

3-21-22

Analysis

# Strategic Intelligence and Foreign Affairs Initiative

## Weekly Newsletter

Liberty University

Helms School of Government Students



# Table of Contents

*Weekly Newsletter.....1*

.....1

*Vladimir Putin’s Health.....3*

    BLUF .....3

    Analysis.....3

    Sources .....4

*Russian Opposition to the Ukrainian Invasion .....4*

    BLUF .....4

    Analysis.....4

    Sources .....6

*Russia-Ukraine Conflict Updates .....6*

    BLUF .....6

    Analysis.....7

    Sources .....7

*China.....7*

    BLUF .....7

    Analysis.....8

    Sources .....9

*Iran Missile Launch .....9*

    BLUF .....9

    Analysis.....10

    Sources .....11

*Appendix A .....12*

    Could Germany be America’s Most Valuable Ally?.....12

    Analysis.....13

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## Vladimir Putin's Health

### BLUF

- Reports of Putin's ill health have been in the public eye since the beginning of 2020, however with the invasion of Ukraine reports have gone up. Sources claim that Putin is dying from bowel cancer. His recent bloated appearance is a known side effect of chemotherapy, and reports of erratic behavior could be explained using steroid therapy. Photos taken with leaders have him at a six feet apart distance, which is ironic since he does not wear masks in his public appearances. During certain forms of cancer therapies, distance from others may be needed to prevent infections.

### Analysis

#### SWOT On the Assumption that Putin is Sick

<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None known</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putin               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Weakness and possible side effects of illness could make him easier to influence/manipulate</li> <li>○ His illness could leave a power vacuum if it worsens to a point</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The military could hold a coup to end invasion of Ukraine</li> <li>• Inner circle could take advantage of his weakness to assert more power</li> <li>• Possible power vacuum opening could leave a place for inner circle members to step up</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign powers could attempt to strongarm Putin (unlikely attempt/success)</li> <li>• Internal struggle</li> <li>• Revolt from common people (unlikely)</li> <li>• International acknowledgement of weakness could force way to have Putin step down</li> <li>• Power vacuum could increase internal struggle/tension</li> </ul>

#### Conclusion

- It is concluded with medium confidence that President Vladimir Putin is sick. According to the data presented and photos with other world leaders he is distanced from others, although his

stance on the coronavirus is more unorthodox than other world leaders. While he is vaccinated, he appears more reclusive and distanced than other leaders. The reports of his erratic behavior could also be explained by a steroid treatment or confirming possible rumors of Parkinson's. He also has been seen as more bloated and paler, which is odd as a world leader who prides himself on his "machismo" type of personality.

## Sources

1. [US News](#)
2. [Examiner Live](#)
3. [National World](#)
4. [US News](#)
5. [Daily Mail](#)

# Russian Opposition to the Ukrainian Invasion

## BLUF

- Since February 24th protests have broken out in Russia opposing the Ukrainian invasion. Approximately 15,000 Russian citizens (0.0009% of the population) have been detained by police and despite new laws banning anti-invasion rhetoric, protests are continuing throughout the country. It is predicted with medium confidence these protests will continue to occur but ultimately will not result in immediate reform or reconsideration of the Ukrainian invasion.

## Analysis

### Chronology

- 24 Feb: Russia invades Ukraine, activist Lev Ponomarev started petition to protest invasion
- 27 Feb: Major protests begin in Russia in over 53 cities, including Moscow and St. Petersburg
- 2 March: Alexei Navalny calls for further protests and civil disobedience from jail
- 3 March: 1.5 million signatures on the petition
- 4 March: Russian government implements anti-war criminalization laws, making it illegal to spread "fake news" about the Russian military or to call an end to the invasion
- 14 March: Russian journalist at state-controlled Channel 1, Marina Ovsyannikova, detained after protesting Ukraine

invasion on live television

### SWOT

<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support of peace from high-profile Russians (ex: Mikhail Fridman and Oleg Deripaska)</li> <li>• International support (anti-invasion protests and acts of solidarity in ~70 countries)</li> <li>• Open support from Russian journalists (ex: Marina Ovsyannikova)</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protestors are minority of Russian population</li> <li>• Lack of outlets due to restriction/control of social media</li> <li>• No cracks in Putin's "inner circle"</li> <li>• Putin's increased popularity in Russian politics since the invasion</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential poor results of the invasion effort (e.g., indisputable evidence of more costs than benefits of invasion)</li> <li>• Economic hardship due to sanctions</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media censorship</li> <li>• Arrest/violence</li> <li>• Enactment of Russian National Guard to work with politsiya</li> <li>• Disinformation campaigns from Kremlin</li> </ul>

