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Falling bond yields have restored relative value to equities. The upcoming earnings sequence will be crucial in providing the pulse for the coming months.



## Reflation in ambush!

Let's face it, at the beginning of the year, we did not expect the US 30-year yield to fall so quickly below 2.0% after having hit a high of 2.45% in March 2021. Reflationary expectations are wavering, but are they completely called into question?

### A rapid decline in long rates

What are the reasons for this rapid decline in long-term rates and the potential scenarios for the rest of the year? The sharp drop in yields and the flattening of the yield curve is explained by 3 factors:

- Weaker than expected economic data. Indeed, the weakening of the data fueled the idea that the U.S. has reached its growth peak and that the slowdown could push yields down. This growth rate is not sustainable: after averaging nearly 9.5% real GDP growth in mid-2021, we expect U.S. growth to slow down in late 2021 and into 2022. However, our chief economist forecasts real GDP growth of 5.1% in 2022, which is still well above potential.
- There was a feeling that the Fed would reduce its asset purchase program more quickly than expected and consequently raise rates as early as 2023. However, the Fed did not suddenly become "hawkish" at the June 16, 2021 meeting. And it is unlikely to become less accommodative until the unemployment rate falls below 4%.
- The unwinding of speculative positions on rising rates. The market data does indeed indicate that investors were over-positioned (to rising rates) and that the buying of shorts exaggerated this move. We do not see an immediate catalyst to bring yields back to their June levels (a 10-year at 1.55% on average), but high valuations and "cleaned up" positions should favor a return to the mean.

In the next few weeks, the 10-year US yield could rebound on the back of a new tightening in the labour supply and substantial progress in financing infrastructures. In the nearer term, a heavy offering of Treasuries will be put on the market during the week of 12 July, including 58 billion dollars in three-year bonds and 38 billion dollars in 10-year paper.

JULY 2021

How the market reacts to such heavy supply will be an initial indicator of investor sentiment. As things currently stand, we advise you to holding onto short 10-year Treasury positions and 2y/7y steepening strategies. We are less confident in the long section of the curve.

### What about reflation?

Although inflation breakeven points' predictive character is open to debate, they do offer a good basis of analysis.

The decline in breakevens in the past two weeks has probably been exaggerated by the technical decline in nominal yields. We expect these to turn back up in the medium term, alongside the increase in real yields and still robust growth. Economic surprise indices have turned down and are at their lowest local levels.

June inflation continues to surprise on the upside. The strengthening in the report's basic components could serve as an upward catalyst for medium-term inflation expectations. The reason for this is that labour supply is likely to increase at the end of summer with the end of federal unemployment programmes, and that could have a positive impact on wages in the coming months. Moreover, housing inflation could continue to rebound in the coming months, thus supplying a solid backing and sustainability to inflation at healthy levels, even if transitional components pull back.

### Continue overweighting equities

Ultimately, falling bond yields have restored relative value to equities. The upcoming earnings sequence will be crucial in providing the pulse for the coming months. Earnings growth forecasts have been raised by 15 percentage points since January (from +32% to +47% in Europe between 2020 and 2021e), fully in line with equity market gains. The equity markets are still expensive but are being driven by consistent fundamentals. Potentially positive surprises in earnings and macroeconomic statistics could provide new momentum to cyclical equities in the coming months. We are far from ruling out this scenario. We don't agree that the value vs. growth rotation is over. However, the coming market cycle will probably take the form – until yearend – of a long mountain stage, in which we continue to "attack at the bottom of climbs".



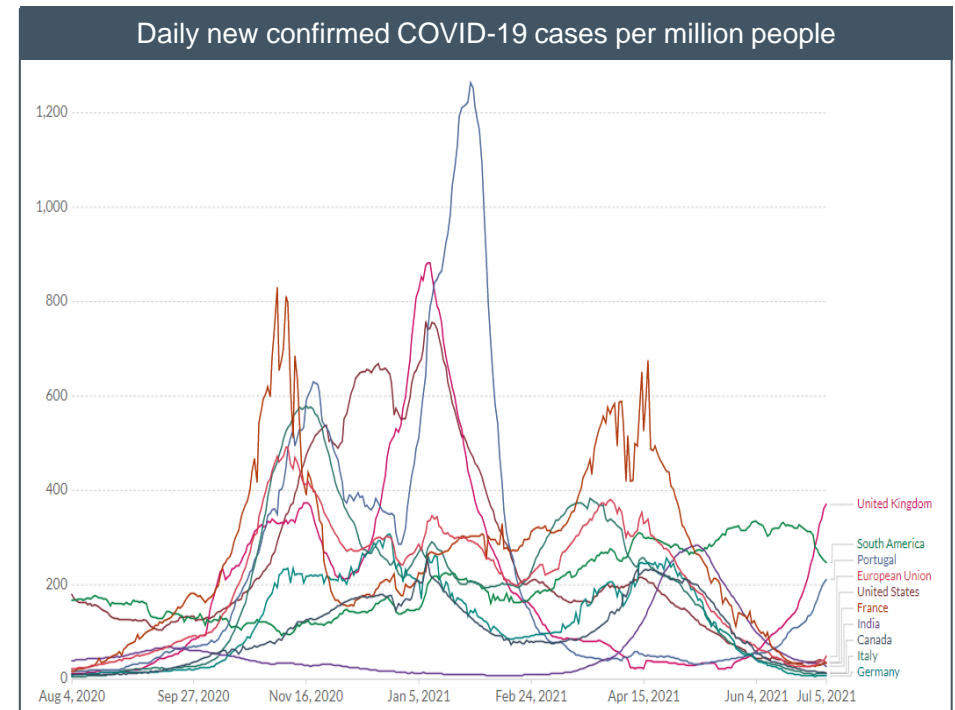
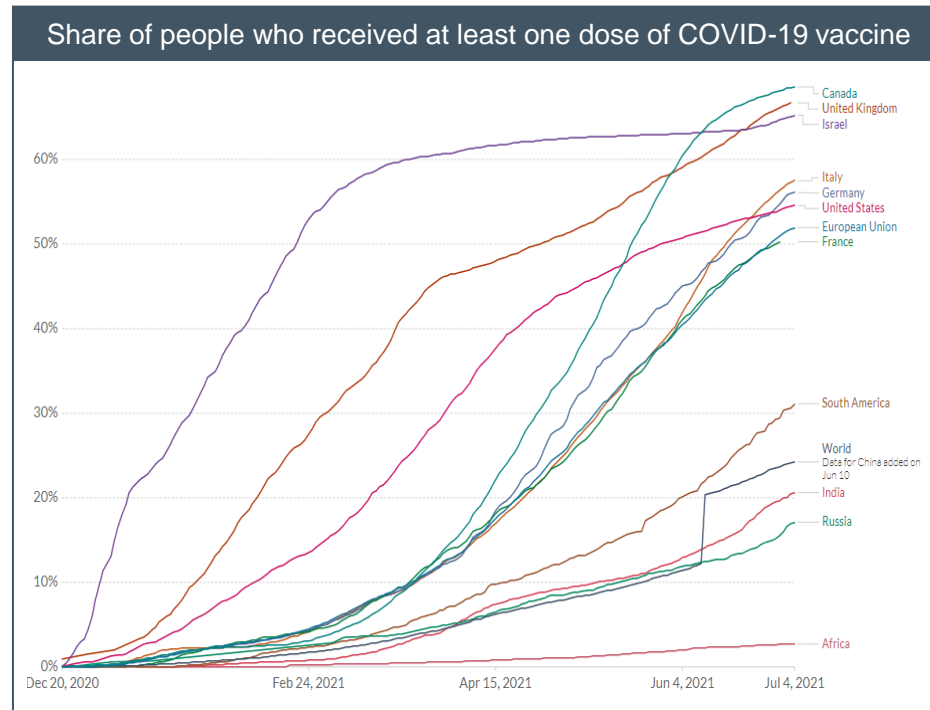
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# MACROECONOMIC OUTLOOK

# Covid19: year 2



## Delta variant unlikely to derail recovery

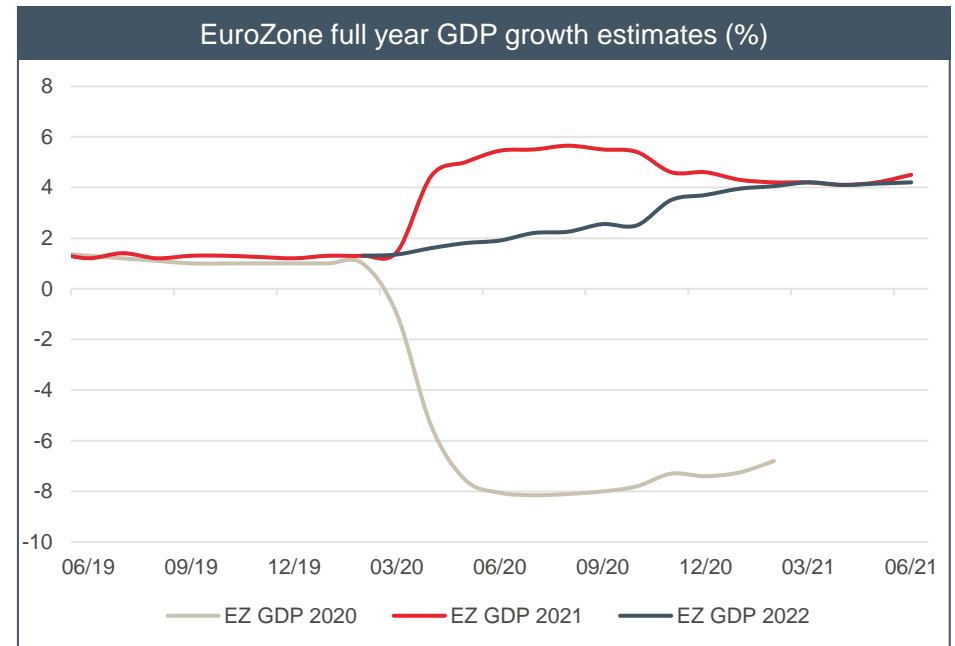
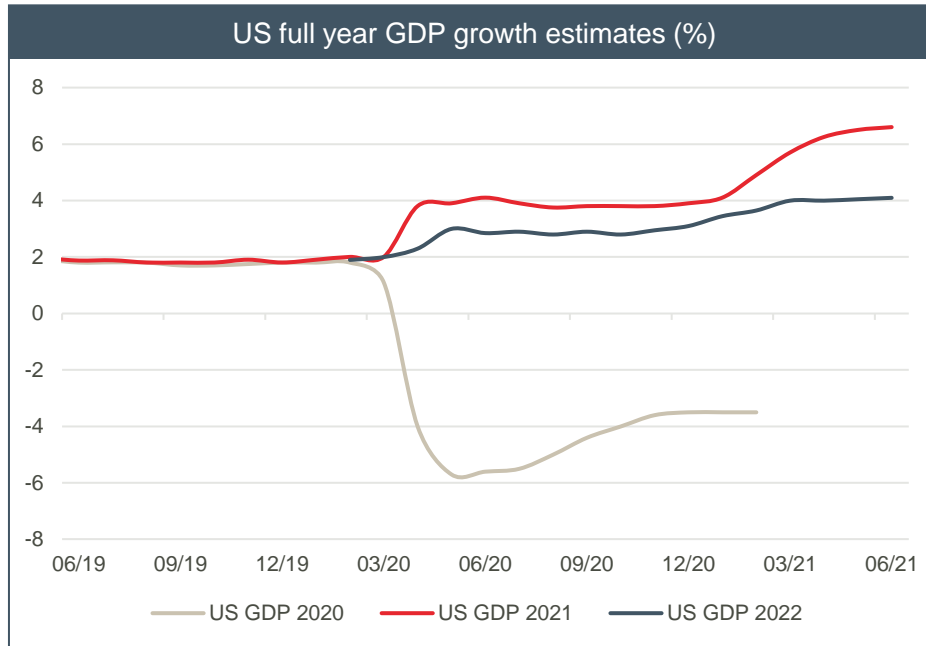


- UK cases have soared since end of May as delta has become the dominant strain
- However, case growth has mostly decoupled from hospitalisations and mortality as most of the age cohorts older than 30 years have been vaccinated
- Most Eurozone countries lag the UK by four to eight weeks and thus can speed-up inoculation in order to have a higher immunity when delta hits
- Most vulnerable countries are those which lag in the vaccination process like Australia or many Emerging Markets

# Growth outlook



## A shift to Europe

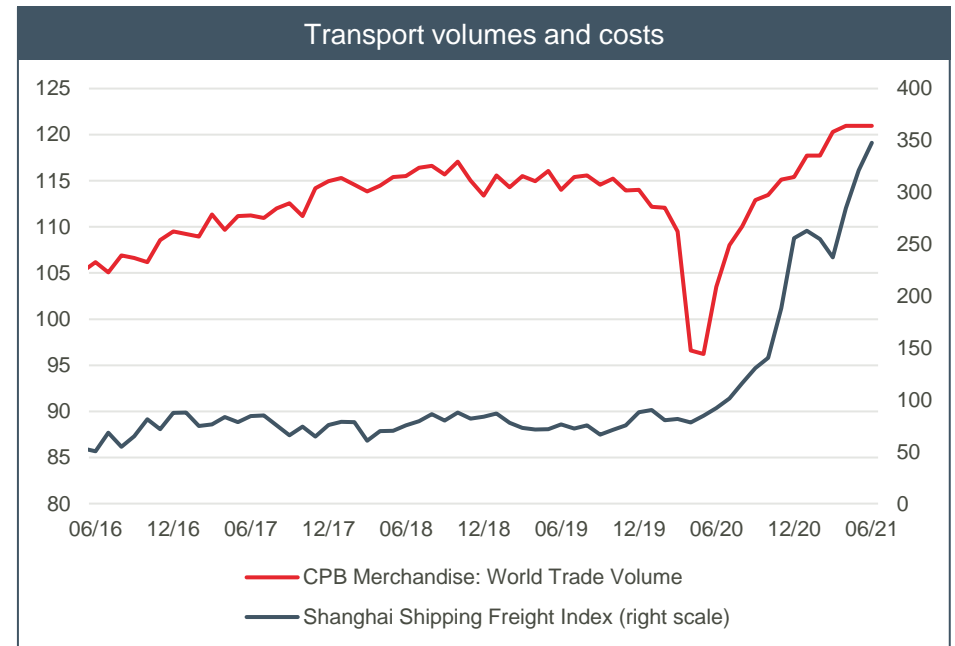
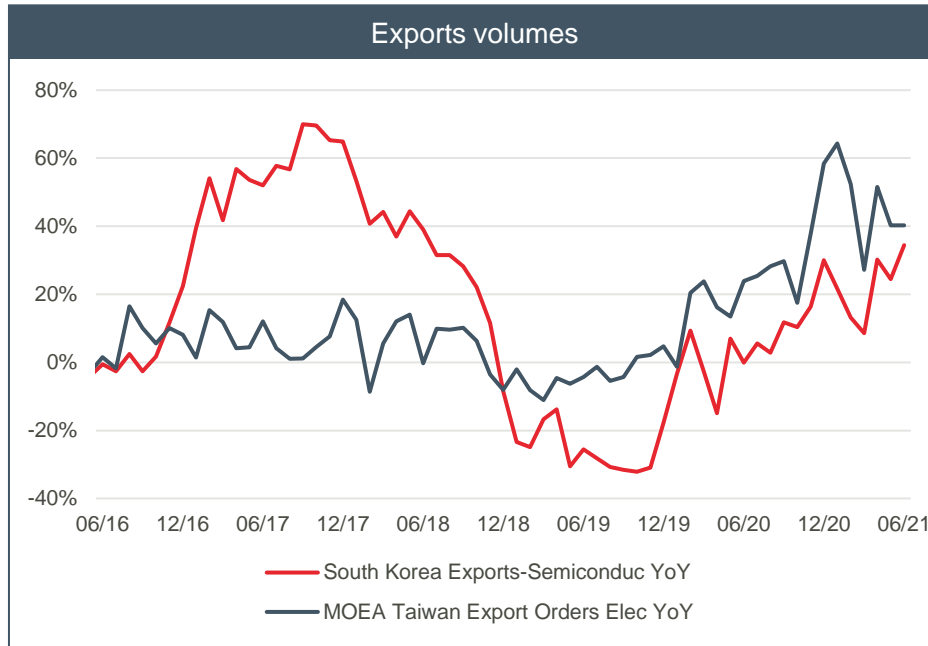


