get set up there.

Mark has found London to be an inclusive place and doesn’t feel he has faced any cultural challenges there, but does say that the lifestyle is quite different. “I do think it’s a much faster paced way of life . . . I don’t think there’s such a thing as a nine to five life.” He says people need to be prepared to put in much longer hours at work than they would in Ireland.

Mark’s experience of emigration has been very positive and he considers himself very fortunate. He thinks it may be more difficult for graduates coming out of Ireland now because the graduate population in the UK is very well prepared and career-focused. “People need to have their homework done if they’re looking for a job because it’s a very competitive environment right now.” But despite high UK unemployment, there are good opportunities. “The UK is a lot more advanced in ensuring that people who work hard, are qualified and have an aptitude for the job will go places.” He feels he has developed skills in London that he wouldn’t have developed in such a short space of time in Ireland.

Mark misses the convenience of life in Ireland and says that in London, everything takes longer so you have to really plan out your spare time. He finds the social life different and thinks that Ireland is a much friendlier place. London can be a tough place at the start, he says - your job will be really important in trying to develop a social network.

Mark would advise someone moving to London to be mindful of what part of London they will be working in.

How you should go about getting work depends on the nature of your industry: job websites tend to be quite effective, but it is also important to use any contacts you may have. You need to be patient about meeting people, he says, but adds that the good thing about London is that there are a lot of activities to get involved in.

He tries to visit Ireland as often as he can, but despite London being so close, it can be difficult. “There’s a big cost because London is a very expensive place, it is very difficult to save money in London. I think that’s a big challenge that a lot of people have.”



## “People are very welcoming”

Bridget moved to London in August 2011 after being offered a good job opportunity with a commercial law firm there. She has found people to be very friendly and welcoming.

For the first month she lived in a flat share and then moved into an apartment with a friend who had also moved over from Ireland. They were surprised that they had to pay a £600 estate agent fee even though they found the apartment on a website. They subsequently learned that everyone in London pays this fee, although it can vary from between £250 and £600.

Bridget would advise someone moving to London to research things like banking and mobile phone providers so they know about the best services available when they arrive. She also says emigrants should make an effort to get to know people. “I was lucky in that I did have a ready made network, but I suppose with any new experience you should probably go out there and meet people.”

Bridget doesn't feel she has faced any particular challenges as an immigrant in the UK. She finds it nice being so near to home. “It's not like you're in Australia where you can only get home once a year if you're lucky.” It's also nice for her parents to know that she's not on the other side of the world and that she can be home in a few hours if needs be.

## “I have married and settled here and raised a family”

Mary moved to Scotland in 1976 to continue her training as a nurse. One of the most difficult aspects of emigrating is being away from her family and “not knowing them as well as I would like because I have been away for so long and missed so much of their lives”. Mary found people in Scotland very similar to Irish people in many ways and had no problems fitting in there. “I have made a life here now and have good friends. My family is grown and I now have a gorgeous granddaughter. I don't have any challenges as an immigrant.”

# Information for Emigrants



## Emigrating to the United States of America

*While historically the United States of America was one of the most popular destinations for Irish emigrants visa restrictions can now make it difficult to live and work in the US.*

### Visa

Obtaining a visa is one of the most challenging parts of emigrating to the US. It is vital that you have a valid visa and only remain in the US as long as your visa permits. Working without a visa may lead to arrest, detention, deportation and a bar from re-entering the US.

### Non-Immigrant Visa

A non-immigrant visa allows you to visit, work or study in the US for a temporary period of time. The Visa Waiver Program allows an Irish citizen to travel to the US without a non-immigrant visa provided you are travelling for business, pleasure or transit only and you are staying in the US for 90 days or less.

There are a number of non-immigrant visas available, including the following:

- Student (F-1) Visa:  
a student who wishes to attend a university or other academic institution in the US requires an F-1 visa.

- Summer Work Travel (J) Visa:

this visa allows post-secondary students enrolled in a full-time course of study at an accredited academic institution located outside the US to come to the US to work and travel during their summer holidays.

- Temporary Worker (H) Visa:

the US does not issue work visas for casual employment. To take up a pre-arranged temporary job in the US you must get a petition-based temporary worker visa.

### Immigrant Visa

If you wish to live in the US permanently you will need to obtain an immigrant visa. This applies even if you do not plan to work in the US. Usually you can only receive an immigrant visa if someone (an employer or family member) files an immigrant visa petition on your behalf.



*Great hall at Ellis Island, Immigration Museum, New York, USA*



### Immigrant Visa Continued

There are several categories of immigrant visa:

- Sponsorship by an Immediate Relative: applies to a spouse of a US citizen; an unmarried child under 21 years of age of a US citizen; an orphan adopted abroad by a US citizen; an orphan to be adopted in the US by a US citizen; and a parent of a US citizen who is at least 21 years old.
- Sponsorship by a Family Member: applies to brothers and sisters of US citizens, adult or married sons and daughters of US citizens; and a spouse of a US permanent resident.
- Sponsorship by a Prospective Employer: this begins with the potential US employer filing a Form I-140 immigrant visa petition for the worker.

### Accommodation

The price of accommodation can vary dramatically depending on where you are living. Big cities, like New York, Chicago and Boston, can be expensive. Apartments are generally rented unfurnished so you will need to include money for furniture in your budget. Many landlords will require you to pay the first months' rent and a deposit in advance.

