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AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

USA OUTLOOK

Weekly newsletter
February 21Th to 25Th





Foto: Newsactive.net

What's at Stake for the Global Economy as Conflict Looms in Ukraine

After getting battered by the pandemic, supply chain chokeholds and leaps in prices, the global economy is poised to be sent on yet another unpredictable course by an armed clash on Europe's border.

Even before the Kremlin ordered Russian troops into separatist territories of Ukraine on Monday, the tension had taken a toll. The promise of punishing sanctions in return by President Biden and the potential for Russian retaliation had already pushed down stock returns and driven up gas prices.

An outright attack by Russian troops could cause dizzying spikes in energy and food prices, fuel inflation fears and spook investors, a combination that threatens investment and growth in economies around the world.

However harsh the effects, the immediate impact will be nowhere near as devastating as the sudden economic shutdowns first caused by the coronavirus in 2020. Russia is a transcontinental behemoth with 146 million people and a huge nuclear arsenal, as well as a key supplier of the oil, gas and raw materials that keep the world's factories running. But unlike China, which is a manufacturing powerhouse and intimately woven into intricate supply chains, Russia is a minor player in the global economy.

Stocks swing and oil prices soar after Russia attacks Ukraine

U.S. markets recovered Thursday after President Joe Biden unveiled new sanctions against Russia in reaction to Russian President Vladimir Putin's military action in Ukraine. Earlier in the day, stocks had dived on concerns that the incursion could roil the global economy.

The Dow closed higher, rising 91 points to 33,223. That swing came after the index had plunged more than 800 points in early trading. Other major U.S. stock indices also recovered their footing, with the S&P 500 rising 1.5% by the close of trading and the tech-heavy Nasdaq jumping 3.3%.

"Russia invading Ukraine has added to an already tense year, with investors selling first and asking questions later," said LPL Financial chief market strategist Ryan Detrick in an email. "But it is important to know that past major geopolitical events were usually short-term market issues, especially if the economy was on solid footing."



Foto: Wall Street Journal



Foto: cnbc.com

Wildlife officials: Avian flu detected in some Florida birds

A strain of avian influenza has been detected in several species of birds in several Florida counties, wildlife officials said. The National Veterinary Services Laboratory confirmed cases of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza strain H5 2.3.4.4 in black vultures, a lesser scaup and other species, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission said Tuesday in a news release.

There is a low risk of transmission to humans and there have been no known human infections in North America, the agency said. Wildlife officials are investigating bird deaths in Brevard, Indian River and Volusia counties that are believed to be caused by the strain. It has been documented in the United States since last year and was detected in hunter-harvested blue-winged teal in Palm Beach County in January.

Authorities are urging the public to avoid handling sick or dead wildlife and report any bird mortalities to the wildlife agency so the deaths can be investigated. They also recommend keeping domestic birds away from wild birds.

Fuente

<https://apnews.com/article/health-environment-and-nature-florida-united-states-fort-lauderdale-3fb9657c61d065c99e203d308d7ce7d9>

Biden and Europe waiting on one key sanction against Russia

U.S. and European officials are holding one key financial sanction against Russia in reserve, choosing not to boot Russia off SWIFT, the dominant system for global financial transactions. The Russian invasion of Ukraine caused a barrage of new financial sanctions Thursday. The sanctions are meant to isolate, punish and impoverish Russia in the long term. President Joe Biden announced restrictions on exports to Russia and sanctions against Russian banks and state-controlled companies.

But Biden pointedly played down the need to block Russia from SWIFT, saying that while it's "always" still an option, "right now that's not the position that the rest of Europe wishes to take." He also suggested the sanctions being put in place would have more teeth.

"The sanctions we've imposed exceed SWIFT," Biden said in response to a question Thursday. "Let's have a conversation in another month or so to see if they're working."



Foto: KAIT

Fuente

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/joe-biden-adam-smith-europe-mitch-mcconnell-iran-b2023023.html>



Foto: washingtonpost.com

Peer pressure is ending mask usage in schools

As more states make face coverings optional, students have begun to copy their unmasked classmates.

Chelsea Ellingson hopes that her children keep masks in their backpacks. She hopes that, once the eighth- and ninth-graders step inside their school buildings in Colorado's Weld RE-4 school district, where masking is optional, they pull their masks from their backpacks and slide them over their noses and mouths.

And, beyond gently reminding her children that she'd prefer they mask as they spill from the car,

Ellingson is unwilling to press the issue. She said her children are maskless when they leave for school and maskless when they come home — and she has stopped asking questions about it. "They just don't want to be the ones singled out for wearing it."

Children across America are facing a similar dilemma. After more than a year of required masking in many districts, school officials are rapidly rolling back rules to make face coverings optional, sometimes because their hands have been forced by politicians at the state level.