

# *The overall concept of military defence*

*Military Strategy and Plan for the Armed Forces*

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Responsibility for Europe.



Federal Ministry  
of Defence



# The overall concept of military defence

## Military Strategy and Plan for the Armed Forces Responsibility for Europe.

This document is the publicly accessible part of the first Bundeswehr Military Strategy and the resulting Plan for the Armed Forces, both approved by the Chief of Defence in April 2026.

The Military Strategy, together with the Plan for the Armed Forces, also known as the Bundeswehr Capability Profile, forms the **overall concept of military defence**:

The **Bundeswehr Military Strategy** outlines the strategic environment and determines how the Bundeswehr will respond to the threat situation in the framework of the Alliance in order to successfully deter and, if necessary, defend.

The **Bundeswehr Capability Profile** builds on the Military Strategy and sets guidelines for the further development of the armed forces. It combines the NATO Capability Targets with national capability objectives and prioritises them to form the basis for goal-oriented steering of the Bundeswehr in close coordination with our Allies.

By implementing the requirements of the Military Strategy, the Bundeswehr Capability Profile for the first time becomes the **Plan for the Armed Forces**. The overall concept thus enables target-oriented control over the long-term buildup of the armed forces – adapted to the current threat but open to future developments with regard to innovation and modern technologies. As a document primarily intended to enable implementation of the Military Strategy in the responsibility area of the Federal Ministry of Defence, it uses the technical language required for this purpose.

The full versions of the Bundeswehr Military Strategy and the Bundeswehr Capability Profile are classified as *GEHEIM* (SECRET), to protect the security and interests of the Federal Republic of Germany and its Allies.



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# Foreword

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The global security situation has changed fundamentally within only a few years. Crises and conflicts are increasing and reinforcing each other. This leads to new instability and tensions between states that do not only have regional implications. They have a global impact. They affect Europe. And they have an impact on Germany.

With the first Military Strategy in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany, we are providing answers to the security situation. It serves as a compass for the troops for the years to come. It describes the threat situation. It sets priorities and defines how the Bundeswehr ensures deterrence in the Alliance – and, in particular, how it fights when necessary.

We are transforming the Bundeswehr into the strongest conventional army in Europe. In the short term, we will enhance our defence capability and sustainability, while in the medium term we want to achieve wide-ranging capability enhancement. In the long term, we will establish technological superiority.

This path towards building technologically superior armed forces is only possible through innovative capability development. The new Capability Profile is based on the strategic requirements of the Military Strategy. As the Plan for the Armed Forces, the Bundeswehr Capability Profile determines the single set of forces. It guides the buildup of the Bundeswehr and provides a strategic orientation for the future Federal Defence Administration.

It is the Bundeswehr's central requirements document and specifies which capabilities the Bundeswehr must have: What does the Bundeswehr need to defend our country, its citizens and our Allies? The armed forces described in the Bundeswehr Capability Profile form the basis for the defence posture.

In short, this means: The Military Strategy outlines our course of action, while the Capability Profile describes the instruments at our disposal.

In essence, security policy needs reliability and comprehensibility – for our troops, for our Allies and for our society as a whole. That is why we are publishing this document, summarising the essential information of the two documents. In view of the threat situation, however, it is also clear that not all aspects of our security can be made public. Therefore, the Military Strategy and the Capability Profile will remain classified.

This document makes it clear that in Europe, Russia is likely to remain the greatest threat to our security. It has scaled up its weapons production to prepare for a military confrontation with NATO and considers the use of military force as a legitimate instrument to enforce its interests. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is directed against the European and global peace order. In this context, Russia is also specifically focusing on hybrid methods. The resulting threats do not stop at national borders. Espionage, acts of sabotage, cyber attacks and disinformation campaigns are no longer mar-



Photo: Bundeswehr/Steffen Kugler

ginal phenomena. Defending against them has become a permanent task.

Old certainties have been shaken. International rules on which we have relied are increasingly being challenged and attacked. This also fundamentally changes our strategic environment in the Alliance.

For us Europeans, it is therefore all the more important to ensure our own security. Germany, in particular, is in great demand within NATO and the EU in this respect. We will systematically take on more conventional strategic responsibility for Europe. This increases Germany's strategic weight for our Allies.

We are taking on this new role so that we can maintain peace and freedom for the people in our country in the future. We will continue to expand our military capabilities and decisively strengthen our defence readiness. We are consistently aligning the Bundeswehr with its core task: national and collective defence. The Capability Profile describes how we are doing this.

