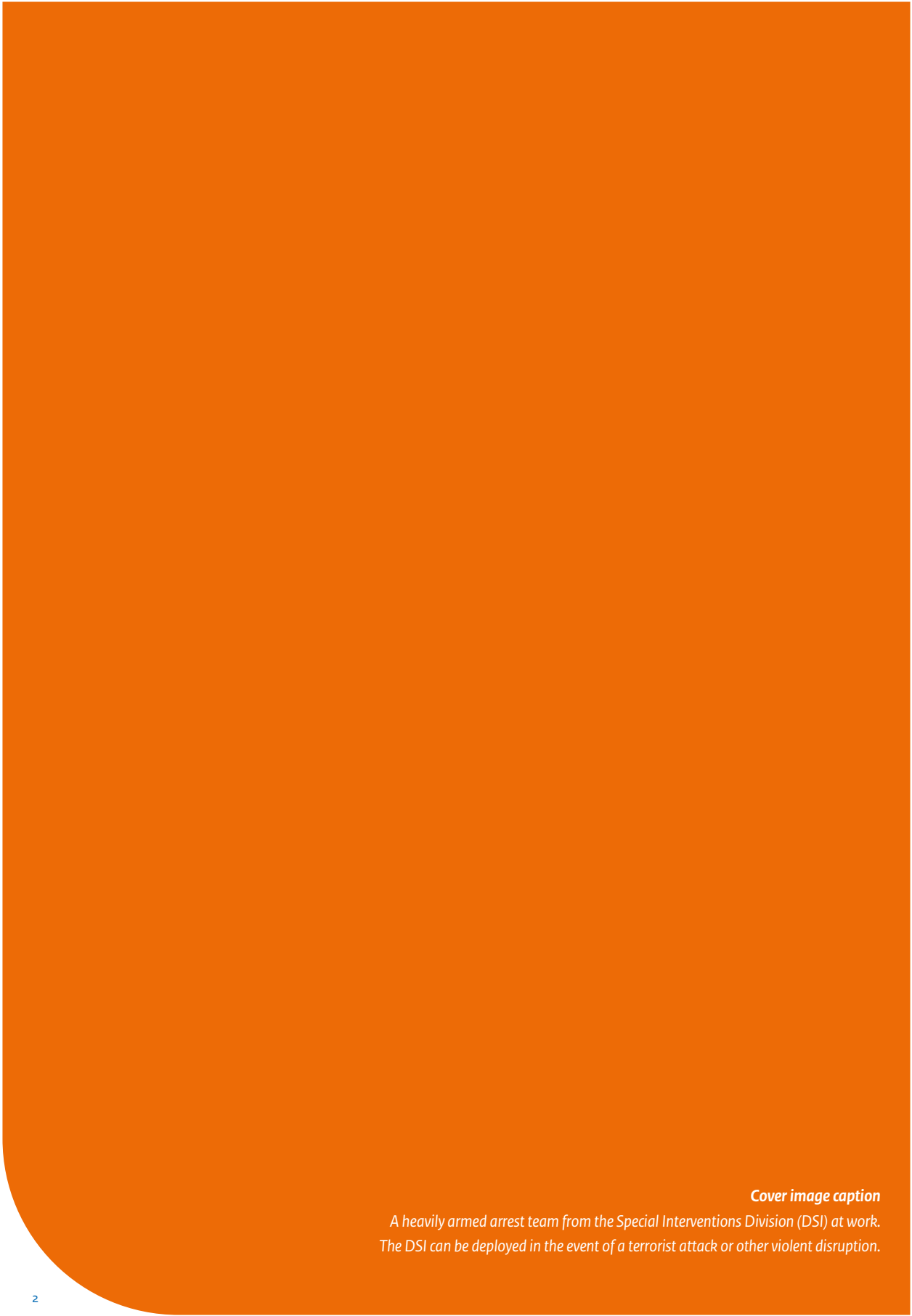




Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands

*Realistic chance of attack due to various terrorist actors'
ongoing intention to commit violence*

June 2026



Cover image caption

A heavily armed arrest team from the Special Interventions Division (DSI) at work. The DSI can be deployed in the event of a terrorist attack or other violent disruption.

A graphic consisting of a large blue circle with a white border. Inside the blue circle is a smaller orange circle. The text 'Threat level' is written in white above a large white number '4' in the center of the orange circle.

Threat level

4

Threat level remains at 4.

This means that there is a realistic possibility that an attack will take place in The Netherlands.

Realistic chance of attack due to various terrorist actors' ongoing intention to commit violence

Threat level

The Netherlands continues to face a substantial terrorist threat. The threat level therefore remains at 4 on a scale of 1 to 5. This means that there is a realistic chance that an attack will take place in this country. Jihadism remains the key driver of the overall terrorist threat, and jihadists still regard the Netherlands as a target, as evidenced by several arrests in the past year.

The Iran war increases the likelihood of a terrorist attack. The framework agreement of mid-June, which is intended as a stepping stone to further negotiations on ending the war between the US and Iran, does not immediately eliminate that threat. The involvement of state actors and quasi-state actors in violent extremism and terrorism in Europe is a key factor in this. Other threat vectors remain unchanged or contribute only to a limited extent to the decision to maintain the threat level at 4. The current terrorist threat necessitates ongoing efforts by Dutch and international security partners.

Jihadist threat remains main component of threat level

For many years, jihadism has been the primary driver of the terrorist threat. This mainly relates to the risk of attacks directed, encouraged or inspired by Islamic State (ISIS). The fact that some radicalised individuals in this country have not given up on the idea of mounting an attack is underscored by various events, including the arrests of two individuals in the Netherlands at the end of 2025 who were seeking to do so. Timely action by security agencies has so far prevented the threat from materialising. The situation is similar in neighbouring countries. As a result of this preventive action, the number of jihadist attacks in Europe over the past six months has been relatively limited. The main threat of jihadist attacks continues to originate from lone actors and small groups that radicalise to the point of embracing violence while remaining under the radar. The ongoing availability of jihadist material online and the relative ease with which individuals can come into contact with elements of ISIS contribute to this risk. Jihadist propaganda and jihadist groups/networks are pres-

ent both on mainstream social media and on messaging apps and alternative platforms. Increasingly, those inspired and radicalised online by ISIS ideology are minors. One concern is that the current online contacts between individuals who support jihadist ideology may in time lead to the formation of jihadist networks that could pose a new terrorist threat to the Netherlands.

Thanks to various arrests, the threat in Europe posed by transnational ISIS networks, which planned several attacks in 2023 and 2024, has declined over the past year. However, these network structures still exist in Europe and could be reactivated if the efforts of Dutch and international security partners were to slacken. The 'ISIS provinces' remain relevant to the terrorist threat to the Netherlands, but were not able to conduct external attack operations in the West in the period under review. Despite regional counterterrorism efforts, Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), in particular, continues to harbour intentions to carry out attacks in the West as well.

Within the jihadist movement in the Netherlands there has been renewed interest in recent years in travelling abroad to join terrorist groups in Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan and elsewhere. In absolute terms, the number of successful departures has been very limited, especially compared to the period between 2012 and 2016. Dutch jihadist travellers could pose a terrorist threat to the Netherlands, given that they may encourage or even help sympathisers in this country to carry out attacks. The threat posed by Dutch travellers who had been held in Syria remains unchanged. They have now been transferred by US forces to a prison in Iraq.

Increased threat of attack in Europe and the Netherlands due to Hamas and war in Iran

The likelihood of attacks in Europe and the Netherlands has increased as a result of, and in response to, the war of the US and Israel with Iran. This threat originates from a wide range of actors, including Iranian security services and state actors/quasi-state actors linked to Iran, and terrorist, violent extremist and state-directed criminal groups, proxies and individuals. Even if this war in the Middle East were to end at some point, the heightened threat could persist for some time thereafter. There appears to be an increasing entanglement of the threat posed by state-sponsored actors and the terrorist threat. The result is a heightened threat to Israeli, Jewish and American targets in Europe. The series of attacks in March and April 2026 on Jewish locations and locations presumed to be American, carried out in the Netherlands and elsewhere, may be an example of this entanglement. According to US authorities, a suspect arrested in mid-May is thought to have played a coordinating role in these attacks. He is believed to work for both the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Iraqi Shia Kata'ib Hezbollah, which is supported by Iran.

The arrest of several Hamas members in Europe indicates that the organisation may be seeking to carry out attacks on the continent. In addition to its political network, Hamas probably also has an operational network in Europe. A genuine change of course by Hamas (or certain factions within the organisation), possibly prompted in part by the US-Israeli war against Iran, could further increase the threat to Jewish and Israeli targets in Europe in particular.

Right-wing terrorist threat remains unchanged

The violent threat to the Netherlands posed by right-wing terrorism remains unchanged. The number of arrests of individuals from right-wing terrorist networks has been relatively limited in recent years. In most cases, these have been young people arrested on suspicion of making online or real-world threats to carry out a right-wing terrorist attack. However, there are scant indications that specific, far-reaching preparations for an attack had been undertaken in any of these cases. Like the jihadist movement in the Netherlands, this movement is also mainly active online. This is where the individuals involved in these networks acquire knowledge and possibly also inspiration for committing attacks.

The transnational right-wing terrorist online milieu, which is estimated to have a few hundred Dutch nationals among its active members, is a loosely organised network that operates in shifting online groups and channels. Right-wing terrorist propaganda continues to be widely disseminated within this online milieu, including various manuals for producing materials for attacks and 3D-printed weapons. This enables individuals active within these networks to acquire the necessary

knowledge and possible inspiration to mount an attack. The radicalisation of Dutch nationals within the right-wing terrorist milieu could therefore potentially afford them access to material for an attack and give rise to a possible threat of attack.

Involvement of right-wing extremists in anti-asylum seekers' centre protests

Since the summer of 2025, dozens of demonstrations have taken place in opposition to immigration and the possible opening of asylum seekers' centres. Participants have been a mix of violent and non-violent protesters, with some harbouring right-wing extremist or anti-institutional extremist ideas. Right-wing extremist language was a feature of some of these demonstrations. A relatively large proportion of the demonstrations escalated to more serious disturbances. In addition to right-wing extremists themselves, other individuals inspired by them may also engage in violence, intimidation or threats. In a number of cases, municipal councillors and other politicians have been threatened, and planned or current accommodations for asylum seekers have been vandalised. As a result, local politicians sometimes feel inhibited from expressing and acting on their positions when demonstrations degenerate into intimidation, threats or violence. Such self-censorship undermines the rule of law and its institutions, in this case local government.

Most right-wing extremists in the Netherlands mainly engage in non-violent extremism, which takes the form of disseminating and normalising their ideas. Their aim is to influence society in a non-violent way. This does not mean that a non-violent approach will not lead to violence; indeed, right-wing extremists and sympathisers who are prepared to use violence may feel emboldened in their actions when they notice that their ideas have gained wider acceptance within society.

Only a small number of anti-institutional extremists pose a terrorist threat

The threat posed by anti-institutional extremism remains unchanged. A very small segment of the anti-institutional extremist movement in the Netherlands is willing and able to use violence. The extremist segment of the anti-institutional movement espouses the theory that a malevolent elite is conspiring against ordinary people, oppressing, exploiting or even murdering them. In their view, this would legitimise a violent confrontation with the alleged malevolent elite. This threat of violence is often directed at regional or local targets. Large-scale terrorist attacks on random members of the public are less likely. Some Dutch anti-institutional extremists who are willing to use violence have not only the intention but also the capability to do so. They are often relatively more knowledgeable about and proficient in the use of instruments of violence. Many of them have a fascination with guns and practise using them.

Concerns about nihilistic violence

For the first time, this edition of the DTN contains a separate chapter devoted to nihilistic violence as a threat vector. As elsewhere, there are now also growing concerns in the Netherlands about the threat of nihilistic violence originating from an international online milieu of crime-oriented networks. An unknown number of Dutch youths are active within this ever-shifting transnational ecosystem. The term 'nihilistic violent extremism' applies to violence committed by these networks on the basis of a misanthropic and destructive worldview. Within nihilistic extremism, violence and chaos are both a means to an end and an end in themselves. Gaining status and recognition by both perpetrating and sharing images of violence is central to this subculture.¹ Status and prestige are closely bound up with the severity and cruelty of the acts of violence committed: the more extreme the violence, the greater the recognition. This has led to a number of at times exceptionally brutal offences in the Netherlands and elsewhere. Outside the Netherlands there have even been instances of lethal violence. In some cases, a limited terrorist threat may arise from this threat vector.

Left-wing extremism and animal-rights extremism pose no terrorist threat

At present, left-wing extremist circles in the Netherlands pose no threat of terrorist violence. Within the left-wing extremist movement in the Netherlands there is only a limited interest in engaging in violence, and this does not appear to be increasing.

Violent extremist protest actions by animal-rights extremists remain rare in the Netherlands. Within the animal-rights movement there is generally no interest in using violence. Besides peaceful demonstrations and possibly intimidating statements directed at persons involved in livestock farming, unlawful acts take place only occasionally.

Contents

Realistic chance of attack due to various terrorist actors' ongoing intention to commit violence	3
Contents	7
Infographic	8
Introduction	10
Key concepts	11
Chapter 1. Jihadism and radical Islam	12
Chapter 2. Right-wing terrorism and extremism	20
Chapter 3. Anti-institutional terrorism and extremism	24
Chapter 4. Nihilistic extremism	28
Chapter 5. Left-wing extremism and animal-rights extremism	32
Annexe 1: Overview of terrorist attacks and arrests for planning attacks	36
Annexe 2: Definitions	38
Annexe 3: DTN threat levels	40
End notes	42

4

Threat level remains at 4

There is a realistic chance of an attack

The Netherlands continues to face a substantial terrorist threat, most significantly from jihadism. The Iran war is increasing the likelihood of a terrorist attack. Right-wing extremists and a small number of anti-institutional extremists also continue to pose a terrorist threat. Young people are radicalising more quickly due to online influences originating from all ideological corners, and this could lead to violence in some cases.



Heightened threat due to the war in Iran

Pro-Iranian groups may seek to mount more attacks in Europe

In March and April 2026 the pro-Iranian group HAYI claimed responsibility for 15 acts of arson in Europe against mainly Jewish and Israeli targets, five of which were in the Netherlands. The attacks may have been planned by a man associated with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and carried out by criminals. It is possible that the Iranian government, or organisations linked to the regime such as Hamas, may harbour intentions to carry out attacks in Europe.



Anti-institutional terrorism and extremism

A small number of potentially violent anti-institutional extremists pose a threat

A very small segment of Dutch anti-institutional extremists are willing and able to use terrorist violence, for example against institutions and government officials. Despite arrests in 2024 and 2025, the few anti-institutional extremists prepared to use violence continue to pose a violent threat. Anti-institutional extremists sometimes take part in protests against accommodation centres for asylum seekers.



Jihadist threat

Attacks mostly prevented by authorities

During the period under review there were few jihadist attacks in Europe, mainly because timely action by the authorities foiled attack plans. There continues to be a real chance that online or real-world propaganda could inspire a lone actor to attempt an attack. ISIS networks are under pressure, but ISIS has the ability to swiftly reconstitute its attack capabilities as soon as military operations against it are scaled back.



Right-wing terrorism and extremism

Limited threat of an attack, but normalisation of right-wing extremism could lead to more violence

Several hundred Dutch nationals, mostly young people, are active in the international online right-wing terrorist milieu. This could give rise to the threat of an attack, which could in some cases lead to arrests. Right-wing extremist instigators want to chip away at societal resistance to their ideas (normalisation), and to that end employ propaganda that uses language such as 'replacement' and 'remigration' and symbols such as the Prince's flag (which has far-right associations) in settings such as anti-asylum protests. This normalisation creates a breeding ground for violence, fear, hate and racism in society and undermines social cohesion.



Nihilistic extremism

Concerns about the violent threat posed by nihilistic extremism

Nihilistic violent extremism is the product of a highly violent online subculture that has little, if any, ideological motivation. Some members of this extremist subculture share a misanthropic and destructive worldview, which inspires them to commit violence or incite others to do so. An unknown number of young Dutch people are active in this online ecosystem. This fascination for nihilistic violence could lead to terrorist attacks.

Introduction

Purpose and structure

The Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands (DTN) sheds light on the threat to the Netherlands posed by terrorism and violent extremism, the interests that could be affected by this threat, and the country's level of resilience. It also examines generally non-violent extremist movements if there are indications that they could potentially commit terrorist acts or other forms of serious violence. International developments are also taken into account if they have a bearing on the threat to the Netherlands or Dutch interests abroad. The DTN is used by the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV) to set the threat level, which is an assessment of the general terrorist threat over a longer period of time.

The DTN is based on research into all forms of terrorism and violent extremism, regardless of their ideological origins. The omission of certain extremist movements from the DTN, such as climate extremists in the case of this edition, indicates that they did not pose a demonstrable threat of violence at the time of writing. If warranted by current events or long-term developments, the NCTV may report on them in other products.² Terrorist financing is discussed in the DTN in so far as it relates to the violent threat to the Netherlands or its interests abroad.

The main purpose of the DTN is to aid in the formulation of strategy and policy at national level. The DTN is a way of informing the government, members of the House of Representatives and the Senate, civil servants, administrators and policymakers at national and municipal level, academics and researchers, and other interested parties about the current threat to the Netherlands posed by terrorism and violent extremism.

Overview

The DTN consists of the previous section, which sets the threat level and summarises the most important findings, and four sections that discuss the situation in greater depth. The sixth section, which is devoted to a different subject in each edition, explores a particular facet of the threat to the Netherlands posed by terrorism or violent extremism. The titles of the sections are as follows:

- Jihadism and radical Islam
- Right-wing terrorism and extremism
- Anti-institutional terrorism and extremism
- Nihilistic extremism
- Left-wing extremism and animal-rights activism
- Annexe 1 presents an overview of the most significant terrorist attacks and of arrests of suspects planning attacks in Europe between mid-December 2025 and early June 2026.
- Annexe 2 Definitions
- Annexe 3 DTN threat levels

Key concepts

- **Accelerationism:** a strategy pursued by right-wing terrorists which uses terrorist violence to create chaos in order to precipitate a race war and hasten the replacement of the democratic system by a national socialist and white ethnostate.
- **Activism:** the efforts of individuals or groups to influence political decision-making through extra-parliamentary action which is within the bounds of the democratic legal order.
- **Democratic legal order:** a society in which the interaction between citizens and the government and among citizens themselves takes place in accordance with principles, procedures and institutions that are rooted in freedoms and rights enshrined in the constitution, specifically the rights of equality, freedom and participation. This is the open society that ensures, among other things, that everyone within the system can live freely and enjoy certain protections.
- **Extremism:** a willingness, grounded in a particular ideology, to engage in activities, whether violent or not, that undermine the democratic legal order. Extremism can take both violent and non-violent forms. Examples of non-violent undemocratic activities include systematically inciting hatred, spreading fear, deliberately disseminating disinformation, demonising and intimidating others, repudiating laws, and attempting to create a parallel society which rejects the authority of the Dutch government and the legal system.
- **Ideological motive:** taking action on the basis of a particular world view in order to achieve a goal, whether general or specific. This goal might be something as vague as: 'things should be different from how they are now'. An ideological motive is distinct from a purely personal, criminal or financial motive.
- **Jihadism:** an abbreviation of 'global jihadist Salafism'. Through armed struggle, supporters of this ideological movement seek to replace 'apostate' governments in the Muslim world with a 'pure' Islamic state. To that end they commit terrorist attacks, including in Western countries. The jihadist movement consists of organisations such as al Qa'ida and ISIS and allied groups, plus networks and individual supporters around the world.
- **Nihilistic extremism:** a willingness to engage in non-violent and/or violent activities that undermine the rule of law and democracy, motivated by a deep-seated hatred

or aversion towards humanity as a whole and/or society. Through various forms of violence, the aim is to create social chaos and instability.

- **Terrorism:** the planning or perpetration of ideologically inspired acts of violence against people, or of acts intended to cause damage resulting in social disruption, in order to create a climate of substantial fear among the general public, effect social change, and/or influence political decision-making.

For a full list of the definitions used in the DTN, please refer to: www.nctv.nl/onderwerpen/dtn/definities-gebruikt-in-het-dtn



Caption

Individuals who are suspected or convicted of terrorist offences are placed together in a special terrorist wing of a detention facility, regardless of their ideological backgrounds. This also applies to jihadists.

1. Jihadism and radical Islam

For some years now, jihadist violence has been the largest component of the terrorist threat in the Netherlands. The main element of this threat is the risk of attacks inspired, encouraged and initiated by Islamic State (ISIS). Most attacks in Europe are carried out by lone actors. The threat posed by transnational networks has decreased somewhat, but the network structures continue to exist in Europe and could pose a greater threat again in the future if counterterrorism efforts were to be reduced. Jihadist material continues to be widely available online and to inspire a younger generation. In some cases, online radicalisation eventually leads to the use of violence.

The threat level for attacks in Europe, including the Netherlands, has risen as a result of the war in Iran. However, this threat is not directly related to the traditional jihadist threat but instead seems to be emanating mainly from pro-Iran groups. Iran itself may also play a role in this regard. Jewish, Israeli and American sites are preferred targets.

Jihadist attacks and arrests in Europe

Limited number of jihadist attacks, but many arrests

The established pattern of jihadist attacks in Europe remains largely unchanged. The number of attacks in Europe has been relatively limited. The previous Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands (DTN) identified a downward trend in the number of jihadist attacks in Europe, and this trend has continued (see the overview of attacks at the end of this report). Even so, various arrests in connection with preparations for attacks in Europe (see the overview of arrests) underline the fact that multiple jihadist attacks have been prevented. This means that various radicalised individuals in Europe, including the Netherlands, still harbour the intention of staging an attack.

In recent years, attacks have mainly been carried out using readily available materials, and often by lone actors. Attacks involving one or two perpetrators using simple implements such as bladed weapons generally result in a smaller number of victims than attacks mounted by international terrorist organisations. However, previous attacks in the West perpetrated by lone actors using cars and trucks have proven very deadly. This has also been the case when perpetrators had access to automatic weapons. There are indications that jihadists are considering using other attack methods, such as drones (see inset).³ Jihadists in the West are known to strike at a range of targets, from Jewish and Israeli sites to random individuals in public spaces.

