m.i.r.

movimento internazionale della riconciliazione

Italian branch of the International Fellowship Of Reconciliation - IFOR

SUBMISSION

TO THE 146th SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

AUSTRIA

Conscientious objection to military service and juvenile recruitment

September 2026

Contact:
Zaira Zafarana
Human Rights Advocacy
zaira.zafarana@proton.me

Introduction

This submission focuses on various aspects of the **right to conscientious objection to military service**, including problems in the procedures and conditions for granting conscientious objector status:

a. **punitive and discriminatory length of alternative civilian service**
b. **strict time limits for applications**,
c. **automatically disqualifying conditions,**
d. **insufficient wage,**
e. **non-recognition for professional / volunteer / serving members of the armed forces**.

The submission also examines the issue of **juvenile recruitment** which has raised concerns in the context of different UN mechanisms (CRC-OPAC / CRC, UPR, ICCPR).

Conscientious objection to military service

Punitive and discriminatory length of alternative civilian service

In the Replies to the List of issues concerning the fifth periodic report of Austria to the Human Rights Committee, the State party explained that the basic military service is **6** months, while the civilian service is **9** months[i] (**1.5 times, 50% increase**).

In its Concluding Observations concerning the fifth periodic report of Austria, the **Human Rights Committee** stated:

> "33. The Committee notes that the length of the civilian alternative service to military service for conscientious objectors is longer than military service and may be punitively long if not based on reasonable and objective grounds (arts. 18 and 26).
> 34. The State party is encouraged to ensure that the length of service alternative to military service required for conscientious objectors is not punitive in nature."[ii]

It should be emphasized that the Human Rights Committee invoked both article **18** of ICCPR, concerning **the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion**, as well as article **26**, concerning **freedom from discrimination**.

In the List of issues prior to submission of the sixth periodic report of Austria, the Human Rights Committee requested:

> "21. Recalling the Committee's most recent concluding observations (para. 34), please report on the measures taken to provide all conscientious objectors with an alternative to military service that is not punitive or discriminatory in terms of its nature, cost or duration."[iii]

In its sixth periodic report, the State party stated:

> "219. The legislature set the duration of civilian service at nine months through a constitutional provision. The burden of civilian service for male citizens should, on average, be as close as possible to that of military service. Unlike conscripts, those performing civilian service are not subject to disciplinary law. The average weekly working time is 40 hours. There is free choice of doctor, and sick leave is taken at home. Those doing civilian service are entitled to two weeks off work, while military service offers none.
> 220. The legal duration of civilian service is three months longer to reach the same average workload. A comparison of duties and burdens shows that equalising the duration could discriminate against military service members."[iv]

From the above it is understood that the situation remains **unchanged** in comparison to the previous cycle, **no measures whatsoever have been taken despite the previous concluding observations**, and therefore, the alternative civilian service it is **still punitive and discriminatory** in terms of **duration**.

It is also doubtful that conscripts receive no (official or unofficial) days of leave, even in extraordinary circumstances. Indeed, it appears that there is such a possibility in certain cases.[v] In any case, the "two weeks off work" for conscientious objectors performing alternative civilian service cannot justify an additional time of 3 months of alternative civilian service, in comparison to the duration of military service.

Most importantly, a careful examination of the historical background reveals that **the real reason** behind such a discrepancy between the duration of the military service and that of the alternative civilian service is rather different than the one invoked in the 6th report. Specifically, in 2015, in its Replies to the List of issues concerning the fifth periodic report, the State party stated:

> "The amendment to the Civilian Service Act of 1991 **facilitated access to alternative civilian service by eliminating the examination of conscientious objection**. Following this amendment, alternative civilian service became more attractive and **easier to access**. Young men who choose to perform alternative civilian service are not subject to Military Criminal Law and Disciplinary Law, do not have to wear uniforms and most importantly do not have to live in barracks. In order to address these advantages compared with military service, the Austrian legislature **extended the duration of alternative civilian service compared with the length of conscript military service**"[vi] (emphasis added).

