

## 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 possibility that the **US** could broker a **Russia/Ukraine** ceasefire. Meanwhile, **China's** vice premier will promote AI cooperation in **France**, **Germany's** election race remains tight, and **South Africa** is trying to defuse tensions with the US following the 7 February executive order. Elsewhere, **Japan's** minority government will focus on revising the budget bill, the election campaign period in **the Philippines** kicks off, and **Ecuador's** presidential run-off takes shape.

Should you have questions or wish to discuss any of these stories in greater detail, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at [Macro@teneo.com](mailto:Macro@teneo.com).

### GLOBAL SNAPSHOT

*With details expected this week about emerging US plans to broker a ceasefire agreement between Russia and Ukraine, we ask our Central and Eastern Europe advisor [Andrius Tursa](#) to look ahead.*

#### What are we expecting to see?

Multiple senior Trump administration officials, including Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, and special envoy for Ukraine and Russia Keith Kellogg will be in Europe this week. They are expected to meet the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference, taking place on 14-16 February.

#### What are the key issues?

Amid multiple complex issues to be addressed during the ceasefire talks, the most important ones to watch are: (1) security guarantees for Ukraine against a renewed Russian invasion, which will determine the future viability of Ukraine as an independent country, and (2) a future sanctions regime and its impact on Russia's economic recovery and military reconstitution, which will have significant implications for wider European security in the medium term.

#### Is there any timeframe for how the ceasefire discussions might unfold?

At this point, neither the timeline nor details are known. While both Russia and Ukraine demonstrate an initial willingness to start talks, the process will not be smooth nor quick as their starting positions and underlying interests remain far apart.

### WHAT TO WATCH

#### ASIA-PACIFIC

## China/US

**Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing is in France from Sunday to Wednesday to attend the AI Action Summit in Paris. China's foreign ministry said Beijing wants to promote cooperation on AI safety.** US Vice President JD Vance will lead the US delegation to the summit, as the Trump administration mulls whether to strengthen chip export controls in response to the [success of DeepSeek](#).

## Japan

**While Tokyo will continue to monitor tariff policy developments in the US this week, Shigeru Ishiba's main focus will shift back to domestic political issues after his [successful Washington summit](#).** The top priority will be negotiating with opposition parties to agree revisions to the current draft of [FY2025 ordinary budget](#), which must pass the Lower House by end-February. Osaka's troubled 2025 World Expo could also become a focus, with Ishiba hoping to win support from the Osaka-based Ishin-no-kai opposition party for the budget bill.

## Philippines

**Campaigning starts on 11 February for the Senate and the party-list elections for the 5 May midterms.** Congressional and all other local government candidates will start campaigning on 6 March. The weak party system has resulted in elections across all levels becoming patronage and popularity contests, with the upcoming midterms unlikely to break the pattern. The key race to watch is the Senate, where the results will be a gauge of the relative political strengths of the Marcos and Duterte families. The administration is expected to do well, and an overwhelming win by its candidates would encourage the Marcos government to pursue the impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte.

## **EUROPE**

### Germany

**Polls conducted after the first of two TV debates on 9 February saw Chancellor Olaf Scholz narrowly ahead of Friedrich Merz.** This seems unlikely to be enough to trigger major shifts in the remaining two weeks of campaigning. More importantly, the poll lead for the Christian alliance (CDU/CSU) has so far not suffered from Merz's earlier decision to accept far-right support for his migration-skeptical Bundestag motions. Calm and collected rather than impulsive, Merz also managed to cut a statesman-like figure during the debate. This overall picture has further clouded Scholz's initial plan to focus on public investment, welfare, and Ukraine, to garner centrist support.

