



Ministry of Defence

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Questionnaire about EBCO's Annual Report 2021

The European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO), has requested the Ministry of Defence to provide information for its Annual Report "Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Europe 2021". EBCO has attached the following questionnaire.

- 1. What is the duration of the military service, and what is the duration of the alternative social civilian service?*
- 2. How was the human right to conscientious objection to military service first recognised? Which year and by which law/ article of Constitution?*
- 3. Are all the conscripts officially informed about the human right to conscientious objection to military service, and how?*
- 4. What is the procedure for a conscript to serve alternative social civilian service? Are there conscripts who are denied this human right?*
- 5. Is the alternative social civilian service system purely civilian indeed, managed by a non-military authority/ ministry?*
- 6. What is the legal minimum age for conscription, and what is the legal minimum age for voluntary enlistment in peace time, in case of general/ partial compulsory mobilization, and in war time?*
- 7. How is the human right to conscientious objection recognised for the professional members of the military?*
- 8. Are there any plans to suspend/ abolish conscription in the near future?*

The Ministry of Defence can provide the following information in response to the questionnaire.

In 2010 Sweden suspended the conscription system in favour of a recruitment system on voluntary terms. The Swedish Government decided on March 2, 2017, to re-activate conscription from January 1, 2018. The conscription system includes both men and women and the obligation to perform conscription into the Armed Forces applies for Swedish citizens from the calendar year he or she turns nineteen. The duration of the military conscription is typically eleven months of basic military training.

The right to conscientious objection to military service was introduced by law in 1920, in the Alternative Service Schemes Act. At date, according to the 1994 Total defence Act (SFS 1994:1809), a conscript soldier with serious personal conviction concerning the use of a weapon against another person may be assigned a military service as a conscientious objector after application to Swedish Defence Recruitment Agency. This means that the individual may not be enlisted for training to a post which is connected with use of weapons or against her or his will be enlisted for services in Swedish Armed Forces. At present there are no military services as a conscientious objector and the civil conscription is not activated, meaning that in practical terms the individual will not do any service. As for an officer or a professional soldier they have a contract and therefore has the possibility to discharge or leaving for any reasons.

The Swedish Defence Conscription and Assessment Agency has a duty to inform the conscripts of the right to conscientious objection to military service. Already at the outset of the selection process, information about conscientious objection is given to everyone that are called up for service through the authority website.

Best regards,



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Legal expert