

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2021

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION BULLETIN - V

- Updates on conscientious
objection to military service

-Human right violations of
people subject to compulsory
military service



Vicdani Ret Derneđi

Conscientious Objection Association

WHAT'S IN THE BULLETIN THIS MONTH?

In our fifth issue of the Conscientious Objection Bulletin, you will find updates on the rights violations of conscientious objectors in Turkey covering the period of August and September 2021. You will also find a report of information requests made to our association by conscientious objectors and others seeking to avoid military service covering this period.

Finally, in this issue, we have also included a summary report of our findings published in the 5 bulletins we have released starting from November 2020.

If you want to get information about the monitoring work carried out by the Association for Conscientious Objection (VR-DER), you can contact us on our [website](#) or via our [social media accounts](#).

APPLICATIONS TO VR-DER

During August and September, a number of new applications were made to VR-DER with a request for information. In a 2-month period, a total of 18 people have sent e-mails to the association and requested information on various topics.

Among those contacted, people who requested information about the right to conscientious objection were in majority. Others included those who were draft evaders or deserters, those seeking information about the asylum process because they did not want to perform compulsory military service, and those who were performing their compulsory military service but seeking information about the right to conscientious objection.

**Draft evader(yoklama kaçağı): Those who have not enrolled even though they were called.*

***Evader(bakaya) : Those who have not responded to the call or have not reported to the unit they have been referred to.*

%5 Evaders

%5 Those who request information about travel abroad

%5 Conscientious objection declarations

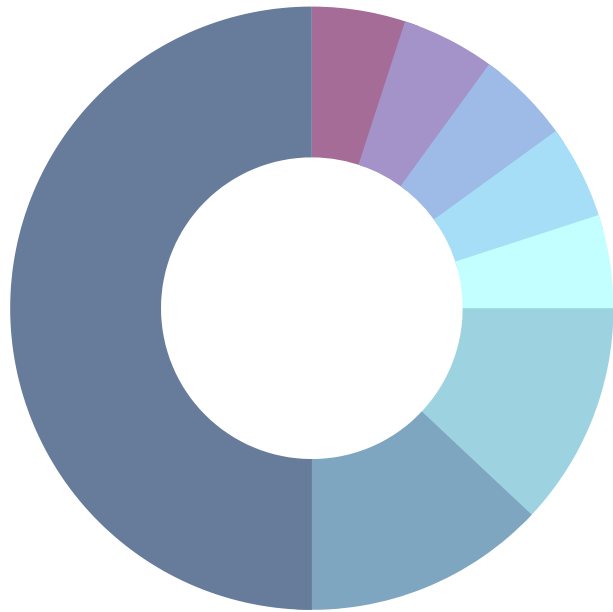
%5 Those who request information about the right to work

%5 Those who request information about right to asylum

%12 Deserters

%13 Draft evaders

%50 Those who request information about the right to conscientious objection

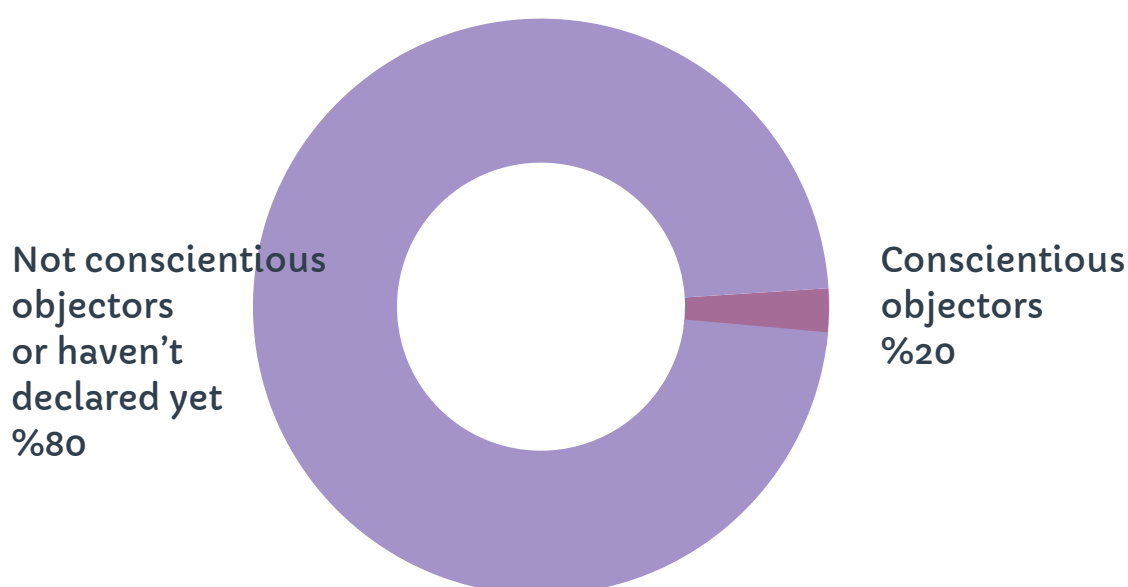


RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF PERSONS OBLIGED TO PERFORM MILITARY SERVICE

During August and September, 10 people filled out our form aiming to collect information on the rights violations of persons obliged to perform military service, including conscientious objectors, draft evaders and evaders. In their responses, participants shared information on various rights violations they have experienced.

The majority of those who filled out the form said their freedom of movement was restricted. In addition, some also stated violations in their right to education; some informed us about their status as being able to work only informally (i.e. working without registering to the social security system); as well as those who said they could not be employed in the state sector at all.

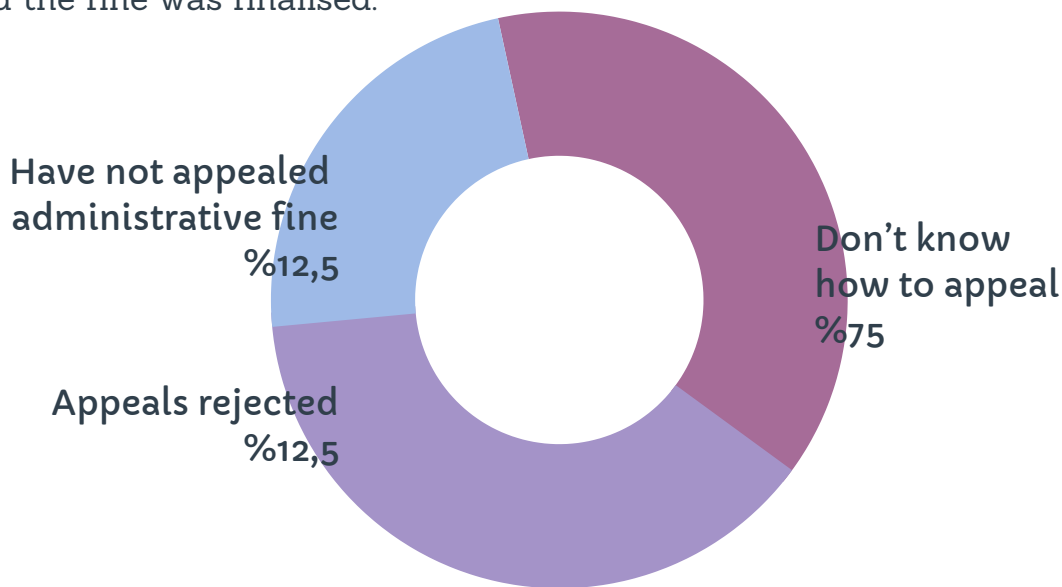
Among the respondents, the majority are those who have not yet declared their conscientious objection yet. Only 2 out of the 10 respondents were declared conscientious objectors.



ADMINISTRATIVE FINES

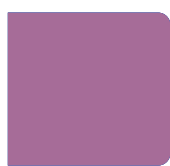
8 out of the 10 respondents who filled out our form between August and September have responded the question: "Have you objected to the administrative fines imposed on you?"

6 respondents stated that they did not know how to object to the administrative fines, which were imposed on the grounds that they were draft evaders or evaders. One respondent said he did not object, and one other respondent stated that his objection to the administrative fine was rejected and the fine was finalised.



An approximate amount of **21,000 Turkish Liras (approx. 1,870 Euros)** were imposed on **4 respondents in total**, who filled out our form in August and September, for draft evading or being an evader.

WHICH VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS ARE PERSONS SUBJECT TO COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE EXPOSED TO?



I was fired.



My bank accounts were confiscated.



I have been prosecuted more than once with the same accusation.



My right to education has been denied.



I cannot work in official institutions.



I cannot have an insured employment.



My freedom to travel has been restricted.



* Violations of rights cited by 8 applicants.

*The applicants stated that they were subjected to more than one violation.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION BULLETINS

The Conscientious Objection Association has been publishing the Conscientious Objection Bulletin since November 2020 and we believe our bulletins have become an important source in documenting the situation regarding the right to conscientious objection in Turkey today. Our bulletins responded to the need for an up-to-date information flow about the situation of conscientious objectors in Turkey, and documented the human rights violations of conscientious objectors and others subject to compulsory military service.

The bulletins helped to make visible the inquiries for conscientious objection made to the Association, up-to-date information on the trial processes of conscientious objectors, rights violations suffered by conscientious objectors, and new declarations of conscientious objection.

Monitoring the current situation of conscientious objectors in Turkey is an important step in raising awareness about the right to conscientious objection. We would like to thank all conscientious objectors who supported our monitoring efforts to raise awareness on the issue, to end the rights violations of conscientious objectors and conditions of 'civil death' for them, and to get the right to conscientious objection recognized as a human right by the Turkish state.

We can summarize the inquiries made to the association by conscientious objectors and others subject to compulsory military service since November 2020 as follows:



157 people contacted VR-DER to get information about conscientious objection and issues related to compulsory military service during the period of November 2020-September 2021. Among those contacted the association (via e-mail) included those who requested information about the right to conscientious objection; those who are draft evaders or evaders; those who requested information about the asylum process because they did not want to be drafted; those who consulted in relation to the violations of their right to education and to the restriction of their freedom of travel, and those who wanted to share their declarations of conscientious objection.

The Association's "form for rights violations of persons obliged to perform military service" has been filled out by a total of **79 people**.

The majority of the respondents were those who had not declared their conscientious objection yet





The respondents included individuals seeking to be recognized as conscientious objector with different motivations.

Their motivations to avoid military service included their stance as a war resister, their political opinion, their gender identity and/or sexual orientation, their belief in non-violence, as well as their health status.

The applicants stated various rights violations for their refusal to perform compulsory military service. **“Not being able to work formally with social security”** was the most common right violation. The rights violations they have mentioned included restrictions on their freedom of movement, inability to work in the state sector, violations in their right to education, being unable to vote, being dismissed from their jobs, confiscation of their bank accounts, and being tried multiple times on the same charges.





Vicdani Ret Derneği

Conscientious Objection Association



+0216 345 01 00



dernek@vicdaniret.org

www.vicdaniret.org

