

WorldWatch Headlines: June 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 army takes an increasingly hard line during the post-Bouteflika transition period.
Angola	The economy will post growth of just 0.1% in 2019 as the oil sector remains subdued.
Botswana	An attempt to replace President Masisi as BDP leader has failed.
Cameroon	The regional central bank keeps its benchmark interest rate on hold.
Congo, D.R.	The dominant party strengthens its grip on power in state elections.
Cote d'Ivoire	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Cote d'Ivoire's country risk rating based on a robust GDP growth outlook.
Ethiopia	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Ethiopia's country risk rating on the back of a positive reform agenda.
Gabon	President Ali Bongo's fitness for office comes under increasing scrutiny.
Ghana	The IMF programme ends but headwinds remain.
Kenya	Kenya successfully launches a third Eurobond to raise an additional USD2.1bn.
Libya	The militarisation of oil terminals increases risk significantly.
Malawi	Economic prospects for 2019 suffer a setback amid widespread flooding.
Mauritius	A solid buffer of FX reserves provides almost ten months of import cover.
Morocco	A leading NGO calls for reforms to tackle inequality.
Mozambique	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Mozambique's country risk rating following major cyclones in March and April.
Namibia	Deregulation in the mining sector will spur foreign direct-investment.
Nigeria	Parliament approves an increase in security spending.
Senegal	President Sall wins a second term.
Sierra Leone	Commissioning at the Marampa iron ore mine has been restarted.
South Africa	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades South Africa's country risk rating as President Ramaphosa focuses on boosting the economy.
Sudan	The political situation remains unstable as the president is removed from power.
Tanzania	Public spending and infrastructure investment spurs economic growth.
Tunisia	An interest rate hike will not cool inflation.
Uganda	The IMF provides an upbeat assessment of the short-term economic outlook.
Zambia	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Zambia's country risk rating amid mining sector disputes.
Zimbabwe	Inflation soars to a ten-year high.

Asia Pacific

Afghanistan	The government's exclusion from peace talks raises concerns.
Australia	Coalition secures a ruling majority in a surprise election win.
Bangladesh	Non-performing loans heighten banking sector risk.
Cambodia	Japanese investors eye infrastructure opportunities.
China	The escalating Sino-US trade war will hit both exports and sentiment from Q3.
Fiji	The government intervenes to stop an environmentally-destructive tourist development.
Hong Kong (S.A.R)	The controversial extradition bill is likely to pass a second reading in the Legislative Council.

India	The ruling coalition's landslide election win may not accelerate big economic reforms.
Indonesia	President Widodo's election victory could help maintain focus on key policy areas.
Japan	Q1 GDP data shows that Japan's domestic demand held up.
Korea (South)	Economic growth slowed to below 2% in Q1 as exports contracted.
Malaysia	Weaker growth is expected after a central bank rate cut and falls in investment.
Myanmar	Imminent electricity price-hikes loom.
Nepal	The Nepal Investment Summit attracts significant investor interest.
New Zealand	A series of regulatory changes will alter the country's banking institutions.
Pakistan	Tax reforms aim to boost revenue and investment prospects.
Papua New Guinea	Peter O'Neill is forced to resign as prime minister following a series of defections.
Philippines	Inflationary pressures fall dramatically.
Singapore	Semiconductor suppliers face additional pressures after the US puts restrictions on Huawei.
Sri Lanka	The country is reeling both from terror attacks and political turmoil.
Taiwan	Exports depress the growth outlook but the economy should be resilient.
Thailand	The military are on course to retain power following the elections.
Vietnam	Economic growth remained strong in Q1.

Eastern Europe

Albania	The political environment worsens rapidly as demonstrations turn violent.
Azerbaijan	Efforts to resolve the status of Nagorno-Karabakh are in the balance.
Belarus	Moscow pushes for deeper integration between Russia and Belarus.
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Bosnian Croats mount a concerted challenge to the integrity of the state.
Bulgaria	Economic growth is set to weaken.
Croatia	Growth will slow over the forecast period as the external environment deteriorates.
Czech Republic	The central bank has raised interest rates to halt rising inflation.
Estonia	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Estonia's country risk rating as political risk rises.
Georgia	The growth forecast is downgraded as external economic conditions weaken.
Hungary	The economic growth outlook for 2019 improves.
Kazakhstan	A snap election will be held in June.
Kyrgyz Republic	A sharp upturn in gold mining output powers stronger economic growth.
Latvia	Legal amendments to combat money laundering are proposed.
Lithuania	The outcome of the forthcoming presidential election is difficult to call.
Macedonia	The government's candidate wins the presidential elections.
Poland	Growth slows due to higher unemployment and softer retail sales.
Romania	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Romania's country risk rating as Liviu Dragnea's tenure as Social Democratic Party leader ends.
Russian Federation	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Russia's country risk rating due to the strength of external balances.
Serbia	Serbia is opening up its economy to new emerging markets.
Slovak Republic	The political scene could be headed for further disruption.
Slovenia	Disputes with Croatia and Hungary could have negative repercussions.
Tajikistan	Remittances rise slightly despite external headwinds.
Turkmenistan	Turkmenistan is now the most repressive country in the world for journalists.
Ukraine	Volodymyr Zelensky is elected president in a landslide victory.
Uzbekistan	The manufacturing sector continues to drive strong growth.

