

WorldWatch Headlines: June

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Africa

Algeria	The general election leaves the two main state-aligned parties firmly in parliamentary control.
Angola	The bidding round for eight on-shore oil exploration blocks is cancelled as cost cutting continues.
Botswana	Net exports drove better-than-expected economic growth in 2016.
Cameroon	Cameroon and the IMF open discussions on a possible three-year financial support package.
Congo, D.R.	The volatile political situation creates uncertainty and raises risk premiums.
Cote d'Ivoire	Cote d'Ivoire is expected to issue a USD 1bn ten-year Eurobond in the near future.
Ethiopia	The country faces severe drought conditions and high demand for food aid in 2017.
Gabon	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Gabon as the oil price recovers and spending is trimmed.
Ghana	The central bank lowers its policy rate further as business confidence and exports improve.
Kenya	The country prepares for elections amid heated political disputes and security concerns.
Libya	Sarraj and Haftar reach an outline agreement to end the conflict, although its success is unlikely.
Malawi	Much-awaited exchange rate stability allows inflation to cool.
Mauritius	The new prime minister emphasises policy continuity.
Morocco	The central bank is poised for an exchange rate reform.
Mozambique	The ceasefire between security forces and rebels is extended indefinitely.
Namibia	The budget deficit is likely to improve as revenue forecasts brighten.
Nigeria	A review of the FX regime could see import restrictions eased.
Senegal	Rebased GDP figures reveal an economy about 30% larger than previously assumed.
Sierra Leone	The government and IMF hold discussions on a new financial support package.
South Africa	President Zuma survives another leadership challenge but political risk persists.
Sudan	Sudan makes progress in building closer trade and investment ties with the Middle East and Asia.
Tanzania	Opening hours are extended at Dar es Salaam port to raise capacity.
Tunisia	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Tunisia amid exchange rate issues and rising social discontent.
Uganda	Growth dips to a multi-year low amid election uncertainty, poor weather and high borrowing costs.
Zambia	An upbeat sentiment in the mining sector leads to new investments.
Zimbabwe	Government claims about securing funds to repay debt arrears remain unverified.

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Asia Pacific

Afghanistan	The number of civilian deaths caused by war reaches nearly 11,500 in 2016.
Australia	The 2017 Budget marks a shift as the government seeks new revenue in lieu of cuts.
Bangladesh	The country's political environment outlook is deteriorating rapidly.
Cambodia	The country's risk rating outlook worsens amid increased political risk.
China	The new cyber-security law effective from June will impact a wide range of sectors.
Fiji	The economy will grow by a respectable 3.5% in 2017 and 3.3% in 2018.
Hong Kong	Real GDP growth rises well ahead of expectations in Q1.
India	The country's first national VAT will bring shifts in pricing and profitability between consumer sectors.
Indonesia	The country's GDP picks up only slightly in the first quarter.
Japan	Japan attempts to revive the Trans-Pacific Partnership without the US.
Korea (South)	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for South Korea as a new presidential administration forms.
Malaysia	Economic growth is bolstered by high domestic and foreign demand.
Myanmar	Abuses in Rakhine state and slowing FDI weigh on government credibility.
Nepal	The chief justice is controversially suspended following government allegations of political interference.
New Zealand	The central bank leaves the policy rate unchanged despite quickening inflation.
Pakistan	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Pakistan amid rising political tensions.
Papua New Guinea	The outcome of the forthcoming election is unclear.
Philippines	Economic growth decelerates due to low public investment.
Singapore	The economy continues on its path of gradual improvement, albeit inconsistently.
Sri Lanka	The impasse over a loss-making port overshadows prospects for Chinese FDI.
Taiwan	Tech exports boost the stock market amid weak private consumption growth.
Thailand	The country's real GDP forecast is increased for 2017 due to recovering goods exports.
Vietnam	Plans to ratify the Trans-Pacific Partnership without the US could still produce benefits for Vietnam.

Eastern Europe

Albania	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Albania's country risk rating as political conditions improve.
Azerbaijan	Mehriban Aliyeva's appointment as first vice president further erodes the country's democratic credentials.
Belarus	A controversial tax is suspended for the rest of this year.
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Political in-fighting potentially jeopardises the country's funding arrangement with the IMF.
Bulgaria	Robust consumption and a recovery in investment will help maintain solid economic momentum.
Croatia	The country deliberates over whether to join the euro zone.
Czech Republic	The prime minister's standing has been damaged by his dismissal of the finance minister.
Estonia	NATO's cyber-defence exercises should help Estonia prepare against the growing threat of cyber attacks.
Georgia	Growth is buoyant in Q1 on the back of increased exports and higher remittances.
Hungary	The government faces a backlash against plans to close the Central European University.

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Kazakhstan	The IMF praises the Kazakh authorities' response to recent economic challenges.
Kyrgyz Republic	Increased gold output supports a pick-up in economic growth, but substantial risks remain.
Latvia	The government approves the main principles of the tax reform programme.
Lithuania	Economic activity increased strongly in the first quarter.
Macedonia	The blocking of a proposed new coalition means the country lacks an effective government.
Poland	Private consumption and investment drive buoyant quarterly growth.
Romania	The government plans a massive rise in public sector wages.
Russian Federation	US-Russia relations remain strained and hopes of a significant rapprochement diminish.
Serbia	A revival of the Albanian national question is compromising Serbia's political outlook.
Slovak Republic	The sanctity of property rights is weakened by a new special measure.
Slovenia	The government is finally selling Slovenia's largest bank to help pay down its excessive debt.
Tajikistan	The growth outlook faces challenges as the somoni weakens and inflation rises.
Turkmenistan	New gas reserves are discovered and economic growth remains buoyant.
Ukraine	EU approval of visa-free travel for Ukrainians strengthens EU-Ukraine relations.
Uzbekistan	The sidelining of the deputy prime minister could open the way for more conservative government elements.

Middle East

Bahrain	The government has intensified its crackdown on the peaceful opposition.
Egypt	Pressure from the IMF leads to Interest rate hikes.
Iran	The presidential election in May will be fought by six candidates, with a reformist expected to win.
Iraq	Tensions between the largely autonomous Kurdish Regional Government and Baghdad increase sharply.
Israel	Growth slows in Q1 due to weaker investment and a decrease in private consumption.
Jordan	The currency peg is set to come under pressure, adding to FX risk.
Kuwait	The country's leading opposition politician is freed from jail.
Lebanon	The bidding process for five offshore blocks stalls as interest from international oil companies falls.
Oman	Tourism potential is boosted through airline development, increasing the number of routes and flights.
Qatar	The country ends its moratorium on gas production from the North Field.
Saudi Arabia	President Trump's visit strengthens bilateral ties, with significant commercial and military deals signed.
Syria	The US military strike on Syria will not change the strategic direction of the conflict.
UAE	Abu Dhabi's real GDP growth contracted in the final quarter of 2016.
Yemen	Prospects for ending the conflict remain weak despite plans to re-open peace talks.

The Americas

Argentina	The economy emerges tentatively from recession with an uneven Q1 performance.
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Bolivia	A new hike in the minimum wage jeopardises competitiveness and long-term employment growth.
Brazil	The widely-unpopular proposed pension reforms encounter new obstacles.
Canada	The labour market shows weakness and the real estate sector brings new risks.
Chile	The central bank makes a surprise fourth rate cut of the year as recession is narrowly avoided.
Colombia	The FARC peace accord implementation is slowed by a court ruling.
Costa Rica	The medium-term currency risk is highlighted through interventions by the central bank.
Cuba	Planned spending is trimmed for the 2018 fiscal year as Venezuela's crisis deepens.
Dominican Republic	The central bank votes to keep its main interest rate on hold.
Ecuador	Lenin Moreno is to be sworn in as the country's next president on 24 May.
El Salvador	The rating outlook for the country deteriorates due to a worsening political stand-off.
Guatemala	Stronger exports and increased remittance flows from the US will boost economic activity.
Honduras	Despite opposition attempts to unite, the president remains favourite to win the November polls.
Jamaica	Economic activity is underpinned by the buoyant agricultural sector.
Mexico	Resilient inflation prompts the central bank to implement a surprise rate hike.
Nicaragua	The US Senate's revision of the NICA bill could threaten Nicaragua's international financing.
Panama	The economy is set to maintain its strong momentum.
Paraguay	A constitutional amendment allowing presidential re-election is passed, sparking tensions and violence.
Peru	The central bank cuts the benchmark interest rate to support economic growth.
Trinidad & Tobago	The near-term outlook remains downbeat as external and domestic market uncertainties persist.
USA	The rebounding job market underpins an improved outlook.
Uruguay	A deal on a new pulp mill moves closer, with potential for a massive investment boost.
Venezuela	Political risk escalates as deadly clashes between protesters and security forces continue.

Western Europe

Austria	The resignation of the vice-chancellor triggers snap elections.
Belgium	The pace of growth in bankruptcies has peaked, and we expect a slowing trend in 2017.
Cyprus	Economic growth accelerates amid lower unemployment and higher inflation.
Denmark	Surging house prices create the risk of an eventual crash.
Finland	The government's blueprint focuses on boosting employment to ease structural fiscal pressures.
France	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades France's country risk rating as Emmanuel Macron is elected president.
Germany	Dun & Bradstreet data confirms the country's excellent payments performance.
Greece	Overall payment performance improves in 2016, with data suggesting continued economic expansion in Q1.
Iceland	The central bank faces growing pressure to cut interest rates.
Ireland	Payment performance deteriorates despite a buoyant economy.
Italy	Real GDP grows in Q1 amid mixed signals from high-frequency indicators.
Luxembourg	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Luxembourg as economic conditions continue to improve.

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Malta	Economic growth is likely to have continued into Q1.
Netherlands	The number of business failures hits a record low.
Norway	The mainland economy expands despite a slump in the oil price.
Portugal	The economy continues to enjoy positive momentum.
Spain	Payment performance improves in 2016, tracking the buoyant performance of the overall economy.
Sweden	The inflation rate approaches the central bank's target.
Switzerland	Energy prices could rise as nuclear energy is phased out.
Turkey	President Erdogan's continued purge of perceived opponents increases political tensions at home and with Europe.
United Kingdom	The snap election unexpectedly results in a hung parliament, increasing the level of political risk.

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