



Clingendael Annual Report 2020



Clingendael

Netherlands Institute of International Relations



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About the Clingendael Institute

The Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' is a leading think tank and academy on international affairs. Through our analyses, training and public platform activities we aim to inspire and equip governments, businesses, and civil society to contribute to a secure, sustainable and just world.

The Clingendael Institute
P.O. Box 93080
2509 AB The Hague
The Netherlands

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Email: info@clingendael.org
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Introduction by the Executive Board

2020 was a year with unprecedented dynamics in Clingendael's field of work. A pandemic and associated economic recession, geopolitical power shifts, globalisation under pressure, a turbulent Middle East, cyber threats, climate change, and economic aftershocks of the COVID-19 crisis and instability in countries around Europe leading to increasing migratory pressure on Europe's external borders. How can the Netherlands and Europe respond to this? What does this require of the European Union as a community of values and interests and as a power factor? We seem to be living at a turning point in history.

All this does not leave citizens untouched, according to our Clingendael "[Foreign Affairs Barometer](#)", which was launched in 2020. The views of the Dutch population on various international developments and foreign policy questions were assessed through a survey among more than 23,000 respondents. When it comes to the security of Europe, it appears that Dutch people are most concerned about irregular migration, the rise of China and climate change.

The powerful international dynamics require an active role from politicians and policy makers as well as from NGOs and the business community, in which they can make choices based on facts, thorough and relevant analyses, and the right knowledge and competences. Informing, stimulating and equipping them to this end is the mission of the Clingendael Academy, Research and the Public Platform.

The relevance of our work is therefore evident. However, this work takes place under increasingly complex circumstances. For example, the politicising and polarising environment affects our work, our employees and our stakeholders. This demands a continuously well-tuned (geo-)political radar. Clingendael is committed to the independence of its employees and their services and products. Double peer review and monitoring & evaluation procedures ensure permanent quality control and improvement.

Amid all these challenges, our rise in the rankings of the TTCSP Global Think Tank Index in 2020 is welcome. Clingendael reached the number 3 position (+7) on the list “Top Think Tanks in Western Europe”. Out of more than 10,000 think tanks worldwide, the Institute maintained its 25th position in the “Top Think Tanks Worldwide” category. In the category “Non-US Think Tanks”, Clingendael ranks 13th (+1). The ranking is based on peer reviews. The significant improvement is due to the great commitment of our employees in combination with the increased international visibility due to the many English-language webinars and international media appearances in 2020.

Also welcome in 2020 was the first NOW scheme. In the second quarter of 2020, a large part of the turnover was lost. Training and research programmes and events were converted to the new situation by acting quickly and effectively. Steep learning curves were not shunned but taken. In the third quarter, the turnover was back on track. The NOW scheme also made it possible to keep all employees on board. With their rich experience and broad talents, they remain committed to inspire and equip governments, businesses, NGOs and societies with trainings, analyses and public discussions to promote a secure, sustainable and just world.

*Monika Sie Dhian Ho, general director, and
Peter Haasbroek, financial director*



Monika Sie Dhian Ho, general director.



Peter Haasbroek, financial director.



The Clingendael Institute is located in the partially 17th century country manor house 'Huys Clingendael', which is surrounded by the Park Clingendael.

About Clingendael

Clingendael – the Netherlands Institute of International Relations – is the leading independent Dutch think tank and academy for international relations, based in The Hague – City of Peace and Justice. Our research, training and public debate inspire and equip societies, businesses and governments to encourage a secure, sustainable, prosperous and just world.

Clingendael Research

Clingendael Research provides independent, interdisciplinary, evidence-based and policy-relevant analyses and recommendations about urgent international issues. Clingendael analyses the most important trends and issues in international environments and policies, evaluates international policies, studies

public opinions concerning international developments and public support for international policies, contributes to new concepts and perspectives regarding international developments, and provides advice on how to approach critical international issues.

Clingendael Academy

Clingendael Academy provides diplomatic training courses, thematic programmes (European Union, sustainability issues, economics and trade, security and conflict management) skills programmes, tailor-made training, expert seminars, open application courses and individual coaching in order to operate effectively at the international level. The Academy also offers capacity-building programmes to support the development of diplomatic academies or other training institutes. These programmes include advice on institutional development, training programmes and training methodologies, as well as train-the-trainer workshops.

Public Platform

The Clingendael Public Platform clarifies current international developments and shares knowledge with the public at large by means of an active role of Clingendael experts in traditional and online media. It also offers a platform for sharing knowledge among politicians, policy makers, social partners and businesses and, with this, provides inspiration for informed action by these parties. Furthermore, Clingendael's

Public Platform publishes publishes the online magazine [Clingendael Spectator](#), organises idea exchanges and programs public meetings aimed at debate and dialogue with a broader audience about international relations from a Dutch perspective.

Our research, training and public platform activities require specialization, but are also combined to best serve our customers. Expertise in all three dimensions makes our institute unique.

Independence

Clingendael is independent and not affiliated to any political, social, or religious movement.

Network

Clingendael has a vast network of local and international partners. Among others, it is member of the [The Hague Academic Coalition \(HAC\)](#), a platform for academic institutions in The Hague, which develops activities in the field of peace, justice and security – often in association with the City of The Hague. It is also partner of the [International Centre for Counter-Terrorism \(ICCT - The Hague\)](#) and the [Knowledge Platform for Security & Rule of Law \(KPSRL\)](#). In cooperation with Leiden University the Institute contributes to a two-year [Master's Programme International Relations and Diplomacy \(MIRD\)](#). Clingendael is affiliated to the [Clingendael International Energy Programme \(CIEP\)](#).

Executive and Supervisory Boards

Executive Board

[Monika Sie Dhian Ho](#) is chair of the Executive Board and Clingendael's general director.
[Peter Haasbroek](#) is Clingendael's financial director.

Supervisory Board

Name	Title
Th.J.A.M. (Tom) de Bruijn	Former Permanent Representative of The Netherlands to the EU, former State Councillor, former Deputy Mayor of The Hague – <i>Chairman</i> , until July 14 th , 2021
A. (Arjan) Buteijn	Partner, Dubois & Co., Registered Accountants
Y. (Yvonne) Zonderop	Independent author, inspirator and director, acting Chair as of July 14 th , 2021
I. (Inge) Bryan	Managing Director NCC Europe Fox-IT, Member as of January 1 st , 2021
J.M. (Jan Maarten) de Vet	Director at Ecorys Brussels, Member as of May 1 st , 2021
K.G. (Koen) Berden	Managing Director at Trade Impact BV; external Executive Director for International Affairs at EFPIA
J. (Jan) Broeks	Lieutenant-General (Ret); former Director-General NATO International Military Staff

Clingendael Advisory Council on Research and Training (CAROO)

Name	Title
E. (Eimert) van Middelkoop	Former Dutch Minister of Defence – <i>Chairman</i>
W. (Wendy) Asbeek Brusse	Director, Policy and Operations Evaluation Department, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs – <i>Vice-Chairman</i>
N.M. (Niels) Blokker	Professor of Public International Law, Leiden University
B. (Bert) Bruning	Managing Director, Atradius
C. (Carlos) Estarippa	Owner, Estarippa Consultancy
B. (Barbara) Rutgers	Department of International Affairs, ING
H. (Hidde) van der Veer	Manager, Carnegie Consult

Clingendael Academy

Undoubtedly, [Clingendael Academy](#) in 2020 will be remembered by the significant impact of the COVID-19 crisis on our work. Half of March Clingendael's building needed to be closed, foreign groups were sent home and all the planned in-person projects were cancelled.

In just two months Clingendael Academy showed its resilience by transforming to the digital world. New online educational tools were created and our training staff trained to teach in an online format. Most importantly, the interactive character and practical impact of our training methods were preserved. This process was successful and even led to innovation on a scale we have never seen before. We are proud of our team to make this transition possible.

Online work also means less costs for travel and accommodation, but the trainings themselves became more labour intensive. In 2020 our staff grew with 10 people.

In this section of the annual report you will read more in detail about the work of the Academy, categorised in our nine programmes and additional sections on digital developments and information on our open enrolment courses. But it is just a glimpse of our work and our interactive

methodologies; the Academy had more than 200 active projects in 2020.

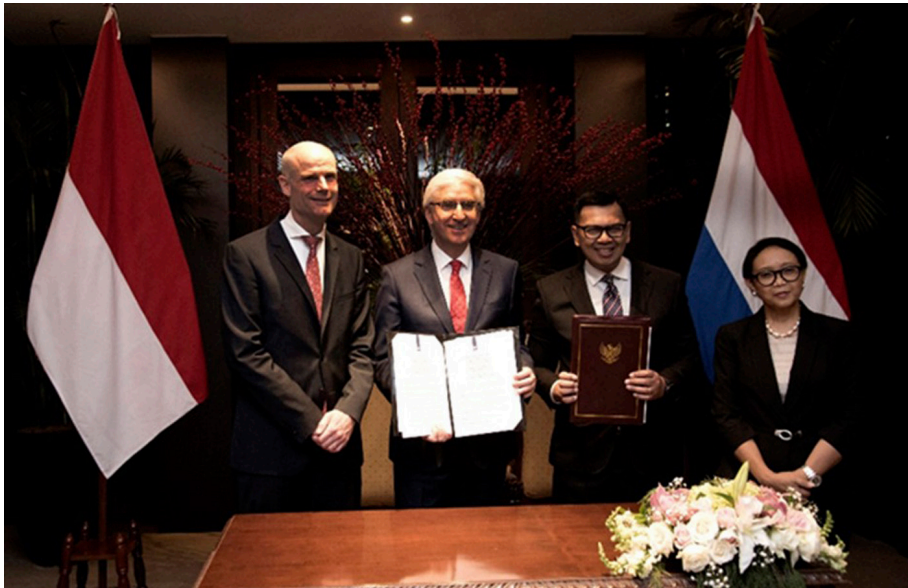
2020 was a challenging year full of change. At the end of the year though, we were more than ever prepared for the (digital) future.

Facts and figures

- Clingendael Academy trained about 757 diplomats from 123 countries in 31 different projects in the Netherlands, abroad and online.
- Clingendael trainers provided hundreds of training sessions for foreign groups in the fields of diplomatic practice, personal effectiveness, (humanitarian) negotiations, capacity-building, security and conflict resolution. The majority of these sessions were online.
- In the context of our international security programmes, we have developed and implemented two entirely new multi-day trainings concerning cyber security and international crisis management.
- We conducted an analytical project, including dozens of interviews and a digital survey among alumni on how to improve the support for insider

mediation projects and the role of capacity-building. We conducted similar projects for women and youth groups.

