

# The Guardian

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## 2022.07.03 - Opinion

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[The Observer](#)[Cameron Diaz](#)

## **Cameron Diaz is back to show it's not all over for actresses after 40**

[Rebecca Nicholson](#)



The one-time queen of romcoms has come out of retirement to join the growing ranks of women stars of action movies



Cameron Diaz retired for eight years after being ‘infantilised’ by the film industry. Photograph: NBC/NBCU Photo Bank/Getty Images

Sat 2 Jul 2022 12.00 EDT Last modified on Sun 3 Jul 2022 00.07 EDT

Cameron Diaz retired from acting after her last film – a remake of *Annie* in which she played Miss Hannigan – was released in 2014. She casually confirmed that she was no longer acting in [an interview](#) with *EW* in 2018, telling her co-stars of the early noughties romcom *The Sweetest Thing* that she was “actually retired”. Two years later, [she expanded](#) on her decision to step away from Hollywood, telling Gwyneth Paltrow that she had grown tired of being “infantilised” by her industry and realised she had to learn how to become self-sufficient. The move brought her, she said at the time, “a peace in my soul”.

Obviously, Diaz has since learned how to boil the kettle and make herself a cuppa, because she is coming out of retirement after eight years. Jamie Foxx [broke the news](#) on Twitter, announcing that he and Diaz would be starring in a new film for Netflix called, appropriately, *Back in Action*. Foxx added a clip of him on the phone to Diaz, who claimed she was feeling anxious. “I don’t know how to do this,” she said; Foxx then recruited the retired and then not-retired NFL star Tom Brady to give her a little guidance on how to stage a comeback.

Not much is known about the film, but *Deadline* is calling it an “action-comedy” and production will start this year. Diaz, who will turn 50 next month, is most known for her comedy work, but a glance at her [IMDb page](#) is a reminder of her sheer range, from *Being John Malkovich* to *Shrek* to *There's Something About Mary*. Diaz returning to the action genre seems a wise and intriguing choice and not just for fans of the Barrymore-Diaz-Liu *Charlie's Angels* holy trinity.

Men get to be action heroes for as long as they want. Tom Cruise and Keanu Reeves are still box office titans. One of the most awaited films of the next couple of years is the fifth Indiana Jones movie, starring Harrison Ford, who is now 79. The same is starting to apply to women. The biggest role in years for Charlize Theron, 46, was as an immortal warrior in [The Old Guard](#). Carrie-Anne Moss, 54, [returned to The Matrix](#). Sandra Bullock, 57, pulled off a retro action hit with [The Lost City](#). It is horror, more than action, but Jamie Lee Curtis, 63, is about to leave the Halloween franchise after 44 years with [Halloween Ends](#).

There is plenty of debate and satire about what happens to female actors after they turn 40, but in action films there appears to be a clear answer: they get to kick ass.

## Kirstie Allsopp: don't keep taking the Airpods



Kirstie Allsopp: look before you eat. Photograph: David M Bennett/Dave Bennett/Getty Images

Sometimes, all you need is the news that [Kirstie Allsopp accidentally swallowed an Airpod](#) while purposefully swallowing her vitamin pills. “I don’t recommend it,” she tweeted, reassuring followers that she had managed to “chuck it up” without going to hospital, although it left her with a sore throat. Some were sceptical about her ability to confuse a headphone with a tablet, though they have clearly not seen the size of a supermarket’s own-brand combination vitamin D and calcium, which I take whenever I want to cosplay being a Borrower.

Maybe this is why, unlike Giant Chocolate Buttons, Giant Tic Tacs were not a thing. You never know what could happen if you needed minty fresh breath while enjoying the latest episode of *This American Life*. Allsopp has taken a combative approach to the surprisingly large number of Airpod-ingestion deniers on Twitter, pointing out it would be a stupid thing to lie about.

Incredibly, she is not the first human being to claim to have made the same mistake. Having trawled through the bins to retrieve one of my Airpods (not swallowed, just tossed), surely cables have made a strong enough case for their usefulness to be allowed a comeback.

## Avril Lavigne: she's still wearing the trousers



Avril Lavigne: a turn-up for the books. Photograph: Paras Griffin/Getty Images

To paraphrase some lesser musical act, it was 20 years ago today, ish, that Avril Lavigne taught the band to play, or at least taught fans to wear baggy trousers that scraped the floor when you walked, dislodging a strip of fabric between hem and trouser leg, which one of my loosest-trouserered friends would repurpose as a tied-on wristband.

Though it was a good early example of zero-waste fashion, a tatty bracelet made from puddle-splashed denim is a concept that remains stranded in 2002.

Lavigne marked the 20-year anniversary of the release of her debut album, *Let Go*, by posing for a [photograph in New York City that recreated the cover](#). The shoes were a little higher and the trousers a little less billowing, but you had to squint to be able to tell that 20 years had passed. ([Shawn Mendes pulled a similar trick last week, recreating the cover of his 2016 album \*Illuminate\*](#) with the caption, “back in time”. He is 23, so by the time he hits the 20-year mark, his nostalgia is going to be through the roof.)

Lavigne's sartorial impact may come and go, but her musical legacy has proved to be robust. At Glastonbury last weekend, [Olivia Rodrigo](#) covered Lavigne's big hit Complicated, which she has been performing on her Sour tour. In April, in Toronto, [she brought out Lavigne](#) to perform it on stage with her. Astoundingly, Rodrigo has not yet celebrated her own 20th anniversary: the song came out almost a year before she was born.

Rebecca Nicholson is an Observer columnist

***Do you have an opinion on the issues raised in this article? If you would like to submit a letter of up to 250 words to be considered for publication, email it to us at [observer.letters@observer.co.uk](mailto:observer.letters@observer.co.uk)***

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## The ObserverGPs

# The Observer view on Britain's shortage of GPs

Observer editorial

At a time when the country's population needs more care than ever, we are training far fewer doctors than we should



'Health outcomes cannot be improved without encouraging more people to go to their GP when they feel unwell.' Photograph: Stephen Barnes/Medical/Alamy

Sun 3 Jul 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Sun 3 Jul 2022 03.26 EDT

General practitioners are the gateway to many NHS services. They are often the first port of call for people with symptoms of cancer and dementia, for those experiencing issues with their mental health and a range of other problems that can get much worse without treatment. Health outcomes cannot be improved without encouraging more people to go to their GP when they feel unwell. Yet it is no understatement to say that GP care is in crisis: there are simply not enough doctors in the UK, meaning growing

numbers of people are finding it effectively impossible to get an appointment even when they are suffering from [serious symptoms](#).

This is utterly counterproductive to the long-term NHS reform that is needed. While the NHS provides world-class care in many areas, we are not spending enough on healthcare as a proportion of GDP, given our ageing population and advances in costs in medical technology – significantly less than countries such as [France and Germany](#). The UK also has high levels of social inequality that feed into relatively poor outcomes such as cancer survival rates. Given these challenges, it is particularly important that health services place more emphasis on preventive rather than acute care through public health interventions, for example, to reduce obesity and early diagnosis of diseases such as cancer and heart conditions.

GP services are central to that mission. Yet availability has become worse in recent years and public satisfaction [has declined](#). The patient body Healthwatch reports that more than 50% of complaints are now about a [lack of access to care](#), while polls suggest that [seven in 10 Britons](#) lack confidence that they can get an appointment with a GP when they want one.

This is an issue of mismatched supply and demand that long predates the pandemic. A growing and ageing population and advances in medical treatment have exacerbated the demand for [GPs](#). Covid has made the problem worse: people who stayed away from their surgery during the acute phase of the pandemic have started to return, while Covid absences have affected doctors' ability to run a normal service.

Yet in common with the rest of the NHS, a lack of medical staff has become the most pressing issue facing GP surgeries. Simply put, the UK has not been training enough doctors for years. We have significantly fewer per head than the [OECD average](#) for EU countries and just two-thirds of the number per head in Germany. There are now [fewer full-time-equivalent GPs](#) in England than there were in 2015, despite government promises to train more, and the average number of patients each GP has to look after has increased by 16%. This is partly as a result of GPs choosing to reduce their working hours and the number of doctors reaching retirement age or choosing to retire early.

The government has done far too little to address this. Health experts have long been issuing warnings that this was a problem that was only going to get worse without intervention. Ministers should have channelled much more into training new GPs over the last decade and into making it easier for doctors from other countries, including the EU, who want to work in the UK [to do so](#).

There are also aspects of the GP contract that need urgent reform. Deficiencies are particularly acute in the [least affluent](#) areas of the country, yet funding for these surgeries does not adequately take into account social deprivation, where care is more expensive to provide.

A lack of government action has turned the GP shortage into a vicious cycle: the scarcity worsens working conditions for existing staff, leading to burnout and more retiring early or joining private providers. And the gap in GP access between richer and less affluent areas will only act to widen already high health inequalities in a country where life expectancy can vary by more than 20 years [depending on where you live](#).

GPs are not the only area of primary care in crisis. NHS dentistry is in an even worse state, with an acute shortage of dentists creating “[dental deserts](#)” in some parts of the country, where there are three-year waiting lists for appointments for NHS treatment. This has led to people in excruciating pain going to extraordinary lengths – even resorting to [pulling out their own teeth](#) – because they simply cannot afford the cost of private treatment. This, too, is a direct result of government inaction: ministers have left NHS dentistry services to wither as a result of a contract that does not cover the costs of treatment and so thus actively disincentivises dentists from offering NHS services.

There is much debate about fancy reform agendas that have the potential to improve long-term health outcomes. Workforce planning – ensuring that the UK is training enough doctors to meet our needs – may seem unexciting in comparison. Yet an utter failure of Conservative ministers to engage with the staffing implications of an ageing population means that key health outcomes such as cancer survival rates, [already disappointing by international standards](#), are unlikely to improve in the near future.

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[The ObserverChina](#)

## The Observer view on China's rule over Hong Kong

[Observer editorial](#)

However much it offends our sensibilities, what can the west really do about Xi Jinping's warped version of democracy?



A man with the Chinese flag at the Victoria Harbour in Hong Kong last week. Photograph: Miguel Candela/EPA

Sun 3 Jul 2022 01.30 EDT

It's a strange kind of democracy that views umbrellas as subversive. It's an odd form of people's government that beats and incarcerates hundreds of people without trial. Bizarre, too, in this democratic nirvana, that journalists are prosecuted for challenging the authorities – and “unpatriotic” people such as you are punished for reading what they write.

These are but a few aspects of the Beijing-style “democracy” brashly celebrated by Xi Jinping, China's popularly unelected president, when he

travelled to Hong Kong last week for the 25th anniversary of the [handover from Britain](#). Xi said his version of democracy was flourishing. Hong Kong's job now was to assist the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation", not stir up trouble.

"After much turmoil, people have learned a painful lesson that [Hong Kong](#) cannot be disorderly, it cannot afford to be," Xi declared, referring to the suppressed pro-democracy movement. "Hong Kong is in a new phase from disorder to stability, from stability to prosperity." Does Xi believe his own words? This was his first trip beyond the mainland since the pandemic began. He really should get out more. Either he is extremely ill-informed or extremely disingenuous.

Denied the vote and a voice by an island administration run by Communist party placemen, Hongkongers are [voting with their feet](#). More than 120,000 people, locals and expatriates, departed in 2020-21 following the imposition of a draconian national security law. Many, especially younger people, came to Britain. A survey last year found that 40% of expats [plan to leave or may do so](#).

High levels of prosperity at which Xi aims were in fact a striking feature of Hong Kong before China's crackdown – and are now under threat as international investors turn wary. Hong Kong's global human rights rating is [plunging](#) alongside financial markets and growth. In short, Xi is turning economic success into failure.

A similar trajectory is evident in political life and civil society. No community will truly flourish when people are denied basic freedoms and forced into Orwellian conformity. Nor will coming generations of children whose textbooks [airbrush Hong Kong's colonial history](#) hear mention of the Tiananmen Square massacre; they are blindly inculcated with the official lie that "external forces" drove the [pro-democracy protests](#).

Myopic Xi's trademark revisionism and systematic repression are storing up huge problems for the future. Yet right now, Britain and the west face an obvious problem: how to deal with this ever more aggressively assertive Chinese regime?

Stern condemnation of Xi's treatment of Hong Kong rained down last week from Boris Johnson, the Biden administration, Australia and others. Chris Patten, the last British governor, complained the Chinese had "[catastrophically and comprehensively broken](#)" their legal obligation to guarantee Hong Kong's pre-1997 way of life.

Yet while that's true, Xi's neo-imperial procession was a final humiliation for the empire of old and there seems little, for all Johnson's [Twitter bragadocio](#) and Liz Truss's venting, that Britain and its allies can do about it. Will they impose sanctions? Launch another trade war? Send back the gunboats? Nato made some threatening noises last week. But, no. They know that's not going to work.

Amid all the anger, New Zealand's prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, [opted for calm](#). The west must defend the global rules-based order that China threatens, she said. But expanding military alliances in an already polarised world was not the way. "We must use diplomacy at every opportunity, until it has proven to fail."

In other words, keep talking – and trust that, over time, China's strange idea of democracy will change.

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**Observer comment cartoon**

**Boris Johnson**

## **Boris Johnson and Tory sleaze – cartoon**

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[The Observer](#)[Protest](#)

## **Living in a tree is the only way to save it from pointless destruction**

[Tim Adams](#)



A man in a hammock is determined to stop Haringey council felling the 120-year-old plane in a row over subsidence



Tree protester Marcus Carambola in 2021. Photograph: Sabrina Merolla/ZUMA Press Wire/REX/Shutterstock

Sat 2 Jul 2022 10.00 EDT Last modified on Sun 3 Jul 2022 00.08 EDT

On Wednesday evening, as the light was fading, I stood chatting under a [London](#) plane tree to Marcus Carambola, who was about to spend his 50th consecutive night sleeping in a hammock among the tree's branches, 10m above the pavement. Carambola, barefoot, 33, spoke of the tree as an old friend: "We have got to know each other pretty well," he said, looking up.

The 120-year-old tree, in Oakfield Road, in Haringey, north London, has become the emblem of a battle between residents, insurers and the local council that has implications for leafy streets across the country.

The owners of the two neighbouring houses, part of a Victorian terrace, have for the past 10 years been engaged in a life-sapping battle with their respective insurers, Aviva and Allianz, over the insurers' responsibility to pay for underpinning and repair work caused by subsidence. The bills run to £400,000. A couple of years ago, the insurers apparently spotted a new way to avoid this payout: they raised, with scant evidence, the idea that the plane tree – though pollarded each year by the council – was the sole cause of the problem and sought to shift liability for repair to Haringey. If the council

removed the tree, they argued, underpinning would not have to be done, because the issue – despite the drying climate and clay soils – would magically go away. The council took the path of least resistance. Two previous attempts to cut down the tree have been thwarted by protesters. The latest is set for tomorrow.

Carambola, meanwhile, has been training locals, the youngest 18, the oldest 72, to take his place in the hammock so that the vigil can carry on and alternative remedies be found. “If this one goes,” he suggests, “all the trees you can see, and hundreds more are also under threat.” The campaign is linked to [others across the country](#). He plans to be still up in his hammock in 50 days’ time.

## Gospel truths



An activist holds up a Bible outside Mississippi’s only abortion clinic, in Jackson, which is to close after the Roe v Wade ruling. Photograph: Rogelio V Solis/AP

I once had a long, mostly enjoyable doorstep conversation with a pair of Jehovah’s Witnesses that began with me suggesting that there was more useful wisdom in Shakespeare than in the collected books of their Old Testament. It ended with us trading quotes from our respective gospels, them

giving me “thou shalt nots”, me making the case that they were “such stuff that dreams are made on”.

A couple of things reminded me of that conversation last week. The first was the news that Sheffield Hallam university was [closing its English literature course](#) in light of the government concentrating funding on “useful” degrees. Conservative voices have always wanted to limit access to the humanities; they spread the word about doubt and empathy and dissent. The second, blunter, reminder of my doorstep standoff was a banner in the [Roe v Wade](#) protests: “I’m not part of your book group,” the banner read. “I don’t give a fuck what the Bible says.”

## Answers on a postcard



Striking barristers outside the Old Bailey in London on 27 June 2022.  
Photograph: Carl Court/Getty Images

I’m in a weekly pub quiz team that is sometimes radically improved by [Shaun Wallace](#), the most formidable of quizzers on ITV’s *The Chase*. Shaun’s day job is as a criminal barrister, and in the past week he has been on [the picket line at the Old Bailey](#). The dispute, he says, is a no-brainer. Junior legal aid lawyers get paid about the same now as when he started out in the profession more than 30 years ago. You don’t have to be a

*Mastermind* champion (2004 for Wallace, special subject FA Cup finals) to know that very different answers are required.

- Tim Adams is an Observer columnist

*Do you have an opinion on the issues raised in this article? If you would like to submit a letter of up to 250 words to be considered for publication, email it to us at [observer.letters@observer.co.uk](mailto:observer.letters@observer.co.uk)*

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The ObserverAbortion

## Danny Kruger has been hiding his real talent – he knows what women want

Catherine Bennett



The Tory MP joins other men who would like to decide when a woman can have an abortion



Danny Kruger: 'I think that, in the case of abortion, that right is qualified...'  
Photograph: Victoria Jones/PA

Sun 3 Jul 2022 02.30 EDT Last modified on Sun 3 Jul 2022 03.29 EDT

How instructive to meet Danny Kruger, the Conservative MP for Devizes, who is probably better known for being [Prue Leith's son](#). Of wholesome appearance, his least appealing characteristics appeared, until last week, to be his previous dedication to David Cameron, Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings, whose rule-breaking he defended.

It emerges, however, that this particular Etonian believes that his own sex should be free, collectively, to coerce women into unwanted pregnancies. Speaking after a number of female MPs, who wanted the UK to signal its disapproval of the reversal of Roe v Wade, [Kruger said](#) he didn't understand why they were "lecturing the United States" on this judgment. "They think that women have an absolute right to bodily autonomy in this matter. However, I think that, in the case of abortion, that right is qualified by the fact that another body is involved." Though by far the most celebrated, this isn't the first sermon Kruger has delivered on the subject. He opposed decriminalisation in Northern Ireland, is against buffer zones and last year informed MPs: "It says a very, very terrible thing about the value that we place on an unborn life if we simply say that it should be determined by whether or not the mother would like to keep it." Were female constituents

aware, when Kruger was [parachuted into Devizes](#) (replacing Claire Perry), that he considers mothers consultants to their own pregnancies?

They could surely have expected, given Kruger's fondness for Johnson, a man not universally popular with [foetuses](#), that his approach would be, for the avoidance of hypocrisy, non-judgmental. There's still nothing in the "[About Danny](#)" bit of his website to warn constituents that this affable individual is evidently at ease with the female misery and deaths that follow, especially for the impoverished, from the prohibition of abortion. Nor is there any indication that female biology is incompatible with personal autonomy. He tells Devizes: "I want to be the MP for everyone in our part of Wiltshire." Which is tricky if you also represent the womb police. Yesterday [he sought to qualify](#) his recent remarks, though his statement wasn't as clear as his anti-abortion record.

Probably, there are some women in Wiltshire, [as in Afghanistan](#), who are happy to be represented by a virtuously repressive male at the UK version of the loya jirga. But others demonstrated yesterday against the MP. So long as he can't stop them, [one in three women](#) in Devizes are likely, given the approval of two doctors, to have an abortion by the time they are 45. How they must have enjoyed Kruger telling them they are, or were, incompetent to make the decision.

There's nothing on his website to warn that he is at ease with female misery and deaths

Still, all credit to this minor celebrity for advertising the need, reversing any previous complacency, for women to interrogate parliamentary candidates about abortion. Not on their personal choices, which are nobody's business, but on any possibility that, if elected, they will threaten women's existing access to legal terminations. To judge by the resistance to buffer zones around fanatic-besieged abortion clinics, and by a very recent vote on keeping the pandemic innovation of abortions at home, scores of MPs would still, like Kruger, be unable to stop themselves.

If they can't emulate the US, and overturn the 1967 [Abortion](#) Act(which permitted state-approved abortion), an alarming number of parliamentarians, whether they are motivated by faith, misogyny or some unholy mixture of both, evidently feel entitled to make abortion as difficult and as shaming for English women as possible. Lending their efforts respectability is the enduring convention that female reproductive autonomy is not an unequivocal right, but a parliamentary gift, subject to constant revision by the combined consciences of the jirga, the majority of whose members will know neither the consuming fear of an unwanted pregnancy nor the colossal relief of a wanted abortion.

Naturally, we find Kruger taking the opportunity, in March, to join Jacob Rees-Mogg, Jim Shannon and fellow stars of the Commons anti-abortion lobby in ignoring the "[overwhelming](#)" [female and professional support](#) for early abortions at home. So, looking down the [list of 184](#) moral guardians, did the MP who has [just resigned](#) for drunken groping at the Carlton Club. Oh, and here are the equally principled Natalie Elphicke, Theresa Villiers and Roger Gale – [the three suspended](#) last year for intervening improperly on behalf of the sex offender Charlie Elphicke – all keen, in another matter of pressing female concern, to defy advice from every significant body in UK reproductive health. Mr Edward Morris, president of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists: "[We urge governments](#) across the UK to listen to women and make the regulations that allow for telemedical abortion services to become permanent."

An alarming number of parliamentarians feel entitled to make abortion as difficult and as shaming for English women as possible

Likeminded MPs won the vote (212 to 184) but disquietingly, among those thinking they knew better, was the health secretary, Sajid Javid, whose department had previously [set its face against](#) telemedical abortion services. In Javid's case, female constituents are not the only women who now deserve clarification of his views on their autonomy. Did he skip that bit of [Ayn Rand](#)? "An embryo has no rights."

It would be reassuring to think, after six relevant abstentions, that Javid recognises the insignificance of his personal views on ensoulment. But his

refusal, in 2018, to introduce buffer zones around clinics, when added to his recent opposition to at-home terminations, indicates that the health minister agrees on at least one thing with anti-abortion zealots: women having them can be righteously tormented. In contrast, the court of appeal upheld, in 2019, a judicial conclusion that Ealing council's buffer zone was justified, since women's "privacy was being very seriously invaded at a time and place when they were most vulnerable and sensitive to uninvited attention".

With abortion still largely criminalised, a health secretary who is a hero to anti-abortion extremists, and a host of MPs who prefer embryos to women, I suppose it's something to see Johnson reproach the US for its failure on reproductive rights. One day, he might even try it at home.

Catherine Bennett is an Observer columnist

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[The Observer](#)[Economic policy](#)

## So the arguments over Brexit are done and dusted for a generation. Really, Tony Blair?

[Will Hutton](#)



We desperately need to rejoin the European Union, whatever the former PM thinks



'It was sad to see Tony Blair, trying to fashion a new political centre ground, insisting last week that the arguments over the EU are over.' Photograph: Future of Britain conference

Sun 3 Jul 2022 03.00 EDT

The British economic debate is bewildering, marooned in a discourse in which the pivotal economic fact of 2022 is ignored. The chancellor and governor of the Bank of England will talk about the dangers of inflation, of the risk of a wage price spiral and the need for pay restraint – but never about the escalating sterling crisis and what lies behind it. Nor will the opposition lay into them for their vows of silence – equally anxious to avoid mentioning the dread word or its baleful economic impact.

But Brexit is not going away. It cannot be avoided. Last week, we learned that in the first three months of this year Britain's [current account deficit](#) was the worst since records began in 1955. It stood at a stunning 8.3% of GDP – the kind of deficit recorded by banana republics before they collapse into slump, banking crises and hyperinflation.

The figures are so terrifyingly bad that even a shaken [Office for National Statistics cautions](#) that it is uncertain about the quality of its own data. But

the core reality cannot be dodged and revisions will impact only at the margins rather than reverse the story: real export volumes over the period are down 4.4% and import volumes up a gigantic 10.4%.

The apologists point to exploding energy costs, statistical vagaries, the ongoing distortions of Covid, weak world markets, supply chain effects. What cannot be mentioned is Brexit and the obvious depressive impact it is having on UK exports and inward investment flows. The refusal of the governor of the Bank of England, Andrew Bailey, even to acknowledge what is happening and why is beginning to be a source of lack of market confidence in itself. Independence was to give the Bank a voice, not to be the government's ever loyal dupe. The foreign exchange markets are increasingly shaken: sterling was once again weak, [slipping below \\$1.20](#) on Friday, against \$1.31 three months earlier. Britain is entering dangerous territory – the economy is falling into recession, investment is flat, while inflation, high across the industrialised world because of the fallout from the war in Ukraine, is highest in the UK largely because of the weak pound, which has no support from any quarter.

The figures are so terrifyingly bad that even a shaken ONS cautions that it is uncertain about the data

Without full access to the EU single market and customs union – our largest market – there is no possibility of an export recovery, nor a recovery in inward investment, nor a lifting of economic confidence. As the Bank of America warns, Britain faces an [existential sterling crisis](#), made worse because of the refusal of the government and many economic commentators to look the truth in the eye.

The eerie parallel is the [1976 sterling crisis](#), triggered by the conviction of the foreign exchange markets that already very high inflation was certain to get out of hand. There was nothing to prop up a [falling pound](#), given the current account deficit was running at what seemed an [unimaginable 4% of GDP](#) – half today's deficit.

The pound could not be steadied without [buying time from the IMF](#) with an enormous credit line. The government would then launch a package of tough

spending cuts as the quid pro quo for the loan, fiercely resisted by the Labour left's leaders Michael Foot and Tony Benn, which would simultaneously shrink the economy and thus the current account deficit. A floor would be put under sterling and therefore curb inflation, aided and abetted by a pay and incomes policy. The prime minister, James Callaghan, famously told a sullen Labour party conference that no other option existed, opening up irreconcilable arguments between its ultra left and social democratic wings that have plagued Labour ever since. But at least the UK was embedded in a network of strong trading relationships. Having just joined the Common Market, it could trade its way back to international creditworthiness, with North Sea oil soon reinforcing the impetus.

The task today is less fiscal belt-tightening and raising interest rates, although both may be forced upon us as sterling's fall accelerates: it is fully to reopen access to our largest market, the EU, to offer some prospect of export growth and inward investment. The strong economic performance that Northern Ireland is now experiencing within the single market needs to be reproduced across the kingdom.

Having to bail out the banking system seemed impossible in 2007 before it happened in 2008. The same inexorable forces are at work today

A Tory prime minister, echoing Callaghan, is going to have to tell a sullen Tory party conference within the next couple of years that no other option exists – that the alternative is ongoing high inflation, high interest rates, a property crash and economic stagnation. Impossible? Devaluing the pound inside the ERM or being forced out altogether seemed impossible in 1991 before it happened in 1992. Having to bail out the banking system seemed impossible in 2007 before it happened in 2008. The same inexorable forces are at work today and the consequent rows between the Tories' pragmatic and its Brexit ultra wings will plague it for a generation too.

It was sad to see Tony Blair, trying to fashion a new political centre ground, insisting last week that the arguments over the EU are over. Brexit is done – it won't be overturned for at least a generation, he said. It is not done. Radical centrism is not to identify what the centre right think and then to do

it more nicely and more moderately, as the swarm of pollsters around him and the leader of the opposition's office seem to think. It is doing the right thing well and with conviction, around which the centre will coalesce.

Britain needs to be in the single market and customs union to have any prospect of price stability and growth. It needs to be within the political architecture of Europe for its own security, given the dark menace of Russia. And it needs to be within both to have any chance of holding Northern Ireland and Scotland in the union.

The British economic and political ship is foundering, damaged by the rock of Brexit; its captains need to be called out for their errant seamanship. A fundamental change of course is an imperative. The future political stars in both the Labour and Conservative parties are those with the courage to say so.

Will Hutton is an Observer columnist

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[The ObserverNHS](#)

## Letters: we desperately need more hospital beds

Increasing capacity would restore patient confidence, reduce waiting lists and improve staff morale



An empty bed is a rare sight in NHS hospitals. Photograph: Keith Morris/Alamy

Sun 3 Jul 2022 01.00 EDT

While accepting that the Tory government has underfunded the NHS compared with other western countries, this is only part of why there are large differences in numbers of hospital beds (“[Doctors tell Javid: NHS crisis caused by you, not by Covid](#)”, News). From the noughties, I saw plans from trusts, health authorities and commissioning groups that reduced the numbers of hospital and psychiatric hospital beds, driven, in some cases, by workforce issues and a need to centralise specialist services but by a belief that acute services should be provided in the community.

Double running costs were never considered to ensure that community services were up and running before closing beds. This has led to the catastrophic situation for mental health patients and the unacceptable and dangerous bed occupancy rates in the acute hospital sector. This approach was largely due to the Department of [Health](#). To restore patient confidence, reduce appalling waiting lists and improve staff morale, it is imperative the government funds an immediate expansion of NHS beds.

**Dr Christopher Clough**, former chair of the national clinical advisory committee and Medical Director Royal Colleges of Physicians  
Whitstable, Kent

## Pro life and pro abortion

I am appalled at the recent US supreme court judgment on abortion (“[Abortion ban is Trump’s legacy. Women across America will pay the price](#)”, Editorial). I’m pro life. That is I am pro planetary life in all its diversity. I am pro life in the sea, the forests and the soil. I am pro life in my new pond, now swarming with tadpoles, most of which will be eaten by dragonfly larvae or newts. Life is also death.

The problem on planet Earth is that one particular life form is getting in the way. It’s humans. In 1800, there were fewer than a billion people on the planet. The discovery of coal, then oil and gas has provided immense benefits over the last 200 years. But it’s also enabled a current population of eight billion, resulting in the other life on the planet being crowded out as we have destroyed and polluted natural habitats. We are living in the sixth great extinction.

Pro life means there should be fewer people, not more. Sex education, family planning and access to abortion as a fundamental right should be at the heart of this vision of pro life.

**Antony Turner**  
Teignmouth, Devon

## Fishing for sympathy?

I read with interest your article on the high fuel costs of the fishing industry in Brixham (“[If fuel goes up, we can't afford to fish – trawler skippers](#)”, News). In 2008/9, Greenpeace said the high oil price had done more to curtail damaging industrial fishing than it had achieved in 30 years.

The industrial trawlers mentioned by Barry Young, managing director of Brixham Trawler Agents, are least worthy of fuel subsidies: why should taxpayers subsidise such fuel-intensive and environmentally damaging fisheries? The fuel per kilo of fish caught consumed by these industrial fleets is up to 10 times greater than fuel used by inshore fleets. Furthermore, the industrial trawlers are fishing closer inshore, jeopardising the fisheries of many of the small-scale inshore fishers, whose livelihoods depend on them, and who have a far greater economic multiplier effect in the local economy. If fisheries were better managed, there would be plenty of fish in the sea. Sadly, it's the greed of the massively wealthy few in Brixham who continue to peddle their tales of woe.

**Caroline Bennett**

Plymouth

## Elegy for lost poets

I share Rachel Cooke's sadness that the OCR exam board is removing work by poets such as Thomas Hardy, John Keats, Philip Larkin and Wilfred Owen from its GCSE English literature syllabus, though not entirely for the same reason ([Notebook](#)). English literature at A-level is in decline. One consequence is the decision by Sheffield Hallam University to [suspend](#) its English literature degree course. It is crucial that English literature at GCSE level fires the enthusiasm of pupils and this necessitates refreshing the syllabus from time to time.

Having looked at the poems being brought in by OCR, few pass the [Clive James](#) test: “With a poem, the most important thing is the way it sounds when you say it.” I can't make many sound more engaging than a weather report. Only a handful possess sufficient energy, musicality or beauty to make them memorable, especially for young people accustomed to memorising the words of pop songs or rapping. The majority, I fear, lack aesthetic appeal. Some of the poems are even a bit clunky. They are unlikely to help stem the decline in the popularity of English literature in schools.

**David Head**  
Peterborough

## Burnham has the bright idea

Keir Starmer's analysis of the Wakefield byelection result ("Labour has now claimed the centre ground – and has shown it can win", Comment) is worryingly complacent.

Last August, following Andy Burnham's lead, Starmer said he would paint his vision in primary colours, but still talks in generalities, which won't clarify the public's perception of what he stands for.

Burnham's proposals include electoral reform, housing as a human right, an end to insecure employment, a national care service and rail renationalisation ("Why it's time for Labour to back proportional representation", Comment). These can be expressed in simple language that resonates with voters. If Starmer won't take up the challenge, the shadow cabinet must.

**Dr Anthony Isaacs**  
London NW3

## Worksop is where it's at

Kitty Empire's otherwise excellent piece about Cresswell Crags in your Hidden Histories supplement ("Going Underground") is marred by her assertion that there are "very few things to do in Worksop". Worksop contains Mr Straw's House, a townhouse frozen in time since the 1920s and owned by the National Trust. Then there is nearby Clumber Park, Sherwood Forest and the estates of Welbeck and Thoresby. I could go on...

**Geoff Griffiths**  
Bawtry, Doncaster

## Signing off in style

Alex Clark's article brought to mind one of the most splendid resignation notes ("I quit! The art of resigning in style", Focus). Newspaper foreign

correspondents in the days of transatlantic communication by telegram would write in a journalistic shorthand to save cost; the full article would be fleshed out by the editor. While in America, Evelyn Waugh regarded his articles as sacrosanct. Consequently, he would transcribe his writing on to a telegram, verbatim.

The cost did not go down well and the newspaper, after repeated warnings to keep telegrams shorter, issued an ultimatum: shorter telegrams or you're out of a job. Waugh's resignation telegram was a miracle of brevity: "JOB UPSTICK ARSEWISE WAUGH."

**David Hill**

Penryn, Cornwall

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## [For the record](#)UK news

# For the record

This week's corrections

Sun 3 Jul 2022 01.00 EDT

It was £350m a week, not “£350m a month”, that Boris Johnson and the Vote Leave campaign claimed in 2016 would flow back to the UK from Brussels ([Brexit: The grim reality](#), 26 June, p31).

Chris Patten received the Order of the Companions of Honour in 1998, not 1989, as a caption said ([Reflections on the death of democracy](#), 12 June, New Review, p9).

Location, location, location: an interview with Tracee Ellis Ross described Brown University as a “New York institution”; it is in Providence, Rhode Island ([I'm excited about getting older](#), 26 June, Magazine, p8), while a travel feature in the same section muddled two puffin-spotting points in suggesting Pembrokeshire’s Skomer Island but going on to describe Puffin Island, off Anglesey ([Call of the wild](#), p43). And in news we put Beckenham in Kent; it is in the London borough of Bromley ([Poignant picture of Johnson family stars in show about loss and home](#), 26 June, p13).

Laura Muir’s winning time in the women’s 1500m final at the UK Athletics Championships was 4:12.91, not 4:21.91 as we had it ([Neita and Azu upset the pecking order of British sprinting](#), 26 June, Sport, p13).

Two errors surfaced in last week’s Hidden Histories supplement: Erasmus Darwin, whose house in Lichfield received a mention, was the naturalist Charles Darwin’s grandfather, not his father ([Turn up for the books](#), p16); and we said most stone circles in Britain date from the bronze age, when they are mostly neolithic and early bronze age ([Rocks of ages](#), p22).

Other recently amended articles include:

[University staff who can't afford to eat ask for campus food banks](#)

[Revealed: why Van Gogh's 'empty chair' paintings were never shown together](#)

[Dora Maar: hidden photos by the artist include intimate portraits of Picasso](#)

[Lapvona by Ottessa Moshfegh review – a carnival of the grotesque](#)

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[The Observer](#)[Marine Le Pen](#)

## As Macron does quiet deals with Le Pen, the far right has France in its grip

[Kenan Malik](#)



She might have lost the presidential election, but the RN leader's influence is all over the mainstream



Marine Le Pen, after a meeting with the French prime minister, Élisabeth Borne, last week. Photograph: Jacques Witt/SIPA/REX/Shutterstock

Sun 3 Jul 2022 02.00 EDT

It is not often that the election of deputy speakers to a parliament can be described as portentous. The appointment last week of vice-presidents (the equivalent of deputy speakers) of the French national assembly was almost unnoticed outside France. But it was historic, in an ominous way. Of the six vice-presidents, [two were deputies of Rassemblement National \(RN\)](#), the renamed far-right Front National.

At the parliamentary elections two weeks ago, the RN gained 89 deputies, a historic breakthrough. Nevertheless, the RN forms only a small bloc in the 577-seat national assembly. So how did the two RN candidates receive 290 and 284 votes respectively? By persuading large numbers of mainstream deputies to vote for them, leading to rumours and accusations of secret [deals between Emmanuel Macron's centrist bloc and the RN](#).

Whatever the truth in that, what is undeniable is the FN/RN's success not just in gaining an electoral foothold but also in reshaping the political

landscape. Many far-right themes on immigration and Islam have seeped in recent years into mainstream thinking of both left and right.

It is 50 years since the Front National was formed from the fragments of postwar fascist groups, part of the attempt by the far right to reorganise itself in the wake of Nazism, Vichy and the Holocaust. The intellectual driving force behind this project was Alain de Benoist. A founder of the French Nouvelle Droite, and of the thinktank GRECE, Benoist recognised the need to abandon claims of racial superiority for ideas of cultural difference and to challenge globalism as undermining “the right to be different”. It was an argument not for a more tolerant, diverse society, but for an end to immigration and for the maintenance of a white, French identity.

In 1974, Jean-Marie Le Pen, the first leader of the Front National, took 0.8% of the vote in the presidential election. In 2002, he shocked France by coming second to Jacques Chirac in the race for the Élysée palace and winning almost 18% of the vote in the presidential run-off. But Le Pen could never properly shake off either his rootedness in fascism or his indelible antisemitism. His daughter [Marine Le Pen](#), taking over the reins of the party in 2011, went much further in detoxifying the FN, even to the point of expelling her father from the party in 2015. In 2018, she renamed the Front National the Rassemblement National (the National Rally). At its heart, though, remained the Benoist programme, in particular hostility to globalism, immigration and Islam. In April, Le Pen lost to Macron in the presidential elections but won 41% of the vote in the second round.

We were xenophobes, antisemites, racists, national preference was a terrible shame. And all of a sudden, there is no more of that

The rise of the FN/RN was effected not only through the party’s success in detoxifying itself but also by the willingness of mainstream politicians, on left and right, to appropriate far-right themes, aiding the normalisation of the party and its ideas.

It was not the FN but the Communist party (PCF) that first brought the issue of immigration on to the political agenda. In the 1970s, communist-run councils routinely excluded non-European immigrants from municipal

housing projects so as not to breach the “threshold of tolerance”. The most notorious incident took place on Christmas Eve 1980. Paul Mercieca, the communist mayor of Vitry, near Paris, led a 60-strong gang in a “direct action” to stop 300 immigrants from Mali being rehoused in the town, using a bulldozer to smash up their hostel.

Pandering to racism could not prevent the PCF’s terminal decline. But having so insidiously linked the problems of the working class to immigration and made acceptable discrimination in social policy, the Communist party cleared the ground for the Front National and allowed Le Pen to don the mantle of defender of working-class interests. The old communist heartlands around Paris and in northern [France](#) are now RN strongholds.

The lessons of the PCF were not learned by more mainstream politicians, as both left or right continued to meet the challenge of the far right by accommodating to its reactionary ideas. When, in the 2012 presidential election, socialist François Hollande and Gaullist Nicolas Sarkozy vied with each other to sound more anti-immigrant, Le Pen mocked: “We were xenophobes, antisemites, racists, national preference was a terrible shame. [And all of a sudden, there is no more of that.](#)” Last year, Macron’s interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, tried to outflank Le Pen in a television debate by [accusing her of being “soft” on Islam.](#) Darmanin claimed that acting tough was [the only way to hinder the far right.](#) In fact, [studies suggest](#) that such an approach may “lead to more voters defecting to the radical right”.

Mainstream commentators have regurgitated not just the hostility to immigration and Islam but also pernicious far-right conspiracy theories such as the “great replacement”, which claims that globalists are using immigration policy to swap Europeans for non-Europeans, and to drive white people from their “homeland”. A [poll last year](#) suggested that six out of 10 French people feared this was happening.

It is not just in France that such themes have become popularised. “Europe is committing suicide... by the end of the lifespans of most people currently alive, Europe will not be Europe and the peoples of Europe will have lost the only place in the world we had to call home.” That is not Le Pen or Benoist but the associate editor of the *Spectator* magazine Douglas Murray in his

bestselling book *The Strange Death of Europe*. In America, too, conservatives from Fox News presenters to Republican congressman have given legitimacy to far-right conspiracy theories.

In the 1970s, Benoist argued that for the far right to flourish, reactionary ideas had to replace liberalism as the dominant cultural ethos of society. That's not what has happened. The liberal framework on race remains in place. Racism remains almost universally abhorred. But into this liberal ethos has been diffused deeply reactionary ideas. Conservatives fear the loss of whiteness. Social democrats follow the far-right playbook in immigration. Centrists vote for far-right deputies. It is not simply the success of the far right but the drip, drip of reactionary themes into mainstream thinking about which we should worry.

Kenan Malik is an Observer columnist

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[The Observer](#)[Economic policy](#)

## If the economy needs sacrifices, it will be workers who are thrown to the wolves

[Nick Cohen](#)



It's a time of national emergency, the Tories tell us. But restraint is not a matter for everyone



Dominic Cummings did at least have a plan to redistribute wealth in Britain.  
Photograph: Leon Neal/Getty Images

Sat 2 Jul 2022 14.00 EDT

We are back in the thieving world of [Fred “the Shred” Goodwin](#) and [Northern Rock](#). The sole difference from 2008 is that instead of the state expecting ordinary people to bail out failed banks, it is expecting them to take pay cuts to protect bosses’ bonuses. The war against inflation in the 2020s, like the war against financial collapse in the noughties, must be fought by those least able to fight it.

Nowhere in the speeches of the prime minister, chancellor or governor of the Bank of England is there a hint that a national emergency demands equality of sacrifice. They do not repeat David Cameron’s line that “we’re all in this together”. As millions sink down, all they say is that it is their patriotic duty to protect the privileged by sinking deeper. Or, as a writer plucked from the Victorian age [explained to Daily Telegraph readers](#) last week, the rewards of the rich are “natural and inevitable” but the “clamour” of workers for pay rises is “nothing but shameful opportunism”.

The hopes of working-class voters that Brexit would raise wages by removing the competition from EU workers have proved false. Unemployment is as low as it has been for 50 years. Employers are desperate to fill vacancies. Despite the most favourable of circumstances, average pay rose by just 4.2% between January and March – far behind inflation, which is now at 9% and heading higher. Averages conceal as much as they reveal, however, and the Resolution Foundation found that bonuses in the financial services sector [were running](#) at a “red-hot” rate of 30% a year. That is still not fast enough for the City, which is [pushing the government](#) to remove all limits on the rewards they can dole out. Meanwhile in the corporate boardroom, chief executives’ [renumeration packages](#) are at 63 times the pay of their average (median) worker – almost double the 2021 ratio.

The manifest unfairness explains why the government has been surprised that its old tunes about militant workers holding the country to ransom no longer play with the public. The Conservatives have yet to realise there is no good argument against the staff at BT threatening to strike [to maintain their wages](#), when the chief executive pocketed a 32% increase and shareholders received £700m in dividends.

The prime minister breaking his own lockdown rules is not the sole reason for the anger in the air. [Inflation](#) makes the previously poor desperate, the previously comfortable poor and everyone aware of inequalities around them. Yet as the rage rises, the government has lost the ability to talk to the public. It isn’t even going through the motions with insincere appeals for the top of society to lead by example or for the wealthy to show the same restraint they expect the lower orders to endure.

A political movement that can no longer mouth the necessary insincerities of public life is a dying movement. The Conservatives’ inability to pretend that they care about the injustice the economic crisis is bringing reveals how the “red Toryism” of the 2010s is in its death throes.

The Tories are now a post-capitalist pensioner party, attending to the needs and prejudices of their core over-65 vote

On the rhetorical level, a part of the centre right responded to the collapse of the neoliberal order in the crash of 2008 with as much urgency as the centre left. Dominic Cummings said the deep hostility of voters to the elites “raking in the money”, with the “mugs on PAYE” paying to bail them out, was why the experts who warned that leaving the EU would be an economic disaster weren’t believed – even as they told the truth. Theresa May’s adviser Nick Timothy spoke of a country trapped in markets that worked for no one except vested interests. May’s denunciation of the “citizens of nowhere” was not aimed at migrants, as her critics claimed, but at international elites. Boris Johnson won an election by promising to level up the regions, reach out to the left-behind and create a high-wage economy.

I’m sure leftish readers will say that the Conservative party just lied to gain power. They can point to the chancellors who controlled economic policy. Rishi Sunak, like Philip Hammond before him, is a Thatcherite. George Osborne was a fiscal extremist who implemented cuts more severe than any Margaret Thatcher dared attempt. For all that, I do not see how you can maintain that a party that took Britain out of the European single market is pro-business. Demographic change has turned the Conservatives from a neoliberal to a post-capitalist pensioner party, which makes money by cutting deals with rightwing plutocrats and maintains itself in office by attending to the needs and prejudices of its core over-65 vote (whose pensions, you must have noticed, it made damn sure rose in line with inflation).

In government, Cummings tried to redistribute wealth and allow great labour mobility by authorising mass housebuilding. But a revolt of elderly homeowners in safe Conservative seats stymied him. Perhaps, then, we can go further than cheap jeers about lying politicians and say that the Conservatives are incapable of addressing the UK’s problems. But even that sweeping statement understates the nation’s malaise.

Previous crises have brought forward politicians with solutions. Phil Tinline’s admirable new history, *The Death of Consensus: 100 Years of British Political Nightmares*, shows how Labour responded to the poverty of the 1930s by planning a welfare state and putting their plans into action in government in the 1940s. It moves on to the Tory right responding to the

strikes and inflation of the 1970s by devising the anti-union laws and marketisation of the 1980s.

Vacuity characterises the crisis of the 2020s. There are no solutions on offer beyond making the rest of society pay to maintain the incomes of its pensioner and wealthy supporters, in the case of the Conservatives, and the fantasy worlds of Scottish and Brexit nationalists, which just make the UK poorer. As for Labour, I have no idea how it intends to put its ideas into practice or indeed what ideas it possesses.

The absence of workable plans for the future is what gives our crisis its frightening quality and why I suspect today's anger will morph into despair.

Nick Cohen is an Observer columnist

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## Headlines friday 1 july 2022

- Conservatives Party pressed to withdraw whip from Chris Pincher after misconduct claims
- Live Minister refuses to say whether Chris Pincher will lose Conservative whip
- Live Russia-Ukraine war: two children among 18 dead after missile strike on Odesa; Zelenskiy hails 'significant' Snake Island victory
- Hong Kong Xi Jinping hails China's rule on 25th anniversary of British handover
- Interview We were too lenient on pro-democracy politicians, says senior Hong Kong MP

## Conservatives

# No 10 denies PM knew of Chris Pincher misconduct claims before promotion

Pincher resigned as deputy chief whip after reports he drunkenly groped two men at a private club

- [Today's politics news – live updates](#)



Chris Pincher resigned as deputy chief whip on Thursday night after admitting he had ‘embarrassed myself and other people’. Photograph: Russell Hart/Alamy

*[Jane Clinton](#) and [Rowena Mason](#)*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 08.42 EDTFirst published on Fri 1 Jul 2022 04.43 EDT

No 10 has denied that Boris Johnson knew about any specific sexual misconduct claims against Chris Pincher before making him deputy chief

whip, as the prime minister faces growing pressure to withdraw the whip from his ally for allegedly drunkenly groping two men.

Johnson's deputy official spokesperson said the prime minister was not aware of any allegations against Pincher prior to promoting him in February, despite multiple sources saying No 10 was told of allegations of sexual misconduct before this point.

No 10 admitted that the Cabinet Office's propriety and ethics team examined Pincher's suitability but said it could not block any appointment based on "unsubstantiated rumour".

Pincher had previously resigned over claims he made unwanted passes at a fellow Conservative, who described him as a "poundshop Harvey Weinstein". He was cleared of wrongdoing in an official investigation.

The Pincher affair is the latest in a long line of sexual misconduct claims against Tory MPs, with Johnson under increasing pressure to clear up the culture in his party.

However, No 10 refused to acknowledge allegations that Pincher drunkenly assaulted two men at the Carlton Club in Piccadilly, central London, saying only that Johnson accepted the MP's resignation for embarrassing himself. The party has also declined to withdraw the whip from Pincher before a crunch vote of backbench MPs for appointments to the 1922 Committee, which will decide whether to change the rules to allow another confidence vote on the prime minister's future.

But Conservative MPs said they were doubtful Johnson would be able to hold off from withdrawing the whip for long.

Karen Bradley and Caroline Nokes, two senior female Tory MPs and select committee chairs, wrote to Johnson on Friday urging him to bring in "zero tolerance" for cases of sexual misconduct, adding that the whip should be withdrawn while thorough investigations are carried out in each and every case. Bradley and Nokes also called for a code of conduct for Conservative members.

At present, any complaints about sexual misconduct are investigated by parliament's independent complaints and grievance service, which only accepts cases brought by victims. The other route is through the police, if there is a suspicion of a crime. However, there is no clear path for an investigation of non-criminal conduct where victims do not bring forward the complaint.

Labour's Yvette Cooper said that removing the whip from Pincher needed to be the "first step that takes place", but did not call for him to resign as an MP.

Cooper told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "We need to know the full truth about what has happened and what the allegations are. But I think that's [removing the whip] the first step that needs to take place. And I think the idea that the [Conservatives](#) can try and simply dismiss this is just unacceptable.

"They have to show they take this kind of thing more seriously. Time and again Boris Johnson just doesn't. That is not good enough. This is about standards in public life."

Simon Hart, the secretary of state for Wales, said his first reaction to the news of the allegations was one of "sadness and frustration" and "here we are again". He said it was up to the chief whip to make the decision to remove the whip from Pincher, meaning he would no longer be a sitting Conservative MP.

"This makes me very sad. It makes me sad for everybody who's been involved in these things," Hart said. "It's clearly something which has gone terribly wrong. There is a process; I think it's important that the process is followed.

"I think it is entirely right that the chief whip and others take a view today about what is the appropriate course of action. Of course, if there are those who are victims of this, or who wish to raise a complaint, they can do so."

When pushed on whether he thought Pincher should have the whip removed, Hart said: "It is not my decision. I know what I'd like to see happen. You

can probably tell what that is just from the way I am trying to avoid answering your question.”

He added: “Let’s let today play out, let the chief whip do his duty today, and then I think we might be having a very different conversation as the day goes on.”

Hart told the Today programme: “It is absolutely beholden on us to make sure that we do these things properly from the point of view of the victims.”

However, he could not confirm if there would be a formal investigation into the allegations.

Asked whether he hoped the issue would get swept under the rug, Hart told Sky: “Absolutely not. This is not the first time. I fear it possibly won’t be the last. This happens in workplaces from time to time.”

The MP for Tamworth had previously stood down from the whips’ office in 2017 after allegations he made an unwanted pass at the former Olympic rower and Conservative activist Alex Story.

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[Politics live with Andrew Sparrow](#)[Politics](#)

## Tory MP Chris Pincher loses whip over groping claims – as it happened

Latest updates: former deputy chief whip suspended from party. This live blog is closed.

- [Chris Pincher loses Conservative whip after misconduct claims](#)
- [Timeline of Tory sleaze under Boris Johnson](#)
- [Inside the Carlton Club: Cad's Corner and Mark Francois holding court](#)

Updated 2d ago

*[Tom Ambrose](#) (now); [Jedidajah Otte](#) and [Rachel Hall](#) (earlier)*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 14.47 EDTFirst published on Fri 1 Jul 2022 04.57 EDT



Chris Pincher has resigned as deputy chief whip. Photograph: Aaron Chown/PA

*[Tom Ambrose](#) (now); [Jedidajah Otte](#) and [Rachel Hall](#) (earlier)*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 14.47 EDTFirst published on Fri 1 Jul 2022 04.57 EDT

## Key events

- [2d agoSummary](#)
- [2d agoChris Pincher suspended by Conservative party over groping claims](#)
- [2d agoFormer MP who was stripped off whip for watching porn in Commons warns of 'double standards'](#)
- [2d agoBoris Johnson considers Chris Pincher matter closed after resignation, Downing Street suggests](#)
- [2d agoCabinet minister refuses to say whether Chris Pincher could lose Tory whip by end of day](#)
- [2d agoBoris Johnson rejects idea that Ukraine conflict is about 'Russia versus Nato'](#)

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## Live feed

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From 2d ago

[12.11](#)

## Chris Pincher suspended by Conservative party over groping claims

**Chris Pincher**, the former Tory deputy chief whip who resigned over groping allegations, has been suspended by the Conservative party.

Pincher lost the Conservative whip after calls grew from Tory MPs to exclude him from the party.

A spokesperson for the chief whip said:

Having heard that a formal complaint has been made to the ICGS, the PM has agreed with the chief whip that the whip should be suspended from Chris Pincher while the investigation is ongoing.

My colleague **Aubrey Allegretti** has a short story on this, with more soon.

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Updated at 12.33 EDT

2d ago **14.47**

That's it from me, Tom Ambrose, and indeed the live politics blog for the evening.

You can read all about Chris Pincher's suspension as a Tory MP [here](#), as well as this [profile](#) on his career so far.

Follow all the latest UK politics news [here](#). Goodnight.

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2d ago **14.09**



Rowena Mason

**In case you missed it earlier, one of Boris Johnson's close allies, Chris Pincher, has been suspended as a Conservative MP and will be investigated by parliament's complaints watchdog after allegations he drunkenly groped two men.**

Pincher, who [resigned as deputy chief whip](#) on Thursday, was reported to the independent complaints and grievance scheme, which looks into allegations of misconduct by MPs.

The referral prompted the chief whip, Chris Heaton-Harris, to suspend the whip from his own former deputy after almost 24 hours of pressure on Johnson to act against Pincher.

With the MP suspended, the spotlight has turned on what the prime minister knew about allegations against Pincher, who had previously resigned from the whips' office in 2017 following claims he made unwanted passes at a Tory colleague and acted like a "poundshop Harvey Weinstein". He was cleared of wrongdoing in a party investigation.

On Friday, the prime minister's official spokesperson denied he had known about "specific" claims before appointing him as deputy chief whip in February.

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[2d ago](#)[13.22](#)

**Boris Johnson is understood to have spoken to several people today, including a Tory MP who was with one of the men who was allegedly groped by Pincher, according to PA Media.**

“The account given was sufficiently disturbing to make the PM feel more troubled by all this,” the No 10 source told the PA news agency.

The prime minister was said to have been waiting for a formal investigation to begin before suspending the whip, as opposition parties said Pincher’s position as an MP was untenable.

Downing Street appeared to acknowledge that there had been concerns when he was appointed to the key post of deputy chief whip, with responsibility for discipline over Tory MPs, in February.

However a No 10 spokesperson said the prime minister had not been made aware of anything that would have prevented the appointment going ahead.

“In the absence of any formal complaints, it was not appropriate to stop an appointment on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations,” the spokesperson said.

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Updated at 14.14 EDT

[2d ago](#)[12.56](#)

## Summary



Jedidajah Otte

Here the latest key developments at a glance:

- **Chris Pincher**, the MP for Tamworth and former Tory deputy chief whip who resigned over groping allegations, **has been suspended by the Conservative party** amid an ongoing investigation into his alleged misconduct.
- Downing Street initially appeared to consider the matter closed after Pincher's resignation.
- No 10 has denied that Boris Johnson knew about any "specific" sexual misconduct claims against Pincher before promoting in February, while reports emerged that the PM's chief of staff Steve Barclay had been made aware of concerns about Pincher's behaviour.
- Tory MPs Caroline Nokes and Karen Bradley have [written a letter to Tory chief whip Chris Heaton-Harris](#), bemoaning an "inconsistent and unclear approach by the Party to instances of sexual misconduct".
- Neil Parish, the former Conservative MP for Tiverton and Honiton – who resigned in May after admitting he had watched pornography twice on his phone in parliament – **had accused the Conservatives of**

**“double standards” prior to Pincher’s suspension and called for “equal treatment” for his former colleague.**

- Keir Starmer will vow Labour will never deal with the Scottish National party while he is leader and make it explicit his party would go into minority government rather than enter talks with nationalists.
- Boris Johnson has rejected the idea that the war in Ukraine is about ‘Russia versus Nato’, and said this was merely how Putin wanted to “reframe [...] his attack on an entirely innocent country”.
- More than 3,000 migrants and refugees crossed the Channel to the UK in June – the highest monthly total this year.

That’s all from me for today, I’m now handing over to my colleague Tom Ambrose.

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Updated at 13.17 EDT

[2d ago 12.44](#)

Labour deputy leader **Angela Rayner** said **Boris Johnson** was forced into suspending **Chris Pincher** as a Conservative MP.

She said:

Boris Johnson has been dragged kicking and screaming into taking any action at all.

He just can’t be trusted to do the right thing. This whole scandal is yet more evidence of his appalling judgement.

It’s time for Conservative MPs to show this chaotic prime minister the door before he can do any more damage.

The PM spoke to a Tory MP who was with one of the men who was allegedly groped by Pincher, a Downing Street source said.

“The account given was sufficiently disturbing to make the PM feel more troubled by all this,” the source told the PA news agency.

Johnson was said to have been waiting for a formal investigation to begin before suspending the whip.

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Updated at 12.45 EDT

[2d ago](#)[12.20](#)

My colleague **Mark Brown** has profiled **Chris Pincher**, who before this week had only been in the national news once: for reportedly having untucked the shirt of the Olympic rower and Tory activist **Alex Story**, having rubbed his neck, and having told him: “You’ll go far in the Conservative party.”

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Updated at 12.27 EDT

[2d ago](#)[12.17](#)

This from **David Williamson** from the Sunday Express:

Kelly Tolhurst, MP for Rochester and Strood, is the new Deputy Chief Whip.

— David Williamson (@dp\_williamson) [July 1, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#)[11](#)

## Chris Pincher suspended by Conservative party over groping claims

**Chris Pincher**, the former Tory deputy chief whip who resigned over groping allegations, has been suspended by the Conservative party.

Pincher lost the Conservative whip after calls grew from Tory MPs to exclude him from the party.

A spokesperson for the chief whip said:

Having heard that a formal complaint has been made to the ICGS, the PM has agreed with the chief whip that the whip should be suspended from Chris Pincher while the investigation is ongoing.

My colleague **Aubrey Allegretti** has a short story on this, with more soon.

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Updated at 12.33 EDT

[2d ago](#)[11](#)[59](#)

This from the Telegraph's **Christopher Hope** on chancellor **Rishi Sunak's** latest newsletter:

Rishi Sunak sounds defensive in his weekly newsletter about the cost of living crisis.

"I don't have a magic wand. I can't make the global challenges of inflation and the impact of a war in Ukraine disappear. I've also had to grapple with a once-in-a-century pandemic that ...

— Christopher Hope (@christopherhope) [July 1, 2022](#)

"... really damaged our economy, and meant our borrowing and debt went up to levels that we hadn't seen since the Second World War... I have a responsibility to make sure that we don't burden our children with a legacy of debt that I didn't deal with."

— Christopher Hope ( @christopherhope ) [July 1, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#) [11.50](#)

My colleague **Libby Brooks**, our **Scotland** correspondent, has written a report on how grassroots groups are preparing for action after a date for a second independence referendum was announced, while the Scottish public remains divided.

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Updated at 12.26 EDT

[2d ago](#) [11.37](#)

My colleague **Jim Waterson** has written a piece on goings-on in the Carlton Club, where the Tory MP **Christopher Pincher** is alleged to have groped two men.

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Updated at 12.27 EDT

[2d ago](#) [11.05](#)

Here's a clip from ITV news featuring an interview with **Neil Parish**, who is calling for "equal treatment" for himself and the former deputy chief whip **Chris Pincher**:

Neil Parish, who had the Tory whip removed for watching porn in Parliament, tells us he's angry Chris Pincher hasn't had the whip removed over sexual assault allegations.

"I was doing myself damage, I was not trying to damage others - you can't say the same for dear Christopher" [pic.twitter.com/oK7cT4jhgy](https://pic.twitter.com/oK7cT4jhgy).

— Daniel Hewitt (@DanielHewittITV) [July 1, 2022](#)

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Updated at 11.32 EDT

[2d ago](#)[11.00](#)

## **Former MP who was stripped off whip for watching porn in Commons warns of 'double standards'**

**Neil Parish**, the former Conservative MP for **Tiverton and Honiton**, has said the [Conservatives](#) cannot show "double standards" and must remove the whip from the former deputy chief whip **Chris Pincher**.

Parish, who formally resigned in May after admitting he had watched pornography twice on his phone in parliament, suggested that he believed the party whip could be withdrawn from Pincher before the end of Saturday.

Parish was adamant the whip should be withdrawn from his former parliamentary colleague, saying:

The first thing they did to me, and I made a huge mistake, is that they withdrew the whip. There cannot be double standards.

My belief is that Christopher Pincher has things to be answered for, the whip must be withdrawn and he has the opportunity then to go before the parliamentary standards board to see what his conduct actually was – those that were affected can also give evidence.

The former MP expressed disbelief that the party whip had not already been withdrawn.

I can't believe why they haven't done it, because that was the first thing they did to me, even though I asked for it to be sorted out privately.

I just feel it is double standards. But I suspect by this evening or tomorrow the whip will be withdrawn. I can't believe they can treat us in such different ways.

Asked by LBC if he saw himself as badly treated by the Conservatives, he said:

I have accepted what happened and I made a big mistake and so up until now, yes I have.

But I have to say to you on this occasion, then I am very upset.

He suggested that he cut an independent path in parliament, meaning that he had little protection from the party when the scandal broke.

The resulting byelection saw the Liberal Democrats take Parish's former seat, overturning a Conservative majority of more than 24,000.

Parish said:

I got myself elected to the [Commons environment, food and rural affairs] select committee chair.

I never had preferment. I was always keen to hold ministers to account, which is what you do as a select committee chair.

And so you weren't part of the establishment. So when you come to blot your copy book, which I did, I accept that, there was no protection for me and straight over the side of the boat.

You just think, come on, he may be deputy chief whip, in fact he may have been the man who actually removed the whip from me, so come on, let's be fair.



Former MP Neil Parish. Photograph: Finnbarr Webster/Getty Images

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Updated at 11.50 EDT

[2d ago](#)[10.49](#)

**Post Office collection and cash delivery workers are to stage a one-day strike later this month in a dispute over pay.**

Members of the Communication Workers Union (CWU) employed in supply chain and admin jobs will walk out on 14 July, PA reports.

The workers deliver cash, valuables and essential supplies to thousands of sub-post offices, process finances and work in administration.

The dispute is in opposition to a pay offer from the Post Office which the union said was worth 3% for 2022-23, alongside a one-off lump sum payment of 500, and no pay increase for the 2021-22 financial year.

The union said the proposals are far beneath the RPI inflation rate of 11.7%.

CWU assistant secretary **Andy Furey** said:

The blame for this disruption lies entirely with the senior Post Office leadership, who have repeatedly failed - and wilfully refused - to set out a sensible and fair pay agreement.

Everyone knows that the only solution is a fair pay rise that properly rewards members for their extraordinary efforts in serving the public and delivering a profitable Post Office, while also taking account of the extreme cost of living.

There most certainly is money available, but management do not want to give workers their fair share.

Our message to the employer today is: don't waste our members' time by misleading statements.

Stop the spin and get serious about pay. Until you do this, the strikes will continue.

A Post Office spokesperson said:

We have received notice that the CWU has called a strike involving supply chain colleagues.

We will have a range of contingency measures in place to minimise any possible disruption to the Post Office network on that day.

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Updated at 10.52 EDT

2d ago10.08

More than 3,000 migrants and refugees crossed the Channel to the **UK** in June – the highest monthly total this year.

Last month 3,136 people made the crossing on 76 boats, with journeys taking place on 19 days, according to PA news agency analysis of government figures.

Of the 12,690 people who made the journey in the first half of this year, the second highest month for crossings was 3,074 in March.

The highest monthly record since 2018 was 6,971 crossings in November 2021.

The total for 2022 so far is more than five times the amount recorded between January and June 2020 (2,493) and more than double the six-month tally for the first half of last year (5,917).

Crossings continued on Thursday with 94 people arriving in **Dover, Kent**, in two boats.

The figures indicate 51,824 people have made the crossing since 2018.

Home Office figures show 28,526 crossed in 2021, compared with 8,466 in 2020, 1,843 in 2019 and 299 in 2018.

The number of Channel crossings may be increasing, but represent a fraction of the number of people migrating to Europe.

Data from the UN Refugee Agency shows at least 120,441 people arrived in Europe via the Mediterranean by land and sea in 2021.

Earlier this week, the home secretary, **Priti Patel**, struck a fresh deal with **Nigeria**, which her department said would do more to tackle “illegal migration” and speed up the “removal of foreign criminals”.

At the same time, the Home Office said 13 people who had “no right to be in the UK” were deported to Nigeria, with a further eight flown to **Ghana**.

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Updated at 10.35 EDT

[2d ago 09.53](#)

Shadow leader of the House of Commons **Thangam Debbonaire** said the allegations of sexual misconduct against former Tory deputy chief whip **Chris Pincher** must be investigated.

She told BBC Radio 4’s World At One programme:

He hasn’t had the whip removed and there’s no sign at the moment of these allegations being investigated by the Tory party.

So yes, he’s resigned as deputy chief whip and what next? What does that say to victims if there’s no further action?

That Pincher has not had the whip removed, she added, “is part of a wider culture, which comes from the top I’m afraid, of tolerance of poor behaviour”.

The responsibility is now on the prime minister, the Tory prime minister and those propping him up to demand, expect and enforce the highest standards of behaviour.

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Updated at 10.01 EDT

[2d ago 09.47](#)

This from Politico’s **Eleni Courea**:

Besides everything else, it's entirely implausible that Steve Barclay would hold up the cabinet reshuffle for hours to allow PET to look into allegations against Chris Pincher (as No10 source claimed to me) without Boris Johnson ever being told about those allegations...

— Eleni Courea (@elenicourea) [July 1, 2022](#)

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[Skip to key events](#)

[Ukraine war live](#)[World news](#)

# Zelenskiy appeals to Latin American leaders – as it happened

This blog is closed. All the Guardian's [Ukraine coverage can be found here](#)

Updated 1d ago

[Maya Yang](#) (now); [Léonie Chao-Fong](#), [Martin Belam](#) and [Samantha Lock](#) (earlier)

Fri 1 Jul 2022 19.16 EDTFirst published on Fri 1 Jul 2022 01.09 EDT

Rescue operation at Odesa apartment block after deadly missile strike – video

[Maya Yang](#) (now); [Léonie Chao-Fong](#), [Martin Belam](#) and [Samantha Lock](#) (earlier)

Fri 1 Jul 2022 19.16 EDTFirst published on Fri 1 Jul 2022 01.09 EDT

## Key events

- [1d agoSummary](#)
- [2d agoUS announces new \\$820 million military aid package to Ukraine](#)
- [2d agoSummary](#)
- [2d agoTwo Britons charged with ‘mercenary activities’ in Donetsk](#)
- [2d agoBriton and Moroccan sentenced to death in Donetsk appeal sentence](#)
- [2d agoWar in Europe beyond Ukraine ‘of course’ a possibility, says Finland](#)
- [2d agoOdesa death toll rises to 21](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 2d ago

[12.42](#)

### **Briton and Moroccan sentenced to death in Donetsk appeal sentence**

**A Briton and a Moroccan man sentenced to death by pro-Russia officials in Russian-controlled east Ukraine have appealed against their sentences, Russian state media reports.**

The supreme court in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic has received appeals from lawyers for Brahim Saadoun and Shaun Pinner, according to the Russian state-owned news agency Tass.

Another Briton sentenced to death by the Russian proxy court, Aiden Aslin, had not yet submitted an appeal, Tass reports.



British man Shaun Pinner (R) and Moroccan Saaudun Brahim (C), pictured with Aiden Aslin (L) have reportedly appealed against their death sentences. Photograph: EPA

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Updated at 13.20 EDT

1d ago **19.00**

## Summary

It's 2am in Kyiv. Here's where things stand as we close this blog. Live coverage will resume later; all the Guardian's [Ukraine coverage can be found here](#).

