# Prince Harry’s Ukraine visit sparks debate over security and hypocrisy



Prince Harry’s recent visit to war-torn Ukraine has drawn a mixture of praise and criticism, highlighting a broader debate about the Duke of Sussex’s stance on personal security and his public commitments. The visit, which took place shortly after a four-day trip to the UK, was intended to support wounded Ukrainian soldiers and showcase the work of his Invictus Games Foundation. The foundation, which Harry established to aid injured veterans through sports, played a central role during his engagements in Kyiv, where he met Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko and veterans receiving rehabilitation and medical care.

Harry’s visit to Ukraine marks his second trip to the country this year, following a previous visit to a military rehabilitation centre in Lviv in April. During his latest trip, he emphasised the importance of supporting recovery efforts among soldiers affected by the ongoing conflict with Russia, while acknowledging that the charity’s efforts could not end the war. His Archewell Foundation has also donated $500,000 to provide prosthetics and medical evacuations for injured children in Ukraine and Gaza, underscoring the broader humanitarian focus of his work there.

Despite the positive intentions of his visit, the Duke’s actions have been labelled hypocritical by some commentators, particularly given his ongoing legal battle with the UK government over security arrangements. After stepping back from frontline royal duties in 2020 and relocating to California with his family, Harry lost his entitlement to automatic, publicly funded police protection in the UK. He has since argued that threats to his safety necessitate enhanced security, stating that his "life is at stake." However, royal biographer Hugo Vickers pointed out the apparent contradiction in Harry’s concerns about safety in the UK while choosing to enter a highly dangerous war zone. Vickers remarked that although Harry "knows what he's doing" in visiting Ukraine, there is "a hypocritical element" in the contrast between his fears at home and his willingness to travel to an active conflict area.

This tension is further reflected in public discourse. Broadcaster Sarah-Louise Robertson has accused Harry of selectively "picking his battles," highlighting the paradox of his UK security concerns versus his visit to Ukraine. Yet, supporters such as Labour MP Barry Gardiner defended the Duke’s actions, arguing that the visit was not about self-promotion but a genuine effort to support veterans who have suffered in the conflict. Gardiner emphasised Harry’s background as a former British Army officer and founder of the Invictus Games, and called for the UK government to reinstate police protection for him given his status as the son of the King.

The legal dimension to Harry’s security dispute is ongoing. Although he lost a recent appeal against the Home Office’s decision to withdraw his automatic police protection following his departure from royal duties, he has won permission from the Court of Appeal to challenge the ruling further. Judge David Bean noted the possibility that the government’s decision may not have fully adhered to its own policies, giving Harry’s legal team grounds to continue the fight.

Harry’s visit to Ukraine took place amid wider developments in his personal and royal family life. During his UK visit, he met King Charles for the first time in over a year, an encounter that many have read as a potential step towards mending their strained relationship. At the same time, King Charles publicly disclosed his cancer diagnosis, adding emotional gravity to their recent exchanges.

