

- in addition to its training role with Emigrant Advice Network in 2004, Emigrant Advice ran a workshop at the EAN international conference in December '04.
- joined with other voluntary sector organisations campaigned for a 'No' vote in the citizenship referendum and used opportunities like the screening of **RTE's Primetime** specials and the launch of its publications to reiterate its call for the implementation of the recommendations of the **Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrants**

- Justice and Faith and further networking with UK agencies via the Federation of Irish Societies
- The development of its outreach 'Immigration' service and the further publicity of the outreach service through articles in relevant newsletters, distribution of Emigrant Advice documentation by relevant organisations
- The development of the the Work Exploitation Section of Emigrant Advice where Emigrant Advice will work with migrant workers who have suffered exploitation to help them prepare for Rights Commissioner hearings and will represent them at Employment Appeals Tribunal hearings. It will use exploitation case work to advocate for the enforcement of employment law protecting the rights of migrant workers and will lobby for greater State protection of non-Irish nationals working in Ireland
- Further development of the campaigning role of Emigrant Advice where trends in client work will be used to campaign for relevant changes in policy and procedures effecting migrants in vulnerable situations.

## PRIORITIES FOR '05

In 2005 Emigrant Advice will prioritise:

- The development of **Returning to Ireland** and pre-departure information packs and training on how to use them;
- The further development of its Outreach 'Emigration' service by developing links with Probation in prisons, youth services (including inputs at Youthreach centres), the Centre for

PUBLICATIONS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FROM EMIGRANT ADVICE INCLUDE:



**crosscare**

In 2004, Emigrant Advice received funding from the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the Department of Foreign Affairs, St. Stephens Green Trust, the Northern Area Health Board and Crosscare.

Emigrant Advice is one of 14 projects of Crosscare, the Dublin Diocese social care agency.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

**EMIGRANT ADVICE INFORMATION**

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# EmigrantAdvice 2004

## BACKGROUND

Emigrant Advice is one of the 14 programmes of Crosscare, the Dublin Diocese Social Care Agency. Since 1987, Emigrant Advice has been working with migrants in vulnerable situations. Originally, Emigrant Advice worked with intending emigrants. In recent years, clients of Emigrant Advice include intending emigrants, emigrants, immigrants, returnees and intending returnees. Importantly, the common factor for all of Emigrant Advice's clients is that they are migrants in vulnerable situations.

The most significant developments in the work of Emigrant Advice during 2004 were:

- support of information providers through the distribution of Emigrant Advice publications and the delivery of relevant training so that high quality information on migration is available throughout Ireland

- development of an outreach service in order to reach the most vulnerable migrants who would not ordinarily access the drop-in service

- piloting of casework with migrant workers based on the fact that there is a need for an increased amount of support to migrant workers experiencing exploitation in the workplace.

## EMIGRATION QUERIES

In 2004, 265 intending emigrants sought pre-departure information from Emigrant Advice, this statistic does not represent those who contacted Emigrant Advice on a number of occasions requesting information and assistance related to their initial query. 38% of these queries related to emigration to the US, (many of these queries related to the DV05 Lottery Visa programme), 15% inquired about emigration to Britain, 22% to Australia, (many of these queries related to the One Year Working Holiday Visa), 7% to Canada, 8% to the EEA, 8% to New Zealand and 2% to other countries, including Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Romania.

In late 2004, Emigrant Advice appointed an outreach worker, Joe O'Brien (*pictured right*). The need for this post was based on consultation carried out by Emigrant Advice with Irish Agencies in the UK, which showed that Irish people were still emigrating to the UK with no pre-departure information. Ex-prisoners, Travellers, early school leavers and people with mental health problems are among those arriving unprepared in the UK. It is in these sectors that outreach is currently being piloted.



## CASE STUDY: PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

In 2004 a young family contacted Emigrant Advice planning to emigrate to Birmingham. Paul, Catherine and their four children had been living in a Council house in Dublin but were being harassed

by neighbours to a point where they were afraid to let their children out to play. They were extremely distressed when they came to Emigrant Advice. Emigrant Advice liaised with staff of the Birmingham Irish Centre who informed us of the serious shortages and high rent of private rented accommodation and the long waiting lists for council houses in the Birmingham area. It was clear that it would be virtually impossible for a family of 6 people, who depended on social welfare, to find affordable, suitable accommodation in Birmingham. As Catherine and Paul were in a council house in Ireland, which they were willing to give up in order to start their new life in the UK, current legislation states that the British authorities would be under no obligation to assist them as they voluntarily made themselves homeless by willingly leaving their council house in Ireland. If they returned to Ireland, they would also experience the same difficulties. If, on the off chance, the British authorities decided to assist the family, Catherine and Paul would be forced to live in homeless accommodation for a considerable amount of time, perhaps 9 months, and the family would be split up and segregated by gender. Paul and Catherine realised that they would put themselves in a worse predicament by emigrating. They decided to stay in Ireland and were supported by Emigrant Advice to request a transfer to a council house in another area. This highlights the fact that pre-departure information is extremely important so that those intending to emigrate can make informed decisions.