### Multiple Scenario Projection

- Variables: economics, military failures (e.g., Loss of life cost/benefit), disinformation campaigns, position of high-profile oligarchs, capability of police forces
- Drivers:
  - Oligarchs – spectrum: pro-invasion to anti-invasion
  - Police capability – spectrum: authoritative power resources and influence to low power resources and influence
  - Disinformation campaigns – spectrum: believable to unconvincing
- Highest Impact Scenario
  - Russian oligarchs turn towards anti-invasion sentiments due to economic recession and negative political impacts. If these impacts were to occur, it is unlikely that Putin would step down from his position in any circumstance.
  - Two potential impacts
    - Internal political pressure on Putin to withdraw
    - Full oligarchical support of a coup of Putin's regime.
- Worst Case Scenario

- National Guard enacted and mass arrests occur throughout the country. Protestors are a significant minority and the extent of Russian disinformation on the war effort has caused the general Russian population to view the incursion favorably, making it easier for the Kremlin to dismiss protestors as “foreign agents” seeking to overthrow the government.
- Most Likely Scenario
  - Protests will continue but yield little result and will slowly fade as the Russian government cracks down on dissent. So long as high-level government officials and oligarchs support and/or abstain from the conflict it is unlikely that a policy change will occur.

### Conclusion

- The Russian police have extensive authority under the “On Police” legislation approved in 2018, and Putin’s implementation of a National Guard in 2016 also opens a new avenue of civilian control and disbandment of protests. Furthermore, Russia’s recent anti-war criminalization laws allow subjective rulings on words and actions which also undermines the ability of protests to gain momentum. Thus, it is determined with medium confidence that without contribution and support from high-level oligarchs in Russian society, it is unlikely that protests will result in immediate change to policy on the Russian invasion.

### Sources

1. [Wall Street Journal](#)
2. [Atlantic Council](#)
3. [NY Times](#)
4. [DW](#)
5. [The Conversation](#)
6. [BBC](#)

## Russia-Ukraine Conflict Updates

### BLUF

- Russia's invasions of Ukraine have been plagued with logistical and tactical errors while also being met with much more resistance than anticipated from Ukrainian armed forces. With international protests growing and the lack of support from the population Russia has entrenched themselves in a war that is slowly grinding to a halt and could last longer than anyone expected, leading to a potential counter insurgency from the Ukrainians.

## Analysis

### Multiple Scenario Projection

- Highest Impact Scenario
  - Russian military stops fighting in Ukraine and Putin loses power in Russia leading to a complete change in leadership and the beginning of new relations between Russia and Ukraine.
- Worst Case Scenario
  - Putin results to the use of nuclear weapons resulting in the conflict becoming global with the involvement of NATO and the U.S. retaliating with heavy force possibly leading to a direct war between the U.S. and Russia.
- Least Likely Scenario
  - U.S. military offer direct troop support to Ukrainian army intensifying the fighting but would push Russian troops back into Russian territory leading to military conflict with U.S. and Russia.
- Most Likely Scenario
  - Putin continues invasion of Ukraine and attempts to seize control of the whole country and throwing everything he has into the lagging invasion.

### Conclusion

- With Putin locked into a fight that is more than he calculated, he has no choice but to use every option that is available to him in order to continue the bogging invasion of Ukraine. With international protests gaining more and more traction especially within Russia itself Putin has no choice but to either back down and show a side of weakness or push forward head on into a battle that he is not ready to face.

## Sources

1. [Understanding War](#)
2. [BBC](#)
3. [Reuters](#)
4. [Aljazeera](#)
5. [Oryx](#)

## China

### BLUF

- China is still continuing to try and consolidate its perceived territory in its western border with India and in Taiwan. The Chinese have been doing a variety of things in order to achieve

these goals, such as securing an arrangement with India regarding their disputed border, continuing to threaten Taiwan and Western support of Taiwan, and control domestic issues such as a resurgence of COVID.

