



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

Right-wing extremism and the extreme right in the Netherlands



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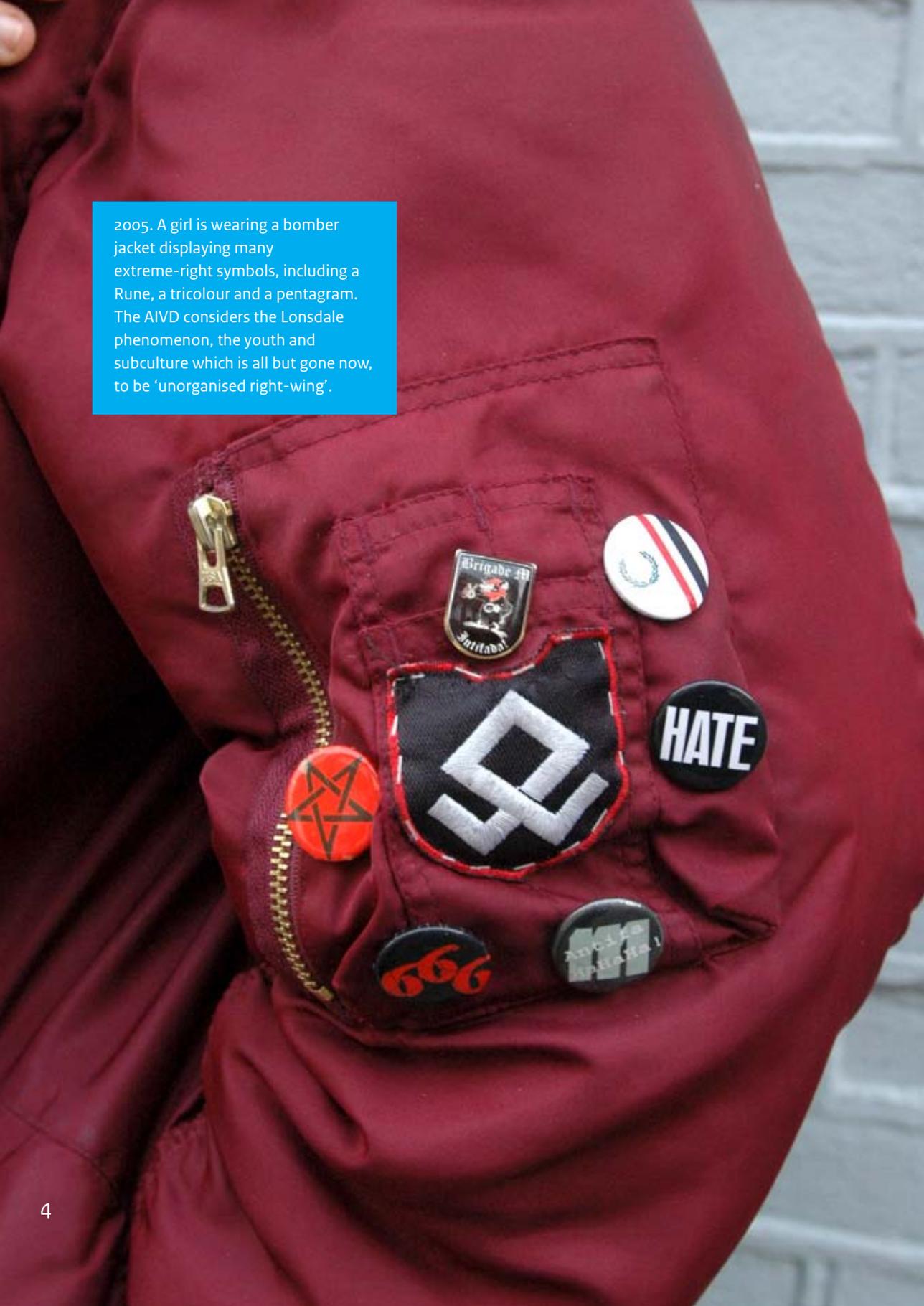
1 Introduction

The investigation into the extreme right-wing movement and right-wing extremist movement in the Netherlands is the longest running investigation by the AIVD and its predecessors. In this publication the AIVD presents the current state of affairs in the Netherlands based on the results of that investigation.

