

# Emigrant Information Pack 2016



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This pack is dedicated to the memory of Fr P. J. Byrne.

*Disclaimer: The Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants (IECE) is affiliated with the Irish Chaplaincy, the Irish Apostolate USA and the Irish Chaplaincy in Sydney. The IECE is not affiliated with any other organisation or website mentioned in this publication and cannot be held responsible for the content or material contained within.*



# Introduction to the Emigrant Information Pack 2016

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Although it has reduced, and despite improvements in the economy and a fall in unemployment, the number of Irish people leaving Ireland each year remains high.

Figures published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in August 2015 showed that 35,300 Irish people emigrated in the twelve months prior to April 2015, a drop of some 5,400 on the previous year. A total of 80,900 people of all nationalities left Ireland during the same period, 1,000 fewer than the year before.

While this is welcome news, emigration continues to have a profound effect on Irish society as many well-educated, enthusiastic young people travel abroad in search of new opportunities. It is imperative that those considering emigration are prepared for the experience. We hope that the practical information in this pack will assist emigrants in making informed decisions and support them while they are away.

In addition to useful information and advice on the primary destination countries for Irish emigrants, this pack provides a step by step guide for J1 students. It deals with the recent changes in the visa programme that now require students to secure a job ahead of travelling. In addition, we have sought to highlight the international role played by the GAA as a source of sporting and cultural enjoyment and an excellent network to help Irish emigrants connect with one another.

While emigration remains high, each year a significant number of Irish people also make the decision to come home (12,100 as per CSO 2015). No matter how long an emigrant has been away, it is important that they plan ahead for their return. This pack contains a considerable amount of information intended to assist those who are returning to Ireland to access the supports they require. In addition to practical assistance, emigrants need spiritual and emotional support. The Council for Emigrants, through its chaplains and agencies, continues to provide essential pastoral outreach to Irish emigrants as they strive to build a new life for themselves far from home.

A number of pastoral resources are contained at the end of this pack.



# Message from Bishop John Kirby

## Chair of the Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants

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Emigration continues to have a dramatic effect on our society as thousands of people travel abroad in search of new opportunities, leaving behind loved ones and creating a void in Irish families and parish communities.

As a Church and a people we must continue to reach out to those who are affected by migration. We must remember and pray for all Irish people overseas, those who have recently left our shores for the first time and those who have been away for many years.

We remember the families they have left behind and pray that they will find strength and comfort as they cope with the pain of separation. We also remember those who have travelled from foreign lands to begin new lives in Ireland. We pray that they will receive the same welcome that we would wish for our own emigrants far from home.

When discussing emigration it is easy to become bogged down with facts and figures, but we must remember the human face of migration. In his message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2016, Pope Francis said, 'at times we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father's action in our lives.'

He pointed out that migration continues to grow worldwide as more and more refugees are forced to flee their homes. Although this can challenge traditional ways of life, Pope Francis urges people not to take the suffering of others for granted.

'Today, more than in the past,' he says, 'the Gospel of mercy troubles our consciences.' He added that migration movements are now a structural reality, and the priority at this time must be to provide programmes which address the causes of migration and the changes it entails, including its effect on the makeup of societies and peoples.

In a desperate plea for justice, Pope Francis reminds us that migrants are our brothers and sisters in search of a better life, one in which poverty, hunger and the unjust distribution of the planet's resources is overcome.

Críost linn.



John Kirby  
Bishop of Clonfert  
Chair of the Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants  
March 2016



# 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. It shows the caring face of the Church and is particularly committed to the needs of the vulnerable involuntary emigrant. It strives to be a significant voice on behalf of emigrants, researching the ongoing needs of Irish emigrants, and creating awareness of these needs at home and abroad.

The plight of Irish emigrants in Britain was brought to the attention of the Irish Bishops in the mid-1950s by a group of Columban priests working in Manchester. Following their appeal and the obvious need, 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, over time, 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-1980s and again in Australia in more recent times.

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

## **THE EMIGRANT COLLECTION**

Each year a number of dioceses generously take up collections in support of the most vulnerable members of our diaspora. Monies raised are channelled through chaplaincies and various Irish emigrant welfare agencies to pastoral outreaches that are always overstretched. The IECE, on behalf of those chaplaincies and agencies, owes a debt of gratitude to the parishes and dioceses that support these emigrant collections.



# Emigration Statistics

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The number of Irish people leaving Ireland remains high, despite improvements in the economy and a fall in unemployment.

Figures published by the Central Statistics Office in August 2015 show that 35,300 Irish people emigrated in the twelve months prior to April 2015, a drop of 5,400 on the previous year. A total of 80,900 people of all nationalities left Ireland during the same period, 1,000 fewer than the year before.

Immigration has increased for the third consecutive year, with the numbers arriving here rising 14 per cent to 69,300. Irish people returning to live in Ireland from abroad made up 12,100 of that total, up just 4 per cent from the same period in 2013–2014.

The majority of those emigrating were either working or studying immediately prior to leaving Ireland, with fewer than one in seven unemployed. This was down from one in five the previous year.

The UK continues to be the most popular destination for emigrants of all nationalities leaving Ireland with 19,200 choosing to make it their new home. Canada saw a rise in numbers from 4,700 to 7,700 due to an increase in the allocation of Canadian working holiday visas at the beginning of 2014. Conversely, Australia experienced a significant drop in popularity amongst emigrants, with just 7,500 moving there from Ireland, down from 10,000 the previous year.

The number of Irish men emigrating continues to outnumber women, by 18,800 to 16,500.

# Information for Emigrants

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# Emigrating to the United Kingdom

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The United Kingdom remains the most popular destination for Irish emigrants.

## VISA

One of the biggest advantages of 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 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday.

## ACCOMMODATION

One of the biggest challenges people face when 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. Tenants are usually required to pay a deposit of one month's rent. You should ask to see a tenancy agreement before paying out 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 a waiting list.

## EMPLOYMENT

If possible, you should begin your job search before you leave for the UK. Start by sending out your CV to get an idea of the jobs available in your sector. Recruitment agencies may be useful depending on the industry. There are many recruitment websites and this 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 the 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.

