

WEEKLY POLITICAL COMPASS

The **EU** will discuss sanctions on **Belarus**. **India's** foreign secretary will visit the **US**. Meanwhile, **China's** regulatory focus on data privacy is increasing, environmental policies will be discussed at this week's **EU** summit, **Peru's** leading presidential candidates will engage in a televised debate, and elections will be held in **Ethiopia**.

CHART OF THE WEEK

Willingness to be vaccinated is increasing across the globe



Source: YouGov

Citizens' willingness to be vaccinated against Covid-19 is growing as the vaccine is rolled out across the world.

This is particularly the case in advanced economies, where a significant share of the population has already received one dose of the Covid vaccine. However, there are still differences within advanced economies. Vaccine hesitancy is much lower in the UK, Spain and the Nordics than in the US and France. Political differences in the way people think about Covid-19 vaccines are more prominent in the US than elsewhere. At the same time, some ethnic minorities across different countries

appear more hesitant to be vaccinated, as they tend to be less trustful of government policies. As the supply of vaccines is not constrained anymore in advanced economies governments will pay increased attention to reaching the unvaccinated population, which also tends to be poorer. Businesses will need to factor in the politics of vaccination, together with the role of structural inequalities, when formulating return-to-the-office policies.

WHAT TO WATCH

EU/Belarus

Leaders of EU member states will discuss imposing additional sanctions on Belarus at the 24-25 May European Council meeting. New restrictions are considered after on 23 May Belarusian authorities forced to land in Minsk a civilian aircraft with 171 passengers onboard – en route from Athens to Vilnius – to arrest Belarusian journalist and opposition activist Roman Protasevic. Beyond sanctions targeting responsible individuals, several EU member states (including the Baltic States and Poland) are calling for the suspension of all EU commercial flights through Belarusian airspace and banning the Belarusian flag carrier Belavia from the EU airspace.

India

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will begin a five-day visit to the US on 24 May. The visit will focus on the procurement of Covid-19 vaccines from American companies and on the possibility of their joint production. Jaishankar will also hold discussions on other bilateral issues with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and senior officials of the Biden administration.

ON THE HORIZON

ASIA

China

The Cyberspace Administration of China named and shamed 105 apps on 21 May for improperly collecting or using personal data from users. This is the latest sign of Beijing's increased regulatory [focus on data privacy](#). Among the apps mentioned were Microsoft's LinkedIn and Bing products, as well ByteDance's Douyin, the Chinese version of TikTok, for violating rules on app data collection and use.

EUROPE

EU

The main topic at the 24-25 May European Council gathering remains climate change. Leaders will have a last chance to express their political demands before the European Commission will unveil a flurry of draft legislation in mid-July. The measures – from a carbon border adjustment mechanism to a reform of the EU's emissions trading system – are intended to deliver on the recently increased CO2 reduction target of 55% by 2030. The question of funding the green transition will be crucial. Under the radar of summit-level politics, meanwhile, technical talks continue to reform the bloc's vast agricultural budget to bring it in line with Europe's green ambitions.

LATIN AMERICA

Brazil

The former health minister Army General Eduardo Pazuello testified in the ongoing Senate inquiry into the handling of the pandemic on 19-20 May. Pazuello was the longest serving out of the three health ministers in the Bolsonaro

administration. He denied facts that are publicly available in past speeches, press conferences, live streams and postings in social media by himself, the president and other members of government, thus risking indictment and imprisonment for lying under oath. Meanwhile, Congress has been decreasing the level of support for the government. Reforms are at great risk of being sidelined by a more self-serving agenda led by electoral interests of parliamentarians.

Peru

A televised debate between presidential candidates Pedro Castillo and Keiko Fujimori is scheduled for 30 May.

Castillo has sidestepped additional debates against his more experienced rival but has agreed to next Sunday's event, partly because a ban on polls in the final few days of the campaign means that if he performs poorly, it may not matter. A vote simulation organized by pollster Ipsos on 21 May suggests that Castillo has regained his lead over Fujimori since the previous simulation a week earlier had suggested they were in a technical tie. An IEP poll from late last week puts Castillo in a more commanding lead of 10.4 points. The final phase of the long campaign will be crucial for undecided voters.

MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Ethiopia

The National Electoral Board has announced that the twice-delayed general election will now take place on 21 June.

Amid conflict, regional strife and flailing voter registration, the polls will present another test for Ethiopia's stability and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's credibility. Over the weekend, the US government announced restrictions on economic and security assistance to Ethiopia and visa restrictions in a bid to push leaders towards a resolution of the crisis.

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