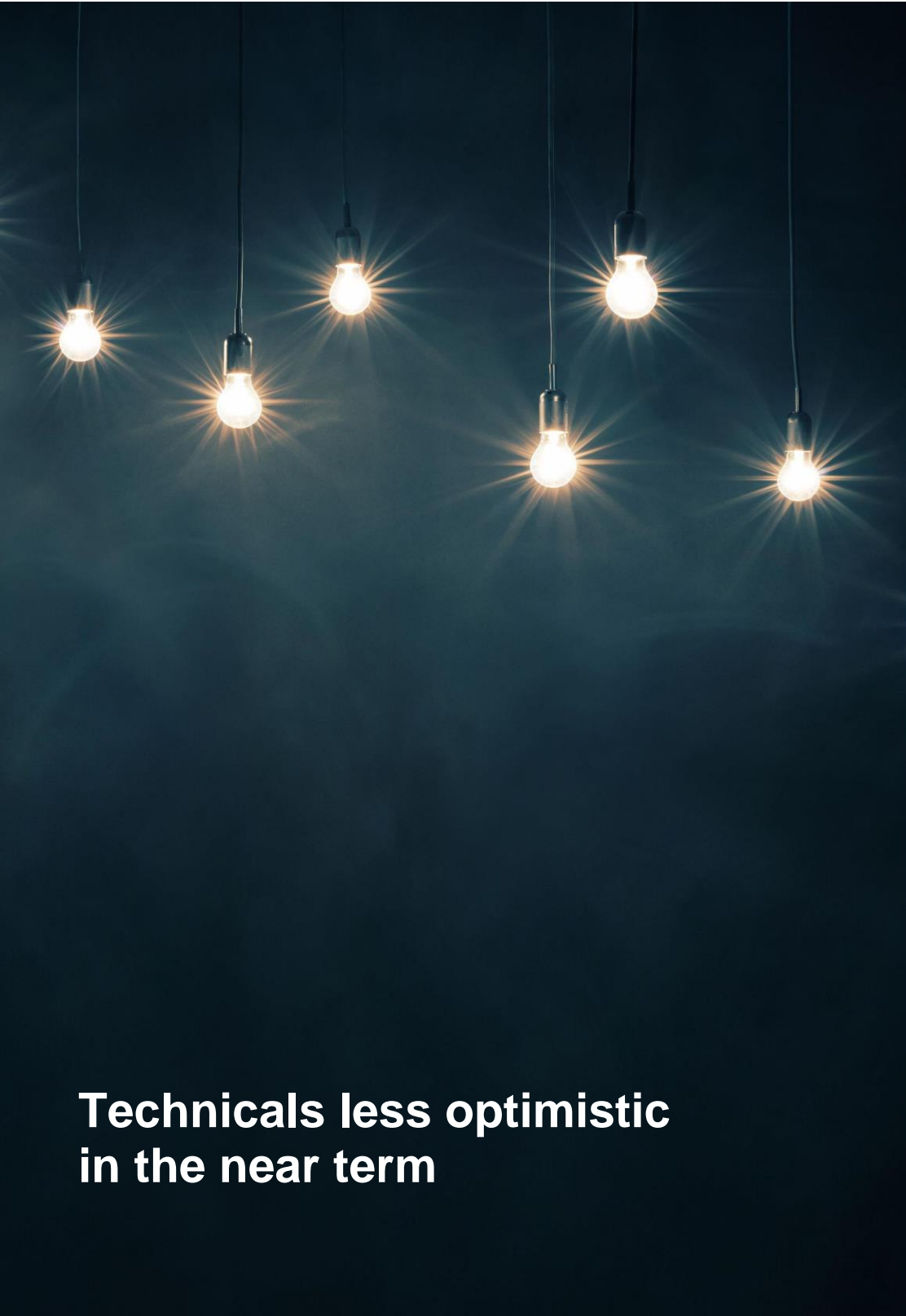


Weekly Market View



Technical less optimistic in the near term

The escalation in US-China trade tensions is a key near-term driver for asset and currency markets, with a relative lack of liquidity expected in August

