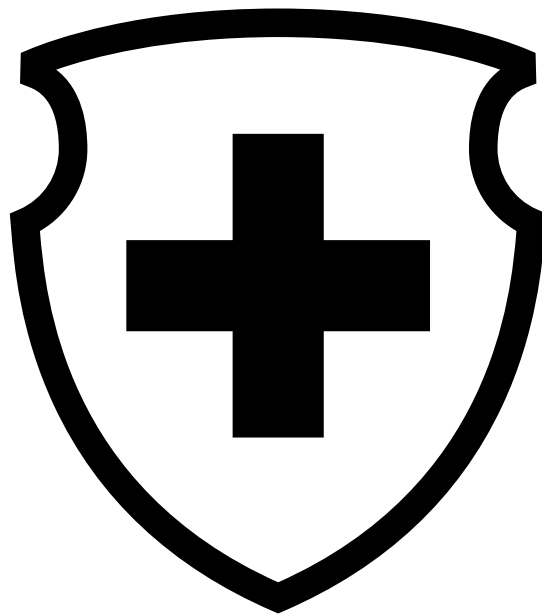




**THE SWISS
ARMED FORCES**

DEFEND



STRONG
DEFENCE,
THE BEST
DETERRENT.

On the state of the Swiss Armed Forces as we enter a new era.



Online Dossier:



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Foreword

«Time is of the essence»

The geopolitical situation has changed fundamentally. We have reached a turning point. The current rules-based security order is under massive pressure. Russia is waging a conventional war in Europe, while at the same time disinformation, influence operations and cyberattacks are on the rise. Switzerland is not an island – not geographically and not in terms of security.

The new reality forces us to question previous certainties. For a long time, we believed that defence was a theoretical scenario. Today we know that only those who can credibly demonstrate that they are prepared to defend themselves can protect themselves against blackmail, destabilisation and military threats. Switzerland is no exception.

The Armed Forces has a plan for restoring its defence capabilities. It will do what is necessary, but it needs planning security.

My manifesto analyses the current state of the Swiss Armed Forces, identifies shortcomings and shows ways in which we can restore our defence capability in good time. But it also shows clearly that it's not just a matter of a lack of resources. Above all, it's a lack of time.

Lieutenant General Thomas Süssli
Chief of the Armed Forces



Our Armed Forces today



Departure from national defence as a turning point

On 16 December 2003, the official launch event for Armed Forces XXI took place at the ice hockey arena in Bern. During the ceremony, Federal Councillor Samuel Schmid symbolically presented General Henri Guisan's personal pennant to Lieutenant General Christophe Keckeis, the first Chief of the Armed Forces.

Looking back, the Armed Forces XXI reform in 2004 marked a turning point in the history of the Swiss Armed Forces. For the first time, the Armed Forces's core mission was no longer to defend the country, but primarily to support the civilian authorities. This meant a shift in focus towards what were considered the most likely missions at the time. **Under Armed Forces XXI, national defence was to be retained merely as a competence.** The concept on which the Armed Forces were based was 'Security through cooperation', the motto of the underlying Security Policy Report 2000. This meant internal cooperation to ward off threats to internal security and external cooperation to contribute to international security.

The Armed Forces have fulfilled the tasks assigned to them by politicians

The Armed Forces have successfully carried out all kinds of missions. They have fulfilled countless civil support services to assist the civilian authorities in protecting conferences and embassies, in the field of migration and in managing the COVID-19 pandemic. They have also provided spontaneous assistance during natural disasters, evacuating people within hours or days, building temporary bridges and repairing damage with heavy equipment. They have provided a wide range of support services at a range of sporting events of national importance. **All assignments and services were carried out without any major incidents and to the complete satisfaction of the respective authorities.**

Every year around 400 volunteers fulfil the third mission of the Armed Forces: Peacekeeping. They make internationally recognised contributions to stability in the Balkans and in Africa, as well as serving as UN military observers around the world.

Defence competence maintained

Defence training and instruction have continued in recent years, both in officer training and in recruit schools and refresher courses. However, within the Armed Forces, the need to strengthen defence capabilities only came to the fore again with the publication of the 'Black Book' in August 2023. Since then, large-scale troop exercises have been taking

place regularly in Switzerland and, more recently, abroad. Last year, the Air Force successfully tested its decentralisation capability by landing aircraft on the A1 motorway.

These exercises demonstrate that expertise in the field of defence has been maintained.

The TRIAS 25 exercise also showed that our Armed Forces need not fear comparison with the armed forces of other countries. The Swiss Armed Forces were able to establish operational readiness for defence after a few months of mission-oriented training just like other armed forces.

