

Germany's armed forces doubles size of homeland security division: War abroad, military state at home

Johannes Stern
21 July 2026

Germany's Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) is pushing ahead massively with the build-up of armed formations for deployment within the country. The Homeland Security Division, established only in April 2025, is to grow to well over 10,000 soldiers by 2035—more than double its current size.

"We currently have a projected strength of 6,500 soldiers," explained the division's commander, Major General Andreas Henne to RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland (RND). "But by 2035 we will grow to well over 10,000 soldiers." In addition to the existing regiments and companies, new homeland security and support battalions are to be established.

The division currently consists of six homeland security regiments with 60 companies stationed at 42 locations. According to RND, it presently comprises around 4,400 reservists and 390 active soldiers; on its own website the Bundeswehr speaks of around 500 regular and part-time soldiers. The regiments are based in Roth, Münster, Nienburg, Alt Duvenstedt, Möckern/Altengraben and Ohrdruf respectively. The divisional headquarters is in Berlin.

Henne made unmistakably clear what the expansion is aimed at. The current strength was sufficient only to establish an "initial capability." It was already possible to secure infrastructure and guarantee the freedom of movement of troops, but "not yet for a prolonged conflict." In other words: the Bundeswehr is preparing to wage a long, comprehensive war in Europe.

The massive expansion of the homeland security force has a dual function. First, it is a component of the immediate preparations for a direct NATO war against Russia. Second, it creates military structures across the entire federal territory that can be deployed against the growing domestic opposition to war, conscription, the dismantling of social provisions and the subordination of the whole of society to the needs of the military.

The Bundeswehr itself leaves no doubt that the homeland security forces are not a kind of military civil defence organisation. Their task is to defend "Germany in Germany" and to keep the Federal Republic functioning as NATO's

"logistical hub."

Their core tasks include the armed protection of ports, airports, bridges, railway lines, energy facilities, digital networks and other so-called defence-critical infrastructure, the detection and countering of drones, and "host nation support." The latter encompasses securing the freedom of movement of German and allied troops on their way to NATO's eastern flank, and the return of damaged war materiel, the wounded and prisoners of war.

The Homeland Security Division is thus a central component of the secret "Operation Plan Germany." This regulates the transformation of Germany into the central staging, supply and transit area for a NATO war against Russia. According to information released so far, in a worst-case scenario, up to 800,000 allied soldiers and 200,000 vehicles are to be moved through Germany to the eastern front within six months, and accommodated, supplied, protected and given medical care en route. The continuously updated plan runs to around 1,400 pages and links military planning with the services required of government authorities, municipalities, hospitals, transport companies and private corporations.

Just how concretely these plans are already being implemented was demonstrated in May by the first major divisional exercise, "Vigilant Roland." More than 650 homeland security soldiers trained simultaneously at several locations in the protection of railway unloading operations, military convoys, assembly areas and logistical hubs. Exercises included the unloading of infantry fighting vehicles, self-propelled howitzers and armoured personnel carriers, as well as the guarding of so-called Convoy Support Centres, at which troops in transit are supplied with fuel and ammunition. The manoeuvre is to take place twice yearly in future.

The homeland security forces establish armed checkpoints and are equipped with automatic grenade launchers and 12.7-millimetre calibre heavy machine guns. During "Vigilant Roland" they practised countering drones and attacks by so-called irregular forces. In a further official report, the Bundeswehr describes how reservists have been training for combat in buildings, the

storming of “enemy-occupied” houses and the securing of railway facilities.

Particularly revealing is the Bundeswehr’s description of possible adversaries. The homeland security troops must be prepared for “civilians,” “disruptors,” “subversive forces” and a military opponent. Scenarios mentioned include the surveillance of military installations, arson and sabotage. However, the deliberately vague terms “disruptors” and “subversive forces” can be applied to any form of opposition to military transports, arms production or war preparations.

Herein lies the domestic political function of the entire project. The Homeland Security Division is an armed, centrally commanded military formation whose operational area is German sovereign territory. It is trained in the protection of fixed installations, combat in buildings, armed patrols, the establishment of checkpoints and the suppression of so-called disruptions. It is thereby prepared for precisely those tasks that would be required, in an acute social crisis, to secure military installations, arms factories, railway stations, transport routes and energy supplies against strikes, blockades and mass protests.

Official accounts seek to obscure this by referring to floods, wildfires and other natural disasters. In practice, the Bundeswehr lists as operational scenarios—alongside natural disasters—large-scale power outages, pandemics, “hybrid threats” and vaguely defined “major threatening incidents involving mass casualties.” Under the rubric of administrative assistance, the population is being systematically accustomed to the sight of armed soldiers in public spaces.

The constitutional barriers to the deployment of the Bundeswehr inside the country are being eroded step by step. The boundaries between war and peace, military and police, and external and internal security are being deliberately blurred. Terms such as “hybrid threat,” “resilience,” “crisis situation” and “total defence” serve to extend military powers well below the threshold of a formally declared state of tension or defence.

It is precisely in this context that the war legislation set in motion by the Merz-Klingbeil government at the start of July must be understood. The Reserve Strengthening Act is to increase the reserve to at least 200,000 personnel by 2035, in addition to at least 260,000 active soldiers. It removes the right of former soldiers to opt out of reserve service and enables their compulsory call-up. This is explicitly to be possible outside a state of tension or defence as well—for example, in the event of a “hybrid threat situation” or other crisis.

In parallel, the Bundeswehr is beginning a comprehensive registration of former soldiers. Professional qualifications, state of health, contact details and activities in the police, fire service, rescue services and other so-called blue-light organisations are being recorded. Those who fail to report notifiable changes face fines and enforcement measures. At the same time, the compulsory medical examination of young men

from July 2027 is preparing for the reintroduction of conscription. The Homeland Security Division will absorb a substantial proportion of the soldiers forcibly recruited in this way and deploy them militarily within the country.

The Bundeswehr Infrastructure Acceleration Act creates the material basis for this build-up. Barracks, ammunition depots, stores, training areas, logistics centres and military transport routes are to be built on an emergency basis with fewer restrictions on planning, environmental considerations and legal challenges. The revision of the security and contingency legislation is simultaneously to subject transport companies, energy supply, healthcare, administration, industry and the workforce to military planning.

This comprehensive militarisation is being financed with the largest war budget in the history of post-war Germany. The regular defence budget is to rise in 2027 by 32.7 percent, from €82.7 billion to €109.7 billion. Together with the so-called “special fund” and expenditure on Ukraine, the central military items amount to €151.3 billion. In addition, 6,000 new military posts are being created in the coming year alone. By 2030, the regular defence budget is to grow to €183.7 billion.

While hundreds of billions of euros are flowing into tanks, missiles, barracks and armed formations within the country, hospitals are being closed, jobs destroyed, pensions and social benefits attacked, and public infrastructure left to decay. In the draft budget for 2027 alone, the Health Ministry budget is being cut from €21.8 billion to €14.3 billion, whilst the regular defence budget grows by almost €27 billion.

The ruling class knows that this programme cannot be imposed democratically or with the consent of the population. A government that forcibly conscripts young people for a war against the nuclear power Russia, destroys the living standards of the population in the interests of the arms corporations and seeks to rebuild Germany as Europe’s leading military power must inevitably rely on ever more authoritarian and ultimately fascist forms of rule.

War abroad and class war at home are two sides of the same policy. The Homeland Security Division does not merely secure the military hub for the advance against Russia. It is a component of the construction of a comprehensive police and military apparatus that safeguards the war economy and suppresses social opposition.



To contact the WSW and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact