

Keir Starmer

Sir Keir Rodney Starmer^[a] (born 2 September 1962) is a British politician and lawyer who has served as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom since 2024 and as Leader of the Labour Party since 2020. He previously served as Leader of the Opposition from 2020 to 2024. He has been Member of Parliament (MP) for Holborn and St Pancras since 2015, and was Director of Public Prosecutions from 2008 to 2013.

Born in Southwark, London and raised in Surrey, Starmer attended Reigate Grammar School. He was politically active as a teenager, and graduated with a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Leeds in 1985 and received a postgraduate Bachelor of Civil Law degree from the University of Oxford where he was a student at St Edmund Hall in 1986. After being called to the Bar, Starmer worked predominantly in criminal defence, specialising in human rights. He served as a human rights adviser to the Northern Ireland Policing Board, taking silk as a Queen's Counsel in 2002. During his tenure as Director of Public Prosecutions and Head of the Crown Prosecution Service he handled a number of major cases, including the Stephen Lawrence murder case. In the 2014 New Year Honours, he was appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB) for "services to law and criminal justice".

Starmer says his work in Northern Ireland influenced his decision to pursue a political career. He was elected to the House of Commons in the 2015 general election. He supported the Remain campaign in the 2016 European Union membership referendum and advocated a proposed second referendum on Brexit. He served in Jeremy Corbyn's Shadow Cabinet as Shadow Brexit Secretary, and following Corbyn's resignation after Labour's defeat at the 2019 general election, Starmer succeeded him by winning the 2020 leadership election. As Leader of the Opposition he moved Labour towards the political centre and emphasised the elimination of antisemitism within the party, and his party made

The Right Honourable
Sir Keir Starmer
KCB KC MP



Official portrait, 2024

Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

Incumbent

Assumed office

5 July 2024

Monarch Charles III

Deputy Angela Rayner

David Lammy

Preceded by Rishi Sunak

Leader of the Opposition

In office

4 April 2020 - 5 July 2024

Monarchs Elizabeth II

Charles III

Prime Minister Boris Johnson

Liz Truss

Rishi Sunak

Deputy Angela Rayner

Preceded by Jeremy Corbyn

significant gains in the 2023 and 2024 local elections. Starmer oversaw a significant drop in Labour membership in the years leading up to the 2024 election.

Starmer led Labour to a landslide victory at the 2024 election, ending fourteen vears Conservative government with the smallest vote share of any majority government since recordbegan in 1830. Under Starmer's keeping premiership. the government has announced changes to the planning system and to workers' and renters' rights, an increase in the minimum wage, and investment in a new nuclear power station at Sizewell C. It has ended certain winter fuel payments for around 10 million pensioners, implemented an early-release scheme for thousands of prisoners to decrease prison overcrowding, and settled a number of public sector strikes. Starmer announced a Border Security Command to replace the Rwanda asylum plan and a National Violent Disorder Programme in response to the 2024 riots. He has negotiated free trade deals with the EU, the US and India. In foreign policy, he has continued support for Ukraine in the Russia-Ukraine war and continued support for Israel in the Gaza war, while calling for a ceasefire and the release of hostages and formally recognising the State of Palestine. He also negotiated the transfer of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius following an International Court of Justice ruling, estimated to cost the UK more than £3 billion over 99 years.

Early life and education



Reigate Grammar School (pictured 2009), where Starmer was a pupil

Succeeded by Rishi Sunak

Leader of the Labour Party

Incumbent

Assumed office

4 April 2020

Preceded by Jeremy Corbyn

Shadow portfolios

Member of Parliament for Holborn and St Pancras

Incumbent

Assumed office

7 May 2015

Preceded by Frank Dobson

Majority 11,572 (30.0%)

Director of Public Prosecutions

In office

1 November 2008 – 1 November 2013

Appointed by The Baroness Scotland

Preceded by Ken Macdonald

Succeeded by Alison Saunders

Personal details

Born Keir Rodney Starmer

2 September 1962

Southwark, London, England

Political party Labour

Spouse Victoria Alexander (m. 2007)

Children 2

Residences 10 Downing Street, London

Chequers, Buckinghamshire

Education University of Leeds (LLB)

St Edmund Hall, Oxford (BCL)

Occupation Politician · lawyer

Profession Barrister

Signature _____ \\ \www.

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armer.com/)

Keir Starmer's voice

6:41

Starmer's first speech as Prime Minister Recorded 5 July 2024 Keir Rodney Starmer was born on 2 September 1962, in Southwark, south east London, [1][2][3] and raised in Oxted, Surrey. [4][5][6] He was the second of the four children of Josephine (née Baker), a nurse, and Rodney Starmer, a toolmaker. [6][7] His mother developed Still's disease. [8][2] His mother attended St John's Anglican Church in nearby Hurst Green, while his father was an atheist. [9] In 2020, Starmer said his "parents' family" was Jewish. On many other occasions, he said his wife's family was Jewish and his children were being raised Jewish. [10] He was nominally "brought up Church of England". [11] His parents were both Labour Party supporters, and reputedly named him after the party's first parliamentary leader, Keir Hardie, [12][13] although Starmer did not confirm this when asked in 2015. [14]

Starmer passed the 11-plus examination and gained entry to Reigate Grammar School, which at the time was a voluntary-aided selective grammar school. The school converted into an independent fee-paying school in 1976, while he was a student. The terms of the conversion were such that his parents were not required to pay for his schooling until he turned 16, and when he reached that point, the school, by now a charity, awarded him a bursary that allowed him to complete his education there without any parental contribution. The subjects he chose to study in the sixth form during his last two years at school were mathematics, music and physics, in which he achieved A level grades of B, B and C. Among his classmates at Reigate were the musician Norman Cook (Fatboy Slim), with whom Starmer took violin lessons; Andrew Cooper, who later became a Conservative peer, and the future conservative journalist Andrew Sullivan. According to Starmer, he and Sullivan "fought over everything... Politics, religion... You name it."

In his teenage years Starmer was active in Labour Party politics joining the Labour Party Young Socialists at the age of 16. [19][6] He won a junior exhibition from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama where he played the flute, piano, recorder and violin until the age of 18. [20] In the early 1980s Starmer was caught by police illegally selling ice creams while trying to raise money during a holiday on the French Riviera. He escaped the incident without punishment, beyond the ice creams being confiscated. [21][22] The first member of his family to go to university, Starmer read law at the University of Leeds where he became a member of the university's Labour Club before graduating with a first class LLB in 1985. [12][23] He then went up to St Edmund Hall to pursue postgraduate studies in jurisprudence taking a Bachelor of Civil Law (BCL) degree from the University of Oxford in 1986. [24][12]

Legal career

Barrister

Starmer became a <u>barrister</u> in 1987 at the <u>Middle Temple</u>, then a <u>bencher</u> in 2009. [1][2] He served as a legal officer for the campaign group <u>Liberty</u> until 1990. [12] Starmer was a member of <u>Doughty</u> Street Chambers from 1990 onwards, primarily working on human rights matters. [8][12]

Starmer has been <u>called</u> to the Bar in several <u>Caribbean countries</u>, where he defended convicts sentenced to the death penalty. In 1999, he was a junior barrister on <u>Lee Clegg's appeal</u>. Starmer assisted <u>Helen Steel</u> and David Morris in the <u>McLibel case</u>, at the trial and appeal in English courts, also representing them before the European Court of Human Rights. Starmer

was appointed <u>Queen's Counsel</u> on 9 April 2002, aged 39. [28] In the same year, he became joint head of Doughty Street Chambers. In 2005 Starmer called his Queen's Counsel appointment "odd" as he had previously expressed support for the abolition of the monarchy. [29]

