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# BAHRAIN

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## Kingdom of Bahrain

**Population:** 709,000 (241.000 under 18)

**Government armed forces:** 11,200

**Compulsory recruitment age:** no conscription

**Voluntary recruitment age:** 17

**Voting age:** 21

**Optional Protocol:** not signed

**Other treaties ratified** (see glossary):

CRC, GC AP I and II, ILO 182

***There were under-18s in the Bahraini armed forces. Non-commissioned officers, technicians and specialized personnel could join the army as cadets from the age of 15 and regular soldiers could be recruited at 17.***

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## Context

Bahrain was not involved in military conflict.

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## Government

### National recruitment legislation and practice

In its initial report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Bahrain reported that “Legislative Decree No. 23 of 1979 regulating enlistment by individuals in the Bahraini Defence Force stipulates that recruits into the ranks must not be under 17 or over 35 years of age, except in the case of non-commissioned officers, technicians and specialized personnel who can be recruited from the age of 15 (as cadets) to the age of 40”. The Decree also states that the age limit can be disregarded in times of necessity (Article 3).

Military service is not compulsory.<sup>1</sup> There has been no conscription since Bahrain’s independence in 1971.

Following recruitment, cadets are sent to training centres, both in Bahrain and abroad, and become soldiers when they have completed training. During general mobilization or war, the supreme commander of the armed forces may reduce the training period.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Initial report of Bahrain to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Doc. CRC/C/11/Add.24, 23 July 2001, <http://www.ohchr.org>.

2 Legislative Decree No. 23 of 1979 (Article 12) (Arabic), <http://bahrain.gov.bh/legalaffairs/htm/L2379.htm>.