# Controversy Surrounds Proposal for Reintroducing National Service in the UK



The proposal to reintroduce National Service for 18-year-olds has been a prominent subject in the United Kingdom's political landscape, with the Conservative Party spearheading the proposal. If the Conservatives win the general election on July 4, 2024, a royal commission will examine the implementation details. The plan, advocated by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, involves either a 12-month military placement or monthly weekend volunteer work for school leavers.

Prime Minister Sunak believes the initiative will foster a renewed sense of pride and unity within the country. Defence Secretary Grant Shapps supports the proposal, suggesting it will strengthen the resilience of Britain's youth and address military needs. Deputy Prime Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan indicated potential legal consequences for non-compliance, including fines for parents.

Despite the government's strong push, the proposal has faced substantial criticism. Labour Party leader Keir Starmer has dismissed the idea as a "ridiculous gimmick" and an inefficient allocation of funds. Concerns have also emerged from within the Conservative Party. Northern Ireland Minister Steve Baker expressed that the policy was introduced unexpectedly and questioned its efficacy, emphasizing the importance of liberty over compulsion.

Pollsters, including Sir John Curtice, have voiced skepticism about the policy's electoral impact. They argue it was primarily designed to appeal to the Conservative base, with minimal effect on wider voter demographics. The policy, with an estimated cost of £2.5 billion, would not be fully implemented until 2028-2029 if the Conservatives secure electoral victory.