



General Intelligence and
Security Service
*Ministry of the Interior and
Kingdom Relations*



ANNUAL REPORT 2014



Louis Einthoven, the first head of the National Security Service (Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst BVD), the predecessor of today's General Intelligence and Security Service (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst), was responsible for the service's motto and shield. He believed that citizens in a democracy such as ours must play an active role in society, and not just passively drift along on the waves of history.

The motto he chose was ***Per Undas Adversas***; against the current. Living fish swim against the current; only the dead ones are carried along. This saying symbolises the service's mentality; it is an active organisation, working against the current if necessary, watching out for threats to national security.

Foreword

For the Netherlands, 2014 began well. In March we were the proud host of the Nuclear Security Summit, NSS, in The Hague. Never before had so many world leaders, diplomats and international journalists gathered in our country. It was an exciting time for our national security apparatus, too. Given the huge media coverage such events generate, they make an attractive target for individuals and groups keen to draw attention to their own causes. The AIVD was one of the government agencies responsible for ensuring that the summit passed off almost without incident.

However, the escalating situation in Ukraine cast a dark cloud over the NSS. It was held just a few days after the Russian annexation of Crimea, precipitating an international crisis and resulting in sanctions against Russia. It goes without saying that it was, and remains, hugely important for the Dutch government to keep a close eye on events there. Thanks to its expertise, the AIVD is making a major contribution to our understanding of developments in the region.

The crisis in Ukraine reached a low point for our nation on 17 July when flight MH17, a Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, crashed near the eastern Ukrainian village of Hrabove. Almost 200 Dutch citizens were killed. Repatriating their remains presented a complex challenge for the Dutch authorities, given the ongoing conflict around the crash site. Nonetheless, the government made every effort to return the victims

to the Netherlands in a dignified manner. The AIVD has been helping to clarify the cause of the disaster.

Meanwhile, we continued to face a threat from individuals who left the Netherlands to join the conflict in Syria or Iraq, returned from it or felt inspired by events in that part of the world to reject our society and its values. The AIVD clearly outlined the extent of the problem in its report *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands: Swarm dynamics and new strength*. Based in part upon this publication, the government has now drawn up a plan of action to counter **radicalisation** and **jihadism**. As the report proves, within the matrix of government organisations the AIVD represents a unique source of information about developments in this domain.

Then there is the undiminished cyberthreat facing the Netherlands. Many other powers are interested in our advanced technological, economic and scientific know-how, and are prepared to use electronic channels in their efforts to obtain it. Our nation has one of the world's most highly developed IT and communications infrastructures. That is a great strength, but it also gives us responsibilities. Abuse of these networks has to be fought. The AIVD put a lot of energy into that struggle in 2014.

Taken together, these developments and threats assumed such proportions as 2014 unfolded that the government decided early

in the year to increase the AIVD's budget. The service has been allocated an additional €25 million a year in order to be able to properly investigate and analyse the threats emanating from beyond the EU's eastern borders, the issues surrounding jihadism and the dangers we face in cyberspace. Activities in all of these areas have further intensified since the end of 2014, as the next annual report will reveal in due course.

On my working visits to "the service" during the course of 2014, I have always been struck by the immense dedication of its personnel and by their expertise and professionalism. I have also seen that many of the developments in today's world are demanding their utmost effort, particularly against a background in which – due to reorganisations and the downsizing of administrative departments – people are having to accustom themselves to a new place within the organisation. The flexibility they have demonstrated in this situation is commendable. It makes me all the more proud to be the minister responsible for an organisation which matters when it comes to preserving and safeguarding our national security.

Dr Ronald Plasterk
Minister of the Interior and
Kingdom Relations



Per undas adversas

On 18 May 2014 the website *rtnieuws.nl* ran a story about Sara, 17, who had married a radicalised 20-year-old Belgian man in Syria. It was said that she first came into contact with Salafist and jihadist ideology through friends at home in the Netherlands. The police had earlier tipped off her parents that Sara was planning to travel to Syria, but apparently had not been believed. Yet she did leave, with a girlfriend.

Six months later the newspaper *De Limburger* reported that a 19-year-old Dutchman had carried out a suicide attack on a police station in Iraq on 12 November. At least eleven people were killed and dozens wounded. The bomber, from Maastricht, had left for Syria on 31 September.

These two stories encapsulate the problem the Netherlands and other Western countries are currently grappling with: young people who are voluntarily allowing themselves to be taken back to the seventh century. Young people who want to join organisations that are preaching violence, not religion. Young people who are then prepared to use that violence without scruples, within the so-called Caliphate or elsewhere. Young people who, instead of representing hope for the future, have become a threat to the very existence of our democratic legal order.

This is the phenomenon which shaped a substantial proportion of the AIVD's work in 2014.

Just days after the proclamation of the Islamic State (IS), the AIVD published the report *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands: Swarm dynamics and new strength*. In that we stated that the violent jihadist movement has hundreds of adherents here, and thousands of sympathisers. Their responses to the establishment of the caliphate confirmed that level of support almost immediately, and in their openness also represented a break with the past. No longer were the expressions of sympathy anonymous and confined to obscure websites; they were now overt and explicit, on the street and in mainstream social media.

The use of social media in particular has amplified the degree of mutual influence within the movement. Their speed and accessibility have created an entirely new group dynamic, one which leaves little room for any form of dissenting thought. We have also seen increasing radicalisation propelled by preachers working outside the established mosques, who urge their supporters to turn their backs on Western values.

In this context, it is hardly surprising that the number of people leaving the Netherlands to join the jihad in Syria or Iraq increased

in 2014. And that it has become impossible to provide a clear profile of who they are. They include boys and girls, men and women, fathers and mothers. Some are highly educated, others school dropouts. Some are ex-criminals, some pious followers of Islam, some pseudo-Muslims. All of which makes analysing the phenomenon an extremely complex business.

One thing we have noted is that more and more families are attempting to leave together. In a number of cases the AIVD has played a part in frustrating these plans.

On an almost daily basis, we have to consider whether individuals might endanger Dutch national security if they were to leave the country or return to it. Or even if they stay because they are unable or unwilling to make the journey. As the recent attacks in Belgium, France, Canada and Australia have reminded us all too clearly, the threat is more diffuse than ever. It comes from home-grown terrorists, from veterans of the jihad, from so-called “sleepers” and from radicalised loners.

On Europe’s southern borders, our attention focused upon the advance of ISIS and its destabilising effect in countries across the Middle East and North Africa. As states, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen are teetering on the brink of failure.

But another threat has also appeared, on Europe’s eastern borders. Russia’s annexation of the Crimea, the situation in Ukraine and the tragic fate of flight MH17 have made it clear that stability in our relations with Russia is still a long way off.

As part of its so-called foreign intelligence task, the AIVD supports the Dutch government by elucidating the actions of those in power and by providing well-founded knowledge and insights concerning political developments and the true intentions of foreign powers. Our people are constantly aware that what they reveal is essential to the nation’s success on the stage of international power politics.

The AIVD is a secret service, and for good reason. Obvious and hidden threats to the Netherlands could not be properly assessed if we were only able to use our people and resources overtly, or if our methods were widely known. Essential foreign intelligence cannot be obtained just by asking questions openly.

But the AIVD is not a secretive service. In this annual report we say as much as we can about what we did in 2014. We also show how social and political developments, combined with those in the digital world, can threaten the domestic and external security of the Netherlands. As the report reveals, it was a turbulent year.

There was internal turbulence, too. We successfully completed a reorganisation with a focus upon internal services and support activities, in order to save €23 million a year. That operation has put us in a better position to face the future, but has also meant parting company with valued colleagues. Which is never a painless experience.

We have now been awarded additional long-term funding. Since 1 January 2015 this has been channelled into our work countering terrorism, cyberthreats and the dangers emanating from Europe’s unstable fringes. On top of that, our budget for the coming years has been further increased. That gives me confidence that we can grow in line with the threats we face, in all their diversity.

First and foremost, though, my confidence is rooted in the abilities and the untiring efforts of our people. Under difficult circumstances, they have shown once again that they stand fully behind the task our service has been entrusted with. Even when, as our motto has it, that is “per undas adversas” – against the current.

Rob Bertholee
Director-General, General
Intelligence and Security Service



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The rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq
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ISIS

JaN

ISIS

AQAS

Algeria

Tunisia

Morocco

Libya

Egypt

Israel

Jordan

Iraq

Iran

Saudi Arabia

Oman

Mali

Niger

Chad

Sudan

Yemen

1 The threat from the belt of instability around Europe

Increasing unrest and tension are affecting more and more countries along the borders of Europe, resulting in wars between nations, internal conflicts and strife between different sections of the population. From North Africa through the Middle East to the Barents Sea, Europe today is surrounded by a “belt of instability”.

Developments in these countries pose a highly diverse range of threats to Europe itself. From jihadist violence and terrorism originating in North Africa and the Middle East to political obstruction and erosion of the security of energy supplies beyond the eastern borders of our region. All of these factors had major implications for Dutch national security in 2014, and hence for the work of the AIVD, and will continue to do so in the years to come.

Developments in North Africa and the Middle East

The undermining of authoritarian regimes in North Africa and the Middle East, and in several cases their complete collapse, has revived old ethnic and religious tensions. And created more room for long-established and newer terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaeda (AQ), Jabhat al-Nusra (JaN) and the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS; “al-Sham” refers to the Levant). To an extent, the latest struggles and conflicts reflect the age-old rift in the Muslim world between Sunnis and Shi’ites. But extremist forces have politicised this religious divide, with regional powers playing an important role in the background.

The rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq

Syria has been a battleground for several years now, with a wide range of groups fighting the regime in Damascus. But also – indeed mainly – each other. ISIS stands out from the other parties in this conflict in that its primary goal is not so much to overthrow the Assad government as to establish an Islamic state in the region. At one time it was an Al-Qaeda affiliate, but since a conflict between the two groups has been disowned by core AQ (see box).



Struggles and conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa increasingly reflect the rift between Sunnis and Shi'ites

In June 2014 ISIS announced that it has established a Caliphate, under the name Islamic State. This move underlines the fact that it does not recognise the existing national frontiers in the region. Its declared ambition is to control not just Iraq, but a whole swathe of the Middle East. ISIS' influence appears widespread, with jihadist groups in other countries declaring their allegiance to it and fighters in various parts of the world forging relations with it – or at least claiming to have done so.