Starmer wrote legal opinions and marched in protest against the <u>Iraq War</u> following the <u>2003</u> invasion of <u>Iraq</u>, and said in 2015 that he believed the war was "not lawful under international law because there was no UN resolution expressly authorising it". [30][6] He defended one of the <u>Fairford Five</u> who broke into the <u>RAF Fairford</u> military air base in 2003 and disabled equipment in order to disrupt military operations at the start of the Iraq War. [31]

Starmer served as a <u>human rights adviser</u> to the <u>Northern Ireland Policing Board</u> and the <u>Association of Chief Police Officers</u>, and was also a member of the <u>Foreign</u>, Commonwealth and <u>Development Office's Death Penalty</u> Advisory Panel from 2002 to 2008. [2][12] The Northern Ireland Board was an important part of bringing communities together following the <u>Good Friday Agreement</u>, and Starmer later cited his work on policing in Northern Ireland as being a key influence on his decision to pursue a political career: "Some of the things I thought that needed to change in police services we achieved more quickly than we achieved in strategic litigation... I came better to understand how you can change by being inside and getting the trust of people". [6] Starmer represented Croatia at the genocide hearings before the <u>International Court of Justice</u> at <u>The Hague</u> in 2014, arguing that Serbia wanted to seize a third of Croatian territory during the 1990s war and eradicate the Croatian population. [32]

Director of Public Prosecutions

In July 2008 Baroness Scotland, the Attorney General for England and Wales, named Starmer as the new Head of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). He succeeded Ken Macdonald, who publicly welcomed Starmer's appointment, on 1 November 2008. [12][13] Starmer was deemed to be bringing a focus on human rights into the legal system. [12] In 2011 he introduced reforms that included the "first test paperless hearing". [33] During his time as DPP Starmer dealt with a number of major cases including the Stephen Lawrence murder case, where he brought his murderers to justice. [34]

In February 2010, Starmer announced the CPS's decision to prosecute three Labour MPs and a Conservative peer for offences relating to false accounting in the aftermath of the parliamentary expenses scandal, who were all found guilty. [35][36] Starmer prioritised rapid prosecutions of rioters over long sentences during



Official portrait as <u>Director of</u> <u>Public Prosecutions</u>, 2009

the <u>2011</u> England riots, which he later concluded helped to bring "the situation back under control". [37][38] In February 2012 Starmer announced that <u>Chris Huhne</u> would be prosecuted for perverting the course of justice, stating in relation to the case that "[w]here there is sufficient evidence we do not shy away from prosecuting politicians". [39]

In 2012, the journalist <u>Nick Cohen</u> published allegations that Starmer was personally responsible for allowing the prosecution of Paul Chambers to proceed, in what became known as the "<u>Twitter joke trial</u>". The CPS denied that Starmer was behind the decision, saying that it was the responsibility of a Crown Court and was out of Starmer's hands. [40] When <u>Jimmy Savile</u>'s sexual abuse crimes were exposed in 2012, Starmer said amid the subsequent scandal that "It was like a

dam had bust and people rightfully wanted to know why he had been allowed to get away with it for so long."^[41] In 2013. Starmer announced changes to how sexual abuse investigations were to be handled amid Operation Yewtree, including a panel to review complaints.^{[42][43]}

Starmer stepped down as Director of Public Prosecutions in November 2013, and was succeeded by Alison Saunders. [44][45] Awarded several honorary degrees between 2011 and 2014, Starmer was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB) in the 2014 New Year Honours for "services to law and criminal justice". [46][47]

Early political career

Member of Parliament

My predecessor, the Right Hon. Frank Dobson, to whom I pay tribute, was a powerful advocate of the rights of everyone in Holborn and St Pancras throughout his highly distinguished parliamentary career. Widely respected and widely regarded, he served the people of Holborn and St Pancras for 36 years. Although I doubt I will clock up 36 years, I intend to follow in Frank Dobson's footsteps—albeit my jokes are likely to seem tame when compared with his, and I might give the beard a miss.



Official portrait as MP, 2017

—Keir Starmer in his <u>maiden speech</u> to the House of Commons, May 2015

Starmer was selected in December 2014 as the Labour parliamentary candidate for the constituency of Holborn and St Pancras, a Labour safe seat, following the decision of its sitting MP, Frank Dobson, to retire. Starmer was elected at the 2015 general election with a majority of 17,048 (52.9 per cent). He was returned at the 2017 general election with an increased majority of 30,509 (70.1 per cent), at the 2019 general election with a reduced majority of 27,763 (64.9 per cent), and at the 2024 general election with a further reduced majority of 18,884 (48.9 per cent), despite a Labour landslide nationally and him becoming prime minister.

During the 2016 European Union membership referendum, Starmer supported the Britain Stronger in Europe campaign for the UK to remain in the European Union (EU). [50] A member of both parliamentary groups Labour Friends of Israel and Labour Friends of Palestine and the Middle East, [51] Starmer was urged by a number of activists to stand in the 2015 Labour Party leadership election following the resignation of Ed Miliband as Leader of the Labour Party after Labour's defeat at the 2015 general election; he ruled this out, citing his relative lack of political experience at the time. [52][53] During the leadership election Starmer supported Andy Burnham, who finished second to Jeremy Corbyn. [54]

Shadow portfolios

Starmer was appointed to Corbyn's Shadow Cabinet as Shadow Home Office Minister in September 2015. He resigned from this role in June 2016 as part of the widespread Shadow Cabinet resignations in protest at Corbyn's leadership following the 2016 EU Referendum result. [55][56] Following Corbyn's re-election September 2016 leadership election, Starmer accepted a new post from Corbyn as Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union. [57] In this role, Starmer Theresa May HMGovernment's questioned and destination for the UK outside of the EU, as well as calling for Brexit plans to be made public and supporting a



Jeremy Corbyn & Starmer, 6 December 2019

proposed Second Referendum on Brexit. [58] Following defeat at the 2019 general election, Corbyn announced that he would not lead Labour at the next general election after "a process of reflection". [59] Starmer began to distance himself from Corbyn's leadership and many of the policies put forward at the general election, later revealing in 2024 that he was "certain that we would lose the 2019 election". [60]

Labour leadership bid

On 4 January 2020 Starmer announced his candidacy for the resultant leadership election. [61][62] He gained support from the former Labour prime minister Gordon Brown and London Mayor Sadiq Khan. [23] During the Labour leadership campaign, Starmer ran a left-wing platform and positioned himself in opposition to austerity, stating that Corbyn was right to position Labour as "the party of anti-



Starmer's logo for the Labour leadership

austerity". [63][64] He indicated he would continue with the Labour policy of scrapping tuition fees as well as pledging "common ownership" of rail, mail, energy and water companies, and called for ending outsourcing in the NHS, local government and the justice system. [65] Starmer was declared the winner of Labour's leadership contest on 4 April 2020, defeating his rivals, Rebecca Long-Bailey and Lisa Nandy, with 56.2 per cent of the vote in the first round. [66][67][23]

It is the honour and the privilege of my life to be elected as Leader of the Labour Party. I want to thank Rebecca and Lisa for running such passionate and powerful campaigns and for their friendship and support along the way. I want to thank our Labour Party staff who worked really hard and my own amazing campaign team, full of positivity, with that unifying spirit. I want to pay tribute to Jeremy Corbyn, who led our party through some really difficult times, who energised our movement and who's a friend as well as a colleague. And to all of our members, supporters and affiliates I say this: whether you voted for me or not I will represent you, I will listen to you and I will bring our party together.

