

## Concours AST – Session 2026

Langue du sujet : Anglais

N°1

Date ou période du sujet : December 19, 2025

Source de l'article : <https://www.bbc.com/news>

Titre du sujet : The New Knitting Machine

By Michael Race

The growing use of artificial intelligence, or AI, is likely to change the jobs market in a way similar to the Industrial Revolution, according to the governor of the Bank of England, Andrew Bailey. He said that while AI could displace people from some jobs, the UK needs to make sure workers have the right “training, education, [and] skills in place” so they can move into new roles that use the technology.

Speaking to BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Mr Bailey said people looking for work would find getting a job “a lot easier” if they had skills linked to AI. However, he warned that younger people with little experience may find it harder to secure entry-level jobs as AI becomes more common. “We do have to think about: what is it doing to the pipeline of people? Is it changing it or not?” he said. “I think if it's people working with AI, I'm not sure it will change the pipeline, but I think we're right to have an eye on that point.”

AI is already part of everyday life and is being used more by businesses and the public sector. The technology allows computers to handle huge amounts of data, spot patterns and follow complex instructions. While this can improve efficiency, there are concerns about its effect on employment. Recent official figures show that the UK unemployment rate rose to 5.1% in the three months to October.

Some people argue that higher minimum wages and taxes have made employers less willing to hire junior staff. Others say that AI could reduce the need for entry-level roles, especially for graduates. Jobs in areas such as law, accountancy and administration are thought to be among the most affected. The global chairman of PwC, Mohamed Kande, recently told the BBC that the firm was slowing down plans to hire more staff. “Now we have artificial intelligence. We want to hire, but I don't know if it's going to be the same level of people that we hire – it will be a different set of people,” he said. Tasks that once took consultants weeks can now be done by AI in minutes.

However, Mr Bailey remains optimistic. He said that fears about new technology replacing workers have surfaced many times throughout history. He cited Queen Elizabeth I's concern about the knitting machine as an example. “As we saw during the Industrial Revolution, it didn't cause mass unemployment, but it did displace people from jobs,” he said. “My guess would be that AI is likely to have a similar effect.”

Date ou période du sujet : December 24, 2025

Source de l'article : <https://www.bbc.com/news>

Titre du sujet : Free Speech Attacked

By George Wright

Two British campaigners are among five people who have been refused visas to enter the United States. The US State Department says they tried to “coerce” American technology companies into limiting free speech. The decision has caused strong reactions across Europe. The two British figures are Imran Ahmed and Clare Melford. Ahmed is a former Labour adviser and now leads the Centre for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH). Melford is the chief executive of the Global Disinformation Index (GDI). The Trump administration described both as “radical activists” and banned them from travelling to the US.

They are not the only ones affected. A former French EU commissioner and two senior members of a German group that works against online hate were also denied visas. European leaders have criticised the move, while the UK government said it remains committed to protecting free speech. A UK government spokesperson said: “While every country has the right to set its own visa rules, we support the laws and institutions which are working to keep the internet free from the most harmful content.” French President Emmanuel Macron described the ban as “intimidation and coercion aimed at undermining European digital sovereignty”. The EU’s foreign policy chief, Kaja Kallas, called it “unacceptable and an attempt to challenge our sovereignty”.

The US government says the decision targets people who have pushed for limits on American technology firms. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said they were part of a “global censorship-industrial complex”. He added: “President Trump has been clear that his America First foreign policy rejects violations of American sovereignty. Extraterritorial overreach by foreign censors targeting American speech is no exception.”

Imran Ahmed’s organisation, the CCDH, supports government action against hate speech and online disinformation. Clare Melford founded the GDI in 2018. The group tracks disinformation online. US undersecretary of state Sarah B. Rogers accused the GDI of using US public money “to exhort censorship and blacklisting of American speech and press”. A GDI spokesperson replied that “the visa sanctions announced today are an authoritarian attack on free speech and an egregious act of government censorship”. They added: “Their actions today are immoral, unlawful, and un-American.”

Date ou période du sujet : April 1, 2022

Source de l'article : <https://www.bbc.com/news>

Titre du sujet : A Horrible Disease

By Claire Marshall & Malcolm Prior

Andy Pollard was once a strong farm manager who could easily jump into his tractor. Today, his life is very different. His arms and legs are stiff, and his body often twists with painful spasms. Andy has advanced Parkinson's Disease and can no longer control his movements. For many years, Andy worked on farms and regularly sprayed herbicides on his land. At the time, he did not know the chemicals could be dangerous, so he did not wear protective clothing. "Paraquat was a really good thing to use – or so we thought," his wife Sue says. "Andy would be driving around the fields and the spray would be going everywhere."

Sue later noticed that many of the people she knew with Parkinson's were farm workers. At first, she thought this was just a coincidence. Then she read about a possible link between the disease and Paraquat, a powerful weedkiller. "Why hasn't it been regulated and stopped?" she asks. "We've got a lot of people in the same situation."

Andy often visits a farm in Dorset run by the charity Countrymen UK. The charity was started by Julie Plumley after her father John was diagnosed with Parkinson's. The farm still produces beef and lamb, but instead of tractors, there are mobility scooters in the yard. "The farmers come here not because they're ill," Julie explains, "but because they want to get on with living."

Julie remembers her father spraying chemicals for hours with bare arms. He developed Parkinson's in his 40s and believed the chemicals were responsible. His neighbour Ken Barnes, also a Paraquat user, became ill at a similar age. "It's a horrible disease," says Ken's wife Sue. "It's taken his life away."

Paraquat has been banned in the EU and the UK since 2007, but it is still made in Britain and exported abroad. In the US, hundreds of farmers are suing Syngenta, claiming the company hid health risks. Syngenta rejects this and says Paraquat is safe.

Scientists remain divided. Some studies suggest a higher risk of Parkinson's, while others find no clear link. For families like the Pollards, however, the questions remain deeply personal and unresolved.

By Charlie Buckland

On 23 December 1975, Rob and Dianne Parsons were preparing for Christmas at their Cardiff home when they heard a knock at the door. Standing there was a man holding a bin bag with his belongings. Rob recognised him as Ronnie Lockwood, someone he had known from Sunday School and had been told to be kind to because he was “a bit different.”

At the time, Rob was 27 and Dianne was 26. They decided to take Ronnie, who was autistic, into their home. They cooked his chicken, allowed him to bathe, and let him stay for Christmas. What began as a simple act of kindness turned into a 45-year bond of love and friendship that lasted until Ronnie’s death.

Ronnie, almost 30 at the time, had been homeless since he was 15 and had moved around Cardiff, working in various jobs. They had originally planned to let Ronnie stay only until the day after Christmas, but they couldn’t bring themselves to ask him to leave. They sought advice from a homeless centre, which told them Ronnie needed an address to get a job, but to get an address, he needed a job.

When Ronnie first moved in with them, he struggled with eye contact and conversation. “But then we got to know him and, in truth, we got to love him,” Rob said. They helped Ronnie find a job as a waste collector, bought him new clothes, and took him to work each day. Over the years, Ronnie developed routines, such as emptying the dishwasher every morning.

Though their lives with Ronnie weren’t always easy, including dealing with his gambling addiction, Rob and Dianne couldn’t imagine life without him. “Ronnie had a great heart,” Dianne said. “He was kind, he was frustrating, but he enriched our lives.”

When Ronnie died in 2020 at 75, the couple said they missed him deeply. He left £40,000 to charity, the exact amount needed to fix the roof of the Lockwood Centre, which was later renamed Lockwood House in his memory.

Dianne said, “I just think it’s all meant to be. Ronnie brought a richness into our lives.”

**Langue du sujet :** Anglais

**N°5**

**Date ou période du sujet :** December 17, 2025

**Source de l'article :** <https://www.newslevels.com>

**Titre du sujet :** Future Generations Deserve a Healthier Future

A recently published study looked at levels of fine particulate matter air pollution across the continental United States from 1999 to 2015. The researchers wanted to understand how this type of pollution has changed over time and how it affects people's health. Fine particulate matter is one of the most harmful kinds of air pollution because it is very small and easy to breathe in.

These particles mainly come from industry, power plants, and cars. When fossil fuels such as coal, oil, or gasoline are burned, they release tiny particles into the air. These particles are about 30 times smaller than the width of a human hair. Because of their small size, they can travel deep into the lungs when people breathe. In some cases, they can even enter the bloodstream. This makes them especially dangerous compared to larger particles, which are often blocked by the nose or throat.

Breathing in fine particulate matter can cause many health problems. It can make asthma worse and can lead to breathing difficulties, especially for children and older adults. Long-term exposure may increase the risk of heart disease, lung disease, and other serious illnesses. People who already have health problems are often more affected, but even healthy people can suffer if they are exposed for many years.

The study found that levels of this pollution have gone down since 1999. This is likely due to stronger environmental laws, better technology, and cleaner energy sources. For example, many power plants now use cleaner methods, and cars produce fewer emissions than they did in the past. These changes have helped improve air quality in many parts of the country.

However, the researchers also discovered that fine particulate matter is still a serious problem. Even when pollution levels are below the current legal standard, they are linked to an estimated 30,000 deaths. This suggests that the current rules may not be strict enough to fully protect public health. One of the lead authors of the study said that lowering the standard could help reduce health risks and save lives.

The researchers hope their findings will encourage policymakers to consider stronger air quality standards in the future. By continuing to reduce pollution, society can create a healthier environment for current and future generations.