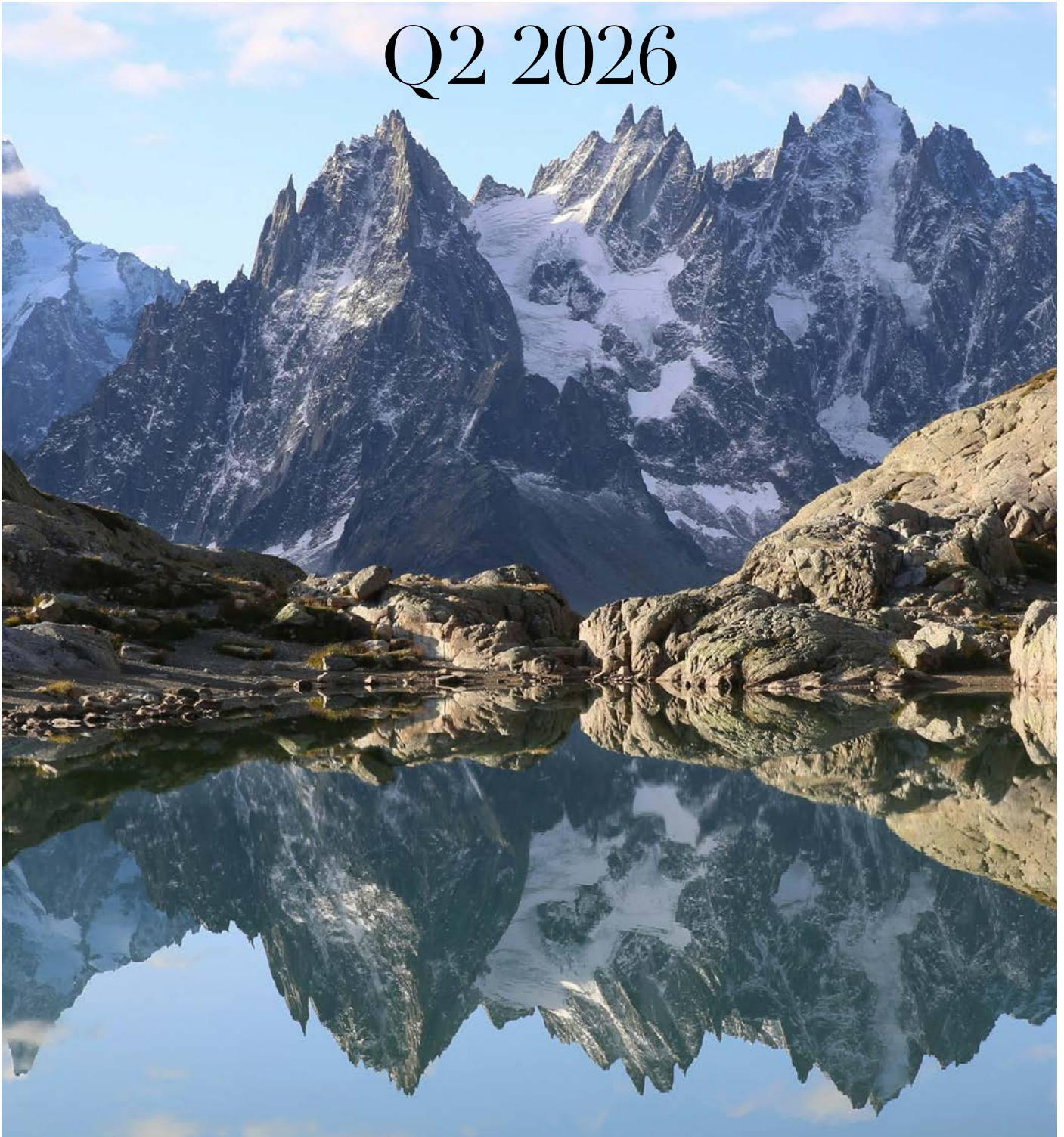
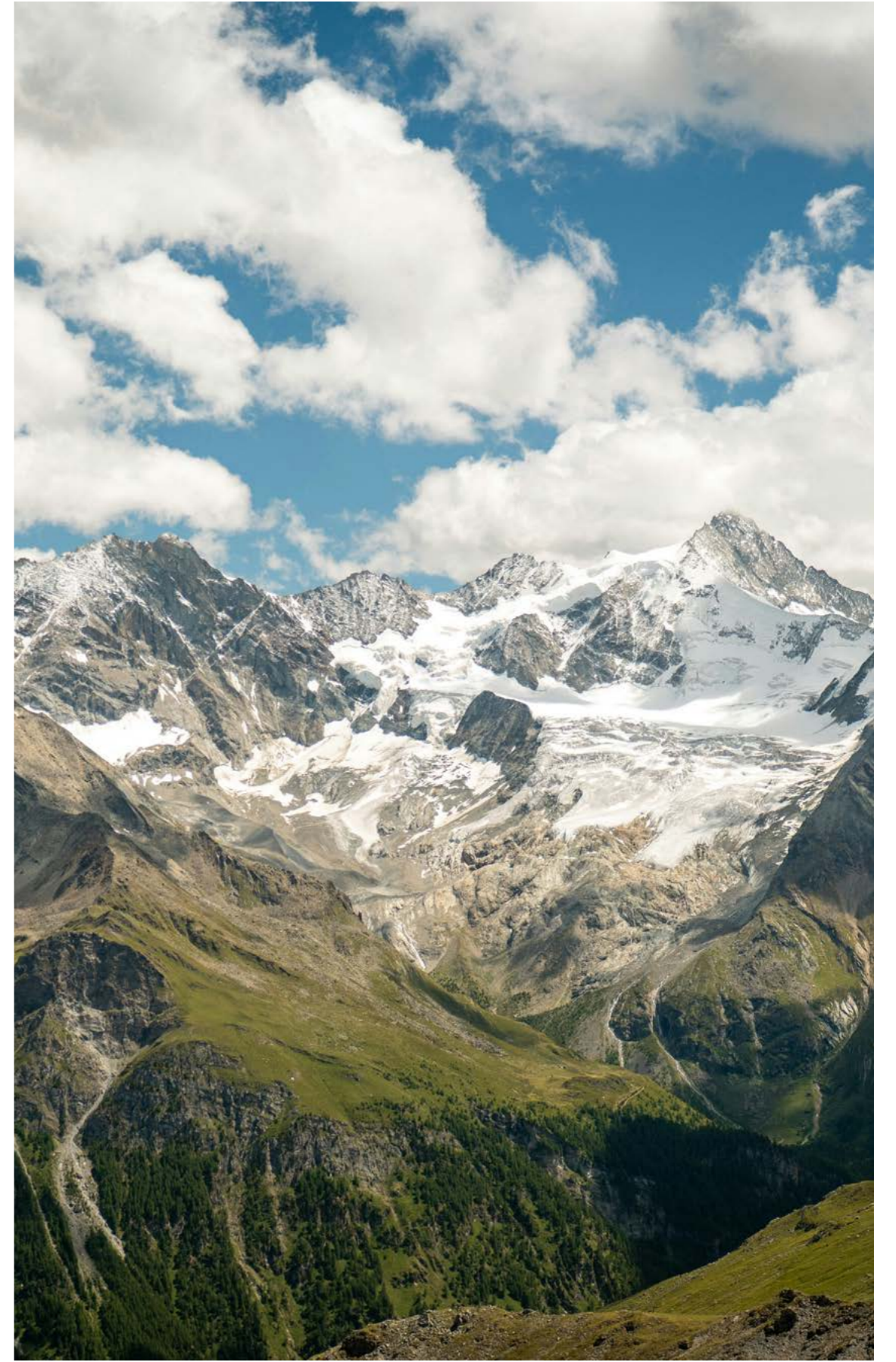
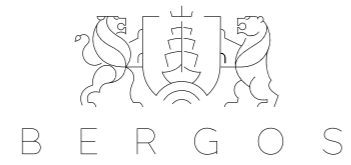


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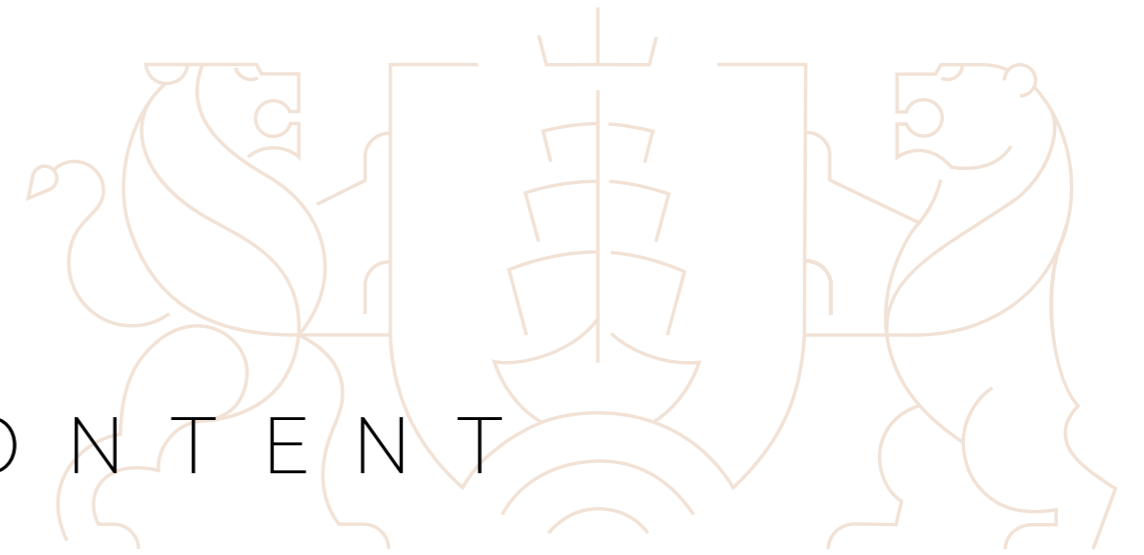
Q2 2026







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Bergos AG is an internationally operating, independent Swiss private bank with headquarters in Zurich and a branch in Geneva. We have been active in the Swiss financial center for over 40 years and can trace our history to the founding of Joh. Berenberg, Gossler & Co. KG in 1590. Our international team is dedicated to all aspects of wealth management and advisory, with a special focus on private individuals, family entrepreneurs, next generation and shipping clients. With a business model focused on pure private banking, we advise our clients on all liquid and non-liquid asset classes and alternative investments.

PUBLISHED BY BERGOS AG
ZURICH, APRIL 2026
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EDITORIAL DEADLINE 02.04.2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABOUT OUR SPRING PUBLICATION

Dear Readers,

Since the outbreak of the Iran conflict at the end of February, there have been, aside from liquidity, few safe havens in traditional asset classes. Alongside equities, bond yields have also suffered under rising interest rates, and gold has given up much of the price surge that occurred earlier.

However, during the correction phase, it became clear that the US stock market has once again proven more resilient during periods of stress than the rest of the world. The US dollar, which is generally affected by a loss of confidence in current US politics, has also contributed to stability in globally diversified portfolios.

It can also be observed that, as soon as even the faintest hope for de-escalation in the Iran conflict arises, investors are quick to place their liquidity reserves on the market. Dynamically positive price jumps, as we saw at the end of March and the beginning of April, are therefore always possible.

The capital market landscape thus ranges from gloomy stagflation scenarios to a rapid resolution of the conflict, accompanied by positive economic trends. This almost binary environment makes positioning particularly challenging.

Against this backdrop, our approach focuses on even broader diversification and avoids one-sided positioning based on extreme scenarios. On the equity side, a stylistic broadening across growth and value stocks plays an important role. To reduce concentration risks, particularly in the US stock market, the inclusion of US small caps is also sensible. Overall, we are convinced by the growth prospects of US equities, which, after the correction, are now trading at more moderate valuation levels.

In the fixed-income segment, we are positioned cautiously in the high-yield sector and maintain a clear underweight. Credit risk premiums for corporate bonds with higher ratings are currently not convincing, which is why we have also taken a more cautious stance here.

Despite the currently high volatility, we remain convinced of gold, as we expect sustained

strong demand from central banks in emerging markets. For additional diversification in multi-asset portfolios, we continue to regard convertible bonds as an attractive complement.

Thus, even in these challenging times, we remain true to our investment philosophy and regularly and critically review our capital market assessments as part of our investment process. We act with a steady hand, and when adjustments are necessary, we pursue a contrarian approach. This strategy has proven successful during previous crises and reinforces our current positioning – even in these turbulent times.