Leader of the Opposition (2020-2024)

Having become Leader of the Opposition during the COVID-19 pandemic, Starmer said in his acceptance speech that he would refrain from "scoring party political points" and would work with the Government "in the national interest". [68] He later became more critical of HM Government's response to the pandemic following the Partygate scandal. [69] In May 2022 Starmer said he would resign were he to receive a fixed penalty notice for breaching COVID-19 regulations while campaigning during the run-up to the Hartlepool by-election and local elections the previous year. [70] The controversy surrounding the event was dubbed "Beergate". [71] In July 2022 Durham



Starmer speaking in the <u>Commons</u> during Prime Minister's Questions, 22 April 2020

Police cleared Starmer and said that he had "no case to answer". [72] In August 2022 the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, Kathryn Stone, found that Starmer had breached the MPs' code of conduct on eight occasions by failing to register interests. [73][74]

Amidst the historic number of ministers resigning from Boris Johnson's government in July 2022, Starmer proposed a vote of no confidence in the Government, stating that Johnson should not be allowed to remain in office. Starmer also criticised Johnson, as well as his successors Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak, for issues such as the Chris Pincher scandal and the subsequent government crisis, the economic crisis resulting from the 2022 mini-budget and subsequent government crisis, the cost of living crisis, and the industrial disputes and strikes including National Health Service strikes. [82][83][84]

As Labour leader Starmer focused on repositioning the Party away from the Left and the controversies that affected Corbyn's leadership, with promises of economic stability, tackling small-boat crossings, cutting NHS waiting times and "rebuilding the NHS", worker rights enrichment, energy independence and infrastructure development, tackling crime, improving education and training, reforming public services, renationalising the railway network, and recruiting 6,500 teachers. Starmer also pledged to end antisemitism within the Labour Party. In October 2020, following the release of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)'s report into antisemitism in the Labour Party, Starmer accepted its findings in full and apologised to Jews on the Party's behalf. In February 2023 Starmer's antisemitism reforms resulted in the Labour Party no longer being monitored by the EHRC.

In September 2023 he reshuffled his shadow cabinet. [90] Starmer was ranked number two in the New Statesman's Left Power List 2023, below his Shadow Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, but still described as "the overwhelming favourite to be the next Prime Minister". [91] The reshuffle was seen as a promotion of Blairites and demotion of those on the soft left. [92][93][94]

During the 2023 <u>Hamas-Israel War</u>, Starmer emphasised his support for Israel, stated he would favour military aid to the country, and called the actions of <u>Hamas</u> and other militants terrorism. [95][96] In an interview with <u>LBC</u> on 11 October 2023, Starmer was asked whether it would be appropriate for Israel to totally cut off power and water supplies to Gaza, with Starmer

replying that "I think that Israel does have that right" and that "obviously everything should be done within international law". [97][98] On 20 October, Starmer clarified that he only meant that Israel had the right to defend itself. [99] Starmer had said that a ceasefire would only benefit Hamas for future attacks, instead calling for a humanitarian pause to allow aid to reach Gaza. [100]

On 15 November 2023 Starmer suffered his largest defeat as leader when 56 of his MPs (including ten frontbenchers) defied a three-line whip in voting for an SNP motion to support an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. [101][102] In December 2023, Keir Starmer followed Rishi Sunak in changing his stance by calling for a "sustainable ceasefire" in relation to the conflict in Gaza. This also came after the Foreign Secretary David Cameron's same change in position. Starmer stated his support for a "two-stage" "two-state solution". [103][104][105] During Starmer's tenure as leader, Labour saw a drop in party membership from a peak of 532,000 after the 2019 election to 370,450 in the runup to the 2024 election. [106] More than 20,000 members left the party within two months in 2024, with blame placed on the party's stance on the Gazan genocide and green investment. [107]

Shadow cabinet

Starmer's <u>shadow cabinet</u> initially comprised both the <u>right</u> and <u>left</u> of the Labour Party. Starmer reshuffled his shadow cabinet three times – firstly in <u>May 2021</u>, secondly in <u>November 2021</u>, and finally in <u>September 2023</u>. <u>[108][109]</u> Starmer's reshuffles reduced the representation of the left and <u>soft left</u> on the opposition <u>frontbench</u>, while increasing the representation of the party's right. <u>[110][111][112][113]</u> Notable changes included <u>Rachel Reeves</u> replacing <u>Anneliese Dodds</u> as <u>Shadow Chancellor</u>, the demotion of <u>Lisa Nandy from Shadow Levelling-Up Secretary to Shadow Minister for International Development</u>, and the replacement of <u>Chief Whip Nick Brown</u> with <u>Alan Campbell</u>. Resignations from Starmer's shadow cabinet included <u>Andy McDonald</u> and <u>Rosena Allin-Khan</u>.

Local election results

Starmer considered resigning after Labour's mixed results in the 2021 local elections, the first local elections of his leadership, but later felt "vindicated" by his decision to stay on, saying "I did [consider quitting] because I didn't feel that I should be bigger than the party and that if I couldn't bring about the change, perhaps there should be a change. But actually, in the end, I reflected on it, talked to very many people and doubled down and determined, no, it is the change in the Labour Party we need". [114]

During Starmer's tenure as Opposition Leader, his party suffered the loss of a previously safe Labour seat at the 2021 Hartlepool by-election, followed by holds at the 2021 Batley and Spen by-election, 2022 Birmingham Erdington by-election and 2022 City of Chester by-election, as well as a gain from the Conservatives at the 2022 Wakefield by-election. During the 2023 local elections, Labour gained more than 500 councillors and 22 councils, becoming the largest party in local government for the first time since 2002. [115] Labour made further gains at the 2024 local elections, gaining from the Conservatives at the Blackpool South by-election and narrowly winning the West Midlands mayoral election. [116]

2024 general election

On 22 May 2024 Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced that a general election would be held on 4 July 2024. Labour entered the general election with a large lead over the Conservatives in opinion polls (which had been the case since 2022), and the potential scale of the party's victory remained a topic of discussion throughout the campaign. [117][118]

In June 2024 Starmer released the Labour Party's 2024 manifesto, <u>Change</u>, which focused on economic growth, planning system reforms, infrastructure, what Starmer describes as "clean energy", healthcare, education, childcare, and strengthening workers' rights. [119][120] It pledged a new publicly owned energy company (<u>Great British Energy</u>), a "Green Prosperity Plan", reducing patient waiting times in the NHS, and <u>renationalisation</u> of the <u>railway network</u> (<u>Great British Railways</u>). [121] Promising wealth creation together with "pro-business and pro-worker" policies, 122] the manifesto also pledged giving 16-year-olds the vote, reforming the <u>House of Lords</u>, and to tax <u>private schools</u>, with money generated going into improving state education. [123][124] On taxes, the day after the manifesto was released, Starmer pledged that not only would income tax, <u>National Insurance</u>, and VAT not be increased, but that, per their manifesto, their plans were fully costed and funded and would not require tax increases. [125]

