



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

2024

> AIVD annual report



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Foreword

What kind of world do we live in? This is a question many people have asked themselves over the past few months when confronted with the current global affairs. It is also a question which arises at the publication of this Annual Report, in which the AIVD paints a picture of the threats against the Netherlands in 2024. Threats which in isolation are considerable and urgent, but when seen in connection with each other even more so.

The AIVD sees a world which is more openly in conflict. Espionage, cyberattacks, economic advancement, and disinformation are weapons through which countries demarcate their spheres of influence and promote their own interests, if need be at another's expense. Over the past years the AIVD spoke of a 'grey zone conflict', in part because such activities often took place outside of the public view.

In 2024 in particular Russia was more open in its actions. With more aggression, also against human lives. Countries such as Germany, Poland, and Finland consider Russia responsible for destroying vital infrastructure, attempted murder, and arson attacks. The Russian regime uses sabotage bordering on state terrorism to sow fear in Europe. The AIVD and MIVD also identified preparations for sabotage in the Netherlands. The regime does this because Putin considers himself in conflict not only with Ukraine, but with the Western world as a whole, and in particular Europe.

The complexity of international relations also shows in our relationship with China. In 2024 the country was again both a partner and an adversary. A partner in part because of highly valued trade contracts. An adversary because of espionage within the Dutch government (as was found in 2024), undermining the revenue model of our companies, and supplying Russia with attack drones allowing Putin to continue his war against Ukraine.

Over and over again in 2024 international developments had an impact on the Netherlands' domestic security. The war in Gaza, which further escalated in 2024, contributed to polarisation and extremist violence in the Netherlands. Images of the war were also utilised by ISIS to increase recruitment amongst supporters in Western countries and to encourage them to commit attacks. In 2024 we witnessed tragic examples of these attacks in our neighbouring countries and also possibly in the Netherlands itself.



Erik Akerboom
 Director General
 General Intelligence
 and Security Service

Right-wing terrorist attacks were also a realistic possibility. And for the first time since the rise of anti-institutional extremism, Dutch followers of the movement were prosecuted for terrorist offences. They had concrete plans for carrying out 'citizen's arrests'. Weapons were found when they were arrested.

Investigation into the criminal networks which (can) undermine the democratic legal order of the Netherlands also showed the extent to which national threats and international developments have become connected.

In 2024 the AIVD ascertained that some criminal networks have advanced capabilities to carry out intelligence investigations into persons they view as a threat. This can include public prosecutors, judges, journalists, and politicians. These capabilities are made possible by the scope of the international drug trade. Because of this countries that want to carry out espionage activities or (assassination) attacks are eager to make use of such criminal networks.

Anyone who has a clear picture of the threats the Netherlands faced in 2024 will not only wonder what kind of world we live in, but also how we are supposed to respond these threats. This Annual Report shows that we are not powerless. The Netherlands, the AIVD, and its partners can do a lot in order to safeguard our national security and way of coexisting.

Now that the Public Prosecution Service and the police as well as the AIVD are all investigating criminal networks as part of their own legal duties, the Netherlands has a more complete picture of the phenomenon, which has helped remove concrete vulnerabilities and threats.

Thanks to the cooperation between European intelligence and security services, a number of jihadist attack plots were stopped in time. Because of this, the UEFA European Football Championship and the Olympics could be held safely.

The European cooperation against the threat of Russia has also contributed to the prevention and failure of sabotage attempts. As a result Russia is increasingly having to rely on criminals or individuals and organisations which offer their assistance, since more Russian intelligence officers were identified and expelled.

In 2024 the AIVD issued 73 official reports (17 more than in 2023) and 319 intelligence reports, of which 117 together with the MIVD. These enabled our partners to carry out arrests, remove threats, or increase their understanding of threats and vulnerabilities.

We also worked with Dutch businesses on increasing their cybersecurity. And together with the central government and numerous other organisations we contributed to ways to make the Netherlands more resilient in case of crises and disruption.

I would like to use this opportunity to express my appreciation for our partners. Together we work on making the Netherlands a safer place. Which is why one of our goals is to invest more in our partnerships. We furthermore focus on taking decisive action, being a technological frontrunner, and recruiting, retaining, and educating the best people. In these sometimes confusing times, this is what we need to safeguard our national security.

1. National threats





Flowers in Solingen after an attacker killed three people and wounded eleven people in a stabbing attack. ISIS claimed the attack as 'revenge for Muslims in Palestine and elsewhere'. Photo: dpa Picture-Alliance

1.1

- > **The threat of jihadist attacks further increased in 2024. In 2024 jihadists and other Muslim extremists carried out eleven attacks in Europe.**
- > **Several dozen attack plots were thwarted by intelligence and security services. Among others around the UEFA European Football Championship in Germany and the Olympics in France.**
- > **So called *encouraged* and *directed* attacks are occurring more frequently again.**
- > **In the Netherlands minors who have been radicalised online play a bigger role in the threat.**

Jihadist terrorism

On 19 September a 22-year-old man stabbed two persons near the Erasmusbrug in Rotterdam. One of the victims passed away while the other was severely injured. The Public Prosecution Service speaks of a crime with terrorist intent. There have furthermore been strong indications of psychological issues.

If the judge finds the terrorist intent proven, the attack is part of the increased number of jihadist attacks and attack plots in Europe in the past year. In all of Europe in 2024 eleven attacks were committed by jihadists and other Muslims extremists. Several dozen attack plots were thwarted by intelligence and security services.

The official reports the AIVD issued on jihadism in 2024 led to nine arrests in the Netherlands. The AIVD was also involved in the disruption of various jihadist networks in Western countries. The numbers are illustrative of a clear increased jihadist attack threat since 2022.

Global jihadism

We currently distinguish between three types of jihadist attacks: attacks that are *inspired*, *encouraged*, and *directed* (by ISIS).

In the last few years, most attacks in the West were *inspired* attacks. While online propaganda and radicalisation play a crucial role, the attacker acts independently. In general there is no direct contact between the attacker and terrorist organisations such as the Islamic State (ISIS) in inspired attacks. The attacks are sometimes claimed by ISIS after the fact.

In its (online) propaganda in 2024 ISIS devoted a lot of attention to the war in Gaza and Quran desecrations in Western countries, as well as calls for (global) attacks against Jewish and Christian targets. The attack that was carried out on a Jewish man in Zurich, Switzerland in March 2024 fits within this pattern.

In 2024 there was moreover a return of *encouraged* attacks. In such attacks, an attacker first contacts ISIS. Sometimes they are given concrete advice on targets and means of attack. For example the advice to choose moments and locations which receive a lot of media attention. It is not without reason that several jihadists were planning to carry out attacks during the UEFA European Football Championship 2024 in Germany and the Olympics in France. All these plans were thwarted by intelligence and security services and police forces.

Persons who are interested in travelling to join ISIS, for example in Somalia, may use the same channels to seek contact with ISIS and receive advice on the destination or travel route.

The deadly attack carried out by a 26-year-old Syrian at the 'Festival of Diversity' in German city Solingen in August 2024 was highly likely an encouraged attack. The attacker killed three people and injured eleven. ISIS claimed his action as an attack on 'a gathering of Christians' carried out 'in revenge for Muslims in Palestine and everywhere'.

The attack in March at a concert near Moscow is an example of a *directed* ISIS attack. Such attacks are often larger in scale and the attackers are directed by ISIS. In the attack four terrorists with automatic weapons opened fire on individuals attending a concert, after which they set the concert hall on fire. According to the police 145 attendees were killed and 551 were injured.

The attackers were sent by Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), originally the Afghan branch of ISIS. In 2024 ISKP was once more active in planning attacks. Other regional ISIS branches (often called 'provinces') also did this more often. Several attack plots in Germany, France, and Sweden could be traced back to ISIS structures in Somalia, Syria, and Iraq.

Jihadism in the Netherlands

While known jihadist networks in Dutch cities have hardly shown any activity in the past years, a new generation of jihadists is arising in the Netherlands: one which is mostly active online and fairly easily comes into contact with ISIS propaganda that way. One of the topics they are preoccupied with is the war in Gaza.

In general, it concerns young people who are susceptible to the disseminated propaganda. Because of their young age, it is sometimes difficult to determine if they are merely saying radical things or if they actually plan to take action. As was witnessed with several of them they can sometimes decide to take drastic steps in a very short time frame; this means that in spite of their young age they pose a serious terrorist threat. Roughly two-thirds of terrorism suspects who were arrested in Europe last year were under the age of twenty. In the Netherlands too in 2024 several young persons were arrested on suspicion of incitement with terrorist intent, participation in a terrorist organisation, or preparing an attack. A number of them claimed they had online contact with ISIS.

The issue of young jihadists shows a lot of similarities to that of young right-wing terrorists (page 18). For both groups, the AIVD aims to not only counter concrete threats but also prevent further radicalisation where possible. The AIVD does this by for example notifying organisations in the health care and criminal justice systems and sometimes through its own intervention.

> For more information,
go to: aivd.nl/terrorisme

1.2

- > **The AIVD continued its investigation into possible Hamas activities in the Netherlands. The network in the Netherlands raises funds here and focuses on propaganda.**
- > **The message of some Wahhabi Salafist inciters became less radical in the past years. Because of this, in several cases the AIVD has wound down its investigations.**

- > **For more information, go to: aivd.nl/radicale-islam**

Islamic extremism

Hamas has been working on obtaining financial support in Europe for years. In 2024 the AIVD continued its investigation to establish whether the threat posed to the Netherlands by the group is changing and whether Hamas could also start to pose a threat to the national security in the West.

