



Home Office

# **Country Policy and Information Note**

## **Egypt: Military service**

**Version 3.0**

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# Executive summary

Military service is mandatory for all males between 18 and 30, with service lengths ranging from one to 3 years. Women are not subject to conscription and may only serve in limited fields.

Exemptions can be granted for a number of reasons, including family circumstances, health conditions and disabilities, for those who are completing their education and in cases of dual nationality. Exemptions are usually granted on a temporary basis with final exemptions from military service being granted when a person turns 30.

In general, people who evade, or desert from, military service do not fall within one of the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, including particular social group (PSG).

Compulsory national service is a prerogative of sovereign states. In general, compulsory military service in Egypt does not involve acts contrary to the basic rules of human conduct, the conditions are not so harsh as to amount to persecution and the punishment for draft evasion or desertion is not disproportionately harsh or severe.

Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from the state, they are unlikely to be able to obtain protection and unlikely to be able to relocate to escape that risk.

A claim made by women, men who are exempt from (unless temporary exemption) or have completed military service and men over the age of 30 are likely to be certifiable as clearly unfounded. Where another claim based on a refusal to undertake military service is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

All cases must be considered on their individual facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate they face persecution or serious harm.

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# Assessment

Section updated: 02 June 2025

## About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – that is the [country information](#), refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of **whether, in general**:

- a person faces a real risk of persecution/serious harm by the state either because they would have to undertake military service, or because of the consequences of not undertaking (deserting or evading) military service.
- internal relocation is possible to avoid persecution/serious harm
- a claim, if refused, is likely or not to be certified as ‘clearly unfounded’ under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

Decision makers **must**, however, consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

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## 1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

### 1.1 Credibility

- 1.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 1.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 1.1.3 Decision makers must also consider making an international biometric data-sharing check, when such a check has not already been undertaken (see [Biometric data-sharing process \(Migration 5 biometric data-sharing process\)](#)).
- 1.1.4 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person’s claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider language analysis testing, where available (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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### 1.2 Exclusion

- 1.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons to apply

one (or more) of the exclusion clauses. Each case must be considered on its individual facts.

- 1.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 1.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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## **2. Convention reason(s)**

- 2.1.1 In general, people who evade, or desert from, military service do not fall within one of the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, including particular social group (PSG). This is because they:
  - do not share an innate characteristic, or a common background that cannot be changed, or share a characteristic or belief that is so fundamental to identity or conscience that a person should not be forced to renounce it – and
  - do not have a distinct identity which is perceived as being different by the surrounding society.
- 2.1.2 Some people may claim that refusing to do military service, including as a conscientious objector, will be perceived by the state as an act of political opposition. The [Asylum Instruction on Military Service and Conscientious Objection](#) and paragraph 22 of the House of Lords judgement in the case of [Sepet & Another v. SSHD \[2003\] UKHL 15](#) explain that it is necessary to carefully examine the reason for the persecution in the mind of the persecutor rather than the reason which the victim believes is why they are being persecuted.
- 2.1.3 The available country evidence indicates that Egyptian authorities would not generally consider evading or deserting military service an act of political opposition in itself. If a person is penalised on return, it is usually for the criminal offence of evading or deserting national service.
- 2.1.4 Establishing a convention reason is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question is whether the person has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of an actual or imputed Refugee Convention reason.

- 2.1.5 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 2.1.6 For guidance on Humanitarian Protection see the Asylum Instruction, [Humanitarian Protection](#).

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### **3. Risk**

#### **3.1 General approach to claims based on (compulsory) military service**

- 3.1.1 Compulsory national service is a prerogative of sovereign states. A requirement to do compulsory military service – or punishment for failing to complete this duty – does not, in itself, give rise to a well-founded fear of persecution. It will only do so where, on account of a Convention reason:
  - (a) military service would involve acts, with which the person may be associated, which are contrary to the basic rules of human conduct; or
  - (b) the conditions of military service would be so harsh as to amount to persecution; or
  - (c) the punishment for draft evasion or desertion is disproportionately harsh or severe.

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#### **3.2 Risk based on conditions of (compulsory) military service**

- 3.2.1 In general, (a) does not apply in respect of Egyptian nationals. This is because Egypt's armed forces, whilst deployed in security roles in the Sinai region, are not routinely engaged in fighting and therefore would not be required to commit such acts.
- 3.2.2 In general, (b) does not apply in respect of Egyptian nationals. This is because the available evidence does not suggest that any conditions encountered would be so harsh as to amount to persecution.
- 3.2.3 Therefore, a person is unlikely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm from the state. The onus is on the person to demonstrate otherwise.
- 3.2.4 Military service in Egypt is mandatory for all males aged between 18 and 30, with service lengths varying based on education level, ranging from one to 3 years. This is followed by a period of between 9 and 15 years as a reservist. Women are not subject to conscription and may only serve voluntarily in limited fields such as specialised officers in administrative positions, nurses, and assistant civil servants (see [Age of recruitment and length of service](#)).
- 3.2.5 There is limited information regarding the number of conscripts in the military. One source estimated that 70.7% (310,000) of Egypt's active armed forces (438,500) were conscripts whereas the CIA World Factbook stated that conscripts make up 'a considerable portion' of the military and Central Security Force, but provided no further information (see [Conscripts](#)).
- 3.2.6 The military conscription process is highly structured, involving registration, medical examinations and background checks. Conscripts are selected based on age and education and must submit various official documents during the registration process. The Egyptian Ministry of Defense regularly issues public instructions and schedules for enlistment. Conscripts are issued with a military service card and a certificate upon completion of their

service (see [Procedures for being drafted](#) and [Military service documentation](#)).

- 3.2.7 Sources state that temporary and permanent exemptions from military service are common but data on the numbers granted each year could not be found. Exemptions can be granted for a number of reasons, including family circumstances (for example, when an individual is an only son), health conditions and disabilities, for individuals who are completing their education and in cases of dual nationality. Exemptions are usually granted on a temporary basis (although it is not clear from the evidence whether this is the case for medical grounds) with final exemptions from military service being granted when an individual turns 30. Individuals who are granted an exemption are issued with an exemption certificate (see [Temporary and permanent exemptions](#) and [Military service documentation](#)).
- 3.2.8 Information regarding the specific roles assigned to conscripts and the conditions they face is limited. Some sources indicate that conscripts are used as a form of 'cheap labour'. In previous years, conscripts were deployed on the front lines in North Sinai as part of counterterrorism operations, however, levels of violence have decreased significantly across 2023 and 2024. Available evidence indicates that conscripts have been deployed to the border with the Gaza Strip in security roles, with no evidence to indicate that conscripts are routinely engaged in active military combat, outside of isolated incidents between Egyptian and Israeli forces (see [Deployment, roles and conditions](#)).
- 3.2.9 Outside of military deployments, conscripts may also be placed in the police force, prison service or used as labour for military or state-affiliated development projects. Some conscripts are also placed in administrative roles, particularly those with political or social connections (see [Deployment, roles and conditions](#)).

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### 3.3 Risk based on desertion or evasion

- 3.3.1 In general, (c) does not apply in respect of Egyptian nationals as the available evidence does not establish that a person who deserts or evades military service is likely to be subject to a punishment that is so severe or harsh as to amount to serious harm or persecution. The onus is on the person to demonstrate otherwise.
- 3.3.2 There are no statistics in the sources consulted on the number of draft evaders/deserters imprisoned or fined, or length of detention for refusing to undertake military service in practice. There is also no evidence to indicate that specific groups are disproportionately targeted. Available evidence indicates that those who fail to report to register for military service can be punished with one year of additional service. Those who evade military service and who reach the age of 30 can be fined between 3,000 and 10,000 Egyptian Pounds [44.38-147.60 GBP] and be imprisoned for up to one year, although sources indicate that a fine is more common. These punishments are not considered to be disproportionate or excessive (see [Punishment](#) and [Arrest, detention and prosecution](#)).
- 3.3.3 In August 2023, Egypt launched an initiative allowing Egyptian men living abroad to settle their military service obligations by paying a fee of 5,000



USD or 5,000 Euros [3767 GBP]. The scheme aimed to increase foreign currency inflows and assist expatriates who may face difficulties returning to or leaving Egypt due to unresolved conscription issues. In May 2024, the initiative was relaunched with an initial two-month application window, before later being extended until 31 October 2024. No further information regarding how many people settled their status during these initiatives, nor any information on future similar schemes was available at the time of writing (see [Status settlement](#)).

