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## The AIVD's role in national security

Many institutions in the Netherlands play a part in safeguarding national security. What is the AIVD's role in this system, and what makes the service unique?

### The AIVD is in the vanguard

The AIVD is very much in the vanguard of national security. It seeks to identify risks and threats as early as possible, before they become apparent. This is done by conducting in-depth investigations to gather intelligence material.

### A special relationship

The AIVD "enriches" the information collected and then shares it with a variety of other organisations. In particular, the service has a close and special relationship with police Regional Intelligence Units (RIDs). Their personnel can also be asked by the AIVD to gather intelligence material, and their local and regional knowledge is invaluable to the work of the service.

Developments abroad can also affect Dutch national security, of course. For this reason, the AIVD conducts investigations in other countries as well as the Netherlands. And that requires international co-operation. Operational information is shared with fellow services abroad in order to develop new insights together, which in turn strengthen national security at home.

The AIVD works intensively with local government, too, as part of its efforts to counter Islamic radicalism. It is important to realise that, whilst such radicalism certainly does not always lead to terrorism, it can in itself pose a threat to Dutch society. Even though they reject armed struggle, the isolationist, anti-Western attitudes of some groups of radical Muslims can still inflame ethnic tensions and cause social polarisation. Such ideological currents are growing and could eventually threaten the continuing existence of the democratic state.

### The AIVD monitors potential threats to people, property and services

The AIVD is also expected to have a clear picture of the interests against which a threat is directed. To do this, the service looks at things from a defensive perspective: where might the threat come from, where are the vulnerabilities and what is it about the subject that attracts danger? This enables it to assess the potential threats from the point of view of the possible target, which may be people, property or services vital to the national security interest. Based upon the information gathered in this way, other organisations can then act to safeguard the interests concerned from the threats and risks identified.

### The AIVD is not a police service

The AIVD investigates the underlying roots of risks and threats to national security. It has the access to information, the powers and the expertise to do this, but that is not the same as investigating criminal acts. The AIVD identifies threats and advises others, including policymakers and public officials at both the national and local levels, as to how they might act upon the information received. But it is then primarily up to them how they respond and what strategies they devise to counter any specific threat. Creating a resilient society is

everybody's responsibility, after all. Only if all concerned play their part will the Netherlands be a safer place.

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