

Catch up: Trump pardons 1,500 Jan 6th rioters; Rubio confirmed



Donald Trump signed an executive order granting “full pardons” to some 1,500 [January 6th rioters](#), whom he had earlier described as “hostages”. Among the other orders the president signed at a rally after his inauguration were directives to withdraw America from the [Paris climate agreement](#) and to freeze hires of most federal workers. However, Mr Trump [stalled on earlier promises](#) to immediately introduce hefty tariffs, prompting the dollar to slide for a short time.

Marco Rubio became the first member of Mr Trump’s prospective cabinet to be confirmed. The Senate voted unanimously to appoint the Florida senator—who is a staunch conservative and China hawk—as secretary of state. [Other Trump picks](#) for his cabinet may not find their confirmations so straightforward.

The **Houthis** said their attacks on ships in the Red Sea would target only those directly linked to Israel, as the second day of the [ceasefire](#) in Gaza took hold. The militant group, which controls large parts of Yemen, warned that assaults on American and British

vessels would resume if those countries attacked its territory. Houthi strikes have [disrupted global shipping](#) and trade.

American regulators escalated an investigation into 129,000 **Ford** vehicles equipped with BlueCruise, the carmaker's [hands-free driving system](#), after two fatal crashes. Both incidents involved Ford's Mustang Mach-E cars colliding with stationary vehicles. Officials are examining whether the system struggles to detect obstacles at night while travelling at highway speeds. The probe could lead to the vehicles being recalled.

China's crude-oil imports from **Russia** hit a record high in 2024, rising 1% to 2.17m barrels per day, as economic ties between the two countries continue to strengthen. Imports from Malaysia, an oil producer that also acts as a hub for shipments from [Iran](#) and Venezuela, surged 28%. Purchases from Saudi Arabia fell 9% as refiners favoured cheaper Russian and Iranian crude.

Axel Rudakubana pleaded guilty to murdering three children and attempting to kill 10 more people in **Southport**, Britain, last year. Yvette Cooper, the country's home secretary, said there would be a public inquiry into the attack, which sparked [days of riots](#). Keir Starmer, the prime minister, said the state must answer "grave questions" about how it "failed" to protect the victims.

Yoon Suk Yeol, South Korea's president [arrested on insurrection charges](#) last week, refused to be questioned by investigators. Mr Yoon, who until last week had barricaded himself inside the presidential residence in central Seoul, was impeached in December for attempting to declare [martial law](#). On Sunday some of his supporters stormed a court building to protest against his detention.

Figure of the day: 25%, the share of the global population living in cities of over a million people, up from 15% six decades ago. [Read the full story.](#)

Trump's would-be spy chief faces Congress



[Tulsi Gabbard](#), Donald Trump's nominee for director of national intelligence, faces a grilling from senators on Tuesday. A former Democratic congresswoman, she may have a harder time gaining lawmakers' support than any other of Mr Trump's nominees. An erstwhile supporter of Bernie Sanders, a left-wing Democrat, Ms Gabbard once derided Mr Trump's first cabinet as "neocon war hawks". She has alienated many Republicans, while members of her old party have criticised her for her rightward shift.

Ms Gabbard's views regarding the former dictator of Syria, Bashar al-Assad, are especially controversial. While serving in Congress she visited the country during its civil war and, according to [The Economist's reporting](#), later received information about an American held hostage by the regime. (She denies this.) Beyond Syria, Ms Gabbard will face questions about her criticism of the intelligence services that she would lead, as well as her views on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a host of other thorny foreign-policy issues.