Therefore, despite other explanations, it appears that the length of alternative civilian service was "extended" rather in order to compensate for the elimination of the examination and the facilitation of access, i.e., in order to test the sincerity of applicants, which is, however, contrary to the **jurisprudence of the Human Rights Committee**. In a **series of cases**, the Committee has **repeatedly** found that **testing the sincerity of an individual's conviction is not among the reasonable and objective criteria** which would justify a differentiation in length.[vii]

According to the **OHCHR**, "Any duration longer than that of military service is permissible only if the additional time for alternative service is based on reasonable and objective criteria. Equalizing the duration of alternative service with military service should be considered a good practice."[viii]

Furthermore, the **European Parliament** has repeatedly stated that the length of alternative service should be the same and not last longer than military service.[ix]

The **current** situation is **not in conformity with articles 18 and 26 of the Covenant**, and it is even more concerning that **recently reports about plans to increase, instead of reducing**, the duration of alternative civilian service, **emerged** in order to address gaps in social care and emergency services.[x]

Strict time limits for applications and no recognition of the right to conscientious objection during military service

Applications may be submitted within 6 months of the initial fitness assessment and no later than 3 days before receiving a call-up order for military service.[xi]

In the List of issues prior to submission of the sixth periodic report of Austria, the **Human Rights Committee** requested:

> "Please clarify whether the State party intends: (a) to revise article 1 (2) of the Civilian Service Act establishing a time limit on the submission of applications for recognition of a conscientious objector status".[xii]

In its 6th periodic report, the State party stated:

> "222. It is not intended to amend the regulations on the submission of a declaration for civilian service, including the permissible time of such a declaration in Section 1 (2) of the Civilian Service Act 1986 (Zivildienstgesetz 1986, BGBl. No. 679/1986 as amended)."[xiii]

According to the **OHCHR minimum standards**:

> "No time limit should be applicable for the submission of a request to be recognized as a conscientious objector. Conscripts and volunteers should be able to object before the commencement of military service, or at any stage during or after military service".[xiv]

The strict time limits applied by the State party preclude granting conscientious objector status to those who have already initiated the military service.

Indeed, it is explicitly cited that "If you have already received a call-up order or if you are currently performing military service, you cannot submit a declaration of civilian service".[xv]

The right to conscientious objection during military service, i.e., after enlistment in the armed forces, derives from the right to change beliefs and it has been recognised by the **Human Rights Committee**,[xvi] as well as by the **OHCHR**,[xvii] and the **UN Commission on Human Rights**.[xviii] Its successor, the **UN Human Rights Council**, after noting that it is aware that persons performing military service may develop conscientious objections, has encouraged States to allow applications for conscientious objection during military service.[xix]

At the regional level, the **Committee of Minister of the Council of Europe**, already since 1987, had mentioned in its recommendations that the law may provide for this possibility.[xx] In 2010, the Committee of Minister of the Council of Europe in a recommendation to member states on human rights of **members** of the armed forces, explicitly asked for those who perform compulsory military service "to have the right to be granted conscientious objector status and an alternative service of a civilian nature should be proposed to them".[xxi]

Furthermore, the right to conscientious objection during military service has been recognised by the **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**,[xxii] the **European Parliament**[xxiii] and the **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the OSCE**.[xxiv]

Very recently, in **2026**, the **OHCHR** reiterated:

> "7. As article 18 (1) of the Covenant includes a right "to have or to adopt a religion or belief", an individual may change their religion or belief such that conscientious objection to military service may form at any time, including when they are already in military service or military reserve forces. Excluding any categories of individuals from exemption from military service could constitute a failure to take the measures necessary to protect the right to conscientious objection.[xxv],[xxvi]

Therefore, the situation in the State party **contravenes** international human rights standards, which are firmly based on international human rights law, specifically, the right to change belief.

Automatically disqualifying conditions

In Austria, it is not possible to submit an application for civilian service:

- If you have been convicted of an intentional criminal offense involving the use or threat of armed violence against persons, or which was committed in connection with weapons or explosives, unless the conviction has been expunged or is subject to restrictions on the disclosure of information from the criminal record. The use or threat of armed violence under this provision occurs when a weapon as defined by the Weapons Act or another equivalent means is used.
- If you belong to a federal or municipal security force.[xxvii]

The above conditions do not take into consideration the right to change beliefs,[xxviii] the possibility of reform, or the right to selective conscientious objection.[xxix]

The **OHCHR** has consistently highlighted the existence of such automatically disqualifying conditions in Austria.[xxx]

According to the **minimum OHCHR standards**:

> "Application procedures should be based on reasonable and relevant criteria, and should avoid the imposition of any conditions that would result in the automatic disqualification of applicants".[xxxi]

Therefore, also in this case, the situation in the State party **contravenes** international human rights standards, which are firmly based on international human rights law, specifically, the right to change belief.

Insufficient wage

Another issue is the insufficient wage provided to conscientious objectors to military service.

