



Immigration and Naturalisation  
Service  
*Ministry of Security and Justice*

# The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) in 2015 Annual Report

## Highlights



# The IND in 2015 Annual Report

You will have noticed: it was a dynamic and eventful year for the IND. Never before had so many people applied for asylum in our country, and we had to pull out all the stops throughout the immigration process to ensure that everything could be implemented smoothly. For the IND this meant that we hired additional staff, opened additional locations, and expanded our capacity by also working on weekends at several of the asylum locations. In this Annual Report you can read more about the measures and their effects.

Of course, while the influx of asylum seekers is high, the other duties of the IND simply continue. For instance, the IND also plays an important role in the Netherlands' position as knowledge economy. We do this, for example, by facilitating highly skilled migrants, in the best possible way, and by working closely with other organisations in expat centres.

In 2015 we also introduced a special scheme for start-ups; young innovative entrepreneurs who we would like to link to the Netherlands. The fact that the Netherlands is becoming more and more attractive for talent from abroad, is also evident from the increase in the number of foreign students who have started studies in the Netherlands during the past year.

The Annual Report also provides more information in this respect.

Of course, we are not alone when it comes to careful implementation of the policy on foreign nationals. We cooperate with other organisations in numerous areas, in order to be able to live up to society's expectations.

Over the past year, for example, we worked with various cooperating organisations (chain partners) in the area of enforcement, and the result was fantastic: for example, a national campaign day on the Approach to Sham Marriages (Aanpak Schijnhuwelijken) took place and we invested efforts in the fight against human trafficking.

In 2016 we will continue to work on the development of our online services, among other things. The first steps in this regard were taken in 2015, and this year we hope to be able to start reaping the benefits and also to further develop our online services. I hope to be able to tell you more about this next year, in the same spot!

Rob van Lint,  
*General Director at the IND*



## January

01/01

### New scheme for start-up entrepreneurs enters into force

The start-up scheme entered into force on 1 January 2015. This new scheme makes it possible for ambitious entrepreneurs situated outside of Europe, to obtain a temporary residence permit in order to establish an innovative business in the Netherlands. A condition in this regard is that they are supervised by a reliable supervisor (facilitator) in the Netherlands.

In the first year of this scheme, 100 applications were submitted and 20 residence permits were granted (residence permits granted including restrictions (or conditions) on residence permits). Foreign nationals with a 'start-up' residence permit come from the United States, Russia, Canada, India, Macedonia, Indonesia, Ukraine, Mexico and New Zealand.

10/01

### Calling the IND

With the arrival of the new call desk, the IND was also assigned new telephone numbers. On business days, staff members of the IND are available to answer questions on telephone number 088 0430430.

You can also ask questions by email, Twitter (@IND\_NL) and at the IND desk (after having previously made a telephone appointment).



29/01

### Central document management

On Thursday 29 January, the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee (KMAR), the National Police, the Dutch Repatriation & Departure Service (DT&V) and the IND signed an agreement. They agreed that travel and identity documents that are seized during the asylum procedure would be managed centrally as from 1 February 2015. This central management task is encompassed with the IND's Team Onderzoek en Expertise Documenten (Document Research and Expertise Team). It is logical that the IND would be the most suitable party for this role, says Frits Swüste. 'The IND is the only party to maintain contact with the client in all cases, irrespective of the outcome of the procedure. If an application is granted and someone is granted a permit, we are the party that orders the permit and



issues the permit at the counter. At the same time we also return the original documents that were surrendered. However, when an application is rejected the documents continue to be available to the Repatriation & Departure Service through us.'

## February

23/02

### Intensified cooperation between Belgium and the Netherlands

Belgium and the Netherlands will intensify cooperation with respect to asylum and migration. This is stated in the letter of intent that State Secretary Teeven and his Belgium counterpart Theo Francken have signed. The cooperation will focus, among other things, on dealing with the misuse of the so-called Europe route, closer collaboration in the deployment of return flights, and more active exchange of information in the context of the fight against migration fraud. An active exchange of experiences and so-called best practices will also be instated between the two migration services.

