2nd Dutch-International Resilience Symposium (2nd DIRS)

Together stronger in complex crisis situations
- Wednesday, November 25. 2026 -

Program and explanation workshops

8.30 – 9.30 hrs	*Registration and welcome reception*
9.30 – 9.40 u	**Opening by Gert-Jan Ludden/Eelco Dykstra** (co-*chairs*)
9.40 - 10.10 u	**What can we learn from Japan when it comes to resilience?** *Kozuke Nakazawa (Crisis & Resilience Journalist Visiting Researcher University of Hyogo)* 
10.10 – 10.40 u	**Analysis of the current threat landscape for the Netherlands** Head of Unit Resilience Directorate of Information AIVD 
10.40 – 11.10 u	**Current developments in the national/regional resilience program** *Paul Gelton* (Program Manager Resilience/Strategic Advisor NIPV) 
11.10 – 11.45 u	*Break and visit exhibition*
11.45 – 12.30 u	**Panel discussion and introduction of the new SVDC book on Resilience** **Marianne Schuurmans-Wijdeven** (Mayor of Haarlemmermeer/Portfolio holder population care Safety Council), **Paul Gelton** (Program Manager Strengthening societal resilience & adaptability NIPV), **Colonel Michiel Verlinden** (Commander Territorial Operations Centre Royal Netherlands Army), **Jan Pol** (Founder Infra Capacity Alliance ICA and **Veda Woods** (USA - CEO Global Cyber Security Advisory Group)     
12.30 – 13.30 u	*Lunch and visit exhibition stands*
13.30 – 14.15 u	First round of Workshops (see explanation below)
14.30 – 15.15 u	Second round of Workshops (see explanation below)
15.15 – 15.45 u	*Break and visit exhibitions stands*
15.45 – 16.35 u	**Courage, resilience and personal fortitude** ***Oleksyi Anulja*** *(Ukrainian defender and former prisoner of war)* 
16.35 – 17.00 u	Interaction with the audience: Next Steps?

17.00 – 18.30 u *Closure of the conference, followed by a reception*

18.30 Buffet dinner (buffet is optional, not included in the registration fee)

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Additional information

The previous edition of the Symposium in 2025, attracted participants from over 20 countries. Also this year, the international dimension of this Symposium not only includes speakers from Japan, Canada, the United States of America and from the Caribbean, but the organizers again extend a warm welcome to international delegates who wish to participate either on-line or onsite/in-person. For online international participants we stream the entire plenary program - including two Workshops - with a captioning service to support Dutch-English translation. For in-person/onsite international participants we also have a number of students available to provide assistance during the Symposium. The standard fee for online participation is Euro 145,00 (ex-VAT/BTW). For international participants who wish to participate in-person, the fee is Euro 325,00 (ex-VAT/BTW). Please note that all payments must have be received upfront.

Explanation of workshops**

Workshop 1
National development of coordination and emergency support points: 2026 is an important year. Safety regions and municipalities are running pilots and practicing the setup of coordination points (Safety Region level) and emergency support points (municipal level). At the end of this year, this project will be evaluated as a precursor to its implementation in 2027. Project leader of the national emergency support points pilot project, Charlotte van Ruyven, will discuss the developments and initial results of this project with those interested in this workshop.

Workshop 2
Caring for the population and population care: societal resilience and the long-term crisis. Crises change; they become more complex and prolonged. How do you prepare the population for such a crisis? The public communication campaign 'Think Ahead' already shows that responsibility is shifting. Terms such as self-reliance and citizen assistance are crucial, with locally rooted networks forming a foundation. These networks are built up during the cold phase and are crucial in the warm, longer-term phase and in the aftermath. Population Care, which collaborates with a wide variety of social partners and crisis organizations, both nationally and locally, stands at the center of this shift. This workshop highlights the developments within Population Care. Roxane Daniëls (Manager of a Resilient Society VNG).

Workshop 3
From critical infrastructure to citizens: how do we keep the Netherlands running during a (digital) crisis? How does the Netherlands keep running when a (digital) crisis strikes – for example, during a large-scale cyberattack or the failure of energy and data networks? In this workshop, we explore the vulnerability and resilience of our critical infrastructure. We look at the role of grid operators, the government, and emergency services, but also at what this means for citizens. Using scenarios, we discuss in an interactive workshop which agreements, cooperation, and communication are needed to keep society operational as much as possible when things go wrong. The central question: what is the minimum required to guarantee continuity when the unthinkable happens? How do you ensure that critical infrastructure continues to function, administrators can continue to steer, organizations can collaborate, and citizens can continue their daily lives as well as possible? Annemeike Schermer (Portfolio manager IAM - CISO office) and John Busch (Business Continuity Manager - ENEXIS)

Workshop 4

Civil-military cooperation, what's next?

