



# Local Safety and Security

## How is it organised from national to local level in the Netherlands

**Before you lies an overview of Dutch governance structure in the field of local safety and security, on national, regional and local level. It is a document filled with examples of how we work in the Netherlands on local safety and security and it can serve as a source of inspiration in making Albania's local safety and security policy more responsive and effective and include civil participation.**

**The document zooms in on the cooperation between national, regional and local level in the field of local safety and security. Furthermore, it explains how the governance structure works and how the interests of various groups are represented.**

**Local safety and security is a shared responsibility of a range of security partners at different levels of governance in the Netherlands. These partners work together in different partnerships at national, regional and local level, depending on the scope of the issue. Figure 1 explains this further.**

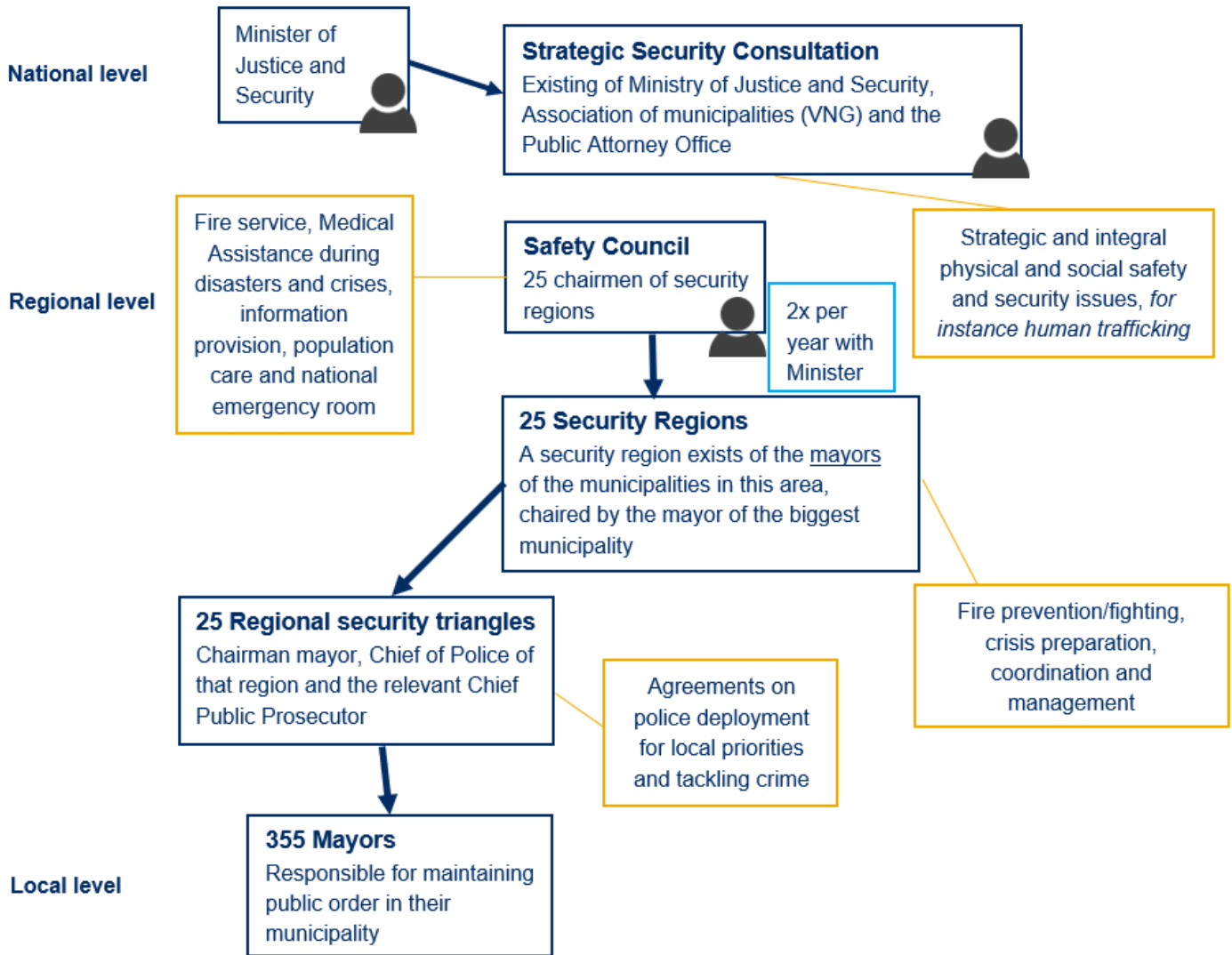


Figure 1 Local safety and security structure in the Netherlands

### National Security Policy

In Albania there is currently no national integrated governance structure and policy regarding local safety and security, that would provide the framework for priorities, actions, cooperation and funding of local safety and security. At the moment there is no institutional structure at national level for local safety and security. The legal framework for dealing with local safety and security issues is largely segmented among sector legislation and there are no specific requirements for establishing institutional and financing mechanisms at municipal level to enable the development of an integrated policy framework when it comes to local safety and security plans, strategies and programmes. Furthermore, there are overlaps in the division of tasks between central and local government in local safety and security.