## QUERIES ABOUT RETURNING TO IRELAND

In 2004, 68 returned emigrants contacted Emigrant Advice. Of these, 46 of these were returning from the UK, 16 were returning from the US and the remainder were returning from Australia/New Zealand and the EEA. See excerpts from the New York Times article, featured right.

### CASE STUDY: RETURNING TO IRELAND

David, a young Irish man from a disadvantaged background, spent much of his childhood and teenage

years exposed to alcoholism, violence and drug use. Just released from prison, David contacted Emigrant Advice as he intended to travel to the UK to break the cycle of drug use, crime, homelessness and violence in which he was trapped. He wanted a fresh start outside Ireland but he was poorly prepared for emigration. Emigrant Advice attempted to link him into the appropriate drug rehabilitation and homeless services in Dublin. However, David lost touch with Emigrant Advice. Two years later when he contacted Emigrant Advice again, David was in London and had fallen foul of all the traps Emigrant Advice had tried to support him to avoid. He was injecting heroin, suffering medical consequences of drug use and was homeless. Emigrant Advice arranged for David to return home and enter a drug rehabilitation programme. If David had not returned, he - like so many other young Irish people living in the UK and Europe - would have succumbed to continued drug addiction, homelessness and poverty. David's case reflects the predicament of many young Irish people abroad. It is not an isolated case and reflects the work Emigrant Advice does with Irish nationals in vulnerable situations in the UK, Europe, the USA and beyond



## IMMIGRATION QUERIES

In 2004 Emigrant Advice dealt with 547 immigration related queries from 324 people from 53 different nationalities. Queries from nationals of Australia, Mongolia, Moldova, Bulgaria, USA, Democratic Republic of Congo and Poland are the most frequent of the 53 nationalities. The nature of the 547 queries is detailed in the table below.

NATURE OF QUERY	% OF TOTAL QUERIES
Work Exploitation/Employment Rights	23%
Work Permit	18%
Social and Economic Rights	15%
Change of Status	13%
IBC Residency	13%
Family Reunification	7%
Leave to Remain	5%
Student Visa	3%
Work Authorisation	2%
Working Visa	1%

In 2004, Emigrant Advice piloted intensive support work with migrant workers experiencing exploitation in the workplace. It evaluated this work and further case work is planned for 2005 with a commitment to campaigning to address the issues which arise from this work.

### CASE STUDY: IMMIGRATION / EMPLOYMENT

Ahmed came to Ireland as a work permit employee and, after a year, was joined by his wife and child. Ahmed came to Emigrant Advice stating that he was unfairly dismissed from his employment. Emigrant Advice worked with Ahmed to take a case for unfair dismissal to the Employment Appeals Tribunal. Emigrant Advice arranged for extensions on his visa to allow him to remain in Ireland for the duration of the unfair dismissals case and advocated on his behalf for a separate visa extension to allow him to be named on a new work permit application. Ahmed won his unfair dismissals case and his new employer received a work permit allowing him to employ Ahmed.

## SUPPORT TO AGENCIES

In 2004 Emigrant Advice dealt with 371 queries from 241 agencies. Of these, 39% of agency queries related to emigration, 34% of queries related to immigration and 27% related to returning to Ireland.

### CASE STUDY: WORKING WITH AGENCIES

In response to the high number of agency queries, Emigrant Advice developed its training role in 2004. It participated as a trainer in nation-wide emigration training, convened by Emigrant Advice Network, of CIC and Dept. of Social and Family Affairs staff. Also, in response to a the volume of immigration queries Emigrant Advice received from Citizens Information Centers, Emigrant Advice was invited to develop and deliver an immigration training session to a regional meeting of the CICs in the North East.

## ADDITIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

In addition to its direct client work in 2004, Emigrant Advice:

- up-dated its mailing list and website, widely circulated its publications and developed a set of operational guidelines to ensure consistency across the organisation in the information given
- launched its publications (including **Thinking of Going to the USA, Thinking of Going to the UK, Thinking of Going to Australia**) completed in 2003 and produced smaller scale publications including a fact-sheet on the DVO6 Lottery Visa, a newsletter detailing new developments in the organisation and a creative Christmas card which doubled as a promotional document for the work of Emigrant Advice
- engaged as a member of the Emigrant Advice Network, Integrating Ireland and Breaking Through, (an All-Ireland Network of Practitioners to Promote Effective Intervention with Young People at Risk)