The Netherlands is in the Grey zone; The prolonged phase of competition in which alertness is heightened but not yet alarming. Or is it? Subtle and not-so-subtle disruptions to daily activities are already influencing our thinking and actions. The government warns us of prolonged power outages, 30 meters of copper disappear during the NATO summit, large-scale data theft affects us personally, and Extinction Rebellion receives permission to demonstrate/camp against the fence of the LNG terminal on the Maasvlakte. Simultaneously, Defence is preparing for the protection of its own and allied territory. Defence takes you through its preparation for this hybrid threat in the Netherlands. This will cover the role and task of the National Territorial Command and your role. In addition to military activities, we will also address reciprocity and self-reliance in this session. These are keywords on which a resilient society depends. We are no longer at the beginning; much has already been done, but we are not there yet. The presenter for this workshop is Colonel André van Wijk; Senior Lead Planner Homeland Defence and Host Nation Support

Workshop 5

Drinking Water Supply Outage: Representatives from VEWIN (Association of Water Companies in the Netherlands) and the Groningen Water Company (Daphne Diephuis and Jeroen Kruims) explain what drinking water companies do to prevent outages (VRA, supply plan), what happens if the power goes out (10 days self-sufficient), and what happens if water no longer comes out of the tap (72-hour emergency kit, emergency drinking water). What can you expect from the drinking water company in your region in such scenarios, and what is wise to prepare in advance yourself?

Workshop 6

Cybersecurity and Europe. Friend or Foe? Europe is threatened on all sides: not only is there a war raging on our immediate eastern border, but our relationship with China is also strained, and since Trump's re-election, little seems to remain of the friendship between the EU and America. This means it is important that we can defend ourselves digitally. However, are we succeeding sufficiently? Are we not dependent on (tech) companies outside Europe? What can we do to become more digitally autonomous? Can regulation be the answer, or is it actually the problem? In the workshop, Liesbeth Holterman, Director of the trade association Cyberveilig Nederland, will delve deeper into this. Innovation, state actors, vital infrastructure, and legislation and regulations will be discussed in conjunction.

Workshop 7

Religion, Death, and Moral Resilience: Strategic Lessons from Russia and Ukraine. How military personnel deal with death and dying is not only a military issue, but above all a moral one. This workshop explores how religion shapes that moral experience in the current war in Ukraine. We will analyze this field of tension from two perspectives. On the one hand, Russian strategic culture, in which the Orthodox Church frames death and sacrifice as a duty to the motherland. On the other hand, empirical research into Ukrainian soldiers, for whom religion is a personal source of moral orientation and resilience rather than an instrument of the state. The workshop demonstrates how religious narratives influence strategic behavior, societal resilience, and the handling of loss. Relevant for professionals in defense, crisis management, and integrated security who wish to better understand the moral drivers behind modern warfare. By Joris van Bladel Ph.D. (Senior Associate Fellow at Egmont-Royal Institute for International Relations/ Associate Fellow at Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy AIES) and Willemijn Kemp MA MMC CMC (Business Representative Europe Oleksyi Anulja)

Workshop 8

Building a resilient Netherlands together: The Citizen Reserve is a Dutch citizen initiative that trains residents to act effectively in crisis situations. These reservists undergo a 30-hour training course and deploy citizens in a general sense during complex and prolonged crisis situations, but can also provide specialist assistance. The initiative was launched in 2025, and the pool now numbers a few thousand trained volunteers. For example, they can play an important role in staffing the emergency support points set up by the municipalities. The Director of the Citizen Reserve, Ralf van Vegten, will elaborate on the task, organization, and working methods of this fine private initiative.

Workshop 9

Uniform structuring of civilian reserves according to the SES model. SES (Stichting Extra Samen), the administrator of the National Healthcare Reserve, is exploring the possibilities for new civilian reserves on behalf of the Ministry of Defence. Crises are increasingly prolonged and multidimensional. This requires not only an acute response but also additional, flexibly deployable capacity. Civilian reserves offer a solution for this: civilian professionals who can be temporarily deployed during crises, supplementing regular structures. Examples include people who fall (partially) outside the regular workforce, such as pensioners or professionals from other sectors. As a civil society organization, SES demonstrates with the National Healthcare Reserve that this works and enjoys broad support. Precisely because the deployment is temporary and supplementary, participation does not constitute a structural burden for employers, and the civilian reserves contribute to societal resilience. This makes the SES approach scalable and applicable across multiple sectors such as engineering, logistics, and security. The strength of the civilian reserves lies in organizing this capacity in advance, so that it can be deployed quickly and targeted when needed. During the workshop, we will share how this model works in practice and what this means for the structuring of citizen reserves in other domains. The workshop will be led by the Crisis Coördinator/Project Leader at Stichting Extra Samen.