Starmer led Labour to a landslide victory at the general election, ending fourteen years of Conservative government with Labour becoming the largest party in the House of Commons. [126] Labour achieved a 174-seat simple majority and a total of 411 seats, the party's third-best result in terms of seat-share following the 1997 and 2001 general elections. The party became the largest in England for the first time since 2005, in Scotland for the first time since 2010 and retained its status as the largest party in Wales. [127] Despite this, Labour won 34 per cent of the vote – the lowest of any party forming a majority government in the post-war era, [128] leading to concerns about the proportionality of the election. [129][130]

In his victory speech Starmer thanked Labour Party workers for their work – including nearly five years of revamping and rebranding Labour in the face of Conservative dominance – and urged them to savour the moment, but warned them of challenges ahead and pledged his government would seek "national renewal": [131][132]

We did it! You campaigned for it, you fought for it, you voted for it and now it has arrived. Change begins now. And it feels good, I have to be honest. Four-and-a-half years of work changing the party. This is what it is for — a changed Labour Party ready to serve our country, ready to restore Britain to the service of working people. And across our country people will be waking up to the news, relieved that a weight has been lifted, a burden finally removed from the shoulders of this great nation. And now we can look forward. Walk into the morning, the sunlight of hope, pale at first but getting stronger through the day, shining once again, on a country with the opportunity after 14 years to get its future back. We said we would end the chaos and we will. We said we would turn the page and we have. Today we start the next chapter, begin the work of change, the mission of national renewal and start to rebuild our country.

Premiership (2024-present)

Appointment

As the leader of the majority party in the House of Commons, Starmer was appointed prime minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service by King Charles III on 5 July 2024, becoming the first Labour prime minister since Gordon Brown in 2010 and the first one to win a general election since Tony Blair in 2005. [133][134][135] He and his wife, Victoria, were driven from Buckingham Palace to Downing Street. Starmer stopped the car on the way back from the palace to go on a walkabout in Downing Street to meet cheering crowds. [136]



Starmer as Prime Minister outside <u>10</u> Downing Street, 5 July 2024

In his first speech as prime minister, Starmer paid tribute to his predecessor, Rishi Sunak, saying "his achievement as the first British Asian prime minister of our country should not be underestimated by anyone" and he also recognised "the dedication and hard work he brought to his leadership", but added that the people of the UK had voted for change: [137]

You have given us a clear mandate, and we will use it to deliver change. To restore service and respect to politics, end the era of noisy performance, tread more lightly on your lives, and unite our country. Four nations, standing together again, facing down, as we have so often in our past, the challenges of an insecure world. Committed to a calm and patient rebuilding. So with respect and humility, I invite you all to join this government of service in the mission of national renewal. Our work is urgent and we begin it today.

Other world leaders, including Joe Biden and Justin Trudeau, as well as Blair and Brown, congratulated Starmer upon his appointment as prime minister. One of his first acts was to declare the Rwanda asylum plan "dead": the Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, would establish a Border Security Command to tackle smuggling gangs which facilitate illegal migrant crossings over the English Channel. Starmer went on a tour of the four nations of the UK, meeting with leaders including John Swinney, Michelle O'Neill, and Vaughan Gething. He also met the twelve regional mayors and announced the establishment of the Council of the Nations and Regions. On 24 July 2024 he attended his first Prime Minister's Questions in the Commons.

Cabinet

Starmer set about appointing a new <u>Cabinet</u>, which first met on 6 July, and he completed his ministerial appointments on 7 July. Parliament was then recalled to meet on 9 July. Among Starmer's ministerial appointments were the scientist <u>Patrick Vallance</u> as <u>Minister of State</u> for Science, the rehabilitation campaigner James Timpson as <u>Minister of State</u> for Prisons, Parole

and Probation, and the international law expert Richard Hermer as Attorney General for England and Wales, who were created life peers to sit in the House of Lords. [146] The new government also contains a few ministers from the New Labour Blair/Brown governments, including Hilary Benn, Yvette Cooper, David Lammy, and Ed Miliband in Cabinet, and Jacqui Smith and Douglas Alexander as junior ministers. [147][148][149]



Starmer convening his first <u>Cabinet</u> meeting on 6 July 2024

Domestic policy

Domestically, Starmer said that his primary concerns would be economic growth, reforming the planning system, infrastructure, energy, healthcare, education, childcare, and strengthening workers' rights, as set out in Labour's 2024 election manifesto. The 2024 State Opening of Parliament outlined 39 bills that Labour proposed to introduce in the months ahead, including ones to renationalise the railways, to bring local bus services under local public control, to strengthen the rights of workers, to tackle illegal immigration, to reform the House of Lords, and to undertake a programme to speed up the delivery of "high quality infrastructure" and housing. In addition, a number of bills proposed by the previous Conservative government were also included, notably the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, which featured in the 2023 King's Speech, but had been abandoned when the election was called. [150][151] Skills England, a body whose objective will be to reduce the need for overseas employees by improving skills training for people in England, was launched on 22 July. [152][153]

Economy

The new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, accused the previous government of leaving a £21.9 billion "black hole", and announced on 29 July that certain winter fuel payments would be scrapped for around 10 million pensioners. [154][155] Following criticism of the plan, Starmer has defended the scrapping of these winter fuel payments, arguing that he had to make "tough decisions to stabilise the economy". [156][157] On 10 September the government benches defeated a Conservative Party motion in Parliament by a majority of 120 to block the measure. [158]



Starmer with Reeves, 6 July 2024

Starmer's Labour Government inherited a number of <u>ongoing industrial disputes</u> from the preceding <u>Conservative Government</u> and agreed pay deals with <u>trade unions</u> representing NHS and railway workers, ending strikes in the first few months of taking office. <u>[159]</u> In August 2024, Starmer's government agreed to increase public-sector worker pay by 5 to 7 per cent. <u>[160]</u>

On 10 October 2024, the Government introduced the Employment Rights Bill, expected to become an Act of Parliament in 2025. This includes an increase in minimum wages and a wide array of rights, such as immediate protection against unfair dismissal and the entitlement for employees to request flexible working arrangements, unless the employer can demonstrate that such arrangements are impractical. [161][162][163] Billions worth of investments in emerging growth sectors including AI and life sciences, and infrastructure were unveiled by businesses and

ministers at the government's inaugural International Investment Summit on 14 October 2024. World-renowned CEOs and investors from around the world convened with ministers, First Ministers, and local leaders at the Guildhall in London. [164]

The October 2024 budget was presented to the House of Commons by Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves on 30 October 2024. It covered Labour's fiscal plans, with a focus on investment, healthcare, education, childcare, sustainable energy, transport, and worker's rights enrichment. The National Minimum Wage is set to increase by 6.7 per cent (reaching £12.21 per hour) and a £22.6 billion increase in the day-to-day health budget was announced, with a £3.1 billion increase in the capital budget. That includes £1 billion for hospital repairs and rebuilding projects. [165] The government plans to allocate £5 billion for housing investment in the fiscal year 2025–26, with a focus on enhancing the availability of affordable housing. Education will receive £6.7 billion of capital investment, a 19 per cent real-terms increase. This includes £1.4 billion to rebuild more than 500 schools. [166]