In sum, Prince Harry’s engagements in Ukraine underscore his commitment to veteran rehabilitation and humanitarian causes, but also bring into sharp relief the complexities and contradictions around his security concerns and his relationship with the UK establishment. His role continues to provoke strong and varied reactions, reflecting the challenging balance he navigates between public service, personal safety, and family dynamics.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/royal/2109170/prince-harry-ukraine-trip-branded-hypocritical), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-prince-harry-visits-ukraine-with-rehabilitation-charity-2025-09-12/), [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/7bd712c94881633095660599b3bdefe8)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-prince-harry-visits-ukraine-with-rehabilitation-charity-2025-09-12/), [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/7bd712c94881633095660599b3bdefe8), [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/prince-harry-donates-500000-help-wounded-children-ukraine-gaza-2025-09-10/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/royal/2109170/prince-harry-ukraine-trip-branded-hypocritical), [[5]](https://www.gbnews.com/royal/prince-harry-accused-picking-battles-ukraine-trip-uk-security-battle)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.gbnews.com/royal/prince-harry-accused-picking-battles-ukraine-trip-uk-security-battle)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/royal/2109170/prince-harry-ukraine-trip-branded-hypocritical), [[6]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/prince-harry-wins-right-challenge-uk-police-protection-ruling-2024-06-06/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-prince-harry-visits-ukraine-with-rehabilitation-charity-2025-09-12/), [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/7bd712c94881633095660599b3bdefe8), [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/prince-harry-donates-500000-help-wounded-children-ukraine-gaza-2025-09-10/), [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/royal/2109170/prince-harry-ukraine-trip-branded-hypocritical)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/royal/2109170/prince-harry-ukraine-trip-branded-hypocritical> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-prince-harry-visits-ukraine-with-rehabilitation-charity-2025-09-12/> - Prince Harry visited Kyiv, Ukraine, accompanied by his Invictus Games Foundation team to present plans for supporting the rehabilitation of wounded Ukrainian soldiers. This marks his second visit to Ukraine in 2025, following a previous visit to a military rehabilitation center in Lviv in April. A former British Army officer, Harry founded the Invictus Games Foundation to support injured veterans through sports. He emphasized that while the charity cannot end the war, it can contribute significantly to the recovery of affected soldiers. Harry stated that he traveled to Ukraine at the invitation of the Ukrainian government and with approval from both the British government and his wife, Meghan. This visit concludes a four-day trip to the UK from his current home in California, where he resides with Meghan and their two children. Notably, during this trip, Harry met with his father, King Charles, for the first time in 20 months, hinting at a possible improvement in their strained relationship since Harry stepped down as a senior royal in 2020.
3. <https://apnews.com/article/7bd712c94881633095660599b3bdefe8> - Prince Harry made a surprise visit to Kyiv, Ukraine, to support wounded service members amid ongoing conflict with Russia. The visit is his second since Russia’s full-scale invasion in 2022, following a trip to Lviv in April. A British Army veteran and founder of the Invictus Games, Harry emphasized support for the recovery process rather than ending the war. Ukraine is bidding to host the Invictus Games in 2029. During his trip, Harry is expected to visit the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War, meet 200 veterans, and hold talks with Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko. His Archewell Foundation, co-run with his wife Meghan, recently donated $500,000 to support injured children in Gaza and Ukraine through WHO medical evacuations and prosthetics development. The visit coincides with a trip by British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper, who unveiled new sanctions on Russia. The trip follows Harry’s recent four-day visit to the UK, where he met with King Charles III for the first time in over a year, signaling potential reconciliation within the royal family.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/prince-harry-donates-500000-help-wounded-children-ukraine-gaza-2025-09-10/> - Prince Harry’s Archewell Foundation has pledged $500,000 to aid wounded children in Gaza and Ukraine, focusing on prosthetics and medical support. The fund includes three grants: $200,000 to the World Health Organization (WHO) for medical evacuations from Gaza to Jordan, $150,000 to Save the Children for humanitarian support in Gaza, and $150,000 to the Centre for Blast Injury Studies (part of Imperial College London) to advance prosthesis development for injured children. During his visit to the Centre, Harry emphasized the need for cross-sector partnerships to support child survivors of blast injuries, noting Gaza has the highest density of child amputees in history. He toured the Centre alongside WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and double amputee and CIS ambassador Dave Henson, who praised Harry’s long-standing support. In addition, Harry announced a separate £1.1 million ($1.49 million) donation to support young people affected by violence in Nottingham. The visit garnered attention not only for Harry’s philanthropic work but also speculation about a possible meeting with his father, King Charles, amid the latter’s cancer treatment, highlighting their ongoing estrangement.
5. <https://www.gbnews.com/royal/prince-harry-accused-picking-battles-ukraine-trip-uk-security-battle> - Prince Harry has been accused of 'picking his battles' after travelling to war-torn Ukraine despite his legal battle against the Home Office for better security protection, claiming his former home country is 'unsafe'. The Duke of Sussex met with victims of the conflict at the Superhumans Centre in Lviv, just days after flying to the UK to attend his court appeal. The visit, according to the official Sussex website, was a 'powerful reflection of the shared mission between the Center and the Invictus Games Foundation'. Discussing his decision to fly to Ukraine amid his court battle with the Home Office, Broadcaster Sarah-Louise Robertson claimed the royal is 'entitled' and is 'picking his battles'. In further defence of Prince Harry, Labour MP Barry Gardiner argued that the Duke's trip to Ukraine was not to 'flaunt in a war zone', but to meet 'veterans of the war' who have been affected by Russia's conflict. Barry concluded: 'He's a young man who fought for this country, and I respect him for that. He's a young man who, having seen some of his friends disfigured and become limbless, set up his charity, and I respect him for that. He went to Ukraine not to flaunt himself in a war zone, but actually to visit some of the veterans of that war who had been injured and lost limbs as well, and I respect him for that.' He added: 'He should have taxpayer-funded protection in this country because he is the son of our King. And if there's any way to attack this country, it is through the son of our monarch. And it seems blindingly obvious to me that the original Home Office decision to take away protection from him was, quite simply, wrong.'
6. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/prince-harry-wins-right-challenge-uk-police-protection-ruling-2024-06-06/> - Prince Harry has been granted permission by the Court of Appeal to challenge the British government's decision to remove his police protection whilst in the UK. This follows a 2020 Home Office ruling, after Harry stepped back from royal duties and moved to California, that he would not receive automatic police security in Britain. The High Court previously upheld this decision and denied Harry further appeal, but his lawyers successfully gained permission to challenge it again. Judge David Bean noted that there was a real prospect of success in Harry's argument that the decision did not adhere to the government's own policy. This appeal is part of a series of legal actions by Harry, including lawsuits against major British media entities. Prior to stepping back, Harry received full publicly-funded security protection alongside other senior royals.