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Make Today Different
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A nurse struggled with COVID-19 trauma. He was found dead in his car

Australia opens up domestic life further as China dispute lingers

FILE PHOTO: People fish following the easing of restrictions implemented to curb the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), at Darling Harbour near the city centre in Sydney, Australia, May 18, 2020. REUTERS/Loren Elliott

MELBOURNE/SYDNEY (Reuters) - Australian officials announced a raft of plans on Wednesday to speed up the resumption of public life to boost the ailing economy amid a diplomatic spat with major trading partner China.

The government is also talking with Australian universities about allowing the return of some international students, a sector that contributes more than A$30 billion ($19.6 billion) to domestic coffers.

New South Wales, the country's most populous state, will allow people to resume recreational travel from next month, effectively reopening tourist regions on its southern coast that were badly damaged by huge bushfires before the epidemic.

"We want people to enjoy themselves, to feel free, but at the same time please know that nothing we do is the same during a pandemic," NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian said.

Australia has reported just over 7,000 infections, including 100 deaths, and has completed around 1.1 million tests among its population of 25 million. Health Minister Greg Hunt said just 11 new cases were logged over the past 24 hours.

Australia's states and territories are implement- ing a three-step federal government plan to unwind lockdown measures that have been in place for two months, but the staggered pace means different restrictions around the country at any point in time.

South Australia said it planned to move more quickly to phase two, allowing more people to eat and drink in restaurants and bars. Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania, which have all reported low numbers of cases, are keeping state borders closed.

Deputy Chief Medical Officer Paul Kelly said from a medical point of view there was no need to keep borders closed.
The resumption of business and social life across the country comes amid a dispute with China over Australia's leading role in the push for a global inquiry into the origins and spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

World Health Organization members overwhelmingly voted on Tuesday for an independent review on the pandemic, with China eventually joining over 130 other countries as a co-sponsor.

China has attacked Australia's lobbying for an inquiry as "political manoeuvring". Canberra has said it wanted to learn the lessons of the pandemic so the world could prevent a repeat.

After Beijing last week banned some major Australian meat exporters, citing labelling breaches, and this week placed hefty anti-dumping and anti-subsidy tariffs on Australian barley, concerns were raised in local media that it was retaliation for seeking the inquiry.

"We would be disappointed if there was any process of conflating these issues," Foreign Affairs Minister Marise Payne told Australian Broadcasting Corp radio.

The Chinese embassy in Canberra on Tuesday derided as "a joke" the Australian assertion that the WHO resolution, first proposed by the European Union, was a vindication of its push for a global review.

An article in China's Global Times newspaper on Wednesday cited an anonymous comment made in a Weibo post saying "Australia, this giant kangaroo that serves as a dog of the U.S., will hit a deadlock with China on trade disputes in sectors like coal and beef."

The disagreement could affect plans by universities to lure back pupils. Chinese students account for almost 40% of Australia's international higher education population.

FILE PHOTO: People fish following the easing of restrictions implemented to curb the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), at Darling Harbour near the city centre in Sydney, Australia, May 18, 2020. REUTERS/Loren Elliott

SMARTPHONE APP
In Victoria, the country's second most-populous state, health authorities revealed they were using a controversial smartphone contact tracing app for the first time to track the movements of an infected person.

Almost 6 million Australians have downloaded the COVIDsafe app, short of the 40% of 18 million smartphone users the government has said would make it an effective tool, amid privacy concerns. Authorities have said use of the data is restricted to state health officials but have so far provided limited detail on its use.

WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

5/20/2020 CORONAVIRUS DIARY

Politics Ahead Of Science

President Trump sent a letter to the World Health Organization (WHO) telling the agency he will permanently pull all U. S. funding from the group if it does not commit to major substantive improvements in the next 30 days.

The WHO has just finished a two–day online visual meeting from Geneva. This coronavirus pandemic has spread all around the world and damaged all the nations on the globe.

In the early weeks of the U.S. coronavirus outbreak, the CDC officials had tracked a growing number of virus transmissions in Europe and proposed a global advisory board that would alert flyers to the dangers of air travel. But after almost one week had passed, thousands of European travelers had already come to the United States.