## 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, driving licence, birth certificate;
- » Bring references from previous employers and landlords;
- » Read the London Irish Centre's guide for people moving to London. It is available on their website: [www.londonirishcentre.org](http://www.londonirishcentre.org)





#### 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 they can assist with problems relating to housing and employment;
- » 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 and you need to check what form of ID will be accepted by a particular bank;
- » 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

##### **The Irish Chaplaincy**

50–52 Camden Square, London NW1 9XB

Phone: +44 20 7482 5528

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

##### **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)

##### **Irish in Britain**

Phone: +44 20 7697 4081

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

##### **The London Irish Centre**

50–52 Camden Square, London NW1 9XB

Phone: +44 20 7916 2222

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

##### **ICAP (Immigrant Counselling and Psychotherapy)**

96 Moray Road, Finsbury Park, London N4 3LA

Phone: +44 20 7272 7906

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

##### **Mind Yourself**

CAN-Mezzanine, 49–51 East Road,

London N1 6AH

Phone: +44 20 7250 8100

Website: [www.mind-yourself.co.uk](http://www.mind-yourself.co.uk)

##### **Console UK**

Console House, First Floor, 34 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0RH

Phone: +44 20 7821 8865

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

# Emigrating to the United States of America

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While the United States is a popular destination for Irish emigrants, visa restrictions make it difficult to work and live there. Irish pastoral and immigration centres continue to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform, with the aim of creating pathways to citizenship for thousands of undocumented Irish people.

## 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 it permits. Working without a visa may lead to arrest, detention, deportation and a bar from re-entering the US.

## NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS

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 ninety days or less.

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

- » Student (F1 Visa): a student who wishes to attend a university or other academic institution in the US requires an F1 Visa;
- » Summer Work Travel Program (J Visa): this programme allows college students enrolled in a full-time course of study to come to the US to work and travel during their summer holidays;
- » Intern Work and Travel Program (J Visa): this programme allows Irish students and recent graduates to participate in internships and travel in the US for up to twelve months;
- » 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 VISAS

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. There are several categories of immigrant visa:

- » Sponsorship by an Immediate Relative: applies to a spouse of a US citizen; an unmarried child under twenty-one 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 twenty-one 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 month's rent and a deposit in advance.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

When looking for a job you should contact any friends or family 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 CV (called a *résumé* in the US) specifically for the American market. Make sure your *résumé* is simple and clear and can be understood by American employers.

### **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 coverage. Visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) for information about insurance options.

### **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 they 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, driving licence, birth certificate;
- » Bring references from previous employers and landlords;
- » Arrange temporary health cover;
- » 'Americanise' 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 may be asked for two forms of identification, proof of address and your Social Security number;
- » Register with your local parish and ask if there are other Irish people in the area.



## USEFUL CONTACTS

### **Irish Apostolate USA**

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

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

### **Irish Embassy in Washington**

2234 Massachusetts Ave NW,

Washington DC 20008

Phone: +1 202 462 3939

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

### **US Embassy in Dublin**

42 Elgin Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Phone: +353 1 668 8777

Website: [www.dublin.usembassy.gov](http://www.dublin.usembassy.gov)

### **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)

#### **Chicago Irish Immigrant Support**

4626 N. Knox Avenue, Suite 301,

Chicago, IL 60630

Phone: +1 773 282 8445

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

#### **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)

#### **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)

### **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)

### **Seattle Irish Immigration Support Group**

Phone: +1 425 244 5147

Email: [SIISG@IrishClub.org](mailto:SIISG@IrishClub.org)

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

### **Irish Immigrant Service of Milwaukee**

2133 W. Wisconsin Ave,

Milwaukee, WI 53233-1910

Phone: +1 414 345 8800

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

### **Irish International Immigrant Center**

100 Franklin Street, Suite LL-1,

Boston, MA 02110

Phone: +1 617 542 7654

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

### **Emerald Isle Immigration Center**

59–26 Woodside Avenue, Woodside,

NY 11377

Phone: +1 718 478 5502

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

### **New York Irish Center**

10–40 Jackson Avenue,

Long Island City, NY 11101

Phone: +1 718 482 0909

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

### **Irish Immigration Center of Philadelphia**

7 South Cedar Lane, Upper Darby, PA 19082

Phone: +1 610 789 6355

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

### **Irish Student Outreach Center**

3314 Coastal Highway,

Ocean City, MD 21842

Phone: +1 410 520 0344



# Emigrating to Australia

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Despite a decrease in the number of people who emigrated to Australia last year, it remains one of the most popular destinations for Irish emigrants.

## VISA

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

If you plan to apply for a second Working Holiday visa you are advised to do your three months in regional Australia as soon as possible after arriving. If you delay this you may not be able to fulfil the three-month requirement in time. You should also be sure to renew your travel insurance for your second year in Australia.

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.

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 Sydney, Perth and Melbourne. When you sign a lease you may be asked to pay the first month's rent and a rental bond which will be around four to six weeks' rent. Apartments are often rented unfurnished so you will need to include money for furniture in your budget. Landlords often request two character references, a letter from a previous landlord, photo identification, a letter confirming you have an Australian bank account and proof of employment. You should have these documents

and a deposit ready so you can act quickly when you find a property you like.

## 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. Visit [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au) for more information about applying for your TFN.

## SUPERANNUATION

If you spent time working in Australia, you might not be aware that you are entitled to claim back contributions made on your behalf by your employer into a pension fund.

Payment into a superannuation fund, which can differ depending on the sector you work in, starts when you earn more than \$AU450 a month, and contributions work out as 9 per cent of your monthly wage.

As the purpose of the fund is to provide for people's retirement, strict rules surround accessing the money before the retirement age of 65. This means that if you're a permanent citizen of Australia you can't claim it, but if your visa has expired, you should be entitled to claim it back. Before you leave Australia check how much is in your fund and enquire about transferring your fund to an Irish fund.

## HEALTH INSURANCE

Australia has a reciprocal healthcare agreement with Ireland, which allows Irish residents visiting Australia to use the public health system for immediately necessary treatment during their stay. This includes 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 so you should also invest in private health insurance. For more

information about the healthcare system in Australia, visit [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.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, driving licence, birth certificate. Certified copies of all documents of identification should be made and kept separately from the originals and a full set should also be left with family in Ireland;
- » Bring references from previous employers and landlords;
- » Research job opportunities and start applying for jobs online;
- » Arrange temporary health cover;

- » If you are emigrating with children, research school fees as these can be quite high;
- » Update your CV so it is suitable for the Australian market and bring proof of your qualifications.

Certified copies of all documents of identification should be made and kept separately from the originals, and a full set should also be left with family in Ireland.

#### 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 and identification. Usually if you open a bank account within six weeks of your arrival you only need your passport as identification;
- » Register with your local parish and ask if there are other Irish people in the area.

