

Emerging Markets Daily

Europe, Middle East & Africa

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Highlights

- Focus on Poland: How low can growth go?**
 Although we expect 2009 GDP growth to remain close to 4%, we think the risks are skewed towards weaker growth.
- Czech Republic: Further drop in manufacturing PMI suggests cooling**
 This decline represents a downside risk to our baseline scenario, in which we expect a stable interest rate in 2H08, followed by two 25bp cuts in 2009.
- Hungary: Liberal party unexpectedly rejects Socialists' tax-cut plans**
 We believe the risks of excessive fiscal loosening are still limited, and the most likely outcome is that the current government remains in place.
- Romania: Robust 2Q08 GDP growth confirms that economy is overheating**
 We think the 2Q08 GDP outturn raises the probability of additional monetary policy tightening for the remainder of this year.

Today's Market Drivers

- UK/US/Euro Area**
 Today sees the release of eurozone producer price data for July. We are expecting a rise to 1.2%MoM from 0.9% a month prior. Also released today is the US ISM manufacturing index for August. The market is expecting it to ease below 50 into contractionary territory.

Event Calendar

	Indicator	Period	Actual	Citi Forecast	Market Forecast	Previous (revision)
Yesterday's events						
08:00	Romania GDP (% YoY)	2Q	9.3	8.6	8.6	8.2
08:30	Czech Rep. Manufacturing PMI (index)	Aug	47.3	-	-	49.9
09:04	Hungary PMI	Aug	52.1	51.0	-	51.7
10:00	South Africa Investec PMI	Aug	47.0	45.0	-	42.8
13:00	Czech Rep. Budget Balance (CZK bn)	Aug	5.3	-	-	9.3
Today's events						
-	Kazakhstan Consumer Prices (% YoY)	Aug		19.7	19.8	20.0
-	Slovakia Budget Balance, ytd (SKK bn)	Aug		-	-	-0.6
08:00	Romania Producer Prices (% YoY)	Jul		-	-	19.4
10:00	South Africa Naamsa Vehicle Sales (% YoY)	Aug		-18.0	-	-19.7

Source: National Statistics Offices, National Central Banks, Bloomberg, Citi forecasts.

Focus on Poland

How low can growth go?

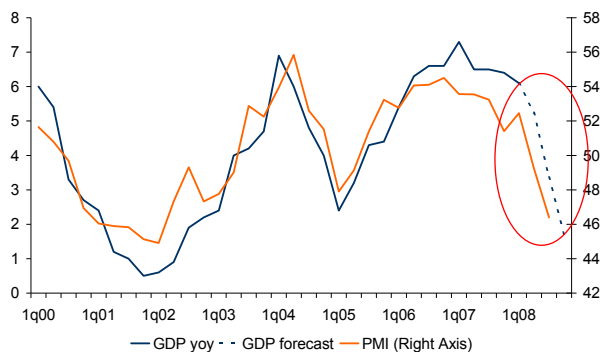
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A series of weak business confidence data releases in recent months suggests that, despite strong GDP growth in 2Q08, the economy is entering a phase of deep economic slowdown. This encouraged us to have a closer look at what these indicators are telling us about future short-term economic trends. According to our estimates, the manufacturing PMI fares better than other sentiment indicators in terms of predicting future GDP growth rates. In particular, models based on the headline PMI indicator are able to explain 80% of the variability in Poland’s economic growth.

A decline in the manufacturing PMI to 45.8 in August, a level that was last recorded in 2003, when the Polish economy was struggling with a deep slowdown, does not give much cause for optimism. Figure 1 shows both GDP and PMI and also includes a simple projection based on one of the estimated regressions. The projection shows that, in 4Q08, economic growth might decelerate even below 2%, the sharpest cyclical downturn for the last five years. Obviously the model is quite simplistic, but business confidence indicators are devised to predict short-term trends, and we think they provide useful information regarding economic growth in 2H2008 and in early 2009.

