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GERMANY

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### *National Service in Germany*

In this essay the term National Service stands for programs, in which [young<sup>1</sup>] people engage in a period of service to their communities or to the nation.<sup>2</sup> Institutions participating in the National Service "respond ... to the needs of society and the citizens".<sup>3</sup> Pragmatically and with an eye for its instrumental use National Service is to be viewed as "the performance of socially needed tasks that the market cannot effectively handle and that would be too expensive for government employees to carry out".<sup>4</sup> Besides the condition of satisfying public, preferably social needs non-profit conduct of National Service organizations and programs is to be in the foreground: citizens involved in National Service are working without steady intention of employment, i.e. either in an honorary capacity or with relatively low costs.

The main proponents of such a National Service in Germany are [1] the "Bundeswehr" as far as conscripts are concerned and the "Zivildienst" (civilian service) [2] measures regarding civil defense, in particular protecting the civilian population and disaster relief [3] certain organizations (vested with public authority) that are active in development aid.

The common feature of these three large segments is that they are operated and organized either completely or predominantly by the *government*. They were established as public institutions with the purpose of handling the tasks in this sector that were assigned to the federal government by the constitution. Each of the three segments includes additional departments and units, the number and internal structure of which cannot be fully documented here.

The governmental National Service has at its disposal a large network of programs and organizations which are supported by private agencies. Private welfare organizations are extraordinarily involved both in the "Zivildienst" as well as in disaster control and development aid. Providing merely a survey of this part of the National Service in Germany proves extremely difficult. The various forms of organizations, fields of activities, and the reciprocal connections are very complex and not easily outlined. Experts concede that for the "average citizen" the network of connections between private agencies must seem like a "labyrinth", through which it is very difficult to find one's way, even after studying the subject matter intensively.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Whether "youth" is or should be a necessary characteristic of National Service may be doubted. See for a more detailed discussion Jürgen Kuhlmann, National Service Policy and Programs. The Case of West Germany. German Armed Forces Institute for Social Research (SOWI), Munich, October 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Sherraden, M. W. & Eberly, D. J., National Service: Social, Economic, and Military Impacts. New York 1982. p. 3. In Germany there is no concept, which, like the National Service in the United States and in other countries, provides a uniform summarization of a group of activities oriented towards the public well-being. National Service has no meaning in the linguistic understanding of large parts of the population. If this essay nonetheless discusses National Service in Germany, it is only by bearing in mind this restriction and by keeping with the intention to report on institutions which at least come close to the objectives and structures of the National Service in the United States.

<sup>3</sup> Eberly, D. (Ed.), National Service: A Report of a Conference. New York 1968. p. 8

<sup>4</sup> Moskos, C. C., A Call to Civic Service. National Service for Country and Community. New York 1988. p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> However, a historical survey of the non-governmental National Service brings to light that the confusing diversity almost always is the result of a centuries-old structural development.

National Service in the "Bundeswehr" and in the "Zivildienst" is legally ordained "compulsory" service for all male citizens. Women are not subjected to similar duties. Disaster control as well as development aid, for one, are available for those young men who thereby want to avoid doing compulsory service in the Bundeswehr or in the "Zivildienst". Insofar this part of the National Service is semi-compulsory in nature. Furthermore, a large number of men and *women* of all ages are active voluntarily in the fields of disaster control as well as development aid.

In addition to the relatively clearly structured governmental institutions a large spectrum of activities is open to honorary voluntary commitments of public welfare. Institutions extend from private welfare organizations that can not be recorded in detail to the self-help groups which are completely formed on *individual* initiatives. Honorary positions in private welfare organizations are open to men and women. of all ages.

### *The Relationship Between Governmental and Nongovernmental National Service Organizations*

Division of labour between governmental and private organizations in the field of public welfare has been a fundamental philosophy in democratic Germany. One would hardly understand the system of National Service in Germany without a having had a short glance at the legal relationship between both spheres.

The relationship between state-controlled and communal National Service on the one hand and the voluntary welfare services on the other hand has been regulated by law in West Germany since 1967. After a long dispute, the Federal Constitutional Court ruled that governmental, communal and voluntary organizations are to try to work together. The independence of the voluntary organizations with regard to setting their objectives and executing their tasks be respected by the governmental agencies. Meanwhile, this principle is reflected in important social legislation.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, the overall responsibility for public welfare still lies with the public organizations, because it is the duty of the state to ensure a just social order. Still, the state is to waive measures if voluntary organizations can provide help in individual cases. Within its overall public responsibility, the state is also called upon to adequately encourage and support voluntary organizations. In concrete terms this means that the state is to support them with the funds it collects within the framework of its tax sovereignty.

The "conditioned" precedence of voluntary welfare work (or the secondariness of public organizations) is to be understood as a principle of division of labor that is in agreement with the value and organizational standards specified in the German constitution. It is derived from the subsidiary principle as the regulation of principle of the German welfare state: first of all, the citizen is to cope with his daily life and any

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<sup>6</sup> Bundessozialhilfegesetz (Federal Public Assistance Act) section 93; Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz (Youth Welfare Act) section 5; Sozialgesetzbuch (Social Security Code) General Part, section 17.

social problems connected to it himself. If the individual cannot manage this by himself any more, the solidarity of his family, close relatives (and, when this was still possible under former living conditions), neighbours is called upon. Before he finally lays a claim to public assistance, the citizen has the right to turn to other institutions located in his social environment, which can give direct help and promise to respect his ideological, political, or denominational values.

In 1986, the Federal Government paraphrased this principle<sup>7</sup> as follows: "A democratic society is inconceivable without the plurality of social forces and organizations with their different political, ideological and social orientation. This plurality is the real expression of the individual citizens independent rights and their consolidation. Youth work as a field of social learning must, therefore, be structured plurastically like the society itself. In this connection, the voluntary organizations have an original right to enter into commitments and to participate in this field, which was established by the governments promotion. With their activities they also help to fulfill a public duty. Thus, it is an expression of its responsibility if the state makes it possible for the voluntary organizations to do the work necessary as regards youth welfare services and to adequately support them in this with public funds".

It is precisely this that non-governmental organizations of the National Service claim to be able to do. According to their argument, they not only satisfy the material needs of persons in distress, but also purposely offer value-oriented help. This could not be expected of communal and state-controlled organizations; to the contrary, they were required to restrain themselves. On the other hand, the social efficiency of voluntary organizations were substantially higher because they could work more flexibly and closer to the sources of problems: "They ... can ... react quicker, more comprehensively and more directly to non-standardized tasks". Finally, precisely because of this peculiarity, voluntary organizations can best take the feeling of "shameful poverty" from persons in need. This is subjectively felt to be a social stigmatization and a declaration of their incompetence, which often goes hand in hand with the decision to turn to public social assistance "and, at the same time, often means separating oneself from ones daily conditions of life".

Despite all fundamental agreement with the positions outlined above, critics do concede that the basic legal framework and the actual realization of the meaning of subsidiarity do not correspond to each other. It is not the question whether social services are organized on a public or on a private basis that, in the final analysis, causes the closeness to the citizens to be lost. The chance of realizing subsidiarity in content decreases with the degree of institutionalization and the size of the respective organizations. The larger and more institutionalized voluntary organizations become, the less do the citizens who need help distinguish them from public as a rule also large and institutionalized organizations. Empirical studies have shown<sup>8</sup>

- that, firstly, large structures decrease the surveyability and transparency of organizations. Bureaucratic, i.e. global solutions to problems, are promoted. The

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<sup>7</sup> At the occasion of defining youth work (youth welfare) in a democratic state.

<sup>8</sup> Munder, J. (1986). Selbsthilfe und (neue?) Subsidiarität - politische Mode oder rechtlich geboten? Neue Praxis, 5, pp.424.

advantage of being able to use the power of large associations is opposed by the feeling of alienation felt by the persons in need;

- that, secondly, letting voluntary organizations share in the public funds is not only a means of support but also a factor of influence: by incorporating them in the social security system, they were forced to take over the "bureaucratic structures of public administration". Thus, they forfeited their original nature of being innovative and flexible supplements to communal and public social administration;
- and that, thirdly, the large welfare associations have a considerable number of full-time employees. The more helping became a profession, the sooner did employment interests become involved. Would, therefore, an essential element of real subsidiarity, namely providing help to achieve self-help, actually be realized, then the occupational basis of the full-time helpers would show a tendency of being destroyed. Finally, they would become superfluous. Thus, in principle, professional helpers conflict with their own professional goals and the objectives of the relief work they are supposed to perform. That should affect their relationship, to the persons in need.

The daily routine of social-political work in West Germany would no longer do without the voluntary welfare organizations. Not only do they relieve the state-controlled organizations in fulfilling their public duties, they also have considerable influence on developing political objectives. Merely the large number of clients represented by them and their undisputed expertise make it seem appropriate to have the voluntary organizations participate in an advisory capacity with regard to legislation and the concrete implementation of social-political measures.

Thus, the voluntary organizations have a corresponding vertical and horizontal structure. In general, it can be said that the voluntary organizations hold ready their own contact offices and representatives at all levels of the public-political decision-making process. In addition to their local institutions in communes, cities and counties, they are organized at the Federal as well as at the Land level, and they are members in advisory committees active there.

It is hardly surprising if the factual power of the voluntary organizations also gives rise to distrust. Critics point out that the high degree of organization of the voluntary organizations is most likely also used as an instrument to secure as large a share of the public funds as possible: "The principle of subsidiarity ... has ... often been made an instrument of claim distribution and financing".<sup>9</sup> Officials of the associations have also acknowledged this - at least to a certain extent - in personal conversations.

### *Civil Defense*

Civil Defense comprises a wide range of activities.<sup>10</sup> What all these activities have in common is that in the case of defense they aim at protecting the citizens from enemy

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<sup>9</sup> Münder, p. 420.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. for the following chapters also Jürgen Kuhlmann, *West Germany: The Right Not to Bear Arms*; in: Eberly, Donald/ Sherraden, Michael (Ed.), *The moral equivalent of war? - A study of non-military service in nine nations*. Westport CT.: Greenwood Press 1990. pp. 127

action through non-military measures and already prepare such measures in times of peace. In this connection, *Disaster Control* occupies a special position. It is to protect the citizens in general, i.e. also in peacetime, against dangers that they could not effectively fend off themselves and for which only the state and the community can provide quick and adequate assistance.

The significant position that Disaster Control holds within Civil Defense can be explained by the fact that approximately 43% of the Federal Government's total expenditures for Civil Defense go to Disaster Control, including the "Technische Hilfswerk"<sup>11</sup>.

According to official information -that should be questioned however - approximately 1.4 million helpers are active in Disaster Control in addition to the fulltime employees working for the Federal, Land or local authorities. These volunteers are primarily men and women active in voluntary fire-brigades (about 1,000,000 helpers) and the so-called "augmentation element" of Disaster Control (about 142,800 helpers).

The "augmentation element" shows clearly the political intentions and practical aspects of the entire Civil Defense in Germany. What holds true for the National Service in general, also can be applied here: only about a quarter of the persons active in the "augmentation element" are full-time employees. The remaining 75% of the "augmentation element" are enlisted helpers or volunteers. They are assembled either by the "Bundesanstalt Technisches Hilfswerk (THW)" or by private, mostly welfare organizations and institutions.<sup>12</sup>

By this division of labor specialised knowledge and manpower are assembled and looked after by non-governmental organizations, the financing is covered to a large extent by funds of the Federal Government. This confirms the official philosophy of Civil Defense, which arguments that citizens' self-help efforts and governmental measures must complement each other. Thus, providing public funds must also be understood as a means of promoting the citizens' commitment to the needs of the community.

### *Serving in Civil Defense as an Alternative to Military Service*

Military service and serving in Civil Defense are considered (almost) equal alternatives in Germany: if one obligates oneself to serve as a voluntary helper in a recognized organization of Civil Defense, he is exempted from military service. Contrary to having to do one's military service in the "Zivildienst" (see below), men obligated to serve need not first achieve official recognition as conscientious objectors, but can decide from the beginning to do civilian service in Civil Defense. However, this decision is contingent on strict prerequisites and the agreement of several authorities, so that, in the final analysis, it is not really a completely free alternative to compulsory military service.

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<sup>11</sup> Federal Technical Support Service, which is a governmental institution.

<sup>12</sup> Some of the helpers active in private organizations are also recognized conscientious objectors doing their Civilian Service there. A part of the helpers working in the THW are conscripts who are serving in die THW instead of doing their military service.

Whoever wants to choose this option, must have made this decision before completing the 22nd year of his life. He must not have been drafted for compulsory military service yet. This is supposed to prevent that a young man's opting for Civil Defence Service is done on impulse in the face of serving in the Bundeswehr. Presupposing the physical fitness of the applicants, only those who follow an occupation that is, on the one hand, of use in Civil Defense (as a rule, skills relating to handicrafts or technical occupations) and, on the other hand, not needed in the Armed Forces at the same time, will be accepted as voluntary helpers in Civil Defense. Moreover, if the current employer urgently needs someone with these specialized skills then acceptance in Civil Defense can be prevented.

