



Welcome to the latest WorldWatch.

This update of global developments is brought to you by the specialists of D&B's Country Insight team. WorldWatch's headline intelligence on trade credit risk, financial risk management, regulatory requirements and recommended trade terms, are explored in more detail in D&B's unique journal, International Risk & Payment Review, and also on an individual basis in D&B Country Insight Snapshots, both of which are updated on a monthly basis.

Africa

Algeria	The three main parties prepare for leadership contests.
Angola	Lower oil-related export receipts will curtail economic growth.
Botswana	The central bank cuts the benchmark interest rate.
Cameroon	The Islamist group Boko Haram launches further attacks.
Congo, D.R.	Decentralisation advances with new provinces created and local elections scheduled.
Cote d'Ivoire	D&B upgrades its country risk rating amid an improving growth outlook.
Ethiopia	Foreign investment increases from Asia, Europe and the US.
Gabon	The low oil price forces the government to rein in spending.
Ghana	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Ghana's country risk rating due to high inflation.
Kenya	Expansionary banking and credit performance aids growth.
Libya	Depletion of FX reserves prompts the government to ban imports on 32 items.
Malawi	A debt swap deal with a regional bank boosts FX reserves.
Mauritius	The new government budget focuses on broad-based economic growth.
Morocco	Political tension mounts in the run up to regional and parliamentary elections.
Mozambique	The country's gas supplies could generate substantial export earnings and fiscal revenues.
Namibia	The new president acts to tackle corruption and commits to a pro-business stance.
Nigeria	A contraction in the oil sector hits growth rates hard.
Senegal	A sharp acceleration in growth is due to broad-based gains.
Sierra Leone	Downward trend of Ebola cases raises hopes for containment.
South Africa	Anti-immigrant xenophobic attacks threaten business continuity.
Sudan	The lower oil price negatively impacts oil export revenues.
Tanzania	Tighter regulation could affect content requirements and foreign workers.
Tunisia	Unpopular but necessary economic reform ramps up social tension.
Uganda	Expansionary fiscal policy will continue to support construction sector activity.
Zambia	The government reverses a royalty rates increase under industry pressure.
Zimbabwe	Substandard rainfall hits the key agriculture industry.

Asia Pacific

Afghanistan	The afghani depreciates sharply to a multi-year low as a result of escalating violence.
Australia	The central bank cuts interest rates to a historical low.
Bangladesh	Civil and political unrest hits export growth targets.
Cambodia	Advantageous global conditions improve the short-term outlook.
China	High-profile bond defaults accompany deteriorating industrial relations.
Fiji	Robust economic growth is spurred by easy domestic credit.
Hong Kong	The political situation has not been defused but China is likely to proceed delicately.
India	Challenging climatic conditions hit the farm sector hard.
Indonesia	The recent economic performance is below potential.

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<i>Japan</i>	The trade balance improves as exports are boosted by the weak yen.
<i>Korea (South)</i>	A more downbeat growth forecast emerges amid poor trade partner growth.
<i>Malaysia</i>	Growth slows in the first quarter as exports underperform.
<i>Myanmar</i>	Relations with China nosedive over clashes with rebel group.
<i>Nepal</i>	Nepal's country risk rating is downgraded after the devastating earthquake.
<i>New Zealand</i>	Steady growth and low inflation may induce a rate cut.
<i>Pakistan</i>	Inflation eases amid low oil prices and reduces business uncertainty.
<i>Papua New Guinea</i>	Growth is strongly ascendant due to powerful expansion in the gas sector.
<i>Philippines</i>	The El Nino weather phenomenon will trigger droughts and elevate inflation.
<i>Singapore</i>	Growth surprises on the upside supported by a thriving services sector.
<i>Sri Lanka</i>	Relations with China improve following a presidential visit to Beijing.
<i>Taiwan</i>	The president defends his record against a disillusioned electorate.
<i>Thailand</i>	Growth disappoints but policy action could boost export competitiveness.
<i>Vietnam</i>	Domestic activity picks up amid low inflation.

Eastern Europe

<i>Albania</i>	The central bank looks set to maintain the lek against the euro.
<i>Azerbaijan</i>	FX risk will remain elevated well into H2 2015.
<i>Belarus</i>	A contraction is recorded in the first three months of the year.
<i>Bosnia & Herzegovina</i>	Destabilising developments could trigger severe political dysfunction.
<i>Bulgaria</i>	New anti-corruption measures risk antagonising oligarch interests.
<i>Croatia</i>	A strengthening of exports will end the six-year recession.
<i>Czech Republic</i>	Improving credit conditions bode well for payment performance.
<i>Estonia</i>	Robust manufacturing exports underpin growth.
<i>Georgia</i>	Prospects improve amid strong domestic demand and better EU ties.
<i>Hungary</i>	The central bank cuts interest rates in response to falling goods prices.
<i>Kazakhstan</i>	President Nazarbayev's landslide re-election raises political risks.
<i>Kyrgyz Republic</i>	The short-term outlook is bleak as Russian growth softens and credit conditions worsen.
<i>Latvia</i>	Growth is on the rise again after a period of sluggishness.
<i>Lithuania</i>	Exports drag down quarterly growth.
<i>Macedonia</i>	Spillover effects from the crisis in Greece weaken the outlook.
<i>Poland</i>	An unexpected presidential election outcome adds to political uncertainty.
<i>Romania</i>	Quarterly growth is among the fastest in Europe.
<i>Russian Federation</i>	Collapsing consumer demand drags Russia into recession but FX risk has abated.
<i>Serbia</i>	The courts face a backlog of a million cases.
<i>Slovak Republic</i>	A warning is issued to the government over excessive levels of debt.
<i>Slovenia</i>	Payment terms will continue to improve significantly.
<i>Tajikistan</i>	The troubles besetting the Russian economy weigh on the grim outlook.
<i>Turkmenistan</i>	Growth reaches double figures in the first four months of the year.
<i>Ukraine</i>	Progress on any peace deal remains elusive as the February ceasefire barely holds.
<i>Uzbekistan</i>	The IMF acknowledges the economy's resilience to downside risks.

