# Keir Starmer’s trade deals risk UK economic autonomy amid growing dependencies



Few figures have demonstrated the pitfalls of international economics more starkly than Donald Trump, albeit unintentionally. Under his presidency, notions like tariffs became not just academic terms but vital issues shaping public discourse around trade. Now, under Keir Starmer's leadership, the UK may be headed down a similar path of compromise, presenting an alarming vision for the nation's economic future.

Starmer's recent trade deals with the United States, India, and the European Union may superficially appear as an effort to restore Britain’s global standing. However, a closer look reveals troubling implications. The "landmark economic deal" with the US, for instance, ostensibly reduces the UK car export tariff from 27.5% to 10%. While Jaguar Land Rover hails this as “vital to the UK’s economic prosperity,” it is crucial to note that this reduction merely reinstates a lower tariff without addressing more systemic challenges. Critics like Kemi Badenoch have decried such arrangements, bluntly stating, “This is not a historic deal with the US,” and warning that the UK has been “shafted” in the process.

Moreover, while the steel industry rejoices over the removal of tariffs on UK steel and aluminium exports, this shift does little to strengthen the UK's economic independence. The overall agreement risks enshrining Britain's status as a junior partner to the US, fostering a dangerous dependency that could undermine the nation's long-term interests.

Starmer’s trade deal with the EU aims to address the plight of the agrifood industry, which has been grappling with declining exports since Brexit. Promising to be "good for jobs, good for bills and good for our borders," the removal of many agrifood restrictions may seem beneficial. However, overlooking the concessions made, particularly in the fishing sector, raises grave concerns. By extending access to British waters for European fishers for an additional twelve years, Starmer seems to be sacrificing the interests of the UK fishing community in a bid for broader trade agreements. Even as industry leaders tout streamlined processes, the reality remains stark: UK seafood exports have plummeted by 26%, illustrating the stark challenges that lie ahead.

As the ramifications of these trade deals unfold, Starmer’s vision of a "global Britain" appears fraught with complexities that paint a concerning picture for the nation’s economy. The success of these agreements hinges not just on the immediate benefits but on the durability of the negotiations as the UK wades through a fragmented global landscape. Key questions loom: Will the United States truly uphold its commitments? Will the EU arrangements yield tangible benefits, or simply further entrench the UK's compromises?

The immediate horizon may offer some semblance of progress, but the intricate web of international trade demands unwavering scrutiny and strong opposition to ensure that the UK's interests are placed foremost, rather than deferred to the whims of global partners. The need for a robust alternative vision has never been clearer.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://theboar.org/2025/05/starmers-trade-balancing-act-praiseworthy-or-pitiful/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-economic-deal-with-united-states-saves-thousands-of-jobs-for-british-car-makers-and-steel-industry> - On May 8, 2025, the UK government announced a historic trade agreement with the United States, marking a significant milestone in post-Brexit trade relations. The deal includes the reduction of tariffs on UK car exports to the US from 27.5% to 10%, affecting a quota of 100,000 vehicles annually. Additionally, tariffs on UK steel and aluminium exports to the US have been eliminated, providing major relief to the UK steel industry. The agreement also offers unprecedented market access for British farmers, ensuring that high food standards are maintained. This trade deal is expected to protect thousands of jobs across the UK, particularly in the automotive and steel sectors, and to bolster the UK's economic prosperity. The UK government emphasizes that this agreement is a crucial step in securing the nation's economic future and re-establishing strong trade ties with the US.
3. <https://news.sky.com/story/uk-and-us-announce-trade-deal-to-save-thousands-of-british-jobs-starmer-says-13363710> - On May 8, 2025, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and US President Donald Trump announced a landmark trade deal aimed at saving thousands of British jobs and boosting bilateral trade. The agreement includes a reduction of tariffs on UK car exports to the US from 27.5% to 10%, applicable to a quota of 100,000 vehicles annually. Tariffs on UK steel and aluminium exports to the US have been removed, providing significant relief to the UK steel industry. The deal also allows for reciprocal market access on beef exports. However, a 10% baseline tariff on most other UK goods entering the US remains in place. Prime Minister Starmer highlighted that this deal is expected to protect British businesses and create jobs, marking a significant step in strengthening UK-US trade relations post-Brexit.
4. <https://www.euronews.com/business/2025/05/08/uk-and-us-secure-trade-deal-with-changes-for-auto-and-agricultural-goods> - On May 8, 2025, the UK and the US secured a significant trade deal that brings changes to tariffs on automotive and agricultural goods. The agreement includes a reduction of tariffs on UK car exports to the US from 27.5% to 10%, applicable to a quota of 100,000 vehicles annually. Additionally, tariffs on UK steel and aluminium exports to the US have been eliminated, providing relief to the UK steel industry. The deal also allows for increased market access for American beef and ethanol exports to the UK. While the 10% baseline tariff on most other UK goods entering the US remains, this agreement is seen as a positive development in UK-US trade relations, offering new opportunities for exporters in both countries.
5. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/05/fact-sheet-u-s-uk-reach-historic-trade-deal/> - On May 8, 2025, the United States and the United Kingdom announced a historic trade deal, marking a new chapter in their special relationship. The agreement includes billions of dollars in increased market access for American exports, particularly in agriculture, dramatically increasing access for American beef, ethanol, and other products. The UK will reduce or eliminate numerous non-tariff barriers that previously discriminated against American products. The deal also establishes high-standard commitments in areas such as intellectual property, labor, and the environment. Additionally, it creates a secure supply chain for pharmaceutical products and maximizes the competitiveness of U.S. aerospace manufacturers through preferential access to high-quality UK aerospace components. This trade deal is expected to usher in a golden age of new opportunities for U.S. exporters and level the playing field for American producers.
6. <https://www.politico.eu/article/keir-starmer-secures-trump-tariff-deal-for-auto-and-steel-industries/> - On May 8, 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer struck a trade pact to lower tariffs on the UK's automotive and steel industries. The agreement reduces the 25% tariffs imposed on UK automotive, steel, and aluminum sectors, benefiting British automakers who produce the UK's largest goods export to the U.S. The deal is seen as a significant step in strengthening UK-US trade relations and addressing trade imbalances.
7. <https://www.benzinga.com/politics/25/05/45293839/trump-starmer-strike-us-uk-trade-deal-steel-cars-beef> - On May 8, 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced a trade deal that includes tariff reductions on UK-made cars, beef, and steel. The U.S. will cut tariffs on UK-made cars from 25% to 10%, granting British automakers a quota of 100,000 vehicles annually. Additionally, U.S. tariffs on UK steel, previously set at 25%, will be reduced. The deal also includes reciprocal market access on beef, with British farmers given a tariff-free quota for 13,000 tonnes. This agreement is expected to support tens of thousands of jobs across the UK manufacturing sector and strengthen UK-US trade relations.