



**European Bureau for
Conscientious Objection**

35 Van Elewyck street, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

www.ebco-beoc.org / ebco@ebco-beoc.org / [@ebcobeoc](https://www.instagram.com/ebcobeoc)



Questionnaire for EBCO Annual Report 2024

A. Status of conscription

1. Is conscription into obligatory military service currently applied?

Yes, conscription into obligatory military service is currently applied in Denmark.

B. Countries with conscription

2. If so, what are the legislative provisions that govern the procedures? Please give full details.

According to section 81 of the Constitutional Act of Denmark from June 5th 1953:

“Every male person able to bear arms shall be liable with his person to contribute to the defense of his country under such rules as are laid down by statute.”

The Constitutional Act of Denmark has unfortunately not been translated into English (<https://www.ft.dk/da/dokumenter/bestil-publikationer/publikationer/mingrundlov/min-grundlov/kapitel-8/paragraf-81>).

The Conscription Act Nr. 225 from 13th of March 2006 governs how the conscription is regulated.

The Conscription Act of Denmark has unfortunately not been translated into English (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ta/2006/225>)

The Defense Personnel Act Nr 667 of 20th of June 2006 governs some of the conditions regarding conscription service.

The Defense Personnel Act of Denmark has unfortunately not been translated into English (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ta/2006/667>)

3. What is the minimum age for conscription?

The legal minimum age for conscription in a time of peace and war is 18.

4. What is the duration of military service?

The duration of military service varies from 4 months up to 12 months.

Call-up can be done for a total of 6-16 months of subsequent service for up to 5 years after repatriation from the first total service. The service can be performed all at once or over several periods.

5. What provision is there for the exemption of conscientious objectors?

The conscripts in Denmark have the right to refuse military service and service in the Danish Emergency Management Agency on the grounds of conscientious objection (CO), according to Article 1, Subsection 1, in the Act No. 226 of 13. of March 2006 of consolidated act on conscientious objectors.

CO-status is granted to a person, who objects to military service and service in the Danish Emergency Management Agency based on reasons of conscience. Objection is accepted when based on religious or ethical reasons. An application solely based on political reasons will be refused.

Legislative of the CO-service (law and departmental order) have unfortunately not been translated into English (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ta/2008/995>).

6. What proportion of conscripts sign up for subsequent voluntary service?

In 2024, as in the past 12 years, 100 percent of conscripts signed up for voluntary military service.

7. What reservist obligations apply, what is the call up procedure for reserve service?

Conscripts have an obligation to register in the Territorial Defense Register for a period of 5 years after the repatriation from the first total service period is completed.

8. How many persons were prosecuted in recent years for evasion/refusal of military service? How many of these had declared conscientious objections? What were the outcomes, and what sentences were imposed?

There is a distinction between not showing up to the first day of military service and evading service at a later date.

The Military Prosecution Service issues fines and handles cases of possible prison sentences for conscripts serving in the Army, Navy or Air Force. In 2024 approximately 54 conscripts were prosecuted for evasion/refusal of military service and for not showing up for military service, and none of them had applied for CO-status. A preliminary estimate made by The Military Prosecution Service shows that the outcome of the above mentioned cases were fines for evasion of military service in 50 cases and prison sentences in 3 cases. In one case, charges were waived.

The Danish Police and Prosecution Service issue fines and handle cases of possible prison sentences for conscripts serving in the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). There were in 2024 two cases of evasion of military service, where fines were the outcome.

C. (Skip if **not applicable) Countries without conscription**

9. Has any legislation regarding obligatory military service (conscription) been abolished, or has it merely been suspended, meaning that it could be reimposed at any time?
10. Is there an ongoing registration procedure for those liable for military service? Is it possible for a conscientious objector to refuse to be registered? From what age is registration required?
11. If suspended, are there specific provisions regarding the circumstances in which it could be reinstated and the process to be followed?
12. Would reinstatement mean that previous legislation regarding conscientious objection would remain applicable? If so, please answer sections F and G with regard to such legislation.

D. School system

13. Is attendance at any days of introduction to the armed forces or military careers or other programs which could be seen as preparatory to military recruitment an obligatory part of the secondary education curriculum?

