LOCATION PROFILE

WEEZE

November 30, 2026

Rheinmetall at the Weeze site

- F-35 center fuselage sections in production since summer 2025; the world's second integrated production line
- At least 400 center fuselage sections included in the project scope; up to 36 per year at peak capacity
- 13 center fuselage sections in production (*as of November 30, 2026*); first delivery planned for early 2027
- Approx. 30,000 m² facility on a site covering approx. 60,000 m²;
  Investment volume of approximately 200 million EUR
- Approximately 350 employees; about 50 additional skilled workers planned



The Weeze site of Rheinmetall Aviation Services GmbH is part of Rheinmetall's *Digital Systems* Division and manufactures highly complex aircraft structures. Since the summer of 2025, center fuselage sections for the F-35A Lightning II multi-role fighter jet have been produced at Weeze Airport in the Kleve district of North Rhine-Westphalia. The client is Northrop Grumman; the collaboration is part of the F-35 program led by Lockheed Martin. With this project, Rheinmetall is expanding its expertise in military aircraft manufacturing and strengthening Germany's industrial participation in a key procurement project of the German Air Force.

Production ramp-up successful and fully on schedule

The project encompasses at least 400 center fuselage sections for the global F-35 program. Production ramp-up is proceeding successfully and according to plan. The first of 13 center fuselage sections currently in production is intended for the 18th German F-35 in the current production series.



The component will be completed by the end of 2026 and delivered in early 2027. This puts Rheinmetall well on track to reach a potential peak capacity of up to 36 fuselage center sections per year. Alongside Palmdale, California, Weeze is the world's second integrated production line for this key component.

Following the start of construction in the third quarter of 2023, a facility spanning approximately

30,000 square meters for production, logistics, research, and training was built in less than 18 months. Rheinmetall invested approximately 200 million EUR in the development of the site.

The approximately 60,000-square-meter property offers excellent development opportunities thanks to its proximity to the airport, transportation links, and space for expansion. The central fuselage section connects the cockpit, wings, tail, engine, and weapons systems, and encompasses key areas of the internal weapon bays and fuel tanks. Its complex structure places the highest demands on manufacturing and quality assurance. Modern production processes, robot-assisted manufacturing, and digital quality control, combined with a skilled workforce, ensure the necessary precision.

Workforce Expansion

Rheinmetall employs approximately 350 people in Weeze. Over the course of the next year, this number will rise to about 400 jobs. The expansion will encompass production, the supply chain, engineering, quality management, and administration. Training at Northrop Grumman in Palmdale and supplementary training in Weeze ensure the transfer of knowledge.



International Technology Transfer

Production draws on the F-35 program's international supply chain. In addition, Rheinmetall is integrating other suitable German suppliers. The transfer of technology and know-how from Northrop Grumman permanently strengthens Germany's manufacturing expertise in complex aircraft structures and opens up new opportunities for the domestic industry.

Modernization of the Air Force and Regional Prospects

The German procurement program currently comprises 35 F-35A aircraft, intended, among other things, to replace part of its Tornado fleet. The first aircraft was officially handed over to the Bundeswehr in September 2026 in Fort Worth, Texas. The first aircraft will initially remain in the U.S. for training; they are scheduled to arrive in Büchel, Rhineland-Palatinate, starting in late 2027. Through its participation in the program, Rheinmetall is strengthening the industrial base for the modernization of the German Air Force and cooperation with allied armed forces.

Infrastructure and Sustainability

Photovoltaics, demand-based lighting control, heat recovery, and air-to-water heat pumps support the plant's energy-efficient operation and reduce resource consumption as well as the use of fossil fuels. Expansion areas and international technology partnerships open up long-term prospects for Weeze as a production and innovation center for military aviation in North Rhine-Westphalia.