

● US politics live US news

IRS could take away Harvard's tax-exempt status while DHS threatens to stop it enrolling foreign students – US politics live

Department of Homeland Security says university must meet administration's demands on sharing information on some visa holders

Léonie Chao-Fong (now); Tom Ambrose and Amy Sedghi (earlier)

Thu 17 Apr 2025 09.39 EDT



📷 Students on campus at Harvard university, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Photograph: Faith Ninivaggi/Reuters

Live feed



From 2h ago

07.20 EDT

IRS considers revoking Harvard tax-exempt status, reports say

The IRS is considering revoking Harvard's tax-exempt status, marking an escalation in the Trump administration's efforts to pressure the university, according to the [New York Times](#).

On Tuesday, [Donald Trump](#) called for Harvard to pay taxes, as part of an ongoing push for changes to its hiring, admissions and curriculum.

Sources said IRS officials told colleagues the treasury department requested the agency consider revoking Harvard's tax-exempt status on Wednesday.

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Key events

- 1h ago** Italy's Giorgia Meloni to meet Trump amid tariff standoff with Europe
- 1h ago** Joe Biden applauds Harvard for standing up to Trump
- 2h ago** IRS considers revoking Harvard tax-exempt status, reports say
- 3h ago** Trump says Fed chair Powell's 'termination cannot come fast enough'
- 4h ago** Trump take with AP ov House acce appeals co

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13m ago 09.29 EDT

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is making plans to rescind Harvard University's tax-exempt status, with a final decision expected soon, according to multiple reports.

Some IRS officials have told colleagues that the treasury department asked the agency on Wednesday to consider revoking Harvard's tax exemption, the New York Times reported.

Linda McMahon, the education secretary, said she doesn't know whether Harvard will lose its tax-exempt status but argued "it was certainly worth looking into."

"We'll see what IRS comes back with relative to Harvard," McMahon told CNN.

I certainly think, you know, in elitist schools, especially that have these incredibly large endowments, you know, we should probably have a look into that.

Donald Trump on Tuesday publicly called for Harvard to lose its tax-exempt status, hours after his administration announced a \$2.2bn freeze in federal funds to Harvard.

"Perhaps Harvard should lose its Tax Exempt Status and be Taxed as a Political Entity if it keeps pushing political, ideological, and terrorist inspired/supporting "Sickness?" Trump wrote on Truth Social. "Remember, Tax Exempt Status is totally contingent on acting in the PUBLIC INTEREST!"

According to the Times, federal law bars the president from either directly or indirectly requesting the IRS to investigate or audit specific targets.

The IRS has previously revoked tax exemptions from organizations for political or commercial activities, but federal law gives non-profits the right to appeal the agency's decision in court.

"To my knowledge, this is the first time an administration has tried something like this," R William Snyder, accounting and taxes professor at George Mason University's Costello College of Business, told CNN.

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Updated at 09.38 EDT

35m ago 09.06 EDT

An immigration judge denied bond to a **Tufts University** PhD student who was detained by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Ice) agents outside her Massachusetts apartment because her student visa had been revoked.

Rümeysa Öztürk, a Turkish doctoral student at Tufts University, was targeted by the Trump administration for arrest, detention, and deportation in retaliation for an op-ed she co-authored in her student newspaper, according to her lawyers.

Öztürk's attorneys said the immigration ruling on Wednesday was a "complete violation of due process and the rule of law."

Ms. Öztürk has committed no crime and DHS has provided zero evidence in their case against her. Despite that, the court yesterday relied on a previously submitted State Department memo that points to nothing that Ms. Öztürk said or did – other than her 2024 school newspaper op-ed – to falsely claim she is a danger to her community.

Öztürk is one of several international university students facing deportation over their involvement in pro-Palestinian protests and activism on college campuses.

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1h ago 08.43 EDT



Phillip Inman

The European Central Bank cut its main interest rate to 2.25% from 2.5% today in response to slowing growth and Donald Trump's tariffs.

The Frankfurt-based bank cut its benchmark deposit rate to tackle a slowdown in the bloc and the impact from the border taxes imposed earlier this month on all EU imports into the US.

It marks the third time this year that the cost of borrowing fell across the 20-member euro area.

Financial markets expect central banks in all major economies to cut interest rates this year as tariffs hit global trade and slow growth.

