

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

America's **House of Representatives** approved a spending package to reopen the federal government after a 43-day **shutdown**. President Donald Trump is expected to sign the bill on Wednesday night. The legislation, which was passed with a 222-to-209 vote, will keep government funded until the end of January. Mike Johnson, the Republican House speaker, blamed [Democrats](#) for the “pointless and foolish” shutdown.

Democrats on an American congressional committee released [new documents](#) from **Jeffrey Epstein's** estate suggesting that **Donald Trump** spent time in Epstein's house with one of his victims. In another email Epstein, a sex-offender who killed himself in 2019, claims [Mr Trump](#) “knew about the girls”. Mr Trump has long denied knowledge of Epstein's sex trafficking. The White House accused the Democrats of creating a “fake narrative”.

Adelita Grijalva, a Democrat who won a special election in September, was sworn into **America's House of Representatives** after shutdown-induced delays. She immediately signed a petition to force a vote to make the Justice Department release its files on Mr Epstein (the measure had been one signatory short). Separately

the House will vote on Wednesday night on a bill to [end the longest-ever government shutdown](#).

German Galushchenko and Svitlana Hrynychuk, **Ukraine's** justice and energy ministers, stepped down amid a **corruption scandal**. Volodymyr Zelensky, the president, had called for their resignations. Mr Galushchenko, who was previously an energy minister, is under [investigation](#) for his role in an alleged \$100m kickback scheme in the country's energy sector; he denies wrongdoing. Seven people have been charged in the probe.

Vladimir Putin will let **Citigroup** sell its Russian subsidiary to Renaissance Capital, a Russian investment bank. The American bank began [winding down](#) its operations in Russia after the country invaded Ukraine and was expelled from the SWIFT banking system in 2022. The Russian president responded by making it harder for foreign companies to sell their Russian assets.

Waymo expanded its autonomous-taxi service to include **freeways** across parts of California and Arizona. Alphabet's [self-driving-car unit](#) already operates within cities, including San Francisco, but not on freeways where cars travel at faster speeds and require different safety controls. Waymo will be the first firm to offer fully-autonomous freeway rides in America.

France's parliament voted to suspend, for now, President [Emmanuel Macron's pension reform](#) that raised the legal minimum retirement age from 62 years to 64. France's centrist government is [struggling to pass a budget](#) for 2026. The vote was a concession to the left by Sébastien Lecornu, who was reappointed as prime minister after resigning less than four weeks into the job.

Skims, a shapewear line co-founded by **Kim Kardashian**, a reality TV star, reached a \$5bn valuation after securing \$225m in a fresh funding round. The six-year-old brand, which says it expects to surpass \$1bn in net sales in 2025, plans to use the new capital to

open more retail stores. It is one of many [celebrity-driven ventures](#) changing the world of consumer goods.

Figure of the day: £174.50 (\$230), the annual price of Britain's television-licensing fee, £30 more than the cost of Netflix and Disney+ combined. [Read the full story here](#)



Photograph: EPA

Milei's mandate to remake Argentina

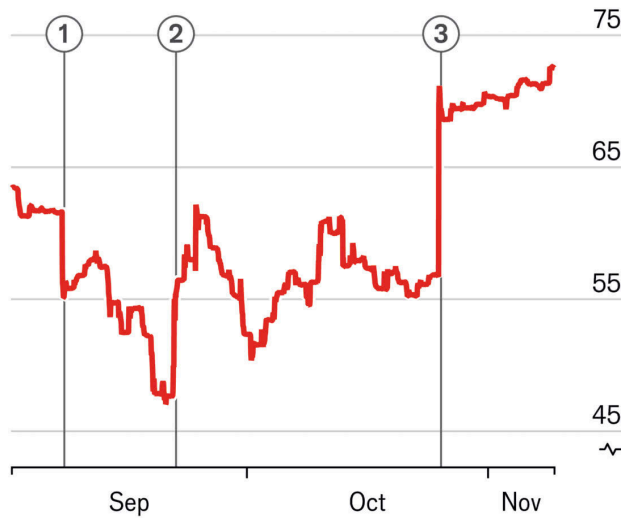
Since Javier Milei [won a thumping victory](#) in midterm elections on October 26th he has tweaked his cabinet and reached out to powerful provincial governors as he prepares tax and labour reforms, as well as the 2026 budget. Argentina's country risk index, a measure of the likelihood of default, is at its lowest level since January.

