The idea of Rome being a demilitarized zone has often been transferred from the Republic to the imperial period. Nevertheless numerous written sources prove the presence of military and paramilitary units in the imperial city and its direct environment. As a matter of fact, from the first to the early fourth century between ten and forty thousand soldiers roamed the streets of the empire’s capital:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>1st century</th>
<th>2nd century</th>
<th>3rd century</th>
<th>early 4th century</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohortes praetoriae</td>
<td>4.500</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>10.000(^1)</td>
<td>10.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speculatores Augusti</td>
<td>300 (?)(^2)</td>
<td>300 (?)</td>
<td>300 (?)</td>
<td>300 (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evocati</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>(?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^4\) Cassius Dio 55.24.6.

It is inevitable that these troops, as an interacting social group, had an impact on everyday life. Their high number and permanent residence established them as a core influence on Rome’s cultural and social life. Their basic needs—for instance for food, housing and armoury—soon became an economic factor. In addition, the services they carried

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7 Cassius Dio 55.24.6.
8 Two inscriptions from the beginning of the third century that were found in the Villa Mattei on the Caelian hill mention 113 officers and 930 soldiers, and 109 officers and 1013 soldiers from the cohors V vigilum, CIL VI 1057; CIL VI 1058 (= ILS 2157).
9 The real strength of the numerus is unknown, but the existence of a ‘centurio frumentarius’ as well as the fact that a legion could send three frumentarii to Rome at the same time, leads to the given number. M. Reuter, Die frumentarii—neugeschaffene ›Geheimpolizei‹ Traians? In E. Schallmayer, ed., Traian in Germanien. Congress Saalburg/Bad Homburg 1999 (1999), 78.
10 The presence of other formations, that are not well-known, such as the so-called numerus primipilarius, the lanciarii the exploratores and the protectores is also proved for Rome. Ephemeris Epigraphica 4 (1881), 339 nr. 911–913; Ephemeris Epigraphica 5, 1884, 121–141, 647 f.
11 Also the act of obtaining their frumentum created contacts between soldiers and civilians, notably the vigiles ‘frumentum p(ublicum) a(ccipit) d(ie) XXII ost(io) XII.’ See: