



BUNDESWEHR 3.0

THE POLITICAL, MILITARY AND SOCIAL
DIMENSIONS OF THE REFORM OF THE GERMAN
ARMED FORCES

Justyna Gotkowska

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KEY POINTS

- The reform of the Bundeswehr, launched in 2011, aims at “constructing” the German armed forces anew in the political, military and social dimensions.

In the political dimension Germany is redefining the role, objectives and principles of employing the Bundeswehr as an instrument in foreign, security and (also) economic policies. The new Bundeswehr is set to be an instrument (to be used as a last resort) of supporting and protecting German interests in the world. The Bundeswehr will thus become the same as other allied armed forces. Germany’s engagement in NATO and EU operations will be subject to sovereign decision of the German government and not the result of the political commitments connected with membership in NATO and the EU.

In the military dimension the reform’s objective is to create a military which is smaller but more effective, well-trained and which uses modern equipment. The changes in structure, processes, capabilities and military equipment are designed to optimise its expeditionary profile.

In the social sphere the reform is intended to provide social legitimacy for the new model of the armed forces and, indirectly, to increase the appeal of professional military service in Germany.

- Both the premises of the present reform and the developments of German security policy will have an impact on Germany’s approach to political and military cooperation within NATO and the EU. The main criterion for decision making about the participation in EU, NATO and UN operations will be Germany’s interests. The participation in international operations will however remain the ultima ratio for Germany. Growing energy and economic links and the wish to develop good

relations with emerging economies will influence Germany's reluctance to take part in operations in regions which are seen as the spheres of influence of these countries. Germany will also be cautious in engaging in operations in Muslim countries, in the Middle East and North Africa, as this could affect its image as well as the political and economic position in the region.

- The premises of the Bundeswehr's transformation and the evolution of Germany's security policy fit in with the existing fragmentation tendencies within the EU (CSDP) and NATO. They also go in line with the tendency to use the structures of both organisations by the largest member states to achieve their national objectives.
- In the discussions within NATO and the EU about closer military cooperation, Germany will not be ready to develop cooperation which would result in a permanent dependence on partners in using certain capabilities in international operations (this concerns above all units involved in combat missions). However, Germany will take part in (limited) cooperation projects, for example in the areas of logistics and training, which do not involve too much dependence for Germany and which generate military and political gains. Germany has indicated the political and military constraints of the smart defence (NATO) and pooling and sharing (the EU) concepts currently being discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Since its establishment in 1955 the Bundeswehr has been perceived in Germany as an important instrument for achieving goals in foreign and security policies. However, the legacy of World War II was a burden for the German armed forces, forcing the government in Bonn, and later in Berlin, to devise a concept which would justify the existence of the Bundeswehr and legitimise its role and missions in the military aspect, in internal policy and in relations with Germany's allies.

The first concept was established in the Cold War period. The second was created after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany. These events brought about geopolitical changes in Europe and in transatlantic relations which forced a redefinition of the goals and principles of deploying the military after 1990. As a result, the political and military concept of the Bundeswehr was transformed. A similar process is currently underway. It has been brought about by the strategic transformations taking place in Europe: the EU and NATO are undergoing changes and the position of Germany in its relations with its allies is being strengthened. The current reform of the Bundeswehr, launched in 2011, is intended to “construct” German armed forces anew in the political, military and social dimensions.

The present paper presents the evolution of the Bundeswehr's role in German foreign and security policy and the ongoing process of “constructing” a new military. The paper discusses the objectives of the military transformation and the change in the image and social identity of the German armed forces. It also analyses the implications of this new concept of the Bundeswehr for political and military cooperation within NATO and the EU.

I. THE BUNDESWEHR AS A POLITICAL INSTRUMENT OF GERMANY

(1) The consent expressed by the US and their European allies for the Bundeswehr to be established **after World War II** was intended to increase West Germany's contribution to NATO's territorial defence and deterrence doctrine. For the government in Bonn the role of the Bundeswehr from the very beginning extended beyond that of ensuring the security of the state and society. The armed forces were treated as an instrument of foreign policy, which helped to gradually increase the degree of West Germany's political autonomy with regard to the allies¹. However, the legacy of World War II weighed heavily on the West German armed forces. Therefore a political and social concept of the Bundeswehr was established in order to ensure the Bundeswehr's democratic legitimacy and its acceptance by West German society and the West European states.

With the division of roles in NATO during the Cold War period, two factors ensured that the existence of the West German armed forces (intended to ultimately reach nearly half a million soldiers) was **accepted by the allies** (above all those from Western Europe). Firstly, the Bundeswehr was defined in the constitution (Grundgesetz) as a military serving exclusively to defend the territory of West Germany within NATO. Secondly, the government in Bonn accepted **military restrictions** imposed on the Bundeswehr: the lack of a General Staff, the organisational focus of the armed forces on territorial self-defence and the subordination of the German army and the combat units of the air force and the navy to the integrated NATO command structures. **The domestic**

¹ In return for remilitarisation, for access to NATO and to the (newly established) Western European Union and for fulfilling commitments resulting from membership in both organisations, West Germany gained the lifting of the occupation statute, the recognition of the government in Bonn as the only legal representative of the whole Germany and the confirmation of support for the reunification of the two German states.

legitimacy, i.e. the acceptance of West German society, critical of the remilitarisation of the country, for the Bundeswehr, was ensured by the philosophy of the “citizen in uniform”. This concept consisted of the principle of the “leadership development and civic education”² (Innere Führung) and of conscription. The principle of Innere Führung implied that soldiers were citizens with a critical approach to the legality of the orders they were given. Mandatory military service was intended to create a sense of responsibility for the country and also to fulfil the function of integrating the armed forces with society.

(2) The end of the Cold War brought about fundamental changes in Germany’s foreign and security policy which were due to Germany’s reunification and regaining of full sovereignty and changes in the security environment. Thus the German government redefined the goals and principles of the deployment of the Bundeswehr in its foreign policy. It was deemed that the Bundeswehr should remain the instrument used to increase Germany’s importance within NATO, extend the country’s influence at the UN and strengthen its position with regard to France and the UK in the Western European Union (WEU). German participation in preventive, stabilisation and crisis response operations abroad were to be the means to this end. The political, military and social concept of the Bundeswehr dating back to the period of the Cold War did not fit into the new realities. Germany had to “construct” anew its armed forces – i.e. to acquire legitimacy at home and acceptance abroad for a model of an expeditionary military - and to launch necessary military reforms.

The international acceptance of Germany’s military engagement abroad has already partly existed. Due to Germany’s full integration in the EU and NATO and the predictability of German policies, above all the US began even to expect that Germany,

² Official German translation. Source: Innere Führung is our established means of guidance, 04.12.06, www.bmvg.de

which previously benefited from NATO's protective umbrella, would fully participate in crisis management operations. The "multilateralism doctrine" in German security policy was also intended to ensure international acceptance for the expansion of Germany's military involvement abroad in the 1990s. The doctrine excluded independent German decisions on security issues which would be contrary to the policies of the US or France and implied political and military support for actions taken by these allies within NATO, the EU and the UN. Germany also intended to gradually familiarise mainly European countries with the Bundeswehr's engagement abroad. This was done by a slow increase of Germany's involvement in NATO, EU and UN operations and a **gradual development of the expeditionary capabilities of the armed forces** (see Appendix).

The **domestic legitimacy** of the Bundeswehr's evolution towards expeditionary armed forces focused on international operations was the greatest challenge for the German government. Legal legitimacy was ensured by the ruling of the Federal Constitutional Court in 1994. The court recognised that Germany's membership in the systems of collective security and collective defence organisations and resulting tasks are compatible with the Grundgesetz. This ruling paved the way for the Bundeswehr's engagement in UN, NATO and WEU (later EU) operations providing that the government obtained the approval of the Bundestag. However, the social legitimacy of the Bundeswehr, based on the "citizen in uniform" philosophy was not adjusted to the new goals and rules of the Bundeswehr's deployment and thus gradually became outdated. Not only did the principle of Innere Führung become devalued, but the proportion and importance of conscripts in the armed forces also declined. The government believed that a gradual increase in the Bundeswehr's engagement abroad would make German society grow accustomed to it. The government also explained the armed forces participation in international operations by the necessity for a united Germany to take "international responsibility". This move proved successful regarding stabilisation operations but

met with opposition from society when German troops became involved in combat tasks in Afghanistan.

(3) Over the last decade (whose beginning may be marked by the September 11th attacks in New York) the process of disintegration of the Atlantic consensus about the role and the mode of NATO's functioning has intensified, which has also affected the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy.

This is manifested by the increased instrumentalisation of both NATO and EU structures by its largest member countries (the US, France) to achieve their national objectives. This process has also extended to Germany, which has gradually been shifting away from the "multilateralism doctrine" to conditional support for actions undertaken by its allies within NATO, the EU and the UN. Paradoxically, the emancipation of German security policy implied not a greater autonomy and readiness to deploy the armed forces, but an increasingly cautious approach to participation in international operations. However, unlike in the 1990s when arguments of a historical nature were raised, national interest is now more likely to be the determining factor. The first example of this approach was Germany's opposition to the American intervention in Iraq in 2003 and non-participation in the "coalition of the willing". Another case in question was when Germany refused to participate in the EU operation in Chad, promoted by France.

The new interpretation of German interests and the role of the Bundeswehr were also demonstrated by Germany's resistance to the significant extension of its involvement in Afghanistan. The new approach was shown best by the recent German opt-out of the international and later NATO-led operation in Libya in 2011, championed by France and the UK³.

³ See: Justyna Gotkowska, No more compulsory engagement. The emancipation of German security policy, OSW Commentary, July 2011.

The process of redefining the goals and principles of the Bundeswehr's deployment abroad started alongside Germany's growing political independence with regard to its allies. The reform, launched in 2011, is to seal the ongoing transformations in the political and military areas and to introduce a new social legitimacy of the Bundeswehr. The Bundeswehr will thus become the same as other allied armed forces. Its deployment in NATO and EU operations will depend on Germany's sovereign decision and will not be the result of the political commitments connected with membership in NATO and the EU. The German political elite are convinced that more than 60 years after the end of World War II Germany does not have to be guided by historical reasons in shaping its security policy. The improvement of the expeditionary profile of the armed forces is therefore underway, accompanied by the establishment of a new social legitimacy of the Bundeswehr.

II. THE MILITARY DIMENSION OF THE REFORM

The current reform, which the Federal Ministry of Defence refers to as *Neuausrichtung*⁴, in its military aspects is part of a wider process of the transformation of the German armed forces initiated at the beginning of the 1990s (see Appendix). It constitutes a consecutive stage of the transformation launched in 2004 – the concept devised in the US and understood as a continuous process of adjusting the armed forces to new challenges and circumstances. The 2011 reform was directly caused by problems with regard to the operation run in Afghanistan and budget savings.

Several years after the 2003/2004 reform authored by Peter Struck, the Defence Minister in the SPD/Greens government (see Appendix), it turned out that the structures and procedures then introduced in the Bundeswehr did not take fully into account challenges met during the operation in Afghanistan. The internal report prepared by the Federal Ministry of Defence in 2007, “The Bundeswehr’s international operations” enumerated the shortcomings in the planning, command and execution of operations abroad, including the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, in the coordination of the branches of the armed forces and of different levels of command, in the duplication of structures, excessive red tape, and in insufficient combat equipment and financing of the armed forces. However, there was not enough political will in the Federal Ministry of Defence headed in 2007 by Franz-Josef Jung (CSU) to implement reforms which were necessary but controversial back home. After 2008 the Bundeswehr had to face up to more serious

⁴ The work on the reform was launched by Defence Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg (CSU) who supervised the creation of the reform’s initial premises and made the decision to suspend conscription. The reform was continued by Defence Minister Thomas de Maizière (CDU). The ministry issued a series of documents: Defence Policy Guidelines (May 2011); Plans of the new structure of the Bundeswehr (September 2011); plans for restructuring the ministry of defence, the reduction in military equipment and arms, increasing the appeal of military service and a new dislocation of units in Germany (October 2011); the reservists’ concept (November 2011).

challenges due to the deteriorating security situation in Northern Afghanistan and to further extend the range of the armed forces' tasks⁵. This forced the CDU/CSU/FDP government in autumn 2009 to include in its coalition agreement a declaration to implement the consecutive stage of the transformation.

An important incentive to introduce a deep reform of the Bundeswehr was provided by the economic crisis and the four-year austerity plan of the federal government of June 2010. Under this plan the Federal Ministry of Defence was set to save 8.3 billion euros in total by 2014. This motivated the ministry to consider a number of options and their possible implications for the capabilities of the Bundeswehr. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the direct incentive to implement the reform was the search for savings, in 2011 the government agreed that the Federal Ministry of Defence would not have to fulfil its obligations made in the June 2010 agreement⁶. By 2014 it will have a budget comparable or even slightly higher than the one of 2010 (Germany's defence spending in recent years fluctuated between 1.3 and 1.4% of German GDP)⁷. Furthermore, costs linked with the reduction in civilian staff will be removed from the ministry's budget⁸. Additional funding for the implementation of the reform will be "obtained"

⁵ The army set up then the first combat unit after the end of World War II - Quick Reaction Force with 300 soldiers.

⁶ The plans from June 2010 allowed for the following budget of the Ministry of Defence in 2012-2014: in 2012 - 30.9 billion euros, in 2013 - 29.6 billion euros, in 2014 - 27.7 billion euros. See: Bundestag, Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage Bündnis 90/Die Grünen: Sparbeitrag des Verteidigungshaushaltes, Drucksache 17/7293, 11.10.2011.

⁷ SIPRI, The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, <http://milexdata.sipri.org/>

⁸ In line with the German Grundgesetz there is a civilian administration of the Bundeswehr (Bundeswehrverwaltung) which performs functions relating to procurement, real estate and personal management (territoriale Wehrverwaltung) and the purchase of arms, information and IT management (Rüstungsbereich).

from gradual decrease in German military involvement in Afghanistan (the German contingent had in the beginning of 2012 approximately 5,000 troops).

The budget of the Federal Ministry of Defence, 2006–2011 (billion euros)⁹

2006	27.8
2007	28.4
2008	29.5
2009	31.2
2010	31.1
2011	31.5

The forecasted budget of the Federal Ministry of Defence for 2012–2015 (billion euros)¹⁰

2012	31.7 (according to earlier agreements ¹¹ 30.9)
2013	31.4 (according to earlier agreements 29.6)
2014	30.9 (according to earlier agreements 27.7)
2015	30.4

⁹ Data from the Federal Ministry of Defence, Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, www.bmvg.de

¹⁰ Bundesfinanzministerium, Unterrichtung des Bundes, Finanzplan des Bundes 2011 bis 2015, source: http://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/nr_137300/DE/Wirtschaft__und__Verwaltung/Finanz__und__Wirtschaftspolitik/Bundeshaushalt/Bundeshaushalt__2012/20110905-Bundeshaushalt12-Finanzplan,templateId=raw,property=publicationFile.pdf

¹¹ See footnote 6.

