Civil Military Relations Beyond Military Power: *Lessons from the United Kingdom and Germany*

This article is based on research originally undertaken as a university dissertation completed in 2026.

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Abstract

This paper examines how trust, transparency, and public engagement shape civil-military relations in the United Kingdom and Germany during a period of heightened geopolitical instability and renewed European focus on defence. Existing literature frequently identifies these variables, particularly trust, as central to defence legitimacy, yet often studies them in isolation and rarely from a comparative public-perception perspective. This research addresses that gap by analysing how civilians and defence-affiliated individuals perceive defence institutions across two contrasting European democracies.

The study adopts a comparative and empirical methodology centred on original survey research conducted in both English and German. Two parallel surveys were distributed between February and April 2026, generating 275 responses across both countries. The research combines quantitative data with qualitative text-box responses, while also introducing a secondary comparative layer by distinguishing between the general public and respondents affiliated with defence institutions. The findings reveal that public trust in defence institutions remains relatively strong despite wider political distrust, suggesting that dissatisfaction is directed more toward governments and political leadership than toward military institutions themselves. The research also demonstrates that transparency and public engagement are widely perceived as overlapping concepts within civil-military relations. Furthermore, defence-affiliated respondents proved significantly more critical towards their own systems than members of the general public, thus highlighting the importance of institutional affiliation in shaping perceptions.

Fundamentally, the paper argues that contemporary civil-military relations depend as much on public trust, legitimacy, and communication as on military capability. The findings carry important implications for public resilience and democratic accountability in an increasingly unstable European security environment.

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1: Introduction

In the words of General Raymond Odierno (2011), trust is "an implicit bond between individuals, organizations, the institution, and the Nation"; without it, "we do not have a profession." While spoken in the American context, this observation resonates strongly across contemporary Europe, where, in a geopolitical climate shaped by renewed European rearmament and rising defence spending, defence institutions increasingly rely not only on military capability, but also on public legitimacy. Yet this strategic importance coincides with growing public distrust toward political and state institutions. As Emily Wegener (2026) argues, "record levels of defence spending" are arriving at "the worst possible time for public trust in institutions." Consequently, understanding civil-military relations in contemporary liberal democracies requires examining public perceptions, particularly as "public opinion plays an important role in supporting defense and foreign policy" (Hines et al., 2015).

This paper therefore asks: *How does trust, transparency, and public engagement shape the relationship between defence institutions and their civilian populations in the United Kingdom and Germany?* In answering this question, the analysis adopts a comparative and empirical approach centred around original survey research conducted in both countries, and thus prioritises civilian perceptions and attitudes toward modern defence systems over the sole analysis of institutional structures or defence policy.

Trust forms the core variable within this study and is conceptualised as the relationship between "people's evaluation of government performance relative to their normative expectations of how [governments] ought to perform" (Hetherington and Husser, 2012). Importantly, this paper distinguishes between broader political distrust and institution-specific trust, as attitudes toward defence institutions themselves may differ from wider dissatisfaction with government.

Alongside trust, the research examines transparency and public engagement as closely connected variables shaping civil-military relations. Public engagement will be defined broadly as interactions between defence institutions and civilians through communication, recruitment, education, and outreach. *Insufficient* engagement contributes to a "civil-military gap", describing the "social distance

that can arise between Armed Forces and civilians from a lack of contact and shared experiences" (Hines et al., 2015). Transparency similarly concerns the communication of "sufficient information on military and security matters", with the aim of achieving "greater accountability and increased public trust" (Rauf, 2017).

For the purposes of this analysis, 'defence institutions' are understood broadly. The term encompasses not only the British Armed Forces and Bundeswehr, but also surrounding governmental and bureaucratic structures, including the UK Ministry of Defence (henceforth MOD) and German Federal Ministry of Defence (henceforth BMVg), alongside wider defence-sector involvement such as civil servants and private defence industries. This broader definition reflects the reality that civilians encounter 'the military' as part of a wider "comprehensive ecosystem" (Ernst&Young, 2025), rather than simply through soldiers alone.

The decision to focus on trust, transparency, and public engagement reflects their repeated identification within the literature as central components of civil-military relations, despite often being studied separately. The paper "judiciously [restricts] itself to the really key variables" to avoid excessive complexity while still allowing for comprehensive analysis (Arend Lijphart, 1971). The United Kingdom and Germany provide a particularly valuable comparison, as both are liberal democracies and NATO members, yet differ substantially in historical experience and military culture. The UK maintains a longstanding military tradition and visible public military culture (Hines et al., 2015), whereas Germany's post-war doctrine of *Innere Führung*, which will be explored in the following chapter, has historically encouraged greater restraint. However, the recent "phase of dynamic growth" of the German defence sector (Ernst&Young, 2025) and renewed debates surrounding conscription in recent months make comparison especially timely.

Methodologically, the study employs original survey research structured around both cross-national and affiliation-based comparison, namely distinguishing between members of the general public and those affiliated with defence institutions, reflecting existing arguments that "personal military

experience [is] likely to influence attitudes" (Hines et al., 2015). The empirical analysis tests four hypotheses:

> **H1:** Individuals overestimate their knowledge of defence institutions while claiming neutrality when responding to broad questions on the subject.
>
> **H2:** Trust in defence institutions has reached historically low levels.
>
> **H3:** Transparency and public engagement are perceived as overlapping variables in the context of civil-military relations.
>
> **H4:** Defence-affiliated individuals are more critical and pessimistic toward their own systems than the general public.

The paper begins by reviewing the relevant literature before outlining the methodology, presenting the survey findings, and discussing their wider implications for contemporary civil-military relations.

2: Literature and Policy Context

Civil-military relations remain central to democratic governance, particularly as public trust in defence institutions is embedded within broader confidence in government: “people need to trust the government to support more government” (Hetherington and Husser, 2012). This is especially significant in Europe, where evolving defence challenges and deeper cooperation raise new questions about the future of UK-EU security relations, especially as “the UK and EU share the same interests and values when it comes to foreign and security policy” (Nissen, 2017). Recent developments in bilateral cooperation such as the 2024 UK-Germany Trinity House Agreement on Defence further underscore the relevance of a comparative approach (Ministry of Defence, 2024). The discussion begins with the principal theoretical approaches before examining trust, transparency, and public engagement, and identifying key gaps in the literature.

2.1 Theoretical Framework: Civil-Military Relations

The study of civil-military relations has long been dominated by a central debate: how can military institutions coexist with, and remain subordinate to, democratic governance? Foundational contributions from Samuel P. Huntingdon and Morris Janowitz established two contrasting theoretical approaches that continue to shape the field. Huntington’s model, most clearly articulated in *The Soldier and the State* (1957), advocates for a clear professional separation between civilian and military spheres. He identifies an inherent “civil-military gap”, rooted in the tension between adherence to the democratic principles of society and the coercive function of military force, whose primary duty consists of waging war (Mannitz, 2013). By contrast, Janowitz’s *The Professional Soldier* (1960) emphasises the social integration of the military within broader society, arguing that armed forces are not autonomous institutions, but are instead “a creation of the larger social structure, [serving] the economic and political needs of the civilian population” (Janowitz, 1960).

While these approaches provide an essential theoretical foundation, later scholars have questioned their underlying assumptions. As Karl Albright (1980) observes, much of the subsequent literature has

"followed lines suggested by Huntington's theoretical notions", often treating civilian and military spheres as analytically distinct. However, Albright challenges these "dichotomous terms", arguing that the boundary between the two is "frequently quite murky" and that civil-military relations lack any fixed or inherent nature. This critique points to a broader limitation within classical theory, namely an overemphasis on institutional structures operating within vague, normative conceptions of democracy, often at the expense of examining how these relationships are negotiated in practice.

This limitation is further developed by Peter D. Feaver (1996), who argues that traditional theories focus too heavily on "internal mechanisms for civilian control" while neglecting the practical engagement of civil society with its military. His work suggests that in 'stable' democracies, the key issue is not the existence of civilian control, but rather its changing patterns and expressions. In this sense, civil-military relations are just as much social relationships as they are institutional arrangements, shaped by public attitudes and perceptions.