## Analysis

### Starburst

- Who
  - China
  - India
  - Chinese citizenry
  - Y Jiechi
  - J Sullivan
  - Russia
  - AUKUS
- What
  - What does China have to gain by backing Russia?
  - What consequences would China consider for nations who support Taiwan?
- When
  - When did tensions between India and China begin?
  - When would be the best time for China to invade Taiwan?
- How
  - How would China respond to AUKUS growth?
  - How would a warmer Sino-Indi and relations hip affect US National Security interests?
  - How will a COVID spike in Shenzhen affect global electric supply?
- Why
  - Why is there a new flair-up of COVID cases in China?

### PMESII

- Political
  - Foreign policy stance revolves around consolidation and expansion to put geography between its adversaries and the mainland
- Military
  - Large, unarmed military presence on the border with India
  - Buzzing of Taiwanese airspace
- Economic
  - Large electronic producer in Shenzhen
  - Interconnected with the global economy
- Social
  - Organized population that values the collective



- Largely in favor of “reunification”
- Information
  - Pushing out anti-West propaganda

### Conclusion

- As the United States and its allies try to form alliances to curb Chinese expansion, China is maneuvering to lessen the effects of a SEATO-type military alliance by trying to form warmer ties between itself and India by attempting to close disputes over their shared border. The reaction of President Biden after his talk with President Xi does indicate that there is a real possibility that Russia will receive military aid from China in their war against Ukraine. China does not feel confident enough to stage a military invasion of Taiwan at the moment, however it is maneuvering itself to put all the pieces in place to achieve that goal. In the meantime, China will continue its boisterous rhetoric against the West and their support of Taiwan.

### Sources

1. [SCMP](#)
2. [SCMP](#)
3. [Politico](#)
4. [Bloomberg](#)
5. [Skynews](#)

## Iran Missile Launch

### BLUF

- With moderate to high confidence, I assess that Iran will continue to develop and bolster their missile defense system/arsenal. Concerning current and future conflicts between Iran and its adversaries, it can be expected that they will continue a consistent approach to how they retaliate (given historical observations and patterns of response and attack). I would also recommend that the U.S. take cautious steps in ensuring national security interests by closely monitoring action and affairs in the Middle East region; namely, relations among Israel, Iran, and Russia. It would also be beneficial for the U.S. to reinforce its foreign bases and establish mutual relations with locals in said foreign regions. While U.S. involvement is considered peripheral at the moment, there is a strong chance that it could increase and become primary, therefore heightening the stakes and risks of U.S. national security interests.

## Analysis

### SWOT: From the Perspective of Iran

<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient number of missiles</li> <li>• Domestically made missiles, sufficient resources</li> <li>• Strategically produced, stored, and launched</li> <li>• Heavily guarded/protected; geostrategic position</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy economic sanctions due to lack of JCPOA reinstatement</li> <li>• Lack of international aide/allies</li> <li>• Loss of Russian support due to Russia-Ukraine conflict</li> <li>• History of religions and political conflict with opposing Middle Eastern States <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specifically, Israel</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redline: military/kinetic force on Islamic homeland to any opposing state</li> <li>• Ability and resources to continue manufacturing domestically made ballistic missiles</li> <li>• Ability to continue missile defense system/arsenal</li> <li>• Unofficial military support/partnership with Russia</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International opposition: U.S., Israel, Iraq, and Russia</li> <li>• Further/harsher economic and political sanctions from opposing states</li> <li>• Suspension of secret Baghdad-brokered talks of peace</li> <li>• JCPOA re-initiation under harsher restriction/policy</li> </ul>

### Key Assumptions: Iran and Israel Conflict

- Supported
  - Iran missile strike was retaliation
  - US national security interests are at risk and could indicate further US involvement in Middle Eastern affairs
- Unsupported
  - The Israeli airstrike group was made up of a Zionist regime of spies causing conspiracy and mischief
- Caveated
  - Iran will always respond/retaliate with missile or rocket strikes when offended/hit by other states
  - This was not an intentional strike at the US consulate

### Conclusion

- The Iranian Missile “Crisis” displays the patterns observed in history of Iran’s response/retaliation to offensive military aggression from adversarial states. This is seen most commonly (but not limited to) in the Middle East region, especially with some of Iran’s neighboring states. This conflict primarily involved Iran and Israel and peripherally involved U.S. and potentially Russia. The U.S. consulate, being fairly new and unoccupied, appears to not have been hit intentionally during the Iranian missile strike, but nevertheless U.S. national security interests are still at risk to a degree. Iran has the capabilities and resources to continue its production in domestic missile manufacturing and the high probability that it will retain consistency in its responses and retaliation. In light of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, international relations have been tense and continue to be so as other international conflicts rise or continue.

