

**COI QUERY**

<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Egypt</b>
<b>Question(s)</b>	Information on exemption(s) from military service
<b>Date of completion</b>	30 April 2018
<b>Query Code</b>	<b>Q71</b>
<b>Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)</b>	

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*The information provided in this response has been researched, evaluated and processed with utmost care within a limited time frame. All sources used are referenced. A quality review has been performed in line with the above mentioned methodology. This document does not claim to be exhaustive neither conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to international protection. If a certain event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.*

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*The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policy makers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on the 30 April 2018. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.*



## COI QUERY RESPONSE

According to sources consulted by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) in 2015, military service in Egypt is compulsory for males between the ages of 18 and 30 years old<sup>1</sup>. The duration of the service varies from one to three years, depending on educational qualifications<sup>2</sup>, followed by a nine-year reserve obligation<sup>3</sup>.

The National Military Service Act of Egypt was amended in 2010, stipulating that only persons over 18 could perform their military service. According to information provided by the United Nations, 'in practice, most persons doing their military service were over 20'<sup>4</sup>.

Egyptian men have to show evidence of their military status, including proof of exemption from the military service, if relevant, when they wish to travel abroad<sup>5</sup>. According to the US Department of State country report 2016, 'National identification cards indicated completion of military service'<sup>6</sup>. A passport can contain a record of exemption from military service<sup>7</sup>.

### Exemption

According to Landinfo<sup>8</sup>, the Norwegian COI unit, the grounds for exemption (in Arabic) are available on the website of [the Egyptian Directorate of Conscription and Mobilisation](#)<sup>9</sup>. The website of the Consulate General of Egypt in Montreal lists, in English, the reasons for exemption and the documents required for obtaining exemption from military service<sup>10</sup>. According to this website, an Egyptian male can apply for military exemption if he holds dual nationality or if he is the only son or a student<sup>11</sup>.

A United Nations report dated 17 March 2010 enumerates the various grounds for exemption from military service in Egypt, under the National Military Service Act:

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<sup>1</sup> IRB, *Egypt: Whether a citizen of Egypt who is living abroad can obtain a studentment from military service without a National Identity Card; whether an Egyptian citizen can apply for a National Identity Card from outside of Egypt*, 8 January 2016, EGY105396.E, ([url](#)).

<sup>2</sup> According to 'Global Security.org': Conscripts with degrees from institutions of higher education had to serve only eighteen months. GlobalSecurity.org, *Egypt - Military Personnel*, 2013, ([url](#)).

<sup>3</sup> Middle East Eye, *Egypt's army: The conscripts who refuse to serve*, 28 November 2016, ([url](#)). CIA, *The World Factbook, Military Service and Obligation (Years of Age), Egypt*, 2017, ([url](#)).

<sup>4</sup> UN, *Convention on the Rights of the Child, Committee on the Rights of the Child, Fifty-seventh session, Summary record of the 1624 meeting*, CRC/C/SR/1624, 21 November 2011, ([url](#)).

<sup>5</sup> DFAT (Australia), *DFAT Country Information Report Egypt*, 19 May 2017, ([url](#)).

<sup>6</sup> US DoS, *Country report on human rights practices, Egypt 2016*, 3 March 2017, ([url](#)).

<sup>7</sup> DFAT (Australia), *DFAT Country Information Report Egypt*, 19 May 2017, ([url](#)).

<sup>8</sup> EASO, *Query on Military service in Egypt – Final Answer*, 9 October 2015, ([url](#)).

<sup>9</sup> Egyptian Directorate of Conscription and Mobilisation: ([url](#))

<sup>10</sup> Consulate General of Egypt in Montreal (Canada), *Exemption from Military Service*, n.d., ([url](#)).

<sup>11</sup> Consulate General of Egypt in Montreal (Canada), *Exemption from Military Service*, n.d., ([url](#)). See also: Middle East Eye, *Egypt's army: The conscripts who refuse to serve*, 28 November 2016, ([url](#)).

‘Under the National Military Service Act, anyone medically unfit for military service is permanently exempt, as is an only son whose father is deceased or permanently incapable of earning a living; anyone eligible for recruitment who is the eldest brother or son of a citizen killed in military operations or permanently incapable of earning a living as a result of injuries sustained during such operations; and anyone eligible for recruitment who is the eldest brother or son of an officer, recruit or volunteer who died as a result of service or who is ill or disabled as a result of service such that he is rendered permanently incapable of earning a living’.

‘The only son of a living father is temporarily exempt from military service, as is the sole provider for a father incapable of earning a living, the provider for a brother or brothers incapable of earning a living, the sole provider for an unmarried sister or sisters, and anyone eligible for recruitment who is the eldest brother or son of an officer, recruit or volunteer who died as a result of service. Also temporarily exempt from compulsory service is the last brother or the eldest remaining brother, after excluding such brothers as are incapable of earning a living, where two brothers or more have been recruited or called for reserve service’<sup>12</sup>.

According to Landinfo (October 2015), ‘there is no specific information on which illnesses are deemed sufficient to grant final exemption nor on the documentation required’<sup>13</sup>.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) summarises some of the exemption grounds detailed by the UN report and provides additional information:

‘Exemptions and deferrals are common. These 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.

University students can be granted exemptions up to the age of 28, and exemptions are also possible for health reasons.

In addition to these deferrals and exemptions, the military may exempt individuals if it has an excess number of conscripts.