- US growth is at full speed but losing upward momentum
- That should not be mixed up with a meaningful growth slowdown
- Europe is picking-up strongly while reopening is in full swing
- China and Asia are probably past peak momentum





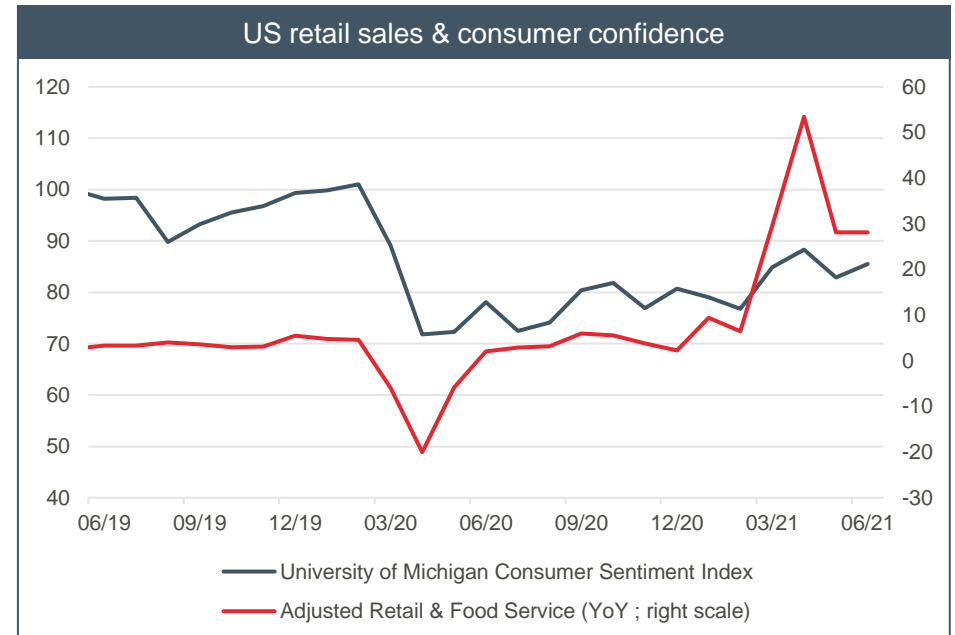
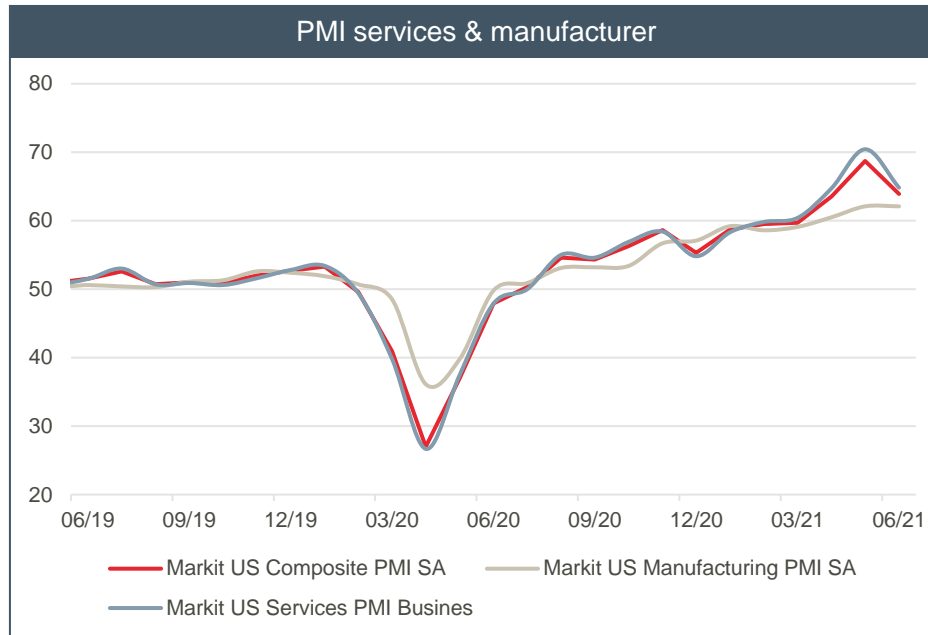
## Supply chain disruptions may start to ease



- Trade growth seems to be constrained for the time being as supply lags
- First evidence that some of the bottlenecks are slightly improving
- However, backlogs take time to normalize



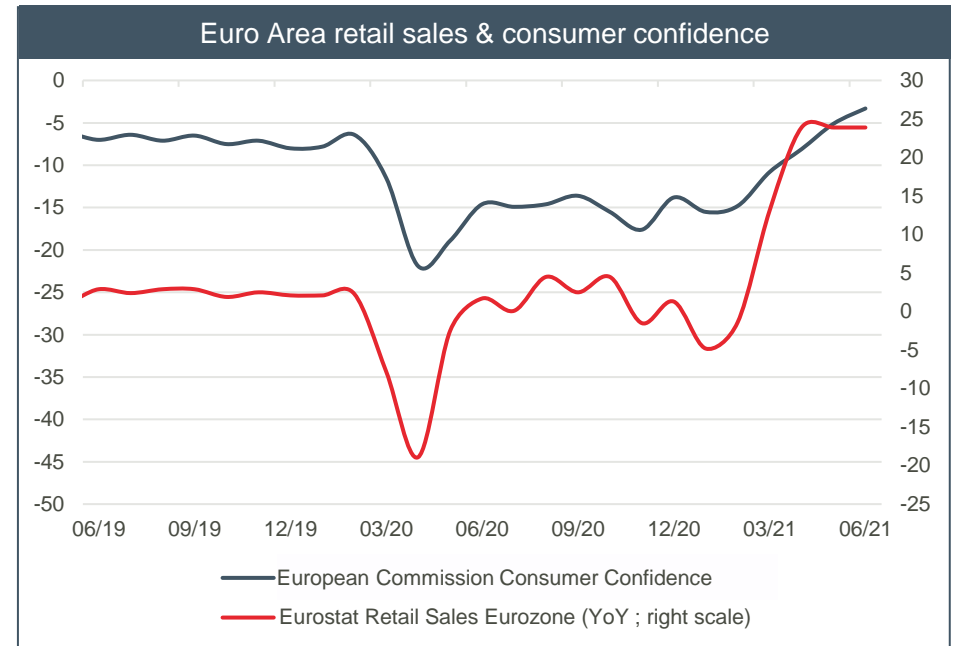
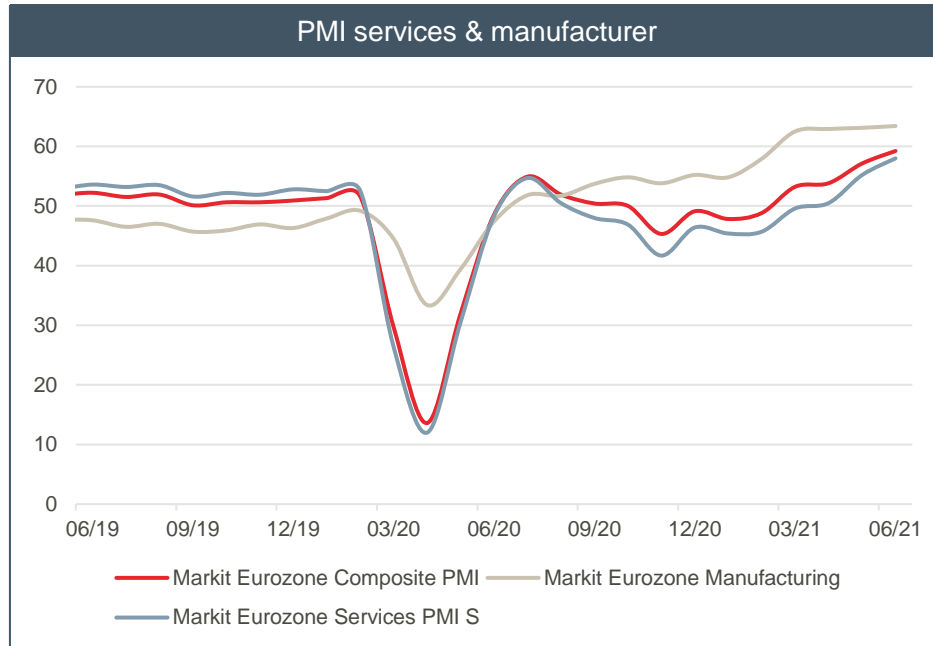
## Output gap should be closed fairly soon



- Growth gap to the 2019 level is closed by now, output gap should turn positive at the end of this year
- Peak growth momentum is behind us but growth level to remain elevated
- PMI are rolling over, still revealing supply constraints and ongoing price pressure
- June job report shows evidence of easing supply pressures



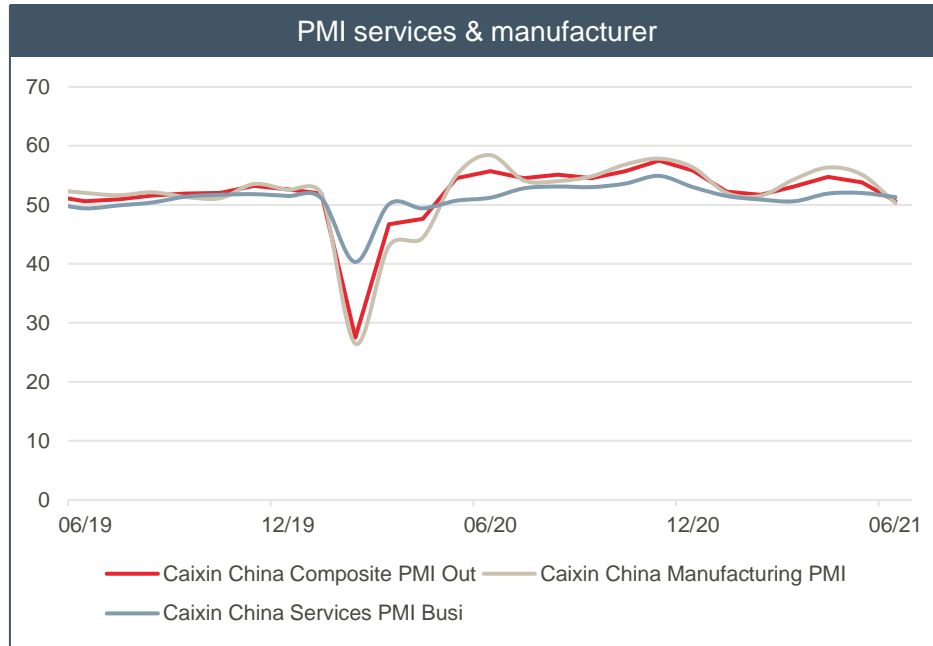
## Growth at full speed



- Service sector is picking up towards manufacturing as evidenced by the recent June PMI in the Eurozone
- The Eurozone is likely to close the gap to 2019 growth level early next year, however the output gap will persist for much longer
- We still are on the optimistic side and see growth this year around 5%, above the consensus (4,5%)
- Delta strain is introducing a bit of downside risk for Q3



## Past peak growth momentum



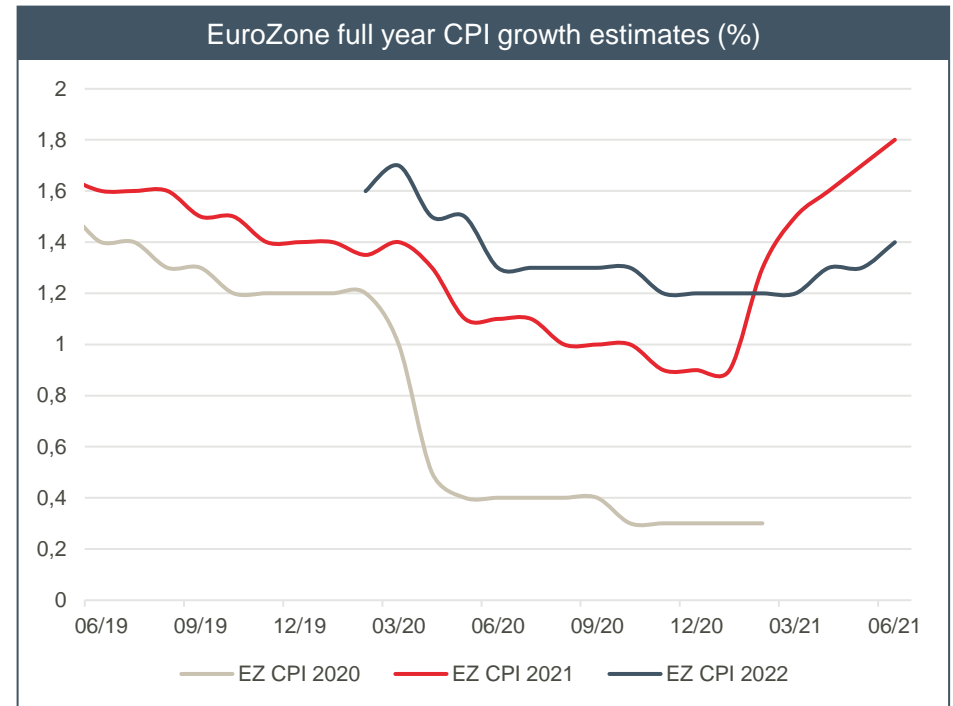
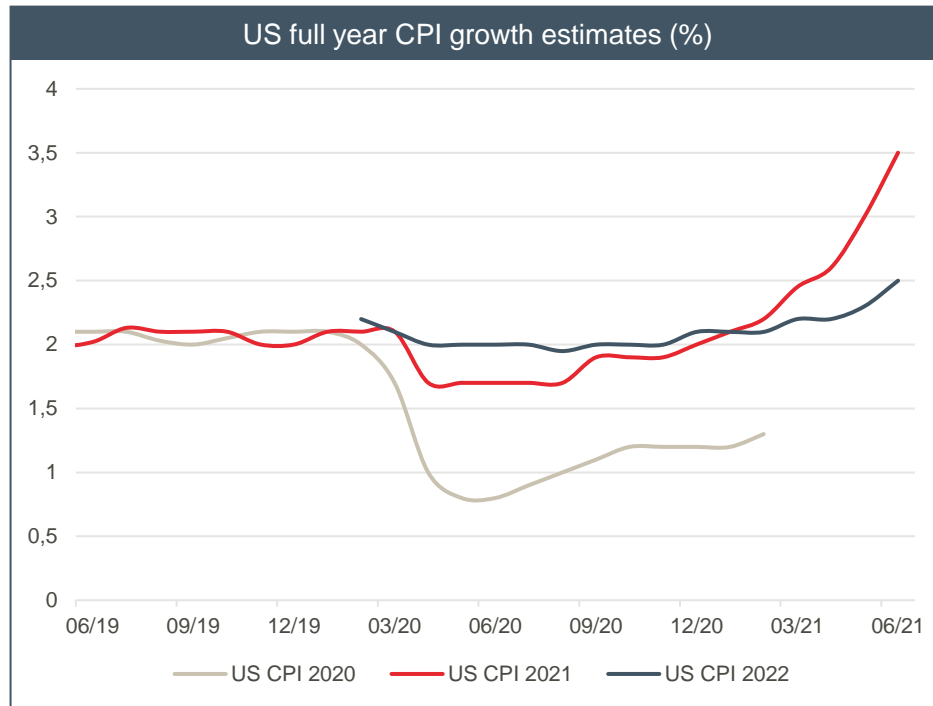
- Caixin PMI surprised to the downside as the service component decreased significantly almost 5 points to 50,3
- Employment dropped to sub-50 level reflecting decreased confidence of small firms
- The official PMI eased off less, but showed weakness in the service sector as well



