

10 Meaningful Pros and Cons of Mandatory Military Service,

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<https://connectusfund.org/10-meaningful-pros-and-cons-of-mandatory-military-service>

Mandatory military service or military conscription is a strategy used by countries to build a large and powerful military ready to be deployed in times of war or when the need to protect the sovereignty of the state arises. Mandatory military service is a controversial topic, and many objections have been raised against it on both religious and political grounds. This leads us to the question: Is compulsory conscription a good thing or a bad thing? Let us take a look at its pros and cons, and you be the judge.

Pros of Mandatory Military Service

1. Promotes National Unity

Mandatory military service can promote national unity in many ways. First, it allows citizens to learn and train together, creating that shared experience of having served in the military. Then there is also that general understanding of what life in the army is like, what is required of the job, and what has to be done in order to protect the country. Citizens are able to understand and develop appreciation for the sacrifices that people in the military made for their country. And all of these can bring people together, especially when dealing with a cultural or political threat from other nations.

2. Maintain Active Military Force

Having compulsory conscription to the military means having an active reserve of large body of armies that is ready to respond quickly and effectively to any threats to national security.

3. Ensures High Levels of Governmental Participation

With every citizen required to joined in the armed forces when the need arise, the public will be more aware and watchful of the government's decision, especially in terms of national security and the like. With their lives at risk or at sacrifice, people will seek to understand more about the threats that face their country and will seek a greater voice on how their government approaches problems.

4. Can Provide Useful Skills

Life in the military can teach individuals more than how to throw a salute or shoot straight. The trainings they provide goes far beyond the technical skills needed to get the job done. Many military volunteers who have pursued a career in the civilian workplace mentioned several other skills and work-related attitudes that help them well in their job. These include teamwork, responsibility, initiative, stress management, diversity, and global awareness. Others learn the habits of healthy living and discipline as well as the skills in self-defense.

5. Promote Equality Among Citizens

Mandatory enlistment means that "no one" will be exempted from facing wars. All citizens, be they celebrities, rich businessmen or ordinary people, will be required to serve when the nation is facing war or in need of extra soldiers.

List of Cons of Mandatory Military Service

1. Violates Free Will

One of the arguments raised against mandatory military service is that it violates people's rights to exercise free will. No one has the final say whether they should participate or not in the military training and enter the army since it is a compulsory mandate implemented throughout the country.

2. Interferes with Other Forms of Education

Mandatory military service typically drafts young men (and women) when they are at the peak of their learning ability (18 years old). This delays individuals' pursuit for higher education as well as their entry into the into the civilian labor market, reducing returns to human-capital investments as a result.

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List of Cons of Mandatory Military Service (Continued...)

3. Put Young People's Lives at Risk

Though you might not like to think about it, part of the process is risking young people lives at risk. Casualties don't just happen in actual combat or in the battle field but also during training and the like. Mandatory military service, which normally enlists able-bodied young people, put the next generation to serious harm and, at worst, death.

4. Compromises the Quality of Military Service

Unlike voluntary soldiers who are willing to undergo rigorous training and serve the country for a long time in the military, draft soldiers often lacks the necessary experience and preparedness, providing low combat skill quality when the time comes they are sent to war. This could lead to high casualty rate among soldiers drafted under compulsory military service.

5. Not Everyone Is Fit for It

Mandatory military service requires every citizen to join and serve in the armed forces, but not everyone is cut out for it. Whether it is mental issue, physical issue, or psychologically issue, not everyone is fit to meet the physical, mental and emotions demands of the job. Factors like anxiety, depression and the like should be carefully considered. Potentially killing someone is something that every person who was drafted in the military struggles with in their own way. A study conducted by the Anxiety and Depression Association of America showed that approximately 40,000 military members who returned from war in Iraq and Afghanistan suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). And that rate is three times higher among those who were deployed in combat than those who were non-deployed.

Conclusion

Mandatory military service has its advantages and has proven itself valuable in protecting the sovereignty of the state as well as in expanding its territories – take for example the Qin Empire that conquered a large area of what is now China, as well as the case of France during the French Revolution that was able to defend itself from the attacks of European monarchies in the late 16th century. However, its ramifications on the young people enlisted, the quality of military service, the labor market, the future generations and the like should be carefully considered.