

## The challenges of being an migrant

### Script

1. I miss my parents, friends and the landscape but I feel living here has been a good opportunity for my personal development. To learn to be more tolerant of other cultures, to learn English and to experience new things. I am happy my children have had a chance to study a foreign language here and that I can spend more time with them than I would have been able to back home. My biggest problem is not being able to work in my profession and I find this frustrating.

2. In my opinion a city, like a person, has a soul. I cannot say that I fell in love with Belfast at first sight. But after a few months I started to love this city. I love the people from here. They are always so friendly and always ready to help. They have made me feel welcome. I love the nightlife. There are great theatres and concert halls in Belfast. There is also a really good Grand Opera House that I like to visit. Honestly I really enjoy the social life here. At the beginning I had a difficult time. I missed my old friends and my family. It took time to find new friends. But now I think that Belfast is my home and I am happy here even though some things have been hard to accept, like, for example, the medical system. It's different here. And still I miss my family and my old friends terribly.

3. Belfast is a small city, but it has all that my family needs. The education is very good for the children, so is the healthcare system and so is the minimum wage. It is reasonably calm. The people are friendly and make strangers feel at home. At the beginning I found it difficult to understand the systems of the city and where I can find information I need. Like when my first baby was born. I stayed at home with her and stopped learning English as I couldn't pay for a nursery and I never thought there would be a women's centre that has a free crèche for children. I find the Belfast accent difficult to understand. The troubles between the Protestants and Catholics annoy me and make me feel worried. I wish the weather was better in Belfast. Now I understand the systems here and can find the information I need easily. If the weather was better it would be my favourite city. I can't give Belfast that much. All I can give is two young girls who are growing up in the traditions of the society here. I have mixed feelings about my daughters growing up with all this freedom. It's not the same as the traditions we have back home. But I feel good that they are getting an education that will help them to know whether what they are doing is right or wrong.

4. I'm a simple person with a modest life. When I first arrived in Belfast I put in the effort to get a job and build a new life for myself. I have tried not to become a burden for this city. Many people decide to choose another country, another lifestyle, but end up at the mercy and care of authorities because they are not strong enough to cope with the problems of living in a large European city. Why do people come here if they don't have anything to come for? Although I haven't been able to work in my profession yet and to benefit from all that I had in my country, that doesn't stop me going ahead. I'm optimistic and I know that one day I will have what I had back home



5. In fact I really don't like Belfast. It's hard to say why. Maybe it's because it's not my city, not my country. But there is one truth I know: Belfast has given me experience – not only work experience but life experience. Belfast has taught me how to be tolerant of people of different religions and cultures. The most important thing that Belfast has taught me is simply the way of life.

There is one thing I could do now which I could never have done before I came here – I could go anywhere in the world and I know I would manage. I would even be able to live in different, difficult circumstances. Belfast has certainly given me courage.