

Red: what is still missing, draft:Christine S.

Place, date

Broad civil society alliance calls for protection/asylum for deserters and conscientious objectors from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine

by [suggest individual sending organization]

In a joint appeal to members of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, a broad civil society alliance from 20 countries has called on the European governments to grant protection and asylum to Russian and Belarusian as well as Ukrainian conscientious objectors and deserters. They need immediate protection and asylum.

According to international law, the servicemen and women fighting for Russia in this war are conducting an illegal operation. Moreover, it is possible that Belarus will participate in the war on Russia's side. People refusing to participate in the war will most likely face serious prosecution, which qualifies them for protection under the EU Qualification Directive. In most of the Member States the overwhelming majority of those affected have not yet received any guarantee of this protection.

With their appeal, the organizations demand that they be guaranteed protection and asylum.

It is assumed that among the 300,000 people who have left Russia recently because of the war, there are many men who seek safety abroad to avoid being sent to the war. In the last few months roughly 20,000 men from Belarus have left the country to avoid recruitment. There are also Ukrainian conscientious objectors who do not want to fight in this war; around 3,000 men have claimed asylum in Moldavia alone.

Each citizen, registered in Ukraine by February 24, 2022, is currently granted humanitarian residence in the European Union. This is encouraging. However, we should seriously consider what will happen to Ukrainian conscientious objectors when this provision expires. **European countries should take in these people fleeing the war effort without red tape and grant them a permanent right to stay.**

The human right to conscientious objection has been recognized *inter alia* by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. It must be guaranteed to everyone on all sides. **The European countries must ensure that the human right to conscientious objection is fully recognized.**

"Our aim is to ensure that conscientious objectors and deserters from the states involved in the war in Ukraine receive immediate protection and asylum," reads the letter to the parliamentarians. The letter - which includes a suggested draft resolution - was initiated by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), War Resisters' International (WRI), the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO) and Connection e.V. (Germany), and is supported by around 60 other peace, human rights and refugee organisations from all over Europe.

The appeal can be found [here](#).

Information on the legal situation for conscientious objection and desertion in Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine can be found [here](#).

Information on protection and asylum for conscientious objectors and deserters can be found [here](#).

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