

The 10-Year Naturalisation Proposal: A Step Backwards for the Netherlands' Future

As a highly skilled immigrant who has chosen to make the Netherlands my permanent home, I was deeply concerned to read about the proposal to extend the residency requirement for naturalisation from five to ten years.

I came to the Netherlands because of its reputation as a country that values openness, fairness, and democracy. I work full-time in a highly skilled role, pay taxes, contribute to the Dutch economy, and have invested all my savings to buy a home in a beautiful Dutch village where I live with my two sons. They go to a local Dutch school. They speak the language fluently, sing Sinterklaasliedjes, and proudly tell everyone they are growing up Dutch. For them, this country is home in every possible sense of the word.

I am not alone. Many of my colleagues and peers have moved here because we believed in the Netherlands' commitment to inclusivity and the rule of law. We believed this was a country that welcomes those who contribute and participate, regardless of where they were born.

The proposal to double the naturalisation waiting period sends a very discouraging message. It tells skilled migrants that even after years of contributing to the economy, integrating into society, and following all the rules, they are still seen as outsiders.

Beyond the emotional impact, this move risks undermining the very strengths that make the Netherlands a global leader in innovation and business. International talent is mobile, and decisions like this will make it harder for Dutch companies to attract and retain the global expertise they need to stay competitive.

Dutch democracy has long been admired for its balance between majority rule and protection of individual rights. This proposal, by contrast, feels like a short-term political gesture that ignores the real, human consequences, not just for migrants like me, but for the country's international reputation and economic future.

I urge the Dutch government and Parliament to reject or rethink this proposal. Instead of moving the goalposts for those who have already committed their lives to the Netherlands, let's strengthen the policies that make this country a magnet for talent, innovation, and diversity. We immigrants do not ask for special treatment. We only ask for fairness, predictability, and the chance to fully belong to the society we already contribute to, in every possible way.

With hope and respect,

A Highly Skilled Immigrant, Parent, and Proud Resident of the Netherlands