# Calls grow to remove Kneecap from TRNSMT over inflammatory political remarks



Calls to remove the Irish hip-hop group Kneecap from the TRNSMT festival lineup have intensified following a series of inflammatory statements made by the band during their performances. The controversy reached a boiling point when a member of the group reportedly proclaimed, “The only good Tory is a dead Tory. Kill your local MP” during a 2024 show. Such remarks have garnered widespread condemnation from various political figures, including Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch, and First Minister John Swinney, with many deeming the band’s comments as crossing an unacceptable line.

In response to the growing unease, Councillor Molyneux has put forth a motion to Glasgow City Council, aiming to address the issue in an upcoming meeting. He articulates that the backlash against Kneecap stems from their vehement support for Palestine and suggests that the vilification of their statements is influenced by broader political narratives. Molyneux points out that while some artists face intense scrutiny for their views, others, who have committed acts of violence or espoused similar sentiments, appear to experience far less public outrage. For instance, the likes of Chris Brown and 50 Cent have faced criticisms for behaviour that could evoke similar ire yet continue to maintain their performance schedules in the city.

The motion includes a call to reassess local policing strategies, particularly in relation to protests, as Molyneux affirms the importance of peaceful demonstration as a cornerstone of democratic expression. He underscores a previous resolution from March, where Glasgow City Council had expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people, reflecting a growing awareness of the complexities surrounding issues of protest and artistic expression in today's political climate.

Furthermore, Kneecap’s visibility has surged in recent years, partly due to their politically charged semi-autobiographical film that screened at the Sundance Film Festival. Despite the band’s attempt to position their comments within a satirical framework, the ramifications of their statements have summoned serious discussions around free expression versus incitement. Acknowledging the potential for misunderstanding, Kneecap has issued apologies to the families of British MPs Jo Cox and David Amess, whose tragic murders demonstrate the severe consequences of political rhetoric.

Their polarising stance has led to calls from various quarters demanding that they be axed from festival lineups, a move viewed by some as an attempt to silence dissenting voices in the cultural sphere. Critics argue this suggests a troubling precedent where artistic expression is curtailed due to political backlash, while supporters claim it is crucial to uphold the right to protest and express dissent.

Simultaneously, the ongoing conversations have also prompted the UK government to confront its own policies regarding protest laws. Legislative measures perceived as restrictive have drawn criticism, with advocates urging a reconsideration to protect civic liberties without compromising public safety. The tumult surrounding Kneecap reflects broader societal tensions, particularly as the band continues to navigate the choppy waters of identity, expression, and political discourse characteristic of Northern Ireland's legacy.

As the debate unfolds ahead of the council meeting, the future of Kneecap’s participation in the TRNSMT festival remains uncertain, casting a spotlight on the intersection of music, politics, and free speech in contemporary society.

## Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
2. Paragraphs 2, 4
3. Paragraphs 1, 4
4. Paragraphs 1, 6
5. Paragraph 6
6. Paragraph 2
7. Paragraph 1