Military training is once again recognised by the private sector

The Armed Forces train more than 20,000 Swiss citizens every year, including around 3,000 officers. **Armed Forces cadre training is more popular in the private sector than it has been for a long time.** It is highly commended by many well-known companies, and civilian institutions and crisis management teams are showing increasing interest in the Armed Forces' crisis management training. As such, the Armed Forces is contributing to the economy's resilience and that of critical infrastructures.

Years of austerity have had a profound impact on equipment

This renewed popularity distracts public attention from the actual state of the Armed Forces' equipment. Since the end of the Cold War, military spending has steadily declined as a share of the federal budget, falling from around 16% to 6% today. At the same time the Armed Forces have also made drastic savings. **Conservative estimates put the peace dividend at over CHF 40 billion, with the NZZ even citing figures of around CHF 140 billion.**

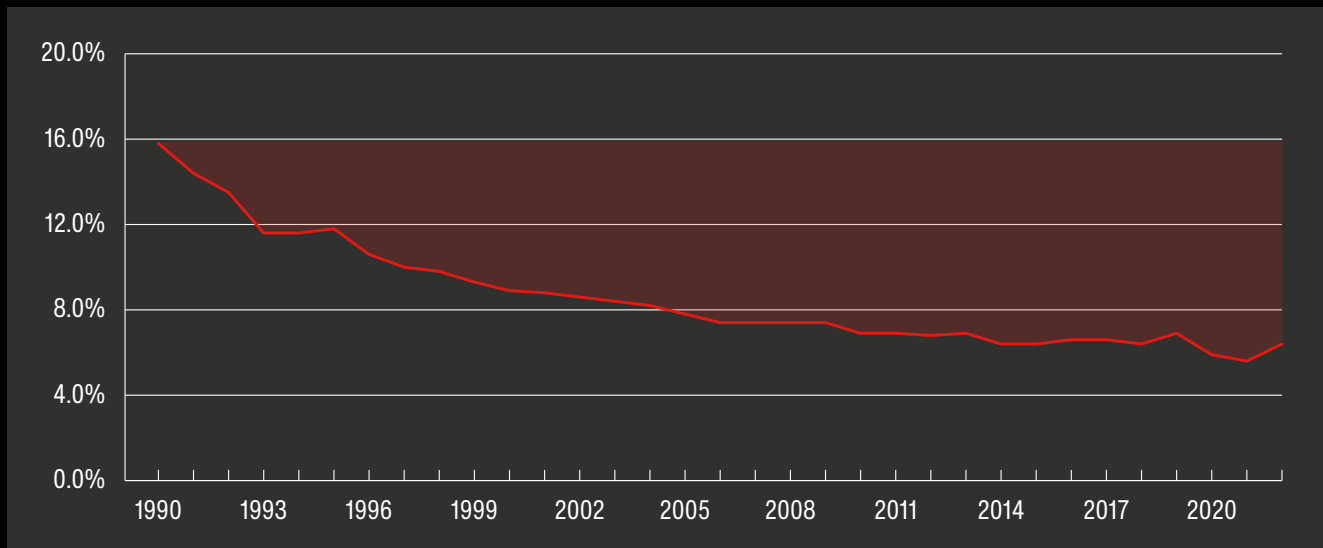
Whatever the case, the consequences are far-reaching. War logistics have been abandoned, and logistics have been organised according to economic principles. The ageing matériel is becoming more and more expensive to maintain. Some systems, such as the M109 self-propelled howitzer and the M113 armoured personnel carriers, have been retained solely to avoid losing artillery completely. These systems and their military usefulness are viewed with scepticism, particularly by the troops. They have not yet been replaced for financial reasons.

Furthermore, the new acquisitions have not been sufficient to fully equip all units. **At present, only one third of the troops can be fully equipped for defence.** Current ammunition stocks are geared towards training. For all these reasons, it must be acknowledged that,

depending on the adversary and the scenario, **Switzerland would only be able to defend itself for a few weeks.**

Armed Forces expenditure as a share of the federal budget in per cent

The cumulated peace dividend amounts to around CHF 140 billion



Armed Forces expenditure as a share of federal budget — © VBS/DDPS, Defence Sector

Defence capabilities limited by financial constraints

In terms of finances, the Armed Forces face three major obstacles. Firstly, operating costs are rising due to ageing systems and the increase in the number of systems. At the same time, Parliament has also imposed operational cost-cutting measures.

Secondly, there is currently a significant gap between the commitments made and the financial resources allocated. According to current financial planning, payment for new major purchases will only be possible from 2028 onwards.

