PIMCO

Monthly Market Update | June 2019

Markets Tariff-ied

In the World

An unanticipated escalation in global trade tensions precipitated a sell-off across risk assets. After the latest round of trade talks with China hit an impasse, President Trump announced an increase in tariffs from 10% to 25% on $200 billion in Chinese goods; he also signed an executive order barring U.S. companies from conducting business with the controversial Chinese telecommunications company Huawei, among others. China retaliated by hiking tariffs on $60 billion in U.S. goods and threatening to tax rare earth metals, a move that could stunt U.S. technology growth. The global trade war then opened on a new front after the U.S. administration surprised markets by announcing it would impose a 5% tariff on all Mexican imports – set to rise by 5% each month, up to 25% – unless Mexico helped stem the flow of illegal immigration into the U.S. Risk assets globally reversed course as developed market equities[1] fell 5.8%, marking their first negative month this year, while emerging market (EM) equities[2] fell 7.3% on the month as dollar strength exacerbated the trade concerns. Not surprisingly, the Chinese yuan and Mexican peso were the worst-performing EM currencies against the U.S. dollar in the month. Credit markets weren't immune to the pullback in risk appetite either: Spreads broadly widened, with high yield spreads[3] 62 basis points (bps) wider. As risk assets sold off, bond yields fell sharply across the yield curve, leaving U.S. 10-year yields 38 bps lower at 2.12%, their lowest level since 2017. The front end of the yield curve also inverted for the second time this year as the spread between three-month and 10-year yields turned negative.

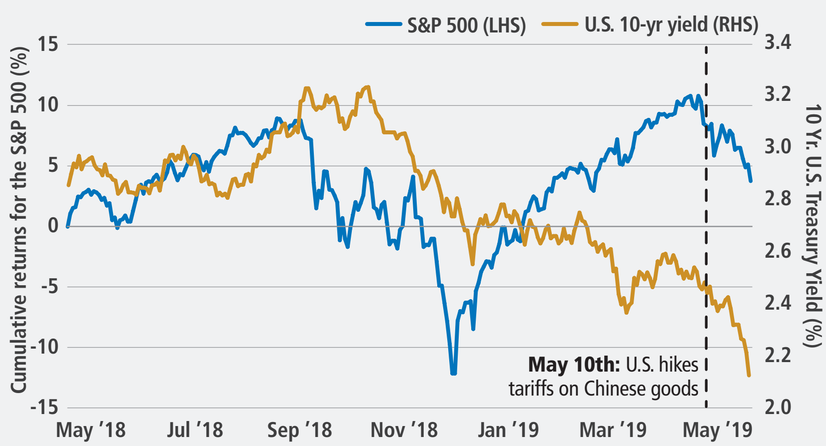
Signs of decelerating global growth also weighed on market sentiment. Manufacturing metrics in particular dipped lower across regions as purchasing managers' indexes (PMIs) in Japan, Europe, and China fell below 50 (the level separating contractionary activity from expansionary), while the U.S. index – though still above 50 – fell over two points to its lowest level in nearly a decade. Other economic data in China also pointed to weakness despite recent stimulus measures, highlighted by slowing retail sales and a larger-than-expected decline in industrial production. With global inflation pressures still subdued, central banks remained supportive: New Zealand's central bank became the latest developed economy to ease policy, cutting rates to a record low of 1.5%, in light of unexpected weakness in inflation. Even Federal Reserve members suggested that rates could be lowered if data were to show persistently below-target inflation or materially weaker global conditions.

Outside of trade, May featured a number of election-related headlines. In the U.K., Prime Minister Theresa May announced that she would step down after political pressure arising from her failure to pass a Brexit deal. Meanwhile, a number of incumbents will remain in office: Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison secured a third term for his center-right government in a surprise victory, and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi handily won his re-election. The European Parliament elections revealed few surprises, with populist and eurosceptic parties picking up support broadly in line with predictions, though remaining well below 50% and thus limited in their power. The Brexit Party in the U.K. finished first, with 31% of the vote; Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini's League Party solidified its power in Italy, while its coalition partner, the Five-Star Movement, saw its popularity wane; and Marine Le Pen's National Rally Party finished ahead of President Emmanuel Macron's pro-EU party in France. In the U.S., the Trump administration delayed tougher sanctions on Iran's petrochemical sector in hopes of easing growing tensions between the two countries after the U.S. accused Iran of attacking Saudi Arabian oil tankers.

