

## **IRELAND**

### **1.1. A few words about the country**

Ireland lies to the west of Great Britain. It covers an area of 83.270 sq km and has a population of approx. five million people. Until 1922, Ireland formed part of the United Kingdom with Dublin as capital. Ireland is a parliamentary democracy and has a written constitution, unlike Great Britain. It is a member of the European Union and its nationals have the right to reside and work in any EU member state. The official language of the state is English. Ireland's economy is based on *agriculture*, which is also of great importance in the export trade. Significant investments have been made in high technology and biotechnology making Ireland one of the leaders in this field in the European Union.

Greece has an embassy in Ireland. Below you can find more information.

#### **EMBASSY OF GREECE IN DUBLIN**

**Address:** 1 Upper Pembroke Street, Dublin 2  
**Tel.:** (003531) 6767254-5 - **Fax:** 6618892  
**E-mail:** [dubgremb@eircom.net](mailto:dubgremb@eircom.net)  
**Ambassador:** PISPINIS ACHILEAS - VASSILIOS

In Ireland you can find all multinational banks as well as 15 national banks.

Below are some useful links of banks in Ireland:

<http://www.ulsterbank.com/>

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

<http://www.international.boi.ie/>

The residents of Ireland can watch satellite TV by paying a monthly subscription or national TV free of charge. Below are some useful links of Irish TV channels providing various information and news about the country.

<http://www.channel4.co.uk/>

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

### **1.1.1. Living conditions and quality of life**

- **Cost of living**

The cost of living in Ireland differs from place to place. In the Dublin area, the country's capital, prices are significantly higher. The cost of living in Ireland is much higher than the EU average and the country is considered as one of the most expensive countries in the European Union. An average weekly cost of living, which includes basic food, clothing, electricity and water bills would range from 190 € to the amount somebody can afford. According to the available figures, the estimated average annual cost of living in Ireland amounts to IR£11.716. However it must be pointed out that in most cases salaries are much higher than EU average.

- **Accommodation**

Finding accommodation depends on the needs of the individuals and the available capital. In Ireland finding accommodation is not always easy and differs significantly from place to place. The option one has is either to buy a house or to rent one depending on the length of stay in the country, the financial capabilities or even the investment choices.

Houses are usually rent with furniture and prices range from 900 – 1300 € per month for one family. It must be noted that the renting periods are sometimes fixed and sometimes not. In case of renting, it would be best for the interested person to negotiate the terms of renting.

Buying a house in Ireland is another alternative in case of a long stay. Prices start from 200.000 € and in some cases can be as high as 320.000 €. In Ireland it is more common to buy a house than to rent one; this is also facilitated by the integrated legal and tax system.

One can find accommodation either by searching in the local newspapers that are widely used for the advertisement of the available houses for rent or acquisition or through real estate agencies.

Real estate agencies manage some renting cases, but they usually deal with buying and selling houses for which newspapers are used again.

If you want more information on how to find accommodation you can get in touch with:

- **Real estate agencies and auctioneers.** If you want to acquire a real estate you can get in touch with these agencies. The term “auctioneers” has prevailed despite the fact the most houses in Ireland are not sold this way. However the real estate agencies must have an auctioneering license. Acquiring a house through real estate agencies entails a commission for them as well as a security until the acquisition of the title deeds and the full payment of the price.

Websites of real estate agencies and auctioneers:

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

<http://www.emeraldauctioneers.com/>

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

<http://www.mortonandflanagan.com/>

<http://www.internet-ireland.ie/rmac/>

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

<http://www.christiesestates.com/>

<http://www.craddockestates.com/>

<http://www.internet-ireland.ie/rmac/>

<http://www.burkewall.com/>

<http://www.tomobrien.net/>

- **Media.** There is a plethora of information about how to find accommodation on the Internet and the websites of major real estate agencies. Irish Times ([www.ireland.com](http://www.ireland.com)) is the most widely

read newspaper in Ireland and provides significant information on how to find accommodation.

*Websites of newspapers providing information on accommodation*

<http://www.irelandonsunday.com/>

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

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

Finally, for a few days you can stay at a hotel of your choice, which you can book on the Internet. You can visit for example the following website:

<http://www.dublinhotels.com/>

- **Language learning**

Irish and English are the two official languages with English being usually the most widely spoken. Irish is compulsory for many teaching positions and for some positions in the public sector. Schools and universities provide language teaching.

The official site of the government also includes Ireland's Department of Education and Science, which provides information on language courses.

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

It must also be pointed out that most universities in Ireland offer English language courses.

National University of Ireland, Galway	www.ucg.ie
National University of Ireland, Mavnooth	www.may.ie
University College Cork	www.ucc.ie
University College Dublin	www.ucd.ie
University of Limerick	www.ul.ie
Dublin City University	www.dcu.ie

There are also private schools and tuition centres that provide English language courses all year round.

Other relevant and useful links:

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

<http://indigo.ie/~modlang>

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

<http://www.learnenglishinireland.com/>

<http://www.mli-ireland.com/>

<http://www.colaistechonnacht.com/>

- **Education for children**

Ireland has a wide range of educational offers. Compulsory attendance starts at the age of 6 and ends with the completion of two years of secondary education. The average age of the children in Ireland who start school is 4. Ireland is the only EU country that has a very developed preschool education, which is heavily subsidized by the state.

Education in Ireland is provided free of charge by state institutions up to university level, just like in the rest of the European Union. In addition to that there is an extensive network of private schools, which are financed by the state and the parents and traditionally maintain close ties with the church. The existing network of schools is accessible through the Internet at [www.scoilnet.ie](http://www.scoilnet.ie). You can find more information on education in Ireland at [www.skool.ie](http://www.skool.ie)

Primary education has approximately 3,200 schools, which provide education to about 450,000 pupils. Secondary education has 750 schools and more than 360,000 pupils per year.

The tertiary education in Ireland is very developed. Every year approximately 100,000 students go to colleges and universities. Tuition fees must be paid to these universities, despite the fact that they are heavily subsidised by the state. Scholarships are granted in many cases under strictly defined levels of income and mainly for postgraduate studies. These grants are verified each year. For more information on tertiary education please visit [www.qualifex.ie](http://www.qualifex.ie). You can apply online for a place at the universities at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie).

<p><a href="http://www.tcd.ie">www.tcd.ie</a> - University of Dublin <a href="http://www.ucc.ie">www.ucc.ie</a> University College Cork <a href="http://www.dit.ie">www.dit.ie</a> Dublin Institute of Technology <a href="http://www.irigov.ie/educ">www.irigov.ie/educ</a> Ministry of Education and Sciences</p>
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Finally, there are quite a few training programmes for those quitting school before completing their basic education. For more information please visit <http://www.youthreach.ie/>

### **1.1.2. Labour conditions**

- How to find a job

You can find a job in Ireland through all known means, which also exist in other EU countries, for example through newspapers, online search engines, job centres, etc. You can get more information on how to find a job from:

- the European Employment Services
- the various professional associations
- national documents, the Irish press and Irish magazines
- the Citizens Information Centres

Two of the websites you can visit in order to find a job in Ireland are:

<http://www.fas.ie/jbframe.htm>

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

Important are also the services provided by EURES (EUROpean Employment Services), which has a department specialised in job vacancies all over Europe. In Ireland you can have access to EURES through any FAS training and employment authority. All candidates may apply directly to the company or organisation of their choice.

In Ireland there are also public employment services managed by the FAS (Foras Aiseanna Saothair), which are answerable to the Department of Enterprise and Employment <http://www.entemp.ie/>. The FAS manage a network of public employment services and a network of training centres. The public services network covers the whole country.

This organisation is very important in the Irish labour market, because it offers valuable services to job seekers by providing information and advice. You can also register in FAS in order to have access to numerous training and employment programmes concerning the definition, preparation and securing a job. It must be noted that registration is not required in order to receive information and advice.

Centrally located Citizens Information Centres in Dublin

Citizens Information Centre  
Parish Hall  
Donabate  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: +353 1 8406877  
Fax: +353 1 8409714  
email: [swords.cic@comhairle.ie](mailto:swords.cic@comhairle.ie)  
www: N/A  
Opening hours: Wed 11.00-12.00.