- We trained, in cooperation with UN women, a group of Libyan women working on increasing the inclusivity of the Libyan peace process. The online format allowed participation of a larger and more diverse group.
- We trained 160 diplomats and civil servants from Cyprus in economic diplomacy.
- We launched new innovative projects in diplomatic training: global health diplomacy, cyber diplomacy, diplomacy and the humanitarian world, tailor-made training for the corps diplomatique in The Hague and a global online simulation game in international crisis management.
- A record number of 70 civil servants from over 20 departments and institutions have been trained across 5 editions of the EU “Insight in Europe” training.
- Clingendael signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indonesia on diplomatic training, a new extension of a strategic partnership since 2004.
- Participants awarded our trainings an average score of 4.2 on a scale of 1 to 5.



From left to right H.E. Stef Blok (Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands), Ron Ton (director Clingendael Academy), Yayan Mulyana (director CET) and H.E. Retno Marsudi (Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia) at the signing of the MoU, 10 March 2020, Jakarta.

Online training in 2020

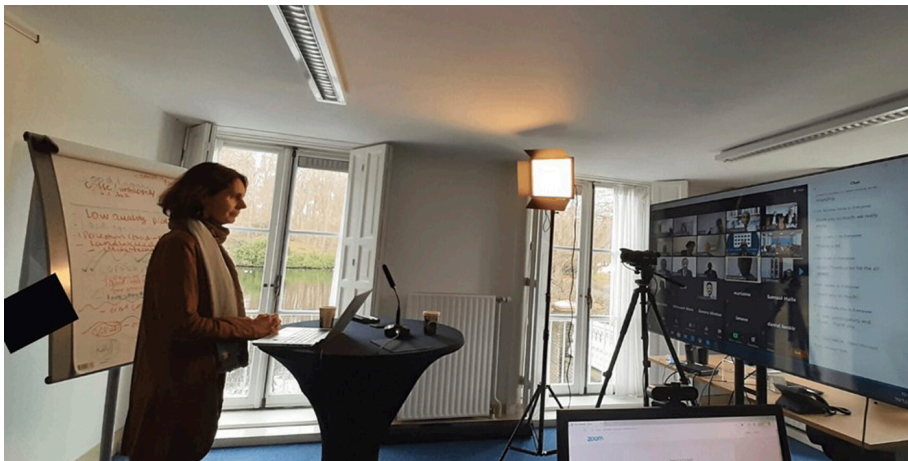
As mentioned we became a fully digital distance learning organisation in a mere two months. We could build on online learning tools we implemented in blended fashion prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At Huys Clingendael, seven studios have been created in former physical classrooms. From these studios, the trainers at the Academy provided over a hundred online trainings on a variety of topics and skills, dedicated to continue educating diplomats, humanitarian aid workers, military staff, etcetera to implement our mission: contributing to a secure, sustainable and just world. While online training has traditionally often been associated with the simple broadcasting



of recorded lectures, the digital training programmes the Clingendael Academy produced in 2020 were characterised by their highly interactive character, made possible through the utilisation of innovative tools such as Mentimeter, Miro, Rise and MiBo.

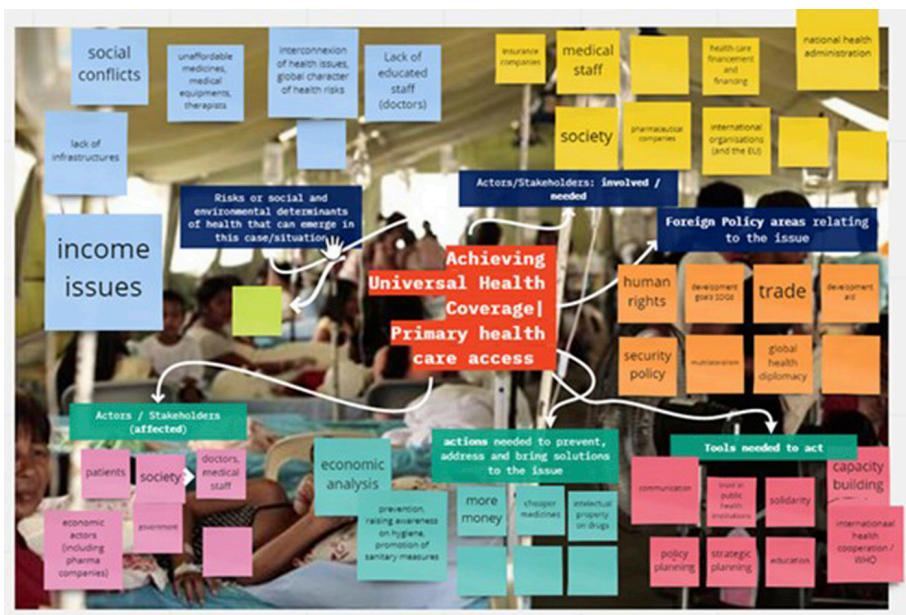
Diplomatic practice



The biggest challenge in our transformation to the digital world was to ensure that the quality of our work would not suffer. Based on the reactions of participants it seems that we have succeeded.

As one participant summarises, turning digital did not affect the quality of [diplomatic training](#): ‘This is a superb programme – dynamic, engaging, interactive and highly relevant and educational (...) delivered virtually in a format that was vibrant and entertaining. (...) I do not feel that the quality of the course was in any way compromised by the modality of distance learning, even though I was only virtually connected to Dutch culture and institutions.’

In 2020, Clingendael Academy developed new training modules covering topical and important areas, such as cyber diplomacy, global health diplomacy, [diplomacy and the humanitarian world](#), and [economic diplomacy](#). We also organised preparation for EU presidency workshops for diplomats from Slovenia and Portugal, and we developed new training materials (such as a [global diplomacy simulation](#); a crisis simulation or a simulation on access to vaccines). Last but not least, 2020 saw a surge in activities for our alumni, including the provision of [interactive webinars](#) on current challenges affecting diplomatic work.



Example of a Miro white board used for Global health diplomacy workshop.

We also continued with our annual programme for the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2020, 40 Dutch diplomats [completed their induction training](#) into the world of international affairs. The training offered key knowledge and skills related to international policy themes and diplomatic practice, helping them on their way to start operating effectively in their postings at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries.

International Security

Innovation and development are the key elements that illustrate the [International Security](#) related programmes in 2020. We have developed our capacity to deliver international cyber security trainings and modules. Currently, the Clingendael Academy can organise multi-day cyber trainings for security, diplomatic and public professionals. Through simulations, tactical challenges and analytical assignments the participants get to encounter various cyber threats and cyber governance dilemmas.

In 2020, we continued to deliver our international security trainings for dedicated audiences such as the trainees of the Dutch Ministry of Defence (MOD)

and the Security Affairs department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). In these trainings, the participants receive the latest insights regarding international security developments and acquire unique Clingendael strategic analysis techniques and skills.

We have expanded and enhanced our crisis management trainings. Through interactive online simulations, we challenge professionals to manage crises at both the operational and strategic level. Training audiences in our crisis management modules have included the Advanced Staff and Command Course of the Dutch MOD, Georgian security personnel and diplomats from Sub-Saharan Africa.

Lastly, the Clingendael Academy has provided five pre-deployment trainings for military and civilian experts that are about to be deployed in international crisis management missions. The Clingendael Academy became an active member of the European Union Civilian Training Initiative (EUCTI) and the European Union Police and Civilian Services Training (EUPCST), integrating our activities in a wide network of European academies and training centres regarding peacekeeping and crisis management missions.



International
Security



Crisis
Management



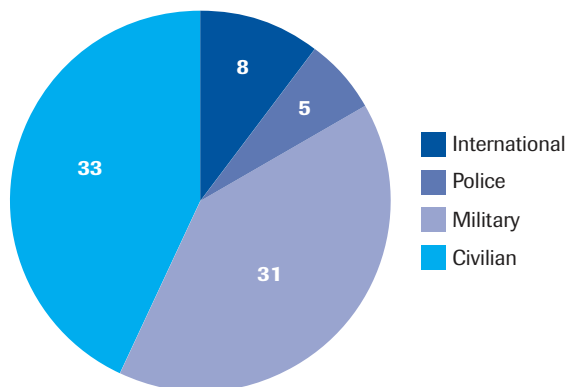
International
Cyber Security



Pre-deployment/
peacekeeping

The four distinct security training categories of the Clingendael Academy.

Trained experts before deployment in ICM missions 2020



9+

Average valuation of the new Clingendael cyber course by national and international participants

Negotiation and mediation in conflict resolution

In 2020 we continued to deliver [negotiation and mediation training](#) to peace negotiators, mediators and mediation support staff from around the world. Through interactive simulations and exercises participants sharpen their conflict resolution skills and expand their toolbox to effectively respond to

changing dynamics. The trainings not only deepen the participants' understanding of negotiation and mediation processes, but also give them the analytical tools to make conscious choices that help them move forward. Participants have reported they feel confident they can participate effectively in their processes after having followed our training, and many have gone on to do so.

For more impact results of our trainings, please consult our new [impact map](#).

Our work in 2020 in numbers

8

training programmes for negotiators (2 physically, 6 online)

3

training programmes for mediators and mediation supporters (1 physically, 2 online)

194

unique participants (54 male, 140 female)

The transition from physical to online trainings due to COVID-19 has led us to develop innovative training programmes, exercises and case studies that are suitable for the online environment. We also developed specific trainings on e-mediation and e-negotiation to equip practitioners to continue their work online.

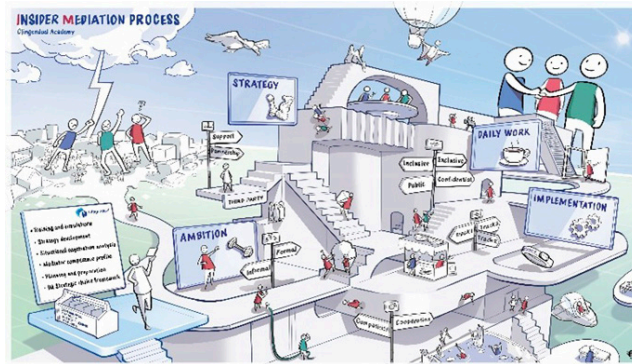
Finally, we conducted several studies to assess how our trainings can further enhance the effectiveness of youth, women and insider mediators active in peace negotiations and mediation processes. Based on the needs identified, we will develop new tools and materials to support their important work.

Our project was extended until 1 July 2022.