- Ukraine's state-run nuclear company, Energoatom, has [restored](#) its connection between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the surveillance systems of the nuclear plant in the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia. The connections have previously been down as a result of Russian occupation.
- UK prime minister Boris Johnson has [received](#) the title of Honorary Citizen of Odesa, the Kyiv Independent reports. On Friday, Odesa mayor Henadiy Trukhanov signed an order that awarded Johnson with the Hryhoryia Marazly Honorary Badges of I, II, III degree, which automatically grants him the title.
- Ukraine's rebuilding plans will [need](#) to address restoring war-torn ecosystems, the EU Commissioner for the Environment said. Virginijus Sinkevicius warned the environmental cost of the conflict was "increasing every day" - and said it could take "generations" to overcome.
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy [called](#) Latin American leaders on Friday in attempts to obtain support from Latin America in his country's fight against the Russian invasion. "I continue to establish relations with an important region — Latin

America," Zelenskiy wrote on social media in regards to his conversations with leaders of Argentina and Chile.

- Ukraine's army accused Russia of carrying out strikes using incendiary phosphorus munitions on Snake Island Friday, just a day after Moscow withdrew its forces from the strategic Black Sea outpost. "Today at around 18:00... Russian air force SU-30 planes twice conducted strikes with phosphorus bombs on Zmiinyi island," it said in a statement, using another name for Snake Island.
- A new Reuters investigation has found that at least 14 Russian weapons companies have not faced any Western sanctions. "Nearly three dozen leaders of Russian weapons firms and at least 14 defense companies have not been sanctioned by the United States, the European Union or the United Kingdom," the Reuters report said.
- The US announced on Friday that it will provide Ukraine with an additional \$820 million in military aid. The new aid package will include new surface-to-air missile systems and counter-artillery radars to respond to Russia's long-range strikes in its war against Ukraine.
- Ukraine's outspoken ambassador to Germany, a talkshow staple who was central to the public debates that led Berlin to step up weapons deliveries to Kyiv, is facing criticism for defending World War Two Ukrainian nationalist leader Stepan Bandera in an interview. An interview with journalist blogger Tilo Jung published on Thursday quoted the ambassador saying that Bandera was not a "mass murderer of Poles and Jews," causing uproar from both the Polish government and the Israeli embassy.

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Updated at 19.16 EDT

1d ago18.17

Ukraine's state-run nuclear company, Energoatom, has restored its connection between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the nuclear plant in the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia, the Kyiv Independent reports.

⚡ Energoatom reconnects IAEA, Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant.

Ukraine's state-run nuclear company restored the connection between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant's surveillance systems, which had been down due to Russian occupation.

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [July 1, 2022](#)

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[1d ago](#) [17.49](#)

**UK prime minister Boris Johnson has received the title of Honorary Citizen of Odesa, the Kyiv Independent reports.**

On Friday, **Odesa mayor Henadiy Trukhanov** signed an order that awarded Johnson with the Hryhoryia Marazly Honorary Badges of I, II, III degree, which automatically grants him the title.

According to Trukhanov, if the rest of the world took the same position against **Russia** as the people of Britain did since the invasion began in February, then Ukraine would have long defeated Russia.

⚡ UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson receives title of Honorary Citizen of Odesa.

Odesa Mayor Henadiy Trukhanov signed an order on July 1 awarding Johnson with the Hryhoryia Marazly Honorary Badges of I, II, III degrees.

With the order, Johnson automatically receives the title.

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [July 1, 2022](#)



This handout picture taken and released by Ukrainian Presidential Press-Service on June 17, 2022, shows Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky (R) welcoming Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson, before talks in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv. Photograph: Ukrainian presidential presser/AFP/Getty Images

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Updated at 18.55 EDT

[1d ago](#)[17.06](#)

**Ukraine's rebuilding plans will need to address restoring war-torn ecosystems, the EU Commissioner for the Environment said.**

**Virginijus Sinkevicius** warned the environmental cost of the conflict was “increasing every day” - and said it could take “generations” to overcome.

Next week, various countries’ leaders and international organisations will meet in Lugano, Switzerland to discuss rebuilding Ukraine, hoping to draw up a “Marshall Plan” for the country’s reconstruction even as war with [Russia](#) rages.

The plan will “absolutely” have to include an environmental component, Sinkevicius told Agence France-Presse on Wednesday, noting the mass destruction of forests, land covered with mines and trenches, chemical pollution spread by munitions, and contaminated waterways and soil.

“The (environmental) price tag every day is increasing, because we see the barbaric actions of the Russian side (are) not stopping,” Sinkevicius said.

“They bomb chemicals facilities” and have put nuclear power plants at risk, he said, adding that “hundreds of thousands of tonnes” of destroyed Russian military machinery would need to be cleared.

He said the environmental damage as a result of the war was “a crime of the biggest scale” that would “take generations to deal with.”

He added there was now a “unique opportunity” to create a “cleaner” Ukraine, but warned: “We can rebuild roads, we can rebuild the infrastructure, but for forests to grow, you need hundreds of years. So it will take time.”



A photograph shows a trench dug by Russian soldiers near the Red Forest which is ten-square-kilometre area surrounding the Chernobyl Nuclear

Power Plant within the Exclusion Zone on May 29, 2022, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Photograph: Dimitar Dilkoff/AFP/Getty Images

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[1d ago](#)[16.36](#)

**Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy called Latin American leaders on Friday in attempts to obtain support from Latin America in his country's fight against the Russian invasion.**

"I continue to establish relations with an important region — Latin America," Zelenskiy wrote on social media in regards to his conversations with leaders of Argentina and Chile.

The conversations with Argentina's Alberto Fernández and Chile's Gabriel Boric came a comes after Zelenskiy spoke with Ecuadorian president Guillermo Lasso and Guatemalan president Alejandro Giammattei a little over two weeks ago.

At the time, Zelenskiy said in a speech that the conversations with Lasso and Giammattei marked "the beginning of our new policy of restoring relations with Latin America."

Fernández held a 35-minute call with Ukraine's leader, in which he offered help in any negotiations that may take place with Russia, according to a press release by the Argentinian government.

As the current head of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, Fernández told Zelenskiy, "Latin America is a continent of peace that rejects the use of force and promotes dialogue to resolve conflicts," according to the release.

Before the war, Fernández was moving to improve relations with Russia. In a sit-down with **Russian president Vladimir Putin** in Moscow in early February, Fernández said Argentina should become the "entry door to Latin America" for Russia. Fernández later condemned Russia's invasion.

Boric later wrote that during his conversation with Zelenskiy, he “expressed my solidarity and our willingness to support the condemnations of the invasion in international organizations,” adding that Ukraine “has a friend in South America.”

Zelenskiy wrote that he thanked Boric for his country’s support in the United Nations and “discussed the possibility of involving Chilean specialists in demining.”

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[1d ago](#)[16.01](#)

**Ukraine’s army accused [Russia](#) of carrying out strikes using incendiary phosphorus munitions on Snake Island Friday, just a day after Moscow withdrew its forces from the strategic Black Sea outpost.**

“Today at around 18:00... Russian air force SU-30 planes twice conducted strikes with phosphorus bombs on Zmiinyi island,” it said in a statement, using another name for Snake Island.

The Russian defence ministry on Thursday described the retreat as “a gesture of goodwill” meant to signal that Russia will not get in the way of UN efforts to organize protected grain exports from Ukraine.

The Ukrainian army on Friday accused the Russians of being unable to “respect even their own declarations”.

Its statement was accompanied by a video that showed a plane drop munitions at least twice on the island, and what appeared to be white streaks rising above it.

Phosphorus weapons, which leave a signature white trail in the sky, are incendiary weapons whose use against civilians is banned under an international convention but allowed for military targets.

Ukraine has accused Russia of using them several times since it invaded its neighbour in late February, including on civilian areas, allegations Moscow has denied.



This handout satellite photo taken and released by Planet Labs PBC on June 30, 2022, shows Snake Island in the Black Sea. Photograph: Planet Labs PBC/AFP/Getty Images

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[1d ago](#)[15.34](#)

**A new Reuters investigation has found that at least 14 Russian weapons companies have not faced any Western sanctions.**

Nearly three dozen leaders of Russian weapons firms and at least 14 defense companies have not been sanctioned by the United States, the European Union or the United Kingdom,” the Reuters report said.

One of the weapons moguls who has not been sanctioned is **Alan Lushnikov**, the largest shareholder of Kalashnikov Concern JSC, the original manufacturer of the famous AK-47 assault rifle.

According to records reviewed by Reuters, Lushnikov owns a 75% stake in the firm.

The company, which was sanctioned by the US in 2014 - the year that [Russia](#) invaded and annexed Crimea, accounts for 95% of Russia's production of machine guns, sniper rifles, pistols and other handheld firearms.



Silhouette of a Kyiv territorial defence member with a Kalashnikov rifle in his hands, as Russia's invasion of Ukraine continues, in Kyiv, Ukraine, March 25, 2022. Photograph: Reuters

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[2d ago](#)[14.58](#)

**US announces new \$820 million military aid package to Ukraine**

**The US announced on Friday that it will provide Ukraine with an additional \$820 million in military aid.**

The new aid package will include new surface-to-air missile systems and counter-artillery radars to respond to Russia's long-range strikes in its war against Ukraine.

The Pentagon also announced that it will provide up to 150,000 rounds of millimeter artillery ammunition to Ukrainians.

Friday's announcement marks the 14th military package sent from the Defense Department's stocks to Ukraine since August 2021. In total, the US has provided over \$8.8 billion in weapons and military training to Ukraine.

As part of the new package, the U.S. will purchase two systems known as NASAMS, a Norwegian-developed anti-aircraft system that is also used to protect the airspace around the White House and Capitol in Washington.

The Pentagon will also provide additional ammunition for medium-range rocket systems it provided Ukraine in June, known as the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS.



A view shows a M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) is being fired in an undisclosed location, in Ukraine in this still image obtained

from an undated social media video uploaded on June 24, 2022. Photograph:  
Via Pavlo Narozhnny/Reuters

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Updated at 14.59 EDT

[2d ago](#)[14.29](#)

**Ukraine's outspoken ambassador to Germany, a talkshow staple who was central to the public debates that led Berlin to step up weapons deliveries to Kyiv, is facing criticism for defending World War Two Ukrainian nationalist leader Stepan Bandera in an interview.**

Reuters reports:

*Andriy Melnyk is easily the best known ambassador in Berlin, known for robust social media exchanges in which he condemned as appeasers politicians and intellectuals who opposed arming Ukraine for its fight against Russian invaders.*

*But an interview with journalist blogger Tilo Jung published on Thursday in which he said Bandera was not a “mass murderer of Poles and Jews” caused uproar and drew condemnation from both the Polish government and the Israeli embassy.*

*“The statement made by the Ukrainian ambassador is a distortion of the historical facts, belittles the Holocaust and is an insult to those who are murdered by Bandera and his people,” the embassy wrote on Twitter.*

*Though he spent much of World War Two in a Nazi prison, Bandera headed the radical wing of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists which killed tens of thousands of Polish civilians during the war.*

*Living in Munich in exile after the war, he was a figurehead of Ukraine’s anti-Soviet insurgency which fought Moscow in partisan actions into the 1950s. He was assassinated by the Soviet KGB in 1959.*

*Even Ukraine's foreign ministry distanced itself from Melnyk's remarks, saying they did not reflect its views. Polish Foreign Minister **Zbigniew Rau** thanked his Ukrainian counterpart for his intervention over the "false statements."*

*Melnyk, 46, has become a central figure in debates over Germany's obligations to Ukraine, credited with using his pulpit as envoy of a nation fighting foreign invasion to keep up the pressure on Chancellor **Olaf Scholz**, who despite initial reluctance has kept boosting arms deliveries to Ukraine.*



Ukrainian Ambassador to Germany Andriy Melnyk speaks during an event marking the 77th anniversary of the 1945 victory against Nazi Germany at the Brandenburg parliament in Potsdam on May 8, 2022. Photograph: Sören Stache/AFP/Getty Images

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[2d ago](#)[13.59](#)

## Summary

It is 9pm in Kyiv. Here's where we stand:

- At least 21 people, including two children, have been killed after Russian missile strikes in Odesa in southern Ukraine, Odesa's military spokesperson, Sergei Bratchuk, said. [A 12-year-old boy was among the dead, he added](#). A further 38 people, including six children and a pregnant woman, were hospitalised with injuries after two Russian missiles struck a multistorey block of flats and a recreation centre. The Kremlin has [denied responsibility](#) for the strike.
- Eight people have been confirmed dead after a Russian missile strike on a residential building in Ukraine's southern city of Mykolaiv on Wednesday, according to local officials. Mayor Oleksandr Senkevych had previously said [eight missiles had hit the city](#), adding that the residential building appeared to have been hit by a Russian X-55 cruise missile.
- Two British citizens captured by Russian forces in eastern Ukraine have been charged with "mercenary activities", Russian state media reported. [Dylan Healy and Andrew Hill have been charged by officials in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic \(DPR\)](#), a source in DPR law enforcement was cited as saying. Both men were refusing to cooperate with the investigation, according to Russian state-owned news agency Tass.
- A Briton and a Moroccan man sentenced to death by pro-Russia officials in Russian-controlled east Ukraine have appealed against their sentences, Russian state media reported. The supreme court in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic [has received appeals from lawyers for Brahim Saadoun and Shaun Pinner](#), according to the Russian state-owned news agency Tass. Another Briton sentenced to

death by the Russian proxy court, Aiden Aslin, had not yet submitted an appeal, Tass reports.

- **Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine will begin using the death penalty in 2025, according to an updated criminal code of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR).** A Russian proxy court in the DPR sentenced two Britons, Aiden Aslin and Shaun Pinner, and Moroccan Brahim Saadoun to death on charges of “terrorism”. It is unclear what [the new rules](#) would mean for the men.
- **The president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has told Ukraine that there is “a long road ahead” for its bid to become an EU member, but that “Europe will be at your side every step of the way.”** After [her speech](#), broadcast via video link, Ukrainian lawmakers watched as [the EU’s flag was hoisted](#) in the plenary hall of the parliament in Kyiv.
- **Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, has said a new chapter had started for his country and the EU after Brussels formally accepted Ukraine’s candidacy to join the bloc.** In a [Telegram post](#), Zelenskiy said Ukraine’s path to EU membership should “not take years or decades” and vowed to make Ukraine’s part of the process “perfect”.
- **Finland’s foreign minister, Pekka Haavisto, has said war in Europe beyond Ukraine is “of course” a possibility and urged countries to support Kyiv.** Finland could not maintain neutrality as its neighbour Russia becomes a security threat, [Haavisto said in an interview with CNN](#), adding that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine “has changed the security atmosphere”.

- Ukrainian forces said on Thursday that they have pushed Russian forces away from Snake Island, a strategic Black Sea outpost off the southern coast. Russia portrayed the pullout from the island as a “goodwill gesture”. Ukraine’s military said Russians fled the island in two speedboats after a barrage of Ukrainian artillery and missile strikes.
- The situation in the eastern Ukrainian city of Lysychansk is “extremely difficult” as Russian forces’ continuous shelling makes it impossible for civilians to evacuate, officials say. Luhansk’s regional governor, Serhiy Haidai, said Russian forces remained on the city outskirts, where there was no street fighting.
- Moscow has told Ukrainian teachers in occupied territories to sign a document within weeks certifying their willingness to switch to teaching the Russian school curriculum. The Guardian spoke with teachers in Russian-occupied parts of south-east Ukraine who said newly appointed local authorities told them they had until 21 July to either sign a document certifying their readiness to follow the Russian school curriculum or resign.
- Russia’s president, Vladimir Putin, has claimed that pressure from the west has pushed Russia to accelerate its integration with neighbouring Belarus. Putin’s remarks at a Russia-Belarus forum on Friday follow comments last week by Russia’s defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, who said Russia and Belarus must take urgent joint measures to improve their defence capabilities and troops’ combat readiness.
- Russia has threatened to close its embassy in Bulgaria after Sofia announced that it would expel 70 Russian diplomatic staff. Russia’s

ambassador to Bulgaria, Eleonora Mitrofanova, said the [closure of the Russian embassy](#) would inevitably lead to the closure of Bulgaria's embassy in Moscow. The [EU said](#) Russia's threat to sever diplomatic ties with Bulgaria was unjustified.

- Ukraine has requested that Turkey detain and arrest a Russian-flagged cargo ship carrying Ukrainian grain. Ukraine's prosecutor general's office said the ship, [Zhibek Zholy, was involved in the “illegal export of Ukrainian grain” from the Russian-occupied port of Berdiansk](#) and headed to Karasu, Turkey. On Thursday, a pro-Russia official said the first cargo ship to leave Berdiansk was carrying [7,000 tonnes of grain to “friendly countries”](#).
- The cooking of borsch, a beetroot and cabbage soup, in Ukraine has been added to the United Nations cultural agency's list of endangered heritage because of Russia's invasion. [The Ukrainian culture of cooking borsch, considered a national dish](#), has been included on Unesco's “list of intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding”.
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[2d ago 13.45](#)

## Two Britons charged with ‘mercenary activities’ in Donetsk

Two British citizens captured by Russian forces in eastern Ukraine have been charged with “mercenary activities”, the Russian state-owned news agency Tass reports.

Dylan Healy and Andrew Hill have been charged by officials in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), Tass cited a source in DPR law enforcement as saying.

Both men were refusing to cooperate with the investigation, Tass reports.

Healy, 22, was reportedly captured by Russian forces in April along with another British man, Paul Urey, at a checkpoint south of the city of Zaporizhzhia in south-eastern Ukraine. There was no mention of Urey in the report by Tass.

Presidium Network, a UK-based company that says it carries out evacuations of families and individuals from war zones, said it had been intending to work with Healy and Urey. Both men appeared to be members of the public with little or no experience of military or humanitarian work.

Hill, 35, a father of four from Plymouth, was reportedly captured by Russian forces during fighting in the Mykolaiv region in southern Ukraine.

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[2d ago 13.07](#)

**Ukraine's foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba, has condemned [Russia](#) for the missile strikes on the Odesa region that killed 21 people dead and injured dozens.**

Kuleba called for modern missile defence systems to be sent to Ukraine, urging allies to "help us save lives and put an end to this war".

Terrorist state Russia continues its war against civilians with overnight missile strikes on Odesa region killing dozens, including children. I urge partners to provide Ukraine with modern missile defense systems as soon as possible. Help us save lives and put an end to this war.  
[pic.twitter.com/SQP6UUkNlI](https://pic.twitter.com/SQP6UUkNlI)

— Dmytro Kuleba (@DmytroKuleba) [July 1, 2022](#)

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Updated at 13.15 EDT

[2d ago](#)[12.53](#)

Isobel Koshiw

**Talina Zharikova first met people who had fled fighting in Donbas in a bomb shelter near her flat in the south-central Ukrainian city of Dnipro when the invasion started.**

For a while, she and her neighbours hosted them in their flats. But there were quickly more people than they could house, so Zharikova decided to ask about renovating an abandoned Soviet hospital opposite their block of flats.

Zharikova, her neighbours, other Dnipro residents and those who had fled fighting set about renovating the building, which had been empty for a decade. There are now 240 people living in the various rooms in the shelter, known as Good on Love, and they say there is room for another 100.

The shelter is one of more than 60 set up by Dnipro residents for evacuees. As the first city of relative safety outside many frontline areas, Dnipro has become Ukraine's aid hub. Thousands who live there, many left jobless by the war, have thrown themselves into volunteering.



Lunch being served at the shelter Good on Love. Photograph: Anastasia Taylor-Lind/The Guardian

Like other volunteers in Dnipro, Zharikova said the financial burden has been immense.

“The city authorities didn’t help, so I fed them all with my own money for the first month. My husband is fighting at the front and I went out and got out what money I had,” said Zharikova, a former hotel manager.

Read the full story:

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Updated at 12.59 EDT

[2d ago](#) [12.42](#)

**Briton and Moroccan sentenced to death in Donetsk appeal sentence**

**A Briton and a Moroccan man sentenced to death by pro-Russia officials in Russian-controlled east Ukraine have appealed against their sentences, Russian state media reports.**

The supreme court in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic has received appeals from lawyers for Brahim Saadoun and Shaun Pinner, according to the Russian state-owned news agency Tass.

Another Briton sentenced to death by the Russian proxy court, Aiden Aslin, had not yet submitted an appeal, Tass reports.



British man Shaun Pinner (R) and Moroccan Saadoun Brahim (C), pictured with Aiden Aslin (L) have reportedly appealed against their death sentences.  
Photograph: EPA

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Updated at 13.20 EDT

[2d ago 12.29](#)

**The cooking of borsch, a beetroot and cabbage soup, in Ukraine has been added to the United Nations cultural agency's list of endangered**

**heritage because of Russia's invasion.**

The Ukrainian culture of cooking borsch, considered a national dish, has been included on Unesco's "list of intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding". Borsch is also widely consumed in Russia, other ex-Soviet countries and Poland.

The decision was approved after a fast-track process prompted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the "negative impact on this tradition" caused by the war, Unesco said.

"People are unable not only to cook or grow local vegetables for borsch, but also to come together" to eat it, "which undermines the social and cultural well-being of communities", it said.

Ukraine's minister of culture, Tkachenko Oleksandr, celebrated the decision on Twitter, tweeting: "Victory in the war for borsch is ours!"

Перемога у війні за борщ- наша! ☺️

Як і всі наступні ☺️

На позачерговому засіданні Міжурядового комітету з охорони нематеріальної культурної спадщини за зверненням [@MKIPUkraine](#) "Культура приготування українського борщу" внесено до Списку нематеріальної культурної спадщини [@UNESCO](#) [pic.twitter.com/iTMNub1ZO1](https://pic.twitter.com/iTMNub1ZO1)

— Tkachenko Oleksandr (@otkachenkoua) [July 1, 2022](#)

Ukraine's first deputy foreign minister, Emine Dzheppar, also welcomed Unesco's decision, saying: "Ukrainian Borsht derussified!"

Ukrainian Borsht derussified!

At extraordinary meeting [@UNESCO](#) Committee for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage unanimously decided to include ☺️ element "Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking" into the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding 1/2 [pic.twitter.com/DGHVX6q6eZ](https://pic.twitter.com/DGHVX6q6eZ)

— Emine Dzheppar (@EmineDzheppar) [July 1, 2022](#)

Russia's foreign ministry, Maria Zakharova, ridiculed the move, claiming "as I understand, everything is subject to Ukrainianisation".

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Updated at 12.37 EDT

[2d ago](#) [12.03](#)

### **Ukraine has requested that Turkey detain and arrest a Russian-flagged cargo ship carrying Ukrainian grain, Reuters reports.**

The ship, Zhibek Zholy, was involved in the "illegal export of Ukrainian grain" from the Russian-occupied port of Berdiansk and headed to Karasu, Turkey, with 7,000 tonnes of cargo, Ukraine's prosecutor general's office said in a letter to Turkey's justice ministry.

Separately, a Ukrainian foreign ministry official said the ship had loaded the first cargo of some 4,500 tonnes of grain from Berdiansk, which the official said belonged to Ukraine.

Ukraine has repeatedly accused Russia of stealing grain from occupied areas. The Kremlin has denied that Russia has stolen any Ukrainian grain.

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Updated at 12.33 EDT

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## [Hong Kong](#)

# **Xi Jinping hails China's rule over Hong Kong on 25th anniversary of handover**

Chinese president says ‘one country, two systems’ will endure and democracy flourishes after unprecedented unpicking of freedoms

- [25th anniversary of the handover of Hong Kong – in pictures](#)
- [We were too lenient on pro-democracy politicians – Regina Ip](#)
- [The ‘unofficials’ who advised UK on handover – and were ignored](#)
- [Timeline: the Hong Kong handover](#)



Hong Kong's new chief executive, John Lee (left), with the Chinese president, Xi Jinping, after a swearing-in ceremony in Hong Kong.  
Photograph: Reuters

*Sum Lok-kei and agencies*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 04.28 EDTFirst published on Thu 30 Jun 2022 19.49 EDT

Xi Jinping has hailed China's rule over Hong Kong as he led 25th anniversary celebrations of the city's handover from Britain, insisting democracy was flourishing despite a political crackdown that has silenced dissent.

After swearing in a new hardline chief executive, John Lee, in a solemn ceremony on Friday morning, the Chinese president laid out his vision for the city and its administrators.

On his first trip outside mainland China since the pandemic began, he vowed that “one country, two systems” – a governance model under which [Hong Kong](#) was promised it would retain some autonomy and freedoms for 50 years – would endure.

“For this kind of good system, there is no reason to change it, it must be upheld for the long term,” Xi said, as critics questioned whether the city’s high level of autonomy was still intact.

“After much turmoil, people have learned a painful lesson that Hong Kong cannot be disorderly, it cannot afford to be,” he said. “Hong Kong is in a new phase from disorder to stability, from stability to prosperity”.

The past three years have seen an unprecedented unpicking of freedoms in Hong Kong as a result of the Beijing-imposed national security law. Scores of pro-democracy activists, journalists and opposition politicians have been jailed.

Xi called on Hong Kong’s residents to contribute to the “great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation” and insisted Beijing had always acted “for the good of Hong Kong”.

Lee, himself a former security minister, named key protests in the pro-democracy movement as challenges the city had overcome, while Xi said the introduction of national security legislation and its revamped “patriots-only” electoral system safeguarded Hong Kong people’s democratic rights.

At the swearing-in ceremonies, all officials, including Xi, wore masks and stood at least one metre apart. They did not shake hands. Xi will return to mainland [China](#) on Friday afternoon, after having stayed less than 24 hours.



A police checkpoint outside the West Kowloon high-speed rail station before Xi Jinping's arrival. Photograph: Anthony Kwan/Getty Images

Before the highly choreographed ceremony began, the British prime minister, Boris Johnson, and the US secretary of state, [Antony Blinken](#), said Beijing had failed to respect the “one country, two systems” arrangement agreed under the deal that ended British colonial rule in 1997.

Vowing not to “give up” on Hong Kong, Johnson said: “It’s a state of affairs that threatens both the rights and freedoms of Hongkongers and the continued progress and prosperity of their home.”

Blinken said Friday was supposed to be the halfway mark of 50 years of promised autonomy under one country, two systems, “yet it is now evident that Hong Kong and Beijing authorities no longer view democratic participation, fundamental freedoms, and an independent media as part of this vision”.

Saying a strict security law imposed in Hong Kong by Beijing in 2020 had led to an “erosion of autonomy”, he said: “We stand in solidarity with people

in Hong Kong and reinforce their calls for their promised freedoms to be reinstated.”



A couple in Hong Kong at an exhibition to mark the 25th anniversary of the former British colony's return to Chinese rule Photograph: Kin Cheung/AP

Events to mark the anniversary of the handover began with a brief flag-raising ceremony at the Hong Kong convention and exhibition centre, a venue surrounded by huge police barricades. Previously, Hong Kong activists have rallied outside the ceremony but were warned by national security police not to protest this year.

Security was tight across the city. Hong Kong police’s counter-terrorism response unit was deployed in Wan Chai, accompanied by armoured vehicles.

Officers also patrolled the area and conducted vehicle spot checks. Media personnel had to surrender their umbrellas before entering the events, as well as having their belongings searched and inspected. The item has been a symbol of the pro-democracy movement since 2014.

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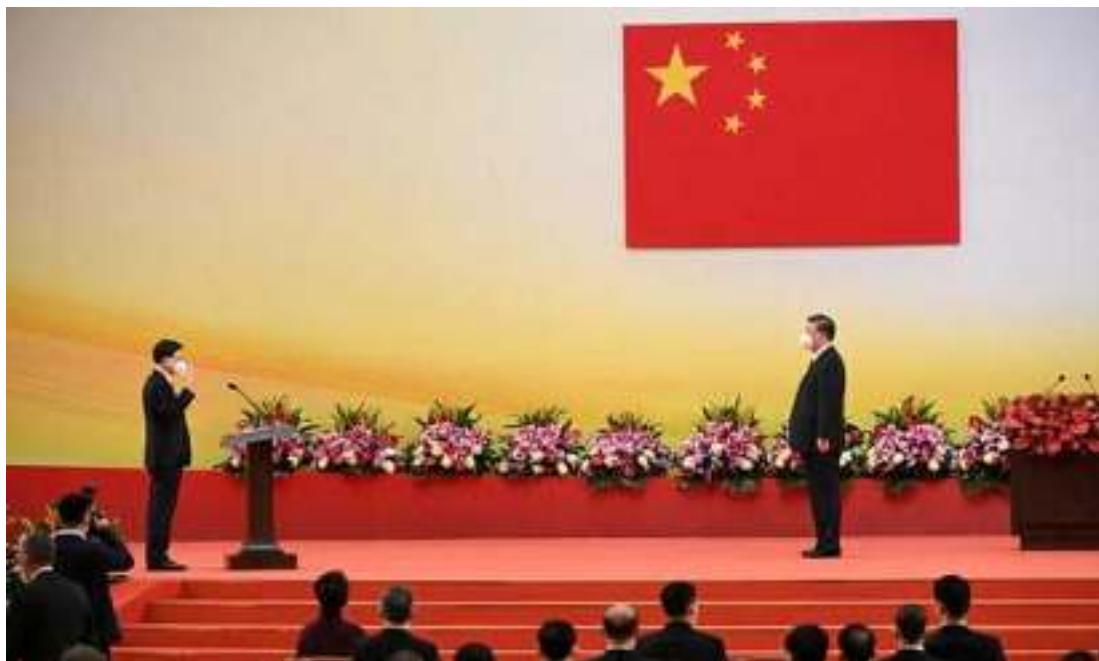
Meanwhile, members of the League of Social Democrats, an activist group, were told by police not to stage any protest on 1 July, after members were interviewed and had their homes searched.

The league's former chairman Avery Ng, said he spotted a team of plainclothes police outside his building, comparing the situation to a house arrest. "Obviously, this is very similar to what happens on the mainland, on significant days you will be 'invited' to keep quiet, or perhaps 'invited' to go on a trip," Ng said.

Unprecedented scrutiny was also applied to journalists covering 1 July events. Only media selected by the government could physically attend the events. The Hong Kong Journalists Association said about 10 media workers from various outlets, including the South China Morning Post, were barred from the events due to "security reasons".

During the inauguration ceremony both Xi and Lee stressed the need for Hong Kong to attract foreign capital.

On Thursday, Xi told selected crowds in Hong Kong that the region had "risen from the ashes".



Xi (right) looks on as John Lee is sworn in as Hong Kong's leader.  
Photograph: Reuters

“My heart and that of the central government have been with our compatriots in Hong Kong,” he said, according to a translation by the South China Morning Post. “In the past few years, Hong Kong has gone through various severe challenges one after another, and has defeated them.

“After the wind and rain, Hong Kong has risen from the ashes, and showed strong vibrancy.”

Lee has pledged to unite the city for “a new chapter”, while also promising an even more aggressive approach to counter “fearmongering and badmouthing” by critics.

Before Friday’s events, Johnson said he would seek to continue to hold China to its commitments under the one country, two systems model, so that Hong Kong is “once again run by the people of Hong Kong, for the people of Hong Kong”. He said Britain’s immigration route for holders of British national (overseas) passports last year had attracted 120,000 applications.

The British foreign secretary, [Liz Truss](#), echoed Johnson’s comments, and said: “Authorities have stifled opposition, criminalised dissent and driven out anyone who can speak truth to power.

“The United Kingdom’s historic commitment to Hong Kong and its people endures. That is why we continue to challenge China for breaching the legally binding commitments it signed up to under the joint declaration.”

Australia also criticised China for restricting the rights and freedoms of people in Hong Kong. “Australia remains deeply concerned by the continuing erosion of Hong Kong’s rights, freedoms and autonomy, two years since the imposition of the national security law,” the foreign minister, Penny Wong, said.

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## Hong Kong

# We were too lenient on pro-democracy politicians, says senior Hong Kong legislator Regina Ip

A senior figure in John Lee's incoming administration says opposition politicians 'only have themselves to blame' for being arrested



Regina Ip greets supporters in Hong Kong ahead of Legislative Council elections in December 2021. She accused pro-democracy supporters of seeking 'regime change'. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

*[Helen Davidson in Taipei](#)  
[@heldavidson](#)*

Thu 30 Jun 2022 19.52 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 20.00 EDT

A senior member of Hong Kong's incoming administration has said dozens of former opposition MPs who were arrested or jailed over their fight for

democracy “have themselves to blame”, and feels authorities were too lenient.

Speaking to the Guardian from her quarantine hotel room ahead of a ceremony with Chinese president Xi Jinping to mark 25 years since the British handover and the start of new chief executive John Lee’s term, Regina Ip was asked how she felt knowing some former Legislative Council (LegCo) colleagues would be sitting in a jail cell instead of attending the event.

“They have themselves to blame for going too far,” said Ip, who has served as a pro-Beijing legislator in Hong Kong’s government since 1996. “It was in the LegCo they have caused a lot of damage with their obstruction and filibustering. So nothing was done, we were locked in battle every day, sometime in fistfights,” she said.

“If the government is to bear any blame it’s that we have been too lenient over the years allowing them to cause havoc.”

In November 2020, [several pro-democracy legislators were arrested](#) over [a melee in May](#) that saw scuffles and some legislators dragged out by security. That same month, [four legislators were disqualified](#) under a new measure banning “unpatriotic” people from serving. In protest, the entire pro-democracy caucus resigned. [Some have since fled overseas.](#)

In January 2021 dozens of politicians, campaigners and activists were arrested by national security police for holding unofficial primary polls which Beijing later [declared illegal](#). Of the group, 47 are still awaiting trial on charges of conspiracy to commit subversion, many of them denied bail.

Ip said she felt sad that former legislators like Claudia Mo, Alvin Yeung and Ka-ki Kwok [had been arrested](#) and wished “they had not gone so far to break the law”.

“It must be terrible to be in jail, and … they were professionals,” she said, but accused them of trying to achieve “regime change”.

The pan-democrats held the primaries in order to select the strongest candidates to run in Hong Kong's elections, riding the momentum of major wins in the last district council votes. Authorities accused the democrats of a planning to "paralyse" government by winning a majority and voting against government bills. The election was later postponed, and eventually took place after an overhaul of the electoral system designed to ensure only "patriots" could run.

Ip said she believed that if the opposition had won power, "they could lock me in jail".

Asked what she believed a pro-democracy government would jail her for, she said she didn't think they "really respected free speech and I don't think they really respect democratic values like mutual tolerance or mutual respect."

The pro-democracy parties have lobbied for increased voting rights promised in the handover agreement, and protested [against crackdowns on freedom of expression and assembly](#). Many supported, attended and spoke at pro-democracy rallies and lobbied on behalf of arrested protesters.



Regina Ip is escorted by police while surrounded by pro-democracy protesters during a rally in November 2019. Photograph: Fazry Ismail/EPA

Ip's comments, in which she also defended the arrests of people for acts including the hanging an independence flag on a washing line or creating [a children's speech therapy book](#) allegedly depicting mainlanders as wolves, serve as an insight to the government's justification for its recent crackdown, which has left score of activists and campaigners in prison, and led to an effective ban on protest and dissent.

Ip has been appointed to head the advisory executive council for incoming chief executive Lee, who is expected to continue its hardline stance on dissent. Ip was security secretary until 2003 when she resigned after earlier attempts to impose a national security law failed in the face of mass protests.

Ip has been a vocal critic of the pro-democracy protest movement and a strong supporter of the 2020 national security law, and said she was optimistic about the region's future with a new kind of parliament.

“Now we have a more collegiate legislature, one without members who try to steal the limelight … we have become more efficient.”

She said the world needed to be “realistic” about the region’s future. “We are China’s Hong Kong.”

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## 2022.07.01 - Spotlight

- Wim Wenders When Paris, Texas won Cannes it was terrible
- 'An old strain of English magic had returned' Stars on why they fell in love with Kate Bush
- The Pride I'll never forget Arabs and Muslims flaunted their costumes in true queer glory'
- The Pride I'll never forget My parents tried their best, and I threw it back in their faces
- Amazon wild west Where drugs, fish and logging are big money but life is cheap

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[Wim Wenders](#)

Interview

## **Wim Wenders: ‘When Paris, Texas won Cannes it was terrible’**

[Ryan Gilbey](#)



‘I made most of my fiction films as if they had been documentaries, then I made my documentaries as if they had been fictions’ ... Wim Wenders.  
Photograph: Christian Sinibaldi/The Guardian

The revered director talks about his friend Rainer Fassbinder, dealing with success and failure, and how he is like the angels in *Wings of Desire* – as a retrospective of his work comes to cinemas

Fri 1 Jul 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 05.01 EDT

Is it bad manners to wear a [Fassbinder](#) T-shirt to an interview with Wim Wenders? Apparently not. “Ah, Rainer!” says Wenders, full of jubilation as he claps eyes on my wardrobe choice. Then he grits his teeth and snarls: “I’m still so fucking mad at him for dying.”

We are in the London offices of the distributor Curzon, which is releasing restored versions of eight of Wenders’ films in cinemas. Included is the Palme d’Or-winning 1984 masterpiece [Paris, Texas](#) and the 1987 fantasy [Wings of Desire](#), in which angels watch over a divided Berlin. The 76-year-old director sports a silver quiff, his inquisitive eyes sparkling behind blue-framed spectacles. His own T-shirt, worn under a white shirt and braces, bears the image of a pair of red-and-blue anaglyph 3D glasses; he pulls his shirt open, like Superman showing off the “S” on his chest, so I can see it. He remains a cheerleader for 3D, having shot several of his own films in the format – most notably [Pina](#), his ravishing 2011 documentary about the choreographer Pina Bausch, in which dance spills off the stage and on to streets, parks, public transport.

As we repair to a conference room, Wenders thinks back to the day in June 1982 when he heard that Fassbinder, his hard-living friend and contemporary, had [died](#) aged 37. “I was leaving the station in Munich early in the morning after getting off the night train. I saw the headlines, then I sat on the station steps and cried like a baby for 10 minutes.” He gives a sigh. “Rainer worked himself to death. I was angry at him when I realised the amount of sleeping pills and uppers and downers he had taken. Anybody could have told him he couldn’t go on like that for ever.”



‘I was a fish in my own water and no longer in somebody else’s tank,’ says Wenders of Alice in the Cities (1974), starring Yella Rottländer. Photograph: Ronald Grant

Though dissimilar from one another in style, Wenders, Fassbinder and Werner Herzog spearheaded the German cinematic revolution of the late 1960s and 1970s. “When we started out, German cinema was dead. There was no industry that would have supported us. It was our mutual support that enabled us to continue. Not one of us was known in our own country until we all came back with reviews from London, New York or Paris. You had to be acclaimed somewhere else first.”

A surgeon’s son from Düsseldorf, Wenders studied medicine then philosophy before ending up at film school in Munich. His graduation film, Summer in the City (1971), has a Kinks-heavy soundtrack and a style straight from John Cassavetes: “My great hero then.” Next came The Goalkeeper’s Fear of the Penalty (AKA The Goalie’s Anxiety at the Penalty Kick), which he describes as “Hitchcock without the suspense”. An adaptation of The Scarlet Letter was not merely a misstep but a final straw. “I had no talent for costume movies. It was a poor man’s David Lean. I had made three films which owed their style to the cinema I liked. I said: ‘I’m going to give it all up. If that’s film-making, I don’t want to do it any more.’”

From that crisis emerged [Alice in the Cities](#), his 1974 film about a writer put in charge of a precocious young girl. The picture begins with the camera gazing up at a plane passing overhead, and ends with a shot looking down on a train threading through the countryside. In between, Wenders established a new kind of road movie, characterised by a photographer's eye and a rock'n'roller's heart. Cool, wry, disaffected but playful, its influence endures today; the recent [C'mon C'mon](#), starring Joaquin Phoenix, is practically a remake.

I always think of Alice in the Cities as my first film because it was the first one where I was purely myself

Wenders hit the road without a script, shooting on the hoof as he trekked with his actors from New York to Amsterdam and on to Wuppertal and towards Munich. “I shot it in chronological order while we were travelling, and it made all the difference. I was a fish in my own water and no longer in somebody else’s tank. I always think of Alice in the Cities as my first film because it was the first one where I was purely myself.” The experience was so satisfying that he and his cinematographer, Robby Müller, repeated it immediately with Wrong Move and Kings of the Road. “I thought: ‘Why do anything else if it’s so good to be doing this?’”



A languid take on the western ... Paris, Texas (1984), starring Harry Dean Stanton. Photograph: Ronald Grant

He named his production company Road Movies, and road movie elements survive even in Paris, Texas, though that film is essentially a languid take on the western (Wenders' most beloved genre) and especially The Searchers. Harry Dean Stanton, swapping John Wayne's Stetson for a battered red baseball cap, is the loner who emerges from the desert, tracks down a "stolen" woman (in this case, his estranged wife, working in a peep show and hauntingly played by Nastassja Kinski), then vanishes back into the wild again, just as Wayne did before him.

The protagonist of Alice in the Cities, played by Rüdiger Vogler, is a Polaroid enthusiast (as Wenders would soon become) and that film's first line of dialogue is directed at him by a child on a bicycle: "Hey mister, what you taking those pictures for?" I put the same question to Wenders: why does he make these movies? "I try to be a witness to something," he replies. "I try to preserve what I see. There's a sense of preservation in my films from the beginning: of landscapes, houses, characters. The act of filming is so precious. The photographer – myself – will be gone one day, but the photo is still there."

There's a sense of preservation in my films: of landscapes, houses, characters. The act of filming is so precious

He describes Wings of Desire, shot three years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, as "a sheer document of a city that does not exist any more". His sense of preservation was at its keenest, however, in the hit documentary [Buena Vista Social Club](#), which celebrates a group of elderly Cuban musicians reintroduced to the world by Ry Cooder, composer of the plangent, twanging score to Paris, Texas.

"My film-making from the beginning had a huge documentary aspect," he explains. "Looking back now, I think I made most of my fiction films – especially Alice and Kings of the Road – as if they had been documentaries, and then I made my documentaries as if they had been fictions." How so? "Well, Buena Vista Social Club is a fairytale. These guys were cleaning

shoes in Havana when Ry first called them. They had nothing; they were poor. By the end, when they're playing Carnegie Hall and everyone is standing on their seats to applaud them, they're the Beatles. If you wanted to write and direct it as fiction, it would be the same movie."



'A sheer document of a city that does not exist any more' ... Wings of Desire (1987), with Solveig Dommartin. Photograph: AF archive/Alamy

The memorialising has naturally grown more acute with the passing of time. "It was so painful with Buena Vista Social Club because within a few years, they were all gone," he says, his voice falling to a whisper. It's a feeling he has had to get used to as, one by one, many of the actors in his films have died. Most recently it was [William Hurt](#), star of Wenders' science-fiction odyssey Until the End of the World. Before him, it was [Stanton](#) and [Dean Stockwell](#), the onscreen brothers from Paris, Texas, and [Bruno Ganz](#), who played the reluctant assassin in The American Friend and the angel who becomes human in Wings of Desire and its sequel, Faraway, So Close! Gone, too, is [Solveig Dommartin](#), the trapeze artist for whom Ganz surrenders his divinity.

Wenders smiles fondly when he thinks of [Peter Falk](#), the Columbo star and Cassavetes favourite, who was parachuted into Wings of Desire at the last minute to play himself after Wenders and the assistant director, [Claire Denis](#)

(soon to become an auteur in her own right), realised that the picture needed a dash of humour. “What a lively man he was. I filmed a lot of people who are no longer with us, because I started early and shot with some old men in between. If you see them now, you can’t help but realise they are very much still alive on the screen. It is one of the capacities of cinema: to immortalise.”

Wings of Desire won him the best director prize at Cannes, but not all his memories related to that festival are happy ones. For years, [Spike Lee raged against Wenders](#), who in his capacity as president of the jury in 1989 had awarded the Palme d’Or to Steven Soderbergh’s Sex, Lies, and Videotape rather than to Lee’s Do the Right Thing. That hatchet is now buried – Lee told CNN in 2018 that it was “long forgotten. Mr Wenders is a great, great film-maker. Peace and love.” But Wenders knows only too well what it’s like to sweat over a movie and then see it go cruelly unappreciated.



‘A fairytale’ ... Buena Vista Social Club (1999), featuring Omara Portuondo and Compay Segundo. Photograph: Maximum Film/Alamy

Buena Vista Social Club, Pina and [The Salt of the Earth](#) (his documentary about the photographer Sebastião Salgado) have all been Oscar-nominated, whereas his recent fiction films – such as Palermo Shooting with Dennis Hopper, [Don’t Come Knocking](#) with Sam Shepard and Jessica Lange, Land

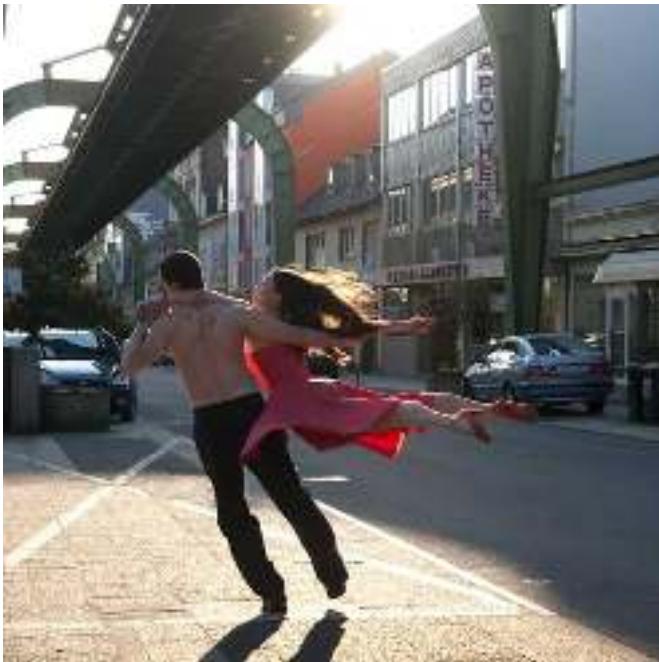
of Plenty with Michelle Williams, and the 3D drama [Every Thing Will Be Fine](#), starring James Franco and Charlotte Gainsbourg – have had all the impact of tumbleweed in a western.

Has he experienced any Spike Lee-esque feelings of anger and frustration? “Yes, that happened to me with Palermo Shooting,” he says with a grimace. “It was shown on the last day of Cannes. The critics were all tired and wasted. It was blown to pieces; it never had a chance. Don’t Come Knocking was treated the same way. But I’ve had films welcomed with open arms, so who am I to complain?” It’s not as if success is straightforward. When Paris, Texas won at Cannes, he says: “It was terrible afterwards. It created a huge void in my life for the next three years because everybody expected me to do that all over again, and that was the only thing I didn’t want to do.”

Palermo Shooting was shown on the last day of Cannes. The critics were all tired and wasted. It never had a chance

Why hasn’t his recent fiction cinema connected with people? “Some films are ahead of their time,” he says. “Others are too late. It’s such a tricky thing. Sometimes they never connect.” In the latter category, he puts his wacky comedy-drama [The Million Dollar Hotel](#), co-written by Bono and starring Mel Gibson as a straight-arrow FBI agent. The movie’s prospects were hardly boosted when Gibson [called](#) it “as boring as a dog’s ass”.

“Oh, Mel killed the film,” Wenders agrees. “He’s very, very good in it. And he thought so. But his next project was What Women Want, and his own people said: ‘If you want to really kill What Women Want then show Million Dollar Hotel – it’s not helping you.’ He decided to turn against the film. It didn’t survive the blow.”



Oscar-nominated ... *Pina* (2011). Photograph: AF archive/Alamy

At least Wenders can look at the films he has made since *Alice in the Cities*, whether they have been loved, loathed or overlooked, and know that they are truly his. That goes even for *Until the End of the World*, originally released in 1991 in a contractually demanded three-hour edit (which he calls “the Reader’s Digest cut”) but now available in a version nearer to five. Watching his back catalogue, as audiences will be able to do more easily when a comprehensive Blu-ray box set arrives later this year, the films blur and bleed fruitfully into one another. The monorail in Wuppertal plays an integral role in *Alice in the Cities* and *Pina*, while Bausch’s dancers, performing in open spaces but ignored by a blasé public, resemble the angels in *Wings of Desire* mingling with an oblivious populace.

As they compare their affectionate notes and observations on humanity, these angels seem like nothing so much as onscreen surrogates for the director himself: compassionate, curious, ever-watchful. Does he feel any kinship with them? “I feel a lot of kinship. I feel like the way they looked at us and the city and other people was very much the way I approach film-making.” Which is? He smiles: “With a loving look.”

- Kino Dreams: A [Wim Wenders](#) Retrospective is in cinemas now

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[Kate Bush](#)

## **‘An old strain of English magic had returned’: stars on why they fell in love with Kate Bush**



Kate Bush. Photograph: Peter Mazel/Sunshine/REX

As a new generation continues to discover her via *Running Up That Hill*, musicians including Sharon Van Etten and Brian Molko reveal how the

singer changed their lives



*As told to [Rachel Aroesti](#)*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 03.00 EDT

**Sharon Van Etten: ‘I hadn’t heard a melody that complex before’**



Sharon Van Etten. Photograph: Michael Schmelling

I was a late bloomer when it came to hearing Kate's music. As a teenager I had moved to Tennessee and tried to do college but ended up coming back home to my parents with my tail between my legs. The first adult friend I made after moving back was a painter's assistant named Alison, and she played me *Wuthering Heights* on a car ride through New Jersey. I hadn't heard a melody that complex and in that high range before – or a song as exploratory in production and arrangement. The music [Kate Bush](#) makes is pretty genre-defying. Hearing her talk about Emily Brontë's novel was something I'd never heard before, either; inserting herself into a story that wasn't her own. I had never listened to music in such a literary way.

As a singer, the thing that has directly affected me is her circular style of melodies; one comes into the other and they never exactly repeat in the same way. I don't think it's ever very strict verse-chorus. The wrong person could make what she does sound really cheesy. In isolation the ideas might not make sense, whereas she can push it to this other place: her choices are really beautiful and massive and dramatic. It feels very much like cinema to me.

## **Brian Molko, Placebo: ‘I could leave the drudgery of my everyday life’**



Brian Molko.

My first exposure to Kate Bush was the video for Babooshka when I was a preteen. I'd never seen anything like it: who is this person from outer space, singing an incredibly strange song? I was completely captivated by this beautiful woman who had such charisma and seemed so unique. Then I discovered that my older brother had [album] The Kick Inside, so I was introduced to The Man With the Child in His Eyes and Wuthering Heights. Then [in 1985] Hounds of Love came out and blew my mind completely.

It was the first time I'd heard a record that had such sonic unity to it: there was a story being told from beginning to end, especially on the dreamier, more psychedelic side two. My insomnia started when I was very young so instead of sleeping I'd be listening to Hounds of Love: “Let me sleep and dream of sheep.”

Kate created her own emotional universe. I'm nostalgic for that period in music because I think we're given too much information today, so there's less capacity for us to create those personal universes through somebody

else's work. There needs to be enough ambiguity there for it to become very personal to each listener. Kate's music meant I could leave the drudgery of my everyday life and my family situation and escape into my imagination – that's still what I look for today in music.

I loved almost all of Running Up That Hill but there were a couple of things which bothered me. One was the snare sound: really 80s and quite generic. Then as I got more and more into the lyrics and they touched me further, it occurred to me that the tempo of the song was a little bit fast for the gravitas of the lyrics to really land. We were already in the habit of covering our favourite songs from the 80s, so I suggested that we do Running Up That Hill but that we slow the tempo down as much as we could without it becoming a dirge, and obviously we wanted to keep it electronic with sounds from the early 2000s. I met Kate once at a party: it was a record company do and there was an orderly queue to speak to her. When I got to the front the first thing she said to me was: "I like your cover of my song." That was enough. I'm very, very pleased that it got Kate's endorsement.

## Rae Morris: 'Her music has a to-the-moon-and-back scale'



Rae Morris. Photograph: Reuben Bastienne-Lewis

When I was about 14, my dad sat me down at a desktop PC and played me the video for Cloudbusting on YouTube. It was the first music video I'd seen that had a narrative and a famous actor, Donald Sutherland – it was like a movie. I wasn't making music yet, but it definitely sparked something in my brain, like: "Oh wow, a female creator has had the vision for this." Soon after, I went to HMV, bought a couple of records and slowly pieced together a history of her music. I felt as if I was catching up: I've always felt a deep jealousy that I wasn't listening to the radio when Wuthering Heights first came out.

Her music is all about combining small details with spiritual, otherworldly, wider cinemascape stuff: a really grand, imaginative to-the-moon-and-back scale, but also the sound of the blood running through your veins. As a teenager I felt like her voice was my inner voice. I also love that she is an aspirational goddess and at the same time a family woman who lives on a farm; it's a perfect balance of being out of reach but also warm. As a mother , she has been a big inspiration in the sense that you can have a child and still record and tour when it suits you. I love that she has never played the game in that way – she's rewritten the rules.

## **Mike Scott, the Waterboys: ‘We had got an old soul back’**



Mike Scott. Photograph: Alicia Canter/The Guardian

When Kate had her first hit with *Wuthering Heights* I felt as if we – the British public – had got an old soul back. It wasn't just the resonance of the story, with Cathy returning at Heathcliff's window; it was Kate, that voice, that character. It was like an old strain of English magic had returned in her persona, and so it has been. All the promise of that first "return" has come true and she has delivered on it.

**Jenny Hval: 'She's reporting from the war zone of human experience'**



Jenny Hval. Photograph: Jenny Berger Myhre

I remember watching her videos – Hounds of Love, Cloudbusting and Running Up That Hill. I was only five at the time but they made me feel a lot. They were so evocative, the relationship between the child and father in Cloudbusting always made me cry. I went on to write my master's thesis on two Kate Bush albums, The Sensual World and The Dreaming. I also looked at her rewriting of Joyce in the song The Sensual World, which I think is, poetically, one of the most successful lyrical projects in pop music.

Working so intensely with her music made me gain enormous respect for her work. I feel as if she is completely unique in her ability to research other people's stories and retell them. So many of her songs are directly about a book, a film, or an image. And instead of the familiar "if I could turn back time" nostalgic pop music storyteller, the emotional density of those stories is always completely intact, through her voice, production twists and magnificent melodic themes. It's as if she is a reporter, reporting from the war zone of human experience.

**Hayden Thorpe, Wild Beasts: ‘Pioneering, experimental, harmonically bizarre’**



Hayden Thorpe. Photograph: Broomberg & Chanarin

When I began performing in my late teens and early 20s, people said I sounded like a male Kate Bush. At the time I was quite offended by people saying I sounded a) like a woman, and b) like an artist I'd not heard of. But from there I decided to listen to her. I started at day one – The Kick Inside, Wuthering Heights era – and came to realise that what she created in that time was a form of expression unto itself. It has almost become a subgenre, that form of hyperbolic expression – so singular and so uniquely English. It is as if it's from English mythology: Maid Marian, good against evil, the woods. I think the thing she maybe isn't given enough credit for is the sonic mastery of her records: they are pioneering, at times experimental and at times harmonically bizarre, but it just always seems to work. The Morning Fog, the last song on Hounds of Love, is a kind of symphony-in-micro – it takes you on this really compelling journey and transports you.

## **Peaches: 'I grew up with her in real time'**



Peaches. Photograph: Daria Marchik

When I was about 13, my friend Julia Rosenberg came over with *The Kick Inside* – it was 1979, a year after it came out. I'm the youngest of three, and at the time my brother was listening to everything from Yes to the Ramones, my sister was into Earth, Wind & Fire and Genesis, and my parents were into musicals and Barbra Streisand. So when I got this Kate Bush album I was like: this is *my* music.

I became obsessed with that album and then got into her story: how she waited three years before she performed so she could learn how to dance and all this stuff. Then we got a VCR player and I videotaped the film of *The Tour of Life* – this very dramatic live music performance [at Hammersmith Odeon]. It was the only thing I had on VCR and I loved it so much. Nobody does the shit she did: miming walking in wind, doing these flowy dances and then at the end she waves goodbye to everybody for two minutes while jumping up and down.

I grew up with her in real time. When I turned 16, *The Dreaming* came out. The record company kept telling her to find producers and she said fuck y'all, and built her own studio and produced the whole album herself; she had such a fiery, independent nature. It's super weird and not very commercial but so incredible. Then when *Hounds of Love* came out I was

like: oh my God, this is it! This is everything she does encompassed in one thing, and in this new pop style that can be relatable, Americans and Canadians are finally going to get it. Running Up That Hill's drumbeat is undeniable. It's timeless, it's not any genre.

Her performative prowess had such an influence on me: how independent she was and how generous she was with her performance: she really goes for it with scenarios and theatrics. And she is so committed, you're like: I'm in.

## **Barry Hyde, the Futureheads: ‘There is still a lot of mystery in it’**



The Futureheads. Photograph: Paul Alexander Knox

The first time I saw Kate Bush was in the video for Babooshka: I must have been about five. We had a compilation called The Whole Story – a collection of her videos up to the mid-80s – and we used to watch it regularly as a family. When I was older, I started listening to her albums. I particularly loved The Dreaming, which has this bizarre, drumless piece on it with didgeridoo about Aboriginal Australians that she released as a single – she had no fear at all. Her music is entirely idiosyncratic. Every song is a different world with its own voice – she’s like an actor in how she uses her voice.

Originally, I wanted the [Futureheads](#) to cover a different Kate Bush song called The Big Sky, but it didn't quite work. On tour soon after, we were listening to Hounds of Love in the van and the bass player in the band we were touring with said it would make a really good cover. As soon as we came home from the tour I put it on and realised there weren't really any chords in the song – it's just a power chord all the way through. I also realised my voice is not in the same range as Kate Bush's, so I transposed it to a different key. I thought it could do with a little intro, so I said to [vocalist and guitarist] Ross, why don't you try singing "Oh-oh-oh-oh?" On her version she's doing a dog bark, but we thought that was a step too far. It was a stone-cold smash – NME voted it song of the year, it was a Top 10 single – and Kate Bush eventually contacted us. We were recording our second album in a farmhouse in the Yorkshire Dales and our manager said she was going to ring; we were terrified to answer the phone because it would be like speaking to a god or the Queen. She ended up ringing when we weren't there and left a message thanking us for covering Hounds of Love and giving us well wishes for the festive season. She was just so lovely.

Even after covering one of her songs, I find that when I listen to her music there is still a lot of mystery in it for me; often, I really don't know what she's doing. That's not something that happens very often any more because I'm a music lecturer now, so I listen to music in a very analytical way. Hers is an incredible art: so unpredictable, deeply beautiful and at times very silly.

## **Russell Mael, Sparks: ‘She establishes her own world – and stays true to it’**



Russell Mael (left). Photograph: Anna Webber/Focus Features

The first 10 things on my list of 2,178 things I love about Kate Bush:

Literate.

Sophisticated.

Not fitting in.

Musically challenging, yet not proclaiming that you are musically challenging.

Not being part of a movement. Creating your own movement.

Not part of a past musical model.

Establishing your own world. Staying true to that world.

Not writing material that sounds like you are desperate for a hit. But having hits nonetheless.

Establishing your own voice. Literally and figuratively.

# Having integrity. At any cost.

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[The Pride I'll never forget](#)[Pride](#)

**‘Arabs and Muslims flaunted their costumes in true queer glory’ – the Pride I’ll never forget**



‘Arab music was my forbidden fruit’ ... Amrou Al-Kadhi. Photograph:  
David Levene/The Guardian

Growing up gay in Bahrain, I was thrilled by the camp potential of Arab music – but terrified of the reaction if I gave in and danced the way I wanted to. Years later, in a field in London, I let myself go

*Amrou Al-Kadhi*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 08.20 EDT

When I was a child living in Bahrain, I used to dread family parties. Not because I didn't want to see my relatives, whom I loved, but because I felt too scared to dance. Some Arab music is beyond sumptuous. It is achingly romantic, dynamic and playful, filled to the brim with the most over-the-top metaphors you'll ever hear, scored with the most luxuriant instrumentals. The camp melodrama is a gay kid's dream come true ... or worst nightmare, for the opulent emotional sounds almost taunt you to come out through dance. As a child terrified about the very real repercussions that would come from being found out as gay, Arab music was my forbidden fruit at familial events, tempting me to reveal myself and thus ensure my exile.

As a kid, I was particularly obsessed with the music of [Umm Kulthum](#), the 20th-century Egyptian singer whose vocals hypnotised the Arab world with their yearning gravitas. Her voice is full of emotion, and her lyrics drenched in drama – listening to her can be an overwhelming experience. I used to watch my mother and her friends dance to it ballerically, while I sat in the corner with my brother, father and all the other boys, restricted from moving my body in the way the music called out for.



‘Her voice is full of emotion and her lyrics drenched in drama’ ... Umm Kulthum. Photograph: CPA Media Pte Ltd/Alamy

During my teenage years, my sexuality and general behaviour became a real issue for my family and community, who were nervous that I was falling into sin and bringing shame on them. My behaviour was policed and punished in all kinds of ways. It was an extremely difficult period in my life. Living in the UK from the age of 11, I came to the reductive conclusion that my Arab heritage and queer identity were incompatible, and so I distanced myself from my cultural roots. Out went the Umm Kulthum CD from the budget Walkman, and in went the considerably less poetic Blue.

When I started hitting gay clubs at 18, it was the soundtrack of Madonna, Diana Ross and Lady Gaga that allowed me to move my body in a more natural way, without the fear of familial judgment. But no music could ever match the magical theatrics of the Arab music I had grown up around. This all changed when I attended [Black Pride](#) in London in 2018.



Amrou Al-Kadhi at Pride. Photograph: Courtesy of Amrou Al-Kadhi

As I wandered around, a shy, handsome Arab person moved towards me, telling me that they were aware of my work and were grateful to have seen some queer Arab representation in the media. With a bewitching stare, they gestured for me and my friends to come with them to “Pride of Arabia”.

We were guided to a hidden pocket of Black Pride, tucked away from the main stage and big crowds. I soon found myself among a group of queer Arabs and Muslims, flaunting the costumes of their pasts in true queer glory, many in drag, belly dancing to the Arab sounds that had raised and (for some) excluded them.

I didn’t think the moment could get any better, but then the rich, powerful sound of Umm Kulthum’s voice came through the speakers. And there, in the corner of a field in south London, I finally fused my queer identity with my Arab heritage, and danced freely to the music that had orchestrated my childhood.

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## The Pride I'll never forgetPride

# ‘My parents tried their best, and I threw it back in their faces’ – the Pride I’ll never forget

As a 16-year-old from rural Devon, I should have been delighted when my mum and dad took me to San Francisco. So why did the drag queens and Dykes on Bikes make me so miserable?



‘Queer culture in Devon was a little less dynamic’ ... San Francisco Pride, 2009. Photograph: David Paul Morris/Getty Images

[Dylan B Jones](#)

Fri 1 Jul 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 08.19 EDT

I came out very early as a teenager and immediately wanted it all. I wanted to work for a fashion magazine and trot urgently across city streets with takeaway coffees. I wanted to dance to London Bridge by Fergie *on* London

Bridge. I wanted to have sex with men. I had big dreams. But I still had my GCSEs to do, and we lived in a tiny village in Devon. I was fuming.

So, when I turned 16, my parents very sweetly took me to San Francisco [Pride](#). They were exceptional. Before I was born, they lived for a time in Provincetown, Massachusetts (sort of an American Brighton). There, my mum, , from a mining town in Yorkshire, and my dad, from an underprivileged suburb of Boston, became ingrained in the town's queer scene and its colourful cast of characters.



'To my parents, and to my drag absinthe fairy, I will be eternally grateful' ... Dylan Jones (on right) with drag performer Cassandra at a recent Pride event. Photograph: Courtesy of Dylan Jones

Queer culture in Devon was a little less dynamic. My friends and parents did their utmost to create a safe and accepting environment for me, and there were other things on my side – Gaydar, the gay dating website, was in full swing and [Skins](#) had just hit Channel 4, meaning same-sex kisses at house parties were suddenly cool. I met the influencer [Jeffree Star](#) at a pub in Exeter – that was a highlight. But despite the best efforts of everyone who loved me, through no fault of theirs, I was missing one of those most important of human needs: community.

It's testament to my parents' thoughtfulness that they chose San Francisco, at the time one of the most famous queer communities on the planet. My mum, fully invested in the mood, even bought me the first three instalments of [Tales of the City](#) to read beforehand as research. The books embodied what I yearned for and still constantly seek out to this day: freedom, excitement and hilarity.

I stepped off the plane feeling confident, my parents on either side of me, both wearing Hawaiian leis for some reason. But as many teenagers do, I'd forgotten one fundamental thing: I was a teenager. As we hit the Castro (San Francisco's iconic gay neighbourhood), my arrogance melted into shyness. There were actual fully evolved adult gay people here. A resplendent leather couple politely pushed past us, with a squeak of shiny trousers and a flutter of red bandanas.



'My mum bought me the first three instalments of Tales of the City to read as research' ... Dylan Jones's parents at San Francisco Pride in June 2008.  
Photograph: Courtesy of Dylan Jones

The entire city was alive. [Dykes on Bikes](#) revved past, powerful on their shining Harleys. On a float, a young man was passionately kissing another man who had a greying carpet of chest hair. A drag queen took flight off a pavement into the oncoming traffic, to a chorus of car horns and delighted

shrieks from the crowd. I had never seen anything like it before, and was transfixed. This was pre-Drag Race – seeing Lily Savage on the telly a couple of times was the extent of my exposure to drag culture. This was the first drag queen I had ever seen who exuded sex and street-smart confidence. She stalked rather than stumbled, not an ounce of slapstick in her lithe body. As the lights changed above her, she paused, mid-street, for a photograph, the car horn chorus rising to a climax, her waist-length wig whipping the San Francisco breeze. She caught my eye and grinned, tipped an index finger at me, like the [Moulin Rouge! absinthe fairy](#) bestowing an acid-hued wish.

I spent the rest of our trip withdrawn and moody, to the confusion and despair of my parents. I still feel bad about it. They tried their best and in true teenage style, I threw it back in their faces. Instead of being happy, I was devastated – devastated that this world had been there, this whole time, a plane ride away, and I hadn't experienced it until now.

I'm happy to say, though, that it spurred me to find the courage to grow up, do my exams and, in the end, find my own Castro district in London. For that, I will be eternally grateful to my parents – and to my drag absinthe fairy.

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# Amazon wild west: where drugs, fish and logging are big money but life is cheap

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# Striking workers are providing the opposition that Britain desperately needs

[Andy Beckett](#)

The strikes are gaining momentum, and public opinion is behind them – could they transform our economic landscape?



Lucie Wibberley, the assistant secretary of the Criminal Bar Association, speaking at the barristers' strike over pay this week, outside the Old Bailey in London. Photograph: Jonathan Goldberg/REX/Shutterstock

Fri 1 Jul 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 00.22 EDT

In Britain, more than in most democratic countries, going on strike is a risk. Your employer, the government, most of the media, much of the public and [often the opposition parties](#) are likely to be against you – or, at best, unsupportive. Your loss of income is unlikely to be made up by strike pay.

Your behaviour on the picket line will be subject to what Tony Blair described approvingly in 1997 as “the most restrictive” trade union laws “in the western world”.

In very public ways, you will be breaking the rules of the modern economy: refusing to work, inconveniencing consumers, acting collectively rather than individually, and making demands for more money openly – rather than in private, as more powerful people do. If you are on the left, you are likely to be told again and again that your strike is politically counterproductive.

Such are the written and unwritten laws that have constricted British strikes for approaching half a century, ever since the walkouts of the 1978-79 winter of discontent inadvertently did so much to bring Margaret Thatcher to power and to provoke the [counter-revolution against workers](#) that still continues today. Many voters have long got used to the idea that strikes are a minority pursuit associated with a bygone age to which the country must not return. Boris Johnson’s government, with its especially strong intolerance of dissent, aims to demonise and marginalise strikes even further.

