

Geopolitics

# BBVA Research Big Data Geopolitics Monitor

Big Data Unit

## Trump Signals Possible Diplomatic End to Iran War Amid Ongoing Uncertainty. Iran Rejects US Negotiation Claims

**Trump Signals Possible Diplomatic End to Iran War Amid Ongoing Uncertainty:** US President Donald Trump has indicated a potential diplomatic resolution to the US-Israel conflict with Iran, delaying planned strikes on Iranian energy infrastructure and easing market tensions. His remarks followed mounting domestic pressure due to rising oil prices and limited public support for the war. Financial markets reacted positively, with stocks rebounding and oil prices falling after earlier volatility. Despite the shift in tone, uncertainty remains over both US strategy and Iran’s willingness to negotiate. Trump issued a five-day ultimatum for Tehran to reach a deal, while Iranian officials denied that any talks were taking place and reiterated demands for retaliation. The US has reportedly engaged in indirect contacts with Iranian figures, but these remain unconfirmed.

**Iran Launches Missile Barrages on Israel, Rejects US Negotiation Claims:** Iran fired multiple waves of missiles at Israel, triggering air raid sirens in major cities including Tel Aviv, where interceptions caused explosions and debris damage but no reported fatalities. The attacks mark a continued escalation in the conflict, with Iran also signaling potential strikes against U.S. targets in the region. At the same time, Tehran denied U.S. President Donald Trump’s claims of ongoing negotiations, dismissing them as “fake news” aimed at influencing global markets. While Trump said talks had made progress and delayed planned U.S. strikes on Iran’s energy infrastructure, Iranian officials insisted no direct negotiations had occurred, though indirect contacts via regional intermediaries may be ongoing.

### The BBVA Monitor: geopolitical risk at extreme levels and economic sentiment deteriorates further

- The Middle East remains in a critical situation. **Geopolitical risk** indicators have been at extreme levels since the beginning of the war. The indicator continues to increase in the United Arab Emirates, while it remains stable at extreme levels in the rest of the Gulf countries. In the case of the United States and Europe, there is a persistent gap, with geopolitical risk significantly higher in the U.S. (in the extreme risk area) than in European countries (in the high-risk area) (see Fig. 1, Fig. 2, and Fig. 3).
- The closure of the Strait of Hormuz and the resulting disruption to global oil markets are further deteriorating economic indicators, especially in the Gulf countries, where **economic policy uncertainty** has increased significantly to extreme levels, particularly in Qatar and Israel. **Economic sentiment** has also worsened markedly, reaching unprecedented levels in Qatar and Oman (see Fig. 3, Fig. 4, Fig. 5, and Fig. 6).

**FIG 1. MIDDLE EAST - GEOPOLITICAL RISK**

(Total media. 28-day weighted mov avg, normalized by its own history)



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

**FIG 2. EUROPE & US - GEOPOLITICAL RISK**

(Total media. 28-day weighted mov avg, normalized by its own history)



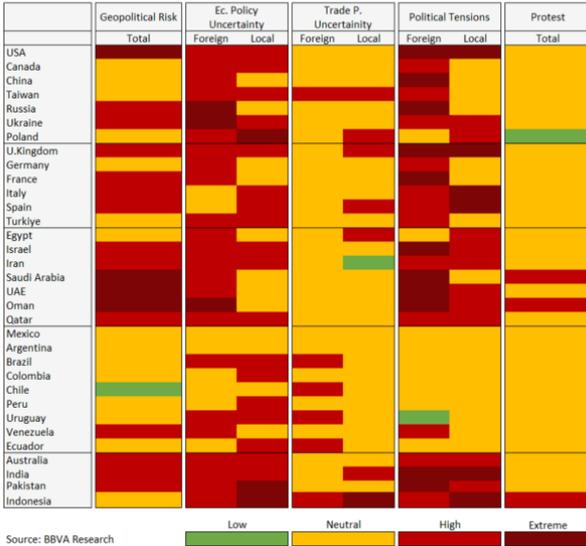
Source: BBVA Research & [www.gdelt.org](http://www.gdelt.org). Positive (negative) values indicate greater (lower) interest relative to the mean of period 2021-nowadays