The AIVD investigation shows that the threat of right-wing extremism and the extreme right to the democratic legal order in the Netherlands is minimal. The movement is characterised by a small following, mutual disagreement and personal animosity, ideologically different views and organisational fragmentation. Nonetheless, the threat attributed to right-wing extremism and the extreme right is often much more significant. A gap exists between the actual threat and the perceived threat.

This publication describes the actual threat emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right in the Netherlands, as well as the related and perceived threats, as identified by the AIVD investigation. It is one of the means employed by the AIVD to inform society, politicians and authorities, enabling them to come to a response to the threat which is in keeping with its nature, severity and extent.

2005. A girl is wearing a bomber jacket displaying many extreme-right symbols, including a Rune, a tricolour and a pentagram. The AIVD considers the Lonsdale phenomenon, the youth and subculture which is all but gone now, to be 'unorganised right-wing'.



2 Extreme or extremist?

In day to day communication, the terms extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist are often used interchangeably. The AIVD, however, draws a distinction between the terms extreme and extremist to be able to establish a nuanced picture of the threat.

Extreme

Persons, groups or organisations are extreme when they manifest themselves on the legal edge of the democratic legal order, but still remain within the law.

Extremist

Extremists aim for or consider it acceptable to go to extremes while overstepping the bounds of the democratic legal order. Restrictions imposed by the law and/or the democratic legal order are considered not binding and are intentionally ignored. Examples include approving or even using violence, and systematically spreading hate.

The AIVD investigates individuals and organisations that give rise to the serious suspicion that they pose a threat to the democratic legal order because of the antidemocratic objectives they pursue and/or the undemocratic means they deploy. An example of an antidemocratic objective is the aim for an authoritarian regime that excludes the freedom of speech or religion. Another objective may be, for example, a political order that guarantees basic rights for some (groups of) citizens, but not for others. Undemocratic means may include violence and intimidation in order to silence others for example. Other examples include secretly steering towards violent outbursts between (population) groups or concealing one's true intentions of participating in democratic institutions, using both a public and a hidden agenda, the content of which goes against the democratic legal order.

noch links, noch rechts



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NEEM!!!
WIBODI?



WONEN
EEN RECHT
MET HET KRAAKVERBOOD



3 Who is who?

The AIVD uses the terms *extreme* and *extremist* to categorise the various right-wing groups and movements. These extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist groups, as well as their ideals, objectives and methods will be addressed in the following sections. Finally, the different world views, held by extreme right-wingers and right-wing extremists.

3.1 The extreme right

The AIVD considers the groups and movements in the Netherlands that developed from the so-called ‘Centre movement’ in the 1990s to be extreme right-wing. Parties such as Central Democrats (Centrum Democraten), Central Party (Centrum Partij), CP’86, National Alliance (Nationale Alliantie), New National Party (Nieuwe Nationale Partij) and New Right (Nieuw Rechts) have been part of this movement. A common characteristic of these parties was a xenophobe or nationalist ideology that they aimed to realise through legal means. In 1994 this Centre movement was at its political peak – in addition to three seats in the Lower House it also occupied many a city-council seat. The decline set in soon after. As the New National Party disappeared from the Feijenoord city council in Rotterdam in 2006, the Centre movement disappeared from politics. The last – still standing – extreme right-wing group that developed from this movement is the National People’s Movement (Nationale Volksbeweging, NVB), but this fading/declining organisation hardly organises any activities of significance anymore.