In this chapter we explain how we organize this structure on national level in the Netherlands. In the following video, Michiel Geuzinge, senior policy advisor Public Order and Safety explains the existing partnerships at the national level in the Netherlands on the theme of local safety and security. He specifically focuses on the Strategic Security Consultation (*Strategisch Beraad Veiligheid*) and the Safety Council (*Veiligheidsberaad*).



The Strategic Security Consultation (SBV) is a consultative body consisting of the Ministry of Justice and Security, Ministry of Interior, Public Prosecution Service and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities. Together, these governmental bodies discuss safety at the national and local level. Four times a year they come together and engage on a wide variety of issues that impact the physical and social safety of the country. The subjects discussed must be of an administrative and strategic nature. During the SBV it is key that all different opinions of the various parties are expressed.<sup>1</sup>



#### *Possible national ban on the lightning of fireworks by the public*

An example of a topic discussed within the SBV is whether or not to impose a national ban on lightning of fireworks by citizens during New Year's. In the Netherlands citizens are allowed to light fireworks from 18:00 on 31 December, until 02:00 on 1 January. Municipalities can further regulate this via general local regulations, for example assigning certain areas as firework-free areas where it is not allowed to use any fireworks. General discussions increased in the last years on the risks of private fireworks use also following an increase in accidents, and a call for further regulation. So far the government has curbed the timeslot in which fireworks can be lit, but hold on to the right to lit fireworks by the public. Municipalities keep the power to impose stricter local regulations.

<sup>1</sup> VNG, Strategisch Beraad Veiligheid (SBV), <https://vng.nl/artikelen/strategisch-beraad-veiligheid-sbv>, (accessed July 21, 2020)

### *Safety Council*

The Safety Council is comprised of the chairmen of the 25 safety regions [see chapter Regional Security Policy for more details on what a safety region is] and functions as a national platform for the safety regions. The safety regions are charged with the organization of the fire services, disaster- and crisis management and medical assistance. As this council collectively positions itself regarding security and safety issues, it is an important conversation partner for the Dutch Minister of Justice and Security when making agreements relating to disaster and crisis management. This is why the Minister of Justice and Security also joins the council during two of their four gatherings per year.<sup>2</sup>

### *Association of Netherlands Municipalities*

The Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) plays an important role in both organs. It represents the interest of all 355 local governments and engages the central government on all aspects of local safety and security. It coordinates policies, discusses new legislation and the implementation of measures with regard to safety and security. For this purpose, the VNG works closely together with the Strategic Security Consultation and the Safety Council. For example, the president of the VNG is member of the delegation to the Strategic Security Consultation. This collaboration is also visible in the fact that the Safety Council aligns its course with the management board of the VNG as well as the National Police Chief. Lastly, the president of the Safety Council is vice president of the management board of the VNG.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 2 Composition of the Strategic Security Consultation

<sup>2</sup> Veiligheidsberaad, Het Veiligheidsberaad, <https://www.veiligheidsberaad.nl/>, (accessed July 21, 2020)

<sup>3</sup> VNG, Openbare orde en veiligheid, <https://vng.nl/rubrieken/openbare-orde-en-veiligheid>, (accessed July 21, 2020)

## Regional Security Policy

The Netherlands is divided into 25 security regions, which are all committed to the safety of the inhabitants and visitors of that area. This commitment comes with a responsibility and several tasks in the domain of fire service, medical assistance, public order, safety and disaster- and crisis management. Among the main responsibilities of the security region is their responsibility to prevent and fight fires and it therefore has to ensure the presence of fire brigades. In addition, they prepare for risks, disasters and crises by setting up an approach and risk profile for each region. This risk profile prepares the region for the most likely accidents to occur there. Subsequently, the coordination, control and combat of these disasters and crises also fall under their responsibility.

The board of a security region consists of all mayors of the member municipalities, as mayors in the Netherlands are responsible for a swift and proper response during risks, disasters and crises in their municipality. The mayor of the biggest municipality is generally the chairman of the security region. This person is authorized and accountable when a risk, disaster or crisis takes place in multiple municipalities of the region. If a crisis goes beyond the regional level and reaches the national scale, such as during a major flooding or a flu pandemic, the central government comes into play.

### GRIP

**Grip 1)** Daily incidents, handled by the emergency services themselves;

**Grip 2)** More serious incidents, where measures outside the scene of incident are needed. An operational team at regional level is formed;

**Grip 3)** Situations with social unrest. The mayor will be involved together with a municipal policy team and representatives of the main organizations involved;

**Grip 4)** When a disaster or crisis transcends the boundaries of a municipality, the chairman of the security region is put in charge and a regional policy team (RBT) is formed;

**Grip 5)** When an incident involves several security regions, the chairmen of these security regions can jointly scale up, in which the chairman of the region where it all started takes the coordinating role.

