

Putin Increases Spring Conscription Target to 160K

By [AFP](#)

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A military enlistment office in Moscow. **Vasily Kuzmichenok / Moskva News Agency**

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday ordered the conscription of 160,000 men by July 15, an increase from previous drafts as Moscow seeks to expand its military ranks.

Russia holds biannual conscription drives, with men aged 18–30 eligible for mandatory service. The Kremlin and Defense Ministry insist conscripts are not sent into combat and that the draft is unrelated to the war in Ukraine.

However, Ukraine has repeatedly claimed to have captured Russian conscripts, and Putin previously admitted that some were mistakenly deployed early in the 2022 invasion.

According to a decree published Monday, this year's spring draft will call up 160,000 men — up from 150,000 last year and 134,500 in 2022.

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Putin also ordered Russia's military to expand to 1.5 million active personnel by 2026, an increase of roughly 180,000 troops.

"The forthcoming draft campaign is in no way connected with the special military operation in Ukraine," the Defense Ministry said on social media.

Beyond regular conscription, Russia has recruited hundreds of thousands of contract soldiers for its war in Ukraine, offering high salaries and large sign-up bonuses.

Putin raised the upper conscription age from 27 to 30 last year. This spring's call-up will run from April 1 to July 15.

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