26/02

### Adopted Congolese children have arrived in the Netherlands after a delay of several years

After a delay of two to three years, two children from the Congo have arrived in the Netherlands to their adoptive parents. They are the first children to have travelled to the Netherlands since the Congolese authorities decided in

VISITING THE IND DESK	2015	2014
Total number of visits to 'information counters'	92,530	120,480
Total number of applications submitted via the counters (including return visas and visa extensions)	28,410	34,300
Total number of residence documents issued by the counters	161,770	42,210
TELEPHONE	2015	2014
The total number of front office calls received	511,100	491,580
Average number of emails per month	1,920	1,650
Average telephone accessibility/waiting time	80%	93%

September 2013 to suspend all international adoptions indefinitely. The Central Authority of International Children's Issues is responsible for substantive monitoring in the adoption procedure.

## March

**01/03**

### Visa applications via the IND

Since 1 March 2015, the IND has been processing all visa applications presented to the IND by the Dutch embassies, consulates and Regional Service Organisations (RSOs) abroad. In a number of cases, these establishments cannot or are not allowed to process the application(s) in an entirely independent manner. In addition, from now on the IND will also process all objections and appeals related to a short-stay visa. However, these foreign diplomatic stations will still be responsible for receiving and processing short-stay visa applications. This concerns the majority of all short-stay visa applications.

**03/03**

### 1000th residence document issued at Holland Expat Centre South in Maastricht

On Tuesday 3 March, Mayor Hoes issued the 1000th residence document to an expat living in Maastricht, Mrs Mengmeng Shi, who works at the University of Maastricht and is originally from China.

Since 21 October 2014, staff members of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) have been making their way to Maastricht, twice a month, to issue residence documents to international residents of Maastricht and the 18 surrounding municipalities.

It is evident that this service meets a need when one considers the fact that the 1000th residence permit was issued after barely four months. 'The presence in Maastricht meets a clear need and literally and figuratively brings the IND closer to the client', according to a spokesperson for the IND.



**04/03**

### State Secretary Teeven issues the first start-up permit

State Secretary Teeven issued the first start-up permit in the Amsterdam Expat Centre.



**06/03**

### 1000th Twitter follower

On 6 March the IND Twitter account reached its 1000th follower. More and more clients and interested parties have



been able to reach the IND on Twitter. Our webcare team is ready to answer questions on business days via @IND\_NL. The General Director of the IND is also on Twitter (@RobvanLint). On 31 December 2015,

@IND\_NL had 2280 followers. A total of 1489 followers joined in 2015. In 2015, 1805 client enquiries (1262 questions plus 543 follow-up questions) were answered. A total of 30 complaints were processed, 16 themes were highlighted, and 133 corporate tweets were sent.

**09/03**

### Resettlement mission to Thailand

Each year, roughly 500 refugees are brought to the Netherlands by invitation. During visits to refugee camps, a selection is made of refugees who are eligible for resettlement, in close collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). 80 refugees were selected during the resettlement mission to Thailand. One of them was pregnant. As a result, 81 refugees eventually arrived in the Netherlands halfway through September. Apart from this mission, resettlement missions were also sent in 2015 to Lebanon (April and June) and Kenya (October). A total of 430 selected refugees arrived in the Netherlands in 2015.

**20/03****New Security and Justice Ministers**

On the recommendation of the Prime Minister, King Willem-Alexander appointed Mr G.A. van der Steur and Mr K.H.D.M. Dijkhoff, effective Friday 20 March 2015, to Minister for Security and Justice (Naturalisation portfolio) and State Secretary for Migration (asylum and migration portfolio).

**24/03****Utrecht Expat Centre opened**

One of the first official acts of the new Minister for Migration, Klaas Dijkhoff, was the opening of the expat centre in Utrecht in the new municipal office of Domstad. This makes Utrecht the eighth expat centre where IND employees perform their work.

The State Secretary:

'I am very pleased with the cooperation in the expat centres. The IND, the municipalities, the local and regional economy, and especially the actual highly skilled migrants are represented.' The ambition for the migrants that are needed in the Netherlands - especially knowledge- and labour migrants, and students - is to be accepted by means of fast and efficient procedures. The increase in the residence clusters Study, Regular Labour and Knowledge & Talent shows that the policy is yielding results.

