

Urbanisation

Task 1: Read the information below about HS2 and create an argument for or against. Make sure you include points about both, in order to convince your audience that your argument is not completely one sided.

FOR

1. Shorter journeys

- Supporters of HS2 say it will make travelling much quicker as the trains will travel at speeds of up to 250 miles per hour (mph).
- This could mean that the time it takes to get between London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds could be halved.
- For example, once it is built, London-to-Birmingham travel times will be cut from one hour 21 minutes to 52 minutes, according to the Department for Transport.

2. Better transport links

- The UK's rail network was mostly built by the Victorians more than 100 years ago, so many people think it's time for an upgrade.
- The Department for Transport has said that the project will triple the number of people able to take the train across the entire route.
- Some companies think it could be a really good thing as it should make it easier for people to get to work.
- Adam Marshall is the director general of the British Chambers of Commerce - a network of businesses. He hopes HS2 might also help with overcrowding on trains.
- He said: "We need a better backbone for our public transport services. The capacity HS2 is going to deliver is absolutely crucial."

3. New jobs

- While it is being built, it is expected to create thousands of jobs. People doing all sorts of work will be needed for it, from engineers to IT workers.
- The government claimed in May 2019 that "over 30,000 jobs will be supported by the programme at peak construction".
- It's hoped that new jobs, and making it easier for people to travel, will also help give the country's economy a boost.

4. Long term environmental impact

- The impact on the environment is also on the list against HS2.
- However, it is also argued that the project will have some benefits for the environment.
- For example it might mean more freight (goods) being moved around by train rather than on the roads which would help cut carbon emissions.

AGAINST

1. The Cost

- The cost of the project was originally estimated to be around £56 billion but last summer the government admitted the project was running around £30 billion over budget.
- A more recent review said that the project might cost over £100 billion.
- Many campaigners say this money would be better spent improving existing transport links.

2. Time

- The whole HS2 project is due to be completed by 2040, but it is already behind schedule.
- Preparation of the route started back in 2015, but now that the plans are being given the green light, building the actual train line can start.

- It's being built in two stages, with the first part between London and Birmingham aiming to be finished by 2031.
- The second part of the line between the Midlands and Manchester and Leeds, is due to be completed by 2040.
- So there are still around 20 years before it is completed.

3. The countryside

- One of the biggest arguments against HS2 is around how it might impact on the country's green spaces and countryside.
- The Wildlife Trust claimed in a recent report that "the deep cut HS2 will make across the landscape could stop nature's recovery in its tracks."
- It says in principle it supports "sustainable transport solutions" but that current plans "come at an unacceptable cost for our natural world, putting the homes of wildlife including barn owls and otters at risk."
- Wildlife presenter Chris Packham has also criticised the plans. On social media he said that by approving HS2 Boris Johnson "continues the war on nature".

4. Homes

- Another criticism of the HS2 project has been the effect it will have on people's homes.
- In some areas, houses might have to be demolished to make way for the line, so some people who don't want to leave aren't happy.
- The government has been buying properties from people in areas which are affected.

Task 2: Write a letter to your local Member of Parliament regarding whether you personally support or oppose HS2. Make sure you write your letter in a formal format, such as the below. Do not just copy the letter below; make sure you write your own.

PUT YOUR NAME AND FULL ADDRESS HERE

PUT THE DATE HERE

Dear Prime Minister,

I am one of your constituents and I am writing to express my concerns about HS2 (High Speed 2).

Now that you have publicly declared your interest in becoming our next Prime Minister, I hope you will finally help put an end to HS2. You have the opportunity to influence a decision on the HS2 project, and I hope you recognise all its flaws and impacts, not only locally but nationally.

I believe that HS2 is not sound on financial, environmental or business grounds, the country can't afford it, and as has become clear there are far more important priorities for the Northern transport system than HS2.