After 7 October 2023, Western intelligence and security services believed it was conceivable that Hamas could carry out extremist activities in Europe, in particular targeting Israeli and Jewish targets. In part because of Hamas's call for 'general mobilisation' amongst its global network of sympathisers. This is not necessarily a call to violence (alone), but could also be a call for fundraising, logistic assistance, and actively spreading Hamas's message. Since late 2023 several individuals in Germany and Denmark have been arrested for suspicion of Hamas membership. A number of them are also suspected of preparing attacks. The criminal investigations are still ongoing.

Whether this money ends up with Hamas's armed wing cannot be established, but cannot be ruled out either

As yet, the activities of the Hamas network in the Netherlands appear to focus on propaganda. For example, the network was involved in (the organisation of) protests against the war in Gaza. These protests remained largely activist in nature. The network also occupies itself with raising funds for Hamas in the Middle East, often via opaque constructions. Whether this money ends up with Hamas's armed wing cannot be established, but cannot be ruled out either. The criminal proceedings are still ongoing.

Wahhabi Salafism

For several years the AIVD has concluded that the threat from the Wahhabi Salafist movement in the Netherlands is decreasing. Inciters and supporters are often more pragmatic in explaining (formerly) antidemocratic dogmas and are less likely to turn away from society than before.

In several cases, the AIVD has wound down its investigations into their activities. The inciters in question had a smaller reach, spread an ideology that had become less radical, or no longer dissent from politics and society in the Netherlands. The more pragmatic Wahhabi Salafists now have a larger reach than the ideological purists, also amongst young people.

1.3

- > **For the first time ever adherents of anti-institutional extremism in the Netherlands have been charged with terrorist offences.**
- > **This happened after several official reports by the AIVD and police investigation.**
- > **Five years after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic it has become increasingly clear how conspiracy theories can give rise to extremism.**

Anti-institutional extremism and terrorism

In 2024, for the first time since the rise of anti-institutional extremism in the Netherlands, some of its adherents were charged with terrorist offences. It concerns a total of ten suspects, including eight self-proclaimed sovereigns. Following two official reports by the AIVD, the suspects were arrested by the police at various moments in 2024. During and after the arrests, members of the group were found in possession of a total of nine firearms and a large amount of ammunition, heavy fireworks, and electric igniters. The Public Prosecution Service suspects three of them of preparing a terrorist offence in addition to forming a terrorist organisation.

This number may still change. They are charged with planning to carry out so-called citizen's arrests on a mayor and police officers. The general threat of violence has not been taken away by the arrests, which is why the AIVD continues its investigation into anti-institutional extremists.

In the arrests police found nine firearms, a large amount of ammunition, heavy fireworks, and electric igniters

The charges show what conspiracy theories and radical enemy narratives can lead to when taken to the extreme. Recent scientific research shows that the more people believe in (evil) conspiracies, the more likely they are to justify, facilitate, or use violence. The continued state of crisis that radicalised conspiracy theorists experience as well as the continuous fantasising about the violent confrontation with 'the elite' can pave the way for violence. This image is further substantiated by the experiences of various foreign intelligence and security services with violence carried out by anti-institutional extremists.

The arrested group is not representative of all sovereigns, let alone of the anti-institutional movement as a whole. The vast majority of these supporters are not violent. The various groups of anti-institutional extremists – including the less radical ones – all believe in the world view that a group of powerful people has control over the government, legal system, scientists, and the media and that they use this control to harm ordinary people. Part of the movement believe they are 'at war' with the elite. The movement in the Netherlands arose around the protests against the government's COVID measures, which they viewed as 'oppression of the ordinary people'.

In particular the self-proclaimed sovereigns remained a challenge to municipalities, the tax authorities, and other parts of the government in 2024. These sovereigns believe the government is not legitimate and that, as a result, they can decide for themselves which laws and rules apply to them. A number of them therefore refuse to pay taxes or fines, or to identify themselves when asked. When police, enforcement officers, or bailiffs take action, some sovereigns behave in a threatening and intimidating manner. One person used violence in 2024.

A large number of (death) threats and hate mail sent to politicians can be traced back to anti-institutional extremists

Moreover, a large number of (death) threats and hate mail sent to politicians and administrators can be traced back to anti-institutional extremists (more on this on page 45). The number of such threats drastically increased over the past years.

2024 was the first year in which the growth of the broader anti-institutional movement likely decreased somewhat. The online movement is big – well-known channels reach thousands to tens of thousands of visitors. Important current themes are migration, climate policy, and the woke ideology. The COVID pandemic and Russia's war against Ukraine are also still important topics within the movement.

However, in general there are fewer people who want to donate money to the drivers of the movement than before. The broader movement also seems less occupied with the idea of trying and punishing 'the elite'. After they had already lost their faith in protesting, they have now increasingly turned their back to society and mostly put their energy in withdrawing into their own circle.

THEME STORY

- > **Criminal networks use their own specialised ‘intelligence teams’ to keep an eye on persons they view as a threat, such as lawyers or journalists.**
- > **This better enables the networks to carry out attacks.**
- > **Criminal intelligence teams sometimes infiltrate parts of the government in order to obtain information.**
- > **Because of AIVD intelligence government bodies can remedy shortcomings in policies and legislation.**

Criminal networks developed capabilities comparable to those of intelligence and criminal investigation services

The criminal networks which pose a threat to the national security of the Netherlands have advanced, professional capabilities for gathering information on persons they view as a threat. These could be criminal rivals, but increasingly include government employees, politicians, journalists, and lawyers. This was ascertained by the AIVD in 2024.

The skills of specialised criminal intelligence teams in some fields can be compared to those of security and criminal investigation services. The same is true for their technical capabilities. With the use of their own surveillance teams and surveillance equipment they map home addresses, work addresses, places of residence, and social networks of their targets. They sometimes get information from government or company databases containing personal data. They do this by bribing or pressuring employees.

They are constantly alert to criminal investigation services. They attempt to identify, evade, and shake these off in a professional manner. For example, they scan their surroundings using technical means. This makes it more difficult to identify their activities – activities which sometimes infringe upon national security.

The fact that criminals were able to specialise in gathering intelligence and preparing for (deadly) attacks is due to the large scope of drug trafficking that happens via the Netherlands. This means criminal networks in the Netherlands have considerable interests to defend and have a structural need for information regarding potential threats to their business.

The AIVD views the intelligence work of criminal networks as a threat to the national security. Primarily because it increases their capabilities for planning and organising violence against e.g. lawyers, judges, public prosecutors, journalists, administrators, and politicians. For the sake of the rule of law individuals working such jobs should be able to carry out their work freely and safely.



Photo above (ANP):
The AIVD investigation concretely contributes to preventing attacks against the rule of law and to protecting threatened persons.

It also damages the legal order if parts of the government are infiltrated by or for criminals. This impacts the trust that citizens may have in these organisations to properly carry out their task. This is mostly damaging when it concerns tasks that are essential for the democratic legal order.

The extent of intelligence and violence capabilities of the criminal networks in the Netherlands also carries with it another risk for society: it becomes more interesting for state-sponsored actors which pose a threat to the national security of the Netherlands to cooperate with them. For example for intelligence operations, sabotage activities, or assassination attempts (more on this on page 45).

Criminal networks abuse any vulnerability they can find in legislation, policy, or working practice

In 2024 the AIVD also investigated the threat of violence criminal networks pose to the media. The networks regularly attempt to bring their criminal opponents into the public eye in hopes that they attract the notice of the police and the judiciary. Such manipulation can be dangerous for journalists, as members of criminal networks might consider them as an extension of rivals or the criminal investigation services. This increases the risk that they are seen as legitimate targets. The threat of violence posed to journalists can also lead to (self-) censorship. If this hampers freedom of the press, it damages the democratic legal order.

The AIVD's investigation into criminal networks focuses on other aspects of organised crime than those carried out by the Public Prosecution Service and the police. In particular it focuses on threats to the democratic legal order and infiltration of governments, companies, and vital infrastructure. The AIVD investigates weak spots within the government and corporations which criminals may exploit: so-called system vulnerabilities. For example companies and organisations which process personal data or issue identity documents.

Criminal networks do everything they can to safeguard their interests and continue their operations out of the sight of the police and the legal system. In order to achieve this, they exploit any vulnerability they can find in legislation, policy, or working practice of parts of the government and companies.

In 2024 the AIVD informed other parts of the government of the possibilities criminal networks have found in order to exploit such vulnerabilities, so that these government bodies can work on finding solutions. In time, this makes it more difficult for criminal organisations to corrupt government employees, obtain information and personal data, or carry out their intelligence activities.

Why and when the AIVD investigates criminal networks

By law protecting the national security of the Netherlands is the AIVD's core task. When there are serious suspicions that a criminal network damages the national security, or can and wants to damage the national security, the AIVD can investigate such a network. The AIVD has its own, demarcated task. The criminal investigation (and prosecution) of criminal offences is the task of the Public Prosecution Service and the Police Force.

Because the police, Public Prosecution Service, and AIVD each investigate criminal networks in their own context, the central government has a more complete overview of the ways in which the Netherlands can become more resilient to criminal undermining.

The AIVD investigation is a concrete contribution to the prevention of violence against ministers, public prosecutors, judges, journalists, and other professionals described as 'representatives of the democratic legal order'. As well as to the prevention of other threats to the national security. The AIVD also informs the government about these threats and about shortcomings in policy and legislation which may be remedied.

1.4

- > In 2024 the AIVD averted several right-wing terrorist threats.
- > Extreme (online) violence came to play an even bigger role within right-wing terrorist groups.
- > The AIVD also cooperated with its partners on ways to prevent radicalisation, in particular amongst minors.

Right-wing terrorism

In part due to the AIVD's investigation, in 2024 the police arrested several young men who are suspected of inciting others (particularly online) to hatred, discrimination, or (right-wing) terrorist violence. One of them might have wanted to carry out acts of violence himself and had made preparations for this.

