

WorldWatch Headlines: January 2019

Welcome to our latest compilation of WorldWatch Headlines, taken from the most recently published Country Insight Snapshot reports. These headlines highlight the key development our analysts identified for each country when they updated the report.

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Africa

Algeria	The government considers halting its quantitative-easing programme.
Angola	The commercial banking sector faces difficult operating conditions and further consolidation.
Botswana	Second-quarter growth picked up to 5.3% and was broad-based.
Cameroon	Opposition parties dispute the presidential election result.
Congo, D.R.	The mining sector leverages high commodity prices and strong demand to boost output and exports.
Cote d'Ivoire	Infrastructure investment drives rapid economic growth.
Ethiopia	Growth is set to accelerate, driven by higher levels of private investment.
Gabon	Political uncertainty is high as the president remains hospitalised by a mystery illness.
Ghana	Growth slows due to headwinds in the financial services sector.
Kenya	The country has fully commissioned the largest wind farm in Africa.
Libya	The failed Palermo summit perpetuates Libya's state of insecurity.
Malawi	An IMF review is broadly favourable.
Mauritius	The country now ranks as Africa's most competitive economy, ahead of South Africa.
Morocco	The fiscal deficit is set to rise in 2019.
Mozambique	Mozambique is ranked among the world's worst in terms of global competitiveness.
Namibia	The economy is mired in recession, with fiscal consolidation curtailing growth.
Nigeria	Support wanes for the ruling APC party ahead of the 2019 election.
Senegal	The country successfully meets most targets under an IMF programme.
Sierra Leone	The IMF praises Sierra Leone's fiscal policy.
South Africa	The central bank raises a key interest rate amid concerns over the rand.
Sudan	The currency continues to slide as the central bank devalues again.
Tanzania	The business operating environment disappoints.
Tunisia	The economic outlook remains mixed, despite accelerating growth.
Uganda	An Ebola vaccination programme is implemented along the DRC border.
Zambia	The 2019 budget highlights the financial constraints facing the government.
Zimbabwe	Shortages of goods and liquidity spark a sharp rise in inflation.

Asia Pacific

Afghanistan	The final results from October's parliamentary election have been delayed.
Australia	Local currency weakness is leading to a rapid drawdown in foreign exchange.
Bangladesh	High rates of non-performing loans are weakening banking sector stability.
Cambodia	Headwinds threaten the export-oriented garments sector.
China	Debt burdens and the trade war weigh on profits and employment.
Fiji	Strong expansion in new loans supports overall economic growth.
Hong Kong (S.A.R)	Economic growth slows in Q3 as various headwinds combine.
India	Growth data for Q3 disappoints, and credit shortages could intensify.
Indonesia	The growth outlook deteriorates as interest rate changes bite.

Japan	Growth in domestic demand is expected to be stable in 2019.
Korea (South)	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for South Korea amid stalling domestic demand.
Malaysia	Economic growth decelerated in line with exports in Q3.
Myanmar	The EU is considering withdrawing Myanmar from its tariff-free market-access arrangement.
Nepal	Recent signals indicate an expanded trade relationship with the US.
New Zealand	Output rose in almost all major industries in Q2.
Pakistan	The currency is set to slide as difficulties increase.
Papua New Guinea	The economy should get a boost from the recent regional summit meeting.
Philippines	Aggressive rate hikes are slowing overall growth.
Singapore	Ebbing economic growth is set to wane further in 2019.
Sri Lanka	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Sri Lanka as the political crisis threatens to spread.
Taiwan	Local election results deal the ruling party a damaging blow.
Thailand	The unexpected decline in exports in September is only a moderate concern.
Vietnam	Plans to lift company ownership limits are unveiled.

Eastern Europe

Albania	The economy will expand amid strong growth in all components.
Azerbaijan	A report confirms the variable quality of the business environment.
Belarus	Russian plans to restrict oil exports could hit the Belarusian economy.
Bosnia & Herzegovina	The country faces an existential threat following all-level elections.
Bulgaria	The economy continues to lose pace.
Croatia	The government finalises the details of its second phase of tax reform.
Czech Republic	The government is steadily abandoning Liberal political orthodoxy.
Estonia	Economic acceleration to fade as export prospects dim.
Georgia	The presidential election's first-round vote proves inconclusive.
Hungary	The quality of the business regulatory environment is in relative decline.
Kazakhstan	The government successfully issues a bond.
Kyrgyz Republic	The supply environment outlook improves.
Latvia	Coalition talks to form a new government are proving difficult.
Lithuania	Three ministers are dismissed amid ongoing teachers' protests.
Macedonia	Parliament agrees to change Macedonia's name, despite the earlier referendum result.
Poland	Domestic demand drives third-quarter growth.
Romania	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Romania due to EU criticism regarding the rule of law.
Russian Federation	Political and security risks are both rising.
Serbia	Kosovo imposes a 100% tariff on Serbian imports.
Slovak Republic	The business environment ranks well, especially for cross-border trading.
Slovenia	The country remains vulnerable to any new external economic shock.
Tajikistan	Doing business in Tajikistan remains challenging.
Turkmenistan	The IMF acknowledges that growth is stable.
Ukraine	Political risk rises as martial law is declared amid the ongoing Russian conflict.
Uzbekistan	Strong demand for imports could indicate that the economy will overheat.

Middle East

Bahrain	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Bahrain due to the financial support from GCC countries.
Egypt	Falling oil prices relieve budgetary pressures.
Iran	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Iran's country risk rating as the second set of US sanctions comes into force.
Iraq	Parliament approves a new government, but with eight posts unfilled.
Israel	Political risk remains elevated as the government narrowly survives.
Jordan	Growth is still very weak, ensuring risks remain elevated.
Kuwait	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Kuwait's country risk rating due to stronger oil revenues.
Lebanon	Political risk remains elevated as a new government has yet to be formed.
Oman	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Oman's country risk rating as the outlook for oil revenue improves.
Qatar	A major ministerial reshuffle should improve the business environment.
Saudi Arabia	Oil production quotas will slow growth in the country.
Syria	Loyalist groups grow vocal against government corruption.
UAE	Growth will slow as the oil price slumps.
Yemen	The UN pushes for control of Hodeidah ahead of December's peace talks.

The Americas

Argentina	Economic contraction will extend into 2019.
Bolivia	An International Court of Justice ruling harms President Morales' re-election prospects.
Brazil	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Brazil as the recovery gains traction.
Canada	Growth momentum slows in Q3 as most of the major GDP drivers falter.
Chile	Banking law is updated to take account of new global best practice.
Colombia	President Duque's honeymoon period is short-lived.
Costa Rica	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Costa Rica's country risk rating due to increased pressure on the currency.
Cuba	The US considers activating a law that further restricts foreign investment in Cuba.
Dominican Republic	Growth accelerated further in Q2.
Ecuador	The IMF issues a mixed report on the economy.
El Salvador	Economic growth is likely to ease further due to worsening external conditions.
Guatemala	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Guatemala as the political crisis deepens.
Honduras	Complex forces cast a shadow over the near-term economic outlook.
Jamaica	The tourism sector continues to thrive despite recent security concerns.
Mexico	The cancelled bidding for oil concessions heightens investor concerns.
Nicaragua	The socio-political crisis prompts a deep recession.
Panama	An increase in fiscal spending will aid economic growth.
Paraguay	Tensions within the ruling party cause serious political hurdles.
Peru	The opposition leader is placed in preventive detention.
Trinidad & Tobago	The natural gas sector is set to provide growth momentum in 2019.
USA	A yield-curve inversion will hit the credit market.
Uruguay	The military pension reform is finally passed.
Venezuela	A new US sanction prohibits trading in gold.

Western Europe

Austria	The rate of growth slows in Q3.
Belgium	Doing business in Belgium is getting easier.
Cyprus	The tourism sector is dealt a major blow as Chinese backers cease budget airline funding.

Denmark	International transfers are tightened to prevent money laundering.
Finland	The political temperature rises as labour reforms stall ahead of the election.
France	The political environment outlook deteriorates as protests challenge the government's resolve.
Germany	Growth stalls due to weaker exports and reduced household spending.
Greece	Key economic indicators hint at a possible deceleration in the Q4 growth rate.
Iceland	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Iceland's country risk rating again amid ongoing economic improvements.
Ireland	The risk of tariff barriers between Ireland and the UK is increasing.
Italy	Risks rise as the EU again rejects the draft budget.
Luxembourg	The country is ranked relatively poorly as a place for doing business.
Malta	The economy grew by a massive 7.5% y/y in Q3.
Netherlands	Growth softens on the back of weak government expenditure.
Norway	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Norway's country risk rating as economic fundamentals improve.
Portugal	Parties start to consider campaign options ahead of the 2019 election.
Spain	The budget for 2019 faces further scrutiny.
Sweden	The prospect of a minority Social Democrat administration rises.
Switzerland	Real GDP contracts unexpectedly.
Turkey	Inflation eases but remains well into double figures.
United Kingdom	The prime minister survives a no-confidence vote.