**April****15/04****Demonstration at the IND office in Amsterdam**

Asylum seekers who had exhausted all legal remedies demonstrate in front of the IND office in Amsterdam. Earlier in the week, they had to leave the so-called Vluchtgarage on the instructions of Mayor Van der Laan. After their eviction, they were offered accommodation in one of the municipality's 'bed-, bath- and bread' facilities. The asylum seekers who had exhausted all legal remedies were not happy about this. The demonstration was peaceful. The media and political arena have paid considerable attention to the 'bed-, bath- and bread' arrangements during the past year.

**22/04****First fully digital asylum legal proceedings**

On 22 April the first digital case of appeal was concluded successfully in the Court of Amsterdam. This case forms part of the Judiciary's pilot project, in which lawyers in asylum cases are able to submit an appeal digitally in the Judiciary system. These reports are received automatically in the IND's information system, and a case is then opened automatically. A proposed legislative change will make it mandatory for professional parties to proceed with digital litigation.



In 2015, the IND's Executive Board for Legal Affairs was assigned 29,680 new appeals. A total of 31,870 appeals were settled. In 87% of these cases the court ruled that the IND's decision was correct and could be upheld (asylum: 86% regular: 88%).

KNOWLEDGE & TALENT HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS		2015	2014
Applications	(9,010 TEV + 3,310 VVR)	12,320	10,900
Decisions	(8,910 TEV + 3,230 VVR)	12,140	11,260
Approvals	(97% TEV + 80% VVR)	92%	93%
LABOUR MIGRANTS		2015	2014
Applications	(1,170 TEV + 790 VVR)	1,960	1,690
Decisions	(1,210 TEV + 830 VVR)	2,040	1,720
Approvals	(80% TEV + 80% VVR)	80%	69%
STUDENTS		2015	2014
Applications	(11,600 TEV + 3,610 VVR)	15,220	12,690
Decisions	(11,590 TEV + 3,580 VVR)	15,170	12,550
Approvals	(99% TEV + 100% VVR)	100%	99%
TOP 3 NATIONALITIES			
Highly skilled migrants	Labour migrants	Students	
Indian	Chinese	Chinese	
American	American	American	
Chinese	Japanese	Indian	



**23/04**

### Opening of the refugee art exhibition by students of the Academy of Art and Design St. Joost (Akademie voor Kunst en Vormgeving St. Joost)

Students of the Academy of Art and Design St. Joost and the IND worked together on a refugee art project. A few of the works of art were exhibited in the Security and Justice building in The Hague. General Director of the IND, Rob van Lint, opened the exhibition.

**May**

**13/05**

### Praise for IND desk staff member

*'I went to the IND desk in Den Bosch for additional information this morning. The service was excellent, I was informed in great detail, with a clear explanation, in comprehensible language and by a friendly man who gave me the feeling that I was taken seriously. In short, the IND desk in Den Bosch certainly deserves my praise.'*

This is a lovely compliment to all the IND employees, who do their best on a daily basis to help the clients to the best of their abilities. However, once in a while things don't run quite as smoothly, and the IND receives a complaint or a notice of default.

In 2015 the IND received 1,340 complaints. This number is a slight increase compared to 2014. 80% of all complaints were processed in good time. The IND continues to endeavour to process 90% of all complaints in good time. In 2015 the IND received 1,850 default notices on account of failure to issue timely decisions. 74% of these default notices were dealt with in good time. The default notices that were not processed on time resulted in a total of € 44,220 being awarded in automatic penalties.

**13/05**

### Human Trafficking Expert Meeting was a major success

The IND's 'Human Trafficking Expert Meeting on Multi-disciplinary Cooperation against Trafficking in Human Beings for Labour Exploitation' took place in The Hague on 13 May 2015. This meeting, in which 27 experts from various EU Member States took part, was organised by the IND in preparation for the Dutch EU presidency in 2016.

