

World stocks fall ahead of US jobs data release

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LONDON -- European and Asian stock markets mostly retreated on Friday, as investors awaited key U.S. jobs data for clues on the outlook for interest rates in the world's biggest economy.

The U.S. Labor Department will later Friday release jobs figures for April, with expectations of a slowdown in new posts.

But while the report is forecast to show the world's leading economy is not as strong as hoped, the American dollar has managed to hold its gains after two Federal Reserve bosses argued the case for an interest rate hike as early as June.

"As we have come to expect on payrolls day, there is a notable caution in risk assets," said Brenda Kelly, head analyst at traders London Capital Group.

Around 0900 GMT London's benchmark FTSE 100 index was down 0.5 percent compared with Thursday's close.

In the eurozone, Frankfurt's DAX 30 index shed 0.3 percent and the Paris CAC-40 lost 0.6 percent in value.

"European markets look set to finish lower for the second week in succession as concerns about a weakening growth outlook and the efficacy of central bank policy in combating it start to weigh on sentiment," said Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets UK.

Confidence on trading floors has been sparse the past two weeks following disappointing data and announcements from China to the United States that tore a hole in hopes the world economy was showing signs of recovery.

On Friday, Asian stock markets mostly fell as lingering worries over global growth sent traders running from higher-risk assets.

Analysts meanwhile expect the Department of Labor data to show the U.S. added 207,000 jobs in April, down from 215,000 jobs in March.

David Levy, portfolio manager at Republic Wealth Advisors, said investors are looking for a sign the U.S. economy will pick up in the second quarter after first-quarter growth was estimated at just 0.5 percent.

"We're muddling along," Levy said.

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/business/global-markets/2016/05/07/465372/World-stocks.htm>