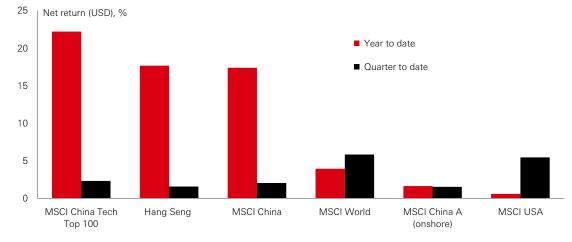


Investment Weekly

16 May 2025 For Professional Clients only.

Chart of the week - China's tech-led rebound



Is it deal-done and crisis-averted in investment markets? This week's agreement between the US and China to slash tariffs for at least the next 90 days is the strongest marker yet of a shift to policy de-escalation. In truth, investors have been alert to this theme since the market recovery began in the third week of April. But this week's price action takes US stocks decisively above their "Liberation Day" levels.

Market price moves naturally reflect a shift in investors' assessment of the risks: lower probabilities now on bad outcomes, and higher probabilities on better outcomes. Even so, it still looks like average US tariffs will settle in the low teens, the highest rate we've seen in the post-war period. Macro damage has already been done. And the policy outlook remains ultra-uncertain. An important theme this year has been the dramatic rotation of the market narrative. The theme has moved from a universal belief in US exceptionalism in January. To a US policy induced recession and worries about economic fragmentation in early April. Now it looks like something in-between. Markets will continue to spin-around.

As for China, the US talks followed a new round of policy stimulus – including rate cuts, targeted easing, credit support, and support for financial markets. It reinforces our view that China's authorities sustain a stabilising policy put on the economy and markets, particularly in areas like consumption and technology. Chinese offshore indices have performed well in 2025 driven by strong returns in technology stocks, which continue to be a profit engine, with firms capitalising on DeepSeek-driven AI optimism. By contrast, onshore indices have been weaker, due to lower tech exposures and slightly higher valuations. To us, playing for China outperformance still makes sense.

Market Spotlight

Euro vision

With the Eurovision Song Contest beaming live from Basel to living rooms around the world this weekend, we bring other news from Europe – but this time on proposed developments in the bond market. Recent questions over the safe haven status of US Treasuries have been a reminder that investors face limited substitutes given that Europe's fragmented debt markets fail to offer the depth and liquidity necessary to rival Treasuries. Moreover, structural imbalances between eurozone economies cause destabilising capital flows between "core" and "periphery" nations during stress periods.

The proposal for European Safe Bonds (ESBies) offers a potential solution. In technical-speak, ESBies are the senior tranche of a securitisation vehicle backed by a diversified portfolio of eurozone sovereign bonds, with the junior tranche referred to as European Junior Bonds, or EJBies. They would command enhanced safe haven premiums through cross-European risk pooling – signaling more market cohesion and serving as a risk-free alternative to German Bunds. They could represent a way of increasing systemic resilience, while addressing the global safe asset shortage and over-reliance on the dollar – just as US exceptionalism as the sole provider of safety is under scrutiny.

The value of investments and any income from them can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount originally invested. Past performance does not predict future returns. The level of yield is not guaranteed and may rise or fall in the future. For informational purposes only and should not be construed as a recommendation to invest in the specific country, product, strategy, sector, or security. Diversification does not ensure a profit or protect against loss. Any views expressed were held at the time of preparation and are subject to change without notice. Any forecast, projection or target where provided is indicative only and is not guaranteed in any way. HSBC Asset Management accepts no liability for any failure to meet such forecast, projection or target. Source: HSBC Asset Management, Bloomberg. Data as at 7.30am UK time 16 May 2025.



Data Outlook → What 'hard' and 'soft' data could mean for markets

Frontier Markets \rightarrow

How Fronter stocks have rebounded from Q2 volatility

Global Small Caps → Exploring small-cap



Hard times

The past week saw the US and China agree to substantially reduced tariffs for a 90-day period while working towards a deal. Although clearly positive news, the significant changes in tariff policy since early April are likely to make interpreting macro data tricky in the coming months. The lion's share of survey data – aka "soft data" – for April weakened on the back of "Liberation Day". But May is likely to see some recovery, especially in the context of resurgent US equities.