ISIS ideology has continued to inspire radicalised individuals to commit violent acts in recent years. ISIS and ISIS-aligned media outlets continue to exploit current events around the world in their efforts to encourage attacks in Europe.⁴ Recently though, blasphemy and the war in Gaza have not been clear catalysts of jihadist violence.⁵ With some regularity, perpetrators have exhibited some combination of radicalisation, mental illness and social isolation. In part because they do not operate as part of an organised network, their attack preparations are often difficult for authorities to detect in advance. In some cases, individuals have announced their plans to commit violent acts ahead of time on social media, enabling preventive action.

Possible increased threat from drones

In Antwerp, on 9 October 2025, three men were arrested on suspicion of planning an attack on politicians, including Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever. The suspects allegedly intended to attach a home-made explosive device to a drone to carry out the assassinations.⁶ Drones are not a new weapon in the arsenal of terrorists outside of Europe. Between 2014 and 2017, ISIS made extensive use of drones in Syria and Iraq for purposes including reconnaissance and the production of material for propaganda, as well as military attacks.

No successful attacks perpetrated with or supported by drones are known to have taken place within Western Europe so far. However, plans for jihadist attacks involving drones have been disrupted on a few occasions within the past five years.⁷ Recent research⁸ indicates that mounting a drone attack requires an extensive understanding of explosives and mechanisms for delivery and detonation, as well as detailed planning. Obtaining access to explosives or their precursors is probably an obstacle for jihadists and other actors planning attacks.⁹ For this reason, attacks by jihadists and other actors will more probably continue to involve readily accessible items. Even so, there are a number of reasons to assume that the terrorist threat to the West (and Western interests) posed by drones may increase in the coming years. For example, drone technology has undergone rapid development as a result of the war between Russia and Ukraine. It is also relatively simple now to acquire instructions for reconfiguring a drone to serve as a weapon. Both ISIS and al Qa'ida have disseminated such instructions in recent years. Finally, in their propaganda materials both ISIS and al Qa'ida encourage sympathisers to mount drone attacks.¹⁰

Developments concerning ISIS and al Qa'ida

ISIS networks still present in Europe but, for now, the threat level is lower

Besides the threat of ISIS-inspired attacks as described above, there is also an ongoing risk that ISIS could order or encourage attacks. This risk is intensified by the relative ease with which individuals can contact ISIS elements online. Various large-scale ISIS plots were disrupted in Europe between 2022 and 2024. The threat posed by transnational networks has decreased since 2025. A range of counterterrorism operations in Europe in recent years have dealt a major blow to many of the transnational networks linked to ISIS. Even so, ISIS-aligned networks remain present in Europe and could resume their activities in time. This means that the threat would probably increase rapidly again if counterterrorism efforts were to be reduced.

Online jihadist material, mostly promoting ISIS, has an inciting effect

Jihadist propaganda is plentiful and readily accessible online. Jihadist propaganda and jihadist groups/networks are present both on mainstream social media and on messaging apps and alternative platforms. Some jihadist propaganda is produced by the ISIS provinces themselves. Other jihadist networks are separate from the ISIS provinces in terms of organisation, but still post material online that is in keeping with ISIS's ideological views and its instructions on mounting attacks.¹¹ These networks often maintain a presence on multiple platforms simultaneously. This extensive online presence is sometimes referred to as the 'virtual ISIS caliphate'.¹² Al Qa'ida materials are also still available online, albeit to a lesser extent.

The volume of jihadist propaganda available online has risen considerably in recent years. There are now more channels and groups, and the content they produce generates more views and likes.¹³ However, it is difficult to clarify the true extent of this propaganda, as it is sometimes concealed on less accessible channels. Public authorities and social media companies are unable to effectively suppress it. Jihadist groups are also increasingly capable of bypassing content moderation measures, for instance by using AI. This ongoing online presence ensures that jihadist ideology is able to endure. This in turn bolsters the recruitment of new jihadists and potentially increases their willingness to mount attacks.¹⁴ Young people

are relatively heavy users of the internet and this could increase their chance of becoming radicalised or even embracing violence. This online presence has reduced the necessity of physical networks, including in the Netherlands (see 'Jihadist movement is highly diverse and mainly active online').

The jihadist online ecosystem comprises pro-ISIS groups as well as jihadist influencers and agitators. Jihadist agitators, operating mostly under their own 'brand name', work to make the jihadist message more accessible and disseminate it among a wider audience.

ISKP and its network are under pressure, but the group is resilient

As a result of various arrests in Europe, networks in Europe that are aligned with Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) carried out fewer terrorist activities in 2025. The organisation is also under pressure in Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, there is no doubt that it continues to pose a threat to the West. ISKP is a resilient faction of ISIS that has transformed itself, after various military setbacks, into the ISIS province that poses the greatest danger to the West. It still aims to orchestrate attacks in Western countries. In 2025 it became clear that ISKP has training camps in Pakistan, to which a number of its leaders had previously fled.¹⁵

ISIS threat in Syria and Iraq remains unclear

While ISIS Syria has mounted more attacks in Syria since 2024, the increase is modest in both relative and absolute terms. Even so, it is unclear whether the shifting balance of power in northern and eastern Syria will affect ISIS's scope for activity there, and if so how. Another important factor is whether or not the authorities in Damascus, the Syrian Kurds and countries in the anti-ISIS coalition, particularly the US, continue their efforts in the fight against ISIS in Syria and Iraq.

This is particularly important with regard to the possible threat posed by operations targeting Europe and orchestrated from inside Syria. Large-scale bombing in the Badiya (also known as the Syrian Desert) has killed many ISIS fighters. As a result, the threat of attacks orchestrated by ISIS Syria and targeting Europe is probably smaller now than it was before.

Threat of jihadism originating in Africa and targeting Western countries is conceivable but not acute

Jihadist terrorist groups are active in a large number of African countries, particularly sub-Saharan ones. The members of many jihadist groups in Africa are ISIS supporters. In contrast to large areas of the Middle East, major branches of al Qa'ida remain active in Africa, including Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) in the western Sahel and Al Shabaab in East Africa. Their activities have heightened insecurity and instability in various regions. Most of the groups have a local or regional agenda and therefore do not pose a direct threat to Europe. These groups have a strong anti-Western ideology, however, and could therefore pose a direct threat to the West at some point in the future. The threat could come from Western jihadist travellers who have joined branches of ISIS or other groups, any networks they might be able to maintain in Europe, or their possible return to Europe for the purpose of mounting attacks.

The core of the ISIS organisation has shifted from the Middle East to mainly East Africa in recent years.¹⁶ ISIS Somalia has developed a strong presence there in recent years. This group has grown, attracting jihadist travellers and planning attacks against Western interests. Counterterrorism operations in East Africa, mainly by the US, have reduced the threat posed by ISIS Somalia to some extent. In May 2026, Jihadist groups were gaining strength in Mali. The al Qa'ida-aligned JNIM and Islamic State Sahel Province (ISSP) are mainly fighting the Malian regime, which has the support of Russian mercenaries. If JNIM and/or ISSP were to capture more territory, and particularly if they should gain a permanent hold on it, this could in time increase the terrorist threat vis-à-vis the West. Jihadists from the West could travel to jihadist territory, and jihadists in this territory could then plan and prepare attacks targeting Western interests. It is concerning that counterterrorism efforts are still virtually non-existent in West Africa, the part of the world where terrorism claims the most victims.¹⁷

Al Qa'ida continues to pose a latent threat to Western interests

Nearly 25 years after the attacks on the US of 11 September 2001, the al Qa'ida organisation has changed drastically. It has transformed from a hierarchical organisation with a charismatic leader into a decentralised one with branches in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The threat it poses in and to the West has diminished since the 2000s, but its activities in Africa have increased in recent years.¹⁸ Its terrorist attacks currently still take place mainly in Africa, but the UN has indications that it has growing ambitions for another programme involving 'spectacular' attacks outside this region.¹⁹ Al Qa'ida's propaganda encouraging followers to mount attacks also continues unabated, although it is not clear that it has the operational capacity to follow through on this threat.

The Dutch jihadist movement

Jihadist movement highly diverse and mainly active online

The jihadist movement in the Netherlands consists of a few hundred individuals who embrace ISIS ideology to some degree or another. In multiple cases individuals have become further radicalised and intend to commit acts of violence. In 2025 the General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) had indications that 11 individuals in the Netherlands posed an acute violent threat.²⁰ In the past year, individuals were arrested at an asylum seekers' centre in Dronten²¹ and in the municipality of Vlissingen²² on suspicion of preparing terrorist attacks. In the case of the man in Dronten, his plans were preliminary and not yet concrete.²³ However, the man in question – a 30-year-old Syrian who was detained in late December 2025 – was allegedly planning to mount a terrorist attack on a church in Bremen.²⁴ He had allegedly received orders from ISIS to kill 'unbelievers and Christians' and had already carried out reconnaissance activities to that end.

The jihadist movement in the Netherlands has little in the way of leadership, structure or any great degree of organisation. The older real-world jihadist networks known to exist in the Netherlands currently pose only a limited terrorist threat. Individuals in these circles may still embrace jihadist ideology, but they now rarely engage in jihadist activity. The more relevant threat now is posed by individuals who largely become radicalised online. They actively consume jihadist propaganda through social media and other channels, and could be members of online networks. Within these networks, ISIS propaganda is produced, translated, adapted and further disseminated. Online agitators are mainly active on social media and gaming platforms, where they create, adapt and disseminate jihadist content as well as forging social contacts between jihadists by creating and managing online jihadist groups. These online agitators are often more ideologically committed than their followers, but they too are motivated by social factors such as the status and attention they receive online. While the majority of them are active only online, their digital activities could lead to real-life actions by others. Increasingly, the individuals concerned are minors who become inspired by the ISIS ideology they find online and then rapidly become radicalised. Sometimes they have psychosocial problems.²⁵ For instance, on 3 February 2026 a minor was convicted of disseminating jihadist material.²⁶ Arrests for similar activities took place in April 2025 and again in 2026, when a number of minors were detained on suspicion of activities including using TikTok to incite others to commit terrorist offences (see inset).

Encouraging terrorism on TikTok

In January and February 2026, 16 arrests were made in connection with a large-scale investigation at multiple locations in the Netherlands. These individuals had allegedly used TikTok and other platforms to encourage others to commit terrorist offences. The main suspect managed an account that circulated ISIS propaganda, with Dutch subtitles, on a large scale. Some TikTok posts had been viewed more than 100,000 times. Followers of this account also engaged to a greater or lesser extent in adapting and disseminating ISIS propaganda.²⁷ Four of the suspects were minors. The fact that the suspects involved in this online network lived in locations across the Netherlands shows once again that online platforms facilitate the formation of jihadist networks capable of transcending municipal, regional and national borders.

It is not always clear whether terrorist utterances made within these online networks indicate actual violent intent or simply bluster and a desire for attention.²⁸ So far, this generation of online jihadists in the Netherlands have not yet engaged in violence. However, individuals have been arrested in recent years in connection with activities in online jihadist networks and preparations to commit violent acts. An additional concern is that the current online contacts between individuals who support jihadist ideology may in time lead to the formation of jihadist networks that could pose a new terrorist threat to the Netherlands.

