BALTIC INTERNATIONAL SECURITY CENTRE

German Media · Press Briefing | **30 October 2026**

Reporting period: 23–29 October 2026

Baltic Security in the German Press

● **25–29 October 2026** — German and Dutch army leaders, with all their generals, reconnoitre possible areas of operation in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania · Lithuania: two Germany-based suspects in the attempted Starlink arson in Vilnius held in Germany · Lithuania's State Defence Council wants to extend conscription to all young men from 2032 · Latvia's Prosecutor General's Office suspects Belarusian border guards of pushing migrants to sabotage the border

NEWS HOTSPOT

Starlink attack in Vilnius: terror suspects live in Germany

● Lithuanian investigators have identified **two suspects living in Germany** for the **attempted arson attack on Starlink equipment in Vilnius** on the night of 18 October; they are suspected of **founding and running a terrorist group** and of a terrorist attack. They see links to attacks in Poland and Bulgaria and are examining **possible ties to Russia**; Prime Minister Mindaugas Sinkevičius had attributed the attack to Russia's hybrid war soon after (**LRT, 29 Oct**).

BOUQUETS THIS WEEK

★ **BR24, 23 Oct** *(Max Gilbert, Claudia Kohler)* — maps, with 16 other public broadcasters including Lithuania's LRT and Latvia's LSM, physical hybrid attacks attributed to Russia or suspected of Russian involvement: airspace violations in the Baltics, "instrumentalised migration" from Belarus (in the words of Lithuania's interior minister) and armed smugglers in Latvia; it discloses its method and the map's gaps

BRICKBATS THIS WEEK

▲ **Berliner Zeitung, 24 Oct** *(Susanne Lenz)* — lets Lithuanian historians speak at length, then reads an EU cultural project with Kaliningrad on Thomas Mann and Kant as a sign that Lithuania no longer needs "to draw a sharp line against the Russian cultural space", recalling Moscow's "Russian World"; Soviet rule appears as mere happenstance, no mention of the word “occupation”.

▲ **FAZ, 26 Oct** *(Peter Carstens)* and **Tagesspiegel, 29 Oct** *(Sven Lemkemeyer)* — both write that NATO gave the German-Netherlands Corps command of possible land operations "in Estonia and Lithuania"; it covers Estonia and Latvia, Lithuania stays with Multinational Corps Northeast (**Bundeswehr, 30 Jun**)

WEEKLY SUMMARY

How the German press covered the Baltics this week

Extract — see the German briefing for full analysis, quotes, and media-by-media breakdown.

Coverage — The Baltics as the German army's "main area of responsibility". In the sample, 10 items in 7 outlets covered the generals' trip, 7 of them dpa copy (**FAZ, 29 Oct**). Army chief Lt Gen Christian Freuding expects Russian superiority in numbers "in this area, probably"; Dutch army commander Lt Gen Jan Swillens: "Perhaps a small land grab is on the agenda somewhere" (**n-tv, 29 Oct**). None of the ten quotes an Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian voice.

Sabotage and hybrid attacks on NATO's eastern flank. Seven items in five outlets covered the Starlink investigation (**SZ, 29 Oct**); the only Lithuanian voice is the criminal police, with no assessment from government or armed forces. Latvia's allegations against Belarus appear only in **n-tv, 26 Oct**, headlined as fact.

Facts largely right, headlines and leads sharper. **Berliner Zeitung, 27 Oct** opens with Moscow's aim to negotiate "Europe's security order"; several items date Russia's war to 2022 instead of 2014.

Gaps — In the sample, only **RND, 29 Oct** reported Lithuania's decision to extend conscription to all young men from 2032 (**LRT, 29 Oct**). Where German newsrooms report themselves (FAZ, SZ, BILD), German officers dominate; Baltic voices arrive almost only via agencies.

SOURCES

→ LRT: "„Starlink“ įrangą bandę padegti vyrai įtariami terorizmu, taikėsi į įrangą ir Bulgarijoje" (29 Oct, Lithuanian, Baltic primary source)
→ FAZ: "Heereschef will mehr Tempo zur Verteidigung des Baltikums" (29 Oct, dpa)
→ Süddeutsche Zeitung: "Litauen: Mutmaßliche Starlink-Saboteure in Deutschland in Haft" (29 Oct, SZ/dpa)

All links last accessed 30 Oct 2026.