However, it is worth taking a step back and remembering that even after the thawing of US-China trade relations, the average effective US import tariff has still risen to a post-WWII high. Accordingly, macro models suggest US growth will drop well below trend in the coming quarters. Hence, while "soft" data may stage a recovery, "hard" data are likely to weaken, especially given investment and consumer spending was pulled into Q1 to avoid paying tariffs, likely leaving an "air pocket" in Q2. In the absence of further positive policy news, weaker "hard" data could trigger some renewed volatility in risk markets.

Efficient frontier

When the US government announced plans for reciprocal tariffs in early April, the initial 46% levy on Vietnam (later cut to 10% while trade talks continue) made it one of the worst affected countries. As a fast-growing Frontier manufacturing hub, Vietnam's goods trade surplus with the US has soared in recent years (2024: USD123.5 billion). That's been driven by its popularity with western firms pursuing a "China Plus One" strategy of diversifying their supply chains.

Like other Frontier markets, ultra-high trade policy uncertainty has caused volatility in Vietnamese stocks. But the market has rebounded well, and year-to-date Frontiers as a group have returned 8.9%, outperforming both developed (3.7%) and emerging (8.5%) markets.

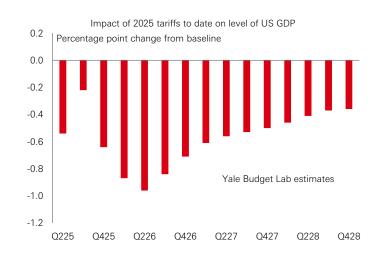
This positive performance is down to factors including discounted valuations, strong earnings growth, and local country idiosyncrasies that offer protection against macro pressures. In the case of Vietnam, our Frontier equities team expect foreign investment to be sticky despite recent uncertainty, with the country's expanding middle class, digital adoption, and urbanisation giving its economy structural resilience.

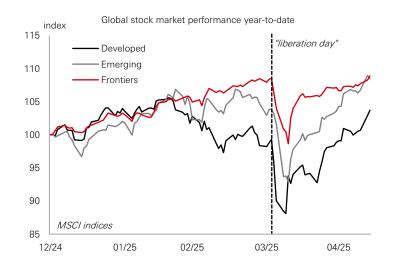
Thinking small

With market rotations continuing, there could be a case for investors to look beyond US large cap dominance for upside in global small caps.

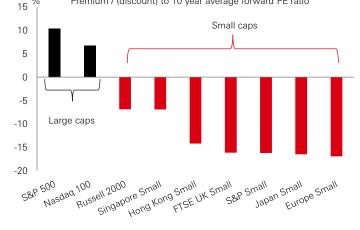
The US S&P 600 small cap index has lagged the S&P 500 by over 50% over the past decade. And while investors would be forgiven for losing patience by now, history suggests smaller firms can deliver big gains after spells out of favour. Take the 1993-2000 technology bubble. After a serious bout of small cap neglect, the S&P small cap index trounced the S&P 500 by 75% from 2001 to 2010.

Small caps have a high beta to both local growth and borrowing. While 65% of US corporate borrowing comes from capital markets, it's only 15-20% in Europe, making those firms more reliant on bank financing. Against a backdrop of better-behaved inflation, policy easing, and fiscal policy 'puts' in European and Asian markets, we think small caps in those regions could be well-placed to benefit. Today, many global small cap indices trade at a discount of close to 20% versus the last decade. Non-US small caps currently trade below their average 12-month forward PEs, with Hong Kong and UK small cap PEs close to 10x – half the S&P 500's 20.5x. Perhaps it's a case of thinking small to achieve big in 2025?





% Premium / (discount) to 10 year average forward PE ratio



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Asset class views

Our baseline macro scenario is for below-trend growth and above-target inflation in the US while other major economies experience more trend-like growth and limited upside inflation pressures. But policy uncertainty remains high, and the data flow is likely to remain bumpy. Risk asset valuations are stretched in many areas. That means that any deterioration in corporate fundamentals could create market volatility. A defensive positioning in portfolios remains appropriate, which includes selective exposures to fixed income, risk assets, and private markets.

House view represents a 12-month investment view across major asset classes in our portfolios.



