

# Jeremy Corbyn

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## Jeremy Corbyn

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- *Jeremy Bernard Corbyn PC MP (/ˈkɔːrbɪn/; born 26 May 1949) is a British politician serving as Leader of the Labour Party and Leader of the Opposition since 2015.*
- *Born in Chippenham and raised in both Wiltshire and Shropshire, Corbyn joined Labour as a teenager.*

Jeremy Bernard Corbyn PC MP (/ˈkɔːrbɪn/; born 26 May 1949) is a British politician serving as Leader of the Labour Party and Leader of the Opposition since 2015. Corbyn was first elected Member of Parliament (MP) for Islington North in 1983. Ideologically, he identifies himself as a democratic socialist.

Born in Chippenham and raised in both Wiltshire and Shropshire, Corbyn joined Labour as a teenager. Moving to London, he became a trade union representative. In 1974, he was elected to Haringey Council and also became Secretary of Hornsey Constituency Labour Party, until elected as the MP for Islington North in 1983. His activism has included roles in Anti-Fascist Action, the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and advocating for a united Ireland. As a backbench MP, he frequently voted against the Labour whip, including "New Labour" governments under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. He chaired the Stop the War Coalition from 2011 to 2015.

Corbyn was elected Labour leader in 2015. Taking the party to the left, he advocated renationalisation of public utilities and the railways, a less interventionist military policy, and reversals of austerity cuts to welfare and public services. Although critical of the European Union, he supported continued membership in the 2016 referendum. After Labour MPs sought to remove him in 2016, he won a second leadership contest. In the 2017 general election, Labour again finished as the second-largest party in parliament, but increased their share of the vote to 40%, resulting in a net gain of 30 seats and a hung parliament. Corbyn has been criticised following allegations of antisemitism in the Labour Party and for alleged antisemitic associations prior to becoming leader. He has asserted his opposition to antisemitism and commitment to rooting it out of the party.

## Early life

- *Corbyn joined the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) in 1966 whilst at school and later became one of its three vice-chairs and subsequently vice-president.*
- *Corbyn was born in Chippenham and brought up in nearby Kington St Michael in Wiltshire.*
- *After school, Corbyn worked briefly as a reporter for a local newspaper, the Newport and Market Drayton Advertiser.*
- *His brother Piers Corbyn is a physicist, meteorologist and weather forecaster.*

Corbyn was born in Chippenham and brought up in nearby Kington St Michael in Wiltshire. He is the youngest of the four sons of Naomi Loveday (née Josling; 1915–1987), a maths teacher, and David Benjamin Corbyn (1915–1986), an electrical engineer and expert in power rectifiers. His brother Piers Corbyn is a physicist, meteorologist and weather forecaster. His parents were Labour Party members and peace campaigners who met in the 1930s at a committee meeting in support of the Spanish Republic at Conway Hall during the Spanish Civil War. When Corbyn was seven years old, the family moved to Pave Lane in Shropshire, where his father bought Yew Tree Manor, a 17th-century country house which was once part of the Duke of Sutherland's Lilleshall estate.

Corbyn was educated at Castle House School, an independent preparatory school near Newport, Shropshire, before attending Adams' Grammar School as a day student. While still at school, he became active in The Wrekin constituency Young Socialists, his local Labour Party, and the League Against Cruel Sports. He joined the Labour Party at age 16 and achieved two E-grade A-Levels, the lowest-possible passing grade, before leaving school at 18. Corbyn joined the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) in 1966 whilst at school and later became one of its three vice-chairs and subsequently vice-president.

After school, Corbyn worked briefly as a reporter for a local newspaper, the Newport and Market Drayton Advertiser. At around the age of 19 he spent two years doing Voluntary Service Overseas in Jamaica as a youth worker and geography teacher. He subsequently travelled through Latin America in 1969 and 1970, visiting Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile. Whilst in Brazil he participated in a student demonstration in São Paulo against the Brazilian military government. He also attended a May Day march in Santiago, where the atmosphere around Salvador Allende's Popular Unity alliance which swept to power in the Chilean elections of 1970 made an impression on him: "(I) noticed something very different from anything I had experienced... What Popular Unity and Allende had done was weld together the folk tradition, the song tradition, the artistic tradition and the intellectual tradition".

## Early career and political activities

- *In May 1982, when Corbyn was chairman of the Constituency Labour Party, Ali was given a party card signed by Corbyn; in November the local party voted by 17 to 14 to insist on Ali's membership "up to and including the point of disbandment of the party".*

- *Corbyn became the local Labour Party's agent and organiser, and had responsibility for the 1979 general election campaign in Hornsey.*

Returning to the UK in 1971, he worked as an official for the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers. Corbyn began a course in Trade Union Studies at North London Polytechnic but left after a year without a degree after a series of arguments with his tutors over the curriculum. He worked as a trade union organiser for the National Union of Public Employees and Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, where his union was approached by Tony Benn and "encouraged ... to produce a blueprint for workers' control of British Leyland"; the plans did not proceed after Benn was moved to a different Department.

He was appointed a member of a district health authority and in early 1974, at the age of 24, he was elected to Haringey Council in South Hornsey ward. After boundary changes in 1978 he was re-elected in Haringay ward as councillor, remaining so until 1983. As a delegate from Hornsey to the Labour Party conference in 1978, Corbyn successfully moved a motion calling for dentists to be employed by the NHS rather than private contractors. He also spoke in another debate, describing a motion calling for greater support for law and order as "more appropriate to the National Front than to the Labour Party".

Corbyn became the local Labour Party's agent and organiser, and had responsibility for the 1979 general election campaign in Hornsey.

Around this time, he became involved with the London Labour Briefing, where he was a contributor. Described by The Times in 1981 as "Briefing's founder", The Economist in a 1982 article named Corbyn as "Briefing's general secretary figure", as did a profile on Corbyn compiled by parliamentary biographer Andrew Roth in 2004, which alleges that he joined the editorial board as General Secretary in 1979. Michael Crick in his 2016 edition of Militant says Corbyn was "a member of the editorial board", as does Lansley, Goss and Wolmar's 1989 work, The Rise and Fall of the Municipal Left. However, Corbyn said these reports were inaccurate in 2017, telling Sophy Ridge "I read the magazine. I wrote for the magazine. I was not a member of the editorial board. I didn't agree with it."

He worked on Tony Benn's unsuccessful deputy leadership campaign in 1981. He was keen to allow former International Marxist Group member Tariq Ali to join the party, despite Labour's National Executive having declared him unacceptable, and declared that "so far as we are concerned ... he's a member of the party and he'll be issued with a card." In May 1982, when Corbyn was chairman of the Constituency Labour Party, Ali was given a party card signed by Corbyn; in November the local party voted by 17 to 14 to insist on Ali's membership "up to and including the point of disbandment of the party".

In the July 1982 edition of Briefing, Corbyn opposed expulsions of the Trotskyist and entryist group Militant, saying that "If expulsions are in order for Militant, they should apply to us too." In the same year, he was the "provisional convener" of "Defeat the Witch-Hunt Campaign", based at Corbyn's then address.

## Parliamentary backbencher (1983–2015)

### Labour in opposition (1983–97)

- *Corbyn was given a medallion at the end of the strike by the miners in recognition of his help.*
- *In May 2015, he said that "the Star is the most precious and only voice we have in the daily media".*
- *Corbyn responded, saying that: "It's not a fashion parade, it's not a gentleman's club, it's not a bankers' institute, it's a place where the people are represented."*

Corbyn was selected as the Labour Party candidate for the constituency of Islington North, in February 1982, winning the final ballot by 39 votes against 35 for GLC councillor Paul Boateng, who in 1987 became one of the first three Black British MPs. At the 1983 general election he was elected Member of Parliament for Islington North, after defeating the incumbent Michael O'Halloran and immediately joined the socialist Campaign Group, later becoming secretary of the group. Shortly after being elected to parliament, he began writing a weekly column for the left-wing Morning Star newspaper. In May 2015, he said that "the Star is the most precious and only voice we have in the daily media". In February 2017, Morning Star said about Corbyn: "He has been bullied, betrayed and ridiculed, and yet he carries on with the same grace and care he always shows to others – however objectionable their behaviour and treatment of him might be."

In 1983, Corbyn spoke out on a "no socialism without gay liberation" platform and continued to campaign for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights.

He was a campaigner against apartheid in South Africa, serving on the National Executive of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and was arrested in 1984 while demonstrating outside South Africa House, leading, decades later, to a viral image of Corbyn being arrested circulated by supporters on social media. This was as a member of the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group (CLAAG) who carried out a "non-stop picket" for 1,408 days to campaign for Nelson Mandela's release from prison. The Anti-Apartheid Movement did not support this protest, as they had agreed not to demonstrate within 30 feet of the embassy, and the picket failed to gain support from the London ANC or Mandela following his release from prison in 1990.

He supported the 1984–85 miners' strike and, in 1985, he invited striking miners into House of Commons gallery who were expelled for shouting: "Coal not dole". Corbyn was given a medallion at the end of the strike by the miners in recognition of his help.

In 1985, he was appointed national secretary of the newly launched Anti-Fascist Action.

During the BBC's Newsnight in 1984, Conservative MP Terry Dicks asserted that so-called Labour scruffs (such as Corbyn, who at this time was known for wearing an old polo-necked sweater to the Commons) should be banned from addressing the House of Commons unless they maintained higher standards. Corbyn responded, saying that: "It's not a fashion parade,

it's not a gentleman's club, it's not a bankers' institute, it's a place where the people are represented."

