# Labour’s attack on Nigel Farage undermines support as populist surge accelerates



Labour’s support has taken a significant hit in the wake of Keir Starmer’s relentless and personal attacks on Nigel Farage, leader of the burgeoning nationalist movement that is challenging the establishment’s narrative. Recent polling reveals that Starmer’s aggressive rhetoric has backfired, with Labour support plunging by five points to 20%, while the populist alternative has surged to 30%, widening the gap from three to ten points and exposing the flaws in Labour’s failed strategy of vilification.

Starmer’s relentless branding of Farage as the “enemy” and his accusations of racism related to migration policies are increasingly viewed as divisive and counterproductive. His recent claims that Farage’s influence directly bears responsibility for the Channel migrant crisis—dismissively calling migrant boats “Farage boats”—have only ignited the very sentiments they aimed to dismiss. Farage’s supporters see this as yet another instance of Labour’s instinct to demonise those with differing views rather than address real concerns about national sovereignty, border control, and immigration.

Starmer continues to defend his rhetoric, denying any intent to incite violence and blaming Farage for the crisis, citing Brexit as the root of the problem. The Labour leader asserts that the UK’s departure from the EU ended cooperative agreements on border enforcement, falsely implying that Farage’s campaign for Brexit bears all responsibility. According to him, these “Farage boats” symbolize the chaos of a Britain left adrift without the safety mechanisms once provided by the EU—a narrative increasingly undermined by border experts.

Contradicting Starmer’s claims, former border force officials have dismissed his narrative as “nonsense,” citing bureaucratic obstacles that have made returns to France under the Dublin Convention virtually ineffective. They criticise government advisers for propagating falsehoods in a desperate attempt to divert attention from the real failures of current policy. Reform UK has been quick to highlight that Farage was among the earliest voices warning about the escalating flow of migrants via Channel crossings, exposing French authorities’ complicity—a fact the Labour leadership now conveniently dismisses as inconvenient.

The escalating conflict between Labour and reform-minded populists has heightened political tensions nationwide. In a display of reckless politicking, Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy retracted baseless allegations that Farage had flirted with the Hitler Youth—a move that smacked of desperation. Meanwhile, Reform UK figures have warned that Labour’s inflammatory rhetoric poses dangerous risks, with MP Danny Kruger warning that such tactics could incite violence against Reform activists and supporters, branding Labour’s portrayal of Reform supporters as racists or Nazis as a reckless slur with potentially deadly consequences.

Starmer’s confrontational stance comes at a time of mounting instability for Labour, whose popularity continues to wane amidst economic turbulence, rising inflation, and disillusionment with the political class. The narrative pushed by Reform UK’s populist message—centered on national pride, immigration control, and economic reform—resonates with a growing segment of voters fed up with the establishment. At Labour’s recent conference in Liverpool, Starmer sought to rally the party behind a message of “unity,” denouncing Reform’s “racist policy” of mass deportations and promoting a patriotic but inclusive Britain—an effort that appears increasingly disconnected from the rising tide of populist sentiment.

Polls throughout 2025 confirm the shift in the political landscape, with Reform UK now surpassing Labour in several surveys. Voters are gravitating toward Farage’s straightforward messaging, which promises to restore Britain’s sovereignty and economic independence—issues that resonate with those tired of the failed policies of the Westminster elite. Starmer’s attacks on Reform’s fiscal policies, including raising the personal allowance, are seen as reckless, echoing the economic misjudgments that have previously undermined Labour’s credibility.

Despite Labour’s current parliamentary majority, internal dissent is brewing, with figures like Andy Burnham hinting at leadership challenges ahead. Public perception reveals a growing understanding of what Reform UK stands for—68% of Britons, according to a Merlin Strategy poll, clearly grasp Reform’s core messages—an advantage Labour desperately seeks to counter. The right-wing populist movement’s ability to communicate effectively is becoming a decisive factor as national elections loom on the horizon.

In an increasingly volatile political climate, it is clear that heavy-handed attacks on reform-minded voices only serve to deepen divisions and propel the populist tide further. The Labour leadership’s obsession with demonising Nigel Farage and his movement may ultimately prove self-defeating, as the rising opposition prepares to reshape Britain’s political future. The question remains: will Labour continue to alienate voters with its divisive tactics, or will it finally recognize the strength of reform and national sovereignty that millions now demand? The coming months will be critical in determining whether Britain drifts further into chaos or embraces the change that leaders like Farage and the growing reform movement now champion.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15154237/Keir-Starmer-attack-Nigel-Farage-backfire-Labour-plunges-polls-reform.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-starmer-calls-party-unite-stop-navel-gazing-2025-09-28/> - UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer has called on the Labour Party to stop internal disputes and unite in battling the populist Reform UK party, which has recently surged ahead in opinion polls. Speaking at the Labour annual conference in Liverpool, Starmer criticised Reform for promoting what he labelled a 'racist policy' of mass deportations and warned that defeating the party was the 'fight of our lives.' Despite not facing a national election until 2029, Starmer is under pressure following recent resignations in his leadership team and dissatisfaction within his party. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-starmer-calls-party-unite-stop-navel-gazing-2025-09-28/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://apnews.com/article/2788160fd8cc084c7f032c46a5a31776> - During a keynote speech at the Labour Party’s annual conference in Liverpool, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer condemned Nigel Farage’s anti-immigration rhetoric, accusing him of crossing a 'moral line' and sowing division, echoing the style of America's MAGA movement. Starmer positioned his vision of 'patriotic renewal' as inclusive and contrasted it with Farage’s grievance-driven politics. Facing low approval ratings and economic difficulties, the Labour government seeks to address public concern over immigration while affirming values of unity and pride in British identity. Starmer advocated secure borders without resorting to extremism, denouncing violence and racism. Labour’s popularity has declined since their 2024 electoral victory, plagued by inflation, a weak economy, and global instability. Meanwhile, Farage’s Reform UK has surged in polls despite limited parliamentary presence. With internal questions emerging about Starmer’s leadership ahead of regional elections, potential rivals like Mayor Andy Burnham are gaining attention. Still, Starmer’s impassioned speech was well-received by many in his party, who see it as a necessary call to counter division and reinvigorate national optimism. ([apnews.com](https://apnews.com/article/2788160fd8cc084c7f032c46a5a31776?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/starmer-call-unity-win-fight-soul-britain-2025-09-29/> - At the 2025 Labour Party conference in Liverpool, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer is set to call for party unity in what he describes as a 'fight for the soul of our country.' Acknowledging the difficult path ahead, Starmer will emphasise national renewal, while cautioning that some decisions may challenge party traditions and will not be easy or comfortable. Amid declining poll numbers and the rise of the populist Reform UK party led by Nigel Farage, Starmer aims to reassert his leadership and define his strategy, particularly on immigration and the economy. He will reaffirm commitments to raising living standards and helping working-class voters, stressing unity and decency over division. However, the government faces a significant fiscal shortfall, and additional tax increases may be necessary, despite last year’s record tax hike. Finance Minister Rachel Reeves warned against loosening fiscal discipline, signalling that tough economic decisions lie ahead. Starmer likens the current challenge to post-war reconstruction, urging Labour to meet this test with resolve. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/starmer-call-unity-win-fight-soul-britain-2025-09-29/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-right-wing-reform-party-leads-first-time-new-poll-sky-news-reporter-says-2025-02-03/> - Nigel Farage's right-wing Reform UK party has overtaken the Labour Party to become the most popular party in Britain, according to a new YouGov poll. The poll shows that if a general election were held today, 25% of voters would choose Reform, 24% would pick Labour, and 21% would vote for the Conservatives. The poll reflects public dissatisfaction with Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who has faced setbacks including the fallout from a tax-raising budget and a sluggish economy. Farage's populist views, especially on reduced immigration and lower taxes, have helped his party gain popularity. The poll surveyed 2,465 people and the results are within the margin of error. Farage celebrated the poll results on social media, stating 'Britain wants Reform.' As Labour's popularity declines and the Conservatives fall further behind, Reform UK's standing continues to rise. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-right-wing-reform-party-leads-first-time-new-poll-sky-news-reporter-says-2025-02-03/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-starmer-warns-farages-fantasy-fiscal-plans-would-crash-economy-2025-05-29/> - British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has criticised Reform UK leader Nigel Farage's economic proposals, warning they could crash the economy if implemented. Starmer described Farage's tax and spending plans as a 'fantasy,' likening them to the failed economic strategy of former Prime Minister Liz Truss in 2022, whose unfunded tax cuts led to market turmoil. As Labour struggles with declining public support due to recent tax hikes and spending cuts, Reform UK has gained traction, leading recent opinion polls. Farage, promoting a blend of right-wing and left-leaning policies, claims Reform represents 'working people,' a statement Starmer rebuffed, citing his own working-class roots. The Institute for Fiscal Studies estimated a Reform proposal to raise the income tax personal allowance could cost £50–80 billion. Despite criticism, Starmer retains a large parliamentary majority and is resisting populist pressures, though he is reconsidering some welfare policies. Political analysts advise Starmer to challenge Farage on economic grounds rather than immigration. A recent YouGov poll shows Reform ahead of Labour (29% to 21%), though more people still favour Starmer as prime minister over Farage. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-starmer-warns-farages-fantasy-fiscal-plans-would-crash-economy-2025-05-29/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.gbnews.com/politics/reform-uk-poll-merlin-strategy-immigration-british-people> - A poll by Merlin Strategy appeared to hand Mr Farage a major post-conference boost after it found that 68 per cent of Britons say they clearly understand what Reform UK stands for. The proportion of voters who believe they can pinpoint where either the Tories or Labour stand collapses by more than 10 per cent - down to 59 per cent and 56 per cent respectively. It is a similar story when voters are asked whether they clearly understand Reform UK's policies. Almost two-thirds (65 per cent) of voters believe they clearly understand Reform UK's policies, up by double-digits compared to 56 per cent for the Tories and 55 per cent for Labour. Responding to the findings, Merlin Strategy founder Scarlett Maguire told GB News: 'Having now led in almost 100 consecutive polls, it is right that Reform UK are coming under increased scrutiny about their policies and their direction of travel. Interestingly though, the public thinks that at the moment they actually understand Reform's policies better than the Conservatives or Labour, showing once again the dissatisfaction with Westminster's traditional two main parties.' However, the Reform UK leader is also considered a liability when it comes to matters such as social cohesion and the environment. During Mr Farage's keynote speech at Reform UK's annual conference at the NEC, the Clacton MP continued to play on the key issues he has become so closely associated with. Speaking about the small boats crisis, Mr Farage said: 'We will stop what is a threat to our national security, what is a danger to girls and women on our streets. We will stop the boats and we will detain and deport those who illegally break into our country, doing what nearly every normal country around the rest of the world does. You cannot come here illegally and stay: we will stop the boats within two weeks of winning government.' On British people, Mr Farage defended the Union Jack and flag of St George after he said: 'What is going on out there is the British people are sticking two fingers up with every flag they place to an establishment that doesn't believe in Britain, to an establishment that thinks more of the interests of other countries and foreign courts that it thinks about its own people, and those flags say we have had enough.' The polling made for bad reading for Kemi Badenoch. ([gbnews.com](https://www.gbnews.com/politics/reform-uk-poll-merlin-strategy-immigration-british-people?utm_source=openai))