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Key Events and Data Releases

This week

Date	Country	Indicator	Data as of	Actual	Prior	Comment
Sat. 10 May	US	Trade agreement with China				The US and China announced a reduction in bilateral tariffs for 90- days while negotiations over a trade deal progress
Tue. 13 May	US	NFIB Index of Small Business Optimism	Apr	95.8	97.4	With survey collection occurring before the US-China trade agreement, small business optimism remained downbeat
	US	CPI (yoy)	Apr	2.3%	2.4%	Past declines in energy prices are helping offset the initial inflation boost from higher tariffs. This is likely to be short-lived
	IN	CPI (yoy)	Apr	3.2%	3.3%	A continued decline in CPI inflation below the RBI's 4% target reinforces market expectations for further monetary easing
Thu. 15 May	US	PPI (mom)	Apr	-0.5%	0.0%	Trade services prices dragged the headline figure down. Core goods prices firmed as the tariff impact begins to be felt
	US	Retail Sales (mom)	Apr	0.1%	1.7%	Sales were little changed after March's tariff-induced strength. Further soft readings are likely in the near term
	JP	GDP (qoq)	Q1	-0.2%	0.6%	GDP fell for the first time in four quarters, reflecting soft consumer spending and a drag from net exports
	MX	Banxico de Mexico, Overnight Lending Rate	May	8.50%	9.00%	Banxico cut rates as uncertainty persists around trade tensions and a weak economy; however inflation is within the bank's target range
	UK	GDP, Prelim (qoq)	Q1	0.7%	0.1%	A strong Q1 likely flatters underlying conditions, with a boost from residual seasonality. Growth should slow from Q2
	US	Industrial Production (mom)	Apr	0.0%	-0.3%	Headline production was unchanged but manufacturing saw a decline. Data may be volatile in the near-term, given trade tariffs
	EZ	GDP, Flash (qoq)	Q1	0.3%	0.4%	The second release of Q1 GDP confirmed a growth pick-up, with rebounds in Germany and France
Fri. 16 May	US	Univ. of Michigan Sentiment Index (Prelim)	May	-	52.2	Consumer confidence has fallen for four consecutive months, reaching its lowest level since mid-22. Job concerns have risen

US - United States, IN - India, JP - Japan, MX - Mexico, UK - United Kingdom, EZ - Eurozone

The week ahead

Date	Country	Indicator	Data as of	Survey	Prior	Comment
Mon. 19 May	US	Earnings	Q1			>92% of S&P500 reported, and quarterly growth has been revised higher, as orders were front-loaded. Europe results are mixed
	CN	Industrial Production (yoy)	Apr	5.5%	7.7%	April's tariff increase suggests a slowdown in production growth, while high-end manufacturing should remain robust
	CN	Retail Sales (yoy)	Apr	5.5%	5.9%	Following a strong Q1, recent data continue to indicate resilient domestic consumption, especially in policy priority areas
Tue. 20 May	AU	RBA Cash Target Rate	May	3.85%	4.10%	The RBA is expected to cut its policy rate for the second time this cycle. Recent trade developments will be in focus
Wed. 21 May	ID	Bank Indonesia Rate	May	5.50%	5.75%	With the rupiah rebounding from recent lows, there is potential for BI to cut rates amid growth concerns
	UK	СРІ (уоу)	Apr	-	2.6%	Higher regulated prices, an increased energy price cap, and the impact of higher NICs are expected to boost headline inflation
Thu. 22 May	US	Composite PMI, Flash	May	-	50.6	A de-escalation of US/China trade tensions may stabilise sentiment, price intentions should rise further
	EZ	Composite PMI, Flash	May	51.2	50.4	Reduced global trade tensions are expected to result in a slight improvement in manufacturing and services confidence
	JP	СРІ (уоу)	Apr	3.60%	3.6%	Headline inflation expected to remain stable while core measures are forecast to rise slightly in April
	GE	IFO Business Confidence Index	May	87.5	86.9	The IFO survey has held up despite trade tensions, likely reflecting positive sentiment regarding Germany's fiscal package
	UK	Composite PMI, Flash	May	-	48.5	A partial rebound from April's sharp decline is possible, but the composite PMI is still likely to signal weak conditions
	IN	Composite PMI, Flash	May	-	59.7	The composite PMI may remain elevated if new export orders continue to perform, despite ongoing external uncertainties

US - United States, CN - China, AU - Australia, ID - Indonesia, UK - United Kingdom, EZ - Eurozone, JP - Japan, GE - Germany, IN - India

Source: HSBC Asset Management. Data as at 7.30am UK time 16 May 2025. For informational purposes only and should not be construed as a recommendation to invest in the specific country, product, strategy, sector or security. Any views expressed were held at the time of preparation and are subject to change without notice. Any forecast, projection or target where provided is indicative only and is not guaranteed in any way.