## Irish politics

- *In the 1980s Corbyn took a keen interest in the conflict in Northern Ireland.*
- *He wanted to develop dialogue with the Irish Republican Party Sinn Féin and so, when Gerry Adams became the first Sinn Féin MP in 1983, Corbyn met with Adams at Westminster along with a number of other Labour MPs.*
- *In the early 1990s, MI5 opened a temporary file on Corbyn to monitor his links to the IRA.*

In the 1980s Corbyn took a keen interest in the conflict in Northern Ireland. He wanted to develop dialogue with the Irish Republican Party Sinn Féin and so, when Gerry Adams became the first Sinn Féin MP in 1983, Corbyn met with Adams at Westminster along with a number of other Labour MPs. In 1984, Corbyn and Ken Livingstone invited Adams, two convicted IRA volunteers and other members of Sinn Féin to Westminster. The meeting took place three weeks after the Brighton hotel bombing, an attack on the Conservative Party leadership carried out by the IRA that killed five people. He became known during the 1980s for his work on behalf of the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six, who were eventually found to have been wrongly convicted of responsibility for fatal IRA bombings in England in the mid-70s. In the run up to the 2017 general election, Corbyn said that he had "never met the IRA", although Shadow Home Secretary Diane Abbott later clarified that although he had met members of the IRA, "he met with them in their capacity as activists in Sinn Féin".

In 1986, Corbyn was arrested with 15 demonstrators protesting against the trial of a group of IRA members including the Brighton Bomber Patrick Magee. Magee would be found guilty of murdering five people. After refusing police requests to move from outside the court, Corbyn and the other protesters were arrested for obstruction and held for five hours before being released on bail, but were not charged. Following the 1987 Loughgall ambush, in which eight IRA members and one civilian were shot dead by the British Army in an operation to defend a police station, Corbyn attended a commemoration by the Wolfe Tone Society and stated "I'm happy to commemorate all those who died fighting for an independent Ireland."

In the early 1990s, MI5 opened a temporary file on Corbyn to monitor his links to the IRA. The Metropolitan Police's Special Branch monitored Corbyn for two decades, as he was "deemed to be a subversive", someone who might "undermine ... Parliamentary democracy". He appeared at a number of Republican protest events. According to The Sunday Times, following research in Irish and Republican archives, Corbyn was involved in over 72 events connected with Sinn Féin, or other pro-republican groups, during the period of the IRA's paramilitary campaign.

He voted against the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement, saying "We believe that the agreement strengthens rather than weakens the border between the six and the 26 counties, and those

of us who wish to see a United Ireland oppose the agreement for that reason." In 1998, he supported and voted for the Good Friday Agreement, saying he looked forward to "peace, hope and reconciliation in Ireland in the future."

### **Israeli embassy bombers**

- *Corbyn supported the campaign to overturn the convictions of Jawad Botmeh and Samar Alami for the 1994 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in London; Botmeh and Alami had admitted possessing explosives and guns but denied they were for use in Britain.*
- *Corbyn signed five early day motions in support of their case between 2002 and 2006, raising issues of public interest and calling for their parole.*

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### **Poll tax protests and select committee membership**

- *Corbyn sat on the Social Security Select Committee from 1992 to 1997, the London Regional Select Committee from 2009 to 2010, and the Justice Select Committee from 2010 to 2015.*
- *In 1990, Corbyn opposed the poll tax (formally known as the Community Charge) and nearly went to jail for not paying the tax.*

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*Corbyn in 2006*

### **Labour in government (1997–2010)**

- *Between 1997 and 2010, during the most recent Labour Government, Corbyn was the Labour MP who voted most often against the party whip, including three-line whip votes.*
- *He was the most rebellious Labour MP in the 1997–2001 Parliament, the 2001–2005 Parliament and the 2005–2010 Parliament, defying the whip 428 times while Labour was in power.*
- *In 2005 he was identified as the second most rebellious Labour MP of all time when the party was in government.*

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while Labour was in power. Jacobin described him as "a figure who for decades challenged them [Labour Party elites] from the backbench as one of the most rebellious left-wing members of parliament."

### Stop the War Coalition and anti-war activism

- *He was elected chair of the coalition in succession to Andrew Murray in September 2011, but resigned once he became Leader of the Labour Party in September 2015.*
- *In 2006, Corbyn was one of 12 Labour MPs to support Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party's call for a parliamentary inquiry into the Iraq War.*
- *In 2002, Corbyn reported unrest : "there is disquiet...about issues of foreign policy" among some members of the Labour party.*

In October 2001, Corbyn was elected to the steering committee of the Stop the War Coalition, which was formed to oppose the Afghanistan War which started later that year. In 2002, Corbyn reported unrest : "there is disquiet...about issues of foreign policy" among some members of the Labour party. He cited "the deployment of troops to Afghanistan and the threat of bombing Iraq" as examples. He was vehemently opposed to the Iraq War in 2003, and spoke at dozens of anti-war rallies in Britain and overseas. He spoke at the February anti-Iraq War protest which was claimed to be the largest such protest in British political history. In 2006, Corbyn was one of 12 Labour MPs to support Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party's call for a parliamentary inquiry into the Iraq War. He was elected chair of the coalition in succession to Andrew Murray in September 2011, but resigned once he became Leader of the Labour Party in September 2015.

### Parliamentary groups and activism

- *Corbyn was chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on the Chagos Islands, chair of the APPG on Mexico, Vice-Chair of the APPG on Latin America and vice-chair of the APPG on Human Rights.*
- *Ofcom ruled in November 2010 that Corbyn did not show due impartiality when he appeared on Press TV as a guest on George Galloway's weekly show.*

Corbyn is a member of a number of Parliamentary Trade Union Groups: he is sponsored by several trade unions, including UNISON, Unite and the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers. He is a supporter of the Unite Against Fascism pressure group. Corbyn was chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on the Chagos Islands, chair of the APPG on Mexico, Vice-Chair of the APPG on Latin America and vice-chair of the APPG on Human Rights. He has advocated for the rights of the forcibly-removed Chagossians to return to the British Indian Ocean Territory.

Corbyn hosted a call-in show on Press TV, an Iranian government television channel, from 2009 to 2012, for which he was paid up to £20,000, according to the register of members'



interests at the House of Commons. Corbyn's final appearance was six months after the network had its UK broadcasting license revoked by Ofcom for its part in filming the detention and torture of Maziar Bahari, an Iranian journalist. Ofcom ruled in November 2010 that Corbyn did not show due impartiality when he appeared on Press TV as a guest on George Galloway's weekly show.

## Labour in opposition (2010–15)

- *Corbyn was one of 16 signatories to an open letter to Ed Miliband in January 2015 calling for Labour to make a commitment to opposing further austerity, to take rail franchises back into public ownership, and to strengthen collective bargaining arrangements.*
- *Before becoming party leader Corbyn had been returned as Member of Parliament for Islington North seven times, gaining 60.24% of the vote and a majority of 21,194 in the 2015 general election.*

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## Leadership of the Labour Party (2015–present)

### Leadership election

- *At the Second Reading of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill in July 2015, Corbyn joined 47 Labour MPs to oppose the Bill, describing it as "rotten and indefensible", whilst the other three leadership candidates abstained under direction from interim leader Harriet Harman.*
- *Following the Labour Party's defeat at the general election on 7 May 2015, Ed Miliband resigned as its party leader, triggering a leadership election.*
- *Corbyn was elected party leader in a landslide victory on 12 September 2015 with 59.5% of first-preference votes in the first round of voting.*

Following the Labour Party's defeat at the general election on 7 May 2015, Ed Miliband resigned as its party leader, triggering a leadership election. It was reported in media sources that Corbyn was considering standing as a candidate, having been disillusioned by the lack of a left-wing voice. Corbyn confirmed to his local newspaper, The Islington Tribune, that he would stand in the election on a "clear anti-austerity platform". He also said he would vote to scrap the Trident nuclear weapons system and would "seek to withdraw from Nato". He suggested that Britain should establish a national investment bank to boost house-building and improve economic growth and lift wages in areas that had less

investment in infrastructure. He would also aim to eliminate the current budget deficit over time and restore the 50p top rate of income tax. He added: "This decision is in response to an overwhelming call by Labour Party members who want to see a broader range of candidates and a thorough debate about the future of the party. I am standing to give Labour Party members a voice in this debate". He indicated that, if he were elected, policies that he put forward would need to be approved by party members before being adopted and that he wanted to "implement the democratic will of our party". The other candidates were Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, Shadow Health Secretary Andy Burnham and Shadow Care Minister Liz Kendall. Corbyn had the lowest number of nominations from fellow MPs of any Labour Party Leader, and several who nominated him later claimed to have cleared him to run more to widen the political debate within the party than because of a desire or expectation that he would win. Nonetheless, he rapidly became the frontrunner among the candidates.

At the Second Reading of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill in July 2015, Corbyn joined 47 Labour MPs to oppose the Bill, describing it as "rotten and indefensible", whilst the other three leadership candidates abstained under direction from interim leader Harriet Harman. In August 2015, he called on Iain Duncan Smith to resign as Secretary of State for Work and Pensions after it was reported that thousands of disabled people had died after being found fit to work by Work Capability Assessments (instituted in 2008) between 2011 and 2014, although this claim was challenged by the government and by FullFact who noted that the figure included those who had died and therefore their claim had ended, rather than being found fit for work.

Following a rule change under Miliband, members of the public who supported Labour's aims and values could join the party as "registered supporters" for £3 and be entitled to vote in the election. There was speculation the rule change would lead to Corbyn being elected by registered supporters without majority support from ordinary members. Corbyn was elected party leader in a landslide victory on 12 September 2015 with 59.5% of first-preference votes in the first round of voting. Corbyn would have won in the first round with 51% of votes, even without "£3 registered supporters", having gained the support of 49.6% of full members and 57.6% of affiliated supporters. Corbyn's 40.5% majority was a larger proportional majority than that attained by Tony Blair in 1994. His margin of victory was said to be "the largest mandate ever won by a party leader".

### **First term as Leader of the Opposition (2015–2017)**

- *After being elected leader, Corbyn became Leader of the Official Opposition and shortly thereafter his appointment to the Privy Council was announced.*
- *He delivered his first Labour Annual Conference address as leader on 29 September 2015.*
- *In July 2016, a study and analysis by academics from the London School of Economics of months of eight national newspaper articles about Corbyn in the first months of his leadership of Labour showed that 75% of them either distorted or failed to represent his actual views on subjects.*

After being elected leader, Corbyn became Leader of the Official Opposition and shortly thereafter his appointment to the Privy Council was announced. In Corbyn's first Prime Minister's Questions session as leader, he broke with the traditional format by asking the Prime Minister six questions he had received from members of the public, the result of his invitation to Labour Party members to send suggestions, for which he received around 40,000 emails. Corbyn stressed his desire to reduce the "theatrical" nature of the House of Commons, and his début was described in a Guardian editorial as "a good start" and a "long overdue" change to the tone of PMQs. He delivered his first Labour Annual Conference address as leader on 29 September 2015.

In September 2015 an unnamed senior serving general in the British Army stated that a mutiny by the Army could occur if a future Corbyn government moved to scrap Trident, pull out of Nato or reduce the size of the armed forces. The general said "the Army just wouldn't stand for it. The general staff would not allow a prime minister to jeopardise the security of this country and I think people would use whatever means possible, fair or foul to prevent that. You can't put a maverick in charge of a country's security".

In July 2016, a study and analysis by academics from the London School of Economics of months of eight national newspaper articles about Corbyn in the first months of his leadership of Labour showed that 75% of them either distorted or failed to represent his actual views on subjects.

### **First Shadow Cabinet and other appointments**

- *In October 2015, Corbyn appointed the Guardian journalist Seumas Milne as the Labour Party's Executive Director of Strategy and Communications.*
- *On 13 September 2015, Corbyn unveiled his Shadow Cabinet.*

On 13 September 2015, Corbyn unveiled his Shadow Cabinet. He appointed his leadership campaign manager and long-standing political ally John McDonnell as Shadow Chancellor, leadership opponent Andy Burnham as Shadow Home Secretary, and Angela Eagle as Shadow First Secretary of State to deputise for him in the House of Commons. Corbyn promoted a number of female backbench MPs to Shadow Cabinet roles, including Diane Abbott, Heidi Alexander and Lisa Nandy, making his the first Shadow Cabinet with more women than men, although the most senior roles went to men. In October 2015, Corbyn appointed the Guardian journalist Seumas Milne as the Labour Party's Executive Director of Strategy and Communications.



*Corbyn and Hilary Benn meet with President Obama in April 2016.*

## **Military intervention in Syria**

- *66 Labour MPs voted for the Syrian air strikes, including Hilary Benn and Deputy Labour Leader Tom Watson, while Corbyn and the majority of Labour MPs voted against.*
- *Amid widespread reports of division in the Parliamentary Labour Party, Corbyn insisted that the final decision on whether the Labour Party would oppose air strikes rested with him.*

After members of Islamic State carried out terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015, Corbyn agreed with David Cameron that a political settlement between the Syrian Government and the rebels should be aimed at resolving the Syrian Civil War. Prime Minister David Cameron sought to build political consensus for UK military intervention against IS targets in Syria in the days after the attacks. Corbyn warned against "external intervention" in Syria but told delegates that Labour would "consider the proposals the Government brings forward".

After Cameron set out his case for military intervention to Parliament, Corbyn held a Shadow Cabinet meeting, in which he said he would continue with efforts "to reach a common view" on Syria, while Shadow Foreign Secretary Hilary Benn suggested the case for air strikes was "compelling". Corbyn sent a letter to Labour MPs saying that he could not support military action against Islamic State: "The issue [is] whether what the Prime Minister is proposing strengthens, or undermines, our national security...I do not believe the current proposal for air strikes in Syria will protect our security and therefore cannot support it." Amid widespread reports of division in the Parliamentary Labour Party, Corbyn

insisted that the final decision on whether the Labour Party would oppose air strikes rested with him. Corbyn eventually agreed that Labour MPs would be given a free vote on air strikes when the issue was voted on. 66 Labour MPs voted for the Syrian air strikes, including Hilary Benn and Deputy Labour Leader Tom Watson, while Corbyn and the majority of Labour MPs voted against.

### January 2016 Shadow Cabinet reshuffle

- *Corbyn also replaced Shadow Europe Minister (not attending Shadow Cabinet) Pat McFadden with Pat Glass.*
- *There was widespread speculation following the vote that Corbyn would reshuffle his Shadow Cabinet to remove Hilary Benn, but Corbyn's January reshuffle retained Benn in the same position.*
- *On 6 January 2016, Corbyn replaced Shadow Culture Secretary Michael Dugher with Shadow Defence Secretary Maria Eagle (who was in turn replaced by Shadow Employment Minister Emily Thornberry).*

There was widespread speculation following the vote that Corbyn would reshuffle his Shadow Cabinet to remove Hilary Benn, but Corbyn's January reshuffle retained Benn in the same position. The reshuffle prompted the resignations of three junior shadow ministers who were unhappy that Corbyn had demoted MPs who disagreed with his position on Syria and Trident.

On 6 January 2016, Corbyn replaced Shadow Culture Secretary Michael Dugher with Shadow Defence Secretary Maria Eagle (who was in turn replaced by Shadow Employment Minister Emily Thornberry). Thornberry, unlike Maria Eagle, is an opponent of nuclear weapons and British involvement in Syria. Corbyn also replaced Shadow Europe Minister (not attending Shadow Cabinet) Pat McFadden with Pat Glass. On 11 January 2016, Shadow Attorney General Catherine McKinnell resigned, citing party infighting, family reasons and the ability to speak in Parliament beyond her legal portfolio. She was replaced by Karl Turner.

### May 2016 local elections

- *There were also Westminster by-elections in two Labour safe seats, which Labour retained: Ogmere and Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough.*
- *Labour candidate Sadiq Khan won the London mayoralship from the Conservatives.*
- *In the 2016 local elections, Labour had a net loss of 18 local council seats and controlled as many councils as before (gaining control of Bristol but losing Dudley).*

In the 2016 local elections, Labour had a net loss of 18 local council seats and controlled as many councils as before (gaining control of Bristol but losing Dudley). There were also Westminster by-elections in two Labour safe seats, which Labour retained: Ogmere and Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough. The BBC's Projected National Vote Share was 31%

for Labour, 30% for the Conservatives, 15% for the Liberal Democrats and 12% for UKIP. Labour candidate Sadiq Khan won the London mayorship from the Conservatives. Labour's misfortunes in Scotland continued, where they fell into third place behind the Conservatives. They retained government in Wales despite some small losses.[citation needed]

## Summer 2016 leadership crisis

### EU referendum

- *Alan Johnson, who headed up the Labour In for Britain campaign said "at times" it felt as if Corbyn's office was "working against the rest of the party and had conflicting objectives".*
- *In September 2016, Corbyn's spokesman said Corbyn wanted access to the European Single Market, but there were "aspects" of EU membership related to privatisation "which Jeremy campaigned against in the referendum campaign."*
- *Corbyn's decision to go on holiday during the campaign was criticised.*

Following the June 2016 vote to leave the EU, Corbyn was accused of "lukewarm" campaigning for Britain to stay in the European Union and showing a "lack of leadership" on the issue by several party figures. Alan Johnson, who headed up the Labour In for Britain campaign said "at times" it felt as if Corbyn's office was "working against the rest of the party and had conflicting objectives". Corbyn's decision to go on holiday during the campaign was criticised. In September 2016, Corbyn's spokesman said Corbyn wanted access to the European Single Market, but there were "aspects" of EU membership related to privatisation "which Jeremy campaigned against in the referendum campaign."

### Shadow Cabinet resignations and vote of no confidence

- *A motion of no confidence in Corbyn as Labour leader was tabled by MPs Margaret Hodge and Ann Coffey on 24 June 2016.*
- *Corbyn was encouraged to resign by Tom Watson and senior Labour politicians including his predecessor, Ed Miliband.*
- *On 28 June, he lost the vote of confidence by Labour Party MPs by 172–40.*

Three days after the EU referendum, Hilary Benn was sacked after it was disclosed that he had been organising a mass resignation of Shadow Cabinet members to force Corbyn to stand down. Several other Cabinet members resigned in solidarity with Benn and by 27 June 23 of the 31 Shadow Cabinet members had resigned their roles as did seven parliamentary private secretaries. Earlier Corbyn announced changes to his Shadow Cabinet, moving Emily Thornberry (to Shadow Foreign Secretary), Diane Abbott (to Shadow Health Secretary), and appointing Pat Glass, Andy McDonald, Clive Lewis, Rebecca Long-Bailey, Kate Osamor, Rachael Maskell, Cat Smith and Dave Anderson to his Shadow Cabinet.



However just two days later one of the newly appointed members, Pat Glass, resigned, saying "the situation is untenable".

A motion of no confidence in Corbyn as Labour leader was tabled by MPs Margaret Hodge and Ann Coffey on 24 June 2016. Hodge said: "This has been a tumultuous referendum which has been a test of leadership ... Jeremy has failed that test". Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell and union leaders including Len McCluskey condemned the motion.

On 28 June, he lost the vote of confidence by Labour Party MPs by 172–40. He responded with a statement that the motion had no "constitutional legitimacy" and that he intended to continue as the elected leader. The vote did not require the party to call a leadership election, but was expected to lead to a leadership challenge. Corbyn was encouraged to resign by Tom Watson and senior Labour politicians including his predecessor, Ed Miliband. Several union leaders (from GMB, UCATT, the CWU, the TSSA, ASLEF, the FBU, the BFWAU and the NUM) issued a joint statement saying that Corbyn was "the democratically-elected leader of Labour and his position should not be challenged except through the proper democratic procedures provided for in the party's constitution" and that a leadership election would be an "unnecessary distraction".

## 2016 leadership challenge and election

- *Martin Kettle of The Guardian wrote that "many Labour MPs, even some who face defeat, want an early election" to prove decisively that Corbyn's Labour is unelectable as a government.*
- *The division between Corbyn and the Labour parliamentary party continued.*
- *When voters were asked who they thought would be the best prime minister – Corbyn or Theresa May – among Labour supporters 48% said Corbyn and 22% May, among all UK voters 52% chose May and just 16% were for Corbyn.*

The division between Corbyn and the Labour parliamentary party continued. On 11 July 2016 Angela Eagle, who had recently resigned from his Shadow Cabinet, formally launched her leadership campaign.

After news reports that Eagle's office had been vandalised, and threats and abuse to other MPs, including death threats to himself, Corbyn said: "It is extremely concerning that Angela Eagle has been the victim of a threatening act" and called for "respect and dignity, even where there is disagreement."

On 12 July 2016, following a dispute as to whether the elected leader would need nominations in an election as a "challenger" to their own leadership, Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC) resolved that Corbyn, as the incumbent leader, had an automatic right to be on the ballot, and also decided that members needed to have been a member for more than six months to be eligible to vote, meaning that many members who had joined recently would not be able to vote. The NEC did however decide that "registered supporters" would be entitled to vote if they paid a one off fee of £25. 184,541 people subsequently paid the one-off fee to become "registered supporters" of the party during the



two-day window in July, meaning that over 700,000 people had a vote in the leadership election.

The decision to retain Corbyn on the ballot was contested unsuccessfully in a High Court action brought by Labour donor Michael Foster.

On 13 July, Owen Smith entered the Labour Party leadership race. Subsequently, on 19 July, Angela Eagle withdrew and offered her endorsement to Smith.

A survey of the public found that 66% of those surveyed believed that the Labour party needed a new leader before the 2020 elections and only 23 percent believed that Corbyn would make a good Prime Minister while Theresa May had an approval rating of 55 percent. A later poll on 23 July found that among those who said they backed Labour, 54% supported Corbyn against just 22% who would prefer Smith. When voters were asked who they thought would be the best prime minister – Corbyn or Theresa May – among Labour supporters 48% said Corbyn and 22% May, among all UK voters 52% chose May and just 16% were for Corbyn.

More than 40 female Labour MPs, in an open letter during the campaign in July 2016, called on Corbyn to deal with issues relating to online abuse, and criticised him for his allegedly unsatisfactory responses and inaction. Speaking at the launch of policies intending to democratise the internet in late August, Corbyn described such abuse as "appalling". He continued: "I have set up a code of conduct on this. The Labour party has a code of conduct on this, and it does have to be dealt with".

On 16 August 2016, Corbyn released a video of himself sitting on the floor of a Virgin Trains East Coast train while travelling to a leadership hustings in Gateshead. Corbyn said the train was "ram-packed" and used this to support his policy to reverse the 1990s privatisation of the railways of Great Britain. A dispute, nicknamed Traingate in the media, developed a week later when Virgin released CCTV images appearing to show that Corbyn had walked past some available seats on the train before recording his video. Corbyn subsequently said that there had not been room for all his team to sit together until later on in the journey, when other passengers were upgraded by train staff.

The psephologist John Curtice wrote just before Corbyn's second leadership win: "There is evidently a section of the British public, to be found particularly among younger voters, for whom the Labour leader does have an appeal; it just does not look like a section that is big enough, on its own at least, to enable Labour to win a general election". Meanwhile, a poll for The Independent by BMG Research, suggested that working class voters were more likely to consider Corbyn "incompetent" than those from the middle class, and a higher proportion thought he was "out of touch" also. Martin Kettle of The Guardian wrote that "many Labour MPs, even some who face defeat, want an early election" to prove decisively that Corbyn's Labour is unelectable as a government. "If there is hope for Labour it lies with the voters. Only they can change the party".

Corbyn was re-elected as Labour leader on 24 September, with 313,209 votes (61.8%) compared to 193,229 (38.2%) for Owen Smith – a slightly increased share of the vote compared to his election in 2015, when he won 59%. On a turnout of 77.6%, Corbyn won the support of 59% of party members, 70% of registered supporters and 60% of affiliated supporters. In his acceptance speech, Corbyn called on the "Labour family" to end their divisions and to "wipe that slate clean from today and get on with the work we've got to do as a party". He continued: "Together, arguing for the real change this country needs, I have no doubt this party can win the next election whenever the Prime Minister decides to call it and form the next government."

## Article 50

- *On 1 February, forty seven Labour MPs defied Corbyn's whip on the second reading of the bill.*
- *In January 2017, Corbyn announced that he would impose a three-line whip to force Labour MPs in favour of triggering Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union to initiate the withdrawal of the UK from the EU.*

In January 2017, Corbyn announced that he would impose a three-line whip to force Labour MPs in favour of triggering Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union to initiate the withdrawal of the UK from the EU. In response, two Labour whips said they would vote against the bill. Tulip Siddiq, the shadow minister for early years, and Jo Stevens, the Shadow Welsh Secretary resigned in protest. On 1 February, forty seven Labour MPs defied Corbyn's whip on the second reading of the bill.

## May 2017 local elections

- *At the 2017 local elections, Labour lost nearly 400 councillors and control of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire county council.*
- *The BBC's Projected National Vote Share was 38% for the Conservatives, 27% for Labour, 18% for the Liberal Democrats and 5% for UKIP, with others on around 12%.*

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## General election, 2017

- *Earlier in the year Corbyn had become the first opposition party leader since 1982 to lose a by-election to an incumbent government, and at the time May called the election Labour trailed the Conservative Party by up to 25 points in some opinion polls.*
- *Corbyn said he welcomed Prime Minister Theresa May's proposal to seek an early general election in 2017.*

- *Corbyn said that he had received the largest vote for a winning candidate in the history of his borough.*

Corbyn said he welcomed Prime Minister Theresa May's proposal to seek an early general election in 2017. He said his party should support the government's move in the parliamentary vote.

Earlier in the year Corbyn had become the first opposition party leader since 1982 to lose a by-election to an incumbent government, and at the time May called the election Labour trailed the Conservative Party by up to 25 points in some opinion polls. A large Conservative majority was widely predicted. Following the short campaign, Labour again finished as the second largest party in parliament but surprised many pundits by increasing their share of the popular vote to 40%, resulting in a net gain of 30 seats and a hung parliament. It was the first time Labour had made a net gain of seats since 1997, and the party's 9.6% increase in vote share was its largest in a single general election since 1945.

Corbyn's election campaign was run under the slogan 'For the Many, Not the Few' and featured rallies with a large audience and connected with a grassroots following for the party, including appearing on stage in front of a crowd of 20,000 at the Wirral Live Festival in Prenton Park. He chose to take part in television debates and dressed more professionally than usual, wearing a business suit and tie. He said the result was a public call for the end of "austerity politics" and suggested May should step down as Prime Minister. Corbyn said that he had received the largest vote for a winning candidate in the history of his borough.

## Opinion polling

- *A poll by Election Data in February 2017 found that 50% of Labour voters wanted Corbyn to stand down by the next election, while 44% wanted him to stay.*
- *Also during February 2017, Ipsos MORI found Corbyn's satisfaction rating among the electorate as a whole was minus 38%; among Labour voters it was minus 9%.*

Opinion polls during the first few months of his leadership gave Corbyn lower personal approval ratings than any previous Labour leader in the early stages of their leadership amongst the general public. His approval amongst party members, however, was initially strong reaching a net approval of +45 in May 2016, though this fell back sharply to just +3 by the end of the next month following criticism of Corbyn's handling of the EU referendum and a string of Shadow Cabinet resignations.

A poll by Election Data in February 2017 found that 50% of Labour voters wanted Corbyn to stand down by the next election, while 44% wanted him to stay. In the same month, YouGov found party members' net approval rating of Corbyn was 17%, whereas a year earlier the result found by the same pollsters had been 55%. Also during February 2017, Ipsos MORI found Corbyn's satisfaction rating among the electorate as a whole was minus 38%; among Labour voters it was minus 9%.

Polling by the end of the first week of campaigning during the 2017 general election was suggesting a defeat for Labour with the parliamentary party much reduced and a landslide victory for the Conservatives with a majority of perhaps 150 MPs. An ITV Wales/YouGov poll at this time placed the Conservatives on 40% in Wales against Labour's 30%; Labour MPs have formed a majority in Wales since the 1922 election. However, an opinion poll published on 22 May suggested that the position had been reversed, with Labour now polling 44% in Wales and the Conservatives 34%. Polls following the publication of the Labour and Conservative manifestos suggested that nationally, Labour was narrowing the Conservative lead to nine points, with YouGov putting the party on 35% of the vote. The final election polls predicted an increased majority for the Tories.

## Second term as Leader of the Opposition (2017–present)

### Aftermath of the election

- *In the months following the election, Labour consistently had a small lead in opinion polling.*
- *In the wake of the election, Corbyn announced that the party was being placed on "permanent campaign mode", expecting another general election to be called as soon as autumn 2017.*

In the months following the election, Labour consistently had a small lead in opinion polling. In the wake of the election, Corbyn announced that the party was being placed on "permanent campaign mode", expecting another general election to be called as soon as autumn 2017. He began a series of rallies in key marginal seats, including Hastings & Rye, Southampton Itchen and Bournemouth West.

### June 2017 Shadow Cabinet dismissals

- *Corbyn sacked three Shadow Cabinet members and a fourth resigned after they rebelled against party orders to abstain on a motion aimed at keeping the UK in the EU single market, which was put forward by Labour MP Chuka Umunna.*

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### Breakaway group of Labour MPs

- *In February 2019, seven MPs – Chuka Umunna, Luciana Berger, Chris Leslie, Angela Smith, Mike Gapes, Gavin Shuker and Ann Coffey – resigned from the Labour Party to form the Independent Group, citing Corbyn's handling of Brexit and of allegations of antisemitism.*

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## Other events

- *In March 2019 Corbyn was assaulted by a Brexit supporter outside a mosque in Finsbury Park, north London.*
- *In 2019 Corbyn refused an invitation to attend a state banquet for Donald Trump, hosted by Queen Elizabeth during the president's June visit to the UK.*
- *Trump rejected the request, saying that Corbyn was a "negative force".*

In March 2019 Corbyn was assaulted by a Brexit supporter outside a mosque in Finsbury Park, north London. His attacker was sentenced to 28 days jail.

