



Pan-European Relocations

Middle and Eastern European countries. Note that the CWI will check the aforementioned shortage every three months. If the shortage is no longer tangible, the list of occupations will be adjusted.

On 1 May 2004, ten countries joined the European Union. For citizens of Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Slovakia however, most of the European labour market remained closed as regular work permit regulations stayed effective. Some noteworthy exceptions exist as follows:

If and when a citizen of one of the new EU member states was legally working in the Netherlands on 1 May 2004 and was given access to the Dutch labour market for twelve months or more, that citizen has a right to an EU/ EER residency document with the annotation 'arbeid toegestaan, tewerkstellingsvergunning niet vereist' (employment allowed, work permit not required). The aforementioned access to the Dutch labour market can be assessed based on a valid Dutch work permit or on a Dutch residence permit with one of the following annotations: 'arbeid vrij toegestaan, TWV niet vereist', 'arbeid toegestaan mits TWV', or 'specifieke arbeid toegestaan met TWV'.

In April of this year the Dutch immigration authorities (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst /IND) took over the entire Dutch residence permit allocation system. Advice with regard to MVV applications, residence permits, return visas, residency stickers: they are all the exclusive domain of the IND. Regrettably the IND has difficulty ensuring the regular legal handling and processing terms and members of the Dutch 'Tweede Kamer' have asked Mrs Verdonk, the Minister for 'Vreemdelingenzaken en Intergratie' for an explanation. Verdonk promised the Tweede Kamer that the IND would have its affairs in order before the end of the year.

With the possible introduction of the knowledge worker category, the steady decrease of the number of asylum seekers, and the decline of the naturalisation requests, it looks like the IND is facing another reorganisation. Therefore it may be wise not to bank too much on Verdonk's promise.

Please note that this article 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 foreigners, policy, work permits, visas, and residence permits are continuously subject to change.

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