### Employment

When looking for a job you should contact any friends or family that you have in the US. Making contact with the local Irish community is also a good way of networking. You should prepare a one page résumé specifically for the American market. Make sure your résumé is simple and clear. You will need a Social Security number to work in the US. For more information visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

### Health Insurance

Medical treatment can be very expensive in the US so it is important that you have adequate health insurance. If possible try to get a job that includes healthcare cover. To find information about insurance options visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)

## What to Do Before You Go

- Learn about the visa categories and apply well in advance for the appropriate visa
- Contact an Irish immigrant support centre as staff there will be able to provide advice on visa categories and eligibility
- Bring sufficient funds to live on until you get paid and to cover additional expenses like rent deposits
- Bring several forms of identification-passport, driver's licence, birth certificate
- Bring references from previous employers and landlords
- Arrange temporary health cover
- Amend your CV and cover letter and bring proof of your qualifications

## What to Do When You Arrive

- Contact an Irish immigrant support centre in your area for advice and support
- Get involved with the local Irish community through Irish clubs and organisations
- Arrange adequate health insurance
- Open a bank account-you will need two forms of identification and proof of address
- Register with your local parish and ask if there are other Irish people in the area



# Useful Contacts

Support & Assistance:

**Irish Apostolate USA**

Email: [administrator@usairish.org](mailto:administrator@usairish.org)

Website: [www.usairish.org](http://www.usairish.org)

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**Irish Embassy in Washington**

2234 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20008

Phone: +1 202 462 3939

Website: [www.embassyofireland.org](http://www.embassyofireland.org)

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**US Embassy in Dublin**

42 Elgin Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Phone: +353 1 668 8777

Website: <http://dublin.usembassy.gov>

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Irish Immigration Centres:

**Irish Pastoral Centre Boston**

15 Rita Road, Dorchester, MA 02124

Phone: +1 617 265 5300

Website: [www.ipcboston.org](http://www.ipcboston.org)

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**Chicago Irish Immigrant Support**

4626 N. Knox Avenue, Suite 308, Chicago, IL, 60630

Phone: +1 773 282 8445

Website: [www.ci-is.org](http://www.ci-is.org)

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**Irish Immigration Pastoral Center San Francisco**

5340 Geary Blvd, Suite 206, San Francisco, CA 94121

Phone: +1 415 752 6006

Website: [www.sfipc.org](http://www.sfipc.org)

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**Aisling Irish Community Center New York**

990 McLean Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10704

Phone: +1 914 237 5121

Website: [www.aislingcenter.org](http://www.aislingcenter.org)

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**Irish Outreach San Diego**

2725 Congress Street, Suite 2G, San Diego, CA 92110

Phone: +1 619 291 1630

Website: [www.irishoutreachsd.org](http://www.irishoutreachsd.org)

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**Seattle Immigration Support Group**

Website: [www.IrishSeattle.com](http://www.IrishSeattle.com)

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**Irish Immigrant Service of Milwaukee**

Website: [www.ichc.net](http://www.ichc.net)

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**Job Websites**

[www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)

[www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)

[www.careermarketplace.com](http://www.careermarketplace.com)

[www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)





## “I wish I knew then what I know now”

Joe, who left school at the age of 16 without any qualifications, has been living undocumented in the US since the late 1990's and has only been home twice since then. He left because there wasn't enough work in Ireland.

Joe didn't know the ins and outs of getting a green card or applying for a visa. “I didn't know exactly what I was getting into until I arrived here...I wish I knew then what I know now.” Joe says that if he had known the situation he was putting himself in he would have done things differently. “There's no way I would have put myself in the situation that I'm in today.” If he had known more he would have gone somewhere else, like Australia.

He has missed many important family occasions, including the weddings of his brothers and funerals of his aunts and uncles. “You can't be with your family and friends in times of crises. That's very tough.”

Joe says that some people find it very difficult to cope with the loneliness and there is a bad drug problem within the Irish community. He praises the Irish Pastoral Centre in Boston for being one of the only places that steps up to the plate and does something for the Irish community.

The last time Joe was home was in 2002 for his father's funeral. He now has his own family in Boston and that is a great comfort to him. His wife has a green card and should get her citizenship next year.

Joe says it is very nerve-wracking knowing that if you're caught you will be detained in prison for six weeks before being deported and getting a ten year bar against reentry. “The only good thing that comes out of it is that you become one of the best drivers in the world because you're watching every speed limit and you're watching every sign to make sure you don't get pulled over.”

He believes there's roughly 3,000 - 5,500 undocumented Irish people in Massachusetts alone and he knows a lot of people in the same situation. Meetings are held to try and inform people about what is happening and he says the stories you hear are unreal. Last year a girl had a video sent over of her mother's funeral and that was how she got to say goodbye.

Joe would advise other people not to come to the US and live without legal status. “If anybody was thinking about coming over here I would tell them absolutely no way...If you can get a green card, get a visa, well and good, but do not come here and think you're going to be safe and sound... At the end of the day if you don't have status here you will go to prison if you're caught by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement).”

He doesn't see himself returning to live in Ireland. “I've been away basically half my life...My children are American citizens and I'm not going to take them out of here. I'm just away too long.” He does know investors in the US who are interested in bringing business to Ireland and he would like to bring more tourism to Ireland in the future through these contacts.

Joe says there's a great community atmosphere in Boston and he describes it as a home away from home. “There's such a big Irish community here, that's the one plus of being here.”

# Information for Emigrants



## Emigrating to Australia

*Good employment opportunities make Australia an attractive destination for Irish emigrants.*

### Visa

You will need to apply for a visa before leaving for Australia. The Working Holiday Visa is a popular option which allows people between the ages of 18 and 30 to spend up to 12 months travelling and working in Australia. The primary purpose of this visa is to allow you to travel so you can only work with each employer for a maximum of six months. It can be extended for another year if you have worked in regional Australia for three months on your first Working Holiday visa.