Yet this summer, more and more [Britons are striking](#) or considering striking regardless. From railway workers to barristers, firefighters to doctors, Post Office workers to teachers, nurses to civil servants, council workers to British Telecom engineers, an unusually large potential strike wave is building. Its social breadth, the range of occupations affected and the atmosphere on some picket lines all suggest that something politically significant may be happening.

At the first [barristers’ protest](#), outside the Old Bailey in London this week, an already excited crowd of advocates in courtroom wigs and gowns burst into prolonged applause when they were joined by a few activists in shorts and jeans from the RMT. It’s not every day that you see such camaraderie between self-employed professionals who rely heavily on trains and striking transport workers carrying a banner that calls for “the supersession of the capitalist system by a socialistic order of society”.

The cost of living crisis, and the refusal of the government and other employers to raise wages accordingly, is the immediate reason for this summer's "[wave of resistance](#)", as Mick Lynch of the RMT union calls it. Yet the causes go deeper: more than a decade of stagnant or falling wages; the long Conservative squeeze on the public sector; and the whole transformation of the British economy since the 1970s, which has effectively taken money from workers and given it to employers, shareholders and the wealthy.

### RMT union: rail strike confirmed after last-ditch talks fail – video

Public dissatisfaction with this model has been growing for years. In the latest British Social Attitudes survey, [64% agree](#) that "ordinary people do not get their fair share of the nation's wealth" – up from 57% in 2019, and far greater than the support for any party. As Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn tapped into this discontent. But the end of his tenure, and Keir Starmer's apparent lack of interest in its redistributive ideas, has created a vacuum where a movement with a radical economic agenda ought to be.

It's possible that the strike wave could become one such movement. While support for the strikes has been stronger than expected - the pollster Savanta ComRes found that even [38% of Tory voters](#) considered the highly disruptive rail strikes "justified"; among younger people this attitude was particularly prevalent. In the same survey, 72% of under-35s backed the strikers. Since few of them have ever been on strike themselves – less than a quarter of trade unionists are under 35 – then the likely explanation is not shared experience but shared disenchantment. Young people, like many of the strikers, have been particularly badly served by the status quo.

Many young people supported Corbyn for the same reason. And there are other similarities between the two movements. Former Corbyn advisers such as James Schneider, Corbyn himself, and the parliamentary Labour left all support the strikers. Green activists, once an important part of Corbyn's coalition, have joined RMT picket lines. Like Labour's 2017 election manifesto, Lynch uses clear, populist language – "every worker in Britain" should get a much better pay deal, he told Question Time – and its effectiveness has taken the media by surprise. Support for the RMT strike [rose after his TV appearances](#).

Could the strikers succeed, not just in getting fairer pay deals but in beginning to change how the economy works? It's an immense task, which Labour under Corbyn sometimes talked about compellingly but never came close to carrying out. And as the strikes widen and lengthen, public opinion may turn against them. Walking to work because of a train strike will seem less of a novelty and more of an imposition if that dispute drags on into the autumn. One of the obvious but often forgotten lessons of the winter of discontent is that voters often hate strikes in cold weather.

Excited union talk about building new mass movements has proved over-optimistic in the past, for example during David Cameron's government. The proportion of British employees who are union members has stabilised in recent years, after decades of decline, but by historic standards it is still low: less than one in four. And the fact that Starmer is not prepared to support the strikers removes one of the main means by which their campaigns could be amplified.

Yet for almost a decade now, British politics has not followed the expected paths. It may be that an economy built on poor wages was politically and socially sustainable only while inflation stayed low. That relatively stable and docile era may be over. Recently, the leftwing website [Left Foot Forward](#) listed some of the pay rises already won this summer by the increasingly assertive trade union Unite: "300 workers at Gatwick get 21 per cent", "300 HGV drivers win 20 per cent". In post-Thatcher Britain, such transfers of wealth to the workers – not just matching but far exceeding the rate of inflation – aren't supposed to happen. But they are.

Unlike in the 1980s, when the Iron Lady beat Britain's last big wave of strikes, unemployment is low and the supply of labour is short. If strikers don't like a pay offer, sometimes they can threaten to go and work for someone who pays more. You could call it an example of something the Tories talk less about these days: market forces.

- Andy Beckett is a Guardian columnist
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## OpinionLondon

# The Africa Centre is back. Now will Britain finally embrace all of its cultural heritage?

[Jason Okundaye](#)

The famous centre was forced to uproot itself from Covent Garden. Then came Black Lives Matter. Maybe this time it will be treasured



‘Bringing African arts, cuisine, culture, intellect and entrepreneurship under one roof.’ The new Africa Centre in Southwark, London. Photograph: Taran Wilkhu

Fri 1 Jul 2022 05.07 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 05.10 EDT

When the decision to sell the Africa Centre’s premises on King Street in Covent Garden, London, was announced in 2011, there was significant pushback, both from British people of African heritage and the international African diaspora. [Archbishop Desmond Tutu wrote](#) in the Guardian that he

was “distressed to hear that the trustees of the centre had decided to sell the lease of the centre without consulting members of the charity or the wider African diaspora”.

Despite the Save the Africa Centre campaign and a £12m [restoration project](#) for the Grade-II listed building, the centre was sold in August 2012 to property developers, and closed the following year. With the Africa Centre [reopening](#) nearly a decade on, two questions are on the minds of invested parties: what took so long, and can the new location on Great Suffolk Street in Southwark ever live up to Covent Garden’s legacy?

The centre’s origins in 1961 coincided with the independence of formerly colonised African nations, allowing new relations to be built between Britain and Africa without the need for consular formality. Officially opening in 1964, the Covent Garden space was a bustling site for culture and politics, hosting some of the most distinguished cultural, literary and political figures of African heritage. The likes of [Wole Soyinka](#), [Maya Angelou](#) and [Julius Nyerere](#) passed through its doors, and Nelson Mandela famously issued a statement to the venue during his incarceration on Robben Island.

The centre also nurtured some of the giants of the Black British music scene, famously being the host of Afrocentric raves. It held a regular Sunday night slot for Jazzie B’s Soul II Soul during the 1980s, before they made their mainstream debut. The centre expanded African culture, previously only seen in small grocers in marketplaces and the underground bars, known as [shebeens](#), of the 1950s and 60s, and brought it into the centre of London.

People of African heritage, both those present during these historic days and those learning about them, maintained a psychogeographic connection to the Covent Garden site, with the feeling that the intangible essence of “heritage” could not simply be transplanted elsewhere.

But legacy alone could not keep the lights on. The centre’s chief marketing and communications officer, Belvin Tawuya, says the original space had to be sold. “Our funding sources were drying up, and the amount of money that would be required to – for example – repair burst pipes was just too much, and the condition of the space itself was just deteriorating.”

Sustainability, funding and investment has been an issue for other Black-owned spaces. In 2018, the Black Cultural Archives, a Black heritage centre in Brixton faced [permanent closure](#) due to the end of a £4m Heritage lottery grant, but was thankfully resurrected by £200,000 in [stopgap funding](#) from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport after the intervention of more than 100 cross-party MPs, patrons and local figures. Most recently, New Beacon Books and the associated George Padmore Institute, the only independent Black publishing house in the UK, announced the [closure](#) of its north London site in 2021, before being saved by a crowdfunding campaign.

Other Black institutions have not been so lucky. In 1991, the Keskidee Centre, the first Black British arts centre, was closed after long-term financial difficulties. The Caribbean Times, a weekly British newspaper targeted at African-Caribbean populations, ceased publication after its publisher, Ethnic Media Group, went into administration in 2009. There seems to be a pattern of Black institutions being thrown into financial crisis.

This raises the question of what value central and local government places on the preservation of Black and African heritage. Tawuya emphasises to me that the funding landscape has not always been favourable, but interest has shifted following the wave of establishment commitments to investing in Black projects following the Black Lives Matter protests. The challenge will be to inoculate the Africa Centre's finances against the whims of funders, and ensure that it secures a sustainable financial future that makes it impervious to political trends or last-minute interventions, as has been the case with other Black institutions.

As for the site's new premises in Southwark, there are clear benefits, as the large population of people of African and Caribbean heritage in the area means it is closer to the communities it represents. While the presence of African culture in the UK is more diverse than it was 60 years ago – from [Ikoyi](#), the UK's first Michelin-starred African restaurant, to the London African Music festival, which debuted in 1990 – the centre remains vital for being an accessible hub that can continue to bring African arts, cuisine, culture, intellect and entrepreneurship under one roof. Young people especially stand to benefit, with chef and restaurateur Akwasi Brenya-Mensa

set to open his pan-African restaurant, and designer Toja Ojuolape commissioned to curate the centre's interiors.

For those who still mourn the loss of the Covent Garden site, it's worth remarking that the staircase leading up to the first floor features a mural by late Mozambican artist Malangatana Ngwenya, which was, Tawuya tells me, removed from the Covent Garden site, preserved and restored there. He has no idea how it was pulled off, but that itself seems to speak to the improbability of it all.

- Jason Okundaye is a London-based writer and researcher
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[Opera](#)

## Why on earth shouldn't Angela Rayner go to the opera?

[Martin Kettle](#)



Dominic Raab's attack on the Labour frontbencher's attendance at Glyndebourne says more about our class-ridden approach to culture than it does about her



Taking a stand ... Angela Rayner in the Commons this week. Photograph: Jessica Taylor/UK Parliament/Reuters

Thu 30 Jun 2022 09.32 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 03.58 EDT

It wouldn't happen in Germany, and certainly not in Italy. It wouldn't cause as much as a raised eyebrow in the US or even in Russia. Only in Britain would a political leader going to the opera stir a controversy.

The fact that the opera was at a country house in the Sussex countryside, with a black-tie dress code is part of the story, of course. That the politician in question is a Labour figure, a woman and working class probably even more so.

But the really pathetic thing about the [whole confected row this week over Angela Rayner's visit to Glyndebourne](#) is what it says about us British – and our still class-ridden society and approach to culture – not about her. None of it is good.

It is beyond dispute that opera houses have always been favoured playgrounds of the powerful and the rich. They still are. But none of that means that those who are not powerful and not rich should not go to the opera either. The arts ought to be for everyone. Many musicians and

politicians made enormous efforts in the 20th century to make opera more open to all.

The decline of state funding for the arts has put that in peril, especially in the UK (things are very different in Germany, for example). Yet what is particularly ironic about the Rayner visit to [Glyndebourne](#) is not that she had to pay a lot. Actually she didn't. Her ticket cost her £62, which is less than the price of entry to many Premier League games and a West End theatre show, never mind the £280 price tag of a Glastonbury festival ticket this year.



Radical: Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (The Marriage of Figaro) at Glyndebourne festival. Photograph: Alastair Muir

Nor is it the fact that the opera she attended, *The Marriage of Figaro*, is a musical masterpiece for the ages – although it unquestionably is. It is that Mozart's opera glories in the complete and repeated humbling of an aristocrat by his servants, and in particular by the maid Susanna, one of the most compelling female roles ever written. Politically it is a truly radical piece.

It ought to be entirely up to Rayner to decide to go to the opera, whether at Glyndebourne or anywhere else. Unfortunately, that is not the case in this

country. That's partly because the slashing of music teaching in schools and colleges, and the marginalisation of classical music on TV have prevented lots of people from discovering opera's powers and pleasures.

But it is also because modern politicians, brought up to be terrified about the tabloid press, mostly steer well clear of the arts in general – for fear of being dubbed “elitist” – and of opera houses in particular. The contrast with Germany, where I have several times seen politicians from Angela Merkel down, is again huge and entirely to our loss.

I write about politics a lot. I also go to the opera a lot. I pay for my tickets except when I am there as a journalist, reviewing. But in all my trips to the opera, I have rarely encountered any British politicians. There are a few exceptions, and they may not thank me for mentioning their attendance – people such as Michael Gove, George Osborne and David Young among Conservatives, Tessa Jowell, Harriet Harman and Nick Brown from Labour, as well as David Trimble the former Ulster Unionist leader (who is particularly keen on the operas of Richard Strauss). I even interviewed Margaret Thatcher once about Handel operas – bizarrely it was in Kyiv.

Dominic Raab’s cheap sneer at Rayner in the Commons yesterday is a reminder that Tories probably feel more entitled and relaxed at the opera than Labour politicians. But there are more trained musicians on the Labour benches than you might think. David Lammy was a chorister in his youth. Thangam Debbonaire is a cellist.

Perhaps British politics – and the British press – will one day lose their stupid, hostile hang-ups about the arts. On that, Rayner deserves the last word. Her tweet this week about going to Glyndebourne at the invitation of an old friend in the orchestra ended with “Never let anyone tell you you’re not good enough. [Violin emoji]”. Not just the last word, but also the best.

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[OpinionMuseums](#)

## **Go to Derby: see how a museum can help shape a better future**

[Charlotte Higgins](#)



The post-industrial city's Museum of Making boldly sets out its vision – and has no time for national myths of lost greatness



Illustration: Thomas Pullin for the Guardian.

Fri 1 Jul 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 04.39 EDT

What is the role of museums in civic life? Are they merely containers of memory or can they be agents for change? When I visited the [Potteries Museum and Art Gallery](#) in Stoke-on-Trent recently – the museum I grew up with, even worked at during the holidays – I ended up with a feeling of profound melancholy, despite my usual pleasure in the richness of its ceramics collection. I could hear fellow visitors, who were locals (though the museum was sadly almost empty) sharing memories of a pottery industry that had contracted greatly in the late 20th century; I chatted to a man whose mother had once been a highly skilled tube-liner at a well-known potbank (tube-lining is a decoration technique). Of course, understanding and thinking about the past has always been the primary role of museums. But – perhaps especially in the case of industrial museums in deindustrialising areas – there is a danger of nostalgia. Of lamentation, even.

About 40 miles east of Stoke, Derby's [Museum of Making](#) is pioneering a different approach. The museum is housed in a former water-powered silk mill, originally built in 1721, that has some claim to be the first modern factory in the world. Shortlisted for the [Art Fund Museum of the Year](#) award, which is awarded on 14 July, the institution was until recently a standard-issue industrial history museum. But since it [reopened](#) last May

after a [redevelopment](#), it has been doing something rather different, and the clue is in the purposeful title. The museum certainly contains relics of a lost manufacturing history. There's no more silk-making, after all; and formerly major firms, such as the foundry Handyside, which manufactured everything from pillar boxes to railway bridges, are gone. But it is also about the industrial present.

When you walk into the museum, the first two things you see are a magnificent Trent 1000 Rolls-Royce engine suspended from the ceiling of the glassed-in hallway; and, above your head, the components of a Toyota Corolla. Both firms are major employers in the city (Rolls-Royce employees, Derby Museums' executive director Tony Butler told me, like to have their wedding photos done by the engine). Between the two modern objects, running up a stairway, is a selection of things once or still made in the city, from bus-stop signs to Crown Derby china.



The Museum of Making in Derby has been shortlisted for the Art Fund Museum of the Year prize. Photograph: Emli Bendixen/Arts Fund/PA

Continue through the museum and you'll get an understanding of the history of manufacturing of this city. Crucially, no bones are made about the exploitation of labour at home and in the empire: there's no British

exceptionalism, no unique British “genius” rolled out to explain the industrial revolution. Aside from being truthful, that hardheadedness also goes a long way towards eradicating wistfulness about a lost greatness.

The museum, instead, is practical. The exhibits – a policy guided by early public consultation – are largely organised by material (wood, ceramic, metal). It’s a maker’s way of looking at the world. And everywhere you go, you are confronted by people actually doing things, whether it’s staff doing a bit of crafting while looking after the tills, or a volunteer helping visitors have a go on a hand loom.

There is a maker-in-residence scheme, currently held by a recent graduate in product design, Joel Aspinall, who is working on 3D-printed ceramics and bespoke jewellery – using a studio space free of charge, and being supported by the museum more generally (when we chat, he is just about to meet up with the in-house marketing team). Those who join a membership scheme can access co-working spaces and rent time in workshops, too.

Here makers – whether recent graduates who need some bench space, professional artisans or retired hobbyists – can go to use seriously good equipment (a kiln, a CNC lathe), and talk through projects with technicians. Butler told me they were explicitly hoping to be a resource and practical inspiration for young people who might not want to go to university, but who could end up with skilled jobs in local industries.

How has it done all this? Crucially, Derby’s museums were spun out of direct control of the council and are run by a trust, which gives them freedom, including the ability to raise their own endowment. (Many council-run institutions have limited autonomy, their directors buried deep within a municipal hierarchy.) However, and in large part owing to Westminster’s outsourcing of austerity to local councils in the years after 2010, Derby’s museums receive only about 50% of their funding from public sources. The rest they raise and earn themselves, so that the Museum of Making is a catering business and an event space too – a modern neoliberal model that, pushed too far, risks deflecting the institution from its civic responsibilities. The museum, free of charge to enter, is clearly thriving – it was buzzing with life on a Tuesday lunchtime – but Covid’s parting gift has been a deficit that must be eradicated by 2026. Not easy.

Derby, like so many towns and cities in the UK, has watched Covid hollow it out, leaving high-street retail units empty that may never be refilled as shopping moves rapidly online. What might a new kind of city centre [look like](#), now that retail-led regeneration is effectively over? Could there be more [housing](#), more units for small-scale businesses and manufacturers, more and better cultural spaces? If museums are one of the most important ways in which the identity of a city is explored, the Museum of Making is certainly staking a claim to Derby's future – not just its past.

- Charlotte Higgins is the Guardian's chief culture writer

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## North Korea

# North Korea blames Covid-laden balloons sent from South for virus outbreak

Experts sceptical of claim, as state media urge citizens to watch out for ‘alien things coming by wind’



A doctor visits a family in Pyongyang, North Korea, to raise awareness of Covid-19. The country has blamed balloons from South Korea for its recent outbreak. Photograph: 朝鮮通信社/AP

*Justin McCurry in Tokyo and agencies*

Thu 30 Jun 2022 23.40 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 09.57 EDT

[North Korea](#) has blamed its Covid-19 outbreak on balloons sent over its border with the South by groups of defectors, in an apparent attempt to shift the blame onto its neighbour.

After two years of insisting that it had not recorded a single case of the virus, the North [admitted its first infections](#) on 12 May, sparking fears of a public health disaster in the impoverished country.

On Friday, the country reported that 4,570 people were newly displaying fever symptoms, bringing the total caseload to 4.74 million. Health authorities refer to fever symptoms rather than Covid-19, apparently due to a shortage of testing kits. The North has reported only 73 deaths.

The official KCNA news agency said on Friday an 18-year-old soldier and a five-year-old child who had touched “unidentified materials” in the eastern county of Kumgang in early April showed symptoms and later tested positive for [Covid-19](#).

“A sharp increase of fever cases was witnessed among their contacts and that a group of fevered persons emerged in the area … for the first time,” it said.

However, the first time that groups of North Korean defectors are thought to have sent balloons across the border this year was in late April from the western Gimpo region.

KCNA warned citizens to “vigilantly deal with alien things coming by wind and other climate phenomena and balloons in the areas along the demarcation line and borders”.

While the report did not name [South Korea](#), defector-activists there use balloons to send anti-regime leaflets and humanitarian aid across the countries’ heavily armed border.

In response, the South’s unification ministry said on Friday there was “no possibility” that the coronavirus had entered the North via balloons.

Experts were sceptical about Pyongyang’s assertion. “It is hard to believe North Korea’s claim, scientifically speaking, given that the possibility of the virus spreading through objects is quite low,” said Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul.

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention says the risk of people getting infected through contact with contaminated surfaces or objects is generally considered low, though it is not impossible.

The regime has not publicly countenanced a more plausible explanation – that Covid entered North Korea after it resumed cross-border trade with China.

“If they concluded the virus was from China, they would have had to tighten quarantine measures on the border area in a further setback to North Korea-China trade,” said Lim Eul-chul, a professor at the Institute for Far Eastern Studies at Kyungnam University.

Reports by North Korean authorities suggest the country avoided a catastrophic outbreak, although it is impossible to independently verify official statistics on cases and deaths.

Pyongyang has rejected outside offers of humanitarian aid, including Covid-19 vaccines and medical supplies, to help it through the pandemic, and accused the US of using the gesture to detract from its “hostile” policy towards the North.

The North Korean foreign ministry said the US was being insincere in offering help while it continued to conduct military drills and pushed for more sanctions in response to the regime’s nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

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## [Palestinian territories](#)

# Palestinian Authority routinely tortures detainees, says rights group

Human Rights Watch calls for donors to cut off funding to security forces and urges international court to investigate



A memorial service in the West Bank for Nizar Banat, an outspoken critic of the Palestinian Authority who died while in custody in June 2021.  
Photograph: Nasser Nasser/AP

*Associated Press*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 04.37 EDTFirst published on Fri 1 Jul 2022 04.35 EDT

Palestinian authorities in the West Bank and the [Gaza](#) Strip systematically torture critics in detention, a practice that could amount to crimes against humanity, an international rights group has said.

In its report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) called for donor countries to cut off funding to Palestinian security forces that commit such crimes and urged

the international criminal court to investigate.

The report alleged that Palestinian security forces “use solitary confinement and beatings, including whipping their feet, and force detainees into painful stress positions for prolonged periods, including hoisting their arms behind their backs with cables or rope, to punish and intimidate critics and opponents and elicit confessions”.

HRW’s report comes a year after the death of Nizar Banat, [an outspoken critic of the Palestinian Authority](#) (PA), whose family says he died after security forces stormed his residence in the middle of the night and beat him with metal batons. His death sparked weeks of protests against the PA, which governs parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Palestinian security forces violently dispersed some of those protests.

Amnesty International said last week that the PA had failed to hold its security forces accountable for the death. Palestinian authorities arrested 14 officers last summer and are trying them in a military court, but have taken no action against top commanders.

“More than a year after beating to death Nizar Banat, the Palestinian Authority continues to arrest and torture critics and opponents,” said Omar Shakir, Israel and Palestine director at HRW. “Systematic abuse by the PA and Hamas forms a critical part of the repression of the Palestinian people.”

The group listed Palestinians who it said had been arbitrarily arrested in the aftermath of Banat’s death. HRW said security forces were not held to account for the alleged torture and that given their systematic nature over many years, the practice could amount to crimes against humanity.

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Palestine is part of the Convention Against Torture, which requires members to work to prevent torture.

The report also describes Israeli mistreatment and torture of Palestinian detainees in the West Bank, saying that no indictments have been issued against Israeli security forces despite hundreds of complaints made over the last 20 years.

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## [Tesla](#)

# Tesla hit by new lawsuit alleging racial abuse

Fifteen black former or current employees allege they faced racial abuse and harassment at carmaker's factories



The body of a Tesla Model S is transported by an automated crane at the carmaker's factory in Fremont, California. Photograph: Stephen Lam/Reuters

*Reuters*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 05.28 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 00.12 EDT

Fifteen black former or current employees at [Tesla](#) have filed a lawsuit against the electric carmaker, alleging they faced racial abuse and harassment at its factories.

The workers said they were subjected to offensive racist comments and behaviour by colleagues, managers, and human resources employees on a

regular basis, according to the lawsuit filed in a California state court.

The harassment, which allegedly occurred mostly at Tesla's Fremont factory in California, included using the N-word and terms such as "slavery" or "plantation" or making sexual comments, the lawsuit claims. It alleges that the automaker's "standard operating procedures include blatant, open and unmitigated race discrimination".

Some of the plaintiffs were assigned to the most physically demanding posts in Tesla or passed over for promotion, according to the lawsuit.

It said that Montieco Justice, a production associate at Tesla's Fremont factory, was immediately demoted upon returning to Tesla after taking an authorised leave of absence as a result of contracting Covid-19.

Tesla did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The automaker is facing at least 10 lawsuits alleging widespread race discrimination or sexual harassment, including one by a California civil rights agency.

It previously has denied wrongdoing and says it has policies in place to prevent and address workplace misconduct.

On Monday, a federal judge in California ordered a fresh trial on the damages Tesla owes to a black former factory worker who accused the company of race discrimination, after he turned down a \$15m (£12.4m) award.

This month, a Tesla shareholder filed a lawsuit accusing the chief executive, [Elon Musk](#), and the company's board of directors of neglecting worker complaints and fostering a toxic workplace culture.

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## Global development

# Afghan embassy staff remain in hiding despite being eligible for UK relocation

UK government accused of leaving former employees and their families ‘in limbo’ in Afghanistan, where they are targets for the Taliban



People employed by the UK stage a demonstration in Kabul on 13 August 2021, two days before Taliban fighters entered the Afghan capital.  
Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

Global development is supported by



[About this content](#)

[Nicola Kelly](#)

Fri 1 Jul 2022 01.15 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 01.16 EDT

More than 170 people who worked for the British embassy in Kabul remain in hiding in [Afghanistan](#) in fear for their lives, almost a year after the Taliban retook the country.

A list of Afghans currently in hiding, seen by the Guardian, shows almost 200 former [interpreters](#), security guards and local staff waiting for a response from the Ministry of Defence and the Home Office, the departments responsible for relocating people at risk. All of those on the list are eligible for transfer to the UK under the [Afghan relocations and assistance policy](#) (Arap), intended to bring those formerly employed by the UK government, and their family members, to safety in Britain.

Aarash\* was employed by GardaWorld, a security subcontractor for the MoD, and worked at the British embassy for more than 10 years. He and his children have fled their home and live hidden in a basement in a village outside the city, surviving on one meal of boiled rice a day.

“The [Taliban](#), they have access to the details of all the guards and their ID cards,” Aarash said, speaking by secure connection. “Two times, they came to search our house, so we had to escape. They say that we are criminals, that we are not true Muslims, that we worked for foreigners. If they find us, they will kill us – this is for sure.”

In August 2021, as the [Taliban took Kabul](#), Aarash was on a coach with his family, due to be evacuated. A suicide bomb inside the airport forced the bus to turn back. He has been in hiding since.

“Every time we receive a message from the MoD, they say to wait. More than 10 months we are waiting. We hoped the British government would help us but they have done nothing – they have left us alone here to die.”



British and US soldiers help evacuate British nationals and former British staff eligible for relocation, Kabul Airport, 21 August 2021. Photograph: MoD/AFP/Getty Images

Another man, speaking through a translator, said: “The Taliban came to our house, they broke everything and we had to leave very quickly. Now we are in very bad conditions. Our children cannot go to school, we cannot walk in the streets or go to the market [for food]. Every day, we are at risk. They will

come for us and they will kill all of us, including the children. We are in a humanitarian crisis.”

He added: “The British government, they know everything about us. They know we are eligible [to come to the UK] because we worked for them for many years. We did good work for them. We respectfully ask the British government to help us and begin our transfer as soon as possible.”

Sarah Magill, a director of the charity Azadi, said eligible Afghans were in their tens of thousands. “They are scattered in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, in hiding and terrified. We would like more diplomatic energy and investment going into establishing pathways for them, including through Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Relying solely on Pakistan, a country in political turmoil, has caused a bottleneck.”

Sara de Jong, co-founder of the Sulha Alliance, which supports Afghans who worked for the British government to resettle in the UK, said: “The Arap team’s slowness and unresponsiveness leaves applicants in limbo, while fearing for their lives. The processing of applications needs to be expedited, and applicants should be given clear timelines, which will also help reduce duplicate applications from Afghans simply desperate to get a response.”

It is the latest criticism of the government’s handling of the crisis, with a [damning report from the foreign affairs committee](#) in May saying there has been a “[total absence of plans](#) to evacuate Afghans who supported the UK mission without being directly employed, which has put lives at risk”.

In [response to a written question](#) last week, armed forces minister James Heappey said one Arap case dating from when the scheme opened remains unresolved. He added that it “relates to an individual we have contacted three times, requesting further information relating to their eligibility”.

However, earlier this month, in [response to a parliamentary question](#), Heappey said decisions on only two of the 3,226 Arap applications received since April 2022 had been processed. Heappey told MPs that 9,500 Afghans have been relocated to the UK under Arap but added: “We think we’ve got about the same to go in terms of the number of people who are eligible.”



Passengers evacuated from Afghanistan disembark at RAF Brize Norton in southern England, 24 August 2021. Photograph: Justin Tallis/AFP/Getty Images

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office this month launched an online system, where those eligible can send an “expression of interest” in being transferred to the UK as part of its [Afghan citizens resettlement scheme](#) (ACRS), which is separate to Arap. The ACRS is designed to support those who assisted UK efforts in Afghanistan and members of minority groups based, for example, on ethnicity, religion or sexuality. Former GardaWorld and British Council employees will be considered, but it is not possible to apply for the scheme.

An MoD spokesperson said: “Between April and the beginning of June, 683 eligible Afghan civilians along with their families and dependants were relocated to the UK under Arap.

“In total, the [Ministry of Defence](#) has relocated over 9,500 Arap principals and their families since the beginning of the scheme. We know there is still a way to go to bring all those who are eligible to safety in the UK; the government is continuing to work with third countries to facilitate the relocation of those who are eligible under Arap.

“We continue to process applications in the order in which they are received, which has meant that some of the newer applications are still being worked through. We recognise there are too many individuals waiting for an answer, and this is not acceptable. This is why we are putting more resource into a dedicated team for processing Arap applications.”

*\*Names have been changed to protect identities*

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/jul/01/afghan-embassy-staff-remain-in-hiding-despite-being-eligible-for-uk-relocation>

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## Food & drink industry

# Salmonella halts production at world's biggest chocolate factory

Contamination found at plant in Belgium run by Swiss group Barry Callebaut



Barry Callebaut's site in Wieze, Belgium, produces liquid chocolate in wholesale batches for 73 clients making confectionery. Photograph: Kenzo Tribouillard/AFP/Getty Images

*Agence France-Presse*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 05.44 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 00.12 EDT

Production has been halted in the world's biggest chocolate plant, run by the Swiss group Barry Callebaut in Wieze, [Belgium](#), after salmonella contaminations were found.

A company spokesman said production had been protectively halted at the factory, which produces liquid chocolate in wholesale batches for 73 clients

making confectionery.

The company said 72 of the 73 companies had confirmed they halted deliveries of potentially contaminated chocolate in time to prevent any reaching the shops and were waiting for a response from one client.

There have been no reports so far of any chocolate consumers being exposed to salmonella, which causes salmonellosis, a disease that causes diarrhoea and fever but is dangerous only in the most extreme cases.

“All products manufactured since the test have been blocked,” the spokesman said. “Barry Callebaut is currently contacting all customers who may have received contaminated products. [Chocolate](#) production in Wieze remains suspended until further notice.”

Most of the products discovered to be contaminated were still on the site, he said.

However, the firm has contacted all its clients and asked them not to ship any products they have made with chocolate made since 25 June at the Wieze plant, which is in Flanders, north-west of Brussels.

“Food safety is of the utmost importance for Barry Callebaut and this contamination is quite exceptional. We have a well-defined food safety charter and procedures,” the firm said.

Belgium’s food safety agency has been informed and a spokesperson said it had opened an investigation.

Barry Callebaut supplies cocoa and chocolate products to many companies in the food industry, including industry giants such as Hershey, Mondelēz, Nestlé or Unilever. The world number one in the sector, its annual sales amounted to 2.2m tonnes during the 2020-21 financial year.

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The Wieze plant does not make chocolates to be sold directly to consumers, and the firm has no reason to believe that any contaminated goods made by clients have made it on to shop shelves.

The scare comes a few weeks after a case where chocolates were contaminated with salmonella in the Ferrero factory that makes Kinder chocolates in Arlon in southern Belgium.

Belgian health authorities said on 17 June that they had given the green light to restart the Ferrero factory for a three-month test period.

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/jul/01/salmonella-halts-production-at-worlds-biggest-chocolate-factory-barry-callebaut>

## Headlines tuesday 28 june 2022

- [Exclusive Fracking firms could be eligible for UK tax breaks worth billions](#)
- [Live Russia-Ukraine war: 21 people still missing after Kremenchuk shopping centre attack](#)
- ['Abominable' Leaders condemn attack on shopping centre](#)
- [Live Nicola Sturgeon accused of sowing 'division and strife' over plan for second Scottish independence referendum](#)

## Fracking

# Fracking firms could share in UK fossil fuel tax breaks worth billions

Exclusive: Campaigners say funding may provide incentive to restart fracking if moratorium is lifted



A fracking site in Lancashire. A British Geological Survey report on fracking potential in the UK is due this week. Photograph: Peter Byrne/UK

*[Fiona Harvey](#) Environment correspondent*

Tue 28 Jun 2022 07.18 EDTFirst published on Tue 28 Jun 2022 05.53 EDT

Fracking companies are likely to be eligible for tax breaks, potentially worth billions, that the government is extending to oil and gas companies to encourage new exploration of fossil fuel resources.

Combined with high gas prices, the extra funding – which amounts to a subsidy, [according to campaigners](#) – could provide a strong incentive to

restart fracking operations if a moratorium in the UK is lifted, which could happen as early as this week.

Oil and gas companies will benefit from a loophole in the government's windfall tax, which allows exemptions for companies that invest in the exploration of new fossil fuel resources. Legal advice provided to the campaigning group Uplift suggests fracking companies would also be eligible for this incentive, based on the way the windfall tax – officially known as the energy profits levy – is currently written.

Tessa Khan, the director of Uplift, said: "Despite a historic cost of living crisis, the government is trying to rush through yet another massive subsidy for oil and gas companies. The energy levy is supposed to ease the burden of rising energy bills for UK households, but this investment loophole allows companies to slash their tax bill if they build more polluting, unsustainable oil and gas projects."

"It is outrageous that fracking companies may be able to benefit from this subsidy, when fracking – like all oil and gas drilling – does nothing to ensure safe, affordable energy for people in the UK."

The Labour party said the loophole meant oil and gas companies would receive 20 times more in taxpayer incentives than renewable energy firms are eligible for. Labour's analysis of government data shows that about £4bn could flow to oil and gas companies via the loophole in the windfall tax and "super-deduction" tax credits.

According to Labour's analysis, the new rules mean that for every £100 an oil and gas company invests in the North Sea, the company receives £91.50 from the taxpayer. For every £100 invested in renewable energy, the renewables company receives £25, but that will fall to £4.50 from April 2023.

Sign up to First Edition, our free daily newsletter – every weekday morning at 7am BST

If these incentives are extended to frackers, it could be enough to swing the economics of fracking in favour of new operations. Labour said that for fracking companies the rules would mean that, out of every £100 spent on fracking, only £7.50 would be paid by the fracker, with the rest made up for by the taxpayer.

This week, ministers will face the conundrum of whether to lift the moratorium on fracking, as the British Geological Survey has been [asked to produce a report](#) on the fracking potential in the UK, which is due by Thursday. Many on the right of the Tory party have vocally supported fracking, and Boris Johnson is seeking their support to bolster his ailing premiership, weakened by two byelection defeats.

Khan said: “How can the government justify effectively picking up the bill for new oil and gas projects when these industries are making record profits and destroying the climate? The simple answer is that it cannot.”

Ed Miliband, the shadow secretary of state for climate change and net zero, said: “It is shameful that the government is handing billions of pounds of taxpayer money back to the very oil and gas companies that have [made record profits](#) during this energy crisis. This giveaway will either go to oil and gas projects that would have happened anyway, or will incentivise new projects that will make no difference to consumer bills, will take years to come to fruition, and will drive a coach and horses through our climate commitments.

“[This could also] end up throwing public money towards dangerous, unpopular and expensive fracking projects. This is a government with the wrong priorities.”

A spokesperson for the Treasury said: “As set out in the British energy security strategy, and with Putin’s invasion of Ukraine illustrating the merit of this, the North Sea oil and gas sector is going to be crucial to the UK’s domestic energy supply and security for the foreseeable future – so it is right that we keep encouraging investment while continuing our focus on cutting emissions. We’re also ensuring the UK continues to invest in clean energy too, through incentives such as the super-deduction, the UK’s competitive R&D tax relief regime and the Contracts for Difference scheme.”

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jun/28/fracking-firms-could-be-eligible-for-uk-tax-breaks-worth-billions>

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[Skip to key events](#)

[Ukraine war live](#)[World news](#)

# Russia-Ukraine war: At least two killed after Russian shelling in Donetsk – as it happened

This live blog is now closed, we will be returning in a few hours to bring you all the latest developments.

- [‘There could be children’: Kremenchuk search continues](#)
- [Aftermath of shopping centre attack in Ukraine – in pictures](#)
- [Response to Russia’s war in Ukraine dominates G7 summit](#)
- [At a glance: what we know on day 125 of the invasion](#)

Updated 4d ago

[Vivian Ho](#) (now); [Geneva Abdul](#) and [Martin Belam](#) and [Samantha Lock](#) (earlier)

Tue 28 Jun 2022 19.14 EDTFirst published on Tue 28 Jun 2022 00.50 EDT

Ukraine shopping mall attack caught on CCTV in nearby park – video

[Vivian Ho](#) (now); [Geneva Abdul](#) and [Martin Belam](#) and [Samantha Lock](#) (earlier)

Tue 28 Jun 2022 19.14 EDTFirst published on Tue 28 Jun 2022 00.50 EDT

## Key events

- [4d agoSummary](#)
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- [4d agoSweden: 'The sooner the better' for Nato membership for Sweden and Finland](#)

- [4d ago World leaders celebrate Nato trilateral agreement](#)
- [5d ago Stoltenberg: 'We now have an agreement' for Finland, Sweden to join Nato](#)
- [5d ago Turkey drops opposition to Finland and Sweden joining Nato](#)
- [5d ago Today so far ...](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 4d ago

[16.14](#)

## World leaders celebrate Nato trilateral agreement

World leaders have been sounding off on the news of the **trilateral agreement** signed by **Finland, Sweden and Turkey** that will enable the two Nordic countries to join **Nato**:

Congratulations to Finland, Sweden, and Turkey on signing a trilateral memorandum – a crucial step towards a NATO invite to Finland and Sweden, which will strengthen our Alliance and bolster our collective security – and a great way to begin the Summit.  
[pic.twitter.com/ug47DhRDG1](https://pic.twitter.com/ug47DhRDG1)

— President Biden (@POTUS) [June 28, 2022](#)

Fantastic news as we kick off the NATO Summit.

Sweden and Finland's membership will make our brilliant alliance stronger and safer. <https://t.co/l7zN5Ez1EV>

— Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) [June 28, 2022](#)

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Updated at 16.16 EDT

[4d ago](#)[19.14](#)

## Summary

Thank you for joining us for today's live coverage of the war in [Ukraine](#).

We will be pausing our live reporting overnight and returning in the morning.

- **Turkey, Finland and Sweden** signed a trilateral memorandum, paving the way forward for the two Nordic countries to join **Nato**.
- The agreement involves Finland and Sweden lifting their **arms embargo**, amending their **laws on terrorism**, supporting Turkey in its conflict with the **Kurdistan Workers' Party (YKK)** and stop supporting the party's Syrian affiliate **People's Protection Forces (YPG)**.
- Rescuers continue to work through the devastation left behind by the **Russian missile strike** on the shopping centre in **Kremenchuk** yesterday that has so far left at least **20 people dead**. President **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** published another video from the attack as he once again derided the strike as an **act of terrorism**. At least **21 people remain missing**.
- Zelenskiy described the attack on Kremenchuk as “**one of the most defiant terrorist attacks in European history**”. “A peaceful city, an

ordinary shopping mall with women, children, ordinary civilians inside,” he said. “Only totally insane terrorists, who should have no place on earth, can strike missiles at such an object. And this is not an off-target missile strike, this is a calculated Russian strike – exactly at this shopping mall.”

- The president reiterated those remarks at the **UN security council** meeting that was held today to discuss Russia’s **attacks on civilians**.

President [@ZelenskyyUa](#) suggested introducing the term of "terrorist state" at the urgent meeting of UN Security Council.

"I call upon you to deprive the delegation of a terrorist state of powers in UN General Assembly, and it's possible."[#RussiaIsATerroristState](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/4wnIRGQrwb](https://pic.twitter.com/4wnIRGQrwb)

— Anton Gerashchenko (@Gerashchenko\_en) [June 28, 2022](#)

- **Russia’s ministry of defence** has claimed that the fire in the shopping mall in Kremenchuk was caused by “the detonation of stored ammunition for western weapons”. No evidence was offered to back up the claim. **G7 leaders** called the strike a “**war crime**” and condemned it as an “**abominable attack**”.
- **Ukraine** has tracked **2,811 Russian missiles** that have been fired on Ukrainian cities since 24 February. A missile strike tonight on **Kharkiv**, a city that has been hit hard in recent weeks, has left the region in flames. Yesterday, a strike on Kharkiv **killed five and wounded 19**.

- In the **Donetsk oblast**, at least two were killed and 15 were wounded in **Russian shelling**.
- **Ihor Kolykhaiev**, mayor of **Kherson**, was arrested by Russian forces on Tuesday, according to an adviser to the mayor. **Galina Lyashevskaya** posted to Facebook that Kolykhaiev had visited a utility facility and was detained as he got out of a car by armed national guards, “most likely the FSB”. Lyashevskaya said hard drives were seized from computers, safes were opened, and guards searched for documents. She said Kolykhaiev was kept in a separate office while this happened, and was handcuffed in the presence of armed guards. Lyashevskaya said the mayor was then put “on the Z bus and taken away”.
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[4d ago](#) [18.45](#)

Authorities have updated the death toll for the **Russian missile strike** on the shopping centre in **Kremenchuk**: at least 20 people were killed and 59 were injured, according to Ukraine’s president, **Volodymyr Zelenskiy**.

At least 20 people were killed and 59 injured as a result of attack.

"They wanted to kill as many people as possible in a peaceful city, in a regular shopping mall," Zelensky said.

Video: Volodymyr Zelensky/YouTube

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 28, 2022](#)

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Updated at 18.49 EDT

[4d ago](#)[18.26](#)

**Ukraine** has tallied up the number of **Russian missiles** fired on Ukrainian cities since 24 February: 2,811.

In his nightly address, President Volodymyr Zelensky said: "As of this evening, a total number of Russian missiles that have hit our cities is already 2,811. And how many more air bombs (they have dropped), how many artillery shells (have been fired)?"

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[4d ago](#)[18.24](#)

The **UN security council** met today to discuss Russia's attacks on civilians, which included, just yesterday, a missile attack on a crowded shopping mall in **Kremenchuk** that killed at least 18, a targeted missile strike on civilians collecting water in **Lysychansk** that killed at least eight and widespread hit on **Kharkiv** that killed at least five.

President [@ZelenskyyUa](#) suggested introducing the term of "terrorist state" at the urgent meeting of UN Security Council.

"I call upon you to deprive the delegation of a terrorist state of powers in UN General Assembly, and it's possible."[#RussiaIsATerroristState](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/4wnIRGQrbw](#)

— Anton Gerashchenko (@Gerashchenko\_en) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[4d ago](#) [18.07](#)

## Today so far

- **Turkey, Finland and Sweden** signed a trilateral memorandum, paving the way forward for the two Nordic countries to join **Nato**.
- The agreement involves Finland and Sweden lifting their **arms embargo**, amending their **laws on terrorism**, supporting Turkey in its conflict with the **Kurdistan Workers' Party (YKK)** and stop supporting the party's Syrian affiliate **People's Protection Forces (YPG)**.
- Rescuers continue to work through the devastation left behind by the **Russian missile strike** on the shopping centre in **Kremenchuk** yesterday that has so far left at least 18 people dead. President **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** published another video from the attack as he once again derided the strike as an **act of terrorism**. At least 21 people remain missing.

[@ZelenskyyUa](#) As of the evening of June 28, the total number of russian missiles that have hit Ukrainian cities are estimated at 2,811.  
russian missile hits shopping mall in the city of [#Kremenchuk](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/94fwmyDDU1](https://pic.twitter.com/94fwmyDDU1)

— Defence of Ukraine (@DefenceU) [June 28, 2022](#)

- A missile strike tonight on **Kharkiv**, a city that has been hit hard in recent weeks, has left the region in flames.
- In the **Donetsk oblast**, at least two were killed and 15 were wounded in **Russian shelling**.

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Updated at 18.17 EDT

4d ago **17.46**

President **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** published another video of the **Russian missile strike** on the shopping centre in **Kremenchuk** that killed at least 18. Authorities estimate that anywhere between 200 to 1,000 people were inside at the time of the strike – 21 people are still missing.

“**Russia** will bear responsibility for this act of state terrorism on the battlefield in **Ukraine**, face tightening sanctions and definitely tribunal,” Zelenskiy said.

In his nightly address, president Zelensky includes a video of Russian strike on Kremenchuk shopping mall, adding that “Russia will bear responsibility for this act of state terrorism on the battlefield in Ukraine, face tightening sanctions and definitely tribunal”  
[pic.twitter.com/MR1Vl2Ycl0](https://pic.twitter.com/MR1Vl2Ycl0)

— Myroslava Petsa (@myroslavapetsa) [June 28, 2022](#)

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Updated at 18.06 EDT

4d ago **17.19**

After rescuers in **Kharkiv** spent the day cleaning up debris from previous attacks, another **missile strike** has sparked a fire in the city:

Russians once again sent missiles on Kharkiv. There is a huge fire there. Earlier, they attacked Dnipropetrovsk region.  
**#RussiaTerroristState #StopPutinNOW** [pic.twitter.com/loDIII64y](https://pic.twitter.com/loDIII64y)

— Iuliia Mendel (@IuliiaMendel) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[4d ago](#)[17.08](#)

**Kharkiv** has been hard hit in recent weeks – a **Russian missile strike** yesterday killed at least five and wounded 19. Here are some images of the destruction:



Ukrainian rescuers clean debris at a school hit by shelling in Kharkiv, Ukraine. Photograph: Sergey Kozlov/EPA



Kharkiv and surrounding areas have been the target of increased shelling and airstrikes by the Russian forces. Photograph: Sergey Kozlov/EPA



Rescuers work on the ruins of a school building, partially destroyed by two rockets. Photograph: Sergey Bobok/AFP/Getty Images



Rescuers clean debris at a school destroyed by rockets in Kharkiv.  
Photograph: Sergey Kozlov/EPA

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Updated at 17.17 EDT

[4d ago](#)[16.32](#)

## **Sweden: 'The sooner the better' for Nato membership for Sweden and Finland**

**Magdalena Andersson**, prime minister of **Sweden**, told the Associated Press that the trilateral agreement that her country and **Finland** has signed with **Turkey**, allowing for Sweden and Finland's **Nato** membership, will bring "more security" to the alliance.

"It's good for Finland and Sweden. And it's good for Nato, because we would be security providers to Nato," she said. Completing the process of membership should be done "the sooner the better, not only for Sweden and Finland but for other Nato countries", Andersson said.

“But there are 30 parliaments that need to approve this and you never know,” Andersson added.

Asked if the Swedish public will see the agreement as a concession on issues like **extraditions of Kurdish militants** regarded by Ankara as terrorists, Andersson said Swedes “will see that this is good for the security of Sweden”.

Andersson said she wasn’t too worried about **Moscow** reacting badly to Tuesday’s agreement. “**Russia** has reacted rather mildly so far,” Andersson said. “Maybe they see the fact that we have been a partner to Nato for quite some time ... that maybe they don’t see this as quite such a big step.”

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Updated at 16.57 EDT

[4d ago](#) [16.14](#)

## World leaders celebrate Nato trilateral agreement

World leaders have been sounding off on the news of the **trilateral agreement** signed by **Finland**, **Sweden** and **Turkey** that will enable the two Nordic countries to join **Nato**:

Congratulations to Finland, Sweden, and Turkey on signing a trilateral memorandum – a crucial step towards a NATO invite to Finland and Sweden, which will strengthen our Alliance and bolster our collective security – and a great way to begin the Summit.  
[pic.twitter.com/ug47DhRDG1](https://pic.twitter.com/ug47DhRDG1)

— President Biden (@POTUS) [June 28, 2022](#)

Fantastic news as we kick off the NATO Summit.

Sweden and Finland's membership will make our brilliant alliance stronger and safer. <https://t.co/l7zN5Ez1EV>

— Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) [June 28, 2022](#)

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Updated at 16.16 EDT

[4d ago](#) [15.59](#)

**Turkey, Finland and Sweden** have signed a **trilateral agreement** that lifts Turkey's objections to Finland and Sweden joining **Nato** and brings the two Nordic countries a step closer to membership.

We now have an agreement that paves the way for [#Finland](#) & [#Sweden](#) to join [#NATO](#). I thank Presidents [@RTErdogan](#) & [@Niinisto](#) & [@SwedishPM](#) for the constructive spirit that made this historic decision possible. <pic.twitter.com/dCEeoNjkO1>

— Jens Stoltenberg (@jensstoltenberg) [June 28, 2022](#)

Here are the things Turkey got:

- Sweden/Finland will lift its arms embargo
- Both will support Turkey on PKK, stop support to YPG
- They will amend their laws on terrorism
- They will share Intel with each other
- They will extradite terror suspects 1/

— Ragıp Soylu (@ragipsoylu) [June 28, 2022](#)

- Finland and Sweden will support Turkey's participation to EU's Pesko
- Turkey, Finland and Sweden will establish a permanent joint mechanism to consult on justice, security and intelligence

— Ragıp Soylu (@ragipsoylu) [June 28, 2022](#)

Read more about the agreement here:

- 
- 

Updated at 16.02 EDT

[4d ago](#)[15.41](#)

Here is a statement from **Sauli Niinistö**, president of **Finland**, on the steps taken with **Turkey** to enable Finland and **Sweden** to join **Nato**.

One step forward. [pic.twitter.com/fEP88uSQtq](#)

— Sauli Niinistö (@niinisto) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[4d ago](#)[15.31](#)

**Pavlo Kyrylenko**, governor of the **Donetsk oblast**, reports that two were killed and 15 wounded in **Russian shelling** today in the region.

Росія вбиває цивільних!

За 28 червня кількість жертв росіян на Донеччині зросла на 2 загиблих і 15 поранених.

Точну кількість жертв у Маріуполі та Волновасі встановити наразі неможливо.

Кожен                          воєнний                          злочинець                          буде  
покараний! [#StopRussia#RussiaKillsCivilians](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/mxJ8uPDQky](#)

— Павло Кириленко (@Pavlo\_Kyrylenko) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#)[15.06](#)

## **Stoltenberg: 'We now have an agreement' for Finland, Sweden to join Nato**

**Jens Stoltenberg**, the secretary general for **Nato**, has announced that talks were successful with **Turkey** and that **Finland** and **Sweden** are now set to join the alliance.

“I am pleased to announce we now have an agreement that paves the way for Finland and Sweden to join Nato,” Stoltenberg said.

BREAKING: NATO chief [@jensstoltenberg](#) says Finland and Sweden are set to join the alliance after successful talks with Turkey. “I am pleased to announce we now have an agreement that paves the way for Finland and Sweden to join NATO.”

Historic start to 3-day summit! [pic.twitter.com/08eSoj6Nyi](#)

— Deborah Haynes (@haynesdeborah) [June 28, 2022](#)

Asked what message the decision to invite Finland & Sweden to join NATO sends to Putin, the NATO chief says: “Every nation has the right to soon their own path.” He also says it shows NATO’s doors are open. And this move is the “exact opposite” of what Putin had been seeking

— Deborah Haynes (@haynesdeborah) [June 28, 2022](#)

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5d ago14.39

## Turkey drops opposition to Finland and Sweden joining Nato

Turkey has dropped its opposition to **Finland** and **Sweden** joining **Nato**, according to the Swedish prime minister, **Magdalena Andersson**, and the Finnish president, **Sauli Niinistö**.

Turkey's stance has been one of the major obstacles in the way of the two Nordic countries joining the alliance, with officials previously stating that they were willing to delay membership for more than a year unless they received satisfactory assurances that Finland and Sweden were willing to address support for **Kurdish groups** that Turkey regards as terrorist organisations.

BREAKING: Turkey drops objections to Sweden and Finland joining Nato, Swedish PM Andersson says. More soon.

— The Local Sweden (@TheLocalSweden) [June 28, 2022](#)

MADRID (AP) — Finnish president says Turkey agrees to lift its opposition to Sweden and Finland joining NATO.

— Nick Riccardi (@NickRiccardi) [June 28, 2022](#)

More to come.

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Updated at 14.50 EDT

[5d ago](#)[14.30](#)

**Vitali Klitschko**, the mayor of **Kyiv**, has made a powerful plea to the **Nato leaders** meeting in **Madrid** to provide **Ukraine** with “whatever it takes” to stop the war, the Associated Press is reporting.

“Wake up, guys. This is happening now. You are going to be next; this is going to be knocking on your door just in the blink of an eye,” Klitschko told reporters on Tuesday.

Klitschko rejected the idea that Ukraine should make any territorial sacrifices to end the war.

“Bully the bully, it’s the only way how to stop it,” he said. “And in this case, **Russia** is the bully.”

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Updated at 14.48 EDT

[5d ago](#)[14.15](#)

The **White House** national security adviser, **Jake Sullivan**, told reporters aboard **Air Force One** today that the US is actively trying to resolve the detention of basketball star **Brittney Griner** in **Russia**, Reuters is reporting.

Griner has been held in Russia since February after officials alleged that they found **hashish oil** in vape cartridges in her luggage. She faces up to **10 years in prison** for the offence. In May, the US government officially deemed her **wrongfully detained**.

“The Russian government should release her and allow her to be returned and reunited with her family and come home safe and sound,” Sullivan said.

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Updated at 14.27 EDT

5d ago13.56

The former deputy commander of Nato and former British general Sir **Alexander Richard Shirreff** has told Sky News that to make Nato's 300,000 troops effective will require rearmament, increased defence budgets, and rebuilding lost capabilities.

On Monday, Nato announced it would boost the number of troops on high readiness by more than seven-fold to over 300,000.

“There is always the risk of Russian escalation,” added **Shirreff**, who said the alliance has taken a risk by providing the weaponry and support that it “needs to” supply to Ukraine.

**Shirreff** called the summit the most important in the more than 70 years of Nato, and the move by the alliance a “fundamental mindset change”.

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Updated at 14.07 EDT

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## Ukraine

# World leaders condemn Russian attack on Ukraine shopping centre

G7 leaders say missile strike on mall in Kremenchuk was a war crime, as rescue efforts continue

- [Russia-Ukraine war – latest updates](#)



It took 300 emergency workers more than four hours to extinguish the flames after the Russian missile strike on a shopping centre in Kremenchuk, central Ukraine. Photograph: Alessio Mamo/The Guardian

*[Lorenzo Tondo](#) in Kremenchuk and [Pjotr Sauer](#) in Kyiv*

Tue 28 Jun 2022 05.25 EDTFirst published on Mon 27 Jun 2022 22.37 EDT

World leaders have denounced Russia's deadly strike on a shopping centre in the Ukrainian city of Kremenchuk as "abominable" and a war crime.

The search for survivors continues after the missile strike on a mall that had hundreds of people in it at the time, according to Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

The Ukrainian defence ministry said the attack, which is likely to become responsible for one of the war's highest civilian death tolls in a single strike, was deliberately timed to coincide with the mall's busiest hours and cause the maximum number of casualties.

'Is anyone alive?': footage captures immediate aftermath of Ukrainian mall strike – video

Twenty people are known to have been killed, according to Ukraine's emergency services, and Serhiy Kruk, the head of Ukraine's state emergency service, said 59 had been injured. Ukrainian prosecutors said they also found the remains of a further six people.

Ukraine's interior minister, Denys Monastyrskiy, said in a briefing that 21 people were still missing, although he added that some of the missing people could be among the bodies that had been found.

Authorities estimate there were between 200 and 1,000 people inside the mall. Many managed to flee to a nearby bomb shelter when they heard an air raid siren.

"I left the building two minutes before the explosion," said Yevhenia Semyonova, 38, a shop assistant at a sportswear store in the mall. "My colleagues who are working in bigger stores, like the supermarket, for example, had to wait for the customers to get out before they could leave. We were lucky because there were no customers in our store during the alarm."

In a joint statement, the leaders of the [G7](#) condemned the "abominable attack" and noted that strikes aimed at civilians were a war crime, and they pledged "unwavering support" for Ukraine.

"We stand united with Ukraine in mourning the innocent victims of this brutal attack. Indiscriminate attacks on innocent civilians constitute a war

crime. [Vladimir] Putin and those responsible will be held to account,” the statement said. “We will not rest until Russia ends its cruel and senseless war on Ukraine.”



Firefighters sift through the wreckage of the shopping centre in Kremenchuk, which was busy at the time of the strike. Photograph: Alessio Mamo/The Guardian

Separately, the French president, Emmanuel Macron, called the attack an “abomination”. He said: “We share the pain of the victims’ families, and the anger in the face of such an atrocity. The Russian people have to see the truth.”

A UN spokesperson, Stéphane Dujarric, said: “It is deplorable, to say the least. Any sort of civilian infrastructure, which includes obviously shopping malls, and civilians should never ever be targeted.”

Russia’s ministry of defence said on Tuesday morning that the fire was caused by “the detonation of stored ammunition for western weapons” located next to the mall, which Moscow claimed was not operating.

The ministry said it conducted a “high-precision” strike on a hangar in Kremenchuk containing weapons supplied by US and European countries. No evidence was offered to back up the claims.

Dmitry Peskov, the Kremlin's spokesperson, told reporters on Tuesday that the war would end only when Ukraine capitulated to Moscow's demands. "The Ukrainian side can end everything by the end of today. They just need to order Ukrainian troops to lay down their weapons and fulfil Russia's conditions. And it will all be over," he said.

"An order for the nationalist units to lay down their arms is necessary."

Ukraine's air force command said Russia struck the mall, located near a railway station, with two X-22 cruise missiles that were fired by an unspecified number of Tu-22M long-range bombers.

### [krememnchuk locator map](#)

Images from the scene showed plumes of black smoke and flames, and emergency crews rushing in to search for victims. It took 300 emergency workers more than four hours to extinguish the flames.

Mykola Lukash, from the Kremenchuk district prosecutor's office, said cranes would be brought in on Tuesday to help lift the collapsed roof of the shopping centre. "We haven't found any children's bodies. A lot of bodies are burnt. We need to carry out DNA tests," Lukash said.

On Monday night, emergency workers and soldiers combed through blackened debris and twisted metal. "We pulled out several bodies, but there are definitely more trapped under the rubble," said Oleksii, 46, a firefighter. "This is normally a very crowded place."

Speaking at 2am local time, Kruk, the emergency services chief, said work was continuing at the site. He added: "The main tasks currently performed by rescuers are to carry out rescue operations, dismantle debris and eliminate fires. So far, 16 people have been killed and 59 injured, 25 of whom have been hospitalised."



Firefighters clear the rubble of the destroyed shopping centre in Kremenchuk. Photograph: Oleg Petrasyuk/EPA

Zelenskiy said on Telegram that the number of victims was “unimaginable”. He wrote: “The occupiers fired missiles at the shopping centre, where there were more than a thousand civilians. The mall is on fire, rescuers are extinguishing the fire, the number of victims is unimaginable. Russia continues to take out its impotence on ordinary citizens. It is useless to hope for decency and humanity from Russia.”

In his nightly video address, Zelenskiy also called Russia “the largest terrorist organisation in the world”.

Elsewhere in the country, Russia continued its efforts to capture Lysychansk, the last Ukrainian stronghold in the eastern Luhansk region, after Ukrainian forces were forced to retreat from twin city Sievierodonetsk last week.

Serhiy Haidai, the governor of Luhansk province, said on Telegram that Russian forces were storming Lysychansk from the south and south-west. “Fighting is currently under way in the area ... the Russians are obliterating Luhansk residents,” he said.

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A Russian missile strike killed eight and wounded 21 others in Lysychansk on Monday, Haidai said.

If the city of Lysychansk falls, the entire region of Luhansk, which along with Donetsk makes up the eastern Donbas region, would come under Russian control, making it the first Ukrainian region to be occupied by Russia since the country annexed Crimea in 2014.

Regional heads in the second largest city of Kharkiv, the central city of Dnipro and the southern city of Mykolayiv also reported renewed Russian shelling on Tuesday afternoon, as the conflict shows no sign of abating.

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[Politics live with Andrew Sparrow](#)[Politics](#)

# Nicola Sturgeon tells Scottish parliament she wants to hold second independence referendum next October – as it happened

This live blog is now closed.

- [Sturgeon seeks supreme court ruling on Scottish independence vote](#)
- [Sturgeon's statement – snap verdict](#)
- [Sturgeon's letter to Johnson on independence referendum](#)
- [Summary of Simon Case's evidence to PACAC](#)
- [Starmer refuses to fully recommit to leadership campaign '10 pledges'](#)
- [Truss dismisses claim UK might join new European political community](#)
- [Truss says aid spending should be more focused on promoting freedom](#)
- [Wales pilots basic income for young people leaving care system](#)

Updated 5d ago

[Andrew Sparrow](#)

Tue 28 Jun 2022 13.03 EDTFirst published on Tue 28 Jun 2022 04.14 EDT

Scottish democracy will not be 'prisoner of Boris Johnson', says Sturgeon on referendum – video

[Andrew Sparrow](#)

Tue 28 Jun 2022 13.03 EDTFirst published on Tue 28 Jun 2022 04.14 EDT

## Key events

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- [5d ago Councils face 'formidable pressures' in months ahead, says Gove](#)
- [5d ago Police swoop on Stop Brexit Man under new anti-protest law](#)
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- [5d ago Sturgeon says general election will serve as vote on independence if supreme court blocks referendum bill](#)
- [5d ago Sturgeon tells Johnson in letter that as 'democrat' she expects him not to block Scotland's desire for referendum](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 5d ago

[09.38](#)

## Sturgeon says she wants to hold second independence referendum on 19 October 2023

**Sturgeon** says she will set out what the Scottish government will do if the UK government does not grant a section 30 order.

She says the referendum must be lawful. And that must be a matter of fact, not a matter of opinion, she says.

She says the Scottish government is publishing today its [Scottish independence](#) referendum bill.

She says there are three key provisions in the bill.

First, its purpose is “to ascertain the views of the people of [Scotland](#) on whether or not Scotland should be an independent country”.

Second, the question should be the same as in 2014, “Should Scotland be an independent country?”

And, third, she says the referendum should be in the second half of this parliament.

She says the Scottish government wants it to be held on 19 October 2023.

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[5d ago](#)[13.01](#)

## Afternoon summary

- [Nicola Sturgeon has asked the supreme court to rule on whether the Scottish government can hold a non-binding referendum on independence, without having Boris Johnson's permission to stage one.](#) The supreme court has [indicated that it will hear the case.](#) **Jonathan Sumption**, a former supreme court justice, told the PM programme that it looked as if it would be “very difficult” for Sturgeon to obtain a referendum this way. He explained:

The problem is that the constitutional relationship between England and Scotland is a reserved matter under the Scotland Act, which means that the Scottish parliament has no power to legislate for anything that affects the constitutional relationship between two parts of the United Kingdom,

The supreme court would have to consider whether it is lawful to pass legislation designed to put pressure on Westminster on a reserved matter.

Commenting on Sturgeon’s announcement, **Boris Johnson** told reporters travelling with him to the Nato summit in Madrid.

I haven't seen exactly what she's said yet. We will study it very carefully and we will respond properly.

The focus of the country should be on building a stronger economy, that's what we're doing with our plan for a stronger economy and I certainly think that we'll be able to have a stronger economy and a stronger country together.

- Boris Johnson has sought to defuse anger over a No 10 briefing that he would ditch a manifesto commitment on defence spending but faced criticism from Labour for breaking a pledge made even more crucial by the Ukraine war.
- Keir Starmer has backed away from sacking Labour frontbenchers who defied his instructions and stood alongside striking rail workers last week.
- The Labour MP Stella Creasy has said she will table an amendment to the forthcoming British bill of rights to give women the fundamental right to an abortion.
- Conservative MPs are privately warning that a swathe of cabinet ministers and other high-profile Tories are on course to lose their seats at the next general election under Boris Johnson.
- Steve Bray, the activist known as “Stop Brexit Man”, has had equipment seized by police officers attempting to shut down his regular protest near parliament, as a new protest law came into force.

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[5d ago](#) [12.31](#)

In her statement **Nicola Sturgeon** announced what was in effect a fast-track procedure to refer her referendum bill to the supreme court. (I used the word emergency earlier, to refer to the fact this is a rare procedure, intended to speed things up, but fast-track is probably a better term.) She proposed this as an alternative to just getting Holyrood to pass the legislation and then wait for it to be challenged in court.

In a Twitter thread starting here, the lawyer **Andrew Nickell** explains more about this process.

Short version: people assumed the Indyref Bill would be introduced and then challenged if passed either (a) by way of a referral from the UK government law officers (or potentially the Lord Advocate) or if not (b) by private litigants in judicial review. <https://t.co/Esltpy00g>

— PeatWorrier (@PeatWorrier) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#) [12.17](#)

**Cabinet secretary says it would be wrong for Johnson to call snap general election without proper reason**

Earlier I covered the opening of the public accounts and constitutional affairs committee with **Simon Case**, the cabinet secretary. I broke away to cover the [Nicola Sturgeon](#) statement, but here is a round-up of the highlights.

- Case admitted that there was a tension between serving the government of the day and upholding traditional civil service values. He said there was a juxtaposition in the civil service code between “the duty to support the government of the day” and upholding the civil service values. This could create “challenges”, he said. And this was an issue in “the current circumstances”, he said. He went on:

The government of the day is one which is not remotely afraid of controversial policies. It believes it has a mandate to test established boundaries. It takes a robust view of the national interest and how the government should protect it and focuses very much on accountability to people and parliament, not on the unelected advisory structures.

- He said it would be “quite wrong” for [Boris Johnson](#) to call a snap election without justification. These are from the i’s Paul Waugh.

On whether Queen can stop a [@BorisJohnson](#) snap election:

Wragg: “You would be uncomfortable with a PM capriciously requesting of Her Majesty a dissolution?”

Case: “It would be quite wrong for the Prime Minister to put the Sovereign in a difficult position constitutionally.”

— Paul Waugh (@paulwaugh) [June 28, 2022](#)

Under the 'Lascelles principles' a Monarch can refuse a request for a gen elexn if:

- existing Parliament "vital, viable + capable of doing its job"
- elexn "detrimental to the national economy", and
- Monarch could relying on finding another PM who cd command a working majority

— Paul Waugh (@paulwaugh) [June 28, 2022](#)

There has been some speculation amongst Tory MPs that Johnson could call a snap election to avert a leadership challenge.

- Case said it was “very difficult” for civil servants to investigate the prime ministers. See [2.23pm](#).
- He said that Lord Geidt, the PM’s independent adviser on ministerial standards, was not asked to advise on the Northern Ireland protocol bill (which is widely seen as against international law, but not by the government) but was asked to advise on a steel tariff issue (where the government’s plan could be in breach of WTO obligations). Geidt resigned over the issue. Case declined to speculate on whether Geidt was using the issue as “an excuse” to quit.
- Case said a decision on the recruitment process for the replacement for Lord Geidt has not yet been made.
- Case said there is an ongoing disciplinary process for civil servants involved in Partygate. He also said some civil servants had resigned over the scandal. But he did not say who or how many, and it was not clear if he was just referring to people who are already known to have left.
- Case confirmed that no investigation has taken place into claims that Johnson tried to appoint Carrie Johnson - now his wife, but at the time his mistress - to a £100,000-a-year job in the Foreign Office when he was foreign secretary. Case said that it was for the PM to authorise such an investigation. William Wragg (Con), the committee chairman, suggested Johnson was “not keen” on the idea, prompting laughter. Case just said that was a question for the PM.

- Darren Tierney, director general for propriety and ethics at the Cabinet Office, who was giving evidence alongside Case, said he was once asked to advise on whether loans between ministers had to be declared. That was “not recently”, he said. He went on: “My general advice is it is probably not a good idea, as a minimum.”



Simon Case Photograph: HoC

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Updated at 13.14 EDT

[5d ago](#) 11.34

## Councils face 'formidable pressures' in months ahead, says Gove

Local government is facing “formidable pressures” in coming months, Michael Gove, the levelling up secretary, told the Local Government

Association (LGA) annual conference. But he said the government would do all it could to help.

Speaking at the conference in Harrogate, Gove said:

I appreciate that in the immediate months ahead local government faces formidable pressures. The accumulating demands on adult social care, the challenges facing children's social care, the pressure to support children with special educational needs, the economies which inevitably affect non-statutory services, and additional expectations that we have in planning and housing.

We will do everything that we can to support you through these challenging times.

Gove said he wanted to encourage more devolution, saying: "You can't have a Northern Powerhouse without more power being exercised in the North."

As PA Media reports, he also told the council leaders he would introduce a two-year funding settlement to help with budget planning and would look to reduce the bewildering range of funding streams to local government to simplify the process.



Michael Gove addressing the LGA conference.  
Photograph: Danny Lawson/PA

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[5d ago](#)[11.24](#)

## Police swoop on Stop Brexit Man under new anti-protest law

**Steve Bray**, the activist known as “Stop [Brexit](#) Man”, has had equipment seized by police officers attempting to shut down his regular protest near parliament, as a new protest law came into force. My colleague **Jamie Grierson** has the story here.

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[5d ago](#)[11.21](#)

And this is from **Adam Tomkins**, a law professor and a former Scottish Conservative MSP.

Two big flaws in Sturgeon’s gambit: what if Supreme Ct declines to rule on a Bill that has not been enacted (on grounds of prematurity)? And re Sturgeon herself deciding that a general election can only be about indy, what if the voters disagree? Pretty desperate stuff, I’d say

— Adam Tomkins (@ProfTomkins) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#)[11.18](#)

From **Michael Russell**, the SNP president

Presumably someone will have already noticed that on the 19th of October 1781 General Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown “effectively ending the American revolution and assuring America’s independence” as Wikipedia puts it. [#indyref2](#)

— Michael Russell (@Feorlean) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#)[11.16](#)

BBC Scotland’s political editor **Glen Campbell** says that, if [Nicola Sturgeon](#) does end up turning the next general election into a de facto independence referendum, she will be looking to win a majority of votes, not just seats.

They’d be seeking to win an overall majority of votes in that election - something the SNP has never done before (very nearly in 2015 if I remember right)

— Glenn Campbell (@GlennBBC) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#)[11.14](#)

**Murdo Fraser**, a Scottish Conservative MSP, seems confident, partly on the basis of an answer Nicola Sturgeon gave in the Scottish parliament earlier

(see [3.41pm](#)), that the Scottish government will lose when the supreme court considers the legality of the referendum bill.

The one thing clear from the FM's statement is that she knew she wouldn't get her referendum bill past the Lord Advocate or Holyrood's Presiding Officer

— Murdo Fraser (@murdo\_fraser) [June 28, 2022](#)

If the hand-picked Lord Advocate wouldn't certify the referendum bill as within devolved competence, the chances that the Supreme Court will do so must be zero [#PretendyRef](#)

— Murdo Fraser (@murdo\_fraser) [June 28, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#) [11.08](#)

## No 10 says it wants to see what supreme court decides in relation to Holyrood's referendum bill

In response to Nicola Sturgeon's announcement, Downing Street has said that Boris Johnson remains opposed to a second independence referendum now, but that it will wait to see what the supreme court decides about the legality of the Scottish government's bill. A spokesperson for No 10 said:

Our position remains unchanged, that both ours and the Scottish Government's priority should be working together with a relentless focus on the issues that really matter to people.

But a decision has been taken by the first minister, so we will carefully study the details of the proposal and the supreme court will now consider whether to accept the Scottish government's lord advocate's referral.

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[5d ago](#)[10.50](#)

## **Sturgeon says general election will serve as vote on independence if supreme court blocks referendum bill**

Here is a lengthy extract from [Nicola Sturgeon's statement to MSPs on a second independence referendum.](#)

And here are the key paragraphs.

### ***On referring the referendum bill to the supreme court***

We must seek now to accelerate to the point when we have legal clarity; legal fact. And crucially, in doing so establish and safeguard the ability of this parliament to deliver a referendum on the date proposed.

The lord advocate has agreed to make a reference of the provisions in the bill to the supreme court.

I can confirm that the reference will be filed with the supreme court this afternoon.

### ***On what happens if the Scottish government wins***

Obviously, it is this government's hope that the question in this bill, proposing a referendum that is consultative, not self-executing, and which would seek to ascertain the views of the Scottish people for or

against independence, will be deemed to be within the legislative competence of this parliament.

If that outcome is secured, there will be no doubt whatsoever that the referendum is lawful. And I can confirm that the government will then immediately introduce the bill and ask parliament to pass it on a timescale that allows the referendum to proceed on 19 October 2023

### ***On what happens if the Scottish government loses***

It is, of course, possible that the supreme court will decide that the Scottish parliament does not have power to legislate for even a consultative referendum. Obviously, that would not be the clarity we hope for.

But if that is what the law establishing this parliament really means, it is better to have that clarity sooner rather than later.

Because what it will clarify is this: any notion of the UK as a voluntary union of nations is a fiction. Any suggestion that the UK is a partnership of equals is false.

There would be few stronger or more powerful arguments for independence than that.

And it would not be the end of the matter. Far from it. Democracy demands that people must have their say.

I want the process set in train today to lead to a lawful, constitutional referendum and for that to take place on 19 October 2023.

But if the law says that is not possible, the general election will be a ‘de facto’ referendum.

Either way, the people of Scotland will have their say.

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Updated at 10.53 EDT

[5d ago](#)[10.41](#)

Back in the Scottish parliament, asked if she has asked the lord advocate to refer this matter to the supreme court because the lord advocate advised that the referendum bill was not legally competent, **Nicola Sturgeon** refused to answer. She said she could not comment on legal advice.

But she said she wanted a referral to the court because she did not want MSPs just to hear advice about whether the referendum bill was legal. She wanted its legality to be established as fact, she said.

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Updated at 10.55 EDT

[5d ago](#)[10.37](#)

This is from **Ian Murray**, the shadow Scottish secretary, on Sturgeon's announcement.

The FM “we must rid our country of this Tory govt”.

But

We will use the next GE to keep them in power.

She's given the game away.

— Ian Murray MP (@IanMurrayMP) [June 28, 2022](#)

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## 2022.06.28 - Spotlight

- [The Barkley Marathons The hellish 100-mile race with 15 finishers in 36 years](#)
- ['South Africa's pain and anger are mine too' How Liz McGregor confronted her father's killer](#)
- [Reproductive rights 'If you love or are a woman, don't go to Malta,' say couple in abortion drama](#)
- [Cancelled flight? Shoddy clothing? Disappointing meal? Blame skimpflation, the hidden curse of 2022](#)

## [Sport](#)

# The Barkley Marathons: the hellish 100-mile race with 15 finishers in 36 years

Participants in the Tennessee race must negotiate extreme temperatures, wild terrain and more than 50,000 feet of accumulated ascent



The Barkley Marathons course winds through wild terrain and it is easy for participants to lose their way. Photograph: Wade Payne/AP

*Sophie Ranson*

Tue 28 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 17.11 EDT

At 6.54am on 8 March 2022, 39-year old Johanna Bygdell from Sweden was perched next to her tent in the middle of Frozen Head State Park, Tennessee, eating breakfast with her boyfriend when she finally heard the noise she had been both craving and dreading. It was the blowing of a conch, marking one

hour until the start of arguably the world's most hellish race: the Barkley Marathons.

"Finally, let's get the party started," she thought.

Bygdell made her final preparations, packing clothes and food, and honed in on her goal of finishing the annual 100-mile ultra endurance challenge. This year, around 40 other determined runners from around the world gathered behind the race's famous starting line, a yellow gate, with the same hope.

But finishing the Barkley Marathons is an anomaly. Since its conception in 1986, only 15 runners have managed to conquer the merciless course – which features punishing sections with names such as Checkmate Hill, Little Hell, Rat Jaw and Testicle Spectacle.

Most years see no finishers at all in the race's 60-hour time limit. And 2022 was no exception.

Despite no one finishing, one Barkley first-timer, Jasmin Paris, beat the clock to become the first woman in a decade to complete three loops – otherwise known as the 'fun run'.

"This was one of the years that the Barkley felt like an entity in itself, picking people off one at a time that you thought would finish," says race director Gary 'Lazarus Lake' Cantrell (most runners just call him 'Laz'), who co-founded the race in the decade following [the 1977 breakout of Martin Luther King's assassin](#), James Earl Ray, from the nearby Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary. During his 55 hours of freedom, Ray covered just 12 miles of ground. "I could do at least 100," mocked Laz.

As is tradition, Laz lights a cigarette to kick things off – an unorthodox start for an unorthodox race. When the embers glow, participants have just 60 hours to complete five rounds of the same unmarked 20 mile (give-or-take) loop: twice clockwise, twice counterclockwise, with the leading runner dictating the final loop direction – if any make it that far. One hundred miles in 60 hours may not seem too tough a task – after all the world record for the distance on foot [is just under 11 hours](#). But the Barkley Marathons course is

unmarked (competitors are allowed a map and compass), has an accumulated ascent of more than 50,000 feet through thick woodland, and is subject to temperature extremes.

“The first lap was run in really hot conditions, too hot for my liking, and then the second lap was the opposite, unbelievably cold with lots of rain,” [said British runner Nicky Spinks](#) after competing in the 2019 race.

All the while, racers must locate books hidden along the route as proof of completion. That task was something first timer Enrico Frigeri, a 34-year old teacher and personal trainer from Brazil, struggled with amidst the gnarled terrain and extreme weather.

After completing the first loop alongside a race veteran, Frigeri entered loop two alone, but struggled to navigate the course and therefore locate the books in time. “It was then I knew that Barkley had won,” he says.

Still it was an impressive feat, given that he only began training for the event 45 days prior, after being hospitalised for three months. “Just completing the loop was fantastic. I feel very satisfied,” he says.

With no official race website, quirky race legends are left to reverberate within the running community – some true, some not.

After paying just \$1.60 to apply, successful entrants receive a ‘letter of condolence’. “Virgins” (first-timers) must contribute a licence plate from their home state or country as part of their race fee, while returning competitors must submit an additional requested item. Changing from year to year, previous examples include a pair of socks and a flannel shirt. In the rare instance a previous race victor returns to take on the course, a pack of Camel cigarettes suffices as payment: the antithesis of modern-day ultrarunning race fees, which can sometimes be upwards of \$1,000 for well-known races.

Laz chuckles when asked about the “human sacrifice”. He or she is the runner Laz allegedly believes is the least likely to complete a lap, and is assigned the No 1 bib.

“It’s a common misconception,” he says. “People write in and say ‘I want to be the human sacrifice, I’ll be terrible!’ No. Everyone who’s there are accomplished runners. Everyone who’s there belongs. The people who are the human sacrifice are the people who don’t want to be the human sacrifice.”

Race veterans play a crucial role in the race, with their accrued knowledge helping to maximise their chances of succeeding.

“You have to have a mix of people,” says Laz. “Very few people are going to give their best effort the first time. So once people have gone through this whole process, you try to give people the chance to give their best effort out there. If everyone was new then it would be catastrophic.”

With plenty of veterans returning this year, including [record-breaking ultra runner Courtney Dauwalter](#), Laz is surprised 2022 didn’t produce a champion. “You’re always rooting for people to complete it. You know how much they put into it and how high their hopes are, but you can’t always count on it. I really thought we would have a finisher this year,” he says.

One veteran, Tomokazu Iraha, a 44-year old running coach from Japan, was “very pumped” to return for his third attempt at the race after an involuntary hiatus due to the pandemic. [Running](#) with two years of Barkley experience behind him, Iraha felt confident.

“I was mostly on my own unlike the past two attempts,” he says. “It felt great!”

Despite his experience, however, he was one of the earliest to be “doomed”, according to Laz – proof that predicting the Barkley is a fool’s game. Iraha fell and hit his knee on a rock during the first loop, and time constraints forced him to pull out after the second.

“By the time I got to Little Hell, the heavy rain made the steep climb very slippery, so it was like moving three steps forward and sliding two steps back,” says Iraha. “My feet [were] wet and cold until finally they became numb. I had five hours … to make it under the loop two cut-off [26 hours 40

minutes], but not for a five loop cut-off. So the best I could have done at this point was a fun run.

“When you are fresh and in a different mind set, you think you should go for that third loop. But after you are beaten down and have a low body core temperature after a very cold and rainy night, you don’t have that mindset anymore. I touched the yellow gate at 26:15:27, giving me enough time [to consider] a third loop turnover. Laz and all the others encouraged me to go for it: ‘You’ve got this, Tomo!’. So I went to the bathroom to rethink as I sat underneath a warm shower to bring my body temperature back up … but my body refused to go back … my third Barkley was over.”

Like others, however, Iraha is undeterred; he aspires to be the first Asian man to finish the Barkley. “It’s kind of scary to do a challenge when there’s such a high chance for failure,” he says. “But I am sure that’s the beauty of the Barkleys. And that’s why I’m hooked so much.”

Laz shares Iraha’s optimism for 2023. “You’ve got people that are ready,” he says. But it is the Barkley Marathons after all. “You never know what’s going to happen.”

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## ‘Why did you murder my father?’ How Liz McGregor confronted a killer



‘I have covered murder trials, but nothing could have prepared me for the horror of sitting through this one’: Liz McGregor. Photograph: Linda Nylind/The Guardian

After a painful and lengthy murder trial, the journalist still had questions about why her father had died. So she set out to meet the gang member jailed for the killing



[Claire Armitstead](#)

[@carmitstead](#)

Tue 28 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 06.27 EDT

Two days after burying her mother's ashes in the summer of 2008, Liz McGregor received a devastating phone call. Her 79-year-old father, Robin, was also dead – and his house 75 miles north of Cape Town, where she lived, was now the scene of a murder inquiry. His car, a bronze-coloured Mercedes that had for years been his pride and joy, had been discovered by police a few miles away in a poor neighbourhood with its lights on. A man was arrested as he tried to run away and officers found blood on his clothes. In the house itself there were no fingerprints, because whoever had murdered Robin McGregor had been wearing gloves.

So began a story that brings McGregor face to face with South Africa's brutal history and the violence it has spawned. Her new book, [Unforgiven: Face to Face with My Father's Killer](#), is so unflinching that it challenges its readers to look away first: it's her way of processing the horror, she says. "It changed me fundamentally. When you get such a profound shock, you

rethink everything. I've always lived my life afraid of what might happen, and when this earthquake happens, at the start you become slightly numb, then you become grief-stricken and terrified and angry, and gradually you become slightly more inured to things."

At the trial of the man who was charged with her father's murder, McGregor and her four siblings listened as the gruesome details emerged over many weeks. "I am a journalist," she writes. "I have covered murder trials in this very court. I have interviewed victims of violence and done my best to enter imaginatively into their experience to properly convey their pain. But none of it prepared me for the horror of sitting in this stuffy courtroom, day after day, while details of the brutality inflicted on someone with whom I was so intimately connected are revealed in torturous detail."

Her father was a retired publisher and game farmer, the former mayor of a town in the mountains of the Western Cape that was coincidentally called McGregor. He had become a bit of a celebrity in his younger days after publishing a bestselling book [exposing the grotesque monopolistic corruption](#) of apartheid, and was rewarded with a place on the Competition Commission in the early days of Nelson Mandela's presidency.

He had spent 11 August 2008 with his son's family, who recalled him patiently explaining the US sub-prime crisis to his young grandson. After they left, he ran himself a bath, in which it was his habit to wind down with a book at the end of each day. He was still in the bath when intruders broke in. "Some time between 10pm and midnight he was murdered," writes McGregor. The blankness of that sentence is where the enduring trauma lies. His body had been found with 27 stab wounds, the fatal one of which was a slash to his neck that severed his carotid artery. Practical to the last, even in his final seconds, he had tried to staunch the bleeding with his pyjamas. As she recounts this particular detail, McGregor starts to quietly weep, impatiently wiping away her tears to carry on talking. Even 14 years on, this always happens, she says.

The forensic facts reveal everything and nothing. Part of the trauma, the reason she has found it so hard to recover, she says, is that her father's killer still maintains his innocence, and refuses to reveal what really happened,

even though he was convicted and imprisoned for 30 years, and all the evidence – including her father’s blood on the clothes he was wearing at his arrest – confirms his guilt. This has prevented the family from understanding how he came to be targeted, why he was so brutally treated in such a prolonged attack, and how many people were involved. He had recently moved to a new house, which he had extensively renovated.



McGregor and her father, Robin. Photograph: Courtesy of Liz McGregor

As a farmer, he was used to keeping cash in one safe to pay his workers and guns in another to protect himself and his family. He had ensured his children knew how to protect themselves, but had also drilled into them that one key survival skill was to know when not to put up any resistance. “We can only assume that one of the workmen helping him on the house saw the two safes, and tipped off a local gang, and in his shock and panic he forgot the combinations of the locks,” says McGregor. The safes were wrenched out of the wall and the cash and the guns were taken along with the car.

Robin McGregor was a third-generation immigrant of Scottish extraction whose great-grandfather had abandoned a wife and children to seek his fortune in the South African gold fields. Cecil Thomas, the man convicted of his murder, was a 33-year-old from a Coloured (the term still used for South Africa’s mixed-race population) family that also probably had roots in 19th-

century Scotland. In her desperation to understand, McGregor travelled to the Western Cape town of Saron, where Thomas grew up, the youngest of 10 children with a loving mother and grandmother but a largely absent and fitfully violent father who died when he was 14. Spooked by the small, isolated settlement that had been founded by German missionaries as a refuge for slaves, she motored on the few miles to Tulbagh, where her father was murdered. “I take out my tourist maps, hoping to see the town anew,” she writes, “but all I see is our country’s painful history writ large.”

The main street of Tulbagh, she discovers, was named after a Dutch governor who, in the 17th century, brought his countrymen out to colonise an idyllic wooded valley that he recognised as “eminently suitable for agriculture”, wiping out or enslaving the original inhabitants in the process. Parallel to that street is one named in honour of the Boer leader who led the [Great Trek](#) out of the cape in the 1830s in protest against British rule and the emancipation of slaves.



McGregor was thrown into jail for a night, and had to be rescued by her father, after marching in support of the Soweto Uprising. Photograph: Foto24/Getty Images

McGregor’s own teens had been spent protesting against the injustices of apartheid that were the legacy of this violent history. As a student at Cape

Town University she was thrown into jail for a night, and had to be rescued by her father, after marching in support of [the Soweto Uprising](#). To the dismay of her devoutly Catholic mother, she writes, she had abandoned the faith for socialism and the anti-apartheid struggle. “The stain of original sin became visible – the colour of my skin, all too clear a stamp of the oppressor.”

After university she became a journalist, “but apartheid seemed invincible and increasingly oppressive,” she recalls. “Security police bugged our phones and every newsroom had at least one journalist who doubled up as a government spy.” Disheartened, she decided to move to England, and a job at the Guardian, until her mother’s diagnosis with dementia persuaded her to return home in 2002, where she pursued a new career as an author of nonfiction books.

It was a time when the euphoria about Mandela’s release and the repeal of apartheid was starting to curdle into disillusion, crime and violence. In 2008, when her father died, she points out, 18,479 people were murdered in South [Africa](#), most of them with many more years left to live than he had. “Although it feels like it, I am not marked out in any way.” Fretting at why she was finding herself so very distraught and unable to move on, she started to wonder if the process of truth and reconciliation that was being played out on the public stage could offer a personal resolution.

Despite opposition from her family, who were afraid of opening old wounds, she set her heart on a meeting with Thomas in the open jail to which he had been transferred for good behaviour, five years into his sentence. It was clear from the start that the prison authorities had little patience with her pestering, but she was allowed to sit in on a session in which convicted rapists were brought face to face with a rape victim, and slowly she found people willing to help her reach Thomas.

Despite all the grand words in the constitution, the lofty ideals of restorative justice are just that – ideals

*Liz McGregor*

Gradually, a picture emerged of a young man who, for all that he was from a close and supportive family, had got caught up with drugs and the rampant gang culture in his home town. In her father's car on the night of the murder he had been smoking tik – the street name for crystal meth. But by the time she finally came face to face with him, prison had bound him so intractably into its gang network that he could not afford to speak the truth even if he had wanted to. In a grotesque parody of colonialism, the gang to which Thomas now belongs describe themselves as "British". After prison skirmishes, explains a kindly ex-warder who she enlists to set up and mediate her prison visit, "you hear them say 'We fought under the British flag'. I think this goes back to the wars against the Xhosa and the Zulus and the Boers. They see the British as good fighters."

This is not a story with a happy resolution. "In my blind rush to confront, I had ignored reality," writes McGregor. "What was in it for Cecil Thomas? There'd be nothing waiting to embrace a repentant sinner. He would be taken straight back to his communal cell ... his only debriefing would be from gang leaders." To survive, he had to stick to the story agreed with his accomplices – "the tired, implausible story he had told in court".

In the months that followed, she concluded that the whole thing had been a farce. "Despite all the grand words in the constitution and in the legislation, the lofty ideals of restorative justice that theoretically underpin our system are just that – ideals," she writes. To make it work, "efficient, ethical governance would have been required. He would have to be offered a credible alternative life, away from the gang, and treatment for his drug addiction."

Thomas is due for parole next year and the McGregor family's consent will be part of his passport back to freedom. The family will be consulted but won't have the final say. She is going to leave that decision to her siblings, to whom the book is dedicated, two of whom have not yet been able to bring themselves to read it. "I feel I've played my part by writing this book," she says. Pressed on whether she feels Thomas should be released, she shakes her head, and asks, "What will be waiting for a convicted murderer? With his tattoos, his drug habit and his prison record, how will he not get involved in yet more violent crime?"

Though the pain of her father's murder will never disappear, McGregor's own life is far from bleak. In March 2020, shortly after a national state of disaster was declared in South Africa due to the escalating Covid pandemic, she married [Alan Hirsch](#), a fellow campaigner from her student days, who rose to manage government policy on economics before quitting in despair over the misrule of the Zuma years, and is now an academic. They spend part of the year in London and the rest in a house by the sea, a 90-minute drive from Cape Town. Despite everything that has happened, she says, "I feel totally bound up with my country. Its pain and its anger and its yearnings are mine too."

- Unforgiven by Liz McGregor (Jonathan Ball Publishers SA, £18.99). To support The Guardian and Observer, order your copy at [guardianbookshop.com](http://guardianbookshop.com). Delivery charges may apply.

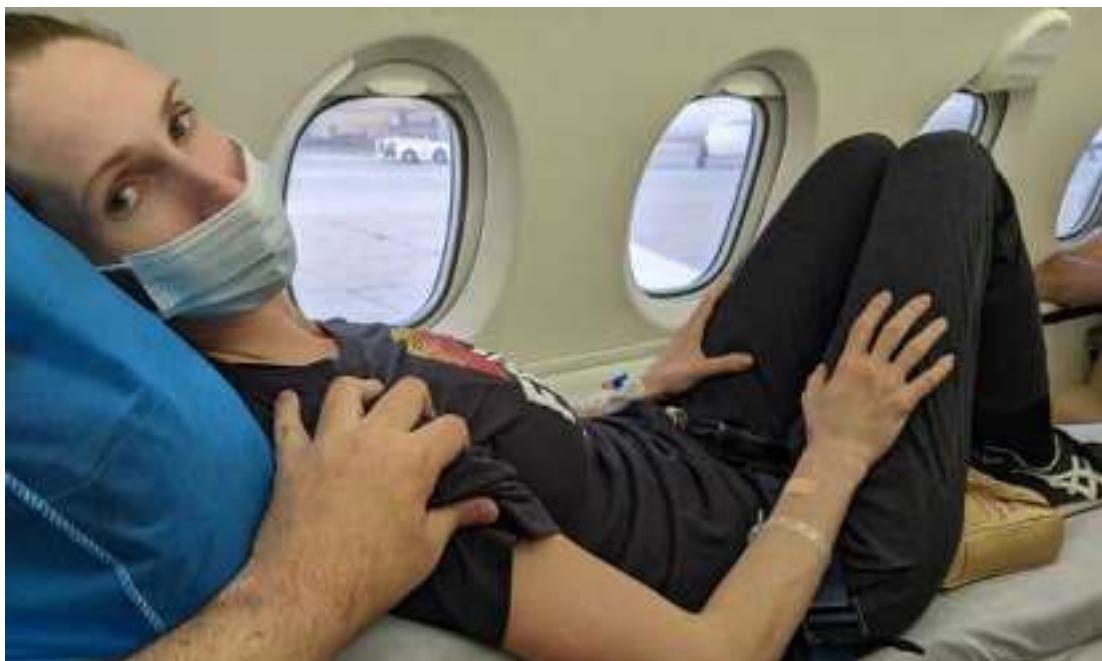
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## Rights and freedomReproductive rights

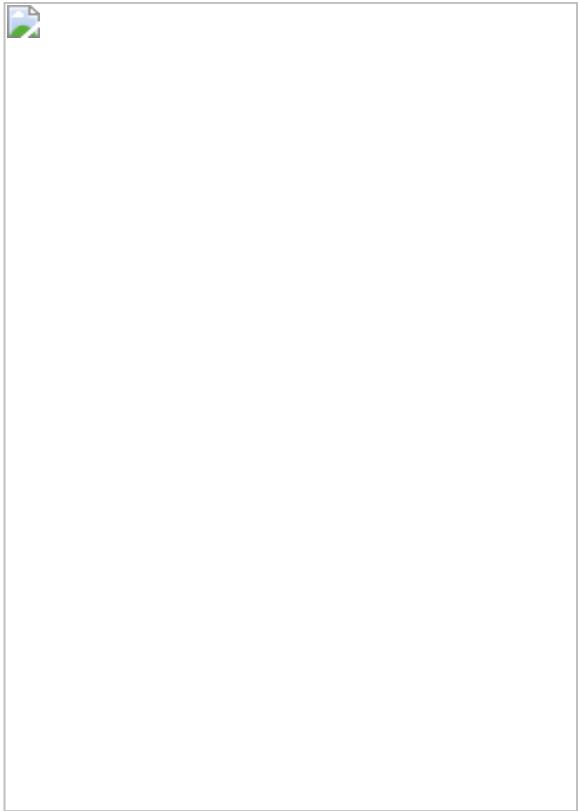
# ‘If you love or are a woman, don’t go to Malta,’ say couple in abortion drama

After her ‘babymoon’ became a tragic medical crisis, Andrea Prudente wants to use her story to oppose bans on abortion



Andrea Prudente flying out of Malta with her partner, Jay Weeldreyer, for treatment in Mallorca. ‘We have a relationship with medicine, not miracles,’ he says to anti-abortionists who told the couple that they should refuse medical intervention. Photograph: Handout

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[Megan Clement](#)

Tue 28 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 07.12 EDT

When Andrea Prudente was sitting in a Maltese hospital waiting for her foetus's heart to stop beating, she was offered grief counselling. [Prudente, an American photographer, began to miscarry](#) her pregnancy at 16 weeks during a holiday with her partner on the Mediterranean island, and had been told there was no hope for it.

But because of the heartbeat – and despite Prudente's own life-threatening risk of haemorrhage and infection – doctors at the Mater Dei hospital in

Msida would not intervene to end her very wanted pregnancy. Malta's ban on abortion in all circumstances – the only EU country to do so – prevented it.

Prudente sent the grief counsellor away. "It's like sending in a PTSD counsellor when the battle is still going on," she says.

It took a [widely publicised medical evacuation](#) by air ambulance to the Spanish island of Mallorca to bring Prudente's two-week ordeal to an end, and for her and her partner, Jay Weeldreyer, to begin to truly grieve for their loss.

Only in Spain were they able to deliver their daughter, hold her and say goodbye. Staff gave the couple a blanket for the body, and a star to hang on a tree alongside those representing all the other births that had taken place at the hospital.

As soon as she arrived at the hospital in Mallorca, Prudente was approached by a sympathetic staff member. "She said, 'I saw you on the news.' And she hugged me," Prudente says.

She was discharged this weekend and is recuperating before the long journey back to Seattle. She says she feels weak but is slowly recovering.

It was only thanks to their travel insurance that the couple was able to get out of Malta at all: the insurer considered Prudente's risk to be significant enough to send a private jet with a surgeon on board from Belgium to transfer her safely to Mallorca.

"We were extraordinarily privileged to be American citizens who had the ability to purchase that kind of insurance, because absent a third-party insurance company, and absent us being foreigners, there's no way we were getting off that island," says Weeldreyer.

He says he is staggered by the lengths they had to go for what could have been a straightforward, if distressing, procedure.

The couple were contacted by anti-abortion activists on social media, who urged them not to intervene to complete the miscarriage and telling them miracles could happen.

“We have a relationship with medicine, not with miracles,” says Weeldreyer.



Jay Weeldreyer and Andrea Prudente in Malta before she began to miscarry.  
Photograph: Handout

Prof Isabel Stabile, a gynaecologist with [Doctors for Choice Malta](#), has seen two other cases like Prudente’s so far this year. But for those local women, waiting for the heartbeat to stop was the only option.

“Luckily, in those cases, the women were fine physically,” she says, adding however that they were “mentally distraught”.

On Monday, Doctors for Choice submitted a “judicial protest”, a legal petition to Malta’s civil courts signed by 135 doctors demanding a review of the abortion ban. The doctors say the law ties their hands in cases such as Prudente’s, where medical professionals must weigh the care they provide to a patient against the risk of being prosecuted for terminating a pregnancy.

We see ourselves as accidentally in this position to influence – just by being honest and sharing our story

*Andrea Prudente*

Under Malta's abortion law, which dates from the 1850s, women who have abortions face up to three years in prison, and doctors who perform them can be imprisoned for up to four years, as well as losing their medical licence.

"The current law does not protect them when they try to protect the lives of women," says Stabile.

She says many of the signatories would not consider themselves pro-choice, but simply want to put an end to the threat of losing their medical licence for providing care to their pregnant patients. A [2019 study](#) found that more than 60% of doctors in Malta supported legalising abortion in cases of risk to the patient's life and foetal non-viability.

Anti-abortion groups point to Malta's [low maternal mortality rate](#) as evidence that the abortion ban does not put patients at risk, and say doctors will intervene in cases of risk to life.

But Stabile says maternal mortality is "a very, very low bar to set" for measuring whether medical care is adequate.

Weeldreyer and Prudente say that as they were preparing to leave Malta, a doctor at Mater Dei who also practised in London told them that if Prudente had been in the UK, he would have intervened as soon as he saw her ultrasound results.

Mater Dei hospital has been approached for comment.

In a dark irony, Prudente's nightmare is likely to become a reality for many women back home in the US. On the day she was evacuated from Malta to Mallorca, the [US supreme court removed the right for women in the US to terminate a pregnancy](#), leading to a [swathe of US states](#) enacting bans on abortion. Though these states have included exceptions to save the life of the patient, [experts warn](#) the terms are so vague as to risk having a chilling effect on doctors, who, like those in Malta, could be reluctant to perform terminations after incomplete miscarriages for fear of falling on the wrong side of the law.

“The timing is nuts,” Prudente says of the ruling overturning [Roe v Wade](#), noting that women in her position will soon have to travel between US states for the care they need. “It’s so regressive.”

She is now preparing to get home and sort through the “emotional wreckage” of a holiday that began as a “babymoon” but became a medical emergency, and then an international incident.

But she wants to use her experience to continue to advocate against abortion bans around the world. “We see ourselves as accidentally in this position to influence – just by being honest and sharing our story.”

In the meantime, Weeldreyer has a warning: “If you know a woman, if you love a woman, if you ever plan on knowing or loving a woman, or if you are a woman – don’t go to Malta.”

This article was amended on 28 June 2022. An earlier version referred to “a swathe of states enacting outright bans on abortion with no exceptions for rape, incest or to save the life of the patient” in the wake of the US supreme court decision. While it is correct that some US states, including those that had laws in place ready to be “triggered” by the court’s decision, do not have exceptions in rape and/or incest cases, they do have exemptions where the life of the patient is in danger.

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## Cancelled flight? Shoddy clothing? Disappointing meal? Blame skimpflation, the hidden curse of 2022



The price remains the same, but the socks are thinner. Illustration: Nick Moffatt/The Guardian

Reluctant to raise prices, refusing to sacrifice profits, travel companies, retailers and restaurateurs are cutting corners wherever they can, usually without telling their customers. Is poor quality the new normal?



Zoe Wood

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Did your [flight get cancelled in the school holidays](#)? Has the delivery of your new sofa been delayed? Was your last meal out disappointing? Are your new socks see-through? Are you reading this while you are on hold to customer services? Does everything feel just a little bit worse?

The [cost of living crisis](#) has given British households a crash course in the misery caused by inflation, which is scaling heights not seen since the 1980s. But what if there is also another force at work in the economy, lurking in the background and making a bad situation that little bit grimmer?

Welcome to “skimpflation” – a term [popularised in the US](#) and gaining traction in the UK. “Skimpflation is when consumers are getting less for their money,” says Alan Cole, a writer at Full Stack Economics and formerly a senior economist at the joint economic committee of the US Congress.

“Unlike typical inflation, where they’re paying more for the same goods, skimpflation is when they’re paying the same for something that worsened in quality.”

The most common example is “having to wait longer for things”, says Cole. “If you’ve ordered furniture or an appliance recently, you’ll find that delivery times are slow. That loss of timeliness is a quality downgrade.”

Thanks to the current crisis, we are all familiar with what inflation means: the price of stuff is going up, sometimes by an eye-watering amount. There have also been plenty of examples of shrinkflation, which is when a company reduces the size of a packet of chocolate or crisps, for instance, but the price stays the same.

But even if it is not as easy to identify, when you start to look for skimpflation, you can see it everywhere. It is in the supermarket, when you bump into someone filling shelves because costlier night-shift work has been axed, or when your favourite brand is no longer there because the range has been reduced to cut warehouse costs.

It is in disappointing new clothes that bobble after one wear, or when you book a holiday only to have your flight rescheduled, or find you now have to pay for your food and drink on board. Then, when you try to get your money back or complain, you find the only route is via a web chat with an entity that may or may not be human.



Illustration: Nick Moffatt/The Guardian

The [Planet Money](#) podcast made by US radio producer NPR came up with the term in 2021. It is a “stealth-ninja kind of inflation”, it said, where consumers “pay the same or more for services but they kinda suck compared with what they used to be”. It used the example of the Magic Kingdom, where visitors were walking nearly a mile to get into Disney World and Disneyland because the tram service from the car park was not running.

To be fair, with the impact of the pandemic and the economy teetering on the edge of recession, this is a difficult time for businesses as well as consumers. For every big corporation with deep pockets like Disney, there is a small company struggling to survive. They got through Covid only to be hit by soaring energy and materials prices, plus staff shortages, when the world got back to normal. As customers struggle with rising living costs, firms must choose between passing on their increased expenses, taking a hit to profits (if they are making any), or replacing parts or services with something cheaper.

“I always assumed that was the [high-street] model with socks,” says [David Blanchflower](#), professor of economics at Dartmouth college, and a former member of the Bank of England’s monetary policy committee, when asked about the idea. “I remember it from many years ago: the price of socks

remained the same and, as costs changed, the thickness of the sock changed. I don't know how big a deal it [skimpflation] is ... I'd ask a different question: to what extent does inflation measure things properly?"

For most of his economics career, Cole believed that official statistics made inflation seem worse than it really was because it was so hard for the data to capture improvements in the quality of products. Now he thinks the official statistics are failing to show how bad inflation actually is.

He argues that skimpflation becomes more prevalent when it's hard to produce things or the world is getting poorer. "Usually, the world is getting richer, so you see goods and services getting fancier. But the Covid-19 pandemic made us poorer and less productive in many ways, forcing cutbacks."

It is also more prevalent in a "seller's market", like today, he says. "That's an environment where more money is moving about the economy, and there are many willing buyers for scarce goods and services. Contrast this with a 2008-2011-style economy, where buyers with cash seem to have the upper hand in transactions, and sellers or workers seem to have little bargaining power. In 2008-2011, money was much less plentiful, and the whole world was a 'buyer's market', if you could afford to be a buyer."

"If the amount of money moving around is higher, but production hasn't increased, then it stands to reason you'll get less for your money. Some firms do this by charging you more, but others do this by skimping on their product a bit."

All producers are looking at ingredients and thinking: Can we use something cheaper to do the same job?

*Jason Bull*

Due to high energy costs and other issues, food costs were already climbing before the war in Ukraine. This inflation has to be paid for, says Jason Bull of West Yorkshire-based ingredients firm Eurostar Commodities, who says companies are trying to find cheaper recipes. "All producers are looking at ingredients and thinking: 'Can we use something cheaper to do the same job

– a different flour, or a different starch, to mitigate the rising costs of ingredients and freight,”” he says.

Changing the recipe may mean the price won’t change but Bull says the quality and taste can. “Food producers want to give the people the ability to afford a healthy and varied diet. However, there’s a real risk people will be eating less nutritious food.”

His view is echoed by Andrew Selle, chief executive of Bidfood, a large UK food wholesaler, who last month warned that soaring food costs meant “difficult decisions for school caterers”. “Either they are going to serve smaller portions or use cheaper ingredients, which isn’t going to be good for the children.”

Higher food prices are a massive headache in the hospitality trade, too, with restaurants forced to resort to “menu engineering” (the technical term for using cheaper ingredients) to make the maths work for each dish. This happens all the time but is particularly relevant now due to “crazy” price rises, says the restaurant industry consultant Peter Backman.



Illustration: Nick Moffatt/The Guardian

In tough times, a common trick is to cut food sold in slices more thinly and at an angle so it covers more of the plate, or to reduce the amount of pricey

meat and fish while introducing more pulses and vegetables, which are cheaper. But Backman says there is “only so much beef you can replace with lentils before the customer says: ‘I ordered beef and not lentils.’”

Where clothes are concerned, experts report that retailers are offsetting higher costs by buying lower-quality fabric or manufacturing them more cheaply. “The wash-and-wear performance of fabrics that look similar on the hanger can vary a lot,” says Matthew Easter, who runs school uniform brand Trutex, which competes with ultra-cheap supermarket ranges that he says are made of less hard-wearing fabrics.

That Britons feel shortchanged is apparent in the snapshot of sentiment provided by the Customer Satisfaction Index, published by the [Institute of Customer Service \(ICS\)](#). Its most recent update showed customer service complaints at a record high, with the quality, reliability and availability of goods and services the main bugbears.

“The number of customers experiencing a problem with an organisation is at its highest ever level,” says the ICS’s chief executive, Jo Causon. “When things go wrong, they can go very wrong indeed, causing frustration and distress, especially in the context of significant life events, or for customers who are vulnerable or who are less confident about engaging through digital channels.”

The survey, which polls 10,000 consumers, found 16% of customers had experienced a problem with a brand’s service in the past six months. There were fewer complaints about staff but far more about quality issues or items being out of stock.

Skimpflation is a new idea but Cole suggests that economists should pay some attention to it. “If you see a firm cutting back product quality for the same price, that’s a good indication that we are in a ‘you get less for your money’ regime, where sellers have the power,” he says.

As for the customers, there’s an old saying that springs to mind: let the buyer beware.

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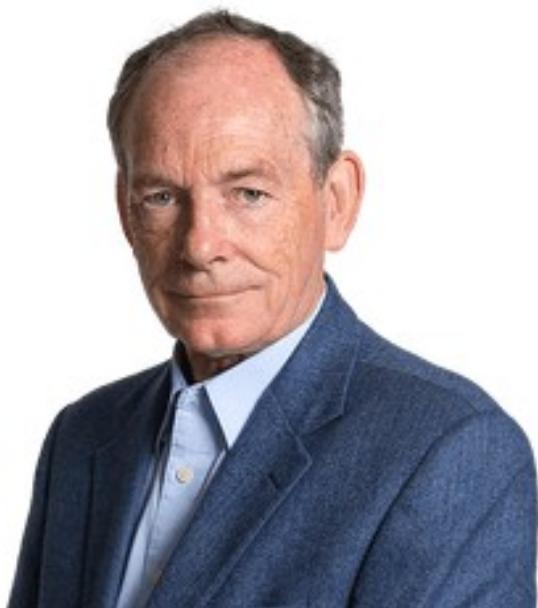
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## **Scrapping the NI protocol is just the start. Johnson's trade wars are Trumpism in action**

[Simon Jenkins](#)



Brexit has left Britain out on a limb. Yet the PM seems hellbent on alienating our trading partners to boost his own position



‘Like all populist leaders, Johnson views his actions in terms of their capacity to promote his own person.’ Johnson at the G7 summit in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, on 28 June 2022. Photograph: Getty Images

Tue 28 Jun 2022 05.26 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 08.56 EDT

Britain’s foreign policy is now at the mercy of Boris Johnson’s reckless quest for survival. At home he grasps for votes with Irish border controls, protectionist tariffs and immigrant quotas. Abroad, he tours Europe demanding [total victory](#) in someone else’s war while promoting the most intense economic disruption in the continent’s peacetime history. Every visit is treated as a photo opportunity. An absurd “bromance” is even staged with the equally embattled French leader, Emmanuel Macron. Never was machismo so synthetic.

Yesterday’s [Commons vote](#) on a bill which would allow him to scrap the Northern Ireland protocol was a classic. It was motivated by a desire to appease the province’s fast-disintegrating Unionist majority. The price is to be a predictable standup row with the EU, but one that Johnson thinks will bolster him with his party’s Brexiter right wing. The government’s suggestions for a “soft” border with Ireland are actually quite sensible. But Downing Street’s three years of anti-EU rhetoric have exhausted any wish in Brussels to be co-operative.

The Brexit cry that “Europe needs us more than we need it” was never emptier. Johnson last night had his own backbenchers, including his predecessor [Theresa May](#), dismissing his Northern Ireland policy as illegal, unattainable and damaging to Britain’s global reputation. At the very moment when he is wandering Europe’s capitals demanding they all refuse to trade with Russia, he is fashioning a [trade war](#) with the EU. This must be madness.

Theresa May: Northern Ireland protocol bill will ‘diminish UK in eyes of the world’ – video

As if two trade wars were not enough, Johnson is also set on another. Trade with the “rest of the world” was predicted as set to boom as a result of Brexit liberation. Now the prime minister wants to embed protectionism with tariffs on [steel imports](#) from China, India, Turkey and other countries. These are precisely the countries with which Johnson boasted he would do “world-beating trade deals”. The World Trade Organization has warned that such action would be illegal, while Downing Street’s ethics adviser, Lord Geidt, said he was put in an [“impossible and odious” position](#) over the issue. But Johnson cares only for votes in “red wall” industrial seats. Such a trade policy is not Toryism but Trumpism.

Meanwhile the government frantically adjusts migrant quotas worthy of the most socialist planning regime to meet post-Brexit crises in agriculture, construction, health and social care. The ironic result is that the stifling of European immigrants is more than countered by a [25% rise in migration](#) from Africa and Asia. Is that what the Brexiteers promised?

Conservatives must search in vain for ideological consistency in these policies. They are the kneejerk reactions of an embattled economy that has declared itself at odds with the outside world. Six years ago Britain made a terrible mistake, to cut itself off from its neighbouring single market, a mistake that the government exacerbates month by month. The Office for Budget Responsibility calculates this is costing the British people a debilitating [4% in annual growth](#). Sooner or later that mistake will have to be reversed.

Like all populist leaders, Johnson views his actions in terms of their capacity to promote his own person. A sure sign is his innovation of inviting news cameras to witness him addressing his own cabinet. It measures success in biceps rather than brain power and is borrowed from a certain Vladimir Putin. It is not democratic government.

- Simon Jenkins is a Guardian columnist
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## OpinionInflation

# Firms are driving up inflation - why doesn't Johnson talk to them about restraint?

[Carys Roberts](#)

The government expects workers to shoulder the burden – while price spikes mean huge windfalls for some companies



Picketing RMT members distribute leaflets at Paddington station, London, June 2022. Photograph: Martin Pope/Getty Images

Tue 28 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 09.47 EDT

What a difference eight months make. At the Conservative party conference in October, the prime minister announced his plan for a high-wage economy. Last week, against a backdrop of rail strikes and thousands of unionised workers marching in London, [he called](#) for wage restraint. This placid-

sounding term belies reality: wage restraint would mean workers accepting sharply falling pay given rocketing prices.

In the short term, inflation – most of which is caused by the rising prices of imported goods such as energy, food, metal and other commodities – poses a real cost to the UK economy that can't be wished away. If firms expect prices to keep rising, this could become a self-reinforcing cycle. But it is the wealthiest who should be shouldering this cost. Meanwhile the government needs to get to work on unhooking our economy from fossil fuels and building resilient supply chains that would prevent inflationary episodes like this in the longer term.

Johnson's call on workers to show restraint is a moral argument. It implies that workers must accept a huge hit to their living standards and their ability to save for the future in order to avoid runaway inflation – for the good of us all.

This moral duty is unequally distributed. Johnson hasn't been asking business executives and their shareholders to show restraint in the profits they generate, or how these are distributed. While state pensioners will see their incomes rise in line with inflation, pay for experienced teachers had already [been squeezed by 8% between](#) 2007 and 2021. Overall, [the Bank of England expects](#) household disposable income to fall by 1.75% in 2022 – the second largest fall since records began in 1964.

What's needed is a balanced approach that quickly reduces inflation while distributing its burden proportionally. In [new analysis](#), Common Wealth and the IPPR, the thinktank of which I'm executive director, have dug into the profit side of this equation. Our findings are stark: up to the end of 2021, half of firms have retained or increased their profit margins compared to pre-pandemic levels. Looking at the largest non-financial companies, we find that aggregate profits surged by 34% over the same period.

The vast majority of this increase in profits is driven by just a handful of companies in a few sectors, with 90% of the profits increase accounted for by just 25 companies. Certain markets such as gas and other commodities have been the biggest winners. As a result of price spikes, including those

caused by war in Ukraine, some companies are seeing their profits increase by billions of pounds – a handsome windfall. Last year, BP chief executive Bernard Looney even [described the company](#) as “literally a cash machine” for this reason. The basic materials sector has seen its net profits increase by £37bn; the energy sector by £12bn. Rather than being reinvested, most of the increases in energy and commodities profits are being paid to shareholders.

What’s more, if shareholders were bearing their share of the costs, we would expect the profit rate (profits as a proportion of revenues) to go down. Instead, the average profit rate had risen by the end of 2021 in the majority of sectors we studied, despite inflation and falling real incomes.

Our analysis raises the possibility that some firms could even be [profiteering](#) from this crisis – using their power in an uncompetitive market to push up prices under the cover of inflation. Although our data on this is not yet conclusive, it’s notable that the UK economy has some very concentrated sectors, such as mining and quarrying, in which five firms make 60% of revenues. [Firms themselves](#) have described being able to raise prices because of inflation. Regardless, one implication is clear: with real costs hitting the UK economy and fears of more generalised inflation, profit restraint should be part of the conversation. We need a balanced approach to distributing the costs of inflation. Putting the onus entirely on workers is not only deeply unjust – it’s also not good economics.

Fiscal policy also has an important role to play in managing inflation fairly. The government has already introduced a windfall tax on oil and gas companies. The rate could be raised. Next, it could – in concert with other governments – consider a tax on the windfalls being made by commodities companies, the receipts of which could be used to support households and boost supply chains. An excess profits tax could be put in place for firms found to be profiteering, discouraging the practice in the first place.

It’s been some time since the UK has had to deal with the visceral politics of inflation. Getting through this period fairly requires a clear-eyed view of who’s winning and who’s paying, and a plan to ensure it’s not ordinary and low-paid workers who are asked to take the hit.

- Carys Roberts is executive director of the Institute for Public Policy Research
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[\*\*OpinionCoronavirus\*\*](#)

## **No masks, no free tests, low sick pay – the UK government is back in Covid denial**

[\*\*Frances Ryan\*\*](#)



Cases are on the rise, but a few small changes would make a big difference to millions of vulnerable people



Passengers at Waterloo station during a national rail strike last week.  
Photograph: Henry Nicholls/Reuters

Tue 28 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 05.40 EDT

If you're reading this in the UK, odds are that by now you've had coronavirus: 7 in 10 of us have watched the dreaded red line appear. You may have been stuck in bed with it twice or even three times by now; by April 2022, England alone had recorded almost 900,000 reinfections. When the public asked to "return to normal", I'm not sure a regular hacking cough was what they had in mind.

It is an odd situation. Last week, Covid infections were reported to have soared by 43%, while hospitalisation from the virus rose by 23%. An [estimated 1.7 million people](#) in the UK tested positive over those seven days. Two million of us [now have long Covid](#), with about two in five of those – or 826,000 people – having symptoms for at least a year.

And yet, listen to [Boris Johnson](#) or his ministers and you'd be forgiven for thinking none of this was really happening. As a new coronavirus wave threatens to hit the country once again, the government appears more interested in scrapping human rights than protecting human lives. Welcome

to sick man Britain: where the public are left to catch coronavirus repeatedly, and ministers pretend everything is fine.

Back in February, Johnson said the government had created a plan to start “living with Covid”, but what it really did was form a plan to catch and spread Covid. After [all coronavirus prevention measures](#) were dropped on 1 April – from the legal obligation to isolate if you had Covid, to the end of most free testing – the public were left wide open to mass infection. Even hospitals were told by ministers to ditch mask mandates, though some worried trusts have defied the rules and kept them. That all precautions were pulled back just when most people’s vaccine immunity was beginning to fade, and the virus was evolving to be more transmissible, gives a hint at how little logic ministers applied.

One of the biggest problems facing Britain’s attempts to quell the virus is that this government doesn’t really want to. There is hope – the number of people dying from Covid has reduced since its peak – but excessive focus on this has long hidden the fact that loss of life has never been the only thing that matters: how many people are infected with the virus matters too. A strategy that lets the virus rip through the population increases the risk we all face, be it from surges, new dangerous variants, or in developing long Covid. Fundamentally, it means accepting a reality where it is deemed normal for many of us to be (possibly severely) sick, from a virus whose long-term effects – and the effects of repeated reinfection – we still know little about.

The likely longterm impact on the economy and society is similarly grim. It means more pressure on an NHS that’s already creaking under the weight of backlogs. It means sickness absences across key sectors and frontline workers, from nurses to teachers. Children missing more school. Not to mention soaring social security bills from long Covid patients who are too sick to work (the government’s solution to this appears to be [turning them down for disability benefits](#)).

There will be few greater casualties though than the 3.7 million clinically extremely vulnerable people, especially the 500,000 who are immunocompromised and can’t get much or any benefit from a booster jab.

Trying to avoid the virus in a country that has forgone all safety measures means risking your life when you pop to the shops. Ministers who are content for repeated coronavirus infection to just become part of British life are content for isolation to be part of clinically vulnerable people's.

There is an alternative. Campaigners are [calling](#) on the government to reinstate free lateral flow tests, the isolation requirement for those with a positive test, and financial help such as sick pay – few rational voices could disagree. Fixing our [dire sick pay rates](#) is only becoming more pressing in a cost of living crisis that means low-paid and insecure workers are likely to feel obliged to go into work when they have Covid. We must also start a long-term investment in ventilation and air filtration that can help make schools and workplaces safer, as well as making lifesaving antiviral treatment [more accessible](#) to clinically vulnerable patients.

It's also time for a renewed public health campaign for boosters; as of this month, around a fifth of people aged 75 and over in England are [yet to have a fourth Covid jab](#). And fiddly though it is, wearing masks in busy and enclosed spaces again is the right thing to do; just under half of Britons (48%) reported wearing a face covering when outside their home last month, down from about 95% during the January Omicron wave.

After two long, tough years, no one wants to still be dealing with coronavirus. I don't want to be writing this column. But unless we wish to sign up to getting repeatedly sick for the foreseeable future, and to the risk of long-term disability from long Covid, we are going to have to bring back low-effort protective measures to curb it. A [recent public health campaign in Ireland](#), which encourages people to think of clinically vulnerable people in their daily interactions, shows how easy it is to do things differently.

The government may want to stop thinking about coronavirus, but in doing so, it is ensuring that all of us have to think about it for a long time to come. That's something we will surely all get sick of fast.

Frances Ryan is a Guardian columnist

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[Project Syndicate economists](#)[Inflation](#)

## Central bank policymakers should not assume reputations will recover

[Howard Davies](#)

As inflation soars, the Fed, ECB, Bank of England and others are more regularly challenged than in the past



Some have accused Bank of England's Andrew Bailey of washing his hands of the inflation problem by blaming exogenous factors for the increase in prices. Photograph: Reuters

Tue 28 Jun 2022 02.41 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 02.42 EDT

Who would want to be responsible for monetary policy in 2022? To judge from the fierce economic and political debates under way around the world, it is as though open season has been declared on central bank governors: they are being criticised from all sides.

The US Federal Reserve chair, Jerome Powell, and his colleagues are accused of failing to spot the early signs of an inflationary threat last year. As late as last autumn, they were [arguing](#) that price rises were “transitory”. With annual US inflation today [approaching double figures](#), that looks to have been a [poor judgment](#). But now that the Fed has acknowledged its mistake and is [raising interest rates](#), many accuse it of choking off the post-pandemic recovery, collapsing equity and bond markets, and precipitating a recession.

The European Central Bank has still not begun to raise rates, although it is [expected to do so](#) in July. The ECB is charged with indecision and with sowing the seeds of a new eurozone crisis by suggesting a potential reversal of quantitative easing. The spread between the yields on Italian and German government bonds has [widened considerably](#), threatening the fiscal stability of southern Europe. An anti-fragmentation weapon has been promised but remains on the drawing board for now.

The Bank of England faces a charge sheet resembling the one drawn up against the Fed, with a couple of added wrinkles

The Bank of England faces a charge sheet resembling the one drawn up against the Fed, with a couple of added wrinkles. Some have accused the Bank’s governor, Andrew Bailey, of washing his hands of the inflation problem by [blaming exogenous factors](#) – the war in Ukraine and energy shortages – for the increase in prices. The Bank is accused of “groupthink”, too. Three of the four external members of its monetary policy committee have voted twice for higher rates, only to be thwarted by the Bank’s five insiders.

The Bank of Japan is in a different position. It is accused of doing nothing and presiding over a [sharp fall](#) in the external value of the yen.

It is tempting to conclude that today’s central bankers are damned if they do and damned if they don’t. Maybe if they sit tight, they will ride out the storm. The then Fed chair, [Paul Volcker](#), was public enemy number one in the US in the early 1980s, when he squeezed post-oil-shock inflation out of

the system with double-digit interest rates. But in his later years he was revered, and became a national treasure, called on to advise successive presidents in any financial emergency.

But central bankers would be wise not to assume that their reputations will automatically recover, and that the status quo ante will be restored. We live in a more disputatious age than the 1980s. Public institutions are more regularly challenged and held to account by far less reverential legislators.

When another former Fed chair, Alan Greenspan, [told Congress](#) that he had “learned to mumble with great incoherence”, it was taken as a witty aside. Such a remark would not go down so well today. Taking pride in being obscure is no longer fashionable. After a long period when overtly criticising an independent central bank was not the done thing, politicians nowadays often do so with alacrity. The Fed and the ECB have strong critics in Congress and the European parliament respectively. One of the UK prime minister Boris Johnson’s closest political allies has called for Bailey’s [head at the Bank of England](#).

Moreover, former central bankers have joined the chorus of critics. The former Fed chair Ben Bernanke, breaking the unwritten rule not to reproach one’s successors, has [said](#) that today’s Fed made “a mistake” by responding slowly to inflation. And Bailey’s immediate predecessors, Mervyn King and Mark Carney, have [weighed in](#), too, with challenges to the [Bank’s policy](#). The fabric of the central banking fraternity is fraying.

Will this disapproval gather strength? Could it coalesce into a coherent critique, perhaps leading to a rethink of central bank independence and inflation targeting?

Although central banks hardly performed impressively in the run-up to the 2008 global financial crisis, they were, paradoxically, the biggest winners in its aftermath. Despite monetary policymakers’ failings, governments around the world gave them new powers and responsibilities, especially in the regulatory arena. They emerged stronger than ever.

But now there are ominous signs of a backlash, including in two new books that challenge the policy orthodoxy of recent decades. Two swallows do not

make a summer but they do give reason to wonder if the weather is about to change.

In [The Price of Time](#), Edward Chancellor mounts a full-frontal assault on the policies adopted by central banks in the past 15 years. In his view, by single-mindedly focusing on consumer price inflation and neglecting asset prices, central bankers have damaged investment and growth, created financial instability with very low interest rates, and increased inequality through QE. The paradigm, Chancellor argues, needs serious reworking. Monetary authorities need different objectives and enhanced accountability.

Jon Danielsson, a professor of finance at the London School of Economics, is more concerned by the excessive concentration of power. In [The Illusion of Control](#), he argues that putting central banks in charge of financial stability is an error because they face “a complex, ill-defined policy domain for which there is no clear consensus on either the problem or the objective”. So, the enterprise is doomed to fail. Separate agencies, with more direct political accountability, are needed for that task.

These critiques may be overstated. But they raise important questions for central banks to address. Mumbling with great incoherence will not put these challenges to bed. Monetary policymakers will need to marshal their defences more effectively and should not assume that central bank independence is the end of monetary history.

*Sir Howard Davies, the first chairman of the UK's Financial Services Authority, is the chairman of NatWest Group. He was director of the LSE and served as deputy governor of the [Bank of England](#) and CBI director general.*

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## 2022.06.28 - Around the world

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## Migration and development

# Revealed: Greek police coerce asylum seekers into pushing fellow migrants back to Turkey

Six forcibly recruited men speak out about brutal illegal pushbacks involving threats, beating and looting



Migrants by an inflatable boat on the Evros river in Turkey, waiting to cross over to Greece. Local people in border villages talk of asylum seekers who ‘work’ for police. Photograph: Felipe Dana/AP

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[Katy Fallon](#), [Klaas van Dijken](#), [Bashar Deeb](#), [Jack Sapoch](#) and [Mohannad Al-Najjar](#)

Tue 28 Jun 2022 01.45 EDT Last modified on Wed 29 Jun 2022 00.08 EDT

In a militarised border zone, in the dead of night, asylum seekers say they have been coerced into violent, illegal pushback operations run by Greek police.

Kept locked up between operations, the asylum seekers claim they were forcibly recruited or lured there by a Syrian man living in a container in the yard of a Greek police station, and then used as boatmen to ferry other migrants back to [Turkey](#).

Six migrants, Syrian and Moroccan, have told how they participated in pushback operations on the Evros river under duress, in return for a police note permitting them a month's stay in [Greece](#). Two of the men described themselves as "slaves". They said they witnessed Greek police strip, rob and assault asylum seekers before they were put back into overcrowded inflatable boats that the men were then ordered to transport back across the deep and fast-running river to the Turkish bank.



One of the migrants, who confirmed their role in pushing migrants back over the border. Photograph: Lighthouse Report/Handout

A joint investigation by the Guardian, [Lighthouse Reports](#), Le Monde, Der Spiegel and ARD Report München has obtained visual evidence to corroborate the men's testimony, and documents confirming their detention and later release by Greek authorities. The men were among those who responded to the Facebook group [Consolidated Rescue group](#), which had asked people to speak out on the practice.

[Reports of pushbacks](#) have multiplied since March 2020 when thousands of people, many herded there by Turkish authorities, arrived at Greek borders after Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced he had opened "the gate" into Europe. Greek authorities and its prime minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, have [constantly rejected allegations](#), insisting that Greece has a "firm but fair" migration policy.

But local people in border villages talked openly of the asylum seekers, usually masked, who "work" for police, and two senior Greek officers confirmed the practice of using third-country nationals as proxies in pushbacks.

The men themselves alleged systematic coercion. Bassel\*, a Syrian, said he spent three months in a police cell at Tychero, near the Greece-Turkey border, pushing others back.

Bassel had crossed the Evros into Greece, hoping to claim asylum. His group was met by Greek police who he says beat them with batons and drove them to Tychero police station. There they were ordered to strip and crammed into overcrowded cells.

After being identified as an English speaker, Bassel said he was pulled out and offered a deal: he would work for the police or be charged with human smuggling and go to prison. In return for a permit to remain in Greece for one month, he would remain locked up during the day and released at night to push back other asylum seekers.

Bassel\* said he was told the “work” would be unpaid but he could take his pick of the migrants’ belongings. Two others told the same story of recruitment and of the beatings that ensued if anything went wrong during an operation.

“This work is very dangerous, also because of the enmity between the Greeks and the Turks,” Bassel said. Police sources speaking to the investigation confirmed that it is to avoid confrontations with Turkish security forces that proxies like Bassel are used.

Three Syrians held at another police station, Neo Cheimonio, told a similar story. All had paid up to €5,000 (£4,300) to an Istanbul middleman to cross into Greece via a smuggler, who said there would be a Syrian waiting for them with Greek police. They were horrified to realise they were expected to row migrant boats back to Turkey in exchange for their own crossing.



A still picture taken from a video of ‘Mike’, a Syrian migrant said to help police at Neo Cheimonio. Photograph: Handout

One of them, Farhad, said they were regularly threatened by a Syrian calling himself “Mike”, who worked at Neo Cheimonio, assisting police in illegal pushbacks and recruiting and coordinating asylum seekers.

Farhad said he initially refused to participate but was told by “Mike” he risked not just losing his money but “vanishing” if he returned to Istanbul.

“Mike”, who lived in the police station grounds, would search apprehended asylum seekers on the river bank before they were sent back. He was particularly keen on gold jewellery, and became violent if people did not hand over valuables.

Well-built and with a tattoo of a Spartan helmet, “Mike”, was identified by the men as well as by a local shopowner, who had seen him with police. The investigation has also seen photographs of him at the station. “Mike” is said to work with his brother, a convicted killer wanted for kidnapping and on multiple smuggling charges.

Bassel was released and has now left Greece, but is traumatised by his time kept in a cell and brought out, masked, to row groups of desperate, often

half-naked asylum seekers back to Turkey.

“I call this stage the stage of slavery,” he said.

The Guardian contacted Tychero and Neo Cheimonio police stations, the minister for citizen protection and the president of the border guards of Evros multiple times but had no response by the time of publication.

*\*Names have been changed to protect identities*

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## [Sri Lanka](#)

# Sri Lanka suspends fuel sales for two weeks as economic crisis worsens

Ban on sales to everything except essential services comes as nation tries to conserve fuel supplies that are barely enough to last a single day



A Sri Lankan security official stands guard outside a fuel station that ran out of petrol in Colombo, Sri Lanka on Monday. Photograph: AFP/Getty Images

*Agence France-Presse*

Mon 27 Jun 2022 20.30 EDT Last modified on Wed 29 Jun 2022 00.10 EDT

Cash-strapped [Sri Lanka](#) has announced a two-week halt to all fuel sales except for essential services and called for a partial shutdown as its unprecedented economic crisis deepened.

The south Asian nation is facing its worst [economic meltdown](#) since gaining independence from Britain in 1948, and has been unable to finance even the imports of essentials since late last year.

[As fuel reserves hit rock bottom](#) with supplies barely enough for just one more day, government spokesperson Bandula Gunawardana said the sales ban was to save petrol and diesel for emergencies.

He urged the private sector to let employees work from home as public transport ground to a halt.

“From midnight today, no fuel will be sold except for essential services like the health sector, because we want to conserve the little reserves we have,” Gunawardana said in a prerecorded statement.

He apologised to consumers for the shortages: “We regret the inconvenience caused to the people.”



A woman returns home from work on her bicycle in Colombo amid Sri Lanka's fuel and economic crisis. Photograph: Pradeep Dambarage/NurPhoto/Rex/Shutterstock

The country is also facing record high inflation and lengthy power blackouts, all of which have contributed to [months of protests](#) – sometimes violent – [calling on the president, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, to step down](#).

Last week, all government schools were shut down and state institutions operated with skeleton staff to reduce commuting and preserve oil.

The state sector shutdown was meant to end this week, but it is now being extended until 10 July, when Gunawardana promised to restore fuel supplies.

On Sunday, the government promised it will implement a token system to ration distribution of limited fuel stocks, but it failed to take off.

There have been long queues outside the few pumping stations which still had supplies.

Sri Lanka is seeking cheap oil from Russia and Qatar.

Earlier this month, the United Nations launched an emergency response to the island's unprecedented economic crisis, feeding thousands of pregnant women who were facing food shortages.

Four out of five people in Sri Lanka have started skipping meals as they cannot afford to eat, the UN has said, warning of a looming "dire humanitarian crisis" with millions in need of aid.

Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$51bn foreign debt in April, and is in talks with the International Monetary Fund for a bailout.

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## Ghislaine Maxwell

# Ghislaine Maxwell prosecutors seek up to 55-year sentence for sex trafficking

Maxwell, 60, faces 30 to 55 years in prison after she was found guilty of procuring teenage girls for Jeffrey Epstein to abuse



Ghislaine Maxwell during her sex-trafficking trial. Prosecutors have pressed for a minimum 30-year prison sentence. Photograph: Elizabeth Williams/AP

*[Victoria Bekiempis](#) in New York*

Tue 28 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 01.01 EDT

[Ghislaine Maxwell](#) is scheduled to be sentenced on Tuesday morning in her New York sex-trafficking case, some six months after a jury found the British socialite guilty of luring teenage girls into [Jeffrey Epstein](#)'s orbit for him to abuse.

Maxwell, 60, faces up to 55 years in prison.

Some of Maxwell's victims are expected to make statements at her sentencing. Maxwell maintains her innocence.

Epstein, a convicted sex offender who once counted Britain's Prince Andrew and Bill Clinton in his circle of wealthy and influential associates, was arrested by federal officials in July 2019, on sex-trafficking counts. He killed himself in a [New York City](#) federal jail, while waiting for trial.

Maxwell's attorneys have argued for leniency in sentencing, saying that she should receive a punishment "[well below](#)" the 20 years recommended by federal probation authorities. They cast Maxwell as a scapegoat for the crimes of Epstein – who could not be prosecuted because of his death – and a victim of [childhood neglect](#).

"Ms Maxwell cannot and should not bear all the punishment for which Epstein should have been held responsible. Ms Maxwell has already experienced a hard time during detention under conditions far more onerous and punitive than any experienced by a typical pre-trial detainee, and she is preparing to spend significantly more time behind bars," they argued. "Her life has been ruined."

"Ms Maxwell is not a dangerous criminal or a habitual offender. She is someone who wants nothing more than to live a normal family life – something she was denied because of her association with Epstein and will now almost certainly never have," they contended. "The public does not need to be protected from Ms Maxwell and such considerations should have no weight in determining her sentence."

"She had a difficult, traumatic childhood with an overbearing, narcissistic and demanding father," they also said. "It made her vulnerable to Epstein, whom she met right after her father's death. It is the biggest mistake she made in her life and one that she has not and never will repeat."

In their sentencing paperwork on Wednesday, prosecutors condemned leniency efforts.

“Ghislaine Maxwell sexually exploited young girls for years. It is difficult to overstate the magnitude of her crimes and the harm she caused. Her crimes demand justice,” they argued. “The government urges the court to impose a sentence within the applicable guidelines range of 360 to 660 months’ imprisonment.”

“Maxwell’s conduct was shockingly predatory,” prosecutors said. “She was a calculating, sophisticated, and dangerous criminal who preyed on vulnerable young girls and groomed them for sexual abuse.

“Not only did her conduct exhibit a callous disregard for other human beings, but her practice of targeting vulnerable victims reflects her view that struggling young girls could be treated like disposable objects.”

They also said: “The defendant acted as an organizer and leader of a massive operation that spanned many years.”

While probation authorities, and lawyers on both sides, make sentencing recommendations, the decision will ultimately rest with Judge Alison Nathan.

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## January 6 hearings

# January 6 committee focuses on phone calls among Trump's children and aides

Footage captured by documentary film-maker understood to show ex-president's children privately discussing election strategies



The select committee investigating the Capitol attack is interested in conversations among Donald Trump's children and top aides on 29 September 2020. Photograph: Carlos Barría/Reuters

*[Hugo Lowell](#) in Washington*

Tue 28 Jun 2022 00.01 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 08.34 EDT

The House select committee investigating the January 6 Capitol attack is closely focused on phone calls and conversations among Donald Trump's children and top aides captured by a documentary film-maker weeks before the 2020 election, say sources familiar with the matter.

The calls among Trump's children and top aides took place at an invitation-only event at the Trump International hotel in Washington that took place the night of the [first presidential debate on 29 September 2020](#), the sources said.

The select committee is interested in the calls, the sources said, since the footage is understood to show the former president's children, including Donald Jr and Eric Trump, privately discussing strategies about the election at a crucial time in the presidential campaign.

House investigators first learned about the event, hosted by the Trump campaign, and the existence of the footage through British film-maker Alex Holder, who testified about what he and his crew recorded during a two-hour interview last week, the sources said.

The film-maker testified that he had recorded around seven hours of one-to-one interviews with Trump, then-vice president Mike Pence, Trump's adult children and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, the sources said, as well as around 110 hours of footage from the campaign.

But one part of Holder's testimony that particularly piqued the interest of the members of the select committee and chief investigative counsel Tim Heaphy was when he disclosed that he had managed to record discussions at the 29 September event.

The select committee is closely focused on the footage of the event – in addition to the content of the one-on-one interviews with Trump and Ivanka – because the discussions about strategies mirror similar conversations at that time by top Trump advisors.

On the night of the first presidential debate, Trump's top former strategist [Steve Bannon](#) said in an interview with *The Circus* on Showtime that the outcome of the election would be decided at the state level and eventually at the congressional certification on January 6.

“They’re going to try and overturn this election with uncertified votes,” Bannon said. Asked how he expects the election to end, Bannon said: “Right

before noon on the 20th, in a vote in the House, Trump will win the presidency.”

The select committee believes that ideas such as Bannon’s were communicated to advisers to Donald Jr and his fiancee, Kimberly Guilfoyle, even before the 2020 election had taken place, the sources said – leading House investigators to want to review the Trump hotel footage.

What appears to interest the panel is whether Trump and his children had planned to somehow stop the certification of the election on January 6 – a potential violation of federal law – and to force a contingent election if Trump lost as early as September.

The event was not open to the public, Holder is said to have testified, and the documentary film-maker was waved into the Trump hotel by Eric Trump. At some point after Holder caught the calls on tape, he is said to have been asked to leave by Donald Jr.

Among the conversations captured on film was Eric Trump on the phone to an unidentified person saying, according to one source familiar: “Hopefully you’re voting in Florida as opposed to the other state you’ve mentioned.”

The phone call – a clip of which was reviewed by the Guardian – was one of several by some of the people closest to Trump that Holder memorialized in his film, titled Unprecedented, which is due to be released in a three-part series later this year on Discovery+.

Holder also testified to the select committee, the sources said, about the content of the interviews. Holder interviewed Trump in early December 2020 at the White House, and then twice a few months after the Capitol attack both at Mar-a-Lago and his Bedminster golf club in New Jersey.

The select committee found Holder’s testimony and material more explosive than they had expected, the sources said. Holder, for instance, showed the panel a discrepancy between Ivanka Trump’s testimony to the panel and Holder’s camera.

In her interview in December 2020, the New York Times earlier reported, Ivanka said her father should “continue to fight until every legal remedy is exhausted” because people were questioning “the sanctity of our elections”.

That interview was recorded nine days after former attorney general William Barr told Trump there was no evidence of election fraud. But [in her interview with the select committee](#), Ivanka said she had “accepted” what Barr had said.

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## [Video art](#)

# From Poirot to poppers! Jarman award shortlist celebrates ‘risk-taking’ film-makers

Contenders for the £10,000 video art prize offer up a range of work, from explorations of the UK prison system to surreal skin cream adverts



Holding it together ... a still from Alberta-Whittle, 2020's Holding The Line  
Photograph: Alberta Whittle

[Tim Jonze](#)

[@timjonze](#)

Tue 28 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 03.37 EDT

From Agatha Christie novels to montages of gay porn, the source material for the 2022 Film London Jarman award nominees list is as varied as the work itself.

This year's contenders for the £10,000 prize include British-Kenyan filmmaker Grace Ndiritu, whose 2021 film Black Beauty sets an advert for factor 5,000 skin cream against a hallucinatory television interview with the writer Jorge Luis Borges. And Onyeka Igwe, a London-based artist whose 2022 film The Miracle on George Green tells the story of the children who tried to save an ancient sweet chestnut tree in Wanstead, east London by writing letters addressed to the treehouse inside it.

The award, which is named after the pioneering filmmaker [Derek Jarman](#) and recognises British artists working with moving images, has gained a reputation for spotting burgeoning talent within the UK art scene. Previous names on the shortlist have included Heather Phillipson, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Monster Chetwynd and Charlotte Prodger.



Reimagining literature ... a still from Rosa-Johan Uddoh's Black Poirot (2019-2021). Photograph: Rosa-Johan Uddoh

Rosa-Johan Uddoh, an interdisciplinary artist inspired by Black feminist practice, is another hotly tipped name on the shortlist. She reimagines classic literature with Black Poirot (2019-2021), which is billed as a “20-minute ride on the Orientalised-Other Express”, whereas her other films investigate the lack of Black British history on the national curriculum (2021’s Practice

Makes Perfect) and racial passing in African-American social institutions (2021's Brown Paper Envelope Test).

Elsewhere, Glasgow School of [Art](#) graduate Jamie Crewe offers up a disorientating sensory overload with 2022's False Wife, which was inspired by compilations of pornography known as "poppers training videos" that instruct users into achieving greater pleasure through the use of amyl nitrate.

Making up the list are London-based artist and writer Morgan Quaintance, who looks at the vibrant cultural scene of Senegal's capital city with 2019's Letter from Dakar, and Alberta Whittle, a Barbadian-Scottish multimedia artist, researcher and curator whose 40-minute 2022 film Lagareh shines a light on the racial injustices of the UK prison system, and whose 2020 work Holding The Line came together during the BLM protests.



Racial injustices ... a still from Alberta Whittle's Lagareh (2022). Photograph: © Alberta Whittle. Courtesy the artist, Scotland+Venice, and Forma 2

Adrian Wootton , chief executive of Film London and the British Film Commission, said: "Risk-taking in both subject matter and form, the 2022 shortlist showcases a diversity of themes that question and articulate the world around us."

The winner of this year's Jarman award is set to be announced on the week of 21 November. The work of the nominees can be viewed in the run-up to the event on the [Whitechapel Gallery website](#) as well as at various cultural venues around the country.

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## **Headlines monday 27 june 2022**

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## Barristers

# Criminal barristers begin strike in row over legal aid fees

The CBA says the offer of a 15% uplift in fees is insufficient and is calling for a 25% rise to make up for years of funding cuts



Barristers protest outside Manchester crown courts. Criminal barristers say they can end up being paid less than the minimum wage for court hearings.  
Photograph: Christopher Thomond/The Guardian

*[Haroon Siddique](#) Legal affairs correspondent*

Mon 27 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 27 Jun 2022 06.47 EDT

Criminal barristers in England and Wales are to [begin a strike](#) over legal aid fees on Monday, as they warn the profession is facing an “existential crisis” because of inadequate funding.

The Criminal Bar Association (CBA) said the offer of a 15% uplift in fees, which was the minimum increase recommended by the [criminal legal aid](#)

review (Clar), is insufficient after swingeing cuts – and will not apply to the backlog of 58,000 cases in crown courts.

It says incomes have fallen nearly 30% over the last two decades and specialist criminal barristers make an average annual income after expenses of £12,200 in the first three years of practice, driving 22% of junior criminal barristers to leave since 2016.

Barristers participating in the strike on Monday spoke of being paid less than the minimum wage for court hearings when travel and hours spent preparing are factored in – and not at all when hearings are cancelled.

Mira Hammad, who is based in Liverpool, and was called to the bar in 2019, said: “The criminal justice system is falling apart. Cases aren’t going ahead because there aren’t enough barristers, there aren’t enough judges, there’s not enough court resources.

“As a criminal barrister you can’t earn enough, so I do inquest work as well as crime. If I was doing solely crime I would not be able to earn a living. It’s unsustainable for anyone involved in the system.

“The fact that there’s no funding in the system means that it’s also an incredibly stressful and frustrating job to do. You don’t get paid well and you’re constantly having to work within a system that is just completely dysfunctional.”

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The walkout is the first by criminal barristers since 2014, until now the only time they have gone on strike. That too was over legal aid fees. CBA members supported action to secure fair fees in 2019, but it was suspended pending the outcome of Clar, which contained the 15% fee increase recommendation when it was finally published last December.

The CBA is angry that after the review took so long the government did not implement the pay rise immediately, but launched a consultation on the

recommendations in March which only closed earlier this month. It wants a 25% rise to make up for years of real terms reductions.

Andrew Fitch-Holland, a criminal barrister based in Nottingham, who was called to the bar in 1990, said practitioners' goodwill had been exploited.

"People are at breaking point, I've seen colleagues in tears," he said. "I know of the level of personal debt people are taking on. We are all struggling to make ends meet and frankly sick and tired of not being paid for the work we do."

He added: "We're not being greedy, we're not fat cats. There have been a series of brutal cuts to our funding at a time when also, over the years, the demands of the job have increased. So we're not only getting paid less, but we're being asked to do more for less. We have reached an existential crisis and the criminal bar is haemorrhaging members."

Barristers will walk out on Monday and Tuesday initially, increasing the number of strike days by one each week, culminating with a five-day walkout in the week beginning 18 July. There will be picket lines at crown courts in London (at the Old Bailey), Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Leeds and Manchester.

They will also not accept instructions for new cases and, continuing industrial action that they began on 11 April, will refuse to accept returns, where they step in to replace the original barrister at a court hearing that the latter can no longer attend. The action will lead to cases being delayed, exacerbating the backlog crisis.

The government has called the CBA's decision "disappointing" and said the "unnecessary" strikes would only harm victims. It has questioned the CBA's mandate for the action and claims a 15% increase would mean a typical criminal barrister earning about £7,000 extra a year.

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## Barristers

# Why are criminal barristers in England and Wales striking and what will be the impact?

The series of strikes over a legal aid funding row comes amid a huge backlog of cases in the crown courts



Walkouts will take place across courts in England and Wales, including Manchester crown court. Photograph: Christopher Thomond/The Guardian

*[Haroon Siddique](#) Legal affairs correspondent*

Mon 27 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 27 Jun 2022 06.32 EDT

Criminal barristers in England and Wales [begin a series of strikes](#) over legal aid funding on Monday. We explain why they are striking and what the impact is likely to be.

## Why are they striking?

The long-awaited [criminal legal aid review](#) (Clar), published in December, recommended a minimum increase in legal aid fees of 15%. Members of the Criminal Bar Association (CBA) say that is too low and want 25%.

Junior barristers can earn as little as £88 a day in court for a bail application and are not paid for preparation work or travel, meaning they can end up earning less than the minimum wage. The CBA says specialist criminal barristers make an average annual income after expenses of £12,200 in the first three years of practice, and that 22% of junior criminal barristers have left since 2016.

It is also aggrieved that the government did not respond to the Clar until March, when it launched a 12-week consultation on reforms, further delaying an increase in fees, which will not apply to the approximately [58,000 backlog of cases in the crown courts](#).

## What will the action involve?

Walkouts will begin on Monday and Tuesday. Each week the number of walkout days will increase by one day until there is a five-day strike in the week beginning 18 July. From Monday, barristers will also not accept instructions for new cases. Additionally, continuing industrial action, [which they began on 11 April](#), criminal barristers will also refuse to accept returns, where they step in to replace the original barrister at a court hearing that the latter can no longer attend.

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## What impact will the strikes have?

Cases will have to be adjourned/postponed, exacerbating the backlog in crown courts, which stands at about 58,000, little changed from six months ago despite the lifting of Covid restrictions. Last year, [a parliamentary committee blamed the backlog](#) on the [legal aid budget](#) being slashed by 40% in less than a decade.

## **Is there a precedent for barristers striking?**

What is believed to be the only previous strike in the bar's history took place in 2014. It was called off after a day and a half when the government suspended planned legal aid cuts.

## **What does the government say?**

It says less than 50% of CBA members voted in support of the option likely to cause the most disruption – no returns, no new instructions and strikes – although, in total, 81.5% of voters backed one of the three options on the ballot sheet that included strikes. It adds that it is trying to introduce a 15% increase in fees by the end of September, which it says would mean a typical criminal barrister earning about £7,000 extra a year.

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## Information

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## 2022.06.27 - Spotlight

- 'This was properly amazing work' The artist's life's work found in a skip
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## ‘This was properly amazing work’: the artist’s life’s work found in a skip



‘I couldn’t save it all’ ... Alan Warburton, who rescued his late neighbour’s pop art drawings from a skip. Photograph: Linda Nylind/The Guardian

George Westren’s op-art drawings went viral on social media after a neighbour saved them from the tip – now they might get an exhibition of

their own



[Tim Jonze](#)

[@timjonze](#)

Mon 27 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

For a short time last week, the entire works of artist George Westren were sat in a skip, heading for the rubbish dump. A few hours later, however, and they were going viral on social media, with people across the world marvelling at his technique and enquiring as to how they might buy some of the late artist's work.

None of this would have been possible if it wasn't for the actions of "nosy neighbour" Alan Warburton. Warburton had been left saddened during lockdown by the news that Westren, his shy upstairs neighbour of six years, had died alone in his flat. Last week, after hearing removal men emptying out the place, he was horrified to see hundreds of Westren's drawings and paintings bagged up and headed for the tip.

"I couldn't save it all," he says from his Spitalfields flat, where Westren's collected works currently reside. "The removal men were in a rush to get the

job done. But I saw George's portfolio lying in the skip and managed to get that. There were more than 150 drawings in there."

And what drawings. Warburton [is an artist himself](#), working in video and animation, and he couldn't believe the quality of Westren's pieces. They were almost all op-art drawings and paintings, geometric shapes heavily influenced by the British artist Bridget Riley. "Seeing the precision, knowing how difficult it is to do what he's done, I was really impressed," says Warbuton. "This was properly amazing, professional quality work. I can imagine him upstairs, working on it for weeks, it being his whole life."



'Art was his whole life' ... George Westren. Photograph: Kim Noble

Even so, he didn't expect the huge response that followed when he took to Twitter to post an image of his haul with the words: "Clearance company arrived this morning and were about to chuck hundreds of beautiful op-art drawings away". Celebrities such as tennis star Martina Navratilova helped spread the story ("Amazing art ... definitely must be saved!" she said), while others who knew Westren got in touch to help Warburton piece together the life story of the neighbour he barely knew. It soon became clear that Westren had had a troubled life, marked by periods of homelessness and alcoholism. Yet art had been his salvation. He appears to have first started drawing after a stint in rehab in 1999, and was believed to have added colour

to his work after finally overcoming his addiction. “Some of the titles are so beautiful,” notes Warburton. “My favourite is called Star Of Hope.”

Westren was a genuine outsider artist – his chosen medium was felt-tip pen, presumably because it was affordable. But some of the compositions are intricate and adventurous, involving complex star designs and diagonals. Did Westren have a background in maths or engineering? Was, as some Twitter users have suggested, his proximity to the African fabrics on Petticoat Lane market an influence on his colour schemes? Warburton is still filling in many blanks.

Kim Noble, [an artist](#) and leader of the arts collective in Islington that Westren was a part of, says: “Art saved George’s life. When he was homeless he once took shelter from the rain in an art gallery and it happened to be a Bridget Riley exhibition. Something in those works inspired George to pick up a pen and try to replicate those images.”

Noble remembers his pupil as a softly spoken gentleman with a sharp sense of humour. “But he didn’t need or want teaching. He just wanted to draw these geometric patterns over and over again. He would attend the art group once a week for nearly 20 years until it was closed down, always with his art portfolio which he took everywhere – even if he often left it on the bus! He was so dedicated to that art collective and his art.”

In particular, Noble remembers a private view for his own work in [London](#). “George came along and, although a quiet man, he proceeded to hold court with everyone, opening up his portfolio, showing anyone and everyone his drawings. People were really taken by him by the end of the evening – I think they forgot it was actually my work on display!” Both Noble and Warburton are confident that Westren would have loved for his artwork to have been shared and so widely admired.

Now Warburton hopes to do his neighbour justice by putting on a show of his work. He has already found a company to scan 30 of the best images and he plans to sell these prints to fund a small memorial show. He also hopes to find someone who can frame and preserve the works properly. “I don’t own the work, I’m only a temporary custodian,” he is keen to stress.

The experience has left him thinking deeply about life, legacies and loneliness. Before Westren died, Warburton knew him simply as the “sweet old man” upstairs. He would often see him coming and going and wonder what his life involved. “I thought maybe he was a journalist,” he says. Finding out that he was a fellow artist, and that the pair could possibly have been friends rather than just acquaintances who shared the occasional word, has led Warburton to think about the bigger picture.

“There are shy people in our communities: gentle, solitary people who probably won’t reach out for help even if they need it. And to think that I was so close and we had so much in common. So I think that’s why I see a kindred spirit in George, and I hope others can see that too.”

- [George Westren's prints](#) are available to buy.
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[Isy Suttie](#)

Interview

## **Isy Suttie: ‘I was like: are they just here to see Dobby?’**

[Rachel Aroesti](#)



Isy Suttie: ‘Their are element of me that want to take risks’ Photograph:  
Matt Crockett

The actor, writer, musician, podcaster and comedian is returning to standup after overwork and parenthood left her burnt out. She discusses motherhood, Fomo and life after Peep Show



Mon 27 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

In one very important sense, motherhood is an exercise in mitigating risk: you are the cautious and dutiful protector of society's most vulnerable. But what if you're also a natural-born thrill-seeker who lives for transgressive fun? What then?

In Jackpot, her new standup show, Isy Suttie explores precisely this contradiction. As a teenager growing up in the picturesque spa town of Matlock in Derbyshire, her life revolved around the pursuit of excitement: some of her wilder escapades included touring multiple house parties in a single evening with her Ouija board, and jumping off a 30ft bridge for a £1 bet. Now, her life has all the hallmarks of measured domesticity – she has a seven-year-old daughter and three-year-old son with her partner, fellow comic Elis James – and yet “the element of me that does want to take risks” remains, she explains over a flat white in a south London coffee shop that is full of mothers conscientiously attending to babes in buggies.

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It is something the 43-year-old still finds herself drawn to. In Jackpot, she recounts the time she encouraged her kids to explore a disturbingly spooky campsite in the woods near her house (they were terrified), and how, with them gone, she engaged in some light trespassing at a nuclear power station with a couple of friends from mum yoga (the police became involved).

Jackpot is Suttie's return to standup after a very long break: she has not toured for a decade. Instead, she has been busy writing books (in 2016 she published a [memoir](#), *The Actual One*, and last year, a novel called [Jane Is Trying](#)), podcasting and acting; her CV includes recurring roles in [Shameless](#), [Man Down](#) and Jo Brand's social work sitcom [Damned](#). But it's as Dobby, the on-off girlfriend of [Peep Show](#)'s uber-relatable loser-geek Mark Corrigan, that she remains best loved. Nerdy, vivacious, kind and sharp-witted, Dobby is one of the most distinctive female roles in British TV comedy history. In her teens, Suttie says, she used to "dream" of playing Sally Phillips's giggling receptionist in *I'm Alan Partridge*; in sitcom character terms, I'd say she ended up going one better.



Isy Suttie as Dobby and David Mitchell as Mark Corrigan in Peep Show.  
Photograph: Angus Young/Channel 4 Picture Publicity

Yet as great as Dobby was, the role did end up derailing Suttie's standup career. At drama school she had harboured ambitions to become a serious actor and/or musician. "Me and my college boyfriend Tom used to sit up all night going: 'I'm going to be in a Mike Leigh film, then I'm going to be in a Ken Loach film, then I'll tour with Théâtre de Complicité.' There was no talk of: 'I'll do theatre in education for a year then I'll get turned down for an advert,'" she recalls, with an enthusiastic appreciation of her own ridiculousness.

I got a bit inside my own head and was like: 'Why are people here? Are they here to see Dobby?

Yet after graduating to zero work, she discovered London's standup scene, and soon found herself performing musical comedy on the gay club circuit. Her material included a song about Geri Halliwell's dog, a lullaby for Katie Price, and one about a man putting his penis into a chip fryer. "The chorus was: 'Eh, come on love, what's the matter / Have you never seen sausage in batter?' In a northern accent," recounts Suttie, trying and failing to keep a straight face.

As much as her camp, celebrity-centric material chimed with the gay scene, it was also a "real baptism of fire". She struggled to win over audiences, and soon migrated to the mainstream standup circuit. There, she thrived. In 2007, [a Chortle review](#) of her first solo Edinburgh show, a one-woman romcom musical set in a Matlock supermarket titled Love Lost in the British Retail Industry, hailed her as a "modern-day Victoria Wood". The following year she made her Peep Show debut; she knew she had nailed the audition thanks to the "tingly" ASMR-related sensation she experienced afterwards.



Isy Suttie performs at the Edinburgh festival fringe in 2011. Photograph: Robbie Jack/Corbis/Getty Images

On the set of her first series on the show, she was “really scared all the time. I was aware of how good it was and I was very quiet and shy.” Off set, she found that Dobby had supercharged her standup career – not always for the better. She was promoted to the top of bills, and gigs were advertised on her Peep Show credentials. “I got a bit inside my own head and was like: ‘Why are people here? Are they here to see Dobby? What do they expect?’” She worried that audiences would presume it was her first foray into standup. The stress was exacerbated by the fact she believed her Edinburgh show that year wasn’t up to scratch, having felt pressure to do the fringe regardless as a rising comedian. “It can feel like a really long Edinburgh where you have to do a show every day and you’re not happy with it,” she says.

Her new work is clearly not born of the same sense of Fomo: Suttie wasn’t planning on returning to standup when Jackpot’s concept came to her. It taps into a very different cultural zeitgeist than the irreverent, Heat magazine-adjacent spirit of the late 00s. Jackpot is part of a wave of comedy that muses, very amusingly, on the ways motherhood and identity intersect (see also: the work of standups [Ali Wong](#) and [Jessica Fostekew](#), books by comedians Lucy Beaumont and Ellie Taylor and sitcoms [Motherland](#) and [Better Things](#)). It’s a theme that also runs through Suttie’s next TV project,

[The Baby](#), which tackles the topic of motherhood in a marginally more disturbing fashion. The horror-comedy follows Natasha (Michelle de Swarte), a contentedly childfree thirtysomething gradually losing all her friends to parenthood who is targeted by a homicidal infant: the child latches on to a new “mother” each time he kills his previous caregiver (and plenty of others along the way).

Suttie plays Natasha’s newly pregnant best friend Rita – another deserter – and filming the show took her back to her pre-kids days. “I really, really related to Michelle’s character feeling bereft of friends when everyone around you starts having kids,” she says. “My first book was about that, really. In a way you do lose your friends when they have kids if you don’t have them, because it’s boring as hell to hear someone talk about their baby and be preoccupied, and not have a proper conversation with you.”

The Baby is laugh-out-loud funny but also genuinely disturbing; one field-based scene literally gave me nightmares. Best of all, it’s packed with subtle, blisteringly evocative allegories for the specific hell – the boredom, the sleep-deprivation, the mania, the crushing sense of responsibility – that is caring for a very small child. One of the cleverest elements of the early episodes is the way Natasha turns into a martyr: she won’t let anyone else look after the baby lest it murders them, a neat parallel for the exhausting instinct many new mothers have to control everything.

It’s something Suttie can relate to. “I remember not letting anyone else wash [her daughter] Beti’s bottles,” she says. “You’re so out of control of so many elements of it, like when they sleep, that you’re scrabbling to control what you can.”

In fact, Suttie’s attempts to do it all after the birth of her daughter in 2014 took its toll in a dramatic way: she developed a condition called migraine-associated vertigo, partly because of the stress she was under. “I did the book tour, I was filming a lot, I was away the whole time – and I was spending a lot of time with her. I wasn’t sleeping much. Both Elis and I would be filming and we’d meet at a service station and swap Beti over into a different car. In the end it was like, ‘One of us has to pull back a little bit.’”

Suttie ended up taking three months off work, even though, being “a perfectionist and a workaholic”, she didn’t particularly want to. During those months she realised not working wasn’t “right for me, but I shouldn’t be working as much. So it was a case of: what do I really want to do?”

The answer seems to be a bit of everything. After our interview, I leave Suttie behind in the baby-garlanded coffee shop; she is staying to catch up on her reading in preparation for the new series of the Penguin books podcast she presents. It’s just one component of a life that takes in writing, acting, parenting, standup, podcasting and, of course, the odd foray into a haunted campsite or nuclear power plant. It may not be everyone’s idea of a good time, but Suttie has clearly worked out how to hit her own personal jackpot.

*Jackpot tours from 22 August, starting at [London’s Soho theatre](#); The Baby airs on Sky Atlantic in July.*

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## Money hacksMobile phones

# Mobile deals: how to buy a smartphone for less

They are essential tools but can be expensive. From trade-ins to refurb there are ways to get a better deal



Paying for a mobile upfront usually works out the cheapest way of owning it over the long term, but not always. Illustration: Jamie Wignall

*[Samuel Gibbs](#) Consumer technology editor*

Mon 27 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT

## Shop around

Prices for the same model regularly fluctuate between retailers. While manufacturers typically only sell their phones at the recommended retail price, third-party retailers can discount them depending on stock levels and

age, so shop around and check multiple price comparison tools such as [Google Shopping](#), [Kelkoo](#), [PriceRunner](#) or [Price Spy](#).

Beware of deals that look particularly cheap as they may not be UK models or not sold from the UK, which can have an impact on the warranty or after-sales support.

## Compare contract or outright deals

Paying for a phone upfront usually works out the cheapest way of owning it over the long term, but not always. Just-released models may be cheaper if bought on a contract with a phone operator, particularly if it is running a deal or if it includes other services, such as Spotify or Netflix, at a discount.

It is worth doing the calculations based on the total cost over the length of the plan versus the cost of the phone outright plus that of an equivalent, cheaper sim-only deal. Bear in mind that if you break the phone you will still be paying for it every month until your contract ends.

## Time it right



You can often grab a bargain on Black Friday, Cyber Monday and the many other yearly sales, but compare prices to make sure a ‘sale’ is really a deal. Photograph: Jonathan Cherry/Reuters

Buying a phone at the right time of the year can mean big savings. Bargains can usually be had in the traditional sales such as Black Friday, Christmas and Boxing Day, around Easter and during the back to school period in the run-up to September.

But individual manufacturers also discount their smartphones at different times depending on their yearly release cycles of new devices. Some manufacturers, including Samsung and Google, offer discounts and free gifts with very early preorders for their new phones before release, which can be worthwhile.

Samsung typically releases its top-of-the-range S-series smartphones in January, which are then discounted in summer sales. Apple’s iPhones are rarely deeply discounted but tend to be cheapest in August in the run-up to the release of a new version in September, with savings of up to £150 depending on the model, according to data from the price-tracking site [CamelCamelCamel](#).

## Trade in or sell your old one

Trading in your old phone is an excellent way of recouping some of its value or getting a discount on a new model. Apple and Samsung offer up to £470 off their new phones and Google up to £676 depending on the model, brand and condition of the phone you trade in.

Alternatively, you can sell your phone to a refurbisher for cash. There are a number of retailers that buy old tech including phones on the high street and online, including [CeX](#), [MusicMagpie](#), [Envirofone](#) and many others. Mobile operators including [EE](#), [Giffgaff](#), [O2](#), [Three](#), [Vodafone](#) and others also buy used phones, as do [Carphone Warehouse](#) and other phone retailers.

Comparison sites can help you find the best price. They include [SellMyMobile](#), [Compare and Recycle](#) and [Compare My Mobile](#). And as

with buying a new phone, timing matters for trade-in if you want to maximise your return.

“We are predicting that across the iPhone 13 and iPhone 12 range the price will depreciate by about 22% between now and the launch of a new model in October 2022,” says Denise Timmis, the brand manager for Envirofone. “That means trade-in values up to £157 less for the iPhone 13 Pro Max and up to £125 for iPhone 12 Pro.”

If your phone is in good condition and you are prepared to do a bit of work, you could get more money selling it privately on eBay or other marketplaces. Check recently sold prices on the sites to see how much similar phones are going for.

## Buy refurbished

This isn’t just better for the planet, it can be great for your wallet, too. Recent data from Giffgaff showed that you can save about 50kg of carbon and £200 on average by buying refurbished compared with new. While the biggest bargains can be had on older devices, top recent models can frequently be found refurbished from both manufacturers and third parties after about six months from release. They typically cost £50-100 less than RRP.

At a time when lots of people are really feeling the rising cost of living, refurbished devices can be a great option

*Giffgaff's Ash Schofield*

“At a time when lots of people are really feeling the rising cost of living, refurbished devices can be a great option,” says Ash Schofield, the Giffgaff chief executive. “You still get that new phone feeling, without breaking the bank. Our research shows that while a number of people see refurb tech as a viable option, quite a few are still missing out on the savings.”

There are [plenty of places to buy refurbished models](#). Those straight from the manufacturer are often the best being fully reconditioned to as-new standards, but most phone or tech shops, mobile operators and specialist

refurbishers sell models in varying conditions and prices from nearly new to worn but still functional.

## Pick up older models with long software support

The newest models are the most expensive, so buying a phone a year or two old, either new or refurbished can save your a packet – but only if you choose the right model.

Unfortunately, not all manufacturers provide lasting software support for their smartphones. Many provide as little as two or three years of updates from a handset's release date. Regular security updates are crucial to the safe usage of a smartphone, so once a model is no longer supported you should not use it.

Only Apple and Samsung provide as much as five or more years of software support for their recent smartphones, making their older models such as the [iPhone 11](#) or [Galaxy S20](#) still worth buying. Google recently committed to supporting its Pixel phones for five years, but only from this year's [Pixel 6](#) onwards.



Apple's iPhone SE (2022) is particularly good value, offering the firm's top chip, 5G and more than six years of software support. Photograph: Samuel

Gibbs/The Guardian

While top-end phones are the most exciting, mid-range smartphones have improved dramatically in recent years and can be had for significantly less. Not all mid-tier phones are made equally, however, with many lacking long-term software support.

Highlights include [Apple's iPhone SE](#) (£470) and Samsung's Galaxy A series (from £129), which receive four to seven years of software support depending on the model.

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## A common condition**Malaria**

# ‘You get goosebumps from the data’: hopes rise for new malaria vaccine

The disease is a leading killer of under fives across Africa. But trials for a new vaccine suggest an end to the death toll could be in sight



Mothers wait with their babies for medical checkups in the maternal child ward at Kilifi County Hospital in Kilifi, Kenya.

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About this content

*Lizzy Davies* in Kilifi. Photography by Luis Tato for the Guardian

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When Annah Kadhenghi had her first child last year, she named him Brighton Ushindi Baraka: *baraka* meaning “blessing” in Swahili, *ushindi* meaning victory. Last month, at the age of seven months, Brighton fought his first battle against an enemy that plagues millions of the world’s poorest: malaria.

“His temperature was very high; he was vomiting. I took him to the hospital,” says Kadhenghi, a schoolteacher in Kilifi, eastern [Kenya](#). Brighton defeated the mosquito-borne disease, and now sits contentedly at the weigh-in clinic at Kilifi county hospital.

More than 600,000 [in Africa in 2020](#) and about 12,500 in Kenya alone, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), were not as lucky. Across vast swathes of the continent, malaria remains a leading killer of under fives. So Kadhenghi was relieved to hear there could soon be an effective vaccine.

“A lot of people are suffering in this area from malaria,” she says. “So I think it’s a very good thing.”



Annah Kadenghi holds her son Brighton Ushindi Baraka, who recovered from malaria.

Scientists at the Jenner Institute at Oxford University – birthplace of the AstraZeneca Covid vaccine – are hoping Kadenghi, and others like her, won’t have to wait long. WHO has already [endorsed one malaria jab](#) for widespread use, and there should soon be a second, which those who have been working on it say is worth the wait.

The RTS,S vaccine, given the green light last year, has a [modest level of efficacy](#), preventing 39% of all malaria cases and 29% of severe cases; however, the new R21 jab is the first to exceed [the WHO target of 75%](#). In a 2019 trial [in Burkina Faso](#) it demonstrated high-level efficacy of 77%, results expected to be echoed at the end of a larger trial in four African countries.

The Serum Institute of India, the world’s largest vaccine manufacturer, stands ready to deliver at least 200m doses annually – a scale necessary to beat malaria. In 2020, [Africa](#) saw an estimated 228m cases of the disease, about 95% of the world’s total.

Mainga Hamaluba, head of clinical research at the [Kemri-Wellcome Trust](#) in Kilifi and principal investigator on the phase III trial, says watching R21's progression has been astonishing. In 2017, when she returned to Kenya after training in the UK, it was just one of several promising vaccine candidates. It looked like "a bit of a leap of faith – until we saw the data from the Phase II trial".



Kenyan scientists work in the immunology and microbiology labs at the Kemri-Wellcome Trust in Kilifi.

When the results were shown to her and her colleagues, she recalls: "The data was being presented. And ... you get goosebumps. It was absolutely extraordinary. It still is." At that point, before the world had seen the speed at which Covid vaccines were developed and manufactured, the idea that R21 would be approved by 2023 had seemed ambitious. "Then you see that," Hamaluba says, "and you think: gosh, this might be possible."

If backed up with adequate funding, the jab could save "exponentially more lives", says Hamaluba. It can't be looked at as the sole weapon in the armoury: it will not mean the end any time soon of insecticide-treated bed nets, or of antimalarial drugs. "But it is pretty amazing."



Mainga Hamaluba, head of clinical research at Kemri-Wellcome Trust.

Adrian Hill, director of the Jenner Institute, who has long championed the vaccine believes that R21 could reduce deaths substantially from next year, and by as much as 75% by 2030. “With a fair wind, the 2030s could see the reduction of malaria from a major killer … to a more localised minor cause of mortality,” he says. He believes the world could be on course for the ultimate goal of eradicating malaria by 2040.

The vaccine hunt has been a century in the making. *Plasmodium falciparum*, the deadliest malaria parasite, is complex, with more than 5,000 genes, evading human immune systems with skill. “Pinning down what is the Achilles heel is tougher [than a virus],” says George Warimwe, a vaccinologist at Kemri-Wellcome. “That’s one of the reasons why it has taken so long.”

Warimwe suspects there are other reasons, aside from biological complexity, behind the long wait for a jab. “We know a lot more about the epidemiology of malaria than we do of some of these newly emerging [diseases] – I can’t help but think about Covid,” he says. “But malaria continues to kill very many people, very many children, in Africa. It should be at the same scale as Covid in terms of prioritisation, but unfortunately that doesn’t happen.”



Vaccinologist, George Warimwe: ‘Malaria continues to kill very many people’

He says a vaccine demonstrating high protective efficacy, should be considered for the same WHO emergency authorisation as the Covid vaccines. “This is something that fits that bill, so why is it not happening?” he asks.

The response to the pandemic has puzzled the community in Kilifi, a sleepy coastal town, which – in partnership between the Kenya Medical Research Institute (Kemri), the Wellcome Trust and Oxford university – gained a world-class health research unit in 1989. When staff returned to work after Kenya’s lockdown, the unit’s community liaison group faced awkward questions, recalls Mary Mwangoma, community facilitator at Kemri-Wellcome Trust.

“The community members would ask ... how come you got this [Covid] vaccine so fast when there are other diseases like HIV and malaria you’ve done studies on for quite some time and you haven’t got a vaccine?” she says. While locals appreciate the work the researchers do, “they would really wish that there was a permanent solution” to malaria, a far bigger threat here than Covid.

Deep in the lush countryside inland, the village of Junju has seen more than 5,000 cases of malaria so far this year. The tally is kept on a blackboard outside the dispensary: 1,708 for January, 655 for February, 1,283 for March. “Malaria is the commonest illness we encounter here – you can see here the number of cases,” says Stephen Chakaya, a medical officer who says numbers will peak at the end of the rainy season in July. “We can see more than 50 cases in a day.”



A boy walks from school towards his house in Junju, Kilifi County. The tropical coastal region is a high-transmission area for malaria.

Outside the dispensary, mothers wait with children to be seen. A baby cries. A chicken stalks in the dust. In the chipped paint on the walls is written: “Vision: a nation free from preventable diseases and ill health.”

Junju, home to nearly 8,000 people, including more than 1,000 under-fives, is a high-transmission area for malaria, as is much of the undulating, tropical land on Kenya’s coast.

Things have improved significantly in the past two decades: most children sleep under insecticide-treated bed nets, and most cases Chakaya sees are mild or moderate. At the dispensary, medics use rapid diagnostic tests that detect malaria in less than 20 minutes.

But anyone over 30 here can remember what it used to be like and they take nothing for granted. Peter Chitsao, who was a child in Junju in the 1980s, says death from malaria was common. “You might see a child taken to the medicine man [a traditional healer] – that was what people called him. And then the child would die.”

Mwangoma recalls the itchy skin, bitter taste and bad dreams that came from a childhood taking chloroquine: “We would call it malariaquine.”



A community health worker checks the pulse of Mama Raheli’s son, who took part in the malaria vaccine trial, at Junju dispensary.

The experience of Junju is mirrored in the statistics: globally, malaria deaths reduced steadily from 2000-2019, from 896,000 in 2000 to 558 000 in 2019. By 2015, the mortality rate was half what it had been in 2000. Better targeted health education and greater investment in the science meant that more and more children avoided the worse.

But, as of 2018, that progress has stalled, and in 2020, with services disrupted by the Covid pandemic, malaria deaths rose for the first time in decades, revealing how easily fragile gains could be squandered. There are fears over growing resistance – in the parasite to drugs and in the mosquito to insecticides.



A scientist works on a sample in the immunology and microbiology lab.

So a vaccine could be coming in the nick of time. Scientists believe R21 has the potential to be a game-changer, if funded. The stalling of progress on malaria has been accompanied, says the WHO, by a widening gap in what is needed and what wealthy donor countries like the UK are investing. By 2020, the gap had reached \$3.5bn.

Will Boris Johnson's government commit to ensuring the research is translated into action? A crucial sign will come this autumn when Britain makes its pledge to the [Global Fund](#), the body providing more than half of all international financing for malaria programmes. The Fund has said that to get back on track after the pandemic it needs funding to rise by 30%, which would require the UK raising its contribution from £1.46bn to £1.8bn, according to [Malaria No More UK](#). Given Liz Truss's plan to [almost halve the aid budget](#) for multilateral bodies, the mood music is not encouraging.

For now Kemri-Wellcome scientists remain focused on the phase III trial, which in Kenya saw 600 babies and toddlers – half of them from Junju – take three doses of the vaccine four weeks apart. In the autumn, a year after the first jab, they will have a booster. Across Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Mali and Kenya, a total of 4,800 children are participating.

There was little trouble finding participants for the trial, says Chakaya. “Everyone is optimistic [about] having a malaria vaccine … [Malaria] is a high cause of morbidity for under fives and pregnant women, so for the community [the possibility of the vaccine coming] is motivation enough,” he says.

The enthusiasm is at least partly down to Mwangoma and her community liaison team, who try to work, tactfully and respectfully, towards engaging people in what researchers are doing and explain the science. Johnson Masha, a community facilitator working with Mwangoma, says, when discussing a trial, “we talk of altruism. That you aim to do good for the benefit of society.”

Hill, who has dedicated his career to malaria research, with a brief detour into Covid, for which he was given an honorary knighthood, says the Kemri unit in Kilifi has played a major role in R21’s development – from being the first site in Africa to test the vaccine, finding “it showed excellent safety and strong immune responses in adults and children”, to building on that in phase III.



Mothers wait with their children for medical checkups at Junju Dispensary, Kilif, where people are optimistic about a new malaria vaccine.

For Hamaluba the importance of an African-led team embedded in an African community cannot be understated. “It has to be African-led scientists [working on] diseases of importance in the areas they live and they work. It has to be,” she says. “Because otherwise things are lost.” Kemri workers are in “a continuous conversation,” she says, with the community.

In Junju, Khadija Mcharo Kapitao, 32, sits with her toddler Rumeisa waiting to see a nurse. She remembers the malaria she suffered as a child, reoccurring two or three times a year with “chills, abdominal pain, back pain, vomiting”. She doesn’t have the same worries for her three children, who sleep under bed nets. She has heard a lot about the jab. “When the vaccine comes I will get my daughter vaccinated,” she says.

On the dispensary blackboard, the left-hand column lists all the regular immunisations that children in the village can expect, against diseases such as diphtheria and hepatitis A. The right-hand column has the numbers diagnosed with the three big childhood killers: malaria, pneumonia, and diarrhoea. Perhaps in the not-too-distant future, at least one will also feature in the left-hand column. “We hope,” says Juliana Wambua, a Kemri-Wellcome field studies manager. “And we hope very soon.”

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## 2022.06.27 - Opinion

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Opinion**Roe v Wade**

## **Let's call the overturning of Roe v Wade what it is: state-sanctioned forced birth**

[Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett](#)



If you have ever been pregnant, the thought of being made to go through it against your will is sickening



'No one is stupid enough to believe this decision will result in an end to abortion.' Protesters outside the US supreme court on 25 June. Photograph: Bryan Dozier/Rex/Shutterstock

Mon 27 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 12.35 EDT

I write this on my birthday, a date when traditionally my mother likes to reminisce about her labour. I was a much-wanted baby, and that love has carried me throughout my life. I have never, for a fragment of a second, doubted it. I used to gently tease my mother about her reminiscences, but now that I have my own baby I understand the impulse more. In the past few weeks, I have been trying to put what happened during my own labour to bed, or at least arrive at a place of full acceptance. I was not traumatised, as I feared I would be, but there is still a process that needs to happen, a mourning perhaps of the birth I thought I would have.

One day, when my son is grown and it is his birthday, and he asks me how it is that he came into this world, I would like to be able to tell him a positive, happy story. I think this is what people tried to do when he arrived unexpectedly early, and they said, "he couldn't wait to meet you". It isn't true but it somehow soothes, in retrospect, the terror I felt when my waters broke early. These are the stories we tell each other and our children. They are palimpsests. The text beneath is written in blood, and it says that 50 years ago, 100 years ago, we would be dead.

Like me, my son is a most wanted baby. The longing I had for a child, complicated though it was, is one of the most powerful emotions I have ever felt. In light of the [overturning of Roe v Wade](#), I've been thinking a lot about all the children who will now be born who are not wanted, to parents unable or unwilling to look after them, and a state with no interest in funding or protecting them. It will be a human crisis of devastating magnitude.

Mostly, though, I think of all the women and girls who will suffer. We need to start calling abortion bans what they are: state-sanctioned forced birth on a monumental scale, which includes forcing children to give birth. I am not even in America, but the news felt visceral, as vicious misogyny often does. If you have ever been pregnant, the thought of being made to go through it – not to mention labour – against your will can make you feel physically sick. I felt like vomiting, then I cried. The same thing happened when [Poland banned it](#), in January 2021. And that will be nothing compared with how women in the US must feel now, as Polish women must have felt then: women who are expected to go about their daily lives as normal when their bodily autonomy has been taken from them, who overnight have become second-class citizens, who must walk alongside those who seek to punish them.

And punishment it is. The punishment is the point, as they say. No one is stupid enough to believe this decision will result in an end to abortion. We all know abortion bans never achieve this, they simply put an end to legal, safe abortion. The point is forced birth, which amounts to torture. The toll pregnancy takes on the body is monumental. I wanted, desperately, to be pregnant, and genuinely loved it when I was. It still felt frightening to find out. Premature rupture of membranes aside, my pregnancy was mostly happy and smooth, though I still experienced sickness, pain, shortness of breath, high blood pressure, anxiety, tearfulness, swelling, lightheadedness, months of sleeplessness, a lack of mobility, bleeding gums, fear, a diabetes scare, and obviously: the birth. Other women are not so lucky. Some want to be pregnant but still hate the experience.

Pregnancy is often the closest a woman comes to death in her lifetime (I remember reading that pregnant women dream frequently of death, how it feels like dancing next to its billowing curtain). It can kill you, and in the US, it is now more likely to do so. Beliefs in foetal personhood are now law

in many states, meaning that doctors won't step in with a lifesaving abortion in the event of complications, even perhaps where, as in cases of [ectopic pregnancy](#), the foetus will only live long enough to kill the woman carrying it. Furthermore, women who are miscarrying or haemorrhaging after having an abortion will be less likely to seek medical help, fearing prosecution.

So, let's call it what it is: forced birth. And as for "pro-life", a term recently used – depressingly – on BBC radio: those who identify that way are nothing of the sort. How can anyone use such a term with a straight face, when they support the torture and murder of human women.

It can be hard to find the words when faced with such hatred, so I've been reading the words of older women, women who have lived through this. Adrienne Rich, Annie Ernaux, Gloria Steinem, Alice Walker, Malika Booker.

Good abortion poems are hard to find, but I am struck by Marge Piercy's The Watch, a poem about waiting for your period: "Forty years of our lives, that flag / is shown or not and our immediate / and sometimes final fate determined, / red as tulips / red as poppies' satin / red as taillights / red as a stoplight, / red as dying, our quick bright blood."

- Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett is a Guardian columnist and author
- [What would the end of abortion rights in America mean for the world?](#)  
Join our panel, including Arwa Mahdawi and Michele Bratcher Goodwin, who will discuss the decision of the landmark Roe v Wade ruling in this livestreamed event on Wednesday 6 July 2022, 8pm–9pm BST/3pm EDT. Book tickets [here](#)

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## OpinionRace

# If you think Denmark is all *Borgen* and social equality, take a look at its awful ‘ghetto’ law

[Hettie O'Brien](#)

The eviction of ‘non-western’ housing estate residents shows the darker side of so-called social harmony



‘More than a housing estate, Mjølnerparken is a community.’ A hijab store near Mjølnerparken in Copenhagen, Denmark. Photograph: Andrew Kelly/Reuters

Mon 27 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 27 Jun 2022 10.57 EDT

We make a habit of idealising Scandinavia. Living in Britain, a country of damp sandwiches, dilapidated housing and extortionate gas bills, makes it easy to fantasise about places like Denmark, with its generous welfare state

and [37-hour working week](#). We laud its social philosophies, binge on its politics as dramatised by TV's *Borgen*.

The idealised version of this looks like a social democratic utopia in which the state takes care of your worries. It does not look like the experiences of Muhammad Aslam, a taxi driver I spoke to recently while visiting [Denmark](#). Aslam's story is one that proponents of the Nordic model do not want you to hear. It reveals a darker side to this cosy ideal. And it shows that when the state considers you an outsider, its generous provisions can be swiftly withdrawn and something dystopian can take their place.

Aslam has lived on the estate since 1987. For all that time, his home has been Mjølnerparken, a leafy public housing estate of squat red-brick blocks in the centre of Copenhagen (Aslam is the chairman of its residents association). His children were born and grew up here; one has just finished law school, the other is an engineer. From his balcony, Aslam can hear the sound of children playing in the courtyards below, mixed with the chattering voices of their parents and grandparents. Local nurseries use the estate's green spaces, and every summer, Mjølnerparken hosts a party for teenage residents who have finished school.

More than an estate, this is a community. But the government has classified Mjølnerparken [as a “ghetto”](#), and plans to slash its public housing stock to no more than 40% of the total. Last month, Aslam received a letter informing him that he has until September to move out of his home. This all stems from a [2018 law](#) intended to eradicate all ghettos in Denmark by 2030. And the Danish state decides whether areas are deemed ghettos not just by their crime, unemployment or education rates, but on the proportion of residents who are deemed “non-western” – meaning recent, first-, or second-generation migrants.

Aslam and most others living in Mjølnerparken are Danish citizens but, as they were not born in western countries, they are treated as foreigners in their own homes. Aslam's children were born in Denmark, attended Danish schools and have Danish university degrees. Because their father was born in Pakistan, they too are deemed [“non-western”](#). This is not a story of

gentrification or the hidden hand of the market, pricing people out of city centres. It is worse than that. It is, in effect, state-directed population control.

A real estate investor, NREP, has already bought 260 of the flats on the estate. Once people like Aslam have been removed, the company plans to increase the rent on their former homes by more than 50%. Residents will be rehoused, but they will have no control over location or cost. Their children will need to move schools; their communities will be broken up. “What have I and my family done? Why do we have to be removed? My kids and my family have done nothing wrong,” Aslam says.

What is playing out on this estate is far from just a local issue. In 2017, the country’s parliament expressed concern that people they considered true Danes were becoming a minority in some areas. The ghetto law was passed the following year. By breaking up these communities, the government hopes to confront what it calls “parallel societies”. This phrase recurs so often in Denmark that it borders on a collective paranoia: the fear that areas that are home to large numbers of minority and Muslim citizens risk splintering a national culture.

The ghetto law was the invention of Denmark’s previous rightwing government. Yet it is now being enforced by the left-leaning Social Democrat government, in an attempt to shore up support among voters it worries will otherwise be lost to the right.

This matters not just in Denmark but in Britain, too. It is often said that leftwing parties must placate the cultural anxieties of left-behind voters if they are to stave off the electoral threat from the right. This is visible in the distinction drawn between “somewheres” and “anywheres”, the argument that working-class Labour votes collapsed because people feel like “strangers in their own country”, or in the books that give an academic sheen to the troubling idea that the “racial self-interest” of white citizens is not the same thing as racism. Some have even appeared to suggest, much like the Danish government, that whether you’re truly British is defined on the basis of your ethnicity.

Denmark's Social Democrat party has been praised by British commentators as a lesson in how to [achieve integration](#) and as a model for [neutralising the right](#). Mjølnerparken shows just how ugly these ideas are in practice. It should be a lesson: travel down this path, and you will find yourself forcefully ripping apart communities in the name of social harmony.

Few residents of Mjølnerparken would deny the estate has its problems. Unemployment and crime rates are higher than average, and overcrowding is an issue. Scratch the surface, though, and you'll find many stories that defy this picture: Ibrahim Kadoura, an electrician who has lived here since 1992, tells me with pride about his son's place at medical school and his daughter's senior role at a consultancy firm. The government sees the problems on such estates as the product of migrants failing to integrate, but residents know it's more complicated. The job market [discriminates](#) against people with Middle Eastern and non-Danish surnames, while many people struggle to find jobs simply because they live on a stigmatised estate like Mjølnerparken. Breaking up the estate would destroy a supportive community and do little to address the discrimination its residents face.

Conformity is central to Danish culture. Believing that people are similar to you and share your values can be useful in maintaining support for a welfare state. But there is a darker side implicit in this requirement: if the country's generous welfare state is uniquely Danish, then migrants and outsiders who are *not* considered truly Danish are easily characterised as a threat to it. "The most important thing, when people live with each other, is tolerance – 'I will accept you, and you will accept me,'" Kadoura says. "I accept the Danish people. But it feels like they cannot accept me."

- Hettie O'Brien is a writer and assistant opinion editor at the Guardian

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[\*\*Opinion\*\*](#)[\*\*US supreme court\*\*](#)

## **Republicans have hijacked the US supreme court. It's time to expand it**

David Daley

If Amy Coney Barrett serves to Ruth Bader Ginsburg's age, she will be a justice until 2059. We must reform the court now, or risk it losing its legitimacy forever



'This is not court packing. It is balancing a court that has already been packed.' Photograph: Étienne Laurent/EPA

Mon 27 Jun 2022 02.25 EDT Last modified on Mon 27 Jun 2022 02.27 EDT

When the [\*\*US supreme court\*\*](#) this week radically expanded the second amendment and declared most any restrictions on guns to be presumptively unconstitutional, then overturned five decades of reproductive rights and created a likely desert for abortion access all the way from Idaho to Florida, America's grim new reality became painfully clear.

An extreme conservative majority holds absolute control over the court. They will likely hold this power for multiple generations. They intend to use it to impose a far-right vision that most Americans oppose, twisting the rule of law into whatever they say it is, depending on the ideological outcome they hope to achieve.

It doesn't have to be this way. The US constitution offers no guidance on the number of supreme court justices. While it has stood at nine for some time, it has not always, and need not for ever. If Republicans have hijacked the court to force a minoritarian agenda on the nation, the court must be expanded and reformed to counter a rightwing power play that threatens to remake American democracy and life itself.

The court's hard-right majority has neither popular support for its agenda nor institutional legitimacy. It is the product of a hostile takeover of the courts 50 years in the planning by conservatives who have long understood that unpopular policies that cannot be won at the ballot box can be thrust upon Americans by an unaccountable and unelected judiciary.

Five of the six conservative justices were appointed by presidents who lost the national popular vote. (Republicans have won the national popular vote once since 1988, but appointed 16 of the last 20 justices.) Two of them have been credibly accused of sexual assault. All six were confirmed by a US Senate that overweights the interests of smaller, whiter states, and is therefore regularly controlled by the Republican party even though a Daily Kos study showed that "Senate Republicans have not won more votes or represented more Americans than Democrats" since the 1990s.

Senate Republicans, of course, have used that ill-held majority to stack and rewire the court, holding a 2016 seat open for nearly a year under a Democratic president by manufacturing a rule about confirmations during an election year, but fast-tracking the appointment of a conservative in fall 2020 even after early voting had already begun.

The court's robed ideologues then return the partisan favor. Republicans engineered the most extreme gerrymanders in modern history during the last decade, awarding themselves a disproportionate edge in swing-state

congressional delegations and entrenching themselves in power in state legislatures in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Michigan and other competitive states even when they lose the popular vote by hundreds of thousands.

The Roberts/Alito wrecking crew then closed the federal courts to partisan gerrymandering claims, telling voters to fix at the ballot box what their own representatives have ensured cannot be undone. That obviously disingenuous reasoning was on display in Friday's decision that overturned Roe as well, as the conservative majority pretended they were returning reproductive rights to the people and the political process, knowing full well that they themselves help rig the playing fields in those states to guarantee the anti-majoritarian position they favor.

The political process in Georgia, Ohio, Texas, Florida and so many other states has been severed from the will of the people by the anti-democratic redistricting this court blessed, allowing lawmakers to defy the will of majorities who support abortion rights even in conservative Oklahoma and Alabama.

A runaway rightwing court stands as perhaps the most foreboding challenge to rule by and for the people

Let's be clear: this is a court that has been constructed to thwart the will of the people with the help of hundreds of millions in rightwing dark money, by playing brutalist constitutional hardball ripped from the autocrat's handbook, and by exploiting the same structural inequities in redistricting, the US Senate and the electoral college that helped protect slavery and then Jim Crow. This supreme court has now placed itself above the people and above the law. Simply because they have the power. Simply because they can.

In a shattered democracy teetering on the edge of what feels like permanent minority rule, a runaway rightwing court – unbound by precedent, public opinion or history, one willing to create over two days a new American hellscape of uncontrollable concealed carry and forced pregnancies – stands as perhaps the most foreboding challenge yet to rule by and for the people.

Republicans built this anti-majoritarian court by exercising raw political power. Now those partisan justices have begun handing down partisan victories that conservatives have sought for years, dressed in the skimpiest fig leaf of constitutional law, that could not otherwise be won through persuasion or the usual political means because most Americans stand opposed to these policies. It will require the same tough-minded use of political power to undo it.

Alas, much of the Democratic leadership spent Friday sending outraged fundraising emails; Speaker Nancy Pelosi read a poem. It will take more than that. Democrats still control the White House and Congress. They can prioritize court expansion and reform now – and run on it this fall – or the current court will continue undoing public safety, the regulatory state, voting rights and reproductive health for years to come. If Justice Amy Coney Barrett serves to Ruth Bader Ginsburg's age, she will remain on the court until 2059. Democrats will need a vacancy, control of the White House and a majority in an increasingly anti-majoritarian Senate to ever confirm another justice. Court expansion must be considered a central piece of any plan to protect American traditions of majority rule.

This is not court packing. It is balancing a court that has already been packed. It is not done in service of any partisan agenda; majorities of all political stripes, in all states, oppose this court's agenda on gerrymandering, abortion and guns. It would not suddenly turn the high court into just another partisan political institution. That ship has long sailed. Rather, it would admit that these decisions are political, not neutral wisdom handed down by non-partisan oracles with a direct line to Adams and Jefferson in the afterlife. And it could be done through any number of thoughtful approaches: adding justices for each of the 12 circuits and the US court of appeals, instituting term limits, awarding each president two appointees, broadening the pool of potential justices to the entire federal bench and randomly drawing nine for each case.

Hardball politics determined to remake America through extra-political means created this legitimacy crisis. It will require equal determination and muscle to rescue us all from a closed game we're all allowed to play, but only the far right can win.

- David Daley is the author of Ratf\*\*ked: Why Your Vote Doesn't Count and Unrigged: How Americans Are Battling Back to Save Democracy. He is a senior fellow at FairVote
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## If it cared, TikTok could stop itself being used to stir up tribal hatred in Kenya

[Odanga Madung](#)

With elections looming, ineffective moderation on the social media platform has allowed it to become a tool of malign actors



A man battles a fire at a shop in Kawangware slum, Nairobi, during post-election violence, October 2017. Photograph: Dai Kurokawa/EPA

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## [About this content](#)

Mon 27 Jun 2022 02.45 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 07.49 EDT

Over the past year, I have submerged myself in propaganda, trying to study the information nerve-endings of Kenyan politics. What I have [uncovered](#) is how the production of disinformation became a cottage industry in Kenya, how disinformation can often [be used as a tool](#) to consolidate power, and how European far-right groups have tried to [manipulate](#) Kenyan platforms for their gain.

Something that struck me, however, as I waded through all this content was that I would always find several [TikTok](#) videos being distributed across platforms. So I decided to focus on TikTok to try to get a sense of the world where these videos were originating.

TikTok likes to position itself as a dancing and lip-syncing app, but my investigation unearthed a lot more than that. There were brazen calls for ethnic hatred and violence.

One video contained a clip of a political candidate giving a speech at a rally with a caption saying that he hates “Kikuyus [an ethnic tribe in Kenya] and will be seeking revenge in 2022.” Another took on the form of a detergent infomercial, saying that “UDA [a Kenyan political party] can be used to

remove *madoadoa* [“stains”] such as Kikuyus, Luhyas, Luos, and even Kambas.” (All these are tribes in [Kenya](#).)

I also encountered phoney content: slickly produced videos containing fake assertions about Kenyan candidates, styled as if they’re from authentic Netflix documentaries, local TV stations or even US president Joe Biden’s Twitter account.

Just as troubling as the content were the view counts – they got millions of views. All this, despite the content clearly violating TikTok’s community guidelines.

Platforms such as TikTok can seem universal: hundreds of millions of people on a single app, sharing and liking the same content.

In reality, TikTok and other platforms function very differently. Their algorithms herd users into bubbles that are unrecognisable to others. Kenyans following the August election are experiencing just that – they’re trapped in a bubble unseen by most of the world, one that’s divisive, dangerous and teeming with lies. This bubble is especially troubling given [Kenya’s fragile relationship with democracy](#).

It has been shown how the [influence of Cambridge Analytica overshadowed](#) the elections of 2013 and 2017. In 2017 in particular, platforms actually made money from politicians’ attempts to sow discord in Kenya’s politics. Offline activity was matched by a plague of online vitriol, driving polarisation. Now, another election is upon us – and this time there’s a TikTok bubble, too.

As I browse TikTok content, I have an advantage that most Kenyan users don’t. I don’t just consume TikTok videos; I also study them. My most recent research at Mozilla, titled [From Dance App to Political Mercenary](#), focuses on the platform. What I saw wasn’t genuine content – it was propaganda carefully crafted to hijack algorithms and misinform voters. (Since reviewing my research, TikTok has removed much of the content and many of the accounts I flagged.)

While my perspective offers me some immunity from the propaganda, it also makes me deeply cynical. Because I don't just see hateful content – I see a billion-dollar platform that's unable, or unwilling, to moderate that content. I also spoke to TikTok moderators, who described a boiler-room operation: one where quantity of moderation is valued over quality, and one where moderators work in languages and contexts they don't understand.

Perhaps what's most troubling about Kenya's TikTok election bubble isn't its graphic content or its moderation shortcomings. It's that it doesn't have to exist, yet still does. Big tech companies' much-touted moderation systems are nowhere near as effective as they're claimed to be. They consistently fail to identify and take down the most egregious content.

Kenya's election is TikTok's first real test in [Africa](#), and the platform has had ample time to prepare and learn from older peers such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Or maybe the Chinese platform is already learning from them. After all, Facebook and Twitter's focus on expansion with complete disregard for civic obligation has seen the companies make billions of dollars. In this respect they're clearly walking in the path of their predecessors.

When I took my findings to TikTok, I got a familiar template response: "We hear you, we've taken down the content, we're investigating ..."

It was however very clear to me that TikTok could have much deeper and meaningful engagement with civil society and factchecking organisations across the country. We have no idea about how much moderation resources are committed to Kenya or Africa at large. TikTok could do so much more.

Platforms, more than anyone else, have the best opportunity to deal with problematic content in their ecosystems. Kenyan and African employees of TikTok also need to demand more from their overlords, and lobby internally for reform.

If none of these work, the message of a mass walk-out by African employees of a big tech company will send a clear message to the industry. But it's something that would require extraordinary courage and collective action.

The information dystopia that Kenya has endured during elections could have a much larger effect beyond the country's borders. Indeed, there's a broader impact on trust of institutions and the media at large. The narrative that the world is full of fake news and that you can't trust anything you see has much bigger consequences than the content these platforms are spreading.

It's now less than two months until Kenya's election. And while much time has been squandered and a great deal of damage has already been done, TikTok and the electoral process *don't* have to be a doomed couple in Kenya. With the right steps and investments, it's possible to open the app and be informed, not inflamed.

This article was amended on 1 July 2022 to remove a line that incorrectly suggested that the writer had spoken directly to AFP about their fact-checking partnership with TikTok in Kenya.

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- Odanga Madung is a Mozilla fellow, journalist and data scientist based in Nairobi, Kenya

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## Protests continue across US to voice anger over supreme court ruling



An abortion rights demonstrator raises their fist, painted in red, in the air during a rally in front of the US supreme court, on Saturday. Photograph: AFP/Getty Images

In New York, thousands gathered downtown to celebrate Pride and give voice to anger after decision that overturned abortion rights

*[Victoria Bekiempis](#) and [Edward Helmore](#) in New York*

Sun 26 Jun 2022 12.49 EDTFirst published on Sun 26 Jun 2022 11.04 EDT

Protests over a US supreme court decision that overturned abortion rights continued across the country this weekend. In [New York](#), thousands marched to voice their anger at the ruling that came at the end of a dizzying week around not just reproductive rights but also gun carry laws and the US Capitol attack.

“Not your uterus, not your choice,” many shouted as the demonstrations progressed in Washington DC., New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Seattle, Atlanta and Austin.

In Providence, Rhode Island, tempers flared so much that an off-duty police officer was accused of punching a woman at an abortion protest. Jennifer Rourke, a state senate candidate, told the Providence Journal she was punched in the face by Jeann Lugo, who had been running for the GOP nomination for a Rhode Island state senate seat but dropped out the race.

Lugo said he was “not going to deny” the punching allegation but added that “everything happened very fast”. For the most part, protests across the US have been peaceful.

In New York, they fell across Pride weekend honoring the achievements of the LGBTQ community, with thousands gathering downtown to simultaneously celebrate and give voice to anger. Marchers said in some cases they were both shell-shocked by the supreme court decision and happy to be celebrating, gender identities and sexual orientations that some like the court’s conservative justices might find contrary.

“It’s a similar feeling to when Trump got elected,” said film editor Oriana Soddu. Soddu said she knew the stripping of nationwide abortion rights was coming after the 2 May leak of a draft ruling saying so, but “for it to actually happen is still a shock”.

The anger, Soddu said, was toward the political system itself. “The Republicans clearly have a very strong agenda and we’ve let this happen,” she said. “My fear is they’re going to go after gay marriage” next.

The crowds that gathered in New York’s Washington Square on Saturday were, for the most part, there to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the New York City Dyke March. Organizers billed the march as a “celebration of our beautiful and diverse dyke lives” that also doubled as a protest of discrimination, harassment, and violence against lesbians, but it also energized a pro-abortion rights demonstration.



A woman smiles waving a Pride flag at the 30th Annual New York City Dyke March on Saturday in New York City. Photograph: Alexi Rosenfeld/Getty Images

“It’s been different to realize that in the eyes of the constitution and the court you’re not really a person and you don’t have autonomy over yourself,” said longtime American activist and socialist organizer Leslie Cagan. “A lot of good things have come for virtually every community that has struggled for a modicum of rights, and now it’s all hanging by a thread.”

“I hope that those people and those communities are beginning to get it that if we don’t work together and get beyond the rhetoric of solidarity in which

everybody does their own thing, none of our people are going to win,” Cagan added. “We haven’t been collectively tuned in to how big and dangerous the power against us is.”

Cindy Greenberg, also marching Saturday, said she thought those forces were really not committed to the notion of a democracy.

“It feels like when Trump was elected,” Greenberg said. “This whole period of time has shown that they’re not. This week has been extraordinary – it showed us that they’re willing to sell all of us down the river.”

Lisa Ann Markuson said she came with her typewriter to write poems for protesters gathered in the park in part because having a normal Pride party day felt strange. “It’s not, ‘Yay, we’re cool, we’re queer!’ It felt farcical to come out here and party like it’s 2008 because it isn’t. People want to set something on fire, but there’s also a sense of apathy and alienation.

“America is supposed to be about freedom but [what] is this? Corporations have freedom and people are supposed to *think* they have freedom because they have a lot of consumer choices.”

Mel Melendes said that being proud and protesting were one and the same. “I’m proud to be here because the louder we express ourselves the more you shine light on what’s wrong.” Added Elisa Buttafuoco: “If we weren’t fighting we wouldn’t be ourselves, we wouldn’t be the queer community. Queer rights is abortion rights is trans rights. It’s all interwoven.”

Some on the march wondered if the protest would go the same way if the decision to lift abortion protections primarily affected the queer community.

“As a minority community it feels like we’re protesting for everything,” said Afrah Boateng. “It feels like there is something to protest every year around Pride. Today it’s for straight families and straight women. But I guess Pride started as protest, so it’s built in.”

According to a CBS poll published Sunday, most disapprove of overturning the nationwide abortion rights established by the landmark Roe v Wade case,

including two-thirds of women. By more than a 20-point margin, Americans call it a step backward for the US.

Younger people are especially likely to disapprove; most moderates disapprove along with nine in 10 liberals; two-thirds of Hispanic Americans disapprove, three-fourths of Black Americans and just over half of White Americans disapprove.

The three-fourths of conservatives who do support the ruling said they felt hopeful and happy.

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## US politics

# Many US companies move to pay travel costs for employees seeking abortions

Tech firms and banks, including Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup and JPMorgan Chase, add ‘critical healthcare’ package



People protest in front of a courthouse in downtown Los Angeles, on Saturday. Photograph: Apu Gomes/AFP/Getty Images

*[Edward Helmore](#) in New York*

Sun 26 Jun 2022 16.28 EDT Last modified on Mon 27 Jun 2022 11.02 EDT

Many large US corporations have moved swiftly to provide support and financial assistance to employees seeking abortions in states that outlawed the procedure after the US supreme court’s decision on Friday to overturn its landmark [Roe v Wade](#) ruling.

With potentially millions of women soon looking to cross state lines for the procedure, many employers have added “critical healthcare” packages to

employees' benefit packages.

The measures reflect, in some cases, elevated responsibility that businesses now feel to respond to pressure from investors, customers and employees at a time when corporate values do not conform with the legislatures of states in which they or their workers are based.

Many banks and tech firms have announced they will cover travel expenses for US workers in need of abortions as part of their medical benefits. After the reversal was announced Friday, [Bank of America](#) and Goldman Sachs joined Citigroup and JPMorgan Chase in offering travel benefits.

"We will continue to provide benefits that support our colleagues' family planning choices wherever we are legally permitted to do so," Citi's head of human resources, Sara Wechter, wrote in a memo to employees on Friday.

Tech firms have also moved to accommodate employees' needs. Microsoft extended its financial support for "critical healthcare" after the draft version of the supreme court opinion overturning Roe was first leaked.

Apple has said the existing benefits package allows employees to travel out of state for medical care, and Facebook parent Meta has said it will offer travel expense reimbursement "to the extent permitted by law".

In entertainment, Disney, Condé Nast, Warner Bros Discovery and Netflix are among those that have said they will offer travel reimbursements.

While large companies can mitigate the supreme court ruling, the measures may not address the concerns of employees at firms that have in recent years located to low-tax states that have either enacted restrictions or essentially banned access to abortion.