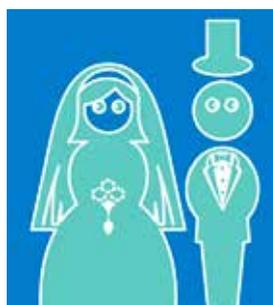
An important part of the programme consisted of two workshops, in which the participants discussed a number of statements in detail and enthusiastically. This meeting resulted in a lot of additional content for the Handbook on Labour Exploitation (Handboek Arbeidsuitbuiting). The handbook will mainly focus on the multidisciplinary approach to labour exploitation, in which cooperation at a national and international level will be key. The meeting was chaired by Richard Sondejker, Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinator at the IND. 'Labour exploitation is a major



injustice that is still getting insufficient attention in many countries, which is why many offenders of this crime escape punishment. This day serves to address this form of human trafficking', explains Sondejker. He continues: 'Many cases of exploitation in the agricultural sector, the construction sector and in the domestic sector are difficult to recognise, because the majority of the work takes place out of sight. This differs significantly from sexual exploitation, where public visibility is generally a requirement in order to attract clients.'

**19/05**

### Five arrests during the national campaign against sham marriages



On 18 and 19 May 2015, a national campaign against sham marriages resulted in five arrests. In 42 administrative law cases, it was assessed whether a residence permit could be withdrawn and whether criminal prosecution would follow, as a result of the campaign. In 48 cases throughout the country, targeted checks were conducted during the campaign, on individuals suspected of taking part in or facilitating a

marriage of convenience (a sham marriage). The campaign involved simultaneous interviews, address inspections and visits to workplaces. A sham marriage is a marriage that is primarily entered into in order to gain residence in the Netherlands. Reasons for entering into a sham marriage range from friendships or family relationships to financial motives or even compulsion. Facilitating and taking part in sham marriages may be linked to criminal activities, such as human smuggling and human trafficking. Sham marriages therefore result in victims. Sham marriages also cost our society money. People who enter into a sham marriage may unjustly take advantage of social provisions and benefits. During the national campaign against sham marriages, the police, the Public Prosecution Service, the IND, municipalities, the Inspectorate SZW (Social Affairs and Employment Inspectorate) and the Repatriation and Departure Service (DT&V) worked together closely in effectively fighting sham marriages. The fight against sham marriages is a priority of the government. Abuse of the immigration regulations will not be tolerated and criminal activities will be punished, by way of measures such as the withdrawal of residence permits, deportation and criminal prosecution. Minister for Migration, Dijkhoff: 'Sham marriages are a problem. We must fight sham marriages and the criminal activities associated with such marriages, in chorus.' State Secretary for Migration, Dijkhoff (Security and Justice), is satisfied with the cooperation between the agencies involved in the approach to sham marriages. The campaign days are a good example of the overall approach to migration fraud, and help to encourage stricter monitoring of possible sham marriages. In 2015, the IND received roughly 28,000 applications in the Family (Familie & Gezin) residence cluster.

FAMILY (Familie & Gezin)		2015	2014
Applications	(18,720 TEV + 9,240 VVR)	27,960	24,830
Decisions	(16,830 TEV + 9,080 VVR)	25,910	24,310
Approvals	(79% TEV + 84% VVR)	81%	84%
TOP 3 NATIONALITIES			
Indian			
Turkish			
American			

## June

12/06

### The CoC and the IND sign a collaborative statement

The CoC and the IND sign a collaborative statement for the Welcoming Equality project. The aim, in consultation with the CoC, is to further increase sensitivity levels among interpreters, with respect to files on LHBT asylum seekers.

The IND and the CoC work together closely, more often, also in the form of a joint master class for interviews involving LHBT asylum seekers in the asylum procedure.

## August

17/08

### Dijkhoff visits Application Centre Ter Apel

The number of asylum applications continues to increase. State Secretary Klaas Dijkhoff brings a visit to Ter Apel where



he himself sees the impact of the increased influx of asylum seekers. He talks with staff, gets an insight in the registration process and takes a closer look at the new waiting area that COA uses on days of high influx.

27/08

### IND officers provide information to foreign nationals

Although everyone in the immigration process makes a genuine effort to ensure that the influx of asylum seekers is managed smoothly, it remains difficult to provide proper reception and fast procedures. For many asylum seekers this means they must wait quite a while before their asylum procedure is started. In order to ease apprehensions in this respect, the IND officers provide information at the various locations of the COA (Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers). They explain how the asylum procedure actually works and what the asylum seeker can expect in the very near future, among other things. This goes hand in hand with an opportunity to ask questions, and interpreters are also present to provide assistance.

## September

01/09

### Vreemdelingendocumenten.nl revamped

The [www.vreemdelingendocumenten.nl](http://www.vreemdelingendocumenten.nl) website was revamped and the updated website has been available since 1 September. The website provides an overview and explanation of the various types of Dutch documents for foreign nationals. The updated website represents the style of [www.ind.nl](http://www.ind.nl) and the style of the websites of other

government organisations. In addition, the website is now also suitable for smartphones and tablets.

DOCUMENTS	2015	2014
Temporary regular residence permit	94,440	97,110
Permanent regular residence permit	8,550	11,280
Temporary asylum residence permit	40,990	26,230
Permanent asylum residence permit	8,110	7,750
W-document	42,670	28,940
W2-document	1,090	1,260

**09/09**

## The King motivates the staff members involved in the immigration process

King Willem Alexander addressed the managers and staff members of the COA, IND, VNG and VWN, among others. He showed great appreciation for the work of the organisations involved in the immigration process, having to cope with large numbers of refugees coming to our country. 'The King is not blind to the effects of such high influx of people in the immigration process, on the men and women in the field, the people who do the work 24/7',



says Deputy General Director, Nanette van Schelven. 'In these busy and hectic times, we are facing major challenges. The support expressed by the King during his visit, as well as the level of involvement displayed from his side, are important and motivating. It has given a boost of energy to all my colleagues working in the immigration process. He truly motivated us.'

ASYLUM	2015	2014
Initial applications for asylum	43,090	21,810
Second and subsequent applications for asylum	1,940	2,720
Family reunification migrants*	13,850	5,360
Approvals for initial, second and subsequent applications for asylum	70%	65%

\*this concerns family members of permit holders who have travelled to the Netherlands.

### TOP 3 NATIONALITIES

Syrian  
Eritrean  
Iraqi

**21/09**

## Extra IND locations in Budel, Doetinchem and Veenhuizen

The high influx of asylum seekers is causing congestion at Ter Apel, where asylum seekers are able to register if they want to apply for asylum, and the same applies for the application centres in Zevenaar and Den Bosch. In an attempt to alleviate this congestion, the IND has opened extra temporary offices at locations of the COA in



Veenhuizen, Doetinchem and Budel. Parts of the asylum procedure take place here, such as the application interview and the initial interview by the IND.

**24/09**

## Conference on Vulnerability and (own) strength and resources

On Thursday 24 September, the conference on 'Vulnerability and (own) strength and resources' took place in Nieuwegein. Roughly 250 interested partners from organisations involved in the immigration process attended the conference which was organised by the COA, the DT&V and the IND. In the morning they listened to guest speaker State Secretary for Migration, Dijkhoff, among others, who elaborated on the unprecedented influx of asylum seekers and on the importance of cooperation between those involved in the immigration process and the municipalities, but, for example, also the Ministry of Defence and the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee (KMar): 'People who aren't even obliged to take on any of the tasks, because such tasks are not part of their primary duties, but do so nevertheless. It is incredible to see that the Netherlands is a country where a notion like this works when push comes to shove.'

**30/09**

## A collection of short stories 'One in a thousand'

Thousands are seeking protection, and each person has his or her own story to tell. Everyone has been touched by the images of refugees who risk their lives to reach European soil. However, what does an asylum application actually entail? Who are the people who apply for asylum? Who are the people who process these asylum applications? What does it mean to make a decision in an asylum file?

The collection of short stories 'One in a thousand', answers all these questions and more. The IND, COA and DT&V offer a unique



glimpse behind the scenes of the day-to-day work related to the Dutch asylum policy. On 30 September, State Secretary for Migration, Dijkhoff, offered the first copies of the collection of short stories to the House of Representatives.

## October

10/10

### IND lustrum in the Caribbean Netherlands

Since 10 October 2010, the IND is responsible for implementation of the immigration and naturalisation policy on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba. The IND implements these tasks on the basis of the Act on Admission and Deportation. This means that the IND assesses all applications for a residence permit for foreign nationals who want to stay on the islands for longer than 3 months. That includes applications from people who want to work or study there. The IND also assesses the applications of Dutch citizens who want to stay on the islands for longer than 6 months. In addition, the IND processes applications from people who want to obtain Dutch citizenship. The IND in the Caribbean Netherlands received a total of 4,670 applications and requests in 2015. A total of 4,420 of these procedures were processed.

