

French consumer sentiment improves slightly

French consumer confidence improved slightly in Feb as households' assessment about future financial situation as well as their standard of living strengthened, the statistical office INSEE showed Wednesday [25/02]. The consumer sentiment index rose slightly to 91 from 90 in the prior month. (www.rttnews.com 25/02/26)

Hong Kong's economy to grow 2.5 to 3.5% in 2026: financial secretary

Based on assessment of current global and local economic situations, Hong Kong's economy is forecast to grow 2.5% to 3.5% in 2026, Paul Chan, financial secretary of China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government, said on Wednesday [25/02]. (www.xinhuanet.com 25/02/26)

RBA did not lose focus on inflation, says deputy governor

The Bank of Australia will remain "100% focused" on its inflation target, its deputy governor Andrew Hauser has said, following the suggestion by an opposition politician that its dual price stability and full employment mandate should be reviewed. Hauser said the RBA was statutorily obliged to focus on its 2–3% inflation target. (www.centralbanking.com 25/02/26)

Norway jobless rate rises to 4-month high

Norway's unemployment rate increased in Jan. to the highest level in 4 months, Statistics Norway showed on Wednesday [25/02]. The seasonally adjusted jobless rate rose to 4.6% in Jan from 4.3% in Dec. Further, this was the highest unemployment rate since Sept. 2025, when it was 4.7%. (www.rttnews.com 25/02/26)

Thailand unexpectedly cuts rates on lower growth outlook

Thailand's central bank unexpectedly lowered its benchmark policy rate by 25 basis points today (February 25), as officials said growth was projected to remain below potential this year and next. The monetary policy committee voted four to two to cut the rate from 1.25% to 1%. (www.centralbanking.com 25/02/26)

Oil edges up as US-Iran tensions keep supply risks in focus

Oil prices inched up on Thursday as investors gauged whether U.S.-Iran talks could avert a military conflict that risks supply disruptions, though gains were capped by a build in U.S. crude inventories. Brent futures were trading at \$71.04 per barrel, up 19 cents, or 0.3%, at 0415 GMT. WTI futures rose 15 cents, or 0.2%, to \$65.57 per barrel. (www.reuters.com 26/02/26)

South Africa plans for a legal 'fiscal anchor' to strengthen public finances

South Africa's government is working to enshrine in law a set of legal rules called a "fiscal anchor" to try to ensure that public finances are sustainable over the longer term. The rules will be outlined in the mid-term budget, which is normally presented in Oct. or Nov. (www.reuters.com 25/02/26)

South Africa's economy projected to grow 1.6% in 2026: finance minister

South Africa's economy is projected to grow by 1.6% in 2026, with the outlook steadily improving, finance minister Enoch Godon Wana said. Godon Wana made the remarks while delivering the 2026 budget speech in cape town, outlining the government's fiscal strategy and economic reform agenda. (www.xinhuanet.com 26/02/26)

Egypt unlocks around \$2.3bn in IMF funding after reviews

Egypt unlocked about \$2.3bn in loans after clearing reviews of IMF program that was expanded in 2024, a boost for a country whose currency and bonds felt jitters over prospect of a US-Iran war. (www.bloomberg.com 26/02/26)

IMF starts staff mission in Kenya for talks on new deal

A team from the IMF is in Kenya to discuss a new loan programme, the government and the Fund said. The East African nation has sought to clinch a new lending programme after the expiry of the previous \$3.6bn deal in April. and the two sides have since held a series of talks in Nairobi and Washington. (www.reuters.com 25/02/26)

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