Jihadist travellers, returnees and detention

Increased interest in travelling to jihadist zones, but jihadist travel from the Netherlands remains very rare

Within the jihadist movement in the Netherlands there has been renewed interest in recent years in travelling abroad to join terrorist groups in Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan and elsewhere.²⁹ In absolute terms, the number of successful departures from the Netherlands has been very limited, especially compared with the period between 2012 and 2016. Dutch jihadist travellers could pose a terrorist threat to the Netherlands, given that they may encourage sympathisers in this country to carry out attacks or even help them to do so.

Situation of Dutch nationals in northeastern Syria has changed; little to no change in terrorist threat to the Netherlands

Most jihadist travellers from the Netherlands are currently in Syria. Some of them move about freely within the area controlled by the new regime there and probably do not intend to return to the Netherlands. Male jihadist travellers who joined ISIS were previously being held in detention facilities in the area of northeastern Syria controlled by the Syrian Kurd-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). In the first two months of 2026, military units aligned with the authorities in Damascus regained control of large sections of this area. US units subsequently transferred more than 5,700 male ISIS fighters from former SDF prisons to detention centres in Iraq. Among them were some 10 male ISIS followers with Dutch ties who had previously been held in northeastern Syria. From a threat perspective, the transfer of the Dutch ISIS fighters to Iraq changes nothing. As long as these male jihadist travellers remain in custody in Syria and Iraq, they cannot pose a terrorist threat. However, it is difficult to predict how the situation in Iraq will develop and whether the men will remain in custody there in the longer term.

The situation of women with Dutch ties who are in northeastern Syria is less clear. A few women and children with Dutch ties were held in the Al-Hol camp until it was taken over by the Syrian authorities. The whereabouts of most of these women and children are currently unclear.

It is unlikely that the women could return to the Netherlands under the radar, with a view to committing violent terror-

ist acts. In recent years many other women with Dutch ties have returned from Syria to the Netherlands, where they have been prosecuted. Their impact on the terrorist threat in the Netherlands, including with regard to recruitment, propaganda and financing, has remained limited.

Most returnees no longer pose a threat

Jihadist travellers who return to Europe could pose a violent threat due to their combat experience and international jihadist contacts. Although various attack plots conceived by returnees emerged in the period from 2014 to 2019, the large majority of travellers and returnees now pose no threat of violence. These are individuals who travelled to Syria in the period from 2012 to 2016 and who have now been back in the Netherlands for a long period, in some cases more than 10 years. This group also has virtually no mobilising influence on the Dutch jihadist movement. More than three-quarters of returnees in the Netherlands currently have no close ties with the jihadist movement. This limited threat is probably partly due to the efforts of security and law enforcement agencies, but it is also clear that returnees have so far played a smaller than expected role in influencing the Dutch jihadist community.

Release of jihadists with high risk profile to begin in 2027

In the Netherlands, individuals suspected or convicted of terrorist offences are placed together in a special terrorist wing of a detention facility, regardless of their ideological backgrounds. This also applies to jihadists. This form of detention is intended to prevent such individuals from imparting their ideology and negatively influencing regular prisoners. At the same time, this approach carries the risk that individuals convicted of terrorist offences will make new contacts and form new networks. Prisoners sometimes maintain the relationships they have established on the terrorist wing after they are released. This situation has not changed in the period since the previous DTN, which also noted that, starting in 2027, a few high-risk jihadists are due to be released each year. The release of convicted jihadists may increase the terrorist threat in the years ahead.

Impact of war in Iran on terrorist threat

The threat level for attacks in Europe, including in the Netherlands, has risen as a result of the war in Iran. However, this threat is not directly related to the usual jihadist threat but instead seems to be emanating mainly from pro-Iran groups.

Heightened terrorist threat in Europe due to Israel-US war against Iran

In late February 2026, Israel and the US attacked Iran, sparking a military escalation in the Middle East. The result is a heightened threat to Israeli, Jewish and American targets, including in the Netherlands. The framework agreement of mid-June, which is intended as a stepping stone to further negotiations on ending the war between the US and Iran, does not immediately eliminate that threat. Targets in Europe and European interests abroad could come to figure more prominently in the sights of the Iranian security services and state actors/quasi-state actors linked to Iran, and of terrorist, violent extremist and state-directed criminal groups, proxies and individuals. It cannot be ruled out that these parties may seek to collaborate with each other. This is nothing new for Iran. In recent years, criminals acting on the orders of Iran have mounted attacks on Israeli targets in Sweden, Denmark and the UK.³⁰ This could indicate an increasing entanglement of the threat posed by state-sponsored actors and the terrorist threat. Even if this war in the Middle East should end, the heightened threat could persist for some time thereafter.

The series of attacks on Jewish and pro-Israeli targets, and targets with perceived links to the US, which have taken place in the Netherlands and elsewhere are possibly in line with this threat situation. Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamia (see inset), a previously unknown group, has claimed responsibility for these attacks. As yet, attacks in the Netherlands have not been aimed at taking human lives. The series of attacks targeting Jewish institutions has caused growing fear among the Jewish population. These attacks could feed hate and polarisation and thus undermine the democratic legal order.

Apart from any attacks by violent extremists sympathetic to the Iranian regime, the war could also eventually influence the

threat posed by jihadists, and opposition to that threat. A protracted war could help ISIS if it were to reduce the attention and priority given to counterterrorism measures. Moreover, the conflict probably provides an ideological boost for ISIS, given that its three major enemies – Jewish Israel, Shiite Iran and the Christian US – are all at war and inflicting losses on each other.

Attacks by previously unknown group Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamia

In brief video messages, a group calling itself Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamia (HAYI) claimed responsibility for attacks that took place in the Netherlands, Belgium, the UK and elsewhere in mid-March 2026. The initial attack was an explosion at the entrance to a synagogue in Liège in the night of 8 to 9 March. This was followed by attacks involving incendiary devices and arson at Jewish locations and perceived American locations in Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Thus far, no further attacks have taken place in the Netherlands since the start of the temporary ceasefire between Iran, the US and Israel. In late April, HAYI claimed responsibility for the stabbing of two Jewish men in the UK. It remains unclear whether the perpetrators were acting on the direct orders of HAYI. In the Netherlands, these acts of violence do not seem to have been intended to cause death.

After the security services had quickly established a possible link with Iran, it remained unclear for two months who was behind the previously unknown group HAYI. In mid-May a 30-year-old Iraqi man was arrested on suspicion of coordinating the attacks from inside Türkiye. According to US authorities, the man was working for both the Iraqi-based pro-Iranian militia Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH) and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard.³¹ This is in line with increasing concerns about state actors orchestrating violent extremism and terrorism in Europe.

The fact that the perpetrators may have mounted the attacks in exchange for payment corresponds to Iran's modus operandi. This phenomenon is referred to as 'terrorism as a service'.³² On several previous occasions Iran has used proxy organisations to mount attacks to further its own interests. For example, in Western countries Iran either coerces or pays criminal organisations and other actors to carry out liquidations of political dissidents and attacks on Israeli and Jewish institutions and individuals.

Possible change of course for Hamas in Europe

In March 2026, a court in Berlin handed down prison sentences to four men (including one Dutch national) in connection with their membership of Hamas.³³ In a case that began in 2023, the men were accused of creating and managing stockpiles of arms in multiple European countries. The court concluded that the suspects were indeed members of Hamas and that they had acted on the orders of the organisation rather than on their own initiative. The men denied having been members of Hamas. Their actions were mainly preparatory in nature, from sourcing and checking weapons to keeping them on hand for future use. The role of the Dutch national corresponds to this profile. He was a member of the logistics network and was seen as a link for reconnaissance and facilitation activities. The court stressed that the arms stockpiles were part of operational measures by Hamas in preparation for possible attacks against Israeli and Jewish institutions in Europe. In European countries including Germany, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Poland and Bulgaria, weapons have been found and/or individuals detained by the authorities in recent years in connection with possible plans by Hamas to stage attacks in Europe.

Hamas has consistently denied preparing attacks in Europe and emphasised that its fight is with Israel.³⁴ As far as is known, Hamas has never mounted an attack in Europe, and it has always considered Europe to be a strategic base where it can raise funds, recruit followers and attract attention for the Palestinian cause. In addition to its political network, Hamas probably also has an operational network in Europe. A genuine change of course by Hamas (or factions within the organisation), possibly prompted in part by the US-Israeli war against Iran, could further increase the threat to Jewish and Israeli targets in Europe in particular.



Caption

Fire at an accommodation centre for asylum seekers in Loosdrecht. Skirmishes between police and demonstrators have occurred in the Netherlands on multiple occasions recently. Members of right-wing extremist groups have also been present.

2. Right-wing terrorism and extremism

The violent threat posed by right-wing terrorism in the Netherlands has remained virtually unchanged for several years. In particular, young people who become radicalised within the online right-wing terrorist milieu could possibly embrace violence. Arrests for preparing terrorist attacks have remained limited for some years.

In the context of social unrest relating to migration and asylum policy, there have been several violent incidents that were possibly motivated by right-wing ideology or encouraged by right-wing extremists. The same applies to incidents of intimidation and threats targeting local and national politicians.

Right-wing terrorist threat remains virtually unchanged

The threat level for right-wing terrorist violence in the Netherlands has remained virtually unchanged for several years now. Arrests of individuals from right-wing terrorist networks have been relatively limited in recent years. In most cases these were young people arrested on suspicion of making online or real-world threats to carry out right-wing terrorist attacks or being members of right-wing terrorist organisations.³⁵ However, there are scant indications that specific, far-reaching preparations for attacks were undertaken in any of these cases. This is possibly due to the young age of the individuals who typically belong to these networks. Planning an attack is possibly beyond the capability of many young people. In the past six months, two minors were arrested in the Netherlands who were active in the online, right-wing terrorist milieu and suspected of planning an attack.

Defence locations possibly intended targets

This year, a Dutch minor was convicted of inciting and preparing right-wing terrorist attacks on the Flemish parliament in Brussels and the Dutch military airbase in Deelen in 2024.³⁶ In March of this year, an 18-year-old man was arrested in connection with indications that he was involved in right-wing extremist circles and allegedly was planning attacks at 'a military base' and elsewhere. Some right-wing terrorists believe that targeting locations associated with the Defence organisation would enable them to cause a maximum amount of societal chaos. However, the threat that right-wing terrorism poses to the Defence organisation as a whole is generally low in the Netherlands.