A video of soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, the Parachute Regiment, stationed in Afghanistan using an image of Corbyn for target practice was posted on social media in April 2019. The Ministry of Defence established an investigation. The Labour group Momentum said the video was a consequence of the "radicalising effect the rightwing press". The Independent stated that Corbyn was "unpopular in parts of the military because of his past policies on Northern Ireland, Trident and opposition to the Iraq War and other foreign interventions".

In 2019 Corbyn refused an invitation to attend a state banquet for Donald Trump, hosted by Queen Elizabeth during the president's June visit to the UK. Corbyn then attended a London protest outside Trump and May's joint press conference and requested a meeting with Trump to discuss issues such as the "climate emergency, threats to peace and the refugee crisis". Trump rejected the request, saying that Corbyn was a "negative force".

## Policies and views

- *In 1997, the political scientists David Butler and Dennis Kavanagh described Corbyn's political stance as "far-left", although in 2017, Stephen Bush suggested his association with the party's left-wing owes more to his past career and rhetoric than the policies he has pursued as party leader.*
- *Corbyn has said he has read some of the works of Adam Smith, Karl Marx and David Ricardo and has "looked at many, many others".*
- *When asked if he regarded himself as a Marxist, Corbyn responded by saying: "That is a very interesting question actually."*

In 1997, the political scientists David Butler and Dennis Kavanagh described Corbyn's political stance as "far-left", although in 2017, Stephen Bush suggested his association with the party's left-wing owes more to his past career and rhetoric than the policies he has pursued as party leader.

When asked if he regarded himself as a Marxist, Corbyn responded by saying: "That is a very interesting question actually. I haven't thought about that for a long time. I haven't really read as much of Marx as we should have done. I have read quite a bit but not that much." Similarly, defending John McDonnell's statement that there is "a lot to learn" from Karl Marx's book *Das Kapital*, Corbyn described Marx as a "great economist". Corbyn has said he has read some of the works of Adam Smith, Karl Marx and David Ricardo and has "looked at many, many others".

## Economy and taxation

- *Corbyn opposes austerity, and has advocated an economic strategy based on investing-to-grow as opposed to making spending cuts.*
- *Robert Skidelsky offered a qualified endorsement of Corbyn's proposals to carry out QE through a National Investment Bank.*
- *Corbyn would also seek to reduce an estimated £93 billion that companies receive in tax relief.*

Corbyn has campaigned against Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes, supported a higher rate of income tax for the wealthiest in society, and his shadow chancellor proposed the introduction of a £10 per hour living wage. He advocates recouping losses from tax avoidance and evasion by investing £1 billion in HMRC. Corbyn would also seek to reduce an estimated £93 billion that companies receive in tax relief. The amount is made up of several reliefs, including railway and energy subsidies, regional development grants, relief on investment and government procurement from the private sector.

Corbyn opposes austerity, and has advocated an economic strategy based on investing-to-grow as opposed to making spending cuts. During his first Labour leadership election campaign, Corbyn proposed that the Bank of England should be able to issue money for capital spending, especially housebuilding, instead of quantitative easing, which attempts to stimulate the economy by buying assets from commercial banks. He describes it as "People's Quantitative Easing". A number of economists, including Steve Keen, argued in a letter to *The Guardian* that despite claims to the contrary there was nothing "extreme left" about the anti-austerity policies he proposed in his leadership campaign. Robert Skidelsky offered a qualified endorsement of Corbyn's proposals to carry out QE through a National Investment Bank. As the policy would change the central bank's focus on stabilising prices, however, it has been argued it could increase the perceived risk of investing in the UK and raise the prospect of increased inflation. His second leadership campaign saw him promise £500 billion in additional public spending, though he did not detail how he would fund it.

Corbyn has been a consistent supporter of renationalising public utilities, such as the now-privatised British Rail and energy companies, back into public ownership. Initially Corbyn suggested completely renationalising the entire railway network, but would now bring them under public control "line by line" as franchises expire.

## National and constitutional issues

- *Corbyn is a longstanding supporter of a United Ireland and reportedly described himself as an "anti-imperialist" campaigner for the region in 1984.*
- *On the issue of Scottish independence, when asked if he would consider himself a unionist, Corbyn said: "No, I would describe myself as a Socialist.*
- *Corbyn would prefer Britain to become a republic, but has said that, given the Royal Family's popularity, "it's not a battle that I am fighting".*

Corbyn is a longstanding supporter of a United Ireland and reportedly described himself as an "anti-imperialist" campaigner for the region in 1984. In 1985, Corbyn voted against the Anglo-Irish Agreement, saying that it strengthened the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and he opposed it as he wished to see a united Ireland. In July 1998, Corbyn endorsed the Good Friday Agreement by voting for the Northern Ireland Bill saying: "We look forward to peace, hope and reconciliation in Ireland in the future." Corbyn would prefer Britain to become a republic, but has said that, given the Royal Family's popularity, "it's not a battle that I am fighting".

On the issue of Scottish independence, when asked if he would consider himself a unionist, Corbyn said: "No, I would describe myself as a Socialist. I would prefer the UK to stay together, yes, but I recognise the right of people to take the decision on their own autonomy and independence." Corbyn said that he did not favour holding a second Scottish independence referendum, but that it would be wrong for the UK Parliament to block such a referendum if the Scottish Parliament desired to have one.

As Leader of the Opposition, Corbyn was one of the sponsors for the Constitutional Convention Bill, which was an attempt at codifying the UK's constitution, which has not been compiled into a single document. He appointed a Shadow Minister for the Constitutional Convention into his Shadow Cabinet; however, Teresa Pearce stepped down after the May 2017 local elections and this position has since remained vacant.

In October 2017, Corbyn was one of 113 MPs to sign a cross-party petition to Home Secretary Amber Rudd, which requested making it a criminal offence for opponents of abortion to hold protests outside of abortion clinics. The letter called for buffer zones to be established around clinics, arguing women "face daily abuse when undergoing terminations", with protesters instead given space in town centres or Speakers' corner. He also promised to allow abortion in Northern Ireland as well as same-sex marriage.

## Education

- *During the 2017 election Corbyn had a policy of scrapping university tuition fees from 2018 restoring the maintenance grants abolished by the Conservatives in 2016 and funding a free national education service.*
- *Corbyn apologised for the actions of previous Labour governments in imposing "fees, top-up fees and the replacement of grants with loans".*



- *During the 2015 Labour leadership contest Corbyn put forward a policy to scrap all tuition fees and restore student maintenance grants.*

During the 2015 Labour leadership contest Corbyn put forward a policy to scrap all tuition fees and restore student maintenance grants. The cost of the policy was estimated at £10 billion which would be funded by "a 7% rise in national insurance for those earning over £50,000 a year and a 2.5% higher corporation tax, or by slowing the pace at which the deficit is reduced". Corbyn apologised for the actions of previous Labour governments in imposing "fees, top-up fees and the replacement of grants with loans". He said "I opposed those changes at the time – as did many others – and now we have an opportunity to change course".

During the 2017 election Corbyn had a policy of scrapping university tuition fees from 2018 restoring the maintenance grants abolished by the Conservatives in 2016 and funding a free national education service. He also pledged to investigate canceling student loan debts incurred by recent graduates. The policy noted that the British average student starts their working life with debts of £44,000 due to tuition costs and that university tuition is free in many northern European countries. The education changes were costed at £9.5 billion and would be funded by increasing taxes on the top 5 per cent of earners and increasing corporations tax.

## European Union

- *In October 2017, Corbyn said that he would vote remain if there were another referendum.*
- *Corbyn said that Labour would campaign for an alternative arrangement involving "tariff free access".*
- *In June 2016, in the run-up to the EU referendum, Corbyn said that there was an "overwhelming case" for staying in the EU.*
- *Corbyn has previously been a left-wing Eurosceptic.*

Corbyn has previously been a left-wing Eurosceptic. In the 1975 European Communities referendum, Corbyn opposed Britain's membership of the European Communities, the precursor of the European Union (EU). Corbyn also opposed the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, opposed the Lisbon Treaty in 2008, and backed a proposed referendum on British withdrawal from the EU in 2011. He accused the EU of acting "brutally" in the 2015 Greek crisis by allowing financiers to destroy its economy.

During his leadership campaign, Corbyn said there might be circumstances in which he would favour withdrawal from the EU. However, in September 2015, Corbyn said that Labour would campaign for Britain to stay in the EU regardless of the result of Cameron's negotiations, and instead "pledge to reverse any changes" if Cameron reduced the rights of workers or citizens. He also believed that Britain should play a crucial role in Europe by making demands about working arrangements across the continent, the levels of corporation taxation and in forming an agreement on environmental regulation.

In June 2016, in the run-up to the EU referendum, Corbyn said that there was an "overwhelming case" for staying in the EU. In a speech in London, Corbyn said: "We, the Labour Party, are overwhelmingly for staying in, because we believe the European Union has brought investment, jobs and protection for workers, consumers and the environment." Corbyn also criticised media coverage and warnings from both sides, saying that the debate had been dominated too much by "myth-making and prophecies of doom". He said he was "seven, or seven and a half" out of 10 for staying in the EU.

In July 2017, Corbyn said that Britain could not remain in the European Single Market after leaving the EU, saying that membership of the single market was "dependent on membership of the EU", although it includes some non-EU countries. Shadow Minister Barry Gardiner later suggested that Corbyn meant that Labour interpreted the referendum result as wanting to leave the single market. Corbyn said that Labour would campaign for an alternative arrangement involving "tariff free access". In October 2017, Corbyn said that he would vote remain if there were another referendum.

In January 2018, Corbyn reiterated that Labour would not seek to keep the UK in the single market after Brexit, however in June 2018 Corbyn called for a "new single market" deal for the UK after Brexit maintaining "full access" to the EU internal market, as opposed to the "Norway model" which pro-Remainers in the party wish to see.