In addition to the aforementioned movements emerging from the Centre

movement, the AIVD also classifies several other groups as extreme right-wing. The action group Voorpost is one of them because of its nationalist ideology. Voorpost aims, among other things, for the reunification of the Netherlands and Flanders. Furthermore, Voorpost fights for animal rights and against the drugs policy and paedophilia, the Americanisation of culture and the Anglicisation of the Dutch language. Voorpost does not have any antidemocratic objectives and does not use undemocratic means. Finally, the AIVD considers the Lonsdale youth and subculture, which is all but gone now, to be ‘unorganised right-wing’.

3.2 Right-wing extremism

Right-wing extremist groups in the Netherlands are characterised by their intention to pursue antidemocratic objectives and use undemocratic means to accomplish them (or so they say). The next paragraphs will address a number of groups in the Netherlands that can be considered right-wing extremist.

NVU

There is no comparison between the current Dutch People’s Union (Nederlandse Volks-Unie, NVU) and the original NVU that was established in 1971. The NVU is as much a neo-Nazi group as it was before, but nowadays it manifests itself as an *volksnationalist* or *volksocialist* political party. The NVU ultimately aims for the establishment of a single-party state in the Netherlands in accordance with the NSDAP¹ model, NVU

¹ National Socialist German Workers Party (National Sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei, NSDAP)

being that single party, of course. What remains after reaching that antidemocratic goal is a violent reckoning with current politicians. Undemocratic means are used to achieve this goal; NVU has a hidden agenda and concealed intentions. Behind closed doors, the NVU leader expresses different views than in public and he advises his followers to do the same. Almost all right-wing extremist demonstrations in the Netherlands are organised by NVU. These demonstrations often revolve around a theme, such as the financial crisis. In 2010 NVU took part in the municipal elections in four cities - without success.

NSA/ANS and RVF

In right-wing extremist circles in the Netherlands, the National Socialist Action/Autonomous National Socialists (de Nationale Socialistische Aktie/Autonomie Nationale Socialisten, NSA/ANS) and Racial Volunteer Force (RVF) occupy an ideological niche position. Whereas the majority of right-wing extremists can be considered traditional Hitlerists, NSA/ANS and RVF represent a small socialist revolutionary minority (national socialism as in nationalistic socialism). Socialist revolutionaries see themselves first and foremost as socialists. Being nationalist is of lesser importance. They rely on the original NSDAP programme from the 1920s, which argued in favour of expropriation and nationalisation of large companies, redistribution of large-scale landownership and the introduction of social welfarism, among others.

NSA/ANS was founded in 2008 and is particularly concentrated in the region around The Hague. The group focuses on revolutionary activism. RVF was established in the United Kingdom in 2002 to carry out

radical political actions. The Dutch RVF branch is quite small, but does have a disproportionately large influence on the (ideological) debate among right-wing extremists. The RVF following is very rigid and radical in their political-ideological views. Roughly speaking, it can be said that whereas RVF comes up with ideas, NSA/ANS turns them into action.

A fundamental ideological discussion is going on between NSA/ANS and RVF on the one hand and the remaining right-wing extremists on the other. The most prominent controversy is the Führer principle. Whereas Hitlerists continue to view Hitler as the undisputed Führer, socialist revolutionaries see others as a source of inspiration, like the Strasser brothers – who led NSDAP's left wing at the time – but also Mao and Che Guevara. This discussion, which involves just a few, is mostly ideological in nature and does not have many practical consequences. Demonstrations are still a joint venture, though.

RVF endeavours to establish an Aryan Fourth Reich that includes the Netherlands. This empire should adopt the original NSDAP programme. The RVF and NSA/ANS objectives exclude large groups in society and are therefore antidemocratic. Both groups consider 'the system' to be the greatest enemy. This system is represented by the government and all who serve the government. NSA/ANS and RVF say they are prepared to seize any and every means possible to undermine the system. In practice, however, they particularly use squatting as a means to fight against the system.