Followers of right-wing terrorist ideology seem to be mainly inspired by the concept of accelerationism, a right-wing terrorist strategy with links to Nazism and replacement theory.³⁷ The strategy aims to speed up the creation of a white ethnostate. Accelerationists are trying to spark a 'race war' by creating as much chaos in society as they can, mounting attacks that target both people and critical infrastructure networks. Individuals in online right-wing terrorist networks also regularly create their own particular violent worldview by piecing together elements of right-wing extremist ideology, misog-

hate and hatred of specific population groups (e.g. Jews), combined with a fascination with extreme violence.³⁸ In this way, vulnerable and impressionable minors active in online right-wing terrorist circles are also exposed to online networks consisting mainly of nihilistic violence, extremely violent content ('gore') and occult and satanic content.³⁹

The transnational right-wing terrorist online milieu, which is estimated to have a few hundred Dutch nationals among its active members, is a loosely organised network of shifting online groups and channels. This makes it difficult to determine exactly how many Dutch nationals are active in this online ecosystem. Participants are often vulnerable and easily influenced young people, some of whom suffer from psychosocial problems. Online networks bring like-minded people into contact with each other, and there is little leadership or hierarchy. Instead, members encourage or inspire each other to commit acts of violence. In isolated cases, small groups of individuals also meet up in person.⁴⁰

Right-wing terrorist propaganda circulates widely within the online milieu. Right-wing terrorists such as Anders Breivik and Brenton Tarrant are celebrated as heroes. Their manifestos and various instructions for creating 3D-printed weapons and materials for attacks are also distributed within this milieu. This enables individuals active within the networks to acquire the necessary knowledge and possible inspiration to mount attacks. The radicalisation of Dutch nationals within the right-wing terrorist milieu could therefore afford them access to materials for use in an attack, giving rise to a potential terrorist threat.⁴¹

Right-wing terrorist organisations claim responsibility for incidents in various countries

Right-wing terrorist organisations in various countries remain active and continue to encourage individuals in Western countries to form cells.⁴² In late 2025, three members of The Base were arrested in Spain.⁴³ The Base is an organisation that operates transnationally, including in the Netherlands, propagating accelerationism and recruiting people into violent and extremist online networks.⁴⁴ The Ukrainian branch of the organisation has claimed that it was behind the recent murders of a colonel in the Ukrainian secret service and a border patrol officer. There are concerns about possible ties between The Base and the Russian authorities and about the possibility that the organisation could eventually begin using Ukraine as a base for destabilising attacks and acts of sabotage in Western Europe. The ambition of the Ukrainian branch of this organisation is to create a 'white homeland' in Ukraine.⁴⁵ In September 2025, another accelerationist group, Atomwaffen Division (AWD), announced a relaunch on Telegram. In a few online messages, this transnational organisation suggested that it had active cells in the US, the Netherlands and Ukraine. The scale and nature of its activities remain unclear.⁴⁶

Right-wing extremism So far, training in physical resilience is not associated with a threat of violence

Adherents of right-wing extremist ideology who do not intend to commit acts of terrorist violence do still organise summer camps, survival exercises, martial arts training and events in a bid to improve and protect the physical resilience of the 'white race'. While this does not pose a risk of violence in the Netherlands at present, it could potentially increase the risk of people becoming *willing* to commit violence. Members of Active Clubs, as well as other right-wing extremist groups in Europe, have again participated in a right-wing extremist martial arts event that was organised in the Netherlands.⁴⁷ In some images of the event people can be seen performing the Hitler salute.

Violent incidents, intimidation and threats in the context of right-wing extremism

Since the summer of 2025, dozens of demonstrations have taken place in opposition to immigration and the possible opening of asylum-seekers' centres. Mobilisation for these demonstrations takes place mainly online. Participants have been a mix of violent and non-violent protesters, with some harbouring right-wing extremist or anti-institutional extrem-

ist ideas (see the inset in the section on anti-institutional extremism). The occasional presence of members of hooligan groups makes for a more mixed (and less predictable) picture. Expressions of right-wing extremist sentiments have been a feature of some of these demonstrations, which have included Hitler salutes, other Nazi references and the display of the 'Prince's Flag'. 'Antifa'⁴⁸ has also been regularly presented as an enemy or scapegoat, and in some cases participants have called for violence and attempted to engage antifascists in violent confrontations. A relatively large proportion of the demonstrations have escalated into more serious disturbances. In a number of cases, municipal councillors and other politicians have been threatened, and current or expanded accommodations for asylum seekers have been vandalised.⁴⁹ In addition to right-wing extremists themselves, other individuals inspired by them may also engage in violence, intimidation or threats. The precise ideologies and intentions of individual perpetrators are often unknown. As a result, local politicians sometimes feel inhibited from expressing and acting on their positions when demonstrations degenerate into intimidation, threats or violence. Such self-censorship undermines the rule of law and its institutions, in this case local government.

Presence of 'Defend' groups at anti-asylum protests

'Defend' groups have been present at various recent demonstrations. In the media, a picture has emerged of coordinated right-wing extremist groups that hijack demonstrations, sometimes with the deliberate intention of perpetrating violence. For now the authorities believe that Defend groups are fluid, heterogeneous and organised to varying degrees, and not formed around any consistent ideology. It is possible that the visibility of a few of these groups, such as Defend Netherlands, contributes to the image of an organised phenomenon of violent demonstrations, but actual events point to a complex mix of sentiments that prompts some participants to turn to violence. For now, the differences between these groups appears to stand in the way of any structural cooperation or a national organisational structure.

Normalisation of right-wing extremism possibly contributing to violence

A common feature of most right-wing extremists in the Netherlands is their desire for their own culture, identity, ethnicity or 'race' to dominate society. Most right-wing extremists in the Netherlands mainly engage in non-violent extremism, which means spreading and normalising their ideas. Many therefore reject violence, at least for now, because it would stand in the way of normalising their ideology. Their aim is to influence society in a non-violent way. This does not mean, however, that a non-violent approach will not lead to violence; indeed, right-wing extremists and sympathisers who are prepared to use violence may feel emboldened in their actions if they perceive that their ideas are gaining traction within society.⁵⁰

Dissemination of right-wing extremist propaganda, disinformation and conspiracy theories takes place both online and offline. Offline activity takes place in the public space, and consists of actions such as putting up posters and stickers on objects and displaying banners and other materials during demonstrations. Right-wing extremists are increasing their visibility and creating national and international networks.⁵¹ Their visibility could contribute to the normalisation of right-wing extremist ideas. A notable development in the past six months is the more or less overt expression of Nazi ideology, which could indicate that some right-wing extremists are feeling emboldened enough in the current social climate to express their beliefs openly. However, some Dutch right-wing extremists take a more discreet approach to normalising right-wing extremist ideas. They organise social events such as receptions, lectures and conferences in order to disseminate their ideology, strengthen their ties with like-minded groups at home and abroad, and recruit new members and sympathisers. In some cases, they deliberately seek to forge connections with the most extreme right-wing parties and individuals, in the hope of generating support for and further dissemination of their right-wing extremist ideas.



Caption

In February 2026 multiple individuals faced trial on suspicion of belonging to a criminal sovereign network. This group was suspected of planning an attack on the home of the then-mayor of Leeuwarden, Sybrand Buma, and other actions targeting the NATO Summit in The Hague.

3. Anti-institutional terrorism and extremism

Dozens of anti-institutional extremists are willing and able to use terrorist violence.

Moreover, aggression, threatening behaviour and intimidation on the part of the broader anti-institutional extremist movement could undermine the ability of our public administration and democratic legal order to function effectively.

The demonisation of opponents, a sense of crisis, the possession of weapons and the legitimisation of 'resistance' could lead to violence

The extremist segment of the anti-institutional movement believes in the theory that a malevolent elite is conspiring against the public, oppressing, exploiting or even murdering ordinary people. Various related narratives add further details to this mindset. Notable examples of these are the sovereign citizen narrative,⁵² the infusing of religion⁵³ and spirituality into the 'malevolent elite' narrative,⁵⁴ ideas about the existence of a 'woke' and/or Marxist world order, and conspiracy theories involving ritual satanic abuse.⁵⁵ Adherents of the 'malevolent elite' narrative generally assume that the elite have a hidden agenda aimed at total world domination. Events such as pandemics, geopolitical tensions and national or local government decisions are viewed with this framing. Many anti-institutional extremists believe that the malevolent elite deliberately create and orchestrate crises in order to justify emergency measures and freedom-limiting legislation, and thus expand its control over ordinary citizens.

In some individuals, this world view can lead to a severe existential crisis and a belief in a battle between good and evil. These feelings inspire some individuals to prepare for a what they believe is an imminent crisis. In some anti-institutional circles, the acquisition of weapons and training in their use is legitimised or even actively encouraged. The idea of a 'right of resistance' against the perceived elite is an element of the anti-institutionalist narrative. While this is often limited to purely theoretical discussions, in some cases there have been open calls for armed resistance. In combination, the demonisation of opponents, legitimisation of resistance and possession of weapons could lower the threshold for acts of violence. Dozens of anti-institutional extremists in the Netherlands are willing and able to commit acts of terrorist violence.

Various anti-institutional extremists have been arrested in recent years on suspicion of terrorism and other offences. For some adherents of this world view, these arrests serve to confirm their beliefs. They see the arrests as evidence that the government is oppressing citizens. A few consider them to be proof that these arrestees have come 'too close to the truth'. These beliefs strengthen their dedication to their convictions.⁵⁶

Agitators play a key role in the anti-institutional movement

The wider anti-institutional movement in the Netherlands lacks any central organisation, clear ideology or common objective.⁵⁷ The anti-institutional movement expanded during and shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic. It has clearly not shrunk in the years since. Within the movement there are dozens of agitators actively promoting the narrative.⁵⁸ Some of the networks that emerged during the pandemic continue to exist. Cooperation between anti-institutional individuals and groups is sometimes opportunistic in nature, with the rejection of government or institutions serving as the common denominator. Agitators play a major role in the dissemination of anti-institutional and related narratives, through channels such as lectures, courses, in-person gatherings, online channels and sometimes quite professional-seeming alternative media platforms. Certain anti-institutional narratives sometimes gain a fleeting popularity. For example, people seem to be increasingly receptive to the narrative around ritual satanic abuse, probably due to the growing reach of social media

channels disseminating it and the eagerness of its followers to share their views. In some cases, this abuse narrative probably plays a role in the radicalisation of anti-institutional extremists who are prepared to employ violence. For instance, two members of the group prosecuted in 2024 stated that the narrative was a major motivation ‘to take action’ against the malevolent elite.

Migration as an issue in anti-institutional extremist ideology

In recent years, migration appears to have become an increasingly important issue within anti-institutional circles.⁵⁹ According to academic research, references in the anti-institutional online ecosystem to immigration, ‘replacement’ and ‘remigration’ have increased sharply since 2023, having occurred only rarely prior to that time.⁶⁰ This points to an increasing overlap with themes associated with right-wing extremism. However, in contrast to right-wing extremists, anti-institutional extremists base their ideas primarily on the narrative of the malevolent elite, and perceive migration policy as proof that the malevolent elite intend to oppress the people. Some believe that the malevolent elite employ migration policy as a strategy to ‘divide and conquer’ in order to ultimately enslave ‘ordinary Dutch people’. Others adhere to a broader definition of one’s ‘own people’. Where right-wing extremists mainly take this to mean the ‘white race’, anti-institutional extremists are generally acting on behalf of ‘the people as a whole.’

Very small segment still willing and able to commit terrorist violence; risk of spontaneous eruption of violence remains

While various arrests of anti-institutional extremists in 2024 and 2025 have reduced the direct threat posed by these two groups, a very small segment of the anti-institutional movement continues to pose a threat of terrorist violence. In their view, a violent confrontation with the alleged malevolent elite would be a legitimate action.⁶¹ This threat of violence is often directed at regional or local targets in their immediate vicinity, such as mayors, members of the municipal executive, municipal officials, the police or bailiffs. This threat is less likely to materialise as large-scale terrorist attacks targeting random members of the public and aimed at terrorising society.