- 3.3.4 Persons who have not completed military service and not obtained an exemption may not be able to travel or migrate and may find it difficult to obtain employment (see [Practical impacts of evading military service](#)).
- 3.3.5 There is very limited evidence regarding conscientious objection, with one source stating that it is not common in Egypt. Conscientious objectors may be considered as political opponents if they are particularly outspoken about their reasons for not serving in the military. The onus is on the person to demonstrate that they would be perceived by the state in this way (see [Conscientious objection](#)).
- 3.3.6 CPIT was unable to find any specific, up to date information regarding the punishment for conscientious objectors, or that it differs from 'regular' draft evaders, within the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 3.3.7 For information on political opposition see [Egypt: Opposition to the state](#).
- 3.3.8 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#)

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## **4. Protection**

- 4.1.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from the state, they are unlikely to be able to obtain protection.
- 4.1.2 For further guidance on assessing state protection, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## **5. Internal relocation**

- 5.1.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from the state, they are unlikely to be able to internally relocate to escape that risk.
- 5.1.2 For further guidance on internal relocation and factors to consider, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## **6. Certification**

- 6.1.1 The following are likely to be certifiable as clearly unfounded:
  - Women (as they are not required to perform military service)
  - Men who are exempt from (unless temporary exemption), or have completed, military service
  - Men over 30 years of age as in practice cease to be eligible for military

service.

- 6.1.2 Where another claim based on a refusal to undertake military service is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 6.1.3 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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# Country information

## About the country information

This section contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the [research methodology](#). It provides the evidence base for the assessment which, as stated in the [About the assessment](#), is the guide to the current objective conditions.

The structure and content follow a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

There is limited up to date COI (i.e. information published within the last two years) on Military Service in Egypt. The COI included was published or made publicly available on or before **23 April 2025**. Any event taking place or report published after this date will not be included.

Decision makers must use relevant COI as the evidential basis for decisions.

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## 7. Military

### 7.1 Size and responsibilities

7.1.1 The Global Firepower (GFP) Military strength index uses a formula of over 60 individual factors to give nations a 'PowerIndex' score, with categories ranging from quantity of military units and financial standing to logistical capabilities<sup>1</sup>. As of 8 January 2025, the GFP estimated that the Egyptian army has 685,000 personnel, the Egyptian Air Force has 50,000 personnel and the Egyptian Navy has 32,500 personnel<sup>2</sup>.

7.1.2 The CIA World Factbook (WFB), updated 9 April 2025, stated that the Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) are made up of the Army (includes the Republican Guard), Navy (includes Coast Guard), Air Force, Air Defense Forces and Border Guard Forces. However, the WFB provided a smaller estimate for the size of armed forces than GFP, stating it had 450,000 personnel in 2024<sup>3</sup>.

7.1.3 The same source additionally stated: '[T]he Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) are responsible for external defense but also have an internal role assisting police and paramilitary security forces during emergencies and in anti-terrorism operations; the EAF also participates in foreign peacekeeping and other security missions, as well as both bilateral and multinational exercises.'<sup>4</sup>

7.1.4 The US Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) Egypt Country Security Report stated:

'The Ministry of Interior supervises law enforcement and internal security,

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<sup>1</sup> GFP, [Country listings](#), 2025

<sup>2</sup> GFP, [Egypt](#), 8 January 2025

<sup>3</sup> CIA World Factbook, [Egypt – Military and Security](#), 9 April 2025

<sup>4</sup> CIA World Factbook, [Egypt – Military and Security](#), 9 April 2025

including the Public Security Sector Police, the Central Security Force, the National Security Agency, and the Passports, Immigration, and Nationality Administration. The Public Security Sector Police are responsible for law enforcement nationwide. The Central Security Force protects infrastructure and is responsible for crowd control. The National Security Agency, which succeeded the State Security Investigation Service in 2011, is responsible for internal security threats and counterterrorism, along with other security services.

‘... The armed forces report to the minister of defense but may also assist police in protecting vital infrastructure during a state of emergency. The armed forces operate in North Sinai as part of a broader national counterterrorism operation with general detention authority. The Border Guard Forces, under the Ministry of Defense, are responsible for border control ... Defense forces operate in North Sinai as part of a broader national counterterrorism operation with general detention authority. The Border Guard Forces, under the Ministry of Defense, are responsible for border control.’<sup>5</sup>

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## 7.2 Conscripts

- 7.2.1 In January 2023, the Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI), an international conscientious objection association<sup>6</sup>, published their submission to the 137th Session of the UN Human Rights Committee (UNHRC). The submission, which cited various sources, stated that approximately 958,113 males reach recruitment age annually. It also noted that (as of November 2021) 70.7% (310,000) of Egypt’s 438,500 active armed forces were conscripts<sup>7</sup>.
- 7.2.2 The CIA WFB noted that ‘conscripts make up a considerable portion of the military and the Central Security Force’<sup>8</sup> but did not provide any further information regarding the numbers of conscripts in the military.
- 7.2.3 CPIT was unable to find further up to date information regarding the number of conscripts within the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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## 8. Legal context and process

### 8.1 General requirements

- 8.1.1 Article 86 of the Egyptian constitution states: ‘Preservation of national security is a duty, and the commitment of all to uphold such is a national responsibility ensured by law. Defense of the nation and protecting its land is an honor and sacred duty. Military service is mandatory according to the law.’<sup>9</sup>
- 8.1.2 The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) country information report for Egypt published in June 2019 (the DFAT 2019 report), the most recent DFAT report available, noted that ‘Article 86 of the

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<sup>5</sup> OSAC, [Egypt Country Security Report](#) (Law Enforcement), 3 March 2025

<sup>6</sup> CPTI, [About](#), no date

<sup>7</sup> CPTI, [Egypt - Military service, conscientious objection and related issues](#), 30 January 2023

<sup>8</sup> CIA World Factbook, [Egypt – Military and Security](#), 9 April 2025

<sup>9</sup> Constitute Project, [Egypt 2014 \(rev. 2019\)](#), April 2022

Constitution states that military service is compulsory according to the law. Military service is regulated by the Law on the Military and National Service (Law 127/1980).<sup>10</sup>

- 8.1.3 CPIT was unable to find any versions of the Law on the Military and National Service (Law 127/1980) in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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## 8.2 Age of recruitment and length of service

- 8.2.1 The DFAT 2019 report stated that 'All Egyptian males older than 18 are required to [do military service] ... Recruits face up to three years of mandatory service.'<sup>11</sup>

- 8.2.2 Cairo 52, an Egyptian legal research institute<sup>12</sup>, in their report 'Queer not in the army' from August 2022 (the Cairo 52 August 2022 report) stated:

'The original time of service is three years and can be reduced according to the following rules:

'One year:

- Graduate students.
- Those who did not receive formal education but memorized Qur'an in full. Memorizing test is done during the first three months of service.
- Those who spent two academic years in a military school and then left it, provided that, they were not dismissed for honor reasons.
- Al-Azhar [University<sup>13</sup>] appointees who work in the secretariat of the Qur'an services.

'One year and a half:

- Intermediate qualification, such as those who only have a high school diploma.

'Two years:

- vocational schools graduate

'Two years and a half to three years:

- For self-employed and craftsmen and anyone who has not obtained a formal education.

'Those periods exclude the boot camp period, as the official conscription period starts once you reach your assigned unit. The boot camp lasts about 30 to 60 days.

'University graduates can also be selected to be reserved officers and in this case, the conscription period is three years divided between a college of reserved officers (six months) and an assigned unit (2 years and a half)'

'Conscripts join the reserve army upon [completion] of their military service and it lasts between ten to fifteen years, in which conscripts can be called for

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<sup>10</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 33, Para 3.98), 17 June 2019

<sup>11</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 33, Para 3.98), 17 June 2019

<sup>12</sup> Cairo 52, [About us](#), no date

<sup>13</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, [Al-Azhar University](#), updated 4 April 2025

mobilization at any time.’<sup>14</sup>

- 8.2.3 The CIA WFB stated: ‘[V]oluntary enlistment [is] possible from age 16 for men and 17 for women; 18-30 years of age for conscript service for men; service obligation 14-36 months, followed by a 9-year reserve obligation; active service length depends on education; high school drop-outs serve for the full 36 months, while college graduates serve for lesser periods of time, depending on their education level.’<sup>15</sup>
- 8.2.4 Women are not conscripted into the military<sup>16</sup> and are only able to serve in certain fields such as nursing, nutrition and psychology<sup>17</sup> or as specialized officers in administrative positions, and assistant civil servants<sup>18</sup>.

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### 8.3 Alternatives to military service

- 8.3.1 An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC) information response of 20 July 2018, citing various sources (the July 2018 IRBC response), noted:

‘According to Aswat Masriya, on 15 September 2015, the Minister of Social Solidarity announced that as of October 2015, all Egyptian nationals exempted from military service would be assigned to perform community service (Aswat Masriya 15 Sept. 2015). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

‘Qantara.de reports that an alternative service only exists "on paper" (Qantara.de 21 Nov. 2016). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.’<sup>19</sup>

- 8.3.2 There is no information in more recent sources on the availability of alternatives to military service in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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### 8.4 Procedures for being drafted

- 8.4.1 In July 2022, CPIT wrote to a senior Middle East and North Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch (HRW) about military service (HRW researcher 2022). They provided the following information:

‘The process to be drafted is very well structured and it has several phases. Normally, as a university graduate you go after your graduation to finalize some paperwork with the police station then there’s a day when you go to a military base to hear whether you’re exempted or drafted and for how long. If you’re drafted there’s a scheduled day when hundreds or thousands of soldiers-to-be go to the military base in Zayton East Cairo to be medically examined and then the same day or maybe some other day you see a few senior officers ... who ask you a few questions. During this process people are also handed forms they have to fill that ask about your background

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<sup>14</sup> Cairo 52, [Queer not in the army](#) (Page 2-3), 16 August 2022

<sup>15</sup> CIA World Factbook, [Egypt – Military and Security](#), 9 April 2025

<sup>16</sup> Italian Institute for International Political Studies, [Women and Military Service ...](#), 5 June 2023

<sup>17</sup> Worldcrunch, [Egypt’s Wannabe G.I. Janes](#), 9 January 2024

<sup>18</sup> Arab Institute for Women, [Women in the Arab Armed Forces](#) (Page 10), 2020

<sup>19</sup> IRBC, [Egypt: Military service, including age of recruitment. ...](#), 20 July 2018

including questions like: Have you been politically active? Have you been convicted before? Do you have any weird beliefs (like being atheist) ? do you have any relatives who are foreigners or dual nationals? etc. the medical examination also include the infamous anal examination perceived to identify gay people. When they find out someone is gay they get exempted on security grounds too. I don't know if all of this is written in a certain bylaws or something but it's been the same process for generations.'<sup>20</sup>

- 8.4.2 The Cairo 52 August 2022 report stated that 'There are different stages to receiving conscripts' applications, organized by individuals' birthdays. To apply, a conscript has to visit the conscription center they are assigned to, according to their ID address. Different documents are required for the application including, criminal record, blood test, copies of graduation, or other qualification certificates.'<sup>21</sup>
- 8.4.3 There is limited additional information regarding the procedures for being drafted for military service. However, it appears that the Egyptian Ministry of Defense (EMOD) publishes details of individuals who are required for military service at different points throughout each year<sup>22 23 24 25</sup>.
- 8.4.4 The most recent announcement by the EMOD at the time of writing was published on 1 January 2025 and outlined that those being conscripted '... will be received at the recruitment and mobilization offices ... [and] will be registered and medically examined.'<sup>26</sup> The announcement listed different dates for registration based on an individual's education level and additionally listed the following documents which are required for conscription:
- 'National ID card
  - Military Service and National Service Card (6 form)
  - Original birth certificate
  - Recent criminal record certificate
  - Blood type
  - Original educational qualification for all qualifications, in addition to the internship/training certificate for graduates of colleges (Medicine / Dentistry / Physiotherapy / Nursing / Applied Health Sciences Technology / Medical Assistance Sciences)
  - Marriage certificate for married individuals
  - Driving license for individuals who possess it
  - Dismissal letters for students expelled from colleges specifying the date and reason for dismissal
  - Appointment letter (teaching assistants / teachers / resident

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<sup>20</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex A](#), July 2022

<sup>21</sup> Cairo 52, [Queer not in the army](#) (Page 3), 16 August 2022

<sup>22</sup> EMOD, [The Armed Forces Accepts New Conscripts of April 2023](#), 7 December 2022

<sup>23</sup> EMOD, [Acceptance of a New Batch of Conscripts in the Armed Forces ...](#), 19 September 2023

<sup>24</sup> EMOD, [The Armed Forces Accepts New Batch of Conscripts "April 2024"](#), 1 January 2024

<sup>25</sup> EMOD, [Acceptance Of A New Batch Of Recruits to Join The Armed Forces ...](#), 13 June 2024

<sup>26</sup> EMOD, [Accepting a new batch of recruits in the Armed Forces, April 2025](#), 1 January 2025



doctors)<sup>27</sup>

- 8.4.5 CPIT was unable to find any further up to date information regarding drafting procedures within the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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## 9. Military service documentation

- 9.1.1 There is limited information regarding military service documentation, however a number of sources indicate that along with a military service card, individuals are issued with a certificate when they are exempt from or have completed military service<sup>28 29 30 31 32 33</sup>.

- 9.1.2 The undated website of the US State Department Bureau of Consular Affairs (USSD BCA) stated that the Egyptian Ministry of Defense is the issuing authority for military service documentation<sup>34</sup>. It additionally stated that 'The documents vary dependent on where they are issued and what entity within the Ministry of Defense issues them; however, all documents will contain an eagle stamp.'<sup>35</sup>

- 9.1.3 The undated website of the American University in Cairo (AUC) stated the following regarding military service cards:

**'Follow the steps below to obtain your military service card (Betaka 6 or 7 Gond):**

1. Go to the police station that issued your National ID (Kesm) to receive 6 Gond, free of charge.
2. If not there, then go to the Military Headquarters in Gesr El Suez for a 7 Gond form.
3. Issue your birth certificate with your military service number and fill out the 7 Gond.
4. Present it to the police station to add two stamps on 7 Gond forms.
5. Submit the 6 or 7 Gond to the registrar's front desk.
6. Make sure that all the information included in the military service Card is identical to your National ID card.'<sup>36</sup>

- 9.1.4 On 17 March 2022, Hayat Shabab, an Arabic youth community website<sup>37</sup>, published an article entitled 'Cases of exemption from the army in medical examination' (the Hayat Shabab March 2022 report). The article, (translated using an online translation tool – available on request), stated:

'If you meet any of the reasons for exemption from the army and have already exited or completed the army period, you will eventually get the

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<sup>27</sup> EMOD, [Accepting a new batch of recruits in the Armed Forces, April 2025](#), 1 January 2025

<sup>28</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 33, Para 3.98), 17 June 2019

<sup>29</sup> Consulate General of Egypt in the UK, [Exemption from Military Service](#), no date

<sup>30</sup> IRBC, [Egypt: Passports, including their appearance and security features ...](#), 25 October 2021

<sup>31</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex A](#), 22 July 2022

<sup>32</sup> EMOD, [Conscription and Mobilization Department, in collaboration with ...](#), 1 June 2016

<sup>33</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex B](#), February 2025

<sup>34</sup> USSD BCA, [Egypt – Military Records](#), no date

<sup>35</sup> USSD BCA, [Egypt – Military Records](#), no date

<sup>36</sup> AUC, [Military Service for Egyptian Male Students](#), no date

<sup>37</sup> Hayat Shabab, [About](#), no date



exemption certificate, if you are sick or other reasons you get the certificate directly after the first medical examination, but in the case of completing your army [service] you have greater advantages, and you must keep the certificate of exemption from the army or the certificate of completion of the army period because you need it during legal transactions.<sup>38</sup>

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## 10. Temporary and permanent exemptions

### 10.1 Overview

- 10.1.1 There is limited up to date information regarding the procedures and requirements for an individual to be exempt from military service.
- 10.1.2 The DFAT 2019 report stated that 'Exemptions and deferrals are common'<sup>39</sup> and that 'Final exemptions from military service are granted when the individual turns 30.'<sup>40</sup> The source did not provide any information regarding the numbers of exemptions or deferrals.
- 10.1.3 There is no accurate data on the number of exemptions allowed each year generally or for each of the various categories described below in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 10.1.4 The website of the Consulate General of Egypt in the UK stated the following regarding exemption from military service (as of 1 November 2024):

#### **'You can apply for military exemption for one of the following reasons**

- If you are holding a dual nationality
- The sole host of a divorced or widowed mother
- If you are the only son of your father
- If you are a student
- \*\*Applicants must have their military identification number (Military triple number)<sup>41</sup>

See also possible exemptions under [Health conditions and disabilities](#).

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### 10.2 Dual nationality

- 10.2.1 The website of the Consulate General of Egypt in the UK stated the following regarding exemption from military service (as of 1 November 2024):

#### **'Documents required to obtain exemption from military service for dual nationality**

- Military triple number [military identification number]
- The original statement of dual nationality
- Valid current UK/Foreign passport
- Valid national ID card and valid Egyptian passport

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<sup>38</sup> Hayat Shabab, [Cases of exemption from the army in medical examination](#), 17 March 2022

<sup>39</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 34, Para 3.100), 17 June 2019

<sup>40</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 34, Para 3.100), 17 June 2019

<sup>41</sup> Consulate General of Egypt in the UK, [Exemption from Military Service](#), no date

- Filling out a “6 Gond” form in the Consulate
- Fees 200 USD [150.69 GBP<sup>42</sup>] or its equivalent to be paid at National Bank of Egypt London, the Defence office account
- Original paying receipt, from the bank
- Applicant is granted a temporary exemption until he reaches the age of 30 and thereafter the final exemption is submitted

**‘... Documents required for the final exemption from military service to dual citizenship holders on a temporary exemption certificate**

- Application form 1 Gond available at the Consulate for 5 GBP
- Photocopy of applicant temporary exemption certificate
- Photocopy of applicant national identity card
- Photocopy of applicant valid UK/foreign passport<sup>43</sup>

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### 10.3 Family circumstances

#### 10.3.1 The DFAT 2019 report stated:

‘These [exemptions and deferrals] can occur for family reasons, including when an individual is an only son; is the only breadwinner; has brothers who have migrated and is supporting the family; has a brother already serving in the military; or has a father or brother who died while serving in the military. Other family reasons may also be considered. This exemption is renewed every three years for reassessment of the situation until the subject is 30 years old, at which time he receives a permanent exemption.’<sup>44</sup>

#### 10.3.2 The website of the Consulate General of Egypt in the UK stated the following regarding exemption from military service (as of 1 November 2024):

**‘Documents required to obtain exemption from military service for being the only son of the father**

- Military identification number
- Valid & original national identity card and Egyptian passport of the applicant
- Photocopy of applicant father’s valid national identity card or valid Egyptian passport
- A recent family registration (not exceeding 3 months)
- Filling out a “6 Gond” form available at the Consulate
- Fees 200 USD [150.69 GBP<sup>45</sup>] or its equivalent to be paid at the National Bank of Egypt London, the Defence office account
- Original paying receipt, from the bank
- Applicant is granted a temporary exemption until the age of 30, after

<sup>42</sup> xe.com, [200 USD to GBP](#), 16 April 2025

<sup>43</sup> Consulate General of Egypt in the UK, [Exemption from Military Service](#), no date

<sup>44</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 34, Para 3.100), 17 June 2019

<sup>45</sup> xe.com, [200 USD to GBP](#), 16 April 2025

which he can apply for the final exemption

**‘In the case of the sole provider of divorced or widowed mothers**

- A photocopy of parents’ passports
- Original divorce certificate (in the case of a divorced mother) or original death certificate of the father (in the case of a widower’s single mother)
- Valid & original national identity card and Egyptian passport of the applicant
- Fees 200 USD [150.69 GBP<sup>46</sup>] or its equivalent to be paid at the National Bank of Egypt London, the Defence office account
- Original paying receipt, from the bank
- Applicant is granted a temporary exemption until the age of 30, after which he can apply for the final exemption.

**‘... Documents required for the final exemption from military service for the only son to his father, who reached the age of 30 or father’s age of 60, after which he can apply for the final exemption**

- Application form 1 Gond available at the Consulate for 5 GBP
- A recently issued family registration (three months maximum from issuing date)
- A photocopy of the certificate of temporary exemption from recruitment as the only son of his father
- A photocopy of the national ID card
- A photocopy of the Egyptian passport
- A photocopy of the UK/foreign valid passport<sup>47</sup>

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## 10.4 Health conditions and disabilities

10.4.1 The DFAT 2019 report stated that ‘... exemptions are ... possible for health reasons.’<sup>48</sup>

10.4.2 The Hayat Shabab March 2022 report stated:

‘Some people suffer from health issues that do not allow them to enlist in the Egyptian army and are among the cases of exemption from the army in the medical examination, especially as this keeps them away from health risks and deterioration of their situation in the event of joining the army, and most importantly that the accepted in enlistment is able to carry out the tasks assigned to him.

‘... The most prominent cases of exemption from the army in the medical examination are medical conditions, including the following:

- Asthma

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<sup>46</sup> xe.com, [200 USD to GBP](#), 16 April 2025

<sup>47</sup> Consulate General of Egypt in the UK, [Exemption from Military Service](#), no date

<sup>48</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 34, Para 3.100), 17 June 2019

- Poor eyesight
- High blood pressure
- Fractures
- Gout
- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Blood diseases
- Liver and gallbladder [conditions]
- AIDS

‘... Overweight people are currently accepted into the army, but if you weigh more than 120kg, you may be exempted from the army in the medical examination ... [P]sychiatric patients do not join the Egyptian army or the army in general, provided that they are presented to a specialised doctor to determine whether they are suitable for the army or not.’<sup>49</sup>

#### 10.4.3 The same source additionally stated:

‘Here are the steps to obtain an army exemption certificate:

- After the medical examination, if you are in doubt about the possibility of exemption, stay in the examination area for a while.
- The official will ask you to present personal documents such as your national ID card etc.
- After the end of the day, the names of those exempted from military service will be announced.
- The official in charge of your enlistment and mobilisation area will be present to sign the exemption papers.
- You may be selected for an examination by the Military Medical Council if you are deemed medically fit.
- In the end, you will receive your final exemption papers.’<sup>50</sup>

#### 10.4.4 People with disabilities may be exempt from military service according to a number of articles published in 2024 by the Egyptian Ministry of Defense<sup>51 52</sup>. However, CPIT was unable to find any additional information regarding what disabilities would exempt an individual from military service within the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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## 10.5 Students

### 10.5.1 The DFAT 2019 report stated that ‘University students can be granted

<sup>49</sup> Hayat Shabab, [Cases of exemption from the army in medical examination](#), 17 March 2022

<sup>50</sup> Hayat Shabab, [Cases of exemption from the army in medical examination](#), 17 March 2022

<sup>51</sup> EMOD, [Conscription and Mobilization Department, in collaboration with ...](#), 1 June 2016

<sup>52</sup> EMOD, [The Recruitment and Mobilization Department Organizes a Ceremony ...](#), 8 August 2024

<sup>53</sup> EMOD, [The Conscription and Mobilization Department Provides Conscription ...](#), 27 October 2024

exemptions up to the age of 28 ...'<sup>54</sup>

10.5.2 In July 2022, the HRW researcher stated that 'Those enrolled in high schools and university education can apply for postponing their service which is automatically granted. Once you finish your first-level university degree, you can't further postpone it (i.e master's degree or beyond are not acknowledged as grounds to postpone service).'<sup>55</sup>

10.5.3 The website of the Consulate General of Egypt in the UK stated that students could apply for temporary exemption from military service but applicants would need to contact the Egyptian Bureau for Cultural and Educational Affairs in London<sup>56</sup>. CPIT was unable to find any further details from the Egyptian Bureau for Cultural and Educational Affairs in London regarding how students could apply for temporary exemption.

10.5.4 The website of the Embassy of Egypt in Washington DC stated the following regarding military service deferral for Egyptian students who want to study in the United States (translated using an online translation tool – available on request):

**'Postponement of enlistment due to study in the United States (enrolment under scientific supervision)**

'The Office of the Educational Mission and Cultural Attaché in Washington is responsible for the procedures for placement under scientific supervision ...

'Documents required:

- Enrolment certificate and grades transcript - The enrolment certificate and grades are certified by the Egyptian Cultural Office in the United States and then by any Egyptian mission in the United States
- Declaration from the guardian to bear the tuition expenses or proof that the student has received a scholarship
- Valid passport/national ID card

**'Procedures**

**'To issue a study deferral for the first time**

- The student creates an electronic account on the electronic platform of the Ministry of Higher Education ...
- The student uploads an electronic copy of his/her documents, registers the request for placement under scientific supervision, completes the data and obtains the reference number
- The student receives the approval of their request electronically
- After the approval is issued, the student himself or his guardian or agent with an official power of attorney to pay the fees to the Central Administration for Missions ...
- The student receives the notification of the approval of all parties to be placed under scientific supervision electronically

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<sup>54</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 34, Para 3.100), 17 June 2019

<sup>55</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex A](#), 22 July 2022

<sup>56</sup> Consulate General of Egypt in the UK, [Exemption from Military Service](#), no date

- After submitting the paperwork to the Missions Department and receiving the approvals, the student goes to the Recruitment Department ... where the Recruitment Department gives the student a deferment notice (the deferment is until the age of 25 in the case of a bachelor's degree or until the age of 29 if they are studying a master's or doctorate).
- The student then goes back to the Missions Department and hands them the deferment notification and gets a letter from them to go to the recruitment department one last time to get a travel permit. The original copy of the travel permit must be kept. The permit is valid for one year for multiple trips and is recommended to be issued from August to August.

**‘Renewal of Deferral:**

- The certificate of enrolment and grades must be certified each time by the Egyptian Cultural Office in the United States and then by any Egyptian mission in the United States.
- The student then submits the original documents to the Missions Office and receives a certificate, which they take directly to the Military Recruitment Administration to obtain a new travel permit.<sup>57</sup>

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## **11. Deployment, roles and conditions**

- 11.1.1 There is limited recently published information in the sources consulted regarding what roles and activities conscripts are assigned when carrying out military service (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 11.1.2 The DFAT 2019 report stated: ‘Conscripts may be placed in a branch of the military, in the police force or prison service ... Service conditions for military conscripts vary considerably. Some conscripts have been sent to the military front lines in North Sinai [during conflict with terrorist organisations] ..., while others have been dispatched to police urban areas. Those with significant family or other connections have been able to undertake their military service in administrative departments, military hotels or offices, or in one of the military’s economic projects.’<sup>58</sup>
- 11.1.3 It should be noted that violence in North Sinai and across Egypt has declined significantly in the time since the DFAT report was published. Violence fell to historically low levels in 2023 and the first half of 2024, with any violence appearing limited to crackdowns by police and security forces against political opponents and occasional sectarian incidents<sup>59</sup>.
- 11.1.4 On 28 May 2024, Middle East Eye (MEE), ‘an independently funded digital news organisation covering stories from the Middle East and North Africa’<sup>60</sup>, published an article entitled ‘Egyptians mourn soldier killed by Israelis at Rafah border amid official silence’ which stated:

‘An unofficial funeral was held on Tuesday [28 May 2024] for one of two

<sup>57</sup> Embassy of Egypt – Washington DC, [Military Service](#), no date

<sup>58</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 33-34, Para 3.98-3.99), 17 June 2019

<sup>59</sup> Cedoca, [COI focus: Egypte, Veiligheidssituatie](#), 7 October 2024

<sup>60</sup> MEE, [About us](#), no date

Egyptian soldiers killed in a shootout on Monday with Israeli soldiers at the Gaza border with Egypt's Sinai.

'... Middle East Eye has verified the identity of the first soldier as 22-year-old Abdallah Ramadan, a border guard who had been deployed near the crossing and died on Monday [27 May 2024].

'... Egypt's army spokesperson confirmed one "element tasked with border security" was killed in a shooting incident and said investigation was underway.

'... Ramadan graduated from college in Fayium and was conscripted for two years as a border guard in North Sinai, his family and friends said.'<sup>61</sup>

- 11.1.5 In June 2024, MEE published an article that featured quotes from serving soldiers, whose names were changed for anonymity, which stated:

'Both Tawfik and Omar are concerned that if they die in action during the current diplomatically complicated situation [between Israel and Egypt], their deaths will be for nothing. "I am concerned that if I get martyred, my blood will go in vain. Ramadan died and not a single bullet was fired to defend him."

'Tawfik said that morale in his unit is low as soldiers have similar fears.

"The only thought that makes these men withstand the [compulsory] service is the possibility that they will die as martyrs or that they will die for their homeland," he said.

'... Mostafa Marwan, 25, a medic in Sinai, who is in his final months of service, said he is praying that Egypt does not go to war. "The thousands of conscripts you see ... on TV in military parades, they are not the ones who are going to fight. There are thousands of soldiers who do not know how to shoot, or to take care of a wounded fellow soldier."

'Marwan said these conscripts are trained for only 45 days in basic camp and carry weapons that have been stored since the time of the Soviet Union. ... Marwan added that as a military medic he only has basic equipment even though he is a surgeon, and that his superiors are abusive and corrupt.

'... Having graduated from an international private university and coming from a well-off family, the 22-year-old Samir believes his conscription does not make sense. "Individuals like me who had the chance to be well educated and know languages should not be forced to serve and fight because we can help develop the country in other ways such as business or economics."

'... Through a powerful connection, Samir's family was able to secure the calmer posting, where he can go home every night, and only do administrative work. "I don't really know much about war and politics, but I am looking forward to finishing my service."

'Like Samir, a lot of Egyptians seek connections either to skip or postpone conscription, or to get their service in big cities or in the administrative or business branches of the armed forces. The result leaves many underprivileged individuals and poorly educated young men on the front, on

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<sup>61</sup> MEE, [Egyptians mourn soldier killed by Israelis at Rafah border amid official silence](#), 28 May 2024



borders, or head to head with extremist militants.

“On the frontlines and on the border, you will find only soldiers from poor backgrounds - sons of farmers, workers, fishermen, and impoverished people,” Megahed Nassar, a counterterrorism soldier in Sheikh Zuwied, who came to Faiyum to attend the funeral of Ramadan, told MEE.

‘... “Most conscripts are forced to serve, are poor, have no other alternative, and do not have a connection. They go to Sinai and either fight the Israelis or the extremist militants.” [said Megahed Nassar]’<sup>62</sup>

- 11.1.6 In February 2025, Freedom House published their annual report entitled ‘Freedom in the World 2025’, covering events in 2024. The report stated that ‘Military conscripts are exploited as cheap labor for military- or state-affiliated development projects.’<sup>63</sup> The same information was included in the Freedom House reports covering events in 2023<sup>64</sup> and 2022<sup>65</sup>.
- 11.1.7 CPIT was unable to find any additional up to date information regarding conscripts’ roles, responsibilities or the conditions they face during military service, such as pay, training and equipment, within the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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## 12. Status settlement

- 12.1.1 On 15 August 2023, Reuters published an article entitled ‘To raise scare dollars, Egypt looks to pension plans, draft evaders’ which stated:
- ‘Egypt is offering a minimum \$5,000 [3767 GBP<sup>66</sup>] fee for Egyptians living abroad who wish to clear their military service obligations ... in a series of fresh measures designed to boost foreign currency inflows.
- ‘... The government will also raise foreign currency by allowing Egyptians living abroad, who are delinquent in their military service, to make good on their status permanently by paying either \$5,000 or 5,000 euros during a one-month window, which started on Monday [14 August 2023].
- ‘The foreign ministry on Tuesday announced a WhatsApp number and email address for enquiries about the scheme, which it said would be monitored around the clock, and urged applicants to register quickly.
- ‘Most Egyptian men between the ages of 19 and 30 are required to serve in the military. Many received temporary exemptions to travel for education, medical treatment or work, but end up remaining abroad.’<sup>67</sup>
- 12.1.2 In September 2023, Ahram Online, an ‘English-language news website published by Al-Ahram Establishment, Egypt’s largest news organisation’<sup>68</sup> published an article entitled ‘Egypt extends deadline for expats to settle military service position’ which stated:
- ‘Minister of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriate Affairs Soha

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<sup>62</sup> MEE, [‘My blood will go in vain’: Egyptian soldiers say their country has failed Gaza](#), 18 June 2024

<sup>63</sup> Freedom House, [Freedom in the World 2025 – Egypt](#) (G4), February 2025

<sup>64</sup> Freedom House, [Freedom in the World 2024 – Egypt](#) (G4), February 2024

<sup>65</sup> Freedom House, [Freedom in the World 2023 – Egypt](#) (G4), March 2023

<sup>66</sup> xe.com, [5000 USD to GBP](#), 16 April 2025

<sup>67</sup> Reuters, [To raise scarce dollars, Egypt looks to pension plans, draft evaders](#), 15 August 2023

<sup>68</sup> Ahram Online, [About us](#), no date



Gendy announced on Thursday that the extension was in response to major demand among Egyptian expats ... She added that the initiative to settle the military service status of Egyptian expats, which was launched in July 2023, is a reflection of the Egyptian government's concern for its citizens living abroad facing problems with their military service status, which could prevent them from returning home or from leaving again if they return, due to conscription requirements.

'... The initiative is available for male expats aged 19-30 who are eligible for conscription as well as expats over the age of 30 in need of settlement. Applicants must submit a photocopy of their National ID card; a photocopy of their passport; a military service identification number (if applicable); proof of date of exit from Egypt; and proof of current country of residence.'<sup>69</sup>

- 12.1.3 In March 2024, Ahram Online published an article entitled 'Egypt re-launches initiative to settle expats' military service status' which stated:

'A two-month application window for the programme will open on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website starting 1 May [2024], according to a joint statement issued by the ministries of foreign affairs and the emigration and expatriates' affairs.

'... To register online, applicants will need an accredited presence confirmation certificate from an Egyptian diplomatic mission (embassy/consulate) abroad, along with payment made to designated bank accounts.'<sup>70</sup>

- 12.1.4 The website of the Embassy of Egypt in Washington DC stated that the initiative for settling status was extended until 31 October 2024<sup>71</sup>.

- 12.1.5 CPIT was unable to find any information regarding the number of people who settled their status during these initiatives, nor whether the initiative was, or is planned to be re-launched in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

- 12.1.6 On 19 December 2024 the EMOD published an article which stated:

'In implementation of the political leadership's directives to provide all forms of support and care to the citizens residing abroad, and based on the social responsibility the General Command of the Armed Forces places on facilitating matters for Egyptians living outside Egypt, the Recruitment and Mobilization Department dispatched several recruitment and judicial committees to Italy and the United Arab Emirates. These committees aim to provide recruitment facilitation services to Egyptians residing in European Union countries and the Arab Gulf States, offering them conscription certificates and resolving their recruitment status.

'This initiative is part of the General Command of the Armed Forces commitment to supporting Egyptians abroad, recognizing them as an integral part of the great Egyptian nation.'<sup>72</sup>

- 12.1.7 CPIT was unable to find any further information regarding the services these recruitment and judicial committees provide in the sources consulted (see

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<sup>69</sup> Ahram Online, [Egypt extends deadline for expats to settle military service ...](#), 14 September 2023

<sup>70</sup> Ahram Online, [Egypt re-launches initiative to settle expats' military service status](#), 18 March 2024

<sup>71</sup> Embassy of Egypt – Washington DC, [Military Service](#), no date

<sup>72</sup> EMOD, [The Recruitment ... Department dispatchs several committees ...](#), 19 December 2024

### 13. Evasion and desertion

#### 13.1 Statistics

- 13.1.1 There is no data on the numbers of draft evaders or deserters who are arrested and detained, prosecuted, convicted and imprisoned or subject to other forms of punishment reported in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

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#### 13.2 Record keeping

- 13.2.1 In July 2022, the HRW researcher stated:
- ‘It is very likely that military authorities keep records of those who joined the service then did not complete it. For evaders, it is hard to tell if there are up to date records. By any means it is not hard for authorities to learn if someone served or evaded or did not complete, because ... at many significant events in one’s life, men in Egypt are required to provide a certificate from the military showing they were exempted or that they successfully finished their service. Additionally, ... the military keeps tight control over records of students at all education facilities and the law obliges education facilities to report the military status of their students.’<sup>73</sup>
- 13.2.2 In February 2025, CPIT wrote to a senior Middle East and North Africa researcher at HRW about military service (HRW researcher 2025). The researcher stated that ‘There are extensive records of all males reaching 18. It’s decentralized and all males reaching 18 have to file appropriate documents to postpone their service (e.g school/university enrolment proof) and those who fail to do so at any point will be listed as evaders. These records are extensive and well-organized.’<sup>74</sup>

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#### 13.3 Punishment

- 13.3.1 There is limited up to date information in the sources consulted regarding the punishments for draft evaders and no specific information regarding punishments for deserters in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 13.3.2 The July 2018 IRBC response, citing the EMOD website, noted that ‘Article 49 of Law No. 127 of 1980 stipulates that any person over the age of 30 evading examination or conscription shall be punished by imprisonment and a fine not less than 3,000 [Egyptian] pounds (EGP) [44.28 GBP<sup>75</sup>] ... and not more than 10,000 pounds [147.60 GBP<sup>76</sup>] ... , or either of these two punishments.’<sup>77</sup> CPIT was unable to find the webpage on the EMOD website that the IRBC response refers to.
- 13.3.3 The DFAT 2019 report stated:

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<sup>73</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex A](#), 22 July 2022

<sup>74</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex B](#), February 2025

<sup>75</sup> xe.com, [3000 EGP to GBP](#), 17 April 2025

<sup>76</sup> xe.com, [10,000 EGP to GBP](#), 17 April 2025

<sup>77</sup> IRBC, [Egypt: Military service, including age of recruitment, ...](#), 20 July 2018

'If an individual is not able to renew his military service exemption and does not complete his military service, he is liable to pay a fine of up to EGP1000 [14.76 GBP<sup>78</sup>] and/or face a minimum of one year's imprisonment. It is unclear how many people have been imprisoned in Egypt for evading military service. Anecdotal evidence suggests that those imprisoned for not completing military service are not targeted or treated differently relative to other prisoners.'<sup>79</sup>

13.3.4 In July 2022, the HRW researcher stated:

'If you fail to show up [to register for military service after an individual has completed their education], every single day of delay is punishable by law. The law says those who fail to show up will be punished by adding one more year to their service but failure to show for longer times can also result in military prosecution.

'Conscription evaders who reach age of 30 (the maximum age to start the conscription by law) usually approach the military prosecution themselves to resolve their conscription status. The procedure is that a lawyer goes to the military prosecution and a military court reviews the case and they are usually fined (between 3,000 and 10,000 [Egyptian] pounds [44.28<sup>80</sup> – 147.60 GBP<sup>81</sup>]), even though the military law gives the military court the authority to imprison them for up to one year. But most cases are resolved with a fine.'<sup>82</sup> It should be noted that those aged under 30 will still be expected to complete their military service, see paragraph 13.4.4.

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13.4 Arrest, detention and prosecution

13.4.1 CPIT was unable to find any specific and up to date information regarding the arrest, detention and prosecution of draft evaders or deserters within the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)). The information contained in this subsection is based on one source across two different time periods (July 2022 and February 2025) and contains only general information about the potential arrest, detention and prosecution of draft evaders or deserters.