In its 6th periodic report, the State party stated:

> "In 2024, those in civilian service received € 585.10 monthly; on average, an extra € 480 for food was paid or meals provided in kind. Those doing civilian service are covered by health, accident, and pension insurance."[xxxii]

As of 1st July 2026, such wage has become 625.60 euros (instead of the previous 605.60 euros), and approximately 400 euros per month in food allowance or free meals.[xxxiii] It should be noted that, while the monthly wage appears to be increased annually, nevertheless, the amount for food appears to be less than the one cited in the 6th periodic report.

Most importantly, it appears that despite the annual increase, the monthly wage continues to be **extremely low** compared to the collectively agreed minimum wages in the State party. Most collective agreements already provide for minimum wages of at least EUR 1,700 gross 14 times a year, resulting in an average monthly wage of EUR **1,983** gross."[xxxiv]

Insofar a conscientious objector is living outside the military and is subjected to the same economic, including cost-of-living, conditions as any other citizen, it is expected to be granted, at least, the minimum wage, in order to be able to live in dignity.

However, in the case of the State party, the amount of money provided to conscientious objectors performing alternative civilian service, not only is much lower than the collectively agreed minimum wages, but it appears to be **well below the threshold of risk of poverty**, which for a single-person household was reported to be, in 2025, the **1,661** euros.[xxxv]

Therefore, the alternative civilian service in the State party remains **punitive and discriminatory** also in terms of **cost**.

Non-recognition for professional / volunteer / serving members of the armed forces

The lack of procedures to resign on grounds of conscience for those serving voluntarily in the armed forces in the State party has been highlighted by the **OHCHR**.[xxxvi]

In the List of issues prior to submission of the sixth periodic report of Austria, the **Human Rights Committee** requested:

> "Please clarify whether the State party intends: […] (b) to amend the legal framework to allow for serving members of the armed forces to apply for early release for reasons of conscience".[xxxvii]

In its 6th periodic report, the State party stated:

> "As to issue 21 (a) **and (b)**
> 222. It is not intended to amend the regulations on the submission of a declaration for civilian service, including the permissible time of such a declaration in Section 1 (2) of the Civilian Service Act 1986 (Zivildienstgesetz 1986, BGBl. No. 679/1986 as amended)."[xxxviii] (emphasis added)

In the latest annual report of the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO), it is still cited that in Austria there are no specific provisions for the release of professional soldiers on grounds of conscientious objection.[xxxix]

It is worth noting that recognition of the right to conscientious objection to military service for professional / volunteer / serving members of the armed forces is distinct from possibility to resign,

insofar the latter often includes conditions and requirements, or in certain countries (e.g. Greece) might entail cost.

According to the **OHCHR minimum standards**:

- "Conscripts and **volunteers** should be able to object before the commencement of military service, or at any stage during or after military service";[xl]
- "The right to conscientious objection should be recognized for conscripts, for **professional members** of the armed forces and for reservists".[xli] (emphasis added)

Furthermore, the OHCHR has recently stated that exclusion of individuals such as "**active service members, volunteers** or reservists" from "the protection of the right to conscientious objection in domestic law" "could be tantamount to a failure to take the measures necessary to give effect to the right to conscientious objection to military service and, depending on the circumstances, could also constitute discriminatory treatment on the basis of persons' thought, conscience and religion or other grounds of discrimination, including status".[xlii] And that to "align with international human rights laws and standards on the right to conscientious objection to military service, States should: […] Ensure that the right to conscientious objection is not restricted to conscription and is applicable to all forms of military service, including **voluntary** and reservist military service, and that alternatives are genuine, non-punitive and non-discriminatory"[xliii]. (emphasis added)

Austria is also a member of the **Council of Europe**, whose **Committee of Ministers** recommended in 2010:

> "H. Members of the armed forces have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Any limitations on this right shall comply with the requirements of Article 9, paragraph 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
> 40. Members of the armed forces have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the right to change religion or belief at any time. […]
> 41. For the purposes of compulsory military service, conscripts should have the right to be granted conscientious objector status and an alternative service of a civilian nature should be proposed to them.
> 42. Professional members of the armed forces should be able to leave the armed forces for reasons of conscience.
> 43. Requests by members of the armed forces to leave the armed forces for reasons of conscience should be examined within a reasonable time. Pending the examination of their requests they should be transferred to non-combat duties, where possible.
> 44. Any request to leave the armed forces for reasons of conscience should ultimately, where denied, be examined by an independent and impartial body.
> 45. Members of the armed forces having legally left the armed forces for reasons of conscience should not be subject to discrimination or to any criminal prosecution. No discrimination or prosecution should result from asking to leave the armed forces for reasons of conscience.
> 46. Members of the armed forces should be informed of the rights mentioned in paragraphs 41 to 45 above and the procedures available to exercise them."[xliv]