1. Improving expeditionary capabilities

In the military dimension, the objective is to create a military which is smaller but more effective, excellently trained, and provided with modern equipment. The changes in the structure, processes, capabilities and military equipment are geared towards improvements in the expeditionary profile of the Bundeswehr. Germany still considers there to be a negligible likelihood of a conventional armed attack on German territory and is focusing above all on analysing threats which can have a negative impact on the international economic flow. Germany wishes to develop its military capabilities with regard to its increased independence from its allies and to fill in the gaps in the capabilities needed in order to complete the tasks it could not undertake alone. In developing the armed forces' capabilities the ministry wants to follow the principle of *Breite vor Tiefe* that is to maintain the widest possible range of capabilities. However this will also mean prioritising certain capabilities while decreasing the efficiency/effectiveness in areas less significant from the point of view of the ministry.

By 2015 the number of Bundeswehr troops will total 185,000 (170,000 professional and contract soldiers and 5,000-15,000 soldiers involved in a volunteer military service lasting from 12 to 23 months). The armed forces will be thus reduced by 25,000 professional and contract soldiers (which is less than the initially proposed reduction of 40,000). The number of civilian employees will also be downsized – from 75,000 to 55,000 (a reduction of 20,000). The army and the air force will be scaled down by approximately a third (respectively to 57,500 and 22,500 soldiers), the navy will be diminished by approximately 14% (to 13,000 soldiers)¹². The Bundeswehr is to generate up to 10,000 troops to be deployed

¹² The Joint Medical Service will have 14,600 soldiers (reduced by 26%), the Joint Support Service will have 36,700 soldiers (reduced by 37%) and 30,000 soldiers will be in training or work in such areas as infrastructure, the maintenance of military equipment, IT etc.

in international operations at the same time (currently it is approximately 7,000). The armed forces will further develop the capabilities needed for Germany to take on the role of a framework nation in conducting operations abroad¹³. Despite reductions the Federal Ministry of Defence announced that Germany will maintain its contribution to the NATO Response Force and the EU Battle Groups at the previous level.

The reduction in the number of soldiers has been linked with the complete **professionalisation** of the armed forces. In July 2011 conscription was suspended and as a result 55,000 places for conscripts and conscripts who opted for service extension were eliminated. At the same time a new Bundeswehr reservists' concept was introduced that increases their importance in the new structure of the armed forces¹⁴. A substantial change will be made in the area of **training**. The earlier division of the Bundeswehr into intervention, stabilisation and support forces will be eliminated. The goal is to adjust the armed forces to the realities of operations currently run since they combine both elements of stabilisation and combat tasks. Soldiers will be trained to perform a broad spectrum of tasks in both low- and high-intensity operations. Furthermore, following the statements made by Thomas de Maizière, in the future the Bundeswehr will confine its activity to military operations and will not, contrary to the present situation, undertake actions in the area of development cooperation or policing. Changes will also be introduced in the **organisation** of the branches of the armed forces, command structures (a reduction in the number of commands, a strengthening of the position

¹³ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Defence Policy Guidelines, 27.05.2011, www.bmvg.de

¹⁴ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Konzeption der Reserve, 01.02.2012, www.bmvg.de. The new concept introduces the division into reservists who support the Bundeswehr units in operations abroad when the need arises (Truppenreserve), reservists assigned to territorial defence tasks, actions undertaken in response to natural disasters or the protection of critical infrastructure (Territoriale Reserve) and finally - reservists not assigned to specific tasks (Allgemeine Reserve).

of the General Inspector of the Bundeswehr) and the structure of the Federal Ministry of Defence with the aim of increasing its efficiency and simplifying decision-making and bureaucratic processes.

As far as **military equipment** is concerned, the reform allows for a reduction in older equipment in use and equipment currently being planned¹⁵ / being introduced into service¹⁶. The reason behind the reduction in purchases of new equipment is not to make savings but rather to “release” funding for the equipment which in view of the ministry is needed more in Bundeswehr’s international operations. It is worth noting that the budget for investments in new military equipment will remain the same¹⁷. In the past the allocation of 95% of funds within this budget was appropriated to financing equipment mostly ordered in the 1990s which will not be needed in such quantities after the armed forces has been reduced in size (Eurofighter, Puma) or because it does not meet the current requirements of the Bundeswehr (Tiger multi-role fire support helicopter or NH90 medium-sized transport helicopter)¹⁸.

¹⁵ On condition that the Ministry of Defence reaches an agreement with defence industry.

¹⁶ The largest reductions are planned in the army and the air force and will concern Leopard 2 tanks (from 350 to 225), Puma infantry fighting vehicles (from the planned 410 to 350), Panzerhaubitze 2000 self-propelled howitzers (from 148 to 81), NH90 medium sized transport helicopter (from the planned 122 to 80), Tiger multi-role fire support helicopters (from the planned 80 to 40), Tornado combat aircraft (from 185 to 85), probably Eurofighter combat aircraft (currently the Luftwaffe has 143 Eurofighters, it has not yet made a decision about accepting the delivery of 37 Eurofighters from the 3B tranche) and military transport aircraft (Transall – from 80 to 60, A400M – from the planned 60 to 40). The plans of purchasing new military equipment by the navy will not be changed; the oldest models of frigates and submarines will however be phased out more quickly or have already been withdrawn from use.

¹⁷ It now amounts to 23% of the Bundeswehr’s budget. Minister de Maizière billigt Umrüstung, 21.10.2011, www.bmvg.de

¹⁸ Niemieccy eksperci krytykują NH90, 23.02.2010, <http://www.altair.com.pl/start-4172>, Bezużyteczne Tigery, 26.05.2010, <http://www.altair.com.pl/start-4576>

In the army the strengthening of combat capabilities will be the most significant criterion for the realignment. This means an increase in combat units, the reinforcement of infantry and the shifting of some units to another branch of the armed forces (the air defence and missile defence units as well as CH-53 heavy-lift transport helicopters will be moved to the Luftwaffe). The infantry will become mobile and light, prepared to run joint operations and to perform a broad spectrum of tasks¹⁹. The infantry will be strengthened at the cost of the reduction in armoured and artillery units, which is visible in the reduction of military equipment – tanks, infantry fighting vehicles and self-propelled howitzers.

The navy will improve its capabilities for participating in international joint operations in remote regions. It will also undertake improvements in its capabilities of supporting land-based operations from the sea. The navy has been undergoing a transformation into the model of an expeditionary navy for several years²⁰. Germany assesses that in the future the navy will be needed more as regards the protection of German citizens and German interests abroad and Germany's participation in international joint operations. There are two reasons for this. The protection of maritime transport routes is of strategic importance to Germany²¹. Joint operations with a more robust participation of the navy not only offer more military options but also expand the room for manoeuvre for political decisions. Domestically it is easier to ac-

¹⁹ Informationen zur Grobstruktur Heer, www.bmvg.de

²⁰ Klaus von Dambrowski, Ein maritimes Konzept für das gesamte Einsatzpektrum, *Maritime Convention 1/2008*, p. 11–13.