#### USEFUL CONTACTS

##### **Irish Chaplaincy Australia**

Rev. Gerard Moran  
Parish of St Patrick's, 2 Wellington Street, Bondi, NSW 2026  
Phone: +61 2 936 51195

##### **Irish Embassy in Canberra**

20 Arkana St, Yarralumla, ACT 2600, Australia  
Phone: +61 2 6214 0000  
Website: [www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/australia](http://www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/australia)

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

Level 26, 1 Market Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
Phone: +61 2 9264 9635  
Website: [www.irishconsulatesydney.net](http://www.irishconsulatesydney.net)

##### **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)

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

(which handles visa services for Irish residents)  
Australia House, Strand,  
London WC2B 4LA, UK  
Phone: +44 207 379 4334  
Website: [www.uk.embassy.gov.au](http://www.uk.embassy.gov.au)

#### LINK IRISH AUSTRALIA

##### **Brisbane – Irish Australian Support Association of Qld Inc.**

5 Abingdon Street, Woolloongabba QLD 4102  
Phone: +61 7 3391 1300  
(After Hours: +61 432 087 328)  
Website: [www.iasaq.com.au](http://www.iasaq.com.au)

##### **Sydney – Irish Support Agency**

2 Wellington Street, Bondi NSW 2026,  
P.O. Box 346, Bondi 2026  
Phone: +61 2 9300 8019  
Website: [www.irishsupportagency.org.au](http://www.irishsupportagency.org.au)  
Email: [admin@iawb.org.au](mailto:admin@iawb.org.au)

##### **Irish Chaplain**

Fr Gerard Moran  
Mount Carmel Retreat Centre  
247 St Andrew's Road  
Varroville NSW 2566 Australia  
Phone: +62 8795 3454  
Email: [irishchaplain@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:irishchaplain@sydneycatholic.org)

##### **Melbourne – Irish and Australian Support and Resource Bureau**

440 A High Street (Cnr Langwells Parade),  
Northcote 3070  
Phone: +61 3 9482 3865  
(After Hours: +61 407 317 539)  
Email: [iasrb@iinet.net.au](mailto:iasrb@iinet.net.au)

##### **Perth – The Claddagh Association Inc.**

Phone: +61 8 9344 7204  
(After Hours: +61 403 972 265)  
Website: [www.claddagh.org.au](http://www.claddagh.org.au)



# Emigrating to New Zealand

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With a mild climate and relatively low cost of living, New Zealand has become another popular destination for Irish emigrants.

## 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 eighteen and thirty and allows you to travel and work in New Zealand for twelve months. You must have a minimum of NZ\$4,200 in your bank account 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 the 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 will be asked to pay a bond of up to four weeks' rent. Apartments are generally rented unfurnished so you will 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 (Inland Revenue Department) number. Visit [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz) for information about applying for an IRD number.

## HEALTH INSURANCE

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

## 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, driving 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. Some banks will allow you to open an account before you arrive in New Zealand;
- » Register with your local parish and ask if there are other Irish people in the area.

#### USEFUL CONTACTS

##### **New Zealand High Commission in London**

New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket,  
London SW1Y 4TQ

Phone: +44 20 7930 8422

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

##### **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)

# Emigrating to Canada

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Canada is now a very popular destination for Irish emigrants and the quota for participants in the 2016 International Experience Canada (IEC) programme is 10,700.

## 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 eighteen and thirty-five to travel and work in Canada for up to two years. To be eligible to participate in this working holiday programme you must have medical insurance for the duration of your stay and have C\$2,500 to help cover expenses at the beginning of your stay.

If you have at least twelve months full-time skilled work experience in Canada you can apply for the Canadian Experience Class visa. Under the Family Sponsorship Program, Canadian citizens and permanent residents can sponsor certain relatives.

## EXPRESS ENTRY

Express Entry is a new electronic management application system for immigration to Canada. It facilitates the selection and processing of Canada's economic immigration programs: the Federal Skilled Worker Class, the Federal Skilled Trades Class, the Canadian Experience Class, and a portion of the Provincial Nominee Programs. Applicants make an 'expression of interest' in immigrating to Canada and, if they are eligible for at least one of the aforementioned programmes, they then enter the Express Entry pool. The federal government and provincial governments, as well as Canadian employers, are then able to select candidates from this pool who will then receive an invitation to apply for immigration to Canada under one of the programs. Express Entry moves Canada from a first-come-first-served (or supply-driven) system to an invitation to apply (or demand-driven) system. Modelled on similar systems in use in Australia and New Zealand, Express Entry aims to fast-track the processing of skilled immigrants deemed most likely to succeed in Canada.

## PERMANENT RESIDENCY

Permanent residency in Canada applies to those who are not Canadian citizens but who have been granted permission to live and work in Canada without any time limit on their stay. A permanent resident must live in Canada for two years out of every five, or they risk losing that status.

A permanent resident holds many of the same rights and responsibilities as a Canadian citizen, among others the right to work for any enterprise, as well as for the federal or provincial government (under restriction of access rights to certain regulated professions). The main differences are that residents cannot:

- » vote in elections in Canada;
- » run for elected office;
- » hold Canadian passports.

In addition, they may be allowed to join Canada's armed forces if the national interest would not be prejudiced.

Permanent residents may apply for Canadian citizenship after four years in Canada; however, this is not mandatory.

Permanent residents also risk deportation for serious crimes committed while residing in Canada. It is extremely important that you maintain your legal status during your time in Canada. If you are planning to stay in Canada 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 very high. Apartments are generally rented unfurnished so you will need to include a budget for furniture when you first arrive. Tenants will usually be asked for references and you may also be asked for employment and income details.



## 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.

## 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 healthcare coverage. To find information about healthcare 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, driving licence, birth certificate;
- » Bring references from previous employers and landlords;
- » Consult [www.irishcdn.org](http://www.irishcdn.org) for advice on visas, finding accommodation and employment, obtaining your Social Insurance number and opening a bank account.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARRIVE

- » Get involved with the local Irish community through Irish clubs and organisations;
- » Contact the Irish Canadian Immigration Centre for help and advice;
- » Research health insurance options and arrange private health insurance if necessary;
- » Apply for your Social Insurance number;
- » 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

### 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

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.canada.ie](http://www.canada.ie)

### Canadian High Commission in London

(which handles visa services for Irish residents)

Canada House, Trafalgar Square,  
London SW1Y 5BJ

Phone: +44 207 004 6000

Website: [www.unitedkingdom.gc.ca](http://www.unitedkingdom.gc.ca)

# Emigrating to the United Arab Emirates

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The UAE offers a high standard of living and the chance to earn a tax-free income, making it an increasingly popular destination for Irish emigrants.

## VISA

Irish passport holders will be granted a 'visit' visa on arrival in the UAE. This visa is valid for thirty days but can be renewed once for a fee. As a visitor you should have a valid return ticket and a passport which is valid for a minimum period of six months.

To work in the UAE you will need to be sponsored by an employer who will obtain work and residence permits for you. The work permit will be issued for the duration of your job contract. The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs advises that if you are planning to reside in the UAE you should get all relevant Irish documents attested at the Consular Section of the Department of Foreign Affairs before you travel.

