

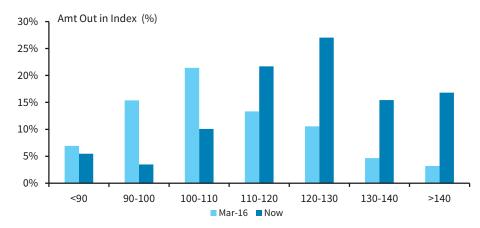
Investment Grade

Drastic Yields Require New Spread Measures

With the decline in all-in yields driving bond prices to near all-time highs, traditional spread measures do not appropriately capture the risk/reward of corporate debt. We recommend investors use BCDS spread, a measure that adjusts for recovery differences across different \$px bonds, to assess relative value in credit.

The credit spreads widening over the past few weeks has been more than offset by the rally in Treasuries, with both 10y and 30y yields falling more than 100bp this year, despite the reversal yesterday. As a result, the yield on the Bloomberg Barclays US Corporate Index has declined to 2.6%, near an all-time low. The same is true for the Long Index, which now yields less than 3.3%. This has driven bond prices higher, with the the Long Index trading above \$129. Indeed, within 10y+ bonds, only 8% of bonds trade below par and only a further 10% of bonds trade between par and \$110, a drastic difference from March 2016, when spreads were equally wide but the prices of the bonds were nowhere near the same.

FIGURE 1. Bloomberg Barclays Long US Corporate Index Price Distribution, Now versus March 2016



Source: Bloomberg, Barclays Research

The significant portion of corporate bonds – especially in the long end – trading meaningfully over par calls into question the efficacy of traditional spread measures. Specifically, the regular yield and spread (OAS or g-spread/z-spread) measures assume that a bond pays all of its

This document is intended for institutional investors and is not subject to all of the independence and disclosure standards applicable to debt research reports prepared for retail investors under U.S. FINRA Rule 2242. Barclays trades the securities covered in this report for its own account and on a discretionary basis on behalf of certain clients. Such trading interests may be contrary to the recommendations offered in this report.

Please see analyst certifications and important disclosures beginning on page 4. Completed: 11-Mar-20, 17:07 GMT Released: 11-Mar-20, 17:15 GMT Restricted - External

CORE

Shobhit Gupta +1 212 412 2056 shobhit.gupta@barclays.com BCI. US

Bradford Elliott, CFA +1 212 526 6704 bradford.elliott@barclays.com BCI, US

Steve Wang +1 212 526 4620 steve.wang2@barclays.com BCI, US coupons and principal. The yield (and spread) is then calculated based on the discount factor such that the present value of these future cash flows equals the current price. While they are a good measure of the cash-on-cash return, we believe they do not appropriately capture the risk/reward of corporate debt in the current environment.

Specifically, because the traditional spread measures do not explicitly model the outcome in which a bond defaults, they are agnostic to differences in the effective loss given default (LGD) of securities with different prices. They do not incorporate the fact that a bond trading at a premium has a higher LGD than a lower-priced bond, all else equal. For instance, assuming 40% recovery, a par bond would have an effective 60% loss given default, while a bond trading at \$120 would have a 66.7% loss, which should mean that the latter trades at a wider spread. Market participants do factor for this risk using back-of-the-envelope adjustments (say, 1bp/\$), but they are approximate at best. Specifically, unlike the fixed dollar price adjustment, the effective compensation for differences in dollar price is not in fact linear.

- The difference in loss (assuming 40% recovery) given default for an \$80 and \$100 price bond is 10% (60% LGD for par bond versus 50% for \$80 security), while it is less than 5% for a \$120 and \$140 bond pair, which would suggest that the basis between the latter pair should be lower.
- The adjustment for price also increases with underlying spread (premium debt of wider trading credits should trade at a larger discount), as well as maturity (longer-dated bonds should offer higher compensation per \$ of premium than short-term debt). See *Dollars and* Sense for more details.

In addition to having higher LGD, the risk of high-coupon paper becomes evident in a few other scenarios. As we discuss in *High Price Bonds Beware of New Issue* and *Large Angels Fall Harder but Bounce Higher*, high dollar price debt tends to perform worse than par paper around new issuance, as well as on downgrade to high yield (which was also evident in the recent underperformance of high-coupon KHC debt). Given the recent spread widening – which means that the premium for high \$px bonds should be higher – and the fact that the Long Index is trading at an all-time high in price, we believe market participants should use a more formal model to account for differences in \$px. Specifically, we recommend using BCDS spreads, which account for differences in coupon and, in our opinion, are a better measure of credit risk in the current environment.

