



International Centre for
Counter-Terrorism

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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01. DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

The global terrorism and violent extremism landscape in 2025 remained highly volatile. While terrorism is no longer always perceived as the dominant global security concern, the threat itself remains persistently high across regions. Africa has been widely described as the epicentre of global terrorism, with violence driven by a complex mix of jihadist insurgencies, local conflicts, and fragile governance. At the same time, Europe continued to face a sustained and multifaceted threat, underlining that terrorism remains a global challenge rather than a geographically contained one.

Several structural trends continued to reshape the threat landscape over the past year. Of particular concern is the growing radicalisation into violence of increasingly young individuals, including pre-teens. This development raises profound challenges for prevention, early intervention, and child protection, and calls into question the adequacy of existing preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) and counter-terrorism (CT) frameworks. At the same time, extremist actors have continued to experiment with and adopt emerging technologies. The use of artificial intelligence, drones, and 3D-printed weapons illustrates how technological innovation is lowering barriers to operational capability and complicating detection and prevention efforts.

Ideologically, 2025 further confirmed a trend toward the hybridisation of extremist belief systems. Clear ideological boundaries are increasingly eroding, giving rise to what is often described as nihilistic violent extremism, in which violence itself rather than a coherent ideology becomes the primary driver. This evolution challenges traditional threat typologies and requires new analytical lenses. The continued rise in antisemitism worldwide was another alarming trend, tragically illustrated by deadly terrorist attacks in countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States.

Compounding these developments, state actors have played an increasingly visible role in shaping and amplifying terrorist threats, notably through hybrid operations. In Europe, Russian influence operations added another layer of complexity to already strained security environments.

Strategically, the year was also marked by growing divergence between the United States and Europe on counter-terrorism priorities, further complicating international cooperation and coherence. Regionally, a regime change in Syria introduced renewed instability and uncertainty, occurring alongside a worrying resurgence of ISIS and reinforcing concerns about spillover effects beyond the region.

These developments reinforce a fundamental reality: terrorism is not only a persistent threat, but an ever-evolving one. Addressing it requires rigorous research, continuous monitoring, and evidence-based policymaking. This is precisely where the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism plays a critical role.

In 2025, ICCT published 79 articles across its website and its academic journal, *Perspectives on Terrorism*, offering in-depth insights into global and regional trends. Core staff also published 21 additional articles externally, including in major media outlets and in collaboration with other leading think tanks. ICCT hosted close to 30 online and in-person activities, convening experts and decision-makers to address pressing security challenges, and contributed to nearly 100 events. Our open-access databases continued to serve as widely used resources, while our podcasts remained accessible on major streaming platforms.

Together, these efforts reinforced ICCT's position as a leading independent think tank, committed to strengthening knowledge and fostering informed, nuanced debate. Our impact is reflected in the high level of media engagement with our work and the growing number of citations of ICCT publications in both academic research and policy discussions. This impact was further recognised through the award of the Best Think Tank on Counter-Terrorism and Hybrid Threats, at the European Enterprise Awards 2025.

At the same time, 2025 proved to be a challenging year. In an increasingly crowded policy landscape, terrorism has become one priority among many, making it more difficult to secure sustained and predictable support. Yet, despite these challenges, ICCT's relevance and credibility were repeatedly reaffirmed by our donors and partners.

In 2025, ICCT also celebrated its 15th anniversary. Established in 2010 following a motion of the Dutch Parliament, ICCT was tasked to inform policy discussions and public debates on how to best prevent terrorism and violent extremism. Looking back, we can take pride in the organisation's contributions, in the Netherlands and globally. Yet the threat continues to evolve. In this context, the need for ICCT's work remains as strong as ever, underscoring the importance of sustained investment in independent, evidence-based expertise.

DR THOMAS RENARD
ICCT DIRECTOR

2025 AT A GLANCE



02. PROJECTS

In 2025, ICCT implemented [26 projects](#), mobilising over 35 partner organisations and supported by 21 distinct donors. This diverse portfolio reflects both the breadth of ICCT's expertise and its ability to respond with agility to evolving challenges in the field of counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism.

Project activities covered a wide range of policy-relevant research areas, including the migration–terrorism nexus, Russian hybrid operations in Europe, and the state of anti-government extremism across the continent. Additional work focused on weapons acquisition by extremist actors, threats against elected officials, and the impact of artificial intelligence on terrorism and violent extremism. Alongside research, ICCT also conducted evaluations of both local initiatives and broader international programmes.

