

UK Independence Party (UKIP) — Post-2019 "Zombie Party" Era

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Overview

Field	Details
Full Name	UK Independence Party
Abbreviation	UKIP
Classification	Tier 3 — Zombie Party (formerly Tier 1 major party, now fringe)
Status	Active (registered)
Founded	3 September 1993 (as Anti-Federalist League)
Current Leader	Nick Tenconi (interim: 16 June 2024; ratified: 5 February 2025)
Spokesperson	Calvin Robinson
Honorary President	Neil Hamilton
Chairman	Ben Walker
General Secretary	Donald Mackay
Treasurer	Ian Garbutt
Headquarters	Henleaze Business Centre, 13 Harbury Road, Henleaze, Bristol, BS9 4PN
Membership (2020)	3,888
Political Position	Far-right
Ideology	British nationalism, Christian nationalism, anti-Islam, anti-immigration, national conservatism, right-wing populism
Councillors	0 out of 18,645 (as of 2026)

Field	Details
Electoral Performance (2024 GE)	26 candidates, 6,530 votes (0.0%), 0 seats
Slogan	"People not politics," "The New Right"
Website	ukip.org

Historical Context

UKIP was once one of Britain's most electorally significant political forces. Under **Nigel Farage's** leadership, it won the 2014 European Parliament elections (24 MEPs, 27.5% of the vote) and secured 3.8 million votes (12.6%) in the 2015 general election. It was the primary driving force behind the 2016 EU referendum and the Brexit vote.

The party's post-referendum trajectory has been one of catastrophic decline:

Year	Leader	Key Events
2016	Diane James (18 days)	Elected leader, resigned after 18 days; Farage returned as interim
2016-2017	Paul Nuttall	2017 GE: 594,068 votes (1.8%), 0 seats; lost every deposit
2017-2018	Henry Bolton	Suspended after 5 months over racist remarks by girlfriend; no-confidence vote
2018-2019	Gerard Batten	Hard-right turn; appointed Tommy Robinson as advisor; mass MEP defections
2019	—	2019 EU elections: lost all MEPs; 2019 GE: stood down in Tory-held seats
2020-2023	Neil Hamilton (interim), various	Membership collapsed to 3,888; no councillors
2024	Lois Perry	Resigned after one month during 2024 GE campaign
2024-present	Nick Tenconi	Christian nationalist turn; anti-migrant street activism

By 2024, UKIP had become a textbook "zombie party" — retaining Electoral Commission registration and name recognition but stripped of members, money, elected representatives, and any plausible electoral path. It currently holds **zero councillors** across all 18,645 UK council seats.

Nick Tenconi: The Current Leader

Biography

Nick Marcel Tenconi (born 29 March 1984, Eastbourne, East Sussex) is a British far-right activist, personal trainer, and politician. He was raised in a wealthy family and attended a private junior school before a state secondary education. He worked in sales before launching his personal training business, **Tenco Training**, in Reading in 2013.

In 2023, Tenconi gained some positive publicity after driving to Ukraine to deliver humanitarian aid.

Turning Point UK

Tenconi's political career began with the right-wing pressure group **Turning Point UK** (TPUK), the British affiliate of the American Turning Point USA organisation founded by Charlie Kirk. He became **Chief Operating Officer (COO)** of TPUK in 2021, working under president **Marco Longhi** (Conservative MP).

At TPUK, Tenconi was involved in organising street demonstrations in London's Honor Oak district at a pub that had hosted drag queen storytime events. These protests drew hundreds of counter-protesters. According to the **Trans Safety Network**, Tenconi "was enthusiastically involved in the street violence, personally offering to fight individuals, and physically moving towards and grabbing at counter-protesters." Pink News reported that he "uses his Twitter platform to espouse hateful anti-trans views."

Hope not Hate observed: "following the addition of COO Nick Tenconi to the group, [Turning Point UK] appears to be in the process of reinventing itself as a street-protest organiser, taking a key role in the demonstrations against drag queen storytelling sessions throughout the year."

Path to UKIP Leadership

Tenconi joined UKIP in early 2024 and was rapidly elevated:

- **May 2024:** Elected Deputy Leader of UKIP under Lois Perry
- **16 June 2024:** Became acting/interim leader after Perry quit mid-election campaign, endorsing Reform UK
- **5 February 2025:** Ratified as permanent party leader

Perry later told Searchlight she quit because "there was something 'sinister' going on, which she had not foreseen, certain elements in the leadership, whom she did not name, 'wanted to go after quite an extreme viewpoint'" — though she said Tenconi was not part of this extremist tendency.

The Christian Nationalist Turn

Since taking leadership, Tenconi has repositioned UKIP around **Christian identity politics**. The party's Wikipedia infobox now lists "**Christian nationalism**" as the second ideology (after British nationalism) and "**Protestantism**" as the party's religion — a highly unusual inclusion for a British political party.

