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What is the IND doing about the long delays?

We have been waiting for more than five months for our residence permit extensions and all I hear from the Immigration and Naturalisation Service IND (if I can reach them) is that we may be in for a long wait. This is absurd. We paid the leges in time, we submitted all the information the IND demanded, and still no residence permits. What can we expect?



I have received a lot of complaints about the IND's lack of service, especially with regard to the extreme delays in handling and processing of residence permit applications. Note that in some cases filing a complaint against the IND may speed up the process.



In June 2004 the Dutch House of Representatives, or Tweede Kamer, passed a motion, asking for remedial measures to be taken.

Last week, the Dutch Minister for Immigration and Integration Rita Verdonk sent a letter to parliament explaining the current handling and processing delays, the problems that IND is now facing, and the ways that IND will approach these problems.

In her letter Verdonk states that major delays were caused by the 'migration' in May 2004 of 24 computer systems from the Aliens Police departments to one central IND computer system.

The IND now has about 60,000 residence permit applications on file. Some 28,000 of these applications were lodged more than 6 months ago.

By law, the IND is required to make a decision within six months but due to the current problems, IND will not meet this criterion. Minister Verdonk expects that 90 percent of residence permit applications (concerning cases older than six months), will be processed before the end of the year.

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With regard to regular residence permit extension requests, the minister states that 12,000 requests already received 'premium' processing, and

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individual applicants were informed by letter that their residence permits have been extended.

She expects that the remainder of the delays vis-a-vis the extension caseload will be tackled by the end of this summer.

Regarding the issuance of so-called return visas, a temporary extra facility has been opened in Hoofddorp where return visas can be obtained free of charge.

As far as the IND Infolijn (the central IND phone service) goes, Verdonk states that the IND has allocated more staff to it, and that the services of a call-center were hired to ensure the IND is better equipped to handle calls from the general public.

Currently the IND has approximately 18,000 appeal cases pending, of which more than 12,000 appeal cases are older than six months. The IND intends to properly address the delays and aims to have most delays squared away by the end of this 2004.

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As far as the kennismigrant (knowledge migrant) is concerned. In my last column I described the possible implementation of a completely new residence permit category (five-year validity, no work permit requirement) for knowledge migrants.

To my knowledge, De Tweede kamer did not raise any major objections to the Cabinet's plans. The House of Representatives is now on summer recess and may attack the plans later this year.

Furthermore, the new regulations will have to be studied by the Raad van State, the highest legal advisory committee of the Netherlands, and that usually takes a while. As always, I will keep you up to speed on all developments.

22 July 2004

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Patrick R. Rovers,
lawyer with Van Velzen CS

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 and European rules and regulations regarding foreigners, policies, procedures, work permits, visas, residence permits etc. are continuously subject to change.

Write to [Patrick Rovers and Hans van Velzen](#)

Subject: Dutch residence permits + living in the Netherlands + working in

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