



New Profile: The Movement to Demilitarize Israeli Society

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear partners, supporters, and friends,

As COVID spread across Israel and Palestine, the lines drawn between the military, the police, and civil society blurred. Civilians were tracked in the name of public health, soldiers stood post in the streets of city centers to monitor movement, and access to vaccines varied significantly based on locality, socio-economic status, and identity.

New Profile is an explicitly anti-militaristic, feminist political movement. We aim to counteract the militaristic and patriarchal impact of the army on the lives of women, Palestinians, marginalized Jewish Israelis, and society at-large through our counseling network and education and outreach programming.

The team of New Profile wishes our supporters, donors, and friends a year of good health, safety, and decreased presence of military, weapons, and war in our day-to-day lives.

In solidarity,

Melissa Danz and Nissi Peli
Development Co-ordinators



New Profile challenges the militarization of Israeli society and advocates for a more civilian and less patriarchal society. Our work with professionals challenges the prevalent notion that enlistment is a measure of success in life, and that one's military service is the chief index reflecting one's worth in Israeli society.

Our support for youth seeking exemption from military service offers individuals and the public a chance to critically question the militarism in Israeli society, and legitimizes one's decision to not join the military.

Our work with professionals who work with youth seeks to reject the idea that military service is a reflection of one's worth—as it currently the mainstream consensus in Israeli society. In doing so, New Profile promotes a more civilian and less patriarchal society.



<https://www.newprofile.org>



info@newprofile.org



IN 2021, NEW PROFILE DID THE FOLLOWING:

In 2021, New Profile's Counseling Network, led by Or Ben David and Inna Lebedinsky, **supported 976 youth who independently chose to refuse enlistment** to the Israeli military for reasons of political or conscientious objection, family financial obligations, mental health or physical health conditions, and more. Of the 976 youth who approached New Profile in gaining an exemption from the military, **343 identified as women** and **13 identified as members of the LGBTQIA+ community**. **130 parents** approached us on behalf of their children. Our Counseling Network was supported by **18 highly-skilled and trained volunteers**, to which we offer our sincere gratitude.

Our Education and Outreach team, led by Noga Hurvitz and Jonathan Hempel, hosted **11 lectures, 8 teacher's forums, and 3 public events**. Participants totaled **662 teachers, professionals working with youth, public attendees, and activists from other social and human rights organizations**. The team also saw an **18% increase in Facebook followers** following their effort to harness social media to widen public discussion of New Profile's discourse. The team answered **256 inquiries to educators and caregivers** and **forged 222 connections** via meetings with international and local movements, activists, researchers, groups and individuals on the ground in Israel and Palestine. The team also opened an Instagram account to connect to the age group which generally approaches us, and the followers have been steadily increasing.

Our Legal department, led by Inna Lebedinsky, **supported 36 people in complex legal cases**, including evasion and desertion. Under Israeli law, this is considered a criminal, imprisonable offense. **15 were able to avoid imprisonment**. In 2021, there was **100% success with all legal cases**, meaning all have received, or are in the process of, exemption.

The legal team had continued offering advice to many beneficiaries, most of whom are young immigrants, even after they had received exemption from military service. Such support was given to these beneficiaries in cases such as preventing unlawful discrimination in employment due to partial or no military service, unlawful discrimination in admission to universities and colleges, and more. Such appeals were a new phenomenon in the Legal team's work, and are viewed by New Profile as an important aspect of our work, ensuring that the rights of those we support are not violated due to not completing military service.

LOOKING FORWARD:

The second year of our 'Challenging Militarism' workshop, conducted in collaboration with Combatants for Peace, involves new educational practices and a variety of fascinating scholars. While the target audience in its first year was solely educators, it is now open to the public. With the focus we have put into publicizing the workshop on our social media, we have been able to reach a larger audience and engage those who wouldn't usually participate in such programs.

We will continue to provide accessible information through publications, our social media accounts, and our soon-to-be new, user-friendly, and secure website. Overall, we believe that the ongoing consolidated online presence we have maintained in the last year will allow us to reach a wider audience in Israel, Palestine and abroad, and raise more awareness to militarization, its consequences, and the civilian alternatives.