Despite these developments, significant gaps remain, which become even more pronounced in the European context. As Austrian sociologist Franz Kernic argues (2001), the social sciences have failed to offer any "comprehensive, social-theoretical or critical perspective on the interrelation between society [...] and military force". Writing more recently, Sabine Mannitz (2013) highlights how post-Cold War transformations, such as the shift from territorial defence to transnational missions, have fundamentally altered the role and identity of the military, and the "contemporary realities of European soldiering do not reflect this [previous] scenario any longer". As soldiers are increasingly tasked with defending an abstract set of "transnational values rather than a bounded national collective", traditional models of civil-military integration become less applicable, and the understanding of trust, transparency, and public engagement along these lines has similarly fundamentally changed.

Taken together, this literature reveals a clear limitation, namely that classical and contemporary theories pay insufficient attention to how civil-military relations are mediated through public

perception. This paper seeks to address this gap by examining these facts through contemporary literature and empirically through survey data on the United Kingdom and Germany.

2.2 Trust in Defence Institutions

Trust constitutes a central dimension of civil-military relations and is a key aspect in understanding the relationship between defence institutions and civil society, yet its conceptualisation within the literature remains contested. Empirically, public trust is most often measured through "large-scale surveys of populations" (Brehm and Savel, 2019) which capture levels of confidence and the perceived legitimacy towards the armed forces. As John Brehm and Meg Savel (2019) note, survey-based research has consistently pointed to a "near catastrophic state of decline" in trust in government since the mid-twentieth century, underpinning H2 and the concept of "generalised trust". This form of trust reflects a diffuse predisposition rather than a specific evaluation of institutional performance, suggesting that attitudes towards the military may be shaped as much by broader political and social sentiments as by direct knowledge or experience.

This raises important questions about how trust is formed and existing literature highlights several key drivers. Performance, particularly in international contexts, has become increasingly significant in light of the aforementioned evolving role of European militaries. Paul Brewer et al. (2004) introduce the concept of "international trust", arguing that citizens "use generalized beliefs about how much their nation can trust other nations" to inform their attitudes towards military action, whether they "endorse internationalism or isolationism", and whether they trust their militaries to carry out certain foreign interventions. This approach is particularly interesting for the comparative element of this study: Brewer et al. highlights how political trust influences international trust, stating that "those who believe their own government does not fulfill their normative expectations may reason that other nations are unlikely to do so either". These judgements are often shaped by what they term "low-information rationality", whereby individuals use cognitive shortcuts and "general and abstract beliefs" rather than detailed knowledge to form opinions on their military. This insight is particularly

relevant for this study, and informs the construction of H1, as it suggests that survey responses may reflect broader ideological orientations rather than informed evaluations of defence policy.

At the same time, trust is highly sensitive to contextual factors such as major political events and collective historical experiences (Brewer et al., 2004), reinforcing the idea that trust is not static but continually renegotiated. This is especially evident in comparative perspectives, as Sabine Mannitz (2013) demonstrates that levels of trust in the military vary across different types of European democracies, highlighting studies which suggest there is "greater trust in the functioning of checks and balances to control the military in states with a long democratic tradition than in younger democracies". In this respect, the contrast between the United Kingdom and Germany is particularly instructive.

In the UK, trust in the armed forces has traditionally remained high, shaped by a historically strong military culture. In Germany, however, trust is mediated by a more complex historical legacy. As James Sperling (2001) argues, perceptions of German military power – and the "German (un)willingness to exercise it" – remain influenced by the legacy of the "egregious violation of [...] constitutional norms [...] during the Second World War", producing what he terms an "ideology of reluctance". In practice, this is institutionalised through the concept of *Innere Führung,* the core ethical framework of the German Bundeswehr developed by Wolf Graf von Baudissin, which embeds democratic values and ethical responsibility within the Bundeswehr through the ideal of the 'citizen in uniform' (Bald, 2001). This concept, which "encompasses fundamental questions of the rights and duties" of the military (Elßner, 2005), is likely to shape how respondents in Germany perceive defence institutions, whether consciously or not.

Existing scholarship nevertheless leaves several questions unresolved, as existing research treats trust as an outcome of institutional performance, with little focus on how individuals construct it in relation to their military or how this varies across national contexts. Understanding how these perceptions differ across the UK and Germany has implications for defence communication, institutional legitimacy, and public support for future defence policy.

2.3 Transparency in Defence Institutions

Issues of transparency and accountability occupy a central yet inherently contested position within the study of civil-military relations. While at their core these concepts refer to the extent to which defence institutions are open to scrutiny and subject to democratic oversight, the literature consistently highlights a fundamental tension between transparency and the operation requirements of national security. As Peters, Wagner, and Deitelhoff (2008) argue, defence is often considered exceptional, requiring "a degree of secrecy and flexibility that sets it apart from most issues of domestic politics" and limits the scope for democratic accountability. This challenge is further complicated in the European context, where decision-making increasingly occurs across "two interconnected levels, the European and the national one" (Peters et al., 2008), raising questions about how parliamentary oversight can be effectively maintained.

The dilemma of balancing secrecy with accountability has been further intensified by structural changes within defence sectors. Clive Walker and David Whyte (2005) point to the growing privatisation of military functions as a key development, where "even the provision of force [is] to be assumed by private enterprise on a contractual model". The outsourcing of roles such as "logistic support [...], intelligence-gathering, and the supply of personnel" to private military companies introduces significant challenges for transparency. These organisations often operate through opaque corporate structures and establish subsidiaries "domiciled in obscure offshore locations", thereby limiting effective oversight through traditional mechanisms of democratic accountability.

These dynamics are particularly evident in the United Kingdom, where scholars note persistent concerns regarding the opacity of military operations and the expanding role of private contractors. The marketisation of defence functions, and the fact that the "armed forces are not immune from processes of commodification and marketization" raises important questions about legitimacy and control. As Walker and Whyte (2005) suggest, such developments risk creating a "constitutional fissure", whereby accountability mechanisms will struggle to keep pace with evolving institutional arrangements. This issue may be especially salient in shaping perceptions and concerns among survey

respondents with direct experience of the defence sector, who may be imbued with higher levels of pessimism than the general public, as will be explored in the discussion of H4.

In contrast, Germany is ostensibly designed to present a model of more formalised and institutionalised oversight. Mechanisms such as the office of the *Wehrbeauftragter*, or Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces, discussed by Detlef Bald (2001), have more than "just symbolic meaning", and are designed to "guarantee transparency and publicly address the problems with *Innere Führung*", thus aiming to prevent the re-emergence of the "military's former isolation". However, even here, the literature points to a series of limitations. Bald (2001) notes that such institutions can become politicised or lose effectiveness over time, raising concerns about whether formal transparency mechanisms such as the office of the *Wehrbeauftragter* practically translate into meaningful accountability.

Despite extensive discussion of institutional frameworks, existing evidence provides only a partial explanation. Much of the existing research focuses on formal structures of oversight with limited attention to how transparency is publicly evaluated, a gap this study aims to address through H3, by examining how individuals in the UK and Germany interpret the relationship between transparency and engagement.

2.4 Public Engagement and Civil-Military Interaction

Public engagement constitutes a crucial dimension of civil-military relations, encompassing the ways in which defence institutions interact with civilian populations, including communication strategies, recruitment practices, education, and symbolic representation. Göran Swistek (2012) situates such engagement within the framework of "public diplomacy", arguing that modern security policy requires a "comprehensive approach" integrating civilian and military strategies, where citizens remain aware of "the goals of a given country's foreign policy through the use of information and cultural programs". In this view, engagement is central to democratic defence policy, relying on clear communication strategies to inform citizens about foreign policy goals and military activities.

One key domain of engagement is recruitment, and, in the German context especially, recent debates surrounding conscription highlight the enduring tension between military necessity and societal integration. As Stephan Pfaffenzeller notes (2010), conscription has historically been ingrained in the German military psyche as a means of linking the military and society, and an alteration to this system "would [only] constitute a reform of the conscript system rather than its abolition". While several legal changes *were* made with respect to conscription mere months after the publication of Pfaffenzeller's 2010 work, recent changes have once again underscored his argument and shown the symbolic importance of conscription in Germany. By contrast, the United Kingdom has "successfully relied on volunteer forces for some time" (Pfaffenzeller, 2010), placing greater emphasis on recruitment campaigns and public messaging. These differing approaches underscore how engagement strategies are shaped by historical and institutional contexts, and how they influence public perceptions of the armed forces.

