

Letter of 22 May 2026 from the Minister of Justice and Security to the President of the House of Representatives on fighting online radicalisation, extremism and terrorism

The physical and online worlds are inextricably linked, which means that the online world's role in society is becoming increasingly significant. This is especially true for young people. Online connection brings opportunities, leads to innovation and facilitates the exchange of knowledge. However, it also constantly creates new opportunities for terrorist and extremist groups and individuals to spread propaganda and to find and recruit vulnerable individuals – particularly young people – and incite them to commit violence in the physical world.¹ The most recent Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands (DTN) reiterates concerns surrounding the rise in online radicalisation and warns about the dangers of, among other things, jihadist and right-wing terrorist propaganda. Concerns surrounding online nihilistic violent extremism are also rising,² especially given the victims' (very) young age.

The government is continuing its unremitting efforts to fight online radicalisation, extremism and terrorism and effectively respond to new developments. In recent years many steps have been taken in the further development of the Enhanced Approach Online to extremist and terrorist content (*Versterkte Aanpak Online*; VAO).³ In light of the increasing and evolving online threat, the coalition agreement set out initiatives to help address online radicalisation, extremism and terrorism, including a ban on addictive, polarising and anti-democratic algorithms. The European Commission also recently presented the new EU Counterterrorism Agenda, which focuses specifically on the online dimension and on additional measures to combat online radicalisation.⁴

I am writing in conjunction with the Minister for the Digital Economy and Sovereignty and the Minister of Work and Participation to inform you about the progress of the Enhanced Approach Online. In doing so I am fulfilling the government's undertaking to provide the House with information on this matter this spring. The efforts described in this letter are grouped into four action areas, namely:

1. Prevention and awareness
2. Establishment of norms and identification of problematic content/individuals
3. Regulation and enforcement
4. Knowledge and research

These areas encompass the following four pillars from previous letters: 1) dialogue with the internet sector; 2) statutory instruments; 3) local approach; and 4) European and international efforts.

1. Prevention and awareness

Ideally individuals should be prevented from coming into contact with extremist and terrorist content and becoming radicalised as a result. Although the motives of malicious parties who use the internet to cause harm may vary, these parties often adopt similar methods and techniques, and they

¹ National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV), Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, December 2025.

² NCTV, Progress report on the Enhanced Approach Online to extremist and terrorist content, 17 December 2025.

³ These steps are set out in the letter of December 2023 outlining the Enhanced Approach Online, the letter of December 2024 further elaborating the Enhanced Approach Online, and the progress reports of May 2025 and December 2025 on the Enhanced Approach Online.

⁴ Working Group for the Assessment of New Commission Proposals (BNC), EU Counterterrorism Agenda, 10 April 2026.

primarily target children and vulnerable young people. It is important to raise awareness about these online dangers and to ensure that not only young people but also those around them know what they can do in response. For example, terrorist content can be reported to the Authority for the Prevention of Online Terrorist Content and Child Sexual Abuse Material (ATKM) for removal.⁵ The ATKM will launch a public awareness campaign this summer to raise awareness about the reporting centre.

It is also vital that young people talk with each other about their online behaviour, including certain content they see or share. As part of the local approach, municipalities – with the support of additional funds from central government – have been working for some time to start a conversation about extremist narratives young people may encounter online. The goal of this is to increase young people's resistance to such content. There are also projects that focus on the role parents play, and how they can talk to their children about the online world and the potential dangers lurking within it. In addition to these ongoing efforts, the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV) – together with various partners – is carefully exploring a joint communications approach regarding online dangers. Furthermore, the ATKM and NCTV – together with the Platform for the Information Society (ECP) – will organise an event in June 2026 on youth radicalisation (the theme is 'recognising, understanding and responding'). The first meeting will focus on the perspective of young people and will examine, in an interactive setting, how young people take in and interpret online content. The insights from this session will serve as a basis for a second meeting, where experts, policymakers and professionals will discuss how to improve methods for identifying and dealing with harmful content in practice.

