

Weekly Review

Week ending 28th September 2012

The response of European governments to the sovereign debt crisis has been described at times using a wave analogy: the rising portion of the wave represents urgency on the part of policymakers to implement reforms, whilst the falling section reflects subsequent periods of feet-dragging and political wrangling. Spain appears to be on the second part of this wave at present, with falling government bond yields prompting officials in Madrid to stall over a request for aid from the European Union. Moves last week suggested that markets may be losing patience with Mariano Rajoy's government, however, as 10-year yields briefly rose back above 6%. Commentators have pointed towards the regional elections on 21 October, which include Mr. Rajoy's home region of Galicia, as marking the most likely date for a request.

Spain unveiled its 2013 budget on Thursday, with the government targeting spending cuts rather than fresh tax increases in order to reduce its deficit. Madrid plans to cut public spending by 8.9%, including a freeze on civil servants' wages. The government also announced plans to introduce 43 new laws over the coming six months in order to liberalise the energy, services and telecom sectors.

Whilst attention remains firmly focused on Spain, the outlook for Germany has also weakened during the past six months. Commentators have tended to concentrate on Europe's core, and in particular Germany's manufacturing powerhouse, when discussing ways in which the region can grow itself out of its debt crisis. Any negative surprise in Germany, where forward looking indicators continue to track downwards (including last week's disappointing survey results from research institute the Ifo) may lead to a further setback for equity markets. Global equities declined by 1.9% last week, as stocks in Europe fell by 3.2%. Short term trend followers hoping for another month-end rally were left disappointed, as major bourses sold off by around 0.8% in local currency terms on the last day of September.

Elsewhere, global government bonds rose by 0.3% over the week, whilst investment grade corporate debt underperformed. High yield or 'junk' rated bond issuance in the third quarter was almost four times higher than during the same period last year, at USD 109 billion, after record low yields on higher rated paper prompted investors to move down the credit spectrum in search of yield opportunities.

In the US, the Conference Board Consumer Confidence index rose by 8.9 points to 70.3, its highest reading since February and ahead of consensus expectations for a print of 63.1. The Case-Shiller Home Price index of 20 major US cities showed broad-based rises by house prices in July, up by 0.4% month-on-month. New home sales dipped unexpectedly, however, down by 0.3% in August versus expectations for a rise of 2.2%, whilst the final reading of US second quarter gross domestic product downgraded growth by 0.4% to an annualised rate of 1.3%.

Chinese markets are closed at the start of this week for the five day (including the past weekend) National Day Golden Week holiday. The People's Bank of China (PBOC) injected a record RMB 290 billion into the economy on Tuesday in advance of the holiday, via reverse repurchase agreements and bill redemptions. The PBOC continues to manage expectations down, acknowledging that it will follow "prudent monetary policy" consistent with a stabilisation of growth "at a slower pace". Chinese industrial profits fell by 6.2% year-on-year in August, the fastest pace of contraction this year. The Shanghai Composite, which includes both local and foreign traded shares, is currently trading at a three year low, having fallen by approximately 5% year to date in US dollar terms.

Gold continues to trend upwards, despite a modest setback last week, with gains of 7.7% in September. In response to growing investor demand for gold and other precious metals, British bank Barclays has opened its first precious metals vault.