Beyond recruitment, engagement also takes the form of education and outreach. Barney White-Spunner (2011) highlights the importance of collaboration between academia and defence institutions, as "understanding of the cultural diversities in the area of operations" is considered fundamental to developing strategy. However, he also points to persistent barriers, including mutual distrust and a desire among civilian experts and organisations to "preserve their own independence and perceived impartiality by distancing themselves from defence structures", thus revealing a wider pattern where "even civilian experts [...] hesitate to engage with the military". Similarly, Jan Techau (2011) emphasises the growing importance of "strategic communication", arguing that public engagement should be a "central element of everyday thinking and working" within the military. Yet he notes that defence institutions often remain reluctant to embrace "systematic work with publics and target audiences", instead placing an emphasis on "secrecy and opaqueness".

The literature generally suggests that engagement can foster familiarity, which in turn enhances trust and legitimacy. On the one hand, critics warn of the potential for militarisation of society through excessive visibility and symbolic integration, while on the other some highlight the risk of public detachment, particularly in professionalised militaries. These concerns echo earlier theoretical

insights, such as those of Immanuel Kant (1795), who argued that standing armies risk both creating distance between citizens and the military while also "incessantly [menacing] other states", advocating instead for a more participatory model of defence. Though, admittedly, altered threats created by developments in technology and geopolitical changes mean many democracies will not be able to fulfil this idealistic vision.

Comparatively, the UK and Germany exhibit distinct patterns of engagement. In the UK, strong symbolic practices, such as remembrance culture and public celebrations of the armed forces, underscore how British nationalism is "closely linked with the dominant institutions of the British state, such as [...] the military" (Heath et al., 1999). In Germany, by contrast, public military presence remains more restrained, shaped by historical sensitivities and the aforementioned *Innere Führung.* As Thomas Elßner (2005) argues, the German Bundeswehr aims for a "successful integration of the soldier into the democratic state and democratic society", yet evolving tensions and security demands have increasingly challenged this "idyllic image", reshaping the nature of engagement: "Now the German soldier must be able to fight again!"

Despite these insights, gaps remain, as the literature emphasises institutional engagement strategies but often treats engagement as neutral, rather than as shaping perceptions of military power, democratic accountability, and, especially in recent years, war.

Trust, transparency, and public engagement are thus deeply interconnected dimensions of civil-military relations, shaping how defence institutions are perceived and legitimised within democratic societies. While existing scholarship provides valuable insights, particularly when comparing the UK and Germany, key differences, rooted in cultural memory, political structures, and evolving military roles, highlight the importance of a comparative approach. However, significant gaps remain, and there is a lack of direct comparative research iterating all three variables, as much of the literature treats them in isolation. Even contemporary policy frameworks, such as the *Strategic Defence Review 2025*, in what it describes as a period in which the "threats we now face are more serious and less predictable than at any time since the Cold War", emphasises public engagement and

a “whole-of-society” approach without fully addressing transparency or its relationship with trust (Ministry of Defence, 2025). The analysis that follows draws on original survey data from the United Kingdom and Germany to examine these relationships empirically and to assess their implications for contemporary defence policy.

3: Research Design

This study adopts a comparative, cross-national research design and an empirical approach based on survey data to investigate the relationship between defence institutions and civilian populations in the UK and Germany. Surveys are particularly well suited to this study, as they enable the systematic measurement of public perceptions across different contexts. Indeed, no method has so consistently "illuminated political science theories with political facts" than surveys, which provide a "gold standard for measuring citizen opinions" central to democratic processes (Henry Brady, 2000). The research combines cross-national comparison with a second analytical layer based on respondents' affiliation with defence institutions, allowing the relationship between civilian and professional perspectives to be examined empirically.

3.1 Research Design

Two surveys were conducted as part of this research: one in English, distributed within UK-based networks, and one in German, translated by the researcher for German participants. Both surveys were identical in structure and content, including the participation information and consent forms, thus ensuring cross-national comparability.

A key feature of this research design is its dual comparative framework, as, in addition to comparing responses between the UK and Germany, the study incorporates a secondary level of comparison based on participant affiliation with defence institutions. Respondents were asked whether they were currently or previously employed within the defence sector or whether they had no such affiliation. Based on this response, participants were directed to one of two identical sub-surveys, thereby effectively producing four analytical groups, thus allowing for comparison both across countries and between affiliated and non-affiliated respondents.

The inclusion of this second comparative dimension is also theoretically grounded. As discussed in the contextual chapter, Huntington conceptualises civil-military relations as involving two distinct and "inherently conflictual" groups: military professionals and civilians (Albright, 1980). Structuring the

survey in this way, as opposed to splitting it into the other defining respondent categories, namely age or gender, allows for empirical testing of this distinction.

Methodologically, this study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative text responses. As Sharon Crasnow argues (2012), this "multimethod research" enables a more comprehensive understanding by allowing different forms of evidence "to be put together in such a way as to converge on a causal explanation".

Participation was, aside from being fully voluntary, based on informed consent, with respondents provided an in-depth project information sheet. Anonymity was ensured by limiting data collection to non-identifiable characteristics, namely age range, gender, and affiliation, and any identifying information in open responses was removed. All data was collected on the Qualtrics platform before being analysed, graphed, and securely stored.

3.2 Data Collection Method and Survey Structure

The construction and organisation of both surveys was loosely informed by Alexander George's "method of structured, focused comparison" (Kaarbo and Beasley, 1999). This approach is "focused" in that it examines specific aspects of a broader phenomenon, and "structured" in that it applies consistent "questions to guide the data collection analysis" across cases. In this study, the surveys selectively target perceptions of trust, transparency, and public engagement, while maintaining a uniform structure in order to facilitate direct comparison between the UK and Germany.

While surveys are particularly well-suited to cross-national research of this kind, and are frequently used by those "who study [...] international relations [and] comparative politics" (Kaarbo and Beasley, 1999), the use of two languages introduces potential challenges relating to interpretation and conceptual equivalence. The three variables and the names of key institutions may carry different connotations depending on linguistic and cultural context. To address this, careful attention was paid to direct translation and neutral phrasing, while respondents were encouraged to elaborate on their answers through text boxes, allowing for insight into how these concepts were understood in practice.

As Brady (2000) notes, researchers "do not only think about concepts as they develop them, they also modify them as they test them", and this study reflects that iterative understanding.

The survey opened with a project information sheet and mandatory consent form, followed by a demographic section, where participants provide non-identifying information on age, gender, and affiliation. As discussed, based on their affiliation, respondents are then directed into one of two identical survey pathways. All survey questions, including their German translations, can be found listed in the Appendix.

The questionnaire consisted of three substantive sections. The first includes two general questions measuring overall knowledge of and opinion towards defence institutions, using Likert-style scales which range from "know very well" to "never heard/don't know" and "very favourable" to "very unfavourable" respectively. As outlined by Likert in his 1932 paper on the subject, the aggregated responses across such scales result in a "useful and tractable measure of the underlying attitude" (Batterton and Hale, 2017). The second page focuses on the three key variables of trust, transparency, and public engagement through five Likert-scale questions, each accompanied by qualitative response boxes. The final page consists of a comparative question asking respondents to evaluate their country's defence system relative to the other, followed by an optional concluding comment.

3.3 Sampling and Participants

In total, including individuals from the general public and those affiliated with defence institutions, 154 responses were obtained from the UK survey and 121 from the German survey over a 55-day period (20th February–16th April 2026), meaning all data reflects opinions formed within this timeframe.

Distribution methods varied between the two countries. The UK survey was more targeted, shared through the University's Politics Department as well as defence-related organisations such as the think tank Defence Synergia, the private online forum the Naval Review, and networks connected to similar organisations for veterans and defence sector professionals. By contrast, the German survey relied on

broader, more organic distribution, including public forums and social media. This resulted in a more even demographic distribution within the German sample, particularly by age.