Workshop 10

The Salvation Army as a structural partner in resilience: The Salvation Army supports people on a daily basis who are disproportionately affected in (individual) crisis situations, such as the homeless, people with mental health issues, debt, or addiction problems. Additionally, it is active in vulnerable neighborhoods where people live who do not automatically trust the government, are capable of becoming resilient without help, or independently set up activities to promote resilience. Within a crisis context, the Salvation Army fulfills a dual role: on the one hand as an operational partner, by providing shelter, basic services, and psychosocial support; on the other hand as a connector, by linking vulnerable target groups to the broader network of municipal services, care chain partners, volunteers, and social initiatives. To make society more resilient, the Salvation Army is an indispensable link that wishes to be anchored as well as possible within the crisis structures. During the workshop, employees of the Salvation Army will address the challenges, possibilities, and opportunities to intensify cooperation with crisis partners.

Workshop 11

Ukrainian lessons learned and the whole-of-society approach: This workshop focuses on the application of lessons learned from Ukraine within a whole-of-society approach to resilience. Using current examples regarding topics such as energy, the banking sector, government, etc., it is demonstrated how cooperation between government, business, and citizens is crucial in times of crisis. The experiences from Ukraine emphasize the importance of information provision, cooperation, and the utilization of civil networks. This workshop is provided by Johan Haan (program-manager resilience) from Triangular Group Insights.

Workshop 12

What can we learn from Japan when it comes to resilience?

During this highly interactive workshop, we will delve deeper into how countries can learn from each other how to strengthenf the resilience of their system of essential services (critical infrastructure). The workshop will not only address which lessons learned in Japan are (or could be) relevant to the Netherlands, but also how knowledge transfer can lead to permanent engagement and lasting cooperation. The workshop will be conducted by Kosuke Nakazawa Ph.D. (Researcher, University of Hyogo/Crisis & Resilience Journalist/ Disaster Governance & BCP Analyst/Visiting), who earlier in the day also delivered the key-note address.

Workshop 13

A national center for a resilient society based on the Canadian model: something for the Netherlands?

Since two years, a national agency has been established in Canada to strengthen the resilience of essential facilities that taken together constitute 'critical infrastructure'.
The National Centre for Critical Infrastructure Protection, Security and Resilience ('NC-CIPSeR') is a non-profit organization affiliated with Carleton University in Ottawa and serves as the focal point where government, business, academia, and civil society organizations meet and collaborate.
This interactive workshop (by Perry Steckly, Executive Director NC-CIPSeR) highlights which lessons learned in Canada are (or could be) relevant and interesting for the Netherlands and other (European) countries. Specific attention is paid to the question regularly asked by NC-CIPSeR, a question that is or could also be of interest to countries like the Netherlands:

How do we move from 'thinking' to 'doing'?

Workshop 14

Lessons and experiences from the Caribbean: The Caribbean has decades of experience with devastating hurricanes, resulting in, among other things, major disruptions of essential services, including prolonged power outages. The population and authorities continue to work together towards becoming better -prepared, respond and recover from all types of impactful crises. What can the Netherlands learn from the experiences gained in the Caribbean, and which improvement measures can the Caribbean adopt from the Netherlands? This workshop focuses on sustainable energy and will be conducted by Terell Hamlet (DIEM fellow), Energy Security Consultant from Trinidad and Tobago). Tracy-Ann Ramkissoon - Caribbean Emergency Response Team (CERT) and by videomessage: Cor Hersbach, NL Ambassador Trinidad & Tobago for Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, and Saint Lucia.

Workshop 15

How resilient is our cultural heritage? By Cecile van der Tweel and Renate van Leijen, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE). Given the current international security situation, the protection of cultural heritage, as well as its connecting role, is more relevant than ever. Unfortunately, heritage is a target in conflicts, for example due to its great symbolic and societal value. Following the mandate of the National Security Council and the parliamentary letters regarding strengthening the societal and military resilience of the Netherlands, the heritage sector faces a clear challenge to increase its own resilience. This not only ensures better protection of heritage but also contributes to social cohesion and broader societal resilience. The Taskforce Safe Heritage, established by the Minister of Education, Culture and Science, has set to work on this mandate. This workshop focuses on improving the connection between the heritage sector and security structures at the national and regional levels.

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