

## Markets Update

Thursday, 19 March 2026

- Overnight the global energy rollercoaster continued its uncertain path. Iran launched attacks on major energy sites in neighbouring countries. As a result, Oil price has risen more than 3% overnight rewinding the positive signs from Wednesday's trading.
- There seems to be no sign of de-escalation in the region, with the US considering deploying thousands of troops to reinforce its operation. This could provide relief to energy prices in the medium term as it may allow for safe passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz.
- Overnight both the Bank of Japan and the US Fed kept their interest rates unchanged. Bank of Japan's commentary was vague, but economists still believe that rate hikes will take place at its next meeting in April. The US Fed projected higher inflation, steady unemployment, and a single reduction in borrowing costs this year. The caveat was that Fed chair Jerome Powell said that these projections are subject to high uncertainty as policy makers take stock of the ongoing conflict.
- Markets now turn their attention to Bank of England and European Central Bank for their interest rate decisions today. Analysts expect ECB to hold rates at 2% and are likely to communicate that the recent uncertainty means it is too early to draw conclusions on its projections for 2026. In the UK, this morning unemployment showed a slight dip to 5.2%, markets do not believe it will change the BOE committees' decision later. Analysts expect BOE will hold rates steady, but all eyes will be on the vote, predicted to be 7-2 however a 9-0 vote would send a clear message to markets regarding the short-medium term interest rate projections for the UK.
- GBP/USD sits around 1.3250 and EUR/USD is around 1.1450. GBP/EUR again is rangebound and has encountered very little movement continuing to sit at a high 1.15 level.

### Market rates at opening

GBP/USD	1.3256
GBP/EUR	1.1581
EUR/USD	1.1446
EUR/GBP	0.8634
GBP/AUD	1.8859
GBP/CAD	1.8212
GBP/CHF	1.0508
GBP/DKK	8.6541
GBP/HKD	10.3871
GBP/JPY	210.8900
GBP/NOK	12.6878
GBP/NZD	2.2826
GBP/SEK	12.4802
USD/CNY	6.9015

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Markets on 028 9089 1111 / 028 9089 1100

We may record or monitor calls to confirm details of our conversations, and for verification and quality purposes. Lines are open 8am to 5pm Monday - Friday except for bank holidays or other holidays in Northern Ireland when the bank is not open for business. Call charges may vary. Please contact your phone company for details. We may record or monitor calls to confirm details of our conversations, and for verification and quality purposes.

**EMAIL:** [markets@danskebank.co.uk](mailto:markets@danskebank.co.uk)

**WEBSITE:** [www.danskebank.co.uk](http://www.danskebank.co.uk)

Issued by Northern Bank Limited trading as Danske Bank (the "Bank" or "We").

So far as the law or regulation allow, We disclaim any warranty or representation as to the accuracy or reliability of the information and statements in this commentary. We will not be liable for any loss or damage suffered from relying on this commentary. This commentary does not purport to contain all relevant information. Recipients should not rely on its contents but should make their own assessment and seek professional advice relevant to their circumstances. This commentary is for information purposes only, is not intended as an offer or solicitation, nor is it the intention of the Bank to create legal relations on the basis of the information contained in it. No part of this commentary may be reproduced without our prior permission.

Danske Bank is a trading name of Northern Bank Limited which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Registered in Northern Ireland (registered number R568). Registered Office: Donegall Square West Belfast BT1 6JS. Northern Bank Limited is a member of the Danske Bank Group.