

## UK government in geography of England fail

9th October 2023



The UK government has issued a report on its rail network that contains mistakes and questionable promises. The 36-page prospectus is titled "Network North". It was issued in the wake of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak scrapping the major HS2 infrastructure

project – a high-speed rail link connecting the northern city of Manchester to the south. The front cover of the publication seems to have relocated Manchester 70 km north-west. Network North also committed to upgrading a road called the A259. However, this road is on the south coast of England. Among other bloopers, the report vowed to extend a tram network to Manchester airport. The airport link actually opened in 2014.

Government critics were dumbfounded and dismayed at the scrapping of the HS2 rail link. The line was announced with great fanfare by the Conservative government in 2012. HS2 was a major component in efforts to "level up" the north. Abandoning the link is seen as Mr Sunak's latest U-turn on a policy initiative. Just a year ago, he was committed to the project. Many people say it shows the government's disregard for the north of England. They lament railway lines in the north being "Victorian" – over a century old. The High Speed Rail Group said: "Every other major European country has managed to build a high-speed rail network, recognizing it's a vital part of a modern society and economy."

Sources: [theguardian](https://www.theguardian.com) / [cnn.com](https://www.cnn.com) / [independent.co.uk](https://www.independent.co.uk)

### Writing

Rail is the best way to travel. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

report / rail network / mistakes / promises / infrastructure / publication / airport / critics / fanfare / government / level up / U-turn / policy / vital / society / economy

### True / False

- 1) A transport report from the UK government contains 36 mistakes. T / F
- 2) The UK's prime minister woke up to a project called HS2. T / F
- 3) The report wants to extend the city of Manchester by 70 km. T / F
- 4) The government promised a tram network that has already been built. T / F
- 5) The government announced HS2 at a funfair in 2012. T / F
- 6) The rail link HS2 was meant to level up the north of England. T / F
- 7) Many railway lines in the north of England are a hundred years old. T / F
- 8) All other major European countries have a high-speed rail network. T / F

### Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>issued</b>         | a. improving  |
| 2. <b>in the wake of</b> | b. part       |
| 3. <b>connecting</b>     | c. promised   |
| 4. <b>upgrading</b>      | d. bemoan     |
| 5. <b>vowed</b>          | e. following  |
| 6. <b>dumbfounded</b>    | f. essential  |
| 7. <b>fanfare</b>        | g. published  |
| 8. <b>component</b>      | h. astonished |
| 9. <b>lament</b>         | i. publicity  |
| 10. <b>vital</b>         | j. linking    |

### Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of the UK scrapping a major rail project?
- c) What parts of your country need levelling up?
- d) What regional differences are there in your country?
- e) What will transport of the future be like?
- f) How is your knowledge of world geography?
- g) How modern is your country?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the UK leader?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. The 36-page                         | a. and dismayed           |
| 2. the major HS2 infrastructure        | b. a tram network         |
| 3. this road is on the                 | c. opened in 2014         |
| 4. the report vowed to extend          | d. modern society         |
| 5. The airport link actually           | e. south coast            |
| 6. Government critics were dumbfounded | f. on a policy initiative |
| 7. announced with great                | g. century old            |
| 8. Mr Sunak's latest U-turn            | h. prospectus             |
| 9. over a                              | i. project                |
| 10. a vital part of a                  | j. fanfare                |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the geography of your country?
- What do you know about the geography of the UK?
- What's your country's rail network like?
- What major infrastructure project is your country building?
- What do you think of your country's leader?
- How important is high-speed rail?
- How are the transport links in your country?
- What's your image of transport in the UK?

## Spelling

- osaibtneugle promises
- The 36-page prcoutsesp
- the major HS2 rntrefutsuarci project
- The front cover of the unlpacbtioi
- iomtemtcd to upgrading a road
- Among other sprelobo
- critics were mufbdddeoun
- yddmisae at the scrapping of the HS2 rail link
- announced with great nearfaf
- a major netoncmop
- a policy inieivitt
- grisdarde for the north

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. j	4. a	5. c
6. h	7. i	8. b	9. d	10. f

## Role Play

### Role A – Train

You think trains are the best form of transport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their forms. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): airplane, bus or bicycle.

### Role B – Airplane

You think airplanes are the best form of transport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their forms. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): trains, buses or bicycles.

### Role C – Bus

You think buses are the best form of transport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their forms. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): airplanes, trains or bicycles.

### Role D – Bicycle

You think bicycles are the best form of transport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their forms. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): airplanes, buses or trains.

## Speaking – Transport

Rank these with your partner. Put the best forms of transport at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| • Rail     | • Tram      |
| • Airplane | • Bus       |
| • Ferry    | • Bicycle   |
| • Subway   | • E-scooter |

### Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	F	4	T	5	F	6	T	7	T	8	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.