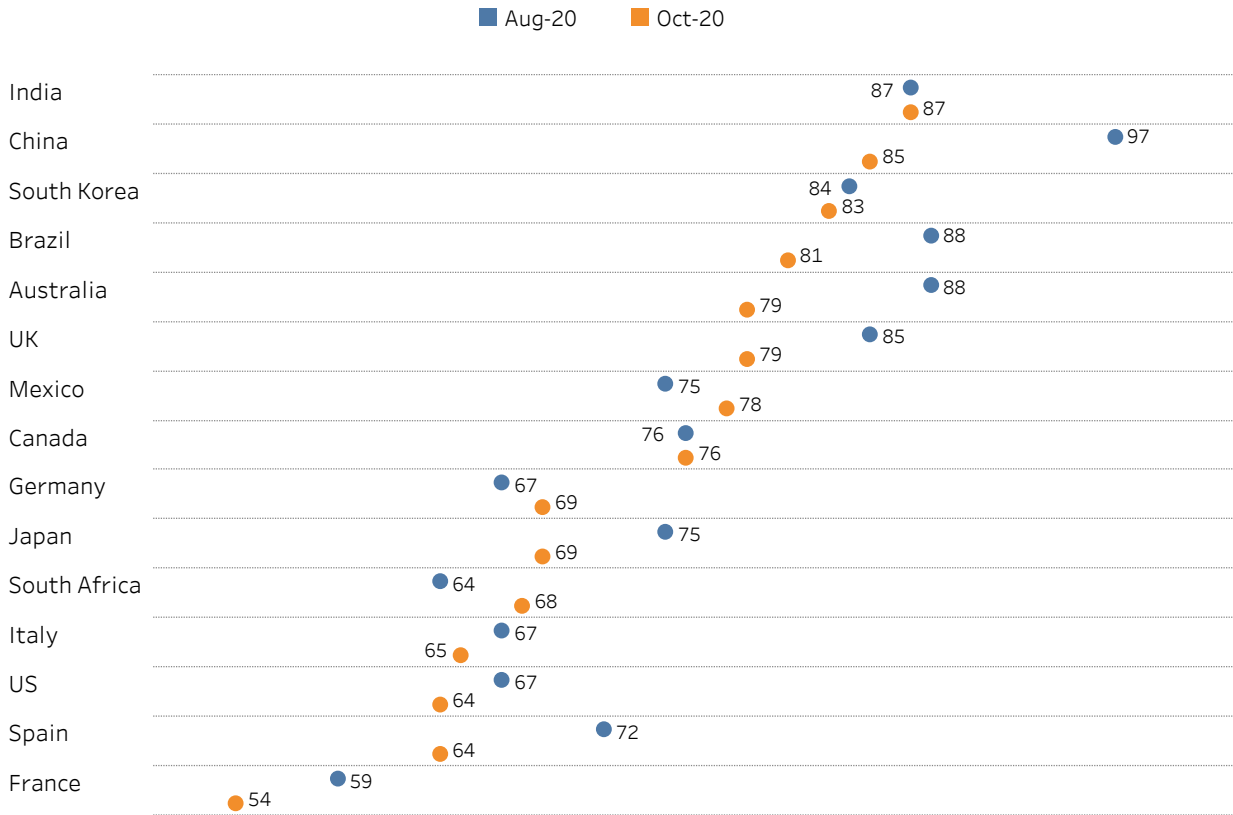


WEEKLY POLITICAL COMPASS

China has suspended frozen food imports from 20 countries. The Tigray conflict is spreading beyond **Ethiopia's** borders. The **EU** recovery fund is threatened by national vetoes. **Peru's** congress will vote in a new president. Meanwhile, the leaders of **India** and **China** will meet virtually at the 12th BRICS summit, **UK-EU** future relationship talks continue in Brussels, **Brazil** held municipal elections on 15 November, and **Cote d'Ivoire's** former president might soon return from exile.

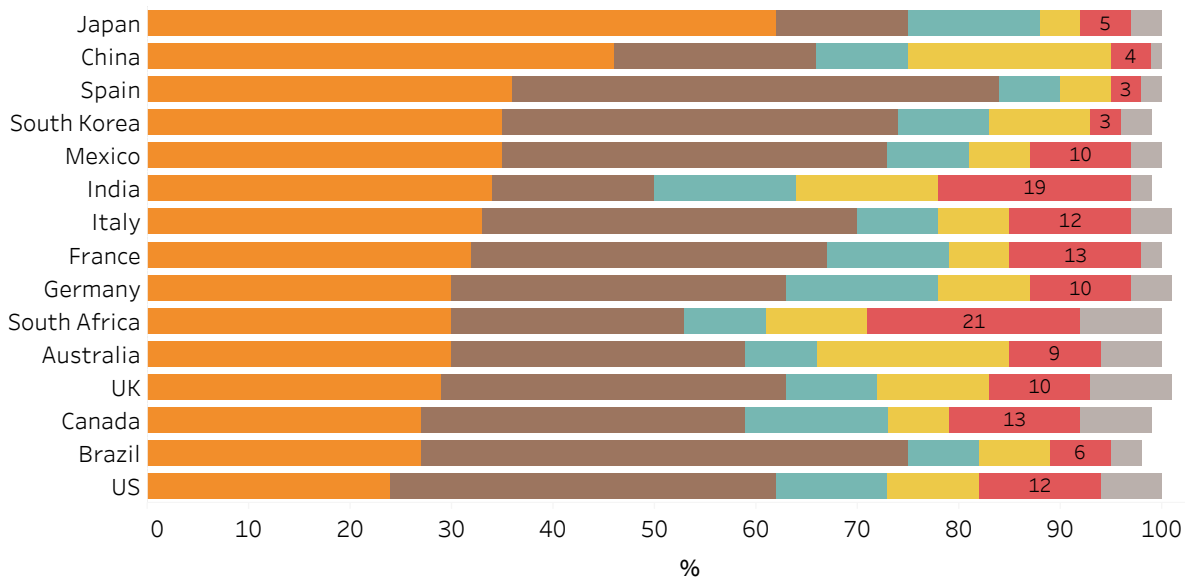
CHART OF THE WEEK

"If a vaccine for COVID-19 were available, I would get it" (Total agree, %)