In addition, the number of positions available in Civil Defense for these kinds of exemptions are limited. The Federal Minister of the Interior and the Federal Minister of Defense agreed on a quota of 17,000 men per age-class; of these, 16,500 are reserved to Disaster Control alone. By 1995, when the Bundeswehr will have shrunk to 370.000 soldiers and therefore will need less conscripts, this figure will more than double to 35.000 men per age class.

After serving 8 years in the Civilian Service, the duty to serve in the Armed Forces lapses - provided the requirements are fulfilled. So the helpers themselves have to ensure that they are continuously available during this period of time; and even professional reasons are not accepted as obstacles. Irregularities can lead to disciplinary action. In the case of gross violations, the helper is referred back to the Armed Forces. He will then have to fulfill his duty to do compulsory military service.

During his 8-year period of service in Civil Defense, the helper must complete about 120 hours of duty per year. These hours are scheduled for every second weekend of 8 months of the year. However, there are local associations having more than 200 hours of personal duty per year. The helper assumes the risk of having to serve this time, which exceeds far beyond the average; he is obligated to fulfill this duty without limitations. Calculated on a 8-year basis, the helper in Civil Defense completes less working hours as compared to the time that need to be served in compulsory military service. The difference is a bonus, so to say, for the abovementioned risk of stress, for being available for a period of 8 years (whereas the duration of general military service is only 12 months), and, above all, for the fact that helpers in Civil Defense do the work for nothing (while conscripts receive a modest soldiers pay - at present approximately DM 500.-- per month). The helpers in Civil Defense are only reimbursed for actual expenditures, as a rule the travel expenses to and from the operational area; they are provided with adequate dress for work as well as operations and, to the extent that they cannot complete their service at their place of residence (which is aimed at and, as a rule, also achieved), room and board are also made available to them.

With regard to this service, the helper can possibly benefit from practical further training in his profession, but this is balanced out by the longer period of service as compared to compulsory military service. For many participants this proves to be an unexpectedly unpleasant alternative in the course of the years, because it is an additional burden in the decade of a young man's life that is filled with the problems of adolescence, vocational training and career issues as well as with family-related problems, e.g. marriage or bringing up children.

### *Development Aid Volunteers*

Development aid volunteers do service in developing countries without earnings in order to contribute to the progress of these countries by cooperating with them as equal partners. This formulation of the Development Aid Volunteer Legislation of 1969 underscores the fundamentally selfless motives of development aid and shows it to be a genuine part of National Service: About 90% of the development aid helpers are real volunteers. Development aid therefore is the only concept in Germany that would deserve to be named National Service. Development aid volunteers are not paid a salary based on their preparatory vocational training, but all receive an equal (rather modest) allowance for their work.

The so-called "dispatched qualified personnel" (or experts) and the Integrated qualified personnel" are not considered development aid volunteers in the strict sense of the term. "Experts" are contractually employed by organizations in West Germany and are then usually utilized as "consulting personnel" abroad. On the other hand, Integrated qualified personnel" conclude their employment contracts themselves with organizations domiciled in the relevant developing country and receive the salaries commonly paid there. The Federal Government provides additional support in the form of contributions to their salaries and subsidies for social security.

In Germany, there are six "recognized" organizations<sup>13</sup> that prepare, dispatch and take care of development aid volunteers. Above all ecclesiastical (Protestant and Catholic) institutions work together in these organizations. The "recognition" of the government is a prerequisite for sharing in the public funds provided by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation. The organizations also provide own funds for the development aid volunteers.

The DED attended to close to 60% of all development aid volunteers from Germany. DED concentrates on making available qualified personnel for projects and programs organized by governmental. and private organizations in developing countries, i.e. it is a "personnel dispatch organization". The ecclesiastical organizations conduct development projects which, besides personnel expenses, require substantial additional funds for other purposes.

In 1963, the DED was established in the presence of former US President John F. Kennedy as a continuation of his Peace-Corps initiative. It is a non-profit limited liability company: 95% of its share capital is held by the Federal Government, the remaining 5% are held by the other "recognized" development aid organizations in Germany. Although it is financed almost completely by federal funds, the DED views

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<sup>13</sup> (1) "Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Entwicklungshilfe e.V. (AGEH) "[Working Group for Development Aid, reg. asso., catholic institutions] (2) "Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED)" [German Development Aid Organization, FRG] (3) "Dienste in Übersee e.V. (DÜ)" [Serving Overseas, reg. asso., protestant institutions] (4) "Eirene, Internationaler Friedensdienst e.V." [Eirene, International Peace Corps, reg. assoj] (5) "Weltfriedensdienst e.V." [World Peace Corps, reg. asso.1 (6) "Christliche Fachkräfte International e.V. (CFI)" [Christian Technical Personnel lud., reg. asso., protestant missions]

itself as "mandatory" of the Federal Government and not as a governmental authority subordinated to the Ministry.

The ensuing tension between the objectives of the Federal Government's foreign policy and foreign economic policy on the one hand and critical statements by citizens engaged in development aid on the other hand seem to be tangible in the daily work of development aid. The theses brought forth on the 25th anniversary of the DED made this evident at several points. "After spending two or more years in a developing country, many development aid volunteers distance themselves from their own society. Being so directly exposed to and affected by the problems of a developing country has made them more aware of the injustice and disproportionate conditions in their own society, and they want to find solutions. The development of our society becomes a problem that seems to be closely connected to the situation in the Third World."<sup>14</sup>

In 1990 1530 development aid helpers were sent out. Since its foundation, the DED alone has employed about 9.000 qualified helpers in more than 50 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The attitude of the qualified personnel has changed in the course of the years. The "bustling euphoria and the solidary optimism" of the first years was soon replaced by sober pragmatism, which rates professional skills higher than "sympathy for one's fellow man and political mission". Today the DED understands itself to be a "technically specialized service with social commitments". The volunteers of the first years with their social and social-political motives have to a large extent been replaced by technically qualified experts. In the process, the concentration has shifted from handicraft and technical skills to academic professions. In 1987, more than 60% of the development aid volunteers came from universities and colleges, whereas the share of this group was only about 30% in 1971. The trend towards having development aid volunteers with academic degrees on the one hand and the fact that contracts are renewed many times on the other hand have made the average age of development aid volunteers rise to 34 years of age.

