# Kemi Badenoch’s praise for JD Vance highlights growing US influence on UK Conservative politics



Kemi Badenoch, a prominent figure in UK politics and a potential future prime minister, recently praised American political figure JD Vance for what she described as "dropping some truth bombs." This endorsement aligns Badenoch with a style of political rhetoric more often seen in the US, particularly among figures associated with former President Donald Trump, rather than traditional British political discourse. Badenoch, at 45, is older than Tony Blair and David Cameron when they first assumed the role of Prime Minister but has adopted a tone that some commentators find strikingly provocative.

JD Vance, known for his conservative views, recently stirred controversy in Germany just before their federal election by expressing support for the hard right in that country. He emphasised curbs on free speech as a critical threat to Europe, comments made while Ukraine continued to suffer from active conflict. Badenoch's support for Vance's assertions has raised questions about the implications of aligning UK politics with American right-wing perspectives, particularly at a time when geopolitical tensions are high.

The situation highlights a broader issue regarding the UK's political relationship with the US and the influence of American political figures on British conservatism. The Financial Times notes that US-style politics, especially those associated with Donald Trump and his movement, are becoming increasingly viewed as a political liability outside the US. This trend is exemplified by Canada's recent federal election, where the Conservative Party suffered defeat partly due to its association with Trump.

Public opinion data from YouGov reveals low favourability ratings for Trump and figures like Elon Musk within the UK, even among Conservative voters who supported the party in previous elections. JD Vance's positive ratings are even lower. These sentiments exist before the UK faces potential economic challenges, such as inflation and slowed growth, which could be exacerbated by US-imposed tariffs.

The Conservative Party in the UK is thus confronted with a critical choice between continuing close political and cultural alignment with Trump and the US or maintaining electoral viability within Britain. Historically, association with Trump was less damaging, but the continuing upheaval linked to his political re-emergence has made it a significant risk.

Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour Party leader, is positioned differently; he has some justification for engaging with Trump-aligned figures as part of efforts to secure trade and maintain US support for Ukraine. In contrast, a Conservative party perceived as enthusiastically embracing Trump risks alienating voters, particularly given the UK's geopolitical vulnerability and economic interdependencies.

This situation is complicated by the UK's evolving relationship with Europe post-Brexit. Labour has been able to negotiate accommodations with the European Union, such as on youth migration, with relatively little public controversy. Meanwhile, only 30% of voters currently believe Brexit has been successful, suggesting a thawing attitude toward European cooperation, although outright re-entry into the EU is not presently on the agenda.

Populist movements in the UK differ significantly from those in the US. The appeal to populism in Europe often incorporates statist elements and social policies that contrast with Trump's brand, including a focus on social welfare such as the NHS. Moreover, religious conservatism, a key component of Trump's support base, is less influential in the UK, which is comparatively secular.

The complexity of nationalist politics means that movements in different countries, especially those with close ties, cannot coexist without conflict or rivalry. The defeat of Canadian Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre, who aligned himself closely with Trump, serves as a cautionary example of how association with foreign political figures can undermine domestic political credibility.

Kemi Badenoch's praise of JD Vance illustrates the ongoing challenge for the UK Conservative Party: navigating the fraught terrain between American-style populist conservatism and the distinct political realities of Britain. The broader electoral consequences of this balancing act remain to be fully realised, with potential implications for future elections beyond the upcoming local polls.

The Financial Times is reporting on these developments and the changing dynamics within conservative politics in the UK and its international influences.

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

## References

* <https://www.ft.com/content/eaba3efe-2b85-4a4f-82e5-5683c8cff4fa> - This article critiques the UK's Conservative Party, particularly Kemi Badenoch, for aligning with far-right U.S. figures like JD Vance and Donald Trump, arguing that such associations are politically damaging.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/af3c5cfe-6b63-4bc5-8c1d-73b1972c73c6> - This piece discusses Europe's far-right parties' divided responses to Donald Trump's trade tariffs, revealing internal contradictions regarding protectionism and free trade.
* <https://apnews.com/article/53ed34f57556ad394c53868726d47194> - This article reports on Germany's Alternative for Germany (AfD) party achieving historic success in the national election, securing the best result for such a party since World War II.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/d3f054ef-70e9-4477-bbe3-8fdd51cb3cd3> - This report details U.S. Vice President JD Vance's criticism of European leaders for allegedly suppressing free speech and failing to handle mass immigration, comparing Europe to authoritarian regimes.
* <https://www.huffingtonpost.es/global/rubio-defiende-discurso-historico-vance-munich-afea-berrinches-europeos.html> - This article covers U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio defending JD Vance's 'historic' speech in Munich and criticizing European leaders for their 'tantrums' in response.
* <https://elpais.com/internacional/2025-02-15/scholz-replica-con- contundencia-a-vance-con-criticas-a-su-apoyo-a-los-ultras-en-plena-campana-en-alemania.html> - This piece reports on German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's firm response to U.S. Vice President JD Vance's support for the far-right in Germany during the Munich Security Conference.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/eaba3efe-2b85-4a4f-82e5-5683c8cff4fa> - Please view link - unable to able to access data