While a number of projects were implemented within Europe, ICCT also expanded its geographical reach, with activities in regions such as the Middle East and Southeast Asia. This demonstrates the organisation's capacity to operate across diverse contexts and contribute to global efforts.

ICCT's work in 2025 was supported by a strong and varied donor base, including Dutch government bodies and municipalities, as well as European and non-European ministries, and international organisations. This highlights the organisation's extensive network of partners in the Netherlands, across Europe, and beyond.

Importantly, five projects carried over from previous years, underscoring ICCT's ability to build sustained partnerships and deliver continued value to its donors. In the course of the year, ICCT launched 10 new projects and successfully concluded 18, maintaining a high level of operational activity throughout.



The most positive aspect of our cooperation with ICCT was the **open and constructive collaboration.**

ICCT was always willing to **exchange ideas, provide feedback,** and work together to find the **best solutions.**

This dynamic made it easier to address challenges and ensure the **project's success.**



PROJECT COORDINATOR FROM
A GOVERNMENT AGENCY

ICCT PROJECTS HIGHLIGHTS

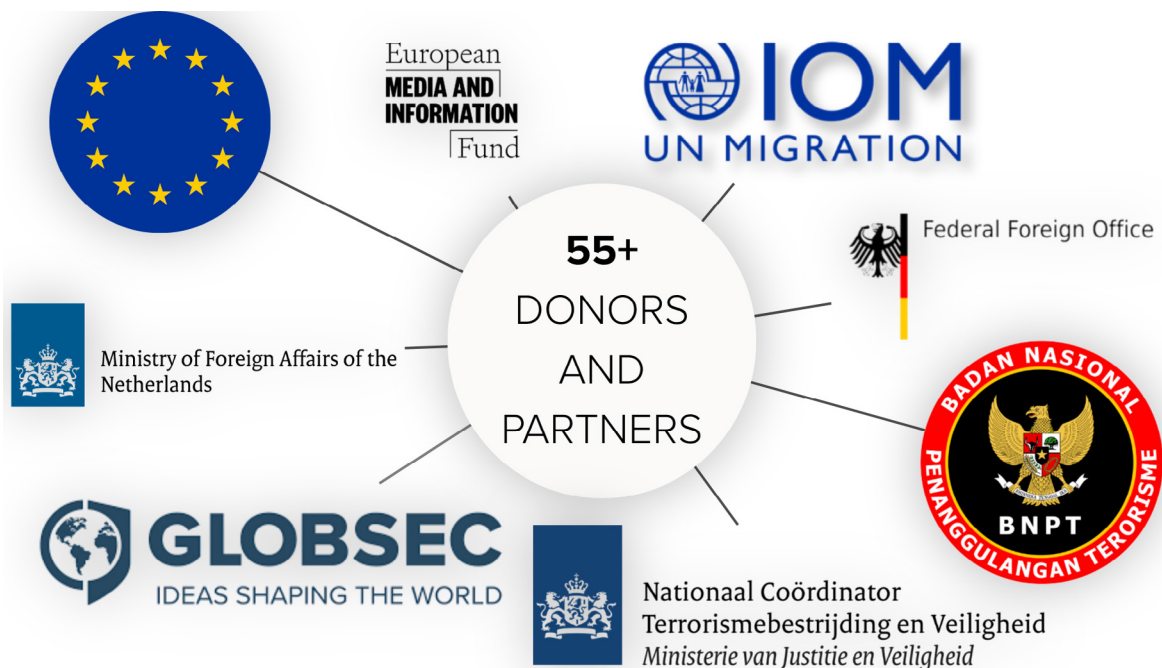
SENTINEL

SENTINEL is an EU-funded project that aims to provide accurate monitoring of current extremist threats to Jews and Jewish places of worship in Europe and increase community resilience to attempted physical attacks. As part of a consortium, ICCT specifically produces monthly reports monitoring antisemitic incidents across Europe, such as acts of terrorism, hate crimes, or vandalism.

RUSSIAN HYBRID THREATS

In cooperation with GLOBSEC, ICCT compiled and analysed data on all kinetic incidents in Europe that were allegedly linked to Russia since 2022, as part of a broader “hybrid warfare campaign”. In addition, data was also collected on the perpetrators of these incidents, to analyse their profiles and motivations. Findings and recommendations were presented in a series of closed-door events for legislators and policy-makers.

SOME KEY DONORS & PARTNERS



03. RESEARCH

In 2025, ICCT produced a substantial body of research, cumulating 100 articles from nearly 90 experts across its different platforms and beyond.