## ACCOMMODATION & EMPLOYMENT

It is important to be aware that in the UAE it is against the law to live with or share a hotel room with someone of the opposite sex to whom you are not married or closely related. Business is done through English so language is not a barrier to employment.

As in all Muslim countries, Friday is a day of rest so the working week is Sunday to Thursday.

## HEALTH INSURANCE

There is no free healthcare for foreigners in the UAE so you will need to obtain travel insurance which will cover all medical expenses. If possible, try to get a job that includes medical insurance. Some prescribed and over-the-counter medicines available in Ireland are controlled substances in the UAE and you will require prior permission from the UAE Ministry of Health to

bring these medications into the UAE. A list of restricted and controlled drugs can be viewed at [www.uaeinteract.com/travel/drug.asp](http://www.uaeinteract.com/travel/drug.asp)

It is recommended that visitors contact the UAE Ministry of Health drug control department to check whether their medication is on the list of controlled medicines.

## LOCAL LAWS & CUSTOMS

It is very important to respect local laws and customs at all times in the UAE. Public displays of affection such as kissing and holding hands are considered disrespectful and may lead to a police caution or arrest. There is a zero tolerance approach to drink driving, and while alcohol is served in licensed hotels and clubs, it is a punishable offence to drink or be drunk in public. There are also serious penalties for possession of drugs and the presence of drugs in the body constitutes possession. The non-payment of bills and fraud (which includes writing a cheque that bounces) are also serious offences which can result in imprisonment or a fine.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Irish Embassy in Abu Dhabi

1 and 2 Khalifa Al Suwaidi Development  
19th Street (off 32nd Street), Al Bateen,  
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
Phone: +971 2 4958 200  
Website: [www.embassyofireland.ae](http://www.embassyofireland.ae)

### Abu Dhabi Irish Society

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

### Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Ireland

45–47 Pembroke Road, Dublin 4  
Phone: +353 1 660 0000  
Website: [www.uae-embassy.ae/ie](http://www.uae-embassy.ae/ie)

### Irish Business Network Dubai

Website: [www.irishbusinessnetwork.me](http://www.irishbusinessnetwork.me)



# Emigrating to Europe

Irish citizens can live and work in most EU member states without a visa. These countries are: Austria, Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany, France, Sweden, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Finland, Denmark, Netherlands, the UK, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Cyprus and Malta. EU citizens can also work in Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Iceland and Norway.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Contact Numbers of Irish Embassies Throughout Europe

Czech Republic (Prague) . . . +420257011280 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/czech-republic">www.dfa.ie/czech-republic</a>	Greece (Athens) . . . . . +302107232771 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/greece">www.dfa.ie/greece</a>
Poland (Warsaw) . . . . . +48225642200 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/poland">www.dfa.ie/poland</a>	Spain (Madrid) . . . . . +34914364093 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/spain">www.dfa.ie/spain</a>
Slovakia (Bratislava) . . . . . +421232338700 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/slovakia">www.dfa.ie/slovakia</a>	Portugal (Lisbon) . . . . . +351213308200 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/portugal">www.dfa.ie/portugal</a>
Bulgaria (Sofia) . . . . . +35929853425 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/bulgaria">www.dfa.ie/bulgaria</a>	Italy (Rome) . . . . . +39065852381 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/italy">www.dfa.ie/italy</a>
Romania (Bucharest) . . . . . +40213102131 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/romania">www.dfa.ie/romania</a>	Malta . . . . . +35621334744 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/malta">www.dfa.ie/malta</a>
Denmark (Copenhagen) . . . +4535473200 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/denmark">www.dfa.ie/denmark</a>	Slovenia . . . . . +38613008970 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/slovenia">www.dfa.ie/slovenia</a>
Estonia . . . . . +3726811888 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/estonia">www.dfa.ie/estonia</a>	Belgium . . . . . +3222823400 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/belgium">www.dfa.ie/belgium</a>
Finland (Helsinki) . . . . . +35896824240 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/finland">www.dfa.ie/finland</a>	Luxembourg . . . . . +352450610 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/luxembourg">www.dfa.ie/luxembourg</a>
Hungary . . . . . +3613014960 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/hungary">www.dfa.ie/hungary</a>	Netherlands (The Hague) . . +31703630993 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/netherlands">www.dfa.ie/netherlands</a>
Latvia (Riga) . . . . . +37167039370 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/latvia">www.dfa.ie/latvia</a>	France (Paris) . . . . . +33144176700 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/france">www.dfa.ie/france</a>
Lithuania (Vilnius) . . . . . +37052629460 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/lithuania">www.dfa.ie/lithuania</a>	Germany (Berlin) . . . . . +4930220720 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/germany">www.dfa.ie/germany</a>
Sweden (Stockholm) . . . . . +46854504040 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/sweden">www.dfa.ie/sweden</a>	Austria (Vienna) . . . . . +4317154246 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/austria">www.dfa.ie/austria</a>
Cyprus (Nicosia) . . . . . +35722818183 <a href="http://www.dfa.ie/cyprus">www.dfa.ie/cyprus</a>	

A list of countries where Ireland has an embassy or consulate can be found at [www.dfa.ie/embassies/irish-embassies-abroad/](http://www.dfa.ie/embassies/irish-embassies-abroad/)



# Emigrating from Northern Ireland

This section provides additional information for those who are emigrating from Northern Ireland and hold British passports.

## EMIGRATING TO THE UNITED STATES

The Visa Waiver Program allows a British 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 ninety days or less.

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

- » Exchange Visitor (J1 Visa): anyone wishing to take up prearranged employment, training or research in the US under an officially approved programme must obtain a J1 Visa. There are several exchange visitor programmes available, including summer employment programmes, intern programmes for university students and au pair programmes. The US Government requires that all applicants attend an interview with the US Embassy in London or Belfast. You must first have a confirmed job offer before you can get your J1 visa.
- » Student (F1 Visa): a student who wishes to attend a university or other academic institution in the US requires an F1 Visa;
- » Temporary Worker (H Visa): the US does not issue work visas for casual employment and, in general, work visas are based on a specific offer of employment.

