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UOB WEALTH BANKING

Short Term Currency Views

Suggested MaxiYield Pairings



US jobs growth brakes sharply, clouds Fed rate hike timing (Fri 03-Apr).
US March services sector activity rises to highest since August: Markit (Mon 06-Apr).
Euro little changed after eurozone PPI at +0.5% m/m, -2.8% y/y (Tue 07-Apr).

Eurozone February retail sales (due on Wed 08-Apr, 17:00 hrs SGT).

Greece's Varoufakis: We will meet 'all obligations' (Mon 06-Apr).
Eurozone services PMI disappoints in March (Tue 07-Apr).

■ Greece claims €279 billion in German 'World War 2' reparations (Tue 07-Apr).

US employers added the fewest number of jobs in more than a year in March, the latest sign of weakness in the economy and one likely to further delay an anticipated interest rate increase by the Fed. Nonfarm payrolls rose 126,000 in March, less than half February's pace and the smallest gain since December 2013, ending 12 straight months of job gains above 200,000. Data for January and February were revised downward by 69,000 fewer jobs created. While the jobless rate held at a more than 6½year low of 5.5%, the workforce shrank. The labour force participation rate dropped back to a 36-year low of 62.7% which was last reached in December 2014

Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis said on Sunday Greece "intends to meet all obligations to all its creditors, ad infinitum" following a meeting in Washington with International Monetary Fund officials. He told reporters the government also plans to "reform Greece deeply" and to try to improve the "efficacy of negotiations" with its creditors. Most urgently, Greece is on the hook for a roughly €450 million loan repayment to the IMF due this Thursday. "I welcomed confirmation by the Minister that payment owing to the Fund would be forthcoming on April 9th," Lagarde said.

The US services sector expanded in March at its fastest pace since August. Markit said its final reading of its PMI for the services sector rose to 59.2 in March from 57.1 in February. The March reading was the highest level since August and was above the preliminary reading of 58.6. Markit's composite PMI, a weighted average of its manufacturing and services indexes, rose to 59.2 in March, its best reading since August, from 57.2 in February. The preliminary March reading was 58.5.

The eurozone services business activity index for March - a key survey of activity in the sector - reached 54.2, lower than an earlier "flash" reading of 54.3 but up from 53.7 the previous month. Markit's eurozone PMI Composite Output Index rose to an 11-month high of 54.00 in March from 53.3 in February. Business activity in the service sector rose at the fastest pace in eight months, spurred on by a sharpest intake of new work since May 2011. The level of business optimism rose to a 46-month high. Input price inflation accelerated to an 8-month high in March mainly due to higher staffing costs, despite which average output charges decreased for the fortieth month in a row.

Greece has formalised its claim to reparations from Germany over the damages from World War II. They now say that the figure owed is €279 billion, made up of damages, forced loans and interest and inflation on those sums. Enough to provide Greece with a "get out of jail" free card from its current debt woes if it were ever paid.



UK economy probably picked up speed in first quarter, says CBI (Tue 07-Apr). UK trade deficit for February (due on Thu 09-Apr, 16:30hrs SGT)

Rebound in UK services PMI points to Q1 GDP boost - Markit (Tue 07-Apr). BoE expected to leave rates unchanged (due on Thu 09-Apr, 19:00hrs SGT).

British economic growth probably picked up pace in Q1 of 2015, the CBI said on Tuesday, giving an upbeat assessment of the recovery as the country heads for a national election next month. Its monthly growth indicator suggested growth accelerated to a quarterly rate of 0.7% in Q1. Data published last week showed Britain's economy grew by 0.6% in Q4 of 2014. But a fall in services output in January prompted several economists to say growth in the first quarter of 2015 could be a lot slower.

Growth in Britain's services sector rose sharply last month, pointing to a speeding up of overall economic growth in Q1 of 2015. Adding to a run of positive economic news before a May 7 national election, the Markit/CIPS services PMI staged its biggest gain in more than a year to hit an eight-month high of **58.9** in March. The index had stood at 56.7 in February. The rise in March's services PMI beat economists' forecasts in a Reuters poll, which called for a more modest rise to 57.0, and followed a strong reading on the equivalent manufacturing survey last week. Britain's GDP probably rose by a quarterly 0.7% in Q1 of 2015, up from 0.6% growth in Q4 last year.



Iron ore price plunges below US\$47 a tonne (Mon 06-Apr).

Australia retail spending rises 0.7% in February (Tue 07-Apr).

Aussie strengthens as RBA's Stevens defies calls for rate cut (Tue 07-Apr).

Australia AiG services PMI slows in March to 50.2; prior was 51.7 (Tue 07-Apr).
ANZ says job ads drop suggests peak has passed (Tue 07-Apr).

The pain for local iron ore miners is showing no sign of healing anytime soon as the commodity's price sinks. At the end of the Monday session, benchmark iron ore for immediate delivery to the port of Tianjin in China was trading at US\$46.70 a tonne, down 4.9% from its prior close of US\$49 a tonne. The figure is a record low.

The AiG Performance of Services PMI for March comes in at 50.2 after 51.7 in February. Much of the growth was again concentrated in the health and community and financial and insurance services sub-sectors, while retail trade also expanded. Respondents to the survey expressed ongoing concerns about weak local economic conditions, fragile consumer and business sentiment, a low appetite for investment, as well as political uncertainties in Canberra and in NSW ahead of the state election.

Australian retail sales have smashed expectations in February as low interest rates and cheaper petrol put some extra cash into people's pockets. Spending rose 0.7% in February, with Australians splashing A\$24.059 billion. It was the strongest growth in spending since September and smashed economists' expectations of a 0.4% rise.

Job advertisements fell in March for the first time in nine months, according to ANZ, as both online and newspaper vacancies declined. ANZ said ads were down 1.4% month on month, with internet advertising off 1.3% and newspapers down 3.6%. The March figures left year-on-year growth in internet ads up 7.5%. Positions vacant in newspapers are down 21.8% from a year ago. ANZ said growth rates in jobs advertising may have peaked following two months of slowing growth at the start of 2015.

The Aussie strengthened as RBA Governor Glenn Stevens kept interest rates on hold for a second month, defying traders' expectations of a cut. The Aussie rose against all its 31 major counterparts. While 17 of 30 economists in a Bloomberg News survey correctly predicted the decision, swaps traders were pricing a more than 75% chance of a cut. Despite the RBA's decision to keep interest rates on hold this month, numerous economists forecast the cash rate to hit a low of 1.75% by the end of this year.



AUD/NZD flirts with parity; sold by macro funds, says trader (Mon 06-Apr).
Auckland property prices hit new high (Tue 07-Apr).

PM Key say kiwi gains reflect economy's strength (Tue 07-Apr).

Macro funds have been selling AUD/NZD since Hong Kong open on Monday, according to an Asia-based FX trader. The deal size is between A\$30m and A\$70m. Traders were pricing in a 75% chance the RBA will cut its cash rate. The Aussie dollar jumped 1.4% to NZ\$1.0208 after depreciating to NZ\$1.0021 on Monday, the lowest since the two currencies were freely floated in the 1980s. The prospect of further interest-rate cuts in Australia had sent the Aussie sliding toward parity with the kiwi.

Mr Key said the strength of the kiwi against the Aussie also reflected the perception among those who price currencies of which economy is in better shape. "It is weakness in Australia as well ... but I think over the last six or seven years we've seen a growing confidence in NZ businesses." he told Morning Report. Mr Key acknowledged many exporters were not happy with the situation but encouraged them to continue to invest and drive productivity. NZ firms were doing well on the international stage, he said.

Data from Barfoot & Thompson, Auckland's largest realtor, show sale prices reached an average of NZ\$776,729 in March. While March was always the busiest month, the level of trading was unprecedented and had set a string of new records. The agency sold 1597 homes, the highest number ever in a calendar month, with a quarter over NZ\$1 million. "Buyers remain convinced that with a stable economy, low interest rates and restricted housing availability, that buying at current prices is manageable."



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