ECOWEEK

No. 19-22, 31 May 2019

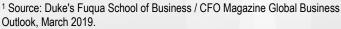
Does psychology dominate company fundamentals?

In a recent survey of 469 CFOs of US companies, 84% expect that the US will have entered recession by the first quarter of 2021 ■This raises the concern of self-realising bearish expectations ■A positive correlation between business confidence and company decisions could reflect (anticipations of) strong fundamentals. It could also be due to animal spirits ■The role of the latter is confirmed by empirical research by cesifo using data for German companies. In the aggregate, optimistic animal spirits have a bigger impact than pessimistic animal spirits

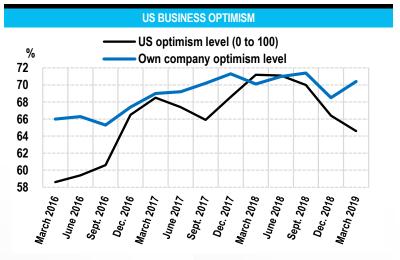
In a recent survey of 469 CFOs of US companies, 84% expect that the US will have entered recession by the first guarter of 20211. This very high percentage is a matter of concern, considering that empirical research in the US shows that CFO earnings expectations for the next 12 months are highly correlated with planned and actual corporate investments². When many CFOs expect a recession, one would assume this will be reflected in lower earnings forecasts and cutbacks in capital expenditures. This could even lead to selfrealising bearish expectations: recession fears end up causing recession. For the time being, this is not yet showing up in the numbers: revenues are expected to increase 6.3% and capital expenditures 8.2%³. Moreover, the level of 'own company optimism' increased in March to 70.4 after a brief dip in December. However, the degree of optimism on the economy in general continued to slide. This may create a belief that, eventually, a recession will start and hence influence corporate business plans.

Indicators of business confidence are an important input in economic analysis. Surveys tend to be available more quickly than certain drivers of corporate investments such as company earnings⁴. A positive correlation between business confidence and company decisions in terms of recruitment, marketing, investment could simply reflect the anticipation of company fundamentals (turnover, profitability, financing costs, etc.). This is the signalling role of confidence.





² Gennaioli Nicola, Ma Yueran, Shleifer Andrei (2015), Expectations and Investment, NBER Working Paper No. 21260.



Source: Duke's Fuqua School of Business / CFO Magazine Global Business Outlook, BNP Paribas

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Markets Overview

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ECONOMIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT



³ The March survey did not report an earnings forecast.

⁴ For an overview, see: William De Vijlder, What is driving corporate investment, BNP Paribas, Conjoncture, September-October 2016



The relationship between confidence and business decisions can also reflect "animal spirits". According to John Maynard Keynes, they reflect a spontaneous urge to action. Nowadays, the concept "refers to our peculiar relationship with ambiguity or uncertainty. Sometimes we are paralyzed by it. Yet at other times it refreshes and energizes us, overcoming our fears and indecisions." The implication is that they can cause a disconnect between company fundamentals and company decisions, depending on whether executives feel optimistic or pessimistic.

What this concretely implies has been analysed in a recent paper by Enders et al.6 The authors compare at the individual company level the responses to business surveys in Germany and the pricing and production decisions. In this comparison, the effect of company fundamentals is filtered out. The authors find that optimistic (pessimistic) companies increase (lower) their production more than companies which feel neutral about the future. They are also more likely to raise (cut) prices. As mentioned before, these results may reflect an anticipation of company fundamentals or a pure animal spirits effect. To disentangle the two, the authors analyse the role of forecast errors: companies that turn out to have been too optimistic/pessimistic display animal spirits. The correlation between sentiment and production and pricing decisions mentioned above, also holds for companies that turned out to be incorrectly optimistic or pessimistic, i.e. which were making forecast errors: animal spirits do play a role. Finally, they construct an indicator of aggregate optimism/pessimism and how it is related to fluctuations in the economy at large. Industrial production and the price level react strongly and significantly to an increase in incorrect optimism. In case of incorrect pessimism, the effects are much weaker and, for industrial production, insignificant. Against this background, we should perhaps be a bit less concerned about the high recession likelihood in the CFO survey of Duke University.

William De Vijlder



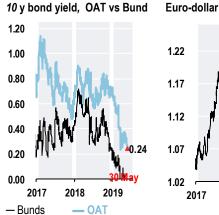
⁵ George A. Akerlof and Robert J. Shiller, Animal spirits – How human pychology drives the economy and why it matters for global capitalism, Princeton University Press, 2009

⁶ Zeno Enders, Franziska Hünnekes and Gernot J. Müller, Firm expectations and economic activity, cesifo working paper 7623, April 2019

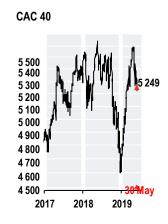
Markets overview

The essentials

)-5-19				
5 317	•	5 249	-1.3	%
2 826	•	2 789	-1.3	%
15.9	•	17.3	+1.5	pb
-0.31	•	-0.32	-0.9	bp
2.52	•	2.52	-0.3	bp
0.28	•	0.24	-3.8	bp
-0.12	•	-0.17	-5.3	bp
2.33	•	2.23	-10.3	bp
1.12	•	1.11	-0.7	%
1 284	•	1 288	+0.3	%
67.8	•	67.6	-0.4	%
	5 317 2 826 15.9 -0.31 2.52 0.28 -0.12 2.33 1.12 1 284	5 317	5 317	5 317





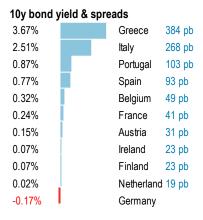


Money & Bond Markets

Interest Rates	;	high	nest' 19	lowest' 19		
€ ECB	0.00	0.00	at 01/01	0.00	at 01/01	
Eonia	-0.37	-0.36	at 01/01	-0.37	at 26/02	
Euribor 3M	-0.32	-0.31	at 24/01	-0.32	at 30/05	
Euribor 12M	-0.16	-0.11	at 06/02	-0.16	at 30/05	
\$ FED	2.50	2.50	at 01/01	2.50	at 01/01	
Libor 3M	2.52	2.81	at 01/01	2.52	at 13/05	
Libor 12M	2.57	3.04	at 21/01	2.57	at 29/05	
£ BoE	0.75	0.75	at 01/01	0.75	at 01/01	
Libor 3M	0.79	0.93	at 29/01	0.79	at 29/05	
Libor 12M	1.00	1.19	at 11/01	1.00	at 29/05	

At 30-5-19

Yield (%) highest' 19 lowest' 19 € AVG 5-7y **0.30** 0.68 at 09/01 0.29 at 27/05 Bund 2y -0.53 at 05/03 -0.65 at 15/05 0.25 at 01/01 -0.17 at 29/05 Bund 10y OAT 10y 0.73 at 08/01 0.24 at 27/03 Corp. BBB 2.15 at 08/01 1.26 at 07/05 \$ Treas. 2v 2.62 at 18/01 2.12 Treas. 10y 2.78 at 18/01 2.23 at 30/05 Corp. BBB 3.88 4.65 at 01/01 3.88 at 30/05 £ Treas. 2y **0.61** 0.83 at 27/02 0.59 at 29/05 Treas. 10y **0.90** 1.35 at 18/01 0.90 at 29/05 At 30-5-19



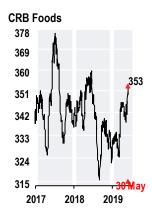
Commodities

Spot price in o	low	2019(€)			
Oil, Brent	67.6	53.1	at	01/01	+30.6%
Gold (ounce)	1 288	1 268	at	02/05	+3.3%
Metals, LMEX	2 770	2 730	at	03/01	+1.6%
Copper (ton)	5 822	5 714	at	03/01	+0.5%
CRB Foods	353	324	at	07/03	+11.9%
w heat (ton)	202	167	at	10/05	+5.2%
Corn (ton)	163	128	at	24/04	+22.6%
At 30-5-19				Va	riations



Oil (Brent, \$)





Exchange Rates

1€ =		high	est' 19	low	est'	19	2019
USD	1.11	1.15	at 10/01	1.11	at	30/05	-2.7%
GBP	0.88	0.90	at 03/01	0.85	at	14/03	-1.5%
CHF	1.12	1.14	at 23/04	1.12	at	02/04	-0.4%
JPY	122.21	127.43	at 01/03	121.86	at	29/05	-2.6%
AUD	1.61	1.63	at 03/01	1.57	at	18/04	-0.7%
CNY	7.68	7.87	at 09/01	7.51	at	25/04	-2.1%
BRL	4.41	4.59	at 20/05	4.18	at	31/01	-0.5%
RUB	72.41	79.30	at 01/01	71.51	at	23/04	-8.7%
INR	77.74	82.00	at 04/02	76.84	at	03/04	-2.6%
At 30-	5-19					Var	iations

Equity indices

	Index	high	iest	' 19	low	est'	19	2019	2019(€)
CAC 40	5 249	5 592	at	23/04	4 611	at	03/01	+11.0%	+11.0%
S&P500	2 789	2 946	at	30/04	2 448	at	03/01	+11.2%	+14.3%
DAX	11 902	12 413	at	03/05	10 417	at	03/01	+12.7%	+12.7%
Nikkei	20 943	22 308	at	25/04	19 562	at	04/01	+4.6%	+7.4%
China*	73	86	at	09/04	68	at	03/01	+4.5%	+7.2%
India*	597	606	at	02/04	530	at	19/02	+7.2%	+10.0%
Brazil*	2 076	2 304	at	04/02	1 862	at	17/05	+9.2%	+9.7%
Russia*	683	685	at	22/05	572	at	01/01	+12.9%	+22.6%
At 30-5-1	9						•	Va	riations

* MSCI index

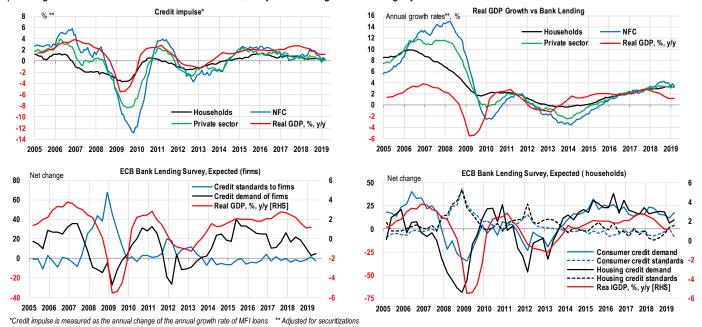




Pulse

Eurozone: Credit pulse

After strengthening in February, credit impulse in the eurozone was relatively stable in March 2019 for households, but weakened slightly for non-financial companies. Demand for credit is expected to rise in the second quarter of 2019 across all loan categories. Although banks are planning to loosen conditions for consumer loans, they intend to tighten them slightly for home loans and business loans.



Source: ECB, ECB survey on the distribution of credit, BLS, BNP Paribas calculations

Indicators preview

A heavy schedule as usual at the start of a new month: purchasing manager indices (manufacturing, services, composite) in several countries, ISM manufacturing and non-manufacturing in the US. The Federal Reserve will publish its beige book with an overview of economic conditions in the different parts of the US. In the eurozone we will have the publication of the unemployment rate, employment numbers and an updated estimate of first quarter growth. Highlights of the week are the ECB Governing Council meeting and the labour market report in the US.

Date	Region	Event	Period	Survey	Prior
06/03/2019	China	Caixin China PMI Manufacturing	May	50.0	50.2
06/03/2019	France	Markit France Manufacturing PMI	May		
06/03/2019	Eurozone	Markit Eurozone Manufacturing PMI	May		
06/03/2019	United States	ISM Manufacturing	May	53.9	52.8
06/04/2019	Eurozone	Unemployment Rate	April		7.7%
06/04/2019	United States	Cap Goods Orders Nondef Ex Air	April		
06/05/2019	China	Caixin China PMI Composite	May		52.7
06/05/2019	France	Markit France Composite PMI	May		
06/05/2019	Eurozone	Markit Eurozone Composite PMI	May		
06/05/2019	Eurozone	Retail Sales MoM	April		0.0%
06/05/2019	United States	ISM Non-Manufacturing Index	May	56.5	55.5
06/05/2019	United States	U.S. Federal Reserve Releases Beige Book			
06/06/2019	Eurozone	Employment QoQ	1Q		0.3%
06/06/2019	Eurozone	GDP SA QoQ	1Q		0.4%
06/06/2019	Eurozone	ECB Main Refinancing Rate	June-06		0.000%
06/07/2019	France	Industrial Production MoM	April		-0.9%
06/07/2019	United States	Change in Nonfarm Payrolls	May	195000	263000

Source: Bloomberg, BNP Paribas



Economic scenario

UNITED STATES

- Growth picked-up by early 19 but this was partly due to one-off factors (inventory building...). The underlying trend in private domestic demand is more subdued. The housing market is softening, corporate investment should slow, as well as exports in reaction to the past strengthening of the dollar and trade tensions. Core inflation remains well under control and has eased a bit.
- Following the neutral message from the May FOMC meeting, we believe the Fed Funds target rate as well as the IOER will keep unchanged.

CHINA

- Economic growth continues to slow. Activity rebounded in March 2019 but weakened again afterwards. The recent flare-up in trade tensions with the US has again darkened export prospects.
- The central bank is easing liquidity and credit conditions, though the reduction in financial-instability risks via regulatory tightening should remain a priority. Fiscal policy has also turned expansionary through increased infrastructure spending and a rising number of household/corporate tax cuts.
- In the short term, exports and private domestic investment should continue to decelerate. Tax measures should support consumer spending.