However, strategies and capability building blocks alone do not constitute a defence capability. The people who take action when it matters are decisive. Our military and civilian personnel take on responsibility for the security of our country and our Alliance on a daily basis. They need reliable framework conditions and a clear objective. The

Military Strategy and the Capability Profile will become a guide for the future in this respect.

We have the means, we have the political will, and we have the people who take responsibility.

The Bundeswehr of tomorrow will not emerge eventually. It is being created right now.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'B. Pistorius'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Federal Minister of Defence,  
Boris Pistorius

# *Foreword*

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Photo: Bundeswehr/Tom Twardy



War has returned to Europe – and with it the realisation that we must be prepared. The threat and use of military force as instruments for enforcing national interests have returned to international politics. This requires a response to protect our country and our Allies.

To master the challenges of our time, we must first consider them in their security context and then act accordingly, avoiding a compartmentalised process in favour of a holistic approach that takes a 360-degree perspective and is closely coordinated with our Allies and partners. With these documents, we have a seamless overall concept of military defence for the first time. They allow us to see objectives, means and ways from a shared perspective. The first German Military Strategy and the Bundeswehr Capability Profile are closely interconnected.

The Military Strategy reflects the idea that, as the largest economy in Europe and in view of an increasingly complex and intense threat situation, Germany must and will assume a leading role within NATO – also at the military level. It represents a paradigm shift and underpins our ambition to play an active and substantial role.

The new Bundeswehr Capability Profile combines the NATO Capability Targets with our national capability objectives. It connects the Defence Policy Guidelines with the implications of the Military Strategy, drawing on these documents to set out

the military prerequisites needed to enable the Bundeswehr to live up to its expanded role, both now and in the future.

Based on the requirements of the Military Strategy and our conclusions drawn from current warfare, we have developed a clear Plan for the Armed Forces that reaches further into the future than anything before.

In building up the Bundeswehr, we are prioritising innovation wherever possible – this applies to our weapon systems as well as to the training of our soldiers. Because strength is not measured by the number of tanks, aircraft, ships or personnel, but by the quality of our capabilities. This overall concept lays the foundation for this development.



Chief of Defence,  
General Carsten Breuer



## 1. Introduction

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**„The signal must be: Germany is leading the way –  
as a pacemaker among the European nations.“**

Federal Minister of Defence Boris Pistorius, 7. November 2025

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Russia's openly revisionist policy aims at reversing the European security order and considers war a legitimate means to achieve this. Since 2014, Ukraine has been resisting Russian aggression. Russia is also a threat to European and German security. Russia is creating the conditions for a war against NATO and is already conducting hybrid operations against member states of the Alliance. For the foreseeable future, today's Russia will therefore remain the largest immediate threat to peace and security in Germany and the Euro-Atlantic area.

German security and defence policy is only possible together with our Allies and partners – the Bundeswehr is an Alliance army. Its tasks include:

- The core task: national and collective defence
- Stabilising and building up resilient partners as a contribution to international crisis management
- Defence diplomacy as an instrument of international cooperation and partnership
- Homeland security and support functions

The core task is the Bundeswehr's priority. The Military Strategy therefore primarily focuses on the threat posed by Russia.

The Bundeswehr has a single set of forces for these tasks. The Chief of Defence therefore prioritises the military-strategic allocation of forces for training, exercises and operations. He is setting the framework for the overall concept of military defence and thus creating the basis for force planning, capability development and procurement.

Germany is shaping its new role in the field of security policy. It will take on additional burdens, including targeted strategic responsibility for Europe at the conventional level. This increases Germany's strategic weight for our Allies, particularly for the United States.

**The Bundeswehr will thus become the strongest conventional army in Europe.**

# *Purpose of the Bundeswehr Military Strategy*

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## 2. Purpose of the Bundeswehr Military Strategy

The Bundeswehr has to accomplish all tasks with the single set of forces while thinking and acting in different geostrategic areas, interconnecting the geostrategic areas and domains, and generating strategic effects. This holistic global perspective is known as the one-theatre approach; it forms the basis of the overall concept of military defence.

The Military Strategy lays the groundwork for the new strategic role of the Bundeswehr. It therefore describes the current threat situation and outlines the key features of current warfare. Building on this, it sets out how the Bundeswehr will address this threat in the framework of the Alliance in order to successfully deter and, if necessary, defend.

The Military Strategy is continuously reviewed for the validity of its assumptions and the degree to which its objectives are achieved. The results will be included as impulses in ad hoc and regular reviews, which are scheduled at least every five years.

The Military Strategy and the Bundeswehr Capability Profile complement one another. The Military Strategy sets priorities, while the Bundeswehr Capability Profile shapes the required single set of forces and therefore defines the Bundeswehr's objectives.