The above-quoted Development Aid Volunteer Law takes into special consideration the public interest in the commitment of the development aid volunteers. It gives them - from a social point of view - almost equal status to employees working in West Germany and ensures corresponding social security. In addition to a liability insurance for damage to persons and property as well as property loss, the law provides for: a tax-exempt re-integration grant; contributions to the national pension insurance scheme; personal accident insurance and, in addition, an insurance against the special risks of living in a developing country; health insurance policy; unemployment support if they are unemployed after returning home.

In the Development Aid Volunteer Law, serving as a development aid volunteer and military service as well as Zivildienst are declared equal-ranking alternatives. Thus, persons liable to military service can be exempted from military or Zivildienst until the completion of their 30th year of life, if they want to serve as development aid volunteers instead and conclude the relevant contracts for this purpose. By working

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<sup>14</sup> DED Information (1989), p. 23.

at least two years in development aid programs, the duty to do military service or Zivildienst lapses.

However, these fundamentally permissible alternatives only play a minor role in development-aid service. The acceptance of an application also presupposes both personal aptitude as well as the "right" profession (i.e. skills needed for development aid) and necessary work experience. As a rule, both cannot be met by the comparably young men liable to do military service. As a matter of fact, only about 10% of all development aid volunteers take this approach.

### *Civilian Alternative Service - Zivildienst*

In Germany, "Zivildienst" has two different meanings: for one it indicates the duty to perform alternative civilian service if one objects to compulsory military service; for another it refers to the concrete organizational form of the duties of the Zivildienst.

Persons liable to do military service who had referred to the right of conscientious objection are obligated to participate in the "Zivildienst" outside of the Bundeswehr instead of doing their military service.<sup>15</sup>

Initially (up to 1984) every person liable to perform military service had to establish the credibility of his reasons for conscience to an governmental "examination board" before he was granted an exemption from military service.<sup>16</sup> Since 1984 young men who were proven to be fit for military service have a de facto, though not de jure choice between military service and Zivildienst. The revised procedure of recognition in force since 1984 no longer prescribes an oral examination of the validity and credibility of the conscientious reasons for the application. Today, the Federal Office for Civilian Service merely checks whether the written applications (curriculum vitae and personal explanation of the motives) correspond to the legally stipulated prerequisites of completeness, conclusiveness and credibility. However, the former procedure was retained for trained conscripts, i.e. reservists and active soldiers, as well as for young men who already have received their calling-up order to the Bundeswehr.

The term of Zivildienst is always one-third longer than that of conscription; at the moment, compulsory military service is 12 months and Zivildienst lasts 15 months.<sup>17</sup> The comparably longer term set for Zivildienst is supposed to balance out the reserve duty training that a conscript with prior service has to do up to the age of 45.

The Federal Constitutional Court holds the view that having a longer term of civilian service is the only way to test the seriousness of the decision to object to military service for reasons of conscience. According to the court's argumentation, it can be assumed that anyone who accepts the "tedious alternative" of serving a

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<sup>15</sup> For a more detailed discussion cf. Jürgen Kuhlmann & Ekkehard Lippert, "Conscientious Objection in the Federal Republic of Germany". SOWI-working paper No. 34, München 1990.

<sup>16</sup> The right of conscientious objection legally takes precedence over compulsory military service, since this right was firmly established by the Basic Law in 1949, whereas compulsory military service was put on a legal basis in 1956 with the Compulsory Military Act.

<sup>17</sup> Which actually is only a surplus of 25 % compared to military service.

comparatively longer period of time is really referring to his constitutional right to make a free decision based on reasons of conscience.

Conscientious objection has become an increasingly aggravating problem in the Federal Republic.<sup>18</sup> Up until the mid-1960s, the number of applications for recognition as a conscientious objector per calendar year was markedly below 6,000. As a result of the widespread discussion on the Vietnam War in the German public and the activities of the so-called extra-parliamentary opposition, the number of applications increased steeply later on. In 1973, the first "mass attrition of the conscience" was reached when about 35,200 applications were recorded. The figures for the period of time from 1984-1987 (about 55,000 per year) were affected by the discussion about arms race, the stationing of cruise missiles and the arguments of the peace movement. Whilst the number of applications then kept steady at an annual level of about 77,000 until 1990, it nearly doubled in 1991 to the so far record level of 151,000 applicants (citizens of former GDR included) - about 4,500 of them being active soldiers.<sup>19</sup> Obviously the unification of both Germanies, the dissolution of the East-West confrontation and especially the 1991 Gulf War were of great influence. In general the continuous upward trend in the number of conscientious requests must be seen as the result of a discussion on security policy and military strategy by a discerning public and surely is an indicator for the dwindling legitimization of military defence among the young men liable to military service.

The Federal Minister for Women and Youth, and no longer - as was the case until 1984 - the Federal Minister of Defense, is responsible for the daily implementation of the duties in the Zivildienst. The Federal Commissioner and the Federal Office for Zivildienst are the executive (superior) subsidiary authorities. They are, so to speak, "directing" authorities for the Zivildienst institutions, in which the conscientious objector undergoing Zivildienst has to perform his duties. The Zivildienst institutions do not fall under the purview of the organizational power of the state,<sup>20</sup> they are operated by non-governmental organizations. That is the reason why the number of persons employed in the governmental authorities, which comes to about 670, is comparably low.

State recognized Zivildienst posts for conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst must perform tasks that serve the public well-being - whatever that may mean and the interpretation of which is decided from case to case. For example the organization "Greenpeace" gained recognition from the Federal Constitutional Court following, however, a long dispute. Furthermore, state-recognized Zivildienst posts must ensure that conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst have a work load comparable to that of the young men undergoing military service and that they are adequately trained and advised.

At the end of 1991 there were 31.207 recognized Zivildienst offices in Germany (1973: 3,978; 1979: 10,529; 1985: 15,129), which offered 153.856 Zivildienst posts.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Since 1956 a total of 1.285.090 applications for recognition as C.O. were registered. In a long term perspective this equals a ratio per age class of 7.6% (according to official information).

<sup>19</sup> According to the Federal Constitutional Court anyone can cite the constitutional right to conscientious objection even if he already is or was a soldier.

<sup>20</sup> With the exception of die Technical Support Service 1 THW.

<sup>21</sup> 75% of the Zivildienst offices and 80% of the slots in former West Germany.

Conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst are primarily called upon to work in the fields of nursing and welfare work<sup>1</sup>:

Nursing assistance and welfare	49,0%
Mobile social services	12,9%
Handicrafts	11,9%
Ambulances and rescue services	8,2%
Individual care for disabled persons	6,9%
Public assistance	4,5%
Drivers	2,4%
Gardening and farming	1,7%
Environmental protection	1,7%
Business and administration	0,8%

<sup>1</sup> Valid as per October 199 1. Source: Federal Office for the Zivildienst

The function of the conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst can best be described as fill-ins in a private-capitalistic competitive society that is based on material well-being. The conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst are preferably employed in positions where private provisions for emergencies and help in distress cannot or will not be applied.

