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A Guide to Working Holiday Schemes

June 2012

What are working holidays?

Working Holiday schemes are agreements made between governments of two countries to allow their citizens to travel and work temporarily in either country. The eligibility criteria and conditions differ from country to country, but usually the schemes are aimed at young adults who wish to travel to another country for up to twelve months and to find casual or temporary work there in order to fund their stay.

Employment does not have to be arranged before travelling. In general, you are required to meet health and character requirements, and you may be required to hold private health insurance for the duration of your trip and to provide police certificates. You are also generally required to have proof of reasonable funds to support yourself, and hold a return ticket or enough funds to purchase such a ticket.

What countries can I go to on a working holiday?

Ireland has Working Holiday agreements with the governments of Argentina, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea (South). These agreements allow citizens of Ireland who meet the criteria to apply for a Working Holiday visa to travel to any of these countries.

In addition to the Working Holiday schemes, Irish citizens may be eligible to travel to the USA under the 12 month Intern Work and Travel Programme (IWT Programme). In order to qualify for this programme you must either be enrolled in post-secondary education or have recently graduated (within the last 12 months).

I am not an Irish citizen. Can I apply for a working holiday visa to travel to another country?

The information in this leaflet relates specifically to Irish citizens. If you are not an Irish citizen you should contact the Embassy or Consulate of the country you are interested in going to, and check if there is a Working Holiday agreement in place with your country of citizenship.

Can I come to Ireland on a working holiday visa?

For information on coming to Ireland on a Working Holiday you should contact the Irish Embassy or Consulate in your country. For an overview of Working Holidays schemes in Ireland see the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs:

<http://www.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=80991>.

Disclaimer: This leaflet contains guidelines only. Crosscare Migrant Project has made every effort to ensure that the information in this guide is accurate; however, policies and legislation can change at any time. All information should be clarified with the relevant government department or authority before any decision is made. Please contact Crosscare Migrant Project if you have any questions.

Argentina

Age limit

You must be aged 18-35 inclusive to apply for this visa.

Visa duration

You must enter Argentina within three months of the date of issue of the visa. The visa is valid for six months from the date of issue. You can then renew the visa for a further three months at the Immigration Service Office in Argentina.

Conditions

- Your primary intention must be to holiday in Argentina, with employment being an incidental rather than the primary reason for your visit.
- You are not permitted to engage in permanent employment.
- You may register in study or training courses of no longer than three months duration (for example Spanish language courses).
- You cannot be accompanied by dependent children and you cannot include your spouse in your visa application. Your spouse would need to apply separately for a transitory visa.

Number of visas available

There are up to 100 visas available per year.

Application fee

€50.00

Processing time

Once all the required documents have been submitted and approved, a visa can be authorised in approximately two-three days.

How to apply

Irish citizens should contact the Embassy of Argentina in Dublin to obtain detailed requirements and an application form.

Further information

Embassy of Argentina, 15 Ailesbury Drive, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.

Tel: 01 269 1546 or 01 269 1713

Email: embassyofargentina@eircom.net or eirla@mrecic.gov.ar

Australia

Age limit

You must be aged 18-30 inclusive to apply for this visa (you must apply before your 31st birthday)

Visa duration

You must enter Australia within twelve months of date of issue of the visa. Your visa is then valid for up to twelve months from the date you enter Australia. You may be eligible to apply for a second visa if you meet certain conditions when you are on your first visa.

Conditions

- You can be employed in sector for a maximum of six months with each employer.
- You cannot be accompanied by a spouse or dependants.
- You need to show that you have access to sufficient funds to support yourself for the initial stage of your holiday (guide of \$5,000 AUD or €4,000 approximately).
- You must meet certain character requirements and health criteria.

Number of visas available

There is no cap on the number of visas available

Application fee

\$270 AUD (approximately €210 or £171 GBP)

Processing time

Service standard processing time is 6 days for a first Working Holiday visa, and 21 days for a second Working Holiday visa; however you visa may be processed more quickly than this. Generally online applications are processed more quickly than paper applications.