²¹ Germany is the world's third largest exporter. Furthermore, it is a country highly industrialised but poor in natural resources. The prerequisite for exports of goods and imports of natural resources and thus also for the development of the German economy is well-functioning global trade. As maritime transport is one of the safest, cheapest and most environmentally-friendly means of transportation, it is of strategic significance to the German economy. The German trade fleet consists of 3,500 ships (including 600 registered in Germany) and thus occupies third place in the world (first place regarding the number of container ships). See: Axel Schimpf, *Die Deutsche Marine der Zukunft, Europäische Sicherheit*, 9/2011, p. 30–36.

cept a decision to operate from the sea without establishing land bases and internationally it is easier to implement. Therefore the navy will be affected to the least extent by the reduction in the number of soldiers (approximately 14% compared to over 30% in other branches of the armed forces). Reductions will not affect the purchase of new military equipment which has been on the drawing board for several years²². Joint Support Ships (JSS) planned in the new structure of the navy show the direction of changes being made. JSS will be used to launch joint operations from the sea and will increase Germany's autonomy with regard to its allies in conducting a show of force in a given region, in conducting land operations from the sea, evacuation operations, special forces operations as well as humanitarian and support tasks in response to natural disasters. Due to financial reasons, the order for these ships will be probably placed in 2016/2018.

As for the German **air force**, the transformed Luftwaffe will maintain, though to a lesser extent, capabilities for the territorial defence of Germany and NATO. The air force will retain three wings (Geschwader) with Eurofighter combat aircraft. There will be only one wing left (out of the current three) with Tornado fighter and fighter-bomber aircraft capable of electronic combat and the delivery of nuclear weapons. The Bundeswehr will thus maintain nuclear sharing capability within NATO. Furthermore, the German air force will develop its capabilities for participation in combined joint operations. Under the *Luftwaffe 2020* concept and the current reform the air force will also prioritise capabilities that increase Germany's political and military leverage in

²² In approximately 2016 German navy will have: eleven frigates (four state-of-the-art F125s, three F124s, four F123s), five K130 corvettes, three task force suppliers (Einsatzgruppenversorger class Berlin ships) to provide logistic support for maritime operations, six class 212A submarines, 30 new helicopters, ten minesweepers and eight P-C3 Orion maritime surveillance aircraft. Most likely in 2019-2020 six small multi-task ships (Mehrzweckkampfschiff 180) will be introduced into service and in approximately 2016-2018 two ships to provide logistic support for land operations (Joint Support Ships) will probably be ordered.

NATO and German influence on conducting international operations. Four priority areas²³ are mentioned: military use of space²⁴, missile defence²⁵, unmanned aircraft systems²⁶ and Air Surface

²³ Ralph Thiele, *Reconsidering the Relevancy of Air Power – German Air Force Development*, ISPSW Strategy Series No. 162, July 2011.

²⁴ The Bundeswehr uses data and services provided by satellite systems in the area of communication, reconnaissance, navigation and geoinformation. The Bundeswehr has its own satellite communication systems (SAT-Com Bw2) and satellite reconnaissance systems (SAR-Lupe) which were launched in recent years. In the area of reconnaissance and communication Germany is seeking to maintain its autonomous capabilities and will only supplement them with participation in international projects. The Luftwaffe is responsible for developing capabilities in the area of the use of space, for protecting and maintaining the satellite systems currently in use and for operating the Space Situational Awareness Centre which gathers and verifies information obtained. The main source of footnotes 22, 24, 25, 26: www.bundeswehr.de

²⁵ The Bundeswehr is building missile defence capabilities in two areas. Firstly, with regard to protecting German military bases in international operations. The MANTIS short range air defence protection system (counter-rocket, artillery and mortar) will be used in this context (the Bundeswehr has ordered four of these). Secondly, Germany is taking part in the NATO ALTBMD (Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence) programme which is aimed at protecting NATO troops during operations against the threat posed by tactical ballistic missiles with ranges up to 3,000 kilometres and which could become part of the NATO missile defence system. The German contribution to the ALTBMD programme will be probably, after the introduction of the reform, 14 batteries of the short-range anti-missile Patriot system upgraded to the PAC-3 version and the Surface to Air Missile Operations Centre (SAMOC). Until 2011 Germany took part in the development of the MEADS programme together with the US and Italy, this programme was intended to gradually replace the Patriot system. Due to the fact that the US decided to withdraw from the MEADS programme, Germany also abandoned it on financial grounds.

²⁶ Germany will be developing unmanned aircraft systems which are already completing for and taking over tasks performed by multirole combat aircraft in the area of reconnaissance and support for land-based operations. For the Luftwaffe the priority is to develop capabilities not only in the range of MALE class UAV (the equivalents of the Israeli IAI Heron UAV, the Bundeswehr is leasing three such UAVs until 2012 and has opted for developing a system of the same class by German companies, possibly in cooperation with foreign partners). It also wants to develop its capabilities in higher class HALE UAVs. From 2015 onwards the Luftwaffe will have four HALE class Eurohawk UAVs equipped with signals intelligence (SIGNIT) which will be the German “ear” in the air. As part of the German contribution to the Alliance Ground Surveillance Core system, which is being developed now, the Bundeswehr will also purchase four US Global Hawk UAVs. Ger-

Integration - the planning, synchronisation and integration of the air force, army and navy capabilities available within an operational area - from the earth's surface to space on joint operations.

2. Challenges for the Bundeswehr's transformation

Will the Bundeswehr be able to achieve the objectives and capabilities set by the Federal Ministry of Defence within the present transformation process? The implementation of the reform - both in the military and political aspects - will take several years. It will be possible to evaluate the results when: the reorganisation of the armed forces takes place, new procedures are introduced, new command structures are tested for operational purposes, the new equipment is introduced and when the consequences of the suspension of conscription is discovered. Nevertheless, in several areas the implementation of the reform will run into difficulties.

(1) Despite the introduction of financial and social incentives along with measures to increase the social recognition of serving in the military, it may prove difficult to recruit a sufficient number of volunteers (the expected number ranges from 5,000 to 15,000). The Bundeswehr's first experiences with a volunteer service do not inspire with optimism - out of 3,459 volunteers enrolled in July 2011 22.5% left within a short amount of time (resigned from military service voluntarily or were discharged). It remains an open question how many of the volunteers currently performing their military service will decide to stay in the armed forces as contract soldiers. Military officials express doubts as to whether it will be possible in the future to maintain the expected size of the armed forces (185,000 soldiers, including 170,000 professional and contract soldiers) and indicate unfavourable demographic trends in Germany. Furthermore, there are concerns that

man companies, commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Defence, are also developing projects regarding unmanned combat air vehicles (UCAVs) - <http://augengeradeaus.net/2012/01/zum-nachlesen-kampfdrohne-fur-die-bundeswehr/>

the Bundeswehr may become the “armed forces of the lower social classes” (Unterschichtenarmee)²⁷ and/or a military whose soldiers will be recruited in large part from radical right-wing circles²⁸.

(2) The reduction in the number of troops by 25,000 professional and contract soldiers coupled with the premise that up to 10,000 troops (currently 7,000) will be involved in international operations calls into question the feasibility of the reform’s guidelines. According to the Federal Ministry of Defence and military officials this can be achieved through high quality training and equipment but will also involve a decrease in the ability of the Bundeswehr to conduct longer and more demanding international operations due to overstressing its resources²⁹.

(3) In the years to come the Bundeswehr will still struggle with the problem of a shortage of military equipment ordered several years ago and not yet delivered or of military equipment delivered and returned for adjustment, repair or upgrade. This may be due to difficulties in the production process of the German/European defence industry as was the case with NH90 medium sized transport helicopters, Tiger multi-role fire support helicopters, A400M military transport aircraft, K130 corvettes. It is quite likely that several years will pass before this equipment will be commissioned into service with the German armed forces.

(4) Even if the Federal Ministry of Defence adopted a long term budgetary plan (to 2015), a decrease in funds allocated to the reform cannot be ruled out in the coming years. The government may look for further budget savings if the economic and financial crisis in the EU deteriorates. Financial setbacks accompanied by

²⁷ Harald Kujat, Das Ende der Wehrpflicht, w: Wehrpflicht und Zivildienst, Aus der Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 48/2011, November 2011, pp. 3–7.

²⁸ Zwischen Verrohung und Verdummung, *Handelsblatt*, 27.05.2011, <http://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/deutschland/zwischen-verrohung-und-verdummung/4224518.html>

²⁹ Harald Kujat, Das Ende der Wehrpflicht, *op.cit.*

possible recruitment problems could lead to a decision wherein the Bundeswehr will decrease further. This would imply further reductions in military equipment and/or abandoning certain capabilities (which the ministry currently wishes to avoid)³⁰. Such a development depends on whether the German government evaluates maintaining an effective military with the ability to conduct the full spectrum of capabilities as necessary taking into account developments in the international security environment.

³⁰ Stephan Löwenstein, Das unerreichte Ende der Fahnenstange, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 02.01.2012, p. 4.

III. THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF THE REFORM

The present stage of the transformation is also intended to create new social legitimacy for a Bundeswehr that is improving its expeditionary profile and is intended to be used by the German government precisely as any other allied armed forces would be.

1. Problems with legitimacy

Acquiring social legitimacy for the Bundeswehr's evolution towards an expeditionary military focused on conducting international operations has been the greatest challenge for the German government since the beginning of the 1990s. Consecutive governments hoped that German society would slowly grow accustomed to the gradual increase in the Bundeswehr's participation in international operations. Furthermore, in order to win greater acceptance for foreign deployments of the Bundeswehr, a fictitious image of its engagement in exclusively "good" stabilisation operations was maintained. Due to the lack of a sufficient information campaign German society's approach to the Bundeswehr began to evolve towards a "friendly indifference" (*freundliches Desinteresse*)³¹. At the same time society was sceptical of the Bundeswehr taking over new tasks, and Germany used this fact in NATO when justifying its lack of a larger military involvement e.g. in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan. However, this fictive image also had negative implications for the German government itself. In recent years the image of the Bundeswehr conveyed by the media where the military was portrayed as a quasi "development/policing agency in uniforms" clashed with the actual tasks performed by the German armed forces in Afghanistan. Within the last two years the Bundeswehr has had to substantially extend the scope of operations in order to maintain the security of

³¹ Köhler fordert mehr Aufklärung über Auslandseinsätze, *Spiegel Online*, 27.11.2008, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,593131,00.html>

its own contingent and of the northern provinces. This move has not been accompanied by an adequate information campaign in Germany and this was the reason for one of the largest scandals concerning the Bundeswehr in the last 20 years. The air strike against two tanker trucks called by a German commander in September 2009 in the Afghan province of Kunduz claimed the lives of approximately 100 Afghan civilians while targeting the Taliban. The number of civilian casualties and the deliberate elimination of the Taliban by the Bundeswehr caused a shock in German society. Franz-Josef Jung, the former head of the Federal Ministry of Defence in the CDU/CSU/SPD coalition and the labour minister in the new CDU/CSU/FDP government, was one of the officials who resigned amidst accusations of providing false information. Partly also due to this scandal, the German government understood that a further transformation of the Bundeswehr along with the evolution of German foreign and security policy would have to be accepted by German society.

The issue of the social legitimacy of the Bundeswehr as internationally deployable armed forces is indirectly linked with the **recruitment of volunteers and candidates for contract and professional soldiers**. Until 2011 mandatory military service served as a recruitment system³². Conscription was also, at least in theory, part of the “citizen in uniform” philosophy and the “link” between the armed forces and society which co-legitimised the

³² Mandatory military service fulfilled the function of the recruitment system despite the diminishing numbers of conscripts. In 1990 the percentage of conscripts in the Bundeswehr stood at 45%, in 2010 it was only 15%. In recent years only approximately 17% of all young men reaching draftable age served in the military. The majority performed civilian service, often in social care institutions in Germany, thus in fact providing them with cheap staff. The recruitment role of conscription started to generate controversies, while the small proportion of conscripts provoked questions about “draft equality”, of ensuring the country’s security (Wehrgerechtigkeit) and about the conformity of the whole situation with the German constitution. The course of mandatory military service and the costs generated by conscription were criticised, as well as the point of the mandatory military service in the face of the new profile of the Bundeswehr.

existence of the Bundeswehr during the Cold War. The suspension of conscription in 2011 meant not only an abandonment of the symbolic element of social legitimacy but also of a convenient recruitment system for the armed forces. Thus, this provided another impetus to create a new image and identity for the Bundeswehr which would be attractive for future recruits.

2. The new image and identity of the Bundeswehr

In order to provide new social legitimacy, the Federal Ministry of Defence has taken measures aimed at **creating the new image and identity of the Bundeswehr**. The measures are intended to win social acceptance for the new model of the armed forces and indirectly – to increase the attractiveness of the professional military service in Germany³³.

The emphasis in political discourse has always been on the democratic history of the Bundeswehr over the last 50 years³⁴ and on its participation in UN, NATO and EU operations. This has been explained as taking “international responsibility” that corresponds to Germany’s new position in Europe and in the world³⁵. The new element in the political rethorik is the reference to German “national interests” and to the links between the Bundeswehr’s participation in international operations and Germany’s position in

³³ Besides the financial aspects and the possibility to receive high quality education in the Bundeswehr, an important factor in (not)deciding to join the armed forces – particularly in Germany – is also the social aspect. See: Heiko Biehl / Bastian Giegerich / Alexandra Jonas, Aussetzung der Wehrpflicht. Erfahrungen und Lehren westlicher Partnerstaaten, in: Wehrpflicht und Zivildienst, Aus der Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 48/2011, November 2011, pp. 31–38.

³⁴ The earlier traditions / events to which the German armed forces makes reference include only Prussian military reforms from 1808–1813 and the resistance to Hitler in the Wehrmacht.

³⁵ Burkhard Köster, Tradition in der Bundeswehr – Tradition der Reformen?, in: Karl-Heinz Lutz, Martin Rink, Marcus von Salisch (ed.), Reform, Reorganisation, Transformation, München 2010, pp. 317–330.

global trade, jobs in German and the income of German citizens³⁶. Since 2010 the government has also started to inform society about the real nature of the Bundeswehr's activity in Afghanistan. The breakthrough came when Defence Minister, Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg, used the taboo word "war" while referring to the conditions of Bundeswehr's operation.

Furthermore, in the last two years the government has been aiming to acknowledge the efforts of German soldiers involved in international operations and to commemorate those who were killed serving their country. In 2009 a monument was built in Berlin in commemoration of the soldiers and civilian employees of the Bundeswehr who were killed on duty (Ehrenmal der Bundeswehr). In 2008 the Bundeswehr Cross of Honour for Bravery (Ehrenkreuz der Bundeswehr für Tapferkeit) was introduced into the catalogue of the military decorations of the German armed forces. This is the first decoration of this type since World War II to be awarded by the Federal Ministry of Defence to honour outstanding achievements of German soldiers in international operations³⁷. An important signal was given in April 2010 when Chancellor Angela Merkel for the first time participated in the memorial service in honour of three soldiers killed in Afghanistan. This was interpreted as a commemoration of their service for the country.