Experience has shown that the social functions assumed by conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst would only be performed inadequately or would be eliminated completely if they were based on the rules of competition, even in a social market economy. Wherever the material profit that can be earned remains negligible or cannot be financed by the relevant marginal groups, the obvious, and comparably less expensive, solution is for the state to obtain by force social welfare work that is disguised as services for the common well-being.

Conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst are indispensable assistant staff for voluntary welfare work organizations. It would no longer be possible to finance professional staff in place of conscientious objectors.

In future the "Zivildienst" will gain new social-political significance primarily for two reasons. Firstly, even more elderly people will require care and old-age assistance before long due to the predictable trend of the population structure in West Germany. Secondly, the state will be even less efficient because the funds provided to the public health and social services will become scarcer. It is already evident today that the scope of services cannot adequately satisfy the needs for social welfare work. In this connection, the voices demanding an obligatory social service for young women too could become more insistent.

Since 1971, the number of positions available in the Zivildienst has doubled every five years. In 1991, about twenty times as many places were available than in 1971.

An obvious question is how this increase can be explained: Is it merely a reaction to an increase in demand caused by an increasing number of conscientious objectors? Or are other interests involved? It is here at the latest that the legal postulate of the so-called neutrality of the Zivildienst in terms of employment comes to mind. This postulate denies the state's recognition of any Zivildienst offices "if it can be proved that they replaced a former place of employment or want to save establishing a new place of employment". In this way, the state wants to avoid having conscientious objectors compete with gainfully employed persons for a place of employment, or, to put it in more concrete terms, to ensure that the Zivildienst offices do not replace a full-time employee by a conscientious objector undergoing Zivildienst. In general however, it is very difficult for the Federal Office of Zivildienst to provide adequate evidence. The counter-argument that no suitable applicants were found for an advertised position is usually enough for the office to retain its status of state recognition.

Nonetheless, in addition to the effects on the employment market, the discussion on the neutrality of the Zivildienst with regard to employment policy particularly conceals the question as to whether the civilian-service institutions "exploit" conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst as cheap labor<sup>22</sup> Conscientious objectors receive - like conscripts doing military service - their pay from the state. The budgets of the institutions are only burdened with housing, clothing and food expenses - altogether markedly less than would have to be paid for a regular employee.<sup>23</sup> In particular those non-governmental institutions which can finance their operation from "refunds of costs" make a nice profit - as distrustful voices say - in this way: the income obtained from the full rate of refund is counter-balanced by comparably few expenses.

Unequivocal and undisputed facts which could provide a conclusive answer to these questions are not available at present: the pros and cons of the argument Confront each other - at least as far as the public discussion is concerned - without factual mediation As a matter of fact, social relief organizations, which did not exist formerly because they would have been too expensive to maintain, have been created within the framework of the Zivildienst since 1984 (mobile services and individual care for seriously disabled persons). Moreover, it is a fact that a large number of conscientious objectors undergoing Zivildienst are active in operations that do not make use of the "cost refund" refinancing instrument and, therefore, cannot utilize this source of funds.

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<sup>22</sup> As staff members, for example of the Ecclesiastical Association for the Assistance of Conscientious Objectors, openly admit and criticize. See Becker, R. & Hoffmann, G.A. Ein Anlaß zum Jubeln? 25 Jahre Zivildienst in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in: Evangelische Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Betreuung der Kriegsdienstverweigerer (EAK), Sozialer Friedensdienst im Zivildienst - Plädoyer gegen Mißbrauch der Friedensdienstbereitschaft von Kriegsdienstverweigerern. Bremen 1989, pp. 77.

<sup>23</sup> "The civilian service posts are obligated to provide the conscientious objectors undergoing civilian service with housing, food, and work clothes; however, to ensure that more positions are made available, some of these costs are also assumed completely by the Federal Office for Civilian Service," and so, finally, only the administrative costs remain. Kraus, C., Zur volkswirtschaftlichen Bedeutung des Zivildienstes. Studienarbeit am Institut für Volkswirtschaftslehre - Politische Ökonomie - des Fachbereichs 1 der Technischen Hochschule Darmstadt. Darmstadt 1989, p. 85.

On the other hand both critical experts on voluntary welfare work as well as officials from the ecclesiastical assistance institutions for conscientious objectors and state-controlled Zivildienst organizations in principle confirm - unofficially, of course - the results of two empirical studies.<sup>24</sup> Independently from each other, both studies come to almost concurrent results: namely, that every conscientious objector earned a "net profit" of DM 33,000 in 1987.<sup>25</sup> The value of the conscientious objector's work in terms of money was calculated to be altogether about DM 2.3 billion, and "75% of this go to the central associations of voluntary welfare work and their member organizations."<sup>26</sup>

The liberalization in the acknowledgement procedure for conscientious objectors in 1984 was accompanied by an increase in the number of Zivildienst participants. As a result, the substance and conditions of the work performed as part of Zivildienst naturally became known much better than before. The social and social-political significance of the services rendered by the conscientious objectors seems to have gradually penetrated public awareness and, correspondingly, to have attained adequate public recognition.

In West Germany conscientious objection was considered deviant behaviour for a long time. In particular among persons aged 50 and over, conscientious objectors enjoyed negligible social prestige and had the reputation of being "dodgers". In 1985, representative opinion polls of the population for the first time indicated a countertrend: since that time, the positive assessment of conscientious objectors continually has remained above the negative opinions.<sup>27</sup> The age group of persons 50 years old and over was no exception.

Among young men (aged 16 to 24) conscientious objection always had a good image.<sup>28</sup> In 1988, the Federal Ministry of Defense was surprised to find that "the standing of a conscientious objector ... (was higher)... than that of a young man who had decided to volunteer for service in the armed forces". Particularly secondary-school graduates ascribed higher moral value to Zivildienst. A - conservative - information service remarked on this development as follows: "It is foreseeable that the conscript who joins the Bundeswehr will be the exception: a reversal of the legal situation, which declares the conscientious objector as the exception". This trend continues. In 1990 only 6% of the 16-29 aged population valued military service an important contribution to the nation's benefit. But 63% thought that a young man, who undergoes Zivildienst is of greater value to society than a (drafted) soldier.

