

## **12. Azorean emigration to Canada in the remaining 20th century: professions, sponsorship and family reunification policy and other cultural aspects**

The contemporary period of contact between the Portuguese and Azoreans with Canada actually began with the pioneers of the 1950s, who went to Canada and it was largely thanks to them that the Azoreans and other Portuguese would come to settle in Canada throughout the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and, despite the importance of emigration in the 1950's from the bilateral treaties between Portugal and Canada, Azorean emigration continued in the 60's and 70's, no longer through agreements between the two countries, but due to the sponsorship and family reunification policy, which would cause Azorean and Portuguese emigration to increase substantially.

We refer to the process of emigration through letters of call, which allowed emigration in the event that this person had a family member who emigrated to Canada, as well as the issue of having friends and family members there who helped the emigrant to find a job and adapt to the new country.

Family reunification in Canada would be one of the first major goals of the emigrants, since the family is the "basis of the Portuguese social structure," where "the Portuguese culture is rooted.

Until 1957, Portuguese and Azorean emigration was mostly male, for specific jobs, but around 1955, emigrants started to call their wives and families, through the famous "call letters", which would be the most used method for both Azoreans and other Portuguese to arrive in Canada. With this family reunification policy that was fundamental until the 70's of the last century, women came from the call letters with economic dependents of their husbands. In the case of Quebec, for example, around 87.9% of the Portuguese who emigrated to this province before 1974 were from this form of emigration.

In the 50s, emigrants went to work on the railways and in agriculture, however, in the 60s, 70s and 80s, they went to areas such as civil construction, services, heavy industry, manufactures, etc., having the 2nd generation Azoreans, generally, better jobs, due to having more studies.

Even with the difficulties (especially the language barrier), as well as even some prejudice and discrimination in the work, the Azoreans managed to get from their work, gaining economic stability and saving, consequently they acquired their own houses and even some of them built their own businesses.

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