

Consumer Price Index: Inflation still lingering

October data illustrates that nation's inflation crisis is not over, economists say. **In Money**

Harry Potter cooking show trades wands for whisks

Filmed on movies' sets, "Wizards of Baking" contestants conjure up magical desserts. **In Life**

What we know about Uranus may be wrong

New data suggests Voyager 2's flyby visit in 1986 may have misled scientists about the ice giant for nearly 40 years. **In News**

NASA/JPL
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USA TODAY

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Thune new Senate majority leader

Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., defeated two opponents in a secret ballot to become Senate majority leader on Wednesday. JACK GRUBER/USA TODAY



South Dakotan bests candidate favored by Trump allies, will succeed McConnell

Riley Beggin
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – Senate Republicans have elected Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., as the next Senate majority leader after rejecting public overtures from allies of President-elect Donald Trump who backed a different candidate.

Thune won in a secret-ballot vote of 29-24, beating out opposing candidates Sens. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Rick

Scott, R-Fla.

Thune, 63, will succeed Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, who has led his chamber's Republicans since 2007 and is the longest-serving Senate party leader in U.S. history.

The Senate majority leader is one of the most powerful people in Washington – and soon will have an important say over Trump's agenda. Thune will

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Trump duo will target waste in government

Joey Garrison, Josh Meyer, Swapna Venugopal Ramaswamy and David Jackson
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – President-elect Donald Trump has tapped tech billionaire Elon Musk, the world's wealthiest person, and former Republican presidential contender Vivek Ramaswamy to lead a new Department of Government Efficiency that will work to slash federal government spending, waste and regulations.

Trump said the commission will "provide advice and guidance from outside of government," partnering with the White House and Office of Management and Budget "to drive large-scale structural reform" throughout the federal government. He said

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Jan. 6 pardons could revitalize far-right groups

Will Carless
USA TODAY

For dozens of people currently sitting in federal prisons around the country, the election of Donald Trump as president last week meant more than a new political future, it offered a lifeline.

Hundreds of people have been imprisoned over the past four years for their roles in the deadly insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Now, with the accused instigator of that insurrection about to take office as president, dozens of violent rioters are pinning their hopes on Trump's promise to issue pardons for the attack, which he recently called "a day of love."

Trump has repeatedly referred to the jailed insurrectionists as political

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NFL head coaches of color hit record high

But 2024 diversity report shows setbacks at offensive coordinator



At the start of this season, nine of the 32 NFL teams were led by a coach of color. ILLUSTRATION BY JIM SERGENT/USA TODAY

Tom Schad and Jim Sergent
USA TODAY

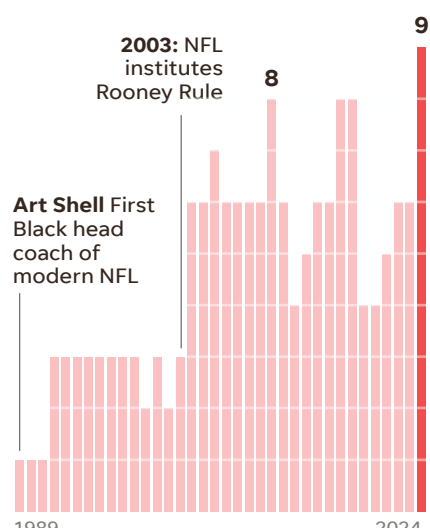
At the beginning of the 2024 season, nine of the NFL's 32 teams were led by a head coach of color, the most in league history.

But the complete picture of coaching diversity within the NFL is more nuanced and complex.

As part of its NFL Coaches Project, USA TODAY Sports once again compiled biographic information – such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, playing background and coaching history – for every on-field coach in the league at the beginning of the season. This ranged from head coaches and coordinators, at the top of the proverbial coaching ladder, to quality control coaches and fellows at the bottom. Strength and conditioning coaches and those who work in analytics or administration were excluded from the data, as were interns.

The 2024 data shows progress in some areas – such as at the

NFL head coaches of color



SOURCE USA TODAY Sports research
JIM SERGENT/USA TODAY

IN SPORTS USA TODAY Sports analysis looks at special teams bias in hiring head coaches.

position coach level, where non-white coaches now hold nearly half of the roles – but regression in others, particularly on the offensive side of the ball. Non-white coaches hold a smaller percentage of offensive coaching roles than they did in 2023, and there were no Black offensive coordinators in the league at the start of the season for the first time since 1988.

In total, the NFL's on-field coaches are roughly as diverse as they were a year ago, at least on a percentage basis. At the start of the season, non-white coaches made up about 44.3% of the league's coaching staffs, within 0.1% of last year's total.

Richard Lapchick founded The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) at the University of Central Florida, where he helped track diversity in the NFL and other sports leagues for more than a decade. He praised the

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Trump, Biden meet

A week after Donald Trump's election win, he and President Joe Biden held a highly anticipated meeting at the White House on Wednesday. Biden congratulated Trump and said, "I'm looking forward to having, like we said, a smooth transition." It was Trump's first trip to the White House since his first term ended in January 2021.



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