Which best describes why you would not take a COVID-19 vaccine? (*)

- I am worried about the side effects
- Moving through clinical trials too fast
- I don't think it will be effective
- The risk to me of getting COVID-19 is low
- I am against vaccines in general
- Other



Source: Ipsos. Fieldwork: 8-13 October 2020; 18,526 online adults aged 16-74 across 15 countries (online samples in Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa tend to be more urban, educated, and/or affluent than the general population)

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(*) Only respondents who disagree somewhat or strongly that "if a vaccine for COVID-19 were available, I would get it" answer this question (4,859 online adults aged 16-74).

Much of the population (73%) in most countries would get a **vaccine for Covid-19** if it were available, although the number has declined slightly since August. There also exist important differences across countries. Whereas in India, China and South Korea between 80% and 90% of the surveyed population would get a Covid-19 vaccine, these figures are much lower in France, Spain, the US and Italy – between 55% and 65%. Being worried about its side effects and that it is quick move through clinical trials are the most cited reasons for not wanting to get the vaccine. On the other hand, only a minority of the population in most countries is opposed to vaccines in general.

WHAT TO WATCH

China

Chinese authorities have suspended frozen food imports of 99 suppliers from 20 countries over concerns that Covid-19 can be transmitted on food imports. The WHO says the risk of transmission from frozen foods is minimal, but China's Customs Administration is tightening testing and disinfection procedures.

Ethiopia/Horn of Africa

The two-week-old conflict between Addis Ababa and the Tigray region is escalating quickly and spilling across Ethiopia's borders. Over the weekend, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) said it had fired rockets at Eritrea's capital, Asmara. The TPLF claims that Eritrean military divisions are fighting alongside federal Ethiopian troops against Tigrayan forces. The claims have not been verified but highlight the acute risk of the rapid internationalization of the conflict.

EU

Member state ambassadors are discussing the next steps after the German Council presidency achieved a deal with the European Parliament on the EU budget last week. The compromise would also clear the way for the EUR 750bn pandemic recovery fund. Concessions made to parliament have been largely cosmetic, but Poland and Hungary are threatening a veto over the inclusion of some rule-of-law conditionality. The budget as such requires merely a qualified majority in the Council but sign-off from all member states is needed to enable the EU to raise the capital required for the recovery fund.

Peru

Congress is scheduled to vote in a new president in a special session starting at 14:00 (local time) on 16 November following Manuel Merino's resignation yesterday. Congress forced Merino to resign – just five days after he was controversially sworn in – by threatening to impeach him if he refused. The death of two protestors on 14 November made Merino's position untenable. Congress has agreed that the caretaker president must come from the group of 19 legislators who voted against Martin Vizcarra's impeachment on 9 November. However, parties in Congress last night failed to agree on a compromise slate of candidates that would have seen Rocio Silva of the leftist Broad Front (FA) voted in as acting president. The Purple Party (PM) has come up with a new list overnight which has Francisco Sagasti as candidate for president.

ON THE HORIZON

ASIA

India

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and China premier Xi Jinping will meet virtually at the 12th BRICS summit on 17 November amid signs of disengagement on the Sino-Indian border. The challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic,

the implications of the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) – India was part of the negotiations but pulled out last year – and political settlement of hot-spot issues are likely to be discussed.

EUROPE

UK/EU

Future relationship talks continue in Brussels, but it is still not clear that the moment for a deal will arrive already this week. Instead of assessing a Brexit deal, the videoconference of EU heads of state or government on 19 November is scheduled to discuss the fight against Covid-19. Trade talks could continue until the European Council's next formal gathering on 10-11 December. The European Parliament's final session only starts on the following Monday, 14 December, leaving enough time for the required sign-off.

LATIN AMERICA

Brazil

Municipal elections took place on 15 November. In the most important capitals (São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro) a runoff election on 29 November will be required. However, political leaders and the federal government in Brasilia will not wait until the end of the month to establish their priorities. The leader of the government in the House, Ricardo Barros, wants to discuss an extensive economic agenda this week, including the autonomy of the Central Bank, a new framework law for cabotage and a new low-income housing program – though the climate for agreements in the chamber is not promising. On the other hand, the Senate intends to discuss a new bankruptcy law and a new regulatory framework for natural gas. In both chambers, the race for the presiding posts in February will continue to delay progress, particularly if the government fails to take the leadership in advancing the reform agenda. In addition, there is no agreement to proceed with a vote on the 2021 Budget Guidelines Law (LDO) which is normally voted by August every year.

MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Cote d'Ivoire

Former president Laurent Gbagbo might return from exile soon as part of ongoing reconciliation talks. Gbagbo, who has resided in Belgium ever since his January 2019 acquittal by the International Criminal Court (ICC), had so far been denied an Ivorian passport. A 20-year conviction in absentia by an Ivorian court means his return will hinge on a presidential pardon. On 11 November, President Alassane Ouattara and main opposition leader Henri Konan Bedie met for the first time since Ouattara's disputed 31 October re-election. While the broader contours of a possible post-election reconciliation have yet to emerge, any lasting settlement would likely need to involve Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front (FPI).

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