

29 April 2026

Global Markets Research
Daily Market Highlights

29 Apr: All eyes on the FOMC where a rate pause is expected

**BOJ maintained policy rate; upward revision to Japan's CPIs but downward to GDP
Brent jumped above \$111/barrel; UAE announced exit to OPEC alliance on May 1st
Improved consumer confidence for the US; strong export growth for Hong Kong**

- AI jitters returned to the Wall Street amid reports that OpenAI had missed its own target for revenue and new users, fuelling concerns that the firm may struggle to finance its infrastructure funding. Partners such as Oracle and CoreWeave slumped, dragging the 3 major stock indices down 0.1-0.9% d/d. Tech companies with less direct ties to OpenAI performed better, especially with companies like IBM recently reporting strong earnings, suggesting that this AI worry was not broad-based, albeit jarring, ahead of earnings of key tech companies.
- Outside of tech, losses in the blue-chip index were also kept in check by solid corporate earnings from the likes of Coca-Cola. Energy shares also gained with crude oil prices jumping more than 2.0% d/d to \$99.93/barrel for the WTI and \$111.26/barrel for Brent as the world awaits US' response to Iran's proposal. Investors were also keeping an eye on **UAE's announcement to leave the OPEC/OPEC+ alliance on 1st May**, likely to gain production flexibility amid high energy prices.
- Sentiment remained firmly subdued elsewhere given the elevated energy prices. Stoxx Eur 600 finished down 0.4% d/d, while Nikkei 224 and Hang Seng lost 1.0% d/d each.
- Treasuries and European sovereign bonds were hit by the climbing oil prices and soaring inflation expectations. The 2Y treasury yield rose 4bps to 3.84%, while the 10Y inched up 1bps to 4.35%. 10Y European bond yields increased 1-6bps.
- Haven demand and JPY weakness sent the DXY up 0.2% d/d to 98.64. JPY strengthened to 158.96 in intraday trading after the latest policy meeting saw growing hawkish tilt within the board and traders upping rate hike bets in the June meeting, but later erased gains with BOJ's Ueda refraining from giving clear rate hike signals and closed the day 0.1% d/d weaker at 159.62 EUR, GBP and AUD depreciated 0.1% d/d each to close the day at 1.1712, 1.3517 and 0.7181 respectively.

Key Market Metrics

	Level	d/d (%)
Equities		
Dow Jones	49,141.93	-0.05
S&P 500	7,138.80	-0.49
NASDAQ	24,663.80	-0.90
Stoxx Eur 600	606.58	-0.37
FTSE 100	10,332.79	0.11
Nikkei 225	59,917.46	-1.02
CSI 300	4,758.21	-0.27
Hang Seng	25,679.78	-0.95
Straits Times	4,887.69	-0.10
KLCI 30	1,729.60	0.72
FX		
Dollar Index	98.64	0.15
EUR/USD	1.1712	-0.08
GBP/USD	1.3517	-0.13
USD/JPY	159.62	0.13
AUD/USD	0.7181	-0.07
USD/CNH	6.8402	0.21
USD/MYR	3.9532	0.04
USD/SGD	1.2772	0.23
USD/KHR	4,006.25	0.01
USD/THB	32.51	0.52
Commodities		
WTI (\$/bbl)	99.93	3.69
Brent (\$/bbl)	111.26	2.80
Gold (\$/oz)	4,591.50	-1.79
Copper (\$/MT)	13,036.50	-1.34
Aluminum(\$/MT)	3,538.50	-1.10
CPO (RM/tonne)	4,469.50	-1.64

Source: Bloomberg, HLBB Global Markets Research
* Closing as of 27 Apr for CPO

- Similarly, most regional currencies weakened against the Dollar. The CNH, MYR and SGD closed the day at 6.8402 (-0.2% d/d), 3.9532 (flattish) and 1.2772 (-0.2% d/d) respectively.

BOJ held rates unchanged at 0.75% with 3 dissenters

- As expected, the Bank of Japan (BOJ) kept its uncollateralized overnight call rate unchanged at 0.75%. The vote was split 6-3, with the 3 dissenters voting to raise rates to 1.00% given the upside risks to prices following the Middle East war.
- In its latest Outlook Report, the central bank also revised its projected real GDP growth for fiscal 2026 and 2027 lower to 0.5% (-0.5ppts) and 0.7% (-0.1ppts) while expecting growth to accelerate to 0.8% in 2028. The BOJ increased its core CPI forecast sharply higher to 2.8% (+0.9ppts) and 2.3% (+0.3ppts) for fiscal 2026 and 2027 due to the recent surge in crude oil prices, but expect prices to moderate to 2.0% in 2028.
- While avoiding clear signals on future path, Governor Ueda did flag that risks to prices are greater than downside risks in his presser. Coupled with BOJ's view that it is necessary for the central bank "to pay particular attention to the impact of the future course of the situation in the Middle East on financial and foreign exchange markets," we are changing our rate hike view from 3Q to 2Q.
- Data wise, we saw jobless rate unexpectedly worsening to 2.7% in March from 2.6% the prior month.