³⁶ In May 2010 German President Horst Köhler felt forced to leave his office after the stark criticism from public opinion in Germany, when he made a link between the participation of the Bundeswehr in international operations with the protection of Germany's economic interests. However, in autumn of the same year the Defence Minister, zu Guttenberg, repeated Köhler's arguments. See: Anna Kwiatkowska-Drożdż, The natural resources deficit: the implications for German politics, OSW Commentary, February 2011.

³⁷ Franz Josef Jung, Soldatisches Dienen anerkennen, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 09.10.2008, http://www.bmvg.de/portal/a/bmvg!/ut/p/c4/NY1RC4IwFIX_oaaURroVEUVQj2UvMt11XnGb3FoNoh_fDDwHzsv3wZEvGevUhEYxeqd6-ZRFjvbvQLSo7GWHRYWAgHKowEOoW65ah_LMJiAE1mtG-ZsihlAOQy3WaZoNSQcp_OBzi66MjHfKZB1N4Bz8vgGOMaUuxJDJ64n8lI-FIILYskPR6SNFmSfjfXo3m1zvL8cjd5WDt_gc9kCbv/

The Federal Ministry of Defence is also promoting the civic character of military service: the Bundeswehr is to contribute to maintaining the model of a free and democratic Germany. This aspect is intended to replace the integrating role formerly assigned to conscription and to establish the “link” between the professional armed forces and society. The civic duty dimension of the new identity is emphasised particularly in the information and recruitment campaign run by the Federal Ministry of Defence under the slogan “*Wir.Dienen.Deutschland*” (We.Serve.Germany)³⁸.

³⁸ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, <http://www.wirdienendeutschland.de/selbstverstaendnis.html>

IV. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR NATO AND THE EU

The foundations of the present reform along with the development of German security policy will both influence Germany's approach to political and military cooperation within NATO and the EU.

1. The implications for political cooperation within NATO and the EU

The current Bundeswehr reform and the evolution of Germany's security policy will bring about a progressing **redefinition of Germany's membership in NATO and the EU**. Germany's membership in NATO and its involvement in the Common Security and Defence Policy are unquestionable in Germany. In future the Bundeswehr will conduct operations within NATO, the EU and the UN in cooperation with the armed forces of the partner countries. With political cohesion faltering both within NATO and the EU, Germany will intensify its instrumental approach to the two organisations as platforms used to achieve its own objectives, not institutions which are setting the political orientation and operational involvement of the Bundeswehr³⁹. As was the case of Libya, Germany will not participate in operations which are not convergent with or are contradictory to Germany's interests and political goals. On the other hand, Germany is concerned that its allies (the US, France and the UK) will reach for "coalitions of the willing" more often than is necessary and that such operations may have negative impact on German political and economic interests in the relevant regions. In future Germany may therefore be confronted with the following choice: either it agrees to an unwanted engagement and thus influences the operation, or it opposes it and thus has no considerable influence on the actions taken by the coalition.

³⁹ Justyna Gotkowska, No more compulsory engagement. The emancipation of German security policy, OSW Commentary, July 2011.

The term “**national interest**”, which until recently was taboo in Germany, has currently become a norm in the vocabulary of German politicians. Accordingly, it will be in the German interest to take part in international operations set to prevent phenomena which may have a negative impact on the international economic flow and thus affect economic growth in Germany and its global position, in the shorter or longer term. Taking over responsibility in international politics is mentioned as another criterion when deciding on German military engagement abroad. Others include: taking part in parallel operations, the predicted duration of the planned operation and clear conditions for its completion as well as the possible consequences Germany would face if it refused to participate⁴⁰. There are few international operations with Bundeswehr involvement which Germany sees as serving its interests. One example of these is the EU’s Operation Atalanta; this is set to secure maritime routes off the coast of Somalia against pirate attacks. Others are the stabilisation operations (KFOR and EUFOR) in the Balkans – a region which Germany treats as its “sphere of responsibility” in the EU’s direct neighbourhood. The deployment of the Bundeswehr in missions of a different type than that mentioned above will rather not be in Germany’s interest. The growing energy and economic links as well as the development of good relations with emerging economies (BRIC) will contribute to Germany’s reluctance to take part in NATO and EU operations in the regions perceived as the spheres of influence of these countries. Germany will also be cautious in engaging in missions in Muslim countries, mainly in the Middle East and North Africa, as this could affect its positive image and have implications for its political and economic position in these regions. The instruments from the areas of diplomacy, development policy, political, economic and financial cooperation as well as police and military cooperation are sufficient and are the preferred tools of protecting German interests. For these reasons, in future crises and conflicts

⁴⁰ See: Thomas de Maizière, speech at the 8th Handelsblatt conference „Sicherheitspolitik und Verteidigungsindustrie” in Berlin, 25.11.2011.

Germany will rather opt for diplomatic solutions within NATO, the EU and the UN. It will also seek to use and strengthen civilian instruments of conflict prevention and crisis response⁴¹. Germany does analyse the consequences of the increased economic, military and political importance of the “new powers” on its position and interests – the competition for political influence, diminishing natural resources and access to markets. But the German answer is to support the establishment of NATO’s “strategic partnerships” with non-NATO countries (above all with Russia, but also with other “new powers”) through confidence building measures, political and military contacts, consultations and cooperation on joint projects⁴².

2. The implications for military cooperation within NATO and the EU

With an evolving approach to political cooperation, the German take on the objectives and principles of military cooperation is also changing, also in the context of the discussion on strengthening military cooperation within NATO and the EU.

Germany will not be ready to become involved in cooperation which could result in a permanent interdependence between partners with regard to capabilities used in international operations. This applies above all to units of the army, air force and the navy conducting combat operations. Germany is concerned that interdependence in such capabilities shared with its

⁴¹ In the tripartite Weimar initiative (see footnote 47), put forward together with Poland and France, Germany was above all interested in the establishment of permanent civilian and military headquarters (EUHQ) – in order to strengthen the civilian component of EU crisis response and better coordination with military structures in performing future EU operations. See: Claudia Major, Ein zivil-militärisches Hauptquartier für die EU. SWP-Aktuell, October 2010.

⁴² See: Thomas de Maizière, speech “Die deutsche Rolle in der internationalen Sicherheitsarchitektur” made at the “German Conference” at Harvard University, Boston, 20.02.2012.

main partners (France and the UK) may lead to political pressure for Germany to engage in operations supported by these countries but not necessarily convergent with German interests. It is precisely due to this reason that Germany's main partners (France and the UK) do not want to engage in this kind of cooperation with Germany either, since in the past a lack of German consent either made joint units deployment on EU or NATO operations difficult or impossible. Germany thus put itself in a difficult political position. This was the case with EU Battle Groups⁴³ and the NATO AWACS unit⁴⁴. The Franco-British agreement for greater military cooperation from November 2010 and the policy of excluding collaboration with Germany which followed it⁴⁵ best illustrates the attitude of France and the UK towards cooperation with Germany.

Germany will however take part in projects of (limited) cooperation which do not restrict Germany's ability to act autonomously and flexibly and which generate military and political gains in selected areas. Germany will continue its present engagement in pooling and sharing/smart defence projects⁴⁶

⁴³ Germany blocked the use of EU Battle Groups with the participation of the Bundeswehr in 2006 (Chad) and in 2008 (Congo). See: Claudia Major / Christian Mölling, EU-Battlegroups. Bilanz und Optionen zur Weiterentwicklung europäischer Krisenreaktionskräfte, SWP-Studie, August 2010, p. 22-23.

