

Feedback on Proposal to Extend Naturalisation Term (5 → 10 years)

I respectfully submit my objection to the proposed extension of the naturalisation term from 5 years to 10 years.

1. Principle of Acquired Rights & Legal Certainty

Dutch administrative law is grounded in fairness, proportionality, and legal certainty. Individuals who began their integration journey under the current 5-year requirement have a legitimate expectation (vertrouwensbeginsel) that this framework remains stable. Retroactive changes undermine trust in the legal system and erode confidence in government commitments. Applying the new rule only to future arrivals would preserve stability and comply with the doctrine of acquired rights.

2. Compliance with International & EU Human Rights Standards

The European Convention on Human Rights (Article 8 – right to family life) and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights stress the importance of legal certainty and proportionality. Extending the waiting period retroactively negatively affects settled families and long-term residents who have already invested years in Dutch society, disrupting their integration and family stability.

3. Economic & Social Integration

Highly skilled migrants, students, and working families contribute immediately to the Dutch economy and society through taxes, social security, and active community participation. Extending the term to 10 years sends a discouraging signal, risks discouraging talent, and undermines the Netherlands' global competitiveness. Other EU countries maintain shorter timelines; making the Netherlands stricter harms its attractiveness as a destination for talent and innovation.

4. Social Cohesion & Inclusion

Nationality is not a distant aspiration but recognition of real, lived belonging. Delaying naturalisation weakens integration, fosters uncertainty, and risks exclusion. A 10-year timeline does not promote integration but delays full participation in civic life. By keeping the 5-year rule, the Netherlands upholds its tradition of fairness and strengthens long-term social cohesion.

Conclusion:

For reasons of legal certainty, human rights compliance, economic competitiveness, and social cohesion, I strongly urge the government to maintain the current 5-year naturalisation period. If any change is adopted, it should apply only to future applicants and not retroactively to those who have already begun their integration journey.