This week

Risk-on market sentiment strengthened this week as the US and China agreed to reduce tariffs to 30% on Chinese imports, and 10% on US imports into China for a 90-day period. US markets now anticipate two rate cuts by year-end, down from nearly three last week. The US dollar continued its modest recovery, while US Treasuries declined, alongside similar yield rises in German Bunds and UK Gilts. US and eurozone credit spreads narrowed. US equities surged, driven by technology, with European markets following, supported by strong Q1 earnings in financials and healthcare. Japan's Nikkei 225 posted modest gains as the yen were range-bound. Other Asian indices performed well, led by India's Sensex, followed by Hong Kong's Hang Seng, China's Shanghai composite, and Korea's Kospi. In commodities, oil prices edged higher, whilst gold retreated from prior week's gains.

Selected asset performance



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Equity Indices	Close	1-week Change (%)	1-month Change (%)	3-month Change (%)	1-year Change (%)	YTD Change (%)	52-week High	52-week Low	Fwd P/E (X)
World		()-/	()-/	(7-7	()-/	()-)			(
MSCI AC World Index (USD)	876	3.5	10.8	-0.9	10.4	4.2	888	723	19.0
North America									
US Dow Jones Industrial Average	42,323	2.6	6.7	-5.0	6.2	-0.5	45,074	36,612	20.9
US S&P 500 Index	5,917	4.5	12.2	-3.2	11.7	0.6	6,147	4,835	22.4
US NASDAQ Composite Index	19,112	6.6	17.2	-4.6	14.5	-1.0	20,205	14,784	28.7
Canada S&P/TSX Composite Index	25,897	2.1	7.4	1.6	16.1	4.7	25,898	21,467	16.2
Europe									
MSCI AC Europe (USD)	616	0.9	5.9	5.1	7.3	16.4	617	516	15.1
Euro STOXX 50 Index	5,412	1.9	9.0	-1.5	6.7	10.5	5,568	4,474	15.6
UK FTSE 100 Index	8,634	0.9	4.3	-1.1	2.3	5.6	8,909	7,545	12.5
Germany DAX Index*	23,696	0.8	11.2	5.3	26.5	19.0	23,912	17,025	16.5
France CAC-40 Index	7,853	1.4	7.1	-4.0	-4.1	6.4	8,258	6,764	15.4
Spain IBEX 35 Index	13,930	2.8	7.6	7.5	23.3	20.1	13,930	10,299	12.6
Italy FTSE MIB Index	40,419	2.7	12.1	6.4	14.1	18.2	40,419	30,653	12.1
Asia Pacific									
MSCI AC Asia Pacific ex Japan (USD)	614	3.1	11.3	3.5	7.6	7.8	632	507	14.3
Japan Nikkei-225 Stock Average	37,731	0.6	11.2	-3.6	-3.1	-5.4	42,427	30,793	19.3
Australian Stock Exchange 200	8,334	1.2	7.4	-2.6	5.7	2.1	8,615	7,169	18.4
Hong Kong Hang Seng Index	23,335	2.0	10.8	3.2	20.4	16.3	24,874	16,441	10.6
Shanghai Stock Exchange Composite Index	3,368	0.8	2.8	0.6	7.9	0.5	3,674	2,690	13.0
Hang Seng China Enterprises Index	8,470	1.9	8.9	1.7	23.3	16.2	9,211	5,772	9.8
Taiwan TAIEX Index	21,785	4.2	11.9	-5.9	2.3	-5.4	24,417	17,307	16.0
Korea KOSPI Index	2,625	1.9	7.3	1.3	-4.6	9.4	2,896	2,285	9.4
India SENSEX 30 Index	82,277	3.6	6.8	8.3	11.7	5.3	85,978	70,234	22.1
Indonesia Jakarta Stock Price Index	7,062	3.4	10.3	6.4	-2.5	-0.3	7,911	5,883	11.6
Malaysia Kuala Lumpur Composite Index	1,572	1.6	6.4	-1.3	-2.5	-4.3	1,685	1,387	14.1
Philippines Stock Exchange PSE Index	6,437	-0.3	4.9	6.2	-2.9	-1.4	7,605	5,805	10.3
Singapore FTSE Straits Times Index	3,888	0.3	6.1	0.3	17.6	2.6	4,005	3,198	12.2
Thailand SET Index	1,203	-0.7	5.6	-5.4	-12.7	-14.1	1,507	1,056	13.2
Latam									
Argentina Merval Index	2,298,473	8.7	5.5	-3.7	55.2	-9.3	2,867,775	1,333,622	9.7
Brazil Bovespa Index*	139,334	2.1	8.6	8.7	8.6	15.8	139,419	118,223	8.3
Chile IPSA Index	8,411	2.2	9.1	14.3	26.5	25.3	8,493	6,082	12.2
Colombia COLCAP Index	1,667	1.3	2.5	7.4	17.6	20.8	1,702	1,272	7.7
Mexico S&P/BMV IPC Index	57,960	2.5	9.3	7.2	0.9	17.1	58,393	48,770	12.6
EEMEA									
Saudi Arabia Tadawul Index	11,485	1.1	-1.3	-7.2	-5.8	-4.6	12,536	10,657	N/A
South Africa JSE Index	92,338	0.5	2.9	4.1	16.1	9.8	93,072	75,753	13.4
Turkey ISE 100 Index*	9,541	1.6	3.0	-3.4	-7.5	-2.9	11,252	8,567	3.8

*Indices expressed as total returns. All others are price returns.

Equity Indices - Total Return	1-week Change (%)	1-month Change (%)	3-month Change (%)	YTD Change (%)	1-year Change (%)	3-year Change (%)	5-year Change (%)
Global equities	3.5	11.0	-0.3	4.8	12.0	46.8	98.7
US equities	4.6	12.5	-3.2	1.0	13.0	53.3	117.4
Europe equities	1.1	6.7	6.7	18.2	10.1	47.6	91.6
Asia Pacific ex Japan equities	3.2	11.5	4.2	8.7	10.2	26.7	48.5
Japan equities	-0.4	7.8	3.9	6.3	7.6	37.5	55.2
Latam equities	2.2	13.1	9.4	25.4	-3.4	21.6	98.1
Emerging Markets equities	3.1	11.1	5.1	10.1	9.4	26.2	47.3

All total returns quoted in USD terms and subject to one-day lag. Data sourced from MSCI AC World Total Return Index, MSCI USA Total Return Index, MSCI AC Europe Total Return Index, MSCI AC Asia Pacific ex Japan Total Return Index, MSCI Japan Total Return Index, MSCI Emerging Latin America Total Return Index, and MSCI Emerging Markets Total Return Index

Total return includes income from dividends and interest as well as appreciation or depreciation in the price of an asset over the given period.

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Close	1-week Change (%)	1-month Change (%)	3-month Change (%)	1-year Change (%)	YTD Change (%)
588	-0.3	-0.1	0.6	4.9	1.3
921.8	0.4	2.0	0.7	6.5	2.7
3339.9	0.1	0.4	0.3	4.5	1.5
260.0	-0.1	0.3	0.0	5.1	0.8
642.4	0.8	2.8	0.7	9.5	2.5
230.0	0.1	0.8	1.0	5.8	2.2
269	0.7	2.0	1.5	8.4	3.0
	588 921.8 3339.9 260.0 642.4 230.0	Change Close (%) 588 -0.3 921.8 0.4 3339.9 0.1 260.0 -0.1 642.4 0.8 230.0 0.1	Change Change Close (%) (%) 588 -0.3 -0.1 921.8 0.4 2.0 3339.9 0.1 0.4 260.0 -0.1 0.3 642.4 0.8 2.8 230.0 0.1 0.8	Change Change Change Change Close (%) (%) (%) 588 -0.3 -0.1 0.6 921.8 0.4 2.0 0.7 3339.9 0.1 0.4 0.3 260.0 -0.1 0.3 0.0 642.4 0.8 2.8 0.7 230.0 0.1 0.8 1.0	Change Change<

Total return includes income from dividends and interest as well as appreciation or depreciation in the price of an asset over the given period.

								50 1	1-week
Currencies (vs USD)	Latest	1-week Ago	1-month Ago	3-months Ago	1-year Ago	Year End 2023	52-week High	52-week Low	Change (%)
Developed markets									
EUR/USD	1.12	1.13	1.14	1.05	1.09	1.04	1.16	1.01	-0.3
GBP/USD	1.33	1.33	1.32	1.26	1.27	1.25	1.34	1.21	0.1
CHF/USD	1.20	1.20	1.23	1.11	1.10	1.10	1.24	1.09	-0.3
CAD	1.39	1.39	1.39	1.42	1.36	1.44	1.48	1.34	0.0
JPY	145	145	142	152	155	157	162	140	0.1
AUD/USD	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.67	0.62	0.69	0.59	0.3
NZD/USD	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.61	0.56	0.64	0.55	0.0
Asia									
HKD	7.81	7.78	7.76	7.78	7.80	7.77	7.82	7.75	-0.4
CNY	7.20	7.24	7.30	7.26	7.22	7.30	7.35	7.01	0.5
INR	85.6	85.4	85.7	86.8	83.5	85.6	88.0	83.0	-0.3
MYR	4.27	4.30	4.41	4.44	4.68	4.47	4.73	4.09	0.7
KRW	1391	1398	1416	1441	1345	1472	1487	1303	0.5
TWD	30.1	30.3	32.5	32.8	32.1	32.8	33.3	29.6	0.5
Latam									
BRL	5.68	5.65	5.87	5.70	5.13	6.18	6.32	5.08	-0.5
COP	4201	4224	4306	4126	3830	4406	4566	3808	0.6
MXN	19.5	19.4	19.9	20.3	16.7	20.8	21.3	16.5	-0.3
ARS	1138	1128	1138	1056	886	1031	1206	886	-0.9
EEMEA									
RUB	80.0	82.5	83.0	91.3	90.9	113.5	115.1	78.2	3.0
ZAR	18.0	18.2	18.8	18.4	18.2	18.8	19.9	17.0	1.1
TRY	38.9	38.8	38.1	36.2	32.3	35.4	41.3	32.1	-0.3

Bonds	Close	1-week Ago	1-month Ago	3-months Ago	1-year Ago	Year End 2023	1-week basis point change*
US Treasury yields (%)							
3-Month	4.34	4.32	4.31	4.31	5.40	4.31	2
2-Year	3.94	3.89	3.77	4.26	4.80	4.24	5
5-Year	4.04	4.00	3.90	4.33	4.40	4.38	4
10-Year	4.42	4.38	4.28	4.48	4.38	4.57	4
30-Year	4.88	4.83	4.74	4.70	4.51	4.78	5
10-year bond yields (%)							
Japan	1.46	1.36	1.26	1.36	0.92	1.09	9
UK	4.66	4.57	4.60	4.50	4.08	4.56	9
Germany	2.62	2.56	2.51	2.43	2.46	2.36	6
France	3.29	3.26	3.27	3.17	2.94	3.19	3
Italy	3.63	3.61	3.70	3.52	3.76	3.52	2
Spain	3.24	3.21	3.21	3.06	3.22	3.06	3
China	1.68	1.64	1.65	1.65	2.32	1.68	5
Australia	4.47	4.29	4.34	4.42	4.19	4.36	18
Canada	3.15	3.16	3.08	3.11	3.56	3.23	-1

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

		1-week	1-month	3-month	1-year	YTD		
		Change	Change	Change	Change	Change	52-week	52-week
Commodities		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	High	Low
Gold	3,217	-3.2	-3.8	11.6	35.4	22.6	3,500	2,287
Brent Oil	64.6	1.1	-0.5	-12.3	-17.2	-11.8	82	58
WTI Crude Oil	61.7	1.1	-0.2	-12.3	-16.1	-12.1	77	55
R/J CRB Futures Index	295.9	0.2	1.1	-5.2	2.0	-0.3	317	265
LME Copper	9,577	1.4	4.1	1.1	-8.1	9.2	11,105	8,105

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Content ID: D045140_v1.0; Expiry Date: 16.11.2025