



Thursday, June 14, 2018

Eurozone employment growth improved in Q1

Eurozone employment grew at a slightly faster pace in the three months ended March. Employment rose 0.4% sequentially in the March quarter, just above 0.3% increase in the previous month. On an annual basis, employment growth eased to 1.4% in the first quarter from 1.6% in the Dec. quarter. (www.rttnews.com 13/06/18)

Eurozone industrial production fell in April

Eurozone industrial production decreased in April after recovering in the previous month. Industrial output fell 0.9% month-over-month in April, reversing a 0.6% increase in March, which was revised up from 0.5%. On a yearly basis, industrial production growth eased to 1.7% in April from 3.2% in the previous month. (www.rttnews.com 13/06/18)

Fed raises interest rates

The US Federal Reserve has voted to raise the target for its benchmark interest rate by 0.25%, citing solid economic expansion and job gains. The widely-anticipated decision will lift the target for the central bank's benchmark rate to 1.75%-2%, the highest level since 2008. The rise is part of the US recovery following the global financial crisis. (www.bbc.com 13/06/18)

China shows signs of losing steam as PBOC pauses after Fed hike

China's central bank held off from immediately raising borrowing costs following the US Fed's interest rate hike, a decision that came just as economic data for May showed that the economy is losing steam. The world's second-largest economy is already slowing after a stronger-than expected start to 2018. (www.bloomberg.com 14/06/18)

UK house price balance improved in May

UK house price balance improved more than expected in May, reports said citing the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The house price balance rose to -3% in May from -7% in April. The expected level was -5%. (www.rttnews.com 14/06/18)

German GDP growth prospects weakened by global insecurity: study

Clouds are gathering over Germany's economy as growth begins to slow, a study published by the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) warns. In the study, DIW cut its earlier forecasts for the rate of GDP expansion in 2018 and 2019 significantly from 2.2% to 1.9% and 2.4% to 1.7% respectively. (www.xinhuanet.com 13/06/18)

French inflation accelerated as estimated in May

France's consumer price inflation accelerated as initially estimated in May, the latest figures from the statistical office Insee show. Consumer prices climbed 2% year-over-year in May, faster than April's 1.6% rise. On a monthly basis, consumer prices rose 0.4% from April, when it edged up by 0.2%. (www.rttnews.com 14/06/18)

Argentina maintains rate, tight policy until inflation falls

Argentina's central bank has left its monetary policy rate at 40.0% and confirmed its guidance from last week's agreement with the IMF that it is "committed to maintaining the current contractionary bias of monetary policy until it observes tangible signs that both inflation and inflation expectations begin to fall." For 2018, the central bank has eliminated its previous inflation target of 15%. (www.centralbanknews.info 12/06/18)

EXCHANGE RATES OF SELECTED CURRENCIES

CURRENCY	BUYING		SELLING	
+USD/GBP	1.3362	(1.3401)	1.3392	(1.3429)
+USD/EUR	1.1771	(1.1784)	1.1762	(1.1804)
*GHS/USD	4.4484	(4.4457)	4.4528	(4.4501)
*GHS/GBP	5.9497	(5.9635)	5.9574	(5.9703)
*GHS/EUR	5.2414	(5.2440)	5.2456	(5.2477)

+SOURCE: BOG INTERNAL TRANSACTION RATES: 14/06/18 (Rates for 13/06/18 in brackets)

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Iceland central bank keeps rate unchanged

Iceland's central bank has left its interest rate unchanged, as policymakers said a tight monetary stance is still required amid rapid demand growth and underlying pressures in the labour market. The Monetary Policy Committee of the Central Bank of Iceland held the seven-day term deposits rate at 4.25%. The bank had lowered the rate by a quarter point in Oct. 2017. (www.rttnews.com 13/06/18)

Georgia holds rate and maintains moderately tight stance

Georgia's central bank has left its benchmark refinancing rate at 7.25% and said it still considers it necessary to maintain a "moderately tight monetary policy" though it will consider easing this stance after a sufficient weakening of the factors that affect inflation. The National Bank of Georgia, which has kept its rate steady since raising it by 25 basis points in Dec. 2017, lowered the minimum requirement for banks' reserves in the domestic currency to 5% from 7%. (www.centralbanknews.info 13/05/18)

Singapore's unemployment rate declined in Q1

Singapore's Ministry of Manpower has announced that the country's labour market improved slightly in the first quarter of 2018, supported by sustained expansion in economic activity. It said in the Labour Report that the seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate declined overall from 2.1% in Dec. 2017 to 2% in March 2018. (www.xinhuanet.com 13/06/18)

Bulgaria inflation accelerated in May

Bulgaria's consumer price inflation accelerated in May after easing in the previous month. Inflation rose to 2.6% in May from 2% in April. Consumer prices have been rising since Dec. 2016. On a monthly basis, consumer prices increased 0.3% from April, when it rose by 0.4%. The EU measure of inflation (HICP) increased 2.3% annually and by 0.4% monthly in May. (www.rttnews.com 13/06/18)

Namibia holds rate, sees slightly stronger 2018 growth

Namibia's central bank has left its benchmark repo rate at 6.75% and said it still expects the domestic economy to perform "slightly better in 2018 compared to 2017" despite slow activity in the first quarter. The Bank of Namibia said slow activity in the first quarter was reflected in the wholesale and retail trade, and fishing. But mining, agriculture, transport and communications had performed positively. (www.centralbanknews.info 13/05/18)

South Africa's rand recovers as Fed delivers few surprises

South Africa's rand firmed early on Thursday after the US Federal Reserve delivered few surprises in announcing an interest rate hike. At 0620 GMT, the rand traded at 13.2450 per dollar, 0.4% stronger than its close on Wednesday. With little on the domestic agenda, traders will be watching the outcome of the European Central Bank's policy meeting, at which it is expected to signal an end to a massive bond purchase scheme. (www.reuters.com 14/06/18)

South Africa retail sales rise at slowest pace since Feb. 2017

Retail sales in South Africa, the continent's most-industrialized economy, rose at the slowest pace in 15 months in April. Sales climbed 0.5% from a year earlier. That's less than the revised 4.6% expansion for March. GDP hasn't grown at more than 2% a year since 2013. (www.bloomberg.com 13/06/18)

Nigeria inflation dipped to lowest in more than two years in May

Annual inflation in Nigeria slowed to 11.61% in May, its lowest level in more than two years and its 16th straight monthly drop, the National Bureau of Statistics has said. It fell from 12.48% in April. A separate food price index showed inflation at 13.45% in May, compared with 14.80% in April. (www.reuters.com 14/06/18)

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