Key appointments:

- **Calvin Robinson**: Appointed as UKIP's lead spokesperson. Robinson is a former GB News presenter, Anglican deacon, and anti-Islam activist known for his "anti-woke" positioning
- **Neil Hamilton**: Retained as Honorary President. Hamilton is a disgraced former Conservative MP (cash-for-questions scandal, 1990s) and former UKIP Wales Assembly Member

Tenconi has described himself as a "defender of masculinity, Christianity, and conservative values" and has expressed opposition to "satanic woke culture." He describes himself as a "huge fan" of **Kyle Rittenhouse**, the American teenager who shot three people (killing two) during 2020 racial justice protests in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Street Activism and Controversies Under Tenconi

Anti-Migrant Protests

Tenconi has personally participated in anti-migrant street protests:

- **Plymouth (August 2024)**: Seen with a loudspeaker at anti-migrant demonstrations
- **Aldershot and Reading**: Leading chants of "invaders out"
- **London (1 August 2024)**: Present at a protest that turned violent
- **Portsmouth (August 2025)**: Anti-migrant demonstration

Southport Conspiracy

According to Searchlight, Tenconi alleged that the man who killed three young girls in Southport (which sparked the summer 2024 anti-migrant riots) was "under orders" — promoting a conspiracy narrative about the attacker.

Tommy Robinson and Katie Hopkins Outreach

Searchlight reported that after taking leadership, Tenconi:

- Attempted to move closer to controversial far-right activist **Tommy Robinson** (real name Stephen Yaxley-Lennon)
- Entered into talks with anti-Muslim influencer **Katie Hopkins**

Nazi Salute Allegations (August 2025)

On 8 August 2025, Tenconi published a video of himself at an anti-migrant demonstration in Portsmouth. In the video, he was seen performing a gesture that some observers, including Hope not Hate, compared to a **Nazi salute**. The gesture was made while dancing to the 1999 Italian song "L'amour toujours," which had been banned from Munich's Oktoberfest in 2024 after it became an anthem of the German far-right.

Tenconi and Turning Point UK denied the accusations, calling them a "ridiculous smear," with Tenconi stating: "[the] ideology at UKIP is conservatism" and that the party stands "wholeheartedly against the far-right and Nazism."

Electoral Performance Under Tenconi

2024 General Election (4 July 2024)

UKIP fielded 26 candidates (down from 378 in 2015), receiving **6,530 votes** (0.0% national share). Leader Lois Perry resigned on 15 June, with Tenconi taking over as acting leader for the remainder of the campaign. No deposits were saved.

2025 Local Elections

A minor bright spot: a Reform UK Kent County Council councillor defected to UKIP in September 2025, giving the party at least one elected representative at county level — though the councillor had been elected under the Reform banner. The 2025 Kent County Council election results for Birchington & Rural were cited in this context.

Current Status (2026)

- **Councillors:** 0 (nationally) with a handful of defections from Reform
- **MPs:** 0
- **Mayors:** 0
- **Police and Crime Commissioners:** 0
- **Registered membership:** Unknown but likely below 5,000

Ideological Evolution

UKIP's ideological transformation under Tenconi represents a significant hardening:

Pre-2016 UKIP (Farage era):

- Right-wing populist, Eurosceptic
- Libertarian economic instincts
- "Civic nationalist" framing
- Broad church: ex-Conservatives, ex-Labour, disillusioned voters

Post-2024 UKIP (Tenconi era):

- Explicitly Christian nationalist
- Anti-Islam core doctrine
- Street-protest orientation
- Far-right realignment
- Conspiracy-adjacent (Southport)
- Association with Tommy Robinson network
- "Defender of masculinity" rhetoric

The party's trajectory is from a once-plausible party of government (briefly) to a far-right street movement with residual electoral registration. The Wikipedia infobox now categorises its political position as "Far-right" (replacing the former "Right-wing to far-right").

National Affiliation

UKIP is part of the "**Patriots Alliance - English Democrats and UKIP**" electoral pact — an alliance of micro-parties including the English Democrats, suggesting cooperation among fringe nationalist groups at the margins of British politics.

Funding

UKIP's financial position has deteriorated dramatically:

- Membership fees collapsed from peak of ~45,000 (2015) to 3,888 (2020)
- No substantial donor base (former major donors all defected to Reform UK or Brexit Party)
- No Short Money/opposition funding (no MPs)

- The party likely relies on residual membership dues and small-scale donations
 - The Electoral Commission has pursued UKIP for financial reporting failures in past years
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Assessment

UKIP is the most significant "zombie party" in British political history — an organisation that shaped the course of the nation (Brexit) but has been completely hollowed out by that very success. Under Nick Tenconi, it has completed its transformation from a populist electoral force to a far-right Christian nationalist street movement.

Tenconi's leadership represents the terminal phase of UKIP's ideological journey: from civic Euroscepticism (Sked/Farage) through anti-Islam populism (Batten) to explicit Christian nationalism and street confrontation. The party retains its name recognition and Electoral Commission registration — valuable assets — but has zero elected representatives at any level, negligible membership, and a leader who has been credibly accused of performing a Nazi salute.

Its current role in the far-right ecosystem is as a radical flank to Reform UK — occupying space that even Farage's party cannot publicly endorse — and as a networking node connecting Turning Point UK, Tommy Robinson's network, and Christian nationalist currents.

Sources

- Wikipedia: [UK Independence Party](#)
 - Wikipedia: [Nick Tenconi](#)
 - Searchlight: Multiple reports on Tenconi leadership
 - Hope not Hate: Reporting on Turning Point UK and UKIP
 - Pink News / Trans Safety Network: Reporting on Tenconi at TPUK protests
 - BBC News: UKIP election results and leadership changes
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