



Germany inaugurates the National Drone Defense Center: a response to hybrid threats

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Berlin, December 17, 2025 – Germany has officially opened its first “**Gemeinsames Drohnenabwehrzentrum**” (**GDAZ**) in **Berlin**, a joint drone defense center that represents a significant step in responding to the growing threats related to the use of unmanned aerial vehicles in the context of **internal security and hybrid warfare**.

A 24/7 center to coordinate detection and intervention

The new GDAZ, located at the **Federal Police Directorate (Bundespolizei)** on Schöneberger Ufer, brings together for the first time under one roof:

- the **federal and Länder (State) police**
- the **Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA)**

- the **Bundeswehr (Armed Forces)**

- intelligence services

with the aim of **exchanging data, analyzing information, and coordinating real-time responses** against suspicious or potentially hostile drones. The center will operate **24 hours a day** and full operational launch is expected in **January 2026**.

Increasing threats: context and political perception

The German Interior Minister, **Alexander Dobrindt (CSU)**, stated that the number of suspicious drones detected in German skies has **increased significantly in recent months**, with frequent overflights of sensitive infrastructures such as airports, military bases, energy plants, and civilian structures. According to the government, **“in many cases we believe these drones are controlled by hostile powers”**, indirectly referring to possible connections with Russia and other hybrid threats.

Chancellor **Friedrich Merz** described these events as part of **hybrid warfare tactics**, aimed at destabilizing and putting pressure on European security.

Why the center was created: coordination and capacity improvement

Before the establishment of the GDAZ, drone defense in Germany was **distributed among various authorities** — from local police to the Bundeswehr — with poor information and expertise sharing. The new center aims to:

- create a **shared situational awareness framework**
- enable a **faster threat assessment**
- develop predictive models on used tactics
- coordinate immediate interventions in case of suspicious overflights

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As explained by German sources, the physical structure of the center includes a central operations room where specialists from different agencies work side by side to **analyze data**

from radar, sensors, and surveillance and define common operational strategies.

Regulations, authorities, and intervention capabilities

The creation of the GDAZ is part of a broader project to strengthen civilian air defense. This year, the German Parliament has **extended police powers to shoot down drones when necessary**, and **regulatory reforms** are underway to also allow the Bundeswehr to intervene in cases of armed drones or serious threats.

Moreover, the establishment of a **special drone defense unit** under the Bundespolizei with about 130 dedicated agents has been announced, tasked with monitoring and countering unauthorized aerial incursions.

Criticism and future challenges

There is no shortage of criticism and questions:

- Some experts point out that **shooting down small drones can be technically complex** and risky for public safety, especially near civilian infrastructures.
- The **increasing number of drones in civilian use** — estimated in the hundreds of thousands in Germany — makes it difficult to quickly distinguish between harmless objects and real threats.

However, the establishment of the GDAZ is seen by most analysts as **a fundamental step to fill coordination gaps** and to respond more effectively to a phenomenon that, according to recent reports, has seen **hundreds of suspicious overflights in 2025**.

Conclusion

Germany is pursuing a proactive drone defense strategy, embedded in the broader context of countering **modern hybrid threats**. With the new **National Drone Defense Center (GDAZ)**, Berlin aims to improve inter-agency cooperation, enhance the response to unauthorized incursions, and strengthen the protection of critical infrastructures. It remains to be seen how the new operational and regulatory capabilities will impact air security in the coming years, in a rapidly evolving landscape.

News link: <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/pressemitteilungen/EN/2025/12/gdaz-dez.html>