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<sup>24</sup> Blandow, J., Zivildienstleistende als Personalgruppe des Wohlfahrtswesens. Ergebnisse einer regionalen Arbeitsmarktstudie. In EAK (Ed.), Zivildienst nur Militärdienstersatz: Dem Pazifismus (k)eine Chance? (Plädoyer für einen "Sozialen Friedensdienst" der Kriegsdienstverweigerer). Bremen 1988. pp.55. and Kraus op. cit.

<sup>25</sup> Evaluated according to die pay scale stipulated for the public service according to the Federal Collective Agreement for Public Employees.

<sup>26</sup> Blandow, J., Stellungnahme zum Entwurf eines Zweiten Gesetzes zur Änderung des Kriegsdienstverweigerungs-Neuordnungsgesetzes. Ausschuß für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit. Bonn 1988. (Ausschußdrucksache 11/69) p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> 1985: positive 39%, negative 33%. 1988: positive 43%, negative 27%.

<sup>28</sup> 1983: 54%, 1984: 42%, followed by a steady increase until 1988: 57%. Cf. Kohr, H.-U., & Räder, H.-G. Image der Bundeswehr. SOWI-Gutachten / Stellungnahmen 4/89. p. 20.

The reproach for dodging, which was aimed at the conscientious objectors, no longer finds an echo in the general public. Whereas about every fourth citizen of West Germany has been assuming for years that conscientious objectors have the potential intention of "changing the system", an increasing majority also acknowledges their religious and humanitarian motives.<sup>29</sup>

### *Conscription For Ever ?*

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany - in its version of 1954 left it to the Federal Parliament to concretely define the organisational structure of the armed forces.<sup>30</sup> In 1955 Parliament had, however, hardly any other choice but to vote for compulsory military service since the peacetime strength of 495,000 servicemen<sup>31</sup> as demanded by NATO could not be reached with volunteers alone. Moreover, an all-volunteer army at that time would have been a heavier burden on the Federal defence budget than was then deemed acceptable. In view of the fact that the strategy of Forward Defence was founded on the concept of a "mass army", the political support for compulsory military service was mainly based on the argument dating from the era of the nation state, that in a democracy every - male - citizen was "born a defender of his state" (Gerhard Scharnhorst).

Until the unification of both Germanies the peacetime strength was formally kept as contracted with the NATO. Apart from the about 220,000 conscripts drafted each year an average of 270,000 men with extended enlistment periods have been doing military service - about 5000 slots were kept open for reservists. Added to these were 165,000 civilian employees on average, employed as administrative personnel, judges, teachers, workers and the like.

Only about 65,000 of the 270,000 soldiers with extended enlistment periods are regulars. They are doing military service for all of their professional life until they reach certain age limits depending on rank and then retire - at the age of 52 at the earliest. The large remainder of 205,000 temporary-career volunteers as a rule leaves the Bundeswehr at an age of about 32 at the latest depending on the rank achieved and on the contractually agreed term of enlistment.

Future functions of military forces in democratic societies are currently being discussed controversially, not only by political elite's and the public but also amongst the military itself. This is not only because of the dramatic change of the general political situation currently experienced particularly in the former USSR, in Eastern

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<sup>29</sup> 1980: 55%; 1988:80%

<sup>30</sup> Cf. for the following Jürgen Kuhlmann / Ekkehard Lippert, German Bundeswehr - Patterns of Change, German Armed Force Institute for Social Research (SOWI), Munich 1992.

<sup>31</sup> That manpower strength was, just as the level of 370,000 servicemen that will be applicable from 1995, "in every respect political" and "not based on military reasons". Cf. Elmar Schmähling, Statt an Ausrüstung der Soldaten lieber an ihrer Zahl sparen, Frankfurter Rundschau, 16.8.1989. A possible Bundeswehr strength of 12 divisions was first mentioned in 1950 in the so-called "Himmeroder Denkschrift" (Himmerod Memorandum). Cf. Klaus von Schubert, Die Entwicklung der Bundeswehr im Kontext der internationalen Beziehungen, in: Peter Barth (ed.), Die Bundeswehr in Staat und Gesellschaft, München 1982: Bayerische Landeszentrale für politische Bildungsarbeit, p. 29. From 1952 on NATO demanded that strength "as Germany's contribution to the defense of the West" *ibid.*, p. 33.

European countries, and in Germany.<sup>32</sup> It is also due to the emergence of a new paradigm of reasoning on security and the functions of military power. The full set of beliefs and orientations is not yet fully consistent and rationally elaborated. Only some core elements of the new paradigm are relatively clearly shaped.

The majority of the public in Europe, particularly the young and well educated sections of the population no longer believes in the threat of war.<sup>33</sup> Traditional images of the enemy are vanishing. Major threats to society and to survival of mankind are now associated with environmental pollution, with risk potentials induced by highly sophisticated industries, with East-West and South-North immigrations as a consequence of the dramatic economic gaps between these areas. If there is any chance to solve these problems at all, national measures alone are insufficient, and the military cannot contribute much to solve these problems.

As a consequence of these changes, military means as such have come under the pressure of legitimation. External threat as a traditional reason for the existence of armed forces in Western European societies seems to have become less important - at least large segments of the publics have this impression. The future function of the military is not clear at all: neither the public nor - and more important in the context of legitimation - the military-political leadership contributes convincing arguments, that might serve as a basis for a new consensus on the function and the role of the military in the changing political and power environment.

No matter what the concrete results of the current process of discussion may be, some outcomes are probable. The end of the époque of the soldier has surely not come yet. But the decline of the mass army will be on the political agenda. The complex organizational, social and political problems related to the process of downsizing mass armies are obvious these days in Germany, where the former strength of both German armies of about 650.000 soldiers has to be reduced to 370.000 men before the beginning of 1995 and evidently will shrink furthermore. It finally becomes clear that potential. new primary functions of armed forces, that is their future "genuine" military tasks, will be much more complex than they were in the past or are even today. Military border defence either nationally or within treaty organizations, military enforcement's of UN resolutions, military actions under UN command, international arms control missions, peace keeping operations in co-operation with other states or under UN flag, rapid and highly mobile intervention forces especially in supra- or multinational military contingents, all these potential tasks call for highly educated and specialised manpower, for military personnel at a high level of both professional and motivational qualifications.