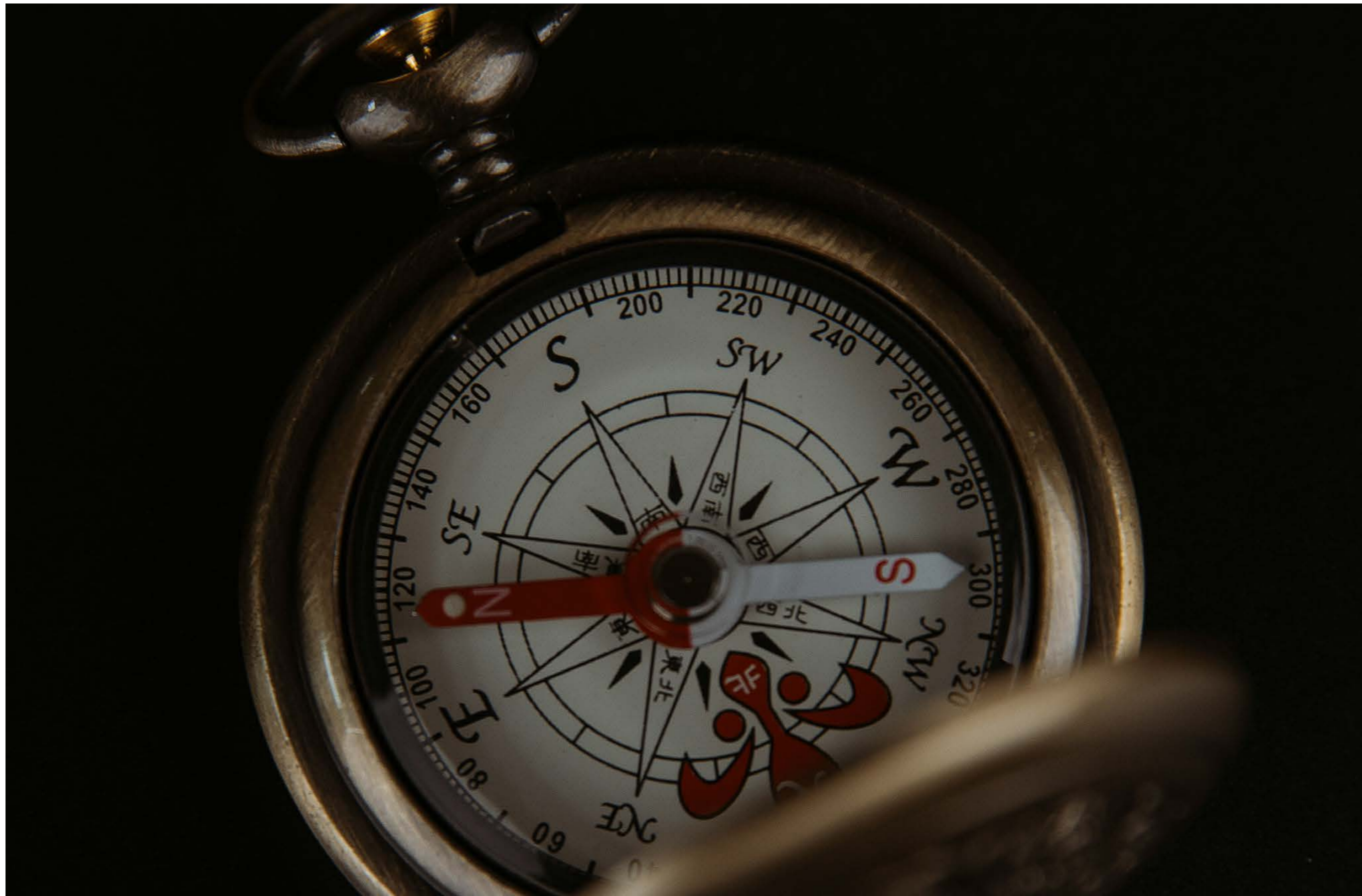
I hope you enjoy reading!

Yours sincerely,

Maximilian Hefe
Deputy Chief Investment Officer

MAXIMILIAN HEFELE CFA
DEPUTY CHIEF
INVESTMENT OFFICER
AND HEAD OF
ASSET MANAGEMENT





C O M P A S S

BASE-CASE SCENARIO

BY TILL C. BUDELMANN, CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER

In our baseline scenario, we currently expect military tensions to ease in the coming weeks, leading to a gradual and significant decline in energy prices from their current levels. However, a rapid drop back to pre-Iran-war levels is unlikely, as oil and gas facilities have been damaged and will take some time to repair.

In this scenario, driven by energy prices, inflation rates would rise noticeably starting in March – both on a month-over-month and year-over-year basis – causing uncertainty among businesses and consumers. However, the core inflation rate, which excludes volatile energy and food prices, would remain largely unchanged. In our baseline scenario, energy prices fall before they can spread to a significant extent to the prices of other goods and services and drive core inflation noticeably higher. Once energy prices have fallen again, inflation rates would quickly decline. Uncertainty would dissipate, and the loss of purchasing power would be moderate. However, since the inflation rate will be significantly higher for several months starting in March, the annual average inflation rate is likely to rise to about 2.6% compared to the previous year. Without the war, average inflation of just under two percent would have been likely.

Central banks could “look through” such a short-term rise in prices. They have already responded to the changed situation in their communications and signaled the possibility of higher interest rates should inflation become entrenched. However, as long as medium- and long-term inflation expectations remain anchored near central bank targets, we believe monetary authorities will not tighten monetary policy – or will do so only very moderately – because doing so would weaken the economy in a fragile situation. Central banks are therefore waiting to see how the situation in the Middle East and in energy markets develops.

With each passing day, however, the risk grows that the war will drag on and energy prices will remain high for a correspondingly longer period. In such a risk scenario, the damage to the economy and price stability would be significantly greater. The specific outcomes could vary greatly depending on the duration and intensity of the damage.

GDP ESTIMATES

INFLATION ESTIMATES (CPI)

UNITED STATES
2025: +2.1%
2026: +1.8%
2027: +1.8%

UNITED STATES
2025: 2.8%
2026: 2.9%
2027: 2.5%

EUROZONE
2025: +1.3%
2026: +0.9%
2027: +1.3%

EUROZONE
2025: 2.1%
2026: 2.6%
2027: 2.0%

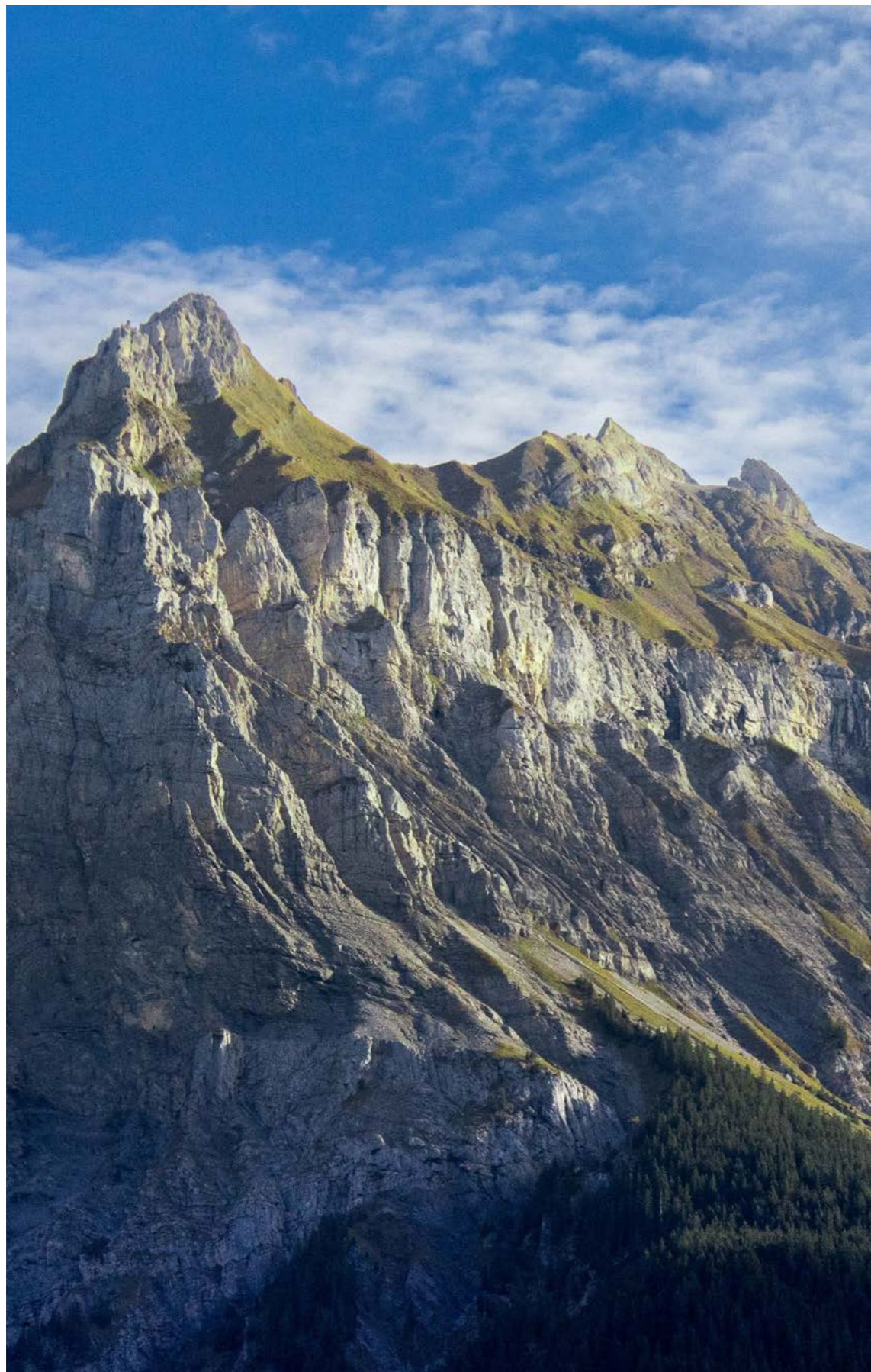
GERMANY
2025: +0.2%
2026: +0.8%
2027: +1.2%

SWITZERLAND
2025: +1.2%
2026: +1.1%
2027: +1.2%

GREAT BRITAIN
2025: +1.3%
2026: +0.7%
2027: +1.4%

CHINA
2025: +5.0%
2026: +4.3%
2027: +4.1%

JAPAN
2025: +1.1%
2026: +0.6%
2027: +0.7%



M A C R O

GEOPOLITICS OVERSHADOWS EVERYTHING

BY DR JÖRN QUITZAU

Venezuela, Greenland, Iran – the list of geopolitical issues and serious conflicts in the first quarter is alarming. Added to this is the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, as well as other latent risks lurking in the background. As the second quarter begins, one thing is clear: geoeconomics is dominating the scene, and otherwise important macro-economic data is taking a back seat.

Economy: Between hope and fear

Before the outbreak of the Iran war, the global economy had shown surprising resilience despite US trade policies. Global growth of just over 3% was once again projected for 2026. The US economy, too, proved more robust than had been feared given US economic

policies. For the eurozone, growth of 1.3% was projected. A key pillar of the economy is highly expansionary fiscal policy. This is particularly true for the US, but many other countries are also accepting significant budget deficits in this complex economic and political situation.

Due to the war in Iran and the resulting energy price shock, the outlook is now clouded and significantly more uncertain than usual. The heightened volatility in the financial markets reflects this uncertainty. The severity of the economic setback will depend largely on the time factor: If the war ends within a few weeks or a few months and energy prices gradually fall back toward their initial levels, the overall economic damage will be short-lived and

manageable when viewed over the course of the year. This is currently our base scenario.

If, on the other hand, the war drags on for many months and energy prices remain at current levels or even rise further, a more significant setback would be expected. In such a risk scenario, stagflation or even a recession accompanied by rising inflation would be likely. Even though this is not our main scenario, the probability is still considerable. And with every additional day of war and every instance of further damage to oil and gas facilities, the likelihood that the economic consequences will be more severe increases.

Monetary policy:

Central banks face a difficult task

Central banks entered this current difficult situation under varying conditions. Switzerland has no inflation problems whatsoever and is best positioned to weather the surge in energy prices. The Swiss National Bank (SNB) does not need to worry about price stability for the time being – especially since central banks cannot influence energy prices but can only mitigate any second-round effects. The SNB will primarily keep an eye on the franc's exchange rate and intervene in the foreign exchange market if it appreciates too rapidly. It reaffirmed its increased readiness to intervene as part of its interest rate decision in March.

In the eurozone, the inflation rate was recently slightly below the ECB's 2% target. Now, in light of the war in Iran, the European Central Bank expects the inflation rate to rise to an annual average of 2.6% in 2026 under its baseline scenario. If energy prices drop significantly again within a few weeks, the ECB would not need to react to the short-term rise in inflation. The central bankers could point to the core inflation rate. The core rate excludes volatile energy and food prices, which is why it is considered a good indicator

of underlying inflationary pressure. As long as the core rate does not rise significantly, the ECB can “look through” the energy price spike. In any case, the development of medium-term inflation expectations remains important because, if they rise noticeably, central banks must act.

