

Universal, selective, and lottery-based: conscription in the Nordic and Baltic states

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The Nordic and Baltic region is currently experiencing a significant expansion of conscription and reserve forces. In addition to accelerated military modernisation and the reinforcement of NATO's north-eastern flank, enhancing mobilisation capacity has emerged as a key element in bolstering the defence capabilities of Nordic and Baltic states in response to an aggressive Russia.

Finland and Estonia are developing their draft-based defence solutions, while Denmark and Norway are increasing the number of conscripts, transforming military service from a recruitment tool for small professional armed forces into a means of rebuilding a trained reserve for wartime mobilisation. Lithuania, Sweden, and Latvia have reintroduced limited conscription in a manner akin to the Danish-Norwegian model. This initiative not only expands the size of their armed forces but also bolsters deterrence by signalling their societies' resolve to defend themselves. Increasing the number of conscripts and reservists aligns with the revitalisation of the concept of total defence, which envisions close cooperation between both the military and civilian sectors.

Universal conscription: Finland and Estonia

In Finland and Estonia, military service is compulsory for men.¹ While most nations in the region transitioned to professional expeditionary forces in the early 21st century, Finland maintained its conscript army, focused on territorial defence, and compulsory military service. This policy was driven by Finland's military traditions, the strong cultural entrenchment of conscription, broad public support, sparse population density (requiring broad citizen involvement in defence), longstanding reliance on independent defence (prior to joining NATO in 2023), and its 1,300 km border with Russia, which has always been perceived by Finns as a potential military threat.² Estonia, which rebuilt its armed forces in the 1990s, largely adopted the Finnish model of conscription and total defence doctrine.³

¹ Except for residents of the Åland Islands – an autonomous and demilitarised territory of Finland.

² P. Szymański, *With Russia right across the border. Finland's security policy*, OSW, Warsaw 2018, osw.waw.pl.

³ T. Kvamldze, *Conscription in Estonia and Georgia: Lessons from and for Small-State Peers*, International Centre for Defence and Security, 23 March 2023, icds.ee.



Unlike Lithuania and Latvia, Estonia retained compulsory service after joining NATO, due to its smaller population and geographical isolation from key allies, which complicated the provision of military aid. Estonia's proximity to the strategic Leningrad Oblast and St. Petersburg, both critical to Russia's military interests, has also influenced this decision. Furthermore, unlike its Baltic neighbours, Estonia did not significantly reduce its defence spending between its NATO accession and Russia's annexation of Crimea (2004–2014).

Conscription enables both nations to sustain significant mobilisation capabilities. Conscripts are trained within units to which they are subsequently assigned as reservists. In Finland, the peacetime armed forces represent only 11% of their wartime strength. In Estonia, the figure is 27%, although this proportion is expected to decrease to around 16% with the envisaged expansion of its reserve force. In light of Russia's vast manpower, Finland and Estonia regard a large, well-trained reserve – which cannot be maintained without universal conscription – as essential.

Despite these similarities, there are differences between the two states' conscription systems. In Finland, the majority of each age cohort is drafted, whereas in Estonia, fewer than half enter compulsory service. The higher deferment rate in Estonia is due to its limited capacity to train larger numbers of conscripts, which is constrained by limited infrastructure, an insufficient number of drill instructors, and the need to host NATO forces, which limits the availability of barracks and training grounds. Estonia also has more professional soldiers per million inhabitants than Finland, a result of its 20 years in NATO, which has necessitated a high-level of interoperability with allied forces, multiple secondments to NATO structures, and participation in out-of-area operations.

Table 1. Conscription and military reserves in Finland and Estonia

	Finland	Estonia
Size of the armed forces (2023)	approx. 31,000	approx. 7,000
Conscripts (2023)	23,304 drafted from a cohort of 31,145 (approx. 75%) Land Forces – 80% Navy – 14% Air Force – 5% Border Guard – 1%	3,635* drafted from a cohort of 9,397 (approx. 40%) <i>[planned 4,000]</i> Land Forces – 75% Navy – 3% others: support, special forces, cyber defence
Women	voluntarily 1,555 in 2024	voluntarily 42 in 2023
Duration of military service	165 days (43% of conscripts), 255 days (14%), 347 days (43%)	8–11 months (from 2023 standardised by levelling up to 11 months)
Training phases	basic (6 weeks) branch (6 weeks) specialised (6 weeks) unit-level (6 weeks)	basic (12 weeks) specialised (6 weeks) unit level (17 weeks) The cycle ends with the large annual Kevadtorm exercise.
Allowances and benefits	yes	yes
Civilian service	yes	yes
Professional soldiers (2023)	8,283	3,514

	Finland	Estonia
Wartime strength	280,000 95% reservists (mainly draftees from the previous 10 years)	26,000 (being increased to 43,700) 90% reservists, including voluntary territorial defence forces
Trained reserves	870,000	34,729 conscripts from the last 10 years – the “hot” reserve plus 40,000 reservists without wartime assignments**
Reserve exercises (2023)	28,000	28,895 (attendance – 65.9%)
Service in the reserves	80–200 days of refresher exercises in reserve until age 50 (officers – until age 60)	6–12 months of refresher exercises 3–6 years after completing the military service – active reserve up to 10 additional years – supplementary reserve (refresher training – twice) up to age 60 – general reserve

* In 2023, as many as 543 conscripts (15%) chose a military career. Usually, this figure ranges between 300 and 350.

** In Estonia, in 2023, the total number of citizens in military register (across various categories) amounted to 288,657 – with males aged 18–60 being liable for national defence obligations.

Source: websites of the ministries of defence and armed forces.

Both Finland and Estonia recognise that a key weakness in their reserve-based defence solutions is the time required to make the political decision to declare mobilisation and subsequently implement it. This issue particularly affects the land forces, which, in peacetime, focus on training conscripts, while the navy and air force are more professionalised. In response to Russia’s war against Ukraine, particularly the full-scale invasion, Finland and Estonia have taken steps to enhance their combat readiness by increasing the frequency and scale of military exercises for reservists. These drills enable them to refresh their skills, test mobilisation capabilities, and demonstrate the will to defend the nation. Currently, both states train approximately 28,000 reservists annually (2023), representing a three-quarter increase for Finland and nearly a fivefold rise for Estonia compared to 2021. Despite this growth, the scale of these exercises in Finland remains relatively modest, considering the size and role of its reserve force.

In Finland, the president has the authority to order immediate reserve exercises in the event of a crisis. Rapid response is further facilitated by the so-called *valmiusyksiköt* – high-readiness units consisting of professional soldiers and conscripts, who, after 5.5 months of advanced training, serve for an additional six months. Estonia stands out for its regular snap reserve exercises (*Okas*), which involve the swift mobilisation of reserve units, up to battalion size, within 48 hours, as opposed to the usual three-month notice. In 2023, three such exercises were conducted, summoning a total of 1,374 reservists, with a turnout rate of 68%.

Both countries also report “non-military” benefits from conscription. Studies indicate that it fosters social capital by reducing exclusion and teaching skills useful in the job market (e.g. driving, medical assistance, logistics, communications, and cybersecurity), while also building friendships. In Finland, conscription helps integrate individuals from migrant backgrounds, while in Estonia, Russian-speaking conscripts (less than 20% of the total) have the opportunity to attend Estonian language courses. In contrast to the previously divided Estonian and Russian-speaking education systems, conscription

now serves as a unifying institution for young people in Estonia.⁴ Compulsory military service enjoys strong public support, with 81% in Finland and 87% in Estonia backing it.⁵

The conscription and reserve systems in Finland and Estonia are not static but are evolving. Both nations are considering the introduction of mandatory service for

” **Finland is debating how to more effectively integrate civilian service into the crisis response system. Estonia is considering various options for extending military service.**

women, driven by the shrinking number of men of conscription age. In Finland, the increasing popularity of alternative civilian service since 2022 presents a challenge. Civilian service is undertaken in various public institutions at central and local levels, religious associations, educational and cultural institutions, healthcare, and care homes. The increasing awareness that war is no longer a hypothetical scenario, and that Finnish reservists could be deployed into combat, is prompting more Finns to opt out of the military reserve. Between January and May 2024, around 2,500 requests for exemption from the reserve were submitted – almost 1,000 more than in all of 2023 – compared to fewer than 1,000 annually in the years preceding the invasion.⁶ Finland is currently debating how to more effectively integrate civilian service into the state’s crisis response system, such as firefighting and rescue services. Similar discussions are taking place in Estonia, where the lack of a well-trained reserve for civil defence tasks has been identified. Additionally, Tallinn is considering various options for extending compulsory military service to up to two years.

Selective and voluntary conscription: Norway and Denmark

Conscription in Norway and Denmark, though *de jure* universal, is effectively selective and voluntary. This means that more individuals apply than there are available positions. After the Cold War, particularly during their involvement in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, Oslo and Copenhagen shifted away from mass armies towards smaller, professional expeditionary forces. However, Norway’s transition was more cautious than that of Denmark or Sweden, due to its proximity to Russia in the High North. Conscription was more than halved, and the mobilisation reserve was neglected.⁷ The draft became primarily a tool for recruiting into the professional service and voluntary territorial defence (TD) forces. This trend was reversed following Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. Both countries are now expanding voluntary conscription to address military personnel shortages, man newly established units, and enhance the operational readiness of their land forces.⁸ They are also rebuilding a reserve force trained for territorial defence and to provide host nation support for allied reinforcements. Norway and Denmark stand out for the significant proportion of female conscripts – 33.2% and 25.1%, respectively. In 2015, Norway became the first NATO country to introduce gender-neutral conscription. Denmark plans to follow suit by 2027.

⁴ E. Lillemäe, K. Kasearu, E. Ben-Ari, ‘Conscription and social transformations: Estonia between security needs and social expectations’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 55(2), 2024, pp. 251–270.

⁵ The growing popularity of military service is evident, with the share of conscripts volunteering for it surpassing 60% in 2023. Volunteers enjoy certain privileges, including the option to choose their branch of service.

⁶ L. Kerkelä, ‘Reserviläiset eroavat joukolla: Ilmiö pakottaa yllättävään uudistukseen’, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 1 July 2024, hs.fi.

⁷ With smaller populations than today, Denmark trained 9,000 and Norway 22,000 conscripts annually in the late 1980s. The number of conscripts and the duration of the military service in both countries is determined by parliament – through cross-party defence agreements (current for 2024–2033) in Denmark, and government military development plans (current for 2025–2036) in Norway.

⁸ *The Norwegian Defence Pledge Long-term Defence Plan 2025–2036*, Ministry of Defence of Norway, 5 April 2024, regjeringen.no; *Danish Defence Agreement 2024–2033*, Ministry of Defence of Denmark, 14 May 2024, fnn.dk.

Table 2. Conscription and military reserves in Norway and Denmark

	Norway	Denmark
Size of the armed forces (2023)	approx. 24,000	approx. 20,000
Conscripts (2023)	9,138 selected out of 26,034 invited for the session* <i>[approx. 13,700 by 2036]</i>	4,717 selected out of up to 40,000 called up for the session** <i>[planned 6,500]</i> lottery in the absence of a sufficient number of volunteers (last time in 2021)
	Land Forces – 49%	Land Forces – 92%
	Navy – 18%	Navy – 4%
	Air Force – 17%	Air Force – 3%
	others: territorial defence (TD), logistics, cyber defence	
Women (2023)	liable 3,037	voluntarily 1,182
Duration of military service	19 months (575 days)	4–8 months (extended to 11 months)
Training phases	general service (12–16 months), including basic training (6–8 weeks) The remaining time for reserve exercises or service in the TD.	basic service (5 months) operational service (6 months)
Allowances and benefits	yes	yes
Civilian service	yes	yes
Professional soldiers (2023)	15,000	16,000
Wartime strength	70,000	no data available (estimated up to 50,000)
Trained reserves	50,000 in active reserve <i>[planned 63,700 by 2036]</i> of which TD (40,500) and reservists with rations (10,000) in addition – 120,000 reservists without wartime assignments	12,000 <i>[planned 18,000]</i> 26 small battalions in addition – 13,300 active TD members (out of more than 43,000 TD troops) A review of the reserve development strategy is underway.
Service in the reserves	a total of several weeks of exercises up to the age of 44	3 months of service for the first 3 years in reserve (drills – 5–8 days annually) higher-rank reservists (a total of 84 days of service under multi-year contracts)

* Invitations are sent after analysing the mandatory questionnaires completed by all 17-year-olds.

** Summons for the session (medical examination and written test) are sent to all 18-year-olds, but attendance for women is not mandatory.

Source: websites of the ministries of defence and armed forces.

In Norway, the proportion of conscripts serving in the land forces is expected to rise. The army is expanding from one to three brigades, with one designed as a cadre-based reserve wartime unit. Norway is also extending the number of conscripts serving the full 16 months, aiming to maximise the use of their skills and more effectively address personnel shortages. To this end, the best-trained conscripts, having completed the 19-month service limit, are being offered temporary contracts.

More extensive reforms to conscription are underway in Denmark, which, since the late 1990s, has most radically shifted its armed forces towards participating in out-of-area operations. After the conclusion of the mission in Afghanistan and Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, Denmark faced challenges in adapting to NATO's renewed emphasis on collective defence. Initial political decisions in 2018 to increase the number of conscripts and extend their service were met with reluctance by the military, which viewed them as additional costs and burdens. It was only after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine that attitudes shifted towards recognising conscription as a key driver for strengthening the Danish land forces, where almost all conscript training takes place.

Denmark's new conscription model is designed to rapidly increase the army's capacity, enabling it to field a reinforced expeditionary brigade on NATO's eastern flank,

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utilising the capabilities of the 1st Brigade (one of two). During the six-month operational phase of their military service, conscripts will perform tasks alongside professional soldiers within the ranks of the 1st Brigade. This includes roles in light infantry, logistics, and transport, with future plans for them to operate newly acquired ground-based air defence systems. Additionally, conscripts can voluntarily be deployed outside Denmark for collective defence missions (e.g. in the Baltic states). The 1st Brigade can also quickly call upon trained reservists from the so-called mobilisation companies. Conscripts who have completed the extended eight-month training can sign up for these companies. These reservists remain on standby for five years and, in the event of a crisis, can be mobilised for up to 180 days.

Both Norway and Denmark face challenges in expanding conscription and their reserves, particularly in ensuring sufficient armament and military equipment for training and wartime posture. Given the plans to significantly increase the number of conscripts, the future of voluntary enlistment remains uncertain. A return to a lottery-based draft cannot be ruled out if volunteer numbers fall short. Additionally, the gender-neutral conscription necessitates robust anti-harassment policies as more women join the ranks. Voluntary conscription enjoys strong public support in both countries. The rigorous recruitment process lends prestige to military service and offers an advantage in the job market.

Lottery and other solutions: Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden

Latvia abandoned conscription in 2006, and Lithuania suspended it two years later, both opting to develop fully professional armed forces. Accession to NATO in 2004 provided a sense of security, and their armies aligned with the doctrinal changes of their Western allies, focusing on enhancing capacities for participation in crisis response operations.

Militarily non-aligned Sweden – once renowned for its Cold War total defence model and policy of armed neutrality – began to benefit from the so-called peace dividend following the collapse of the USSR and Finland's departure from Moscow's sphere of influence in the late 1990s. Stockholm then drastically reduced the size of its armed forces and defence spending, prioritising professionalisation and ensuring Sweden's contribution to global security, notably through involvement in multinational crisis response operations within the framework of the UN, EU, or NATO. The suspension of conscription in 2010 – a step not taken by any of its Nordic neighbours – was in line with this approach.

In response to Russia's aggressive policy and the need to reinforce homeland defence, Lithuania (2015), Sweden (2017), and Latvia (2022) reinstated conscription. While the draft is universal in principle, it is selective in practice. These countries rely on voluntary participation, aiming to minimise coercion and attract motivated citizens.

In Lithuania and Latvia, this move was accompanied by a heated debate. Those in favour of conscription pointed to military personnel shortages, the lack of trained reserves, and the poor level of defence preparedness among the population. Conscription was presented as a factor integrating all citizens and as a signal to the Kremlin, demonstrating the will to defend the country. One of the key factors was the growing popularity of the Nordic concept of total defence. Opponents of conscription focused on budgetary, infrastructural, and training capacity issues (such as the need to recruit additional military instructors) as well as demographic constraints (a declining number of people reaching conscription age). Ethical concerns were raised about the coercive nature of conscription and the potentially lower training quality of reservists compared to professional soldiers. Economic difficulties were also cited, both at the individual level (a delayed career start) and at the broader level (the exacerbation of labour market issues due to workforce shortages).⁹ There were also fears of increased emigration to evade the draft and the potential for a wave of renunciations of citizenship among called-up emigrants.