Under these auspices the concept of compulsory military service in Germany has recently become subject to ever more questions and doubts. In fact there are no

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<sup>32</sup> This and the following chapter are partly taken from Heinz-Ulrich Kohr & Jürgen Kuhlmann, *Conscription for ever? A Plea for a General Voluntary Civic Service*. Cf. *Security and Security Policy, The Current Situation and Future Developments: Concepts and Empirical Findings*, Papers presented at the IUS Biennial Conference, October 11-13, 1991, Baltimore/USA, compiled by Jürgen Kuhlmann.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Marina Nuciari & Karl Haltiner, *Change of Values and Alternative Concepts of Security*, in: *Security and Security Policy, The Current Situation and Future Developments*, op.cit.

conclusive military, economic and social reasons for maintaining compulsory military Service in its traditional and present form.<sup>34</sup>

The official philosophy of a natural linkage between democracy and conscription has been rejected by reality. Conscription does not at all share the defence burden equally among all citizens. When women are not liable to the draft, about one half of the population is exempted from this burden-sharing. In this respect one may well say that the draft is a state sponsored very special form of sexist discrimination. Moreover, in general only a minor part of all young men who are physically fit is called to service as a conscript. Most of them drop out. In Germany they either volunteer for the military, police forces etc. (and are fully paid) or they object to military service.

Conscription, on the other hand, is no guarantee to keep democracy alive. History has proven that conscription did not hinder states to become dictatorships, as for instance Hitler- and Honecker-Germanies show. And traditional democracies are getting along with All-Volunteer-Forces. It appears to be more appropriate to conceive armed forces as an outcome of a special society in a special historical and political Situation. The organizational format of the military may change when different needs are perceived or defined by a society.

Unmasking the ideology of a natural linkage between democracy and conscription, young people no longer accept the draft to be a self-evident contribution to the community. They rather feel their duties to the state fulfilled by paying taxes. Military service, as any other compulsory services, is rated a very unpleasant interfering into one's private lifeplan. And the "average citizen" too shows a relative great distance to all activities that might call for his personal engagement in defence and military matters.

Decreasing public support, youth's objection to the draft, and financial constraints altogether urged a trend to cut down the length of compulsory military service. The present duration of the conscription in almost all countries, that still favour the draft, is insufficient to educate and train draftees for ambitious and qualified military jobs.

The shorter conscription becomes the more it will apply that conscripts can be used for simple work only: guard duty, cleaning the quarters, car driving, serving officers and NCOs in the mess, ceremonial functions and the like. The military value of conscript manpower diminishes. It will turn out to be extremely low when confronted with the emerging tasks of armed forces in the future. Conscripts will increasingly become marginalized in the modern military of tomorrow. They would continue to serve as cheap labour dedicated to do the menial work.

The often heard presumption, that conscript armed forces economically are more advantageous than All-Volunteer-Forces, rests upon essential assumptions. All of these are questionable. Assumption (1) supposes that a change from conscription to All-Volunteer-Forces would require the same personnel strength, that is the number of volunteers needed would have to be equal to the number of conscripts. But in

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Jürgen Kuhlmann & Ekkehard Lippert, Farewell to compulsory military service? - Arguments against and for compulsory military service in times of peace, German Armed Forces Institute for Social Research (SOWI), Munich, March 1991.

general we may say that one volunteer replaces more than one conscript. This is valid in terms of training received, of military skills learned, and of experience and motivation. Assumption (2) presumes that conscripts are not paid according to market-place conditions. Actually at present their pay normally is lousy, they earn only small fragments of the salary they would have in a civil job. The erroneous assumption (3) is, that fiscal personnel expenditures for conscripts and the real costs of conscription do coincide. But fiscal costs of conscription form only a small part of all societal costs, that conscription causes. Draftees are not only forced to sacrifice a certain period of their life for the state. They personally also give up a substantial civil income. In addition, draftee's manpower is taken away from civil economy thus causing misallocations of economy resources.

Adding all costs, id est: 1. the fiscal personnel expenditures, 2. the opportunity costs of conscripts, 3. the total opportunity costs of civil economy, leads to the conclusion that in economic terms the draft is an expensive alternative to All-Volunteer-Forces. It represents a waste of economic resources.

One doesn't need to be a highly developed prognostic talent to predict that in the years after 1995 (when the "new" total strength of 370,000 men should have been achieved) a change in the current draft system will have to be made - in contradiction to sharp denials coming from the Federal Government and the political parties.

As early as in 1973 (!) the so called Force Structure Commission of the Federal German Government had already recommended to examine once more "the issue of converting the Bundeswehr into all-volunteer forces if the security situation changed so drastically as to allow a considerable reduction of operationally ready forces". For "all-volunteer forces are efficient and cost-effective. They do not have the problems conscript forces have. There is no inequity in induction, and the right of conscientious is no longer relevant. Volunteer forces are the best possible solution for an industrial society based on the division of labour."<sup>35</sup>

But several important prerequisites on which a fairly reasonable decision could be based are still missing. A military strategy for foreseeable threats scenarios is - more than three years after the end of the Cold War - still in the conceptual phase. What future tasks the Bundeswehr will be devoted to - and for what purpose it will be deployed - is still as uncertain as the amount of public funds German society is willing and able to spend on its defence. The future of general compulsory service depends moreover on the actual personnel strength of the Bundeswehr after 1995. It is doubtful whether Germany can evade the trend noticeable in almost every European country to considerably reduce the total strength of the Bundeswehr beyond the already planned 370,00 men. A recent empirical survey amongst Bundeswehr officers revealed that 80% of them believe the Bundeswehr to shrink below the figure of 370,000. 65% expect a strength of about only 250,000 soldiers or less within the next ten years.<sup>36</sup> Though not yet widely talked about in public, a force level of about 150,000 is conceivable: A slimmed force comprising about 40% of the currently projected strength could be the outcome.

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. the Commission's 1972/1973 report, p.29

<sup>36</sup> Survey administered in fall 1991.

Slowly, but more and more often, there are signs in public pointing to a force structure after 1995 which will actually abandon the traditional type of compulsory military service. "The defense system of the future will be dual:" a mixture of regular forces "composed of regular soldiers and temporary career volunteers, and a militia for home defence consisting of former members of the regular forces and of young men ... (and women, annotation by the authors) ... who join the Bundeswehr because they want to and because they are attracted by material incentives".<sup>37</sup>

### *General Civic Service - An Utopian Perspective ?*

It is easily to imagine what troubles private and public welfare organizations, more than that: the whole German welfare system, would run into if, together with compulsory military service, the Zivildienst had to be given up. The persons entrusted to the care of approximately 90,000 young men doing Zivildienst would have to do without the previously rendered services. Critics therefore have been suspicious that "the compulsory military service must be maintained to supply an adequate number of young men doing Zivildienst in order to make up for the emergency situation in nursing and welfare work".

