



# What if European security reshapes Italy's labour market?

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In December 2025, Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni took the stage at an important party political conference to warn that Europe must take control of its own security amid signals of US disengagement.

"Trump has said most emphatically that the US intends to disengage and Europeans must organise to defend themselves: hello Europe," Meloni said.

"For 80 years we outsourced our security to the US pretending it was free, but there was a price to pay and that price is called conditioning. Freedom has a price," she added.

The prime minister's statement is a strong indication of potential changes also ahead for Italy – coming as they did shortly after her defence minister, Giulio Crosetto, told media in November of a potential draft bill that will "guarantee the country's defence in the next few years and that will not only talk about the number of military personnel but precisely about organisation and rules".

Meanwhile, it is raising on certain areas a (new) interest in mandatory paid military service for Italian citizens between 18 and 26 years of age.

What form any new military service (voluntary or not) could take in Italy remains to be seen. Italy's immediate neighbours – Switzerland, Austria, and Croatia – already have compulsory military training for their youth, while France is due to introduce a form of voluntary service later this year.

Other EU countries, such as [Germany](#), are also looking at (re)introducing various forms of military training.

Mandatory military service was "suspended" in Italy on 1 January 2005, with the introduction of Law 226/2004 only allowing service on a paid, voluntary basis. A concrete chance for new generations to find a job, as it can be testified by all of the existing different military corps. In this scenario we must remember that the law did not abolish national service, so there is the potential for its return and in a manner that potentially extends beyond the youth population.

Any new law on military service could [potentially impact the Italian labour market](#). Employers must therefore decide if they want to be strategically in front of any such change or wait to react to it.

Of course, no one has a crystal ball to predict the future; but the covid pandemic offers a useful reminder that it is worth preparing for the unthinkable. Just how would you manage and prepare your workforce if you knew military service would be introduced in three, six, or 12 months' time?

Is there a plan in case certain workforce demographics are called out for days, weeks, or months of military duty? More importantly, is there enough flexibility in your workforce management system to overcome any short or long-term impacts if conscription actually came to fruition?

Think of these questions as an extension of a worksite risk assessment – the putting together of your “just in case” safety protocols. Even though it rarely happens, everyone knows the escape plan in the event of a fire. Why not the same in case of compulsory military service or, perish the thought, actual mobilisation.

A year ago, we posed the question: [should you be preparing for conscription mandates?](#) In our opinion this question is still important – perhaps even more so in 2026. Now is the time to ask: what if?