The violence in Syria and Iraq, and the disintegration of their respective states, poses a threat not only to safety of their own populations but to the security of the entire region and areas well beyond it. The conflict in the two countries, and in particular the proclamation of the Caliphate by ISIS, has been exerting a magnetic appeal across the world. Foreign jihadists have flocked in to help the opponents of the Assad regime. Most join one of the extremist Sunni fighting organisations, such as ISIS or its rival JaN. There is every possibility that trained fighters from Western nations could return to their home countries with instructions to commit acts of terrorism or, from the combat zone, inspire those left behind to do so.

The conflict has taken on an even more international dimension since a multinational coalition intervened to check ISIS' rapid advances. The Netherlands is a member of this coalition, which has been carrying out air strikes in Iraq. That has prompted sometimes furious responses from Dutch ISIS fighters on the ground, who have been using social media to call for sympathisers to carry out attacks in the Netherlands.

Many individual Sunnis from the Arab world are fighting with the jihadist groups active in Iraq and Syria. And a number of prominent Sunnis are not only propagating jihad against Assad, but regard the conflict as a holy war with Shi'ism. This is a view also reflected in certain Arab political circles. Shi'ite Iran and Hezbollah have rallied to the aid of Damascus, in turn drawing in a number of Sunni regimes in the Middle East which are anxious to curtail Iran's power and influence as much as they can. In the background, the struggle for dominance between the regional powers has been a real factor in the uprisings against the governments in Damascus and Baghdad. Their political rivalries, being fought out by proxies on the battlefields of Syria and Iraq, are turning the situation more and more into an outright sectarian conflict between Sunnis and Shi'ites.

The struggle for leadership of the global jihad

ISIS is engaged in a fierce conflict with core Al-Qaeda over the leadership of the international jihadist movement. Until recently that role was held by the leader of core AQ, Ayman al-Zawahari. But now ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has clearly laid claim to the title by proclaiming himself Caliph. In Syria the dispute has led to clashes between ISIS and JaN, core AQ's official affiliate in the country, although fighters from the two groups do still sometimes operate side by side against Syrian government forces.

In various countries of the world, mainly smaller jihadist groups have declared their support for ISIS. And some have sworn an oath of allegiance to Al-Baghdadi. One example is Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis in the Sinai, which has also changed its name to Wilayat Sinai. By doing so, it has acknowledged that its territory is a province (wilayat) of the Caliphate. For the time being, however, most such groups remain loyal to AQ. They include its three largest affiliates, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Al-



Most European Jihadists, trying to join the conflict in Syria or Iraq, pass through Turkey

Shabaab (AS) in Somalia. But even within these groups there are elements sympathetic to ISIS and keen to affiliate with it. That has led to internal tensions which might eventually result in splits, as indeed has already happened within AQIM.

Although the influence and popularity of core AQ appear to be on the wane, by no means is it out of the picture. As recently as September 2014, for instance, it announced the creation of a new organisation named Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). Bringing together several existing jihadist groups, most from Pakistan, the establishment of this network shows that core AQ is still trying to expand its influence.

The accentuation of this doctrinal division, fuelled by underlying geopolitical strife, is undermining social order across the Muslim world. Moreover, it could also cause or intensify tensions between Sunnis and Shi'ites in the West.

The rise of ISIS: consequences for other countries in the region

As well as supporting the Syrian regime in its fight against ISIS, Iran is also backing Shi'ite militias in Iraq. This is because it regards ISIS as a direct threat to its own territorial integrity and to its interests in the region. Iran is not a member of the international coalition, but is providing both the Iraqi government and local militias with training, advice, equipment and technical support.

In Lebanon, too, tensions between Sunnis and Shi'ites are mounting as a result of the conflict in Syria. Jihadist groups sympathetic to ISIS are active in the Palestinian refugee camps. Sunni extremists have carried out terrorist attacks in Lebanon, with both JaN and ISIS or groups associated with them implicated. Hezbollah, which is supporting the Assad regime to protect the Shi'ites in Syria, is using Lebanon as a base for its own operations there. This situation is not going to change any time soon, since

neither the Lebanese army on the one hand nor Hezbollah and the Syrian army on the other are able to control and secure the entire Syrian-Lebanese border.

Most European jihadists trying to join the conflict in Syria or Iraq pass through Turkey, which also became increasingly concerned about ISIS' advances in 2014. Turkey has joined the international coalition, although it is not playing an active part militarily.

The situation in Syria and Iraq, and especially the battle between ISIS and the Kurds for control of the town of Kobane, temporarily stalled the Turkish-Kurdish peace process. There have also been tensions between Islamist and nationalist Kurds. These strains have had some effect upon relations between Turks and Kurds in Europe.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar are all members of the international coalition against ISIS and are conducting in air strikes against it in Iraq. However, their involvement has attracted criticism from some sections of their own Sunni communities, which regard ISIS as true Muslims attempting to "cleanse" Syria and Iraq of apostates. The Gulf states also have their own



Russia's unwavering faith in its own status as a superpower: a source of regional instability

problem with young men attempting to join the jihad, and have been trying to stem this tide. Saudi Arabia, for example, clamps down hard on those seeking to travel to Syria or Iraq and either imprisons returnees or subjects them to a programme designed to deradicalise them. In addition, it is actively endeavouring to counter Iran's influence in the region.

In Egypt, the current government is doing all it can to oppose jihadist terrorist groups. Despite this, they continue to operate and some are rallying to ISIS. They include Wilayat Sinai, which become an "official" ISIS affiliate in 2014. These organisations primarily attack Egyptian government targets, but also have Western property and citizens in their sights.

Since the fall of the Gaddafi regime, Libya has descended into administrative chaos. The country's borders are wide open to human traffickers and arms smugglers. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), active mainly in southern Algeria and Mali, is amongst those to benefit from this situation. Other jihadist groups also emerged in Libya during the course of 2014, with some expressing support for ISIS.

Europe's eastern borders

As 2014 unfolded, the confrontation in eastern Ukraine between government forces and pro-Russian separatists descended into full-scale armed conflict. This escalation followed Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in March, by military force. Despite considerable evidence to the contrary, President Putin continued to deny that Russia was supplying the **separatists** with equipment and personnel. It was in this context that Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 crashed in eastern Ukraine on 17 July.

The unrest caused by Russian activities along Europe's eastern borders is set to remain a constant theme for years to come. Russia has lost no opportunity to make it clear to other former Soviet republics in its so-called "near abroad" that it stands fully behind their Russian minorities. The nations affected, which include Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, interpret this stance as a threat to their territorial integrity.

Russia's international ambitions

Russia's unwavering faith in its own status as a superpower, combined with continuing denial of its internal problems, is set

to remain a source of regional instability. The West is once again being presented as the nation's common enemy and the true cause of all its economic woes and moral failings.

To maintain his influence over the general population, Putin has resorted to the tried and trusted methods of the past: expansion of the state apparatus, repression of political opponents and so on. Supported by a relentless campaign of propaganda in the Russian mass media, in recent years he has also been playing a strongly nationalistic card characterised by a strong emphasis on patriotism and the Russian Orthodox faith.

Putin's public statements about the expansion of Russia's sphere of influence and his efforts to secure it a leading role on the international stage stand in stark contrast to the country's vulnerable economic position, the result of overreliance on sales of primary raw materials alone.

An uneven playing field

The Russian state system is characterised by massive bureaucracy. Moreover, true power lies not with the institutions formally



Energy: a core weapon to sow division within Europe

responsible for exercising it but is rooted in parallel structures and competing informal networks. This enables Putin, working behind the scenes and outside formal institutional structures, to act as the ultimate arbiter. This framework, combined with sometimes unpredictable decisions designed to increase Putin's public popularity, is what defines Russia's political positioning. And it makes maintaining a transparent relationship with the country, both politically and economically, a complex business. It also means that agreements struck with Russia must be regarded as fragile.

Divide and rule

Russia's principal weapon in opposing the West is to amplify Europe's own internal divisions. In 2014 this strategy was particularly evident in its approach to the sanctions imposed by the European Union in response to its role in the crisis in Ukraine, but the same tactic has been a standard part of its energy policy for many years. Russia also continues to try to drive a wedge between NATO member states. To undermine the unity of EU policy towards Russia, the Kremlin is constantly applying a strategy of divide and rule.

Energy is a core weapon in these efforts to sow division within Europe. Moscow is trying to bring individual European states into its orbit by making them totally reliant upon its natural gas, or by supplying them with energy on very advantageous terms. Its hope is that these nations will then turn against the European consensus in favour of a robust policy towards Russia, and also oppose EU energy policy. Designed to encourage a free market by avoiding reliance upon any single country, single supplier or single source of energy, that EU policy is viewed by Russia as a direct threat to its position of power. Moscow would rather hold all the cards.

Nonetheless, Russia's ability to exert political influence based upon its status as an energy superpower has been weakening. It needs international partnerships and investments to increase the efficiency of its own energy sector and to exploit the vast untapped reserves in its Arctic regions. To demonstrate its independence from Europe in this regard, it is now seeking to intensify its energy trading relationship with China. In this way it also hopes to strengthen its negotiating position towards Europe.

European and Dutch security

Geopolitical developments around Europe directly impact the national security of European countries, the Netherlands included.

The current social and political unrest, civil wars and terrorism in North Africa and the Middle East are phenomena likely to remain problematic for some considerable time to come. Moreover, they are resonating loudly within the multicultural societies of Europe. With the openness offered by our society being used by some radical Dutch Muslims to express vocal support for ISIS, it is quite conceivable that community tensions here might increase.

There are major interests at stake in Europe's relations with Ukraine and Russia. The political tug-of-war with Russia over the crisis in Ukraine resulted in both sides introducing economic sanctions in the summer of 2014. And there is a risk that the Russian measures could cause divisions within Europe.

