



The EU is not the same one the UK left

MICHEL BARNIER INTERVIEW, PAGE 19

Weight loss drugs are reshaping business

RANA FOROOHAR, PAGE 23

Poll positions Stark choices for Argentina

Workers attach a voter list to the wall of a polling station in Buenos Aires yesterday as Argentines cast their ballots in a tense and polarising presidential election.

They faced a choice between Sergio Massa, the economy minister who is handling the country's worst crisis in two decades, and Javier Milei, a hard-right libertarian outsider who has claimed he may be the victim of voter fraud.

The two candidates offered starkly different plans to solve the country's problems. Massa is a skilled political operator from the moderate wing of the centre-left populist Peronist movement, which has ruled Argentina for much of the past 40 years.

Milei, by contrast, is a former television commentator known for his furious rants against the country's political elite.



Juan Ignacio Roncoroni/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock

Pressure mounts on OpenAI board to reinstate Altman as chief executive

Valley reels from Friday firing • Backers weigh expelling directors • Staff rally to support pioneer

GEORGE HAMMOND — SAN FRANCISCO
MADHUMITA MURGIA — MUMBAI

Pressure was last night mounting on the board of OpenAI to reinstate Sam Altman as chief executive after it sacked him in a surprise ousting on Friday.

Top executives, employees and investors in the company behind ChatGPT rallied to support Altman, whose firing shocked Silicon Valley. The 38-year-old has become a leading voice on generative AI, a technology which has had a breakthrough year in part thanks to OpenAI's launch of ChatGPT in November 2022.

Venture backers and executives at Microsoft — which has committed more than \$10bn to OpenAI — were this week-end exploring options including clearing out the board and reinstating Alt-

man, according to three people briefed on the discussions.

Altman has become a de facto ambassador for AI start-ups, meeting presidents, prime ministers and regulators on a world tour earlier this year and speaking at the Apec Asia-Pacific regional summit in San Francisco just a day before he was sacked.

The company's biggest venture capitalist backers — including Thrive Capital, its second-largest shareholder, Tiger

Altman has become a de facto ambassador for AI, meeting presidents, prime ministers and regulators

Global, Khosla Ventures and Sequoia Capital — have signalled support for Altman in any future endeavours. That includes a possible return as OpenAI's chief, according to several people with direct knowledge of the matter.

While they have no seats on the non-profit board that ultimately controls OpenAI, investors could refuse further backing and employees could quit in an attempt to force the board's hand. "Since the minute [Altman was sacked] this has been in the works," said one of the people involved in the effort to reinstate him.

Investors hoped that Altman would return to the company "which has been his life's work" and that interim CEO Mira Murati, who was promoted from chief technology officer on

Friday, would stay on, the person added.

Vinod Khosla, an early venture backer of OpenAI, said that he wanted to see Altman return to OpenAI "but will back him in whatever he does next".

Microsoft, Thrive Capital, Tiger Global and Sequoia declined to comment. OpenAI could not be reached for comment.

In a memo circulated to staff on Saturday, chief strategy officer Jason Kwon said he was "optimistic" that Altman and co-founder Greg Brockman — who quit on Friday — would return, according to a person with direct knowledge of its contents. The memo's existence was first reported by The Information.

The board said on Friday that it had removed Altman because he had not been "consistently candid" in his con-

versations with them. The abrupt decision has drawn attention to OpenAI's unusual corporate structure: its directors oversee a non-profit entity that owns a for-profit company.

According to investors, tensions over the speed at which Altman wanted to deploy powerful AI tools had stoked board concerns that safety could be compromised. "They had an argument about moving too fast. That's it," said one of the investors.

One person with knowledge of the situation said there were concerns at board level about Altman's efforts to raise as much as \$100bn from investors in the Middle East and SoftBank founder Masayoshi Son to establish a new microchip development company. *Additional reporting by Richard Waters*

Briefing

US confident Arab states will not 'weaponise' oil

White House energy adviser Amos Hochstein has told the FT he is confident that oil producers will not "weaponise" energy, despite rising anger across the Middle East over Israel's siege of Gaza. — PAGE 4; CHRISTIAN PLIGHT, PAGE 7; JOANNE LIU, PAGE 22

Setback over pension cash

A government push to unlock £50bn in capital from the biggest retirement funds has run into roadblocks as funds balk at shifting savers' investments into costlier and riskier assets. — PAGE 2

KPMG cuts UK partners

The Big Four firm has cut its UK partnership to less than half the size of rival PwC's, after shrinking its top rank for a fourth year in succession against a backdrop of regulatory fines. — PAGE 11

EU-Mercosur trade push

Brussels and the bloc of South American nations are pushing to finalise a "cows for cars" trade deal that has been in negotiation for 20 years, political interests on both sides converge. — PAGE 6

Japan buyout bonanza

Management buyouts have hit their fastest pace in more than a decade as investor activism, rising governance pressure and cheap financing trigger an exodus from public markets. — PAGE 8

First Citigroup jobs cut

The bank is to announce today the first big round of job cuts in a sweeping shake-up unveiled by chief Jane Fraser in September. It will in time result in thousands of roles being eliminated. — PAGE 10

Corden in studio plan

A global entertainment company co-owned by actor James Corden has submitted plans to build a £450m studio in Sunderland, in a boost for the creative industries in the north of England. — PAGE 11

Lex and Business Life

The Lex column, Pilita Clark's Business Life column and the FT crossword can be found today on Page 12.



Russians accused over Bulgarian arms sabotage

Emilian Gebrev, the head of Bulgarian arms manufacturer Emco, says Russian saboteurs have targeted his factories in a bid to disrupt weapons supplies to Ukraine. As much as 40 per cent of the bullets and shells used by Ukraine are produced in Bulgaria. The Balkan nation has remained a prime area of operations for Russian agents, say Gebrev and other industry insiders, with infiltration acute in the country's prosecutorial and security services. **Russia accused** ▶ PAGE 4

Hunt fuels Tory hopes for basic-rate income tax cut in Autumn Statement

GEORGE PARKER — POLITICAL EDITOR

Jeremy Hunt promised yesterday to put Britain "on a path to a lower tax economy" in this week's Autumn Statement, fuelling Conservative MPs' expectations he will announce cuts to personal and business taxes.

The chancellor has pushed back plans to cut inheritance tax until next year, raising Tories' hopes that he could instead honour Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's promise to reduce the 20p basic rate of income tax.

Sunak said last year that he wanted to lower the rate to 16 per cent by the end of the next parliament. A 1p cut from next April would be seen by MPs as a downpayment on that pledge.

Tory strategists had initially planned to hold back headline-grabbing income tax cuts until the spring Budget — closer

to the likely date of the next election — but the party's dire opinion poll ratings have put pressure on Hunt to act now.

One senior Tory MP said this was the "last opportunity" for Sunak and Hunt to make bold moves and that an income-tax cut would be welcomed: "If you leave it to the run-up to the election, nobody takes it seriously."

A senior Tory figure said: "They've been looking at a 1p income tax cut. Number 10 needs a silver bullet. They need to do something to calm down the right of the party."

Higher-than-expected tax revenues and lower debt servicing costs have given Hunt more fiscal headroom than expected, leaving him with scope for giveaways on Wednesday. At the spring Budget he had a £6.5bn cushion against his target of cutting debt as a share of GDP in the fifth year of the forecast.

JPMorgan estimates that in this week's forecasts the headroom before any new policy measures could rise to about £26.5bn.

The chancellor's allies say the biggest tax cuts will target business. Hunt said he would not announce any tax cuts that hampered the Bank of England's efforts to cut inflation to its 2 per cent target, but he argued that Britain had "turned a very big corner" in halving inflation this year to 4.6 per cent.

The chancellor said this weekend he would take "difficult decisions" on welfare spending to create space for cutting taxes. Ministers have already said they want to reduce benefit spending by requiring people on incapacity support to look for work they can do from home. *Additional reporting by Sam Fleming*

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World Markets

STOCK MARKETS				CURRENCIES				GOVERNMENT BONDS					
	Nov 17	Nov 10	%Chg	Nov 17	Nov 10	Nov 17	Nov 10	Yield (%)	Nov 17	Nov 10	Chg		
S&P 500	4508.54	4508.24	0.01	\$/€	1.089	1.067	€/\$	0.919	0.937	US 2 yr	4.91	4.85	0.06
Nasdaq Composite	14104.04	14113.67	-0.07	\$/£	1.243	1.220	£/\$	0.804	0.820	US 10 yr	4.46	4.47	-0.01
Dow Jones Ind	34926.98	34945.47	-0.05	€/€	0.876	0.875	€/£	1.142	1.143	US 30 yr	4.61	4.65	-0.04
FTSEurofirst 300	1802.17	1785.06	0.96	W/\$	149.575	151.475	W/€	162.851	161.632	UK 2 yr	4.54	4.53	0.02
Euro Stoxx 50	4339.99	4302.45	0.87	W/£	185.981	184.746	£ index	80.878	80.709	UK 10 yr	4.27	4.32	-0.05
FTSE 100	7504.25	7410.97	1.26	SFr/€	0.965	0.964	SFr/£	1.102	1.101	UK 30 yr	4.54	4.59	-0.05
FTSE All-Share	4088.05	4037.99	1.24	CRYPTO				JPN 2 yr	0.03	0.06	-0.03		
CAC 40	7233.91	7188.40	0.91		Nov 17	Prev	%Chg	JPN 10 yr	0.74	0.79	-0.04		
Xetra Dax	15919.16	15786.61	0.84	Bitcoin (\$)	36128.80	36161.15	-0.09	JPN 30 yr	1.67	1.71	-0.05		
Nikkei	33585.20	33424.41	0.48	Ethereum	1923.99	1961.76	-1.93	GER 2 yr	2.95	2.96	-0.01		
Hang Seng	17454.19	17832.82	-2.12	COMMODITIES				GER 10 yr	2.59	2.59	-0.01		
MSCI World \$	2973.00	2975.19	-0.07		Nov 17	Nov 10	%Week	GER 30 yr	2.80	2.83	-0.03		
MSCI EM \$	982.25	983.51	-0.13	Oil WTI \$	75.60	77.26	-2.15						
MSCI ACWI \$	683.62	684.16	-0.08	Oil Brent \$	80.13	81.55	-1.74						
FT Wilshire 2500	5806.85	5808.99	-0.04	Gold \$	1980.10	1957.45	1.16						
FT Wilshire 5000	45199.30	45224.90	-0.06										

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NATIONAL

Stronger fiscal position gives Hunt room for giveaways

Prospect grows of Autumn Statement tax cuts as chancellor faces pressure from MPs

GEORGE PARKER, SAM FLEMING AND GILL PLIMMER

In September, Chancellor Jeremy Hunt said that making tax cuts would be “virtually impossible” in his Autumn Statement. With just three days to go, Tory MPs believe they are a racing certainty.

Two big things have happened since Hunt issued that warning. The first is that a “stealth” tax raid on middle Britain has helped to improve the UK’s fiscal position, possibly by about £20bn, offering the chancellor more room for giveaways.

The second is that Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and the Conservative party are foundering in opinion polls, typically trailing Labour by 20 points or more, while downbeat Tory MPs are demanding a fiscal pick-me-up now.

Decisions that were being pencilled in for the Spring Budget, including a cut to income tax, could be hurried forward by Hunt to appease increasingly restive Tory MPs who fear defeat in the general election expected next year, according to officials.

“It feels like we’re in too high a gear, going up a hill,” said one influential Tory MP. “We are losing momentum and we have been since the spring.” Sunak’s Tory conference speech, the King’s Speech and cabinet reshuffle failed to achieve the political “gear shift” craved by many of his colleagues.

Hunt had been urged by some Tory MPs to cut inheritance tax this week, a

levy which is broadly unpopular, according to polls, even if it is only paid by fewer than 4 per cent of all estates.

Tory election chief Isaac Levido believes that cutting inheritance tax is a policy that will mobilise Tory voters in the shires, traditional Conservative-leaning counties in England, to turn out to vote next year, according to party strategists.

But government officials said cuts to inheritance tax would be deferred until next year. Some in the Treasury admitted to being spooked by the idea of a move that would directly benefit wealthy politicians including Sunak and Hunt during a cost of living crisis.

Instead, Hunt and Sunak are looking at other tax cuts, notably on the business side. But a cut to the basic rate of income tax that would benefit workers, promised by Sunak last year, would have more “rabbit out of the hat” appeal.

The chancellor on Saturday suggested that personal tax cuts could be funded by welfare reductions, an argument that could help him counter the claim that these would boost overall demand and fuel inflation.

Cutting income tax would also give him a chance to score a



The Treasury’s revenues have increased at a time of persistent inflation. Below, Jeremy Hunt, chancellor

Hollie Adams/Bloomberg



political point against Labour, by showing the Tories will use a “carrot and stick” to get people back into work, and let them keep more of their wages when they do get a job.

Hunt suggested to Sky News that tax cuts would help to boost economic growth: “I think it’s important for a productive, dynamic, fizzing economy that you motivate people to do the work, to take the risks that they need,” he said.

The Tory right, bruised by a reshuffle that brought the return of the centre-right David Cameron as foreign secretary, may need more than a tax cut though as an offering. “If they think this alone somehow shuts up the right, they are politically dumb,” said one Tory MP from the “Red Wall”. Part of the reason for the government’s change of mood has been the better news on the fiscal front.

In March the Office for Budget Responsibility, the fiscal watchdog, projected the Treasury’s headroom against its debt-reduction rule would be £6.5bn. Forecasters including Capital Eco-

nomics and JPMorgan are now saying it could exceed £25bn. That would be close to the average amount of headroom chancellors have enjoyed since the OBR was brought into being in 2010.

The improvements are being driven by persistent inflation feeding through into higher government revenues, outweighing negative factors such as rising debt interest payments. In the fiscal year to date, borrowing has come in £19.8bn lower than the £101.5bn forecast by the OBR.

The risk is that fiscal giveaways such as income tax cuts risk fuelling inflation, which Hunt has vowed to avoid. Whereas a measure aimed at bolstering capital investment by companies could be justified as a means of improving the country’s supply capacity, reducing income tax might end up injecting demand into the economy if not offset by deficit-reduction measures.

The true risks to inflation will depend heavily on the scale of any giveaway, said Paul Johnson, director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies. A contained measure such as lopping a penny off

‘I think it’s important for a productive, dynamic, fizzing economy that you motivate people to do the work’

income tax would be relatively modest in the context of the economy, even if in the Bank of England’s view it would be a “push in the wrong direction”.

The bigger problem, Johnson argued, concerns fiscal policy. When there is good news on the public finances the government tends to use it to cut taxes or lift spending, he said, whereas with bad news they push the country’s debt problem “further into the long grass”.

That process of “fiscal drag” is set to reach £40bn a year by 2028 due to inflation, according to the Resolution Foundation think-tank. When the Treasury freezes income tax thresholds while people’s salaries are growing, as they are doing amid the highest inflation for a generation, its revenues increase.

Torsten Bell, managing director of the Resolution Foundation, pointed out there are still income tax rises on the horizon as a result of the government’s multiyear freeze to income tax allowances and thresholds — a so-called “stealth tax”. He said the chancellor should address these first.

FT View page 22

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THE ARTISAN OF EMOTIONS – SINCE 1860

INTERNATIONAL

Gaza Christians shelter in their churches as the war rages on

Enclave's small community lives in fear of relentless Israeli air strikes

HEBA SALEH — CAIRO

For hundreds of years, empires and armies have come and gone in Gaza, but holy service at the Church of Saint Porphyrius has continued. The rituals have carried on in recent weeks as Israeli forces moved on Gaza City and fighting raged on the streets outside.

Despite the battle around them, Greek Orthodox priests dressed in gold-trimmed cassocks have carried on holding mass for the hundreds taking shelter in the church.

Built on a site first consecrated in the fifth century, this house of God has become a wartime home for many of the enclave's Christian community.

Gaza's entire population of Christians numbers just 800-1,000 people – and almost all of them are now hiding in Saint Porphyrius and the nearby Holy Family Church, part of Gaza City's last remaining Catholic parish.

"These two churches are hosting 340 families, which account for almost all the Christians in Gaza," said Ram

'We came here seeking safety, a last resort in the house of God . . . There is nothing military here'

Tarazi, who used to run an Orthodox cultural centre before the war, which has been destroyed by an Israeli air strike. Around 20 of the Tarazis, a large clan of Palestinian Christians, fled their homes in Gaza City for the relative safety of Saint Porphyrius, which was named after a fifth-century bishop who first established a church on the site to replace a pagan temple.

"We left the same night under bombardment," said Tarazi, reached by phone on the church grounds. "Our homes are in three buildings next to each other, but after more than a month here, we are not even sure they are still standing."

Families sheltering in Saint Porphyrius, a compound centred on a renovated church first built by 12th century crusaders, sleep on mattresses laid on the floors of buildings that served as offices for employees and residences for priests. Solar panels provide a small amount of power, just enough for people to charge their phones.

Like the other 2.3mn Palestinians in the enclave, the Christians of Gaza live in fear of Israel's relentless air campaign and its tanks rolling on streets nearby. There is little food left in the churches and almost nothing to buy in nearby shops. Tarazi said Saint Porphyrius still had a small amount of fuel, which was used sparingly to pump drinking water.

Israel considers Gaza City to be the centre of gravity for Hamas, the militant group it has vowed to "destroy" after it led a cross-border attack on October 7 in which about 1,200 people were killed, according to the government.

Palestinian health officials in the Hamas-controlled territory say more than 11,470 Gazans have been killed since Israel launched its military campaign.

Even in churches, the Christians have no assurance of safety. An Israeli air strike on October 19 destroyed one of

the buildings sheltering families in the Saint Porphyrius compound, killing 17 people, including four of Tarazi's relatives. They were buried in the grounds of the church.

Ramez Soury, who lost his three children – Suhail, Julia and Majd – told Jazeera TV: "We came here seeking safety, a last resort in the house of God . . . There is nothing military here." Ten members of the Soury family were killed in the air strike.

The Israeli military said the church was not the intended target, saying the aim was to hit a Hamas command centre nearby; an internal review has begun.

Mitri Raheb, a Lutheran pastor who is also the president and founder of Dar al-Kalima University in Bethlehem, said the presence of Christians in Gaza was "as old as Christianity", adding: "Gaza is mentioned eight times in the New Testament."

Yet even before the war, the Christian population in the enclave was dwindling. There were 1,750 Christians in Gaza in 1997, according to Raheb, a figure that has since halved. Many have sought opportunities to escape the restricted life in the impoverished territory that has been blockaded by Israel and Egypt since Hamas took control in 2007.

"A third of those who left moved to Bethlehem, taking advantage of Israeli permits to go there for Christmas [before] staying on," said Raheb, "Others have emigrated."

Raheb, whose university Dar al-Kalima runs a cultural outpost in Gaza, fears Israel is adopting a "scorched earth strategy" in Gaza "so it cannot be habitable again".

Hundreds of thousands of residents of north Gaza have moved to the south following repeated Israeli orders to evacuate "for your safety". But many of the displaced Christians are afraid to make that journey.

"It is too dangerous. At least at the church they have a roof over their heads," said Hanna Maher, a former pastor of the Gaza Baptist Church, whose wife, Janet, is Ramy's sister. She and their three children are with the family in Saint Porphyrius. "People have tried to leave more than once, but they were caught up in the clashes and killed."

Maher said that Elham Farah, an 84-year old music teacher who had taken refuge in the Holy Family Church, was shot in the leg on Sunday when she went out to check if her home was still standing. She died on the street, according to Maher and a Catholic priest in Bethlehem. It was too dangerous for anyone to go to her rescue.

Maher, an Egyptian, was on a visit to his home country when the war broke out and he could not return to Gaza. He has been spending much of his days trying to contact his wife on the phone. "Sometimes two days pass before I am able to reach her," he said.

Temperatures are falling and Maher is concerned that there is nowhere to buy warm clothes for his children. Tarazi, meanwhile, is worried the supplies of food may not last the week. "The drinking water is not very clean, and we have a small stock of medicines," he said. "We just want the war to end."



'These two churches are hosting 340 families, which account for almost all the Christians in Gaza'

Haven: services have continued at the Saint Porphyrius church in Gaza despite the conflict

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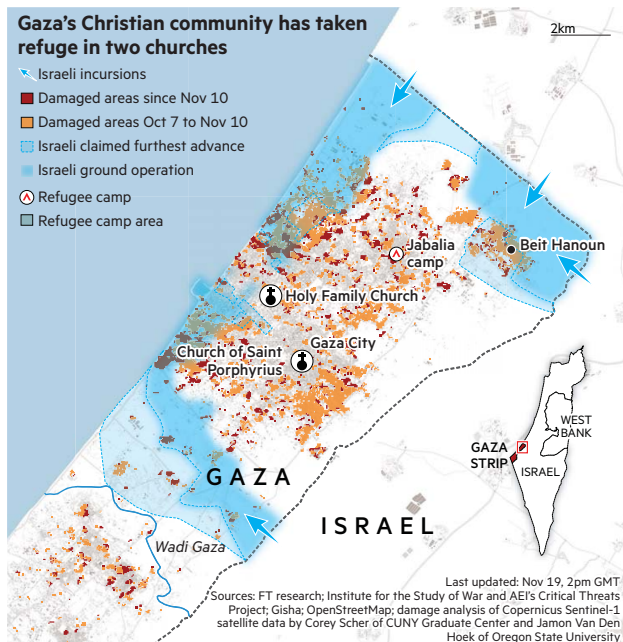


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COMPANIES & MARKETS

Petrobras puts Brazil on the world energy stage

State-controlled oil producer's rising output from vast offshore reserves brings rich returns for investors and the government

MICHAEL POOLER — RIO DE JANEIRO

From a speck on the horizon where sea and sky merge, a pilot flame is the first thing visible to helicopter passengers flying towards one of the newest offshore oil platforms transforming Brazil into a global energy power.

Anchored 200km from Rio de Janeiro, the P-71 floating production unit is among more than 30 run by national oil company Petrobras over a hydrocarbon-rich stretch off the country's south-eastern Atlantic coast.

The expanse is known as the "pre-salt" region because its crude deposits — 11.5bn proven barrels at the last count — lie under a thick crust of sodium chloride, deep beneath the ocean floor. It was home to an oil discovery considered the western hemisphere's most significant for 30 years in the first decade of this century.

"There were doubts over whether we would be able to develop it," said José Ferreira Junior, manager aboard the P-71 vessel in the Itapu field. "The expectation was fulfilled and this turned a page for Brazil, putting it on the world stage as a petroleum producer."

The South American country's overall output of the commodity grew 4 per cent in 2022 to 3mn barrels a day, with three-quarters from pre-salt areas, ranking it as the planet's ninth-largest oil-producing nation.

Rising output from these vast deep-water reserves underpins an ambitious target by the Brasília government to reach fourth place by the end of the decade with 5.4mn b/d, ahead of the likes of Iran, Canada and Kuwait. At the forefront of that drive is \$99bn-valued Petrobras. Latin America's largest oil and gas business is state-controlled but with outside shareholders and a stock market listing.

While the Rio de Janeiro-based group was given priority over the pre-salt resources and dominates the activities, it operates many fields in consortiums with international groups such as Shell, TotalEnergies, QatarEnergy, Malaysia's Petronas and China's Cnooc. "This year we will exceed our goals [and] surpass what we predicted," said Joelson Falcão Mendes, director of exploration and production at Petrobras. "We have significant and growing production for the coming years."

First found in 2006 and chiefly located in the Santos Basin, the pre-salt deposits presented technical challenges. At depths of up to 7km beneath the water's surface, including layers of rock and 2,000 metres of salt to be drilled through, development required colossal amounts of capital. The resource is now a cash gusher.

Pre-salt production rose from 41,000 bpd in 2010 to 2.3mn last year, fuelling record annual profits of R\$188bn (\$38bn) and dividends of R\$216bn at the company. "For the shareholders — controlling and minority — pre-salt [operations] mean really good returns combined with production growth," said Gabriel Barra, analyst at Citi. "It is finally paying off."

While net income fell by two-fifths to \$5.5bn in the third quarter — hit by lower oil prices and a weaker dollar, foreign exchange effects and higher operating expenses — Petrobras increased total crude volumes by almost 10 per cent year on year.

To further boost extraction, it plans to launch another 11 platforms in the pre-salt region by 2027. But with output



The P-71 floating production, storage and offloading unit, anchored 200km off Rio de Janeiro in the Itapu field, in the Santos Basin pre-salt area

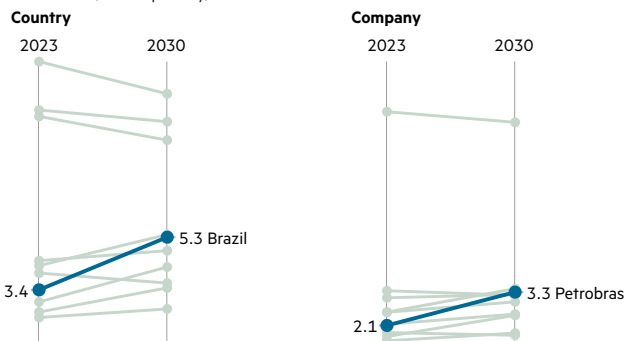
Brazil's pre-salt offshore fields



Sources: Revista USP, modified from Papaterra, 2010; Rystad Energy

By 2030, Brazil is set to be the fifth-largest crude producer and Petrobras the third-biggest oil-producing business

Production (mn bbl per day)



from the fields expected to peak by 2029 and then start falling, there are questions over the future strategic steps for both the company and country.

The pressure to secure reserves of hydrocarbons — the chief components of petroleum and natural gas — has been underscored by recent blockbuster takeover deals by US oil industry supermajors ExxonMobil and Chevron.

Yet as the world seeks to avert catastrophic climate change, the very 'For shareholders, pre-salt [operations] mean really good returns combined with production growth'

soundness of Brazil's continued wager on oil and gas has been challenged.

Critics say it exposes a contradiction within the green agenda of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who has promised greater ecological protections and sustainable development.

The pre-salt riches were discovered during the left winger's first stint in office and his Workers' party, or PT, considers it one of his legacies.

Although the Lula administration and Petrobras have pledged to back cleaner

alternatives, fossil fuels remain a pillar of national policy. "We don't see any type of contradiction," said Mendes. "As an integrated energy company, we can use what we [generate] in oil and gas production to invest in renewable energy," he added.

Petrobras has pledged more of its capital expenditure budget to low-carbon projects since Lula returned to power. But campaigners argue that it should pivot away from polluting activities more quickly. Enrico Marone at Greenpeace rails against the company's policy, saying: "It makes no sense to keep betting on fossil fuel sources when the world is looking for urgent reductions in greenhouse gas emissions."

Petrobras counters that pre-salt oil is cheaper and cleaner than other sources, and therefore an ideal supply as societies remain dependent on hydrocarbons during the energy transition.

Pre-salt wells offer huge economies of scale that bring down unit costs, say analysts. The sheer size of operations is shown by the P-71: a floating production, storage and offloading unit, or FPSO, which looks like a massive ship.

Pre-salt oil costs roughly \$35/barrel to produce, according to Schreiner Parker at consultancy Rystad Energy, well below current international benchmark prices of about \$90. The CO₂ emitted in

Sport

Saudi tie-up talks with PGA Tour set to drag on

SAMUEL AGINI, ARASH MASSOUDI AND JOSH NOBLE — LONDON

The PGA Tour and the Saudi sovereign wealth fund are struggling to resolve differences over an investment tie-up originally announced in June, with negotiations set to drag into next year.

The so-called framework agreement unveiled in June between the PGA Tour and the Public Investment Fund, which owns LIV, set a deadline of year-end for reaching a deal to unite golf under a single commercial entity.

But the December 31 deadline was increasingly unlikely to be met and the talks extended due to several hurdles, according to people familiar with the matter. Three of the people said one possible outcome was a broader deal involving other investors coming in alongside PIF. Another conceded that "things have been moving very slowly".

Big sticking points in the negotiations include how to compensate PGA Tour players who stayed loyal and turned down bumper pay deals from LIV, and reluctance among PGA Tour players to participate in LIV-style team golf.

The PGA Tour and LIV had been

locked in litigation until calling the surprise truce, diffusing tensions after dozens of golfers accepted huge pay deals to leave the PGA Tour and join LIV, a rebel tour backed by \$2bn from the PIF.

Last week, commissioner Jay Monahan said in a memo to players that the leaders of the PGA Tour "remain focused" on reaching a definitive agreement with PIF, and that progress had been "deliberate due to the complex nature of the process".

The original framework agreement was settled when the PGA Tour policy board was largely made up of people



Golfer Rory McIlroy stepped down from the policy board last week

from its commercial operations, but now players — including Tiger Woods — have voting control after a shake-up in August. Last week, Northern Irish golfer Rory McIlroy said he was stepping down from the policy board.

The PGA Tour has also held talks with several potential US investors, including Fenway Sports Group, owner of Liverpool FC and the Boston Red Sox; Liberty Media, which controls Formula One racing; and a group of wealthy individuals dubbed the Friends of Golf, which includes KKR co-founders Henry Kravis and George Roberts.

Raine Group, the merchant bank, is advising the PGA Tour players. It is unclear whether outside investors would participate alongside the PIF or separately.

Monahan said in his memo that after receiving a number of "unsolicited" proposals from other investors, the tour plans to continue talks with a narrowed down list of parties. "This is an important part of the process, allowing us to focus on the most attractive bids and the long-term value creation for you and the tour," he told players. The PIF and the PGA Tour declined to comment.

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UK COMPANIES

Financial services

KPMG shrinks partnership in wake of fines

Firm's UK unit chooses not to elevate any staff in latest promotion round

SIMON FOY

KPMG has cut its UK partnership to less than half the size of rival PwC's, after shrinking its top rank for a fourth straight year against a backdrop of regulatory fines.

The number of equity partners at the Big Four firm, who own the business and share its profits, fell 7 per cent in the year to October to 467 after it failed to elevate any staff to its partnership in its

latest promotion round. The drop pushed the firm's UK partnership numbers to their lowest level in more than 20 years, giving a bigger proportion of profits to those who remain.

The figures highlight how KPMG's strategy and fortunes have diverged from the other Big Four firms – PwC, EY and Deloitte – in recent years, after it was hit by a series of scandals and fines, including a record £21mn penalty for failures in its auditing of collapsed outsourcer Carillion. It is the first time KPMG's partnership has fallen to less than 500 members since firms began disclosing these figures in 2002.

PwC has 1,057 equity partners, while

EY and Deloitte have 930 and 714 respectively, after expanding their partnerships in the past year.

Jon Holt, KPMG UK's chief executive, is seeking to repair the firm's reputation and boost profits, which have lagged behind rivals. KPMG, which is the smallest of the Big Four, with about 16,000 staff, has long trailed its competitors on average partner pay. In the year to September 2022, partners were paid an average of £757,000, the highest since the financial crisis.

However, this still fell short of Deloitte, PwC and EY, which paid an average of £1.06mn, £1.02mn and £803,000, respectively, during their

equivalent financial years, despite having larger partnerships.

While the size of its partnership has shrunk, KPMG has made dozens of promotions to the rank of "salaried partner", a job it introduced in 2021 that is not entitled to profit-sharing. It now has 359 salaried partners.

The salaried partner role has also been brought in at EY and Deloitte.

Chris Hearld, chief operating and financial officer of KPMG UK, said salaried partners at the firm had bonus arrangements "linked directly" to the size of the partner profit pool.

He added: "Having both of these roles is an approach common across the mar-

ket and allows for salaried partners [to join] the partnership in a way that allows them to grow in the role, at the same time [as] being rewarded by the firm's success and starting on a path to becoming an equity partner."

Salaried partnerships also in effect prolong the path to equity partner by increasing the number of promotions needed to reach that position. Not all salaried partners become equity partners.

Since 2018, KPMG has been hit with 16 sanctions by either the accounting watchdog or industry tribunals. The total penalties and costs levied against the firm during that time amount to more than £95mn.

Media

Corden's FulwellCain seeks approval for £450mn film studio

DANIEL THOMAS

A global entertainment company co-owned by actor James Corden has submitted plans for one of Britain's largest film studios, just days after work on film and TV productions restarted in the US and the UK following Hollywood strikes.

FulwellCain has teamed up with Sunderland City Council in an attempt to gain approval for the £450mn film studio on the banks of the river Wear.

The studio would be a major boost for the creative industries in the north of England. The UK is the biggest producer of TV and films outside Hollywood, claim studio executives, but companies such as Amazon have warned studio space in the UK is "close to capacity".

In a submission to an inquiry by parliament's Culture, Media and Sport committee into British film and TV published last week, Amazon said the government needed to simplify planning laws to allow the construction of more studio space.

Ministers have made the growth of TV and film production a priority area for economic growth, but industry executives have said more studio space was needed to make this happen.

FulwellCain wants to build a new studio complex in Sunderland that will include 20 sound stages covering more than 1.6mn sq ft and create 8,500 jobs in the area. Production company Fulwell 73 has teamed up with real estate group

"The north-east has an abundance of incredible locations but no studios or infrastructure"

Cain International for the project. Leo Pearlman, managing partner of Fulwell 73, said more than 20 major productions were being held up because of the lack of studio space.

The application submitted to the local authority's planning committee sets out detailed plans for phase 1 of the studios, with two further phases also submitted for outline consent.

Pearlman said production was moving to other countries and cities – such as Budapest – because of the lack of investment in studios in the UK regions.

"London and the south-east is packed to the rafters. They have a production list as long as your arm. The north-east has an abundance of incredible locations but no studios or infrastructure."

After the end of the strikes, Hollywood executives were now "scrambling" to secure space, he added. "We'll feel the positive pressure."

The production company behind TV series such as *The Late Late Show with James Corden* and *The Kardashians* is owned by Corden, Ben Winston, Pearlman, Ben Turner and Gabe Turner.

The developers are also seeking financial backing from the government. Executives behind Crown Works – named after the former shipyard that once stood on the site – compare the potential impact to Nissan's investment in Sunderland in the 1980s.

More space is also being developed at other studios. In its submission to the committee, Warner Bros Discovery said the UK was the company's largest base outside the US.

Media. Spending spree

Blavatnik plans to access all areas of entertainment

Billionaire ready to invest hundreds of millions of pounds in television, film and theatre

DANIEL THOMAS

Sir Leonard Blavatnik is planning to invest hundreds of millions of pounds in buying up media businesses and producing new TV, films and theatre, according to the boss of the Ukrainian-born billionaire's entertainment empire.

Danny Cohen, the former director of the BBC's TV output, said the group would also consider larger acquisitions in Hollywood, pointing to the 2011 takeover of Warner Music for \$3.3bn as a template for his ambitions. The music business, which is partly listed, is now worth more than \$16bn.

"We'll spend a few hundred million if we can find the right things. I've got to keep coming to him with things that he really likes and that are going to do well and make money," he added. "[Blavatnik] has a real love of the arts and the entertainment industry."

Cohen joined Blavatnik to run Access Entertainment, part of the billionaire's Access Industries, in 2016, and has since built up a portfolio of investments across TV, film, gaming, art, theatre and social media.

"The thing Len says a lot is do big things," Cohen said. "He likes scale. He wants us to do those things. The working model is... Warner Music: buying something huge at the right time at the right price. Len certainly has got the appetite."

He said the group would also look at more traditional Hollywood studio businesses, with some struggling under heavy debt burdens and needing to focus on driving returns.

Shares in Warner Bros Discovery slumped earlier this month after the entertainment group warned that it was "unlikely" to meet its goals for paying off debt, against the backdrop of rising interest rates. Analysts have also warned over high debts and tough trading conditions at Paramount.

Cohen said they had looked before at studio businesses but the prices being asked were too high. Blavatnik was linked with a bid for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 2010.

Cohen said that it was not possible to say exactly how much the group was aiming to spend because it depended on what assets came for sale.

"Len doesn't give you a pot and says spend this. He thinks in a very strategi-



Centre stage: Danny Cohen, boss of Sir Leonard Blavatnik's entertainment empire, says the group will spend 'a few hundred million' if it can identify the right media businesses to buy — Charlie Bibby/FT

cally flexible way. We're trying to invest right across the creative sector, across a wide range of entertainment sectors, in high-growth companies."

He added that the traditional TV and film industry was already consolidated into relatively few larger companies, and also faced challenges in moving to a digitally distributed future, making some deals potentially less attractive.

Several areas would be in focus for investment, he said, including further deals in the "creator" economy where individuals made content for platforms such as YouTube.

Access already owns a stake in Spotter, the YouTube platform that backs creators such as MrBeast, which is now a "unicorn" worth more than a billion dollars.

Access is also seeking to invest more in South Korea as a centre for film and TV. "There's probably no other non-English language country, which has had so much success across music, film, television and technology," Cohen said.

The group owns a stake in Tripledot, a mobile gaming group, and has taken a shareholding in Portal One, a Scandina-

vian games company combining gaming and TV.

Access has also just invested further into A24, a film production house behind the hit film *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, with plans to back new films as well as a make-up brand spin-off.

While at the BBC and Channel 4, Cohen oversaw production of shows such as *Doctor Who* and *Strictly Come Dancing*, and commissioned programmes such as *Skins*, *The Inbetweeners*, *Call The Midwife* and *Happy Valley*.

Blavatnik, a British-American businessman who made his money in the privatisation of Russian aluminium and oil assets, acquired Britain's third oldest theatre, the Theatre Royal Haymarket, in 2018.

He has since invested in dozens of productions in the West End and Broadway, including *School of Rock* and *Hamilton*, and will open a production of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* next year at the Haymarket theatre with Sarah Snook playing all roles.

Access wanted "to add more theatres on the West End and Broadway", Cohen

"The thing Len says a lot is do big things. The working model is Warner Music: buying something huge at the right time"

said, but "they don't come up very often". Post-pandemic, the Theatre Royal has returned quickly to profitability. "We've made money and been paying dividends."

Blavatnik has also branched out into the arts with an investment in a digital gallery in King's Cross that shows large-scale "immersive" art – for example, a David Hockney exhibition and a Tom Hanks show, both featuring the artists' voices as well as their pictures. This digital art show is now being taken to other countries. "It's an authored experience, rather than just putting the pictures on the wall," Cohen said.

Blavatnik separately owns DAZN, the sport streaming service. Access owns one of the two commercial broadcasters in Israel, which Cohen said was "challenging" at present given there was "virtually no advertising revenue".

Cohen, who has been vocal on his concerns about the rise of antisemitism in the UK and other parts of the world after the start of the Israel-Hamas war, said: "They're basically showing news 24/7 and we're just doing what we can to support the team."

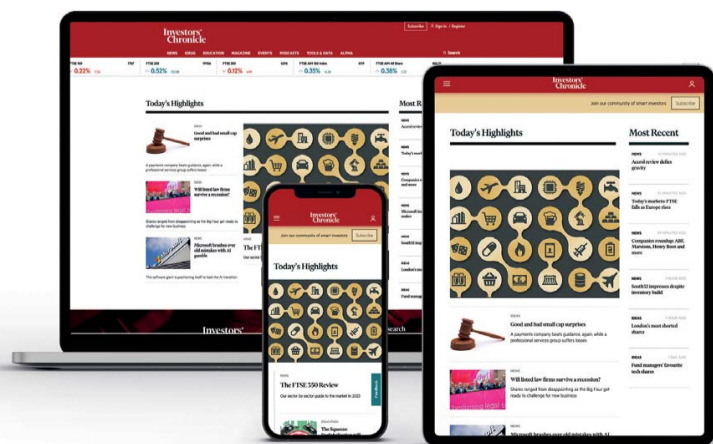
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Age is but a number In search of the chief executive who never grows old

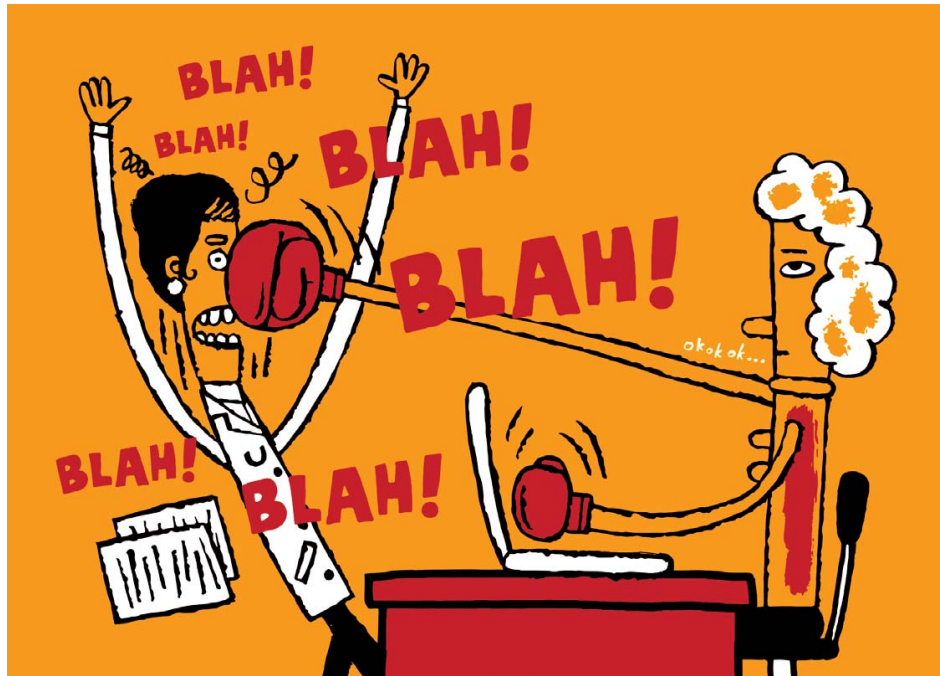
WORK & CAREERS

The tyranny of the bad boss is inescapable



Pilita Clark Business Life

Imagine you are in your early twenties and you head off to your work Christmas party only to end up being hung upside down from a crane, toplless. Then imagine that your boss joins in the fun and slaps you on your bare chest, repeatedly. A young man named Ilyas Elkharraz says this happened to him when he was an apprentice carpenter at a glass installation company in the Australian city of Melbourne in 2020. When a TV show broadcast a video of the incident, it made headlines across the world. Last week, his then boss, Steven Yousif, pleaded guilty in court to failing to provide a safe workplace, after a regulator charged him with "repeated, unreasonable bullying behaviour". My first job was in Melbourne and I had some dubious bosses when I was close to Elkharraz's age. I still remember jamming a guitar up against my cabin door handle on a Queensland fishing boat after another female crew member advised that such a barricade would be useful to keep out the captain, which it did. But if anything like that crane incident was happening I don't recall ever hearing of it, which raises two questions: how common are bad bosses and how do they get



Kenneth Andersson

away with being so dire for so long? The prevalence of the bad boss depends on how the problem is measured. More than two-thirds of American workers say they have dealt with a toxic boss and 31 per cent believe they currently work under one, a Harris Poll report showed last month. Those findings were based on 1,233 employees being asked if their supervisor displayed behaviour such as micromanagement, favouritism, unreasonable expectations and unprofessional behaviour. But academics who studied 28,000 European workers came up with a different finding in 2018 using a more elaborate scoring method that assessed things like how much praise or help supervisors gave. They estimated 13 per cent of employees had a bad boss, and the problem was worst in the transport sector. But white-collar workers are by no means immune.

The problem was worst in the transport sector. But white-collar workers are by no means immune

Take Ray Dalio, the billionaire founder of Bridgewater Associates, the world's largest hedge fund. It's long been known that Dalio, who has stepped back from daily management, ran his firm in a highly unconventional way. Employee meetings were recorded and staff were expected to hold each other to account by following a forbidding set of rules called "The Principles" and a culture of "radical transparency". Dalio's system fascinated leadership and management experts, including his idea that no-one had the right to hold a critical opinion at work without speaking up about it. "It's pretty extreme, but it's provocative and I love that," said Harvard Business School professor Amy Edmondson. Other Ivy League professors wrote approvingly of Dalio in their books. But a new book called The Fund, by journalist Rob Copeland, casts a hellish light on Dalio's reign at Bridgewater. Tales of breakdowns, tears and surveillance litter its pages. "You're a dumb shit," Dalio reportedly told one woman in a group meeting that had been called to discuss why she was behind schedule on a

project. Copeland writes that she ran from the room sobbing. A recording of the meeting was later shared with other staff. I'm told "dumb shit" is a term commonly used at the firm, and by Dalio about himself, to mean a person who doesn't know as much as they need to know. But still. A man hired to be CEO became ill, sleepless and "pallid, often non-verbal, broken" due to radical candour. He quit after less than six months. The page I cannot unsee reproduces a C-word-laced verse Dalio chanted at a work do in front of mostly female employees. But perhaps most shocking of all, the fund also allegedly rigged a system that ranked employees to keep Dalio on top. That's just a taste of the cultish atmosphere Copeland invokes in the book, which Dalio has dismissed as "sensational and inaccurate". If even a tenth of it is true though, Dalio was clearly a worrying leader. Yet on he went, as so many do. Being a billionaire founder helped, and at least his staff were handsomely paid. But Copeland's book is a reminder that the most extraordinary workplace horrors can happen in any type of company.

pilita.clark@ft.com

Lex. Surveys: cash for questions. US pollsters alter methods. UK labour force survey. Includes bar and line charts showing survey methods and response rates over time.

Enjoying this app? Would you recommend us to a friend? In your own words, how satisfied are you with our service? Data gatherers subject consumers, employees and voters to a constant barrage of questions. This suggests it is easy to carry out surveys. But continuous quizzing causes fatigue. Privacy concerns make people cautious about answering detailed, pertinent questions. Response rates have plummeted in some cases. The problem is acute for government statisticians. The response rate to the UK's labour force survey has dropped from 38.5 per cent pre-pandemic to 15 per cent. Britain's Office for National Statistics had to skip its usual publication of the jobs data in October. It now plans to pay more to increase participation rates. It already shells out an unconditional £10 to individuals selected to take part and a further £10 on completion. The upfront payment is likely to rise. Payments for participating in online research will remain a problem. Some platforms put people through an unpaid screening process to establish whether they are suitable for a study. That might encourage dishonesty if individuals can work out the eligibility criteria. Aim-listed pollster YouGov says it avoids such pitfalls in recruiting its 24mn panel members. They get paid in points for surveys that can be converted into gift cards. The provision for the accrued value of these incentives stood at £17.8mn in July. That compares with its £444mn operating profits for the latest year. It has been growing rapidly, though, and, as with its peers, some of the air has come out of its valuation. YouGov's forward price-to-earnings valuation has fallen by a half over three years to 23 times. In March US private equity group Silver Lake agreed to buy US poll-related software maker Qualtrics for \$12.5bn at under 10 times trailing annual revenue, about half the valuation of its 2021 listing. Online surveys were first launched around the turn of the millennium. At first, they made few inroads into an industry dominated by telephone polling. The tables are now turning. In 2022, more than half of US public pollsters used methods different from those deployed six years earlier, says Pew Research. The UK's ONS is part of this trend. It plans to roll out a digital-first version of its labour force survey in the spring.

NIKKEI Asia The voice of the Asian century

CROSSWORD No 17,579 Set by ARTEXLEN. Includes crossword grid and clues for across and down words.

JOTTER PAD Solution 17,577. Includes a grid with the solution and a QR code to access FT crosswords.

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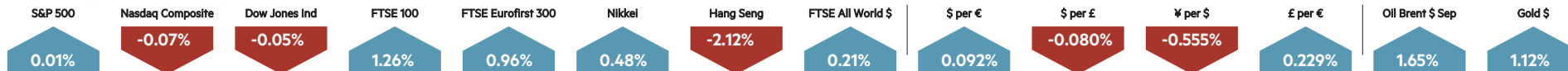
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MARKET DATA

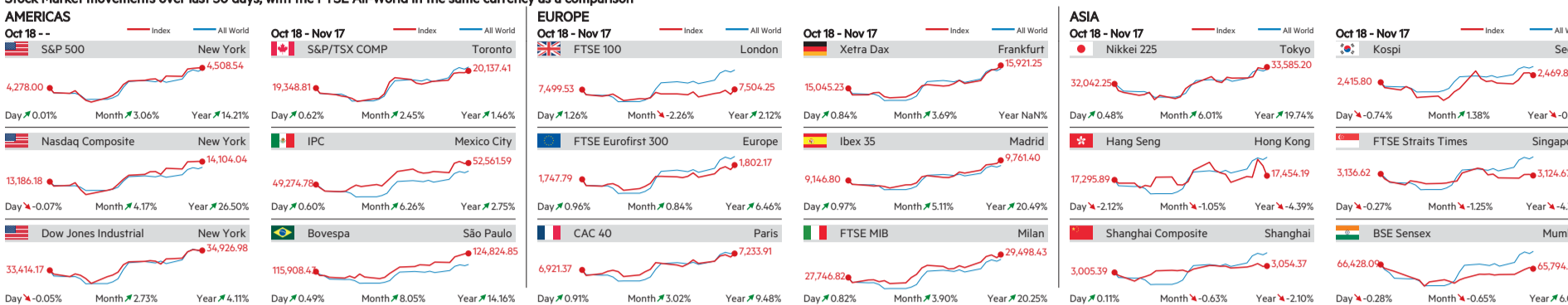
WORLD MARKETS AT A GLANCE

FT.COM/MARKETS/STOCK

Change during previous day's trading (%)



Stock Market movements over last 30 days, with the FTSE All-World in the same currency as a comparison



Country	Index	Latest	Previous
Argentina	Merval	622780.96	602278.19
Australia	All Ordinaries	7261.00	7269.50
Brazil	Ibovespa	124324.36	124324.36
Canada	S&P/TSX Comp	20177.23	20053.07
China	SSE Composite	3525.79	3525.79
France	FTSE MIB	7214.83	7214.83
Germany	DAX	39208.24	39208.24
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	17822.32	17238.38
India	BSE Sensex	65794.73	65982.48
Indonesia	Jakarta Comp	6977.67	6958.01
Japan	Nikkei 225	33595.20	33424.41
South Korea	KOSPI	2469.13	2469.13
Taiwan	TSEI	17423.91	17423.91
UK	FTSE 100	7504.25	7504.25
USA	S&P 500	4508.54	4508.54

(c) Closed, (u) Unavailable, f Correction, ▼ Subject to official recalculation. For more index information, please visit www.ft.com/worldindices. A fuller version of this table is available on the [ft.com research data archive](https://www.ft.com/research/data-archive).

STOCK MARKET: BIGGEST MOVERS

Country	Index	Latest	Previous	Country	Index	Latest	Previous
USA	S&P 500	4508.54	4508.54	USA	Apple	182.25	181.00
USA	Nasdaq Composite	4508.54	4508.54	USA	Microsoft	375.20	375.20
USA	Dow Jones Industrial	33414.17	33414.17	USA	Amazon.com	149.16	149.16
UK	FTSE 100	7504.25	7504.25	UK	Barclays Bank	218.40	218.40
UK	FTSE Eurofirst 300	7504.25	7504.25	UK	HSBC	20.50	20.50
UK	Nikkei 225	33595.20	33595.20	UK	BT Group	8.80	8.80

UK MARKET WINNERS AND LOSERS

Company	Change (%)	Company	Change (%)	Company	Change (%)	Company	Change (%)
Wideworld	+3.54	Bank of America	+1.26	Wideworld	+3.54	Bank of America	+1.26
Wideworld	+3.54	Bank of America	+1.26	Wideworld	+3.54	Bank of America	+1.26
Wideworld	+3.54	Bank of America	+1.26	Wideworld	+3.54	Bank of America	+1.26

CURRENCIES

Country	Currency	Latest	Previous	Country	Currency	Latest	Previous
USA	Dollar	1.00	1.00	UK	Pound	0.78	0.78
EU	Euro	0.92	0.92	JP	Yen	149.57	149.57
HK	Dollar	0.78	0.78	AU	Dollar	0.73	0.73

FTSE ACTUARIES SHARE INDICES

Index	Nov 17	Nov 16	Nov 15	Nov 14	Nov 13	Nov 12	Nov 11	Nov 10	Nov 9	Nov 8	Nov 7
FTSE 100	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25
FTSE Eurofirst 300	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25	7504.25
Nikkei 225	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20	33595.20

FTSE GLOBAL EQUITY INDEX SERIES

Region/Country	Index	Latest	Previous	Region/Country	Index	Latest	Previous
Global	FTSE Global All Cap	2636.80	2636.80	Asia	FTSE Asia All Cap	1594.50	1594.50
North America	FTSE North America	1495.50	1495.50	Europe	FTSE Europe All Cap	1820.80	1820.80
South America	FTSE South America	149.50	149.50	Africa	FTSE Africa All Cap	149.50	149.50

FTSE 100 SUMMARY

Index	Latest	Previous	Index	Latest	Previous
FTSE 100	7504.25	7504.25	FTSE 250	4508.54	4508.54
FTSE Eurofirst 300	7504.25	7504.25	FTSE SmallCap	20177.23	20053.07
Nikkei 225	33595.20	33595.20	FTSE 100 Div Yield	4.21%	4.21%

UK STOCK MARKET TRADING DATA

Market	Nov 17	Nov 16	Nov 15	Nov 14	Nov 13	Nov 12
Order Book Turnover (m)	14027	79394	19395	60159	11033	11033
Order Book Bids	80957.80	75641.00	69144.00	52604.00	52155.00	52155.00
Order Book Shares Traded (m)	1864.22	2149.00	2119.00	1767.00	1909.00	1909.00

UK RIGHTS OFFERS

Company	Amount	Latest	Renun.	High	Low	Stock	closing price	var.
There are currently no rights offers by any companies listed on the LSE.								

UK COMPANY RESULTS

Company	Turnover	Pre-tax	EPS(p)	Div	Pay day	Total	0.000
Baillie Gifford European Growth Trust	346	2175.000	2178.000	21.948	242.954	7.770	67.190
Parkmark Group (The)	Int	21.469	12.029	35.29L	3.963	38.740L	0.750

UK RECENT EQUITY ISSUES

Issue	Issue	Stock	Stock	Closing	Price	High	Low	Mkt
Issue date	Issue	Stock	Stock	Closing	Price	High <td>Low <td>Mkt</td> </td>	Low <td>Mkt</td>	Mkt

Figures in £m. Earnings shown basic. Figures in light text are for corresponding period year earlier. For more information on dividend payments visit www.ft.com/marketsdata. Pricing price, *Indication, **When issued. Annual report/prospectus available at www.ft.com/. For a full explanation of all the other symbols please refer to London Share Companies notes.

MARKET DATA

FT500: THE WORLD'S LARGEST COMPANIES

Main table containing FT500 company data, categorized by country (Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, UK, USA, Vietnam, etc.). Each entry includes company name, price/week, and various performance metrics.

FT 500: TOP 20

Table listing the top 20 FT 500 companies, including their names, current prices, and percentage changes.

FT 500: BOTTOM 20

Table listing the bottom 20 FT 500 companies, including their names, current prices, and percentage changes.

BONDS: HIGH YIELD & EMERGING MARKET

Table showing bond market data for high yield and emerging markets, including ratings, yields, and spreads.

BONDS: GLOBAL INVESTMENT GRADE

Table showing global investment grade bond market data, including ratings, yields, and spreads.

INTEREST RATES: OFFICIAL

Table of official interest rates for various countries and currencies.

INTEREST RATES: MARKET

Table of market interest rates for various countries and currencies.

BOND INDICES

Table of bond indices for various countries and currencies.

CREDIT INDICES

Table of credit indices for various countries and currencies.

VOLATILITY INDICES

Table of volatility indices for various countries and currencies.

BONDS: BENCHMARK GOVERNMENT

Table of benchmark government bond data for various countries.

GILTS: UK CASH MARKET

Table of UK gilt and cash market data.

GILTS: UK FTSE ACTUARIES INDICES

Table of UK FTSE actuaries indices data.

COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices for various goods like oil, wheat, and metals.

BONDS: INDEX-LINKED

Table of index-linked bond data.

BONDS: TEN YEAR GILT SPREADS

Table of ten-year gilt spreads for various countries.

GILTS: UK FTSE ACTUARIES INDICES

Table of UK FTSE actuaries indices data.

Yield Indices

Table of yield indices for various countries.

Real Yield

Table of real yield data for various countries.

Yield Indices

Table of yield indices for various countries.

Real Yield

Table of real yield data for various countries.

Source: FT.com, Bloomberg, Reuters, etc. Data as of 11:00 AM GMT on 20 November 2023.

Large advertisement for FT Financial Times, featuring a photo of a man and the text 'SWAMP NOTES' and 'The FT's newsletter on US politics and power. Sign up now at ft.com/newsletters'.

FINANCIAL TIMES SHARE SERVICE

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AIM

Table with columns: Price +/- Week, 52 Week High, Low, Yld, P/E, 000s. Includes Aerospace & Defence, Banks, Chemicals, Construction & Materials, Electronic & Electrical Equip, Financial General.