For municipalities, understanding the intervention options is an important step in preventing online radicalisation. Various regions still often lack such knowledge and do not know how to systematically incorporate the online world into local prevention efforts. That is why, on the basis of discussions with municipalities and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG), the paper 'Tackling Online Radicalisation' was drawn up for municipalities and local professionals.⁶ In mid-May 2025, agreements were made with the Social Stability Expertise Unit (ESS) of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment to enhance municipalities' knowledge on preventing online radicalisation. In 2026, the ESS – with the support of the NCTV – is continuing to raise awareness and increase knowledge about online radicalisation among municipalities, professionals, parents and young people. This is in addition to the ESS's existing prevention efforts at local level. Municipalities can also contact their local NCTV advisers for advice on how to incorporate the online domain into their local approach.

Digital resilience

Increasing digital resilience is also an essential part of prevention and awareness. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment is working through local authorities and youth workers and other professionals to build knowledge and enhance the scope for action in preventing online radicalisation.⁷ In addition, the Ministry is encouraging the use of effective interventions and awareness-raising campaigns, which the House was informed about on 2 March of this year.⁸ Together with the Minister of Work and Participation, I will meet with representatives of other ministries, professionals and young people themselves later this year to discuss ways of improving

⁵ <https://www.atkm.nl/meldpunt-atkm>

⁶ [Tackling online radicalisation | National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security](#).

⁷ Parliamentary Papers, House of Representatives 2024/25, 32 824, no. 456.

⁸ Parliamentary Papers, House of Representatives 2025/26, 32 824, no. 479.

prevention efforts. In addition to digital resilience, we will also focus on broader topics that contribute to prevention, such as mental health, citizenship and preventing discrimination. As part of this approach, I will meet with experts from various domains, including the social, education and security sectors, in the autumn. The purpose of this meeting is to strengthen underlying connections and trust between these domains, and to share working methods and expertise.

In addition to raising awareness about online radicalisation, it is also important to raise awareness about acceptable norms and values online. The Minister for the Digital Economy and Sovereignty is therefore launching the dialogue platform www.praatmeemetdeoverheid.nl to strengthen online public debate. This summer will mark the start of the first hybrid national dialogue about online discrimination, using both this platform and physical locations around the country. The dialogue aims to raise awareness of how polarisation, racism and discrimination help fuel radicalisation, extremism and terrorism, and to provide insight into public opinion on the responsibilities of the government and platforms when it comes to making the online world safer.

Collaboration with online platforms

These prevention and awareness efforts are being carried out together with online platforms. As announced in the progress report of December 2025, in January 2026 a pilot scheme was launched in cooperation with Meta and ReDirect. This scheme was initially rolled out on a small scale on Instagram.⁹ Using the ReDirect method, users searching for terrorist online content were redirected to the National Support Centre for Extremism. To date the number of redirected users has been relatively limited. This summer the pilot will be expanded to Threads and Facebook, and in the autumn there will be a review to determine whether the initiative should be further expanded and/or extended.¹⁰ I will inform the House about this in the next VAO progress report.

In the recent period the possibility of setting up other, similar pilots has been explored. Two potential initiatives are currently being considered. The first is a pilot scheme that, similar to the ReDirect method, would be set up on another social media platform that is popular in the Netherlands. The second involves a project on an online gaming platform. I will inform the House of the progress regarding these two initiatives in a letter this autumn.

The Netherlands also continues to work actively at European and international level to encourage cooperation in the area of prevention.¹¹ At the end of 2026, the European Commission will present a step-by-step plan to help member states establish effective strategies against online extremism and terrorism.

⁹ Parliamentary Papers, House of Representatives 2025/26, 29 754, no. 774.

¹⁰ The National Support Centre for Extremism in the Netherlands has confirmed that their landing page works and that users are being redirected there. The page has been specially designed for the pilot and provides information to online visitors.

¹¹ In the context of the EU Knowledge Hub on Prevention of Radicalisation, the Netherlands – together with France and the European Commission – is leading a European working group on the online radicalisation of young people. In 2026 there will be three meetings that bring together policymakers and operational experts from various member states.

