

Military Conscription Worldwide

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Incredibly, in the 21st-century, more than half of the world's nation-states practice military conscription. According to many sources, the countries profiled on this list are still enforcing military conscription.

In all cases, registration is required but military service may not be; this practice would certainly yield a number of draft refusers. In some cases, other forms of national service are compulsory which also generates principled refusal.

Starred * countries list provisions for alternative service or conscientious objection which exemption would also result in absolutist refusers; in some cases, the right to conscientious objection is constitutional.

Article 2(2)(a) of the 1930 International Labour Organization (“ILO”) Convention No. 29: Forced Labour Convention http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@ro-bangkok/documents/genericdocument/wcms_346435.pdf exempts from its prohibition on forced or compulsory labour (Article 1(1)), “any work or service exacted in virtue of compulsory military service laws for work of a purely military character.” The reference to “military service laws” indicates that for the exemption to be valid, it must be set out in law.

Failure by governments to provision conscientious objection or alternative service contravenes two primary and fundamental United Nation conventions, the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Article 18) <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3712c.html> and the 1976 *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (Article 18) <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20999/volume-999-i-14668-english.pdf>, to which almost all these nation-states are party. Thus, the right to conscientious objection is an inherent derivative right based on “freedom of thought, conscience, and religion” (para 1) as “the right to *manifest* one’s religion of belief” (para 3).

However, Article 8(3)(c)(ii) of the ICCPR exempts from the prohibition on forced or compulsory labour (found in Article 8(3)(a)), “Any service of a military character and, in countries where conscientious objection is recognized, any national service required by law of conscientious objectors.

In the 1999 HRC decision in *Foin v. France*, CCPR/C/67/D/666/1995 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4a3a3aebf.html> and 2000 decision in *Venier and Nicholas v. France*, CCPR/C/69/D/690/1996 <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/50b8ec0c2.pdf>, the UN Human Rights Council stated that under Article 8 of the ICCPR States may require service of a military character <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a3a3aebf.html>, para 10.3.

In 1960, every nation-state member of the European Union conscripted for military service with the sole exceptions of Andorra, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, and San Marino. In 1967, the European Parliamentary Assembly adopted its first resolution supporting the right to conscientious objection.

In 1967, the European Parliamentary Assembly supported the right to conscientious objection with Resolution 337. The Assembly reaffirmed this commitment in 1977 with Recommendation 816 <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-DocDetails-en.asp?FileID=15752&lang=en> in 1977.

Starting in 1975 with the Helsinki Agreement, and reaffirming in 1983, 1990 (twice), 1991, 1994, 1999, 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010 (twice), 2013, 2014, and 2015, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), a binding council of 57 states in Central Asia, Europe, and North America, committed to freedom of conscience and belief http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1351.

The 1978 UN General Assembly was explicit in its Resolution 33/165 <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/33/ares33r165.pdf> which recognize “the right of all persons to refuse service in military or police

forces". In 1981, UNHRC again supported conscientious objection in its Resolution 40 (XXXVII). In 1982, this was restated in Resolution 1982/36.

In 1983 UN published its report *Conscientious Objection to Military Service*, E/CN.4/Sub.2/1983/30/Rev.1, 1985 (the "Eide and Mubanga-Chipoya report") <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5107cd132.pdf>, regarding persecution in the context of conscientious objection to conflicts which violate basic rules of human conduct.

The United Nations' Declaration on Human Rights Defenders A/RES/53/144 <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Defenders/Declaration/declaration.pdf> was begun in 1984 and formally adopted in 1998 by the General Assembly on the 50th anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

In 1987, the European Committee of Ministers issued Recommendation R(87)8 [https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/hrpolicy/Other_Committees/DH-DEV-FA_docs/CM_Rec\(87\)08.en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/hrpolicy/Other_Committees/DH-DEV-FA_docs/CM_Rec(87)08.en.pdf), which invites governments of member states to bring their national legislation and practice in line with the principle, "Anyone liable to conscription for military service who, for compelling reasons of conscience, refuses to be involved in the use of arms, shall have the right to be released from the obligation to perform such service, on conditions set out in the Recommendation. Such persons may be liable to perform alternative service...which is not punitive by its nature or duration."

The UN Human Rights Commission on March 5, 1987 in Resolution 1987/46 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f0ce50.html> resolved that "conscientious objection has to be considered as a legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of conscience and religion".