Returns to 28 September 2012

Asset Class/Region	Index	Currency	Currency returns		
			Week ending 28 September 2012	Month to date	YTD 2012
Developed Market Equities					
United States	S&P 500 NR	USD	-1.3%	2.5%	15.9%
United Kingdom	FTSE All Share TR	GBP	-1.8%	1.1%	8.2%
Continental Europe	MSCI Europe ex UK NR	EUR	-3.2%	1.2%	12.7%
Japan	Topix TR	JPY	-1.5%	1.8%	3.5%
Asia Pacific (ex Japan)	MSCI Pacific ex Japan TR	USD	-0.6%	3.9%	17.6%
Global	MSCI World NR	USD	-1.9%	2.7%	13.0%
Emerging Market Equities					
Emerging Europe	MSCI EM Europe NR	USD	-2.6%	4.7%	16.8%
Emerging Asia	MSCI EM Asia NR	USD	0.6%	7.3%	14.1%
Emerging Latin America	MSCI EM Latin America NR	USD	-1.8%	3.9%	4.2%
BRICs	MSCI BRIC NR	USD	-0.9%	6.5%	7.4%
South Africa	FTSE JSE All Share TR	USD	-1.3%	3.8%	12.3%
Global emerging markets	MSCI EM (Emerging Markets) NR	USD	-0.4%	6.0%	12.0%
Bonds					
US Treasuries	JP Morgan United States Government Bond Index TR	USD	0.6%	-0.4%	2.3%
US Treasuries (inflation protected)	Barclays Capital U.S. Government Inflation Linked TR	USD	0.1%	0.5%	6.5%
US Corporate (investment grade)	Barclays Capital U.S. Corporate Investment Grade TR	USD	0.7%	0.7%	8.7%
US High Yield	Barclays Capital U.S. High Yield 2% Issuer Cap TR	USD	-0.6%	1.4%	12.1%
UK Gilts	JP Morgan United Kingdom Government Bond Index TR	GBP	1.0%	-0.7%	3.0%
UK Corporate (investment grade)	BofA Merrill Lynch Sterling Non Gilts TR	GBP	0.7%	0.8%	10.9%
Euro Government Bonds	Citigroup EMU GBI TR	EUR	0.3%	1.3%	7.4%
Euro Corporate (investment grade)	Barclays Capital Euro Aggregate Corporate TR	EUR	0.2%	0.8%	10.3%
Euro High Yield	BofA Merrill Lynch Euro High Yield Constrained TR	EUR	-0.5%	2.3%	19.6%
Japanese Government	JP Morgan Japan Government Bond Index TR	JPY	0.2%	0.3%	1.9%
Australian Government	JP Morgan Australia GBI TR	AUD	1.4%	0.6%	6.4%
Global Government Bonds	JP Morgan Global GBI	USD	0.3%	1.0%	3.2%
Global Bonds	Citigroup World Broad Investment Grade (WBIG) TR	USD	0.1%	1.2%	4.4%
Global Convertible Bonds	UBS Global Convertible Bond	USD	-1.1%	1.9%	10.1%
Emerging Market Bonds	JP Morgan EMBI +	USD	0.4%	1.4%	14.3%

Source: Lipper Hindsight, September 2012.

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Asset Class/Region	Index	Currency	Currency returns		
			Week ending 28 September 2012	Month to date	YTD 2012
Property					
US Property Securities	MSCI US REIT NR	USD	-1.5%	-2.0%	14.0%
UK Property Securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT United Kingdom TR	GBP	-0.3%	-0.9%	20.5%
Europe ex UK Property Securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed Europe ex UK TR	EUR	-1.9%	-0.2%	16.3%
Australian Property Securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Australia TR	AUD	-0.3%	1.1%	24.4%
Asia Property Securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed Asia TR	USD	1.1%	6.7%	33.2%
Global Property Securities	FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Developed TR	USD	-0.6%	1.6%	21.6%
Currencies					
Euro		USD	-1.0%	2.1%	-0.9%
UK Pound Sterling		USD	-0.7%	1.7%	3.9%
Japanese Yen		USD	0.5%	0.6%	-1.1%
Australian Dollar		USD	-0.7%	0.6%	1.4%
South African Rand		USD	-0.1%	2.1%	-2.2%
Swiss Franc		USD	-0.8%	1.4%	-0.5%
Chinese Yuan		USD	0.3%	1.0%	0.1%
Commodities & Alternatives					
Commodities	RICI TR	USD	0.1%	0.4%	5.5%
Agricultural Commodities	RICI Agriculture TR	USD	-0.9%	-2.7%	8.0%
Oil	ICE Crude Oil CR	USD	2.6%	-1.4%	3.6%
Gold	Gold Index	USD	-0.5%	7.7%	16.0%
Hedge Funds	HFRX Global Hedge Fund	USD	-0.2%*	0.4%*	2.7%*

* Estimate

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