[1] MSCI World Index [2] MSCI EM Index [3] Barclays Global Agg High Yield Index.

TOGETHER AGAIN ... AND HEADED DOWN

U.S. equities tumbled in May, marking the first monthly decline of 2019 and a reversal of the robust risk appetite that had underpinned impressive gains in equities through April. A repricing of global trade tensions and lingering growth concerns dragged risk assets into the red, with the S&P 500 dropping 6.4% in the month. Consistent with traditional "risk-off" behavior, bonds rallied as global rates fell dramatically: The 10-year U.S. Treasury yield declined 38 bps to 2.12% (notably below the Federal Reserve's current policy range of 2.25%–2.50%). That is the lowest level since 2017 and more than 100 bps below the 2018 high reached last November. The unusually large move lower in yields is partly due to investors' rising expectations for interest rate cuts by the Fed, which increased to three by the end of this year. As a result, the U.S. yield curve inverted again (typically seen as a precursor to recession), adding to fears of deteriorating economic conditions.



Source: Bloomberg. As of 31 May 2019.

Market snapshot

To view detailed on each asset class, visit pimco.com/monthly-market-update.

BONDS	U.S.				U.K.				EUROZONE				JAPAN				CANADA			
	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018
	Level	Change (bps)			Level	Change (bps)			Level	Change (bps)			Level	Change (bps)			Level	Change (bps)		
Target Rate*	2.50				0.75				-0.40				-0.10				1.75			
2 YR	1.92	-34	-57	+60	0.60	-16	-15	+31	-0.66	-8	-5	+2	-0.17	-2	-3	-1	1.43	-13	-43	+18
5 YR	1.91	-37	-60	+30	0.64	-27	-27	+18	-0.58	-17	-27	-11	-0.19	-3	-5	-4	1.36	-18	-52	+2
10 YR	2.12	-38	-56	+28	0.89	-30	-39	+9	-0.20	-22	-44	-19	-0.09	-5	-10	-5	1.49	-22	-48	-8
30 YR	2.57	-36	-45	+27	1.47	-22	-35	+6	0.43	-23	-45	-39	0.46	-11	-26	-9	1.77	-22	-42	-8
5 YR ILBs	0.34	-9	-66	+71	-2.64	-37	-40	-9	1.20	-12	-27	-24					0.07	+4	-58	+40
10 YR Muni[a]	1.66	-24	-66	+31													2.42	-18	-61	+17

CURRENCIES	USD**				GBP/USD				EUR/USD				USD/JPY				USD/CAD			
	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018
	Level	Change			Level	Change			Level	Change			Level	Change			Level	Change		
	97.75	0.3%	1.6%	4.4%	1.26	-3.1%	-1.0%	-5.6%	1.12	-0.4%	-2.6%	-4.5%	108.28	2.9%	1.2%	2.8%	1.35	-0.9%	0.9%	-7.8%

EQUITIES	S&P 500				FTSE 100				EURO STOXX 50				NIKKEI				SPTSX			
	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018
	Level	Change			Level	Change			Level	Change			Level	Change			Level	Change		
	2,752	-6.4%	10.7%	-4.4%	7,162	-2.9%	8.8%	-8.7%	3,280	-5.5%	11.6%	-12.0%	20,601	-7.4%	3.7%	-10.7%	16,037	-3.1%	13.0%	-9.6%

SECTOR SPREADS***	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018
	Level	Change (bps)		
MBS[b]	44	+3	+9	+11
IG[c]	120	+15	-21	+54
HIGH YIELD[d]	480	+62	-66	+206
EM EXTERNAL[e]	393	+28	-42	+124

COMMODITIES	May '19	MTD	YTD	2018
	Level	Change		
Oil	$54	-16.3%	17.8%	-24.8%
Gold	$1,306	1.6%	1.9%	-2.1%
Copper	$264	-9.0%	0.3%	-20.3%
Grains[f]	$30	12.2%	0.8%	-7.4%

*Central Bank Policy Rate
**U.S. Dollar Index (DXY)
***Sector spreads to like-duration government bonds

Source: Bloomberg

[a]Thomson Municipal Market Data (MMD) AAA Curve, [b]Barclays Global Agg MBS Index, [c]Bloomberg Barclays Global Agg Credit Average OAS, [d]Barclays Global Agg High Yield Index, [e]JPMorgan Emerging Markets Bond Index, [f]Dow Jones – UBS Grains Subindex

Outlook

Based on PIMCO's cyclical outlook from March 2019.

