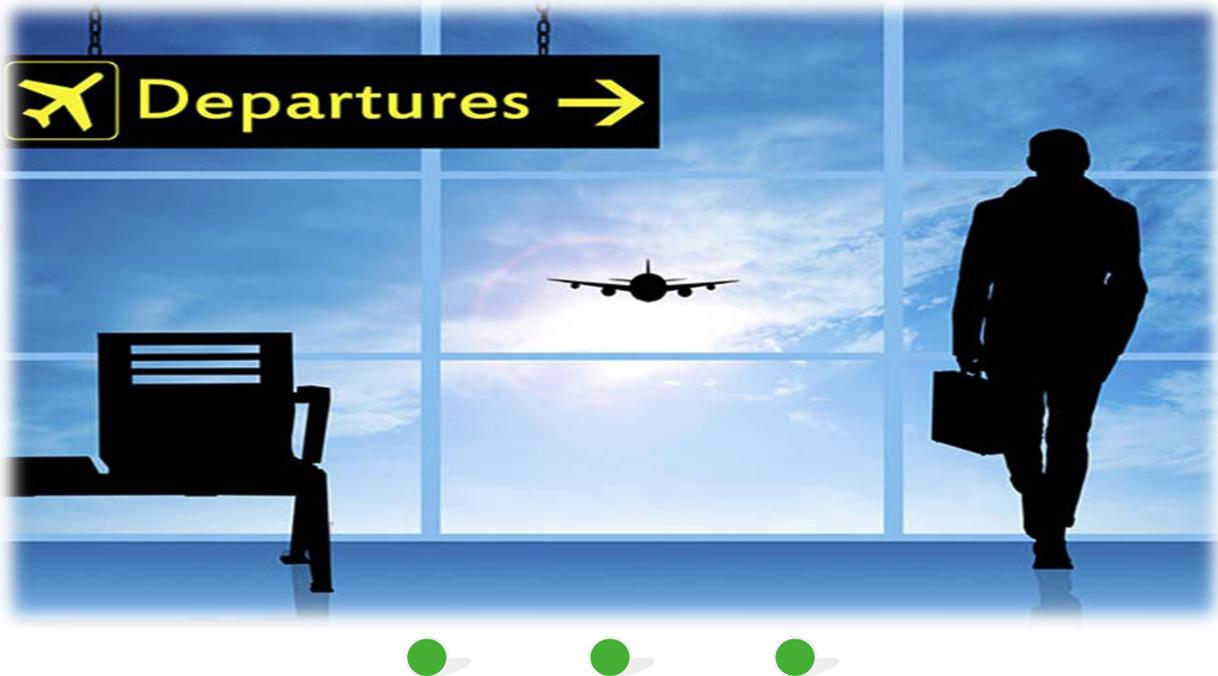


What You Can Expect to Feel After Immigrating



Before you go:

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

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

Also visit:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/after-life-shock.asp>

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/after-life.asp>

A new and challenging experience

This post will explain a few of the challenges you can expect to face in your new life here. The more you learn about Canada, the easier your adjustment to your new home will be.

Adapting to a new culture and country

Moving to a new country may be hard for some people. It is common to feel the following emotions when you first arrive in Canada:

- Discomfort
- Helplessness
- Frustration
- Fear

- Insecurity
- Uncertainty about how to behave
- A sense that your cultural beliefs and values are being challenged
- A sense that things are not predictable

STAGES of CULTURE SHOCK



Feelings of stress are common

Your first months in Canada will be full of change. You will face many challenges, especially if you have to upgrade your skills/gain credential recognition. You may have to take a first job or live in a home that is different from what you expected. You may need to get more education or training to get a job and build your new life here. This can create some stress in your life.

You can get help if you need it.

Contact the Irish Canadian Immigration Centre to find out what resources are available to help you cope emotionally. Please view our online guide: In a Crisis Pathways to Care (there is a Toronto guide and a national guide for major cities across Canada).

Common stages of adapting to culture shock

Though each person is different and will have a unique experience settling in to their new home, many people will go through four common stages of adapting to life in a new culture, often referred to as “culture shock.”

Stage 1: Happiness and fascination

Just before or shortly after arriving in Canada you may:

Have high hopes and expect great things

Feel this is a very exciting time

Feel everything is new and interesting

Feel confident and that you can easily cope with problems and stress

Tend to focus on what is similar between Canada and the culture and country you come from

Stage 2: Disappointment, confusing feelings, frustration and irritation

During the first six months you may:

Feel happy about the challenges you have overcome

Feel frustrated, confused and disappointed

Feel very positive one day and very negative the next

Focus on the differences between yourself and Canadians

Miss your family and feel no connection to Canada

Have difficulty going to work or looking for work

Feel loneliness for your country and loved ones

Feel guilty about leaving family members behind

Stage 3: Gradual adjustment or recovery

During this stage of adjustment you may:

Feel more in control of your life as you gain a better understanding of Canada

Feel more confident in your language skills

Gradually get involved in the community

Have a better understanding of how to adapt to life in Canada

Have a better sense of what you need to do to get what you want in Canada

Stage 4: Acceptance and adjustment

During this stage of adjustment you will likely:

Feel more comfortable in Canada

Have made some friends and be more involved in your new community

Understand better how things are done in Canada

Be studying, planning to return to school or working at better jobs

Generally feel content about having come to Canada

Learning how to adjust to a new culture

- Do not overload yourself or expect everything to go smoothly. It is normal for every person living in a new culture to experience stress and challenges.

- Understand that being aware of cultural differences is part of the process of getting used to your new environment.
- Explore cultural differences. This can help you avoid misunderstandings, make friends and feel more comfortable.
- Stay in touch with friends and family to avoid feeling alone and isolated.
- Involve yourself in the community as a volunteer; this is a good way to meet people who may have went through the same situation as yourself.
- Get involved in activities that interest you: music, sports, dance, art, learning a language, etc. You may also want to participate in your new community. Contact the Irish Canadian Immigration Centre to learn more about events or festivals taking place in your area.
- Accept that you and your family may have to grieve what you may have lost and left behind. This may include losing touch with friends and family, leaving pets or sentimental things behind or feeling lost in a new culture.

Respect differences

Canada's population of around 31 million people reflects a cultural, ethnic and linguistic mix that is unique in the world. Canadian multiculturalism is based on the belief that all citizens are equal and that diversity makes us stronger as a country.

