



Situation facing present-day conscientious objectors in different countries in Europe

Country	Mandatory military service	Can apply for recognition as a conscientious objector to military service	Challenges for conscientious objectors	References
<p><u>Europe</u></p>				
<p><u>Western Europe</u></p>				
<p>Germany</p>	<p>Voluntary</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>In Germany conscription was suspended in 2011. However, it can be reintroduced at any time as the provision remains in the constitution. There have been some discussions about this matter since 2020. The underaged can be enlisted in the German army as</p>	<p>https://www.dw.com/en/bundeswehr-military-conscription/a-54077335</p> <p>https://www.dw.com/en/conscription-in-germany-merkels-party-mulls-return-of-military-service/a-51456280</p>

			volunteers. The military has several campaigns targeting young people for recruitment. These have been regularly criticised. Although soldiers in the army can be declared conscientious objectors, the process usually takes a long time, sometimes even years.	https://www.wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/country_report/de/Germany
France	Voluntary	Yes	In 2018 President Macron reintroduced compulsory “Universal National Service”, as a tool for “social cohesion”. For their service, French youth have to do social service for one month and then they can volunteer for at least three months, and up to a year, to do specific activities in defence and security. There are concerns that this could result in the violation of the right to conscientious objection. It is important that participants in the “Universal National Service” have access to this right.	https://www.education.gouv.fr/le-service-national-universel-snu-jeunesse-engagee-5381#La_premiere_phase_du_service_national_universel https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44625625 https://www.france24.com/en/20190616-france-trial-macron-new-compulsory-national-service-teen-military
Netherlands	Voluntary	Yes	In the Netherlands conscription was suspended in 1997. However, it still exists on the statute books and, at the age of 17, all citizens receive a letter stating that they have been registered for service. They can then be called up in a war scenario. The underaged can do military service as volunteers. In 2020 young women received a letter from the Ministry of Defence for the first time.	https://dutchreview.com/news/conscription-introduced-for-dutch-women/ https://nltimes.nl/2020/10/20/military-conscription-letters-sent-girls-born-2003 https://wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/country_report/es/Netherlands
Belgium	Voluntary	Yes	Conscription in Belgium was suspended in 1992, but only for peacetime. People under 18 can join the army once they complete their compulsory education, regardless of age. Belgium’s army is evaluating plans	https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/15/world/europe/belgium-army.html

			to reshape and refresh their training strategies to be “less brutal” e.g. by allowing recruits to sleep at home on weekdays during training. This is conceived as a plan to make military service more attractive to millennials.	
Austria	Yes	Yes	In Austria there is provision for call-ups for extraordinary civilian service when needed. For example, the pandemic was given as a reason to force young people to do civilian service, and for military reserves to be mobilised. The underaged can be recruited on request. In 2013 Austrians voted in favour of retaining compulsory military service. So Austrian men have to serve six months in the army, or nine months in civilian service (for example, for conscientious objectors), when they reach 18.	https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-21110431#:~:text=Austrian%20men%20must%20serve%20six,1996%2C%20and%20Germany%20in%202011. https://www.dw.com/en/austria-votes-in-favor-of-retaining-conscription/a-16535795 https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-austria-idUSKBN21A2J8
Switzerland	Yes	Yes	In Switzerland the length of military service is 9 months, while the length of civilian service is 13 months. Civilian service is usually longer. It can be understood as a punitive measure for those, such as conscientious objectors, who refuse to do their military service. Those who do not serve in the army have to pay a tax. The army is worried about the increasing numbers of recruits for civilian service. There have been reports of plans to make civilian service less attractive for people. Before 2009 those who opted for civilian service first had to convince a commission that they had a genuine conscientious reason. This requirement was abolished in 2009.	https://www.ch.ch/en/performing-compulsory-service/ https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/conscientious-objection_is-it-possible-to-refuse-military-service-in-switzerland-/45306024 https://www.thelocal.ch/20190221/the-swiss-armys-growing-problem-with-civilian-service/