If you wish to live in the US permanently you will need to obtain an immigrant visa. As of 1 February 2013, all individuals who are issued immigrant visas at the US Embassy in London must pay a \$165 Immigrant Fee before travelling to the US. There are several categories of immigrant visa:

- » Immediate Relative Visa: applies to the spouse, parent, step-parent, child or step-child under the age of twenty-one, of a US citizen and the spouse of a deceased US citizen;

- » Family-Based Visa: 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;
- » Employment-Based Visa: there are five categories: (1) priority workers; (2) members of 'the professions' and persons with exceptional ability in the sciences, arts and business; (3) professionals; (4) special immigrants, including religious workers; and (5) investors.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Consulate General of the United States in Belfast

Danesfort House, 223 Stranmillis Road, Belfast, BT9 5GR  
Phone (from within the UK): 020-3608-6998  
Website: <http://usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/belfast>

### US Embassy in London

24 Grosvenor Square, London W1A 2LQ  
Phone: +44 20 7499 9000  
Website: <http://london.usembassy.gov>

### British Embassy in Washington

3100 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20008  
Phone: +1 202 588 6500  
Website: <http://ukinusa.fco.gov.uk/en/>

### British Consulate General in Boston

1 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02142  
Phone: +1 617 245 4500

### British Consulate General in New York

845 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022  
Phone: +1 212 745 0200

### British Consulate General in Chicago

625 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 2200, Chicago IL 60611  
Phone: +1 312 970 3800  
Phone: +1 312 970 3800

## EMIGRATING TO AUSTRALIA

The Working Holiday visa allows British citizens between the ages of eighteen and thirty to spend up to twelve months travelling and working in Australia. The primary purpose of this visa is to travel so you can only work with each employer for a maximum of six months. This visa 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.

Australia and the UK have a reciprocal healthcare agreement and UK residents visiting Australia are entitled to the following health or injury treatments:

- » free treatment as a public in-patient or outpatient in a public hospital;
- » Subsidised medicine under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS);
- » Medicare benefits for out-of-hospital treatment provided by a doctor. If you are in Australia on a student visa from the UK you will be covered by Medicare.

## EMIGRATING TO NEW ZEALAND

A Working Holiday visa is available to British citizens between the ages of eighteen and thirty. Applicants can select either a twelve-month or twenty-three-month stay in New Zealand. To be eligible you must be permanently living in the UK, have a British passport that is valid for at least three months after your planned departure from New Zealand, and meet certain health and character requirements

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.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Australian High Commission in London

Australia House, Strand, London WC2B 4LA  
Phone: +44 207 379 4334  
Website: [www.uk.embassy.gov.au](http://www.uk.embassy.gov.au)

### British High Commission in Canberra

130 Commonwealth Avenue, Canberra, ACT 2600  
Phone: +61 2 6270 6666  
Website: [www.ukinaustralia.fco.gov.uk/en/](http://www.ukinaustralia.fco.gov.uk/en/)

### British Consulate General in Sydney

Level 16, Gateway Building, 1 Macquarie Place, Sydney, NSW 2000  
Phone: +61 2 9247 7521

### British Consulate in Perth

Level 12, 251 Adelaide Terrace, Perth, WA 6000  
Phone: +61 8 9224 4700

### British Consulate General in Melbourne

17th Floor, 90 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria  
Phone: +61 3 9652 1600

### British Consulate in Brisbane

Level 9, 100 Eagle Street, Brisbane QLD 4000  
Phone: +61 7 3223 3200

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### New Zealand High Commission in London

New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TQ  
Phone: +44 20 7930 8422  
Website: [www.govt.nz](http://www.govt.nz)

### British High Commission in Wellington

44 Hill Street, Wellington 6011  
Phone: +64 4 924 2888 (This number is not for passport or visa enquiries)  
Website: [www.ukinnewzealand.fco.gov.uk/en/](http://www.ukinnewzealand.fco.gov.uk/en/)

### British Consulate General in Auckland

Level 17, 151 Queen Street, Auckland 1010  
Phone: +64 9 303 2973



## EMIGRATING TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

British passport holders will be granted a 'visit' visa on arrival in the UAE. This visa is valid for thirty days but can be renewed for a fee. As a visitor you should have a valid return ticket and a passport which is valid for a minimum period of six months. Holders of British Overseas Citizens Passports who do not have the right of abode in the UK will need a visa to enter the UAE. To work in the UAE you will need to be sponsored by an employer who will obtain work and residence permits for you.

## EMIGRATING TO CANADA

British citizens between the ages of eighteen and thirty are eligible for the International Experience Canada (IEC) programme. This allows people to travel and work in Canada for up to twelve months. To be eligible to participate in this working holiday programme you must be a citizen of the United Kingdom and be able to demonstrate habitual residency in the UK for at least three years directly prior to your application. You must also have medical insurance for the duration of your stay and have C\$2,500 to help cover expenses at the beginning of your stay. If you have at least twelve months full-time skilled work experience in Canada you can apply for the Canadian Experience Class visa. Under the Family Sponsorship Program, Canadian citizens and permanent residents can sponsor certain relatives.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in London

30 Prince's Gate, London SW7 1PT

Phone: +44 20 7581 1281

Website: [www.uae-embassy.ae/uk](http://www.uae-embassy.ae/uk)

### British Embassy in Abu Dhabi

22 Khalid bin Al Waleed Street,

PO Box 248, Abu Dhabi

Phone: +971 2 610 1100

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/birth-embassy-abu-dhabi/office/british-embassy-abu-dhabi-main-contact](http://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/birth-embassy-abu-dhabi/office/british-embassy-abu-dhabi-main-contact)

### British Embassy in Dubai

Al Seef Street, PO Box 65, Dubai

Phone: +971 4 309 4444

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/birth-embassy-dubai](http://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/birth-embassy-dubai)

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Canadian High Commission in London

Canada House, Trafalgar Square,

London SW1Y 5BJ UK

Phone: +44 207 258 6699

Website: [www.unitedkingdom.gc.ca](http://www.unitedkingdom.gc.ca)

### British High Commission in Canada

80 Elgin Street, Ottawa ON K1P 5K7

Phone: +1 613 237 1530

Website: [www.ukincanada.fco.gov.uk/en/](http://www.ukincanada.fco.gov.uk/en/)

### British Consulate General in Vancouver

1111 Melville Street, Suite 800,

Vancouver, British, Columbia V6E 3V6

Phone: +1 604 683 4421

### British Consulate General in Toronto

777 Bay Street, Suite 2800, Toronto,

Ontario M5G 2C8

Phone: +1 416 593 1290

### British Consulate General in Montreal

2000 McGill College Avenue, Suite 1940,

Montreal, Quebec H3A 3H3

Phone: +1 514 866 5863

### British Consulate General in Calgary

3000-150 6 Ave SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 3Y7

Phone: +1 403 705 1755

# GAA

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*Footballers from clubs across Queensland take part in the Gold Coast's first Beach GAA Competition, January 2015*

Gaelic Games continue to flourish across Australia and New Zealand, due in part to the influx of Irish emigrants in recent years.

As a result, there are now GAA clubs and teams established in all major centres outside the popular havens of Sydney, Melbourne and Auckland, with clubs and competitions running in places like the Gold Coast in Queensland, to Darwin in Northern Territory, the island of Tasmania, and Wellington – the most southerly capital city in the world.