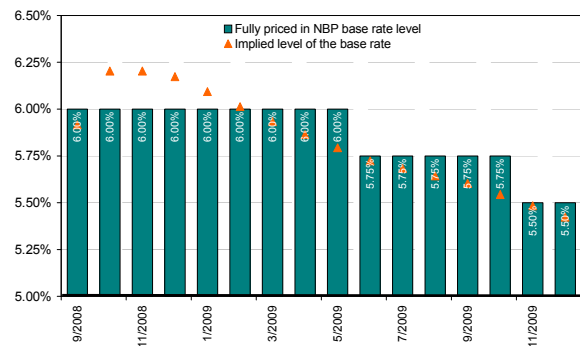
Taking this into account, we expect a substantial economic slowdown in the coming quarters, though we are not as pessimistic as the PMI index would suggest. Our scenario assumes economic deceleration to below 4% in early 2009. The reason why we are more optimistic than the PMI is that we expect next year’s growth to be supported by PIT reductions, which should help keep consumption high. Nevertheless, the scale of a possible economic slowdown makes us more confident that the MPC is likely to start a monetary easing process in 2009. We expect that, after hiking rates once again in October, the central bank will ease policy by 75-100bp in 2009 (while the FRA market assumes stable rates in 2008 and rate cuts of 50-75bp in 2009).

Figure 1. GDP Forecast Implied by Manufacturing PMI



Source: Central Statistical Office & Citi estimates.

Figure 2. GDP Forecast Implied by Manufacturing PMI



Source: Reuters, Citi estimates.

This item is based on “*Special Report: How low can GDP growth go?*” published on 1 September 2008.

Country Analysis

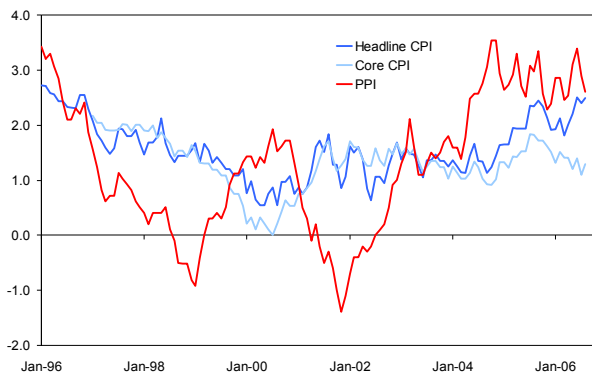
Czech Republic

Further drop in manufacturing PMI suggests cooling

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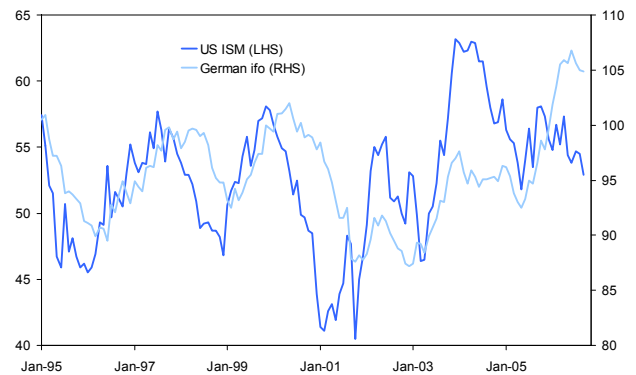
Manufacturing industry is likely to feel the adverse effects of last year's strong appreciation of the koruna and the lacklustre outlook for growth in the eurozone. August's Purchasing Manager's Index for the manufacturing sector dropped further to 47.3, the second consecutive month below the critical 50 level, suggesting a continued weakening of economic activity.

Figure 3. Two Manufacturing Sector's PMI (LHS) and Production and Sales in Manufacturing (RHS), Jan01-Aug08 (Index and 3mma Percent Change YoY)



Source: Reuters EcoWin, ABN AMRO, Markit and Citi calculations. Note: production and sales in the manufacturing industry to Jun 2008.

