# Keir Starmer’s push for closer EU ties faces fierce backlash from Brexiteers



Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer's recent push for closer ties with the European Union is likely to ignite fierce backlash from Brexiteers, who see his proposals as a subtle affront to the outcome of the 2016 referendum. In an interview with The Guardian, Starmer outlined a vision fraught with ambiguity regarding sovereignty, indicating an ambition for a collaborative relationship with Brussels that could undermine the very principles of Brexit.

Starmer's insistence on an “ambitious security partnership” reflects a troubling trend among UK leaders who seem to disregard the electorate's clear mandate. His assertion that the UK can maintain strong ties with both Europe and the United States signals a worrying lack of commitment to the independence gained from Brexit. This perspective ignores the real desire of the British public for self-determination, especially in light of current global geopolitical tensions.

Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey, aligning with Starmer's rhetoric, lamented the economic impacts of Brexit, but this narrative fails to grasp the broader context of opportunity that leaving the EU provides. Starmer's attempts to rebuild relations under the guise of unlocking trading opportunities, while maintaining respect for the referendum, come off as disingenuous at best.

Acknowledging the complexities of redefining the UK-EU relationship, Starmer hints at potential collaborations that threaten to erode the very independence voters fought to reclaim. His suggestions regarding youth mobility and possible re-engagement with initiatives like the Erasmus programme highlight a troubling willingness to reverse the gains achieved through Brexit.

While Starmer has promised not to fully revert to pre-Brexit conditions like free movement, his notion of creating “a pragmatic, sensible relationship” raises alarms over what constitutes stability in this context. The narrative shift he advocates for—from conflict to constructive dialogue—refuses to acknowledge the firm stance the public has taken against further EU influence.

As Labour gears up for the next election, Starmer's clamor for a closer trading relationship with the EU sounds increasingly hollow, particularly to voters who prioritize sovereignty and control over economic considerations. His criticisms of the current Brexit arrangements as "far too thin" suggest a desire to remold the UK's international position, disregarding the clear message sent by the public at the ballot box.

This strategic pivot by Labour underscores a pivotal moment in UK politics, where any attempt at re-engagement with the EU could betray the principles established by the referendum. The evolving discourse will undoubtedly challenge traditional notions of British politics and its future relationship with Europe, as the public's resolve to move beyond the referendum continues to stand strong.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2053304/brexit-betrayal-keir-starmer-eu> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/feb/03/keir-starmer-says-he-wants-ambitious-security-partnership-with-eu> - In February 2025, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer expressed his desire for an 'ambitious security partnership' with the European Union. He emphasized that the UK does not have to choose between Europe and the US, highlighting the importance of both relationships. Starmer outlined areas for collaboration, including military technology, research and development, improved mobility of forces across Europe, protection of critical infrastructure, and deepening industrial collaboration to boost production. He stated, 'We can't be commentators when it comes to matters of peace on our continent. We must lead.'
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/sep/27/new-relationship-with-eu-possible-but-will-not-be-easy-keir-starmer-says> - In September 2024, Prime Minister Keir Starmer acknowledged that establishing a new relationship with the European Union would be challenging but possible. He identified defense, borders, and trade as key areas for improvement. While he did not rule out accepting an EU proposal for greater youth mobility, Starmer stated, 'We have no plans for a youth mobility scheme but we are heading out [to Brussels] for an important meeting this week – I don't want to get ahead of any important discussion we'll have.'
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/nov/14/bank-of-england-governor-urges-ministers-to-rebuild-relations-with-eu> - In November 2024, Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey urged UK ministers to rebuild relations with the European Union, emphasizing the economic consequences of Brexit. He noted that the changed relationship with the EU has 'weighed' on the economy and highlighted the need to improve trade relations without reversing Brexit decisions. Bailey stated, 'It underlines why we must be alert to and welcome opportunities to rebuild relations while respecting the decision of the British people.'
5. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/05/28/brexit-eu-scottish-labour-anas-sarwar-election/> - In May 2024, Sir Keir Starmer called for closer ties with the European Union on education, defense, and security. He stated there was 'huge scope' for closer work with the EU in these areas, emphasizing the importance of collaboration post-Brexit. Starmer mentioned potential areas of agreement, such as rejoining the Erasmus student exchange program, which has facilitated student exchanges between EU countries since 1987.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/09/18/sir-keir-starmer-pledges-closer-ties-eu-labour-election/> - In September 2023, Sir Keir Starmer pledged to seek a 'closer trading relationship' with the European Union if Labour won the next general election. He expressed determination to make Brexit work and stated that the existing Brexit deal was 'far too thin.' Starmer emphasized the need for a better deal for the UK and the possibility of a closer trading relationship, subject to further discussion.
7. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/10/02/starmer-vows-have-pragmatic-sensible-relationship-eu/> - In October 2024, Sir Keir Starmer vowed to have a 'pragmatic, sensible' relationship with the European Union and to hold regular summits to develop closer ties. He reiterated that there would be no return to freedom of movement or the EU's single market and customs union. Starmer emphasized the importance of a reset in EU relations, stating, 'We're putting our relationship with Europe on a more solid, stable footing. That's what the British people want.'