# *Threat environment*

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### 3. Threat environment

The military-strategic operational and threat environment is characterised by increasing multipolarity and strategic rivalry. This is putting pressure on the international order and leading to volatility, uncertainty and instability. Since its foundation, the Federal Republic of Germany has been a proponent of a peaceful order based on international law, and it will have to confront these developments.

The growing interconnectivity of actors and crisis situations moreover means that regional conflicts can become globally significant. Countries such as Russia are creating dilemmas for Germany and its Allies and partners. Therefore, individual events must always be examined closely for any links to other geo-strategic areas and other actors. The significance of the cyber, information and space domains is steadily growing. It is only in these domains that defensive and offensive actions in the geostrategic areas are prepared and made possible. Another aspect that is essential for NATO's collective defence is the fight against terrorism.

In this operational environment, the nature of international crisis management is also changing. Building stable and resilient partners will be a competitive process. If necessary to protect German or European interests, the Bundeswehr will continue to step in and accomplish its tasks wherever other powers exert a destabilising influence.

The classified version of the Military Strategy describes and assesses in detail the global operational and threat environment and draws conclusions for the Bundeswehr. Its main focus is on **Russia** as the largest and most direct threat to German, European and transatlantic security for the foreseeable future. It poses a whole-of-government and comprehensive military-strategic threat: **whole-of-government**, because Russia already operates below the threshold of war to challenge all elements of the state; **military-strategic**, because Russia exploits conflicts on its periphery and threatens Europe from all directions with long-range weapon systems. The West is generally seen as hostile by today's Russia, and the accession of democratic states to NATO since 1989/1991 is portrayed as an attempt to encircle Russia.

Moscow's central objective is to reverse this development and establish a new European security architecture. For Moscow, the path there involves weakening cohesion within the Alliance and the strategic decoupling of the United States from Europe, ultimately leading to the failure of NATO.

This would, from Russia's perspective, establish the basis for expanding its sphere of influence into Europe. This would affect not only the Baltic states but also the former member states of the Warsaw Pact – who are present-day NATO Allies.

Russia is creating the conditions for a military attack on NATO countries. It is also already conducting hybrid operations against member states of the Alliance, including Germany. In doing so, it seeks to undermine sustainability and confidence in state institutions.

In the Indo-Pacific, the Russian Pacific Fleet, supplemented by air and space forces as well as strategic rocket forces, is also pursuing Moscow's aspirations. At the same time, Russia has an interest in creating a *multi-dilemma scenario* in this region to tie up US forces in the Indo-Pacific.

# Warfare

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## 4. Warfare

The **Military Strategy** addresses relevant global, technological and social trends. In a world of increasingly fast and disruptive technology and innovation cycles, conflicts unfold in an environment where information sovereignty, system survivability, and interconnectivity are the arbiters of victory or defeat. Even today, long-predicted trends shape each and every battlefield.

The only way to build technologically superior armed forces is through innovative capability development. This is managed over the long term based on current warfare and is established within the **Capability Profile** as a **core area of long-term capability development**.

### 4.1 Key features of current warfare

**Dissolution of the boundaries of war:** The state, the economy and the population are all targets – German society as a whole is threatened. Our adversary will deliberately undermine the distinctions between homeland and battlefield, civil and military, internal and external security, war and peace, and combatant and noncombatant. We can no longer rely on others to comply with accepted ethical and legal principles.

**Multi-temporal war:** Warfare is undergoing radical change; disruption and continuity occur together. Deterrence and war preparations are carried out using state-of-the-art capabilities – actual warfare, in contrast, is conducted using the means and methods of yesterday, today, tomorrow and the more distant future. Cutting-edge technologies such as quantum computing and robotics are used alongside low-cost, commercially available resources and means of conventional warfare. Innovation and adaptability are therefore critical to battlefield success.

**The transparent battlefield:** Data is becoming a weapon. Artificial intelligence complements and expands cognitive capabilities. The constant and global availability of connected sensor technology in all domains results in a battlefield that is increasingly transparent and digital. Even today, it is difficult to avoid being targeted by real-time reconnaissance. The aim is to gain information superiority for specific areas and periods of time, achieving command, control and effects superiority in order to seize and maintain the initiative.

**Standoff effects:** Precise standoff weapons in all ranges compound the threat on the transparent battlefield. There are no safe havens.

**Automation and autonomisation:** The ongoing universal technologisation of war increases operational speed, reduces human influence and amplifies vulnerability in what is known as the *Cognitive dimension*. The adversary will exploit artificial intelligence and autonomous unmanned systems without restraint.

**Scale for efficiency:** Systems are being produced with increasing speed and cost-effectiveness for multi-domain use. Large quantities are cheap to produce and become a quality of their own. There are considerable advantages to mass offensive deployment of inexpensive systems that can be produced at

scale and are used in conjunction with high-value resources. Issues surrounding the economics of war are regaining relevance. Success depends on the ability to maintain deployment of this combination of systems for the duration of the war.

## 4.2 Implications for the Bundeswehr

**Integration into overall defence:** Deterrence requires resilience throughout society, also in view of Russian interference. The Bundeswehr must work together with all the state's instruments of power. In order to avoid overextending its own forces in the event of a war, it must focus on the tasks that absolutely have to be performed by the military.

**Superiority through future viability and adaptability:** Technological developments are increasingly driving capability and doctrine development. Keeping pace with developments is critical. The Bundeswehr must accelerate innovations, adopt them and quickly prepare to use them for its own warfare. New capabilities must also translate into an advantage in the war of the future. The Bundeswehr must stay ahead of the adversary in the cycle of adaptation and especially innovation. In peace and war, it will take forward-looking, pragmatic and agile action.

**The fight for information and data:** The Bundeswehr must gain information superiority while denying it to the adversary. Offensive and defensive capabilities must be expanded in all domains. This is of particular relevance to the space domain and the cyber and information domain. Reconnaissance and electromagnetic warfare can be leveraged across all other domains. Continuous availability of these capabilities at all times, as well as their integrity and protection, is imperative. Using artificial intelligence is also critical to our ability to harness mass data and large-scale complexity for military decision-making. The reliability and integrity of data and data processing are vital.

**Multi-domain operations capability:** It is essential to ensure targeted coordination and synchronised timing of military and nonmilitary activities across all domains in order to achieve effects. *Multi-Domain Operations* significantly alter the armed forces' command and control structures and processes. We must be able to implement multi-domain operations within the framework of the Alliance and with selected partners through network-enabled capabilities. Accordingly, the Bundeswehr has to achieve cross-domain reconnaissance and engagement capabilities and adapt its structures and processes to the changed requirements.

**Standoff effects and protection:** Only sustainable engagement throughout the entire depth of the enemy area can ensure the Bundeswehr's operational capability and the best possible protection of deployed personnel. At the same time, effective and sustainable air defence of all ranges is crucial.

**Increasing operational speed:** Humans remain central, but we must increase operational speed through responsible use of automation and autonomous capabilities. The Bundeswehr's ability to conduct *Multi-Domain Operations* while using artificial intelligence further boosts operational speed or enables such operations in the first place.

**Quantity and quality:** In order to avoid exhausting its limited number of high-tech weapon systems against the adversary's mass deployment of low-cost systems in a war, Germany must achieve a balanced mix of high-tech systems, existing systems and low-cost mass-produced technologies as appropriate to the threat. The Bundeswehr must take this approach to increase its efficiency in light of limited resources. In addition, the sustainability of the armed forces must be consistently ensured through appropriately sized support forces, and by adjusting supply levels and scalable security and defence industry capacities. We are laying the groundwork for this together with our Allies.

The implications of these key features will be integrated into the Bundeswehr Capability Profile to drive further development of the armed forces.

A large, abstract sculpture made of rusted metal plates, resembling a gear or a mechanical structure, set against a modern glass building. The sculpture is composed of several large, flat, rusted metal plates that are arranged in a complex, geometric pattern. The plates are interconnected, creating a sense of depth and movement. The building in the background is a modern, multi-story structure with a facade of large glass windows that reflect the sky and the surrounding environment. The overall scene is set in an urban or institutional environment, with a paved area and a gravel bed in the foreground.

*The strongest  
conventional  
army in Europe*

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## 5. The strongest conventional army in Europe

Germany faces the threats together with its Allies. As the largest national economy in Europe and an important NATO member that does not have its own nuclear forces, Germany has a special responsibility for:

- *Reassurance* – providing reassurance for its Allies and their societies
- *Deterrence* – credible deterrence against Russia and
- *Defence* – defence of NATO

Germany's deterrence and defence concepts and planning are all within the framework of the Alliance. For credible collective defence, however, the Bundeswehr must take on a new strategic role. This role will develop in close cooperation with Germany's partners and Allies.

The decision to establish the Lithuania Brigade as the first permanent Bundeswehr combat brigade outside German territory is a visible expression of Germany's new role within the Alliance. Germany is taking on a historically unprecedented amount of responsibility for Europe, and will continue to build on this basis. NATO must become more European in order to remain transatlantic. In this respect, the EU supports its member states in rapidly equipping their armed forces in line with mission requirements.

### 5.1 Deterrence and defence in the Alliance

Germany only engages in deterrence within the framework of the Alliance. The Bundeswehr will therefore provide combat-ready forces to support the defence plans of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and take on additional burdens within the Alliance. This is where the Bundeswehr's military-strategic focus will lie. It will continue to contribute to NATO's nuclear deterrence within the scope of nuclear sharing.

Russia will engage in hybrid action as long as it considers such action expedient. Germany's response will be resilience and a whole-of-government ability to take action. To achieve this, it will harness its economic, political and increasing military strength. The Bundeswehr will support overall defence within the scope of homeland security.

If NATO's deterrence fails, Germany will help defend the Alliance within a whole-of-government framework. SACEUR will deploy the pledged Bundeswehr forces in line with NATO's defence plans. In addition, the Bundeswehr will ensure national territorial defence and help Germany to function as an operational base.

## 5.2 The Bundeswehr's new strategic role

The United States is essential to NATO, both in political terms and due to its military capabilities. However, it has indicated that it is increasingly shifting its strategic focus towards its Western hemisphere and the Indo-Pacific.

Beyond this reorientation towards the Indo-Pacific, the United States is demanding in its 2026 *National Defense Strategy* that its Allies step up their efforts to safeguard their own security. Germany must therefore become an even stronger military Ally to the United States while working together with other Allies to take on more responsibility for the shared Euro-Atlantic security, in order to engage in successful deterrence and continue to defend the Alliance.

In light of the threat environment and the war in Europe, this situation means that Germany must take on additional tasks. In this context, Germany will bear targeted **strategic responsibility in and for Europe at the conventional level**. What does this mean? First of all:

1. The **self-sufficient defence capability of the Bundeswehr's current forces** is strategically important. The primary strategic priority is initially establishing organic operational readiness of the forces from all domains as fast as possible – followed by structured augmentation.
2. These forces must increasingly be able to deploy independently in Alliance territory. A **national and European projection capability** would strengthen deterrence and collective defence, lighten the burden on the United States and enhance Europe's ability to take action.
3. Within the NATO Defence Planning Process and on a national level, the Bundeswehr will systematically develop and expand **capabilities** that are **essential in military strategy for deterrence and defence** in the Alliance. These capabilities include territorial missile defence and a cross-domain sensor-to-shooter network for use of long-range precision weapon systems (*Deep Precision Strike*).

European Allies will take on a larger share of Euro-Atlantic security. Germany will increase its share of responsibility in this regard. From its position at the heart of Europe, it will increase cohesion between Eastern, Central and Western Europe and maintain ties with North America. In this new strategic role, Germany will be an even greater military supporting partner for its European Allies and join them in enhancing Europe's ability to take action. Taking on responsibility for Europe can only be a joint effort together with our European Allies and partners.



Photo: Bundeswehr/Finn Stainer-Hutchins

# *Military-strategic priorities*

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## 6. Military-strategic priorities

The following military-strategic priorities are an integral part of a comprehensive military approach, or one-theatre approach, and listed in order of significance. The military-strategic priorities are intended for strategic control of the entire armed forces during training, exercises and operations in line with the Military Strategy.

Thinking and acting in geostrategic areas demands that we constantly examine the connections, interactions and consequences resulting from our own actions or those of other actors. This is especially true in the context of military advice. Wherever possible, allocation of forces and capabilities serves more than one of the following priorities at the same time.

### **Military-strategic priority 1:**

#### **Ensuring deterrence and defence capability in the context of national and collective defence**

Deterrence is aimed at influencing the adversary's cost-benefit rationale and consequently the decisions the adversary takes. The Bundeswehr will implement this military-strategic priority by, for example, keeping combat-ready forces available and developing strategic capabilities at the conventional level.

### **Military-strategic priority 2:**

#### **Mitigating the effects of hybrid attacks**

Sabotage and other hybrid activities are not only aimed at defence-related facilities. Hostile actors especially target civilian infrastructure for basic state services. The Bundeswehr contributes to the mitigation of hybrid activities. It thereby also contributes to a whole-of-government ability to take action.

### **Military-strategic priority 3:**

#### **Strengthening the stability of Europe and its southern neighbourhood**

Military-strategic action in Europe's neighbourhood between North and West Africa, the Sahel region and the Middle East is aimed at ensuring sufficient stability. The Bundeswehr will implement this military-strategic priority by, for instance, strengthening regional partners and keeping capability contributions available for international crisis management within the scope of the United Nations and the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy.

### **Military-strategic priority 4:**

#### **Protecting international (sea and other) lines of communication**

The freedom of sea lines of communication and other lines of communication in all domains is crucial to the rules-based international order. The Bundeswehr will implement this military-strategic priority by, for example, allocating appropriate forces and contributing to protection of defence-critical infrastructure.

# *The Bundeswehr Capability Profile: Plan for the Armed Forces*

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## 7. The Bundeswehr Capability Profile: Plan for the Armed Forces

The Military Strategy describes the Bundeswehr's new strategic role within the Alliance and outlines the initial implications. As the Plan for the Armed Forces, the Bundeswehr Capability Profile now determines the single set of forces. Besides guiding the buildup of a rapidly and inherently combat-ready Bundeswehr that integrates its strategic capabilities into the Alliance, it also provides strategic orientation for the Federal Defence Administration of the future.

*The Bundeswehr is set to grow and become more modern at the same time;  
it will avoid establishing an army of the past for the war of the future.*

The Bundeswehr Capability Profile therefore sets force planning guidelines and enables top-down control for the prioritisation of resources. It is the Bundeswehr's **central requirements document** and covers everything that is needed at the military level.

The armed forces described in the Bundeswehr Capability Profile form the basis for the **defence posture**. To this end, the Capability Profile sets the **military guidelines for the buildup** as a framework for further operationalisation.

The Federal Ministry of Defence plans the armed forces based on **capabilities**. A capability is established by

- combining the necessary material, organisational, infrastructural and operational resources with trained personnel
- to perform a specific military task.

This makes it possible to think in systemic contexts, thereby enabling integrated force planning. Temporary decoupling of resources can create the flexibility that is needed for the buildup.

The Bundeswehr Capability Profile therefore combines the **German NATO Capability Targets** with Germany's **National Capability Targets** and sets out the **Bundeswehr's objectives**:

- **NATO Capability Targets:** The Bundeswehr is an Alliance army. Germany shapes the NATO Defence Planning Process and negotiates the targets that reflect its current and future role within the Alliance in accordance with military-strategic guidelines.
- **National Capability Targets:** National capability objectives exist alongside the NATO Capability Targets. They reflect the Bundeswehr's tasks and missions as defined in the Defence Policy Guidelines and the requirements of the Military Strategy, supplement the NATO Capability Targets, can be integrated into the Alliance and also serve as a starting point for multinational defence planning.

The Bundeswehr Capability Profile is being further developed and updated, as necessary and directed by the Chief of Defence. Its further implementation is carried out according to ministerial directives.

# *Becoming the strongest conventional army in Europe*

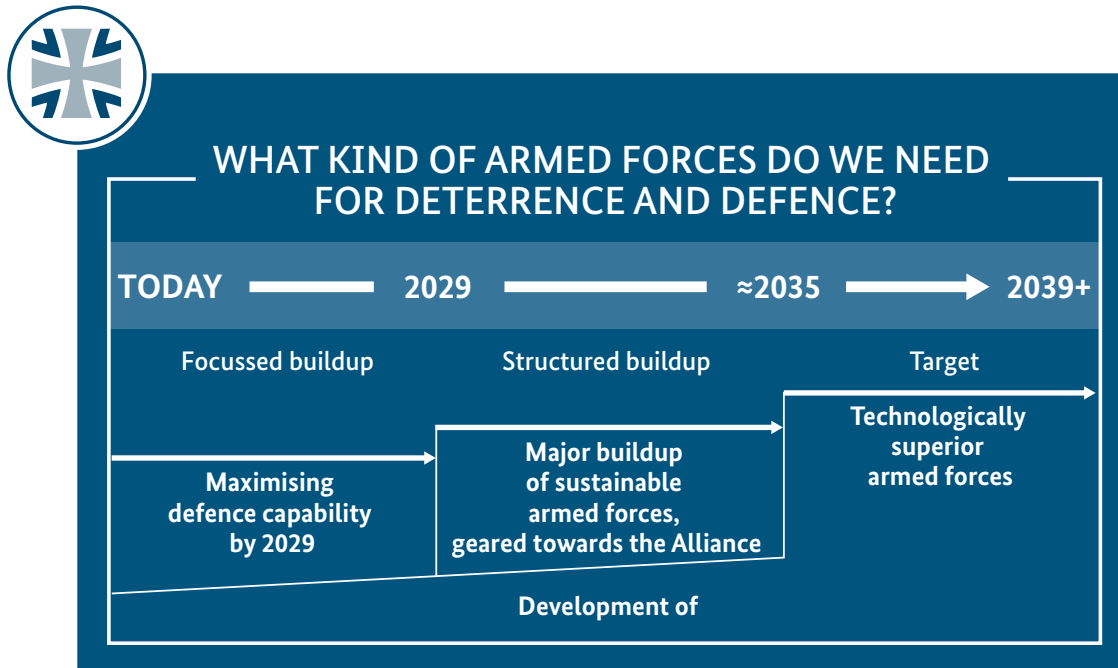
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## 8. Becoming the strongest conventional army in Europe

The Bundeswehr's long-term buildup is taking place against the backdrop of the threat situation described in the Bundeswehr Military Strategy.