13.4.2 In July 2022, when asked if Egyptian authorities actively pursue military service evaders for prosecution, the HRW researcher stated that : '... Authorities actively pursue for prosecution those who joined (or began the paper work for being enrolled) in the military service and then did not show up or did not complete their service, rather than actively pursuing all evaders who avoided the service at all. Article 46 says the Interior Ministry is responsible for arresting and bringing to the Defense Ministry all those who violate or evade conscription.'<sup>83</sup>

13.4.3 In February 2025, when asked the same question, the HRW researcher stated: 'This depends on what you mean by "actively." Young men could be asked to provide a document showing the status of their conscription at different police or military checkpoints or at border crossings/airports. I'm not

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<sup>78</sup> xe.com, [1000 EGP to GBP](#), 17 April 2025

<sup>79</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 34, Para 3.101), 17 June 2019

<sup>80</sup> xe.com, [3000 EGP to GBP](#), 17 April 2025

<sup>81</sup> xe.com, [10,000 EGP to GBP](#), 17 April 2025

<sup>82</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex A](#), 22 July 2022

<sup>83</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex A](#), 22 July 2022

aware of active campaigns to search for and detain evaders.’<sup>84</sup>

- 13.4.4 In July 2022, when asked if evaders or deserters are arrested on arrival after returning from abroad, the HRW researcher stated:

‘That remains a possibility as the police has the authority to arrest and turn in to the military anyone who fails to show a valid proof of their military service (or exemption). But mostly trouble happens during departure, not arrival. Those people will not be able to leave the country again and will be required to turn themselves in to the military prosecution to resolve their conscription status. If they are over 30, they will probably just face a fine. If they are under 30, they will probably face prison sentence (after which they still need to finish their military service).’<sup>85</sup>

- 13.4.5 In February 2025, when asked the same question, the HRW researcher stated: ‘No. Usually not. But they are not allowed to leave Egypt again without clearing their situation. They would be instructed to proceed to their military area and then they are prosecuted in a military court and most probably fined but the law still provide for prison sentence which a military judge can also resort to.’<sup>86</sup>

- 13.4.6 In February 2025, when asked if evaders are imprisoned in normal (public) prisons or military prisons, the HRW researcher stated: ‘Hard to tell if there is a general rule about this. I believe if they evade service after starting it already (i.e go on a vacation and don’t come back) they are taken to military prisons. But if they are still civilians (didn’t enrol) and they get caught, they probably go to public interior ministry prisons.’<sup>87</sup>

- 13.4.7 For information on prison conditions please see the CPIN Egypt Opposition to state.

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## **14. Practical impacts of evading military service**

### **14.1 Employment**

- 14.1.1 The DFAT 2019 report stated that ‘If a male over the age of 18 years seeks employment without having completed military service, he generally has to produce an exemption certificate from the Ministry of Defence to his employer.’<sup>88</sup>

- 14.1.2 In July 2022, the HRW researcher stated: ‘... showing an official document that one did their service or was exempted from doing it is a requirement for virtually everything in Egypt, e.g. ... to join a government job and also frequently to join a job in the private sector, employers would ask the candidates to provide the certificates that they finished or got exempted from the military service.’<sup>89</sup>

- 14.1.3 In April 2024, Amnesty International published its annual report on the human rights situation in Egypt, covering events in 2023. The report stated that ‘Candidates for civil servant jobs complained about being denied

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<sup>84</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex B](#), February 2025

<sup>85</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex A](#), 22 July 2022

<sup>86</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex B](#), February 2025

<sup>87</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex B](#), February 2025

<sup>88</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 33), 17 June 2019

<sup>89</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex A](#), 22 July 2022

certificates of completion of the military academy course, which became mandatory for appointments in 2023 ...<sup>90</sup>

- 14.1.4 In February 2025, the HRW researcher stated that ‘... people’s employment can be impacted [if they have not completed or are not exempt from military service] especially in government jobs, or public sector since this document [exemption or completion certificate] is required as part of the application for any job. Private sector companies are also required by law to request this document and maintain a copy of it as part of the employment process for any young man.’<sup>91</sup>

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## 14.2 Travel and passports

- 14.2.1 The DFAT 2019 report stated the following regarding exit procedures: ‘Egyptian males are required to show evidence of their military service status (including proof of exemption, if relevant). Such proof could be an exemption certificate; an expired passport noting exemption from military service; or a permission to travel issued by the Conscription Department.’<sup>92</sup>
- 14.2.2 The August 2023 Reuters article stated that ‘Those who do not comply with the service requirement would not be able to renew their passports.’<sup>93</sup>
- 14.2.3 The March 2024 Ahram Online article stated that ‘Passport renewals will be unavailable for Egyptians abroad who have not settled their military service, the statement added.’<sup>94</sup>
- 14.2.4 In April 2024, the US State Department (USSD) published its annual report on human rights practices, covering events in 2023. The report stated that ‘The constitution stated that “no citizen may be prevented from leaving the State territory,” but the law prohibited men who had not completed or been exempted from compulsory military service from traveling abroad or emigrating.’<sup>95</sup>
- 14.2.5 See paragraphs 13.4.4 – 13.4.5 of [Arrest, detention and prosecution](#) for information on airport exit procedures.

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## 15. Conscientious objection

- 15.1.1 There is limited up to date information in the sources consulted regarding conscientious objection (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 15.1.2 The DFAT 2019 report stated:
- ‘Conscientious objection to military service is not a common phenomenon in Egypt. However, there is a small conscientious objector movement, launched by prominent conscientious objector, Maikel Nabil, who refused to be enlisted in 2009. Nabil was detained five times for publicly campaigning against compulsory military service, and was imprisoned for two years for insulting the military. In June 2015, two conscientious objectors (including

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<sup>90</sup> Amnesty International, [The State of the World's Human Rights ...](#) (Workers’ rights), 24 April 2024

<sup>91</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex B](#), February 2025

<sup>92</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 44), 17 June 2019

<sup>93</sup> Reuters, [To raise scarce dollars, Egypt looks to pension plans, draft evaders](#), 15 August 2023

<sup>94</sup> Ahram Online, [Egypt re-launches initiative to settle expats’ military service status](#), 18 March 2024

<sup>95</sup> USSD, [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) (Section 2D), 22 April 2024

Nabil's brother) were granted an exemption from service from the office of the Defence Minister. The exemption did not state a reason or recognise the two as conscientious objectors. It is unlikely that these exemptions represent any formal move towards recognition of conscientious objection.<sup>96</sup>

- 15.1.3 In February 2025, when asked if authorities consider evading military service and/or conscientious objection a political act of opposition, the HRW researcher stated:

'Evaders who are not politicized (i.e just young people who escape military service because it's burdensome or because they have financial or family commitments [sic]... etc) are not treated as political people. But if someone evades service and say publicly or in interrogations that they don't want to serve because they are passivists/conscientious objectors or because military institution is corrupt/abusive... etc then their evasion is definitely treated as a political act of defiance. They can be harshly punished.'<sup>97</sup>

- 15.1.4 The source did not provide any further information on conscientious objection, nor the treatment that they may be subjected to. See the CPIN [Egypt: Opposition to the state](#) for information regarding activities considered to be in opposition to the government.

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<sup>96</sup> DFAT, [Egypt Country Information Report](#) (Page 34), 17 June 2019

<sup>97</sup> HRW researcher, [Email - Annex B](#), February 2025



# Annex A: Human Rights Watch researcher – July 2022

## 1. Do authorities actively pursue military service evaders for prosecution?

The mandatory age for conscription in Egypt is 18. Those enrolled in high schools and university education can apply for postponing their service which is automatically granted. Once you finish your first-level university degree, you can't further postpone it (i.e. master's degree or beyond are not acknowledged as grounds to postpone service). If you fail to show up, every single day of delay is punishable by law. The law says those who fail to show up will be punished by adding one more year to their service but failure to show for longer times can also result in military prosecution.

Law 127 of 1980 on conscription gives the Defense Ministry a very tight grip on conscription and enrolment. For example, all universities have to keep records of their students and send them to the defense ministry to show those students are still enrolled in programs eligible for postponement of the service. Universities cannot keep any student who surpassed 29 years without doing his service, at that age students have to go to the military and afterwards finish their university degree.

That's said: Authorities actively pursue for prosecution those who joined (or began the paper work for being enrolled) in the military service and then did not show up or did not complete their service, rather than actively pursuing all evaders who avoided the service at all. Article 46 says the Interior Ministry is responsible for arresting and bringing to the Defense Ministry all those who violate or evade conscription.

Conscription evaders who reach age of 30 (the maximum age to start the conscription by law) usually approach the military prosecution themselves to resolve their conscription status. The procedure is that a lawyer goes to the military prosecution and a military court reviews the case and they are usually fined (between 3,000 and 10,000 pounds), even though the military law gives the military court the authority to imprison them for up to one year. But most cases are resolved with a fine. That's said, in order to "hide" oneself from the authorities until one reaches 30 years old is quite a strenuous situation. That's because showing an official document that one did their service or was exempted from doing it is a requirement for virtually everything in Egypt, e.g. to issue a passport, or to travel outside the country, and or to join a government job and also frequently to join a job in the private sector, employers would ask the candidates to provide the certificates that they finished or got exempted from the military service.

## 2. Do authorities keep a records of military service evaders?

It is very likely that military authorities keep records of those who joined the service then did not complete it. For evaders, it is hard to tell if there are up to date records. By any means it is not hard for authorities to learn if someone served or evaded or did not complete, because as mentioned above, at many significant events in one's life, men in Egypt are required to provide a certificate from the military showing they were exempted or that they successfully finished their service. Additionally, as mentioned above, the military keeps tight control over records of students at all education facilities and the law obliges education facilities to report the military status of their students.

## 3. For those prosecuted and imprisoned, do the authorities treat the differently from the rest of prisoners?

They are tried before military courts which are part of the Defense Ministry. They are usually imprisoned in military prisons. Access to military courts and due process in military trials are severely undermined by their nature. It's also a violation of international law to try a civilian before a military court (before becoming part of the military) for simply refusing to join the military or going later than mandated.

4. Are military service evaders imprisoned in normal (public) or special military prisons?

They are imprisoned mostly in military prisons.

5. Are evaders or those who did not complete military service returning from abroad arrested on arrival?

That remains a possibility as the police has the authority to arrest and turn in to the military anyone who fails to show a valid proof of their military service (or exemption). But mostly trouble happens during departure, not arrival. Those people will not be able to leave the country again and will be required to turn themselves in to the military prosecution to resolve their conscription status. If they are over 30, they will probably just face a fine. If they are under 30, they will probably face prison sentence (after which they still need to finish their military service).

6. How do authorities/wider society generally treat military service evaders?

As mentioned above, the certificate proving that a man did his service or got exempted is one of the most fundamental documents needed to "live" normally in the country. I.e one can't get a passport, and can't travel abroad, and can't get many jobs or pursue and education without such document. So it severely impacts your life if you evade the military until you reach 30. The society would be more neutral towards evaders because most people perceive mandatory conscription as a negative experience that delays career pathways and practical and family life (e.g getting married). When a man proposes to a woman, one of the first question the woman's family will ask is whether the man finished his service.

7. Are military service evaders subjected to torture and or other inhumane treatment for the act of evasion?

We have not worked on such cases to be able to give a certain answer. What we know is that there are abuses in military prisons and prison conditions in Egypt in general are abhorrent. If someone, for some reason, gets interrogated by the military intelligence, which often is responsible for interrogating evaders in certain case, the possibility of ill-treatment can rise significantly.

8. Do authorities considers evading military service and/or conscientious objection a political act of opposing

Egyptian law does not acknowledge or mention the term conscientious objection. In fact, such act is a felony and is punished by imprisonment. A famous case of a conscientious objector a few years ago was reportedly ill-treated, tortured and received 3 years in a military trial in 2011. <https://www.amnesty.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/mde120482011en.pdf> because he posted blogs encouraging conscientious objection.

9. What happens during the conscription process?

The process to be drafted is very well structured and it has several phases. Normally, as a university graduate you go after your graduation to finalize some paperwork with the police station then there's a day when you go to a military base



to hear whether you're exempted or drafted and for how long. If you're drafted there's a scheduled day when hundreds or thousands of soldiers-to-be go to the military base in Zayton East Cairo to be medically examined and then the same day or maybe some other day you see a few senior officers (Kash al-Hay2a) who ask you a few questions. During this process people are also handed forms they have to fill that ask about your background including questions like: Have you been politically active? Have you been convicted before? Do you have any weird beliefs (like being atheist) ? do you have any relatives who are foreigners or dual nationals? ... etc. the medical examination also include the infamous anal examination perceived to identify gay people. When they find out someone is gay they get exempted on security grounds too. I don't know if all of this is written in a certain bylaws or something but it's been the same process for generations.

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# Annex B: Human Rights Watch researcher – February 2025

## 1. Do authorities actively pursue military service evaders for prosecution?

This depends on what you mean by “actively.” Young men could be asked to provide a document showing the status of their conscription at different police or military checkpoints or at border crossings/airports. I’m not aware of active campaigns to search for and detain evaders.

## 2. Do authorities keep a records of military service evaders?

Yes. There are extensive records of all males reaching 18. It’s decentralized and all males reaching 18 have to file appropriate documents to postpone their service (e.g school/university enrolment proof) and those who fail to do so at any point will be listed as evaders. These records are extensive and well-organized. Until 2011 (when I did my service) it was not too much digitalized but I can imagine it’s now.

## 3. For those prosecuted and imprisoned, do the authorities treat the differently from the rest of prisoners?

No, not really as a general rule.

## 4. Are military service evaders imprisoned in normal (public) or special military prisons?

Hard to tell if there is a general rule about this. I believe if they evade service after starting it already (i.e go on a vacation and don’t come back) they are taken to military prisons. But if they are still civilians (didn’t enrol) and they get caught, they probably go to public interior ministry prisons.

## 5. Are evaders or those who did not complete military service returning from abroad arrested on arrival?

No. Usually not. But they are not allowed to leave Egypt again without clearing their situation. They would be instructed to proceed to their military area and then they are prosecuted in a military court and most probably fined but the law still provide for prison sentence which a military judge can also resort to.

## 6. How do authorities/wider society generally treat military service evaders?

In the society it’s ok, people are not hostile towards evaders since military service is widely perceived as a burden that young men need to be done with. Authorities treat evaders as people who lack honour and should be prosecuted according to law.

## 7. Are military service evaders subjected to torture and or other inhumane treatment for the act of evasion?

This is possible given the general dire conditions in detention facilities. Particularly if someone is from poorer socioeconomic background, low-educated or illiterate.

## 8. Do authorities considers evading military service and/or conscientious objection a political act of opposing

Evaders who are not politicized (i.e just young people who escape military service because it's burdensome or because they have financial or family commitments... etc) are not treated as political people. But if someone evades service and say publicly or in interrogations that they don't want to serve because they are passivists/conscientious objectors or because military institution is corrupt/abusive... etc then their evasion is definitely treated as a political act of defiance. They can be harshly punished.

9. Are conscripts from different faith backgrounds/ ethnicities/ sexuality or gender identity treated differently during their period of mandatory service?

I think those who are homosexuals face the risk of sexual abuse in service. We haven't documented any such cases though. Christians face the implicit and explicit discrimination they face in day to day civilian life in schools, ... etc.

10. Are draft evaders from different faith backgrounds/ ethnicities/ sexuality or gender identity treated differently in terms of fines/ sentences and/or detention conditions?

Yes, they will probably be seen as political defiant and opponents.

11. Are draft evaders living within Egypt able to earn a living, or is completion of mandatory service (or proof of exemption) a pre-requisite to employment?  
How is this proof provided?

The proof is normally a document or certificate people obtain from the military stating they either finished their service, or got exempted. With that document, people can obtain passports that state they are not needed for service. All other people get passports that state they are needed for service. The national ID doesn't have this information.

Yes, people's employment can be impacted especially in government jobs, or public sector since this document is required as part of the application for any job. Private sector companies are also required by law to request this document and maintain a copy of it as part of the employment process for any young man.

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# Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used and the COI compared to ensure that it is accurate and balanced, and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

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# Terms of Reference

The 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) provides a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the [country information](#).

The following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Legal context
  - Legislation Constitution
  - Size of military
- Conscription
  - Eligibility – age, gender
  - Length of service
  - Procedures
- Exemptions
  - Grounds for exemption including age, study, medical, nationality
  - Conscientious objection
  - Exclusion from service
- Undertaking military service
  - Deployment and roles
  - Conditions of service and treatment of conscripts
- Evasion, desertion and conscientious objection
  - Legislation – penalties and convictions
  - Legal consequences
- Practical consequences for evasion and desertion of military service
  - Travel/passport
  - Education
  - Employment
- Treatment
- Conditions of service
- Abuses by security forces
  - War crimes
  - Crimes against humanity

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