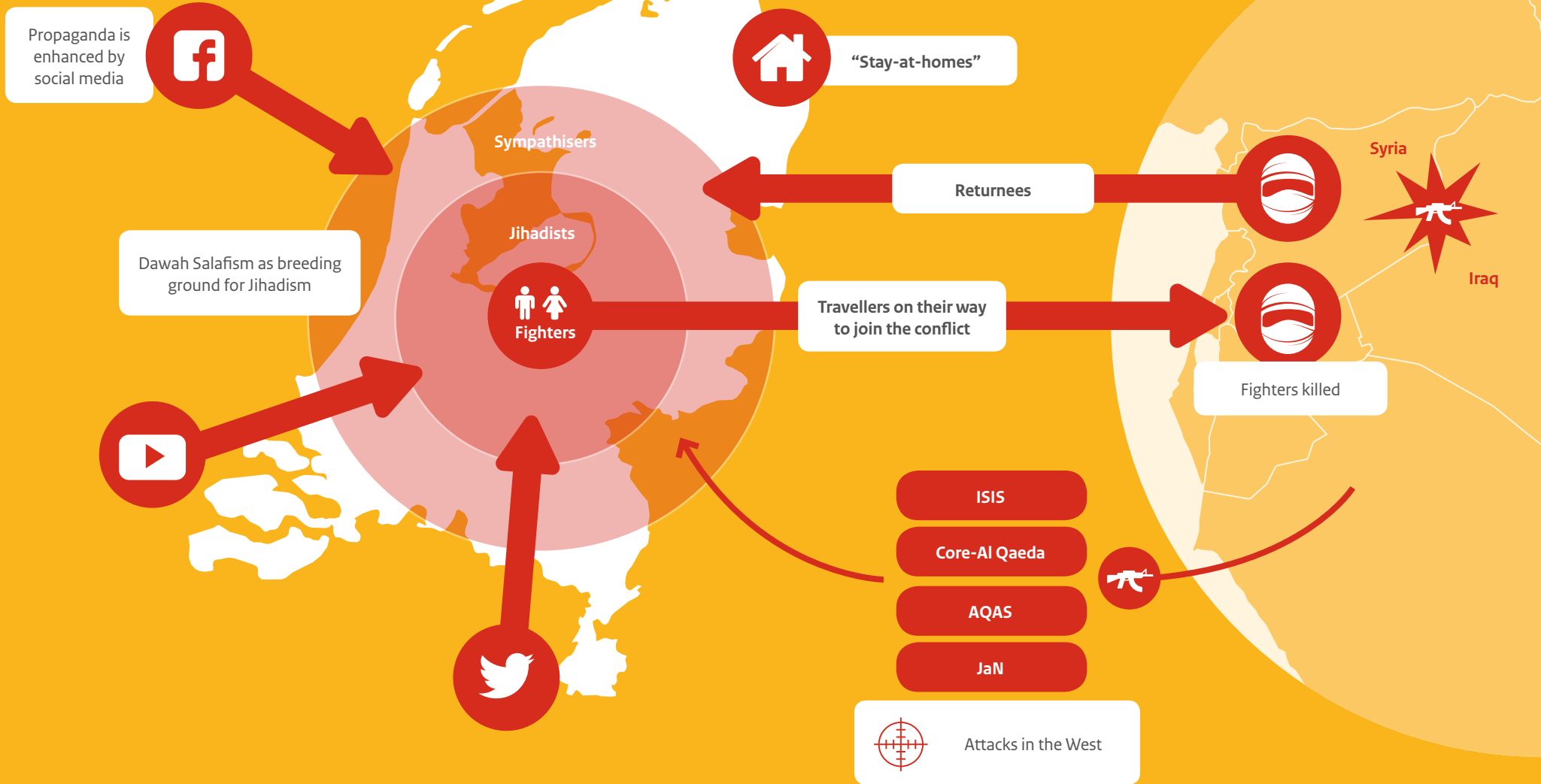


Crimea crisis causes political conflict between Russia and Europe

Position and role of the AIVD

Dutch national security is inextricably bound up with developments abroad, particularly where tensions and conflicts could give rise to threats. The AIVD is committed to investigating and interpreting such developments and to identifying the risks they might pose at the earliest possible stage.

Our service possesses the know-how, the international contacts and the powers needed for a timely and reliable understanding of the potential threats emerging from Europe's unstable fringes. Its findings are then passed on promptly to the public agencies best able to act effectively in response to them. By highlighting new threats and clarifying existing ones, for example, as well as by revealing the hidden agendas and true intentions of those in power in certain countries, the AIVD is helping to limit potential damage to the Netherlands and so playing its part in protecting our national security.



2 The jihadist threat to the Netherlands

The potential threat from jihadist terrorism once again dominated the news for much of 2014. It has now become absolutely clear that events abroad, particularly in Syria and Iraq, have direct repercussions for the national security of the Netherlands. To an extent, the risk of a terrorist attack here or elsewhere in Europe emanates directly from those conflict-hit countries. But, as events in Paris in January 2015 show, individuals inspired by the ideology of the international jihad can also strike even if not actually acting on orders from an organisation elsewhere in the world. Jihadists continued to travel from the Netherlands to join the conflict in Syria in 2014. In some cases, entire families left together. But a number of fighters also returned.

Internal and external threats

Jihadism in the Netherlands has attracted considerable media and political attention in the past few years. In June 2014 the AIVD published a report entitled *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands: Swarm dynamics and new strength*.¹ This describes the emergence of a new generation of radical Muslims and jihadists, the role played by social media in this phenomenon and how a significant number of them have joined the conflict in Syria.² One of the report's key conclusions is that there is no "typical" Dutch jihadist. Some are university educated, others dropped out of secondary school. And although the majority are Dutch citizens of Moroccan origin, their ranks also include native Dutch converts and others of Surinamese, Turkish or Antillean parentage.

One thing most of them do share, though, is a superficial knowledge of Islam based exclusively on sources that admit only the most radical and violent interpretation of the faith. The picture they paint, in which violence plays a central role and is given a religious justification and endorsement, appeals particularly to the mindset of those with a criminal past. For others, the attraction comes from the opportunity to stand out within a group of like-

¹ *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands: Swarm dynamics and new strength*, AIVD, June 2014

² We refer here simply to "Syria" because that is the initial destination of most of these individuals, although some travel directly to or onto Iraq.



**At the end of 2014
approximately 180 persons
had left the Netherlands to
join the conflict**

minded peers. The AIVD's purpose in publishing its report was to draw political and public attention to the threats and risks posed by the jihadist movement in its current form.

The proclamation of the Caliphate by the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in June 2014 has exerted a magnetic appeal upon jihadists in the Netherlands. There is now a specific territory with a supreme religious and political leader, the Caliph, to which they can travel. Defending and expanding the Caliphate is an important reason for joining the jihad there.

The number of individuals travelling from the Netherlands to Syria again increased in 2014, to about 180. Most join an organisation like Jabhat al-Nusra (JaN) or ISIS upon arrival, but some have affiliated with other jihadist or Salafist fighting groups.

Many are trained as front-line fighters and go on to gain combat experience. Some also learn other skills, such as how to make explosives, which they could put to use to commit terrorist attacks if and when they return to Europe. The majority, however, claim that they have no intention of ever coming back to the Netherlands. They want to settle in and defend the ISIS-proclaimed Caliphate, or die in the struggle. As of the end of 2014,

an estimated 20 jihadists from the Netherlands had indeed been killed in the conflict.

It is not only men who are travelling to Syria. Young women, including minors, are also making the journey. Generally, their aim is to marry a fighter and start a family. But female jihadists often receive weapons training, too, and learn self-defence techniques.

Fighters returning from Syria are an important factor in the threat facing the West. The number of those coming back to the Netherlands increased in 2014, reaching approximately 35 in all by the end of the year. The potential danger posed by such individuals was highlighted by the attack on the Jewish Museum in Brussels in May 2014: the perpetrator was a jihadist who had fought in Syria.

Not every returnee represents a threat of this kind, though. Some come back disappointed with what they have seen and experienced. The romantic image of glorious battles against the infidels is easily shattered by the reality of the situation. Upon arrival, new recruits are assessed for their suitability as fighters. Not all pass muster, and some end up cooking or cleaning for their comrades. That soon makes the whole adventure rather

less heroic. Similarly, realising that medical care is better in the Netherlands, some young women who become pregnant return to give birth here.

Interestingly, returnees are often held in high esteem in Dutch jihadist circles even if they have not fought on the front line. So they can still play a role in radicalising others and encouraging them to join the jihad. It is thus essential that the threat posed by returnees be assessed on a case-by-case basis. To this end the AIVD shares as much of its unique information as possible with other relevant parties, such as the National Co-ordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismedebestrijding en Veiligheid, NCTV), the Public Prosecution Service (Openbaar Ministerie, OM), the National Police Service and local authorities, in order for the parties to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment together.

Social media

Social media have fundamentally changed the flows of information and communications within Dutch jihadism. These were originally vertical in nature, with centralised web forums used to disseminate jihadist material to receptive individuals throughout the world. This was very much a top-down form of



ISIS propaganda

ISIS has a strong propaganda machine. It operates a number of media organisations and regularly publishes an online magazine, *Dabiq*, presenting its version of events in Syria, Iraq and other parts of the world. Naturally, the group's own deeds are glorified and its acts of violence justified. *Dabiq* can be compared with the AQIM publication *Inspire*.

The proclamation of the Caliphate and ISIS' rapid advances in Syria and, especially, Iraq in the summer of 2014 provided the organisation's propaganda and rhetoric with a huge boost. Images

of its fighters as fearless and invincible soldiers of the Caliphate were widely disseminated. Moreover, the shocking videos it has released of prisoners being executed excel in the professionalism of their staging, camerawork and timing.

The appeal of ISIS propaganda is further reinforced by the use of social media by allied but unofficial media organisations, its own fighters and large numbers of other followers. By ensuring that its message spreads quickly, they are playing an important role in enhancing the effectiveness of that propaganda.

communication, from the few to the many, as presented in a 2012 AIVD report about the power of the internet in encouraging radicalisation and promoting jihadism.³

The social media, by contrast, operate horizontally: from the many to the many. On Twitter, Facebook and suchlike networks, information spreads at remarkable speed. A message can achieve a huge reach very quickly, with jihadists constantly influencing

each other. In response, some of the "traditional" web forums now also use social media.

The effectiveness of jihadist propaganda has certainly been enhanced by social media. By maintaining direct contact with friends and acquaintances at home in the Netherlands about their activities in Syria (or Iraq), many fighters on the front line are helping to radicalise and recruit their peers. Their use of social

media makes the experience of the jihad more immediate and more personal. This form of direct interaction is a significant factor in the ongoing radicalisation of some Muslims in the West, and in drawing significant numbers to Syria from the Netherlands and other countries.⁴

A complex and extensive threat

Calls to action from ISIS and its supporters could inspire "stay-at-homes" – jihadists who have not travelled to Syria – to prepare terrorist attacks in the West. In response to the international coalition's air strikes on Syria and Iraq, for example, there were explicit demands for sympathisers to commit acts of terrorism in their home countries. Those receptive to such calls, acting alone or in groups, might include individuals who feel an affinity with one or other of the jihadist organisations issuing them, without actually being members. The attacks in Paris in January 2015 and in Copenhagen the following month both fit this scenario.

³ *Jihadism on the web*, AIVD, February 2012

⁴ For a more detailed description of the influence of social media in contemporary jihadism, see chapter 2 of the report *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands: Swarm dynamics and new strength*, AIVD, June 2014



ISIS and JaN call for attacks in the West after coalition air strikes

Others may consider striking closer to home after failing in their attempts to join the jihad abroad. That seems to have been the case in Australia in October 2014, where the authorities foiled plans by a group of extremists to take hostages at random and kill them. A number of those arrested had previously attempted unsuccessfully to travel to Syria.

