



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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Organization Chart	Israel: Proportion of draftees who are disqualified from military service for receiving a Profile 21 classification or for other reasons (2005-2006)	
Employment	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa	
Legal and Policy		
References	Draftees who are given a Profile 21 medical classification based on a medical condition that makes them unsuitable for military service are exempt from service in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) ( <i>Haaretz</i> 5 Dec. 2006; <i>The Jerusalem Post</i> 1 Feb. 2006).	
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	New Profile, a pacifist non-governmental organization (NGO) opposed to the military draft, estimates that a quarter of draftees are exempt on medical grounds and that "[i]t is common knowledge that a large proportion of these [draftees] in fact choose not to serve" (n.d.). In August 2006, the Hebrew-language newspaper <i>Maariv</i> reported that some 20 percent of young Israelis eligible for conscription do not enlist in the Israeli army (23 Aug. 2006). That figure is a slight drop from November 2001, when an article appearing in the <i>Irish Times</i> noted that of the total number of Israeli draftees, some 25 percent fail to enlist, and a further 20 percent drop out of the IDF at a later time (6 Nov. 2001). Like New Profile, the article mentions that there are resisters and that the majority of them manage to obtain exemptions under Profile 21, although "Profile 21 people don't show up in the statistics as draft resisters" ( <i>Irish Times</i> 6 Nov. 2001). Similarly, <i>Maariv</i> noted in April 2003 that approximately 20 percent of draftees had either not been conscripted into the defence forces or, once recruited, were exempt from service on medical-psychological grounds. However, in the first three months of 2003, defence statistics showed a 25 percent drop in the number of soldiers discharged from service on psychiatric grounds, after having been assessed under a Profile 21 classification ( <i>Maariv</i> 9 Apr. 2003). The decrease in numbers was the result of an IDF decision to reduce the number of discharges on psychological grounds by classifying some soldiers who used to be discharged under Profile 21 under Profile 41, which indicates that they experience "adjustment difficulties" (ibid.). Soldiers classified under this profile are not discharged from the military but are instead given a lighter service (ibid.).	
	In a report on the practice of recruiting children, New Profile cited figures from Ynet, the main Hebrew-language Web site of the daily <i>Yediot Achronot</i> , indicating that some 40 percent of eligible men and 54 percent of eligible women are not conscripted (29 July 2004, 11). A 25 July 2005 article appearing in <i>The Jerusalem Post</i> , citing figures from the IDF, also reported that 42.3 percent of Jewish women "opt out of military service." Of these, 10 percent drop out for medical reasons or personal "unsuitability," and 32.1 percent base their claims for opting out on	

religious beliefs (*The Jerusalem Post* 25 July 2005). Senior military officials consider this figure suspiciously high (*ibid.*). Similarly, the Glasgow-based *Sunday Herald* estimates that only half of eligible women actually serve in the Israeli army: almost 20 percent are exempted because of religious beliefs; 20 percent because they do not meet the educational requirements; and 10 percent because they are married (17 Apr. 2005).

Under the Tal Law, Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) Jews are granted exemption on a year-by-year basis, provided they are pursuing religious studies (*The Jerusalem Post* 11 Dec. 2005; US 15 Sept. 2006). The Israeli government says that approximately nine percent of eligible male candidates have deferred military service because they are registered as full-time students at a recognized religious school (*ibid.*). According to government figures published by *The Jerusalem Post* on 11 December 2005, only 139 out of 45,639 Haredi Jews of draft age have joined the army since the passing of the Tal Law in 2002. Despite ruling against a petition submitted to the High Court to revoke the Tal Law, the High Court stated that the law "causes serious harm to the human dignity of the majority who are obligated to do national service" (*Haaretz* 16 May 2006).

While Druze Israelis have the same military obligations as Jews, other Israeli-Arabs are exempt from mandatory military service, and an estimated 90 percent do not serve in the IDF (US 15 Sept. 2006).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

#### References

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*Sunday Herald* [Glasgow]. 17 April 2005. Valerie Zenatti, Clive Fairweather and Trevor Royle. "In Israel the Army Is Just Part of Life When You Are 18." (Factiva)

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#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Internet Sites, including:** Amnesty International (AI), Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Center for Conscience and War, Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Courage to Refuse, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Freedom House, Human Rights Watch (HRW), Israel Defense Forces (IDF), Refuser Solidarity Network, War Resisters' International (WRI), Yesh G'vul, Ynetnews.

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