This was reaffirmed in UNHCR Resolution 1989/59 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f0b24.html>, stating "all Member States have an obligation to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to fulfill the obligations they have undertaken under the various international human rights instruments, the Charter of the United Nations and humanitarian law" and "called upon Member States to grant asylum or safe transit to another State" for conscientious objectors.

In 1990, the country representatives to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) at the Second Conference on the Human Dimension agreed on the importance of introducing civilian non-punitive alternative service for COs.

UNHRC's 1991 Resolution 1991/65 <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/6409> recognised "The role of youth in the promotion and protection of human rights, including the question of conscientious objection to military service".

In 1993, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ruled in a decision on merits that the conscription process must be challengeable in a court of law <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5020dd282.html>.

The UNHRC's 1993 Resolution 1993/84 <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/10691> was also explicit in reminding Member States of the previous UN resolutions.

This was reiterated in 1995 by UNHCR Resolution 1995/83 <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/9174> recognising "the right of everyone to have conscientious objections to military service as a legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion".

In 1996, the Council of Europe accepted human rights NGOs' recommendations CM(97)57, on CO recognition <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016804dc9bc>.

UNHCR did so again in 1998 by UNHCR Resolution 1998/77 <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/6136> which restated "that States, in their law and practice, must not discriminate against conscientious objectors in relation to their terms or conditions of service, or any economic, social, cultural, civil or political rights;

reminding “States with a system of compulsory military service, where such provision has not already been made, of its recommendation that they provide for conscientious objectors various forms of alternative service which are compatible with the reasons for conscientious objection, of a non-combatant or civilian character, in the public interest and not of a punitive nature”; and “emphasizes that States should take the necessary measures to refrain from subjecting conscientious objectors to imprisonment and to repeated punishment for failure to perform military service, and recalls that no one shall be liable or punished again for an offence for which he has already been finally convicted or acquitted in accordance with the law and penal procedure of each country”.

In 2000, the right to conscientious objection was included in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf Article 10(2).

In 2001, the Council of Europe and the European Parliament stated “The right of conscientious objection is a fundamental aspect of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion” before the UN Human Rights Council. In May 2001, the Parliamentary Assembly recalled these minimum standards by adopting Recommendation 1518/2001 <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/20890> in which member states were again invited to the standards of legislation and practice in recommendation R987/8.

This standard was concluded by the EU Rapporteur for Legal Affairs and Human Rights in Document 8809, revised May 4, 2001 <http://www.assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/Xref/X2H-Xref-ViewHTML.asp?FileID=9017&lang=EN>. The Recommendation also means to ensure “the right for all conscripts to receive information on conscientious objection and the means of obtaining it”.

In 2002, UNHRC adopted Resolution 2002/45 <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/6415> which called upon “States to review their current laws and practices in relation to conscientious objection to military service” according to Resolution 1998/77 and to consider the information outlined in the report of the High Commission”.

Also in 2002, The United Nations General Assembly adopted its “Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict” A/RES/54/263 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPACCRC.aspx> against child soldiers and other children at risk in war zones.

The European Committee of Social Rights has several times commented that alternative service lasting long than one-and-a-half times longer than military service constitutes violation of Article 1.2 of the 1961 European Charter for Social Rights. (Conclusions XVI-Vol. 1, November 2002 on Complaint 8/2000.) <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/20796>.

The UN Commission on Human Rights reiterated these by Resolution 2002/45 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5107c76c2.html> and its High Commissioner published Report E/CN.4/2004/55 <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/415be85e4.pdf> on ‘best practice’ in 2004.

In 2004, UNHRC adopted Resolution 2004/35 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/415be85e4.html> for the protection of conscientious objectors and, in 2006, UNHRC Resolution 2/102 was seconded by 33 UN Member States.

In 2005, the right to conscientious objection was included in the Ibero-American Convention on Young People’s Rights [https://www.unicef.org/lac/IberoAmerican_Convention_on_the_Rights_of_Youth\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/lac/IberoAmerican_Convention_on_the_Rights_of_Youth(1).pdf) Article 12(3).

In 2006, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights issued Analytical Report 4/2006/51, *Regarding Best Practices in Relation to Conscientious Objectors to Military Service* http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session23/A.HRC.23.22_AUV.pdf. Also in 2006, The Human Rights Council issued its decision 2/102 based on the 2004, 1998, and 1993 resolutions <http://www.refworld.org/docid/45c30c7b0.html>.

