

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023





My first year as Director General of French Cybersecurity Agency (ANSSI) has been filled of rich experiences and many challenges. With geopolitical tensions rising and international events taking place in France, the level of IT threats has continued to increase. The Rugby World Cup, held in September 2023, was an opportunity for the Agency to challenge its operational resources, in coordination with all the government departments concerned, in the perspective of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games (JOP). It's gratifying that this event

took place without any notable cybersecurity incidents, just as no hospital was paralyzed over the past year. This is the proof that the directions taken recent years by the Agency and the French government are yielding results.

In response to the massification of the threat, the second Network and Information Security Directive, known as "NIS 2", aims to raise the cyber maturity of all the value chains in our economy and public services, by imposing harmonized and proportionate IT security rules. Preparing its transposition obviously kept us busy throughout 2023, and mobilized a great deal of expertise within the Agency. In particular, consultations have been initiated to co-construct these future requirements with the entities concerned, and will continue over the coming months.

Finally, 2023 was also highlighted by the inauguration of ArteFact, our new site in Rennes. I'm delighted to see ANSSI expanding its presence in Brittany. With the opening of this new site, the Agency is strengthening not only its network detection and supervision activities, but also its expertise and knowledge of the threat, in cooperation with its partners. The level of the threat requires us to adapt and extend our range of services, and to develop cooperation with an extensive ecosystem of institutional, industrial and academic partners. This networking includes CSIRT relays, [Cybermalveillance.gouv.fr](https://cybermalveillance.gouv.fr), other government entities, as well as Cyber Campuses and private service providers.

On the threshold of this centenary event, the Olympic Games, we have the opportunity to put ourselves to the test of the "big night" and to test our capabilities in the face of a threat that no longer avoids any player. From this perspective, I would like to reiterate my full confidence in the ability of all ANSSI personnel to rise to the challenge: having worked alongside them, I know that their commitment and expertise are equal to the challenges ahead.

Vincent Strubel
General Director of ANSSI

2023 IN FIGURES



634
agents ¹



37 years old
average age



3,703
safety events ²



1,112
incidents ³



25,738
automated audit
reports (ADS and
SILENE)



269
security visas issued



57,823
SecNumacademy
certificates issued



1,644
people trained by the
CFSSI



70
SecNumedu-labeled
training courses



35
SecNumedu-FC-
certified training
courses



29.8 millions euros
budget (excluding
payroll)



23
technical guides
published



8
scientific articles
published



15
open source software
published

¹ Civilian staff excluding trainees and apprentices.

² Events brought to the attention of ANSSI and handled by operational teams.

³ Security events for which ANSSI confirms that a malicious actor has successfully carried out actions on the victim's information system.

A CHANGE OF SCALE TO DEAL WITH A GROWING THREAT

With an increasing cyberthreat affecting more and more entities, as revealed in the Agency's Cyberthreat Panorama 2023, it is imperative to raise the overall level of cybersecurity in France and the European Union (EU). To meet these challenges, two new pieces of legislation with a particularly structuring impact on the Agency were deployed in 2023. Firstly, the Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Law (loi de protection militaire LPM 2024-2030), four articles of which directly concern the Agency, was adopted during the summer. This law, which confers new defense and detection resources, strengthens the Agency's operational capabilities.

The NIS 2 directive, adopted at European level in 2022, extends ANSSI's missions and promotes a massive reinforcement of the cybersecurity of the economic fabric and administrations within the EU, by increasing the number of regulated entities and sectors. This new regulation will lead the Agency to raise awareness, support and regulate thousands of new beneficiaries. The transposition of this directive into French law, which is the subject of extensive consultations, is particularly important for ANSSI and the entities that will be subject to it. In addition to defining the technical rules on which these regulations are based, in 2023 the Agency worked actively on its range of services and the qualification scheme for security audit and consultancy service providers (PACS), which will enable us, in addition to other qualified service providers, to increase our capacity to help the new entities affected by these rules.

The change of scale also means continued development for ANSSI, which has opened a new site, ArteFact, in Rennes. It is also a challenge for the Agency, with multiple sites and new operational challenges for the teams, which means we have to pay particular attention to the cohesion and well-being of our agents at work.

To ensure this expansion, ANSSI has launched a number of internal projects focusing on issues of inclusion and equality. It is committed to a proactive approach to equal pay, the creation of a local mechanism dedicated to combating sexist and sexual violence, and the roll-out of awareness training on this subject, psychosocial risks and equality in general.



TO DEFEND AND ASSIST

In terms of CERT-FR's incident response activities, the situations handled by ANSSI have worsened: cybersecurity incidents have mobilized more resources and over longer periods than in 2022. Likewise, the audits carried out in 2023 by CERT-FR, whether automated or by dedicated teams, attest to the increased level of the threat, requiring greater commitment from ANSSI teams.

To meet this need, articles 64 to 67 of the CIIP law 2024-2030 provide new resources for the Agency. First and foremost, these measures will increase knowledge of attackers modus operandi. ANSSI's detection capabilities have been strengthened by relying on private digital players: the Agency's collection of the data needed to understand the threat, identify victims and protect the Nation, makes it mandatory for electronic communications operators to set up detection capabilities, and extends the scope of the system to data center operators and subcontractors of public authorities, OIVs and OESs. The CIIP law gives the Agency the resources to better remedy the effects of cyberattacks. Finally, the Agency can more effectively alert victims of incidents or threats to information systems. Software publishers who suffer an incident or have a vulnerability in a product supplied on French territory must now notify ANSSI and inform their users. If they fail to do so, the Agency may inform them itself.