One of the characteristics of the current right-wing terrorist movement is that for the greater part its supporters are young, with a considerable number of them even being minors. In many cases, they do not have a stable home environment or social safety net. Many of them also have psychological issues.

Timely contact with (health care) professionals and proper counselling can sometimes prevent them from becoming more hardened in their ideology. That is why in 2024 the AIVD and its partners cooperated on various ways to counter right-wing terrorism. In order to do this the service spoke with the (local) government bodies and organisations in the criminal justice and health care systems about what they can do to help counter radicalisation at an early stage and call to account persons who are exhibiting concerning behaviour, but are not so radicalised that police action is required. This is comparable to the conversations the AIVD has about young jihadists (more on this on page 10).

The measures are a response to years of deadly right-wing terrorist violence in Slovakia, Germany and the US

In 2024 this approach meant the AIVD also sent an official report to a mayor in order to enable them to take action (outside of criminal law). The AIVD also sent several official reports to the Public Prosecution Service regarding minors who were active in online right-wing terrorist channels.

The past year European governments too worked on developing new instruments to counter the threat of right-wing terrorism. In January, the Netherlands placed *The Base* organisation on the National Terrorism Sanction List.

The Base is a right-wing terrorist organisation which recruits members in the US and Europe and propagates the accelerationist ideology: the idea that terrorist attacks are necessary to provoke a race war. In summer the EU moreover placed *The Base* on the European list of terrorist organisations. It is the first right-wing terrorist organisation on the list. As a consequence, it is

now prohibited to provide financial support to the organisation. The group's European funds were also frozen. The measures are a response to years of deadly right-wing terrorist violence in Slovakia, Germany and the US. Over the past years several possible threats in the Netherlands were removed by police action and disruptions by the AIVD. Since 2021 the AIVD has assessed that that it is conceivable that right-wing terrorist attacks may be carried out in the Netherlands, especially by radicalised lone actors.

It is a movement of lone individuals who derive their ideologies from hatred of others and admiration of mass shooters

The same was true for 2024. Although its threat level remained the same, the movement remained changeable in other aspects. In its Annual Report of 2023 the AIVD already warned that a fascination with violence was starting to play a greater role within the right-wing terrorist movement in the Netherlands. Ideology sometimes took a back seat.

This trend continued in 2024. In addition to organisations with a more well-defined ideology such as *The Base*, there are now online channels which mainly seem to revolve around sharing and watching sinister content: photos and videos of (school) shootings, torture of humans and animals, decapitations (including by ISIS), war footage (from Ukraine), and sexual (child) abuse. Such content can cause young people to become numb and alienated from everyday life, and may lower the threshold for them to use violence themselves. Especially because in other online channels, carrying out attacks is encouraged or even facilitated and directed.

The right-wing terrorist movement has a number of characteristic features which makes it so challenging for society: it is a movement of difficult to assess lone individuals who derive their self-compiled ideologies from online right-wing extremist ideas, hatred of other population groups, and sometimes admiration of occult movements or mass shooters. Radicalisation and incitement happens online and often out of view, in fragmented channels which can also be deleted again after a short time. After these channels are deleted, key figures can disappear (back) into anonymity.

> For more information, go to: aivd.nl/terrorisme

1.5

- > In the past year right-wing extremist groups worked on achieving broader public acceptance of extremist ideas.
- > Through cunning social media campaigns they attempted to normalise the Umvolkung conspiracy theory.

Right-wing extremism

In the past year the right-wing extremist movement in the Netherlands has attempted to normalise extremist ideas. Various extremist groups are trying to reach a point in the immigration debate where the Umvolkung conspiracy theory is no longer considered to be a radical idea.

Right-wing extremist groups view immigration as an intentional demographic attack on the native populations of European countries – in particular when these immigrants are Muslims. They link this to the Umvolkung conspiracy theory: the idea that the elite (other right-wing extremist groups speak of a Jewish elite) is pulling the strings within the government and purposefully tries to weaken the native populations (sometimes: ‘the white race’) in order to control them. This elite is allegedly assisted by ‘left-wing’ politicians, media outlets, the judiciary, and scientists.

Several right-wing extremist groups spread such ideas. In particular in professionally filmed and edited videos aimed at young people. They publish these videos on large, online platforms and attempt to attract as many viewers as possible. For example by approaching influencers outside of their own circle in the hopes that they share these videos either on purpose or because they are ignorant as to their meaning.

Normalising anti-democratic right-wing extremist ideas can lead to hatred of minorities and intolerance of anyone who is viewed as the enemy

Right-wing extremist groups in Europe also have good mutual contacts which they use to repost and spread each other’s videos in order to reach a bigger audience. When the same message comes from various countries, it could strengthen the message for the viewers. Popular right-wing extremist accounts in Europe reach tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands viewers. Right-wing extremist groups also focus on strengthening and growing their movement. In order to do that, more and more often these groups cooperate with each other – also internationally. In the past, they often viewed each other as competitors.

One way to meet each other and attract new members is through the active clubs: (small) groups in which young people, mostly men, get together to train in martial arts and other forms of personal resilience. There are currently no indications that they are training with the purpose of attacking others. But they do want to prepare for what they see as an unavoidable race war.

A poll showed that one in six Dutch citizens believes that ‘the political elite is attempting to replace the original population’

Normalising antidemocratic right-wing extremist ideology can lead to hatred of minorities and intolerance of anyone who is viewed as the enemy. This includes feminists, the LGBTQI+ movement, and ‘the left’.

The propagation of the Umvolking conspiracy theory may also threaten support for democratic institutions if they are viewed as executors of the ‘Umvolking’. A 2024 poll by *Kieskompas* showed that about one in six Dutch citizens now believes that ‘part of the political elite is deliberately trying to replace the original Dutch population with non-Western immigrants’.

> For more information, go to: aivd.nl/extremisme

1.6

- > **Anarchist and Marxist-Leninist groups were involved in many pro-Palestinian protests.**
- > **In general the AIVD did not see a larger willingness for violence amongst the left-wing extremist movement. However, some actions became more vehement.**

Left-wing extremism

In 2024 the war in Gaza was one of the most important topics for the left-wing extremist movement in the Netherlands. Anarchist, Marxist-Leninist, and other groups were often involved in (the organisation of) pro-Palestinian protests. Via online platforms they called upon their followers to join them.

Several left-wing extremist groups are expressly pro-Palestine. Some groups link this to an anti-imperialist agenda, in which Israel and the United States are by definition seen as malicious actors.

The occupation devolved into large-scale destructions and violence against police officers

The fact that known extremists are involved in protests is not uncommon in the left-wing activist scene and does not necessarily mean that the nature of the actions has changed. The pro-Palestinian actions of 2024 largely fit this view. Most of them were activist in nature, without violence, and some with disruptions of the public order.

Known extremists did appear to play a role in the fact that the occupation of the University of Amsterdam in May got out of hand. Anger amongst the present (international) students against the university board was turned against the police by the known extremists. The occupation devolved into large-scale destructions and violence against police officers. The last fact is not only a (serious) offence, but also affects the foundations of the democratic legal order.

Dutch-Jewish citizens felt less safe and were restricted in their freedom of movement and expression

In this and other university protests, strong statements were made which not only criticised the actions of the State of Israel, but also called into question Israel's right to exist. At times the use of violence by Hamas was downplayed. This cannot be attributed so much to the known left-wing extremists who were present, but to the various groups which attended the demonstrations. Because of this Jewish Dutch citizens, students, and teachers felt less safe and they were sometimes restricted in their freedom of movement and expression. The same is true for the broader Jewish community in the Netherlands.

> For more information,
go to: aivd.nl/extremisme

The AIVD did not see a large willingness for violence amongst the left-wing extremist movement as a whole. However, some actions (regarding various topics) did become more vehement and there were cases of destruction, intimidation, and doxing – sharing someone’s personal data as a means of intimidation. The majority of the left-wing activist scene in the Netherlands continues to express itself in an activist manner, with sometimes small-scale, sometimes very visible actions surrounding climate, refugees, the housing crisis, and right-wing extremism. In 2024 in response to the war in Gaza there also appeared to be more attention for antimilitarism.

In general, the goal or consequence of these actions was not the undermining of the democratic legal order. So long as this remains the case, it is not within the AIVD’s remit to investigate such actions.

2. International threats





On 12 May 2024 the largest shopping centre in Poland burned down. Over 1.400 stalls and shops were destroyed. Poland believes Russian intelligence services to be involved. The sabotage action fits within a series of arson attacks in Europe. Photo: Redux Pictures

THEME STORY

- > **Russia's relationship with Western countries has continued to harden over the past year.**
- > **The Russian regime is most likely involved in a series of conspicuous sabotage operations in European countries intended to sow fear, erode unity, and undermine support to Ukraine.**
- > **The Kremlin considers Russia to be in an existential conflict with the West. A conflict which the country is battling out with grey zone tactics such as attacks and (cyber)espionage.**

A more aggressive Russia tested the West's resolve

In 2024 the Kremlin and its connected networks and organisations took on a more aggressive, brazen, and provocative attitude towards European countries. They carried out acts of espionage, organised covert disinformation campaigns in order to influence the public debate, and carried out cyberattacks.

Most notable in 2024 was a series of sometimes violent sabotage operations which Western governments attributed to Russia. In 2024 the governments of Czechia, Lithuania, and Latvia attributed a number of arson attacks to Russia. Finland is investigating the involvement of a ship linked to Russia in 'serious sabotage' of power and fibre optic cables. Poland arrested eighteen people for planning and committing arson at several locations, including one of the largest shopping complexes in Warsaw. The British authorities also arrested several people for planning and carrying out arson attacks against companies which play a role in the West's support to Ukraine. It is suspected that this was done for Russia's benefit. German authorities suspect Russia of setting fire to a steel factory, destroying telecommunications cables in the Baltic Sea, planning the assassination of the director of a German weapons factory, and planting an incendiary device on a cargo plane at the Leipzig airport.