EUROZONE

- Despite a stronger than expected growth in the 1st quarter of 2019, the economic slowdown is continuing in the eurozone, especially in Germany, due to international environment uncertainties and a slowdown of exports to China. Capacity constraints also play a role and activity in the manufacturing sector continues to decline.
- Inflation is now expected to decrease while core CPI is hardly moving. The activity slowdown also implies that the pick-up in core inflation should be slower than expected until recently.
- Monetary policy remains cautious and proactive, the ECB announcing the launch of another round of longer-term refinancing operations (TLTRO) for eurozone banks.

FRANCE

Growth is slowing although the economy should show some resilience. Households' consumption should get a boost from the tax cuts and the jobs recovery but inflation reduces purchasing power gains. Business investment dynamics remain favourable. The global backdrop is less supportive. A slight rise in core inflation is appearing but remains to be confirmed.

INTEREST RATES AND FX RATES

- In the US, the Fed has announced to be patient before deciding on any change in its policy. We expect key rates to stay on hold this year and next. We expect 10 year treasury yields to rise moderately, reaching 2.60% by the end of this year on the back of a somewhat higher term premium.
- The combination of slower growth and subdued core inflation leads us to expect that ECB official rates will remain unchanged this year and next. 10 year Bund yields are expected to rise only marginally to 0.00% by the end of this year. We forecast a yield of 0.15% by the end of 2020.
- No change expected in Japan.
- We expect the euro to strengthen versus the dollar considering that the latter is expensive on valuation grounds.

	GI	OP Growth	1	Inflation			
%	2018	2019 e	2020 e	2018	2019 e	2020 e	
Advanced	2.2	1.8	1.3	2.0	1.6	1.6	
United-States	2.9	2.7	1.8	2.4	2.1	2.0	
Japan	0.8	0.6	0.2	1.0	0.6	0.5	
United-Kingdom	1.4	1.3	1.4	2.5	1.9	1.9	
Euro Area	1.8	1.1	1.0	1.8	1.3	1.3	
Germany	1.4	0.6	1.0	1.9	1.5	1.5	
France	1.6	1.3	1.2	2.1	1.4	1.5	
Italy	0.7	0.3	0.2	1.3	0.9	0.9	
Spain	2.6	2.2	1.9	1.7	1.0	1.2	
Emerging	4.5	4.2	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.3	
China	6.6	6.2	6.0	2.1	2.2	2.6	
India*	7.0	7.4	7.6	3.4	3.5	4.2	
Brazil	1.1	0.8	2.5	3.7	3.9	3.9	
Russia	2.3	1.5	1.7	2.9	5.1	4.1	

Source: BNP Paribas Group Economic Research (e: Estimates & forecasts)

^{*} Fiscal year from April 1st of year n to March 31st of year n+1

Intere	est rates, %	2019						
End of	period	Q1	Q2e	Q3e	Q4e	2018	2019e	2020e
US	Fed Funds	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50
	Libor 3m \$	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.81	2.60	2.50
	T-Notes 10y	2.42	2.50	2.50	2.60	2.69	2.60	2.50
Ezone	ECB Refi	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Euribor 3m	-0.31	-0.30	-0.30	-0.30	-0.31	-0.30	-0.30
	Bund 10y	-0.07	-0.05	-0.05	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.15
	OAT 10y	0.26	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.71	0.30	0.45
UK	Base rate	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.25	0.75	1.25	1.25
	Gilts 10y	1.00	1.85	2.00	2.10	1.27	2.10	2.10
Japan	BoJ Rate	-0.06	-0.10	-0.10	-0.10	-0.07	-0.10	-0.10
	JGB 10y	-0.09	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02	0.00	-0.02	-0.05

Source: BNP Paribas GlobalMarkets (e: Forecasts)

Exch	ange Rates	2019						
End of	period	Q1	Q2e	Q3e	Q4e	2018	2019e	2020e
USD	EUR / USD	1.12	1.13	1.16	1.20	1.14	1.20	1.25
	USD / JPY	111.0	108.0	105.0	102.0	110.0	102.0	95.0
	GBP / USD	1.30	1.27	1.32	1.38	1.27	1.38	1.49
	USD / CHF	1.00	1.01	0.99	0.97	0.99	0.97	0.94
EUR	EUR / GBP	0.85	0.89	0.88	0.87	0.90	0.87	0.84
	EUR / CHF	1.12	1.14	1.15	1.16	1.13	1.16	1.18
	EUR / JPY	124.0	122.0	122.0	122.0	125.0	122.0	119.0

Source: BNP Paribas GlobalMarkets (e: Forecasts)



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ECOTY WEEK

What is the main event this week? The answer is in your two minutes of economy

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