Finally, the third challenge concerns the financial resources required to fully equip the current Armed Forces, which amount to nearly CHF 40 billion for equipment and CHF 10 billion for ammunition and spare parts. These figures are not new. They were announced shortly after the introduction of Armed Forces XXI, when there was talk of ramp-up, i.e. returning from maintaining competence to restoring defence capability.

Internal Armed Forces planning shows an immediate need for CHF 13 billion to restore minimum defence capabilities. These calculations date from 2023. In the meantime, international demand, inflation and delivery times have increased significantly. Before the war, the price of tank ammunition, for example, was USD 1,200 per shell, today it is over USD 7,400.

Shortfall in capability to defend against threats from the air

In addition to ageing and inadequate systems, there are serious gaps in certain areas of capability. **In particular, Switzerland still has no defence against ballistic missiles, cruise missiles or drones.** However, these types of threats have grown significantly in recent years. In the Middle East and in Ukraine, the population is under daily threat from long-range weapons.

The new air defence system, which will consist of the new F-35 fighter aircraft, the Patriot long-range ground-to-air defence system and the IRIS-T medium-range ground-to-air defence system, will be introduced from 2028 onwards. Only then will we be able to effectively protect our population and infrastructure against threats from the air. In addition, defence systems against larger drones and low-altitude cruise missiles will only be acquired from the early 2030s onwards.

Loss of Land Forces narrowly averted

Many European armed forces are currently evaluating and acquiring new heavy equipment, including battle tanks. This is the case in Germany, Poland, Sweden, Italy, Hungary and the UK, among others. Land forces remain the only and often the ultimate decisive means of defence. **If parts of the country were to be occupied, only the Land Forces would be able to recapture them.**

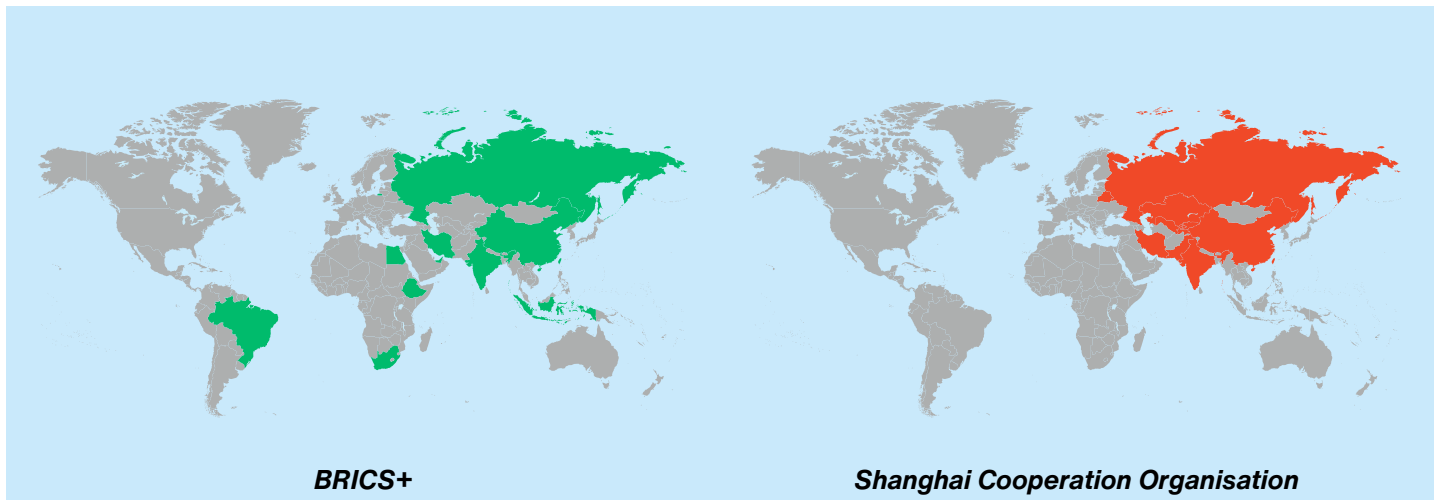
In its Report on the Future of Land Forces published in 2019, the Armed Forces stated that many of the ground-based systems would reach the end of their service life by 2030. Without a timely replacement project, capability gaps would inevitably arise, and the Land Forces would no longer be operational as an integrated system. In the Armed Forces Dispatch 2024 the Federal Council and Parliament set out the course for the development of the Armed Forces over the coming years.