Middle East

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<i>Bahrain</i>	The long-delayed two-year budget is finally pushed through.
<i>Egypt</i>	Fiscal deficit to overshoot as subsidy cuts deliver negligible benefits.
<i>Iran</i>	Iran tries to persuade foreign oil firms to return to the country.
<i>Iraq</i>	US airstrikes help clear a provincial capital of Islamic State.
<i>Israel</i>	Concerns surround the viability of the new governing coalition.
<i>Jordan</i>	Growth is healthy despite a hazardous risk environment.
<i>Kuwait</i>	A dispute over the Divided Zone halts oil production.
<i>Lebanon</i>	The IMF and World Bank reiterate the importance of reform.
<i>Oman</i>	The government seeks to diversify energy supply sources.
<i>Qatar</i>	Efforts to improve the country's treatment of migrant workers face international scrutiny.
<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	New Crown Prince installed amid rising domestic tensions.
<i>Syria</i>	Rebel advance changes the strategic picture of the conflict.
<i>UAE</i>	The country's enhanced standing is highlighted as Emiratis are granted visa-free access to the Schengen zone.
<i>Yemen</i>	A Saudi-led coalition force launches airstrikes on Houthi targets.

The Americas

<i>Argentina</i>	Numerous factors help growth return in February.
<i>Bolivia</i>	The government plans to increase investment spending.
<i>Brazil</i>	Government austerity plans face stiff public and political opposition.
<i>Canada</i>	The government projects a federal budget surplus ahead of the October election.
<i>Chile</i>	Proportional representation is signed into law.
<i>Colombia</i>	Growth forecast slashed as industrial production falls.
<i>Costa Rica</i>	Data show a continued deceleration in growth.
<i>Cuba</i>	A new oil deal symbolises a warmer welcome for foreign investors.
<i>Dominican Republic</i>	Fiscal consolidation process lowers GDP forecasts for the year.
<i>Ecuador</i>	The government continues its efforts to reduce public expenditure.
<i>El Salvador</i>	The security situation deteriorates amid spiking homicide rates.
<i>Guatemala</i>	A major tax fraud scandal undermines government credibility.
<i>Honduras</i>	The IMF acknowledges that the country has made significant progress.
<i>Jamaica</i>	A positive IMF assessment points to a stable risk environment.
<i>Mexico</i>	The growth forecast is trimmed as the central bank holds its overnight rate again.
<i>Nicaragua</i>	Investment and the low oil price helps growth strongly exceed expectations.
<i>Panama</i>	Anti-money laundering reforms are approved but implementation may be problematic.
<i>Paraguay</i>	Weak agriculture sector performance weighs on growth in early 2015.
<i>Peru</i>	Mining-driven growth is unexpectedly strong but does not indicate a sustained recovery.
<i>Trinidad & Tobago</i>	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Trinidad & Tobago's country risk rating amid declining oil revenues.
<i>USA</i>	A poor first quarter prompts a downwards revision of growth for the year.
<i>Uruguay</i>	Hope for Mercosur reform grows after Brazil emerges as a potential ally.
<i>Venezuela</i>	Foreign firms demand payment in dollars as the bolivar plunges.

Western Europe

<i>Austria</i>	Growth improves marginally on the flat final two quarters of 2014.
<i>Belgium</i>	The economy expands for the eighth consecutive quarter.

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<i>Cyprus</i>	High-frequency indicators offer a mixed macroeconomic picture.
<i>Denmark</i>	Increased consumer spending makes business cautiously optimistic.
<i>Finland</i>	The election result sees a shift to the right as coalition talks get underway.
<i>France</i>	Forward-looking indicators suggest a challenging business climate.
<i>Germany</i>	A large railway strike severely disrupts supply chains.
<i>Greece</i>	Weak economic fundamentals and the growing Grexit risk pressurise the outlook.
<i>Iceland</i>	Large-scale industrial action complicates the risk environment.
<i>Ireland</i>	Payment performance improves alongside gathering economic momentum.
<i>Italy</i>	Improving payment performance and fewer bankruptcies bode well for the economy.
<i>Luxembourg</i>	The six-month trend of falling prices is reversed.
<i>Malta</i>	Labour market conditions improve amid higher retail sales.
<i>Netherlands</i>	Bankruptcies fall sharply to their lowest level since 2011.
<i>Norway</i>	The economy copes well overall as the price of oil slumps.
<i>Portugal</i>	The economy improves amid stabilising inflation trends and better property market conditions.
<i>Spain</i>	Regional elections point to increased political fragmentation.
<i>Sweden</i>	The government announces new infrastructure investment plans.
<i>Switzerland</i>	Insolvency risk rises after a promising start to the year.
<i>Turkey</i>	President Erdogan pushes for a more authoritarian presidential political system.
<i>United Kingdom</i>	Surprising election outcome raises risk of EU-exit in the medium term.