In recent times it has been increasingly suggested to replace compulsory military service, and thus Zivildienst, by a "general service to society".<sup>38</sup> The point in question is not so much the personal involvement which society may expect from young citizens. It is the sobering insight that German society will to an ever greater extent depend on the social services so far rendered by the Zivildienst on the one hand. And that on the other hand these services couldn't be paid in market prices, as public budgets have been short of sufficient financial means to do so and will continue to be during the next years due to the immense costs of unification.

But civic service, a priori, in general does not have an automatic, quasi-natural linkage to conscription. It serves a democratic society well, not to force its young (male) citizens to any kind of service for the community, be it a military or civil one, but to leave the decision up to them to their solidarity and their freely chosen engagement. In a democratic society, which believes in and relies on liberal principles, citizens should have the opportunity to choose the kind of service they consider appropriate, or not to join any service at all.

As mentioned before, in German society a seemingly self-evident linkage is perceived between the system of conscription on one hand and civic service as performed in Zivildienst on the other. This link is defined by legislation: conscientious objection is, so to say, legitimized via the price of the acceptance of a civic service (which is longer than the military service).

A critical examination of this linkage reveals that both types of services (military and civic), differ fundamentally. While the idea of a civic service is based on personal socio-political engagement and free choice, the idea of conscription rather

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<sup>37</sup> Kurt Kister & Paul Klein, Keine Zukunft für die Wehrpflicht?, in: Paul Klein (ed.) Wehrpflicht und Wehrpflichtige heute, Baden-Baden 199 1: Nomos, p. 127

<sup>38</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this theme cf. Kuhlmann & Lippert, Farewell to Compulsory Military Service, op. cit. pp. 30.

corresponds to a philosophy in which the state claims the right to impose the duty to serve upon its (male young) citizens.<sup>39</sup> And close to this philosophic stance would be the idea of a compulsory civic service.

The problem of a general civic service first of all is its legitimation, apart from the manifold severe administrative and economic obstacles. Concerning this problem the most frequently mentioned arguments *backing* the idea of a general civic service are the following:

1. Many problems of modern societies refer to the social sector (helping, caring etc.). The young should 'practice solidarity' by devoting some time of their life to the community without claiming an adequate pay for this service (primacy of economic arguments with reference to cheap labor force).
2. The service is a good opportunity to train social skills and cooperation (primacy of educational arguments).
3. The service is a means to overcome alienation and distance to society. The young can engage in activities which they themselves consider meaningful and rewarding. They practice social and political engagement, relatively free from career-oriented considerations and pressures (primacy of socialization of democratic citizenship).

It is obvious that these arguments refer to different levels of sociomoral reasoning. While the first two are preconventional-instrumental and conventional, the third is more postconventional. In the debates on the adequateness of a general civic service, the arguments usually are mixed. And to many, the instrumental-economic arguments are most appealing (in Germany, for instance, the economic gain of conscientious objection is really substantial: the helping-and-careing institutions make a good profit by using the objectors for their work). However, the instrumental arguments are not convincing; they cannot really legitimize a general civic service in a democratic society, since those who engage in such a service would clearly be exploited on behalf of economic advantages.

In order to legitimize a general civic service, it has to be optional in a double sense. The young of both sexes must have the chance to accept or reject such a service in general, *and* they must have the chance to decide for one of many options of a service.

Young citizens who feel an obligation to defend their country, who want to engage in the military service, should have a chance to do so. But military service should only be one of many equally rated and estimated services. Other options should be defined according to the results of an analysis and a public discussion of current and future security risks and societal interests. For instance, environmental service, service in countries of the third world / developmental aid, service in hospitals, taking care of children, helping the old, may represent such options.

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. EAK (Ed.) *European Churches and Conscientious Objection to Military Service. A Contribution to the Conciliar Process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*, Bremen 199 1.

To make such services attractive, gratification's could be offered by the society to those who engage in such a service (e.g. financial aid; formal acknowledgement as additional professional qualification; integration of the service into later steps of vocational training / qualification etc.).

### *Acceptance of a General Civic Service*

In December 1990, two representative samples of the young (16-25 years, total n about 900) were drawn in the former West-Germany and in the former GDR. Among other items, the poll included questions concerning the acceptance of a general civic service (compulsory for all young men and women between 18 and 20 years old) with seven options.<sup>40</sup> First the subjects were asked to decide, if they would or would not do that service.

General acceptance of seven options of a civic service (yes, would accept)

	<b>West</b>	<b>East</b>
1. service in a hospital	64%	72%
2. developmental aid	64%	73%
3. taking care of seniors	52%	61%
4. military service 1 defense	31%	24%
5. taking care of handicapped persons	51%	63%
6. protection of the environment	89%	88%
7. taking care of children	82%	79%

It secondly was asked which of the services were preferred. The data shows a wide variety of responses. Relatively large preference rates (close to 30%) are given for "protection of the environment" and "taking care of children,". Around 10% selected the options "developmental aid", "serving in a hospital", and "military service / defense". Very small percentages (about 2-3%) decided for "taking care of seniors", and "taking care of handicapped persons".

When asked to select the service they would dislike most, "military service / defense" clearly is leading with about 60% of the responses. "Protection of the environment and "taking care of children" are rejected by a very small section of the sample (about 2%). Each of the other options is rejected by about 10% of the samples (there are no large differences between East- and West-German youth.

The final question asked for a rating of the idea of a civic service including options:

<b>West</b>	<b>East</b>
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<sup>40</sup> Cf. Kohr, Heinz-Ulrich, "Wehrdienst als Teil eines allgemeinen Gesellschaftsdienstes?" (Military service as part of a general optional civic service ?), München 1990, SOWI-working paper.

rather in favor 49%	49%	66%
rather opposed 32%	32%	16%
undecided/indifferent 19%	19%	18%

In summary the results show that a substantial section of the young population tends to accept the (hypothetic) concept of an optional civic service, even if it should be obligatory. There is no large difference in the overall acceptance of the idea between young men and young women.

A replication of the study (panel) in July 1991 lead to comparable results. Besides the aspects already mentioned above, the second sample revealed that the influence of traditional. gender roles still is important to some extent: relative to young men, young women prefer the 'caring activities', (children, persons in hospitals, environmental pollution). Young men - in contrast to young women - are more willing to serve in the armed forces and tend to more frequently reject the 'caring activities'. Environmental service, however, is rejected by a very small minority only.

Summarizing the empirical evidence, it is obvious that there is a potential. interest of the young to engage in a societal. service, dealing with a attempt to minimize the 'modern' risks young people consider substantial (environmental pollution, developmental aid, caring for children, the old, the handicapped). The traditional societal service, i.e. compulsory service as a conscript, is attractive for a minority of young men only (about 20%).