The decision to initially address the major shortcomings of the Armed Forces on the ground, in the air and in cyberspace has made it possible to include acquisitions in the

2025 Armament Programme to renew the artillery and keep at least some of the main battle tank 87s until the 2030s. By then, we will also have a clearer picture of the options for a replacement system.

A new era has begun

From the rules-based order to a multipolar world



The FDFA already referred to 'a new era' in its 2021 Foreign Policy Report. The report was published on 2 February 2022, three weeks before Russia's attack on Ukraine, in violation of international law, and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's historic speech in response to the invasion. The FDFA used the phrase in reference to the fact that more and more countries were questioning the rules-based security order and calling for a new multipolar world order, a world in which the major powers would set the rules among themselves.

These countries are led by China which – while respecting the UN Charter – asserts that under the current order, only one country – the United States – sets the rules without following them itself. China is trying to rally the Global South to its side with organisations such as BRICS+ and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

War in Ukraine as a wake-up call for Europe's security

In a geopolitical context, it is sometimes said that if China is the climate, then Russia is the weather, or at least a violent storm. Russia's war against Ukraine marks a turning point and has led to a significant deterioration in the security situation in Europe. **The Armed Forces must align themselves with the threat in accordance with their mission. The threat is the product of military potential and the intention to use it against us.**

Military potential is easy to observe but takes years to develop. Intentions, on the other hand, can change quickly, as recent history has shown. All around Switzerland, military potential has increased and continues to grow. Various European intelligence services, analysts and even defence ministers are expressing concern that the conflict with Russia could escalate further. Such an escalation is frequently seen as a possibility from 2028 onwards.

A military technology revolution and its consequences

General Mark Milley, former Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff believes that we are currently witnessing the greatest revolution in military technology ever seen. These changes are being driven by the use of drones, robotics, artificial intelligence and the digitalisation of the battlefield. **The battlefield has become transparent and kinetic effects can be achieved further, faster and with greater precision. We can reach anything we see, and now we can see everything.** New technology does not replace existing technology but rather makes it even more dangerous. **It is not a question of choosing between drones and mechanised forces, but of engaging them jointly.**

Innovation cycles have become shorter. In Ukraine, they last between eight and twelve weeks, whereas in Switzerland, traditional procurement cycles take seven to twelve years. **On the battlefield, technology, agility and innovation are now as important as firepower, mobility and logistics.**

Drones are changing the nature of war

While the importance of armed drones was already becoming apparent in the Nagorno-Karabakh war, in Syria and at the beginning of the war in Ukraine, commercially available, off-the-shelf drones are causing the real disruption. **A veritable technology war is being waged to develop and defend against drones.**

The impact on the course of the war is considerable. Drones brought Ukraine's 2023 summer offensive to a halt and led to the withdrawal from Kursk. Today, drones are transforming a 15km-strip of land on both sides of the front line into a death zone.

But drones can also be used to destroy positions and prevent operations deep behind enemy lines. In particular, it is virtually impossible to repel the latest generation of drones controlled by fibre optic cables. **As a result, command and control forces and facilities must be smaller, dispersed, well camouflaged and constantly on the move.**

A hybrid war is still war

There is no standard definition of 'hybrid warfare'. That is perhaps what makes it so dangerous. Indeed, the concept of hybridity should not obscure the fact that the intentions behind it are the same as those of conventional warfare: **A hybrid war is also about asserting one's own interests on another state**, or, in the words of Carl von Clausewitz, a Prussian general and military theorist, to impose one's own will.

Europe, and Switzerland too, is already the target of targeted disinformation and influence operations. **According to the director of the Federal Intelligence Service, we are already in a hybrid war.** Numerous cyberattacks are being carried out against the economy and even against critical infrastructures. While cyberattacks in the form of ransomware are well known, this is not the case with espionage and the preparation of acts of sabotage.

In Europe, numerous acts of sabotage with Russian involvement have been reported. When Belarus transported large numbers of Syrian refugees to the Polish border, the EU declared this a tactic of hybrid warfare. In an initial phase, the aim of the attacker is to remain below the threshold of armed conflict, but the defender should not underestimate the danger. **It should never be forgotten that a hybrid conflict can escalate into conventional warfare at any time.**

Demonstrating in a credible manner that we are prepared to defend our sovereignty

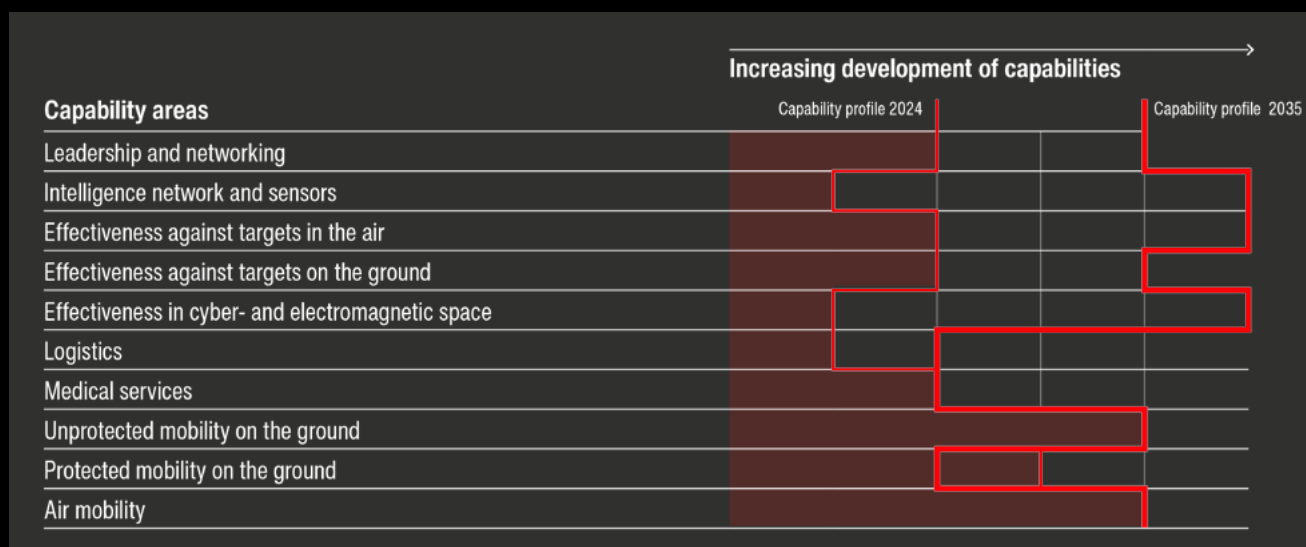
As things stand, the determining outlook for the future is of a divided and destabilised Europe. Even if Switzerland is unlikely to be directly involved in an armed conflict at present, one thing is certain: a new era has begun. **The world will never be the same again. We must credibly demonstrate that we are prepared to defend our sovereignty, whether on the ground, in the air or in cyberspace.**

The public would not understand why such a scenario had not been considered in advance and why no appropriate measures had been taken. Let us not forget that **the Armed Forces are Switzerland's last line of defence.**

The path to timely defence capability

Capability profile

Current capability profile 2024 (highlighted) and the capability profile aspired to by 2035 (continuous line)



