



Bundesministerium  
der Verteidigung

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Ms Alexia Tsouni  
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**Dr Marcus Korte**

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SUBJECT **Questionnaire regarding the 2020 Annual Report of the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection:  
Response**

REFERENCE Citizen's enquiry of 27 December 2020

Ref. no. 01-13-11RII4  
Bonn, 11 January 2021

Dear Ms Tsouni,

Thank you for your enquiry and your interest in the Bundeswehr. I have been asked to reply to you.

Unfortunately, the Federal Ministry of Defence is unable to answer questions 2 and 4 since they are outside its area of responsibility. They concern the right to conscientious objection, which falls within the sphere of competence of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. I recommend that you submit the questions to that Ministry.

Questions 1 and 3 fall within the area of competence of the Federal Ministry of Defence.

Please find my answers below:

Question 1: How was the conscription ended? It was suspended or abolished? Which year and by which law/decision?

The legal obligation to perform basic military service outside of a state of tension or defence was suspended on 1 July 2011. This is laid down in Section 2 of the Compulsory Military Service Act (*Wehrpflichtgesetz*).

Question 3: What is the legal minimum age for voluntary enlistment in peace time, in case of general/partial compulsory mobilization, and in war time?

Section 27 of the Legal Status of Military Personnel Act (*Soldatengesetz*) in conjunction with Sections 8 (1) no. 1, 11 (1) no. 1, 15 (1) no. 1 and 23 (1) no. 1 of the Military Career Regulation (*Soldatenlaufbahnverordnung*) provides that the minimum age for entering the armed forces is 17. In a state of tension or defence, all men who have reached the age of 18 can be conscripted in line with Article 12a of the German constitution (*Grundgesetz*). Conscripts willing to start military service earlier can do so upon request in accordance with Section 5 (2), second sentence of the Compulsory Military Service Act, provided they have reached the age of 17.

Yours sincerely,

For the Federal Ministry of Defence



Dr. Marcus Korte