How to apply

You can apply online at www.immi.gov.au/e_visas/working-holiday.htm or you can apply by post. If you are applying by post, paper application forms can be found at <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1150.pdf>. If you have dependent children you must apply using the paper application.

Further information

Migration Branch, Australian High Commission, Strand, London, WC2B 4LA, UK

Tel: 0044 20 7420 3690

Email enquiry form: <http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/forms/europe/english/>

Web: www.immi.gov.au/visitors/working-holiday/417/

Canada

Age limit

You must be aged 18-35 inclusive to apply for this visa (you must apply before your 36th birthday)

Visa duration

Your Letter of Introduction will be valid for entry to Canada for twelve months from the date it is issued. You can then stay in Canada for twelve months from the date you enter. It is possible to apply for a second visa for another year; however you will need to leave Canada and re-enter in order to get your second work permit.

Conditions

- You must be a citizen of Ireland and you must be able to show that you have been physically living in Ireland for a minimum of three years directly prior to your application (temporary absence of up to 18 months for study or short-term work is permitted).
- You must have a return ticket or enough funds to be able to purchase a return ticket.
- You must have sufficient funds to support yourself for the initial stage of your holiday (guide of \$2,500 CAN or €1,950 approximately).
- You must have health insurance.
- You can still apply if you have a spouse or partner or dependents.

Number of visas available

There were 5,350 visas available to Irish citizens in 2012; however all of these have already been taken for 2012. If you are interested in this scheme for 2013, you are advised to apply early in the year as all visas tend to be used in the first half of the year.

Application fee

\$150 CDN (approximately €110)

Processing time

Approximately 8 weeks after the full complete application is received.

How to apply

A step-by-step-application guide and the application forms required can be found on the website of the Embassy of Canada (see details below).

Further information

Email: ldn.iec@international.gc.ca

Web: www.canada.ie (International Experience Canada section) or

http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/ireland-irlande/experience_canada_experience/index.aspx?lang=eng&view=d

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Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region)

Age limit

You must be aged 18-30 inclusive to apply for this visa.

Visa duration

Your visa will be valid for up to 12 months from the date you enter Hong Kong.

Conditions

- You must be an Irish citizen and you must be ordinarily resident in Ireland.
- You cannot work for the same employer for more than 3 months.
- You are not permitted to take part in study or training courses.
- You must provide evidence of a return ticket, or enough funds to purchase a return ticket.
- You must also be able to show that you possess HK \$20,000 (approximately €2,000).
- You must not be accompanied by dependents.

Number of visas available

There are up to 100 visas available to Irish citizens per year.

Application fee

Free of charge

Processing time

It will normally take two weeks to process your visa application.

How to apply

You can get a copy of the guidelines and an application form online at <http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/fholiday.htm>, or from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Dublin. Applications can be made by post or in person directly to the Immigration Department in Hong Kong, or to the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Dublin (details below).

Further information

Employment and Visit Visas Section, Hong Kong Immigration Department, 24/F Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Tel: 00852 2824 6111

Email: enquiry@immd.gov.hk

Web: http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/hkvisas_10.htm

Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 40 Ailesbury Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Tel: 01 219 6651

Japan

Age limit

You must be aged 18-25 inclusive in order to apply for this visa. The upper age limit may be extended to 30 on agreement with the authorities of the Government of Japan

Visa duration

Your visa will be valid for up to 12 months from the date you enter Japan.

Conditions

- You must be an Irish citizen and you must be resident in Ireland.
- You must not be accompanied by dependents.
- You must be in good health and have no criminal record.
- You must have health insurance.
- You must be able to show that you possess €3,200, or else have a return ticket and €1,600.
- Your visa is valid for a single entry only. You must obtain a re-entry permit before leaving Japan if you plan to return.

Number of visas available

There are up to 400 visas available to Irish citizens per year.

Application fee

Free of charge

Processing time

You should apply at least three weeks before your planned departure date.

How to apply

Irish citizens should contact the Embassy of Japan in Dublin to obtain detailed requirements and an application form. Application forms are also available online at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/toko/visa/pdfs/application1.pdf>. Applications should be made in person at the Embassy of Japan in Ireland, and applicants may be interviewed.