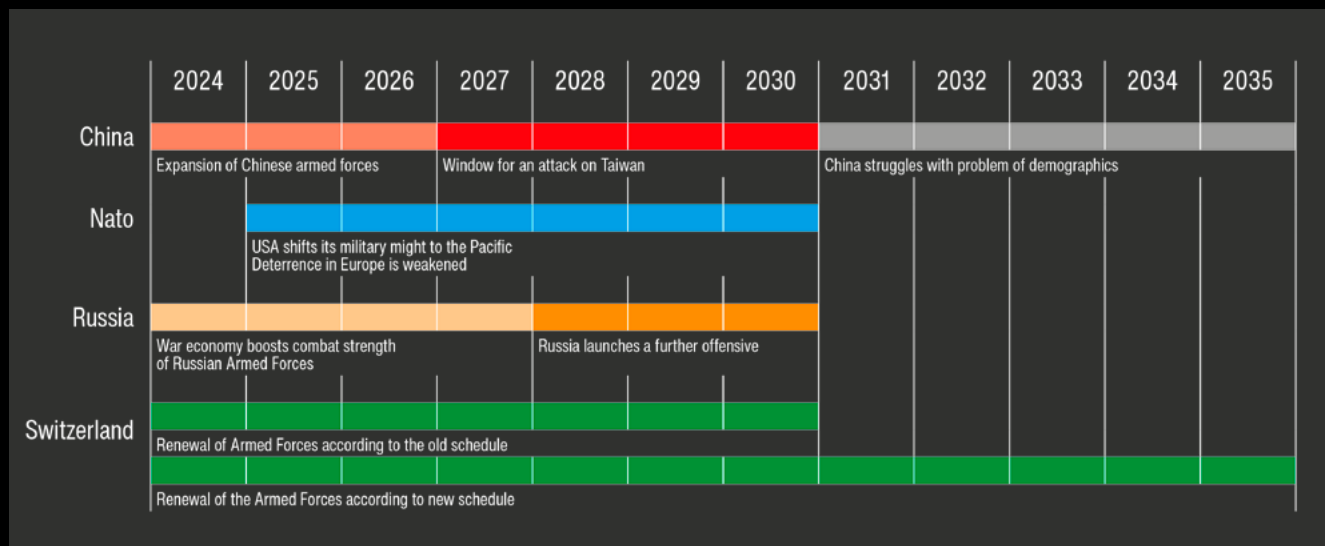
Targets for 2040 and immediate measures

The current organisation of the Armed Forces still dates from Armed Forces XXI in 2004, although it was adapted with the further development of the Armed Forces in 2018. **Over the next two years, the Armed Forces will define new objectives for 2040. These will lay the foundations for the development of doctrine, organisation, training, equipment and personnel.** These objectives will have to take technological developments into account.

They will be implemented gradually and in an adaptive manner. At the same time, as an immediate measure, the current Armed Forces must be equipped for defence. And I mean properly equipped. It is inconceivable that two thirds of militia personnel cannot be properly equipped or supplied with the ammunition they need to fulfil the Armed Forces' defence mission. This immediate measure must not, however, prejudice any decision on the future orientation of the Armed Forces.

Adaptive development faster than major reforms

How war could draw closer to Switzerland



Source: NZZ, 16 January 2024

Since 1995, all reforms of the Armed Forces have resulted in a reduction in personnel and capabilities. Based on the existing state of the Armed Forces, decisions were made on what the next, smaller version of the Armed Forces should look like, retaining what was necessary and decommissioning what was no longer needed.

The challenge today is different. With necessary investments in the order of forty billion francs and annual investments amounting to two to three billion francs, it is not possible to implement a reform by a specific deadline. **Building up the Armed Forces for defence will take years, even decades.** It must therefore occur gradually. The same applies with regard to military technology. The exponential pace of technological change means that new equipment must also be rolled out gradually.

The Armed Forces have already demonstrated that they are capable of developing progressively without the need for major reforms, whether in establishing Cyber Command on 1 January 2024 or the upcoming reorganisation of the Air Force planned for 1 January 2026. The Armed Forces will have to continue along the same path, adapting to technological challenges and modifying structures in an adaptive and gradual manner.

Innovation and technology determine success on the battlefield

Innovation does not come about at headquarters or in research laboratories. It must be able to emerge anywhere and at any time. **With more than 140,000 personnel, the Armed Forces are home to the country's largest think tank, and it is precisely within the ranks of the troops that innovation must take place.** The difference between innovation and just a good idea is that it brings tangible benefits to the troops.

Financial scope must be created for innovation alongside traditional procurement. The framework conditions for collaboration with start-ups must be simplified. That is the only way to keep pace with exponential technological developments and reap the benefits of innovation on the battlefield. armasuisse is currently running a Drones Task Force on behalf of the Armed Forces, with the aim of developing a combat drone system for Switzerland.

The advantages are obvious. **Switzerland is at the cutting edge of drone technology. These systems are inexpensive to manufacture and highly accurate. These factors are crucial for the Armed Forces as a defender in its own territory.**

The F-35 changes the game in our favour

The three-year evaluation of a new fighter jet for Switzerland resulted in a clear winner. The F-35 was the aircraft that best met the requirements and offered the best value for money. There was therefore only one option. Although the requirements were originally formulated for a fourth-generation fighter aircraft, the F-35, a fifth-generation aircraft, clearly prevailed in the evaluation. Its stealth capabilities (very low radar signature) are a decisive advantage in air combat. Simulations have shown that it is 20 times superior to fourth-generation fighter jets.

The range and precision of its sensors enable it to engage targets at long range and even beyond visual range. Thanks to the combination of different sensors, the F-35 is in fact an early warning and information gathering system similar to a mini-AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System). It is capable of delivering a recognised air picture, which serves as a basis for the early detection and defence against cruise missiles and drones.

The development of the F-35 is an international project involving eight partner states, including Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. **With more than 800 aircraft planned, the F-35 will be the most widely used fighter aircraft in Europe.** It is constructed in the USA, Italy and Japan. **In addition to eight aircraft produced in the USA, Switzerland will also receive 28 aircraft from European production.**

The Swiss procurement includes logistics that should allow the fleet to operate autonomously for at least six months, even when borders are closed. **The assessment and discussions with European air forces have also confirmed that there is no 'kill switch'** (see DDPS correction 'Switzerland can deploy the F-35A and the Patriot system independently' dated 7 March 2025).

