

"For example, a job at Al Rahba Hospital in Abu Dhabi has a range of benefits, including tax-free salary, generous living allowances and flights," she said.

Closer to home, Irish talent is going for gold in Britain. Trevor Murphy, associate director with recruitment firm Brunel, said there had been a significant "leakage of talent" into

the British market in sectors such as engineering and construction. Work on the infrastructure for the London Olympics in 2012 had given rise to demand for engineering and construction staff in the greater London area.

Also Murphy expected more long-term work in these industries in Britain, given how the market is looking.

"The British property markets, both residential and commercial, have picked up," he said.

## Australia and New Zealand

In recent weeks, jobseekers bound for Australia were dealt a blow, as the Australian government announced it had suspended its skilled migration visa until the end of June.

Liz O'Hagan of Kildare-

based company Australian Visa Specialists said this marked the latest in a series of gradual changes to Australia's immigration procedures.

"They are overhauling the whole system and, over the last 12 to 18 months, there have been a number of subtle changes," O'Hagan said.

As part of this overhaul, the Australians have published a new "skills list". This states all the occupations that are in demand, and thus effectively decides who can or can't get a visa. O'Hagan said the list now had about 180 occupations on it, while previously it included 400 job titles.

However, she said many of the jobs that had dropped off the list are not that relevant for Irish jobseekers and estimated that only 5 per cent of Irish jobseekers would be affected by the changes.

For those who want to go to Australia, the one-year working visa is still an option for younger jobseekers and full de-

tails of the new skilled visa programme are expected in July.

Australian government statistics show that unemployment stood at 5.3 per cent in February, up fractionally from the 5.2 per cent figure a year earlier. Unemployment was highest in Tasmania and lowest in the Northern Territories.

Nursing staff are in demand in Australia, while in Western Australia a current boom in mining means jobs for engineers and other related professionals.

Seek, one of New Zealand's largest recruitment companies, recently published figures showing an increase of almost 3 per cent in the number of new jobs being advertised in New Zealand in April, which is good news for potential emigrants.

The Seek New Job Index measures the flow of net jobs for the month, and is seen as an indicator of economic activity. Wellington was April's best performer in the index, with

new jobs up 5.1 per cent on the previous month. In Auckland, April saw 3.1 per cent more new jobs than March.

Seek's survey found that the most-sought after employees at present are IT consultants, engineering managers, nurses and midwives, solicitors and local government staff. However, those working in customer support roles, retail, office administration or distribution will struggle to find work, according to Seek's data.

For those under 30, a one-year working holiday visa to New Zealand could be a way to ride out the recession. No job offer is required to secure this visa, but applicants must have a minimum level of funds and a return ticket, or equivalent funds to purchase a ticket at the end of their stay.

However, those planning a longer-term move should consider the skilled migrant visa programme. It works on a points basis and, similarly to Australia and New Zealand, also maintains a skills shortages list.

## US and Canada

The latest update from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that 34 US states recorded decreases in their unemployment rates last month. A further ten states saw employment levels stay flat in April, while the remaining six reported an increase in unemployment for the month.

According to the US government, the largest month-on-month increase in employment in April occurred in Ohio,

where an extra 37,300 people became employed last month. Maine was at the other end of the spectrum, with the largest number of newly unemployed people (6,500) in April.

Typically, there are three routes into the US as a permanent immigrant: you can be sponsored by an employer, sponsored by a family member who is a permanent resident or US citizen or you could win a green card.

So-called "green cards" are the prizes in the US's annual diversity visa lottery. A number of visas are allocated annually to successful applicants who apply to be entered into a lottery.

Visas are allocated proportionately by region. Registration for the 2011 draw has now closed and, as yet, no details for 2012 are available.

Canada operates a similar visa system to Australia and New Zealand, with a one-year working holiday option or a skilled migrant programme. Applicants for the skilled visa will be awarded points based on work experience, education and a range of other skills.

## Middle East

During the boom years, many Irish workers – especially in construction and engineering – looked east. However, despite the boom having long since ended, some job opportunities remain in the Gulf region.

Teachers and medical staff are in high demand. The main advantage of working in the region is that one can draw a tax-free salary in many Gulf countries.

However, securing a visa for the Middle East can prove difficult. Typically, emigrants need to be sponsored by an employer to obtain a visa. Also, many Middle Eastern countries do not have embassies in Ireland, meaning that Irish jobseekers need to obtain their visa via British embassies, which adds an extra layer of hassle to the process.

## Britain and Europe

EU law ensures that all workers have the right to look for a job in another member state, and the right to work there if they find one. EU rules also guarantee immigrant workers from other EU states equal treatment in regards to pay, working conditions and social security benefits.

The European Employment Services (Eures) network lists thousands of jobs across the EU and employs over 700 advisers who are in daily contact with employers all over Europe.

The service is designed to match jobseekers with vacancies, and works in partnership with trade unions and employers' organisations.

Registering with Eures allows jobseekers to submit their CVs, which will then be made available to employers in 31 countries – all 27 EU states, as well as Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

For those emigrants staying closest to home, working in Britain can be the easiest transition from a cultural point of view.

While no visa is required, make sure to apply for your national insurance number before you start working.

As the unemployment rate in Ireland continues to rise, two key changes have occurred in the labour market: foreign workers are no longer looking for jobs in Ireland, and Irish workers are now turning to other countries for hope of employment.

Valerie Sorohan, marketing manager with recruitment website Irishjobs.ie, said that the nature of traffic on the company's website was changing.

"Previously about 10 per cent of traffic came from abroad, places like Poland, India and so forth," Sorohan said. "However, that's now been replaced by Irish jobseekers."

As foreign workers return home or travel to greener pastures, Irish workers are following not too far behind, with a growing number of jobseekers considering emigration as an option to beat the financial pressures of the recession.

## Where people are going

If someone decides to emigrate, which country they go to

very much depends on what skills they have. Within the financial services sector, the funds industry has been a big employer of those from a business background in the last decade, but this changed somewhat in the last two years, leaving international markets to sop up Ireland's excess talent.

"The Caribbean and locations such as the Channel Islands took advantage of the market here to snap up experienced fund accountants who perhaps wouldn't have left Ireland otherwise," said Jean O'Donovan, manager of the banking and financial services division at Brightwater Recruitment.

For nurses and doctors struggling to cope with the public sector embargo, some of the best overseas opportunities are in the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

"The skills for healthcare professionals are fairly easily transferable, especially when coming from an English-speaking country," said Mairead Mulvey, one of the founding directors of Sigmar Recruitment and a specialist in healthcare recruitment.

Mulvey said medical professionals typically needed a couple of years post-qualification experience before jetting off, but said the rewards could be good for those who took the plunge.