

23 April 2021

An Analytic Intelligence
Wire Prepared by The
Students of Embry-Riddle
Aeronautical University

Issue 382

Of Eagle Eye Intelligence

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Source: Reuters



21 April 2021

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In This Issue

GREECE: Quarantine Lift May Exacerbate Third-wave COVID-19 Crisis	1
CHINA: Decreasing Birth Rates Indicate Downward Economic Turn.....	2
GERMANY: Upcoming Election Likely Choice between Status Quo and.....	3
Change	
TAIWAN: Aggressive Chinese Response Indicates Opposition for Independence....	6

GREECE: Quarantine Lift May Exacerbate Third-wave COVID-19 Crisis

Summary: Greece's relaxed travel restrictions allow more tourist activity in the region but may prove premature amid a third wave of COVID-19 and result in an overwhelmed healthcare system and frustrated population.

Development: On 19 April, Athens lifted quarantine restrictions in a bid to fully reintroduce tourism by 14 May. Greece now accepts travelers from the European Union and a shortlist of other select nations. A third wave of COVID-19 currently challenges the region as active infections in Greece surpassed 200,000. The nation also hit a record number of COVID-19 patients who required the use of ventilators as part of their treatment. All travelers to Greece require a complete vaccine certificate or a negative PCR test result within 72 hours of travel.

Analysis: Athens may prioritize tourist destinations like Santorini for vaccination and testing resources, which could leave islands with refugee camps vulnerable. If the increased tourism leads to increased positivity rates, it will most likely stress hospital capacities and ventilator resources. Short-term success from the quarantine lift in Greece could prompt other countries to try re-opening prematurely. Additionally, the presence of tourists might discourage locals from continuing to wear masks and socially distance due to the potential reenergized atmosphere. The requirement for vaccine certificates could create a market for fake cards, undermining the safety protocols in place.

[Savannah Grace Riddles]

CHINA: Decreasing Birth Rates Indicate Downward Economic Turn

Summary: China's decreasing birth rates indicate near-future risk of economic strife due to a lack of support from younger women to leave the workforce and adhere to traditional gender roles.

Development: On 14 April, four researchers from the People's Bank of China (PBOC) released a paper indicating a negative population growth after the year 2025. After the release of the paper, government media put more emphasis on family values and on the roles of women as caretakers. Under the communist rule of Mao Zedong, women's roles in the workforce and the encouragement to put off marriage increased. After such roles dissolved in Chinese culture, the One-Child Policy remained and women's roles shifted to care for the elderly. After 2016, the One-Child Policy ended, allowing Chinese couples to have two children. Currently, women in China increasingly oppose a settled life while they continue supporting themselves in the workforce. China's divorce rates continue to increase after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and marriage rates continue to decline. Beijing officials worry that a decrease in births leads to the requirement of increased labor for future elderly populations and a reduction of stimulation for the economy.

Analysis: China will likely experience long-term economic struggle as a result of its decreasing childbirth rates. Decreasing birth rates indicate a strong likelihood that the elderly population's struggles may increase due to lack of support from the youth. China will almost certainly depend more on the elderly population to re-enter the workforce to stimulate the economy while encouraging women to provide more care for the elderly population too old to work in the community. Women will almost certainly resist a return to more domestic life and the rates of women leaving that life to enter the workforce will likely increase as divorce rates continue to climb. To combat the downward trend, China may change divorce procedures to make separations more difficult. Furthermore, education could shift for the current youth to encourage domesticity and child-rearing to promote population growth.

[Savannah Gallop]

GERMANY: Upcoming Election Likely Choice between Status Quo and Change

Summary: The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) will almost certainly work to capitalize on its experience to continue its hold on power, while the Green party will likely try to appeal to any public desire for change in the September elections for chancellor.

Development: On 20 April, members of the CDU voted to nominate Armin Laschet for chancellor to represent the party in the upcoming election in September 2021. The nomination remains unofficial, although the Christian Social Union (CSU) said it would respect the decision. Angela Merkel's tenure as chancellor provided the CDU with a 16-year hold on power, although approval rates for Merkel fell following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. On 19 April, the rival Green party announced the nomination of Annalena Baerbock, the party's first candidate in its 40-year history. Baerbock backs policies including stronger actions on climate change, opposing increasing defense spending, and promised to bring a "new start" to the country.

Analysis: The CDU likely hopes to continue its hold on power, while the Green party may attempt to capitalize on the transition period to introduce new leadership. Laschet will likely campaign with promises of retaining the status quo and continuing Merkel's policies. Baerbock will likely attempt to portray herself as a fresh start, with a chancellor never before coming from the Green party. Baerbock may also work to capitalize on growing dissent for the handling of the pandemic in effort to promote her "new start" campaign promise. This tactic will likely prove successful among citizens looking for change and revitalization post-pandemic. Laschet will likely point to Merkel's successes and focus on the importance of stability while the country navigates the pandemic. While the Green party may work to capitalize on any desire for change, the CDU's experience and resources will almost certainly benefit Laschet's campaign and potentially increase its lead in the polls.

[Alli McIntyre]

TAIWAN: Aggressive Chinese Response Indicates Opposition for Independence

Summary: Recent diplomatic efforts with Japan sparked further tensions since meeting with Taiwanese officials, leading to a large Chinese military presence around the island likely to exert control and dominance within the region.

Development: On 21 April, Tokyo released a statement emphasizing the ambiguity of its relations with Taiwan following a 17 April statement where it officially referenced the territory. The 21 April statement said that Japanese troops would not travel to Taiwan should Beijing invade the island. Tokyo received pushback from Beijing following the 17 April statement, since Beijing works to exert control over the region. Beijing warned against any actions that may harm China's core interests in Taiwan and initiated a heavy military presence close to Taiwan's borders, including frequent aerial flyovers and a large aircraft carrier in the strait. Chinese officials called the sudden activity military drills, although an anonymous Taiwanese official called the military scramble a warning. China continues to make Taiwan's economy dependent on the mainland and discourage independence movements. This includes marking Taiwan factories to produce for China only than sell overseas.

Analysis: While Taiwan aims to diplomatically work with other national leaders, Beijing probably will continue to retaliate militarily, politically, and economically to assert dominance in the region. As a result, Taiwan's efforts in becoming economically independent from China will likely fail because of Beijing's strong interest in controlling Taipei. With the large military drills directed to discourage political actions on Taiwan, potential ally countries with the disputed territory will likely scale back the pursuit of diplomatic relations to avoid retaliation. Japan will likely work to moderate relations with Taiwan in effort to ease tensions with China. Future diplomatic talks between the Taiwanese government and other nations will likely prompt Beijing to respond in larger global statements whether militarily or economically.

[Damon Reyes]

About GSIS

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Currently, Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency and Office of the Director of National Intelligence, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

EE strives to provide actionable intelligence and analysis to its customers during the academic year. We are driven by a number of goals – continuous development, nonpartisanship, interdisciplinary studies, global awareness, and professionalism.

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The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not represent the position Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University or the College of Security and Intelligence.

Alli McIntyre, a junior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at editorsee@gmail.com or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708.

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