Today, many states, including the state of Connecticut, are open back up for business including beaches, restaurants, barber shops and gyms. But public health officials are very worried that the virus may get out of control again.

President Trump admitted he is taking the hydroxychloroquine drug to protect himself from the coronavirus. Medical doctors are criticizing him for setting a very bad example.

We are urging the United States not to withdraw from the WHO. At this current time of crisis we all need to work with all countries to defeat this invisible enemy and rescue the many people who are suffering in this pandemic.

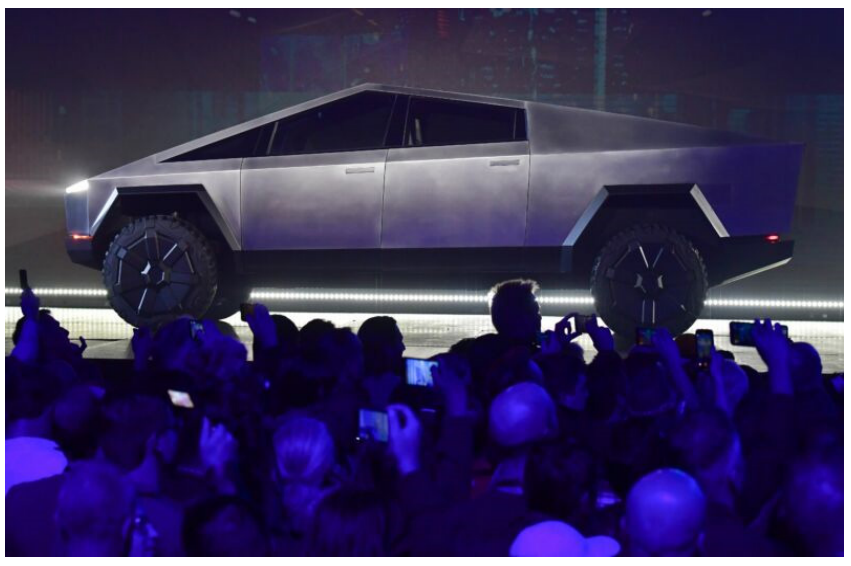
Southern News Group Chairman / CEO
Chairman of International Trade & Culture Center
Chairman of International District Houston Texas

Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee

Stay Safe! BUSINESS *Wash Your Hands!*

Company Is Slated To Build The Model Y Crossover And The Cybertruck Possibly In The Austin Area

Report: Tesla Plans To Build A New Car Factory In Texas



Tesla's Cybertruck at its November 2019 unveiling.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Elon Musk's recent clashes with officials in Alameda County, home of Tesla's Fremont factory, may have given him a heightened sense of urgency to find Tesla's next US factory. On Friday, several news outlets reported that Tesla was narrowing in on a new location to build the Model Y crossover and Tesla's forthcoming Cybertruck.

The reports started with Electrek, a pro-Tesla site whose co-founder Fred Lambert has good connections inside the company. Just before 3pm Eastern time, Lambert reported that Tesla had settled on Austin, Texas as the site of its next factory.

"We are told that the decision for the site is not set in stone since Tesla was apparently given a few options in the greater Austin area," Lambert wrote. "But Musk is said to want to start construction extremely soon and aims to have Model Y vehicles coming out of the plant by the end of the year."

That would be a remarkably short amount of time for any car company to build a new factory from scratch. Last year, it took Tesla almost a year to build its Shanghai factory—and that was considered unusually fast.

Tesla's Model Y Crossover

The new factory could easily cost billions of dollars. Tesla is currently building a factory near Berlin that is estimated to cost more than $4 billion. But with $8 billion in the bank at the end of the last quarter, Tesla shouldn't have too much trouble financing the project. Lambert noted that Tesla has some existing connections to the Austin area. Some of the chip engineers on the Autopilot team were recruited from AMD's Austin offices, and so Tesla has a small office there.