The total number of jihadists in the Netherlands is hard to estimate exactly, but the AIVD believes that there are several hundred, plus a few thousand sympathisers.

In addition, we must not forget that there are some long-established jihadist networks active in Europe. They maintain relationships with like-minded groups in the Middle East and North Africa. Often with a core membership of hardened veterans of the jihad, these networks collaborate to some extent and are certainly capable of recruiting radicalised young people within Europe for their own purposes. They are also able to commit acts of terrorism in our region, using perpetrators who have never taken part in the jihad in Syria.

The international jihadist threat to the West and its interests

Despite the fact that most of the jihadist groups active in the North Africa and the Middle East are currently engaged first and foremost in local conflicts, they also pose a threat to the West and to its interests in those regions.

Some groups in Syria have declared their explicit intention to attack the West. One is the Khorasan Group, made up of a number of individuals with ties to core Al-Qaeda. And some with considerable experience in planning, preparing and facilitating terrorist attacks. Indeed, this particular group's primary goal is to strike at the West in accordance with core AQ's basic ideology and international agenda. With the large number of Western jihadists now in Syria, and in principle capable of returning to Europe with relative ease, the Khorasan Group has an extensive pool of potential recruits at its disposal. This certainly enhances its offensive capability and hence the threat it poses to the West.

Then there is the continuing risk from core AQ itself, which still intends and plans to commit acts of terrorism in Europe. That danger has not diminished by any means, and may indeed be

enhanced should core AQ decide to try to prove that it is better able than ISIS to strike the West. Affiliates like Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) also have similar intentions. That group remains particularly significant because it has proven adept at developing innovative forms of explosives. In this domain it is working closely with both core AQ and JaN.

Jubhat al-Nusra (JaN) is core AQ's official affiliate in Syria. Although it long confined itself to the conflict there, in the wake of the coalition air strikes of September 2014 it joined ISIS in calling for attacks on and in the West, and Europe in particular. Its close working relationships with both core AQ and the Khorasan Group make JaN a real threat. Again, the large number of Western jihadists potentially available to these groups mean that that menace has to be taken seriously.

Libya has become a battleground for numerous competing factions, including jihadist groups. Moreover, the chaos there has created room for AQIM and its associated organisations to train fighters and to supply their campaigns in various countries across North Africa and the Sahel. Some Egypt jihadist groups are also making use of the situation to prepare attacks of their own,



Dawah Salafist organisations have become more anti-integration, anti-democratic and hostile to any form of dissenting thought

mainly on Egyptian government targets. Meanwhile, despite the death of its leader, the Somali group Al-Shabaab (AS), which has recruited some Dutch jihadists, has expanded its influence, especially in Kenya.

All of the groups mentioned above pose a threat to Westerners in their regions. In Yemen and in North and West Africa, the greatest risk is kidnap. In Libya, the growing influence of groups associated with ISIS could eventually pose a direct threat to Europe itself.

The role of Salafism

With regard to radicalisation in the Netherlands, the role played by Salafism has changed in recent years. As revealed in the AIVD report *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands: Swarm dynamics and new strength*, the distinctions between radical forms of dawah Salafism and jihadism have blurred.⁵ And the former have become more prominent in the Dutch Islamic landscape, both physically and online. This can be seen at the Salafist conferences held regularly at various locations across the country, for example, at which independent Salafist preachers present their radical message.

Salafist organisations also disseminate their message through Arabic language and Islamic studies courses, for both adults and children. The organisations concerned are usually established as foundations, often with an opaque financial structure. The AIVD considers it quite possible that these arrangements are being used to channel funds to or from extremist or jihadist organisations in the Netherlands and abroad.

Because jihadists and radical dawah Salafists regularly attend the same gatherings and events, from the outside it can be difficult to distinguish between them. In practice, moreover, some followers of Salafist preachers have travelled to Syria to join the jihad there. And some returnees have immediately tried to re-establish contact with the Salafist mosques they attended prior to departure. Certain Salafist preachers also emphatically encourage their followers to avoid any contact with the Dutch authorities, and their influence does not seem to contribute to countering attempts to travel to Syria.

Some younger, more radical preachers are attracting a jihadist support base outside the sphere of influence of the established dawah Salafist organisations. In any case, those organisations have again hardened their own tone after a period of relative

moderation, becoming more anti-integration, intolerantly isolationist and hostile to any form of dissenting thought. There is, after all, a clear ideological affinity between Salafism and jihadism. The dawah Salafist message, like its jihadist counterpart, incorporates elements clearly at odds with the principles of our democratic legal order, such as freedom of expression and equality before the law regardless of gender, sexual orientation or personal beliefs. Salafists may reject the Caliphate proclaimed by ISIS, but they do so only on procedural grounds: they dispute ISIS' political and religious authority to establish such an entity. And whilst Salafists speak out publicly against Westerners travelling to join the jihad in Syria and Iraq, they still regard it as a legitimate struggle. They also harbour considerable sympathy for ISIS' harsh treatment of Shi'ites in the areas under its control.

Due in part to the factors described above, the ability of the established dawah Salafist organisations in the Netherlands to act as a counterweight to jihadism has been declining. In fact, the Dutch dawah Salafist movement has become a breeding ground for jihadism. Many of the young people who have travelled to join the conflict in Syria moved in Salafist rather than outright jihadist circles prior to their departure.

⁵ For a more detailed description of dawah Salafism's current role in radicalisation, see chapter 4 of the report *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands: Swarm dynamics and new strength*, AIVD, June 2014.



The threat posed by Salafism is twofold, then. Not only is it anti-integration, anti-democratic and polarising in itself, but it is also providing a radicalising path towards jihadism. Because countering the immediate terrorist threat to the Netherlands took first priority in 2014, however, the AIVD had to confine its investigations into radicalisation to the leading figures behind that phenomenon.

Polarisation in the Netherlands

Supporters of ISIS in the Netherlands became increasingly vocal in expressing their backing for the organisation and its acts of terrorism during the course of 2014. That in turn provoked opposition and resistance, including counterdemonstrations. In addition, Kurdish involvement in the struggle against ISIS in Syria resulted in tensions between Kurds and ISIS sympathisers.

Another source of polarisation is the strongly anti-Shi'ite message propagated by Salafism, combined with the ferocious campaign being waged against Shi'ites in Syria and Iraq. Fuelled by Salafist preachers and returnees from the combat zone, the resulting hatred and divisions could well take root and spread in the Netherlands.

AIVD activities and results

The AIVD's main focus in this domain is the constant monitoring and analysis of jihadist individuals and groups in order to counter the threat they pose. These activities are not confined to the Netherlands or to Dutch jihadists now in Syria or Iraq, but also encompass other parts of the Arab world and North and East Africa. Investigations can vary in intensity according to the nature of the situation, with the service using its special powers as well as its "eyes and ears" in the community to track threats as they develop. When a significant threat is identified, the AIVD has the flexibility to upgrade to a more intensive form of investigation so as to deal with it effectively.

Because of the scale, variety and opacity of the threats facing the Netherlands, the AIVD has to conduct multiple simultaneous investigations of various kinds, both at home and abroad. This forces the service to make choices and set priorities. The highest priority in 2014 was the danger from returnees from the fighting in Syria and Iraq. Work in this area was intensified. Investigations into those who had travelled to that region concentrated upon such questions as which group they had joined, what their intentions were and, above all, whether they planned to return to the Netherlands.

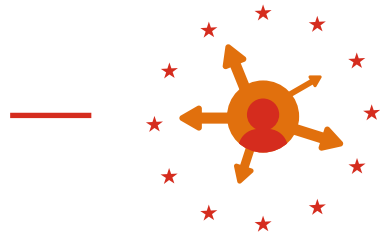
At the same time, a number of jihadists who had never left the country were identified as posing a threat. They, too, were subjected to intensive investigation. In response to indications that terrorist attacks were under preparation, the service uncovered several such plots and proceeded to eliminate the risk they posed, either by intervening itself or by mobilising enforcement partners.

Finally, the AIVD continued its investigations into the threat posed by groups such as core AQ and its affiliates. These are long-term exercises, which sometimes only produce results after several years of work.

National and international co-operation

In monitoring those travelling to and returning from the theatre of jihad, the AIVD works closely with numerous partners in the Netherlands and other countries. Should a specific threat arise or be suspected, if at all possible those parties empowered to take action to counter it are informed.

At the national level, the service's principal working partners are the Military Intelligence and Security Service (Militaire



The report *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands* extensively highlighted the dynamics within the Jihadist movement

Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst, MIVD), the National Co-ordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, NCTV), the National Police Service and the Public Prosecution Service (Openbaar Ministerie, OM).

The report *The Transformation of Jihadism in the Netherlands: Swarm dynamics and new strength* served as a key source of inspiration for a new programme, *An Integrated Approach to Jihadism*⁶, compiled by the NCTV in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. The AIVD is now actively involved in implementing various aspects of that programme.

The service is also one of the suppliers of the information used by the NCTV in drawing up its regular publications on the national **Counterterrorism Alert System (Alertingssysteem Terrorismebestrijding, ATb)** and the current terrorist threat to the Netherlands.

The AIVD consults regularly with local authorities on the issues they face in respect of radicalisation and jihadists attempting to travel to Syria. Acting upon **official reports** from the service

to the National Public Prosecutor for Counterterrorism, the OM can initiate criminal investigations into suspected terrorists. This occurred on several occasions in 2014.

Because of Europe's open borders, the Netherlands can easily become embroiled in terrorist plots targeting other European countries. For this reason, the AIVD works very closely with partner services in Europe and elsewhere to identify and neutralise such threats at the earliest possible stage. Intelligence and security services throughout the world regard the presence – and potential return – of European and other foreign fighters in Syria, especially, as a major threat which needs to be tackled collectively. The AIVD is a very active participant in the European alliance of security services, which are collaborating intensively on this issue.

In 2014 the service issued a total of 420 reports to relevant Dutch recipients about various national and international developments and events with repercussions for the jihadist threat to the Netherlands. These included more than 60 official reports to enforcement agencies.

⁶ In Dutch: *Actieprogramma Integrale Aanpak Jihadisme*, 30 August 2014.