### Sources

1. [Reuters](#)
2. [MSN](#)
3. [American Military News](#)
4. [News Talk ZB](#)
5. [ABC News](#)
6. [Reuters](#)
7. [Rudaw](#)
8. [Times of Israel](#)
9. [JNS](#)

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*“The question shouldn’t be what we ought to do, but what we can do” – Rory Stewart*

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## Appendix A

### Could Germany be America's Most Valuable Ally?



Germany spent 47 billion euros on defense in 2021(Reuters), Chancellor Olaf Scholz has introduced a measure to add 100 billion euros in military spending. This initial increase is technically a one-time increase (DW, 2022). The added 100 billion in spending would bring the 2022 German defense spending past 147 billion

euros. Consider that Chancellor Scholz has committed to reaching the NATO agreement for a 2% GDP expenditure on military spending, Germany would need to spend a yearly amount of around 76 billion, when German GDP is 3.8 trillion (World Bank Group, 2022). Scholz has committed the 100 billion expenditures to modernizing and preparing the German military for legitimate NATO conflict. In the years past, Germany has neglected their military to the point of having less than 50% of their forces operationally ready (DW, 2019). The Bundeswehr currently has less than 200 hundred thousand personnel. This down from the 500 hundred thousand in 1990 (World Bank Group, n.d.). As recently as 2018, it was reported that Germany had only 4 Eurofighter jets ready for combat out of 128 (DW, 2018), however, this information cannot be independently clarified as that is classified. It is probable that more are combat ready as of 2022. Eurofighters are aging, but not yet considered obsolete, despite being retired by some nations. Germany also produces the Leopard 2a7 MBT with a price tag around 15 million euros. Infantry equipment is even with the standards of other nations, despite reports suggesting training equipment was underscored, some units trained with broomsticks.

The German navy has 16,300 personnel, 61 naval craft, and 51 aircraft (Bundeswehr, n.d.). Despite the aircraft, Germany has no aircraft carriers in their navy. The army has 60,000 soldiers (Bundeswehr, n.d.). The army uses the German-produced Leopard 2a7 MBT. The Luftwaffe, or German air force, has 27,725 personnel, and 380 aircraft, including helicopters (n.d.). Most German equipment can be publicly viewed [Bundeswehr.de](https://www.bundeswehr.de), a comprehensive PDF produced by the government.

Germany has a very large GDP, the largest in Europe by some margin. This report places the GDP at 3.8 trillion. This is several trillion larger than the GDP of Russia, which stands at 1.4 trillion according to World Bank Group (2020). Germany produces and exports a wide array of technology and material, with globally represented brands. Their economy is comparable to that of the U.S., however, on a smaller scale and with considerable government oversight. Politically, the German government oversees a population fairly reserved over combat and military operations. In the research for this analysis, the Germans who agreed to speak have a plethora of opinions regarding the military, yet none consider their force to be a global fighting power, like that of the U.S. The younger generation tended to see the German-based U.S. forces as an extension of German defense, thereby outsourcing their defense expenditures. A person connected to a German military academy, speaking on condition of anonymity, expressed the lack of motivation for another conflict within the ranks of the military.

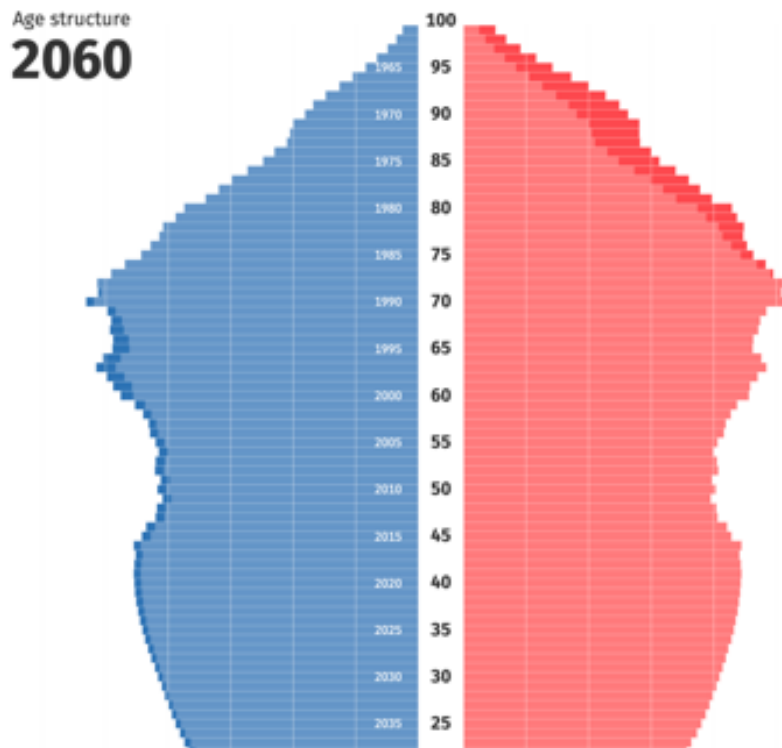
## Analysis

### The Potential for a German Superpower and America's most valuable NATO Ally

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located centrally in Europe</li> <li>• High production capabilities</li> <li>• Large population</li> <li>• Nearby NATO allies</li> <li>• Defensible Terrain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population is reserved about military</li> <li>• Poor historical precedent</li> <li>• Heavy reliance on Russian energy</li> <li>• Unkept and unready equipment</li> <li>• Small navy and air force</li> </ul>

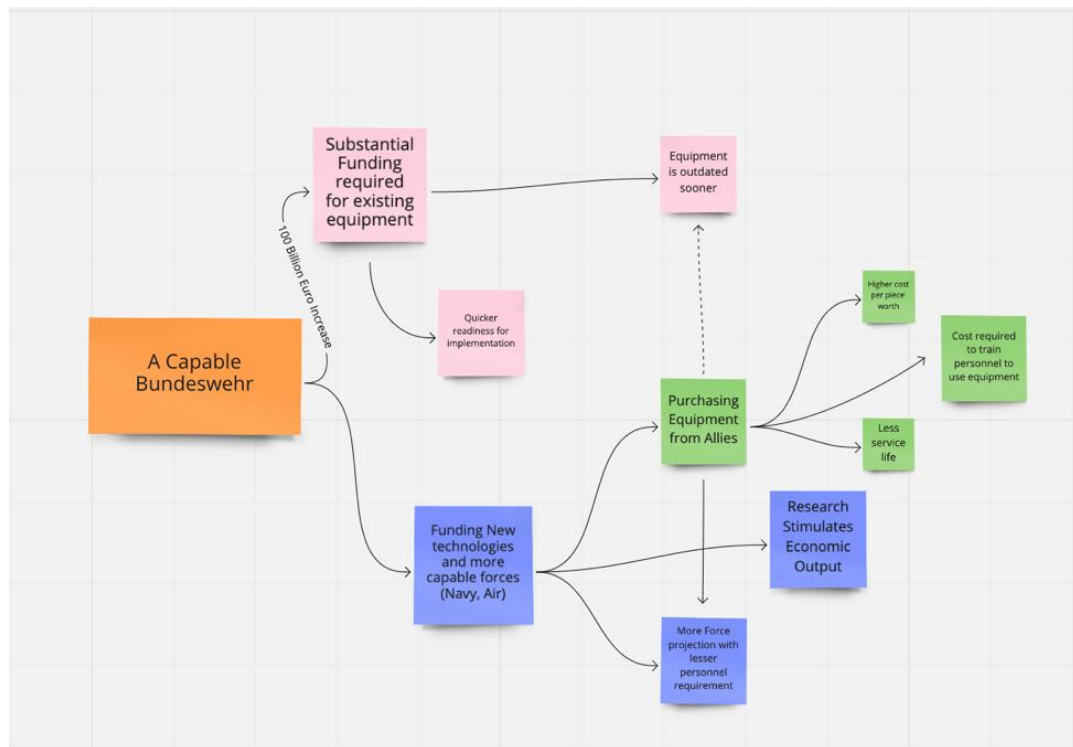
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Globally represented brands with economic importance</li> <li>Advanced technological production capabilities</li> <li>High GDP and Euro value</li> <li>Expansive Alliances and Unions</li> <li>Joint Equipment Cooperation and Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generationally weak military overall</li> <li>Close proximity to Russian held WW2 territorial gains</li> <li>Unable to project force across Baltic Sea</li> <li>Unsustainable reliance on opposition energy</li> <li>Reliant on American military policy</li> </ul>

Assessment of the SWOT table for Germany (focused on Military) shows that despite the 100 billion euro increase, which makes the military the third highest in funding for 2022, the Bundeswehr will need substantial yearly increases and time to make the military combat ready. Combat ready in this report is defined as capable of defense against Russian Armed Coalition.



With a population of approx. 80,000,000, the population is roughly 40 million men and 40 million women (destatis, n.d.). The population is generally healthy demographically, despite a suspected decrease in overall size due to birthrate (n.d.). Given that a small majority of the population will be older, as opposed to militarily capable younger generations, the possible conscription for Germany would likely lie around 20 to 30 million (men and women). Compared with the overall sentiment regarding the military, conscription will likely always be a last resort in the nation, and “volunteer” recruiting will take precedent. A modest volunteer-based military typically has around 500,000 personnel (active and reserve), up to 1.5 million personnel (the majority reserves). Germany had 500,000 as recently as 1990, before the fall of the Soviet Union.

Arguably more important than overall personnel numbers are equipment and upkeep. The U.S. continues to project as the world's foremost military, despite having personnel numbers a fraction the size of other nations. This is due to the reliance and spending on superior equipment. Germany currently produces high-level equipment worldwide, purchased often by other militaries. China has repeatedly purchased diesel submarine engines from the European nation. The Leopard 2a7 and a6 have been purchased and disseminated to countries like Saudi Arabia and Hungary. German firearms companies continue to produce and export trusted weapons to other nations and NATO alike, such as Heckler and Koch (HK, n.d.).



Using a concept map, it becomes clear that funding the Bundeswehr toward operational readiness and max capability is complex. The process would best be implemented through a multitiered approach. The options explored in the map were funding existing equipment, purchasing equipment from German allies, and research and developing new equipment. A historical review of power projection across nations shows that naval prowess is consistent indicator of capability abroad. For this analysis, colonial powers and world war belligerents were considered in their historical spheres. Across all conflicts, powerful navies contributed to higher levels of force projection. A navy allows a nation or empire to take force to another country, separating the conflict from domestic theater. Navy power also appears to have a correlation to economic prowess. This is likely due to the effect maritime trade and travel has on national interconnectivity. In the first World War, Germany and Britain did not have self-sufficient food production (Britannica, n.d.), however, Britain was able to effectively keep trade and supply open with their navy. The German navy in both World Wars was used to the effect of limiting allied maritime trade and movement. German Kriegsmarine numbers show overwhelming submarine

production in the second world war due to this. The issue with naval force projection in the modern age is the advent of militarized flight. Naval power had a greater impact in the first world war, likely due to air force technology and strategy being in its infancy. The second World War saw heavy use of aircraft carriers. Carriers are considered vital ships for military power and have essentially made battleships obsolete.