The BCDS spread is calculated as follows: on each payment date (coupon or principal), the bond is assumed to either 1) make the payment or 2) default and pay the expected recovery. The total return from the bond is the sum of the two cash flows weighted by the survival probability on each payment date. The survival probability curve and, through it, the BCDS spread are then calculated by calibrating the cash flows to the current price of the bond. Since this measure explicitly models the default outcome, it accounts for the difference in LGD across different dollar price debt.

Using BCDS instead of traditional spread measures has a few implications. First, given that the Bloomberg Barclays Index trades at a more than \$11 premium, the BCDS spread is nearly 10bp tighter than L-OAS.¹ The adjustment is not uniform across maturity buckets. Longer-dated bonds trade at a higher premium over par; therefore, BCDS spreads are as much as 20bp tighter (Figure 2).

Another key implication of this is that 10s30s curves are indeed flatter than they appear. This is especially true for A rated corporates, given that their 30y debt trades at a significant premium. Indeed, while the 10s30s OAS curve is 30bp, the curve on a price-adjusted basis is only 17bp. This reinforces our view that 10s30s, especially for A credits, look too flat and should steepen,

¹ Note the because BCDS is calculated off the swap curve, it is most comparable to Libor OAS.

especially given the decline in yields. Figure 3 shows the average 10s30s curves for A and BBB industrials in both OAS and BCDS terms. Although BBB curves look steep even after the adjustment for price, we note that high-coupon BBB- debt is exposed to significant downside in case of a downgrade to high yield. We highlight select high coupon BBB- bonds that screen as especially rich in *The Highs and Lows of High Price Bonds*.

FIGURE 2. Spread Adjustment for Dollar Price by Maturity Buckets

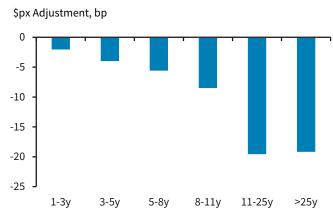
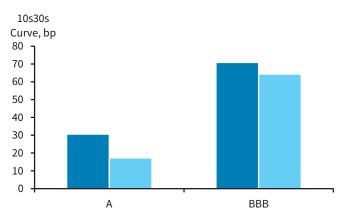


FIGURE 3. 10s30s OAS and BCDS Curves



Note: For industrials only.

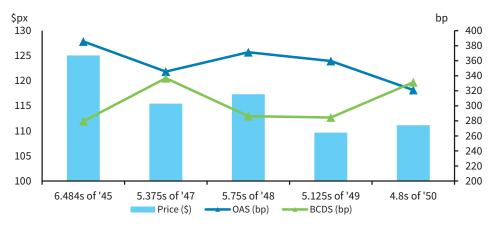
Source: Bloomberg, Barclays Research

Source: Bloomberg, Barclays Research

Furthermore, using BCDS spreads also changes the relative value opportunity set. While in nominal spread terms high dollar price bonds appear to offer more compensation, after adjusting for dollar price, the relative cheapness/richness in some cases can completely flip. One such occurrence is in long-dated Charter bonds, shown in Figure 4, where the highest price 2045s offers the most spread compensation in OAS terms but the lower price 2050s are the cheapest when using BCDS.

BCDS spreads can be found on "Bond Screening Tool" on Barclays Live and is available for most index-eligible bonds. The BCDS spread is calculated off the swap curve and is therefore most comparable to L-OAS. The difference between L-OAS and BCDS is the effective spread compensation for dollar price.

FIGURE 4. CHTR 30y Bonds OAS versus BCDS Comparison



Source: Bloomberg, Barclays Research

Analyst(s) Certification(s):

We, Shobhit Gupta, Bradford Elliott, CFA and Steve Wang, hereby certify (1) that the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect our personal views about any or all of the subject securities or issuers referred to in this research report and (2) no part of our compensation was, is or will be directly or indirectly related to the specific recommendations or views expressed in this research report.