<sup>12</sup> Convention on the Rights of the Child, Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 8, paragraph 1, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict*, CRC/C/OPAC/EGY/1, 17 March 2010, ([url](#)). See also: BAMF (Germany), *Case ID (IOM): ZC190/11.12.14*, 11 December 2014, ([url](#)); New Arab (The), *Conscripts with connections get easy military service in Egypt*, 6 April 2015, ([url](#)).

<sup>13</sup> EASO, *Query on Military service in Egypt – Final Answer*, 9 October 2015, ([url](#)).



It has also been reported that the military will not recruit as conscripts those arrested as Islamists.

Final exemptions from military service are granted when the individual turns 30<sup>14</sup>.

According to an IRIN article dated 2012, a person without an ID card is exempt from military service<sup>15</sup>. However this information could not be corroborated by additional sources.

A 2013 report on Egypt's military by GlobalSecurity.org notes that 'men employed in permanent government positions, sons whose brothers had died in service, men employed in essential industries, and family breadwinners were all eligible for exemptions'<sup>16</sup>.

According to an Egyptian news website, in December 2017, the Egyptian Armed Forces committee decided that, men from the southern Halayeb, Shalateen, Abu Ramad and Wadi Al-Allaqi areas, who passed the age of 30 without performing mandatory military service, will be issued 'final certificates of exemption for military service as part of the efforts by the Armed Forces to assist citizens of these border areas'<sup>17</sup>.

An article published by the 'New Arab'<sup>18</sup> mentions that, since the January 2011 revolution, exemption and postponement to military service have been difficult to obtain. It also indicates that 'some conscripts sometimes got exemptions by paying bribes to high ranking officials, which start at 15,000 pounds (\$2,000)<sup>19</sup>.

The DFAT (2017) notes that 'obtaining a deferral or exemption from military service is largely dependent on individual and socio-economic circumstances'<sup>20</sup>.

It should be noted that, an article by the 'Middle East Eye', dated November 2016, refers to a movement called 'Not to Compulsory Military Service Movement (NoMilService)'<sup>21</sup>. According to the organisation Global Voices', this movement was set up by Egyptian activists on a Facebook Page<sup>22</sup>. The

<sup>14</sup> DFAT (Australia), *DFAT Country Information Report Egypt*, 19 May 2017, ([url](#)).

<sup>15</sup> IRIN, *Egypt: No ID, no government services*, 18 July 2012, ([url](#)).

<sup>16</sup> GlobalSecurity.org, *Egypt - Military Personnel*, 2013, ([url](#)).

<sup>17</sup> Ahramonline (Egypt), *Egypt minister of defence ratifies settlement of military service status for men over 30 in Halayeb, Shalateen areas*, 28 December 2017, ([url](#)).

<sup>18</sup> The New Arab is a news website operating globally with journalists in over 20 countries. According to the 'About us' page, 'non-partisan, our editorial line is independent and objective'. See: <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/aboutus>

<sup>19</sup> New Arab (The), *Conscripts with connections get easy military service in Egypt*, 6 April 2015, ([url](#)), accessed 30 April 2018.

<sup>20</sup> DFAT (Australia), *DFAT Country Information Report Egypt*, 19 May 2017, ([url](#)).

<sup>21</sup> No to compulsory military service Movement: <http://www.nomilservice.com/>

<sup>22</sup> Global Voices, *These Egyptians Say No to Mandatory Military Service*, 23 March 2014, ([url](#)). The facebook page is available at: <https://www.facebook.com/No.Military.Service>



website of this movement publishes posts on the situation of conscientious objectors<sup>23</sup> in Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean region. The most recent post visible on the website dates 2016<sup>24</sup>.

### **Exemption documents**

Documents required for obtaining exemption from military service differ based on the grounds for the exemption<sup>25</sup>.

For example, documents required for obtaining exemption from military service on the ground of dual nationality are: military identification number, photocopy of dual citizenship statement, photocopy of national identity card or valid Egyptian passport and a photocopy of the valid passport of another state, as well as an application form<sup>26</sup>.

In case of exemption from military service for an only son, required documents are: military identification number, photocopy of applicant national identity card or valid Egyptian passport, photocopy of applicant father's national identity card or valid Egyptian passport, family registration and the application form<sup>27</sup>. Documents needed for the application for final exemption can be consulted on the website of the Consulate general of Egypt in Montreal<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> For more information on conscientious objection in Egypt, see: War Resisters International, World survey of conscription and conscientious objection to military service, *Egypt*, Last revision 21 July 1998, ([url](#)), accessed 30 April 2018.

<sup>24</sup> No to compulsory military service (NoMilservice), *Amir Eid the new Egyptian CO which the Egyptian authority must determine his rights*, 17 October 2016, ([url](#)).

<sup>25</sup> Egypt, Consulate General of Egypt in Montreal (Canada), *Exemption from Military Service*, n.d., ([url](#)).

<sup>26</sup> Egypt, Consulate General of Egypt in Montreal (Canada), *Exemption from Military Service*, n.d., ([url](#)).

<sup>27</sup> Egypt, Consulate General of Egypt in Montreal (Canada), *Exemption from Military Service*, n.d., ([url](#)).

<sup>28</sup> Egypt, Consulate General of Egypt in Montreal (Canada), *Exemption from Military Service*, n.d., ([url](#)).



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