By reinstating conscription, Vilnius opted for a fast-track approach – it took only six months from the decision (February 2015) to the first call-ups (August). By 2016,

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around 3,000 conscripts had already been called. This move was endorsed, albeit reluctantly at first, by the same defence minister who had suspended compulsory military service eight years earlier. The reinstatement of conscription, coupled with a dynamic increase in defence spending and accelerated military modernisation, aimed to signal Lithuania’s readiness to defend itself, as well as to address significant shortages of lower-rank military personnel. The majority of draftees volunteer for military service, with the remainder selected by lottery from those of conscription age.

Riga, on the other hand, acted only after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022. This ‘draft procrastination’ was influenced not only by the fear of increasing the presence of Russian speakers in the armed forces (Russian is the first language for more than a third of the population), but also by the long-term consequences of the 2008 financial crisis and the degradation of Latvia’s military capabilities, which were impacted by sharper defence cuts than in other countries in the region (the defence budget was halved at the time). Consequently, Riga’s priority after 2014 was to rearm and reequip the land forces, as well as to expand the voluntary territorial defence force (currently 10,000 members). Latvia decided to gradually and cautiously develop its conscription programme, with full implementation by 2027. This approach was driven by significant societal polarisation. Opinion polls initially showed an even split between supporters and opponents of reintroducing conscription, though today, proponents prevail – accounting for almost two-thirds of the population.¹⁰ The first conscripts entered the barracks in July 2023 and January 2024 – 253 and 125 volunteers, respectively. However, ambitions were greater, as 1,000 people had been expected to volunteer.

The Swedish case was different, as the reinstatement of conscription (suspended in 2010) occurred after only seven years, without a broader public debate. The government did not highlight reasons related to external threats or a manpower crisis in the armed forces, instead portraying the new military service as modern and progressive. This approach successfully garnered support from the majority of Swedes.¹¹ This was achieved by emphasising voluntarism, professional development, and

⁹ T. Jermalavičius, ‘Reinstating conscription in Lithuania: bringing society back into defence?’ [in:] A. Sprūds, M. Andžāns (eds.), *Security in the Baltic Sea Region: Realities and Prospects*, Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2017, pp. 33–53.

¹⁰ Supporters predominated among Latvian-speaking citizens, while opinions were more divided among Russian speakers. Semigallia had the strongest pro-conscription sentiment, while Latgale exhibited the weakest. See M. Andžāns, ‘The First Year of Conscription in Latvia’, Foreign Policy Research Institute, 20 May 2024, fpri.org.

¹¹ S. Strand, ‘The Reactivation and Reimagination of Military Conscription in Sweden’, *Armed Forces & Society*, 18 April 2023, after: journals.sagepub.com.

gender neutrality. Additionally, conscription was reinvented as selective and limited (unlike its Cold War predecessor), encompassing initially around 4,000 draftees annually. Unlike in Denmark and Norway, military service has not gained the same level of popularity among young people in Sweden. In 2023, volunteers made up only 16% of those conscripted.¹²

Table 3. Conscription and military reserves in Lithuania, Latvia, and Sweden

	Lithuania	Latvia	Sweden
Size of the armed forces (2023)	approx. 15,000	approx. 8,000	approx. 35,000
Conscripts (2023)	3,781 drafted out of a cohort of 27,000 <i>[target – 7,000]</i>	378 <i>[target – 4,000 from 2028]</i>	7,310 selected out of 36,000 called up for the session* <i>[target – 10,000 from 2030]</i> Land Forces – 57% Navy – 17% Air Force – 11%
Women	voluntarily	voluntarily	liable 1,201 (2023)
Duration of military service	9 months	11 months	9–15 months
Training phases	no data available	initial (3 months) specialised (3 months) unit-level (5 months)**	basic (3 months)
Allowances and benefits	yes	yes	yes
Civilian service	yes	yes	yes
Professional soldiers (2023)	12,000	7,345	15,969 plus 11,732 soldiers on contract
Wartime strength	over 40,000, including 28,000 in active reserve with wartime assignments (with 5,400 members of the territorial defence, TD)	no data available <i>[target – 61,000]</i> consisting of 31,000 peacetime forces (professionals, TD, conscripts, active reserve) and 30,000 in mobilisation reserves	88,000 (including territorial defence – 22,145) <i>[target – 130,000 from 2035]</i>
Trained reserves	100,000	38,000	no data available
Reserve exercises	2,600 soldiers (2023) doubling by 2025	no data available	3,000 soldiers (2023) reinstated in 2015
Service in the reserves	20–60 days of refresher exercises within 10 years after military service	Those trained are first transferred to the active reserve with higher readiness, and then to the general reserve.	The majority receive refresher training twice, up to the age of 47 (up to 34 days annually).