Citizens Information Centre  
35 North Frederick Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: +353 1 8723800  
Fax: +353 1 8783629  
email: [nad@iol.ie](mailto:nad@iol.ie)  
www: <http://www.nadp.ie>  
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9.00.5.00.

Private job centres are instrumental in finding a job. They usually focus on office or temporary jobs. These offices are very updated and networked. Finally, it is worth mentioning that all universities provide advice services to jobseekers

through professionally organised presentations of enterprises and interviews taking place at the university premises.

Some useful addresses for jobseekers in Ireland:

<http://www.irishbarstaff.com/>  
<http://www.rfc.ie/>  
<http://www.skillsgroup.ie/>  
<http://www.dbrecruitment.ie/>  
<http://www.softskills.ie/>  
<http://www.1-800people.com/>  
<http://www.parc-group.com/>  
<http://www.cmi-recruitment.ie/>

- **Highly demanded skills**

The highly demanded skills in Ireland are in the high-tech field. Ireland has significantly promoted the fields of biotechnology and high technology achieving thus high growth rates. You can receive interesting information on these issues at:

<http://www.fas.ie/jbframe.htm>

- **Unemployment**

Compared to other EU countries, the unemployment rate in Ireland is quite high. This is due to the rapid increase of the available labour force (despite high emigration) and to the limited demand of manpower. In the beginning of 1990 unemployment rate was 9.2%. During the '90s and with the economy turning to the new economy the market landscape changed. The so-called "Celtic Tiger" was the spearhead for investments in the new technology field and unemployment was so low that many scientists from all over Europe had found a job in the Irish market. Consequently, nowadays the Irish market is a model for new technologies and innovations, employing a large number of scientists and engineers.



- **Workers' rights (working hours, public holidays, leave, benefits)**

EU and EEA citizens are free to live and work in Ireland without any restrictions. However they must have a residence permit, except of the citizens of the United Kingdom.

In Ireland the law provides for 48 working hours per week. The weekly working hours are usually distributed in 5 days and Sunday is a compulsory day of rest. Nevertheless in a market economy the working hours can also be freely formed, just like in other countries. People working in industrial enterprises are not allowed to work more than 5 hours without at least one break of 30 minutes. The legal duration of work does not apply to home employment, agricultural employment, fishery, transportation of persons and goods, mines and the trade profession. As regards the trading business, the Shops' Legislation lays down a maximum working day of 11 hours, 56 hours per week at hotels and 48 hours in other shops.

*- Contracts of employment:*

Contracts of employment usually provide for duration of work, which is less than the one provided for by law and in general 39 hours per week.

*- Leaves: annual leaves: holidays*

The legislation lays down two types of holidays: public holidays, which are 8, and religious holidays, which are six. These holidays cannot be added up; the employer is however entitled to replace a public holiday with a religious holiday (except of New Year's Day and St. Patrick's Day).

According to the law, holidays must be paid, but it is up to the employer to grant:

- a paid day off on that day or
- a paid day off within a month of that day or
- an additional day of annual leave or
- an additional day's pay.

Below you can take a look at the whole legislation concerning the workers' rights in Ireland:

<http://www.entemp.ie/erir/empl2-info.htm>

- **Representation of engineers (associations, organisations, chambers)**

Just like in any other country and given that the employment conditions in Ireland are mainly determined by collective labour agreements, the workers' unions are of great importance in the private and public sector. The most important professional body of Ireland's engineers is I.E.I. (Institution of Engineers of Ireland, [www.iei.ie](http://www.iei.ie)), currently representing approx. 22,000 members.

In order for somebody to exercise the engineering profession it is not necessary to have a license from the I.E.I.

