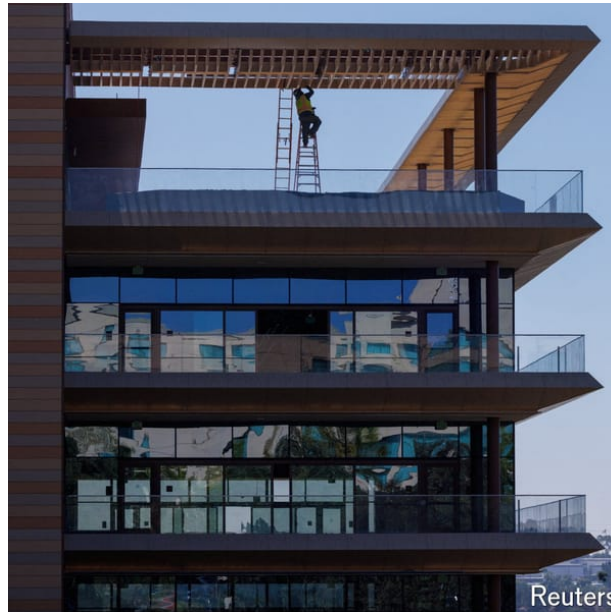


Catch up: Russian disinformation campaign ramps up; ceasefire hopes fade



American intelligence officials said “Russian influence actors” had manufactured a viral video purporting to depict voter fraud in [Georgia](#), a swing state. They said the clip, which seemingly showed a Haitian immigrant illegally voting for Kamala Harris, was “part of Moscow’s broader effort to raise unfounded questions about the integrity of the US election”. They warned more [disinformation](#) was incoming from Moscow. On Thursday Georgia’s top election official appealed to Elon Musk to remove such content from his social-media platform, X. The site said it was “taking action against” identified posts.

America added 12,000 jobs in October, according to official figures. The number is far below the 223,000 reported in September and well short of the 100,000 jobs expected. The reading reflects disruption caused by [hurricanes](#) and strikes, but will nevertheless worry Ms Harris, who is neck-and-neck with Donald Trump in the presidential race, according to [our forecast model](#).

Prospects of a ceasefire between **Israel** and its foes faded. Air strikes killed at least 68 people in **Gaza** and 52 in **Lebanon** on Friday, according to local officials. The UN warned that the situation in northern Gaza had become “apocalyptic”. Earlier the Israel Defence Forces said it had killed Izz al-Din Kassab, one of Hamas’s “last high-ranking members”, in a targeted strike.

Heavy rainfall continued in **Spain** on Friday, particularly across the south of the country. The death toll from [flash floods](#), which were worst in the eastern region of Valencia, passed 200. The heavy rainfall began on Monday. It is the country’s worst flood-related disaster in modern history.

ExxonMobil and **Chevron** reported a fall in profits during the third quarter. Exxon’s earnings fell by 5.5% compared to the same period in 2023, while Chevron’s dropped by 30%. The American oil titans posted [huge profits](#) after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, when commodity prices soared. But since prices returned to earth, they have struggled to repeat that performance.

Supporters of Evo Morales, **Bolivia’s** former president, stormed an army barracks and took around 20 soldiers hostage. They began blocking roads three weeks ago to prevent his arrest for rape charges he claims are trumped up. Though barred from running, Mr Morales is fighting to be the candidate of [the left-wing MAS party](#) in next year’s presidential election.

Mathematicians at the University of Technology, Sydney, cast doubt on the “**infinite monkey theorem**”, which holds that a chimpanzee would produce [Shakespeare’s works](#) by typing randomly for an eternity. They suggest the theory is misleading: a monkey would take longer than the lifetime of the universe to write anything “non-trivial”, and have just a 5% chance of typing the word “bananas” in its own lifetime.

Word of the week: Galapagos syndrome, a term used to describe how many of the goods developed and sold in Japan do not get exported. [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. Find that on our app and home page on Tuesday November 5th, and [sign up here](#) to receive daily election updates delivered as a newsletter.

Spain in deep water



Days after a [torrential storm](#) killed more than 200 people in eastern Spain, the country is bracing for more rain. New weather alerts were issued on Friday. Meanwhile the search for those still missing continues. The streets in towns around Valencia, the country's third-biggest city, are piled high with cars, furniture and mud. The city's bypass and the high-speed railway to Madrid will be out of service for weeks; commuter trains for months, with some 90km of track either buckled or gone. Tens of thousands of people remain without power.

The storm was caused by a cold front colliding with the warm waters of the Mediterranean Sea, which have been super-heated by climate change. While Spain has also recently suffered from severe droughts and heatwaves, meteorologists warn that these super storms will become more frequent, too. Politicians should look at how similar disasters might be avoided. The country needs a national plan to adapt by moving housing away from floodplains.

Will Donald Trump's bros turn out?



To increase his vote in America's presidential election, Donald Trump had two options. He could have moderated his message to win over independents and disaffected Republicans. He has not done that: witness the denigration of Puerto Ricans at his [recent rally in New York](#). Rather he has courted people who don't reliably vote, but might well vote for him if they can be persuaded to vote at all—namely, [young men](#).

The strategy is risky. Only half of eligible young men turned out in 2020, 41% of whom voted for him (compared with 32% of young women). This time his share could rise by several percentage points. Even a small improvement could deliver Mr Trump hundreds of thousands of votes.

The challenge is convincing people with less trust or interest in politics that casting a ballot is worth the energy. Worryingly for Mr Trump, more young men who support Ms Harris say they will “definitely” vote compared with their pro-Trump counterparts.

