

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

**Donald Trump** said he was ending trade talks with **Canada** because of an advertising campaign launched by the province of Ontario. Mr Trump complained about an ad set to air on American television featuring former president Ronald Reagan “speaking negatively about tariffs”. It is a blow for [Mark Carney, Canada’s prime minister](#), who has been seeking a trade deal to lower Mr Trump’s tariffs on Canadian goods.

**Intel’s** share price surged after the [American chipmaker](#) reported revenue of \$13.7bn in the third quarter, above estimates and up by 3% year on year. America’s government, Nvidia and SoftBank have all recently invested in the firm. Its shares had already risen by around 85% in the six months before Thursday. Intel is one of few firms that could dislodge TSMC as the world’s leading chip manufacturer.

**Germany’s manufacturing and service sectors** expanded, according to a flash estimate of S&P Global’s purchasing managers’ index, which rose from 52 in September to 53.8 in October. The figure marks a near two-and-a-half-year high, and is [welcome news](#) for Friedrich Merz, the chancellor, who has [ramped up spending](#) on

infrastructure and defence in a bid to revive Germany's stagnant economy.

Britain's ruling **Labour Party** suffered a disastrous by-election defeat in Caerphilly, losing a Welsh parliament seat in an area it had been dominant in for a [century](#), to Plaid Cymru, a Welsh nationalist party. Labour came third behind the hard-right Reform UK. Consequently it has lost its effective majority in the Senedd, the Welsh parliament. The loss bodes ill for Labour ahead of local elections next year.

The price of oil rose by over 5%, a day after the **Trump administration** [announced sanctions](#) on **Russia's** two largest oil companies, Rosneft and Lukoil. On Thursday the **European Union** also adopted new sanctions on Russia's energy sector, aiming to force a ceasefire [in Ukraine](#). Vladimir Putin, Russia's president, called the American sanctions an "unfriendly act" and said that "no self-respecting country" would bow to such pressure.

**Mr Trump** pardoned **Changpeng Zhao**, the co-founder of **Binance**, the world's largest cryptocurrency exchange. Mr Zhao pleaded guilty to [criminal money-laundering violations](#) in 2023, and spent four months in prison. The Trump administration, which has [pursued crypto-friendly policies](#), suggested that Mr Zhao had been targeted in former president Joe Biden's "war on cryptocurrency". [Mr Zhao](#) vowed to make America "the Capital of Crypto".

Dozens of people connected to the **National Basketball Association**, including players and coaches, were indicted for organised theft and fraud following a four-year investigation. Two sports-betting and poker-rigging schemes reportedly involved "tens of millions of dollars" and had links to the mafia, according to the head of the FBI, [Kash Patel](#).

**Figure of the day:** 424%, the average wage increase workers from developing countries would get if they took low-skilled jobs in America. [Read the full story.](#)



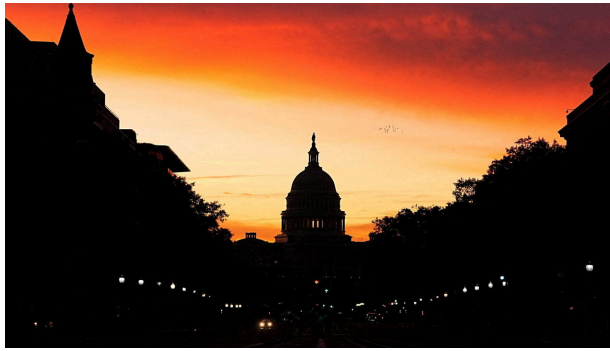
Photograph: Getty Images

## France's budget and ratings squeeze

Now that France has a new government in place—the third this year—parliament will on Friday finally start to debate the [budget for 2026](#). President Emmanuel Macron has given his re-installed prime minister, [Sébastien Lecornu](#), “carte blanche” to negotiate a compromise to get it through.

To secure support from the opposition Socialists for his minority government, Mr Lecornu has promised to suspend Mr Macron's landmark pension reform, which progressively raises the minimum retirement age from 62 to 64 years. This concession, however, needs financing. Mr Lecornu has conceded that earlier pledges to reduce the government deficit from 5.4% of GDP in 2025 to 4.6% will not be met. But he vows to keep it under 5%.

Bond markets will be watching. On Friday Moody's ratings agency will update France's sovereign credit rating. On October 17th S&P, a rival rater, lowered France's credit rating, citing “uncertainty on public finances”. Quite.



Photograph: Reuters

## A trickle of economic data in America

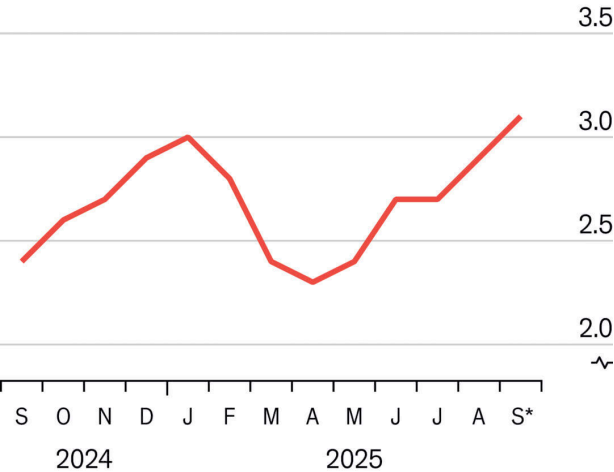
As America's government shutdown lurches into its fourth week, [economy-watchers](#) face a worsening data drought. But there is one oasis on the horizon: on Friday, the Bureau of Labour Statistics will release inflation figures for September, nine days later than originally scheduled.

