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What if I have a Dutch partner?

"I'm from New Zealand and have been in a serious relationship with a Dutchman for several years now. My boyfriend now wants me to join him in the Netherlands and I'm not sure what my options are. Am I allowed to work in the Netherlands? What about a residence card? Is it difficult to get entry into the Netherlands? Is your Foreign Police strict in these matters? Please help us!"



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Lots of foreigners come to the Netherlands to join their Dutch partners, and continue their relationships on Dutch soil. These foreign partners' official purpose of stay is 'residing with partner', in other words living together. Unfortunately, applicable rules and regulations have no romantic dimension. For the Aliens Police and IND (*Immigratie en Naturalisatiedienst*) it is business as usual, so be prepared for a rough ride.

First of all there is the MVV requirement (special entry visa) to consider. The MVV application procedure has been changed and upgraded in the summer of this year.

Processing should be less time consuming and more efficient. Citizens of the European Union and citizens of Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and the United States of America are not required to secure an MVV (*'Machtiging Voorlopig Verblijf'*). All other nationalities need an MVV. Without an MVV their residence permit application in the Netherlands will not be processed.

The MVV application is (usually) filed at the Dutch embassies or consulates in the country of origin of the foreign applicant. The Dutch partner is allowed to start a *'referent'*-procedure in the Netherlands. This procedure can shorten the MVV application procedure considerably.

Once you have entered the Netherlands, you will have to register with the Aliens Police and apply for a residence permit as soon as possible.

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The application procedure is pretty straightforward but requires thorough preparation and sufficient documentation. There are all sorts



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of official documents to complete, such as a 'garantverklaring' (guarantor's declaration), a relationship declaration, and a criminal antecedents declaration, besides the regular residence permit application forms.

Furthermore, both you and your Dutch partner have to submit (among other things) official and original not-married extracts from respectively the New Zealand (apostille and legalisation mandatory) and Dutch civil authorities.

Aliens Police will also check if your partner has sufficient income to provide for you both in the Netherlands, and whether or not he holds a steady job.

If Aliens Police is satisfied with the application and documentation, a one-year residence permit is issued, allowing you to live with your Dutch partner. You will also receive a special annotation on the back of your residence permit, which allows you to enter the Dutch labor market without the work permit requirement. The annotation will state 'Arbeid is vrij toegestaan. Een tewerkstellingsvergunning is hiervoor niet vereist'.

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Dear Expatica readers, feel free to contact our office with any questions or suggestions for future columns you may have. But please note that due to a hectic schedule and a planned holiday there may be some delay in a response.

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.

[Patrick Rovers and Hans van Velzen](#)



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