FINANCIAL TIMES
MONDAY 3 APRIL 2023 INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR ASIA

How Mrs Assad holds Syria's economic reins
THE BIG READ, PAGE 17

Japan's youth reap demographic rewards
LEO LEWIS, PAGE 18

Base mettle
Trump plays to Florida fans

Supporters of Donald Trump protesting against his indictment on criminal charges outside his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida this weekend.

Trump was indicted by a grand jury last week on charges related to the alleged payment of hush money to porn star Stormy Daniels, though the exact nature of the charges are not yet known.

He will appear in a New York court tomorrow to answer the allegations.

Joe Tacopina, one of the former president's lawyers, said yesterday Trump would plead not guilty and would seek to have the charges dismissed. "There's no law that fits this," he said.

After his court appearance, Trump, who is running to be the Republican candidate for president in 2024, will travel back to Florida to deliver a speech in a bid to rally his base.

News & analysis page 2
Outlook page 18

Giorgio Viera/AFP via Getty Images

Opec members in surprise oil output cut of more than 1mn barrels a day

- Move will raise US-Saudi tensions
- Targets effective from May
- Russia extends production cap

DEREK BROWER — NEW YORK
DAVID SHEPPARD AND TOM WILSON
LONDON

Saudi Arabia and other major oil-producing nations yesterday announced surprise production cuts totalling more than 1mn barrels a day, putting Riyadh on a collision course with the US as the kingdom attempts to boost prices.

Saudi Arabia will implement a "voluntary cut" of 500,000 b/d, or just under 5 per cent of its output, in "co-ordination with some other Opec and non-Opec countries", it said.

Russia, which is also a member of the Opec+ group of oil producers, said it would extend its existing 500,000 b/d production cut until the end of the year. Moscow's reduction was first announced last month in retaliation against western countries' imposition of a price cap on its seaborne oil exports.

Oil prices fell sharply last month after the collapse of the US's Silicon Valley Bank and the forced takeover of Credit Suisse by UBS, which sparked fears of contagion in global financial markets and a significant drop-off in demand for crude.

"Opec+ have made a pre-emptive cut to get ahead of any possible demand weakness from the banking crisis that has emerged," said Amrita Sen, director of research at Energy Aspects.

> 'Opec+ have made a pre-emptive cut to get ahead of any demand weakness from the banking crisis'

The Saudi-led initiative was announced without a formal Opec+ meeting, suggesting an element of urgency by the countries involved.

The surprise cuts risk reigniting a dispute between Riyadh and the US, which pushed the kingdom to pump more oil last year in a bid to tame rampant inflation amid a surge in energy costs after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

In October, when Opec+ announced a formal production cut of 2mn b/d, the White House accused Saudi Arabia of in effect siding with Russia.

People familiar with Saudi Arabia's thinking say Riyadh was irritated last week that the Biden administration publicly ruled out new crude purchases to replenish a strategic stockpile that had been drained last year as the White House battled to tame inflation. The White House had previously offered reassurance to Saudi Arabia that it would step in to make purchases for its strategic reserve if prices fell.

Helima Croft, head of commodity strategy at RBC Capital Markets, said Saudi Arabia was staking out an economic strategy independent of the US, after relations between Riyadh and Washington have deteriorated under Biden's administration.

"It's a Saudi-first policy. They're making new friends, as we saw with China," Croft said, referring to a recent Beijing-brokered diplomatic deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The kingdom was sending a message to the US that "it's no longer a unipolar world", she added.

The voluntary cuts from Opec+ members will begin in May and last until the end of 2023, the Saudi statement said. Iraq will reduce crude production by 211,000 b/d; the United Arab Emirates by 144,000 b/d; Kuwait by 128,000 b/d; Kazakhstan by 78,000 b/d; Algeria by 48,000 b/d; and Oman by 40,000 b/d, according to statements from their respective governments.

"We don't think cuts are advisable at this moment, given market uncertainty," the US National Security Council said. "We will continue to work with all producers to ensure energy markets support economic growth and lower prices for American consumers."

Additional reporting by Felicia Schwartz

Briefing

China ups the US chip ante with Micron review
Beijing has ordered a probe into imports from the semiconductor maker on security grounds as the tech battle intensifies.— PAGE 5; CHINA PRESSES JAPAN, PAGE 4

Israel to set up new force
Israel's cabinet has approved the creation of a national guard to deal with "national emergencies" but critics have denounced it as a "militia". — PAGE 4

Trend hedge funds suffer
So-called CTA hedge funds have suffered one of their worst monthly losses after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank prompted a reversal in US Treasuries.— PAGE 5

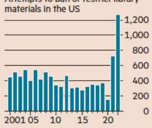
Plea for deep-sea mining
The head of UK Seabed Resources has said Europe must allow mining of the ocean if it is to gain key resources in the transition to clean energy.— PAGE 8

Law firms eye India
International firms are looking to open offices in the country after the Bar Council of India changed its rules to allow overseas groups wider market access.— PAGE 8

Crossword and Lex
The Lex column, Business Life and the FT crossword can be found inside today.— PAGE 13

Datawatch

Throwing the book
Attempts to ban or restrict library materials in the US



Source: American Library Association

The US last year saw its highest number of demands to censor books in more than 20 years of data from the American Library Association. The 'vast majority' of titles were by or about members of the LGBTQ+ community or people of colour

Lithium supplies threaten Europe's EV ambitions
Electric transition ▸ PAGE 8

Prosecutor to probe UBS takeover of Credit Suisse as investors vent anger

SAM JONES — BELLINZONA
OWEN WALKER — LONDON

Switzerland's federal prosecutor has opened an investigation into the state-backed takeover of Credit Suisse by its rival UBS, as the bank's shareholders prepare to vent their anger at its last annual meeting.

The Bern-based prosecutor is looking into potential breaches of Swiss criminal law by government officials, regulators and executives at the two banks, which agreed an emergency merger last month over the course of a frantic weekend in order to avert a potentially catastrophic financial crisis.

The prosecutor's office told the Financial Times it "wants to proactively fulfil its mission and responsibility to contribute to a clean Swiss financial centre". There were "numerous aspects of events" that warranted investigation, it said, which must be analysed to "identify any crimes that could fall within the competence of the [prosecutor]".

Prosecutor Stefan Blättler has issued a number of "investigatory orders" to government bodies. His office has also been in contact with the federal and cantonal governments and is likely to seek to interview key officials.

A focus of the probe concerns sensitive information from the negotiations that was leaked to the press and could constitute a breach of state secrecy or industrial espionage laws, according to a person familiar with the investigation.

Shareholders of UBS and Credit Suisse — who were denied a say on the deal by government fiat — will get a chance to air their grievances in the coming days as both banks hold annual meetings.

Credit Suisse's board is expected to bear the brunt of investors' anger when they gather tomorrow at a 15,000-capacity ice hockey stadium in the Zurich suburb of Oerlikon. Executives fear that the event could attract protests from Swiss citizens, who are outraged by the bank's rapid decline and litany of recent scandals.

Polling shows that more than three-quarters of the public are opposed to the $3.25bn takeover.

UBS is pressing ahead with plans to integrate its erstwhile rival into its business. It has whittled down a list of management consultants to advise on the deal to four. It will decide in the coming days whether to award the contract to Bain & Company, Boston Consulting Group, McKinsey or Oliver Wyman, said people involved in the process.

The FT View page 18
Martin Wolf & Rana Foroohar page 19

Australia	A$7.00(inc GST)
China	RMB30
Hong Kong	HK$33
India	Rup220
Indonesia	Rp45,000
Japan	¥650(inc JCT)
Korea	W4,500
Malaysia	RM11.50
Pakistan	Rupee 350
Philippines	Peso 140
Singapore	S$5.80(inc GST)
Taiwan	NT$140
Thailand	Bht140
Vietnam	US$4.50

Subscribe In print and online
www.ft.com/AsiaSubs
Tel: (852) 5803 3388
Fax: (852) 2905 5590
email: subseasia@ft.com

No: 41,288 ★

Printed in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Dublin, Frankfurt, Milan, Madrid, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore, Seoul, Dubai

14>
9 770307 176814

World Markets

STOCK MARKETS

	Mar 31	Prev	%chg
S&P 500	4085.91	4050.83	0.87
Nasdaq Composite	12146.58	12013.47	1.11
Dow Jones Ind	33111.69	32859.03	0.77
FTSEurofirst 300	1810.95	1798.60	0.69
Euro Stoxx 50	4318.49	4285.42	0.77
FTSE 100	7631.74	7620.43	0.15
FTSE All-Share	4157.88	4151.91	0.14
CAC 40	7333.44	7263.37	0.96
Xetra Dax	15628.01	15522.40	0.74
Nikkei	28041.48	27782.93	0.93
Hang Seng	20400.11	20309.13	0.45
MSCI World $	2759.70	2739.42	0.74
MSCI EM $	985.77	980.14	0.57
MSCI ACWI $	639.89	635.30	0.72
FT Wilshire 2500	5248.02	5220.02	0.54
FT Wilshire 5000	40929.03	40716.66	0.52

CURRENCIES

	Mar 31	Mar 24		Mar 31	Mar 24
$/€	1.086	1.076	€/$	0.920	0.929
$/£	1.236	1.223	£/$	0.809	0.818
£/€	0.879	0.880	€/£	1.138	1.136
¥/$	133.090	130.635	¥/€	144.596	140.596
¥/£	164.559	159.734	£ index	79.018	78.558
SFr/€	0.993	0.988	SFr/£	1.130	1.122

CRYPTO

	Mar 31	Prev	%chg
Bitcoin ($)	28395.60	28016.00	1.35
Ethereum	1828.40	1792.80	1.99

COMMODITIES

	Mar 31	Mar 24	%Week
Oil WTI $	75.45	69.16	9.09
Oil Brent $	79.63	74.89	6.33
Gold $	1965.80	1977.95	-0.61

GOVERNMENT BONDS

Yield (%)	Mar 31	Mar 24	Chg
US 2 yr	4.10	4.14	-0.04
US 10 yr	3.52	3.57	-0.05
US 30 yr	3.70	3.76	-0.06
UK 2 yr	3.43	3.45	-0.01
UK 10 yr	3.62	3.66	-0.04
UK 30 yr	3.80	3.81	-0.01
JPN 2 yr	-0.05	-0.07	0.02
JPN 10 yr	0.32	0.32	0.00
JPN 30 yr	1.24	1.21	0.02
GER 2 yr	2.68	2.74	-0.06
GER 10 yr	2.29	2.37	-0.08
GER 30 yr	2.36	2.42	-0.06

Prices are latest for edition
Data provided by Morningstar

Legal risks

Former president has Georgia on his mind

Alleged interference in 2020 vote count puts pressure on Trump

STEFANIA PALMA — WASHINGTON

As Donald Trump prepares to turn himself in over alleged hush money payments, the former president is the focus of other state and federal investigations that pose even bigger legal risks.

Trump's next set of legal problems could arrive in the state of Georgia, where Fani Willis, the Fulton county district attorney, is weighing potential charges in relation to alleged interference by the ex-president and others in the 2020 US presidential election.

Willis said this year that her decision on whether to bring indictments stemming from a special grand jury investigation was "imminent".

The Georgia inquiry as well as a US Department of Justice investigation into Trump's alleged meddling in the 2020 election are seen as the most serious legal threats to the ex-president. The DoJ is also investigating his handling of government documents. Trump has denied wrongdoing in these cases.

"The Georgia and DoJ cases expose Trump to potentially far more prison time than the Manhattan case, where prison time seems unlikely," said Barbara McQuade, professor at University of Michigan's law school and a former US attorney. "A conviction for election fraud, conspiracy to defraud the United States, Rico (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) or seditious conspiracy could bring substantial prison time".

Of the two inquiries linked to the 2020 election, a potential indictment would probably materialise in Georgia first, as its investigation may be viewed as a "subset" of the DoJ probe, according to Andrew Weissmann, who was a lead prosecutor during special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation while Trump was in office.

> 'A conviction for election fraud . . . or seditious conspiracy could bring substantial prison time'

The Georgia inquiry as well as the DoJ documents investigation "both appear to be substantially done", he added.

Clark Cunningham, law professor at Georgia State University, said Willis might decide to file a potential indictment before May 1, the deadline for her to address Trump's request, to avoid delays. Going by her use of the Georgia Rico statute in other high-profile trials, analysts say a potential indictment by Willis would focus on election fraud and may include racketeering charges often associated with mob prosecutions.

Rico would act as an umbrella for the string of alleged crimes associated with Trump and others. This may include allegations that the ex-president pressed Georgia's top election official to change the state's vote count, and that Republican lawmakers in that state signed false declarations claiming Trump had won the 2020 polls and designated themselves as electors.

Violations of Georgia's Rico laws carry a penalty of between five and 20 years in prison. Unlike in federal proceedings, defendants convicted in state courts may start serving jail time while appeals are pending.

Some experts argue that despite the gravity of allegations against Trump, he may never see a prison cell because of his defence strategies and status as former president.

But to others, that would not be the sole gauge of prosecutors' success.

"The most important thing is to reassert the rule of law," said Cunningham.

See Outlook

Politics. Republican right

Loyal backers see charges as rallying cry

Diehard supporters rage at Democrats and insist he will prevail in court battle

JAMES POLITI — PALM BEACH

Along the bridge to Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort on Saturday, a small group of supporters gathered in defence of the former president as he prepared to face criminal charges in Manhattan this week.

Some brought flags, others had posters, one carried a large cross. They cheered as passing cars honked in approval and jeered after one showed a photograph of Trump behind bars.

Dirk Frazel, who had driven five hours down Florida's Atlantic Coast from his hometown of Saint Augustine to offer free hot dogs to the group, condemned the "Democrats" behind the investigation.

"I think that in their blood lust, in their chaotic rage, they have committed a fatal error, in terms of setting a precedent for the prosecution of all past presidents and members of the government. And I think it opens up Pandora's box," he said.

Since receiving word of the indictment, Trump has remained inside his lavish estate, expressing his fury on social media and attacking the "witch hunt" that will force him to fly to New York today and face his arraignment tomorrow.

The indictment brought by district attorney Alvin Bragg may not be the only one: Trump is facing investigations by federal prosecutors over his role in the January 6 attack on the US Capitol and his mishandling of classified documents. He is also facing an inquiry in Georgia over his efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

But among Trump's diehard supporters and closest advisers, there is no shame or recrimination about his legal woes. They insist he will prevail both in court and at the polls as he aims to clinch the Republican presidential nomination in 2024 and win back the presidency from Joe Biden.

"[Trump] has an uncanny ability to remain motivated and hard charging, when I think the average person would just curl up into a ball," said Jason Miller, a senior adviser to Trump, in Palm Beach on Saturday. "There's a clear focus from his end on what the endgame is here. And that's to get back to the White House."

On board: a Trump supporter moors his boat in front of the former president's Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach, Florida, on Saturday — Giorgio Viera/AFP via Getty Images

Among Republicans in Palm Beach County, one of Florida's largest, it is clear that Trump has been solidifying his political standing in recent months, even though his main rival in next year's Republican presidential primary is expected to be Ron DeSantis, the state's governor.

According to the polling average on the Realclearpolitics.com website, Trump has a lead of 45.7 per cent to 28.9 per cent over DeSantis, although early primary state surveys have shown the Florida governor to be more competitive. Meanwhile, Trump has launched a massive fundraising drive on the back of the charges and many congressional Republicans have closed ranks behind him.

Among many US political analysts, the expectation is that even if Trump survives a primary challenge, his legal trouble could be deeply damaging in the general election, as voters balk at his alleged crimes. It is also unclear whether Trump would be able to mount an effective campaign during a trial.

On West Palm Beach, there was little sympathy for the former president. "He's in it for himself . . . he brought a lot of racism out . . . he's just a clown," said Gloria Ramirez, a nurse from Saint Lucie County, north of Palm Beach, and a Democrat.

Suzanne Lissandro, who works in publishing, added: "His supporters are diehard supporters, he's got that group. But I don't think that group is big enough to get him back in. There's just too much that has happened in the past couple of years."

But in Trump's orbit, many are increasingly confident that he can overcome the legal difficulties.

And they are especially dismissive of the challenge posed by DeSantis, who has not formally launched his campaign yet, and has been struggling to fend off Trump's increasingly brutal and personal attacks.

> 'There's a clear focus from his end on what the endgame is here. And that's to get back to the White House'
>
> Jason Miller, Trump adviser

The Trump campaign's pollster John McLaughlin on Saturday released a survey conducted since the indictment showing Trump with a 30-point lead over DeSantis, compared with 12 points in January.

Some local Republicans are also unhappy with DeSantis's response to the indictment. Although the governor wrote a tweet criticising the charges as "un-American" and a "weaponisation" of the justice system, his earlier reactions were to lament the "manufactured circus" over the investigation and saying he did not know "what goes into paying hush money to a porn star".

Robert Kiger, a Republican from Palm Beach county who has served as treasurer to a number of political campaigns, said: "Ron DeSantis has been a great governor for Florida [but] it makes no sense for him to run this time around."

But the main message coming from Republicans in Palm Beach is that Trump remains a viable candidate, even as the legal system closes in on him.

"[He has] all these attacks from all these different directions. And he just seems to be getting stronger lately," said Miller.

Defence strategy

Mar-a-Lago speech to be made after lawyers' bid to dismiss case

FELICIA SCHWARTZ — WASHINGTON

Donald Trump plans to deliver a speech after his arraignment tomorrow as one of his lawyers said he will move to dismiss the hush money charges against him, telegraphing the ex-president's early strategy.

"I very much anticipate a motion to dismiss coming because there's no law that fits this," Joe Tacopina said on CNN's *State of the Union*.

Trump's 2024 re-election campaign announced that the ex-president will give a speech tomorrow evening at Mar-a-Lago, showing how he is trying to use his legal woes to rally supporters at the same time he fights the charges in court.

Trump will be formally arrested and arraigned tomorrow after he was indicted by a grand jury last week on charges related to the alleged payment of hush money to porn star Stormy Daniels, though the exact nature of those charges are not yet known. The former president will plead not guilty, Tacopina said yesterday.

"He's gearing up for a battle," he said on ABC's *This Week*. "We believe it is a political persecution."

Former Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr said on NBC's *Meet the Press* yesterday that he expected "the court will want this to move quickly".

The case against Trump, who is running to be Republican candidate for president in 2024, comes after a grand jury in New York heard evidence from witnesses including Michael Cohen, his erstwhile lawyer. Cohen has claimed he was ordered in 2016 to pay $130,000 to Daniels to cover up an alleged affair.

> 'I very much anticipate a motion to dismiss coming because there's no law that fits this'

An ABC News/Ipsos poll released yesterday found that 50 per cent of Americans think the charges against Trump are serious, while 35 per cent believe they are not serious. Nearly 90 per cent of Democrats think Trump should have been charged in Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's investigation, while 62 per cent of Republicans say he should not have been.

The announcement of the indictment has shaken the presidential race and sent the US into uncharted territory, making Trump the first ex-president to be indicted. Republican analysts and members of his campaign expect the charges can help him with voters.

The Trump campaign pollster John McLaughlin on Saturday released a survey conducted since the indictment showing Trump with a 30-point lead over Florida governor Ron DeSantis, his expected main rival, a lead from 12 to 12 points in January.

Former Arkansas governor Asa Hutchinson, a moderate Republican, said yesterday he would join the race for president and called for Trump to drop out of the race now that he is indicted.

"If we're looking at the presidency and the future of our country, then we don't need that distraction and he needs to be able to concentrate on the legal issues that he faces," he said.

FINANCIAL TIMES
6th Floor, Nan Fung Tower
Central, Hong Kong

Subscriptions and Customer Service
Tel: (852) 5803 3388, subseasia@ft.com

Advertising
Tel: (852) 2868 2863 asiaads@ft.com, www.ftasia.net

Letters to the editor
letters.editor@ft.com

Published by
The Financial Times (HK) Limited, 6th Floor, Nan Fung Tower, 88 Connaught Road Central, Hong Kong
Asia Editor: Robin Harding

Printed by
Australia: Spotpress Pty Ltd, 24-26 Lillian Fowler Place, Marrickville, NSW 2204
Hong Kong: Kin Ming Printing Co Ltd, 15/F BLK A, 18 Ka Yip Street, Ming Pao Industrial Centre, Chai Wan; Representative; Angela Mackay; ISSN 1025-918X
Japan: Nikkei Tokyo Newspaper Printing Center, Inc., 1-10-5, Shinonome, Koto-Ku, Tokyo 135-0062 Representative; Hiroko Rizzo Hoshino; ISSN 0915-9460
South Korea: Maeil Business Newspaper, 30-1, 1-Ga, Pil-Dong, Jung-Ku, Seoul, 100-728
Singapore: SPH Media Limited, 2 Jurong Port Road, 619088
Representative, Anjali Mahindroo

Key players

American legal drama features colourful cast of characters

JOSHUA CHAFFIN — NEW YORK

The historic indictment of Donald Trump was the culmination of a four-year investigation marked by unexpected twists and unusual characters. Here is a list of some of the key players:

Stormy Daniels
Daniels, 44, is an adult film star. (Her birth name is Stephanie Gregory). She claims to have met Trump in 2006 at a charity golf tournament in Lake Tahoe, California. By her telling, Trump invited her to his suite. What ensued "may have been the least impressive sex I'd ever had," Daniels has said, claiming Trump offered her a role on his reality television show, *The Apprentice*. Daniels sought to sell her story in 2016, by which time the former reality television star was heading for the White House.

David Pecker
The one-time king of America's supermarket tabloids and publisher of the National Enquirer is a longtime Trump ally and Palm Beach denizen. When Trump entered politics Pecker, 71, offered to look out for potentially damaging stories, according to prosecutors. In a tabloid dark art known as "catch-and-kill", he could buy these but never publish them. When Daniels' team approached the Enquirer to sell her story in 2016, Pecker redirected them to Trump's then-fixer, Michael Cohen, to broker a deal.

Michael Cohen
Trump's former personal lawyer and fixer was once so devoted to his boss that he pledged to "take a bullet" for him, if need be. By his own account, the 'Mini-Me' Cohen, 56, was mesmerised by Trump when he went to work for him, even buying several apartments in his buildings. The Trumps appear to have viewed Cohen more as a lackey.

It was Cohen who arranged to pay Daniels $130,000 for her story. He did so, he has said, on Trump's orders. He pleaded guilty in 2018 to tax fraud and campaign finance violations related to the pay-off, and was sentenced to three years in prison. Since breaking with Trump, he has been reborn as his zealous antagonist. Cohen has testified before the grand jury but his value as a government witness may be impaired by his record of perjury. He lied to Congress, for example, about the Trumps' now-infamous Moscow tower project.

Allen Weisselberg
The former longtime chief financial officer of the Trump Organization was hired by Donald Trump's father, Fred Trump. More than anyone, Weisselberg, 75, knows the family business and so has been the holy grail for prosecutors. They have been unable to flip him, in spite of winning a guilty plea on tax charges that landed Weisselberg in the Rikers Island prison for a five-month sentence. He will be released in late April. Prosecutors are hoping that the threat of fresh criminal charges may yet prompt Weisselberg to break his decades-long allegiance to the Trumps.

Stormy Daniels said she met Donald Trump at a charity golf tournament

Cyrus Vance, Jr
The man who succeeded the legendary Robert Morgenthau as Manhattan district attorney and launched the Trump investigation in 2018. Vance, 68, was prompted by Cohen's testimony to Congress about the "hush" money payments to Daniels. His investigation then broadened into the Trump Organization's business practices. Vance's third and final term expired in January 2022.

Alvin Bragg
The son of both working-class Harlem and Harvard Law School took over from Vance just over a year ago. Bragg, 49, has become a punch bag for the right for ordering his staff to refrain from prosecuting many non-violent offences while, at the same time, pursuing Trump for allegedly paying off a mistress. Bragg is well-liked by his peers. But even admirers wonder if he has the political gifts to justify such a consequential case to a doubting public.

Shipping insurance

Russian sanctions heighten oil spill concern

Limited cover means clean-up could be delayed after a major accident

IAN SMITH, TOM WILSON AND CHRIS COOK — LONDON

The chief executive of one of the world's biggest shipping insurers has warned of the growing risk of a disastrous oil spill after the knock-on effects of sanctions on Russia left thousands more ships without third-party liability cover from "well-tested" insurers.

"Nobody will be there to help clear up the mess [without sufficient liability cover]," said Rolf Thore Roppestad, chief executive at Norway's Gard. "This is a social and environmental disaster waiting to happen, and it should be a big worry for all of us." The rare public warning from a senior insurer comes amid concern among big trading houses and some policymakers over the unintended consequences of the west's sanctions regime, which has pushed the Russian oil trade into the shadows.

There is unease in the energy sector that smaller, less experienced traders are now moving crude over longer distances on older vessels with unknown levels of insurance provision.

In an interview with the Financial Times, Roppestad estimated that since Russia invaded Ukraine "several thousand" more ships were trading around the globe without cover from the International Group of 12 Protection & Indemnity Clubs. The group is made up mostly by European and US insurers, including Gard, which have historically covered about 90 per cent of the world's ocean-going tonnage.

Roppestad said there was a much greater risk of a worst-case scenario in which "nobody will be there to pay" to clean up after an accident. "As the shadow fleet continues to grow, it will only become more acute."

The International Group of P&I Clubs are mutually owned by shipowners and charterers and offer insurance for third-party liability such as crashing a vessel. P&I cover is critical to the shipping trade and a condition for entry at global ports.

Western insurers and brokers have expressed private concerns that P&I cover from non-IG insurers will be less reliable and result in more limited payouts. "I am much less convinced about their reliability and ability to effectively handle a casualty if something goes wrong," said Roppestad.

Many ships eschewing IG cover are relying on other P&I insurers in Russia and the Middle East, according to insurance experts and ship records. Iran and Venezuela have long used their own shadow fleets of several hundred vessels to skirt sanctions. Iran has its own P&I insurer, Kish, created after western insurers pulled back.

"We have changed the logistics skill set around Russian oil in a very short period of time," said Ben Luckock, co-head of oil trading at Trafigura, about the growing prominence of smaller, less experienced trading firms relying on older vessels. Trafigura was one of the biggest lifters of Russian crude before it wound down that business last year.

A big area of concern, he said, are the straits between Denmark and Sweden at the mouth of the Baltic Sea, which remains an important trade route for sanctioned Russian oil that now bypasses Europe on its long journey to new buyers in India and China.

"You have a lot of 17, 18 and 19-year-old boats transiting the Danish straits with [Russian] oil destined for Asia," Luckock told the FT Commodities global summit last week.

Additional reporting by Polina Ivanova

Paris 2024. Ban dispute

Olympic stars left in limbo over Ukraine war

Sports world divided over participation of Russians and Belarusians at games

SARA GERMANO — NEW YORK

Russia's fencers might be headed for Paris 2024. Its shot putters might not. But the Olympic community has definitely hit a hurdle. With war in Ukraine still raging and the Paris Olympics just a year away, the question of whether Russian and Belarusian athletes will be permitted to compete in international events is dividing the sporting world.

It has also created a quagmire of competing arguments for the International Olympic Committee, which organises the games, pitting it against some of its leading member federations and drawing in dozens of foreign ministries and the UN.

"I want to perform at the Olympics. But as a citizen of Ukraine, I can't even imagine how to stand next to representatives of the Russian Federation," Olga Kharlan, a Ukrainian fencer and Olympic gold medallist, told journalists last week.

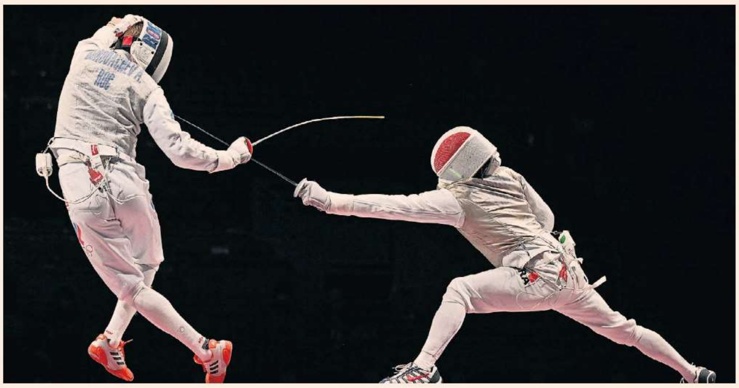
The issue is coming to a head as qualifying events for Paris 2024 get under way. But the governing bodies of the dozens of sports that make up the games remain divided.

The UK's Wimbledon Championship said on Friday it would reverse its ban on Russian and Belarusian athletes, who may now compete as neutrals in the tennis tournament. The WTA and ATP, the women and men's professional tours, whose rankings determine qualification for the Olympics, described the decision as "a workable solution which protects the fairness of the game".

The International Fencing Federation (FIE) also voted last month to reinstate Russian and Belarusian athletes following an initial ban in the early days of the Ukraine invasion.

The decision has proved so controversial that the German fencing federation said it would no longer host a women's World Cup event planned for May and more than 300 fencers, including Kharlan, signed an open letter this week imploring FIE to reverse its stance.

"Because of this ignorance on the part of the FIE and national fencing federations, it is once again the athletes who bear the responsibility and are being pushed into individual deliberations about boycott decisions", they wrote. "Athletes are left alone in this chaos."



Lunge: Russian fencer Kirill Borodachev, left, and France's Erwann Le Pechoux compete in the final of the men's foil event at the Tokyo Olympic Games
Fabrice Coffrini/AFP/Getty Images

However, World Athletics, which governs track and field and other running and walking events, said last month it would exclude Russian and Belarusian athletes "for the foreseeable future", in effect barring them from seeking to qualify for the Paris games.

At a board meeting last Tuesday, the IOC sought to resolve its dilemma, setting out guidelines for administrators of all Olympic sports on admitting athletes from Russia and Belarus to qualifying events. They include a bar on those nations' athletes entering team sports and on any member of the military or anyone who has publicly supported Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

"We have been accused by the Russian side of being agents of the US, and we have been accused by the Ukrainian side of being promoters of war", Thomas Bach, president of the IOC, said at a press conference after the meeting.

Qualifying standards are set by individual sports governing bodies and athletes spend years training to meet the criteria. However, the IOC has the final say on whether any qualifying athlete can enter the Olympics and has not yet ruled on whether Russians or Belarusians will be permitted to compete in Paris.

Critics have accused the committee of waiting for developments in Ukraine before deciding. Bach denied this, saying: "We are not kicking it down the road and we are not waiting for the war to end. We all want the war to end now."

On the first anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February, 35 governments, including in the UK, US and France, signed an open letter to international sports bodies in which they said: "Given there has been no change in the situation regarding the Russian aggression in Ukraine . . . there is no practical reason to move away from the exclusion regime for Russian and Belarusian athletes".

Within Russia, reactions to sanctions have been mixed. Stanislav Pozdnyakov, president of the Russian Olympic Committee, told state news agency Tass that banning Russian teams constituted "discrimination on the basis of a passport". Tatiana Tarasova, a prominent figure skating coach, said: "Athletes must compete. If we don't perform, we have a threat of losing Russian sports."

In issuing its guidelines, the IOC argued that preventing individual Russian and Belarusian athletes from competing could violate their human rights. The committee cited a resolution from the Court of Justice of the European Union and an opinion given by UN special rapporteur, Alexandra Xanthaki, in support of its argument.

'I want to perform but as a citizen of Ukraine, I can't even imagine how to stand next to a [Russian]'

But in an address to the IOC at its meeting, Ukrainian sports minister and president of the country's National Olympic Committee, Vadym Gutzeit, called the rapporteur's conclusions "not complete" and urged the global sporting body "to explore human rights issues more".

In practice, individual sporting bodies and nations will be responsible for deciding whether to boycott international events. Ukraine's government has said the country's athletes will not compete alongside Russians and Belarusians, according to local media.

The IOC said on Saturday that "if implemented, such a decision would only hurt the Ukrainian athlete community, and in no way impact the war that the world wants to stop".

One of the sharpest conflicts is taking place on the fencing piste. The sport's rules mandate that opponents shake one another's hand after competition or face disqualification, Ukrainian fencing federation president Mykhailo Illiashev told Reuters on Thursday.

But a potential handshake between a Russian and Ukrainian "is an impossible scenario", he said.

See Opinion

Middle East

Israel to set up national guard demanded by extreme-right Power party

JAMES SHOTTER — JERUSALEM

Israel's cabinet has approved the creation of a national guard, paving the way for the establishment of a force long demanded by the country's ultranationalist national security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promised Ben-Gvir's extreme-right Jewish Power party the force would be set up as part of a coalition deal between their parties in the wake of last year's parliamentary election. But critics have denounced the proposed body as a "militia".

The cabinet said yesterday that the new force would deal with "national emergency situations" similar to those in May 2021, when violence erupted in Israel's mixed cities — which have Jewish and Arab populations — as Israel fought an 11-day war with Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip.

Ben-Gvir, a settler previously convicted of inciting racism and supporting a terrorist organisation, has long argued for a national guard, saying it was needed to combat lawlessness and ease pressures on an overstretched police force.

However, civil rights groups and opposition politicians fear that the proposed force could be used to target Palestinian citizens of Israel and quell political dissent, and have expressed alarm about the prospect of such a force being subordinate to Ben-Gvir, who until a couple of years ago kept a picture in his house of a Jewish supremacist who gunned down 29 Palestinians in a mosque in 1994.

Several hundred people took to the streets in Tel Aviv to protest after Ben-Gvir's party published details of its proposals last week.

Ayman Odeh, an Arab lawmaker who leads the Hadash-Ta'al list, warned last week that the plan would create a "militia" that was "another tangible threat to the democratic space", adding: "It must be stopped."

Yair Lapid, leader of the country's largest opposition party, Yesh Atid, lambasted the announcement yesterday, accusing the government of having "ridiculous" priorities and financing "a private army of thugs" for Ben-Gvir.

"The only thing that interests [this government] is trampling on democracy and advancing the extreme fantasies of delusional people," he said.

Israel's police commissioner, Kobi Shabtai, has also expressed concerns, warning in a letter to Ben-Gvir that was leaked to local media that the new body would be "nothing but a waste of resources", was based on an untested model and could undermine security.

The cabinet said in a statement yesterday that the new body would be created in Ben-Gvir's ministry but that "the responsibilities of — and control over — the national guard" would be discussed by a committee involving all Israel's security agencies and the "relevant government ministries".

It added that the committee would report within 90 days and would "propose whether the national guard will be subordinate to the Israel Police Inspector General or to another body".

The previous government began setting up a national guard to cope with domestic political violence after the clashes in May 2021, but lost power before it could complete the process.

Climate summit

Fears for free speech in UAE ahead of COP28

AIME WILLIAMS — WASHINGTON
ATTRACTA MOONEY — LONDON

Speakers at a climate and health conference in the United Arab Emirates were told not to protest against or "criticise corporations" in a warning that cited the Gulf state's laws, alarming campaigners ahead of the country hosting the UN's COP28 climate summit this year.

Climate activists said the restrictions on free speech raised more questions about the suitability of the oil-rich UAE to host the annual UN climate summit at a time when top scientists have warned of a "rapidly closing window" to limit global warming to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels.

Organisers advised panellists at this month's Forecasting Healthy Futures event in Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital and its richest emirate, to "be aware and respectful of UAE laws", and warned: "Do not criticise Islam, UAE government, corporations or individuals", and "do not protest".

The written guidance, seen by the Financial Times, added: "We understand that climate change can be a controversial subject and we welcome all perspectives and opinions in civil discourse throughout the programme agenda. Protesting is illegal in the United Arab Emirates and any instances of disruptive protesting will be handled by the local authorities."

The conference on health in the context of climate change was organised by Forecasting Healthy Futures, a group of health and technology organisations convened by Malaria No More. According to the event's website, seed funding to FHF was provided by Reaching the Last Mile, a public health and development group with ties to UAE president Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan.

Campaigners said the warning raised serious concerns ahead of COP28, which will take place in November and December. The host nation has already come under scrutiny over its appointment of Sultan al-Jaber, head of Abu Dhabi's state-owned oil company Adnoc, to the presidency of COP28.

A COP28 UAE spokesperson said the conference would "take an inclusive approach that engages all stakeholders from the public and private sectors, civil society, scientific community, women and youth" and "welcome inclusive, constructive dialogues that facilitate consensus building to drive ambitious climate outcomes". They said organisers would ensure "there are safe spaces where all voices may be heard".

Additional reporting by Camilla Hodgson

Semiconductors

China presses Japan on chip export curbs

THOMAS HALE — SHANGHAI
LEO LEWIS — TOKYO

China has attempted to dissuade Japan from imposing big curbs on exports of semiconductor manufacturing equipment, as part of a fast-evolving geopolitical battle over access to the world's most advanced chips.

The move by Chinese foreign minister Qin Gang came during a visit to Beijing by his Japanese counterpart Yoshimasa Hayashi — the first such trip to China's capital by a leading Japanese diplomat in more than three years.

Qin told Hayashi that the US had in the past tried to "brutally suppress" Japan's semiconductor industry and was now "repeating its old tricks" against China. "Don't do to others what you don't want others to do to you," Qin said, according to a statement published on China's foreign ministry website yesterday. The "blockade" would "only stimulate China's determination to become self-sufficient", he added.

The comments signal that Beijing is taking a more active role in the face of a US sanctions regime that since late last year has sought to restrict global semiconductor-related exports to the Chinese mainland, as relations between the two powers deteriorate sharply.

Hayashi's visit came after Japan unveiled restrictions on Friday on exporting 23 kinds of technology, as part of a deal reached with the US and the Netherlands.The export controls will affect a larger number of Japanese companies than previously expected and require producers of high-end equipment to obtain licences for all regions.

'[A blockade will] only stimulate China's determination to become self-sufficient'

That would give Japanese authorities oversight over sales of machinery to countries that could potentially produce high-end chips for military use in China and elsewhere.Japan has been careful not to refer publicly to its agreement with the US and the Netherlands. Many Japanese companies depend on China for much of their growth, and a growing number of chief executives have expressed concern in private that a spiralling chip war will make it harder for them to straddle the gulf between the US and China.

China has sought to discourage the Netherlands from participating in the deal, with Tan Jian, the Chinese ambassador to the country, warning last month of "consequences" if it went ahead with restrictions. Foreign businesses in China have explored options for how they would maintain supply chains in the event of a severe decoupling or conflict between the powers.

During meetings with both Qin and Chinese premier Li Qiang, Hayashi also lodged a protest over the recent detention in China of a Japanese employee of pharmaceutical group Astellas, according to Japanese officials.

China steps up tech battle see Companies

Boomerang CEOs In times of crisis, the return of a former boss can provide both comfort and stability ● WORK & CAREERS

Companies & Markets

China steps up tech battle with probe into US chipmaker

- Micron subjected to 'security' review
- Beijing retaliates to Washington curbs

THOMAS HALE — SHANGHAI

China has launched a review into US chip manufacturer Micron Technology on "national security" grounds as Beijing retaliates against Washington's increasing curbs on its access to semiconductor technology.

The Cyberspace Administration of China said it would review imports of Micron's products in order to maintain national security, ensure the security of its information infrastructure and prevent risks caused by product problems.

Nasdaq-listed Micron Technology is the largest maker of memory chips in the US. Its shares fell 4 per cent following the announcement.

The semiconductor industry is at the heart of economic decoupling between the world's two superpowers.

> 'Micron stands by the security of our products and our commitments to customers'

In October last year, Washington introduced expansive chip export controls in an effort to slow China's progress in artificial intelligence and super computers. Since then, the Netherlands and Japan have joined the US in imposing more restrictions.

The CAC announcement, made late on Friday, marks a retaliatory move from Beijing and adds to the challenges facing businesses caught between the two countries.

The Biden administration has intensified economic pressure on China, with a special committee in Washington adding to bipartisan scrutiny on US businesses operating on the mainland. In response, companies in China are exploring how to diversify their supply chains. In September last year, Micron announced that it would receive around $320mn in subsidies from the Japanese government to expand co-operation with the US.

Despite China adopting a more conciliatory tone to business as it reopens from years of isolation during the pandemic, there are signs that there could be more retaliation in response to Washington's restrictions.

Last week, US business leaders including Apple chief Tim Cook largely kept a low profile at the China Development Forum, an annual opportunity for them to meet top officials in Beijing.

The Netherlands and Japan in January reached a deal with the US regarding semiconductor exports, with the latter unveiling restrictions on 23 types of equipment on Friday. The deal is designed to cut off China's access to advanced chips that could be used in sophisticated weaponry and machines.

In its quarterly report published in March, Micron said that: "The Chinese government may restrict us from participating in the China market or may prevent us from competing effectively with Chinese companies."

It also warned over the risk of losing access to rare earth materials that are mainly produced in China. "Constrained supply of rare earth elements, minerals, and metals may restrict our ability to manufacture certain of our products and make it difficult or impossible to compete with other semiconductor memory manufacturers who are able to obtain sufficient quantities of these materials from China."

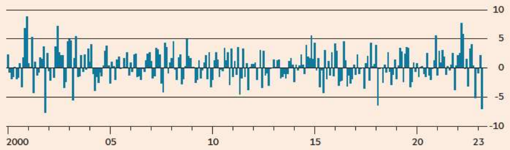
Micron said in a statement it was communicating with the Chinese regulator and co-operating fully: "Micron is committed to conducting all business with uncompromising integrity, and we stand by the security of our products and our commitments to customers."

Bleak futures Trend-following hedge funds suffer worst month since 2001 in bank chaos

Jeff Chiu/AP

Trend-following hedge funds slumped in March

Société Générale CTA Index, monthly move (%)



Source: Bloomberg

NICHOLAS MEGAW AND KATE DUGUID — NEW YORK
LAURENCE FLETCHER — LONDON

Trend-following hedge funds have suffered one of their worst monthly losses since the dotcom bust in the bond turmoil that was unleashed by the recent banking crisis.

So-called CTA funds, which manage around $200bn in assets according to eVestment, use algorithms to detect and ride trends in global futures markets, but many were caught out by a sudden reversal in US Treasuries after Silicon Valley Bank's failure.

Société Générale's CTA index, which tracks the performance of 20 of the largest such funds, dropped 6 per cent in two days in the wake of the Californian lender's collapse, and has slid further since. It declined 6.4 per cent in the month to March 30, the latest day for which data was available.

That would mark its worst monthly performance since November 2001, another month when changing interest rate expectations caused historic swings in Treasury yields.

The trend-following funds had profited from last year's historic selloff in bond markets, but many came unstuck when the banking chaos prompted a sudden dash into ultra-safe US government debt.

"CTAs were following last year's trend into this year," said Edward Al-Hussainy, a senior analyst at Columbia Threadneedle. "When trends reverse as rapidly as they did in the banking crisis, CTAs are bound to get caught offside."

Funds managed by firms including Man Group, Aspect Capital and Systematica Investments were among those hit by the moves.

Speculators in February had held the largest collective bet against short-dated US government debt on record, according to Commodity Futures Trading Commission data going back to 1993. And CTAs had been running bets against the two-year Treasury for well over a year, according to Société Générale's Trend Indicator, which models these vehicles' positions. The rush into Treasuries upended the trade, forcing hedge funds to buy bonds in order to exit their losing positions.

The sudden shift in hedge fund positioning helped fuel some of the biggest moves in the Treasury market since the 1980s, and drove volatility to its highest level since 2008.

CTA strategies are often pitched to investors as a way to diversify away from other assets. The SG index enjoyed its best year ever in 2022, climbing almost 20 per cent while the S&P 500 dropped almost 20 per cent.

Ron Lagnado, research director at Universa Investments, said the way CTAs' algorithms pick up signals meant they performed well during slow corrections like last year's but could struggle when markets were more "choppy".

World's largest security group Allied puts IPO on hold

LEKE OSO ALABI — LONDON

The chief executive of Allied Universal has put the company's multibillion-dollar public listing on hold as the world's largest private security group tackles hiring problems and rides out the turmoil in markets.

"The last 10-12 months have been really choppy waters for public markets, so we're very comfortable just continuing to remain private," said chief executive Steve Jones.

Allied, the world's biggest employer of private security guards employing 800,000 people, has been hit by recruitment problems in a tight labour market and rate rises that have damped the mood for listings in the US.

The crisis engulfing the banking sector has also compounded already challenging conditions for fundraising, creating greater uncertainty in the markets and the economy.

Jones had previously said a US listing of the world's seventh-largest employer and North America's third-biggest in an expected multibillion-dollar transaction was possible by May 2024, but "that timeline has been paused".

Stephen Rawlinson, analyst at Applied Value, said Allied Universal's enterprise value, including debt, could be between $15bn and $17bn. "It partly depends on whether Allied Universal can argue that it has market power as the global leader and is therefore worth a premium," he said.

Jones said labour shortages had eased, although it was still a tight market following the pandemic, which created "the biggest challenge we've faced really in my 25-year career" for recruiting.

He said the US government's stimulus programmes rolled out at the height of the pandemic hampered the company's ability to attract and hold on to workers.

"We've had low unemployment rates in the past, but we really haven't faced a situation where people were provided with some sort of government subsidies to be able not to work," he said.

Referring to the delay in the IPO, he said: "There are many factors for us to consider . . . including general economic uncertainty, fear of recession and significant increases in interest rates over the past year."

Allied acquired UK-listed security group G4S in 2021. The deal was backed by private equity firm Warburg Pincus and Canadian pension fund Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec.

Technology. Restructuring

Alibaba seeks to appease regulators and investors with split

> Separation of units marks biggest shake-up since group was founded 24 years ago

RYAN MCMORROW — BEIJING
QIANER LIU AND ELEANOR OLCOTT
HONG KONG

The last time Alibaba made a radical move to reorganise its business, the Chinese tech group set in motion events that led to a clash with regulators, the cancellation of what would have been the world's biggest initial public offering and a crackdown by Beijing on Big Tech.

This time Alibaba hopes to please investors and Beijing with a restructuring into six business units, heralding the biggest shake-up of China's best-known ecommerce company since Jack Ma founded it 24 years ago.

In 2020, a speech by Ma attacking China's financial watchdogs and banks led to the abandonment of its blockbuster $37bn initial public offering of Ant Group, its fintech affiliate. It was a trigger for President Xi Jinping's campaign to reduce the influence of the country's largest tech companies.

This week's move by Ma's successor as chief executive, Daniel Zhang, may make Big Tech seem smaller to Beijing. He is dividing up a conglomerate weighed down by 240,000 employees — twice the size of chief rival Tencent — and consisting of a range of business lines from groceries to cloud computing.

The sprawling empire had left Chinese officials regretting that they let it grow so big and Wall Street investors scratching their heads at how to value it properly. Add on nimbler rivals eating into its market share and Alibaba executives led by Zhang had begun to worry that they, too, had lost control. "We need to figure out how to really make the organisation simpler and more agile and I think that starts from the top," Zhang told employees in a video message aired by state media.

"With these changes, everyone can set their own strategy to fit their respective battlefields."

One obvious intended beneficiary is Alibaba's share price, which is languishing around where Ma rang in its New York stock's first trading in 2014.

"Alibaba is a set of disparate businesses run by a single management team, a pure conglomerate, and it is now moving in the direction of splitting into fully independent businesses," said Jesse Fried, a corporate governance expert at Harvard. "It's unlikely they will go all the way, because management won't want to fully give up control."

But Fried said even the restructuring outlined so far should improve operations by allowing more focus. It should also lead to higher valuations by making it easier for investors to assess the worth of individual business units.

Under the restructuring, Alibaba's six business groups will be dedicated to domestic and international ecommerce, cloud computing, local services, digital media, as well as logistics. Alibaba will retain its full ownership of the Chinese ecommerce unit, which includes online shopping sites Tmall and Taobao, and in its last fiscal year generated more profits than the group as a whole.

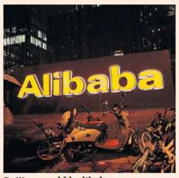
How far Zhang will go in splitting up Alibaba remains unclear. For now, Alibaba has indicated the corporate group will retain control of the six units via a holding company structure. The shake-up will put chief executives and boards in place for each unit and will lead to some of the "baby Babas" going for separate public listings.

Analysts expect one of the first units to attract additional outside investors will be Cainiao, a logistics group that does everything from delivering spring dresses and EarPods to apartments in Shanghai to shipping packages to Paris that shoppers have bought on AliExpress, the group's international sales platform. In the December quarter Cainiao was the group's fastest-growing business line, with sales up 27 per cent from a year earlier, and was operating at nearly break-even.

Alibaba's cloud computing unit could also attract outside interest as its business recovers after China's zero-Covid lockdowns ended. Zhang took direct control of the unit in December.

"Cloud and Cainiao are the two entities that offer the clearest value," said Robin Zhu of Bernstein.

But he cautioned that any IPO for either unit was probably some way off. "The market seems to expect announcements of spin-offs in the very near future," Zhu said. "This is not an Alibaba break-up in the sense that we're going to get Alibaba IPO one through six."



Beijing would be likely to encourage IPOs for units spun out of Alibaba

Other Alibaba units may face greater challenges. Local services, which include food delivery and Alibaba's mapping app, as well as the group's international commerce business, were operating at a loss in the December quarter.

The restructuring sets Alibaba on the path taken by its ecommerce rival JD.com, which retained control while spinning out its logistics, fintech and healthcare businesses. JD's logistics and healthcare business first raised capital from outside investors, including a politically connected private equity group tied to the son of China's most powerful financial official, Liu He, then went on to list in Hong Kong.

"Most investors don't generally view what JD did with the spin-offs as unlocking significant value," said Zhu. "JD's business outperformed in 2021, but that was mainly driven by business growth rather than the IPOs."

A regulator in Alibaba's hometown said Beijing would encourage public offerings for any of the units spun out of the group, including the two most likely to attract investor attention, the cloud and logistics arms. The official said it would also make sense for Alibaba to take in outside capital for its semiconductor unit T-Head.

Alibaba is keen to avoid repeating the saga of Ant, which has been in limbo for more than two years and is yet to complete a Beijing-demanded revamp.

To appease regulators, Ma opted to give up control of Ant in January, a change that under Hong Kong listing rules will delay any IPO for at least a year.

Embracer rejects aggressive accounting claims

Founder has created Europe's biggest gaming business, but the Swedish group's acquisitive strategy has also attracted short sellers

ANNA GROSS — KARLSTAD
DAN MCCRUM — LONDON

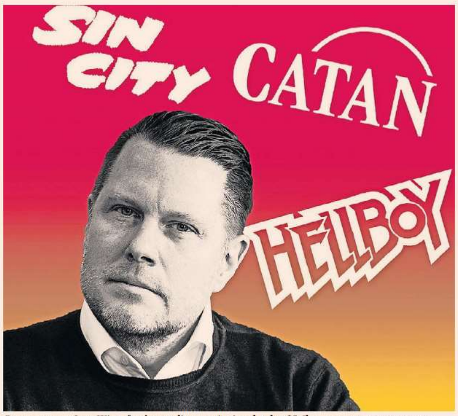
The Swedish founder of the biggest gaming company in Europe sits overlooking a frozen lake from his snow-clad holiday home in Karlstad, where he courted more than 70 business and media professionals before buying many of their companies.

As the chef from his private jet cooks a three-course meal in the kitchen next door, 45-year-old Lars Wingefors insists that Embracer does not fit the classic playbook of a "roll-up", in which a company aggressively buys up lots of smaller entities.

Wingefors has transformed the once obscure Swedish developer into a sprawling games empire with a market capitalisation of SKr58.7bn ($5.6bn).

But his light-touch approach to integrating newly bought businesses, along with the gulf between Embracer's actual and adjusted profits, have generated criticism from hedge funds and investors. These concerns are thwarting his efforts to cultivate a strong shareholder base outside Sweden.

At the heart of the debate lies a question that becomes hard to answer when more than 100 distinct businesses are funnelled into one set of financial statements: do the profits from selling a game justify the cash invested in developing it?

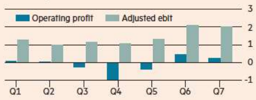


Games master: Lars Wingefors' sprawling empire is valued at $5.6bn — FT montage/Fredrik Karlsson/SolstaFoto

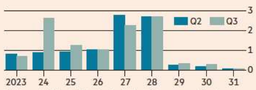
Embracer

Share prices rebased to Feb 23 2018 (local currency, %)

Embracer's operating and adjusted ebit figures for last 7 quarters (SKr bn)



Total cash 'earnout' obligations (SKr bn)



The 'earnouts' include obligations in relation to future personnel costs and payouts for milestones being reached. Embracer's calculations for 2024 changed between reporting on Q2 and Q3

Sources: Refinitiv; Embracer quarterly results

Embracer achieved its size through a four-year acquisition spree, gaining interests in multiple studios, the US comics publisher behind *Hellboy* and *Sin City*, intellectual property for *The Lord of the Rings*, and board games such as *Catan*. Sales have increased almost a hundredfold, from SKr178mn in 2014 to SKr17bn last year, helping Embracer build an enthusiastic local shareholder base.

The company's frantic dealmaking also attracted sceptics, wary that like so many roll-ups before it, the result will prove to be a fractured mess worth far less than the sum of its parts.

Four hedge funds with short positions in the group have stated their concerns. Among the issues they raised are the difficulty in assessing the company's financial performance due to repeated internal reorganisations and a switch from local to international accounting standards; accounting practices around newly purchased companies that may obscure the group's underlying performance; and a belief that the company is poorly positioned for a wider downturn in the gaming sector after a pandemic-fuelled boom.

"They've been acquiring all these companies, so you can't get to their organic growth at any time," said an investment manager at a British hedge fund that holds a short position.

"The reality is that when the music stops, they'll start to struggle to pay down debt."

Other investors and analysts argue that critics have a misplaced reverence for organic sales growth and overlook the logic of industrial consolidation. "Fundamentally [the critics] are a bunch of finance guys that don't understand it," said Thomas Singlehurst, an analyst at Citi, who is bullish on Embracer.

Wingefors' dinner table pitch to entrepreneurs is a supportive home that leaves them free to pursue a creative vision, with no forced cost cuts or centralisation. He boasts that of 108 business owners that have entered the group, 106 remain. "If it's not broken, why should you start messing around with people?" said Wingefors.

The strategy, he said, is diversification and cross-pollination. Embracer's 134 studios should produce a steady stream of blockbuster computer games, while reducing the risk attached with development at any individual house. Popular intellectual property will then be transplanted into console, mobile and tabletop games.

"Lars is almost religious about this idea of no forced synergies between the groups," said Randy Pitchford, chief executive of US video game developer Gearbox, purchased by Embracer in 2021. By contrast, gaming groups typically seek opportunities for cost-cutting in their dealmaking. When Take-Two acquired mobile specialist Zynga last year for $12.7bn it touted $100mn in "synergies".

For all the focus on executive freedom and diversification, Embracer lost money over the past seven quarters, a cumulative operating loss of SKr838mn ($81mn). Like many tech companies, it directs investors to ignore some costs as temporary.

Johan Ekström, Embracer's chief financial officer, said it "definitely makes sense" to exclude acquisition-related costs from adjusted earnings before interest and tax, Embracer's preferred metric to judge profitability, as they have "nothing to do with the underlying performance of the company".

Those adjustments turned a seven-quarter loss into an operating profit of SKr9.9bn ($950mn).

What is striking about the adjusted figures is how Wingefors asks investors to ignore the expense of paying the executives he so carefully wooed at his lakeside chalet.

Costs investors are told to ignore are predominantly "earn-outs" paid to acquired business owners, either in cash or shares, if they remain in post for a certain duration, or if they reach business milestones and financial targets.

Embracer's hands-off approach means the business model of a games studio is the same once it joins the group, but accounting for a takeover involves subtle choices that can flatter profits in the short term.

For instance, Embracer has invested SKr7.7bn in games development over the past seven quarters. Once a game is released, the related costs are then amortised through the income statement to cleanly set them against their associated sales. Like US peer Activision Blizzard, Embracer amortises software development over two years.

Sceptics also argue that Embracer paid top prices for middling-quality studios at a moment of peak pandemic demand; its mobile and PC divisions both shrank on an organic basis during the most recent quarter, the crucial Christmas trading period.

Wingefors has said he would "love" to continue making "big move" acquisitions but it is "not the right time" given limited shareholder appetite.

Two of Embracer's founding investors, Erik Stenberg and Pelle Lundborg, have slashed their holdings of Class B shares over the past year. Stenberg halved his holding after he stepped down as deputy chief executive, while Lundborg has reduced his by 33 per cent.

Lundborg did not respond to a request for comment. Stenberg cited "personal finance reasons" for cutting his stake and said his "belief in the future of Embracer is unchanged".

Avanza, a Swedish asset manager that offers services to domestic retail investors, remains a top-20 holder of Embracer stock, reflecting its continued allure to locals.

Energy

Europe urged to support deep-sea mining

Marine metals crucial for clean power, argues head of Norway minerals group

KENZA BRYAN AND HARRY DEMPSEY
LONDON

Europe must be prepared to support deep-sea mining if it is to secure metals crucial to making the transition to clean energy, the new Norwegian owner of British industry hopeful UK Seabed Resources has warned.

Hans Olav Hide, chair of Norway's Loke Marine Minerals, said the controversial practice could help the UK and EU compete in the face of China's dominance of battery-metal supply chains.

"Marine minerals are a very clear response to the geopolitical scene," Hide said, referring to western governments' focus on energy security since Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "People are realising we need to get away from . . . China covering everything."

"If you build a battery factory you will get funding" from governments, he told the Financial Times. "But if you ask where it will get minerals from, it will be from China or Russia."

Advocates of deep-sea mining say it could play a crucial role in meeting the huge increase in demand for energy transition metals at a time when land-based projects face lengthy waits to gain permits, and growing opposition from local communities.

Critics, however, warn that the practice poses a serious threat to marine ecosystems and biodiversity, with potentially far-reaching implications.

Global rules to allow deep-sea mining have yet to be approved but companies in various jurisdictions have obtained exploration licences from the UN-backed International Seabed Authority.

The ISA debated this week whether to give the green light to the extraction of manganese, nickel, copper and cobalt from potato-sized nodules up to 5,000 metres beneath the ocean surface.

Hide's appeal for Europe to secure minerals from the seabed comes days after the EU released the Critical Raw Materials Act aimed at bolstering the bloc's security of supply.

Demand for commodities such as copper, lithium and rare earths are set to boom because of their use in vital technologies and infrastructure to decarbonise the global economy, such as electric cars, renewable power and upgrades to the grid.

The EU has warned for years that the bloc's reliance on imports of critical raw materials could expose it to supply squeezes from China and threaten its goal to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Most of the world's cobalt is refined in China, as are all of the rare earths used in magnet production for electric vehicles and wind turbines, it said last month.

Mining companies must obtain the backing of ISA member states to obtain exploration licences. The UK, France, India, Russia and China are among countries that have given such backing.

Loke, based in Norway's oil capital Stavanger, is backed by companies including Norwegian defence contractor Kongsberg Gruppen, UK offshore engineer TechnipFMC and Norwegian shipping group Wilhelmsen.

It bought UK Seabed Resources from US defence group Lockheed Martin in March for an undisclosed sum. UKSR's assets include two licences in the Pacific Ocean's Clarion-Clipperton Zone, the largest known deposit of battery metals.

Loke plans to make an investment decision on mining in the Pacific in 2027 but faces an uphill battle to build a supply chain and client base if it goes ahead.

Market questions. Week ahead

Economists forecast slowdown in pace of US jobs growth

Will the pace of US hiring slow?

Hiring in the US is forecast to have slowed in March following two months of strong gains that have helped make the case for the Federal Reserve to keep interest rates high despite the turmoil in the banking sector.

The labour department is expected to report on Friday that the US added 240,000 jobs in March, according to economists polled by Reuters, down from the 311,000 jobs added in February and less than half the 517,000 added in January.

The unemployment rate is expected to be steady at 3.6 per cent, while average hourly earnings are expected to be up 0.3 per cent month on month, a tick up from the rate in February.

The data will be a crucial part of the Fed's deliberations when it next meets, in May. Odds in the futures market are split on whether the US central bank will raise interest rates one more time, or whether the 0.25 per cent increase in March was the last in its cycle.

While market expectations for another raise had been tempered by the US banking system's woes, those fears have begun to recede and evidence of persistent inflation may spur the Fed to tighten further. *Kate Duguid*

Just the job: thousands of people seeking employment at the Amazon Career Day in Arlington, Virginia. The US is expected to have added about 240,000 jobs in March
Jahi Chikwendiu/Washington Post via Getty

Will Australia and New Zealand signal the end for global rate rises?

Global investors are looking to interest rate decisions in Australia and New Zealand this week for a potential indication of just how quickly central banks might end the current regime of rapid rate rises.

Investor expectations of continued tightening by central banks, including the US Federal Reserve, have waned in the wake of recent banking sector ructions. Markets are now suggesting more than one rate cut by some nations before the end of this year.

Economists polled by Bloomberg expect the Reserve Bank of Australia to hold its cash rate steady at 3.6 per cent tomorrow after repeatedly boosting the benchmark over the past 12 months from a starting point of just 0.1 per cent.

Josh Williamson, chief Australia economist at Citigroup, said that if the RBA did keep rates on hold, "we expect the policy statement to keep optionality around possible further increases, at least until the details of the [consumer price index] show moderation in items where prices are a function of domestic demand".

But he added it was "highly unlikely the RBA would loosen financial conditions with the labour market operating ahead of full employment and with households sitting on substantial savings buffers."

The decision from the Reserve Bank of New Zealand on Wednesday could also be a spoiler for those looking for an imminent end to global rate rises. Economists expect the RBNZ to agree at least once more increase, by 0.25 percentage points, to 5 per cent. *Hudson Lockett*

How resilient is German industrial production?

German industrial production is expected to have expanded in February, continuing the strong rebound registered in January.

Economists polled by Reuters are forecasting growth of 0.4 per cent between January and February after rising 3.5 per cent in the previous month.

January's big rebound had raised expectations "that industry may continue to hold up well in the face of the energy crisis", said Franziska Palmas, senior Europe economist at Capital Economics. In January manufacturing output was only 1.6 per cent below its level just before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, "a fairly good outcome considering the severity of the energy crisis", said Palmas.

She estimated that if industrial production remained at January levels in February and March, it would rise 1.9 per cent in the first quarter as a whole.

The figures would confirm that German production is rebounding from the plunge at the end of 2022, which contributed to the country's economic contraction, boosted by lower gas prices

Germany's production rebound raised expectations 'that industry may continue to hold up well in the face of the energy crisis'

and the easing of supply chain disruption.

Industrial orders in the eurozone's manufacturing powerhouse, released on Wednesday, are also expected to show a 0.5 per cent expansion in February following 1 per cent growth in the previous month.

Industrial production data for France and Spain, also published this week, will indicate how broad-based the expected resilience of the eurozone manufacturing sector is.

Sylvain Broyer, economist at the rating agency S&P Global, thinks that the current order levels across eurozone factories suggest that they still have five months of assured production.

"Alongside lower prices for industrial and energy commodities, this should ensure industrial production remains steady until the summer," he said. *Valentina Romei*

Support services

Rule change boosts foreign law firms' India business

KATE BEIOLEY — LONDON
CHLOE CORNISH — MUMBAI

International law firms including DLA Piper, Herbert Smith Freehills and Baker McKenzie are looking at opening offices in India after the country changed its rules to widen overseas access to a huge market.

The Bar Council of India announced in March that foreign legal firms would be allowed to set up in the country for the first time and advise clients on the international elements of mergers and acquisitions or appear as arbitrators, among other things.

The biggest international firms have built up large practices working on corporate deals with an Indian focus but until now had to advise clients on a "fly-in fly-out" basis.

"We are excited — we think this is a very big opportunity and it's one we're taking seriously," said Ashok Lalwani, a Baker McKenzie partner who runs the firm's India group from Singapore. He said the rules were the most significant progress for the Indian market in a long time.

Roddy Martin, London-based head of the India practice at Herbert Smith Freehills, said the news was significant, adding: "It will possibly be less about today than the scale of opportunities in India over the next five years."

The new rules will not allow foreign lawyers to advise on local law or appear in Indian courts.

'It will possibly be less about today than the scale of opportunities in India over the next five years'

The changes have not been unanimously welcomed. Members of the Society of Indian Law Firms plan to send representatives to negotiate with the Bar Council and local firms have raised concerns about how the proposed "level playing field" would work, particularly as the Bar Council prohibits Indian law firms from marketing their practices online or offline.

"I think we might be entering a silly season of backroom manoeuvring, public petitions etc," said Karam Daulet-Singh, managing partner at Mumbai-based Touchstone Partners, a cross-border transactions specialist.

The arrival of overseas firms "would certainly intensify the competition" at the top end of the market, which "will go through vigorous change and even disruption", he added.

The changes come as talks over a post-Brexit trade deal between the UK and India grind on.

"The reform is long overdue," said Cyril Shroff, managing partner at one of India's biggest law firms, Mumbai-based Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas. "My guess is that the UK-India [free trade agreement] discussions were the trigger."

Firms such as Herbert Smith Freehills and Baker McKenzie currently service Indian clients and international clients operating in India from bases in Singapore or London. "Clients always ask us when we'll get there," said a partner at one large firm. "Multinational companies investing in India like to have lawyers in the country who have experience on the ground."

Basic resources. Battery technology

Lithium shortages threaten EU's electric vehicle transition

Continent will struggle against China without homegrown supply of key component,

PATRICIA NILSSON AND HARRY DEMPSEY
LONDON

Europe's transition to electric cars is under threat because of persistent shortages of lithium, the key battery component that will power the vehicles of the future.

EU plans to ban sales of new petrol and diesel cars by 2035 mean demand for lithium is set to surge fivefold by 2030 to 550,000 tonnes a year — more than double the 200,000 tonnes the region will be able to produce, according to Benchmark Mineral Intelligence.

"The whole global market is still set to be in a deficit by the end of the decade," said Daisy Jennings-Gray, analyst at Benchmark Mineral Intelligence.

"Europe will probably sit in a tight position in terms of availability and cannot afford any delays to domestic projects [to extract the metal]."

The supply problem has been highlighted by the world's largest lithium producer Albemarle, which has sidelined plans to extract lithium in Europe after failing to find a commercially viable site. "The resources we are aware of in Europe are not high quality and relatively small," the group's chief financial officer Scott Tozier said.

The projected lithium deficit in a market already suffering global shortages and high prices of $62,000 a tonne — more than five times the average cost of production despite a recent drop — may prove existential for European carmakers. Without a homegrown supply, Europe's automotive groups could find it difficult to compete with China, which is rapidly expanding its electric car industry and making inroads into the European market.

A sign of China's dominance in the field is that it controls 60 per cent of global lithium processing, which turns a concentrate produced from brine or ore into lithium chemical compounds such as carbonate or hydroxide that are used in car batteries.

Francis Wedin, chief executive of Australia-listed Vulcan Energy Resources, one of the few companies trying to extract lithium in Europe, said the region's car industry would not be able to electrify its future fleet without its own lithium.

China "will prioritise supply for its own industry", he said. Without its own access to lithium, European carmakers would "not survive competition" from the country, he added.

Although US-based Albemarle, which supplies a fifth of the world's lithium, plans to build a European refinery for the metal by the end of the decade, carmakers need alternatives now.

That has prompted some leading European car groups to gamble on a handful of local projects, where success is far from assured because of the complicated extraction processes. One involves Perth-based Vulcan, which is promising to extract lithium out of German brine using geothermal power.

Opel-maker Stellantis last year became the first carmaker to invest in a lithium miner when it paid €50mn in return for equity in Vulcan. Renault and Volkswagen have, much like Stellantis, also made binding orders for Vulcan's expected supply of lithium.

Another risky project involves French mining group Imerys, which aims to extract lithium from rocks underneath a kaolin mine, opened by the country's ceramics industry in the 19th century.

Vulcan hopes to produce 24,000 tonnes annually two years after starting production in 2025 while Imerys is planning to start producing 34,000 tonnes of battery-grade lithium chemicals a year from 2028.

A technician working with lithium brine for Vulcan Energy Resources

Combined, this is enough to supply roughly 1.2mn small electric vehicle batteries a year, according to the companies' calculations. But this is a long way short of expected demand for electric cars, which is likely to match or exceed current sales volumes with 11.3mn new cars registered in Europe in 2022, according to German trade group VDA.

This also assumes the success of the Vulcan and Imerys ventures.

"The projects carry an inherent risk as we are daring production processes that nobody has done before," admitted Alessandro Dazza, chief executive of Imerys, as he highlighted the need for government support. In addition, there is a danger the ventures will end up costing far more than rival projects.

The EU is aware of the problems. Its Critical Raw Materials Act aims to shore up its EV supply chain by sourcing more battery metals such as lithium, cobalt and nickel domestically.

But executives say financial support from governments is needed to get domestic lithium supply off the ground.

Europe also needs to address bureaucratic hurdles, such as arduous procedures for processing permits, as well as political and local resistance to mining.

Rio Tinto's Jadar project in Serbia, which would have created one of the world's largest lithium mines, was one of the casualties of the system. Its exploration and development licences were revoked ahead of elections last year because of environmental concerns and political opposition.

But even without permitting delays, analysts say the challenges ahead for Europe in meeting lithium needs are enormous, particularly when compared with the US, which has put vast resources behind disentangling its critical mineral supply chains from China.

"It's a one-two punch for the extractive sector in Europe of a lack of money going in at the early stage of exploration and a much more difficult permitting environment than Africa, Australia and Canada," said Kevin Murphy, at S&P Global Commodities. "In the near term, Europe will be heavily reliant on outside resources to supply their industry."

MARKET DATA

WORLD MARKETS AT A GLANCE

FT.COM/MARKETSDATA

Change during previous day's trading (%)

S&P 500	Nasdaq Composite	Dow Jones Ind	FTSE 100	FTSE Eurofirst 300	Nikkei	Hang Seng	FTSE All World $	$ per €	$ per £	¥ per $	£ per €	Oil Brent $ Sep	Gold $
0.87%	1.11%	0.77%	0.15%	0.69%	0.93%	0.45%	0.75%	-0.458%	-0.162%	0.264%	-0.227%	0.52%	0.04%

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	251639.07	249104.10
Australia	All Ordinaries	7373.30	7312.40
	S&P/ASX 200	7177.80	7122.30
	S&P/ASX 200 Res	6137.30	6045.30
Austria	ATX	3209.44	3219.18
Belgium	BEL 20	3797.34	3777.44
	BEL Mid	10048.44	9952.79
Brazil	IBovespa	103714.43	103713.45
Canada	S&P/TSX 60	1205.59	1197.34
	S&P/TSX Comp	20079.91	19940.99
	S&P/TSX Div Met & Min	1476.28	1475.97
Chile	S&P/CLX IGPA Gen	27505.42	27519.54
China	FTSE A200	10609.93	10594.67
	FTSE B35	9000.71	8988.96
	Shanghai A	3430.45	3418.23
	Shanghai B	294.84	294.33
	Shanghai Comp	3272.86	3261.25
	Shenzhen A	2222.85	2205.61
	Shenzhen B	1191.88	1188.90
Colombia	COLCAP	1261.61	1260.21
Croatia	CROBEX	2013.05	2011.29
Cyprus	CSE M&P Gen	68.46	68.68
Czech Republic	PX	1352.46	1336.74
Denmark	OMXC Copenhagen 20	2013.72	2009.05
Egypt	EGX 30	16418.53	16411.37
Estonia	OMX Tallinn	1867.10	1866.61
Finland	OMX Helsinki General	10727.17	10666.83
France	CAC 40	7333.44	7263.37
	SBF 120	5593.82	5544.78
Germany	M-DAX	27703.29	27458.79
	TecDAX	3325.15	3323.66
	XETRA Dax	15638.01	15522.40
Greece	Athens Gen	1054.00	1045.84
	FTSE/ASE 20	2548.89	2532.97
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	20400.11	20309.13
	HS China Enterprise	6968.86	6922.66
	HSCC Red Chip	3955.42	3966.86
Hungary	Bux	42318.34	41603.82
India	BSE Sensex	58991.52	57960.09
	Nifty 500	14557.85	14345.60
Indonesia	Jakarta Comp	6805.28	6808.95
Ireland	ISEQ Overall	8341.19	8328.72
Israel	Tel Aviv 125	1720.33	1751.06
Italy	FTSE Italia All-Share	29313.11	29216.73
	FTSE Italia Mid Cap	43708.75	43601.07
	FTSE MIB	27113.95	27021.04
Japan	2nd Section	7228.27	7239.06
	Nikkei 225	28041.48	27782.93
	S&P Topix 150	1720.10	1700.01
	Topix	2003.50	1983.32
Jordan	Amman SE	2601.20	2600.76
Kenya	NSE 20	1598.10	1581.11
Kuwait	KSX Market Index	6633.44	6603.51
Latvia	OMX Riga	1171.84	1173.41
Lithuania	OMX Vilnius	995.61	995.46
Luxembourg	LuxX	1573.00	1550.18
Malaysia	FTSE Bursa KLCI	1422.59	1424.61
Mexico	IPC	54484.41	54198.94
Morocco	MASI	10528.66	10517.82
Netherlands	AEX	757.19	752.46
	AEX All Share	1035.27	1029.14
New Zealand	NZX 50	11884.50	11933.17
Nigeria	SE All Share	53603.80	53124.63
Norway	Oslo All Share	1017.37	1006.88
Pakistan	KSE 100	40000.83	39848.35
Philippines	Manila Comp	6499.68	6644.75
Poland	Wig	58550.39	58665.21
Portugal	PSI 20	6044.13	6024.91
	PSI General	4581.51	4543.10
Romania	BET Index	12111.50	12041.50
Russia	Micex Index	2436.57	2445.30
	RTX	1245.71	1212.57
Saudi-Arabia	TADAWUL All Share Index	10503.18	10468.08
Singapore	FTSE Straits Times	3258.90	3257.18
Slovakia	SAX	317.24	317.82
Slovenia	SBI TOP	-	-
South Africa	FTSE/JSE All Share	76100.17	76704.63
	FTSE/JSE Res 20	66233.88	67516.91
	FTSE/JSE Top 40	70497.70	71089.32
South Korea	Kospi	2476.86	2453.16
	Kospi 200	322.03	318.05
Spain	IBEX 35	9232.50	9207.10
Sri Lanka	CSE All Share	9301.09	9228.50
Sweden	OMX Stockholm 30	2223.75	2199.44
	OMX Stockholm AS	842.93	833.78
Switzerland	SMI Index	11106.24	11032.21
Taiwan	Weighted Pr	15868.06	15849.43
Thailand	Bangkok SET	1609.17	1605.42
Turkey	BIST 100	4794.31	4896.07
UAE	Abu Dhabi General Index	9222.93	9251.11
UK	FT 30	2684.20	2647.30
	FTSE 100	7631.74	7620.43
	FTSE 4Good UK	6913.64	6901.68
	FTSE All Share	4157.88	4151.91
	FTSE techMARK 100	6568.56	6581.51
USA	DJ Composite	11113.25	11005.23
	DJ Industrial	33111.69	32859.03
	DJ Transport	14385.50	14129.50
	DJ Utilities	935.36	932.91
	Nasdaq 100	13090.56	12963.14
	Nasdaq Cmp	12146.58	12013.47
	NYSE Comp	15325.53	15200.59
	S&P 500	4085.91	4050.83
	Wilshire 5000	40497.71	40086.95
Venezuela	IBC	29483.10	29038.63
Vietnam	VNI	1064.64	1059.44
Cross-Border	DJ Global Titans ($)	455.81	451.89
	Euro Stoxx 50 (Eur)	4318.49	4285.42
	Euronext 100 ID	1361.92	1350.53
	FTSE 4Good Global ($)	10241.42	10171.58
	FTSE All World ($)	425.31	422.16
	FTSE E300	1810.95	1798.60
	FTSE Eurotop 100	3585.61	3561.39
	FTSE Global 100 ($)	2719.29	2699.03
	FTSE Gold Min ($)	1941.54	1919.94
	FTSE Latibex Top (Eur)	4440.00	4432.20
	FTSE Multinationals ($)	2851.07	2824.69
	FTSE World ($)	773.04	767.27
	FTSEurofirst 100 (Eur)	4874.57	4845.44
	FTSEurofirst 80 (Eur)	5849.22	5808.10
	MSCI ACWI Fr ($)	639.89	635.30
	MSCI All World ($)	2759.70	2739.42
	MSCI Europe (Eur)	1850.86	1831.79
	MSCI Pacific ($)	2699.36	2702.76
	S&P Euro (Eur)	1912.24	1900.69
	S&P Europe 350 (Eur)	1856.58	1844.55
	S&P Global 1200 ($)	3078.84	3055.67
	Stoxx 50 (Eur)	3943.73	3914.12

(c) Closed. (u) Unavaliable. † Correction. ♥ Subject to official recalculation. For more index coverage please see www.ft.com/worldindices. A fuller version of this table is available on the ft.com research data archive.

STOCK MARKET: BIGGEST MOVERS

UK MARKET WINNERS AND LOSERS

CURRENCIES

FTSE ACTUARIES SHARE INDICES

FT 30 INDEX

FTSE SECTORS: LEADERS & LAGGARDS

FTSE 100 SUMMARY

FT WILSHIRE 5000 INDEX SERIES

FTSE GLOBAL EQUITY INDEX SERIES

UK STOCK MARKET TRADING DATA

Data provided by Morningstar | www.morningstar.co.uk

UK RIGHTS OFFERS

There are currently no rights offers by any companies listed on the LSE.

UK COMPANY RESULTS

UK RECENT EQUITY ISSUES

MARKET DATA

FT500: THE WORLD'S LARGEST COMPANIES

Stock	Price	+/-Week	52 Week High	52 Week Low	Yld	P/E	MCap m
Australia (A$)							
ANZ Bank	22.93	0.17	27.96	20.78	6.52	9.70	46123.94
BHP Group	47.23	3.72	53.72	35.83	8.62	11.19	160244.01
CmwBkAu	98.32	1.29	111.38	86.98	3.53	18.65	111182.11
CSL	288.30	0.12	314.21	254.30	1.04	41.64	93140.44
NatAusBk	27.72	0.09	33.75	25.43	3.21	14.89	58270.97
Telstra	4.22	0.03	4.24	3.62	2.35	34.62	32656.86
Wesfarmers	50.25	0.65	51.48	40.03	3.51	26.06	38164.56
Westpac Bank	21.66	0.33	24.67	18.80	4.06	15.89	50905.58
Woolworths	37.90	0.53	39.63	31.67	2.82	43.60	30878.57
Belgium (€)							
AnBshInBv	61.56	4.09	62.01	45.56	0.83	32.13	116186.8
KBC Grp	63.62	3.78	72.46	45.53	5.17	10.83	28834.7
Brazil (R$)							
Ambev	14.55	0.77	16.88	12.60	3.89	21.91	45198.08
Bradesco	11.99	0.75	17.72	11.15	6.94	5.53	12604.94
Cielo	4.96	0.05	6.22	2.99	2.94	16.74	2657.75
ItauHldFin	21.17	1.35	26.04	18.86	3.67	8.35	20702.55
Petrobras	27.14	1.57	42.08	23.61	17.72	3.86	39837.89
Vale	82.00	2.42	98.25	61.90	15.88	3.65	73408.33
Canada (C$)							
Bausch Hlth	10.63	0.64	29.94	5.10	-	-3.26	2842.32
BCE	61.16	0.87	74.09	55.66	5.60	20.91	41221.22
BkMontrl	120.03	4.24	149.25	113.47	3.68	9.43	63237.17
BkNvaS	67.95	1.78	91.71	63.19	5.34	8.68	59836.66
Brookfield	58.88	10.36	63.88	41.28	1.09	19.91	69948.82
CanadPcR	103.62	1.03	111.43	86.42	0.72	25.35	71272.69
CanImp	57.42	0.70	77.76	53.58	10.23	4.06	38690.1
CanNatRs	74.86	4.27	88.18	58.75	2.61	11.85	60864.94
CanNatRy	158.75	4.14	175.39	137.26	1.52	23.56	78377.45
Enbridge	51.99	2.00	59.69	48.88	6.28	18.52	77789.13
GtWesLif	35.54	0.95	37.69	27.99	5.31	10.20	24481.93
ImpOil	68.51	4.83	79.83	52.67	1.47	20.13	29571.29
Manulife	24.77	0.40	27.50	20.81	4.62	7.15	33994.33
Nutrien	99.06	-1.40	147.93	93.43	2.29	14.53	36569.69
RylBkC	128.85	1.78	140.75	116.75	3.38	11.69	132397.28
SHOP	63.36	0.57	91.90	33.00	-	2.24	62625.94
Suncor En	42.07	1.54	53.62	36.39	2.44	15.53	41391.49
ThmReut	175.55	2.06	175.80	119.23	1.14	12.36	61215.02
TntoDom	80.96	3.63	101.72	76.40	3.95	10.36	109477.68
TrnCan	52.72	1.42	74.44	50.70	6.46	28.98	39839.39
China (HK$)							
AgricBkCh	2.91	0.00	3.07	2.22	7.46	3.74	11394.88
Bk China	3.01	-0.03	3.17	2.51	7.53	3.65	32064.13
BkofComm	4.94	0.01	5.74	3.84	7.21	3.99	22032.97
BOE Tech	0.65	0.00	0.85	0.55	-	10.26	16.47
Ch Coms Cons	4.67	-0.25	5.32	3.09	4.44	3.79	2628.6
Ch Evrbrght	2.38	-0.08	3.01	2.04	10.25	3.15	3844.07
Ch Rail Cons	5.69	-0.20	6.38	3.75	4.69	2.96	1505
Ch Rail Gp	4.79	-0.55	5.86	3.46	4.37	3.77	2567.31
ChConstBk	5.09	-0.04	5.98	4.12	7.43	3.62	155888.99
China Vanke	12.38	-0.58	21.50	9.96	11.72	5.46	3479.85
ChinaCitic	3.95	0.15	4.08	2.92	7.24	3.56	7488.56
ChinaLife	12.90	-0.40	15.14	8.53	5.39	5.52	12228.23
ChinaMBank	40.10	-0.95	62.80	25.40	3.63	7.23	23451.75
ChinaMob	63.60	0.00	66.10	46.85	5.16	9.60	165775.27
ChinaPcIns	20.85	-0.80	23.20	12.10	6.42	6.65	7371.39
ChMinsheng	2.69	-0.01	3.14	2.19	9.31	3.40	2851.2
ChMrchSecs	13.79	-0.28	15.98	12.06	3.22	12.10	14994.09

[illegible]

FT500: TOP 20

[illegible]

FT500: BOTTOM 20

[illegible]

BONDS: HIGH YIELD & EMERGING MARKET

[illegible]

BONDS: GLOBAL INVESTMENT GRADE

[illegible]

INTEREST RATES: OFFICIAL

[illegible]

INTEREST RATES: MARKET

[illegible]

BOND INDICES

[illegible]

VOLATILITY INDICES

[illegible]

BONDS: BENCHMARK GOVERNMENT

[illegible]

GILTS: UK CASH MARKET

[illegible]

GILTS: UK FTSE ACTUARIES INDICES

[illegible]

COMMODITIES

[illegible]

BONDS: INDEX-LINKED

[illegible]

BONDS: TEN YEAR GOVT SPREADS

[illegible]

Data provided by Morningstar | www.morningstar.co.uk

MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

SUMMARY

FT.COM/FUNDS

Winners - US Fund Mid-Cap Value

Fund Name	1yr Return GBP	3yr Return GBP	5yr Return GBP	3yr Sharpe Ratio	3yr Std Dev
Hotchkis & Wiley Mid-Cap Value Fund	-6.73	31.57	4.64	0.75	35.38
Pzena Mid Cap Value Fund	-6.54	25.24	5.37	0.70	32.33
Invesco Value Opportunities Fund	-7.08	24.38	6.41	0.74	29.94
Monteagle Select Value Fund	-7.48	23.36	6.01	0.68	29.08
Fidelity® Value Fund	-8.83	23.06	7.13	0.72	29.28

Losers - US Fund Mid-Cap Value

Fund Name	1yr Return GBP	3yr Return GBP	5yr Return GBP	3yr Sharpe Ratio	3yr Std Dev
Frank Value Fund	2.28	7.91	4.65	0.62	14.49
Nuance Concentrated Value Fund	-1.89	9.18	5.42	0.48	15.08
Nuance Mid Cap Value Fund	-3.44	9.28	5.86	0.52	14.88
Janus Henderson Small-Mid Cap Value Fund	-4.96	11.23	3.60	0.45	23.02
Virtus NFJ Mid-Cap Value Fund	-7.29	11.98	3.22	0.46	24.05

Morningstar Star Ratings

Fund Name	Base Currency	Morningstar Rating 3 Yr	Morningstar Rating 5 Yr	Morningstar Rating 10 Yr
Special Situations Fund W-ACC-GBP	Pound Sterling	★★★★	★★★	★★★★
Janus Henderson Global Equity Fund Acc	Pound Sterling	★★★	★★★	★★★★
UK Multi-Cap Growth A Inc	Pound Sterling	★★	★★	★★★
Janus Henderson Sterling Bond Unit Trust Acc	Pound Sterling	★★	★★	★★
American Fund W-ACC-GBP	Pound Sterling	★	★	★★

Global Broad Category Group - Fixed Income

Morningstar Category	Base Currency	Total Ret 1Yr GBP	Total Ret 3Yr GBP	Total Ret 5Yr GBP
Emerging Bonds	Mexican Peso	-1.85	17.10	2.90
World Bank Loan	Yen	7.65	12.36	5.59
World High Yield Bond US	Yen	2.52	12.29	6.14
ZAR/NAD Diversified Bond	Rand	4.78	12.12	6.79
NOK High Yield Bond	Norwegian Krone	5.43	12.12	4.55

abrdn Capital (CI) Limited (JER)
PO Box 189, St Helier, Jersey, JE4 9RU 01534 709130
FCA Recognised
abrdn Capital Offshore Strategy Fund Limited

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Bridge Fund	£2.1886	-	0.0260	2.10	-5.94	9.02
Global Equity Fund	£3.3160	-	0.0522	1.39	-4.97	13.13
Global Fixed Interest Fund	£0.7445	-	0.0027	6.26	-8.45	-0.07
Income Fund	£0.6368	-	0.0076	-	-5.80	9.33
Sterling Fixed Interest Fund	£0.6851	-	0.0012	4.25	-12.38	-3.56
UK Equity Fund	£1.9525	-	0.0346	3.62	-1.37	11.93

Algebris Investments (IRL)
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Algebris Core Italy I EUR	€147.08	-	1.32	0.00	-5.72	20.36
Algebris Core Italy R EUR	€139.29	-	1.24	0.00	-6.43	20.69
Algebris Financial Credit I EUR	€180.20	-	-1.83	-	-13.30	1.06
Algebris Financial Credit R EUR	€137.52	-	-1.58	-	-13.91	0.46
Algebris Financial Credit Rd EUR	€ 82.93	-	-0.95	-	-13.90	0.51
Algebris Financial Equity B EUR	€158.15	-	2.69	0.00	2.05	25.50
Algebris Financial Equity R EUR	€132.59	-	2.26	0.00	1.24	24.30
Algebris Financial Income I EUR	€172.07	-	3.70	-	-6.85	14.42
Algebris Financial Income R EUR	€156.14	-	3.35	-	-7.69	13.39
Algebris Financial Income Rd EUR	€ 94.59	-	2.03	-	-7.68	13.39
Algebris Global Credit Opportunities I EUR	€123.08	-	0.72	-	-2.07	5.00
Algebris Global Credit Opportunities R EUR	€119.93	-	0.70	-	-2.65	4.65
Algebris Global Credit Opportunities Rd EUR	€104.61	-	0.62	-	-2.64	4.77
Algebris IG Financial Credit I EUR	€ 94.27	-	0.31	-	-9.86	0.45
Algebris IG Financial Credit R EUR	€ 92.68	-	0.29	-	-10.31	-0.06
Algebris Sust. World B	€104.55	-	1.24	-	-	-
Algebris Sust. World R	€103.96	-	1.23	-	-	-

The Antares European Fund Limited
Other International

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
AEF Ltd Usd	$570.24	-	9.71	0.00	1.87	0.96
AEF Ltd Eur	€522.58	-	8.48	0.00	0.36	0.20

Artemis Fund Managers Ltd (1200)F (UK)
57 St. James's Street, London SW1A 1LD 0800 092 2051
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Artemis SmartGARP UK Eq I Acc	2356.39	-	36.13	-	6.66	24.81
Artemis Corporate Bond I Acc	98.69	-	0.19	-	-8.36	1.38
Artemis SmartGARP Eur Eq I Acc	452.78	-	10.50	-	11.55	20.89
Artemis European Opps I Acc	130.30	-	2.30	0.40	3.62	12.58
Artemis SmartGARP GloEmr Eq I Acc	164.61	-	0.38	-	0.45	13.77
Artemis SmartGARP Glo Eq I Acc	375.39	-	2.74	-	-5.25	16.06
Artemis Global Income I Inc	106.09	-	1.19	-	-3.23	18.05
Artemis Global Select I Acc	162.97	-	1.70	-	-8.39	12.04
Artemis High Income I Q Inc	69.01	-	0.36	-	-3.84	5.74
Artemis Income I Inc	253.31	-	3.84	-	2.10	15.37
Artemis Monthly Dist I Inc	69.12	-	0.46	4.77	-4.99	9.40
Artemis Positive Future Fund	68.08	-	0.81	-	-18.87	-
Artemis Strategic Assets I Acc	99.35	-	0.96	0.00	20.41	14.70
Artemis Strategic Bond I Q Acc	101.69	-	0.14	-	-5.79	0.52
Artemis Target Return Bond I Acc	105.79	-	0.07	3.18	-1.66	2.51
Artemis UK Select Fund Class I Acc	773.17	-	17.42	-	1.80	22.55
Artemis UK Smaller Cos I Acc	2007.33	-	26.60	-	-3.52	17.27
Artemis UK Special Sits I Acc	771.74	-	16.41	-	2.06	17.74
Artemis US Abs Return I Hdg Acc	112.69	-	-0.05	0.00	0.22	-0.84
Artemis US Extended Alpha I Acc	319.20	-	3.69	0.00	-7.78	14.65
Artemis US Select I Acc	280.87	-	3.01	-	-12.42	11.53
Artemis US Smlr Cos I Acc	293.84	-	2.33	0.00	-16.13	14.21

Ashmore Group
61 Aldwych, London WC2B 4AE. Dealing team: +352 27 62 22 233
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Emerging Markets Equity Fund	$120.30	-	1.51	0.00	-8.84	12.95
Emerging Markets Equity ESG Fund	$138.64	-	1.69	0.00	-8.08	-
Emerging Markets Active Equity Fund	$122.62	-	1.01	0.00	-14.60	5.71
Emerging Markets Frontier Equity Fund	$171.83	-	0.47	1.05	-16.89	11.94
Emerging Markets Blended Debt Fund	$ 53.23	-	0.12	5.50	-10.55	-2.38
Emerging Markets Blended Debt ESG Fund	$ 85.91	-	0.25	0.00	-8.89	-1.40
Emerging Markets Debt Fund	$ 57.30	-	0.23	6.51	-13.57	-2.71
Emerging Markets Corporate Debt Fund	$ 59.86	-	0.10	8.24	-9.03	-0.78
Emerging Markets Local Currency Bond Fund	$ 62.87	-	0.15	-	1.09	2.31

Atlantas Sicav (LUX)
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
American Dynamic	$6605.65	-	4.51	0.00	-11.80	21.20
American One	$6654.89	-	21.44	-	-6.66	23.44
Bond Global	€1527.97	-	0.74	-	-1.43	1.37
Eurocroissance	€1358.15	-	14.05	-	-5.52	16.00
Far East	$1028.54	-	17.67	-	-6.95	10.73

Blue Whale Investment Funds ICAV (IRE)
www.bluewhale.co.uk, info@bluewhale.co.uk
FCA Recognised - Ireland UCITS

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Blue Whale Growth USD T	$ 9.42	-	0.19	-	-16.63	-

Brooks Macdonald International Fund Managers Limited (JER)
5 Anley Street, St Helier, Jersey, JE2 3QE
+44 (0) 1534 700 104 (Int.) +44 (0) 800 735 8000 (UK)
Brooks Macdonald International Investment Funds Limited

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Euro High Income	€1.2115	-	0.0023	2.50	-10.29	-3.50
High Income	£0.6534	-	0.0008	3.77	-11.52	-3.58
Sterling Bond	£1.2600	-	0.0010	2.06	-10.51	-3.00

Brooks Macdonald International Multi Strategy Fund Limited

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Cautious Balanced Strategy	£1.2462	-	0.0065	0.00	-6.67	2.57
Cautious Balanced Strategy A	£0.8925	-	0.0047	1.10	-6.20	-
Balanced Strategy	£0.9159	-	0.0066	0.09	-4.02	-
Balanced Strategy A	£0.9182	-	0.0066	0.56	-3.54	-
Growth Strategy	£1.9322	-	0.0169	0.00	-5.39	7.26
Growth Strategy A	£0.9248	-	0.0081	0.48	-4.92	-
High Growth Strategy	£2.6984	-	0.0274	0.00	-5.47	9.38
High Growth Strategy A	£0.9216	-	0.0094	0.12	-4.99	-
US$ Growth Strategy	$1.6812	-	0.0163	0.00	-13.93	5.74

Dealing Daily. Initial Charge Nil for A classes and up to 2% for other classes

Brown Advisory Funds plc (IRL)
http://www.brownadvisory.com Tel: 020 3301 8130
FCA Recognised

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
US Small Cap Blend Fund USD B	$ 21.03	-	0.17	0.00	-9.90	18.00
US Flexible Equity Fund USD B	$ 23.37	-	0.31	0.00	-12.37	17.38
Global Leaders Fund USD C	$ 20.80	-	0.29	0.00	-9.37	14.77
US Sustainable Growth Fund USD C	$ 23.87	-	0.37	0.00	-14.23	17.30
Global Leaders Sustainable Fund USD C	$ 12.56	-	0.18	0.00	-10.67	14.76
US Equity Growth Fund USD B	$ 47.28	-	0.88	0.00	-17.54	9.59
US Smaller Companies Fund USD B	$ 34.54	-	0.31	0.00	-10.29	15.89
US Mid-Cap Growth Fund USD C	$ 16.60	-	0.22	0.00	-15.44	11.42
Global Sustainable Total Return Bond GBP B	£ 9.47	-	-0.01	0.91	-3.28	-

CG Asset Management Limited (IRL)
25 Moorgate, London, EC2R 6AY
Dealing: Tel. +353 1434 5098 Fax. +353 1542 2859
FCA Recognised
CG Portfolio Fund Plc

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Absolute Return Cls M Inc	£134.00	134.60	0.21	-	-3.72	5.47
Capital Gearing Portfolio GBP P	£36826.38	37028.44	39.96	-	-4.33	5.73
Capital Gearing Portfolio GBP V	£179.10	180.09	0.19	-	-4.33	5.73
Dollar Fund Cls D Inc	£167.10	167.60	0.43	1.23	-2.53	0.06
Dollar Hedged GBP Inc	£ 95.00	95.28	0.11	1.22	-10.04	-0.53
Real Return Cls A Inc	£200.68	201.28	0.31	1.71	-2.30	0.26

Candriam Investors Group (LUX)
FCA Recognised

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Candriam Eqts L Australia Cap	A$1872.76	-	18.06	0.00	-2.55	19.55

Candriam Investors Group
Other International Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Candriam Eqts L Emerging Mkts Cap	€846.36	-	2.36	-	-20.11	6.75
Candriam Bonds Credit Opportunities	€197.34	-	0.47	0.00	-0.89	0.63
Candriam Bds Euro High Yield Cap	€1183.74	-	3.01	-	-2.78	2.84
Candriam Bds Euro Sh.Term Cap	€1995.91	-	-0.77	-	-2.37	-0.77

Chartered Asset Management Pte Ltd
Other International Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
CAM-GTF VCC	$283309.90	283309.90	-1588.63	-	-6.36	3.78
CAM GTi VCC	$780.49	-	-32.39	-	12.31	4.69
RAIC VCC	$ 1.64	1.64	0.03	2.06	5.74	-1.66

Consistent Unit Tst Mgt Co Ltd (1200)F (UK)
Stuart House, St John's Street, Peterborough, PE1 5DD
Dealing & Client Services 0345 850 8818
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Consistent UT Inc	60.20	60.20	0.30	1.03	-10.01	23.16
Consistent UT Acc	163.50	163.50	0.80	1.03	-10.02	23.17
Practical Investment Inc	236.20	236.20	2.40	3.87	-1.43	16.79
Practical Investment Acc	1504.00	1504.00	15.00	3.87	-1.44	16.10

CP Global Asset Management Pte. Ltd.
www.cpglobal.com.sg, Email: customer_support@cpglobal.com.sg
International Mutual Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
CP Multi-Strategy Fund	$304.71	-	-0.54	-	10.38	10.67

CP Capital Asset Management Limited
www.cpgbl.com, email: fundservices@cpgbl.com
International Mutual Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
CPS Master Private Fund	$413.11	-	-7.65	-	7.83	10.53
CP Global Alpha Fund	$342.05	-	-3.40	-	9.07	10.60

DWS (LUX)
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7541 8999 www.dws.com
FCA Recognised

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
DWS Invest Top Dividend	£148.22	148.22	1.22	-	-0.49	10.53
DWS Invest Top Euroland	£159.61	159.61	2.95	-	5.87	14.80
DWS Invest Multi Opportunities	£115.25	115.25	0.18	-	-1.84	8.28
DWS Invest Global Bonds	£ 92.25	92.25	-0.03	-	-7.12	-2.05

Dodge & Cox Worldwide Funds (IRL)
48-49 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG.
www.dodgeandcox.worldwide.com 020 3713 7664
FCA Recognised
Dodge & Cox Worldwide Funds plc - Global Bond Fund

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
EUR Accumulating Class	€ 15.75	-	0.04	-	1.35	5.46
EUR Accumulating Class (H)	€ 10.53	-	0.02	-	-3.57	2.92
EUR Distributing Class	€ 11.27	-	0.03	-	0.15	4.45
EUR Distributing Class (H)	€ 7.47	-	0.01	-	-4.81	1.86
GBP Distributing Class	£ 12.19	-	0.05	-	5.36	4.97
GBP Distributing Class (H)	£ 8.04	-	0.02	-	-3.39	2.70
USD Accumulating Class	$ 12.31	-	0.02	-	-0.97	4.56

Dodge & Cox Worldwide Funds plc-Global Stock Fund

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
USD Accumulating Share Class	$ 29.06	-	0.40	-	-7.30	21.38
GBP Accumulating Share Class	£ 38.82	-	0.63	-	-1.40	21.86
GBP Distributing Share class	£ 26.06	-	0.43	-	-1.81	21.45
EUR Accumulating Share Class	€ 40.26	-	0.59	-	-5.20	22.41
GBP Distributing Class (H)	£ 13.39	-	0.19	0.78	-9.53	19.35

Dodge & Cox Worldwide Funds plc-U.S. Stock Fund

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
USD Accumulating Share Class	$ 37.05	-	0.49	-	-11.85	22.09
GBP Accumulating Share Class	£ 46.81	-	0.73	-	-6.23	22.57
GBP Distributing Share Class	£ 27.98	-	0.43	-	-6.79	22.16
EUR Accumulating Share Class	€ 44.32	-	0.61	-	-9.85	23.12
GBP Distributing Class (H)	£ 14.62	-	0.19	0.36	-13.94	20.09

Dragon Capital
www.dragoncapital.com
Fund information:info@dragoncapital.com
Other International Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Vietnam Equity (UCITS) Fund A USD	$ 25.19	-	0.02	-	-36.29	20.77

EdenTree Investment Management Ltd (UK)
PO Box 3733, Swindon, SN4 4BG, 0800 358 3010
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Amity Balanced For Charities A Inc	99.48	-	1.35	-	-4.76	9.85
Amity Global Equity Inc for Charities A Inc	155.50	-	2.00	-	-2.06	13.54
EdenTree European Equity Cls A Inc	329.00	-	7.20	-	9.10	19.59
EdenTree European Equity Cls B Inc	332.50	-	7.30	-	9.75	20.32
EdenTree Global Equity Cls A Inc	328.90	-	5.80	-	-4.59	12.70
EdenTree Global Equity Cls B Inc	331.80	-	5.80	-	-4.11	13.34
EdenTree Responsible and Sust S Dtd Bd B	93.74	-	0.05	1.26	-2.11	-0.41
EdenTree Sterling Bond Cls A Inc	85.66	-	0.15	4.01	-8.89	-0.90
EdenTree Sterling Bond Cls B Inc	96.86	-	0.17	4.01	-8.38	-0.29
EdenTree UK Equity Cls A Inc	216.90	-	3.30	1.52	-6.98	6.61
EdenTree UK Equity Cls B Inc	216.30	-	3.30	2.08	-6.50	7.26
EdenTree UK Equity Opps Cls A Inc	272.00	-	3.80	1.13	-9.33	9.23
EdenTree UK Equity Opps Cls B Inc	277.70	-	3.80	1.68	-8.86	9.87
Edentree Global Impact Bond B	85.95	-	0.01	2.43	-7.02	-
Edentree Green Future B Net Inc	102.00	-	1.70	0.46	-0.38	-
EdenTree Managed Income Cls A Inc	120.80	-	1.20	-	-4.12	10.00
EdenTree Managed Income Cls B Inc	129.10	-	1.30	-	-3.63	10.59

Euronova Asset Management UK LLP (CYM)
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Smaller Cos Cls One Shares	€ 52.83	-	-0.07	0.00	-	9.77
Smaller Cos Cls Two Shares	€ 33.67	-	-0.05	0.00	-	8.05
Smaller Cos Cls Three Shares	€ 16.80	-	-0.03	0.00	-	7.99
Smaller Cos Cls Four Shares	€ 22.15	-	-0.03	0.00	-	8.61

Fidelity Investments International
Other International Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Emerging Mkts NAV	£ 7.21	-	-0.16	1.95	-9.79	1.07

FIL Investment Services (UK) Limited (1200)F (UK)
Beech Gate, Millfield Lane, Lower Kingswood, Tadworth, KT20 6RP
Callfree: Private Clients 0800 414161
Broker Dealings: 0800 414 181
OEIC Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Allocator World Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 2.63	-	0.03	-	-5.30	15.13
American Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 53.76	-	0.78	-	-8.32	9.60
American Special Sits W-ACC-GBP	£ 21.60	-	0.21	-	-6.21	19.40
Asia Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 15.45	-	0.09	-	-5.74	6.95
Asia Pacific Ops W-Acc	£ 2.91	-	0.04	0.48	-0.85	16.24
Asian Dividend Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 2.31	-	0.01	2.87	-1.74	12.94
Cash Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.04	-	0.00	-	2.13	0.70
China Consumer Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 2.73	-	0.01	-	-1.97	-0.84
Emerging Asia Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.88	-	0.01	-	-1.67	10.74
Enhanced Income Fund W-INC-GBP	£ 0.85	-	0.01	-	4.59	13.01
European Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 24.83	-	0.38	-	9.62	16.51
Extra Income Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.27	-	0.01	3.86	-9.58	0.67
Global Dividend Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 3.05	-	0.03	-	4.71	12.15
Global Enhanced Income W-ACC-GBP	£ 2.35	-	0.02	-	4.76	11.12
Global High Yield Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 13.72	-	0.05	-	-7.05	3.13
Global Property Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.78	-	0.04	-	-22.82	1.57
Global Special Sits W-ACC-GBP	£ 53.93	-	0.64	-	-6.11	15.06
Index Emerging Markets P-ACC-GBP	£ 1.67	-	0.02	-	-6.01	8.46
Index Europe ex UK P-ACC-GBP	£ 1.99	-	0.04	-	7.27	16.37
Index Japan P-ACC-GBP	£ 1.91	-	0.00	-	0.09	7.14
Index Pacific ex Japan P-Acc-GBP	£ 1.92	-	0.02	3.52	-2.50	14.04
Index Sterling Corporate Bond Fund P-ACC-GBP	£ 0.84	-	0.01	-	-10.63	-
Index UK Gilt Fund P-ACC-GBP	£ 0.76	-	0.00	0.61	-15.19	-
Index UK P-ACC-GBP	£ 1.60	-	0.02	-	2.64	15.06
Index US P-ACC-GBP	£ 3.43	-	0.04	-	-5.56	18.60
Index World P-ACC-GBP	£ 2.70	-	0.04	-	-3.78	16.95
Japan Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 5.76	-	0.02	-	4.84	14.14
Japan Smaller Companies Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 3.64	-	0.02	0.60	-3.86	5.11
MoneyBuilder Balanced Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 0.61	-	0.01	-	-3.18	5.14
MoneyBuilder Dividend Fund W-INC-GBP	£ 1.28	-	0.02	-	3.69	13.49
Multi Asset Allocator Adventurous Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 2.11	-	0.02	-	-5.56	11.34
Multi Asset Allocator Defensive Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.31	-	0.01	-	-6.30	0.31
Multi Asset Allocator Growth Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.83	-	0.01	-	-5.86	7.50
Multi Asset Allocator Strategic Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.58	-	0.01	-	-6.24	3.80
Multi Asset Balanced Income Fund W-INC-GBP	£ 0.96	-	0.01	-	-6.13	3.10
Multi Asset Income & Growth Fund W-INC-GBP	£ 1.02	-	0.01	-	-5.43	5.27
Multi Asset Income Fund W-INC-GBP	£ 0.87	-	0.00	-	-8.82	1.17
Multi Asset Open Advent W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.75	-	0.01	1.53	-1.46	11.56
Multi Asset Open Defen W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.34	-	0.00	2.07	-3.45	3.82
Multi Asset Open Growth Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.66	-	0.01	-	-1.48	10.81
Multi Asset Open Strategic Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.51	-	0.01	1.92	-2.64	7.22
Open World Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 2.29	-	0.03	0.83	-1.59	15.60
Select 50 Balanced Fund PI-ACC-GBP	£ 1.14	-	0.01	1.38	-4.77	5.40
Short Dated Corporate Bond Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 10.65	-	0.03	-	-2.27	0.73
Special Situations Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 42.47	-	0.72	-	2.73	19.79
Strategic Bond Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.18	-	0.00	-	-8.51	-1.26
Sustainable Emerg Mkts Equity Fund A-ACC Shares	£ 1.52	-	0.01	4.74	-13.81	-0.91
Sustainable European Equity Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 5.75	-	0.11	-	4.81	13.28
Sustainable Global Equity Income Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 32.99	-	0.41	-	-2.97	14.48
Sustainable MoneyBuilder Income Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 12.29	-	0.02	-	-11.07	-2.79
Sustainable Multi Asset Balanced Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 0.93	-	0.01	-	-7.04	-
Sustainable Multi Asset Conservative Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 0.90	-	0.01	-	-8.30	-
Sustainable Multi Asset Growth Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 0.95	-	0.01	-	-7.09	-
Sustainable Water & Waste W-ACC-GBP	£ 1.15	-	0.02	-	-6.19	11.76
UK Opportunities Fund W-ACC-GBP	243.00	-	4.60	1.26	-17.88	11.25
UK Select Fund W-ACC-GBP	£ 3.66	-	0.06	-	-0.71	14.23
UK Smaller Companies W-ACC-GBP	£ 3.62	-	0.05	-	-0.22	28.09

Findlay Park Funds Plc (IRL)
30 Herbert Street, Dublin 2, Ireland Tel: 020 7968 4900
FCA Recognised

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
American EUR Unhedged Class	€150.32	-	2.05	-	-8.27	-
American Fund USD Class	$162.85	-	2.19	-	-10.50	13.22
American Fund GBP Hedged	£ 79.67	-	1.07	0.00	-12.56	11.80
American Fund GBP Unhedged	£132.27	-	1.96	-	-4.50	13.35

Foord Asset Management
Website: www.foord.com - Email: info@foord.com
FCA Recognised - Luxembourg UCITS

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Foord International Fund | R	$ 50.78	-	0.40	-	-0.57	9.04
Foord Global Equity Fund (Lux) | R	$ 16.97	-	0.22	-	-6.34	-

Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Foord Global Equity Fund (Sing) | B	$ 20.32	-	0.27	-	-5.98	13.75
Foord International Trust (Gsy)	$ 49.50	-	0.39	-	-0.54	9.06

Fundsmith LLP (1200)F (UK)
PO Box 10846, Chelmsford, Essex, CM99 2BW 0330 123 1815
www.fundsmith.co.uk, enquiries@fundsmith.co.uk
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Fundsmith Equity T Acc	617.22	-	5.70	-	1.43	14.47
Fundsmith Equity T Inc	562.52	-	5.20	-	1.42	14.47

GAM
funds@gam.com, www.funds.gam.com
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
LAPIS GBL TOP 50 DIV.YLD-Na-D	£121.86	-	1.43	-	1.31	14.49
LAPIS GBL F OWD 50 DIV.YLD-Na-D	£103.80	-	1.24	-	-1.67	8.88

Guinness Global Investors

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Guinness Global Equity Income Y GBP Dist	£ 18.72	-	0.22	-	3.08	17.43
Guinness Global Innovators Y GBP Acc	£ 26.75	-	0.58	-	-6.34	16.96
Guinness Sustainable Global Equity Y GBP Acc	£ 11.33	-	0.14	-	-3.48	-

HPB Assurance Ltd
Anglo Intl House, Bank Hill, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 4LN 01638 563490
International Insurances

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Holiday Property Bond Ser 1	£ 0.48	-	0.00	0.00	1.26	-2.57
Holiday Property Bond Ser 2	£ 0.63	-	0.00	0.00	0.32	-0.63

Hermes Property Unit Trust (UK)
Property & Other UK Unit Trusts

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Property	£ 6.35	6.82	-0.01	3.48	-12.57	-1.71

Janus Henderson Investors (UK)
PO Box 9023, Chelmsford, CM99 2WB Enquiries: 0800 832 832
www.janushenderson.com
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Janus Henderson Asia Pacific Capital Growth Fund A Acc	1152.00	-	11.00	0.05	-5.50	5.12
Janus Henderson Asian Dividend Income Unit Trust Inc	79.13	-	0.48	5.87	-8.02	6.06
Janus Henderson Cautious Managed Fund A Acc	287.00	-	2.20	-	-2.25	7.21
Janus Henderson Cautious Managed Fund A Inc	141.60	-	1.10	-	-2.27	7.49
Janus Henderson China Opportunities Fund A Acc	1201.00	-	10.00	-	-10.91	-3.30
Janus Henderson Emerging Markets Opportunities Fund A Acc	194.90	-	1.60	0.73	-8.88	7.04
Janus Henderson European Growth Fund A Acc	303.90	-	6.10	-	7.77	16.91
Janus Henderson European Selected Opportunities Fund A Acc	2303.00	-	45.00	-	8.02	15.91
Janus Henderson Fixed Interest Monthly Income Fund Inc	17.58	-	0.05	-	-11.51	-0.28
Janus Henderson Global Equity Fund Acc	4257.00	-	66.00	0.00	-7.96	11.63
Janus Henderson Global Equity Income Fund A Inc	66.23	-	0.82	-	4.18	13.57
Janus Henderson Global Sustainable Equity Fund A Inc	475.70	-	7.70	-	-6.12	15.23
Janus Henderson Global Technology Leaders Fund A Acc	2981.00	-	59.00	0.00	-9.06	14.83
Janus Henderson Instl UK Index Opportunities A Acc	£ 1.14	-	0.01	-	2.29	14.81
Janus Henderson Multi-Asset Absolute Return Fund A Acc	161.80	-	0.90	-	-0.19	6.73
Janus Henderson Multi-Manager Active Fund A Acc	254.90	-	2.00	-	-5.28	8.33
Janus Henderson Multi-Manager Distribution Fund A Inc	124.80	-	0.60	-	-5.16	4.76
Janus Henderson Multi-Manager Diversified Fund A Acc	87.18	-	0.27	2.63	-5.32	2.05
Janus Henderson Multi-Manager Global Select Fund Acc	307.50	-	2.80	0.00	-5.18	13.13
Janus Henderson Multi-Manager Income & Growth Fund A Acc	187.30	-	0.90	-	-4.58	5.04
Janus Henderson Multi-Manager Income & Growth Fund A Inc	145.70	-	0.70	-	-4.61	5.04
Janus Henderson Multi-Manager Managed Fund A Acc	313.20	-	2.20	-	-4.13	7.86
Janus Henderson Multi-Manager Managed Fund A Inc	302.40	-	2.20	-	-4.16	7.86
Janus Henderson Sterling Bond Unit Trust Acc	205.90	-	0.10	1.62	-10.75	-3.68
Janus Henderson Sterling Bond Unit Trust Inc	56.24	-	0.04	1.64	-10.75	-3.69
Janus Henderson Strategic Bond Fund A Inc	104.60	-	-0.10	-	-10.13	-1.22
Janus Henderson Absolute Return Fund A Acc	168.20	-	0.40	0.00	2.31	2.19
Janus Henderson UK Alpha Fund A Acc	137.60	-	2.90	-	-10.82	9.64
Janus Henderson UK Equity Income & Growth Fund A Inc	515.70	-	6.70	4.53	0.77	15.84
Janus Henderson US Growth Fund A Acc	1703.00	-	15.00	-	-11.44	12.47

MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

Kleinwort Hambros Bank Limited (UK)
5TH Floor, 8 St James's Square, London, SW1Y 4JU
Dealing and enquiries: 033 0024 0785
Authorised Inv Funds
Unit Trust Manager/ACD - Host Capital

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
HC Kleinwort Hambros Growth A Acc	237.67	-	1.96	1.36	-4.47	7.72
HC Kleinwort Hambros Growth A Inc	215.84	-	1.78	1.38	-4.47	7.72
HC Kleinwort Hambros Equity Income A Inc	94.52	-	0.83	3.06	-3.91	10.37
HC Kleinwort Hambros Equity Income A Acc	189.31	-	1.67	4.50	-3.91	10.38
HC Kleinwort Hambros Multi Asset Balanced A Acc	169.95	-	0.99	0.81	-5.43	3.91
HC Kleinwort Hambros Multi Asset Balanced A Inc	160.64	-	0.94	0.81	-5.43	3.91
HC Kleinwort Hambros Fixed Income A Acc	123.89	-	-0.03	3.44	-10.06	-2.73
HC Kleinwort Hambros Fixed Income A Inc	93.86	-	-0.02	3.44	-10.06	-2.73

LAZARD ASSET MANAGEMENT

Lazard Fund Managers Ltd (1200)F (UK)
P.O. Box 364, Darlington, DL1 9RD
Dealing: 0870 6066408, Info: 0870 6066459
Authorised Inv Funds
Lazard Investment Funds (OEIC) B Share Class

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Developing Markets Acc	119.67	-	1.13	-	-6.18	7.41
Developing Markets Inc	117.17	-	1.10	-	-6.19	7.41
Emerging Markets Acc	358.96	-	2.14	-	-0.41	11.63
Emerg Mkts Inc	270.43	-	1.61	-	-0.41	11.63
European Alpha Acc	1881.77	-	20.14	-	6.05	14.55
European Alpha Inc	828.29	-	17.25	-	6.05	14.55
European Smaller Cos Acc	675.06	-	15.98	-	-10.81	13.54
Global Equity Income Acc	222.10	-	2.86	-	-2.57	15.86
Global Equity Income Inc	111.46	-	1.43	-	-2.57	15.86
Managed Bal Inc	184.45	-	1.79	-	-5.40	8.87
UK Income Acc	1817.87	-	21.50	-	1.08	14.85
UK Income Inc	584.27	-	7.76	-	1.08	14.85
UK Omega Acc	290.20	-	4.13	-	4.84	16.58
UK Omega Inc	239.62	-	3.41	-	4.84	16.58
UK Smaller Cos Inc	2881.78	-	8.44	-	-24.24	1.74

Lothbury Property Trust (UK)
155 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 3TQ +44(0) 20 3551 4900
Property & Other UK Unit Trusts

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Lothbury Property Trust GBP	£ 1941.62	1988.71	-15.88	3.40	-19.25	-5.17

M & G Securities (1200)F (UK)
PO Box 9038, Chelmsford, CM99 2XF
www.mandg.co.uk/charities Enq./Dealing: 0800 917 4472
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Charifund Inc	1494.18	-	17.69	5.65	0.06	14.23
Charifund Acc	29485.42	-	351.58	4.75	0.05	14.22
M&G Charities Fixed Interest Common Fund Inc	£ 1.10	-	0.00	2.45	-4.45	-1.50
M&G Charities Fixed Interest Common Fund Acc	£ 39.50	-	0.00	-	-4.45	-1.55
M&G Charity Multi Asset Fund Inc	£ 0.89	-	0.00	3.85	1.41	13.89
M&G Charity Multi Asset Fund Acc	£ 107.67	-	0.95	3.52	1.41	13.89

MMIP Investment Management Limited (GSY)
Regulated
Multi-Manager Investment Programmes PCC Limited

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
UK Equity Fd Cl A Series 01	£ 3387.87	3430.49	91.65	0.00	2.41	8.14
Diversified Absolute Rtn Fd USD Cl AF2	$ 1669.02	-	45.93	-	-1.51	1.32
Diversified Absolute Return Stlg Cell AF2	£ 1555.76	-	-8.11	0.00	-2.21	2.75
Global Equity Fund A Lead Series	£ 1865.78	1911.82	-22.59	0.00	2.51	6.59

Marwyn Asset Management Limited (CYM)
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Marwyn Value Investors	£ 329.72	-	-6.14	0.00	-	-7.17

McInroy & Wood Portfolios Limited (UK)
Easter Alderston, Haddington, EH41 3SF 01620 825867
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Balanced Fund Personal Class Units	6948.18	-	47.70	1.40	1.20	11.10
Income Fund Personal Class Units	2881.20	-	23.10	2.40	0.56	9.73
Emerging Markets Fund Personal Class Units	2308.30	-	10.40	1.48	3.92	12.42
Smaller Companies Fund Personal Class Units	5873.36	-	44.90	1.30	-11.38	9.90

MILLTRUST INTERNATIONAL

Milltrust International Managed Investments ICAV (IRL)
mimi@milltrust.com, +44(0)20 8123 8316 www.milltrust.com
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
British Innovation Fund	£ 121.92	-	2.89	0.00	-	-
MAI - Buy & Lease (Australia)	A$ 108.45	-	0.50	0.00	-16.53	1.41
MAI - Buy & Lease (New Zealand)	NZ$ 91.20	-	-6.06	0.00	-7.20	-2.67
Milltrust Global Emerging Markets Fund - Class A	$ 91.51	-	0.71	0.00	-11.73	7.51

Milltrust International Managed Investments SPC
em@milltrust.com, +44(0)20 8123 8316, www.milltrust.com
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Milltrust Alaska Brazil SP A	$ 74.86	-	0.65	0.00	-17.55	13.06
Milltrust Laurium Africa SP A	$ 100.56	-	0.84	0.00	-12.75	18.87
Milltrust Marcellus India Fund	$ 113.83	-	0.30	0.00	-16.88	-
Milltrust Singular ASEAN SP Founders	$ 132.06	-	1.12	-	-11.70	22.47
Milltrust SPARX Korea Equity SP A	$ 109.67	-	-0.05	0.00	-19.58	11.34
Milltrust Xingtai China SP A	$ 103.72	-	0.76	-	-	1.03
The Climate Impact Asia Fund SP (Class A)	$ 80.92	-	0.73	0.00	-3.62	-
The Climate Impact Asia Fund (Class B)	$ 80.15	-	0.72	0.00	-4.10	-

Ministry of Justice Common Investment Funds (UK)
Property & Other UK Unit Trusts

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
The Equity Idx Tracker Fd Inc	1676.00	-	23.00	-	-3.10	12.90

Distribution Units

MIRABAUD ASSET MANAGEMENT

Mirabaud Asset Management (LUX)
www.mirabaud.com, marketing@mirabaud-am.com
Please find more details on our website: www.mirabaud-am.com
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Mir. - Glb Strat. Bd I USD	$ 115.06	-	0.20	-	-4.30	2.08
Mir. - DiscEur D Cap GBP	£ 163.42	-	2.88	-	-15.41	13.39
Mir. - UKEq HA Cap I GBP	£ 128.81	-	1.15	-	-14.29	10.10

OASIS

Oasis Crescent Global Investment Funds (UK) ICVC (UK)
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Oasis Crescent Global Equity Fund USD A (Dist)	$ 34.49	-	0.38	0.24	-10.92	9.35
Oasis Crescent Global Income Fund USD A (Dist)	$ 10.05	-	-0.05	-	-2.27	1.46
Oasis Crescent Global Low Equity Fund USD D (Dist)	$ 12.12	-	0.10	1.00	-8.93	4.26
Oasis Crescent Global Medium Equity Fund USD A (Dist)	$ 13.48	-	0.09	0.30	-8.55	5.58
Oasis Crescent Global Property Equity Fund USD A (Dist)	$ 7.41	-	0.12	-	-28.54	4.42
Oasis Crescent Global Short Term Income Fund USD A (Dist)	$ 0.94	-	0.01	-	-1.33	0.33
Oasis Crescent Variable Fund GBP A (Dist)	£ 9.71	-	0.09	0.37	-7.54	6.11

Omnia Fund Ltd
Other International Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Estimated NAV	$ 952.34	-	9.75	0.00	35.44	13.79

Orbis Investments (U.K.) Limited (GBR)
28 Dorset Square, London, NW1 6QG
www.orbis.com 0800 358 2030
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Orbis OEIC Global Cautious Standard	£ 11.95	-	0.03	0.00	1.15	9.11
Orbis OEIC Global Balanced Standard	£ 19.50	-	0.10	0.37	3.28	17.08
Orbis OEIC Global Equity Standard	£ 21.58	-	0.22	2.47	0.30	16.18
Orbis OEIC UK Equity Standard	£ 11.67	-	0.12	2.94	6.79	28.72

PLATINUM CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Platinum Capital Management Ltd
Other International Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Platinum All Star Fund - A	$ 144.95	-	-	-	-5.84	3.93
Platinum Global Growth UCITS Fund	$ 7.99	-	-0.02	-	-30.10	-5.15
Platinum Essential Resources UCITS Fund SICAV USD Class E	$ 10.16	-	0.19	0.00	-12.93	18.18
Platinum Global Dividend UCITS Fund	$ 45.46	-	0.09	-	-17.54	-0.77

Polar Capital Funds Plc (IRL)
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Artificial Intelligence I Inc	$ 15.61	15.61	0.22	0.00	-14.84	13.63
Asian Stars I USD Acc $	$ 14.47	-	0.15	0.00	-9.96	10.79
Biotechnology I USD	$ 38.25	38.25	0.65	0.00	1.08	18.41
China Stars I USD Acc $	$ 11.72	11.72	0.10	0.00	-1.76	4.23
Emerging Market Stars I USD Acc	$ 11.43	-	0.15	0.00	-12.08	9.07
European Ex UK Inc EUR Acc	€ 14.70	14.70	0.14	0.00	7.85	16.32
Financial Opps I USD	$ 13.49	-	0.17	2.06	-12.33	15.12
Global Convertible I USD	$ 13.69	13.69	0.09	0.00	-10.64	4.55
Global Insurance I GBP	£ 9.82	-	0.15	0.00	8.12	17.70
Global Technology I USD	$ 89.73	-	1.21	0.00	-19.38	11.33
Healthcare Blue Chip Fund I USD Acc	$ 18.28	18.28	0.06	0.00	-5.92	15.38
Healthcare Dis I Acc USD $	$ 12.35	-	0.16	0.00	-13.76	13.08
Healthcare Opps I USD	$ 64.69	-	0.52	0.00	-1.39	15.32
Income Opportunities B2 I GBP Acc	£ 2.87	2.87	0.02	0.00	-0.51	17.20
Japan Value I JPY	¥ 149.88	149.88	-0.13	0.00	14.16	15.91
North American I USD	$ 32.29	32.29	0.44	0.00	-13.99	17.59
Smart Energy I USD Acc $	$ 9.48	9.48	0.23	0.00	-0.73	-
Smart Mobility I USD Acc $	$ 8.91	8.91	0.19	0.00	-5.91	-
UK Val Opp I GBP Acc	£ 12.33	12.33	0.26	0.00	-8.74	13.11

Private Fund Mgrs (Guernsey) Ltd (GSY)
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Monument Growth 28/03/2023	£ 536.86	542.06	-0.51	-	-4.32	11.75

Prusik Investment Management LLP (IRL)
Enquiries - 0207 493 1331
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Prusik Asian Equity Income B Dist	$ 175.95	-	-0.15	4.97	-2.29	13.92
Prusik Asia Emerging Opportunities Fund A Acc	$ 176.63	-	0.25	-	-14.42	19.39
Prusik Asia Fund U Dist.	£ 203.96	-	0.65	0.00	-13.96	11.27
Prusik Asia Sustainable Growth Fund A Acc	$ 87.31	-	0.24	0.00	-11.27	-

Purisima Investment Fds (UK) (1200)F (UK)
65 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7NQ
Order Desk and Enquiries: 0345 922 0044
Authorised Inv Funds
Authorised Corporate Director - Link Fund Solutions

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Global Total Fd PCG A	387.56	-	6.74	0.18	-6.53	17.17
Global Total Fd PCG B	382.43	-	6.65	0.00	-6.76	16.88
Global Total Fd PCG INT	375.08	-	6.52	0.00	-6.99	16.59

Purisima Investment Fds (CI) Ltd (JER)
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
PCG B ✣	289.58	-	-0.24	0.00	-14.53	13.59
PCG C ✣	281.54	-	-0.23	0.00	-14.71	13.35

ram ACTIVE INVESTMENTS

Ram Active Investments SA
www.ram-ai.com
Other International Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
RAM Systematic Emerg Markets Eq	$ 219.45	219.45	0.92	-	-5.93	17.27
RAM Systematic European Eq	€ 531.30	531.30	6.43	-	-8.14	16.28
RAM Systematic Funds Global Sustainable Income Eq	$ 147.17	147.17	1.19	-	-10.03	15.06
RAM Systematic Global Eq Sustainable Alpha	$ 111.57	111.57	0.33	-	-2.35	-0.71
RAM Systematic Long/Short European Eq	€ 152.61	152.61	-0.50	-	-2.77	4.14
RAM Systematic US Sustainable Eq	$ 342.78	342.78	3.36	-	-17.91	10.54
RAM Tactical Global Bond Total Return	€ 139.12	139.12	0.12	-	-4.47	-1.35
RAM Tactical II Asia Bond Total Return	$ 145.58	145.58	0.05	-	-2.50	0.20

Royal London (UK)
55 Gracechurch Street, London, EC3V rlam.co.uk
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Royal London Sustainable Diversified A Inc	£ 2.34	-	0.02	0.87	-6.66	6.12
Royal London Sustainable World A Inc	347.00	-	4.20	-	-6.47	10.16
Royal London Corporate Bond Mth Income	75.36	-	0.13	-	-9.09	-2.11
Royal London European Growth Trust	213.60	-	3.90	-	6.77	15.61
Royal London Sustainable Leaders A Inc	775.10	-	10.80	-	-1.52	11.65
Royal London UK Growth Trust	617.60	-	9.30	-	-1.90	14.14
Royal London UK Income With Growth Trust	208.30	-	2.00	-	-1.56	11.62
Royal London US Growth Trust	368.10	-	4.50	-	-4.93	18.76

Additional Funds Available
Please see www.royallondon.com for details

RUFFER

Ruffer LLP (1000)F (UK)
65 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7NQ
Order Desk and Enquiries: 0345 601 9610
Authorised Inv Funds
Authorised Corporate Director - Link Fund Solutions

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
LF Ruffer Diversified Rtrn C Acc	105.04	-	0.18	1.80	-1.96	-
LF Ruffer Diversified Rtrn C Inc	103.12	-	0.18	1.81	-1.96	-
LF Ruffer European C Acc	781.16	-	0.97	0.80	-7.77	15.39
LF Ruffer European C Inc	140.13	-	0.17	-	-7.76	15.39
LF Ruffer Equity & General C Acc	575.96	-	-0.15	0.76	2.35	11.80
LF Ruffer Equity & General C Inc	520.34	-	-0.14	0.76	2.35	11.80
LF Ruffer Gold C Acc	255.52	-	15.29	0.00	-13.93	7.75
LF Ruffer Gold C Inc	154.65	-	9.25	0.00	-13.93	7.75
LF Ruffer Japanese C Inc	164.62	-	0.63	-	1.15	10.98
LF Ruffer Japanese C Acc	354.65	-	1.36	0.24	1.14	10.98
LF Ruffer Total Return C Acc	568.07	-	5.90	2.80	-0.40	7.57
LF Ruffer Total Return C Inc	349.64	-	3.63	2.87	-0.39	7.58

RUBRICS

Rubrics Global UCITS Funds Plc (IRL)
www.rubricsam.com
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Rubrics Emerging Markets Fixed Income UCITS Fund	$ 138.21	-	0.31	-	1.00	1.24
Rubrics Global Credit UCITS Fund	$ 16.77	-	0.01	-	-3.30	0.88
Rubrics Global Fixed Income UCITS Fund	$ 171.69	-	0.02	-	-1.90	-1.72

Scottish Friendly Asset Managers Ltd (UK)
Scottish Friendly Hse, 16 Blythswood Sq, Glasgow G2 4HJ 0141 275 5000
Authorised Inv Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Managed Growth ♦	347.90	-	5.40	-	-0.11	16.28
UK Growth ♦	407.00	-	6.10	-	-0.15	21.54

SICO Est 1995 سيكو

SICO BSC (c) (BHR)
+973 17515031.
www.sicobank.com

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Khaleej Equity Fund	$ 544.95	-	1.07	0.00	-10.34	13.04
SICO Kingdom Equity Fund	$ 31.42	-	-0.29	0.00	-13.44	13.15
SICO Gulf Equity Fund	$ 153.51	-	-1.41	0.00	-7.42	11.52

Slater Investments

Slater Investments Ltd (UK)
www.slaterinvestments.com; Tel: 0207 220 9460
FCA Recognised

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Slater Growth A Acc	629.97	629.97	6.87	0.00	-19.20	12.65
Slater Income A Inc	138.32	138.32	1.20	5.22	-5.23	15.59
Slater Recovery A Acc	329.89	329.89	2.84	0.00	-13.97	15.48
Slater Artorius	280.79	280.79	-1.43	-	-20.55	17.06

Stewart Investors

Stewart Investors (UK)
23 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh, EH2 1BB
enquiries@stewartinvestors.com
Client Services: 0800 587 4141
Dealing Line: 0800 587 3388
Authorised Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
SI Asia Pacific A Acc	1586.55	-	5.53	-	4.70	15.06
SI Asia Pacific A Inc	£ 2.81	-	0.01	-	4.46	14.59
SI Asia Pacific Leaders A Acc	862.21	-	3.91	0.00	-2.33	12.50
SI Asia Pacific Leaders A Inc	£ 2.93	-	0.02	0.00	-2.37	12.44
SI Asia Sustainability A Acc	731.58	-	3.13	0.00	3.99	15.08
SI Global Emerging Mkts A Acc	796.98	-	5.91	-	2.86	12.69
SI Global Emerging Mkts Leaders A Acc	552.00	-	4.21	-	-1.67	11.48
SI Global Emerging Mkts Sus A Acc	365.19	-	2.64	-	-1.33	8.49
SI Indian Sub-Cont A Acc	729.35	-	5.29	-	5.20	23.28
SI Latin America A Acc	£ 2.18	-	-0.01	2.87	-4.66	-8.93
SI Worldwide Equity A Acc	£ 2.36	-	0.05	-	21.94	8.37
SI Worldwide Equity A Inc	£ 2.39	-	0.05	-	23.40	8.80
SI Worldwide Leaders A Acc	591.17	-	4.63	-	-1.23	12.65
SI Worldwide Sus A Acc	£ 2.63	-	0.03	-	-6.03	9.76
SI Worldwide Sus A Inc	£ 2.55	-	0.03	-	-6.02	9.86

STONEHAGE FLEMING
GLOBAL BEST IDEAS EQUITY FUND

Stonehage Fleming Investment Management Ltd (IRL)
www.stonehagefleming.com/gbi
enquiries@stonehagefleming.com
Regulated

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
SF Global Best Ideas Eq B USD ACC	$ 233.50	-	2.45	-	-11.74	11.99
SF Global Best Ideas Eq D GBP INC	£ 287.76	-	3.41	-	-5.82	12.12

SUPERFUND INVEST BETTER

Superfund Asset Management GmbH
www.superfund.com, +43 (1) 247 00
Other International Funds
Other International Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Superfund Green Gold	$ 1038.10	-	-7.37	-	-38.21	-7.26
Superfund Green Silver	$ 878.75	-	-1.49	-	-42.24	2.17
Regulated						
Superfund Green US$	$ 753.98	-	-2.83	-	-38.22	-10.42

Thesis Unit Trust Management Limited (UK)
Exchange Building, St Johns Street, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1UP
Authorised Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
TM New Court Fund A 2011 Inc	£ 18.46	-	0.13	0.00	-6.15	7.96
TM New Court Fund - A 2014 Acc	£ 18.62	-	0.13	-	-6.15	7.98
TM New Court Equity Growth Fund - Inc	£ 20.02	-	0.16	0.00	-7.91	9.66

TOSCAFUND

Toscafund Asset Management LLP (UK)
www.toscafund.com
Authorised Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Aptus Global Financials B Acc	£ 4.91	-	0.08	3.22	5.33	25.44
Aptus Global Financials B Inc	£ 3.13	-	0.05	3.31	5.36	26.99

Toscafund Asset Management LLP
www.toscafund.com

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Tosca A USD	$ 471.95	-	3.78	0.00	10.21	11.45
Tosca Mid Cap GBP	£ 168.13	-	-3.56	0.00	-27.30	-14.39
Tosca Opportunity B USD	$ 252.81	-	-15.03	0.00	-29.95	-19.96
Pegasus Fund Ltd A-1 GBP	£ 40.14	-	-0.92	0.00	-27.06	-14.58

TROY ASSET MANAGEMENT

Troy Asset Mgt (1200) (UK)
65 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7NQ
Order Desk and Enquiries: 0345 608 0950
Authorised Inv Funds
Authorised Corporate Director - Link Fund Solutions
Trojan Investment Funds

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Trojan Ethical O Acc	127.25	-	0.33	0.07	-2.88	6.24
Trojan Ethical Global Inc O Acc	100.81	-	1.15	-	-2.72	-
Trojan Ethical Global Inc O Inc	97.77	-	1.11	-	-2.71	-
Trojan Ethical O Inc	126.89	-	0.33	0.08	-2.89	6.24
Trojan Ethical Income O Acc	136.88	-	1.47	-	-3.95	5.41
Trojan Ethical Income O Inc	112.97	-	1.21	2.68	-3.95	5.40
Trojan Fund O Acc	386.36	-	0.92	0.25	-2.62	6.61
Trojan Fund O Inc	311.93	-	0.74	0.25	-2.62	6.61
Trojan Global Equity O Acc	477.24	-	5.76	0.00	-4.50	11.97
Trojan Global Equity O Inc	393.76	-	4.75	0.00	-4.50	11.97
Trojan Global Income O Acc	152.08	-	1.49	-	-2.80	9.42
Trojan Global Income O Inc	126.24	-	1.23	3.17	-2.81	9.41
Trojan Income O Acc	340.21	-	3.33	2.89	-4.44	5.82
Trojan Income O Inc	165.38	-	1.62	2.96	-4.44	5.81

Zadig Gestion (Memnon Fund) (LUX)
FCA Recognised

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Memnon European Fund - Class U2 GBP	£ 261.67	-	3.67	0.00	15.84	20.57

Guide to Data

The fund prices quoted on these pages are supplied by the operator of the relevant fund. Details of funds published on these pages, including prices, are for the purpose of information only and should only be used as a guide. The Financial Times Limited makes no representation as to their accuracy or completeness and they should not be relied upon when making an investment decision.

The sale of interests in the funds listed on these pages may, in certain jurisdictions, be restricted by law and the funds will not necessarily be available to persons in all jurisdictions in which the publication circulates. Persons in any doubt should take appropriate professional advice. Data collated by **Morningstar**. For other queries contact **reader.enquiries@ft.com +44 (0)207 873 4211**.

The fund prices published in this edition along with additional information are also available on the Financial Times website, **www.ft.com/funds**. The funds published on these pages are grouped together by fund management company.

Prices are in pence unless otherwise indicated. The change, if shown, is the change on the previously quoted figure (not all funds update prices daily). Those designated $ with no prefix refer to US dollars. Yield percentage figures (in Tuesday to Saturday papers) allow for buying expenses. Prices of certain older insurance linked plans might be subject to capital gains tax on sales.

Guide to pricing of Authorised Investment Funds: (compiled with the assistance of the IMA. The Investment Association, Camomile Court 23 Camomile Street, London EC3A 7LL. Tel: +44 (0)20 7831 0898.)

OEIC: Open-Ended Investment Company. Similar to a unit trust but using a company rather than a trust structure.

Different share classes are issued to reflect a different currency, charging structure or type of holder.

Selling price: Also called bid price. The price at which units in a unit trust are sold by investors.

Buying price: Also called offer price. The price at which units in a unit trust are bought by investors. Includes manager's initial charge.

Single price: Based on a mid-market valuation of the underlying investments. The buying and selling price for shares of an OEIC and units of a single priced unit trust are the same.

Treatment of manager's periodic capital charge: The letter C denotes that the trust deducts all or part of the manager's/operator's periodic charge from capital, contact the manager/operator for full details of the effect of this course of action.

Exit Charges: The letter E denotes that an exit charge may be made when you sell units, contact the manager/operator for full details.

Time: Some funds give information about the timing of price quotes. The time shown alongside the fund manager's/operator's name is the valuation point for their unit trusts/OEICs, unless another time is indicated by the symbol alongside the individual unit trust/OEIC name.

The symbols are as follows: ✣ 0001 to 1100 hours; ♦ 1101 to 1400 hours; ▲ 1401 to 1700 hours; # 1701 to midnight. Daily dealing prices are set on the basis of the valuation point, a short period of time may elapse before prices become available. Historic pricing: The letter H denotes that the managers/operators will normally deal on the price set at the most recent valuation. The prices shown are the latest available before publication and may not be the current dealing levels because of an intervening portfolio revaluation or a switch to a forward pricing basis. The managers/operators must deal at a forward price on request, and may move to forward pricing at any time. Forward pricing: The letter F denotes that that managers/operators deal at the price to be set at the next valuation.

Investors can be given no definite price in advance of the purchase or sale being carried out. The prices appearing in the newspaper are the most recent provided by the managers/operators. Scheme particulars, prospectus, key features and reports: The most recent particulars and documents may be obtained free of charge from fund managers/operators. * Indicates funds which do not price on Fridays.

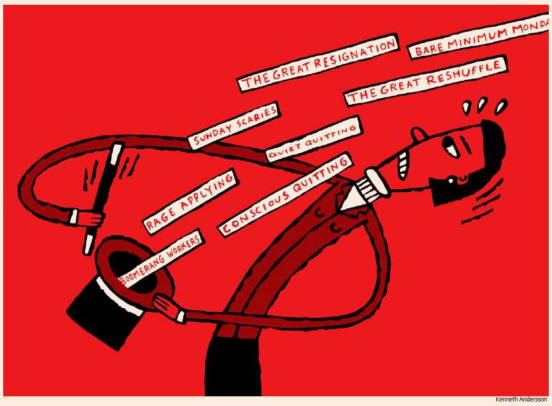
Charges for this advertising service are based on the number of lines published and the classification of the fund. Please contact **data@ft.com or call +44 (0)20 7873 3132** for further information.

Data Provided by MORNINGSTAR®
www.morningstar.co.uk
Data as shown is for information purposes only. No offer is made by Morningstar or this publication.

Rutherford Hall
'This may not be the ideal time to call for banking freedoms. Then again . . .'
WORK & CAREERS

Workplace buzzwords to take seriously – and those to ignore

Pilita Clark
Business Life



Kenneth Andersson

There was a time when no one mentioned quiet quitting, Sunday scaries, bare minimum Mondays and all the other buzzwords that have come to infest the way people talk about work.

I remember this time well because it was only three years ago. These new catchphrases describe a shift in how we view our jobs that was allegedly unleashed by Covid.

Researchers reported last year that 65 per cent of global employees said the pandemic had made them rethink the place that work should have in their life. Employers were advised to recognise their staff wanted "purpose-driven work" and a sense of being valued, not just a pay cheque.

There is truth to this, even after the bout of mass lay-offs and economic gloom. But do bosses really need to take every new bit of workplace jargon seriously? Can't most of these terms be safely dismissed as alliteratively alluring blather from social media savvy twenty-somethings on TikTok?

I have always thought so. But last week I spoke to Anthony Klotz, the American academic who coined the biggest buzzword of all — the Great Resignation. He persuaded me the data shows a more nuanced picture.

The Great Resignation was of course quite real. Resignation rates had been gradually climbing before Covid but in 2022, more than 50mn US workers quit their jobs, the highest annual number in more than 20 years, and other countries saw similar jumps.

Klotz, who himself resigned and moved from the US to University College London's school of management last year, predicted the trend before official figures confirmed it.

The number of quitters has subsided. As Klotz says, most of them never left the workforce but switched to similar jobs and have now stayed put. Also, employers started offering better paid work with more flexibility and better benefits, and the economy has soured so job-hopping is less appealing.

What about the term quiet quitting, a phrase that grew from a TikTok post last year about doing your job but nothing more and generally putting life before work. Is it remotely real?

> "Can't most of these terms be safely dismissed as alliteratively alluring blather from twenty-somethings on TikTok?"

Experts widely dismissed the phrase as another term for staff disengagement. But Klotz says a disengaged employee is somebody who starts doing poor work or withdrawing from their tasks, which was not what quiet quitters meant. "They're talking about disengaging from the extra, not going above and beyond their job description, which is different," he says.

This has implications for employers and the employed. Klotz's research has shown that, while it can be rewarding to go beyond the call of duty, it can also be draining.

"Rage applying" is another phrase that grew out of a TikTok post but should not be entirely dismissed by employers. It means mass-applying for jobs after getting fed up at work.

This "spray-and-pray" job hunting strategy describes a retaliatory staff behaviour that has been studied for years. But the proliferation of online job platforms makes it easier to do, and some workers may be more sensitive to office slights and frustrations, having avoided them while working remotely.

Klotz advises employers to maintain a fair workplace — and make sure they are on all the platforms rage appliers from rival outfits might be using.

So what are the terms that bosses can more easily ignore?

First up: "resenteeism", the supposedly evil twin of quiet quitting. It means staying in a job you hate because you have no choice, and beginning to actively resent it, which, as Klotz says, is "classic disengagement".

He says there is also no empirical evidence showing a rise in the so-called Sunday scaries, or dread about the working week ahead, nor "bare minimum Mondays", another TikTok hit, coined by a young woman describing how to deal with said scaries.

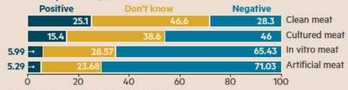
"This isn't something that's happening, it's something that's being recommended," says Klotz. He doesn't think employers need to dwell on it, except to ask if there is any evidence their staff are turning up on Mondays looking drained and far from recharged.

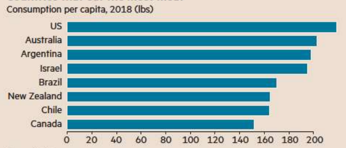
The bottom line? It makes sense to keep an eye on all these developments. Some are supported by evidence. But never forget that trending online does not mean trending in life.

pilita.clark@ft.com

Lex.

Lab-grown meat: hard to swallow





Source: Statista

Italy has said "*no, grazie*" to lab-grown meat. That is understandable, given the pride the country takes in its traditional food. But, longer term, the choice is unlikely to be between a gourmet Tuscan Chianina burger or the cultivated variety. Instead, it could be between a cultured patty or an empty bun.

Prime minister Giorgia Meloni's ban on lab-grown meat and animal feed may simply mean her rightwing government seeks to protect local farmers. But there does not seem to be a need for that quite yet.

Cultured meat — made in a lab by growing animal cells in a protein and sugar soup — is technically viable and even approved by the US Food and Drug Administration.

A lab in Australia has even grown a giant meatball using ancient mammoth DNA. Start-ups are raising money, from the likes of Bill Gates and Sir Richard Branson. But this meat is miles away from competing with the four-legged kind.

A recent academic study estimates that a scaled-up plant would produce beef at $60/kg. A steak costs a third of that at the supermarket. However, over time the cost of alt-meat should fall as the technology improves and scale of production expands. McKinsey, a consultancy, estimates that cultivated meat might reach cost parity within the next decade.

But before that, this type of food would likely be a niche offering only, not unlike what has happened to Beyond Meat's plant-based protein products. Its share price at about $16 is more than a third below its IPO price.

Meloni's ban looks more like an exercise in brand protection. Given her nationalistic stripes, that would be her own brand, and that of traditional Italian food. After all, the mammoth meatball sounds rather less appetising than the more traditional *polpette della Nonna*.

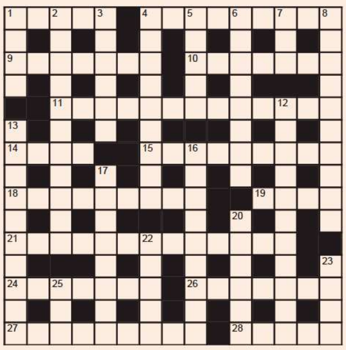
But such on-the-hoof thinking fails to grasp the seriousness of the climate challenge. Already, agriculture contributes more than 14 per cent of global carbon emissions. As the global population grows, and becomes wealthier, we will inevitably have to reconsider what we eat.

Going the sustainable, agritech route might thus offer another way. We could eat grass-fed, sustainably grown — and much less — meat.

But if we do want to have our steak, and eat it, the lab-grown option is worth cultivating.

CROSSWORD

No 17,376 Set by GUY



ACROSS

1 Fine cheese swapped by barrister (5)
4 Nancy's in bar for rendezvous (9)
9 Bend one's records (7)
10 Warning that Tories would like to stop flying? (3,4)
11 North Surrey's organised runs, some for beginners (7,6)
14 Couple grabs kiss from behind the door (4)
15 Sting live holds back for encores — wise guy (9)
18 Tightwad loses money by cooking green pepper (9)
19 Guy packs case for sensible pirate (4)
21 Nadal blocks a fine shot, moving only moderately well (5,1,7)
24 Family cycles by healthy little reservoir (7)
26 Ted surprisingly enters with a bow, showing style (3,4)
27 Dead duck carried by hunter's top dog (6,3)
28 Try to win love, in short (5)

DOWN

1 British have pound (4)
2 Unable to stop visiting Africa, perhaps (11)
3 Convent has day on a railway (6)
4 Poles filling English dykes drink in the morning (9)
5 Something casual to wear like a diamond, perhaps (5)
6 Needless sandwiches left next to roll (8)
7 Up to one pound missing from cash register (3)
8 Roger edits cryptic, making ordinary English hit home (10)
12 Case of wine chap leaves behind for you (11)
13 Kelly perhaps helping those of a certain age (10)
16 Love speed with superior acceleration, heavens! (9)
17 Give distress to two Attorneys General (8)
20 Writer pens one set of books relating to living things (6)
22 Turned over soil often contains collection of leaves (5)
23 Delivery that's standing next to the door? (4)
25 Indian novel to read cursorily, skipping the introduction (3)

JOTTER PAD

Solution 17,373

You can now solve our crosswords in the new FT crossword app at ft.com/crosswordapp

Boomerang CEOs give comfort in times of crisis

The hope is ex-bosses can bring stability, yet these companies underperform, write *Anjli Raval, Stephen Morris* and *Jamie Smyth*

Returning UBS CEO Sergio Ermotti, outgoing boss Ralph Hamers and UBS chair Colm Kelleher in Zurich last week to announce Ermotti's appointment
Michael Buholzer/EPA/EPA/Shutterstock

When a crisis hits, corporate boards can find comfort in familiarity.

Swiss bank UBS did just that this week, announcing Sergio Ermotti would return as chief executive to steer the difficult integration of domestic rival Credit Suisse.

Several other "boomerang" chief executives have taken back their roles. Last November Bob Iger was reappointed to the top job at Disney after a loss of confidence in successor Bob Chapek's leadership. Starbucks founder Howard Schultz returned to the coffee chain for his third stint as chief executive in April 2022 after his replacement, Kevin Johnson, retired.

Largely a US phenomenon, the hope is that these individuals — who know the business and understand its corporate culture — can bring stability at a time of chaos. They are a known entity to the board, top executives and shareholders, paving the way for a seamless turnround.

Activist investor Carl Icahn this week called on US biotech Illumina to bring back its former boss Jay Flatley — his latest move in a brewing proxy fight with the company.

"I spoke to a number of big shareholders in Illumina and most of them like him and say he did a great job in the past. And we need someone who can do a great job right now," Icahn told the Financial Times. "When you have problems it is very hard to find somebody to lead a company, which is why you often look back to see who did it well in the past."

One senior leader at UBS said the acquisition of Credit Suisse was the most significant banking combination since the financial crisis, presenting huge uncertainty. "This is a major, major deal with enormous complexity and the board wanted to take no risk on execution. It is as simple as that. Sergio is the right man for the deal. He knows both parties well. He has the experience."

Ermotti, who ran UBS for nine years before handing the reins to Ralph Hamers in 2020, had in his previous stint drawn up plans to acquire Credit Suisse several times, according to people familiar with his thinking.

Research by headhunter Spencer Stuart found that 22 chief executives of companies in the S&P 500 had returned to their previously held posts in the past 12 years. Of these, 13 came back permanently and nine were appointed on an interim basis, with most staying less than a year.

But data suggests companies typically underperform the market when they bring back former leaders. Chris Bingham, professor of strategy and entrepreneurship at the Kenan-Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina, said these individuals tended to "hurt rather than help" organisations.

He conducted research published in the MIT Sloan Management Review in 2020 assessing the performance of "boomerang" chiefs. Using a sample of 6,429 chief executive tenures at companies in the S&P Composite 1500, from 1992 to 2017, Bingham and his co-authors found that stock performance was 10 per cent lower at the 167 groups led by reappointed leaders than at their counterparts. This was particularly true if the returning chief executive was one of the company's original founders.

"Boards want someone who can hit the ground running. They often don't have a lot of time and there is a crisis. This is often the logic. Why shake things up, this is someone that has dealt with crises in the past and can deal with the current ones. This is especially helpful for investors who are looking for reassurance. This is what is happening at UBS," said Bingham. But he issued a warning: the reason why boomerang chief executives did not perform as well was partly because they were returning to a starkly different business environment.

> The reason they didn't do as well was partly because they were returning to a starkly different business climate

"For UBS's Ermotti — it has only been two years, but look at how much things can change", said Bingham.

From managing the fallout from Covid, to having policies on flexible working, diversity and inclusion, the role of the post-pandemic chief executive has evolved.

Still, the idea of bringing back a successful chief executive is alluring when a company is in trouble. Steve Jobs' reappointment at Apple is often cited as a game-changer for the tech group. After being removed from his position as chief executive in 1985, he returned when Apple was close to collapse in 1996, refocusing and rebuilding it into the tech titan it is today.

Other high-profile examples include Michael Dell, who left his namesake company only to return to lead it three years later in 2007, as well as former bosses at Twitter, Best Buy, Bloomberg and Charles Schwab.

In another recent example, Katrina Lake, founder of Stitch Fix, the online personal shopping subscription service, returned to the role of chief executive in January, less than two years after stepping aside.

> **FT Leadership**
> More interviews illuminating the personalities of high-profile leaders by focusing on the issues they faced
> *ft.com/leadership*

Some executive search professionals believe bringing back a former chief executive says more about the board failing to ensure a smooth succession process than about the stellar performance of a past leader.

"Each company has their own story. The Ermotti story is a little different from the Iger story, for example. But in general, if I was to see a pattern, it is that you have a strong, longstanding respected leader leaving big shoes to fill and the successor then deemed not able to do it," said one headhunter of top boardroom roles.

"More often than not these are highly alpha CEOs who are not interested in creating successors and can be seen sniping from the sidelines and undermining their replacement," he added. "When a successor fails, the board often thinks 'let's bring back the former CEO', but they probably should think, 'shouldn't we bring in someone else'".

Leadership. Dame June Raine, chief executive, MHRA

'No 3am moments' in race for Covid vaccine

The UK medicine agency's head was dealing with Brexit when the pandemic hit, write *Sarah Neville* and *Hannah Kuchler*

When June Raine, the chief executive of the UK medicines agency, found herself at the centre of Britain's Covid-19 response three years ago, the unremitting pressure held a grim familiarity.

She says it evoked life as a junior doctor more than 40 years earlier, requiring her to draw on similar reserves of "buoyancy" and resilience.

On one occasion, she was the doctor in charge when a group of 30 came into hospital, poisoned with carbon monoxide on a canal boat. "And if you have 30 admissions at the same time, that was [like] what was happening in Covid . . . if you've trained in medicine it's, if you like, [an emergency department] way of working, and you go into that mode."

The story of her leadership of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency is of two imperatives – first, to chart a new path for the agency after Brexit forced it to leave the embrace of the European Medicines Agency, then to set the international pace in approving life-saving Covid vaccines and therapeutics.

Raine had taken over as interim chief executive in September 2019 – her appointment was made permanent in early 2021 – and "the challenge at that time was . . . [Britain's] EU exit".

She felt the organisation had a chance to accelerate how drugs were brought to patients by focusing on the UK's strong science base and "real world" data from its public health system.

Last month, that ambition bore fruit in an announcement that the MHRA would operate a more streamlined approval process for the most cutting-edge medicines and devices to try to attract pharmaceutical companies to develop their medicines in the UK.

Early in the outbreak, June Raine saw the potential of the regulator to help accelerate vaccine delivery
Anna Gordon/FT

But three years ago much of this had to be put on hold as Covid forced a shift in priorities. "By December 2019 [or] January 2020, we were waking up to quite a different challenge," she says.

From early in the pandemic, she grasped the potential of her role as regulator at a time when drugmakers were racing to develop vaccines. She realised she could be "part of the solution".

> 'For us, it isn't "science drives regulation", it's that we can drive science and technology'

Raine had her first meeting with drug manufacturers in early March 2020, when most of the world was oblivious to the huge toll the pandemic would take.

She took the decision that the agency would review the data from companies in real time rather than waiting for the trial phases to be completed.

As scientists strained to beat records for how quickly life-saving treatments could be brought to market, Raine and her colleagues were able to inspect facilities and analyse pre-clinical data. She emphasises this work was done "at risk", with no certainty any of the vaccines or therapeutics would prove effective.

The need to reassure Britons that prospective treatments would be safe was paramount. Those early conversations with drugmakers were "about all the elements that a regulator needs to provide assurances to the public and to health professionals that the standards have been met", she notes.

The EMA and the US Food and Drug Administration took longer to deliver their first approvals. Did she feel justified in pressing ahead with less data, given the fast-moving environment?

She corrects: "Not less data, *enough* data. And I think the data sets, particularly on the vaccines, were robust and very well analysed."

Her confidence was bolstered by the knowledge the MHRA had set in train "robust vigilance", with the public asked to submit reports about the vaccine, including side-effects. This, and other forms of data collection, gave the agency "the ability to understand benefit-risk in the wide world", she says.

At the time, there were suggestions in Europe and the US that the UK had rushed it. Did she ever question her approach?

"No self-doubt" or "3am moments", she says. "The risk environment we were in was extremely clear . . . and the data we had, and all the expertise coupled with those secure vigilance plans, meant we could take those decisions."

No regulator, she notes, "has differed materially in their later judgments".

How did she conceive the human and organisational challenge of leading the agency through such a demanding time? First and foremost it involved "relentless prioritisation", she recalls.

With ministers desperately counting on the vaccines to end lockdown, did she feel conscious of political pressure?

"At no point was there anything other than absolute respect for regulatory independence," she says.

Dealing with a crisis brought insights about her own working style. One lesson was the importance of "not dissipating activity on things that are interesting, but maybe not urgent or important".

Her profile grew via appearances at televised news conferences. She implies she would never have sought the public eye but did so to make sure Britons understood the work involved in ensuring the vaccines were safe.

Early modelling suggested only about half of Britons would take up the offer of a jab. It was vital to address "the questions the public were asking", she says, such as: "'Has this been tested on people like me?'"

Ultimately, the UK had among the world's highest vaccination levels, a success she partly ascribes to the agency's openness about its work. "It was all there for people to digest," she says.

She wants to counter preconceptions that the role simply reacts to scientific developments rather than playing a role in maximising their potential. "When we can see something coming, like artificial intelligence, for us as regulators it isn't 'science drives regulation', it's that we can drive science and technology."

Raine describes her own managerial style as "balanced, fair, listening, considerate but with high expectations", adding: "And they're met."

Looking back at the past few years, she believes her working life in some ways changed for the better because she was forced to shed anything extraneous to the mission of battling the pandemic.

And she takes pride in the legacy of the period she not only lived through, but helped shape. "The access to those vaccines has saved around 20mn lives worldwide, and if we played a part, that's what life is all about. That singular goal was what made a leadership role absolutely priceless."

It may not be an ideal time to call for more banking freedoms. Then again . . .

Rutherford Hall
Critical Comms

Messages from the archive of Rutherford Hall, critical communications strategist

LinkedIn: I tried my hand at surfing in Morocco this month. When you get it right you feel the exhilarating harmony of man and nature. But I also took away a key learning. As the great Laird Hamilton says, it's not just about timing or balance, but understanding the energy of the wave, the type of swell, how a wave will break. In critical communications, we talk about surfing a wave but true thought-leadership appreciates the deeper dynamics.

....

WhatsApp to Stephen. I'll need to get back to you on that. This bank crisis is threatening our anti-regulation strategy. This is England dammit, are we going to allow a tiny liquidity crisis to stop us freeing our banks?

From: *Rutherford@monkwellstrategy.com*
To: *MartinK@volponebank.com*

Martin, the timing isn't ideal. But we have a compelling story on the need to unleash banks from burdensome regs and we can't back off just because some minor firms no one had heard of (OK, Credit Suisse) fell off the perch. That's capitalism. Britain has been barely affected, bar one of our biggest brands saving a foreign tech bank. Our argument is that the UK model is working so we should double down on it. The freedom to keep betting till you need a bailout is a clear Brexit bonus.

We also don't want any backsliding on actual bonuses. Behind the scenes we're making headway on lower liquidity ratios, capital requirements etc. Our slogan "unleash the power of the City" is playing well, especially in London. Jeremy Hunt is obsessed with retaining the City's competitive edge and disappointed people aren't more excited by his Edinburgh reforms.

I admit that two months ago it felt like we'd caught the wave and now — wipeout. But we need to get back on the board. There's value in fighting on for less regulation. We call it our National Rifle Association strategy.

Best Rutherford

Find me on Strava, KoM Sydenham Hill, PR London to Brighton 3h 47m

....

WhatsApp to Priya: Priya, I need some data that shows overregulation is jeopardising the City's status as a premier financial centre. We need some clever benchmarking to highlight dangers. Jobs lost, value of business going elsewhere. Be good if London was falling back, especially vs New York.

WhatsApp to MartinK: Our new survey is very helpful. Am sending it to the City minister before we release it.

WhatsApp to Andrew Griffith: Just wanted to give you a heads-up on this survey. Frankly, it's pretty alarming. Our competitive advantage is at risk. Would be a tragedy to undo all the good work of the Edinburgh reforms.

> 'There's value in fighting on for less regulation. We call it our National Rifle Association strategy'

From: *Rutherford@monkwellstrategy.com*
To: *PannickKC@parliament.co.uk*

That's very kind of you David but we prefer to keep our role helping with Boris's committee hearing secret. It was important to step up but we can be a lot more effective working below the waterline., Best Rutherford.

Find me on Strava . . .

....

From: *Rutherford@monkwellstrategy.com*
To: *MartinK@volponebank.com*

OK, maybe the Morocco trip went to my head, but you have to surf through a barrelling wave, not into it. To which point I really think we should postpone your appearance before the Treasury select committee. Between ourselves, we do a lot of work with preparing clients for hearings and this could get nasty. They will just see this as a chance to beat you up and then post clips of it on Twitter., Best Rutherford

Find me on Strava, KoM Sydenham Hill, PR London to Brighton 3h 47m

....

WhatsApp to Andrew Griffith: Thanks Andrew. I know you get this, but it's also worth stressing that the industry is building a new partnership with government, backing infrastructure; funding all those businesses' green investments. Anything that makes it harder to lend can only hurt the economy.

I wouldn't pay too much attention to so-called experts like the Bank of England. Where were they last year? And remember, our banks stepped up during the pandemic. Only £4bn in defaults and no questions asked, well, except of the taxpayer.

....

From: *Rutherford@Monkwellstrategy.com*
To: *MartinK@volponebank.com*

I think the survey steadied nerves. Time to get back on the front foot. It's been a month since Silicon Valley Bank. That's surely long enough for us all to move on. This is London's future on the line. You haven't any small teams that we can leak are thinking of moving to New York have you? Just to keep up the pressure? Best, Rutherford

"If you don't understand the wave, you can't respect it. And if you don't have respect for a wave, it's only a matter of time till the ocoean teaches you some."
— Laird Hamilton

Find me on Strava . . .
Messages recovered by Robert Shrimsley

ARTS

The Dark Side of Pink Floyd's feuding

Relations between former bandmates Roger Waters and David Gilmour have turned toxic even before the release of rival versions of their classic 1973 album. By Ludovic Hunter-Tilney

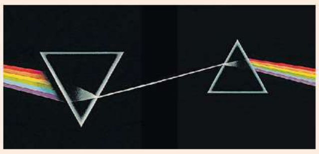
In the annals of rock feuds, few can match that between Pink Floyd's David Gilmour and Roger Waters for vitriol or durability. Their current state of relations is particularly bad. With customary Floydian grandeur, the areas of dispute range from geopolitics — Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — to who did what on which song. The fallout now threatens to poison the 50th anniversary of the band's magnum opus.

The Dark Side of the Moon is the pivotal moment in the band's history. Dealing with themes of social alienation and madness, it was Pink Floyd's first concept album. It was also their first US number one. As of this March, it has spent a record-breaking 972 weeks in the Billboard chart and sold an estimated 45mn copies globally.

With its iconic cover illustration of a light ray refracted through a prism, the vinyl version of this psychedelic behemoth may well hold an unofficial record as the most popular surface ever for rolling joints.

Its half-centenary is being marked by the arrival of a remastered edition. The new Dolby TrueHD Atmos mix is designed to immerse the listener in the album's soundscape of heartbeats, clocks, voices, ringing cash tills and majestic songcraft. But it faces rivalry from an unofficial version — the rogue orbit of another *Dark Side of the Moon*. Its creator is Waters, who was ejected from the band in 1985.

Pink Floyd's pugnacious former leader, 79, has decided to remake the album as a solo work. It's expected to arrive in May, although the exact date hasn't been confirmed. Apparently it involves Waters adding voice-overs to the original's instrumentals. An indication of what to expect might lie in the re-recording he released last year of the band's 1979 song "Comfortably Numb". It jettisons Gilmour's famous guitar solos and adds a vocal part by singer Shanay Johnson. Her voice cries out across the acoustic space where once the guitarist's notes scaled the heights.



Main: Roger Waters on stage in Milan last month. Above: 'The Dark Side of the Moon' sleeve
Mairo Cinquetti/NurPhoto via Reu

According to Waters, the new *Dark Side* is intended "partly as a tribute to the original work, but also to readdress the political and emotional message of the whole album". For many, not least Gilmour, these words will act like the alarm clock that goes off at the beginning of *Dark Side*'s track "Time". Waters is a polemicist, determined not just to air his views but confront people with them. As the warning screened at the start of gigs on his This Is Not a Drill tour puts it, "if you're one of those 'I love Pink Floyd, but I can't stand Roger's politics' people you might do well to fuck off to the bar right now."

His broad-brush critique of war and state power in songs such as *Dark Side*'s "Us and Them" has sharpened over the decades into a specific set of grievances. One is hostility to Nato and US foreign policy, which has led him to speak approvingly of Vladimir Putin. "It may be that he's leading his country to the benefit of all the people of Russia," he told The Daily Telegraph in February, overlooking the countless Russians who have the disbenefit of being dead as a result of Putin's war in Ukraine.

Another flashpoint is his criticism of Israel's policies towards Palestinians, which he likens to those of Nazi Germany. "The Israelis are committing genocide," he asserted in the Berliner Zeitung, also in February. Such inflammatory rhetoric, and the use of an inflatable pig emblazoned with a Star of David as a stage prop at gigs, have prompted furious accusations of antisemitism, which Waters no less adamantly rejects.

He's currently threatening legal action against Frankfurt after the city's authorities labelled him an antisemite and cancelled his planned concert there in May. Among the signatories in a petition protesting against the ban is Pink Floyd's drummer, Nick Mason.

David Gilmour, left, and Roger Waters with Pink Floyd in 1970

Mason has heard Waters' reworking of *Dark Side*. "Annoyingly, it's absolutely brilliant," he said at a playback in London last month for the Dolby remaster of the album. The drummer has remained friendly with Waters ("I've always been well-known for my fence-sitting," he said in 2003). Richard Wright, the band's keyboardist, died in 2008. That leaves Gilmour, who is 77, as Waters' implacable antagonist in Pink Floyd.

Their differences include the usual rock-band squabbles about credits: the release of a 2018 remix of their 1977 album *Animals* was delayed until last year by an argument over liner notes. But Gilmour and Waters are also separated by profound differences in outlook.

Last year, the guitarist reunited with Mason as Pink Floyd to release "Hey Hey Rise Up", a charity single for humanitarian relief in Ukraine (Gilmour has a Ukrainian daughter-in-law). "I find it really, really sad," Waters said of the song in his Berliner Zeitung interview. Two days later, Gilmour's wife, the writer Polly Samson, tweeted a livid denunciation of Waters, to which Gilmour added a rejoinder that "every word demonstrably true". In response, Waters said that he would be taking legal advice.

The seeds for this estrangement were implanted in *The Dark Side of the Moon*. It was the first Pink Floyd album on which Waters acted as sole lyricist. In 2003, when it turned 30, the bassist told Uncut magazine that *Dark Side* was "my baby", although he conceded that "Dave particularly, but Rick as well, had major, important contributions". He depicted the album as a watershed in the life of the band: "We did some very good work after that. But we'd fulfilled the dream and, to us, in some fundamental sense, it was over, so it was all downhill from then on."

His control grew with each subsequent album until his bandmates rose up and overthrew him in the 1985 coup. *Dark Side* was the summit of their joint work, a collective effort that included others outside their ranks. The cover was created by the art design group Hipgnosis. The music's sound quality was engineered by Alan Parsons. "The nice thing about working with them was that they would go home and just leave me to it," Parsons said in 1977. Clare Torry was the session singer who devised and performed the ecstatic vocal run in "The Great Gig in the Sky". "They didn't know what they wanted," she later explained.

> Roger Waters is a polemicist, determined not just to air his views but confront people with them

Waters used to be more collegiate about the album's authorship. "There was something about the symbiosis of the musical talents of the four of us that worked really well," he told Billboard magazine in 2006. But his re-recorded version comes with a bristling sense of ownership. "I wrote *The Dark Side of the Moon*," he insisted in his Daily Telegraph interview. "Let's get rid of this 'we' crap!" Unfolding against the backdrop of tumultuous historical events, the album's history is thus being rewritten. The toxic bloom of Pink Floyd's feuding is at risk of contaminating the legacy of their greatest achievement, the work that gave fullest expression to their group identity.

'The Dark Side of the Moon 50th Anniversary Edition Box Set' is available now, pinkfloyd.com

Pink Floyd at Kew Gardens, London, in 1969: clockwise, from top, Roger Waters, Richard Wright, Nick Mason and David Gilmour
Storm Thorgerson

When money mules hit the jackpot

PODCASTS
Fiona Sturges

In the riveting first season of *The Lazarus Heist*, the Peabody-nominated BBC World Service podcast, we heard how cyber criminals hacked into the private correspondence of workers at Sony Pictures in 2014 and leaked it online. The hackers were alleged to have been working from North Korea and visiting revenge on Sony for *The Interview*, the Seth Rogen film that imagined the assassination of the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. (Pyongyang officials have denied involvement and accused the US of trying to tarnish their country's image.)

Given the outlandish nature of the story, which subsequently took in counterfeit currency and an audacious bank heist in Bangladesh, the podcast seemed like a one-off. But the Lazarus Group, the name under which this shadowy cyber crime collective operates, turns out to be a vast and many-headed beast which continues to find new and ingenious ways to wreak havoc. So now we have a second season, bringing with it an outré tale of a global heist worth $2.1bn and spanning 28 countries.

The series is once again hosted by Jean Lee, who opened the first and only US news bureau in North Korea, and Geoff White, a journalist specialising in tech and organised crime. At the centre of this new story is jackpotting, a practice that uses malware to control ATM machines. Long before the rise of the Lazarus Group, banks had been warned by the late security expert Barnaby Jack that cash machines were vulnerable to interference — the series opens with audio of a 2010 tech conference in which Jack wheeled an ATM on stage and, using his laptop, made it spew hundreds of fake banknotes. And so it came to pass in 2018 when so-called "money mules", allegedly recruited by the Lazarus Group, visited 12,000 cashpoints across the world and, in the course of two hours, enacted a carefully co-ordinated international jackpotting spree. It's with a clear note of admiration that White calls the operation "an extraordinary global flash-mob of crime".

The new series of 'The Lazarus Heist' focuses on a story of ATM fraud

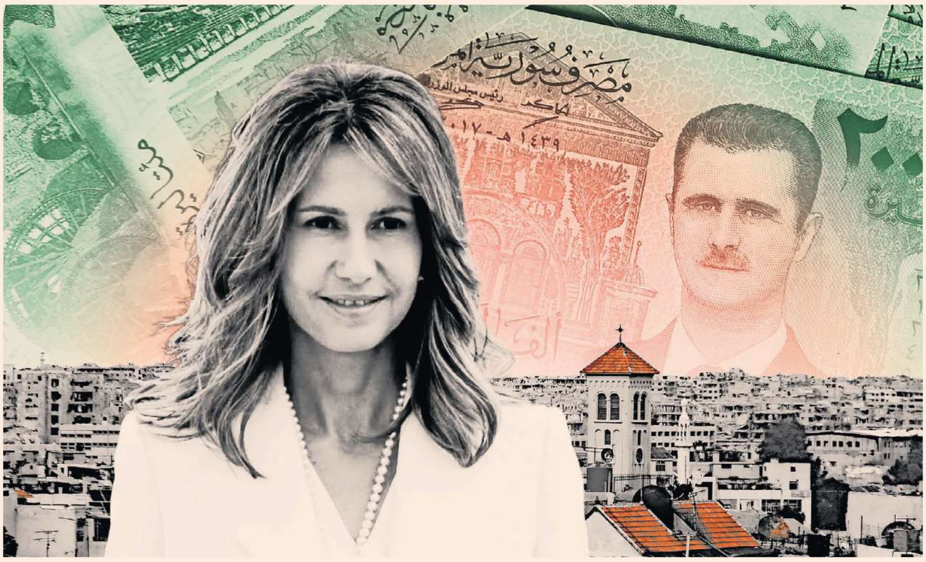
The opening episodes dig deep into how this complex heist was pulled off. We learn about the intricacies of banking systems, how law enforcement officials pieced together the scale of the crime and the machinations of the dark web. If the storytelling sometimes gets bogged down in detail — I began to zone out during a breakdown of the workings of cash machine software — the series comes with a remarkable cast of characters including a Versace-loving influencer named Hushpuppi, who was jailed last year for money laundering, and a dark web fraudster hilariously known as Big Boss. This is the kind of story that would make a terrific Hollywood movie, though that would probably be asking for trouble.

For further tales of online skulduggery, *Hacking Humans* is a surprisingly fun and accessible series on cyber crime. Hosted by Dave Bittner and Joe Carrigan, it covers everything from identity theft, phishing scams and ransomware attacks to AI and deepfakes.

FT BIG READ. MIDDLE EAST

Syria's first lady, who still holds a British passport, now plays a leading role in a regime that is taking control of vast swaths of the economy and plundering the wealth of its people.

By Raya Jalabi



The rising influence of Mrs Assad

When Bashar al-Assad visited Abu Dhabi on March 19, it was seen as the latest sign that the Syrian dictator is quietly being rehabilitated by his peers in the region.

But the trip was especially noteworthy for the fact that he was accompanied by his wife, Asma al-Assad. Dressed head to toe in white, Syria's enigmatic first lady stood out on her first known trip abroad since the outbreak of war over a decade ago.

Asma's presence underscored something little understood outside Syria: how a woman initially sidelined as an obstinate young newly-wed with lofty western ideals has since risen to become one of the most powerful people in the country, at the apex of the country's ruthless ruling family.

In public, she styles herself as the Mother of the Nation, radiating maternal care as she tends to Syria's military families, cancer-stricken children and survivors of the February 6 earthquake. She sports delicate ribbons in her hair, her petite frame draped in dresses sewn by the widows of men martyred in her husband's war.

But privately, Asma has manoeuvred herself into a position of remarkable power, according to interviews with 18 people familiar with the regime's operations, including heads of business, aid workers and former government officials. She now controls some of the key levers in Syria's battered economy, both as policymaker and profiteer, helping consolidate the family's grip over a country in bloodied ruin.

An ex-JP Morgan banker, Asma sits at the head of the president's secretive economic council, staffed with the first couple's close acolytes and business associates. Her NGOs have helped build the Assads a vast patronage network, while controlling where international aid money flows in the country.

As early as 2020, "it had become clear that Asma was becoming a central funnel of economic power in Syria," says Joel Rayburn, who served as special envoy for Syria at the state department under President Donald Trump.

Her fingerprints can be detected across multiple sectors of Syria's economy, including real estate, banking and telecommunications — albeit obscured by shell companies, free zones and offshore accounts owned by associates.

That economy is teetering on the brink of collapse, hampered by years of conflict, unpaid debts, western sanctions and the financial implosion in neighbouring Lebanon, long a haven for Syrian businessmen.

But much of what remains is split between Bashar, his younger brother Maher and Asma. Together, they have cannibalised Syria's traditional merchant class and created new ways to profit from the war, Syrian businessmen and analysts say.

Her name, in particular, has become shorthand for an era of financial consolidation by the presidential couple and their circle. As one Syrian businessman says: "All of Syria is now Asma's."

An auspicious match

Asma Akhras, 47, was born and raised in west London. People who knew her then recall a clever, charming and ambitious young woman, more comfortable speaking English than Arabic.

After marrying Assad in 2001 she had a bumpy start in Damascus, hampered by her formidable mother-in-law who sought to restrict her role to motherhood. Asma dedicated herself to politically uncontroversial initiatives in tourism, culture and education.

In 2007, she set up the Syria Trust for Development, an NGO that would raise her profile and become an essential tool for the regime during the war. In early 2011, just as the Arab uprising arrived in Syria, Vogue published a profile describing her as the "rose of the desert".

Then came the civil war. During the worst of the conflict, Asma retreated from public view, as her husband's regime tortured and killed hundreds of thousands of people and drove millions from their homes.

By 2016, with Assad's forces back in control of much of Syria, she was out in full force. Asma drummed up public adoration in the Alawite heartland through her charity work. Her battle with breast cancer in 2018 helped bring the Assads closer together and soon after, Bashar entrusted his wife with parts of Syria's economics portfolio.

While Asma recovered, the country was facing increasingly dire straits. The economy was in freefall. Widespread shortages of essential goods became the norm, as the government haemorrhaged cash to fund military spending, public sector payroll and subsidised goods. The regime was also deeply in debt to Russia and Iran. Then came the financial meltdown in Lebanon, which wiped out many Syrians' savings. By December 2019, the currency had lost more than 95 per cent of its prewar value against the dollar, impoverishing swaths of the population.

Asma al-Assad has risen to become one of the most powerful members of the country's ruthless ruling family. 'All of Syria is now Asma's,' says one businessperson. Below: the first lady waves with disabled children in 2018 during a ceremony at Damascus University

FT montage: Getty Images/Sana; Omar Sanadiki/Reuters

These complex demands forced the regime to take drastic measures that cemented Bashar and Asma's near-total grip on the economy, according to Syrian experts, businessmen and people with insight into the regime's operations. Efforts to reach the government for comment were unsuccessful.

In 2019, the Assad regime implemented what Syrian businessmen and experts have called a "mafia-like" campaign to shake down the business elite — including those who supported the Assads throughout the war — which continues to this day.

The shakedown began in September 2019 when dozens of businessmen were summoned to the Sheraton Hotel in Damascus, and asked to deposit US dollars into the central bank to help stabilise the Syrian lira or they wouldn't be released. According to some accounts, the total value of the deposits were in the "high hundreds of millions".

The seizures have become commonplace. For some, a legal pretext is used to send regime accountants into a business seemingly at random to find violations that can be leveraged for hefty fines. This can include overlooked back taxes, customs or currency violations on imported goods, or fresh tax rules applied retroactively, according to five businessmen and three analysts.

In many instances, the company's executive is detained and their assets frozen until their families can pay the fine — typically in the mid six figures.

One prominent Syrian businessman describes how he was stopped on the streets of Damascus in summer last year by members of the security forces who politely asked him to accompany them back to a nearby office. He was then quietly put into solitary confinement for 14 days and thereafter given a choice: settle a large bill based on his estimated wealth or stay in jail indefinitely.

Money collected this way normally bypasses tax collection accounts and is instead sent to charity funds or bank accounts directly controlled by the presidential palace, which people with insight into the regime's thinking say are largely used for the Assads' patronage and personal enrichment.

'You have to remember that you're not talking about a normal capitalist system . . . The opacity of the system is intentional'

Asma's circle

These systematic asset seizures are said to have been thought up during meetings of the presidential palace's secretive economic council that Asma chairs, Syrian experts and sources with insights into the regime's thinking say.

Unlike the government's formal economic committee, this one is little-known outside the palace gates and implements the regime's more clandestine asset seizures.

It is unclear how involved Bashar is with the council. Some people think the first couple act in tandem on the economy, his carefully calibrated distance giving him cover. But others say it is Asma's pet project, given her background in finance. "She's very influential [on him]" says a veteran Syrian businessman who knows the Akhras family.

95%	$4,500
How much by 2019 the Syrian lira had lost of prewar value	Price of a Valentino dress Asma was pictured wearing

The highest-profile victim of the shakedowns so far is Bashar's maternal cousin Rami Makhlouf, who was thought to control more than half of Syria's economy before the war. In 2019, authorities ransacked his sprawling empire and forced him to hand over his major assets inside the country.

This included Syria's largest company, Cham Holding, and Makhlouf's crown jewel, SyriaTel, the country's largest mobile network. In doing so, the Assads brought one of their main economic rivals under their control. Asma now controls Makhlouf's charity and its vast patronage network, expanding her control over the aid sector.

Close affiliates of the Assads are everywhere, including Asma's cousins and one of her brothers, who run several businesses closely associated with her.

The presidential couple's names, however, are not on any documents. "You have to remember that you're not talking about a normal capitalist system where you have quarterly reports and transparency," says Eyad Hamid, a researcher at the Syrian Legal Development Programme. "The opacity of the system is intentional."

Among their chief lieutenants is Yassar Ibrahim. Largely unheard of outside Damascus before the US sanctioned him in 2020, his name is now the only one that matters, according to 12 businessmen, analysts and people with insight into the Assads' inner circle.

He is officially economics adviser to the president, but also sits on the clandestine economic council that Asma chairs. Unofficially, he takes on many of the companies that business owners have been compelled to sell, according to four businessmen in the region, and two sources with insight into regime operations.

His name appears on dozens of company documents, including telecommunications companies, tourism, construction, real estate, private security and oil firms, according to Karam Shaar, a senior fellow at the New Lines Institute who has tracked Ibrahim's activities.

Other key associates had early starts in the first lady's office, including Lina Kinayeh, who previously headed Asma's office but is now a ministerial adviser. She is one of the palace's private sector liaisons, three well-placed sources say. When sanctioning her in 2020, the US Treasury noted she "has conducted a range of business and personal activities on behalf of [Asma]".

Another of Asma's close affiliates is Khodr Ali Taher, owner of Syria's biggest retail phone and IT operator, EmmaTel, and a member of the palace's economic council. Many believe he operates the company launched in 2019 on her behalf; Emma was Asma's anglicised childhood nickname in London.

Misplaced trust

A key power base for Asma, and a prime source of patronage, is the Syria Trust. It is run by her close associate Fares Kallas, formerly her senior aide.

Analysts and aid experts say her experience managing the NGO allowed her to craft a systematically corrupt humanitarian assistance system in the country, with her network at its core.

From the start of the war, "NGOs couldn't operate without having contact with her," says the veteran businessman. Syrian sources and aid workers have said the relationship was so blatant that Asma would host meetings in her office at the presidential palace to negotiate international NGO contracts.

Aid groups over the years have frequently conceded to the Assad regime's demands, fearful of losing access and under pressure to keep humanitarian help flowing.

The regime routinely restricts access to areas in need, diverts aid towards its preferred communities and insists on the hiring of officials' relatives. It has also targeted rival groups to help Asma consolidate control over an industry with a guaranteed influx of cash. Last year, a children's NGO was forced to close down after authorities raided their offices and threw several of their staff in jail, according to two people with knowledge of the raids.

It also requires UN bodies and aid groups to partner with government-affiliated agencies the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the Syria Trust. These were the key partners distributing post-quake international aid.

'It had become clear that Asma was becoming a central funnel of economic power in Syria'

The Syria Trust network includes 14 affiliated subsidiaries and programmes, including a university, a microfinance initiative and cultural heritage arm. But its work in the humanitarian space has repeatedly raised alarm bells. It did not respond to a request for comment.

The Syria Trust's website says it has generated "unanticipated income" via its construction company Deyari. The firm has won tenders for UN projects in recent years, and works on an Agha Khan Foundation project in old Aleppo.

A UNHCR 2018 audit report is critical of an unnamed UN partner that contracted a company it "fully owned" to rehabilitate shelters for approximately $400,000. The partner was the Syria Trust and the company was Deyari, according to two sources.

In response to questions from the FT, the UN said its partnerships with the Syria Trust have become "much more limited" and are often necessary because of their "institutional role". In all cases, their performance is regularly monitored: "Partnering does not imply giving carte blanche," says Francesco Galtieri, who until March was a senior UN official in Damascus.

But the UN also pays millions of dollars — $12.3mn in 2021, according to Shaar's analysis of its latest data — for staff to stay at the Damascus Four Seasons Hotel. On paper, the hotel is majority owned by a businessman named Samer Foz who was sanctioned by the US over his ties to the regime. But four Syrian businessmen, two experts and a relative of Foz's suggest that a portion of its profits ends up with Asma.

Even as sanctions pile up against her family and associates, Asma has seemed unfazed. Last October, she was photographed wearing a 2021 Valentino dress worth $4,500 — at least 200 times the average Syrian salary today.

She has held on to her British passport. Reports resurfaced in 2021 that the UK was looking to strip her of her citizenship over human rights violations, but it has yet to happen. She herself was sanctioned in 2020, along with her parents, two brothers and eldest son for accumulating "ill-gotten riches at the expense of the Syrian people". Her parents still live in London, while both brothers now live in Damascus.

With most of their economic rivals cast out, some say the presidential couple are now collecting assets simply to project power. "They certainly don't need all the money they've collected for just themselves," one Syrian businessman says. "I think they're just buying up property and landmarks for prestige and dominance, to make sure everyone knows who's in charge."

With reporting by Andrew England in London and Simeon Kerr in Dubai

The FT View

FINANCIAL TIMES
'Without fear and without favour'

ft.com/opinion

Four ways to make it easier to wind up failing banks

The resolution mechanism needs overhauling after the recent turmoil

"A globally active, systemically important bank cannot simply be wound up according to the 'too big to fail' plan," Switzerland's finance minister said last weekend. "Legally this would be possible. In practice, however, the economic damage would be considerable."

Fresh from crafting the rescue-by-takeover of Credit Suisse, Karin Keller-Sutter identified a clear problem. Bank resolution, the supposed gold standard of emergency regulatory action, cast in the heat of the great financial crisis of 2007-08, may be mainly decorative.

The bank resolution mechanism clearly needs overhauling before the next round of financial turmoil.

The digitised speed of the run on Silicon Valley Bank exposed deep problems with other emergency measures, such as deposit insurance and central bank funding. Days later, Keller-Sutter and colleagues were able to push Credit Suisse into the arms of UBS. In the process, though, they wiped out the contingent convertible bonds that were supposed to rank above equity in the established hierarchy of liabilities. The "coco", an important new tool in the post-2008 regulatory box, was shown to be unfit for purpose.

Four main adjustments would make orderly resolution of an imminently failing bank easier to achieve.

As US president Joe Biden suggested this week, regulators need firstly to factor the impact of sharp interest rate rises on balance sheets into their stress testing of institutions ahead of periods of monetary tightening, and bring mid-sized banks back under the stronger Dodd-Frank rules applied to systemically important peers.

Supervisors and central banks also need to recognise the sheer speed with which an online run on the bank can develop. A 24/7 crisis requires a 24/7 response. It is no longer enough for the US Federal Reserve to limit opening of its discount window to a few hours a day. The Fed might also consider widening the range of securities that can be pledged as collateral against loans from the window and make permanent the new Bank Term Funding Program it set up in the wake of the SVB implosion.

> The 'coco', an important new tool in the post-2008 regulatory box, was shown to be unfit for purpose

Third, deposit insurance regimes need to be adjusted, since the perception at the moment is that all deposits are de facto guaranteed. This is delicate. A permanent backstop would increase moral hazard, giving licence to banks to pursue risky strategies. A temporary backstop of all deposits, as suggested by Sheila Bair, former chair of the US Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, would require careful design to avoid any possible runs on fragile banks as the guarantee period drew to a close.

What is clear is that if mutualised deposit guarantee schemes' cover widens, banks must pay a higher price to participate. Rules on the assets backing banks' deposits must be stricter, and must be fortified against any attempts to loosen them later.

Finally, after the Credit Suisse rescue, bank supervisors must codify the investor hierarchy and ensure it is applied consistently across jurisdictions.

The SVB and Credit Suisse cases have drowned out banks' calls to loosen the rules and should curb governments' desire to use laxer regulation as a competitive tool. A safer, if less profitable, banking system built on fortress-like capital structures is again the goal.

But the recent turmoil is a reminder that when banks teeter, local politics and pragmatism tend to trump purism. Such ad hoc decision-making fuels further uncertainty. More than a year went by between the first credit crunch tremors in 2007 and the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008. Now would be a good time to reinforce the predictable framework that was meant to avoid a repeat of that crisis, before the next quake.

Opinion Japan

The disguised blessings of demographic decline

Maria Hergueta

Leo Lewis

At the age of 15, Akino Imanaka already boasts a fabulous resume. She graduated — as all her teachers expected — at the top of her class, was the natural choice as student president and was picked to represent Oteshima Junior High at countless prestige events.

It helped, certainly, that she was her school's only pupil.

Imanaka's sign-of-the-times solo graduation in a child-starved corner of Kagawa prefecture fits elegantly into the received despair-scape of Japan's future.

Life as the country knows it, lament various recent accounts, is in irrevocable peril. The dividend, though, is less often discussed: in the middle of the great coming upheaval, attitudes to risk-taking, unrewarded loyalty and enduring the unendurable may prove vulnerable as well. Just as many might daydream of a level of financial comfort that grants the individual total freedom to bargain, berate or just walk away from an employer, Japan is about to find out whether its young are now sitting on the demographic equivalent of "forget-you money".

> Younger job applicants can now ask a question once seen as impertinent: 'What can you do for me?'

The country's demographic news is decidedly grim, and the long-term implications sound as ominous as they always have been. The young and the taxpaying will be heavily outnumbered by the old and tax-dependent, and monstrously indebted Japan cannot borrow from generations unborn without some reckoning.

The shorter-term discomforts are also starting to feel very real. Overtime caps and chronic shortages of lorry drivers, forecasts a Nomura Research Institute survey, will leave more than a third of domestic cargoes undeliverable by 2030. Population shrinkage and ageing, said a reverberatory report by Recruit Works Institute, will create an 11mn-worker shortfall by 2040. Last week ended with the government unveiling its latest plans to reverse long-term birthrate decline after a warning by Prime Minister Fumio Kishida that the consequence of inaction was nothing short of societal collapse.

Tough stuff for CEOs, for sure. But conceivably, for Imanaka and her cohort of 15-year-old Japanese, quite liberating. She in particular has experienced — under admittedly extreme circumstances — the extraordinary empowerment of scarcity. Others can expect smaller-scale versions of that force to work in their favour in the future.

Even if the Recruit Works projection is a little off and even if the economy itself is forced into big structural change, by the time the Imanaka generation starts job hunting in about six years time, the labour market, which today offers 134 jobs for every 100 available workers, will have millions of positions to go around.

In theory, this cohort can foresee a Japan that will structurally need them a great deal more than it did other recent generations. It may, as a consequence, be far more accommodating to their ambitions, more responsive to their complaints and, perhaps most critically if they choose a life of entrepreneurialism, forgiving of their first, second and even third failures.

To an extent, say recruiters and hiring managers, this shift has already begun. Even large, household-name Japanese companies report a gap between their ideal intake and what they actually get these days. As that gap has widened, the HR job has changed: once a fairly one-way process of selection, it has become one of suasion. Many say they now face a question from applicants that their former abundance once made impertinent: "What can you do for me?"

Companies will also see their magnetism fading beyond the point of recruitment, as staff realise that scarcity grants them the ability to walk away from anything they do not like — bullying, excessive overtime, sexism — and into something they might.

But the greater empowerment may take the form of encouraging the Imanaka generation to experiment with the economy in ways that they — or more often their parents — would previously have viewed as too risky. Japan's start-up ecosystem, say those directly involved in it, is not only structurally short of risk capital, but of people who feel comfortable taking the risk. The calculus changes completely if the risk can be taken knowing that a staff-deprived corporate sector stands ready (if not happily) to act as safety net for those who took a chance that did not work out.

There are many factors that could prevent this playing out anywhere near as neatly as described. But, for a period at least, the perception of inflection may be hugely empowering on its own. Imanaka told local media that, as a career, she was interested in education or welfare. Japan's graduate-ravenous economy may have grander ambitions for her; demographics mean she can do exactly as she pleases.

leo.lewis@ft.com

Letters

Email: letters.editor@ft.com
Include daytime telephone number and full address
Corrections: corrections@ft.com
If you are not satisfied with the FT's response to your complaint, you can appeal to the FT Editorial Complaints Commissioner: complaints.commissioner@ft.com

Guns before butter — Europe has to choose

Janan Ganesh's opinion piece "Western voters will refuse to give up the peace dividend" (Opinion, March 29) explores the trade-off that voters will have to make between guns and butter in the west. As retirement age protests sweep France, this concern is valid — western European voters today don't know what it's like to live without the "peace dividend".

But ultimately, they soon won't have a choice. The US, on which Europe is largely dependent for its security via Nato, is increasingly shifting its focus to China and the Indo-Pacific. While Russia's unjust war in Ukraine has slowed this pivot, it has not altered the underlying calculus behind it: America can't be the chief security guarantor to everyone, everywhere, all at once.

When tensions all but inevitably spike between the US and China, the focus of my fellow Americans will not remain on the European continent. When equipment and manpower deployed through Nato and our bilateral security agreements is reduced or eliminated entirely to meet the challenge of a peer or near-peer competitor in the Pacific, Europe will find itself underarmed and insecure.

Only the voters of western Europe have the resources and manpower to correct this imbalance.

If Europe is to remain free and prosperous, they'll need to make a choice for guns over butter that today seems inconceivable.

Robert Clarke
Director of Foreign Policy Marketing
Stand Together
Alexandria, VA, US

It should be more difficult to withdraw large deposits

Martin Wolf has suggested several "ways to fix the bank problem" (Opinion, March 22). He focused on the conflicting roles that banks play and the alignment between bank liabilities and assets. Fixing the banking system will take time. In the interim, addressing two weaknesses in the current system would moderate the perverse dynamics that can produce a crisis overnight.

First, it should not be so easy for clients to withdraw large deposits. For example, a condition for extending guarantees beyond the $250,000 limit of deposit insurance could be the conversion of excess sight deposits into time deposits which have a six-month maturity. They could be withdrawn early with a penalty.

Second, it should be easier for banks to increase their liquidity. For example, it could be possible for banks to borrow from the Federal Reserve with 100 per cent of the book value of their longer-term assets as collateral. These fixes would not be necessary if bank liabilities and assets were perfectly aligned. But we are far from that nirvana today.

Henry Birdseye Weil
Senior Lecturer
MIT Sloan School of Management
Cambridge, MA, US

Woodblock print of actor Kawarazaki Gonjûrô I as Tokimune Gorobei

Playing video games in an investor meeting is red flag

It's OK to be boring, especially when your job is to protect people's money. Bragging that you have the "coolest banking job in the entire world" (Top Line, FT Weekend, March 18) as Greg Becker, boss of the now collapsed Silicon Valley Bank, did should be taken as a red flag. "Cool" and fiduciary duty are not easy bedfellows. Bankers are not Disney princesses and movie stars. "Cool" does not factor into it.

In the now infamous Sequoia Capital article about FTX's Sam Bankman-Fried, "cool" behaviours such as playing video games during investor meetings were taken as signs of genius.

However, it should be basic common sense that one should not give billions of dollars to a young man and his frat house friends because they talk nice, went to good schools, and are fun to hang out with.

So please, do the due diligence, fill in the compliance reports, ask the tough questions, and leave being cool to TikTok creators.

Rumbie Mugadza
Brussels, Belgium

Did Kishida's Kyiv visit trigger Mongol memory?

If in his piece on how the merging of geopolitical rivalries in Asia and Europe has disturbing echoes of the 1930s, Gideon Rachman had extended his analysis to 13th century Russia, China and Japan, the insight might have been even more interesting ("China, Japan and the Ukraine war", Opinion, March 28). For when Japan was attacked by the Kublai Khan's Yuan navy in 1274 and 1281 the whole Eurasian area, including present-day Russia and China, was under the Mongols. The present populations of Russia and China are descendants of Genghis Khan.

So when Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping met, could it be that the memory of that 13th century Mongol attack came back to haunt Japan, persuading its current leader, prime minister Fumio Kishida, to do something to defend his country from the new Mongol power. It is almost as if in Kishida's visit to Kyiv he was channelling Hojo Tokimune who was Shogunate of Kamakura Bakufu and who beat back the Mongol force — with the help of a powerful storm.

Rei Grossman
Fremont, CA, US

The Labour goose and the Conservative gander

Robert Shrimsley writes of "the rapid and ruthless marginalisation of the hard left" in the Labour party under Sir Keir Starmer ("Britain's new stability rests on shaky ground", Opinion, March 30). I look forward, without real hope, of Rishi Sunak undertaking a similar ruthless marginalisation of the hard right within the Conservative party, and its disproportionate influence on the government.

Frank Skuse
London E11, UK

OUTLOOK

MIDWEST

Wisconsin's fish-fryers play down Trump's indictment

by Patti Waldmeir

"It's wrong. Wrong! That district attorney should be disbarred."

Suzanne Windle, 64, voted for President Donald Trump in 2016 and 2020 and she leapt to his defence again, hours after he became the first ex-president in US history to face criminal indictment by Manhattan district attorney Alvin Bragg. And she did it with exactly the mix of vehemence and outrage that Trump is counting on to give him another shot at the US presidency.

But signs are that Trump had better think twice before counting on voters like Windle, whom I met when savouring one of the cultural rites of Midwestern springtime, the Friday night Lenten fish fry at the Polish Centre of Wisconsin. Windle — and her self-described "office husband" Tom Comiskey, 65, longtime work colleagues now retired — represent a class of Midwestern Trump voter that I find myself running into more and more: the kind that passionately defends the former president, but isn't sure they want to vote for him again.

"As much as I like, or liked, Trump, it just would be too polarising to have him run again, I don't think he will be the nominee — but the Democrats will do anything they can to prevent it," says Comiskey. And it's not just Republicans like him who question the indictment's motivation in this way: 62 per cent of Americans told one poll last week that they think it is mainly motivated by politics.

Windle is Polish by birth, Comiskey Irish and I am descended from Italian immigrants: three blue collar US ethnic groups who helped power Trump's rise in the Midwest.

We digested our cod, pierogies and chips, piled in shades of beige in a white styrofoam box, to the strains of a polka played on the accordion — the music and food of my Midwestern childhood. And we talked about what comes next: Windle says she's "on the fence" but that she's "leaning towards [Florida Governor Ron] DeSantis — because with him you just don't have all this bullshit" — by which she means legal and other "dramas".

An 18-year-old volunteer, who asked to remain nameless, says he, too, planned to vote for DeSantis: "I would only vote Trump if DeSantis doesn't declare," he tells me.

The consensus among Democrats, independents and Republican voters at this and other Lenten fish fries in southern Wisconsin was that Trump's indictment is likely to have only a temporary effect on his electoral prospects. It's unlikely to motivate Republican or independent voters to come to the polls for him — or inspire Democrats to turn out against him, they said.

One diner, carefully helping his wife into their SUV after a fish dinner at St Thomas Aquinas Catholic church in the rolling country of southern Wisconsin, says the indictment will not affect anyone's choice of candidate. "I like my Ford, you like your Chevy, nothing is going to change that."

Trump's campaign said it raised $4mn in 24 hours after the indictment — and who knows what might happen when he turns himself in to New York prosecutors tomorrow — but Wisconsin pollster Charles Franklin, director of the influential Marquette Law School Poll, says he thinks any rally could prove temporary. Trump's Republican favourability ratings have hovered around 70 per cent no matter what, he says. Even impeachment proceedings had no impact.

DeSantis is a threat precisely because he is favoured by the same voters who like Trump, his polling shows. "He's not the candidate of the never-Trumpers, he's a threat from within the Trump coalition," Franklin tells me. Maybe that's why Trump scored 71 per cent favourable ratings on the latest Marquette poll, but would still lose if paired directly with DeSantis: 52 per cent of Republicans chose the Florida governor and only 46 per cent Trump when paired head to head. In a presidential battle, the same poll found, Biden and Trump would each get 38 per cent of the vote with 20 per cent wanting a different candidate. In a DeSantis vs Biden contest, DeSantis got 42 per cent and Biden 41 per cent.

The one thing the Wisconsin fish eaters agreed on is that this won't help heal America's political divide. "Trump really polarised the country," Comiskey says. "I don't think we will ever be the same again".

The writer is a contributing columnist, based in Chicago

Opinion

The UK must learn its own lessons from the banking crisis

BRITAIN
Martin Wolf

Banks are the Achilles heel of the market economy. The combination of risky long-term assets with liquid liabilities redeemable at par is a standing invitation to illiquidity and insolvency. Contagion is also a permanent danger. The events of recent weeks have reminded us of these realities.

So, what lessons should be learnt, including in the UK? As Andrew Bailey, governor of the Bank of England has reminded the House of Commons Treasury Committee, "Banking is an international industry and the UK is a significant financial centre." The UK wants to enjoy the benefits, while minimising the risks. What is, at least so far, a "mini" crisis is a reminder of the risks.

So, what are the obvious lessons?

First, an open financial entrepot like the UK is vulnerable to regulatory failures elsewhere. Thus, as Bailey stressed, it was helpful that Silicon Valley Bank UK was a ringfenced subsidiary, not a branch. That allowed the UK to resolve it quickly and independently.

Second, the story of Credit Suisse shows that policymakers may find it hard to impose orderly resolution on politically sensitive institutions, even when a plan for it exists. The UK authorities need to consider whether and how they would have done better in a similar case. Ringfencing of the domestic retail bank did not avoid the problem in that case. That is disturbing.

Third, if resolution is so hard, it is even more important for banks to have so much credibly loss-bearing equity and debt and such strong liquidity that all depositors will feel safe. Otherwise, there are likely to be runs and bailouts.

Fourth, large holes in the regulatory net must be avoided. Losses on the market value of portfolios caused by higher interest rates are a potentially relevant example. The British authorities appear to have been much more aware of the risks created by such losses than those in the US. Such losses must be taken into account in both capital and liquidity requirements and stress tests.

Fifth, bailouts are always systemically significant. If depositors believe they will be protected, banks will be encouraged to behave in a more irresponsible manner. So, any bank whose losses might be bailed out must be regulated as systemic. Again, this risk can be reduced with higher equity capital and "bailinable" debt and stronger liquidity. Equity and long-term debt should also be written down before deposits. Alternatively, there could be more generous formal insurance of deposits, with premiums related to a bank's riskiness.

> A shock like this should make mindless deregulation and mindless risk-taking less appealing

Sixth, the story of SVB shows the importance of responsible management. These are not just profitmaking businesses, but also utilities supported in a number of ways by taxpayers. In this case, senior management took tens of millions of dollars out of the bank while it was being driven into the ground. Thereupon, depositors were rescued by taxpayers. This just has to be prevented. As Charles Goodhart of the London School of Economics has noted, managers who fail to manage successfully must share — and know they will share — in the losses. They should bear personal financial liability. That change might permit liberalisation, even abolition, of the UK's onerous "senior managers" regime.

Seventh, think carefully about opening holes in the regulatory regime in an emergency. The ringfencing recommended by the Independent Commission on Banking (of which I was a member) was an attempt to separate domestic retail banking from the risks created by the relatively large global activities of certain UK banks. That is a far smaller concern for the US, where domestic activities are so large. Ringfencing was also designed to give regulators and the government more options in the case of resolution. By granting HSBC an exemption from ringfencing in its takeover of SVB UK, the government has opened a potentially dangerous loophole. This needs to be closed as soon as possible.

Finally, the best protection against occasional huge banking crises is frequent smaller ones. Fear works. We have seen, for example, some unwise deregulation. That of smaller banks in the US in 2019, which contributed to the recent crisis, is a powerful example. Pressure for deregulation has also been growing in the UK. A shock like this should make mindless deregulation less appealing to politicians and mindless risk-taking less appealing to bankers. Both lessons might have been learnt in the US and elsewhere, for a while.

The regulatory regime and bank supervision in the UK seem to have been quite effective. UK bankers also seem to have been quite sensible. So, we did learn from the last crisis. That is good. The best result of the present shock is that it should reinforce those lessons.

martin.wolf@ft.com

Shadow banks could yet cause trouble

Matt Kenyon

BUSINESS
Rana Foroohar

If you asked a few months ago where the next financial crisis might emanate from, most people probably wouldn't have said regional banking. Rather, they might have guessed at the shadow banking sector, which has grown dramatically since the global financial crisis of 2008. It remains far less regulated than the traditional banking sector.

When the pandemic hit, non-banks such as hedge funds and open-ended money market funds pulled out of key credit markets, forcing governments to intervene to stabilise things. As Treasury secretary Janet Yellen said in a speech last week, "Put simply, the Covid shock reaffirmed the significance of structural vulnerabilities in non-banks." Yellen pointed out a number of ways in which US regulators are trying to better monitor hedge fund leverage and address liquidity mismatches in open-ended funds and money markets. These can, when under pressure, "break the buck", leaving small investors with big losses.

It's good that policymakers are focusing on shadow banks, because I'd still bet that this is where the real nexus of risk in 2023 and beyond will lie.

Consider, for example, the trouble brewing in commercial property loans, and private equity real estate funds. This is where the shadow bank and small bank stories meet. Small banks hold 70 per cent of all commercial real estate loans, the growth of which has more than tripled since 2021. Following the easing of Dodd-Frank rules for community banks, smaller financial institutions have also invested more in riskier assets owned by private equity and hedge funds (as have other institutions looking for better returns, including pension funds).

Small bank funding to commercial real estate is now tightening. This, along with interest rate rises, is putting downward pressure on commercial property values, which are now below pre-pandemic levels. That will curtail capital flows, derail investments and put pressure in turn on private equity funds with loans that are maturing, or which need equity injections.

As a recent TS Lombard note laid out, the level of real estate debt maturities in 2023 is expected to be high. This means asset managers may be forced to go to investors for more capital (which will be a tough negotiation at the moment) or sell property out of their portfolio to cover loans.

This has the feel of a doom loop to me. Big real estate indices had already turned negative in 2022. Last month, the Canadian property group Brookfield stopped making payments on $734mn of LA office building debt, and there is elevated short interest in real estate investment trusts such as Hudson Pacific Properties and Vornado Realty. It is possible that concerns about commercial real estate will start to expose other vulnerabilities — or at the very least asymmetries — in the financial system and shadow banks in particular.

Consider, for example, how rich non-bank asset managers such as Blackstone, Apollo, Carlyle and others became on both residential and commercial real estate in the wake of 2008. This was partly because they were able to make deals that more regulated banks couldn't. Private equity players have also made new investments in utilities, farmland, transportation and energy (renewables in particular, driven by the government push for a clean energy transition).

> We are about to see a curtain pulled up on what private equity has been up to over the past few years

I'm not saying that these institutions are about to go broke. Quite the opposite — the major private equity firms are flush with cash. According to data provider Preqin, real estate funds in general have the equivalent of 18 months of equity held in reserve, though as TS Lombard points out, that could dry up as returns fall. But it's safe to say that the combination of falling values, higher rates and a credit crunch is going to mean we'll probably see some high-profile defaults. Perhaps more importantly, I think we are about to see a curtain pulled up on what private equity and the global asset management business in general has been up to over the past few years.

This month, political economist Brett Christophers will publish a book titled *Our Lives in Their Portfolios: Why Asset Managers Own the World*. He believes we've moved from financialised capitalism to something more insidious — an asset manager society in which the titans of finance own "essential physical systems and frameworks" — the homes in which we live, the buildings where we work, the power systems that light our cities and the hospices in which we die.

It is a process that has been sped up by post-Covid fiscal stimulus plans in the US and elsewhere, which have encouraged more public-private infrastructure partnerships. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in America, for example, had less public investment than initially proposed, but introduced a host of new concessions for private investment.

The opening quote in Christophers' book is from Bruce Flatt, chief executive of Brookfield Asset Management, who says, "What we do is behind the scenes. Nobody knows we're there." Well, not anymore. The problem of private equity in residential real estate has been well explored. With the looming crisis in commercial real estate, we are likely to get a much closer look at the highly leveraged bricks and mortar empires built by shadow banks, and what risks are posed by the privatisation of such assets.

rana.foroohar@ft.com

Kosovo's war crimes trial shows the need for preparation in Ukraine

Andrea Lorenzo Capussela

As international investigators collect evidence of wartime atrocities in Ukraine, a war crimes trial dealing with grim events in another part of Europe is due to begin today. Former Kosovo president Hashim Thaçi and three of his associates are all accused of having committed war crimes and crimes against humanity between 1998 and 1999, when Kosovo's mostly ethnic Albanian population fought their Serbian rulers, eventually gaining independence (under the west's auspices) in 2008.

It remains doubtful that either Kosovars or Serbs will view the trial as meting out even-handed justice, let alone contributing to regional reconciliation. As such, the proceedings may hold lessons for future attempts to deal with war crimes cases arising out of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

One problem concerns the unusual status of the court trying the case. Known as the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, it is nominally part of Kosovo's judicial system, but it is located in the Netherlands. In practice it is run entirely by the EU. Its prosecutors and judges, handpicked by EU diplomats, have no secure tenure, making them vulnerable to political influence.

Predictably, Kosovars view the KSC as a biased EU imposition which focuses on their fighters rather than the Serbs who, in Kosovo's eyes, committed the most war crimes. True, the court's first ever verdict — a stiff sentence against a lesser figure than Thaçi — provoked only fleeting protests. But more credible international or hybrid tribunals that handled war crimes in the former Yugoslavia failed to fully satisfy the local population's desire for justice, or to settle profound differences among former adversaries about their past. In some Balkan states, elites and citizens alike still revere their "war heroes".

The background to the trial lies in the doctrine of liberal interventionism once favoured by the west. In 1999, Nato launched air strikes against Serbia to halt massive repressions against Kosovars by Slobodan Milošević's regime. By 2008, western powers concluded that the best solution to a problem rooted in early 20th-century Balkan history was to accede to Kosovo's desire for independence.

But, thanks mainly to Russian and Chinese opposition, the UN Security Council authorised neither Nato's intervention nor Kosovo's independence. To this day, five EU countries with restive or secessionist minorities of their own — Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain — do not recognise Kosovo. Nor do China, India, Russia and dozens of other countries. That precludes the country from acquiring UN membership.

> It is doubtful either side will view the trial as meting out justice or contributing to reconciliation

Kosovo's authorities lack control over Serbian communities in the northern areas of the young state, where tensions run high. EU pressure for a compromise has yielded various patchily implemented agreements and, lately, a verbal pact on whose interpretation Serbia and Kosovo immediately diverged.

Kosovo's economy is the weakest in the Balkans despite large flows of foreign aid. The country also boasts Europe's youngest population, but one in two youths are unemployed. Corruption and organised crime remain a problem. For all this, some responsibility lies with Thaçi, who served as Kosovo's prime minister, foreign minister and president.

The court that will judge him was set up because the UN and the EU — which administered justice in Kosovo in 1999-2008 and 2008-2014, respectively — had been ignoring serious crime. But in 2011, a Council of Europe report, written by Swiss senator Dick Marty, summarised evidence of the KLA's alleged war crimes and the violent methods by which its leaders later acquired political and economic power.

Bowing to pressure, the EU, with US support, set up the KSC. Thaçi and his associates maintain their innocence of the charges against them.

The switch in western policy — from tolerating the misrule of Kosovo's elite to putting Thaçi and others on trial — speaks to the inconsistencies of EU and US intervention in this corner of Europe. The west changed Serbia's borders in 2008, then declared Kosovo's borders inviolable. They rescued Kosovo from Milošević, then watched their docile local partners plunder the new state.

The priority now for western powers should be to support the programme for clean government and inclusive economic growth embraced by the reformers for whom Kosovars voted in 2021. Instead, the west is supervising a trial conducted by a flawed court. We must hope that anyone dealing with similar trials and institution building efforts in Ukraine will be better prepared.

The writer, who headed the economics unit of the International Civilian Office in Kosovo, is author of 'State-Building in Kosovo'

An outdated criminal records system fails us all

Michael Hastings

The UK currently has more than a million job vacancies. And while ministers scramble to plug this gap, there is a common sense solution staring them in the face. A solution that will reinvigorate our workforce, grow our economy, advance racial equity and make our communities safer — we must reform our outdated criminal records system.

More than 12mn people in the UK have some form of criminal record. Most of these are for minor infractions, often decades old, and yet they still prevent individuals from gaining stable employment — even when the offence has nothing to do with the job at hand. But 27 per cent of employers say they would not hire someone with a criminal record. These workers have skills and experience to offer and we should not be holding them back — especially when the economy is sluggish.

Societies that thrive are the ones that get the most out of their people, and work is one of the most effective means of lifting people out of poverty, raising productivity and increasing social cohesion. Ensuring those who have paid their debt to society find gainful employment allows them to provide for themselves and their families, but it also helps give them the purpose and dignity necessary to move on.

Throughout my career I have consistently found people who have been through the criminal justice system to be conscientious, hardworking and loyal, and my experience is far from atypical. As for businesses in the UK that employ people with a criminal record, 81 per cent say that they positively contribute to society.

> These workers have skills and experience to offer and we should not be holding them back

We need reform of criminal records checks to help more employers tap into a vast, underutilised workforce.

The #FairChecks campaign proposes three simple changes: stop the automatic disclosure of cautions; wipe the slate clean for childhood offences; and stop forcing people to reveal short prison sentences forever. This will allow for a more flexible approach that doesn't trap people in the past. For individuals, it's a chance to start afresh, while giving employers access to a new talent pool.

Our criminal justice system rightly punishes wrongdoing. But exclusion from employment for people who have already paid their dues denies deserving individuals another chance to contribute. This makes our society less prosperous and less equal. David Lammy's review has documented how disproportionately our justice system affects people of colour. I have seen the harm this inflicts, after decades spent working on projects to strengthen black communities.

Minorities face more of the economic barriers that accompany a criminal record, which in turn deepens racial inequity. This effect is compounded by other prejudices, which makes the consequences even more damaging: three-quarters of people from a black and minority background felt that it increased the problems they faced as a result of their record.

As for the national balance sheet, we spend more on prisons than any other country in Europe (with the exception of Russia). By the Ministry of Justice's own estimates, reoffending costs England and Wales £18bn a year. This is a failure. We need to rethink our approach. Having a job is the most important determinant in whether someone will reoffend, so by expanding opportunities through clearing old records, we can reduce the likelihood of new crimes.

Workforce shortages and inequality are among the most urgent issues facing society, and the government must do everything in its power to drive economic growth while helping everyone to reach their full potential. Reforming our criminal record system is a common sense solution — saving money and making us safer at the same time.

The writer is chair of Soas University of London, founder of Crime Concern and co-founder of Catch22


CARTIER
AUTOMATIC