

Six Dimensions of the Nation Brands Index 2022

The Executive Office today published the 'Six Dimensions of the Nation Brands Index 2022' statistical bulletins.

Students pay a heavy price from latest Starmer U-turn say Greens



Green Party

3 May 2023

The Green Party has slammed Labour over its U-turn on a pledge to abolish student fees, something that was in Labour's 2019 election manifesto and Keir Starmer promised to support during his leadership campaign [1].

Co-leader of the Green Party, Adrian Ramsay, said:

"This is the latest U-turn from Keir Starmer's Labour and this time it's students who are paying a heavy price. The Green Party thinks tuition fees should be scrapped and grants restored.

"Higher education is a public good and should therefore be properly funded by Government. Students in England pay some of the highest fees in the world, while in Scotland, Germany and Sweden university education is free. This shows that the whopping £9000 charge for students, introduced by the coalition government and now backed by Labour, is a political choice. Publicly funded higher education is not only possible but essential to a society committed to equality and social mobility."

Co-chair of the Young Greens and a student at Oxford University, Kelsey Trevett, added:

"This U-turn from Labour is deeply disappointing but is exactly what we have come to expect from Keir Starmer's Labour. It is no surprise that the

architects of tuition fees won't commit to their abolition, and for millions of students, this solidifies what we already knew: Labour is not on our side. Sky-high tuition fees are adding to the yawning gap between the generations and the growing sense of injustice among young people."

Notes

1. [Labour set to ditch pledge for free university tuition, Starmer says – BBC News](#)

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[April stocking of Departmental waters](#)

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has stocked the following waters with takeable fish in April 2023:

[Reappointment of a Non-Executive Member to the Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland](#)

The Department of Health has announced the reappointment of a Non-Executive (Finance) Member to the Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland formerly known as the Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA).

[Tackling soaring food prices](#)

People are going through the worst cost-of-living crisis in a generation. Energy costs are up, mortgage bills are up, rent is up. But one of the biggest contributors to the crisis is food.

The **cost of the weekly shop has soared** over the last twelve months, now costing families an extra £600 a year.

The price of essential foods that we all use every day has gone through the roof. Cheese is up by 50%; milk by 40%; and eggs by 30%.

People are really struggling just to afford the basics.

And despite this, the **Conservative Government has done absolutely nothing to help**. It's no wonder that on their watch the UK's food inflation has hit 20%, the highest it's been since the 1970s.

Hard-working families shouldn't have to worry about putting food on the table. **People deserve a fair deal**. That's why we've set out a five-point plan to bring down food bills:



1. Invest an extra billion pounds in British farms, to boost food production

We should be supporting our farmers to boost the UK's environmentally-friendly and sustainable food supply.

Starting by targeting support at shortage areas, we can protect ourselves from import shocks, put more good-quality food on the shelves, and bring down prices for the long term.



2. Cut energy bills for farms and businesses

Last month, the Government cut energy support for businesses by 85%, forcing farmers and shops to raise their prices. We'd put the support back up, to cut costs for producers and retailers.

And in the meantime, the Government should ensure that energy-intensive farms, such as those producing poultry, pig, dairy and fruit and vegetables, qualify for extra support under the current scheme.



3. Let our farmers and fishers recruit the staff they need

The Government's unfair visa rules have left our farmers and fishers producing less food because they can't recruit enough workers. Tonnes of fruit and veg went to waste last year as a result.

The Government must fix its broken visa system which is holding back our food supply, by scrapping arbitrary salary thresholds.



4. Investigate profiteering by big food corporations and supermarkets

A handful of big corporations control huge parts of our food and grocery markets, and there's alarming evidence they could be unfairly raising their prices at consumers' expense.

The Government must order an investigation by the market competition watchdog – the CMA – and crack down on profiteering. And they should give the Groceries Code Adjudicator more power to protect farmers from big supermarkets, keeping prices lower.



5. Free school meals for every child in poverty

Unfair rules put in place by the Conservatives in 2018 have excluded 800,000 children growing up in poverty from Free School Meals. And another 200,000 eligible children are missing out because they're not registered.

The Government must immediately end this injustice by scrapping the arbitrary household income threshold, and automatically enrolling every eligible child.

British people are struggling with eye-watering food prices and yet this Government is refusing to help. The Conservative Party is so out of touch they might as well be on a different planet.

It's the **Liberal Democrats** who have put forward a proper plan to make food **cheaper**. Now ministers need to stop sitting on their hands and put it into action.

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