* From a conscription-age cohort of over 100,000.

** There are alternative forms of service: a five-year contract with the territorial defence forces (28 days of training annually) and military training for university students.

Source: websites of the ministries of defence and armed forces.

¹² 'Så här många inskrivnatill värnplikt kommer från din kommun', Plikt- och prövningsverket, 15 November 2023, via.tt.se.

Lithuania's conscription and reserve system is undergoing reform, aimed at rapidly rebuilding the military reserves for the planned three-brigade land forces (including one reserve cadre-based brigade) and boosting recruitment into the professional component, where growth has slowed. In June 2024, the parliament introduced more flexibility into the military service, allowing it to be shortened from nine to six months, offering various options for students, and attracting graduates with rare specialisations for a short three-month draft. Another significant change is the extension of service in the active reserve from 10 to 15 years, increasing the reserve force to 47,000. Conscription in Lithuania enjoys broad public support, with 63% of respondents favouring the introduction of mandatory universal service.

It is too early to assess Latvia's conscription programme, as it is still in its early stages. Like Lithuania, Latvia hopes that a significant portion of conscripts will volunteer. However, initial experiences have not been promising, as interest remains low. This summer, 69 conscripts had to be drafted by lottery, while only 390 volunteered. Improvements are also needed in the training exercises for reserve soldiers, as they do not receive sufficient refresher training.

Sweden is working to restore elements of its total defence system, which was dismantled after the Cold War. The gradual enlargement of conscription is a key component of this process. Without the successful implementation of its conscription programme, Sweden will face challenges in meeting personnel demands of its expanding land forces, which aim to increase to four brigades.

Conclusions and outlook

Since 2014, the Nordic and Baltic region has served as a testing ground for various forms of conscription. The lessons learned from Russia's invasion of Ukraine highlight the crucial role a trained reserve plays in sustaining forces during a prolonged conflict.

Two distinct visions for conscription coexist in the region: the citizen-soldier (e.g. Finland) and the volunteer-soldier (e.g. Norway). In the first model, military service is a civic duty required of all men, while the second emphasises individual choice, personal development, and increasingly women's participation in national defence. In countries with lottery-based conscription, such as Lithuania, these approaches merge. In the near future, the focus in the region will likely remain on strengthening the volunteer-soldier model – drafting motivated individuals and making military service more attractive, prioritising quality over quantity. However, in the long term, plans to increase the number of conscripts may lead to a situation where voluntary enlistment is insufficient, and some individuals will receive compulsory draft notices. This could spark discussions about universal military service (citizen-soldier) and female conscription.

The importance of rehearsal exercises will continue to grow, ensuring that reserve cadre-based units remain adequately trained and ready for mobilisation. Additionally, the demand for armament and military equipment to support wartime structures will increase.

Discussions around conscription are also taking place in Poland and Germany, driven by a lack of adequately trained reservists, the need to address personnel gaps among professional soldiers (especially in Germany), and plans to expand land forces with new units (particularly in Poland). Both countries, which have relatively large regular forces, have so far favoured voluntary military engagement. In Poland, the introduction of voluntary basic military service (DZSW) in 2022 has successfully met the military's recruitment needs, attracting significant interest. This year, more than 40,000 volunteers are expected to undergo training.¹³

¹³ The service begins with a 27-day basic training. After that, one can either move to the passive reserve or enter an 11-month specialist training phase. Upon completing full military service (DZSW), soldiers can choose a professional military career, serve in the territorial defence, or join the active reserve, which trains either once a quarter for at least two days or once every three years for a single 14-day drill.

In Germany, where voluntary military service (FWD) is already available, there has been no political consensus within the ruling coalition to reinstate mandatory military service, despite initial proposals from the defence ministry. The debate highlighted infrastructural shortcomings and a reluctance to employ coercion. Ultimately, a new military service solution, modelled after the Scandinavian approach, will be introduced in 2025. Initially, Germany plans to train 5,000 people annually.