The Week Ahead **Global Economy**

US-North Korea summit, Mobile World Congress, Brexit

Your FT guide to next week's big events

YESTERDAY

The US-North Korea summit due to take place in Vietnam on Wednesday and Thursday is set to dominate this week's global political coverage, while in the UK MPs will put forward amendments on Brexit — but prime minister Theresa May has said the "meaningful vote" on her overall deal will not take place this week.

The two-day EU-Arab League summit being held at the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh concludes on Monday. The EU-inspired event is being attended by Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, plus the Italian and British prime ministers. In Africa, the results of Nigeria's election will be closely watched, while the deadline for US-China trade talks at the end of the week moves closer.

For tech watchers, the annual Mobile World Congress in Barcelona is under way and continues until Thursday.

On the economic front, Thursday's fourth-quarter gross domestic product data are the main US release of the week. Personal consumption expenditure, the Federal Reserve's preferred measure of inflation, is out the following day. Other US data this week range include wholesale inventories (on Monday), housing starts and price data (Tuesday) and consumer sentiment and manufacturing (both on Friday). Brazil publishes its GDP report Thursday and Canada's report is due on Friday, when investors will assess the extent of what is likely to be only a temporary slowdown stemming from oil sector weaknesses. UK manufacturing PMI data are also due on Friday. Israel's central bank sets rates on Monday and Turkey releases trade data on Thursday.

US-North Korea summit

The second meeting between president Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un to discuss denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula follows the historic summit in Singapore last June, which produced a vague agreement. The US says North Korea has yet to take firm steps to give up its nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, North Korea wants the US to ease up on sanctions to reward it for freezing nuclear and missile testing and for the partial dismantling of some of its nuclear facilities. It also wants a formal end to the Korean war and security guarantees.

BACKGROUND READING

- Kim Jong Un heads to summit meeting with Donald Trump

Brexit

Theresa May has said she will continue "positive talks" with the EU this week and "as a result of that we won't bring a [second] meaningful vote to parliament this week, but we will ensure that happens by March 12". The choice of date is an attempt to circumvent MPs' attempts to extend Brexit talks. A proposal by Labour's Yvette Cooper, which parliament is due to debate on Wednesday, would give MPs the ability to seek an extension to the Article 50 exit process if no deal has been approved by parliament by March 13.

BACKGROUND READING

- Theresa May promises vote on final Brexit deal by March 12
- How no-deal sets the stage for Brexit's biggest negotiations

Mobile World Congress

Discussion this week is likely to centre on the declining mobile market and whether innovations such as folding phones can help revive consumer interest. But the main focus will be on the underlying telecoms networks themselves. As long-awaited fifth-generation 5G networks finally come online, industry executives and regulators will be debating not only what 5G will be used for, but which companies can be trusted to build it.

BACKGROUND READING

- Huawei unveils Mate X foldable phone at Mobile World Congress
- Samsung follows Apple on pricey smartphones
- 5G: Can Europe match the US and China on mobile networks?

US-China trade deal deadline

Washington had set a March 1 deadline for Beijing to agree a deal on trade, lest it face an increase in tariffs on $200bn of Chinese imports. On Friday, US president Donald Trump said he was open to pushing that deadline back as long as progress was being made. Negotiations between the two sides will continue over coming days.

Earnings

It's a big week for retail and consumer stocks in the US, with Home Depot, Macy's, Campbell Soup, TJX Companies and Gap reporting quarterly earnings, while in the UK names a host of names from a range of sectors report, including Persimmon, Metro Bank, Standard Chartered, WPP, British American Tobacco and Lloyd's of London insurer Hiscox.

Markets questions

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Economic calendar

A comprehensive guide to the week's economic events

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