Figure 4. Employment expectation (LHS) and Number of Employees in Industry (RHS, Jan00-Aug08 (3mma Balance and Percent Change YoY)



Source: European Commission, Czech Statistical Office and Citi calculation. Note: Number of employees to Jun 08.

In our view, the breakdown of the PMI, together with the European Commission's business indicators, suggests to us that the underlying inflationary pressure is weakening. The PMI survey for manufacturing industry points to a decrease in both input and output prices. Also, expectations regarding employment are weakening, suggesting to us that the labour market is not likely to present an inflationary risk.

We feel the downside risks to economic growth are cumulating, and are likely to outweigh the inflationary risks. The negative manufacturing PMI indicator supports expectations of a further cut in the Czech National Bank's (CNB) policy rate in 2H08, in our view, and this is priced into the FRA market. This represents a downside risk to our baseline scenario, in which we expect a stable interest rate in 2H08, followed by two 25bp cuts in 2009. We argue that the previous tightening of monetary conditions reflected the strong appreciation in the koruna, while the real interest rate has remained negative. Therefore, we believe that any loosening of monetary conditions is likely come about through a weaker koruna. All in all, we feel that a combination of a weaker real economy and an easing in inflation (August's inflation data are to be released on 8 September) could support a market expectation of a further cut in the CNB's policy interest rate in 2H08.

Central government has released the bond-calendar for 4Q08

The central government has released the calendar for bond issuance in 4Q08, comprising CZK45 billion in medium- and long-term local currency government bonds. The Ministry of Finance has already issued CZK110.5 billion of T-Bonds in domestic currency (of which 37%, CZK40.9 billion, was into own books) in 1-3Q08, not counting the issuance of eurobonds to the value of EUR2 billion (CZK49 billion). The calendar for 3Q08 includes three further auctions, reaching CZK20 billion in September 2008. By then, the total issuance of medium- and long-term government bonds in domestic currency is likely to reach CZK175.5 billion in 2008. If we add the issuance of eurobonds, but exclude the T-bonds in Ministry's own book, the total issuance is likely to reach almost CZK184 billion, that is, more than the total central government's gross borrowing requirements for 2008 (CZK180 billion).

Figure 5. Issuance Calendar of Czech Central Government T-Bonds for 4Q 2008

Name of Issue	ISIN Number	Issue Number	Auction Date	Settlement Date	Maturity Date	Original Maturity (Years)	Estimated Volume (CZK Billion)
T-Bond 2007-2017, 4.00 %	CZ0001001903	51/10	8 Oct 2008	13 Oct 2008	11 Apr 2017	10	6
T-Bond 2008-2011, 4.10 %	CZ0001002158	54/6	15 Oct 2008	20 Oct 2008	11 Apr 2011	3	6
T-Bond 2007-2022, 4.70 %	CZ0001001945	52/8	22 Oct 2008	27 Oct 2008	12 Sep 2022	15	6
T-Bond 2008-2011, 4.10 %	CZ0001002158	54/7	5 Nov 2008	10 Nov 2008	11 Apr 2011	3	6
T-Bond 2007-2012, 3.55 %	CZ0001001887	50/11	19 Nov 2008	24 Nov 2008	18 Oct 2012	5	6
T-Bond 2007-2017, 4.00 %	CZ0001001903	51/11	26 Nov 2008	1 Dec 2008	11 Apr 2017	10	6
T-Bond 2006-2036, 4.20 %	CZ0001001796	49/3	3 Dec 2008	8 Dec 2008	4 Dec 2036	30	3
T-Bond 2007-2012, 3.55 %	CZ0001001887	50/12	10 Dec 2008	15 Dec 2008	18 Oct 2012	5	6

Source: Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic.

Hungary

Liberal party unexpectedly rejects Socialists' tax-cut plans

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The ex-coalition Liberal party (SZDSZ) has rejected the tax-cut plans at its executive board meeting on Saturday 30 August. The tax-cut plans proposed by the Socialists last week included a reduction in corporate and personal income tax and a cut in social security contributions, which would be partly offset by raising other minor taxes. The net effect to tax revenues would be only around 0.5% of GDP in 2009.

