Greetings,

In this month's edition of the Global Elections and Climate Trends Monitor, our focus is on the European elections. Some European citizens have already cast their votes to elect parliamentary representatives, with voting continuing until Sunday. With the EU positioning itself as a leading force in global climate action, this election could significantly influence the planet's trajectory over the next five years!

Meanwhile, South Africa and India have just concluded their elections, with leading parties in both countries needing to seek coalitions to govern effectively. In India, which is grappling with simultaneous floods and droughts, Narendra Modi is set to secure a third term despite significant losses in his party. In South Africa, the ANC secured over 40% of the vote but lost its 30-year parliamentary majority. The ANC is now in talks with rival parties to form a unity government in order to govern effectively and address challenges like the energy crisis.

This newsletter provides a summary of media coverage in key election regions, exploring how climate change is reshaping political discourse. Don't forget to share it with your contacts and reach out if you have any queries!

Until next time,
Filipe Ferreira
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This month's top stories

1 | Trump Convicted on All Counts to Become America’s First Felon President (The New York Times)

2 | Mexico elects Claudia Sheinbaum as first woman president (BBC)

3 | British PM Rishi Sunak calls snap general election for July 4 (France24)

4 | All politics is local: What the EU election is actually about in each country (Politico)

5 | Modi declares victory in India election but party faces shock losses and will need coalition (CNN)

6 | South Africa's ANC loses 30-year parliamentary majority after election (Al-Jazeera)

Links: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

Climate politics

- **EU clears law to increase domestic green tech production** (Reuters)
  “European Union governments formally cleared on Monday a new law designed to ensure the bloc produces 40% of its solar panels, wind turbines, heat pumps and other clean tech equipment and to help European industry compete with U.S. and Chinese rivals.”

- **EU approves law to hit gas imports with methane emissions limit** (Reuters)
  “European Union countries approved a law on Monday to impose methane emissions limits on Europe’s oil and gas imports from 2030, pressuring international suppliers to cut leaks of the potent greenhouse gas.”

- **UK is failing to put climate crisis at centre of national security measures, MPs told** (The Guardian)
  “The US, Germany and other countries are putting the climate crisis at the heart of their national security plans but the UK is failing to do likewise, experts have told the government.”

- **Carbon Offsets, a Much-Criticized Climate Tool, Get Federal Guidelines** (The New York Times)
  “The new principles aim to define ‘high-integrity’ offsets amid concerns that current practices often don’t cut greenhouse gas emissions as claimed.”

- **On drilling and climate policies, Biden, Trump couldn’t be more different** (VOA)
  “US presidential candidates Joe Biden and Donald Trump have very different views on the production of fossil fuels and the need to transition to clean energy to fight climate change.”
Social impacts & cost of living

- **Climate change, housing are cities' top challenges ahead of European election, mayors say** (Politico)
  “Local leaders want EU to fund affordable housing, sustainable mobility and adaptation to climate change.”

- **Employers face a rising climate conundrum** (Financial Times)
  “Younger workers in unexpected places are pressing their firms to take serious action on emissions.”

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**On the spotlight: European Union**

Elections date: 6 - 9 June 2024

Data on all EU 27:

- Quality of Government Index (2021)
- Free Elections Score (2022)
- Happy Planet Index (2021)
- RE capacity (2022)
- CO2 emissions (tons p/capita) (2021): 6.25

**Top election stories**

- **Police search European Parliament offices in Russia probe** (DW)
  “Belgium is investigating ‘pro-Russian interference networks’ ahead of next month's European Parliament elections.”

- **Greens ‘will not back von der Leyen’ for re-election if she does deal with far right** (The Guardian)
  “German Green MEP chair warns that EU plan to tackle climate crisis will be put at risk by agreement with hard right parties.”

- **Inside von der Leyen’s secret climate crusade** (Politico)
  “The European Commission president fought hard in her first term to get her Green Deal reforms past skeptical colleagues — but then backtracked ahead of the election. Has she given up on climate, or is she just biding her time?”

- **Top jobs timeline: What happens after the European election** (Politico)
  “On June 10, the day after the EU election, the real fight starts: doling out the four European top jobs and dozens of smaller prizes among the main political families.”

