



Joanne Mulvee (right) of Nursing In Australia, with Julie Tiego, Victor Mitto and seven-month-old son Keith, from Clonsilla, Co Dublin, at the Working Abroad Expo yesterday. Photograph: Eric Luke

Nurses, taxi drivers and laid-off staff explore options

KITTY HOLLAND

NURSES, TAXI drivers, SR Technics employees, former Dell workers, electricians and engineers were among those investigating emigration options at an event in Dublin at the weekend.

Organisers of the Working Abroad Expo, which bills itself "Ireland's largest overseas recruitment and relocation exhibition" say about 6,000 people paid the €10 entrance fee into the two-day event at the RDS.

There were 34 stalls, giving information on job and education opportunities, visa information as well as advice on which jobs were in most need and in which parts of mainly Canada, New Zealand and Australia they could be got.

Ian Riddle, from the New Zealand embassy in London, who markets his country to potential immigrants, said: "We're after skilled workers, health professionals, media workers, teachers, miners, retail workers. Yes, New Zealand is in recession but it doesn't seem to have hit as hard as here."

He said "very good people" had

been seeking information from the stall and added most visas could be processed within a fortnight.

Sarah Green, an immigration consultant in Calgary, Canada, said there were "a lot of nurses, electricians, plumbers and chefs" approaching for advice. "And we've had a couple of journalists."

There were 38 occupations the Canadian government actively wanted to attract, in areas such as financial services, construction, healthcare, teaching and cooking.

Ciarán Carpenter, a taxi driver and electrician, said he was considering Australia "but I'm hearing two sides to it, that some people aren't getting on too well there.

"If you go out of the cities maybe you can do better. I'm looking at my options".

Aoife Maher, a dental nurse from Waterford, was there with her partner, Eoin Carroll, a painter-decorator, and their little boy. Mr Carroll was "let go" in November and said he "just cannot get work".

"I was on good money and it's just come to a stop. We've a mortgage and it just seems there's no other option now for us, so

we're thinking of going to Australia around January."

Another family seriously considering emigrating were Cathy Kiernan, Ray Finnegan and their two daughters, from Ballymun, Dublin.

"I work part-time in a charity in Ballymun and he works at SR Technics," said Ms Kiernan. "So he'll be out of work unless there's a miracle. We've just had to pull out of buying a house. It seems to be Canada is our safest option.

"Absolutely it's sad. They've had their education through Irish and they're going to lose that," she said of her daughters.

There were also immigrants who had chosen Ireland in years gone by, looking to move on again. Olaf Bichman, from Germany, had been working at Dell for four years and has been unemployed for six months. "I have a couple of ideas - maybe New Zealand or Canada."

There were several nurses from India there who said they were looking at leaving as their spouses were not permitted to work here.

The Working Abroad Expo will be in Cork on Thursday and Friday.