3.4 Data Analysis

Survey findings are presented according to the four hypotheses introduced in the previous section, rather than strictly following the order of survey questions. This structure links the empirical findings directly to the study's principal arguments. Data is analysed comparatively across both countries and affiliation groups, and is contextualised through reference to existing literature and external datasets, such as the latest UK MOD Armed Forces Reputation Survey (Ministry of Defence, 2017) and broader European polling (Solletty and Vadler, 2026). In fact, the question style of the former inspired the structure of the initial broad questions on general knowledge and overall opinion, in order for clear comparisons to be made between them.

Quantitative data is presented through stacked bar charts for Likert-scale responses and pie charts for sample composition, enabling clear visual identification of trends. To maintain clarity in the presentation of graphs in the subsequent chapter, affiliation categories are streamlined into three options as follows:

> **Option 1:** Currently working in the defence sector, including the army, ministries of defence, and private defence industries.
>
> **Option 2:** Retired/employed elsewhere, but has worked in the defence sector.
>
> **Option 3:** None of the above apply.

These quantitative findings are complemented by selected qualitative responses from text boxes, which provide additional depth and help explain underlying attitudes, ensuring a more complete understanding and nuanced interpretation of the results.

3.5 Research Limitations

Several limitations shape the interpretation of the findings. First, the sample size, while sufficient for exploratory analysis, remains relatively small, particularly for the German survey. In fact, “there exists a stereotype of the case study that includes [...] an inability to generate a sufficient number of data points” (Kaarbo and Beasley, 1999), which may constrain the accurate testing of broader theoretical claims. This limitation is compounded by the use of convenience sampling. Such samples, and this study is no exception, frequently (over)rely on accessible groups, such as “the proverbial ‘college sophomores’” (Brady, 2000), which may not fully represent the wider population. Despite efforts to diversify distribution, both surveys thus remain subject to potential demographic bias, a facet of the research which is largely unavoidable as “the universe of cases is not known or is not accessible” (Kaarbo and Beasley, 1999).

Second, the survey design itself introduces methodological constraints. The repeated use of Likert-scale questions, while beneficial for clarity and comparability, may contribute to patterned answering, as “batteries of repeated items with set points” influence how respondents engage with survey items (Brehm and Savel, 2019). Additionally, making all responses but the consent form optional led to variation in response rates across questions, which may affect consistency in the data.

Finally, the study captures only a snapshot in time during a particularly tumultuous and rapidly evolving geopolitical climate. As Brady (2000) observes, cross-sectional surveys are limited in their ability to “[capture] the impact of events that develop over time”. A longitudinal design, such as that used in a study by Brewer et al. (2004) in which participants were interviewed in two waves, and “sixty-one percent [...] of the respondents from the first wave were reinterviewed”, would provide deeper insight into how civil-military perceptions shift, and represents a promising avenue for future research.

Despite these limitations, the study remains methodologically sound and offers valuable insights into public perceptions of civil-military relations, particularly by addressing the underexplored

comparative and affiliation-based dimensions. Taken together, the research design provides a robust basis for interpreting the survey findings presented in the following section.

4: Findings and Discussion

4.1 Sample Overview

The survey sample is first examined across three demographic variables: age, gender, and affiliation with defence institutions (see *Figure 1*). While age and gender are important for assessing the general comparability of both surveys, affiliation is the most analytically significant variable, as it distinguishes respondents with defence-sector experience from the wider public, thus enabling the aforementioned two-level comparison.

Gender distribution is broadly similar across both samples (56% women in the UK, 63% in Germany), supporting comparability. However, age distribution differs more significantly, as the UK sample is concentrated among younger (18-25) and older (46+) respondents, whereas the German sample is more evenly spread. This reflects the differences in survey distribution discussed in the methodology. Despite this, affiliation remains relatively balanced – particularly the predominance of civilian respondents (80% UK; 63% Germany) – ensuring the samples remain sufficiently comparable for analysis.

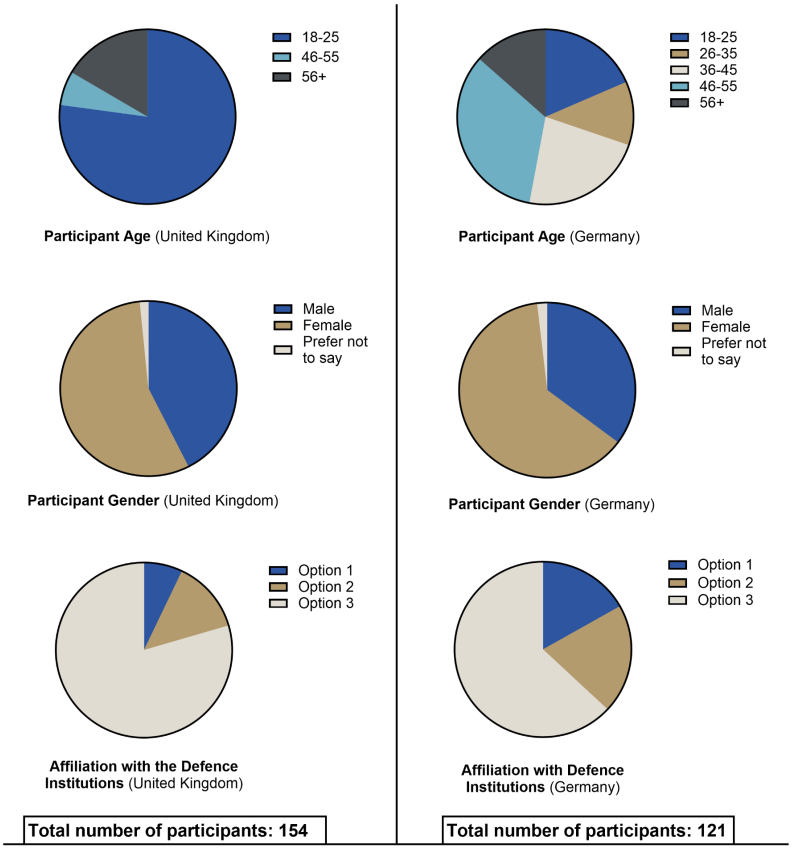

***Figure 1**: Sample Overview, by Country.*

H1 – Perceived Knowledge and Neutrality

The first hypothesis proposes that individuals tend to overestimate their knowledge of defence institutions when asked abstract questions about them, while simultaneously presenting their views as

more neutral than they are in practice. The hypothesis therefore predicts that more specific questions will reveal stronger variation in attitudes than broad evaluations alone. This section tests that claim by analysing responses made to the initial broad questions, and evaluating how these compare to variations in opinions on transparency specifically.

Initial findings on levels of knowledge suggest a high degree of self-reported familiarity across both countries (see *Figure 2*).

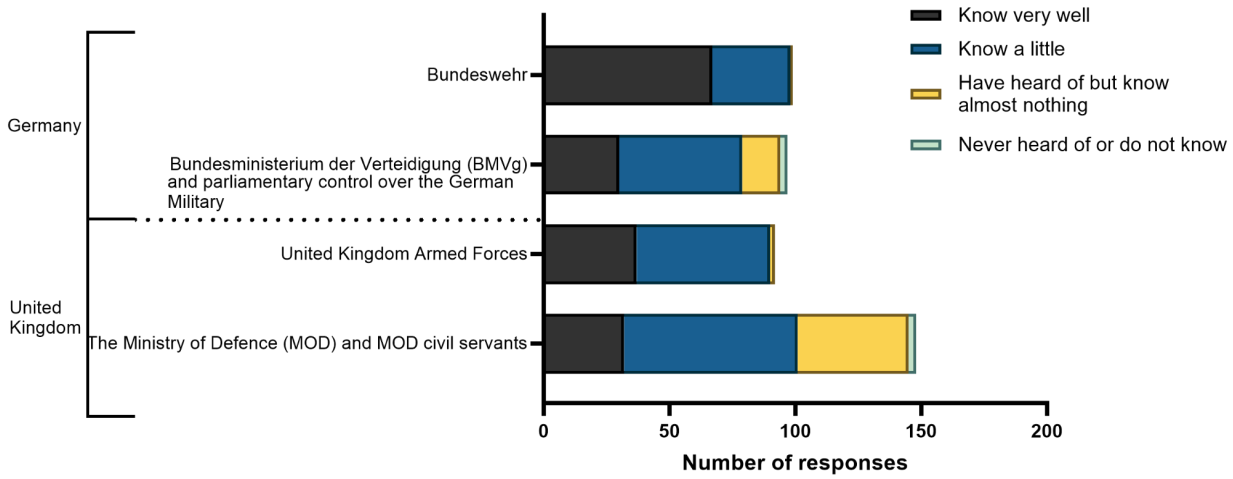

Figure 2: *Overall Level of Knowledge of Relevant Defence Institutions.*

The overwhelming majority of respondents in both the United Kingdom and Germany indicated that they know either "very well" or "a little" about their respective armed forces and defence ministries. In fact, almost no respondents claimed to have no knowledge: only one German respondent reported having heard of the Bundeswehr but knowing nothing about it, and just two UK respondents selected this option for the Armed Forces. No respondents in either country indicated complete unfamiliarity. These findings are consistent with Paul Brewer's (2004) concept of "low-information rationality", whereby individuals feel confident in a vague understanding of their country's military, even where this may not reflect substantive knowledge.