Military recruitment is not an obligatory part of the secondary education curriculum.

14. Do the armed forces have access to personal data of students?

No, the armed forces have no access to personal data of students.

15. Do military institutions offer temporary programs to students aged under 18 to learn more about military careers?

There is a possibility to apply for one week of professional practice in military institutions to students under 18.

16. Are military personnel involved in teaching classes at schools, on a temporary or long term basis?

No, military personnel are not involved in teaching classes at schools.

E. Voluntary recruitment into military service

17. What incentives or measures are used by the national armed forces to encourage voluntary recruitment? (financial incentives, scholarships, career prospects, advertising, etc.)

The national armed forces offer a large number of education programs that can improve one's career prospect, both in the military and civil world. In order to introduce those opportunities the national armed forces use different types of promotion, including advertising on their own platform (HP, SoMe, promotion fairs, open house engagement, etc.) or paid platform (TV, SoMe, Cinema, etc.).

18. What is the minimum age for recruitment?

The legal minimum age for recruitment is 18.

19. What was the total first-time military recruitment in recent years?

Please disaggregate by age, gender and (if appropriate) whether as conscripts or volunteers.

The total first-time military recruitment in recent years is 4575 and 100 % of conscripts signed up for voluntary military service, from which 75 % were men and 25 % women.

We do not have precise statistics regarding their age, but we know that majority of conscripts are between 19-21 years old.

20. What legislation governs voluntary recruitment into military service?

The Constitutional Act of Denmark, Article 81:

“Every male person able to bear arms shall be liable with his person to contribute to the defense of his country under such rules as are laid down by statute.”

21. What is the duration of service initially required?

The length of service varies from 4 months up to 12 months.

Call-up can be done for a total of 6-16 months of subsequent service for up to 5 years after repatriation from the first total service. The service can be performed all at once or over several periods.

22. What proportion of recruits sign up for a second period of the same length or longer?

None, since there is no possibility to sign up for a second period.

23. How many persons were called up for reserve service, and of what duration?

None, since there was no need for reserve service.

F. Application process for recognition of conscientious objectors

24. What process is used to decide upon applications for the recognition of conscientious objectors?

Application for CO-status must be sent in writing, stating the reasons for applying, i.e. the matter of the conscience. Since July 1st 1998 the applicants have been offered a form for applying for CO-status made by the CO-Administration. Use of this form is not mandatory.

An application should be sent within eight weeks after the applicant has received his call-up papers for the military forces or for service in the Danish Emergency Management Agency. The reason for this eighty-week time limit is that the military authorities should have sufficient time to find replacements for those who are granted CO-status.

An application can be sent in before the conscript has received his call-up papers, and the CO-status may be granted, but the length of the service cannot be stated until the final half-year distribution for the conscripts has taken place.

It is also possible to apply for CO-status after the eight-week time limit and after the applicant has initiated his service in the military forces or in the Danish Emergency Management Agency. Still the application should be based upon the conscience of the conscript. In this situation the applicant has to state the time his conscience has begun, and the reason for it. Besides, it should be ascertained, in which way the conflict has worsened during his service.

All conscripts have a right to apply for CO-status, but all of the above-mentioned requirements need to be fulfilled. Otherwise, the conscripts will be denied this right.

25. What information is provided to conscripts regarding the possibility of applying for recognition?

Conscripts receive a letter of information along with their call-up papers, which, among other things, describes the conditions of compulsory national service. This letter has a chapter on civilian service, containing information about the right to refuse military service for conscientious reasons, about the procedure of applying for CO-status, and the length and types of work in the civilian service. Along with the call-up papers for service in the military forces or for service in the Danish Emergency Management Agency the conscripts receive information about the possibility of transfer to civilian service.

26. What body is responsible for deciding upon applications?

The Danish Ministry of Defence Personnel Agency (MDPA) is responsible for deciding upon applications.

27. Who sits in the responsible body?

Administrative officers in the Administration for CO in the Danish Ministry of Defence Personnel Agency (MDPA).

28. In recent years, how many applications were received? How many were successful on first consideration; how many unsuccessful applications were appealed, and with what results?

Year	Number of applications	Successful applications	Unsuccessful applications
2020	9	5	4
2021	19	18	1
2022	11	11	0

2023	12	10	2
2024	3	2	1

No appeals were received regarding unsuccessful applications.

29. Are you able to indicate on which grounds any were rejected?

CO-status is granted to a person, who objects to military service and service in the Danish Emergency Management Agency based on reasons of conscience.

Objection is not accepted when based on health issues, family issues, problems with authority in the army, etc. An application solely based on political reasons would be refused too.

30. How can the decision be appealed?

The decision can be appealed in a letter of complaint to the Danish Ministry of Defence.

31. What are the legal provisions for those who also refuse to perform alternative service?

If a CO does not report, the CO receives a letter with a new date for reporting, and at the same time the Prosecution Authorities are involved in order to give him a fine (DKK. 1.500, DKK. 2.000, DKK. 2.500 etc.) for not reporting. After a number of incidents, the case can be looked upon as denial, which can lead to imprisonment for a period corresponding to the length of his service.

G. Terms of alternative service

32. If alternative service is / would be required of conscientious objectors, under what authority are the arrangements administered?

The arrangements are administered under authority of the Danish Ministry of Defence Personnel Agency (MDPA).

33. What is the duration of alternative service?

The duration of the civilian service/conscientious objection service (CO-service) has to be equal to the duration of the military service, from which the conscript is transferred. The duration of the military service normally varies from 4 months up to 12 months, so the duration of service for COs differentiates accordingly, but for most COs, the duration of the service is 4 months.

34. To what duration of military service would the objector otherwise have been liable?

Please see the response to question 33.

35. What is the rate of remuneration?

During their service COs receive various cash benefits like daily remuneration, subsistence allowance, repatriation allowance, clothing allowance and housing allowance (average amount/per. month 1.900 EUR)

36. How does the rate of remuneration compare to that of military conscripts?

Military conscripts get another kind of cash benefits (monthly salary and subsistence allowance) but the amount is the same.

37. Which bodies offer alternative service placements?

The alternative civil service/conscientious objection service established for conscientious objectors is purely civilian. During that service, the COs are placed to work in one of the many public or publicly funded institutions, approved by the CO-Administration for this purpose only.

Workplace:

All workplaces for conscientious objectors have been approved by CO-Administration and are mainly local (municipal) or regional governmental, public institutions or private institutions for the common good, that receive public funding. All workplaces are within the fields of social, health, culture, religion, peace or environment.

Examples of workplaces are institutions for children, the youth and the elderly, institutions for mentally and physically disabled persons and cultural institutions such as museums, theatres, libraries etc. Besides that, it is possible to work in peace organizations, organizations connected to the U.N., church organizations and environmental organizations.

38. Are conscientious objectors assigned to placements, or do they have a free choice?

The COs can choose the sort of placement, they find most suitable to their interest, geographical position etc. Institutions are located all over the country, which makes it possible for most of the COs to do their civil service in close proximity to their homes. The employment of the COs may not have a military purpose. The specific rules are provided by the Ministry of Defence, and the practical administration rests with the CO-Administration.

It is a condition, however, that the COs works as extra labour, i.e. the COs may not be hired for vacant jobs and they may not be hired to work in functions demanding special skills. Furthermore, they may not work in institutions, which they are attached to, or where they previously have been employed.

39. Is it possible to perform alternative service while continuing to live at one's permanent address?

Yes, they all continue to live at their permanent address while performing alternative service.

H. Conscientious objection during military service of conscripts/volunteers

40. What legislation or regulations would apply to the case of a serving member of the armed forces who applied for release having developed conscientious objection?

Danish legislation recognizes conscientious objection to military service. The conditions are stated in legal order no. 226 from March 13 2006.

41. What procedures are followed in the event of an application?

Application for CO-status must be sent in writing, stating the reasons for applying, i.e. the matter of the conscience. Since July 1st 1998 the applicants have been offered a form for applying for CO-status made by the CO-Administration. Use of this form is not mandatory.

An application should be sent within eight weeks after the applicant has received his call-up papers for the military forces or for service in the Danish Emergency Management Agency. The reason for this eighty-week time limit is that the military authorities should have sufficient time to find replacement for those who are granted CO-status.

An application can be sent in before the conscript has received his call-up papers, and the CO-status may be granted, but the length of the service cannot be stated until the final half-year distribution for the conscripts has taken place.

It is also possible to apply for CO-status after the eight-week time limit and after the applicant has initiated his service in the military forces or in the Danish Emergency Management Agency. Still

the application should be based upon the conscience of the conscript. In this situation he also has to state the time his conscience has begun, and the reason for it. Besides it should be ascertained, in which way the conflict has worsened during his service.

All conscripts have the right to apply for CO-status, but all of the above mentioned requirements need to be fulfilled. Otherwise, the conscripts will be denied his right to CO-status.

42. What information is available to serving personnel about the right of conscientious objection and the means of applying for release?

In their call-up papers all conscripts receive an information letter, which among other things describes the conditions of compulsory national service. This letter has a separate chapter on civilian service, containing information about the right to refuse military service for conscientious reasons, about the procedure of applying for CO-status, and the length and types of work in the civilian service. Along with the call-up papers for service in the military forces or for service in the Danish Emergency Management Agency the conscripts receive information about the possibility of transfer to civilian service.

43. Have any such cases been recorded in recent years? Please give details of the number of applications, the number of acceptances.

Since 100 % of conscripts signed up for voluntary military service, such cases are almost non-existent in recent years. In 2024 only 3 conscripts applied for transfer, from which 2 were granted.

44. Give details, if relevant, of the grounds for any rejections.

CO-status is not granted to a person, who objects to military service and service in the Danish Emergency Management Agency based on other reasons than of conscience.

45. How many persons were prosecuted for desertion? Were any of these persons who had declared themselves conscientious objectors? What was the outcome, and what sentences were imposed?

Only three conscripts were registered for desertion in 2024. None of them had declared themselves conscientious objectors. The outcome of the cases are unknown at the moment, but typically desertion is decided by fines or imprisonment and in some cases the conscript is recalled.

I. Conscientious objection after military service

46. What legislation or regulations would apply to the case of a reservist who applied for recognition as a conscientious objector?

After completing the compulsory service period, all the conscripts, including conscientious objectors, automatically transfer to a Territorial Defense Register for 5 years.

The aim of the register is for the Government to be able to call up 9.000 conscripts at any time, in order to aid the society in case of natural or environmental disasters or terrorist activities. The idea is for the society to be able to use the skills acquired under the compulsory service in order to perform limited assignments.

Former conscripts are not mobilized at any time during or after the compulsory service period but are obligated to appear if called upon by the Territorial Defense Register.

Legislation that apply in this case is the Act amending the Act on Defense Personnel No. 328 of 30th march 2019 which unfortunately has not been translated into English (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lt/2019/328>).

47. Have any persons sought to refuse reserve service on this basis in recent years? With what results?

The Territorial Defense Register was established in 2005 and has never been activated.

J. Asylum for conscientious objectors

48. Would it be possible for you to obtain statistics on approvals/rejections of those asylum applications in your country that were citing conscientious objection?

It is not possible for MDPA to obtain statistics on approvals/rejections of those asylum applications in Denmark that were citing conscientious objection.

K. Developments since last year

[Here you can find the information published in last year's Report.](#)

49. What legislative changes have happened within the last year?

No legislative changes have happened within the last year.

50. Is there any legal initiative undergoing at the Parliament or any other state body, which concerns the military service, the right to conscientious objection, or related issues?

Yes, the Ministry of Defence is currently working on initiatives concerning the military service. The initiatives are expected to be presented to The Danish Parliament within the next year.

51. Anything else that you would like to report?

No.

EBCO was founded in Brussels in 1979 as an umbrella structure for national associations of conscientious objectors in the European countries to promote the right to conscientious objection to preparations for, and participation in, war and any other type of military activity as a fundamental human right. It enjoys participatory status with the Council of Europe since 1998 and is a member of its Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations since 2005. It provides expertise and legal opinions on behalf of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs of the Council of Europe. It is involved in drawing up the annual report of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament on the application by the Member States of its resolutions on conscientious objection and civilian service, as determined in the “Bandrés Molet & Bindi Resolution” of 1994. It is a full member of the European Youth Forum since 1995.