The Fed has the most room to cut in the current dovish global rate environment, but most central banks will continue with their easing policy

Equities: Q2 earnings and outlook continues to be supportive of equities in the US

Technicals: Less optimistic in the near term

Bonds: Trade developments depress yields and flatten the yield curve

FX: The USD peaking process could gain traction, with safe-havens leading the way

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Chart of the week: USD/CNH breaks the psychological 7.00 level

USD/CNH breaks above the sensitive 7.00 level

USD/CNH (daily) with technical levels



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Editorial

Escalation in US-China tensions impacted markets

In a surprised move, the US proposed an additional 10% tariff on the remaining US\$300bn Chinese imports. This was followed by USD/CNY breaking above the psychologically important 7.00 level on Monday and a subsequent move by the US administration to officially decree China as a currency manipulator. While this is largely symbolic move and any damage from this status on China is likely to be limited, the ongoing trade escalation is likely to exacerbate the current global manufacturing slowdown and keep inflation weak enough to justify additional easing by the Federal Reserve (Fed) and other central banks.

We expect further near-term trade escalations to be contained, but much will depend on the US administration's next steps, and when they are taken. The current pattern seems clear; an action from the US will likely prompt a reaction from China. We are also cautious of the (usually) more illiquid markets in August, which could exacerbate market movements both on the upside and downside. **See page 3 for the impact on asset classes and page 5 for short-term technical levels.**

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Concurrent geopolitical tensions add to market noise

Social unrest in Hong Kong, continuing North Korean missile launches, a growing rift between Japan and South Korea and India's move to change the political status of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are ongoing sources of regional geopolitical tensions. We see these as short-term disturbances that could impact markets in the coming weeks but may also provide medium-term investment opportunities if markets overreact.

HIBOR surges

The HKD, while pegged to the USD, is also influenced by the CNY due to the city's economic links with China. The HKD fell sharply on 5 August when additional Chinese tariffs were announced. Meanwhile, the Hong Kong Interbank Offered Rate (HIBOR) surged, with the three-month Hibor jumping 20bps to 2.4782%. We believe this will likely discourage short sellers from betting against the HKD. The moves have increased local borrowing costs, and the Hibor will likely remain elevated and above the London Interbank Offered Rate (Libor) if political protests continue and HKD selling pressure mounts. We do not see a threat to the current USD/HKD peg, but investor sentiment could remain subdued until these issues are resolved.

More central banks turning dovish

Three major central banks surprised markets unexpectedly this week. The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) announced no change in the policy rate, but signalled its outlook was for lower rates for longer. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ) and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cut rates by 0.5% and 0.35%, respectively, against market expectation of a 0.25% cut. More rate cuts are expected globally and supports growing market expectations for more aggressive moves by the Fed following the "hawkish" cut in July.

At the time of writing, consensus suggests 69% and 31% probability of a 25bp and 50bp Fed rate cut in September, respectively. If global equity markets continue to see pressure through August, we would not be surprised to see the probability of US rate cuts to rise considerably. As we had highlighted previously, the Fed has far more scope to cut rates, compared to the European Central Bank (ECB), the Bank of Japan (BoJ) and most other countries, who may have to eventually consider fiscal stimulus as the answer to slowing growth and disinflationary pressure.

Impact on asset markets

Equity markets have seen a shift towards defensiveness in the short-term. Global equity markets have fallen 3.7%, with Asia ex-Japan down 6.4% and the S&P500 lower by 3.2% over the past week. We believe the downward pressure in stocks will be at least partially offset by falling interest rates.

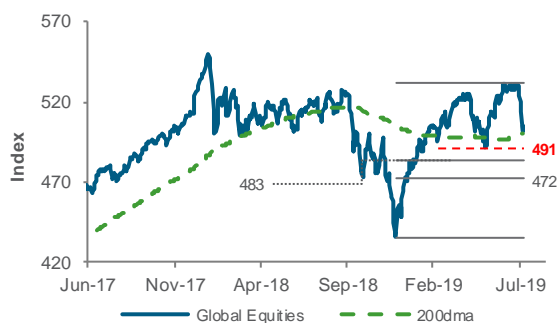
We expect the USD peaking process to continue to play out. Interest rate differentials between US and the rest of world will likely continue to narrow, combined with the administration's focus on exchange rates and currency manipulation. We believe this USD weakness will not be broad-based at the outset and prefer safe-haven currencies like JPY, CHF, the "USD alternative" EUR, and the Brexit-hit undervalued GBP, rather than trade-sensitive currencies such as the AUD and the NZD.

What we are watching

CNY fixing rates (daily); US administration trade actions (ongoing); Fed officials' comments (ongoing); safe-haven flows (ongoing); HK unrest.

Testing crucial support

MSCI AC World Index (daily) with technical levels



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Key support at 2% broken

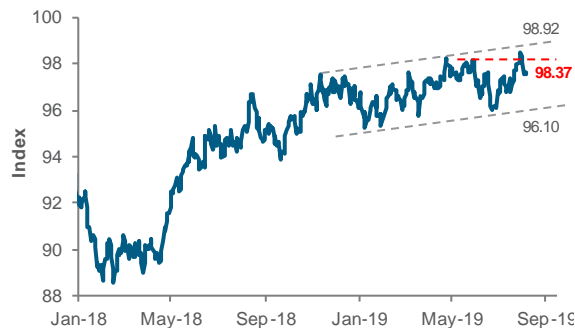
10-year US Treasury yield (weekly) with technical levels



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

DXY pulls back from stiff resistance

DXY (daily) with technical levels



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

What does this mean for investors?

Equities

We remain Overweight global equities. Healthcare and energy our preferred sectors the US. Over 80% of S&P500 companies have reported, with Q2 earnings growth now expected at +2.7% y/y, an increase from Q1 growth of +1.6%. Healthcare saw 95% of the reported companies beating expectations. Communication services has the strongest earnings growth at +16.4% y/y. Energy earnings are down -9.4% y/y due to lower crude oil prices, but overall sector earnings were 6.4% better than expected and we believe earnings will rebound with over 29% earnings growth in 2020. Overall 2019 growth remains stable at around 2%.

The decline in global bond yields YTD has renewed investor interest in income-generating assets, including REITs. The US and Asia ex-Japan REIT indices have risen 15% YTD, as investors seek the certainty of income over less certain capital gains. Looking ahead, performance in H2 may not be as strong as H1. Nonetheless, with the US and Asia ex-Japan REITs yielding between 4% and 6%, the income potential of the REITs remains intact.

Bonds

Trade developments depress yields and flatten curves. Global bond yields fell amid CNY depreciation and rising trade tensions. Trump's designation of China as a currency manipulator weighed on risk sentiment as US 10-year Treasury yields plunged. However, with the PBoC coming out to reassure investors that significant CNY depreciation is unlikely, Treasury yields have stabilised at around 1.70%. **See page 5 for short-term technical levels.**

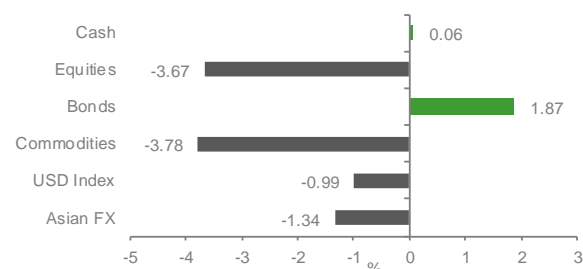
Our preference for EM USD government bonds remains. While the backdrop for Emerging Markets (EM) has worsened over the past week, risk premia will unlikely rise significantly over the next few weeks. A continued search for yield and still-reasonable valuations drive our positive view. However, sensitivity to a sharp rise in US interest rates remains a key risk for EM USD government bonds. Asia USD bonds have remained surprisingly resilient despite recent market volatility, highlighting its defensive characteristics. They remain our second ranked within our bond sub-asset classes.

FX, Commodities

We expect the USD peaking process to gain traction. USD/JPY remains vulnerable to repatriation flows amid near-term market uncertainty and could test the support 105 level. EUR/USD could continue its climb from recent lows to test 1.1450 as the most prominent USD alternative. While safe-havens may become more attractive initially, currencies impacted by slowing global trade, such as the AUD and the NZD, are likely to remain weak until the USD decline begins in earnest. Gold has moved sharply higher, and the sustained break above USD 1,485 – 1,500/oz could open a further rally towards USD 1,585/oz.

Oil falls back into a bear market. Fears of a demand slowdown have returned to the fore as markets are pricing in more troubled US-China relations. Our expectation of a range-bound oil price (USD 60-65/bbl) in the next 6-12 months remains unchanged. This is driven by ongoing Middle East tensions and continued OPEC discipline, which will likely mitigate renewed demand fears on escalating trade tensions.

Benchmark (USD) performance w/w*



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)

*Week of 31 July 2019 to 7 August 2019

Equity market technicals have turned bearish

Technical levels of key markets as of 8 August 2019

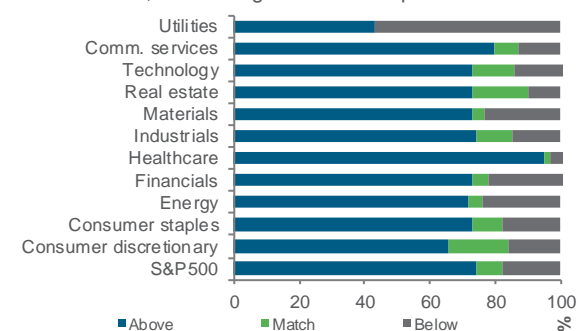
Index	Spot	1st support	1st resistance	Short-term trend
S&P	2,884	2,820	2,945	🔴
STOXX 50	3,310	3,250	3,425	🟢
FTSE 100	7,199	7,135	7,260	🔴
Nikkei 225	20,540	20,100	21,300	🔴
Shanghai Comp	2,769	2,700	2,885	🔴
Hang Seng	25,997	24,550	26,920	🔴
MSCI Asia ex-Japan	597	568	630	🔴
MSCI EM	973	930	1,021	🔴
Brent (ICE)	57	55	66	🔴
Gold	1,507	1,445	1,535	🟢
UST 10Y Yield	1.71	1.54	1.94	🔴

Source: Trading Central, Standard Chartered

Note: Arrows represent short-term trend opinions

Q2 earnings continue to surprise on the upside

S&P500 index; Q2 earnings relative to expectations



Source: FactSet, Standard Chartered

*As of 6 August 2019

Gold remains attractive

Gold (USD/oz), Global negative yielding debt (Index; RHS)



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Top client question

What are technical charts on risky assets suggesting in the short term?

Risks are tilted to the downside for the S&P500. The S&P500 index's failed attempt to break past key resistance at the 2018 and H1 19 highs is a sign that the index could be settling with a weak bias in the near term. Moreover, the impulsive nature of the drop from last week has exposed downside risks towards the fairly strong support at the early June low of 2,729 (about 5% below Tuesday's close). A break below the support could open the way towards 2,610 (the 61.8% retracement of the 2019 rise), about 10% from Tuesday's close. There is strong support at the December low of 2,347 (about 18% from Tuesday's close). On the upside, the July high of 3,028 remains a tough resistance.

