

Russian Military to Draft 147,000 New Recruits in Spring Call-Up

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New recruits line up as they begin their military service. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

President Vladimir Putin on Thursday [signed](#) an order allowing Russia's Defense Ministry to enlist 147,000 men for their compulsory military service in the upcoming spring call-up.

The number of draftees to be called up this year marks an increase of 12,500 compared to last year's recruitment figures.

The Defense Ministry will kick off the conscription campaign on Saturday, drafting eligible men between the ages of 18 and 27. The recruitment drive is scheduled to wrap up on July 15.

Enlistment officers will likely crack down on draft dodgers in order to meet Putin's ambitious 147,000 target, according to experts [quoted](#) by the independent news outlet Agentstvo.

The experts also said that the pool of potential conscripts born between 1995 and 2005 has grown insufficiently to meet the military's increasing demand for fresh troops, despite a steady rise in birthrates since 2000.

“There was definitely no surge [in birthrates], so the idea is apparently to catch as many [draft dodgers] as possible,” Ilya Kashnitsky, a professor of demography at the University of Southern Denmark, told Agentstvo.

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Russian demographer Alexei Raksha estimates that up to 19% of the 770,000 men born in 2004 will be sent draft papers during this year's spring call-up.

“If the fall draft is the same, a total of 38% from the 2004 generation [will be recruited] this year,” Raksha told Agentstvo.

Russia's General Staff said Friday that none of the soldiers conscripted in the latest recruitment campaign would be sent to fight in Ukraine. The biannual draft allows conscripts to be sent to fight abroad after just four months of military training.

Roughly 400,000 contract soldiers are currently serving in Russia's armed forces.

Putin increased the spring call-up figures after greenlighting Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu's December proposal to boost Russia's combat personnel from 1.15 million to 1.5 million.

The latest draft is expected to be one of the last before new rules that raise the conscription age limit to 30 take effect in 2024. The lower-age limit will also gradually increase from 18 to 21 over the next three years.

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