



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





Cyberthreats and international developments



Espionage and covert political influencing



Threats to society's vital processes



An undefeated ISIS, a persistent jihadist threat



Salafist inciters coerce and intimidate



Right-wing extremism: anti-Islam, anti-immigration and anti-government



Left-wing extremism: anti-right and anti-government



Continued threats and intimidation against politicians



Over 45,000 security screenings carried out



Parliament passes the new Intelligence and Security Services Act





Cyberthreats and international developments

The digitalisation of society and related developments of globalisation are great influences on the work of the General Intelligence and Security Service (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst, AIVD).

Our everyday lives are increasingly moving over to the digital realm. Threats to our national security have also taken on a different dynamic as a result of the digitalisation of the world.

The AIVD's work is set against a backdrop of turbulent international developments. The Netherlands is a sovereign state, but our influence over our wealth and well-being is limited. The security of our country is almost always inextricably bound up with developments elsewhere. The (covert) intentions of other countries affect international relations and (inter) national security. As such the actions of other countries play an increasingly important role in what happens in the Netherlands and to our interests abroad.

In short, the tasks of ensuring our country's internal and external security are becoming ever more intermeshed as a result of digitalisation and globalisation.

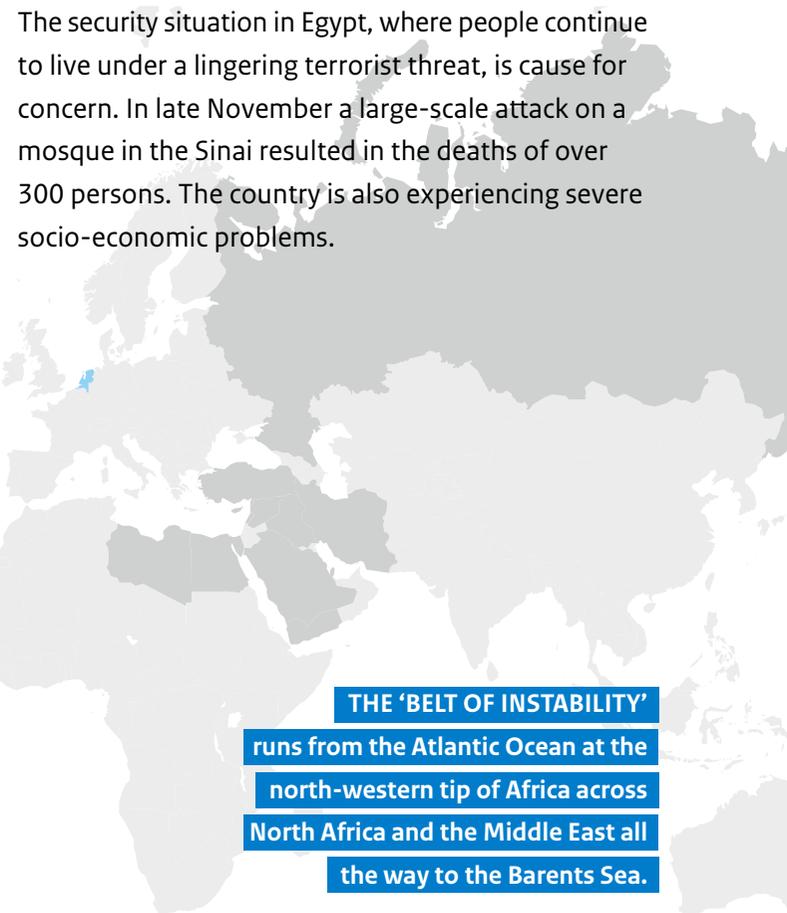
The international context

The most direct impact on our security and on the security of Western Europe as a whole is still coming from the 'belt of instability', which runs from the Atlantic Ocean at the north-western tip of Africa across North Africa and the Middle East all the way to the Barents Sea.

Chaos in North Africa and the Middle East

As a result of the unstable political situation in Libya, jihadist terrorist groups continue to enjoy a certain freedom of movement. With Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) under pressure in Syria and Iraq it is conceivable that fighters will relocate to other jihadist conflict zones, for example Somalia, Libya, and Egypt. This is a potential threat to (Western) Europe in the near future.

The security situation in Egypt, where people continue to live under a lingering terrorist threat, is cause for concern. In late November a large-scale attack on a mosque in the Sinai resulted in the deaths of over 300 persons. The country is also experiencing severe socio-economic problems.



THE 'BELT OF INSTABILITY'
runs from the Atlantic Ocean at the
north-western tip of Africa across
North Africa and the Middle East all
the way to the Barents Sea.

In 2017 the Syrian regime, with the support of Iran, Hezbollah and Russia, moved forward in its ambitions to regain military control over all of Syria's territory. Almost all the territory held by ISIS has been retaken by the Syrian regime and the Syrian Democratic Forces.

In Iraq the fight against ISIS in its present shape appears to be nearing the final stages. Now that the common enemy is all but defeated, other long-running political conflicts resurface. The outcome of the referendum for independence that the Kurds held in September 2017, eventually resulted in a weakening of their position.

The AIVD's work is set against a backdrop of turbulent international developments, which influences our national security.

