IND pilots new family reunification rules for a small number of pending applications

From 12 June 2026, the IND will begin applying the Netherlands' new family reunification rules in a limited number of pending cases as a pilot to test whether the law can be applied retroactively to more than 19,000 applications submitted before that date but not yet decided. The Council of State has previously warned that applying these rules to already-submitted applications could result in unequal treatment. For that reason, only a small group of cases will proceed initially, while others are prepared but not decided until the courts issue a guiding judgment. Applications that are not affected by the new rules will continue to be processed as normal.

Under the new system, only nuclear family members qualify for reunification, meaning unmarried partners, adult children, and foster children are excluded. For people with subsidiary protection status, additional conditions apply, including a two-year waiting period after receiving a residence permit and requirements to show independent housing and sufficient financial means.

The purpose of this staged approach is to obtain legal clarity and avoid the need to reopen decisions later, thus preventing additional burden for the relevant stakeholders. Once a guiding ruling has been issued and the consequences are clear, the IND will then continue to assess the cases pending a decision.

Source(s)

- Immigration and Naturalisation Service | Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst (12 June, 2026), IND toetst nieuwe nareisregels in de praktijk [IND tests new family reunification rules in practice], https://ind.nl/nl/nieuws/ind-toetst-nieuwe-nareisregels-in-de-praktijk

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