The GAA can help people to feel more at home away from home, allow them to continue playing a sport they love, provide an opportunity to meet members of the diaspora, and help combat the loneliness and isolation some emigrants feel.

Australasian clubs provide an invaluable social hub for young emigrants as well as more established Irish expats, seeking work, accommodation and like-minded friends. More often than not some players may not have played GAA for a number of years but are keen to maintain that all-important connection with home.

Clubs will happily offer assistance to new players and members with the practicalities of moving to Australia or New Zealand, including advice on what paperwork they should bring, courses they might need to complete and recruitment agencies they should register with.

Typically clubs can also help new recruits source employment through the network of connections they have with agencies, construction companies and their player base, likewise for accommodation. Facebook pages of clubs read like a noticeboard with information on everything from selling cars, suggestions on places to visit, the best mobile phone networks, to upcoming Irish community events.

The standard of Gaelic Games is pretty high across the region, particularly for ladies football and camogie, which continue to grow in popularity. In addition, with more Irish families now calling Perth home, the Gaelic Games Junior Academy of Western Australia has been established to provide an outlet for young parents to come together and help pass on our games to the next generation.

**For more information on the Gaelic Football & Hurling Association of Australasia or the clubs in each state please visit [www.australasiangaelicgames.com](http://www.australasiangaelicgames.com), like them on Facebook or email [pro.australasia@gaa.ie](mailto:pro.australasia@gaa.ie).**

# Safe Home Ireland: Coming Home



Established in 2000, Safe Home Ireland's work includes the following:

- » *Assisting* qualifying *older* Irish born emigrants to return to secure accommodation in Ireland.
- » Providing an *information and advice service* to anyone (regardless of age or circumstances) who may be contemplating returning or moving to Ireland.
- » As part of their *outreach work*, where it is feasible, they carry out home visits with Safe Home housing applicants throughout the UK.
- » Providing an *outreach and advocacy service* to those who have returned home, both through and independent of Safe Home and assist with readjustment and integration in Ireland.
- » Acting as a *link with home* for those emigrants who decide to remain on in their host countries. This is done primarily through their monthly newsletter, which is disseminated globally.

The most important message Safe Home wishes to get across to anyone considering a move to Ireland is to do their homework first and plan their move well in advance. This is particularly important if they have lived abroad for a long time or if they were not born in Ireland. The following are some of the issues to be aware of:

## **IRISH INSURANCE NUMBER (PPS NUMBER)**

One of the first things to do on arrival in Ireland is register for an Irish Insurance number (PPS number). This is the Irish equivalent of a National Insurance/Social Security Number. Some people may already have this number, particularly if they are in receipt of a part Irish pension or if they lived/worked in Ireland after 1979.

*To enquire about an existing PPS, contact:* Client Identity Services, Shannon Lodge, Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim. Telephone: Lo Call 1890 927999 or (071) 967 2616, after the recording, option 1 should be selected to get through to the Client Identity section or email: [cis@welfare.ie](mailto:cis@welfare.ie).

*To apply for a PPS Number:* PPS Registration Centres have now been centralised. People need to contact the local social welfare office in the area where they have returned to and they will advise where the nearest PPS registration centre is located or a person can check PPS Registration Centres on [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie). When going to the Registration Centre, the following documentation must be brought: (a) Birth cert (b) Photo ID and (c) Proof of residency in Ireland. Applicants must give a valid reason as to why the PPS number is required: e.g. starting work/applying for a benefit/applying for a Medical Card etc. There is no automatic entitlement to a PPS number.

## **HABITUAL RESIDENCE CONDITION (HRC)**

*Habitual Residence is a condition which must be satisfied to qualify for most social welfare assistance (means tested) payments.* For someone who lived outside of the State and is now applying for any means tested welfare payment on their return to Ireland e.g. Job Seekers Allowance, Disability Allowance, State Pension (Non Contributory) it is likely that a welfare application will also have to be accompanied by a Habitual Residence form – HRC1. This form is available to view or download on the Department of Social Protection website: [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).

Having to satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition applies across the board regardless of whether or not a person was born and reared in Ireland or is an Irish Citizen. However, anyone resuming previous residence here (e.g. returning Irish emigrants) will undoubtedly find it easier to show their connections to/in the country. Applicants who are being assessed for Habitual Residency should provide as much back up documentation as possible i.e. (a) Proof that shows they have cut all ties with the country they have left and (b) Proof to show their links to and in Ireland, and (c) Proof that shows an intention to remain here for the foreseeable future. It is also worthwhile to take advice from a relevant advice agency BEFORE submitting any claim for welfare here. This will help to ensure that the 'paper trail' of accompanying documentation is adequate.

## **HOUSING**

Ireland is going through a housing crisis at the moment and the level of available and affordable housing stock is limited, particularly in the urban areas. A person aged fifty-seven or older should contact our offices to check their eligibility to apply for housing through Safe Home.

Social housing waiting lists have increased over the years and eligibility has become even more bureaucratic and restricted. Equally, private rented housing stock is limited and has become more expensive in recent years. We strongly advise that people do not return to Ireland unless they have confirmed accommodation in advance. It might be possible or necessary to stay with friends or family in the short-term.

Those who intend to rent privately should view the most popular private housing listings which can be found on [www.daft.ie](http://www.daft.ie). Most landlords require prospective tenants to provide at least one reference, as well as paying one month's rent up-front and a deposit (usually one month's rent in advance).

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

The Health Service Executive (HSE) provides all of Ireland's public health and social services, in hospitals and communities across the country. Entitlement to health services is primarily based on residency and means, rather than on payment of tax or pay-related social insurance (PRSI). Any person, regardless of nationality, who is accepted by the HSE as being ordinarily resident in Ireland has eligibility to health services. A person is ordinarily resident if they are living in Ireland and have lived here, or intend to live here, for at least one year.

GP visits are expensive and can range from €50 to €70, depending on the area a person returns to. If someone has a low income they may be entitled to a Medical Card or a GP Visit card. Please refer to the following section on the HSE website – <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/> – for details of all public services in Ireland and how to access same.

## **IRISH SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM**

The social welfare system in Ireland is divided into three main types of payments (a) Social insurance payments: (for example, Jobseeker's Benefit); (b) Means tested payments or social assistance payments: (for example, Jobseeker's Allowance); (c) Universal payments: (for example, Child Benefit).

Most welfare payments require the person to meet a number of qualifying criteria in addition to the Habitual Residence Condition. If they have worked abroad and have paid social insurance they might be eligible for some social insurance payments. The person should bring a record of any social contributions made abroad, using forms E105 and U1 (formerly E301), which can be obtained from a local security office. Certain non-means tested social security benefits from another EEA country or Switzerland can be transferred to Ireland. If a person lived outside the EEA there might be a Bilateral Social Security Agreement between Ireland and the country they are leaving. This allows their social insurance contributions to be taken into account for the State contributory pension. It is important to note there is no automatic entitlement to access social welfare on returning to Ireland.



### **OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT**

To open a bank account in Ireland photographic identification (passport preferably) will be required and proof of residence in this country. Proof of residence usually requires providing two utility bills in a person's own name at their Irish address. This can be problematic if they do not have accommodation secured in advance and can delay benefits and pension transfer.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further advice, information or support contact us directly at: Safe Home Ireland, St. Brendan's Village, Mulranny, Co. Mayo. Tel: 00 353 (98) 36036; email: [info@safehomeireland.com](mailto:info@safehomeireland.com); website: [www.safehomeireland.com](http://www.safehomeireland.com)

Crosscare Migrant Project provides an information, advocacy and referral services for intending, existing and returning emigrants. 1 Cathedral Street, Dublin 1; tel: 00 353 (1) 873 2844; email: [migrantproject@crosscare.ie](mailto:migrantproject@crosscare.ie); Website: [www.migrantproject.ie](http://www.migrantproject.ie)

For details of Citizens Information Centres (CIC) on a county by county basis, use the FIND A CENTRE search on: [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie).

# A Parent and Student Guide

## Changes to J1 Summer Work and Travel Programme

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For almost 50 years, Irish students have been traveling to the United States with the Summer Work and Travel programme, which allows them the opportunity to work and participate in a cultural exchange in the US for up to 90 days with a J1 visa. The Irish Immigration Pastoral Centres across the country and their local communities have welcomed and supported these students over the years.

In late 2015, CIEE and InterExchange, the two largest sponsors of Irish students on the J1 Summer Work & Travel programme, announced regulation changes requiring pre-placed employment, affecting all Irish summer students intending to come to the United States in summer 2016. The regulation changes directly tie the programme to finding and securing an approved job. For the first time, potential participants from all visa waiver countries, including Ireland, who wish to apply for a J1 Summer Work Travel Visa will be required to find suitable employment in advance of receiving their J1 Visa.

To comprehensively explain the regulation changes, CIEE and InterExchange have created a joint website with information on the 2016 J1 Summer Work & Travel programme for students: <http://j12016.com>.

The Irish Immigration Pastoral Centres across the US are urging students to make preparations early for the summer ahead. Speaking on behalf of the Irish immigration centres across the United States, Celine Kennelly (Board Member, Irish Apostolate USA and President, Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers) stated, 'The US sponsors are seeking suitable employment opportunities for students in summer 2016, but it is critical that the students plan early this year and contact their sponsors with questions about the new regulations and programme process. Historically, participation in the J1 Summer programme has been a significant personal development experience for Irish college students and an integral part of their college education, and we want to ensure that it remains as such for future generations.'

The application process for a J1 Summer Work and Travel visa begins with the local agents in Ireland – USIT, SAYIT and TravelBug. These companies work on the ground in conjunction with the US sponsors and are responsible for the processing of the visa and in some cases the arrangement of travel.

**USIT** (partner agency with CIEE), the larger student-travel organisation in Ireland is advertising available jobs throughout the US including in popular destinations such as San Diego, San Francisco, New York, Cape Cod, Boston and Chicago. They charge a program fee of €499 which includes work eligibility processing, provides access to employer listings, organises meetings with employers and provides administration, back-up and support. Flight arrangements must be made with USIT. For further information visit [www.j1online.ie](http://www.j1online.ie)

**SAYIT** (partner agency with InterExchange) offers a significantly cheaper program fee of €299, which includes the same work eligibility processing and access to employer listings, but notes that: 'Jobs available through our sponsor InterExchange are extremely limited in California. If your destination is California, you must choose "I have my own job" option.' SAYIT also offers a free US sim card worth €30. Flight arrangements must be made with SAYIT. For further information visit [www.j1.ie](http://www.j1.ie)



**TravelBug** is the smallest agent in the market and had been offering a non-preplacement programme which, at time of printing, is fully sold out. They continue to offer two programme options – find your own job at a cost of €799 or have them find a job for you at a cost of €899. Flight arrangements can be made with any airline or travel agent. For further information visit [travelbuglimited.ie](http://travelbuglimited.ie)

Students who have contacts in the US through family, friends or neighbours should be in touch with them to get information on local employment leads. In an effort to provide placements for applicants, InterExchange and CIEE are reaching out to employers across the US and have already hosted jobs fairs in Ireland earlier this year. They are also facilitating online interviews to match employers with students. The sponsors have created an information website for potential employers who are interested in learning more: <http://hire.j12016.com>

Once a student has found a potential job, the host employer will be required to submit an Employment Offer and Agreement to have both their company and the job vetted and approved. In addition to the Employment Offer and Agreement which outlines the nature of the job being offered, the company will have to submit a copy of their business licence and their worker's compensation policy. These forms are available online at the respective websites mentioned above.

It is only when the company and the job are approved that the agent will approve and issue work authorisation for the student and the student will apply to the US Embassy for their visa. If the company or job is not approved, the student will need to source another job offer.

The visa application process with the US Embassy takes place online and requires the payment of two additional fees – \$160 visa application fee and \$35 SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) fee. The student will have to appear at the US Embassy in Dublin for an interview.

Once the student has begun the visa application process, they will have the opportunity to make their flight arrangements and to choose their health insurance plan. It is highly recommended that students choose the best possible insurance plan. There is no national health system in the United States so health insurance is vitally important.

Students and parents should be aware of the terms of the insurance policy including the **alcohol exclusion and extreme sports clauses**. Students in past years have been left with medical bills totalling hundreds of thousands of dollars when their insurance policy has not covered them.

The Irish Immigration Pastoral Centres across the country welcome students, local employers and community members to contact them directly with details of possible employment opportunities for J1 Summer students. Centres are happy to share information about the regulation changes and get potential employers connected with some wonderful Irish students.

The message for the 2016 J1 Summer Work & Travel Program is simple – prepare early and prepare well – if you are a student or an employer. Do your homework, make your connections and broaden your horizons. There are many amazing places, other than the traditional destinations, across the US where you can have a phenomenal J1 experience. The J1 is a rite of passage, a learning experience, an opportunity – make the most of yours.