In addition to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, the situation in the Middle East is marked by increased animosity between Iran and Saudi Arabia. This confrontation affects all of the region and in 2017 also led to a political crisis involving the Gulf state of Qatar.

The hostile relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran are also a contributory factor in the ongoing war in Yemen. In the conflict in Syria and the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, Lebanon attempts to remain as neutral as possible, but the country is hampered by Hezbollah's strong domestic position. This group has close ties with Shia Iran.

In the past year, the Palestinian Territories witnessed the signing – under foreign pressure – of a reconciliation agreement between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority.

Turkey is important to the region as a bridge between Europe and the Middle East. In 2017, President Erdogan consolidated his position with a narrow victory in the referendum on the amendment of the Turkish constitution.

Russia asserts itself

The relationship between the Russian Federation and the Netherlands continues to be fraught with tension, also due to Russia's critical view of the investigation into the shooting down of flight MH17 and alleged anti-Russian sentiments in the Netherlands.

In general, Russia's relationship with the West has not improved, also because of accusations of Russian interference with due democratic process, for instance in the elections in the United States. Russia asserts itself in its ambitions to re-establish itself as a global superpower, for example by means of covert political influencing. The country exploits the vulnerabilities of open, democratic societies and the digital opportunities these societies embody.

Russia is attempting to appropriate a geopolitical role for itself in the Middle East, wishing to be in the lead at the peace talk process for Syria.

Development of weapons of mass destruction

The developments with regard to the various weapons programmes in so-called “countries of concern” are a source of growing threat to international security, in particular where North Korea is concerned.

In this past year Pyongyang found itself in the limelight after demonstrating that it had made great technical advancements in its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programmes. A sixth nuclear test with a significantly greater explosive yield and the launches of three intercontinental ballistic missiles have put North Korea on the map, but they also resulted in serious international sanctions.

The AIVD has reported frequently to various government bodies on the steady technical progress made by North Korea, both in its nuclear weapons programme and its ballistic missile programme. The AIVD and the Military Intelligence and Security Service (MIVD) combine their efforts in the joint Counter-proliferation Unit (UCP).

Iran has continued to develop and increase the accuracy and range of its missiles. We investigated Tehran’s willingness to observe the agreements of the inter-

national nuclear accord. Other reports were concerned with the country’s development of its ballistic missile programme.



The Middle East is also still plagued by attacks involving chemical weapons, with the attack on Khan-Sheikhoun, Syria, in April as the low point. Hundreds of people were wounded and dozens were left dead in this attack. We have on several occasions reported on the extent of Syria’s willingness to disclose facts concerning its own chemical weapons programme.

The suspected biological and chemical weapons programmes in other countries of concern prompted us to investigate further and report our findings. The AIVD and MIVD have also offered technical assistance in investigations into chemical and biological threats by non-stately actors in Syria and Iraq (ISIS in particular) and the potential threat to the Netherlands.

Procurement of goods and knowledge

Countries like Iran, Syria and Pakistan are looking for high-grade technology for their WMD programmes, in the Netherlands as well as in many other Western countries.

Also this past year, we investigated attempts to procure proliferation-sensitive goods in or via the Netherlands, and, when possible, prevented the procurement. To carry out this task we cooperate closely with other parties, for example the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Customs Office, and foreign partner services.

In support of Dutch counter-proliferation (export) policies, several reports were published in 2017, including 18 official reports to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition to providing intelligence, in 2017 the UCP also intervened in several attempts to obtain proliferation-sensitive material.

By providing education on the possible risks of proliferation we have also raised awareness among companies and institutions.

The Caribbean: instability in Venezuela

The confines of our monarchy extend all the way to the other side of the Atlantic. The islands of Sint Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire are special overseas municipalities, and Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten are autonomous countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As a result, Dutch territorial integrity extends all the way to Latin America.

The situation in Venezuela, currently in the grip of a combined political and socio-economic crisis, is a cause for particular concern in this part of the kingdom. The situation there has led to widespread protests by the Venezuelan population in spring and summer of this year. The regime has little regard for political and human rights in the autocratic course it has chosen to pursue.

The economic interests of China, Europe, and the Netherlands are becoming increasingly intertwined. The development of China's 'New Silk Roads' is a good example of this.

Internationally, Venezuela is becoming more and more isolated. Other countries in the region are critical, and the United States and Canada have announced individual sanctions against Venezuelan officials who undermine the country's democracy and violate human rights. The European Union has also adopted restrictive measures.

Meanwhile hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans have left the country to seek refuge elsewhere. It is expected that the situation in Venezuela will continue to deteriorate in 2018. The country's instability adversely affects the security of the entire region. This could also have repercussions on the stability of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao.

China gets a foot in the door

The economic interests of China, Europe, and the Netherlands are becoming increasingly intertwined. The development of China's 'New Silk Roads', by which China is trying to get better access to Europe, is a good example of this. Its creation will bring important changes to the transportation hubs of the Port of Rotterdam and Schiphol Airport. To China this is not only an important economic initiative, but also a way to expand its sphere of influence.