A further distinction emerges between perceptions of the armed forces, of the traditional, fighting 'military', and the broader bureaucratic institutions that support them. Respondents in both countries reported higher familiarity with the Bundeswehr and UK Armed Forces than with the BMVg or the

MOD. This aligns with previous findings, such as the most recently published MOD Public Attitudes Survey (Ministry of Defence, 2017), which demonstrated significantly higher public awareness of the military (74%) compared to civilian defence structures (64% knew of the MOD, and only 38% knew of MOD civil servants).

This pattern is mirrored in responses to the question on overall opinion (see *Figure 3*).

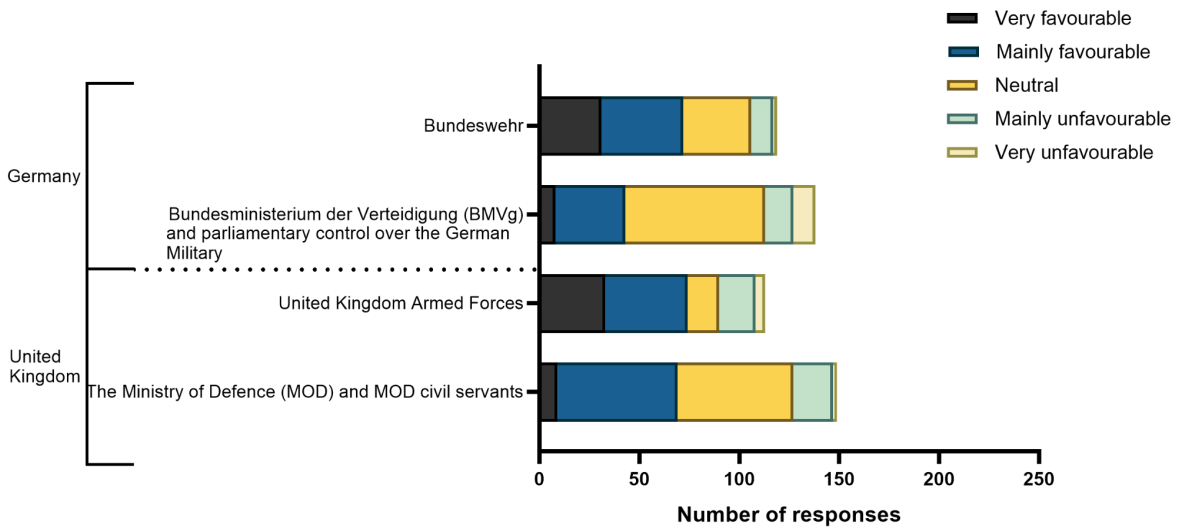

Figure 3: *Overall Opinion of Relevant Defence Institutions.*

While neutrality is a common response – particularly for bureaucratic institutions (37% neutral for the UK MOD; 43% for the German BMVg) – attitudes towards the armed forces are notably more positive. In both countries, respondents were more likely to express favourable views of the Bundeswehr and UK Armed Forces than neutral ones. These findings also mirror research conducted by external surveys, where analysis suggests that the "UK public have high regard for the UK Armed Forces" in particular (Hines et al., 2015), and in the aforementioned MOD Public Attitudes Survey 88% of respondents were "very/mainly favourable" towards the Armed Forces (Ministry of Defence, 2017). This partially supports the hypothesis: while respondents claim neutrality at a general level, more specific questioning reveals clearer and often more positive attitudes, particularly towards military institutions themselves.

This greater variation in opinion as a result of more *focused* questioning becomes pronounced when examining attitudes towards transparency, as does the divergence between the UK and Germany (see

Figure 4). UK respondents demonstrated a significantly stronger preference for transparency, with a large proportion agreeing that defence institutions should be open with the public. In contrast, German respondents were more divided, with a substantial number expressing scepticism towards full transparency (45% argued that they "somewhat disagree").

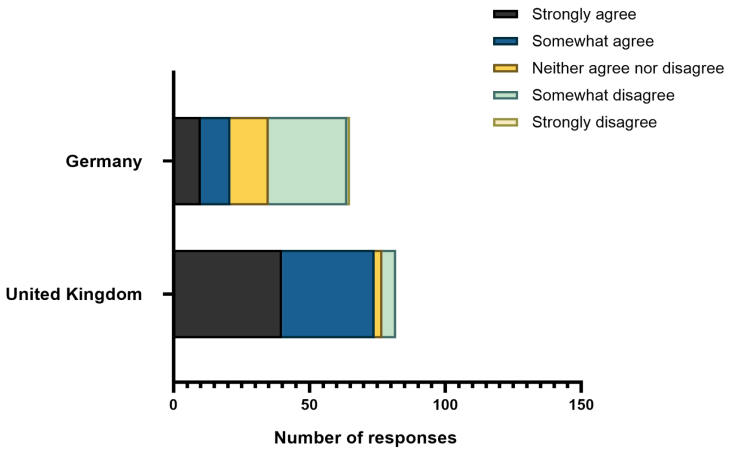

Figure 4: *"It is important for my country's defence system to be transparent with its citizens."*

Qualitative responses reinforce this distinction: German participants frequently emphasised the importance of "economic transparency" , particularly regarding how "state financial resources [are] used", while simultaneously arguing against operational openness due to security concerns and to prevent "third-party states [from possessing] insights they should not have". Interestingly, the German Institute for International and Security Affairs similarly proposes that "cost and price structures of defence contracts should be made more transparent" (Becker and Kempin, 2025), thus highlighting how in the German context it is primarily economic transparency which is perceived as necessary. UK responses, by contrast, framed transparency in broader terms of openness and accountability, namely "being open about their operations [...] and who they are aiding".

Overall, the evidence provides qualified support for H1. While individuals *do* appear to overestimate their knowledge and initially present neutral positions, disaggregating these variables reveals more defined and context-specific attitudes. Crucially, these patterns vary significantly between the UK and Germany, reflecting differing historical experiences, political cultures, and, significantly, conceptions of civil-military relations.

H2 – Trust in Defence Institutions

The second hypothesis assumes that public trust in defence institutions is at a historic low, shaped by contemporary geopolitical uncertainty and broader political dissatisfaction. Existing scholarship and recent geopolitical developments suggest that trust in defence institutions should be under considerable pressure (Solletty and Vadler, 2026). Aforementioned studies such as those by Brehm and Savel (2019) describe trust as being in a state of decline in the UK, and "[remaining] significantly lower than before 2022" in Germany (Graf, 2025), while others warn that the "civil-military gap might have widened into a gulf" (Hines et al., 2015). In this context, it is reasonable to expect diminished confidence and trust in defence institutions, particularly as fears and limited public engagement may exacerbate scepticism.

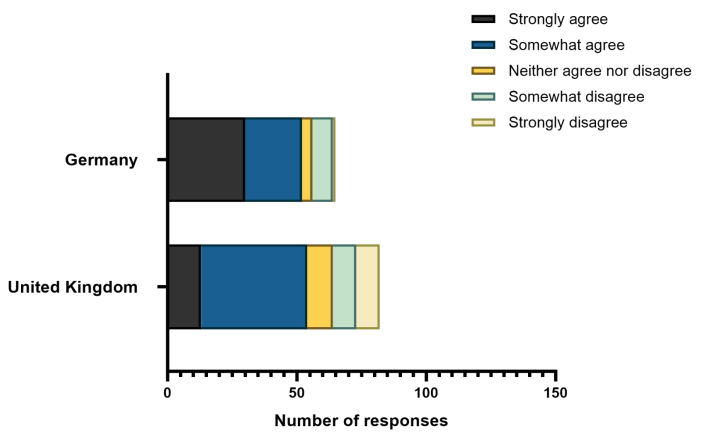

Figure 5: *"I trust in my country's defence system to fulfil its stated aims and supposed role(s)."*

However, the survey results challenge this assumption (see *Figure 5*). In Germany, approximately 80% of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that they trust their country's defence system to fulfil its stated aims. In the United Kingdom, this figure remains similarly high at around 66%. These findings suggest that, contrary to expectations, trust in defence institutions remains relatively robust in both countries.

The findings instead point towards the need for a more nuanced understanding of trust in civil-military relations. While broader political trust may indeed be declining, as evidenced by a survey conducted by FGS Global in late 2025 (Solletty and Vadler, 2026) indicating widespread dissatisfaction with national governments, this does not necessarily extend to defence institutions themselves, as the very same survey reports a strong desire for increased defence spending. Instead, the survey data above suggests a distinction between trust in political leadership and trust in the

military as an institution, as public scepticism appears to be directed primarily at governments and political decision-making.

This interpretation is supported by qualitative responses from the survey. UK participants frequently emphasised confidence and trust in the capability of the defence system itself, arguing that "the UK is able to defend and support [itself] very well", while attributing shortcomings to political leadership. One respondent noted that "most of our defence problems stem from our political position, not exactly the state of our defence system", while another highlighted the commitment of personnel to national protection and protecting the "UK and its citizens from attack". Similar sentiments emerged in the German responses, where trust in the Bundeswehr's role in protecting the population is paired with criticism of the "poor politics of recent years". Such responses reinforce the idea that trust in defence institutions operates somewhat independently from trust in government.

These findings admittedly complicate the initial hypothesis. While generalised political trust may be in decline, as suggested in the literature, institutional trust in defence appears more resilient. This aligns with the distinction between "generalised trust" (Brehm and Savel, 2019) and more specific, sector-based trust, in that individuals may express dissatisfaction with the political system while still maintaining confidence in key state institutions, particularly those associated with national security.

Ultimately, the results suggest that trust in defence institutions remains relatively strong despite broader political uncertainty, indicating that the civil-military relationship may be more stable than the literature initially implies.

H3 – Transparency and Public Engagement

The third hypothesis proposes that, unlike trust, transparency and public engagement are not perceived as distinct variables within civil-military relations, but rather as overlapping or interchangeable concepts, and the ordering of the literature suggests that transparency is often understood as a core component of public engagement. This assumption reflects a broader theoretical logic, namely that meaningful engagement between defence institutions and civilian populations

typically requires the communication of information and intentions, which in turn implies a degree of transparency.

The survey results provide strong support for this hypothesis (see *Figure 6*).

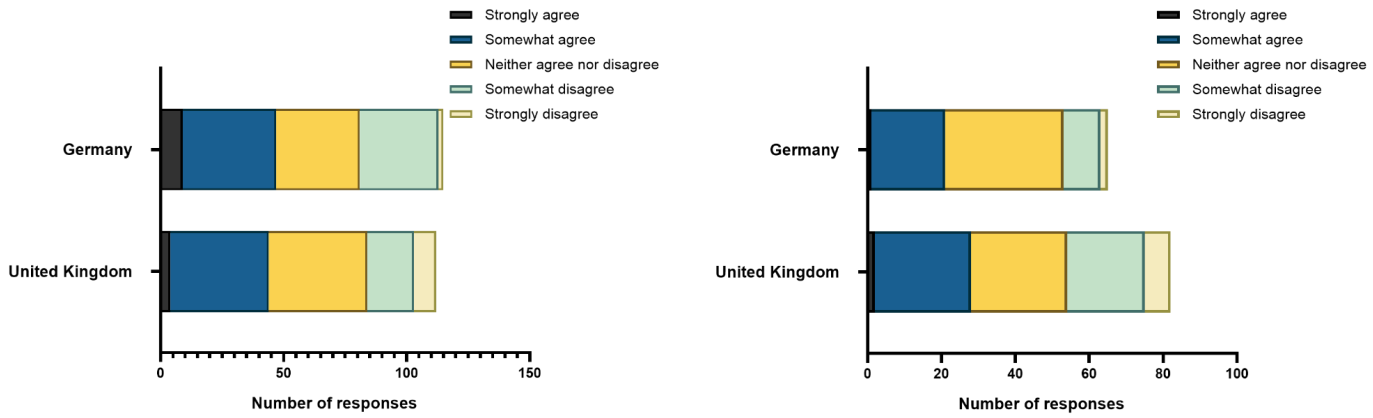

Figure 6: *"My country's defence system is sufficiently transparent with its citizens."* ***(left)*** *and "My country's defence system currently actively, appropriately, and sufficiently engages with its citizens."* ***(right)***

Despite being positioned in different sections of the survey, the patterns of response closely mirror one another, with strikingly similar distributions across both the United Kingdom and Germany. In both countries, respondents tended to cluster around neutral or moderately positive positions, with relatively few expressing strong agreement or disagreement.

Qualitative responses provided by participants help explain this convergence. These responses suggest that many individuals conceptualise public engagement primarily through the lens of information-sharing and increased communication. UK respondents frequently framed engagement in terms of the need for "more talks [and] awareness around national readiness", and providing access to "factual information or how to access factual information" all point towards a desire for greater openness. Importantly, respondents often dismissed symbolic or ceremonial forms of engagement as insufficient, arguing that "a military tattoo, parade or an air show is NOT adequate", and instead emphasising the need for substantive communication.

Similarly, responses to the transparency question reinforce this interpretation. Participants frequently referred to existing communication channels, such as the "royal navy, army, and marines all [having]

their own news posts", but also highlighted a perceived lack of comprehensive, accessible information about the "role [and] responsibilities [of defence institutions] and how these are achieved".

Taken together, these findings suggest that transparency is, in practice, operationalised through mechanisms of public engagement. The desire for greater transparency is frequently articulated as a call for better communication and educational outreach programmes. Conversely, critiques of insufficient engagement often centre on a lack of transparency. This reinforces the argument that, certainly from the perspective of civilian populations, the two concepts are deeply intertwined and, in many cases, effectively indistinguishable.

This interpretation is consistent with existing literature and secondary research. For instance, Techau's discussions of "strategic communication" (2011) emphasises the need to move away from military secrecy in order to engage effectively with the public. Likewise, policy initiatives aimed at increasing transparency, such as the MOD funded *Building Integrity UK* programme within the new UK Anti-Corruption Strategy (Wegener, 2025), often take the form of engagement strategies, in this case through "training and education". These examples illustrate that, both theoretically and practically, transparency and public engagement operate as mutually reinforcing dimensions of civil-miltary relations. Therefore, the findings ultimately support the hypothesis that transparency and public engagement function as a combined category of public perception, distinct from, but closely related to, the more clearly defined variable of trust.

H4 – Affiliation and Diverging Perceptions

The fourth hypothesis posits that individuals currently or previously employed within the defence sector exhibit greater disillusionment with their own country's military institutions, generally lower levels of implicit patriotism, and a tendency to view the other country's system more favourably. In contrast, the general public is expected to display more neutral or even moderately positive attitudes towards their own country with less pronounced comparative judgements.

At a surface level, the combined results already suggest variation between the two national samples (see *Figure 7*).