A good collaboration and coordination between government structures, companies and inhabitants is essential for a proper response in each cases, as many stakeholders of different domains are usually involved. In order to ensure this, each security region has to comply with the same nation-wide emergency management procedure, which is called the Coordinated Regional Incident-Management Procedure (GRIP).<sup>4</sup> The GRIP-structure plays an important role in upscaling during a disaster or crisis. Upscaling takes place based on the severity and extent of the event. This procedure distinguishes five scales of the scope of an incident and enables the security region to quickly respond to a situation by sending the right persons to the location. Therefore, the responsibilities and powers may change in case of upscaling. In the following textbox the various levels of upscaling are explained.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> CCV, Grip Structuur, <https://www.raadsledenveiligheid.nl/crisisbeheersing/grip-structuur>, (accessed July 21, 2020)

<sup>5</sup> Rijksoverheid, Veiligheidsregio's, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/veiligheidsregios-en-crisisbeheersing/veiligheidsregios>, (accessed July 21, 2020)

Within this video, Rob Kooij, advisor of the mayor of Diemen on crisis management introduces the security region Amsterdam-Amstel and explains the main issues the security region is involved in.



### *The 1992 Bijlmerramp*

In his video Rob Kooij refers to the plane crash in 1992, commonly known in the Netherlands as the 'Bijlmerramp', named after the neighbourhood in Amsterdam where the fatal accident occurred. On 4 October 1992 a Boeing 747 cargo plane of Israeli airline El Al experiences mechanical problems shortly after its departure from Schiphol Amsterdam airport. The plane loses two of its engines and has permission to make an emergency landing, but upon deploying the landing things go wrong and the plane crashes into the Bijlmer neighbourhood, into a corner where two apartment buildings are connected resulting in a huge fire. A special rescue team of the Amsterdam fire force is used for the rescue and salvage operation. Initially it is thought that hundreds of people lost their lives, as many illegals reside in the apartment buildings. The official death toll is set at 43, including 3 crew members and a passenger of the plane.

### **Local Security Policy**

As mentioned before, the institutional structure on governmental level concerning local safety and security in Albania is not yet in place, not on national level, but also not on local level. Most municipalities do not have a policy document on local safety and security approved. Also knowledge and experience about the role and responsibilities of local government in local safety and security is limited

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### Involve your Citizens

In Albania the level of awareness among the community on their role to prevent and address issues of concern for local safety and security, does not encourage their proactive engagement with the municipality and police in dealing with security issues. The municipality can gain much from involving the citizens in the (implementation of) local safety and security policies. *Involve, inspire and engage them!*

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In the Netherlands, the responsibility for the development of a local safety policy lies with the municipality, with the mayor having the main responsibility of the enforcement of public order and safety. Each municipality is represented by the mayor in one of the 25 security regions. Practically, the role of the municipality mainly entails good coordination between all (security) parties that are involved in safety issues on the local scale, such as the police and the public prosecution service. Depending on the subject, many other parties are also involved, such as schools, social district teams, entrepreneurs and the fire brigade. Municipalities furthermore ensure that the agreed upon measures with these parties, which are generally listed in an implementation plan, are enforced. Within this implementation plan, the goals with regard to safety are explained.

The Netherlands Association of Municipalities (VNG) plays an important role in the drafting of this implementation plan, as they have developed a general method on how to draft according to various steps. Their method consists of five themes which should be incorporated in each plan: (i) a safe living environment, (ii) commerciality and safety, (iii) youth and safety, (iv) physical safety and (v) integrity and safety.<sup>6</sup>



Within this video, Mrs. Bronsvoort, mayor of the municipality of Oost-Gelre, explains her role regarding the safety of her municipality, as well as what her role in the security region and the VNG Committee of Safety and Governance specifically entails. She explains how the various roles and responsibilities are divided and that by handling local safety and security together, we are *stronger!*

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<sup>6</sup> CCV, Integraal Veiligheidsbeleid, <https://hetccv.nl/onderwerpen/integraal-veiligheidsbeleid/>, (accessed July 21, 2020)

# Building Better Futures

by strengthening democratic local government

VNG International is an expert in strengthening democratic local government in developing and transitional countries. Local governments play a key role in the provision of basic services such as water, waste management, health care and housing. They have profound impact on areas like safety, food security, rule of law, and women's rights. Our projects contribute sustainably to better futures for people, communities and countries.

VNG International runs over sixty projects worldwide, funded by various donors including the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and the World Bank. We are embedded in the Dutch local government sector and we have an extensive international network of experts in the fields of decentralisation and local administration at our disposal.

In 1993 VNG International was founded by Vereniging Nederlandse Gemeenten (VNG), the Association of Netherlands Municipalities. Globally we are represented through our daughter company in Tunis, as well as over 15 local project offices.

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