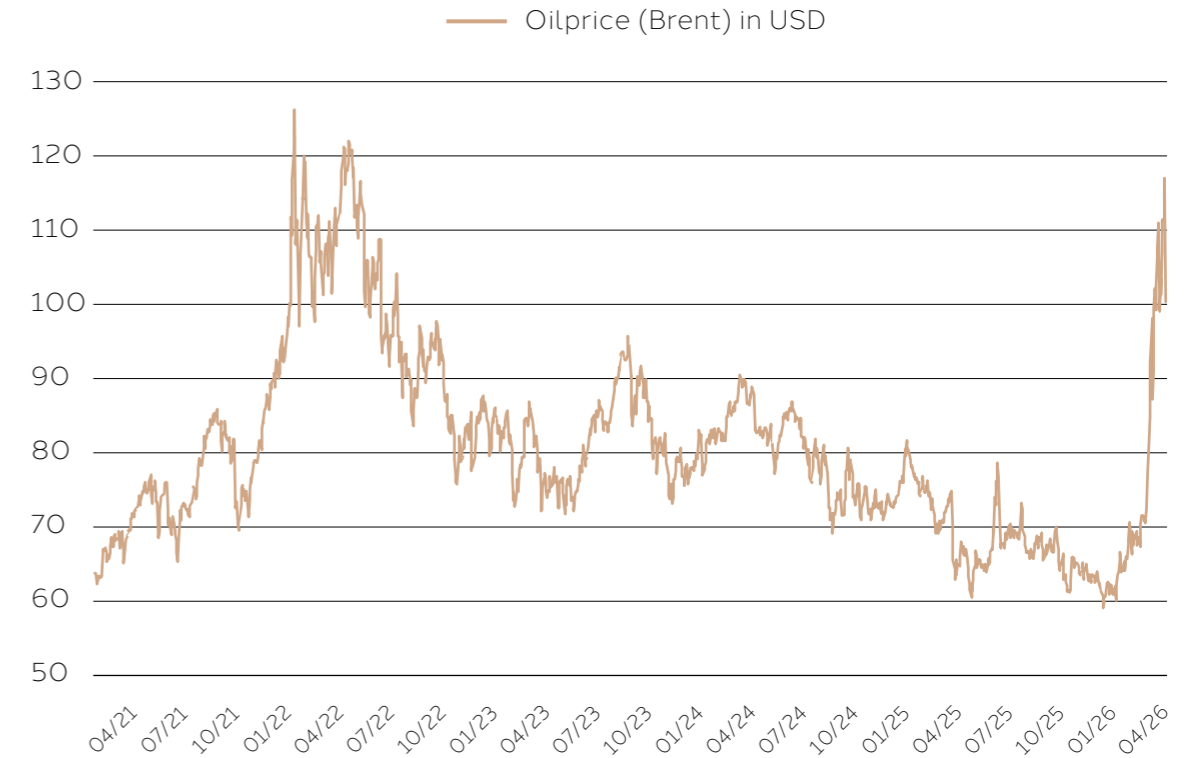
The US Federal Reserve (Fed) and the Bank of England were already grappling with stubborn inflation even before the spike in energy prices. Nevertheless, there were strong signs in favor of a moderate easing of their monetary policy over the course of the year. Plans for easing are now likely to be postponed, at least until the future trajectory of the energy price crisis becomes clearer.

Politically unstable environment

The Iran conflict has temporarily pushed two major issues out of the headlines: US tariff policy and the appointment of a new chair of the Federal Reserve.

After US President Donald Trump once again threatened several European countries with higher tariffs in the wake of his Greenland threats, he suffered a legal setback. The Supreme Court ruled – unsurprisingly – that large portions of the tariffs imposed by Donald Trump since 2 April 2025, were unlawful. Trump subsequently imposed new tariffs on a different legal basis. It is difficult to predict how this tariff chaos will unfold. The only certainty is that the high degree of uncertainty alone is causing damage.

Donald Trump has also left his mark on monetary policy with his erratic and confrontational behavior. Among other things, he exerted massive pressure on Fed leadership, particularly on Fed Chair Jerome Powell. Things calmed down somewhat after Trump nominated Powell's successor, whose term as Fed Chair ends in May 2026. Starting in May,



Oilprice (Brent) in USD

Source: Macrobond, Bergos. Data as of 02.04.2026

Kevin Warsh is set to lead the Federal Reserve. The task ahead for Kevin Warsh could hardly be more difficult. Inflation was already too high before the start of the Iran war, and now the price level threatens to rise significantly again due to the surge in energy prices.

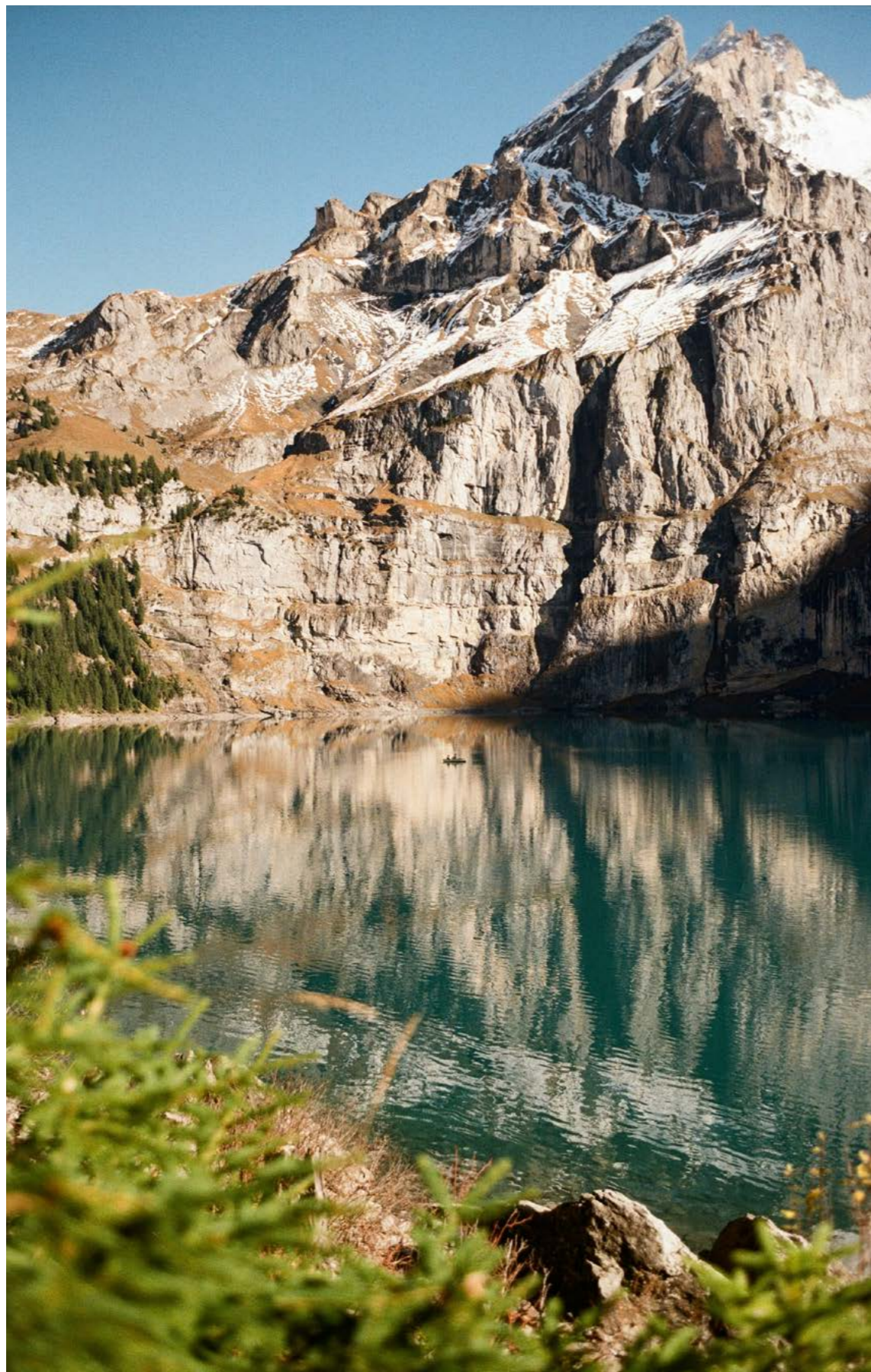
In such an environment, lowering interest rates – as Donald Trump desires – is difficult to justify. At the same time, however, the economy is cooling and the labor market is showing signs of weakness. Since the Fed has a mandate not only to maintain price stability but also to achieve maximum employment, it would have to cut interest rates and thus finds itself in a dilemma. In a stagflationary environment, there is no silver bullet for central banks.

As Fed Chair, Kevin Warsh is likely to adopt a pragmatic approach. He is generally regarded as an advocate of stability-oriented monetary

policy. Nevertheless, in recent months he has shown himself open to interest rate cuts – in line with the US President's views. Warsh expects a strong boost in productivity due to the boom in artificial intelligence, which will have a price-lowering effect. This would give the central bank greater scope to cut interest rates. For now, however, such structural aspects of monetary policy are being overshadowed by energy price trends.

More than ever, all eyes are on Washington, D.C., and Donald Trump. How and when will the US President find a way to end the war in the Middle East? With the midterm elections approaching, Donald Trump urgently needs visible successes, not least to avoid imposing even higher living costs on consumers who are already financially strained. A decline in energy prices would be urgently needed to achieve this.





E Q U I T I E S

GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS WEIGH ON EQUITY MARKETS

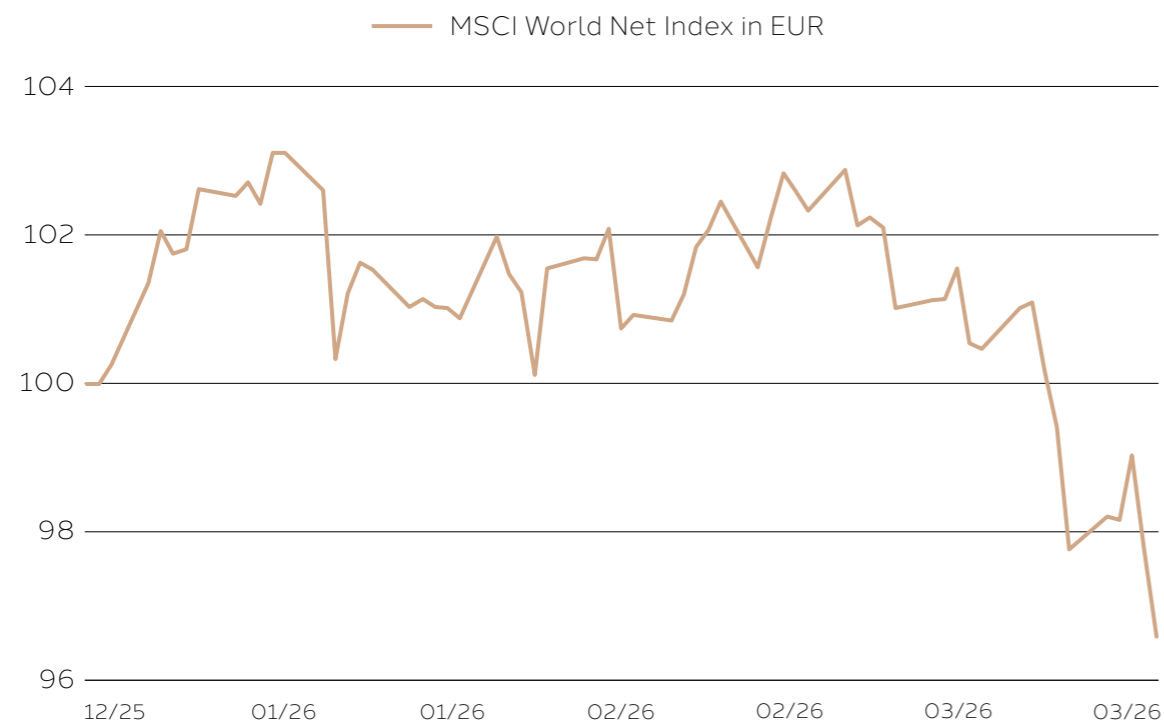
BY FREDERIK CARSTENSEN

The first quarter of 2026 was marked by heightened uncertainty. Tariffs, the appointment of a new Fed Chair, a temporary government shutdown in the US, and above all geopolitical tensions put markets under pressure. After a strong start to the year that saw new all-time highs, geopolitical risks and inflation concerns noticeably dampened sentiment across global equity markets.

In early January, the Trump administration ordered a military operation in Venezuela that resulted in the arrest of President Nicolás Maduro. Despite the historical significance, the immediate market reaction remained muted. Similarly, ongoing US threats of a possible annexation of Greenland caused

diplomatic friction within NATO but failed to trigger any notable market moves.

By far the most market-relevant event of the quarter was the conflict with Iran. Military operations by the US and Israel, ongoing since late February, drove energy prices sharply higher: the oil price (Brent) rose by more than 70 percent since the beginning of the year, reaching nearly USD 120 per barrel at one point. The VIX volatility index – as a measure of market nervousness – climbed to above 31 by the end of March. Rising gasoline prices and equity losses have since weighed on the sentiment of American consumers and investors.



Development of the MSCI World in 2026

Source: Bloomberg, Bergos. Data as of 27.03.2026

European and Asian equity markets initially started the year on a positive note before Europe's high energy dependence began to take its toll. The German equity market, in particular, recorded significant declines. Cyclical stocks came under considerable pressure, while defensive sectors remained comparatively resilient. In emerging markets, growing risk aversion and capital outflows also led to noticeable losses.

Iran remains the key factor

In the coming weeks, the Middle East conflict is likely to remain the dominant theme for global equity markets. Although the initial shockwaves have subsided somewhat, a sustainable easing of tensions is not in sight. Many investors continue to act cautiously, given the uncertainty over potential disruptions

to energy and trade flows as well as the risk of further escalation.

The further direction of equity markets will depend primarily on how long the conflict persists and to what extent energy markets remain affected. The Strait of Hormuz, through which around 20 percent of globally traded oil is transported, remains of central importance. We currently distinguish between two possible scenarios: A de-escalation of geopolitical tensions could lead to lower oil prices and trigger a recovery in capital markets. Conversely, if energy prices remain elevated or continue to rise, economic risks would increase. Higher energy costs act like a hidden tax – they weaken household purchasing power, fuel inflationary pressures, and influence monetary policy expectations.

Adjustment of inflation and interest rate expectations

At the beginning of the year, the US Federal Reserve adopted a wait-and-see stance. After three interest rate cuts totaling 75 basis points in 2025, it signaled a cautious approach for 2026 in December. Nevertheless, the market had still priced in two additional rate cuts. The escalation of the Iran conflict in March significantly unsettled these expectations: rising energy costs are increasing inflation risks while US growth simultaneously shows signs of weakening. The specter of stagflation – a combination of weak growth and persistent inflation – lingers, placing central banks in a difficult position.

Earnings expectations remain supportive

Despite all uncertainties, the fundamental picture remains intact for now. The earnings season for the fourth quarter of 2025 delivered encouraging results: S&P 500 companies recorded earnings growth of 14 percent year-over-year – the fifth consecutive quarter of double-digit growth. Ten of the eleven GICS sectors contributed positively to this development, pointing to a broader earnings base. Analysts also expect double-digit earnings growth for the S&P 500 for the current year.

In the near term, however, volatility is likely to remain elevated. For the further course of global equity markets, developments in the Middle East, monetary policy signals from central banks, and the upcoming earnings season will remain decisive. We do not currently see the conditions for a pronounced bear market as being in place. Historically, geopolitical shocks have often proven temporary and, following periods of heightened uncertainty, have regularly created attractive entry opportunities. Taking current uncertainties into account, we remain broadly diversified in terms of style, sectors, and market capitalization.

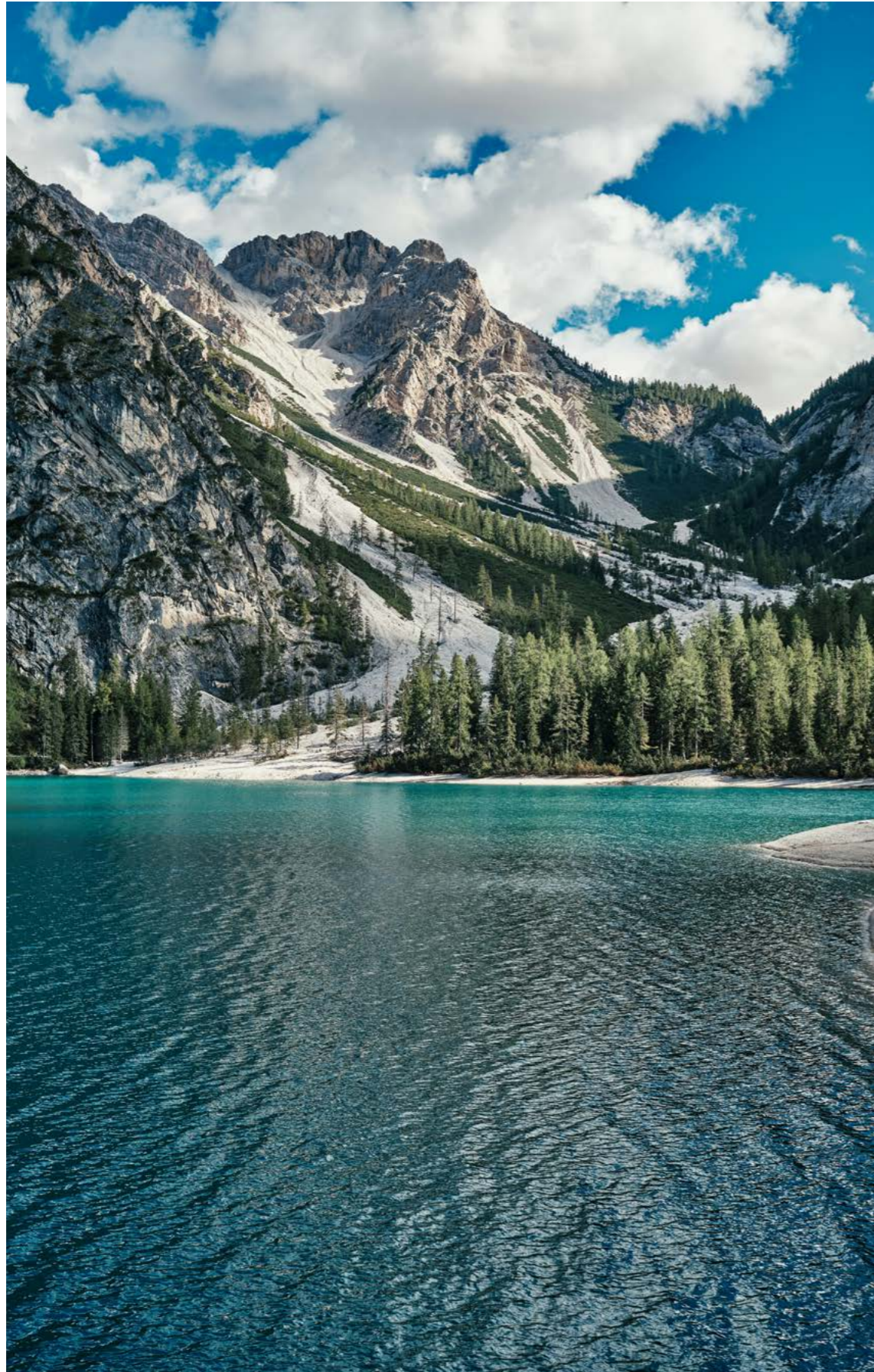
Moreover, it is reasonable to assume that President Trump has a strong vested interest in stable markets ahead of the midterm elections. The marked deterioration in investor sentiment – the share of pessimists is now clearly above the historical average – could act as a contrarian indicator, thereby opening up potential upside. In the short term, markets also appear technically oversold.

US equity markets remain preferred

We maintain our neutral overall equity allocation and continue to favor the US on a regional basis. As a net energy exporter, the US is showing relative strength in the current environment, while energy-dependent regions tend to lag behind. Within emerging markets, we had previously favored India due to its above-average GDP and earnings growth prospects. However, the current oil price shock is likely to weigh noticeably on real economic growth, as higher energy costs have a particularly strong impact on the economy. Historically, Indian equity markets have reacted very sensitively to oil price fluctuations, often recording significant negative returns during such shocks. Furthermore, the Indian equity market remains expensive – even relative to its own history – and recent earnings estimates have generally been revised downward. In contrast, earnings expectations for emerging markets as a whole have improved significantly. Against this backdrop, we have recently sold our position in India and reallocated the proceeds into a broadly diversified emerging markets index.

By contrast, developments in Brazil remain encouraging: as an oil-producing nation, the country is benefiting from the current environment. In addition, we continue to view the scope for possible further interest rate cuts and the attractive valuations positively.





B O N D S

A QUARTER OF TURNING POINTS

BY CHRISTOPH JUNG

The US intervention in Venezuela and the sovereignty dispute over Greenland at the beginning of the year gave us an initial taste of the geopolitical instability that has since dominated headlines in 2026. What at the time may still have appeared as localized disruptions has, in retrospect, proven to be a precursor to the seismic shifts in March. The escalation on 28 February 2026 and the resulting blockade of the Strait of Hormuz –

one of the most important shipping routes for the global oil and energy trade, through which a significant proportion of global seaborne fertilizer transport also passes – have fundamentally changed the global narratives for inflation, growth, and monetary policy. On closer inspection, the story of this quarter is a lesson in how quickly bond markets that were priced for perfection can be overtaken by a new reality.

The hunt for yield and the echo of 1998

We began the year in an environment that felt remarkably resilient. In January, the focus was primarily on the “last mile” in the fight against inflation and the upcoming leadership change at the Federal Reserve (Fed). US inflation data came in mostly as expected, with the headline Consumer Price Index (CPI) at 2.7% and the core rate steady at 2.6%. Although these figures remained stubbornly above the Fed’s 2.0% target, the market drew confidence from a monetary policy that still had a restrictive effect and would tend to contain inflation, as well as from solid growth. With annualized GDP growth of 4.4% in the third quarter of 2025 and forecasts at the time of up to 5.3% for the fourth quarter, the “no landing” scenario – growth without any meaningful slowdown – was conceivable for many market participants. However, early cracks were already visible in the labor market in January, as the unemployment rate rose to 4.4%. Within the Federal Open Market Committee, the view was largely aligned, with 10 votes to 2 in favor of keeping the policy rate at 3.5%–3.75%, despite pressure from President Donald Trump, who called for a substantial and rapid reduction in US interest rates. Overall the market was calm and optimistic, and the US Treasury yield curve hardly changed in this environment. The same applied to yield curves in the euro area, where overall inflation, by contrast, hovered close to the European Central Bank’s (ECB) target of 2%. In addition, the ECB emphasized that stronger-than-expected growth and a robust labor market had contributed decisively to the fact that rate cuts were not yet imminent. The deposit facility stood at 2.0%, and the market assumed that no rate cuts would follow for the entire year 2026.

A general optimism fueled a spectacular hunt for yield in credit markets. Issuance volume in

January was above average but was easily absorbed by insatiable demand. Demand was so strong that credit risk premia in the US tightened to levels last seen in 1998. Whether investment grade, high yield, or emerging market bonds – investors bought anything that offered an additional yield over government bonds. As a result, assets with a risk premium outperformed government bonds on average.

The calm before the storm

February initially provided an apparent confirmation of the rate-cutting path. Falling energy prices and a cooling in housing-related costs led to US inflation data surprisingly declining to 2.4%. However, the published GDP growth figures for the fourth quarter of 2025 disappointed sharply at only 1.4%. Overall, economic data had to be treated with caution, as some indicators were still missing and government spending had also declined noticeably during this period due to the 43-day shutdown in the previous year. As Jerome Powell’s term ends in May 2026 and President Trump had already signaled Kevin Warsh as his successor, the market speculated – also due to the encouraging trend on the inflation front and a decline in job creation – about a more aggressive, partly politically motivated rate-cutting path. This was reflected in declining US Treasury yields. Two-year US Treasury yields declined by 15 basis points to 3.38%, while 10-year US Treasuries, which had still been pushed toward 4.3% in January, fell to around 4.0%.

In the eurozone, the situation remained stable. Inflation stood at 1.9%, practically at target level, and the ECB remained in wait-and-see mode. The Bund yield curve flattened slightly, and although credit spreads widened somewhat from their extremely low January levels, overall confidence remained high.

Outbreak of war in Iran with far-reaching consequences

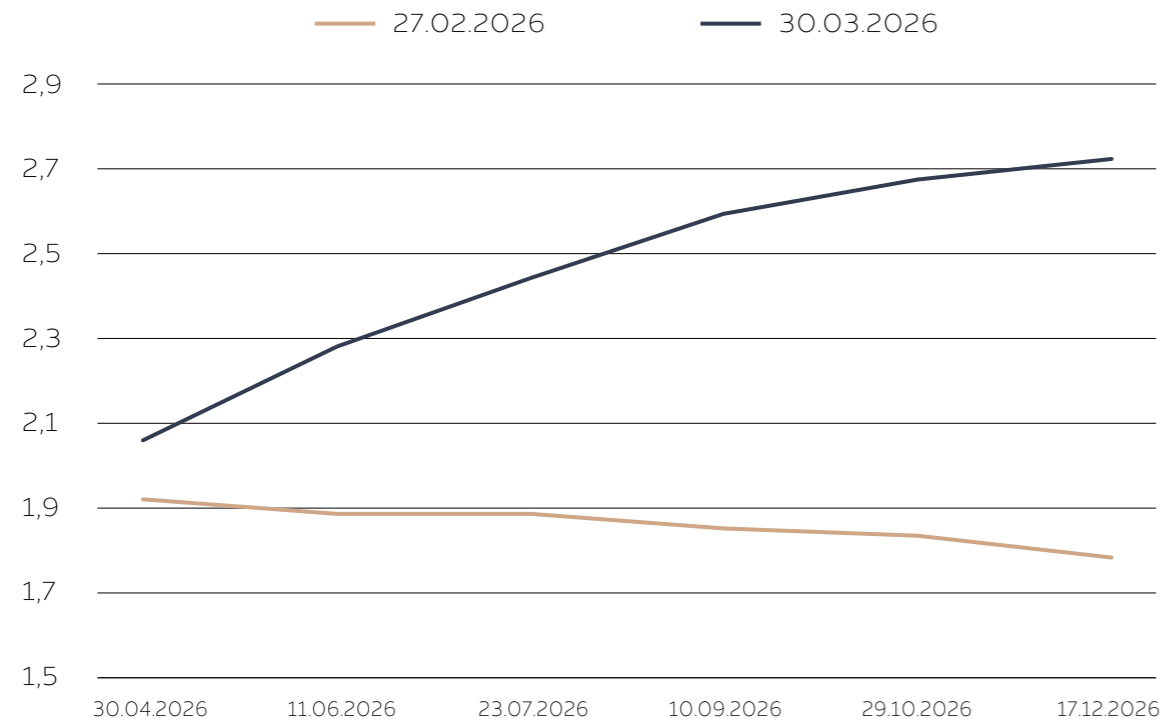
On 28 February 2026, everything changed. The joint military strikes by the US and Israel against Iran caught many off guard and abruptly ended the rally in the bond market. The resulting exchange of strikes damaged critical energy infrastructure and effectively led to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. For the bond market, the importance of this strait cannot be overstated. The immediate surge in energy prices essentially meant that inflation would increase again – exactly at a time when many central banks were still seeking an exit from restrictive policy. The market reaction was severe. Short-term inflation expectations rose sharply, and bonds were sold off across the board, as the narrative of imminent rate cuts became obsolete. The short end of the yield curve, which is more closely linked to central bank developments, moved extraordinarily strongly: two-year US Treasury yields rose by around 50 basis points over the course of the month, while 10-year yields increased by 40 basis points. Increased volatility can also be seen in the MOVE Index, which tracks volatility in the US bond market by monitoring a basket of OTC options on US interest rate swaps. It surged rapidly from just above 60 points to around 110.

The Fed faces a tough challenge, grappling with the dual pressures of rising inflation and a still weakening labor market. At its March meeting, it clearly expressed its intention to keep rates unchanged, and given the uncertain geopolitical situation, it can be assumed that the Fed will remain in a wait-and-see mode at least also in the next meeting at the end of April. The market, however, has fully priced out any rate cuts in 2026.

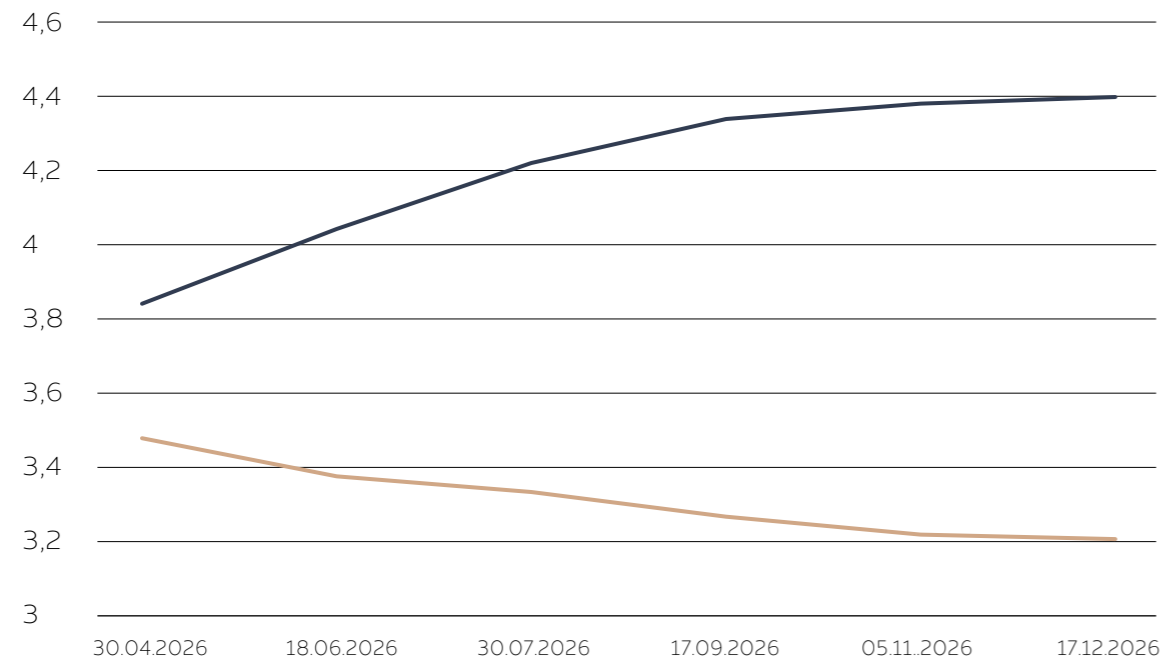
European interest rates could not escape this development seen in the US. The yield on the two-year German Bund, which had still been moving around 2% with a declining tendency in the first two months, rose by around 70 basis points in March alone. Developments in the United Kingdom were even more dramatic: the two-year gilt yield now stands at 4.5%, around 1 percentage point higher than before the outbreak of the conflict. Another notable development is certainly the shift in market expectations regarding future interest rate moves by the respective central banks. At the end of February, the consensus was still that the ECB would not cut interest rates, while two rate cuts were expected from the Bank of England. Today, the market is pricing in three rate hikes for each institution, as shown in the figure below. Overall, there was a flattening of the yield curve, with the short end rising more sharply than the long end, which is also referred to as a “bear flattener” in technical terms.

In this environment, credit risk premia also widened, although overall still moderately. For example, option-adjusted spreads for US investment-grade bonds rose from around 80 basis points to over 90. By comparison, the 10-year average stands at 113 basis points, while the peak in April last year – when Trump introduced tariffs on the so-called “liberation day” – was around 120. The current risk premium therefore remains noticeably below these levels.

Market-implied key interest rate trends for selected central banks



European Central Bank



Bank of England

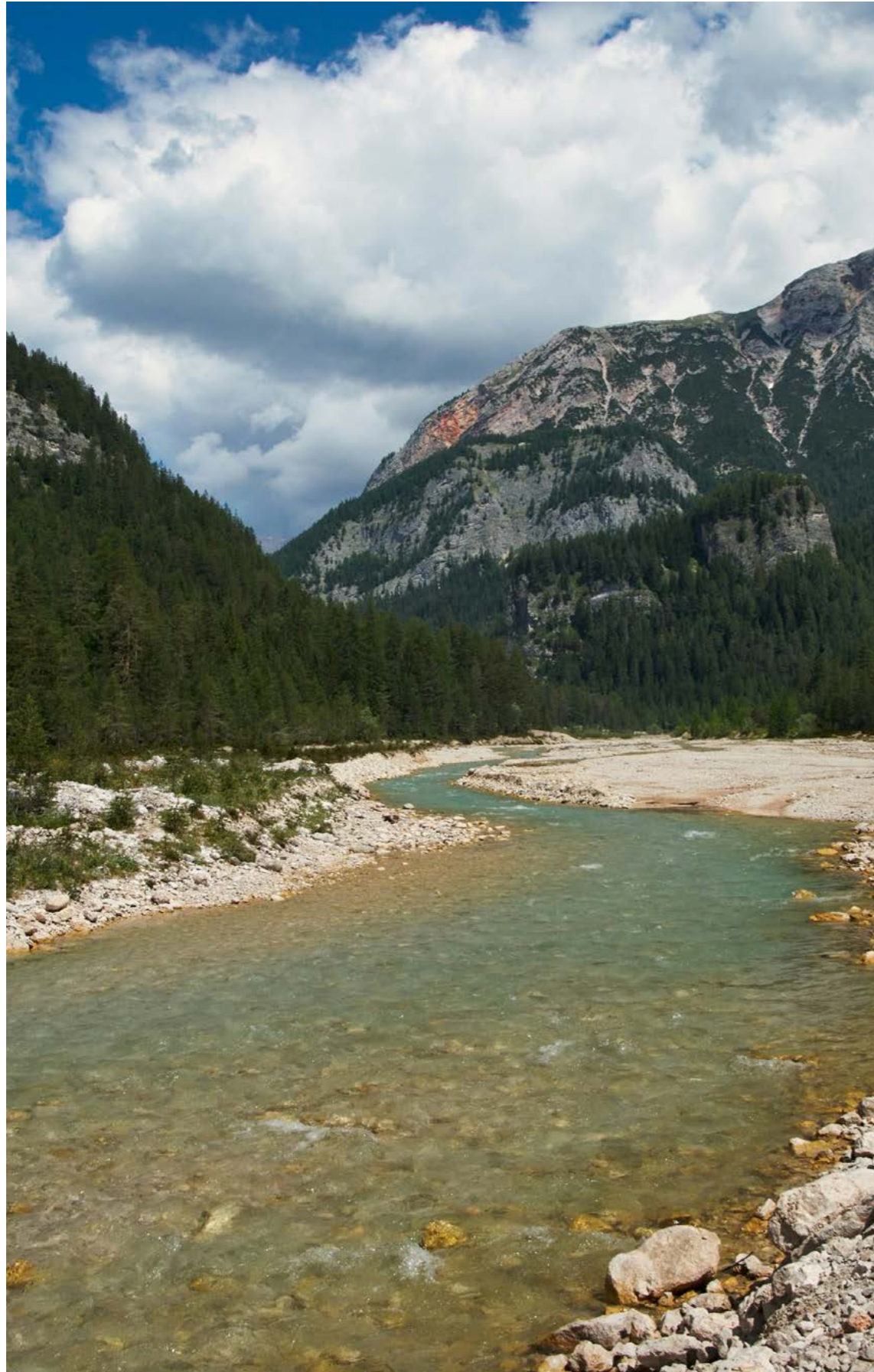
Source: Bloomberg, Bergos. Data as of 27.02.2026 and 30.03.2026

Outlook

Looking ahead to the second quarter of 2026, the focus remains clearly on a potential resolution in the Middle East. The resilience that characterized the beginning of the year has been replaced by a regime of high volatility and rising capital costs. The extent of the impact of the Iran conflict and its consequences for price and financial stability will largely depend on how far the conflict spreads and how long it lasts. Initial countries such as the Philippines have already declared an energy emergency due to the closure of Hormuz; other heavily affected countries, particularly in Southeast Asia, have responded with emergency and austerity measures. Energy is ultimately a key component not only of many agricultural goods but also of industrial products, and it is therefore to be expected that inflation forecasts for this year will be revised upward, while growth expectations are revised downward at the same time. A rather unfavorable stagflationary tendency is clearly emerging – even if the term stagflation is not yet widely used. The range of possible actions by central banks remains broad, but the probability that inflation will be addressed either through higher policy rates in the euro area or through a prolonged phase of high rates in the US has increased noticeably.

In this environment, we see good reason to remain defensively positioned and are prepared to seize opportunities should a diplomatic solution become more likely and the economic impacts, as well as associated idiosyncratic risks, become more quantifiable. Until then, our priority remains capital preservation and capturing yields in high-quality bonds in the short- and medium-duration segments. We remain vigilant and closely monitor the geopolitical pulse to ensure that our portfolios are well positioned for any future reality.





A L T E R N A T I V E I N V E S T M E N T S

**GOLD IN 2026: EARLY MOMENTUM SHAKEN
BY GEOPOLITICAL SHOCKWAVES**

BY OLIVER WATOL

Gold's latest quarter was anything but quiet. Building on 2025's remarkable rally, the year began with strong momentum, as prices surged to fresh all-time highs above USD 5,400/oz in January, rising more than 20% year-to-date at the peak. This strength proved short-lived, however, with gold undergoing its first meaningful correction later in January. The appointment of Kevin Warsh helped ease

policy uncertainty and reinforced confidence in the independence of the Federal Reserve, dampening safe-haven demand. February saw a slow but steady climb back, aiming for previous highs, driven by a familiar combination of geopolitical uncertainty and persistent headline risk. A more significant shift followed in late February, when the US-Israeli conflict with Iran triggered an energy

shock and broader market dislocation. Since the start of that conflict, gold has fallen about 12%, even as the geopolitical backdrop became more dangerous, which is precisely what made this quarter so unusual for such a classic safe-haven asset.

March's weakness was largely driven by two factors. First, a clear liquidity effect emerged, as rising volatility and higher margin requirements forced investors to sell readily available assets. Broad de-risking, tighter financing conditions, and concerns about stress among leveraged investors help explain why gold was sold alongside other assets rather than immediately attracting safe-haven demand. This dynamic was reinforced by positioning, as gold had become a crowded trade following a strong multi-year advance and record inflows into gold-backed ETFs, making it an obvious source of liquidity when portfolios needed to reduce exposure quickly. Second, and most importantly, the macro backdrop shifted sharply against gold. The Iran shock pushed oil above USD 100, revived inflation fears and led markets to reprice central bank policy in a more hawkish direction. Market participants are now seeing fewer US rate cuts and even assign a meaningful probability to a hike by year-end, while at the same time other central banks have turned more cautious because of the inflationary consequences of the energy shock. That matters greatly for gold. Higher nominal rates, higher real rates and a firmer US dollar all raise the opportunity cost of holding a non-yielding asset. In our judgment, this macro repricing has been the dominant force behind gold's March setback.

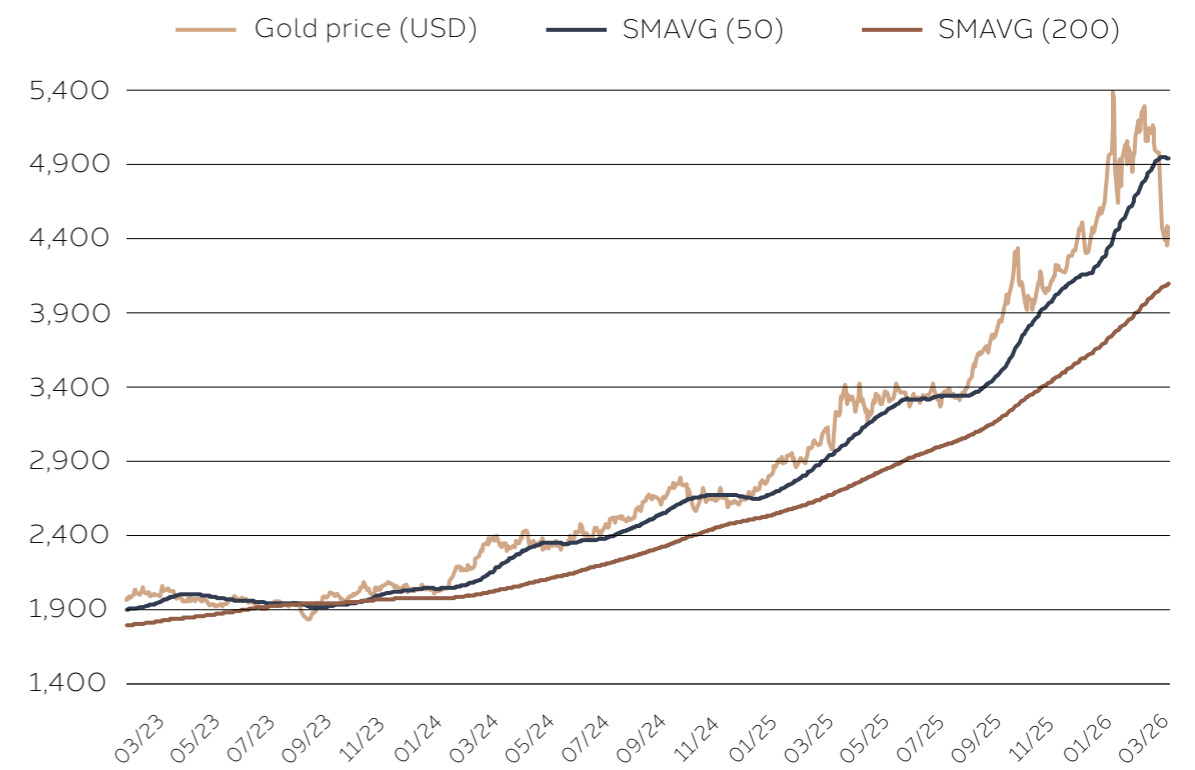
While these forces explain the recent setback, they do not alter our broader conviction. Looking ahead, we remain constructive and continue to hold an overweight view on gold. The longer-term fundamentals are still intact.

The technical picture has clearly weakened in the short run, but it has not broken the broader trend. Even after the March correction, gold remains above its 200-day moving average, which suggests that the long-term uptrend is bruised, but not broken. At the same time, central banks remain a key structural source of demand. According to the World Gold Council, official sector purchases reached a substantial 863 tonnes in 2025, well above the average seen between 2010 and 2021. Survey evidence also points to ongoing reserve diversification into gold and away from the US dollar. While some central banks particularly in the Middle East and parts of Asia may draw on reserves in response to the current market stress, gold is likely to be treated as a last line of defense given its long-standing strategic role. We would interpret any potential selling as tactical rather than structural. In addition, from a macroeconomic perspective, a prolonged oil price shock could materially weaken the growth outlook and economic momentum. In such a scenario, central banks may shift toward supporting growth, with the US central bank in particular more inclined to do so given its dual mandate. Consequently, the market assumption that the Federal Reserve will refrain from cutting rates may prove premature, as the policy focus could shift toward stabilizing growth rather than strictly combating inflation.

Importantly, the structural reasons behind the strong investor demand for gold in recent years have not disappeared. If anything, they have arguably strengthened. Rising geopolitical tensions continue to support demand for safe-haven assets, while persistent fiscal deficits in several major economies, most notably the United States, remain a long-term concern for investors focused on currency stability and purchasing power. The International Monetary Fund projects that global public debt will

continue rising to around or above 100% of GDP by the end of the decade, up from roughly 93% in 2024, underscoring a persistent upward trajectory in global public debt levels. Against a backdrop of structurally high debt and persistent geopolitical fractures, gold continues to stand out as a store of value independent of any single government's balance sheet. Periods of liquidity-driven volatility and consolidation may persist in the near term, but they do not alter the broader picture.

Despite volatility-driven pullbacks, gold's long-term upward trajectory persists



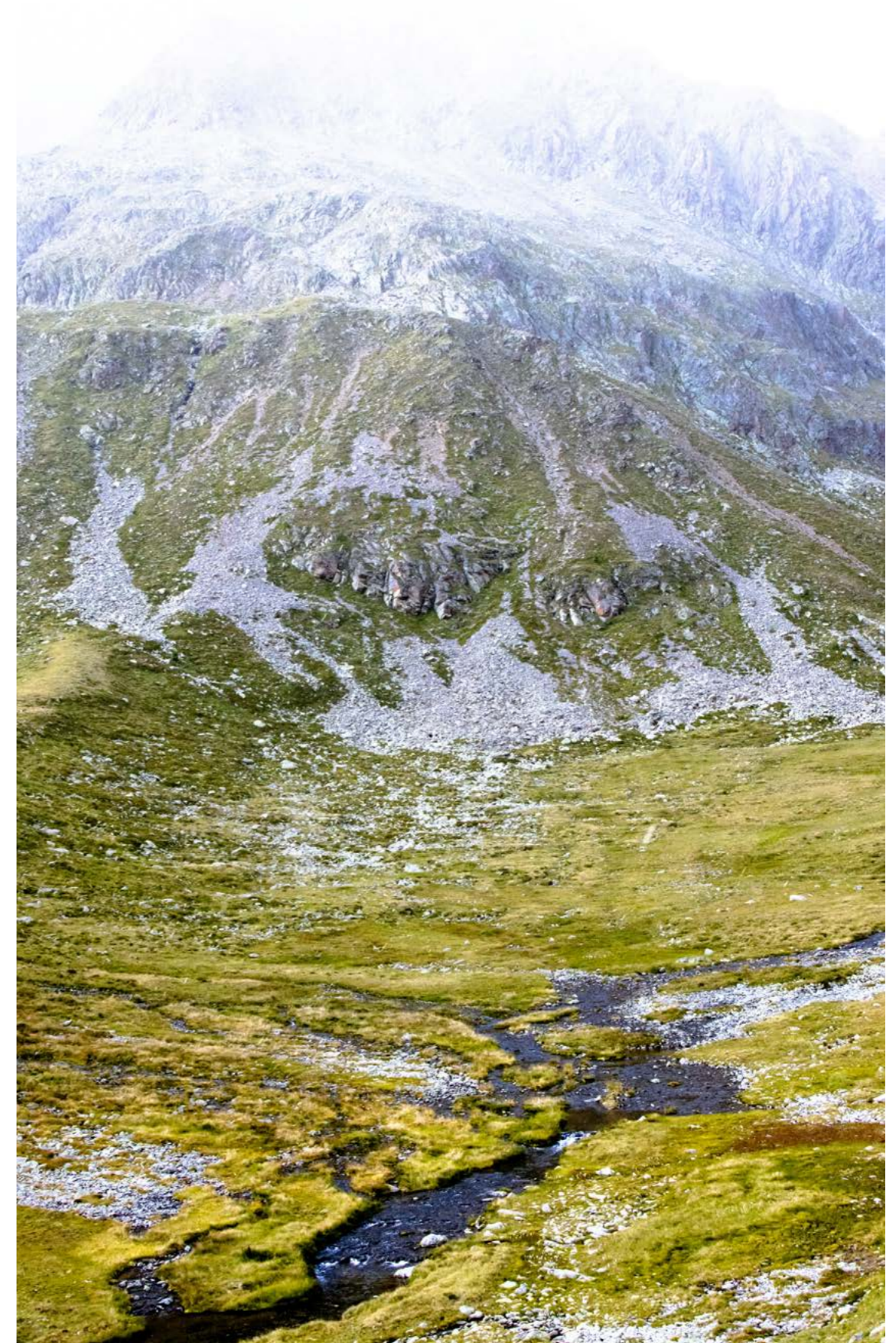
Gold price in US-dollar per ounce
Source: Bloomberg, Bergos. Data as of 27.03.2026

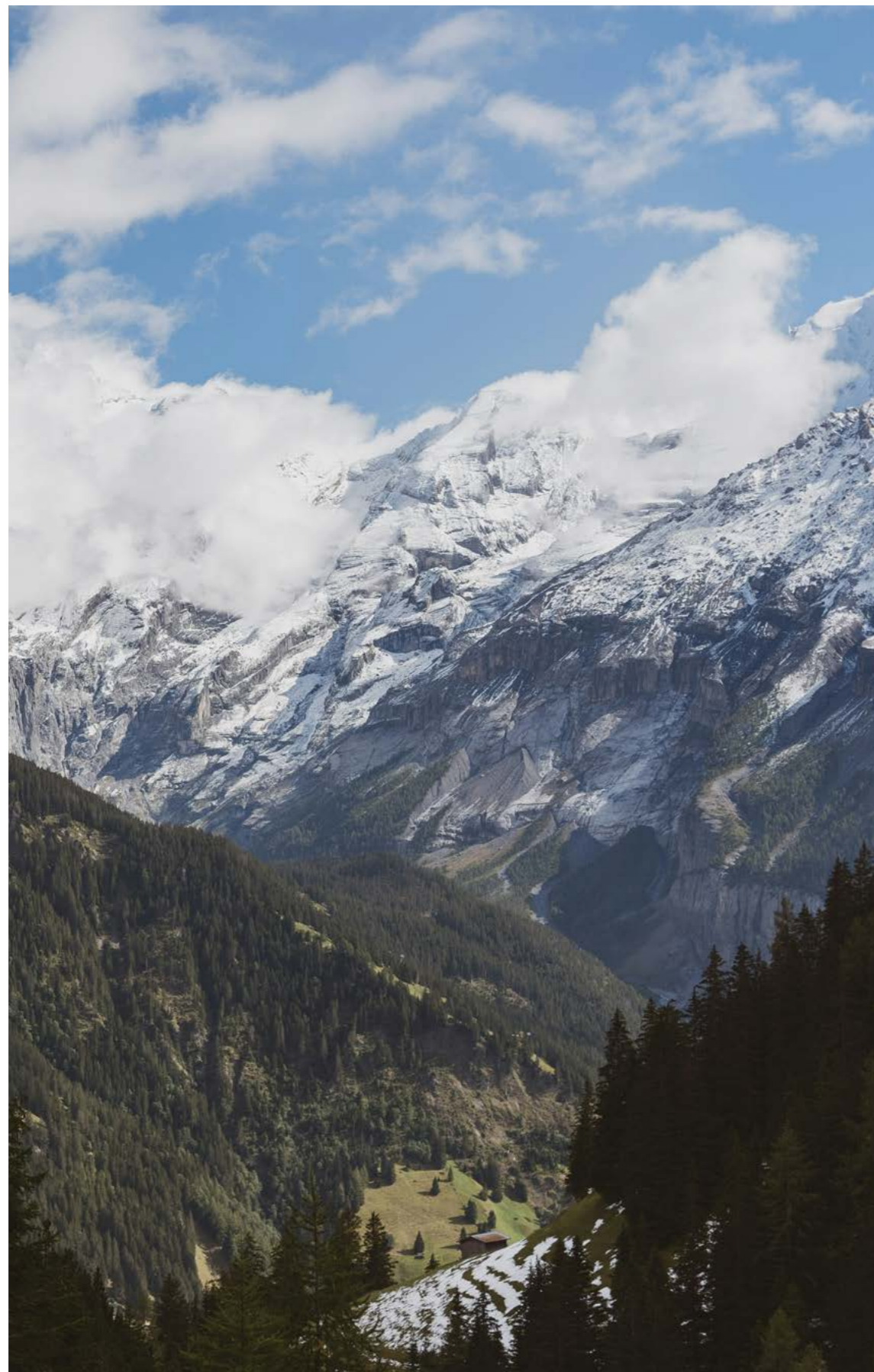
Holding ground:

Liquid alternatives in a volatile phase

Liquid alternative strategies entered the year with solid momentum, delivering two consecutive months of gains despite concerns around artificial intelligence, tariffs and private credit. This progress was tested by the US-Israeli strikes on Iran, which triggered a renewed rise in volatility and challenged market conditions. Against this backdrop, performance across sub-strategies remained relatively stable. Macro strategies led with modest gains in the first quarter, supported by their ability to adapt quickly across asset classes and respond to shifts in geopolitics, rates and currencies. Equity long short strategies also held up well, reflecting disciplined exposure management and selective positioning. Returns overall were moderate. In the current environment, this points to resilience rather than weakness. We continue to see an important role for liquid alternative UCITS strategies within portfolios.