In 2012, the UN Human Rights Council tabled before the UN General Assembly Resolution 20/2 http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session20/A-HRC-20-2_en.pdf, “Promotion and protection of all human rights”...“including Conscientious objection and seconded by 34 UN Member States, many of them conscripting nations. This direction was most recently repeated by UN Human Rights Council’s 2013 Resolution 24/17 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/G13/172/35/PDF/G1317235.pdf?OpenElement>, referring to UNHRC’s 2012 Resolution 20/2.

In 2013, UN Human Rights Council published its *Analytical report on conscientious objection to military service: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, A/HRC/23/22* <http://www.refworld.org/docid/51b5c73c4.html>. The UNHRC adopted Resolution 24/17 A/HRC/RES/24/17 supporting CO <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=53bd05754&skip=0&query=Conscientious%20Objection> and again with A/HRC/24/L.23 <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=526e3e114&skip=0&query=Conscientious%20Objection>, tabled before the UN General Assembly.

In 2014, the HRC also published its *Guidelines on International Protection No. 10* <http://www.unhcr.org/529efd2e9.pdf> regarding refugee claims by conscientious objectors and deserters. Hundreds of conscientious objectors from dozens of countries have applied for asylum in third countries using Article 1A (2) of the 1951 UN Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees.

In 2016, the European Convention on Human Rights found that failure to apply CO status in European member states violated Article 9, “freedom of thought, conscience, and religion” (Application No. 66899/14, 15 September 2016) http://www.ebco-beoc.org/sites/ebco-beoc.org/files/attachments/2016-10-14%20Press-Release_Greece.pdf, and Article 10, “freedom of expression” (Application No. 2458/12, 15 November 2016) <https://religion-weltanschauung-recht.net/2016/11/15/egmr-savda-v-turkey-no-2-no-245812/>, of the European Convention.

Conscription has now been abolished in 25 EU countries, leaving 16 states still enforcing military conscription. Azerbaijan, Belarus, and Turkey make no provision for conscientious objectors. Romania and Ukraine recognize only religious objectors; Armenia, Cyprus, Greece, Lithuania, and Moldova discriminate in practice against non-religious COs. In 26 European countries, not one complies fully with the EU recommendations and in 16, military authorities are responsible for CO applications. In only seven countries can CO applications be made by serving volunteers, conscripts, and reservists.

Amnesty International lists all worldwide CO prisoners as its “prisoners of conscience”. However, AI’s country figures do not include the aggregate total number of *all* such objectors.

Are any politicians listening or is this all just lip-service? As can be seen from the list of countries below, most governments simply ignore human rights recommendations or condemnations.

Criteria for definition of draft “evasion” include the rich who pay substitutes to do their military service. All countries which have armies also have deserters from military service. Aiding or hiding deserters is also a criminal offence and often parents or other family members are prosecuted.

All countries have small numbers of Jehovah’s Witness and other sectarian refusers. Politicians prey on the young and weak. We support all means of refusing military service both public and covert.

Countries marked with a check ✓ are listed on the War Resisters’ International “World survey of conscription and conscientious objection to military service” <http://www.wri-irg.org/co/rtba/>.

I have included countries where conscription remains in law but at present is not enforced. These statistics, where available at all, may not accurately reflect the actual numbers of refusers; statistics range from 1993-2005. In many cases, resident foreigners are also eligible for conscription, notably the USA.

I have not included “press-gang” forced enlistment by rebel paramilitaries. The practice is widespread in countries where such conflicts exist.

Please note that no information has been recorded for many countries. The author calls on readers to provide any further information to make this survey more complete.

This is the 21st century’s Wall of Shame, the real rogue states enslaving young men for war.