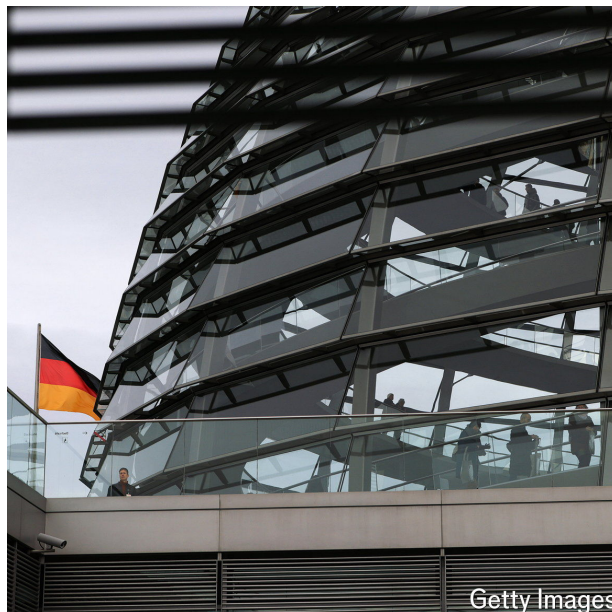
Chicago braces for deportations



On Tuesday attention will turn to Donald Trump's signature policy: [deporting undocumented immigrants](#). Over the weekend the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the new president's administration will start with a splashy immigration raid in Chicago, a city that Republicans love to loathe. Tom Homan, Mr Trump's "border czar" (pictured), has previously railed against [Brandon Johnson](#), Chicago's Democratic mayor, warning him not to stand in his way. Up to 200 Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents would, the *Journal* claimed, be accompanied by right-wing media to demonstrate a show of force.

Immigrant-rights groups in the Windy City are expecting large numbers of arrests. But as zero hour approaches, it is unclear whether the raids will actually happen. With the element of surprise gone, it might not be possible any more, mused Mr Homan on Fox News on Sunday. "Chicago's not off the table, but we're reconsidering when and how we do it," he said. Perhaps mass deportation is not as easy as made out.

Fading optimism over Germany's economy



On Tuesday ZEW, a German research institute, will publish its monthly economic-sentiment index. The survey asks some 300 experts from banks, insurers and businesses their expectations for the state of Germany's economy over the next six months. For most of last year, it was gloomy. Then, at the end of 2024, the indicator rose by more than expected, from 7.4 points in November to 15.7 points in December. (The index ranges from 100 to -100, with a reading below zero indicating pessimism about the economy.)

The European Central Bank's interest-rate cut in mid-December and economic-policy changes expected after parliamentary elections on February 23rd gave cause for optimism. But the mood is unlikely to last. Donald Trump's trade policies, along with war in Ukraine, are causing considerable uncertainty for German businesses. And the country's [woeful growth](#) shows no sign of improving. The German statistics agency announced on January 15th that the German economy contracted for the second consecutive year in 2024.

Netflix's hits keep coming



The world's biggest streaming subscription service has been on a blockbuster run lately, its share price rising by more than 80% last year. Netflix's quarterly earnings, due on Tuesday, will probably contain more good news for shareholders. Subscriber growth is easing off, as the platform nears 300m members. But operating margins are widening as Netflix raises prices and builds up its advertising business.

Expect plenty of boasting about [live sport](#), the latest category of content that the streamer is getting into. In the past few months, Netflix's sporting broadcasts have included boxing, American football and wrestling, attracting the kind of large simultaneous audiences that advertisers like. "Squid Game 2", a TV thriller, was also a big hit over Christmas. The only bad news is from Washington. Donald Trump, America's new president, seems keen to save TikTok, a video-sharing app, which competes with Netflix for both audience and ad dollars.

A shake-up in European football



This season UEFA, which runs European football, changed the format of the Champions League, its premier club competition. The tournament's opening group stage, in which sets of four clubs played each other at home and away, was replaced with a league system in which sides face eight different teams. Some fans feared that the new structure was too complicated and might favour the wealthiest teams.

Yet the tournament is springing some surprises. True, Liverpool, six times European champions, who play Lille on Tuesday, look set to reach the next round easily. But other giants are struggling. Real Madrid and [Manchester City](#) are currently 20th and 22nd in the 36-team league, and may need to win a play-off to progress. Paris Saint-Germain, perennial winners of France's domestic league, are even lower and could be eliminated automatically. In contrast, Brest, a much-less fancied French side, are on track to qualify. That would please football romantics.

Daily quiz



The Economist

We will serve you a new question each day this week. On Friday your challenge is to give us all five answers and, as important, tell us the connecting theme. Email your responses (and include mention of your home city and country) by 1700 GMT on Friday to QuizEspresso@economist.com. We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

Tuesday: York, Westphalian and Tyrolean Speck are all types of which meat product?

Monday: The Canadian restaurant and coffee chain, which now has branches in more than a dozen countries, is named after which ice hockey player?

The further a society drifts from truth the more it will hate those who speak it.

George Orwell