

Weekly Review

Week ending 22nd March 2013

Late last night officials from the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (the “troika”) came together with Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades, to strike a 10 billion euro bailout deal, in order to avert the collapse of the country’s banking system and keep Cyprus in the Eurozone. After being approved by finance ministers from the 17 Eurozone member states, the deal will see Cyprus’ second largest bank, Laiki Bank, split into a “good” bank and a “bad” bank, with the good assets held in the former being eventually absorbed into the Bank of Cyprus. Unlike the initial proposal, which proposed a bank levy of 6.75% on small savers and 9.9% on larger investors, the new deal ensures that deposits below EUR 100,000 remain fully guaranteed. Although the rate to be applied on deposits worth in excess of EUR 100,000 is still to be decided in the coming weeks, the president of the Eurogroup, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, said the deal has “put an end to uncertainty” surrounding Cyprus’ economy.

In the US, the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting on Wednesday saw attendees vote to keep the rate of asset purchases at their current level of USD 85 billion per month, whilst also committing to maintaining interest rates at today’s ultra-low levels until unemployment falls below 6.5% from its current level of 7.7%. In the statement which followed the meeting, the FOMC highlighted “signs of improvement” in the labour market, and lowered their forecast of unemployment from 7.6% to 7.4% for the end of 2013. The statement, however, also highlighted the downside risks to the committee’s forecasts, after growth for 2013 was lowered by 0.1% to 2.6%. Elsewhere, the National Association of Realtors (NAR) reported that sales of existing homes during the 12 months to the end of February had risen to their highest level since November 2009, at 4.98 million units, whilst the US Conference Board index of economic indicators - a leading indicator used to forecast future economic activity - rose by 0.5 points to 94.8 in February.

In the UK, last Wednesday’s budget included few surprises, with Chancellor George Osborne outlining plans for a “modest loosening” in the next two years followed by a period of austerity from 2015-16 when public sector national insurance contributions

will rise. In his seventh fiscal statement since taking office, the main points addressed by Mr. Osborne included a reduction in corporation tax (down 1% to 20%, to leave the UK with the lowest corporation tax of any major economy); a “help to buy” scheme which will see the government provide interest free equity stakes of up to 20% in new build homes, and an accelerated timetable for raising the personal income tax allowance to GBP 10,000. Growth in 2013 was halved from December’s 1.2% projection to 0.6%, whilst the Office of Budget Responsibility also lowered growth in 2014 by 0.2% to 1.8%. Ratings agency Fitch placed the UK’s triple-A rating on credit watch negative in the wake of the budget, following concerns over higher than expected debt levels and the downward revisions to the economy’s growth forecast.

In Asia, the preliminary HSBC Manufacturing PMI (Purchasing Managers’ index) for March - which is considered a better indicator of the sector’s health compared to January and February’s readings, given the effect of the Chinese New Year - rose to 51.7 from 50.4 previously. Meanwhile in Japan, in his first press conference as governor of the Bank of Japan, Haruhiko Kuroda promised to do whatever he can to achieve the government’s 2% inflation target “at the earliest possible time”, and said Japan’s central bank will target the domestic economy instead of currency manipulation in order to achieve this aim.

Global equities fell by 0.8% last week, following falls in most major markets. Emerging markets lagged their developed counterparts, down by 2.5%, as uncertainty over Cyprus’ banking sector contributed to declines of 3.8% by equities in emerging Europe. Fixed interest securities generally outperformed equities over the week, with global government bonds returning 0.6%. Credit underperformed government bonds, whilst UK investment grade bonds offered some of the highest returns in developed markets, up by 1.0% (gilts) and 0.7% (corporate) respectively. Global property securities fell by 0.9% whilst the broad commodities index declined by 0.7%, despite gold appreciating by 1.0% over the week.