### Kosovo

**Although the governing Self-Determination Movement (LVV) won the 9 February parliamentary election, the party's weakened position in parliament will complicate government formation.** With 90% of the votes counted, Prime Minister Albin Kurti's LVV had 41%, ahead of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) with 22.4%, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) with 17.6%, and the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo-NISMA (AAK-NISMA) list with 7.6%. To form a majority government, the LVV will need to partner with at least one opposition party, which will be difficult. A administration formed by the opposition parties PDK, LD, and AAK-NISMA cannot be ruled out either, especially if the US, Kosovo's most important strategic partner, expresses a preference for it.

### Romania

**President Klaus Iohannis will step down on 12 February amid growing public and political discontent with his continued rule after the expiry of his term on 21 December.** Senate speaker Ilie Bolojan (National Liberal Party, PNL) will assume presidential duties until a new president is sworn in after the May/June presidential elections. The reshuffle should not have any direct impact on policymaking or government stability.

## **LATIN AMERICA**

## Brazil

**The Senate is set to elect new committee presidents, while the House still negotiates the presidency of key committees.** House Speaker Hugo Motta (Republicanos Party) expects to install the committee presidents after the Carnival holiday, which is during the first week of March this year. The House reflects a sensitive balance between President Lula da Silva's Workers' Party (PT) and former President Jair Bolsonaro's Liberal Party (PL), amid pressure from "Big Center" parties that have grown in influence since the 2024 municipal elections. Both new congressional leaders are themselves from the big-center movement. Motta is so far resisting an informal agreement reached by predecessor Arthur Lira to assign the key Constitution, Justice, and Citizenship committee to Bolsonaro's PL.

## Ecuador

**With almost 90% of votes counted following the first round of the presidential election on 9 February, President Daniel Noboa was on 44.4%, narrowly ahead of leftist candidate Luisa Gonzalez on 43.9%.** A run-off vote will now take place on 13 April. In a sign that Noboa was shaken by Gonzalez's better-than-expected performance, neither the president nor any government spokesperson addressed the media. However, Gonzalez immediately congratulated Leonidas Iza of the Pachakutik (PK) party, who finished third with 5.1%, in a clear sign that she will court the indigenous vote ahead of the run-off. The prospect of a comeback for Correísmo, the movement that Gonzalez represents on behalf of former president Rafael Correa (2007-17), injects considerable uncertainty into Ecuador's political outlook. The shape of the next National Assembly should become clearer over the coming days as results are processed.

## **AFRICA**

### South Africa

**President Cyril Ramaphosa plans to dispatch envoys to Washington in a bid to defuse an escalating diplomatic row between South Africa and the US.** President Donald Trump's 7 February executive order "[Addressing Egregious Actions of The Republic of South Africa](#)" announced a suspension of aid funding to the country and a refugee program for "Afrikaner refugees escaping government-sponsored race-based discrimination, including racially discriminatory property confiscation." Fueled by multiple US grievances, which extend well beyond allegedly 'racist' expropriation laws, a fundamental reset in bilateral relations will be difficult to achieve and may put at risk trade relations.

### Ghana

**An International Monetary Fund (IMF) team is expected to begin a five-day visit to Ghana, starting on 10 February, to engage with the government about key economic issues.** The discussions will center on the economy and the 2025 budget, ensuring that it is in line with the Fund's existing program with the country, particularly to improve revenue mobilization. Other issues on the agenda will be an assessment of progress made by the government on negotiations with external commercial creditors and the energy sector debts (including seeking clarity about plans to privatize parts of the Electricity Company of Ghana's (ECG) operations).

[Client Portal >>](#)

---

### **Geopolitical Research**

+44 20 7186 8894

Macro@teneo.com

© 2025 Teneo. All rights reserved. This material was produced by Teneo for use solely by the recipient. This communication is intended as general background research and is not intended to constitute advice on any particular commercial investment or trade matter or issue and should not be relied upon for such purposes. The views expressed here represent opinions as of this date and are subject to change without notice. The information has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable but no guarantees can be given as to its accuracy, completeness or reliability. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or otherwise, without the prior consent of Teneo. To unsubscribe click [here](#).