The Liberal party claims the package fails to include more radical expenditure cuts, and the three-year horizon outlined by the tax plan extends beyond the current government's mandate (general elections are due by spring 2010 at the latest). In an interview with the Liberal party leader, Gabor Fodor (30/08, www.index.hu), he claimed that the tax plans serve the interests of the PM and not the interests of the country. He also added that the current government lacks credibility due to the PM's personal lack of credibility and that, in making its decision, the Liberal party took into account that PM Ferenc Gyurcsany reiterated his intention to resign if the 2009 budget including the tax plan fails to pass the parliamentary vote. This is a straight refusal of the Socialist's party vice president Peter Kiss's proposal to reform the coalition (interview on 29/08, www.index.hu).

We believe the risks of excessive fiscal loosening are still limited, and the most likely outcome is that the current government remains in place, with or without the PM. The increased political risks are likely to weigh on Hungarian asset prices in the coming weeks, and may contribute to a maintained tight monetary policy stance.

This item is based on “*Liberal party unexpectedly rejects Socialists’ tax-cut plans*” published 1 September 2008.

Romania

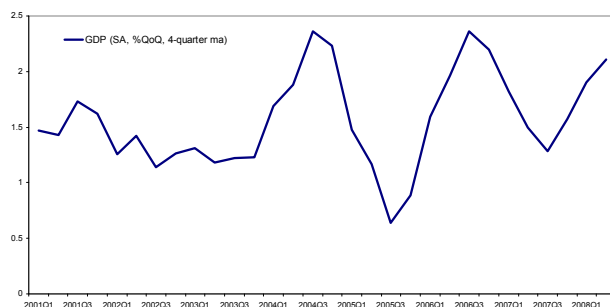
Robust 2Q08 GDP growth confirms that economy is overheating

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At 9.3% YoY, Romania's GDP growth in 2Q08 came in higher than the consensus (Bloomberg) and our expectation (both at 8.6% YoY). The 2Q08 outturn, which translates into an increase of around 1.9% QoQ (using seasonally adjusted data), corroborates our view that excess demand pressures continue to complicate the job of policy makers (Figure 1). Specifically, since persistent excess demand pressures are likely to affect external performance adversely, both fiscal and monetary policy will need to take account of continuing demand pressures. Although we will provide a more comprehensive analysis once the statistics office issues the detailed GDP breakdown on 11 September, output gap estimates using various measures (quadratic trend, HP filter, and Band-pass filter) suggest that the economy has been operating above its potential since Q306 (Figure 2).

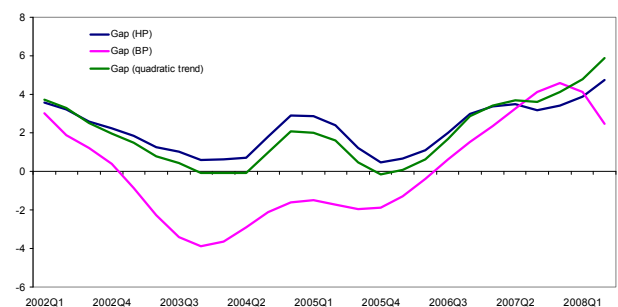
We believe that the probability of additional tightening is now higher than before, in view of the Q208 GDP outturn, elevated inflationary pressures, and the bleak prospects for meaningful help from fiscal policy ahead of general elections in November. In our opinion, the National Bank of Romania (NBR) is likely to pursue additional tightening for the remainder of this year, which would take the policy rate to 10.50% or even higher by year-end. This, holding everything else constant, should be supportive of the leu, at least in the near term.

Figure 6. GDP Growth (SA, Percent QoQ, 4-Quarter MA)



Source: Ecowin and Citi calculations.

Figure 7. Output Gap (Percent)



Source: Ecowin and Citi calculations.

