

Catch up: polling day arrives in America; Spain's PM announces flood aid



America's presidential election was [agonisingly close](#) as voters across the country went to the polls. After being fed the final opinion polls of the campaign, [The Economist's forecast model](#) put Kamala Harris, the Democratic candidate, narrowly ahead of her Republican rival, Donald Trump, with a 56% chance of winning. More than 82m early ballots had been cast before Tuesday.

Meanwhile traders placed [nervous bets](#) on the two candidates. Bitcoin and stocks, which some think would rally under Mr Trump, rose as markets showed some signs that investors were placing so-called **"Trump trades"**. But currency markets seemed to point in the other direction: after rising in October on the expectation of a second Trump term, the dollar weakened slightly.

Pedro Sánchez, **Spain's** prime minister, promised €10.6bn (\$11.6bn) in aid for areas hit by [floods](#) last week. Mr Sánchez, who faced angry crowds when he visited the disaster-stricken region of Valencia on Sunday, said he would announce further funding soon.

The government said that 217 people have died. Many people are still missing.

A two-month strike at **Boeing** ended as workers voted to accept a 38% pay rise over the next four years. [The walkout](#) by 33,000 union members, a fifth of the company's workforce, had cost the company some \$100m a day in revenue. The American planemaker has been in crisis since a fuselage panel blow-out mid-flight in January.

Poland arrested four people suspected of taking part in a **Russian** plot to place bombs on transatlantic flights. Poland launched its investigation after a parcel exploded at a delivery hub in Germany in July. The incident is thought to have been a test run for placing similar devices on flights to America or Canada. Europe is increasing its efforts to counter [Russian sabotage](#).

Apollo reported that its assets under management rose to \$733bn during the third quarter, an increase of 16% year on year. Its adjusted net income rose to \$1.1bn, up from \$1bn during the same period in 2023. The American [private-equity titan](#) has attracted growing numbers of wealthy investors this year, driving a 10% increase in asset-management fees.

An alleged plot to establish a **far-right regime in Saxony** was foiled by German police, according to federal prosecutors. Eight suspects were arrested after raids involving more than 450 police officers. *Der Spiegel*, a newspaper, reported that one of the suspects represents the hard-right [Alternative for Germany](#) as a councillor in Grimma, a town in east Germany.

Figure of the day: \$35, the cost of a cubic metre of helium, the amount needed to lift a single kilogram. [Read the full story](#).

American politics matters intensely to the rest of the world. The US in brief's team of editors will be giving The Economist's fastest

*analysis of the election results as they come in on Tuesday
November 5th [here](#).*

Turkey's growing sway in Central Asia



On Tuesday the presidents of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Uzbekistan will discuss prospects for economic integration at a summit of the [Organization of Turkic States](#) in Bishkek, the Kyrgyzstani capital. Once a talking shop, the OTS is turning into a vehicle for regional co-operation. The war in Ukraine has damaged Central Asian countries' trust in Russia. Many of the group's members see the OTS as a way of reducing dependence on the Kremlin.

Turkey, the biggest of the OTS countries, has taken note. Turkish developers have signed contracts worth tens of billions of dollars across Central Asia. Turkey's arms companies are busy in the region, too. Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan (the latter an OTS observer) have already bought Turkey's battle-tested Bayraktar drones. Kazakhstan is in talks to produce them. Russia maintains economic and political sway in the region. But Central Asian officials now talk of pursuing a "multi-vector" foreign policy and believe time is on their side.

Who will control America's Congress?



The prospect of a divided Congress—and with it the shelving of much of the next president's agenda—looms large in America's election. [Our forecast model](#) gives the Republicans a 71% chance of taking the Senate. To retain control, Democrats cannot afford to lose Arizona, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania or Wisconsin. Yet their incumbents in the largely red states of Ohio and [Montana](#) look particularly vulnerable. They could withstand a loss if they flipped a seat elsewhere, and some recent surveys have put the challengers to Republican senators in the pale-red states of [Florida and Texas](#) just a few points behind them. But our model only gives Democrats a one-in-five chance of flipping seats in either state.

Meanwhile the battle for the House is a [coin-toss](#). California is a [key battleground](#). If Democrats can flip five Republican-held districts in the blue state, they may well take the lower chamber. That will be another nail-biting race that adds to the uncertainty on election day.

America's presidential showdown



As polling day in America begins on Tuesday, *The Economist's* [forecast model](#) suggests that the presidential contest is agonisingly close. Kamala Harris narrowly moved ahead of Donald Trump this morning. If the polls are even slightly wrong, one of them could win a decisive electoral-college victory.

How quickly the results will be known will depend in part on how large is the winning candidate's margin of victory. The first states to be called, based on exit polls, will be where one candidate is far ahead. A better early indicator of the overall result will be changes in county-level tallies since 2020: these will appear live on [our results page](#) throughout election night. The race will probably depend on [seven swing states](#). Of these, Georgia and Michigan may be fastest to count; Pennsylvania, the likely pivotal state, will probably be slower. It will not start processing postal ballots until Tuesday morning.

Showing off China's wealth



China's government hosts endless forums, summits and expos each year. But the China International Import Expo has special significance to the ruling Communist Party. The country's main economic contribution to the world has been in the form of exports. An import expo—one in which thousands of foreign companies advertise their wares to local consumers—intends to show that China is more than a giant factory. It is a country of increasingly wealthy consumers, too.

The event, which started on Tuesday, will attract all manner of multinational groups, hoping to get a small share of [China's market](#). But the domestic demand that China's rulers are so eager to display is flagging. Imports rose only 0.3% year on year in dollar terms in September. That is hurting international brands. LVMH, a luxury group, recently attributed poor quarterly results to “deteriorating trends from the Chinese customer”. Expos alone will not improve local consumer sentiment.

A celebration of black photography



The photographs are lighthearted. A woman in a colourful dress leans against a car in London; a boy pushing a bike grins at the camera; two friends pose on New York's subway. "As We Rise", an exhibition which opens at the Saatchi Gallery in London on Tuesday, brings together more than 100 such images to explore "black identity on both sides of the Atlantic". From Britain to Canada to the Caribbean, the images capture everyday interactions in the 20th and 21st centuries. The photographers featured include Sir Horace Ové, a Trinidadian-born British artist who died last year, and Arielle Bobb-Willis, an up-and-coming American talent.

Since the mid-19th century, [black photographers](#) have documented the spirit of their communities. They have countered centuries of stereotypes and clichéd representations. This exhibition has a mix of family pictures, artsy shots and self-portraits. It is both a historical archive of the African diaspora and a testament to the joy of good photography.

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: What, according to a discussion between two characters in Pulp Fiction, do the French call a cheeseburger?

Monday: Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg were pioneers in which branch of physics?

\$35

The cost of a cubic metre of helium, the amount needed to lift a single kilogram.

Read the full story.

**Thoroughly conscious ignorance is the
prelude to every real advance in science.**

James Clerk Maxwell