Prof Dr Melanie Sully [www.melanie-sully.at](http://www.melanie-sully.at/) melanie.sully@speed.at

*First published in German in the Tiroler Tageszeitung May 8, 2025*

**Pub Populist Aims to be Prime Minister**

He fought for decades for Britain to leave the EU. He scored huge electoral successes with different parties and was instrumental in bringing about the downfall of three prime ministers: David Cameron, Theresa May and Rishi Sunak. He is reckoned to be one of the most influential politicians in Britain this century. Nigel Farage with his Reform Party is now shaking the very foundations of British politics and posing an existential threat to the old two party system.

Reform UK was born out of the Lockdowns during the pandemic. It protested against the Establishment and what it saw as heavy handed decrees of the State. This was more than Eurosceptism, it embraced opposition to what it saw as mad environmental policies and socalled woke ideas on gender and asylum seekers. It railed against the big banks, the BBC, the International Monetary Fund and the World Health Organisation, all in the eyes of Farage wielding too much power. His campaign paid off and in last years election Farage was elected as a Member of Parliament.

Generally considered a right wing populist, Farage initially damaged the Tories tarnished by scandals and economic disasters. But more recently Farage has switched to attack the Labour government which has failed to bring about the change many voters had hoped for. He has even supported more state ownership of major utility companies. Last week Reform scored a stunning success at the local elections and snatched victory from Labour in a byelection. Next year Farage hopes for major breakthroughs in elections in Scotland and Wales.

At 61 Farage is a man to be reckoned with. He has survived cancer, a car accident and a major airplane crash which has left him with painful injuries. His success lies in his talent for communicating with voters on the doorsteps, in pubs and in factories and farms. He is attracting donors and many young people, chiefly white males.

Farage reckons he has an even chance for getting into No 10 Downing St at the 2029 election. He has been laughed at in the past, but he is the only one grinning now.