MORE ECONOMIC ESPIONAGE

Attacks on companies within the so-called top sectors, such as high technology, agricultural, horticultural, maritime, energy and chemical industries



THE NETHERLANDS AS A CHANNEL FOR INTERNATIONAL ATTACKS



CYBERTERRORISM

Intent is present, potential is growing



3 Digital attacks and the threat to national security and the economy

The AIVD has identified numerous digital espionage attacks on Dutch organisations in the past year. In addition, Dutch infrastructure has been exploited for use in similar incidents elsewhere in the world. In all, many hundreds of targets in the Netherlands and abroad have been affected. Both the infrastructures and the targets involved are very wide-ranging. The AIVD believes that the attacks it has actually observed represent only the tip of the iceberg, with the total number many times higher.

The increasing digitisation of our everyday lives only increases the threat from such attacks. In particular, the huge growth in the amount of information being created on, distributed through and stored in internet-connected systems is multiplying opportunities for digital espionage.

This form of spying can harvest massive quantities of data within a very short time, largely anonymously and often simultaneously from targets at very different geographical locations. Such an attack rarely targets a single organisation, but instead usually affects dozens of companies and public bodies around the world at the same time. The AIVD's counterespionage activities in this domain focus mainly upon so-called state actors, as described in the "[Espionage](#)" section on pages 29 to 31.

Increasing complexity

Because of their clandestine and persistent nature, many digital espionage attacks continue unnoticed for years. Attackers often disguise their communications with infected networks as regular online traffic, using encryption to conceal the true nature of their activities. They also invest in reconnaissance of the security systems and processes on the networks they have penetrated,



Economic cyberespionage: an increasing threat

making use of the knowledge gained to remain undetected. And if they are discovered, in many cases they have already provided themselves with alternative ways to access the target network. By pre-installing so-called “back doors” or hidden channels of communications, for example.

The AIVD has repeatedly observed that, even once a case of digital espionage has been uncovered and the malware responsible removed, the attackers soon find another way to penetrate the same network. This shows that they are able to avoid the structural safeguards in compromised systems, making them very hard to detect and to exclude permanently. Consequently, the problem can persist for months or even years, potentially inflicting huge damage on the organisations affected.

More diverse perpetrators

Nations continue to pose the greatest threat when it comes to digital espionage, but the perpetrators are becoming more diverse in both size and type. In some cases states themselves are exploiting the knowledge, abilities and resources possessed by hacker groups or private entities like IT companies and universities. It may well be that the software or infrastructure

of these organisations is being used without the knowledge or active involvement of the developer or system administrator. Such “hijacking” makes it even more difficult to trace the true source of a cyberespionage attack.

More economic espionage

As well as attacks on a variety of government bodies and NGOs in the Netherlands, in 2014 the AIVD also observed numerous cases in which private companies were targeted. Amongst them were firms active in the government’s designated “top sectors”, including the high technology, agricultural, horticultural, maritime, energy and chemical industries. The majority of these incidents were attempts to retrieve intellectual property or confidential information about investments, mergers and tenders.

The Dutch economy is one of the most competitive and innovative in the world. It is also the most digitised, which makes it particularly vulnerable to digital espionage.

The scale of the economic damage caused by such activities is difficult to quantify. There can be no doubt that, when intellectual property is compromised, this is likely to increase competition

Advanced Persistent Threats

Digital espionage by state actors generally falls into the self-explanatory category “advanced persistent threats” (APTs). These are characterised by a high degree of technical expertise and sufficient financial means to sustain targeted attacks over a long period. In many cases, multiple techniques are combined and the attacker is tenacious and patient enough to spend a considerable amount of time, years even, putting their plan into effect. In addition, efforts are made to camouflage what is happening and to avoid detection. Standard prevention-led countermeasures are generally not enough to fend off APTs. True resilience requires not only a thorough awareness of information security, but also a permanent commitment to good risk analyses and detection methods, to the investigation of detection results and events, to their translation into indicators of compromise (IoCs) and to the collection of threat information.



Dutch infrastructure misappropriated for cyberespionage

in terms of price and quality and so put pressure on the profit margins and market positions of the affected businesses. On top of that, they face the additional costs associated with analysing and eliminating the infection. In the long term that can undermine their competitive position and, in the worst case, even threaten their very existence. Digital economic espionage damages the Netherlands' earning potential and so represents a growing risk to the innovative and competitive ability of the entire national economy.

The Netherlands as a channel for digital attacks

Economically, the Dutch information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure is of comparable strategic importance to our nation as the Port of Rotterdam in international shipping and Schiphol Airport in global aviation. This explains why, as well as being a prime target for digital attacks, the Netherlands is also a major channel for those directed elsewhere. Our country possesses considerable bandwidth, hosts one of the world's largest internet hubs and is a major provider of leased server capacity. All of which also make it an ideal base or transit point for attacks exploiting that infrastructure.

A substantial proportion of the AIVD's investigations in this domain are concerned with the abuse of Dutch ICT infrastructure in efforts to spy on organisations elsewhere. And the number is expected to increase in the future. A whole range of international organisations, foreign governments, research institutes and companies active in the high-tech, energy and chemical sectors have been targeted, with our facilities being misappropriated in the process.

Cyberterrorism: a growing cause of concern

The AIVD has observed that persons with pro-ISIS sympathies have been organising hacking classes for like-minded individuals, and also recruiting skilled hackers. The increasing online availability of advanced malware is making it easier to acquire the knowledge, expertise and resources needed to carry out successful digital attacks. For the time being there are no indications of any specific threat to the Netherlands from this quarter, but the intent is certainly there and the potential that it will be put into practice is growing. The likelihood of cyberterrorism is thus increasing.

Western organisations are already suffering digital attacks attributable to terrorist groups with some regularity. For the

most part, they are still using relatively simple techniques like defacements and distributed denial-of-service (DDOS attacks, with the effects generally confined to verbal intimidation and the distribution of propaganda.

Currently, there are no signs that such groups have managed to access sensitive information or to sabotage digital or physical infrastructures in the Netherlands. It is known, however, that plans are afoot in terrorist circles to obtain credit card and bank data in order to divert funds to finance the jihad.

Greater footprint and impact

The digitisation of our social and economic activities has increased the risk of cyber attacks enormously. For the perpetrators, our greater personal and business use of social media has made it quite a lot easier to identify, profile and approach potential targets. For example, through personalised e-mail containing malware. This technique has been dubbed "spear phishing". The AIVD is also observing more and more so-called "watering hole" attacks, in which malware is placed on and infects visitors to a website of interest to the perpetrator's target group. Those run by industry organisations, human rights groups and so on.



Cloud services subjected to cyberespionage

Business networks and government bodies are increasingly interconnected in order to facilitate the exchange of information. This enables attacks to spread quickly from one firm to another, between international organisations or even from state to state, amplifying their scale and impact.

Meanwhile, the spread of mobile telephones with internet connections and operating systems is multiplying the opportunities available to attackers. These devices are already subject to digital espionage attempts, and are expected to attract even more in the future. Those linked to internet-enabled **industrial control systems (ICSs)**, especially, are potential targets.

The AIVD has yet to observe to any specific threat in this regard, but there can be no doubt that the digitisation of the systems used to operate vital infrastructure is increasing the risk of cybersabotage.

Data concentration increases potential impact

Governments, companies and private citizens are outsourcing more and more of their information management activities to a limited number of service providers. In part, this is down to greater use of the “cloud”. The resulting concentrations of data are attractive targets for spies. Many of the providers concerned are owned or managed by foreign organisations to a greater or lesser extent, a situation which creates opportunities for intelligence services from other countries to exert financial, political, legal or personal pressure to facilitate their own espionage activities.

The AIVD has established that cloud services are indeed being subjected to cyberespionage attacks and that foreign secret services are investing in their relationships with them. The use of such services thus entails a risk that information entrusted to them will be compromised, potentially – given the amount of data they are bringing together – on a huge scale and with massive impact.

AIVD activities and results

The AIVD actively investigates digital attacks that pose a threat to Dutch national security, whether their purpose be espionage, sabotage or to cause social unrest or disruption. This work reveals details of the perpetrators and their intentions, methods and targets, information which is shared with affected public bodies and companies as well as being used to improve detection and prevention.

In this respect, the service’s objective is that detection and prevention bolster one another. In other words, information obtained when detecting attacks is used in strengthening safeguards at points where the threat outweighs current levels of resilience.

For good national cybersecurity, it is essential that public bodies and private organisations join forces, share threat information and work together to put effective countermeasures in place. The AIVD is involved in the creation and implementation of the National Cybersecurity Strategy, which has this form of public-private partnership as one of its key principles.



Cyberanalysis Team: Strengthening co-operation between AIVD, MIVD, NCSC, National Police and Public Prosecution Service

The service also continued to invest directly in such collaborations in 2014. For example, it is a member of the National Detection Network (Nationaal Detective Network, NDN). That is committed to improving the detection of all kinds of digital threat, with the AIVD's contribution focusing mainly on advanced forms that other agencies are less capable of identifying. Thanks to its good working relationships with partner services abroad, the AIVD is aware of certain detected characteristics of particularly stealthy attacks which are known only within very limited circles.

In addition, work has begun to strengthen Cyberanalysis Team 5 (Cyber Analyse Team-5, CAT-5), an existing partnership in this domain between the AIVD, the Military Intelligence and Security Service (Militaire Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst, MIVD), the National Cybersecurity Centre (Nationaal Cyber Security Centrum, NCSC), the National Police Service and the Public Prosecution Service (Openbaar Ministerie, OM). CAT-5 gathers and jointly analyses technical and operational data about digital attacks. In many cases hitherto, each of these parties has held certain pieces of information but none has seen the complete picture. By sharing it and processing it together, they are able to produce better

analyses and to organise faster and more efficient responses to assist actual or potential victims. Because the material concerned may include classified information from partner services abroad or sensitive data from affected parties, the strengthened CAT-5 is based in the AIVD's high-security environment.

To help organisations understand the threat and how to protect themselves against it, the AIVD gave numerous presentations about cyber attacks and the security of sensitive information during 2014. The service also supports the Dutch government in protecting its data against hostile state actors and other threats. For example, it provides advice on solutions in such areas as ICT security. For more details of this work, see the "[Security of sensitive information](#)" section on pages 35 and 36.



CARIBBEAN



**SECURITY
PROMOTION**



**WEAPONS OF
MASS DESTRUCTION**



**ACTIVISM AND
EXTREMISM**



**SECURITY
SCREENING**



ESPIONAGE

4 Other AIVD tasks and areas of interest

As well as the primary themes covered in the previous chapters, other domestic and international developments also demand the attention of the AIVD. In many cases, the service's foreign intelligence task overlaps with its remit to investigate threats to the internal security of the Netherlands. For example, its counterintelligence activities during the year under review have once again revealed that our nation is the target of traditional as well as digital espionage from abroad. Phenomena such as proliferation are also transnational in nature. And threats to people and property in the Netherlands can easily originate in other countries.