⁴⁴ German soldiers make up a third of the NATO AWACS unit. Germany did not allow their participation in the AWACS unit operation in the NATO mission in Libya. It may have considerably hampered the unit's operations if the German government had not allowed the participation of Bundeswehr soldiers in the unit's operation in Afghanistan. This decision was made under pressure from the allies and due to fierce criticism within NATO of the German stance on Libya. Earlier, due to domestic policy, Germany had rejected NATO's request to allow the participation of German soldiers in the AWACS unit operation in Afghanistan. See: The German mission in Afghanistan depends on local elections, BEST OSW, 19.01.2011, http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/CEWEEKLY_99.pdf

⁴⁵ Tom Kington / Albrecht Müller, Italy, Germany make their own pacts. Agreements a reaction to snub by French-UK Deal, 19.12.2011, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20111219/DEFFEAT04/112190321/Italy-Germany-Make-Their-Own-Pacts>

⁴⁶ E.g. European Air Transport Command (EATC), Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) or Baltic Air Policing.

and will become involved in new ones in the EU and NATO. Nevertheless this cooperation will have a limited scope. It may cover support units which do not take part in international operations, strategic and tactical airlift units, the area of education and training as well as maritime patrolling (important for Germany with regard to preventing e.g. piracy), and air policing resulting from NATO's Article 5 commitments.

In response to the Franco-British agreement, Germany along with Sweden in the Ghent Initiative suggested exploring the possibilities of strengthening European military cooperation through pooling and sharing projects. They also provided examples of possible areas of cooperation⁴⁷. For Germany, pooling and sharing cooperation can improve certain capabilities at the European level (e.g. strategic and tactical airlift, maritime patrolling, air policing). Germany would also like to use possible European projects in order to maintain and reinforce the structures of the German armed forces (e.g. through the common use of the Bundeswehr's training and exercise centres). Germany's approach to European

⁴⁷ The Ghent Initiative. In the document submitted by German and Sweden in November 2010 three categories of capabilities were specified: **(1)** capabilities and support structures that are deemed essential for individual nations and therefore maintained on a strictly national level (e.g. capabilities relating to combat, combat support and combat service support forces, intelligence, fighter airplanes and warships). In this category cooperation can extend as far as to increasing **interoperability**; **(2)** capabilities and support structures where closer cooperation is possible without creating too strong dependencies e.g. in the form of **pooling** capabilities (e.g. non deployable support forces and operational training forces as well as selected capabilities such as strategic and tactical airlift and logistics capabilities). In the latter area the Bundeswehr is currently taking part in the following initiatives: the NATO Strategic Airlift Capability and the European Air Transport Fleet); **(3) capabilities and support structures where mutual dependency and reliance upon European partners is acceptable in the European role- and task-sharing framework** (e.g. support structures required for education, training and exercises or capabilities relating to tasks such as maritime patrolling or air policing). See: Ghent Initiative. European Imperative. Intensifying Military Cooperation in Europe, November 2010, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede260511deseinitiative_/sede260511deseinitiative_en.pdf

cooperation is shown best by its offer to build permanent EU civil-military operational headquarters on the Bundeswehr Response Forces Operations Command in Ulm – this is set to be dismantled as part of the current reform⁴⁸. Within its military cooperation Germany will also attempt to support its own defence industry. In the context of the economic crisis and expenditure cuts made in the defence sector in the EU, Germany's objective is to maintain production capacities and to guarantee the technological development of the German defence companies.

Despite the fact that Germany (with Sweden) authored the proposal to strengthen European military cooperation, Germany is now seeking to diminish expectations regarding this kind of cooperation within the EU and NATO. It indicates that such cooperation will not provide a lifeline for maintaining the capabilities of the armed forces and developing new ones in a time of savings in the area of defence. Germany is rather recommending several new projects be focused upon. The German Defence Minister, Thomas de Maizière, in February 2012 even called for a sober and realistic outlook on smart defence and pooling and sharing projects and stressed the importance of the political and military limitations of this type of cooperation⁴⁹.

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⁴⁸ Julian Hale, Germany to press maritime patrol aircraft pool, 29.07.2011, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20110729/DEFSECT05/107290307/Germany-to-Press-Maritime-Patrol-Aircraft-Pool>

⁴⁹ Thomas de Maizière, the speech made at the 48th Munich Security Conference, 03.02.2012, <http://www.securityconference.de/Dr-Thomas-de-Maiziere.809.o.html>

APPENDIX

THE MOST IMPORTANT REFORMS OF THE BUNDESWEHR AND THEIR CONTEXT (1990–2004)

1. 1993: Volker Rühle's reform

After Germany's reunification the Bundeswehr started to participate in UN, NATO and WEU (Western European Union) operations. As early as in 1991 Germany supported the militarily operations of the anti-Iraq coalition, despite the fact that Chancellor Helmut Kohl refused to involve the Bundeswehr directly in the Gulf War. In 1992 the Bundeswehr took part in the UN operation in Cambodia (UNTAC, medical units) and in 1993 – in the UN operation in Somalia (UNOSOM, logistics units). Next, German military engagement abroad was extended to the participation of German navy units in NATO and the WEU Sharp Guard operation on the Adriatic to implement the UN economic sanctions and arms embargo against the former Yugoslavia.

German politicians and military officials were aware of the security environment transformation and of its consequences for NATO and Germany and thus for the structure of the Bundeswehr. However, due to the domestic situation, they attempted to maintain domestically that the Bundeswehr's international operations are only complementary to the main task of the German armed forces, i.e. defending the country and its NATO allies. This "duality" was reflected in the Defence Policy Guidelines (VPR) published by Defence Minister Volker Rühle in 1992. According to the document the threat of a conventional attack on German and NATO territory was highly unlikely; however the threat of conflicts in Germany's further geographical surroundings was increasing. Tasks related to crisis response operations were thus in the future to replace tasks related to territorial defence. Nevertheless the Guidelines still defined the territorial defence of Germany and NATO as the Bundeswehr's main task, defining the participation of a limited number of units in international peace and

stabilisation operations only as complementary. Therefore a division was made in the new structure of the Bundeswehr, splitting it into: main defence forces (Hauptverteidigungskräfte), crisis response forces (Krisenreaktionskräfte, approx. 50,000 soldiers) and basic military organisation (Grundorganisation der Streitkräfte)⁵⁰. The total number of troops was to reach 370,000 in 1995. The Bundeswehr thus began to have a certain double structure. The main body of the army was made up of main defence forces, based on mandatory military service (54.5% of soldiers were conscripts). Main defence forces were tasked with territorial defence and composed mainly of armoured units. Crisis response forces were a complementary and smaller component. However, they were undergoing the process of the equipment modernisation and professionalisation - they were made up of contract and professional soldiers as well as longer serving conscripts⁵¹. As part of this reorganisation the Bundeswehr Command Centre was also created as a planning and command and control headquarters for international operations. Until then, due to full integration in NATO command structures during the Cold War, the German armed forces in the early 1990s were unable to deploy units under national command in international operations⁵². Alongside the belief that changes to Germany's defence policy must be introduced slowly and gradually, a lack of deeper reforms in the structure, organisation, equipment and training of the Bundeswehr was due to the high cost of the Germany's reunification. The integration of the National People's Army (Nationale Volksarmee) into Bundeswehr structures, the reduction in number of the all-German armed forces⁵³ conducted in parallel with the evolution from an armed forces

⁵⁰ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien 1992, Bonn, 26.11.1992.

⁵¹ Heiko Biehl, Die neue Bundeswehr, SOWI-Arbeitspapier, Nr. 112, August 1998, pp. 23.