In 2012, in a questionnaire on the implementation of the above recommendations, to the question about whether professional members of the armed forces can leave the armed forces for reasons of conscience, Austria responded negatively.[xlv]

The **Human Rights Committee** has advocated as well for the right to conscientious objection to military service for serving / professional members of the armed forces. In the case of another State party, Latvia, the Committee has recently recommended in its Concluding Observations: "**Consider revising the legislative framework to provide for honourable discharges on grounds of conscience, and to ensure that individuals who receive early termination from military service on those grounds do**

not face financial or other penalties."[xlvi] Besides Latvia, the Committee has **included in recent years the issue of conscientious objection to military service for serving members of the armed forces in the Lists of issues prior to reporting** of further State parties, including Austria.[xlvii] The issue was raised also during the examination of Moldova.[xlviii]

The **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the OSCE**, has also explicitly mentioned in its recommendations that "Conscientious objection should be available both for conscripts and for professional soldiers both prior to and during military service, in line with the recommendations of international bodies".[xlix]

The **UN Human Rights Council** has also moved towards this direction by stating that it "acknowledges that an increasing number of States recognize conscientious objection to military service **not only for conscripts but also for those serving voluntarily** and encourages States to allow applications for conscientious objection prior to, during and after military service, including reserve duties".[l] (emphasis added)

Finally, in the context of the **Universal Periodic Review**, there have been also **recent** recommendations to other States under review (e.g. to Albania,[li] which has accepted the recommendation,[lii] to Norway[liii] (not accepted, noted[liv]), and to Italy[lv], which has accepted the recommendation[lvi]), to recognise the right to conscientious objection to military service for professional members of the armed forces.
Therefore, it appears that the situation in the State party contravenes international and regional human rights standards and is **not in conformity with articles 18 and 26 of the Covenant**, regarding the recognition in law of the right to conscientious objection to military service for professional / volunteer / serving members of the armed forces.

Juvenile recruitment

In 2015, in the List of issues in relation to the fifth periodic report of Austria, the **Human Rights Committee** requested:

> "Please also indicate whether the State party is considering raising the minimum age for voluntary recruitment into the armed forces to 18 years".[lvii]

In its replies to the List of issues, Austria stated:

> "132. Austria is State Party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as to its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict. Article 9, Article 41, para. 2, and Article 57 of the Defence Act 2001 (Wehrgesetz 2001) comply fully with the requirements set out by this Convention. It is possible in Austria, however, to join the army voluntarily at the age of 17, provided certain conditions are met. According to Article 9 in conjunction with Article 57 of the Defence Act 2001, a 17-year-old has to act of his own accord and requires the written consent of a parent or legal guardian to be able to join the army. The idea behind this rule is to provide young men, who have successfully completed their apprenticeship or education at the age of 17, with the opportunity to join the army. Most employers consider the completion of the mandatory military service or the substitute civilian service as a necessary prerequisite for offering a job. The Austrian Federal Army, however, does not actively advertise this opportunity and does not promote the recruitment of under 18-year-olds in any way."[lviii]

In the List of issues prior to the submission of the sixth periodic report of Austria, the **Human Rights Committee** insisted:

> "Please clarify whether the State party intends: […] (c) to raise the minimum age for voluntary recruitment into the military to 18 years of age".[lix]

In its 6th periodic report, the State party stated:

> "**As to issue 21 (c)**

223. According to Section 9 (2) of the Military Service Act 2001 (*Wehrgesetz 2001*, BGBl. I No. 146/2001 as amended), early military service is possible from age 17. The mandatory requirements are voluntary registration and consent of the legal representative.
224. For the following reasons, no amendment of this regulation is planned:

- It was created exclusively to give young people who have already completed their vocational training at age 17 the opportunity to complete military service voluntarily directly after this training. This pursues two objectives: Firstly, eliminating the need for young people who complete their training early to wait before starting their military service. Secondly, improving opportunities on the labour market and avoiding a phase of unemployment for those who complete their vocational training at 17 but do not get a permanent job until they have completed their military service.
- The Austrian Armed Forces do not actively advertise this option and do not promote the recruitment of under-18-year-olds in any way. Moreover, statutory provisions and internal instructions ensure that soldiers under 18 do not participate directly in hostilities as part of a deployment (see Section 41 (2) of the Military Service Act 2001) and are not deployed on foreign soil (Section 1 (1) of the Foreign Deployment Act 2001 (*Auslandseinsatzgesetz 2001*, BGBl. I No. 55/2001 as amended)).
- These regulations also fully comply with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the First Optional Protocol."[lx]

However, the above response does not appear to be entirely accurate. The **Committee on the Rights of the Child has repeatedly raised the issue** throughout the years.

