

## WorldWatch Headlines: April

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### Africa

<b>Algeria</b>	There are signs of political change at the heart of the establishment.
<b>Angola</b>	Plans are announced to develop new oil-refining facilities.
<b>Botswana</b>	The opposition coalition is bolstered by the entry of a new party.
<b>Cameroon</b>	New deep-water port facilities are close to receiving their first commercial shipments.
<b>Congo, D.R.</b>	International mining companies are showing a renewed interest in the country's mining assets.
<b>Cote d'Ivoire</b>	Infrastructure development and trade policies are driving rapid growth.
<b>Ethiopia</b>	Corruption is adversely affecting the business environment and social stability.
<b>Gabon</b>	High-profile politicians are arrested amid a corruption crackdown.
<b>Ghana</b>	The government announces budget measures to tackle the fiscal deficit.
<b>Kenya</b>	The 2017/18 Budget targets an increase in household spending and much greater business investment.
<b>Libya</b>	Armed clashes and protests continue to curtail oil production.
<b>Malawi</b>	Much-awaited exchange rate stability allows inflation to cool.
<b>Mauritius</b>	The new prime minister emphasises policy continuity.
<b>Morocco</b>	The king steps in to unblock the political logjam.
<b>Mozambique</b>	The central bank moves to modernise the monetary policy framework.
<b>Namibia</b>	A mining sector recovery will boost economic growth in 2017.
<b>Nigeria</b>	A modest recovery in economic growth is anticipated following a full-year recession.
<b>Senegal</b>	The country's corruption score improves to an all-time high.
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	Escalating price pressures add to business overheads and transaction costs.
<b>South Africa</b>	International ratings agencies downgrade South African sovereign debt to 'junk' status.
<b>Sudan</b>	The easing of sanctions by the US raises interest from foreign investors.
<b>Tanzania</b>	The government imposes an export ban on unprocessed metals to boost local value addition.
<b>Tunisia</b>	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Tunisia amid better tourism prospects.
<b>Uganda</b>	The pipeline for large infrastructure projects will drive construction activity and economic growth.
<b>Zambia</b>	Annual consumer price inflation eases considerably as the currency stabilises.
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	The tobacco marketing season may offer temporary relief from FX shortages.

### Asia Pacific

<b>Afghanistan</b>	The IMF forecasts slightly higher growth in 2017 due to increased agricultural output.
<b>Australia</b>	Rising household debt and unimproved labour market drivers will limit growth.
<b>Bangladesh</b>	The country's political environment outlook is deteriorating rapidly.
<b>Cambodia</b>	New political legislation marks a significant retreat from democracy.
<b>China</b>	North China aims to reinvent its growth model, in a special zone south of Beijing.
<b>Fiji</b>	The central bank maintains rock-bottom interest rates.
<b>Hong Kong</b>	Real GDP grows ahead of expectations in Q4 2016.
<b>India</b>	State election results open the way for Prime Minister Modi's populist and economic reform agendas.
<b>Indonesia</b>	A damaging dispute in the mining sector disrupts copper output.
<b>Japan</b>	The Bank of Japan holds interest rates steady as inflation expectations remain weak.

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<b>Korea (South)</b>	The impeachment crisis is resolved, but regional political risks remain.
<b>Malaysia</b>	Public finance sustainability improves amid higher oil prices and better collection.
<b>Myanmar</b>	Abuses in Rakhine state and slowing FDI weigh on government credibility.
<b>Nepal</b>	Investment should receive a boost after USD13.5bn was pledged by donors in March.
<b>New Zealand</b>	Inventory-buildup helps to mask slower growth in Q4 GDP.
<b>Pakistan</b>	Militant attacks still threaten the security gains made over the past eight years.
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	Real GDP growth will accelerate due to increased energy sector activity and higher commodity prices.
<b>Philippines</b>	Companies should expect higher input and borrowing costs in 2017.
<b>Singapore</b>	Demand for manufactured products helps to boost the economy's momentum.
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	The authorities are preparing for an intensification of the worst drought since the 1970s.
<b>Taiwan</b>	Data relating to industry, exports and the economy is broadly encouraging for 2017.
<b>Thailand</b>	Growth should pick up modestly this year against a background of increased external risks.
<b>Vietnam</b>	Officials show concern over exports' heavy dependence on foreign direct investment.

## Eastern Europe

<b>Albania</b>	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Albania's country risk rating as political stability declines.
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	Following a contraction in 2016, the economy should pick up slightly as oil prices rise.
<b>Belarus</b>	Rare instances of civil protest are allowed to go ahead.
<b>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</b>	Politics become increasingly fraught as Serbs boycott the central government institutions.
<b>Bulgaria</b>	The GERB party wins the snap general election but falls short of an outright majority.
<b>Croatia</b>	High public debt is a burden on the economy, but it is starting to decline.
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Real GDP moderates in 2016, but domestic demand remains strong.
<b>Estonia</b>	The growth rate picks up, but there are still risks for the small, open economy.
<b>Georgia</b>	The IMF approves in principle a three-year Extended Fund Facility worth around USD285m.
<b>Hungary</b>	New legislation aims to weaken the foreign-owned supermarket sector.
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	Continuation of the easing inflation trend gives the central bank room to further cut rates.
<b>Kyrgyz Republic</b>	Potentially destabilising political jockeying escalates ahead of the presidential election.
<b>Latvia</b>	Amendments to the Energy Law officially open up Latvia's gas market to competition.
<b>Lithuania</b>	Emigration from Lithuania has picked up pace in recent quarters.
<b>Macedonia</b>	The integrity of the state is put at risk over Albanian participation in government.
<b>Poland</b>	Relations between Warsaw and Brussels remain strained.
<b>Romania</b>	The supply of credit is rising, but some factors continue to constrain growth.
<b>Russian Federation</b>	Widespread anti-corruption protests constitute the most significant challenge to the regime since 2011-12.
<b>Serbia</b>	Economic growth will accelerate in both of the next two years.
<b>Slovak Republic</b>	The evolving EU will have significant consequences for the country's long-term economic development.
<b>Slovenia</b>	The country's long-term development will be affected by the evolution of the EU.
<b>Tajikistan</b>	Challenges cloud the outlook despite official data suggesting strong growth in 2016.
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	The incumbent, Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov, secures another term as president with nearly 98% of the vote.
<b>Ukraine</b>	Kiev announces an official trade blockade of rebel-held territory in Donbas.
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	Reforms are delayed because of disagreements between the president and the deputy prime minister.

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## Middle East

<b>Bahrain</b>	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Bahrain's country risk rating amid escalating violence.
<b>Egypt</b>	Saudi Arabia resumes petroleum supplies as tensions with Egypt ease.
<b>Iran</b>	The central bank's latest data release highlights the political nature of official statistics.
<b>Iraq</b>	The reconquest of west Mosul is moving ahead more rapidly than expected.
<b>Israel</b>	Growth is forecast to remain strong, helped in particular by investment and exports.
<b>Jordan</b>	The weakest growth this century and rapidly-rising inflation increase short-term risk.
<b>Kuwait</b>	The country makes its long-awaited inaugural bond issuance of USD8bn.
<b>Lebanon</b>	Factionalism prevents the passage of vital legislation, undermining the risk outlook.
<b>Oman</b>	The government successfully issues both domestic and international bonds to help ease liquidity.
<b>Qatar</b>	Government borrowing accelerates, causing stress in the banking system.
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	Saudi ramps up its efforts in Asia to attract trade and investment.
<b>Syria</b>	Al-Qaeda gains momentum in the country.
<b>UAE</b>	Dubai increases its investment inflows, helping reduce the UAE's dependency on oil and gas revenues.
<b>Yemen</b>	Prospects for ending the conflict remain weak despite plans to re-open peace talks.

## The Americas

<b>Argentina</b>	Mounting labour discontent elevates political risks ahead of elections.
<b>Bolivia</b>	A new coca law could boost the narcotics trade and social unrest.
<b>Brazil</b>	The government presses ahead with simplifying the notoriously onerous tax code.
<b>Canada</b>	Domestic consumption and a strengthening labour market continue to support economic growth.
<b>Chile</b>	Economic data disappoints and the copper mine strike ends without resolution.
<b>Colombia</b>	The central bank continues monetary easing as inflation cools.
<b>Costa Rica</b>	The government abandons its fiscal reform package.
<b>Cuba</b>	The economy is set to contract for the second consecutive year.
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	The central bank votes to keep its main interest rate on hold.
<b>Ecuador</b>	Government candidate Lenin Moreno is heading for presidential victory following a run off.
<b>El Salvador</b>	Congress extends the extraordinary anti-gang measures amid the continuing downward trend in homicides.
<b>Guatemala</b>	The unseating of another magistrate deals a further blow to the Supreme Court.
<b>Honduras</b>	Despite opposition attempts to unite, the president remains favourite to win the November polls.
<b>Jamaica</b>	The real GDP growth forecast increases for both 2017 and 2018.
<b>Mexico</b>	Growth will slow considerably as fiscal stimulus is ruled out.
<b>Nicaragua</b>	International pressure mounts concerning human rights and abuse of power.
<b>Panama</b>	Flagging global trade and demand drag economic growth to its slowest pace in six years.
<b>Paraguay</b>	Political uncertainty rises amid renewed manoeuvres to introduce presidential re-election.
<b>Peru</b>	The government unveils a stimulus package to jump-start the flagging economy.
<b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>	The near-term outlook remains downbeat as external and domestic market uncertainties persist.
<b>USA</b>	The Republican Party's majority does not guarantee smooth policy passage.
<b>Uruguay</b>	The growth forecast is revised upwards due to a stronger than expected recovery and a fall in inflation.
<b>Venezuela</b>	Political parties - except the ruling PSUV - begin the re-registration process.

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## Western Europe

<b>Austria</b>	The economic outlook is still encouraging, but consumer prices are maintaining their upward movement.
<b>Belgium</b>	Intensifying external challenges hinder the country's economic growth.
<b>Cyprus</b>	The Cypriot economy expands further in 2016.
<b>Denmark</b>	The governing coalition is increasingly unsustainable, and could collapse.
<b>Finland</b>	Rising government debt leaves Finland in breach of EU rules, risking punitive action.
<b>France</b>	Political risk remains elevated in the run up to the presidential election.
<b>Germany</b>	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Germany due to growing optimism, both economically and politically.
<b>Greece</b>	Austerity is set to constrain market potential in 2017-18.
<b>Iceland</b>	Economic growth is expected to remain strong, driven partly by growing demand.
<b>Ireland</b>	Political risk is on the rise as early elections look likely.
<b>Italy</b>	The economy continues its trend of growing at a faster pace.
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Luxembourg as economic conditions continue to improve.
<b>Malta</b>	Growth outpaced the euro-area average in 2016, but Brexit weighs on the outlook.
<b>Netherlands</b>	VVD comes top in the elections, but will need support to form a coalition.
<b>Norway</b>	The government will not add more stimulus, as the economy is ready to self-sustain.
<b>Portugal</b>	The economy grows in 2016 while unemployment reduces slightly.
<b>Spain</b>	The economy gathers momentum, but rising inflation could constrain growth.
<b>Sweden</b>	Borrowing costs are expected to remain low over the course of 2017.
<b>Switzerland</b>	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Switzerland as economic prospects improve.
<b>Turkey</b>	FX risk will remain elevated as the central bank attempts to reinvigorate the economy.
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Political risk continues to rise sharply as the Brexit date is set for March 2019.

Brexit

What does it mean for you?



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