√ **Abkhazia & South Ossetia [Georgia]**

√ **Albania***

Repeat prosecutions

√ **Algeria**

√ **Angola**

√ **Armenia*** -

16,000 evaders

450 Jehovah’s Witness prosecutions upheld by EU Court of Human Rights (2009)

Civilian alternative service implemented and approved for 71 JWs

Last 28 JWs released from prison in 2013

√ **Austria*** -

UN Human Rights Committee condemns alternative service longer than military service

√ **Azerbaijan*** -

2,611 in prison (2002), repeat sentences

UN recommends legal recognition of CO

Jehovah’s Witness persecution and CO prisoners

√ **Belarus*** -

30% refuse conscription, Jehovah’s Witness deterrent show trials and prisoners

1,200-1,500 evaders/deserters per year

99% of conscripts feign illnesses or go into hiding

CO only for religious objection, alternative service double length

Soldiers cannot change their minds and become COs

√ **Benin**

√ **Bhutan**

√ **Bolivia** -

80,000 evaders

Draft exiles & refugees abroad

√ **Bosnia***

√ **Brazil***

√ **Bermuda***,

Bulgaria -

Conscription abolish in 2008

Registration from 18 to 32 reinstated in 2016,
indicating return to compulsory military service

√ **Burundi**

√ **Cape Verde**

√ **Central African Republic**

√ **Chad***

√ **Chile** -
10,000 nonregistrants

√ **China**

√ **Colombia***
50% draft evasion

Forced enlistment, COs charged with desertion
Forced enlistment of child soldiers, indigenous and Afro-Colombians by paramilitaries
Military & police disobedience & desertion 6,362 serving
UN recommends legal recognition of CO

√ **Congo***

√ **Cuba**

√ **Curaçao & Aruba**

√ **Cyprus (Northern)** -

Schools militarized by Turkish Army soldier-teachers
No provision for CO or alternative service
Civilian COs tried by military courts
CO defections to Republic of Cyprus
Military reserve training until age 40
Condemned by European Court of Human Rights, ignored by government

Cyprus (Republic of) -

CO application made to military

√ **Denmark*** -

25 draft refusers per year

√ **Dominican Republic**

√ **Ecuador** -

10% of conscripts desert

√ **Egypt** -

4,000 draft evaders

√ **El Salvador*** -

Draft exiles & refugees abroad

√ **Equatorial Guinea**

√ **Eritrea** -

12 draft prisoners, secret trials, indefinite detention, torture
No medical care, deaths in custody
Prison & summary execution for fleeing the country
Revokes citizenship, business & driver's licences, passports, marriage certificates,
national identity cards, denial of exit visas
54 Jehovah's Witnesses in prison without charge or trial 14+ years
Forced enlistment, including child soldiers, indefinite and arbitrary service, sometimes a decade
Rape, torture, extrajudicial killings, inhumane conditions in military camps
Forced labour in State and private enterprises
UN Human Rights Council ruled Eritrea violates the "right to life" of its nationals,
charged the country with "enslavement", ignored by government

√ **Estonia***

√ **Finland***

Conscription from age 18 to 60
Alternative service double military,
condemned by UN Human Rights Council

50 absolutist prisoners
Some house arrest sentences
Jehovah's Witnesses exempt

√ **Gabon**

√ **Georgia*** -

2,498 deserters

After abolition in June 2016, conscription was restored in 2017

Alternative service double military service

√ **Germany***

√ **Ghana**

√ **Greece*** -

Conscripts into Army, Navy, Air Force, including foreign residents of Greek descent

Hundreds of public draft refusers, Gulf Wars objectors

Automatic administrative fines of €6,000 plus interest for installments, often repeat fines

Court costs of €200 assessed

Failure to pay results in property forfeiture and denial of business licence

Repeat prosecutions condemned by UN Human Rights Council, UN Human Rights Committee,

European Court of Human Rights, ignored by Greek government

After prison, five years suspension of civil rights: denied voting, election to parliament, work in civil service,

obtain passport or business licence

Soldiers or former soldiers not permitted to declare CO, trials for 'insubordination' in military courts

Amnesty for objectors declared before 1998

CO recognition only for baptized Jehovah's Witnesses

UN Human Rights Committee condemns alternative service double military service, discrimination against COs

"Illogical and arbitrary" punitive rescission of CO for failure in discipline during alternative service

Numerous draft exiles abroad

√ **Guatemala** -

350 COs, 75% of conscripts desert,

frequent extrajudicial executions

√ **Guinea**

√ **Guinea-Bissau**

√ **Herzegovina*** -

1,500 COs

√ **Honduras** -

29% draft evaders, 50% deserters

√ **Indonesia**

√ **Iran** -

Numerous draft and deserter exiles, may not return until after age 40

√ **Iraq** -

Capital punishment for desertion, amputation of an ear, branding of the forehead

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria /

Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) /

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) /

Da'esh (داعش) -

Forced recruitment, abduction, and conscription, including child soldiers from age six