Elon Musk has previously said that Tesla's "Cybertruck gigafactory" would be in the central United States and that a location would be chosen within three months of Tesla's late April earnings call, Korosec noted.

Both Texas and Oklahoma have right-to-work laws that allow employees to opt out of paying union dues. These laws could help Tesla discourage workers in its new factory from forming a union. California's laws are more friendly to union organizing.

Musk seems to be gravitating toward Texas

One reason that Tesla will most likely ultimately locate its next factory in Texas is that Musk already has substantial ties to the state. Musk's other company, SpaceX, has at least two facilities in Texas. The company is building Starships at a fast-growing facility near Boca Chica, near the southernmost point in Texas. SpaceX also has a rocket testing facility in McGregor, Texas, about halfway between Austin and Dallas. Musk recently vowed to move Tesla out of California after county officials tried to delay re-opening of Tesla's Fremont factory.

Tesla Model Y SUV

"This is the final straw," Musk tweeted on May 9. "Tesla will now move its HQ and future programs to Texas/Nevada immediately." A few days later, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said he had spoken to Musk about moving Tesla to Texas.

Earlier in May, Musk tweeted about selling his physical possessions, including a California home that formerly belonged to actor Gene Wilder.

So building a Texas car factory could be part of a broader shift in Musk's life—from spending most of his time in California to spending most of his time in the Lone Star State. Musk has spent the last 15 years shuttling back and forth between SpaceX offices in Los Angeles and Tesla's facilities in the Bay Area in his private jet. Going back and forth between SpaceX's South Texas operation and a new Tesla headquarters in the Austin area wouldn't be such a big change in his routine. (Courtesy https://arstechnica.com/)

Related

SpaceX Loses subsidies in California After Musk signals willingness to move Tesla to Texas

Elon Musk got some push back from a California panel less than a week after he signaled he was open to moving Tesla's headquarters and future programs.

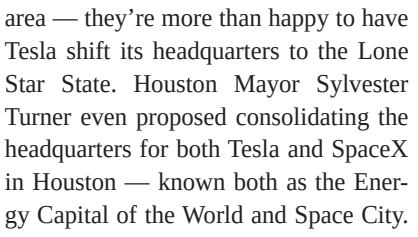
SpaceX, where Musk is also CEO, was turned down May 15 for a request of more than $650,000 in state job and training funds, according to a report from Reuters. The entrepreneur's willingness to move Tesla Inc. (Nasdaq: TSLA) to Texas or Nevada didn't sit well with some on California's Employment Training Panel.

Elon Musk is CEO of both Tesla Inc. and SpaceX.

"In my opinion, given the recent threats of the CEO to leave the state of California, and everything else we've discussed today, this proposal does not rise to the level for me to feel secure in supporting it," said Gretchen Newsom, a panel member and the political director of an IBEW electrical workers union local, according to the report. "SpaceX is a different company, but they have the same CEO." About a week ago, Musk expressed frustration over restrictions on the Tesla plant in Fremont, California, which is near the company's headquarters in Palo Alto.

"Frankly, this is the final straw," Musk said on Twitter. "Tesla will now move its HQ and future programs to Texas/Nevada immediately."

After saying he was restarting production in Fremont and willing to be arrested, the situation appeared to shift last week when the county health department said that if the company's Prevention and Control Plan includes updates — and the public health indicators remain stable or improve — the company can begin to augment "Minimum Business Operations" in preparation for possible reopening.



Elon Musk represents Silicon Valley's "fast break" culture.

SpaceX, which is based in Hawthorne, Calif., had requested $655,500, according to a filling with the state agency in California. The staff had recommended approval of the proposal that affected more than 1,000 employment positions. Even before the panel's meeting on May 15, there had been opposition to SpaceX getting the support. Teamsters Joint Council 7 President Rome Aloise and California "labor allies" called on the panel to deny the request.

SpaceX, which has 6,000 employees overall, counts Texas among its operations. That includes a launch facility in South Texas, a development facility in North Texas and a Houston-area presence, according to its website.

