

Standard documentation Meta information

(Definitions, comments, methods, quality)

on

Statistics on medical examinations of conscripts

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Executive Summary

The results of the medical examinations of those subject to compulsory military service to determine their suitability for military service are an important data basis for medically diagnosed morbidity as well as objective measurement results of body measurements of a subgroup of the total population. In principle, every male Austrian citizen is liable for military service from the age of 17. A person is called up for military service in the calendar year in which he reaches the age of 18. The aim of the medical examination is not primarily to determine the general state of health, but to determine the medical and psychological suitability for military service. It is to be determined whether the military service can be performed in a function corresponding to the personal abilities. The results of the military examinations thus provide a comprehensive picture of the health situation of 18-year-old Austrian males.

The Federal Ministry of Defence provided Statistics Austria with data on the medical examinations from the enlistment year 1990 onward. Each enlistment year refers to a birth cohort (cohort representation), i.e. to those persons with Austrian citizenship who reach the age of 18 in the respective enlistment year. Due to the increasing share of persons with non-Austrian citizenship, the share of the birth cohort for which enlistment data are available is decreasing. In 1990, 53 064 men born in 1972 were living in Austria, 91 % of whom got an enlistment. In 2022, a total of 45 191 men born in 2003 were living in Austria. The results of 36 238 conscripts are available, i.e. 80 % of this birth cohort. In special cases, such as physical or mental impairments, a small percentage of conscripts are placed "in absentia" and their unfitness is decided on the basis of the medical reports submitted or sent in.

The recruitment procedure ends with a decision on fitness or unfitness for military service. Fitness is divided into "full fitness" and "limited fitness", whereby the latter category means that the person subject to compulsory military service is exempt from individual activities such as running, lifting, carrying, etc. The latter category is called "temporary fitness". Temporary unfitness can be certified on the basis of a medical or psychological problem. After a certain period of observation, a new call for service is issued.

The following characteristics of the examinations are analysed in order to represent the health status of the persons subject to the enlistment: Fitness, body weight, height, waist circumference, smoking behaviour and diagnosed diseases. In total, up to six medical diagnoses can be documented for each conscript during the examinations. In 2005, the coding of diagnoses was changed from ICD-9 to ICD-10. For better comparability, therefore, only the data from the 2006 enlistment year are used in the analysis.

The results are published annually on the Statistics Austria website in the form of tables and in the Health Statistics Yearbook.

Statistics on on medical examinations of conscripts – Main Key Points

Subject matter	Health status of conscripts
Population	Male Austrian citizens aged 18 years
Type of statistics	Secondary statistics
Data sources/Survey techniques	Medical examinations of conscripts
Reference period or due day	Study period of a birth cohort (main year of enlistment, year before and year after up to October/November)
Periodicity	Yearly
Survey participation (in case of a survey)	-
Main legal acts	Federal Statistics Act 2000 - BstatG Defence Act 2001
Most detailed regional breakdown	Federal provinces
Availability of results	Final data: t + 12 months
Other	The enlistment takes place in the calendar year in which the 18th birthday is reached (main enlistment year). However, it is also possible to undergo a military examination in the year before or after.