Texas, for instance, has been aggressively selling itself as a low-tax- and low-regulation home to companies such as Oracle, Hewlett-Packard and Tesla. Facebook, Amazon and Apple have all increased their presence there.

But the commitment of Texas, like Missouri, to a near-total ban on abortion could now clash with those companies' stated values and harm the state's ability to attract new business, employees and investment.

Earlier this year, Texas state representative Briscoe Cain sent a cease-and-desist letter to [Citigroup](#), saying he would propose legislation barring localities in the state from doing business with any company that provides travel benefits for employees seeking abortions.

The St Louis mayor, Tishaura Jones, [said in a post to Twitter](#) that she believes abortion bans at the state level are going to make it harder to attract businesses. Kansas City mayor Quinton Lucas said one business has already backed out of setting up in the city.

But many large companies have stayed silent, including McDonald's, PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, General Motors, and Arkansas-based Walmart – the largest employer in the US with dozens of stores in states that have enacted abortion bans.

The Business Roundtable, an organization that represents some of the nation's most powerful companies, has said it "does not have a position on the merits of the case".

Perhaps a more pressing concern is that for millions of people not employed by a large international or national company, abortion restrictions present a more onerous challenge.

According to the pro-choice [Guttmacher Institute](#), abortion bans and restrictions don't reduce unintended pregnancy or demand for abortion. Rather, they impose significant hurdles to obtaining care, causing stress for people in need of abortion and leading some to experience forced pregnancy and all its troubling consequences.

"Evidence also shows the disproportionate and unequal impact abortion restrictions have on people who are already marginalized and oppressed – including Black and Brown communities, other people of color, people with low incomes, young people, LGBTQ communities, immigrants and people

with disabilities,” Dr Hermania Palacio, the institute’s president, said in a statement.

In response, regional governments and community organizations have started outreach efforts to help anyone in need of the procedure. Baltimore’s mayor, Brandon Scott, has announced that the city will provide \$300,000 in grants to organizations that offer abortion and family planning.

Some left-leaning states have seen abortion procedures increase as surrounding states tightened access, even before Roe fell. In Illinois, abortion increased by 25% between 2017 and 2020. Guttmacher said in response “local and national abortion funds increased their capacity and helped even more people pay for their abortions”.

But with an increasingly fragmented and increasingly polarized abortion landscape, many companies are likely to find themselves forced to respond to both pro-choice and anti-abortion activists while promising to promote women’s equality and workplace advancement.

The issue of freedom to travel to other states for an abortion procedure issue has one notable, anti-Roe supporter. In his concurring opinion released Friday, Justice Brett Kavanaugh said it would be unconstitutional for a state to impose travel restrictions. “In my view, the answer is no, based on the constitutional right to interstate travel,” Kavanaugh wrote.

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## US politics

# ‘They set a torch to it’: Warren says court lost legitimacy with Roe reversal

Top Democrats again call for appointing additional justices to blunt conservative super-majority which made ruling possible



Senator Elizabeth Warren addresses the public during a rally to protest the supreme court’s overturning of Roe v Wade at the Massachusetts state house in Boston, on Friday. Photograph: Joseph Prezioso/AFP/Getty Images

[Edward Helmore](#) in New York and [Ramon Antonio Vargas](#)

Sun 26 Jun 2022 13.35 EDT Last modified on Tue 28 Jun 2022 18.31 EDT

Leading Democrats on Sunday continued calling the supreme court’s legitimacy into question after it took away the nationwide right to abortion last week, and some again lobbied for appointing additional justices to the panel so as to blunt the conservative super-majority that made the controversial ruling possible.

The Massachusetts senator [Elizabeth Warren](#) suggested to ABC's This Week that expanding the court was an urgent matter because supreme court justice Clarence Thomas indicated in Friday's decision to overturn the landmark Roe v Wade ruling that he is open to reconsidering precedents guaranteeing the right to contraception, same-sex marriage and consensual gay sex.

"They have burned whatever legitimacy they may still have had," Warren said of the supreme court. "They just took the last of it and set a torch to it."

Warren joined Georgia gubernatorial candidate and Democratic organizer Stacey Abrams in again lobbying to expand the supreme court in a way that balances the current makeup of six conservatives and three liberals.

Joe Biden has rejected the strategy. But Abrams – who previously served in Georgia's house of representatives – said the president doesn't have the final word on the matter, with legislators also having a say.

"There's nothing sacrosanct about nine members of the United States supreme court," Abrams said on CNN's State of the Union.

Warren again discussed abolishing the filibuster, a tactic that both parties use to prevent legislative decisions, a move Biden and centrist Democrats have also rejected.

She also urged Biden to issue orders shielding medication abortions and authorizing the terminations of pregnancies on federal land.

Appearing on NBC's Meet the Press, the New York congresswoman [Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez](#) argued that drastic measures were justified.

"I believe that the president and the Democratic party needs to come to terms with is that this is not just a crisis of Roe – this is a crisis of our democracy," Ocasio-Cortez said.

The congresswoman also said the supreme court was undergoing "a crisis of legitimacy", alluding to how Thomas's wife, Ginni, emailed 29 Republican lawmakers in Arizona as she tried to help overturn Biden's victory over Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election.

“The supreme court has dramatically overreached its authority,” Ocasio-Cortez said. “This is a crisis of legitimacy.”

Speaking from a Republican point of view on another program, South Dakota governor Kristi Noem said it was “incredible” that reproductive laws had been returned to the states. South Dakota is one of 13 states where trigger laws banning most abortions came into effect after Friday’s decision.

“The supreme court did its job: it fixed a wrong decision it made many years ago and returned this power back to the states, which is how the constitution and our founders intended it,” Noem told CBS’ Face the Nation with Margaret Brennan.

South Dakota, she said, would ensure that “babies are recognized and that every single life is precious”.

The governor said the state would move to block Democratic efforts to allow access to out-of-state telemedicine and the ability of health practitioners in legal abortion states to provide pills in the mail that would allow them to end a pregnancy.

Noem said that abortion pills were “very dangerous medical procedures”, though Face the Nation host Margaret Brennan correctly pointed out that the pills were approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration.

Nonetheless, Noem claimed that “a woman is five times more likely to end up in an emergency room if they’re utilizing this kind of method for an abortion.

“It’s something that should be under the supervision of a medical doctor and it is something in South Dakota that we’ve made sure happens that way.”

The governor, a rising star in Republican circles, said that mothers would not be prosecuted for receiving abortions, rather the state planned to target illegal abortion providers.

“We will make sure that mothers have the resources, protection and medical care that they need and we’re being aggressive on that. And we’ll also make

sure that the federal government only does its job,” Noem added.

This article was amended on 28 June 2022 to correct misspellings of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s surname as “Ocascio-Cortez”.

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## Roe v Wade

# Roe v Wade: legal experts see limited opportunities to challenge court ruling

Legal scholar Lawrence Tribe: ‘We’re in for a long, tangled, chaotic and, in terms of human suffering, horribly costly struggle’



An abortion rights supporter holds a banner as she protests outside the US supreme court on Saturday. Photograph: Elizabeth Frantz/Reuters

## Edward Helmore

Sun 26 Jun 2022 06.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 27 Jun 2022 10.49 EDT

Joe Biden on Saturday renewed his criticism of the supreme court, a day after justices handed down a historic ruling that overturned a ruling that had guaranteed a constitutional right to abortion for almost half a century.

“The supreme court has made some terrible decisions,” Biden said at an event where he signed last week’s bipartisan gun control bill into law. The president said he and the first lady, Jill Biden, knew “how painful and

devastating the decision is for so many Americans” and vowed that his administration would focus on how states implement the decision.

But the White House has limited options, leaving constitutional and legal experts to warn on Saturday that there was no short-term way besides statute law to restore federal guarantees to woman’s right to abortion after the [US supreme court](#) overruled Roe v Wade on Friday.

The opportunities to challenge the justices’ ruling or re-present constitutional law arguments based on equal rights are for now limited.

“We’re in for a long, tangled, chaotic and, in terms of human suffering, horribly costly struggle,” said the Harvard constitutional law professor Lawrence Tribe, who has described Friday’s decision as “unprincipled”.

Tribe told the Guardian that it may take generations to completely restore abortion rights but there may be opportunities to minimize the effects of the ruling.

One of those could be for Congress to give powers to the Department of Health and Human Services or the Food and Drug Administration to override state laws. That issue came up on Friday when the attorney general, Merrick Garland, said in a statement that states [cannot ban mifepristone](#), a medication that is used to bring about an abortion, based on disagreement with the federal government on its safety and efficacy.

Mifepristone and misoprostol, another drug used to induce abortion, have been approved by the FDA for use in the first 10 weeks of pregnancy. But some states, including Louisiana, have adopted legislation to make it illegal for doctors to mail the medications.

In a statement, Garland said the justice department “strongly supports efforts by Congress to codify Americans’ reproductive rights, which it retains the authority to do”. But federal law is unclear as to whether states can ban the medication, and the question would probably return to the same bench that issued Friday’s ruling.

Some scholars have gone back to [Roe v Wade](#) to find where that ruling gave the current majority on the bench space to vacate the decision.

One idea that has come up is that the original ruling discussed liberty but not equality.



The attorney general, Merrick Garland, said the justice department ‘strongly supports efforts by Congress to codify Americans’ reproductive rights’. Photograph: Evelyn Hockstein/Reuters

“It’s foolish really to attempt to explain why the ruling wouldn’t have got the highest grade in a constitutional law class,” says Tribe, who is cited four times in Friday’s ruling. “The court should have talked about equality, no question, but it also talked about liberty and liberty embodies the idea of equality.”

One avenue that could be more fruitful in repairing the right to abortion is in state constitutions that have their own protections around liberty and equality.

“I would expect creative litigants to challenge state laws banning abortion on the basis of the state’s own constitution. If the state courts, which are in many cases elected, look at this through the same lens as the supreme court did, they won’t get anywhere,” Tribe said.

“But it is possible that in some states there are more liberal, progressive or pro-gender equality state courts that would interpret the state constitution as giving more rights to women than they have been given under the federal constitution,” Tribe added.

Kevin O’Brien, a partner at Ford O’Brien Landy, a boutique law firm, pointed out that Roe v Wade was written 50 years ago – a long time in terms of constitutional law.

“It was written in a benignly liberal era where there weren’t ideological tensions. Under the Warren court the writing was a little more casual and the justices wrote a broad sweep. They tucked Roe under this rather vague notion that there was a privacy interest implicit in the constitution.”

O’Brien cited the late justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who noted that Roe v Wade was argued on a right to privacy, rather than women’s rights. “Roe isn’t really about the woman’s choice, is it?” Ginsburg once said. That held, of course, until it didn’t. “It didn’t seem to require a lot of arguing among civilized people that people had autonomy in their own bedrooms and women had a right to control their own body, but then we got this revolution in thinking among conservative judges.”

As the federal and some state governments work to navigate new legal barriers, private companies have signaled they will try to bridge the gap. Some of the most recognized US companies, including JPMorgan Chase, Meta (parent of Facebook and Instagram), Walt Disney, Tesla and Apple, have said they will extend coverage to workers who need access to safe, legal abortions.

Conservative lawmakers have warned that companies could face legal action if they support employee abortion travel. Citigroup was warned by a Texas lawmaker that under that state’s abortion law the bank could face criminal charges. In Justice Brett Kavanaugh’s concurring opinion in Friday’s court ruling, the Trump-appointed justice said states cannot bar their residents from traveling to seek abortions.

But, as Tribe pointed out, beyond legislative action guaranteeing abortion rights that few believe is possible, options are limited. “If you mean recourse

to completely restoring to before the ruling, that may take generations,” he said. “If you mean minimizing the ruling’s damage, taking steps along the margins to reduce the devastation of the ruling then, yes, that certainly can be done.”

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jun/26/roe-v-wade-legal-experts-limited-opportunities-abortion>

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## Headlines thursday 30 june 2022

- [Live Russia-Ukraine war: Russia withdraws from Snake Island and says Ukraine should demine waters](#)
- [Police Record number of UK forces are failing and need intensive help](#)
- [Live Liz Truss rejects claims from Tories that privileges committee inquiry into Johnson won't be fair](#)
- [Armed forces Liz Truss defends plans to cut British army by nearly 10,000 troops](#)

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[Skip to key events](#)  
[Ukraine war live](#)[Ukraine](#)

## A new ‘iron curtain’ is descending between Russia and the west, Russia’s foreign minister says – as it happened

This live blog is now closed, you can find our [latest coverage of the Russia-Ukraine war here](#)

Updated 2d ago

*Samantha Lock* (now); *Maya Yang*, *Léonie Chao-Fong*, *Martin Belam* (earlier)

Thu 30 Jun 2022 20.06 EDTFirst published on Thu 30 Jun 2022 00.43 EDT



A shell crater in front of a damaged residential building in the town of Siversk, Donetsk Oblast. Photograph: Genya Savilov/AFP/Getty Images

*Samantha Lock* (now); *Maya Yang*, *Léonie Chao-Fong*, *Martin Belam* (earlier)

Thu 30 Jun 2022 20.06 EDTFirst published on Thu 30 Jun 2022 00.43 EDT

## Key events

- [2d agoSummary](#)
- [2d agoErdoğan warns Turkey may still block Nordic Nato drive](#)
- [2d agoSummary](#)
- [3d agoSummary](#)
- [3d agoNato will stick with Ukraine as long as it takes, says Joe Biden](#)
- [3d agoNew ‘iron curtain’ already descending between Russia and the west, says Lavrov](#)
- [3d agoToday so far...](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 3d ago

[12.43](#)

## New ‘iron curtain’ already descending between Russia and the west, says Lavrov

Russia’s foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, said, a new “iron curtain” was descending between [Russia](#) and the west, and that Moscow would not trust Washington and Brussels “from now on”.

Speaking to reporters, Lavrov said:

As far as an iron curtain is concerned, essentially it is already descending.

The process “has begun”, he said after talks with his counterpart from Belarus, AFP reports.

Lavrov accused the EU of not being “at all” interesting in understanding Russia’s interests, adding:

It is interested in what has been decided in Brussels. And what has been decided in Washington has been decided in Brussels.

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[2d ago](#)[20.02](#)

## Summary

Thank you for joining us for today’s live coverage of the war in [Ukraine](#).

We will be pausing our live reporting overnight and returning in the morning.

In the meantime, you can read our comprehensive summary of the day’s events in our summary below.

- **Russia’s foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, says a new “iron curtain” is descending between Russia and the west, and that Moscow would not trust Washington and Brussels “from now on”. [The process “has begun”, Lavrov said](#) after talks with his counterpart from Belarus. “As far as an iron curtain is concerned, essentially it is already descending,” he added.**
- **Ukrainian forces say they have [pushed Russian forces from Snake Island](#), a strategic Black Sea outpost off the southern coast.** Russia portrayed the pullout from the island as a “goodwill gesture”. Ukraine’s military said the Russians fled the island in two speedboats following a barrage of Ukrainian artillery and missile strikes.

- The situation in the eastern Ukrainian city of Lysychansk is “[extremely difficult](#)” as Russian forces’ continuous shelling makes it impossible for civilians to evacuate, officials say. “There is a lot of shelling and from multiple directions. The Russian army is approaching from different directions towards Lysychansk,” Luhansk regional governor, Serhiy Haidai said, adding that Russian forces remain on city outskirts where there is currently no street fighting.
- Russia is using inaccurate missiles from old Soviet stocks for more than 50% of its strikes in Ukraine, leading to significant loss of civilian life, a brigadier general in Ukraine’s armed forces said. [The rate of Russian strikes in Ukraine has more than doubled in the last two weeks](#), Brigadier Gen Oleksii Hromov said in a news conference.
- A cargo ship left the Russian-occupied Ukrainian port of Berdiansk for the first time since the city was seized by Moscow’s troops, according to a pro-Russia official. Yevgeny Balitsky, the head of the pro-Russia administration, was cited by Russian state media as saying the first cargo ship to leave Berdiansk was [carrying 7,000 tonnes of grain to “friendly countries”](#), without saying what cargo the ship was carrying.
- Joe Biden declared that the US and Nato allies will [stick with Ukraine “as long as it takes”](#) as the military alliance promised hundreds of thousands more troops to defend eastern Europe. The US president [also announced another \\$800m of military aid to Kyiv](#) – but questions remained over how much detail there was behind [the plan to create a 300,000-strong force](#) to deter any Russian attack.

- Nato's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, has said Sweden and Finland are expected to formally sign the Nato accession protocol on Tuesday. Following the Nato summit in Madrid, Stoltenberg said leaders had decided to support Kyiv “to make sure Ukraine prevails as an independent sovereign state in Europe”.
- Turkey's president has warned that Ankara could still block Finland and Sweden's accession to Nato if the two countries fail to fully meet his expectations. Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that if the two Nordic countries renege on their promises, including to extradite terror suspects with links to outlawed Kurdish groups, Turkey's parliament could refuse to ratify the deal reached on Tuesday.
- Estonian and Latvian defence ministers signed a letter of intent on Thursday at the Nato summit in Madrid for joint procurement of medium-range anti-aircraft systems. “The aggression of Russia in Ukraine clearly shows the need for air defence systems,” Latvian defence minister Artis Pabriks said in a statement.
- French president, Emmanuel Macron, said France will deliver six CAESAR howitzers and a “significant number” of armoured vehicles to Ukraine. Macron added that the Nato allies meeting in Madrid “unanimously decided” to boost humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine as it attempts to fight of Russian forces.
- The UK's foreign secretary, Liz Truss, said it is a “realistic” ambition to push Russian forces out of Ukraine entirely. Asked whether the British government believed Russia could be pushed out of all of Ukraine within a foreseeable timeframe, Truss replied: “It is realistic, and that is why we are supplying the extra lethal aid we're supplying.”

- Russia's foreign ministry said it had summoned the British ambassador in Moscow, Deborah Bronnert, to protest against Boris Johnson's "offensive" remarks regarding Russia and Vladimir Putin. A strong protest was expressed to the ambassador over "the frankly boorish statements of the British leadership regarding Russia, its leader and official representatives of the authorities, as well as the Russian people", [it said in a statement](#).
- Norway's foreign minister, Anniken Huitfeldt, has said her nation is not blocking Russian access to Svalbard. On Wednesday, Russia accused Norway of disrupting the delivery of critical supplies and threatened retaliation. Huitfeldt [said Norway was not blocking Russian access to the Arctic archipelago](#), only applying international sanctions, and that Russia had other means to reach its settlements.
- The Indonesian president, Joko Widodo, arrived in Moscow where he will urge Vladimir Putin to agree to a ceasefire and seek ways to allow the export of grain from Ukraine. Widodo [also met with the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, on Wednesday](#) during a visit he described as a "manifestation of the Indonesian people's concern for the situation in Ukraine".
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Updated at 20.06 EDT

[2d ago 19.32](#)

Satellite images shows smoke rising from **Snake Island**, off the coast of [Ukraine](#), on Thursday.

Ukrainian forces say they pushed Russian forces from the strategic Black Sea island.



A satellite image shows smoke rising from Snake Island, off the coast of Ukraine. Photograph: Planet Labs Pbc/Reuters



A general view of Snake Island purportedly taken by Ukraine Operational Command South. Photograph: Ukraine Operational Command South/Reuters

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[2d ago](#)[18.52](#)

Eva Corlett

New Zealand prime minister, **Jacinda Ardern**, has assured Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelenskiy of her continued support in the country's fight against Russia, just days after turning down an invitation to visit the country.

Eva Corlett reports to us from New Zealand.

Ardern had been invited to visit Kyiv during her trade mission in [Europe](#) but was unable to accept due to timing constraints. Instead, Ardern called Zelenskiy from Brussels on Thursday morning following the Nato Leader's Summit in Spain:

I passed on New Zealand's solidarity, and our commitment to keep standing with Ukraine as they fight the illegal invasion of their country."

A spokesperson from the prime minister's office says Ardern had also assured the president of New Zealand's continued support through sanctions on those connected to the Russian government.

In a statement on Twitter, Zelenskiy thanked New Zealand for its support and solidarity, particularly in security:

Discussed further strengthening of sanctions on Russia and ways of bringing the aggressor to justice. Invited to join the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine."

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2d ago 18.37

## **Erdogan warns Turkey may still block Nordic Nato drive**

Just two days after [agreeing to lift deal-breaking objections to Sweden and Finland's Nato accession](#), Turkey's president has warned that Ankara could still block the process if the two countries fail to fully meet his expectations.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan said [at the close of the alliance's summit in Madrid](#) that the 10-article agreement with the Nordic pair was a victory for Ankara and addressed all its "sensitivities".

He particularly stressed the satisfying of Turkey's demand for Sweden and [Finland](#) to extradite terror suspects with links to outlawed Kurdish groups or the network of an exiled cleric accused of a failed 2016 coup in Turkey.

But Erdogan added that if the two Nordic countries renege on their promises, Turkey's parliament could refuse to ratify the deal reached on Tuesday. Nato accession must be formally approved by all 30 member states, which gives each a blocking right.

"This business will not work if we don't pass this in our parliament," Erdogan said.

"First, [Sweden](#) and Finland must fulfil their duties and those are already in the text ... But if they don't fulfil these, then of course there is no way we would send it to our parliament."

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2d ago 18.27

**US president, Joe Biden, accidentally announced that he had called the leader of Switzerland to discuss abandoning two centuries of neutrality**

**to join Nato** — before quickly correcting himself to say he actually meant Sweden.

Speaking at a press conference in Madrid following a Nato summit, he let slip:

Some of the American press will remember when I got a phone call from the leader of Finland saying could he come and see me, then he came the next day and said, ‘Will you support my joining — my country joining Nato?’ We got the telephone. He suggested we call the leader of Switzerland,” Biden said.

Biden quickly clarified:

Switzerland, my goodness, I’m getting really anxious here about expanding Nato — of Sweden.”

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Updated at 19.05 EDT

[2d ago](#)[18.02](#)

## Summary

It's 1am in Kyiv. Here's where things stand:

- Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau [announced](#) the [finalization](#) of the agreement to transfer 39 armored combat support vehicles to Ukraine. At the conclusion of the Nato summit in Madrid, Trudeau said that the ACVSSs were originally supposed to be for the Canadian army and were in the process of being delivered but will instead be redirected to [Ukraine](#).
- A five-year-old Ukrainian refugee died Thursday after being hit by an electric scooter in Nice, French police said. The child and his

mother were crossing the Promenade des Anglais, the famous palm-lined street overlooking the Mediterranean, at a pedestrian crossing when the accident happened on Wednesday.

- Estonian and Latvian defense ministers signed a letter of intent on Thursday at the Nato summit in Madrid for joint procurement of medium-range anti-aircraft systems.“The aggression of Russia in Ukraine clearly shows the need for air defence systems,” Latvian defence minister Artis Pabriks said in a statement.
- The situation in the eastern Ukrainian city of Lysychansk is “extremely difficult” as Russian forces’ continuous shelling makes it impossible for civilian evacuation, the regional governor of Lugansk said on Thursday. “There is a lot of shelling and from multiple directions. The Russian army is approaching from different directions towards Lysychansk,” Serhiy Haidai said, adding that Russian forces remain on city outskirts where there is currently no street fighting.
- The United States on Thursday blocked a US-based company worth more than \$1 billion linked to Russian oligarch Suleiman Kerimov, saying the ally of President Vladimir Putin used it to funnel and invest shadowy funds. The Treasury Department said that Kerimov, a billionaire active in Russian politics, secretly managed the Delaware-based Heritage Trust which put its money into a number of large public companies.
- French president Emmanuel Macron has announced that France will deliver six CAESAR howitzers and armored vehicles to Ukraine, the Kyiv Independent reports. Macron added that the Nato allies meeting in Madrid “unanimously decided” to boost humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine as it attempts to fight off Russian forces.

*That's it from me, Maya Yang, as I hand the blog over to my colleagues in Australia who will bring you the latest updates. I'll be back tomorrow, thank you.*

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2d ago 17.30

**Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau announced the finalization of the agreement to transfer 39 armored combat support vehicles to Ukraine.**

At the conclusion of the Nato summit in Madrid, Trudeau said that the ACVSs were originally supposed to be for the Canadian army and were in the process of being delivered but will instead be redirected to Ukraine.

“The light armoured vehicles we will be sending over will be extremely effective,” Trudeau told summit reporters. “We’re just glad to help and we’re going to continue to look and respond to things that they need.”

He reassured reporters that the Canadian army will continue to remain stocked, saying, “Stocks for the Canadian military will be replenished as quickly as possible... We need to make sure that the women and men of the Canadian Forces have the equipment they need to continue their mission and step up as necessary.”

Trudeau added, “We also recognize that the best use, right now, of things like howitzers and sniper rifles and all of the other equipment we’ve been sending to Ukraine — the best use for Canadian security, for geopolitical stability — is to put them in the hands of Ukrainians.”



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau holds a press conference after the NATO Summit at the IFEMA Convention Center in Madrid, Spain on June 30, 2022. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

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Updated at 19.20 EDT

[2d ago](#)[16.51](#)

**A five-year-old Ukrainian refugee died Thursday after being hit by an electric scooter in Nice, French police said.**

The child and his mother were crossing the Promenade des Anglais, the famous palm-lined street overlooking the Mediterranean, at a pedestrian crossing when the accident happened on Wednesday.

The boy “was holding a bag that his mother was also holding, but was walking a bit ahead of her”, police said, adding they were “hidden by street furniture”.

A 40-year-old on an electric scooter who was going “at excessive speed” could not avoid the child, they said.

“Despite being injured and having fallen, the rider of the electric scooter immediately cared for the child,” they added.

Nice mayor Christian Estrosi, on Twitter, expressed his “deep emotion” over the incident and opposition to self-service scooters.

“We are studying all possible solutions for avoiding these tragedies,” he said.

Immense émotion suite au décès du petit garçon renversé hier soir par une trottinette électrique à [#Nice06](#). J'adresse mes pensées à sa famille et ses proches et leur souhaite beaucoup de courage dans cette terrible épreuve. <https://t.co/FaNVWmmZIv>

— Christian Estrosi (@cestrosi) [June 30, 2022](#)

The boy’s family had arrived in France at the beginning of Russia’s invasion of [Ukraine](#), the head of a French-Ukrainian association in the Riviera, **Iryna Podyriako**, told the Nice-Matin regional daily.

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Updated at 19.21 EDT

[2d ago](#)[16.27](#)

**Estonian and Latvian defense ministers signed a letter of intent on Thursday at the Nato summit in Madrid for joint procurement of medium-range anti-aircraft systems.**

“The aggression of Russia in [Ukraine](#) clearly shows the need for air defence systems,” Latvian defence minister Artis Pabriks said in a statement. He added that the move would support regional cooperation and common defense among Baltic countries as the region reacts to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“The Nato summit has sent a clear message that help will be given to those who are ready also to defend themselves,” added Pabriks’ Estonian counterpart Kalle Laanet.

Both Estonia and Latvia are EU and Nato members.

A specific proposal on the procurement of the systems is expected to be unveiled at the end of July, but no details have yet been made public about the cost or delivery dates.

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Updated at 19.22 EDT

[2d ago 15.57](#)

**New satellite images have emerged of Snake Island after Russian forces abandoned the strategic Black Sea outpost earlier this week, indicating remaining equipment that has been left on the island.**

Maxar Technologies has published fresh satellite images of Snake Island

Retreating from the island, the invaders left their equipment on fire.  
[pic.twitter.com/xKju5sHccN](#)

— NEXTA (@nexta\_tv) [June 30, 2022](#)

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Updated at 19.23 EDT

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## [Police](#)

# Record number of UK police forces are failing and need intensive help

Met police, in need of special measures for first time since founding in 1829, is not the only force where intervention is deemed necessary



London mayor Sadiq Khan blames Met police failings on Conservative cuts, which led to inexperienced officers being hired. Photograph: Radharc Images/Alamy

*[Vikram Dodd](#) Police and crime correspondent*

Thu 30 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 02.06 EDT

A record six police forces are currently judged as failing so badly that they need special help as a furious political row erupted over the placing of Scotland Yard into special measures.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary confirmed on Tuesday that the Metropolitan police had been [placed into special measures](#) as it waits for a

new commissioner to reverse plunging public confidence.

But the full extent of one of the worst ever crises gripping policing across England and Wales is much more widespread and has not yet been made public.

Never before have so many of the 43 local forces been judged to be failing at the same time. Almost one in seven forces are currently judged by HMIC, the official policing inspectorate, as needing to accept intensive help and monitoring to urgently improve their performance.

The descent of the Met, which is Britain's biggest police force, into the failing force category led the Conservatives to blame the [London](#) mayor, Sadiq Khan, while Labour said the government in power since 2010 bore responsibility.

As well as the Met, forces known to be in special measures, officially termed as being in “engage”, were [Cleveland](#), [Greater Manchester police](#), [Gloucestershire](#). Staffordshire and Wiltshire forces are the other two failing forces, a spokesperson for HMIC confirmed to the Guardian.

The HMIC spokesperson said: “The number of forces in the engage phase varies from time to time. Six is the highest number of forces that have been in the engage phase simultaneously.”

The Met is the most high-profile failing force and it is the first time since its founding in 1829 that it has been judged in need of special measures.

On Tuesday, the Guardian revealed 14 new failings that were uncovered by a still secret HMIC inspection, coupled with plunging public confidence after repeated scandals led the inspectorate to take the unprecedented move.

The report is still at least six weeks from being made public and comes after the first round of interviews for the two remaining candidates to be the next commissioner.

They are Mark Rowley, who left the Met in 2018 after serving as head of counter-terrorism, and the assistant commissioner, Nick Ephgrave, who ran

local policing across London.

Cressida Dick [was ousted in February](#), choosing to resign after Khan told her he was unconvinced by her plans to pull the Met out of a successions of crises.

In the Commons, the policing minister, [Kit Malthouse](#), rewrote his speech at the last minute to include an attack on Khan, who is also the police and crime commissioner for London. Malthouse said: “I don’t know how much more serious it can get for London’s police force. This is the first time in their history they have been put into special measures.

“They are supposedly our premier, our biggest police force, and the primary accountability is the mayor of London … He has to step forward and do his job.”

Khan hit back and said: “Londoners won’t be surprised at our Conservative ministers deflecting their responsibility after 12 years of massive cuts.

“We’ve lost 21,000 experienced officers around the country, many of them in London. Because of City Hall funding we’ve managed to replace many of them, but clearly, with newer, inexperienced officers.”

Dick, under whose commissionership the Met plunged into failed force status, was jointly selected in 2017 by Khan and the Conservative government.

Her replacement is expected to be announced at some point in July and will be appointed by royal warrant. The home secretary, Priti Patel, makes the choice, and has to have due regard for the views of London’s mayor. Despite not officially being part of the process, Downing Street also influences the choice.

A Home Office spokesperson said: “We expect improvements to be made.

“We are clear forces and their police and crime commissioners must deliver on the public’s priorities … while continuing to recruit thousands of new officers to protect local communities.”

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jun/30/record-number-of-uk-police-forces-are-failing-and-need-intensive-help>.

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[Politics live with Andrew Sparrow](#)[Politics](#)

# Boris Johnson says UK defence spending set to rise to 2.5% of GDP by end of decade – as it happened

This live blog is closed.

- [No 10 says it trusts privileges committee probe into PM will be fair](#)
- [Summary of Boris Johnson's press conference after Nato summit](#)
- [Truss defends plans to cut British army by nearly 10,000 troops](#)
- [Truss says west needs to ensure Taiwan can defend itself against China](#)
- [Bill of rights could damage human rights across Europe, says JCHR](#)
- [45% of Britons say Brexit has made daily life worse, poll suggests](#)

Updated 3d ago

[Andrew Sparrow](#)

Thu 30 Jun 2022 12.47 EDTFirst published on Thu 30 Jun 2022 04.35 EDT

Boris Johnson pledges to increase defence spending to 2.5% of GDP – video

[Andrew Sparrow](#)

Thu 30 Jun 2022 12.47 EDTFirst published on Thu 30 Jun 2022 04.35 EDT

## Key events

- [3d ago Afternoon summary](#)
- [3d ago Scottish government says its £65m contribution to military aid to Ukraine must be one off, not thin end of wedge](#)
- [3d ago Blair says Labour has to assure people it's 'safe alternative' in order to win next election](#)

- [3d ago Nadine Dorries mistakes rugby league for union code at World Cup event](#)
- [3d ago Mike Amesbury resigns as Labour frontbencher to give 'louder voice' to his constituents](#)
- [3d ago 45% of Britons say Brexit has made daily life worse, and only 17% say it's made it better, poll suggests](#)
- [3d ago UK firms tell Rishi Sunak: time running out to save UK plc from perfect storm](#)

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## Live feed

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From 3d ago

[07.48](#)

## Johnson says defence spending set to rise to 2.5% of GDP by end of decade

*Q: Why are you cutting 9,500 troops and breaking the manifesto pledge to increase defence spending by 0.5% above inflation?*

**Johnson** says Nato the amounts the UK is spending on defence. Defence spending has gone up by £24bn.

The UK is well over the 2% (of GDP) defence spending target, he says. It will get to 2.5% by the end of the decade.

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[3d ago 12.45](#)

## Afternoon summary

- Boris Johnson has said the UK will spend 2.5% of GDP on defence by the end of this decade, after a cabinet row over defence spending and claims the government would ditch a key manifesto commitment on the issue.
- Liz Truss has defended plans to cut the British army by nearly 10,000 troops as she called on other Nato countries to “step up” their defence spending.
- Ministers have announced a U-turn on key elements of the government’s schools bill, scrapping or amending clauses that would have given the Department for Education (DfE) greater control over “virtually every aspect” of academy trusts in England.
- Natalie McGarry, a former Scottish National party MP who embezzled almost £25,000 from two pro-independence groups has been jailed for two years.



Boris Johnson boarding his plane as he leaves the Nato summit in Madrid to fly home.

Photograph: WPA/Getty Images

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[3d ago](#)12.41

**Scottish government says its £65m contribution to military aid to Ukraine must be one off, not thin end of wedge**



Severin Carrell

The Scottish government has said it has reluctantly agreed to allow its budgets to be used towards funding extra military aid for [Ukraine](#), after UK ministers asked the devolved government to contribute £65m towards the new £1bn fund.

Kate Forbes, the Scottish finance and economy secretary, said:

This further funding is to assist Ukrainian armed forces to fight Russian aggression and the unspeakable brutality being perpetrated.

We have agreed to providing funding on this occasion given the clear need to maximise the international effort to support Ukraine. However, we are clear that this must not be seen as any kind of precedent which leads to devolved budgets being used to help pay for clearly reserved policy areas.

The Welsh government also expressed reservations about this request, and said it too had reluctantly agreed because of the significance of the crisis. (See [2.27pm](#).) Nicola Sturgeon's chief spokesman said today it was worried that ministers in London may feel other devolved funds could be raided in

future to fund UK-level policies normally paid for by the UK government. He said:

We don't want this to be the thin end of a wedge which you'll regularly or semi-regularly see devolved budgets used for clearly reserved matters because Scotland clearly doesn't receive funding for foreign affairs and defence, but devolved Scottish funding is being used for foreign affairs and defence. So it's, I don't think it's ever happened. We regard it as a one off.

The government said the chief secretary to the Treasury asked devolved authorities and all the UK's government departments to either offer up a contribution or to take a reduction in the consequentials provided as part of the block grant from the UK government. The Scottish government said it took £65m from its own capital reserves, carried forward from last year's budget.

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Updated at 12.47 EDT

[3d ago](#) [12.31](#)

## **Blair says Labour has to assure people it's 'safe alternative' in order to win next election**

The Future of Britain conference, organised by **Tony Blair** as part of the Britain Project, his initiative to champion progressive, cross-party, centrist politics, has just finished. At one point there were suspicions that it was the springboard for the launch of a new Macron-style party, but in the end [the speaker list](#) was relatively second division and in a Q&A at the end of the day Blair said he did not expect the two-party model of British politics to change. But he did offer some advice to Keir Starmer, as well as declaring that he would be touting his centrist policy agenda to anyone interested. Here are the main points.

- **Blair said that it would be vital for Labour at the next election to assure people who might not vote for the party that it would be a safe alternative.** Referring to the Lib Dem victory in the Tiverton and Honiton by-election last week, Blair said at the next election Labour needed those voters to stick with the Lib Dems. And that meant they had to be comfortable with the idea of a Labour government. He went on:

Those people have got to be comfortable with the prospect of a Labour government. Doesn't mean to say they're all going to vote Labour, I'm not saying that ...

One of the things that I always used to try and do when I was leader of the opposition was, I wanted to make it as easy as possible for people to make that journey [to backing Labour]. For Labour, the big challenge is when people come to what is always a big decision for a country, to change its government, people have got to think: 'You know, I think the other lot deserve to be put out. And these guys are a safe alternative.'

- **He said Keir Starmer had done “an amazing job” in pulling Labour back from where it was in 2019.** When it was put to him that Labour modernisation still had a long way to go, and that it was at the 1989 stage on the (1979-97) route to power, Blair said he he thought the party had progressed “a lot further” than that. He also said Starmer’s starting point was worse than his. Blair said: “To be fair to Keir, I took the Labour party over after Neil Kinnock and John Smith. He’s had a tougher time of it, mentioning no names. So I think he’s done an immense job in taking it this far.”

- **But Blair said Labour needed a clearer policy agenda.** He said:

The fact is, for Labour to win the next election, it's got to have a policy agenda that's absolutely clear.

Now, it has done a huge amount of work. But for Labour, if it wants to seal the deal with the British people, then I think it's going to be all about policy and expressing through policy the fact that this is a Labour party prepared to reach out beyond its traditional base and pull in people who may be voting Liberal Democrat, some people may be soft Tories.

- **He said he hoped the Labour party would adopt the policies promoted by his thinktank.** Asked why he did not set up his own party, he said Britain had a system with two main parties, and he did not see that changing. But he went on:

But let me tell you, from the point of view of the Labour party, my political party, I hope they take this agenda.

We published the paper on the health service yesterday, we've got one on education coming, another on asylum and immigration. I want to build a strong policy agenda. And then it's there for reasonable people - whether they're Conservative party, Labour party, the Lib Dems whatever - to take it up.



Tony Blair speaking at the Future of Britain conference. Photograph: Future of Britain conference

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Updated at 12.38 EDT

[3d ago](#)[11.44](#)

The Conservative MP **Julian Lewis**, who chairs parliament's intelligence and security committee, has described [Boris Johnson](#) promise to increase defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2030 as "feeble". Lewis accused Johnson of "an inability or unwillingness to face up to the gravity of the current crisis".

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[3d ago](#)[11.39](#)

## **Nadine Dorries mistakes rugby league for union code at World Cup event**

**Nadine Dorries**, the culture secretary, stunned a rugby league audience by confusing the 13-player game with the rival code, PA Media reports.

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[3d ago](#)[11.33](#)

## **Mike Amesbury resigns as Labour frontbencher to give 'louder voice' to his constituents**

The [Labour](#) MP **Mike Amesbury** has announced he has resigned as a shadow local government minister. In his resignation letter, Amesbury, who represents Weaver Vale in Cheshire, which he held with a majority of just 562 at the last election, says he wants to be able to devote more time to representing his constituents. He says:

As inflation bites, I will stand shoulder to shoulder with all whose only ask is a fair deal for them and their families. I intend to provide this support and voice from the back benches ...

I secured my marginal seat from the Tories in 2017 and retained it in very challenging circumstances in 2019. At both elections I promised that I would put my constituents first. I believe that if I am to continue to do so, I am not able to give the role of shadow local government minister the energy it demands and deserves ...

The combination of a decade of Tory austerity, the impact of the pandemic and now soaring living costs have all meant a sustained increase in the number of constituents needing my help.

I will now give them an even louder voice in the community and in parliament.

Amesbury does not mention the rail strike in his letter. But he expressed support for the striking rail workers last week, and the reference to standing “shoulder to shoulder” with workers asking for a fair deal may be a reference to unhappiness with Keir Starmer’s instruction to frontbenchers not to join RMT picket lines.

Today I resigned as Shadow Local Government Minister to ensure I can continue to put my constituents first as their MP.

Thank you to [@lisanandy](#) and everyone in the team, as well as local government colleagues who have been a pleasure to work with.  
[pic.twitter.com/BG8EjnITy1](https://pic.twitter.com/BG8EjnITy1)

— Mike Amesbury MP (@MikeAmesburyMP) [June 30, 2022](#)

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Updated at 11.42 EDT

3d ago **10.43**

Labour has accused [Boris Johnson](#) of postponing “difficult decisions” about the defence budget. Responding to Johnson’s announcement that he wants it to rise to 2.5% of GDP by the end of the decade, **John Healey**, the shadow defence secretary, said:

Britain deserves better than ministers rowing in public over defence spending throughout this Nato summit. We should have seen UK leadership as Nato acts to strengthen European defences.

With war in Europe and the threats growing, Britain needs to reboot defence planning now - not duck difficult decisions until the end of the decade.

No one thinks the prime minister will be around to keep this 2030 pledge.

Labour has called for a “post 9/11” increase in defence spending, but it has not set out details.

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Updated at 11.42 EDT

3d ago **10.16**

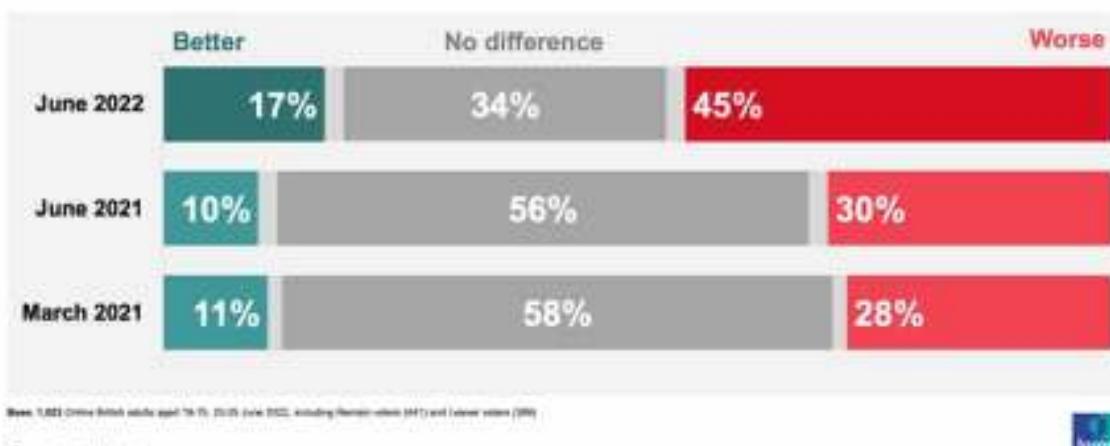
**45% of Britons say Brexit has made daily life worse, and only 17% say it's made it better, poll suggests**

Almost half of Britons (45%) think Brexit has made daily life worse, [new polling from Ipsos Mori](#) suggests. Fewer than one person in five (17%) thinks it has made daily life better.

Both figures have gone up quite a lot since last summer, because the proportion of people saying [Brexit](#) has made no difference has shrunk. But 34% of people are still saying its impact has been neutral.

**The proportion who think Brexit has made daily life worse has risen to nearly half; almost one in five now think it has made daily life better**

To what extent has Britain's exit from the EU made your daily life better or worse, or has it made no difference?

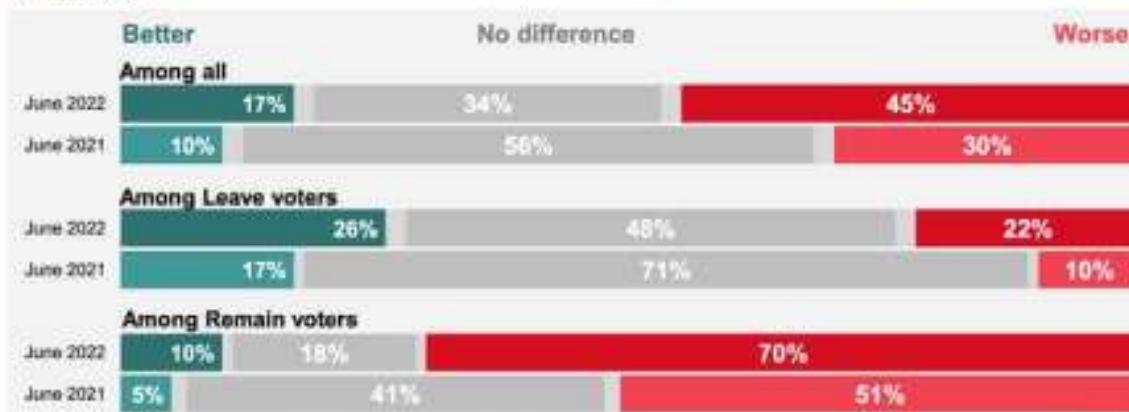


Polling on Brexit. Photograph: Ipsos Mori

More than a quarter of leave voters (26%) says Brexit has made their daily life better. But 22% says it has made life worse, and 48% say it has made no difference.

## Views on Brexit's impact on daily life have become more polarised, with fewer not having an opinion either way

To what extent has Britain's exit from the EU made your daily life better or worse, or has it made no difference?



Polling on Brexit Photograph: Ipsos Mori

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Updated at 10.54 EDT

3d ago09.51

**Tobias Ellwood**, the Conservative chair of the Commons defence committee, has said increasing defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2030 (see 1.52pm) is “too little too late”.

This is NOT the time to cut the Army by 10,000.’

My request to Government .

And moving to 2.5% defence spend by 2030 is too little too late.  
[pic.twitter.com/djHlPnrfW](https://pic.twitter.com/djHlPnrfW)

— Tobias Ellwood MP (@Tobias\_Ellwood) June 30, 2022

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[3d ago](#)[09.48](#)

## UK firms tell Rishi Sunak: time running out to save UK plc from perfect storm

**Rishi Sunak** has been warned the government is running out of time to save the economy amid a rapidly worsening growth outlook and soaring inflation hitting businesses, my colleague **Richard Partington** reports.



Rishi Sunak at the BCC annual global conference this morning. Photograph: Yui Mok/PA

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[3d ago](#)[09.45](#)

This is from **Bridget Phillipson**, the shadow education secretary, on the government's decision to drop clauses from the schools bill that would threaten the autonomy of academies. (See [2.10pm](#).)

This is a major climbdown from Nadhim Zahawi and confirms this chaotic government has no plan to drive-up standards in our schools and improve outcomes for our children.

Just days ago the schools minister was told the Commons these were important provisions. Now the government has binned them. The Conservatives are in a mess trying to rush through laws to avoid scrutiny and distract from their own incompetence.

And here is our story on the move by my colleague **Richard Adams**.

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[3d ago](#)[09.36](#)

## **Tony Blair says Labour has ‘recovered’ as he dismisses need for new party**

**Tony Blair** has dismissed the need for a new political party, saying Labour has “recovered” under [Keir Starmer](#) but needs a clearer sense of direction to win the next general election. My colleague **Aubrey Allegretti** has the story here.

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[3d ago](#)[09.34](#)

**Volodymyr Zelenskiy**, the Ukrainian president, has thanked Boris Johnson for the [£1bn in military aid for his country](#) announced today.

I'm grateful to [REDACTED] Prime Minister [@BorisJohnson](#) for allocating an additional £1 billion for security assistance to Ukraine. [REDACTED] is our true friend and strategic partner. We appreciate the consistent, leadership support for [REDACTED] in countering Russian aggression.

— Володимир Зеленський (@ZelenskyyUa) [June 30, 2022](#)

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[3d ago](#)[09.27](#)

**Welsh government expresses concern about £30m being taken out of its budget to fund UK military aid for Ukraine**



Steven Morris

The Welsh government has expressed concern that more than £30m is being taken out of its budget to go towards the £1bn the UK is sending to [Ukraine](#) for military aid.

**Rebecca Evans**, the Welsh finance minister, insisted her government was determined to support the Ukrainian people and had made a “substantial contribution” to the humanitarian effort. She said:

We will continue to provide humanitarian support to the Ukrainian people, and it is right the UK should continue to provide much-needed military support.

But she said it was “novel, worrying and potentially divisive” that the Treasury was seeking to use devolved budgets to fund reserved spending areas such as military aid and defence.

She said these funds should be spent on devolved areas such as health and education, adding: “This will result in challenging decisions to be made about our limited capital budget.”

Evans went on:

Ultimately, because of the exceptional circumstances, we have accepted this situation in light of our ongoing commitment to support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in their fight against this senseless act of aggression, but it should not be a precedent.



Rebecca Evans. Photograph: Eleanor Cunningham/PA

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Updated at 09.29 EDT

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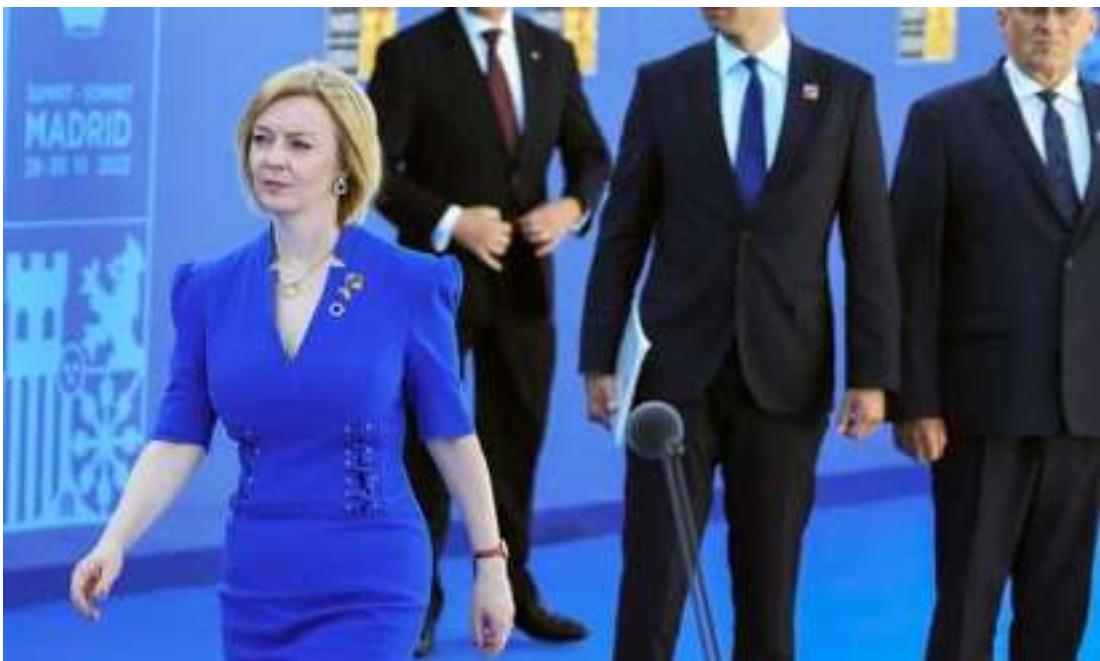
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**Liz Truss**

## **Liz Truss defends plans to cut British army by nearly 10,000 troops**

Foreign secretary calls on other Nato countries to increase defence spending and support Taiwan over China threats

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Liz Truss attends the Nato summit in Madrid, Spain. Photograph: Paul White/AP

*[Aubrey Allegretti](#) Political correspondent  
[@breeallegretti](#)*

Thu 30 Jun 2022 05.07 EDTFirst published on Thu 30 Jun 2022 05.05 EDT

Liz Truss has defended plans to cut the British army by nearly 10,000 troops as she called on other Nato countries to “step up” their defence spending.

Speaking as western leaders gathered in Madrid to discuss the alliance's most significant transformation for a generation, the UK foreign secretary suggested there was no end in sight to Russia's invasion of [Ukraine](#).

Truss pushed back against any "false peace" or "territorial compromise" being reached with the Kremlin, took swipes at several of her cabinet colleagues and called for Taiwan to be supported more in the face of threats from China.

Splits have broken out over the government's response to the Ukraine invasion during Boris Johnson's international tour, with the defence secretary, Ben Wallace, pushing for the department to get a significant funding increase and the head of the British army calling a plan to reduce the army from 82,000 to 72,500 perverse.

Truss defended the cut in troop numbers, telling BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "We all need to recognise that warfare now is different to warfare as it was 100 years ago, or 200 years ago."

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She said: "We need to make sure that the defence capability we have is fit for purpose for the modern world – and we face all kinds of new threats, whether it's cyber threats, threats in space, new technology, new weaponry, and what's important is the overall shape of those forces."

Truss added there had been an extra £24bn for the UK's defence budget and called on other [Nato](#) countries to meet the commitment to the 2% of gross domestic product target.

After the cold war, the west did not collectively spend enough on defence, Truss said, adding: "We also need our allies to step up. I see the 2% as a minimum and I want to see our allies spend more too."

She appeared unimpressed by rhetoric from Johnson and Wallace in recent days. The prime minister has claimed that if Vladimir Putin were a woman,

they would not have invaded Ukraine, while Wallace said the Russian leader had “small man syndrome”.

“I believe that both men and women are capable of doing evil things,” Truss told LBC, adding: “I don’t pretend that I can conduct a psychological analysis of [Putin]. Nor do I think it’s helpful.”

Truss suggested there was no end in sight to the conflict in eastern [Europe](#) in which tens of thousands of troops have been killed.

She told the Today programme: “We will only successfully end this war when Russia is pushed out and there is a proper peace settlement.”

Asked whether that included Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014, the foreign secretary said there should be no trade-offs or compromises with Moscow.

She was also notably hawkish on China and hinted at moves to arm Taiwan to help see off the threat of an invasion. Truss told Times Radio that the “free world” had to “make sure that Taiwan has the ability to defend itself, that we continue to maintain peace in the Taiwan Strait”, adding: “This is a thing that we’re discussing with our allies.”

After Johnson’s allies briefed [the Telegraph](#) about concerns over whether he would get a fair hearing by the privileges committee, which on Wednesday began its investigation into whether the prime minister misled parliament over Partygate, Truss said she had full confidence in the inquiry.

When asked about the Labour MP Harriet Harman being chair of the committee, which has a Conservative majority, Truss said: “I don’t see a problem with that.”

Truss added she trusted the cross-party group of MPs to look at the allegations properly and make an appropriate judgment.

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## 2022.06.30 - Spotlight

- 'A massive betrayal' How London's Olympic legacy was sold out
- The Pride I'll never forget 'There were only thousands of us there. But we felt like millions'
- The 'unofficials' The Hong Kongers who advised Britain on the 1997 handover – and were ignored
- Rae Morris 'I want to be a national treasure, but the things I like are quite weird'

# ‘A massive betrayal’: how London’s Olympic legacy was sold out

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[Pride](#)

## ‘We were marching with ghosts’: three writers on the Pride they’ll never forget



‘Scotland was changed for ever’ ... Pride Glasgow, 25 June 2022.  
Photograph: Jeff J Mitchell/Getty Images

As this year’s loud and proud celebrations draw to a close, regulars remember the parties and processions that changed how they saw the world

— and themselves. Kicking things off: a teenager's first Pride

*[Damian Barr](#) , [Ella Braidwood](#) and [Yas Necati](#)*

Thu 30 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 06.37 EDT

## **Damian Barr: ‘There were thousands of us and it rained. But we felt like millions. We felt like sunshine’**

I lost my [Pride](#) virginity the same day Scotland did: Saturday 17 June 1995. The sun shone proudly as we marched loudly through Edinburgh, a city that generally limits shows of emotion to a vigorous twitch of a net curtain. I was 18, weeks from 19, and didn't know where to look first.

Finally, I was legal: the age of consent had just been cut from 21. The fear of being arrested for doing what all my straight pals had been getting away with was very real. That summer, a guy I danced with at Bennett's in Glasgow was reported by his boyfriend's parents and jailed. Homosexuality was only decriminalised in Scotland in 1981 – more than a decade after England. And Section 28 was still very much on the books, as a teacher told me after I worked up the courage to ask for help. So, I flinched when I saw all the police at the march assembly point by the Blue Moon Cafe on Broughton Street. The uniforms were there to stop trouble – we all knew how quickly it could turn. But still.

I couldn't believe the crowds; I didn't know there were this many of us in the world, never mind Scotland. There were men holding hands and kissing IN PUBLIC. I blushed and longed to be that brave. Ranks of lesbians banged drums in time, rattling the windows in the Georgian townhouses all around. There were people whose gender I couldn't work out. There, and then, we were all different together. I was among strangers yet among friends and might even find a boyfriend, maybe at the afterparty in the Meadows. Of course, I couldn't find most of my actual friends: some things never change.



Damian Barr at Edinburgh Pride, 1995. Photograph: Supplied image

Huge handmade banners shouted about Aids, which hit Edinburgh especially hard. I don't remember what I wore that day, but I know I had my red ribbon on. We all did. We were marching for the people we had lost. We were marching with ghosts. There were a few rainbows but far more pink triangles – I was just discovering this history, not taught at school, of how my ancestors were rounded up by the Nazis, along with the Jews and Roma and all the others they destroyed. Never forget, I was learning.

I was studying journalism at Napier University (I was the first in my family to go to uni and the first to come out, that I knew of). I considered interviewing the people marching with me, but who would run such a story? Who would read it?

I don't remember floats and there were no corporate sponsors, no invitation to slay your mortgage with Barclays. We set off around noon, led by the drummers, and braced as we left the gaybourhood. No crowds lined Princes Street. Some shoppers stopped to stare. A busload of tourists mistook the men in kilts carrying a Pride Scotia banner for nationalists and took photos – they didn't clock that the kilts were leather. We crossed George IV Bridge and headed to the Meadows where I finally found my pals. It was all over by

9pm. But I was changed for ever. And so was Scotland, which continues making up for lost time.

Official records of that first Pride say there were only thousands of us there that day and grainy photos show it rained, lots. But we felt like millions. We felt like sunshine.



Ella Braidwood with her parents and older brother at Pride in Carlisle, 2019.  
Photograph: Supplied image

## **Ella Braidwood: ‘Where I lived, gay was used as an insult and lesbians were fetishised’**

I remember feeling nervous, as 200 of us arranged ourselves behind a big Pride banner in front of Carlisle’s city council offices. It was 2019 and I had gone back home to march in Cumbria Pride, two school friends in tow. It was the antithesis to the big city parades. There was no need to sign up to the march beforehand – anyone could join in – and barely any corporate sponsors. There were certainly no floats laden with drag queens or waving celebrities; waterproof jackets and hiking boots were the order of the day, rather than leather and sequins. But it was never about the glittery grandeur: it was the 10th anniversary of Cumbria Pride.

I couldn't have imagined that day, as a closeted teenager. I grew up in a village just outside of Carlisle, and knew I was a lesbian around the age of 14. I felt a huge amount of shame because, where I lived, gay was used as an insult and lesbians were fetishised or discussed as the butt of jokes. My friends were supportive when I came out, but "that's so gay" was still a phrase I heard a lot throughout school. I found it incredibly isolating – until I learned to drive, I couldn't really get anywhere on my own, except for a few daily buses to Carlisle. Some people describe their secondary school years as the best of their life. Well, they were the worst of mine.

I was brought up as a Christian and went to church most Sundays, and that fuelled my sense of shame. I feared what my congregation would think of me. I knew that my mum especially would find it hard to accept my sexuality, at least initially. I don't want to go into detail about my coming out to her, other than to say this: that moment broke both of us. I think homophobia damages all of us, just in different ways and to varying degrees. Now, she often tells me that she is proud of me, but actually I am so proud of her and how she changed to embrace me.



'I love going home now' ... Ella Braidwood. Photograph: Courtesy of Ella Braidwood

All of which is why I wanted to be visible for the LGBTQ+ kids living in Cumbria. The parade route was pretty short, around a mile long, through the city centre and up to Carlisle Castle. Without much in the way of a sound system, the marching music consisted of bagpipes and Newcastle's all-women drumming group, the Bangskees. The National Trust was one of the few big brands on the march.

There were no barriers along the route, so, when I saw my family, I jumped out of the parade to hug them. A family friend took a photo: I'm smiling with mum by my side, wrapped in a rainbow flag she gave me that morning, both encased by my dad and older brother. (I also have a younger brother, who wasn't able to come, but has always been very supportive.)

For me, the day was about progress, and reclaiming the place where I'd grown up with the people I loved. I moved to London for university in 2012, a few days after coming out to my family. I hadn't really looked back – apart from the holidays, I avoided going home. It just reminded me of how sad I'd been there. I wanted to let go of that painful awkwardness, still lingering, from things said in the past. I think I did far more for young LGBTQ+ people in Carlisle that day than I'd ever done at the Prides I'd been to in London and Brighton. As a child, I didn't see people like me.

But things have changed. In the castle grounds after the march, there were families with young kids, covering themselves with glitter and face paint. It was wonderfully grassroots, with a marquee, a stall selling Cumberland sausages, and a play area with hula-hoops. Among the advertisers on the big screen were a local chip shop and pole-dancing group.

I love going home now. That Pride march helped me move on from the past, the people I grew up with rallying behind me. Last year, I got that photo of me with my family framed and hung it on the living room wall. It always makes me happy when I look at it. It's one of my favourite memories.



'I felt like his energy had taken over my body' ... Yas Necati performing their Tarkan drag act. Photograph: Eda Sancakdar

## **Yas Necati: 'I had wanted to perform drag for a while, but something was holding me back'**

I spent the weeks leading up to Pride month ordering tiny water guns off eBay, hoping one of them would fit. It was preparation for my first ever performance other than poetry: a drag act taking on one of Turkey's biggest pop stars, Tarkan. I was to take the stage at a new club night, a small alternative community Pride event at The Glory (east London's notorious queer bar and performance space) called Turkish Delight. The scene was set: I had watched hours of Tarkan videos from the 90s and 00s, the soundtrack was mixed, the choreography was sorted, and I had what I thought was a great idea: to pull a water gun out of my pants mid-performance and squirt the audience.

I was a few weeks into rehearsal: practising in my living room with bananas or pencils or whatever I could get my hands on, really. When I ordered the first small water pistol off eBay, I didn't anticipate that it wouldn't be watertight, instead producing a steady drip down my trousers. I looked like I had wet myself.

I tried using other water pistols to no avail. I attempted filling the water guns with thicker liquids. But soon there was just fairy liquid, melted chocolate or whipped cream soaking through my jeans, chafing my thighs. This was not the comical-but-sexy striptease I had in mind.

On the night of the show, I was buzzing. It was so cool to be performing to an audience who had also grown up with Tarkan's music. Tarkan himself is a very confident, cocky, beautiful and effeminate man and I felt like his energy had taken over my body when I was in front of that audience. I started off in a jean jacket with a postman's hat and fingerless gloves – a nod to an early Tarkan video [Kımdi?](#) – and by the end I wasn't wearing very much at all.

People were singing along to his music at the top of their voices, and I was giving everything I had. When I came off stage, I fell into the arms of my sister, my friends and my then-partner – I felt so at peace. The water pistol idea had flopped (I kept the gun, but without the water), but that wasn't what the act had been about: it was about celebrating queerness, transness and Turkishness, but it was also about me.

I had never had a space before where I could celebrate all of the intersections of my identity like that. Mainstream Pride events in the UK had never felt like they were for me. But here I was at an alternative Pride event, run by a lesbian couple from Istanbul, Tuna Erdem and Seda Ergul, and although I identify as Cypriot, not Turkish, I felt embraced and at home.

I had been wanting to perform drag for a while, but something was holding me back: I was worried predominantly that white audiences wouldn't get the act I envisioned. But performing to people who knew Tarkan and his own complex relationship with his sexual orientation felt so liberating. Doing drag has helped me celebrate all the parts of myself, and feel pride both on and off the stage.

Last month, on a walk with my sister, she said: "Yas, I have an idea for a drag act!" I won't go into too much detail here (so as not to reveal it ahead of her debut!), but the act is also very Cypriot. At the start of Pride month, she shared a picture of herself with her first painted-on beard, and gushed about her pride in being a lesbian and how excited she is to do drag.

Six years later, I'm so excited my sister can develop something like this with a hope that it might find a place on the London drag king circuit. Doing drag has helped me celebrate all the parts of myself, and I hope it can do this for her, too.

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## **The Hong Kong ‘unofficials’ who advised Britain on the handover – and were ignored**



Lydia Dunn, Hong Kong's most senior non-government politician, and SY Chung talking to reporters in 1984. Photograph: South China Morning Post/Getty Images

Reviled by Beijing and dismissed by London, a group of local advisers tried and failed to ensure the interests of Hongkongers would be protected after 1997

Vincent Ni China affairs correspondent and Jason Rodrigues

Wed 29 Jun 2022 19.12 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 14.43 EDT

In official Chinese and British versions of Hong Kong history, the choices of the great powers occupy most pages. Little room is given to the voices of the people of Hong Kong. But in the years leading up to the territory's handover in 1997, one group of local industrialists tried – and failed – to influence the course of history.

They were called “unofficials”, a group of well-connected local advisers appointed by British governors to their de facto cabinet to advise on the territory’s policies. For years, this group of local Hong Kong Chinese were seen as the go-to figures for complex issues. And for a long time, their advice did seem to have certain influence on colonial governors.

But the role of the unofficials began to change when the most contentious subject emerged in the late 1970s. In March 1979, the governor, Murray MacLehose – locally called Big Mac – began to explore the “1997 question” with China’s paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping. The governor saw the issues as an “inescapable source of crisis” if left unaddressed.

**Steve Vines** reveals the mistakes Britain made before losing its last great colony and the crucial error made by officials at a meeting with Deng in 1979 that led to the agreement to restore Chinese sovereignty in 1997

## **Blunders may have cost Hong Kong**



The Guardian's report on the issue, dated 3 February 1991. Photograph: Guardian

# Left in the dark

MacLehose's trip to talk to Deng in Beijing did not go well, according to historians who wrote about the meeting years later. At the time, most of his senior advisers – including SY Chung, an “unofficial” engineer turned politician – were left in the dark as to what was discussed between the British and the Chinese. Without information, many in Hong Kong continued to believe that British administration would extend beyond 1997.

To some, the British governor's secrecy over the details of the meeting with Deng exposed a gap between the interests of the crown and the residents of the colony. Like Chung, most unofficials were left out of the loop, too, says Louisa Lim, the author of [Indelible City: dispossession and defiance in Hong Kong](#). "Their enforced ignorance was not casually done; it was a considered British government strategy, memorialised in diplomatic notes," she says.

In the early 1980s, uncertainties about Hong Kong's future hung over the territory. Having been kept in the dark, there was a sense of urgency among the unofficials; they would have to fight on their own – not against Beijing,

but against London.

Throughout that decade, the issue of Hong Kong's identity kept resurfacing. The 1980 nationalities bill proposed a new status for Hong Kong residents as "citizens of a British dependent territory". As the Guardian reported on [7 March 1981](#), this led some to wonder whether Britain would relinquish its obligations to them if a handover took place.



Chris Patten, the 28th and last governor of colonial Hong Kong, receives the union jack flag after it was lowered for the last time at Government House in 1997. Photograph: Emmanuel Dunand/AFP/Getty Images

So before the final parliamentary debate in October that year, two unofficials went to London to lobby the British government for British national status for Hong Kong's residents. But the response from British MPs shocked them.

"They all reassured us that it was not the Hong Kong British subject they were after – it was Gibraltarians and all that – but they did say, 'We don't mind having you people in but I certainly would not like to wake up one day and go to my butcher and my druggist to find that Hong Kong Chinese people are running them,'" according to one of the unofficials, the banker Li

Fook-wo, who recalled this version some time after the event to the British Hong Kong academic Steve Tsang.

They were humiliated, and went back home. The frustration continued to build up. So much so, Chung told Margaret Thatcher in a private meeting a few months later that if the British government could not trust its own local advisers, some of them might have no choice but to resign.

“The unofficials were in a peculiarly powerless and paradoxical position,” says Lim. “To Beijing, they were nonexistent though sometimes sought for their views, while to Britain they were consulted, then ignored.”



Deng Xiaoping and Margaret Thatcher in 1982 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing during one of the meetings leading up to the signing of the joint declaration. Photograph: AFP/Getty

## Fears for the future

Throughout the nearly two dozen rounds of negotiations between Beijing and London in the early 1980s, none of the unofficials, such as Chung, were permitted to be present. The British thought their views on China were too “confrontational”.

