# Nigel Farage’s Reform party surges to 32% amid Conservative collapse and Labour repositioning



As political tension in the UK reaches a boiling point, the rise of Nigel Farage and his party represents a significant threat to the traditional political establishment. With the Conservatives scrambling to find footing following recent electoral setbacks, they have described Farage's proposals as reckless drivel that could lead the nation down a path of financial disaster. Shadow Chancellor Mel Stride's claims that Farage’s dramatic manifesto, featuring £140 billion in giveaways, is not just unrealistic but dangerous reflect a palpable fear of the growing momentum behind his party, now polling at a staggering 32 per cent—far ahead of Labour at 22 per cent and the Conservatives languishing at 19 per cent.

The results of the recent local elections highlight a definitive shift in voter sentiment. Amidst a backdrop of declining support for the established parties, Farage's influence has grown substantially, as evidenced by the hundreds of councillors gained and mayoral victories in Greater Lincolnshire and Hull and East Yorkshire. The capture of constituencies previously viewed as Labour strongholds, such as Runcorn & Helsby, signals a broadening discontent with the status quo, which Farage capitalised on effectively, mirroring rising populist sentiments seen across Europe.

In outlining his platform, Farage's commitment to bold tax reforms has drawn significant scrutiny. A proposal to raise the minimum income tax threshold to £20,000, eliminate inheritance tax for estates under £2 million, and scrap stamp duty on properties valued below £750,000 raises critical questions about fiscal management. Stride has been quick to respond, warning that such sweeping tax cuts could send national debt soaring, burdening future generations with financial instability.

To counter Farage's surging popularity, the Conservative party has opted for a strategy steeped in gradualism, promoting modest tax reductions as a safer alternative to the radical changes advocated by Farage. Stride's stark warning that these proposals could lead to catastrophic funding shortages for the NHS and other vital public services encapsulates the deep concern among Conservative ranks as they navigate the dual challenges of declining popularity and the rising threat of Farage's party.

Amid this turmoil, Labour's Keir Starmer has recalibrated his party’s approach in an effort to address the growing power of Farage. Acknowledging in a recent interview that the next election may become a direct showdown with Farage's party, Starmer's strategy reflects an attempt to reposition Labour among shifting voter allegiances while evoking a sense of urgency against what he labels a "busted flush" Conservative party.

Reform’s manifesto further includes cuts to corporation tax from 25 per cent to 15 per cent, moves that Stride has pointed out could lead to significant deficits in government financing. Farage’s opposition to the current net-zero strategy, along with an insistence on energy sovereignty driven by fossil fuels, underscores a broader backlash against existing environmental policies that many see as detrimental to economic growth.

Nevertheless, the party's platform is rife with contradictions. In recent local campaigns, Reform has unexpectedly shown signs of potentially endorsing state intervention, even advocating for the nationalisation of failing utilities. This puzzling pivot reflects a strategic maneuver to broaden their appeal while straying from the libertarian principles that initially defined their economic philosophy.

As the political landscape continues to shift dramatically, the stakes for both traditional parties and emerging populist forces like Farage's are incredibly high. With growing support hinting at a possible upheaval in British politics, the impending general election could be transformative. Only time will tell if Farage's momentum can evolve into sustained political power or if the traditional parties can reclaim their authority amidst such formidable challenges.

