# Nigel Farage dominates UK political TikTok but votes remain elusive



On social media, “clout” is a term that signifies the influence a personality can wield through their followers and the engagement of their content. In the realm of UK politics, few embody this notion as viscerally as Nigel Farage, the leader of Reform UK. His immense traction on TikTok is remarkable, especially given his profile as a former banker and a conservative politician, who traditionally does not resonate with younger, left-leaning voters typically active on the platform.

Farage’s message appears strikingly effective; his video titled “Isn’t it about time we started looking after our own people?” garnered a staggering 4.9 million views shortly after its release in January. According to analysis, his TikTok presence dwarfs that of his political counterparts—four of the five most-viewed political posts by an MP in 2024 belonged to him. Furthermore, Reform UK has achieved engagement rates nearly fourteen times higher than its major competitors, Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal Democrats. As of now, Farage boasts a following equivalent to the combined total of all other MPs on TikTok.

Despite this impressive digital footprint, the correlation between social media fame and electoral success remains uncertain. Historical precedents, such as Jeremy Corbyn's considerable online following, illustrate that massive clicks do not effortlessly translate into votes. With local election results fresh in the public mind, these victories leave pundits questioning whether Farage's digital influence will manifest into tangible political capital. In addressing these concerns, Tim Bale, a professor of politics at Queen Mary University, noted that Reform may be pursuing this strategy out of necessity rather than foresight, as the party lacks the financial backing of legacy parties that typically dominate more traditional media avenues.

Reform UK’s commitment to TikTok traces back to late 2022, ahead of leading parties like Labour and the Conservatives who only recently began to explore this landscape. The party and its representatives have made 728 posts, significantly outpacing others, including the SNP, who managed 544. Interestingly, within the Conservative party, many MPs are hesitant to engage on TikTok due to security concerns tied to the Chinese-owned platform. As a result, only a fraction of Conservative members have adopted the app actively.

Reform UK’s approach to social media campaigning mirrors strategies seen abroad, notably with Germany's far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), which similarly leveraged TikTok to widen its electoral base. Jakob Guhl, a researcher at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, explained that Reform’s intentions may well reflect those of the AfD, whose successful engagement on the platform influenced broader campaign strategies among German competitors.

The Labour Party, despite posting more frequently than Reform, struggles with engagement levels, amassing only a fraction of the interactions enjoyed by Farage’s posts. Their recent initiatives to improve their online presence reflect an acknowledgment of TikTok’s role in contemporary political discourse. Importantly, Reform UK’s tactic of focusing on personal narratives and relatable content resonates strongly on TikTok, where viewers often favour personalities over institutional messaging.

The content produced by Farage ranges from everyday grievances, such as an amusing complaint about milk options at a hotel, to more serious party platitudes targeting “woke politics.” His ability to blend humour with political commentary has earned him not only viewership but also a priceless connection with Generation Z. Research indicates that while TikTok's effects on voting behaviour remain somewhat nebulous, it is crucial in shaping political conversations, providing an amplifying effect for party messages.

Yet, as Steven Buckley, a lecturer in digital media sociology at City, University of London, argued, social media engagement—while valuable—must translate into genuine political action to be meaningful. He asserts that to effectuate real change in younger generations' lives, politicians need to engage with the substantive issues at hand, rather than solely relying on viral content.

Amidst this intriguing juxtaposition between engagement and electoral outcomes, Farage’s rise on TikTok embodies the evolving landscape of political communication in the digital age. Whether this will usher in a new era of political engagement remains to be seen, but the lessons learned on the platform are likely to shape future campaigns profoundly.

### Reference Map

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

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/11/nigel-farage-is-a-hit-on-tiktok-but-are-young-voters-listening-or-laughing> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/jun/26/nigel-farage-outperforms-all-other-uk-parties-and-candidates-on-tiktok> - An analysis reveals that Nigel Farage's TikTok account outperforms all other UK political parties and candidates in terms of engagement and average views. Between May 22 and June 17, 2024, Farage's posts garnered more interactions per video than those of Labour's Jeremy Corbyn, Zarah Sultana, and the Greens' Carla Denyer combined. Despite the Labour Party's higher total views, Farage's content achieved superior engagement on a per-video basis, highlighting his dominance on the platform.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/jun/20/hip-hop-mimes-and-breast-jokes-win-nigel-farage-a-valuable-gen-z-following-reform-uk> - Nigel Farage has effectively embraced TikTok to engage younger audiences, amassing over 775,000 followers, making him the most followed UK politician on the platform. His content, which includes humorous and relatable videos, resonates with Generation Z, showcasing his adaptability and appeal to a demographic traditionally less engaged with conservative politics.
4. <https://news.sky.com/story/reform-uk-may-be-winning-the-first-tiktok-election-13145329> - Reform UK, under Nigel Farage's leadership, has emerged as a significant presence on TikTok, surpassing even major parties like Labour in follower count. This digital strategy indicates a shift in political campaigning, with Reform UK effectively utilizing the platform to reach younger voters and challenge traditional party dynamics.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/article/2024/jul/02/nigel-farage-tiktok-stardom-reform-uk-leader-content-creator> - Nigel Farage's TikTok success is attributed to his willingness to be opinionated, comical, and authentic, resonating with younger audiences. His approach contrasts with the more serious tones of other political figures, highlighting the platform's preference for engaging and relatable content.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/jul/02/nigel-farage-tiktok-stardom-reform-uk-leader-content-creator> - Nigel Farage's TikTok success is attributed to his willingness to be opinionated, comical, and authentic, resonating with younger audiences. His approach contrasts with the more serious tones of other political figures, highlighting the platform's preference for engaging and relatable content.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/jul/02/nigel-farage-tiktok-stardom-reform-uk-leader-content-creator> - Nigel Farage's TikTok success is attributed to his willingness to be opinionated, comical, and authentic, resonating with younger audiences. His approach contrasts with the more serious tones of other political figures, highlighting the platform's preference for engaging and relatable content.