Blood & Honour, Combat 18

At the end of the 1970s the British punk music scene politicised, resulting in the Blood & Honour movement in 1987 and, somewhat later, in Combat 18². Both movements aim to spread the white power or white pride ideology through music. Blood & Honour did have a number of regional branches in the Netherlands for a while, established in 2003, but the movement imploded in 2007. Only a handful out of the estimated 200 to 250 followers are still active. Incidentally, this downfall is typical of the movement in other European countries. Combat 18 wanted to promote the white power or white pride ideology more prominently than Blood & Honour. This movement has now all but disappeared from the Netherlands.

The white pride or white power ideology is a passive and generally formulated ideology that has apocalyptic undertone to it. The idea is that some time in the future 'alien or non-indigenous' inhabitants will inevitably constitute a population majority. When that happens, the 'indigenous' population must return to its own (racial) identity. As a result, societal tension and chaos will rise, and a racial fight will break out. According to the ideology, the indigenous – 'the superior white race' – will not unleash this 'inevitable' fight themselves, but will not turn away from it either. Eventually, the pure-race ideal will be realised when the fight is won by the 'superior' white race.

NJN

The Netherlands National Youth (de Nationale Jeugd Nederland, NJN) was formed early 2010 and proclaims to establish a (white) Netherlands for the (white) Dutch without multicultural 'taints or pollutants'. This white Dutch people's community will be realised after 'alien' and 'hostile' elements have been removed, for instance through forced (re)migration. NJN has a racist ideology, which means that it does respect racial differences, but only while they occur in their original context. There is no quarrel with Islam, for example, as long as it manifests itself in the Islamic world, and not here.

New right-wing extremist collaborations regularly arise in the Netherlands, NJN being a recent example. Often these associations appear, and disappear equally swiftly.

² The numbers 1 and 8 refer to the first (a) and eighth (h) letter of the alphabet, i.e. Adolf Hitler's initials.



NSA/ANS participation at a NVU demonstration

3.3 World view

The world view constitutes an important point of dispute between the various extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist movements. Islamisation seems to be considered the most urgent issue by the extreme right. Right-wing extremists do recognise the existence of an islamisation issue, but have always seen the Jews as the greatest enemy. For the socialist revolutionary minority among right-wing extremists, 'the system' is the issue rather than islamisation³. To them radical Muslims are their natural allies in the fight against Jews and Zionists.

³ According to social revolutionaries, the control of 'the system' is – behind the scenes – in the hands of the 'Zionist Occupation Government' or 'Zionist Occupied Government' (ZOG). According to the social revolutionaries, islamisation is an instrument used by the Zionist Occupation Government to distract attention from their own dominance.

As a result of these different world views, extreme right-wingers and right-wing extremists are also divided when it comes to sympathy for national political parties that (seem to) make islamisation their primary focus.

In the right-wing extremist and extreme right-wing world views, opponents within the left-wing extremist spectrum play a secondary role at most⁴. Right-wing extremism and the extreme right do deploy activities aimed at gathering information on left-wing extremist opponents. The information gathering operations by left-wing extremists, targeted at right-wingers, are far more sophisticated and far-reaching than the initiatives of extreme right-wingers and right-wing extremists.

⁴ This refers to the Anti Fascist Action (Anti-Fascistische Aktie, AFA) and the Collective Anti Fascist and Capitalist Archive (Kollektief Anti-Fascistisch en Kapitalistisch Archief, KAFKA) described in more detail on page 13.

4 Threat against the democratic legal order

The results of AIVD investigation show that the threat against the democratic legal order emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right has been low throughout the years. Short-lived revivals are followed by long periods of downfall, the latter being the case right now. Based on the AIVD investigation, there are several ways to explain how the current threat assessment has come about. Before going into that, however, an outline will be provided of the current extent, nature and severity of the threat. At the end of this chapter you will find an indication of expectations for the future threat of right-wing extremism and the extreme right, based on past developments.

4.1 Extent, nature and severity

There is but a very limited number of active followers of right-wing extremism and the extreme right in the Netherlands. In 2007 the AIVD still estimated this number at around 600, some 400 of which were considered right-wing extremists. As a result of rifts and groups falling apart, that estimated number of active followers has now even decreased to below 300, of which some 150 to 180 right-wing extremists.

The threat emanating from the extreme right in the Netherlands has all but disappeared. NVB is the only group remaining from all groups and movements emerging from the Centre movement, but it does not play a significant role. Voorpost does not pursue antidemocratic goals and does not deploy undemocratic means. Right-wing extremist groups and movements differ in the extent to which they can pose a threat to the democratic legal order

in the Netherlands. Not all right-wing extremist groups pursue concretely formulated antidemocratic goals or are prepared to deploy undemocratic means. Whereas NVU, NSA/ANS, RVF and NJN do envisage a relatively concretely described antidemocratic goal and say they intend to attain it, this is not so much the case for Blood & Honour and Combat 18. In addition, not all groups or movements are prepared to deploy undemocratic means - intentions usually remain limited to oral debate only.

Many a right-wing extremist maintains contacts with like-minded foreign individuals. Mostly they are European comrades in the directly surrounding countries, sometimes farther and in a few cases overseas. These contacts remain, just as within the movement in the Netherlands, often limited to personal, friendly relations. Such contacts may lead to participation in mutual manifestations (commemorations, schooling and training activities, concerts) and demonstrations. That participation depends very much on the costs involved and the distances that have to be travelled. For example, a few dozen Germans took part in demonstrations of the NVU in Arnhem and Venlo, also because of the direct train connections from Germany. The number of Dutch right-wing extremists who participate in manifestations and demonstrations abroad is relatively small (in general twenty at the most). Therefore, they also present themselves expressly as Dutch right-wing extremists. Because of differences in opinion and leadership, collaboration on the level of content, organisation or ideology is rarely realised. Therefore, there

is no cross-border 'right-wing extremism' that transcends frontiers.

So far, there are no indications of a development towards terrorism based on right-wing extremist and extreme right-wing inspirations or motivations. This does not mean that the possibility of 'lone wolves' using violence based on right-wing extremist and extreme right-wing inspirations or motives can be ruled out. Right-wing extremists have a fascination with weapons and glorify certain forms of violence. There are, however, no indications that weapons are collected with the intent to use them in acts of violence or in attempts to attain the goals previously set.

The situation that has been described for right-wing extremism in the Netherlands, is also roughly applicable to the directly surrounding countries.

4.2 Threat assesment explained

The development of the threat emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right against the Dutch democratic legal order continues to be characterised by a small following, personal animosity and mutual discord, ideologically different views and organisational fragmentation. Moreover, followers often leave the movement as they grow older ('ageing out'). These factors limit the threat.

In addition, traditionally there has been resilience within Dutch society to right-wing extremist and extreme right-wing movements. There is a high societal price to pay for joining them. This also reduces the chance of a strong increase in the threat emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right.

Political-social occurrences and developments, such as the attacks of 9/11, the assassinations of Pim Fortuyn (2002) and Theo van Gogh (2004) or the financial-economic crisis, prove to have little significant effect on the nature, severity or extent of the threat emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right. Leaders have reacted with restraint or not at all to such past events, fearing that their statements might be incorrectly interpreted or that they might face criminal charges. As a result, political-social occurrences and developments can hardly be used as themes to gather or mobilise followers. The broader following seems to be characterised by a certain disinterest in politics and society, and by a lack of trust in and a sheer distrust of the current system.

As far as the extreme right is concerned, its recruitment power has decreased over the years as some of their viewpoints have been put on the national political agenda. In the integration and Islam debate initiated after the attacks of 9/11, many extreme right-wing viewpoints have been addressed and become mainstreamed. An example is the alleged bankruptcy of the multicultural society. This development has been partly responsible for the dramatic collapse of extreme right-wing groups and movements existing at the time.