2. Establishment of norms and identification of problematic content/individuals

The action area establishment of norms and identification of problematic content/individuals includes activities such as dialogue with the platforms. I continue to engage with online platforms to draw attention to the online threat, express my concerns regarding online radicalisation, extremism and terrorism, and (in normative terms) hold the platforms to account with regard to their responsibility for creating a safe online environment.¹² In line with my predecessor's remarks in the parliamentary debate of 29 January 2026 on the budget of the Ministry of Justice and Security,¹³ I also took the opportunity in the EU Internet Forum ministerial meeting of 4 March 2026 to highlight the responsibility of these platforms and express major concerns.¹⁴

This year the dialogue with platforms has been expanded to national level. I intend to continue my talks with both social media and gaming platforms, and to extend these discussions to include the AI sector as well. In the autumn I also plan to organise a meeting with the social media and gaming platforms most commonly used by young Dutch people, in order to share my concerns and explore opportunities for enhanced cooperation.

Minimum age for social media with age verification

The government is looking more broadly at whether digital services are safe enough for children and young people. In the context of the strategy on child rights in the digital domain, the government is using instruments such as Child Rights Impact Assessments to take stock of a wide range of risks that digital services pose to children and young people. The coalition agreement includes the ambition to introduce an enforceable Europe-wide minimum age of 15 for social media access, for so long as social media is not adequately safe. Various countries, including in the EU, are looking into a minimum age for social media access, or are preparing national legislation on the matter.

As stated at the meeting of 2 March 2026 to discuss the digital affairs bill, the Minister for the Digital Economy and Sovereignty will inform the House about the status of the European approach regarding a Europe-wide minimum age for social media access. In addition, the Minister has commissioned the University of Amsterdam to assess what the most appropriate legal arrangement would be for a Europe-wide minimum age for social media access. The results will be published before the summer. We are also monitoring developments on this front in other countries, both within and outside the EU, and look forward to the recommendations from the independent panel of experts led by the President of the European Commission on a Europe-wide minimum age and the protection of children online. In parallel with this, the Minister is exploring whether age verification is possible and how best to implement it in the Netherlands. Due attention is being paid to both the effectiveness of this measure and its possible implications for the privacy and other fundamental rights of social media users, especially children and young people. The European frameworks and public values such as accessibility, proportionality, transparency and enforceability are also being taken into account. The exploratory study is expected to be completed by the summer, and the House will be informed of the outcome.

¹² Stressing the importance of human content moderation on these platforms is an integral part of this dialogue.

¹³ Ministry of Justice and Security budget 2026, p. 37-5-7.

¹⁴ During the EU Internet Forum on 4 March 2026 the Netherlands also expressed its full support for the work of the European Commission in general and the EU Internet Forum in particular, following the unfounded accusations set out in the US House Judiciary Committee's report of 3 February 2026.

3. Regulation and enforcement

Developments in the area of online radicalisation, extremism and terrorism highlight the importance – in addition to prevention and identification – of making effective use of statutory instruments and the enforcement powers associated with them. With the Terrorist Content Online (TCO) Regulation and the Digital Services Act (DSA), the EU possesses specific instruments to combat certain illegal online content. In the Netherlands, the Authority for the Prevention of Online Terrorist Content and Child Sexual Abuse Material (ATKM) is responsible for enforcing the TCO Regulation, and the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets is responsible for supervising Netherlands-based platforms within the scope of the DSA. Under the DSA, supervision of the very large online platforms (VLOPs) is primarily the responsibility of the European Commission.

Digital Services Act

The DSA is aimed at fostering a safe, predictable and reliable online environment, where the dissemination of illegal content is tackled effectively. The DSA imposes various obligations on online platforms to protect users and their fundamental rights. Furthermore, the designated VLOPs are required to identify and mitigate the systemic risks of their services. The dissemination of terrorist and extremist content can constitute such a risk.

In October 2025 the European Commission published final guidelines to protect minors online, pursuant to Article 28 of the DSA.¹⁵ In late 2025, the Working Group for the Assessment of New Commission Proposals (BNC) drew up a BNC file, about which the then Minister of Foreign Affairs informed the House on 14 November 2025.¹⁶ The Minister for the Digital Economy and Sovereignty will submit answers to the House's questions on this subject in the near future.

