# Labour faces internal revolt as Starmer’s leadership wanes amid welfare cuts backlash



The political landscape for the Labour Party is increasingly unstable, with recent developments casting serious doubts on Keir Starmer’s leadership amid a concerning decline in the party's poll ratings. Just months after an election victory that boasted supposed progressive aspirations, Labour now finds itself in a precarious position as public confidence plummets. Starmer's ambiguous remarks regarding his intentions for the next election—characterised by a surprising lack of enthusiasm—have heightened speculation about his future at the helm. While he hastily insisted on leading the party through a so-called "decade of national renewal," there’s a palpable doubt surrounding his conviction, particularly among factions that are increasingly disillusioned with his approach, especially with cuts to welfare provisions that disproportionately affect the most vulnerable.

The cuts, which amount to £5 billion, have sparked outrage not only within the party but also among the electorate, especially as they impact disabled individuals and other key constituencies. Nearly 200 Labour MPs are reportedly gearing up to oppose these reductions, revealing an internal fracture that could have dire consequences for the party’s credibility. Public sentiment sharply reflects this discontent; polling shows that around 60% of voters believe Labour will struggle in the next election, with many questioning Starmer's ability to lead them by that time. Such figures illustrate a stark decline in confidence not only in Starmer but in Labour's wider appeal, which has slipped from a comfortable lead over the Conservatives to a mere one-point advantage, ringing alarm bells among party strategists.

The internal struggles are echoed by criticism from significant Labour figures, including Louise Haigh and John McDonnell, who have voiced their dismay regarding the current trajectory of their party. As tensions rise, ambitious cabinet members seem to be contemplating their future paths, especially after a leaked memo from Angela Rayner, which suggested more progressive taxation proposals than those currently being pursued by the leadership. This chaotic backdrop lays the groundwork for potential leadership challenges, with Rayner and others like Wes Streeting emerging as figures poised to capture disenchanted voters. One MP remarked, “It’s already deeply unfashionable to say anybody other than Angela Rayner can be the next Labour leader,” indicating her growing appeal amidst the discontent. However, skepticism remains regarding Streeting’s ambitions and political vision, further complicating the party’s landscape.

As Labour braces for critical upcoming votes—including a difficult spending review—the decisions made now could dictate Starmer’s political survival and the party's direction moving forward. The impending vote on welfare reforms is set for June, which is critical for the government's credibility. Internal sources hint at a necessary cabinet reshuffle aimed at revitalising public perception, but there’s a troubling sense of fragmentation among MPs. While there’s widespread dissatisfaction, there seems to be no unified approach to addressing it, with some advocating for a more left-leaning economic stance while others demand stricter immigration policies. The variety of perspectives among MPs returning from local elections complicates any coordinated corrective measures.

In this context, party loyalists are making efforts to ensure that the annual conference in Liverpool remains a supportive environment for Starmer, striving to shield the leadership from potentially divisive motions. While there’s a glimmer of hope that successfully navigating the current challenges could restore faith in the party, deep-seated apprehensions about public sentiment and internal dissent continue to cast a long shadow. As some members advocate for a wait-and-see approach regarding economic indicators, one MP ominously cautioned, “Things are still pretty early on in parliament,” reflecting the unpredictable nature of the current political terrain.

Starmer faces a daunting array of challenges, and the outcomes of upcoming decisions could either solidify his waning authority or open the door for significant leadership changes within Labour. With tensions simmering and uncertainty looming, party members are left to grapple with their political futures and the precarious state of the party they claim to represent.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/31/labours-poll-ratings-drop-is-starmer-future-in-question> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/31/labours-poll-ratings-drop-is-starmer-future-in-question> - An article from The Guardian discussing the decline in Labour's poll ratings and questioning Keir Starmer's future as leader. It highlights his ambiguous response about standing for re-election, leading to speculation about his intentions. The piece also covers dissatisfaction among Labour MPs, particularly regarding £5bn welfare cuts affecting disabled people, and mentions potential leadership challenges from figures like Angela Rayner and Wes Streeting.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/09/23/three-in-five-think-labour-lose-next-election-poll-shows/> - A Telegraph article reporting that 60% of voters believe Labour will lose the next general election, just months after their landslide victory. The poll indicates that over half of respondents doubt Sir Keir Starmer will lead the party into the next election, with 52% saying he will not be Prime Minister by then.
4. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/10/08/labour-poll-lead-over-tories-falls-to-one-point/> - An article from The Telegraph revealing that Labour's lead over the Conservatives has narrowed to just one point, with Labour at 29% and the Tories at 28%. This significant drop in support follows a tumultuous period for Sir Keir Starmer's government, marked by controversies and policy disagreements.
5. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/labour-and-starmer-approval-ratings-continue-drop-government-nears-100-days-power> - Ipsos reports that over half of Britons (52%) are unfavourable towards Keir Starmer, marking a decline from the previous month. The Labour Party's net favourability has dropped from +6 to -21 since taking office in July, indicating growing public dissatisfaction as the government approaches its 100-day mark.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/659406e7-552c-4e10-83a0-0adebb5ad838> - A Financial Times article highlighting a significant drop in Sir Keir Starmer's popularity, with his net favourability rating falling to -46. The decline is attributed to his shift to the political right, including controversial moves like cuts to international aid and stricter welfare reforms, leading to internal dissent within the Labour Party.
7. <https://www.ft.com/content/b8efadcb-c744-4fec-ae53-74b807147dcc> - An analysis from the Financial Times discussing the rise of Nigel Farage's Reform UK party, which is gaining support amid public dissatisfaction with traditional parties. The article suggests that unless Labour accelerates impactful action and communicates it effectively, the public's search for meaningful change will continue.