

What's with the permit price hike?

I understand the Dutch government has increased the handling fees (leges) for Dutch residence permits recently. We received a letter from the local Aliens Police, informing us that new rules were implemented on 1 May 2002. I am here with my husband and three children (all South African citizens), and this increase is an unexpected surprise. The first time we entered the country, we paid about EUR 58 per person. Now, the fee for a regular extension is EUR 169 per person! It doesn't seem fair.

In March of this year, the Staatssecretaris of the Dutch Justice Department, decided to increase the handling fees for residence permit applications and at the same time, introduced a fee for extension requests and change of purpose requests.

Expatica.com did a survey and asked its readers what their views were on the handling fee increase. 19 % said that the increase was justified. 43% felt quite the opposite, and 38% thought that an increase was justified but said the increase percentage was off the scale.

In less than ten years, the Dutch situation concerning handling fees for residence permits applications has changed considerably.

Till 1993, no fee was charged. From 1994 onwards, modest fees were introduced, ranging from about EUR 16 for an EU citizen residence permit, to about EUR 227 for a permanent residence card.

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With implementation of the new regulations, the following handling fees apply:

Residence permit

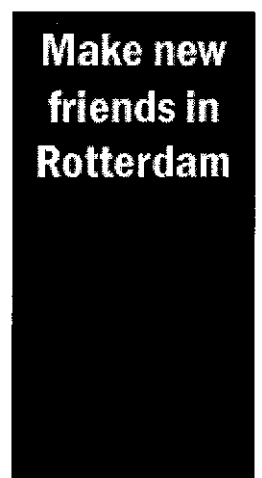
(verblijfsvergunning regulier voor bepaalde tijd):

- Applicant older than 12 years: EUR 258 (old fee: EUR 56,72);
- Applicant under 12 years: EUR 169 (old fee: EUR 22,69);
- Applicant from EU/EER & family members: EUR 26 (old fee: EUR 15,88).

Permanent residence card



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(verblijfsvergunning regulier voor onbepaalde tijd):

- All applicants: EUR 539 (old fee: EUR 226,89).

Extension request regarding certain residence permits

(verlengen van de geldigheidsduur):

- Regular applicants: EUR 169 (under the old regulations: no fee);
- Applicant from EU/EER & family members: EUR 26 (under the old regulations: no fee).

Change of purpose request

(wijziging doel verblijfsvergunning regulier / bepaalde tijd):

- Applicant older than 12 years: 258 Euro (under the old regulations: no fee);
- Applicant under 12 years: 169 Euro (under the old regulations: no fee);
- Applicant from EU/EER & family members: 26 Euro (under the old regulations: no fee).





If the applicable handling fee is not paid in full, processing of the application or requests is halted immediately.

With regard to implementation of the new regulations, please note that an extension request for current residence permits with a term of validity ending before 1 August 2002, will not be charged. This transition period does not apply to extension requests by EU/EER citizens & their family members. They have to pay the EUR 26 fee, starting from 1 May 2002.

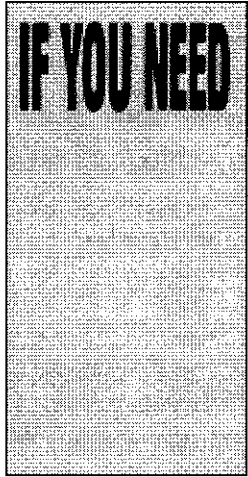
Other countries have different handling fee regulations. For instance, the United States Consulate general in Amsterdam charges a EUR 54 fee for every US visa application.

Certain US visa categories are linked to the availability of a US work permit. This means that these visas are only issued if the applicant submits proof of a valid US work permit.

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The Immigration and Naturalization Service, responsible for work permit adjudication in the USA, charges handling fees of up to USD 2130 for certain US work permit applications.



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In comparison, the Employment Office in the Netherlands doesn't charge any fees for a work permit application.

This column is for informative purposes only, is general in nature, and is not intended to be a substitute for competent legal and professional advice. Dutch rules and regulations regarding aliens, work permits, visas, and residence permits are continuously subject to change.

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