

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

**Binyamin Netanyahu** said Israel would begin negotiating with **Hamas** to pause fighting and secure the release of some remaining hostages. The [militant group](#) agreed to the proposal this week. The Israeli prime minister also approved a plan by the **Israel Defence Forces** to take over Gaza city; earlier the IDF said it had seized control of the city's outskirts.

An appeals court in New York overturned an “excessive” **civil-fraud penalty** of \$520m against **Donald Trump**. Last year Mr Trump was [found liable](#) for business fraud after a judge determined that his property company inflated the value of its assets to secure better loan terms. That verdict was upheld, despite the president's claims of “total victory” over a “political witchhunt”.

**Meta** reportedly agreed to pay at least \$10bn over six years for cloud-computing services from **Google**. Facebook's parent company wants more computing power in order to compete in the AI race. Mark Zuckerberg, Meta's boss, has also been spending megabucks on an [AI hiring spree](#). Though the tech giant will reportedly pause those efforts, it is poaching another artificial-intelligence executive from Apple, according to Bloomberg.

Two terrorist attacks in **Colombia** killed at least 18 people. Twelve police officers died when a drone downed their helicopter. The officers had been trying to eradicate coca leaves in the rural north of the country. Later a car bomb outside a military-aviation school in the city of Cali killed six. The government blamed dissidents from [FARC, a disbanded guerilla group](#).

**Volodymyr Zelensky** said there was “no signal” that Russia intends to [end its war](#) following a huge air attack on Ukraine, whose targets included an American-owned factory. Meanwhile a former Ukrainian military officer was arrested in Italy on suspicion of masterminding an attack on Russia’s Nord Stream underwater pipelines in 2022. He will be tried in Germany. Ukraine has previously denied involvement.

**Uganda** agreed to accept migrants [deported by the Trump administration](#), as long as they are not criminals or minors; it will give preference to deportees who are originally from other African countries. Uganda already hosts many refugees from Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This month Rwanda agreed to accept 250 migrants from America, which has also deported people to South Sudan.

Shares in **WH Smith** sank by 42% on Thursday after the British retailer cut its annual profit outlook because of an accounting error. The company said it overstated profit expectations in its North American division by around £30m (\$40m) and that it had hired Deloitte accountants to conduct an “an independent and comprehensive review”.

**Figure of the day:** 130,000. The number of cars stolen in Britain last year. [Read the full story here](#).



Photograph: Shutterstock

## Ukraine's security guarantees take shape

Since Donald Trump played host to European leaders and Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine's president, in the White House on Monday, work on providing "robust" [security guarantees for Ukraine](#) has accelerated. The plan, expected to be firmed up in the next few days, would be for a "coalition of the willing" of some ten countries, led by Britain and France, to deploy ground forces in Ukraine in the event of a ceasefire. Mr Trump has indicated a willingness to provide American air support.

Still, details remain murky: the size of the force; where exactly it will be deployed; what its rules of engagement will be; and whether [Mr Trump's commitment is serious](#). Russia remains strongly opposed to European boots on the ground in Ukraine. Sceptics fear that the force will not have the military heft to deter Russia. Mr Zelensky may well believe that Ukraine's best security guarantee is for Ukraine's allies to ensure that its armed forces get the weapons they need.