# Inflation expectations



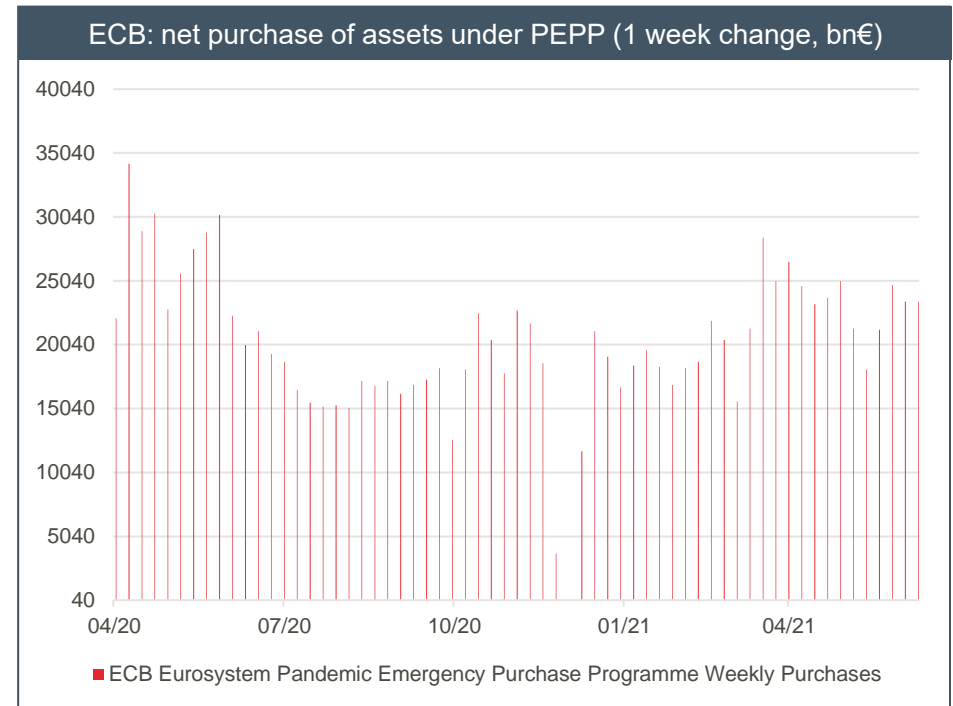
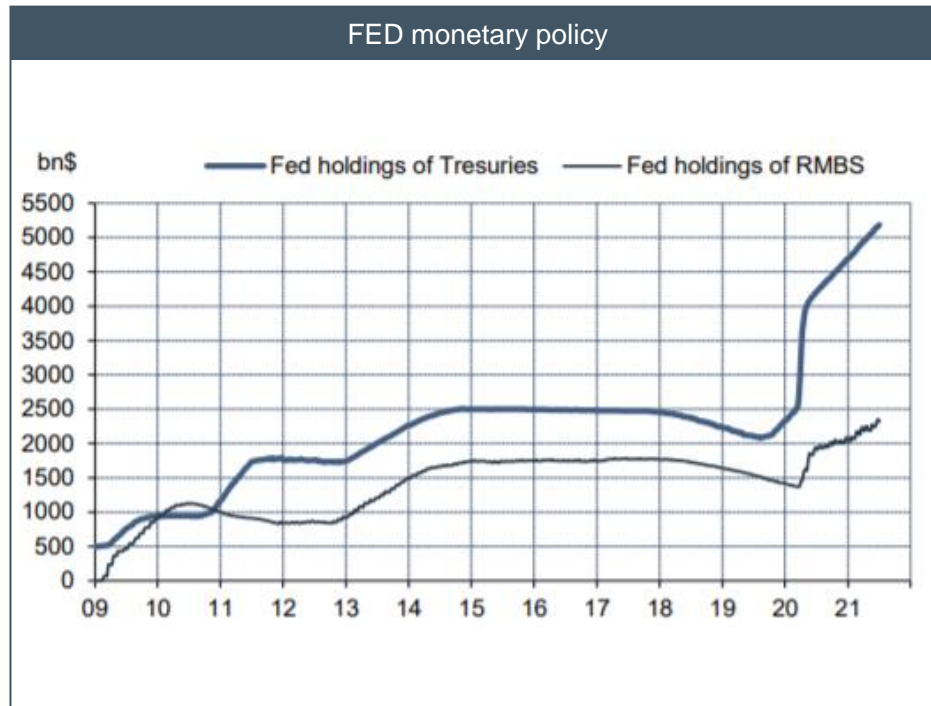
Still anchored



- FED narrative of transitory inflation spike is now consensus and leaves little margin of error
- A more durable or structural inflation path could thus have a considerable market impact
- Inflation in the EZ should be bumpy over the next months with a peak later in the year
- EZ break-evens have declined in sympathy with US counterparts, but should offer more upside from a still relatively low level



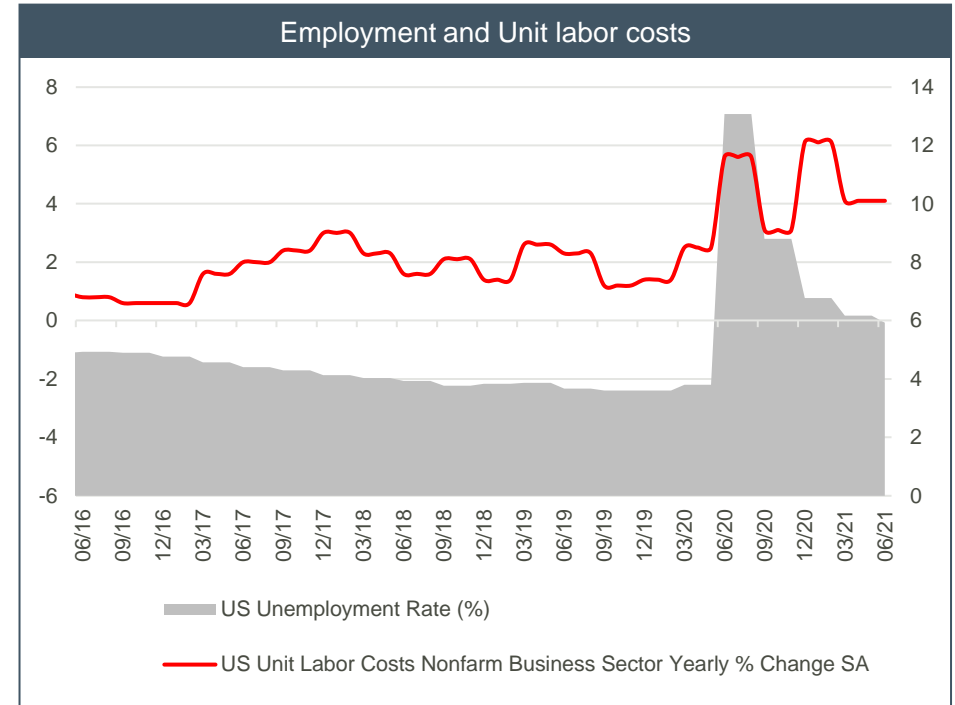
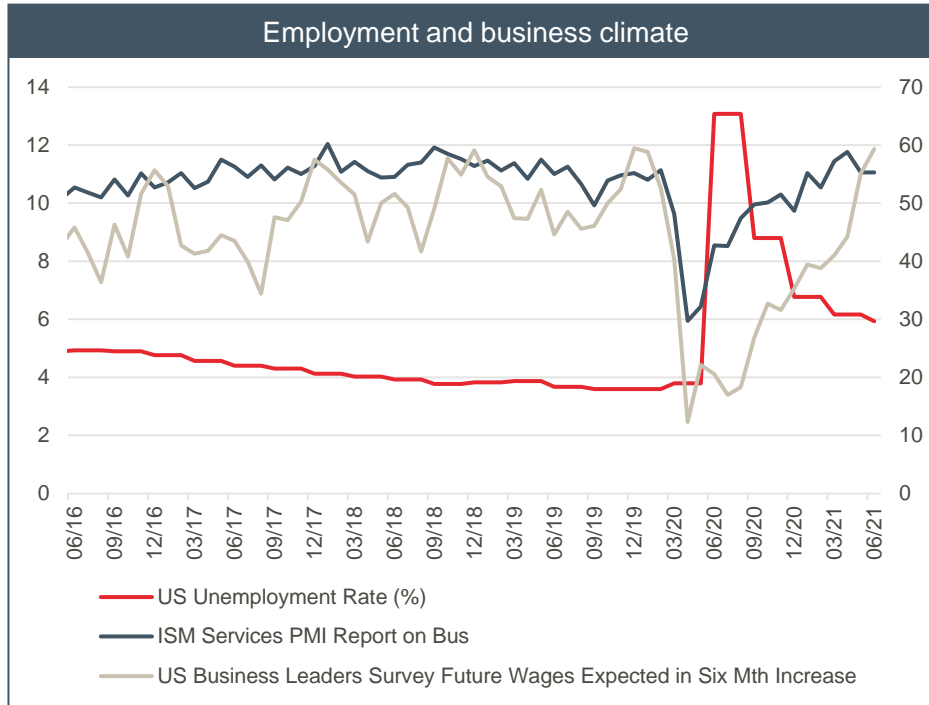
## A dovish FED pivot?



- FED dots have moved to an earlier rate lift-off than in the March meeting
- Markets are now pricing in a first hike for mid 2022, but early tapering probability in late 2021 is still underestimated
- Future of PEPP is still undecided
- Probably more light on a possible fade-out of PEPP, a partly replacement by APP and results of the strategy review at the September meeting



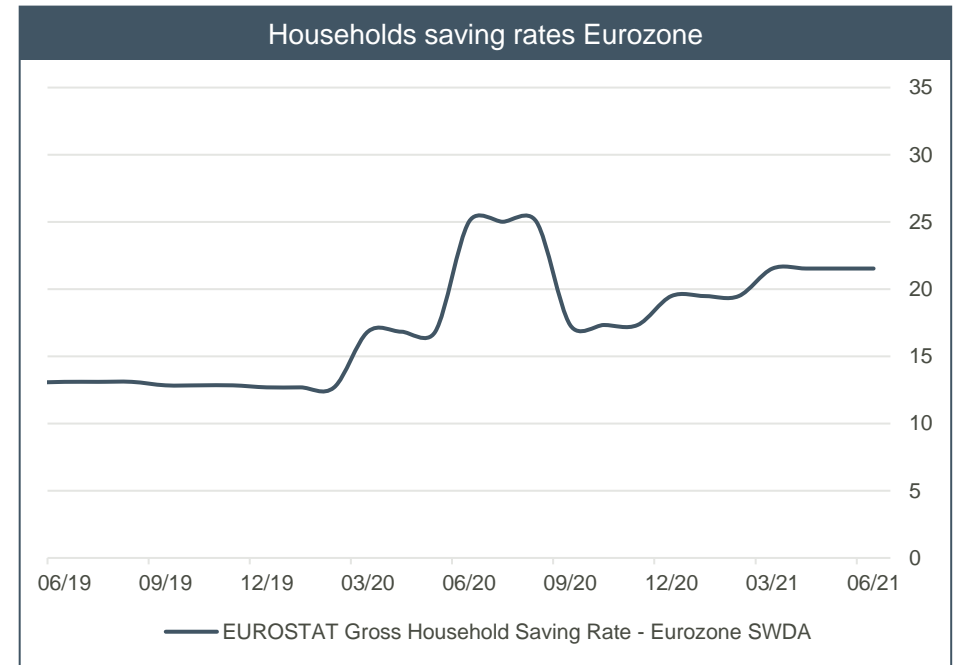
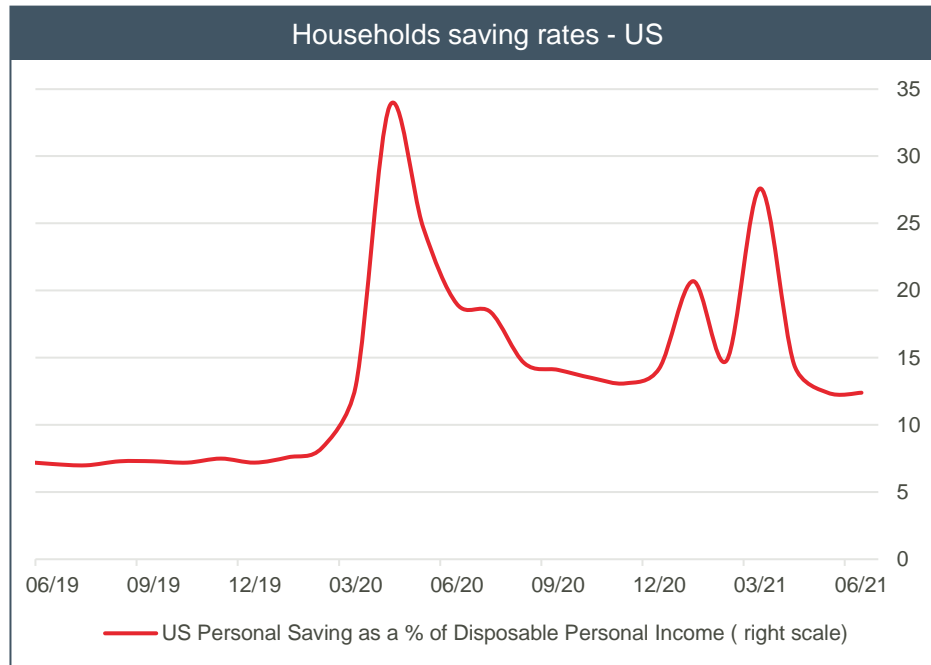
## What is holding back supply?