Finally, the assessment of the extreme right threat should be seen as a reflection of the specific time and context in which it takes place or took place. In the past, the threat emanating from the extreme right was particularly assessed according to the damage it could inflict on the interethnic relations in the country, the social tensions it managed to accentuate and the possible undermining of trust in a properly func-

tioning democratic legal order. In the current day and age, attention is primarily focused on the potential threat to the democratic legal order, whenever antidemocratic goals are pursued and undemocratic means can be deployed. The investigation into right-wing extremism therefore takes priority over the extreme right for the AIVD.

4.3 Expected development

If the dynamics underlying the current threat assessment persist, it is not to be expected that the threat emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right in the Netherlands will resurge in the near future. There are no indications whatsoever of this threat developing into a terrorist threat; rather, further weakening of the threat is conceivable. As mentioned, high-impact political-social occurrences and developments seem to have little discernable effect on the movement. The perceived threat could regain momentum if someone were to stand up who is accepted as a (hierarchical) leader and therefore capable of ridding the movement of its current limitations. This is not expected to be the case any time soon.

In addition to the threat emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right itself, there is also a related threat as a result of the activities carried out by left-wing extremist opponents of right-wing extremism and the extreme right. The Anti-Fascist Action (de Anti-Fascistische Aktie, AFA) is prepared to take the law into its own hands in the fight against racism and fascism, and engage in confrontations using violence, if necessary. AFA steps in where the government 'fails to act' by allowing right-wing extremist and extreme right-wing manifestations to take place, for example⁵. When such demonstrations take place, AFA regularly resorts to violence itself or lets others act on its behalf. These disruptions of the public order are then attributed to the right-wing demonstrators and used by AFA as an argument to ban demonstrations.

Together with AFA, the research group Collective Anti Fascist and Capitalist Archive (Kollektief Anti-Fascistische en Kapitalistisch archief, KAFKA) aims to ban everything considered right-wing from public space. AFA and KAFKA use undemocratic methods to reach this antidemocratic objective, such as (inciting of) violence, intimidation, and hiding true identities (by using aliases) and intentions, by using both a public and a hidden agenda, the content of which goes against the democratic legal order. Usually, extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist circles hardly ever react to such actions. Right-wing extremists did regain confidence for a while after violent actions took place in *Uitgeest*, where AFA disrupted a NVB gathering in February 2007. Subsequently, right-wing extremists sought confrontation with left-wing extremists a few times. However, this revival proved short-lived.

⁵ Redactie Alert!, *Redactioneel*, in: *Alert!*, 3-2009, p. 2



5 Perception and facts

The threat that is attributed to right-wing extremism and the extreme right is often greater than evidenced on the basis of AIVD investigation results. This supposed threat lies in the perception. The picture corresponds with the widely supported social antipathy against right-wing extremism and the extreme right. Moreover, extreme rightists and right-wing extremists contribute – intentionally or not – to this perception by their outward appearance. Because the supposed threat is then widely perceived as the factual threat, an almost mythical image arises.

The left-wing extremist opponents AFA and KAFKA have a role in the creation of the perception surrounding right-wing extremism and the extreme right. They derive their *raison d'être* from the threat that may emanate from this and they cultivate the picture that it is large and growing. AFA tries to prevent every right-wing activity by lobbying at local authorities, for example. Politicians and administrators run the risk that they will let themselves be led by an incorrect outline of the situation. This may even cause an overreaction.

As far as the perceived threat is concerned, it is governed by emotions, feelings and images. The terms, which the AIVD consistently keeps separate, are juggled and used as being interchangeable: 'they are all fascists'. By using terminology meticulously and by distinguishing factions a more balanced picture is formed. It then becomes clear that we are not dealing with a closely-knit organised and managed movement that – inspired by a shared ideology – mercilessly goes about with violence. Thus, it becomes possible to attain a realistic assessment about the nature, severity and extent of the threat.

6 Role of the AIVD

The AIVD conducts investigations into organisations that, and persons who, because of the objectives they pursue, or through their activities give cause for serious suspicion that they are a danger to the continued existence of the democratic legal order⁶. This has resulted in the investigation of right-wing extremism and the extreme right, and of the related threat posed by its left-wing opponents. Even though the right-wing extremist and extreme right-wing threat against the democratic legal order is low, it remains important to investigate and interpret its nature, severity and extent. The AIVD enables others to act by sharing the results and insights gained from the investigation. As for the perceived threat, the AIVD's task is to offer support aimed at increasing resilience to this threat and demythologising the image created.

Right-wing extremist and extreme right-wing groups and movements are clearly visible in the public domain, which regularly causes problems of public order. In general, these public order disturbances do not pose a threat to an actual threat to the democratic legal system, and therefore fall outside the scope of the AIVD.

⁶ Article 6 of the Intelligence and Security Services Act (Wiv 2002).

7 Conclusion

The threat emanating from the extreme right-wing and the right-wing extremism against the democratic legal system in the Netherlands is low. An overflow of different, mutually exclusive positions, beliefs and world views exist within the extreme right-wing and the right-wing extremism. In addition, these movements have been characterised by a small following, personal animosity, ideologically different views and organisational fragmentation for years. The number of active followers is dropping. The effectiveness of right-wing extremism and the extreme right is therefore limited. What remains of the antidemocratic goals envisaged by Dutch right-wing extremists mostly proves to be idealistic lip service – only a few actually walk their undemocratic talk.

The situation that has been described for right-wing extremism in the Netherlands, is also roughly applicable to the directly surrounding countries.

Many a Dutch right-wing extremist maintains contacts with people with the same views abroad. Because of differences in opinion and leadership, collaboration on the level of content, organisation or ideology is rarely realised.

Based on the AIVD investigation, several explanations can be given for the low threat currently emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right. The recruitment power of the extreme right, for example, has decreased after established political parties addressed certain viewpoints and these issues became debatable in the integration and Islam discussion on a national level. In addition, the resilience to

extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist movements in society is considerable and there is a high societal price to pay for joining them. Moreover, it is unlikely that a (hierarchical) leader, who is also accepted as such and therefore capable of breaking through the limitations of the movement, will stand up any time soon. The AIVD deems that, if the dynamics leading to the current threat assessment persist, the low threat emanating from Dutch right-wing extremism and the extreme right against the democratic legal order will not change fundamentally in the future or will subside even further.

As a result of the created image, the threat emanating from right-wing extremism and the extreme right against the democratic legal order is often perceived to be greater than evidenced by the AIVD investigation. Even though the threat to the legal order is minimal, it remains important to investigate and interpret its nature, severity and extent. This publication is one of the means used by the AIVD to inform, mobilise and support society, politicians and authorities, enabling them to come to a response to the threat which is in keeping with its nature, severity and extent.

Appendix: further reading

- The website www.aivd.nl features a file on right-wing extremism.
- www.aivdkennisbank.nl offers the possibility to search through twenty years of AIVD publications online. The search for the term 'right', for example, yields a list of AIVD publications on this topic of the past years, both annual reports and other publications.
- A detailed definition of such notions as extreme, extremism, radical, radicalism, democratic legal order, etc. can be found in the AIVD publications *From Dawaa to Jihad* (2004) and *The radical Dawaa in transition* (2007), which can be accessed and ordered via www.aivd.nl.
- AIVD: *Lonsdale-jongeren niet rechts-extremistisch*, 11 July 2005, www.aivd.nl
- 'Lonsdale-jongeren' in Nederland. *Feiten en fictie van een vermeende rechts-extremistische subcultuur*, nr 2381145/01, www.aivd.nl
- Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, *Argumentationsmuster im Rechtsextremistischen Antisemitismus. Aktuelle Entwicklungen*, November 2005, <http://www.verfassungsschutz.de>



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