

Dutch Used Pegasus Spyware on Most-Wanted Criminal: Report

By AFP

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Dutch secret services have used the controversial Israeli spyware known as Pegasus to hack targets including the country’s most-wanted criminal, a news report said on Thursday.

The Netherlands’ AIVD secret service in 2019 used the software bought from Israel’s NSO Group to access fugitive alleged drugs kingpin **Ridouan Taghi**, the Volkskrant daily reported.

Pegasus, which [can switch on a phone’s camera or microphone](#) and harvest its data, was engulfed in controversy last July after several media outlets reported that governments around the world had used it to spy on opponents.

Based on four anonymous sources, Volkskrant said although tracing criminals was not the AIVD’s role, it assisted Dutch police in finding Taghi, who was arrested in Dubai in 2019.

Taghi, 44, and 16 others are currently on trial on charges including murder.

The newspaper said the AIVD used Pegasus to spy on Taghi “among others” but did not say who else may have been targeted.

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The advertisement features the Wallarm logo and 'API SECURITY PLATFORM' text. The main headline reads 'AI Runs on APIs. Secure the Connection.' Below this is a screenshot of a security dashboard. The dashboard includes a 'SECURITY POSTURE' section with a 'Total score' of 52/100 and a 'Discovered Security Issues' table. The 'SECURITY VENDORS' section lists various vendors and their counts.

Discovered Security Issues	
CRITICAL	16
HIGH	74
MEDIUM	31
LOW	16

SECURITY VENDORS	
Wallarm	9
Amazon	3
ModSecurity	3
Imperva	2
Cloudflare	2
and 4 more	

The use of the software has raised eyebrows in the privacy-sensitive Netherlands.

Spyware “is a more intrusive form of tapping than what you see in George Orwell’s book 1984,” said Pieter Omtzigt, an independent lawmaker known for asking tough questions.

“I want to know the context in which it was used, against which type of people and how oversight was organised,” Omtzigt told Volkskrant.

MEP Sophie in 't Veld, who is part of an EU Parliament probe into Pegasus, said the spyware was “massively invasive, and we’ve seen other countries use it for political aims.”

Neither the AIVD, nor the NSO Group commented on the Volkskrant report, with the company saying “NSO’s technology is used by investigative agencies worldwide to prevent terror attacks.”

The European Parliament created a “committee of inquiry” in March to probe accusations over the use of Pegasus spyware by EU governments, notably in Hungary and Poland.

Spain’s prime minister, Pedro Sanchez, vowed last week to tighten oversight of the country’s secret services after a scandal over the use of Pegasus to hack top politicians’ mobile phones.

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Source: <https://www.securityweek.com/dutch-used-pegasus-spyware-most-wanted-criminal-report>