



# Politics of German Defence and Security: Policy Leadership and Military Reform in the Post-cold War Era

*Tom Dyson*

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The post-Cold War era has witnessed a dramatic transformation in the German political consensus about the legitimacy of the use of force. However, in comparison with its EU and NATO partners, Germany has been reticent to transform its military to meet the challenges of the contemporary security environment. Until 2003 territorial defence rather than crisis-management remained the armed forces' core role and the Bundeswehr continues to retain conscription. The book argues that 'strategic culture' provides only a partial explanation of German military reform. It demonstrates how domestic material factors were of crucial importance in shaping the pace and outcome of reform, despite the impact of 'international structure' and adaptational pressures from the EU and NATO. The domestic politics of base closures, ramifications for social policy, financial restrictions consequent upon German unification and commitment to EMU's Stability and Growth Pact were critical in determining the outcome of reform. The study also draws out the important role of policy leaders in the political management of reform as entrepreneurs, brokers or veto players, shifting the focus in German leadership studies away from a preoccupation with the Chancellor to the role of ministerial and administrative leadership within the core executive. Finally, the book contributes to our understanding of the Europeanization of the German political system, arguing that policy leaders played a key role in 'uploading' and 'downloading' processes to and from the EU and that Defence Ministers used 'Atlanticization' and 'Europeanization' in the interests of their domestic political agendas.

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