

European stocks and oil slip

European stocks open lower on Friday as investors turn their attention to November's euro zone inflation data, a key indicator ahead of the European Central Bank's final policy meeting of the year on December 12.

At 3:10 ET (8:10 GMT) Germany's DAX index fell 0.1%, France's CAC 40 declined 0.14%, and the UK's FTSE 100 dropped 0.1%.

Additionally, France's risk premium equalled Greece's for the first time, underscoring investor concerns over ongoing turmoil.

Inflation data in focus

The market is closely watching the release of the flash inflation data for the euro zone, expected later today.

The figures will provide crucial insight into the region's economic trajectory and could influence the ECB's monetary policy at its December meeting.

With inflation trends playing a pivotal role in shaping interest rate decisions, this data is expected to be a key determinant of investor sentiment in the near term.

Aviva (LON:AV) eyes Direct Line (LON:DLGD) in potential takeover move

British insurer Aviva has reportedly approached shareholders of its smaller rival, Direct Line, in a move that could signal intentions for a hostile takeover.

As reported by The Financial Times, the approach follows Direct Line's rejection of Aviva's initial cash-and-share offer, which the smaller insurer dismissed as "highly opportunistic" and undervaluing the company.

Aviva's bid, submitted on November 19, reflects a growing trend of consolidation in the insurance sector. Direct Line's rejection has set the stage for a potential standoff between the two firms, with shareholders now caught in the middle of a high-stakes negotiation.

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