Infrastructure and real estate needs have increased

After the outbreak of war in Ukraine, the Armed Forces Command suspended the sale and decommissioning of combat and command infrastructure. These facilities are indispensable, not only for combat operations, logistics and command support, but above all for troop training and accommodation. During recruit training the Armed Forces's buildings and facilities are fully utilised. **Any site closure would entail replacement investments totalling millions of francs.** However, that money urgently needs to be invested in defence capabilities.

The days when there were valuable properties at prime locations that could be sold off are long gone. On the contrary, in recent years maintenance on many facilities has often been neglected, resulting in major renovation work costing hundreds of millions of francs.

No effective defence without combat service support

War logistics was abandoned with the introduction of Armed Forces XXI. It was replaced by a system of five armed forces logistics centres, each with high-bay warehouses operated on business management principles. Since then, the Armed Forces Logistics Organisation (AFLO) has managed to provide the increasingly scarce and ageing material for training purposes in a timely manner. Structures and processes have been optimised for this purpose. At the same time, mobilisation concepts have been developed and practised as part of the further development of the Armed Forces.

What is lacking today, however, is **combat service support** – protected means of transport and troops that bring ammunition and supplies from underground depots to combat troops, as well as the mission-critical information and logistics systems required for this. The AFLO is currently drawing up a corresponding concept, which should be available before the end of the year.

New digitalisation platform a prerequisite for winning the battle

The core process of every armed force is the sensor-to-shooter loop, which involves gathering information from different domains (including air, ground and cyberspace) and using it to create a picture of the situation in order to achieve rapid and precise effects.

In battle, it is a matter of 'kill or be killed' or the fastest wins. That is only possible with the help of digitalisation.

Switzerland has the advantage that when it fights, it is to defend its own territory. We also make use of this advantage in the digital sphere. We have an extremely secure and robust IT and communications infrastructure, which includes two fully protected data centres, other data centres scattered throughout the country and the Swiss command network.

The troop's IT and communications systems are hosted in these infrastructures. All of these components are combined under the New Digitalisation Platform (NDP). It will be operational from July 2026. The first mission-critical applications are already installed and operational. The project is on track.

International cooperation strengthens autonomous defence capability



Exchanges with other Armed Forces are essential and directly strengthen the defence capabilities of our Armed Forces. First and foremost, it is about the transfer of knowledge. Even with a vastly superior budget, the Armed Forces would never be able to do everything itself in a timely manner. The Armed Forces and armasuisse are required by lawmakers and the Swiss Federal Audit Office to procure standard and not specifically Swiss solutions.

NATO standards are to military technology what ISO standards are to industry. Even European procurement programmes comply with these standards, whether for aircraft, air defence or information and command systems. This principle also offers opportunities. By exchanging information with our partners, we can gain valuable knowledge, optimise system rollouts and avoid mistakes.

The second aspect of this cooperation concerns training opportunities. Training ground troops at training areas abroad allows them to gain experience that would otherwise not be possible in Switzerland. What has long applied to the air force and special forces is all the more relevant for the Land Forces and the infantry. **Switzerland has no training grounds for combat exercises in an urban environment. Nor do we have training grounds for mecha-**

nised troops. The TRIAS 25 exercise in Allentsteig, Austria, highlighted the usefulness of such exchanges.

Thirdly, it is also about creating options for the Federal Council in the event of a conflict. If Switzerland were to be attacked, it would be released from its obligation of neutrality meaning that the Federal Council could decide to establish cooperation arrangements. Cooperation between armed forces is based on interoperability, i.e. harmonised processes, structures, standards and even systems. However, establishing interoperability takes years. That is why we adopt standards, purchase standard systems and adapt our processes and structures where necessary.

Deterrence: an old term with new relevance



During the Cold War, deterrence was a concept deeply rooted in Swiss security policy. The aim was to deter any potential adversary from acting against Switzerland. It was a matter of demonstrating credibly that our country was capable of defending itself so that it would not have to do so.

Foreign countries were aware of our ability to mobilise the Armed Forces within days. They also knew that all Swiss military personnel kept their uniforms, assault rifles and even am-

munition at home. The ammunition was in order to be able to protect themselves on the way to the mobilisation point, but it was also a sign of the political authorities' trust in our militia-based Armed Forces. **Foreign countries were aware of the cohesion and resilience of the population. But we were also renowned for our extensive equipment and our underground combat and command infrastructure.**

Deterrence means reflecting on our strengths

Many of the Armed Forces' former strengths still exist today or can be restored or rebuilt at a reasonable cost. We need to reflect on our strengths and build on them. That is what deterrence is all about, even today.

We still have a militia-based system with a current target strength of 100,000 military personnel. According to a number of recent surveys, service members once again recognise the necessity and importance of military service. The participation of around 1,000 volunteers in training abroad over the Easter holidays is proof of this.

The mobilisation and readiness system allows initial forces to be deployed within a few hours and 35,000 military personnel to be called up and equipped within ten days. In addition, all military personnel keep their equipment and weapons at home.

We also still have a large number of protected combat and command structures. These are located on solid ground, which gives the defender an advantage, even when facing new forms of conflict.

Troop exercises such as LUX 23, PILUM 24, TRIAS 25 as well as battalion exercises demonstrate that defence capabilities are still present. **It is important to have these strengths and equally important to demonstrate this to the outside world.** This is the only way to ensure that they have the desired deterrent effect. **Deterrence also involves an element of intimidation.** Potential adversaries must be aware that any action against Switzerland will also entail losses for them. With the F-35, the planned procurement of rocket artillery, the special forces and cyber command, the Armed Forces will have appropriate means of deterrence at its disposal.

What the Armed Forces need now is a binding commitment

A clear statement of intent in favour of defence

The recommendations published with the 2022 Supplementary Report to the 2021 Security Policy Report called for a strengthening of defence capabilities by increasing expertise, but without a clear focus on defence. The Federal Council report in response to the postulate of the Council of States Security Policy Committee (23.3000) also remained vague on the consequences.

In view of the deteriorating security situation, there is now an urgent need to speak plainly and demand that the restoration of defence capabilities be made a priority. The Federal Council's response to the Theiler interpellation ([25.3415](#)) is an important first step in this direction.

Security and defence must be considered holistically

Opinions may differ as to whether the concept of 'general defence', as it was once understood, is still relevant today. However, its substance is more relevant than ever. In the hybrid phase of a conflict, resilience and endurance are needed to show the opposing side that actions against Switzerland will not succeed. All security policy instruments and measures taken at federal, cantonal and communal level must be geared towards this goal.

After all, the Armed Forces are the ultimate reserve. After them there is nothing left. The services that the Armed Forces are required to provide must be combined in a comprehensive security and defence strategy, and cooperation must be trained with all partners in the security network.

The Armed Forces have a plan, but lack planning certainty

Already in the [Black Book](#) (report on defence capability), the Armed Forces set out concrete and feasible plans showing that a first and minimal step towards equipping the current Armed Forces for defence would cost around CHF 13 billion. **The increase in the Armed Forces budget to one per cent of GDP by 2032 has been approved by Parliament, but its implementation remains uncertain. What the Armed Forces need is planning certainty.**

There is not only a shortage of money, but above all a shortage of time

The legal competence for determining the direction, organisation and financing of the Armed Forces rests with the Federal Council and Parliament. Responsibility for assessing the risks and threats to Switzerland also rests with the political authorities. The Armed Forces, on the other hand, have specialists who can show what military means are necessary to counter them.

The Armed Forces are fully aware of their situation, including their strengths and weaknesses. They have outlined what they need to gradually transform from how they are currently set up to a defence force. This will be achieved more quickly with greater financial resources and more slowly with limited resources. **According to current plans, the first step towards defence capability will cost around CHF 13 billion and will be implemented by the early to mid-2030s at the earliest. Given the changing geopolitical situation, this may be too late.**

A new system of compulsory service is needed

Much is written about systems, projects and funding for the Armed Forces. However, people are still the most important factor. Our militia-based system is unique in the world. Our Armed Forces are made up of citizens who perform a special mission in the service of collective security, sometimes even risking their lives.

Many countries envy us for this system, so it is something we should look after if we want it to continue. Currently, the effective strength of the Armed Forces is around 147,000 service members, which is higher than the statutory strength of 140,000. However, by the end of the 2020s, when the interim solution expires, the effective strength will fall to around 125,000.

During refresher courses many units are only at 50 to 70 per cent of their required strength. Although the number of conscripts called up each year is sufficient in relation to the current target strength, too many switch to civilian service on completing recruit school. **We therefore need a new system of compulsory service in the short to medium term if we want to maintain our militia-based system.**

Conclusion

The security situation worldwide and in Europe has fundamentally changed. We must now credibly demonstrate that we are prepared to defend our sovereignty on the ground, in the air and in cyberspace so that we do not have to do so.

In recent decades the Armed Forces have proven that they are capable of fulfilling their missions despite financial and material constraints. The foundations for the future are in place. However, making that a reality requires a clear commitment to defence capabilities and planning certainty in terms of equipment, personnel and international cooperation.

Time is of the essence.

Online Dossier:

