# Keir Starmer’s EU reset deal sparks fierce backlash over Brexit retreat



Keir Starmer's recent proposal for a reset of relations with the European Union has sparked intense debate and warranted sharp criticism from numerous political factions, marking a troubling deviation in the UK's post-Brexit course. Former Brexit Party MEP Alex Phillips, speaking on the Mail's “Apocalypse Now?” podcast, has described this initiative as a calculated maneuver aimed at stealthily re-establishing close ties with the EU, veiling a stark retreat from Brexit principles.

Starmer's extensive UK-EU reset deal, unveiled earlier this week, includes newly minted agreements on trade, defence, and travel, but skepticism abounds. According to Phillips, Starmer has “fallen at the first hurdle” in his negotiations with Brussels. She emphasizes that the concessions, particularly concerning fishing rights and youth mobility, could prove disastrous, lacking adequate return on investment for British interests.

The UK's decision to relax certain restrictions has resulted in a 12-year extension of EU fishing access to British waters, a move critics argue betrays the UK's fishing industry. This approach risks leaving fishermen to retire without many new entrants to rejuvenate the sector, underlining a concerning trend toward re-engaging with EU regulations at the cost of national industries.

The criticism is not limited to Phillips; Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch has branded the initiative a "betrayal" of Brexit principles, while the leader of the burgeoning right-wing party has condemned it as an “abject surrender to Brussels.” This bipartisan dissatisfaction underscores the prevailing concerns over sovereignty and national interests following a hard-fought Brexit.

Despite the government portraying the deal as a pragmatic response to rising global security challenges—asserting that closer ties with the EU are necessary for economic and security collaboration—the reality is far more unsettling. The projected economic benefits of around £9 billion to the UK economy by 2040 fall flat against the backdrop of a nearly 4% long-term GDP reduction attributed to Brexit. Such figures raise critical doubts about the capacity of the Labour government to maneuver effectively within EU relations without putting independence at risk.

The geopolitical context adds layers of complexity. Phillips points out the EU's sluggish response to the Ukraine crisis, illustrating why further alignment could be detrimental. The worry is not unfounded: a closer relationship with the EU may entangle the UK in a framework that prioritizes EU agendas over British sovereignty.

With mounting pressure from both sides of the political spectrum, the challenges posed by Starmer's government are stark. They must navigate the fine line between aspirations for renewed cooperation and the electorate's expectation for independence—the very principles that propelled the Brexit movement. The stakes of this reset deal are significant, presenting a not just a policy pivot but a potential redefinition of the UK’s identity on the global stage.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14739527/UK-EU-reset-deal-Globalist-Keir-Starmer-pushing-Britain-European-Union-stealth-Alex-Phillips-Mails-Apocalypse-podcast.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/04bf9ddc-1abf-4641-a4e3-f9b5f2689ebb> - This article discusses the UK's recent agreement with the EU under the Labour government, marking a modest step towards closer cooperation. The centerpiece is a security and defence pact formalizing collaboration in military training, cyber and space security, infrastructure resilience, and hybrid threats. Economically, the deal includes a veterinary agreement to ease agrifood exports and aligns emissions trading systems, potentially adding £9bn to the UK economy by 2040. However, the UK has accepted dynamic alignment with EU rules in certain areas and extended EU fishing access to UK waters for 12 years, prompting criticism from right-wing parties as a loss of sovereignty and a betrayal of the fishing industry. While the Labour government has maintained red lines against rejoining the single market or customs union, the deal reflects a shift towards more pragmatic relations. With Europe facing rising security challenges, the agreement serves as a foundation for a deeper realignment, recognizing the UK's need to foster stronger ties with its principal trade and security partner.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/7e7f481e-92dd-4d95-b46e-1d6adb911b70> - The UK and EU have announced a reset of their post-Brexit relationship through a three-part agreement aimed at improving economic ties, security cooperation, and energy integration. Key components include a new security and defence partnership, improved trade in agrifoods and electricity, and a veterinary agreement reducing red tape on agricultural exports. While Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer claims a potential £9bn annual economic boost by 2040, analysts note the gains would only marginally offset Brexit’s 4% long-term GDP impact. The agreement includes a controversial 12-year extension of EU fishing access to UK waters, a trade-off for securing improvements in food trade. The UK will also work towards rejoining the EU's internal energy market, which could save consumers €44bn annually. The security pact reestablishes institutional cooperation, including regular high-level meetings and potential UK involvement in the EU’s €150bn arms fund. Gains in youth and professional mobility remain uncertain, with limited commitments on work exchanges and no progress on touring artist visas. Despite some economic and diplomatic progress, the reset does not reverse the fundamental Brexit trade and regulatory realignments.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/44910e71-cc63-4d6e-8931-6447b9e74aea> - The UK Labour government has recently made strides in easing trade barriers with India, the EU, and the U.S., marking modest trade successes for Prime Minister Keir Starmer. However, these efforts have sparked backlash from Eurosceptic media, prompting some Labour MPs to argue for a more extensive reintegration with the EU, particularly in reinstating free movement. Yet, free movement remains a politically risky position, despite potential economic benefits. The government's accumulation of small policy achievements has not been sufficient to offset the tight constraints in its existing tax and spending plans. Additional top UK concerns include slashing higher education capital funding—especially for non-STEM fields—and investing up to £48bn in developing new towns. There's increasing worry over youth who were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and who now risk being left behind in employment and education. Finally, the EU remains hesitant to fully welcome the UK into its €150bn rearmament fund due to lingering post-Brexit tensions, even as negotiations for further involvement continue.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/4930edbc-4c79-43f8-929d-f4a8f45aa667> - The May 20, 2025 episode of the FT News Briefing podcast covers several critical global and economic developments. Former U.S. President Donald Trump announced the U.S. would no longer mediate in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, urging Moscow and Kyiv to negotiate independently—a stance criticized by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Meanwhile, the U.S. Treasury market reacted negatively after Moody’s downgraded the nation’s AAA credit rating due to concerns over rising public debt exacerbated by tax cuts, pandemic-related spending, and increased interest rates. This led to falling bond prices and rising yields, signaling market unease and dependency on both domestic and foreign investors. Additionally, biotech company 23andMe was acquired by Regeneron for $256 million, a fraction of its former $5.8 billion valuation, following its bankruptcy filing. The UK and the EU signed a new agreement to enhance cooperation in defense, trade, and energy, signaling a reset in relations post-Brexit. However, domestic political reactions suggest the UK remains divided over Brexit, influencing the Labour government’s cautious approach to EU engagement.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/614a8c20-6174-4cb6-ba4c-13c56d8135ef> - Post-Brexit Britain is navigating a complex path in redefining its relationship with the European Union. A recent EU-UK summit underscores efforts to 'reset' ties, signaling political shifts and concessions, particularly from the UK. Prime Minister Keir Starmer’s recent trade deals with India and the US bolster his position domestically, allowing him to pursue deeper EU relations without appearing to forsake global opportunities. However, Britain’s reluctance to fully commit to either the EU or other global spheres underscores a deeper indecision. The likely outcomes of the summit include agreements on defense, border goods regulation, professional mobility, energy integration, and fisheries management. These developments suggest incremental UK alignment with EU standards and principles, such as dynamic alignment and acceptance of European Court of Justice influence. The economic benefits of renewed integration are mostly skewed in the UK's favor due to the EU's significantly larger economy. However, the UK’s status remains one of subordination; it must continually adapt to EU frameworks without equal influence—a dilemma illustrating that sovereignty outside the EU still entails compromise. As long as Britain stays outside the bloc, both sides face ongoing instability and frustrations, leaving open the question of eventual reintegration.
7. <https://www.ft.com/content/3482c9de-bda4-412b-ab08-61191bc147da> - Following Brexit, the UK under Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer's administration is seeking to revitalize relations with the EU through regular structured dialogue and a potential UK-EU leaders' summit. The aim is to foster closer collaboration on issues like security, trade, and migration, while dismantling some Brexit trade barriers. Labour's manifesto promises new pacts covering various sectors and the government has ruled out rejoining the EU, single market, or customs union. The approach focuses on building trust and tackling trade burdens without low regulatory ambitions. The EU has welcomed these overtures, seeing positive diplomatic engagement and potential pathways for the future.