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Date  
4 July 2024

Subject  
CSR Notification Letter in response to  
the Letter to the House of  
Representatives from the Minister of  
Economic Affairs concerning the  
cyber security labour market.

Your Excellency,

In this notification letter you will find a response from the Cyber Security Council (hereinafter: the Council) concerning the approach proposed in the recent Letter to the House of Representatives from the outgoing Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy (EZK) to reduce the shortages in the cyber security labour market. This letter contains several initial follow-up steps based on a comprehensive study by the Platform Talent voor Technologie (PTvT) and Dialogic<sup>1</sup> concerning this subject. Our notification letter is a follow-up to an information letter from the Council about this subject dating from the end of 2023. A copy of this letter was also sent to you.<sup>2</sup>

Reducing shortages in the cyber security labour market is of crucial importance for digital resilience and the strategic digital autonomy of the Netherlands. The Council recognises the results of the survey carried out by PTvT and Dialogic on the instructions of EZK to identify the nature and extent of the shortages, as well as the recommendations presented therein. However, the Council also wishes to present several points for attention and make recommendations for further elaboration in addressing the shortages in the cyber security labour market:

1. The Council appreciates the efforts made by EZK as guiding Ministry concerning this subject, but insists, given the nature and scope of the problems, that the reduction of the shortages in the cyber security labour market must be a very clear priority for all Ministries involved. In addition to the Ministry of EZK, the Council also calls on the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Kingdom Relations and the Ministry of Justice and Security, to implement coordinated action within a public-private scientific partnership.
2. There are already several initiatives within the business community and the educational and knowledge institutes to reduce the shortages in the cyber security labour market. In accordance with the research report issued by PTvT and Dialogic, the Council points out the importance of alignment with these existing initiatives in order to jointly realise the desired impact on the labour market. A coordinating and binding role on the part of the Central Government can ensure an efficient and coherent reduction of shortages.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Onderwijs en Arbeidsmarkt Cybersecurity' research report, Platform Talent voor Technologie en Dialogic, April 2024

<sup>2</sup> [Information letter from the Cyber Security Council concerning education reinforcement and knowledge development | Letter | Cyber Security Council](#)

3. The Letter to the House of Representatives proposed linking follow-up actions concerning this file to the Human Capital Agenda-ICT. The Council recognises that it may be effective to place follow-up steps with this initiative since its agenda is being formulated and implemented in conjunction with the broader field of IT, and it encompasses several activities that could also contribute to resolving the shortages within the cyber security domain. The Council concludes that these advantages also imply limitations. The link with the HCA-ICT means that there may not be sufficient space for the multidisciplinary aspects of cyber security and it may be the case that security receives insufficient independent attention. The Council considers this a point for concern in view of the extent of the shortages and the importance of cyber security to the society and economy of the Netherlands. The Council will therefore closely monitor these activities under the HCA-IT and make recommendations for improvement in case of insufficient progress.
4. The Council argues that the shortages in the cyber security labour market constitute a complex challenge. Educational institutions at MBO (senior secondary vocational education), HBO (higher professional education) and WO (university) level play a role in increasing the influx of young talent. A strong growth in the number of teachers is essential for this purpose. It is important in this connection that existing obstacles to teachers from the professional field are removed, so that more teachers can participate in programmes provided by educational and knowledge institutions. In addition, financial resources have to be made available to increase the number of teachers.
5. However, new influx from regular education alone is not sufficient to plug the gaps in the short term. Retraining and supplementary training programmes also play an important role. Retraining part of the existing workforce for the digital security domain (at all training levels) will make it possible to reduce the shortage within a relatively short period. Positive incentives, such as changing the (technical) image of the professional field and adequate financial reward, are also important, in particular with respect to jobs within government.
6. And finally, the Council is concerned because the Letter to the House of Representatives does not show that there is additional financial room for following up the study. This will be necessary for effective implementation of measures in order to carry out the recommendations.

A copy of this letter will also be sent to the Ministers of Education, Culture and Science, Social Affairs and Employment, Foreign Affairs and Kingdom Relations and the Minister of Justice and Security, and to the State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and Digitalisation.

In anticipation of your response, we remain,

Yours sincerely,  
On behalf of the Cyber Security Council,

Pieter-Jaap Aalbersberg  
CSR co-chair

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Acting CSR co-chair