European Affairs

In 2020, [EU trainings](#) by the Clingendael Academy took another leap forward, with our EU trainers providing sessions and lectures to hundreds of diplomats, civil servants, NGOs and private sector professionals. The “[Insight in Europe](#)” training, our four-day expert course open to all levels of national government, had its most successful year so far with 90 participants across 5 editions.

Our trainers developed a range of EU e-learnings and digital learning tools that will be used for years to come. Additionally, several all-new training programmes were developed for local



IM strategic choice framework

governments, trainee groups and diplomats from regional cooperation bodies such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the African Union (AU). Additionally, we once more provided trainings to groups of diplomats and civil servants in the run-up to their presidency of the Council of the EU. In 2020, both Portugal and Slovenia were trained with over 200 and 50 participants, respectively.









Humanitarian negotiations

2020 was the final year of the four-year project period on [humanitarian negotiation](#). We saw all elements of the project come together. Long-term partnerships with several large humanitarian organisations meant we could work closely with central staff on analysing internal capacity at field level. An in-depth research into the working practices around humanitarian diplomacy – both from diplomats and aid workers – laid the foundation for future training that aims to improve collaboration between

these sectors. We delivered innovative new training courses on e-negotiations and [e-mediation](#) which were well-received by aid workers and mediators suddenly finding themselves working exclusively online. Alumni from our [Training of Trainers in 2019](#) also delivered their own training to their colleagues in the field.

After four years, we compiled all impact data (based on feedback from participants of our course). We can see a wide range of impact, particularly an increase in the importance attached to negotiation skills training at organisational level, and improved understanding between negotiating counterparts.

Results at a glance

	→	We worked with 160 aid workers from 59 different organisations, operational in 23 countries.
	→	86% of those aid workers are operational in countries with high, very high or extreme access constraints.
	→	80% of our participants are national staff of their organisations through which we contribute to the localisation agenda of the sector.
	→	Six months after the course, 78% of our participants report that they had been involved in one or more humanitarian negotiation(s). 93% of those state they used the techniques they learned in the course which made a positive difference in 79% of cases they reported on.
	→	99% of all participants state that the training is (very) useful for their work.
	→	We saw an increase in representation of local NGOs from 12% to 17%.



Institutional development

In 2020, Clingendael Academy continued to invest in the [development of partner training institutes](#), from the strategic to the practical level.

With Georgia's Defence Institution Building School (DIBS), we worked on linking research and training, integrating best practices in learning and knowledge management, and formulating a new vision for 2025. Clingendael also supplemented DIBS' own course package with [online workshops](#) on intercultural communication, cyber security, and NATO and EU decision-making in crisis situations. DIBS' growth into a fully

autonomous, professional training institute was confirmed with its first NATO course accreditation.

Institutional cooperation on preventing violations of international obligations against torture (UNCAT) was continued by developing online training guides, as the board in Vietnam finalised the central curriculum.

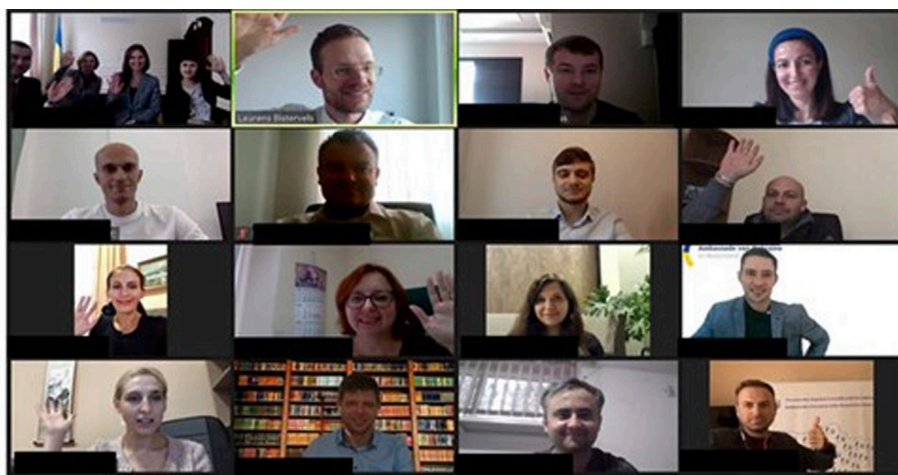
Clingendael supported many other worldwide partners in diplomatic training. We continued working with our strategic partners in Jakarta (CET), helped the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus in [developing its economic diplomacy strategy](#) and worked with partners building up expertise in diplomatic training in [Afghanistan](#) and Kosovo.

Personal effectiveness

We provided hundreds of [personal effectiveness](#) trainings throughout all Academy projects, such as negotiation, intercultural communication, presentation skills and effective influencing.

Clingendael Academy staff also provided stand-alone training sessions focusing specifically on one or two skills, including successful editions of our open enrolment courses on [negotiation](#), mediation and [consensus building](#), and [intercultural communication](#). Highlights furthermore included the negotiation training conducted within the European Diplomatic Programme (EDP) and training sessions for the Repatriation and Departure Service (DT&V) and one with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). We also worked with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) on an Insider Mediation project in the East of Congo linked to a disarmament project. We are also proud of our cooperation with UN Women to [support a group of women from Libya](#) to enhance their participation in the Libyan peace process.

The screenshot displays a digital training interface. At the top, a section titled '1: Reporting forms' contains two sub-items: '1.1: The Clingendael general diplomatic crisis SITREP-report' with a file 'Reporting/Forms during Crisis SITREP.pdf' and '1.2: The Georgian CRIP report' with a file 'Operational briefing template.pdf'. Below this is a video player showing a man in a suit speaking in front of a bookshelf. Under the video, section '2: The scenario' provides a narrative: 'A foreign plane has entered the Georgian airspace and has crashed in the beautiful city of Anaklia, in the Rionero River. You are the senior commander and have to inform the grid and strategic command.' It lists two files: 'Scenario Test Briefing Plane Crash.pdf' and 'Appendix Plane Crash.pdf'. The bottom section, 'Assignment 1: Plane Crash in Anaklia', states: 'You are the representative of the mayor in Anaklia, the local press shows up with a camera crew and request a statement regarding to the crash. You have 3-minutes, and then you deliver a press-statement!'.



Economic and sustainable development

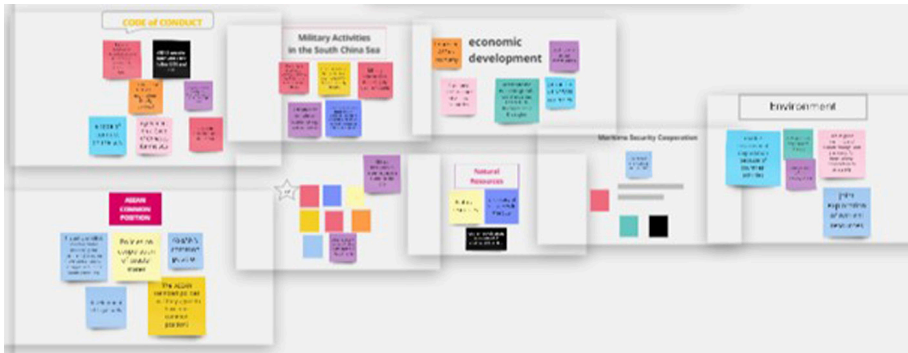
(25 participants), North Macedonia (15 participants) and Ethiopia (80 participants). Finally, we provided tailored programmes on Blue Diplomacy and for [Dutch agricultural attachés](#).

This year, participants from around the globe logged in to Clingendael Academy to train and discuss [sustainable economic development](#) during and after COVID-19. We developed new five-day economic diplomacy workshops, mixing trade promotion, innovation and branding, using online platforms for interactive exchanges and reaching larger audiences. We trained groups from Cyprus (160 participants), Indonesia (100 participants), [Ukraine](#)

Strategic thinking

Clingendael Academy offers training in [strategic planning](#) tools, allowing professionals to anticipate as much as possible international developments. We provide standalone trainings and incompany tools in different types of programmes.





Example of a Miro board used in scenario planning.

In 2020, we trained multiple groups in strategic policy planning, such as senior policy officers from Indonesia and Afghanistan. Additionally, the scenario planning tool has become more prominently incorporated in trainings with a wider thematic focus.

Open enrolment courses

Most of the work of the Clingendael Academy is tailor-made. Each year we also offer a number of [open enrolment courses](#) on different aspects of our work, such as EU Affairs, international security and personal effectiveness. Most of the training courses offered saw increased participation in 2020. The online environment allowed more people to join from more places. We therefore made plans to increase the number of courses by including online versions also after the COVID-19 pandemic. We also prepared new courses to be offered in 2021/2022, for example in cyber security.

Research

Clingendael has been working at the interface between research and practice for more than three decades. Our experts carry out state-of-the-art analyses and policy research with the aim of providing strategic analysis and tailor-made advices for an audience of government ministries, companies, business associations and non-profit organisations.

The products and services that we offer range from trend analyses that are part of our Clingendael Strategic Monitor to high-quality in-depth analyses, scenario-building, horizon scanning and alerts. Our mission and signature approach is to ensure that policy development is informed by as many relevant insights as possible.

Clingendael is not a standard consultancy service provider. As an impartial and independent player in the public domain, we also see it as our mission to provide an effective platform for sharing and promoting reports and findings with a broader audience.

Conflict and fragility

Clingendael's [Conflict Research Unit](#) (CRU) conducts research on the political economy of conflict and fragility

dynamics. By offering insights and innovative approaches on how to reduce the occurrence, intensity and impact of violence, we aim to achieve that policy makers and practitioners feel urged and enabled to take informed action against the human suffering caused by modern-day violent conflict. As such, CRU works with international policy makers (like the German and US governments, the European Commission and NATO in 2020) as well as with operational aid organisations (like the International Organization for Migration, IOM; VNG International and Finnish Church Aid in 2020). The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains a key partner for CRU. Working together with this ministry through the Conflict & Fragility Research Partnership, as well as the [Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law](#) (which CRU manages on behalf of the ministry in collaboration with Saferworld and the International Development Law Organization), we aim to strengthen the effectiveness and relevance of peace and security policies and programming.

Our research combines expertise in the fields of [security and justice](#), [politics and crime](#), [business and fragility](#), and [migration and conflict](#), with knowledge of the [international aid architecture](#). These areas of expertise

are subsequently applied to concrete cases within our focus regions: the Sahel, the Levant and the Horn of Africa.