Luxembourg	Voluntary	Yes	In Luxembourg conscription was abolished in 1967, by law. However young people can volunteer for military service once they reach 18. Luxembourg has been changing its defence policies and has a new strategy for recruitment. They have changed their approach to recruiting people according to the needs of the institution e.g. targeting people with cybersecurity expertise or Master's degrees.	https://defense.gouvernement.lu/dam-assets/la-defense/luxembourg-defence-guidelines-for-2025-and-beyond.pdf https://www.indexmundi.com/luxembourg/military_service_age_and_obligation.html
Monaco	No	No	There has never been an army in Monaco. The defence of Monaco is the responsibility of France.	
Liechtenstein	No	No	There has never been an army in Liechtenstein. However there is a national police force which maintains close relations with neighbouring forces.	
<u>Southern Europe</u>				
Italy	Voluntary	Yes	In Italy conscription was suspended in 2005, by law. There is alternative service which is called "Universal Civilian Service". Thanks to the work that civilians have done in the last few years, the government has been increasing its funds. There is a campaign called " <i>Another defence is possible</i> " looking to stop the big investment in the military and allocate those resources to civil defence. One of the main demands is that tax-paying citizens should have the option to choose to which department (military spending or civil defence) they would like to allocate their taxes.	https://www.indexmundi.com/italy/military_service_age_and_obligation.html
Spain	Voluntary	Yes	Conscription in Spain was suspended in 2002 by royal	https://www.indexmundi.com/spain/milit

			decree. However, the Spanish government retains the right to mobilise citizens in a national emergency. The right to conscientious objection to military service is in the constitution.	ary_service_age_and_obligation.html https://exploringyourmind.com/conscientious-objection-in-spain/
Greece	Yes	Yes	In Greece the length of military service is 9 to 12 months, while the length of civilian service length is 15 months. Despite the difficult fiscal situation in Greece, and the pandemic, the government is seeking to acquire new armaments. Prosecutions and fines for insubordination still continue, including against conscientious objectors. Conscientious objectors have faced several violations of their rights as a result of their decision. The excessive duration of alternative service is one of many obstacles to accessing jobs. However, both religious and non-religious grounds for conscientious objection are legally recognised.	https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/greece-extends-mandatory-military-service-to-12-months/2118718 https://greekcitytimes.com/2021/01/22/greece-military-service-12-months/ https://greekherald.com.au/news/greece-to-increase-army-service-amid-tension-with-turkey/ https://wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/country_report/en/Greece https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur25/0088/2019/en/
Portugal	Voluntary	Yes	Conscription during peacetime was abolished in 2004. However, professional soldiers are excluded from claiming their right to conscientious objection.	https://www.indexmundi.com/portugal/military_service_age_and_obligation.html https://wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/country_report/en/Portugal
Serbia	Voluntary	Yes	In January 2021 the Minister of Defence announced that they were considering the idea of reintroducing regular military service. This is being considered because “people are less interested in professional military service.” Fortunately, Article 45 of the Serbian constitution guarantees the right to conscientious	https://emerging-europe.com/news/serbia-looks-set-to-reintroduce-mandatory-military-service/ https://rs.n1info.com/english/news/expect-mandatory-military-service-would-increase-emigration-from-serbia/

			objection. According to research from Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP), about three quarters of the population support the idea of reintroducing mandatory military service. The main reasons are “teaching young people discipline” and “tradition.” One of the biggest concerns is that mandatory military service may lead to an increase the number of young people emigrating.	https://www.serbianmonitor.com/en/stef-anovic-we-are-seriously-thinking-about-re-introducing-mandatory-military-service/ https://en.connection-ev.org/article-3298
Croatia	Voluntary	Yes	In Croatia conscription was suspended by the government in 2008, but it remains law. At the same time conscientious objection was first recognised in the constitution. In 2017 the idea of reintroducing conscription was floated. However, according to different analysts, this idea is unrealistic because of the large expenditure it would involve. Croatia would need to rebuild their army almost from zero. Some analysts suggest that it would be wiser to avoid mandatory military service and strengthen their reserves. Should conscription be reactivated, the laws and regulations on conscientious objection would also come into force again. Currently people can do voluntary military service in the army for 14 weeks.	https://balkaninsight.com/2017/01/26/croatia-s-announced-military-service-not-realistic-01-25-2017/ https://wri.org/es/programmes/world_survey/country_report/es/Croatia https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-with-mandatory-military-service
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Voluntary	Yes	Conscription was abolished in 2005, by law. Conscientious objection is also suspended.	https://www.indexmundi.com/bosnia_and_herzegovina/military_service_age_and_obligation.html
Albania	Voluntary	Yes	In Albania conscription was suspended / abolished in 2010. People can volunteer for military service once they are 19. In the case of general, or partial, compulsory conscription the age of recruitment would	https://www.indexmundi.com/albania/military_service_age_and_obligation.html