China is continuing its transformation from an export-oriented production economy to a sophisticated technological economy. One of the indications of this transformation is the interest in acquiring technical and scientific knowledge. In this context the Chinese government also encourages Chinese (state-owned) companies to invest abroad, for example by takeovers, all with the intention of boosting the competitive power of Chinese national enterprise. This could lead to competitive imbalance, an adverse effect on the level playing field that would be detrimental to the Netherlands.

Informed foreign policy

The Netherlands is a member of various international organisations, such as NATO and the EU. In 2018 our country will also take a seat on the UN Security Council. With all these institutions it is important that the Dutch government remains well-informed on geopolitical developments when it joins the discussion. The AIVD is legally tasked, and equipped appropriately, to investigate the true intentions and hidden agendas of other countries and to inform the government of its findings.

In its investigations of other countries the AIVD collects what is known as political intelligence. Under the Intelligence and Security Services Act, the AIVD is not allowed to be open about the countries and topics it is investigating. In the context of our task of gathering political intelligence on other countries, we have produced over 200 intelligence reports and analyses for many different audiences, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

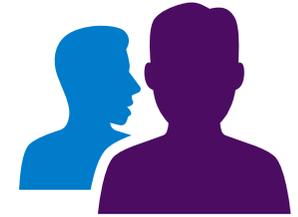
Practically all the global challenges and developments described above affect our national security in one way or another. The fact that (political) developments

elsewhere influence our safety here, underscores the importance of having a combined intelligence and security service like the AIVD.

For example, the government of an unnamed country could be plotting to strengthen its economic position by secretly stealing digital blueprints from companies in our country. This fact touches not only upon the service's task of gathering political intelligence, i.e. to uncover the true intentions of another country, but also upon our national security task, i.e. to prevent economic cyberespionage attacks.

When we uncover a country's true intent regarding its chemical weapons programmes, we are also able to establish which national sectors and enterprises could become a target with a view to the procurement of goods for the production of this type of weaponry. This allows us to inform the businesses and organisations involved.





Espionage and covert political influencing

As long as there have been countries, they have been spying on each other to look for ways to influence political decision-making. One of the ways to do this is through direct human contact, but (additional) digital means are being used more and more as well.

Cyberattacks are accessible, cheap and difficult to trace to the actual perpetrator, and their impact can be quite extensive.

The Netherlands as target for espionage

The position of the Netherlands – as an international hub, as a member of the UN Security Council in 2018, and as a member state of NATO and the EU – contributes to a more-than-average interest in our country from external stately actors.

More and more countries clandestinely attempt to acquire information for their own (geo)political gain by means of cyberespionage. Such digital activities offer an attractive alternative or addition to conventional military and intelligence operations.

In 2017 our country was not only targeted by cyber-espionage but also by ‘classic’ Russian intelligence activities. Russian operatives collected intelligence on science, politics, defence and the economy. We have also identified (attempts at) recruitment and the directed collection of specific information on (financial) economics and politics by China.

We work closely together with the MIVD and with national partners such as the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) in order to identify and contain such dangers. The collaboration with foreign partner services has been intensified in order to expand our knowledge of operations such as these and to be able to intervene quickly.

Increase in economic espionage

Cyberespionage for economic reasons continues to be a matter of concern. In comparison with last year the AIVD has noticed a slight increase in economic espionage in Europe. Several foreign powers have been found guilty of such activities.



MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

EU, NATO, UN Security Council

In 2017 we identified cyberespionage incidents at various European multinationals and research organisations in the fields of energy, high technology and chemistry. Amongst these are several organisations that cooperate closely with the Netherlands or have local offices here. These cyberbreaches led to the theft of terabytes of confidential information, representing a substantial economic value. Such persistent cyberattacks represent a threat to our national earning potential.

Various companies and foreign partner services were informed of these espionage activities.

Use of social media for espionage purposes

Public and private organisations with large-scale access to personal data are increasingly being targeted by cyberespionage. The information acquired in cyberattacks provides insight into the social and professional circles of the clients and employees of these organisations. A state actor can approach or contact persons of interest directly using the information obtained on employers or sectors, or on the basis of someone's social media (business) contact lists, e.g. from LinkedIn. There have been examples of this also in our country.

The goal is to identify persons that have knowledge of or access to relevant economic, financial or political-strategic information. When someone reacts to such attempts to contact them, on LinkedIn or other social media, the country in question tries to obtain relevant information in exchange for money or some other kind of reward. If the person in question accepts, they will be developed into a source, and in some cases there may even be a meeting in person.

Such undesirable, covert activities also fall, for example, within China's broad strategy for boosting its economic, scientific and military power as fast as possible.

Increasingly complex cyberespionage attacks

The AIVD has noted that more and more countries are turning to cyberespionage, and that the complexity of such operations is growing. More and more often, foreign powers are using and abusing legitimate software and bona fide suppliers to gain access to specific victims. This approach bypasses the use of malware, which makes it more difficult to detect and prevent such attacks. Various Dutch organisations in the corporate world, vital infrastructure and the government have been the target of such attacks. We informed them of this.

Cyberattacks that aim to influence

Ever more frequently other countries also employ digital means to influence political and administrative decision-making, public perception, and dissidents in other countries.

Russia in particular is highly skilled in covertly influencing (political) decision-making processes, and the public perception and opinion in other countries through digital means. In recent years such covert strategies have become an increasingly important part of Russia's foreign policy. Since flight MH17 was shot down, Russia has had a vested interest in Dutch politics and the Dutch judicial system.

We found that a number of foreign powers use targeted cyberattacks to collect intelligence on their national diasporas in the Netherlands. These countries also use digital means to intimidate these people and to silence critics, even when these are from the Netherlands. The authorities competent to intervene have been informed.

Threats to society's vital processes

The AIVD has found that the Dutch government and the corporate world have become more security-aware. Yet often there is still room for improvement, in terms of both digital and physical security threats.

Alertness is of the utmost importance particularly where processes that are vital to national security are concerned.

The threat of digital sabotage

The AIVD has found that foreign powers carry out more and more targeted and untargeted cyberattacks on organisations throughout the world. These attacks also had an impact on our country. The Port of Rotterdam, for example, was affected by the fall-out of the advanced 'NotPetya' cyberattack, which caused considerable economic damage.

The scale and the technically advanced nature of this attack indicate that a state actor is behind it.

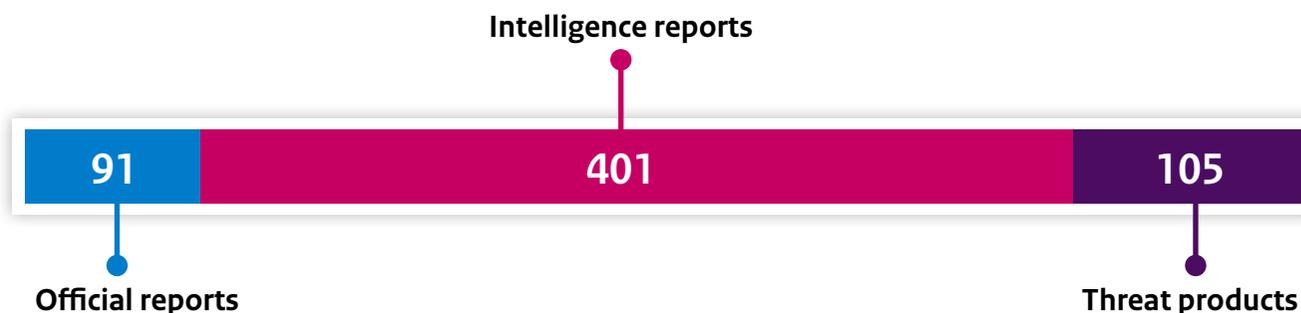
Digital sabotage attacks could have a huge impact on a society, especially where vital infrastructure – communications and the supply of power and energy – is concerned. There is increased activity by extraneous parties seeking access to and positioning themselves in certain systems in order to be in a position to target and sabotage Europe's vital infrastructure (in the future).

To promote security awareness within the vital sectors, we gave over 200 presentations, briefings, and workshops in 2017 to government and civil aviation organisations and other suppliers of vital processes.

In addition, 3 threat analyses, 3 threat estimations and 1 risk assessment were issued.

We participate in several expert groups and other initiatives aimed at security efficiency and effectiveness. In coordination with the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV), the AIVD maintains a network within all relevant (vital and non-vital) sectors.

AIVD products 2017



Digital information security in the spotlight

If a society is to function well, it has to be able to depend on the security of confidential information. The AIVD notes that also in the area of information security this awareness has grown. The AIVD experts of the Netherlands National Communications Security Agency (Nationaal Bureau Verbindingsbeveiliging (NBV)) notice that the detection of and response to foreign digital attacks is becoming more and more important. Detection and response add to the prevention of threats of this kind.

The NBV provides high-quality security advice and other reports, using its own expertise, classified information from AIVD investigations, and market developments.

In the past year we have been involved in numerous initiatives to promote security. We were consulted, for example, to provide advice on the data security of the parliamentary elections and on the continued development of the access card used by civil servants.

The AIVD also visited several (inter)national conferences and universities to share our views on how to protect ourselves against the threat of quantum computers.

With regard to this topic we shared a first version of evaluation criteria for quantum technology-resistant products that process data of the highest classification. These criteria will assist companies in their technical choices.

To improve information security the AIVD is always looking for alliances in the academic world. In 2017 the AIVD and Radboud University Nijmegen began a joint research project in the field of OpenVPN-NL connection security, which was later distributed to all users of this network. We also worked on the development of smartcards for user-friendly implementations of OpenVPN.

This year also saw evaluations of new cryptographic products to clear them for use with information of the highest classification, such as state secrets. We also produced and distributed all approved cryptographic material for the Dutch government, NATO, the EU, and the European Space Agency.

We have also followed up on an initiative for the certification of security products by other, AIVD-sanctioned parties. This concerns basic information security. In this manner an organisation can have the security level tested of a product it uses itself.

Security product suppliers can also obtain an (indirect) AIVD certification of their product in this manner.

In order to raise awareness of information security, the AIVD and MIVD jointly published an information brochure: **'Cyberespionage: Are you aware of the risks?'** This publication provides guidelines for organisations and ICT specialists in setting up secure ICT services.