Impact COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the work of CRU in a number of ways. First and foremost, we had to adjust our research agenda in order to allow us to understand if – and if so, how – COVID-19 affects the causes and consequences of conflict and fragility, and subsequently peace and security programming and policy-making. We have conducted a series of research projects on this – both from a [regional perspective](#) and from various [thematic perspectives](#). Our main finding has been that the pandemic compounds and accelerates the existing crises in the fragile and conflict-affected regions that we focus on. Most of the countries in these regions have weak healthcare systems to begin with, which have not been able to provide basic health services and care to COVID-19 affected populations. Instead, they have had to rely on social measures to slow down the spread of the virus (such as social distancing, curfews, movement restriction, school closure and closure of certain economic sectors) which are very costly to individuals. For populations living at or near subsistence level, strong restrictions combined with little services may lead to significant suffering and dissatisfaction. In addition, countries with poor governance effectiveness and/or weak public finances are likely to struggle with the post-COVID-19 recovery. They will not have the financial means to implement large financial stimulus packages for the

private sector and will be hit hard by the global economic downturn that follows. This could highlight weak government capacity and opacity. As ruling elites will most likely continue to enjoy the same benefits while inequality and visible wealth will grow, this could trigger popular protests and calls for more government transparency and accountability (both for the health response itself and the ensuing recovery) of the kind that Iraq, Lebanon, Algeria and Sudan have recently experienced. Our research efforts on the topic have fed into a continuous dialogue with donor governments and aid organisations on the challenges but also the opportunities provided by the pandemic.

The major operational consequence of COVID-19 has been that planned research activities – and particular fieldwork that was to be conducted in the focus regions – had to be re-designed in such a way that the data collection could be carried out by CRU's local research partners under the guidance of CRU staff working from home. While much more time-intensive than originally foreseen, this did provide us with the opportunity to accelerate our ongoing efforts to strengthen and expand our network of local research partners. COVID-19 also seriously affected the conflict and fragility research “market” – in that most funding entities decided to freeze their procurement efforts while digesting the consequences of the pandemic on their policy and programming abilities. As a result, there have been less opportunities for CRU to expand its project portfolio.



Cover photo of report “COVID-19 and conflict in the Middle East”. Workers disinfect Tajrish bazaar against coronavirus. Source: Student News Agency / Wikimedia Commons.

Research impact

In collaboration with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), CRU commissioned an independent progress review to provide a forward-looking assessment of the results achieved by the above-mentioned Conflict and Fragility Research Partnership. The review, which was conducted by KPMG Norway, concluded that CRU delivers high quality and relevant research products – for which the end users of the research consistently perceive the quality, relevance and uptake of research to be positive. Here it was noted that the end users perceive that the research has both a direct and indirect influence on the formation and implementation of policy. The primary influence described is building “tacit” knowledge that shapes the perceptions and approach of MFA officials – which underlines the importance of the trust relationship built within the

research partnership, and the value of ongoing and continuous conversations and joint learning processes rather than conducting one-off assignments and research projects. Working with research programmes, as CRU has been doing since 2016, in other words pays off.

Our [Sahel research programme](#) focuses on security and survival under fragmented sovereignty in the greater Sahel region, and how intervention strategies can be better adjusted to these dynamics. One major project that was finalised in 2020 focused on [governing conflict over access to resources in Burkina Faso](#). Pastoralism fuels conflict in Burkina Faso as it is a determinant for loyalty/opposition to local armed groups. Yet, not much is known about how local and customary authorities in Burkina Faso manage pastoral resources (and hence, how resource governance may or may not affect conflict). The study



Cover photo of report *"When the dust settles"*. Source: Anna Schmauder (May 2019).

highlights how pastoralists loose out in the value-chain (where livelihoods are earned) and how much of these problems are rooted in unequal resource governance. To this end, the report provides recommendations on what type of governance interventions could be harnessed to de-escalate conflict in Burkina Faso at the local level. Data collection was implemented in collaboration with other research entities and aid organisations active in the region, such as the Institute for Security Studies, the Danish Demining Group, the Human Security Collective and the Danish Refugee Council, so as to ensure that the research builds on existing knowledge and strengthens ongoing interventions.

Another important component of the research conducted under the Sahel programme focuses on the relationship between crime and governance in the border area between Libya, Niger and Chad. In 2020, CRU has finalised

a study zooming in on the Agadez region in northern Niger, where human smuggling and drug and arms trafficking have grown increasingly important in recent years. Under the banner of migration policies, the restrictions to such activities have been tightened – which has impacted on the opportunities for local populations to foresee in their livelihoods. The study has investigated the [economic and governance repercussions of migration policies in the Agadez region](#), focusing on the main challenges that confront local communities and how this affects the local (traditional) authorities' ability to govern and mediate conflicts. The outcomes of the study have been discussed with aid organisations active in the region, like IOM, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and Danish Refugee Council, as well as with bilateral donor governments and the EU.

Our [Levant research programme](#) examines the impact of hybrid security organisations on political order and state performance / development in Syria and Iraq in the context of Turkish, Saudi and Iranian foreign policy. The programme also pays attention to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, political crises in Lebanon and the Turkish/Kurdish conflict. In 2020, one of the lines of research was focused on options and pathways for governance reform in the region. Many of the Levant countries are dealing with a situation in which there is an entrenched and largely unaccountable (sectarian) elite linked with strong and influential foreign interests. CRU has conducted exploratory research to identify options and pathways for governance innovation in the face of such circumstances. First, an in-depth comparative analysis of prospects for [reform in Iraq and Lebanon's](#) quasi-democratic sectarian systems was conducted. It was followed by a successful and large engagement with the MFA including the embassies in Beirut and Baghdad, as well as with the World Bank in Beirut. Second, an in-depth study of the utility of [Syria's Constitutional Committee](#) as lever for developing governance reform ideas for the future of Syria was conducted.

Another line of research focused on producing concrete policy advice on what meaningful, long-term EU engagement in the Middle East could look like. What policy principles, approaches and tools should play a role

to achieve political objectives that take adequate account of the complexity of the context? What obstacles, trade-offs, public diplomacy frames from the region and conflicting interests among EU member states are at play? We initially focused this line of inquiry on Syria given that it represents the most acute conflict challenge for the EU in the Middle East and one where the EU has been profoundly unable to shape either the diplomatic or the military agenda and therefore represents a useful source of lessons to learn. As part of a broader Friedrich Ebert Stiftung study on the role of Europe in addressing conflicts throughout the Middle East, we contributed a case study focused on practical entry points for developing a [new EU-Russian understanding on Syria](#), in partnership with a Russian author. Moreover, based on several years of research of the Syrian conflict we developed an extensive brief on [EU policy options for dealing with Assad](#) given the dead-end nature of waiting for the 'elusive meaningful political transition'. This brief enjoyed high praise from the Dutch Syria Envoy (DAM) and also served as input for a joint Clingendael-Bertelsmann Stiftung event at the margins of the Brussels-IV Syria conference. It finally benefited from a helpful informal roundtable discussion with several EU staff, including heads of unit from the European External Action Services (EEAS) and the Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR).

A Transition at Work?

The ethnicization of Ethiopia's informal sector

Jos Meester
Nancy Ezzeddine

CRU Report



Our [Horn of Africa research programme](#) finally focuses on how informality – and specifically informal economies – can be harnessed to strengthen stabilisation strategies in the region. In 2020, we achieved substantive impact with a project that focused on [employment, grievances and ethnicity in the urban informal economy in Ethiopia](#). The research explores in what ways employment and (self-)employment in the informal economy in Ethiopia relieves or fuels potential (ethnic) grievances and how this affects propensity for violence and inclusiveness. As such, the aim was to provide input for the development of Dutch policies and

programming on the issue, focusing specifically on the questions how Dutch and international interventions contribute to grievance expression or reinforcement by their effects on (self-)employment in the informal sector; and how Dutch and international interventions contribute to young people's (self-)employment in the informal sector in a way that facilitates their ability to organise and express grievances.

Another line of research in 2020 focused on the [impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on small- and medium-sized enterprise \(SME\) growth and resilience in the fragile context of Somalia](#). While the COVID-19-induced economic shock did not structurally change the Somali political economy, it did exacerbate existing patterns of inequality. The support the private sector provided to the COVID-19 response has likely supported a range of livelihoods throughout the Somali territories, yet the preferential access to governance and strong competitive position that allowed this also highlights a worrying level of inequality, market concentration and raises questions regarding government legitimacy. The study finds that the COVID-19-induced economic crisis has reinforced rather than destabilised those dynamics that prevent small businesses from competing on an equal footing in Somalia, and that prevent fragile situations from developing and stabilising. The study has fed into a roundtable discussion on the topic bringing together representatives from donor governments and aid organisations active on SME-development in Somalia.

EU & Global Affairs

In 2020, the EU & Global Affairs (EUGA) Unit was composed of three research programmes and two research centres. The permanent research staff consisted of about 10 fte, but in project work they received a lot of support by colleagues from the other units, Clingendael Associate Fellows and interns. The staff is well networked across Dutch, European and international policy and think tank circles. During the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, like the rest of Clingendael, they showed tremendous flexibility in shifting to working from home offices, continuing with ongoing research, setting up new formats for online meetings that attracted surprisingly large audiences and also managed to acquire several new projects.

European cohesion and governance

We devoted two research projects to ways to deepen the EU's capacities for monitoring and enforcement; one focused at [EU border management/Schengen](#) and the other at [economic governance](#). Both areas struggle with the question to what extent “deeper” integration also means more centralisation and handing over sovereignty. Both areas also underline that the EU's ambitions are not matched by the EU's governance systems when it comes to enforcement. They were spearheaded by Clingendael Senior Research Fellow Adriaan Schout. In honour of his work, he became (part-time) professor at Nijmegen University in 2021, working on the relationship between the Netherlands and European governance. He is one of the renowned Dutch thinkers on



Cover photo of report “Diagnosing enforcement of EU border control”. Source: Frontex.

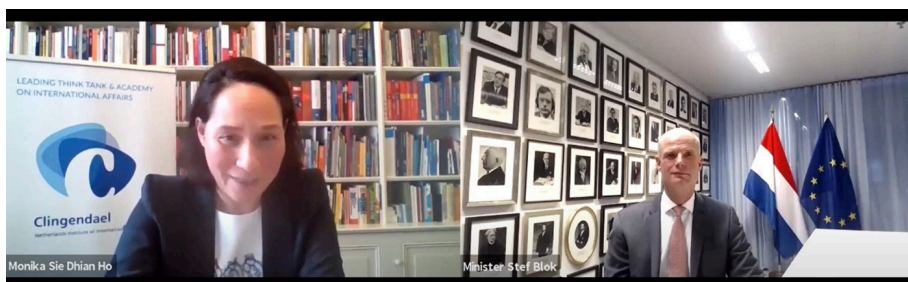
European cooperation and governance and frequently quoted in national and international media.

Another research project looked at the EU's ambitions to become more geopolitical. In a world with increasingly assertive great powers and the rise of China in particular becoming more of a concern, the question of how the EU should strategically respond is pertinent. An [essay](#) was published in Dutch magazine *De Groene Amsterdammer* on how Europe can avoid to become a playground for great power competition, and instead act as one of the key players. It subsequently discusses what this means for Dutch foreign policy and its positioning towards other EU member states, notably France and Germany. The essay received a lot of attention in policy and political circles and is considered a source of inspiration for a new government that is expected in 2021.

Another [essay](#) that was published in *De Groene Amsterdammer* and the *Clingendael Spectator*, entitled "The real danger of the myth of Europe's decay", covered the issue of European values and their continued relevance.

The yearly Clingendael [State of the Union conference](#) was held in the autumn of 2020 as a series of online webinars that attracted a lot of audience. It focused on how the EU responds to crises. The COVID-19 pandemic triggered an unprecedented crisis for the European Union. Not only did it bring back memories of the eurozone struggles, but it also re-enacted the divisions of the time, with framings of the "frugal" North and the "fragile" South re-emerging. Internally and externally, it raised questions about the EU's state of readiness for a next crisis, while old ones – such as the irregular arrival of asylum-seekers and migrants and growing tensions with Russia – are still slumbering. With a total of eight online debates the conference reflected on the European Union's "polycrisis" of the last decade and its effect on European integration and solidarity. Furthermore, it re-evaluated the various perspectives for action and leadership of the European Council, Commission and the Parliament.

Ahead of the State of the Union conference the policy brief "[Europeanising health policy in times of coronationalism](#)" was published on the EU's COVID-19



Opening of the State of the Union Conference 2020 with Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Stef Blok and Clingendael's General Director Monika Sie Dhian Ho.

response in the health domain. The policy brief illustrates how the EU has responded and stepped up cooperation in the field of health policy, notably with regard to joint vaccine purchasing. It also points to a European Health Union not being automatically appreciated by EU member states and raising a lot of questions with regard to a diversity of European health systems and ways they are financed.

On transatlantic relations we prepared a paper for the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade (AFET). The paper entitled "[No Way Back: Why the Transatlantic Future Needs a Stronger EU](#)" was finalised just after the outcome of the US elections became clear, and generated a lot of attention in view of its topical relevance. It covered security, trade and global public goods issues, notably climate change and health. A presentation of the report was

delivered in front of the AFET committee and the contents were also used for a [webinar](#) with the Washington-based Brookings Institute on global public goods cooperation, and shorter publications on global health and climate change published with the Wilson Center.

As part of the "Foreign Affairs Barometer" survey series, we published a [Clingendael Alert](#) on the state of the transatlantic relationship. Based on opinion-polling among the Dutch population, the Alert highlights a turn to more support for European (security and defence) cooperation.

Clingendael also worked on the future relationship between the EU and the UK. We produced a [paper](#) on EU-UK foreign and security policy cooperation for the European Policy Centre (EPC). We addressed various conferences on



Cover photo of webinar "A new era of transatlantic cooperation on global public goods?" Joe Biden speaking with attendees at the 2019 Iowa Democratic Wing Ding at Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake, Iowa. Source: Gage Skidmore / Flickr.

EU-UK affairs, including conferences organised by the “UK in a Changing Europe” thinktank in March 2020 and the EPC in November 2020. Rem Korteweg was also a frequent commentator on the state of the Brexit negotiations for national and international broadcast media and television, including as a repeated guest on *Nieuwsuur* and popular podcasts like “Europa Draait Door” on *NPO Radio 1*. In 2020 he continued his work as a member of the informal European thinktank group liaising with the European Commission’s Brexit negotiating team and the EU-UK Track 2 process organised by the EPC.

European neighbourhood and Western Balkans (including Balkans Hub)

The EU & Global Affairs Unit further expanded its work in 2020 on the regions around the EU. As part of the work for the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence, our experts delivered a [paper](#) outlining three dilemmas the EU faces in the Eastern Partnership region, including contributions from the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) and the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR). We furthermore assessed EU-Turkey cooperation on migration in a [policy brief](#), and researched [the role of the Netherlands in the EU’s enlargement policies towards the Western Balkans](#). Our experts also compared Turkey’s and Serbia’s accession process in a [Clingendael Alert](#). Lastly, together with the ECFR, we produced an [extensive report](#) (as well as a [webinar](#)) on the growing role of China in the Western

Balkans and to what extent that affects EU cooperation with the region (see also the China Centre).

The EUGA Unit moreover continued cooperation with Western Balkans partners as part of its Balkan Hub. With the Centre for Education Policy (CEP) in Belgrade a [report](#) on media freedom in Serbia was produced, and with the Albanian Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) the [policy brief](#) “Together or alone? The need for increased Albanian-Dutch cooperation to fight transnational organised crime”. EUGA also facilitated cooperation between the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) and the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS), which resulted in the [policy brief](#) “What EU Member States can learn from Kosovo’s experience in repatriating former foreign fighters and their families”. With the Democracy for Development (D4D) institute in Kosovo, Kosovo’s NATO future was researched in a [policy brief](#). Moreover, colleagues wrote a [policy brief](#) on state capture. The unit further initiated the “[Western Balkans in focus](#)” series in the *Clingendael Spectator* magazine, featuring in 2020 articles on the [history of EU-Western Balkans relations](#) and on the [constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#). In terms of events, on 23 April 2020, both an expert meeting and public webinar were organised with the ThinkforEurope network (TEN), titled “[The Zagreb Summit – A moment of Decisions for EU enlargement?](#)”. Also with TEN, Clingendael organised a [public webinar](#) on closing the economic gap between the Western Balkans and the EU.



Delegates at the Delhi-based Raisina Dialogue 2020, including Clingendael Senior Research Fellow Maaiko Okano-Heijmans.

For the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the EUGA Unit facilitated three foresight workshops on the future of the Western Balkans up to 2030, taking place in Sarajevo, Belgrade and Pristina, respectively. Our experts designed the project, conducted background research, facilitated the workshops and produced concluding reports, and held a concluding strategic discussion with GIZ staff. Other scenario activities included our participation in four strategic foresight workshops organised by Aspen Institute Germany on the future of the EU, resulting in a [public report](#). We moreover participated in a scenario workshop from DGAP on the future of the Eastern Partnership in November 2020.

In line with European policy development, the promotion of trajectories for legal migration is one of the six pillars of the Netherlands “Integral Migration Agenda”, that was published in March 2018. Against that background Clingendael carried

out a big study into [the possibilities for circular legal migration](#) pilot projects between a number of African countries (Tunisia, Ethiopia and Nigeria) and the Netherlands. The objective of the research was to develop a holistic framework for the analysis of circular migration (taking into account the many interests and concerns of the stakeholders involved) and to explore the benefits, possibilities and difficulties, conditions and concrete content for effective circular migration programmes between Tunisia, Ethiopia and Nigeria as countries of origin and the Netherlands as a host country.

Geopolitics of the new economy: digital connectivity, trade wars and big tech

In 2020, Clingendael enhanced its strong international profile on digital connectivity in and with the Indo-Pacific. Among others, research projects on cooperation, synergies and coordination between the [EU and India](#), and the [EU and the Republic](#)

[of South Korea](#) were part of this year's projects. Additionally, studies on China's [Digital Silk Road](#) and its implications for [Europe's Digital Decade](#) carried out by the EU & Global Affairs Unit are considered important stepping stones in building and disseminating knowledge on digital connectivity. Presentations on connectivity and EU-Asia relations were delivered at the Delhi-based Raisina Dialogue, European Parliament, Fudan University (China), German Marshall Fund and Institute Montaigne.

Despite the lockdown, the international network of Clingendael researchers greatly expanded in 2020, especially on the nexus between technology, economics and geopolitics. The new and strengthened ties were translated into an edited report by Clingendael researchers: [Dealing with China on High-Tech Issues](#). This report bundles chapters from the US (CNAS/CSIS), Japan (Tokyo University), India (Carnegie), Australia (ASPI), Germany (Bertelsmann Stiftung) and France (IFRI). Lastly, Clingendael established a long-term relation with the Cambodian Institute of Cooperation and Peace (CICP) in [a three-year partnership](#) funded by the EU and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They will cover EU-ASEAN relations on several issues, including connectivity.

In 2020, the international trading system faced major challenges, including large-scale disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing geopolitical tensions between the US and China, crumbling multilateral cooperation, and the climate and digital revolutions. In 2020, the [AIG Global Trade Series](#)

project was organised for the second year in a row. The initiative is a collaboration between US insurer AIG and six leading centres of trade policy research, with one of our experts acting as lead convener. As in 2019, the original plan was to organise three conferences in the US, Europe and Asia. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 crisis, these activities could not take place. Instead, a series of ten podcast conversations was recorded with eminent international trade experts and policy makers covering a range of topics from the future of globalisation to African trade integration and the climate-trade nexus. One of our experts was the host and moderator of these conversations.

Clingendael International Sustainability Centre (including the Planetary Security Initiative)

2020, whilst being a challenging year, saw a fantastic amount of progress by the Planetary Security Initiative (PSI) in helping advance the understanding of the climate-security nexus. Work continued in Iraq and culminated in the [“Iraq: Climate, Water & Conflict in 2020”](#) webinar as well as further stakeholder meetings to develop community-based action in the South of Iraq. Continued collaboration with organisations like [Free Press Unlimited](#), helped promote local activism and journalism on the topic regionally.

More widely, the PSI contributed to global advancements in climate security understanding through the publication of reports looking into the [militarisation of climate change](#) and how natural gas may act as a [new ‘green’ resource curse](#).



Screenshot of the webinar “Iraq: Climate, Water & Conflict in 2020” on 8 July 2020, moderated by Louise van Schaik, Head of Clingendael’s EU & Global Affairs Unit and Coordinator of Research on Climate change and sustainability at Clingendael.

This was also discussed in the [webinar](#) “Climate Interventions & Peace in the Age of Covid-19”, hosted by the PSI. Finally, much of the research for the [Climate Security Practices](#) report, a first of its kind breakdown of tangible climate security actions, was conducted in 2021.

Clingendael and its Planetary Security Initiative are participating actively in the International Military Council on Climate and Security. The first edition of the [World Climate Security Report](#) was launched just ahead of the lockdown in 2020 at the Munich Security Conference. At this prestigious event the leaders and opinion shapers of the security and defence sectors are meeting to discuss the most pressing international security challenges of our time. This year’s conference was attended by Clingendael Senior Associate Fellow General Tom Middendorp and Clingendael General Director Monika

Sie Dhian Ho. In his capacity as Chair of the International Military Council on Climate and Security (IMCCS), General Middendorp took part in a mainstage panel on climate-security.