			be 18.	
North Macedonia	Voluntary	Yes	Conscription in North Macedonia was suspended / abolished in 2007. However, there is still a provision for mandatory military service in North Macedonia's constitution. In wartime every citizen would have to fulfil their duty. When conscription was suspended, all provisions for conscientious objection were suspended too. Professional soldiers currently have no right to conscientious objection.	https://wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/country_report/en/Macedonia
Slovenia	Voluntary	Yes	In Slovenia conscription during peacetime was abolished in 2003. The right to conscientious objection was suspended at the same time. Although conscientious objection is recognised, this is only in peacetime. In 2020 a proposal to reintroduce mandatory military service was defeated in parliament. The idea behind this proposal was to make people aware of how to use weapons and basic military techniques in a war scenario, as well as to strengthen patriotism. This year the government proposed expanding the grounds when conscription could be invoked.	https://www.total-slovenia-news.com/politics/5403-sds-bill-proposes-reintroduction-of-conscription https://www.total-slovenia-news.com/politics/5790-bill-to-reintroduce-conscription-in-slovenia-fails-at-first-vote-in-parliament https://www.indexmundi.com/slovenia/military_service_age_and_obligation.html https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/increase-in-military-drafting-on-the-cards-in-slovenia/
Montenegro	Voluntary	Yes	Conscription was suspended in 2006 by decision of the President. The right to conscientious objection is protected by the constitution and recognised on both religious and non-religious grounds. However, as conscription is suspended, the right to conscientious objection is also suspended. Due to perceived terrorist	https://balkaninsight.com/2015/05/13/serbs-in-montenegro-call-for-restoring-conscript-army/ https://wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/country_report/en/Montenegro

			threats in the Balkans, there has been some discussion in the last few years about reintroducing mandatory military service.	
Malta	Voluntary	No	There has never been conscription in Malta, only voluntary military service.	https://www.indexmundi.com/malta/military_service_age_and_obligation.html
Andorra	No	No	There are no regular military forces in Andorra. Its defence is the responsibility of France and Spain.	https://wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/country_report/en/Andorra
San Marino	Voluntary	No	There are no regular military forces in San Marino and there has never been conscription. Italy is responsible for its defence. However, there is a small military force consisting of volunteers and during wartime the government can allow conscription. There is no recognition of conscientious objection.	https://www.indexmundi.com/san_marino/military_service_age_and_obligation.html
Holy See	Voluntary	No	There is no conscription in the Holy See. The Pontifical Swiss Guard Corps is made up of volunteers. A volunteer must be Roman Catholic, a single male, and a Swiss citizen to join the Guard Corps.	https://www.indexmundi.com/holy_see(vatican_city)/military_service_age_and_obligation.html
Turkey	Yes	No	Since 2019 there has been an option in Turkey to pay in order to avoid military service. Conscientious objection is not recognised. Those who declare themselves conscientious objectors are prosecuted. They can be imprisoned and they face a “civil death” where they are excluded from all social, cultural and economic life. As a result many conscientious objectors decide to leave the country. One of the biggest challenges is that military service is pivotal in Turkish	https://en.connection-ev.org/article:turkey-prosecution-of-conscientious-objectors https://wri-irg.org/en/CODay2021 https://wri-irg.org/en/story/2020/council-europe-urges-turkey-recognise-conscientious-objection https://www.ktb.gov.tr/EN-98544/military-service-and-leaving-

			<p>culture. It is almost seen as a sacred duty, making a person honourable and virtuous. People can volunteer when they reach 17. Conscription is at 20 years old. The president is authorised to change the duration of the service, if necessary. Article 318 of the Penal Code forbids people promoting 'desertion or the non-realisation of mandatory military service'.</p>	<p>home.html</p> <p>https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-parliament-ratifies-new-military-service-law-144475</p> <p>https://www.indexmundi.com/turkey/military_service_age_and_obligation.html</p>
Azerbaijan	Yes	Yes	<p>In Azerbaijan the age for conscription is 18, but people can volunteer once they are 17. In 2001 Azerbaijan, as a member of the EU, agreed to create a model of alternative service. However, it has still not done so. Many conscientious objectors are imprisoned for refusing military service. In September 2020 Azerbaijan called up its reserves for war against Armenia. There have been reports of soldiers appearing at homes during the night to take the boys. There have also been reports of peace activists being detained and imprisoned for criticising (in public or through their social media) the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia.</p>	<p>http://www.icconnectblog.com/2011/04/mandatory-military-service-and-broken-promises-in-azerbaijan-the-case-of-bakhtiyar-hajiyev/</p> <p>https://www.rferl.org/a/azerbaijan_to_reform_military_conscription/24491577.html</p> <p>https://eurasianet.org/armenians-and-azerbaijanis-are-called-to-war</p> <p>https://wri-irg.org/en/story/2018/azerbaijan-conscientious-objectors-criminal-conviction-more-follow</p>
Georgia	Yes	Yes	<p>Conscription was reintroduced in Georgia in 2017. This decision was taken a year after conscription was abolished back in June 2016. As a result, at least 20,000 young people registered as priests in the Church of Biblical Freedom to avoid military service. Being a priest is grounds for exemption from military service. They only needed an identification card and 50 laris (\$18.50) to be ordained. Citizens who have not done their military service may have restrictions in</p>	<p>https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/31780/64/en/pdf#:~:text=Citizens%20of%20Georgia%20aged%20from,to%20performing%20compulsory%20military%20service.</p> <p>https://agenda.ge/en/news/2017/263</p> <p>https://www.rferl.org/a/georgian-draft-dodgers-find-loophole-in-god-to-avoid-army/29918668.html</p>

			appointment to public office.	
Republic of Cyprus	Yes	Yes	In the Republic of Cyprus the right to conscientious objection has been recognised by law. However, alternative service is 19 months compared with 14 months for military service.	https://www.mondaq.com/cyprus/general-immigration/788084/cypriots-eligible-for-military-service-on-claiming-cypriot-citizenship-on-the-basis-of-origin https://www.weareplanc.org/blog/conscientious-objector-in-cyprus-faces-prosecution/#:~:text=In%20North%20Cyprus%2C%20conscientious%20objectors,as%20being%20sent%20to%20prison.
<u>Eastern Europe</u>				
Russia	Yes	Yes	In Russia the underaged are able to join the army through military schools, as a first step. Conscriptio is usually very strict. There is a growing fear that the right to conscientious objection is not guaranteed for the future. One of the biggest issues is that those who approve or deny the right to conscientious objection are not impartial. There is a concern that conscription is used to silence and punish people from the opposition, anyone considered “politically undesirable” and / or their families across the country.	https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20210503-activists-in-russia-say-military-conscription-is-a-weapon-for-silencing-dissent https://eng.mil.ru/en/career/conscription/determent.htm
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	In the Ukraine the underaged can do military service as volunteers. There have been reports of human rights violations during conscription and inside the army e.g. young people being transported against their will to do their military service. There have also been reports of	https://www.euronews.com/2021/04/21/ukraine-president-volodymyr-zelenskyy-approves-new-military-reservist-law

			<p>conscripts who have committed suicide.</p> <p>In the Ukraine conscientious objectors have to do alternative service of 27 months, while military service is 18 months. Moreover, alternative service is only accessible to religious objectors. It is difficult to access employment for those who have not done their military service.</p> <p>In April 2021, as a result of the tensions with Russia, the President signed a law allowing reservists to be called up without announcing mobilisation. It is a complex situation as there are zones in the country where the government's jurisdiction is diffuse.</p>	
Poland	Voluntary	Yes	<p>Conscription was abolished in 2009. In Poland religious and non-religious grounds for conscientious objection are legally recognised. Women serve in the military on the same terms as men.</p>	https://www.indexmundi.com/poland/military_service_age_and_obligation.html
Romania	Voluntary	Yes	<p>In Romania conscription has been suspended since 2007. However, conscription is mandatory for men during wartime. In 2018 the Defence Minister stated that he would like to reintroduce compulsory military service.</p>	https://www.indexmundi.com/romania/military_service_age_and_obligation.html
Czech Republic	Voluntary	Yes	<p>Conscription was abolished in 2004. However, it can be reintroduced in wartime.</p>	https://english.radio.cz/15-years-later-was-ending-military-service-right-move-czech-republic-8116052#:~:text=It%20should%20be%20noted%20however,every%20Czech%20citizen%20between%20the

Hungary	Voluntary	Yes	<p>In Hungary conscription during peacetime was abolished in 2005. However, it can be reintroduced in times of emergency. In 2020 the Defence Ministry announced that they were going to open new military high schools and colleges. However, the ministry said that there were no plans to reintroduce mandatory military service.</p>	<p>https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-with-mandatory-military-service</p> <p>https://xpatloop.com/channels/2020/6/hungary-to-open-more-military-schools.html</p>
Belarus	Yes	Yes	<p>In Belarus the underaged can do military service as volunteers. In 2019 President Lukashenko announced that some deferments of conscription were going to be abolished, arguing that it was necessary to reduce the number of deferments and increase the number of conscripts.</p> <p>An increasing concern over the last few years is that there have been reports of 'suspicious suicides' and how they could be linked with the levels of hazing and authorised violence inside military ranks.</p> <p>Since 2016 conscientious objectors have been able to do alternative service instead of military service. Alternative service is for 36 months, while military service is only for 18 months. Military service can only be postponed once for study reasons. So, accessing further education post-college is not possible without completing military service.</p>	<p>https://emerging-europe.com/news/youre-in-the-army-now/</p> <p>https://www.esu-online.org/?news=statement-on-the-new-draft-law-for-military-service-in-belarus</p> <p>https://belarusdigest.com/story/belarus-introduces-alternative-civilian-service/</p> <p>https://www.belarus.by/en/press-center/news/belarus-considering-changes-in-conscription-rules-i-93665.html</p>
Bulgaria	Voluntary	Yes	<p>Conscription was suspended in 2008. However, in 2019, 72% of the population supported the idea of reintroducing mandatory military service. In 2020 the</p>	<p>https://bnr.bg/en/post/101209583/72-of-bulgarians-support-the-reinstatement-of-compulsory-military-service</p>

			government introduced voluntary military service for the reserves. People up to 40 years old can volunteer.	https://www.novinite.com/articles/207116/Bulgaria+Will+Introduce+Voluntary+Military+Service https://sofiaglobe.com/2020/12/16/bulgarias-parliament-legislates-voluntary-military-service-for-citizens-up-to-age-of-40/
Slovakia	Voluntary	Yes	In Slovakia conscription was suspended in 2006. However, it can be reintroduced in an emergency situation. In 2019 the Defence Ministry stated that it would be interested in launching a nation-wide discussion about reintroducing mandatory military service, or not. However, members of the opposition parties stated that it was important first to address the things that the Slovakian army is lacking.	https://www.indexmundi.com/slovakia/military_service_age_and_obligation.html https://enrsi.rtv.slovakia.sk/articles/coronavirus/184219/debates-on-compulsory-military-service
Moldova	Yes	Yes	<p>In Moldova the length of military service and alternative service is 12 months. For conscripts / citizens with a higher level of education it is 3 and 6 months respectively.</p> <p>However, most alternative service is within military institutions. As a result most conscientious objectors have refused to participate in those institutions. However, they have no real alternatives that guarantee their rights.</p> <p>In the last few years, the government has said that mandatory military service would be abolished by 2021. Then the military would consist of soldiers employed by contract.</p>	http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-03/21/c_137053387.htm#:~:text=Under%20the%20current%20legislation%2C%20citizens,for%20a%20one%2Dyear%20term. https://balkaninsight.com/2018/09/21/moldova-to-dismiss-compulsory-military-service-by-2021-09-21-2018/ https://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2511