When the decision to relinquish Hong Kong in 1997 was finally announced on 20 April 1984, ironically it brought a sense of liberation to the advisers. Emboldened, a nine-member delegation – led by Chung – went to London to try to exert pressure on the government.

But London was prepared. The press were briefed against them before their arrival and described their statement as “militant”. Their crucial questions to their colonial masters were: what would happen if China breached the Sino-British joint declaration? Would residents of Hong Kong be able to cast their vote on the joint declaration? If so, how?

It was a controversial visit at home, too. Pro-Beijing newspapers accused the delegation of “spreading gloom in Hong Kong”, despite Hong Kong’s stock exchange index having already fallen by 200 points since the 20 April announcement. “We are here to try to reflect the Hong Kong people’s aspirations,” said Selina Chow, a member of the delegation, as reported by the *Guardian* on [13 May 1984](#). “We are asking the British government: ‘How are you going to fulfil your obligations to me? How are you going to protect me against these doubts?’”



SY Chung in 1978. Photograph: South China Morning Post/Getty Images

But before they received any answer from London, they were dismissed – including by their former boss, MacLehose, who by now had been given a life peerage. To Chung, it was unforgivable. “I shall never forget the words of the MPs who criticised us, saying that the unofficial members of the two councils were not elected so how could they represent Hong Kong? … I said to them: ‘How can you claim that you can negotiate for us? You have no mandate from us either; I never elected you,’” he later recalled to Tsang.

As a sophisticated businessman who had dealt with China often, Chung had been cautioning the British against being too credulous of the Chinese. He had also urged London to make sure Beijing would not break its promises. He had reservations about the proposed agreement. His fears ranged from whether the future Hong Kong governments would actually be ruled from Beijing, to whether Chinese politics would revert to the extreme left. “Looking back today, they were all prophetic,” says Lim.

## A cold reception in Beijing

Seeing things were going nowhere with London, the unofficials began meetings with Beijing on their own. In June 1984, Chung led a three-member delegation to see Deng in Beijing’s Great Hall of the People.

Just as they were accused by London of not having the right to represent the people of Hong Kong, the unofficials were fobbed off in the same way. “Deng told the delegation that he was willing to listen to their views as individuals, but it would not make any difference to China’s plans for the colony,” according to a [Guardian report on 25 June 1984](#).

“You can say anything you want, but I must point out that the People’s Republic of China stands firmly by its positions, principles and policies on the Hong Kong issue,” Deng told the trio. “We’ve heard a lot of different opinions, but we don’t acknowledge that these represent the interests of all of the Hong Kong people,” he added, accusing Chung and his colleagues of “[having] no faith in the People’s Republic of China”.

Hong Kong’s press described this meeting as a “humiliation”. The unofficials, however, put on a brave face, describing the dress-down by the Chinese leader as “very frank and thorough”.

“The unofficials tried very hard to put the wills of the people of Hong Kong to policymakers in China and Great Britain but were dismissed out of hand by the Chinese leadership and were not taken sufficiently seriously by the British government,” says Tsang, who now directs the Soas China Institute in London.

John Gittings on Hong Kong's 90 options that all point in the same direction

## All roads lead to Peking

THE PEOPLE of Hong Kong believe Governor John C. Patten’s “commodities” of which is instrumental in all the political changes in the city, he has come to power. The new Mayor has been asked to nationalise certain of the former British-owned companies.

Now Chris Patten is the last colonial administrator of Hong Kong before Hong Kong returns to China. The remaining offices of the former colonial government — including the government offices — will be closed at short notice. In fact, not the day after he was appointed, Mr. Patten announced that the last administrative functions to be recognised as Chinese. The administration will consist of three or six officials. “The last word from any of the administrative council is that it is not intended that any of the original civil servants return to Hong Kong after June 1997,” said Chris Patten.

Analysts and the economy

The latest that can be predicted is that the new government will consist of three or six officials. “The last word from any of the administrative council is that it is not intended that any of the original civil servants return to Hong Kong after June 1997,” said Chris Patten.

Analysts and the economy



The Guardian, 27 May 1987. Photograph: Guardian

## Switching loyalty

A few years after those humiliating trips to both capitals, Chung became a prominent voice in calling the territory's direct election plan “unrealistic”. In April 1987, he reaffirmed to the press that Britain would turn Hong Kong over in 1997 “to China, not to the Hong Kong people”.

Shortly before Christmas in 1993, Chung went to see Chris Patten, who had begun as the last governor of Hong Kong a year earlier. This time round, his role had changed. “Perhaps inevitably, having failed to influence the departing colonial power, he eventually went over to the other side and is now one of Beijing’s advisers,” Patten wrote in his diary, which was recently published.

A few weeks later, the two men met again. “He has fallen hook, line and sinker for the Chinese version of the end of the talks,” Patten recalled on Monday, 10 January 1994. “It’s sad and surprising. He used to argue that we should hold on to Victoria Island and bring in water by tanker if necessary.”

After the handover in 1997, Chung was appointed by Tung Chee-hwa, the territory’s first chief executive as a non-official convenor of the executive council. He died in 2018 at the age of 101. Local press called him “the godfather of Hong Kong politics” and “the Sir of Sirs”.

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Interview

## Rae Morris: ‘I want to be a national treasure, but the things I like are quite weird’

[Rachel Aroesti](#)



Magnetic north ... Rae Morris. Photograph: Reuben Bastienne-Lewis

The Blackpool-born artist talks about why the music industry doesn't get her, how she's reclaiming her sexuality, and why she's written a lush concept album about the north



Thu 30 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

Rae Morris's house is so nice it has brought on an identity crisis. "I find myself in this fancy location house in Primrose Hill," says the musician, scanning the mirrored walls and mustard velvet upholstery that has made her home a sought-after set for fashion shoots and TV shows. "And I'm like: what the fuck am I doing here?!"

The chasm between Morris's very ordinary childhood in Blackpool – her dad was a firefighter, her mother an NHS worker – and her charmed existence has been playing on the 29-year-old's mind. She is about to release her third album, *Rachel@Fairyland*, another collection of the idiosyncratic yet deeply catchy confections that have made her a lauded figure on the outer limits of British pop. Combining piano balladry with quirky production, piercing Kate Bush-style vocals and incisive, introspective lyrics, Morris creates indelible, euphoric tunes.



Rae Morris Photograph: Reuben Bastienne-Lewis

The new album serves as an unashamedly “rose-tinted” view of the north as a “Mary Poppins-esque universe”, explains Morris. It’s a concept echoed in the music, which is peppered with “orchestral Disney-esque woodwind stuff”. You can feel the yearning especially keenly on *Running Shoes*, a lush synthpop hymn to a pastoral idyll where animals graze and “the internet’s slow”. But Morris also misses less tangible things: the friendliness, the “practicality” and a feeling of normality she can’t seem to locate in London, where she lives with fellow musician and collaborator [Benjamin Garrett](#) (better known as Fryars) – convinced her to move to this ritzy neighbourhood was its proximity to Euston, the gateway to the north-west.

Last summer, after *Rachel@Fairyland* had been recorded – in the studio they installed in their basement – Morris and Garrett had a baby. It is a development that has compounded Morris’s sense of displacement. She isn’t keen on the idea of her daughter having a posh southern accent. “I think she’ll sound like she’s from Primrose Hill, and I’ll just have to deal with it,” she sighs, jokingly fantasising about success drying up and her family being forced to decamp to Blackpool.

It seems unlikely. That said, the past few years have been rocky for Morris professionally. *Rachel@Fairyland* is her first release since leaving Atlantic,

the major label she signed with at 19 for a “weird” amount of money. The music industry interest – based on a handful of demos she’d uploaded to Myspace – “completely blew my world away. Suddenly there were all these A&Rs coming down to my gigs at the Mad Ferret in Preston, some shit open-mic night.” Now, she wishes she hadn’t accepted such a massive advance, “because for the next eight years I was having to prove I was worth it”. To put it brutally, she couldn’t: despite scoring a Top 10 hit with her 2015 debut [Unguarded](#), compared to labelmates Ed Sheeran and Clean Bandit her numbers were “pathetic”, she says.

After her second album, 2018’s critically acclaimed [Someone Out There](#) (chart peak: No 20), she was dropped. She was upset, she admits, but also seems remarkably sanguine. “I’ve always wanted to play massive gigs and be a national treasure-type,” she says, giggling at her own chutzpah. “But the things I love are always a little bit weird.”

Morris says her experiences in the belly of the pop machine weren’t exactly terrible – in fact, after making most of her new album alone with Garrett, she signed with another major, RCA. But being in that world from a young age had an insidious effect on her sense of self. Rachel@Fairyland’s gorgeously sweeping opening track, No Woman Is an Island, focuses on the creepy ways in which female pop stars are moulded by older male executives. “Not in any other area of your life would someone say: ‘You’ve got a really great smile, you should put that out there more,’” she says. “There was a lot of: ‘I wonder if you wear a crop top whether that would help?’” There was also the suggestion she be seen more often in public with her celeb mates. “‘Maybe you could invite these famous people you know to this thing ...’” She cringes.

But it was a flattening of her character that Morris particularly objected to. “You take me for polite and mild / But actually my life is totally wild,” she croons on No Woman Is An Island, a reference to the fact that she was viewed as dull simply because she didn’t engage in any out-there onstage antics: “Just because I’m not dancing around with very little clothing doesn’t mean that I don’t have many layers to my character.”

If her previous team were desperate for some provocation, they would have been delighted to hear new track Low Brow, a “very sexy banger”, she says. The song, written with Garrett, is about a lifetime of sexual experiences: wet thighs, faces “glistening” and a person “tunnelling through my body”.

Not in any other area of life would someone say: ‘You’ve got a really great smile, you should put that out there more’

Morris says the song isn’t straight-faced but it has a serious side. When she first found fame, Morris was in a relationship with fellow Blackpool singer-songwriter Karima Francis and she found it “really annoying” that having a girlfriend meant interviewers seemed to view her sexuality as an appropriate subject for (strained) conversation. Low Brow was an opportunity to “discuss my sexuality in a way that was more fun and relaxed”. Although she appreciates the irony. “I know now everybody’s just going to ask me about it every single time.”

Writing a song with your husband about your past bedroom activity might sound a bit unusual, but everything about Morris’s demeanour screams extremely well-adjusted, down-to-earth and – yes – normal. When I worry that I’m perspiring on her swanky built-in sofa after a sweltering tube journey, she shows me a large milk stain on one of the cushions that happened while she was breastfeeding.

Conversation segues to other bodily fluids: we start comparing notes about bouts of norovirus spread by our children. Morris’s household outbreak occurred on a day of filming in her house. “[My daughter] was being sick, and I was being sick, and we had to do a video shoot. We couldn’t cancel because it was too late.” I gaze at the pink carpeted walls and picture the scene: even an inordinately cool Primrose Hill home and glamorous career isn’t enough, it seems, to insulate against everyday disaster.

*Rachel@Fairyland is out on Friday 8 July.*

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[\*\*Opinion\*\*](#)[\*\*Biofuels\*\*](#)

## **Why are we feeding crops to our cars when people are starving?**

[\*\*George Monbiot\*\*](#)



Modern biofuels are touted as a boon for the climate. But, used on a large scale, they are no more sustainable than whale oil



Illustration: Sébastien Thibault/The Guardian

Thu 30 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 08.07 EDT

What can you say about governments that, in the midst of a global food crisis, choose instead to feed machines? You might say they were crazy, uncaring or cruel. But these words scarcely suffice when you seek to describe the burning of food while millions starve.

There's nothing complicated about the effects of [turning crops into biofuel](#). If food is used to power cars or generate electricity or heat homes, either it must be snatched from human mouths, or ecosystems must be snatched from the planet's surface, as arable lands expand to accommodate the extra demand. But governments and the industries that they favour obscure this obvious truth. They distract and confuse us about an evidently false solution to climate breakdown.

From inception, the incentives and rules promoting biofuels on both sides of the Atlantic had little to do with saving the planet and everything to do with political expediency. Angela Merkel [pushed for an EU biofuels mandate](#) as a means of avoiding stronger fuel economy standards for German motor manufacturers. In the US, they have long been used to [prop up the price of grain](#) and provide farmers with a guaranteed market. That's why the Biden

administration, as the midterm elections loom, remains [committed to this cruelty](#).

As the investigative group Transport & Environment shows, the land used to grow the biofuels consumed in Europe covers [14m hectares](#) (35m acres): an area larger than Greece. Of the [soy oil consumed](#) in the European Union, 32% is eaten by cars and trucks. They devour 50% of all the palm oil used in the EU and 58% of the rapeseed oil. Altogether, 18% of the world's vegetable oil is turned into biodiesel, and 10% of the world's grains are transformed into ethanol, to mix with petrol.

A [new report by Green Alliance](#), an independent thinktank, shows that the food used by the UK alone for biofuels could feed 3.5 million people. If biofuel production ceased worldwide, according to one estimate, the [saved crops could feed 1.9 billion human beings](#). The only consistent and reliable outcome of this technology is hunger.

It's not just a matter of the [upward pressure on food prices](#), great as this is. Biofuel markets also provide a major incentive for land grabbing from small farmers and indigenous people. Since 2000, [10m hectares of Africa's land](#), often the best land, has been bought or seized by sovereign wealth funds, corporations and private investors. They replace food production for local people with "flex crops": commodities such as soya and maize that can be switched between markets for food, animal feed or biofuel, depending on which prices are strongest. Land grabbing is [a major cause of destitution and hunger](#).

As biofuels raise demand for land, rainforests, marshes and savannahs in Indonesia, Malaysia, Brazil and Africa [are cleared](#). There's a limit to how much we can eat. There's no limit to how much we can burn.

All the major crop sources of biodiesel [have a higher climate impact](#) than the fossil fuels they replace. Rapeseed oil causes 1.2 times as much global heating, soy oil twice as much, palm oil three times. The same goes for [ethanol made from wheat](#). Yet this consideration hasn't stopped the [reopening of a bioethanol plant in Hull](#), in response to government incentives, which will use the wheat grown on 130,000 hectares of land.

Whenever a new biofuel market is launched, we are told it will run on waste. A recent example is BP's claim that planes will be fuelled by "[sustainable feedstocks such as used cooking oil and household waste](#)". Invariably, as soon as the market develops, dedicated crops are grown to supply it. Already, all the waste that can realistically be extracted is being used, yet it accounts for [just 17% of the EU's biodiesel](#) and scarcely any bioethanol. Even these figures, according to an industry whistleblower who contacted me, are stretched: as waste palm oil, thanks to the demand for "green" biodiesel, can be more valuable than new oil, fresh supplies are allegedly slipped into the waste stream.

Far from heeding the concerns, however, last year the UK government, "responding to industry feedback", [increased its target](#) for the amount of biofuel used in surface transport. Worse, it justifies continued airport expansion with the claim that [planes will soon be able to use "sustainable fuels](#). In practice this means biofuel, as no other "sustainable" source is likely to power mass air travel in the medium term. But there is no means of flying [more than a tiny number](#) of planes on this fuel that does not involve both global starvation and ecological catastrophe.

Now the energy company Ecotricity has [relaunched a plan](#) to turn 6.4m hectares of the UK – over one quarter of our land area – into feedstock for biogas plants. Ecotricity's founder, Dale Vince, has made the astonishing claim that "[it's a plan with no downsides](#)". But, as critics have been trying to [point out to him](#), this scheme would incur enormous ecological, carbon and food opportunity costs. In other words, the land could either be used for growing food; or, if it ceased to be used for food production, would draw down more carbon and harbour more wildlife if it were rewilded. Biogas production has also triggered [severe pollution events](#), caused by spreading the residue back on to the land, which is a crucial part of Ecotricity's plan, or by [leaks and ruptures](#). It's the worst land use proposal I've ever seen in the UK.

When I challenged Vince about these issues, he told me: "We're not the big bad corporate. We're environmentalists that get things done, and often enough when we start something new we upset the settled view of things."

But we can't use such fixes to solve our climate crisis. To leave fossil fuels in the ground, we should change our energy system: [our need to travel](#), our modes of transport, the fuel economy of our homes and the means by which we heat them. Modern biofuels, used at scale, are no more sustainable than an older variety: whale oil. And burning food is the definition of decadence.

- George Monbiot is a Guardian columnist
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## OpinionTransport

# I didn't think going car-free would be possible for me: but it has changed my life

[Funmi Shonibare](#)

I took up a challenge from a climate charity – and suddenly my daughter and I were gliding past canals instead of sitting in traffic



‘What was once an unpredictable journey often stuck in traffic was now a fun ride along the marshes and the canal.’ Funmi Shonibare and her daughter, Grace. Photograph: Funmi Shonibare

Thu 30 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 05.38 EDT

I've always been a driver at heart. I passed my test when I was 19, and I've been behind the wheel for most journeys since. After becoming a parent eight years ago, I became even more dependent on my car, thinking that it meant security for me and my child, almost like driving was my duty. I

couldn't imagine a world where I didn't get around on four wheels, but that all changed when I tried going car-free.

Earlier this year, I signed up to a challenge posed [by the climate charity Possible](#) to see what it would be like to go without my car for three weeks. Given I've been driving for 10 years, it was daunting. On the other hand, being a motorist isn't always a piece of cake: low traffic neighbourhoods make it a bit harder to travel by car in my community, and there isn't controlled residential parking where I live. I wanted to see if there was another way of getting around.

I know all the reasons we shouldn't be driving around as much as we do. I'm no expert on pollution, but I'm aware that what is coming out of the exhaust pipes of our petrol and diesel cars is clogging up the lungs of our children – something I think about a lot given that one of my main journeys is the two-mile trip to my daughter's school. And then there's the contribution that cars make to the climate crisis.

I switched my car for an electric family bike. Straight away, I enjoyed having a break from driving, especially on the school run. What was once an unpredictable journey often stuck in traffic was now a fun ride along the marshes and the canal. Suddenly the low traffic neighbourhoods and school streets made my journey faster rather than frustrating. And I could see that my daughter loved every moment of it, which gave me the fuel I needed to know that we were doing the right thing.

Giving up my car didn't come without its challenges. I work in a Tesco about five miles away, and although there's endless car parking spaces, there isn't adequate provision to lock up my bike securely. Back home, I had to lug my bike up the stairs to keep it in the flat, because my borough is one of many with a lack of secure street storage. I've since learned that over 60,000 people are on a [waiting list for bike storage](#) across London. These are just a couple of the ways that our cities are still geared up to put cars first; yet some simple tweaks in investment and infrastructure could make it so much easier to give up the car for good.

On balance, the benefits outweighed the downsides. I felt myself getting fitter. I didn't need to think about going for a walk or going to the gym because I was getting exercise during my commute. I saved a bit of money every week, which was also the case for the majority of us who took part in this trial. [Of the 10 of us, eight saved money](#), up to £53 a week. And as the price at the pumps looks set to shoot past £2 a litre, the savings will only stack up longer term. I also slashed my carbon emissions from transport by nearly a half – and one participant in London eliminated their transport emissions entirely.

I was surprised by how feasible and pleasant it was to give up the car and get around on my bike and by public transport. I'm now saving up to get my own folding bike permanently, as my daughter has her own bike, and I know that two of the other participants in the trial have actually sold their cars. This July, [Possible is extending its challenge](#) to go car-free to the whole country, and I'd encourage anyone to give it a go, whether you think you can just switch one journey, or hang up the car keys for the whole month.

There is so much low hanging fruit when it comes to cutting traffic in our cities. Over a third of our car journeys in London [are less than 2km](#) – a shorter distance than the trip to my daughter's school. So many of these trips could be replaced by walking or wheeling, and I'm proud to have proven it. Going car-free made me really rethink my options and broadened my perspective. I used to think it was my duty as a parent to be a driver. Now I think it's my duty to get on my bike whenever I can.

- Funmi Shonibare a mum of one and works as a Travelex bureau manager. She participated in the climate charity Possible's call to go car-free

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[\*\*Opinion\*\*](#)[\*\*Air transport\*\*](#)

## **Britain's air passengers face a turbulent summer – here's how to tackle the chaos**

[Rocio Concha](#)

Until airlines meet their obligations – or ministers force them to – travellers' best bet is to know their rights in advance



Passengers queueing at Heathrow airport near London, 1 June 2022.  
Photograph: Carl Court/Getty Images

Thu 30 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 12.24 EDT

When packing for a summer holiday, the list of essentials to remember is increasing. Passport, boarding pass, sunglasses and a sensible hat are all non-negotiable. Now it seems we need rations for a six-hour queue, camping equipment in case we are forced to bed down for the night on a cold terminal floor, and a comprehensive grounding in consumer rights law in preparation for the airline cancelling our flight or losing our bags.

The [scenes in UK airports](#) in recent weeks – children in tears, baggage piling up, long-awaited first post-Covid holidays denied – have been difficult to watch. And the reality is that some of the problems that have caused the disruption do not have quick fixes. It could take weeks or months to sort out the [staffing shortages](#) that have hit some airports and airlines.

Yet the appalling treatment that passengers have suffered at the hands of some airlines is not inevitable – and could be fixed. Recent events should be a watershed moment and used as an opportunity to reform the travel sector so that passengers' rights are respected.

So the need for strengthened passenger rights is not new. In 2018, [Ryanair refused to compensate passengers](#) affected by its pilots striking. The high court instructed the airline to pay compensation for cancelled or delayed flights after the regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) took legal action, but Ryanair argued that the circumstances were extraordinary and refused. The case is still dragging through the courts, almost four years on.

Last year, [Ryanair and BA were investigated](#) by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) because they refused refunds to customers who couldn't legally take flights due to Covid restrictions. The investigation was ultimately dropped by the CMA due to a "lack of clarity in the law", but the regulator said it "strongly believed" the airlines should have given customers their money back.

The government is currently consulting on reforms of air passenger rights. Everyone agrees on the importance of ensuring a resilient travel sector emerges from the battering it took during the pandemic. But for airlines and holiday firms to flourish, it's vital that damaged consumer trust is restored.

However, some of the government's current plans are too focused on opportunistic demands from some airlines. Now is not the time to consider slashing compensation payouts for passengers whose domestic flights are severely delayed or cancelled – particularly when airlines have refused to provide any evidence for claims that paying compensation is an intolerable burden on their business. At Which? we found the government's current proposals could slash average payouts by £163 per passenger – while at the

same time removing one of the most important deterrents against airlines delaying, overbooking or cancelling flights at short notice.

The government must prioritise giving the CAA the powers it needs to ensure airlines follow the rules and are held accountable when they don't. Which?'s [latest investigation](#) found a number of airlines have misleading terms and conditions that could potentially be illegal. Is it any wonder that some airlines have taken such a cavalier attitude to passengers' rights during the recent disruption?

If your flight has been delayed or cancelled, airlines should be rerouting you via any reasonable route, even if that means with another carrier – but not all airlines are doing this, meaning some passengers being left stranded or forced to pay for another flight out of their own pocket. That's unacceptable. Yet airlines feel empowered to act in this way because they know from experience that they will get away with it.

The CAA should be given stronger enforcement powers, including the ability to fine airlines directly when they break the rules. To provide clarity to both passengers and the industry, the CAA should also establish a consumer-focused code of conduct for airlines operating in the UK, with the objective of holding operators accountable for their behaviour.

In our new report, Final boarding call: Which? Vision for consumer reforms in the aviation and package holiday sector, Which? is also calling on the government to reform the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system and set up a single, statutory-backed ombudsman in aviation to make it easier, cheaper and quicker for passengers to escalate complaints without having to go to court.

This summer, the best advice for passengers will most likely be to turn up at the airport and be prepared to stand up for your rights if things go wrong – especially if your flight is cancelled at the last minute. We know from the passenger stories we have heard that those who are prepared to insist on airlines meeting their legal obligations are more likely to get a satisfactory outcome.

Passengers shouldn't have to do this just to receive what they're entitled to. Airlines should step up, and ministers should give the CAA teeth to punish those who don't. Without action, there could be more turbulent times ahead for passengers and the travel industry.

- Rocio Concha is director of policy and advocacy at Which?
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## Stagflationary global debt crisis looms – and things will get much worse

[Nouriel Roubini](#)

There is ample reason to fear big economies such as the US face recession and financial turmoil



Equity markets are likely to move deeper into bear territory. Photograph: Justin Lane/EPA

Thu 30 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 02.02 EDT

The global financial and economic outlook for the year ahead has soured rapidly in recent months, with policymakers, investors and households now asking how much they should revise their expectations, and for how long. That depends on the answers to six questions.

First, will the rise in inflation in most advanced economies be temporary or more persistent? This debate has raged for the past year but now it is largely

settled: “Team Persistent” won, and “Team Transitory” – which previously included most central banks and fiscal authorities – must admit to having been mistaken.

The second question is whether the increase in inflation was driven more by excessive aggregate demand (loose monetary, credit, and fiscal policies) or by stagflationary negative aggregate supply shocks (including the initial Covid-19 lockdowns, supply-chain bottlenecks, a reduced US labour supply, the impact of Russia’s war in Ukraine on commodity prices, and China’s “zero-Covid” policy). While demand and supply factors were in the mix, it is now widely recognised that supply factors have played an increasingly decisive role. This matters because supply-driven inflation is stagflationary and thus raises the risk of a hard landing (increased unemployment and potentially a recession) when monetary policy is tightened.

Several prominent Wall Street institutions have now decided that a recession is their baseline scenario

That leads directly to the third question: will monetary-policy tightening by the US Federal Reserve and other major central banks bring a hard or soft landing? Until recently, most central banks and most of Wall Street occupied “Team Soft Landing”. But the consensus has rapidly shifted, with even the Fed Chair, Jerome Powell, recognising that a recession is possible, and that a soft landing will be “[very challenging](#)”.

Moreover, a model used by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York [shows](#) a high probability of a hard landing, and the Bank of England has expressed similar views. Several prominent Wall Street institutions have now decided that a recession is their baseline scenario (the most likely outcome if all other variables are held constant). In the US and Europe, forward-looking [indicators](#) of economic activity and business and consumer confidence are [heading sharply south](#).

The fourth question is whether a hard landing would weaken central banks’ hawkish resolve on inflation. If they stop their policy-tightening once a hard landing becomes likely, we can expect a persistent rise in inflation and either

economic overheating (above-target inflation and above potential growth) or stagflation (above-target inflation and a recession), depending on whether demand shocks or supply shocks are dominant.

Most market analysts seem to think that central banks will remain hawkish but I am not so sure. I have [argued](#) that they will eventually wimp out and accept higher inflation – followed by stagflation – once a hard landing becomes imminent because they will be worried about the damage of a recession and a debt trap, owing to an excessive buildup of private and public liabilities after years of low interest rates.

Now that a hard landing is becoming a baseline for more analysts, a new (fifth) question is emerging: Will the coming recession be mild and short-lived, or will it be more severe and characterised by deep financial distress? Most of those who have come late and grudgingly to the hard-landing baseline still contend that any recession will be shallow and brief. They argue that today's financial imbalances are not as severe as those in the run-up to the 2008 global financial crisis, and that the risk of a recession with a severe debt and financial crisis is therefore low. But this view is dangerously naive.

There is ample reason to believe that the next recession will be marked by a severe stagflationary debt crisis. As a share of global GDP, private and public [debt levels](#) are much higher today than in the past, having risen from 200% in 1999 to 350% today (with a particularly sharp increase since the start of the pandemic). Under these conditions, rapid normalisation of monetary policy and rising interest rates will drive highly leveraged zombie households, companies, financial institutions, and governments into bankruptcy and default.

The next crisis will not be like its predecessors. In the 1970s, we had stagflation but no massive debt crises because debt levels were low. After 2008, we had a debt crisis followed by low inflation or deflation because the credit crunch had generated a negative demand shock. Today, we face supply shocks in a context of much higher debt levels, implying that we are heading for a combination of 1970s-style stagflation and 2008-style debt crises – that is, a stagflationary debt crisis.

When confronting stagflationary shocks, a central bank must tighten its policy stance even as the economy heads toward a recession. The situation today is thus fundamentally different from the global financial crisis or the early months of the pandemic, when central banks could ease monetary policy aggressively in response to falling aggregate demand and deflationary pressure. The space for fiscal expansion will also be more limited this time. Most of the fiscal ammunition has been used, and public debts are becoming unsustainable.

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Moreover, because today's higher inflation is a global phenomenon, most central banks are tightening at the same time, thereby increasing the probability of a synchronised global recession. This tightening is already having an effect: bubbles are deflating everywhere – including in public and private equity, real estate, housing, meme stocks, crypto, Spacs (special purpose acquisition companies), bonds, and credit instruments. Real and financial wealth is falling, and debts and debt-servicing ratios are rising.

That brings us to the final question: will equity markets rebound from the current bear market (a decline of at least 20% from the last peak), or will they plunge even lower? Most likely, they will plunge lower. After all, in typical plain-vanilla recessions, US and global equities tend to fall by about 35%. But because the next recession will be stagflationary and accompanied by a financial crisis, the crash in equity markets could be closer to 50%.

Regardless of whether the recession is mild or severe, history suggests that the equity market has much more room to fall before it bottoms out. In the current context, any rebound – such as the one in the last two weeks – should be regarded as a dead-cat bounce, rather than the usual buy-the-dip opportunity. Though the current global situation confronts us with many questions, there is no real riddle to solve. Things will get much worse before they get better.

*Nouriel Roubini, professor emeritus of economics at New York University's Stern School of Business, has worked for the IMF, the [US Federal Reserve](#) and the World Bank*

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## 2022.06.30 - Around the world

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## Paris attacks

# Paris attacker Salah Abdeslam found guilty of murder and jailed for life

Abdeslam was only survivor of 10-man terrorist unit that struck in city, killing 130 people, in 2015



A court sketch shows Salah Abdeslam (right) standing next to the 13 other defendants at Paris's criminal court. Illustration: Benoît Peyrucq/AFP/Getty

*[Angelique Chrisafis](#) in Paris*

*[@achrisafis](#)*

Wed 29 Jun 2022 14.25 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 05.34 EDT

Salah Abdeslam, the only survivor of the 10-man unit that carried out coordinated terror attacks in [Paris](#) in 2015, has been found guilty of murder and sentenced to full life in prison, the toughest sentence available under French law.

Abdeslam, 32, a Brussels-born French citizen, was found guilty of taking part in the series of bombings and shootings across the French capital, which killed 130 people and injured more than 490.

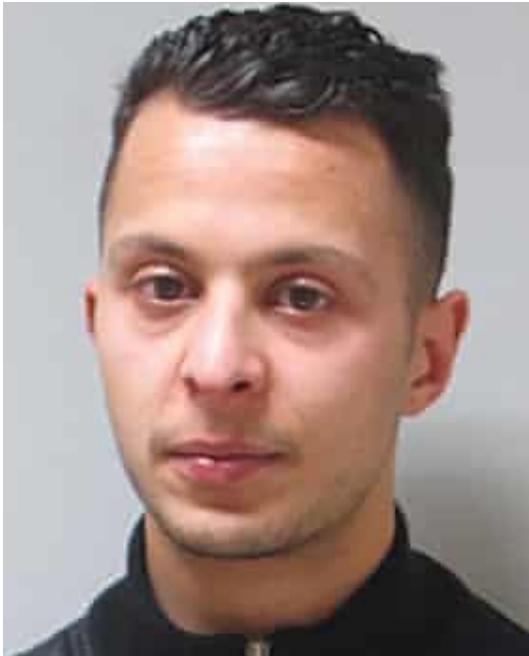
The attacks, for which [Islamic State](#) claimed responsibility, began when suicide bombers struck outside the national sports stadium on the night of Friday 13 November 2015. Drive-by shootings and suicide bombings targeting cafés and restaurants followed, and finally, a gun attack at the Bataclan theatre during a rock concert by Eagles of Death Metal killed 90 people.

After the biggest criminal trial ever held in [France](#), a panel of judges found Abdeslam guilty of terrorism. He was given a full-life term, the most severe penalty that can be imposed under French law. It offers only a small chance of parole after 30 years.

Another 19 suspects were found guilty of either plotting or offering logistical support, with sentences ranging from two years to life in prison.

Mohamed Abrini, a childhood friend of Abdeslam who was accused of transporting the attackers and weapons, was given a life sentence with 22 years as a minimum term.

Only 14 of the 20 accused appeared in court. The rest were missing, presumed dead, and were tried in their absence.



Salah Abdeslam.

For 10 months in a specially built, heavily guarded court, hundreds of people who survived the deadliest peacetime attack on French soil gave shocking details of their ordeal – from crawling past corpses at the Bataclan to being held hostage by gunmen there or ducking Kalashnikov fire at restaurant pavement tables.

Nine of the 10-man group who struck the city died that night, either killing themselves or being shot dead by police – including Abdeslam's elder brother, Brahim, who detonated an explosive vest at a Paris bar.

Abdeslam was the only survivor. He went to a bar in the north of Paris but later dumped his explosive vest in a bin and called friends to come and collect him and drive him back to Brussels. For months, he hid in the city where he had grown up, evading one of Europe's biggest manhunts.

He was arrested in March 2016 after a shootout with Belgian police in the Brussels suburb of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean. Days after his arrest, bombers suspected of being part of the same terrorist unit struck at Brussels airport and the city's Metro system, killing 32 and injuring hundreds.

[map](#)

Paris investigators argued that Abdeslam had intended to blow himself up in a Paris bar on the night of the 13 November attacks in 2015, but that his explosive vest was defective. He argued that he backed out at the last minute.

He was accused of providing crucial planning and logistical support and also of dropping off suicide bombers at the Stade de France at the beginning of the night.

Abdeslam remained silent for years after his arrest in 2016.

Prosecutors emphasised the contradictions in Abdeslam's testimony in the special Paris court. At the start of the trial, he had pledged allegiance to Islamic State and expressed regret that the explosives strapped to his body failed to detonate.

Later he said he had changed his mind when he got to the Paris bar and deliberately disabled his vest because he did not want to kill people "singing and dancing" on a night out.

He said his older brother, whom he had always sought to emulate and impress, had asked him in summer 2015 to collect Islamic State fighters returning to Europe from Syria and bring them to Brussels. Prosecutors dismissed as false his account that he had been convinced to join the unit only two days before the attacks.

Abdeslam's demeanour changed over the course of the 10-month trial. In April, he apologised to the victims in court and asked them to "hate me with moderation". In his closing words to the court on Monday, he said he had "evolved".

He referred to his prison conditions in solitary confinement, saying it had been a "shock" at first to be confronted by so many people in court. But he now felt "calmed" because he had managed to find a "semblance of social life" by being brought from his cell into court.

"I've made mistakes, but I'm not an assassin. I'm not a killer. If you convict me for murder, you will be committing an injustice," Abdeslam told the

court this week.

“My first words are for the victims. I have already said sorry. Some will say my apologies are insincere, that it is a strategy ... More than 130 dead, more than 400 victims. Who can apologise insincerely for so much suffering?”

During closing arguments on Monday, Abdeslam’s lawyer, Olivia Ronen, told the judges her client was the only member of the group who had not set off explosives to kill others that night. He could not be convicted for murder, she argued. Abdeslam had told the court he was “not a danger to society”.

Prosecutors had argued that a full-life sentence was justified, saying Abdeslam’s rehabilitation into society seemed impossible because of his “deadly ideology”.

During the trial, Abdeslam was asked by one lawyer how he would like to be remembered. “I don’t want to be remembered,” he said. “I want to be forgotten for ever. I didn’t choose to be the person I am today.”

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## [China](#)

# Nato leaders voice concern about threat China poses to world order for first time

Beijing's efforts to build up nuclear forces, hacking operations and increasingly close ties to Moscow are 'serious challenges', says Nato secretary general



Chinese state broadcaster CCTV shows the launch of the Fujian, Beijing's new aircraft carrier, in June 2022. Nato has noted the threat posed by China for the first time in its strategic blueprint. Photograph: CCTV/AFP/Getty Images

*Graham Russell and agencies*

*@G\_J\_Russell*

Wed 29 Jun 2022 22.12 EDT

China is not an adversary but it does represent serious challenges, Jens Stoltenberg, Nato's secretary general, said on Wednesday, as the alliance

agreed for the first time to include threats posed by Beijing into a blueprint guiding its future strategy.

While Russia's war against Ukraine has dominated discussions at the Nato summit, China earned a place among the western alliance's most worrying security concerns.

"We now face an era of strategic competition ... China is substantially building up its forces, including in nuclear weapons, bullying its neighbours, including Taiwan," Stoltenberg said. "China is not our adversary but we must be clear-eyed about the serious challenges it represents."

The alliance's last blueprint – or strategic concept – was agreed to in 2010 and did not mention China. The new one states that China's policies challenge Nato's interests, security and values, though Russia remains the most significant and direct threat to security.

"The PRC's [People's Republic of China] malicious hybrid and cyber operations and its confrontational rhetoric and disinformation target allies and harm alliance security," the strategic concept reads, noting a deepening partnership with Russia in their shared attempts to "subvert the rules-based international order, including in the space, cyber and maritime domains".

Nato warned that the Chinese government was "rapidly expanding" its nuclear capability without increasing transparency or engaging in good faith in arms control, and using economic leverage to "create strategic dependencies and enhance its influence".

US secretary of state Antony Blinken accused Beijing of undermining the rules-based order "that we believe in, that we helped build". "If China's challenging it in one way or another, we will stand up to that," he said.

The Australian prime minister, Anthony Albanese, attending his first Nato summit in Madrid, warned that the strengthening of relations between Beijing and Moscow posed a risk to all democratic nations.

“Just as Russia seeks to recreate a Russian or Soviet empire, the Chinese government is seeking friends, whether it be … through economic support to build up alliances to undermine what has historically been the western alliance in places like the Indo-Pacific,” he told the summit on Wednesday.

Albanese said Australia had been subjected to “economic coercion” from China, and urged democratic leaders to pursue trade diversification.

Australia, South Korea, Japan and New Zealand were invited to the Madrid summit to add a greater focus on the Indo-Pacific region. Albanese’s objective was to elevate the region as a second theatre of strategic competition with Nato members preoccupied with Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine.

Addressing her first Nato summit, New Zealand prime minister Jacinda Ardern warned of a “more assertive” China but urged more diplomatic engagement. New Zealand has toughened its tone recently amid Beijing’s growing presence in the South Pacific, in part due to the signing of a security pact between China and Solomon Islands.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian responded by saying Nato should stop “trying to launch a new cold war”.

“Stop trying to mess up Asia and the world after messing up Europe,” he said. “What they should do is give up their cold war mindset, zero-sum games and stop doing things that create enemies.”

Japan’s prime minister, Fumio Kishida, said the invasion of Ukraine had shaken the foundation of the rules-based order. “The security of Europe and the security of the Indo-Pacific cannot be decoupled,” he said in opening remarks.

En route to the summit, UK prime minister Boris Johnson said the Russian invasion of Ukraine had shown the need for extra vigilance and caution over [potential Chinese action against Taiwan](#).

“I just think it’s very important that countries around the world should not be able to read across from events in Europe and draw the conclusion that the

world will simply stand idly by if boundaries are changed by force,” he said. “That’s one of the most important lessons that we pick up from Ukraine.”

UK foreign secretary, Liz Truss, was more explicit, calling for faster action to help Taiwan with defensive weapons, a key requirement for Ukraine since the invasion.

“There’s always a tendency – and we’ve seen this prior to the [Ukraine](#) war – there’s always a tendency of wishful thinking, to hope that more bad things won’t happen and to wait until it’s too late,” Truss told the UK’s foreign affairs committee.

“We should have done things earlier, we should have been supplying the defensive weapons into Ukraine earlier. We need to learn that lesson for [Taiwan](#). Every piece of equipment we have sent takes months of training, so the sooner we do it, the better.”

*With Reuters and AAP*

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## [Canada](#)

# Ottawa braced for Canada Day protest by ‘freedom convoy’ supporters

Members of anti-vax convoy have vowed to maintain a presence over the summer initially mingling with the annual celebrations



A person takes part in a demonstration in front of Parliament Hill, part of a convoy-style protest in Ottawa in April, Photograph: Patrick Doyle/AP

*[Tracey Lindeman](#) in Ottawa*

Thu 30 Jun 2022 05.55 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Jun 2022 14.43 EDT

Residents of downtown Ottawa are bracing for a Canada Day unlike any other, after “freedom convoy” protesters vowed to return to Parliament Hill on 1 July, and maintain a presence [over the remainder of the summer](#).

Every [Canada](#) Day, people congregate on Parliament Hill in Ottawa to watch musical performances and fireworks on the anniversary of Canadian confederation. This year, it will probably be difficult for police to distinguish

between celebrators and convoy members – which is what protesters are banking on.

In late January, groups opposed to vaccine and mask mandates drove tractor-trailers and other large vehicles into Ottawa’s downtown core and set up camp. The ensuing three-week occupation of the capital city was a traumatic experience for many locals, who faced harassment, incessant noise and other unwelcome encounters, said Ariel Troster, a candidate for city council in Ottawa’s Somerset ward.

“Many people were driven from their homes, many were subjected to harassment, there were at least two cases where people defecated on people’s front steps. There were reports of apartment buildings where convoy people took over the laundry room and wouldn’t leave,” said Troster. “Not to mention the symbols of hatred, which were quite visible not just on the Hill but in the neighbourhoods.”

Group communications on Telegram, YouTube videos and other channels show convoy sympathisers believe in [white replacement theory and other conspiracies](#). QAnon activists and propaganda were often seen at the wintertime occupation.

It ultimately cost the city \$36m in policing costs and has resulted in a proposed [class action lawsuit](#) against protest organisers.

Now that Canada has dropped most mandates, the convoys appear to be demanding Justin Trudeau’s resignation as prime minister. They have been gaining traction with Conservative politicians, [recently having held a meeting](#) with their “allies” in parliament.

The Ottawa police service (OPS) has pledged to foil any new attempt to occupy the city. The force is under immense pressure to get Canada Day right after its [many failures to police the previous occupation](#).

At a [police services board meeting](#) on Monday, the interim OPS chief, Steve Bell, said a heightened police presence and road barricades limiting the

number of vehicles permitted downtown may not be able to keep convoys arriving on foot away, but it will prevent people from setting up camp.

“Canada Day’s a very important day to Canadians. It’s a day where we celebrate our country and all the good things in it. But people, when they come, they need to be lawful. And they need to be respectful of our community,” Bell said.

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## Hong Kong

# Hong Kong tightens security as Xi visits for 25th anniversary of handover

China's president makes first trip outside mainland since pandemic began as territory prepares to mark milestone



Xi Jinping arriving in Hong Kong on Thursday. He said the territory had been 'reborn of fire'. Photograph: Selim Chtayti/AFP/Getty Images

*[Helen Davidson](#) in Taipei*

*[@heldavidson](#)*

Thu 30 Jun 2022 08.47 EDTFirst published on Wed 29 Jun 2022 22.59 EDT

China's president, [Xi Jinping](#), has made his first trip outside the mainland since the Covid pandemic began, landing in Hong Kong and telling crowds the region had "risen from the ashes" after years of upheaval.

The leader, his wife, Peng Liyuan, and delegates, arrived by high-speed train at West Kowloon station before his scheduled attendance at the inauguration

of the city's new chief executive, and the 25th anniversary of the [British return of Hong Kong to Chinese rule](#).

In a speech, he said [Hong Kong](#) had been “reborn of fire” and the policy of “one country, two systems” had been a success.

“My heart and that of the central government have been with our compatriots in Hong Kong,” he said, according to a [translation](#) by the South China Morning Post. “In the past few years, Hong Kong has gone through various severe challenges one after another, and has defeated them.

“After the wind and rain, Hong Kong has risen from the ashes, and showed strong vibrancy.”

Authorities are taking no chances, ensuring the highly choreographed visit is filled with pomp and pageantry – and no sign of dissent. Xi’s red carpet arrival included a brass band, traditional “lion” dances, and vetted crowds chanting and waving flags. He was met by the outgoing chief executive, Carrie Lam, and China’s liaison chief, Luo Huining, before greeting other officials.

Before Xi arrived, huge barriers went up around the convention centre, establishing a tight, two-level secure zone with no civilian access. On Wednesday hundreds of Hong Kong’s distinctive red taxis, adorned with red Chinese flags and red celebratory banners, parked in the shape of the number “25” in the city’s Central district. Across the harbour in Kowloon, hundreds of Chinese and Hong Kong flags fluttered from the balcony railings of two housing estates, each dozens of storeys high.



A special police unit in the Hong Kong's Wanchai district on Thursday.  
Photograph: Peter Parks/AFP/Getty Images

On 1 July 1997, the territory was promised 50 years of self-government and freedoms of assembly, speech and press that are not allowed on the Communist-ruled Chinese mainland. As the city of 7.4 million people marks a quarter of a century under Beijing's rule, those promises have all but evaporated.

Under a plan to ensure the anniversary day goes without a hitch, nearby metro stations have been closed and buses rerouted, while the harbour and other areas are subject to temporary restricted flying zones.

Opportunity for criticism of Xi, or the Beijing-backed Hong Kong government, will be stifled. One of Hong Kong's few remaining pro-democracy groups said it would not stage a protest after several members were summoned by police.

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Local and foreign outlets have been denied access to Friday's event by authorities, citing the pandemic. On Tuesday some approved outlets said

individual journalists had since been denied access, too late to have a replacement obtain the requisite several days of negative tests.

Hong Kong's media have been hobbled since the introduction of the national security law in 2020. Papers and websites have been forced to close, while editors and executives have been arrested.

It is one way Beijing has in recent years expanded its influence and control. Protest is in effect outlawed after pro-democracy rallies that were crushed by police. Schools must now provide lessons on patriotism and national security, and some [new textbooks deny Hong Kong was ever a British colony](#).

Electoral changes have ensured that no opposition lawmakers are in the city's legislature, only those deemed by Beijing to be "patriots".

Reacting to the event in Hong Kong, Australia's foreign minister, Penny Wong, said in a statement on Thursday that her country "remains deeply concerned by the continuing erosion of Hong Kong's rights, freedoms and autonomy.

"We urge the Chinese government and Hong Kong authorities to uphold and protect those elements which have been so crucial to Hong Kong's success, including its high degree of autonomy, the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the basic law and the Sino-British declaration, to which Beijing committed," she said.

## **Hong Kong's 'new chapter'**

John Lee, the former security head who oversaw the crackdown on Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement, will be inaugurated as the next chief executive of the territory on Friday.

Lee will replace Lam, the maligned face of the crackdown that began in earnest in 2019. Asked by [Bloomberg](#) this month if she wanted to apologise for anything from her term, she said no, that she was only sorry for the sacrifices made by her family "to support my mission".

Lee has pledged to unite the city for “a new chapter”, while also promising an even [more aggressive approach](#) to counter “fearmongering and badmouthing” by critics.

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The prominent Hong Kong journalist Ching Cheong, who was jailed by Chinese authorities for three years and covered the handover, says Lee has shown his loyalty to Beijing and will be “at most a figurehead implementing Beijing’s idea”.

“The lifelong career of John Lee is security and he has no experience in other sectors,” Ching says.

Xi has said he expects Lee and his new government to “bring refreshing changes to the governance of Hong Kong”.

On Wednesday Xinhua, the official state news agency of the Chinese Communist party, said Hong Kong’s development had “come along in leaps and bounds” under one country, two systems, with much-needed stability brought by the national security law. In the meantime, record numbers of people are leaving the city for good.



Police close an access barrier to Bauhinia Square and hotels used by anniversary guests in Wanchai district, Hong Kong. Photograph: Jérôme Favre/EPA

## Missing faces

In normal times, the anniversary would include familiar faces from the handover, such as Martin Lee. Nicknamed the “father of democracy”, Lee was instrumental in the Sino-British joint declaration and a prominent face of the pro-democracy movement for decades.

As Prince Charles left Hong Kong, he diarised his fears: “Thus we left Hong Kong to her fate, and the hope that Martin Lee, leader of the Democrats, would not be arrested.”

Lee, 82, was arrested last year and given a 12-month suspended sentence for organising and participating in an unauthorised assembly – one of the 2019 pro-democracy rallies.

Dozens of his fellow activists and politicians have also been arrested or jailed. Those not incarcerated, like Lee, rarely speak publicly and spend their days visiting and caring for friends and colleagues in prison.

Under the national security law introduced in 2020, the risk of crossing vaguely defined red lines is too great and at least two people, including the widely respected legislator Claudia Mo, were denied bail after their WhatsApp conversations with foreign journalists were submitted as evidence.

For many former Hongkongers, the anniversary will be a painful reminder of the promise the city once had, and its swift collapse.

Valerie was 17 when Hong Kong was handed back. On that day in 1997 she watched the ceremony on TV, but “without any happiness”. “In the last scenes of [former British governor Chris] Patten’s family getting on the ship, I couldn’t stop my tears,” she told the Guardian from her new home overseas.

“I didn’t understand politics much in those days but I couldn’t believe Hong Kong would get better. Now I’m afraid the Hong Kong culture will eventually fade away.”

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[Philippines](#)

## Ferdinand Marcos Jr praises dictator father during swearing in as Philippines president

Son says family has legacy of achievement as he completes clan's return to power 36 years after father's ousting

Marcos Jr pays tribute to dictator father as he is sworn in as president of the Philippines – video

*[Rebecca Ratcliffe](#) and agencies*

Thu 30 Jun 2022 06.31 EDTFirst published on Wed 29 Jun 2022 21.01 EDT

Ferdinand Marcos Jr has promised a government that will deliver for all Filipinos during his inauguration speech, even as he paid tribute to the legacy of his dictator father, whose rule was marked by widespread corruption and rights abuses.

Marcos Jr, who began his term as president of the [Philippines](#) on Thursday, said he would emulate his father. "I once knew a man who saw what little had been achieved since independence in a land of people with the greatest potential for achievement. And yet they were poor. But he got it done. Sometimes with the needed support, sometimes without. So will it be with his son. You will get no excuses from me," he said.

His mother, [Imelda Marcos](#), 92, who once described it as her son's destiny to become the president, sat metres away as he spoke at the public ceremony at the National Museum in Manila.

Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr, 64, [won last month's elections by a landslide](#), 36 years after his father, who ruled for more than two decades, was chased from the Malacañan Palace by a popular uprising. Marcos Jr's

election victory was fuelled by [disinformation spread widely](#) on social media, glorifying his father's rule.



Ferdinand ‘Bongbong’ Marcos Jr with his mother, Imelda Marcos, after taking his oath as the next president of the Philippines. Photograph: Ezra Acayan/Getty

Marcos Jr told the ceremony he was not there to talk about the past, but did refer to his father on multiple occasions. He would heal divisions, he said, stating: “The changes we seek will benefit all and will shortchange no one.”

On Thursday morning, as the inauguration was under way, survivors of his father’s regime gathered to take their own oath “to guard against tyranny, falsehoods and the trampling of people’s rights and freedoms”.

They gathered at Bantayog ng mga Bayani, a monument, museum and research centre dedicated to the thousands of people imprisoned, tortured or killed during Marcos Sr’s rule. Marcos Jr has downplayed or denied such abuses.

Marcos Jr [succeeds Rodrigo Duterte](#), who remains enduringly popular at home but has attracted international condemnation for his “war on drugs”. [As many as 30,000 people](#) are dead as a result of extra-judicial killings

linked to the campaign, according to estimates cited by the international criminal court, which is investigating the matter.

In his speech, Marcos Jr praised Duterte for building infrastructure, but also acknowledged “shortcomings in the Covid response”, which he promised to fix.

Analysts have commented on the delicate dynamics between the two leaders. Marcos Jr ran in tandem with the president’s daughter Sara Duterte, who is now the vice-president – an arrangement that displeased [Rodrigo Duterte](#), who wanted his daughter to campaign for the top job.

Duterte last year called Marcos Jr a [“spoiled child”](#) and “weak leader” and implied he used cocaine. However, Marcos Jr has the power to block the ICC’s prosecutors from entering the Philippines to investigate Duterte.

Marcos takes over at a challenging time for the Philippines, where food and fuel prices have soared, and poverty rates increased as a result of the pandemic.

He was criticised on the campaign trail for failing to give concrete policy plans and for only taking questions from journalists he considered sympathetic.

In his speech on Thursday he said his team was developing a “comprehensive, all-inclusive plan for economic transformation”, and referred to the devastating impact of the climate crisis on the Philippines and the need to tackle plastic pollution.

Marcos Jr promised to promote food self-sufficiency, which he said was a most pressing need as a result of Russia’s war in Ukraine. “The most vulnerable when it comes to food are the countries furthest away from the conflict,” said Marcos, who has appointed himself agriculture secretary.

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Marcos also referred to Sara Duterte's role as education secretary, saying the curriculum in schools "must be rethought". But he quickly added that it was the sciences and vocational classes that needed updating – not the history syllabus. The failure adequately to teach young people about the history of martial law, which was imposed by Marcos Sr in 1972, has been cited as a factor that allowed disinformation portraying the era as a golden age to spread widely.

While Marcos Jr referred to his father during his speech, he did not acknowledge the suffering or economic mismanagement endured during his rule. The Marcoses and their cronies plundered up to \$10bn (£8.2bn).

In a statement, the Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses and Martial Law, which represents martial law victims and human rights advocates, said it would continue to call for the return of plundered funds and unpaid taxes. "The sacrifices of the thousands who fell and the millions who suffered during the long dark years of the Marcos dictatorship will serve as inspiration in our continuing quest for a just and democratic nation," it said.

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## [Climate crisis](#)

# ‘Perfect storm’ of crises is widening global inequality, says UN chief

Exclusive: António Guterres says growing north and south divide is ‘morally unacceptable’ and dangerous



A Russian soldier keeps watch in front of a wheat field near Melitopol in Ukraine. The war has sent global food prices surging. Photograph: Sergei Ilnitsky/EPA

*[Karen McVeigh in Lisbon](#)*

*[@karenmcveigh1](#)*

Sat 2 Jul 2022 03.00 EDT

Humanity is facing a “perfect storm” of crises that is widening inequality between the north and south, the UN secretary general has warned. The divide is not only “morally unacceptable” but dangerous, further threatening peace and security in a conflicted world.

The global food, energy and financial crises unleashed by the war in Ukraine have hit countries already reeling from the pandemic and the climate crisis, reversing what had been a growing convergence between developed and developing countries, António Guterres said.

“Inequalities are still growing inside countries, but they are now growing in a morally unacceptable way between north and south and this is creating a divide which can be very dangerous from the point of view of peace and security.”

Guterres, who spoke to the Guardian at the UN ocean conference in his home town of Lisbon in Portugal this week, said his biggest concern was how global problems were widening the gap between rich and poor.

“What is worrying is we are living in a perfect storm. Because all crises are contributing to the dramatic increase in inequality in the world and to a serious deterioration in living conditions of the most vulnerable populations.

“All these escalated a situation in which a world that was looking like it was converging between developing countries and developed countries, even if inequality were growing within countries north and south. Now we are back to a divergence.”

Earlier this month, the head of the UN’s World Food Programme [warned](#) dozens of countries dependent on wheat from Russia and Ukraine risked protests, riots and political violence as global food prices surge.

Of all the crises facing the world the climate crisis was the most vital, Guterres said.

“That is why it is so concerning that the war in Ukraine has to a large extent kept out the focus on climate action. We need to do everything we can to bring again the climate issue as the most important issue in our collective agenda. It’s more than the planet, it is the human species that is also at risk.”



António Guterres speaking at the UN ocean conference in Lisbon this week.  
Photograph: Pedro Nunes/Reuters

While many important topics were addressed at the Cop26 UN climate conference in Glasgow last November, the central question of how to reduce emissions was not seriously discussed and continues to be ignored, he said. There was agreement, he said, that to keep warming down to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, deep cuts of 45% in emissions by 2030 compared with 2010 levels were needed. But we are moving in the wrong direction, he added.

“The truth is that if we look at the national determined contributions we have today and what was announced before during and immediately after Cop we are still moving into an increase of emissions of 14%.

“We have the risk of sleepwalking into the killing of the 1.5C goal.

“Something is being done, but it is too little too late. If we want to keep 1.5 alive we need to have a massive determination to reduce emissions as quickly as possible.”

All indicators suggest the effects of the climate crisis are accelerating faster than the worst predictions of a few years ago, he said.

Earlier this month, Guterres [hit out at fossil fuel companies](#), describing them and the banks that finance them as having “humanity by the throat” and castigated governments that failed to rein in fossil fuels and were in many cases seeking to increase production of gas, oil and even coal, the dirtiest fossil fuel.

Asked about the backsliding of EU countries that have announced plans to reopen coal-fired power stations in response to Russia’s restrictions of gas flows into Europe, Guterres said: “Coal is enemy number one of climate action.”

The UN secretary general has called on Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries to phase out all coal plants by 2030 and other countries by 2040.

“I hope these examples of countries where some coal will be burned will be for a very short period,” he said

Germany, a country [heavily reliant on Russian gas](#), announced it would reopen mothballed coal-fired stations to conserve its supplies, following Russia’s restrictions of gas flows. France has signalled it may reopen a coal station due to the situation in Ukraine.

Guterres said the war had highlighted our dependence on fossil fuels. “It is the instability in the fossil fuel market that is creating these dramatic impacts in rising energy prices and contributing to rising food prices and to the extremely difficult financial situation of many developing countries. If the world had invested massively as it should have had the past decade on renewables, we would today be in a completely different situation.” We need to learn lessons of the past, he said.

At the UN conference, attended by global leaders and heads of state, the heads of small island developing states such as Palau, Fiji and Tonga spoke of the devastating impact on their countries from increasing typhoons and sea level rise. The minister for climate change in Vanuatu, Silas Bule Melve, said the climate crisis was the single biggest threat” to the country’s efforts to expand its blue economy.

On Monday, Guterres declared the world was [in the middle of an “ocean emergency”](#) and condemned the “egoism” of some countries that were hampering efforts to reach a long-awaited treaty to protect the world’s oceans.

A longstanding promise, made in 2009 and brought to the fore at Cop26, from rich countries to provide £100bn a year in climate finance to the developing world has not yet been delivered.

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Although this finance was a small part of what is needed, the failure to honour the promise of providing it, year after year, has added to the division between rich and poor countries, Guterres said. It “probably won’t happen in 2022”, he added. “This makes developing countries feel that there is indeed not a strong commitment of solidarity. Small island developing states feel it with particular intensity.

“There is a risk of the next Cop to be negatively impacted by this frustration of developing countries and lack of confidence and trust in the seriousness of the support of the developed world. And this would be tragic because we really need to mobilise everybody. We need everybody committed if we want to keep 1.5C alive.”

Asked what gave him hope, Guterres said he had met many young people in Lisbon, part of a youth forum aiming to develop ideas on solutions to the ocean and climate emergencies. Their depth of knowledge, clarity, commitment in their proposals and their enthusiasm “is my best hope”, he said.

“Young people are engaged. We see more and more cities, more and more civil society and even more areas of the private sector that are engaged. Governments are now becoming probably the entities that are moving more slowly.”

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## Conservatives

# Chris Pincher loses Tory whip over misconduct allegations

Move comes after Conservative MP stood down as deputy chief whip after incident at private club

- [Today's politics news – live updates](#)



Chris Pincher admitted he had drunkenly ‘embarrassed myself’. Photograph: Aaron Chown/PA

*[Rowena Mason](#) and [Aubrey Allegretti](#)*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 14.01 EDTFirst published on Fri 1 Jul 2022 12.10 EDT

One of Boris Johnson’s close allies, Chris Pincher, has been suspended as a Conservative MP and will be investigated by parliament’s complaints watchdog after allegations he drunkenly groped two men.

Pincher, who [resigned as deputy chief whip](#) on Thursday, was reported to the independent complaints and grievance scheme, which looks into allegations of misconduct by MPs.

The referral prompted the chief whip, Chris Heaton-Harris, to suspend the whip from his own former deputy after almost 24 hours of pressure on Johnson to act against Pincher.

With the MP suspended, the spotlight has turned on what the prime minister knew about allegations against Pincher, who had previously resigned from the whips' office in 2017 following claims he made unwanted passes at a Tory colleague and acted like a "pound shop Harvey Weinstein". He was cleared of wrongdoing in a party investigation.

On Friday, the prime minister's official spokesperson denied he had known about "specific" claims before appointing Pincher as deputy chief whip in February.

However, a No 10 source conceded Johnson "probably" knew about rumours surrounding the MP's sexual conduct, while downplaying the seriousness of the most recent allegations as on the level of "somebody's bum being pinched".

The government admitted the Cabinet Office's propriety and ethics team had examined Pincher's suitability before he was promoted to a role in charge of discipline and pastoral care of MPs but said it could not block any appointment based on "unsubstantiated rumour".

The sixth scandal involving alleged sexual misconduct of an MP under Johnson's government broke on Thursday after the Sun reported Pincher had allegedly drunkenly groped two men at the Carlton Club in Piccadilly, London.

The deputy chief whip, who played an instrumental role in propping up Johnson's premiership earlier this year, wrote to the PM saying he was resigning for "embarrassing" himself, but No 10 initially said there was no need to remove the whip as he had taken responsibility.

Senior Tories, including the former ministers Caroline Nokes and Karen Bradley, had called for the whip to be withdrawn and the allegations to be investigated, while Neil Parish, who resigned as a Tory MP after viewing pornography in the Commons, accused Johnson of “double standards” regarding his own treatment compared with Pincher’s.

The accusation was repeated on Friday night by the Conservative MP Andrew Bridgen, who told BBC Newsnight he had “a lot of sympathy” with Parish’s claims.

Nokes and Bradley, both select committee chairs, wrote to Johnson on Friday urging him to bring in “zero tolerance” for cases of sexual misconduct, adding that the whip should be withdrawn while thorough investigations are carried out in each and every case. They also called for a code of conduct for Conservative members.

Angela Rayner, Labour’s deputy leader, accused Johnson of having been “dragged kicking and screaming into taking any action at all”.

“He just can’t be trusted to do the right thing. This whole scandal is yet more evidence of his appalling judgment,” she said.

The independent complaints process will be carried out confidentially. However, multiple sources told the Guardian the whips were aware of claims of previous sexual misconduct by Pincher.

A female Tory MP said other ministers and backbenchers had taken it upon themselves in recent months to perform welfare checks on colleagues because “no one had any confidence victims could seriously go to the whips’ office to report inappropriate behaviour” given the previous complaint against Pincher.

Two Conservative MPs also said Pincher was responsible for bullying behaviour towards MPs. Pincher was accused by one senior MP of repeated bullying behaviour and veiled threats of blackmail. “He and his shadow whipping operation were the lead organiser of that kind of activity,” the MP said.

Another MP said: “He is seen as master of the black arts … the only reason the PM was hanging on to him is that he is the holder of more damaging stuff than the damage he is doing to the party.”

Others speculated Johnson was desperate for Pincher not to lose the whip or quit as an MP in case he faced another no-confidence vote.

There was much disgust at No 10’s initial lack of interest in Pincher’s behaviour beyond his admission of drunkenness. “He’s resigned as if he’d had one too many sherbets,” a senior backbencher complained.

It is understood the whips’ office says it has had no formal complaints of sexual misconduct or bullying in relation to Pincher and has a position that it does not act on unsubstantiated allegations, rumour or hearsay.

The incident comes after a group of Tory staffers wrote to the PM and Conservative party complaining that serious sexual abuse, harassment and bullying accusations made against MPs were treated as “mere gossip”. The group of staff working for MPs said “behaviour committed by a few individuals but tolerated by others has stained the reputation” of parliament.

The Pincher affair follows a string of incidents involving allegations of sexual misconduct by MPs including a Tory MP being arrested on suspicion of rape, who has not had the whip removed.

Imran Ahmad Khan, the Conservative MP for Wakefield, was [found guilty in April](#) of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old boy after plying him with gin at a party. Khan assaulted the boy in Staffordshire in January 2008, 11 years before he became an MP. He resigned as an MP two weeks after he was found guilty.

Parish, the MP for Tiverton and Honiton, also stood down in April after admitting to [watching pornography on his phone](#) in the Commons, with the party subsequently losing its [huge majority in the seat to the Liberal Democrats.](#)

Another Conservative MP, David Warburton, lost the whip after the Sunday Times reported he was [facing allegations from three women.](#)

Warburton, 56, was accused by one of the women of climbing into bed with her naked. She told the newspaper she repeatedly warned that she did not want to have sex with him, but alleged that he ground his body against her and groped her breasts.

He is said to have denied any wrongdoing and said he had “enormous amounts of defence, but unfortunately the way things work means that doesn’t come out first”.

Only one Conservative appeared to rally to Pincher’s defence on Friday. Peter Bottomley, the longest-serving MP, said in a WhatsApp message to colleagues that he hoped “Pincher is soon back in government”. The government said Pincher had been replaced as deputy chief whip by Kelly Tolhurst.

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## Conservatives

# Scandal after scandal: timeline of Tory sleaze under Boris Johnson

PM's tenure has been characterised by disrepute, from lockdown breaches to serious sexual assaults



Boris Johnson and Matt Hancock, who resigned as health secretary after it emerged he broke social distancing rules. Photograph: Christopher Furlong/Getty Images

*[Josh Halliday](#)*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 09.04 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 00.13 EDT

Boris Johnson's premiership has been characterised by a string of scandals since he entered No 10 in 2019. From "Pestminster" to "Wallpapergate", the prime minister has sought to ride out every storm during his two and a half years in charge. Here is a timeline of the sleaze so far:

**25 May 2020**

Dominic Cummings [refuses to resign or apologise](#) after the Guardian and Mirror reveal his lockdown-busting trips to north-east England at the height of Covid-19. Johnson stands by his chief aide despite fury from the public, MPs and scientists.

## 30 July 2020

Charlie Elphicke is [found guilty](#) of three counts of sexual assault against two women, less than a year after resigning as the Conservative MP for Dover. Elphicke had denied the three charges, two of which related to a parliamentary worker. He was later [sentenced](#) to two years in prison. His wife, Natalie Elphicke, succeeded him as MP for Dover in December 2019.

## 25 May 2021

Rob Roberts, the Conservative MP for Delyn in north Wales, is [found](#) by parliament's independent expert panel to have made "significant" repeated unwanted sexual advances towards a former member of staff, as well as inappropriate comments of a sexual nature. He is suspended for 12 weeks by the Conservatives but [allowed to rejoin](#) the party in October 2021.

## 28 May 2021

Johnson "unwisely" embarked on a £112,000 refurbishment of his official Downing Street flat without knowing how it would be paid for, according to a [report](#) by the ethics adviser Christopher Geidt. However, it later emerges that Geidt was not given crucial text messages between Johnson and the Conservative donor David Brownlow, prompting an apology from the prime minister.

## 26 June 2021

Matt Hancock [resigns](#) as health secretary after it emerged he broke social distancing rules by kissing his longtime friend and close aide, Gina Coladangelo, in his ministerial office. The resignation is a huge blow to the authority of Johnson, who had stood by Hancock when the story broke 24 hours earlier.

## 8 July 2021

Johnson is reprimanded by parliament's committee on standards for failing to "establish the full facts" about a free holiday to a [luxury villa in Mustique](#). The accommodation was organised by David Ross, the Tory donor and co-founder of Carphone Warehouse, after Johnson "sought and was offered" the use of Ross's villa, the report found.

## 26 October 2021

The former Tory minister Owen Paterson is found by parliament's standards watchdog to have committed an ["egregious" breach](#) of lobbying rules. Paterson repeatedly lobbied the government on behalf of two companies that were paying him more than £100,000 a year, the watchdog found. The MP, who maintained his innocence, [resigns](#) as the Conservative representative for North Shropshire in November 2021. The subsequent byelection is won by the Liberal Democrats on 16 December 2021.



Owen Paterson sits in the Commons as MPs debate an amendment calling for a review of his case after he received a six-week ban from parliament.  
Photograph: House of Commons/PA

## **10 December 2021**

The former Conservative minister Andrew Griffiths is found [by a high court judge](#) to have raped his wife and subjected her to coercive control. Griffiths, who denied the allegations, had stepped down as an MP in November 2019 after a series of claims about his conduct. His wife, Kate Griffiths, who left him when the original stories broke, succeeds him as MP for Burton in Staffordshire.