Another option is to apply for an Employer Sponsored Visa. This can be a temporary or permanent visa. The temporary 457 visa allows employers to hire overseas workers to fill skilled positions in Australia. This visa is valid for up to four years.

If you haven't been sponsored by an employer you may be able to apply for a visa under the General Skilled Migration (GSM) programme, provided your skills match those on the Skilled Occupation List. You can access a copy of Australia's Skilled Occupation List on [www.immi.gov.au/skilled/sol](http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/sol)

It is extremely important that you maintain your legal status at all times during your stay in Australia.

### Accommodation

The cost of accommodation may vary but can be high in cities like Sydney and Melbourne. When you sign a lease you may be asked to pay the first two to four weeks' rent and a bond which will amount to about four to six weeks' rent. Apartments are often rented unfurnished so you may need to include money for furniture in your budget.

### Employment

If possible you should begin searching for jobs online before you leave. Update your CV (called a *résumé* in Australia) so it is appropriate for the Australian market. When you arrive you should apply for your Tax File number (TFN) as you will need to provide this to your employer. For more information about applying for your TFN visit [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)



*Sydney Opera House, Sydney, Australia*



### Health Insurance

Australia has a reciprocal health agreement with Ireland which allows Irish residents visiting Australia to use the public health system for emergency treatment during their stay. This covers any ill-health or injury that occurs while in Australia and requires treatment before you return home. This agreement does not cover those in Australia on a student visa. There are many expenses that won't be covered by the reciprocal health agreement, including ambulance costs, prescription costs, outpatient costs and follow up care. You should therefore also invest in private health insurance. For more information about the healthcare system in Australia visit [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au)

### What to Do Before You Go

- If using a migration agent look for one registered with the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA)
- Bring sufficient funds to live on until you get paid and to cover additional expenses like rent deposits
- Bring several forms of identification-passport, driver's licence, birth certificate
- Bring references from previous employers and landlords
- Research job opportunities and start applying for jobs online
- Arrange temporary health cover
- Update your CV so it is suitable for the Australian market and bring proof of your qualifications

### What to Do When You Arrive

- Register with recruitment agencies
- Get involved with the local Irish community through Irish clubs and organisations
- Arrange adequate health insurance
- Open a bank account-you should bring your Tax File number (TFN) and identification
- Register with your local parish and ask if there are other Irish people in the area

## Useful Contacts

Support & Assistance:

### **Irish Chaplaincy Australia-Rev Tom Devereux**

*Parish of St. Patrick's, 2 Wellington Street, Bondi, NSW 2026*

*Phone: +61 02 936 51195*

*Email: [stpatbon@bigpond.net.au](mailto:stpatbon@bigpond.net.au)*

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### **Irish Embassy in Canberra**

*20 Arkana St, Yarralumla, ACT 2600, Australia*

*Phone: +61 02 6214 0000*

*Website: [www.embassyofireland.au.com](http://www.embassyofireland.au.com)*

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### **Consulate General of Ireland in Sydney**

*Level 26, 1 Market Street, Sydney NSW 2000*

*Phone: +61 02 92649635*

*Website: [www.irishconsulatesydney.net](http://www.irishconsulatesydney.net)*

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### **Australian Embassy in Ireland**

*7th Floor, Fitzwilton House, Wilton Terrace, Dublin 2*

*Phone: +353 1 664 5300*

*Website: [www.ireland.embassy.gov.au](http://www.ireland.embassy.gov.au)*

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### **Australian High Commission in London**

*(which handles visa services for Irish residents)*

*Australia House, Strand, London WC2B 4LA*

*Phone: +44 207 379 4334*

*Website: [www.uk.embassy.gov.au](http://www.uk.embassy.gov.au)*

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### **Irish Australian Welfare Bureau**

*2 Wellington Street, Bondi, NSW 2026*

*Phone: +61 02 9300 8019*

*Website: [www.iawb.org.au](http://www.iawb.org.au).*

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### **Job Websites**

*[www.seek.com.au](http://www.seek.com.au)*

*[www.jobs.com.au](http://www.jobs.com.au)*

*[www.jobsearch.gov.au](http://www.jobsearch.gov.au)*

*[www.gumtree.com.au](http://www.gumtree.com.au)*







## “Emigration is a Bittersweet Experience”

Mary misses everything about Ireland, especially tea and RTÉ, but she misses her friends and family the most. “I miss my new baby nephew who I haven’t even met yet...I miss all the family occasions.”

Mary emigrated to Sydney in 2010. Her fiancé had qualified as a solicitor in Ireland, but did not have any prospect of a job. They also decided to emigrate because they wanted to experience something different.

The biggest challenge they faced when they arrived was finding employment. They were lucky to have some family contacts in Sydney, but it was still not easy to find a job: “It was a completely unknown market and we had no contacts in our fields.” They began by contacting recruitment agencies, but this didn’t lead to anything. “We had to resort to sending CV’s out to everyone...at that point I was beginning to feel that it wasn’t going to work out at all. What changed it for me is that I did start getting to speak to people: my willingness to work for free (or little) to gain experience really helped me get my foot in the door.”

They also found it challenging to get to know people in Sydney. “I think the general feeling is that they see a lot of people coming through, a lot of English and a lot of Irish, and they just come and go in a year.” She began to feel more secure in Sydney as they became more settled: “It is quite a diverse society here so you’re not really an outsider.”

Mary thinks of emigration as both a positive and negative experience: “I hate the having to be here and not being able to go home. I think that tinged it a bit, the fact that we don’t have an option, but I do think that being here is great for my own

development and I think it’s been brilliant for both of our careers. I don’t think I’ll regret it...I just think the circumstance has tainted it a little bit.”