**Regional analysis**

In June 2024, millions of voters across the EU's 27 member states will elect 720 members of the European Parliament (MEPs). The newly elected parliament will then vote to approve or reject the European Commission president and 26 other commissioners, who will lead the EU for the next five years.

The election is expected to result in a rightward shift, and the centre-right European People's Party, which is backing Ursula von der Leyen for a second term as president, is set to elect the most MEPs.
The European election comprises 27 separate elections, and its fragmented nature makes it difficult to identify issues that resonate across Europe. However, the election may impact EU policy on issues like climate change, migration, the economy, the war in Ukraine, and the future of the EU itself.

In some countries, climate issues are virtually absent from the debate ahead of the elections. However, a recent Eurobarometer survey showed that 30% of respondents considered climate a priority. In a ranking of most important policy areas, climate came second, after security and defence.

The EU's Green Deal, under which the bloc aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, is facing growing backlash ahead of the elections. The cost of living crisis, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, has fueled public discontent. This discontent is being exploited by far-right parties, which have blamed the Green Deal for rising energy prices and job losses. Specific policies under the deal such as carbon taxes, limits on car emissions and regulations on agriculture are facing strong opposition, particularly by farmers and in rural areas.

While public backing for reducing emissions remains high, support has declined in several countries, suggesting a growing divide in public opinion. As a result, the EU's ambitious climate proposals are facing significant threats. A shift to the right following the election could mean a delay to the EU's transition away from fossil fuels.

**Climate impacts**

- **India’s ‘sinking island’ looks to election for survival** (The Guardian)
  
  "For many on Ghoramara, the general election is about the climate crisis and survival. The island, 150km south of Kolkata and named the ‘sinking island’ by the media, has lost nearly half its area to soil erosion in the past two decades and could disappear if a solution is not found."

- **Delhi ‘unbearable’ as temperatures near 50C** (BBC)
  
  "Parts of northern and central India are sweltering under a severe heatwave, with a provisional record temperature of 52.3C (126.1F) registered in Delhi."

- **‘Never-ending’ UK rain made 10 times more likely by climate crisis, study says** (The Guardian)
  
  "The seemingly “never-ending” rain last autumn and winter in the UK and Ireland was made 10 times more likely and 20% wetter by human-caused global heating, a study has found."

- **Flooding wreaks havoc across Europe** (France 24)
  
  "Heavy rains and floods hit parts of Germany. Officials in one region have declared the state of emergency. There is also concern about heavy flooding in Italy."

- **Cyclone Remal leaves trail of destruction in India’s northeast** (The Diplomat)
  
  "Cyclone Remal has left a trail of devastation in India’s frontier region of the northeast causing deaths and disruption from flood and landslides."

**Energy and transport**

- **Investment in clean energy likely to be double figure for fossil fuels in 2024, IEA says** (The Guardian)
  
  "Global investment in low-carbon electricity will rise to 10 times as much as fossil fuel power this year due to an increase in spending on solar projects, according to the International Energy Agency."

- **Climate action will boost energy security in Europe by 8% by 2030, IMF Says** (Euronews)
  
  "Efforts to meet Europe’s emission reduction targets led by industry and citizens will pay off..."
according to an analysis published today (May 29) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which estimates the continent could improve energy security by 8% by 2030."

- **EU agrees to quit energy investment treaty over climate concerns** *(Reuters)*
  “European Union countries unanimously agreed on Thursday to quit an international energy treaty over concerns that it protects fossil fuel investments and undermines efforts to fight climate change, the Belgian EU presidency said.”

- **Analysis: European power-sector emissions fall by 20% since last EU election** *(Carbon Brief)*
  “Power-sector emissions have fallen by 20% across the EU since the last European parliamentary election in 2019, according to Carbon Brief analysis.”

- **Energy ministers conclude Belgian Council presidency with ‘EU Supergrid’ plan** *(Euractiv)*
  “EU energy ministers committed to work towards deeper integration of the European electricity grid and to facilitate longer-term and more cross-border planning at Thursday’s (30 May) meeting of the Energy Council, the last under Belgium’s six-month Council presidency.”