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Table with columns: Conventional (Ex Private Equity), Price +/- Week, 52 Week High, Low, Yld, NAV, or P/B. Includes various investment funds.

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FT Weekend advertisement featuring the headline 'Start your weekend thinking' and 'Read things differently with the weekend's clearest view on the world, plus uncover the new and noteworthy in art, culture, style and travel.' Includes images of magazine covers and a person reading.

MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

SUMMARY FT.COM/FUNDS

Summary table with columns for Winners - Europe ex-UK Equity, Losers - Europe ex-UK Equity, Morningstar Star Ratings, and Global Broad Category Group - Commodities. Includes fund names, returns, and ratings.

McInroy & Wood Portfolios advertisement featuring a performance chart for Nov 2020 - Nov 2023, a bar chart of weightings as of 30/09/2023, and a table of top 10 holdings as of 30/09/2023.

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Table listing various funds with columns for Fund, Bid, Offer, +/-, Yield, 1Yr, and 3Yr.

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WORK & CAREERS

In search of chief executives who never grow 'old'



Andrew Hill
Leadership

By naming 53-year-old Janet Truncala as its next global chief executive, EY will hope it can put behind it a nasty bushfire ignited by one rival candidate over the final leadership taboo: old age.

During his campaign for the top job, Andy Baldwin, 57, warned executives discussing his candidacy that they risked breaching age discrimination laws if they made too much of the fact that a four-year term heading the professional services firm would push him beyond 60. That is when EY usually requires its partners to step down.

Sixty seems an absurdly and arbitrarily early age at which to ask executives to hand in their lanyards and badges. Except in the case of a few physically demanding jobs, mandatory retirement also seems an anachronistic throwback. Most countries are obliging workers to toil for longer before they can claim a state pension. Companies are also falling over themselves to become more inclusive.

Tension is only likely to increase as companies and staff try to reimagine work for 50-year careers. Speaking at the recent Anthropy conference on the UK's future, Jeremy Hughes, who is helping to develop a new charity aimed at bridging the demographic divide, Intergenerational England, described

the workplace as the "key forum where generations come together". But the workplace is also where generations could come to blows.

The career that Baldwin and his EY peers have had is already hard to imagine for 20-somethings. On the same panel, youth ambassador Ladajah Wilson made clear she did not want to follow the 9-to-5, four-weeks-annual-holiday path of her elders. She preferred a career that was varied and flexible. Such "squiggly careers" are ill-served by traditional leadership selection processes.

Age is just a number, they say. But succession planning is dominated by another number: usually, there is only one job at the top. That tempts companies to force change to ease leadership bottlenecks.

Mandatory retirement ages are legal in the UK if they represent a proportionate means of achieving a business aim. That could include freeing up senior jobs or, in EY UK's case, partnerships for younger colleagues. At a level where men still dominate, it might also serve to meet a corporate goal of greater ethnic and gender diversity.

In the US, mandatory retirement for CEOs is an exception under age discrimination legislation. But an

increasing number of big companies have started to abandon or waive their mandates. This year, Chevron dropped its age cap of 65 for chief executive Mike Wirth, now 63, to ensure continuity at the oil and gas company.

Meanwhile, the average age of US chief executives continues to rise. According to headhunter Crist Kolder, in 2013, the age of CEOs when hired averaged 51.3. It now stands at 55.6.

Listed companies do seem more reluctant to keep chief executives well into their 70s or 80s. When I drew up a ranking of global leaders of listed businesses by age in 2011, Warren Buffett, then 80, was only the 16th oldest corporate chief. At 93, he now tops a global league table, prepared by BoardEx for the FT, that contains only two octogenarians. Among US bosses, he is 11 years older than the next oldest in the Fortune 500, Robert Mehrabian of Teledyne Technologies.

Buffett might seem an exception. But he is living proof that some older chief executives amply justify extending their tenure beyond what used to be considered pensionable age. Capable younger executives ought to be able to rise sooner, too. Only 31 of Fortune Global 500 companies are headed by chief executives aged under 50.

Research has shown that shareholder

Sixty seems an absurdly and arbitrarily early age at which to ask CEOs to hand in their lanyards and badges

wealth drops for each year a chief executive ages. Plenty of leaders overstay their welcome because of too tolerant boards or poor succession planning. Another study suggests leaders become more risk averse as they age, with negative consequences for stock performance. Researchers found that was particularly true when the two most influential executives were older. The best outcome might be to pair younger and older colleagues.

I prefer an age-blind approach that does away with age-related stereotypes. It could also help assess the capabilities and potential of younger people like Wilson, if she ever wants to run a multinational.

This is another area where technology could level the playing field. At an FT conference on artificial intelligence last week, Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, author of *Why Do So Many Incompetent Men Become Leaders?*, said AI could help humans "focus on the qualities that make people better leaders, while ignoring the noisy signals that make them more toxic and inept".

The solution to "bed-blocking" by bosses, in other words, is not automatic ousting, based on age, but more rigorous appraisal, based on competence.

Demographics

Start-ups challenge culture of the Japanese salaryman



Post-pandemic, younger workers have new expectations of risk, reward and responsibility, writes *Leo Lewis*

At some point during the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic, the world of the Japanese salaryman and woman took an extraordinary — but little noticed — swerve off its historic course. No longer, it seemed, were bigger companies necessarily better; career uncertainty was not so terrifying.

Corporate Japan was facing an onslaught of change in 2021. Its most staid companies, where traditions, working practices and career expectations had barely changed for decades, were being forced to rapidly adapt to work-from-home pandemic norms, remote meetings, hierarchy disruption and the sudden demise of the presenteeism that once firmly policed their work culture.

But behind all that, something far more transformative was evolving. Younger Japanese workers who, through decades of deflation, wage stagnation and a sense of slow national decline, had prioritised predictability in their career, had new ideas of what a company should offer by way of risk, reward, stimulation and opportunities for rapid promotion.

Companies, which until that point had felt little pressure to revamp their work cultures, given that stability and size had reliably attracted the most talented staff, were facing a new threat.

By the end of 2021, more than a fifth of job transitions from large companies in Japan were people leaving to join start-ups, according to the Japan Venture Capital Association, compared with 8 per cent in 2018. That proportion has continued to push towards 25 per cent, according to JVCA members.

"I don't think a lot of Japanese companies realise what is happening, because if they did, they would be in panic mode," said a 26-year-old Keio University graduate currently negotiating her move from one of Japan's biggest banks into a Kyoto-based tech start-up. "For a lot of my age-peers, start-ups are offering an alternative work environment — there is still a lot of pressure, but it is pressure you want. When you are at university choosing a job, you don't see that, but after a few years at a big company, it's obvious."

The social, economic and psychological shift behind that type of comment is arguably the most significant in Japan since the end of the 1980s bubble, according to venture capital firms and the start-ups themselves. Critically,

Of the people transitioning from jobs at large companies in Japan, the proportion leaving to join start-ups is pushing towards 25 per cent, up from 8 per cent in 2018

FT montage/Getty

new Japanese businesses are not only attractive as talent magnets, but internally they are beginning to redefine work environments in a way that poses a direct challenge to the large companies they are poaching from.

Entrenched strictures of age-based seniority and a refusal to measure white collar work more qualitatively — characteristics that have dominated Japanese corporate culture for many decades — are high on the list of gripes that may prompt a jump from a large company.

"The Japanese start-up market is probably one of the most misunderstood in the world. So much has changed here, yet a lot of that change has gone mostly unnoticed," said James Riney, chief executive of Tokyo-based VC firm Coral Capital, who added that investment into start-ups in Japan had grown by about 10 times in the past nine years, drawing in some of the country's most talented workers.

"The Japanese government's vocal, financial, and regulatory support have not only made starting up easier, but also mainstream," he added.

But government support is just one of many factors behind the change, according to Kathy Matsui, co-founder of Tokyo-based venture capital fund, MPower Partners.

"Some individuals at large Japanese companies will look into their career crystal ball and see a predictable promotion path, and a predictable compensation package. More and more you are finding people saying 'that's OK, but it's not great'. At a start-up, meanwhile, you can immediately or very quickly be in a key position and having a real impact on a business where there are, potentially, much higher returns," said Matsui.

Genesis Healthcare is one example.

The Tokyo-based genetic testing and research company's chief financial officer previously worked at Nomura and another member of its top executive team came from Mitsubishi Bank. Their roles at Genesis offer them greater influence over a company's future.

Start-ups are also widening the salary gap between themselves and traditional companies, according to the JVCA. It found that average salaries were ¥580,000 higher at start-ups in 2022 than at big listed companies. Two years earlier the difference was ¥90,000.

Japan's chronically tight labour market — a feature of low-birth rate demographics and a now shrinking working-

'A lot of companies don't realise what is happening, because if they did, they would be in panic mode'

age population — takes the edge off the perceived risk of joining a start-up by providing an implicit safety net.

"Of course there is a risk in leaving the predictable behind, but these days there is built into the equation the idea that if you fail, you can always go back to a large company," added Matsui.

Others go further, suggesting that for many young Japanese workers, the decision to join a start-up may actually feel like a hedge against career risk. They look at big, traditional Japanese companies and take the view that if they stay at those too long, they may not gain the skills they need to build careers in a world increasingly defined by the rapid pace of technological change.

"So a lot of people think they could gain those skills at a start-up. And once

you have people with that shared view in a start-up, of course you are going to get a new type of work culture building around that. You have environments where there is a feeling that they are doing something very different from the way previous generations did," said Mio Takaoka, a partner at, DNX Ventures, a fund that backs Japanese start-ups and is closely involved in their development.

She and others draw parallels between the emerging start-up culture in Japan in 2023 and the arrival of the internet in the mid 1990s — a period that was notable both for the speed with which it prompted new companies to launch and the ferocity with which it splayed-open generational gaps within business.

Then, people could build internet companies because there was no older generation to stop them. Now, a similar layer of conservative senior managers is frustrating younger employees who want to embrace AI and other transformational technology.

Many traditional companies do feel forced to adapt, said Riney, noting that almost every big company had an "open innovation" or similar department that engages with start-ups.

But for all of the disruption that the Japanese start-ups appear to be causing, Takaoka argued, their underlying culture is not explicitly disruptive in intent. They are not looking to confront Japan's existing business establishment, but rather work with it to fill its many gaps.

"There is some natural conservatism built in there, so you haven't got people joining start-ups to shake everything up. They are joining because they see it as building something that hasn't yet been offered, probably faster and better than they could anywhere else," said Takaoka.

Work watch

Is friendship any business of employers?



Emma Jacobs

How would you classify your relationship with your colleague? ITV posed that question when updating its policy on workplace relationships last month. The broadcaster asked staff to declare not just romantic and family relationships but platonic ones too: flatmates, close relationships or friendships.

Some commentators were aghast, decrying it as a ban on work friends, conjuring a white-collar dystopia in which colleagues furtively slide messages on slips of paper under their desks.

A zero-friendship policy would be bad for business. More than half the workers polled by the US Society for Human Resource Management this year had a colleague they called a close friend. Work friends improve engagement and productivity. Since the pandemic, friendship, according to Gallup, has become increasingly important to workers. A best friend, the polling company says, increases employee satisfaction and the likelihood they will recommend their workplace. Navigating the hybrid workplace is all the better with a friend, a more compelling incentive to lure commuters into the office than a free sandwich or a meeting — and someone to surreptitiously message while Zooming.

However, this is not a ban on friendship but an attempt to make ties between workers more transparent. ITV is looking into procedures around safeguarding in the wake of presenter Phillip Schofield's departure after what he called an "unwise, but not illegal" affair with a younger colleague.

Sarah Henchoz, an employment partner at law firm Allen & Overy, says policies on friendships are not widespread, though it is "pretty standard to require employees to disclose conflicts of interest they may have in relation to, for example, new hires". Procurement is another such area. Failing to declare relationships can lead to distrust — the UK government has been tarnished by accusations of chumocracy over how it awarded contracts during the pandemic.

Public sector organisations, including the NHS, universities and

councils, ask for disclosure of friendships within teams. Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys Foundation Trust's policy says staff must inform their manager of any "close personal relationship with another employee who you directly/regularly work with".

One challenge is the haziness around work friendships. The NHS Trust says: "Employees are expected to exercise judgment in determining whether or not a friendship has developed to such an extent that it can be described as a close personal relationship."

But where is the line? A drink outside of work? A holiday? A godparent to your work bestie's child? What if you fall out with your friend, do you update management? You might see yourself as an acquaintance to a colleague whereas they see themselves as more. If anything, social media has made the lines fuzzier. "We've got used to people having 600 friendships on Facebook," says David D'Souza, membership director at the CIPD. "That's different to having 600 people you can call in the night."

Policies on workplace romance are clearer. Some employers ask staff to disclose them, others ban them between senior executives and subordinates. Pam Loch, founder of Loch Associates Group, an employment law firm and consultancy, says disclosure policies are designed to diminish favourable treatment "by changing line management or putting other steps in place to change or remove that level of influence".

There is some overlap with friendship, especially when it comes to preferential treatment, says Nancy Rothbard at the University of Pennsylvania. While support is important, she notes, reciprocating it might prove "distracting". It can also be hard to give "tough feedback to a friend".

"It is a problem but it won't be solved with a list," says D'Souza. Employers might end up with a volume of information that gives the illusion of control without achieving much.

It seems to me the best test of friendship is when you leave. It's easy enough to be matey when in need of an ally to let off steam. Much harder when you no longer bond over shared bureaucracy or the irritating habits of a colleague.

FEATURES

The
Henry Mance
Interview‘The EU is not
the same one
the UK left’

MICHEL BARNIER

French politician says British ministers did not
know the consequences of leaving the bloc

Charlie Bibby/FT

Michel Barnier arrives, carrying, of course, two folders full of papers. Tall and debonair, the former Brexit negotiator knows the power of appearances.

During the talks, he cultivated an air of principled authority. Remainers saw him as a voice of reason; even Brexiters developed a grudging respect. “I wish we could employ him,” said a frustrated Nigel Farage. Barnier kept his head while his British counterparts were losing theirs and blaming it on him.

“I’m not always calm – listen to my wife or children – but I decided at the very beginning to be calm. I knew it could be a weakness to be French, and I knew that I would be in the fire of the tabloids. They were waiting for me to get angry. They tried several times.”

Barnier was mellowed by age and hikes in the French Alps. In 2020, some British newspapers suggested he might have been Downing Street’s Covid “patient zero” who infected Prime Minister Boris Johnson. He swallowed his fury.