To pursue its security efforts, the Agency has also launched an automated cyberdefense system. This consists of blocking technical elements deemed malicious within the perimeter of the State's interministerial network, thereby protecting the beneficiaries of the public sphere. Since February 27, 2023, 60 attacks have been blocked. A total of 92,000 different markers were blocked in 2023, and around one billion requests are processed every month.

The Agency's entire defense system is part of the coordinated organization of the Cyber Crisis Coordination Center (C4). In 2023, its members shared with the Agency 113 security events involving potential French and foreign victims. Investigations carried out by ANSSI, some of which are still ongoing, have linked these events to 7 proven compromises of French entities.

TO SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN

The territorial declination of public action in digital security continued in 2023. ANSSI supported the gradual establishment of "departmental digital security committees" under the aegis of prefects.

It has also contributed the development of eleven local Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT), three cyber resource centers in overseas France, five sectoral CSIRT and ministerial CSIRT. All these structures are gradually integrating CERT-FR's operational methods, enabling early sharing of detected attack campaigns and cooperation on certain incidents. Together, they are positioning themselves as central players in local and sectoral operational cybersecurity, offering a range of services common to all and developing services adapted to their resources and roadmaps.

The governance of the State's digital security has led to the launch of ambitious new interministerial projects, including a sector plan for electrical energy (strengthening security levels, preparing for crisis management) and support for the Cybersecurity Acceleration and Resilience of Institutions (CaRE) plan for healthcare establishments.

ANSSI also took part in the national crisis management set up for the Rugby World Cup, which is also being used to prepare for the 2024 Olympic Games. This upcoming event mobilized the Agency throughout the year. Its preparation contributed to the overhaul of ANSSI's operational set-up, tested as part of a cyber training program that began in June. Last but not least, the Agency prepared for the Games by raising awareness of risks and crisis management among all those involved in the Olympic Games. In addition to security programs for dozens of entities, a self-diagnostic tool for assessing resilience maturity levels and turnkey crisis management exercise kits were made available.

Finally, scaling up means building and deploying simpler, more operational support tools for both large and small organizations. 2023 was the launch of projects supported by ANSSI's innovation laboratory, such as MonEspaceNIS2, which will enable regulated entities to test their eligibility, and MonAideCyber, which will enable them to initiate a securitization process, while MonServiceSécurisé, already operational, is strengthening the cybersecurity of all digital public services.

TO KNOW AND SHARE

The development of the Agency's knowledge of new technologies and digital security issues continued this year in a partnership approach with government agencies, manufacturers and research players. In 2023, this approach resulted in the provision and management of discussion forums for the community of qualified cybersecurity service providers. Feedback from this community was incorporated into the drafting of guides dedicated to the remediation of cyber incidents, published in early 2024. Since spring 2023, ANSSI has also been hosting the National Cyber Coordination Center (known as "NCC-FR"), which gives companies easier access to European support schemes in the fields of cybersecurity research, technology and industrial development.

The Agency's research work remains at the core of its missions. To help the ecosystem prepare for the quantum threat and encourage the emergence of critical innovative technologies in the field of post-quantum cryptography, the Agency has updated its technical opinion on the subject and launched work leading to the publication of a transition plan.

Regarding to certifications and qualifications, processes aimed for identifying trusted cybersecurity offerings, ANSSI has published the PACS (Information Systems Security Support and Consultancy Providers) reference framework. The Agency has assigned the first PVID (remote identity verification service providers) and SecNumCloud 3.2 (cloud service providers) qualifications, which include protection against laws with extraterritorial scope. ANSSI has announced the winners of the first round of support for SMEs and start-ups to improve their eligibility for SecNumCloud.

The Centre de formation à la sécurité des systèmes d'information (CFSSI), in collaboration with players in the field, has developed two skills matrices to raise the profile of cybersecurity professions among students and professionals, while helping employers, human resources departments and trainers to develop recruitment and training.

Finally, the DemainSpécialisteCyber campaign, co-constructed by ANSSI, the French Ministry of Education and Campus Cyber, has raised the profile of cybersecurity and its professions among young people and their teachers. As part of the campaign, the CyberEnJeux program trained almost 100,000 students in cybersecurity through the creation of board games.



ANSSI'S MISSION

Created in 2009, French Cybersecurity Agency (ANSSI) is the national authority for cybersecurity and cyberdefense. As a department of the Prime Minister's office, it is attached to the General Secretariat for National Defense and Security (SGDSN). Its role is to protect the nation from cyber attacks, and in particular operators of vital importance (OIV), operators of essential services (OES) and government agencies.

ANSSI is responsible for coordinating the French government's cybersecurity initiatives. This action is organized around three pillars:

- ▶ The "State responds to attacks" pillar organizes the State's response to cyber attacks within the framework of the Cyber Crisis Coordination Center, C4;
- ▶ The "State secures itself" pillar aims to work on protecting the information systems of ministries and major operators;
- ▶ The "State protects the Nation" pillar aims to better protect the French people and the country's economic and social fabric by taking greater account of cybersecurity in the government's priority policies on industry, security and education.

In a digital world that is undergoing profound and rapid change, ANSSI is also playing its role as a trailblazer for digital transformation. As such, it works with a range of public and private, national and international partners on subjects as varied as cybersecurity training, research, new technologies and industrial policy. It also contributes to the development of a French cybersecurity doctrine and to the design of standards and regulations at national and European level.

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