Their value lies in delivering diversified return streams and reducing reliance on traditional market direction. Equity long short market neutral approaches remain particularly relevant. By balancing long and short exposures, they focus on stock-specific opportunities while limiting broader market sensitivity. For investors, this translates into effective diversification alongside equities and fixed income. These strategies are designed to generate returns from relative value rather than market trends, offering a more stable performance profile across different environments. This approach also allows investors to remain invested in equity markets while managing downside risks more actively. It supports participation in recoveries while helping to protect capital during periods of stress. With volatility elevated and correlations less predictable, the stabilizing role of liquid alternatives in general becomes increasingly relevant. At Bergos, we remain constructively positioned with an overweight in equity long short market neutral strategies.





C U R R E N C I E S

DURATION OF THE IRAN WAR DETERMINES THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT
IN CURRENCY MARKETS

BY STEFFEN KILLMAIER

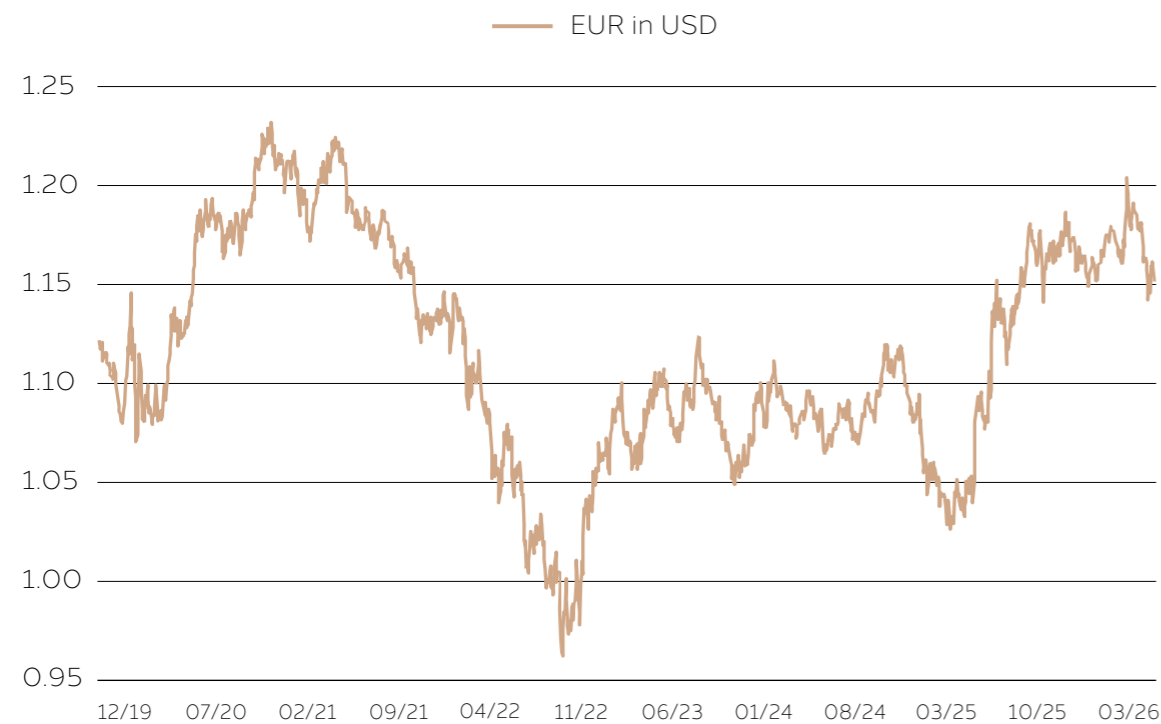
The past weeks and months have made it abundantly clear that the financial world remains extremely volatile and can change fundamentally from one day to the next. Market narratives have shifted from concerns about US trade policy to the appointment of a new Chair of the US Federal Reserve, and most recently, to the geopolitical escalation in the Middle East. In particular, the sharp rise in energy prices and the resulting fear of stagflation have become key market drivers.

In this environment, it was once again the so called “safe haven” currencies that saw increased demand from market participants. This was

especially true for the Swiss franc. However, the US dollar – whose safe haven status had faded somewhat in recent times – has also regained some of its former appeal. By contrast, currencies of countries heavily dependent on energy imports came under pressure, particularly those of many emerging markets.

US dollar benefits from the United States’ net energy exporter status

At the beginning of the year, the discussion still centred on the loss of confidence in the US dollar resulting from unpredictable US policy and Donald Trump’s attacks on the independence of the Federal Reserve. It did not



Development of the EUR/USD exchange rate
Source: Bloomberg, Bergos. Data as of 27.03.2026

take long, however, for the growing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East to take centre stage. The US dollar benefited both from the heightened risk aversion in financial markets and from the sharp increase in oil and gas prices. Whereas the United States had long been a net importer of oil and energy, it has been a net energy exporter since 2019, exporting on average over 10 million barrels per day. This status represents a major structural advantage for the US economy, making it less vulnerable to turbulence in energy markets compared with the euro area and currently providing support for the dollar. The significant rise in energy prices, and the associated expectation of higher inflation rates, has also led to a substantial repricing of expected policy rate adjustments.

The outlook for currencies will largely depend on the duration of the Iran war. In our

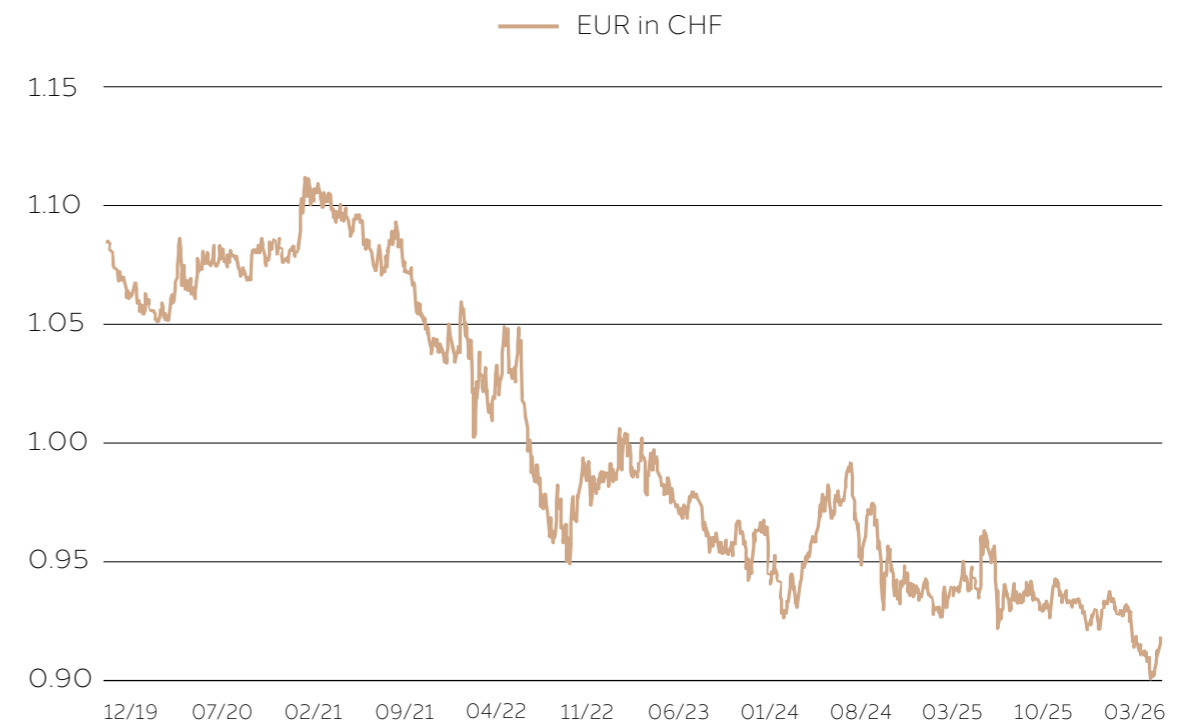
baseline scenario, we assume that military tensions will ease over the coming weeks, leading to gradually declining energy prices. Inflation is likely to spike temporarily but should normalize relatively quickly. Central banks are expected to “look through” such a short term price surge and respond primarily through communication. Based on these assumptions, we currently view the strength of the US dollar as temporary. Should the conflict subside, Donald Trump’s unpredictable policy stance and questions surrounding the independence of key US institutions, notably the Federal Reserve, are likely to return to the forefront. These issues could once again erode confidence in the dollar. Accordingly, we maintain our view that the US dollar will weaken against the euro over the course of the year and remain constructive on the EUR/USD currency pair on both a three month and twelve month horizon.

Swiss National Bank signals increased intervention willingness

The Swiss franc benefited in the first quarter of 2026 from heightened geopolitical risks and once again demonstrated its role as a reliable anchor of stability in an uncertain global environment. In times of elevated market volatility, investors traditionally turn their attention to currencies with strong credibility and robust institutional foundations. Switzerland stands out in this regard with its high degree of political stability, confidence in its economic framework, and consistent monetary policy. Additionally, the Swiss economy is less directly affected by rising energy costs than those of many other countries. Even though we expect military tensions to ease in the coming weeks under our baseline scenario, global political and geopolitical uncertainties are likely to remain elevated. The Swiss franc

should therefore continue to benefit from its safe haven characteristics.

From a price stability perspective, the Swiss National Bank (SNB) has little reason for concern. The rise in energy prices triggered by the Iran war can be handled well by Switzerland, as it does not face inflation problems. The SNB will continue to focus on the Swiss franc, whose persistent strength is increasingly weighing on Switzerland’s export-oriented economy. For the time being, the SNB is likely to maintain its zero interest rate policy and counter further appreciation primarily through foreign exchange market interventions. Already at the onset of the Iran conflict, and again in its March policy decision, the SNB signaled its heightened willingness to intervene. We therefore expect the Swiss franc to remain in demand in the months ahead, though we do not expect further appreciation from current



Development of the EUR/CHF exchange rate
Source: Bloomberg, Bergos. Data as of 27.03.2026

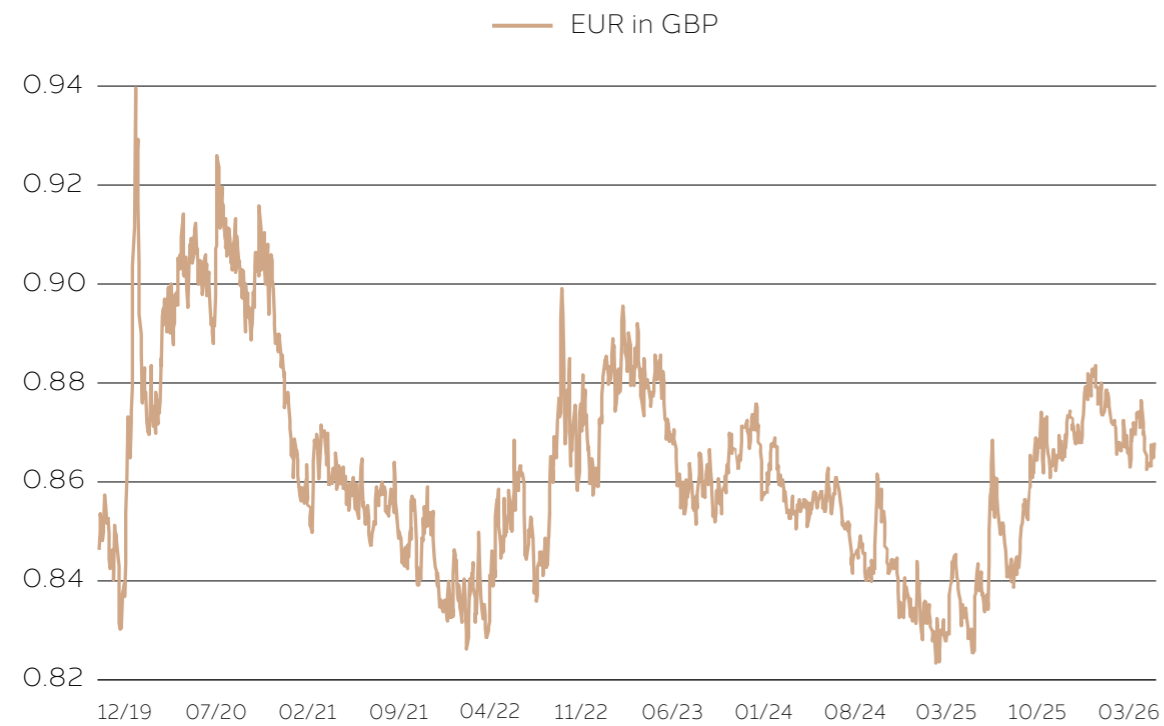
levels due to increased foreign exchange market interventions. We hold a neutral stance on the EUR/CHF currency pair over both three month and twelve month horizons.