Since the Musk tweet regarding a potential move, Texas government officials — including those in the Houston area — they're more than happy to have Tesla shift its headquarters to the Lone Star State. Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner even proposed consolidating the headquarters for both Tesla and SpaceX in Houston — known both as the Energy Capital of the World and Space City. (https://www.bizjournals.com/)

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice

An aerial view of flooding as water overruns Sanford Dam, Michigan. TC VORTEX /via REUTERS

People stand in line to receive food aid amid the spread of coronavirus, at the Itireleng informal settlement, near Laudium suburb in Pretoria, South Africa. REUTERS/Siphiwe Sibeko

A fox carries a squirrel in its mouth during a phased reopening from the coronavirus restrictions in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. REUTERS/Carlos Osorio

Beauticians wearing protective gears tend to their customers inside a parlor after authorities allowed saloons and beauty parlors to open, during an extended nationwide lockdown to slow the spreading of the coronavirus in Ahmedabad, India.

A man is sprayed with hypochlorous acid water as a measure to prevent an infection with the coronavirus at the entrance of Kichiri Shinjuku, a Japanese style pub known as an 'izakaya', in Tokyo, Japan. REUTERS/Issei Kato

U.S. President Donald Trump examines a coronavirus pandemic relief debit card he was handed during a Cabinet meeting in the East Room at the White House in Washington. REUTERS/Leah Millis

A woman reads aloud from the Bible as residents wait in line for free groceries from a pop-up food pantry amid the coronavirus outbreak in Chelsea, Massachusetts. REUTERS/Brian Snyder

Cemetery workers place a coffin, containing the body of a 52-year old woman who died of the coronavirus, into a grave at the San Rafael cemetery, in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. REUTERS/Jose Luis Gonzalez

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

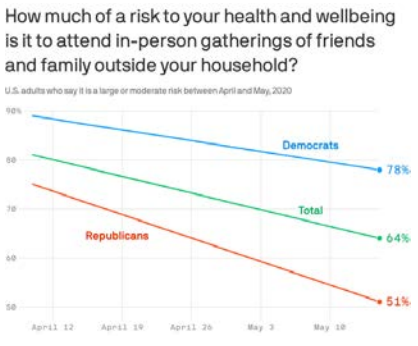
Social Interaction Climbing As People View Seeing Friends As Less Risky

America Re-Engages

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Americans are increasingly stepping out for social calls amid the pandemic — making playdates for their kids, restarting visits with elderly relatives, even grabbing a haircut, according to the latest installment of the Axios-Ipsos Coronavirus Index.

Why it matters: People are enabled and emboldened by states that have begun reopening, even as infections in the U.S. near 1.5 million and office closures and work-from-home arrangements remain in effect.



Data: Axios/Ipsos surveys. Note: The first survey was April 10-13, and 1,098 adults were interviewed. The second was May 15-18, and 1,009 adults were interviewed. Chart: Axios

Visuals

What they're saying: "There's still this high level of perceived risk about the COVID-19 world, but people are poking their heads out now," said Cliff Young, president of Ipsos U.S. Public Affairs. "The overall trend is, everything's jumping up." "The restrictions are being lifted in some places; in other places there's this expectation they will be lifted." "They're venturing out in a safe way. They're using some of the basic social distancing, masks and six feet apart."

By the numbers: Southerners lead the push for haircuts, meals out and playdates, and that's in keeping with the pace of where restrictions are being lifted. Visits with the elderly are less about where you live than whether you're old enough to have elderly parents.

Southerners are three times as likely to have gone out for a haircut in the last week (9%) as Northeasterners (3%); Southerners (16%) are twice as likely as Northeasterners (8%) to have gone out to eat in the past week; Parents in the South (41%) and Midwest (38%) are more than twice as likely as parents in the Northeast (17%) to have let their children play with other children in the past week; Overall, 15% of respondents say they visited elderly relatives in the last week, the highest share in nine weeks; that share shoots up to 23% among those ages 50-64.