Abducted Yazidi minority women raped and forced to marry *jihadis* and soldiers

Numerous deserters, including foreign recruits

Mass desertion due to disaffection

√ **Israel**

Exponential number of refuseniks against war of Palestinian occupation

Draft refusal starts in high school

COs face military courts-martial, repeat sentences

Women may be COs but not men

Numerous draft evaders, draft exiles & refugees

Israeli Arab citizens are draft-exempt, except for Druze

√ **Ivory Coast**

√ **Jordan**

√ **Kazakhstan** -

40% draft evaders, 3,000 deserters

UN recommends legal recognition of CO

Kosovo [Serbia] -

Status undetermined

√ **Kuwait** -

Widespread draft evasion

√ **Kyrgyzstan**

√ **Laos** -

Widespread draft evasion

JW CO prosecutions

√ **Latvia***

√ **Lebanon**

√ **Libya**

√ **Lithuania*** -

Conscription reinstated in 2015

UN recommends legal recognition of CO and opportunities for alternative service

√ **Madagascar**

√ **Mali** -

Widespread desertion

√ **Mauritania**

√ **Mexico**

√ **Moldova*** -

1,675 COs, hundreds denied

√ **Mongolia**

√ **Montenegro*** -

Widespread draft evasion, 26,000 evaders charged

150,000 draft exiles

√ **Morocco** -

2,250 deserters, five officers executed

√ **Mozambique** -

Forced enlistment, mass desertion

√ **Myanmar***

√ **Nagorno-Karabakh [Azerbaijan]**

Jehovah's Witness prisoners

√ **Netherlands***

Refusals of duty to Afghanistan

√ **Niger**

√ **North Korea -**

Death penalty for draft evasion and desertion

√ **Norway*** -

2,364 COs, 100-200 absolutist refusers

No prison time for refusers

Drafted women since 2014

√ **Paraguay*** -

Forced enlistment

6,000 COs, 15% of conscripts

√ **Peru -**

Forced enlistment

√ **Philippines -**

Two historical nonregistrants

Forced enlistment by rebel paramilitaries

√ **Poland*** -

Roman Catholics denied CO status

(Poland is 87.5% Catholic)

√ **Qatar -**

Reintroduced conscription in 2014

√ **Russian Federation*** -

1,445 COs annually by application to military, 17% rejection

Supreme Court protection (1996)

Alternative service double military

Buddhists, Jehovah's Witnesses excluded

30,000 draft evaders and 40,000 deserters

Soldiers not allowed to declare CO

Draft exiles & refugees

√ **Senegal**

√ **Serbia***

9,000 COs

26,000 draft evaders and deserters

150,000 draft exiles abroad

No conscription as of 2011.

√ **Seychelles**

√ **Singapore**

Compulsory registration at 16 1/2, no legal status for CO

Hundreds of Jehovah's Witness & Adventist refusers,

Court-martialled to 36 months military detention

held separately from other COs

Refusal of flag salute, national anthem & oath of allegiance

Absolutist refusers fined S\$10,000 and sentenced to 12-36 months

Repeat sentences

At least 4,200 draft evaders

Social sanctions, including loss of permanent residence or citizenship
for the refuser and family, denial of re-entry Permits

√ **Slovenia***

√ **Somalia** -

Recruitment, abduction, and conscription of child soldiers by both government and paramilitaries
COs considered deserters

√ **South Korea**

13,000 CO prisoners, 400-700 per year,
5,000 draft refusers, repeat sentences
Draft refugees & exiles abroad
599 JW prisoners

UN Human Rights Committee recommends all COs be released from prison, have criminal records
expunged,
and recognise CO in law

South Sudan

√ **Spain*** -

Dozens of public draft refusers, opposition to Gulf Wars
No conscription as of 2001.