So the 72-year-old’s career is bookended by two achievements: organising the 1992 Albertville Winter Olympics, which he mentions surprisingly frequently, and negotiating Brexit. Albertville was positive, Brexit was negative, he says. And the UK didn’t win in either, I suggest. Barnier doesn’t rise to the joke. “Winning for the UK in the Winter Olympics is more difficult than in the Summer Olympics,” he says, with predictable calm.

But, like David Cameron, the former UK prime minister who returned to frontline politics last week, Barnier is not finished. He tried and failed to

‘I knew it could be a
weakness to be French,
and I knew I would be in
the fire of the tabloids’

become the centre-right candidate in the 2022 French presidential election. Now he is urging the centre-right to unify to stave off Marine Le Pen.

In doing so, he has disappointed his old colleagues in Brussels and those who saw him as the face of unbendable EU principles. Ahead of the 2022 election, the two-time former EU commissioner claimed immigration was “out of control”. He suggested France should suspend all immigration from non-EU countries for three to five years.

Critics say Barnier has joined the populist wave he once scorned. He retorts: “I have been European before them, and I will remain European after them.”

He blames the European Court of Justice for reducing states’ freedom to act in the name of national security and expanding migrants’ rights to bring family members: “You can find nothing in the French constitution about migration, and there is almost nothing in the European treaties. For 30 or 40 years, there’s a kind of interpretation that is always in favour of the migrants . . . We have to rewrite something in the [EU] treaties or in the [European Convention of Human Rights].”

So he is hoping to reform the EU, like Cameron in 2015? “We have to provoke a discussion at the European

level . . . During this time, we have to create a constitutional shield [allowing national law to take precedence], and to ask the French people to decide.” In other words, a referendum, including the creation of annual immigration quotas.

Maybe Barnier liked Brexit so much he has decided to repeat the experience. He insists the opposite. “If we don’t do that – as Brexit was improbable and happened – something in France which is improbable could happen: the election of Mrs Le Pen as president.”

He adds, grandiosely: “I’m the only one in France perhaps to know exactly why the Brexit happened.”

In the two and a half years since he stepped down from Brexit duties, the issue has slid down the EU’s agenda. Yet in the UK, it remains unresolved. In the latest polls, 57 per cent of the public say it was wrong to leave; 33 per cent think it was right. By a margin of 58 per cent to 42 per cent, they say they would vote to rejoin the EU.

“It seems to me that Brexit is an issue of permanent debate in the UK. That means Brexit was not so clear,” observes Barnier. “From the very first day, the UK ministers not only underestimated the consequences of Brexit – they *did not know* the consequences of Brexit.”

He dismisses a promise by shadow foreign secretary David Lammy to go through the UK-EU trade agreement “page by page” if Labour is elected: “Good luck!” But he is warm to Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer, who wants closer relations, albeit while staying outside the single market and customs union . . . I think Starmer is a European like me – a patriot and European.”

A 2018 entry in Barnier’s *My Secret Brexit Diary* describes Starmer as the British politician “who impresses me the most for his ability to grasp in detail what is at stake in Brexit negotiations . . . I get the feeling that Keir Starmer will one day be UK prime minister.”

Starmer’s plan, which includes a UK-EU veterinary agreement, “seems to be pragmatic and possible”. Barnier would like him to go further, including a UK-EU defence treaty and joint road map for peace in the Middle East. “We have – France and the UK in particular, but also Italy, Spain and some others – a historic responsibility.”

Barnier is quick to detail the UK’s previous negotiating mistakes. He spent the nine months before Brexit talks began in June 2017 preparing with his team: “I do not think the UK did the same.” The UK’s first Brexit secretary, David Davis, suggested London could keep the headquarters of two key regulators. “Totally impossible! It seems to me a huge weakness: to take your desires for reality.”

Then there was Theresa May ruling out customs union and single market membership from the outset (Barnier was “astonished”), and Boris Johnson committing to leave the EU on a set date. “It was a huge mistake. He had no time.”

When Jeremy Hunt, as foreign secretary, likened the EU to the USSR, Barnier wrote in his diary: “What’s the point of arguing with Jeremy Hunt?” He was friendly with Davis, a garrulous politician like himself, but lost all trust in David Frost, Johnson’s aggressive Brexit negotiator, for threatening to break the divorce treaty he had just agreed.

Did Barnier ever believe there would

be a no-deal Brexit? “Yes, when Theresa May failed a third time to get an agreement in the House of Commons.” But under Johnson, no-deal seemed a bluff. “Johnson said once, ‘I want a deal because I need a deal.’ This sentence was key for me . . . I wasn’t surprised by the madman strategy. I was told that this strategy was taught in university in the UK.”

Barnier’s approach was methodical. As a teenager, he wrote to Georges Pompidou after his ousting as French prime minister, and received a personal reply. From then on, he resolved to respond to every letter he received. Similarly, he met endlessly with legislators over Brexit, while leaving the policy slog to his team, especially his deputy, Sabine Weyand. “He made a lot of people feel very important,” says one observer.

Crucially, Barnier kept the EU unified, convincing 27 member states that sticking together was the best way to protect their own specific interests. Only about eight states, for example, had a direct interest in fisheries: “Ms Merkel told me several times, ‘It’s not so important for us, but I understand it’s important for Mr Macron.’”

“The British did not understand. They tried every week to divide us. I

‘The only reason that
Biden and the Chinese
president respect us
is the single market’

visited one capital every week: the day before I came, there was a British minister, and the day after. Which is incredible. Losing time!” *La méthode Barnier* is now established as a way for the European Commission to handle external negotiations on behalf of member states and its parliament.

In February, the UK and EU agreed the Windsor framework to reduce checks on goods crossing the Irish Sea. Does it show Barnier was too inflexible on this issue? He attributes the compromise to Rishi Sunak being “more pragmatic and serious” than Johnson. The changed context given the Ukraine war perhaps also played a role.

What about rules of origin for electric cars? The commission is considering postponing tariffs on sales of cars between the EU and UK. Barnier is “not in favour of any type of flexibility”, worrying it would set a precedent. “I’m ready to be very vocal on this point . . . What is said about rules of origin could be said about financial services and equivalence. [Britain] lost the financial passport: there will be no flexibility.”

Listening to Barnier, I am reminded of the joke about a French bureaucrat who asks of a policy idea: it works in practice, but does it work in theory?

“I have no spirit of revenge, no spirit of punishment – never – just to protect what is our main asset and perhaps our single asset: the single market. The only reason that Mr Biden and the Chinese president respect us is the single market.”

Would Le Pen take France out of the EU? Barnier points out that she celebrated Brexit as a “victory”. “She’s able, like Farage, to hide what she wants to do. But I think she didn’t change [her view].”

The EU has started to confront populism, he argues, noting the hiring of 10,000 border guards and the use of joint borrowing to create a Covid recovery fund. “The EU today is no longer the EU that the UK left. We have begun to draw the lessons of Brexit.”

Yet the bloc is hamstrung by Franco-German stalemate. “This co-operation has never been easy, except for one time when the leaders were friends,

[Valéry] Giscard [d’Estaing] and [Helmut] Schmidt.”

He is hopeful about Poland’s role under Donald Tusk. He supports Ukrainian membership of the EU, but thinks it should wait until it has become “acceptable” to the bloc’s public. He also supports Emmanuel Macron’s idea of a European political community, which could offer a framework for closer relations with non-members like the UK.

Barnier, who was first elected to public office 50 years ago, wants his party Les Républicains, Macron’s Renaissance and others to coalesce behind a single, centre-right candidate for the presidency in 2027. Could it be him? “That’s not the issue now,” he says, briefly flustered. I insist. “It’s not a question of people for the moment.” On this point, at least, Barnier may see room for flexibility.

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ARTS

Collector who wants more support for galleries

Chris Ingram lends his Modern British holdings to museums, colleges and prisons – and believes others should do so too. By Melanie Gerlis

The generally diplomatic British art collector and businessman Chris Ingram, 80, sees no reason to hold back his views on some fellow art-buyers. “The biggest change in the market has been the number of billionaire so-called collectors who are buying art, putting it into freeports and not even looking at it,” he declares over lunch in London.

A major collector of Modern British art since selling his media-buying business two decades ago, Ingram’s credo is clear. “I like the collection to be seen,” he says. It’s not just warm words: in the past financial year, 75 per cent of the 400-plus works in the core collection were on public display, while the contemporary and outsider-art collection of nearly 200 works also travels widely. Since he suffered a stroke in 2016, limiting movement on his right-hand side, art has offered Ingram a distinct motivation. “In a way, it’s kept me going,” he says.

Unlike many of his collector counterparts, he says he was never tempted to have a private museum for his holdings. “People would have to go there, to one place, whereas I’m sending art out to them,” he says.

As a result, Ingram’s works have adorned some surprising venues recently, ranging from The Clink prisoner rehabilitation restaurants at HMPs Styal and High Down to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art’s Barbara Hepworth retrospective last year. Works from the Ingram Collection are also frequently on display at The Lightbox gallery and museum in Woking, the Surrey suburban town where Ingram grew up, and an institution that he has long supported.



Above: Chris Ingram with ‘Goggle Head’ (1969) by Elisabeth Frink. Above right: ‘Sisterhood’ (2023) by Erin Holly, selected for the Ingram prize — Elisabeth Frink Estate and Archive. Photo: John-Paul Brand, PDP Gallery

His collection’s future is with the nation: ‘There’s nothing for my children and grandchildren to fight over,’ he semi-jokes

Ingram notes that as well as skewing the display of art, the new money in the market has also “upset its value”. There is, he says, “no difference to these buyers, whether they get something at say £60,000 or £80,000, so the rest of us fall back” when bidding. The impact, it must be said, is not all bad news for Ingram, whose first purchases of Modern British art were made when prices reflected the category’s then unfashionable status.

He is reluctant to give the current value for the whole collection, as it isn’t for sale, preferring to focus on what it does, though a trustees’ report put it at more than £10m in 2021. He is

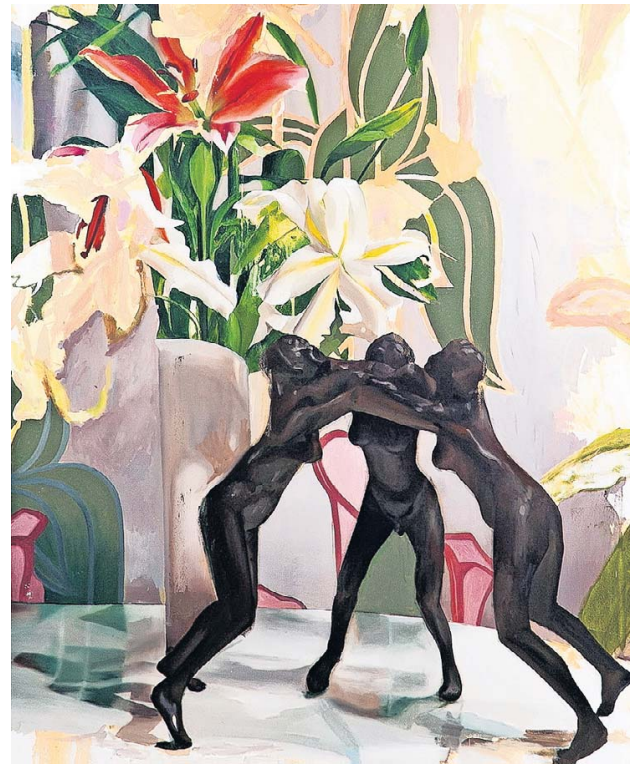
prepared to highlight some individual pieces whose values have grown over time. In 2002, Ingram bought a 1965 Hepworth oil and pencil work for £14,000, now valued for insurance at £180,000. In the same year, he purchased an Elisabeth Frink *Riace* warrior sculpture for £40,000, and notes that a work from the same series, “*Riace II*” (1986), sold publicly for £230,000 in 2008. Work by Frink, who runs deep in the Ingram Collection, has since made more than £1m at auction.

Ingram is not a straightforward interviewee — he keeps me on my toes by frequently answering questions with a follow-up question or two. It seems part of his inbuilt instinct to challenge the status quo. Curator and art adviser Jo Baring, who is director of the Ingram Collection, recalls that in the early days, “I would often tell Chris that ‘in the art world, we work like this’ and he would answer, ‘Well, why?’”

It perhaps explains why he seems just as comfortable branching out from Modern British and into the contemporary realm. “Supporting the current generation is a natural adjustment,” he says. He sees his role as partly educational in a world unfamiliar with business practices.

Already a regular at degree shows, Ingram noticed how uncomfortable young artists were when it came to selling their works. “Many didn’t know how to invoice me,” he says.

This observation contributed to the thinking behind the Ingram prize, a competition for UK-educated artists at the start of their careers, launched in 2016; its 32 shortlisted artists are on view this week at Cromwell Place. The shortlisted works are in a range of media: as well as paintings, there are films, sculptures and installations with materials that include recycled sari silk and St John’s wort seeds.



Winners’ work is bought for the Ingram Collection while all of the shortlisted artists are offered ongoing support, including a professional development day that covers areas such as copyrighting, applying for residencies and, of course, invoicing. The prize, whose previous winners include Sin Wai Kin (nominated for last year’s Turner Prize), had its highest number of entries this year, Baring says.

Also this month, works from the Ingram Collection are on loan to venues ranging from Woking coroner’s court — 16 works including a 1990 lithograph by Elisabeth Frink — to Brasenose College, Oxford — 24 pieces, including David Hockney’s etching and aquatint “My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean” (1962). The collection has joined forces with the Women’s Art Collection for the exhibition *Women & Water*, featuring work by artists including Frink and Tracey Emin (Murray Edwards College, Cambridge, until February 25). Ingram and Baring are still buying, including opportunities

that fill any gaps in the Modern British holdings. The future of his collection is squarely with the nation: “There’s nothing for my children and grandchildren to fight over,” he semi-jokes.

He is conscious that it isn’t just artists who need support now. “It is very sad-denying that councils are pulling out of local museums,” he says. The Lightbox is one of the latest to face an uncertain future as Woking borough council has proposed stopping all funding for arts and culture as part of a £12m cut to local services. Ingram confesses he is “confused” by the UK government’s policy towards culture, including severe cuts in London, but lays some of the responsibility at the foot of private individuals. He questions once again: “Where are all the others who could make sure their collections are seen by all and sundry?”