In 2004, in its **initial report under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC)**, Austria detailed the possibility for voluntary recruitment of a person between 17 and 18 years.[lxi]

The **Committee on the Rights of the Child**, in its concluding observations stated:

"Voluntary recruitment

5. The Committee notes that Section 9, paragraph 2, of the National Defence Act, sets the minimum age of voluntary recruitment at 17 years. It also notes that according to the State party, "no systematic or comprehensive debate took place in Austria" (CRC/C/OPAC/AUT/1, para. 26) regarding possible review of legislation to increase this age to 18 as "the existing legislation reflected consensus on the minimum age".

6. The Committee recommends that the State party consider the possibility to increase the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to 18 years."[lxii]

Following the combined third and fourth periodic report of Austria for the Convention on the Rights of the Child itself, which included relevant information on the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict,[lxiii] the **Committee on the Rights of the Child,** in 2012, in its Concluding Observations stated**:**

"Children in armed conflict

56.While noting the State party's indication during the dialogue that under 18-year old recruits may not participate in any hostilities and in United Nations peacekeeping operations, the Committee remains concerned that Section 9, paragraph 2, of the National Defence Act sets the minimum age of voluntary recruitment at 17 years. The Committee also notes with concern that students from age 14 are trained on the use of small arms at the Vienna military academy ("Militärrealgymnasium"), albeit on an extracurricular basis.

57. The Committee reiterates its recommendation (CRC/C/OPAC/AUT/CO/1, para. 6) that the State party consider the possibility of increasing the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to 18 years. It also recommends that the State party ensure that

the education of child cadets at military academies is free from any form of arms training and military drill and consistent with the aims of education, as recognized in article 29 of the Convention and in its general comment No. 1 (2001)."[lxiv]

Following relevant information in the combined fifth and sixth periodic report of Austria for the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[lxv] the **Committee on the Rights of the Child,** in 2020, in its Concluding Observations stated:

"**Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict**

44. While noting the explanations provided by the State party in its report in response to the Committee's recommendations made in 2005 on the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and reiterated in 2012 (CRC/C/AUT/CO/3-4, para. 57), the Committee regrets that the State party has not taken any specific measures to implement its recommendations. The Committee urges the State party to reconsider its position that it will not increase the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to 18 years".[lxvi]

Furthermore, the issue has been raised in the context of the **Universal Periodic Review**.
During the first cycle of UPR, Austria received recommendations to:

"Raise the age for all enrolments into armed forces to the age of at least 18 years in line with the CRC recommendation".[lxvii]

The State under review rejected the recommendation stating:

"Austria does not accept the recommendation. The option of performing the military service starting at the age of 17 is based solely on the voluntary enlistment of the person concerned and requires the consent of his legal guardian. Neither the direct participation in combat nor the voluntary enlistment for military service in international operations is admissible. Under these provisions, full respect of the entire Convention on the Rights of the Child including its Optional Protocol is guaranteed".[lxviii]

Notwithstanding specific reporting from civil society organisations,[lxix] (and the continuous recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child – see above), it appears that the issue of juvenile recruitment has not been explicitly included in the recommendations of the second cycle.

Worth noting that a broader recommendation, "accepted", to "Continue to harmonize its national legislation on children with the international standards contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Protocols, and any other relevant instrument to which it is party" during the second cycle,[lxx] did not result in resolving the issue of juvenile recruitment.

During the third cycle, a recommendation on juvenile recruitment reappeared ("Increase the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to 18 in line with the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child") but it was not accepted, only "noted".[lxxi]

Suggested recommendations

1. The State party should take all necessary legislative measures in order to recognise the right to conscientious objection to military service according to international human rights standards (e.g. A/HRC/41/23, para. 60; A/HRC/50/43, para. 57; A/HRC/56/30, paras. 54-58), including by:
   a. Providing all conscientious objectors with an alternative to military service that is not punitive or discriminatory in terms of its nature, cost or duration. In this regard, the State party should reduce the length of alternative civilian service and increase the monthly wage provided.

b. Revising article 1 (2) of the Civilian Service Act establishing a time limit on the submission of applications for recognition of conscientious objector status, so that conscripts and volunteers are able to object before the commencement of military service, or at any stage during or after military service.

c. Amending the legal framework to allow for professional / serving members of the armed forces to apply for early release for reasons of conscience.

d. Eliminating all automatically disqualifying conditions concerning applicants for alternative civilian service, such as the one about previous crimes, in order to comply with international human rights standards about conscientious objection to military service and the right to change one's beliefs. (arts. 2, 18 and 26)

2. The State party should raise the minimum age for voluntary recruitment into the military to 18 years of age. (Art. 24)

[i] CCPR/C/AUT/Q/5/Add.1, 24 August 2015, para. 131. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/Q/5/Add.1
[ii] CCPR/C/AUT/CO/5, 3 December 2015, paras. 33-34. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/CO/5
[iii] CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6, 30 August 2024, para. 21. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6
[iv] CCPR/C/AUT/6, 18 March 2026, paras. 219-220. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/6
[v] https://www.jusline.at/gesetz/wg/paragraf/45
[vi] CCPR/C/AUT/Q/5/Add.1, 24 August 2015, para. 130. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/Q/5/Add.1
[vii] Human Rights Committee, Views on Communication No 666/1995, Frédéric Foin v. France, (CCPR/C/67/D/666/1995), 9 November 1999, para. 10.3. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/67/D/666/1995
Human Rights Committee, Views on Communications No. 690/1996 & 691/1996, Marc Venier and Paul Nicolas v. France, (CCPR/C/69/D/690/1996 & 691/1996), para. 10.4. https://www.refworld.org/jurisprudence/caselaw/hrc/2000/en/89601
Human Rights Committee, Views on Communication No. 689/1996, Maille v. France, (CCPR/C/69/D/689/1996), para. 10. 4. Available at: https://juris.ohchr.org/casedetails/886/en-US
[viii] A/HRC/41/23, 24 May 2019, para. 60, (l). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/41/23
[ix]https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:JOC_1993_115_R_0139_01&from=EN, page C 115/183, para. 51.
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:JOC_1994_044_R_0075_01&from=EN, page C 44/105, para. 9.
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P5-TA-2003-0012+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN, para 42.
[x] E.g. "Austria Plans Mandatory 11-Month Civil Service as Demographic Shortfalls Loom", *Ad Hoc News*, 29 July 2026.
https://www.ad-hoc-news.de/boerse/news/unternehmensnachrichten/austria-plans-mandatory-11-month-civil-service-as-demographic-shortfalls/69896807
[xi] https://www.zivildienst.gv.at/zivildiener/weg-zum-zivildienst.html#zivildiensterklaerung
[xii] CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6, 30 August 2024, para. 21. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6
[xiii] CCPR/C/AUT/6, 18 March 2026, para. 222. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/6
[xiv] A/HRC/41/23, 24 May 2019, para. 60(f). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/41/23
See also: A/HRC/50/43, 11 May 2022, para. 57(g). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/50/43
[xv] https://www.zivildienst.gv.at/zivildiener/weg-zum-zivildienst.html#zivildiensterklaerung
[xvi] CCPR/C/79/Add.61, 3 April 1996, paras. 15 and 20. http://undocs.org/CCPR/C/79/Add.61
See also "the Committee remains concerned that, according to information received, conscientious objection may be recognized only prior to enlistment in the armed forces" in CCPR/C/MDA/CO/4, 2 April 2026, para. 39. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/MDA/CO/4
[xvii] A/HRC/62/24, 21 April 2026, para. 41(c). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/62/24
See also previously in: A/HRC/50/43, 11 May 2022, para. 57(g). https://undocs.org/A/HRC/50/43
A/HRC/41/23, 24 May 2019, para. 60(f). https://undocs.org/A/HRC/41/23
A/HRC/35/4, 1 May 2017, para. 63. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/35/4
A/HRC/23/22, 3 June 2013, para. 70. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/23/22
UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Conscientious Objection to Military Service, New York and Geneva, 2012. See relevant chapter "Conscientious objection for persons serving in the armed forces", pp. 25-26.
https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/ConscientiousObjection_en.pdf
See also: "States should be encouraged to end time limits for individuals to apply for conscientious objector status" in E/CN.4/2006/51, 27 February 2006, para. 61. https://undocs.org/E/CN.4/2006/51
[xviii] UN Commission on Human Rights, Resolution 1993/84, para. 2. https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unchr/1993/en/11724
Resolution 1995/83, para. 2. https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unchr/1995/en/8151
See also the phrase "aware that persons performing military service may develop conscientious objections" in the preamble in the previous resolutions, as well as in: Resolution 1998/77. https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unchr/1998/en/8561
[xix] UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 24/17 (A/HRC/RES/24/17), 8 October 2013, para. 5. http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/24/17
[xx] Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers, Recommendation No. R(87)8, 9 April1987, para. 8.
https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/coeministers/1987/en/88968
[xxi] Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers, Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 4 "Human Rights of members of the armed forces", para. 41. https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/coeministers/2010/ru/88943
[xxii] Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Recommendation 1518 (2001), para. 5.1.
https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=16909&lang=en
[xxiii] European Parliament, Resolution on respect for human rights in the European Community (annual report of the European Parliament), (A3-0025/93) [known as the De Gucht Resolution], 11 March 1993, as it has been published in the Official Journal of the European Communities C 115, on 26 of April 1993, para. 49 (p. 183).
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:JOC_1993_115_R_0139_01&from=EN
See also the term "at any time" in: European Parliament, Resolution on conscientious objection and alternative service, (A3-15/89), [known as Schmidbauer Resolution], 13 October 1989, as published in the Official Journal of the European Communities C291, 20 November 1989, para 1 (p. 124). https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:JOC_1989_291_R_0113_01&from=EN
[xxiv] OSCE, ODIHR, *Handbook on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Armed Forces Personnel, 2008*, Chapter 10 Conscientious Objection to Military Conscription and Service, 4. Best Practices and Recommendations, p. 85 [second point].
https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/0/c/31393.pdf
[xxv] [Note in the original] A/HRC/56/30, para. 16.
[xxvi] A/HRC/62/24, 21 April 2026, para. 7. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/62/24
[xxvii] https://www.zivildienst.gv.at/zivildiener/weg-zum-zivildienst.html#zivildiensterklaerung
[xxviii] https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-religion-or-belief/international-standards#2
[xxix] A/HRC/41/23, 24 May 2019, para. 60(d). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/41/23
See also: A/HRC/50/43, 11 May 2022, para. 57(e). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/50/43
A/HRC/56/30, 23 April 2024, para. 20. https://undocs.org/A/HRC/56/30
A/HRC/62/24, 21 April 2026, para. 41(d). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/62/24
[xxx] E/CN.4/2006/51, 27 February 2006, para. 34. https://docs.un.org/en/E/CN.4/2006/51
OHCHR, *Conscientious Objection to Military Service*, New York and Geneva, 2012, Formal requirements and conditions resulting in disqualification, p. 54. https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/ConscientiousObjection_en.pdf
A/HRC/41/23, 24 May 2019, para. 46. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/41/23

[xxxi] A/HRC/41/23, 24 May 2019, para. 60(h). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/41/23
See also: A/HRC/50/43, 11 May 2022, para. 57(j). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/50/43
[xxxii] CCPR/C/AUT/6, 18 March 2026, para. 221. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/6
[xxxiii] https://www.zivildienst.gv.at/einrichtungen/finanzielles.html (in German).
[xxxiv] Republic of Austria, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health Care and Consumer Protection, "Minimum Wage in Austria". https://www.sozialministerium.gv.at/en/Topics/Labour/Labour-Law/Remuneration/Minimum-Wage-in-Austria.html
[xxxv] "From when is one actually considered rich or poor in Austria?", *Vol.at*, 16 August 2025. https://www.vol.at/from-when-is-one-actually-considered-rich-or-poor-in-austria/9610454
[xxxvi] A/HRC/23/22, 3 June 2013, para. 65. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/23/22
[xxxvii] CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6, 30 August 2024, para. 21. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6
[xxxviii] CCPR/C/AUT/6, 18 March 2026, para. 222. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/6
[xxxix] EBCO, *Annual Report, Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Europe 2025*, 11 May 2026, p. 28. https://ebco-beoc.org/sites/ebco-beoc.org/files/2026-05-11-EBCO_Annual_Report_2025.pdf
[xl] A/HRC/41/23, 24 May 2019, para. 60(f). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/41/23
See also: A/HRC/50/43, 11 May 2022, para. 57(g). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/50/43
[xli] A/HRC/41/23, 24 May 2019, para. 60(c). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/41/23
See also: A/HRC/50/43, 11 May 2022, para. 57(d). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/50/43
[xlii] A/HRC/56/30, 23 April 2024, para. 16. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/56/30
[xliii] A/HRC/62/24, 21 April 2026, para. 41(b). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/62/24
[xliv] CM/Rec(2010)4 - Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on human rights of members of the armed forces (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 February 2010 at the 1077th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies), paras. 40-46. https://search.coe.int/cm?i=09000016805cf8ef
[xlv] CDDH(2012)016 – AUSTRIA, H4.
https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680695e4b
[xlvi] CCPR/C/LVA/CO/4, 3 September 2025, paras. 37-38(b). https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/LVA/CO/4
[xlvii] E.g. Austria: CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6, 30 August 2024, para. 21(b). https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6
Barbados: CCPR/C/BRB/QPR/4, 22 April 2025, para. 21(b). https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/BRB/QPR/4
[xlviii] CCPR/C/SR.4273, 27 May 2026, para. 16. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/SR.4273
See also "the Committee remains concerned that, according to information received, conscientious objection may be recognized only prior to enlistment in the armed forces" in CCPR/C/MDA/CO/4, 2 April 2026, para. 39. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/MDA/CO/4
[xlix] OSCE, ODIHR, *Handbook on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Armed Forces Personnel*, 2008, Chapter 10 Conscientious Objection to Military Conscription and Service, 4. Best Practices and Recommendations, p. 85 [second point].
https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/0/c/31393.pdf
[l] UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 24/17 (A/HRC/RES/24/17), 8 October 2013, para. 5.
http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/24/17
[li] A/HRC/58/5, 20 December 2024, recommendation 124.89 (Costa Rica). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/58/5
[lii] A/HRC/58/5/Add.1, 12 February 2025, para 3(a). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/58/5/Add.1
[liii] A/HRC/58/4, 20 December 2024, recommendation 132.90 (Costa Rica). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/58/4
[liv] A/HRC/58/4/Add.1, 25 February 2025, para. 260 referring to Recommendation number 132.90.
https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/58/4/Add.1.
And Annex to Norway's Addendum to A/HRC/58/4, para. 260.
https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/upr/sessions/session48/nrw/a-hrc-58-4-add-1-norway-annex-e.docx
[lv] A/HRC/59/4, 18 March 2025, recommendation 34.95 (Costa Rica). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/59/4
[lvi] A/HRC/59/4/Add.1, 7 April 2025, para. 4. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/59/4/Add.1
[lvii] CCPR/C/AUT/Q/5, 28 April 2015, para. 18. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/Q/5
[lviii] CCPR/C/AUT/Q/5/Add.1, 24 August 2015, para. 132. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/Q/5/Add.1
[lix] CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6, 30 August 2024, para. 21. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/QPR/6
[lx] CCPR/C/AUT/6, 18 March 2026, paras. 223-224. https://docs.un.org/en/CCPR/C/AUT/6
[lxi] CRC/C/OPAC/AUT/1, 8 July 2004, paras. 17-20, 24-27. https://docs.un.org/en/CRC/C/OPAC/AUT/1
[lxii] CRC/C/OPAC/CO/2 [also referenced as CRC/C/OPAC/AUT/CO/1], January 2005, paras. 5-6. An unedited version can be accessed at https://archive.crin.org/sites/default/files/attachments/crc_c_opac_co_2.pdf
[lxiii] CRC/C/AUT/3-4, 16 November 2011 [29 September 2009], paras. 258-266. https://docs.un.org/en/CRC/C/AUT/3-4
[lxiv] CRC/C/AUT/CO/3-4, 3 December 2012, paras. 56-57. https://docs.un.org/en/CRC/C/AUT/CO/3-4
[lxv] CRC/C/AUT/5-6, 21 March 2019 [Date received: 4 April 2018], paras. 247-251. https://docs.un.org/en/CRC/C/AUT/5-6
[lxvi] CRC/C/AUT/CO/5-6, 6 March 2020, para. 44. https://docs.un.org/en/CRC/C/AUT/CO/5-6
[lxvii] [1st Cycle] A/HRC/17/8, 18 March 2011, Recommendation 93.47 (Ghana, Slovakia). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/17/8
[lxviii] [1st Cycle] A/HRC/17/8/Add.1, 1 June 2011, p. 6, Recommendation 93.47. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/17/8/Add.1
[lxix] [2nd Cycle] A/HRC/WG.6/23/AUT/3, 14 August 2015, para. 27. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/WG.6/23/AUT/3
It refers to Joint Submission 1 by International Fellowship of Reconciliation and Conscience and Peace Tax International, which can be accessed through https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/uprat-stakeholders-info-s23.
[lxx] [2nd Cycle] A/HRC/31/12, 22 December 2015, Recommendation 139.4 (Nicaragua).
https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/31/12
[lxxi] E.g. [3rd Cycle] A/HRC/47/12, 9 April 2021, Recommendation 141.63 (Croatia). https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/47/12