An undefeated ISIS, a persistent jihadist threat

There were no attacks in the Netherlands in 2017, but in many other Western countries terrorists did succeed in violently carrying out their agendas. In all, 29 attacks took place, a slight increase from 2016. Many more were prevented by the timely intervention of national authorities.

The terrorist threat to the Netherlands mainly stems from the global jihadist movement, which has been under a great deal of pressure internationally. The most prominent branch of jihadist terrorism, ISIS, lost practically all of its territory in Syria and Iraq. Geographically, not much is left of the so-called caliphate, which is part of the reason why only a small number of jihadists tried to make their way there.

The organisation itself remained a danger and it succeeded in inspiring its followers to carry out many attacks in the West. It is expected that ISIS will live on underground and that it will continue to plot attacks, also in the West.

ISIS continues to have a great need for attacks committed in its name. Besides the persistent motivation inherent in jihadist ideology that ‘infidels’ should be attacked, ISIS wants its propaganda to show how the group can exact vengeance on the international coalition, of which the Netherlands is a member. ISIS also wants to demonstrate to jihadists across the world that in spite of its military defeats in Syria and Iraq, the group is still a force to be reckoned with, all to retain its position as a prominent international jihadist organisation.

In this context ISIS is more and more invested in inspired and encouraged attacks. Supporters in Europe who are considering the possibility of an attack, more than ever feel the pressure from Syria and Iraq to take action. In its propaganda ISIS deliberately plays into these sentiments. Furthermore, each new attack is also a potential inspiration for other attackers.

Al-Qaeda has also been active in various countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, and it still harbours

ambitions to carry out attacks in the West, especially now that ISIS is under such great pressure. Both ISIS and al-Qaeda have affiliates in other countries, some of which also direct their external operations towards targeting the West.

Jihadist movement still active in the Netherlands

Also in the Netherlands jihadists have remained active in 2017. The movement has a few hundred followers in our country. In the past year only a few succeeded in leaving the country to travel to Syria and Iraq. Towards the end of 2017 a total of some 185 individuals from the Netherlands were still in Syria or Iraq.

There are at least 175 minors with ties to the Netherlands presently in Syria and Iraq. Less than a third was taken there by one or both parents, and over two thirds was born there. This means that more than half of these minors is under 4 years old. The male-female ratio is about equal. The majority of these children was with ISIS.

Less than 10 per cent of these minors is 9 years or older, which is the age at which children with ISIS undergo training and could become involved in the fighting. It is quite likely that this does not apply to girls with ISIS, or to minors with other, al-Qaeda-related factions. It remains difficult to identify or confirm pregnancies or births in the conflict area, in particular in cases when Dutch foreign fighters married local women.

The year 2017 saw relatively few returnees. We expect more returnees now that ISIS has lost nearly all of its territory. In all likelihood these will be mostly women and children, and they are expected to return fairly gradually. Returnees pose a serious threat because they were in the conflict area for an extended period of time, and it is probable they witnessed or even took part in serious acts of violence, even the children.

The threat of cyberterrorism

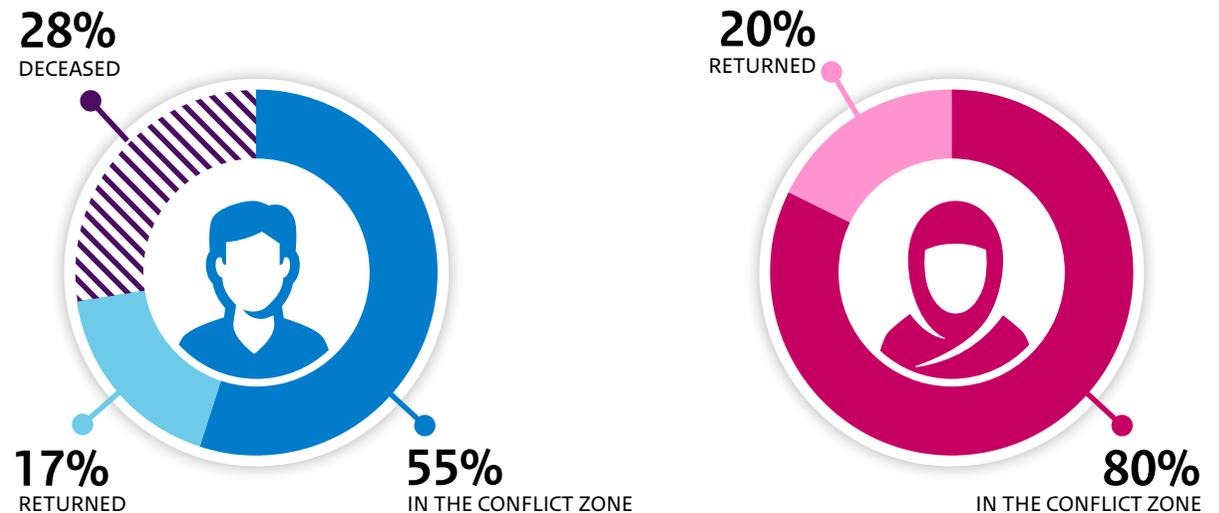
Jihadists use the internet primarily to spread propaganda. A small segment of their activities is aimed at carrying out cyberattacks. Because digital terrorist attacks could have a widespread social impact, we also investigate these forms of terrorism in combination with cyberthreats.