In the U.S., we continue to expect growth to slow to 2%–2.5% in 2019 from nearly 3% last year. Factors contributing to the deceleration include fading fiscal stimulus, the lagged effect of tighter monetary policy over the past few years, and headwinds from the China/global slowdown. We estimate that China's easing will not filter through to U.S. growth until late 2019 or early 2020. **Headline inflation looks set to drop to 1.5%–2% this year, while core CPI moves sideways.** With growth slowing and inflation remaining below target, the Fed is likely to keep rates unchanged in 2019.

For the eurozone, we expect growth to slow to a trend-like pace of 0.75%–1.25% in 2019 from close to 2% in 2018, as weak global trade exerts significant downward pressure on the economy and Italy slipped into recession. An improvement in global trade conditions through this year should contribute to a gradual reacceleration. Reflecting firmer wage growth, **we expect a moderate pickup in core inflation, which has been stuck at 1% for some time.** In line with the European Central Bank's (ECB) forward guidance, we expect policy rates to remain unchanged this year.

In the U.K., we expect real growth in the range of 1%–1.5% in 2019, modestly below trend, and we continue to think that a chaotic no-deal Brexit is a low-probability event. **We see core CPI inflation stable at or close to the 2% target** as import price pressures have faded and domestic price pressures remain subdued. In the event of a soft Brexit by midyear, a rate hike by the Bank of England in the second half of the year would appear likely.

Japan's GDP growth is expected to be modest at 0.5%–1% in 2019, broadly unchanged from 0.7% in 2018. **With core CPI inflation expected to dip into negative territory** (due to temporary factors) around the middle of the year, we expect the Bank of Japan to keep its targets for short rates and the 10-year yield unchanged this year.

In China, we see growth slowing in 2019 to the middle of a 5.5%–6.5% range from 6.6% in 2018, but stabilizing in the second half of the year as fiscal and monetary stimulus find some traction and a likely trade deal between the U.S. and China supports confidence. We expect fiscal stimulus of 1.5% to 2% of GDP. **Inflation remains benign at 1.5%-2.5% in our forecast,** and we look for another rate cut by the People's Bank of China in addition to more reductions in banks' reserve requirement ratios. Yuan stability is well anchored with a patient Fed and the understanding that this needs to be a component of the China-U.S. trade deal.

Past performance is not a guarantee or a reliable indicator of future results.

All investments contain risk and may lose value. Investing in the **bond market** is subject to risks, including market, interest rate, issuer, credit, inflation risk, and liquidity risk. The value of most bonds and bond strategies are impacted by changes in interest rates. Bonds and bond strategies with longer durations tend to be more sensitive and volatile than those with shorter durations; bond prices generally fall as interest rates rise. A low interest rate environment increases this risk. Reductions in bond counterparty capacity may contribute to decreased market liquidity and increased price volatility. Bond investments may be worth more or less than the original cost when redeemed. Commodities contain heightened risk including market, political, regulatory, and natural conditions, and may not be suitable for all investors. **Equities** may decline in value due to both real and perceived general market, economic and industry conditions. Investing in **foreign denominated and/or domiciled securities may** involve heightened risk due to currency fluctuations, and economic and political risks, which may be enhanced in emerging markets. High yield, lower-rated securities involve greater risk than higher-rated securities; portfolios that invest in them may be subject to greater levels of credit and liquidity risk than portfolios that do not. **Inflation-linked bonds (ILBs)** issued by a government are fixed-income securities whose principal value is periodically adjusted according to the rate of inflation; ILBs decline in value when real interest rates rise. Mortgage- and asset-backed securities may be sensitive to changes in interest rates, subject to early repayment risk, and while generally supported by a government, government-agency or private guarantor, there is no assurance that the guarantor will meet its obligations. Sovereign securities are generally backed by the issuing government. Obligations of U.S. government agencies and authorities are supported by varying degrees, but are generally not backed by the full faith of the U.S. government. Portfolios that invest in such securities are not guaranteed and will fluctuate in value. Derivatives may involve certain costs and risks, such as liquidity, interest rate, market, credit, management and the risk that a position could not be closed when most advantageous. Investing in derivatives could lose more than the amount invested.

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