

Military conscription also for girls in the Netherlands

Henk Blom - Netherlands

Since 2020, girls are also subject to compulsory military service in the Netherlands. All more than 100,000 girls born in 2003 have received a letter from the Ministry of Defense informing them that they are registered for military service. With a view to equal treatment of men and women, it was believed that women should also be registered for military service.

Incidentally, compulsory attendance for military service has been temporarily suspended in the Netherlands; currently the army consists exclusively of professional soldiers. As soon as it is deemed necessary, registered conscripts (men and women) are called upon to perform their military service. How this will be practically arranged, was not mentioned.

The letter did not mention the possibility of invoking the Conscientious Objections to Military Service Act. However, a recruitment brochure for professional soldiers was enclosed. A nice colour brochure: 'Working at Defence, Not currently employed but curious about our story?' And: 'For Peace and Security, Check *Werkenbijdefensie.nl*'. All this decorated with cheerful photos of soldiers. In other words, a promotional brochure. And that for (legal) minors !?

In addition, it can be reported that in the Netherlands - just as in the European Union - there is a growing call from various sides for more money for the army.

Within the *Vereniging Kerk en Vrede* (Dutch branch of IFOR), as well as other peace organizations in the Netherlands, an opportunity is being sought to take action against this.

Henk Blom, Zwolle, The Netherlands, member of *Kerk en Vrede*