The Tories unveil their new leader



Britain's Conservative Party reveals its [new leader](#) on Saturday. It will either be Kemi Badenoch, a former business secretary, or Robert Jenrick, a former immigration minister. They were whittled down from a field of candidates by their fellow MPs. The Conservative Party's members—who numbered about 172,000 in 2022—have chosen from the final pair. Whoever wins, the party appears set to tilt to the right. Both are hawkish about curbing migration to Britain. Each has had conspicuously less to say about [economic policy](#).

The new leader faces a huge challenge. In July's general election the party suffered its worst result since the 1830s in both seats (121 out of 650) and vote share (24%). The first big test of the new leader's appeal will fall in May 2025, when a large clutch of local councils in provincial England, traditionally Tory strongholds, come up for election. Heavy losses are on the cards unless the party can recover its standing.

Goths get excited



This weekend The Cure released their first album in 16 years. For one particular subculture, this is truly momentous. In the dark and sprawling netherworld of goth, the British alternative rock band, led by Robert Smith, hold an iconic status—as they have done for almost half a century.

But if the band epitomise [goth culture](#), they also transcend it. The Cure first enjoyed success as a new-wave group in the early 1980s, just as goth was emerging from the post-punk milieu. Over the decades The Cure's music has ranged from upbeat, indie dancefloor favourites like “Friday I’m In Love” to ominous, epic dirges such as “Pornography”. Their excellent new album, “Songs of a Lost World”, may be the best yet. Though unmistakably in The Cure's own style, it forges its own identity: an intense, but never morbid, reckoning with mortality.

Weekend profile: Dan Osborn, the mechanic shaking up Nebraska's politics



Dan Osborn, an independent candidate for America's Senate in Nebraska, has a fable he recounts on the campaign trail. "It's a story about a society of mice that happens to be ruled by cats," he says. Each election, they pick from a crowd of cats to rule them. Eventually, "the mice wake up". They realise the problem: it is not merely that "we're electing the wrong kind of cat". It is that "we're electing cats" in the first place. Mr Osborn says that what makes him different is that he is "not ashamed to admit that I'm a mouse."

The polls suggest he has a small but real chance of becoming a very powerful rodent. Democrats seem likely to lose their tiny majority in the upper chamber. But in [staunchly Republican Nebraska](#), Deb Fischer, the state's senior senator, faces an unexpectedly [difficult fight](#) to keep her seat. Mr Osborn, who managed to manoeuvre himself into being the only other serious candidate (the Democrats chose not to put anybody up), is showing that, even in red states, Republicans can be vulnerable.

Mr Osborn moved to Omaha aged seven, when his father took a job on the railways. He met his wife at high school and, on graduating, joined the navy. He later served in the Nebraska National Guard before becoming a mechanic at the Kellogg cereal factory in Omaha and getting involved in trade unionism. By 2021 he was the local union president, and led the Omaha leg of a bitter 77-day strike at all Kellogg's plants. After that, in his telling, he was fired—and so ended up running for office.

Aged 49, Mr Osborn is the picture of a white working-class union man. He dresses almost exclusively in plaid shirts and jeans (he claims not to own a suit), usually with a naval baseball cap. He has proposed raising the cap on social-security contributions so that workers with high incomes pay more. Yet he has maintained a studious silence as to where he would sit in the Senate. He claims to have been a registered independent his whole life, and will not say how he will vote in the presidential election.

Nebraska is now one of America's reddest states. But until 2013 it had a Democratic Senator. If Mr Osborn has a chance, it is because it is the Democratic Party itself, not Democratic messages, that has fallen out of favour. Even if he fails—still the most likely outcome—his campaign has sent a message that the sorts of working-class voters who have flocked to Mr Trump are not yet entirely sold on his party. The next election cycle may have a few more Dan Osborns. Perhaps they will call themselves “the Mice”.

Weekly crossword



Our crossword is designed for experienced cruciverbalists and newcomers alike. Both sets of clues give the same answers, all of which feature in articles in this week's edition of *The Economist*:

Cryptic clues

1 down Sculpting all hegemonic for artist (12)

1 across Unknown among leaders of major economically independent country or state (6)

2 across Little French one with odd aura on the moon (5)

3 across Partially enjoys terrible seafood (6)

Factual clues

1 down Artistic beneficiary of the Medicis (12)

1 across Where Netflix made its first foreign-language original (6)

2 across A type of base that might be build underground in future, to shield them from radiation (5)

3 across An indulgent food-stuff, normally slurped from its shell (6)

Email all four answers by 9am GMT on Monday to crossword@economist.com, along with your home city and country. We will pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners in next week's edition.

The winners of this week's quiz



The Economist

Thank you to everyone who took part in this week's quiz. The winners, chosen at random, were:

Jennifer Stapleton, Cheltenham, England

John-Mikal Stordal, Oslo, Norway

Greger Lindell, Eemnes, Netherlands

They all gave the correct answers of Hawkeye Pierce, Steven Tyler, George Harrison, Garfield and Cleveland. The theme is 19th-century American presidents: Franklin Pierce, John Tyler, William and Benjamin Harrison, James Garfield and Grover Cleveland.

The questions were:

Monday: What was the name of the character played by Alan Alda in the long-running TV series "MASH"?

Tuesday: Steven Tallarico is the real name of which American rock singer, the lead vocalist of Aerosmith?

Wednesday: Which member of the Beatles was the youngest?

Thursday: Which cartoon cat was created by Jim Davis?

Friday: The baseball team of which city changed its name from the Indians to the Guardians?

Galapagos syndrome

A term used to describe how many of the goods developed and sold in Japan do not get exported.

Read the full story.

**England and America are two countries
separated by the same language.**

George Bernard Shaw