The Ingram Prize is on view at Cromwell Place, London, November 22-26, ingramcollection.com



‘Erased’ (2022) by Eliana Marinari is also in the running for the Ingram prize

PWM | THE BANKER

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An event from the Financial Times

Sound design elevated to high art

PODCASTS

Fiona Sturges



In “Dead Ends”, the first episode in the new series of podcast *Lights Out*, Talia Augustidis tries to summon memories of her late mother, Sallie, who died when she was three years old. In 2003, filmmaker Sallie had been on a work trip to Mallorca when she fell off a hotel balcony — “It was late, it was dark, she was drunk,” says her daughter.

Augustidis has only hazy recollections of her mother; most of what she knows of her has been drawn from old photos, bits of home videos and news reports of her death. At the start of the episode, we find Augustidis combing cassette tapes unearthed in her father’s attic and labelled “accidental recordings”, looking for signs of Sallie. Noting the sound of movement, she asks: “Is that you? Going through the drawers at 19 minutes and 52 seconds? What are you looking for? What do you need?”

Made for the BBC by the independent production company Falling Tree, *Lights Out* is a long-running anthology series in which sound design is elevated to the realms of high art. Not for nothing

did the episode “A Sense of Quietness”, which told the interconnected stories of four women and the Irish abortion referendum, win the Prix Europa. Each of the series’ half-hour episodes is a small masterpiece of soundscaping and storytelling.

“Dead Ends”, written and produced by Augustidis, uses the fragments of surviving audio of her mother to create an intimate and moving collage of absence and loss. Listening to those cassette tapes, on which Sallie apparently pressed record in error, are like “speaking to a ghost”, she says. There are moments of bleak comedy

too. A few years ago, Augustidis had some old home videos digitised, including one that her father, Dimitri, had instructed her not to touch. To her horror, it turned out to be a sex tape. Augustidis told her father she had simply wanted to see more of her mother. “That part you can keep,” she told him.

In the next episode, “Dust”, Icelandic writer Andri Snaer Magnason and Scottish conceptual artist Katie Paterson grapple with the landscapes that have inspired their work and in which the scars of geological events are etched.

The episode is produced by Eleanor McDowall, who was behind audio gems including BBC Radio 4’s *Short Cuts*, *Field Recordings* and *Radio Atlas*.

We hear the sounds of breaking waves, wind, the deep rumbling of a volcano and footsteps on snow; music, courtesy of Phil Smith, drifts in and out. There is also audio footage of the Vatnajökull glacier in Iceland, collected for an art project by Paterson via a submerged microphone and discernible in crackles and clicking sounds. This richly textured episode — which should be heard on headphones for the full immersive effect — is simultaneously poetic and apocalyptic, a chilling reminder of our smallness in the face of the elements.



Baby Talia Augustidis with Sallie

bbc.co.uk

FT BIG READ. SWEDEN

A wealthy nation long admired for its progressive values is now facing one of the highest levels of fatal shootings in Europe. What lies behind the upsurge and what can be done about it?

By Richard Milne

Gang violence: 'it is tearing us apart'

What used to be a home is now a mess of wood, insulation and cladding, littering neighbouring gardens and spilling into the street. Windows are completely blown and only jagged shards of glass remain following the sheer force of an explosion.

"It is like a war scene," says a local resident, "something you see on the news from Afghanistan."

But this is not a conflict zone. It is a previously peaceful district of prosperous Uppsala, Sweden's fourth-largest city, now the centre of the country's gangs crisis. Soha Saad, a 24-year-old newly qualified teacher, died in the blast on September 28. She was the unintended casualty of an attack aimed at a neighbour believed to be a relative of a criminal gang member.

Soha was "ambitious, good, kind, generous", according to her friend Sara Samara. "I wonder how many more innocent lives will have to be taken from us," she wrote on Instagram. "This is my appeal to politicians: wake up."

Sweden is now on high alert having suffered an extraordinary spate of violence in recent months, particularly in Uppsala and its neighbour to the south, capital Stockholm. At its worst in September and October, barely a day went by without a shooting, bombing or hand grenade attack – sometimes several.

The Nordic country has gone from having one of the lowest levels of fatal shootings in Europe to one of the highest

'Sweden has never seen anything like it before. No other country in Europe is seeing anything like it'

in just a decade. Well-established criminal gangs, largely run by second-generation immigrants, are no longer just killing each other but increasingly relatives and innocent bystanders. In many areas, the police are overwhelmed following the deadliest month on record



Well-established criminal gangs are no longer just killing each other but increasingly relatives and innocent bystanders. In many areas, the police are overwhelmed following the deadliest month on record

FT montage/Getty Images

the oldest in the Nordics, as well as Scandinavia's biggest cathedral and a grand royal castle.

But in recent years it has achieved notoriety as the hometown of one of Sweden's most deadly gangs and its notorious leader Rawa Majid, "the Kurdish Fox", who fled to Turkey in 2018 after a number of drug and violence-related convictions.

Much of the recent violence is due to a major split in the Foxtrot drug gang, say police. Majid, who was raised in Uppsala by Iraqi parents, is believed to have fallen out with his former right-hand man Ismail Abdo, or "Strawberry", who also moved to Turkey.

Amid the feud, Abdo's mother was shot dead in Uppsala in September.

"The situation in society is inhumane, incomprehensible and without any limits," Catarina Bowall, a senior police officer in Uppsala, said recently. Police in Uppsala and Stockholm declined to be interviewed, saying they are too busy investigating recent shootings.

Fredrik Linder, a doctor at Uppsala's hospital, has witnessed the effects of the violence. When he started working in A&E there would be one or two cases of gunshots a year, he told a local TV station. Now, there is about one a week. "It's a completely new world," he added.

By the end of October, there had been 48 deadly shootings this year in this country of 10.5m people. Last year, there were a record total of 62, up from 45 in 2021.

But the targeting of relatives, many of whom live in respectable districts, and a record number of bombings have led to a growing feeling of insecurity. "It almost appears random – it can happen to anybody, anywhere. It makes it more similar to terrorism," says Manne Gerell, a Swedish criminologist and senior lecturer at Malmö university.

Police in Stockholm alone have a list of 150 homes in the capital that could be targets for a shooting or bombing, public broadcaster SVT has reported. "If my family is in danger, everyone's family is in danger," a gang member told the TV station.

Another recent phenomenon is that the killers are getting younger, as children in Sweden often receive light sentences. In October, several people were convicted for two powerful explosions in a trendy part of Stockholm. A 25-year-old received five years in jail, while two 17-year-olds involved were placed in youth homes for 10 months.

This is also a risk. Police say gangs are actively recruiting vulnerable young people from within these care homes, known in Sweden as Hem för vård eller boende, or HVB. "We know that HVB can increase the problem, not be the solution," says Ola Jerimiasen, chief of staff for social services in Uppsala.

Pelling, the mayor, says that many of the people arrested for recent killings in the area are not from Uppsala, but young "hitmen" sent to the city.

"It's very hard for the city of Uppsala to prevent those crimes," he adds. "It's a national problem."

Society of division

Ask a Swede what has gone wrong in their country and you will get a mixed response. Those on the right largely blame immigration, which has added 2m people to the country in recent decades. Those on the left point to social factors, including the privatisation of Sweden's welfare system which has led to worse services in deprived areas.

For most of the 2010s, the nationalist Sweden Democrats were a lone voice opposed to mass immigration, but their support has risen almost in lockstep with the intensifying violence.

Now, the one-time fringe party is one of Sweden's largest political groups. "For a long time, we were alone. We were labelled racists. Today the situation is so bad. We're not alone any more," says Jomshof, of the justice committee.

Jomshof, who faced calls to resign in July over his views on Islam and an inflammatory description of the Prophet Muhammad – wants Sweden to stop immigration and deport criminals born overseas.

But the nearest thing to agreement across the political spectrum is that Sweden itself has not done enough to integrate its immigrant communities.

Almost all Swedish cities have at least one so-called vulnerable area, where immigrants often make up a majority of the population. Crime rates there tend to be high and schools struggle to keep students or maintain discipline.

"I don't want to say migration is what went wrong; I would rather say integration [went wrong]," says Jens Lapidus, a criminal defence lawyer turned crime author who wrote the Netflix show *Snabba Cash*.

Most of his former clients and gang members today are not newly arrived immigrants but those born in Sweden, he says. "You were born here, but you still feel the doors are closed to you and you have not been let in," he adds.

This has a "psychological effect", he argues. "The real problem is how we failed at integrating these people."

Taha, who gave only his first name, became a Swedish citizen after arriving from Iraq two decades ago but is now thinking of moving to the UK.

"Swedes make you feel foreign even when you have the passport, even my kids who were born here," he says. "They blame immigrants for everything. But this gang violence affects me, my family, my friends as well."

He thinks the Swedish authorities let this happen and should have acted "a long time ago".

'I don't want to say migration is what went wrong; I would rather say integration [went wrong]'

Local politicians now openly talk of segregation and the presence of parallel societies. Many, especially on the political right, are urging Sweden to set more demands on new arrivals.

"The politicians have been naive. You have people in Malmö who have lived on financial aid for decades and who can't speak Swedish. Why are we letting people be so passive?" asks Farishta Sulaiman, a local councillor from the Moderate party.

Naive is a word on many lips. Lapidus, the former lawyer, argues that Swedes "have a naive belief in human goodness" and have been slow to "fathom that there are not so nice people out there".

Jomshof, whose Sweden Democrats support the government in parliament, is one of those bemoaning his country's slow response, noting that neighbouring Denmark started cracking down on gangs 20 years ago and has been far more successful.

Gerell, the academic, agrees. "No one took the violence and the gang structures seriously until it was too late."

But Lapidus points to a different shift in Sweden: the "complete explosion of the hyper-rich". Inequality has risen faster in the Scandinavian country than

any other developed country in the past three decades. "If you create a society where the rift is too big, it also leads to . . . more problems with the underbelly of society," he argues.

Particularly on the left, there are concerns over how gangs have exploited another big change in Swedish society: the widespread privatisation of the welfare state. Private companies now run large amounts of schools, hospitals and care homes after the Moderate's previous stint in power from 2006 to 2014.

Police and local politicians say that gangs are now making more money from activities such as fraud and even running parts of the welfare state than from the drugs trade.

"We have had 20 years of deregulation and we have been too naive. We have a school system that works against integration [by] segregating," says Pelling, pointing out that poor areas are often left with the worst schools.

Nobody quite knows how far the infiltration has spread. Security officials believe some political parties have been affected. Prosecutors recently charged an employee at the district court in Attunda, between Stockholm and Uppsala, with leaking secret information to a gang member. The woman, who denies the offence, is also accused of letting them use her work computer.

"What scares me is that we're trying to fight non-democratic citizens with democratic rules," says Jomshof, the far-right politician. "Sometimes I wonder: will it be enough?"

'The country is still safe'

For many years, it was the southern city of Malmö that was the focus of gang violence. Just across the Øresund strait from the Danish capital of Copenhagen, it is the main entry point for immigrants arriving in Sweden and home to one of the country's most notorious suburbs, Rosengård.

In the decade after 2010, Sweden despaired at the violence in Malmö. But that has since subsided, moving to other cities such as Uppsala.

After a peak of violence in 2017 with 65 shootings and 58 explosions, police say there have been 27 shootings and 7 explosions so far this year. Glen Sjögren, a veteran police officer in Rosengård, says: "Back then, it felt quite helpless. We had a feeling that no matter what we did, it just got worse. Nowadays, we rather feel the opposite."

With fewer murders to deal with, he says, more resources can be put on the street to prevent crimes.

Police attribute the fall in violence to a crackdown on gang crime, in which the worst criminals were put in jail. Authorities also turned to a US anti-violence tactic, known as Group Violence Intervention, which shifts the focus from punishment to prevention. The entire community is engaged to persuade actual and potential gang members to avoid violence.

"The slogan is: alive, safe and out of prison. Jail has a high cost. It is more important to stop them committing crime than lock them up for crimes they have done," Sjögren argues.

But he and local politicians argue that law and order is only part of the solution. Much of the answer also lies on the social side, particularly schools.

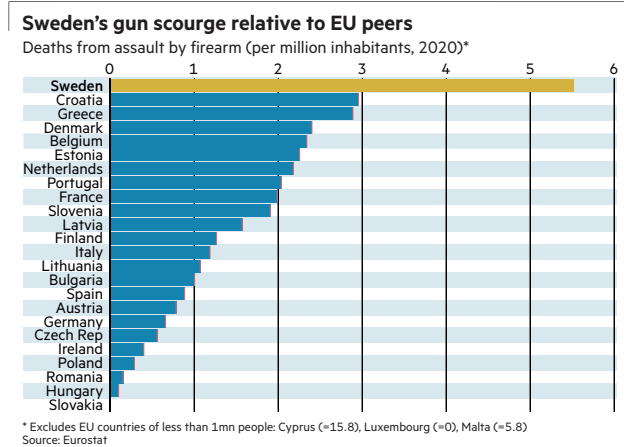
"To really turn things around, we need to do something with recruitment. It's doing things now with three-year-olds to stop them in 10 years' time picking up a gun," says Gerell. If as much resource was placed on social solutions as law enforcement, he adds, Sweden could afford to give each at-risk child their own social worker.

Sulaiman, the local councillor, adds: "The best vaccine for not getting into crime is to pass secondary school. Malmö has a lot of kids not even passing elementary school."

This is "the most important thing we can do", agrees Anders Fridborg, head of security for Uppsala. "If kids don't finish school, they are more likely to end up in a criminal structure."

A final area of rare agreement is that there are no quick fixes to Sweden's gang crisis. Improving integration, keeping more children in vulnerable areas in school and removing gangs from the welfare state will take many years. "We need to work together, not against one another," says Almerfors in Uppsala.

Others, like Lapidus, are urging people inside and outside Sweden to keep a sense of perspective. "It's bad what is going on," he says. "But come on, it's nothing like Mexico or even America. Sweden is still one of the safest countries in the world."



Uppsala is renowned for its university,

Opinion

China's long rise is reversing

MARKETS

Ruchir Sharma



In a historic turn, China's rise as an economic superpower is reversing. The biggest global story of the past half century may be over.

After stagnating under Mao Zedong in the 1960s and 70s, China opened to the world in the 1980s – and took off in subsequent decades. Its share of the global economy rose nearly tenfold from below 2 per cent in 1990 to 18.4 per cent in 2021. No nation had ever risen so far, so fast.