The Clingendael researchers working on climate change and sustainability also covered the European Green Deal and its relationship with the Dutch Climate Agreement. They followed the developments in Brussels closely with presentations at a meeting of the platform that developed the Dutch Climate Agreement (on 7 February 2020) and a [policy brief](#) on how the European Green Deal stayed alive in the debate on European post-COVID-19 recovery. We published a [Clingendael Spectator article](#) on climate change as topic in the US elections, and jointly an article was written on [transatlantic cooperation on climate change](#).



Munich Security Conference 2020. From left: Jennifer Morgan (Executive Director, Greenpeace International), Tom Middendorp (General, Chairman, International Military Council on Climate and Security), Helga Maria Schmid (Secretary General, European External Action Service), Ban Ki-moon (Former Secretary General of the United Nations), John Kerry (Former Secretary of State, United States), Edith Kimani (News Anchor, Deutsche Welle). Source: MSC / Kuhlmann.

On the issue of water and conflict we published on the [weaponising of water in the Middle East](#), tensions surrounding water distribution related to the Congo river and the [Nile water conflict](#). The latter attracted quite some media attention as the building of the dam by Ethiopia leads to grave concerns with Egypt. An event on the water-conflict relationship was organised at the Geneva Peace Week.

Research on sustainability in 2020 was extended to the issue of global health. Several publications and events materialised, discussing the international relations implications of the COVID-19 perspective. We moderated several [webinars](#) in the context of the Clingendael Global Health Initiative (in cooperation with Cordaid, AIGHD, KNCVTBC and others). One of the webinars that was organised in May 2020 featured [Minister](#).

[Sigrid Kaag and Corona Envoy Feike Sijbesma](#), and was viewed over 1,400 times online since it was the first time Minister Kaag talked at a public event on how the Netherlands looked at the international implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and how its policies and programmes were adjusted. We furthermore published a report on the [globalisation paradox of health](#). Jointly with the Berlin-based thinktank Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) a closed webinar was organised one week after a crucial World Health Assembly took place in which the EU secured a resolution to an international COVID-19 response led by the World Health Organization (WHO). As a result of this cooperation an influential [comment](#) was published. At the end of the year an [article](#) was published in a high impact academic journal on the EU's role in the WHO.



Screenshot of the Clingendael webinar organised in May 2020, featuring Minister Sigrid Kaag and Corona Envoy Feike Sijbesma, on how the Netherlands looked at the international implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and how its policies and programmes were adjusted.

Clingendael China Centre (C3)

The aim of the Clingendael China Centre, which was established in 2019, is to coordinate the Institute's research activities on China and to make Clingendael more visible as a knowledge centre on China at the national and international level. In 2020, the China Centre was involved in a range of publications and events on China. The centre is coordinated by Frans-Paul van der Putten who published a [book on China's international rise](#) in 2020 with Prometheus.

In 2020, the Clingendael China Centre acted as the secretariat for the China Platform for European Institutional

Investors (CPEII). The first publication of the platform, "[Fire and Haze](#)", looks at the most disruptive events of 2020 in geopolitics and finance. The authors reflect on how these events impact long-term trends, as well as translate those into relevant prospects for European institutional investors for 2021. In a turbulent year like 2020, particular attention was paid to two major events: the Sino-US trade war and the COVID-19 crisis. To enhance knowledge for European institutional investors even further, Clingendael published the biweekly newsletter "[China Finance Focus](#)", focusing on international politics and finance, the stock market and investment, and developments relating to green finance.

China and the EU in the Western Balkans

A zero-sum game?

Wouter Zweepers
Vladimir Shopov
Frans-Paul van der Putten
Mirela Petkova
Maarten Lemstra

Clingendael Report



Together with the colleagues working on the Western Balkans, a report was written on how China is impacting on that region and how this is relevant to its European perspectives. The Clingendael report [China and the EU in the Western Balkans](#) focuses on China's approach towards the six non-EU countries of the Western Balkans and particularly aims to explore whether this influence affects the behaviour of the six Western Balkans governments in ways that run counter to the EU's objectives in the region. The authors propose several actions

based on recognising the developmental needs of the countries in the Western Balkans, one of which is for the EU to maximise accession conditionality as a tool to influence the conditions under which China is involved in the region. On 7 October, a [webinar](#) based on this report was hosted, in which the question was answered to what extent China tries, through its Belt and Road initiatives, to get a foothold in the EU's "inner courtyard"?

A similar research was conducted on how China is operating in the Arctic and specifically its engagements with Greenland and Iceland. This research was presented at the Annual Ambassadors Conference in January 2020. It found that China is trying to acquire a presence in the region, but only to varying success. The [research report](#) concludes that the EU needs to respond more strategically also in this region of the world. The team cooperated closely with colleagues from the Security Unit who simultaneously worked on another Clingendael report on international security and the Arctic, as input for the update of the Dutch Arctic Strategy.

The "Silk Road Headlines" newsletter that is published weekly has a wide international readership. In 2020, Clingendael further strengthened its role as an international centre of expertise on EU-China relations and Chinese foreign relations. In recognition of this, the German presidency of the EU sought Clingendael's advice.

Security and Defence

Impact COVID-19

The European dependency on outside supplies to fight the COVID-19 pandemic led to a series of papers on the geopolitical impact of the virus. These were delivered with great speed in the period May-July by allocating the flex part of the budget of Progress Work Package 4 (Security and Defence) to this special project. Clingendael's Security Unit delivered two papers (in the Dutch language) on the consequences for the EU and on the impact on the multilateral system in the area of security and defence.

New focus on Russia and Eastern Europe

In the spring of 2020, the Clingendael Russia and Eastern Europe Centre (CREEC) was launched with resources from the Public Platform programme. Clingendael invested in this new centre in response to the widely felt need for deeper understanding of the Russian Federation and of regional developments in Eastern Europe as a whole, both within the Dutch government and wider society. As such, the aim of CREEC is to increase knowledge of Russia, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia through analyses, strategic policy advice and events, in close cooperation with Dutch

universities and knowledge platform [Raam op Rusland](#). CREEC brings together researchers with relevant thematic and geographic expertise from different parts of Clingendael.

Since its launch in May, CREEC organised a number of well-attended webinars on a variety of topics, such as [COVID-19 and Russia](#) (1,816 views), the [hot summer in Belarus](#) (448 views), and the [strategic reflection process in NATO and the relation with Russia](#) (502 views). CREEC also contributed to several publications, including the Barometer Alert "[What do you think: are the Russians coming?](#)", which documented the threat perceptions and increasing polarisation of opinions about Russia within Dutch society. It was widely picked up by media and used both for public consultations by Foreign Minister Stef Blok, for closed-door briefings for members of Parliament and for several embassies in The Hague. Another prominent publication was the Clingendael Alert "[Five crises around Europe not to be forgotten despite Covid-19](#)" of July, in which CREEC warned about potential escalation in both Nagorno-Karabakh and Belarus – both of which indeed materialised a few months later. These publications and webinars helped to build Clingendael's profile on this region and highlight its expertise, which is now increasingly sought after by the Dutch government, the media and other relevant stakeholders.



A screenshot of the webinar “The Impact of COVID-19 on Russia’s domestic politics and foreign policy” on 26 May 2020, the first part of a series hosted by the Clingendael Russia & Eastern Europe Centre (CREEC).

Major output

Despite the restrictions on working conditions, the Security Unit’s researchers delivered in 2020 many other publications on a wide variety of themes. They also contributed to a large number of webinars and were very active in the media by commenting on current issues. The following five publications represent the Security Unit’s major output.

1 Strategic Monitor 2020-2021

The Strategic Monitor is an annual report produced at the request of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence on the major international trends in the next ten years. The 2020-2021 Strategic Monitor describes six major challenges that the Netherlands and the EU will face in the post-COVID-19 world.

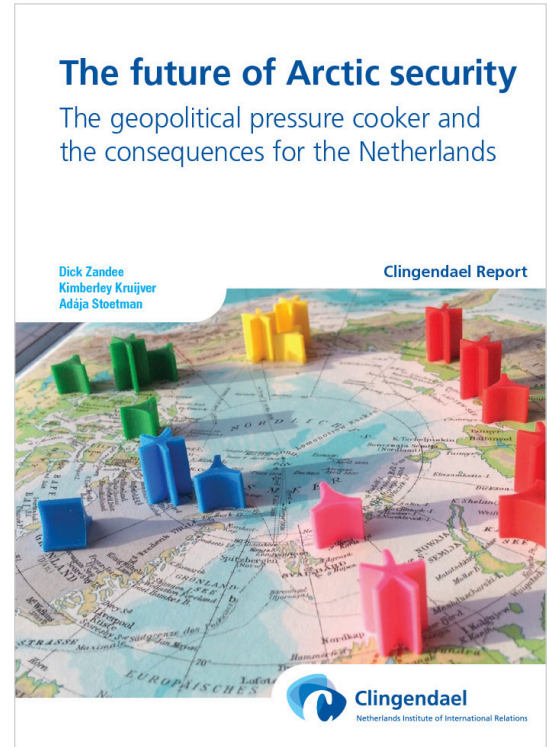
1. The nature of multilateralism is changing. Cooperation will continue to be a central feature of the international system, but it will frequently occur in ad hoc and rapidly shifting arrangements.
2. Interaction between the major powers will play a greater role in shaping the global system.
3. Middle powers are becoming more assertive in defending their interests, as the multilateral system changes and competition between major powers intensifies.
4. As a result of the evolution of the multilateral system and increasing competition between the great powers, non-state actors are gaining more power and influence.
5. Grey zone operations, or hybrid warfare, are an increasingly important feature of the international system, and one that presents more challenges for democracies than for authoritarian states.
6. The impact of climate change on international peace and security will continue to increase in the coming years.

The report offers a broad blueprint for the Netherlands and its EU partners to begin moving beyond their long-standing political and security dependence on the United States and do more to promote peace and security in our own region. Doing so is necessary, both in order to solidify the EU's status as a global power – and Dutch influence within the EU – and to more effectively address the complex security challenges they face.

In March 2021, the first copy of the Strategic Monitor 2020–2021 was handed over to Minister of Defence Ank Bijleveld. Already in an earlier phase the draft was used by the Dutch government for strategy development in the field of foreign, security and defence policy, such as the *Defence Vision 2035* and the resulting *Strategic Concept for the Dutch Armed Forces*. Additionally, the Strategic Monitor has been used as a framework for discussions in strategic policy planning sessions with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, and with the Dutch National Police.