Important Disclosures:

This document is intended for institutional investors and is not subject to all of the independence and disclosure standards applicable to debt research reports prepared for retail investors under U.S. FINRA Rule 2242. Barclays trades the securities covered in this report for its own account and on a discretionary basis on behalf of certain clients. Such trading interests may be contrary to the recommendations offered in this report.

Barclays Research is produced by the Investment Bank of Barclays Bank PLC and its affiliates (collectively and each individually, "Barclays").

All authors contributing to this research report are Research Analysts unless otherwise indicated. The publication date at the top of the report reflects the local time where the report was produced and may differ from the release date provided in GMT.

Availability of Disclosures:

For current important disclosures regarding any issuers which are the subject of this research report please refer to https://publicresearch.barclays.com or alternatively send a written request to: Barclays Research Compliance, 745 Seventh Avenue, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10019 or call +1-212-526-1072.

Barclays Capital Inc. and/or one of its affiliates does and seeks to do business with companies covered in its research reports. As a result, investors should be aware that Barclays may have a conflict of interest that could affect the objectivity of this report. Barclays Capital Inc. and/or one of its affiliates regularly trades, generally deals as principal and generally provides liquidity (as market maker or otherwise) in the debt securities that are the subject of this research report (and related derivatives thereof). Barclays trading desks may have either a long and / or short position in such securities, other financial instruments and / or derivatives, which may pose a conflict with the interests of investing customers. Where permitted and subject to appropriate information barrier restrictions, Barclays fixed income research analysts regularly interact with its trading desk personnel regarding current market conditions and prices. Barclays fixed income research analysts receive compensation based on various factors including, but not limited to, the quality of their work, the overall performance of the firm (including the profitability of the Investment Banking Department), the profitability and revenues of the Markets business and the potential interest of the firm's investing clients in research with respect to the asset class covered by the analyst. To the extent that any historical pricing information was obtained from Barclays trading desks, the firm makes no representation that it is accurate or complete. All levels, prices and spreads are historical and do not necessarily represent current market levels, prices or spreads, some or all of which may have changed since the publication of this document. Barclays Research Department produces various types of research including, but not limited to, fundamental analysis, equity-linked analysis, quantitative analysis, and trade ideas. Recommendations and trade ideas contained in one type of Barclays Research may differ from those contained in other type

In order to access Barclays Statement regarding Research Dissemination Policies and Procedures, please refer to https://publicresearch.barcap.com/S/RD.htm. In order to access Barclays Research Conflict Management Policy Statement, please refer to: https://publicresearch.barcap.com/S/CM.htm.

All pricing information is indicative only. Unless otherwise indicated, prices are sourced from Refinitiv and reflect the closing price in the relevant trading market, which may not be the last available price at the time of publication.

Types of investment recommendations produced by Barclays FICC Research:

In addition to any ratings assigned under Barclays' formal rating systems, this publication may contain investment recommendations in the form of trade ideas, thematic screens, scorecards or portfolio recommendations that have been produced by analysts in FICC Research. Any such investment recommendations produced by non-Credit Research teams shall remain open until they are subsequently amended, rebalanced or closed in a future research report. Any such investment recommendations produced by the Credit Research teams are valid at current market conditions and may not be otherwise relied upon.

Disclosure of other investment recommendations produced by Barclays FICC Research:

Barclays FICC Research may have published other investment recommendations in respect of the same securities/instruments recommended in this research report during the preceding 12 months. To view all investment recommendations published by Barclays FICC Research in the preceding 12 months please refer to https://live.barcap.com/go/research/Recommendations.

Legal entities involved in producing Barclays Research:

Barclays Bank PLC (Barclays, UK)

Barclays Capital Inc. (BCI, US)

Barclays Bank Ireland PLC, Frankfurt Branch (BBI, Frankfurt)

Barclays Bank Ireland PLC, Paris Branch (BBI, Paris)

Barclays Bank Ireland PLC, Milan Branch (BBI, Milan)

Barclays Securities Japan Limited (BSJL, Japan)

Barclays Bank PLC, Hong Kong branch (Barclays Bank, Hong Kong)

Barclays Capital Canada Inc. (BCCI, Canada)

Barclays Bank Mexico, S.A. (BBMX, Mexico)

Barclays Securities (India) Private Limited (BSIPL, India)

Barclays Bank PLC, India branch (Barclays Bank, India)

Barclays Bank PLC, Singapore branch (Barclays Bank, Singapore)