Russia tried to sow fear and discord, undermine support to Ukraine, and wanted to test where the West draws its red lines

The sabotage actions were often aimed at organisations that are involved in the war in Ukraine. The targets were expressly military or logistical. There were no such incidents in the Netherlands, but the AIVD and MIVD did identify cyberoperations and preparatory actions which could have led to sabotage. And the Netherlands was and is a possible target country for Russia. For one because in 2024 the Netherlands provided a considerable amount of support to Ukraine, and also because the Netherlands is a transport and information hub in Europe. (More on this in chapter 'Espionage and state-sponsored interference in the Netherlands' on page 29.)



Photo above (AFP):
In December 2024 the Finnish coastguard kept watch on Russian-linked oil tanker Eagle S, which Finland suspects of involvement in serious sabotage of power and fibre optics cables.

The actions against European countries were carried out by Russian intelligence and security services, as well as by a range of Russian or pro-Russian organisations, networks, and individuals in Russia and the West, including criminals. They sometimes received directions from the intelligence services and sometimes independently offered to take action, which could be lucrative for them. This led to an opaque and unpredictable cooperation.

Russia used the sabotage actions to delay Western (weapons) shipments to Ukraine, sow fear and discord, and undermine support to Ukraine, and also wanted to test where the West draws its red lines regarding Russian aggression in Western territories. It seems as though the regime tried to discover patterns in the responses of Western countries. This could help Russia build a strategy to disrupt support to Ukraine as much as possible, without provoking a full-scale military response.

Although the sabotage operations were connected to the war in Ukraine, they showed that in 2024 the Russian regime saw this war as part of a broader conflict with the West. According to Moscow, Russia's very existence is at stake. The end of the war against Ukraine would likely not mean the end of Russia's hostile attitude towards the West.

In spite of considerable loss of personnel and materiel, 2024 saw Russia fully devoted to the war against Ukraine. The economy increasingly started to exhibit the elements of a war economy. Weapons were supplied via Iran and Belarus. And North Korea supplied both weapons and soldiers. Furthermore the Kremlin was able to circumvent Western sanctions using companies in China and several other countries. Support amongst the population was considerable and Putin's war propaganda was embraced.

Moscow says it is defending Russian civilisation against the aggressive West which wants to destabilise Russia

The Russian regime presents Russia - both domestically and internationally – as a unique civilisation with its own norms and values which poses an alternative to the US-dominated Western world order. Moscow says it has to defend Russian civilisation against the aggressive West which wants to destabilise Russia and see it suffer defeat. And there can only be one victor. This is why the conflict is considered all-encompassing and existential.

There is likely another, more prosaic reason, which is that the regime wants to remain in power. As yet they are succeeding. Putin's regime is stable, though this is increasingly enforced through repression.

2.1

- > **China targeted European governments with its espionage activities in 2024.**
- > **The Russian regime considered the Netherlands to be a target country because of its support to Ukraine.**
- > **The AIVD concluded its investigation into a specific case of espionage in which the Moroccan intelligence service was involved.**
- > **The AIVD and the NCTV published an analysis on the interference of other countries in migrant communities in the Netherlands.**

Espionage and state-sponsored interference in the Netherlands

In 2024 the AIVD investigated espionage carried out by (order of) various foreign intelligence services. China's espionage activities were focussed not only on economic targets, but also on the governments of various European countries, including the Netherlands.

A striking number of European countries exposed Chinese (political) espionage or influencing in 2024. Several persons in Germany, the United Kingdom, and Poland were arrested on suspicion of this. Belgium too publicly accused China of political espionage. As yet the Netherlands has mostly had to deal with digital espionage by China, aimed at technological companies. This happens at a large scale. China's regime does not just use extensive espionage programmes for this.

On the basis of Chinese legislation, any Chinese institution and any citizen is obligated to cooperate with the Chinese regime, even abroad. As such, it is not always clear which organisation or government body is behind certain (espionage) activities. Theme story 'Pursuit of dominance determined China's actions in 2024' on page 31 goes in more detail on this.

In 2024 the AIVD also investigated (possible) activities of Russian intelligence and security services GRU, SVR, and FSB aimed at the Netherlands and its (NATO) allies. Russia too tries to covertly obtain technology and technological knowledge in the Netherlands.

The knowledge and expertise present at Dutch high-tech and knowledge-intensive companies is highly regarded and sought after internationally. The Netherlands is furthermore a target for the Russian regime because of its support to Ukraine, the international institutions (which sometimes also look into Russia) located here, and its status as a hub of transport and information routes. Theme story 'A more aggressive Russia tested the West's resolve' on page 26 goes into further detail on the threat posed by the Russian regime in 2024.

In 2024 the AIVD concluded its investigation into a specific case of espionage in which the Moroccan intelligence service was involved. In 2023 the AIVD discovered that intelligence officers of that service were in frequent contact with a Dutch-Moroccan employee of the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV). Because of his work, he had access to classified documents. He is suspected of taking these documents home. That is why he was arrested in October 2023 following an official report by the AIVD.

He is charged with leaking state secrets, either by his own design or by order of a foreign entity. The court is yet to give a decision in this case.

State-sponsored interference

Intelligence services of other countries are also active in the Netherlands to monitor (former) citizens or their descendants. They sometimes (still) view them as their subjects. This threatens the freedoms of those (former) migrants as well as the national security of the Netherlands.

In order to give more insight into this problem and help policy makers in their approach, the AIVD and the NCTV released their publication 'Crossing borders: State-sponsored interference in diaspora communities in the Netherlands'.

The analysis details why foreign authorities and intelligence services target diaspora communities. They attempt to silence (political) opponents, convince or force persons with a migration background to spy for them, or use communities to influence public opinion and politics in the Netherlands. It can also be a revenue model: sometimes they attempt to convince communities to send (more) money to their country of origin or make investments there.

He is charged with leaking state secrets, either by his own design or by order of a foreign entity

Monitoring and intimidating migrants or their (grand)children in the Netherlands is often done on the initiative of intelligence services of the country in question. Sometimes they use criminals, nationalist groups, or hacker collectives. For the intelligence services this has the advantage of allowing them to deny their involvement.

Countries can go very far in exerting pressure. Various countries are guilty of intimidation and using violence. In the past Iran and Pakistan were even involved in kidnapping and (attempted) murder in the Netherlands. These cases are described in previous AIVD Annual Reports.

Such undesirable interference can have considerable impact on (large) migrant communities in the Netherlands, such as the Turkish and Moroccan communities. It is difficult to get the full picture, however, as many victims are afraid to come forward. The AIVD estimates that the cumulative impact is considerable.

> For more information, go to: aivd.nl/spionage

THEME STORY

- > **China is both the biggest threat to the economic and knowledge security of the Netherlands and a formidable trade partner.**
- > **In 2024 the Chinese regime took tougher action against Taiwan, assisted in keeping the war against Ukraine going, and illegally attempted to influence political decisions in Western countries.**
- > **This fits China's ambition of changing and eventually dominating the world order.**
- > **Because China if necessary can utilise any Chinese institution or citizen, the challenge for Dutch governments and companies keeps growing.**

Pursuit of dominance determined China's actions in 2024

On 1 October 2024 the People's Republic of China turned seventy five. In these seventy five years the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) turned China from a poor country into the second-largest economy of the world.

Its current leader Xi Jinping wants to achieve that in 2049 – the centennial of the People's Republic – China's economy is as independent as possible, and that instead other countries are economically dependent on China. The regime also wants to make its own anti-Western and antidemocratic ideas commonplace in the world. China strives to change and eventually dominate the world order.

China strives to change and eventually dominate the world order

In 2024 the regime also took tougher action against Taiwan. China carried out extensive military exercises around the island in response to statements made by Taiwan's newly elected president. This is part of China's strategy to eventually bring the island under its authority.

Elsewhere in the South and East China Seas too China exhibited more aggressive behaviour in territories claimed by other countries. A crisis in the region could have considerable consequences for Dutch economic and security interests. Because for a trading country such as the Netherlands, the maritime routes through the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait are very important. Taiwanese companies are essential for the production of semiconductors.

China moreover joined forces with Russia to bring about a decrease in the West's influence in the world. The countries were already cooperating at political, economic, and military levels, although they sometimes had other interests. Although China does not supply weapons and ammunition to Russia, Chinese companies did supply dual-use goods for the Russian war complex, including attack drones. This made China a direct player where it concerns Europe's security and a threat against the Netherlands and its allies.



Photo above (EPA): President Xi of China and President Putin of Russia speak (via an interpreter) during the BRICS meeting in Russia in October. China and Russia use such cooperations to decrease the West's influence in the world

China and Russia are moreover important partners within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and within BRICS: international trade cooperations which China and Russia use to decrease West's influence in the world.

China is in considerable need of advanced technological knowledge, because the country wants to take on a leading role in the field of artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, quantum, agricultural engineering, and drug development. Advanced knowledge is also required for modernising and expanding its armed forces – something it continued to do in 2024 at a rapid pace. In 2024 China used extensive espionage programmes in its attempts to obtain advanced technology and knowledge from Western countries. In order to do that the regime recruited Western scientist and employees of high-tech companies. China also carried out advanced cyberattacks on such companies. The Netherlands had to contend with many of these. As such China poses the greatest threat to the economic and knowledge security of the Netherlands. Economic espionage affects the revenue model of Dutch companies. The protection of knowledge and technology is therefore of great importance for the Netherlands and Europe.