21/10

### Letter to the asylum seekers from the Minister for Migration

From Wednesday 21 October, new asylum seekers who registered at AC Ter Apel were issued a letter which included an explanation of the asylum procedure and the current reception facilities.

22/10

### The IND, COA and DT&V launch the online Magazine entitled *VreemdelingenVisie*

On Thursday 22 October 2015, the first edition of *VreemdelingenVisie*, - the online Magazine of the IND, COA and DT&V, regarding the work with foreign nationals - was published. The three organisations work together closely with respect to the implementation of the policy on foreign nationals. The foreign national occupies a central position in this collaboration. The same applies for the joint online magazine. *VreemdelingenVisie* sheds light on all aspects related to admission, reception, supervision and repatriation of foreign nationals. Apart from actual news items, the magazine also includes background articles and clear explanations on formal procedures and terms. Moreover, the magazine provides room for personal stories



on employees and foreign nationals. From asylum seekers to people who intend to live, work or study in the Netherlands, but also foreign nationals who want to obtain Dutch citizenship or people who must leave the Netherlands. *VreemdelingenVisie* brings all of this information together. *VreemdelingenVisie* is a magazine for all persons who are (professionally) involved in the work with foreign nationals. The magazine is published every two months and a subscription to the magazine is free of charge.

24/10

### Asylum interviews during weekends as well

The IND started processing asylum applications over the weekends as well. It does so in close coordination with the cooperating organisations, namely the COA, the Aliens Police (*Vreemdelingenpolitie*), the Legal Aid Board (legal aid for asylum seekers provided by immigration lawyers), and the Dutch Council for Refugees (*Vluchtelingenwerk*), each with a specific role in the asylum procedure. Operating over the weekends also holds consequences for these organisations. Interpreters and technical support are now also operating seven days a week. All efforts aim to adequately deal with the high influx of asylum seekers.



27/10

### Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) facility in Doetinchem

The municipality of Doetinchem, the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA), and the IND signed an agreement for the start of a registration facility for the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP). They signed the agreement following the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) facility pilot project which started in Ter Apel in September 2014 and which yielded positive results. The purpose of the registration facility for the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) is to speed up the transition of foreign nationals (with an asylum residence

permit) to a regular residence within the municipalities. At a registration facility for the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP), a foreign national with an asylum residence permit can already be registered in the Municipal Personal Records Database during the general asylum procedure. This implies that the process related to registration in the Municipal Personal Records Database, issuing of a Citizen Service Number, and (in due time) the issuance of residence documents, will take place sooner, which means that foreign nationals with a residence permit will proceed to the reception centre (asielzoekerscentrum, AZC) from the registration location, with the correct documents already in their possession. The registration in the Municipal Personal Records Database, at a later stage, at the municipality of establishment, will therefore be faster and simpler, since it will only require a transfer. This saves time and money. Later in the year a Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) facility was also opened in Budel-Cranendonck (on 12 November).

## November

05/11

Prime Minister Rutte visits the IND



09/11

The Netherlands and South Africa extend their cooperation in the fight against illegal immigration

The Netherlands and South Africa have officially perpetuated their arrangements with respect to technical cooperation in terms of migration. The updated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in which these agreements are set out, was signed on Monday, 9 November, by the Dutch ambassador to South Africa and the Director-General of the South African Department of Home Affairs. The MoU includes agreements on the



cooperation between the South African Department of Home Affairs and the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND). The agreements that were made mostly pertain to the cooperation in the fight against illegal immigration, and include, among other things:

- Support from the Netherlands in establishing a document fraud department at the airport in Johannesburg;
- Support from the Netherlands in establishing a migration analysis department at the Department of Home Affairs;
- Mutual sharing of relevant knowledge, information, documentation, legislation and other instruments that could be of use for both countries;
- Continuation of the process of cooperation with respect to training programmes and technical assistance.

The updated MoU will be effective for a period of three years. Based on the previous MoU, which has already lapsed, cooperation between the two countries, with respect to migration, has been good for several years. In addition, the IND has had an immigration liaison officer (ILO) in South Africa for quite some time, who maintains the good relationship with the South African immigration services encompassed with the Department of Home Affairs.