While Mary and her fiancé made an intentional decision not to become part of the Irish crowd in Sydney it’s hard not to meet Irish people. “You hear them everywhere-they’re in the queues in supermarkets...every time I go out walking in the park they’re there...When we went to Bondi beach on Christmas morning we passed the Church and it was like it was Croke Park, GAA jerseys everywhere...streams and streams of them, it was unbelievable.”

Mary describes emigration as a bittersweet experience and says that the biggest challenge is “getting back home again”.

## “I miss everything but the recession and the weather”

David left Ireland in October 2011 because of the recession and the lack of work at home. One of the biggest challenges he faced as an immigrant in Australia was trying to find work in a short space of time. He now has a job as a quantity surveyor and is getting on very well. He describes his experience of emigration as both good and bad: good in that he could avail of the opportunity to travel while gaining experience in his field, but bad that he had to leave.

David got involved with his local hurling team in Australia, but misses the social groups and organisations in Ireland. He also misses his family and friends, but doesn’t plan on returning to Ireland in the near future. He might consider moving home when there are more employment opportunities available.

# Information for Emigrants



## Emigrating to New Zealand

*New Zealand is now another popular emigration destination.*

### **Visa**

There are a number of visas available which will allow you to live and work in New Zealand. The Working Holiday Visa is available to Irish citizens between the ages of 18 and 30 and allows you to travel and work in New Zealand for 12 months. You must have a minimum of NZ \$4,200 to meet your living costs while you're there.

Temporary Work Visas are available for people who have a job offer from a New Zealand employer or are skilled in occupations that are in demand. There are several visa options available for people who want to live in New Zealand permanently. The Skilled Migrant Category offers the opportunity to move permanently to people who have skills, qualifications and experience New Zealand needs. If you're aiming for residency and your talents are needed by New Zealand employers you can apply under the Work to Residence category.

For more information about applying for a visa visit the Immigration New Zealand website at [www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz)

### **Accommodation**

The price of accommodation will vary widely depending on where you are living. You may be asked to pay a bond of up to 4 weeks' rent. Apartments are generally rented unfurnished so you may need to include money for furniture in your budget.

### **Employment**

Immigration New Zealand has an Immediate Skill Shortage List and a Long Term Skill Shortage List which show the occupations that are given priority for visas. When you arrive in New Zealand you should register with local recruitment agencies and search for jobs online. You will need to register with Inland Revenue and obtain an IRD number. For information about applying for an IRD number visit [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz)

### **Health Insurance**

In New Zealand publicly funded health care is available to citizens, residents and work-permit holders who have been issued with a work permit for a minimum of 2 years. Visitors to New Zealand must pay for health services unless the health services are needed as a result of an accident. For more information visit [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)

3



*Bay of Islands, New Zealand*



3

### What to Do Before You Go

- Bring sufficient funds to live on until you get paid and to cover additional expenses like rent deposits
- Bring several forms of identification-passport, driver's licence, birth certificate
- Bring references from previous employers and landlords
- Research job opportunities and start applying for jobs online
- Arrange temporary health cover
- Update your CV so it is suitable for the New Zealand market and bring proof of your qualifications

### What to Do When You Arrive

- Register with recruitment agencies
- Get involved with the local Irish community through Irish clubs and organisations
- Arrange adequate health insurance
- Open a bank account-you will need photo identification and proof of address
- Register with your local parish and ask if there are other Irish people in the area

## Useful Contacts

Support & Assistance:

**Honorary Consul General in Auckland**

Phone: +64 (9) 977 2252

Email: [consul@ireland.co.nz](mailto:consul@ireland.co.nz)

.....  
**Auckland Irish Society**

Website: [www.aucklandirish.co.nz](http://www.aucklandirish.co.nz)

.....  
**Wellington Irish Society**

Website: [www.wellingtonirishsociety.com](http://www.wellingtonirishsociety.com)

.....  
**Christchurch Irish Society**

Website: [www.christchurchirishsociety.co.nz](http://www.christchurchirishsociety.co.nz)

.....  
**Job Websites**

[www.seek.co.nz](http://www.seek.co.nz)

[www.hays.net.nz](http://www.hays.net.nz)

[www.newkiwis.co.nz](http://www.newkiwis.co.nz)

[www.jobs.govt.nz](http://www.jobs.govt.nz)



## “Ireland is still home”

Clíodhna initially left Ireland because she wanted the experience of living abroad for a year. In August 2010 she set off to travel around South America for a few months, arriving in New Zealand in December of that year. She is now living in Wellington, having experienced what she describes as “accidental emigration”.

“Initially I wanted the experience of living abroad for a year, it’s something I always wanted to do, but I really love Dublin and it was only going to be for a year.” Clíodhna hasn’t returned to Ireland because she’s worried about not getting a job. “I have a good life in New Zealand and I have a job...when I think about Ireland I want to go back, I want to see my friends, but you imagine it with a big grey cloud over it.”

She believes that while Irish people always want to travel the experience is very different at the moment. “When we grew up people had money and you did go for a year and you knew that when you came back you could decide what you wanted to do.” Clíodhna’s sister has lived in New Zealand for years. Five years ago there weren’t many other Irish people in Wellington. “Now, they’re everywhere. You go into a coffee shop you’ll be served by an Irish person and there’ll be another two tables of Irish people in there.”

Clíodhna found it very straightforward to get a visa for New Zealand. Getting a job when she first arrived was difficult, but there were a lot of recruitment agencies which were very helpful. She found a job in advertising, which is the area she had worked in Ireland and this allowed her to get a two year work permit.

Clíodhna’s experience of emigration has been very positive. The most difficult part is being so far away from home. “All your friends’ lives are changing... You worry if you ever do make it home are you going to fit in again, is everyone going to have moved on? That’s a big genuine fear.”