Between the lines: Americans see it as safer to re-engage with people they know than to re-engage with society overall. At the same time, there's a widening gulf as Republicans see less risk with both sets of interactions than Democrats. People who say attending in-person gatherings with friends and family outside their households is a large or moderate risk dropped from 81% in mid-April to 64%. (The split between Republicans and Democrats on this question grew from 14 points to 27 points over that time.); Those who say returning to their pre-coronavirus life would pose a large or moderate risk dropped far less over the same period, from 72% to 68%. (That split between Republicans and Democrats grew from 21 points to 36 points.)

The big picture: Week 10 of our national survey finds about one in three continue to self-quarantine; six in 10 people use video conferencing to connect with family and friends; eight in 10 wear a mask outside the home; and 84% of Americans say attending a sporting event would be a large or moderate risk.

But there are subtle signs that people are growing weary of social distancing: 87% now say they practice it, down from 92%. The survey also found potential tension points with people who say they're following social distancing rules but perceive that others aren't.

Meanwhile, the survey found some good news for efforts to implement contact tracing programs to contain the spread of the virus. Most say they're open to sharing information about who they've been in contact with, if the tracing is done by local health officials and doesn't involve sharing data from their cell phones.

Related

Americans Open To Local Contact Tracing Systems

Washington DC, May 19, 2020

1. Americans are open to locally-run, in-person contact tracing systems.

A large majority of Americans say they would likely follow several key aspects of contact tracing systems including 84% who say they would be likely to self-quarantine if they were notified that they came into contact with a coronavirus-infected individual and two-thirds (76%) would give officials a list of all the people they had recently come into contact with.

However, fewer (56%) would give access to their cell phone location data echoing the 51% who would opt-into a cell-phone based tracing system established by public health officials in our wave 9 study.

2. The end of social distancing is driven by seeing friends and family.

• Over a third (38%) of Americans report visiting friends or relatives in the last week, up 6 percentage points from last week, and almost twenty from the high point of social distancing in mid-April. Likewise, nearly a third (31%) of parents report their kids playing with other kids in the last week.

• While also climbing, many fewer Americans report going out to eat (12%) or going to a salon (7%) in the last week.

• Sixty-four percent of Americans currently view seeing family or friends as a large or moderate risk to their health, down from 81% in mid-April. Currently, 74% view dining in at a restaurant and 66% view going to a salon as a large or moderate risk.

3. Memorial Day is going to be a questionable start to the Summer holiday season.

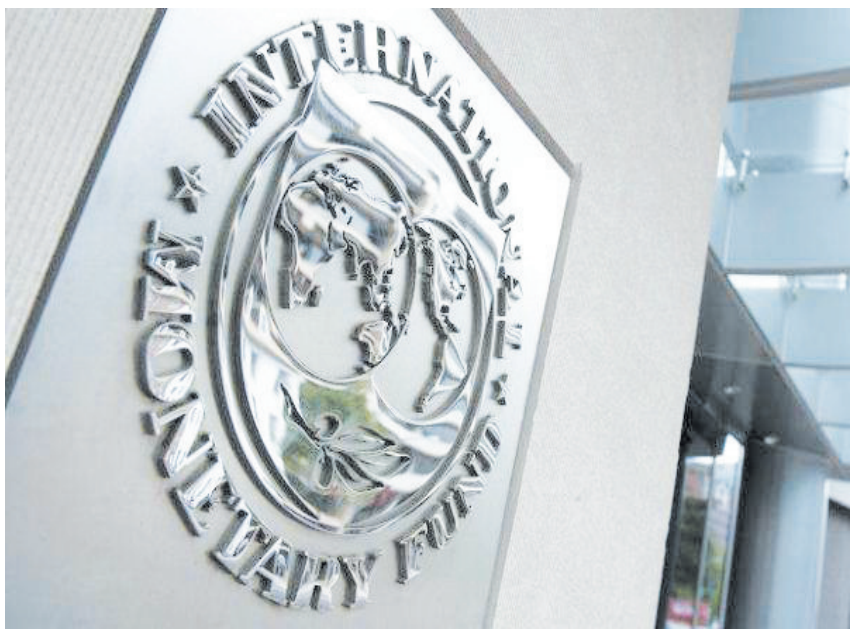
• Half of Americans (49%) say they have canceled summer vacation plans.