In 2018, Corbyn said his main reason for not committing to remaining in the single market was freedom from EU rules on state aid to industry. He said the UK government should not be "held back, inside or outside the EU, from taking the steps we need to support cutting edge industries and local business". This prompted backlash from senior EU figures, who said that state subsidisation would be a "red line" in negotiations, as it would lead to a possible trade war between the UK and EU. One senior figure told The Times: "We have to protect ourselves and the single market ... If a Corbyn government implements his declared policies the level playing field mechanism will lead to increased costs for Britain to access the single market because of distortions caused by state aid."

Also in 2018 Corbyn said he would seek a new type of customs union with the European Union, but will seek exemptions of some EU regulations for the UK, such as those regarding state aid and government subsidies.

In January 2019, Labour lost a vote of no confidence in the government. The Conservative government sought to open cross party talks while Corbyn initially said Labour would refuse to attend talks unless the government ruled out a "no deal brexit".

## Foreign affairs

### War and peace

- *Corbyn has said he would prefer to use diplomacy rather than armed force in international conflict.*
- *In July 2016, the Chilcot report of the Iraq Inquiry was issued, criticising the former Labour PM Tony Blair for joining the United States in the war against Iraq.*
- *Corbyn has called for Tony Blair to be investigated for alleged war crimes during the Iraq War.*

During the 1982 Falklands War, in a meeting of Haringey Council, Corbyn opposed a motion offering support to British troops sent to retake the islands, instead declaring the war to be a "Tory plot" and submitted an alternative motion that condemned the war as a "nauseating waste of lives and money". Corbyn has said that he would like Britain to achieve "some reasonable accommodation" with Argentina over their Falkland Islands dispute, with a "degree of joint administration" between the two countries over the islands.

Corbyn does not consider himself an absolute pacifist and has named the Spanish Civil War, the British naval blockade to stop the slave trade in the 19th century and the role of UN peacekeepers in the 1999 crisis in East Timor as justified conflicts. However, opposing violence and war has been "the whole purpose of his life". He prominently opposed the invasion of Iraq and war in Afghanistan, NATO-led military intervention in Libya, military strikes against Assad's Syria, and military action against ISIS, and served as the chair of the Stop The War Coalition. When challenged on whether there were any circumstances in which he would deploy military forces overseas he said "I'm sure there are some but I can't think of them at the moment."

Corbyn has called for Tony Blair to be investigated for alleged war crimes during the Iraq War.

In July 2016, the Chilcot report of the Iraq Inquiry was issued, criticising the former Labour PM Tony Blair for joining the United States in the war against Iraq. Subsequently, Corbyn – who had voted against military action against Iraq – gave a speech in Westminster commenting: "I now apologise sincerely on behalf of my party for the disastrous decision to go to war in Iraq in March 2003" which he called an "act of military aggression launched on a false pretext" something that has "long been regarded as illegal by the overwhelming weight of international opinion". Corbyn specifically apologised to "the people of Iraq"; to the families of British soldiers who died in Iraq or returned injured; and to "the millions of British citizens who feel our democracy was traduced and undermined by the way in which the decision to go to war was taken on."

Corbyn has said he would prefer to use diplomacy rather than armed force in international conflict. He would avoid military conflict by "building up the diplomatic relationships and

also trying to not isolate any country in Europe". His aim is to "achieve a world where we don't need to go to war, where there is no need for it".

## NATO and nuclear weapons

- *In June 2016, he agreed to allow Labour MPs a free vote on the replacement of Trident.*
- *Writing for The Daily Telegraph, Edward Lucas saw Corbyn as having a "desire to appease Russia by sacrificing Ukraine" and said that Corbyn's "anti-imperialist sentiments did not stretch to understanding countries such as Ukraine".*

Corbyn favours the United Kingdom leaving the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). In May 2012, Corbyn authored a piece in the Morning Star titled "High time for an end to NATO" where he described the organisation as an "instrument of cold war manipulation", saying that "The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, with the ending of the Warsaw Pact mutual defence strategy, was the obvious time for NATO to have been disbanded." and also said a 2014 speech that the organisation was an "engine for the delivery of oil to the oil companies" and called for it to "give up, go home and go away".

For these comments and a refusal to answer whether he would defend a NATO ally in the case of attack he was criticised by Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the former Prime Minister of Denmark and NATO Secretary General, who said Corbyn's opinions were "tempting President Putin to aggression" and made comparisons between his views and those of the American president Donald Trump. He was also criticised by George Robertson, former Labour Party defence secretary, who said "It beggars belief that the leader of the party most responsible for the collective security pact of NATO should be so reckless as to undermine it by refusing to say he would come to the aid of an ally".

He has since acknowledged that the British public do not agree with his beliefs that the UK should leave NATO, and instead intends to push for the organisation to "restrict its role". He believes there should be a debate about the extent of NATO's powers including its "democratic accountability" and why it has taken on a global role. In April 2014, Corbyn wrote an article for the Morning Star attributing the crisis in Ukraine to NATO. He said the "root of the crisis" lay in "the US drive to expand eastwards" and described Russia's actions as "not unprovoked". He has said it "probably was" a mistake to allow former Warsaw Pact countries to join NATO as it has increased tensions with Russia and made the "world infinitely more dangerous".

Corbyn's views on Ukraine, Russia, and NATO were criticised by a number of writers, including Halya Coynash of the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group, Anne Applebaum in The Sunday Times, Ben Judah in The Independent, and Roger Boyes in The Times. Writing for The Daily Telegraph, Edward Lucas saw Corbyn as having a "desire to appease Russia by sacrificing Ukraine" and said that Corbyn's "anti-imperialist sentiments did not stretch to understanding countries such as Ukraine". Lithuanian ambassador Asta Skaisgiryte disagreed with Corbyn's portrayal of NATO, saying her country was not "forced

or lured into NATO as part of an American global power grab. We were pounding on the door of the alliance, demanding to be let in".

Corbyn is a longstanding supporter of unilateral nuclear disarmament, although he has suggested a compromise of having submarines without nuclear weapons. He has campaigned for many years against nuclear weapons and the replacement of Trident and has said he would not authorise the use of nuclear weapons if he were prime minister. In June 2016, he agreed to allow Labour MPs a free vote on the replacement of Trident. In the subsequent vote 140 Labour MPs voted with the government in favour of the new submarines, in line with party policy, and 47 joined Corbyn to vote against. During the debate Corbyn said "I do not believe the threat of mass murder is a legitimate way to deal with international relations".

## United States

- *Following the election of Donald Trump in the 2016 US presidential elections, Corbyn said that he believes that President Trump is not offering solutions to problems, but simply being divisive.*
- *Corbyn has also criticised Trump's attacks on Sadiq Khan as "unacceptable".*
- *Corbyn has also criticised Trump's involvement in British politics, saying that it was "not [Trump's] business who the British prime minister is" following Trump's endorsement of Boris Johnson as a possible future leader.*

Following the election of Donald Trump in the 2016 US presidential elections, Corbyn said that he believes that President Trump is not offering solutions to problems, but simply being divisive. Corbyn also called for a proposed Trump state visit to the UK to be cancelled following his executive order banning visitors from certain majority-Muslim countries from entering the US.

Corbyn has also criticised Trump's involvement in British politics, saying that it was "not [Trump's] business who the British prime minister is" following Trump's endorsement of Boris Johnson as a possible future leader. Corbyn has also criticised Trump's attacks on Sadiq Khan as "unacceptable".

## Israel and Palestine

- *In January 2017, Corbyn expressed concern about Israeli involvement in British politics, after the broadcasting of The Lobby.*
- *In 2012 and again in 2017, Corbyn called for an investigation into Israeli influence in British politics.*
- *In August 2016, Corbyn said: "I am not in favour of the academic or cultural boycott of Israel, and I am not in favour of a blanket boycott of Israeli goods.*

Corbyn is a member of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, campaigning against conflict in Gaza and what the organisation considers to be "apartheid in Israel". In 2012 and again in

2017, Corbyn called for an investigation into Israeli influence in British politics. In August 2016, Corbyn said: "I am not in favour of the academic or cultural boycott of Israel, and I am not in favour of a blanket boycott of Israeli goods. I do support targeted boycotts aimed at undermining the existence of illegal settlements in the West Bank."

At a meeting hosted by Stop the War Coalition in 2009, Corbyn said he invited "friends" from Hamas and Hezbollah to an event in parliament, referred to Hamas as "an organisation dedicated towards the good of the Palestinian people," and said that the British government's labelling of Hamas as a terrorist organisation is "a big, big historical mistake." Asked on Channel 4 News in July 2015 why he had called representatives from Hamas and Hezbollah "friends", Corbyn explained, "I use it in a collective way, saying our friends are prepared to talk," and that the specific occasion he used it was to introduce speakers from Hezbollah at a Parliamentary meeting about the Middle East. He said that he does not condone the actions of either organisation: "Does it mean I agree with Hamas and what it does? No. Does it mean I agree with Hezbollah and what they do? No. What it means is that I think to bring about a peace process, you have to talk to people with whom you may profoundly disagree ... There is not going to be a peace process unless there is talks involving Israel, Hezbollah and Hamas and I think everyone knows that", he argued.

In 2010 Corbyn claimed that some of the speeches by British Members of Parliament about the Gaza flotilla raid in May 2010 were written by Israel using a "pre-prepared script. I'm sure our friend (Israeli ambassador) Ron Prosor wrote it. Because they all came up with the same key words... the buzz-words were, 'Israel's need for security.' And then 'the extremism of the people on one ship.' And 'the existence of Turkish militants on the vessel.' It came through in every single speech, this stuff came through."

In January 2017, Corbyn expressed concern about Israeli involvement in British politics, after the broadcasting of The Lobby. He described the actions of the Israeli official as "improper interference in this country's democratic process" and was concerned on national security grounds that Boris Johnson had said the matter was closed.

In his keynote speech at the 2018 annual Labour Party conference Corbyn said if elected his government would immediately recognise the Palestinian State as a way of supporting a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He declared that the Labour Party condemned the "shooting of hundreds of unarmed demonstrators in Gaza by Israeli forces and the passing of Israel's discriminatory nation-state law".