Given the acute threat situation the Alliance now faces, the buildup of the Bundeswehr is to take place in three phases, each one of which has a different focus.



Over a period leading up to 2039, the armed forces will be built up and developed further in such a way that

- they can rapidly maximise defence capability and sustainability **in the short term**,
- there is significant capability enhancement across all domains **in the medium term**, and
- they become technologically superior and innovative **in the long term**.

The objective of Phase 1 is to increase the deterrence and defence capability of the armed forces as quickly as possible. For this purpose, the focussed use of available resources initiates and implements those measures that maximise the inherent combat readiness of the armed forces.

In Phase 2, the Bundeswehr will be further developed in such a way that it can assume its new European leadership role in the Alliance. Together with Allies, it will be able to provide credible deterrence and, if necessary, collective defence.

The objective of Phase 3 is to develop the Bundeswehr into the strongest conventional army in Europe by consistently using innovative technologies, thus consolidating its European leadership role and importance in the security architecture.

It is crucial that the steps initiated in Phase 1 take effect in Phases 2 and 3. In addition, the early introduction of the latest weapon systems is a requirement from the outset.

Due to its sensitive nature, complete and detailed information on how the phases for the (functional) domains – Army, Air Force, Navy, Support, and Special Operations Forces – are organised must remain classified as GEHEIM/SECRET, and is not included here.

Phases are organised in accordance with legal requirements, including prioritisation for the allocation of resources. For this purpose, overarching force planning parameters will be defined in line with military-strategic priorities. German NATO Capability Targets and national capability objectives will be combined as per the Chief of Defence's prioritisation for the armed forces.

In order to maximise defence capabilities without any delay, the tasks and structures of a peacetime army will be phased out. Existing resources will be redirected and existing structures adapted.

## 8.1 Organisational principles

### 8.1.1 Guidelines for the armed forces

**Core task: national and collective defence** – The focus of the *Single Set of Forces* will be on the core task. The combat-ready forces earmarked for this purpose will also accomplish their task in the context of other operations.

**New role within the Alliance** – The Bundeswehr will develop capabilities that, in line with the Military Strategy, correspond to its new strategic role at the conventional level within the Alliance.

**Pressure to innovate** – The new role of the Bundeswehr will only be achieved by making the most of innovations across all areas. The speed of implementation and the use of innovations from within, as part of a bottom-up approach, are essential for success. With this in mind, military elements and innovators, researchers and actors from the national commercial sector will be closely interlinked. Wherever possible, existing systems and platforms will be replaced from the very first phase and procedures and organisational aspects adapted in such a way that military effects can be achieved more effectively, with less personnel and in a quicker and cheaper manner.

**New responsibility as a supporting partner** – This new role for the Bundeswehr can only be achieved in cooperation with Germany's Allies. Multinational cooperation, however, is not an end in itself: The Bundeswehr, as the strongest conventional army in Europe, will become combat-ready **in a self-sufficient manner** and capable of force projection **together with Allies**. The highest possible degree of interoperability will be achieved for this purpose.

**Defined number of military personnel** – The intended target strength of military personnel for the Single Set of Forces is at least 460,000 servicemen and women by 2035, active and non-active. This initial planning

guideline determines the **path for the buildup of the armed forces** (in accordance with Section 91 of the Legal Status of Military Personnel Act) and forms the framework for the initial **defence posture**.

**Effective reserve** – The reserve is an integral part of the armed forces and plays a role in increasing the operational readiness of the Bundeswehr. Both structural and non-structural parts are intended as reserves. Field replacements for increased sustainability are part of the structural reserve.

**Full equipment** – All units and military personnel will be fully equipped. Once this has been achieved, a weapon system-specific logistic buffer will be established as a **maintenance float**. In order to increase the materiel sustainability of major equipment, a **weapon system-specific major equipment reserve** will also be taken into account.

**Equipment of the reserve** – Non-active units will also be fully equipped. An exception here relates to field replacement personnel, who will be provided with the minimum required equipment (personal equipment and a handgun) and mobilised from material mobilisation augmentation resources. Non-structural reserve personnel will only receive personal equipment.

**Prioritisation of equipment** – The chiefs of the individual services/commanders are responsible for prioritising personnel replenishment and the materiel resources of active and non-active units in the context of the Bundeswehr's objectives.

