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assistant is in line with current Dutch labour conditions and circumstances. In other words, this decision will simplify the work permit application procedure enormously and will free the Dutch hospital from a lot of paperwork, costs and hassle.

Nationals from Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Slovakia seeking employment in other occupations and their prospective Dutch employers cannot benefit from this (temporary) arrangement. In their situation the regular regime regarding Dutch work permit issuance applies. (Maltese and Greek Cypriot workers do not require a work permit to take up employment in the Netherlands.)

Until 1 May 2006, the regular work permit rules and regulations will be enforced with regard to occupations and sectors within the Dutch economy where ousting (verdringing) is imminent.

This means that from 1 May 2004 to 1 May 2006, prospective Dutch employers of the new EU member nationals are required to arrange for regular work permits. In order to become eligible for such a work permit, the respective employer will have to (amongst other things) register the job opening with the competent authorities, place advertisements in Dutch/EU newspapers and/or specialised magazines, and/or enlist the services of head hunters or recruitment agencies.

The prospective employer will have to do his/her utmost to find a suitable Dutch/current EU candidate for the position. If and when such a candidate can not be located, and the CWI is satisfied with the prospective employers' recruitment efforts, a Dutch work permit may be issued.

This month the EU has welcomed ten new member states into its realm. In future Turkey, Romania, Albania and even the Ukraine may follow. This will lead to interesting and historic developments of which the outcome is uncertain (to say the least). As the 'old European Union' fades into the annals of history, here is some food for thought:

- According to a recent survey by the Dutch news program Twee Vandaag 74 percent of the respondents think it is likely that that nationals from the new EU member states will glut the labour market, and 57 percent of the respondents are worried about this.
- Sweden, Greece and Ireland are the only current EU member states opening up their labour markets, and effectively respecting the free movement of people principle.
- Poland and Hungary have decided to restrict/close their labour markets to nationals of most of the current EU member states, as a result of the fact that most current EU member states will not allow Polish or Hungarian nationals to work in their countries without any restrictions.

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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, policy, procedures, work permits, visas, and residence permits are continuously

subject to change.

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