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25151737.resist-calls-ban-kneecap-glasgows-trnsmt-says-councillor/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://apnews.com/article/3cc86cf249c366554dee3cf5dd498fdc> - British counterterrorism police are investigating the Irish hip-hop group Kneecap following controversial comments made during concerts. In 2024, a band member allegedly said, 'The only good Tory is a dead Tory. Kill your local MP,' and in 2023, shouted 'up Hamas, up Hezbollah,' referencing groups banned in the U.K. The Metropolitan Police confirmed there are grounds for further inquiry, now led by its Counter Terrorism Command. Kneecap, known for combining satirical songs with Irish republican symbolism, has ignited political tensions and public debate, especially after projecting anti-Israel messages during a Coachella performance. The group apologized to the families of U.K. MPs Jo Cox and David Amess, who were murdered in separate extremist attacks, claiming their comments were taken out of context. Some U.K. lawmakers have called for Kneecap to be removed from upcoming festivals, though notable musicians have defended them, criticizing attempts to silence the group and uphold artistic freedom. Kneecap’s recent rise to international attention follows the success of their semi-autobiographical film 'Kneecap,' which screened at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival and received Oscar shortlist recognition. ([apnews.com](https://apnews.com/article/3cc86cf249c366554dee3cf5dd498fdc?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/irish-rappers-kneecap-apologise-families-murdered-uk-lawmakers-2025-04-29/> - Irish rap group Kneecap issued an apology to the families of murdered British lawmakers Jo Cox and David Amess following the resurfacing of controversial footage from their 2023 performance, where a member appeared to say, 'Kill your local MP' and 'The only good Tory is a dead Tory.' The band, known for their republican views and support for Irish unity, has also been criticized for pro-Palestinian messages at events, including a Coachella performance condemning Israel and footage supporting banned groups Hamas and Hezbollah. Kneecap denied supporting any militant groups, stating the clips are part of a smear campaign and reiterating their condemnation of attacks on civilians. British Interior Minister Yvette Cooper condemned the comments as dangerous, noting law enforcement is reviewing the footage. Kneecap, set to perform at Glastonbury Festival in June, emphasized they did not intend to cause harm and acknowledged the gravity of their statements amid the UK's history of political violence. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/irish-rappers-kneecap-apologise-families-murdered-uk-lawmakers-2025-04-29/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/2a228472-da0f-4d7f-81f3-dbbbf23455ae> - Northern Irish rap group Kneecap is at the center of a major controversy following provocative performances at Coachella, where they displayed a slogan stating 'Fuck Israel. Free Palestine.' The incident led to accusations of antisemitic hate speech, calls for prosecution from UK Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch, and condemnation from politicians including British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Irish Taoiseach Micheál Martin. Footage from past performances added to the outrage, showing Kneecap members expressing apparent support for Hamas and Hizbollah, and suggesting violence against Conservative MPs. Some of their summer shows have been cancelled amid growing backlash. The band's provocative style echoes punk traditions of deliberate shock value, similar to the Sex Pistols and gangsta rap pioneers NWA, though critics argue Kneecap blurs satire and incitement. While the trio claims to distance themselves from political violence and has apologized to families of murdered MPs, they maintain a strong anti-Israel stance. Their use of Irish-English bilingual lyrics and commentary on Northern Ireland's history show a deeper message beneath the surface-level provocation, but critics accuse them of hypocrisy and insensitivity in applying local protest tactics to broader geopolitical conflicts. ([ft.com](https://www.ft.com/content/2a228472-da0f-4d7f-81f3-dbbbf23455ae?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/c54616b6-30c0-4fa9-b02c-fb312c465e0e> - El trío de rap Kneecap, de Belfast, ganó una batalla legal contra el gobierno del Reino Unido después de que el departamento liderado por Kemi Badenoch les negara financiamiento artístico por supuestamente 'oponerse al Reino Unido'. El Tribunal Superior en Belfast determinó que la negación fue 'ilegal' e 'injusta'. Kneecap fue premiado con £14,250, equivalente al financiamiento solicitado. El Departamento de Negocios y Comercio aceptó el acuerdo y decidió no continuar la disputa legal. Kneecap condenó el bloqueo como un intento 'fascista' de censurar el arte que no alinea con las opiniones del gobierno. Badenoch, ahora líder del partido opositor conservador, defendió la decisión citando la protección del gasto público. Kneecap expresó que el caso fue una cuestión de igualdad y libertad de expresión, y donarán el dinero a organizaciones juveniles. ([ft.com](https://www.ft.com/content/c54616b6-30c0-4fa9-b02c-fb312c465e0e?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kneecap_%28band%29> - Kneecap are an Irish hip hop trio from Belfast, Northern Ireland, composed of Mo Chara, Móglaí Bap and DJ Próvaí, the stage names of LiamÓg ÓhAnnaidh, Naoise ÓCairealláin and J.J. ÓDochartaigh, respectively. They rap in a mixture of English and Irish. Their first single 'C.E.A.R.T.A.' (cearta is Irish for 'rights') was released in 2017, followed by their debut studio album 3CAG, in 2018. Their second studio album Fine Art was released in 2024, and a biographical film about the group was released later the same year. The group's themes focus on working class Belfast youth culture, Irish republicanism and Irish language rights. Their name is derived from the extralegal punishment attacks meted out by Northern Ireland paramilitary groups. They are also outspokenly anti-Zionist. In 2025, The Guardian described Kneecap as 'the most controversial band in the UK'. ([en.wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kneecap_%28band%29?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://trnsmtfest.com/artist/50-cent> - Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson has carved out a thriving television and film career as both a best in class producer and star. In 2005, he founded G-Unit Film & Television, Inc. which has produced a wide variety of content across numerous platforms and sold a myriad of shows to various networks. Among these is the critically-acclaimed #1 show on Starz, 'Power,' in which he not only co-starred in but also served as executive producer and director. He has successfully focused on expansion of the 'Power' universe with spin-offs 'Power Book II: Ghost,' 'Power Book III: Raising Kanan,' and 'Power Book IV: Force.' G-Unit Film & Television also produced ABC's For Life, is just wrapped production on season four of the hit series, Black Mafia Family, for Starz is in production on season two of the Black Mafia Family docuseries. G-Unit Film & Television is in development on the scripted series Fightland and Queen Nzinga for Starz as well as Trill League at BET+ and recently released Tik Tok Star Murders on Peacock to huge numbers. Additionally at Peacock, G-Unit Film & Television is in production on the definitive Gilgo Beach Killer docuseries. At Netflix, G-Unit Film & Television is in production on the highly publicized Sean Combs documentary. G-Unit Film & Television released Hip Hop Homicides on WeTV. ([trnsmtfest.com](https://trnsmtfest.com/artist/50-cent?utm_source=openai))