

weekly market view

macro strategy | 8 June 2018

This reflects the views of the Wealth Management Group

Editorial

Nasdaq regains record highs

- **The technology sector-heavy Nasdaq's recovery bolsters our conviction on US equities. An extended USD reversal is likely to ease pressure on Emerging Markets (EMs).**
- **Equities:** The Nasdaq scaled new record highs, supported by a robust earnings outlook and easing US-China trade frictions. We remain positive on US equities and the technology sector.
- **Bonds:** Fed, ECB policies and Italy's fiscal policy risks likely to keep yields elevated. Rising onshore China defaults support our preference for Investment Grade (over High Yield) bonds in Asia.
- **FX:** EUR/USD continued to rebound from 1.15; the next key resistance is in the 1.1960-1.2060 region. AUD/USD is likely to test a key resistance above the 200DMA around 0.7750.

What's new?

- **Nasdaq regains record highs.** The Nasdaq has recovered the ground it lost since March to scale a new record high. The renewed strength is likely driven at least partly by expectations the US will ease some of the restrictions imposed on China technology companies in doing business with the US and/or acquiring US companies. This has brought the robust earnings outlook for the sector to the fore. The technology sector, which has the largest weight in US benchmark equity indices, has seen one of the strongest earnings upgrades since the start of the year (see chart) and is the top-performing sector in the S&P500 year-to-date, up 14% this year. The strong momentum supports our bullish view on US equities and the technology sector.
- **Strong US data lifts bond yields, fails to boost USD.** Another strong job market report, which showed the US unemployment rate matched the lowest since 1969, helped lift US 10-year yields towards 3%. Higher bond yields are positive for bank earnings, supporting our preference for the US financial sector. However, rising US yields have not translated into further USD gains. The USD's drop this week, if it extends, is likely to ease pressure on EMs that had earlier seen fund outflows (RBI's first rate hike since 2014 and BRL's continued slump were the latest signs that EMs remained under strain from the USD's rebound since April).
- **China bond defaults rise.** Onshore bond defaults, primarily in the property sector, have hurt sentiment. While spillover into the Asian USD bond market has thus far been limited, the development reinforces our preference for Investment Grade bonds in Asia. Having said that, we also note that China property sector equities have gained momentum on positive monthly sales data for May. We retain our preference for China equities within Asia, given strong earnings and attractive valuations.

What we are watching

- **Fed, ECB, BoJ meetings.** While markets have priced in a 100% probability the Fed will raise rates by 25bps to 2% on 13 June, any indication at the ECB meeting that it will end bond purchases by year-end is likely to further boost the EUR (see page 3).
- **Trump-Kim talks, G7 meetings.** The 12 June meeting between the US and North Korean leaders is a key geopolitical event, though expectations of a breakthrough are low.

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The Nasdaq set a new record high, while the S&P500 volatility index fell to its lowest since January, signalling return of risk appetite

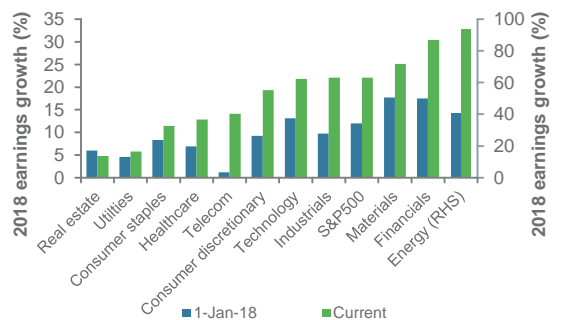
Nasdaq 100 index and S&P500 VIX index



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

The US technology sector has seen among the strongest earnings upgrades this year, bolstering the outlook for US stocks

2018 earnings expectations of S&P500 industry sectors; right hand scale for energy sector earnings only



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Steve Brice Chief Investment Strategist	Rajat Bhattacharya Senior Investment Strategist
Clive McDonnell Head, Equity Investment Strategy	Tariq Ali, CFA Investment Strategist
Manpreet Gill Head, FICC Investment Strategy	Francis Lim Senior Investment Strategist
Arun Kelshiker, CFA Head, Portfolio Strategy	Jill Yip, CFA Senior Investment Strategist
Audrey Goh, CFA Senior Cross-asset Strategist	Abhilash Narayan Investment Strategist
Daniel Lam, CFA Senior Cross-asset Strategist	Cedric Lam Investment Strategist
Belle Chan Senior Investment Strategist	Trang Nguyen Portfolio Strategist
	DJ Cheong Investment Strategist

What does this mean for investors?