Espionage

States use intelligence services to acquire information from overseas that can serve their own interests but is not freely available. This may include knowledge beneficial to their own national security, such as political intelligence, but also scientific know-how or economic insights for material gain. With its advanced knowledge economy, its prominent role in international organisations and its position as a European geographical and digital hub, the Netherlands makes an attractive target for espionage by foreign powers in all of those domains.

Naturally, states try to conceal their hostile intelligence activities as much as they can. Consequently, it is not always clear who is trying to spy on us. As a rule, however, we can state that the larger the power, the more active its potential intelligence operations are.

Russia

Many of those currently in positions of power in Russia, including President Putin himself, have a background in the country's intelligence and security services. And they still use such agencies to help satisfy their information needs and pursue their political and economic agendas. Russia's secret services are active



Russian Intelligence Services gathers confidential information world-wide

throughout the world, gathering confidential and classified information, acquiring military technology and conducting manipulative operations. The Netherlands is not exempt from these efforts.

The permanent presence and ongoing activities of these Russian services in our nation, as part of a global pattern of operations directed against the West as a whole, are damaging our political, military and economic positions and those of our allies.

Knowledge acquisition

In the past year, it has been established once again that the Russian intelligence services are running agents in the Netherlands with the aim of acquiring political and scientific information. Agents are also being deployed to purchase military and semi-military technology, in a deliberate attempt to flout export restrictions.

In Russia itself, the intelligence services are quite prepared to use intimidation against resident Dutch citizens in their efforts to gather information.

Influence and manipulation

Russia's global campaign to influence public policy and opinion in its favour also extends to the Netherlands. Efforts in this domain, here and in the rest of the world, appear to have intensified since Russia's intervention in Ukraine. One of the tools being used is a network of contacts developed in previous years. Russia, and its intelligence and security services in particular, possesses considerable know-how in the field of manipulative operations.

Such activities focus mainly upon the political and business communities, but also embrace culture and the media. For example, the AIVD has observed an intensification of efforts to persuade talented academics and socially engaged young people to travel to Russia at government expense.

Clandestine or surreptitious manipulation, in the political domain or elsewhere, is difficult to pin down because it takes place in a grey area between diplomacy and intelligence work and also because its ultimate effects are impossible to quantify objectively. In addition, the Dutch government and business community alike possess a strong belief in their own ability to resist campaigns of this kind. That can lead to them underestimating the long-term influence of hostile Russian efforts at manipulation.

China

In 2014 the AIVD observed continuing Chinese intelligence activities on Dutch soil, too. These are directed both at recruitment and at the acquisition of specific information about economic, political and other matters.

Information needs

In terms of information, China is interested primarily in matters related to foreign policy. For example, material concerning the European economy and European policy, especially insofar as these impact China itself. It has also set out to acquire technical and scientific knowledge, which it needs in order to facilitate its own economic advancement. State-of-the-art technical know-how is crucial to Chinese companies in competing effectively with their Western counterparts. Their government is encouraging them to invest abroad – through acquisitions, for example – in order to enhance their competitive strength.

Recruitment

The main focus of Chinese recruitment activities in the Netherlands in 2014 was so-called "profiling": fêting individuals within their network of contacts and building long-term relationships. These are important steps in the recruitment process.

AIVD and MIVD conduct investigations into proliferation of weapons of mass destruction



Asylum extremists in action

In 2014, there were again several – partially successful – attempts to prevent deportations of failed asylum seekers. The Repatriation and Departure Service (Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek, DT&V) and airlines were sent “warning” letters, prospective deportees were instructed on how to cause disruption aboard aircraft and campaigners flew with them to conduct vocal protests.

“Asylum extremists” were also behind a planned blockade of the nuclear reactor at Petten during a visit by delegates to the Nuclear Security Summit in March. Thanks to information provided by the AIVD, however, the local authorities were able to prevent the blockade.

Activities and Results

In fulfilling its counterintelligence task, the AIVD concentrates upon identifying and frustrating hostile intelligence activities by foreign powers. As part of this remit, it seeks to raise institutional awareness of the risks associated with intensive contacts with Russian and Chinese officials and government

agencies. One of the tools used is the *Analysis of Vulnerability to Espionage* (Kwetsbaarheidsanalyse Spionage, KWAS), together with the accompanying handbook.⁷

The AIVD also informs the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about intelligence officers who use diplomatic cover to undertake unacceptable activities. To counter the threat from recruitment and espionage, in 2014 the service held several awareness briefings for policy officers at various levels within government. And it submitted more than 150 reports related to its counterintelligence task to relevant recipients in the Netherlands.

Weapons of mass destruction

Throughout the world, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) is regarded as a genuine threat to global security. The AIVD and its military counterpart, the MIVD, conduct investigations into nations suspected of developing or possessing weapons of mass destruction in contravention of international treaties. These are known as “**countries of concern**”.

With the elimination of Syria’s chemical weapons programme in 2014, the risk of their use on a large scale by the Assad regime has disappeared. Nonetheless, it remains possible that substances like chlorine gas might be used to a more limited extent. Moreover, a revived chemical or biological weapons programme cannot be ruled out.

AIVD activities and results

From its own autonomous intelligence position, the Counterproliferation Unit (Unit Contraproliferatie, UCP) operated jointly by the AIVD and the MIVD keeps the Dutch government informed about relevant developments in this domain. It also endeavours to frustrate procurement-related activities by or on behalf of countries of concern.

Several shipments of sensitive goods were intercepted in 2014, as a result of close collaboration between the UCP and official partners including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as with partner services abroad. The unit also submitted dozens of **official reports** to the ministry in support of its enforcement of export control policy. And representatives visited several institutions and companies to notify them of specific proliferation risks.

⁷ *Analysis of Vulnerability to Espionage*, AIVD and Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, February 2011.

Developments in Venezuela of influence on Dutch interests



Latin America and the Caribbean

A joint AIVD-MIVD team gathers intelligence and background information for the Dutch government about Latin America and the Caribbean region.

For the MIVD, the permanent presence of Dutch troops in the Caribbean territories is reason enough to monitor events there in broad terms, insofar as they might affect our forces.

With the islands of Sint Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire governed since 2010 as “special municipalities” of the Netherlands, our nation’s borders – and hence the security tasks of the AIVD and MIVD – now extend to the very fringes of Latin America.

Due to its proximity to Bonaire and to Curaçao and Aruba – both autonomous territories within the Kingdom of the Netherlands – events and developments in Venezuela, in particular, have the potential to impinge upon Dutch interests.

AIVD activities and results

Having monitored the declining political and economic stability of Venezuela throughout 2014, in the light of ongoing developments

the AIVD and MIVD predict that the situation will continue to deteriorate, possibly with repercussions for the wider region.

The two services will therefore keep following events in order to provide the Dutch government with timely information. In the past year, more than 100 reports and notifications have been issued on regional matters. Most were submitted to the ministries of Defence, of Foreign Affairs and of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (relations with the autonomous territories in the Caribbean).

Activism and extremism

Due to their nature and the number of participants, the **activities** of left-wing extremists have long had a greater impact in the Netherlands than those at the other end of the political spectrum. Right-wing extremism remains a minor phenomenon here.

On the left, recent years have seen greater collaboration between activists inspired by different causes. In 2014, that was particularly apparent in the field of resistance to asylum and immigration policy.

Asylum, animal rights and other focal areas of left-wing extremism

For some years now, the No Border Network Netherlands (No Border Netwerk-Nederland) has been at the heart of Dutch radical opposition to national and European asylum and immigration policies. This has brought together campaigning activists and more **extremist** elements, but in 2014 cracks began to appear in their collaboration. Believing that the network’s more moderate activities were not productive enough, the extremists turned to “harder” forms of protest like so-called “home visits” and graffiti attacks.

As far as animal rights extremism is concerned, the AIVD has observed a decline in both the number of activities and their ferocity. There has also been less international co-operation between extremists.

Right-wing extremism

The extreme-right group Identity Resistance (Identitair Verzet) was the driving force behind the new ad-hoc organisation Pro Patria, which in August 2014 clashed with ISIS sympathisers and with anti-fascists and the police in the Schilderswijk district of The Hague. Some of the right-wing extremists involved are now



PKK continues to lobby to be dropped from the EU list of terrorist organisations

profiling themselves as anti-Islamists and have taken part in similar demonstrations in Germany.

Coupled with growing readiness on the part of those associated with Identity Resistance and Pro Patria to take to the streets, the AIVD predicts a shift away from “traditional” right-wing extremism towards anti-Islamist and anti-Islamic activism. A Dutch arm of the German protest movement Pegida was founded in December 2014, but so far has confined its activities to Facebook and Twitter.

Separatist and revolutionary groups

The AIVD investigates politically motivated **separatist** and revolutionary terrorist organisations active in Europe, including the Netherlands. One is the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan, PKK), which is still organising clandestine activities in support of its armed struggle against the Turkish state. Another is the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party/Front (Devrimci Halk Kurtuluş Partisi/Cephesi, DHKP/C), a Turkish Marxist-Leninist terror group which uses the Netherlands as a base for its activities in Turkey and Europe. Both are on the European Union’s list of designated terrorist organisations and so are banned in the Netherlands.

The PKK is lobbying to be dropped from the EU list, but in the meantime continues to recruit fighters. However, they are now destined mainly for the military wing of its Syrian ally, the Democratic Union Party (Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat, PYD), which is battling both ISIS and the Damascus regime.

In the Netherlands, the DHKP/C confines itself to social, political and cultural activities like organising and selling tickets for concerts by the band GrupYorum. These events are then used to disseminate DHKP/C ideology.

AIVD activities and results

The AIVD keeps relevant parties abreast of developments and activities related to left-wing extremism. The service’s partners and the national authorities are informed through intelligence reports, whilst local governments are briefed on trends and specific planned activities. As and when necessary, official reports provide enforcement agencies with a basis for specific action. Ten such reports were issued in respect of left-wing extremism in 2014. As for PKK and DHKP/C meetings and activities in support of **terrorist activities**, almost thirty official reports and other notifications were submitted to relevant authorities.

Due to a shift in its priorities, in 2014 the AIVD temporarily had to pay less attention than usual to political extremism and to organisations such as the PKK and DHKP/C.