Argentina's exchange-rate scheme, however, remains a source of tension. Earlier this year Mr Milei had sought to maintain the peso's artificial strength as he fought against high inflation. New data released on Wednesday is expected to show the monthly rate in October at 2.2%, up slightly from September.

With elections out of the way, investors are pushing for the peso—which floats within a band—to be freed. Pimco, a giant American asset-management firm, warned Mr Milei that without that it would withhold investments. Mr Milei insists he will not float the currency, though reports suggest that he may widen the band more quickly over time.

Rebound

Argentina, ten-year government-bond price, 2025
Cents on the dollar



- 1 Milei's party loses the Buenos Aires provincial election
- 2 Bessent posts on X that the US Treasury stands with Argentina
- 3 Milei's party wins midterm elections

Source: Bloomberg



Photograph: Alamy

Germany's gloomy growth outlook

The German Council of Economic Experts, a group of academics that advises the government on economic policy, presented its annual report on Wednesday. In May the council revised down its economic-growth forecast for this year: [instead of weak growth it predicted stagnation](#). It is now forecasting growth of 0.2% for the year, thanks in part to the government's fiscal stimulus. However, the report also warned about wasting the increased funding for defence and infrastructure. The report also suggested reforming inheritance tax.

On Tuesday the Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW) announced that its indicator of economic sentiment was stable this month. "But the overall mood is characterised by a fall in confidence in the capacity of Germany's economic policy to tackle the pressing issues," said Achim Wambach, head of the ZEW. The council's report did little to lighten it.

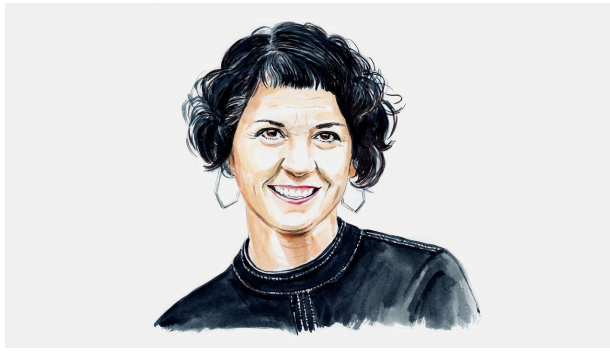


Illustration: Dan Williams

Fighting China's bullying of a university

China's increasingly muscular approach towards its critics has left Sheffield Hallam, a British university, bruised—and has raised broader questions about how democracies respond to Chinese intimidation. Last year the university abruptly ended its research into Uyghur forced labour in China and the resulting corruption of international supply chains. Writing exclusively for *The Economist*, the professor who led the research, [Laura Murphy, explains](#) how it took a freedom-of-information request to reveal that the ban came soon after Chinese state-security agents had visited the university's student-recruitment office in Beijing, issuing what a university memo described as a clear “message to cease” the research.

Sheffield Hallam has apologised to Professor Murphy for any uncertainty regarding her research and allowed the research to resume—while denying it was stopped for commercial reasons—but the case continues to reverberate: British MPs plan to investigate Chinese interference in academia. Professor Murphy worries that more such cases will corrode institutions unless governments in democracies “build a fortress” around academic freedom.



Photograph: Quadrille

An ode to the pantry

Alison Roman's fourth cookbook, "Something from Nothing", out this week, extols the virtues of not spending too much time cooking. The recipes come together quickly. They rely on pantry ingredients, especially tinned anchovies and dry beans, which have in recent years seen [resurgent interest](#) on social media and in restaurants.

What many hurried cooks do out of necessity, Ms Roman—an American food star—has cleverly made her personal brand. "I don't soak my beans, and I enjoy doing in two steps what's usually done in five," she proclaims proudly. But that laid-back approach is paired with a perfectly crisp white shirt and gourmet ingredients. "High-low", she calls her lifestyle. To impress her guests, she usually serves grocery-store radishes with "very yellow, very expensive butter", to signal that she is both casual and elegant. She loves crisps—paired with caviar. Many readers will be put off by Ms Roman's distinct, opinionated tone. Many more will make space in their pantry.



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

Wednesday: Which city, not known for its bear population, is home to the Grizzlies basketball team?

Tuesday: Which city was designed by Pierre Charles L'Enfant in 1791?

Truth is the only safe ground to stand on.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton