

Hope springs eternal

In the week that marked the one-year anniversary of “Liberation Day”, US President Trump was moving markets again, providing mixed signals regarding a potential end to the conflict in the Middle East. Optimism peaked on Tuesday following reports that Trump would be willing to end the conflict without a full opening of the Strait of Hormuz. Iran’s president, Masoud Pezeshkian, also commented that Iran has the “necessary will to end this war”. Global stock markets rallied, and major US stock indices recorded their biggest one-day gain since May. However, the conflict continued to rage on, and in an address on Wednesday evening, Trump threatened to hit Iran “extremely hard” while also saying that “core strategic objectives are nearing completion”. Stock prices wavered on Thursday as the market struggled between forecasts of escalation and peace.

The price of oil continued to surge, rising 11.8% in EUR terms as the length of the supply disruption remained unclear. The UK hosted a coalition of around 35 countries on Thursday which agreed to explore the use of sanctions to pressure Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

In Europe, flash inflation data for March provided the first glimpse of the impact of higher energy prices. The headline inflation rate in Germany rose from 2.0% to 2.8%, in line with projections. In Ireland, the headline rate climbed from 2.5% to 3.6%. The year-on-year inflation rate for the Euro Area as a whole jumped to 2.5%, up from 1.9% and below expectations of 2.6%.

US retail sales data for February showed a 0.6% rise month-on-month, bouncing back from a -0.1% drop in January and beating forecasts of 0.5%. There was additional strength demonstrated in the labour market with the US non-farm payrolls report showing that 178,000 jobs were added in March, the most since December 2024.

Bond yields dropped across the major economies as hope for peace caused renewed demand for government debt. However, March marked one of the worst months in the past decade for Eurozone government bonds as the market priced in fiscal concerns surrounding rising energy prices.



Fact of the week

The US stock market just had its worst quarter since 2022; this was despite the US energy sector recording its best quarter ever, returning over 40% in EUR terms.

Our regular market information continues on the next page.

Snapshot



- World Equities
- Sovereign Bonds
- Corporate Bonds
- Oil
- Gold
- Copper

The week ahead

8 Apr	US Federal Reserve releases minutes from its last meeting.
9 Apr	US PCE inflation data for February is reported.
10 Apr	Preliminary US Michigan consumer sentiment data for April goes to print.



	1 Week Return 27.03.26 to 03.04.26		Year to Date Return 31.12.25 to 03.04.26	
	Local Currency	Euro	Local Currency	Euro
World	3.3%	3.0%	-2.3%	-0.6%
U.S.	3.4%	3.1%	-3.8%	-2.2%
Europe	3.7%	3.7%	-0.2%	-0.2%
Ireland	1.6%	1.6%	-7.8%	-7.8%
U.K.	4.8%	4.1%	6.7%	6.8%
Japan	0.6%	0.8%	7.2%	7.3%
Hong Kong	1.5%	1.1%	8.2%	9.3%
Corporate Bonds	1.0%	1.0%	-1.2%	-1.2%
Sovereign Bonds	1.5%	1.5%	-0.3%	-0.3%

Warning: Past performance is not a reliable guide to future performance.
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Equities

- Global stocks finished up 3.0% in euro terms and up 3.3% in local terms last week.
- Year-to-date global markets are down by -0.6% in euro terms and down by -2.3% in local terms.
- The U.S. market, the largest in the world, finished up at 3.1% in euro terms and at 3.4% in local terms.

Fixed Income & FX

- The U.S. 10-year yield finished at 4.3% last week. The German equivalent finished at 3.0%. The Irish 10-year bond yield finished at 3.2%.
- The Euro/U.S. Dollar exchange rate finished at 1.15, whilst Euro/GBP finished at 0.87.

Commodities

- Oil finished the week at \$112 per barrel and is up 98.1% year-to-date in euro terms.
- Gold finished the week at \$4,676 per troy ounce and is up 10.4% year-to-date in euro terms.
- Copper finished the week at \$12,288 per tonne and is up 0.6% year-to-date in euro terms.