

Weekly Market View

Policy expectations flaring; keep CALM

→ Resilient US economic data and hawkish Fed underpin our H2 outlook, calling for a delay of the recession to Q1 of 2024. In H2, the markets will likely be caught between two extreme scenarios: a recession case (implying risk assets should be avoided) vs a “no-landing” scenario (equities should be chased higher). Our view is we will likely fall somewhere in between, and investors should keep CALM.

→ The market-implied probability of a 25bps rate hike in the upcoming July FOMC meeting has shot up to over 83%. Any rate hike for the rest of the year will only exacerbate the tightening of monetary conditions at a time when more liquidity would be sucked out by the Treasury General Account refill. This makes the delayed recession case more likely.

→ The JPY and CNH continue to react to hawkish Fed remarks. We recommend leaning towards Asia USD bonds and Asia equities, with the next catalyst as the July Politburo meeting, from which more targeted fiscal policy support should stabilise sentiment towards China assets.

What are your thoughts on the forthcoming US Q2 earnings season?

What is your view on the debate between cash and bonds?

How would a strong JPY impact your Overweight on Japan equities?

Do the recent PBoC actions indicate a near-term peak in USDCNH?

Charts of the week: Markets turning more hawkish on hard data beat

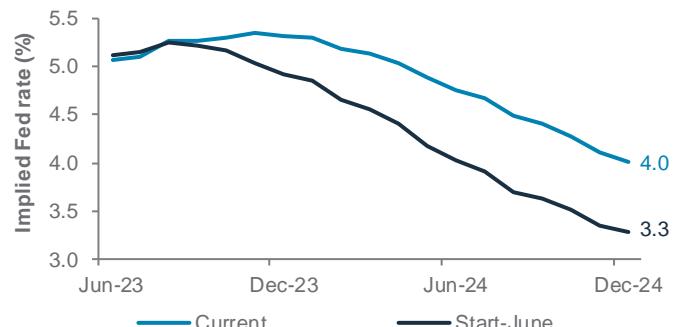
Hard data (durable goods orders) vs. survey-based data (PMI); markets pricing in a more resilient economy

US durable goods orders and manufacturing PMI index



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Market-implied Fed funds rate



Editorial

Policy expectations flaring; keep CALM

Resilient US economic data and hawkish Fed underpin the base case from our H2 outlook, calling for a delay of the recession to Q1 of 2024. During H2, the markets will likely be caught between two extreme scenarios: a recession case (implying risk assets should be avoided) vs a “no-landing” scenario (equities should be chased higher). We will likely fall somewhere in between, and investors should keep CALM.

Our delayed US recession scenario reinforced: Fed Chair Powell repeatedly highlighted over the week the possibility of up to two rate hikes before the end of this year. This was notwithstanding the June manufacturing PMI that fell further in contractionary territory. US equities slumped earlier on recession fears, only to rebound as consumer confidence, new home sales and durable goods orders surprised positively.

Markets turning hawkish: Against the strong US consumer data and the Fed's commitment to fighting inflation, the market-implied probability of a 25bps rate hike in the upcoming July FOMC meeting shot up to over 83%. We are watchful of the PCE core deflator (due 30th June) as a better gauge of the next Fed move. But any rate hikes for the rest of the year will only exacerbate the tightening of monetary conditions at a time when more liquidity will be sucked out of the system by the Treasury General Account refill. This makes the delayed recession case more likely.

JPY and CNH down on hawkish Fed: Noticeably, USD/JPY has edged higher to 143-145, despite comments from Japan's key currency official, Masato Kanda, this week that he would not rule out the option of intervention. Based on options market pricing, markets assign a low probability to any intervention, at least until the JPY weakens towards 150. We believe interest rate differentials and BoJ policy remain key to USD/JPY.

Policy hopes ignited in China: USD/CNH surged past 7.25, despite the PBoC's moves to set the reference rate at 7.22.

Apart from widening interest rate differentials, the CNY also reacted to the less-than-desirable economic data in China. First, tourism revenue during the Dragon Boat Festival declined 5.1% from the 2019 level, implying per-capita tourism spending fell by 15%. Second, industrial profits contracted by 18.8% in the first 5 months of 2023 (page 3). Against all this, Premier Li Qiang's speech at the Summer Davos Forum this week, emphasizing more effective measures to tap the potential of domestic demand, has reignited hopes for policy support.