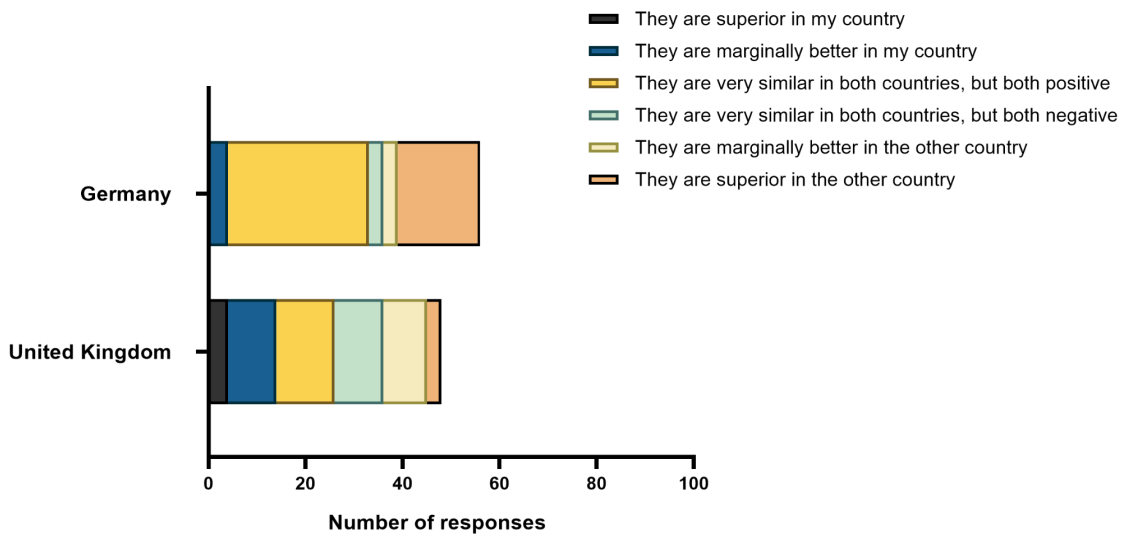

Figure 7: *Final Evaluation of the Defence Institutions of the Other Country, In Reference to the Three Variables Explored.*

However, disaggregating responses by professional affiliation reveals much sharper patterns.

Among respondents from the general public in both countries, views remained broadly consistent with expectations: they tended to express moderate or neutral evaluations of the other country's capabilities, while maintaining slightly more favourable views of their own national institutions. This aligns with broader trends identified earlier in the analysis, most notably in H2, where generalised trust and perception are shaped by national context but remain relatively stable.

In contrast, respondents affiliated with defence institutions, whether currently serving or retired, displayed a markedly different outlook. In both the United Kingdom and Germany, these individuals demonstrated significantly higher levels of dissatisfaction with their own systems and were more likely to rate the other country's defence institutions as superior. In Germany, a substantial majority (approximately 74%) of affiliated respondents considered the UK's defence institutions to be 'marginally better' or 'superior'. A similar trend is visible in the UK sample, where around 67% of affiliated respondents expressed a preference for German capabilities.

Qualitative text box responses provide important insight into the sources of this disillusionment. German professional participants frequently reference growing security concerns, arguing that the "threat in Europe has steadily increased", with one noting that the days of "*Waffen zu Pflugscharen*", or 'weapons into ploughshares', are over, signalling a departure from post-war pacifist norms. UK respondents echo similar anxieties, highlighting perceived unpreparedness and the reality that "the UK public are unaware that they are 'standing into danger'".

A recurring theme across both samples is frustration with the perceived disconnect between civilian policymakers and military realities, and the feeling that civilian-military relations have become *too* intertwined. German respondents, for instance, pointed to individuals "[becoming] defence ministers who had never served in the Bundeswehr and therefore lacked the necessary qualifications to do the job".

This internal perspective also helps explain the tendency to favour the other country's system. Respondents often highlighted perceived strengths abroad, such as that "significant rearmament is underway already [in Germany]", while contrasting these with shortcomings at home: "this is in stark contrast to [the] UK".

Admittedly, this comparative pessimism should be contextualised. While Germany has indeed visibly expanded its defence commitments, and many argue that "beyond German fiscal stimulus and defence efforts, little of substance has changed [in Europe]" (Brzeski, 2025), clear structural challenges remain. Workforce shortages, a lack of skilled labour in major defence firms such as Rheinmetall and KNDS, and "decades of underinvestment in defence-related education and training" (EuroBrussels, 2026), indicate that many of these perceptions may not fully align with operational realities.

These findings suggest that professional experience fundamentally shapes perceptions of defence institutions. Rather than reinforcing institutional confidence, affiliation appears associated with greater critical scrutiny and a stronger tendency towards comparative evaluation. This distinction has important implications for understanding civil-military relations, particularly when policymakers seek

to gauge public confidence through surveys that do not distinguish between professional and civilian respondents.

5: Conclusion

Trust, transparency, and public engagement emerge from this analysis as central determinants of contemporary civil-military relations in both the United Kingdom and Germany. Overall, the findings reveal four principal conclusions. First, respondents frequently claimed high levels of knowledge and neutrality, yet more detailed questioning revealed clearer and more differentiated attitudes, particularly regarding transparency. Second, while political trust may be declining, confidence in defence institutions themselves proved considerably more resilient. Third, transparency and public engagement were consistently understood as closely connected concepts rather than distinct dimensions of civil-military relations. Finally, respondents with professional experience of the defence sector were often more critical of their own institutions than members of the general public, highlighting the importance of professional affiliation when interpreting public attitudes. Taken together, these findings suggest that the strength of civil-military relations depends not only on military capability, but equally on communication, legitimacy, and public confidence.

These findings have important implications for contemporary defence policy. Defence legitimacy in liberal democracies increasingly depends upon maintaining public trust and effective communication, meaning governments cannot assume that growing external threats will automatically translate into public support for defence policy or increased military spending. This has important ramifications for recruitment and public resilience strategies, as particularly the qualitative responses indicate that citizens value education, preparedness, and transparency more than symbolic or purely recruitment-focused engagement initiatives. Recent debate surrounding military service reform in Germany further illustrates the political sensitivity of public engagement with defence policy (Cole, 2026). At the same time, defence institutions must ensure greater democratic accountability "without compromising on confidentiality" (Ernst&Young, 2025). While trust in defence institutions currently appears more stable than trust in politics generally, rapidly evolving security conditions mean these issues will likely become increasingly important, as one survey respondent observed: "the only way the UK and Germany stand a chance in the current conflict-ridden geopolitical landscape is for its citizens to be prepared and to trust their defence systems fully". Military capability remains

indispensable, but it is no longer sufficient. Effective defence policy also depends on maintaining informed, engaged, and trusting civilian populations capable of understanding and supporting the strategic choices made in their name.

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Appendix

United Kingdom Survey Questions:

- **About you:**
  - What is your gender? (‘Male’, ‘Female’, ‘Prefer not to say’)
  - What age range do you fall into? (‘18-25’, ‘26-35’, ‘36-45’, ‘46-55’, ‘56+’)
  - Which of the below statements best describes you?
    - ‘I currently work in the defence sector, including the army, the Ministry of Defence, and private defence industries’
    - ‘I am now retired/am employed elsewhere, but have worked in the defence sector, including the army, the Ministry of Defence, and private defence industries’
    - ‘None of the above apply, I do not and have never worked in the defence sector’
- **Your perspective:**
  - For each of the organisations below, choose an option which accurately describes your level of knowledge. In making your choice, take into account any of the ways you have learned or heard about them.

	Know very well	Know just a little	Have heard of but know almost nothing	Never heard of/don't know
The Ministry of Defence (MOD)	○	○	○	○
UK Armed Forces	○	○	○	○
MOD civil servants	○	○	○	○

  - For each of the organisations below, choose an option which accurately describes how favourable or unfavourable your overall opinion or impression of each is. Take into account anything you might think is important. Is your opinion...

	Very favourable	Mainly favourable	Neither/nor	Mainly unfavourable	Very unfavourable
The Ministry of Defence (MOD)	○	○	○	○	○
UK Armed Forces	○	○	○	○	○
MOD Civil Servants	○	○	○	○	○

  - Thinking now about the United Kingdom's defence structure as a whole (Ministry of Defence and the UK Armed Forces), please consider the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

  - It is important for the UK's defence system to be transparent with its citizens.
    - ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Somewhat agree’, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’, ‘Somewhat disagree’, ‘Strongly disagree’
  - Please explain your answer briefly. For instance, how would you define transparency in this context? [*Text box response*]

  - The UK's defence system is sufficiently transparent with its citizens.
    - ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Somewhat agree’, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’, ‘Somewhat disagree’, ‘Strongly disagree’
  - Please explain. [*Text box response*]

  - I trust the UK's defence system to fulfil its stated aims and supposed role(s).

        - ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Somewhat agree’, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’, ‘Somewhat disagree’, ‘Strongly disagree’
    - Please expand upon your answer, for example what do you view as the supposed roles of the UK's defence system? [*Text box response*]

    - It is the responsibility of the UK's defence system to actively engage with its citizens (for instance in the form of making an active contribution through events, increased awareness and training etc.).
        - ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Somewhat agree’, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’, ‘Somewhat disagree’, ‘Strongly disagree’
    - Please expand upon your answer, for example what type of engagement do you view as necessary? [*Text box response*]

    - The UK's defence system currently actively, appropriately, and sufficiently engages with its citizens.
        - ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Somewhat agree’, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’, ‘Somewhat disagree’, ‘Strongly disagree’
    - Please explain. [*Text box response*]

    - Finally, how do you feel the defence structures of the UK compare to those of Germany, in reference to citizen's trust, transparency, and public engagement?
        - ◯ They are superior in the UK
        - ◯ They are marginally better in the UK
        - ◯ They are very similar in both countries, but both positive
        - ◯ They are very similar in both countries, but both negative
        - ◯ They are marginally better in Germany
        - ◯ They are superior in Germany
        - ◯ ⃠ I don't know

- **Additional Insight:**
    - The main portion of the survey is now complete. If you wish to make any additional comments, for instance reference a perspective not covered by the questions, give a related opinion, or state any relevant personal experience (which will be anonymised), please do so below. Otherwise, continue to the end by pressing the arrow.

Germany Survey Questions:

- **Über Sie:**
    - Was ist Ihr Geschlecht? (‘Männlich’, ‘Weiblich’, ‘Möchte ich nicht sagen’)
    - In welche Altersgruppe fallen Sie? (‘18-25’, ‘26-35’, ‘36-45’, ‘46-55’, ‘56+’)
    - Welche der folgenden Aussagen beschreibt Sie am besten?
        - ‘Ich arbeite derzeit im deutschen Verteidigungssystem, darunter für die Bundeswehr, das Bundesministerium der Verteidigung (BMVg) und die Rüstungs- und Verteidigungsindustrie (private Unternehmen).’
        - ‘Ich bin jetzt im Ruhestand/arbeite woanders, habe aber im deutschen Verteidigungssystem gearbeitet, unter anderem für die Bundeswehr, das

Bundesministerium der Verteidigung (BMVg) und die Rüstungs- und Verteidigungsindustrie (private Unternehmen).'

- 'Keiner der oben genannten Punkte trifft zu, ich arbeite nicht und habe nie im Verteidigungssektor gearbeitet.'

- **Ihre Perspektive:**
  - Wählen Sie für jede der unten genannten Organisationen eine Option aus, die Ihren Wissensstand genau beschreibt. Berücksichtigen Sie bei Ihrer Auswahl alle Möglichkeiten, wie Sie davon erfahren oder gehört haben.

	Ich weiß viel darüber	Ich weiß ein wenig darüber	Ich habe davon gehört, weiß aber fast nichts darüber	Nie davon gehört/weiß nicht
Bundesministerium der Verteidigung (BMVg)	○	○	○	○
Bundeswehr	○	○	○	○
Parlamentarische Kontrolle über das Militär	○	○	○	○

  - Wählen Sie für jede der unten genannten Organisationen eine Option aus, die Ihre allgemeine Meinung oder Ihren Eindruck von jeder Organisation am besten beschreibt. Berücksichtigen Sie dabei alles, was Ihnen wichtig erscheint. Ist Ihre Meinung...

	Sehr positiv	Überwiegend positiv	Weder/noch	Überwiegend negativ	Sehr negativ
Bundesministerium der Verteidigung (BMVg)	○	○	○	○	○
Bundeswehr	○	○	○	○	○
Parlamentarische Kontrolle über das Militär	○	○	○	○	○

  - Wenn Sie nun über das gesamte Verteidigungssystem Deutschlands nachdenken, überlegen Sie bitte, inwieweit Sie den folgenden Aussagen zustimmen oder nicht zustimmen.

  - Es ist wichtig, dass das deutsche Verteidigungssystem gegenüber seinen Bürgern transparent ist.
    - 'Ich stimme voll und ganz zu', 'Ich stimme teilweise zu', 'Ich stimme weder zu noch bin ich dagegen', 'Ich stimme teilweise nicht zu', 'Ich stimme überhaupt nicht zu'
  - Bitte erläutern Sie Ihre Antwort. Wie würden Sie beispielsweise Transparenz in diesem Zusammenhang definieren? [*Text box response*]

  - Das deutsche Verteidigungssystem ist gegenüber seinen Bürgern ausreichend transparent.
    - 'Ich stimme voll und ganz zu', 'Ich stimme teilweise zu', 'Ich stimme weder zu noch bin ich dagegen', 'Ich stimme teilweise nicht zu', 'Ich stimme überhaupt nicht zu'
  - Bitte erläutern Sie. [*Text box response*]

- Ich vertraue darauf, dass das deutsche Verteidigungssystem seine veröffentlichten Ziele und vorgesehenen Aufgaben erfüllt.
    - ‘Ich stimme voll und ganz zu’, ‘Ich stimme teilweise zu’, ‘Ich stimme weder zu noch bin ich dagegen’, ‘Ich stimme teilweise nicht zu’, ‘Ich stimme überhaupt nicht zu’
- Bitte erläutern Sie Ihre Antwort, z. B. was sind Ihrer Meinung nach die Aufgaben des deutschen Verteidigungssystems? [*Text box response*]

- Es liegt in der Verantwortung des deutschen Verteidigungssystems, sich aktiv mit seinen Bürgern zu engagieren (beispielsweise in Form von Veranstaltungen, Sensibilisierungsmaßnahmen, Schulungen usw.).
    - ‘Ich stimme voll und ganz zu’, ‘Ich stimme teilweise zu’, ‘Ich stimme weder zu noch bin ich dagegen’, ‘Ich stimme teilweise nicht zu’, ‘Ich stimme überhaupt nicht zu’
- Bitte erläutern Sie Ihre Antwort, z. B. welche Art von Engagement Sie für notwendig/wichtig halten. [*Text box response*]

- Das deutsche Verteidigungssystem arbeitet derzeit aktiv, angemessen und ausreichend mit seinen Bürgern zusammen.
    - ‘Ich stimme voll und ganz zu’, ‘Ich stimme teilweise zu’, ‘Ich stimme weder zu noch bin ich dagegen’, ‘Ich stimme teilweise nicht zu’, ‘Ich stimme überhaupt nicht zu’
- Bitte erläutern Sie. [*Text box response*]

- Wie schätzen Sie das Verteidigungssystem Deutschlands im Vergleich zu dem des Vereinigten Königreichs ein, was das Vertrauen der Bürger, die Transparenz und die Beteiligung der Öffentlichkeit angeht?
    - ◯ Sie sind in Deutschland überlegen
    - ◯ In Deutschland sind sie etwas besser
    - ◯ Sie sind in beiden Ländern sehr ähnlich, aber beide im positiven Sinne
    - ◯ Sie sind in beiden Ländern sehr ähnlich, allerdings beide im negativen Sinne
    - ◯ Im Vereinigten Königreich sind sie etwas besser
    - ◯ Sie sind im Vereinigten Königreich überlegen
    - ◯ ⃠ Ich weiß es nicht

- **Zusätzliche Einblicke:**
    - Der Hauptteil der Umfrage ist nun abgeschlossen. Wenn Sie zusätzliche Kommentare abgeben möchten, beispielsweise auf einen Aspekt hinweisen möchten, der in den Fragen nicht behandelt wurde, eine Meinung dazu äußern möchten oder relevante persönliche Erfahrungen schildern möchten (die anonymisiert werden), können Sie dies unten tun. Ansonsten fahren Sie bitte mit dem Pfeil bis zum Ende fort.