2 Arctic Security

At the request of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence already early in 2020 (April), the report [The future of Arctic security](#) was published, in view of the updating of the Netherlands' Polar Strategy later that year. The report gave answers to the question what the foreign and security policy consequences can be of the melting of the ice in terms



of geopolitical trends. One of the main conclusions was that that the unfolding great power competition in the Arctic no longer guarantees a political-military stable situation in the region that characterised the past. It recommended to the Dutch government to launch and support efforts to counter the trend of uncontrolled militarisation and potential destabilisation of the Arctic region. *The Netherlands' Polar Strategy 2021–2025* was released in December and contained a clear reference to the Clingendael report on this issue.

3 European Strategic Autonomy

Throughout 2020 the debate continued on the pros and cons of European strategic autonomy, both in the wider sense of the EU becoming a geopolitical actor as well as on the specific topic of security and defence. The report [European strategic autonomy in security and defence](#), published in December, provided an important contribution to the debate in the Netherlands and abroad. The report argued for an approach of Europe 'being able to act on its own when needed' and provided a list of recommendations on the consequences that such a form of strategic autonomy would have for political and institutional dimensions, capabilities, and defence technological and industrial cooperation. The report has been an important contribution to policy development on European security and defence cooperation of the Dutch government. Furthermore, several lectures have been given on the report (ongoing in 2021) and the Dutch press also paid attention to the report's conclusions and recommendations.

4 Nuclear Arms Control

While formal negotiations on nuclear arms control are stalled and various arms control agreements have collapsed or are under pressure, more informal venues may provide openings for international dialogue and constructive cooperation on this issue. One of such a new, informal venue is the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) initiative of the US State Department. Since its start in 2019, Clingendael provides a so-called "NGO Facilitator" to a working group on Nuclear Risk Reduction within CEND. In 2020 the expert (financially supported by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs) co-authored several papers which were discussed during online sessions of the working group, in which over 40 countries participated. The contributions by Clingendael deepened the diplomatic discussion on possibilities to reduce the risks of nuclear weapons. In addition, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a series of (online) public events was organised to enhance public knowledge and understanding of current developments around the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

5 The National Network of Safety and Security Analysts

In 2020, the Security Unit actively contributed to various products of the National Network of Safety and Security Analysts (Analistennetwerk Nationale Veiligheid, ANV), in which Clingendael is one of the partners. The ANV is commissioned by the National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism and Security (NCTV). The Clingendael contribution consists, among other products, of the Integrated Risk Analysis (acronym GRA in the Dutch language) and horizon scanning. In the GRA, the most important risks for the national security of the Kingdom of the Netherlands are analysed. In 2020, for the first time, the ANV has produced a GRA of the Dutch Caribbean islands (Bonaire, Sint-Eustatius & Saba), based on a Clingendael input. In addition, in 2020 the ANV also produced the [Horizon Scan 2020](#), which analyses future developments (0-5 years from now) potentially threatening the national security of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Clingendael was actively involved in the drafting of these products, especially on the themes of international (geo)politics and security.



Strategic Initiatives & Outreach

Strategic Dialogues

As in previous years, Clingendael was honoured to jointly organise high-level bilateral dialogues with Italy and Spain. These track-1.5 dialogues are organised in close cooperation with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and their governmental and think tank counterparts. Their purpose is to foster stronger bilateral understanding on foreign policy issues of common interest. Clingendael partnered with the Elcano Royal Institute to organise the Dutch-Spanish dialogue and, for the Dutch-Italian “VanWittel/ Vanvitelli” dialogue, with the Istituto Affari Internazionali in Rome. Both dialogues took place in a hybrid format: ministers met face-to-face, but senior policy makers and think tank participants joined online.

Public Platform

The COVID-19 pandemic shaped international economic and political affairs in 2020. It also became a determining factor in the programming of Clingendael's Public Platform. The pandemic presented a host of challenges, but also new opportunities. Organising

physical public events was no longer possible. Clingendael quickly adapted to this new reality and organised numerous digital dialogues and webinars, both for a wider audience and expert audiences. These constraints also offered a number of benefits. Digital meetings allow more participation from a wider geographic space, while physical meetings have geographic and logistical limits.

The pandemic also sparked a surge in demand for expert commentary and analysis on the impact it was having on international (geo)political and economic relations and international and European cooperation. The crisis became a topic in itself and our programming took due account of this.

The number of publications – mainly shorter Clingendael Alerts – and events increased compared to the previous year. Clingendael was also strongly represented in the (inter)national media.

In recognition of the role that Clingendael plays in the international and European think tank debate, the Institute improved its ranking on the TTCSP Global Think Tank Index. Clingendael reached the

number 3 position on the list “Top Think Tanks in Western Europe”. Out of more than 10,000 think tanks worldwide, Clingendael maintained its 25th position in the “Top Think Tanks Worldwide” category. Among non-US think tanks, Clingendael ranks 13th. It also rose to the 13th position on the list of Foreign Policy and International Affairs Think Tanks (+4).

Among the outputs, the Public Platform’s priority deliverable in 2020 was the “[Foreign Affairs Barometer](#)” survey series. The views of the Dutch population on various foreign policy questions were assessed through a survey among more than 23,000 respondents. Throughout 2021 more Barometer analyses will be published. The Barometer survey was also the focus of a number of strategy sessions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and public discussions attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In 2020, Clingendael researchers provided expert commentary no fewer than 978



Public discussion via Zoom with Minister of Foreign Affairs Stef Blok. Source: AD.

times in national and international media, including online, television/video, radio and print. More than half of our media commentary (496 times) was in foreign media. All media appearances can be found on our [website](#). Clingendael experts also published 25 opinion pieces in Dutch and foreign media outlets.

Title	Expert(s)
"Wat denkt u: komen de Russen?": Dreigingsbeeld over Rusland polariseert in Nederland (NL)	Bob Deen, Christopher Houtkamp, Hugo Klijn en Monika Sie Dhian Ho
Dutch views on Transatlantic ties and European security cooperation in times of geopolitical rivalry (ENG)	Rem Korteweg, Christopher Houtkamp en Monika Sie Dhian Ho
Zorgen over buitenlandse inmenging (NL)	Kars de Bruijne, Christopher Houtkamp en Monika Sie Dhian Ho
De Nederlandse wending naar Europa: Steun voor meer Europese militaire zelfstandigheid, taakspecialisatie en een hoger defensiebudget (NL)	Dick Zandee, Christopher Houtkamp en Monika Sie Dhian Ho
Wel de telefoon, niet de netwerken: Nederlandse houdingen ten opzichte van Chinese technologie (NL)	Brigitte Dekker, Christopher Houtkamp, Maaïke Okano-Heijmans en Monika Sie Dhian Ho

Below are highlights of the op-eds and publications that Clingendael experts produced in 2020 as part of the Institute's mission to inform public and expert debate about international and European affairs.

Title	Author(s)
Corona: EU's existential crisis	Bob Deen & Kimberley Kruijver
A joint effort to increase production of medical masks in Europe	Sanne van der Lugt
Macron's overtures towards Russia deserve support, not scorn	Hugo Klijn & Bob Deen
Defence & COVID-19: why budget cuts should be off the table	Dick Zandee, Els Duchateau-Polkerman & Adája Stoitman
COVID-19 and Defence: the need for EU funding	Bob Deen & Kimberley Kruijver
The politics of COVID-19 in the Sahel	Loïc Bisson, Anna Schmauder & Johannes Claes
The spies who came in from the cold war	Danny Pronk
Five crises around Europe not to be forgotten despite COVID-19	Bob Deen, Tobias von Lossow, Jos Meester, Louise van Schaik & Dick Zandee
The Netherlands can choose opt-outs EU coronavirus recovery fund	Adriaan Schout
EU Enlargement package: can one bad apple spoil the whole barrel?	Nienke van Heukelingen & Wouter Zweers
Fears for militarization of climate change	Louise van Schaik, Tobias von Lossow & Maha Yassin
Building the 'Belt and Road' in Europe?: Chinese construction companies and transport infrastructure in the European Union	Frans-Paul van der Putten & Mirela Petkova
Europeanising health policy in times of coronationalism	Louise van Schaik & Remco van der Pas
'Designed in Ethiopia' and 'Made in China': Sino-Ethiopian technology collaboration in South-South relations	Jos Meester
Onverminderd heeft China de tijd aan zijn kant (Oped - NRC Handelsblad)	Frans-Paul van der Putten & Luuk van Middelaar
Opinie: Vergis je niet: coronacrisis is ook een digitale pandemie (Oped - de Volkskrant)	Maaïke Okano-Heijmans
De euro valt niet en Nederland is niet gek geworden (Oped - NRC & l'Opinion)	Adriaan Schout
Spanish vs Dutch views on the EU recovery fund (Oped - EUobserver)	Monika Sie Dhian Ho, Charles Powell, Rem Korteweg, Federido Steinberg & Miguel Otero-Iglesias

Title	Author(s)
Like it or not: coercive power is essential to development (Oped -OECD)	Erwin van Veen
Could the corona crisis strengthen due diligence in cyberspace? (Oped - Council on Foreign Relations)	Sico van der Meer
Ode aan het Europese doormodderen (Oped - Trouw)	Adriaan Schout
EU should not rush investment deal with China (Oped - EU Observer)	Maaïke Okano-Heijmans & Ingrid d'Hooghe
What Iran's leaders really think about Biden (Oped - Foreign Policy)	Erwin van Veen & Maysam Behravesht

The online magazine [Clingendael Spectator](#) published 141 articles, including 6 thematic volumes on intervention policy, arms control, the Trump presidency, the fight against IS, the state of Africa and 10 years after the Arab Spring.

As part of its public platform, Clingendael organised 17 public events – mainly

webinars – and 12 expert events or digital dialogues. A number of these events were full-day conferences – such as the annual State of the Union conference. Aside from the focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, four topics featured prominently in our event programming: Russia and Eastern Europe, China, Turkey and EU-UK relations. A selection follows below.