# Homily Note

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On a recent visit to New York's Ellis Island, I was struck by the words of poet Emma Lazarus on the nearby Statue of Liberty, warmly welcoming immigrants from all nations. Holding the lamp way up high, with the words inscribed on the base of the statue, 'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free', the lamp lit the way for the early Irish emigrant; in the nineteenth and early twentieth century they arrived in huddled masses, leaving behind a life of poverty, never to see their home or loved ones again, bravely facing into a new life, a better life. The Irish emigrant that now arrives in New York is well educated and confident and more than likely will return home after a few years but they are still seeking and yearning, searching for a better life.

The final line on the inscription reads 'I lift my lamp beside the golden door!' Jesus is saying the same to us in the following scripture passage: 'You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden'. Men do not light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket. Rather, they set it on a stand where it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, your light must shine before people so that they may see goodness in your acts and give praise to your heavenly Father (Matthew 5:14-16). The Irish emigrant has made their mark on this world; in every field imaginable, literature, arts, engineering, medicine and sharing the word of God. Irish people let their light shine and changed the world for the better.

Today our challenge as people of God has changed, now we must open our arms and welcome those who travel horrendous journeys to the west in huddled masses, leaving behind a troubled life, and in most cases a country filled with war. Jesus said: 'When I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all people to myself'. (John 12:32) Jesus, who is the light of the world, is here encouraging us to faithfully follow in his way, by taking down the walls and bridges that separate us. Jesus asks us to welcome the huddled masses and make space for them to be free and let their light shine. This was the approach of the ancient Irish monks from Patrick's time. They received the stranger as Christ.

On another note, the lyrics of the well-known 1960s song, 'He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother', is a powerful phrase that draws us in, knowing that in all of our lives, on occasion we need to carry others in the midst of their pain. There are also times that we need to be carried by others. Immigrants and refugees are not heavy. In Christ, they are our brothers and sisters.



## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

**Presider:** As followers of Christ, let us attempt to open our hearts, hands and homes to the world view of Christ.

**Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

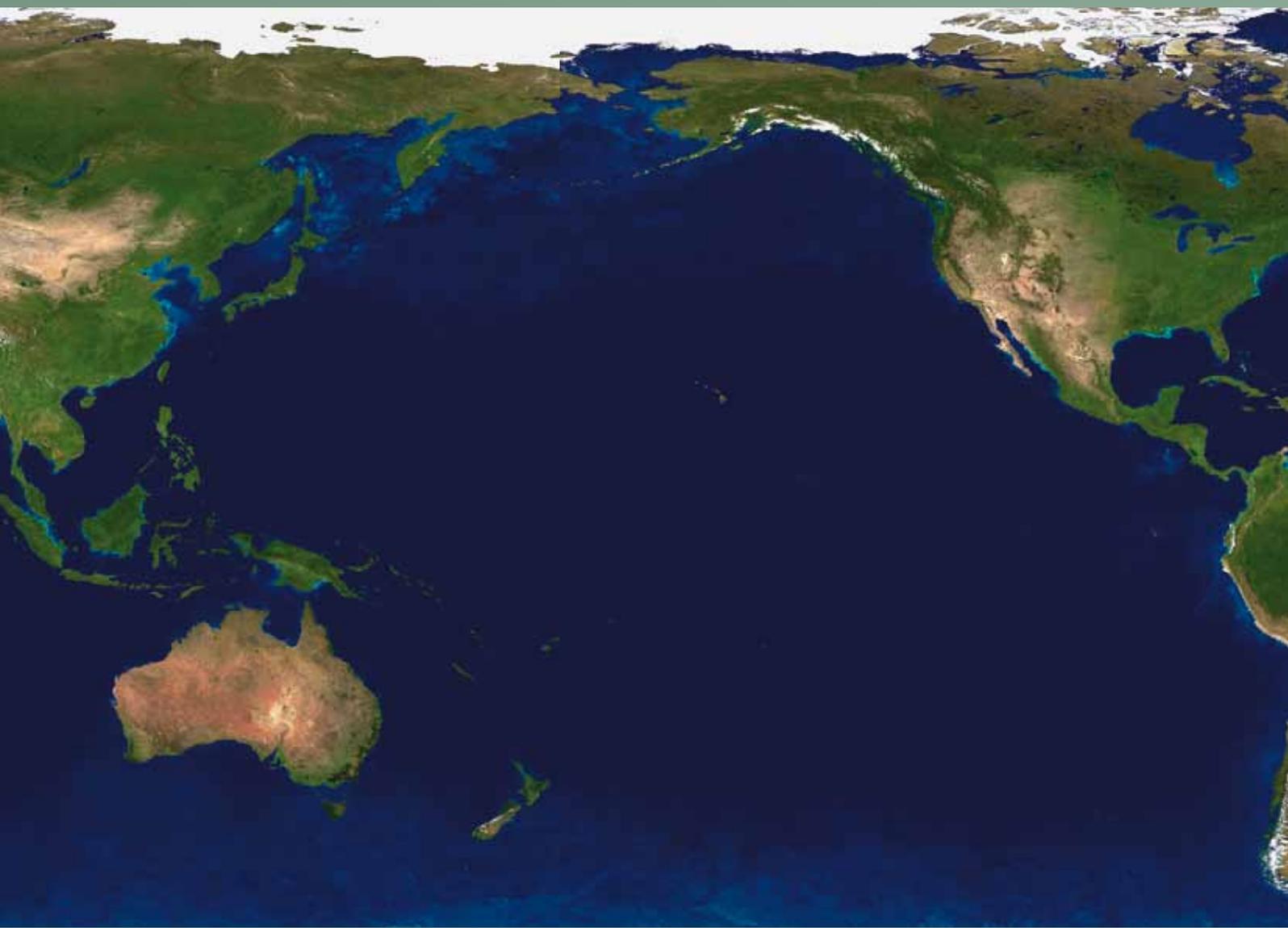
1. For Pope Francis, that he may continue to lead, guide and call us to solidarity with all migrants, refugees and vulnerable persons. **We pray to the Lord.**
2. For all migrants in this year of mercy, that they will bring the gift of mercy with them on their journey and receive mercy wherever they go. **We pray to the Lord.**
3. For Irish people throughout the world, that they may be welcomed wherever they go and work in safe and just conditions. **We pray to the Lord.**
4. For parents and families of Irish emigrants, that they may have peace of heart and mind in entrusting their loved ones to God's care. **We pray to the Lord.**
5. For those whose journey abroad has not been smooth, we especially remember those who are ill or in trouble. **We pray to the Lord.**
6. For those in prison far from home, that they might feel God's presence in times of despair and hopelessness. **We pray to the Lord.**
7. For those who died far from home and those who died at home far from loved ones, may they be reunited once again in God's eternal love. **We pray to the Lord.**

**Celebrant:** God of all nations, we rejoice today in St Patrick who first brought the Gospel to our shores. Keep us true to that faith and answer our petitions this day.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.







## Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants

A Council of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference  
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