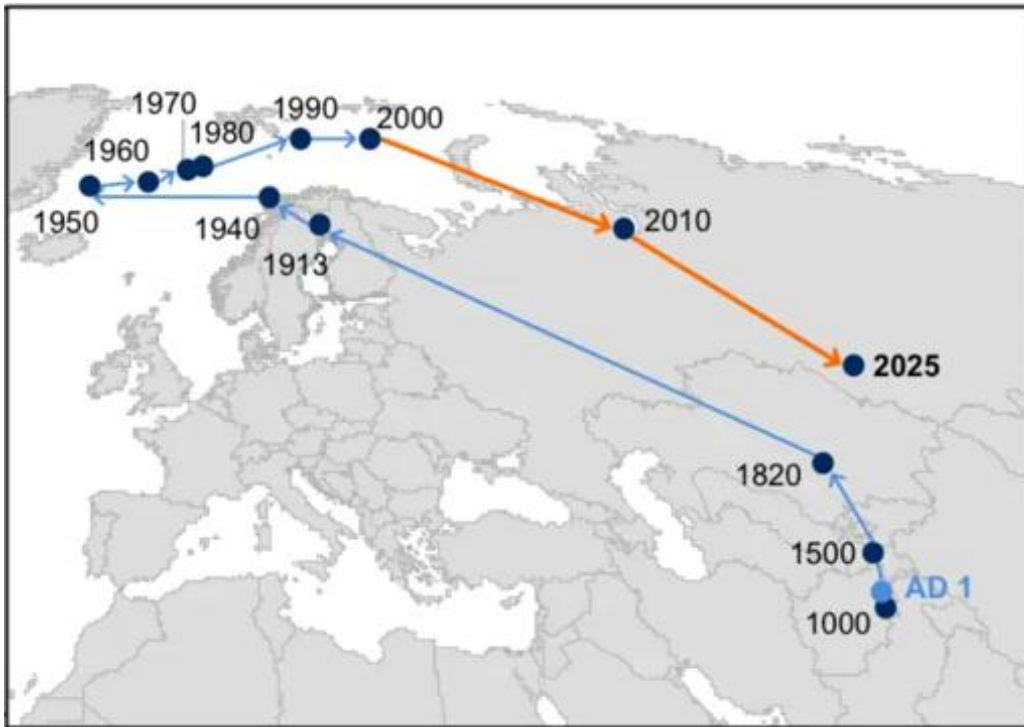
Colonial Powers					
	Navy	Army	Air Force	Economy	Force Projection
British Empire	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	High
Spanish Empire	Yes	Moderate	N/A	Yes	High
Dutch Empire	Yes	Moderate	N/A	Yes	High
German Empire	No	Moderate	N/A	Moderate	Low
French Empire	Yes	Yes	N/A	Moderate	High

World War 1					
	Powerful Navy	Powerful Army	Powerful Air Force	Powerful Economy	Force Projection
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Moderate	Yes	High
Spain	No	No	No	No	Low
Netherlands	No	No	No	Moderate	Low
German Empire	Yes	Yes	Moderate	Yes	High
France	Moderate	Yes	No	Yes	High

World War 2					
	Powerful Navy	Powerful Army	Powerful Air Force	Powerful Economy	Force Projection
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High
Russia	No	Yes	No	Yes	High
Nazi Germany	Yes	Yes	Moderate	Yes	High
France	Moderate	Yes	No	Yes	Low
United States	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High
Japan	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	No	Moderate

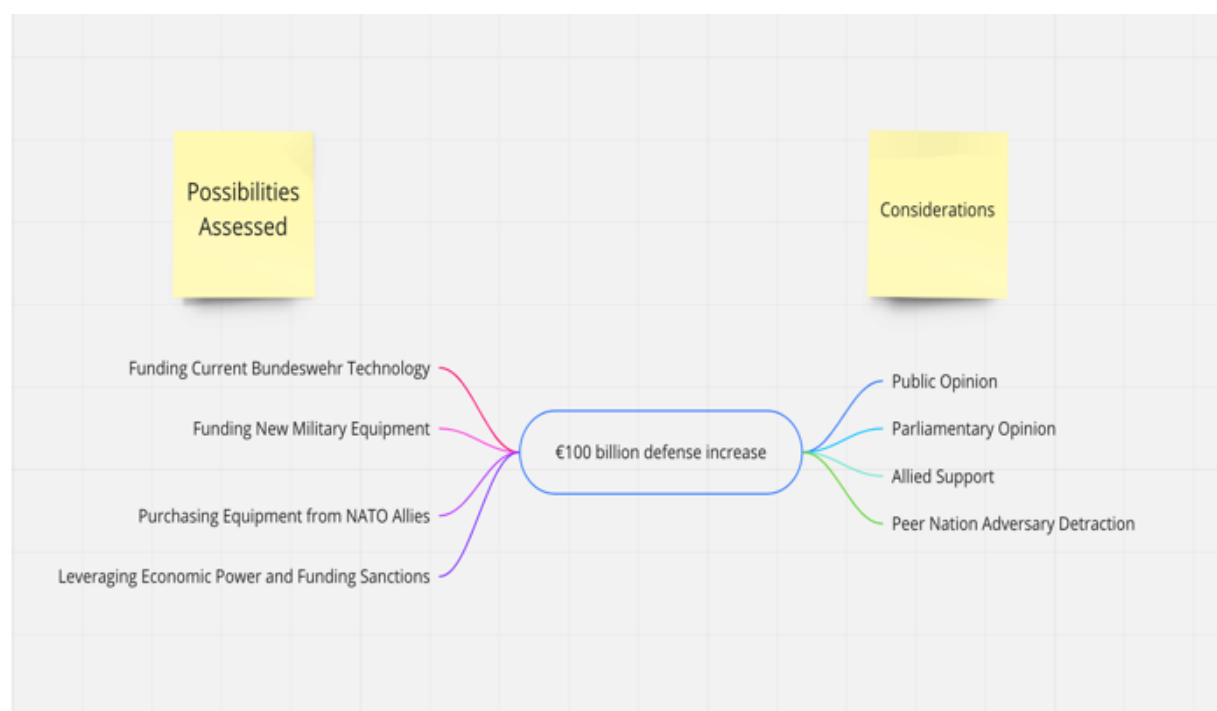
Considering power projection for German in the modern age, geography is important. Germany is west-central in Europe. This location provides a mountain range on its southern border, rivers on the east and western border, and the Baltic Sea to the north. All of these are defensible and valuable to a degree. Arguably their weakest point, the eastern border, is dominated by more gradual landscape and footing. The east also harbors remnants of the Soviet Union and iron curtain. Between Germany and aggressive nations is Poland, a nation currently meeting its NATO required 2% GDP spending. Considering these factors, aircraft carriers and moderate naval forces are likely not as valuable to Germany as a formidable air force.