Our investigations have shown that the most prominent cyberjihadist hacker groups do not have the advanced capabilities to carry out complex cyberattacks. Nor have they made significant advances in obtaining those capabilities. They want to, but they just can't (yet). The essence of jihadist cyberattacks is that a relatively basic attack can still cause a great deal of unrest. Publishing so-called kill lists is another way of causing unrest.

AIVD investigations enable others to act

The AIVD conducts intensive investigations into jihadist persons and organisations, both in the Netherlands and abroad. We also investigate foreign terrorist fighters and returnees. We issue official reports to alert national partners so that they can take appropriate measures, for example the arrest and possibly the prosecution of returnees.

Foreign terrorist fighters and returnees



We issue official reports to allow other organisations to take action. In 2017 over 40 official reports concerning the threat of jihadist terrorism were issued to the Public Prosecution Service.

One of these official reports was the start of a trajectory that eventually led to the sentencing of a 31-year-old man from Rotterdam to four years imprisonment for the plotting of a terrorist attack. He was arrested in December 2016 shortly after the AIVD issued an official report.

AIVD investigations revealed in April that someone from the Netherlands was directly involved in the publication of a so-called kill list. Following an official report by the AIVD the police were able to arrest this person.

We also provide information to other partners, such as the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND), and local authorities, so that they can take steps against persons that are guilty of terrorist activities or radicalisation. This can be done either by official report, but also by means of intelligence products and briefings.

In 2017 we presented several publications on jihadist terrorism that were intended for a wider audience. The aim of these publications is to describe and analyse phenomena and trends for the general public. They are based on our in-depth knowledge and expertise.

'Focus on returnees' looks at the threat posed by people returning from the conflict zone. They could carry out terrorist attacks themselves, or they could recruit or radicalise others.

The publication **'The Children of ISIS'** looks at the issue of the indoctrination of children with ISIS. Children are victims above all else, but they also pose a threat to the West, having been confronted with extreme violence from a very young age.

In **'Jihadist women, a threat not to be underestimated'** the AIVD describes the role played by women in jihadist networks. Generally this role is a supportive one, but that does not exclude that they could move on to using violence. Often women are just as fanatical in their jihadist ideology as men.

The need for international cooperation in counterterrorism

When it comes to counterterrorism, 2017 turned out to be another hallmark year underlining the importance of international cooperation between intelligence and security services. This cooperation is partially established in the European Counterterrorism Group (CTG), but there is also cooperation with partner services outside of this framework. In 2017 the AIVD continued to play a leading role in the operational platform created by the CTG member states in 2016 with the aim of exchanging information on terrorists and attack plots continuously and in real time.

The AIVD team that handles notifications from the police, civilians and foreign partner services that cannot not immediately be assigned to a specific team, processed almost 3,800 tips in 2017. Compared to 2016 this is an almost 30 per cent decrease. 2016's higher number was mainly the result of terrorist attacks abroad. In 2017 the team carried out 245 preliminary investigations, which is more or less the same as in 2016.

Salafist inciters coerce and intimidate

The AIVD pays close attention to the Salafist movement, because of concerns that its ideology is used to legitimise intolerance, anti-democratic activities and polarisation.

One remarkable development within Salafism in the Netherlands is the fact that Salafist inciters are increasingly willing to set aside their ideological differences to join forces and obtain their goals together, in the name of Islam. These are goals such as the monopolisation of Islamic education, (spiritual) care and counselling, and other expressions of the Islamic faith. Opposition and contradiction are not tolerated, and Muslims are demanded, in a coercive and often intimidating manner, to express their loyalty to Islam in general.

In 2017 the AIVD cooperated with administrative and social partners at national and regional levels to create awareness, from a security perspective, regarding such activities. Our emphasis is, among other things, on the conduct and practices of Salafist inciters who

call upon freedom of religion and freedom of speech to curb these and other freedoms in others. We have also called attention to the consequences of the foreign financing of Salafist organisations.

Confrontations between left-wing and right-wing extremists in the Netherlands are becoming ever more grim, no matter if the issue at hand is immigration, Islam, or “Black Pete”.



Right-wing extremism: anti-Islam, anti-immigration and anti-government

For several years, the most important ideological impetus motivating the extreme right in the Netherlands has been its view on Islam and immigration.

More recently there has been an upsurge also in anti-government sentiment, as the government is seen as the culprit whose policies enable the rise of Islam in the Netherlands.

Another new development is the rise of groups that are driven by an ideological motivation to promote ‘white racial purity’. These groups blame the ‘political elite’ for what they call ‘Umvolkung’, by which they mean the promotion of policies that in the long run could lead to the extinction of the white race.

So far the extreme right has manifested itself in the Netherlands primarily with non-violent or minor disruptive actions. Although a limited group of right-wing extremists activists is prepared to resort to violence, this intention is hardly if ever acted upon. More than previously, however, they are looking to confront and engage with 'leftist' persons and groups.