In May 2019 Corbyn sent a message of support to the National Demonstration for Palestine in London in which Ahed Tamimi participated. He said the Labour Party condemned the "ongoing human rights abuses by Israeli forces, including the shooting by Israeli forces of hundreds of unarmed Palestinian demonstrators in Gaza - most of them refugees or families of refugees - demanding their rights".

## Tunisian wreath-laying controversy

- *A Labour spokesperson stated that Corbyn "did not lay any wreath at the graves of those alleged to have been linked to the Black September Organisation or the 1972 Munich killings.*
- *Corbyn said that he had been present during commemorations where a wreath was laid for Palestinian leaders linked to Black September, but did not think that he had actually been involved.*

In October 2014, Corbyn visited Tunisia to attend the "International Conference on Monitoring the Palestinian Political and Legal Situation in the Light of Israeli Aggression", organised by the Centre for Strategic Studies for North Africa, alongside other British parliamentarians. While in Tunisia, Corbyn attended a commemorative service for victims of the 1985 Israeli air strikes on the PLO headquarters in Tunis. The bombardment was condemned at the time by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and U.S. President Ronald Reagan, as well as the UN Security Council.

In August 2018, the Daily Mail reported, with pictorial evidence, that during the event, Corbyn had also been present at a wreath-laying at the graves of Salah Khalaf and Atef Bseiso, both of whom are thought to have been key members of the Black September Organization, which was behind the 1972 Munich massacre. The Jerusalem Post commented: "In another photo, Corbyn is seen close to the grave of terrorist Atef Bseiso, intelligence chief of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Bseiso is also linked to the massacre." There was condemnation from some of the British press, as well as from some members of the Labour Party and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. A Labour spokesperson said that "a wreath was laid on behalf of those at the conference to all those who lost their lives, including families and children".

BBC News, on 15 August, showed in a report from inside the cemetery, that for the memorial for the 1985 victims, Corbyn would have stood in a designated confined covered area where all dignitaries typically stand during annual ceremonies, which also covers the graves of Bseiso and Khalaf. Corbyn said that he had been present during commemorations where a wreath was laid for Palestinian leaders linked to Black September, but did not think that he had actually been involved. A Labour spokesperson stated that Corbyn "did not lay any wreath at the graves of those alleged to have been linked to the Black September Organisation or the 1972 Munich killings. He of course condemns that terrible attack, as he does the 1985 bombing." The Labour Party initially made a complaint to the press watchdog Independent Press Standards Organisation against several newspapers' alleged misreporting of the event, although this was later dropped.

## Kosovo and Bosnia

- *In response to the criticism, a Labour spokesman said: "Jeremy Corbyn had dinner with friends from Cypriots for Labour, during which they were joined briefly by Mr Papadopolous, who asked to be photographed with Jeremy.*



- *Unlike most Labour MPs at the time, Corbyn and a few other backbenchers opposed NATO intervention during the Kosovo War.*

Unlike most Labour MPs at the time, Corbyn and a few other backbenchers opposed NATO intervention during the Kosovo War. In 2004 Corbyn and 24 other backbenchers signed a parliamentary motion "congratulating" the journalist John Pilger "on his expose of the fraudulent justifications for intervening in a 'genocide' that never really took place in Kosovo", leading to later criticism that he had labeled Serbian war crimes as fabrications. The motion noted that initial estimates of casualties by the US Ambassador for War Crimes Issues were much higher than the later body count by the International War Crimes Tribunal.

In 2018, Corbyn was criticised for having dinner with Marcus Papadopoulos, a prominent pro-Assad campaigner also known for denial of the Srebrenica massacre. In December 2017, Papadopoulos had tweeted "There was no siege of #Sarajevo, there was no genocide at #Srebrenica and there was no massacre at #Aleppo." In response to the criticism, a Labour spokesman said: "Jeremy Corbyn had dinner with friends from Cypriots for Labour, during which they were joined briefly by Mr Papadopolous, who asked to be photographed with Jeremy. Photographs of Jeremy with members of the public do not mean he endorses their views."

## Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers

- *In 2016, Corbyn released a video stating his "solidarity to stand with the Tamil community in the search for truth, justice, accountability and reconciliation", while the Labour Party reiterated its "full implementation of the UN Human Rights Councils resolution on Sri Lanka"; some Tamil activists interpreted the video to be a signal of Jeremy Corbyn's "support for Tamil self-determination".*
- *In 2017, John McDonnell stated that a Corbyn led Labour government would end arms sales to Sri Lanka.*

In 2006, Corbyn signed a petition calling for the lifting of the ban on the Tamil Tigers, which it referred to as the "supposedly terrorist Tamil Tigers", stating that "the Sri Lanka government is carrying out an undeclared war against the Tamil people who have been struggling for more than two decades for the legitimate right to self-rule" and calling for an end to aerial bombardment by the Sri Lankan government. In 2009, Corbyn called for a total economic boycott of Sri Lanka, stating "the tourism must stop, the arms must stop, the trade must stop", he later stated the Sri Lankan cricket team should also be boycotted. He expressed outrage particularly at the reports of the depopulation of Tamil areas of Eastern Sri Lanka and the relocation of Tamils, stating that denying Tamils the right to return home was in contravention of international law, as well as reports of systematic sexual violence.

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Lanka"; some Tamil activists interpreted the video to be a signal of Jeremy Corbyn's "support for Tamil self-determination". In 2017, John McDonnell stated that a Corbyn led Labour government would end arms sales to Sri Lanka.

## Iran

- *Corbyn has called for the lifting of the sanctions on Iran as part of a negotiated full settlement of issues concerning the Iranian nuclear programme, and the starting of a political process to decommission Israel's nuclear arsenal.*

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## Saudi Arabia

- *In March 2018, Corbyn accused Theresa May's government of "colluding" in war crimes committed by Saudi forces in Yemen.*
- *Corbyn has criticised Britain's close ties with Saudi Arabia and British involvement in the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen.*
- *Corbyn also called for an international investigation into the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and Saudi's war crimes in Yemen.*

Corbyn has criticised Britain's close ties with Saudi Arabia and British involvement in the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen. In January 2016, after a United Nations panel ruled Saudi-led bombing campaign of Yemen contravened international humanitarian law, Corbyn called for an independent inquiry into the UK's arms exports policy to Saudi Arabia. Corbyn and Hilary Benn wrote to David Cameron asking him to "set out the exact nature of the involvement of UK personnel working with the Saudi military". Corbyn has constantly called for the British Government to stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia to show that Britain wants a peace process in Yemen, "not an invasion by Saudi Arabia". In March 2018, Corbyn accused Theresa May's government of "colluding" in war crimes committed by Saudi forces in Yemen. He said that a "humanitarian disaster is now taking place in Yemen. Millions face starvation...because of the Saudi led bombing campaign and the blockade."

Corbyn called for the suspension of arms sales to Saudi Arabia after opposition Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi was murdered inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. Corbyn also called for an international investigation into the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and Saudi's war crimes in Yemen.

## Cuba

- *Internal Labour party critics of Corbyn accused him of glossing over Castro's human rights abuses.*

- *In November 2016, following the death of former communist President of Cuba Fidel Castro, Corbyn said that Castro, despite his "flaws", was a "huge figure of modern history, national independence and 20th Century socialism...Castro's achievements were many."*
- *Corbyn is a longtime supporter of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, which campaigns against the US embargo against Cuba and supports the Cuban Revolution.*

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## Venezuela

- *Following the 2017 Venezuelan Constituent Assembly election, which was condemned and not recognised by over 40 nations, including the European Union, pressure was mounted on Corbyn to speak out against President Maduro's election.*
- *Corbyn also shared support for Chávez's successor, President Nicolás Maduro, in 2014 while congratulating him on his presidency.*

A proponent of the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, Corbyn praised Hugo Chávez following the death of the socialist President of Venezuela, saying "He made massive contributions to Venezuela & a very wide world". Corbyn also shared support for Chávez's successor, President Nicolás Maduro, in 2014 while congratulating him on his presidency. Following the 2017 Venezuelan Constituent Assembly election, which was condemned and not recognised by over 40 nations, including the European Union, pressure was mounted on Corbyn to speak out against President Maduro's election.

In February 2019 he said that intervention in Venezuela and sanctions against the government of Nicolás Maduro were wrong and that only Venezuelans have the right to decide their own destiny. He was against outside interference in Venezuela, "whether from the US or anywhere else". He said there needed to be dialogue and a negotiated settlement to overcome the crisis.

## Kurdistan and Kurds

- *In 1988, Jeremy Corbyn was one of the first MPs to raise the issue of Saddam Hussein's Halabja chemical attack against the Kurdish people, at a time when Hussein was still an ally of the west.*
- *In 2016, Corbyn said that "if peace is wanted in the region, the Kurdish people's right to self-determination must be accepted."*

In 1988, Jeremy Corbyn was one of the first MPs to raise the issue of Saddam Hussein's Halabja chemical attack against the Kurdish people, at a time when Hussein was still an ally

of the west. In the aftermath, he called upon the Tory government to institute sanctions against Iraq and Iran to end the Iran–Iraq War, and to end the use of chemical weapons against the Kurds.

In 2016, Corbyn said that "if peace is wanted in the region, the Kurdish people's right to self-determination must be accepted." Referring to the Kurdish nationalist leader Abdullah Öcalan, he remarked "if there will be a peace process and solution, Öcalan must be free and at the table."

At Chatham House in 2017 he was asked if he would "condemn the genocide which is going on against the Kurds in Syria and in Turkey," Corbyn responded with "I would be very strong with the Turkish government on its treatment of Kurdish people and minorities and the way in which it's denied them their decency and human rights." On warfare by Turkey against the Kurds, Corbyn stated, "If arms are being used to oppress people internally in violation of international law then they simply should not be supplied to them."