I don't believe that:

- The environmental impact of HS2 has been properly considered or the cost
- HS2 is good value for money
- There is evidence that HS2 will close the north/south divide or rebalance the economy
- HS2 is the best or only way of getting the capacity we need
- HS2 is the greenest transport alternative
- we really need HS2 to catch up with other countries

On a local level, HS2 are already destroying our precious green spaces, treating residents unfairly and taking away local facilities and causing far more disruption than we have ever been led to believe at their meetings and events.

I would be grateful for a written response in which you confirm your stance and intentions in regards to HS2.

I hope you seize this moment for the benefit of all.

Yours sincerely,

SIGN HERE

Task 3: Create a fact sheet / poster, like the below. Your poster should be either for or against HS2. What is the impact on the local area? Especially as we live in an area that will be greatly affected!

Class Privileged few super excessive vanity project. Start date before the public realise it's a waste of money. Taxpayers' pockets. Method of payment increased cuts to essential services. Price money to pay for it. NEVER HAS BEEN. 15.7 billion (2008), 32.7 billion (2010), 50.1 billion (2013), 55.7 billion (2015), 88.0 billion* (2019), 115.8 billion** (2020).

* PM admitted this would more likely be over £100bn
 ** Independent Review by Lord Berkeley
www.stophs2.org

StopHS2

CO₂
 HS2 IS FORECAST TO STILL BE A NET CARBON CONTRIBUTOR INTO THE FUTURE. Source: HS2 Ltd

WHAT EVERY POUND SPENT ON HS2 GETS YOU
 "HS2 LTD CLAIMS TO FREE UP CAPACITY FOR RAIL FREIGHT, BUT DEF'S ACTIONS TO DATE MEAN THAT THIS MAY BE JUST AN ILLUSION... EVEN EXISTING SERVICES MAY BE PREVENTED FROM OPERATING"

**Leeds-Bradford
 Manchester
 East Midlands
 Birmingham**
 FAR FROM REDUCING FLIGHTS, HS2 IS BEING LOBBIED FOR BY 4 MAJOR AIRPORTS WHO ALL SAY HS2 IS ESSENTIAL IN THEIR PLANS FOR AVIATION EXPANSION

Route Timetable
 £11.1m OF CUTS TO EXISTING RAIL SERVICES WHICH ARE NEEDED TO PAY FOR HS2

108 ANCIENT WOODLANDS ARE AT RISK
 Source: Woodland Trust

HS2 THREATENS:
 693 LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES
 33 SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
 21 DESIGNATED LOCAL NATURE RESERVES
 5 WILDLIFE REFUGES OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

HS2 WILL REQUIRE 3TWh/yr OF ELECTRICITY TO RUN - 67% OF THE ELECTRICITY THE ENTIRE UK RAIL NETWORK CURRENTLY USES

"THE SUGGESTION THAT HS2 WILL FREE UP COMMUTING CAPACITY INTO LEEDS OR MANCHESTER SIMPLY ISN'T TRUE."
 Source: Quality Chain, former director, British Rail & the Strategic Rail Authority

19,590 JOBS PERMANENTLY DISPLACED

500 HOMES AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS DEMOLISHED

STOP HS2

NORTH
 FAR FROM BEING A MAGIC WAND TO CURE THE NORTH/SOUTH DIVIDE

SOUTH
 EVERY SINGLE PIECE OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE SHOWS HS2 WOULD JUST MAKE LONDON AN EVEN MORE DOMINANT ECONOMIC CENTRE

9 MAJOR RIVERS DIVERTED 34KM OF THE ROUTE GOES THROUGH FLOOD ZONES

£48.1BN
 OR 45.4% OF THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF HS2, RELY ON THE FACT THAT NO ONE EVER WORKS ON TRAINS

No votes for you with HS2!

STOP HS2 No business case.
 No environmental case.
 No money to pay for it.

HS2 BINGO!
GAMBLING WITH £50 BILLION OF TAXPAYERS MONEY!
 LETTING HARDWORKING PEOPLE GIVE FAT CATS A FAST TRAIN TO ENJOY