In contrast to jihadist and right-wing terrorist milieus, most anti-institutional extremists are individuals over the age of 45 who have become radicalised later in life. They come from many walks of life and are relatively well represented in rural areas. Interaction with like-minded individuals takes place mainly online, but in some cases they may form small, in-person networks, which are often tied to a particular region.

Some anti-institutional extremists in the Netherlands not only harbour the intention of posing a violent threat but are also capable of doing so. They are often relatively more knowledgeable about and proficient in the use of instruments of violence. Many of them have a fascination with guns and practise using them. Some have arsenals of legal and illegal weapons such as knives, batons, crossbows, firearms and air guns. Air guns can be lethal at medium and close range.⁶²

If individuals from the wider anti-institutional movement come into contact with government authorities such as bailiffs, police officers, youth workers or other officials, this could in some cases spark unplanned eruptions of violence. In some cases it could lead to very serious violent incidents. Individuals who use violence are often suffering from a complex set of personal and sometimes psychological problems. These may reduce impulse control and contribute to threatening or violent behaviour.⁶³ Due to this and other factors, it is not always easy to determine whether violent behaviour in individuals is primarily an expression of anti-institutional ideology.

Anti-institutional conspiracy theories can be used to legitimise intimidation, doxing and violence

Generally speaking, anti-institutional ideology amplifies institutional distrust and demonisation of opponents and, for some followers, implicitly or explicitly legitimises violence. In the eyes of anti-institutional extremists, academics, journalists, and politicians and other public officials can be held personally responsible for carrying out the agenda of the malevolent elite, or may even be seen as its representatives. These officials may therefore be subjected to intimidation, doxing and violence, or anti-institutional extremists may call for citizen's arrests and 'tribunals'.⁶⁴ Threats and aggression against political office holders undermine our public administration and institutions and therefore the democratic legal order itself. When politicians and mainstream (or quasi-mainstream) media channels endorse anti-institutional conspiracy theories, thus giving them a wider distribution and possible grounds for acceptance, this poses an increasing threat to the democratic legal order. Another future threat could arise if such narratives were to be exploited by a state actor in order to sow division in Dutch society and undermine Dutch institutions.



Caption

There are major concerns about the potential long-term mental and physical harm to young people who are active within nihilistic extremist online networks.

4. Nihilistic extremism

There are growing concerns in the Netherlands about the threat of nihilistic violence, which can assume various forms. This threat stems from an international online milieu of crime-oriented networks. An unknown number of Dutch young people are active within this ever-evolving transnational ecosystem. Within it, the roles of perpetrator and victim are frequently intertwined, and detection is often difficult. Although much of the violence originating from this wider online ecosystem is not extremist per se, it is giving rise to ideologically motivated nihilistic violence. The term ‘nihilistic violent extremism’ is used to describe violence perpetrated by actors within these networks on the basis of a misanthropic, destructive worldview. The role of ideology, however, is often unclear and varies from case to case. In some cases this threat vector does present a limited terrorist threat.

Nihilistic extremists seek destruction, motivated by an ideology that can be difficult to discern

The nihilistic online ecosystem has grown significantly in recent years. Within this ecosystem there is often no clearly identifiable ideological component or justification for violence. Frequently there is no detectable ideology or extremism at all, and the violence is committed simply for its own sake, motivated by pure sadism. That is to say: deriving satisfaction from inflicting pain on others or perpetrating violence against them.⁶⁵ In some cases, however, the term ‘nihilistic extremism’ may be justified. This is the case where violence is motivated by a negative view of humanity (misanthropy) and aimed at the destruction of people and society.⁶⁶ An individual might reason that he hates his life and the people around him and therefore wants to destroy not only himself but everyone he knows too. Each individual case must be assessed to determine the extent to which ideology plays a role and whether the label ‘extremism’ or, in the most serious cases, ‘terrorism’ is appropriate. In some cases there is overlap with other extremist and violent currents and phenomena, such as right-wing extremism, Satanism and ‘gore’.⁶⁷ Due to the fascination with violent content (gore), videos of jihadist beheadings or school shootings also regularly circulate within this milieu.

Nihilistic extremist networks have a dynamic online structure

Within a broader range of extreme and transgressive online subcultures, the themes of nihilism and misanthropy are dominant in some networks and groups. These networks and groups are in constant flux. A well-known network within this sphere is ‘the Com’ (‘The Community’). The criminal activities of the Com network can be grouped into three pillars: cyber-crime (hacking, SIM card fraud and cryptocurrency theft), sextortion (extortion and doxing) and offline criminal activities (vandalism, arson, random attacks on strangers, stabbings and terrorism). There is regular overlap between the activities and groups within these pillars, and individuals may be members of multiple groups at the same time.⁶⁸

Various sadistic groups operate within the Com network, with their own channels, chat groups and objectives. These groups are often referred to using the umbrella term ‘764’, but in reality they are a variety of transnational online groups in which violence, sexual abuse and the glorification of such transgressive acts are ends in themselves. 764 is the name of the best-known group, but there are several other groups active with largely the same objective as 764. Within these groups, members frequently flirt with the ideology and especially the aesthetics of Nazism and Satanism.⁶⁹ Another group active

within the Com network that has in recent years been repeatedly linked to acts of violence in Europe is No Lives Matter. Manuals on how to commit murder are circulated within this group, which is dominated by nihilistic, misanthropic and neo-Nazi beliefs.⁷⁰

Another extreme online subculture is the True Crime Community (TCC). The TCC is characterised by fandoms⁷¹ that glorify attackers and mass murderers. The TCC also proved a source of inspiration for various school shooters abroad who had been active within the network.⁷²

Intertwining perpetrator and victim roles and escalation of violence hinder detection

Nihilistic networks recruit young people using grooming strategies involving manipulation, blackmail and systematic desensitisation. Within these networks the roles of perpetrator and victim often overlap: at first, young people are manipulated and blackmailed; later they often turn into perpetrators or instigators themselves. This creates complex dilemmas for detecting, dealing with and aiding these young people, because traditional distinctions between guilt, coercion and vulnerability become blurred.⁷³

Within nihilistic extremism, violence and chaos are simultaneously an end in themselves and a means to an end. Gaining status and recognition by committing and sharing images of violence is central to this subculture.⁷⁴ Status and prestige are closely bound up with the severity and cruelty of violent acts: the more extreme the violence, the greater the recognition. This has led to a number of offences in the Netherlands too – some of them extremely violent – and in some cases in other countries to deadly violence. In the most extreme instances, young people are forced to kill or abuse people or pets, to self harm, or even to commit suicide.

This hunger for status leads to hierarchical relationships in groups and a febrile atmosphere among members of the group.⁷⁵ In videos and still images, members document acts of violence – which they often commit themselves – in great detail, not simply for shock value or in order to acquire as much online status as possible, but also to gain power over their victims or other group members. This pursuit of recognition and control helps to perpetuate and escalate the violence. This system also ensures that members are willing to use violence, reinforces in-group loyalty and makes detection and infiltration by law enforcement agencies and researchers more difficult, as undercover operatives would have to participate in such acts and be exposed to harmful content.⁷⁶

Nihilistic extremist youths pose a potential terrorist threat

There are major concerns about the potential long-term mental and physical harm to young people who are active within nihilistic extremist online networks. The exact number of Dutch participants in such networks is difficult to determine. They number in the dozens: often minors, girls as well as boys who are potentially both victim and perpetrator.⁷⁷ Regularly viewing extremely violent images can give rise to violent fantasies, desensitisation, a negative view of humanity and an aversion to society, especially in vulnerable minors. It may also lower their threshold for committing violence, making these young people attractive targets for recruitment by terrorist networks and groups.

Abroad, several attacks have been carried out by individuals active in nihilistic extremist online subcultures. In the Netherlands, various individuals are being prosecuted for alleged involvement in nihilistic extremist networks.⁷⁸ For example, a 25-year-old man from Eindhoven is being prosecuted for participation in an organisation with terrorist intent. According to the Public Prosecution Service, he is the founder of No Lives Matter.⁷⁹ This is a group that also disseminates right-wing extremist views, and in which he is alleged to have glorified right-wing terrorist attackers.



Caption

Left-wing extremists generally refrain from using violence in support of protest actions, which have included blocking rail lines. When they do become violent, it is usually in the context of resisting arrest.

5. Left-wing extremism and animal-rights extremism

The willingness to use violence within the left-wing extremist movement in the Netherlands is limited and does not appear to be increasing. Left-wing extremist circles in the Netherlands currently pose no threat of terrorist violence. Protests generally take the form of lawful activism. When more hard-edged protest actions do occur, they involve vandalism, intimidation or doxing.

Palestine remains the primary issue; threat of violence remains limited

The left-wing extremist movement in the Netherlands consists mainly of anarchists and, to a lesser extent, Marxist-Leninists. Within the movement there is a pronounced pro-Palestinian sentiment, with Western countries viewed as complicit in the violence against Palestinians. Some groups frame this issue within an anti-imperialist agenda, in which Israel and the United States are considered bad actors by definition.⁸⁰ The attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel have so far led to only a limited response within the left-wing extremist movement. Demonstrations are generally peaceful, though there have been ongoing acts of graffiti and vandalism against buildings belonging to companies that are involved (or believed to be involved) in supplying arms to Israel or in activities by Israeli settlers, as well as against government locations and universities.⁸¹ Within antifascist circles, another issue that motivates anarchists in particular to take action is the conviction that fascism lives on in far-right speech, movements and parties, leading to the fear that history could be repeated. To prevent this, contemporary antifascists embrace a strategy of direct action: actively disrupting far-right initiatives in the guise of self-defence.⁸² In the Netherlands, the methods used by antifascists have been the same for many years: committing acts of vandalism, disrupting meetings and demonstrations, intimidating individuals and doxing.⁸³ Violent antifascist actions abroad, such as arson attacks on politicians in Germany⁸⁴ and the killing of a right-wing student by antifascist counter-demonstrators in France,⁸⁵ have not resonated with antifascists in the Netherlands or engendered a greater willingness to use violence.

There is currently no threat of terrorist violence from left-wing extremist circles in the Netherlands; at most there have been incidents involving intimidation or damage to property. At the present time, the use of serious, life-threatening violence remains taboo.

Sabotage of critical infrastructure abroad

Left-wing extremists in other European countries are more inclined to use violence than left-wing extremists in the Netherlands. In addition to antifascist violence, left-wing extremists in countries such as Germany, France and Italy have committed acts of vandalism, sabotage and arson targeting critical infrastructure. In their statements, they often claim that such attacks are directed against the state, the arms industry or the perceived nexus between capitalism and climate change. Attacks have caused millions of euros in damage to businesses and public authorities and affected segments of the population through, for example, power, internet and telecommunications outages or disruption to train services. In a sabotage campaign in Italy, anarchists attempted to disrupt transport to venues for the Winter Olympic Games. An arson attack on a cable bridge in Berlin on 3 January 2026 affected 45,000 households and around 2,200 businesses.

Thus far, protest actions targeting critical infrastructure are not high on the agenda of left-wing extremists in the Netherlands, and few, if any, reactions to the attack in Berlin have been observed. In contrast to these other countries, there are not nearly as many left-wing extremists in the Netherlands who are willing to commit violence. In this country there are at most a few dozen anarchists with violent or insurrectionist intentions. In recent years, increasing numbers of individuals from abroad have become involved in the Dutch left-wing extremist milieu. There are currently no indications that their presence in the Netherlands is leading to an increased willingness to use violence among Dutch left-wing extremists.