Selected Market Indicators

Currency Performance				Local Rates*				Equities			
	Spot (Prev Close)	Change (%)		Last Close	Change		Last Index Level	Change (%)			
		1 Day	1 M		1 Day	1 M		1 Day	1 M		
Europe (vs euro)				Europe				Europe			
Bulgaria <i>Lev</i>	1.96	-0.01%	-0.01%	Bulgaria	5.36	-0.02	0.00	Bulgaria <i>SOFIX</i>	1010	-1.79%	-0.29%
Croatia <i>Kuna</i>	7.14	-0.24%	-1.12%	Croatia	3.82	-0.51	0.75	Croatia <i>CROBEX</i>	3494	-0.02%	-3.88%
Czech <i>Koruna</i>	24.86	0.24%	2.76%	Czech	3.57	-0.02	0.01	Czech <i>PX50</i>	1468	-0.72%	1.44%
Hungary <i>Forint</i>	238.43	0.67%	2.82%	Hungary	8.39	0.70	-0.61	Hungary <i>BUX</i>	20665	-1.63%	-5.10%
Poland <i>Zloty</i>	3.35	0.45%	4.30%	Poland	6.16	-0.06	-0.13	Poland <i>WIG20</i>	2584	-0.49%	0.28%
Romania <i>Lei</i>	3.52	-0.33%	0.34%	Romania	12.43	-0.98	1.30	Romania <i>BSE</i>	5479	1.08%	-9.12%
Russia <i>Ruble</i>	36.04	-0.35%	-1.41%	Russia	6.88	-1.10	-1.01	Russia <i>RTS (US\$)</i>	1667	1.24%	-14.17%
Serbia <i>Dinar</i>	76.36	0.18%	-0.23%	Serbia	NA	NA	NA	Serbia <i>BELEX15</i>	1363	-0.36%	-7.99%
Slovak <i>Koruna</i>	30.32	-0.02%	-0.20%	Slovak	4.10	0.00	0.75	Slovak <i>SAX</i>	445	0.00%	-2.60%
Turkey <i>Lira****</i>	1.19	0.11%	-0.17%	Turkey	17.25	0.01	0.01	Turkey <i>ISE</i>	39457	-0.97%	4.89%
Ukraine <i>Hryvnia****</i>	4.68	0.13%	1.03%	Ukraine***	21.40	0.00	11.60	Ukraine <i>PFTS</i>	534	0.00%	-17.82%
Middle East (vs US\$)				Middle East				Middle East			
Bahrain <i>Dinar</i>	0.38	-0.01%	0.00%	Bahrain	NA	NA	NA	Bahrain <i>BHSE All-Sh</i>	2683.9	-0.23%	-3.86%
Egypt <i>Pound</i>	5.38	0.23%	1.50%	Egypt	NA	NA	NA	Egypt <i>HERMES</i>	738.42	-0.07%	-6.82%
Israel <i>Shekel</i>	3.62	1.00%	1.28%	Israel (1M)	4.45	0.00	0.19	Israel <i>TA-100</i>	909.3	-0.98%	-3.13%
Jordan <i>Dinar</i>	0.71	0.20%	0.11%	Jordan	5.15	0.10	0.34	Jordan <i>ASE</i>	NA	NA	NA
Kuwait <i>Dinar</i>	0.27	0.03%	0.11%	Kuwait (1M)	4.06	-0.37	1.81	Kuwait <i>KWSE</i>	14212.9	-1.62%	-4.89%
Lebanon <i>Pound</i>	1507.5	0.00%	0.00%	Lebanon	NA	NA	NA	Lebanon <i>BLOM (US\$)</i>	1794.17	0.00%	-11.09%
Qatar <i>Rial</i>	3.64	0.08%	0.00%	Qatar	NA	NA	NA	Qatar <i>DSM 20</i>	10550.27	1.03%	-8.72%
S Arabia <i>Riyal</i>	3.75	0.00%	0.00%	S Arabia	NA	NA	NA	S Arabia <i>TASI</i>	8751.87	-0.06%	1.44%
UAE <i>Dirham</i>	3.67	0.00%	0.00%	UAE (1M)	3.01	0.00	0.50	UAE <i>ADSMI</i>	4358.13	-1.25%	-12.04%
Sub-Saharan Africa (vs US\$)				Sub-Saharan Africa**				Sub-Saharan Africa			
Botswana <i>Pula</i>	0.15	-0.40%	-3.09%	Botswana	12.66	0.00	-0.03	Botswana <i>DCIBT</i>	7736.75	0.00%	4.38%
Ghana <i>Cedi</i>	11590.0	0.17%	-0.52%	Ghana	9.61	0.00	0.02	Ghana <i>GSE</i>	10790.95	0.00%	2.96%
Kenya <i>Shilling</i>	68.65	-0.15%	1.70%	Kenya	6.65	0.14	0.30	Kenya <i>NSEK</i>	4648.78	0.00%	-4.15%
Malawi <i>Kwacha</i>	140.58	0.00%	0.03%	Malawi	15.73	0.75	-0.79	Malawi	NA	NA	NA
Nigeria <i>Naira</i>	117.68	0.04%	-0.05%	Nigeria (1M)	8.50	0.00	0.00	Nigeria <i>NGSE</i>	49204.61	2.96%	-6.53%
S. Africa <i>Rand</i>	7.75	0.53%	7.27%	S. Africa (1M)	11.95	0.00	-0.03	S. Africa <i>JALSH</i>	26926.38	-2.80%	1.59%
Tanzania <i>Shilling</i>	1152.5	-0.65%	-0.43%	Tanzania	15.79	0.11	1.22	Tanzania	NA	NA	NA
Zambia <i>Kwacha</i>	3530.0	0.43%	4.59%	Zambia	12.02	-0.26	0.61	Zambia	NA	NA	NA
Commodities				FX Volatility				Major Indices			
Gold <i>\$/troy oz.</i>	817.99	-1.58%	-10.20%	EUR - CZK	8.15	0.00%	-7.47%	US <i>NYSE</i>	1282.83	0.00%	-0.49%
Platinum <i>\$/troy oz.</i>	1445.5	-2.76%	-12.74%	EUR - HUF	10.28	0.00%	-0.15%	US <i>NASDAQ</i>	2367.52	0.00%	2.45%
Silver <i>\$/troy oz.</i>	13.43	-1.32%	-23.17%	EUR - PLN	7.01	-2.06%	2.82%	UK <i>FTSE 100</i>	5610.4	-0.46%	2.27%
Copper <i>US\$/ton</i>	7552	0.00%	-6.45%	EUR - SKK	1.88	0.00%	-28.68%	France <i>CAC 40</i>	4489.23	0.15%	4.05%
Tin <i>US\$/lb</i>	860	-1.57%	-6.45%	EUR - RON	NA	NA	NA	Germany <i>DAX</i>	6446.27	0.37%	0.78%
Natural Gas <i>US\$</i>	8.24	0.00%	-8.75%	USD - RUB	8.50	0.00%	64.17%	Japan <i>Nikkei 225</i>	12834.18	-1.83%	-3.17%
Oil <i>US\$ Brent Crude</i>	107.6	-3.91%	-11.77%	USD - ZAR	16.60	0.00%	10.98%	FTSE <i>Global</i>	384.18	-0.83%	-2.96%
CRB <i>All Commod</i>	391.71	0.00%	-6.99%	USD - TRY	10.28	0.00%	-24.05%				

Source: Bloomberg. Note: Equities are local currency unless otherwise stated; FX Volatility is the mid price At-the Money (ATM) 1M term; * Overnight unless otherwise stated; Poland is the 5Y benchmark bond yield. **Weekly data on 3 month rates except S Africa. *** Subject to a one-week lag. **** Turkey Lira & Ukraine Hryvnia are against the US dollar.

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Disclosure Appendix A1

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