

How can I be a work trainee in Holland? 22/07/2003 00:00

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I am a student from Canada and want to work in the Netherlands for six months as a trainee with a Dutch company. What should I do to make this happen?

There are a few things foreign trainees should take into consideration before travelling to the Netherlands.

For starters, the Dutch employer offering the traineeship, should promptly secure a work permit from the Central Employment Office. The application procedure usually takes a minimum of 5-8 weeks, so the employer should apply well in advance.

One of the standard requirements is that the foreign trainee is still a student and that the traineeship in the Netherlands is necessary for the completion of his/her studies in the country of origin. A statement to this effect from the foreign trainee/students' foreign school is required.

Central Employment Office will also request information regarding the content of the actual traineeship in the Netherlands. A well-prepared and detailed training program (no regular work activities!) should therefore be submitted. The foreign trainee/student must also possess sufficient basic skills, gained through his/her education in the country of origin, to be able to follow the training program in the Netherlands.

If all requirements are met, the prospective Dutch employer may be eligible for a work permit without having to advertise in a newspaper or magazine first. The maximum validity of this work permit is twelve months. Furthermore, no previous registration with local Employment Office and Eures is necessary and the minimum wage regulations are not applicable to the trainee.

In general, the prospective employer is not allowed to employ a continuous string of foreign trainees and the total number of foreign trainees must not exceed 10 percent of the companies' workforce.

Special regulations regarding Dutch work permits apply to so-called inter-company trainees. These trainees are transferred to the Netherlands from within an international group of companies. The inter-company trainee has to have a bachelor degree or higher. A detailed training program should stipulate why training in the Netherlands is requested and necessary. If all requirements are met, a work permit (maximum validity of three years) may be issued without advertising or registration requirements (ref. above).

An employer of an EU/EER trainee is exempt from the work permit requirement.

Secondly, following their arrival in Holland, foreign trainees will have to apply for a Dutch residence permit, if they intend to stay for more than three months. Aliens Police

will (among other things) demand a copy of the work permit. The work permit serves as proof of the purpose of the intended stay and of the legality of the intended employment as trainee. Without the work permit the chances of receiving a residence permit are quite slim, to say the least.

Please note that foreign trainees with EU/EER nationalities or from Canada, Australia, the United States, Japan or New Zealand are exempt from the so-called [MVV requirement](#). All other nationalities are obliged to secure an MVV through the Dutch embassy in their country of origin, if they intend to stay for more than three months, before travelling to the Netherlands.

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, benefits, visas and residence permits are continuously subject to change.

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