ONLINE PRESENCE:

In 2021, activists of New Profile were published several times in the media:

An article concerning the uprising of violence in Israel, as well as the spread of weapons in civic society, written by Reli Mazali, co-founder and ongoing member of New Profile, was published in Haaretz in May 2021 in [Hebrew](#) and [Arabic](#).

An article titled 'Organizing against militarism from Israel to Europe', written by Jonathan Hempel, New Profile's Education and Outreach Co-coordinator, was published in ROAR Magazine in August 2021, and has since been republished in AbolishFrontex's blog and in Progressive International. Published in [English](#), [Italian](#), [German](#), [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#) and [French](#).



FEEDBACK:

Among our optional survey issued to users of the counseling network, respondents replied:

65.5% report that they shared their exemption experience with family and friends.

The information provided by New Profile proved to be effective, with **22%** of respondents saying that: "I used to think that everyone should serve in the army, but today I disagree."

74.6% responded that they always believed that non-conscription was a legitimate choice for some or all.

28.8% of respondents said that they would be interested in joining political activity related to anti-militarism.

Written feedback from our optional surveys included the following:

"My personal mentor gave me confidence along the way, served as a great and kind support network for me, and helped me get through the process successfully. The information provided helped me a lot in the issues I was dealing with."

"My counselor helped me significantly and the information she sent really helped me in the process I went through...To my counselor: if you see this, I want to tell you that you are amazing!"

"12/10! The counselor contacted me in less than two days and already started helping me. She was amazing, caring, available all the time, guided me before anything, and was really a golden girl who, thanks to her, helped me get out of a very difficult place. An amazing organization in my opinion!"



A RECENT STORY OF SUCCESS:

In late August 2021, New Profile's Counseling Network received a request for assistance from a concerned mother, Tamar*, regarding her teenage daughter, Yael*. Yael was called to participate in a day of obligatory exams by the army. Tamar told us that Yael was suffering from ongoing anxiety, self-harm, and severe adjustment disorder in school. While Yael had expressed her firm wish for exemption, Tamar felt confused and intimidated by the process ahead.

We advised that all medical and psychological data from any professionals treating Yael should be passed on to the army in order to demonstrate why she was unfit to serve. However, an interesting dilemma arose. While the boarding school Yael had attended had gone to great lengths to support her with her difficulties, the school's professionals were hesitant to document the severity of Yael's situation to be passed onto the army. On one hand, there was professional pride and perhaps disappointment they had not helped Yael more. On the other hand, the school (and most Israeli institutions) heavily supported the notion of military service.

A proper and accurate evaluation was essential to Yael's case for exemption—nothing but the hard truth. And nothing but conviction and tenacity of Tamar in attaining such an evaluation from the professionals would suffice. Two months from the last conversation with Tamar, she called to tell us that upon her insistence, the papers came through. Yael's inability to serve was recognized and she was finally exempt from military service.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR DONORS:

Bread For the World · Sparkplug Foundation · IHL Trust · Mennonite Central Committee · Women's World Day of Prayer · American Friends Service Committee · British Shalom-Salaam Trust · The Radley Charitable Trust · SIVMO · Haëlla · Women for Peace Switzerland · Palästina - Friedensstiftung Rachel Corrie · Refuser Solidarity Network · Individual Donations from Israel and abroad

PLEASE CONSIDER SUPPORTING US:

Like most movements working for social change, New Profile relies on donations to cover its running costs. Your contribution is highly needed and appreciated:

In the US: Make a tax-deductible donation via the Refuser Solidarity Network here.

In Canada: Make a tax-deductible donation via La Galerie Fokus: Fokus Galerie Charity Registration No. 132450230 RR 0001 Plateau Mont-Royal 68, Ave. Duluth E. Montreal, Quebec H3W 1G8

Send a wire transfer to our bank account: Bank Hapoalim, Account No. 421120, Branch 630, Sokolov Street 90, Ramat Hasharon, Israel, 4726405. Swiftcode: "POALILIT", IBAN: IL21012-6300-0000-0042-1120 (Note: Following new banking regulations, you must specify the IBAN code in any money transfer for it to go through). And please kindly notify us by e-mail or using our contact form.



<https://www.newprofile.org>



info@newprofile.org