2024 was the first time the AIVD and MIVD directly and publicly attributed a cyberattack on a Dutch defence network to the Chinese state

2024 was the first time the AIVD and MIVD directly and publicly attributed a cyberattack on a Dutch defence network to the Chinese state. The attack shows China's intention of carrying out espionage against the Dutch government and political targets. Other European countries also attributed espionage (attempts) to

China in 2024. In Germany, the United States, and Poland a number of persons were arrested on suspicion of spying for China. Through these activities the regime wants to influence the political decisions of other countries so that these are more opportune for China. The regime also uses Chinese emigrants for this.

On the basis of Chinese legislation and whole-of-society approach any citizen, also those abroad, can be forced into cooperating with the Chinese government. Many Chinese actors may be involved in such covert influencing. As such, it is not always clear which organisation is behind certain activities.

China did not just use espionage to try and obtain advanced knowledge, but also used several other legal, though undesirable, methods. For example buying high-tech companies or funding students and academics who can obtain sensitive information at Western knowledge institutions. If China obtains highly technological knowledge in such a way, it could undermine the strategic knowledge positions of Dutch knowledge institutions. It also harms the Netherlands' security interests, revenue model, and even norms and values.

China's whole-of-society approach means that all sorts of companies and organisations can pose a threat to the Netherlands. In particular where cyber is concerned, the playing field keeps expanding (more on this in chapter Cyberthreats on page 34). This presents the Dutch government and Dutch companies with the challenge of finding joint ways to offer resistance.

How the AIVD takes action against economic espionage by China

The AIVD investigates the scope and nature of undesirable knowledge and technology transfer to China. Following from this investigation the service assists companies and knowledge institutions which have strategically important knowledge and technology in becoming more resilient.

Export restrictions and screenings (such as investment tests) can stop certain forms of undesirable technology transfer. This is why the AIVD provides advice to the relevant ministries regarding these developments. Nevertheless state actors such as China continue to find ways to abuse the open nature of our scientific community and economy.

The AIVD also investigates Chinese investments in the Netherlands and cooperations with organisations working on the vital infrastructure of the Netherlands. This helps safeguard the Netherlands's strategic independence.

2.2

- > **In 2024 more countries developed the capabilities to carry out cyberattacks.**
- > **this is because it is relatively easy to set up an offensive cyberprogramme and also because of the increase in international conflicts.**
- > **Dutch companies and government bodies were attacked by several parties, including from China, Russia, and North Korea.**

Cyberthreats

In 2024 the AIVD saw a further rise in the number of countries developing offensive cyberprogrammes. Over the past three years, there has been a sharp increase.

It is relatively easy for countries to set up a (new) digital attack programme. Advanced spyware is available for commercial purchase and countries can already use these means to get into and monitor many devices and networks.

In particular if they focus on the weak spots: when it comes to mobile devices (phones, tablets, laptops), access points to networks (such as routers), and online storage (the cloud) monitoring is generally limited, which means the chances of a hacker being discovered are smaller. Such weak spots are increasingly the target of attack.

Additionally, many weaknesses in software are publicly known, but some organisations do little to nothing to fix them. This makes it fairly easy for new cyberactors to use such vulnerabilities to gain access to them.

Of the fifteen most exploited vulnerabilities in popular software by hackers in 2023, two had already been identified for at least two years. This was the conclusion of the American Cyber Defense Agency in 2024 based on the data of cybersecurity agencies of five Western countries.

The new offensive cyberprogrammes are not as advanced as those of Iran or North Korea, let alone those of Russia and China. However, the fact that more and more countries are taking offensive steps in cyber poses an increasing challenge for those parties who have to defend themselves against cyberattacks. This includes the Netherlands.

And although the attacks of new cyberactors did not, or only rarely, target the Netherlands, they do threaten the digital security of allies and alliances such as EU and NATO. Moreover, it is detrimental to the Netherlands if the cyberspace becomes more opaque and dangerous with more attacks and perpetrators.

Also in other ways the proliferation of cyber continued in 2024. China, Russia, Iran and North Korea increased their already significant capabilities for carrying out cyberattacks.

China made increased use of a large number of commercial IT companies which deal with equipment, technical assistance programmes, and anonymisation of data traffic, as well as personal data brokers, e.g. to gain insight into what people share on online platforms.

In this way the Chinese services and hacker collectives which carry out cyberattacks outsource part of their work. This allows them to carry out even more cyberattacks and work more sophisticatedly. In doing so China is contributing to a substantial increase in the global cyberthreat.

The number of hacker collectives that can be linked to the Russian regime has also increased in the past two years. The groups are furthermore becoming more diverse. Some do act in the interests of the Russian regime, but seemingly at their own initiative. This makes the threat more unpredictable and also makes it harder to identify perpetrators.

The reason countries with offensive cyberprogrammes are expanding their capabilities is largely to do with their political plans. Russian cyberactors increasingly shifted their focus to military and logistical targets in Europe as well as to organisations that are involved in the war in Ukraine. In its aim for market leadership in various technologies, China carried out highly advanced cyberattacks on high-tech companies, including in the Netherlands. In 2024 the MIVD and AIVD moreover announced that they had discovered Chinese malware on a Dutch defence network. Theme stories 'A more aggressive Russia tested the West's resolve' on page 26 and 'Pursuit of dominance determined China's actions in 2024' on page 31 go into further detail on these topics.

Hackers who can be linked to Iran do this through means such as hack and leak operations: stealing sensitive information and publicly releasing this information in order to cause someone harm

In 2024 North Korea used its offensive cyberprogramme e.g. to obtain scientific research and steal intellectual property. North Korean cyberactors also steal cryptocurrency in order to finance the regime. Iran used its cyberprogramme e.g. to influence the image of the war in Gaza and present the regime in a positive way.

Hackers who can be linked to Iran do this through means such as hack and leak operations: stealing sensitive information and publicly releasing this information in order to cause someone harm. The regime also monitors experts who are preoccupied with the conflict in the Middle East. What makes the proliferation of cyberprogrammes more concerning is the fact that offensive capabilities are growing more quickly than the defensive ones.

> For more information, go to: aivd.nl/cyberdreiging

A protest in Iran after a commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps died in an Israeli air strike. In 2024 there were direct attacks between Iran and Israel, and Israel and Hezbollah. Photo: Shutterstock



THEME STORY

- > The war between Hamas and Israel further escalated in 2024. This also heightened social tensions in the Netherlands.
- > Following the football match Ajax against Maccabi Tel Aviv in Amsterdam extremist violence was used against Israeli citizens. This had a considerable impact on the sense of security experienced by Dutch-Jewish citizens and Israeli citizens in the Netherlands.
- > The AIVD investigated the stability in the Middle East as well as the impact of the war in Gaza on extremism in the Netherlands.

Escalation in the Middle East also put pressure on the national security of the Netherlands

In 2024 the war between Hamas and Israel escalated into a broader military conflict in the Middle East, with Israel on one side and Iran on the other. Iran and Israel carried out direct attacks on each other. As did Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen – both militias with ties to Iran. This had large consequences for the stability of Lebanon and for Syria, which also saw the fall of Assad’s regime in 2024.

The AIVD investigated what these events (could) mean for the stability of the Middle East and the national security of the Netherlands. Few of the rulers in the Middle East stand to benefit from a broader military conflict. Before Hamas’s attack on 7 October 2023 several neighbouring countries were making efforts to restore the quiet and to possibly cooperate with Israel. This would increase economic opportunities for those countries.

Governments in the region are ambivalent about Hamas and Hezbollah. Hezbollah is seen as an extension of Iran. Hamas is mostly seen as part of the Muslim Brotherhood, which they combat. In many Arab government

circles Israel's military action against these groups will be privately welcomed. At the same time, their populations show a lot of sympathy and support for Palestinians. The regimes have to balance between these two sides and for now will not strengthen their diplomatic ties with Israel.

In the attacks, bombings, and fights Dutch citizens and Dutch objects in the Middle East were also in danger. More instability in the Middle East will also have more consequences for the Netherlands. Unsafe shipping routes and higher oil and gas prices have a negative impact on the Dutch economy. The various conflicts could bring more refugees to Europe should the local citizens flee the area.

Polarisation and extremist violence in the Netherlands

In 2024 the war in Gaza moreover put a lot of pressure on social stability in the Netherlands. For dozens of years the public debate in the Netherlands regarding Israel and the Palestinian Territories has been charged and emotional.

The debate has become strongly polarised since 7 October 2023 and in particular since 2024. The danger of this polarisation became evident in the night of 7 to 8 November after the football match Ajax against Maccabi Tel Aviv. In a period of about 90 minutes groups of rioters carried out violent hit-and-run actions on Israeli supporters in the city centre of Amsterdam. The footage was spread around the world.

The perpetrators referred to the war in Gaza and used anti-Israel, anti-Zionist, and antisemitic terms in their communication. Their actions had a considerable impact on the sense of security experienced by Dutch-Jewish citizens and Israeli citizens in the Netherlands.

The AIVD considers the violence used that night to be extremist and subversive to the democratic legal order of the Netherlands. The violence was not perpetrated by known extremists, but rather by individuals who took matters into their own hands and who were motivated by an extremist ideological framework.

For some known extremist movements, the war in Gaza is a potential catalyst. However, as yet anger regarding the war has not led to (more) extremist activities. The war in Gaza is currently one of the most important topics for the left-wing extremist movement. But the pro-Palestinian protests in which they were involved remained predominantly activist (more on this on page 22).

For jihadists and other radical Muslims (pages 10 and 12) the topic could cause further radicalisation, in particular amongst lone individuals. At the same time ISIS, one of the most significant jihadist movements, has little regard for Hamas.