Possible resurgence of antimilitarism in response to (geo)political trends

Antimilitarism saw a modest revival in early 2025, partly as a result of Israel's violence against Palestinians and the Dutch government's response to it, as well as the NATO Summit held in the Netherlands in June 2025. This revival primarily took the form of demonstrations, graffiti and damage to government institutions and the arms industry, or protest actions against persons or companies seen as responsible for genocide.⁸⁶ Antimilitarist protest actions have declined in number since the NATO summit. They may increase again in the near future in response to the planned expansion of the armed forces or a position the Netherlands takes in response to a given geopolitical trend.

Animal-rights extremism remains limited in the Netherlands

Violent extremist protest actions by animal-rights extremists remain rare in the Netherlands. The animal-rights movement is generally not inclined to be violent. While peaceful demonstrations or possibly intimidating remarks aimed at people involved in livestock farming are the norm, unlawful acts are also committed on occasion. Examples include covert filming of video footage in stables or abattoirs.⁸⁷ Individual extremists may use more radical language without this being part of a planned campaign.

Around the time of the parliamentary elections, threats against politicians emerged from animal-rights extremist circles. In addition, the Public Prosecution Service is currently prosecuting a man for allegedly threatening 13 butchers' shops in Groningen and Drenthe between August 2024 and September 2025.⁸⁸ However, such excesses do not point to a resurgence of animal-rights extremism in the Netherlands.

Annexes

Annexe 1

Overview of terrorist attacks and arrests for planning attacks

Below is an overview of the most significant terrorist attacks and arrests (in connection with planning an attack) in Europe since 18 May 2025. Convictions for such offences are not noted in the list because they relate to past arrests and are therefore not necessarily relevant to the current threat situation. This overview gives a good indication, but the list is not exhaustive. Some arrests are not yet public knowledge and are therefore not mentioned in this DTN. And not all arrests ultimately result in convictions for terrorist offences. In addition, in the case of some attacks or arrests, a terrorist motive may emerge only at a later stage of the investigation. The dates and locations of attacks are marked in **bold and red**.

December 2025

- **1 December 2025, France:** the French authorities arrested two minors on suspicion of plotting a terrorist attack. According to French media, they were looking to strike Israeli and Jewish targets. One is 16 and from Chechnya, while the other is a 17-year-old French national. Both are believed to be ISIS supporters.
- **12 December 2025, Germany:** five men were arrested in Bavaria on suspicion of preparing an attack on a Christmas market. The authorities suspect a jihadist motive, but it is believed that no specific target for the attack had been chosen yet. The suspects are three men of Moroccan origin, aged 22, 28 and 30, a 56-year-old Egyptian and a 37-year-old Syrian.
- **12 December 2025, Germany:** a 21-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of preparing a jihadist attack. The man, who is from Tajikistan, is believed to have entered Germany on a visa in June 2024.
- **18 December 2025, the Netherlands:** the police arrested a 29-year-old Syrian at his home in Vlissingen. The AIVD suspects that he intended to commit a terrorist attack in Europe during the holiday period. The man is believed to be an ISIS member. No specific target was named.

January 2026

- **3 January 2026, Germany:** as yet unidentified individuals carried out an attack by setting fire to a cable bridge in the Lichterfelde district of Berlin, damaging high-voltage cables. A total of 45,000 households and 2,200 businesses were left without power until 7 January. Responsibility for the attack was claimed by the left-wing extremist Vulkangruppe.

February 2026

- **13 February 2026, France:** a man who had been convicted of a terrorist offence back in 2013 attacked three police officers with a knife near the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. The police were able to subdue him, after which he was taken to hospital, where he died. None of the officers were injured in the attack.
- **17 February 2026, France:** two 16-year-olds were arrested for planning a jihadist attack. The suspects allegedly planned to attack a concert venue. The presumed leader of the two had a plan to steal firearms and confessed to having chemicals at home in order to conduct 'combustion tests'.
- **26 February 2026, Norway:** a 17-year-old youth was arrested on suspicion of preparing a jihadist attack. The youth, of Norwegian origin, planned to carry out a bomb attack on a NATO base near Stavanger, in southwest Norway. He had also expressed support for ISIS and is said to have been seen at school with an ISIS flag.

March 2026

- **8 March 2026, Norway:** an explosion occurred at the US Embassy in Oslo, Norway, probably caused by an incendiary device. No one was injured and the damage to the building was minimal. Three brothers aged between 20 and 29 were arrested. The three suspects are Norwegians of Iraqi descent. They are believed to have had terrorist motives related to the war in the Middle East.
- **28 March 2026, the Netherlands:** a 21-year-old man was arrested at his home in Eindhoven in connection with a terrorism investigation. The arrest followed a

report from the AIVD that the man was an ISIS supporter. He is suspected of incitement to commit a terrorist offence and participation in a terrorist organisation.

- **March 2026:** Police arrested an 18-year-old youth who was allegedly active in online right-wing extremist circles and planning attacks on a 'military base' and other sites.

April 2026

- **10 April 2026, the Netherlands:** a 25-year-old man from Den Bosch was arrested on suspicion of preparing and facilitating a terrorist offence, and of engaging in terrorist training. .

May 2026

- **28 May 2026, Switzerland:** a man attacked passers-by with a knife at the railway station in Winterthur, injuring three. The man is known to the police as an ISIS sympathiser. He also has psychiatric problems.

Series of attacks/explosions/acts of arson in March/April 2026 claimed by HAYI:

- **9 March 2026, Belgium:** explosion at a synagogue in Liège, Belgium.
- **13 March 2026, the Netherlands:** explosion and arson at a synagogue in Rotterdam. Four individuals arrested.
- **14 March 2026, the Netherlands:** explosion at a Jewish school in Amsterdam.
- **16 March 2026, the Netherlands:** explosion near the Bank of New York in the Zuidas district of Amsterdam.
- **23 March 2026, United Kingdom:** arson attack on ambulances belonging to a Jewish charity in London.
- **24 March 2026, Belgium:** arson attack on a car in a Jewish neighbourhood.
- **28 March 2026, Paris:** 17-year-old youth arrested for attempting to detonate an explosive device at the Bank of America.
- **3 April 2026, the Netherlands:** explosion at the Israel Centre in Nijkerk.
- **10 April 2026, Germany:** explosion at an Israeli restaurant in Munich.
- **15 April 2026, United Kingdom:** attempted arson attack at a synagogue in London.
- **15 April 2026, United Kingdom:** arson attack on a Persian-language media organisation in London.
- **15 April 2026, North Macedonia:** arson attack at a synagogue in Skopje. Several individuals arrested. Responsibility for the attack was claimed by HAYI; according to the authorities the suspects are linked to ISIS.
- **18 April 2026, United Kingdom:** explosion caused by an incendiary device at a synagogue in London.
- **28 April 2026, United Kingdom:** attempted arson attack at a memorial site in London for Iranians killed during anti-government protests in Iran.
- **29 April 2026, United Kingdom:** stabbing in the London neighbourhood of Golders Green in which two Jewish men (aged 76 and 34) were injured. The 45-year-old suspect, a man of Somali origin was arrested at the scene and is said to have shouted 'Allahu Akbar'. He was already known to Prevent, the British government's counter-terrorism programme.

Annexe 2

Definitions

- **Accelerationism** – a right-wing extremist ideology centred on using terrorist violence to create chaos in order to precipitate a race war and hasten the replacement of the democratic system by a national socialist and white ethnostate.
- **Activism** – the efforts of individuals or groups to influence political decision-making through extra-parliamentary action which is within the bounds of the democratic legal order.
- **Al Qa'ida-allied** – groups, networks, cells or individuals that maintain contact with the al Qa'ida core but are not under its operational control. Allied groups with their own regional agendas are HTS, AQIM, AQAP, AQIS and al Shabaab.
- **Al Qa'ida core** – the original al Qa'ida organisation. Based near the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, it maintains contact with allied groups (each with its own regional agenda) and portrays itself as these groups' 'mother organisation'.
- **Anti-institutional movement** – supporters of the anti-institutional movement oppose the government and other institutions such as the judiciary, the traditional media and the scientific community. On the basis of conspiracy theories, they view these institutions as part of an international 'malevolent elite' against which they believe the Dutch people are in a state of war.
- **Caliphate** – an ideal Islamic state, primarily located in the region where Sunni Islam has its origins. On 29 June 2014, ISIS proclaimed a 'caliphate' in Syria and Iraq. This physical 'caliphate' came to an end in late March 2019. A caliphate is traditionally headed by a caliph. ISIS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi appointed himself caliph.
- **Da'wa** – literally a 'call' to Islam. In its traditional sense, it refers to the call to Muslims to practise Islam and convert non-believers. It encompasses preaching and missionary work. In the context of jihadism, da'wa is primarily concerned with preparing for jihad.
- **Democratic legal order** – a society in which the interaction between citizens and the government and among citizens themselves takes place in accordance with principles, procedures and institutions that are rooted in freedoms and rights enshrined in the constitution, specifically the rights of equality, freedom and participation. This is the open society that ensures, among other things, that everyone within the system can live freely and enjoys certain protections.
- **Extremism** – a willingness, grounded in a particular ideology, to engage in activities, whether violent or non-violent, that undermine the democratic legal order.
- **Far left** – a collective term covering supporters of anarchism and Marxist-Leninism. Key beliefs include anti-globalism, anti-capitalism and anti-liberalism. While far-left activists remain within the bounds of the democratic legal order, left-wing extremists undermine the democratic legal order, and far-left terrorists commit acts of violence targeting human lives on the basis of far-left ideologies.
- **Far right** – a collective term covering supporters of ultra-nationalism and xenophobia (e.g. antisemitism and Islamophobia). The DTN also uses the term 'right-wing extremism' to describe the activities of this group. While far-right activists remain within the bounds of the democratic legal order, right-wing extremists undermine the democratic legal order, and far-right terrorists commit acts of violence targeting human lives on the basis of far-right ideologies.
- **ISIS** – an acronym for 'Islamic State in Iraq and Syria'; 'Daesh' is the equivalent acronym in Arabic. Despite the loss of its physical 'caliphate' in Syria and Iraq, ISIS continues to carry out attacks in the region. It also still has the intention to carry out attacks in Western countries.
- **Jihad** – The word's basic meaning in the Quran is 'an effort in support of a worthy cause'. Its primary sense is thus an ethical one: humans have a divine mission to do battle against the evil in themselves. A second meaning is a commitment to the interests of Islam and the community of believers. A third meaning is armed struggle.
- **Jihadism** – an abbreviation of 'global jihadist Salafism'. Through armed struggle, supporters of this ideological movement seek to replace 'apostate' governments in the Muslim world with a 'pure' Islamic state. To that end they commit terrorist attacks, including in Western countries. The jihadist movement consists of organisations such as al Qa'ida and ISIS and allied groups, plus

networks and individual supporters around the world.