Global stocks continued to recover, with broad-based gains across most markets. EM government bonds fell amid higher US yields. The USD extended declines amid a return of risk appetite.

Equities: Cyclical sectors underperform in Asia

- **USD strength weighs on Asia's cyclical sectors.** Cyclical sectors in Asia ex-Japan have underperformed defensive sectors YTD as the USD's strength over the past couple of months and trade tensions with the US clouded the growth outlook. We expect USD strength to dissipate and the currency to weaken modestly over the next 12 months, helping Asia's cyclical sectors to recover. Asia ex-Japan remains a preferred region.
- **China, Hong Kong equities break above key resistance.** Both the MSCI China and the Hang Seng indices broke above their respective 100DMAs, having earlier rebounded from just above their 200DMAs, amid increased optimism that the technology sector would not be significantly impacted by the ongoing trade dispute between the US and its trade partners. The positive technical and fundamental outlook supports our preference for Chinese equities within Asia ex-Japan.

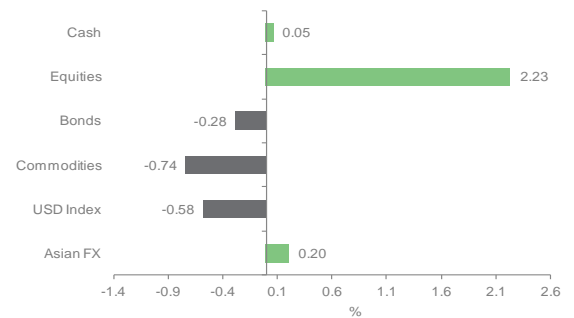
Bonds: EM bonds under pressure from rising US yields

- **US, European yields rise.** US 10-year Treasury yields rebounded towards 3% on the back of solid jobs data for May. However, we note that speculative positions remain extremely short, which should limit any further significant rise in yields. German bond yields extended their rebound as an ECB official signalled the central bank was likely to set out the path for ending its bond purchase programme at its 14 June policy meeting. We would continue to reduce exposure to US and European government bonds, where appropriate, in favour of EM bonds.
- **Pockets of value emerging.** Emerging Market (EM) bonds and Developed Market (DM) Investment Grade (IG) bonds declined, highlighting their sensitivity to higher US Treasury yields. Some EM bonds were particularly hurt by renewed FX weakness in Brazil and Mexico. However, we note that EM bond outflows have moderated off late. We continue to believe EM government bonds offer an increasingly attractive entry opportunity, especially if the USD turns lower, and retain our comfort with Asian USD bonds given their track record of lower volatility relative to their non-Asian peers.

FX: EUR rebounds on ECB policy expectations

- **EUR rebounds from 11-month lows.** EUR/USD jumped from just above 1.15 to a three-week high on comments from an ECB policymaker that suggested the central bank would discuss ending its bond purchase programme at its 14 June meeting. Recent wage growth and inflation data were also a support. The speed and timing of the closure of the bond purchase programme will be watched closely. The EUR/USD's break above 1.1730 and the current momentum suggest the pair could test the 1.1960-1.2060 resistance area in the coming days. The G7 leaders meeting on 8-10 June is another likely driver of the pair.
- **AUD to test key resistance.** AUD/USD continued to rebound from just below 0.75 on strong growth data, although the RBA signalled rates would remain on hold, given little signs of inflationary pressures. We believe the pair is likely to test key resistance just above the 200DMA of 0.7750 in the coming days.