## **18 December 2021**

Simon Case, the UK's most senior civil servant, [steps down](#) from chairing the investigation into lockdown-breaking parties in Downing Street after claims emerged he had hosted an event himself over the same period. The senior civil servant Sue Gray takes over.

## **6 January 2022**

Johnson is [revealed](#) to have sought funds to help cover a £112,000 makeover of his Downing Street flat from a Conservative donor while promising to consider plans for a “great exhibition”. Labour accuses the prime minister of corruption, while Johnson apologises for failing to disclose crucial WhatsApp messages to his ethics adviser, Lord Geidt, the previous spring.

## **2 April 2022**

David Warburton, the Conservative MP for Somerton and Frome, is [suspended](#) from the Tory parliamentary party after a series of allegations relating to sexual harassment and cocaine use. A investigation by Westminster's independent complaints and grievance scheme is ongoing as of 1 July.

## **11 April 2022**

Imran Ahmad Khan, the Conservative MP for Wakefield, is [found guilty](#) of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old boy after plying him with alcohol at a party

in 2008. He resigns as an MP on 28 April, triggering a byelection that Labour wins on 23 June.

## 29 April 2022

Neil Parish, the Conservative MP for Tiverton and Honiton, resigns his seat after admitting he [twice watched pornography](#) in the House of Commons chamber. His resignation prompts a byelection that results in a decisive Liberal Democrat victory on 23 June.

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## 17 May 2022

An unnamed Conservative MP is arrested on suspicion of rape and other sexual offences. The MP, who has not been publicly named, is ordered to stay away from Westminster while [under investigation](#) by the Metropolitan police. He remains on bail as of 1 July.

## 25 May 2022

Sue Gray publishes a [damning report](#) into lockdown-busting parties across Whitehall, revealing that government staff had drunken brawls, vomited and sang karaoke until dawn while the UK observed strict Covid-19 restrictions on socialising. The prime minister says he is “humbled” and “appalled” but critics doubt his contrition and calls for his resignation grow louder.

## 30 June 2022

Chris Pincher, the Conservative deputy chief whip, [resigns](#) after admitting he had “embarrassed myself and other people” following reports that he drunkenly groped two men at a private club. It is the second time Pincher has resigned from the whips’ office, having previously stood down in 2017 after he was reported to have made an unwanted pass at a Tory activist.

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## Ukrainian officials say Lysychansk remains in their hands – as it happened

This blog is closed. All the Guardian's [Ukraine coverage can be found here](#)

Updated 7h ago

[Dani Anguiano](#); [Jane Clinton](#), [Léonie Chao-Fong](#) and [Miranda Bryant](#)

Sat 2 Jul 2022 18.13 EDTFirst published on Sat 2 Jul 2022 02.44 EDT



A soldier's family mourns at a mass funeral for 13 Ukrainian military members in Dnipro, south-east of Kyiv, amid Russia's continuing attacks on Ukraine. Photograph: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

[Dani Anguiano](#); [Jane Clinton](#), [Léonie Chao-Fong](#) and [Miranda Bryant](#)

Sat 2 Jul 2022 18.13 EDTFirst published on Sat 2 Jul 2022 02.44 EDT

## Key events

- [16h ago Today so...](#)
- [17h ago Ukraine army says Lysychansk is 'not encircled'](#)
- [18h ago Russian-backed separatists say they have 'completely' encircled Lysychansk – reports](#)
- [19h ago Russian forces continue to pound Ukrainian stronghold of Luhansk, says governor](#)
- [21h ago UK condemns exploitation as captured Britons could face death penalty](#)
- [23h ago Two more Britons captured in Ukraine could face death penalty](#)
- [23h ago Russia achieving 'minor advances' around Lysychansk, says UK MoD](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

[7h ago 19.47](#)

This blog is closed. All the Guardian's [Ukraine coverage can be found here](#)

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[9h ago 18.13](#)

**Ukrainian** officials say that **Lysychansk** remains in Ukraine's hands, despite claims from **Russia** that the city "has been brought under control", Reuters reports.

Ukrainian forces have spent weeks trying to defend the city, Ukraine's last bastion in the eastern province of Luhansk. The city saw intensified fighting on Saturday and videos on Russian media showed Luhansk militia waving flags and cheering in Lysychansk streets. A spokesperson for the pro-

Russian separatist forces said “Lysychansk has been brought under control,” but “unfortunately, it is not yet liberated.”

Despite fierce battles near the city, Lysychansk is not surrounded and remains under control of the army, said Ruslan Muzychuk, the Ukraine national guard spokesman.

“The goal of the enemy here remains access to the administrative border of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Also, in the Sloviansk direction, the enemy is attempting assault actions,” he said.

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[9h ago](#)[17.51](#)

### Zelenskiy urges resolve amid ‘very difficult path’ to victory

As **Russia** intensifies its attacks on Ukrainian cities, **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** told citizens in his nightly address on Saturday that they must maintain their resolve. **Ukraine** must inflict losses on Russia “so that every Russian remembers that Ukraine cannot be broken”, he said.

“In many areas from the front, there is a sense of easing up, but the war is not over,” Zelenskiy said. “Unfortunately, it is intensifying in different places and we mustn’t forget that. We must help the army, the volunteers, help those who are left on their own at this time.”

The country has endured a series of deadly strikes this week. At least 21 people were killed near Odesa when a missile hit an apartment block. On Monday, 19 people died after a shopping mall was hit.



Local officials stand in front of a damaged residential building in the town of Serhiivka, where a Russian airstrike on residential areas killed at least 21 people. Photograph: Maxim Penko/AP

Kyiv has accused Moscow of deliberately targeting civilian sites, which [Russia](#) has denied. Russian forces have intensified missile attacks on cities far from the main eastern battlefields in recent days, Ukrainian officials said. Meanwhile, Ukrainian troops on the eastern frontlines have described intense artillery barrages hitting residential areas.

Russian strikes have killed thousands of civilians and levelled cities since the country launched its invasion of Ukraine in February.

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[10h ago](#)[16.44](#)

Demonstrators took to the streets in **Berlin** to demand that the **German** government not intervene in war in **Ukraine**. Germany has offered support to [Ukraine](#) in its fight against Russia, sending billions in military aid and heavy weapons.



Protesters carry a banner reading “active resistance against a third world war” during a demonstration in Berlin. Photograph: John MacDougall/AFP/Getty Images



A protester displays a placard reading: “Nato equals war!”. The German chancellor, Olaf Scholz, pledged EUR 100bn for the armed forces in February, repeating his promise to reach the 2% of gross domestic product spending on defence in line with Natodemands. Photograph: John MacDougall/AFP/Getty Images



Various anti war and anti-Nato placards during a demonstration in Berlin on 2 July 2022. Photograph: John MacDougall/AFP/Getty Images

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Updated at 16.46 EDT

12h ago15.14

**References to Nazism in articles about Ukraine on Russian websites surged to “unprecedented levels” when Russia invaded the country, according to a [New York Times](#) report.**

Throughout the war, Vladimir Putin has falsely claimed that Ukraine is run by “neo-Nazis” and that Russia is trying to “liberate” and “de-nazify” the country. Ukraine’s democratically elected leader, [Volodymyr Zelenskiy](#), is Jewish, and many of his relatives were killed in the Holocaust.

According to the Times, Russian media has been instrumental in the spread of false claims and propaganda in the war, including articles that falsely claim Ukrainian Nazis have used civilians as human shields and are

planning the mass murder of Russians. References to Ukrainian Nazism in Russian articles have remained high since the day Russia's invasion began.

"You see it on Russian chat groups and in comments Russians are making in newspaper articles," Jeffrey Veidlinger, a University of Michigan professor, told the Times. "I think many Russians actually believe this is a war against Nazism."

Russia has engaged in a [harsh crackdown](#) on both Russian and foreign independent news outlets since invading Ukraine, and passed a law that media outlets have warned [criminalizes independent journalism](#).

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Updated at 16.02 EDT

[13h ago](#)[14.01](#)

The president of **Belarus** has claimed, without providing evidence, that **Ukraine** attempted to strike military facilities on Belarusian territory earlier this week.

Reuters, citing the state-run Belta news agency, reported that Alexander Lukashenko said Ukrainian armed forces tried to strike facilities in Belarus three days ago, but that the missiles were intercepted. He claimed Ukraine was attempting to provoke Belarus, and that his country does not plan to intervene in the conflict.

Belarus, a close ally of Russia, has supported the war, allowing Moscow to use the territory to wage its war against Ukraine. Vladimir Putin recently pledged to send Belarus [nuclear-capable missiles](#) in "the coming months" and offered to provide upgraded warplanes.

Last week, Ukraine said that missiles from Belarus hit a border region in its territory.

The Ukrainian military did not immediately comment on Lukashenko's claims.

*I'm Dani Anguiano and I'll be bringing you the latest developments in the war in Ukraine over the next few hours*

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Updated at 14.03 EDT

[15h ago 12.00](#)

CNN reports on the volunteers deep in the **eastern Ukrainian** forest sleeping in earthen dugouts, primed and ready to defend against the **Russian military**.

Maxym is one of them, living in a wooded encampment not far from **Sloviansk**, with his comrades who make up Ukraine's territorial defence. These are non-professional soldiers, most of whom signed up in the early days of Russia's invasion in February.

He says he thinks often of his pregnant wife, back home in **Kharkiv**, and their unborn son.

We will kick them out of here, and he will know it: that we didn't just stand here doing nothing. It's our land, and they have no right to come here.

Not long after CNN's visit, a cluster strike heavily wounded some of the soldiers.

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[15h ago 11.40](#)

Demonstrators gathered at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland today to protest against the **Russian** invasion of Ukraine.



Protesters were dressed in the colours of the Ukrainian flag. Photograph: Martial Trezzini/EPA



Blue and yellow flowers were assembled during the demonstration. Photograph: Martial Trezzini/EPA

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Updated at 11.59 EDT

16h ago 10.59

## Today so far...

It is 6pm in Kyiv. Here's where we stand:

- Powerful explosions shook Ukraine's southern city of Mykolaiv on Saturday morning, its mayor, Oleksandr Senkevych, said. [Air raid sirens sounded across the Mykolaiv region before the blasts](#) and residents were urged to stay inside shelters. It was not immediately known what caused the explosions.
- Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, has accused Russia of engaging in "conscious, deliberately targeted terror" after another in a series of what Kyiv says are Russian missile attacks aimed at civilians. [In his nightly video address on Friday](#), Zelenskiy denounced [the strikes on an apartment building and a recreation centre in a small coastal town near Odesa](#) in southern Ukraine that left at least 21 people dead.
- Russian forces are continuing to achieve "minor advances" in the strategic city of Lysychansk in eastern Ukraine, with air and artillery strikes continuing in the district, British intelligence says. Ukrainian forces probably continue to block Russian forces in the south-eastern outskirts of the eastern Ukrainian city, [according to the latest UK Ministry of Defence report](#).

- **The Ukrainian army has rejected claims that Russian-backed separatists and Russian forces have surrounded the key eastern city of Lysychansk.** Ruslan Muzytchuk, a spokesman for the Ukrainian National Guard, [said fighting rages around Lysychansk but that the city remains under the control of Ukraine](#). Russian-back separatists earlier [claimed they had “completely” encircled Lysychansk](#).
- **Russia’s defence ministry has said its forces destroyed five Ukrainian army command posts in Donbas and in the Mykolaiv region, according to Russian state media.** Three weapons storage sites were also destroyed in the Zaporizhzhia region in south-east Ukraine, [the ministry was quoted as saying](#). These claims have not been independently verified.
- **Rescue workers have recovered as many as 29 body fragments amid the rubble of deadly Russian missile strikes on a shopping centre in the Ukrainian city of Kremenchuk, Ukraine’s state emergency service said.** At least 19 people were killed on Monday [after two Russian X-22 cruise missiles hit a crowded shopping centre in Kremenchuk](#), officials said.
- **The UK government has condemned the exploitation of prisoners of war after two more British men held by Russian proxies in east Ukraine and charged with “mercenary activities” could face the death penalty.** [Andrew Hill of Plymouth and Dylan Healy of Huntingdon were reported to have been charged](#) with “forcible seizure of power” and undergoing “terrorist” training, according to a state news agency in Russian-controlled Donetsk.
- **A Briton and a Moroccan man sentenced to death by pro-Russia officials in Russian-controlled east Ukraine have appealed against**

**their sentences, Russian state media reported.** The supreme court in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic has received appeals from lawyers for Brahim Saadoun and Shaun Pinner, according to the Russian state-owned news agency Tass. Another Briton sentenced to death by the Russian proxy court, Aiden Aslin, had not yet submitted an appeal, Tass reports.

- **A series of recent assassination attempts targeting pro-Russian officials suggests a growing resistance movement against Russian-backed authorities occupying parts of southern Ukraine, according to US officials.** The resistance could grow into a wider counterinsurgency that would pose a significant challenge to Russia's ability to control captured Ukrainian territories, CNN has cited officials as saying.
- **Ukraine's army has accused Russia of carrying out strikes using incendiary phosphorus munitions on Snake Island a day after Moscow's withdrawal of forces.** A statement by the army was accompanied by a video that showed a plane drop munitions at least twice on the island, and what appeared to be white streaks rising above it.
- **The US announced on Friday that it would provide Ukraine with an additional \$820m in military aid.** The new aid package will include new surface-to-air missile systems and counter-artillery radars to respond to Russia's long-range strikes in its war against Ukraine. The Pentagon also announced that it will provide up to 150,000 rounds of millimetre artillery ammunition.

*That's it from me, Léonie Chao-Fong, today. My colleague, Jane Clinton, will be here shortly with all the latest from Ukraine. Thank you.*

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Updated at 11.01 EDT

16h ago 10.57

**Ukrainian prisoners of war have detailed their experiences of torture and abuse while in the hands of Russian forces, while their families have described weeks of not knowing whether their loved ones were dead or alive as “hell on earth”.**

The US newspaper [the Hill spoke](#) to former prisoners of war and their families about what life was like for those captured by Russian forces since Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine.

One former prisoner of war, Igor Kurayan, 55, said he was beaten and given electric shocks during weeks in Russian captivity.

Russian soldiers twisted and cut his fingers using pliers and metal cutting scissors, Kurayan said. Other prisoners were beaten so badly they died, he added.

A translator for Kurayan told the paper:

Every day he would be called out for the torturing and they wanted him to hand over his friends.

Anzhelika Todorashko, 32, said her mother, 52-year-old Viktoria, was captured in February for her work with the Ukrainian army. She was transported to Russia where she said she was given electric shocks, photographed naked, given little food and water, and heard screams from other prisoners asking for death, Todorashko said.

Russian soldiers would humiliate prisoners, Todorashko said, with her mother telling her that prisoners had to hold their hands above their head for hours a day. If they dropped their hands they would be beaten, she said. Soldiers also shaved the heads of the women and suffocated others.

Her mother was released weeks after being imprisoned and taken to a Ukrainian hospital, the paper writes.

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Updated at 11.00 EDT

[17h ago](#) [10.15](#)

## **Ukraine army says Lysychansk is 'not encircled'**

**The Ukrainian army has rejected claims that Russian-backed separatists and Russian forces have surrounded the key eastern city of Lysychansk.**

Ruslan Muzytchuk, a spokesman for the Ukrainian National Guard, said on Ukrainian television:

Fighting rages around Lysychansk. (But) luckily the city has not been encircled and is under control of the Ukrainian army.

A spokesperson for the pro-Russian separatist forces earlier told Russian state media that Lysychansk was “completely encircled”.

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## [UK news](#)

# Two more Britons captured in Ukraine could face death penalty

Russia has charged former soldier Andrew Hill and Dylan Healy, believed to have been doing humanitarian work, with fighting as mercenaries



Dylan Healy (pictured above) and Andrew Hill were also charged with ‘forcible seizure of power’ and undergoing ‘terrorist’ training, according to Russian state media. Photograph: SWNS

*[Andrew Roth](#)*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 17.33 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 08.13 EDT

Two more Britons held by Russian proxies in east [Ukraine](#) have been charged with fighting as mercenaries, Russian state media have reported, indicating that they could face the death penalty in a likely attempt to pressure western countries to make a deal for their freedom.

Britons [Andrew Hill of Plymouth](#) and [Dylan Healy of Huntingdon](#) were reported to have also been charged with “forcible seizure of power” and undergoing “terrorist” training, according to a state news agency in Russian-controlled Donetsk. The report was sourced to an anonymous official and has not been confirmed.

Two Britons and a Moroccan man were [sentenced to death](#) on identical charges by the authorities in Russian-controlled Donetsk last month. No date has been set for the sentences to be carried out, and at least two of the men are appealing against the verdict.

Hill, who was identified as a father of four from Plymouth, has been [paraded on Russian television in several clips](#), including one that aired last month with the headline: “Exclusive – before the execution”.

In the clip, he appeared to have been informed that he may face criminal charges, saying that he was being “detained here as a suspected mercenary”.

Hill, who is reported to have previously served in the Lancaster regiment of the British army, was first shown on Russian television after his capture in late April. In the video, the 35-year-old appeared to be severely injured, with his head bandaged and his left arm in a cast and supported by a sling.

“I want to go home, to my homeland, to my family, to my children,” he said in the recent clip, which appeared to have been filmed under duress. “I just want to go home. I will tell them the truth.”

The other man, Dylan Healy, is reported to have been working in Ukraine as a humanitarian aid volunteer. He and another British man, Paul Urey, were reported to have been [detained near Zaporizhzhia in south-eastern Ukraine while driving to help a woman and two children to evacuate](#).

He was said to be working in Ukraine independently of any major aid organisation. A friend told ITV that he believed Healy had gone to Ukraine to “to try to help and make a difference”.

The men's backgrounds will likely have little influence on the outcome of a trial, which are carried out in the Donetsk People's Republic, a proxy government recognised only by Russia and Syria.

In the previous trial, all three men were convicted of fighting as mercenaries despite serving as enlisted soldiers in the 36th Marine Brigade and being entitled to the protections of the Geneva conventions.

The Russian government has said it is also planning a larger tribunal for Ukrainian soldiers captured at the Azovstal steelworks in Mariupol.

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## 2022.07.02 - Spotlight

- 'It felt like history itself' 48 protest photographs that changed the world
- 'People want to get their clothes off' Naturists catch eye of UK businesses
- Father John Misty 'Which living person do I most despise? Oh, he knows'
- Mobile phones EU roaming charges are back after Brexit – beware high mobile bills

# ‘It felt like history itself’ – 48 protest photographs that changed the world

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/02/it-felt-like-history-itself-48-protest-photographs-that-changed-the-world>

## Naturism

# **‘People want to get their clothes off’: naturists catch eye of UK businesses**

From skinny dips to naked karaoke, firms are recognising the financial opportunity of the ‘buff pound’



It is legal to be a naturist in the UK, where people have a right to freedom of expression. Photograph: Stuart McGowan/Alamy



[Amelia Hill](#)

[@byameliahill](#)

Sat 2 Jul 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 06.25 EDT

Justine Drury did not want to upset the fishers, but her customers wanted to swim naked.

“And if that’s what the people of Nottingham city want – if that’s their way of connecting with nature – then who am I to stand in their way?” said the co-owner of the [WholeHealth](#) swimming club. “But we did have to think of the fishermen. They are quite old school.”

Accordingly, the first ever skinny dip at Colwick Lake last year was held before the fishers arrived for the day. The 5.30am event was, said Drury, awash with enthusiastic naturists.

“We’re now thinking of having an event every month,” said Drury, a former headteacher. “We held the first event because we’re a socially responsive company, but we’re going to make it a regular thing because it makes good business sense; when we hold these skinny dips, we’re inundated.”

Mainstream companies are increasingly realising that catering to the “buff pound” makes sound business sense. Andrew Welch, from [British Naturism](#),

said venues now regularly hold their own naturist events after having hosted a one-off occasion with his organisation.

“The buff pound is definitely something that businesses are increasingly aware of,” said Welch, who is busy organising this weekend’s annual [Great British Skinny Dip](#).

“They hold one event alongside us and then realise it’s a great commercial opportunity: if they put on something a bit unusual at a time of the week when they wouldn’t usually be open or have many customers, they get a guaranteed crowd.”

Rachel Weick, of [Bare West Events](#), agreed. “Most venues want a slice of the action once they’ve seen events in the flesh – excuse the pun,” she said. “If, for example, you’ve got a lovely garden, then it’s a no-brainer; people want to get their clothes off in a nice garden, almost irrespective of the weather – and if the hosts provide a cream tea, a barbecue or a bar, they’re guaranteed good business all night as naturists aren’t going to go off site because they want to be naked.”

This weekend, the UK’s biggest naturist event, [Nudefest](#), returns to the West Country with naked karaoke and slip’n’slide. It comes just weeks after thousands of people joined the [World Naked Bike Ride](#) – an event that has taken place annually in 200 cities across the globe since 2004 – while next month, [Nothing On Events](#) will hold a [Garden of Wellness festival in West Sussex](#) as part of its summer schedule.

[Arundel Lido in West Sussex](#) is about to start holding monthly sessions after the success of its first tentative event. “We held our first naturist event just to see what the uptake would be, and were stunned when 80 people turned up,” said Nikki Richardson, its general manager.

“It makes perfect business sense because we’re reaching a whole new client base; naturists are prepared to travel for miles – we had people from the Isle of Wight and from Portsmouth.”

Briony Newsome, the acting chair of the [Shap open-air swimming pool committee](#) in Cumbria, decided to warn neighbours whose houses overlook

the pool when they started holding their regular monthly sessions recently.

“But we got absolutely no complaints at all,” she said. “I think locals are aware that these events bring new business into the village as a whole. Because naturists tend to come from so far away, they spend the whole day here.

“We’re wondering if it might be a new string to our bow too,” she mused. “I think naturist families who come to our events might well decide to hire the pool out privately at another time for naturist sessions just for themselves and their similarly minded friends.”

Johnny Nicol, the owner of [Race Hub](#), an open-water swimming venue outside Leicester, held his first “clothing optional” event as part of British Naturism’s Great British Skinny Dip last year and has never looked back.

“We’re thinking of making it a monthly event now, from June to September,” he said. “It’s a great business opportunity: because there aren’t many naturism events, you’re guaranteed lots more people coming than we might usually attract.

“But you’re also going to benefit from the publicity it generates at other times too. Mainstream attitudes to naturism are pretty relaxed now. Even if people aren’t into it themselves, they’re sympathetic to it. We reckon non-naturists will hear about these events and will think of coming to the lido at regular times themselves.”

But the cost of living means other venues are struggling to keep their naturist events going. Elaine Hudson, the manager of [Wigton Baths in Cumbria](#), said it would have to curtail its naturism sessions from two hours to one.

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“It’s very sad,” she said. “We’ve only just started having these regular sessions and they’re very popular, but there are two issues: it costs us almost twice as much to heat the pool than previously – and because petrol costs

have increased so much, the number of naturists coming from further afield has almost halved.

“We were making a good profit from the sessions last year, but now people are clearly thinking: ‘Do I go for a nice naked swim or do I stay home?’

“Sadly, they’re opting for the latter. And that, combined with the increased cost of heating the pool, means we just can’t carry on.”

## The bare facts about naturism

- It is legal to be a naturist. Naturists have a legal right to freedom of expression which only engages criminal law if they commit sexual offences or use disorderly behaviour that they intend to or are aware may be disorderly within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress.
- An Ipsos Mori poll in 2011 found that 6% of people in the UK considered themselves to be naturists: almost one person in 17, or about 3.7 million people. In 2001 the percentage of naturists had been 2%.
- More than 15,000 people attended organised naturist events across the country last year,
- The 9,000-strong membership of British [Naturism](#) grew over lockdown by about 2.5%: by mid-March 2020, it had 180 new members, and by the end of May, 500. Since the beginning of 2022, 600 more people have joined.
- There are more than 100 naturist clubs and swims across UK. Clubs offer naked dining, boat trips, bike rides, art gallery visits, museum visits and sports. “Our walks are particularly popular,” said Andrew Welch from British Naturism. “Clothed people coming in the opposite direction find it funny or intriguing. They’re never offended.”
- One key piece of etiquette: “If it’s bad behaviour with your clothes on, it’s going to be bad behaviour with your clothes off. But we do always

sit on a towel," said Welch.

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Interview

## Father John Misty: ‘Which living person do I most despise? Oh, he knows’

[Rosanna Greenstreet](#)



Father John Misty: ‘What single thing would improve the quality of my life? A hit.’ Photograph: Ward & Kveskin

The singer-songwriter on dreaming of a giant reptile, listening to sports radio and snogging under a police spotlight

Sat 2 Jul 2022 04.30 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 16.52 EDT

Born in Maryland, Josh Tillman (AKA [Father John Misty](#)), 41, moved to Seattle in 2002, where he worked in a bakery and began to record music. In 2008, he became drummer for Fleet Foxes and spent four years touring with the band while continuing to work on solo material. In 2012, he released Fear Fun, his first album under the name Father John Misty. His second, I Love You, Honeybear, received critical acclaim. In April, his latest album, [Chloë and the Next 20th Century](#), entered the UK album charts at No 2. Next year he will tour the UK. He is married and lives in Los Angeles.

**When were you happiest?**

Whenever it was, it’s likely I was actually miserable, destitute and alone.

**What is your greatest fear?**

Getting thrown down a well.

**What is your earliest memory?**

Not enjoying sleep training.

**Which living person do you most admire, and why?**

Grace Zabriskie – her style; her woodworking.

**What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?**

I bore myself constantly.

**Aside from a property, what's the most expensive thing you've bought?**

A rug.

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**What is your most treasured possession?**

My teeth.

**Who would play you in the film of your life?**

I had a really sweet conversation with my dad where he told me he didn't understand what my life was like until he saw A Star is Born. I went with it.

**What makes you unhappy?**

Quite often I sit down to write a song and discover I have absolutely no passion for writing songs.

**What do you most dislike about your appearance?**

Sometimes, I can't believe my posture.

**If you could bring something extinct back to life, what would you choose?**

Duelling to the death.

**What is your most unappealing habit?**

Acting distant and withdrawn, then asking my wife if something's wrong. Also biting my nails, folding them in half and keeping them in my pocket.

**What scares you about getting older?**

This increasingly realistic conception of what's possible.

**Which book are you ashamed not to have read?**

I don't know how many people I've told that, "Yes, I *have* read that Ken Kesey book about Oregon and the logging family. It *is* amazing ..."

**What did you want to be when you were growing up?**

A mutant turtle ninja.

**What is your guiltiest pleasure?**

Sports radio.

**Have you ever said 'I love you' without meaning it?**

Sometimes reciprocating an "I love you" with drunk acquaintances is an act of mercy. Still doesn't feel great.

**Which living person do you most despise, and why?**  
Oh, he knows.

**What did you dream about last night?**  
I found a giant reptile and was feeding it cereal.

**What single thing would improve the quality of your life?**  
A hit.

**What has been your closest brush with the law?**  
The first time I ever touched a girl intimately was in a park after hours, eventually in the spotlight of a squad car. We were frozen so long the officer said he thought we were dead.

**What is the most important lesson life has taught you?**  
Absolutely everyone is winging it.

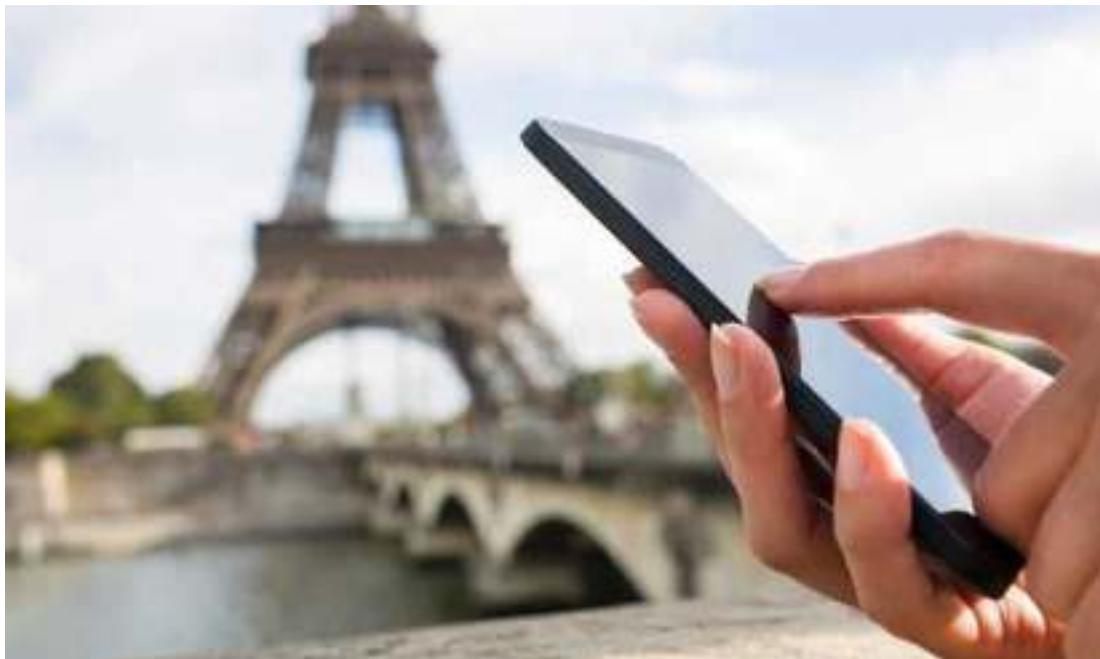
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## Mobile phones

# Roaming charges are back after Brexit – beware high mobile bills

Giffgaff and Tesco have joined EE, Sky Mobile, Three and Vodafone in making contract changes



Roaming charges differ across the mobile phone networks. Photograph: MIKA Images/Alamy



Zoe Wood

@zoewoodguardian

Sat 2 Jul 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 18.50 EDT

Roaming charges are [back with a bang](#) since Brexit, so if your mobile is never far from your hand it is important to make sure your post-holiday glow isn't ruined by a shock bill for calls and data when you get home.

Almost all the big mobile phone companies, including EE, Sky Mobile, Three and [Vodafone](#) have reintroduced EU roaming charges, with giffgaff and Tesco Mobile the latest names to announce contract changes.

Giffgaff has [told its customers](#) that from 26 July they can only use up to 5GB of data a month in the EU. Above that level they will be charged 10p a MB. In a post on its website, the company blamed the move on the connection charges incurred when people roam in the EU.

Giffgaff said it had “taken the decision to mitigate some of that cost, so that we can at least give our members up to 5GB to roam in the EU, at no extra cost”. It pointed to 2019 usage data, which showed more than 90% of its members had used less than that figure when roaming in the EU.

The Brexit deal did not include continued protection against roaming charges

In another change, the sun is setting on the free roaming enjoyed by Tesco Mobile customers on its [Home from Home](#) contract. From the start of 2023, new sign-ups and upgrade customers will lose this benefit; existing customers will continue to enjoy this perk provided they don't change their device or move to a sim-only contract. The roaming charges will be 10p a MB of data, 20p a text and 55p a minute for calls.

In 2017, mobile networks in EU countries were [banned from charging customers extra to use their phones](#) in other member countries, with the right to make calls, send texts and, most importantly, use data allowances anywhere in Europe – as if at home – one of the most popular pieces of European legislation in the UK. However, the [Brexit](#) deal did not include continued protection against roaming charges.

With charges differing across the networks it is a “confusing time” to travel with your phone, says Ernest Doku, a telecoms expert at the price comparison and switching service Uswitch.com.

As a first step, Doku suggests you check the roaming charges for your destination and see if your provider has a fair usage policy. This means they can restrict your full UK allowance even if you are on an unlimited plan at home. Three, for example, has a fair usage limit of 12GB, and you will be charged £3 a GB if you exceed it.



Have you checked the roaming charges for your holiday destination?  
Photograph: Elizaveta Galitckaia/Alamy

Of the big four firms, O2 is the only one that says it is not currently planning to bring back roaming fees, while Virgin Mobile customers should also be safe from roaming charges “for this year at least”, Doku says.

“Depending on when you last took out a mobile or sim deal, or upgraded your phone, you may be shielded from your provider’s new roaming charges as they will not have been written in your contract at the time,” he adds.

If you change networks you may be able to keep roaming at no additional cost – and also save money on your bills. “O2 is the last major network not to bring back roaming fees for customers travelling to the EU but some smaller sim-only networks also offer inclusive roaming in [Europe](#) and could be a good option if you are not venturing too far afield,” Doku says.

The easiest way to avoid accidental charges while abroad is to go into the settings menu of your mobile and turn roaming off. If you need to get online, use the wifi in your hotel or in local restaurants and bars. Also remember to put your phone in flight mode when you are in transit to avoid incurring charges as you pass through different territories.

Another radical option is to switch your phone off and just relax. Go on, you know you can do it.

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## 2022.07.02 - Opinion

- Zara Aleena just wanted to walk home. We will keep marching until women are safe on our streets
- From big dog Johnson to ‘big grope’ Chris Pincher: another day in Westminster’s ‘normal’ workplace
- Digested week: north Norfolk’s middle-age spread, and panic at the school disco
- I reject the US abortion ruling. I vow to defend the sovereignty of women’s bodies

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**OpinionViolence against women and girls**

## **Zara Aleena just wanted to walk home. We will keep marching until women are safe on our streets**

[Anna Birley](#)

We were promised real change to counter male violence against women.  
We're still waiting



A vigil in memory of Sabina Nessa, and against violence against women, in Kidbrooke, south London, 25 February 2022. Photograph: Jonathan Brady/PA

Sat 2 Jul 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 05.32 EDT

I wish today's vigil didn't have to happen. The murdered woman's name, [Zara Aleena](#), becomes another that we remember, joining the growing list of women who will never meet each other but who find themselves grouped together, with little in common but the fact that they never made it home.

Since the murder of [Sarah Everard](#), vigils have become symbols of resistance to male violence in the UK. A way not just to remember and mourn, but for women to mobilise. By standing shoulder to shoulder, we take up space, our physical presence defying a status quo that means these public spaces where we meet are not always safe spaces for women to be.

Zara walked everywhere, and believed that all women should be able to walk home. [A statement](#) from her family talked about how she would bring a pair of flat shoes in her handbag so that she could take off her heels at the end of a night and head home comfortably. That detail gave me a lump in my throat. It's so relatable – like asking a friend to text you when they get home, or clutching keys in your fist on dark roads, it's something every woman has done.

When we organised the [vigil for Sarah Everard](#), it felt like a turning point. The prime minister lit a candle for her on the doorstep of No 10, and politicians from all parties were saying “never again”. For the first time I can remember, we were talking about really tackling misogyny and tackling male behaviour, rather than yet again asking women to change their behaviour to accommodate it. Instead of yet more posters in women’s bathrooms telling us to alert a bartender if we felt unsafe, posters started going up by urinals telling men to challenge sexist comments from their mates.

But over a year later, any change has been cosmetic and those with the power to improve matters have turned their attentions elsewhere. In the year since Everard was killed, more [women were killed](#) by male perpetrators than the year before. While the number of successful rape convictions [continues to drop](#), and [women’s confidence](#) in the police and justice system falls, the only thing that seems to be going up is the [number of Tory MPs](#) accused of sexual harassment and misconduct.

While the government’s [violence against women and girls strategy](#), published last summer, included some important promises, including investing £3m towards getting a better understanding of what works to prevent male violence, it fails to engage with the scale of the problem facing

women. The £3m for prevention pales in comparison with the £45m safer streets fund announced in the wake of Everard's murder.

This focus on street lighting and public realm improvements is shortsighted and misses the point: it isn't a matter of dark corners but the attitudes and behaviour of some of the men who occupy them. Dark corners would be safe if women were not heckled, followed and attacked in them by men who feel entitled to women's attention and bodies. The home secretary rejected an amendment to the police, crime, sentencing and courts bill that would have made [misogyny a hate crime](#).

The home office minister Rachel Maclean stood up in parliament [to praise apps that track women's movements](#) – missing the point that we don't want to have to share our location to avoid violence on our walk home. We don't want to be confined only to the well-lit streets. And we know that even when we do take the longer, better-lit route, it is no guarantee of safety.

And meanwhile, the freedom for women to challenge misogyny is being eroded. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act creates limits on our ability to protest, and by ripping up the Human Rights Act this government is limiting the ways in which women can challenge injustice. Our [successful court case](#) against the way the Met Police handled the Clapham Common vigil was only possible because of the Human Rights Act – it plays a crucial role in enabling women like us to hold institutions and authorities to account, as well as providing essential protections for women who have been victims and survivors of violence.

We need the freedoms to light candles for those women who never made it home. And we need the right to raise our voices so that tackling male violence never drops down the government's agenda. We want cultural changes that mean we don't have to keep looking over our shoulder, that mean we don't need to wear comfy shoes to be able to run away from the man following us home, that mean we never have to ask our friends to text us when they get home safely. If they get home safely.

Because if apps and street lighting could solve violence against women and girls, we wouldn't need to march today.

- Anna Birley is a founder of Reclaim These Streets
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## **From big dog Johnson to ‘big grope’ Chris Pincher: another day in Westminster’s ‘normal’ workplace**

[Marina Hyde](#)



Of course the PM and his allies backed their disgraced deputy chief whip. Just two scandals? That hardly registers these days



Boris Johnson at 10 Downing Street, London, 1 July 2022. Photograph: John Sibley/AP

Fri 1 Jul 2022 08.01 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 00.23 EDT

Because nothing is too on-the-nose for the current Conservative party, the intro of Chris Pincher's [latest drinking column](#) featured Uncle Monty from [Withnail and I](#). "That lubricious booby", Pincher called Monty, in an article for the Critic magazine filed some time before he appeared to admit [drunkenly groping two younger men](#) on Wednesday night. I wonder what Uncle Chris was saying as he chased them round the Carlton Club? "I mean to have you, even if it must be burglary!"

In reality, the dialogue is likely to have been less iconic than any of that movie's quotable quotes. The last time Pincher resigned for alleged sexual misconduct – of course there was a last time – he was accused of [luring a former Olympic rower](#) back to his home before reappearing in a bathrobe, massaging his victim's neck and untucking his shirt, while whispering: "You'll go far in the Conservative party." Just call him Harvey Winetime.

Speaking of going far in the Conservative party, though, it was AFTER that incident that Pincher was elevated to the position of deputy chief whip, with the whips' office naturally being the place you're supposed to go with your

concerns about sexual misconduct by MPs and so on. It all does rather raise the question: who whips the whips? Unclear. Some sadist down in Battersea, you'd imagine. But if he or she is off for a week, I don't think it would be too difficult finding holiday cover. Just walk along any British high street and ask who fancies letting out a bit of their frustration with how they're ruled.

Still, great to see the government turning itself into the Netflix of sex scandals. Forgive me for falling back on its most gibberish of [favoured metaphors](#), but you have to concede the Johnson administration is a bloated monster, profoundly overvalued and built on a vast debt to the public that will ultimately need to be collected on.

For now, let's have a look at the [resignation letter](#) sent to the PM by Pincher, who inevitably – yet somehow still incredibly – has apparently long been nicknamed Arse Pincher. This missive to the prime minister is some state-of-the-art minimising. “I've embarrassed myself and other people” is surely the most twee possible way of saying: “I am alleged to have sexually assaulted two people.” It's the Live, Laugh, Love of predatory behaviour.

As is the way of these things, it wasn't long before allies of Pincher were briefing that the Tamworth MP was “vulnerable”. That line was reportedly also [trotted out](#) at this morning's Downing Street meeting, with staff told by director of communications Guto Harri to “think about how he feels today”. Righto. Maybe the guys he allegedly sexually assaulted that night were vulnerable too? Maybe they are now? Why were Downing Street staff not encouraged to think first about how they feel?

Probably because Pincher was a [key part of Operation Save Big Dog](#), instrumental in the shadow whipping operation that got Tory MPs back on Johnson's side as the Partygate revelations piled up. The prime minister was made aware of the “issues” with Pincher back in February, when he sought to promote him in reward for all this. Yet Johnson went ahead anyway. [Politico revealed](#) this morning claims that Pincher had been [assigned a “minder”](#) to ensure he left events “without drinking too much and getting into trouble”. Where was the minder on Wednesday night? Or maybe he groped the minder? I mean, anything feels possible.

What we can say for sure is that Pincher and those who appointed him are not the only ones in positions of power trying very hard to handwave it all away. No sooner had the resignation letter dropped than the prime minister's winged flunkeys were out there explaining why it was fine that Pincher hadn't had the whip withdrawn. In the end that non-punishment didn't make it past about 5pm on Friday, when Pincher had the whip withdrawn. But it's nonetheless crucial to understanding the situation. Always listen to that reflexive first reaction, because it tells you exactly what they really think, and by extension why situations like this keep happening. As a [Tory source explained](#) in the immediate aftermath of the Pincher revelations last night: "The PM thinks he's done the decent thing by resigning. There is no need for an investigation and no need to suspend the whip."

Oh, I see – *Boris Johnson* thought he had done the decent thing. Well that really is the fricking hallmark. Where do other people convicted of breaking their own laws stand on this moral issue? What about other people who try to graft [£150,000 toddler treehouses](#) off their donors? Other people who are reported to have been caught in a "compromising situation" in their office with a junior colleague? Tell me what THEY think, because I simply must know! I don't think I'm going to be able to fully plot this on the decency graph until I've heard from every other chiselling sexual incontinent who recognises the word victim only as a term that applies to him.

While you're waiting on that, listen to Welsh secretary Simon Hart, the government's new shiteater-in-chief, who gets sent out seemingly once a week to do the job of cleaning up after the latest scandal. Simon was on the morning broadcast round today, where [he explained](#) of the Pincher horror show: "This is not the first time, and I fear it won't be the last. This happens in workplaces from time to time ..."

To which the only sane reply is: WHAAAAAAAAT?!?! Can you imagine if – in the past three months alone – five senior BBC figures had been accused of serious sexual misconduct? Can you imagine what people like Simon would be saying about the BBC? Or think of your own workplace. Can you imagine if [five senior figures](#) there had been involved in major sex scandals since April? We're only just into July!

Hart's line-to-take recalls that of the recent [Tory candidate for Wakefield](#) (a seat vacated when the last MP was convicted of sexually assaulting a child). This guy kept going on the news with the most eye-watering version of the "one bad apple" take you're likely to hear, explaining that the public should still trust Tory MPs because Harold Shipman didn't make them stop trusting GPs.

Sorry to wheel out this mindboggling statistic yet again, but [56 current MPs](#) are reportedly facing allegations of sexual misconduct. Assuming the vast majority of those will be men, that's about one in eight male MPs. Labour MPs and others will be among those, of that you can be sure – though for a sheer run of repulsive form, no one can currently touch the Conservatives. Yet on it all goes. Westminster is a rotten and backward workplace, and nothing seriously meaningful gets done about it because the people with power actively do not want to do anything about it, and in several cases are involved in abuses themselves. What is it they're so fond of saying? Ah, yes: "We work for you." In which case, do please consider stopping before more people get hurt.

- Marina Hyde is a Guardian columnist
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Digested weekNorfolk

## **Digested week: north Norfolk's middle-age spread, and panic at the school disco**

Lucy Mangan



I feel I belong in north Norfolk, where youth has no place. I wish I could say the same for school parties



Cromer beach on the north Norfolk coast: ‘Slow, confident and peaceful.’  
Photograph: Michael Brooks/Alamy

Fri 1 Jul 2022 13.32 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 00.11 EDT

## Monday

It has been determined that north Norfolk is the place with the oldest average age in the UK, at 48 years and 11 months. A third of its population [are over 65](#).

In fact, as a longtime visitor and hopefully soon to be full-time resident of this fine county, I can tell you it’s even better than that. Everyone here, regardless of when they were born, has a mental age of 48 years and 11 months at least.

Youth has no place here. It took me a while to figure out quite why I fell so quickly and so fully in love with north [Norfolk](#) when I first pitched up here 20 years ago – but it’s this. It is built for the middle-aged and, as I was born 35, I have been ready for this almost my whole life. It’s a place of small shops selling good food, local arts and crafts or sensible clothing for the long, flat walks that are, gloriously, the main form of activity on offer. It is slow, confident and peaceful, and anyone who wants to create a fuss or

indulge in nonsense is looked at askance and wordlessly invited to fuck off to Ipswich.

It is home.



“Let’s go to the first day of Wimbledon! It’ll be fun!” You berk, Marjorie.’  
Photograph: Steven Paston/PA

## Tuesday

Dad has just had one side of his body replaced (he’s had no hip joint for two years, so when it finally came time to get it done, a lot of associated stuff had to be rigged around it – stop me if I’m getting too technical for you) and it’s been very difficult. He has not been able to cook for a week.

“What about my birthday?” I said, as Mum blew her whistle and started screaming him through his physiotherapy paces when I went to visit today.  
“Who’s going to make my roast chicken, per tradition?”

“I’m sorry, pet,” said Dad as Mum bent his leg up past his ear and a light sweat of pain broke across his pale and furrowed brow. “I think you might have to do it. Or – your mother?”

I looked at her. “He’s on a lot of drugs,” she said. “He doesn’t know what he’s saying. Now, squeeze those buttocks!”

She was talking to him, but it’s good advice for us all.

“No, but seriously, Dad,” I said. “You’ve got two weeks. Can you be better by then?”

“I’ll get there,” he said, gritting his teeth against the agony as Mum snapped out her folding rule to ensure leg raises were done to the prescribed height. “I may need someone to lift the bird in and out of the oven, but I can do most of the rest sitting down.”

“And I want bread sauce, remember,” I said as I got up to take my leave of Nurse Ratched and her trembling charge.

“I won’t let you down,” he said, shortly before fainting with pain.

I’ll give it a week before I remind him again. You do have to make allowances for parents after a certain age.

## Wednesday

Today a thing occurred that I felt guilty and upset about. There was technically no reason to – it wasn’t my fault, I’d minimised the consequences for everyone, nothing and no one was harmed. But I did, because I often do, and anyone who is wired the same way as me will know whereof I speak. Those who aren’t will be baffled, but honestly: just go about your business, enjoy life, and may God and nature continue to bless you.

Back to me. I was feeling terrible, for no real reason. Normally this scuppers the day, as I must beat myself up for The Thing *and* for reacting so irrationally to The Thing, and then for other Things in the past as they break open their cages and join the fray.

Today, however, do you know what I did? I bought myself something nice instead. As if I deserved it. I know, right?! I just thought I’d do the opposite

of everything my brain, instincts and training were telling me and see what happened.

And what happened was that I felt better. It broke the cycle, stopped me being an utter fool, and got me back on track for the day. I offer this possible aid to all those who understood my first paragraph. Go against everything you stand for. At the very least, you'll get a nice recycled leather pencil case out of it.

## **Thursday**

A number of male MPs gamely donned “menopause vests” – heated jackets that simulate the hot flushes that are a common symptom endured by those entering the post-period years – as part of an event to try to raise awareness of the shortage of HRT products in the UK and empathy for the women it affects.

They could not wait to take the vests – “volcanic”, said one – off. My hunt for an explanation of how these weak, mewling creatures ever came to rule the world continues.

## **Friday**

My son went to his first party – an end-of-school-year bash – this evening.

As I deposited him at the venue, the door opened and a wave of noise, music and the fug of 11-year-olds’ sweat and spilled soft drinks hit me and I was instantly transported back to all the worst nights of my life.

My poor boy, doomed by his genetic inheritance on both sides, for I did not marry a man any better at youth or life than me, looked in and then at his rapidly retreating mother. “Do I have to?” he said.

“Can you return the in-app purchase with which we bribed you to come?” I asked. “Or is that not how they work?”

“No,” he sighed. He straightened his shoulders and turned back to face his Somme.

“I’ll be in the cafe just round the corner,” I said. “Suffering the torments of the damned with you, but at a safe distance.”

He lasted 20 minutes, which is longer than his father and I managed at all the discos of our childhoods put together. We are very proud.



‘So I say, bugger it, now, Nic – break the whole thing up! Strip it, sell it for parts. Give that idiot son of mine something to do when I’m gorn.’  
Photograph: Jane Barlow/PA

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**Roe v Wade**

# I reject the US abortion ruling. I vow to defend the sovereignty of women's bodies

V (formerly Eve Ensler)



After the supreme court declared war on us a week ago, at first I wanted to weep and howl. But then I wrote – and then I revolted



Pro-choice demonstrators march on Capitol Hill on Wednesday. Photograph: Allison Bailey/NurPhoto/Rex/Shutterstock

Sat 2 Jul 2022 04.00 EDT

How did you feel when it happened? When they came to take away the rights to our bodily autonomy? When they said 12-year-old girls would be forced to carry to full-term, and then go through excruciating labour to deliver, babies with the faces of their rapists. When they legalised paying bounty hunters to pursue us for living in our own flesh and blood and wombs. When they believed that those of us who had given our lives to be free, to walk our own paths and dream our most vital dreams, would easily and quietly surrender to their twisted cage, unable to see they were connected to other cages inside cages, each one taking more of our air and our light. I heard a shrieking, high-pitched laugh-scream coming out of my frothing, ancient mouth, my white hair blazing with fury. I wanted to weep and howl, and I did, for the depth of their hatred for me, for women, for Black women and brown women and Indigenous women and Asian women and young victims of incest and poor women and trans men and non-binary birthers of babies and all the rest of us trying to get free.

So I wrote. I wrote and I wrote. I wrote piece after piece trying to say something smart. Something that hadn't been said. Something so revelatory

and earth shattering it would unlock the story, solve the crime, catalyse the opening. Finding the words that would undo this nightmare. That would save the young women and people who would die trying not to give birth and the ones who would be forever emotionally, economically, spiritually tortured and destroyed by having babies they never wanted, which would rob them of their dreams and destinies.

Words and poems that would, through the genius arrangement of syllables and rhythms and facts, historical references and metaphor, finally break the spell, the centuries-old curse of patriarchy: word dares, simple words, clear fucking words like no no no no no. We are never ever going back because we all know that once we agree to that we will open the door and they will come for everything and everyone.

In one of the pieces, I wrote a declaration of refusal. I refuse, I wrote. My conscience will not permit me to agree to the scornful decisions of a fringe minority on the supreme court – some of whom have been accused of sexual assault – appointed by a president who is a self-confessed perpetrator, those masquerading as judges to determine what goes on in this body or the precious, glorious, generous, life-giving caring bodies of my sisters, whom I love with every fibre of my being.

But then I realised I wasn't sure how exactly we would refuse, what form that would take in a country with 400m guns.

So here's what I know. I will not ever accept this decision to go back against myself, my body and all the years of our bloodily fought-for freedoms. I know there are multitudes who feel the same. I don't have the answers but I have questions. I believe in questions.

Will we be passive, obedient followers of unjust laws. Will we be more concerned with formality than justice, acquiesce to corrupt and delegitimised institutions – rather than devotion to conscience and each other?

Will the magnitude of our joining forces catalyse our imaginations, our ferocity and solidarity, and emerge with a collective vision – a series of

surprising, successful actions?

Will we finally agree to understand that the struggle for abortion rights is the struggle against white supremacy, is the struggle to end gender oppression and patriarchy, so that we stand by each other when they come to each of our doors?

Will we finally be able to release our self-delusions, which have obscured the supreme court's historically racist and inherently patriarchal practices, and stop turning our lives and will over to these institutions run mainly by white men who work against the majority, the vulnerable and oppressed?

Will we trust our bodies and defend their sovereignty against church and state?

Will this be the moment when we finally come to celebrate that not one of us has the answer or will ever write the definitive piece, but when we choose to line up side by side in the same direction with the uniqueness each of us has to offer, the way forward will be revealed?

Is this the moment we've been waiting for?

Is it called Revolution?

Could it happen with love?

I offer you my hand.

- V (formerly Eve Ensler) is a playwright and activist and the founder of V-Day, a global movement to end violence against women and girls
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- [Iran earthquakes At last five killed and village flattened, state media says](#)
- ['Flawed but vibrant democracy' Papua New Guinea headed to polls amid election violence fears](#)
- [Explainer Papua New Guinea election: what's at stake?](#)
- [Venezuela Indigenous leader who defended the Amazon shot dead](#)

## [Iran](#)

# Iran earthquakes: at least five killed and village flattened, state media says

Rescue work carried out after 12 also injured in magnitude-6.1 quake followed by two others and more than dozen aftershocks

Earthquakes flatten village in southern Iran – video

*Reuters in Dubai*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 23.23 EDT Last modified on Sat 2 Jul 2022 07.19 EDT

At least five people were killed by a magnitude-6.1 earthquake in southern [Iran](#) early on Saturday, state media reported, with the area also hit by two later strong quakes of up to 6.3 magnitude.

“Five people have died in the earthquake ... and so far 12 are hospitalised,” Mehrdad Hassanzadeh, the head of emergency management in Hormozgan province on Iran’s Gulf coast, told state TV.

“Rescue work has been carried out and we are now providing tents as emergency housing.”

The state news agency Irna said a magnitude-6.3 earthquake and a magnitude-6.1 quake followed the 6.1 quake that flattened the village of Sayeh Khosh near Iran’s Gulf coast. There were more than a dozen aftershocks.

“All of the victims died in the first earthquake and no one was harmed in the next two severe quakes as people were already outside their homes,” said Foad Moradzadeh, the governor of Bandar Lengeh country, quoted by Irna.

Major geological fault lines crisscross Iran, which has suffered several devastating earthquakes in recent years. In 2003, a magnitude 6.6 quake in

# Kerman province killed 31,000 people and flattened the ancient city of Bam.

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## The Pacific projectPapua New Guinea

# Papua New Guinea to head to polls amid election violence fears

Election-related deaths plague lead-up to voting day in election closely watched by China and Australia

- [What's at stake in Papua New Guinea's polls?](#)



The two leading candidates to be Papua New Guinea's next prime minister are former PM Peter O'Neill and incumbent James Marape. Photograph: Christopher Hawkins/AFP/Getty Images

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# Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas

## About this content

*Lyanne Togiba* in Port Moresby

Fri 1 Jul 2022 15.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 15.01 EDT

Papua New Guinea is heading to the polls on Monday and there are fears the vote could be more violent than the 2017 elections, in which more than 200 people died.

Violence has plagued the lead-up to the vote. Local media reports that through May and the campaign period, there have been 28 election-related deaths, several injuries, an assassination attempt on a possible candidate, the shooting of an election official and burning of five vehicles.

The election is being closely watched by regional players and more widely, including by Australia and China, [after China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, visited early](#) in June to try to salvage an economic and security deal.

The two leading candidates for prime minister are incumbent James Marape and former leader Peter O'Neill. Marape, who leads the ruling Pangu pati, introduced a manifesto centred on “Taking back PNG and making it the richest black Christian nation” on Earth when he took office in 2019.

He has focused on more benefits for local residents in natural resource extraction, agriculture and small businesses. His predecessor, O'Neill, the leader of the Peoples National Congress party, has policies centring on health, education and providing 500,000 jobs if he is returned.

Catholic Professionals Society president Paul Harricknen said: “Violence is inevitable when the stakes are high. There is so much stress and tension.”

The 2012 and 2017 elections were plagued with election-related violence and the 2022 elections could be much worse, he said. Problems with updating election rolls dating back to 2012 were expected to add to tensions.

“This roll was not updated and the 2017 elections used it and the electoral commission did nothing since. A high number of young voters stand to miss out on voting in this elections,” Harricknen said.

Economics lecturer Maholopa Laveil said election-related violence and deaths were recorded after the 2007, 2012 and 2017 elections. In 2017 204 deaths were recorded – the highest number out of all the elections.

“Given poor election administration to this point, we can expect the same levels of violence as seen in 2017,” Laveil said.

Institute of National Affairs director Paul Barker said many constituencies, including in the Highlands provinces, often remained peaceful during voting, with “some atmosphere of festivity or carnival”.

But he said “it does sometimes erupt into threats, intimidation and sometimes violence, particularly in some electorates, occasionally during the campaigning period, but more often as ballot boxes are escorted to the tally room, or during the counting and the results come in.”

The 2017 election was also the worst to date in terms of both electoral preparedness, as well as systematic and local manipulation of voting.

This election, the commission also seems to be ill-prepared, he said.

“Returning officers have also been appointed late, although one of their main functions is the update of the electoral roll, and seven new constituencies have been rather randomly added, which has added to the challenges. The prevalence of a large number of weapons out there is also severely problematic, and risks minor skirmishes getting out of hand.

“Nevertheless, there remains a strong eagerness to campaign and vote, so although a flawed democracy – PNG remains a vibrant democracy, which many other countries are not,” Barker said.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Dr Philip Mitna said his security forces “are prepared for the inevitable. We are not going into a war zone – we’d like for our people to own the process. It’s their democratic right to vote freely and partake in this process.”

Election campaigning in PNG has always been a very expensive exercise, with estimates of millions of the local currency, kinas, spent on campaign financing.

“When you consider the amount of money and resources spent and the expectations that go with it if the candidates don’t win, the sponsors and supporters behind the candidates – there is so much to lose,” Harricknen said.

“Nowadays, some candidates have driven the cost up for everyone, not only for blanket advertising, but also hosting feasts and in many cases bribing the electorate with cash and other rewards, which is illegal.”

Many voters have also lost touch with the function of an MP as a representative in parliament, examining proposed legislation and overseeing government performance, and instead expected them to deliver goods, jobs, funeral expenses and college fees.

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## Papua New Guinea

# Papua New Guinea election: what's at stake?

The results will impact not only domestic policy but also the wider Pacific and geopolitical landscape

- [Papua New Guinea to head to the polls amid election violence](#)



The incumbent prime minister of Papua New Guinea, James Marape, with the visiting Chinese foreign minister, Wang Yi, in Port Moresby last month. China and Australia are both closely watching the election outcome.  
Photograph: AP

*[Leanne Jorari](#)*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 16.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 1 Jul 2022 16.01 EDT

In the coming days, Papua New Guineans will head to the polls to vote in the first national election in five years.

A struggling economy, the impact of the pandemic and growing frustrations about failing public services are among the leading issues. The results of the election will be important not only to the country's almost 9 million people, but also for the increasingly complex geopolitical landscape in the wider Pacific region.

## The election process

Of the 2,351 candidates running in the national election, 118 members will be elected. Members of parliament will serve a five-year term, representing each of PNG's electorates.

PNG has a multi-party system with numerous political parties, in which no one party often has a chance of gaining power alone. Parties must work with each other to form coalition governments.

Similar to other Commonwealth countries, the party or coalition with the most seats will form a government. Its leader subsequently becomes prime minister. No single party has yet won enough seats to form a government in its own right.

The two most prominent parties are the Pangu party, led by the incumbent prime minister, James Marape, and the People's National Congress party (PNC), led by the former prime minister Peter O'Neill.

In an attempt to stop election fraud, the PNG electoral commission has scheduled polling for the whole country on a single date to limit the movement of people between provinces.

Eligible voters have to be at least 18 years old. Typical turnout in the past has been chaotic – often people don't find their names on the electoral roll and there have been reports of underage voting and electoral fraud, when people vote using other people's names or more than once.

Voting is due to start on Monday, with counting expected to begin immediately after polling, and results announced in mid-July.

## Who are the frontrunners?

The two leading candidates for prime minister are Marape and O'Neill.



Former prime minister Peter O'Neill and incumbent prime minister James Marape in 2017. Photograph: Christopher Hawkins/AFP/Getty Images

Marape was a close ally and member of the PNC when it was led by O'Neill, but he abruptly resigned in 2019 as finance minister and, after a month-long tussle for power, O'Neill resigned as prime minister. Marape took power in May 2019 in a parliamentary vote. He was later appointed leader of Pangu.

He promised to “take back PNG” and make it the “richest Black Christian country” in the world. While his government succeeded in introducing reforms in the country’s lucrative mining and resource industries, the state of the economy has left Papua New Guineans frustrated at how it is being managed. The health system also continues to struggle with the impact of Covid-19, and there is rising unemployment.

O'Neill and the PNC have garnered immense support on the campaign trail. In some provinces, supporters have gone as far as burning and defacing

Pangu posters that feature Marape. Experts say O'Neill's popularity is due to a growing disenchantment with Marape's leadership, due to unfulfilled promises and grandstanding.

## **What regional issues are at stake?**

China's [growing influence](#) has been at the forefront of geopolitical discussions in PNG. Neighbour Solomon Islands has signed a security deal with Beijing.

In the past, Marape and O'Neill have on many occasions said that under their leadership PNG's doors remain open to partnership opportunities. Both have often described PNG as a "friend to all and enemy to none".

The country's relationships with Australia, New Zealand and the US remain amicable, and include joint security training and support.

Both O'Neill's and Marape's governments have welcomed Chinese investment, though no security deals were signed during [Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi's trip](#) to the country.

## **The 'women's election'?**

Women could be voted into parliament after a complete absence for the past five years, though seven women have served as MPs since independence in 1975. This time, 142 female candidates are on the ballot.

PNG women [battle for gender equality and against gender-based violence](#), and face high rates of maternal and child mortality.

In the past five years terrible crimes have been committed against women, sparking nationwide outcry and women's rights marches.

"Clearly, the absence of any women from parliament since 2017, and their near absence at the provincial level, deprives women of both a voice in the legislature but also in government at the national and critical subnational

levels,” said the executive director of the Institute of National Affairs, Paul Barker.

“It should be added that there are also very few women at the top levels of the public service as well, in contrast to back in the 1980s when women headed several of the major institutions, as well as being public servants and ombudsman commissioners.”

## How safe are elections in PNG?

At least 30 people have been killed in election-related violence since May, and police are cracking down on illegal firearms at political rallies and gatherings.

In May local media reported two foiled assassination attempts against senior electoral officials in the Highlands; two people were shot dead in Kainantu in the Eastern Highlands and many more were injured in gun battles. Early this month the Mount Hagen international airport was forcibly shut down by political supporters.

This violence has been the norm during election periods. Before the 2017 election, more than 200 people died during campaigning, polling, counting and even after a candidate was declared the winner, prompting many to conclude that it was the worst election in PNG history.

Away from the violence, thousands of eligible voters could not vote due to a faulty and outdated electoral roll.

Official observers from the Commonwealth observer group and the Australian National University recommended that funds be given to the electoral commission to update the roll. To date, this and other recommended reforms have not been implemented. The government says Covid-19 and a lack of funding have prevented updates to the roll.

Barker said intimidation and violence could deter many voters and “failure to update the roll since 2017, while the 2017 roll was also subject to many

flaws, including apparent systematic manipulation, reduces the capacity of many – especially younger people – to vote”.

“Unlike in many democracies where voter apathy reduces participation and weakens the outcome, PNG is a very proactive democracy with an almost carnival atmosphere, but also some very undemocratic processes, which severely undermine voters’ capacity to engage and have their preferences reflected in the outcomes.”

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## Venezuela

# Indigenous leader who defended the Amazon shot dead in Venezuela

Virgilio Trujillo Arana, a 38-year-old indigenous Uwottuja man, was shot in the head three times in the city of Puerto Ayacucho



Residential houses in a village outside of Puerto Ayacucho, Amazonas, Venezuela. Photograph: Sarah Kinosian/Reuters

*Staff and agencies in Puerto Ordaz*

Fri 1 Jul 2022 16.07 EDT

A Venezuelan indigenous leader who was an opponent of armed groups and illegal mining has been shot dead in the Amazonas state capital, a non-governmental organization and three people with knowledge of the case said.

Virgilio Trujillo Arana, a 38-year-old indigenous Uwottuja man, was a defender of the Venezuelan Amazon and had set up community groups to act as guardians of the Autana municipality of Amazonas.

Arana was shot in the head three times by a gunman who fled to a waiting vehicle in Thursday's attack in the city of Puerto Ayacucho. He had reportedly received threats relating to his work.

"In life, Trujillo Arana strongly opposed the presence of foreign groups and illegal mining exploitation in the indigenous territories of the Uwottuja people, in the Alto Guayapo area," indigenous rights NGO AC Kape Kape wrote on Twitter.

The Uwottuja community is made up of about 15,000 people.

Non-governmental organizations and a United Nations report have denounced the presence of violent criminal groups that control gold mines in the jungle.

The ministry of communication and information and the prosecutor's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Communities from the town of Uwottuja announced last February their decision to defend their territory against a "silent invasion" by criminal groups, rejecting illegal mining exploitation as well as the use of their land for illicit activities.

Mining has been prohibited since 1989 in [Venezuela](#)'s southern Amazonas state, which is not part of the so-called Arco Minero, or Mining Arc, [a gold exploitation zone 111,000 sq km created by decree in 2016 by the government of President Nicolas Maduro.](#)

The office of United Nations high commissioner for human rights Michelle Bachelet has asked the government to regularize mining activities and guarantee that they are carried out under international and environmental standards.

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The Pride I'll never forget My parents tried their best, and I threw it back in their faces

Amazon wild west Where drugs, fish and logging are big money but life is cheap

#### 2022.07.01 - Opinion

Striking workers are providing the opposition that Britain desperately needs

The Africa Centre is back. Now will Britain finally embrace all of its cultural heritage?

Why on earth shouldn't Angela Rayner go to the opera?

Go to Derby: see how a museum can help shape a better future

#### 2022.07.01 - Around the world

North Korea Virus outbreak blamed on Covid-laden balloons sent from South

Palestine Authorities routinely torture detainees, says rights group

Tesla Carmaker hit by new lawsuit alleging racial abuse

Afghanistan Embassy staff remain in hiding despite being eligible for UK relocation

Chocolate Salmonella halts production at world's biggest chocolate factory

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'Abominable' Leaders condemn attack on shopping centre

Live Nicola Sturgeon accused of sowing 'division and strife' over plan for second Scottish independence referendum

#### 2022.06.28 - Spotlight

The Barkley Marathons The hellish 100-mile race with 15 finishers in 36 years

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Let's call the overturning of Roe v Wade what it is: state-sanctioned forced birth

If you think Denmark is all Borgen and social equality, take a look at its awful 'ghetto' law

Republicans have hijacked the US supreme court. It's time to expand it

If it cared, TikTok could stop itself being used to stir up tribal hatred in Kenya

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Roe v Wade Protests continue across US to voice anger over supreme court ruling

US Companies pay travel costs for employees seeking abortions

'They set a torch to it' Warren says court has lost legitimacy

Analysis Legal experts see limited opportunities to challenge ruling

## Headlines thursday 30 june 2022

Live Russia-Ukraine war: Russia withdraws from Snake Island and says Ukraine should demine waters

Police Record number of UK forces are failing and need intensive help

Live Liz Truss rejects claims from Tories that privileges committee inquiry into Johnson won't be fair

Armed forces Liz Truss defends plans to cut British army by nearly 10,000 troops

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'A massive betrayal' How London's Olympic legacy was sold out

The Pride I'll never forget 'There were only thousands of us there. But we felt like millions'

The 'unofficials' The Hong Kongers who advised Britain on the 1997 handover – and were ignored

Rae Morris 'I want to be a national treasure, but the things I like are quite weird'

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Why are we feeding crops to our cars when people are starving?

I didn't think going car-free would be possible for me: but it has changed my life

Britain's air passengers face a turbulent summer – here's how to tackle the chaos

Stagflationary global debt crisis looms – and things will get much worse

## 2022.06.30 - Around the world

Paris attacks Salah Abdeslam found guilty and sentenced to whole-life term

Nato Leaders voice concern about threat China poses to world order for first time

Canada Day Ottawa braced for protest by 'freedom convoy' supporters

Hong Kong Security tightened as Xi visits for 25th anniversary of handover

Philippines Ferdinand Marcos Jnr praises dictator father during swearing in as president

## Headlines saturday 2 july 2022

'Morally unacceptable' Perfect storm of crises is widening global inequality, says UN chief

Conservatives Chris Pincher loses Tory whip over misconduct allegations

Scandal after scandal Timeline of Tory sleaze under Johnson

Live Russia-Ukraine war: Zelenskiy accuses Russia of 'deliberate terror'; explosions rock city of Mykolaiv

Ukraine Two more Britons captured in Ukraine could face death penalty

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'It felt like history itself' 48 protest photographs that changed the world

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Father John Misty 'Which living person do I most despise? Oh, he knows'

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