The June 2025 <u>Spending Review</u> was presented to the House of Commons by the Chancellor, allocating day-to-day budgets for the years between 2025/26 and 2028/29 and capital budgets for the years between 2025/26 and 2029/30. It included £14.2 billion for a new nuclear power station at <u>Sizewell C^[167]</u>, £15 billion for transport projects outside London ^[168], and £39 billion over a decade for social and affordable housing. [169]

Immigration

One of Starmer's first acts was the cancellation of the controversial Rwanda asylum plan, describing it as "dead and buried". Cooper established the Border Security Command to tackle smuggling gangs which facilitate illegal migrant crossings over the English Channel. [139][140]

In a May 2025 speech and associated <u>white paper</u> on the topic of immigration, Starmer said that the UK risked becoming an "island of strangers", and that high immigration had done "incalculable damage" to society. [171][172] The white paper outlined changes aimed at reducing immigration, including training for people in the UK. [173][174][175] His language was criticised by the left for its perceived echoes of <u>Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood speech</u>. [176] In June, Starmer apologised for his "island of strangers" comment, saying that the phrase "wasn't right" and "I deeply regret using it". He said that he and his speechwriters had been unaware of the similarity with Powell's words. [176]

On 10 July 2025, Starmer announced that a new 'one in, one out' migrant deal with France would begin within weeks. [177] In early September 2025, it was reported that 3,567 people had arrived on the UK's shores since the deal with France was ratified in August, however returns had not yet commenced. [178] On 15 September 2025, the first 'one in, one out' migrant flight, which was due to fly one migrant from London to Paris on an Air France flight, was cancelled due to protests from charities and threats of legal action. [179] On 16 September 2025, deportation flights were cancelled again due to legal challenges and protests. [180] Further that day it was reported that a 25-year-old Eritrean asylum seeker who had arrived on a small boat on 12 August 2025, would not be deported as planned on the 17 September, after he won his High Court bid to have the removal temporarily blocked. [181][182]

Healthcare

On 11 September 2024 Starmer pledged that there would be no more money for the NHS without reform. In response to the report from a nine-week review conducted by the peer and NHS surgeon Lord Darzi, which said that the NHS in England was in a critical condition, Starmer said the solution was reform, not money, and that there will be no more money without reform. [183]

In Government, Starmer reaffirmed the outgoing Conservative government's commitment of no new HIV cases in the United Kingdom by 2030. On 10 February 2025 Starmer, alongside the singer and HIV activist Beverley Knight and the Terrence Higgins Trust chief executive Richard Angell, recorded himself taking a rapid HIV home test. This made Starmer the first serving British prime minister and serving G7 leader to take a test on camera. [184][185] In March 2025 Starmer, along with Health Secretary Wes Streeting announced a two-year plan to abolish NHS England, saying it would to reduce bureaucracy and increase funding available for more effective purposes within the service. [186][187]

Welfare and pensions

Starmer has declined to abolish the two-child benefit cap introduced by the Cameron-Clegg coalition government in 2013, citing financial reasons. [188][189][190] On 23 July 2024 Labour withdrew the whip from seven of its MPs who had supported an amendment tabled by the Scottish National Party's Westminster parliamentary leader Stephen Flynn to scrap it, with Flynn saying that scrapping the cap would immediately raise 300,000 children out of poverty. MPs rejected the SNP amendment by 363 votes to 103. [191] The seven Labour MPs suspended for six months were John McDonnell, Richard Burgon, Ian Byrne, Apsana Begum, Imran Hussain, Zarah Sultana, and Rebecca Long-Bailey, all of whom sat as independents, they all had the whip restored except from Sultana, Begum and McDonnell. [192] Starmer launched a Child Poverty Taskforce, in which expert officials from across government would work together on how best to support more than four million children living in poverty. [193]

In July 2025 the government's Universal Credit Bill passed the House of Commons. It will increase the standard rate of <u>Universal Credit</u>. The measures reduce the health-related aspect of universal credit for certain claimants, but they make sure that other parts of the benefit increase beyond inflation. [195]

Education

Starmer's government has imposed VAT on private school fees, expanded free school meals to 500,000 more children^[196], and opened 750 free breakfast clubs in primary schools.^[197] It also presided over an increase in tuition fees for higher education in England along with an increase in maintenance loans.^[198]

Criminal justice

Shortly after taking office, Starmer said that there were "too many prisoners", [199] and described the previous government as having acted "almost beyond recklessness". [200] Saying it would help manage prison overcrowding, the newly appointed Justice Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, announced the implementation of an early release scheme which allowed for prisoners in England and Wales to be released after serving 40 per cent of their sentences rather than the 50 per cent previously introduced under the last government. [201] Over 1,700 prisoners were released in September, with further releases expected in the following year. [202] It then emerged that one

prisoner released early under the scheme was charged with sexual assault relating to an alleged offence against a woman on the same day he was freed. [203] Starmer has defended the releasing of prisoners, and accused the previous government of having "broke[n] the prison system", with plans to build new prisons. [204][205]

2024 England and Northern Ireland riots

Following the 2024 Southport stabbing, in which three young girls were killed, Starmer described the incident as horrendous and shocking and thanked emergency services for their swift response. [206] He visited Southport and laid flowers at the scene, where he was heckled by some members of the public. [207] Starmer later wrote amidst the riots across England and Northern Ireland following the stabbing that those who had "hijacked the vigil for the victims" had "insulted the community as it grieves" and that rioters would feel the full force of the law. [208]



Starmer receives senior British police officers at 10 Downing Street, 1 August 2024.

On 1 August, and following a meeting with senior police officers, Starmer announced the establishment of a

National Violent Disorder Programme to facilitate greater cooperation between police forces when dealing with violent disorder. On 4 August Starmer stated that rioters "will feel the full force of the law" and that "You will regret taking part in this, whether directly or those whipping up this action online and then running away themselves". He added "I won't shy away from calling it what it is – far-right thuggery". Starmer later called an emergency response meeting of COBRA. After the COBRA meeting, Starmer ordered a "standing army" to be set up to tackle the ongoing "far-right" riots. This was possible under the special emergency powers which were first used 40 years ago under the Ridley Plan, to tackle striking miners in 1984 and 1985.

Starmer rejected calls from some MPs – including the Labour MP <u>Diane Abbott</u>, the <u>Reform UK</u> leader Nigel Farage and the Conservative MP <u>Dame Priti Patel</u> – to <u>recall Parliament</u> to <u>Westminster</u>. After he said "large social media companies and those who run them" were contributing to the disorder, <u>Elon Musk</u>, the owner of the social media website <u>X</u>, criticised Starmer for not condemning all participants and only blaming the <u>far-right</u>. Musk further said Starmer was not protecting all communities in the United Kingdom, which he said had a "two-tier" policing system. [217][218][219]

Acceptance of gifts

In September 2024, Starmer and fellow senior government ministers faced criticism for accepting gifts from Labour donors. Starmer also faced accusations of breaking parliamentary rules by not declaring £5,000 worth of clothes bought for his wife by the Labour donor Lord Alli. That same month, Sky News reported that Starmer had received £107,145 in gifts, benefits, and hospitality since December 2019, which was two-and-a-half times more than any other MP. [223]

Approval ratings

Despite winning a record amount of seats within Parliament, [224] Starmer has suffered from low favourability among the British public during his tenure as Prime Minister. [225] A YouGov poll conducted in July 2025 showed that his government's approval rating was sitting at -54 (a

disapproval rating of 63% and an approval rating of 13%).[226]

