

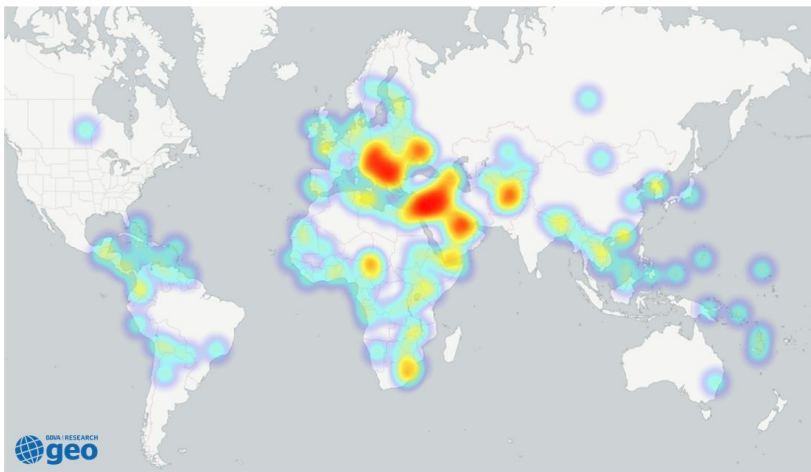
Geo-World: Conflict & Social Unrest August Update

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ISIS intensified its operations in the Middle East and North Africa during August, protecting its core territory and taking advantage of “failed” states’ fragilities. While the decision of the Turkish authorities will enhance the military efficiency of the international coalition’s campaign in Syria, political instability in Iraq is on the rise. Separatists and the Ukrainian forces launched important attacks in eastern Ukraine, expanding their offensive operations. The Houthis continued losing ground in Yemen. The refugee crisis increased throughout Europe.

Geopolitical conflicts around the world rose further during August...

BBVA Research World Conflict Heatmap (Aug, monthly changes)
(Number of conflicts / Total events)



Source: www.gdelt.org & BBVA Research

- **ISIS escalated its attacks in the Middle East and North Africa. Coalition forces favoured were by the Turkish decision**

ISIS expanded its actions in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, Libya and Afghanistan.

- **Fighting intensified in Ukraine to its strongest level since the agreement**

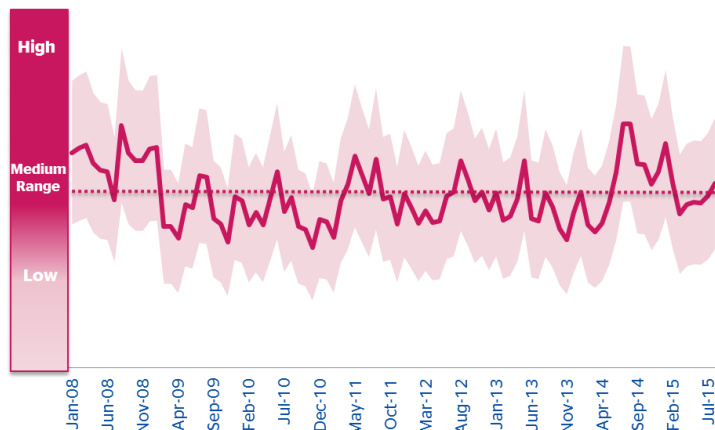
Ukrainian and separatists strengthened their assaults in the wake of the spectacular attack on Donetsk-Mariupol by separatists.

- **The refugees crisis continue to escalate in Europe**

Migrants from Southern Mediterranean and Eastern Europe increased.

The BBVA Research world conflict intensity index¹ rose during August as a result of the intensification of the ISIS and Ukrainian conflicts. **ISIS escalated its operations** to protect its core territory, intensifying the fighting in northern Syria in an effort to avoid the implementation of the proposed “ISIS-free” zone along the Turkish border. Despite new anti-ISIS initiatives after the deal with Turkey to use its airbases, the US campaign against ISIS faced difficulties in expanding, given the strength of ISIS positions in the area. **ISIS also launched spectacular attacks in Baghdad and eastern Iraq** to divert the Iraqi security forces and the Iraqi Shi’a militia forces away from combat operations in Anbar province. **ISIS increased its attacks in Libya, Egypt, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia.**

BBVA Research World Conflict Intensity Index 2008-15
(Number of conflicts in the world / Total events in the world)



Source: www.gdelt.org & BBVA Research

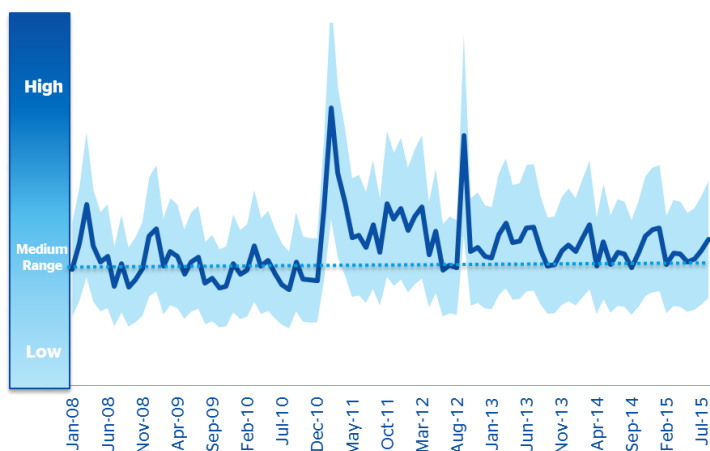
The Ukrainian-Russian crisis escalated in eastern Ukraine to its most violent point since the signing of the agreement last February. Russian-backed separatist forces launched their largest combined arms attack against Ukrainian forces, assaulting 20 kilometres of Ukrainian positions at the east of the Donetsk-Mariupol highway. Ukrainian forces responded by increasing their own heavy weapon attacks.

Yemen’s **Houthi forces**, despite support from Iran, are **rapidly losing ground** against the fighters loyal to President Hadi and the supporting forces from Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The US has doubled the numbers of support staff advising the Saudi intervention in Yemen in the fight against the Houthis. Nevertheless, despite the Saudi-led coalition continuing to accumulate victories, the coalition is losing its initial momentum in advancing into areas where there is strong Houthi opposition.

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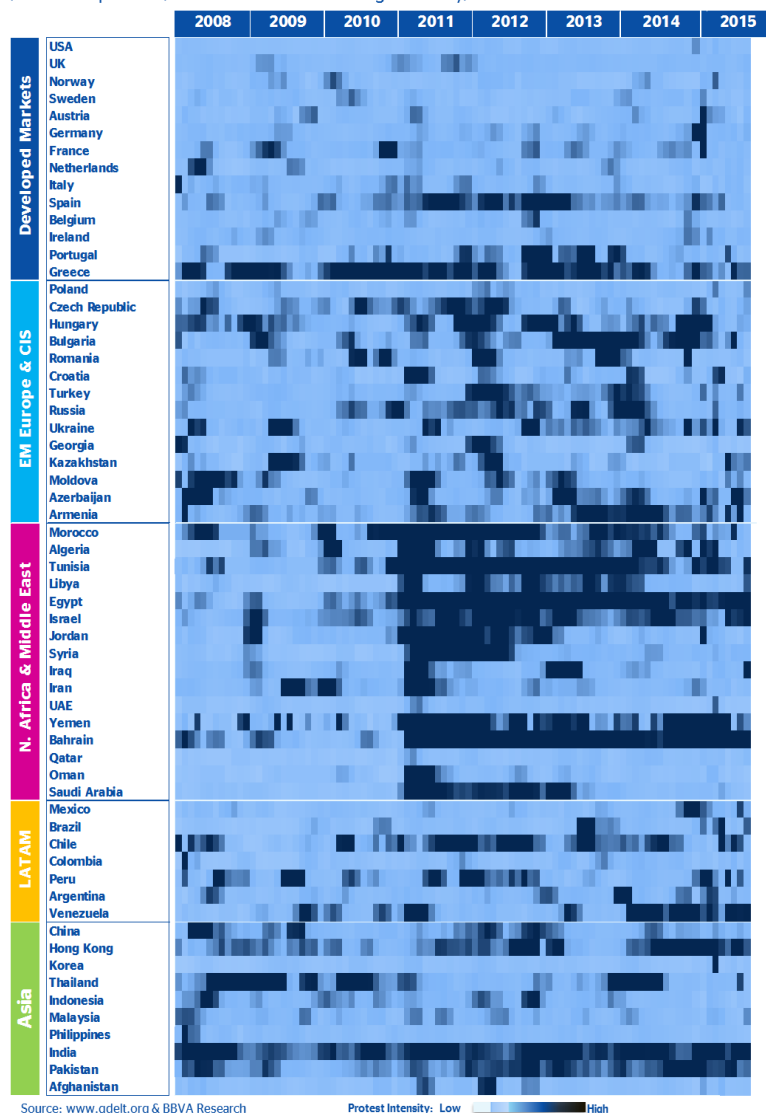
¹Details about methodology can be found in the following link: [Methodology, tracking protests and conflicts](#).

BBVA Research World Protest Intensity Index 2008-15
(Number of protests in the world / Total events in the world)



Source: www.gdelt.org & BBVA Research

BBVA Research World Protest Intensity Map Jan 2011 - Aug 2015
(Number of protests / Total events. Dark Blue: High Intensity)



Source: www.gdelt.org & BBVA Research

Protest Intensity: Low High

... at a similar pace to social unrest

Protests around the world increased in August, reaching values similar to those observed at the beginning of the year (as shown by our BBVA Research world protest intensity index²). According to our BBVA Research world protest intensity map, the main hot spots were the following:

- In regional terms, demonstrations remained at low levels in Western Europe and East Asia. In Emergina Europe, some tensions arose. Instability in some Middle East and North African countries continued at worrisome levels, and social pressures also increased in Latin America.

- In Western Europe, demonstrations have remained quite calm during the last months. Greece was still in the spotlight after Alexis Tsipras' resignation and his call for an early election in September.

- In Emergina Europe and CIS countries, social pressures intensified in Ukraine. The intensification of offensive operations in the country increases the tensions on political stability in the build-up to the October parliamentary elections. Instability remained high in Azerbaijan although at a lower intensity than last month. Protests increased in Kazakhstan and Poland and decreased in Moldova and Armenia. Social unrest also rose in Turkey, given the PKK-linked violence and the call for snap elections increasing the political uncertainty.

- In North Africa and the Middle East, social unrest continued at worrisome levels. Demonstrations rose in Tunisia and Libya, given the political upheavals and the presence of ISIS. Instability also persisted in Egypt and Israel, and increased in Iraq as a result of massive protests against corruption and the lack of public services.

- In Latin America, tensions eased in Mexico. Peru and Chile, while they emerged in Brazil given the corruption claims. Social turmoil in Venezuela continued at extreme levels.

- Pressures in Asia continued to be focused on Hong Kong and India. Tensions relaxed in Thailand, while they started to emerge in Malaysia as a consequence of the government's censorship of the media.

In sum, the main hot spots remained in the Middle East and North Africa. Social unrest and instability in the Middle East and North Africa have increased again and seem to drag on. ISIS

strengthened its positions in the area and continued gaining ground. In Latin America, the deterioration in the political climate was still alive, but eased compared with last month. Western Europe and Asia remained calm.

²Details about methodology can be found in the following link: [Methodology, tracking protests and conflicts](#).

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