

Truss triumphs, Europe plans for winter, mega-rich go underground and world falls for Korean culture

It might have come as a surprise to many outside the UK this week that there is a new prime minister in London - and even more of a surprise to learn that the identity of that new leader is Liz Truss.

When Boris Johnson stepped down earlier this year following the Partygate scandal, the then foreign secretary Truss was not at the top of the list of candidates tipped to replace him, with Conservative MPs strongly favouring the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, or trade minister Penny Mordaunt. But once Truss had made it on to the final ballot of party members, her clear popularity with grassroots voters flipped the contest on its head.

Our big story this week looks at how Truss demonstrated political shrewdness and pragmatism during the summer to manoeuvre her way through a crowded field of Tory hopefuls. Observer political editor Toby Helm charts her rise to the top, while Guardian political editor Pippa Crerar and correspondent Peter Walker survey the daunting landscape facing the new prime minister as the country faces an economic tsunami of high energy bills and inflation in the coming months.

The big story [Page 10](#) →



Russia cited flimsy “maintenance” reasons for closing off the Nord Stream 1 pipeline last weekend but it was clear that this was a major escalation of a full-scale energy war against Europe. With Germany having announced a multi-billion euro support package and all eyes on how Truss will attempt to insulate the UK, we take a look at other European countries’ responses to the energy crisis.

The death of Mikhail Gorbachev last week prompted much reflection on Russia’s journey since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Andrew Roth finds the former president’s funeral a rare gathering point for the nation’s beleaguered liberals, while historian Archie Brown says the war in Ukraine has destroyed the positives of Gorbachev’s legacy.

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If the prospects for the world seem bleak, spare a thought for those poor billionaires who, as Douglas Rushkoff reveals this week, are growing more worried about how to guard their underground survival bunkers when the apocalypse comes. Or, indeed, whether their fortunes can protect them from the consequences of a “great event” at all ...

Bunker mentality [Page 40](#) →

In recent years Korea has refashioned its cultural identity in a way that has made it globally influential in music, screen, art and technology. As a major new exhibition on all things K-inspired opens in London, the Observer’s Tim Adams travels in the opposite direction, to Seoul, to find out what’s behind the resurgence.

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