Some voters have objected to his attempted benefit reductions as part of Labour's Universal Credit Bill in July 2025^[227] and sections of his white paper speech on immigration in May 2025, when he was accused of echoing the 1968 Rivers of Blood speech by Enoch Powell and feeding into farright, anti-immigrant narratives by saying that uncontrolled immigration risked turning Britain into an "island of strangers". [228][229]

Other critics have accused Starmer's government of two-tier policing, which has led to these critics labelling him with the moniker "Two-Tier Keir". [230][231] Right-wing critics who subscribe to this theory such as Elon Musk state that the police use more heavy-handed tactics when dealing with right-wing protests when compared to left-wing protests. [232][233] Critics such as Jamie Driscoll believe that the police are more favourable to right-wing protests and more heavy-handed against left-wing protests and groups such as Palestine Action, which was proscribed by Starmer's government in 2025. [234][235][236]

Other allegations of two-tier policing were especially prevalent during the <u>Southport riots</u> in August 2024 and the subsequent arrest of rioters and some of their supporters, such as <u>Lucy Connolly</u>, along with the Epping protests in July 2025. [237][238] Starmer has also received disapproval from across the political spectrum for Britain's stagnant economy, [239] changes to farmer's inheritance taxes and the erosion of free speech as a result of the <u>Online Safety Act</u> 2023, the provisions of which were implemented by his government. [241][242][243]

Foreign policy

United States

In July 2024, following the 2024 general election, US President Joe Biden congratulated Starmer on "a hell of a victory". [244] Starmer and Biden discussed their shared commitment to the Special Relationship between the US and the UK, as well as their mutual support of Ukraine.

Following the attempted assassination of Donald Trump in July 2024, the former president of the United States at the time, Starmer posted on Twitter saying "Political violence in any form has no place in our societies" and extended his best wishes to Trump and his family. [245]



Starmer with US President Joe Biden in the Oval Office, 10 July 2024

In September 2024, during a visit to New York City to address the UN General Assembly, Starmer met the American Republican Party presidential candidate, Trump, at Trump Tower. Following the meeting, Starmer said it was "good" to have met with Trump and that the meeting was an opportunity for both Trump and Starmer to establish a working relationship. [246] Following Trump's election victory in the 2024 United States presidential election, Starmer called Trump to formally congratulate him on 6 November and was assured that the "special relationship" between the United Kingdom and United States "would continue to thrive". [247]

In February 2025 Starmer met with President Trump at the <u>White House</u> to discuss continued support to Ukraine and a potential peace deal. They additionally discussed a potential trade deal. He also presented a hand written letter from <u>King Charles III</u> inviting the President to a historic

second state visit to the UK. [248][249]

In June 2025 Starmer supported Israel's right to self-defence in the <u>Iran–Israel war</u> and <u>United States strikes on Iranian nuclear sites</u>, stating that "Iran can never be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon and the US has taken action to alleviate that threat". [250][251]

NATO

The first overseas meeting Starmer attended as prime minister was the 2024 NATO summit held in Washington from 9 to 11 July 2024. [252][253] On the flight to the summit, Starmer laid out a "cast iron" commitment to increase defence spending to the NATO target of 2.5 per cent of GDP in line with the NATO target, following a "root and branch" review of British armed forces. [254][255]

Europe

Since he became prime minister Starmer has sought to "reset" <u>UK relations</u> with the <u>European Union</u> following <u>Brexit</u>, which he opposed. He met with a number of <u>European leaders</u> during his first few months in office. [256][257]



Starmer with US President Donald Trump in the Oval Office, 27 February 2025



Starmer and Secretary-General <u>Jens</u>
Stoltenberg at the NATO summit in 2024

On 27 August 2024 Starmer and German Chancellor <u>Olaf Scholz</u> announced talks towards revising a <u>Germany-UK</u> co-operation agreement covering areas including defence, energy security, science and technology. [258]

Ukraine-Russia war

At the 2024 NATO summit, Starmer signalled that <u>Ukraine</u> could use British <u>Storm Shadow missiles</u>, <u>sent by HMG by way of military aid</u>, to strike military targets inside <u>Russia</u>, during the <u>Russian invasion of Ukraine</u>. [259] In a meeting with <u>Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Starmer called for an "irreversible" <u>membership strategy</u> for Ukraine to join NATO. [260]</u>

Following a <u>heated meeting</u> between US President Trump and President Zelenskyy at the White House, Starmer organised a <u>summit of European leaders in London</u>. Among the things discussed at the summit were continued



Starmer with <u>Ukrainian President</u> Volodymyr Zelenskyy, 10 July 2024

support for Ukraine, security guarantees for the country and peace efforts. [261]

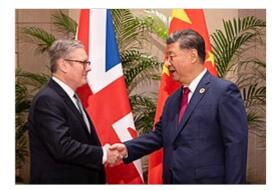
China

In November 2024, Starmer met Chinese President $\underline{\text{Xi Jinping}}$ at the $\underline{\text{G20 summit in Rio de}}$ $\underline{\text{Janeiro}}$ and told him he wanted to build a 'consistent, durable, respectful' relationship with $\underline{\text{China.}}^{[262]}$

Gaza war

On the <u>Gaza war</u>, Starmer has supported Israel's right to self-defence and has not blocked all arms sales to Israel. He has also condemned some of Israel's actions, called for a ceasefire, committed humanitarian aid to Gaza, and supported a two-state solution. [263][264][265]

In October 2023, shortly after the <u>Hamas attack on Israel</u>, Starmer said Israel had the "right to defend" itself and suggested Israel had the right to cut off power and water from the <u>Gaza Strip</u>, but added "everything should be done within international law". [266] This sparked significant



Starmer meeting Xi Jinping

controversy within his party, and several Labour councillors resigned in protest. Starmer then said that he was referring to the right to self-defence, "I was not saying that Israel had the right to cut off water, food, fuel or medicines". [267]

When he became Prime Minister, Starmer told Israeli Prime Minister <u>Benjamin Netanyahu</u> of the "urgent need for a ceasefire, the return of hostages and an immediate increase in the volume of humanitarian aid". He also assured Netanyahu that the UK would continue its "vital cooperation to deter malign threats" with Israel. [268]

Under Starmer's premiership, the licences of some <u>British arms sales to Israel</u> were suspended in September 2024 because of a "clear risk" that the weapons could be used to violate international law. <u>Foreign Secretary</u> David Lammy announced the UK Government's suspension of 30 of 350 arms export licences to Israel, affecting equipment such as parts for fighter jets, helicopters and drones. [269] However, in the last three months of 2024, UK arms licenses to Israel totalled £127.6 million, exceeding the £115 million worth of military equipment sent to Israel in the prior four years, 2020 to 2023. [270]

In November 2024 Starmer's government stated that Netanyahu would be arrested if he travels to the UK, after the International Criminal Court issued an international arrest warrant for him for alleged war crimes. [271]

In May 2025 Starmer issued a joint statement with Emmanuel Macron and Mark Carney condemning Israel's renewed offensive against Gaza. He called for Israel to immediately stop its military operations and to immediately allow humanitarian aid into Gaza. The statement condemned remarks by members of the Israeli government suggesting the destruction in Gaza would lead to relocation of its population as "abhorrent" and against international law. He said his government would take "concrete actions" if Israel continued its "egregious actions". [272] Netanyahu accused Starmer of siding with Hamas, saying "you're on the wrong side of justice, you're on the wrong side of humanity and you're on the wrong side of history". [273]

On 5 July, the government made the protest group <u>Palestine Action</u> a "<u>proscribed</u> organisation" under the <u>Terrorism Act 2000</u>, following its vandalism of military aircraft at <u>RAF Brize Norton</u> alleged to support the Israeli military. On 6 August, at a Labour <u>National Executive Committee</u> meeting, Starmer said the group had targeted Jewish-owned businesses, and that the ban was not meant "to stifle debate on Palestine". On 9 August, the <u>Metropolitan Police</u> made 532 arrests, its most in at least a decade, at a protest in <u>Parliament Square</u>. Of these 522 were for "displaying an item in support of a proscribed organisation", as most protestors carried placards reading "I

oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action." <u>Amnesty International</u> and <u>Liberty</u> condemned the proscription as infringing on <u>freedom of speech</u>. <u>[276][277]</u> Protests against the banning of Palestine Action continued into September 2025, with 890 arrests in one weekend. <u>[278][279]</u>

On 29 July 2025, Starmer announced that the United Kingdom would conditionally recognise the State of Palestine at the September opening of the United Nations General Assembly, contingent on Israel's compliance with a ceasefire, the facilitation of humanitarian aid, and a commitment to a two-state solution. The announcement followed a letter signed by 225 MPs, including over half of Labour, calling for immediate recognition. One of its coordinators, Sarah Champion, criticised the conditionality, while Netanyahu and Conservative politicians condemned the move as rewarding Hamas. [280] On 21 September, Starmer announced that the United Kingdom formally recognised Palestine as an independent state. [281]

Criticisms

In September 2025, following the Angela Rayner tax scandal that led to her resignation and a Labour Party deputy leadership election, the subsequent cabinet reshuffle, and the dismissal of Peter Mandelson as British ambassador to the United States over the latter's association with Jeffrey Epstein, criticisms of Starmer's leadership became more prominent within the Labour party. MPs reportedly viewed underperformance in the 2026 United Kingdom local elections and next Senedd election as a likely catalyst for a leadership challenge. Clive Lewis also became the first Labour MP to publicly call for Starmer's resignation. On 13 September, The Guardian reported that plans to replace Starmer had begun among groups of MPs.

Political positions

Starmer's political positions significantly changed after the 2020 Labour Party leadership election, which he won on a ten-pledge left-leaning platform. Most of the pledges, including increasing income tax on the top 5 per cent of earners, abolishing university tuition fees, and support for freedom of movement, were abandoned or substantially changed during Starmer's tenure as Labour and Opposition leader. Starmer defended changing positions on these issues by stating that the changing economic circumstances made these pledges unrealistic. [284][285][286][287]

Some commentators, judging that Starmer has led his party towards the political centre in order to improve its electability, attempt to liken what he has accomplished in this regard with Tony Blair's development of New Labour. [288] Others regard his changes of policy as testament that Starmer holds no clearly defined philosophy. [289][290][291] A third group think that Starmer does subscribe to a definite ideology and that it is towards the left end of the socialist spectrum, arguing that "Labour under Starmer has advanced a politics of anti-neoliberalism like that of Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell", and that Starmer "differs markedly from New Labour" in "aspiring to restructure an economic model perceived to have failed". [288]

Figures including Starmer's former boss – the barrister Geoffrey Robertson^[292] – his former advisor Simon Fletcher, and the journalist and broadcaster Peter Oborne, have described Starmer as exhibiting an authoritarian approach. In office, he initiated plans to garner support from authoritarian-leaning voters. A 2025 pre-conference *Guardian* editorial stated Starmer

generally took an Anglo-American not European position, and had referenced the American centrist <u>Abundance</u> book and buzzword for developing prosperity by deregulation, rapid infrastructure development and market-led growth. [297]

Despite the lack of consensus as yet about the character and even existence of Starmer's ideology, it has acquired a neologism, Starmerism, and his supporters have been called Starmerites.

[298][299]
Starmer's advisor Morgan McSweeney is often credited with having significantly influenced Starmer's political positions.
[300][301][302][303]

In April 2023 Starmer gave an interview to *The Economist* on defining Starmerism. [299][304] In this interview, two main strands of Starmerism were identified. [304] The first strand focused on a critique of the British state for being too ineffective and over-centralised. The answer to this critique was to base governance on five main missions to be followed over two terms of government: these missions would determine all government policy. The second strand was the adherence to an economic policy of "modern supply-side economics" based on expanding economic productivity by increasing participation in the labour market, reducing inequality, expanding skills, mitigating the impact of Brexit and simplifying the construction planning process. [304]



Keir Starmer and Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education visit primary school children in Orpington.

In June 2023 Starmer gave an interview to <u>Time</u> where he was asked to define Starmerism, stating: "Recognizing that our economy needs to be fixed. Recognizing that [solving] climate change isn't just an obligation; it's the single biggest opportunity that we've got for our country going forward. Recognizing that public services need to be reformed, that every child and every place should have the best opportunities and that we need a safe environment, safe streets, *et cetera*." [305]

Starmer supports social ownership and investment in the UK's public services. [306][307][308] He has remained committed to renationalising the railways and local bus services, the creation of a publicly owned energy company, and stricter regulation of water and energy companies. [309][310][311][312] He advocates for reducing the voting age to 16, a change that is set to be implemented in the UK by the next general election. [313]

Starmer has repeatedly emphasised the reform of public institutions (against a <u>tax and spend</u> approach), localism, and <u>devolution</u>. He has pledged to <u>abolish the House of Lords</u>, which he describes as "indefensible", during the first term of a Labour government and to replace it with a directly elected Assembly of the Regions and Nations, the details of which will be subject to scrutiny by <u>public consultation</u>. He criticised the Conservatives for creating <u>peerages</u> for "cronies and donors". [314] Starmer tasked the former Labour prime minister Gordon Brown with recommending <u>British constitutional reforms</u>, [315] whose report was published in 2022. Endorsed and promoted by Starmer, Brown's report recommended the abolition of the House of Lords, extending greater powers to local councils



Starmer visits Trydan Gwyrdd Cymru Wind Farm with <u>First Minister of Wales</u>, Baroness Eluned Morgan in Carmarthenshire, to promote <u>Great British Energy</u>.

and mayors, and deeper <u>devolution</u> to the <u>countries of the United Kingdom</u>. [316] Labour's 2024 election manifesto committed to the removal of the <u>remaining hereditary peers</u> from the <u>chamber</u>, setting a <u>mandatory retirement age</u> of <u>80</u>, and beginning a consultation on replacing the Lords with a "more representative" body. [317]

Starmer strongly favours green policies to tackle <u>climate change</u> and <u>decarbonise</u> the British economy. He has committed to eliminate fossil fuels from the UK electricity grid by 2030. [318][319]

Starmer has supported policies to improve animal welfare. [320][321] However, in his government's first year, campaigners criticised his government for failing to implement his proposals. [322]

In a July 2024 statement to <u>PinkNews</u> ahead of the 2024 election, Starmer stated the Labour Party supported <u>LGBT rights</u>, including strengthening protections against hate crimes targeting members of the <u>LGBT community</u>, "modernising" the "intrusive and outdated" gender recognition framework, and a proposed, "trans-inclusive" ban on <u>conversion therapy</u>. [323][324] After taking office, the Labour Party reiterated plans for the ban as part of the King's speech. [325][326][327]