- June employment report eased slightly earlier concerns for sustained supply disruptions in the labor market
- Direct pay cheques, pandemic school closures, retirement and reduced immigration are possible factors at play
- Except for retirement, those factors will fade over time, eg. benefits have already started to run-off in some states
- However, the dust may take time to settle a bit longer so markets and the FED will probably have to wait for autumn to have a clearer picture
- We still expect a significant improvement in the labor market to force the FED into tapering late this year



## The big unknown



- How fast and by how much will involuntary savings flood the economy?
- Around 2,5 trn USD have been built up alone in the US
- Debt repayment and heightened risk aversion following the pandemic suggest a moderate decline in savings

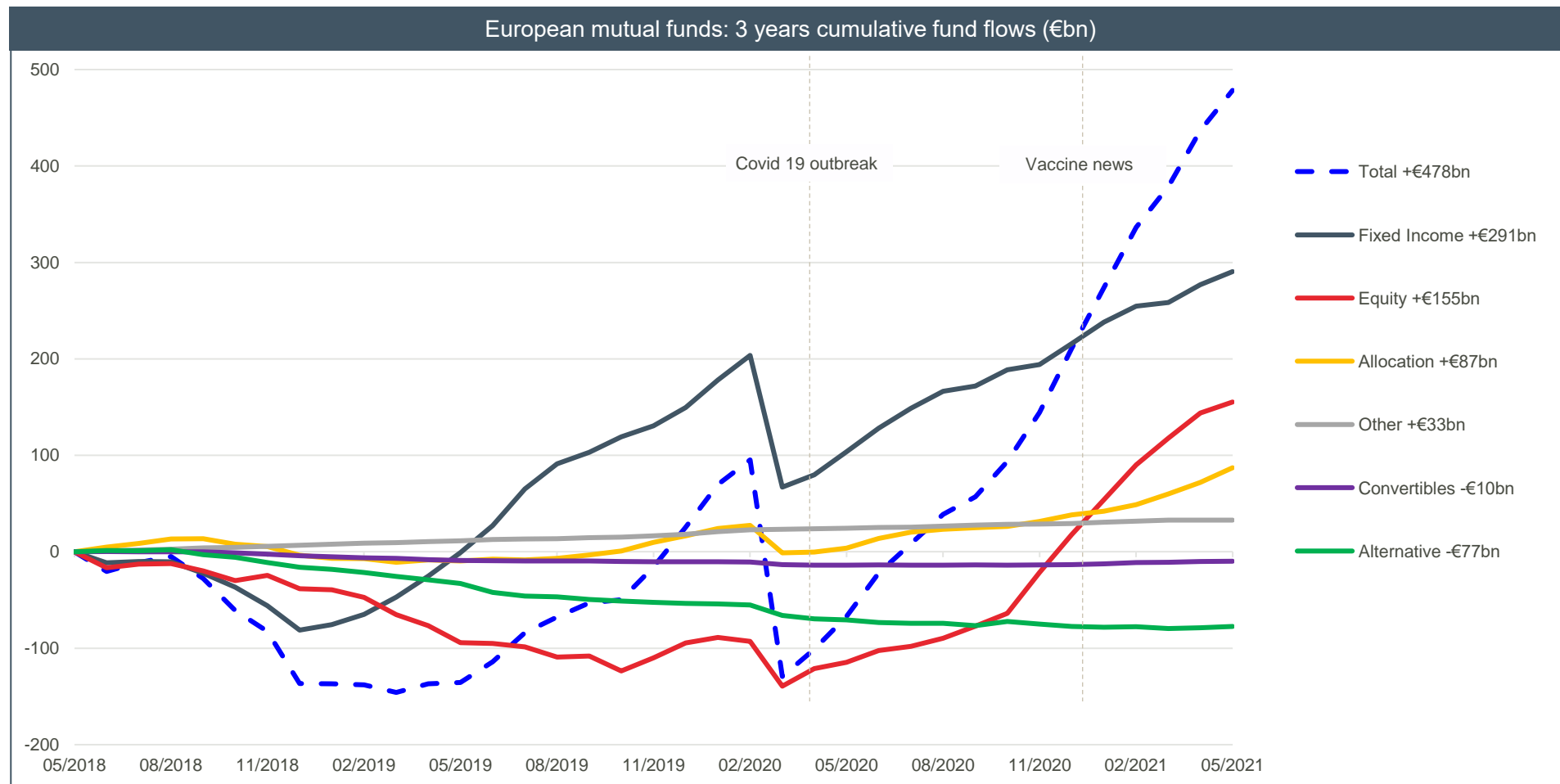


## 02 MARKET ANALYSIS

# European mutual fund flows – 3 years trend



Less risky asset classes getting some new inflows



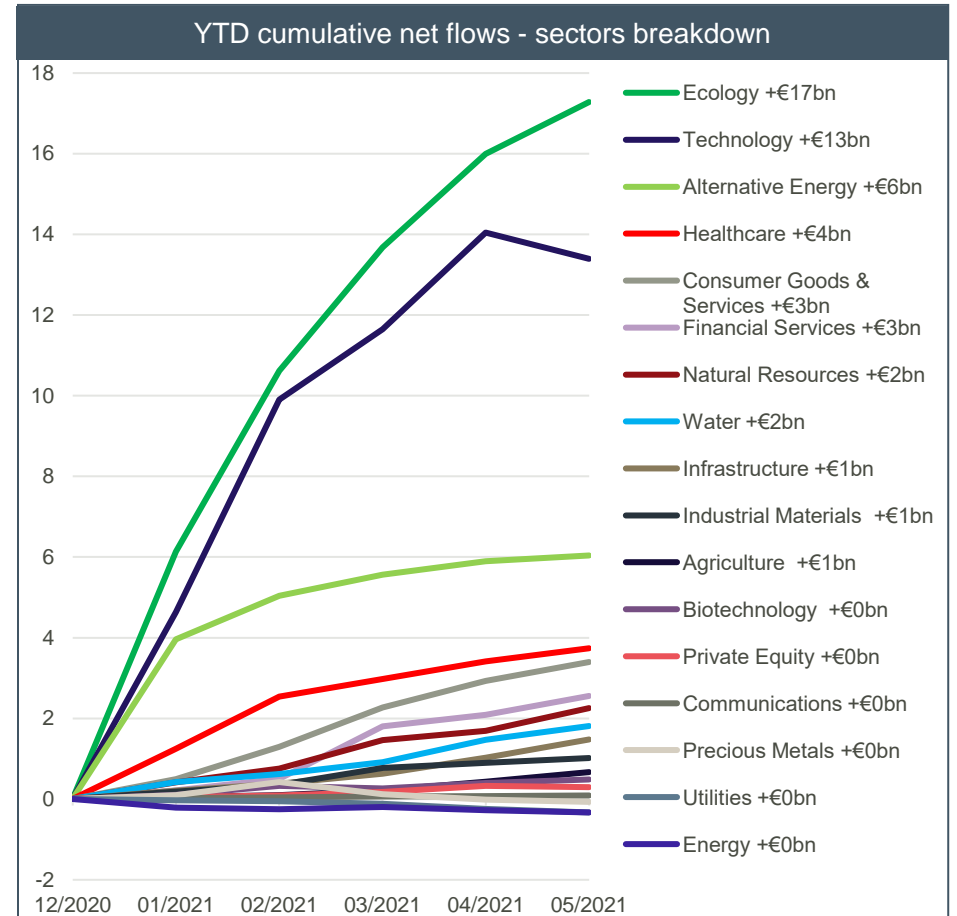
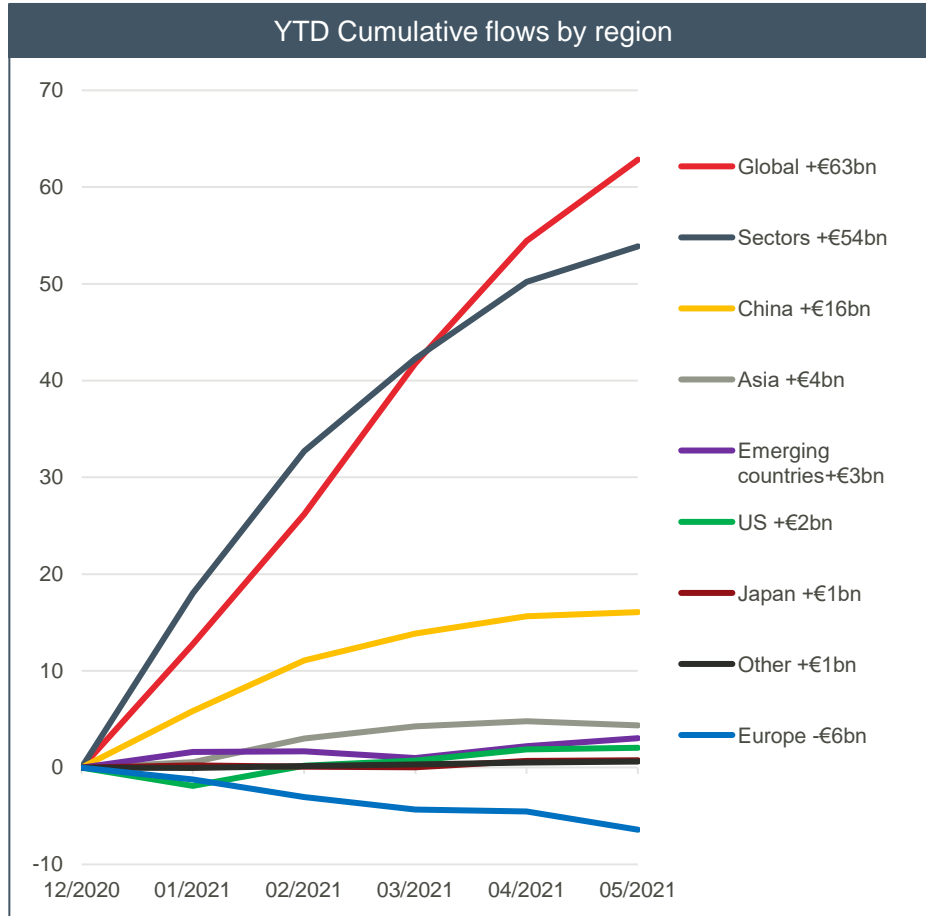
Source : Morningstar. Data as of 31.05.2021 (Europe OE ex ETF ex MM ex FoF ex Feeder (domiciled, most compr.))



# European mutual fund flows – year-to-date equity flows



Global and sector strategies still leading the trend

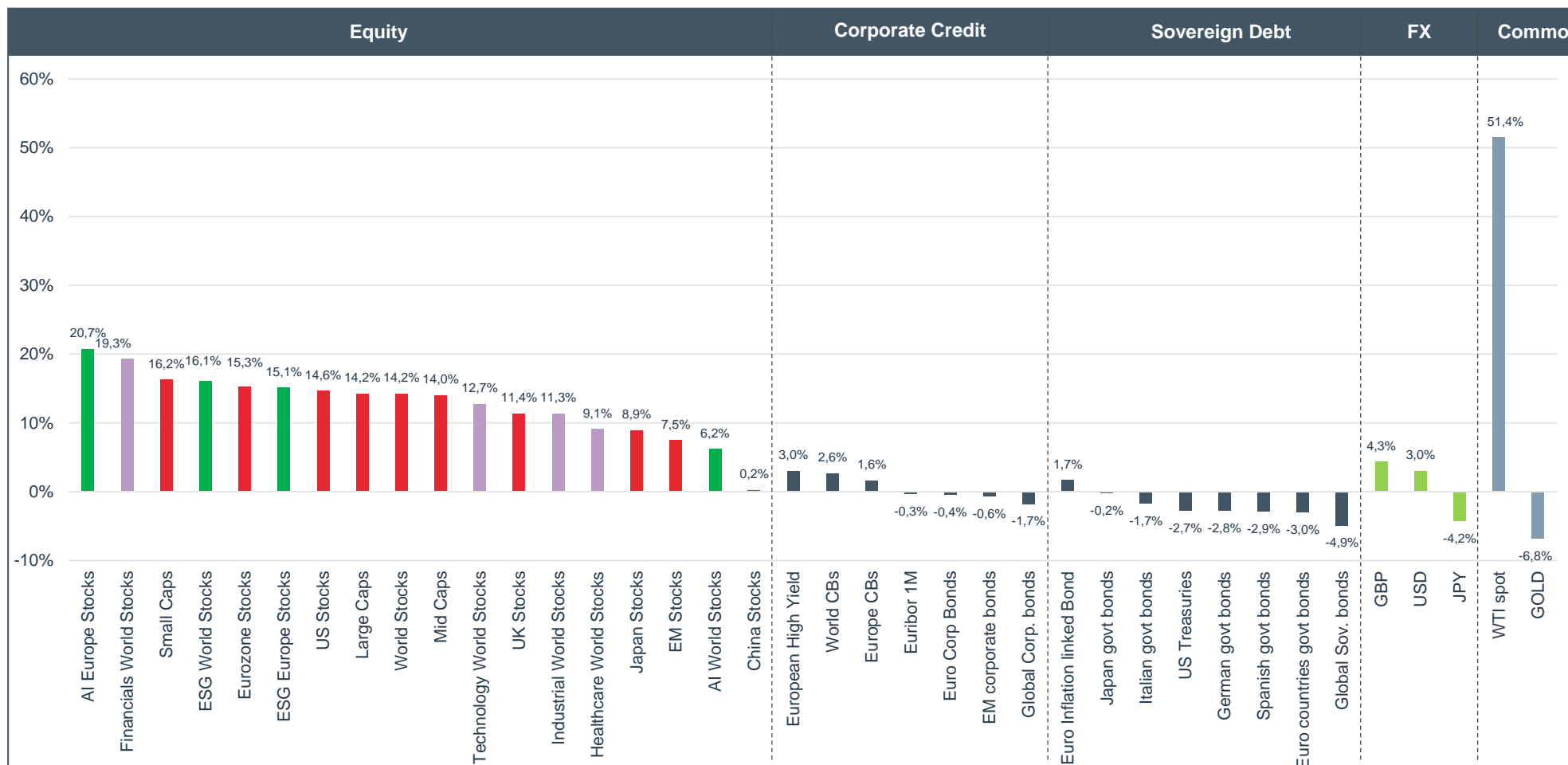


Source : Morningstar. Data as of 31.05.2021 (Europe OE ex ETF ex MM ex FoF ex Feeder (domiciled, most compr.))

# Year-to-date performances of asset classes



Still confidence in the recovery



Equities Sectors Thematics

Past performances are not a reliable indicator of future performances and are not constant over time.

