

Geopolitics

BBVA Research Big Data Geopolitics Monitor

Big Data Unit
5 March 2025

Zelensky is ready to engage in peace. Trump reaffirms his policies to Congress

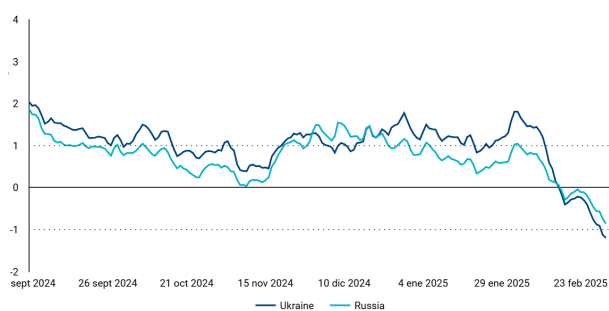
Zelensky ready to engage in Peace: Ukrainian President has expressed his country's readiness to engage in peace negotiations after Trump suspended military aid which alarmed Ukrainian officials, as it threatens the country's ability to defend itself against Russian attacks, particularly on energy infrastructure. Zelensky has shown interest in a French proposal for a temporary ceasefire, if Russia reciprocates but EU leaders remain divided.

Trump delivered a major address to US Congress and reiterates priorities: President Donald Trump delivered the speech to the Congress, doubling down on his aggressive trade policies, calling for an end to the war in Ukraine, and praising Elon Musk's cost-cutting initiatives in Government. He reinforced his commitment to imposing tariffs on countries that tax US imports, including Mexico, Canada, and China (whose Tariffs were reaffirmed yesterday), despite concerns about rising consumer costs. "There will be a little disturbance, but we're OK with that," Trump admitted. He also declared the Ukraine conflict a "horrific and brutal war," urging for peace without detailing a clear path forward. Meanwhile, he continued his attacks on former President Joe Biden, blaming him for inflation, high energy costs, and economic instability, won immigration, he pushed for increased deportations and promoted a "gold card" residency plan for wealthy immigrants willing to pay \$5 million. While light on new policy announcements, the speech reinforced Trump's commitment to his signature issues and signaled an aggressive approach to governance in his new term ([WSJ](#)).

The BBVA Monitor: Trade Uncertainty index is in the extreme risk area, while geopolitical risk decreases as Russia-Ukraine negotiations continue

- **Geopolitical risk indicators** kept decreasing in Ukraine, Russia, as well as in Europe and US, given that peace negotiations to resolve the Russia-Ukraine war seems to be closer (Fig.1 and Fig. 3).
- **The US Trade uncertainty index** has increased sharply during the last weeks, moving into the extreme risk area due to concerns over Trump's tariff measures (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).
- **Geopolitical risk** increased in **Mexico**, while they eased in most of the rest of Latin American countries (Fig.3 and Fig. 4). In the case of **Israel**, this geopolitical risk index eased over the week, but still in the high-risk area (Fig.3 and Fig. 5).

Fig1. **GEOPOLITICAL RISK INDEX: UKRAINE & RUSSIA**
(28-day weighted moving avg, normalized by its own history)



Source: .BBVA Research & www.gdelt.org. Positive (negative) values indicate greater (lower) risk relative to the mean of period 2021-nowadays

Fig2. **TRADE UNCERTAINTY INDEX: US**
(28-day weighted moving avg, normalized by its own history)



Source: BBVA Research & www.gdelt.org. Positive (negative) values indicate greater (lower) interest relative to the mean of period 2021-nowadays

*The selection of news has been enriched by the BBVA Research Geo Assistant developed with Chat-GPT.

Fig3. **BBVA RESEARCH GEOPOLITICS MONITOR "SIGNAL" CHANGES**

(Signals in Geopolitical Risk, Political Tensions, Economic Policy Uncertainties, Protest and Conflict according to Standard Dev)

BBVA Research Geopolitics Monitor main "Signal" changes after the Hamas-Israel Conflict

Summary of Signals After Hamas-Israel Conflict (February 25th, 2025)



Source: BBVA Research

Summary of Signals After Hamas-Israel Conflict (March 4th, 2025)

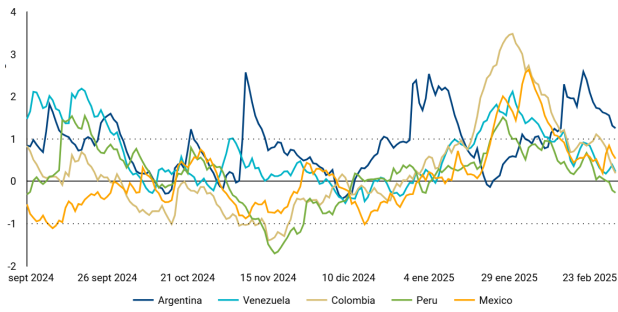


Source: BBVA Research

Source: BBVA Research and www.qdelt.org.

Fig4. **GEOPOLITICAL RISK INDEX: LATAM**

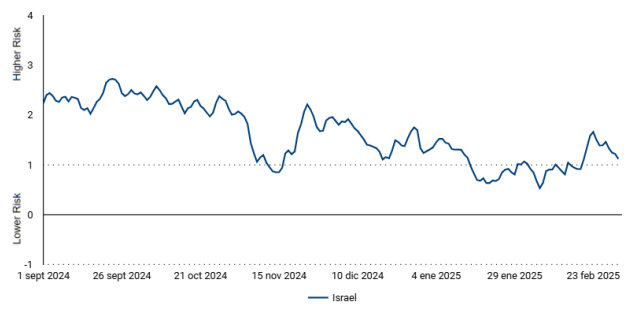
(28-day weighted moving avg, normalized by its own history)



Source: BBVA Research & www.qdelt.org. Positive (negative) values indicate greater (lower) risk relative to the mean of period 2021-nowadays

Fig5. **GEOPOLITICAL RISK INDEX: ISRAEL**

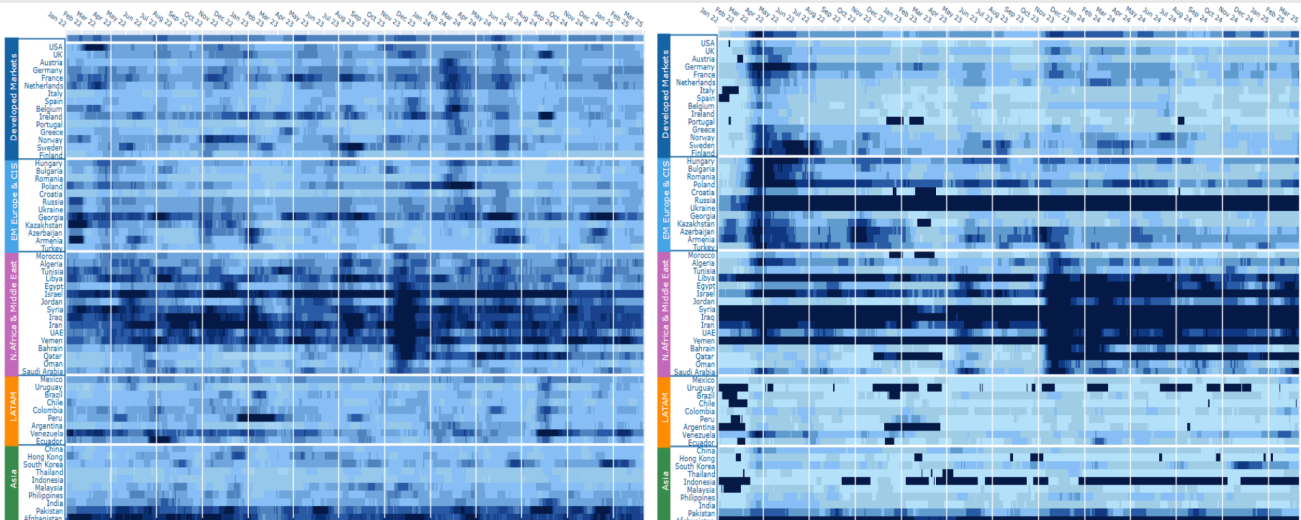
(28-day weighted moving avg, normalized by its own history)



Source: BBVA Research & www.qdelt.org. Positive (negative) values indicate greater (lower) risk relative to the mean of period 2021-nowadays

Fig6. **BBVA RESEARCH PROTEST AND CONFLICT HEAT MAPS**

(Evolution of Protest and Conflict over time by regions)



Source: BBVA Research and www.qdelt.org.

Methodological annex: indicators' construction

We have developed a daily tracker with weekly updates to monitor protest and conflict indicators for every country in the world from 2019 to present day. To construct this, we use a rich 'big database' of international events (GDELT), created by Leetaru and Schrodt (2013). GDELT is an open-source database that extracts and parses digital news monitoring world events covered by news media from nearly every corner of the world, whether broadcast, printed, or published on the web, in over 100 languages, every moment of every day, updated every 15 minutes. Thus, it contains a comprehensive and high-resolution catalog of geo-referenced events and themes.

Using different dictionaries, several thousands of taxonomies and themes are identified in the news pieces to classify the information. The algorithms used by GDELT also identify emotions, organizations, locations, news sources, and events across the world as well as their average sentiment using Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques and the lexicon approach.

The included indicators are:

- Geopolitical Risk: or sentiment (weighted by coverage) of the country's geopolitical risk perception.
- Political Tensions: or sentiment (weighted by coverage) of the country's political tensions.
- Economic Policy Uncertainty or sentiment (weighted by coverage) about the country's economic policy uncertainty, also disaggregated by media origin.
- Protests or coverage regarding social protests or unrest in the country.
- Conflict or coverage of armed conflicts, which go beyond verbal protests.
- Bilateral Tensions or the sentiment (weighted by coverage) between a specific pair of countries that appear together in the news article (plus NATO and EU).

The indicators track the evolution of tensions and are normalized by their country's history since 2019, thus they are all expressed in terms of standard deviations from their historical patterns. Indicators usually lie within the range [-1,1]. Therefore, when the values exceed one (the upper boundary of the range), this means escalating tensions. While it's possible to observe simultaneous tensions arising in multiple countries (for example, due to geopolitical events affecting several nations, as seen in some of our heatmaps), using these indicators for direct quantitative comparisons of risk levels between countries is not recommended.

We apply a weighted moving average of 28 days (to include four complete weeks with the same number of days of the weeks) to reduce the noise of daily information and identify signals more clearly. The weights have been calculated using a discrete geometric distribution such that it puts more weight on recent data and less on past data (see Graph 1). Aggregating by weeks, the weight of the most recent week has a weight of 68%, the past week 22%, the previous 7%, and the fourth 3%. The weight of the 28 days can be seen in the following image. In such a way, the indicators reflect what has been happening in the last few days.

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