



Kurzinformation

Armed forces - restriction of geographic location

The following brief information answers the question whether members of the German Armed Forces (Bundeswehr) can restrict their service to a particular area or other geographic locations.

In order to increase the attractiveness of service in the German Armed Forces and to form the Bundeswehr to become one of Germany's most attractive employers, the **German Federal Ministry of Defence** initiated the agenda "**Bundeswehr in the Lead – Active/Attractive/Different**" on 30 May 2014.¹ Following the publication of this so-called "Attractiveness Agenda" which contains 29 sub-legislative measures, an omnibus act with 25 measures was adopted as the second pillar of this agenda on 26 February 2015.²

All together, the new sub-legislative arrangements set out in the agenda and the omnibus act formed a package for increasing the forces' attractiveness. Improvements to the old-age provision for temporary career volunteers, amendments to pensions and benefits law relating to career soldiers, and the raising of hardship and post allowances have entered into force. Sub-legislative measures such as coaching for top officers, roaming workplaces and steps to make service-women's and men's career pathways more flexible have been put in motion.

Some of the attractiveness measures were intended to promote the **compatibility of family life and service**. These measures included the extension of opportunities for part-time work, longer periods of time in one post or at one location, and fewer transfers. In implementing these measures, personnel management plays an important role.

¹ **Die Agenda Attraktivität** [The Attractiveness Agenda]. Retrievable in German language from: https://www.bundeswehr.de/portal/a/bwde/start/karriere/bundeswehr_in_fuehrung/ueberblick/!ut/p/z1/04_Sj9CPYkssy0xPLM-nMz0vMAfljo8zinSx8QnyMLI2MTN1CDA0cvb0sTT38g43dfYz1wwkpiAJKG-AAjgb6wSmp-pFAM8xxmuFiph-sH6UflZVYllihV5BfVJKTWqKXmAxvoX5kRmJeSk5qQH6yl0SgIDei3KDCUREAVxE_Ww!!/dz/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/#Z7_B8LTL29225FT10AKJ95HOS3GD6 (last retrieved on 1 November 2017).

² **Gesetz zur Steigerung der Attraktivität des Dienstes in der Bundeswehr** [Act on Increasing the Attractiveness of Service in the German Armed Forces], adopted on 26 February 2015 and effective since 13 May 2015. Retrievable in German language from: <https://www.jurion.de/gesetze/bwattraktstg/> (last retrieved on 1 November 2017).

The **Federal Office of Bundeswehr Personnel Management** is the central authority of the German Armed Forces for recruitment, personnel development and the discharge of personnel.

When appointing personnel the Federal Office of Bundeswehr Personnel Management always **aims at considering the individual wishes of every soldier** (including the wishes to serve in a particular area or at a specific geographic location). The office is informed about these wishes through evaluation reports which are issued by the superiors biannually. Every Bundeswehr soldier has the opportunity to state his/her individual wishes directly in these evaluation reports. Additionally, he/she can address his/her personal wishes during interviews which the superior who is responsible for writing the evaluation report has to conduct at regular intervals.

However, every soldier is aware that **the objective to ensure the armed forces' readiness and effectiveness is finally the decisive criterion** for appointing personnel. As a last consequence, this could – in singular cases – lead to personnel decisions which do not or do not fully consider the soldier's individual wishes.

In conclusion, members of the German armed forces **cannot restrict their service to a particular area or other geographic locations** but can address their personal preferences at several occasions. The personnel management is obligated to seriously consider these wishes and to balance them against the necessity to fill all posts in the best possible manner for the armed forces' readiness and effectiveness.