The BLS has not published data since the shutdown began at the start of October. But it has made an exception for figures tracking consumer prices, which will help calculate the cost-of-living uplift for some 70m Americans who receive social-security payments. Forecasters are expecting [annual inflation](#) to nudge up from 2.9% to 3.1%, as tariffs and lower immigration push prices up.

Betting markets expect the shutdown to last until mid-November. That would compound the data woes at the BLS. Ordinarily, the agency's army of price-collectors would be gathering data from around the country for October's figures, due out in November. But now they sit furloughed, clipboards down.

High time

United States, consumer prices,  
% increase on a year earlier



\*Forecast  
Source: LSEG Workspace



Photograph: Getty Images

## Money for Ukraine, sanctions for Russia

Following a frenetic week of diplomacy, on Friday the European-led “coalition of the willing” will meet Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelensky, in London to discuss a peace plan. The 12-point proposal, which emerged earlier this week, bears similarities to America’s 20-point deal for Gaza. It could also include a “peace board” chaired by Donald Trump. A ceasefire in Ukraine would be based on the [current front lines](#), which Russia rejects.

The proposal comes after Mr Trump scrapped a summit with Vladimir Putin in Budapest and announced sanctions on Russian oil firms. If rigorously enforced, those could help cut the funding for Moscow’s war machine. On Thursday the [European Union’s](#) leaders delayed until December a vote on a long-standing proposal for a \$162bn “reparations” loan to Kyiv using profits from frozen Russian assets in Europe. Should it be agreed it is not clear how much leeway Ukraine would have on spending the money, but Mr Zelensky insists that some of it should go on new weapons and supporting Ukraine’s defence industry.



Photograph: Alamy

## Ireland's spoiled ballot

On Friday Ireland will choose its next president. The race had promised plenty of colour, with a meteorologist, a martial-arts fighter, a former gaelic-football manager and Bob Geldof, an outspoken rock singer, in the mix. But only two, more conventional, candidates are left. The overwhelming favourite is a former barrister, Catherine Connolly (pictured left), who is a pro-Palestine independent backed by the left. Her rival, Heather Humphreys (pictured right), is from the centre-right Fine Gael party.

About half of voters polled feel represented by neither. The main parties closed ranks to stop more unusual candidates from receiving the necessary backing to run. Some people intend to spoil their ballots; others will just not vote. While the role of Ireland's president is mostly ceremonial, it has the potential to unify the country beyond party politics. But compared with the outgoing president Michael D. Higgins, a diminutive, well-liked politician and sometime poet who often brought his dogs on official business, whoever wins will be uninspiring.





Photograph: Reuters

## The team to beat in Major League Baseball

Ever since the Los Angeles Dodgers signed [Shohei Ohtani](#) (pictured), a Japanese superstar, to a contract worth \$700m in late 2023, they have been Major League Baseball's best team. It is stuffed with talent. Last year it led the league in payment of "luxury tax", a penalty levied on teams whose salary bills exceed a certain threshold. The Dodgers have cruised to this year's World Series, in which they will play Toronto's Blue Jays. The first game in the best-of-seven series takes place on Friday.

It is tempting to cast the Blue Jays as plucky underdogs. They have not reached a World Series since 1993 and were absent from the playoffs between 1994 and 2015. But the team has been splashing cash, too. It secured Vladimir Guerrero junior, a first baseman, on a \$500m contract this year, which is the third-largest in MLB history. The Blue Jays' payroll this year was the league's fifth-highest. That suggests they'll put up a good fight.



Illustration: The Economist

## Daily quiz

We will serve you a new question each weekday. On **Friday** your challenge is to give us all five answers and tell us the theme. Email your responses (and your home city and country) by 1700 BST on Friday to [\[email protected\]](#). We'll pick three winners at random and crown them on Saturday.

**Friday:** Who was the only British prime minister for whom English was not his first language?

**Thursday:** Which actor is noted for his appearances as real-life people, including Tony Blair and David Frost?

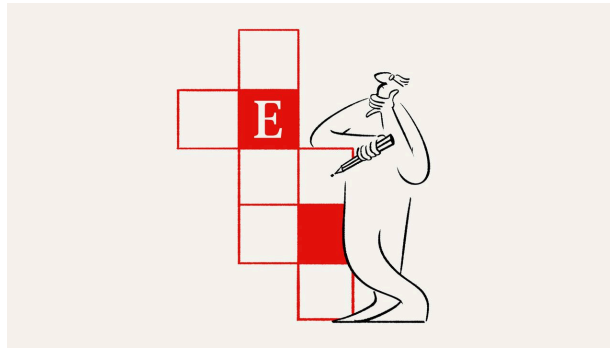


Illustration: The Economist

## The winners of last week's crossword

Thank you to everyone who took part in our crossword, published on Saturday. The winners, chosen at random, were:

**Ray Wronski**, Tokyo, Japan

**Rune Pettersson**, Höganäs, Sweden

**Celia Johnson**, Vancouver, Canada

They all gave the correct answers of Russia, luxury, throne and Royal Mint.

*A great artist is always before his  
time or behind it.*

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***G. E. Moore***