⁵² Sven Bernhard Gareis, Militärische Beiträge zur Sicherheit, in: Stephan Böckenförde / Sven Bernhard Gareis (publishing house), Deutsche Sicherheitspolitik, Opladen 2009, pp. 116-117.

⁵³ Due to provisions of the 2+4 Treaty Germany agreed to reduce the number of troops of the reunified Germany to 370,000 soldiers by the end of 1994.

charged with the task of territorial defence into a mobile and world-wide deployable military would have been difficult to achieve – both in political and financial terms. Firstly, German society felt increasingly secure and wanted to take advantage of the “peace dividend”. Secondly, the integration of East Germany incurred increased social and infrastructural expenditure for the German government⁵⁴. Yet already in the 1990s decisions had been made on the development of new technologies, future purchases and the modernisation of military equipment with regard to conducting international operations⁵⁵.

2. 1999: Rudolf Scharping’s reform

Civil war in the former Yugoslavia accelerated changes in Germany’s security policy, bringing about a change in the doctrine of using the armed forces. The Western Balkans were too close a region geographically for Germany not to engage in their stabilisation, both politically and militarily. The Bundeswehr’s participation in operations in the former Yugoslavia was to become a milestone for the German military out-of-area engagement and contributed to breaking many taboos. In 1995 the German units participated in NATO’s IFOR operation and were stationed in Croatia. “Kohl’s doctrine” was binding and according to it German soldiers should not take part in operations in countries which were occupied by the Third Reich during World War II. However, already in 1996 the German contingent was moved from Croatia to Bosnia as part of NATO’s SFOR operation which replaced IFOR. Emphasising the peace and stabilising character of the SFOR operation, in which German soldiers were assigned mainly logistic and medical tasks,

⁵⁴ „The development of the eastern German federal states is a priority for the German government and will consume significant funds in the immediate future. The politico-economic concept of Germany’s security must take into account not only future challenges, but also the difficult financial situation of the federal budget”. See: Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien 1992, Bonn, 26.11.1992.

⁵⁵ They included: A 400M strategic transport aircraft, Puma infantry fighting vehicle, Tiger helicopter (change of specification from the original antitank helicopter into the combat version).

was meant then to secure domestic legitimacy. The greatest breakthrough came however when Germany decided to participate in NATO's Allied Force air operation in 1999, whose objective was to put an end to ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. For the first time since the end of World War II German armed forces (the air force) participated in a combat operation which moreover was not legitimised by the UN. Additionally, Germany was engaged in the stabilisation of Kosovo - not only did it send a large military contingent (8,500 soldiers) as part of the international KFOR forces led by NATO - it also, for the first time, took command over one of the sectors during deployment abroad (in Kosovo). The slogan "*No more Auschwitz*" became the justification for the Bundeswehr's operations in Kosovo - Germany started to support the doctrine to prevent ethnic cleansing and humanitarian disasters, including by military means.

The growing German military involvement in former Yugoslavia laid bare the problems with maintaining the Bundeswehr's structure. Organisationally the Bundeswehr was not well prepared for the planned development of military capabilities within the EU's European Security and Defence Policy created at the end of the 1990s. In 1999 the SPD/Greens government decided to carry out a new reform. The assumptions of Defence Minister Rudolf Scharping were accepted. Territorial defence and maintaining the appropriate Bundeswehr structure was still the main point of reference along with a further strengthening of the expeditionary component. The Bundeswehr was to be reduced to 282,000 soldiers (200,000 professional and contract soldiers, approximately 77,000 conscripts and 5,000 reservists). A division was introduced into the basic military organisation (Militärische Grundorganisation, 105,000 soldiers) and operational forces (Einsatzkräfte, 150,000 soldiers) which were both to serve for territorial defence and to be deployed in international operations⁵⁶. Furthermore,

⁵⁶ Hans-Dieter Lemke, Bundeswehrreform. Schwachpunkt Krisenfähigkeit, SWP-aktuell, No. 66, November 2000, http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/aktuell/aktu_66_sicher.pdf

the Central Medical Service (Sanitätsdienst) and Joint Support Service (Streitkräftebasis) were created, as well as the Armed Forces Operational Command (Einsatzführungskommando) to run operations abroad.

3. 2003/2004: Peter Struck's reform

Quite soon however, the SPD/Greens government made a decision on a further reform which, due to political and military reasons, proved to be a breakthrough reform. The government redefined the mission and tasks of the Bundeswehr and decided on a complete transformation from a military prepared and trained for conventional defence tasks into a mobile and worldwide deployable military. In 2003 Defence Minister Peter Struck (SPD) published a new Defence Policy Guidelines (VPR) and in 2004 issued the new Concept of the Bundeswehr based on the Guidelines. In both documents the Federal Ministry of Defence proclaimed a **radical change of priorities**, tasks and capabilities development of the Bundeswehr. A definitive change of the security environment and the lack of foreseeable conventional threats to Germany were stated. The notion of “defence” was extended to include the fight against unconventional threats such as international terrorism as well as conflict prevention and crisis management. A quotation from Struck's preface to the new Concept of the Bundeswehr 2004 encapsulates the new approach: “We have to react to threats where they appear, for if we do not take any steps they may have a negative influence on our security, even if they arise in remote regions”⁵⁷. The decision about the reform was influenced by the September 11th terrorist attacks as they created a new political and security situation for the West; it was also influenced by the Bundeswehr's problems in conducting the OEF-A and ISAF operations in Afghanistan. The problems highlighted the fact that the Bundeswehr must introduce greater changes in structure, mili-

⁵⁷ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Grundzüge der Konzeption der Bundeswehr, Berlin 2004, pp. 2 - 3.

tary equipment and training and in the conducting of joint operations in order to be able to perform tasks in completely different conditions than had previously been the norm.

In order to describe the reform, the Federal Ministry of Defence adopted the US concept of military **transformation** understood as a constant process of adjusting the Bundeswehr to the world's changing political, social, economic and technological challenges. "Transformation" was not only to lead to a defined goal, but to be a goal itself. Thus reforms in the German armed forces were introduced that were adequate to the changes in German security policy. The capabilities, structure and the number of troops of the Bundeswehr were to depend above all on the requirements and conditions of performing joint and combined operations (of the branches of the Bundeswehr and in cooperation with allied and partner armed forces) and not on its preparedness for territorial defence. The reduction in the number of troops to 250,000 soldiers was made (up to 195,000 professional and contract soldiers, 30,000 conscripts and 25,000 voluntarily longer serving conscripts). The process of switching to a model of an expeditionary military did not, however, include the abolition of conscription; the number of conscripts was only limited and mandatory military service was reduced from ten to nine months. A new categorisation of the armed forces was introduced. The new categories were related exclusively to the ability of performing tasks in international operations. A division was made into: the response forces (Eingreifskräfte, 35,000 soldiers) to perform high intensity tasks and to run rescue and evacuation operations; the stabilisation forces (Stabilisierungskräfte, 70,000 troops) to conduct low and medium intensity operations aimed at peacekeeping, the support forces (Unterstützungskräfte, approx. 147,000 soldiers) for logistic, organisational and technical support, for command and control in international operations and for maintaining Bundeswehr infrastructure in Germany. Emphasis was placed on the development of the capabilities required to conduct joint international operations: a network-centric command and

control system, reconnaissance, tactical and strategic transport, operational effectiveness, support and supply and the protection of soldiers during operations. At the command level the competences of the General Inspector of the Bundeswehr were strengthened. Furthermore, new structures were created; apart from the Armed Forces Operational Command, which had existed since the Scharping/Kujat reform, the Response Forces Operations Command and the Special Forces Operations Command were established.