

BROOKINGS

EXPERT

Ben Harris

Vice President and Director – Economic Studies, The Bruce and Virginia MacLaury Chair

Ben Harris is the vice president and director of Economic Studies at the Brookings Institution, where he also holds the Bruce and Virginia MacLaury Chair. As a scholar, Harris focuses on public finance and macroeconomics, and is widely published in academic journals, policy outlets, and the popular press—including the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post—and is a regular guest on cable television. With Martin Baily, he is the author of the book “The Retirement Challenge: What’s Wrong with America’s System and a Sensible Way to Fix It” (Oxford University Press, 2023).

Harris has extensive experience in senior public sector roles. Most recently, he was assistant secretary for economic policy and chief economist at the Treasury Department. He also served as the chief economist and economic adviser to the Vice President of the United States and as a senior economist with the Council of Economic Advisers during the Obama administration. Harris was also the senior economist with the U.S. House of Representatives Budget Committee. In 2020, the New York Times dubbed him the “Quiet Architect of Biden’s Plan to Rescue the Economy.” For his Treasury Department service, Harris was awarded the prestigious Alexander Hamilton Award by Secretary Janet Yellen.

In addition to his public service, Harris has worked extensively in think tanks and academia. He has spent much of his career at Brookings, where he has been the director of the Retirement Security Project, policy director for the Hamilton Project, and fellow in Economic Studies—among other roles earlier in his career. He was also a research associate professor and executive director of the Public-Private Initiative at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management and has taught as an

adjunct instructor at Georgetown University, Harvard University, and the University of Maryland.

In the private sector, Harris was the founder and president of the economic consulting firm Cherrydale Strategies. He was also the senior economic policy adviser with the hedge fund Rokos Capital.

Harris holds a Ph.D. in economics from George Washington University, a Master's degree in Economics from Cornell University, a Master's degree in Quantitative Methods from Columbia University, and a Bachelor's degree from Tufts University. He was also a Fulbright Scholar to Namibia in 2000.

Past Positions

- Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy, U.S. Treasury
- Executive Director of the Kellogg Public-Private Initiative, Northwestern University
- Chief Economist and Economic Adviser to the Vice President of the United States

Education

- Ph.D. in economics, George Washington University
- Master's degree in economics, Cornell University
- Master's degree in quantitative methods, Columbia University
- BA in economics, Tufts University

In the media



Reuters

November 22, 2025

If your goal is to reshore manufacturing, of course that's going to be more expensive because the reason it was offshored in the first place was because corporations wanted to lower..."

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Bloomberg

October 18, 2024

Ben Harris joins Bloomberg TV to discuss the U.S. presidential candidates' economic agendas and how immigration policy could affect the national economy.

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Yahoo! News

September 26, 2024

Bloomberg quotes Ben Harris on the importance of the business community for a potential Harris administration.

Read the article ↗

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CNBC

August 16, 2024

Ben Harris joins CNBC Squawk Box to discuss Vice President Kamala Harris' economic agenda and her speech laying out plans to tackle price gouging and the U.S. housing shortage.

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Bloomberg

July 24, 2024

Ben Harris lays out the economic policy priorities that Vice President Kamala Harris is most likely to advocate as she campaigns for president.

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