Known right-wing extremist groups are both antisemitic and hostile towards Muslims and mainly use the riots to further normalise this hostility. The same is true for right-wing terrorists, who see it as positive that Jews are being attacked and that they see more unrest, polarisation, and violence in society. Anti-institutional extremist groups mostly see these events as a confirmation of their world view. They suspect the Dutch or Israeli government of orchestrating the violence following the Ajax - Maccabi Tel Aviv match.

The violence in Amsterdam shows the danger of deeply polarised discussions

The fact that the violence in Amsterdam was not perpetrated by an existing movement, shows the danger of deeply polarised discussions. The stronger the polarisation, the more people in the radical extremes of the debate may look for the solution in autonomous action. And the more people are seen solely as part of a group, the faster intimidation or violence against individuals can threaten the entire group. This too undermines the democratic legal order.

So long as the polarisation regarding the war in Gaza remains this strong, the possibility of extremist actions occurring remains high. Not just the course of the war plays an important role, but also the ability of Dutch society and politicians to ensure the debate on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory does not become one of radical extremes.

Photo right (ANP): The riot police in the city centre of Amsterdam, where in the night of 7 to 8 November Israeli supporters of football club Maccabi Tel Aviv were attacked in violent hit-and-run actions. The AIVD considers the violence that was used against them to be extremist.



2.3

- > The AIVD investigates events abroad which may have an impact on our national security.
- > In 2024 the AIVD investigated for example the stability in the Middle East and the security of the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Political intelligence

The security of the Netherlands is strongly dependent on the security of the world. As such it is the AIVD's legal task, at the request of the government, to investigate events abroad which may threaten our own national security. In 2024 many AIVD investigations were related to the changing balance of power in the world and to international conflicts. The AIVD investigated the stability in the Middle East, where the war between Hamas and Israel escalated to a broader regional conflict with Israel on one side and Iran on the other. This had consequences for other countries too, such as Lebanon and Yemen. And in Syria Assad's regime was dismantled by armed forces. Theme story 'Escalation in the Middle East also put pressure on the national security of the Netherlands' on page 36 goes into further detail on this. Together with the MIVD the AIVD also investigated possible threats against the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Venezuela is the biggest neighbour of Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire. For years, the country has been dealing with political, economic, and humanitarian crises. The living conditions are very poor and many people have fled the country.

In 2024 there were presidential elections in Venezuela. The incumbent regime claimed the victory without showing any evidence for their win. Afterwards, protests were harshly suppressed. The government of Venezuela continues to build up its armed forces through support from Russia, Iran, and China. The instability in Venezuela could potentially have considerable consequences for the economy, politics, and security of Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire. The 'investigations concerning other countries' the AIVD carries out is one of the AIVD's six legal duties. The AIVD's intelligence can be of assistance to the government in negotiations and in drafting policy that makes the Netherlands a safer place. It is important that the Netherlands can do this on its own, on the basis of independently obtained intelligence.

The Integrated Order

The countries and topics the AIVD and MIVD investigate are determined by the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Minister of Defence, and the Prime Minister as the Minister of General Affairs. This is done with the involvement of other ministries. The decision regarding the countries and themes is recorded in the so-called Integrated Order Intelligence and Security (*Geïntegreerde Aanwijzing Inlichtingen en Veiligheid, GA I&V*). The current GA I&V applies until 2026 and was established in close cooperation with the MIVD and various ministries. The GA I&V is evaluated every year and adjusted on the basis of the current threats where necessary. The exact contents of the Integrated Order are secret.

3. Helping to prevent or eliminate threats





The port of Rotterdam. The maritime sector is one of the vital sectors which received more (cyber)advice from the AIVD in the past year. Photo: ANP

THEME STORY

- > More than in any previous year the central government, vital sectors, and Dutch high-tech companies appeared to come to the realisation that they were the target of state-sponsored actors.
- > Because of this, the AIVD received more requests for advice on becoming more resilient, carrying out checks, or screening locations.
- > Organisations still did not always take concrete measures to protect themselves against espionage, theft of secrets, or sabotage.
- > The AIVD cooperated with private parties more often in order to keep Dutch companies safe.

More than ever companies and governments realised that the world has become more dangerous for them

Vital sectors

In comparison to previous years, the AIVD provided more (cyber)advice to vital sectors, in particular in the energy, telecommunications, and maritime sector as well as civil aviation. If such vital sectors are shut down (through sabotage, for example) this could cause serious disruption to society. The AIVD, NCTV, and the National Cyber Security Centre therefore provide advice on how to be (digitally) resilient. The advice issued in 2024 concerned the importance of working with safe suppliers, because hackers or spies regularly try to gain access to their targets through such companies. Following this, companies in vital sectors more often made requests with the AIVD for checks on suppliers. As a result some risks could be identified at an early stage.

Threat advice and assessments

The AIVD provides companies in vital sectors with advice on and assessments of threats. This could concern concrete situations, such as a digital attack by hackers working for a foreign government. The AIVD will then inform the affected organisation and give advice on mitigating the damage and security measures in order to minimise the chances of a future attack.

Advice on threats can also regard broader trends. In 2024, for example, on the risks of close access operations, in which a hacker attempts to gain access to an IT system by bringing equipment into its physical vicinity.

The Dutch high-tech sector

The Dutch high-tech sector is of a very high quality. This makes it an attractive espionage target for foreign regimes which want to use the knowledge and technology developed there for their own purposes. The AIVD tries to make the sector more aware of these dangers and advises high-tech companies on adequate security measures.

All knowledge-intensive small and medium-sized businesses in the Netherlands can direct their questions on economic security to the Office of Economic Security (*Ondernemersloket Economische Veiligheid*, OLEV) an initiative of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The AIVD is one of the founders of this office and also provided support in 2024. The MIVD and various ministries also contribute to the office.

Modern technologies

The AIVD is always looking ahead to new technologies which could impact the national security. Because they can increase threats, or because they can help protect the Netherlands. In 2024 the AIVD published several public analyses on artificial intelligence (AI) and quantum. Such publicly accessible and independent knowledge can contribute to a resilient society.

The central government

The past year AIVD carried out more electronic security sweeps for other parts of the government. In these sweeps the AIVD establishes whether there are hidden cameras or microphones in a space. The fact that the request for these sweeps has increased fits the growing security awareness within the government. The central government is an important espionage target for other countries. Knowledge of policy standpoints, processes, and internal affairs can help them determine how to influence the Netherlands or its allies. To counter this, in 2024 the AIVD issued security advice several times.

The AIVD carried out more electronic security sweeps for the central government. In these sweeps the AIVD establishes whether there are hidden cameras or microphones in a space

It remains a point of attention that government organisations have to take concrete measures themselves, for example where it concerns ICT security. In order to further contribute to the security of the central government, in 2024 the AIVD and MIVD established the National Bureau of Industry Security (*Nationaal Bureau Industrieveiligheid*, NBIV). The NBIV sees to the security requirements companies have to meet if they carry out tasks for the central government which may impact the national security.

Protection of state secrets

To ensure that Dutch state secrets remain a secret, the government has to use security products of the highest level. Such products are made by specialist companies. The AIVD plays an important role in helping to develop and evaluate these products.

The National Crypto Strategy (NCS) details how the government can ensure that such information security products remain available in the future. In 2024 various information security products which were developed according to this strategy became available to the central government.

The AIVD moreover directed more attention to the importance of a continued existence of a strong and autonomous crypto industry in the Netherlands, so that the country does not become dependent on products developed abroad.

In its role as National Security Authority the AIVD moreover carried out inspections at different parts of the government and companies that are allowed to work with the classified information of the EU, NATO, and the European Space Agency (ESA).

Public-private cooperation

In 2024 the AIVD further invested in Cyclotron, the cooperation in which public and private parties can quickly exchange information on (imminent) cyberincidents. In 2023 the AIVD started to share threat information with this platform. This marked the first time the service shared such information with private parties. Public-private cooperation is important because more and more parts of society can be or are affected by espionage and cyberactivities from other countries. Cooperation can help counter the threat.

The importance of telemetry

In all sectors the AIVD provided with security advice on cyberattacks in the past year, the service emphasised the importance of telemetry. This refers to the gathering, storing, and analysing of data. This is important for all kinds of company processes, but in particular in the case of cyberattacks. Using such data can help the AIVD, cybersecurity companies, or a company's own IT departments in ascertaining how a cyberattack was carried out and what the consequences were. This knowledge can also be used to better recognise and prevent attacks in the future and to increase the Netherlands' ability to withstand such attacks.

> For more information, go to:
aivd.nl/weerbaarheid

3.1

- > Dutch politicians and administrators again received many death threats. They also received many intimidating messages.
- > The AIVD made more threat assessments on persons who are under threat from foreign regimes.
- > An assassination attempt in Haarlem which Iran was likely responsible for illustrates the threats foreign regimes may pose.

The AIVD's role in the Dutch Protection and Security System

In 2024 Dutch politicians once more received many intimidating messages and death threats. The number of reported cases of serious threats and incitement against members of parliament and the government has been increasing for several years. The rise of anti-institutional extremism has played a role in this, as well as more hardened social debates. In 2024 these debates included topics such as asylum, migration, and the current cabinet.

The AIVD did not witness any serious physical incidents against national politicians in 2024 such as it did in 2023. Criminal networks also pose a threat to politicians, lawyers, public prosecutors, and journalists (more on this on page 15).

On the basis of intelligence it is likely that Iran is responsible for the assassination attempts

The AIVD is a partner in the Dutch protection and security system which works to prevent (terrorist) attacks on persons, objects, and services. Those who fall under the system include members of parliament and the government, those working in the legal system, journalists, diplomats, important (international) organisations, and national events (such as National Remembrance of the Dead). In part based on risk analyses, threat analyses, and threat assessments by the AIVD it is determined by the Public Prosecution Service, National Police, and the NCTV if persons, objects, and organisations require (additional) security.