√ **Srpska*** -

Widespread draft evasion & desertion

√ **Sudan** -

2.5 million draft evaders, forced enlistment, including universities
Men of conscription age prohibited from travel abroad

Sweden -

Military conscription 1901-2010
New draft for men and women expected in 2019

√ **Switzerland*** -

2,000 COs per year
100 absolutist refusers per year, 8-12 month sentences
Trials by military courts-martial
Vegan found unfit ordered to report again
3% punitive annual military income tax for failure to join military each year

√ **Syria** -

Mass draft evasion, forced enlistment, including child soldiers, at military checkpoints
Summary execution of soldiers who refuse to fire on unarmed civilians or residential areas
Jews are exempt

Anti-government paramilitaries also using forced enlistment, including child soldiers
Condemned by UN Human Rights Council, ignored by government

√ **Taiwan**

√ **Tajikistan**

Widespread draft evasion and desertion
CO considered evasion
Arbitrary arrests, inhuman treatment, and torture of conscripts
and their parents
50% of military forced recruitment
Cndemned by UN Human Rights Council, ignored by government

√ **Tanzania**

√ **Thailand** -

30,000 draft evaders, incidences of public draft refusal
Some draftees are seconded to Royal Thai Police, used as officers' domestic servants or working in their
businesses
Hazing and humiliation of conscripts is rife
Beatings of conscripts by officers frequent, sometimes to death

900 21-year olds failed to register in a single province
A new law by the 2014 military coup conscripts 300,000 men
Allows conscription of 12 million registrants
70 JW draft refusers, no prosecutions

√ **Transdnistria Moldovan Republic* [Moldova]**

√ **Tunisia*** -

Forced enlistment, widespread desertion

√ **Turkey** -

74 public draft refusers, repeat sentences,
considered deserters

European Court of Human Rights found repeat convictions “civil death” and degrading treatment,
ignored by Turkish government

Muslim COs

Disparaging military or “alienating public from military service” a crime

60,000 draft evaders per year

Objectors imprisoned as deserters

Draft refugees & exiles abroad

√ **Turkish Occupied Territories (North Cyprus) -**

14 declared COs

√ **Turkmenistan** -

Significant draft evasion, 20% desertion, 2,000 deserters

Beatings, threats of rape, torture, solitary confinement

9 JW prisoners, held incommunicado from family

11 under house arrest, some suspended sentences

Sentences up to four years

Sunni & Wahhabi Muslims suffer brutal treatment, torture & starvation for CO

Govt denies deaths in penal custody

European Parliament Intergroup on freedom of Religion or Belief and Religious Tolerance

condemns treatment of Jehovah’s Witnesses, found to violate

UN’s Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Articles 7, 10 (1), and 18(1),

ignored by government

√ **Uganda** -

Forced enlistment, including child soldiers

Widespread desertion

√ **Ukraine*** -

Only religious COs: Seventh Day Adventists, Baptists, Adventists-Reformists,

Jehovah's Witnesses, Charismatic Christians

2,864 COs

Incidence of public absolutist refusal, 3-5 year sentences

Often charged with treason—13 years

10% compliance, 48,624 non-religious draft evaders

Specific refusers to war with Donetsk in the East & Crimea in the South

Cizre canton recognised CO in Kurdish region

Draft refugees in hiding and abroad

United Arab Emirates -

Reintroduced conscription in 2014

United Kingdom -

Prince calls for military conscription in May 2015

√ **USA*** -

Tens of millions of draft evaders fail to register, fail to report address changes

Thousands of absolutist refusers, only 20 prosecutions, sentenced from 35 days-six months

Conspiracy charges for those who aid, abet, counsel
 Five years prison, \$250,000 fine
 Draft registration for women is anticipated
 Military refusers and deserters
 Deserters charged with wartime offence
 Draft and deserter exiles
 Stop-Loss: military's 18-month involuntary extension of service considered 'back-door' conscription
 Rampant heroin addiction overseas
 √ **Uzbekistan*** -
 Jehovah's Witness, Muslim, Seventh Day Adventist
 literature banned
 √ **Venezuela** -
 Forced enlistment, widespread draft evasion and desertion
 34 public absolutist refusers, 180 CO deserters per year
 Compulsory registration in Supreme Court challenge
 √ **Vietnam** -
 Widespread draft evasion and desertion
 √ **Western Sahara**
 √ **Yemen** -
 Significant draft evasion and desertion
 √ **Zimbabwe***
 Conscription not enforced.

The numbers of draft refusers, where known, vary widely among the countries. In some, there may be only a handful. This handful also deserve to be protected—you could be one of them! In every country practicing military conscription, there are draft refusers and draft prisoners. Wherever a country maintains an army, from the most liberal of countries to the most repressive, there are conscientious objectors and deserters.

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