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Keir Starmer's Approval Rating Declines Amid Israel-Palestine Conflict

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Keir Starmer's approval rating remains low, with the latest polling revealing no improvement in public perception of his leadership. Recent data from Opinium Research shows his net approval score has fallen, now standing at -41% across key leadership attributes.

The poll surveyed 2,050 UK adults aged 18 and over between 6 and 8 August. It was weighted to be nationally and politically representative. Despite the parliamentary summer

recess, Starmer has seen no boost in public support, as key issues such as the Israel–Palestine conflict and the Online Safety Act continue to influence public opinion.

Regarding the conflict in Israel and Palestine, the poll shows significant shifts in public attitudes. Forty-two per cent of respondents now view Israel as a threat to the UK, while only 18 per cent see it as an ally. This compares to 36 per cent who regard Palestine as a threat. Public disapproval of Starmer's handling of the conflict has risen by 14 points since October 2024, with 45 per cent disapproving, up from 33 per cent. Approval currently stands at 17 per cent, a slight drop from previous months.

When asked about the government's support during the conflict, 33 per cent of those surveyed believe Starmer has provided sufficient backing for Israel and its citizens. In contrast, 40 per cent feel the government could do more to support those in Gaza. Furthermore, 44 per cent of respondents believe the UK should recognise Palestine as an independent state, nearly double the 23 per cent who oppose such recognition.

The Online Safety Act, which has recently come into effect, received more positive feedback. Over half of the respondents (54 per cent) support the aims of the legislation, with only 17 per cent opposed.

Public opinion also favours restrictions on social media access for children. Eighty-three per cent agree that social media should be banned for under-13s, and 58 per cent believe the ban should extend to those under 16. Additionally, 70 per cent support banning mobile phone use during the school day for under-16s, with 36 per cent favouring a full ban in schools and colleges for all pupils up to 18 years old.

Regarding education and technology, two-thirds of those polled (66 per cent) think schools should teach pupils about emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI). Half support the use of AI for research purposes, though 73 per cent oppose its use for completing homework or essays.

James Crouch, head of policy and public affairs at Opinium, commented on the findings: "There is growing disapproval of Israel, with more than twice as many Britons viewing it as a threat to the UK than as an ally. Public dissatisfaction is mounting over Keir Starmer's handling of the Israel-Gaza conflict, particularly regarding the support offered to Gazan citizens.

"With state recognition on the agenda, the British public believes Palestine has as much right to exist as Israel.

"As Israel's actions diverge further from British public opinion, its plan to move Gaza City's population south presents Starmer with a difficult challenge: navigating the conflict in a way that shows meaningful support without alienating voters."