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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.11.2025)

The EU is firmly committed to promote and defend democracy, human rights and the rule of law, including in its relations with Ukraine. Ukraine has been under martial law since 24 February 2022, defending its existence against Russia's war of aggression, among other measures, by mobilisation of its population to defence of the country. Russia continues and escalates its attacks on Ukraine despite the calls for an unconditional and immediate ceasefire to which Ukraine agreed already in March 2025.

The European External Action Service and the Commission are aware of reports of harsh recruiting methods and lack of civilian alternative service for conscientious objectors.

Aspects in this area are addressed in the regular annual EU-Ukraine human rights dialogue. Furthermore, the enlargement process puts Ukrainian legislation and practice under long term scrutiny including in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms and fosters ongoing close cooperation on these issues.

The Commission is not aware of any Member State that has returned a Ukrainian citizen solely on the basis of their conscription status. The Commission is in regular contact with Member States authorities to ensure that protection is granted to those entitled to it. The relevant provisions under the temporary protection scheme, as well as those concerning access to international protection, are applicable.