- **Increasing use of renewable energy in US yields billions of dollars of benefits** *(The Guardian)*
  “New study published in Cell Reports Sustainability finds emission reductions provided $249bn of climate and health benefits.”

### Climate movements

- **Farmers and activists call for greener agricultural policies during pre-election demonstration** *(Euractiv)*
  “Environmental groups and farmers called for a transition to a sustainable agri-food system, climate action, and the approval of the stalled nature restoration law during a modest demonstration in Brussels on Saturday.”

- **Gen Z ready to take the reins in Europe** *(Politico)*
  “Hailing from across the political spectrum, young people are gunning for votes in the European election.”

- **‘It’s all we have’: young climate activists on the state of politics around the world** *(The Guardian)*
  “The Guardian asked young climate activists around the world what they want from the elections and whether politics is working in the fight to halt global heating.”

- **Embryo activist: Baby’s lawsuit takes on South Korea climate inaction** *(The Japan Times)*
  "When he was a 20-week-old embryo — before he even had a real name — Choi Hee-woo became one of the world’s youngest-ever plaintiffs by joining a groundbreaking climate lawsuit against South Korea.”

### Disinformation alarm

Nowadays, during election season, the stage is unfortunately set for the widespread dissemination of dubious claims, especially online.

Euronews offers some valuable tips on how to detect and protect yourself against false information. Here are the main points of its analysis:

- Be critical, but not cynical;
- Use reliable nonpartisan sources;
- Trust the experts;
- Respect democracy.

For more details and to stay vigilant, [read here!](#)
Make sure to also check the following

- **TikTok users being fed misleading election news, BBC finds** *(BBC)*
  “Young voters in key election battlegrounds are being recommended fake AI-generated videos featuring party leaders, misinformation, and clips littered with abusive comments, the BBC has found.”

- **Disinformation crisis unit on rapid alert around European elections** *(The Guardian)*
  “EU officials anticipate ‘narratives questioning the legitimacy of the elections’ for weeks afterwards.”

- **OpenAI says Russia and China used its A.I. in Covert Campaigns** *(The New York Times)*
  “Iran and an Israeli company also exploited the tools in online influence efforts, but none gained much traction, an OpenAI report said.”

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**Commentary**

- **Normalising the far-right has backfired on migration - next will be climate** | By Rosa Balfour *(EUObserver)*
  “Following the latest coalition agreements between the radical-right and the centre-right in the Netherlands and Croatia, seven EU member states are now governed or supported by the radical right. More could come about, with elections looming in Belgium, Bulgaria and for the European Parliament. The old cordon sanitaire policy of keeping the radical-right out of power has not succeeded in preventing its rise.”

- **Rishi Sunak's big net zero UK election gamble** | By Pilita Clark *(Financial Times)*
  “Any British voter who believes in climate change should not vote Conservative in the July 4 general election. That’s because, in its current state, the Conservative party is endangering people’s lives, jobs and opportunities for economic growth by taking a negative approach to climate action and rowing back on the energy transition.”

- **Biden’s EV tariffs will delay an essential transition** | By The Editorial Board *(Bloomberg)*
  “Flaws in President Joe Biden’s clean-energy strategy were apparent before his latest initiative underlined the contradictions. The administration has committed hundreds of billions of dollars toward accelerating the transition to electric vehicles. Yet in order to head off a surge of imports, it recently announced 100% tariffs on EVs made in China — thereby delaying the transition it rightly insists is essential.”

- **Europe’s climate movement continues to evolve and grow** | By Chiara Martinelli *(Euractiv)*
  “Ahead of the 2019 European elections, young climate activists took to the streets in all corners of our continent to demand urgent climate action from the EU. The combination of advocacy efforts and grassroot movements catalysed a transformative green wave across Europe that was marked by the election of many climate protectors to the European Parliament.”

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**Live monitoring dashboard**

Our Talkwalker dashboard offers the latest articles and insights on democratic elections around the world, along with emerging climate narratives.

[Check our dashboard!](#)
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