Benchmark (USD) performance w/w*



*Week of 31 May 2018 to 07 June 2018

Source: MSCI, JP Morgan, DJ-UBS, Citigroup, Bloomberg, Standard Chartered (Indices used are JP Morgan Cash, MSCI AC World TR, Citi World Big, DJ-UBS Commodity, DXY and ADXY)

S&P500 index has the strongest technical support

Technical levels of key market indicators as on 07 June

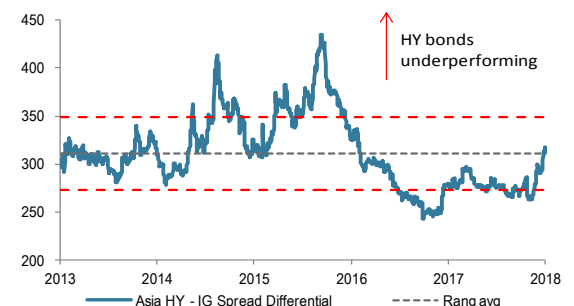
Index	Spot	1st support	1st resistance	Short-term trend
S&P500	2,770	2,676	2,795	↑
STOXX 50	3,460	3,407	3,497	→
FTSE 100	7,704	7,508	7,890	↓
Nikkei 225	22,823	21,900	23,500	↑
Shanghai Comp	3,109	3,020	3,230	↓
Hang Seng	31,513	29,800	31,800	→
MSCI Asia ex-Japan	732	691	750	↑
MSCI EM	1,150	1,097	1,170	↓
Brent crude oil (ICE)	78	72	81	→
Gold	1,297	1,279	1,320	→
UST 10Y Yield	2.94	2.71	3.13	↑

Source: Trading Central, Standard Chartered

Note: Arrows represent short-term trend opinions

Yield premiums on Asia HY bonds have risen more than IG bonds in recent weeks amid China property sector defaults; we continue to prefer IG bonds

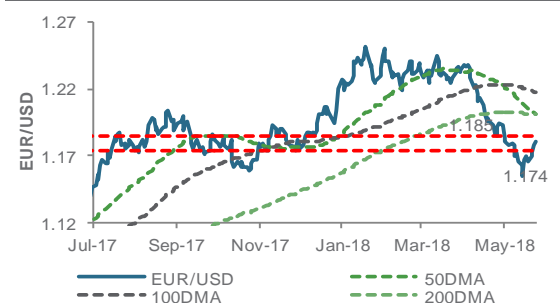
Yield premium differential between Asia HY and IG bonds



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

EUR/USD extended its rebound as the ECB prepared to discuss ending its bond-buying programme

EUR/USD



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Top client questions

Q1. Is the USD recovery losing momentum? Does this mean it is time to raise exposure to the EUR?

The USD has pared back some of the gains made since April. Part of the reason for the pullback is likely that markets have already priced in expectations for a steady tightening policy by the US Federal Reserve, extending into 2019. Thus, on balance, any surprise now would likely be for a more dovish Fed stance. This would be USD-negative. The USD is also likely to remain constrained by broader concerns over the financing of the twin budget/trade deficits. Finally, assuming that markets remain orderly, a more “risk-on” environment is unlikely to be USD-supportive.

Meanwhile, the sharp fall in the EUR since mid-April was likely driven by the historically wide yield spreads in favour of US Treasuries, a period of flat economic performance in Europe, and continued robust growth and inflation in the US. The move took on added momentum due to the unwinding of excessive levels of speculative long EUR positions, in our view. Finally, the formation of a populist government in Italy appeared to threaten the stability of the Euro area. After the “perfect storm”, “calmer seas” appear to have returned.

It is likely that the ECB will announce – possibly on 14 June or in July – the roadmap for ending its quantitative easing (QE) programme. This should support the EUR near-term. There also appears to be a “feel-good factor” returning to the broader Euro area markets, and economic performance is likely to improve over the summer.