There are also many associations for all engineering disciplines. Some of these are mentioned below (together with their websites):

Women' s engineering society	<a href="http://www.wes.org.uk">www.wes.org.uk</a>
Construction industry federation	<a href="http://www.cif.ie">www.cif.ie</a>
Association of consulting engineers	<a href="http://www.acei.ie">www.acei.ie</a>
Institute of Project Management of Ireland	<a href="http://www.projectmanagment.ie">www.projectmanagment.ie</a>
Association of building engineers	<a href="http://www.dit.ie">www.dit.ie</a>

## **1.2. Recognition of diplomas**

### **1.2.1. Engineers**

#### **1.2.1.1. *Studies – qualifications – disciplines***

In Ireland there are the following university titles of engineers, which are recognised as disciplines:

- Mechanical engineers – Degree or diploma
- Production engineer – Degree
- Electronic, electrical engineers - Degree or diploma
- Chemical engineers – Diploma
- Maintenance engineers

#### **1.2.1.2. *Licence to exercise the engineering profession, bodies and ways of granting it***

The competent authority to which applications for recognition of engineering qualifications should be sent is the “*Institution of Engineers of Ireland*”. It is also necessary to have a design degree granted by the IEI in order to design and plan public works.

#### **1.2.1.3. *Recognition and equivalence of diplomas***

The profession of engineer is covered by the general system for the recognition of professional qualifications. The degrees of all EU countries are considered as equivalent and permit the exercise of the engineering profession.

The competent authority to which applications for recognition of engineering qualifications should be sent is the «*Institution of Engineers of Ireland*» ([www.iei.ie](http://www.iei.ie))

#### **EU references:**

Directives 89/48/EEC and 92/51/EEC+ Guide for users of the general system for the recognition of professional qualifications.

#### **National references:**

.Statutory Instruments no. 1 of 1991 and no. 135 of 1996.

## 1.2.2. Architects

### 1.2.2.1. **Studies – qualifications – disciplines**

In Ireland, just like in the United Kingdom, the title “Architect”, unlike the title of engineer, is legally protected. This means that in order for someone to work by using the title of architect, he or she must register in the institutionalised body granting the relevant licence, which in this case is the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland.

Registration is not required for those wishing to exercise the profession without using the title of architect. An architect can register in the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland if he satisfies the requirements laid down by the relevant legislation. In general, candidates who wish to join the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland must have completed a five-year university course in Architecture.

The profession of architect, with the use of this title, is a profession regulated by law in Ireland and is governed by the Council Directive 85/384/EEC of 1985 on “the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications in architecture, including measures to facilitate the effective exercise of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services”.

**Title of diploma:** Degree of Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.NUI)

**Body awarding diploma:** National University of Ireland to architecture graduates of University College Dublin, College of Technology, Bolton Street, Dublin

**Title of diploma:** Degree standard: diploma in architecture (Dip. Arch)

**Body awarding diploma:** Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland

**Title of diploma:** Certificate of associateship (ARIAI)

**Body awarding diploma:** Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland

**Title of diploma:** Certificate of membership (MRIA)

**Body awarding diploma:** Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland

## 1.3. **Industrial relations**

### 1.3.1. Engineers

In the private sector, wages are negotiated between the employer and the employee, whereas in the public sectors wages are secured by the collective labour agreements. Engineers' wages are estimated to IR£ 42.500 per year in both cases. The state supervising body of public works is "The Office of Public Works". You can visit their website at [www.opw.ie](http://www.opw.ie).

The national legislation concerning the construction of public works or other special issues is available at the "Office of Public Works" at the above website. In general, this office has all information regarding technical projects; it is a very good information source for engineers working in Ireland.

Office of Public Works 51 St Stephens Green DUBLIN
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### 1.3.2. Architects

In terms of industrial relations, architects are governed by the same provisions as engineers.

#### **1.4. Insurance for engineers**

Pension and health insurance is compulsory in Ireland. The insurance rates are 4.5% or up to IR£ 100 per week.

Furthermore, a percentage of 2% concerns contributions to the health branch for incomes that are no less than IR£ 11,250 per year.

#### **1.5. Taxation of engineers**

Ireland does NOT apply double taxation. More information is provided by the Irish tax offices or the Department of Finance. You can also get important information by visiting the government's website at [www.oasis.gov.ie](http://www.oasis.gov.ie). In general, Ireland has the same taxation system as Great Britain.

##### A) If you do not reside in Ireland but work there as employee

Ireland has normally the right to tax your income from your employment (this may also depend on the period of time that you reside in Ireland during a tax year). You may also be entitled to all or some of the personal allowances granted to the citizens of Ireland, if you are liable to Irish income tax.