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1h ago 08.35 EDT

Italy's Giorgia Meloni to meet Trump amid tariff standoff with Europe

Donald Trump is set to meet with Italian prime minister, **Giorgia Meloni**, at the White House today, marking the first visit by a European leader since Trump announced tariffs on EU imports.

The EU faces 25% import tariffs on steel and aluminum and cars, and broader tariffs on almost all other goods.

Posting to Truth Social this morning, Trump said he had a “very productive” call with Mexico’s president, **Claudia Sheinbaum**, and also a “very productive” meeting with the “highest level” Japanese trade representatives.

“Every Nation, including China, wants to meet!” he wrote. “Today, Italy!”

Meloni, the leader of Italy’s most right-wing government in decades, was the only EU leader invited to Trump’s inauguration in January. Trump has previously described her as a “fantastic woman”.



📷 Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni (C) and Argentina's President Javier Milei (L) attend Donald Trump's inauguration, 20 January. Photograph: REX/Shutterstock

The two leaders are expected to hold talks and have lunch during Meloni’s day visit to Washington. She is then scheduled to host vice-president **JD Vance** in Rome later this week.

Today's meeting will be closely watched. On one hand, it is an ideal opportunity for Meloni to demonstrate an affinity with Trump, with whom her natural political tendencies lie, while boosting her credentials as a conduit towards more meaningful dialogue.

On the other, it will be a delicate balancing act for the prime minister, who also knows she must be careful to maintain her allegiance to Italy's EU partners.



Updated at 09.39 EDT

1h ago 08.16 EDT

Joe Biden applauds Harvard for standing up to Trump

Joe Biden visited [Harvard University](#) on Wednesday, during which he applauded its decision to defy demands from the Trump administration.

[According to](#) the Harvard Crimson, the former president attended a private seminar in which he said Harvard had “stepped up in a way no one else has”.

Asked if Harvard should pursue legal action, Biden said he believed it should “just do what it's doing - lifting everybody up”.

Biden's comments came after another former US president, **Barack Obama**, [praised Harvard](#) for having “set an example for other higher-ed institutions – rejecting an unlawful and ham-handed attempt to stifle academic freedom”.



Updated at 08.40 EDT

2h ago 07.54 EDT

Donald Trump said Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell's termination “cannot come fast enough”, while calling for the US central bank to cut interest rates.

In a post on his social media platform Truth Social, Trump reiterated his stance on rate cuts, saying that Powell “should have lowered interest rates, like the ECB, long ago, but he should certainly lower them now”.



Updated at 08.41 EDT

2h ago 07.36 EDT

Dharna Noor

Conservationists on Wednesday sued the [Trump administration](#) over its attempts to boost the oil industry by rolling back green policies.

Filed by the environmental non-profit Center for Biological Diversity, the [litigation](#) focuses on Trump's day-one “unleashing American energy” [executive order](#). In an effort to boost already booming US energy production, the emergency declaration directed federal agencies to identify all policies and regulations that “unduly” burden fuel producers and create “action plans” to weaken or remove them.

The lawsuit seeks information about the development of these action plans from four federal agencies: the Department of the Interior, the Department of Commerce, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service.

Since the executive order was passed, the administration has announced plans to eliminate scores of other green policies. Last week, for instance, it emerged that the EPA plans to [eliminate long-standing requirements](#) for

polluting companies to collect and report their greenhouse gas emissions, ProPublica reported.

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2h ago 07.20 EDT 

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Updated at 08.55 EDT

3h ago 06.56 EDT



Anna Betts

Donald Trump has declared that [Harvard University](#) should no longer receive federal funds, calling it a “joke” that “teaches hate and stupidity”, while his administration said the pre-eminent US university could lose its ability to enrol foreign students.

Harvard made headlines on Monday by becoming the first university to stand up against a series of onerous demands from the [Trump administration](#), setting the stage for a showdown between the federal government and one of the US's most prestigious institutions.

The Trump administration swiftly retaliated by announcing it would freeze more than \$2bn in multiyear grants and contracts with the university. On Wednesday it was also reported by CNN that the **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** was planning to [take away](#) Harvard's tax-exempt status.

Numerous Democratic politicians and top universities across the country have rallied in support of Harvard, but the Trump administration has doubled down, threatening to strip Harvard of its tax-exempt status and insisting that the university apologize.

The **Department of Homeland Security (DHS)** said late on Wednesday that Harvard would lose its ability to enrol foreign students if it did not meet demands the Trump administration demands to share information on some visa holders. The department's secretary, **Kristi Noem**, also announced the termination of two DHS grants to Harvard totalling more than \$2.7m.

Noem said she wrote a letter to the university demanding records on what she called the “illegal and violent activities” of Harvard's foreign student visa holders by 30 April. “And if Harvard cannot verify it is in full compliance with its reporting requirements, the university will lose the privilege of enrolling foreign students,” she said in a statement.

A spokesperson for Harvard said it was aware of Noem's letter and that the university stood by its statement earlier in the week to “not surrender its independence or relinquish its constitutional rights”, while saying it would comply with the law.

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3h ago 06.38 EDT

Trump says Fed chair Powell's 'termination cannot come fast enough'

Donald Trump blasted **Federal Reserve** chair **Jerome Powell** on Thursday for not lowering interest rates, calling him “always TOO LATE AND WRONG”.

“Powell’s termination cannot come fast enough,” Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. “Too Late should have lowered Interest Rates, like the ECB, long ago, but he should certainly lower them now.”

The central bank’s chair warned on Wednesday that Trump’s sweeping tariffs on virtually every trade partner could put the Fed in the unenviable position of having to choose between tackling inflation and unemployment.

Trump’s stop-start tariff policy has unnerved investors and trading partners unsure about the long-term strategy, and what it might mean for international trade.

Agence France-Presse (AFP) reports that Trump has repeatedly urged Powell to cut interest rates, but the US central bank has adopted a wait-and-see attitude, holding interest rates steady at 4.25% to 4.5% since the start of this year.



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Updated at 08.58 EDT

3h ago 06.28 EDT



Jakub Krupa

And we have just heard from **Moscow**, with **the Kremlin** welcoming today’s meeting in **Paris** as a chance for **Witkoff** to update **Europeans** on his long conversation with **Russian** president **Vladimir Putin** last week.

“The United States is continuing to work in this direction with the Europeans and with the Ukrainians,” the Kremlin spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, said.

“Unfortunately, from the Europeans we see a focus on continuing the war,” he said, as reported by Reuters.



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Updated at 09.01 EDT

3h ago 06.21 EDT

US secretary of state, **Marco Rubio**, arrived in **Paris** on Thursday to meet **French** president, **Emmanuel Macron**, about crafting a **Ukraine** ceasefire, as **Washington** and **Europe** seek common ground on ending the fighting.

Top Ukrainian officials were also in the French capital to meet EU and US delegations, president **Volodymyr Zelenskyy**’s chief of staff said, without saying precisely who they were meeting, reports Agence France-Presse (AFP).



📷 US special envoy Steve Witkoff arrives for a meeting with French president diplomatic adviser at the Élysée presidential palace in Paris, France, on Thursday. Photograph: Ludovic Marin/EPA

The latest diplomatic initiative comes as Trump's push for a ceasefire has yet to bear fruit despite his pledges to quickly end the war. Zelenskyy himself urged the Paris talks participants to lean on **Russia** to agree to a ceasefire.

“Russia uses every day and every night to kill. We must put pressure on the killers ... to end this war and guarantee a lasting peace,” Zelenskyy said in a Telegram post.

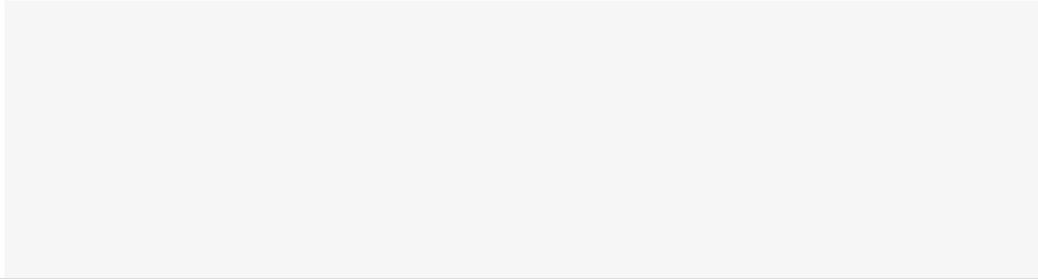
Rubio and **Keith Kellogg**, Donald Trump's special envoy to Ukraine, arrived in Paris mid-morning. US envoy **Steve Witkoff** is also expected to join them.

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Updated at 09.05 EDT

1 of 2

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