Security promotion

Safety and Security System

Within the framework of the national **Safety and Security System** (Stelsel Bewaken en Beveiligen, SBB), the AIVD elucidates actual and potential threats against political officeholders, the government, diplomatic property, international organisations and major events. This information is transmitted to the national Safety and Security Co-ordinator (Coördinator Bewaking en Beveiliging, CBB) in the form of threat assessments, threat analyses and risk analyses, so that he can then take appropriate precautions.

More than 140 assessments and analyses were submitted by the AIVD in 2014.

Threats to political and government targets

Jihadist groups and individuals are as determined as ever to commit acts of terrorism in Western nations, and in some cases at least

AIVD involved in preparations for NSS



they have politicians and governments in their sights. During the year under review, a plot to attack government targets in Australia was foiled and a fatal terrorist shooting took place at Canada's parliament. In the Netherlands, meanwhile, the threat from jihadists increased. Based in part upon information provided by the AIVD, this resulted in additional security measures being put in place.

Political officeholders quite regularly receive general threats or intimidating e-mails, letters and tweets. But several Dutch politicians were also the subjects of very specific threats in 2014. The AIVD notified the CBB of these cases and appropriate precautions were taken. Of all the threat assessments, threat analyses and risk analyses issued during the year, about two-thirds related to political and government targets.

Threats to diplomatic property and international organisations

As host nation, the Netherlands is responsible for the safe and uninterrupted functioning of the diplomatic missions and international organisations, tribunals and courts located on our territory. As in previous years, in 2014 the AIVD conducted threat assessments in respect of these institutions and their personnel. It also compiled an overall picture of the threat to diplomatic

premises and representatives here, in form of a comprehensive threat analysis.

Threats to events of national and international importance

To ensure that events of national importance pass off safely and without disruption, the AIVD assesses potential threats to them and the dignitaries attending them. The occasions in question in 2014 were King's Day, Remembrance Day, Veterans' Day, Budget Day and the National Commemoration of the MH17 Disaster.

Nuclear Security Summit

The Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) was held in The Hague in March 2014. The AIVD had been involved in preparations for this major international meeting since 2012, participating in specially established bodies like the Airports Expertise Group and also preparing a number of threat analyses covering the event itself and the delegations attending it. A substantial proportion of service staff played their part in this preparatory work, either as members of internal project groups and workgroups or working with outside partners to ensure that the summit passed off without incident. Which it did.

Threats to the Jewish community

As a result of events including the attack on the Jewish Museum in Brussels in May, the perceived threat facing the Dutch Jewish community and its institutions increased in 2014. At the request of the CBB, the AIVD elucidated the true extent of this potential threat.

Vital sectors

The AIVD actively promotes measures to safeguard crucial sections of the Dutch government apparatus, infrastructure and public services. Major service failures in **vital sectors** such as energy supply or the financial system could seriously disrupt our society and national economy. To help the organisations concerned take precautions, each year the AIVD issues a number of threat analyses within the framework of the national **Counterterrorism Alert System (Alertingssysteem Terrorismebestrijding, ATb)**. Eleven of these were produced in 2014, covering such sectors as electricity supply and the nuclear industry.

The service also intensified its work with the civil aviation sector, organising more training courses and presentations to assist it in implementing appropriate security safeguards.



National Signals Security Bureau enhances government resilience

Security of sensitive information

The Dutch government must be in a position to protect its confidential information from hostile state actors and other eavesdroppers. To this end, the AIVD provides it with impartial advice on ICT security solutions suitable for state secrets. The service's own National Signals Security Bureau (Nationaal Bureau voor Verbindingsbeveiliging, NBV) possesses unique knowledge and expertise in this field, and also makes use of information drawn from its extensive international network.

The AIVD advises the government about protective measures, and on how to detect and respond to breaches of security. On request, the service also evaluates security products before they enter service with the government and oversees the development of products for use with classified information. This work improves government resilience in the digital world and supports its risk management activities. Thanks to AIVD advice, ministries and the government-wide ICT service centres are better able to safeguard their interests.

Product development and evaluations

In 2014 the AIVD issued recommendations concerning the development and introduction of various new products, including

telephones and network, media and document security solutions. Others, amongst them a file encryption device and a handset for secure telephony up to "Secret" (Stg. Geheim) level, were evaluated with positive results.

Government security advice

In 2014 the AIVD advised various branches of central government, including the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, on security issues related to the establishment and configuration of digital information architectures and the protection of sensitive data. It also notified the government of certain vulnerabilities, including risks associated with USB equipment (BadUSB), as well as providing updates on developments in quantum computing. Finally, the service advised the organisers of the Nuclear Security Summit on cybersecurity.

The AIVD is the designated national security authority for the protection of classified NATO and EU information held by the Dutch government – with the exception of the Ministry of Defence – and private companies in the Netherlands. In this context, more than 300 firms were inspected in 2014.

The service produces the keys for the Dutch government's cryptographic equipment, and last year also contributed towards a digital Ministry of Defence system for the distribution and management of encryption key material for national and NATO signals traffic. Finally, presentations were again organised to raise awareness of the risks and threats associated with the security of sensitive information.

Domestic and international co-operation

Alongside the Military Intelligence and Security Service (Militaire Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst, MIVD) and the National Cybersecurity Centre (Nationaal Cyber Security Centrum, NCSC), the AIVD is a participant in the National Detection Network (Nationaal Detectie Network, NDN) co-ordinated by the Ministry of Security and Justice (see "[AIVD activities and results](#)" on pages 26 and 27). In this context, last year the service worked with the NCSC on a variety of products. These included the national cybersecurity overview (Cybersecurity Beeld Nederland) and a factsheet about the Heartbleed bug. Collaboration with the Ministry of Defence focused on the development of security products.



Updated designation guidelines provide tighter definition of positions involving confidentiality

Beyond the Netherlands, the AIVD is playing its part in joint international efforts to standardise information security measures in order to simplify the safe exchange of information within NATO and the EU. In addition, at their request it reviews the security product evaluations conducted by foreign partner services.

Positions involving confidentiality and security screening

The AIVD is responsible for the security screening of persons holding or appointed to so-called “positions involving confidentiality” (*vertrouwensfuncties*) in central government, vital sectors, civil aviation and other sensitive areas. These are posts in which abuse of office might seriously harm national security or the interests of the state. A person cannot take up a position involving confidentiality until the AIVD has granted them a Security Clearance (*Verklaring van Geen Bezwaar, VGB*). On the one hand the screening process focuses upon the specific sensitive aspects of the post in question, and on the other upon the subject’s personal conduct and circumstances.

Several developments in this area were of particular importance to the AIVD in 2014.

Tighter definition of positions involving confidentiality

Policy concerning the definition of positions involving confidentiality was further clarified during the year, with the introduction of updated designation guidelines (*Leidraad aanwijzing vertrouwensfuncties*). Replacing the previous guidelines for such positions in the police service and the vital sectors, these include criteria to ensure that only posts in which abuse of office has a genuine and conceivable potential to harm national security are designated.

Charging

The AIVD billed a total of more than €5.3 million for security screenings in the public sector in 2014. Meanwhile, the ministers of the Interior and Defence have tabled a parliamentary bill to introduce a similar charging scheme for the private sector. This was passed by the House of Representatives in the autumn of 2014 and will be considered by the Senate in 2015.

Screening for Security

In November the service’s Security Screening Unit organised a meeting for current and potential partners and customers, under the title Screening for Security (*Screenen voor veiligheid*).

Participants were informed about the procedure for the designation of positions involving confidentiality and, using a case study, guided through the screening process itself. It is hoped that such meetings will improve knowledge and understanding of the unit’s work.

AIVD activities and results

In all, almost 40,000 security screenings were conducted in 2014 by the AIVD and the mandated organisations to which it delegates this task in some domains: the National Police Service and the Royal Military Constabulary (*Koninklijke Marechaussee, KMar*). In nearly 1000 cases, most in the civil aviation sector, they resulted in Security Clearance being denied or withdrawn.

The AIVD itself performed almost 8,500 more extensive screenings, with just over 90 per cent of these completed within the statutory period.



Positions involving confidentiality: 40,000 security screenings conducted

Results of security screenings, including delegated procedures

	Positive (clearance issued)	Negative (clearance refused or withdrawn)	Total	Within statutory period
Level A, by AIVD	1148	11	1159	93%
Level B, by AIVD	3705	48	3753	90%
Level C, by AIVD	724	8	732	91%
Level B, by AIVD through KMar/NP/DBB	1936	891	2827	
Level B, by KMar/ NP/ DBB (delegated)	31,518		31,518	
Total	39,031	958	39,989	

KMar: Royal Military Constabulary (Koninklijke Marechaussee). NP: National Police Service (Nationale Politie). DBB: Royal and Diplomatic Protection Service (Dienst Bewaken en Beveiligen).

Results of objections and appeals against security clearance denials

	Dismissed	Upheld	Inadmissible	Withdrawn	Denied	Granted	Total
Objections	28	11	4	-	-	-	43
Appeals	6	-	1	1	-	-	8
Second appeals	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Preliminary injunctions	-	-	-	-	2	2	4
Total	37	11	5	1	2	2	58



5 Co-operation and organisation

The complexity and transnational nature of the threats facing the Netherlands, particularly from terrorism and cyber attacks, make it essential that we co-operate with other parties. The AIVD cannot identify and counter these dangers alone. In tackling the issue of jihadists travelling to fight in Syria and elsewhere, for instance, throughout 2014 the service worked closely with other Dutch institutions and with partners abroad. And it was one of many organisations collaborating to ensure that the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) in The Hague passed off virtually without incident.

Internally, meanwhile, the service underwent a reorganisation. And on its governance side, the first steps were taken to update the Intelligence and Security Services Act (Wet op de inlichtingen- en veiligheidsdiensten, Wiv 2002) in response to the recommendations published by the so-called Dessens Committee in 2013.

Domestic co-operation

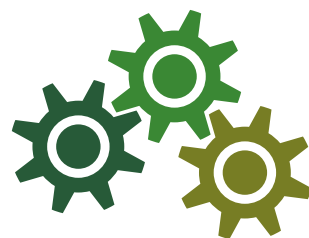
MIVD

The AIVD and the MIVD, its military counterpart, share common ground in many areas of their work. The two services therefore co-ordinate their operational activities as much as possible, and act together in a large number of investigative domains.

For example, they have established several joint units. These include the Caribbean Team (Team Caribisch Gebied), the Counterproliferation Unit (Unit Contraproliferatie) and the Joint Sigint Cyber Unit (JSCU, see below). In other areas there is intensive mutual operational support, and in counterterrorism they share and harmonise information.

Investigations conducted by both services are equally as vital to the safety of Dutch military personnel in the field as they are to protecting the Netherlands itself from threats like terrorism.