An evaluation of the DSA by the European Commission is expected in 2027. The Dutch Digital Services Act (Implementation) Act will also be evaluated in 2027. The Minister for the Digital Economy and Sovereignty will coordinate this on the Netherlands' behalf and take stock of the experiences of ministries, supervisory authorities and civil society organisations and any changes to the DSA these parties may consider necessary or wish to see. This will be taken into account in deciding on the Netherlands' efforts at EU level. I will also be involved in this process and will advocate, where necessary, for clarification in the DSA, taking account of the fact that the legislation is still relatively new. For example, opportunities are being explored to put duty of care back on the agenda¹⁷ so that online platforms can be better held to account regarding their responsibility for tackling online radicalisation. In addition to the evaluation of the DSA, the Digital Fairness Act (DFA) is currently in preparation, and the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) is under revision. Both statutory instruments contribute to a safer online environment.

¹⁵ Guidelines on measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors online, pursuant to Article 28(4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/2065, C(2025)6826 final.

¹⁶ Parliamentary Papers, House of Representatives 2025/26, 22 112, no. 4207.

¹⁷ In the negotiations that led to the DSA, the Netherlands argued that online platforms should have a duty of care. As set out in the letter of December 2023 outlining the Enhanced Approach Online, this proposal did not have sufficient support in the European Council at the time.

Non-paper

In the context of developing a new EU Counterterrorism Agenda, the European Commission called on member states to submit additional proposals for combating the online threat. The Netherlands, together with Germany and France, drafted the non-paper 'Countering together: fighting online radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism'.¹⁸ The non-paper calls for the development of a code of conduct for online platforms, and the new EU Counterterrorism Agenda explicitly refers to such a possibility. In the coming period I will continue urging the European Commission to translate the proposals in the non-paper into concrete action, as also argued in the Justice and Home Affairs Council of 5 March 2026, where France, Germany, Spain, Finland, Sweden and Belgium expressed their support for the non-paper.

These joint efforts to counter the negative influence of online platforms are also in line with the aim set out in the coalition agreement to ban addictive, polarising and anti-democratic algorithms. The Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and the Minister for the Digital Economy and Sovereignty are currently looking into how this goal can be achieved in practice.

Authority for the Prevention of Online Terrorist Content and Child Sexual Abuse Material (ATKM)

In the Netherlands the ATKM is authorised to order the removal of terrorist content and – together with national, European and international partners – it actively contributes to the uniform application of the TCO Regulation.¹⁹ The ATKM uses a multi-stakeholder approach. It holds one-on-one talks with various partners and also focuses on joint reflection with these partners and experts. The ATKM continues to lead the 'taxonomy project', in which – working together with competent European authorities – it identifies indicators of obvious online terrorist content.²⁰ In 2026, the ATKM will join the rotating board of the Global Online Safety Regulators Network (GOSRN), an international network that promotes global norms for internet supervision and strengthens underlying coherence among supervisory authorities.

Terrorist Content Online Regulation (Implementation) Act

The Terrorist Content Online Regulation (Implementation) Act is currently being evaluated, in accordance with the statutory obligation to present the House with an evaluation of the legislation within three years of its entry into force.²¹ The evaluation encompasses the legal scope of removal orders and the options for using removal requests. The final report will be presented to the House in the autumn of 2026.

In addition to the evaluation's focus on the possible use of removal requests, a policy study is being conducted on attaching removal requests to removal orders from the ATKM. This process involves

¹⁸ Dutch/German/French non-paper 'Countering together: fighting online radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism', December 2025.

¹⁹ For example, the ATKM participates in working groups with the European Commission and competent authorities from EU member states. Together with the Swedish authorities, the ATKM leads the working group on hosting service providers without legal representation in the EU, and participates in two other working groups.

²⁰ The goal is to establish a guideline that supports competent authorities in clearly classifying such material.