The largest Luftwaffe base (Fürstenfeldbruck) is roughly 2,000km from Moscow. The Eurofighter Typhoon (the Jet Germany currently uses) has a “ferry range” of 5,300km (Armed Forces UK, n.d.). The Bundeswehr does not provide resource for the range of its Eurofighters, the maximum range of the aircraft is reported differently among sources. Considering it has a maximum range of at least 3,000km, then the Eurofighter, which has a dual-role capability (Eurofighter, n.d.), could feasibly pick up in Fürstenbruckfeld, perform an engagement over Moscow, and then land in allied Poland in one trip. The geography of Germany, then, negates the overall need for a Navy at this time. Europe remains an economic powerhouse, despite the global economic center shifting into Asia (Durden, 2012).

Economics have recently entered mainstream media in the form of a weapon, as the U.S. and NATO countries sanction Russia in its invasion of Ukraine. Economic control and withholding in an interconnected world is perhaps a weapon exclusive afforded to world powers. Germany boasts the world’s fourth largest economy (World Pop. Review, n.d.). German companies are world-renown, like Volkswagen, Allianz, and BMW. Germany exports over \$200 billion in value of cars and car parts (OEC, n.d.). It is probable that Germany can use its economic prowess to leverage trade.



The analysis here is a heavily modified indicators assessment. The idea behind it being a measurement of the dissent by different parties for action, and the opinions of those parties being considered by the German chancellor's party. The higher a value, the more likely it is assessed to be dissented to. Funding current equipment and economic sanctions appear to be the least provoking measures in terms of defensive actions and funding. The idea behind sanctions requiring funding is the offset cost of the government limiting its own business, as technically, sanctions go both ways in terms of business.

**Key:** Highly Likely (HL) = 5, Likely = 4, Could Happen (C) = 3, Unlikely (UL) = 1, Highly Unlikely (HUL) = 0

	Funding Current German Bundeswehr Equipment	Funding New Military Equipment	Purchasing Equipment from NATO Allies	Leveraging Economic Power and Sanctions
Public Opinion (Negative)	C	L	L	UL
Parliamentary Opinion (Negative of CDU)	UL	HL	HL	C
Allied Support (positive)	L	C	HL	L
Peer Nation Adversary Detraction	HUL	UL	HUL	HUL
Results:	0	7	4	0

Negative Values for positive outlook

**Conclusion:**

The overall conclusion of this assessment finds that Germany has the potential to be a superpower and NATO's second strongest nation, but to reach these levels, they will need much more than the "one time" €100 billion increase in defense-related spending. It would likely take close to a decade for Germany to reestablish a functioning and combat ready military on par with nations like the United Kingdom, at the least.

Germany boasts many characteristics that would propel rearmament and global standing. They have a very powerful economy built on domestic production. They have a large population that will not decrease *highly* significantly in the nearest years. Additionally, Germany produces some of the most effective and sought-after weapons in the world. Geographically, their position makes them a potential stalwart against eastern aggression from Russia. This would enable to the United States to put more resources into posturing against China, wherein Germany would be the nation to hold Russia within check.

**Final Assessment:**

Given 10-12 years of continued significant investment, Germany can become a near superpower.

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