# Information for Emigrants



## Emigrating to Canada

*Canada is an increasingly popular destination for Irish emigrants. The majority of people settle in Toronto and Vancouver, but there are also good job opportunities in other provinces.*

### Visa

A large number of Irish people travel and work in Canada through the International Experience Canada (IEC) initiative. This allows people between the ages of 18 and 35 to travel and work in Canada for up to one year. To be eligible to participate in this working holiday programme you must hold an Irish passport that remains valid throughout your stay in Canada and have C \$2,500 to help cover expenses at the beginning of your stay. Participation in the IEC programme is restricted to two one year periods.

Although the IEC visa is very popular there are other options available:

- Skilled workers and professionals may be eligible to become permanent residents based on their ability to become economically established in Canada provided they have experience in certain occupations
- If you have two years full time work experience in Canada you can apply for the Canadian Experience Class visa
- Under the Family Sponsorship Programme Canadian citizens and permanent residents can sponsor certain relatives

It is extremely important that you maintain your legal status during your time in Canada. If you are planning to stay long term you may need to apply for your next visa long before your current visa expires. If you are found without a valid visa you risk deportation and having an exclusion order made against you.

### Accommodation

The price of accommodation can vary depending on where you are in Canada. The cost of living in Toronto and Vancouver is high. Apartments will generally be unfurnished so you will need to include a budget for furniture when you first arrive.

### Employment

While people tend to gravitate towards the bigger cities in Canada it is worth considering employment opportunities in other parts of the country. The provinces have their own immigration programmes for people who want to stay long term. Examining these programmes may give you a good idea of the jobs that are available in different provinces. You will need to prepare a Canadian-style résumé. Visit <http://www.canadavisa.com/canadian-employment-resume.html> for tips.

*Parliament Buildings, Canada*





### Health Insurance

All Canadian citizens and permanent residents are eligible for public health insurance. Each province has its own health insurance plan and in some provinces temporary workers may also be eligible for health care coverage. To find information about health care in Canada visit [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

**What to Do Before You Go**

- Research job opportunities in all provinces, not just in the bigger cities
- Update your CV so it is suitable for the Canadian market and bring proof of your qualifications
- Arrange temporary health cover
- Bring sufficient funds to live on until you get paid and to cover additional expenses like rent deposits
- Bring several forms of identification-passport, driver's licence, birth certificate
- Bring references from previous employers and landlords

**What to Do When You Arrive**

- Contact the Irish Canadian Immigration Centre for help and advice
- Get involved with the local Irish community through Irish clubs and organisations
- Research health insurance options and arrange private health insurance if necessary
- Open a bank account-you may need to present proof of identity, proof of address and your Social Insurance number
- Register with your local parish and ask if there are other Irish people in the area

## Useful Contacts

Support & Assistance:

### **Irish Embassy in Ottawa**

*Embassy of Ireland, Suite 1105 (11th Floor),  
130 Albert St, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5G4  
Phone: +1 613 233 6281  
Website: [www.embassyofireland.ca](http://www.embassyofireland.ca)*

.....  
**Irish Canadian Immigration Centre**

*67 Yonge Street, Suite 401, Toronto, Ontario, M5E 1J8  
Phone: +1 416 603 9549  
Website: [www.irishcdn.org](http://www.irishcdn.org)*

.....  
**Canadian Embassy in Ireland**

*7 - 8 Wilton Terrace, Dublin 2  
Phone: +353 1 234 4000  
Website: [www.ireland.gc.ca](http://www.ireland.gc.ca)*

.....  
**Canadian High Commission in London**

*(which handles visa services for Irish residents)  
1 Grosvenor Square, London W1K 4AB  
Phone: +44 207 258 6600  
Website: [www.unitedkingdom.gc.ca](http://www.unitedkingdom.gc.ca)*

.....  
**Job Websites**

*[www.irishjobs.ca](http://www.irishjobs.ca)  
[www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca)  
[www.monster.ca](http://www.monster.ca)  
[www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)*



# Information for Emigrants



## Emigrating to Europe

### Employment

Irish citizens can live and work in most EU member states without a visa.

These countries are:

|                    |                   |                       |                |                |                  |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Austria</i>     | <i>Luxembourg</i> | <i>Belgium</i>        | <i>Germany</i> | <i>France</i>  | <i>Sweden</i>    |
| <i>Spain</i>       | <i>Greece</i>     | <i>Portugal</i>       | <i>Italy</i>   | <i>Finland</i> | <i>Denmark</i>   |
| <i>Netherlands</i> | <i>UK</i>         | <i>Czech Republic</i> | <i>Estonia</i> | <i>Latvia</i>  | <i>Lithuania</i> |
| <i>Slovenia</i>    | <i>Slovakia</i>   | <i>Poland</i>         | <i>Hungary</i> | <i>Cyprus</i>  | <i>Malta</i>     |

Certain restrictions may apply to Romania and Bulgaria and those seeking to work in these countries should check visa requirements before travelling.

EU citizens can also work in Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Iceland and Norway.

### Health Insurance

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) allows EU citizens to access health care services in member countries. Applications for the EHIC are processed through Local Health Offices in Ireland.

Forms can be downloaded from [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)

*Prague, Czech Republic*





## Useful Contacts

Support & Assistance:

**Embassy of Ireland; Czech Republic (Prague)**

+420257530061

**Embassy of Ireland; Poland (Warsaw)**

+48228496633

**Embassy of Ireland; Slovakia (Bratislava)**

+421259309611

**Embassy of Ireland; Bulgaria (Sofia)**

+35929853425

**Embassy of Ireland; Romania (Bucharest)**

+40213102131

**Embassy of Ireland; Denmark (Copenhagen)**

+4535473200

**Embassy of Ireland; Estonia**

+3726811888

**Embassy of Ireland; Finland (Helsinki)**

+35896824240

**Embassy of Ireland; Hungary**

+3613014960

**Embassy of Ireland; Latvia (Riga)**

+37167039370

**Embassy of Ireland; Lithuania (Vilnius)**

+37052629460

**Embassy of Ireland; Sweden (Stockholm)**

+46854504040

**Embassy of Ireland; Cyprus (Nicosia)**

+35722818183

**Embassy of Ireland; Greece (Athens)**

+302107232771

**Embassy of Ireland; Spain (Madrid)**

+34914364093

**Embassy of Ireland; Portugal (Lisbon)**

+351213308200

**Embassy of Ireland; Italy (Rome)**

+39066979121

**Embassy of Ireland; Malta**

+35621334744

**Embassy of Ireland; Slovenia**

+38613008970

**Embassy of Ireland; Belgium**

+3222823400

**Embassy of Ireland; Luxembourg**

+3524506101

**Embassy of Ireland; Netherlands (Hague)**

+310703630993

**Embassy of Ireland; France (Paris)**

+33144176700

**Embassy of Ireland; Germany (Berlin)**

+49030220720

**Embassy of Ireland; Austria (Vienna)**

+4317154246





## “It’s essential that you make a stab at the language”

There were a number of reasons why Ronan and his Finnish wife decided to return to Finland in August 2010 with their two children. One of the biggest factors was the education system. Their son was nearly at the age when he would be starting school. Ronan and his wife preferred the Finnish school system, where children don’t begin until the age of 7, there are no uniforms and the teaching style is less formal.

Although Ronan was employed in Ireland the recession was also a big factor in their decision. “We were doing ok, I wasn’t let go or anything... but things were getting so much tighter, money wasn’t going as far...The atmosphere was really gloomy.”

For Ronan and his family emigration has been an extremely positive experience and he describes it as the best thing he ever did. Although he misses Ireland and his family Ronan found a good job in Finland that he really enjoys. He has found that in Finland there is a much better work/life balance- people do not work very long hours and they are encouraged to spend time with their families.

One of the biggest challenges Ronan faced in emigrating to Finland was learning a new language. He only spoke a few words of Finnish before they moved and had to study the language for a year after they arrived. He believes that when you move to another country in Europe it is essential that you make a stab at learning the language. “If you can’t [speak the language] this can worsen your sense of isolation.” Another challenge Ronan faced is the lack of an Irish community in the area- there is only one other Irish person living in their town.

Even though it’s easy to access Irish news and radio online Ronan still finds it can be difficult to get the chance to keep up with everything that’s happening at home. The advantage of being in Europe is that it is not too difficult for Ronan and his family to come home to visit. When he’s here Ronan thinks about moving home and while this could be a possibility someday, it won’t happen any time soon.

# Those Left Behind

## “We’re losing and have lost fantastic people”

Stephen’s daughter Julie left Ireland just over two years ago to work as a psychiatric nurse in the UK. The fact that Julie was forced to leave Ireland to find work came as a shock to her family. As a nursing student she and her classmates had been told that they would have plenty of choices when it came to getting a job. “Then suddenly within two years there were no choices, other than stay at home, look for agency work if possible or go somewhere else.”

Stephen’s fatherly instinct was to help her find a job and when he saw an advertisement in a Sunday newspaper for interviews the following week he cut it out and gave it to her. She went for an interview on the Tuesday and by Thursday she had a contract. “Part of me was thinking this is great...not in any way thinking of the fact that she was leaving and going away, it was the fact that she had gotten a job.” Within two and a half months she was gone. “Then the reality of the move dawned on us.”

Stephen and his wife have been to England to see Julie several times in the last few years and found it a great relief to see where she lives and to meet her friends who are a major part of her life now. Julie is doing very well there, having been promoted since she arrived and winning nurse of the year in her unit. “Another sad part of it is that the people for whom she works say that the training she got [in Ireland] was phenomenal...We’re losing and have lost fantastic people and it’s all around us.”

Stephen knows that his experience is not unique. A lot of his friends are in an even worse situation with more than one family member having emigrated to Australia or New Zealand. Around Christmas he found they were having a whole new set of conversations centred on the fact that they all had family members abroad.

Stephen and his wife also have two sons, one who lives close by and their youngest son who still lives at home. Stephen only fully realised the effect of Julie’s emigration on them when his eldest son opened up about it during his wedding speech. “We would not have known the feeling and anger that existed...He swore vengeance on the government...It was funny and sad at the same time...I think he was voicing the opinion of so many people in the room who are in similar situations.”

Although Julie’s emigration has been very difficult Stephen believes that it would have been worse if she had stayed at home not doing anything. At least in the UK she is doing what she wants to do.

The experience reminds Stephen of time he spent in the 1970’s working in a hostel for Irish labourers in London. “It was so common then...I was part of it, but not close to it.” It also reminds him of his own family history of emigration. “In my own father’s family, all of them bar himself and his brother emigrated to the UK in the late 50’s. So my father died not knowing that his granddaughter went to England. I’d say that would have been hard for him.”

## “I’m nine years down the road and every time I come back I feel I’ve left part of me behind”

In 2002 Joan’s daughter Siobhan left Ireland to study architecture in the UK. Travelling over to Liverpool with her the first time was a very difficult experience. “I came back on the plane and I felt everyone was looking at me because I couldn’t stop crying. I couldn’t go into her room when I went home. She was everywhere about me but she wasn’t with me.” It was a particularly difficult time for their family as Joan’s husband was diagnosed with cancer in the November after Siobhan left.

They travel to the UK often to visit Siobhan and Joan says that she now hates airports. “You try to be brave and not to cry...you walk away as fast as you can, but you’re still looking back, in the distance you can see them move away from you.”

Siobhan graduated the year that things slowed down in the construction industry and at first it looked like she would have to travel even further afield for work. “Certainly there was nothing for her in Ireland...She was the only person in her year who got a job and a month afterwards another girl was taken on in the same company; she was an Irish girl so that was a little comfort.”

Siobhan is now nearly qualified as an architect in the UK and is very ambitious. Joan doesn’t think she sees anything for herself in Ireland and it is unlikely that she will come back home in the next few years.

Joan says Siobhan’s emigration has had a huge effect on their family. “Each time she comes home or when we visit, when you part it’s the heartbreak all over again. You think you’d get used to it after nine years but you don’t.”

## “The strong family unit we had split”

While Deirdre regularly Skypes and texts her son in Canada she finds with the time difference it is not always easy to stay in touch. Ian is 23 years old and left Ireland to find work as an electrician. Deirdre found his absence especially difficult over Christmas and says their house is very quiet since he left. “He is missed a great deal; it was especially hard over Christmas. We also miss his friends calling and the activity that was around himself and his friends.”

# Working with Emigrants

## Irish Immigration Pastoral Center, San Francisco

The Irish Immigration Pastoral Center in San Francisco provides a wide range of services to Irish immigrants, including advice and support on issues related to immigration, accommodation, employment, education and social services. In addition to this the centre operates a senior outreach programme, mother and toddler groups, AA meetings and family sports days.

Fr. Brendan McBride, President of the Irish Apostolate USA, is chaplain at the Irish Immigration Pastoral Center in San Francisco. He provides pastoral care to the Irish community, giving vital sacramental services and providing marriage preparation courses. He says the services provided in the centre have developed over time in response to the queries they receive. A lot of the same issues keep coming up, but as people in the community get married and have children different issues also evolve.

For undocumented people particular difficulties can arise. For children that come from Ireland at a young age there may not be a problem at primary or secondary school level, but problems may emerge as they reach university level. Some people may not know they are undocumented and this can present a real dilemma for parents.

The centre is now seeing people with undergraduate and postgraduate degrees coming from Ireland. They try to encourage these people to get into their own field of expertise as there may be a possibility of sponsorship. Fr. Brendan says the difficulty is that a lot of people are coming with no practical training. The centre would encourage people to research what opportunities are available in their own profession and to build up contacts.

## Irish Canadian Immigration Centre

The Irish Canadian Immigration Centre opened in Toronto in January 2012. It is a national service providing assistance to Irish immigrants throughout Canada. The centre provides a range of services including assistance with visas, settlement issues, employment issues and social issues.

Cathy Murphy, Executive Director of the Irish Canadian Immigration Centre, recommends that before you leave Ireland you should consider where in Canada your skill set might be put to use. Everything, including the weather and job market, can change considerably depending on where in Canada you go. You should also prepare a Canadian-style resume so you are ready to begin applying for jobs straight away.

After you arrive in Canada you should contact the Irish Canadian Immigration Centre so they can put you in touch with Irish communities in your area. Cathy believes it is important for emigrants to get involved with Irish groups in the first six months as this is a great way to network. Networking is a big part of getting a job in Canada, particularly in corporate communities. Cathy also recommends that emigrants use the jobs website [www.irishjobs.ca](http://www.irishjobs.ca) which was set up by the Ireland - Canada Chamber of Commerce.

According to Cathy one of the biggest challenges facing emigrants in Canada is the lack of understanding surrounding the International Experience Canada visa. She says people should make sure they understand the rules regarding this visa before they leave for Canada.

# The Supporting Irish Abroad (SIA) Campaign



*I was a stranger and you welcomed me - Matthew 25:35*

A major part of our Biblical history focuses on God's people exiled from their homeland - 'How can we sing a song to the Lord in a foreign land?' Ps 137:4.

The acronym SIA is a Gaelic word meaning 'longer' or 'farther'. The aim of the campaign was to reach out to our brothers and sisters abroad through awareness, prayer and funding. The migrant chaplains and agencies, working daily with the Irish community abroad were well aware of the needs of Irish emigrants. The campaign was launched by Bishop Séamus Hegarty, Bishop of Derry and Chair of the Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants (IECE) on 21st of February 2004, at a function in the London Irish Centre, Camden Town. The SIA campaigns of 2004, 2005 and 2006 raised much needed funds (approximately €1.6 million) which are channelled through chaplaincies and agencies to pastoral outreaches that are always overstretched. The vast majority of this fund has now been utilised. The IECE on behalf of those chaplaincies and agencies owe a deep debt of gratitude to the parishes and dioceses that supported the SIA campaign and subsequent emigration collections.

Here are a few examples of how SIA funding is being used:

## **London Irish Centre**

The London Irish Centre provides a wide range of quality services. One of the many services provided is the London Irish Survivor Outreach Service (LISOS) which has been providing services to Irish emigrant survivors of institutional abuse. Their objective is to provide support, advice and information to those who experienced child abuse whilst in institutional care in Ireland.

A SIA grant has allowed the Centre to provide a continuation of the Day Service element to this group.

## **Aisling Return to Ireland**

The Aisling Return to Ireland project was started by workers in the London Irish Centre and Arlington House, the biggest homeless hostel in Europe which has been home to more Irish men than any other building outside Ireland. Aisling Return to Ireland project provides at least five fully supported group holidays to Ireland per year for long-term emigrants, fulfilling what is for many a dream of seeing their homeland again. Aisling is committed to supporting the most vulnerable members of the Irish community in this way and it makes a profound difference to the lives of this marginalised group.