Global equities could break lower. The MSCI All Country World index has been capped by strong resistance at the late-2018 highs of 527-528. The index is now approaching key support at the May low of 491. Given the sharp fall in recent days, the odds have risen of a drop towards 472 (the 61.8% retracement of the rise from end of 2018), about 6% from Tuesday's close.

Asia ex-Japan nearing key support. The MSCI Asia ex-Japan index is currently testing a key support: an uptrend line from mid-2015 (now at about 600), slightly above the Q4 18 low of 571 (about 4% below). This support area is crucial, and a break below could imply further downside, initially towards the end-2016 low of 506 (15% below), with strong support at the early 2016 low of 435 (27% below).

On balance, volatility could remain high in the near term, especially given the thin/relatively low liquidity summer period. However, we believe fundamentals will overshadow technicals eventually, triggering a rebound in risky asset markets.

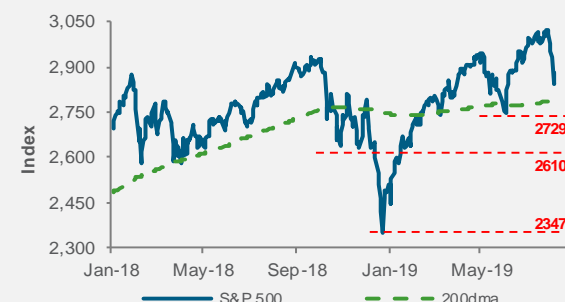
US 10-year Treasury yields fall spectacularly. The US 10-year Treasury yields' fall below the psychological and technical support (includes the September 2017 low) of 2.00% has opened the way towards the 2016 record low of 1.32%. For the downtrend to reverse, at minimum, the yield would need to break above immediate resistance on a downtrend line from end-2018 (now at about 2.20%).

Gold's uptrend resumes. Spot gold's (XAU/USD) sideways consolidation in recent weeks was unsurprising given the sharp rally from the end-May low of USD 1,274/oz, suggesting a flag pattern on the daily charts. This week's break above the upper edge of the pattern indicates the consolidation has ended, and the uptrend has resumed. XAU/USD has broken resistance at USD 1,483/oz (the 50% retracement of the 2011-15 fall). A sustained break higher could open the way towards USD 1,585/oz (the 61.8% retracement).

We remain bearish on the USD. Here are a couple of signs on the daily charts that suggest a weak bias in the US dollar index – a failed attempt to break above stiff resistance at the Q2 high of 98.37 and a retreat from the top edge of an upward sloping channel from the end of 2018. The index risks falling towards the lower edge of the channel (now at about 96.10; about 1.5% below the current level).

Strong support expected at June's low

S&P 500 (daily) with technical levels



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

Asia ex-Japan equities nearing key support

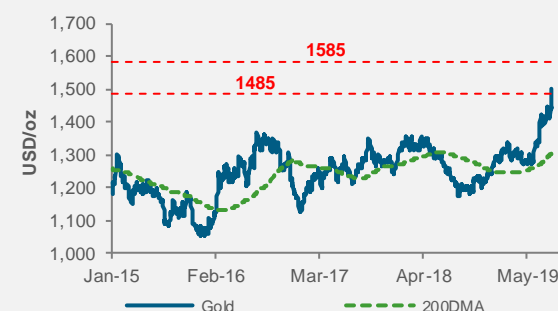
MSCI Asia ex-Japan (weekly) with technical levels