Northern Europe				
United Kingdom	Voluntary	Yes	<p>Conscription was abolished in the UK in 1963. However, the underaged can join the military on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>The armed forces recognise the right of serving personnel to be discharged if they develop a conscientious objection to their work. They recognise that exposure to warfare can radically alter a person's values and beliefs. However there is no clear legislation about this and most personnel are unaware of it. Due to the process, discharges on the grounds of conscientious objection are rare.</p> <p>Reservists are allowed an honourable discharge as a conscientious objector. In 2020 there were some suggestions about reintroducing conscription (National Service) and the importance of having a nation-wide debate about it.</p>	<p>https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-with-mandatory-military-service</p> <p>https://www.theweek.co.uk/94653/should-the-uk-bring-back-national-service</p> <p>https://www.parliament.uk/globalassets/documents/joint-committees/human-rights/Briefing_from_Forces_Watch_Conscientious_objection.pdf</p> <p>https://menwhosaidno.org/costoday/costodayUK.html</p>
Sweden	Yes	Yes	<p>Conscription in Sweden was suspended in 2010 but it was then reintroduced in 2018. However, conscription is highly selective and most personnel are volunteers. Despite this, in wartime, every person between 16-70 years old has to participate in national defence. However, people can apply for a "weapon-free status" to avoid using guns and can apply to participate in civilian defence or at posts with no weapons. Most people applying are conscientious objectors and most applications are accepted. However total objection to</p>	<p>https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39140100</p> <p>https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/03/sweden-conscription/518571/</p> <p>https://www.indexmundi.com/sweden/military_service_age_and_obligation.html</p>

			military and civilian defence means being liable for fines.	
Denmark	Yes	Yes	<p>Military conscription is mandatory for men older than 18 who are physically fit. Women may participate but are not obliged to do so. Conscription is highly selective and almost 100% of military ranks are made up of volunteers. In general, only 6.5% of Danes within a year group are selected for conscription. Usually, the military chooses the best suited and most motivated to serve. They have a high female participation rate among conscripts.</p> <p>The length of military service is usually 4 months. Conscientious objectors can claim exemption, including on religious grounds. They can do alternative civilian service instead, also for a period of four months.</p>	<p>https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/dk-conscription.htm</p> <p>https://www.indexmundi.com/denmark/military_service_age_and_obligation.html</p> <p>http://fred.dk/mnk/english/etc/coindenmark.html</p> <p>https://cphpost.dk/?p=122482</p>
Finland	Yes	Yes	<p>In Finland two thirds of males serve in the military. However, conscripts can apply for alternative service anytime before, or during, military service. Every application is accepted automatically. They can also apply after their service and are usually then known as “reserve objectors.” The length of alternative service is the same as the maximum conscription period (nearly a year). However, conscientious objectors can face home arrest and, in very rare cases, prison sentences. Those who have refused civilian service, but have not been imprisoned, will be called again to serve.</p> <p>Finnish men who live abroad and have not done their</p>	<p>https://puolustusvoimat.fi/en/finnish-conscription-system</p> <p>https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/12000_finns_start_military_service_under_new_training_regime/11145670</p> <p>https://wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/country_report/de/Finland</p>