- **Jihadist traveller** – an individual who leaves their own country to join a jihadist group in a jihadist conflict zone.
- **Lone-actor terrorist** – an individual who is not part of a terrorist organisation or hierarchical system and receives no external direction in planning and carrying out an attack.
- **National profile** – the Netherlands' international appeal as a potential terrorist target, that is, how terrorists perceive the Netherlands – not the Netherlands' overall image abroad.
- **Nihilistic extremism** – A willingness to engage in activities, whether violent or not, that undermine democracy and the rule of law, motivated by a deep-seated hatred or aversion towards humanity as a whole and/or society. Through various forms of violence, the aim is to sow social chaos and instability.
- **Operative** – an individual – whether an attacker, accomplice, supporter or facilitator – acting under orders from a terrorist organisation.
- **Polarisation** – the emphasis on differences in society, resulting in an increase in tensions and in deeper divisions between groups.
- **Radicalisation** – a process involving an increasing willingness to accept and act on even the most extreme implications of an ideology. This can cause people or groups to engage in deeply offensive behaviour, infringe the personal freedoms of others, reject society or resort to violence.
- **Resistance** – in its broadest sense resistance is the product of social resilience (societal factors that promote resistance) and government countermeasures (effects of government measures promoting resistance).
- **Returnee** – a jihadist traveller who, after spending time with a jihadist group in a jihadist conflict zone, returns to the country they left or another country that is not a jihadist conflict zone.
- **Terror** – state tyranny directed at the state's own citizens, often aimed at preserving the power of the dominant political, religious or ethnic elite. This term is often used synonymously with 'terrorism' in the media and elsewhere.
- **Terrorism** – the planning or perpetration of ideologically inspired acts of violence against people or of acts intended to cause property damage and calculated to result in social disruption, in order to create a climate of fear among the general public, achieve social change,

and/or influence political decision-making.

- **Wilayat** – the Arabic name for one of ISIS's self-proclaimed 'provinces'. ISIS has also proclaimed provinces outside Syria and Iraq, for example in Libya and Yemen.

Annexe 3

DTN threat levels

The threat level, which is set on the basis of the Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands (DTN), reflects the general terrorist threat over a longer period of time. In order to determine the threat level, many different factors are taken into account. The nature, origin, specificity, visibility and timeliness of these factors may vary. Threat levels are indicated on an ascending scale from 1 to 5. The threat levels are used to qualify the scope of the estimated risk that the Netherlands will face a terrorist attack. Fluctuations in the nature, extent and background of the threat therefore do not always immediately warrant raising or lowering the threat level. Furthermore, a concrete threat against a person, object or vital sector in the Netherlands need not lead to a rise in the general threat level, even if systems other than the DTN do raise their levels. The bullet points that appear under the threat levels below are intended to illustrate the kinds of situations that may occur under a given threat level. This also means that not all of the bullets need apply if a particular threat level is in force.

Level 1 out of 5	The terrorist threat to the Netherlands is minimal <i>It is unlikely that a terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands.</i> • We have no indications that there are individuals in the Netherlands who pose a terrorist threat. • We have no indications that the Netherlands is a potential target of terrorists abroad.
Level 2 out of 5	The terrorist threat to the Netherlands is limited <i>There is a slight chance of a terrorist attack in the Netherlands.</i> • There is evidence of radicalisation that could eventually pose a threat. • Terrorists have the intention of carrying out attacks in Europe but have made no specific preparations to that end.
Level 3 out of 5	The terrorist threat to the Netherlands is significant <i>A terrorist attack in the Netherlands is conceivable.</i> • There are individuals and groups in the Netherlands that are becoming highly radicalised and pose a threat. • We have no indications that terrorists are preparing an attack in the Netherlands, though it is conceivable. • Terrorists are carrying out or plotting attacks in Europe.
Level 4 out of 5	The terrorist threat to the Netherlands is substantial <i>There is a real chance of a terrorist attack in the Netherlands.</i> • Terrorists see the Netherlands as a target. • Terrorists are carrying out attacks in surrounding countries. • We have possible indications that terrorists are preparing an attack on the Netherlands.
Level 5 out of 5	The terrorist threat to the Netherlands is critical <i>A terrorist attack in the Netherlands is imminent.</i> • We have specific indications that terrorists are about to carry out an attack in the Netherlands. • An attack has taken place in the Netherlands. • There is a chance of a follow-up attack in the Netherlands.

Remarks on Level 5:

- The level can be raised to 5 for just one specific part of the country.
- Level 5 will be maintained for a limited time only.

End notes

- 1 AIVD Annual Report 2025, p. 27.
- 2 In 2015, the NCTV and AIVD concluded that most Salafists accept the Dutch democratic legal order and reject the use of jihadist violence in society. Until December 2023, the DTN reported on polarisation, extremism and radicalisation. Since December 2023, the DTN has limited itself to the subjects of violent extremism and terrorism, and therefore no longer reports on Salafism. Over the past decade, the Salafist movement in the Netherlands has undergone a number of developments. On 30 June 2026, the NCTV and AIVD published the analysis 'Tradition in Transition' on developments within the Salafist movement in the Netherlands since 2015.
- 3 '3 verdachten opgepakt die aanslag wilden plegen op premier De Wever met drone: "Jihadistisch geïnspireerd"', VRT Nieuws, 9 October 2025
- 4 'Nearing the end of 2025, what is the state of the Islamic State?', The Soufan Center, 19 December 2025.
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- 8 Stijn Willem van 't Land, *Tussen mogelijkheid en realiteit*, Leiden University, June 2026.
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- 10 Lucas Webber, 'Islamic State Increasingly Targeted and Threatened Western Sporting Events in Advance of the Paris Olympics', Jamestown Terrorism Monitor, 21 August 2024. 'ISIS circulates "detailed attack manuals" on using drones to hit games', The National, 5 June 2024.
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- 12 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, June 2025, p. 19.
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- 14 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, December 2025, p. 16.
- 15 'The BLA and ISKP clash in Balochistan', Jamestown, 20 September 2025.
- 16 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, June 2024, p. 16.
- 17 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, December 2025, p. 14.
- 18 Colin Clarke & Clara Broekaert, 'The global state of al-Qa'ida 24 years after 9/11', CTC Sentinel, September 2025.
- 19 United Nations, 'Thirty-seventh report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities', 4 February 2026.
- 20 AIVD, Annual Report 2025, p. 22.
- 21 'Syrische terrorismeverdachte aangehouden in Dronten', OM.nl, 17 December 2025.
- 22 Syrische terrorismeverdachte aangehouden in Vlissingen', OM.nl, 30 December 2025.
- 23 'Opgepakte Syriër (34) bereidde vanuit azc Dronten aanslag voor in Nederland: hij werd de sjeik genoemd', BN DeStem, 11 March 2026.
- 24 'Syriër die vlak voor Kerst in Vlissingen werd opgepakt, beraamde aanslag op kerk in Bremen: plannen zeer concreet', De Stentor, 25 March 2026.
- 25 See, for instance: 'Radicalisering en psychosociale problematiek: Beter begrijpen, beter ingrijpen', WODC, 5 June 2025.
- 26 Judgment by Rotterdam District Court, case no. 10-194128-24, 3 February 2026. ECLI:NL:RBROT:2026:838, Rechtbank Rotterdam, 10-194128-24.
- 27 'Aanhoudingen in verband met opruiming tot terrorisme op sociale media', OM.nl, 10 February 2026.
- 28 AIVD, 'A Web of Hate', 2025, p. 12.
- 29 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, December 2025, p. 28.
- 30 NCTV, Threat Assessment on State-Sponsored Actors, July 2025, p. 32.
- 31 'Iraqi national arrested and charged with providing material support to Iranian backed terrorist organizations and directing attacks targeting U.S. citizens and interests', US Department of Justice, 15 May 2026.
- 32 The expression 'crime as a service' is also used.
- 33 'Berlin court jails 4 men over Hamas weapon stockpiles', DW, 25 March 2026.
- 34 'Suspected Hamas members accused of planning attacks appear in German court', Reuters, 2 October 2025.
- 35 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, December 2025, p. 26.
- 36 'Frieze jongen plande aanslag op Vlaams Parlement en vliegbasis', NOS, 31 March 2026; 'Minderjarige veroordeeld voor voorbereiden terroristische aanslag Brussel', De Rechtspraak, 31 March 2026.
- 37 This right-wing extremist conspiracy theory describes immigration by Muslims and people of colour as a deliberate and strategic demographic attack by a Jewish and/or left-wing elite on the original white population of Europe. In addition, LGBTIQ+ people, feminists and people in mixed-race relationships are considered complicit in the conspiracy. In the minds of these extremists, such people are compromising racial purity and the

future viability of white society. It is a fact that the demographic composition of Western countries has changed over the past few decades, but adherents of replacement theory believe that this is the result of malicious intent.

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- 40 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, June 2025, p. 28.
- 41 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, December 2025, pp. 25–26.
- 42 Urszula Mrozowska, 'The Resurgence of The Base in Europe: The Spanish Cell and a Transnational Accelerationalist Network,' GNET Insights, 13 April 2026.
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- 47 'Dutch Active Club Chapter Advertises Recently Held Fight Night Event', Counter Extremism Project, 10 February 2026.
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- 50 AIVD, Annual Report 2025, p. 28.
- 51 'May 30 "Remigration Summit" in Porto, Portugal, Promoted by Far-Right Leaders', SITE Intelligence, 26 January 2026.
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- 53 Some anti-institutional extremists blend their ideology with Christian ideas about good, evil and the end times.
- 54 Some anti-institutional extremists blend their ideology with forms of spirituality; spiritual practices and rituals often play a role in the anti-institutional movement. 'Conspiratorality' is a blend of conspiracy theories and elements of spirituality.
- 55 According to certain conspiracy theories, the malevolent elite is guilty of not only oppressing the population, but also child trafficking and satanic abuse.
- 56 AIVD, Annual Report 2025, p. 25.
- 57 NCTV, Terrorist Threat Assessment for the Netherlands, December 2025, p. 30; K. Rekawek, T. Renard, J. Lanchès, M. Zotova, M. Hartgers, M. Finnsjö, A. Bolpagni, M. Lombardi, S. Rizieri Lucini & J. Ware, 'Recent Developments of Anti-Government Threats: Online Activities and Transnational Connections', ICCT, March 2026, p. 2.
- 58 AIVD, Annual Report 2025, p. 25.
- 59 Rekawek et al., 'Recent Developments of Anti-Government Threats,' pp. 5, 27; AIVD, Annual Report 2025, p. 24.
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- 69 Marc-Andre Argentino, 'Beyond the Headlines: Arrest Data and Drivers of Nihilistic Violent Extremism in the Com Network', Maargentino.com, 18 September 2025.
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The first part of the paper discusses the importance of understanding the cultural context of the research. It highlights the need for researchers to be sensitive to the values and beliefs of the communities they are studying. This is particularly important in the field of education, where cultural differences can significantly impact learning outcomes.

The second part of the paper focuses on the methodology used in the study. It describes the process of selecting participants, collecting data, and analyzing the results. The authors emphasize the importance of using a mixed-methods approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

The third part of the paper presents the findings of the study. It discusses the results of the quantitative data analysis and the insights gained from the qualitative interviews. The authors conclude that there are significant cultural differences in the way that students learn and that these differences should be taken into account when designing educational programs.

Finally, the paper offers some practical recommendations for educators and researchers. It suggests that educators should strive to create a culturally inclusive classroom environment and that researchers should continue to explore the relationship between culture and education.

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