Photograph: dpa

## **The German economy's upwind struggle**

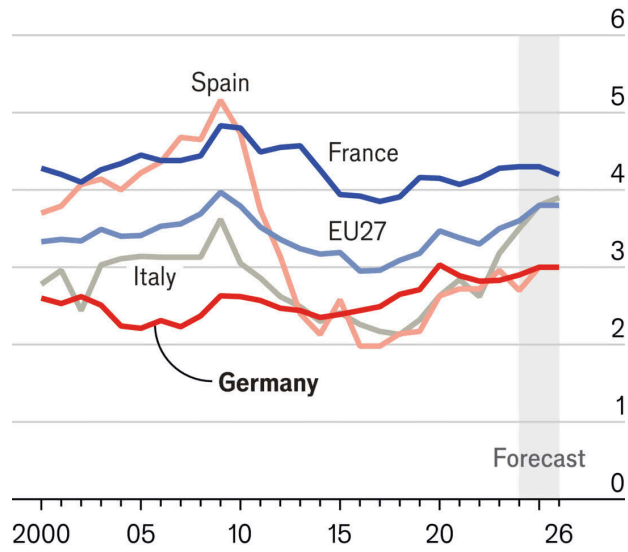
Destatis, the German statistics agency, released figures for GDP in the second quarter on Friday. Despite the fiscal stimulus promised by Germany's new government under Friedrich Merz, the figures showed that the German economy shrank by -0.3% compared to the previous quarter—a faster rate than the -0.1% predicted in a flash estimate last month.

Donald Trump's tariffs have landed a fresh blow on Europe's biggest economy, which has been stagnating or in recession for the past two years. According to a recent study by the German Economic Institute, the tariff deal between the European Union and America will reduce GDP by 0.4% on average between 2025 and 2028.

Another escalation of the trade conflict with the American president could cost 1.1% of GDP. The government's big investments in defence and infrastructure will go some way to soften the blow. But Germany's dependence on exports means it will continue to be buffeted by shifting trade winds.

## Making ends meet

Public investment, % of GDP



Sources: Eurostat; European Commission



Photograph: Reuters

## Mexico's resilient economy

Mexico will confirm its second-quarter GDP growth on Friday. A preliminary estimate showed the economy expanded by 0.7% quarter on quarter, accelerating from 0.2% in the first quarter. But the broad picture is still one of a [weak economy](#). Forecasts for 2025 as a whole range from a contraction to meagre growth of 0.2 to 0.5%. In 2024 growth dropped to an annualised rate of 1.5% from 3.3% the year before, owing to weak domestic demand, sluggish private and public investment and policy uncertainty. And forecasts of inflation have edged up to 3.7% year on year in August, limiting monetary authorities' options to stimulate the economy.

Yet Mexico has also shown resilience. Manufacturing and exports have held up despite Donald Trump's import duties, thanks mainly to deep integration into North American supply chains and relatively light tariff rates compared with [America's more distant trade partners](#). Still, without stronger domestic policy to lift productivity and confidence, Mexico's economy is in for a lacklustre year.



Photograph: AP

## A survival thriller set in paradise

Ron Howard has a number of mainstream hits to his name. His films span feel-good pictures (“Cocoon”, “Splash”), tales of heroism (“Apollo 13”, “Backdraft”) and thrillers (“The Da Vinci Code”). “Eden”, featuring Sydney Sweeney, the American [actress of the moment](#), is much darker. It reprises a familiar cinematic plotline: a group of idealists, disenchanted with civilisation, aim to form a perfect society in a remote place, only to discover that human frailties and conflicts follow them there.

Whereas previous films with this theme, such as “The Village”, “The Beach” and “The Mosquito Coast”, are pure fiction, “Eden”—like many of Mr. Howard’s films—is based on a true story. It dramatises the travails of a handful of German settlers on an uninhabited and inhospitable island in the Galapagos in the 1930s. In “Eden” Mr Howard demonstrates a hitherto unseen willingness to explore the grimmer depths of human behaviour.





Illustration: The Economist

## Daily quiz

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 BST on Friday to [\[email protected\]](#). We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

**Friday:** An extended celebration of LGBTQ people in June is generally known under what title?

**Thursday:** The Althing is the oldest-known example (still in existence) of what type of institution?





Illustration: The Economist

## The winners of this week's crossword

Thank you to everyone who took part in our weekly crossword, published in the weekend edition of Espresso. The winners, chosen at random, were:

**Jordan Moar**, Waterloo, Canada

**Tom Geary**, Versailles, France

**Kevin Gaunt**, Cambridge, New Zealand

They all gave the correct answers of [hybrid](#), [Lenin](#), [member](#), [Herculaneum](#).

*A gram of experience is worth a  
ton of theory*

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***Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, 3rd Marquess  
of Salisbury***