

WEEKLY POLITICAL COMPASS

Welcome to this edition of the Weekly Political Compass from Teneo's political risk advisory team.

This week, we are taking a closer look at the upcoming **UK** general election. Meanwhile, the leaders of **China, Japan and South Korea** met in Seoul, **Lithuanians** have chosen a new president, Claudia Sheinbaum continues to lead most polls in **Mexico**, and the vote share of **South Africa's** ruling party is expected to drop below 50% for the first time in three decades. Our graph of the week zooms in on the expansion of **tertiary education**.

Should you have questions or wish to discuss any of these stories in greater detail, please do not hesitate to reach out to us!

GLOBAL SNAPSHOT

The **UK** will hold its long-awaited general election on 4 July. Our Europe expert [Carsten Nickel](#) analyses the situation.

Why is the aftermath likely to be more interesting than the election?

A Labour majority is by far the most likely result. If elected, Sir Keir Starmer will face great expectations regarding improvements to public services, but public finances are in a dire state, and the tax burden is high. The Conservatives face the risk of infighting and, ultimately, a new leadership that could make the party unelectable at the center.

What could still change the outlook?

Divisive topics such as the war in Gaza could again become more pronounced in the public debate, complicating Labour's efforts to construct a large and diverse voter coalition, a vital task under the British first-past-the-post electoral system. Amid the widely expected Labour victory, complacency could result in selectively low turnout.

WHAT TO WATCH

ASIA PACIFIC

East Asia

Leaders of China, Japan and South Korea struck a positive tone on economic relations but made only modest new commitments at the [trilateral summit](#) in Seoul on 27 May. A joint declaration called for formalizing regular high-level communication and cooperation on areas including sustained development, climate change, public health, 'people-to-people' exchanges, and 'regional and international peace'. Chinese Premier Li Qiang said the meeting — the group's first since 2019 — marked "a restart and a new beginning."

EUROPE

Lithuania

As [anticipated](#), incumbent Gitanas Nausėda (independent) claimed a decisive victory over Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte (Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats) in the second round of presidential elections on 26 May. The re-elected president pledged to prioritize the country's security and the expansion of welfare state during his second five-year term. Although Nausėda is independent, his open support for the center-left opposition Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP) boosts its chances of winning the October parliamentary election.

LATIN AMERICA

Mexico

Most polls continue to put Claudia Sheinbaum of the governing National Regeneration Movement (Morena) in a commanding lead over her main rival Xochitl Galvez of the Strength and Heart for Mexico (*Fuerza y Corazon por Mexico*) opposition coalition ahead of the 2 June presidential election. While some polls suggest that Sheinbaum leads Galvez by as much as 20 points, Galvez insists that the race is much tighter. In the nine gubernatorial elections taking place on the same day, races to watch include Mexico City and Veracruz, where the energy minister Rocio Nahle is battling corruption allegations. Morena is simultaneously pushing hard on the legislative front in the hope that the party and its allies can secure two-thirds majorities that would allow them to modify the constitution, though this looks challenging. Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, whose approval ratings remain very high, is framing the election as a referendum on his presidency. Campaigning officially closes on 29 May.

MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

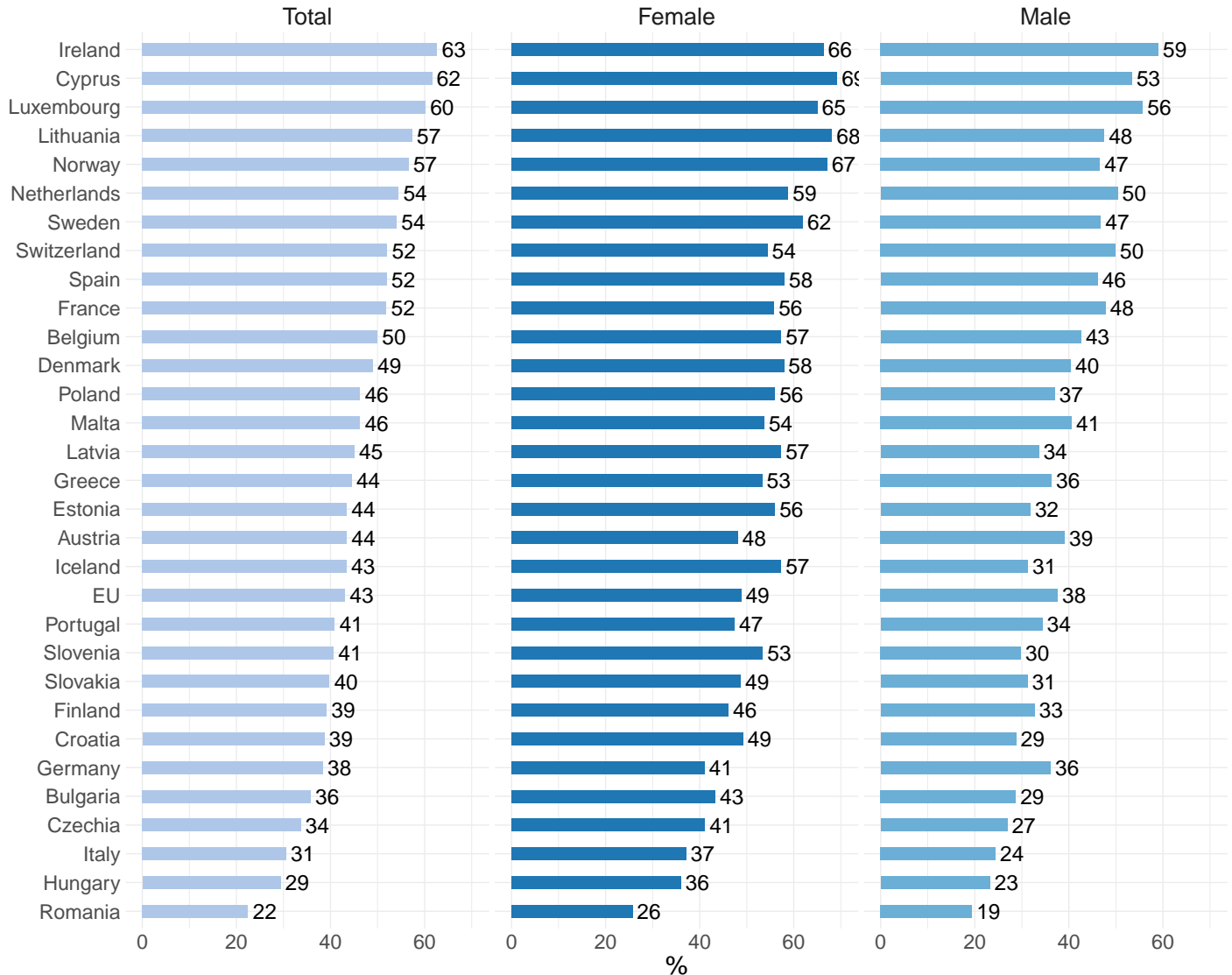
South Africa

On 29 May, South Africans vote in parliamentary and provincial elections. For the first time in 30 years, the ANC's national vote share is expected to drop below 50%, though the precise margin will be crucial for post-poll coalition scenarios. On 29 May, polling stations will be open from 7:00 to 21:00 local time. While partial results start to emerge within hours, the vote count usually takes two to three days to complete (likely until 1 June). A new third ballot and procedural issues and tensions, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal province, might cause some delays. Technically, the electoral commission (IEC) has up to seven days to declare the results. After this, the newly constituted parliament must convene its first sitting and elect the president within 14 days.

GRAPH OF THE WEEK

Young women in Europe outpace men in university education attainment

Tertiary education attainment, 2023 (% of population aged 25–34)



Source: Eurostat

Tertiary education has expanded over the past decades across many high- and middle-income countries. This trend is particularly prominent in the European Union, where 43% of 25-34 years old individuals have obtained a university degree. Young women, overall, graduate from university at higher rates than men, with the gap being particularly pronounced in countries such as Sweden, Finland, Portugal, and Italy. Lower levels of tertiary education attainment in Germany or Italy can be attributed to the traditional strength of their vocational training programs. As educational expansion continues, university graduates cannot be seen as a homogeneously prosperous economic group, especially where the availability of good jobs is insufficient given the large pool of graduates. Young, educated women are turning more progressive than men in many countries. Countries with a skilled workforce – whether with university or vocational training degrees – are better positioned to reap the benefits of technological transformations such as generative artificial intelligence.

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