Middle East

Bahrain	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Bahrain's country risk rating after a sharp cut in oil price forecasts.
Egypt	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Egypt's country risk rating in light of an improved economic outlook.
Iran	Tensions between Iran and the international community increase.
Iraq	Our oil price forecast reduction undermines the market outlook.
Israel	Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is forced to call another general election.
Jordan	The IMF continues to support Jordan's external position.
Kuwait	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Kuwait as oil-price forecasts weaken.
Lebanon	The draft budget for 2019 aims at slashing government spending.
Oman	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Oman's country risk rating after a sharp cut in oil price forecasts.
Qatar	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Qatar due to weaker oil price forecasts.
Saudi Arabia	Escalating regional tensions undermine the risk outlook.
Syria	The economy is gaining momentum.
UAE	Abu Dhabi's National Oil Company signals its changing hydrocarbon-sector priorities.
Yemen	The ceasefire in Hodeidah could collapse at any time.

The Americas

Argentina	A sharp fall in economic activity in March drags down Q1 growth.
Bolivia	The government announces measures to increase domestic liquidity.
Brazil	Pension reforms still face a difficult path to congressional approval.
Canada	The election defeat for Alberta's premier challenges the Liberal Party's standing.
Chile	An enhancement to Chile's FTA with China comes into effect.
Colombia	Economic activity is gathering pace as inflation remains within target range.
Costa Rica	Cross-party consensus appears to be holding with the election of a new legislative president.
Cuba	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Cuba as new US sanctions are set to have a severe impact.
Dominican Republic	Economic growth remains robust.
Ecuador	The new economic plan is a move away from the previous government's leftism.
El Salvador	President Bukele wins a landslide election victory.
Guatemala	Downside risks to the economy persist despite supportive fiscal policies.
Honduras	A worsening external environment will keep the growth momentum weak.
Jamaica	Real GDP growth is set to slow as a result of weaker external conditions.
Mexico	The economy appears to be recovering from a disappointing Q1 performance.
Nicaragua	President Ortega holds firm despite continued opposition.
Panama	The opposition candidate is ahead in the run-up to presidential elections.
Paraguay	Both public infrastructure spending and private investment will spur economic activity.
Peru	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Peru's country risk rating due to the confrontation between the executive and congress.
Trinidad & Tobago	Growth will be driven in the near term by the natural gas sector.
USA	Inventory-building and export receipts both mask the slowing GDP growth trend.
Uruguay	With elections in October 2019, the ruling Broad Front coalition loses ground.
Venezuela	A failed uprising leaves President Maduro in control of the government.

Western Europe

Austria	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Austria as the government collapses.
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Belgium	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Belgium as coalition politics become more tortuous.
Cyprus	The economy remained strong in Q1 2019.
Denmark	The opposition SDP will win the upcoming parliamentary elections.
Finland	The emerging centre-left coalition faces tough fiscal choices.
France	The economy grows steadily but slowly amid difficult external trading conditions.
Germany	Domestic drivers underpin growth but a weak manufacturing sector subdues the outlook.
Greece	The fiscal outcome remains stronger than budgeted.
Iceland	Growth forecasts for 2019 moderate as exports weaken.
Ireland	The ruling Fine Gael party performs strongly in European elections.
Italy	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Italy amid ongoing fiscal pressures.
Luxembourg	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Luxembourg's country risk rating following financial outflows from London.
Malta	Economic growth will slow due to deteriorating external conditions.
Netherlands	The economy stays on a steady path in Q1.
Norway	The central bank is likely to cut short its tightening cycle in March 2020.
Portugal	The ruling Partido Socialista wins a strong 33.4% of the EU vote in May.
Spain	The socialist party wins the election but fails to secure an outright majority.
Sweden	Interest rates are unlikely to rise again before Q1 2020.
Switzerland	Negotiations with the EU over a planned agreement may have to be restarted.
Turkey	The economy returns to growth, but the outlook remains weak.
United Kingdom	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades the UK's rating outlook again as political uncertainty increases.