Investment implications: While markets are pricing more US rate hikes this year, the 10-year government bond yield is likely capped by delayed recession fears, trading in a range and facing strong resistance at 4%. With the 10-year yield likely to retreat to 3%-3.25% in 12 months, our **CALM** strategy calls for an Overweight on high quality bonds, with a tilt to long duration, as a key tenor to **Capitalise** on market conditions. The other prong is to have a core allocation to global equities.

Allocating broadly across asset classes, e.g., gold, is key to building a diversified foundation portfolio. Gold deserves a core allocation, given Emerging Market central banks' buying and geopolitical risks. This week's (short-lived) unrest in Moscow and the anticipated intensification of the US restrictions on chip exports to China serve as good reminders.

Lean to Asia USD bonds and Asia equities: Our near-term view on the JPY is supportive of our positive stance on Japan equities (page 5). We anticipate China equities to be supported by targeted fiscal policy measures from the July Politburo meeting. We recommend balanced positioning between onshore and offshore China equities.

Last, but not least, **Managing volatility** is important in navigating uncertain times. One approach is to use our sectoral preferences to balance defensive (US healthcare) and growth exposures (US tech, see page 4).

— Raymond Cheng

The weekly macro balance sheet

Our weekly net assessment: On balance, we see the past week's data and policy as neutral to positive for risk assets in the near term

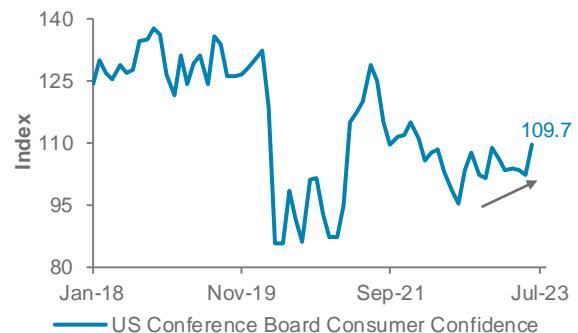
(+ factors: Prospects of China policy support, upwardly revised US Q1 GDP, improving US consumer confidence, lower initial jobless claims

(- factors: Hawkish ECB; weaker Euro Area mfg. and services PMI

	Positive for risk assets	Negative for risk assets
Macro data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US Conference Board consumer confidence rose more than expected US durable goods orders rose unexpectedly by 1.7% y/y, the second month of increase US house price index rose more than expected by 0.7% m/m US new home sales rose more than expected to 763,000 US Q1 GDP revised up to 2%, beating estimates US initial jobless claims dropped by the most since October 2021 to 239,000 Euro area consumer confidence rose more than expected to 36.2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US mfg. PMI fell unexpectedly to 46.3, services PMI fell as expected to 54.1 US pending home sales dropped more than expected by -20.8% y/y in May Euro area mfg. and services PMI fell more than expected to 43.6 and 52.4, respectively Euro area money supply cooled more than expected to 1.4% y/y China domestic travel spending during the Dragon Boat Festival fell short of pre-COVID-19 levels China non-manufacturing PMI weaker than expected
	<p>Our assessment: Neutral to Positive – Improving US cons. confidence, durable goods orders, housing market vs weaker Euro Area PMI, disappointing China consumption</p>	
Policy developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fed's Bostic called for a hold on interest rates China Premier Li Qiang committed to more practical and effective measures to boost domestic demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> President Lagarde said the ECB would not be able to declare the end of its hiking cycle soon
	<p>Our assessment: Neutral – Prospects of China policy support vs hawkish Developed Market central banks</p>	
Other developments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports the US will cut off certain investments in China and tighten AI curbs; China Premier Li Qiang warns economic barriers would lead to confrontation
	<p>Our assessment: Negative – Geopolitical tensions</p>	

US consumer confidence rebounded

US Conference Board consumer confidence



Source: Bloomberg; Standard Chartered

Euro area manufacturing and services PMI continued its decline in June

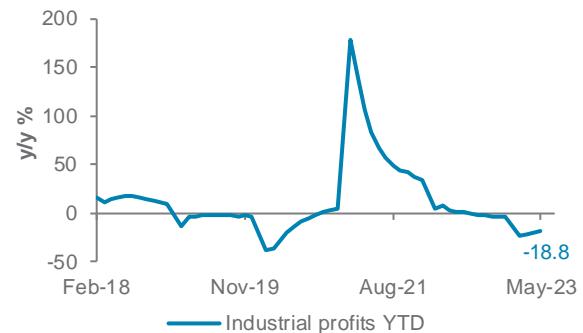
Euro area manufacturing and services PMI



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

The downturn of China industrial profits reflects soft domestic demand and re-ignites hopes for more policy support

China industrial profits YTD y/y



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Top client questions

Q What are your thoughts on the forthcoming US Q2 earnings season?

The US Q2 earnings season begins in earnest in the week of 10 July, with major US banks among the first to report. **Q2 is expected to be the worst quarter for the year**, registering a 5.6% y/y drop in earnings, according to Refinitiv's consensus estimates. Earnings growth is expected to revert to positive territory in Q3 (+1.6%) before accelerating in Q4 (+9.6%). The expectation for full-year 2023 earnings growth remains positive at 1.4%.

We believe it will be crucial to monitor any change to the expected 2023 earnings growth, as well as to the expected 2024 earnings growth, which currently stands at +11.8%. Therefore, **forward guidance will take on additional importance** to get a sense of whether these elevated expectations are achievable. We have a Neutral allocation to US equities over the next 6-12 months, with 2023 earnings expected to remain resilient. This is in line with our view for a US recession to start only in Q1 2024.

Our preferred US sectors are communication services, technology and healthcare. **Technology sector earnings are expected to see a pause in 2023 (+1.0%) before accelerating in 2024 (+17.5%).** Technology's largest segment is software, which continues to see defensive recurring revenue, while AI has sparked significant orders benefitting the semiconductor segment. Valuations are elevated, but we expect the strong price momentum to continue as investor positioning is not extreme.

— **Fook Hien Yap, Senior Investment Strategist**

Q What is your view on the debate between cash and bonds?

Short-term cash returns have outperformed long-term bonds during one of the most rapid rate hiking cycles in history. As major Developed Market (DM) central banks vow to hike rates further, short-term rates are likely to remain elevated in the short term, supporting the investment case for deposits. While we acknowledge the portfolio benefits of having a cash allocation, especially in times of heightened uncertainty, we believe locking in longer term yields via high quality bonds makes sense.

While the absolute return on cash may beat bonds in the near-term, such an allocation comes with reinvestment risk, i.e. the yield available when cash deposits mature may be much lower. **We see reinvestment risk increasing over time** as interest rates peak and fall in 2024.

Investing in bonds reduces reinvestment risk by locking yields for future years to come. In addition, when benchmark rates edge lower as risk-adverse demand surges, long-term bonds enjoy capital gains (surge in bond prices) in addition to coupon returns, starting to outperform deposits. Hence, in this juncture of economic cycle, **we are Overweight bonds, especially higher-quality bonds**, and expect them to outperform in the next 12 months.

— **Cedric Lam, Senior Investment Strategist**

Q2 is expected to be the worst quarter for the year for US equity earnings growth, before recovering in Q3 and accelerating in Q4

Consensus earnings growth y/y for S&P500 index, by quarter



Source: Refinitiv, Standard Chartered

Cash return diminishes as reinvestment risk surges; bonds offer capital gain in addition to interest income

Cash return vs bond return

	Rate changes				
	-40bps	-20bps	0bps	+20bps	+40bps
1st year return					
Cash	5.86%	5.86%	5.86%	5.86%	5.86%
Bonds	6.59%	4.98%	3.38%	1.77%	0.16%
2nd year return					
Cash	4.02%	4.02%	4.02%	4.02%	4.02%
Bonds	6.31%	4.84%	3.38%	1.91%	0.44%
3rd year return					
Cash	3.28%	3.28%	3.28%	3.28%	3.28%
Bonds	6.03%	4.70%	3.38%	2.05%	0.72%
36-month return (annualized)					
Cash	4.38%	4.38%	4.38%	4.38%	4.38%
Bonds	6.31%	4.84%	3.37%	1.91%	0.44%

1. Return of cash estimated using Bloomberg-compiled 12-month USD deposit rate
2. Using 1y1y fwd OIS & 2y1y fwd OIS as proxies of 2nd & 3rd year cash deposit rate
3. Return of bonds estimated using on-the-run 10Y UST

Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Top client questions (cont'd)

Q How would a strong JPY impact your Overweight on Japanese equities?

This may sound like a strange question given the recent JPY weakness, but our longer-term view is that a **potential tightening in Bank of Japan (BoJ) policies**, such as relaxation of yield curve control, **may lead to JPY strength**. In our opinion, this is the key risk to the rally in Japanese equities, as a stronger JPY is likely to impact corporate earnings and put pressure on share prices.

However, from the perspective of a USD-denominated investor, the pressure on corporate earnings is partially offset by gains from the strengthening JPY vs USD. On top of that, this time around, the **improvement in corporate governance is a key structural tailwind to Japanese equities**, which has long been the “Achilles’ heel” to Japanese equities. **We remain Overweight Japanese equities** and continue to expect a rerating there.

In terms of sectors, **tighter BoJ policies are likely to lead to higher yields that favour Japanese banks** in general. This is because higher yields often lead to widening in net interest margin, which means better profitability for the banks. The stronger-than-expected economic data in Japan also provides a favourable environment for banks to outperform.

— **Daniel Lam, Head, Equity Strategy**

Q Do the recent PBoC actions indicate a near-term peak in USD/CNH?

The recent bout of weakness in the CNH, since the beginning of May, has been primarily driven by a combination of:

1. Disappointment with China's economic data, which has led to interest rate cuts, as well as expectations of further stimulus.
2. Increased Fed hawkishness, which has led to higher 2-year US government bond yield and wider interest rate differentials.
3. Increased geopolitical risks, including news about the latest round of AI chip curbs by the US, potentially leading to subdued investor sentiment.

As USD/CNH breached 7.20 level, Chinese authorities stepped in to moderate the pace of the decline by setting a stronger fix. While this could lead to near-term consolidation in USD/CNH, our expectation of further policy stimulus means the **USD-CNH interest rate divergence is likely to increase in the near term, pushing USD-CNH to 7.30**, or even possibly the 2022 high of 7.37.

However, over the next 6-12 months, we expect the combination of stronger growth in China and weaker US growth to lead to a narrowing of interest rate differentials, greater investor optimism and fund inflows to push USD/CNH towards 7.05-7.08.

— **Abhilash Narayan, Senior Investment Strategist**

Strong JPY (ie, falling USD/JPY) may hurt Japanese equities, offset by improvement in corporate governance)

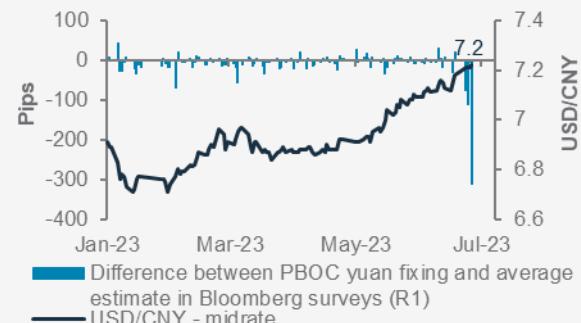
TOPIX Index vs USD/JPY (RHS)



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

PBoC has started to set stronger fixes since USD/CNH breached 7.20

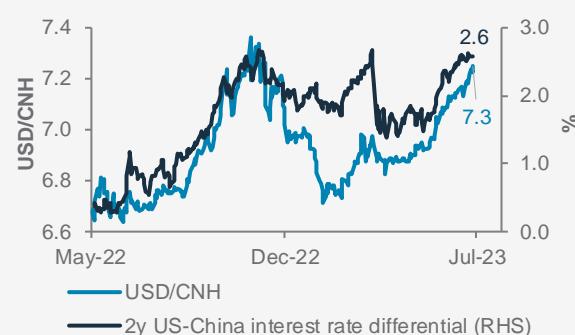
Difference in PBoC CNY fix and the market expectation; USD/CNY mid-rate



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Divergent monetary policy between US and China is a key driver for the recent CNH weakness

USD/CNH and 2-year US – China interest rate differential



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Market performance summary *



Sources: MSCI, JP Morgan, Barclays Capital, Citigroup, Dow Jones, HFRX, FTSE, Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

*Performance in USD terms unless otherwise stated, 2023 YTD performance from 31 December 2022 to 15 June 2023; 1-week period: 22 June 2023 to 29 June 2023