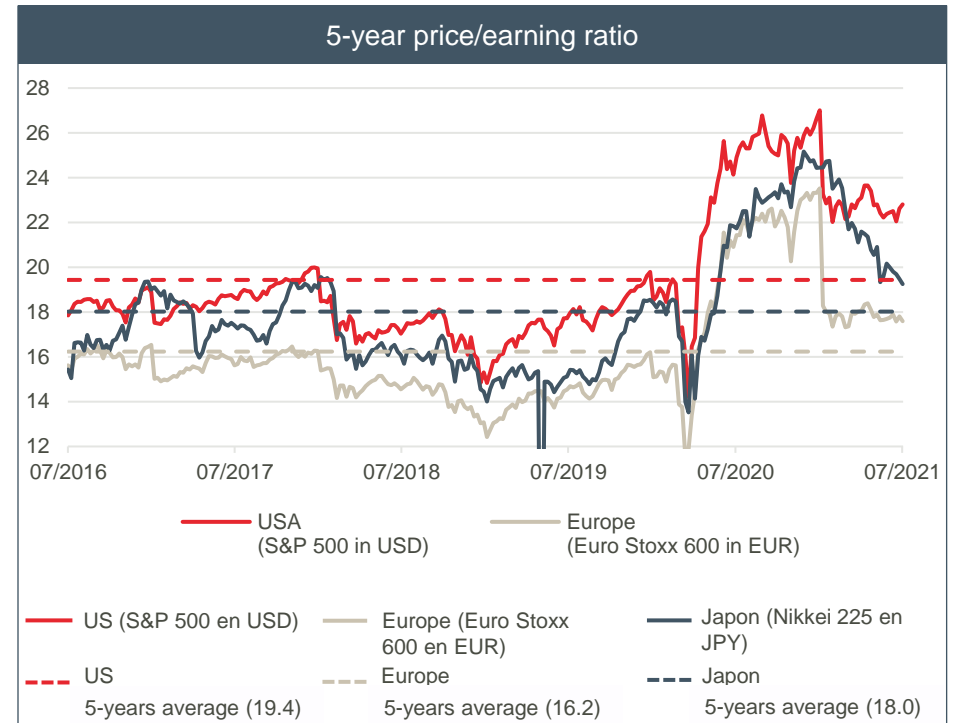
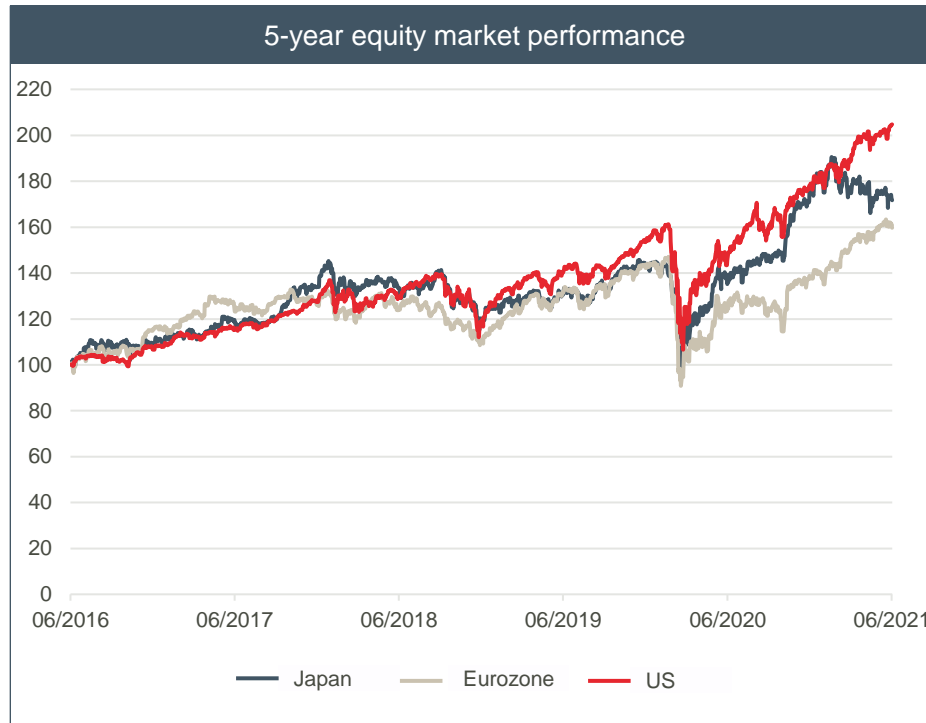
Sources: Bloomberg and BoA ML as of 06/30/2021; performances expressed in local currencies



# EQUITIES



## A long-lasting global rally



- Global equity indexes kept on rallying (Msci World All Countries +1.3%), led by the US market (S&P +2.2%).
- Growth and quality were strongly bid, with Nasdaq posting a 5.5% gain, and the Swiss SMI gaining 5.1%.
- Emerging equities were flat on average (in USD), with positive returns mostly coming from Asian markets (Taiwan +4%, Philippine SE +4%), but not China (CSI300 -2%).

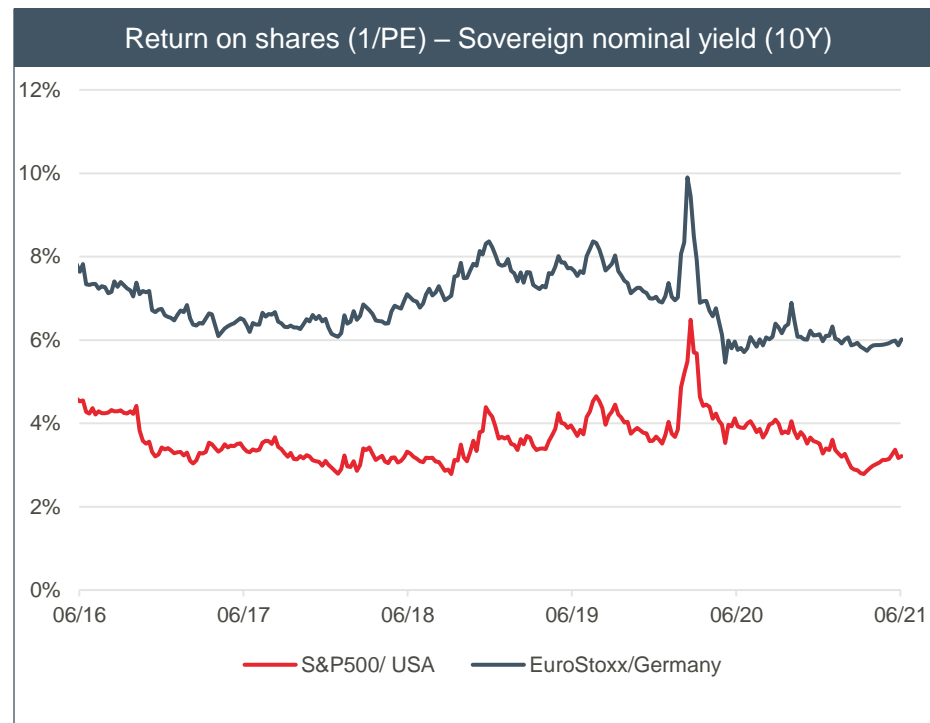
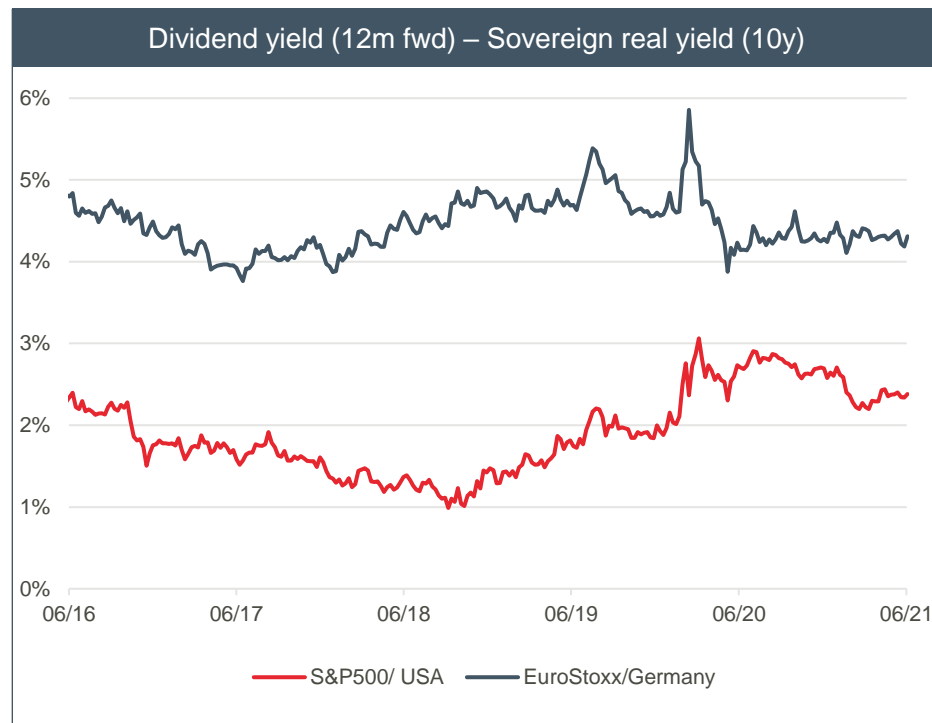
**Past performances are not a reliable indicator of future performances and are not constant over time.**

Source: Bloomberg, ODDO BHF AM SAS | Datas as of 06/30/2021

# Risk premiums



Equities still compare favorably



- With the recent move down in US long term yield, inflation expectation stabilizing, and earning regularly revised up, the risk premia on US equities has slightly rebounded

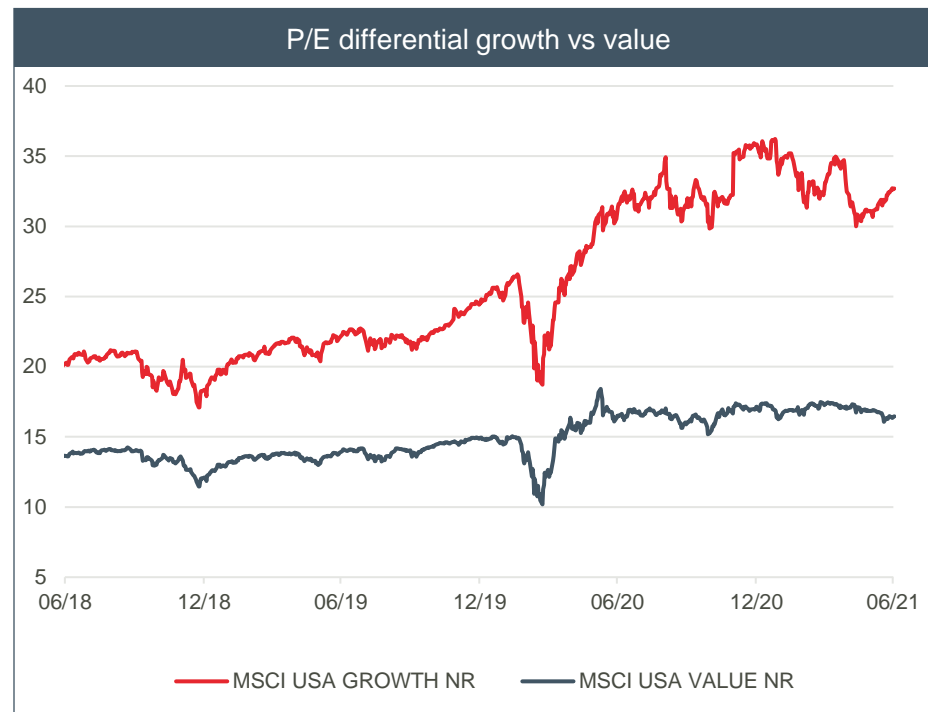
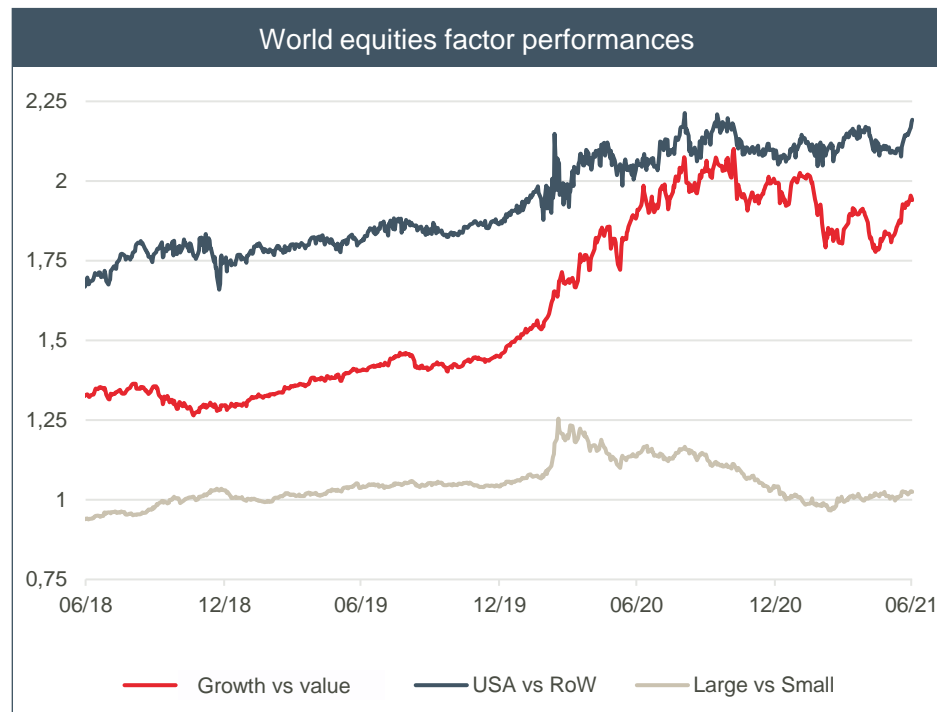
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Source: Bloomberg, ODDO BHF AM SAS | Figures as of 06/30/2021

# Equities performances – styles differential



Bond market driving equities



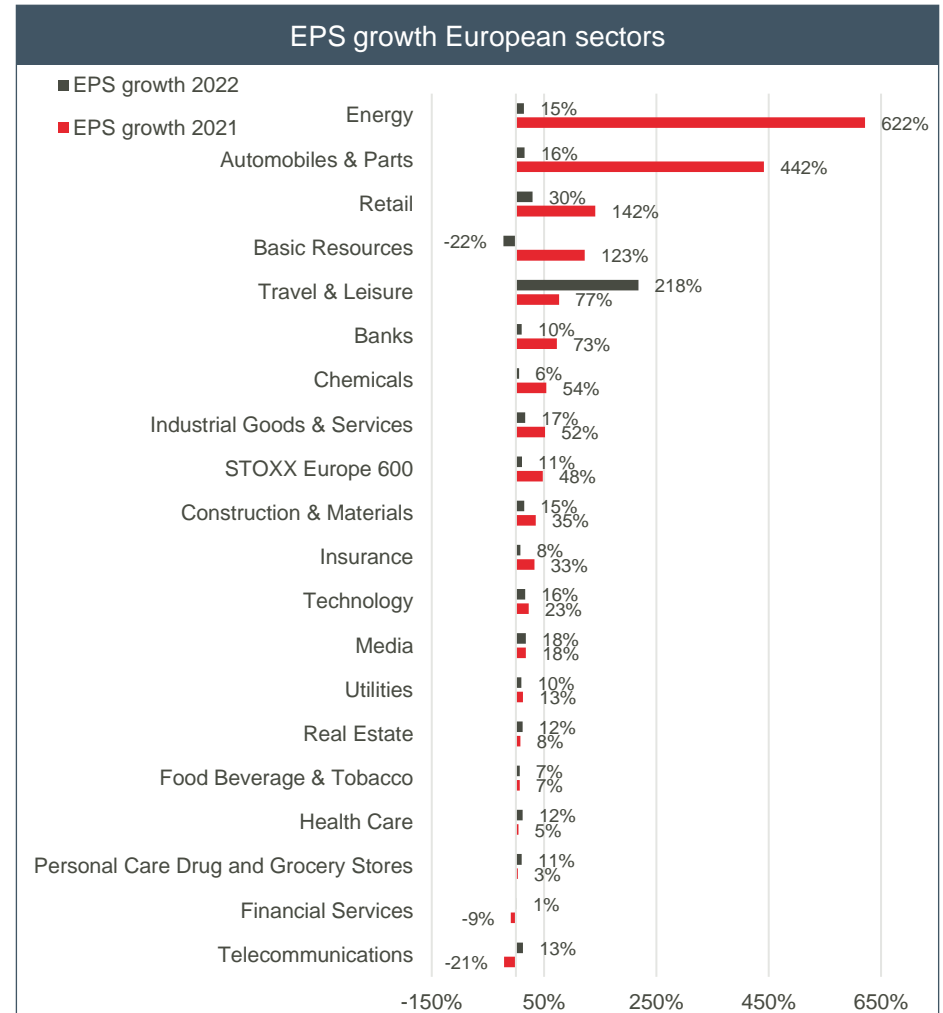
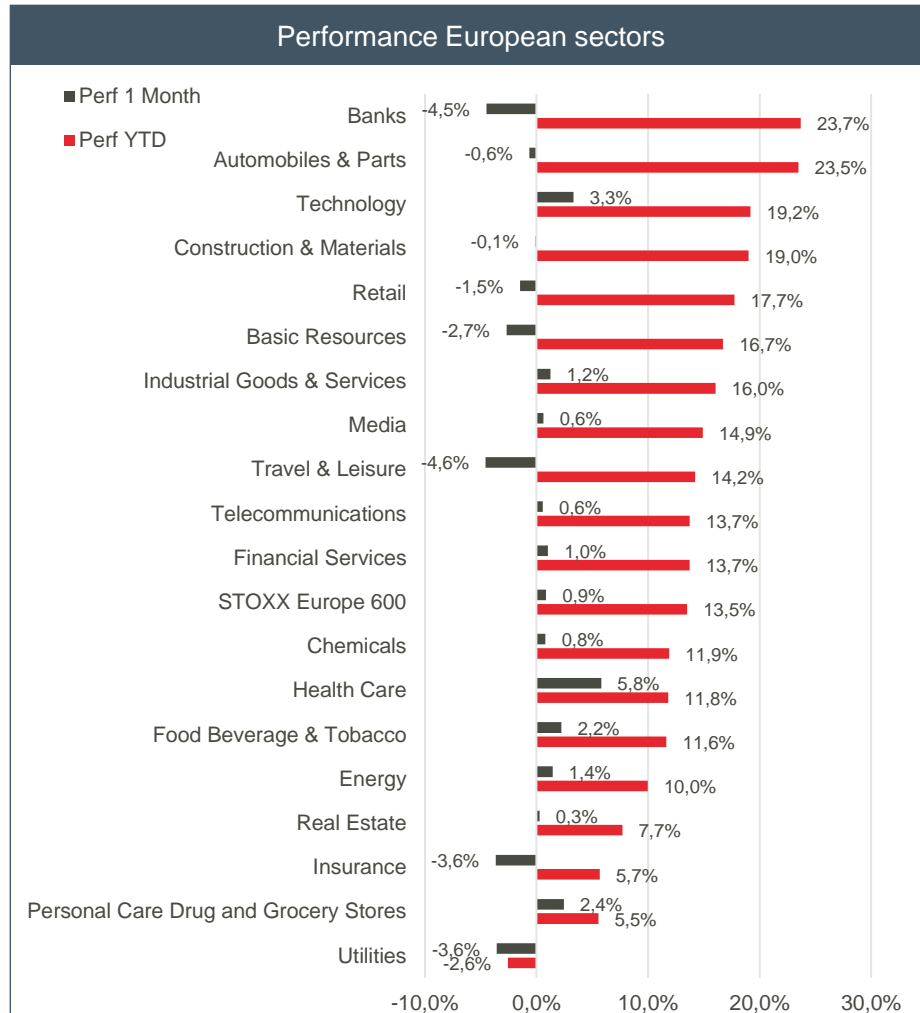
- While (long term) US yields fell, the rebound of the value sector came to an abrupt halt.



# European equities - sectors



The upcoming earnings sequence is crucial to give the pulse of the coming months

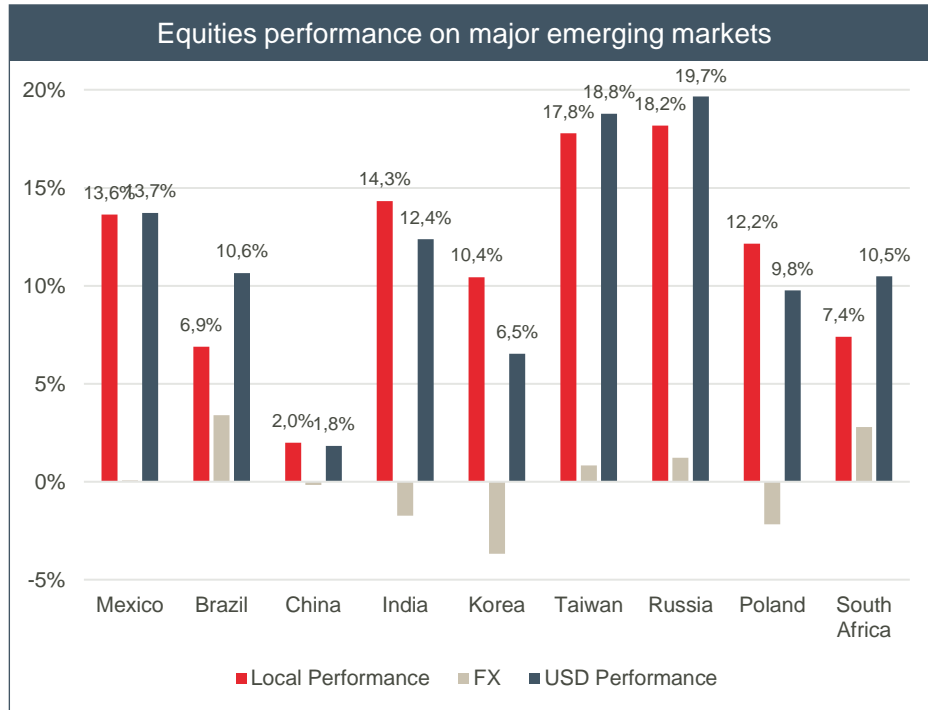


Source: ODDO BHF AM SAS, Factset, data as of 06/30/2021

# Emerging markets



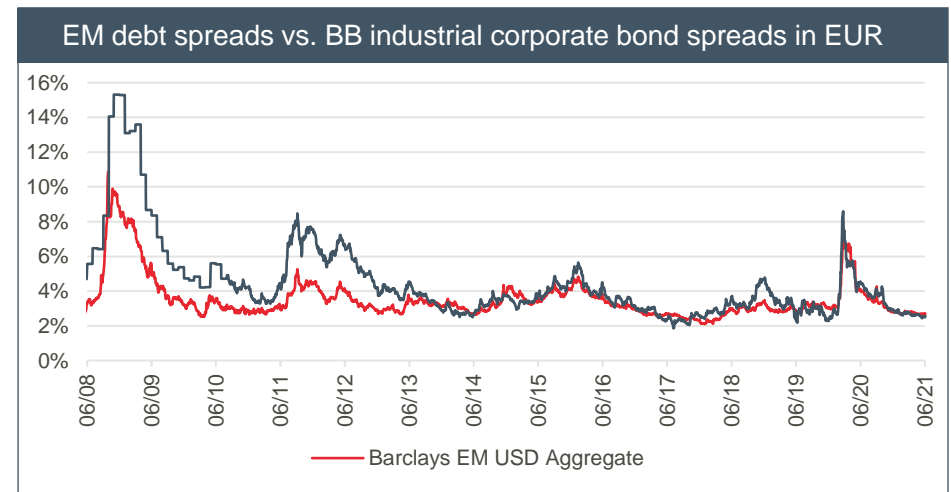
## Stabilizing?



- Apart from China, earning momentum is getting better.
- Valuations still compare favorably and volatility has also come down

**EPS (including losses) growth and PE (local currency)**

Indices	PE 12m fwd	2020 EPS growth	2021 EPS growth	2022 EPS growth	Dividend yield
MSCI EM	14.9	-17%	59%	10%	2.4%
MSCI CHINA	17.1	-9%	19%	17%	1.5%
MSCI KOREA	12.2	6%	95%	9%	1.7%
MSCI INDIA	22.2	-27%	93%	14%	1.3%
MSCI INDONESIA	17.5	-30%	27%	20%	2.7%
MSCI PHILIPPINES	20.2	-52%	60%	26%	1.7%
MSCI MALAYSIA	13.0	-26%	79%	-8%	4.4%
MSCI RUSSIA	8.0	-58%	90%	4%	7.0%
WSE WIG INDEX	12.9	-33%	110%	3%	2.8%
MSCI TURKEY	5.7	6%	63%	20%	7.1%
MSCI SOUTH AFRICA	11.3	-10%	73%	15%	3.5%
MSCI BRAZIL	9.4	-38%	203%	-6%	4.2%
MSCI COLOMBIA	11.2	-77%	209%	36%	3.1%
MSCI MEXICO	15.4	-50%	130%	8%	2.9%



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Sources: Bloomberg, ODDO BHF AM SAS | Data at 06/30/2021

# Play the reflation?



Collapse of the reflation trade thematic



Source: ODDO BHF AM SAS, Bloomberg

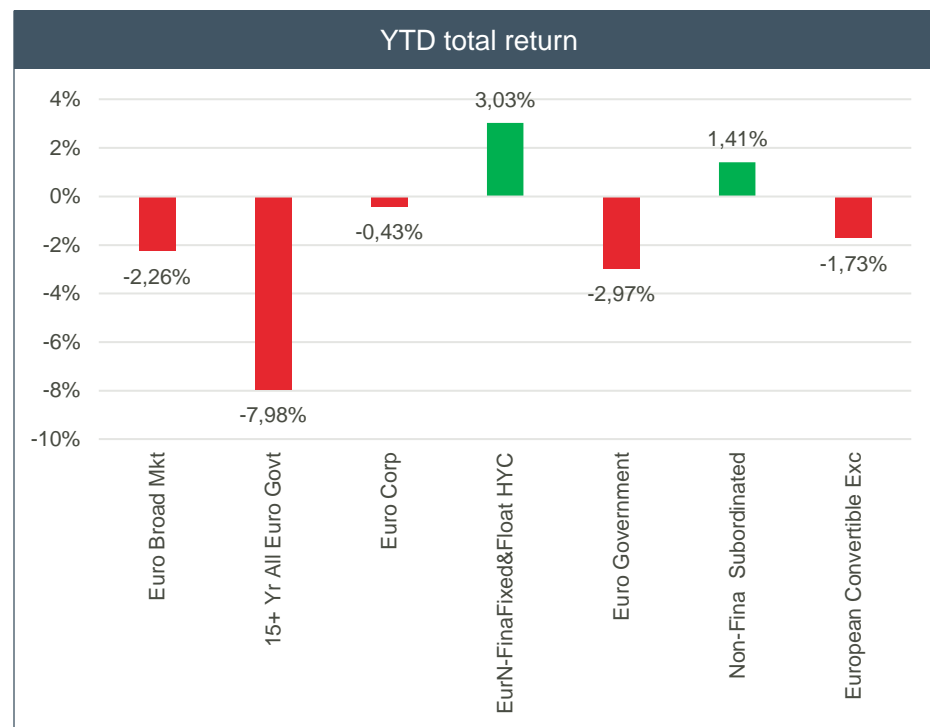
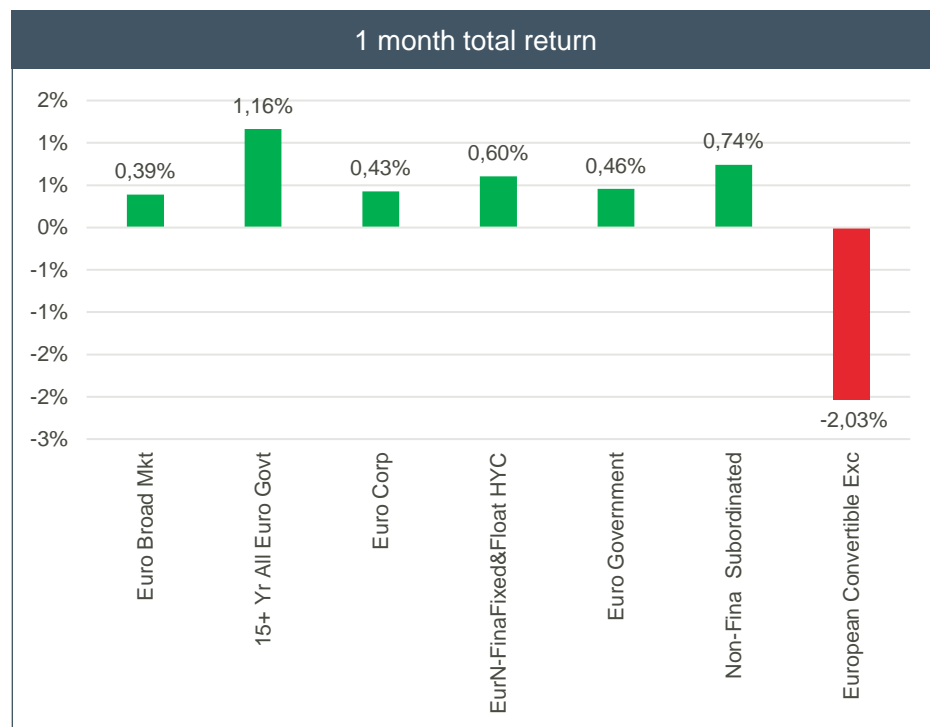