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

## Bibliography

* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14700435/Tories-Nigel-Farage-giveaways-bankrupt-Britain-panic-Reform-poll-surge.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-starmer-under-pressure-farage-tightens-migration-rules-2025-05-11/> - In response to growing support for Nigel Farage's Reform UK party, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced stricter immigration policies. These measures include extending the residency period for immigrants to qualify for settlement and citizenship from five to ten years, except for highly skilled workers who will be fast-tracked. Additional restrictions involve limiting skilled worker visas to graduate-level applicants, stopping care sector firms from recruiting internationally, and raising English language requirements for adult dependents. These steps aim to reduce net migration and enhance migrant integration. Employers groups, however, express concern that these restrictions may hinder business efforts to fill labor shortages and could deter investment in the UK. The government insists these reforms will deliver greater control and tougher enforcement across the immigration system.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/c3b25079-f394-4a40-84af-2c11fa0f6338> - Reform UK, a right-wing populist party led by Nigel Farage, gained control of ten English councils and two metro mayor positions in the 2025 local elections, prompting increased scrutiny of its policy platform. Nationally, Reform promotes anti-immigration, anti-net zero, and anti-'woke' stances. The party advocates for leaving the European Court of Human Rights, offshoring the processing of illegal immigrants, stricter immigration rules, and revoking citizenship for foreign-born criminals. Economically, it supports a small-state model—cutting corporation taxes for SMEs, scrapping inheritance tax, and opposing expanded workers' rights. While it traditionally backed free-market policies, recent local election campaigns saw Reform endorse nationalizing failing utilities and supporting striking workers. It remains staunchly opposed to net zero, calling for the end of green subsidies and promoting fossil fuel extraction.
* <https://elpais.com/internacional/2025-05-05/la-victoria-de-la-derecha-populista-de-farage-en-las-elecciones-locales-del-reino-unido-siembra-los-nervios-entre-laboristas-y-conservadores.html> - The victory of the right-wing populist party Reform UK, led by Nigel Farage, in the UK's local elections has generated concern among both the Labour and Conservative parties. Reform UK secured more than 40% of the nearly 1,600 councilors contested, won its first mayoralty (Greater Lincolnshire), and gained a parliamentary seat in Runcorn & Helsby, traditionally a Labour stronghold. This success indicates a significant shift in the UK's political landscape, resembling the rise of radical forces in other European countries. Farage, now backed by an effective political machine, has capitalized on social discontent, anti-immigration sentiments, and fatigue with traditional parties. While the Conservatives face internal crossroads and leadership questions, the Labour Party, with a significant loss of councilors, is also criticized for its shift towards conservative policies. Analysts like John Curtice warn that Reform UK is no longer a fleeting force but a structure with real potential to profoundly alter the UK's political balance.
* <https://moneyweek.com/economy/uk-economy/reform-uk-policies-nigel-farage-manifesto> - Reform UK's manifesto, presented by Nigel Farage, outlines several key policies. In taxation, the party proposes raising the minimum income tax threshold to £20,000, abolishing stamp duty for properties under £750,000, and eliminating inheritance tax for estates below £2 million. Economically, it supports reducing corporation tax, abolishing IR35 rules, and scrapping business rates for small and medium firms. On the environment, Reform UK plans to nationalize 50% of key utility companies, fast-track development on brownfield sites, and increase the farming budget. In energy and net zero, the party aims to abandon existing carbon emission targets, accelerate North Sea oil and gas licenses, and speed up clean nuclear energy. These policies reflect Reform UK's commitment to a small-state model and skepticism towards current environmental targets.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/jun/17/reform-uk-manifesto-key-proposals> - Reform UK's manifesto, launched by Nigel Farage, includes significant tax cuts, such as raising the minimum income tax threshold to £20,000 and abolishing stamp duty for properties below £750,000. The party also proposes freezing 'non-essential' immigration and ending the settlement of illegal immigrants. Economically, Reform UK plans to scrap the net zero strategy, introduce life imprisonment for convicted drug dealers, and provide 20% tax relief on private healthcare and insurance. These proposals have been met with skepticism from economists, who question the feasibility and funding of such plans.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/jun/17/farage-unveils-reform-uks-140bn-pledges-that-economists-say-do-not-add-up> - Nigel Farage unveiled Reform UK's manifesto, which includes £140 billion in pledges, such as raising the minimum income tax threshold to £20,000, abolishing stamp duty, and eliminating inheritance tax for estates under £2 million. The manifesto also proposes scrapping the net zero strategy and introducing life imprisonment for convicted drug dealers. Economists have expressed skepticism, stating that the costings are out 'by a margin of tens of billions of pounds per year' and that the plans 'don't add up'.