In 2024 the AIVD drew up more threat assessments on persons and organisations which came under threat from state-sponsored actors – often foreign regimes or their intelligence services. By intimidating and threatening people in the Netherlands, they attempted to exert influence here.

In June 2024 an assassination attempt was carried out in Haarlem on an Iranian citizen living in the Netherlands. The police arrived at the scene quickly and arrested two suspects. One of them is also suspected of the failed assassination attempt on Spanish politician and Iran critic Alejo Vidal-Quadras.

> For more information, go to:
aivd.nl/bewakenenbeveiligen

Both assassination attempts fit the method of operation Iran has been applying for years: using criminal networks in Europe to silence perceived opponents of the regime. On the basis of intelligence it is likely that Iran is responsible for the two assassination attempts.

The AIVD also made more threat analyses on international and diplomatic institutions. The service also made a threat analysis for the NATO summit which will take place in 2025 in the Netherlands. The protection and security system is currently being changed into the 'security of persons' system because matters within the system have become more complex, sizeable, and serious over the past years. The authority is becoming more centralised under the NCTV. The AIVD is one of the parties which cooperates in this process of change. This work will continue in 2025.

THEME STORY

- > In 2024 the cabinet decided that the Netherlands should be better prepared for crisis and conflict.
- > At a time of escalating tensions the AIVD provides the government with independent intelligence on the security situation in the world.
- > The AIVD investigates foreign espionage, sabotage, and disinformation and in this way promotes the national security.

At a time of increased tensions the AIVD helped the Netherlands prepare for crisis and conflict

The tensions between the most powerful (groups of) countries in the world have increased so strongly over the past years that the cabinet wants to better prepare Dutch society for the serious social disruption which can stem from crisis and conflict.

The kind of disruption which could result from a defensive war against Russia, should NATO be attacked. Or the disruption which could be the result of successful cyberattacks or the sabotage of gas, water, communication, or power networks. Dutch citizens would have to make do without running water, electricity, or heat, possibly for a longer time.

Previous annual reports by the AIVD have detailed how the world has become less safe recently. Both because of military conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, which many countries could become involved in, and because of non-military conflicts in which (groups of) countries attempt to strengthen their own position at the expense of each other.

More and more countries are getting involved in a race for technological, weapons, and economic advancement which could determine the power balance in the world

More and more countries are getting involved in a race for knowledge, technology, weapons, mineral resources, and economic advancement which could determine the power balance in the world. Espionage, disinformation, and cyberoperations play a big role in this. The Netherlands and its allies are also targets in this.

This is why last year the Scientific Council for Government Policy came to the conclusion that the days in which the Netherlands did not have to worry about the resilience of society are over.



Photo above (ANP): Shops in the Rijnmond area closed in September following a large power failure. Roughly 50,000 houses and a number of chemical companies were hit by the outage. The Dutch government wants to make society more resilient against such failure, regardless of the cause.

That is why the government programme contains the resolution to quickly increase the resilience of Dutch society. As part of this, the government is surveying successful initiatives in other European countries.

The AIVD plays a unique role in strengthening the Netherlands' resilience. Only the AIVD and MIVD have the capacity and authority to identify and investigate the covert activities of other countries. As such the Dutch government can respond to threats based on independent intelligence.

The AIVD and MIVD drew up the threat assessment on which the government bases its plans

The past year the AIVD together with the MIVD drew up the threat assessment on which the government (partially) bases its plans to strengthen the resilience of the Netherlands. In this assessment it was considered that the Netherlands is a global digital hub and the logistical port to Europe, which is crucial to NATO.

Moreover, the situation provides additional gravity to the AIVD's core tasks. Especially when it regards non-military conflicts between states, the intelligence and security services help safeguard the national security of the Netherlands. With its strong access to intelligence the AIVD helps the government to understand the intentions and plans of other countries, even when these are covert (pages 26, 29, 31 and 34).

The AIVD helps identify and prevent espionage and other forms of foreign state-sponsored interference (page 29). And the service also has a special responsibility in making the government and vital infrastructure more resilient and in preventing investments and company takeovers which make the Netherlands more vulnerable (theme story 'More than ever companies and governments realised that the world has become more dangerous for them' on page 42 goes into further detail on this).

Especially when it regards non-military conflicts between states, the intelligence and security services help safeguard the national security of the Netherlands

In light of these government plans the AIVD will also reflect on its own working methods. Over the past years threats sometimes developed at such a rapid pace that the AIVD had to set up new investigations and shift its priorities in a short space of time. This is challenging, as good investigations require very specifically trained people, and it takes time to carefully establish access to intelligence. In crises the AIVD has to be able to rapidly change its priorities in such a way that it does as little damage to other ongoing investigations as possible.

If the security chain, society, businesses, and government are better prepared for crises and conflict, the Netherlands is less vulnerable and more resistant against threats. Being well-prepared can moreover deter (digital) attacks.

3.2

- > In 2024 it became clear that Russia does not shrink from using ballistic missiles against Ukraine.
- > Russia also used chemical weapons against Ukrainian soldiers more often than in previous years.
- > Iran attacked Israel with ballistic missiles.
- > there have been concerns concerning nuclear developments in Iran and North Korea.
- > The AIVD and MIVD prevented Russian and Iranian attempts to obtain materials and knowledge in the Netherlands that could be used in weapons programmes.

Counterproliferation

In the past year Russia again used chemical agents against Ukrainian soldiers. Shortly after the invasion in 2022 reports appeared concerning Russia's employment of tear gas on Ukrainian territory. Since then the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence has reported thousands of incidents in which the Russian army has allegedly employed chemical agents against Ukrainian soldiers. It particularly relates to tear gas grenades. Incidents with chloropicrin were also documented. Chloropicrin is a chemical compound the use of which has been explicitly prohibited in the Chemical Weapons Convention.

In 2024 the AIVD and MIVD prevented Russian and Iranian attempts to obtain technology or knowledge in the Netherlands that could benefit their weapons programmes. Investigation by the services showed that at times in 2024 Russia managed to bypass the Western export sanctions on dual-use goods. Dual-use goods are equipment, resources, software, and technology which can be used peacefully, for example in research, but also for military purposes – sometimes in the development of weapons of mass destruction. The export of these goods is therefore bound by regulations. Russia nevertheless managed to import such goods via third countries – including the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Kazakhstan, and China. In some cases this concerned dual-use goods which came from the Netherlands.

The AIVD and MIVD concluded that in a very short time frame Iran could acquire enough highly enriched uranium to produce the quantity required for several nuclear weapons

In the past year the AIVD and MIVD also concluded that in a very short time frame Iran could acquire enough highly enriched uranium to produce the quantity required for several nuclear weapons. The services have no indications that Iran is currently developing a testable nuclear explosive. However some Iranian politicians have advocated for a revision of the 2003 fatwa against nuclear weapons. Iran also threatened to no longer abide by the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) if relations with the West continue to deteriorate.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) meanwhile reports that Iran's limited cooperation prevents the Agency from determining whether the Iranian nuclear programme serves only peaceful purposes. This makes it more difficult to reach a new agreement, which should alleviate concerns regarding Iran's nuclear programme.

In 2024 Iran carried out its first ever direct attack on Israel and used ballistic missiles. Ballistic missiles have a large range and are difficult to defend against due to their high velocities. Some countries equip them with weapons of mass destruction (see text box on page 52).

The missiles used by Iran have been developed by the country itself. Hezbollah and the Houthis also use missiles developed by Iran. In this way Iranian weapons systems formed a threat to Israel as well as to shipping in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. Additionally, Iran delivered close range ballistic missiles to Russia. The European Union and several of its allies have imposed additional sanctions against Iran, in response to these actions.

North Korea supplied short-range ballistic missiles to Russia, which the Russian army later actually used against Ukraine

In 2024 North Korea too continued developing ballistic missiles, both missiles for ranges below 1,000 kilometres and intercontinental ballistic missiles for ranges over 5,500 kilometres. The regime carried out test launches with new intercontinental and hypersonic ballistic missiles. Furthermore launches with tactical ballistic missiles and cruise missiles were conducted with larger high explosive payloads.

Photo below (AFP): A North Korean missile test is broadcast on television. In 2024 North Korea continued its development of ballistic missiles, including intercontinental ballistic missiles.



In a year in which tensions with South Korea were already increasing, North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un moreover gave orders to increase the production of munitions. North Korea also supplied short-range ballistic missiles to Russia, which the Russian army later actually used against Ukraine.

In 2024 the North Korean regime also posted photos of a uranium enrichment facility for the first time. This seems intended as a signal that the country is working towards realising Kim Jong Un's ambition to considerably expand its nuclear arsenal.

The Counterproliferation Unit

The AIVD and MIVD investigate whether countries that may pose a threat to international security – so-called countries of concern – possess or are developing weapons of mass destruction. The investigation is carried out by the joint Counterproliferation Unit. This investigation also concerns the acquisition of delivery means for weapons of mass destruction – usually ballistic missiles. The work of the Unit helps prevent countries like Russia, Iran, North Korea, and Syria from obtaining technology and knowledge in the West that they can use for their weapons programmes. The government can take diplomatic, administrative, and legal measures, and the services can take operational action. In the podcast *De Dienst* (The Service, aivd.nl/podcast) employees of the service give a little insight into their work.

> For more information,
go to: [aivd.nl/
massavernietigingswapens](https://aivd.nl/massavernietigingswapens)

3.3

- > **The demand for security screenings remained high, in part because the Ministry of Defence hired more staff. The AIVD and MIVD took measures to be able to handle this.**
- > **The Ministers of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and Defence worked on a review of the Security Screening Act. The bill meets many wishes of sectors with positions involving confidentiality.**

- > **For more information, go to: aivd.nl/veiligheidsonderzoeken**

Security Screenings

The demand for security screenings remained high. In 2024 the AIVD and MIVD, in cooperation with the mandated partner the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee (KMar), completed 84,847 security screenings. This number is just a little lower than in 2023. In 2023 it concerned 85,622 completed screenings, which was a 20 per cent increase compared to the year prior. The demand for security screenings was this high because more staff was hired for positions involving confidentiality, including with the Ministry of Defence. 93.3 per cent of screenings were completed within the legal term of eight weeks.

