

WorldWatch Headlines: March 2019

Welcome to our latest compilation of WorldWatch Headlines, taken from the most recently published Country Insight Snapshot reports. These headlines highlight the key development our analysts identified for each country when they updated the report.

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Africa

Algeria	The army supports President Bouteflika's continued rule.
Angola	The IMF approves a large extended credit facility for Angola.
Botswana	The ruling party could be weakened ahead of this year's elections.
Cameroon	President Biya reshapes the executive to help tackle the Anglophone crisis.
Congo, D.R.	The constitutional court upholds December's contested election result.
Cote d'Ivoire	The regional bank maintains the steady interest rate.
Ethiopia	The World Bank increases lending to the country.
Gabon	The president makes a brief return after an attempted coup is foiled.
Ghana	Inflation levels fall and the policy rate is lowered.
Kenya	Nairobi suffers a deadly terrorist attack.
Libya	Khalifa Haftar's bid to control the south of Libya could be a game-changer.
Malawi	Nine candidates vie for the presidency ahead of the election in May.
Mauritius	A trade deal with India is expected early in 2019.
Morocco	The IMF renews its precautionary credit line.
Mozambique	Energy companies secure more LNG sales contracts.
Namibia	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Namibia as the central bank keeps interest rates on hold.
Nigeria	Presidential and legislative elections could create instability.
Senegal	The country successfully meets most targets under an IMF programme.
Sierra Leone	The IMF praises Sierra Leone's fiscal policy.
South Africa	The central bank keeps the policy rate on hold.
Sudan	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Sudan amid violent country-wide protests.
Tanzania	The Stiegler's Gorge hydroelectric dam passes an administrative hurdle.
Tunisia	A general strike brings Tunisia to a complete standstill.
Uganda	An Ebola vaccination programme is implemented along the DRC border.
Zambia	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Zambia after regulatory and fiscal changes unsettle the mining sector.
Zimbabwe	Shortages of goods and liquidity spark a sharp rise in inflation.

Asia Pacific

Afghanistan	The country moves one step closer to a peace deal.
Australia	Slower Chinese growth may have far-reaching implications for the Australian economy.
Bangladesh	The country seeks to attract FDI into its offshore gas sector.
Cambodia	Headwinds threaten the export-oriented garments sector.
China	A slowdown in industrial output and investment looks to be under way.
Fiji	The ruling party's election victory implies broad policy continuity.
Hong Kong (S.A.R.)	December trade posts the weakest y/y performance in nearly three years.
India	The Reserve Bank of India cuts interest rates amid weakening inflation.

Indonesia	The growth outlook deteriorates as interest rate changes bite.
Japan	Domestic demand is still expanding but China's slowdown will tell on growth.
Korea (South)	Trade uncertainty and faltering employment overshadow the outlook.
Malaysia	The country has a new king following a carefully-managed succession.
Myanmar	The EU is considering withdrawing Myanmar from its tariff-free market-access arrangement.
Nepal	Economic growth remains buoyant.
New Zealand	Higher minimum wages will support consumption growth.
Pakistan	Foreign investment from Saudi Arabia will provide a limited boost.
Papua New Guinea	The economy should get a boost from the recent regional summit meeting.
Philippines	Self-rule is established in the country's south west amid hopes of a lasting peace.
Singapore	Economic growth is set to slow markedly.
Sri Lanka	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Sri Lanka as the political crisis threatens to spread.
Taiwan	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Taiwan Region as export orders fall and inventories rise.
Thailand	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Thailand as economic prospects weaken.
Vietnam	Exports could start to struggle in 2019.

Eastern Europe

Albania	The political environment outlook deteriorates rapidly due to the outbreak of demonstrations.
Azerbaijan	The business environment improves but serious problems remain.
Belarus	The IMF acknowledges the economy's strong recovery.
Bosnia & Herzegovina	The attempts to integrate the country into the EU and NATO stall.
Bulgaria	The current account surplus is set to shrink.
Croatia	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Croatia as economic growth slows.
Czech Republic	Government stability is at risk as the prime minister comes under fire.
Estonia	The business environment remains sound, despite some slippage.
Georgia	The country elects its first female president.
Hungary	A wave of strikes and demonstrations hits major cities.
Kazakhstan	The short-term outlook remains stable despite recent oil price deflation.
Kyrgyz Republic	Economic growth should pick up in the short term.
Latvia	Parliament approves a new coalition government.
Lithuania	Economic sentiment remains optimistic.
Macedonia	The country's name has changed to the Republic of North Macedonia.
Poland	Growth is forecast to slow in both 2019 and 2020.
Romania	The government imposes punitive measures on foreign investors.
Russian Federation	Growth was robust in 2018 but market sentiment remains low.
Serbia	Kosovo imposes a 100% tariff on Serbian imports.
Slovak Republic	New reforms aim to simplify the start-up of new businesses.
Slovenia	Public debt is declining, but it remains excessive.
Tajikistan	Official figures show robust GDP growth in 2018.
Turkmenistan	The IMF acknowledges that growth is stable.
Ukraine	International reserves reach a 62-month high.
Uzbekistan	Strong demand for imports could indicate that the economy will overheat.

Middle East

Bahrain	A cabinet reshuffle installs new finance and defence ministers.
Egypt	The currency rallies after assurances from both the central bank and the IMF.
Iran	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Iran's country risk rating as US sanctions bite.
Iraq	Iraq agrees to join a new round of OPEC-led cuts in oil production.
Israel	Israel is ranked strongly for its innovation.
Jordan	Growth remains anaemic, putting pressure on businesses.
Kuwait	Kuwait is cutting its oil output in 2019.
Lebanon	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Lebanon as a new government is formed.
Oman	A second rating agency cuts Omani debt to junk status.
Qatar	The failed GCC summit underlines the lack of hope for ending the boycott.
Saudi Arabia	The economy gained momentum throughout 2018.
Syria	Loyalist groups grow vocal against government corruption.
UAE	The IMF commends the government's recent policy initiatives.
Yemen	The UN pushes for control of Hodeidah ahead of December's peace talks.

The Americas

Argentina	Economic activity dropped sharply in November 2018.
Bolivia	A ruling which upholds Morales' fourth presidential bid stirs tensions.
Brazil	Consumer price inflation will remain subdued in H1.
Canada	Corruption allegations damage Prime Minister Trudeau's political standing.
Chile	Policies on both migration and the indigenous Mapuche people raise concerns.
Colombia	Diluted tax reforms receive congressional approval.
Costa Rica	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Costa Rica due to the passage of a tax reform.
Cuba	US legislators make a bi-partisan push to lift the embargo on Cuba.
Dominican Republic	Real GDP growth accelerates again.
Ecuador	Real GDP growth is up slightly in Q3.
El Salvador	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for El Salvador as the 2019 budget is approved.
Guatemala	Political stability is being put at risk.
Honduras	Rising inflation pressures prompt the first rate hike in years.
Jamaica	The tourism sector continues to thrive despite recent security concerns.
Mexico	Factories on the US-Mexico border face strike action.
Nicaragua	The risk of deep recession turning to economic collapse is real.
Panama	The opening of the Cobre Panama copper mine will help economic growth to rebound.
Paraguay	Tensions within the ruling party cause serious political hurdles.
Peru	Higher investment and consumer spending will keep the growth momentum strong.
Trinidad & Tobago	The natural gas sector is set to provide growth momentum in 2019.
USA	Labour market strength continues to defy expectations.
Uruguay	Economic growth continues to stutter.
Venezuela	The ruling party consolidates its power as the president begins a second term.

Western Europe

Austria	The government is planning a tax on digital advertising.
Belgium	The business outlook softens despite stable household consumption.
Cyprus	Cyprus joins a newly-formed regional gas forum.
Denmark	Economic growth will slow due to a European downturn.

Finland	Growth projection softens as external headwinds pick up.
France	Muted economic growth is expected as headwinds strengthen.
Germany	The economy slows and prospects dim as exports come under pressure.
Greece	The pace of economic growth looks to have accelerated in Q4 2018.
Iceland	Despite faster economic growth, the number of insolvencies increased in 2018.
Ireland	For firms based in Ireland, the looming risk of a no-deal Brexit grows.
Italy	The economy dips into a technical recession in late 2018.
Luxembourg	Economic growth is set to slow.
Malta	Reduced EU funding could cut annual GDP growth.
Netherlands	Business and consumer confidence falls as trade-related uncertainties persist.
Norway	The booming onshore economy will buoy up growth in 2019.
Portugal	The government plans a substantial infrastructure investment.
Spain	The rejection of the 2019 budget prompts a snap election.
Sweden	The market environment outlook worsens as economic headwinds increase.
Switzerland	Insolvencies registered a small increase in 2018.
Turkey	The FX rate is experiencing lower levels of volatility.
United Kingdom	Political risk is high, the economy is slowing, and business failures are rising.