This combination of European and US perspectives supports our short-term view that the broader USD will continue to weaken and the EUR/USD will track back towards 1.20, where it may begin to meet some resistance. Our longer-term view on the USD remains bearish and EUR/USD remains bullish.

The coming week should bring more clarity on some of the geopolitical and central bank policy drivers, beginning with the G7 meeting this weekend, followed by the Trump/Kim summit on 12 June, the Fed rate announcement on 13 June and the ECB meeting on 14 June.

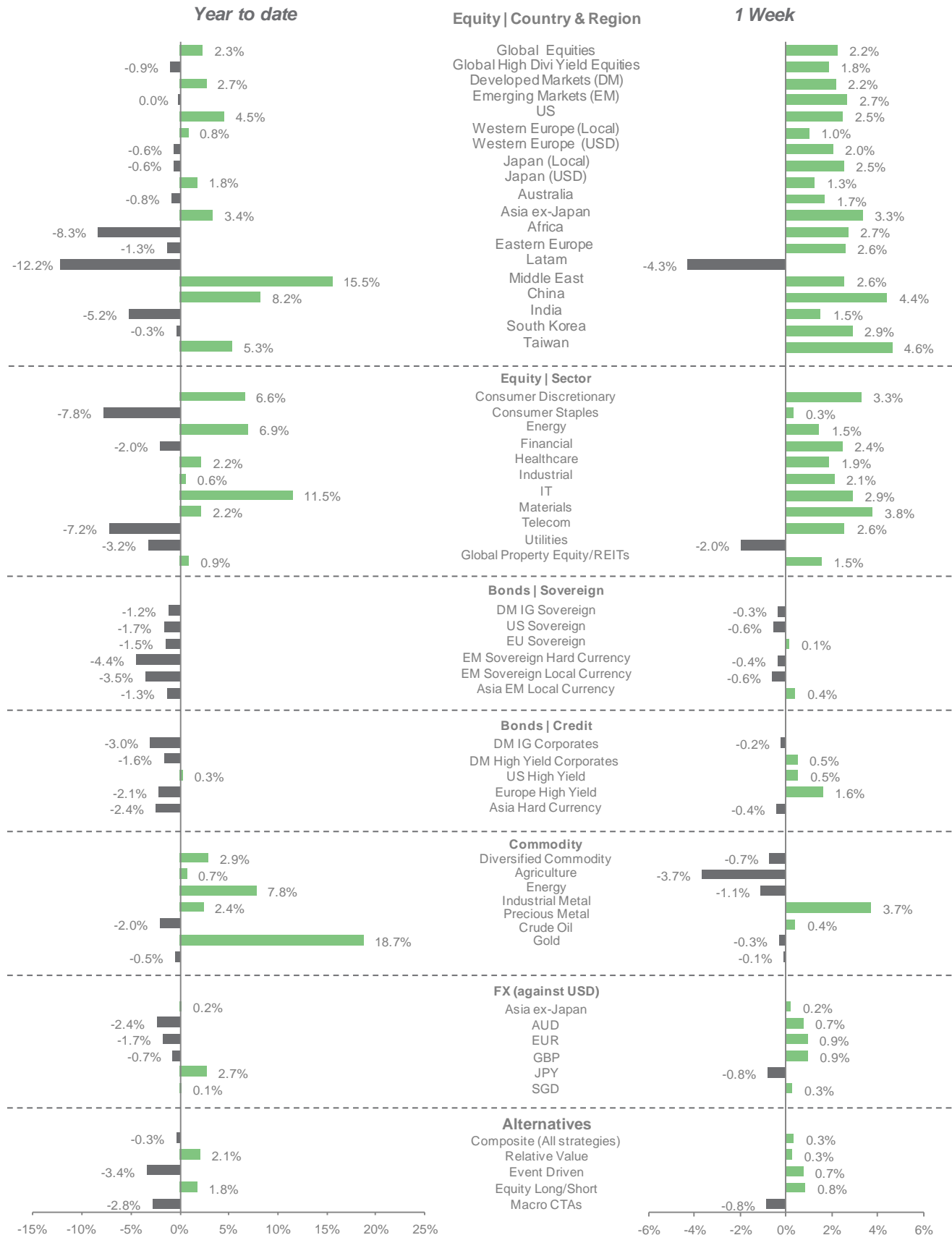
The USD index has fallen back from around 95 level in recent weeks as risk appetite returned