Barclays Bank PLC, DIFC Branch (Barclays Bank, DIFC)

Disclaimer:

This publication has been produced by Barclays Research Department in the Investment Bank of Barclays Bank PLC and/or one or more of its affiliates (collectively and each individually, "Barclays"). It has been prepared for institutional investors and not for retail investors. It has been distributed by one or more Barclays affiliated legal entities listed below. It is provided to our clients for information purposes only, and Barclays makes no express or implied warranties, and expressly disclaims all warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose or use with respect to any data included in this publication. To the extent that this publication states on the front page that it is intended for institutional investors and is not subject to all of the independence and disclosure standards applicable to debt research reports prepared for retail investors under U.S. FINRA Rule 2242, it is an "institutional debt research report" and distribution to retail investors is strictly prohibited. Barclays also distributes such institutional debt research reports to various issuers, media, regulatory and academic organisations for their own internal informational news gathering, regulatory or academic purposes and not for the purpose of making investment decisions regarding any debt securities. Media organisations are prohibited from republishing any opinion or recommendation concerning a debt issuer or debt security contained in any Barclays institutional debt research report. Any such recipients that do not want to continue receiving Barclays institutional debt research reports should contact debtresearch@barclays.com. Clients that are subscribed to receive equity research reports, will not receive certain cross asset research reports co-authored by equity and FICC research analysts that are distributed as "institutional debt research reports" unless they have agreed to accept such reports. Eligible clients may get access to such cross asset reports by contacting debtresearch@barclays.com. Barclays will not treat unauthorized recipients of this report as its clients and accepts no liability for use by them of the contents which may not be suitable for their personal use. Prices shown are indicative and Barclays is not offering to buy or sell or soliciting offers to buy or sell any financial instrument.

Without limiting any of the foregoing and to the extent permitted by law, in no event shall Barclays, nor any affiliate, nor any of their respective officers, directors, partners, or employees have any liability for (a) any special, punitive, indirect, or consequential damages; or (b) any lost profits, lost revenue, loss of anticipated savings or loss of opportunity or other financial loss, even if notified of the possibility of such damages, arising from any use of this publication or its contents.

Other than disclosures relating to Barclays, the information contained in this publication has been obtained from sources that Barclays Research believes to be reliable, but Barclays does not represent or warrant that it is accurate or complete. Barclays is not responsible for, and makes no warranties whatsoever as to, the information or opinions contained in any written, electronic, audio or video presentations of third parties that are accessible via a direct hyperlink in this publication or via a hyperlink to a third-party web site ('Third-Party Content'). Any such Third-Party Content has not been adopted or endorsed by Barclays, does not represent the views or opinions of Barclays, and is not incorporated by reference into this publication. Third-Party Content is provided for information purposes only and Barclays has not independently verified its accuracy or completeness.

The views in this publication are solely and exclusively those of the authoring analyst(s) and are subject to change, and Barclays Research has no obligation to update its opinions or the information in this publication. Unless otherwise disclosed herein, the analysts who authored this report have not received any compensation from the subject companies in the past 12 months. If this publication contains recommendations, they are general recommendations that were prepared independently of any other interests, including those of Barclays and/or its affiliates, and/or the subject companies. This publication does not contain personal investment recommendations or investment advice or take into account the individual financial circumstances or investment objectives of the clients who receive it. The securities and other investments discussed herein may not be suitable for all investors. Barclays is not a fiduciary to any recipient of this publication. Investors must independently evaluate the merits and risks of the investments discussed herein, consult any independent advisors they believe necessary, and exercise independent judgment with regard to any investment decision. The value of and income from any investment may fluctuate from day to day as a result of changes in relevant economic markets (including changes in market liquidity). The information herein is not intended to predict actual results, which may differ substantially from those reflected. Past performance is not necessarily indicative of future results. The information provided does not constitute a financial benchmark and should not be used as a submission or contribution of input data for the purposes of determining a financial benchmark.

United Kingdom: This document is being distributed (1) only by or with the approval of an authorised person (Barclays Bank PLC) or (2) to, and is directed at (a) persons in the United Kingdom having professional experience in matters relating to investments and who fall within the definition of "investment professionals" in Article 19(5) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005 (the "Order"); or (b) high net worth companies, unincorporated associations and partnerships and trustees of high value trusts as described in Article 49(2) of the Order; or (c) other persons to whom it may otherwise lawfully be communicated (all such persons being "Relevant Persons"). Any investment or investment activity to which this communication relates is only available to and will only be engaged in with Relevant Persons. Any other persons who receive this communication should not rely on or act upon it. Barclays Bank PLC is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority and is a member of the London Stock Exchange.

