# Massive anti-migrant protest in London sparks societal divisions and security concerns



The recent surge of anti-migrant protests and the accompanying rise in racist rhetoric have deeply unsettled many communities across the UK, including youth organisations dedicated to fostering inclusion and support. Youth Music, a charitable organisation focused on young people, has openly condemned the anti-migrant demonstrations, describing the far-right street protest in London as shocking and deeply concerning. Recognising the direct impact of these events on young people, particularly refugees and asylum seekers, as well as on the workforce supporting them, Youth Music has pledged solidarity and flexibility with its funded partners to help them navigate these difficult circumstances.

This major protest, held under the banner "Unite the Kingdom," was organised by far-right activist Tommy Robinson and drew an unexpectedly massive crowd, estimated between 110,000 and 150,000 participants—one of the largest right-wing gatherings in recent UK history. The march featured a strong anti-immigration message, nationalist themes, and prominent display of British and English flags, including the controversial St George’s Cross, which has increasingly been associated with far-right groups. Participants carried signs with slogans like "send them home" and wore identifiable far-right symbols such as MAGA hats, signalling a transnational adoption of populist and nationalist imagery. The event escalated into violent clashes with police, resulting in 26 officers being injured, several seriously, and 25 arrests covering violent disorder and assault. These scenes of unrest unfolded against a backdrop of mounting political tensions over immigration, with record numbers of asylum seekers arriving via small boats across the English Channel and heated public debate over the government’s asylum policies.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer responded strongly to the protests, affirming the fundamental right to peaceful assembly but condemning the violence, assaults on police officers, and the intimidation of minority communities. Speaking at the height of the unrest, Starmer denounced the misuse of the national flag by extremists to sow fear and division, reinforcing his vision of Britain as a nation grounded in tolerance, diversity, and mutual respect. While Starmer decried the inflammatory rhetoric emerging from the rally, notably from Elon Musk—who addressed the demonstrators via video link and issued warnings of impending violence—he chose not to pursue punitive measures against Musk or his companies publicly, despite political pressure to consider sanctions.

Elon Musk’s involvement added an international dimension to the rally, as he aligned himself with far-right figures such as Robinson and voiced strong opposition to current immigration policies and government regulation of online speech. His remarks, urging supporters to “fight back or you die,” were widely criticised as dangerously inflammatory by UK politicians and human rights advocates alike. The rally’s explicit anti-immigration stance and public support from prominent figures like Musk drew intense scrutiny amid a year of social unrest linked to asylum seeker accommodations and increasing public concern about migration.

Alongside the large far-right protest, a smaller counter-demonstration took place, organised by groups such as Stand Up To Racism, which brought out around 5,000 supporters campaigning against racism and advocating for refugee rights. This counter-mobilisation highlighted the deep divisions in British society over immigration and community cohesion. Authorities, including the Metropolitan Police and government officials, vowed to clamp down on violence and extremists exploiting these tensions, promising strong measures against those promoting disorder.

The protests and responses to them underscore broader societal challenges in the UK, where escalating migration numbers and political polarisation are fuelling unrest and complicating efforts to promote integration and understanding. Organisations serving vulnerable groups, particularly young migrants, find themselves working amid increasingly hostile environments. Youth Music’s commitment to supporting their partners during this volatile period reflects a wider recognition within civil society that addressing hate and fostering solidarity is critical to safeguarding social harmony and protecting the well-being of young people affected by these issues.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.youthmusic.org.uk/news/resources-and-support-during-current-racism-and-protests-uk)
* Paragraph 2 – [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/over-100000-anti-immigration-protesters-march-london-2025-09-13/), [[5]](https://apnews.com/article/e4c7bfd7d7fda25b3c4ef8ef7e0a2f53)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-starmer-says-people-have-right-peaceful-protest-after-anti-migrant-march-2025-09-14/), [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/de9e83df-33bc-47f1-a833-f25fa66fba27)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/b1f272511ff0c5bc6a8d7bf308063343)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/over-100000-anti-immigration-protesters-march-london-2025-09-13/), [[5]](https://apnews.com/article/e4c7bfd7d7fda25b3c4ef8ef7e0a2f53)
* Paragraph 6 – [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-starmer-says-people-have-right-peaceful-protest-after-anti-migrant-march-2025-09-14/), [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/de9e83df-33bc-47f1-a833-f25fa66fba27)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.youthmusic.org.uk/news/resources-and-support-during-current-racism-and-protests-uk), [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/over-100000-anti-immigration-protesters-march-london-2025-09-13/), [[5]](https://apnews.com/article/e4c7bfd7d7fda25b3c4ef8ef7e0a2f53)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.youthmusic.org.uk/news/resources-and-support-during-current-racism-and-protests-uk> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-starmer-says-people-have-right-peaceful-protest-after-anti-migrant-march-2025-09-14/> - British Prime Minister Keir Starmer affirmed the right to peaceful protest following a large anti-immigration march in London, which saw over 100,000 participants. The demonstration, organized by far-right activist Tommy Robinson, led to violent clashes, with 26 police officers injured and at least 25 arrests, with more expected. Starmer denounced the violence and emphasized that while peaceful protest is a fundamental right, assaults on police and intimidation based on race or background are unacceptable. He underscored Britain's identity as a nation founded on tolerance, diversity, and respect, pledging that the national flag should not be misused to incite division or fear. This incident comes amid escalating political tensions over immigration, which has become a central issue in the UK, with a record number of asylum seekers arriving by small boats across the Channel. The unexpectedly large turnout overwhelmed planned protest routes, and police faced serious aggression from segments of the crowd. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-starmer-says-people-have-right-peaceful-protest-after-anti-migrant-march-2025-09-14/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://apnews.com/article/b1f272511ff0c5bc6a8d7bf308063343> - British Prime Minister Keir Starmer strongly condemned Elon Musk's comments at a far-right, anti-immigration rally in London, labeling them "dangerous" and inflammatory. Musk, speaking via video to over 100,000 demonstrators at the "Unite the Kingdom" event organized by Tommy Robinson, warned of impending violence in Britain and urged action against Starmer’s government. Although Starmer distanced himself from Musk's rhetoric, the UK government declined to consider sanctions or block Tesla from receiving public contracts, despite pressure from Liberal Democrat leader Ed Davey. The rally, marked by violent outbreaks and confrontations with counter-protesters, resulted in multiple police injuries and arrests. Musk, known for aligning with far-right European figures, criticized immigration and government regulation of online content. His support for Robinson and groups like Germany’s AfD has drawn increasing scrutiny. The demonstration, framed as a pro-free speech event, also spotlighted concerns over illegal immigration via the English Channel and the use of hotels for asylum seekers, which has triggered unrest across the UK. Symbolically, participants prominently displayed British flags, including the St. George flag, which has become contentious due to its appropriation by far-right movements. Starmer reaffirmed national unity and condemned the misuse of national symbols to incite fear. ([apnews.com](https://apnews.com/article/b1f272511ff0c5bc6a8d7bf308063343?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/over-100000-anti-immigration-protesters-march-london-2025-09-13/> - More than 100,000 people took part in a major anti-immigration protest in London on Saturday, one of the largest right-wing demonstrations in modern UK history. Organized by controversial activist Tommy Robinson under the banner "Unite the Kingdom," the protest focused on opposition to illegal migration and calls for greater free speech. Protesters carried British, English, American, and Israeli flags, and some wore MAGA hats. They also expressed criticism of Prime Minister Keir Starmer and voiced support for Robinson, chanting and carrying signs with messages like "send them home." Police deployed over 1,600 officers, including 500 from other forces, to manage the event and a nearby counter-protest by "Stand Up to Racism" attended by around 5,000 people. Multiple confrontations occurred as some protestors attempted to break through police lines, leading to officer assaults. The demonstration followed a summer of tensions around asylum seekers housed in hotels and comes amidst rising immigration numbers, topping 28,000 arrivals this year. The use of national symbols like the St George’s Cross and Union flags has raised concern among anti-racism groups, who view it as promoting hostility toward immigrants. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/over-100000-anti-immigration-protesters-march-london-2025-09-13/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://apnews.com/article/e4c7bfd7d7fda25b3c4ef8ef7e0a2f53> - A major protest organized by far-right activist Tommy Robinson in London, titled "Unite the Kingdom," drew between 110,000 and 150,000 attendees, significantly exceeding expectations. The march, held under the premise of free speech, prominently featured anti-migrant rhetoric and nationalist themes. The event turned violent when some participants clashed with police, resulting in 26 injured officers—four seriously—and 25 arrests for offenses like violent disorder and assault. Robinson, founder of the far-right English Defense League, addressed the crowd alongside European far-right politicians and tech entrepreneur Elon Musk, who criticized the U.K. government and migration policies. Demonstrators carried nationalist flags and anti-immigration signs, while a smaller counterprotest of about 5,000 people, organized by Stand Up To Racism, advocated for refugee rights and condemned fascism. The march occurred amid heightened tensions over immigration, especially following high-profile criminal cases involving asylum seekers. Although the protest was primarily nonviolent, confrontations between the groups escalated later in the day, prompting police intervention. This event followed a previously planned 2024 rally by Robinson, which he missed due to imprisonment for contempt of court. ([apnews.com](https://apnews.com/article/e4c7bfd7d7fda25b3c4ef8ef7e0a2f53?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/de9e83df-33bc-47f1-a833-f25fa66fba27> - Sir Keir Starmer has strongly condemned the recent far-right "Unite the Kingdom" rally in London, which drew between 110,000 and 150,000 participants and ended in violence, injuring 26 police officers and resulting in 24 arrests. Emphasizing the importance of tolerance and unity, Starmer asserted that Britain must "never surrender" its national flag to extremists who use it to spread fear and division. He affirmed the right to peaceful protest but denounced assaults on police and the intimidation of minorities. The rally was organized by far-right activist Tommy Robinson and supported by tech billionaire Elon Musk, who urged followers to "fight back or you die" and recently shifted his political backing from Reform UK to Robinson's movement. Business Secretary Peter Kyle acknowledged public concerns over immigration and societal divisions, but his measured remarks drew criticism from some Labour MPs for not being more forceful against the far-right. A counter-protest organized by Stand Up To Racism drew around 5,000 attendees. Authorities, including Metropolitan Police assistant commissioner Matt Twist, pledged to take strong action against those who incited violence during the event. ([ft.com](https://www.ft.com/content/de9e83df-33bc-47f1-a833-f25fa66fba27?utm_source=openai))