In 2014 the AIVD and MIVD declared their intention to base themselves at the same location some time in the future, a move expected to enhance co-operation between them. In the meantime, they are looking at the extent to which their products



AIVD and MIVD attune operational activities

and services can be provided through a single point of contact. It is thought that the greatest opportunities in this respect rest with units acting in support of the operational process.

JSCU

Formally established on 15 June 2014, the new JSCU is responsible for the acquisition and processing of signals intelligence (sigint) and cyberdata and for making them available to investigative teams within the AIVD and MIVD. Although operated jointly by the two services, the unit's main base is in the AIVD building.

NCTV

Along with the MIVD and the National Police Service, the AIVD supplies the National Co-ordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, NCTV) with the information and intelligence he needs to manage the Dutch fight against terrorism. That task includes operating the [Counterterrorism Alert System \(Alertingssysteem Terrorismebestrijding, ATb\)](#) and determining the current national threat level. For more information on co-operation between the AIVD and the NCTV, see the section of this report on the [jihadist threat to the Netherlands](#) (pages 14 to 21).

Similarly, the partnership between the AIVD and the National Cybersecurity Centre (Nationaal Cyber Security Centrum, NCSC) is discussed in the section on [digital threats](#) (pages 22 to 27). And the service's input to the NCTV's Safety and Security Co-ordinator (Coördinator Bewaking en Beveiliging, CBB) is described in the section on [security promotion](#) (pages 33 to 36). All in all, then, the AIVD works very closely with the NCTV. Indeed, it can be regarded as an essential supplier of intelligence and information in all the areas mentioned.

Ministries

The rapid pace of events in the Middle East and the crisis between Russia and Ukraine have reminded us that reliable, up-to-date information is essential to the Dutch government if it is to act decisively on the global stage and effectively in bilateral consultations and in international forums like the UN, the EU and NATO. To this end, the AIVD is constantly sharing information about developments at home and abroad with government ministries in The Hague.

In particular, the service maintains close contact with the Ministry of General Affairs (the Prime Minister's department) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with relevant personnel kept informed through

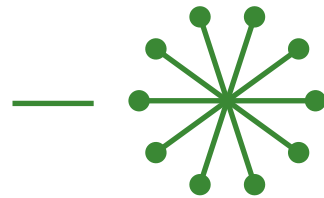
intelligence reports and briefings. Co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also extends into other domains, such as scenario analyses for use in formulating travel advice and support in implementing Dutch export control policy.

This close relationship is the product of the AIVD's remit to gather foreign intelligence and political information. Among other things, this enables it to understand the true intentions of foreign powers and their leaders.

The foreign intelligence task is unique to the AIVD, with its findings being shared with all ministries which express a need for such information. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains the principal recipient by far. On the other hand, as explained in the section on the [modernisation of the Intelligence and Security Services Act](#) (pages 42 and 43), the new Wiv will require closer co-ordination with other ministries in respect of the service's domestic security task.

Regional intelligence units and special teams

The National Police Service, the Royal Military Constabulary, the Netherlands Tax and Customs Administration (Belastingdienst) and the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force (Korps Politie



CT infobox: a partnership of ten official organisations

Caribisch Nederland, KPCN) have all established teams to carry out work on behalf of the AIVD, as provided for in Article 60 of the Wiv 2002. These act as extensions of the service in their specialist domains. Each has its own internal and external networks, making them the AIVD's "eyes and ears" in various sections of Dutch society.

The National Police Service and the AIVD are currently engaged in achieving a complete separation of public-order policing duties and national security work by "Article 60" teams. Once that process has been completed, the teams within the police force will work exclusively for the AIVD.

Netherlands Counterterrorism Information Centre

The Netherlands Counterterrorism Information Centre (CT Infobox) is a partnership of ten Dutch official organisations, which has been active in the fight against terrorism for ten years now. It provides a secure forum in which information about individuals and networks implicated in terrorist activities can be pooled, compared by experts in different fields and analysed, in order to generate recommendations on which the partners can act quickly and effectively.

In 2014 the Research and Documentation Centre (Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatiecentrum, WODC) of the Ministry of Security and Justice reviewed the workings of the CT Infobox, establishing that it is an important tool in combating terrorism and is functioning well. It has proven successful because it informs and advises its member organisations without compromising their own sensitive material. It highlights opportunities to intervene, but does not reveal source information or issue instructions on how its advice is to be acted upon. The government recently underlined the importance of the CT Infobox by investing to strengthen it in pursuit of the implementation of sections of the programme *An Integrated Approach to Jihadism* (Actieprogramma Integrale Aanpak Jihadisme).

International co-operation

Foreign intelligence, security and sigint services

In support of its intelligence position overseas, the AIVD maintains a network of liaison officers. Some are stationed abroad, whilst others stay in contact with foreign partner services from the Netherlands. Given the growing international threat to our nation, this network is to be expanded in the coming year.

The nature of the service's international partnerships ranges from very limited to very close. In determining the intensity of any collaboration, it specifically considers the democratic credentials of the organisation concerned. The assessment model it has developed for this purpose forms the basis for the criteria the government now wishes to establish in law (see "[Modernisation of the Intelligence and Security Services Act](#)" on pages 42 and 43).

The Intelligence and Security Services Regulatory Commission (Commissie van Toezicht betreffende de Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdiensten, CTIVD) devoted a number of reports to relations with foreign partner services in 2014, looking particularly at the exchange of information. In two of these documents, on the acquisition of telecommunications data⁸ and the use of social media⁹, the Commission confirmed that neither the AIVD nor the MIVD systematically acts outside the law in obtaining personal and other information through partners abroad. It also found that, as a rule, the practice of supplying those services with material gleaned from certain web forums is legitimate and is conducted with due care.

⁸ In Dutch: *Toezichtsrapport inzake gegevensverwerking op het gebied van telecommunicatie door de AIVD en de MIVD* [Regulatory report on data processing by the AIVD and MIVD in the field of telecommunications], CTIVD, 5 February 2014

⁹ In Dutch: *Toezichtsrapport inzake onderzoek door de AIVD op sociale media* [Regulatory report on AIVD investigations on social media], CTIVD, 16 July 2014



AIVD supplied expertise to ensure security during events

In its ruling on a legal challenge to the exchange of data with the US National Security Agency (NSA), a court found that the Dutch State had acted lawfully¹⁰. No international law or regulation had been broken in doing so, and the national security interest outweighed any uncertainty about the origin of particular information.

In 2014 the AIVD supplied expertise to help ensure the security of events including the forthcoming football World Cup in Brazil and the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi. Here again, it worked closely with foreign partner services.

NATO CIC

In 2014 the AIVD chaired NATO's Civil Intelligence Committee (CIC), made up of representatives from the civilian intelligence and security services of the alliance's 28 member states. The CIC and its military counterpart, the MIC, advise the North Atlantic Council on threats that might affect the work of NATO. Under the slogan "Less but better", the AIVD used its term in the chair to try to ensure that CIC products – especially those related to terrorism and espionage – better meet the information needs of the various branches of NATO.

Organisational developments

The AIVD has translated earlier budget reductions into an internal reorganisation, which was more or less completed in 2014. Not only has this resulted in greater efficiency and cost savings, it has also brought about organisational changes to better prepare the service for future developments.

With effect from 1 January 2015, the AIVD is made up of three directorates: Intelligence, Operations and Security Screening & Management. They are supported by a central administrative staff. For a diagram of the new organisation, see www.aivd.nl/english/aivd/units.

Shortly before the summer, the government decided to increase the service's annual budget by €25 million. These additional funds are earmarked for improvements to the operational process in the light of developments during the past year. A substantial proportion will be invested in expanding investigative staffing capacity.

Modernisation of the Intelligence and Security Services Act

Following the publication late in 2013 of the so-called Dessens Report, a review of the Wiv 2002, the government issued its

response in March¹¹. Since then, it has largely adopted the recommendations made. For example, Ministry of Foreign Affairs support for matters related to the AIVD has been strengthened and it is now consulted in detail about the designation of topics to be investigated by the service in fulfilment of its foreign intelligence remit.

Dessens also recommended that intelligence recipients and security partners be involved in the compilation of annual plans for the service's other tasks. The government has responded that it wants to formulate an "integrated intelligence and security designation order", covering the full breadth of the AIVD's remit.

With regard to collaboration with foreign partner services, the government wishes to formalise consideration of their democratic credentials and their nation's human rights record. The proposed approach closely matches the assessment model already used by the AIVD. Previously, it was decided that ministerial permission must be sought for the bulk exchange of data with services abroad.

Dessens also concluded that it would be "logical and efficient" for the AIVD and MIVD to form a joint organisation to conduct

¹⁰ Verdict of the district court of The Hague on the exchange of data with the NSA, 23 July 2014

¹¹ Kamerstuk [Parliamentary Paper] 33820 no. 2, 11 March 2014



Reorganisation within AIVD more or less completed in 2014

security screenings. In 2014, therefore, the two services looked at ways of intensifying their collaboration in this field. The activities actually required to achieve this are to be reconnoitred in 2015, under the leadership of a so-called “outrider”.

In line with opinions previously expressed by the CTIVD, Dessens stated that the Wiv 2002 is in need of modernisation in respect of telecommunications-related activities. The law as it currently stands allows only for the bulk interception of communications on radio frequencies. However, the great majority of such traffic nowadays, on the internet in particular, is transmitted through cables. In order to identify substantive threats – which is, after all, the task of the AIVD – this special power needs to be brought into line with modern technology.

In a memorandum submitted to the House in November¹², the government stated that it was willing to make the necessary changes as long as privacy safeguards were strengthened at the same time. At the time of writing, the parliamentary debate on this matter is ongoing.

CTIVD reports

The CTIVD produced five reports on the work of the AIVD in 2014¹³. They cover the control of agents, the use of interception powers and signals intelligence, the processing of telecommunications data, investigations focusing upon social media and the activities of the service’s predecessor, the BVD, in relation to political activist Roel van Duijn in the 1960s, ’70s and ’80s.

Each of these reports includes a number of recommendations intended to improve the AIVD’s working procedures – although, in some cases, these had already been revised since the period covered by the report. The minister has accepted all the recommendations and, as far as necessary, has adapted internal policy accordingly. Several have also been incorporated into the proposed amendments to the Wiv 2002.

Operating income and expenditure (in millions of euros)

	2013		2014	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Expenditure	195	195	197	193
Operating income	8	9	13	9
Net variance	–	+1	–	0

¹² Kamerstuk [Parliamentary Paper] 33820 no. 4, 21 November 2014

¹³ List of CTIVD inquiries into the AIVD can be found on: www.ctivd.nl

Colophon

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