## 8.1.2 Implementation in the Bundeswehr

**Organisational buildup** – The buildup of the Bundeswehr requires an organisational framework that supports the buildup of materiel, infrastructure and personnel strength while being sufficiently flexible. This framework is established by the planning guidelines for the domains (classified GEHEIM/SECRET) in conjunction with the capability overviews so that the Bundeswehr can grow to achieve its target structure through the buildup phases.

**Personnel buildup** – The buildup to achieve the target strength for military personnel pursues a flexible approach. The effective control required particularly in phase 1 is also determined by the planning guidelines contained in the Capability Profile and in line with predicted requirements for personnel recruitment. The **military personnel buildup plan** provides further information regarding specification, development and allocation.

The required **buildup of civilian personnel across all major organisational elements** is conducted as specified in the **civilian personnel buildup plan** in line with defence-related tasks. This also includes personnel who require combatant status as Bundeswehr soldiers to perform their tasks, such as relevant personnel of the military legal system.

**Efficient Federal Defence Administration** – In order to allow the armed forces to focus on their core task, the **Federal Defence Administration relieves the armed forces** of tasks that do not absolutely have to be

performed by military personnel. The buildup of the armed forces over the course of the phases determines the requirements and structures of the Federal Defence Administration. In synchrony with this buildup, the Federal Defence Administration must provide resilient and sustainable support across the continuum of peace, crisis and war.

**Support outside of Germany** – The new strategic role of the Bundeswehr requires a permanent presence and operational capability outside of Germany. Services that absolutely have to be mobile and performed wherever armed forces are deployed are ensured using civilian personnel of the Federal Defence Administration (*embedded support organisation*).

**Essential support services** – Civilian preparedness for war on the federal, state and municipal level contributes significantly to the support of the Bundeswehr in the context of overall defence, in particular in the areas of infrastructure, logistics and healthcare. In the context of host nation support, this also includes our Allies.

**Infrastructure for the buildup** – The buildup of the Bundeswehr hinges on its infrastructure. The necessary framework conditions will be established. This includes proactive, requirement-oriented and timely development followed by resilient operation and service performance across the entire task spectrum, including resilient energy supply. Some infrastructure is also kept available for a scalable buildup of the Bundeswehr.

## 8.2 Capability targets

Based on a common threat situation, Germany and its Allies are developing the capabilities of the Alliance required for deterrence in and defence of the Euro-Atlantic region. By implementing the German capabilities required for this purpose, the Bundeswehr will play its assigned part in SACEUR's defence plans.

In addition, the path to becoming the strongest conventional armed forces in Europe is also reflected in **National Capability Targets** for the purposes of force planning. Initially, these are:

1. **Standoff effects and countering aerial threats** – The Bundeswehr will improve its deep precision strike capabilities. At the same time, it will strengthen its capability to counter long-range weapons and delivery systems.
2. **The fight for information superiority and increasing the speed of information** – Offensive and defensive capabilities to gain and maintain information superiority will be further developed across all domains with the aid of artificial intelligence.
3. **Interconnectivity and digitalisation** – Germany will play a leading role in the shift to an MDO Enabled Alliance. To this end, the necessary ground- and space-based capabilities will be developed and

expanded: a seamless cloud-based IT platform and resilient and redundant communication systems (digital backbone). Digital sovereignty will be consistently pursued during the implementation process.

4. **National command and control capability** – The national capability to plan, command and control operations must be ensured at the operational level. This also includes the command and control of multi-domain operations as well as the associated task of cross-domain command and control of deep precision strikes. At the same time, a whole-of-government ability to take action is established through interministerial points of contact.
5. **Germany as an operational base** – Germany as an operational base encompasses the territory of Germany and its territorial waters, its national airspace, and its national data and communication networks. The military capabilities that are indispensable for maintaining the function of the operational base will be developed.
6. **Crisis management for German nationals abroad, support functions and permanent tasks** – Military capabilities for performing these tasks must be adequately considered. Crisis management for German nationals abroad and support functions are an interministerial sovereign task to protect German nationals abroad.

Together, the Military Strategy and the Bundeswehr Capability Profile, which are outlined here in part, now provide a threat-appropriate rationale for the military requirements that form the basis for the buildup of the Bundeswehr. For the Federal Ministry of Defence, they represent an overall concept that derives distinct objectives for the armed forces from the strategic assessment of the threat situation.



DEM DEUTS



SCHEN VOLKE

Photo: Bundeswehr/Alexander Gottschalk



Germany bears responsibility for Europe.

This overall concept is a road map for the Bundeswehr.

The Chief of Defence

# *Imprint*

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