European Economic Area ("EEA"): This material is being distributed in the EEA by Barclays Bank PLC. Barclays Bank PLC is not registered in France with the Autorité des marchés financiers or the Autorité de contrôle prudentiel.

Americas: The Investment Bank of Barclays Bank PLC undertakes U.S. securities business in the name of its wholly owned subsidiary Barclays Capital Inc., a FINRA and SIPC member. Barclays Capital Inc., a U.S. registered broker/dealer, is distributing this material in the United States and, in connection therewith accepts responsibility for its contents. Any U.S. person wishing to effect a transaction in any security discussed herein should do so only by contacting a representative of Barclays Capital Inc. in the U.S. at 745 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019.

Non-U.S. persons should contact and execute transactions through a Barclays Bank PLC branch or affiliate in their home jurisdiction unless local regulations permit otherwise.

This material is distributed in Canada by Barclays Capital Canada Inc., a registered investment dealer, a Dealer Member of IIROC (www.iiroc.ca), and a Member of the Canadian Investor Protection Fund (CIPF).

This material is distributed in Mexico by Barclays Bank Mexico, S.A. This material is distributed in the Cayman Islands and in the Bahamas by Barclays Capital Inc., which it is not licensed or registered to conduct and does not conduct business in, from or within those jurisdictions and has not filed this material with any regulatory body in those jurisdictions.

Japan: This material is being distributed to institutional investors in Japan by Barclays Securities Japan Limited. Barclays Securities Japan Limited is a joint-stock company incorporated in Japan with registered office of 6-10-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-6131, Japan. It is a subsidiary of Barclays

Bank PLC and a registered financial instruments firm regulated by the Financial Services Agency of Japan. Registered Number: Kanto Zaimukyokucho (kinsho) No. 143.

Asia Pacific (excluding Japan): Barclays Bank PLC, Hong Kong Branch is distributing this material in Hong Kong as an authorised institution regulated by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority. Registered Office: 41/F, Cheung Kong Center, 2 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong.

All Indian securities-related research and other equity research produced by Barclays' Investment Bank are distributed in India by Barclays Securities (India) Private Limited (BSIPL). BSIPL is a company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 having CIN U67120MH2006PTC161063. BSIPL is registered and regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) as a Research Analyst: INH000001519; Portfolio Manager INP000002585; Stock Broker/Trading and Clearing Member: National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE) Capital Market INB231292732, NSE Futures & Options INF231292732, NSE Currency derivatives INE231450334, Bombay Stock Exchange Limited (BSE) Capital Market INB011292738, BSE Futures & Options INF011292738; Depository Participant (DP) with the National Securities & Depositories Limited (NSDL): DP ID: IN-DP-NSDL-299-2008; Investment Adviser: INA000000391. The registered office of BSIPL is at 208, Ceejay House, Shivsagar Estate, Dr. A. Besant Road, Worli, Mumbai – 400 018, India. Telephone No: +91 2267196000. Fax number: +91 22 67196100. Any other reports produced by Barclays' Investment Bank are distributed in India by Barclays Bank PLC, India Branch, an associate of BSIPL in India that is registered with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as a Banking Company under the provisions of The Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (Regn No BOM43) and registered with SEBI as Merchant Banker (Regn No INM000002129) and also as Banker to the Issue (Regn No INB100000950). Barclays Investments and Loans (India) Limited, registered with RBI as Non Banking Financial Company (Regn No RBI COR-07-00258), and Barclays Wealth Trustees (India) Private Limited, registered with Registrar of Companies (CIN U93000MH2008PTC188438), are associates of BSIPL in India that are not authorised to distribute any reports produced by Barclays' Investment Bank.

This material is distributed in Singapore by the Singapore branch of Barclays Bank PLC, a bank licensed in Singapore by the Monetary Authority of Singapore. For matters in connection with this material, recipients in Singapore may contact the Singapore branch of Barclays Bank PLC, whose registered address is 10 Marina Boulevard, #23-01 Marina Bay Financial Centre Tower 2, Singapore 018983.