• Seventy-five percent view taking a vacation as a large or moderate risk to their health while 84% view attending a sporting event as a large or moderate risk.

4. Trust in the federal government continues to decline as state governments hold steady.

Slightly more than a third (37%) of Americans currently say they trust the federal government to look out after the best interests of their family, down from 43% in late April. Almost two-thirds (61%) currently trust their state governments, a figure that has held steady since late April. Employers (78%) and local health officials and healthcare workers (84%) remain the most trusted. (Courtesy axios/ipsos.com)

大话经济 Daily News



IMF擬再向下修正全球經濟預測

中國該如何對沖經濟影響？

隨著疫情對全球經濟的影響進壹步惡化，國際貨幣基金組織(IMF)總裁格奧爾基耶娃近日表示，將於6月公布對全球經濟預測的向下修正。

多位經濟專家在接受中新經緯客戶端采訪時表示，受二季度疫情全球蔓延不斷加重的影響，最終數據可能比2008年- 2009年金融危機時還要低。世界銀行的數據顯示，2008年和2009年全球GDP增速分別為1.85%和-1.68%。

在此情況下，中國在財政政策和貨幣政策上又該如何應對？

二季度多國經濟恐受重創

IMF在4月14日發布的《世界經濟展望報告》曾指出，受新冠病毒大流行影響，全球經濟2020年預計將萎縮3%。而IMF總裁的最新表態，則意味著2020年全球經濟將萎縮至3%以下。

中國人民大學重陽金融研究院院長助理兼宏觀研究部主任賈晉京對中新經緯客戶端表示："2020年全球經濟增長肯定是要比IMF壹季度預測的3%要萎縮很多。因為二季度是疫情對歐美經濟影響最嚴重的階段。如果二季度歐美普遍負30%的話，估計全球經濟全年下降幅度肯定會超過5%，降幅也會超過2009年金融危機時期。"

東方證券首席經濟學家邵宇也預計全球經濟將萎縮至-4%甚至-5%的水平。

美國亞特蘭大聯儲近日發布的報告預測，2019年第二季度美國GDP將大幅下降34.9%，是第二次世界大戰以來的最大跌幅，並預計整個2020年美國經濟仍將比2019年低6.8%。

高盛13日在壹份報告中也提出，美國二季度GDP料將下滑39%，全年經濟增速將下滑6.5%。

歐元區的形勢也不樂觀。歐委會5月6日公布的春季預測報告顯示，歐盟27國的國內生產總值2020年將下跌7.5%。

那麼，全球經濟何時可以緩解？植信投資首席經濟學家兼研究院院長連平對中新經緯客戶端表示，現在美國疫情並未明顯緩解，而共和黨已有放松防控發展經濟的想法。在這樣的情況下，未來是否還會受到第二波疫情的影響存在不確定性。所以接下來還很難說兩個季度情況就會有所緩和，反倒是還可能會出現進壹步地多次的反復，具體的影響還沒法做出判斷。

北京大學經濟學院教授、北京大學國民經濟研究中心主任蘇劍也認為，今年全球經濟取得正增長的困難很大，基本上做不到。"疫情的嚴重程度遠遠超出人們的想象，而且還看不到徹底解決的希望。最終疫情在全球範圍內的終結取決於治理能力和醫療資源最差的國家，因為這個病毒傳染性很強，又不可能把任何壹個國家孤立起來，所以只要有壹個國家治理不好，全球就不能掉以輕心。這種情況下，疫情經濟將持續很長時間，可能持續到明年，其結果是今年的全球經濟形勢不樂觀。"

中國財政貨幣政策上該如何應對？

面對當前的世界經濟發展形勢，要盡力減少世界經濟對中國經濟的不利影響，在財政和貨幣政策上中國又該如何應對？

對此，賈晉京表示："在這種情況下，從貨幣和財政政策角度來看，肯定是要更加積極壹些。"

東方證券首席經濟學家邵宇則指出，中國的財政政策還有進壹步發力的空間，但是總體而言在全球出現比較大的萎縮的背景下，中國很難去制定壹個比以前更高或者相對水平更高的增長目標。目前中國的政策大多是對沖性的，並不是強烈刺激性的，所以我覺得只能在特別國債的發行額度，包括貨幣政策的釋放，降準降息的空間方面繼續做壹定的政策操作，但是可能很難達到像2008年那樣壹個刺激的量級，不管是財政占GDP的比重，還是貨幣寬松的程度。

連平也認為中國應加大對沖的力度。"如果全球疫情在三季度仍沒有緩和的話，中國的相關政策可能還要更加積極，甚至於還要加碼。在接下來還需要進壹步提高政策的前瞻性和靈活性。我覺得中國的財政政策還有更加積極的空間，貨幣政策也還有進壹步松動的空間，比如準備金率進壹步下調，利率進壹步下調，都是有空間的。"

不過，受制於疫情對經濟的影響，也有專家認為財政政策上恐會受限。

蘇劍分析稱，中國的財政政策受制因素太多，主要是疫情打擊下財政收入下滑、支出上升導致的困境。在這種情況下還要實行擴張性財政政策，難度就很大。因此，目前中國財政政策的困難不在於如何作為，而在於如何籌資。目前發行國債、處置國有資產應該是比較好的辦法。減稅、增加政府支出(包括基建支出和轉移支付)都是可行的辦法，降低社保收費、高速路收費等等也都是好辦法，但這些的前提是得先有別的收入來源。

買的賣的都著急 北京西城二手房成交井噴

北京市西城區2020年義務教育階段入學工作實施意見公布以來，據中原地產統計，短短兩周時間北京西城區二手房住宅成交量已超過1000套。從歷史數據看，近年來，西城區二手房月成交量徘徊在800套左右，5月前兩周成交已超往年月平均水平。

專家預計，在7月31日政策落地之前，西城區二手房市場仍將保持壹定熱度，5月西城區二手房成交量或達到2000套左右。

市場火爆

"賣的著急，買的也著急。"北京市某大型房產中介經紀人告訴中國證券報記者，最近西城區掛牌出售的房源很多，不少人想趕在政策實施之前，鎖定高價位把房子賣了。同時，壹些客戶為了確保孩子能夠進入心儀學校而"緊急"買房。"買的人很多，目前西城區壹居、兩居小戶型已基本售罄。'壹房難求'，市場火爆，報價普遍上調5%以上，稀缺房源漲幅達到10%左右。"該經紀人告訴記者。

記者查詢鏈家網西城區5月15日新上的房源發現，部分小戶型、甚至"老破小"房源單價最高已達17萬元/平方米，同小區4月中旬成交的大戶型單價則在11萬元/平方米左右。初步統計發現，當日上架的西城區房源平均單價超過12萬元/平方米。

中原地產首席分析師張大偉預計，這壹輪西城區"學區房"成交熱會持續到7月31日政策落地。西城區月成交量有望達到2000套左右，全北京地區二手房成交保守估計或達到18000套。

政策調整可能性低

學區房降溫是壹個漫長的過程。張大偉表示，壹個區域教育水平提高短期難以實現，近期北京各郊區雖在加快發展教育，但要拉平差距仍需多年時間。

"長期看，此類措施出臺對促進教育公平和貫徹'房住不炒'等都有積極作用。客觀上為學區房降溫，同時促進教育教學資源更加合理配置。"易居研究院智庫中心研究總監嚴躍進指出。

張大偉認為，房價方面，政策落地後或出現短期下行，長期走勢還要看政策執行力度。"西城區算是全北京城區最後壹個執行'多校劃片'政策的區域。從目前情況看，各區執行政策力度不壹，西城區政策最終將如何落地還沒有定論，但就近原則大概率保持不變。"

同策研究院總監張宏偉認為，目前西城區二手房，特別是學區房成交火熱，房價上漲較快。另外，深圳、上海、杭州、南京等個別城市的個別區域樓市快速回暖。但從整體情況看，年內房地產政策層面收緊的概率不大。