

Emmanuel Macron set to host UK Labour leader Keir Starmer in Paris

Емманюель Макрон збирається приймати в Парижі лідера Лейбористської партії Великобританії Кіра Стармера

Лідер Лейбористської партії Великої Британії Кір Стармер планує поїздку до Парижа для двосторонньої зустрічі з президентом Франції Емманюелем Макроном, повідомили двоє людей, поінформованих про поїздку. Стармер зустрінеться з Макроном в Елісейському палаці. Супроводжувати Стармера в його поїзді будуть його нова глава апарату Сью Грей, тіньовий канцлер Рейчел Рівз і тіньовий міністр закордонних справ Девід Леммі. Поїздка відбудеться незадовго до того, як король Карл III прибуде до Франції з власним державним візитом.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-host-uk-labour-leader-keir-starmer-paris/>

Coup for Britain's opposition leader as French president agrees to bilateral summit.

Could this be the start of a new bromance?

U.K. Labour Party leader Keir Starmer is planning a high-profile trip to Paris next week for a bilateral meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron, two people briefed on the trip said. The Elysée confirmed the story after it was reported by POLITICO.

Starmer is meeting Macron at the Elysée on Monday or Tuesday. Accompanying Starmer on his trip will be his new chief of staff Sue Gray, Shadow Chancellor Rachel Reeves and Shadow Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

The trip will take place shortly before King Charles III travels to France for his own state visit later in the week.

A bilateral summit with the French head of state is a significant PR coup for Starmer, who is keen to appear statesmanlike with his opposition Labour Party 18 points ahead in the polls and with a general election looming next year.

Macron's decision to host Starmer will rile some Conservatives, however. Tory leader Rishi Sunak has struck up a good relationship with the French president since becoming prime minister last October, leading a large ministerial delegation to Paris for his own Anglo-French summit in March. Relations between the two leaders — both 40-something former bankers — had been widely touted as a “bromance.”

An aide to Macron said: “The president told Rishi Sunak on the sidelines of the G20 that he was going to meet Keir Starmer. It's logical for the president to meet the different players of European countries.”

Previous U.K. opposition leaders have held meetings with foreign leaders in the run-up to elections.

David Cameron met Barack Obama at the U.S. ambassador's residence in London in 2009. Tony Blair developed a close relationship with Bill Clinton and his team before he became prime minister in 1997.

“It's not abnormal for opposition leaders to do this, at least not in run-up to an election,” said Catherine Haddon of the Institute for Government think tank. “The calculation is between looking like you are an alternative government-in-waiting, versus looking presumptive.

“Starmer and his team clearly feel it works for them, and France is an important country to have a relationship with. But still, what is interesting in this is not that Starmer is doing this, but that Macron is.”

Starmer's visit to Paris will follow planned trips to the Hague and to Montreal this week, as he seeks to build international relationships and put pressure on the U.K. government over its handling of illegal migration.

Gray only started her role as Starmer's chief of staff last week, after six months of gardening leave from the civil service. Her presence on the Labour delegation is a clear sign of how central she will be to Starmer's team.