11/11

Immigration services of Switzerland and the Netherlands exchange experiences

General Director of the IND, Rob van Lint, and Asylum & Protection Director, Renger Visser, were guests of their Swiss colleagues, Mario Gattikel and Pius Betschart, on Wednesday, 11 November. Switzerland has focused on the Dutch asylum system in recent years, and reformed its system based in part on the Dutch example. Experiences were exchanged during the visit, among other things, with respect to the involvement at the EASO (European Asylum Support Office) support plan for Italy, and issues concerning the so-called 1F policy (Article 1F of the UN Convention on Refugees excludes war criminals and perpetrators of crimes against humanity from obtaining refugee status) were discussed.

17 and 18/11

Dutch initiator of the international 1F workshop

On Tuesday 17 and Wednesday 18 November, an international workshop took place in Geneva, focusing on the 1F theme (no status for war criminals and perpetrators of crimes against humanity - also such as terrorists, for example). A large international group with representatives from the immigration services of various EU countries, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UNHCR spent two days discussing the question of how to jointly act more effectively in this regard. The IND was the initiator of the workshop, where themes such as the following were discussed:

- National and international cooperation
- The collection and exchange of information
- Possibilities for international legislation
- Could we strengthen each other by setting up an Exclusion Network, as recommended by Human Rights Watch (The Long Arm of Justice report) and by way of the strategy of the Genocide Network (a network of European Officers charged with the task of prosecuting offenders of international crimes) adopted by the European Council)?

## December

05/12

### Ratification of the Forced Marriage Prevention Act

With the entry into force of this act, it is no longer possible to marry if you are younger than 18 years, among other things. Both partners must be at least 18 years old in order to be able to get married in the Netherlands. Also, marriages concluded with minor partners abroad can only be recognised in the Netherlands when both partners are at least 18 years old. Moreover, a marriage between blood relatives in the third or fourth degree, so-called first cousin marriages, will become more difficult. In cases of forced marriage, the Public Prosecution Service will have the option of refusing the proposed marriage. There will also be more opportunities for a forced marriage to be declared null and void. The recognition of polygamous marriages that are recognised abroad will also be limited.

08/12

### Red Cross Refugee Buddy App



What city am I in? Where is the closest pharmacy? When will the train leave for Amsterdam? These are just a few examples of questions, and the answers are available in the Refugee Buddy App of the Dutch Red Cross. The app was launched today and is intended for refugees living in emergency accommodations. The app also includes general information on the asylum procedure. This information has been coordinated with the IND, COA and the Dutch Council for Refugees, among others.

15/12

### National Naturalisation Day

Naturalisation Day is the day in the Netherlands on which people who naturalise as Dutch citizens are presented with an official certificate showing that they have become Dutch



citizens. Naturalisation Day was instated for the first time in 2005 as a public holiday for new Dutch citizens and takes place annually on 15 December, also in Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba (the BES islands). Since 2006 municipal authorities have been legally obliged to

organise this day on an annual basis. Many municipalities also arrange additional naturalisation ceremonies on other days in the year. In 2015, 25,450 applications for Dutch nationality were submitted. In 2015, 25,450 applications for Dutch nationality were submitted. Approximately 96% of the applications were granted.

22/12

### Videos launched for refugee youngsters

Young asylum seekers often have no idea where they are in the Netherlands. What does the asylum procedure entail, how do other children live, where do they attend school, which rights and obligations do they have? On Friday, 18 December, the organisers of the project [welcomeinthenetherlands.nl](http://welcomeinthenetherlands.nl) presented the informational videos that were made especially for refugee youngsters, in the cinema the Ketelhuis in Amsterdam. The partners in this project of International Debate Education Association, IDEA NL, were Nidos, COA, IND and Jade Zorggroep.

31/12

### Income and Expenditures

In 2015 the IND's income totalled € 409.2 million. The bulk of this amount (around 85%) originated from the ministry. The remaining amount comprises the proceeds of administrative charges and other income. Expenditure was slightly less than income in 2015 at € 404.5 million, representing a positive result of € 2.4 million. This means that a positive result was booked for the sixth consecutive year. The bulk of the IND's costs (approximately 63%) comprise personnel costs. The remaining amount comprises material costs, such as accommodation and computerisation. The official number of employees is 2,900 FTEs. External employees were hired in order to allow the department to cope with the increased influx of asylum seekers.