# FIXED INCOME

# Performance fixed income segment



Carry and spread compression took it all so far

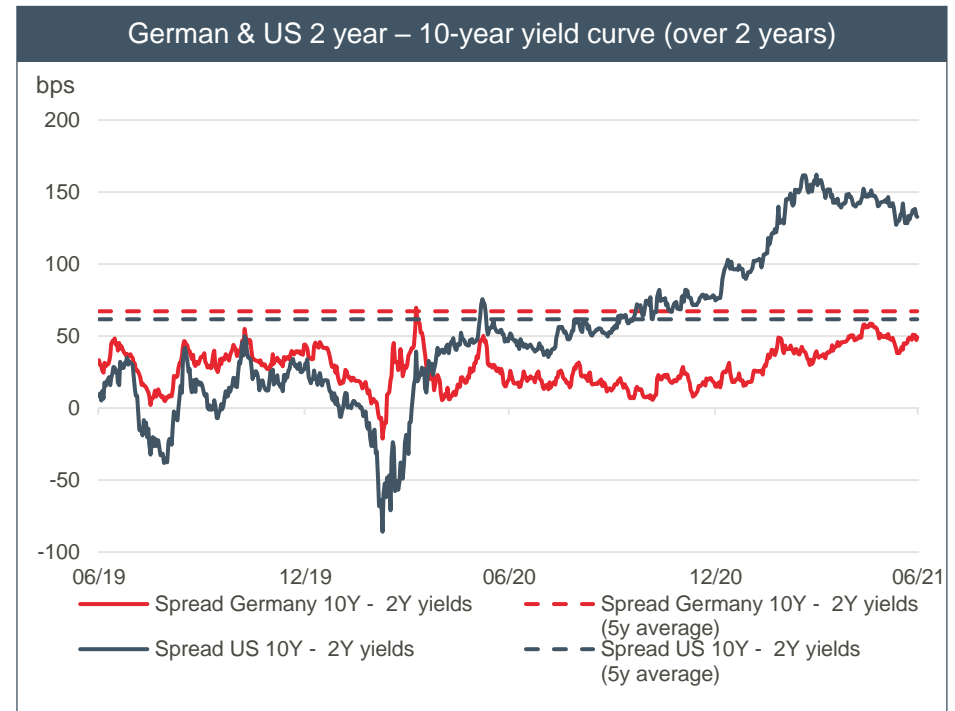
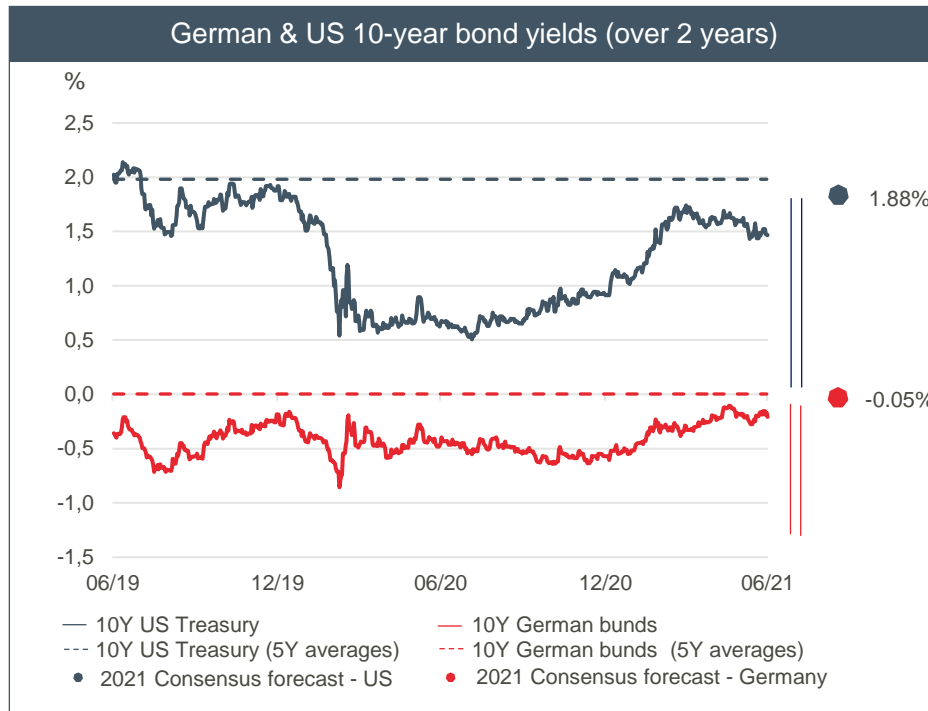


- Duration markets still looking bleak in return terms despite the strong June rebound
- Spread products and low duration sectors are still way ahead of Government bonds

Source: ODDO BHF AM, Bloomberg, data as of 06/30/2021



## Back to the drawing board?



- Contrary to expectations, yields in the US have declined by almost 40bp in 10-year Treasuries
- Presumably peaking US inflation and growth, positioning, trust in the Fed plus the threat from the delta strain are all playing a role
- An improving labor market and more durable inflation prints should reinforce the taper discussion and lift completely misplaced real rates (10-year at -0,9%) to slightly more adequate levels
- Bunds should start to diverge again but follow in direction as the ECB will not be able to completely buffer the increase in US yields

**Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance and is not constant over time.**

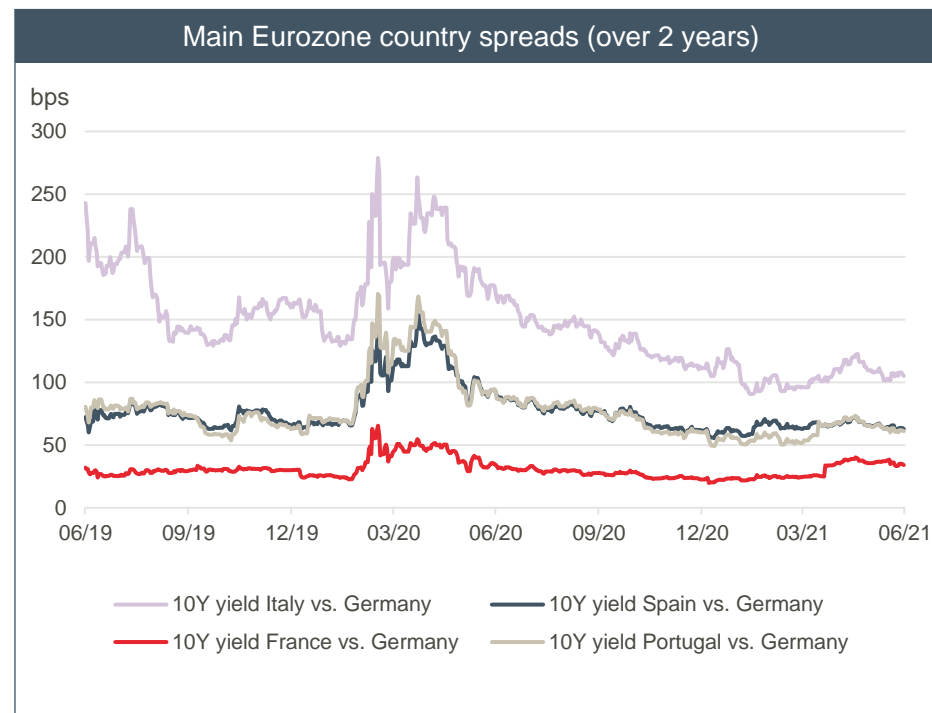
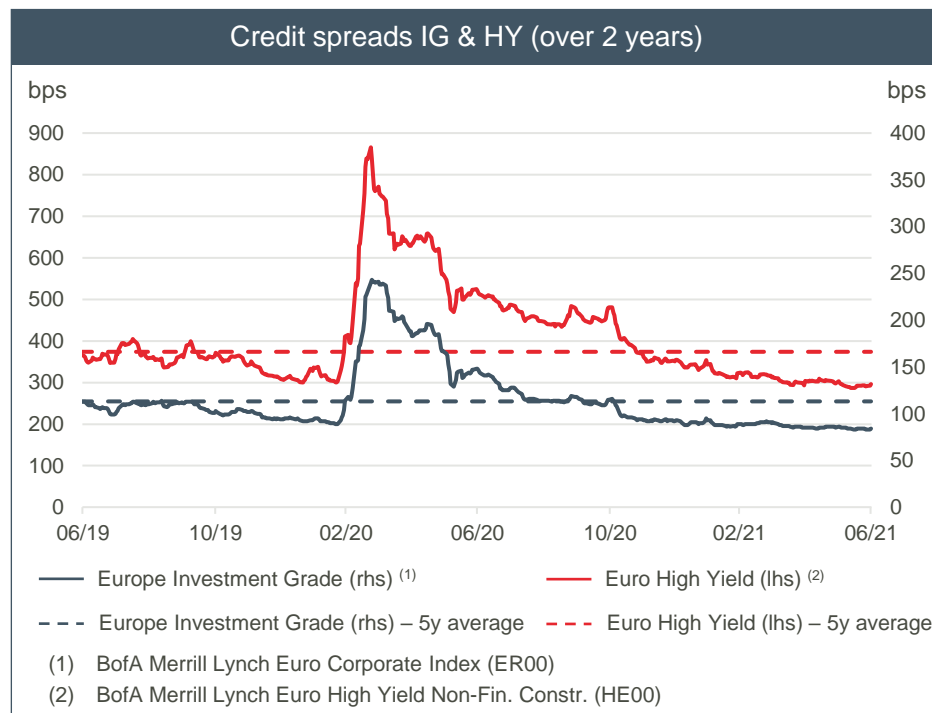
(1) Bloomberg Economic Forecast | Sources: ODDO BHF AM SAS, Bloomberg | LHS: Data as of 06/30/2021; RHS: Data as of 06/30/2021



# Credit Spreads



Carry is king



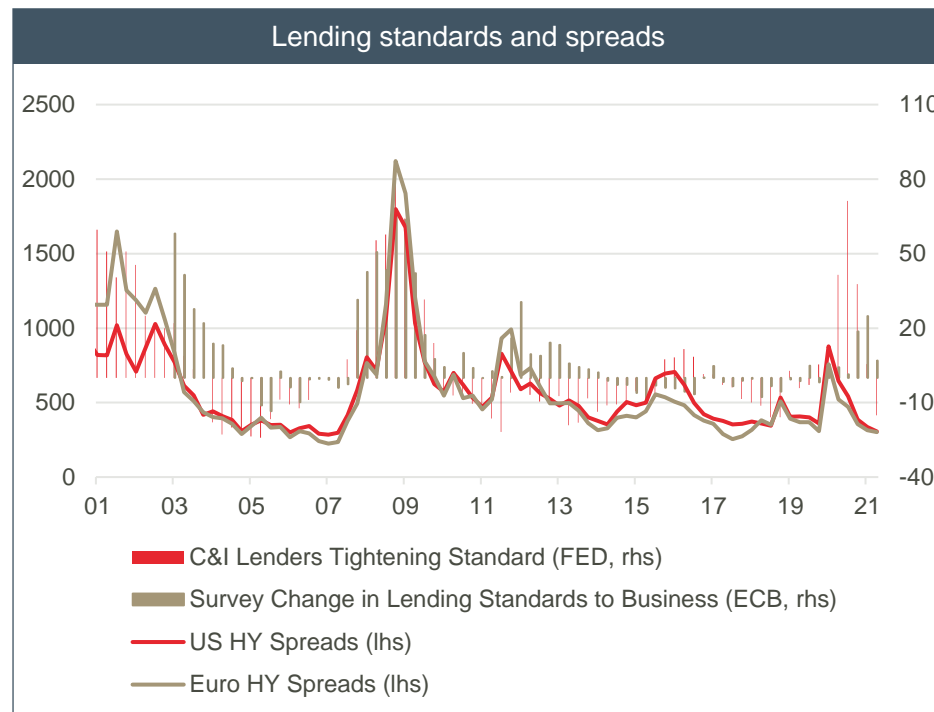
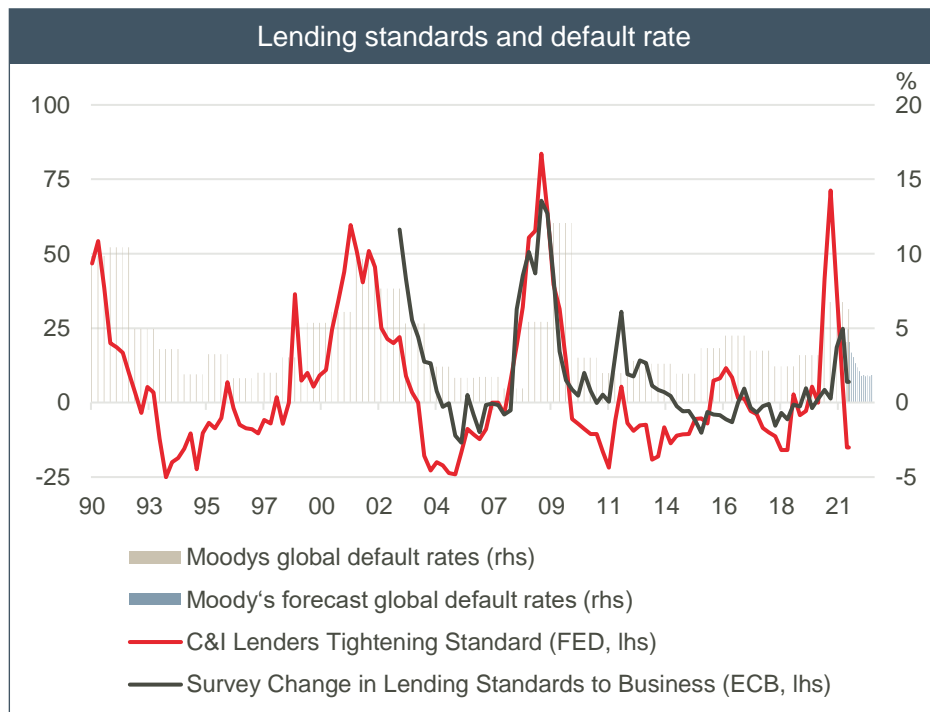
- Spread momentum is low but positive
- At current levels significantly tightening spreads are unlikely, but the carry game is still attractive as long as Central Banks remain hyper-accommodative

**Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance and is not constant over time.**

Sources: ODDO BHF AM SAS, Bloomberg | Data as of 06/30/2021



## Hunky dory



Source: Fed, ECB, Bloomberg | Moody's as of 06/30/2021, Lending Standard & Survey Change as of 06/2021, Spreads as of 06/30/2021