Events
Future of Europe Breakfast: Europe's far-right surge
Brexit: the saga continues
Future of Europe Digital Dialogues 'The EU's response to Corona: values at stake?'
Webinar 'Corona: why investments in global health are needed now'
The Zagreb Summit: a moment of decisions for EU Enlargement?
Covid-19 als mondiale gezondheidsuitdaging: het Nederlandse perspectief
Cyber security webinar with Huib Modderkolk
Future of Europe Digital Dialogues Stefaan de Rynck on future EU-UK relationship
The Impact of Covid10 on Russia's politics and foreign policy
5 years into the Malian Peace Agreement – where do we stand?
EU Options for dealing with the Syrian Conflict
Future of Europe Digital Dialogues: What should the EU's trade policy review deliver?
Belarus – a hot summer ahead?
Webinar on Turkey #1: 'Continuity and change in Turkish domestic politics'
CREEC Webinar 'What will US-Chinese competition mean for European security?'
Webinar China and the EU in the Western Balkans – A Zero Sum Game?
Webinar on Turkey #2: Turkish Foreign Policy in the Levant

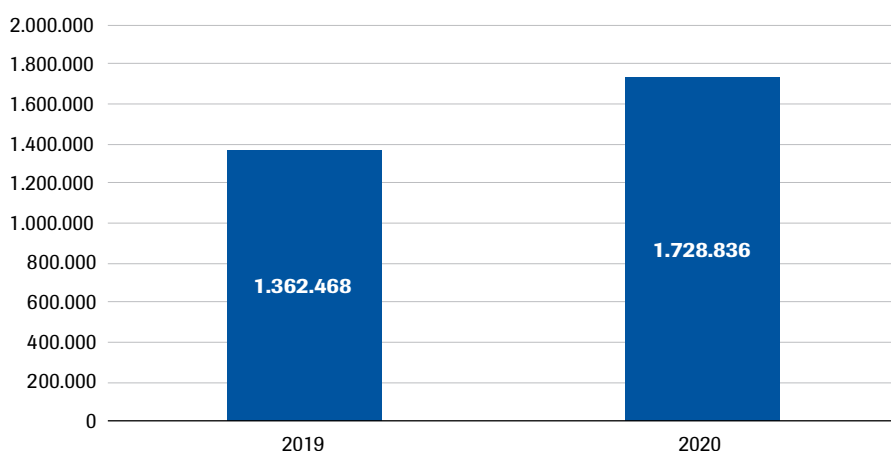
Events
Online Publieksgesprek met minister Blok en Monika Sie over Clingendael Buitenland Barometer
Clingendael State of the Union conference 2020
Online debat: De wederopstanding van China
Webinar Europe's Digital Decade & China's Digital Silk Road
A Fireside Chat on Brexit: Dutch, Irish and European perspectives
Webinar: NATO's strategic reflection after the US elections

Aside from events that Clingendael organises itself, Clingendael researchers contribute to numerous policy debates at conferences and roundtables around the world. As invited speakers, Clingendael experts share their insights and analyses, helping to improve policymaking and mutual understanding. These outreach activities are also an important source to ensure Clingendael researchers have access to the latest thinking on various foreign policy issues. In 2020, for example, Clingendael researchers have addressed the Raisina Dialogue, EFTA Council,

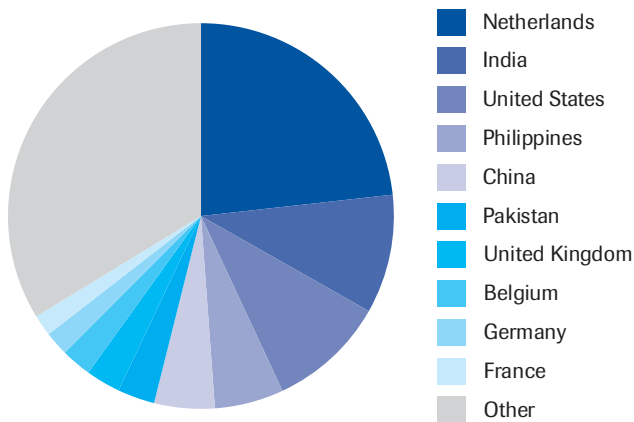
Japan-Europe Policy Conference, CSCAP-EU Committee meeting, Havencongres 2020, the European Parliament, Chatham House Global Trade Conference, the Benelux Parliament and the EU-UK Track 2 process.

In 2020, Clingendael further strengthened its outreach strategies, focusing in part on online media strategies. Throughout 2020 we witnessed exceptional growth of the Clingendael website. Our pageviews increased by 26.9% to over 1.7 million in 2020.

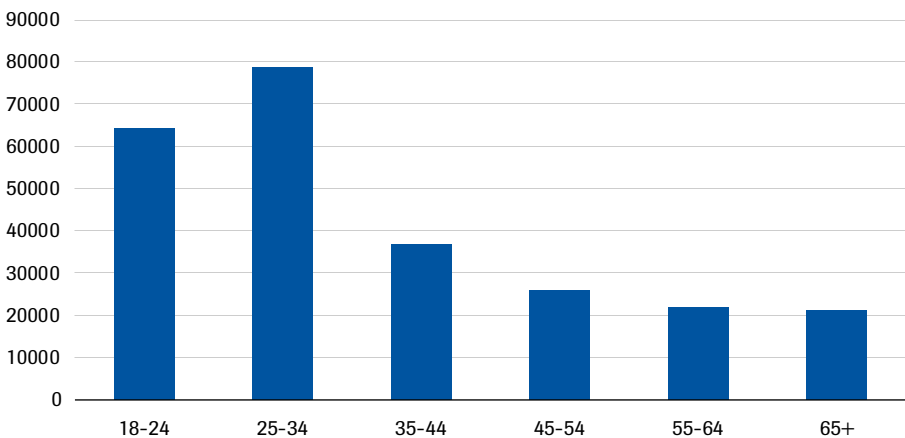
Pageviews per year



Website sessions by country

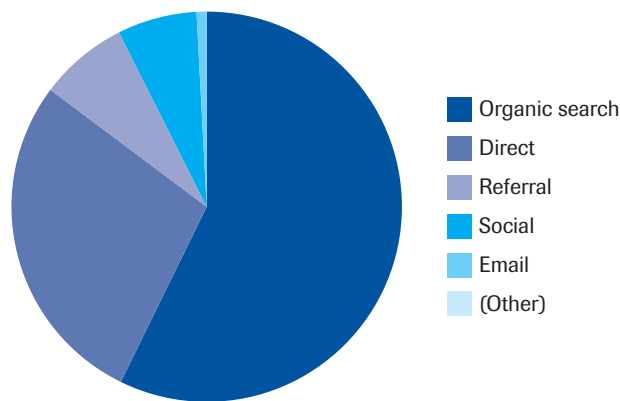


Website sessions by age



The data shows that 31.7% of our audience is in the 25-34 age range, with the 18-24 age range making up 25.9% and the 35-44 age range in third place with 14.8%.

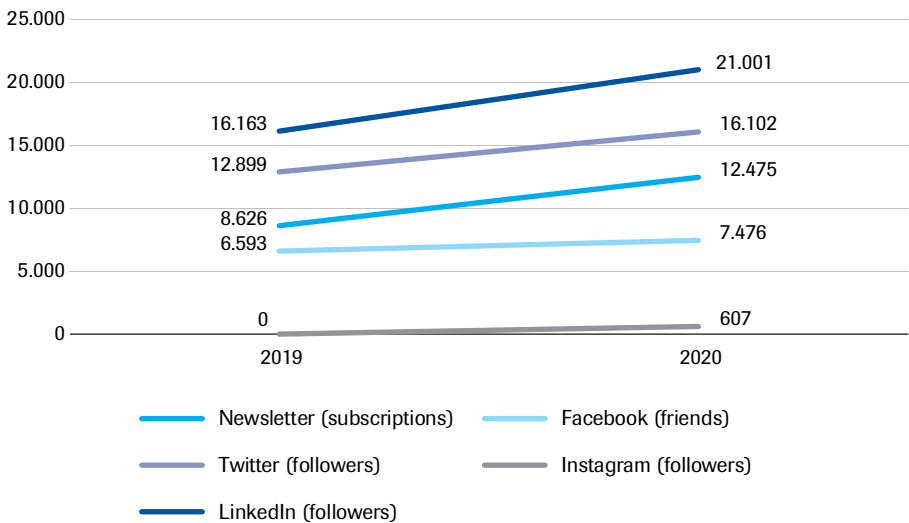
Sources of website traffic



More than 85% of our website traffic is generated directly and through search engines (such as Google).

Clingendael significantly increased its reach and engagement on its social media channels in 2020. Our follower base on LinkedIn grew by 29.9%, on Twitter by 24.8%, on Facebook by 29.9% and our newsletter subscribers by 44.6%.

Followers on social media channels and newsletter subscriptions



Our People

On 1 January 2021, Clingendael, including the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), employed 100 people. The number of staff decreased slightly from the 2019 level (103), but there was also a change in the number of foreign staff and interns. Clingendael employed people of 11 different nationalities in 2020 (7 European and 4 non-European). Interns were of 7 different nationalities (European).

We are fortunate in continuing to attract a high-quality and high-quantity response to our vacancies. This resulted in 31 new hires for regular jobs, while 30 university students from the Netherlands and abroad completed internships

at Clingendael in 2020. In 2019 we had 49 new hires and 45 interns.

Recruitment is primarily carried out through our website, our weekly newsletter and social media, as well as through all Clingendael staff and interns. In 2020 a very successful digital version of the Open Student Day was launched with over 180 participants worldwide.

Staff training boosted, which resulted in a large number of employees (93) participating in skills-oriented training, ranging from language training, personal effectiveness to safety & security trainings for travelling staff members.

Overview of personnel

Annual Report	2018	2019	2020
Employees (per 1 January 2019/2020/2021)			
Clingendael employees	92	94	93
ICCT employees	7	9	7
FTEs (per 1 January 2019/2020/2021)			
Clingendael employees	77.81	84.06	86
ICCT employees	6.33	7.89	6.5
Total number of new employees hired	23	32	31
Total number of departing employees	17	27	23
Employees on fixed-term contracts (per 1 January 2019/2020/2021)	39	49	45
Employees on permanent contracts (per 1 January 2019/2020/2021)	61	54	55
Male/Female ratio % (per 1 January 2019/2020/2021)	38/62	39/61	42/58
Number of vacancies (incl. internship vacancies)	47	55	43
Total number of interns	37	45	30
Absence %	3,4	4,5	4,2

Our Finances

	Actuals 2020	Actuals 2019
Turnover	13.410	16.114
Total costs	13.247	16.009
Operational result	163	105
Result after taxation	103	30
Equity / total assets	45%	36%
Full time equivalents	93	92

Note: amounts x €1.000



Clingendael

Netherlands Institute of International Relations

P.O. Box 93080
2509 AB The Hague
The Netherlands

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Email: info@clingendael.org

Website: www.clingendael.org