The government continued to block the Gender Recognition Reform Bill in Scotland, [328][324][329] while Starmer personally has ruled out allowing transgender people to self-identify, and has stated that trans women should not have the right to use women-only spaces. [330] Following the Supreme Court decision of *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers* on 16 April 2025, Starmer, through a spokesperson, stated that he no longer believed that transgender women could be considered women, in accordance with the Court's ruling that the definition of a woman in the Equality Act 2010 only constituted "biological women". [331]

After the <u>murder of George Floyd</u> by the police officer <u>Derek Chauvin</u> in the United States, against which numerous protests were held in the <u>Western world</u>, Starmer supported the <u>Black Lives Matter movement</u>, and <u>took the knee</u> alongside his deputy, Angela Rayner. [332] One year on from Floyd's murder, Starmer promised a Race Equality Act, which he said would be a "defining cause" for his Labour Government. [333]

In the wake of the <u>murder</u> of Sarah Everard in March 2021, Starmer called for longer sentences for rape and sexual violence. [334] Starmer said he wanted to reduce crime, maintaining that "too many people do not feel safe in their streets". [335] He has pledged to halve the rates of violence against women and girls, halve the rates of serious violent crime, halve the incidents of knife crime, increase confidence in the criminal justice system, and create a 'Charging Commission' [336] which would be "tasked with coming up with reforms to reverse the decline in the number of offences being solved". [337] He has also committed to placing specialist domestic violence workers in the control rooms of every police force responding to 999 calls to support victims of abuse. [338] In June 2024 Starmer pledged to reduce the record high level of legal immigration to the UK, [339] and aims to reduce net migration by improving training and skills for British workers. [340][341]

In December 2023, Starmer used Margaret Thatcher, as well as Tony Blair and Clement Attlee, as examples of how politicians can effect "meaningful change" by acting "in service of the British people, rather than dictating to them". [342][343] Starmer has described the Labour Party as "deeply patriotic" and credits its most successful leaders, Attlee, Harold Wilson, and Blair, for policies "rooted in the everyday concerns of working people". [335] In a speech in May 2023, Starmer stated: [344]

Don't mistake me, the very best of progressive politics is found in our determination to push Britain forward. A hunger, an ambition, that we can seize the opportunities of tomorrow and make them work for working people. But this ambition must never become unmoored from working people's need for stability, for order, security. The Conservative Party can no longer claim to be conservative. It conserves nothing we value — not our rivers and seas, not our NHS or BBC, not our families, not our nation. We must understand there are precious things — in our way of life, in our environment, in our communities — that it is our responsibility to protect and preserve and to pass on to future generations. If that sounds Conservative, then let me tell you: I don't care.

-Keir Starmer

He is a member of the Fabian Society. [345]

Personal life

Starmer met <u>Victoria Alexander</u>, then a <u>solicitor</u>, in the early 2000s while he was a senior barrister with <u>Doughty Street Chambers</u> when they were working on the same case. They became engaged in 2004 and married on 6 May 2007 at the Fennes Estate just north of <u>Bocking, Essex</u>. [346][347][348] The couple have two children: a son, who was born a year after their wedding, and a daughter, born two years later. Until moving in to Downing Street, the couple resided in <u>Kentish Town</u>, north London, where they own a townhouse. [349][350][351]

Starmer is a <u>pescatarian</u>, and his wife is a <u>vegetarian</u>. They raised their children as vegetarians until they were 10 years old, at which point they were given the <u>option of eating meat</u>. [352] In an interview during the 2024 general election campaign, Starmer said that his biggest fear about becoming prime minister was how it may impact



Starmer and his wife, Victoria, outside 10 Downing Street, 5 July 2024

on his children, due to their "difficult ages" and how it would be easier if they were younger or older. [353] During the 2024 general election campaign Starmer said in an interview that he would try to avoid working after 6 pm on Fridays in order to observe Shabbat dinners and spend time with his family. [354][355]

Starmer is an atheist, and has chosen to take a "solemn affirmation" (rather than an oath) of allegiance to the monarch. [356] He has said that although he does not believe in God, he recognises the power of faith to bring people together and has been supportive in raising his children in the Jewish faith. [357][358][359] He also accompanies his family to services at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in North London. [354][360] Starmer is a keen footballer, having played for Homerton Academicals, a north London amateur team. [13] He supports the Premier League football club Arsenal and was a season-ticket holder at the Emirates Stadium before becoming Prime Minister. [6][361] Starmer has written a few articles for The Guardian and other newspapers including The Sunday Telegraph. [362] From 1986 to 1987, Starmer served as the editor of Socialist

<u>Alternatives</u>, a <u>Trotskyist</u> radical magazine produced by an organisation under the same name, which represented the British section of the <u>International Revolutionary Marxist Tendency</u> (IRMT). [363]

Since September 2024, Starmer and his family have kept a <u>Siberian cat</u>, named Prince, at 10 Downing Street. [364][365]

On 26 December 2024, Starmer's brother Nick died following a cancer diagnosis. Starmer issued a statement the following day, paying tribute to him. [366]

Awards and honours

In 2002 Starmer took silk being appointed Queen's Counsel (now King's Counsel). [367] Having received the Bar Council's Sydney Elland Goldsmith Award in 2005 for his outstanding contribution to pro bono work in challenging the death penalty in Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, and the Caribbean, he was elected an Honorary Fellow of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, in 2022. [370] In 2025 Time magazine listed him as one of the world's 100 most influential people. [371]

For "services to law and criminal justice", Starmer was knighted and appointed a <u>Knight</u> Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB) in the 2014 New Year Honours, [47][372] enabling him to wear the Order of the Bath badge and star on appropriate occasions. [373]

Honorary degrees awarded to Keir Starmer

Date	School	Degree
21 July 2011	University of Essex	Doctor of University (D.U.)[374]
16 July 2012	University of Leeds	Doctor of Laws (LL.D.)[375]
19 November 2013	University of East London	Doctor of Laws (LL.D.)[46]
19 December 2013	London School of Economics	Doctor of Laws (LL.D.)[376][377]
14 July 2014	University of Reading	Doctor of Laws (LL.D.)[378]
18 November 2014	University of Worcester	Doctor of University (D.Univ.)[379]

Starmer was sworn of the <u>Privy Council</u> on 19 July 2017, [380] according him the <u>honorific prefix</u> "The Right Honourable". [381]

See also

Electoral history of Sir Keir Starmer

Notes

a. /ˈkɪər/ <u>Û</u> KEER

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Further reading

- Baldwin, Tom (2024). *Keir Starmer: The Biography*. HarperCollins Publishers. <u>ISBN</u> <u>978-</u>0008661021.
- Eagleton, Oliver (2022). *The Starmer Project: A Journey to the Right* (paperback ed.). Verso Books. ISBN 978-1-83976-464-6.

External links

- Official website (https://keirstarmer.com)
- Profile (https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/keir-starmer/4514) at Parliament of the United Kingdom
- Contributions in Parliament (https://hansard.parliament.uk/search/MemberContributions?memberId=4514) at Hansard
- Contributions in Parliament (https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/people/4514) at <u>Hansard</u>
 1803–2005
- Voting record (https://www.publicwhip.org.uk/mp.php?mpn=Keir Starmer) at Public Whip
- Record in Parliament (https://www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/keir starmer) at TheyWorkForYou
- Appearances (https://www.c-span.org/person/?100494) on C-SPAN

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