Consumer confidence in the US improved despite material concerns over prices

- The Conference Board Consumer Confidence index unexpectedly inched up 0.6ppts to 92.8 in April, with consumers more optimistic over the short-term outlook (expectations: +1.2ppts to 72.2) which more than outweigh their assessment of the current situation (-(-0.3ppts to 123.8). That said, the survey period coincided with the 2-week ceasefire in the Middle East and subsequent rebound in equities, and as such, a sustainable improvement is highly dependent on a concrete peace deal and expectations of softer prices consequently.
- Home price appreciation continued to slow, with the FHFA Home Price index showing flat growth in February (prior: 0.2% m/m) while the S&P Cotality House Price index also showed modest growth of 0.7% y/y in February (prior: 0.8% y/y). With mortgage rates still elevated near 6.0%, dampening affordability, and more than half of major metropolitan markets posted yearly declines, these suggest that the underlying momentum in the housing industry has and will likely remain weak.

Double-digit growth for Hong Kong's export growth

- Like most regional peers, Hong Kong's export growth remained strong and surprised on the upside at 35.8% y/y in March (prior: 24.7% y/y). Robust global demand for AI-related electronic products spurred growth, while exports to most markets continue to register strong growth. As it is, resilient global demand for AI-related electronic products should keep external demand well supported, but heightened geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and its implications on energy prices and supply chain will pose downside risks to demand in the near term.

House View and Forecasts

FX	This Week	2Q-26	3Q-26	4Q-26	1Q-27
DXY	97-100	100.63	99.80	97.96	96.48
EUR/USD	1.15-1.19	1.14	1.15	1.17	1.19
GBP/USD	1.33-1.36	1.31	1.32	1.34	1.35
USD/CHF	0.76-0.81	0.79	0.78	0.76	0.75
USD/JPY	157-161	159	155	152	152
AUD/USD	0.70-0.73	0.68	0.69	0.70	0.71
NZD/USD	0.56-0.61	0.57	0.58	0.58	0.59
USD/CNY	6.80-6.85	6.93	6.88	6.84	6.77
USD/MYR	3.93-4.00	3.98	3.96	3.93	3.90
USD/SGD	1.26-1.29	1.29	1.28	1.27	1.25
USD/THB	31.70-32.60	31.60	31.80	31.80	31.40

FX	Last close	2Q-26	3Q-26	4Q-26	1Q-27
EUR/MYR	4.6218	4.55	4.55	4.60	4.66
GBP/MYR	5.3335	5.23	5.23	5.26	5.28
AUD/MYR	2.8366	2.72	2.72	2.75	2.77
CNY/MYR	0.5783	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58
SGD/MYR	3.0964	3.09	3.10	3.11	3.12

Rates, %	Current	2Q26	3Q26	4Q26	1Q27
Fed	3.50-3.75	3.50-3.75	3.50-3.75	3.25-3.50	3.25-3.50
ECB	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
BOE	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
SNB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
BOJ	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
RBA	4.10	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35
RBNZ	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25
BNM	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75

Source: HLBB Global Markets Research

Up Next

Date	Events	Prior
29-Apr	AU CPI Trimmed Mean YoY (Mar)	3.30%
	EC Economic Confidence (Apr)	96.6
	US MBA Mortgage Applications	7.90%
	US Advance Goods Trade Balance (Mar)	-\$98.5b
	US Durable Goods Orders (Mar P)	-1.30%
	US Housing Starts MoM (Mar)	7.20%
	US Cap Goods Orders Nondef Ex Air (Mar P)	0.70%

	US Building Permits MoM (Mar P)	-4.70%
	US FOMC Rate Decision (Upper Bound)	3.75%
	US FOMC Rate Decision (Lower Bound)	3.50%
30-Apr	JN Retail Sales MoM (Mar)	-2.00%
	JN Industrial Production MoM (Mar P)	-2.00%
	CH Manufacturing PMI (Apr)	50.4
	CH Non-manufacturing PMI (Apr)	50.1
	AU Private Sector Credit MoM (Mar)	0.60%
	CH RatingDog China PMI Mfg (Apr)	50.8
	JN Consumer Confidence Index (Apr)	33.3
	EC GDP SA QoQ (1Q A)	0.20%
	EC Unemployment Rate (Mar)	6.20%
	EC CPI Core YoY (Apr P)	2.30%
	UK Bank of England Bank Rate	3.75%
	EC ECB Deposit Facility Rate	2.00%
	EC ECB Main Refinancing Rate	2.15%
	EC ECB Marginal Lending Facility	2.40%
	US Personal Income (Mar)	-0.10%
	US Personal Spending (Mar)	0.50%
	US Core PCE Price Index YoY (Mar)	3.00%
	US Initial Jobless Claims	214k
	US Employment Cost Index (1Q)	0.70%
	US GDP Annualized QoQ (1Q A)	0.50%
	US MNI Chicago PMI (Apr)	52.8
	US Leading Index (Mar)	-0.10%

Source: Bloomberg

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