USD index



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Market performance summary*



*Performance in USD terms unless otherwise stated, YTD period from 31 December 2017 to 07 June 2018, 1 week period: 31 May 2018 to 07 June 2018
Sources: MSCI, JP Morgan, Barclays Capital, Citigroup, Dow Jones, HFRX, FTSE, Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Economic & Market Calendar

	Event	Next Week	Date	Period	Expected	Prior
MON	JN	Core Machine Orders y/y	11-Jun-18	Apr	3.8%	-2.4%
	UK	Industrial Production y/y	11-Jun-18	Apr	–	2.9%
TUE	UK	Average Weekly Earnings 3m/y/y	12-Jun-18	Apr	–	2.6%
	EC	ZEW Survey Expectations	12-Jun-18	Jun	–	2.4
	IN	CPI y/y	12-Jun-18	May	–	4.6%
	US	CPI Ex Food and Energy y/y	12-Jun-18	May	2.2%	2.1%
WED	UK	CPI Core y/y	13-Jun-18	May	–	2.1%
THUR	US	FOMC Rate Decision (Upper Bound)	14-Jun-18	13-Jun	2.0%	1.75%
	CH	Retail Sales y/y	14-Jun-18	May	9.6%	9.4%
	CH	Industrial Production y/y	14-Jun-18	May	7.0%	7.0%
	CH	Fixed Assets Ex Rural YTD y/y	14-Jun-18	May	7.0%	7.0%
	UK	Retail Sales Ex Auto Fuel y/y	14-Jun-18	May	–	1.5%
	EC	ECB Main Refinancing Rate	14-Jun-18	14-Jun	–	0.0%
	US	Retail Sales Ex Auto and Gas	14-Jun-18	May	–	0.3%
FRI/SAT	US	Industrial Production m/m	15-Jun-18	May	0.3%	0.7%
	US	U. of Mich. Sentiment	15-Jun-18	Jun P	98.2	98
	IN	Exports y/y	15-Jun-18	May	–	5.2%
	JN	BOJ Policy Balance Rate	15-Jun-18	15-Jun	–	-0.1%

	Event	This Week	Date	Period	Actual	Prior
MON	EC	Sentix Investor Confidence	4-Jun-18	Jun	9.3	19.2
	EC	PPI y/y	4-Jun-18	Apr	2.0%	2.1%
TUE	CH	Caixin China PMI Composite	5-Jun-18	May	52.3	52.3
	AU	RBA Cash Rate Target	5-Jun-18	5-Jun	1.5%	1.5%
	IN	Nikkei India PMI Composite	5-Jun-18	May	50.4	51.9
	UK	Markit/CIPS UK Composite PMI	5-Jun-18	May	54.5	53.2
	EC	Retail Sales y/y	5-Jun-18	Apr	1.7%	1.5%
	US	ISM Non-Manf. Composite	5-Jun-18	May	58.6	56.8
WED	IN	RBI Repurchase Rate	6-Jun-18	6-Jun	6.25%	6.0%
	US	Trade Balance	6-Jun-18	Apr	-\$46.2b	-\$47.2b
THUR	GE	Factory Orders WDA y/y	7-Jun-18	Apr	-0.1%	2.9%
FRI/SAT	GE	Exports SA m/m	8-Jun-18	Apr	–	1.8%
	GE	Industrial Production WDA y/y	8-Jun-18	Apr	–	3.2%
	CH	Exports y/y	8-Jun-18	May	–	12.7%

Previous 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

Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered; key indicators highlighted in blue

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