The tax income is deducted at the source based on the so-called Pay As You Earn (PAYE) system. All tax obligations for most of the employees are regulated under the PAYE system. You must fill in an income tax return only if your matters are more complex, i.e. if you have other sources of income in Ireland, if your tax office sends you a tax return form or if you want to claim tax relief.

##### B) If you do not reside in Ireland but work there as self-employed

In this case, Ireland may have the right to tax your income coming from self-employment (as well as other incomes from Irish sources). You may also be entitled to all or some of the personal allowances granted to the citizens of Ireland. You must usually submit a tax return at the end of each tax year.

Finally, in terms of the income taxation and in accordance with the prevailing tax system, the tax rates on taxable income are the following:

- 22 % on the first £17,000 for a single person
- 22 % on the first £34,000 for a married couple with two incomes
- 22 % on the first £28,000 for a married couple with one income

The higher rate of 44% is payable on the balance.

For more information on Ireland's tax system please visit the following website:

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

### **1.6. Frontier workers (engineers)**

Due to the special status of the frontier workers, who, by definition, work in a different country from the one they reside, community law does not require a residence permit to be issued by the country of employment.

Community rules on social security include specific provisions on frontier workers. Under community rules, the term "frontier worker" (used in the EU legislation for the coordination of social security systems) means any employed or self-employed worker who pursues his occupation in a member state but who returns at least once a week to the neighbouring country in which he resides.

As frontier workers, engineers are covered by the European legislation on social security in the same way other categories of people are mentioned in these provisions. However, special rules apply to sickness and unemployment benefits. They are entitled to sickness benefits either in the country of residence or in the country of employment. However if a person is unemployed he or she is entitled to unemployment benefit only in the country of residence.

By virtue of the tax agreements that have been signed between the EU member states, the income acquired by frontier workers can be taxed in both or in one country. In the first case, the tax paid in one country is taken into consideration when calculating the taxes payable to the other country (in order to avoid double taxation of the same income). The definition of the frontier worker is quite

restrictive in this issue and very frequently depends on the applicable agreement, if a worker resides and/ or works in a frontier zone and how frequently he returns to the country of residence.

When employees who do not permanently reside in their country of employment (this category may be wider than the one of the frontier workers) are taxed in this country, the non-discrimination principle laid down by community law obliges this country, in specific cases, to treat them the same way it treats the workers who are permanent residents. This happens when a worker who is not a permanent resident is in a comparative situation with the one of a permanent resident, that is when he acquires all or almost all of his income in his country of employment and the income in the country of residence is not enough to be taxed. The personal and marital status is also taken into consideration. If these conditions are met, the country of employment must provide to the workers who are not permanent residents the same tax relief that is provided to the permanent residents, due to their marital status.

### **1.7. Useful websites on Ireland**

[www.ireland.com](http://www.ireland.com)

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

[www.ucg.ie](http://www.ucg.ie)

[www.may.ie](http://www.may.ie)

[www.ucc.ie](http://www.ucc.ie)

[www.ucd.ie](http://www.ucd.ie)

[www.ul.ie](http://www.ul.ie)

[www.dcu.ie](http://www.dcu.ie)

[www.scoilnet.ie](http://www.scoilnet.ie)

[www.skool.ie](http://www.skool.ie)

[www.qualifex.ie](http://www.qualifex.ie)

[www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)

[www.youthreach.ie](http://www.youthreach.ie)

[www.fas.ie/jbframe.htm](http://www.fas.ie/jbframe.htm)

[www.careerdirections.ie](http://www.careerdirections.ie)

[www.entemp.ie](http://www.entemp.ie)

[www.nadp.ie](http://www.nadp.ie)



[www.iei.ie](http://www.iei.ie)

[www.wes.org.uk](http://www.wes.org.uk)

[www.cif.ie](http://www.cif.ie)

[www.acei.ie](http://www.acei.ie)

[www.projectmanagment.ie](http://www.projectmanagment.ie)

[www.dit.ie](http://www.dit.ie)

[www.opw.ie](http://www.opw.ie)

[www.oasis.gov.ie](http://www.oasis.gov.ie)

[www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie)

[working.monster.ie](http://working.monster.ie)

[www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)

[www.niceone.com/irl/subcat](http://www.niceone.com/irl/subcat)