This material is distributed to persons in Australia by Barclays Bank PLC. None of Barclays Bank PLC, nor any other Barclays group entity, holds an Australian financial services licence and instead relies on an exemption from the requirement to hold such a licence. This material is intended to only be distributed to "wholesale clients" as defined by the Australian Corporations Act 2001. This material is distributed in New Zealand by Barclays Bank PLC, but it has not been registered, filed or approved by any New Zealand regulatory authority or under or in accordance with the Financial Markets Conduct Act of 2013, and this material is not a disclosure document under New Zealand law.

Middle East: Nothing herein should be considered investment advice as defined in the Israeli Regulation of Investment Advisory, Investment Marketing and Portfolio Management Law, 1995 ("Advisory Law"). This document is being made to eligible clients (as defined under the Advisory Law) only. Barclays Israeli branch previously held an investment marketing license with the Israel Securities Authority but it cancelled such license on 30/11/2014 as it solely provides its services to eligible clients pursuant to available exemptions under the Advisory Law, therefore a license with the Israel Securities Authority is not required. Accordingly, Barclays does not maintain an insurance coverage pursuant to the Advisory Law.

This material is distributed in the United Arab Emirates (including the Dubai International Financial Centre) and Qatar by Barclays Bank PLC. Barclays Bank PLC in the Dubai International Financial Centre (Registered No. 0060) is regulated by the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA). Principal place of business in the Dubai International Financial Centre: The Gate Village, Building 4, Level 4, PO Box 506504, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Barclays Bank PLC-DIFC Branch, may only undertake the financial services activities that fall within the scope of its existing DFSA licence. Related financial products or services are only available to Professional Clients, as defined by the Dubai Financial Services Authority. Barclays Bank PLC in the UAE is regulated by the Central Bank of the UAE and is licensed to conduct business activities as a branch of a commercial bank incorporated outside the UAE in Dubai (Licence No.: 13/1844/2008, Registered Office: Building No. 6, Burj Dubai Business Hub, Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai City) and Abu Dhabi (Licence No.: 13/952/2008, Registered Office: Al Jazira Towers, Hamdan Street, PO Box 2734, Abu Dhabi). This material does not constitute or form part of any offer to issue or sell, or any solicitation of any offer to subscribe for or purchase, any securities or investment products in the UAE (including the Dubai International Financial Centre) and accordingly should not be construed as such. Furthermore, this information is being made available on the basis that the recipient acknowledges and understands that the entities and securities to which it may relate have not been approved, licensed by or registered with the UAE Central Bank, the Dubai Financial Services Authority or any other relevant licensing authority or governmental agency in the UAE. The content of this report has not been approved by or filed with the UAE Central Bank or Dubai Financial Services Authority. Barclays Bank PLC in the Qatar Financial Centre (Registered No. 00018) is authorised by the Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority (QFCRA). Barclays Bank PLC-QFC Branch may only undertake the regulated activities that fall within the scope of its existing QFCRA licence. Principal place of business in Qatar: Qatar Financial Centre, Office 1002, 10th Floor, QFC Tower, Diplomatic Area, West Bay, PO Box 15891, Doha, Qatar. Related financial products or services are only available to Business Customers as defined by the Oatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority.

Russia: This material is not intended for investors who are not Qualified Investors according to the laws of the Russian Federation as it might contain information about or description of the features of financial instruments not admitted for public offering and/or circulation in the Russian Federation and thus not eligible for non-Qualified Investors. If you are not a Qualified Investor according to the laws of the Russian Federation, please dispose of any copy of this material in your possession.

IRS Circular 230 Prepared Materials Disclaimer: Barclays does not provide tax advice and nothing contained herein should be construed to be tax advice. Please be advised that any discussion of U.S. tax matters contained herein (including any attachments) (i) is not intended or written to be used, and cannot be used, by you for the purpose of avoiding U.S. tax-related penalties; and (ii) was written to support the promotion or marketing of the transactions or other matters addressed herein. Accordingly, you should seek advice based on your particular circumstances from an independent tax advisor.

© Copyright Barclays Bank PLC (2020). All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or redistributed in any manner without the prior written permission of Barclays. Barclays Bank PLC is registered in England No. 1026167. Registered office 1 Churchill Place, London, E14 5HP. Additional information regarding this publication will be furnished upon request.

BRCF2242