### Allegations of antisemitism

- *Corbyn said that Salah was "a voice of the Palestinian people that needs to be heard".*
- *In 2018, Corbyn was criticised by Jewish leaders for not recognising antisemitism, after Mear One publicised on social media in 2012 that his mural about exploitative bankers and industrialists was being censored and Corbyn responded by questioning its removal.*
- *A September 2018 poll found that 86% of British Jews and 39% of the British public believed Corbyn to be antisemitic.*

Corbyn has been challenged on antisemitism in relation to past associations and comments and his handling of allegations within the party, while defenders have cited his support for Jews against racism.

The associations included hosting a meeting where Holocaust-survivor Hajo Meyer compared Israeli actions in Gaza to elements of the Holocaust, attending "two or three" of the annual Deir Yassin Remembered commemorations in London, with Jewish fellow Labour MP Gerald Kaufman, organised by a group founded by Paul Eisen, who has denied the Holocaust, and being a member of three mainly pro-Palestinian private social media forums in which antisemitic remarks had been made. Corbyn has responded that he was unaware of the views expressed by Eisen and some members of the online groups, and had associated with Mayer and others with whom he disagreed in pursuit of progress in the Middle East. Corbyn was also criticised for opposing the deportation from the UK of cleric Raed Salah, who had allegedly repeated the 'blood libel', the historical myth that Jews in Europe had used children's blood in making holy bread. Salah denied the accusation and successfully appealed his deportation. Corbyn said that Salah was "a voice of the Palestinian people that needs to be heard".

In 2018, Corbyn was criticised by Jewish leaders for not recognising antisemitism, after Mear One publicised on social media in 2012 that his mural about exploitative bankers and

industrialists was being censored and Corbyn responded by questioning its removal. In response to the criticism, Corbyn said he regretted that he "did not look more closely at the image", agreed it was antisemitic and endorsed the decision to remove it. Corbyn was criticised for a 2013 speech in which he said that certain "Zionists" who had "berated" the Palestinian speaker at a meeting, "having lived in this country for a very long time, probably all their lives ...don't understand English irony" (used by the speaker). The remarks were criticised for appearing to perpetuate the antisemitic canard that Jews fail or refuse to integrate into wider society. Corbyn responded that he was using Zionist "in the accurate political sense and not as a euphemism for Jewish people". In 2019, Corbyn was criticised for a foreword he wrote in 2011 for a republication of the 1902 book *Imperialism: A Study*, by John A. Hobson, which contains the antisemitic assertion that finance was controlled "by men of a single and peculiar race, who have behind them many centuries of financial experience" who "are in a unique position to control the policy of nations". In his foreword, he called the book a "great tome" and "brilliant, and very controversial at the time". Corbyn responded that the language used to describe minorities in Hobson's work is "absolutely deplorable", but asserted that his foreword analysed "the process which led to the first world war" which he saw as the subject of the book and not Hobson's language.

Following coverage of alleged antisemitic statements by party members, Corbyn commissioned the Chakrabarti Inquiry and supported changes to the party's rules and procedures to make hate crime a disciplinary offence. In July 2018, after Corbyn initially sought, for party disciplinary purposes, to exclude or amend those examples from the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism relating to Israel, Britain's three main Jewish newspapers jointly called a Corbyn-led government an "existential threat to Jewish life" in Britain. A September 2018 poll found that 86% of British Jews and 39% of the British public believed Corbyn to be antisemitic.

Defenders, including Jewish Voice for Labour, have cited his record of opposing and campaigning against racism and antisemitism, and supporting Jewish communal initiatives. He organised a demonstration against a 1970s National Front march through Wood Green; spoke on the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street, noting that his mother was a protester; signed numerous Early Day Motions condemning antisemitism; in 1987, campaigned to reverse Islington Council's decision to grant the planning application to destroy a Jewish cemetery; and in 2010, called on the UK government to facilitate the settlement of Yemeni Jews in Britain. He also took part in a ceremony in his Islington constituency to commemorate the original site of the North London Synagogue and visited the Theresienstadt Ghetto, calling it a reminder of the dangers of far-right politics, antisemitism and racism. His defenders have criticised the tactics of opponents and the role of the media.

## Personal life

- *Corbyn lives in Finsbury Park, Islington, north London.*
- *Álvarez has described Corbyn as "not very good at house work but he is a good politician".*

- *Following a difference of opinion about sending their son to a grammar school – Corbyn opposes selective education – they divorced in 1999 after two years of separation, although Corbyn said in June 2015 that he continues to "get on very well" with his former wife.*

Corbyn lives in Finsbury Park, Islington, north London. He has been married three times and divorced twice, and has three sons with his second wife.

In 1974, he married Jane Chapman, a fellow Labour Councillor for Haringey and now a professor at the University of Lincoln; they divorced in 1979. Corbyn had a brief relationship with Diane Abbott and went on a motorbike tour of East Germany with her, after his marriage to Chapman ended.

In 1987, he married Chilean exile Claudia Bracchitta, granddaughter of Ricardo Bracchitta (Consul-General of Spain in Santiago), by whom he has three sons. Corbyn missed his youngest son's birth as he was lecturing NUPE members at the same hospital. Following a difference of opinion about sending their son to a grammar school – Corbyn opposes selective education – they divorced in 1999 after two years of separation, although Corbyn said in June 2015 that he continues to "get on very well" with his former wife. His son subsequently attended Queen Elizabeth's School, which was his wife's first choice. Their second son, Sebastian, worked on his leadership campaign and is now employed as John McDonnell's Chief of Staff.

In 2001 his second oldest brother, Andrew Corbyn, a geologist, died of a brain haemorrhage in Papua New Guinea. Jeremy Corbyn went to Papua New Guinea, from where he travelled with the body to Australia, where his brother's wife and children were staying.

In 2012 Corbyn went to Mexico to marry his Mexican-born partner Laura Álvarez, who runs a fair-trade coffee import business. In 2015 her coffee business came under scrutiny after being accused of "exploiting workers in her native Mexico" by selling luxury coffee marketed as "fair trade" and made by impoverished farmers who earned only 93p of the £10 per-bag selling price. A former human rights lawyer in Mexico, she first met Corbyn shortly after his divorce from Bracchitta, having come to London to support her sister Marcela following the abduction of her niece to America by her sister's estranged husband. They contacted fellow Labour MP Tony Benn for assistance, who introduced them to Corbyn who met with the police on their behalf and spoke at fundraisers until the girl was located in 2003. Álvarez returned to Mexico, with the couple maintaining a long-distance relationship until she moved to London in 2011. Álvarez has described Corbyn as "not very good at house work but he is a good politician". He has a cat called El Gato and previously owned a dog called Mango, described by The Observer in 1984 as Corbyn's "only constant companion" at the time.

## Personal beliefs and interests

- *Interviewed by The Huffington Post in December 2015, Corbyn refused to say what his religious beliefs were, saying that they were a "private thing", while denying that he was an atheist.*
- *Corbyn named John Smith as the former Labour leader whom he most admired, describing him as "a decent, nice, inclusive leader".*
- *Corbyn is a member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Cycling.*

Interviewed by The Huffington Post in December 2015, Corbyn refused to say what his religious beliefs were, saying that they were a "private thing", while denying that he was an atheist. He has said that he is "sceptical" of having a god in his life. He compared his concerns about the environment to a sort of "spiritualism". Corbyn has described himself as frugal, telling Simon Hattenstone of The Guardian, "I don't spend a lot of money, I lead a very normal life, I ride a bicycle and I don't have a car". He has been a vegetarian for nearly 50 years, after having volunteered on a pig farm in Jamaica when he was 19. Although he has been described in the media as teetotal, he said in an interview with the Mirror newspaper that he does drink alcohol but "very, very little".

Corbyn is a member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Cycling. He enjoys reading and writing, and speaks fluent Spanish. He supports Arsenal F.C., based in his constituency, and has signed parliamentary motions praising the successes of the club's men's and women's teams. He named Jens Lehmann, Ian Wright and Dennis Bergkamp as his favourite Arsenal players, and has campaigned for the club to pay its staff a living wage. Corbyn is an avid "drain spotter" and has photographed decorative drain and manhole covers throughout the country.

Corbyn named John Smith as the former Labour leader whom he most admired, describing him as "a decent, nice, inclusive leader". He also said he was "very close and very good friends" with Michael Foot.

## Awards and recognition

- *In 2017 the American magazine Foreign Policy named Corbyn in its Top 100 Global Thinkers list for that year "for inspiring a new generation to re-engage in politics".*
- *Corbyn has won the Parliamentary "Beard of the Year Award" a record six times, as well as being named as the Beard Liberation Front's Beard of the Year, having previously described his beard as "a form of dissent" against New Labour.*

In 2013, Corbyn was awarded the Gandhi International Peace Award for his "consistent efforts over a 30-year parliamentary career to uphold the Gandhian values of social justice and non-violence". In the same year, he was honoured by the Grassroot Diplomat Initiative for his "ongoing support for a number of non-government organisations and civil causes". Corbyn has won the Parliamentary "Beard of the Year Award" a record six times, as well as



being named as the Beard Liberation Front's Beard of the Year, having previously described his beard as "a form of dissent" against New Labour.

In 2017 the American magazine Foreign Policy named Corbyn in its Top 100 Global Thinkers list for that year "for inspiring a new generation to re-engage in politics". In December 2017 he was one of three recipients awarded the Seán MacBride Peace Prize "for his sustained and powerful political work for disarmament and peace". The award was announced the previous September.

## See also

- *Parliament of the United Kingdom Relocation*
- *Official Opposition frontbench*

Official Opposition frontbench

Parliament of the United Kingdom Relocation

## References

## Further reading

## External links

- *Media related to Jeremy Corbyn at Wikimedia Commons*
- *Jeremy Corbyn on Twitter*

Media related to Jeremy Corbyn at Wikimedia Commons

Jeremy Corbyn on Twitter

Official website

Profile at Parliament of the United Kingdom

Contributions in Parliament at Hansard 2010–present

Contributions in Parliament during 2006–07 2007–08 2008–09 2009–10 at Hansard Archives

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Voting record at Public Whip

[Record in Parliament at TheyWorkForYou](#)

[Profile at Westminster Parliamentary Record](#)

[Articles authored at Journalisted](#)