Returns to 22 March 2013

| Asset Class/Region | Index | Currency | Currency returns | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|----------|---------------------------|---------------|----------|
| | | | Week ending 22 March 2013 | Month to date | YTD 2013 |
| Developed Market Equities | | | | | |
| United States | S&P 500 NR | USD | -0.2% | 2.9% | 9.5% |
| United Kingdom | FTSE All Share TR | GBP | -1.3% | 1.1% | 10.0% |
| Continental Europe | MSCI Europe ex UK NR | EUR | -1.5% | 1.6% | 6.3% |
| Japan | Topix TR | JPY | -1.2% | 6.5% | 20.8% |
| Asia Pacific (ex Japan) | MSCI Pacific ex Japan TR | USD | -2.1% | -1.0% | 6.5% |
| Global | MSCI World NR | USD | -0.8% | 2.1% | 7.5% |
| Emerging Market Equities | | | | | |
| Emerging Europe | MSCI EM Europe NR | USD | -3.8% | -2.1% | -3.1% |
| Emerging Asia | MSCI EM Asia NR | USD | -2.4% | -4.4% | -3.4% |
| Emerging Latin America | MSCI EM Latin America NR | USD | -2.3% | -2.1% | -1.3% |
| BRICs | MSCI BRIC NR | USD | -2.9% | -3.4% | -3.7% |
| South Africa | FTSE JSE All Share TR | USD | -2.7% | -1.4% | -6.2% |
| Global emerging markets | MSCI EM (Emerging Markets) NR | USD | -2.5% | -3.6% | -3.5% |
| Bonds | | | | | |
| US Treasuries | JP Morgan United States Government Bond Index TR | USD | 0.4% | -0.1% | -0.4% |
| US Treasuries (inflation protected) | Barclays Capital U.S. Government Inflation Linked TR | USD | 0.3% | 0.0% | -0.8% |
| US Corporate (investment grade) | Barclays Capital U.S. Corporate Investment Grade TR | USD | 0.4% | -0.1% | -0.2% |
| US High Yield | Barclays Capital U.S. High Yield 2% Issuer Cap TR | USD | 0.1% | 0.9% | 2.7% |
| UK Gilts | JP Morgan United Kingdom Government Bond Index TR | GBP | 1.0% | 1.2% | 0.1% |
| UK Corporate (investment grade) | BofA Merrill Lynch Sterling Non Gilts TR | GBP | 0.7% | 1.2% | 1.2% |
| Euro Government Bonds | Citigroup EMU GBI TR | EUR | 0.5% | 0.9% | 0.6% |
| Euro Corporate (investment grade) | Barclays Capital Euro Aggregate Corporate TR | EUR | 0.1% | 0.5% | 0.5% |
| Euro High Yield | BofA Merrill Lynch Euro High Yield Constrained TR | EUR | -0.8% | 0.3% | 0.3% |
| Japanese Government | JP Morgan Japan Government Bond Index TR | JPY | 0.6% | 1.0% | 2.2% |
| Australian Government | JP Morgan Australia GBI TR | AUD | 0.5% | -1.0% | -0.8% |
| Global Government Bonds | JP Morgan Global GBI | USD | 0.6% | -0.2% | -2.8% |
| Global Bonds | Citigroup World Broad Investment Grade (WBIG) TR | USD | 0.3% | -0.1% | -1.9% |
| Global Convertible Bonds | UBS Global Convertible Bond | USD | -0.5% | 1.1% | 3.3% |
| Emerging Market Bonds | JP Morgan EMBI + | USD | -0.3% | -1.1% | -3.3% |

Source: Bloomberg, March 2013

Returns to 22 March 2013

| Asset Class/Region | Index | Currency | Currency returns | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------|---------------------------|---------------|----------|
| | | | Week ending 22 March 2013 | Month to date | YTD 2013 |
| Property | | | | | |
| US Property Securities | MSCI US REIT NR | USD | -0.5% | 1.4% | 6.3% |
| UK Property Securities | FTSE EPRA/NAREIT United Kingdom TR | GBP | -1.2% | -0.7% | 2.6% |
| Europe ex UK Property Securities | FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed Europe ex UK TR | EUR | -0.5% | 0.1% | 1.1% |
| Australian Property Securities | FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Australia TR | AUD | -2.1% | -2.4% | 5.5% |
| Asia Property Securities | FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed Asia TR | USD | -1.3% | 0.7% | 6.2% |
| Global Property Securities | FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed TR | USD | -0.9% | 0.9% | 4.8% |
| Currencies | | | | | |
| Euro | | USD | -0.7% | -0.5% | -1.5% |
| UK Pound Sterling | | USD | 0.8% | 0.4% | -6.3% |
| Japanese Yen | | USD | 0.8% | -2.0% | -8.2% |
| Australian Dollar | | USD | 0.3% | 2.2% | 0.5% |
| South African Rand | | USD | -1.2% | -3.0% | -8.9% |
| Swiss Franc | | USD | -0.2% | -0.4% | -2.7% |
| Chinese Yuan | | USD | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.3% |
| Commodities & Alternatives | | | | | |
| Commodities | RICI TR | USD | -0.7% | 0.2% | 0.0% |
| Agricultural Commodities | RICI Agriculture TR | USD | -0.5% | 0.8% | 0.5% |
| Oil | ICE Crude Oil CR | USD | -1.2% | -4.1% | -2.3% |
| Gold | Gold Index | USD | 1.0% | 1.8% | -4.0% |
| Hedge Funds | HFRX Global Hedge Fund | USD | -0.1%* | 0.8%* | 3.2%* |

* Estimate

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