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

The uptrend resumes

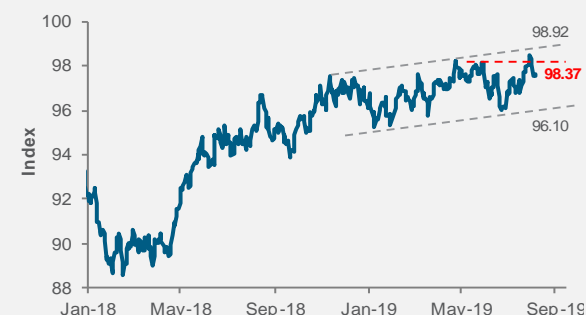
Gold (daily) with technical levels



Source: Bloomberg, Standard Chartered

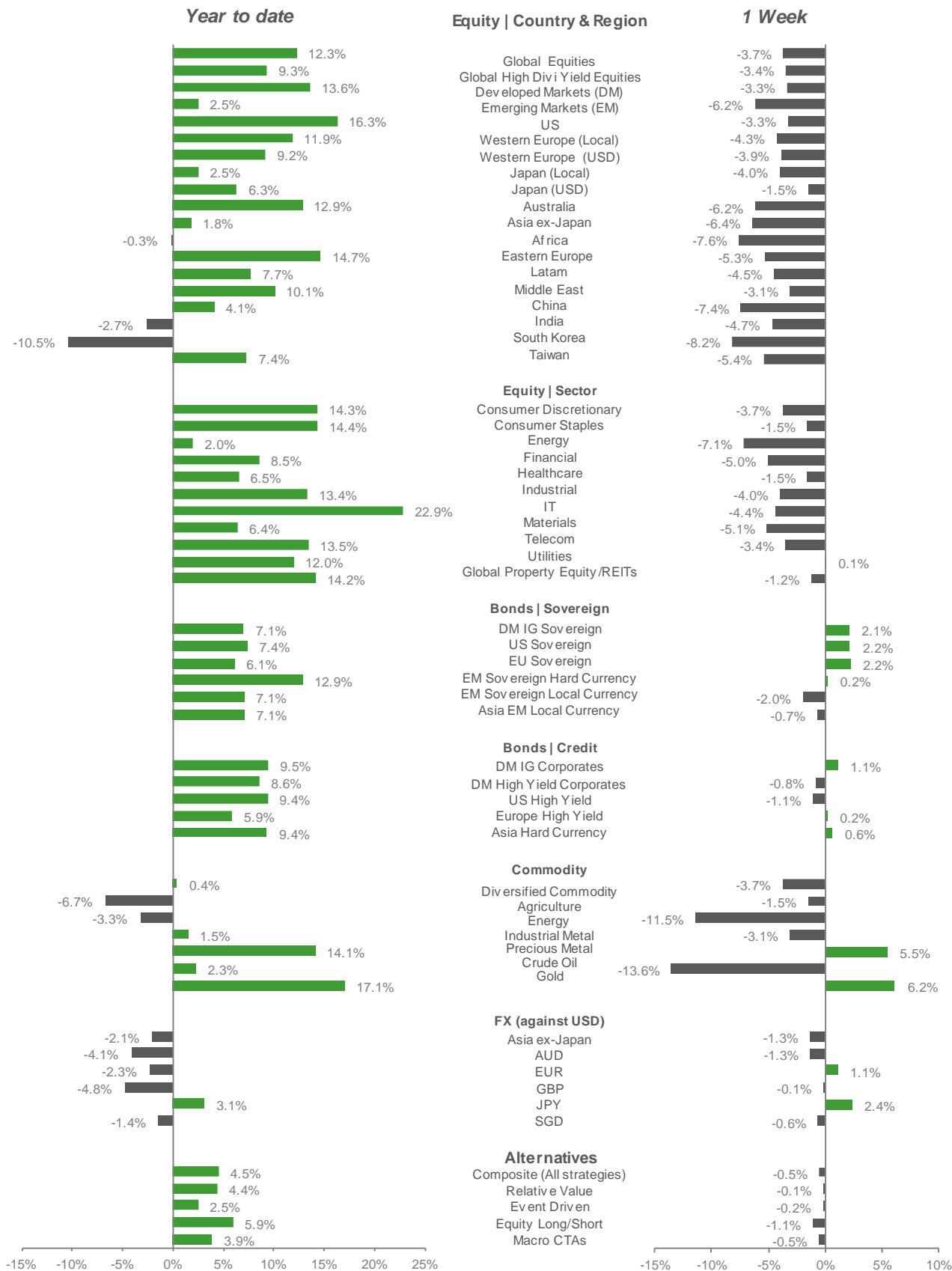
Weaker bias for the dollar

USD Index (DXY – Daily) with technical levels



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, YTD period from 31 December 2018 to 07 August 2019, 1 week period: 31 July 2019 to 07 August 2019

