

UK leader wants national service for 18-year-olds

30th May 2024



The UK leader has a plan to introduce national service for 18-year-olds. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak says he will introduce compulsory national service if his party wins the UK election on July the 4th. Under his plan, young people will have two

choices when they become 18. The first choice is to spend one year in the army, navy or air force. The government thinks about 30,000 people will choose to do this. The second option is to do voluntary work for one weekend a month. This means volunteering to work with Britain's National Health Service, ambulance service, fire service, or in local communities. Mr Sunak said young people will gain valuable skills, and help to "build a stronger national culture".

Rishi Sunak's plan has been attacked by many people. Various experts say it is too expensive, and that the UK does not have enough staff to train 30,000 army volunteers. Many defence experts say the idea is unworkable. Admiral Alan West, a former navy head, said: "I'm delighted if more young people become aware of defence...but this idea is...bonkers." He believes the government needs to spend more money on defence. He says national service will "suck" money out of defence. Many young people disagree with the plan. They believe it takes away their freedom. However, one 17-year-old said it will give many young people a purpose. She said national service works well in dozens of countries.

Sources: [bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com) / [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com)

Writing

All 18-year-olds should do national service for one year. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

leader / national service / election / choice / army / navy / air force / health service / experts / volunteers / defence / delighted / government / freedom / purpose / plan

True / False

- 1) The U.K. will introduce national service on the 4th of July. T / F
- 2) Young people can choose one of two options for national service. T / F
- 3) The government thinks 30,000 people will join the air force. T / F
- 4) Rishi Sunak said young people will learn about national cultures. T / F
- 5) Experts say there is a shortage of staff to train 30,000 army volunteers. T / F
- 6) A defence expert suggested the national service plan would not work. T / F
- 7) The expert said the plan would take money away from defence. T / F
- 8) A 17-year-old said national service was a failure in many countries. T / F

Synonym Match

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

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. introduce | a. specialists |
| 2. compulsory | b. get |
| 3. choices | c. nations |
| 4. gain | d. motivation |
| 5. valuable | e. required |
| 6. experts | f. precious |
| 7. bonkers | g. start |
| 8. freedom | h. crazy |
| 9. purpose | i. liberty |
| 10. countries | j. options |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How much should a country spend on its army?
- c) Is it more important to spend money on defence or education?
- d) How would you feel about doing a year in the army?
- e) Do you have enough freedom?
- f) Does national service take away someone's freedom?
- g) Should all young people spend time in the military?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the UK leader?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. a plan to introduce | a. expensive |
| 2. if his party wins | b. do voluntary work |
| 3. The first choice is to spend | c. dozens of countries |
| 4. The second option is to | d. one year in the army |
| 5. young people will gain | e. away their freedom |
| 6. Various experts say it is too | f. is unworkable |
| 7. the UK does not have enough | g. national service |
| 8. defence experts say the idea | h. valuable skills |
| 9. it takes | i. staff |
| 10. works well in | j. the UK election |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of national service?
- How can 18-year-olds help their country?
- Is 18 the best age to be?
- Would you choose to join the army, navy or air force?
- Would you prefer to do military service or community work?
- Is voluntary work for one weekend a month enough?
- How can you help your local community?
- What can you do to build your country's culture?

Spelling

- introduce oupscrylmo national service
- young people will have two oeicshc
- The second pnioto
- in local ietmcnmuios
- people will gain auallybe skills
- build a stronger national clruute
- aktecatd by many people
- it is too xensepiev
- 30,000 army euoelsntvr
- Many young people earedsgi with the plan
- give many young people a suopepr
- in sezdon of countries

Answers – Synonym Match

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

Role Play

Role A – Hospitals

You think hospitals are the best places to do voluntary work. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): schools, care homes or farms.

Role B – Schools

You think schools are the best places to do voluntary work. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): hospitals, care homes or farms.

Role C – Care Homes

You think care homes are the best places to do voluntary work. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): schools, hospitals or farms.

Role D – Farms

You think farms are the best places to do voluntary work. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): schools, care homes or hospitals.

Speaking – Volunteer

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to volunteer for at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| • Care worker | • In hospitals |
| • Helping animals | • In schools |
| • Counselling | • With old people |
| • Teaching English | • Picking up litter |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	F	4	F	5	T	6	T	7	T	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.