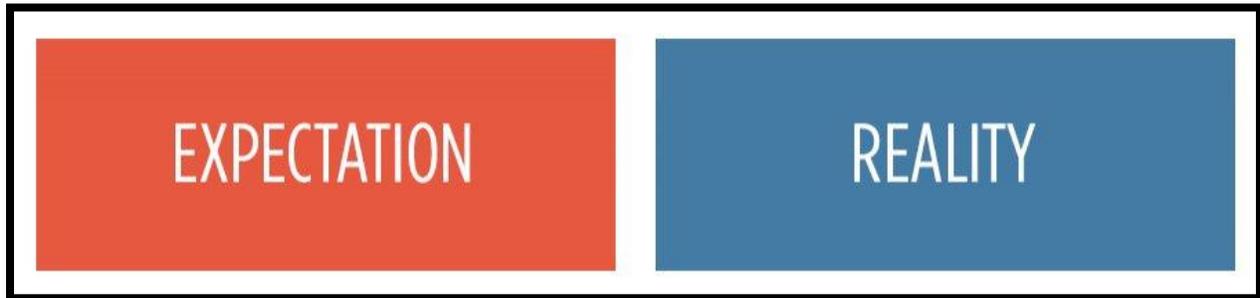


Coming to Canada: Expectations and Realities



Before you go:

You can prepare yourself emotionally by considering the excellent tips on:

<http://www.mindhowsyougo.ie/>

In addition also consider:

- **Funds**

Although we understand that given the current economic climate in Ireland savings are depleted, if possible, you need to come with funds on which to fall back. If you are coming on the IEC, you must have a minimum of \$2500 Canadian, but this is not necessarily enough. By the time you pay first and last month's rent, buy some furniture (Canadian apartments rarely come furnished), buy a cell phone, and stock your fridge, your savings will be close to gone.

If you are coming on the LMIA/temporary foreign worker program, you need to bring even more savings if possible. Those on the LMIA can be laid-off. As your LMIA is non-transferable, you will not be allowed to pick-up work elsewhere.

- **Resume**

You will need to "Canadianize" your CV. We call it a resume here. You will find a standard example on the Essential Guides page of our website. Have this done and ready to go upon arrival. As soon as you get a cell phone here, put your Canadian number on the resume. If you are staying in a hostel, list that address. Do not send out your resume until you have got a

Canadian phone and address. Do not list your nationality, date of birth, or work permit type on the resume.

- **Research**

Spend some time exploring your employment sector. Go on the job sites for each major city (all are listed on our website). See where the bulk of the positions are. Consider going outside of the well-branded cities such as Toronto and Vancouver. Read the major Canadian newspapers online to follow economic trends. Check out the Skills Recognition guide on our website to see what exams you may need to take upon arrival.

Employment Expectations:

Compared to most parts of Europe, Canada has a fairly stable (but not booming) economy at present. However, there is still a lot of competition for employment, especially in the major cities and especially amongst new graduates. Keep in mind that in the autumn of 2014 and the winter of 2015 there were major cutbacks to labour in both Alberta and Saskatchewan due to falling oil prices.

- Be prepared to take on a “joe-job” to get you by when you first arrive while you interview for roles in your sector.
- Expect to wait several months before landing a “career position.” The Canadian hiring system is slower than you will have been used to in Ireland. From posting to interviewing to second interviews to meeting the team and signing contracts will take weeks and sometimes longer.
- Be prepared for quiet times in hiring. Mid-November to early February and early June to September are very quiet. If you arrive in November, unless you are in a trade or the retail and hospitality sector, it is unlikely that you will find what you are looking for, even in terms of interviews, until mid-winter. The same is true if you arrive in mid-May—hiring will not pick-up again until September. Again, the trades are always an exception here.

Cost of Living:

- Food in Canada is more expensive than in Ireland. You will be surprised by the price of cheese or a pint. Bread, milk, all the staples are priced higher.
- Rent in the major cities is also higher than in Ireland. You will find a cost of living breakdown city by city on our website BLOG page.

- Furnished apartments: they don't exist in most major Canadian cities. The majority of landlords will expect you to bring in your own furniture. Ikea and GoodWill/Value Village are the cheapest options. Also watch local Irish FB pages to see if those going home are selling their furniture.

Geography:

Canada is the second biggest country in the world. It takes over a week to drive from one end to the other—our land mass spans 3 oceans. There are 10 provinces and 3 territories. In Ontario alone you can drive for two days and still be in the same province. If you live outside of a major city you will find your commute to be longer than that to which you are used. In certain parts of the country it will be difficult to function without a car. The major cities have subways, above ground commuter trains, light rail systems, and/or bus routes.