A SIA grant has enabled Aisling to develop their Volunteer programme in the funding of the post of Volunteer Coordinator.

# Parish Resources

## Prayer of the Faithful

### **Introduction** (by the Presider)

Let us bring our petitions before God, confident that our prayers are always heard.

### **Intercessions**

(announced by the deacon, cantor or another person)

1. *We pray that the leaders of the Church will be guided by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.*

**Lord, hear us.**

2. *We pray that young people, inspired by the example of Patrick, may courageously take up the missionary challenges of our age as joyful witnesses of the gospel.*

**Lord, hear us.**

3. *We pray that those who have travelled from other lands to make Ireland their home may be warmly welcomed into our communities and may enrich us with their presence and their gifts.*

**Lord, hear us.**

4. *We pray for Irish people all over the world, that they may enjoy God's favour. We remember especially those who are lonely and those who cannot return home.*

**Lord, hear us.**

5. *We pray that Ireland and its people may always treasure their Christian heritage.*

**Lord, hear us..**

6. *We pray that those who have died may receive the crown of righteousness that is reserved for them. We remember in a special way all our Irish brothers and sisters who have died far from their homeland.*

**Lord, hear us.**

### **Conclusion** (by the Presider)

Heavenly Father, we thank you for our faith and the life and example of St Patrick. Hear the prayers we now make, in the name of Jesus, your Son, who is Lord forever and ever. Amen.

# Homily Notes

## **Emigrants as Missionaries**

Before Christmas 1963, I was a young missionary in Korea struggling with their so difficult language, when the since famous Jesuit Master General Fr. Arrupe and his Irish assistant Herbert Dargan visited the Missionary Language School. They remarked that the most unusual and successful mission story of all was that of St. Patrick and Ireland.

I was astonished at a foreigner saying this. They remarked that Patrick obviously grew to love the Irish in their strange ways even though he was a forced emigrant there.

As a missionary, he didn't try to change them – he adapted to their culture, Christianized their customs, their Celtic beliefs in the power of fire and water. He adapted to the Christian Practice of Paschal Fires and Holy Wells, even changing their May Day superstitions into blessings. They said that this is what we will be proposing about the essential Missionary Nature of the Church at the next session of the Council!

St. Patrick's people became hugely Missionary in a few generations and remained that way down the centuries, despite the many great obstacles it faced.

"It is an ill wind that doesn't blow some good".

Presently, our great economic crisis too can have some good effects. Our educated people leaving these shores can make a huge contribution by their quality of life and belief system to their new abodes.

Would the Catholic Church in England and Wales be so influential were it not for the 'ill wind' of the famine?

Would the Churches of the American and Australian continents be so strong were it not for the faith and practice of the Irish Emigrant?

Could the economic ill wind of the present day emulate the 1950's when the Irish people set up great lay missionary movements like the Legion of Mary and the Volunteer Service Overseas?

Could the shortage of Irish Priests and Religious inspire young people to take their place and form loving communities in their new abodes?

Could the new Professional Irish Emigrants be leaders and inspirational models to the new Irish Emigrants?

Can today's first reading inspire the new Irish 'not to be afraid' in professing and living their Christian values, 'for I am with you' (Jeremiah 1:4-9).

Can the respect that Paul and Barnabas give to the new people of Corinth be emulated by the new Irish in these new surroundings – where they will admire their hosts and contribute their values to them? (Acts of the Apostles 13:46-49).

Can our Emigrants be the light of the values as the Psalm suggest – (Psalm 115:12-19) and can we at home be proud to support and pray for them in their new surroundings?

And as Luke says, can they be disciples in their new countries – and can we inspire them to be that by our prayers and support? (Luke 10:1-12).

### **Sample Bidding Prayers**

- *During this Eucharist Congress year, may we as a Nation cry out for a deep Faith to share both at home and abroad.*

**Lord, hear us.**

- *We pray especially for the people who are working in the Irish Centres and Communities throughout the world.*

**Lord, hear us.**

- *We pray that our recent emigrants will remain true to their Christian values.*

**Lord, hear us.**

- *We give thanks for the great gifts that our forebears brought to the new lands, and may their efforts influence and inspire our emigrants today.*

**Lord, hear us.**

- *May our emigrants grow to love their new countries like St. Patrick did in Ireland.*

**Lord, hear us.**

### **Gerry French, s.s.c.**

Former Director of the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain



# Prayers for Emigrants

## **Lord Jesus,**

Who in the very first days of your earthly life were compelled together with your Mother Mary and your Father Joseph to flee your native land and seek refuge in Egypt, knowing the discomfort of emigrants.

Look kindly upon our brothers and sisters who are far from their native soil, from friends and family, and are struggling to come to terms with new life in a foreign land.

Guide them on their journey, stay close to them in their loneliness and comfort the family and friends they have left behind.

We pray Lord that we may be able to embrace them once more, at home or abroad, and for those that pass from this life, we pray that we may meet once more in your heavenly kingdom.

Amen.

## **Lord,**

Some may know the bleakness of life, its capacity to disappoint, the waning of energy or health.

Yet they have a place in the soul which time cannot touch, a wisdom and beauty from lives deeply inhabited.

May all of them know the warmth of their soul, the natural shelter around their lives.

In dignity and freedom may they return home to themselves.

Amen.

## **Lord,**

No one is a stranger to you and no one is ever far from your loving care.

In your kindness watch over refugees and exiles, those separated from their loved ones, young people who are lost,

and those who have left or run away from home. Bring them back safely to the place where they long to be and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and those in need.

*Roman Missal: For Refugees and Migrants*

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