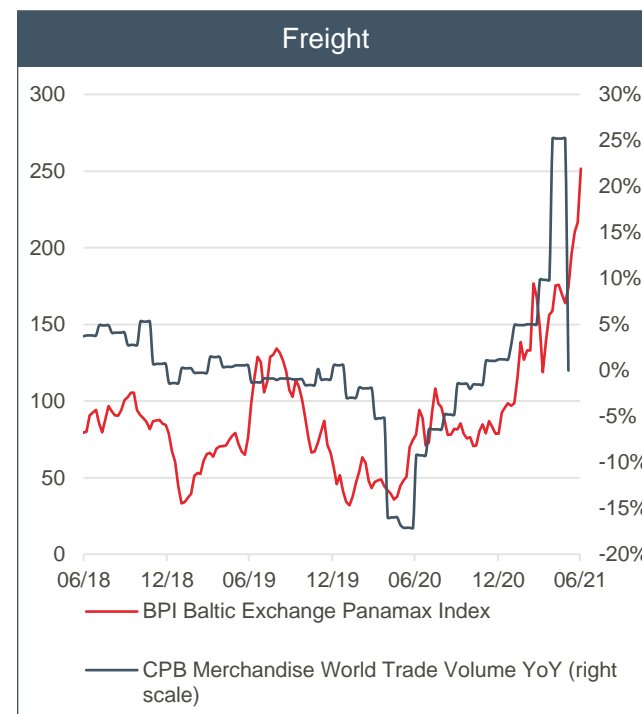
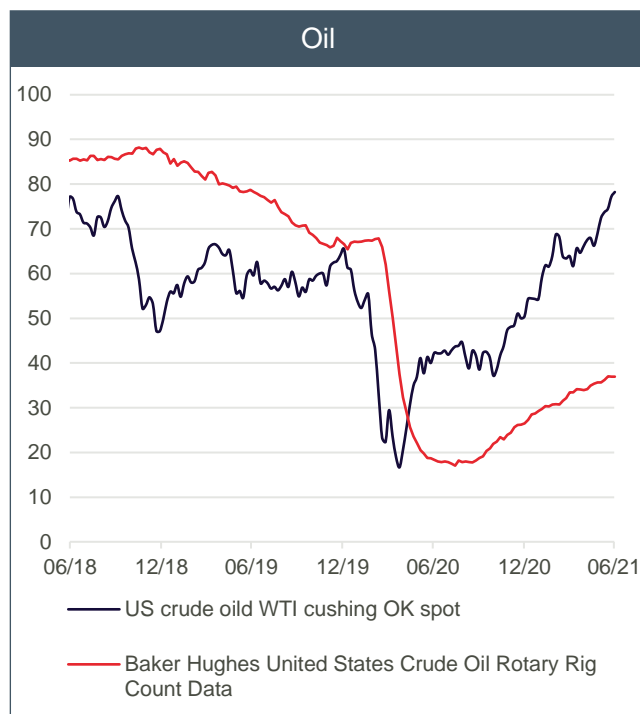
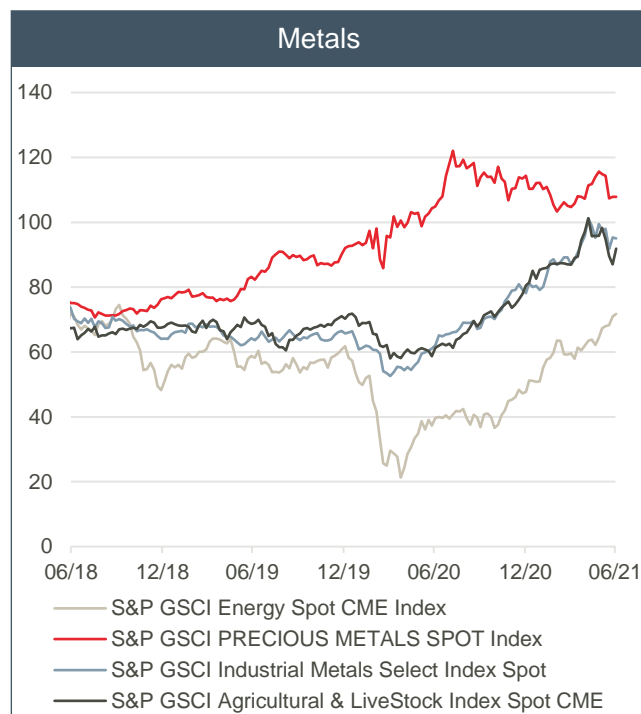


# COMMODITIES & CURRENCIES

# Commodities



Still some price hikes



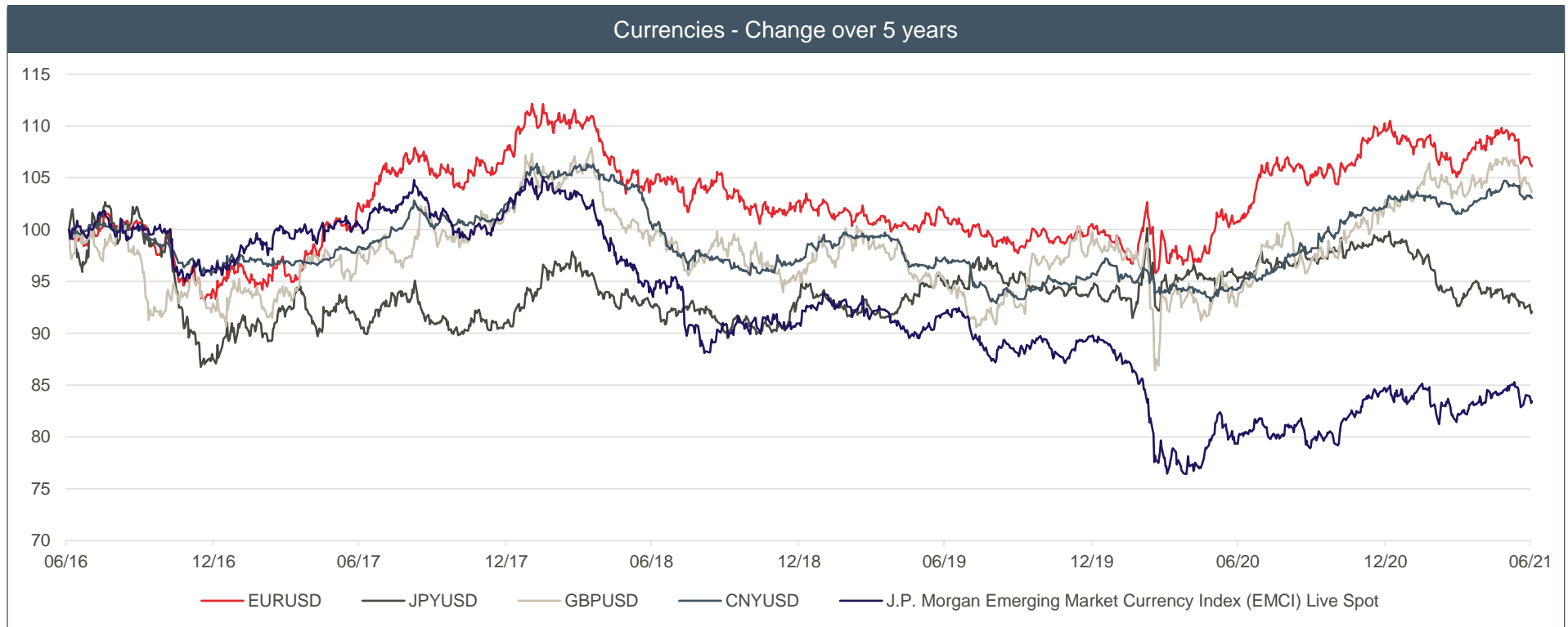
- Most freight indexes moved up in June
- WTI barrel is back to the highest since 2014
- Lumber, whose scarcity made it into the headlines a few months ago, has normalized and is back to flat YtD (but still +70% vs pre-pandemic level)

**Past performances are not a reliable indicator of future performance and are not constant over time.**

Sources: Bloomberg, ODDO BHF AM SAS | Data at 06/30/2021



## USD rallying



- The bear flattening of the US curve eventually ended up with a strong rebound of the USD
- Emerging currencies were more resilient, and thus appreciated vs EUR or JPY

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Sources: Bloomberg, ODDO BHF AM SAS | Data at 06/30/2021



## **03** CURRENT CONVICTIONS



# Structural challenges



## Long-term trends and potential risks

Horizon	Structural trend	Potential financial risks	Risks at 12 months	Recent changes
Short term <1 year	Monetary expansion	Excess of debt	Increasing	Increase in bankrupts in H2 2021
	US earnings supercycle	Decline in margins	Increasing	Rising input prices
	European identity crisis	Hard Brexit, Ital-Exit	Decreasing	OECD Reform 2.0 will support tax harmonisation in the Eurozone!
Mid term 1-5 years	China's economic transition	Economic and political crisis	Decreasing	New five-year strategy for the Chinese government
	The globalisation of inequalities	Political instability	Increasing	New US fiscal plan expected
Long term > 5 years	Ageing of the world population	Secular stagnation and decline	On going	China is getting concerned
	Global warming	Natural disasters and over-regulation	Non foreseeable	Greening of public expenditure



## Our 6-month view

### Central scenario:

#### Growth recovery in Europe, normalizing growth trend in the US & China, still strong earnings momentum

70%

##### Europe

- Growth acceleration with vaccination campaigns progressing finally
- Recovery lagging vs the United States, China
- Positive earning momentum will continue after the last strongest year of the decade
- Fiscal and monetary policy will continue to support financial markets

##### US

- With economic sentiment, GDP growth and also inflation close to their expected peak levels, the management of growth normalization will be in the focus
- Corporates fundamentals strong
- While fiscal support remains unprecedented, current monetary support might fade as tapering discussions are expected to start relatively soon

##### Assets to overweight



- Equities (focus on high quality cyclicals)
- Credit

##### Assets to underweight



- Sovereigns

##### Strategy



- Flexibility
- Hedging (options, gold,...)

### Alternative scenario: Interest rate risk fueled by more persistent increase in US inflation and intensifying tapering discussion

25%

- Wage growth and continuation of supply-demand imbalance resulting in broad based inflation increase
- Central banks' view of just „transitory“ inflation increase is tested by the market
- Reduction of growth potential & pressure on equity valuations

##### Assets to overweight



- Inflation-hedged bonds
- Alternative strategies
- Cash

##### Assets to underweight



- Equities
- Core Sovereigns

### Alternative scenario: Increase in protectionism from geopolitics and pandemia extension

5%

- Global recession with a risk on financial equilibrium
- Geopolitical risks materializing
- Covid-19 variants with much higher negative effect than expected resulting in new lockdowns in autumn/winter

##### Assets to overweight



- Money Market CHF & JPY
- Volatility
- Core government bonds

##### Assets to underweight



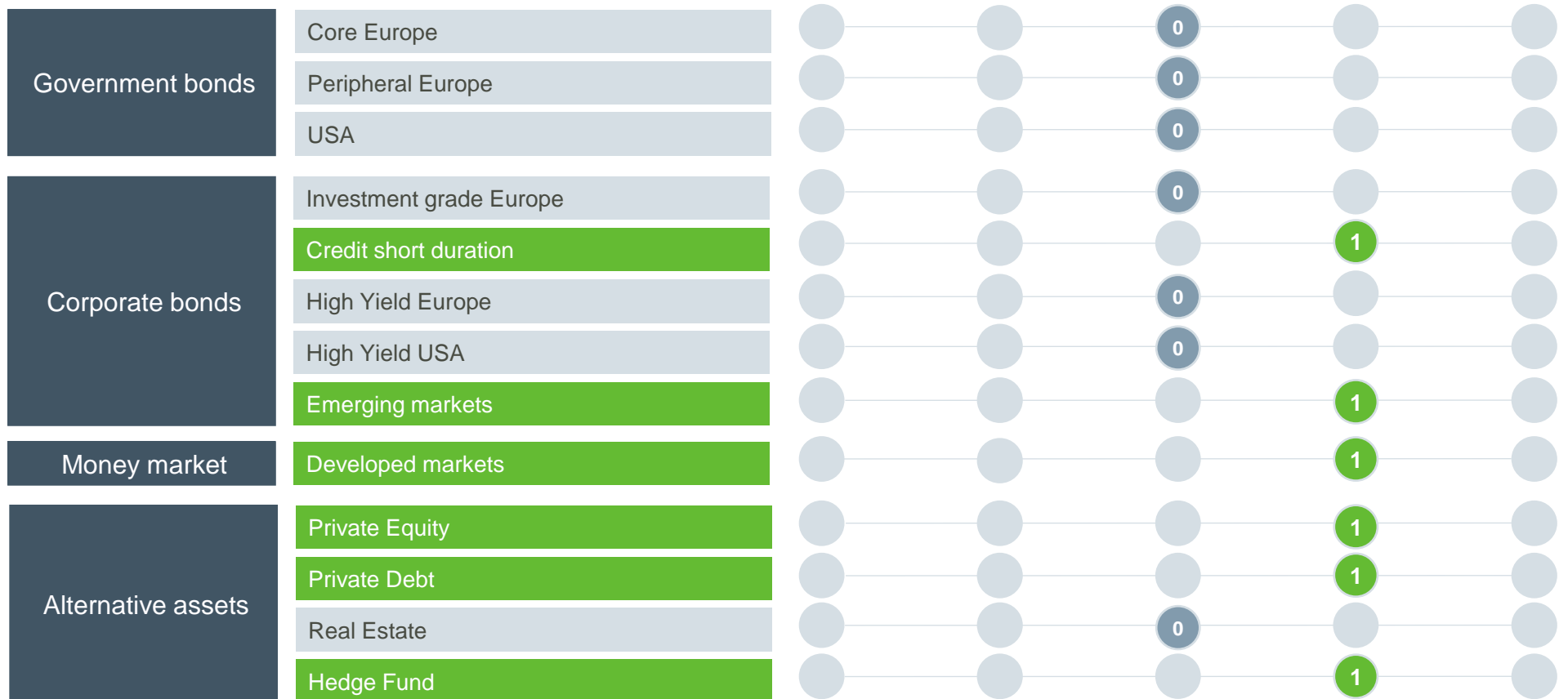
- Equities
- High Yield credit



# Our current convictions for each asset class



Source: ODDO BHF AM, comments as of 07/07/2021

# Our current convictions for each asset class





 Change vs the previous month

Source: ODDO BHF AM, comments as of 07/07/2021



How performances are calculated

Cumulative fund performance is calculated based on dividends reinvested. Annualised performance is determined on an annual, 365-day actuarial basis. A fund's performance relative to its benchmark index is expressed as arithmetic difference. Static indicators are generally calculated on a weekly tick that is taken on Fridays, or failing that, on the day prior to valuation.

Volatility

Volatility is a risk indicator measuring the level of fluctuations observed in a portfolio (or index) over a defined period. It is calculated as annualised standard deviation of absolute returns within a defined period of time.

Credit spreads (credit premiums)

The credit spread is the risk premium or the difference between the yields of corporate bonds and that of sovereign bonds with the same characteristics.

Investment grade

Investment-grade bonds are bonds issued by issuers rated between AAA to BBB- by Standard & Poor's or the equivalent.

High yield

High-yield bonds are speculative bonds rated lower than BBB- (Standard & Poor's) or the equivalent.

PE (price-earnings ratio)

A stock's price-earnings ratio is equal to the stock's price divided by the issuing company's earnings per share. It is also called the "earnings multiple". It depends mainly on three factors: the company's forecast earnings growth, the risk associated with these forecasts, and the level of interest rates.

# Our latest publications



## **MONTHLY INVESTMENT BRIEF**

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[May 2021 – « Welcome to France! »](#)

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## **MARKET VIEWS**

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[June 21st 2021 – Bitcoin: technological innovation or pure hype?](#)

[May 17th 2021 - When the chips are down](#)

[May 3rd - SPACs: Opportunities and risks for investors in Europe](#)

[April 8<sup>th</sup> 2021 - Covid 19 crisis: impacts on listed real estate](#)

[March 22nd 2021 – Sugar Rush](#)

[March 9th 2021 - How should investors react to the rise of long-term rates?](#)

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## **INVESTMENT STRATEGIES**

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## **SUSTAINABLE INVESTING**

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[Basics of Sustainable Investing](#)

[White paper – The ecological transition: a sustainable investment opportunity](#)

[White paper – Human Capital – a factor or resilience and differentiation](#)

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