Markets expect a significant policy shift by the Bank of England

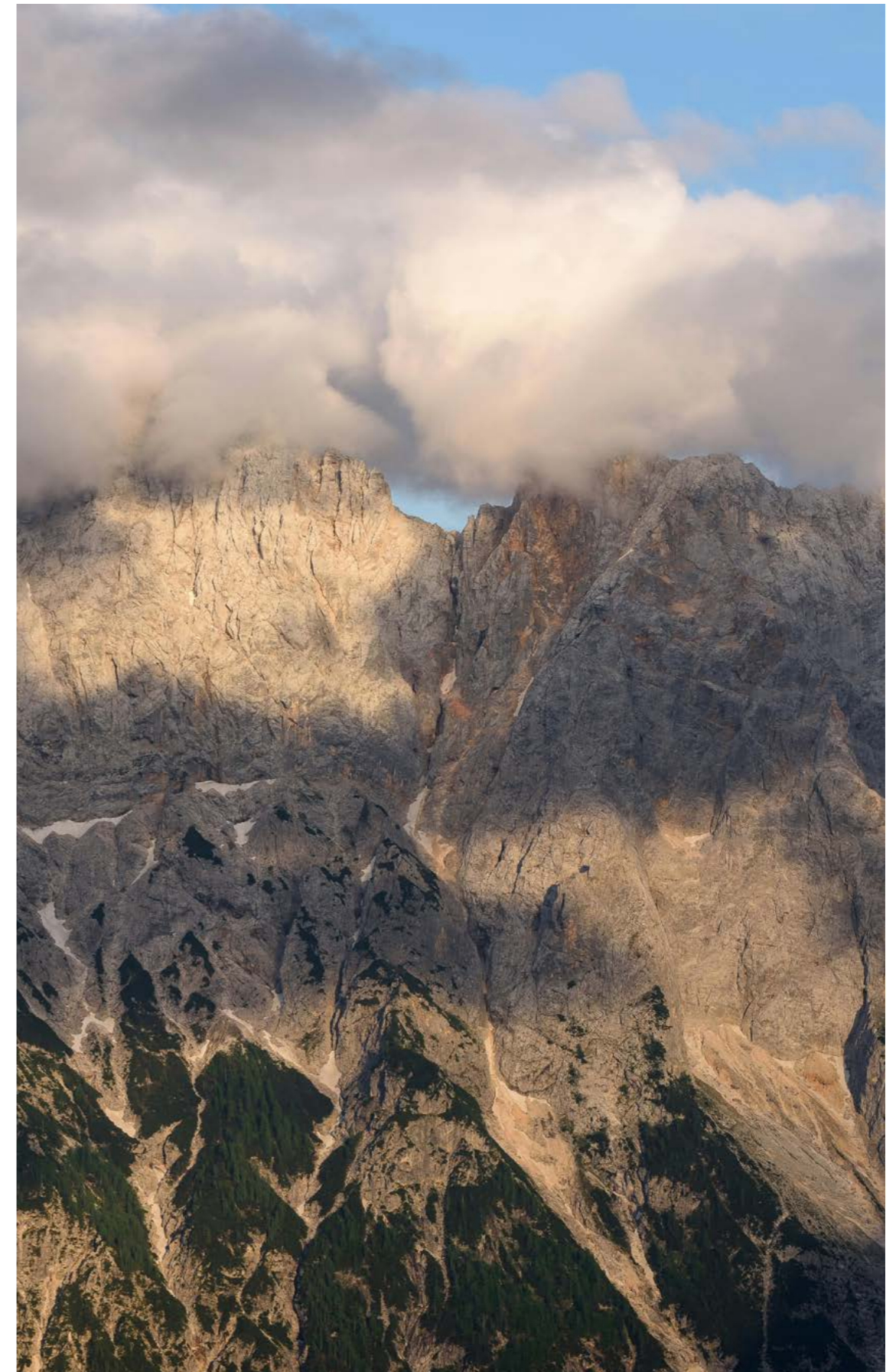
The fiscal concerns that weighed on the pound in 2025 have receded as greater clarity has emerged regarding budget procedures for 2026. However, the geopolitical backdrop has introduced new uncertainties. The duration and severity of supply disruptions from the Gulf region remain unclear, complicating the Bank of England's ability to persist with its easing bias. Since the start of the conflict, the yield on ten year gilts has risen sharply, temporarily exceeding 5% at the end of March, reflecting changing expectations for UK monetary policy. Whereas markets were anticipating two rate cuts by the BoE prior to

the Iran war, they now expect several rate hikes by year end. This shift in expectations has been more pronounced in the UK than in other advanced economies, providing support to the pound.

However, the Bank of England's policy path remains highly uncertain. Even before the latest energy price surge, the UK was grappling with stubbornly high inflation. In February, the inflation rate stood at 3.0%, remaining well above the BoE's 2% target. At the same time, economic growth recently stagnated unexpectedly. Overall, the growth outlook remains subdued. Political risks also add to the uncertainty: the local elections in May will serve as a key test for Prime Minister Starmer's leadership. In this environment, we retain a neutral stance on the EUR/GBP currency pair over both the three month and twelve month horizons and expect largely sideways trading.



Development of the EUR/GBP exchange rate
Source: Bloomberg, Bergos. Data as of 27.03.2026



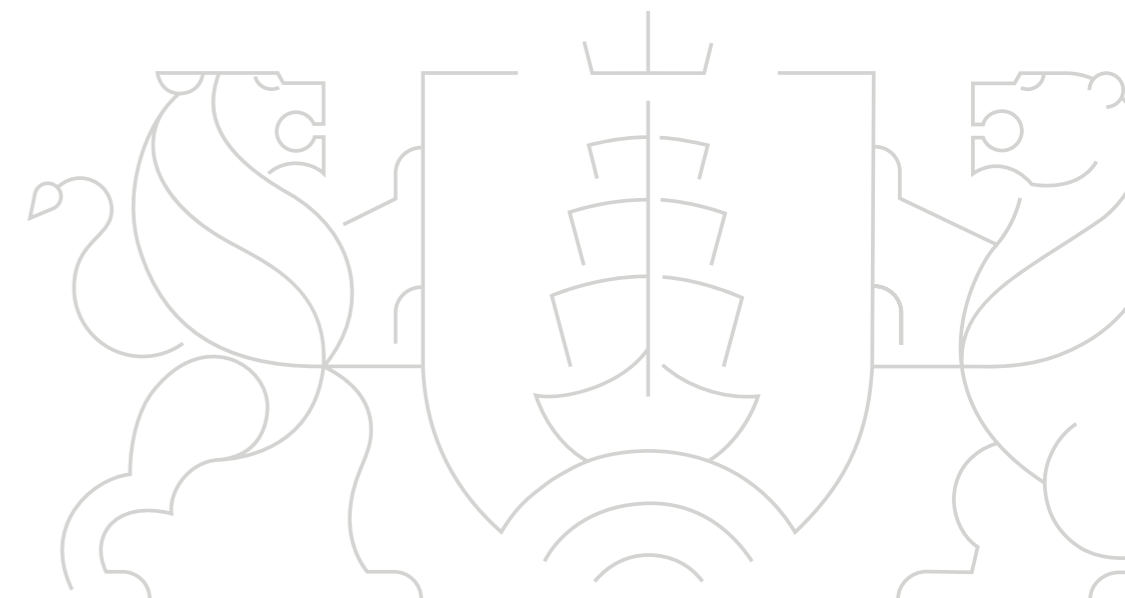


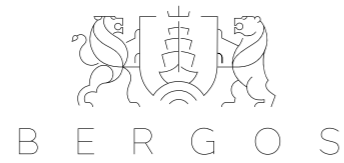
B E R G O S V I E W

BANK VIEW	--	-	0	+	++
EQUITIES	○	○	●	○	○
NORTH AMERICA	○	○	○	●	○
CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY	○	○	○	●	○
CONSUMER STAPLES	○	●	○	○	○
ENERGY	○	○	●	○	○
FINANCIALS	○	○	○	●	○
HEALTH CARE	○	○	○	●	○
INDUSTRIALS	○	○	●	○	○
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	○	○	●	○	○
MATERIALS	○	●	○	○	○
REAL ESTATE	○	●	○	○	○
COMMUNICATION SERVICES	○	○	●	○	○
UTILITIES	○	○	●	○	○
EUROPE	○	○	●	○	○
CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY	○	○	○	●	○
CONSUMER STAPLES	○	○	●	○	○
ENERGY	○	●	○	○	○
FINANCIALS	○	○	●	○	○
HEALTH CARE	○	○	●	○	○
INDUSTRIALS	○	○	●	○	○
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	○	○	○	●	○
MATERIALS	○	○	●	○	○
REAL ESTATE	○	○	●	○	○
COMMUNICATION SERVICES	○	●	○	○	○
UTILITIES	○	●	○	○	○
JAPAN	○	○	●	○	○
EMERGING MARKETS	○	○	●	○	○

	--	-	0	+	++
FIXED INCOME	○	○	●	○	○
DENOMINATION US-DOLLAR	○	○	●	○	○
DURATION	○	○	●	○	○
SHORT TERM	○	○	●	○	○
MEDIUM TERM	○	○	○	●	○
LONG TERM	○	●	○	○	○
SOVEREIGNS	○	○	●	○	○
COVERED BONDS/ AGENCY MBS	○	○	○	●	○
CORPORATES INVESTMENT GRADE	○	●	○	○	○
CORPORATES HIGH YIELD	○	●	○	○	○
DENOMINATION EURO	○	○	●	○	○
DURATION	○	○	●	○	○
SHORT TERM	○	○	○	●	○
MEDIUM TERM	○	○	○	●	○
LONG TERM	○	●	○	○	○
SOVEREIGNS	○	○	●	○	○
COVERED BONDS/ AGENCY MBS	○	○	○	●	○
CORPORATES INVESTMENT GRADE	○	●	○	○	○
CORPORATES HIGH YIELD	○	●	○	○	○
EMERGING MARKETS	○	●	○	○	○

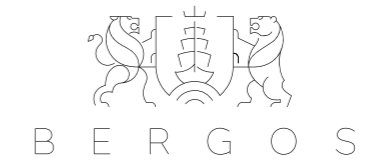
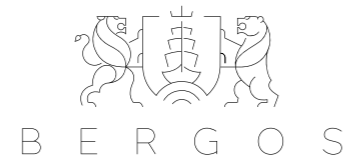
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ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS	○	○	○	●	○
COMMODITIES	○	○	●	○	○
ENERGY	○	○	●	○	○
INDUSTRIAL METALS	○	○	●	○	○
PRECIOUS METALS	○	○	○	●	○
HEDGE FUND STRATEGIES	○	○	●	○	○
LONG/SHORT	○	○	○	●	○
RELATIVE VALUE	○	○	○	●	○
MACRO	○	○	●	○	○
EVENT-DRIVEN	○	○	●	○	○
CONVERTIBLES	○	○	●	○	○
ALTERNATIVE CREDIT AND PRIVATE DEBT	○	○	○	●	○
REAL ESTATE	○	○	●	○	○





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ZURICH, APRIL 2026

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