



Kurzinformation

German Military Services

On 24 March 2011, the German parliament decided to suspend compulsory military service from 1 July 2011. However, the end of compulsory military service applies only in peacetime, and it can be reactivated in the event of tension or defence. However, article 12a of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany (“Grundgesetz”), according to which every male German citizen “may be obliged to serve in the armed forces, in the Federal Border Guard or in a civil defence association from the age of eighteen”, remains unaffected.

There is still no compulsory military service for women.

Since then, the Bundeswehr has been a volunteer army. Professional (“Berufssoldaten”) and regular (“Zeitsoldaten”) soldiers as well as volunteers do military service in it. As a temporary soldier, women and men aged 17 and over can commit themselves to a service period of between two and 25 years, or as volunteers between seven and 23 months. The model of voluntary military service offers young women and men the opportunity to get to know the troops.

The Bundeswehr currently has a total of around 172,000 professional and regular soldiers and an annual average of around 8,500 volunteers in 2018. A total of 21,600 women serve in the armed forces.

In addition, 90,000 reservists are included in the plans. They are and will be recruited from former soldiers and suitable others as well. The reserve is divided into Troop Reserve, Territorial Reserve and General Reserve. The Troop Reserve strengthens the active units, especially in the case of short-term personnel requirements. The Territorial Reserve performs security and support tasks at home, especially in civil-military cooperation. This relieves the regular units. The General Reserve supplements these with capabilities in the aforementioned tasks. A new strategy for the reserve is currently being drafted. Results should be available by mid-2019.

The Bundeswehr is also one of Germany's largest civilian employers with over 1,000 different professions. The goal is to reach a number of 198,000 soldiers and 61,000 civilian servants and employees by 2024.

Wage increases, benefits and allowances

Regular soldiers can receive a continuation premium according to the needs of the armed forces and the duration of their deployment. In addition, the armed forces offer comprehensive health care, some forms of family allowances, improved supplementary insurance in the statutory pension insurance and old-age provision as well as a health insurance.

The salaries of soldiers and civil servants are similar to those of federal officials. The basic salaries depend on the grade of service and are paid out in various stages in which, for example, criteria such as seniority/experience levels are taken into account. Furthermore, bonuses are paid in individual cases for various tasks.

During the active duty service of the voluntary reservists, the State provides financial compensation for the employers of business enterprises for the given period. The reservist is eligible for a specific salary during the service and other benefits (e. g. travel discount, allowances to the costs of living, etc.).

Future Development

In May 2015, the Federal Ministry of Defence launched an attractiveness enhancement programme ("Bundeswehr in Führung - Aktiv. Attraktiv. Anders." / "Bundeswehr take the lead - Active. Attractive. Different."). The spectrum of measures adopted ranges from better salaries and pensions and easier reconciliation of private life and service to statutory security and reliable working time rules. To this end, the "Act to Increase the Attractiveness of Service in the Bundeswehr" („Gesetz zur Steigerung der Attraktivität des Dienstes in der Bundeswehr“) came into force on 23 May 2015.

This increased the number of professional and regular soldiers by 1,800 in 2016 and another 2,000 in 2017. The aim is to increase the number of Bundeswehr personnel by 13,000 to a total of 198,000 soldiers by 2024.

At the same time, the armed forces will be strategically realigned. Among eight tasks that are basically of equal importance, ranging from disaster relief to foreign missions, the ability to defend the country and the alliance forms the core.

The "White Paper 2016 on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr" ("Weißbuch 2016 zur Sicherheitspolitik und zur Zukunft der Bundeswehr“) of the Federal Government and the capability profile ("Fähigkeitsprofil") of the Bundeswehr from 2018 are the basic pillars for a modernization of the Bundeswehr which should be completed in three steps by 2032.

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