Further information

Embassy of Japan in Ireland, Nutley Building, Merrion Centre, Nutley Lane, Dublin 4

Tel: 01 202 8300

Email: consular@embjp.ie

Web: <http://www.ie.emb-japan.go.jp/workingholidayinfo.htm>

New Zealand

Age limit

You must be aged 18-30 inclusive to apply for this visa.

Visa duration

You must enter New Zealand within twelve months of the date the visa is issued.
Your visa is then valid for up to twelve months from the date you enter New Zealand.

Conditions

- You must be a citizen of Ireland.
- You must not be accompanied by dependents.
- You must not take up permanent employment.
- You can take part in study or training courses for up to three months.
- You must provide evidence of a return ticket, or enough funds to purchase a return ticket.
- You must also be able to show that you possess NZ \$4,200 (approximately €2,575).
- You must meet health and character requirements.

Number of visas available

There is no cap on the number of visas available.

Application fee

£75 GBP (approximately €93)

Processing time

If you apply online you will receive a response within a matter of days. Generally online applications are processed more quickly than paper applications.

How to apply

You can apply online at <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/secure/default.htm>. Or else you can apply by post via the London Branch of Immigration New Zealand (details below). If you are applying by post, paper application forms are available at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/work/workingholiday/howdoiapply>.

Further information

Immigration New Zealand, Mezzanine Floor, NZ House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TE, UK

Tel: 0044 1245 454449

Email: workingholiday@dol.govt.nz

Web:

<http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/work/workingholiday/irelandworkingholidayscheme.htm>

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Republic of Korea (South Korea)

Age limit

You must be aged 18-30 inclusive to apply for this visa.

Visa duration

Your visa is valid for twelve months from the date of issue.

You may stay in Korea for a maximum of twelve months from the date you enter.

Conditions

- You must be an Irish citizen.
- You cannot be accompanied by a spouse or dependents.
- You cannot engage in full-time permanent employment.
- You may enroll in a course of study or training for a maximum of six months.
- You must possess a return ticket or enough money to buy a return ticket.
- You must be able to show that you possess sufficient funds (€1,800)
- You must agree to undertake a medical and you must have health insurance to cover your stay in Korea.
- You must not have a criminal record.

Number of visas available

There are up to 400 visas available to Irish citizens per year.

Application fee

€60

Processing time

Not stated

How to apply

Irish citizens should contact the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Dublin to obtain detailed requirements and an application form.

Further information

Embassy of the Republic of Korea, 15 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Tel: 01 668 8800 or 01 660 8053

Email: irekoremb@mofat.go.kr

Web: <http://irl.mofat.go.kr/english/eu/irl/visa/workingholiday/index.jsp>

United States of America (Intern Work and Travel Programme)

Age limit

You must be over 18.

Visa duration

This visa allows you to stay in the United States for up to 12 months.

Conditions

- You must be a citizen of Ireland.
- You must be currently enrolled and participating in a post-secondary college or university course or a FETAC course equivalent to or higher than Level 6 of the Irish Higher Education System; or you must have graduated from such a course within the last twelve months.
- You cannot be accompanied by a spouse or dependents.

Number of visas available

There are 20,000 visas available to Irish citizens under this programme.

Application fee

The fees vary depending on which sponsoring organisation you decide to use, but on average the programme fees are €600 - €700. In addition to the programme fee, you will also have to pay a SEVIS fee of US\$180 and a visa application fee of US\$160.

Processing time

This may depend on which sponsoring organisation you use, but on average it will take approximately six - eight weeks to process your application.

How to apply

You must make your application through an approved sponsoring organisation. It is not possible to apply directly through the US Embassy.

Further information

Contact one of the sponsoring organisations for more details and to obtain guidelines and application forms.

You will find contact details for sponsoring organisations and more detailed information at <http://www.migrantproject.ie/documents/USA12monthvisa.pdf>.

See also <http://dublin.usembassy.gov/general/twelve-month-intern-work-and-travel-pilot-program.html>.