Then the reversal began. In 2022, China's share of the world economy shrank a bit. This year it will shrink more significantly, to 17 per cent. That two-year drop of 1.4 per cent is the largest since the 1960s.

These numbers are in "nominal" dollar terms – unadjusted for inflation –

the measure that most accurately captures a nation's relative economic strength. China aims to reclaim the imperial status it held from the 16th to early 19th centuries, when its share of world economic output peaked at one-third, but that goal may be slipping out of reach.

China's decline could reorder the world. Since the 1990s, the country's share of global GDP grew mainly at the expense of Europe and Japan, which have seen their shares hold more or less steady over the past two years. The gap left by China has been filled mainly by the US and by other emerging nations.

To put this in perspective, the world economy is expected to grow by \$8tn in 2022 and 2023 to \$105tn. China will account for none of that gain, the US will account for 45 per cent, and other emerging nations for 50 per cent. Half the gain for emerging nations will come from just five of these countries: India, Indonesia, Mexico, Brazil and Poland. That is a striking sign of possible power shifts to come.

Moreover, China's slipping share of world GDP in nominal terms is not

based on independent or foreign sources. The nominal figures are published as part of their official GDP data. So China's rise is reversing by Beijing's own account.

One reason this has gone largely unnoticed is that most analysts focus on real GDP growth, which is inflation-adjusted. And by adjusting creatively for inflation, Beijing has long managed

It is one of the few economies suffering from deflation, and it also faces a debt-fuelled property bust

to report that real growth is steadily hitting its official target, now around 5 per cent. This in turn appears to confirm, every quarter, the official story that "the east is rising." But China's real long-term potential growth rate – the sum of new workers entering the labour force and output per worker – is now more like 2.5 per cent.

The ongoing baby bust in China has

already lowered its share of the world working age population from a peak of 24 per cent to 19 per cent, and it is expected to fall to 10 per cent over the next 35 years. With a shrinking share of the world's workers, a smaller share of growth is almost certain.

Further, over the past decade, China's government has grown more meddlesome, and its debts are historically high for a developing country. These forces are slowing growth in productivity, measured as output per worker. This combination – fewer workers, and anaemic growth in output per worker – will make it difficult in the extreme for China to start winning back share in the global economy.

In nominal dollar terms, China's GDP is on track to decline in 2023, for the first time since a large devaluation of the renminbi in 1994. Given the constraints to real GDP growth, in the coming years Beijing can only regain global share with a spike in inflation or in the value of the renminbi – but neither is likely. China is one of the few economies suffering from deflation, and it also faces a debt-fuelled property bust, which typically leads to a

devaluation of the local currency.

Investors are pulling money out of China at a record pace, adding to pressure on the renminbi. Foreigners cut investment in Chinese factories and other projects by \$12bn in the third quarter – the first such drop since records begin. Locals, who often flee a troubled market before foreigners do, are leaving too. Chinese investors are making outward investments at an unusually rapid pace and prowling the world for real estate deals.

China's President Xi Jinping has in the past expressed supreme confidence that history is shifting in his country's favour, and nothing can stop its rise. His meetings with Joe Biden and US chief executives at last week's summit in San Francisco did hint at moderation, or at least a recognition that China still needs foreign business partners. But almost no matter what Xi does, his nation's share in the global economy is likely to decline for the foreseeable future. It's a post-China world now.

The writer is the chair of Rockefeller International

Europe needs a new framework for Turkey

Sinan Ulgen

European leaders will face a historic decision at their next summit in December. After years of prevarication, they must decide whether the EU is finally ready to accept new members. Geopolitical shocks such as the war in Ukraine, but also the growing prospect of a long-term rivalry with China, have precipitated this moment of truth. Yet the real dilemma lies elsewhere. As the EU charts a path for the accession of new countries including Ukraine, Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the question of Turkey looms large.

Had Turkey pursued its reform agenda, the task facing EU leaders would have been much simpler. Already a candidate country since 1999, Ankara's progress could then have been judged on the same merits as the remaining members of this club of aspirant nations. However, over the past decade, Turkey has drifted away from European norms on democracy and the rule of law. This backtracking stands in contrast to the logic of EU enlargement, which is predicated on the will to reform. The lack of a domestic consensus for reform, as evidenced by the May 2023 elections, shrouds the future of Turkey-EU relations in uncertainty.

This uncertainty has persisted, as there has been no tangible progress on the Turkey-EU agenda for years. But Europe can no longer postpone the inevitable. Making a historic opening to new nations while sidestepping the issue of Turkey would be a truly superficial outcome for December's summit.

This can be resolved by redefining

An embedding of Ankara in the EU's strategic plan could contribute to a revitalised western alliance

Europe's long-term relationship with Turkey, based on four key principles. First, Turkey needs to remain a candidate for enlargement. Despite the negative developments of the past several years, there is no value in challenging its status as one – especially given that, despite having failed to capture political power, there is a strong domestic constituency in Turkey interested in advancing the prospect of political integration with the EU.

Second, the changed circumstances should be reflected in the creation of a European framework for relations with Turkey. Viewed from Ankara, the EU has been unable to provide a channel of positive engagement with Turkey at this time of geopolitical upheaval. This has also complicated the championing of a domestic narrative to counter the strong scepticism about the west that permeates public discourse. Viewed from Brussels, this lack of engagement has resulted in a total loss of leverage over Turkish policy, domestic or foreign.

Third, the new framework should aim to improve Turkish governance, in contrast to the accession track which remains focused on political rights. A concrete achievement can be the green-lighting of negotiations for the deepening of the Turkey-EU customs union. Broadening this arrangement to include services would lead to Turkey's policies converging with those of the EU, enhancing policy predictability and the rule of law. This initiative, along with visa liberalisation, policy convergence in green and digital sectors, energy collaboration and joint diplomacy in Africa and Central Asia, could profoundly reshape Turkey-EU political relations.

Finally, the new deal between Turkey and the EU must recognise today's global landscape. Regardless of whether Turkey can ever become an EU member, neither entity would be well served by a future of rivalry and antagonism.

The deal should foster a gradual and sustainable rapprochement, acknowledging Turkey's aim of strategic autonomy and its growing identification with the concerns of the Global South. This embedding of Turkey, with its own capabilities and sensibilities, in the EU's strategic plan, could contribute to a revitalised western alliance that is better equipped to respond to a cornucopia of regional and global challenges. This is the crucial test for Europe's leaders as they prepare for this decisive summit.

The writer is the director of the Istanbul-based *Edam think-tank* and a senior fellow at *Carnegie Europe*

Behold the Ozempic effect on business

COMPANIES

Rana Foroohar



It's rare that the presentation of the results of medical studies attract standing-room-only crowds. But that was the case a couple of weeks ago in Philadelphia, when medical professionals and media alike packed a ballroom at an American Heart Association meeting.

They were there to hear the news that Wegovy, one of a new group of massively popular weight-loss medications, could not only make patients a lot thinner and cut their risk of diabetes, but also reduce the chance of death from heart attack or stroke by 20 per cent.

Not since the rise of cholesterol-reducing statins, or perhaps even pain medications like Advil, has a group of pharmaceuticals so captured the public imagination. Wegovy, and its better known cousin Ozempic, are "semaglutides," a class of drugs that slow digestion and mimic the effects of natural appetite-reducing hormones. First commercialised by Danish insulin maker NovoNordisk, they are now being developed and rolled out by many major pharmaceutical companies. Not only do they lead to an average 15-20 per cent weight loss in obese patients, they also appear to protect the heart, liver

and kidneys, organs which are often put under strain by excess weight.

Prescriptions for these drugs are up a whopping 300 per cent in the US since 2020, despite the fact that they can cost between \$300 and \$1,500 per month. Bank of America expects 48mn Americans (about one-seventh of the population) to be on the meds by 2030.

This reflects not only the fact three-quarters of the US population is overweight, but also the impact of intense media interest in the drugs. They are being used not only by the truly overweight and/or diabetic patients for whom they were developed, but by Hollywood stars and others who believe you can never be too rich or too thin.

Pre-diabetic patients are going on them to avoid more serious illness. Psychiatrists are doling out prescriptions to patients whose antidepressants have caused them to put on weight. Weight-Watchers has acquired a telemedicine company to start prescribing semaglutides via Zoom.

Other companies in industries ranging from fast food to insurance to health and fitness are seeing their core business models disrupted by drugs that seem to fundamentally change how much people want to eat.

Let's start with the pharmaceutical firms themselves. If you don't have an Ozempic knock-off in the development pipeline, your share price may take a hit. Novo Nordisk now has a market capitalisation that is higher than the entire gross domestic product of Denmark, and Eli Lilly's share price is up 40



Matt Kenyon

per cent since it rolled out its own weight-loss copycat Mounjaro. But both Pfizer and Moderna – neither of which have a successful semaglutide on the market – have seen their share prices plummet in recent months.

And it's not only companies in the weight-loss business that are being affected. In early October, when Novo Nordisk announced that Ozempic was so effective against kidney disease that it was stopping a trial early, shares in some dialysis providers tanked.

Now, healthcare analysts say that the \$250bn cardiovascular disease market could be reduced by 10 per cent by 2050, and hundreds of billions-worth of additional business in treatments for diabetes, kidney and liver disease and other weight related illnesses could be

Big players in industries ranging from fast food to insurance are seeing their core models disrupted

disrupted. The Ozempic effect doesn't stop there. Analysts have downgraded doughnut maker Krispy Kreme recently amid worries that Americans on semaglutides won't reach for as many sweet treats as they have in the past.

Last month, Walmart chief executive John Furner said that customers on obesity drugs weren't buying as many groceries, which led to a brief sell-off in consumer staple stocks such as Mondelez and PepsiCo. No wonder Coca-Cola's chief financial officer John Murphy tried to get out ahead of the issue earlier last month, emphasising that more than two-thirds of his company's portfolio was made up of low and no-calorie products.

The new weight-loss drugs will also disrupt the US healthcare system – the only question is how. Semaglutides are expensive, but so is obesity.

One study found that obesity adds \$1,861 in annual healthcare costs per American. But if the government decided that Medicare should reimburse for weight-loss drugs (it currently doesn't) that would create huge costs,

too. Insurance companies have long complained about obesity-related costs, but also don't like the idea of tens of millions of Americans suddenly going on semaglutides. Analysts say the jury is out on whether costs for the system as a whole would decline, but it seems likely if you take into account the possible reductions in conditions such as kidney failure, blindness, heart disease and liver complaints.

Of course, the new miracle weight-loss drugs do nothing to address many of the underlying causes of American obesity, from an out-of-date farm subsidy system that encourages the over-production of unhealthy food, to sprawling suburbs where people are forced to spend large swaths of their time in their cars. You can't fix any of that with a pill. We also don't yet know what the long-term health ramifications of taking these pills for years or even decades will be. What we do know is that they are already transforming fortunes as well as waistlines across America.

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Berlin is hoist with its own legalistic petard

EUROPE

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Germany's constitutional court has repeatedly proved its readiness to be a pain in the backside of would-be policy-makers. It has long been weaponised by opponents of the European Central Bank: in 2020, it infamously usurped the European Court of Justice's authority to interpret European law, over quantitative easing.

Last Wednesday, it was domestic economic policy that the country's top court torpedoed. The judges in Karlsruhe barred a €60bn budgetary move made in the early days of the coalition government of social democrats, liberals and greens.

Because of the pandemic, the strict rules of the "debt brake" limiting public

borrowing were still suspended in 2021. When the government took office late that year, it used a supplementary budget – for 2021 even if passed in 2022 – to shift unused borrowing authorisation from the main budget into a separate off-budget multiyear fund for green investments. The court has now found that this contravened the constitution's strict rules against deficit funding.

The striking down of that budget manoeuvre presents an immediate economic challenge. Even Europe's largest economy cannot effortlessly pull another €60bn (more than 1.5 per cent of annual output) out of its sleeve. If the state has already committed any of the money, then tough luck: the court says it "must compensate for this through other means".

That is not insurmountable: the €60bn was to be spent over several years. Calculations can be tweaked, technical adjustments made, safety margins and reserves maxed out to find more money. Against that, the ruling threatens other off-budget funds too, at both federal and state levels.

The alternative of not doing the cli-

mate spending would be disastrous after two decades of under-investment in an economy that urgently needs to be fitted out for net zero and a geopolitically precarious world. Berlin will no doubt have to look hard at raising taxes.

The political fallout could be greater than the economic consequences. The original manoeuvre played a key role in making the coalition possible: it could satisfy the greens' climate ambitions

The political fallout of the constitutional court's ruling could be greater than the economic consequences

while reassuring the liberals' fiscally conservative voters that German budget probity was being honoured.

But now the court has made it plain that you can't have it both ways. Hard legal limits on deficit financing, which Berlin introduced in the global financial crisis and pushed hard on the rest of Europe, make it extremely difficult to

pursue the economic policy most now deemed essential for both industrial revival and planetary survival. Germany has been hoist on its own ordoliberal petard.

This will matter in EU politics too. Finance ministers are trying to agree, by the end of the year, on a replacement for the bloc's fiscal rules – whose main contribution must be to make fiscal sustainability compatible with more investment. At a late stage in the talks, Christian Lindner, the liberals' finance minister, has demanded stricter annual deficit limits that even Germany's most frugal friends did not call for.

It is not a good look to lecture others on fiscal discipline and the need for tougher rules while your highest court slaps you down for accounting trickery to circumvent your own. If Berlin resorts to new budgetary manoeuvring rather than hard economic choices, it will not aid Lindner with his EU counterparts.

Conversely, if the German government responds with serious tax rises or spending cuts to sustain its full investment ambitions, he will be able to say he

practices what he preaches. But don't expect too much of that: those who object loudest to public borrowing are usually also the strongest opponents of higher taxes, while few politicians like to cut spending. Either way, the next days of budget talks in Berlin will matter for those in Brussels.

Something good could come out of this, if the Karlsruhe ruling triggers a serious debate in Germany about how best to do economic policy – and economic politics. For the belief in strict rules reflects a desire to take the politics out of economic management. That betrays politicians' lack of confidence in one another – but most profoundly, in their own rectitude.

That is the root of Germany's ordoliberal economic philosophy, for historical reasons, but can be found through much of Europe. It is, however, an illusion. Economic policy is ineradicably political; the question is how to make it responsibly so. If this legal curveball provokes answers to that, in Germany and in the EU, it will have been well worth it.

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