ICCT published 46 articles on its website, including 26 short reads, 8 Policy Briefs, and 12 in-depth reports. These outputs addressed a broad spectrum of topics, ranging from analyses of the security situation in Syria and the evolution of the jihadi threat, to online disinformation and radicalisation processes, and terrorist designation trends. ICCT also explored emerging issues such as Russian hybrid operations in Europe, youth radicalisation, and the rise of anti-technology terrorism, while fostering forward-looking discussions on the future of prevention and countering violent extremism (P/CVE). Moreover, ICCT published a flagship report on how European intelligence services assess the terrorist threat.

These publications were authored by 37 experts, reflecting the diversity and depth of ICCT's research network.

Beyond its in-house publications, ICCT staff contributed 21 external articles, including op-eds in major newspapers such as *Die Zeit* and *NRC*, as well as academic journal contributions. This further underscores the recognised expertise and thought leadership of ICCT researchers.

ICCT also published four issues of its academic journal, *Perspectives*

100 ARTICLES
46 ICCT publications
33 PT articles
21 external contributions

on Terrorism, in 2025. Across these issues, 33 articles by 51 scholars covered a wide range of topics. The journal received 99 submissions and maintained an acceptance rate of 24%.

In parallel, ICCT maintained and expanded two key online resources. The *Foreign Terrorist Fighters Knowledge Hub*, developed in partnership with the TMC Asser Institute, was extended to four additional countries—Maldives, Uzbekistan, Kosovo, and Sweden—bringing its coverage to 36 countries. The platform continues to provide comprehensive data on administrative and criminal measures, as well as rehabilitation and prevention policies. ICCT also continued to develop the *Interlinkages Database*, which now includes 96 domestic cases in which individuals have been tried for core international crimes in a terrorism context.



RESEARCH IMPACT

ICCT's research outputs achieved significant impact in 2025. ICCT publications were cited more than 200 times in academic and think tank work. In addition, ICCT research informed 21 policy documents produced by key institutions, including the Council of Europe, the Council of the European Union, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Eurojust, UK independent reviewers on Prevent and terrorism legislation, and the Dutch Parliament. Together, these figures demonstrate ICCT's continued influence on both academic debate and policy development.



ICCT provides excellent,
high-quality research and analysis
on counter-terrorism and related
security issues. Their work is both
practical and **academically strong.**



 READER SURVEY
RESPONSE

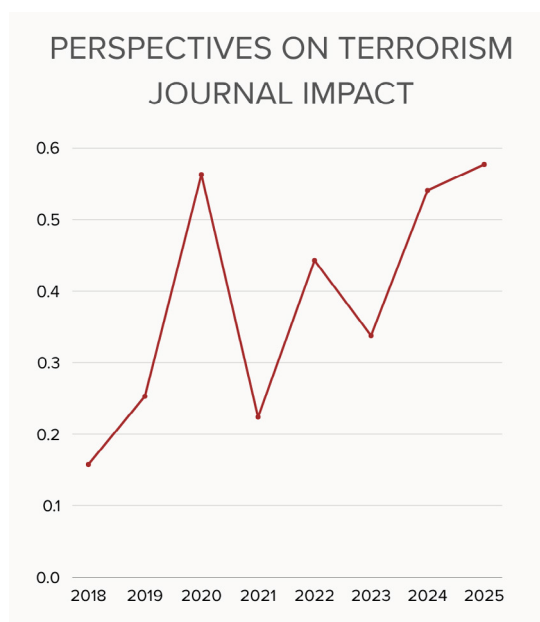
Similarly, *Perspectives on Terrorism* continued its upward trajectory, achieving its highest impact factor to date (SJR: 0.577; H-index: 27), and securing a Q1 ranking for the second consecutive year. Articles published in the journal accumulated 524,593 reads on JSTOR, further consolidating its position as a leading open-access publication bridging academia, policy, and practice. Since 2023, the journal has been published in partnership with the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) at Leiden University and the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV) at the University of St Andrews.

0.577

SCIMAGO JOURNAL
RANK (SJR)

Q1

RANKED IN THE TOP
25% OF LAW JOURNALS
WORLDWIDE



MOST READ PUBLICATIONS

TOP FIVE MOST READ SHORT PUBLICATIONS

- 01 Operation Sindoor: a turning point for India in addressing terrorism in Kashmir?
by [Tanya Merha](#)
- 02 The Islamic State in 2025: an Evolving Threat Facing a Waning Global Response
by [Adrian Shunti](#)
- 03 The Threat of ISIS in a Fragmentated Syria
by [Tanya Merha](#)
- 04 2025 New Orleans Truck Attack: The Role of Electric Vehicles and Peer-to-Peer Platforms
by [Yannick Veilleux-Lepage](#) and [Marc-André Argentino](#)
- 05 ISIS Suspects Held in Syria: Repatriation Reset under New US, Syrian Leaders?
by [Letta M. Tayler](#)

- 01 Russia's Crime-Terror Nexus: Criminality as a Tool of Hybrid Warfare
by [Kacper Rekawek](#), [Julian Lanchès](#), [Maria Zotova](#), and [Donald Bowser](#)
- 02 In Their Eyes: How European Security Services Look at Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism
by [Laura Winkelmuller Real](#), [Kacper Rekawek](#), and [Thomas Renard](#)
- 03 Conceptualising and Addressing the Migration-Terrorism Nexus: Literature Review, Case Studies, and Policy Recommendations
by [Thomas Renard](#) and [Méryl Demuynck](#)
- 04 Justifications, (Dis)Advantages and Implications of Designating Proxy Actors: The Case of the Wagner Group/Africa Corps
by [Tanya Mehra](#) and [Méryl Demuynck](#)
- 05 Blurred Boundaries: Legal, Ethical, and Practical Limits in Detecting and Moderating Terrorist, Illegal and Implicit Extremist Content Online while Respecting Freedom of Expression
by [Bibi van Ginkel](#), [Tanya Mehra](#), [Merlina Herbach](#), [Julian Lanchès](#) and [Yael Boerma](#)

TOP FIVE MOST READ LONG PUBLICATIONS

04. POLICY & PRACTICE

In 2025, ICCT continued to play a key role in informing counter-terrorism policy and practice. In addition to its policy-oriented publications, ICCT engaged with policy-makers and practitioners during nearly 50 tailored events.

ICCT convened or co-hosted 14 closed-door events dedicated to knowledge-sharing and policy advice. These included expert discussions in Brussels, Paris, and Warsaw to present findings from ICCT's work on Russian hybrid operations in Europe to members of parliament and policy-makers. ICCT also delivered specialised briefings, such as on Nihilistic Violent Extremism (NVE) for the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD), and on online radicalisation for Indonesia's National Counter Terrorism Agency (BNPT).

ICCT PROJECTS HIGHLIGHTS

EUKH

In 2025, ICCT contributed actively to the activities of the EU Knowledge Hub on the Prevention of Radicalisation – the EU's flagship initiative bringing together practitioners, policy-makers and experts from around Europe. ICCT Director acted at the Chair of the EUKH Research Committee, providing guidance on research priorities for the EU and its member states. ICCT staff also actively contributed to several EUKH activities, such as the Townhall Meeting or so-called Thematic Panels on Geopolitics or Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs). Furthermore, ICCT staff wrote two articles for the EUKH newsletter.

BORDERLINE CONTENT

ICCT examined the feasibility of developing a reliable framework for detecting and moderating extremist and terrorist content online, without limiting the freedom of expression. Included in this category of content is the so-called 'borderline' content, which is not always easily detectable due to its implicit character. This project was commissioned by the Dutch Research and Data Centre (WODC), at the request of the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV). Results informed the work of the Dutch Parliament.

In addition, ICCT core staff contributed to 35 closed-door events organised by partners, further extending the organisation's policy reach. These contributions included participation in high-level forums such as Europol's ECTC Annual Conference and the European Experts Network on Terrorism (EENeT), as well as the delivery of briefings to European Union policy-makers in the context of the EU Knowledge Hub on the Prevention of Radicalisation, during meetings of the Council of the European Union's Working Party on Terrorism (COTER), or on the occasion of the EU Counter-Terrorism Week in Brussels. ICCT experts also provided tailored briefings to intelligence and law enforcement services from different countries, as well as to international platforms such as the Global Coalition against Daesh.

Through these engagements, ICCT reached hundreds of policy-makers and practitioners worldwide, ensuring that its research and expertise translate into practical insights and actionable recommendations. This sustained level of interaction underscores the strong policy relevance and real-world impact of ICCT's work.

05. TRAININGS & CAPACITY-BUILDING

In 2025, ICCT organised ten capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening the knowledge and skills of policy-makers, practitioners, and experts. These activities addressed key operational and legal challenges in counter-terrorism, including a specialised training for Indonesia’s National Counter Terrorism Agency (BNPT) on cumulative prosecution for terrorism and core international crimes, a training for the Government of Iraq on prosecution challenges in terrorism cases, as well as a training on evidence-based evaluations of public policies.

In addition, ICCT core staff delivered or contributed to 12 further training sessions and lectures in a variety of settings. These included guest lectures at universities and other expert forums, supporting the dissemination of ICCT’s expertise to both academic and practitioner audiences.

Through these efforts, ICCT continued to strengthen capacities across institutions and regions, contributing to more effective and informed counter-terrorism responses worldwide.

01

“The insights I gained during the course were **entirely new** and **highly significant** for my future research and overall career development.”



PARTICIPANT

TRAINING ON EVIDENCE-BASED
EVALUATIONS OF PUBLIC POLICIES

02

“The workshop material is something new that **we will bring to our work environment** for **further discussion.”**



PARTICIPANT

TRAINING, JAKARTA

03

“I would surely recommend it as it offers a wide spectrum of experiences combined with academic research and career-relevant practices. It provides both **theory and practice** whilst encouraging **reflection on the future.”**



PARTICIPANT

2025 SUMMER PROGRAMME

ICCT TRAININGS HIGHLIGHTS

SUMMER PROGRAMME

Since 2011, ICCT co-organises jointly with the TMC Asser Institute an Advanced Summer Programme on Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and the Rule of Law. Organised every year in The Hague, the course is designed for professionals working in the field of counter-terrorism and P/CVE, including practitioners, diplomats, or academics. It combines insightful lectures from leading scholars with interactive sessions, and study visits.

EVALUATION & ASSESSMENT

ICCT developed a curriculum and delivered four training sessions on “Public Policy Evaluation & Impact Assessment”, sponsored by EuroMeSCo with financial support from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). This training equipped participants with foundational knowledge and practical skills to design and conduct evidence based evaluations of public policies.

06. PUBLIC OUTREACH

In 2025, ICCT continued to engage a broad audience through a range of public outreach activities, marking in particular its 15th anniversary year.

A key highlight was the ICCT Annual Conference, held on 4 December in The Hague, which brought together nearly 100 policy-makers, practitioners, and researchers. The invitation-only event provided a platform to reflect on major achievements in counter-terrorism (CT) and prevention of violent extremism (P/CVE) over the past fifteen years, fostering open and candid discussions. The conference featured high-level speakers, including representatives from the Dutch National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV), the Royal Marechaussee, the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator's office, and Public Safety Canada.

On this occasion, ICCT [presented](#) the Lifetime Achievement Award to Prof. em. Dr Alex P. Schmid, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the field of terrorism studies.





In addition to its flagship conference, ICCT organised three public webinars addressing key contemporary issues, including Russian disinformation campaigns, the potential revival of ISIS in Syria, and borderline online content. These events attracted nearly 250 participants.

ICCT staff also contributed to 12 external public events, including the Global Security Forum in Doha, Hedayah’s Annual Conference in Brussels, and a conference of the International Organisation for the Least Developed Countries (IOLDCs) in Geneva, further amplifying ICCT’s outreach.

ICCT continued to diversify its communication formats, producing two podcast episodes in 2025, covering topics such as anti-Semitism in Europe and foreign fighters in the war in Ukraine.

To mark its 15th anniversary, ICCT also published a special report highlighting its cumulative impact, supported by a dedicated communication campaign, including a press release, a commemorative logo, and targeted social media outreach.

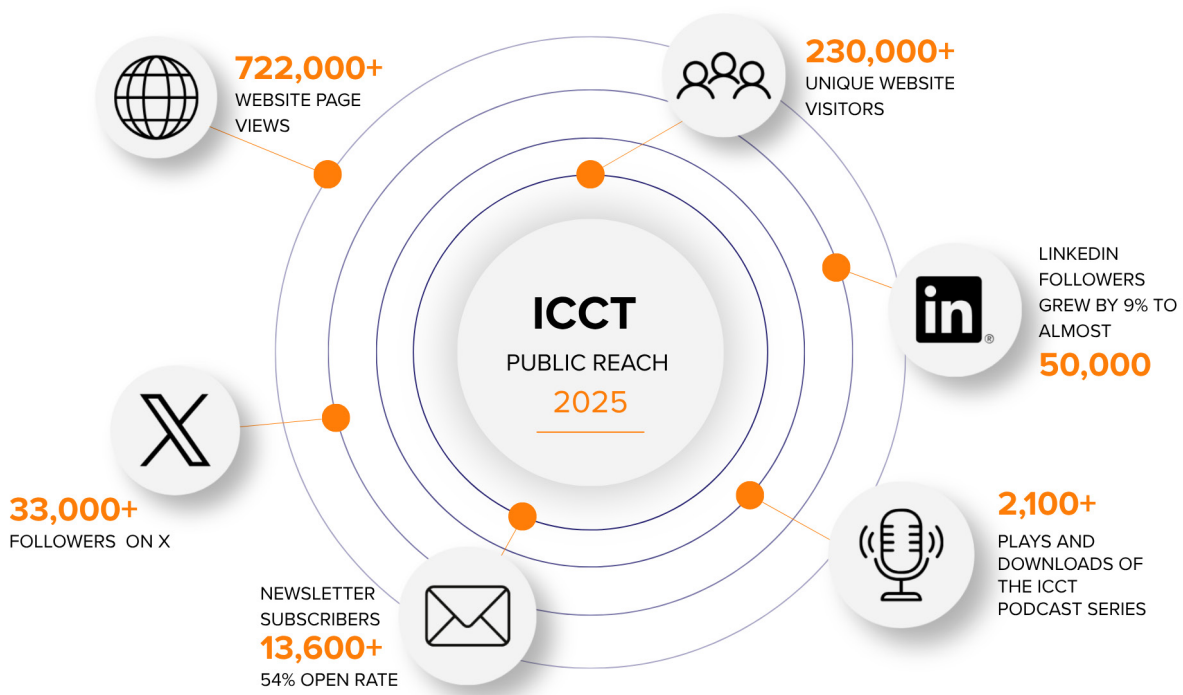
The anniversary year concluded with ICCT receiving the “Best Think Tank on Counter-Terrorism and Hybrid Threats” award, at the European Enterprise Awards 2025. Reflecting on this recognition, ICCT Director Dr Thomas Renard [noted](#) that the award highlights both the relevance of ICCT’s work and the dedication of its team.



ICCT's outreach efforts are reflected in its 2025 analytics. The organisation recorded over 722,000 page views and more than 230,000 unique website visitors, alongside an increase in returning users and time spent on its platforms. Its global audience remained geographically diverse. On social media, ICCT's presence continued to grow, with LinkedIn followers increasing by 9% to nearly 50,000, and a total of over 33,000 followers on X. The ICCT newsletter maintained a strong subscriber base of over 13,600, with a notably high open rate of 54%, well above industry averages. ICCT's YouTube channel and podcast also sustained steady engagement, reflecting continued interest in its multimedia content.

Furthermore, ICCT core staff was massively present in international media, to comment on significant developments as well as key research findings. In 2025, ICCT was quoted in more than 250 distinct media articles, from 215 distinct media outlets – a 35% increase from 2024.

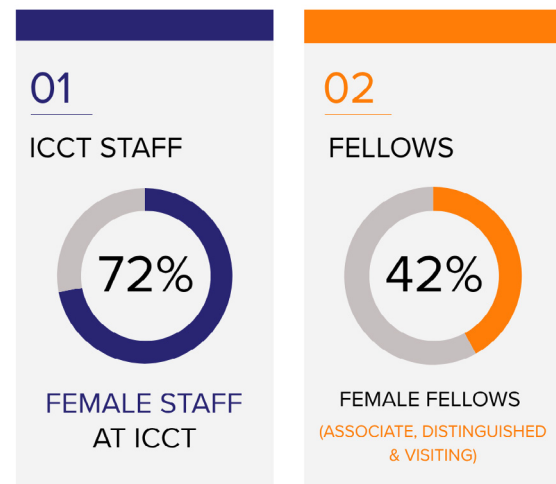
Overall, these figures demonstrate ICCT's ability to effectively disseminate its work and engage a wide and growing global audience.



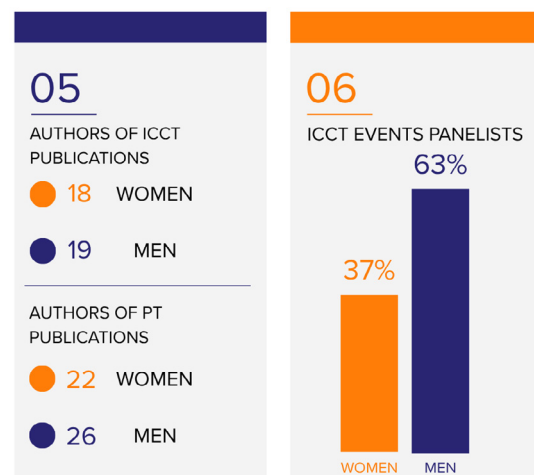
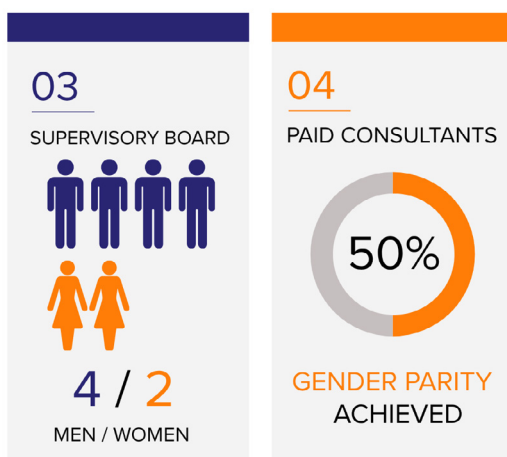
07. GENDER & GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

ICCT is committed to promoting diversity and advancing gender equality across its activities and organisational structure. As part of this commitment, the ICCT Director is a member of the International Gender Champions network, which brings together leaders dedicated to breaking down gender barriers and making gender equality a reality in their respective spheres of influence.

In 2025, ICCT maintained a strong gender balance across its work. Women represented 67% of ICCT staff, with an even higher proportion when including interns. Among ICCT's associate, distinguished, and visiting fellows, 42% were women and 58% men. The Supervisory Board comprised four men and two women. Gender



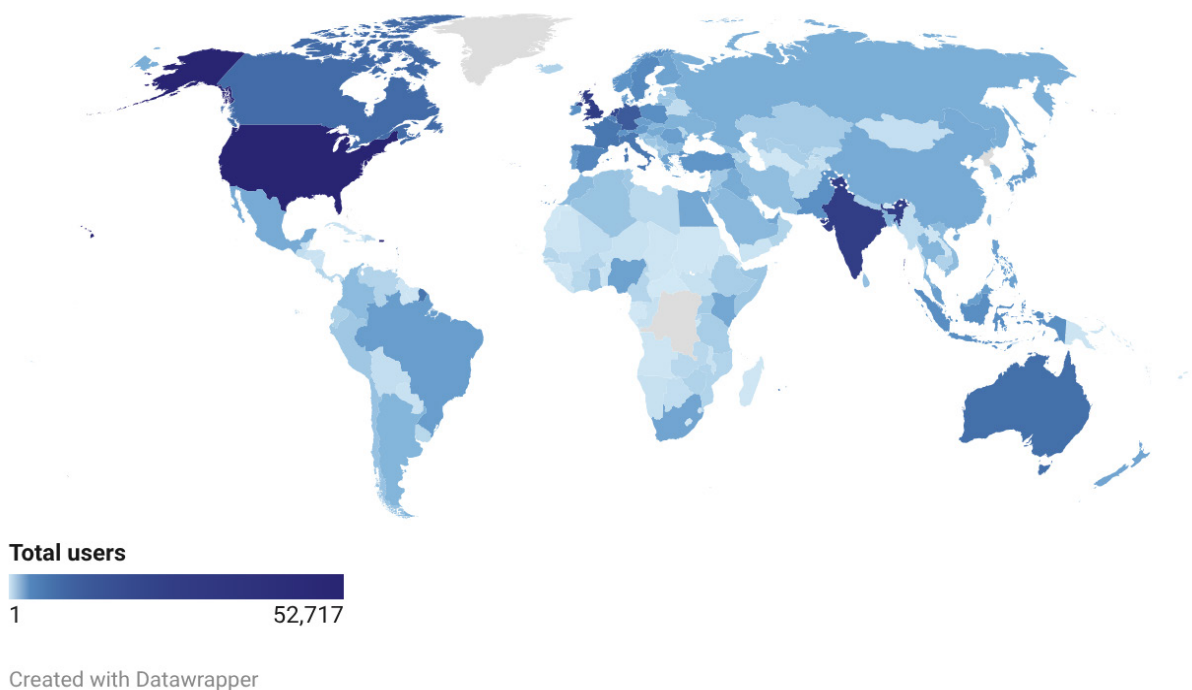
parity was achieved among paid consultants contributing to ICCT projects. Authorship of ICCT website publications was also balanced, with near parity between female (18) and male (19) authors. Perspectives on Terrorism authorship was similarly distributed with 22 women and 26 men contributing throughout the year. Across ICCT events, efforts were made to ensure diverse representation on panels, resulting in 37% female and 63% male speakers.



Geographically, ICCT’s activities and outreach remained global in scope. Its audience spans all continents, with a primary concentration in Europe and North America. In 2025, ICCT implemented projects across multiple regions, with staff deployed in Europe, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and North America. ICCT’s research outputs also reflected this global perspective, covering developments in regions such as Syria, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and West Africa.

Together, these figures reflect ICCT’s continued efforts to foster inclusivity and ensure a broad geographical reach in both its operations and impact.