Economic and market calendar

	Event	Next Week	Date	Period	Expected	Prior
MON						
TUE	JP	Producer Prices, Domestic, y/y	13-Aug-19	Jul	–	-0.1%
	GE	Harmonized Consumer Prices, y/y	13-Aug-19	Jul	–	1.1%
	UK	ILO Unemployment Rate	13-Aug-19	Jun	–	3.8%
	GE	ZEW Economic Sentiment	13-Aug-19	Aug	–	-24.5
	GE	ZEW Current Conditions	13-Aug-19	Aug	–	-1.1
	US	CPI MoM	13-Aug-19	Jul	0.3%	0.1%
WED	JP	Machinery Orders, y/y	14-Aug-19	Jun	–	-3.7%
	AU	Wage Price Index, y/y	14-Aug-19	Q2	–	2.3%
	CH	Industrial Output, y/y	14-Aug-19	Jul	5.8%	6.3%
	CH	Retail Sales, y/y	14-Aug-19	Jul	8.6%	9.8%
	GE	GDP Flash, y/y	14-Aug-19	Q2	–	0.6%
	IN	Wholesale Prices, y/y	14-Aug-19	Jul	1.9%	2.0%
	UK	CPI y/y	14-Aug-19	Jul	–	2.0%
	EU	GDP Flash Estimate, y/y	14-Aug-19	Q2	1.1%	1.1%
THUR	AU	Unemployment Rate	15-Aug-19	Jul	–	5.2%
	UK	Retail Sales, y/y	15-Aug-19	Jul	–	3.8%
	US	Initial Jobless Claims	15-Aug-19	5-Aug	–	–
	US	Retail Sales, m/m	15-Aug-19	Jul	0.3%	0.4%
	US	Industrial Production, m/m	15-Aug-19	Aug	0.2%	0.0%
FRI/ SAT						
	Event	This Week	Date	Period	Actual	Prior
MON	CH	Caixin China PMI Composite	05-Aug-19	Jul	–	50.6
	CH	Exports y/y	05-Aug-19	Jul	–	-1.3%
	EC	Sentix Investor Confidence	05-Aug-19	Aug	–	-5.8
	IN	Markit India PMI Composite	05-Aug-19	Jul	–	50.8
	RU	Markit Russia PMI Composite	05-Aug-19	Jul	–	49.2
	UK	Markit/CIPS UK Composite PMI	05-Aug-19	Jul	–	49.7
	US	ISM Non-Manufacturing Index	05-Aug-19	Jul	55.5	55.1
TUE	AU	RBA Cash Rate Target	06-Aug-19	6-Aug	–	1.0%
	GE	Factory Orders WDA y/y	06-Aug-19	Jun	–	-8.6%
WED	CA	Markit India PMI Composite	07-Aug-19	Jul	–	50.8
	GE	Industrial Production WDA y/y	07-Aug-19	Jun	–	-3.7%
	IN	RBI Repurchase Rate	07-Aug-19	7-Aug	5.5%	5.8%
THUR						
FRI/ SAT	CA	Markit Russia PMI Composite	09-Aug-19	Jul	–	49.2
	CH	CPI y/y	09-Aug-19	Jul	–	2.7%
	GE	Exports SA m/m	09-Aug-19	Jun	–	1.1%

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

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

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ESG data			
A	Excellent	C	Fair
B	Good	D	Unsatisfactory

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