

US-Iran Standoff Shuts World's Biggest Oil Route, Markets on Edge

A military conflict between the United States, Israel, and Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz — the narrow waterway through which about one-fifth of the world's oil normally flows

Oil prices have surged to their highest levels in years, with Brent crude reaching over \$113 per barrel, as traders worry about supplies running short

CONCLUSION

The world's energy markets are navigating one of the most complex crises in modern history, but opportunities exist for informed investors.

MARKET INSIGHT

Stock Markets Split — Tech Holds Steady While Europe and Industrials Dip

- The S&P 500 is holding near flat at 7,136 points, showing resilience despite global uncertainty, as investors weigh strong tech earnings against inflation fears
- The Nasdaq 100 is up 0.43% at 27,187 points, buoyed by optimism ahead of Apple's quarterly results due this evening
- European markets are under more pressure — the FTSE 100 is down 1.16% at 10,213 points and Germany's DAX is off 0.49% at 23,955 points, as rising energy costs weigh on the region
- The Dow Jones Industrial Average is down 0.61% at 48,862 points, with industrial and financial companies sensitive to slower growth concerns

CONCLUSION

Technology stocks are acting as a buffer for US markets, but European equities face a tougher road while energy costs remain elevated.

Key Economic Readings: Oil Surges, Gold Holds, Crypto Pulls Back

BRENT CRUDE OIL

\$113.41 per barrel
(+2.01%)

Oil is rising sharply as the Strait of Hormuz remains largely closed to tanker traffic, tightening global supply

GOLD

\$4,558.40 per troy ounce
(+0.08%)

Gold is holding near record highs as investors seek safety during geopolitical uncertainty — central banks bought 244 tonnes in Q1 alone

BITCOIN

\$75,513 (-2.26%)

Crypto markets are pulling back alongside other risk assets as investors move to safer ground amid global tensions

EUROZONE UNEMPLOYMENT

6.5% (forecast unchanged)

Europe's jobs market remains relatively stable even as growth concerns mount — today's official reading is expected to confirm the trend

Commodities and Crypto: What's Moving and Why

1

Brent Crude at \$113.41

Oil is surging on fears of prolonged supply disruption through the Strait of Hormuz, where tanker traffic has been severely restricted since late February

2

WTI Crude at \$109.57

US benchmark oil is also rising sharply, tracking global supply fears — some economists warn prices could reach \$190 per barrel by August if tensions continue

3

Silver at \$72.22

Silver is outperforming gold today, up 0.68%, benefiting from both its safe-haven appeal and strong industrial demand outlook

4

Bitcoin at \$75,513

Bitcoin dropped over 2% as investors reduced exposure to volatile assets — Ethereum fell even further, down 3.73% to \$2,241, in a broad crypto pullback

CONCLUSION: Energy commodities are the standout story today, while precious metals provide stability and crypto faces headwinds from global risk-off sentiment.

Where Markets Stand Right Now

Oil and Energy



Strait of Hormuz crisis limiting global supply; demand holding firm

US Equities



Tech earnings providing support; Fed dissent and oil costs creating drag

European Equities



High energy import costs and growth fears weighing on DAX and FTSE

Gold and Silver



Safe-haven demand strong; gold near record highs at \$4,558

Forex (US Dollar)



Fed's divided vote creating uncertainty; dollar range-bound against major peers

Crypto



Risk-off environment pushing Bitcoin and Ethereum lower; BTC down 2.26%

CONCLUSION: Energy and geopolitics are running the show today — the world is watching whether diplomacy or escalation wins out in the US-Iran standoff.