			military or civilian service by the age of 28 are usually denied a Finnish passport. In 2019 exemption to military service for Jehova's Witnesses was abolished.	
Norway	Yes	Yes	In 2008 only about 30% of the 32,000 young men reaching conscription age were called up for compulsory military service. In 2011 the Minister of Justice stated that conscientious objectors would no longer be called up and would be exempted from military service. In 2013 Norway introduced mandatory military service for women.	https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/norway-introduces-compulsory-military-service-for-women-bunking-them-in-mixed-dorms https://wri-irg.org/en/story/2018/return-conscription#_ftn24 https://wri-irg.org/en/story/2011/norway-end-substitute-service-conscientious-objectors
Ireland	Voluntary	No	In Ireland conscription has never existed. However, in emergencies it is possible to conscript men. There is still no recognition of the right to conscientious objection for personnel in the military.	https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-with-mandatory-military-service https://www.indexmundi.com/ireland/military-service-age-and-obligation.html https://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/council-of-europe-dismisses-case-on-conscientious-objection-rights-of-defence-forces-1.4513130#:~:text=A%20number%20of%20EU%20states,seek%20discharge%20on%20this%20basis.&text=Euromil%20argued%20that%20the%20failure,contrary%20to%20the%20European%20charter.
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	Conscription in Lithuania was suspended in 2009 but then reintroduced in 2015. However, conscription is highly selective and the percentage of conscripts is	https://www.defence24.com/lithuania-reintroduces-conscription-and-compulsory-military-service

			<p>small. In 2020 college students were included in the draft call. Students have the option to pause their studies and serve or they can delay their draft until the end of their studies. Although there is alternative service this is under military control and supervision. Conscientious objectors who reject any kind of involvement with the military do not have their rights guaranteed.</p>	<p>https://www.karys.lt/en/military-service/conscripts/400</p> <p>https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1131779/lithuania-compiles-military-conscription-list-includes-students-for-first-time</p> <p>https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1187960/european-court-to-look-into-lithuania-s-military-conscription-rules</p>
Latvia	Voluntary	Yes	<p>In Latvia conscription was suspended / abolished in 2007. However, each person is entitled to serve in the military for life. According to the Minister of Defence in 2017, a return to conscription was not affordable. They preferred to invest in an educational course in schools and, through this, increase the numbers of volunteers. This new course, to be introduced in schools in 2021, is called the “National Defence Course” and is for students in the 10th and 11th grades. The objective is to teach theoretical and practical skills with topics such as security and defence, resilience in crises, and skills and competences for defence. Students can object to this course with no consequence and the teacher will provide alternative study topics. At the moment it is voluntary, but it will be mandatory from 2024-25.</p>	<p>https://www.indexmundi.com/latvia/military_service_age_and_obligation.html</p> <p>https://jamestown.org/program/latvia-pursues-total-defense-concept-rejects-conscription/</p>
Estonia	Yes	Yes	<p>In Estonia conscription is highly selective. Over the years it has been found that approximately one third of males serve. In 2020 it was reported that there was an increasing number of women interested in military</p>	<p>https://mil.ee/en/defence-forces/compulsory-military-service/#:~:text=The%20Constitution%20of%20the%20Republic,Defence%20Forces%20to%20the%20conscript.</p>

			<p>service. According to a survey in 2021, 90% of Estonians believe military service is necessary. There is alternative service. It is for 12 months (compared with military service which is for 8-12 months) and is administered by the Minister of Defence. It has been reported that the Minister of Defence wants to introduce a reserve from conscripts who have done alternative service. At the moment people in the reserves are those who have served in the military. There are only a few slots for alternative service, so some of those who have asked for alternative service have to wait for a year to serve.</p>	<p>https://www.eesti.ee/en/security-and-defense/military-service/benefits-and-allowances-for-conscripts/</p> <p>https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2020/0924/For-Estonian-women-military-service-increasingly-attracts-as-a-career</p> <p>https://estonianworld.com/security/survey-almost-all-estonians-consider-conscription-necessary/</p>
Iceland	No	No	<p>There are no regular military forces in Iceland. It is the only NATO member with no standing military forces. However, according to the Constitution, conscription can be introduced if there is a national danger. The defence of Iceland is a NATO commitment. As a result, there is no recognition of conscientious objection. There is a small coastguard force, a police force and the Icelandic Crisis Response Unit which is a peacekeeping force. Most people in the country are against the idea of arming the police.</p>	<p>https://www.bluecarrental.is/blog/why-does-iceland-not-have-an-army/</p> <p>https://wri-irg.org/en/programmes/world_survey/reports/iceland</p>

Note

The information in this table relates to official armies in nation states.

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