Also this past year we mapped the developments in the world of right-wing extremism in order to gain insight into the radicalisation of persons and groups with extreme right-wing views in the Netherlands. We coordinate the ways in which we gather intelligence with the regional intelligence services, who play an important role in this process. The result is a wider scope of investigation and more efficiency.



Left-wing extremism: anti-right and anti-government

Last year's low point in the international world of left-wing extremism were the riots at the G20 summit in Hamburg, the worst disturbances in Germany in decades.

There were also Dutch protesters arrested and convicted in relation to the violent clashes in Hamburg. Given the often international nature of left-wing extremism, we regularly exchange information with foreign partner services.

In 2017 we were able to update our picture of the individual or group activities by left-wing extremists. The activities of left-wing extremist groups vary wildly in terms of progression and intensity. Left-wing extremists are often active in several areas, operating in groups of varying compositions (*ad hoc* coalitions), and sometimes internationally. The developments of left-wing extremism are largely in reaction to the

developments on the extreme right, with the caveat that left-wing extremists have a very fluid notion of what constitutes "the extreme right".

Confrontations between left-wing and right-wing extremists in the Netherlands are becoming ever more grim, no matter if the issue at hand is immigration, Islam, or "Black Pete". These clashes are often limited to verbal confrontations on social media, but more and more often extremists also take to the streets to seek each other out. Any protest by the (extreme) right against asylum seekers is invariably met with an – often unannounced – counterprotest by the left that also attracts many a left-wing extremist.

In 2017 extremists also launched a website under the name *Expose the Repatriation and Departure Service!* ("Ontmasker de DT&V!"), where they publish names and photographs of civil servants working for the Repatriation and Departure Service of the Ministry of Justice and Security.

In the run-up to the 15 March 2017 elections, the houses of some members of the Party for Freedom (PVV) were defaced, and also Thierry Baudet, the leader of Forum for Democracy, had his front door defaced.

By applying the correct perspective to expected threats, other parties were given the opportunity to take adequate security measures and prevent violent incidents. In order to maintain an even better overview of all the developments in this area of interest, the coordination between regional intelligence services and the AIVD was tightened further in 2017.

Tensions in the Netherlands concerning Turkey

The conflict between the Turkish government and the PKK continued also in 2017.

In the Netherlands, rumours concerning the presumed death of PKK leader Öcalan led to protests by Kurds – including PKK sympathisers – and nationalist Turks.

The relations between the two groups are still on edge. The AIVD is investigating the PKK's strategy with regard to Europe and the threat this brings with it.

The Turkish left-wing extremist terrorist organisation DHKP/C has a marginal presence in the Netherlands. The AIVD issued a number of official reports regarding several leading figures within the organisation, which led the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to freeze their funds.

Continued threats and intimidation against politicians

Extremists and jihadists consider politicians and administrators to be justified targets, for varying reasons. Actual physical violence against politicians is quite rare.

Several politicians have been confronted with threats and intimidation also in 2017.

As in previous years, we provided the NCTV in the interest of national security with an extensive analysis of the threats issued against politicians. In addition, we issued a threat analysis for the new cabinet under Prime Minister Rutte, which took office last year.

We also provided threat analyses with regard to large national happenings, such as the celebrations of King's day, Remembrance Day, Veterans' Day and the State Opening of Parliament, with a special focus on the vulnerable, freely accessible and easy to reach locations that are the preferred targets of jihadist terrorists.

Our country is host to a large number of international courts and tribunals. In 2017 we strengthened our contact with these institutions, so that we could better meet the needs of these organisations and gain insight into the threats against them.

In 2017 we provided 2 risk analyses, 11 threat analyses, 47 threat assessments, and 22 notifications in the context of the Safety and Security System.



Over 45,000 security screenings carried out

In 2017 the AIVD and mandated partners (the National Police Service and the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee (KMar)) carried out over 45,000 security screenings of persons (hoping to) fill a position involving confidentiality. This is an increase of almost 30 per cent in comparison to 2016, mainly as a result of a greater number of B-level screenings.

The increase in the number of security screenings is related to the fact that we had to deal with a back-log following the completion of the National Police's personnel reorganisation. Labour mobility as a result of the flourishing economy and a larger number of requests from the civil aviation sector also played a part.

The AIVD itself issued a certificate of no objection ('Verklaring van geen bezwaar - VGB') in over 8,800 cases, which is more than in the previous year. In approximately 650 cases the certificate was denied. Of those security screenings conducted by the AIVD, 89 per cent was completed within the maximum statutory

period of 8 weeks. Unfortunately the service fell short of its stated goal of a desired 90 per cent completion rate as a result of the increase in the number of screening requests.

A more efficient management of administrative procedures has again resulted in a cost cutting for A-level security screenings. The administrative scope for B and C-level screenings has been expanded, which resulted in an increase in quality, but also brought a slight increase in costs.

The Unit Security Screenings, a yet to be established unit in which the MIVD and AIVD will cooperate in the area of security screenings, was brought one step closer in September 2017 when a number of employees of the Defence Bureau of Security Screenings relocated to the AIVD's headquarters.

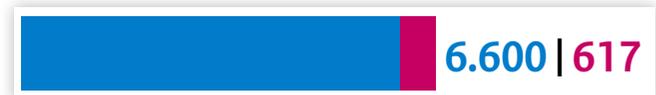
For more information on [security screenings](#) please visit our [website](#).

Security screenings

Level A by the AIVD



Level B by the AIVD



Level C by the AIVD



Total screenings



■ positive decisions | ■ negative decisions



Parliament passes the new Intelligence and Security Services Act



In February the House of Representatives passed the new Intelligence and Security Services Act 2017 (Wiv 2017); the Senate followed suit on the last day before the 2017 summer recess.

The new act modernises the AIVD and MIVD's powers and strengthens statutory safeguards and oversight.

The coalition agreement of the new government contains a passage regarding the new Wiv, in which the government specifies that the service may only carry out targeted investigations of cable-borne communications, and only under strict safeguards. The new act also determines that information may only be exchanged with partner services that have been reviewed and assessed (reported in a so-called *assessment memorandum*), unless the minister grants authorisation for the exchange with non-partner services. The act will be evaluated two years to the day on which it takes effect.

The AIVD is hard at work to ready the organisation for the day the new act will come into force. That date is 1 May 2018.

The Wiv 2017 provides extra safeguards, for example in the new Review Board for the Exercise of Investigatory Powers (TIB). As a result, some 150 processes and procedures regarding requests for the use of special investigatory powers will have to be amended. A project group for the implementation of the new law was established in 2016.

In addition, preparations have been made so that we will be able to intercept investigation-specific, cable-borne digital data streams. This is one of the most significant (technical) changes compared to the old law.

211 new employees

In 2017, 211 new employees joined the AIVD, so that at the end of last year the workforce stood at 1796 FTE.

In 2015 the government made extra funds available to expand capacity to counter the increasing threat against our nation. Since then we have grown at a steady pace, and we will continue to do so in the future.

The majority of the newcomers are operational employees and ICT specialists. It is expected that in 2018 another 200 new employees will join the service. We have also invested in innovation in the areas of operations and processes.



Facts and figures

Table 1: Number of completed security screenings, including delegated procedures.

| | Positive | Negative | Total |
|--|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Level A, by AIVD | 1797 | 16 | 1813 |
| Level B, by AIVD | 4609 | 64 | 4673 |
| Level B, taken over by AIVD from KMar, National Police, Surveillance and Protection Department | 1374 | 553 | 1927 |
| Level C | 537 | 14 | 551 |
| AIVD total | 8317 | 647 | 8964 |
| Level B, delegated to KMar, National Police, Surveillance and Protection Department | 36495 | | 36495 |
| | 44812 | 647 | 45459 |

Table 2: Results of objections and appeals against security screening decisions.

| | Dismissed | Upheld | Inadmissible | Total |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| Ruling on objections | 39 | 18 | 8 | 65 |
| Ruling on appeals | 7 | 2 | - | 9 |
| Ruling on second appeals | 5 | - | - | 5 |
| Total | 51 | 20 | 8 | 79 |

Table 3: Complaints about the AIVD to the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

| | |
|---|----|
| Under consideration as of 1 January 2017 | 6 |
| Received | 19 |
| Dismissed | 8 |
| Upheld in part | 2 |
| Inadmissible | 4 |
| Handled informally to the satisfaction of complainant | 7 |
| Still under consideration as of 31 December 2017 | 4 |

Table 4: Complaints about the AIVD to the National Ombudsman.

| | |
|--|---|
| Under consideration as of 1 January 2017 | 2 |
| Received | 4 |
| Dismissed | 2 |
| Upheld in part | 1 |
| Inadmissible | 3 |
| Referred to the minister for consideration | - |
| Still under consideration as of 31 December 2017 | - |

For more information on [complaints about the AIVD](#) please visit our website.

Table 5: Requests to inspect information held by the AIVD, by nature or subject.

| Subject of information requested | Submitted | Reviewed | Granted |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Applicant | 95 | 95 | 24 |
| Deceased relative | 19 | 18 | 10 |
| Third party | 13 | 10 | 1 |
| Administrative matters | 185 | 213 | 25 |
| Total | 312 | 336 | 60 |

Table 6: Results of objections and appeals against decisions on requests to inspect information held by the AIVD.

| | Objection | Appeal | Second appeal |
|--------------|-----------|--------|---------------|
| Reviewed | 105 | 90 | 10 |
| Dismissed | 105 | 7 | 5 |
| Upheld | - | - | 4 |
| Inadmissible | - | 83 | 1 |
| Withdrawn | - | - | - |

Table 7: Number of notifications.

| | |
|------|----|
| 2017 | 30 |
|------|----|

Table 8: Number of CTIVD reports on the work of the AIVD.

| | |
|------|-------------------------------|
| 2017 | 4: numbers 51, 52, 53 and 54. |
|------|-------------------------------|

Published by

General Intelligence- and Security Service (AIVD)

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

For more information about our investigations
and activities: www.english.aivd.nl

March 2018