TOTAL WEBSITE USERS BY COUNTRY



08. MONITORING & EVALUATION

In 2025, ICCT continued its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities, supporting both internal learning and external accountability. The organisation conducted five external evaluations for a range of stakeholders, including local municipalities and international organisations. This notably included an evaluation of the European Union's Terrorist Content Online (TCO) Regulation.

In addition, ICCT completed four effect evaluations and two process evaluations, contributing to a deeper understanding of the impact and implementation of counter-terrorism and prevention initiatives. Two ICCT projects were also subject to external evaluation, reflecting the organisation's commitment to transparency and continuous improvement.

ICCT's M&E Centre of Excellence further supported partners through six helpdesk requests in 2025, providing targeted advice and expertise on evaluation methodologies and practices.

Overall, these activities highlight ICCT's growing role in advancing evidence-based approaches and strengthening evaluation capacity in the field.

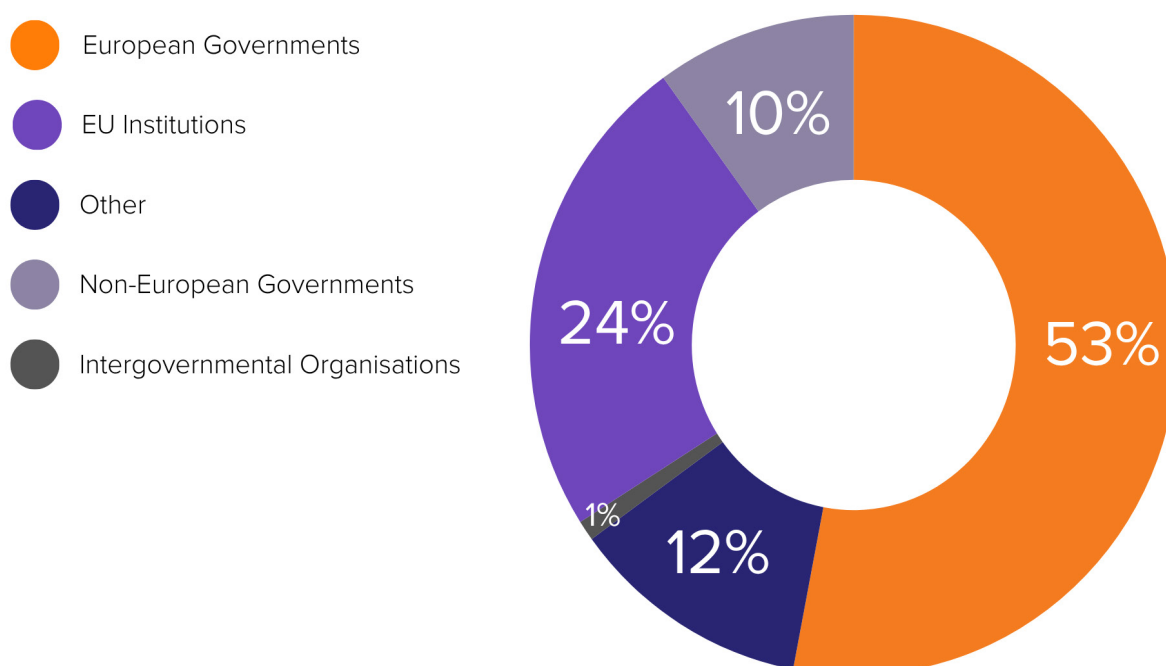
09. FINANCIALS

ICCT is an independent foundation that relies exclusively on competitively awarded grants, primarily from government bodies and international organisations. As part of its commitment to transparency and good governance, ICCT undergoes an independent external audit on an annual basis.

In 2025, ICCT's total revenue amounted to €1.8 million, representing a slight decrease compared to the previous year.

ICCT maintains a diversified donor base. More than 75% of its funding originates from European public bodies, with the largest share provided by Dutch government entities, including both ministries and municipalities. Additional support was received from other European governments and through European Union-funded projects. Beyond Europe, ICCT secured funding from United Nations agencies, non-European governments—particularly the United States—and private foundations.

Overall, this broad mix of funding sources reflects ICCT's strong and diverse partnerships, as well as the continued confidence of its donors in the organisation's work.



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ABOUT ICCT

The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) is an independent think-and-do tank based in The Hague, Netherlands. Since 2010, we have provided research, policy advice, training, and other solutions to support better counter-terrorism policies and practices worldwide based on evidence and compliant with human rights and the rule of law. We also contribute to the scientific and public debates in the fields of counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, notably through our publications and events.

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