²¹ Undertaking to MP Hanneke van der Werf (D66) during the plenary debate on the Terrorist Content Online Regulation (Implementation) Act on 21 December 2022.

the ATKM, the National Police and Europol. Violent extremist content that cannot easily be characterised as terrorist in nature and therefore does not always fall within the scope of the ATKM is on the rise. The House and various partners have indicated that there is a need for additional options when it comes to removing such content. At this time the legal and operational options and implications are being mapped out. I will inform the House about this in the next progress report.

Lastly, the goal set out in the coalition agreement to prohibit or remove content depicting criminal offences could present opportunities in the fight against violent extremist content. In the coming period, we will examine how to translate this goal into action.

Workable definition of (violent) extremist content

As a follow-up to the motion submitted by MP Ingrid Michon-Derkzen on establishing a workable definition of extremist content, discussions have been held with relevant partners in the justice system.²² They have confirmed that there is a broad need for clarity as to what is considered 'extremist content', but also that there are many challenges in establishing an unambiguous, workable definition at national and EU levels. This is due in part to the various tasks and competences of the relevant organisations or institutions. To date, the government's point of departure has been to find a definition that aligns with the definition of 'extremism' used in the National Extremism Strategy.²³ We are also looking into how the definition can be further refined to correspond to the needs of our partners, and/or whether it is desirable or necessary to restrict the definition to 'violent extremist content'. The discussion with system partners is still ongoing. At European level I am also working to put the matter of finding a workable definition of 'extremist content' on the agenda. In late 2026 I will further inform the House of these efforts at national and European levels.

Checks on data carriers

The court may impose special conditions on individuals who are suspected or convicted of an offence, regarding the behaviour of which they are suspected or have been convicted. These special conditions can include, for example, a social media ban and the requirement to submit to a data carrier check. In practice, we see that courts also impose such behaviour-related conditions on persons suspected and convicted of terrorism, for example in the context of the suspension of provisional detention.²⁴ A social media ban can have the effect of an early warning system. To prevent high-risk behaviour and reoffending, and to encourage behavioural change, effective enforcement is also vital. A survey in this connection has shown that the probation services have developed a tool and working method to check whether a party is complying with the special condition of 'avoiding digital environments featuring child sexual abuse'.²⁵ I will speak with the probation services about the scope for developing a similar check in the context of online terrorism

²² Motion by MP Ingrid Michon-Derkzen (VVD) on a workable definition of 'extremist content', submitted on 2 October 2025 (Parliamentary Paper 29 754, no. 758).

²³ National Extremism Strategy for 2024-2029.

²⁴ This concerns people (primarily relatively young in age) suspected or convicted of, among other things, incitement to terrorism on social media or online contact with (large amounts of) terrorist and/or extremist content and dissemination of such content, for example.

²⁵ The tool and working method make it possible for the probation services to automatically check data carriers for high-risk behaviour relating to online child sexual abuse.

and (violent) extremism. I aim to provide the House with more information on this matter at the end of this year.

4. Knowledge and research

Current developments concerning extremism and terrorism, the online world and new technologies demand an increase in knowledge. As stated in previous letters to parliament, I expect to be able to share the results of the Research and Data Centre (WODC) study on extremism on gaming platforms with the House in a policy response in mid-2026. In addition, the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS) published a report on the Com network on 10 March 2026,²⁶ about which I informed the House in a government response submitted on 22 May.

Conclusion

In recent years a strong foundation has been laid in the fight against online radicalisation, extremism and terrorism. However, the online world changes rapidly and constantly requires new responses to these problems. By working on prevention, identification of problematic content/individuals and establishing norms, regulation and enforcement, and increasing our knowledge, I am reinforcing our approach to combating online terrorism and extremism, preventing online radicalisation and increasing online security, with a special focus on children and young people. The protection of fundamental rights, such as the right to freedom of expression and freedom of information, remains essential. In the autumn of 2026 I will inform the House about further developments in the approach to tackling online radicalisation, extremism and terrorism.

²⁶ <https://hcss.nl/report/hcss-focus-het-com-netwerk/>.