Our 12-month asset class views at a glance

Asset class	
Equities	◆
Euro area	◆
US	◆
UK	▼
Asia ex-Japan	▲
Japan	▲
Other EM	◆
Bonds (Credit)	◆
Asia USD	▲
Corp DM HY	▼
Govt EM USD	▼
Corp DM IG	◆
Bonds (Govt)	▲
Govt EM Local	◆
Govt DM IG	▲
Preferred Sectors	
US Communication	▲
US Technology	▲
US Healthcare	▲
Europe Technology	▲
Europe Discretionary	▲
Europe Financials	▲
China Communication	▲
China Discretionary	▲
Alternatives	◆
Gold	◆

Source: Standard Chartered Global Investment Committee

Legend: ▲ Most preferred | ▼ Less preferred | ◆ Core holding

Economic and market calendar

	Event	Next week	Period	Expected	Prior
MON	CH	Caixin China PMI Mfg	Jun	50.0	50.9
	US	ISM Manufacturing	Jun	47.3	46.9
	US	ISM New Orders	Jun	–	42.6
TUE					
WED	CH	Caixin China PMI Services	Jun	55.6	57.1
	EC	PPI y/y	May	–	1.0%
	EC	Retail Sales y/y	May	–	-2.6%
THU	US	ADP Employment Change	Jun	250k	278k
	US	Trade Balance	May	-\$70.2b	-\$74.6b
	US	JOLTS Job Openings	May	–	10103k
FRI/SAT	US	ISM Services Index	Jun	51.2	50.3
	US	Change in Nonfarm Payrolls	Jun	213k	339k
	US	Unemployment Rate	Jun	3.6%	3.7%

Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Prior data are for the preceding period unless otherwise indicated. Data are % change on previous period unless otherwise indicated

P - preliminary data, F - final data, sa - seasonally adjusted, y/y - year-on-year, m/m - month-on-month

The US S&P500 index's next resistance is at 4,419

Technical indicators for key markets as of 29 June close

Index	Spot	1st support	1st resistance
S&P 500	4,396	4,351	4,419
STOXX 50	4,355	4,299	4,382
FTSE 100	7,472	7,450	7,497
TOPIX	2,296	2,267	2,312
Shanghai Comp	3,182	3,159	3,198
Hang Seng	18,934	18,762	19,140
MSCI Asia ex-Japan	629	628	633
MSCI EM	987	984	992
Brent (ICE)	74.3	73.0	75.0
Gold	1,908	1,903	1,919
UST 10Y Yield	3.84	3.75	3.88

Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Note: These short-term technical levels are based on models and may differ from a more qualitative analysis provided in other pages

