



FINANCIAL  
PARTNERS



RMB  
ASSET MANAGEMENT

# Weekly Review

Week ending 25<sup>th</sup> June 2010

The past week proved reasonably eventful in terms of meaningful economic, political and market related events. The UK took centre stage early on in the week as the newly appointed Chancellor George Osborne delivered on his Conservative party's pre election promise of making a concerted effort to cut the country's budget deficit. The 'emergency' budget detailed the most draconian budget cuts in at least 40 years with the objective of reducing the deficit to 2.1% of GDP by 2014/15, a significantly more ambitious plan compared to that of the previous government. A large proportion of the spending cuts (GBP32 billion) came via significant cuts to the welfare bill although tax rises (GBP8 billion) were also part of the plan with the main change being an increase in VAT from 17.5% to 20%. A levy on banks and building societies was also announced and is expected to raise around GBP2 billion per annum. The initial market reaction seemed to be relatively calm as government bonds strengthened and it seems that, depending on market sentiment, the budget has probably done enough to preserve the country's coveted AAA bond rating. The government also ratcheted GDP growth forecasts down compared to those of the previous government but a point of contention is that they still expect growth to exceed 2% beyond 2010. One of the key risks from here is whether private sector employment will pick up quickly enough so as to sufficiently compensate the sizeable reductions in public sector expenditure.

On the political front headlines over the weekend have been dominated by news from the G20 summit in Toronto. As has often been the case at these events the final outcome contained very little in terms of new agreements or commitments for change. Although all countries committed to "growth-friendly fiscal consolidation plans" there were no sanctions set for governments failing to meet the targets, and indeed the objectives of halving deficits by 2013 and stabilising the ratio of debt to GDP by 2016 are not particularly challenging in the first place given that G20 countries are already on course for achieving these goals. An exception to these commitments was granted to Japan which

is in the somewhat unique situation of being able to fund almost its entire (sizeable) debt burden internally via domestic savings. Additionally, proposals for a global levy on banks were dropped and no firm decisions were made regarding the implementation of more stringent capital requirements.

Elsewhere on the political front the prime minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd, was forced to resign ahead of a leadership challenge which he had little chance of surviving. He was replaced by the country's first female prime minister, Julia Gillard, whose initial priority must be to resolve a dispute with the mining industry over a controversial resources profit tax proposal. This poorly considered initiative, which included a retrospective tax on profits, was one of the key factors in Rudd's sudden fall from grace.

Moving on to markets, last week saw a significant degree of divergence between equity and fixed income investments. While fixed income markets moved to price in a very bad scenario for Europe, equity markets, despite selling off somewhat, did not seem to reflect the same concerns. The price of insuring Greek debt rose to a level that implies a 62% probability of default within the next five years, and spreads on periphery government debt (Portugal, Spain etc.) over German Bunds increased to levels higher than those before the EU and ECB stepped in with proposals intended to calm markets.

Looking more generally across all asset classes fixed income assets made small gains with the exception of European government bonds, while equities sold off by between -2% and -4% in local currency terms across all developed regions. Global emerging markets posted a smaller loss of -0.6% further compounding the outperformance so far this month. Currency returns were mixed versus the US Dollar; Australia, Canada, South Africa and the eurozone saw their currencies weakening versus the greenback whilst the UK's and Japan's currencies gained over 1%. Broad commodity indices mostly delivered small gains or losses for the week whilst oil slipped -3.3% lower.

## Returns to 25 June 2010

Asset Class/Region	Index	Currency	Week	Month to date	Year to date
<b>Equities</b>					
United States	S&P 500 NR	USD	-3.6	-1.1	-2.8
United Kingdom	FTSE All Share TR	GBP	-3.8	-2.2	-3.8
Continental Europe	MSCI Europe ex UK NR	EUR	-3.1	-2.0	-2.0
Japan	Topix TR	JPY	-2.0	-1.5	-3.6
Australia	S&P/ASX 300 TR	AUD	-2.9	-0.1	-7.8
Global	MSCI World NR	USD	-3.2	0.1	-6.6
Global emerging markets	MSCI World Emerging markets TR	USD	-0.6	2.4	-3.2
<b>Bonds</b>					
US Treasuries	JP Morgan United States Government Bond Index TR	USD	0.6	1.2	5.3
US Treasuries (inflation protected)	Barclays Capital U.S. Government Inflation Linked TR	USD	0.4	1.3	4.2
US Corporate (investment grade)	Barclays Capital U.S. Corporate Investment Grade TR	USD	0.7	1.3	4.9
US High yield	Barclays Capital U.S. High Yield 2% Issuer Cap TR	USD	0.3	1.5	4.7
UK Gilts	JP Morgan United Kingdom Government Bond Index TR	GBP	0.1	1.2	5.5
UK Corporate (investment grade)	Merrill Lynch Sterling Non Gilts TR	GBP	0.9	0.9	5.8
Euro Government Bonds	Citigroup EMU GBI TR	EUR	-0.1	-1.0	2.1
Euro Corporate (investment grade)	Barclays Capital Euro Aggregate Corporate TR	EUR	0.4	0.2	3.5
Euro High yield	Merrill Lynch Euro High Yield 3% constrained TR	EUR	0.1	0.2	5.9
Japanese Government	JP Morgan Japan Government Bond Index TR	JPY	0.4	0.9	1.9
Australian Government	JP Morgan Australia GBI TR	AUD	0.6	0.9	4.3
Global Government bonds	JP Morgan Global GBI	USD	0.8	1.5	-0.2
Global Bonds	Citigroup World Broad Investment Grade (WBIG) TR	USD	0.4	1.1	-1.2
Global Convertible bonds	UBS Global Convertible Bond	USD	-0.7	0.7	-3.1
Emerging Market Bonds	JP Morgan EMBI +	USD	-0.1	1.8	4.9

Source: RMB Asset Management / Bloomberg / Lipper Hindsight. June 2010.

## Returns to 25 June 2010

Asset Class/Region	Index	Currency	Week	Month to date	Year to date
<b>Property</b>					
US Property securities	MSCI US REIT TR	USD	-3.0	0.4	11.4
UK Property securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT United Kingdom TR	GBP	-2.2	-2.6	-11.5
Europe ex UK Property securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed Europe ex UK TR	EUR	-0.8	4.4	-0.7
Australian property securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Australia TR	AUD	-2.0	0.6	-0.9
Asia Property securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed Asia TR	USD	0.3	3.5	-4.9
Global Property securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed CR	USD	-1.6	1.7	-2.4
<b>Currencies</b>					
Euro		USD	-0.7	0.2	-14.3
Sterling		USD	1.2	3.1	-7.3
Yen		USD	1.7	2.0	4.3
Australian Dollar		USD	-0.6	3.1	-3.9
Rand		USD	-1.9	0.5	-3.8
<b>Commodities</b>					
Commodities	RICI TR	USD	0.4	2.7	-7.5
Agricultural Commodities	RICI Agriculture TR	USD	-0.5	1.6	-11.1
Oil	Brent Crude Index (ICE) CR	USD	-3.3	1.9	-2.2
Gold	Gold index	USD	-0.2	3.9	11.5

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