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

**FIG 3. BBVA RESEARCH GEOPOLITICS MONITOR "SIGNAL" CHANGES**  
(Signals in Geopolitical Risk, Political Tensions, Economic Policy Uncertainties, Protest and Conflict according to Standard Dev)

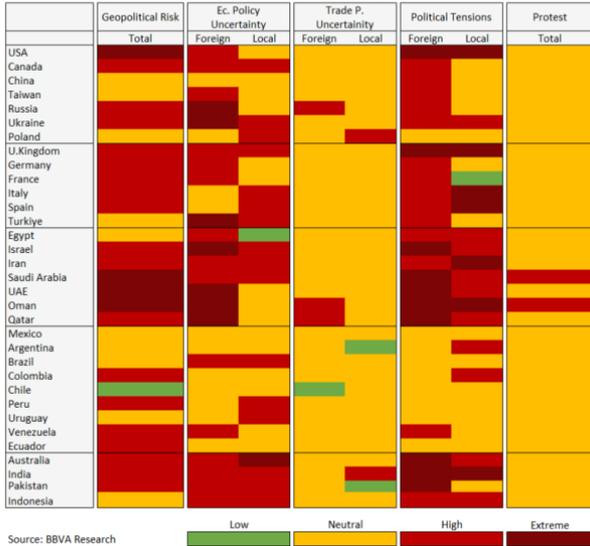
**Summary of signals (March 17th, 2026)**

(News Sentiment Map. Sentiment relative to average sentiment in each country)



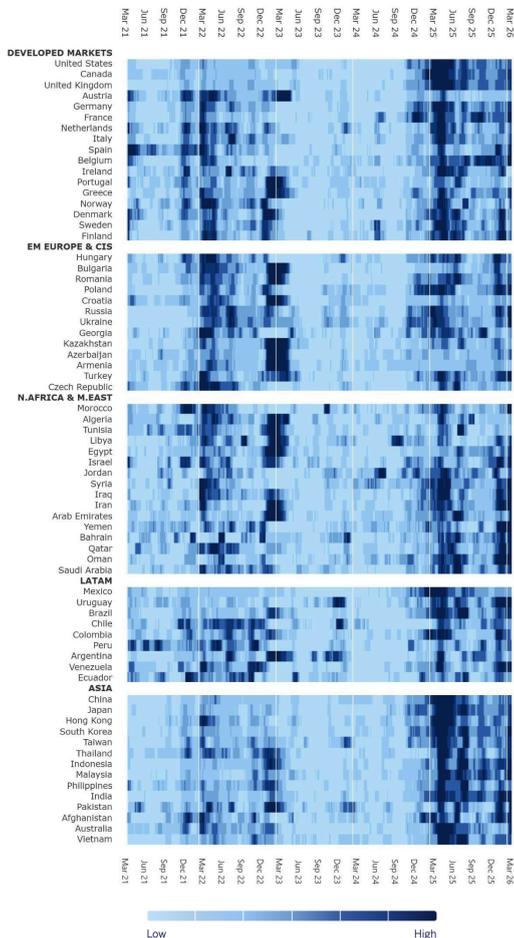
**Summary of signals (March 24th, 2026)**

(News Sentiment Map. Sentiment relative to average sentiment in each country)



Source: BBVA Research and <http://www.gdelt.org/>

**FIG 4. ECONOMIC POLICY UNCERTAINTY MAP**  
(Local media. 28-day weighted mov avg, normalized by its own history)



Source: BBVA Research & [www.gdelt.org](http://www.gdelt.org/). Darker Blue colors stands for higher economic policy uncertainty while lighter blue colors for low uncertainty

**FIG 5. ECONOMIC POLICY UNCERTAINTY INDEX**  
(Total media. 28-day weighted mov avg, normalized by its own history)



**FIG 6. CONFLICT AREA: ECONOMIC SENTIMENT**  
(Total media. 28-day weighted mov avg, normalized by its own history)



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

## 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 (GDELТ), created by Leetaru and Schrodt (2013). GDELТ 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 GDELТ 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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