Investor diversity narrowed in US equities, EM local bonds

Our proprietary market diversity indicators as of 28 June

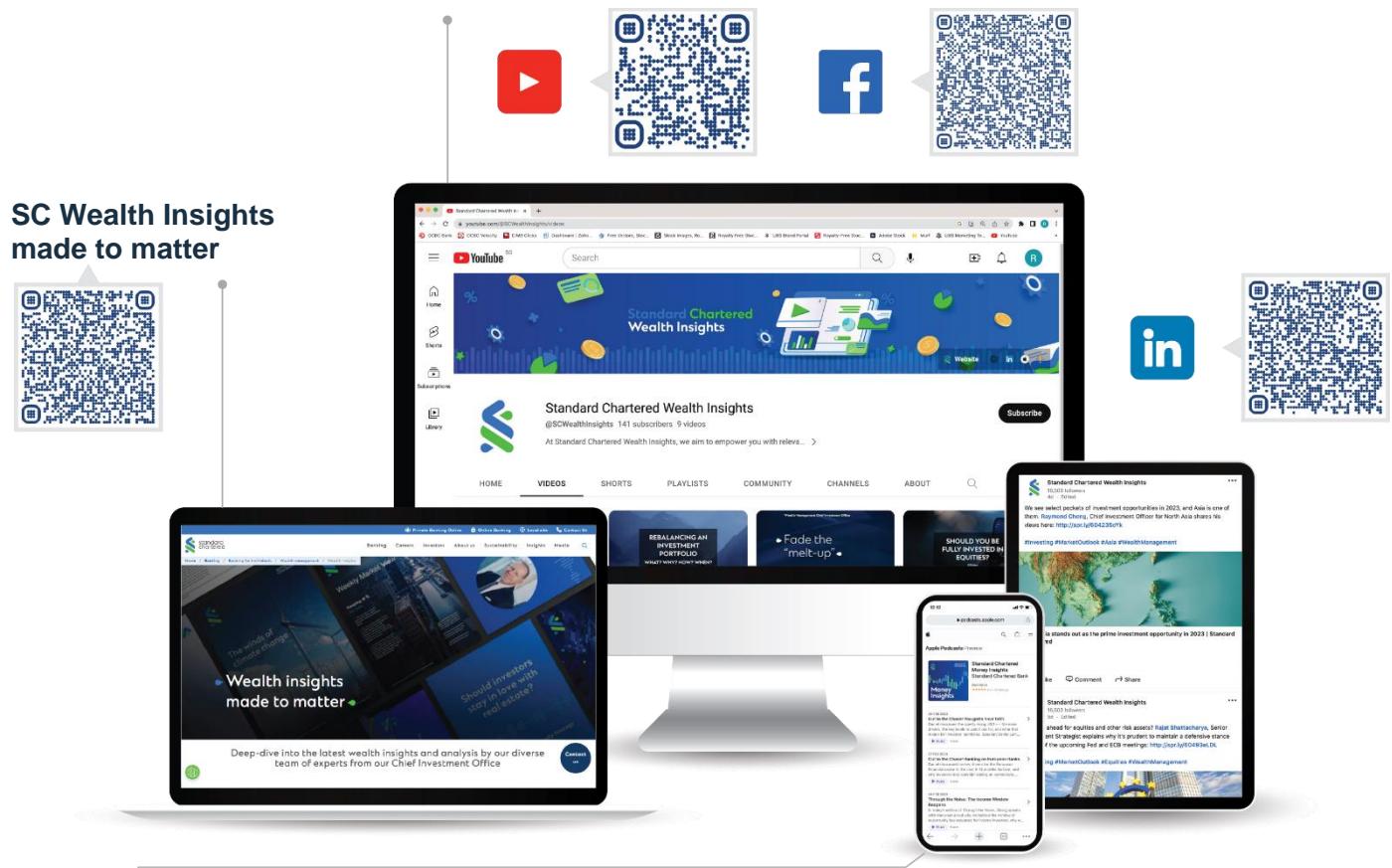
Level 1	Diversity	1-month trend	Fractal dimension
Global Bonds	●	↑	1.92
Global Equities	●	↓	1.36
Gold	●	↑	1.57
Equity			
MSCI US	●	↓	1.30
MSCI Europe	●	↓	1.59
MSCI AC AXJ	●	↑	2.04
Fixed Income			
DM Corp Bond	●	→	1.77
DM High Yield	●	↓	1.44
EM USD	●	↓	1.42
EM Local	●	↓	1.34
Asia USD	●	↓	1.76
Currencies			
EUR/USD	●	→	1.69

Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered; **Fractal dimensions below 1.25 indicate extremely low market diversity/high risk of a reversal**

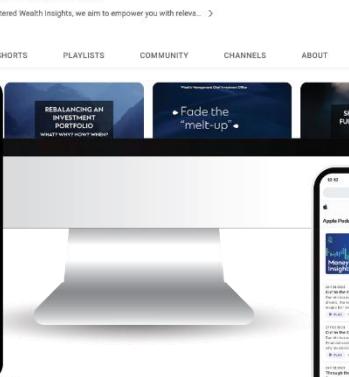
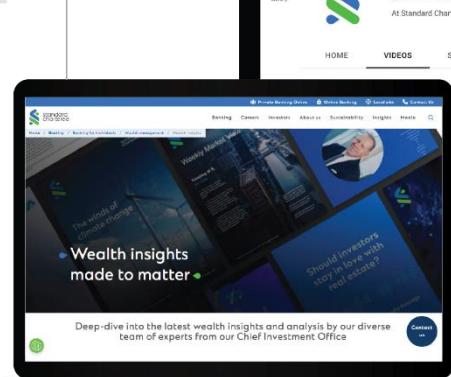
Legend: ● High | ○ Low to mid | □ Critically low

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Through the Noise

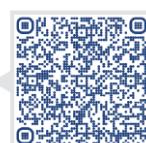
Weekly update on financial markets, implications for our outlook and call to action actions

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