



Algeria – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 22 February 2016

General information on military service in Algeria. Information on the army call-up (rapelle) of ex military personnel for military service from 2011 to date. Information on the military call-up (rapelle) of discharged ex-military personnel to service. Information on whether the military will or do call up ex military personal who were dismissed from the army after serving a prison term for evasion.

The CIA World Factbook entry for Algeria, in a paragraph headed “Military service age and obligation”, states:

“17 is the legal minimum age for voluntary military service; 19-30 years of age for compulsory service; conscript service obligation is 18 months (6 months basic training, 12 months civil projects) (2012).” (Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (11 February 2016) *The World Factbook: Algeria*)

An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada response to a request for information, in a section headed “Obligations Regarding Military Service”, states:

“The National Service Code (*Code du service national*) of 1974 indicates that military service is obligatory for all men over 19 years of age. The website of the Ministry of National Defence indicates that since 31 December 2011, all men over 30 years of age are exempted from this obligation and are eligible for regularization.” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (22 October 2012) *DZA104204.E – Algeria: Obligations regarding military service and the reserve; the possibility of obtaining an exemption or stay, including the procedures that must be followed (2006-September 2012)*)

This response also states:

“The National Service Code indicates that the duration of military service is two years. However, the Algerian government indicates that in 2002, it was reduced to 18 months. Other sources also indicate that the duration of military service is 18 months, and comprises basic training for 6 months and 12 months in civil projects. The website of the Ministry of Youth and Sports indicates that the initial six-month period consists of [translation] ‘shooting, mental and physical training, and simulation exercises in cases such as torture and sudden attacks’. The National Service Charter (*Charte du service national*) indicates that after the military training period, recruits perform activities in the economic, administrative, social, cultural or national defence fields. However, the website of the Ministry of Youth and Sports indicates that in the 12-month period following the six-month military training, recruits are serving in the military land forces.” (ibid)

See also Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada response which, in a section headed “Call for Recruits” (section 1.3) states:

“The Ministry of Defence's website notes that, one month prior to the beginning of service, recruits who are not continuing their studies receive, at their place of residence, a convening order from the national gendarmerie, for which they must confirm receipt (ibid.). The Ministry of Defence adds that [translation] 'as soon as' the recruits receive the convening order, they must contact their enlistment unit [translation] 'on the set date, without delay' (ibid.).

Article 16 of the National Service Code states:

[translation]

Any citizen who is called to fulfill his national service obligations and is properly notified of his marching orders will be considered a draft evader if he does not report to the designated site for his enlistment within thirty days after the date indicated in the marching orders referred to above, unless the delay is caused by circumstances beyond his control.” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (28 January 2014) *DZA104734.FE – Algeria: Recruitment to the National Service; methods used by the Algerian authorities to locate draft evaders*)

The most recent UK Home Office report on Algeria, in a section titled “Military Service” (paragraph 9.02), quotes from the specialised subscription source Jane's as follows:

“Jane's Sentinel Country Risk Assessment Algeria (JSCRA Algeria), last updated on 1 June 2012, stated: ‘Once compulsory service has been completed, soldiers must remain available to the Ministry of Defence for five years and may be recalled at any time, after which they become part of the reserve forces for a further 20 years. The number of reserves is thought to be around 100,000, but their mobilisation would be difficult as they would first need retraining.’ “ (UK Home Office Border Agency (17 January 2013) *Algeria: Country Of Origin Information (COI) Report*, p.46)

An article from the US military sponsored website Magharebia states:

“Algerian men over age 30 are no longer required to perform military service. The measure is the latest in a series of steps 'taken for handling youth preoccupations', the National Service Department said Thursday (March 3rd) about the new policy announced by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika.” (Magharebia (8 March 2011) *Algeria reforms military service policy*)

This article also states:

“Meanwhile, experts believe it is now time to reflect in depth on national service instead of resorting to 'populist' measures. It is important to do away with national service as part of the efforts to professionalise the army that have been made over the last ten years, according to political researcher Othman Selini. Some MPs proposed that the duration of national service be limited to nine months, recalling that until 2002, it lasted for two years. It was later reduced to 18 months. A third option would be to make it voluntary for youths.” (ibid)

A report from the Italian news agency ANSAmed states:

“Before the new law, men who had not completed compulsory military service could not seek employment in the coveted public sector but could still turn to the private one. Now article 7 of the new law states unequivocally that ‘all citizens who can not prove a regular situation with regard to the national service (compulsory military service) may not be employed in the public or the private sector nor resort to liberal professions’. According to the new law military service will last a year and no longer 18 months, answering the concerns of many young men whose lives were put on hold by the long stretch of the service. On the other hand, hopes of resorting to civil service to avoid the vagaries of the Southern borders have been dashed by the law which excludes the option.” (ANSAmed (12 September 2014) *Algeria: employment barred without military service: New law cuts military service from 18 to 12 months*)

Information specifically referring to the recall (rappelle) of ex-military personnel in Algeria was not found among sources available to the Research and Information Unit.

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

References:

ANSAmed (12 September 2014) *Algeria: employment barred without military service: New law cuts military service from 18 to 12 months*

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