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Helping Russian Deserters Flee the Front Lines

Russia on the Record

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This week in Russia, a man was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison after he pleaded guilty to trying to persuade his friend to surrender to the Ukrainian army. Cases like this are on the rise, with over 5,500 desertion cases prosecuted in Russia in 2023 alone.

Idite Lesom (Get Lost), an NGO founded in Georgia after Russia declared its "partial" mobilization in fall 2022, helps Russians escape from mobilization or from the front lines. In almost two years, Get Lost has helped over 500 conscientious objectors evade service.

Its founder, Grigory Sverdlin, formerly director of the Nochlezhka homeless aid charity, spoke to The Moscow Times about the organization's work.

Russia on the Record is a podcast where Moscow Times journalists, independent experts and ordinary Russians reflect, analyze and explain what's going on in Russia right now.

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