

Johnson: UK has financial strength to get through cost-of-living crisis

The UK is one of the most successful countries on earth and has the financial strength to get through the cost-of-living crisis, Boris Johnson said.

The outgoing [Prime Minister](#) said investments were making the UK “fit for the future” and the country would get through the current “pressures” on living standards.

Britons face months of soaring energy bills, double-digit inflation and an economy heading into a potentially lengthy recession, but Mr Johnson defended the legacy he would be leaving his successor next week.

Asked whether Britain was “broken” in the final days of his leadership, he responded: “Absolutely not. This country has got an incredible future and has everything going for it.

“Look at the place that people want to invest in. Which is the country that attracts more venture capital investment now than China? It’s the [United](#) Kingdom.

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Prime Minister Boris Johnson speaks to the media (Peter Nicholls/PA) / PA Wire

“Which country has, I think, more billion-pound start-up tech companies than France, than Germany, than Israel put together? It is the United Kingdom.

“Why do people want to come here? Because it is the place to be.

“What we’re doing now, and what I’m proud that we’ve done over the last three years or so, is put in a lot of things that will make this country fit for the future.”

The Prime Minister will leave office on Tuesday, handing power to either Liz Truss or Rishi Sunak following the outcome of the Tory leadership contest.

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Speaking outside a police station in Lewisham, south-east London, Mr Johnson highlighted “unemployment at record lows” and “investment coming to this country on the scale we’ve never seen before”.

“We’ve got investments that we’re making in this country that are going to make it fit for the future,” he said.

“I’m talking about three new high-speed lines: the biggest rail investment for more than 100 years.

“[Investment](#) in gigabit broadband: giving people access to 21st-century communications. Fantastic progress from 7% coverage when I became Prime Minister to 70% today.”

(PA Graphics) / PA Graphics

He said that because of Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine “we have pressures on the cost of living” but “we have the financial strength to get through them”.

“What we’re also doing is making sure that we have the long-term British energy supplies that we need to get our people through,” he added.

The [Government](#) has also been unable to prevent thousands of people crossing the English Channel in small boats in an attempt to claim asylum in the UK – but Mr Johnson said that was “just a symptom of why this country is one of the most successful on Earth”.

“Of course, people want to come and live here,” he said.

“Of course it’s a perennial difficulty to stop people coming here illegally, but we’re taking powers to do that.”

Meeting Vimala, a police horse, during a visit to a Metropolitan Police station in south east London (Peter Nicholls/PA) / PA Wire

Labour leader Sir [Keir Starmer](#) warned that soaring energy bills would leave people earning as much as £50,000 a year struggling.

The Opposition’s £29 billion plan to freeze energy prices, funded in part by a windfall tax on oil and gas giants, would apply to all households, regardless of income.

He told Channel 5’s Jeremy Vine: “I think if you’re on £50 grand you’re going to really struggle with £4,000 on your energy bills.

“I think there will be many people watching who accept ‘I’m not the hardest-up, I’ve got a decent wage, but £4,000 on my energy bills is more than I can afford’.”