The past year the AIVD and MIVD took structural measures to be able to handle the increased demand. The services hired more staff and work(ed) on digitalising and (partially) automating the security screenings. This allows employees to focus on the more complex cases, which require the most expertise. The automation has ensured that the quality of investigations has increased and the waiting period has decreased by a week on average compared to last year.

The demand for security screenings was this high because more staff was hired for positions involving confidentiality

In order to ensure that security screenings continue to go smoothly, the ministers involved are working on a review of the Security Screening Act. The revised act will be submitted to the Dutch House of Representatives in 2025. The act regulates the implementation of a site-specific certificate of no objection for civil aviation and the (freight) supply chain. Anyone who moves to a new position at the same site maintains their certificate of no objection and does not need to go through another screening.

Another section of the reviewed act covers the implementation of a register for persons who hold a position involving confidentiality. The bill meets the wishes of sectors with (many) positions involving confidentiality and should ensure that in the future the services are better able to complete security screenings within the legal term of eight weeks. The parliamentary debate on the bill will likely conclude in 2025, with the new act to be implemented in early 2026.

Table 1
Key figures security screenings (including mandated parties)

SCREENINGS	POSITIVE DECISIONS	NEGATIVE DECISIONS	TOTAL NUMBER OF DECISIONS
LEVEL A, BY UVO	6,884	30	6,914
LEVEL B, BY UVO	22,769	158	22,927
LEVEL B, TAKEN OVER BY UVO FROM KMAR	9,244	1,607	10,851
LEVEL C, BY UVO	5,294	16	5,310
FOR NATO SUMMIT 2025	92	0	92
TOTAL SCREENINGS BY UVO	44,283	1,811	46,094
LEVEL B, BY KMAR	38,753	0	38,753
TOTAL NUMBER OF SCREENINGS	83,036	1,811	84,847

Notes on key figures for security screenings

The KMar does not issue negative decisions. In case of doubt in a Level B security screening, the investigation is handed over to the Security Screening Unit (*Unit Veiligheidsonderzoeken*, UVO). Negative decisions are added to the number of negative decisions made by the AIVD. This explains why the figure here is 0. Of the total number of screenings in 2024, 46,094 were carried out by the UVO itself and 38,753 were carried out by the mandated party. Depending on the nature of the confidential position and the potential harm the (candidate) official in this position could cause to national security, a level A, B, or C screening will be initiated. The level A screening is the most thorough and intended for the most vulnerable of positions involving confidentiality.

Table 2

Security screenings: results of objections and appealsberoepsprocedures

	OBJECTIONS	APPEALS	SECOND APPEALS	PROVISIONAL RULING
SUBMITTED (IN 2024)	170	9	0	0
PROCESSED (IN 2024)	88	4	1	0
UNFOUNDED	54	4	0	-
UPHELD	13	-	-	-
INADMISSIBLE	12	-	1	-
WITHDRAWN	9	-	-	-
DISMISSED	0	-	-	-

Notes on the results of objections and appeals

Following decisions to refuse or withdraw a certificate of no objection, the affected persons can file an objection. If this objection is deemed unfounded, they may appeal this.

The Security Screening Unit (Unit Veiligheidsonderzoeken, UVO)

The Security Screening Unit is a joint AIVD and MIVD unit. The UVO carries out security screenings of persons under consideration for or in positions involving confidentiality: people who in their work have access to classified information or have a position in which they could damage the national security. Examples are people working for the central government, the Ministry of Defence, in civil aviation, or with companies responsible for vital processes. When a screening results in a positive decision, the applicant receives a so-called certificate of no objection (*Verklaring van geen bezwaar, VGB*).

4. Organisation and key figures





Erik Akerboom, Director General of the AIVD, gives a briefing on the current threat assessment. Photo: ANP

4.1

- > **The TIB and the CTIVD independently monitor the legitimacy of the AIVD's actions.**
- > **In 2024 the CTIVD concluded that the AIVD's use of so-called agents is generally lawful.**

Review and oversight of the work of the AIVD

The Investigatory Powers Commission (*Toetsingscommissie Inzet Bevoegdheden*, TIB) and the Oversight Committee for the Intelligence and Security Services (*Commissie van Toezicht op de Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdiensten*, CTIVD) independently monitor the legitimacy of the AIVD's actions. This is important for the legitimacy of the work of the service.

The TIB reviews whether the AIVD is legally permitted to use certain special investigatory powers. The CTIVD regularly checks the lawfulness of the entire implementation of the Intelligence and Security Services Act (Wiv 2017). In order to do so the CTIVD can carry out investigations and then reports on these to the House of Representatives and the Senate.

In 2024 the CTIVD reported on two investigations the committee had carried out since 2023 into the AIVD's legal power to deploy 'agents'. An agent is someone who is asked by the AIVD to gather specific information. This could also be an AIVD employee working under a cover. If this is done online, this is called a virtual agent.

In September the CTIVD reported that the AIVD and MIVD generally act lawfully in their deployment of virtual agents. The CTIVD also investigated the use of journalists as agents. In June the Committee concluded that there is no reason to suppose that journalists have been pressured to work as agents and also reported that employees of the service are making efforts to ensure that such deployment is done as carefully as possible.

The CTIVD also made recommendations to pay more attention to the special position of journalists and to keep better record of working methods in policy and working instructions. The AIVD has adopted these recommendations and informed the CTIVD on the progress of the implementation.

The Committee is still working on a third investigation into the deployment of agents. This investigation regards the way AIVD handles its duty of care for the mental well-being of its agents. This investigation will continue in 2025.

In 2024 the CTIVD moreover started new investigations. Including into how the AIVD and MIVD process bulk data sets – large data files. And following the suspicion of a (former) NCTV employee leaking state secrets, the CTIVD is investigating whether the AIVD has properly carried out its security screenings and has been careful in providing classified information to the NCTV.

4.2

- > **The temporary act that was intended to restore the AIVD and MIVD's power to act went into effect in 2024.**
- > **Staff shortages with the CTIVD meant that the services were not yet able to make full use of the possibilities of the temporary act.**

- > **For more information, go to: aivd.nl/wiv**

The legal framework in which the AIVD operates

In 2024 after many preparations the 'temporary act' took effect. The 'Temporary act on investigations by the AIVD and MIVD into countries with offensive cyberprogrammes, bulk datasets and other specific provisions' is intended to ensure that the services' power to act is restored and that they remain future-proof. This had initially come under pressure due to a number of shortcomings in the Intelligence and Security Services Act (Wiv 2017).

The temporary act provides more clarity on the use of bulk data sets and the services' hacking authority. The temporary act also enables the services to make broader use of cable interception, in particular against countries with an offensive cyberprogramme. This is always preceded by an assessment regarding its lawfulness by the Investigatory Powers Commission (TIB). In 2024 the AIVD immediately submitted the request to actually use this power. This was deemed lawful by the TIB.

The temporary act also enables the services to make broader use of cable interception against countries with an offensive cyberprogramme

In practice the AIVD and MIVD were not yet able to make full use of the possibilities offered by the temporary act, in particular the improved use of the hacking authority against countries which carry out digital attacks against the Netherlands. This is because of limited capacity with the CTIVD (page 58), which has binding oversight of the use of this special investigatory power.

With the temporary act only the most urgent imperfections of the Wiv 2017 have been corrected. In order for the services to carry out their work within a legal framework that fits modern operational practice in which technology plays a larger role, the ministers involved also worked on a thorough review of the Wiv 2017. The goal is to submit the bill for public consultation in late 2025.

Facts and figures



25

notifications issued



73

official reports issued



71

written threat reports issued



388

intelligence reports issued



1.258

wiretaps used under Wiv 2017, article 47(1)

Table 3

Number of access requests to inspect information held by the AIVD, per type

REQUESTS	SUBMITTED	COMPLETED	INSPECTION FILE SENT	STILL PENDING
GEGEVENS OVER EIGEN PERSOON	380	589	334	126
GEGEVENS OVER OVERLEDEN FAMILIELID	77	101	54	15
GEGEVENS OVER BESTUURLIJKE AANGELEGENHEDEN	29	28	21	41
GEGEVENS OVER DERDEN	22	21	2	7
TOTAAL	508	739	411	189

Table 4

Results of objections and appeals against decisions access requests

	OBJECTIONS	APPEALS	SECOND APPEALS
COMPLETED	20	4	1
UNFOUNDED	13	3	1
WELL-FOUNDED (IN PART)	5	0	0
INADMISSIBLE	1	0	0
WITHDRAWN	1	1	0

Table 5
Complaints about the AIVD to the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION AS OF 1 JANUARY 2024	8
SUBMITTED IN 2024	21
DISMISSED	3
UPHELD IN PART	0
UPHELD	0
HANDLED INFORMALLY	3
NOT TAKEN UP FOR CONSIDERATION	1
WITHDRAWN	1
REDIRECTED	2
STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024	19

Table 6
Complaints about the AIVD to the CTIVD

STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION AS OF 1 JANUARY 2024	4
SUBMITTED IN 2024	15
DISMISSED	1
UPHELD IN PART	0
UPHELD	0
NO JUDGEMENT	0
HANDLED INFORMALLY	2
NOT TAKEN UP FOR CONSIDERATION	10
WITHDRAWN	1
REDIRECTED	0
STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024	5

Colophon

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General Intelligence and Security Service
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April 2025